



Comprehensive Plan for 2026

City of Suffolk, Virginia

Adopted: April 5, 2006



Prepared by:
City of Suffolk
Department of Planning
With assistance from:



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URS

277 Bendix Road
Virginia Beach, VA 23452

It's a good time to be in Suffolk

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Chapter 1: Introduction

It's a good time to be in Suffolk. This motto indicates the confidence with which the City is changing, growing, and adapting to new opportunities. Areas of rural landscape are being transformed into high technology centers. The historic downtown core is vibrant once again. Yet more than 75% of the City remains predominately agricultural. Change is occurring and the City is determined to manage and guide it to enhance the quality of its citizens' lives.

Comprehensive planning is central to the City's past success and to its future prosperity. The 2018 Comprehensive Plan, adopted in 1998, has been the City's primary planning document. Representing a dramatic departure from the previous 2005 General Plan, this plan laid the foundations for the City's current growth management system, and has served the City well for the past seven years.

To be vigilant about continuing the success begun with the 2018 Comprehensive, the City has established a policy and associated procedure to periodically review, update and modify the adopted comprehensive plan. This updated 2026 Comprehensive Plan is the product of such a review. Accordingly, as appropriate, many key ideas and strategies of the previous 2018 Comprehensive Plan are being brought forward and incorporated into this plan.

- Define and delineate two areas of compact high-quality urban and suburban development: one around the central core and one in the northeast;

- To ensure that the core city development area is substantial in relation to the northeast and that the development area will support the historic core;
- To allow and promote some low intensity, high quality large-lot residential development between these two compact areas;
- To significantly increase the community and regional-scale open space and parkland available to all residents;
- To preserve the southern half of Suffolk as a rural agricultural area;
- To provide for some growth and public sewer in the rural villages of Holland, Whaleyville, and Chuckatuck/Oakland;
- To make special efforts to protect the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries and the watersheds that provide drinking water for Suffolk, Portsmouth, Norfolk, Chesapeake, and Virginia Beach;
- To clearly define the location and nature of future roads and to identify improvements to existing roads; and
- To support and revitalize the historic city and the City's rural villages. *(By reference the following plans are incorporated into this 2026 Comprehensive Plan:*

- *Downtown Suffolk Initiatives Plan;*
- *Hall Place Neighborhood Initiatives Plan;*
- *East Washington Street Neighborhoods Initiatives Plan;*
- *Fairgrounds Revitalization Plan;*
- *Olde Towne Revitalization Plan;*
- *Holland Village Initiatives Plan;*
- *Whaleyville Village Initiatives Plan;*
- *Chuckatuck/Oakland Village Initiatives Plan;*
- *Crittenden/Eclipse Village Initiatives Plan;*
- *Driver Village Initiatives Plan;*
- *Huntersville Neighborhood Initiatives Plan; and*
- *Carolina Road Corridor and Southern Area Land Use Strategy.*

This updated 2026 Comprehensive Plan provides policy and action statements, many of which are being brought forward from the previous plan, that guide development in the City. The policy and action statements express the will of citizens to manage the pace and direction of growth and to lessen the fiscal and environment impacts of that growth.

Why change the plan? Mirroring the City's position that it is good policy and appropriate to periodically review and update the comprehensive plan, the Commonwealth of Virginia requires that cities reexamine their comprehensive plans every five years to ensure that the policies and actions contained within them are still valid. This reexamination process established that the 2018 plan has been a successful guide to the future; however citizens indicated that more definition in several elements would strengthen the plan. In response, the updated plan includes the following major features:

1. A revised growth management strategy titled the Focused Growth Framework. The framework builds on the success of 2018 plan by providing more definition as to how the City should grow inside the Suburban/Urban Growth Areas.
2. A measured and balanced expansion of the Central Suburban/Urban Growth Area for economic development and job creation, and related housing and mixed use development.
 - ✓ To the south along White Marsh Road and Hosier Road. This expansion area will increase the land base and thus the economic potential needed to support the ongoing redevelopment of downtown commercial and retail uses.
 - ✓ To the north, between King's Fork Road and the Western Branch Reservoir. This expansion will accommodate opportunities for a mixture of office, commercial, public / semi-public and residential uses suitable for this area.
 - ✓ To the west along Pruden Boulevard. This expansion will provide opportunities primarily for significant employment generations and a mixture of office, and regional scaled retail, as well as opportunities to assure the preservation of the proposed Rt. 460 limited access highway corridor.
 - ✓ To the west along Holland Road. This expansion will provide opportunities primarily for significant employment generators a mixture of office, and economic development.
3. The additional residential development potential resulting from the expansion of the Suburban/Urban

Growth Area is balanced in part by a proposed change of part of the Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential area in the northwestern part of the City to an agricultural classification. This reduction of growth potential has the dual benefit of lowering the impact of new potential growth in other areas and protecting prime agricultural areas of the City.

4. This plan looks closely at housing issues in the City. Housing affordability was identified by the City Council as a strategic priority for this plan update. As the City has developed since the 2018 Plan was adopted, housing prices have soared. This has caused an affordability gap in many segments of the housing market. This plan provides strategies to bridge some of those gaps.
5. This plan responds to comments made by various environmental agencies including the Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Board. This plan links development with impacts to the environment. It provides updated poli-

cies and actions to implement state and federal regulations.

6. This plan takes a realistic look at the City's transportation network. With limited state and Federal dollars for expansion, the plan looks at maintenance requirements, modest increases in capacity, and future potential for transit in the City.
7. The plan looks at municipal facilities and examines the way in which they are impacted by potential future growth and can be expanded to meet future needs.

These ideas are the result of an intensive planning process that involved the City Council, the Planning Commission, various city departments and many citizens who took time to attend one of the outreach meetings. They are based on an in-depth knowledge of the existing conditions and modern urban planning practices.

Below is a list of the plan's policies and action statements. They are supported by information found in each chapter.

Policy and Action Statements

- 3-1 Create a system of focused growth development areas within the two main urban and suburban growth areas in the City**
- 3-1A Develop a coordinated system of focused growth zoning to support both the historic downtown central core and the northern core development areas.
- 3-1B Revise the existing growth area boundaries south of the central core to establish a pattern of development areas of decreasing densities consistent with the Focused Growth Framework.
- 3-1C Revise the existing growth area boundary north of the Central Core Suburban / Urban Development Area to establish a pattern of development areas for a mixture of office and commercial uses consistent with the Focused Growth Framework that may include opportunities for related housing and public / semi-public uses.
- 3-1D Define and encourage accommodative zoning districts for two mixed-use core areas: one in the north and the other in the downtown core.

- 3-1E Promote low intensity development in the drinking water watersheds and re-zone some of the current RE lands to A to enhance protection of the regional water supply in the northwest quadrant and accommodate the policy of “no-net increase” in residential development potential due to modest expansion of central suburban / urban growth area boundary as shown on Figure 3-15.
- 3-1F Continue the policy that there can be no justification for rezonings to residential uses outside the Comprehensive Plan growth areas.
- 3-1G There can be no justification for additional residential rezoning contrary and inconsistent with the Focused Growth Framework and associated themes, policies and actions, and smart growth principles of this 2026 Comprehensive Plan.
- 3-2 Moderate the pace of future residential growth to current levels**
- 3-2A Assume an annual average growth rate of 1,000 residential units per year.
- 3-2B Pursue expanded growth management authority from the General Assembly
- 3-2C Closely coordinate school location planning to the identified growth areas and rural villages, focusing new schools in the areas of highest residential density in accordance with the following smart growth in schools planning principles:
- Provide highest quality education;
 - Involve broad community involvement in school facility siting and planning;
 - Site selection consistent with city’s long-range growth plan (Comprehensive Plan);
 - Smaller in size and fit well within context of the community in which they are located;
 - Ease of accessibility;
 - Function as centers and anchors of community;
 - Support community uses after hours; and
 - Mix of new construction and renovation programs.
- 3-2D Provide sewerage and potable water service only to those areas that have been identified for growth, with the highest priority on core, core support, inner-ring suburban, and suburban use districts. Exceptions can be made for existing developed areas that have a large number of failing septic systems or have been identified by the City’s health department as having significant potable water quality concerns.
- 3-3 Enable high-quality, well planned development to occur in a predictable and orderly manner.**
- 3-3A Develop incentives to better promote and encourage, as appropriate, mixed use development in more zoning categories.
- 3-3B Continue incentives in the zoning ordinance to support “New Urbanist” and traditional neighborhood designs where appropriate in the City.
- 3-3C Continue the use of cluster developments to preserve and protect the natural environment with revisions to allow for more community-usable open space.
- 3-3D Amend the development regulations to assure that transportation system planning and the preservation of right of way for transit are incorporated into the design and construction of new development projects, particularly large scale developments in the Mixed Use Core and Core Support districts.

- 3-4 Balance residential and non-residential land uses**
- 3-4A Assume a future jobs/housing ratio of between 1.0 and 1.56. Continue to develop implementation tools that will help achieve help the higher number.
- 3-5 Facilitate the expansion of office, R&D and manufacturing activity in Suffolk.**
- 3-5A Ensure that there are adequate amounts of land zoned to support the growing high technology corridor in the northern suburban/urban growth area as well as office and industrial uses in other parts of the City.
- 3-5B Revise the existing growth area boundaries west of the central core suburban / urban development area to establish a pattern of development areas for continued economic development and job creation consistent with the Focused Growth Framework.
- 3-5C Revise the existing growth area boundary west of the Central Core Suburban / Urban Development Area to establish a pattern of development areas for continued economic development and job creation consistent with the Focused Growth Framework.
- 3-6 Ensure the long term viability, operation and function of the Suffolk Executive Airport and protect it from the encroachment of non-compatible land uses.**
- 3-6A Establish an Airport Protection and Compatibility Overlay Zone where land use in general proximity to the airport are designated for low intensity, non-intrusive and compatible employment or agricultural usage and not converted to suburban residential uses.
- 3-6B Establish an Aircraft Overflight District as shown on Figure 3-14 where land use in close proximity to the airport and located in the designated aircraft overflight areas as illustrated in the *Carolina Road Corridor and Southern Land Use Strategy (incorporated herein by reference)* are designated for low intensity, non-intrusive and compatible employment or agricultural usage and not converted to suburban residential uses.
- 4-1 Build upon the work of the Affordable Housing Task Force and implement the recommendations of the Task Force's report.**
- 4-1A Encourage development of a balanced housing stock with high end, moderate and affordable housing goals to accommodate demand.
- 4-1B Establish a new Affordable Housing Overlay District in both Suburban/Urban Development Areas.
- 4-1C Implement the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to their fullest potential by effectively negotiating with developers for the construction of affordable dwelling units and adjusting the incentives and requirements to better match market conditions.
- 4-1D Continue the housing taskforce established by the Mayor and the City Council as a way to advise the City Council on key housing issues throughout the City.
- 4-1E Encourage the construction of affordable housing in mixed use communities.
- 4-1F Streamline the City's approval process for development of affordable housing.
- 4-1G Encourage increasing the supply of homes selling in the \$100,000 to \$200,000 price range.

- 4-1H Encourage increasing the supply of housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income households, including both homeownership and rental opportunities.
- 4-1I Utilize existing housing assistance programs to generate more homeowners.
- 4-1J Generate a greater awareness of the City's affordable housing goals and its incentive and assistance programs.
- 4-1K Pursue a variety of financing strategies to encourage a variety of housing types.
- 4-1L Establish a comprehensive approach to increasing workforce housing in Suffolk and the ability of consumers to benefit from such opportunities.
- 4-1M Review and update the City's Consolidated Plan to ensure that conforms to and is consistent with the policies and implementation strategies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- 4-1N Encourage opportunities for retirement housing.
- 4-1O Continue to strike the right balance between moderate cost housing needs and opportunities for higher-end housing.
- 4-1P Continue to create incentives for higher-end housing.

- 4-2 Encourage housing development in the core area.**
- 4-2A Revise the City's development ordinance to ensure that it is compatible with infill development in existing communities.

- 4-3 Provide for modest development in the City's rural villages.**
- 4-3A In accordance with the adopted village initiatives plans promote land use patterns within or adjacent to the villages where affordable and market rate construction of new housing units is feasible.

- 5-1 Preserve and protect Suffolk's agricultural heritage.**
- 5-1A Create an agricultural development board as an advisory committee to the City Council and Planning Commission.
- 5-1B Examine the opportunities for a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) or conservation easements program and begin to establish a financing mechanism to fund such a program through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).
- 5-1C Ensure that the UDO allows for the necessary agricultural industrial uses in the Agriculture (A) district to support a thriving farming economy.
- 5-1D Continue to support the plans and policies set forth in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan to limit extensive residential development in the Agriculture (A) district by not permitting major subdivisions as an allowed use in the Agriculture (A) district and by requiring major subdivisions to have public water and sewer.
- 5-1E Support alternative agricultural economic practices such as community supported agriculture (CSA), cooperative farms, and hobby farms.
- 5-1F Consider increasing the minimum qualifying acreage for *Land Use Valuation* for open space as allowed by state code.
- 5-1G Modify the subdivision and other development regulations to prevent the lining of rural roads with small residential lots.

- 5-2 Protect the City's lakes, rivers, streams, and reservoirs from the negative impacts of development.**
- 5-2A Continue to implement and enforce the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.
- 5-2B Preserve tidal marshes along City shorelines.

- 5-2C Increase public access to Suffolk's shoreline and water bodies using water quality-friendly techniques.
- 5-2D Implement the Community Rating System once it is approved by FEMA.
- 5-2E Provide resources to implement farm planning programs and update the agricultural farm plan inventory.
- 5-2F Continue to support the implementation of shoreline erosion mitigation measures.
- 5-2G Promote coastal water quality improvement initiatives dealing with commercial and recreational fisheries, restricting development patterns, uses, and activities adjacent to spawning and nursery grounds in order to preserve and protect them from adverse impacts.
- 5-2H Study the opportunities and environmental constraints of providing full access to currently blocked waterways and rivers for boating activities.
- 5-2I Protect the quality of ground water and well water and the water quality in the region serving lakes and reservoirs.
- 5-2J Promote low-intensity and low density development in the drinking water watersheds.
- 5-2K Continue to explore new and innovative techniques to apply water quality protection measures beyond those of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and Regulations.
- 5-2L Continue to identify and adopt appropriate measures to protect water quality in the Great Dismal Swamp.
- 5-2M Continue to work with the health department to adjust regulations for septic systems to better protect water quality.
- 5-2N Work with the Peanut Soil and Water Conservation District to promote the development and implementation of Farm Conservation Plans.
- 5-2O Continue to work closely with neighboring jurisdictions in efforts to improve the effectiveness of the region's watershed management program.

- 5-3 Promote the City of Suffolk as a destination for eco-tourism as a method of continuing to preserve the City's natural resources**
- 5-3A Continue to work with the National Wildlife Service to promote and protect the Great Dismal Swamp.

- 5-4 Preserve the City's Historic Resources**
- 5-4A Pursue funding and opportunities for preservation through the City's new designation as a Preserve America Community.
- 5-4B Continue to survey areas of the City for their contribution to the cultural heritage of the City and designate new historic districts as they are located.
- 5-4C Update the City's design guidelines for historic buildings in the downtown core by use of a pattern book and work to ensure that private developers understand and appreciate the value of preserving historic architecture.
- 5-4D Establish development encroachment protection zones around the City's historical villages and individual properties to better protect and buffer these cultural resources from encroaching non-compatible development.

- 6-1 Provide opportunities for residents to adopt a lifestyle that is less dependent on auto travel.**
- 6-1A Focus development in the two suburban/urban growth areas based on the densities shown in Chapter 3.

- 6-1B Promote implementation of mixed-use development where facilities, infrastructure and markets will sustain investment.
- 6-1C Promote the development of an internal transit circulator system within the two mixed use cores.
- 6-1D Continue to tie development approval to the adequacy and funding of public facilities, including highways.

- 6-2 Suffolk will be a responsible participant in the regional planning and programming process.**
- 6-2A Develop roadway and transit improvement programs to be consistent with those adopted by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission.
- 6-2B Planned improvements to facilities crossing jurisdictional boundaries should be coordinated with the neighboring locality.
- 6-2C Expand the type and location of transit service connections between routes within Suffolk and those serving regional destinations.
- 6-2D In conjunction with the TIP, annually evaluate the efficiency and need for improvements of those roadways and intersection so designated in Table 6-4 and Figures 6-4 and 6-5.
- 6-2E Upgrade Route 460 to a grade-separated freeway from Suffolk westward to I-95. Similarly, consideration should be given to upgrading Route 58 to a grade-separated freeway from Suffolk westward to I-95.

- 6-3 Investment in infrastructure will be targeted to areas where need either is or is forecasted to be greatest.**
- 6-3A Focus investment of transportation resources on facilities that serve growth areas with higher densities and/or provide adequate service to regional facilities.
- 6-3B Implement the planned bypasses around both of the villages of Chuckatuck and Whaleyville.

- 6-4 The City will employ appropriate regulatory and financial incentives to ensure that access to and within the central core area supports private sector initiatives.**
- 6-4A Prioritize transportation investments to ensure adequate access from Mixed Use Core Areas to regional markets.
- 6-4B Interconnectivity of the street, sidewalk and trail systems within the Mixed Use Core, the Core Support and the Inner Ring Suburban Areas should be implemented with both public and private resources.
- 6-4C Continue to complete the street network per the adopted initiatives and redevelopment plans, making street connections wherever possible and appropriate.

- 6-5 Provide facilities and policies that ensure adequate multi-modal access throughout the growth areas of the City.**
- 6-5A Promote the prioritization of investment in major regional improvements that are critical to the City's economic development.
- 6-5B Preserve existing capacity on the roadway system by minimizing conflicts between vehicles accessing the local street system and through moving vehicles.
- 6-5C Increase the minimum allowable spacing between median crossovers to a distance of 1,000 feet on selected roadways. (See Chapter 6).

- 6-5D Conduct periodic and systematic evaluations of critical intersections to define deficiencies and develop improvements.
- 6-5E Discourage strip retail commercial development along major arterial corridors.
- 6-5F Create, designate and implement a bikeway and trail system serving both recreational and functional purposes.
- 6-5G Assure the incorporation of transit related features in conjunction with design and construction of road improvements.
- 6-5H Continue and enhance the utilization of Special Corridor Overlay district and access management plans to assure the efficiency and function of the City's road network.
- 6-5I Explore the possibility of designating and protecting scenic roadways within Suffolk.

- 7-1 Coordinate the planning of municipal facilities with the land use map show in Figure 3-5. Relate the pace of growth to the ongoing availability of infrastructure and services.**
- 7-1A Amend the City's master water plan to ensure that it is compatible with the Focused Growth Framework and the Public Water Service Area maps.
- 7-1B Amend the City's master sewer plan to ensure that it is compatible with Focused Growth Framework and the Sanitary Sewer Service Area maps.
- 7-1C Continue to review and modify the HRSD Master Sewer Plan to reflect Suffolk's land use plan and sewer service priorities.
- 7-1D Review and update the City's Storm Water Master Plan to ensure that it is compatible with the Focused Growth Framework map.

- 7-2 Continue to provide a high level of police and fire protection throughout the City.**
- 7-2A Plan for the expansion of the City's police and fire departments to meet the needs of a population distribution as shown in Chapter 3.
- 7-2B Ensure that the City's police and fire systems meet and exceed the level of service standards established in Chapter 7, Municipal Facilities.

- 7-3 Provide a highly rated parks and recreation system for the enjoyment of the citizens of Suffolk and the region.**
- 7-3A Define and strengthen the role of Parks and Recreation and its relationships within the City and region.
- 7-3B Refine and enhance programming offered to reflect the desires of the community, sound business practices, and to emphasize opportunities unique to Suffolk.
- 7-3C Develop a system of Parks and Recreation facilities distributed throughout the community, providing equitable opportunity for all citizens to utilize recreational programs, while emphasizing the unique attractions and qualities of the City.
- 7-3D Develop a system of greenways, blueways, and bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular trails throughout the City, with connections to other regional systems; relate the system to an ecotourism initiative.
- 7-3E Adopt development guidelines and policies that support the Parks and Recreation system and master plan and produce compatible public amenities and open spaces.

- 7-3F Utilize Parks and Recreation facilities, programs and staff to promote ecotourism as a contribution to economic development.
- 7-4 Provide a public school system that provides a high level of service to the children of Suffolk.**
- 7-4A Maintain or exceed the level of service standard for schools as determined by the standards as shown in Table 7-5.
- 7-4B Establish, by a joint effort with the schools division and the Planning Department, a quantitative approach to predicting student generation from new development.
- 7-4C Work collaboratively with the School Board to implement the smart growth in school planning principles:
- Provide highest quality education;
 - Involve broad community involvement in school facility siting and planning;
 - Site selection consistent with city's long-range growth plan (Comprehensive Plan);
 - Smaller in size and fit well within context of the community in which they are located;
 - Ease of accessibility;
 - Function as centers and anchors of community;
 - Support community uses after hours; and
 - Mix of new construction and renovation programs.
- 7-5 Provide an improved library system that supports the needs of the citizens of Suffolk**
- 7-5A Support the funding and construction of an additional library in Suffolk.
- 7-5B Increase the overall library holdings in each of the existing libraries to be consistent with the level of service standards.
- 7-6 Provide potable water to all Suffolk citizens and businesses within the Urban/Suburban Growth Areas and the Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential Area.**
- 7-6A Identify new sources of potable water to meet the future demands of the City and the portions of Isle of Wight County served by the Western Tidewater Water Authority.

Chapter 2: Planning Principles and Themes

1. Introduction

The City of Suffolk is growing and changing every day. While growth and change are inevitable, the way in which they occur is not. There is no single issue that this Comprehensive Plan is attempting to solve. Rather, this plan provides themes, policies, and actions to help respond to and guide future growth.

Background

The City of Suffolk has seen steady growth for more than a century, but this growth accelerated rapidly after 1970. As shown in Figure 2-1 and Table 2-1, the overall population of the City of Suffolk in 1900 was just over 23,000 people. It took more than 70 years for the population to nearly double to just over 45,000 in 1970. The population grew by 50% again between 1970 and 1990, to 52,143.

The City of Suffolk's population has grown tremendously over the last 14 years, outpacing the growth rate of the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Region and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Between 1990 and 2000 the population of Suffolk increased by 11,534 to 63,677. This corresponds to a 22.1% increase in the population over that ten year period. During the same 10 years, the Hampton Roads Metropolitan Region's population grew by 126,981 (8.8%), increasing to 1,576,370 from 1,449,389. The Com-

monwealth of Virginia grew at a rate of 14.2 over the same period.

Recent population estimates from the Weldon-Cooper Center for Public Policy at the University of Virginia report the City's population at 75,500, an 18.6% increase from the 2000 Census. This increase translates to a 4.1% annualized rate.

Housing and services for these new residents have dramatically changed the landscape of Suffolk. For the past several years, an average of nearly 1,000

While growth and change are inevitable, the way in which they occur is not.

housing units per year has been constructed in the City. In fact, a total of 6,310 units have been constructed since the

adoption of the 2018 Plan in 1998. This growth has required the City to invest in new schools at a rate of nearly one per year. The City's critical environmental resources continue to be threatened by encroaching development. Roads designed for agricultural purposes have become clogged as they change to regional commuting routes.

This growth has come with benefits as well. The City has a thriving high-tech economy that was unthinkable when the City was primarily agrarian. Historic Downtown Suffolk is being revived and rejuvenated with new public and private investment.

2. Principles and Values

During the plan development process, a series of principles and values were established to guide each plan element.

The principles and values are:

- Preserve Effective Transportation Choices
- Vary the Landscape and Development Patterns
- Provide Housing Options
- Protect What is Irreplaceable
- Take Care of What the City Has (Investment and Infrastructure)
- Keep Jobs and Schools Near Population Centers
- Protect and Enhance Agricultural Character and Uses, and Open Space

This plan responds to these principles and values in the following way:

1. Preserve Effective Transportation Choices

Suffolk's current development pattern is highly automobile-dependent. This situation is not sustainable over the long term. It is virtually impossible in most areas of the City to perform the most basic of household errands without driving. Studies have shown that over time, given limited resources, it is nearly impossible to build enough roadway capacity to maintain the highest levels of service on the roadway system. In recent surveys and during the data collection process for this plan, transportation and congestion was identified as



a key issue for City residents.

There are three alternatives to this problem that this plan addresses:

1. This plan provides for larger areas of the City to be developed as mixed-use/walkable communities. The core, core support, and inner-ring suburban areas, as set forth in Chapter 3, Land Use and Growth Management, all encourage mixed use at different densities. This will allow for more trips to be made without getting into the car.

2. The core and core-support areas of this plan provide for transit-supportive housing densities. According to seminal studies of the relationship between transit and land use, the minimum density to support a low level of bus transit is 4 dwelling units per acre. More recent studies have shown that to support a

fixed guideway investment (commuter rail or light rail) densities of at least 25 units per acre are required.

3. This plan recognizes that not every land use will support or needs

to support free-flow traffic conditions. Downtown and other areas of significant activity do not need to be completely free of congestion to have a high level of service.

2. Vary the Landscape and Development Patterns

The character of Suffolk was another key topic discussed during the public meetings. Citizens are very pleased with the high quality of life, and open space that they are able to enjoy in Suffolk and the variety of landscapes that they encounter every day. Citizens also relate positive feelings about the friendliness of the community, its low noise, and its tight-knit feel.

This plan continues this tradition by allowing for more types and different types of development in a structured, logical, and sustainable pattern. The focused growth concept behind the plan allows for a real mix of landscapes throughout the City. One of the things that makes Suffolk unique and is reinforced in the plan is the variety of development patterns in the City – from the most intensely urban to farms and forests – all within the same city.

3. Provide Housing Options

Housing costs have been and continue to be a real issue in the City. For many years, Suffolk used to be known as a place where first-time homebuyers could find a starter home and people of all income groups could find reasonably priced homes. One of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan's action statements was to encourage the development of high-end housing, something that was missing in Suffolk in 1998, to extend the range of housing

choices in the City. Now, however, for reasons that extend beyond the borders of the City, region, and state, housing prices have escalated to unforeseen levels. Data now show that much of the new housing being constructed in the City is unaffordable to many current residents. Existing home prices are also rapidly limiting the ability of many residents to move up from starter homes to larger homes in Suffolk. This plan addresses this problem by allowing for a greater variety of housing types, and in some cases higher-density developments. It is hoped that by making this change, land prices as a percentage of total new home prices will be lowered, allowing for a broader range of homes to come to market. This plan also incorporates the policies established by the Affordable Housing Task Force.

4. Protect What is Irreplaceable

The City's productive agricultural land, its rural landscapes, its waterways, and large natural areas like the Great Dismal Swamp can all be considered "irreplaceable" – that is, once developed, they cannot be returned to their natural state. Historic buildings, villages and neighborhoods also have qualities that are irreplaceable. This plan continues the 2018 Comprehensive Plan's strategies of environmental protection and preservation of rural character. It also incorporates the major policies of the initiatives plans for the rural villages and urban neighborhoods.



5. Take Care of What the City Has (Investment and Infrastructure)

The City of Suffolk and private citizens have invested many millions of dollars in the City over the past decades. The City has built hundreds of miles of water and sewer lines, built police and fire stations, upgraded its library system, and constructed many new schools. Homeowners have staked their long term future real estate in the City. This plan helps protect that investment. By knowing that most new development will be within the suburban/urban growth area, the City can plan its infrastructure investment strategy in a systematic and logical manner. Owners derive price stability from well planned communities. The focused growth maps show where the highest and lowest densities are planned, allowing for more efficient and effective programming of the City's limited capital resources.

6. Keep Jobs and Schools Near Population Centers

A positive mix of jobs, schools, housing, retail, and recreation is the definition of a vibrant city. Single family homes on large lots promote suburban isolation.



The City has recently made several positive steps towards achieving the goal of keeping schools and jobs close to population centers, and this plan continues to move the City forward. For example, the City has established a framework for incorporating smart growth principals in school planning. One of the goals of that

framework is to work together to make schools the focal point of communities within walking distance to homes. Also, the City recently adopted a mixed use zoning ordinance, allowing for jobs and housing to be mixed on the same lot.

This principle goes hand-in-hand with providing housing options, varying the landscape and development patterns, and preserving transportation choices. This plan allows for mixed use areas over a greater portion of the City, allowing people to walk to work, school, and shopping.

7. Protect and Enhance Agricultural Character and Uses, and Open Space

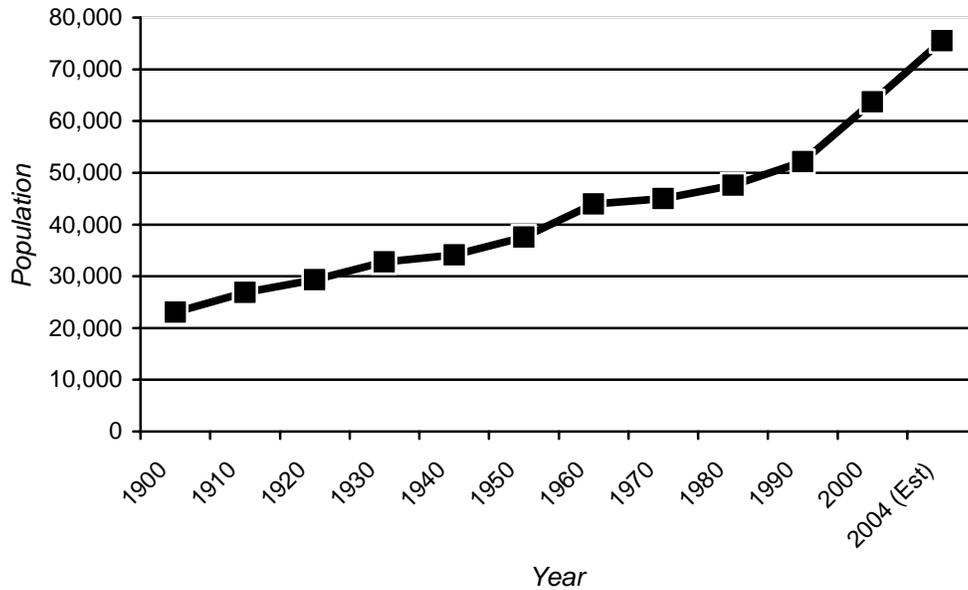
The agricultural economy in Suffolk is changing. Global economics and changes in federal policies are impacting the crops that are grown in the City and the returns that farmers are receiving for them. These changes, coupled with the City's rapid population growth, have put pressures on the agricultural community. In order to protect the City's

agricultural heritage, this plan continues the 2018 Comprehensive Plan's strategy of preserving most of the southern part of the City for agricultural uses. In addition new areas in the northwest section of the City are being added

into the agricultural district.

Very limited development will continue to be allowed in this area through minor subdivisions and family transfers. However, this plan re-emphasizes the City's policy of maintaining that part of the City as primarily agricultural.

**Figure 2-1
Population Change in Suffolk: 1900-2004**



Source: Census of Population and Housing, 1900-2000
2004 Estimate from Weldon-Cooper Center at University of Virginia

**Table 2-1
Population Change in Suffolk: 1900-2004**

Year	Total	Percent Change from previous census	Absolute Change
1900 ¹	23,078		
1910 ¹	26,886	17%	3,808
1920 ¹	29,322	9%	2,436
1930 ¹	32,801	12%	3,479
1940 ¹	34,114	4%	1,313
1950 ¹	37,577	10%	3,463
1960 ¹	43,975	17%	6,398
1970 ¹	45,024	2%	1,049
1980	47,621	6%	2,597
1990	52,141	9%	4,520
2000	63,677	22%	11,536
2004 (Est.)	75,500	18.6%	11,823

Source: Census of Population and Housing, 1900-2000
2004 Estimate from Weldon-Cooper Center at University of Virginia
1. Total includes both City of Suffolk and Nansemond County. The City of Suffolk and Nansemond County merged in 1974 to form the City of Suffolk

3. How Have the Citizens of Suffolk Reacted to the Impacts of Growth Since the 2018 Plan?

For the data collection phase of the project, two rounds of public meetings were held—one in May and another in November/December of 2004. The meetings were held to obtain an initial set of observations from the citizens of Suffolk on their feelings about growth in the City. Two different meeting formats were used—a free discussion and a structured discussion. Both formats yielded good results that enabled the study team to focus their work to meet the needs, wishes, and desires of the residents of the City. The key concerns expressed at the meetings are shown in Table 2-2.



Overall, the citizens of Suffolk are generally pleased about the overall direction that the City is taking with respect to growth. Citizens are concerned primarily about how growth is going to impact the quality of life in the future if it is not well planned. Areas of special concern include transportation, housing, schools, and the future of agriculture. During the public meeting process, citizens commented that the transportation system in the City was inadequate for the needs of a growing community and that better planning needed to be done to account for increased travel demand. With respect to housing, there were many comments about the price of homes and increasing assessments. Many residents who attended the meetings stated that new home prices are now non-

attainable of many long time residents and that the City needed a better strategy to accommodate a range of housing types city-wide. The public school system appeared both as a strength, opportunity, and a threat to the community in the second round of public meetings, indicating a mixed opinion of the education system in the City. Citizens appeared to be pleased with the number and quality of the school buildings that are being constructed but continue to be concerned with the quality of the programs being offered and academic performance.

Overcrowding in some schools appeared to be a point of concern for some, although recent school construction activity seems to have alleviated some of the problem. Finally, the future of agriculture in the City was a major issue that reappeared throughout the visioning process. Most suburban residents liked the “idea” of agriculture in the City—enjoying the benefits of open space and the agrarian feel of the southern half of the City. People directly involved in the agricultural economy were concerned about preserving their way of life and making a return on their investment in an increasingly difficult economic climate. Farmers were also concerned about increasing suburban intrusion into a primarily rural area, creating land use and automobile and farm vehicle conflicts.

**Table 2-2
Areas of Concern
Identified During the Plan Development Process**

Area of Concern	% of Comments
Transportation	12.5%
Economic Development	10.6%
Schools	9.2%
Community Character	8.8%
Development Regulations	8.1%
Housing	6.9%
Other Government Functions	6.5%
Taxes	6.0%
Parks	5.5%
Pace of Growth	5.2%
Agricultural Development	4.7%
Downtown Redevelopment	3.9%
Public Safety	2.7%
Adequate Public Facilities	2.1%
Public Utilities	2.0%
Other	1.9%
Environmental Protection	1.8%
Hamlets and Villages	0.8%
Historic Preservation	0.5%
Rural Character	0.4%
Grand Total	100%

Source: URS Corp., 2004

4. Plan Themes

Based on the principles and values and the citizen concerns, the five overall plan themes from the 2018 Comprehensive Plan were carried forward into this plan. While many policies relating to each theme are substantially unchanged, others have shifted in response to current growth trends.

The themes are:

1. Balanced Growth
2. Responsible Regionalism
3. Environmental Protection
4. Preserve Rural Character
5. Core Area Revitalization
6. Enhance Economic Vitality

1. Balanced Growth

This plan maintains the balance between the Central and Northern growth areas, and between residential and non-residential development. It maintains the balanced distribution of future population and jobs in relation to existing and future infrastructure. One change from the 2018 Plan is the approach to moderating the pace of growth. The 2018 Plan set a target of 600 to 800 new residential units per year. This target has been exceeded nearly every year since the 2018 Plan was adopted. This plan assumes a higher growth rate of 1,000 units per year- more in line with market demands. This pace of growth is sustainable given the positive fiscal impacts of the plan as shown in Chapter 9.

This plan also recommends that the City continue to pursue innovative growth management practices through the General Assembly, to enable it to better balance new development with the infrastructure and services needed for this development.

2. Responsible Regionalism

As in the 2018 Plan, the City's plans for roads, sewer and water service continue to relate to regional priorities. Some of the road and infrastructure improvements proposed in the 2018 Plan are now completed or in progress. For example, the widening of North Main Street (north of Constance Road) was completed concurrent with expansions in the size and scale of retail commercial development along the right of way. The Southwest Suffolk Bypass (U.S. Route 13) now extends freeway service from the Holland Road interchange to Carolina Road. VDOT has initiated a study of improvements to the U.S. Route 460 corridor (Pruden Boulevard) from Bowers Hill in Chesapeake to Petersburg. The study will address both alignment and financing options. In conjunction with VDOT's efforts, the City through this comprehensive plan have strengthened and expanded upon strategies that will help preserve future transportation facilities and corridors. The City has also initiated design activities on the widening of Nansemond Parkway and the extension of Finney Avenue, although construction funding has not been programmed for either improvement.

Other major improvements in the 2018 Plan have undergone modification since adoption. For example, the Kings Highway Bridge replacement has been expanded to include a realignment of Kings Highway from the eastern shore of the Nansemond River to extend generally due west to Godwin Boulevard. At the request of and with participation by the City, VDOT conducted the Southeast Suffolk Bypass Feasibility Study. The study concluded that factors of high expense (cost of \$120 million), low service (forecasted less than 25,000 vehi-

cle per day in 2026), and unacceptable impacts to either the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge or adjacent residential neighborhoods, planning for the facility should be discontinued. The City concurred, and determined in the areas immediately south of Downtown to revise the Master Thoroughfare Plan to improve accessibility to the arterial system.

Other roadways in the 2018 Major Thoroughfare Plan may have been incorporated in pursuit of a long-range vision, but will not be implemented within the planning period. These include the multi-lane parkway connection along abandoned railroad right of way between downtown and north Suffolk, the secondary arterial connecting Whaleyville with Holland, and the extension of Kings Fork Road to the west crossing the Nansemond River. The need for these facilities have been analyzed and discussed in the Transportation Chapter.

Finally, with the adoption of the *Unified Development Ordinance's* section of access management regulation on the Special Corridor Overlay District, the City – for the first time – instituted a systems management approach to preserving arterial roadway capacity. The connection between managing land use development patterns and designs and transportation service will be further expanded in the update.

3. Environmental Protection

The policies of the 2018 Plan regarding environmental protection are carried forward into this document. In 2003 the City amended its development ordinance for the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area (CBPA) consistent with state and federal regulations. The city has had ordinances implementing the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act since 1990. Enforcement of CBPA standards

for grading and protection of shoreline vegetation helps protect vulnerable shorelines from erosion. Stream corridor restrictions (100-foot buffers) throughout the City also protect riparian vegetation. Reclassifying some Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential lands to Rural Agricultural Preservation will allow for more protection of the regional water supply in the Northwest quadrant of the City.

4. Preserve Rural Character

This plan continues and amplifies the policy of creating varied environments, from urban to suburban to rural. Most of the southern part of the City will remain in agricultural and forestry use. Based on the 2018 Plan, the City modified its subdivision regulations to slow the pace of the lining of rural roads with residential lots by limiting the number lots developable under the minor subdivision regulations. Other ongoing initiatives include protection of passive and active open space in cluster and planned unit developments, and acquisition of lands for community and regional-scale parks. The initiative plans for rural villages have resulted in streetscape and park improvements, as well as economic development and infrastructure improvements.

5. Core Area Revitalization

Many of the policies and actions set in motion by the 2018 Plan and related downtown initiatives have now borne fruit. The Downtown Initiatives Plan was adopted in 1998, and many of its recommendations have been implemented. One of the centerpieces of the downtown plan, The Constant's Wharf redevelopment, comprising a hotel, conference center, park and marina, has been completed. The city has also adopted various small area initiative plans for urban neighborhoods throughout the historic core area. Suffolk was

recently designated as a Preserve America community, bringing national recognition to the City's revitalization efforts.

6. Enhance Economic Vitality

Suffolk's economy has continued to grow since the 2018 Plan was adopted, maintaining a desirable balance between jobs and housing. The City's Economic Development Department offers an array of federal, state and local incentives to attract businesses, including Enterprise Zones, Foreign Trade Zones, and tax credits and façade grants for rehabilitation of historic buildings.

Suffolk is at the center of the technology corridor of southeastern Virginia and is realizing economies of scale due to its location. The Suffolk technology corridor along I-664 in the northern suburban/urban growth area has become the nation's leader in military simulation and modeling. Companies such as Mitre, Raytheon, Lockheed Martin, General Dynamics, and SAIC, as well as the U.S. Joint Forces Command Center and Virginia Modeling and Simulation Center are all located in the corridor. These economic opportunities are encouraging

new companies to relocate to the area, as they hope to take advantage of the skilled workforce and close proximity to other companies.

The preservation of adequate amounts of land in the correct locations for economic development uses and future transportation corridors are vital to the long range future and vision of Suffolk. Accordingly, given the interrelationships between land use, zoning, economic development, and transportation, this *Comprehensive Plan for 2026* emphasizes the need and importance to establish and implement strategies designed to plan for and protect future opportunities. For example, the need for corridor planning is highlighted. Other strategies include taking the appropriate steps to assure the correct mix of business, office and industrial uses; and preserving lands in close proximity to major intersections and interchanges for business.

Currently about 22,000 acres, or eight percent of the City's land area, is zoned for industrial, office or commercial development. Under this plan, the City will continue to provide an ample number of areas zoned for employment-producing uses, including new opportunities for employment in mixed-use developments.

Chapter 3: Land Use and Growth Management

1. Introduction

The key smart growth principal on which both the 2018 Comprehensive Plan and this update are founded is to manage and direct growth towards existing communities. Since its adoption, the 2018 Comprehensive Plan has been very successful at providing a basis for controlling the previously sprawling landscape of the City. The 2018 plan, as shown in Figure 3-1, identified two areas of the city designated as Suburban/Urban Growth Areas: one in the north and the other in the center. The central growth area is focused around the historic core city, and the northern growth is focused around major transportation routes. By accommodating development, the primary role of these growth areas is to provide a focus for development, reduce sprawl pressures in the rest of the City and provide for more efficient and effective delivery of city services. By accommodating growth in two discrete areas, one strategy of the Plan included reducing development pressures in southern areas and as a result, preserving much of the City's rural character.

In addition to the two growth areas, a key component of the 2018 Plan's growth management strategy was to designate a third large area of the City as a rural conservation / low density residential area. This area allows a lower density of residential development that was designed as a method of protecting the region's water supply reser-

voirs that Suffolk hosts. Three key rural villages (Holland, Whaleyville, and Chuckatuck) have been designated to provide some growth outside of the urban/suburban area. The remainder of the City was designated as an agricultural/conservation area with limited residential development potential. To a large degree, all of these goals have been successfully achieved and are continued under the 2026 Comprehensive Plan.

Since the 2018 plan was implemented, more than 80% of the City's growth has occurred in the two Suburban/Urban Growth Areas. This growth has been effectively balanced between the northern and central growth areas. Minor subdivisions and family transfers are continuing, allowing some new residential growth in the agricultural district.

As shown in Table 3-1, there are approximately 5,000 residential units in Suffolk's development pipeline. The pipeline consists of developments that have received some form of government approval but have not yet been constructed. Furthermore, based on existing zoning designations, the remaining vacant residentially zoned land in the City of Suffolk has the capacity for approximately 14,000 additional homes. Homes in Suffolk are presently being constructed at a rate of nearly 1,000 per year (Figure 3-2). This rate of residential growth in the City exceeds the 2018

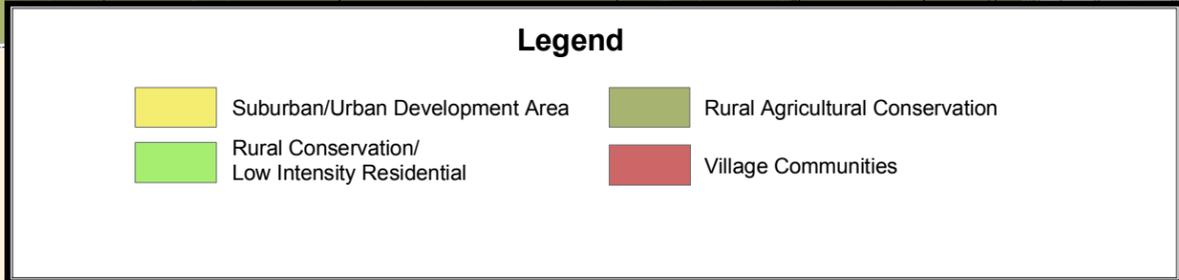
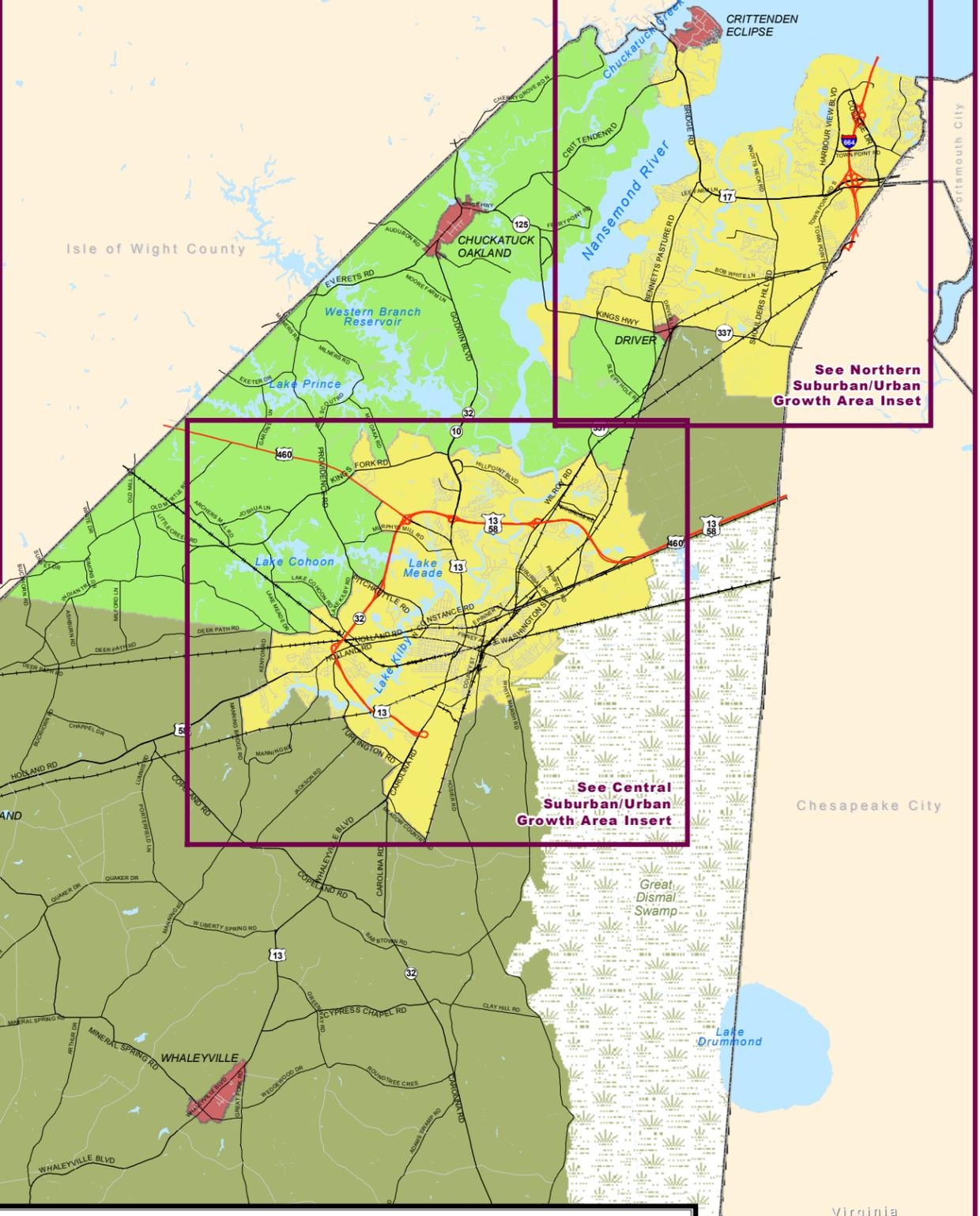
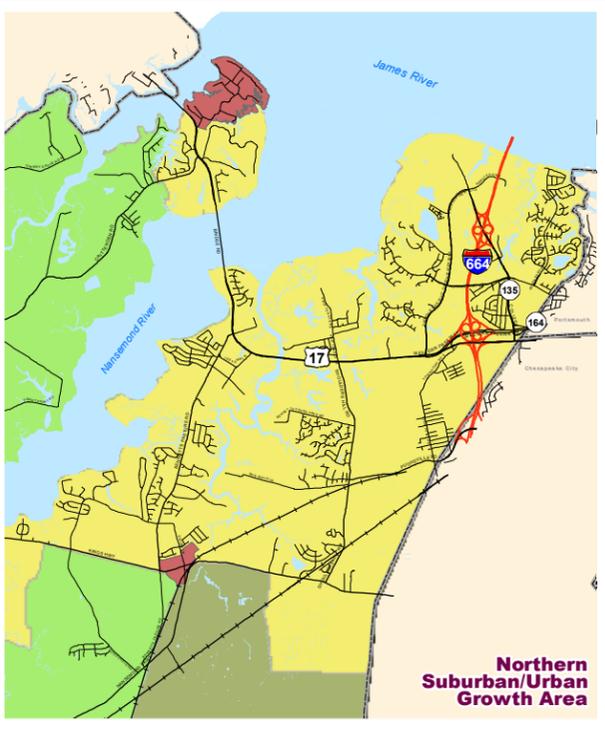
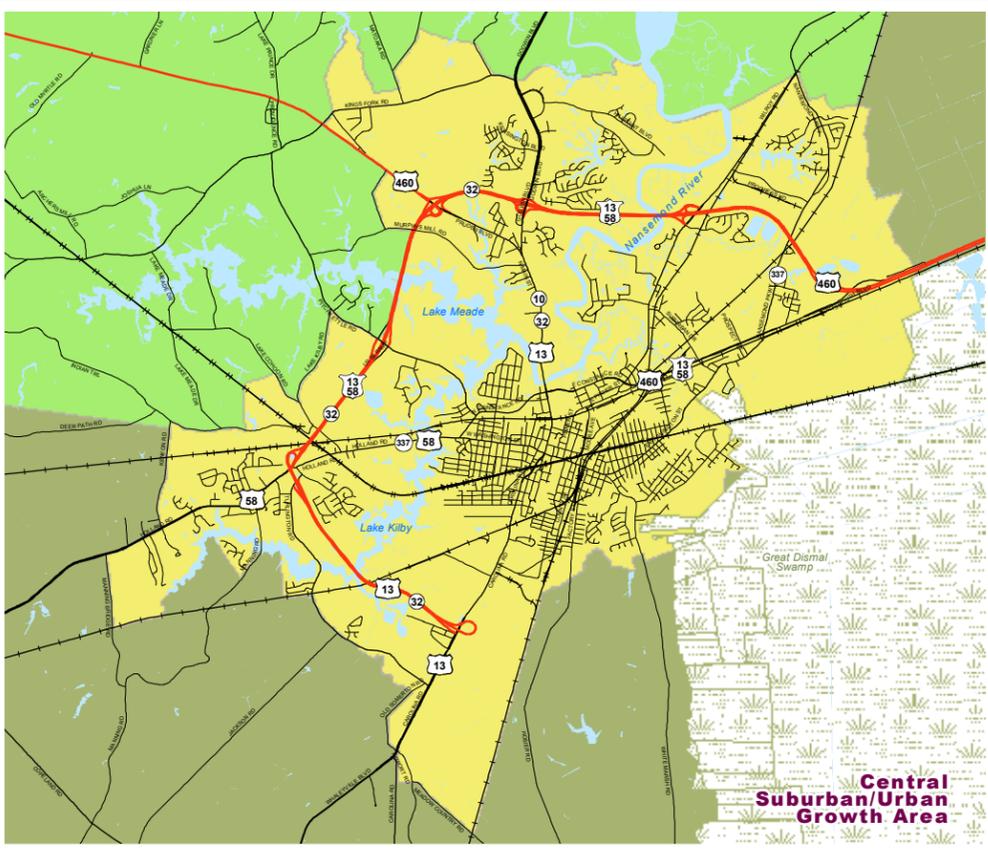
The 2018 Comprehensive Plan has been very successful at controlling the development pattern in the City of Suffolk ...

Plan's desired goal by 200 to 300 housing units per year.

Other goals included in the 2018 plan, such as balancing employment growth with residential development and expanding the commercial tax base relative to the residential tax base, have been on or near target since the plan's adoption. These indicators signify that from an economic and fiscal perspective, the rate of overall growth has been sustainable and has not been beyond the City's ability to adapt and accommodate.

While the 2018 Plan's growth management strategies have been very successful in containing and controlling development, the City's land resources within the Suburban/Urban Growth Area continue to be absorbed at a rapid rate.

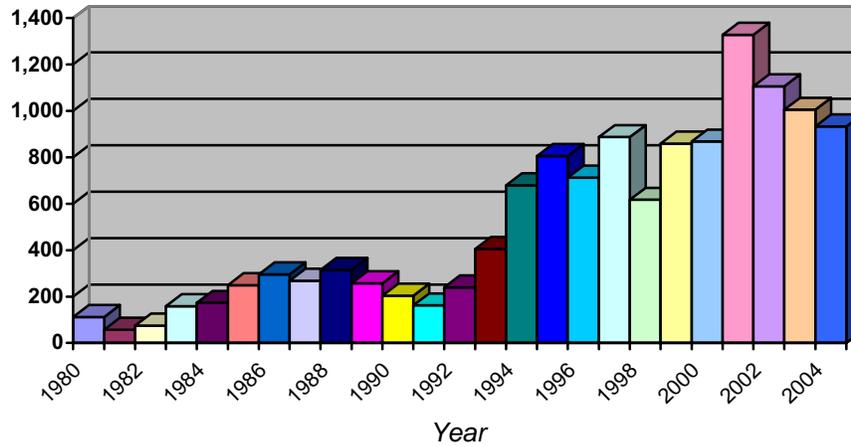
Table 3-2 and Figure 3-3 show the distribution of existing zoning categories in the City. The 2018 plan, while designating areas for growth, did not provide significant guidance on how those growth areas should develop over time. What has resulted is the development of high-quality, attractive, single family neighborhoods, with relatively low density. Residential property values have increased rapidly, creating enormous equity in the market. However, rapid, low density growth has resulted in numerous challenges, including increasing traffic congestion, rapid demand for new schools, and decreasing opportunities to provide housing for a mix of incomes because of rising land costs. Figure 3-4 shows the location of the remaining residentially zoned land.



City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan
2018 Comprehensive Plan
Development Areas



Figure 3-2
Single Family Residential Units/Year
Development Activity
1980-2004

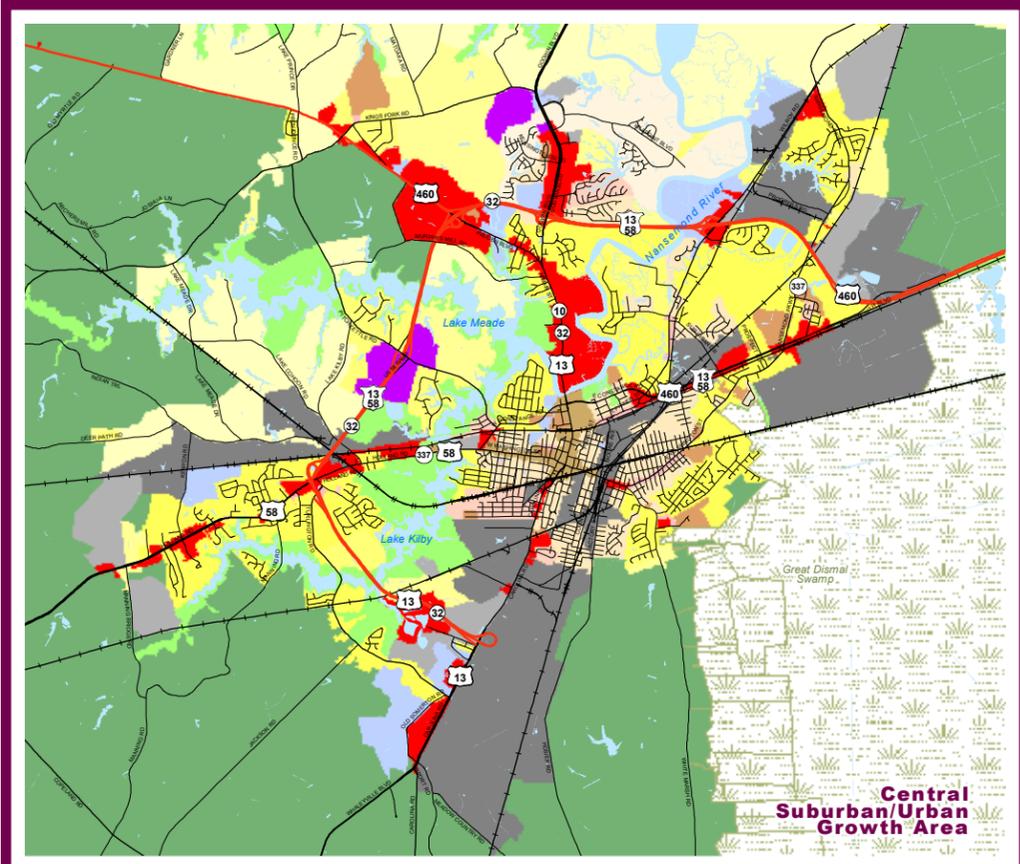


Source: City of Suffolk, 2005

Table 3-1
Summary of Approved / Pipeline Residential Development
As of August 2005
(Not Built)

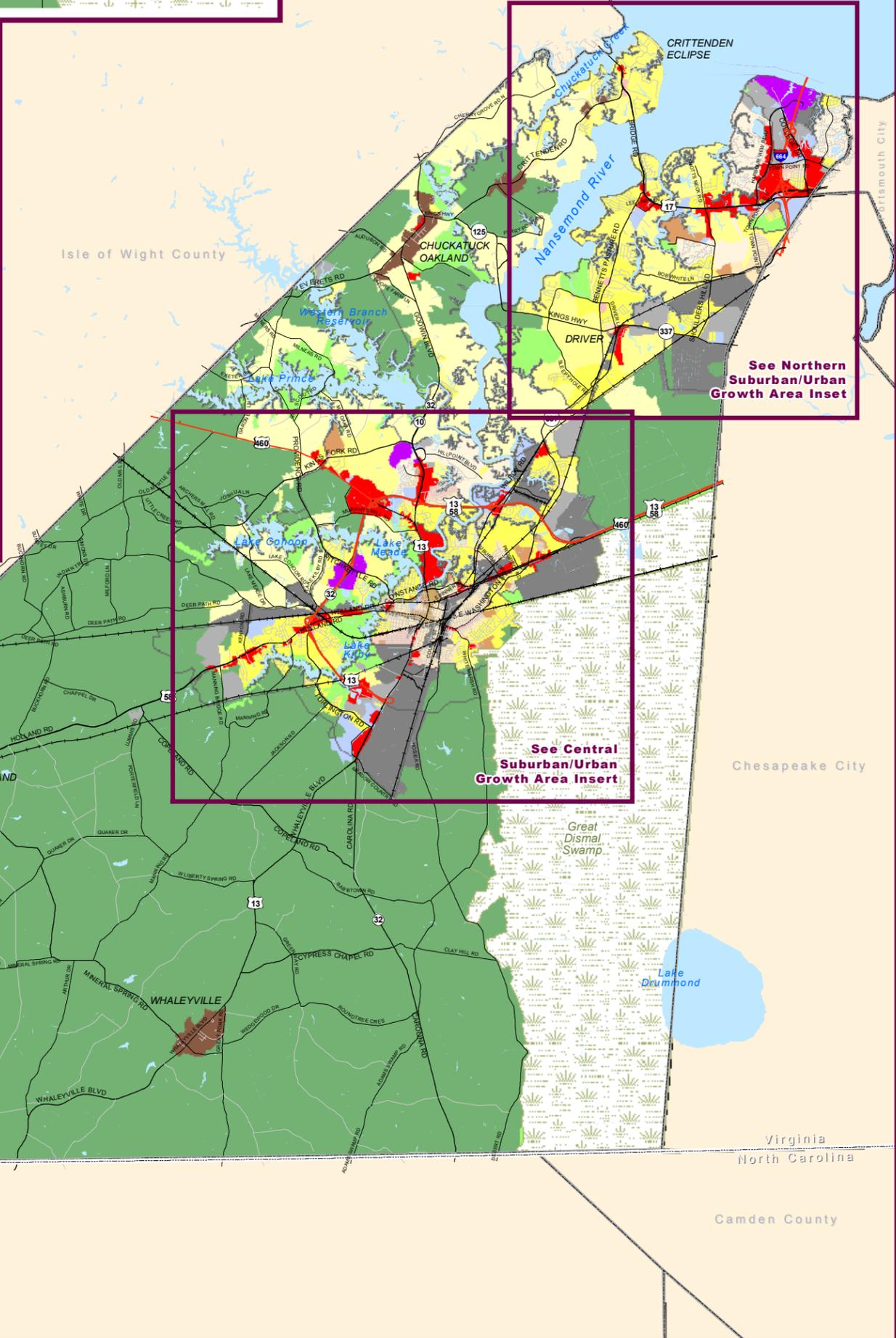
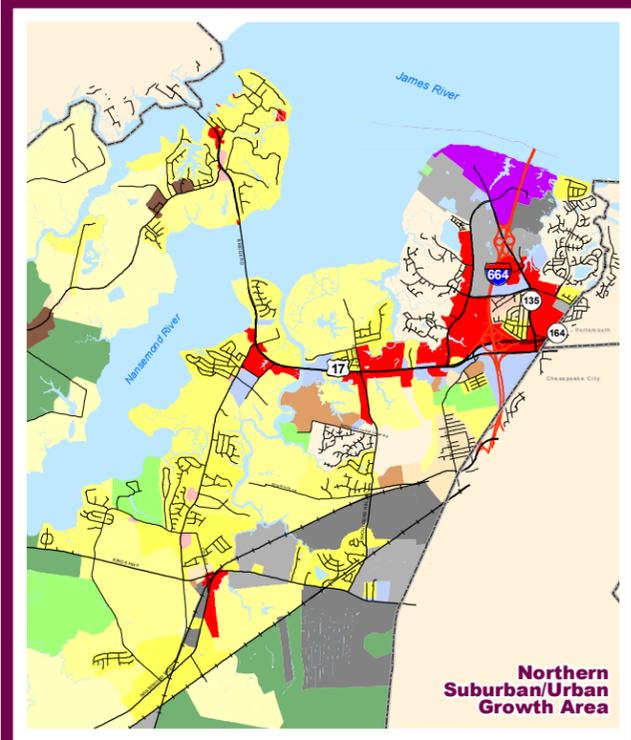
Type of Unit	Approved Residential Units	Developed Residential Units
Multi-Family	1,861	1,136
Retirement / Age Restricted Multi-Family	418	150
Single Family Detached	7,670	4,081
Single Family Semi-Attached	1,227	626
Total	11,176	5,993
Approved Pipeline Residential Units	5,183	

Source: City of Suffolk, 2005



Existing Zoning Categories

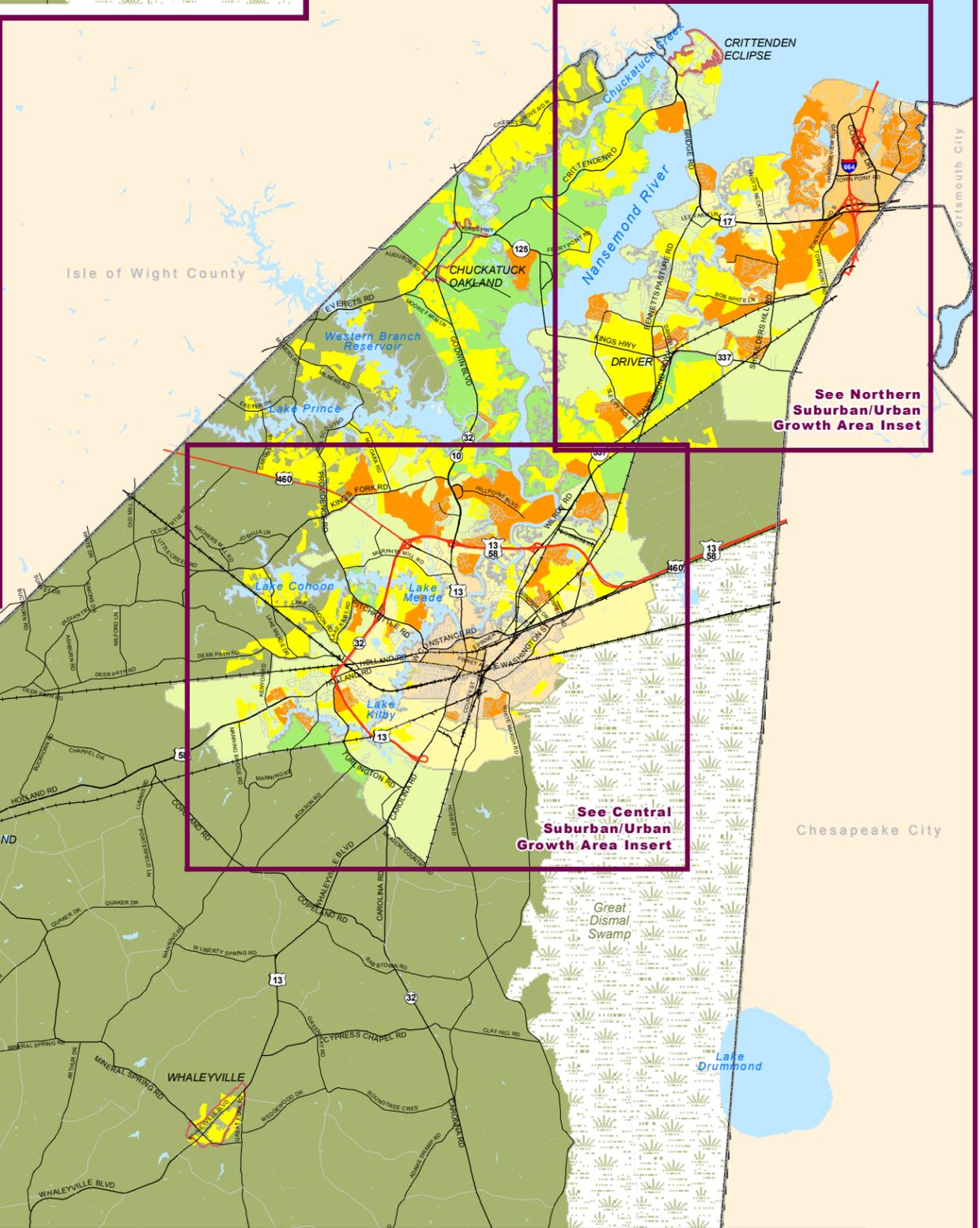
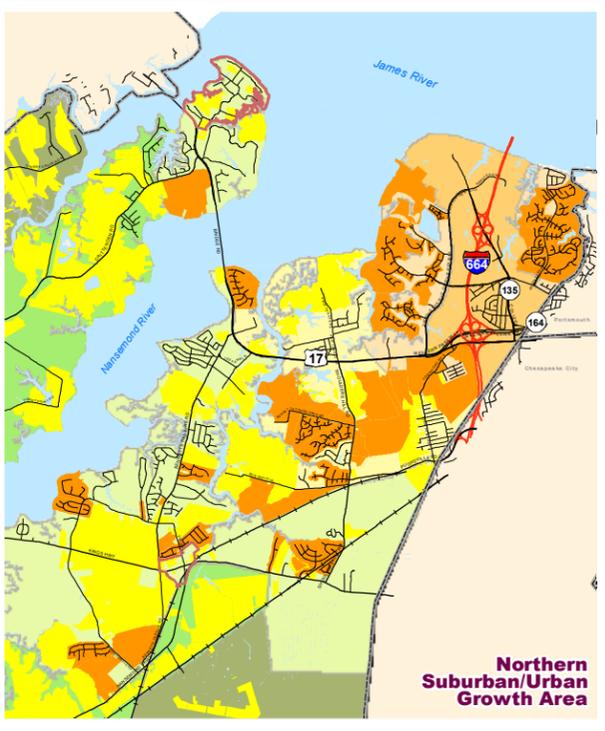
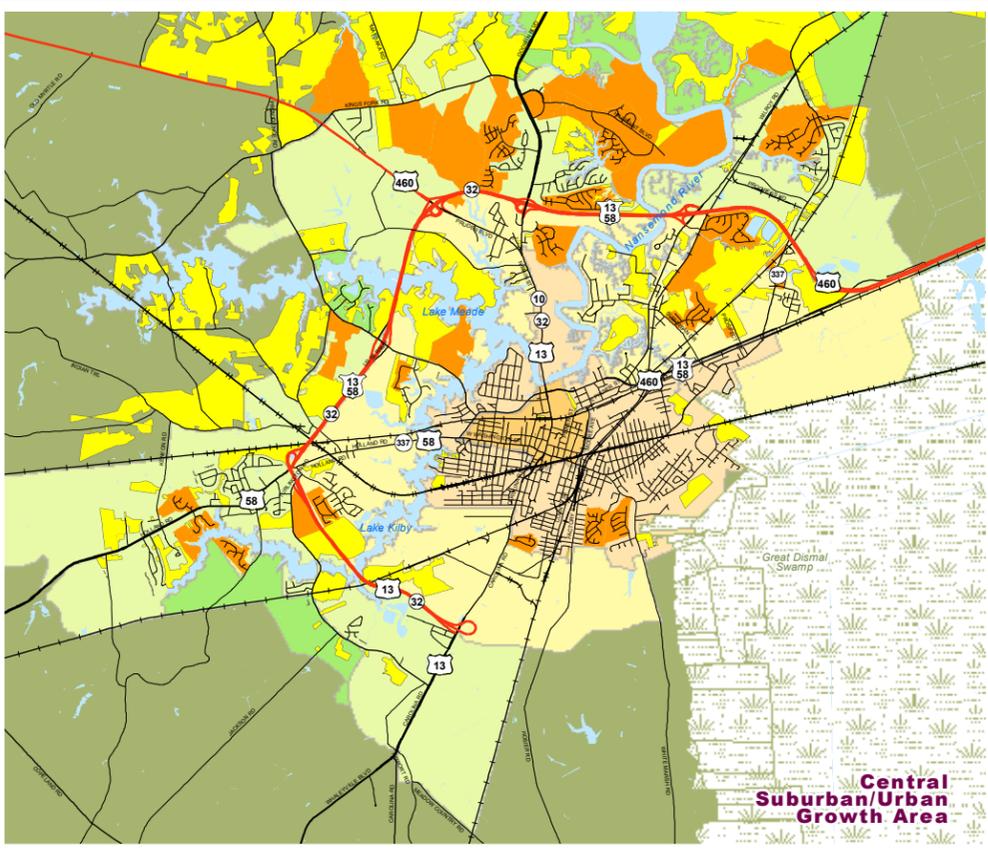
	Rural Estate District - RE		General Commercial District - B2
	Rural Resident District - RR		Commerce Park - CP
	Residential Low District - RL		Village Center District - VC
	Residential Low-Medium District - RLM		Central Business District - CBD
	Residential Medium District - RM		Light Industrial District - M1
	Residential Compact - RC		Heavy Industrial District - M2
	Residential Urban - RU		Conservation District - C
	Office-Institutional District - O/I		Agricultural District - A
	Neighborhood Commercial District - B1		



City of Suffolk, Virginia
 2026 Comprehensive Plan
Existing Zoning Categories

0 3
Miles

URS
Figure 3-3



Legend					
	Vacant Land Zoned for Residential Development (2004)		Core Support		Rural Conservation/ Low Intensity Residential
	Land Currently in the Residential Development Pipeline		Inner-Ring Suburban		Rural Agricultural Conservation
	Mixed Use Core		Suburban		Village Boundaries



City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan
Undeveloped Residential Land (2004)



**Table 3-2
Land Area by Zoning District
2018 Land Use Plan**

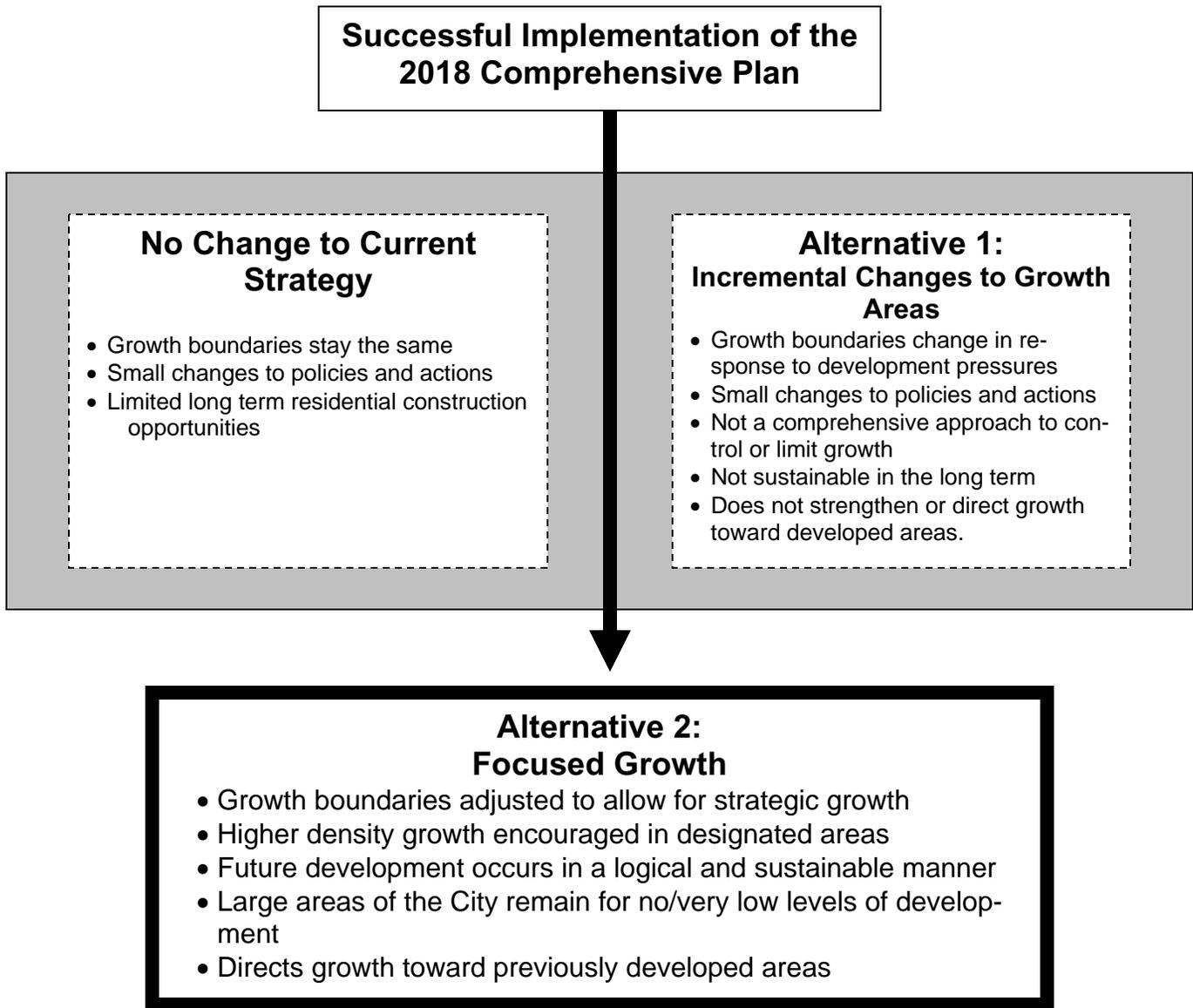
Zone	Name	Acres	% of Total
A	Agricultural District	163,248.3	59.4%
C	Conservation District	41,691.8	15.2%
RR	Rural Residential District	7,950.2	2.9%
RE	Rural Estate District	16,751.0	6.1%
RL	Residential Low District	7,597.4	2.8%
RLM	Residential Low-Medium District	8,619.2	3.1%
RM	Residential Medium District	2,185.0	0.8%
RC	Residential Compact	416.6	0.2%
RU	Residential Urban	778.2	0.3%
B-1	Neighborhood Commercial District	165.1	0.1%
B-2	General Commercial District	3,417.2	1.2%
CBD	Central Business District	245.8	0.1%
VC I	Village Center District	1,322.6	0.5%
O-I	Office-Institutional District	1,612.0	0.6%
CP	Commerce Park	4,737.9	1.7%
M-1	Light Industrial District	3,291.4	1.2%
M-2	Heavy Industrial District	7,316.3	2.7%
PD	Planned Development Overlay District	3,332.6	1.2%

*Source: City of Suffolk Geographic Information System, 2005
Compiled by: URS Corp., 2005*

2. Differing Approaches to Growth Management

As part of the 2018 Plan review and update process, the City of Suffolk evaluated the impacts of the current growth management strategies, as well as two alternative potential future growth patterns. Each of the alternative future growth frameworks that were examined recognized the strengths of the existing

plan and built upon them. Key to each framework was continuing the 2018 Plan's concept of two Suburban/Urban Growth Areas. After careful consideration, alternative framework 2, **Focused Growth**, was selected as the preferred alternative, and it serves as the basis of this review and update.



3. A Revised Growth Strategy: *Focused Growth*

The focused growth concept is based on the way in which cities historically have developed. By establishing a range of development densities and uses in relation to a central core, the concept models the pattern exhibited by dynamic and successful urban places. Cities evolved as centers of culture, trade and commerce. Mixed-use centers with business and residential areas in close proximity were and remain the hallmark of older urban places. Cities like New York, Philadelphia, Norfolk, and the historic downtown core of Suffolk have this quality. Urban form was compact—allowing people to walk to work, shop, and play close to where they lived.

Over time, especially in the post World War II-era, improvements in personal mobility have allowed for more dispersed urban areas. Core areas no longer needed to be diverse live/work centers. Cities spread out and large suburbs developed.

This auto-oriented form is the dominant pattern the City of Suffolk exhibits today. Long term trends in land development point toward the continued development of single-family residential subdivisions. However, as shown in the tables in the previous sections, this pattern is not sustainable. It is the purpose of the comprehensive plan to provide a framework for the City to move to a more sustainable development pattern.

While the 2018 Plan has been successful in controlling sprawl and reducing the pressure for development in rural areas of the City, it has been somewhat limited in defining the quality and type of development options within the two growth

areas. As a result, the City has been unable to target policies within the growth areas that would encourage development at specific locations that would be consistent with the City's goals. By providing a more detailed range of development types and locations, the focused growth framework is the next logical step in advancing the comprehensive plan.

The key concept behind the focused growth approach is an emphasis on using the City's existing development orientation as a transportation hub and its historic urban form as the basis for revising use patterns and densities. The highest densities are located in the middle of the growth area and the mix and density of uses decreases the further one travels from the central district. In

The focused growth framework is the next logical step in the development of the City of Suffolk.

this way, a wider variety of uses from urban through rural can be located and accommodated.

Various types of land uses are designated in specified Use Districts that are generally located in concentric bands surrounding the central district, and the transition from one Use District to the next is based on increments of travel time and distance. This approach allows the City to include new use types and densities in a coordinated manner while still generally maintaining the current growth area boundaries.

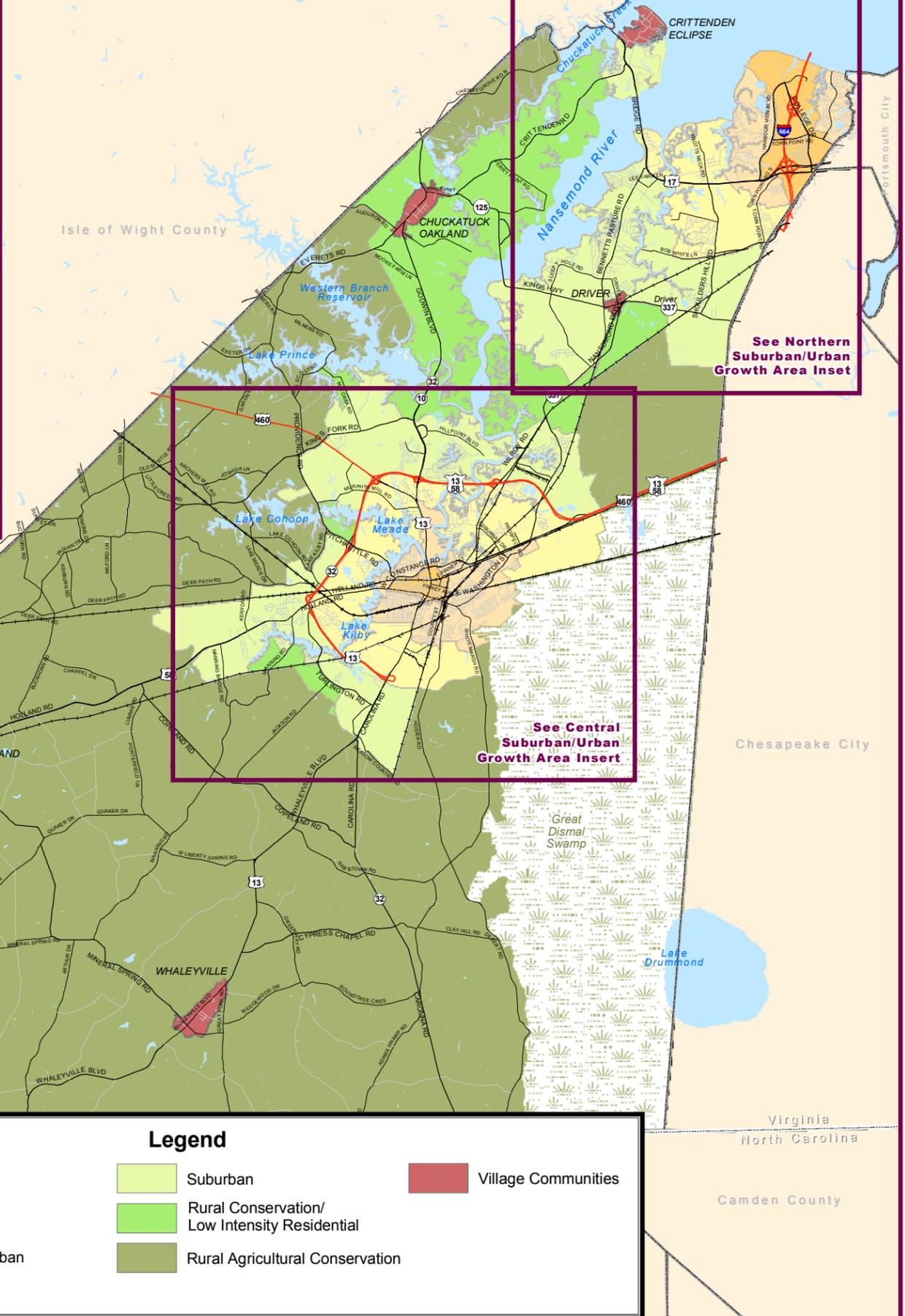
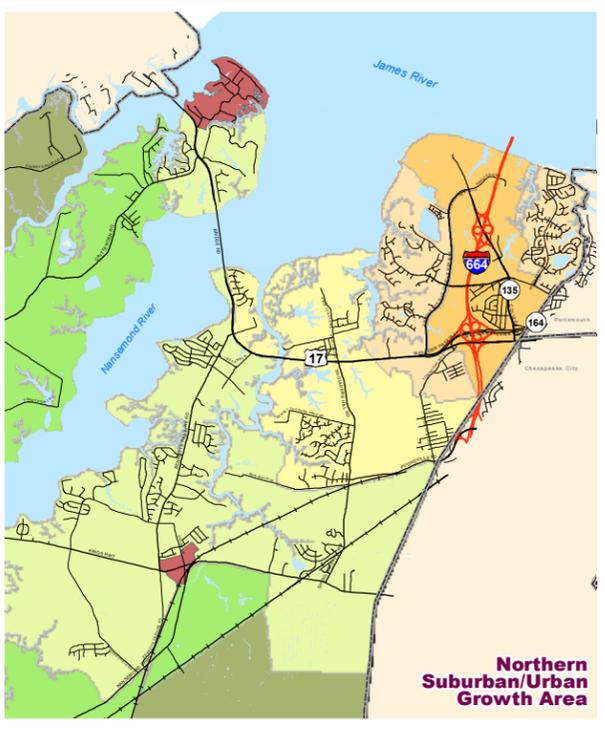
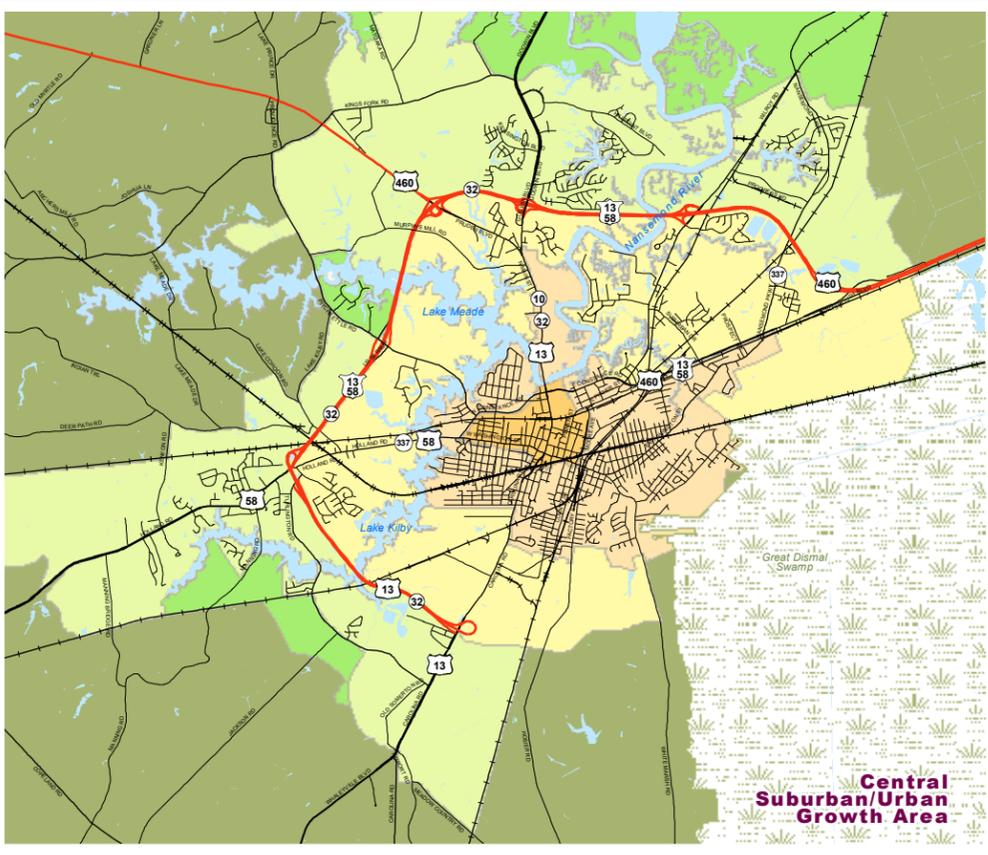
One of the most important goals of the focused growth framework is to allow for development and redevelopment in areas of the City that are already experiencing growth. By providing density within the central Suburban/Urban Growth Area in and around the historic core of the City, the focused growth

framework will encourage more activity there, raising property values and encouraging further investment and redevelopment. The Northern Suburban/Urban Growth Area focuses development on the I-664 corridor and its successful high technology base.

The focused growth framework conversely discourages, or limits development in undeveloped areas of the City, areas of the City that are environmentally sensitive (such as the areas surrounding the regional water reservoirs), areas of prime farmland, and areas supporting the Great Dismal Swamp. These areas are protected and preserved, while other, less environmentally sensitive area are allowed to continue to grow. Limited residential and retail growth is targeted for these areas

in the existing rural villages of Whaleyville, Holland, and Chuckatuck.

Figure 3-5 shows the proposed growth districts for the City of Suffolk with detail of the Central Suburban/Urban Growth Area in Figure 3-6 and the Northern Suburban/Urban Growth Areas in Figure 3-7. As shown in Table 3-3, there are approximately 42,000 acres of land in the two designated growth areas -- 22,800 in the Central, and 18,800 in the Northern. Of this, as shown in Table 3-4, approximately 19,000 acres remains available for development. This accounts for approximately 11% of the total developable land area of the City. Table 3-5 provides a summary of the projected rate of growth over the twenty year horizon of the *Comprehensive Plan for 2026*.



Legend					
	Mixed Use Core		Suburban		Village Communities
	Core Support		Rural Conservation/ Low Intensity Residential		
	Inner-Ring Suburban		Rural Agricultural Conservation		

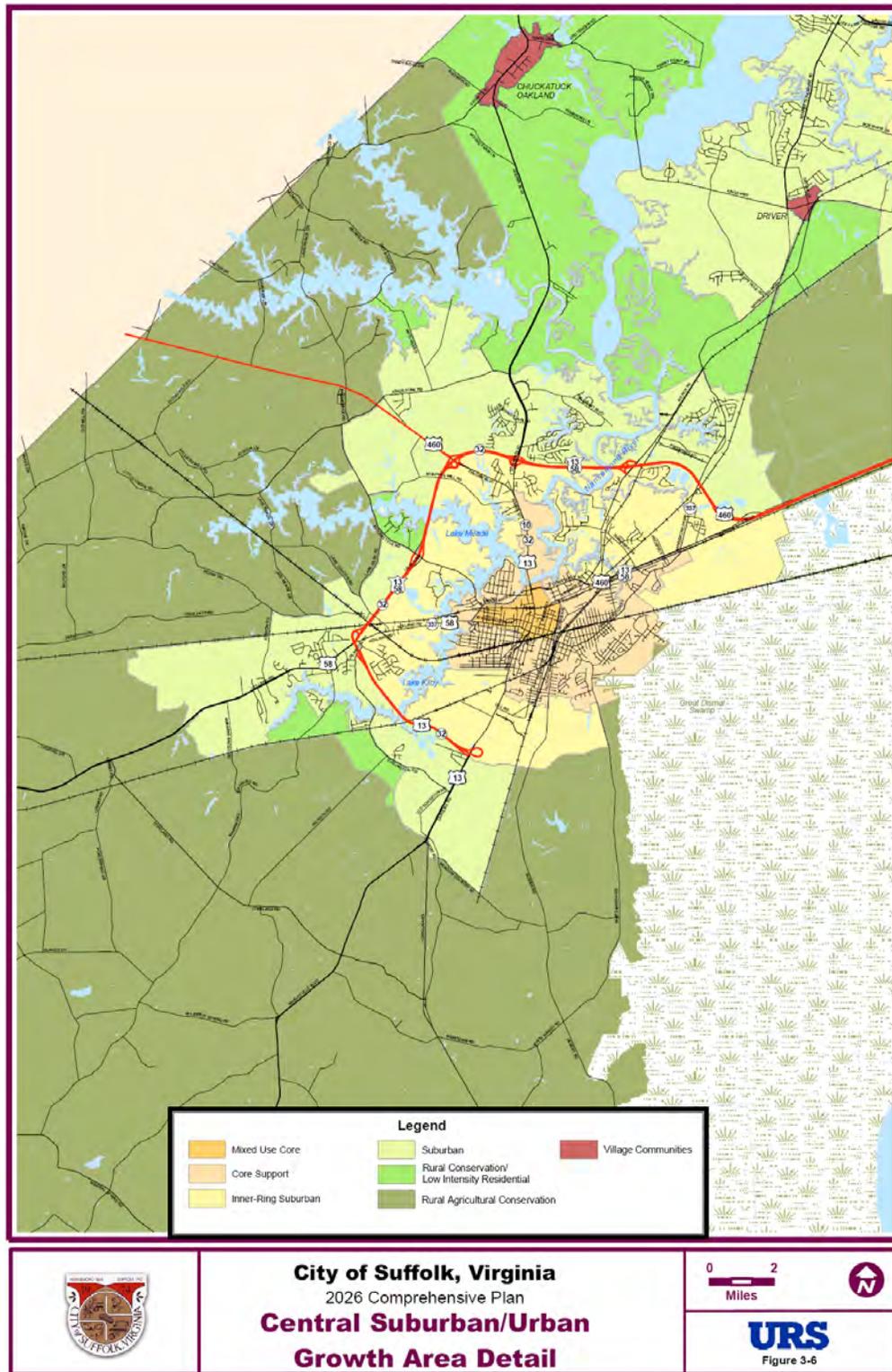


City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan

Focused Growth Areas

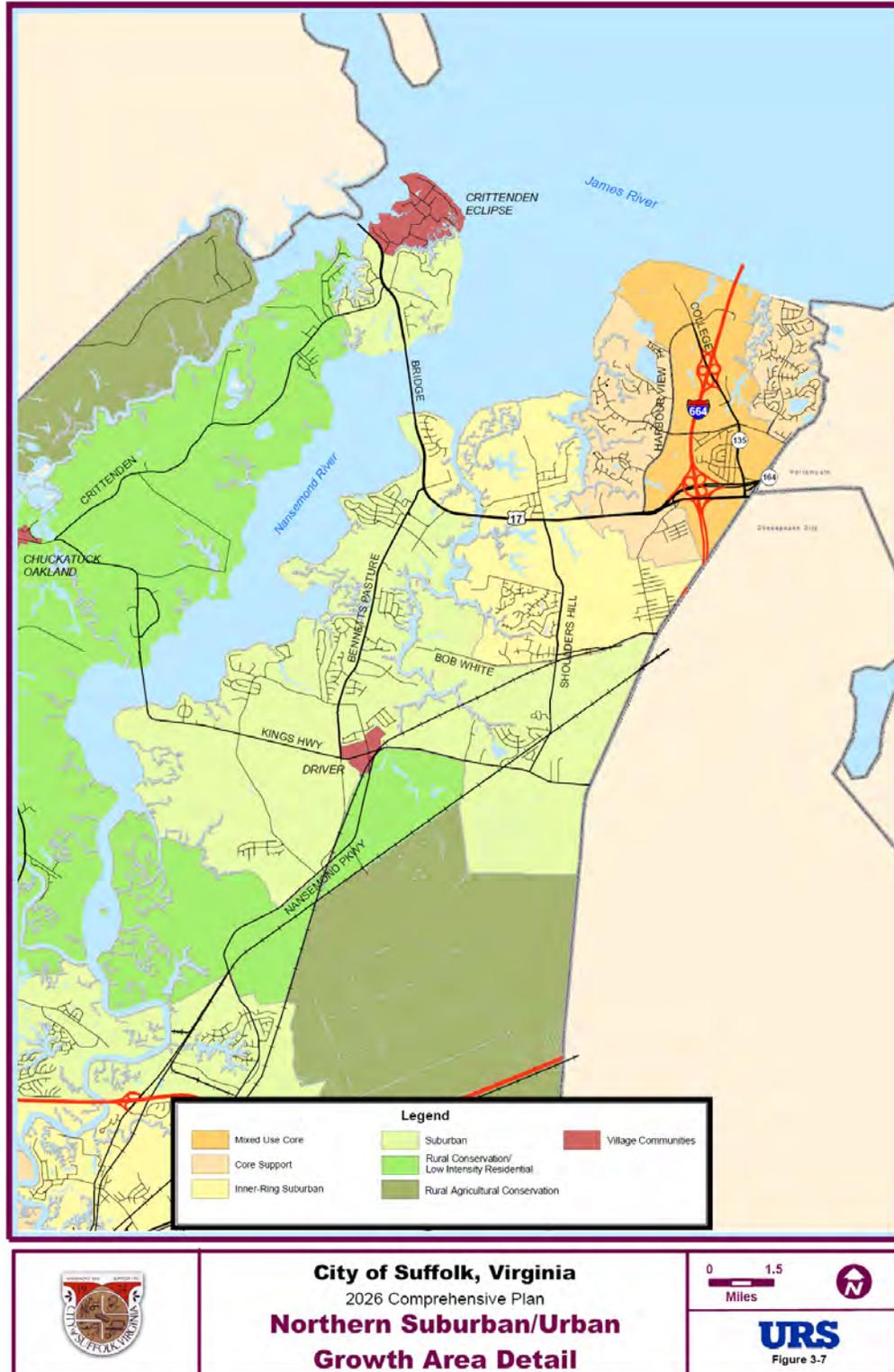


Figure 3-6
Central Suburban/Urban Growth Area Detail



Data Source: City of Suffolk GIS, 2005
Compiled by: URS Corp., 2006

Figure 3-7
Northern Suburban/Urban Growth Area Detail



Data Source: City of Suffolk GIS, 2005
Compiled by: URS Corp., 2006

**Table 3-3
Use District Distribution
Focused Growth Framework**

Growth Area	District	Total Area		
		Acres	% of District	% of Total
Central	Core	460.5	1.71%	0.2%
	Core Support	3,589.2	13.36%	1.4%
	Inner-Ring Suburban	8,133.0	30.26%	3.2%
	Suburban	14,690.4	54.67%	5.7%
Total Central		26,873.1	100.00%	10.5%
Northern	Core	2,313.6	12.27%	0.9%
	Core Support	2,325.8	12.33%	0.9%
	Inner-Ring Suburban	3,601.2	19.10%	1.4%
	Suburban	10,618.5	56.30%	4.1%
Total Northern		18,859.2	100.00%	7.3%
Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential		14,573.5	n/a	5.7%
Rural Agricultural Conservation Area		196,820.3	n/a	76.5%
Total		257,126.0		100.0%

Source: URS Corp., 2006

**Table 3-4
Remaining Developable Land
Focused Growth Framework**

Growth Area	District	Acres	% of Growth Area	% of District	% of City-wide Total
Central	Core	78.3	17.0%	0.66%	0.04%
	Core Support	724.4	20.2%	6.08%	0.40%
	Inner-Ring Suburban	5,190.7	63.8%	43.55%	2.84%
	Suburban	5,926.5	40.3%	49.72%	3.24%
Total Central		11,919.9	44.4%	100.00%	6.51%
Northern	Core	695.7	30.1%	7.73%	0.38%
	Core Support	529.9	22.8%	5.89%	0.29%
	Inner-Ring Suburban	1,627.3	45.2%	18.07%	0.89%
	Suburban	6,150.5	57.9%	68.31%	3.36%
Total Northern		9,003.5	47.7%	100.00%	4.92%
Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential		11,839.2	81.2%	n/a	6.47%
Rural Agricultural Conservation Area		141,238.5	71.8%	n/a	77.18%
Total		183,004.5			100.00%

Source: URS Corp., 2006

**Table 3-5
Summary of Total Projected Growth
Focused Growth Framework**

Growth Area	District	Plan Year 1-5				Plan Year 6-10				Plan Year 11-20			
		Housing Units	Population	School Children	Employment	Housing Units	Population	School Children	Employment	Housing Units	Population	School Children	Employment
Central	Core	65	131	33	260	90	180	45	361	245	491	123	913
	Core Support	420	841	210	820	467	934	234	1,141	1,121	2,242	560	2,882
	Inner-Ring Suburban	645	1,710	323	1,881	615	1,629	307	2,617	1,168	3,095	584	6,611
	Suburban	675	1,891	338	1,796	642	1,797	321	2,499	1,216	3,404	608	6,312
Total Central		1,807	4,573	904	4,756	1,813	4,540	907	6,618	3,750	9,232	1,875	16,718
Northern	Core	414	828	207	3,741	607	1,214	304	5,205	1,656	3,311	828	13,148
	Core Support	390	781	195	1,022	434	867	217	1,422	1,041	2,082	520	3,593
	Inner-Ring Suburban	756	2,003	378	249	706	1,872	353	347	1,342	3,556	671	877
	Suburban	1,295	3,626	648	679	1,118	3,131	559	945	2,119	5,933	1,060	2,387
Total Northern		2,855	7,237	1,428	5,692	2,865	7,085	1,433	7,919	6,158	14,883	3,079	20,005
Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential		280	741	140	479	254	674	127	666	432	1,145	216	1,682
Rural Agricultural Conservation Area		47	125	24	163	47	125	23	227	94	249	47	574
Total		4,988	12,676	2,494	11,090	4,980	12,423	2,490	15,430	10,434	25,509	5,217	38,979

4. Focused Growth Development Patterns

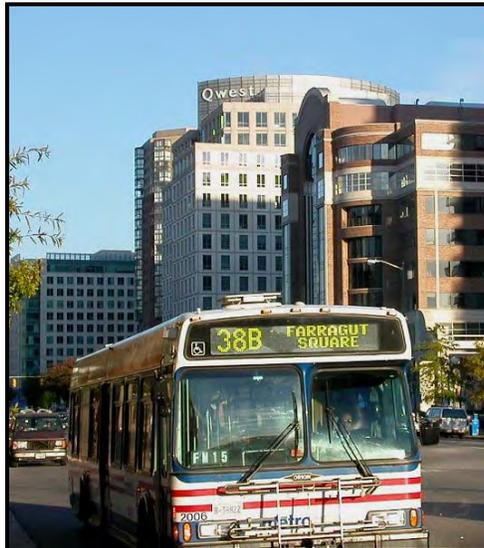
As explained above, the Focused Growth Framework is based on the intensity of development decreasing based on the distance away from the core. On the following pages is a description of the purpose and typical land uses for each of the focused growth areas. It is important to remember that these descriptions are not zoning districts, but rather describe the type of development that is desirable in each area.

Recommendations are shown for uses, floor area ratios, residential densities, and other development characteristics

that should be included in the individual zoning categories within each use district. It is also important to note that uses and densities will vary across each district based on existing land development patterns and environmental constraints. The purpose of these districts is to provide guidance as to the level and intensity of development of the remaining developable land in each area over the next 20 years. Figure 3-8 provides a matrix of existing zoning categories and how they relate to the revised growth strategy.

4.1 Mixed Use Commercial and Residential Core

The purpose of this use district is to provide an area for high intensity business, retail, residential, and civic uses. The Mixed Use Commercial/Residential core will enable Suffolk to compete regionally and nationally for the most intensive uses by providing both greenfield and redevelopment sites that are appropriate for high density urban-scale developments. This type and form of development has been frequently and successfully located in areas previously characterized as suburban, but where market conditions have been found to support development of an urban character of more intense uses.



Suffolk's development pattern has the unique opportunity to provide high density development opportunities in a mix

of settings. The northern core area, focused on the I-664 corridor, has significant amounts of greenfield development opportunities that can build upon the successes of the existing high technology businesses. The central core area of the existing downtown presents opportunities for redevelopment, rehabilitation and infill types of development.

While the two core areas are unique in character, to ensure the highest and best use of this district, new construction should be governed by minimum densities and maximum parking requirements. The street system should be highly interconnected (grid) pattern

with appropriate sidewalk widths, textures, and lighting to support an active pedestrian environment.

**Figure 3-8
Typical Development Patterns by
Use District**

Use District 6	Use District 5	Use District 4	Use District 3	Use District 2	Use District 1
Rural Agriculture Conservation District	Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential District	Suburban	Inner Ring Suburban	Core Support District	Mixed Use Commercial/Residential Core
Image Credit: Duany/Plater-Zyberk & Company					
A					
RR					
RE					
RL					
RLM		1			
RM		1			
RC			1	1	
RU					
B-1					
B-2					
VC					
CBD					
OI					
CP					
M-1					
M-2					

	Not allowed in this district
	Allowed
	May be appropriate depending on use, location, and density

1 With revised provisions for mixed use, TND, and clusters as appropriate

Buildings should contain street level features including a high percentage of windows, storefronts with active retail, and public spaces. The densities required in this district should support both bus and fixed guideway transit in the future. System planning and right of way preservation for transit should be incorporated into large-scale developments in this district.

Appropriate uses in the use district include offices, residential buildings, ho

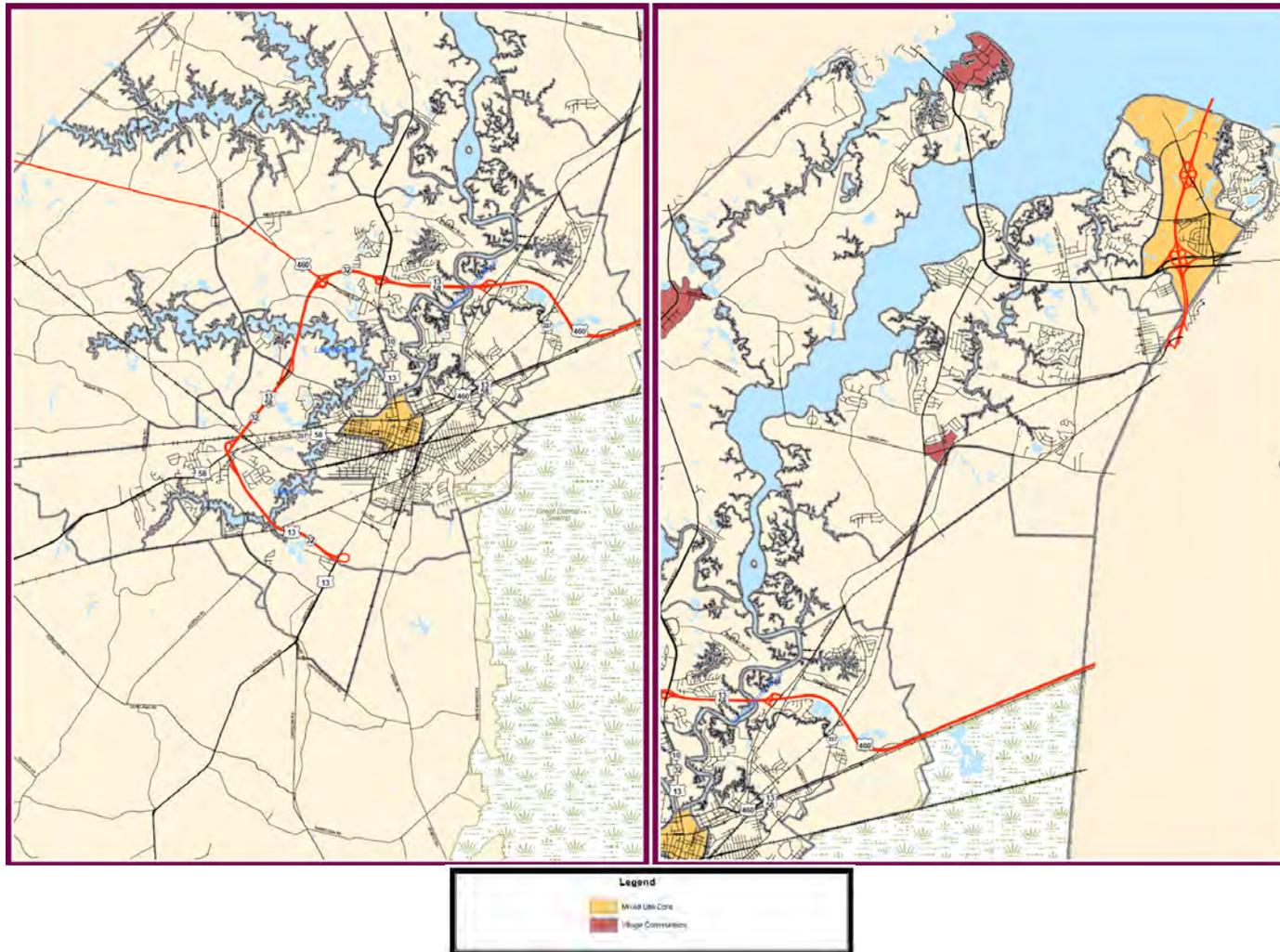
tels, colleges and universities, civic buildings, and other uses normally associated with urban areas. Buildings may either be single use (office buildings or apartments) or multi-use (office, residential condominiums, retail within the same structure), but no single type should dominate the district. The typical uses, density, and character of this district are shown in Table 3-6. The location of this district is shown in Figure 3-9.

**Table 3-6
Development Characteristics
Mixed Use Commercial and Residential Core**

Typical Uses	Densities	Development Character
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional scale retail in a vertical setting. • Office buildings. • Hotels. • Multiple family dwellings. • Public buildings. • Vertical mixed use buildings. • Research and development. • Civic building and community facilities including government offices, public safety buildings, colleges, primary and secondary schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercial/Mixed Use Floor Area Ratio: Minimum: 2; Maximum: 5 (6 for residential/hotel uses). • Residential Densities: Maximum: Up to 30 units/acre; Minimum: 8 units/acre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multistory (4+) buildings built at the street line. • Highly connected street pattern. • Formal streetscape landscaping of similar types of trees at a pedestrian scale. • Pedestrian-scale street lighting. • 70% or more of street frontages should consist of doors and windows. • Varied sidewalk materials including brick, concrete, granite, slate, etc. to provide a visually interesting walkway. Sidewalks to be constructed on every street. • Very high percentage of first floor uses should be shops and storefronts. • Structured parking is encouraged with entrances not on the main streets. • Where structured parking is not feasible, parking should be located away from the main streets and behind buildings. • Street design should accommodate future transit by using non-conductive piping, centrally locating utilities in the sidewalk. • Underground utilities consolidated into a single ductbank.

Source: URS Corp., 2005

**Figure 3-9
Location Map of
Mixed Use Commercial and Residential Core**



Data Source: City of Suffolk GIS, 2005
Compiled by: URS Corp., 2005

4.2 Core Support District

The purpose of this district is to provide a significant level of residential and ancillary retail and business activity to support the high density mixed-use core. The density and types of uses in the Core Support District should encourage walkable mixed-use neighborhoods at a moderate scale. There should be no perceptible break between the Core Support District and the Mixed Use Core. The proximity of this district to the core district should shorten travel times, expand travel options, reduce congestion, and improve air quality.

Land use densities in this district should be transit supportive (greater than 8 units/acre for fixed route bus service and greater than 15 units/acre for fixed guideway). Potential transit corridors should be identified early in the development process and appropriate right-of-way reserved. The highest density land uses should be clustered around these potential transit service corridors and stations.

Sub-regional auto dependent retail uses (large retail stores, large grocery stores, home improvement centers, multiplex movie theaters) can be accommodated in the district. These uses should be integrated in well-designed mixed-use centers focused on major arterials from which access should be exclusively channeled. Smaller, neighborhood-oriented stores (smaller grocery stores, drug stores, dry cleaners, restaurants, etc) should be integrated in traditional neighborhood developments and should be walkable (within ¼ mile) from their intended residential market areas.

A variety of housing types can be accommodated in this district, including single family, town homes, stacked town homes, small apartment buildings, and others. Providing for a range of housing types on smaller lots in this district should encourage the development of homes at a many different price points.

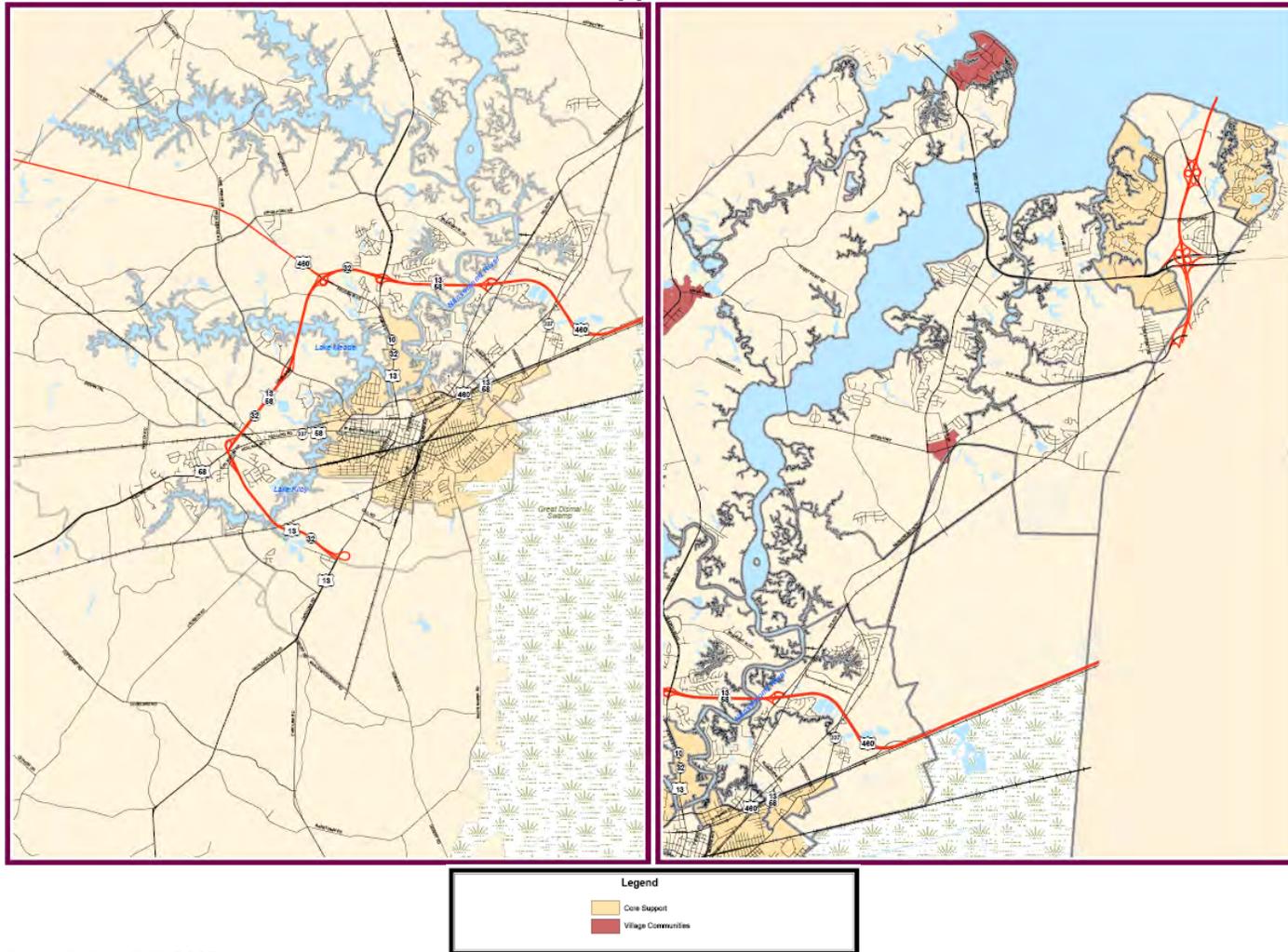
The typical uses, density, and character of this district are shown in Table 3-7. The location of this district is shown in Figure 3-10.



**Table 3-7
Development Characteristics
Core Support Districts**

Typical Uses	Densities	Development Character
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single family attached/high density single family detached (Traditional neighborhood designs). • Office. • Light manufacturing. • Mixed-use developments including big box retail/office/residential uses. • Sub-regional level retail at designated locations. • Neighborhood-level retail and convenience uses within pedestrian walksheds. • Civic building and community facilities including government offices, public infrastructure buildings (pump stations, treatment facilities), public safety buildings, colleges, primary and secondary schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floor Area Ratio: Minimum: .5; Maximum: 2. • Height Restrictions: 80 feet. • Residential Densities: 7 to 10 units/acre. • Mixed use development should be the predominant development type in this district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multistory (2+) Buildings built with no or shallow setbacks from street. • Highly connected street pattern. • Formal streetscape landscaping of similar types of trees at a pedestrian scale in commercial and high density residential areas • Naturalistic plantings in predominately lower scale residential areas. • Pedestrian-scale street lighting. • 70% or more of street frontages should be windows and doors in commercial districts • Varied sidewalk materials including brick, concrete, granite, slate, etc. to provide a visually interesting walkway. Sidewalks to be provided on all streets. • Very high percentage of first floor uses should be shops and storefronts. • Parking should be located away from the main streets, behind or between buildings and allowed on-street. • Street design should accommodate future transit by using non-conductive piping, centrally locating utilities in the sidewalk. • Underground utilities consolidated into a single ductbank.

**Figure 3-10
Location Map of
Core Support District**



*Data Source: City of Suffolk GIS, 2005
Compiled by: URS Corp., 2005*

4.3 Inner Ring Suburban Districts

Moving further from the Mixed Use Core, this district is the first area where exclusively residential neighborhoods should be located. Neighborhood design in this district should still be focused on walkable streets. Land efficient lot subdivision patterns can be explored in this district, such as zero lot lines, zipper lots, z-lots etc. Cluster development patterns allowing for the preservation of usable open space are also encouraged.



Neighborhood level retail nodes should be within walking distance from much of their intended markets. Sub-regional scale centers (large grocery stores, big box stores, home improvement centers, etc.) can be accommodated in this district at specific locations.

The line delineating the limits of the Inner Ring Suburban District along the southeast side of the downtown Core was the subject of the *Carolina Road Corridor Land Use Strategy*, performed by Urban Design Associates. The results of that study are incorporated by reference in this report. The Carolina Road Corridor Study looked at ways to extend the residential and commercial uses south of downtown without significantly impacting environmental resources or the economic development potential and importance of the Suffolk Executive Airport or significantly straining the City's finances. To summarize generally, the plan concluded that with ample development guidelines and good

planning practices the desire to provide opportunities for an additional 1,000 new homes south of greater downtown Suffolk can be accommodated. The plan also accommodates new opportunities for some mixed use commercial centers and industrial uses south of greater downtown Suffolk. Most of this new residential and commercial development will be nestled in between White Marsh and Hosier Roads. (See Figure 3-13). One significant component of this plan is the incorporation of an Aircraft Overflight District as a

strategy to protect the Suffolk Executive Airport from the encroachment of conflicting and non-compatible land uses, thereby preserving the airport as a valuable economic development engine. (See Figure 3-14).

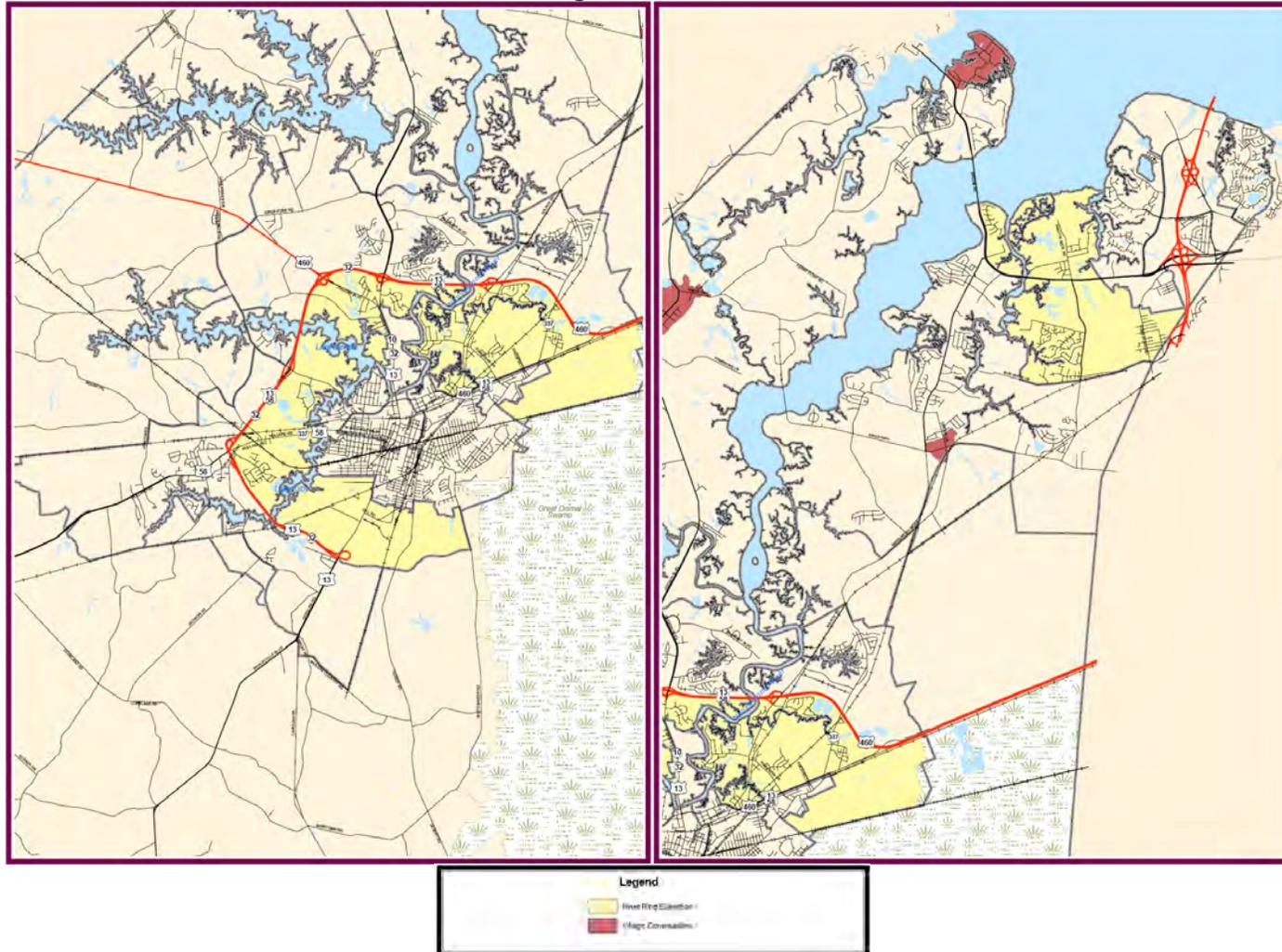
To accommodate this new residential growth while maintaining a policy of "no net increase" in new residential development potential due to the expansion of the urban / suburban development area boundaries, the plan calls for the reduction of an equal amount of development potential from other areas of the City; specifically the Rural Conservation / Low Intensity Residential Development Area. (See Figure 3-15).

The typical uses, density, and character of this district are shown in Table 3-8. The location of this district is shown in Figure 3-11.

**Table 3-8
Development Characteristics
Inner Ring Suburban Districts**

Typical Uses	Densities	Development Character
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single family. • Traditional Neighborhood Developments (TND). • Light Manufacturing. • Neighborhood Retail Commercial (grocery, dry cleaners, etc). • Civic building and community facilities including government offices, public infrastructure buildings (pump stations, treatment facilities), public safety buildings, colleges, primary and secondary schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floor Area Ratio: Maximum: .5 (1 for residential/hotel uses). • Height Restrictions: 60 feet. • On-Site Parking: Per existing requirements. • Residential Densities: 3 to 5 units/acre. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High density single family homes on small lots in mixed use developments. • Highly connected street pattern. • Formal streetscape landscaping of similar types of trees at a pedestrian scale in commercial areas. • Naturalistic plantings in predominately lower scale residential areas. • Pedestrian-scale street lighting. • Limited use of front-loading garages in residential areas, with preferences towards service alleys. • Varied sidewalk materials including brick, concrete, granite, slate, etc. to provide a visually interesting walkway. Sidewalks to be provided on all streets. • Parking should be located away from the main streets, behind or between buildings and allowed on street.

**Figure 3-11
Location Map of
Inner Ring Suburban Districts**



Data Source: City of Suffolk GIS, 2005
Compiled by: URS Corp., 2005

4.4 Suburban District

The Suburban District is the least dense area inside the Suburban/Urban Growth Area. This district should be primarily composed of traditional residential subdivisions. Single family dwellings are the most common use found in this district. Local and collector streets should be designed with sidewalks and be pedestrian friendly. Arterial and collector roads should have bicycle lanes and sidewalks that connect to neighborhoods and other key activity centers



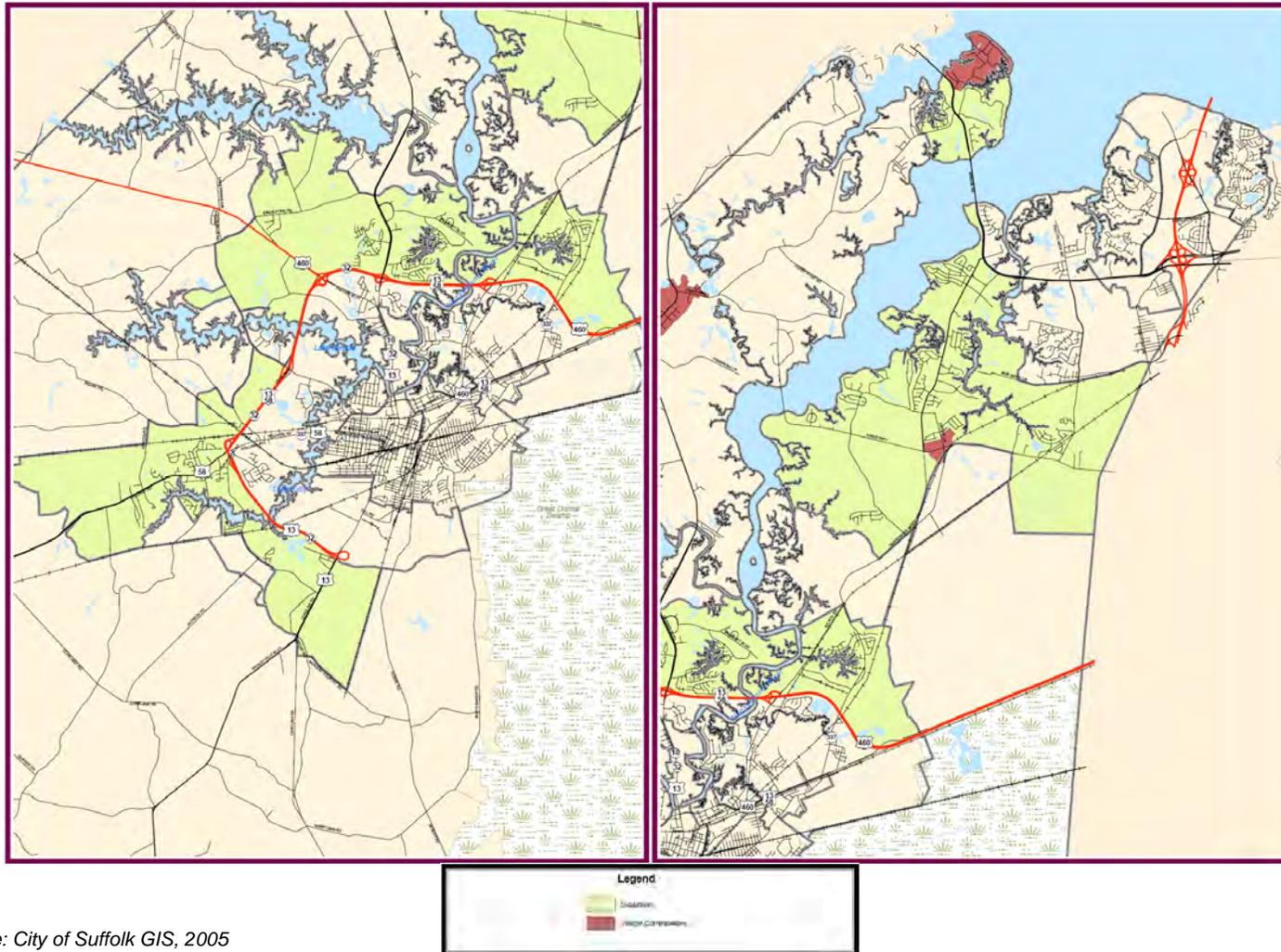
Retail uses in this district are primarily neighborhood-scale centers. Larger, sub-regional-scale uses may be accommodated on specifically-identified sites with direct access to major transportation routes.

The typical uses, density, and character of this district are shown in Table 3-9. The location of this district is shown in Figure 3-12.

**Table 3-9
Development Characteristics
Suburban Districts**

Typical Uses	Densities	Development Character
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential Subdivisions (Traditional/TND/ Cluster). • Small convenience retail. • Professional offices. • Industrial uses. • Civic building and community facilities including government offices, public infrastructure buildings (pump stations, treatment facilities), public safety buildings, colleges, primary and secondary schools. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floor Area Ratio: Maximum: .5. • Height Restrictions: 45 feet. • Residential Densities: 1 to 4 units/acre. • On-Site Parking: Per existing requirements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single family homes at a suburban scale. • Varied materials and designs of housing. • High percentage of windows on all faces of homes. • Limited use of front-loading garages in residential areas, with preferences towards service alleys. • Streets built to accommodate shared and exclusive bicycle lanes. • Informal landscaping preserving the existing viewsheds where feasible using native trees. • Interconnected street systems in new developments. • On-street parking.

**Figure 3-12
Location Map of
Suburban Districts**



Data Source: City of Suffolk GIS, 2005
Compiled by: URS Corp., 2005

4.5 Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential District

The purpose of this district is to provide an area of protection between the developed portions of the City and the regional water supply reservoirs. In most areas of the City, the Rural Conservation District is the first use type outside of the Suburban/Urban Growth Area. The most common land use type in this district is low density residential in traditional, hamlet, and cluster subdivision patterns. Local and collector streets may or may not have sidewalks and pedestrian amenities, depending on the neighborhood design. The viewsheds from all major roadways should be maintained with a rural aesthetic using native trees and wide setbacks. Retail uses should be small and neighborhood-centered. Small retail uses supporting the rural character of the area (farmstands, agricultural supplier, etc.) are also allowed.

Moderately higher levels of residential and commercial development are allowed in the villages of Chuckatuck and Oakland.

The low-intensity nature also provides for resource protection of the regional surface water supplies and lakes. Development in this district is allowed on individual septic systems provided city water is available.



To concurrently maintain a policy of “no net increase” in new residential development potential due to the expansion of the Suburban/Urban Development Area boundaries while accommodating the desire for new residential growth south of greater downtown Suffolk, the plan calls for the reduction of an equal amount of development potential from the Rural Conservation /Low Intensity Residential Development Area.

The lands cited for this reduction in future development potential are currently vacant, not served by the City’s public central water supply, and do not have any development proposals under review or consideration for approval by the City of Suffolk.

The reduction of residential development potential in the Rural Conservation /Low Intensity Residential Development Area provides other important benefits including the better protection of the region’s water supply, and the preservation and protection of prime farm lands from destruction by land development activities.

The typical uses, density, and character of this district are shown in Table 3-10.

**Table 3-10
Development Characteristics
Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential District**

Typical Uses	Densities	Development Character
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residential subdivisions (traditional/cluster). • Small convenience retail . • Agricultural. • Public safety facilities including fire and police stations as necessary. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Height Restrictions: 45 feet (agricultural buildings excluded). • Maximum Impermeable Area (non residential): .25. • On-Site Parking: Per existing requirements. • Residential Densities: 3 acres/unit. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single family homes. • Varied materials and designs of housing. • High percentage of windows on all faces of homes. • Streets built to accommodate shared and exclusive bicycle lanes. • Informal landscaping preserving the existing viewsheds where feasible using native trees. • Use of buffers (both man-made and natural) to reduce the visual impact of new development from existing major roadways. • Major subdivisions must be serviced by public water, but may be on individual septic systems. • Large community facilities such as high schools, middle schools, and large primary schools, should be avoided in this district to maintain its rural character. Appropriately scaled elementary schools are encouraged in the village centers.

4.6 Rural Agriculture Conservation District

Predominantly located in the south, and northwest quadrants of the City, the purpose of this district is to maintain significant areas of the City for continued agricultural use. Retail, wholesale, and industrial uses directly related to the production of agricultural products are allowed on a limited basis. Development in this district is allowed with private drinking water wells and septic systems.



Included in the Rural Agriculture Conservation District (Agricultural District) are two of the City’s designated rural villages- Holland and Whaleyville. The villages once served as the hubs of the City’s agricultural community and continue to provide important residential and retail and development opportunities in the southern half of the City. The City Council has recognized that the villages are an important part of the character of Suffolk and has made revitalization of them a priority.

series of initiative plans for the rural villages of Holland and Whaleyville. The purpose of these plans was to establish themes and actions to support the villages as discrete places within the overall city of Suffolk. The Village Center zoning district allows a variety of compatible uses within villages, provided they meet design standards for building and site design that are consistent with village character.

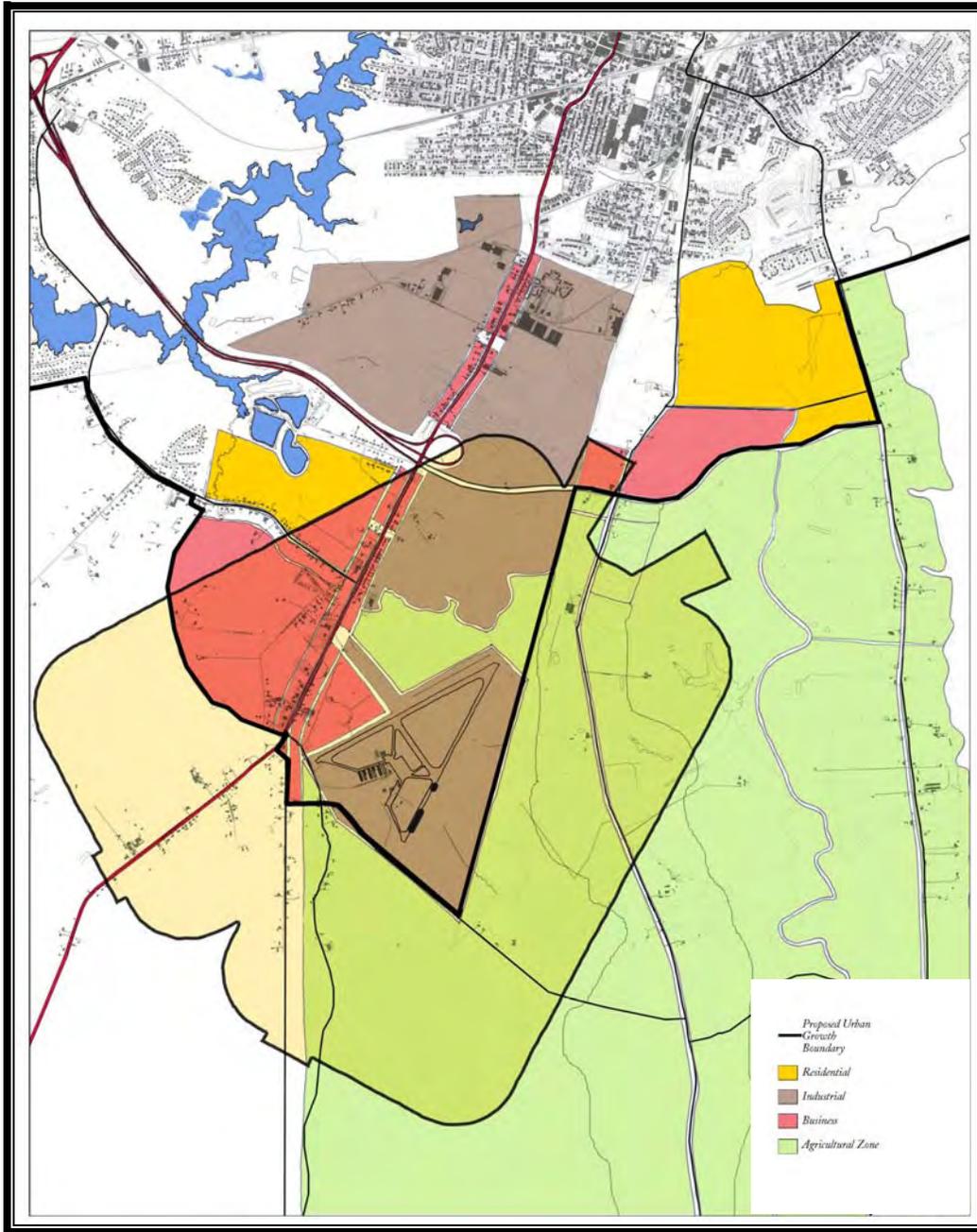
To accomplish this priority, over the past several years, the City has undertaken a

The typical uses, density, and character of this district are shown in Table 3-11.

**Table 3-11
Development Characteristics
Rural Agriculture Conservation District**

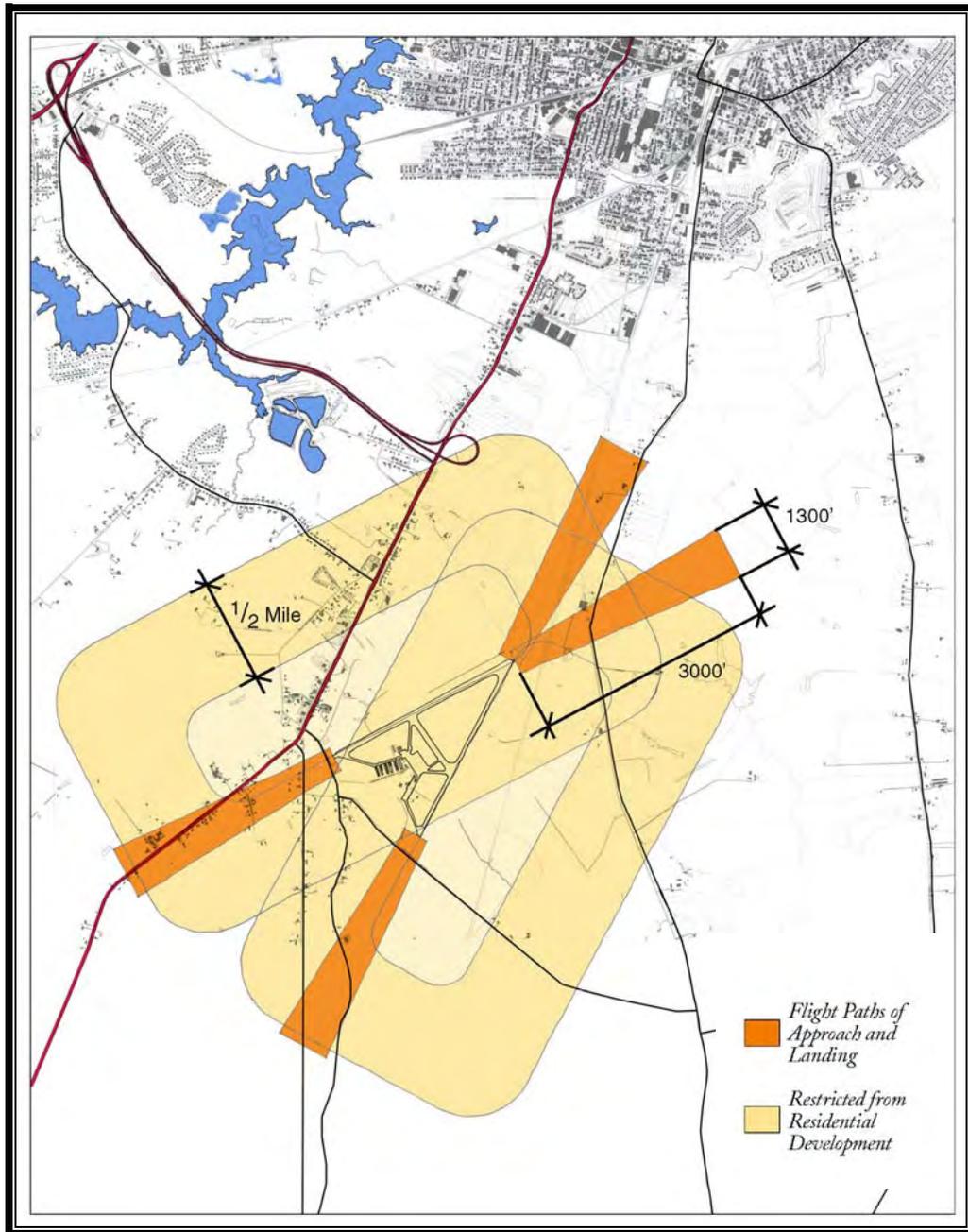
Typical Uses	Densities	Development Character
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large-scale agricultural and forestry. • Small farming operations (hobby farms, small horse farms). • Agricultural processing and related manufacturing. • Small convenience retail. • Limited single-family homes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Height Restrictions: 45 feet (agricultural buildings excluded). • Residential Densities: 1 unit/acre. • Major Subdivisions: Not allowed in this district. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New housing should be buffered visually from the existing streets using naturalistic tree plantings of various species along road frontages. • Encourage use of native grasses and plantings when visible from street. • Large community facilities such as high schools, middle schools, and large primary schools, should be avoided in this district to maintain its rural character. • Appropriately scaled community facilities including elementary schools are encouraged in the rural villages.

**Figure 3-13
Carolina Road Corridor Land Use Strategy**

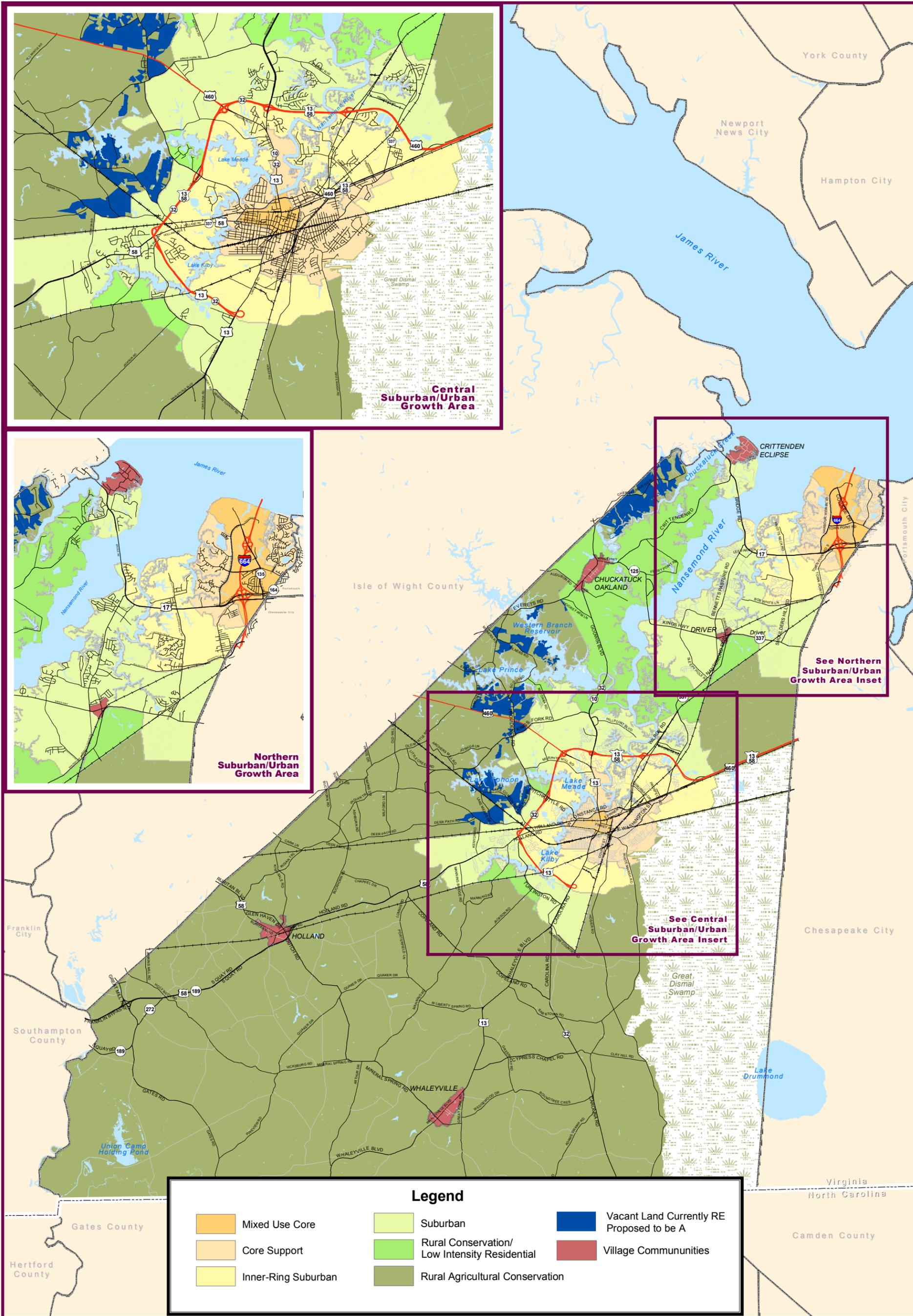


Graphic by Urban Design Associates

**Figure 3-14
Aircraft Over Flight District**



Graphic by Urban Design Associates



Central Suburban/Urban Growth Area

Northern Suburban/Urban Growth Area

See Northern Suburban/Urban Growth Area Inset

See Central Suburban/Urban Growth Area Inset

Legend

- Mixed Use Core
- Core Support
- Inner-Ring Suburban
- Suburban
- Rural Conservation/ Low Intensity Residential
- Rural Agricultural Conservation
- Vacant Land Currently RE Proposed to be A
- Village Communities



City of Suffolk, Virginia
 2026 Comprehensive Plan
Reduction in Development Potential



URS
Figure 3-15

5. Themes, Policies, and Action

Theme: Balanced Growth

Policy 3-1: Create a system of focused growth development areas within the two main urban and suburban growth areas in the City.

Action 3-1A: Develop a coordinated system of focused growth zoning to support both the historic downtown central core and the northern core development areas.

The focused growth framework provides for a sustainable, environmentally sensitive method to manage growth for the next twenty years. The framework allows for areas of high density mixed uses, surrounded by development areas of supportive uses. . This development pattern encourages a mix of housing and economic development opportunities. The focused growth framework provides for continuation of the successful strategies of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan while expanding the range and types of development options.

Action 3-1B: Revise the existing growth area boundaries south of the central core to establish a pattern of development areas of decreasing densities consistent with the Focused Growth Framework.

To ensure that this development is consistent with the Focused Growth Framework, the growth area boundary between White Marsh Road and Carolina Road and in the area of Turlington Road should be extended to the south. The expanded development area will encourage higher density/mixed uses closest to the urban core, with lower density uses towards the edges.

Action 3-1C: Revise the existing growth area boundary north of the

Central Core Suburban / Urban Development Area to establish a pattern of development areas for a mixture of office and commercial uses consistent with the Focused Growth Framework that may include opportunities for related housing and public / semi-public uses.

To ensure that this development is consistent with the Focused Growth Framework, the growth area boundary located north of and between Kings Fork Road and the Western Branch Reservoir should be extended north so as to include those lands situated adjacent to Matoaka Road and Mockingbird Lane as shown in Figure 3-5. The boundary of the development area is being expanded to accommodate opportunities for a mixture of uses suitable for this area. Such uses may include office and commercial uses and related housing and public / semi-public development. Being at the edge of the Suburban Development District, adjacent to the Rural Conservation / Low Intensity Residential Development Area and agricultural uses and the Western Branch Reservoir, densities and intensities of future development should be kept at the minimum within the established range for the Suburban Development District.

Action 3-1D: Define and encourage accommodative zoning districts for two mixed-use core areas: one in the north and the other in the downtown core.

Key to the focused growth framework is the definition of two highly dense mixed-use centers. Zoning district changes to support these areas should be carefully evaluated to ensure that they are of sufficient size to stimulate growth, yet do

not impinge on historic areas, environmentally sensitive lands, or the ability of the City to provide services in an efficient and effective manner.

Action 3-1E: Promote low intensity development in the drinking watersheds and rezone some of the current RE lands to A to enhance protection of the regional water supply in the northwest quadrant and accommodate the policy of “no-net increase” in residential development potential due to modest expansion of central suburban / urban growth area boundary as shown on Figure 3-15.

The Focused Growth Map (Figure 3-5) illustrates the expansion of the Rural Agricultural Conservation District into the Northwest quadrant. Figure 3-15 identifies particular vacant lands that should be rezoned from Rural Estate (RE) to Agriculture (A) in order to create a larger buffer surrounding the regional water supply reservoirs and to encourage agricultural activity in an area where there are prime agricultural soils and reduce the residential development potential in this area of the City..

Action 3-1F: Continue the policy that there can be no justification for rezonings to residential uses outside the Comprehensive Plan growth areas.

The Focused Growth Framework provides sufficient land for residential use to meet forecasted demand for 20

years. The framework provides a logical and sustainable growth pattern that expands housing opportunities without accommodating sprawl development patterns.

Action 3-1G: There can be no justification for additional residential rezoning contrary and inconsistent with the Focused Growth Framework and associated themes, policies and actions, and smart growth principles of this 2026 Comprehensive Plan.

The extensive amount of vacant land already zoned for development (i.e.: future development potential) and the large amounts of development in the pipeline, mean that Suffolk should not be rezoning tracts of land for additional residential growth unless said action is consistent with this comprehensive plan. The City should deny rezoning requests that are not consistent with this plan, that do not demonstrate the need and demand for additional residentially zoned land, and where facilities are not adequate based on established standards. There will, of course, be some exceptions to this general rule by way of small, infill parcels and the like.

Policy 3-2: Moderate the pace of future residential growth to current levels

Action 3-2A: Assume an annual average growth rate of 1,000 residential units per year.

This average growth rate will produce the increase in population and employment forecasts shown in Table 3-12.

Table 3-12: Population and Employment Estimates (Numeric Increase)		Total Plan Years 1 - 20			
		Housing		Commercial Development	Industrial Development
		Units	Population	Employees	Employees
District	Zone				
Central	Core	401	802	1,532	2
	Core Support	2,008	4,017	4,438	404
	Inner-Ring Suburban	2,428	6,435	3,364	7,745
	Suburban	2,533	7,092	6,199	4,408
Total Central		7,371	18,346	15,533	12,559
Northern	Core	2,677	5,353	21,621	472
	Core Support	1,865	3,730	6,033	3
	Inner-Ring Suburban	2,804	7,431	1,473	0
	Suburban	4,532	12,691	1,992	2,019
Total Northern		11,878	29,204	31,120	2,495
Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential		966	2,560	2,044	783
Rural Agricultural Conservation		188	498	487	477
Total		20,402	50,608	49,185	16,314

Action 3-2B: Pursue expanded growth management authority from the General Assembly.

The City should continue to pursue the enabling authority to adopt innovative growth management practices. These may include collecting impact fees, requiring adequate public facilities for site plan and subdivision approval, and transfer of development rights.

- Smaller in size and fit well within context of the community in which they are located;
- Ease of accessibility;
- Function as centers and anchors of community;
- Support community uses after hours; and
- Mix of new construction and renovation programs.

This action is consistent with the principal of providing schools and employment opportunities near residential development. It promotes identifiable, cohesive and sustainable neighborhoods. Careful analysis will ensure that operating and capital needs of the school system are balanced with the smart growth ideal of neighborhood schools.

Action 3-2C: Closely coordinate school location planning to the identified growth areas and rural villages, focusing new schools in the areas of highest residential density in accordance with the following smart growth in schools planning principles:

- Provide highest quality education;
- Involve broad community involvement in school facility siting and planning;
- Site selection consistent with city’s long-range growth plan (Comprehensive Plan);

Action 3-2D: Provide sewerage and potable water service only to those areas that have been identified for growth, with the highest priority on core, core support, inner-ring subur-

ban, and suburban use districts. Exceptions can be made for existing developed areas that have a large number of failing septic systems or have been identified by the City's health department as having significant potable water quality concerns.

Coordination between water and sewer planning and land use planning is one of the most effective development timing mechanisms available to Virginia municipalities. Priority should be given to providing adequate sewer service within the designated growth areas to both encourage appropriate development and to protect environmental quality.

Policy 3-3: Enable high-quality, well planned development to occur in a predictable and orderly manner.

Appropriate modifications to the Zoning Ordinance and District Maps and design standards in the UDO, along with selective additions of new districts within the general boundaries established by the Focused Growth Framework, will make high-quality development more likely and predictable.

Action 3-3A: Develop incentives to better promote and encourage, as appropriate, mixed use development in more zoning categories.

Adding design standards for mixed use to the UDO, and specifying different types and intensities of mixed use within different zoning districts would complement this action by providing more guidance to applicants and more assurance to reviewers that submittals will meet the City's goals.

Action 3-3B: Continue incentives in the zoning ordinance to support "New Urbanist" and traditional neighborhood designs where appropriate in the City.

While the full-scale 'TND' is an option within the UDO, the process of creating smaller traditional neighborhood developments, or infill development, could be streamlined and simplified. Increasing the options for mixed-use at a variety of scales in more zoning districts will also facilitate traditional neighborhood design.

Action 3-3C: Continue the use of cluster developments to preserve and protect the natural environment with revisions to allow for more community-usable open space.

Cluster development patterns have been an effective tool for preserving large open spaces and natural features in new developments. This tool should continue to be part of the UDO in the future. Revisions to the UDO could help to make cluster development a more attractive option than conventional subdivision in certain zoning districts, including the RE zoning district. Revisions to the UDO could also help improve the aesthetics and design of cluster developments.

Action 3-3D: Amend the development regulations to assure that transportation system planning and the preservation of right of way for transit are incorporated into the design and construction of new development projects, particularly large scale developments in the Mixed Use Core and Core Support Districts.

Given Suffolk's strategic location within the region, the rate of new growth, and advances in transit system and other associated technologies, it is essential that the City position itself and reserve the capability to provide future services and to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities that may be presented.

Theme: Enhance Economic Vitality

Policy 3-4: Balance residential and non-residential land uses

Action 3-4A: Assume a future jobs/housing ratio of between 1.0 and 1.56. Continue to develop implementation tools that will help achieve help the higher number.

Establishing a good balance between jobs and housing is essential to maintaining the high quality of life in the City. Too low a ratio would mean that Suffolk was strictly a bedroom community to other cities in Hampton Roads. Estimates based on the focused growth framework, using existing housing and non-commercial construction trends show that the City could have a job to housing ratio in excess of 3 jobs for every household developed as a result of the comprehensive plan.

Policy 3-5: Facilitate the expansion of office, R&D and manufacturing activity in Suffolk.

Action 3-5A: Ensure that there are adequate amounts of land zoned to support the growing high technology corridor in the Northern Suburban/Urban Growth Area as well as office and industrial uses in other parts of the City.

Based on current construction trends, available land, and densities supported under the focused growth framework, there appears to be sufficient areas of the City for commercial and industrial activity. However, the zoning map must be revised to ensure that it matches the goals of the focused growth framework.

The design, timing and pace of development along the major transportation corridors needs to be master planned and coordinated by way of a series of

corridor studies and plans so as to assure the preservation of lands for economic development and job creation, and future right-of-way; promote the prioritization of investment in major regional improvements that are critical to the City's economic development; and assure the compatibility, efficiency and function of the City's transportation network and adjacent land uses.

In conjunction with these master corridor plans, the City needs to continue to develop and implement land use strategies that continue to preserve lands within one-half to one mile of major interchanges and intersections for employment uses (office, research and development). Such lands should not be zoned for residential uses.

Associated with these master corridor plans a comprehensive economic development plan and strategy needs to be adopted. This plan will document and articulate the vision Suffolk has in regard economic development, establishing the types and mix of industries desired, identifying where such industries are best located, and what strategies need to be implemented to achieve this vision. Such a comprehensive economic development plan must be developed and implemented in concert and consistent with this 2026 Comprehensive Plan.

Action 3-5B: Revise the existing growth area boundaries west of the central core suburban / urban development area to establish a pattern of development areas for continued economic development and job creation consistent with the Focused Growth Framework.

To ensure that this development is consistent with the Focused Growth Framework, the growth area boundary along the Holland Road corridor should be extended to the west as illustrated on

The Focused Growth Map (Figure 3-5). The expanded development area will provide for additional industrial development and job creation. Specifically, while the expanded development area may accommodate new industrial uses such as manufacturing, warehousing and distribution facilities, the expanded development area is intended to primarily provide opportunities for additional research and development facilities, professional office and services, office flex, and other significant employment generators.

In concert with Actions 3-5A and 6-5H the design, timing and pace of development along this corridor needs to be master planned and coordinated by way of a series of corridor studies and plans so as to assure the preservation of significant amounts of lands for economic development and job creation, and future right-of-way; promote the prioritization of investment in major regional improvements that are critical to the City's economic development; assure the compatibility, efficiency and function of the City's transportation network and adjacent land uses.

Furthermore the preservation of road capacity and access management are of the highest priority and consequently, direct access to all future development within the area must be provided by an internal road network and that direct access (entrance drives) from adjacent thoroughfares, particularly Holland Road (Rt. 58), should be minimized.

Action 3-5C: Revise the existing growth area boundary west of the Central Core Suburban / Urban Development Area to establish a pattern of development areas for continued economic development and job creation consistent with the Focused Growth Framework.

To ensure that this development is consistent with the Focused Growth Framework, the growth area boundary along the Pruden Boulevard (Rt. 460) corridor should be extended to the west to Kings Fork Road and south to Pitchkettle Road as illustrated on the Focused Growth Map (Figure 3-5). The expanded development area will provide opportunities primarily for additional regional scaled commercial retail, research and development facilities, professional office and services, and other significant employment generators.

In concert with Actions 3-5A and 6-5H the design, timing and pace of development along this corridor needs to be master planned and coordinated by way of a series of corridor studies and plans so as to: 1) assure the preservation of significant amounts of lands for economic development and job creation, particularly in the areas adjacent to the existing Pruden Boulevard (Rt. 460) corridor and the proposed Route 460 limited access highway corridor and future right-of-way; 2) assure the preservation of lands necessary for the proposed Route 460 limited access highway corridor; 3) promote the prioritization of investment in major regional improvements that are critical to the City's economic development, for example, the City in concert with the Virginia Department of Transportation should continue to encourage and plan for the establishment of an interchange where the proposed Route 460 limited access highway crosses Pitchkettle and King's Fork roads; and 4) assure the compatibility, efficiency and function of the City's transportation network and adjacent land uses. Furthermore the preservation of road capacity and access management are of the highest priority and consequently, direct access to all future development within the area must be provided by an internal road network and that direct access (en-

trance drives) from adjacent thoroughfares, particularly Pruden Boulevard, Pitchkettle Road and Kings Fork Road, should be minimized.

In conjunction with these master corridor plans, the City needs to continue to develop and implement land use strategies that continue to preserve lands within one-half to one mile of major interchanges and intersections, as well as those lands adjacent to and within one-half to one mile proximity to the existing Pruden Boulevard (Rt. 460) corridor and the proposed Route 460 limited access highway corridor and future right-of-way, for employment uses (office, research and development). Such lands should not be zoned for residential uses.

The expanded development area will also accommodate opportunities for related housing and mixed use development. Being at the edge of the Suburban Development District, adjacent to the Rural Conservation / Low Intensity Residential Development Area, Rural Agricultural Conservation Area and the Lake Meade water reservoir, densities and intensities for future development should be kept at the minimum within the established range for the Suburban Development District. The timing and pace of any new residential development should be tied directly with the timing and pace of commercial retail and professional office and services economic development activities and associated job creation within the area.

Policy 3-6: Ensure the long term viability, operation and function of the Suffolk Executive Airport and protect it from the encroachment of non-compatible land uses.

Action 3-6A: Establish an Airport Protection and Compatibility Overlay Zone where land use in general proximity to the airport are designated

for low intensity, non-intrusive and compatible employment or agricultural usage and not converted to suburban residential uses.

Airports and their related businesses are crucial to a community's ability to grow. Unfortunately, in today's environment it doesn't seem to matter if the airport existed long before incompatible uses encroached upon and surrounding it. The costs of dealing with public complaints and lawsuits associated with encroaching and incompatible land use issues incurred by airports can be considerable. If permitted, development will encroach upon airport boundaries and violate critical airspace; therefore, it is important that effective land use planning and control measures around airports be adopted establishing specific planning boundaries in the form of an Airport Compatibility Overlay Zone.

Comprehensive planning of land uses that tend to be more compatible to the airport operations and safety requirements minimize problems within communities and help to foster cooperation with many different interests as the community grows. Thus the simple solution is to mitigate existing compatibility issues and plan for compatible issues in the future.

To implement effective land use planning and control measures around airports, it is necessary to identify specific planning boundaries. These boundaries will define the airport environs for land-use planning purposes. It is essential to understand the components of an effective compatible airport land-use plan and incorporate federal and state airport design criteria, safety of flight requirements and land use provisions unique to the community into the plan and its associated implementation strategies. At a minimum these include: safety zones, traffic patterns, overflight areas, noise, and height restriction criteria must be

considered. Finally, a land use strategy for airport-compatible land-uses should include an area large enough to consider all these factors. This will ensure the long term survival of one of the city's key economic development tools.

Action 3-6B: Establish an Aircraft Over Flight District as shown on Figure 3-14, where land use in close proximity to the airport and located in the designated aircraft over flight areas as illustrated in the *Carolina Road Corridor and Southern Land Use Strategy* (incorporated herein by reference) are designated for low intensity, non-intrusive and compatible employment or agricultural usage and not converted to suburban residential uses.

Areas in the close proximity to airports experience the frequent over flight by

aircraft operating to and from the airport and will be perceived by citizens as a nuisance. The areas of frequent over-flight include areas under commonly used approach and departure routes for an airport, including areas under airport traffic patterns.

Non-compatible and intrusive uses such as residences, schools, churches, hospitals, daycare centers, nursing homes and other similar uses need to be avoided. Other uses that should be avoided include relatively high density and high intensity commercial and industrial that result in large assemblies of people. Compatible uses may include low density and low intensity commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational such as golf courses and parks, and other similar uses.

Chapter 4: Housing

1. Introduction

Suffolk enjoys a fairly wide range of housing options. Many charming older houses and traditional neighborhoods can be found downtown and in the rural villages. Farmsteads and estates are scattered throughout the more rural areas of Suffolk, particularly south of downtown and a substantial amount of newer housing has been built in recent years in the central and northern parts of the City, particularly along major transportation routes. While much of this new housing development has occurred in the two designated growth areas consistent with the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, growth has occurred at a rate higher than anticipated and the cost of housing (both new and resale) has increased significantly. Keeping pace with housing demand, and providing for a range of affordability to meet the needs of Suffolk residents, will be a continual challenge.

Overall, the City's goal has been to develop housing for the full range of incomes. Policy 6 of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan states: *Strike the right balance between moderate cost housing needs and opportunities for higher end housing.* The 2018 Plan, combined with market forces, has been successful at expanding high end hous-

ing. This Comprehensive Plan strives to bring balance back to the housing market by focusing more on affordability while still maintaining balance. Nevertheless, it remains important to develop policies and programs designed to encourage a healthy mix of housing choices, including housing for high and moderately high income families, and retirees.

In October 2004 the Mayor requested that an Affordable Housing Task Force be formed with representation from the City Council and the Suffolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, and respective staffs. The directive given by the Mayor to the Task Force was to clearly identify what the City's housing affordability needs and obstacles are, and to develop rec-

ommendations for addressing them to the extent that local government can and should influence the housing market. The Task Force met thirteen (13) times, beginning in December 2004 and working through August 2005. Based on their efforts, a Task Force Report was developed that identified housing issues and made recommendations to improve housing in Suffolk.

There was consensus that, while the long-term goal should be to ensure that

Different Housing Needs in a Community

1. Housing for the homeless
2. Publicly-assisted housing
3. Very-low income housing
4. Low-income housing
5. Moderate-income housing
6. High-income housing
7. Active senior housing
8. Housing for those on fixed or retirement incomes
9. Assisted living facilities and long-term care facilities
10. Fair and accessible housing for disadvantaged populations
11. Homeownership and rental housing

housing needs in the City of Suffolk are being met along the full “continuum of care” (see inset), the highest priority for the short-term is to address the needs of those in the Suffolk workforce or “**workforce housing**”— to promote housing opportunities for those who are active in the Suffolk work force and who desire to live in Suffolk. This should consist of both homeownership and rental choices.

According to the Census of Population and Housing, there were a total of 24,704 housing units in Suffolk in 2000. About 72% of the housing units in the City were owner-occupied and 28% were rental units. This reflects a higher percentage of owner-occupancy than either the Hampton Roads region or the State overall. While on the surface a high percentage of owner occupancy can appear as a positive indicator for the City as a whole, the lack of available rental housing can negatively impact some segments of the City’s population. In fact, the four census tracts with the lowest rates of home ownership are located in downtown Suffolk and all also have high concentrations of low income and minority households.

A similar statistic is the percentage of housing units in multi-family buildings. In Suffolk, these units are typically rental apartments, or relatively less expensive townhouses. According to the 2000 Census, 82.3% of the City’s housing stock was made up of 20,335 single-family units, while 13.3% or 3,294 units were in multi-unit buildings. Another approximately 4.4% consisted of mobile homes.

Of these existing housing units, the Census indicated that approximately 6% were vacant – a fairly high percentage for growing communities such as Suffolk. Vacancy rate is a key statistic in determining the health of the local housing market. There will always be some vacancy in the housing market as people move from one home to another leaving one vacant for a short period of time. However, this is usually less than 5% of the housing stock. A 6% vacancy rate shows a slight softness in the housing market as it means that homes are being left unoccupied for longer periods of time. However, since 2000 this may have changed with the stronger housing demand.

Factors that Impact Housing Values In Suffolk

- Land costs
- Land availability
- Density allowed by zoning
- Types of housing allowed by ordinance
- Design and construction standards
- Regional cost of living
- Local development costs

According to the Suffolk Statistical Atlas, about 58% of all housing units in Suffolk were built before 1980, with 40% built between 1950 and 1979 and about 18% built before 1950. Almost 42% of all housing units were built between 1980 and 2000. Thus, slightly less than half of the City’s housing stock

is relatively new. However, almost 38% of rental units were constructed before 1960. The range of housing ages in Suffolk compares similarly to the Hampton Roads region and the State, although Suffolk has a slightly higher percentage of housing built before 1950.

Census data show that areas with the highest percent of older housing, owner-occupied and rental, are located in downtown.

The vast majority of housing units in Suffolk has indoor plumbing and complete kitchen facilities. Less than 2 per-

cent of the entire housing stock is lacking one or both of these features.

Average house size has steadily increased over the past few decades and is now approximately 2,400 square feet.

This reflects a national trend in consumer preference for larger houses, often with at least three-car garages and multiple bathrooms.

2. Housing Values and Affordability

Information compiled from the Real Estate Information Network (REIN) indicate that from the beginning of 2000 through the third quarter of 2004, the average value of new construction in Suffolk increased by 75%. Average housing values have consistently been highest in the northern part of Suffolk and lowest in the central area around downtown. However, over the past five years, average new housing values have increased more in the central and western/ southern areas than in the northern area, which experienced increases of 99.9%, 10.2%, and 75%, respectively. Since 2003, average new construction values increased the most in the western/southern area (51.9%), followed by the central area (36.9%) and the northern area (11.6%).



During the same period, the beginning of 2000 through the third quarter of 2004, REIN data show the average value of resale housing in Suffolk has increased by 73%, with increases of 67.3% in the northern area, 68.4% in the central area, and 63.7% in the western/southern area. Since 2003, the central area experienced the greatest increase in resale values -- almost 29% -- compared to 18% in the northern area and 15% in the western/southern area.

The State defines “affordable housing” as housing those households at or below the area median income can afford, provided they pay no more than 30% of gross income for gross housing costs, including utilities. According to the 2000 Census, Suffolk’s median household income is \$41,115 and median family income is \$47,342. Based on those incomes, “affordable housing” in the City consist of homes valued at \$111,700 or less, based on median household income and \$135,400 or less, based on median family income.

Current average new and resale housing values are not “affordable” to Suffolk households with incomes at or below the median.

In fact, REIN data indicate that the average new housing values in Suffolk have not been below the “affordable” threshold of \$111,700 (based on the 2000 Census median income) since 2000, when the average new house was valued at \$116,741. Likewise, resale values have exceeded the “affordable” threshold since 2002, when the average resale value reached \$119,727.

Analyzing sales data, City staff concluded that in third quarter 2004, only 3.8% of all new construction fell within the “affordable” range while 21% of resale units were “affordable”. Thus,

slightly less than 25% of all housing sold in Suffolk in 2004 could be considered “affordable”.

The Regional Fair Housing Report, based on 2000 Census data, states that 24% of households that own their homes paid more than 30% of their gross income on housing, and are thus considered cost-burdened. Despite the concentration of older and lower-cost housing in downtown, areas in Suffolk with the highest percent of cost-burdened households are also concentrated in downtown (census tracts 651 and 655) as well as the northeast (census tract 751).

The median rent in 2000 in Suffolk was \$506/month. Census data show that 39.5% of renter households paid more than 30% of their gross income on rent, and were thus considered cost burdened.

The *Statistical Atlas* reports that the southeast portion of the City has the highest percent of units with rents less than \$250 per month. Units with the highest rents are more concentrated in the far northeast corner of the City and northwest of downtown. Census data (2000) indicated that over 52% of renter households in census tract 752 in northeast Suffolk were cost burdened.

The *2018 Comprehensive Plan*, adopted in 1999, does not contain a more traditional “Housing” element, whereby an analysis of housing characteristics and housing needs in the City are identified with accompanying policies and strategies. However, the plan does contain a few policies and action items related to housing, under the theme of “Balanced Growth” as follows:

Policy 5: Balance the distribution of future population to ensure that a varied housing stock is provided and that disadvantaged populations are

supported.

Action 5A: Achieve the population distribution shown in the 2018 Plan.

Policy 6: Strike the right balance between moderate cost housing needs and opportunities for higher-end housing.

Action 6A: Implement the 2018 Plan’s pattern of housing densities.

Action 6B: Create incentives for retirement housing in the zoning ordinance to encourage this population in Suffolk.

Policy 8: Maximize accessibility and minimize vehicle miles traveled and vehicle hours of delay.

Action 8C: Promote land use strategies such as the co-location of jobs and housing, mixed use centers, and neighborhood or community-scale retail uses within communities.

To date, the City has used the following means to implement these recommended policies and actions:

- Rezoning land to establish new zoning districts, expand mixed-use zoning districts, and add more uses and higher densities in existing zoning districts, which encourage co-location of jobs and housing, such as the Planned Development (PD), Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND), Village Center (VC), and Central Business District (CBD) zoning districts.
- Rezoning land for more zoning for commercial and industrial uses, thereby providing employment opportunities to Suffolk residents.
- Adopting and implementing Downtown, Neighborhood and Village Initiatives Plan, which provide opportunities for new housing and rehabilitation of existing housing.

The Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance is the City's primary tool for realizing the construction of affordable dwelling units with certain new development applications, providing regulations for and developer incentives to promote the construction of affordable dwelling units as part of new residential development projects. The ordinance is modeled on the enabling authority set forth in Section 15.2-2305 of the Code of Virginia, and follows it verbatim.

The purpose of the City's ADU Ordinance is:

To provide affordable shelter for all residents in the City, to address housing needs, to promote a full range of housing choices, and to encourage the construction and continued existence of moderately-priced housing by providing for optional increases in density in order to reduce land costs for such moderately priced housing.

The ordinance applies to any application for development approval, wherein the site, or a portion thereof, is the subject of an application for rezoning or special exception (conditional use permit), site plan or subdivision plat where fifty or more residential units are proposed within a public sewer service district, yields, as submitted by the applicant, fifty or more residential units at an equivalent density greater than one unit

per acre within an approved sewer area. It does not apply to applications requesting approval of an elevator structure four stories or above.

Any of these qualifying applications, which request approval of single family detached dwelling units, single-family attached dwelling units, and non-elevator multiple family dwelling units structures four stories or less in height, may be approved with an increase in the developable density of the site by no more than 20%, if the applicant consents to a voluntary and enforceable condition in which at least 12.5% of the units are set aside as Affordable Dwelling Units (no more than 10% if at least 6.25% of the units are set aside in a multi-family project application). The number of Affordable Dwelling Units required in exchange for the bonus density shall be based upon the maximum permissible dwelling units for the site, and shall not be reduced to account for any voluntary reduction in permitted dwelling units for Mixed Use development, any Open Space or Critical Areas, or any other voluntary reductions in the total permitted dwelling units. "Affordable Dwelling Unit" means any dwelling unit restricted as Low Income Housing or Very Low Income Housing.

Housing Prices In Suffolk

New Construction

**Table 4-1A
Home Prices: New Construction
City Wide**

Year	Average Sales Price	Days on Market
1998	\$129,359	36
1999	\$140,247	45
2000	\$157,940	52
2001	\$176,431	47
2002	\$198,431	56
2003	\$240,225	42
2004*	\$276,399	21
2005**	\$336,429	65

**Table 4-1B
Home Prices: New Construction
Central Suffolk**

Year	Average Sales Price
1998	\$108,239
1999	\$105,227
2000	\$116,741
2001	\$132,480
2002	\$141,983
2003	\$170,427
2004*	\$233,331
2005**	\$298,058

**Table 4-1C
Home Prices: New Construction
Northern Suffolk**

Year	Average Sales Price
1998	\$131,892
1999	\$146,681
2000	\$164,542
2001	\$185,203
2002	\$220,728
2003	\$257,986
2004*	\$287,861
2005**	\$401,509

**Table 4-1D
Home Prices: New Construction
Western/Southern Suffolk**

Year	Average Sales Price
1998	\$125,075
1999	\$145,426
2000	\$133,447
2001	\$143,568
2002	\$138,370
2003	\$177,725
2004*	\$269,900
2005**	\$309,720

* Through September 24, 2004 only.

** From August 1, 2004 – August 9, 2005.

Housing Prices In Suffolk

Re-sales

**Table 4-2A
Home Prices: Re-sales
City Wide**

Year	Average Sales Price	Days on Market
1998	\$121,957	87
1999	\$120,759	80
2000	\$118,286	90
2001	\$134,694	73
2002	\$149,700	52
2003	\$168,463	42
2004*	\$204,934	25
2005**	\$232,149	33

**Table 4-2B
Home Prices: Re-sales
Central Suffolk**

Year	Average Sales Price
1998	\$102,820
1999	\$109,197
2000	\$96,795
2001	\$108,853
2002	\$119,727
2003	\$126,578
2004*	\$162,964
2005**	\$190,077

**Table 4-2C
Home Prices: Re-sales
Northern Suffolk**

Year	Average Sales Price
1998	\$155,837
1999	\$139,052
2000	\$142,072
2001	\$157,255
2002	\$176,656
2003	\$201,393
2004*	\$237,638
2005**	\$293,928

**Table 4-2D
Home Prices: Re-sales
Western/Southern Suffolk**

Year	Average Sales Price
1998	\$110,835
1999	\$107,074
2000	\$103,327
2001	\$115,845
2002	\$136,002
2003	\$147,393
2004*	\$169,187
2005**	\$212,442

* Through September 24, 2004 only.

** From August 1, 2004 – August 9, 2005.

3. Effectiveness of Existing Policies

Together, the few and relatively vague policies and actions set forth in the *2018 Comprehensive Plan* do not provide clear direction for how to address the full range of housing needs identified by the task force, or more specifically “affordable housing” or “workforce housing” and, in and of themselves, cannot constitute a housing or affordable housing plan. They do not set a target percentage of housing stock (new construction and resale), which should be built and maintained annually as “affordable” and used as a benchmark to track progress. Furthermore, there does not appear to be a clear mechanism in place to ensure against concentration of poverty and lower income households in certain areas of the City or to provide for a more equitable geographic distribution of affordable housing stock.



The various Downtown, Neighborhood and Village Revitalization Initiatives Plans, adopted from 1998 to the present, do contain new housing and affordable housing opportunities. However, realization of any of these opportunities will be over the long-term versus short-term, with progress limited by municipal funds available to complete necessary costly infrastructure improvements and redevelopment of blighted areas to support these housing initiatives.

Since adoption of the *2018 Comprehensive Plan* and the Unified Development Ordinance, it is apparent that higher-end, more expensive housing has been constructed, and that real estate values have been increasing, as per Policy 6, Action 6B. Again, while these can be construed to be positive trends, and help realize important city fiscal management goals, moderate-to-lower income earners are beginning to fall out of the Suffolk housing market. Therefore, the biggest challenge remains in integrating affordable housing in new construction, and not just limited to new construction on leftover, smaller infill parcels.

The City has an ADU Ordinance that provides developers with an option of setting aside affordable units in exchange for granting a bonus density as the ordinance allows, however, it ap-

pears that either the City has not effectively promoted the Ordinance or the Ordinance does not provide developers sufficient cost effective incentives to build affordable units.

This has resulted in lost opportunities to realize the construction and integration of affordable dwelling units as part of larger residential development projects.

Furthermore, the City has not taken the necessary steps set forth in the ordinance to establish qualifying City-wide affordable dwelling unit sales prices

based on local market conditions, or to establish City-wide affordable dwelling unit qualifying income guidelines, and the Suffolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority has not been engaged to administer the program as set forth in the ordinance.

When the Task Force asked representatives of the development industry why no developer to date has sought a bonus density increase under this ordinance, some claimed they were not aware of the ordinance, others stated that the density bonus was not rich enough to be attractive from a project financing and profitability standpoint, and that perception—real or perceived—that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to sell market-rate units side by side with ADUs limited to low income and very-low income households.

The Task Force surmises that other deterrents to the ordinance's effectiveness may be the limitation of ADUs to either "low-income" or "very low-income," to the exclusion of "moderate income" earners, or those earning 80% to 100% of area median household income. The Task Force also noted that the 50-year sale price or rental rate restriction period is also a disincentive for developers and consumers, who look to homeownership as an opportunity to build equity, and that a lesser holding period would be more acceptable. The enabling authority does not permit the resale or re-rental price restriction period to go beyond 50 years; however, it can be less. When Fairfax County adopted its ordinance, it had a 50-year re-sale or re-rental price restriction period on the ADUs and has since amended its ordinance to make it 15 and 20 years, respectively. The Task Force also noted that the density bonus limitation set forth in the Code of Virginia may not be sufficient enough for the for-profit developer. However, changes to the formula cannot be initiated by a local

government, and the General Assembly would need to be petitioned to do so.

Lastly, the ADU Ordinance allows City Council to offer incentives other than density increases, such as reductions or waiver of permit, development, and infrastructure fees, as deemed appropriate to encourage the provision of affordable housing. To date, none of these approaches have been taken by City Council. This permissive authority recognizes that a density bonus, in and of itself, may not be enough to make the deal attractive and other incentives may need to be negotiated with the developer.

Below is a summary of the goals, objectives and recommendations developed by the Affordable Housing Task Force:

A. Goals

Goal 1: Increase the supply of homes, which sell in the price range of \$100,000 to \$200,000.

There appears to be a strong market for homes in this price range, particularly for first-time homebuyers, young persons just out of college starting their careers, public service employees, and active seniors who are looking to down-size; yet, the market is not currently producing an adequate supply of homes of this size and at this price point. Such housing choices should include both new construction and rehabilitation of existing, deteriorated homes.

Goal 2: Increase the supply of housing that is affordable to moderate-income households, inclusive of both homeownership and rental opportunities.

This is housing that is affordable to those with incomes between 80% and 100% of area median income, and such that no more than 30% of household income is spent on housing costs, includ-

ing basic utilities. Therefore, based on area median household income of \$42,448 as reported in the 2000 Census, this is housing that costs a homeowner or renter no more than \$10,187.52-\$12,734.40/year or \$848.96-\$1,061.20/month, including basic utilities.

Goal 3: Increase the supply of housing that is affordable to low-income households. If possible, this should include both homeownership and rental opportunities.

This is housing that is affordable to those with incomes between 50% and 80% of area median income, and where no more than 30% of household income is spent on housing costs, including basic utilities. Therefore, based on area median household income of \$42,448 as reported in the 2000 Census, this is housing that costs a homeowner or renter no more than \$6,367.20-\$10,187.52/year or \$530.60-\$848.96/month, including basic utilities.

The Task Force recognizes that local government's ability to influence the housing market and realize these affordability goals is limited in and of itself.

Goal 4: Create an equitable distribution of workforce housing throughout the City to avoid concentration.

Workforce Dwelling Units (WDUs) should be built in both new and in existing neighborhoods. An annual target number of WDUs to be built and/or maintained annually, distributed evenly between and throughout the City's two designated "Urban/Suburban Development Areas" or growth areas should be set.

Goal 5: Ensure that all workforce housing, both new construction and rehabilitation of existing housing, is of such design quality that it is compatible with

or better than surrounding housing, for long-term sustainability and minimal future maintenance.

Goal 6: Enhance effectiveness of existing housing assistance programs through local funding.

Goal 7: Build on the existing framework of housing assistance programs to create more homeowners.

Goal 8: Enable consumers to take advantage of new workforce housing opportunities.

Goal 9: Develop partnerships with non-governmental organizations to help implement the City of Suffolk's workforce housing goals.

Goal 10: Change negative perceptions about affordable housing by building housing that is an asset to the City.

B. Objectives

To realize the aforementioned goals, the Task Force identified the following important objectives:

Objective 1: Workforce housing choices should be found in both new and existing neighborhoods.

Objective 2: Local government incentives, including regulatory and financial, should be employed to minimize or remove institutional barriers to housing affordability and help close the gap to make workforce housing feasible for both developers and consumers.

Objective 3: Effectiveness of existing housing assistance programs should be enhanced by supplementing with local funding.

Objective 4: A variety of financing strategies to realize workforce housing goals should be pursued.

Objective 5: Marketing of developer and consumer education programs about the City's affordable housing goals and incentive and assistance programs should be pursued or enhanced where existing.

Objective 6: Key community partners who can play a role in realizing the City's affordable housing goals should be identified for support.

C. Recommended Actions

The Task Force recommends a comprehensive approach to increasing the supply of workforce housing in the City of Suffolk, and to increasing the ability of consumers to benefit from such housing opportunities. In addition to the recommendations set forth throughout this report and guidelines regarding prioritization of techniques, the following specific recommendations are offered:

1. Promote the City's workforce housing initiative by:

- Making for profit developers/builders aware of need for this type of housing and local incentives to increase supply.
- Marketing the City's Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance.
- Discussing the City's affordable housing goals and needs with private lending institutions to identify partnership opportunities.
- Enhanced marketing of housing assistance programs.
- Building public awareness about the need for workforce housing and helping achieve acceptance of it through preparation of Public Service Announcements (PSAs) and promoting model developments of this type.
- Establishing an awards program for developers/builders to showcase excellence in workforce housing development.

2. Promote the construction of workforce housing choices in new neighborhoods:

- Implementing the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance to the fullest extent possible, as written, with the modification recommended in this report.
- Develop minimum design standards for ADUs or workforce housing to ensure compatibility with surrounding housing.
- Encourage development of ADUs as part of all new mixed use development projects.
- To increase rental choices, allow "granny flats" or accessory apartments in all residential zoning districts, and not restricted to family members only. Consider permitting them by-right.

3. Promote workforce housing choices in existing neighborhoods by:

- Establishing Affordable Housing Overlay Districts throughout the City and especially near employment centers and within infrastructure service districts, in which development of affordable housing is encouraged through a variety of incentives.
 - Using the City's Geographic Information System (GIS) to map vacant, smaller tracts of undeveloped residentially-zoned land within the developed areas of the City.
 - Encourage smaller developers and non-profits to construct infill housing on these vacant parcels.
 - Consider using flexibility in adherence to lot size minimums.
 - Develop minimum design standards for ADUs or workforce housing to ensure compatibility with or enhancements to surrounding housing.
 - Target these districts for priority application of rehab housing assistance programs.

- Target these districts for priority application of first-time homeownership and rental housing assistance.
 - To increase rental choices, allow “granny flats” or accessory dwellings in all residential zoning districts, and not restricted to family members only.
4. Offer government incentives, including:
- Minimize or remove regulatory barriers and costs within reason and within legal limitations
 - Establish or modify zoning regulations to enable increased housing choice, mixed uses and mixed use buildings, co-location of jobs and housing, and higher densities
 - Streamline/expedite permitting and reducing/waiving fees (within legal limits)
 - Allow flexible use of materials but with adherence to design standards.
 - Revisit density bonus offered in ADU Ordinance to determine if it should be greater.
 - When density bonuses are sought for cluster pattern development, consider requiring that the bonus units be set aside as workforce dwelling units.
5. Use a variety of financing techniques, including:
- Maximize use of federal and state housing programs to increase WDU supply and to qualify first-time homebuyers.
- Leverage federal housing assistance programs with Federal Home Loan Bank programs to qualify first-time homebuyers.
 - Expand Section 8 “Housing Choice” voucher program beyond renters to first-time homebuyers.
 - Work with local and regional lenders to create a Community Development Lending Corporation and/or encourage developers/builders to use the new state Community Development Bank which is presently under establishment.
 - Establish a local Affordable Housing Incentive Fund to be used for such things as:
 - Offset development costs (e.g., fee waivers/reductions, etc.)
 - Homebuyer assistance:
 - Teacher/public safety personnel housing program assistance
 - Other municipal employee housing assistance programs;
 - Acquire property for private development/rehab;
 - Require initial and continuing homeownership education to qualify.
 - Avoid tax rate increases to capitalize; consider dedication of tax revenue to initially capitalize and then structure to be a self-sustaining program (e.g. revolving funds program).
6. Periodic review of progress by:
- Continuing to engage the Affordable Housing Task Force in monitoring the implementation of the City’s workforce housing initiative, and having the Task Force develop additional recommendations as necessary with community stakeholders.

4. Public Housing Programs

There are 466 public housing units in the City owned and managed by the Suffolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (SRHA). These units include: Cypress Manor Apartments (113 units), Hoffler Apartments (80 units), Parker Riddick Village (93 units), Colander Bishop Meadows (80 units), and Chorey Park (100 units age restricted). Applications for housing assistance are accepted weekly. Qualifying applicants must be 18 years of age, a US citizen or eligible for citizenship, and meet HUD income guidelines. Applicants must also go through credit reporting, state criminal background checks, personal interviews, home visits, and verification of current and previous landlords. Public Housing residents' rent is based on 30% of their gross annual income. Effective May 1, 2003, minimum rent is \$50.00. The majority (78%) of public housing units are located in census tracts with concentrations of minority households and all are located in census tracts where over half the households are low-income.

According to data from August 2005, the SRHA authorized 809 Section 8 vouchers. Section 8, is generally regarded to the largest and to a great degree the most successful public housing program in the country. It provides a 'backstop'

against homelessness based on affordability while focusing on housing in the private sector. In general, the program works such that the family pays a portion of the rent and SRHA pays a portion, and this is determined largely by the family's total household income. If the family is determined eligible for the program, they are issued a voucher. The family selects a rental unit, which must pass a Housing Quality Standard Inspection. The rent asked must be reasonable in comparison to rental units on the open market. SRHA negotiates a Housing Assistance Program contract with the property owner, and a lease agreement is entered into between the family and the property owner. Thus, Section 8 housing is a three-way partnership between the SRHA, the property owner, and the family.

In March 2003, the SRHA reported 1,202 households on the waiting list for public housing and 1,248 on the waiting list for Section 8 vouchers.

The City of Suffolk has a variety of other housing programs for low-income households, including housing rehabilitation loans and a home ownership program. The City also participates in the Western Tidewater HOME Consortium, which provides access to HOME grant funding.

5. Themes, Policies, and Actions

Theme: Balanced Growth

Policy 4-1: Build upon the work of the Affordable Housing Task Force and implement the recommendations of the Task Force's report.

Task Force goals include the following:

- Increase the supply of housing that is affordable to moderate-income and low-income households.
- Create an equitable distribution of workforce housing throughout the City
- Enhance the effectiveness of existing housing programs through local funding and partnerships with nongovernmental organizations.

Key objectives identified by the task force for the implementation of a successful housing program are:

Objective 1: Workforce housing choices should be found in both new and existing neighborhoods.

Objective 2: Local government incentives, including regulatory and financial, should be employed to minimize or remove institutional barriers to housing affordability and help close the gap to make workforce housing feasible for both developers and consumers.

Objective 3: Effectiveness of existing housing assistance programs should be enhanced by supplementing with local funding.

Objective 4: A variety of financing strategies to realize workforce housing goals should be pursued.

Objective 5: Marketing of developer and consumer education programs about the City's affordable housing goals and incentive and assistance programs should be pursued or enhanced where existing.

Objective 6: Key community partners who can play a role in realizing the City's affordable housing goals should be identified for support.

Action 4-1A: Encourage development of a balanced housing stock with high end, moderate and affordable housing goals to accommodate demand.

New construction of affordable dwelling units should satisfy Suffolk's development goals.

Action 4-1B: Establish a new Affordable Housing Overlay District in both Suburban/Urban Development Areas.

The Overlay District could foster construction of new affordable dwelling units through infill development on smaller vacant lots, tax sales of delinquent properties for rehabilitation, and rehab of other substandard housing is encouraged through by-right zoning and a variety of developer incentives. It is recommended that this Overlay District be applied in both "Urban/Suburban Development Areas" where public utilities services currently exist, and in close proximity to employment centers. Appropriate residential building design standards allowing the latest building technologies and flexible use of building materials should be factored into the establishment of such design standards.

Action 4-1C: Implement the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to their fullest potential by effectively negotiating with developers for the construction of affordable dwelling units and adjusting the incentives and requirements to better match market conditions.

Strategies recommended by the Task Force include:

- *Establish qualifying jurisdiction-wide affordable dwelling unit sales prices based on local market conditions, and establish jurisdiction-wide affordable dwelling unit qualifying income guidelines.*
- *Consider applying appropriate incentives, in addition to density bonuses, as needed on a case by case basis.*
- *Consider expanding the definition of ADU's to include "moderate income" qualifying households in addition to low- and very-low income households.*
- *Engage the Suffolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority in the implementation of the ordinance as per the manner set forth in the ordinance.*
- *Reduce the holding period on resale and re-rental prices from 50 years to a maximum of 15 and 20 years, respectively.*
- *Include a table or chart with Table 417-1 in the ordinance, which demonstrates clearly to the developer how many bonus units can be obtained for the voluntary set aside. This will assist a developer in making this choice as it affects his bottom line.*
- *Consider requesting the General Assembly to revisit the bonus density formula set forth in the enabling legislation to increase the density bonus that a locality can offer.*

Action 4-1D: Continue the housing taskforce established by the Mayor and the City Council as a way to advise the City Council on key housing issues throughout the City.

Continuing to engage the Affordable Housing Task Force in monitoring the implementation of the City's workforce housing initiative, and having the Task Force develop additional recommendations as necessary with community stakeholders.

Action 4-1E: Encourage the construction of affordable housing in mixed use communities.

Mixed use communities allow an opportunity for people to live closer to where they work, reducing the amount of time and money spent on commuting. Constructing affordable housing in these developments helps to encourage diversity and promotes a successful community.

Action 4-1F: Streamline the City approval process for development of affordable housing.

The City's development review and permitting processes create costs that are borne by developers and tend to be factored into the price of housing. The City could consider an incentive to create affordable housing units by expediting the review process for projects that include those types of units, reducing developers' costs.

- *Following the adage "time is money," City Administration should continue to explore ways to streamline the permitting process toward the end goal of a true "one-stop shop" where all reviews and permits associated with development can be obtained. While some permit consolidation was done with a recent restructuring of the Department of Neighborhood Development Services, a developer must still visit various city depart-*

ments (e.g. Planning, Public Utilities, Public Works) to obtain all necessary reviews and permits.

- Consider offering expedited project review and permitting as a developer/builder incentive. It should be noted that the City's ADU Ordinance already offers such, but this same approach might be applied to all development applications for which affordable dwelling units are proposed and may not necessarily meet the eligibility requirements for the density bonus set forth in the ADU Ordinance.
- Consider offering reduction or waiver of utilities connection/availability fees as a developer/builder incentive. Such costs tend to be high. Offering flexibility for how infrastructure is developed to serve residences was also suggested.
- Consider other opportunities for permit fee reductions or waivers.
- Consider establishing an Affordable Housing Incentive Fund, which can be used to assist developers with development costs, to be negotiated, as needed and on a case-by-case basis.

The task force also identified other strategies and techniques that may be pursued including:

Short Term – High Priority (no additional funding required)

- Inclusionary Zoning (voluntary approaches)
- Fast Track Development Review of Affordable Housing Proposals (may require more staffing)
- City-initiated zoning for higher density housing
- New Forms of Higher Density Housing (e.g. tandem houses, zero lot line zoning, accessory apartments not limited to family members and in more zoning districts)

- Deregulation and Building Methods: Reducing Development Costs (more flexible building methods)
- Affordable Housing Overlay District (mandatory inclusionary zoning)

Longer Term – High Priority (funding required)

- Development Fee Waivers/Reimbursement of Fees (some legal limitations for water and sewer fees)
- Land Purchase and Resale/Donation to Affordable Housing Developers (public-private-non-profit partnerships, pursue tax sales more frequently) (SRHA Involvement)
- Existing housing purchase/Resale to Moderate Income Purchasers (encourage private sector investment before public)
- Infrastructure Support (TBD on project case by case basis)
- Development of Affordable Scattered Site Housing/Single-Family Subdivisions (may be accomplished through zoning changes)

Medium Priority

- Banking Partnerships for Affordable Housing (municipal asset deposits in exchange for provision of affordable housing servicing) – would require some policy work, politically sensitive
- Infrastructure Support (TBD on project case by case basis)
- Land Purchase and Resale/Donation to Affordable Housing Developers (public-private-non-profit partnerships, pursue tax sales more frequently) (SRHA Involvement)
- Community land trusts (using private funds)

Low Priority

- Grants to Affordable Housing Developers

- *Grants/Other Assistance for Pre-Development Costs*
- *Special Consideration (exemptions) in Growth Management Initiatives*
- *Linkage: Encourage Housing with Commercial Developments*

The task force also identified techniques that should not be pursued:

- *Grants to Affordable Housing Developers*
- *Grants/Other Assistance to Pre-Development Costs*
- *Special Consideration (exemptions) in Growth Management Initiatives*
- *Adaptive Reuse of City-Owned or Other Buildings for Affordable Housing*
- *Converting Motels to Low-Income Housing/Converting Apartments to Affordable Condominiums*

Action 4-1G: Encourage increasing the supply of homes selling in the \$100,000 to \$200,000 price range.

The market for homes in this price range is strong, particularly for first-time homebuyers, young persons out of college and starting their careers, public service employees, and active seniors who are looking to downsize; yet, there currently does not appear to be an adequate supply of homes of this size and at this price point. Such housing choices should include both new construction as well as rehabilitation of existing homes.

Action 4-1H: Encourage increasing the supply of housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income households, including both homeownership and rental opportunities.

Critical components of the Suffolk work-force earn incomes at or below the area

median household income of \$42,448, including teachers and public safety employees. For these workers, there is an inadequate supply of housing that is considered affordable for them, where no more than 30% of household income is spent on housing costs.

Action 4-1I: Utilize existing housing assistance programs to generate more homeowners.

Existing housing assistance programs administered by SRHA and others can be used to help increase the rate of homeownership among low- to moderate-income workers. Increases in local funding can be used to further enhance the effectiveness of these programs.

- *Consider layering of appropriate housing assistance programs on top of affordable housing construction incentive programs to developers to ensure that income-qualifying individuals can take advantage of new affordable housing opportunities. The first-time homebuyer program and homeowner education programs are very appropriate in this regard.*
- *Consider local subsidy of housing assistance programs to offset federal funding shortfalls, in order to enhance program service delivery and to meet the needs of the City's growing population.*
- *Consider aggressive pursuit of real estate tax delinquency sales and offer right of first refusal to SRHA, which in turn can sell to CHDOs for rehabilitation of such properties to be offered for sale as affordable dwelling units. Enabling authority from the General Assembly would have to be pursued in order to grant SRHA a first right of refusal.*
- *If any form of local subsidy is offered for use in housing assistance programs, enrollment in a homeowner education program should be mandatory.*

- SRHA should continue to explore ways to expand the Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program to include homeownership as well as rental opportunities. This approach has been successfully employed in other cities.
- As public housing is determined to be obsolete, consider conversion of some public housing units into homeownership opportunities.

Action 4-1J: Generate a greater awareness of the City’s affordable housing goals and its incentive and assistance programs.

No developer to date has applied for a density bonus under the existing ADU Ordinance. Some claimed they were not aware of the ordinance, others stated that the density bonus was not rich enough to be attractive from a project financing and profitability standpoint, and that perception—real or perceived—that it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to sell market-rate units side by side with ADUs limited to low income and very-low income households. Improved marketing could help to change those negative perceptions and inform developers about the potential benefits of building affordable housing.

Action 4-1K: Pursue a variety of financing strategies to encourage a variety of housing types.

There are a number of techniques that have been employed by cities around the country to encourage construction of a variety of housing types, including affordable housing. Some of these strategies include support for infrastructure costs, development fee waivers or adjustments, or entering into partnerships with the private sector.

The Task Force concluded that, if the realization of workforce housing oppor-

tunities in the City of Suffolk is a priority, then it will be necessary for City Council to appropriate funding, which can be used in a variety of ways to meeting workforce housing needs, on a project-by-project basis or on an individual consumer basis. Examples of uses could be developer incentives (e.g., fee waivers or reductions, infrastructure funding), and down payment and/or closing cost assistance (e.g., soft second forgivable mortgages repayable at the time of sale to assist with “gap financing,” municipal employee housing assistance, etc.). The establishment of an Affordable Housing Trust Fund is recommended for this purpose, and should be initially capitalized through a local appropriation or series of appropriations (e.g., dedication of one-cent on the tax rate), and should be designed to be a self-sustaining revolving fund over the long-term. The Task Force does not recommend a tax rate increase for this purpose.

Action 4-1L: Establish a comprehensive approach to increasing workforce housing in Suffolk and the ability of consumers to benefit from such opportunities.

Promote the City’s workforce housing initiative by:

- Making for profit developers/builders aware of need for this type of housing and local incentives to increase supply.
- Marketing the City’s Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance.
- Discussing the City’s affordable housing goals and needs with private lending institutions do identify partnership opportunities.
- Enhanced marketing of housing assistance programs.
- Building public awareness about the need for workforce housing and helping achieve acceptance of it through preparation of Public Ser-

vice Announcements (PSAs) and promoting model developments of this type.

- Establishing an awards program for developers/builders to showcase excellence in workforce housing development.

Promote the construction of workforce housing choices in new neighborhoods:

- Implementing the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Ordinance to the fullest extent possible, as written, with the modification recommended in this chapter.
- Develop minimum design standards for ADUs or workforce housing to ensure compatibility with surrounding housing.
- Encourage development of ADUs as part of all new mixed use development projects.
- To increase rental choices, allow “granny flats” or accessory apartments in all residential zoning districts, and not restricted to family members only. Consider permitting them by-right.

Promote workforce housing choices in existing neighborhoods by:

- Establishing Affordable Housing Overlay Districts throughout the City and especially near employment centers and within infrastructure service districts, in which development of affordable housing is encouraged through a variety of incentives.
 - Using the City’s Geographic Information System (GIS) to map vacant, smaller tracts of undeveloped residentially-zoned land within the developed areas of the City.
 - Encourage smaller developers and non-profits to construct infill housing on these vacant parcels.
 - Consider using flexibility in adherence to lot size minimums.
 - Develop minimum design standards for ADUs or workforce housing

ing to ensure compatibility with or enhancements to surrounding housing.

- Target these districts for priority application of rehab housing assistance programs.
- Target these districts for priority application of first-time homeownership and rental housing assistance.
- To increase rental choices, allow “granny flats” or accessory dwellings in all residential zoning districts, and not restricted to family members only.
- Offer government incentives, including:
 - Minimize or remove regulatory barriers and costs within reason and within legal limitations
 - Establish or modify zoning regulations to enable increased housing choice, mixed uses and mixed use buildings, co-location of jobs and housing, and higher densities
 - Streamline/expedite permitting and reducing/waiving fees (within legal limits)
 - Allow flexible use of materials but with adherence to design standards.
 - Revisit density bonus offered in ADU Ordinance to determine if it should be greater.
 - When density bonuses are sought for cluster pattern development, consider requiring that the bonus units be set aside as workforce dwelling units.

Use a variety of financing techniques, including:

- Maximize use of federal and state housing programs to increase Workforce Dwelling Units (WDUs) supply and to qualify first-time homebuyers
- Leverage federal housing assistance programs with Federal Home Loan Bank programs to qualify first-time homebuyers

- *Expand Section 8 “Housing Choice” voucher program beyond renters to first-time homebuyers*
- *Work with local and regional lenders to create a Community Development Lending Corporation and/or encourage developers/builders to use the new state Community Development Bank which is presently under establishment.*
- *Establish a local Affordable Housing Incentive Fund to be used for such things as:*
 - *Offset development costs (e.g., fee waivers/reductions, etc.)*
 - *Homebuyer assistance*
 - Teacher/public safety personnel housing program assistance*
 - Other municipal employee housing assistance programs*
 - *Acquire property for private development/rehab*
 - *Require initial and continuing homeownership education to qualify*
 - *Avoid tax rate increases to capitalize; consider dedication of tax revenue to initially capitalize and then structure to be a self-sustaining program (e.g. revolving funds program).*
- *City Council should set a target number of new affordable dwelling units to be constructed and a target number of existing affordable units to be maintained on an annual basis.*
- *Create an equitable distribution of workforce housing throughout the City to avoid concentration.*
- *Ensure that all workforce housing, both new construction and rehabilitation of existing housing, is of such design quality that it is compatible with or better than surrounding housing, for long-term sustainability and minimal future maintenance.*

Action 4-1M: Review and update the City’s Consolidated Plan to ensure that conforms to and is consistent with the policies and implementation strategies of the Comprehensive Plan.

The Consolidated Plan, as the City’s strategic implementation plan for housing, should be based on the housing policies and recommended actions set forth in the City’s Comprehensive Plan. Doing so will ensure linkage between the two plans.

City Council direction to the SRHA Board of Commissioners on housing needs priorities should be based on both the Comprehensive Plan and the Consolidated Plan.

Action 4-1N: Encourage opportunities for retirement housing.

Continue to explore techniques to encourage retirement housing. Retirees place no demands on the school system and generate little peak-hour traffic.

Action 4-1O: Continue to strike the right balance between moderate cost housing needs and opportunities for higher-end housing.

Until recently Suffolk has largely been the recipient of first-time home buyers housing. For the sake of economic development and the caliber of Suffolk’s services and amenities, it is important to balance this market image with the continued need for higher-end housing. Suffolk must provide for higher-value housing opportunities. Areas in the Plan designated for low-density, residential estate lots are oriented towards capturing this market. Over time, some executive-level residents will want to move their businesses close to where they live.

Action 4-1P: Continue to create incentives for higher-end housing.

An example of such a strategy is to promote golf courses and golf course communities by, for example, allowing the as by-right development in the Rural Estate (RE) zone, coupled with stringent environmental controls. Golf courses can have significant environmental impacts on water quality and sensitive lands due to their land and water consumptive nature. Mitigation of these impacts in the form of water recycling, storm water management and flood control, integrated pesticide management, and forest, wetland and wildlife habitat protection can be achieved through golf course management plans.

The need to house all of the City's residents, in all income ranges, has not been overlooked as a result of this action.

Theme: Core Area Revitalization

Policy 4-2: Encourage housing development in the core area

Action 4-2A: Revise the City's development ordinance to ensure that it is compatible with infill development in existing communities.

Infill lots provide an opportunity to develop housing in established communities. However, these lots often remain undeveloped because they do not conform to current subdivision and zoning regulations.

Theme: Preserve Rural Character

Policy 4-3: Provide for modest development in the City's rural villages

Action 4-3A: In accordance with the adopted village initiatives plans promote land use patterns within or adjacent to the villages where affordable and market rate construction of new housing units is feasible.

Affordable housing should not be concentrated in the central core areas of the City. Rather, by identifying other areas of the City, including the villages, all citizens of the City can benefit from additional housing choices.

Chapter 5: Natural and Environmental Resources

1. Introduction

Protecting the environment is one of this plan's most important themes. Understanding the inextricable interaction of the man-made and the natural environment is crucial to being good stewards of our limited resources. The City of Suffolk is blessed with an abundance of unaltered natural areas including the wetlands of the Great Dismal Swamp and the tidal wetlands along the banks of the Nansemond, Chuckatuck, Bennetts Creek and James Rivers. It is the responsibility of the comprehensive planning process to lay out the state of our natural resources and to develop policies and action statements to protect and preserve them, while balancing the needs of continued development. The focused growth framework, as described in previous chapters, allows for this balance in a meaningful and sustainable way.

The Focused Growth Framework continues the key environmental protection and land preservation policies of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan — allow for managed growth in two areas – the northern and central Suburban/Urban Growth Areas, limit development in environmentally sensitive areas around the regional reservoir system, and reserve more than 70% of the City for agricul-



tural production. This plan continues to reinforce Suffolk's contribution to the health of the Chesapeake Bay. It also recognizes Suffolk's critical role as the host of most of South Hampton Road's water supply.

As Suffolk continues to grow and prosper it is critical that the City provide clear and concise policies to ensure the health of our natural systems. Without appropriate controls and focus, development could overwhelm the natural environment.

2. Location

The City of Suffolk is located in south-eastern Virginia. It is bounded by the James River to the north, the State of North Carolina to the south, the City of Chesapeake and the City of Portsmouth to the east and the Isle of Wight County to the west. The City encompasses 430 square miles.

The City is divided between Virginia's middle Coastal Plain and the lower and Outer Coastal Plan. This landscape was formed over the last few million years as sea levels rose and fell in response to the repeated melting and growth of large continental glaciers and as the Coastal Plain slowly uplifted. The Chesapeake Bay was created about 5,000 to 6,000 years ago when the lower course of the Susquehanna River through the Chesapeake lowland was flooded as meltwater from the large Pleistocene continental glaciers raised sea levels. Continuing sea level rise and shoreline erosion caused the bay to expand to its current size.

The Virginia Coastal Plain is underlain by a thick wedge of sediments that increases in thickness from a featheredge near Richmond to more than 4,000 meters under the continental shelf. These sediments rest on an eroded surface of Precambrian to early Mesozoic rock. Two-thirds of this wedge is comprised of late Jurassic and Cretaceous clay, sand, and gravel; they were stripped from the Appalachian mountains, carried east-

ward by rivers and deposited in deltas in the newly formed Atlantic Ocean basin. A sequence of thin, fossiliferous marine sands of Tertiary age overlies the older strata. This pattern of deposition was interrupted about 35 million years ago by a large meteorite that plummeted into a shallow sea, and created a crater

more than 90 km in diameter, termed the Chesapeake Bay Impact Structure. It was subsequently buried under about 1.2 km of younger sediment.

Latest Tertiary and Quaternary sand, silt, and clay,

which cover much of the Coastal Plain, were deposited during interglacial highstands of the sea under conditions similar to those that exist in the modern Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries.

The City is level with gentle slopes downward west to east with the higher ground closest to the Isle of Wight County boarder. The City has elevations ranging from approximately 85 feet to 25 feet and lower near key rivers.

Suffolk has a temperate climate consistent with its location close to the Atlantic Ocean in the southeastern United States. The City has a mean high temperature of approximately 69.4 degrees, and a mean low temperature of 49.3 degrees. Average precipitation is 48 inches.



3. Rural Lands Conservation



Preserving our agricultural heritage is one of the key themes of this comprehensive plan. Historically, agriculture has played a major role in the City's economy. The City's predominant crop, peanuts, has been under pressure in recent years due to changes in federal crop support payments. Increasing land values throughout the City have put development pressure on the area. Due to the development regulations (minor subdivisions) large pasture and crop lands are being fragmented. This is especially a concern where two or three development lots with driveways along a rural road may make a large farm behind less usable.

Anecdotal evidence suggests that changes at the federal level combined with the increasing land values are causing many farmers to reconsider the use of their land. Statistics from the 2002 Census of Agriculture appear to support some of the conclusions.

The Census of Agriculture found that in the City of Suffolk over the past five years, there has been an overall decrease of more than 8,000 acres of farmland. Over the same period, there has been an increase in the number of

very small farms (less than 70 acres) and very large farms (more than 2,000 acres) with a large increase in the number of farms between 10 and 49 acres. Farms in most other categories declined both in the number of farms and in the number of acres in production due to shifts in the production type of crops. This is shown in Table 5-1.

There are two key interrelated issues that are affecting the agricultural community in Suffolk today. They are:

1. Crops historically produced in the City of Suffolk, such as cotton and peanuts, are in some cases no longer generating sufficient levels of return to justify continued cultivation.
2. As crop returns diminish, landowners are seeking additional ways to create value in their properties - mainly through residential development. This increased residential development in the southern portion of the City is causing conflicts between the agricultural community and new residents.

Based on the 2018 plan, residential development in the agricultural areas of the City has been held in check by limiting subdivisions. However, development in the area is still occurring using two options – family transfers, and minor subdivisions. It is interesting to note that the City of Suffolk is the only city in Virginia that is required by state law (City Charter) to provide for family subdivisions.

**Table 5-1
Farms by Size**

Total Farms	1997	2002	Change	% Change
Number of Farms	257	247	-10	-3.9%
Total Acres Being Farmed	78,796	70,592	-8204	-10.4%
Average Farm Size	307	286	-21	-6.8%

Source: 2002 Census of Agriculture, US Department of Agriculture

Figure 5-1, Prime Farmland Soils illustrates the extent and approximate locations of Prime Farmland Soils in relation to the existing zoning classifications. Prime farmland is one of several kinds of important farmlands meeting certain criteria making it well suited to the production of food, feed, forage, fiber and oilseed crops, as defined by the US Department of Agriculture (USDA). The designation as Prime Farmland is based on soil type and does not reflect the current land use. Since the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, the majority of residential and commercial development has occurred within the Suburban/Urban growth areas, with outlying nodes

around the rural villages. It is clear that the 2018 Comprehensive Plan and Unified Development Ordinance have succeeded in directing new growth into these designated Suburban/Urban growth areas, helping to preserve extensive prime farmlands in the southern and northern portions of the City where timber and agriculture are major land uses. The Focused Growth Framework continues to support this, by expanding the agricultural areas in the northwest portion of the City, and continuing to strictly limit non-agricultural development in the southern reaches of the City.

3.1 State of the Agricultural Economy in Suffolk

Historically, Suffolk has been known for its peanut crop. Recent changes in federal farm policy have caused a decrease in the economic value of the crop. Federal price supports no longer support direct quota plantings as was previous federal policy. This has caused some

consolidation in peanut producing farms in Suffolk. Since 1997, there has been a 30% decline in peanut farms in the City, as shown in Table 5-2. However, there has only been a 1.9% drop in the number of acres being farmed and a 6.5% drop in pounds of peanuts produced.

**Table 5-2
Peanut Production in Suffolk**

	1997	2002	Change
Farms	112	78	-30.4%
Acres	11,058	10,845	-1.9%
Pounds	24,927,215	23,314,338	-6.5%

Source: 2002 Census of Agriculture, US Department of Agriculture

Peanut Profile in a Nutshell

Peanuts are believed to have originated in South America, probably in Brazil or Peru. Peanuts were introduced to Asia and Africa by Spanish explorers and to North America in the 1700s. Four main varieties of peanuts are produced in the U.S.: Runners, Virginia, Spanish, and Valencia.

The most common variety, Runners, accounts for about three-quarters of U.S. peanut production and is used mainly to make peanut butter (52 percent of Runners in 2000/01) but also in peanut candy (26 percent) and as snack peanuts (20 percent). The large, high-quality Virginia peanuts account for about 15 percent of domestic production and are more favored as snack peanuts (e.g., roasted in-shell peanuts and salted or honey-roasted peanuts). Spanish peanuts, with smaller kernels and higher oil content, are used mainly in peanut candies. The least common, Valencias, also have small kernels and are known for their sweetness. They are produced almost exclusively in New Mexico, and are usually roasted and sold in the shell.

At the national level, peanuts are a relatively minor crop, with farm-level value of production less than 5 percent of the value of corn production in 2000/01. But peanut production is concentrated in a small number of states and is a key contributor to local economies. Virtually all peanut production takes place in just nine states in three regions: the Southeast (Georgia, Alabama, Florida, and South Carolina), with 55 percent of national production; the Southwest (Texas, Oklahoma, and New Mexico), with 30 percent; and the Virginia-North Carolina region, with 15 percent.

Cotton is another key indicator crop for the City. Table 5-3 illustrates that since 1997, there has been a nearly 2,000 acre increase in land in cotton production while the number of farms has decreased by approximately 37.5%, show-

ing a consolidation of smaller farms into fewer larger farms. However, yields have suffered, with a 24.3% decrease in the number of bales taken from City farms over the same period.

**Table 5-3
Cotton Production in Suffolk**

	1997	2002	Change
Farms	48	30	-37.5%
Acres	13,432	15,389	14.6%
Bales	20,599	15,600	-24.3%

Source: 2002 Census of Agriculture, US Department of Agriculture

3.2 Agricultural Impacts to the Environment

Agriculture, while a seemingly environmentally friendly land use, can have significant environmental impacts if not properly managed. Grazing lands are considered a major source of nonpoint water quality problems in some areas depending upon management. Most often, problems relate to confinement of livestock or livestock's access to

streams. Croplands, too, can have a significant impact on local and regional surface water quality. According to a United States Department of Agriculture Publication, the following are a list of some of the management practices that can be used to reduce agricultural impacts to water quality.

1. Prescribed and rotational grazing

Good grassland serves as an effective cover to control erosion and filter sediment. A healthy well managed stand of grass effectively utilizes the available nutrients and prevents nutrient transport to the streams. A grazing management plan can be designed to rotate pastures or to limit the intensity and duration of grazing and animal access to the streams.

2. Nutrient and pesticide management

The application of fertilizers is done when optimum utilization of the grass is realized. Pesticides, when appropriate for pest control, are applied for the target species at the prescribed rates and timing to reduce potential off-site damage.

3. Livestock watering facilities

This provides livestock water from ponds, pipelines, or controlled access to streams. It also improves grazing distribution. This aids in reducing the impact and erosion potential on concentration areas. It also prevents long-term uncontrolled access to streams.

4. Livestock exclusion

This practice protects the streamside vegetation from overgrazing, trampling, or other impacts that degrade riparian vegetation or the stability of the stream. Due to water quality concerns, access by livestock to streams could negatively impact the stream or filtering function of the streamside vegetation. As such, restricted access to streams should be considered.

5. Riparian Forest Buffer

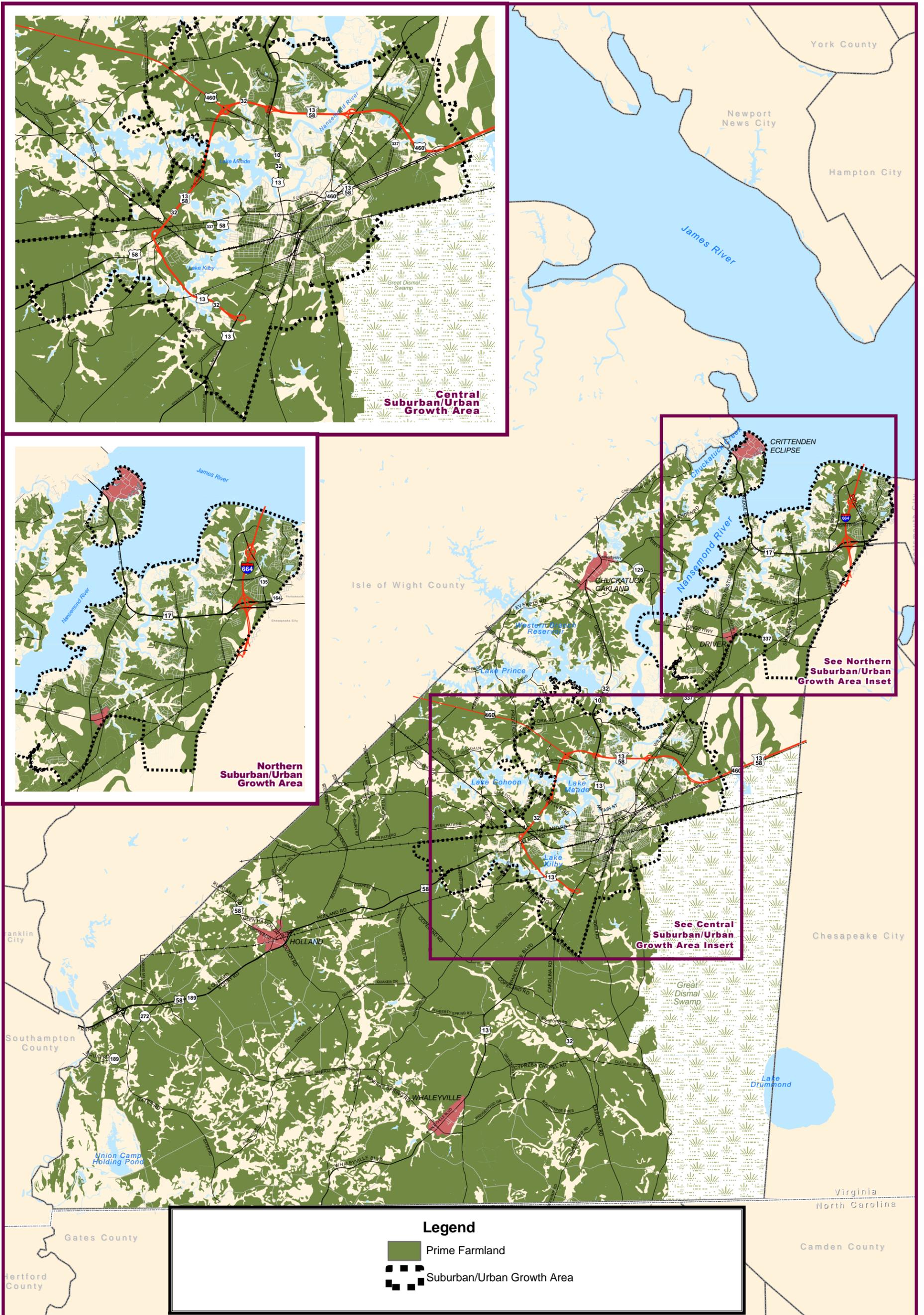
Riparian forest buffers are areas of forested land adjacent to streams, rivers, marshes or shoreline that form the transition between land and water environments. This practice often becomes the last means of intercepting pollutants in the form of sediment or chemicals in runoff or shallow groundwater before it enters the streams.

6. Land use changes

Conversion from cropland to a less intensive land use, such as hayland or forest on areas adjacent to stream systems, generally reduces the risk of pollutants entering the stream system.

Farmers should work with their extension agent, the Soil and Water Conservation service, and other agencies to determine best management practices to limit agricultural impacts to water quality.

The Peanut Soil and Water Conservation District and Natural Resource Conservation Service are the primary agencies that work closely with the agricultural community in the City of Suffolk. These agencies can assist landowners with the development of “conservation plans” and can provide funds to landowners to install conservation practices. To date, the City has not taken an active role in conservation planning in the agricultural areas, except through a Memorandum of Agreement, which should be updated.



City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan

Prime Farmland



4. Water Resources and Chesapeake Bay Preservation

Water resources are an integral part of the quality of life for residents of the City of Suffolk. The management of development and land disturbing activities directly affects the quality of surface water, drinking water, fisheries and wetland habitat.

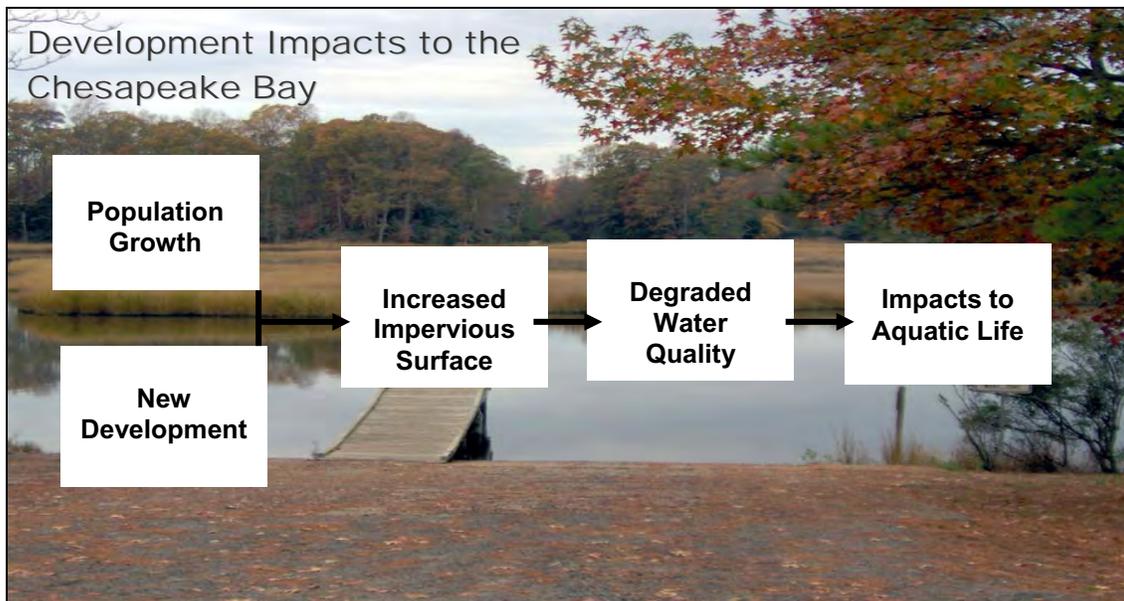
In the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, and the associated Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations, adopted by the Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Board, address nonpoint source pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Nonpoint source pollution is caused by rainfall moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human-made pollutants, depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, and coastal waters. The regulations identify and provide management strategies for portions of the basin, known as Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas (CBPAs) -- lands where development has the potential to impact water quality most directly. Land in a CBPA is categorized as either a Resource Protection Area (RPA) a Resource Management Area (RMA) or an Intensely Developed Area (IDA). RPAs are sensitive lands within 100 feet of the shoreline or along the banks of streams and wetlands. RMAs are lands out of the RPA that, without proper management, have the potential to significantly degrade water quality or to damage the protective features of the RPA. Development within RPAs is restricted to water dependent uses or redevelopment. Land use within RMAs is limited by the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. In

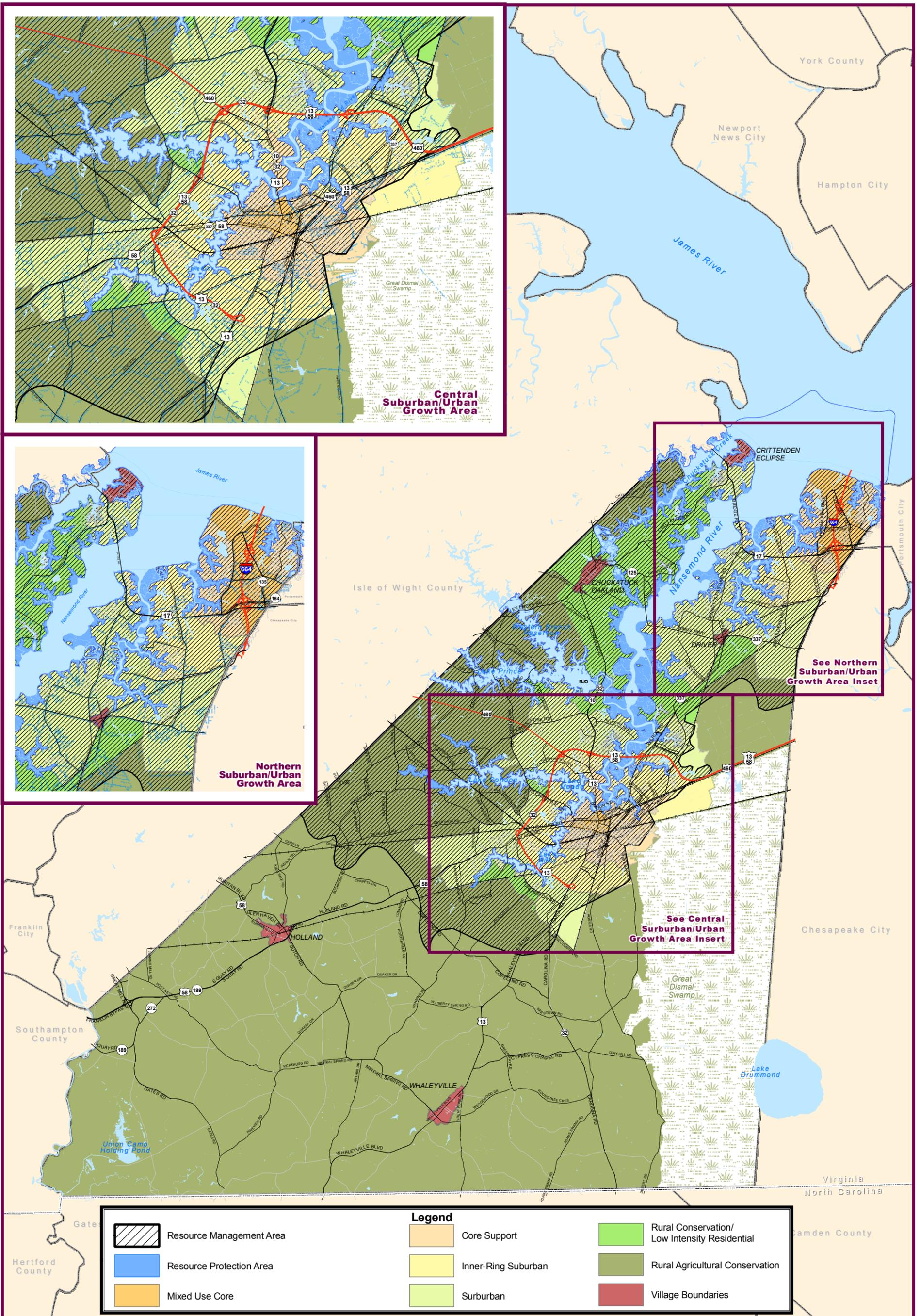
terms of the amount of impervious surface cover, any development permitted under the Unified Development Ordinance can occur in the RMA with a limitation that stormwater pollutants must be removed to the default level equivalent to an impervious cover of 16 percent. Intensely Developed Areas (IDA) is a designated redevelopment area which incorporates portions of the RPA and RMA. The IDA includes areas in which development was concentrated as of January 21, 1992, so that little of the natural environment remains. Development within IDAs is much less constrained than in RPAs and RMAs.

However, the default of factor of 16% impervious cover has been challenging to implement with Performance Based Criteria when used for evaluating stormwater facilities. Large industrial or commercial facilities have substantial amounts of impervious cover. Even with the most efficient stormwater BMP, it is difficult, if not impossible, to achieve the required pollution removal from stormwater runoff from sites with large impervious coverage. The development community has requested that "Proprietary" BMPs be allowed; however, without a proven method for evaluating these facilities, the City is reluctant to allow these systems. The Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Division should provide information and guidance regarding these stormwater issues.

Figure 5-2 depicts the process of environmental degradation as a result of development in RPAs and RMAs. Figure 5-3 identifies the locations of RPAs and RMAs in the City of Suffolk.

Figure 5-2





City of Suffolk, Virginia
 2026 Comprehensive Plan
Chesapeake Bay Preservation Areas



Figure 5-3

4.1 Floodplains

Floodplains play a vital part of the City's ecosystem. According to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, floodplains play the following roles:

Natural flood and erosion control

- Provide areas of floodwater storage
- Reduce flood velocities, giving more time to react to floods
- Reduce flood peaks
- Reduce sedimentation

Water quality

- Filter nutrients and impurities from runoff
- Process organic wastes
- Help moderate temperature fluctuations

Groundwater recharge

- Promote infiltration and recharge of the aquifer
- Slowly release water to reduce infrequency and duration of low surface flows

Biological resources

Fish and wildlife habitat

- Provide breeding and feeding grounds
- Create and enhance waterfowl habitat
- Protect habitat for rare and endangered species

Floodplains include all areas subject to inundation by waters of the 100-year flood. A 100-year flood has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. These areas include the designated floodway and flood-fringe. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) also designates areas as being in the 500-year flood plain, where there is a .2% chance of a flood occurring. Maps of the City's flood hazard areas are available for review at the City Planning Department and for purchase from FEMA.

Since the 2018 Plan was adopted, the floodplain boundary along the Blackwater River was widened to more adequately reflect flood conditions that were observed during Hurricane Floyd in 1999.

The City's Floodplain District limits development within floodplain areas and/or provides design requirements in keeping with floodplain regulations. Additionally, the City has an emergency plan to evacuate residents during hurricane emergencies. The City manages development within the Coastal High Hazard Area to minimize flood and tidal impacts. FEMA and the National Flood Insurance Program have defined the Coastal High Hazard Area as areas within the 100-year coastal floodplain and additional hazardous areas associated with storm waves. Future impacts to floodplains will continue to be minimized through the building permit process. In accord with recent updates to FEMA regulations, the City adopted minor changes to the floodplain ordinance in August 2002. The City has not done a comprehensive evaluation to determine opportunities to lessen the impact of flooding on flood-prone properties. Rather, structure improvements and removal from the floodplain are coordi-

nated through compliance with floodplain regulations during redevelopment activities.

The City should consider taking part in the National Flood Insurance Program's (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS), which is a voluntary incentive

program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management and education activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. Once FEMA approves the City's CRS, there could be potential savings on flood insurance for those property owners who currently pay for this insurance.

4.2 Tidal and Non-tidal Wetlands

The development and protection of wetlands within the City of Suffolk is vital to the City's ability to regulate water levels within watersheds; improve water quality; reduce flood and storm damages; provide important fish and wildlife habitat; and support hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities.

Wetlands filter surface-water runoff before it reaches open water. As the runoff water passes through the wetlands, it retains excess nutrients and some pollutants, and reduces sediment that would clog waterways and affect fish and amphibian egg development. Wetlands within and downstream of urban areas are particularly valuable, counteracting the greatly increased rate and volume of surface-water runoff from pavement and buildings.

The vegetative species within wetlands slow the speed of flood waters and distribute them more slowly over the floodplain. At the same time, wetlands function as natural sponges that trap and slowly release surface water. This combined water storage and braking action

lowers flood heights and reduces erosion.

The ability of wetlands to control erosion is so valuable that some states are restoring wetlands in coastal areas to



buffer the storm surges from hurricanes and tropical storms. Wetlands at the margins of lakes, rivers, bays, and the ocean protect shorelines and stream banks against erosion. Wetland plants hold the soil in place

with their roots, absorb the energy of waves, and break up the flow of stream or river currents.

Wetlands are either tidal or non-tidal. Tidal wetlands can be found along protected coastlines and are influenced by the motion of ocean tides. Tidal marshes include freshwater marshes, others that are brackish (somewhat salty), and still others that are saline (salty).

Non-tidal marshes are the most prevalent and widely distributed wetlands in North America. They are mostly fresh-

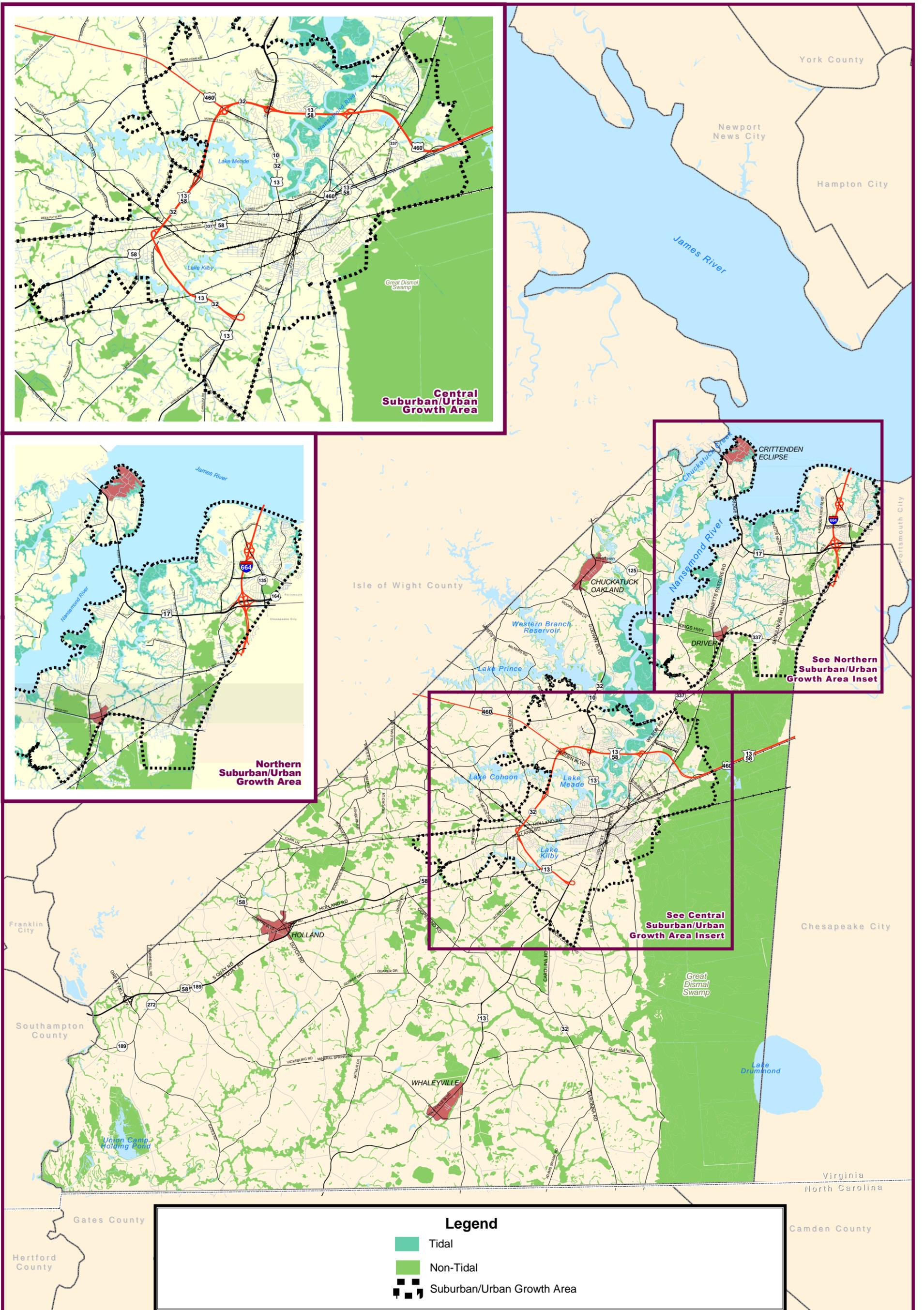
water marshes, although some are brackish or alkaline. They frequently occur along streams in poorly drained depressions, and in the shallow water along the boundaries of lakes, ponds, and rivers. Water levels in these wetlands generally vary from a few inches to two or three feet.

As illustrated in Figure 5-4, Tidal and Non-Tidal Wetlands, and Table 5-4, the City includes approximately 94,000 acres of wetland. Wetlands occupy tidal areas, stream corridors and broad flat swamps such as the Great Dismal Swamp. The following table presents a relative breakdown of the various wetland types found in the City based on National Wetland Inventory data.

**Table 5-4
Wetlands by Type**

Wetland Type	National Wetland Inventory Classification	Typical Vegetation	Area (acres)
Estuarine – subtidal	E1	Aquatic bed or mudflat	12,537
Estuarine – intertidal	E2	Cordgrass, needlerush, groundsel tree, salt meadow hay	6,058
Freshwater – emergent	PEM	Sedges, rushes, grasses, arrowhead, smartweed	2,422
Freshwater – forested	PFO	Red maple, black gum, bald cypress	63,976
Freshwater – shrub swamp	PSS	Alder, dogwood, willow, ferns	3,253
Freshwater – open water	PUB & PAB	Submergent aquatics	1,201
Freshwater - riverine	R	Riparian woods	194
Freshwater - lakes	L	Submergent aquatics	4,695
Total			94,336

Source: National Wetland Inventory GIS database



City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan

Wetlands



Figure 5-4

Wetlands are protected by federal, state and local regulations. The Army Corps of Engineers regulates all wetlands that are adjacent to or connected to navigable waters. Generally, this includes all wetlands associated with watercourses, both intermittent and perennial, as well as tidal wetlands. The Department of Environmental Quality and Marine Resources Commission regulate freshwater and tidal wetlands. The City regulates tidal wetlands through the Wetlands Board. All agencies require mitigation for proposed impacts in accord with the federal policy of “**no net loss**”.

The following human and natural actions have the potential to negatively affect the quality of wetlands:

Human Actions

- Increased boating activity
- Drainage
- Dredging and stream channelization
- Deposition of fill material
- Diking and damming
- Tilling for crop production
- Levees
- Logging
- Mining
- Construction
- Runoff
- Air and water pollutants
- Changing nutrient levels
- Releasing toxic chemicals
- Introducing nonnative species
- Grazing by domestic animals

Natural Threats

- Erosion
- Subsidence
- Sea level rise
- Droughts
- Hurricanes and other storms

Between 2000 and 2004, the City has reviewed and approved 184 permits for tidal wetland impacts. Many of the wetland projects were for stabilization of

shorelines necessary as a result of recent hurricanes. However, mitigation will now be required for routine projects.

Nevertheless, five non-tidal wetland restoration projects have been completed in the City, according to the Army Corps of Engineers, providing over 190 acres of restored or preserved wetlands designated as wetland banks. Through the wetland permitting process, wetland bank acreage can be used as mitigation for project impacts.

Wetlands banks can be established in various areas of the City. The permitting agencies will give careful consideration to the ecological suitability of a site i.e., that it possess the physical, chemical and biological characteristics to support establishment of the desired aquatic resources and functions. Size and location of the site relative to other ecological features, hydrologic sources (including the availability of water rights), and compatibility with adjacent land uses and watershed management plans are important factors for consideration. It also is important that ecologically significant aquatic or upland resources (e.g., shallow sub-tidal habitat, mature forests), cultural sites, or habitat for Federally or State-listed threatened and endangered species are not compromised in the process of establishing a bank. Other significant factors for consideration include, but are not limited to, development trends (i.e., anticipated land use changes), habitat status and trends, local or regional goals for the restoration or protection of particular habitat types or functions (e.g., re-establishment of habitat corridors or habitat for species of concern), water quality and floodplain management goals, and the relative potential for chemical contamination of the wetlands and/ or other aquatic resources.

4.3 Shoreline Features and Erosion Control

The City waterfront contains approximately 150 miles of shoreline bordering the Nansemond and James Rivers, and Chuckatuck and Bennett's creeks, and their tributaries. Shoreline elevations in Suffolk average from 3 to 8 feet, with some locations having higher elevations. Flooding is generally not considered to be a significant issue in most areas of the City as the Nansemond River is a low energy waterbody. Typically, storm surges are two or less feet above normal high tide, leaving only marshlands proximate to the river as flooded. Only the downtown area around North Main Street experiences flooding when strong northeast winds and tidal surges occur.

Shoreline areas often provide access to the local river systems and to the Chesapeake Bay through public and private piers. Shoreline areas along the lower Nansemond River, Chuckatuck Creek, Bennetts Creek, Knotts Creek and Hoffler Creek have extensive marshes. These marshes provide medium to high quality habitat for wildlife and fisheries, as well as buffering the shore from erosive forces.



In general, shoreline areas in the City remain in a natural condition; with short areas of artificial stabilization (approximately 3.75% of the City's Chesapeake Bay area shoreline is stabilized). In the

northern portion of the City, shoreline areas along rivers and bays are prime sites for high-end development, particularly for residential properties. In this area, especially near the mouth of Chuckatuck Creek and the James River shoreline, up to 29% (4,075 feet) of the shoreline has been stabilized. Another 2,200 feet of James River shoreline is stabilized near Pig Point (Bridgeway Commerce Center) and 200 feet of shoreline is stabilized at the Tidewater Community College Campus.

The condition of existing shorelines with respect to erosion problems is not expected to have changed substantially from the 2018 plan. According to the previous plan, shoreline erosion was not a significant problem in the City. The bluffs at Eclipse (Barrel Point) and on the peninsula between Chuckatuck Creek and the Nansemond River were identified as having the greatest amount of erosion problems, accounting for approximately 2.3 feet/year. Existing shoreline erosion problems are most notable at the mouth of Bennetts Creek. Continued development along shorelines has the potential to increase erosion problems, as natural vegetation is removed and replaced by manicured landscapes. Enforcement of CBPA regulations, particularly grading and vegetative restrictions for the RPA, continue to minimize development impacts to shorelines. There are many small projects being implemented by landowners to improve shoreline stabilization. The City conducts appropriate compliance review to ensure that these projects are consistent with wetland and CBPA regulations. Further, the CBPA provides the following information on appropriate shoreline erosion mitigation measures, based on the extent of the problem.

Areas with a Low Erosion Rate (< 1 ft./year) 1 = most preferable

1. Vegetative stabilization with or without bank regrading (if applicable)
2. Revetment
3. Bulkhead

Areas with a Moderate Erosion Rate (1 – 3 ft./year) 1 = most preferable

1. Vegetative stabilization (depending on site-specific conditions)
2. Beach nourishment
3. Revetment
4. Breakwaters
5. Groins
6. Bulkheads (depending on site-specific conditions)

Areas with a Severe Erosion Rate (> 3 ft./year) 1 = most preferable

1. Relocation
2. Beach nourishment
3. Revetments
4. Breakwaters
5. Groins
6. Seawall

The City of Suffolk Wetlands Board reviews and permits structures to ensure that shoreline projects are justified. Currently, the approval process is based on the environmental merits of each project individually, and does not take into consideration the cumulative effects of other shoreline control structures. The totality of impacts from erosion control structures along a river or creek is critical to making individual permit decisions. However, the Board does receive critical information and assistance from VIMs to assist in determining the cumulative impacts.

Within the CBPA, Intensely Developed Areas (IDAs) have been designated by the City to serve as development areas in which development is concentrated and where little natural environment re-

mains intact. Further, one of the following conditions must exist: (i) development has severely altered the actual state of the area such that it has more than 50% impervious cover; (ii) public sewer and water is constructed and currently serves the area; or (iii) housing density is equal to or greater than 4 dwellings per acre. Development and redevelopment within the IDAs can be permitted provided that water quality impact assessments are conducted and Best Management Practices are established to achieve a 10% reduction in nonpoint source pollution. The city also requires water quality improvements through the use of BMPs and buffer restoration where possible.

Boating activities and development of associated water access and use areas can also degrade water quality, exacerbate natural shoreline erosion rates, and potentially harm sensitive land and aquatic living resources found in those areas if not properly developed.

Through comprehensive shoreline planning, inventories of unaltered and altered shoreline features, sensitive living



resources, oceanographic characteristics, and adjacent land use designations can be created and their interrelationships examined in both a pre- and post-erosion control structure placement context. In doing so, it can be determined whether or not an erosion problem truly exists and, if so, what factors are responsible for the problem and what measures are most appropriate to relieve the problem. In addition, any potential upstream or downstream impacts can be analyzed. In any case, it should be noted that erosion control structures are ultimately susceptible to extreme weather events. If such structures are not the most appropriate for a given situation, they can be extremely expensive in the long-term to the property

owner and, sometimes, even the community at large. Any shoreline activity should be done in a manner consistent with recommendations from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) and the Shoreline Advisory Service.

While existing land uses along the shoreline should work to control erosion, future development goals should be to direct development or redevelopment away from shoreline areas which are identified as critically-eroding, and to areas where suitable access can be developed without degradation of water quality or sensitive living resources through related construction, operation, or maintenance activities.

4.4 Water Quality

As part of on-going evaluation and regulation of water quality, the VA Department of Environmental Quality and US Environmental Protection Agency have developed a list of impaired water bodies. To be listed as impaired, a water

body has to have documented pollutants that exceed normal tolerances for the designated use. Table 5-5 provides the listing of impaired waters for the City of Suffolk.

**Table 5-5
Impaired Waters in the City of Suffolk**

Waterbody Name	Size	Impairment	TMDL* Development Date (proposed)
James River (Mulberry Island area)	95.28 sq. mi.	General Standard (Benthic)	2016
Nansemond River (Upper)	1.25 sq. mi.	Fecal Coliform	2016
Nansemond River (Lake Meade Dam)	0.32 sq. mi.	Fecal Coliform & Enterococco, Dissolved Oxygen	2010
Bennett Creek (Lower)	0.52 sq. mi.	Fecal Coliform, Fish Tissue –PCBs	2016
Star Creek tributary to Nansemond River	0.02 sq. mi.	Fish Tissue – PCBs	2016
Shingle Creek	0.12 sq. mi.	Fecal Coliform, Dissolved Oxygen, pH	2010
Nansemond River: Bleakhorn Creek	0.05 sq. mi.	VDH Shellfish Restriction	2010

Waterbody Name	Size	Impairment	TMDL* Development Date (proposed)
Nansemond River: Knotts Creek	0.14 sq. mi.	VDH Shellfish Restriction	2010
Nansemond River: Bennett Creek	0.46 sq. mi.	VDH Shellfish Restriction	2010
Nansemond River & tributaries	3.28 sq. mi.	VDH Shellfish Restriction	2010
Shingle Creek	0.12 sq. mi.	VDH Shellfish Restriction	2016
Chuckatuck Creek tributary to James River	1.94 sq. mi.	Fish Tissue – PCB	2016
Blackwater River (Lower)	19.87 mi.	Dissolved Oxygen	2010
Blackwater River (Down from Zuni)	40.22 mi.	Fish Consumption - Mercury	2016
Somerton Creek	13.78 mi.	Dissolved Oxygen, pH	2016
Somerton Creek, unnamed tributary (March Swamp)	7.47 mi.	Dissolved Oxygen, pH	2016
Chapel Swamp	3.85 mi.	Dissolved Oxygen, pH	2016

Source: Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, 2004 Water Quality Assessment 305(b)/303(d) Integrated Report.

*TMDL = Total Maximum Daily Load.

The listed waters for the CBPA watershed (James River Watershed), generally, have limitations related to industrial pollutants (PCBs) and sanitary sewer pollutants (fecal coliform). The Chowan River/Dismal Swamp Basin, generally, has limitations related to agricultural runoff (dissolved oxygen) and acidity (pH). To identify the level and sources of pollutants in the impaired waterways that result in the impairments, and management practices required to eliminate the impairment, Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) studies should be conducted. The VA Department of Environmental Quality is the lead agency at the state level and USEPA leads the federal level. Funding for TMDL studies is available from both the state and federal government; however, competition for the funding is extremely tough due to the large number of studies that need to be done statewide and nationally.

The most visible effects of the water body impairments recognized by the citizens of Suffolk are restrictions to fish consumption and shellfish harvesting. Fish restrictions are generally related to elevated levels of the carcinogen PCB or Mercury. Shellfish restrictions are generally related to high fecal coliform bacteria levels from nonpoint sources, such as failing septic systems, or from point source pollution.

Detailed information about the sources of pollutants and management solutions will not be available until the TDML studies are completed, which are not projected to be conducted until 2010, at the earliest.

The following activities by the City contribute to the improvement of stormwater quality:

- CBPA regulatory compliance and enforcement
- Stream buffer requirements
- Provision of city sewer to residents with failing septic systems
- Grading and erosion control compliance and enforcement
- Stormwater management activities

It is expected that the TMDL studies will require a greater wide scale effort of extensive best management practice installation and environmental cleanup to reduce the impairments from the listed water resource areas.

4.5 Fisheries

Fish spawning areas for migrant fish species (anadromous) are located in the James River near the Suffolk shoreline from Pig Point east to Hoffler Creek. The marsh system along the Chesapeake Bay watershed shoreline in Suffolk, particularly along the Nansemond River, and the West, Streeter, and Hoffler Creek marsh complex are noted for being of a high resource value for marine life. As such they can be expected to be nursery areas for many of the species of finfish and shellfish in the Hampton Roads Region.

Many of the lakes and streams of the City have been stocked with a variety of fin-fish to support species restoration and recreational fishing. For example, the regional reservoir system has been stocked with striped bass, walleye, and other popular species. Area lakes support more than 20 different types of fin-fish and numerous species of reptiles and amphibians.

Shellfish restoration has been a significant issue in the Chesapeake Bay over the past several years. Shellfish are extremely susceptible to contamination from human activity especially from sewer and stormwater outfalls and fail

ing septic systems. The Nansemond River has historically been a highly productive area for growing oysters. There are numerous private leases for shellfish beds along the bottom of the river. There are several large public oyster beds (Baylor Survey) off the shoreline of the City, and near the confluence of the Nansemond and the James River.

As of November 2005, the following waters in the City of Suffolk were condemned for the taking of shellfish: Areas of Streeter Creek and Hoffler Creek (Condemnation Notice 064-018, effective March 1, 2005), area of Chuckatuck Creek (Condemnation Notice 062-080, effective September 21, 2005), areas of the upper Nansemond River including Willis Cove (Condemnation Notice 063-008, effective February 15, 2005), areas of the lower Nansemond River including Bennett Creek, Knots Creek, Bleakhorn Creek, and portions of the river itself (Condemnation Notice 063-046, effective February 15, 2005). Condemnation of an area makes it illegal except by permit, to take shellfish from these areas. It should be noted however, that these condemnation notices can change from day to day depending on conditions.

4.6 Waterfront Access

Access to the waterfront is important to the people of Suffolk due to the aesthetic, recreational, commercial and economic benefits that it provides. Nevertheless, the development of shoreline access facilities may potentially impact water quality. The magnitude of the impact will depend on the type of access. The types of shoreline access generally include marinas, motorized and non-motorized boat access ramps, and piers and docks for fishing and pedestrian access. The type that presents the greatest impact to water quality is marinas. Marinas can impact water quality in the following ways:

- Resuspension of bottom sediments by associated dredging and boating activities, increasing turbidity levels, and releasing pollutants;
- Stormwater runoff from impervious surfaces associated with marina development capable of transporting nonpoint source pollutants directly into receiving waters;
- Oil and fuel discharges associated with boat engines;
- Pollutants associated with boat maintenance activities such as paint, oil, and boat washing activities;
- Associated piers, docks, and bulkheads may decrease water circulation and decrease aquatic habitat by blocking available light.

The construction and operation of boat ramps will have many of the same impacts on water quality as marinas, but usually to a much lesser degree. Compared to marinas and boat ramps, non-motorized boating access, such as ca

noe/kayak access, presents few adverse impacts to water quality. Potential impacts from pier and bank fishing access are minimal, except perhaps for the installation and use of docks and piers and fish cleaning activities. Similarly, pedestrian shoreline access presents minimal impacts to water quality, except potential stormwater runoff associated with access facilities and the construction of piers and docks.

According to the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) Shoreline Study, there are 331 piers and docks in the City. This calculates to a density of .42 piers per 1000 feet of shoreline. Bleakhorn Creek has the highest density in the City with more than 2 piers per 1000 feet of shoreline. Further, there are three marinas – Bennett Creek, Brady’s Marina, and Constants Wharf.

On a similar note, access to open waterways and rivers provides increased recreational activities that support the quality of life of Suffolk’s residents. While fixed bridges currently block full access to many rivers and waterways in and around the City, the potential impacts of increase boat activities on the potentially delicate environments needs to be assessed. One option for the City is to encourage all marina operators to secure the “Clean Marina” designation awarded through the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality. Participation in this program requires marina operators to implement a variety of water quality protection techniques.

5. Soils

Soils provide one of the underlying keys to the opportunities and constraints for site development. Constraints can range from high water tables that limit on-site sewage treatment to erosive conditions that require intensive management during site development. Table 5-6 (located at the end of this chapter) provides a characterization of the soil types in the Suffolk area. Some limitations include soils that have a high potential for shrink or swell are poorly suited for foundations, roadways, or other construction. On the other hand, other soils that have high organic content and are well drained make excellent soils for farming. Thus, knowing the type and characteristic of soils underlying the City are invaluable in making decisions about the future of development. A map of the soils found in the City of Suffolk is shown as Figure 5-5.



According to Table 5-7, Suitability of Soils for Specific Uses, the majority of the City has soils that are very limited for traditional on-site septic systems. Construction of traditional septic systems in such soils often results in failing systems that contribute bacteria and nutrients directly to surface waters that flow to sensitive resources such as the Chesapeake Bay and wetlands.

In the Suburban/Urban Development Area soil suitability for septic systems is

generally not a concern. In the Suburban/Urban Development Area public sewers are required and available in most instances. In the Rural Agricultural Conservation District, well-drained soils and lower housing densities support septic systems that are less likely to fail. However, septic system suitability is a primary concern in the Rural Villages and the Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential District, where housing development is present or planned for the future. Soils with poor suitability are prevalent in these areas and require careful evaluation to identify appropriate sewage treatment systems. Alternative

treatment systems, as approved by the Virginia Department of Health, should be utilized for building sites with moderate limitations. Severe soil limitations should not be used for any septic system.

In addition to the concerns for future development on unsuitable soils, there are likely many existing residential sewage treatment systems that are failing. Discussion during initial public meetings indicates that residential properties commonly have drain fields with “soggy conditions” and leakage in the spring or when rainfall is abundant. These conditions would equate with a failing sewer system and pose a threat to water quality. The City, in coordination with the Health Department, requires regular pumping of septic tanks, but does not have an inspection program to identify failing systems. The

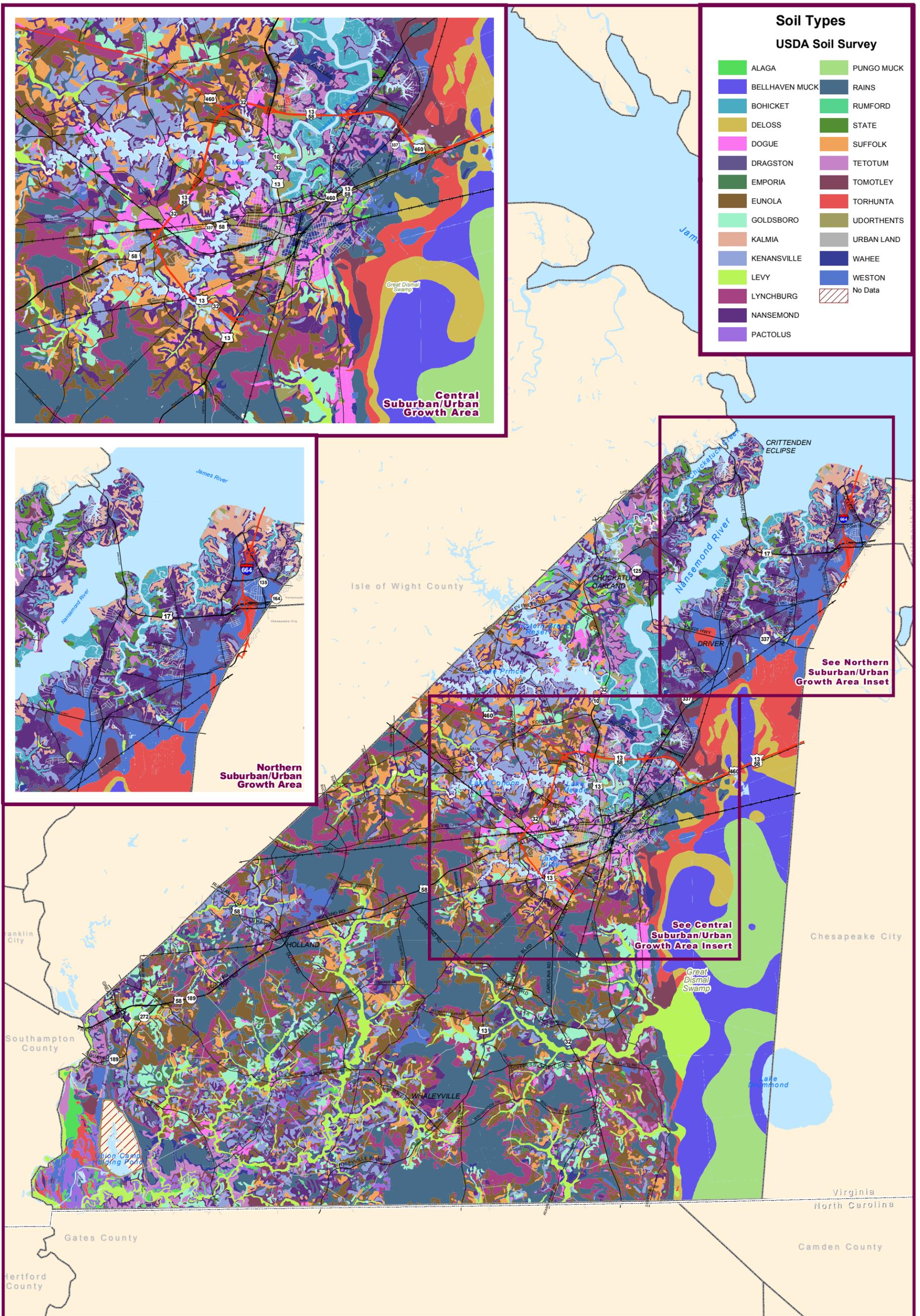
occurrence of failing systems is expected to continue to be an issue in the City with direct impacts to water quality. However, the extension of sewer service to cover the entire suburban/urban development area should help alleviate some of these problems.

Soils suitable for agriculture are also prevalent in the City of Suffolk. Significant areas of the City are designated as Prime Farmland and farmlands of statewide significance. These soils are generally limited in their use for residential or commercial development. As such, development has been focused on the northern and central parts of the City.

This updated plan makes changes in the size and location of the Rural Agricultural Conservation District. As shown in Figure 5-6 Rural Agricultural Conserva-

tion Districts, the revised area includes significant portions of the City that were previously in the Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential District. By making this change, there is a three-fold benefit to the natural environment in the City:

1. Reduces the development potential by approximately 1,300 housing units in an area of the City that are within critical areas of the Chesapeake Bay watershed. This will reduce the potential for run-off from impermeable surfaces.
2. Protects, through zoning, farming on soils that are highly productive, assisting the agricultural community in the City.
3. Limits future development and runoff in the area surrounding the regional reservoir system.



City of Suffolk, Virginia
 2026 Comprehensive Plan

Soils Types



Figure 5-5

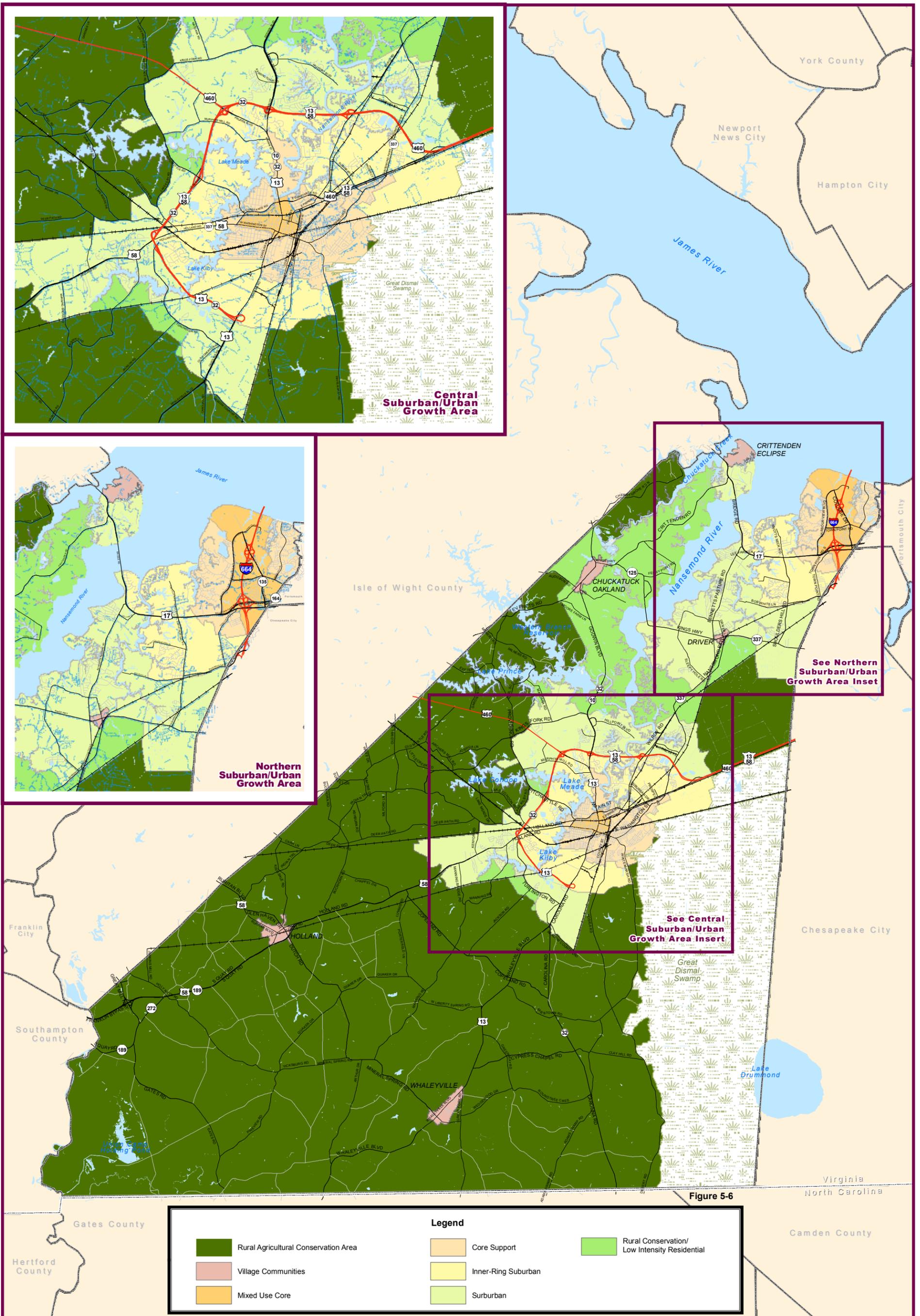


Figure 5-6



City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan

Rural Agricultural Conservation Area



Figure 5-6

**Table 5-7
Suitability of Soils for Specific Uses**

Soil Type	Upper Limits of Water Table (ft)	Septic Suitability	Farmland Suitability	Use for Local Roads and Streets	Use for Dwellings and Small Commercial Buildings
Alaga loamy sand, wet substratum, 2 to 8 percent slopes	4.0 to 5.0	Very Limited		Not limited	Not Limited to Somewhat Limited
Belhaven muck	0.0 to 1.0	Very Limited		Very limited	Very limited
Bohicket silty clay loam	0	Very Limited		Very limited	Very limited
Deloss mucky loam	0	Very Limited	Prime Farmland if Drained	Very limited	Very limited
Dogue fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	1.5 to 3.0	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited to Very Limited
Dogue fine sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded	1.5 to 3.0	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited to Very Limited
Dragston fine sandy loam	1.0 to 2.5	Very Limited	Prime Farmland if Drained	Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited to Very Limited
Emporia fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	3.0 to 4.5	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited
Emporia fine sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded	3.0 to 4.5	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited
Eunola loamy fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	1.5 to 2.5	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited to Very Limited
Eunola loamy fine sand, 2 to 6 percent slopes	1.5 to 2.5	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited to Very Limited
Goldsboro fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	2.0 to 3.0	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Not limited	Not Limited to Very Limited
Goldsboro fine sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes, eroded	2.0 to 3.0	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Not limited	Not Limited to Very Limited
Industrial waste pond		N/A		Not rated	Not Rated
Kalmia fine sandy loam, wet substratum, 0 to 2 percent slopes	4.0 to 5.0	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Not limited	Not Limited to Somewhat Limited
Kalmia fine sandy loam, wet substratum, 2 to 6 percent slopes	4.0 to 5.0	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Not limited	Not Limited to Somewhat Limited
Kenansville loamy sand, 0 to 4 percent slopes		Very Limited		Not limited	Not Limited
Kenansville loamy sand, wet substratum, 0 to 4 percent slopes	4.0 to 5.0	Very Limited		Not limited	Not Limited to Somewhat Limited
Levy silty clay loam	0	Very Limited		Very limited	Very limited
Lynchburg fine sandy loam	0.5 to 1.5	Very Limited	Prime Farmland if Drained	Very limited	Very limited

Soil Type	Upper Limits of Water Table (ft)	Septic Suitability	Farmland Suitability	Use for Local Roads and Streets	Use for Dwellings and Small Commercial Buildings
Nansemond fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	1.5 to 2.5	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited to Very Limited
Nansemond fine sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	1.5 to 2.5	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited to Very Limited
Nansemond loamy fine sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	1.5 to 2.5	Very Limited		Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited to Very Limited
Nansemond loamy fine sand, 15 to 30 percent slopes	1.5 to 2.5	Very Limited		Very limited	Very limited
Nansemond loamy fine sand, 6 to 15 percent slopes	1.5 to 2.5	Very Limited		Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited to Very Limited
Pactolus loamy fine sand	1.5 to 2.5	Very Limited		Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited to Very Limited
Pungo muck	0.0 to 1.0	Very Limited		Very limited	Very limited
Rains fine sandy loam	0.0 to 1.0	Very Limited	Prime Farmland if Drained	Very limited	Very limited
Rumford loamy fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes		Very Limited		Not limited	Not Limited
State fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	4.0 to 5.0	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Not limited	Not Limited to Somewhat Limited
State fine sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	4.0 to 5.0	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Not limited	Not Limited to Somewhat Limited
Suffolk loamy sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes		Very Limited	Farmland of Statewide Importance	Not limited	Not Limited
Suffolk loamy sand, 2 to 6 percent slopes		Very Limited	Farmland of Statewide Importance	Not limited	Not Limited
Tetotum fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	1.5 to 2.5	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited to Very Limited
Tetotum fine sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	1.5 to 2.5	Very Limited	Prime Farmland	Somewhat limited	Somewhat Limited to Very Limited
Tomotley loam	0.0 to 1.0	Very Limited	Prime Farmland if Drained	Very limited	Very limited
Torhunta loam	0.5 to 1.5	Very Limited		Very limited	Very limited
Udorthents, loamy		N/A		Not rated	Not Rated
Wahee silt loam	0.5 to 1.5	Very Limited	Prime Farmland if Drained	Very limited	Very limited
Weston fine sandy loam	0.0 to 1.0	Very Limited	Prime Farmland if Drained	Very limited	Very limited
Urban land		N/A		Not rated	Not Rated
Water		N/A		Not rated	Not Rated

6. Habitat

The preservation of habitat is broadly defined as the place where a plant or animal species naturally lives and grows; or consists of the characteristics of the soil, water, and biologic community (other plants and animals) that make this possible. Habitat enhancement and preservation is important, because it is necessary for the survival of native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to the health and quality of life for Suffolk residents.

Certain vegetative types, such as forestland and farmland, also contribute to the economic vitality of the community. The 2018 Comprehensive Plan focused on the quantity of natural and man-made cover types, the preservation of wetland habitats, establishment of buffers along

watercourses, preservation of the rural character, and increasing the amount of passive and active open space. The CBPA regulations and wetland regulations are primary tools used to preserve existing sensitive vegetative communities.

Figure 5-7 and Table 5-8, Vegetation Cover Types illustrates the locations and area of forestlands, farmlands and wetlands in relation to the zoning classifications. In general, the area with the most extensive forests and farms is in the southern portion of the City. Wetland habitats are primarily located along stream courses throughout the City, the Great Dismal Swamp, and in tidal areas of the northern portion of the City.

**Table 5-8
Vegetation Cover Types in the City of Suffolk**

Cover Type	Portion of Suffolk (%)	Area* (acres)
Woodland	55.5	155,852
Farmland	22.3	60,690
Tidal/Estuarine Wetland	6.6	18,595
Rivers, lakes, ponds	2.2	6,090
Freshwater Wetland (Emergent, Forested & Shrub)	24.8	69,651
Urban	12.7	35,638

*Note that some lands are included in more than one cover type. The acreages provided are estimates.

Source: National Wetland Inventory GIS database and City of Suffolk GIS database.

Woodlands - Forestry remains a vital part of the economy for southern Suffolk. Large acreage of forestlands, primarily pine plantations, are actively managed and harvested for wood products. These monotypic stands often include more diverse plant communities along stream corridors, drainageways and within hardwood swamps. The most sizeable natural forest community

is located within the Great Dismal Swamp, which covers approximately 38,000 acres within the City.

Farmlands - Farmlands are used to produce commodities such as peanuts, cotton, corn, soybeans and wheat. As with managed forestlands, farmlands tend to include more diverse plant communities along stream corridors,

field borders and within wetlands. The overall acreage of land in farm production is slowly declining due to the struggling farm economy. However, farming is still a vital part of the economy of southern Suffolk and remains an extensive cover type.

Wetlands - Federal and state regulations (including CBPA regulations) minimize impacts and degradation to wetland habitats, though development pressures along these sensitive resources remain. Logging of forested wetlands, particularly hardwood swamps, is not specifically regulated and is on-going in the southern portion of the City. This activity is regulated by the State Department of Forestry.

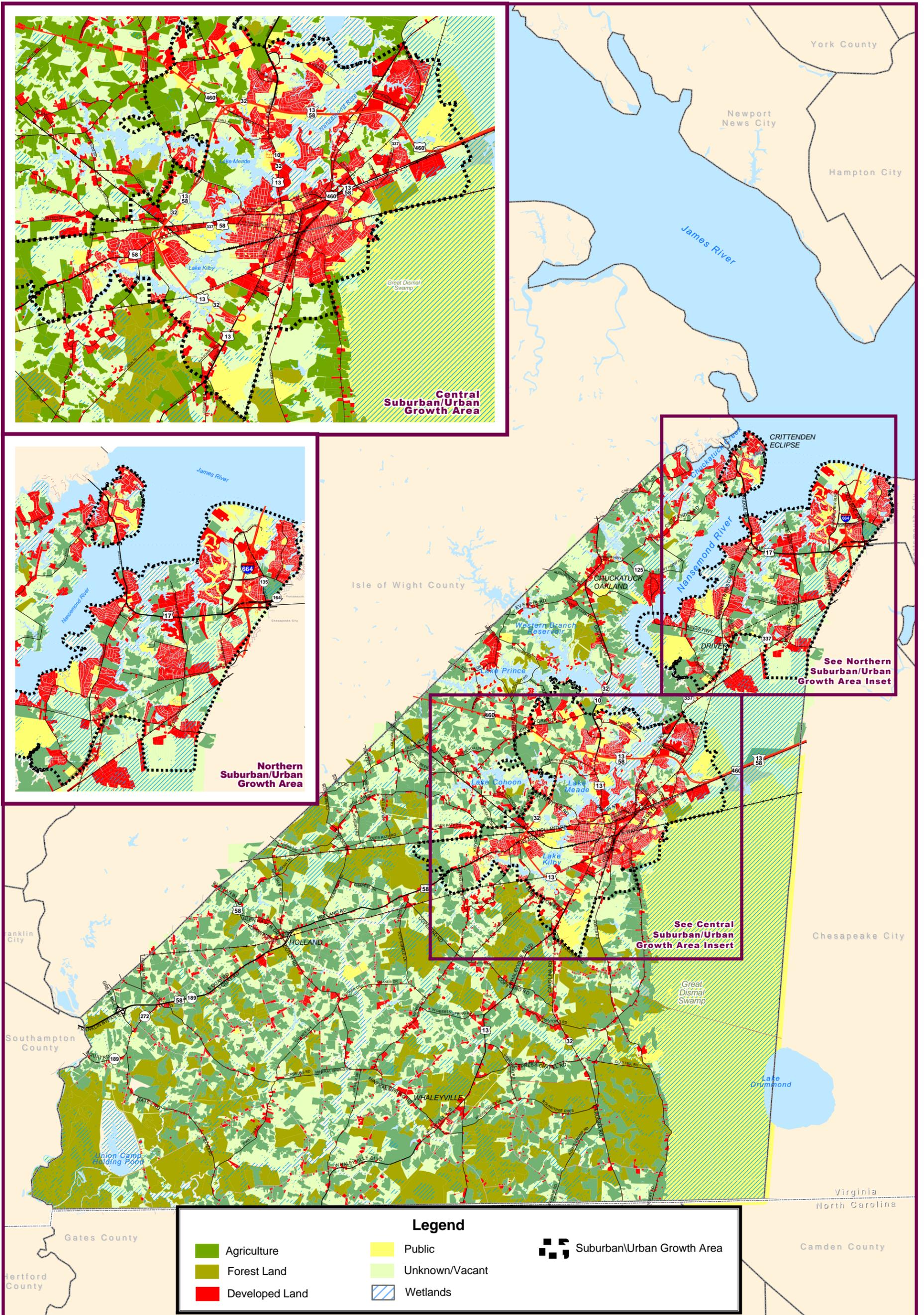
Rivers, Lakes and Ponds – The City includes a great diversity of waterbodies, ranging from the tidal estuaries on the James and Nansemond Rivers, to drinking water reservoirs, to freshwater creeks. Of particular importance are the estuaries where spawning habitat is available for marine fisheries and shellfish. The quality of these waterbodies is directly impacted by nutrients and bacteria from surface water runoff

Urban Land – Urban land includes areas developed for office, commercial, industrial and dense residential. These areas tend to have high coverage of impervious surface and increased surface water runoff. The vegetative component

of the urban landscape is limited to manicured lawns and landscaping with invasive or weedy species present within unmaintained drainageways and idle lands. This cover type is steadily increasing as the City develops.

Wildlife Habitat - The cover types of forestlands, farmlands and wetlands, as well as rivers and waterbodies, combine to provide a wide range of habitats for fish and wildlife. The common wildlife associated with each cover type is shown in Table 5-9.

As the City continues to develop, the relatively large tracts of farmlands, woodlands and wetlands are converted to smaller parcels of residential property or urban lands. This development has resulted in “fragmented” habitat that supports a lower diversity of wildlife species. Wetlands and waterways tend to be preserved under existing regulations, providing essential corridors for wildlife. However, wetlands and waterways tend to have a lower overall quality because of disturbance, surface water impacts and fragmentation of the adjacent cover types. Development also results in an increase in wildlife nuisance problems, such as the current and increasing nuisance problem with the black bear population in the City when development infringes into habitat areas.



Legend

Agriculture	Public	Suburban/Urban Growth Area
Forest Land	Unknown/Vacant	
Developed Land	Wetlands	



City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan

**Vegetative
Cover Types**



Figure 5-7

**Table 5-9
Common Wildlife Associated with Various Cover Types**

Cover Type	Common Wildlife	
Woodlands	Bear Deer Raccoon Fox Squirrels	Other small mammals Songbirds Raptors Woodpeckers Turkey
Farmland	Deer Raccoon Fox Rabbits Other small mammals	Songbirds Raptors Quail Pheasant
Non-tidal Wetland (Wooded)	Bear Small mammals Songbirds	Wood ducks Raptors Woodpeckers
Non-tidal Wetland (Not Wooded)	Raccoon Muskrat Beaver Mink Other small mammals	Songbirds Ducks Geese Shorebirds Raptors
Tidal Wetlands	Raccoon Muskrat Other small mammals Songbirds	Ducks Shorebirds Raptors Marine fisheries
Lakes, Ponds and Rivers	Raccoon Muskrat Beaver Turtles	Bass Crappie Catfish
Urban Lands	Raccoon Squirrels	Other small mammals Songbirds

6.1 Natural Heritage Areas

Natural Heritage Areas are locations of identified habitat for rare species that may exist within the City. The conservation of these habitats requires special evaluation to maintain their viability for rare species. The 2018 plan did not include any policies specific to Natural Heritage Areas, but indirectly minimized potential impacts to some areas through development and zoning restrictions.

As part of this review and update, the VA Division of Natural Heritage provided an up-to-date listing of species identified as rare within the City. The status of each species is identified as Endangered (populations in danger of becoming extinct), Threatened (populations likely to become endangered in the foreseeable future), or Special Concern (populations that are uncommon and worthy of concern). Table 5-10 provides

a summary of the rare species identified within the City.

The Division of Natural Heritage has identified Natural Heritage Areas that

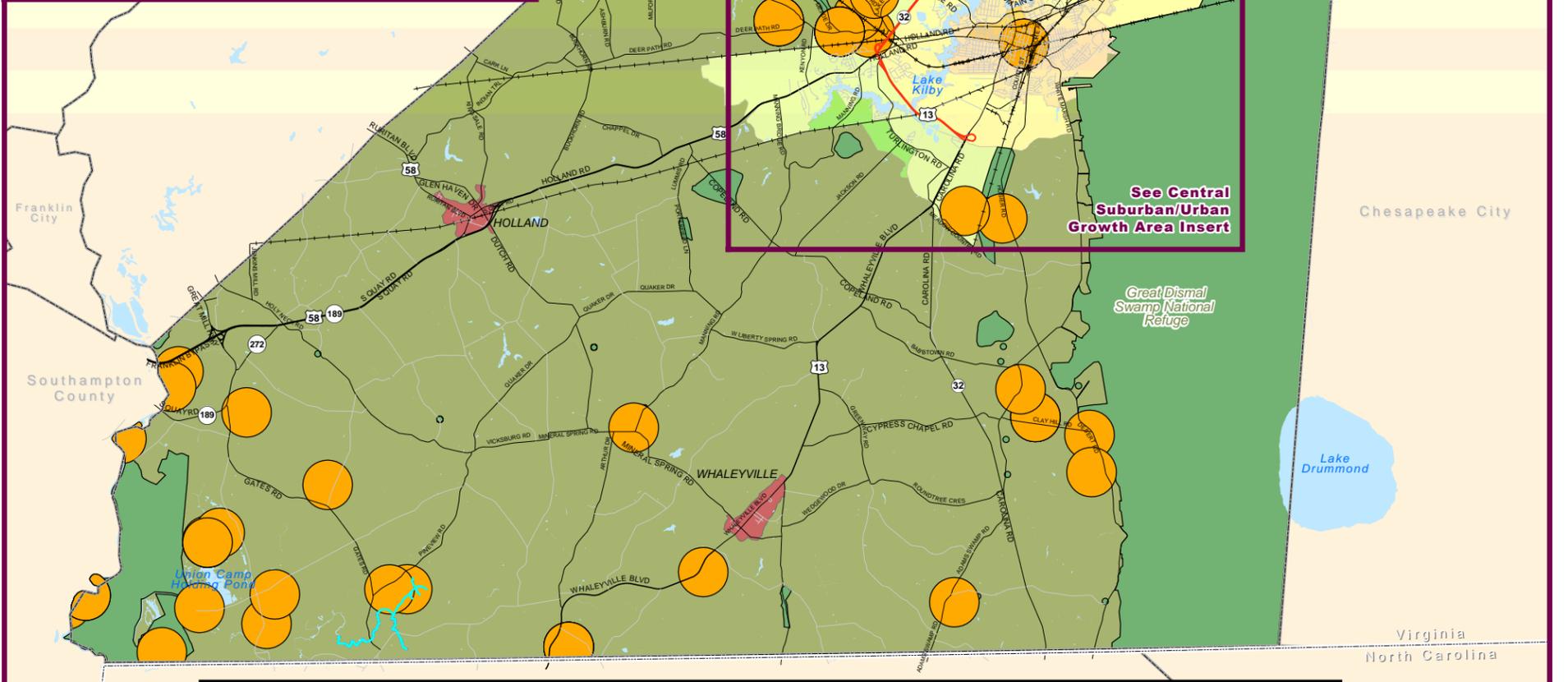
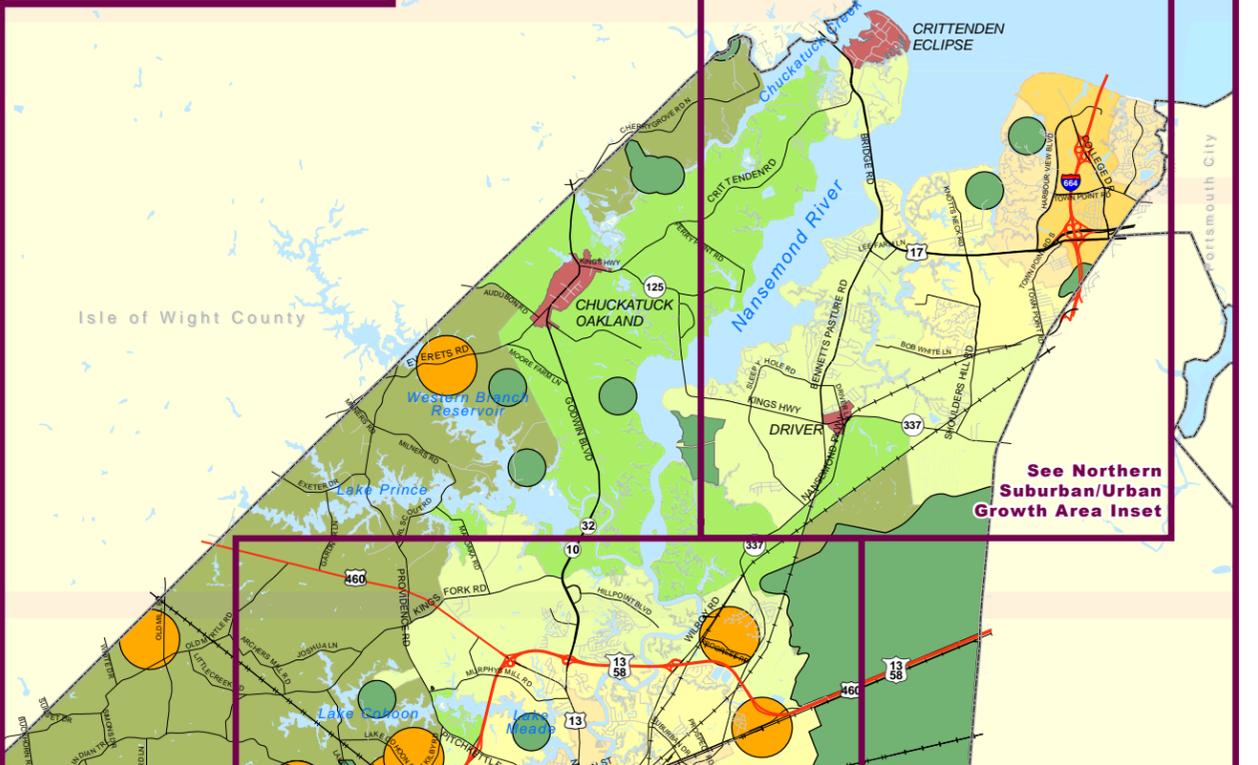
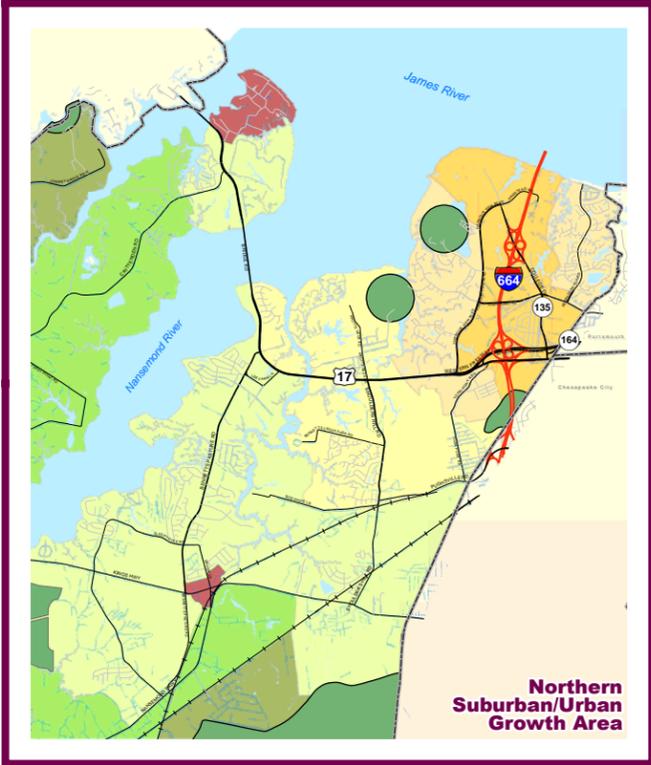
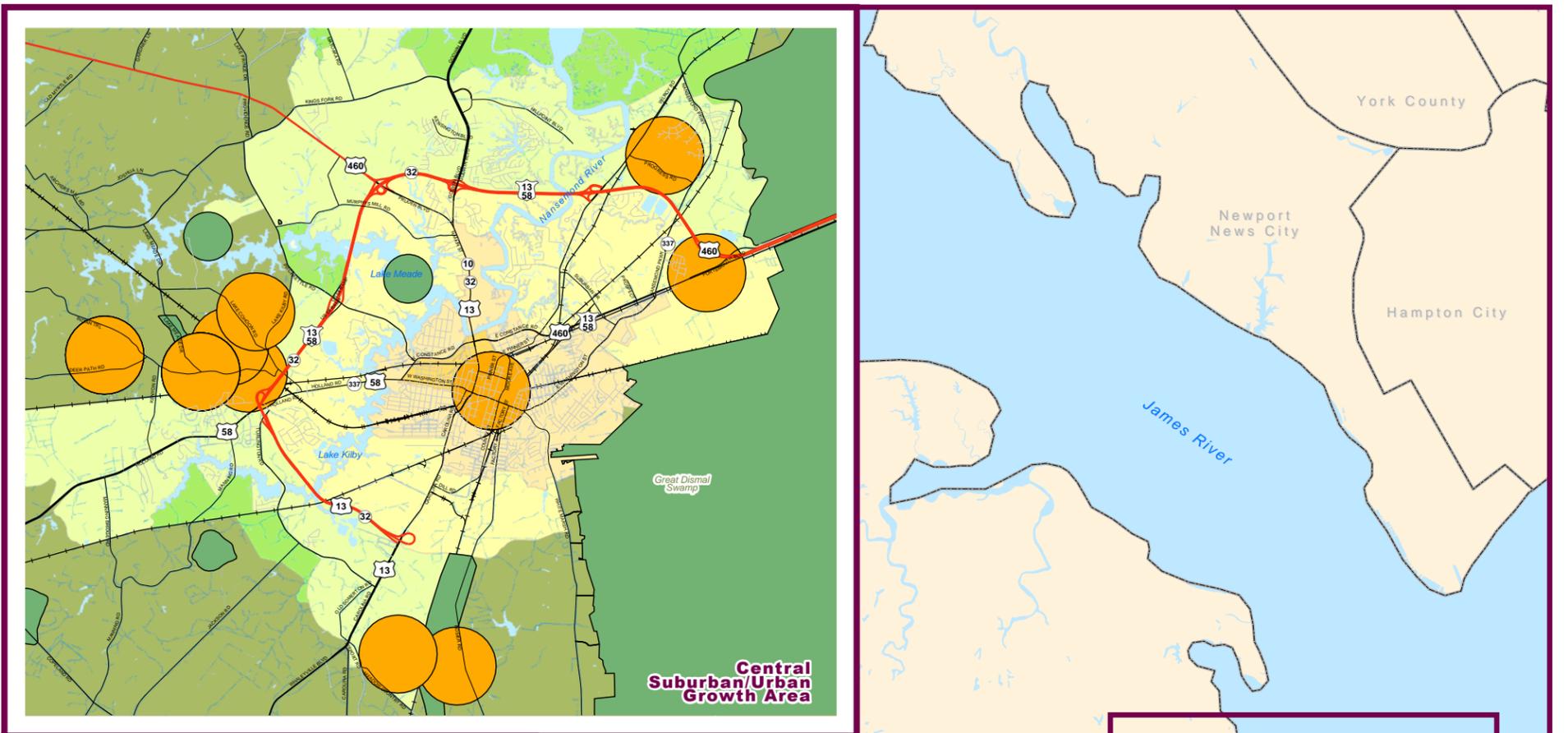
include the appropriate size and type of habitat necessary to protect sensitive species. These areas are identified on Figure 5-8.

**Table 5-10
Natural Heritage Species Identified in the City of Suffolk**

Species Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status*	State Status*	Last Year Observed	General Habitat Requirements	Threats to the Populations
Amphibians						
<i>Ambystoma mabeei</i>	Mabee's Salamander	Not Listed	LT	1979	Vernal ponds and hardwood swamps; Associated pine and hardwood forests	Loss of wetlands, urbanization, conversion of forest to crop lands
<i>Bufo quercicus</i>	Oak Toad	Not Listed	SC	1986	Vernal ponds, wetlands and other flooded areas; Associated forests and grasslands	Loss of wetlands, urbanization and intensive forest management
Birds						
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald Eagle	LT	LT	2002	Mature trees near lakes, streams, wetlands or shores	Human disturbance during nesting, environmental contaminants
<i>Limnothlypis swainsonii</i>	Swainson's Warbler	Not Listed	SC	1996	Rich, damp, deciduous floodplain and swamp forests, understory thickets	Harvest of lowland hardwoods, conversion to pine plantations, harassment by bird watchers
<i>Picoides borealis</i>	Red-cockaded Woodpecker	LE	LE	ND (Presumed extirpated?)	Open, old-growth pine forest	Loss of habitat
Mussels						
<i>Lampsilis radiata</i>	Eastern Lampmussel	Not Listed	SC	1991	Standing water or backwater, freshwater	Unknown

Species Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status*	State Status*	Last Year Observed	General Habitat Requirements	Threats to the Populations
Crustaceans						
<i>Caecidotea phreatica</i>	Phreatic Iso-pod	SOC	Not Listed	1984	Subaquatic, subterranean	Unknown
Mammals						
<i>Corynorhinus rafinesquii macrotis</i>	Big-eared Bat	Not Listed	LE	1996	Old buildings, hollow trees, caves	Human intrusion, logging
<i>Sorex longirostris fisheri</i>	Dismal Swamp Southeastern Shrew	Not Listed	LT	1994	Habitat generalist; Mid-successional forests, clearcuts and areas with thick understory such as canebrake thickets	Loss of wetlands from drainage or development
Vascular Plants						
<i>Ludwigia ravenii</i>	Raven's Seedbox	SOC	Not Listed	ND	Open, wet, peaty locations including swamp margins, marshes and ditches	Populations are small and disconnected
<i>Trillium pusillum var. virginianum</i>	Virginia Least Trillium	SOC	Not Listed	1999	Woodlands, creek beds, swamps	Clear cutting, grazing and development

*LT – Listed Threatened, LE – Listed Endangered, SOC – Species of Concern, SC – Special Concern.
 Source: Virginia Department of Natural Heritage



City of Suffolk, Virginia
 2026 Comprehensive Plan
Natural Heritage Areas

0 3
 Miles

Figure 5-8

7. Historic Resources

Suffolk’s extensive cultural and historical resources are recognized at the state and national level. As shown in Table 5-11, Suffolk contains ten individual historic buildings or building complexes, one archeological site, and six historic

districts that are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. (This includes the original downtown Suffolk Historic District and the North Main Street and East Washington Street extensions.)

**Table 5-11
National Register Historic Resources**

Resource Name	Address	Listed
Bay Point Farm	1400 Sleepy Hole Rd.	6/23/2003
Building at 216 Bank Street	216 Bank St.	11/7/1985
Dumpling Island Archeological Site	Address Restricted	2/10/1998
East Suffolk Complex	231 S. 7th St.	8/4/2003
Glebe Church	W of Chesapeake City on VA 337	5/25/1973
Godwin--Knight House	140 King's Hwy.	8/24/1992
Phillips Farm	6353 Godwin Blvd.	n/a
Phoenix Bank of Nansemond	339 E. Washington St.	1/24/1991
Professional Building	100 N. Main St.	8/12/1999
Riddick House ("Riddick's Folly")	510 Main St.	5/2/1974
St. John's Church	E of Chuckatuck on VA 125	4/11/1973
Chuckatuck Historic District	Jct. of VA 10/32 and VA 125	4/7/1995
Driver Historic District	Jct. of VA 125 and VA 629	4/7/1995
Holland Historic District	Jct. of US 58 with VA 189 and VA 653	5/18/1995
Suffolk Historic District	Roughly bounded by RR tracks, Hill St., Central Ave., Holladay, Washington, N. Saratoga and Pine Sts.	6/22/1987 Expanded 2004
Suffolk Historic District (East Washington Street District)	Roughly bounded by N and W RR tracks, County St., and Liberty St., Bank St., Market St., Clay St. and Poplar Sts.	9/14/2002
Suffolk Historic District (North Main Street Extension)	Roughly along N. Main St., from Constance Rd., to Norfolk and Western RR Tracks	6/10/1999
West End Historic District	Roughly bounded by Causey Ave., Seaboard Coast Lines RR tracks, Pender St., Wellons St., Linden Ave., and RR tracks	1/16/2004
Whaleyville Historic District	Jct. of US 13 and VA 616	4/7/1995

Source: US Department of the Interior, National Register of Historic Places Search

At the local level, the Unified Development Ordinance includes a Historic and Cultural Conservation Overlay District that encompasses most of the downtown National Register districts and adjacent areas. Design Guidelines for the district were adopted in 1990. The overlay district provides a procedure for review by the Historic Landmarks Commission of all external changes to buildings that are visible from any street or public way. The Commission may issue a Certificate of Appropriateness or require changes in compliance with the design guidelines. (Minor alterations such as replacement of building elements with matching elements may be approved administratively.)

The City is a Certified Local Government, making it eligible for funding assistance from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Grants can be used to survey architectural and archaeological resources, prepare nominations to the National Register of Historic Places, create preservation planning documents and programs, create public education programs, and rehabilitate publicly owned buildings listed on the national register. The City has received grants for historic resource surveys and educational efforts such as brochures.

Federal (income producing) and state (owner occupied) tax credits are available for certified renovations to historic buildings: a tax credit on 25% of eligible expenses through the Virginia Rehabili-

tation Tax Credit Program and an additional 20% through the Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program. Recent projects such as the renovation of the 1919 Suffolk Professional Building into office and retail space, as well as the adaptive reuse of the Suffolk High School into the Cultural Arts Center, took advantage of these tax credits.

The Suffolk-Nansemond Historical Society was organized in 1966 to preserve and publicize the City's historic resources. The Society maintains a gift shop in the Riddick's Folly museum and is leasing space in the old Nansemond County Courthouse for additional exhibits. It sponsors a Candlelight Tour each December and periodic lectures and walking tours. Its property com-



pany, Preservation of Historic Suffolk, Inc., recently purchased and restored the 1885 Seaboard Passenger Station on Main Street, with the help of federal transportation enhancement funds and private contributions.

The City of Suffolk has also been designated by the White House as a Preserve America community. Along with ten other cities in Virginia and many others around the country, this designation provides opportunities for funding to support preservation efforts through heritage tourism, education and historic preservation planning.

8. Themes, Policies, and Actions

Theme: Preserve Rural Character

Policy 5-1: Preserve and protect Suffolk's agricultural heritage

Action 5-1A: Create an agricultural development board as an advisory committee to the City Council and Planning Commission

Agricultural development boards have been used successfully in communities across the nation as a way to providing advice on farming issues to city leaders. The board could be made up of current farmers, agricultural economists, and agricultural business leaders.

Action 5-1B: Examine the opportunities for a purchase of development rights (PDR) or conservation easements program and begin to establish a financing mechanism to fund such a program through the Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Purchase of development rights programs or conservation easements can be two of the most successful agricultural preservation techniques if correctly implemented. Techniques that may lead to successful implementation include: establishing a permanent funding source for the program and creating a prioritized list of properties or types of properties to be acquired.

Action 5-1C: Ensure that the UDO allows for the necessary agricultural industrial uses in the Agriculture (A) district to support a thriving farming economy.

As global economic trends continue to put pressure on Suffolk agricultural economy, it is critical for the City to provide supportive industrial uses. Some of

these uses include agricultural processing, shipping, agricultural product sales, and other ancillary uses.

Action 5-1D: Continue to support the plans and policies set forth in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan to limit extensive residential development in the Agriculture (A) district by not permitting major subdivisions as an allowed use in the Agriculture (A) district and by requiring major subdivisions to have public water and sewer.

Action 5-1E: Support alternative agricultural economic practices such as community supported agriculture (CSA), cooperative farms, and hobby farms.

These types of farming practices are not as impacted by changes to federal crop programs or global economic developments, yet they continue to provide a rural character and low-levels of land development.

Action 5-1F: Consider increasing the minimum qualifying acreage for *Land Use Valuation* for open space as allowed by state code.

Currently five acres is the minimum qualifying acreage for Land Use Valuation for open space. This low size can contribute to the undesirable fragmentation of large parcels in the agricultural areas of the City.

Action 5-1G: Modify the subdivision and other development regulations to prevent the lining of rural roads with small residential lots.

Explore ways to better prevent the lining of rural roads with small residential lots. Furthermore, consideration should also

be given to changing the regulations so that the design and location of minor subdivision lots avoids the most valuable agricultural lands and highly permeable soils located in close proximity to water resources (the most significant of which are located in the upland areas immediately surrounding Chuckatuck Creek and the tributaries of the Nansemond River, as well as the lands immediately adjacent to the major water reservoirs).

Theme: Environmental Protection

Policy 5-2: Protect the City’s lakes, rivers, streams, and reservoirs from the negative impacts of development.

Action 5-2A: Continue to implement and enforce the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.

The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act requires all local governments located in Tidewater Virginia to address water quality protection in their comprehensive plan. The City’s Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area regulation is the principal enforcement and implementation tool for addressing water quality protection.

Action 5-2B: Preserve tidal marshes along City shorelines.

Tidal marshes provide the final level of natural filtration of run-off reaching the City’s lakes and rivers. Maintaining and expanding these marshes is crucial to the health of the City’s waterways.

Action 5-2C: Increase public access to Suffolk’s shoreline and water bodies using water quality-friendly techniques.

Access to open waterways and rivers provides increased recreational activities that support the quality of life of Suffolk’s residents.

Action 5-2D: Implement the Community Rating System once it is approved by FEMA.

The Community Rating System can reduce the price of flood insurance which is required by home lenders in flood prone areas.

Action 5-2E: Provide resources to implement farm planning programs and update the agricultural farm plan inventory.

Action 5-2F: Continue to support the implementation of shoreline erosion mitigation measures, based on the following factors:

Areas with a Low Erosion Rate (< 1 ft./year) 1 = most preferable

- 1. Vegetative stabilization with or without bank regrading (if applicable)*
- 2. Revetment*
- 3. Bulkhead*

Areas with a Moderate Erosion Rate (1 – 3 ft./year) 1 = most preferable

- 1. Vegetative stabilization (depending on site-specific conditions)*
- 2. Beach nourishment*
- 3. Revetment*
- 4. Breakwaters*
- 5. Groins*
- 6. Bulkheads (depending on site-specific conditions)*

Areas with a Severe Erosion Rate (> 3 ft./year) 1 = most preferable

- 1. Relocation*
- 2. Beach nourishment*
- 3. Revetments*
- 4. Breakwaters*
- 5. Groins*
- 6. Seawall*

Action 5-2G: Promote coastal water quality improvement initiatives dealing with commercial and recreational fisheries, restricting development patterns, uses, and activities adjacent to spawning and nursery grounds in order to preserve and protect them from adverse impacts.

The city's shorelines are host to several migrant fish spawning areas especially along the James River. Special care should be observed when locating developments that may impact those areas. Encourage "Clean Marina" designation for all marinas.

Action 5-2H: Study the opportunities and environmental constraints of providing full access to currently blocked waterways and rivers for boating activities.

Several of the City's major streams are blocked to recreational and commercial boaters by low clearance bridges. The city should examine opportunities to and impacts from reconstructing the bridges to provide better boating access.

Action 5-2I: Protect the quality of ground water and well water and the water quality in the region serving lakes and reservoirs.

(See action 3-1D)

Action 5-2J: Promote low-intensity and low density development in the drinking water watersheds.

(See action 3-1D)

Action 5-2K: Continue to explore new and innovative techniques to apply water quality protection measures beyond those of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and Regulations.

Action 5-2L: Continue to identify and adopt appropriate measures to protect water quality in the Great Dismal Swamp.

Action 5-2M: Continue to work with the health department to adjust regulations for septic systems to better protect water quality.

Action 5-2N: Work with the Peanut Soil and Water Conservation District to promote the development and implementation of Farm Conservation Plans.

The Peanut Soil and Water Conservation District and Natural Resource Conservation Service are the primary agencies that work closely with the agricultural community in the City of Suffolk. These agencies can assist landowners with the development of "conservation plans" and can provide funds to landowners to install conservation practices. To date, the City has not taken an active role in conservation planning in the agricultural areas, except through a Memorandum of Agreement, which should be updated.

Action 5-2O: Continue to work closely with neighboring jurisdictions in efforts to improve the effectiveness of the regions watershed management program.

The City of Suffolk, in conjunction with other Hampton Roads communities, should continue efforts to build a framework for inter-jurisdictional cooperation on water supply watershed management: The Water Supply Watershed Management Principles developed by the planning and utility directors of the region's localities establish a foundation for regional cooperation on watershed management issues.

A proactive approach to watershed management can yield many benefits.

Correcting water quality problems associated with established land use patterns can be difficult and expensive. In addition, proper management of land uses can help avoid health risks associated with waterborne pathogens and other forms of contaminations. Proactive watershed management can both protect water supplies and provide a healthy and aesthetically pleasing environment for residents and businesses of the watershed. A properly maintained reservoir can provide potable water, recreational amenities, wildlife habitat, amenities for development, and economic benefits.

Policy 5-3: Promote the City of Suffolk as a destination for eco-tourism as a method of continuing to preserve the City's natural resources

Action 5-3A: Continue to work with the National Wildlife Service to promote and protect the Great Dismal Swamp.

The Great Dismal Swamp represents a tremendous, yet underused resource for promoting the City's natural beauty. Any new or expanded visitation plans need to be cognizant of wildlife refuge's mission of protecting critical habitats.

Policy 5-4: Preserve the City's Historic Resources

Action 5-4A: Pursue funding and opportunities for preservation through the City's new designation as a Preserve America Community.

This recent designation may give the City an opportunity to apply for new grants to expand the City's historic preservation program.

Action 5-4B: Continue to survey areas of the City for their contribution to the cultural heritage of the City and designate new historic districts as they are located.

Update the City-wide inventory of historic resources and conduct Phase 1 archaeological assessment to identify potentially significant archaeological resources.

Action 5-4C: Update the City's design guidelines for historic buildings in the downtown core by use of a pattern book and work to ensure that private developers understand and appreciate the value of preserving historic architecture.

The City's design guidelines for the historic downtown core need to be updated to provide more consistent guidance.

Action 5-4D: Establish development encroachment / protection zones around the City's historical villages and individual properties to better protect and buffer these cultural resources from encroaching non-compatible development.

Many of Suffolk's architectural and cultural resources are located in close proximity to encroaching and non-compatible development. As a consequence, and if allowed to continue unchecked, this encroachment will begin to threaten and place in jeopardy these valuable resources. The development and implementation of appropriate strategies to protect these resources are needed.

**Table 5-6
Description of Soils Present in the City of Suffolk**

Soil Type	Non-Technical Description	Acres	% of City	Suitable for Septic
Alaga loamy sand, wet substratum, 2 to 8 percent slopes	Alaga is a gently sloping to strongly sloping, very deep, somewhat excessively drained soil. Typically the surface layer is loamy sand about 9 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is rapid. It has a low available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 54 inches. The land capability classification is 3s. The Virginia soil management group is II. This soil is not hydric.	1,200	0.4	Very Limited
Belhaven muck	Belhaven is a nearly level, very deep, very poorly drained soil. Typically the surface layer is muck about 44 inches thick. The surface layer has a very high content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderately slow. It has a very high available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is rarely flooded and is frequently ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 6 inches. The land capability classification is 7w. The Virginia soil management group is PP. This soil is hydric.	13,400	4.9	Very Limited
Bohicket silty clay loam	Bohicket is a nearly level, very deep, very poorly drained soil. Typically the surface layer is silty clay loam about 13 inches thick. The surface layer has a high content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is very slow. It has a moderate available water capacity and a high shrink swell potential. This soil is very frequently flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 0 inches. The land capability classification is 8w. The Virginia soil management group is PP. This soil is hydric.	5,100	1.9	Very Limited
Deloss mucky loam	Deloss is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, very poorly drained soil. Typically the surface layer is mucky loam about 17 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderate content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a high available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 0 inches. The land capability classification is 6w. The Virginia soil management group is OO. This soil is hydric.	4,260	1.5	Very Limited

Soil Type	Non-Technical Description	Acres	% of City	Suitable for Septic
Dogue fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Dogue is a gently sloping to moderately sloping, very deep, moderately well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 16 inches thick. The surface layer has a low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderately slow. It has a moderate available water capacity and a moderate shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 27 inches. The land capability classification is 2e. The Virginia soil management group is K. This soil is not hydric.	1,700	0.6	Very Limited
Dragston fine sandy loam	Dragston is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, somewhat poorly drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 9 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderately rapid. It has a moderate available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 21 inches. The land capability classification is 2w. The Virginia soil management group is E. This soil is not hydric.	5,800	2.1	Very Limited
Emporia fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Emporia is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 10 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is slow. It has a moderate available water capacity and a moderate shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 45 inches. The land capability classification is 1. The Virginia soil management group is R. This soil is not hydric.	760	0.3	Very Limited
Emporia fine sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes, eroded	Emporia is a gently sloping to moderately sloping, very deep, well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 10 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is slow. It has a moderate available water capacity and a moderate shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 45 inches. The land capability classification is 2e. The Virginia soil management group is R. This soil is not hydric.	1,200	0.4	Very Limited
Eunola loamy fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Eunola is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, moderately well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is loamy fine sand about 9 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a moderate available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 24 inches. The land capability classification is 2w. The Virginia soil management group is T. This soil is not hydric.	31,420	11.4	Very Limited

Soil Type	Non-Technical Description	Acres	% of City	Suitable for Septic
Goldsboro fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Goldsboro is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, moderately well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 18 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a moderate available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 30 inches. The land capability classification is 2w. The Virginia soil management group is J. This soil is not hydric.	5,700	2.1	Very Limited
Goldsboro fine sandy loam, 2 to 5 percent slopes, eroded	Goldsboro is a gently sloping to moderately sloping, very deep, moderately well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 18 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a moderate available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 30 inches. The land capability classification is 2e. The Virginia soil management group is J. This soil is not hydric.	2,800	1	Very Limited
Kalmia fine sandy loam, wet substratum, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Kalmia is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 22 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a low available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 54 inches. The land capability classification is 1. The Virginia soil management group is S. This soil is not hydric.	1,540	0.6	Very Limited
Kalmia fine sandy loam, wet substratum, 2 to 6 percent slopes	Kalmia is a gently sloping to moderately sloping, very deep, well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 22 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a low available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 54 inches. The land capability classification is 2e. The Virginia soil management group is S. This soil is not hydric.	1,700	0.6	Very Limited
Kenansville loamy sand, wet substratum, 0 to 4 percent slopes	Kenansville is a nearly level to moderately sloping, very deep, well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is loamy sand about 23 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a low available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 54 inches. The land capability classification is 2s. The Virginia soil management group is DD. This soil is not hydric.	15,100	5.5	Very Limited

Soil Type	Non-Technical Description	Acres	% of City	Suitable for Septic
Levy silty clay loam	Levy is a nearly level, very deep, very poorly drained soil. Typically the surface layer is silty clay loam about 10 inches thick. The surface layer has a high content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is slow. It has a high available water capacity and a high shrink swell potential. This soil is very frequently flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 0 inches. The land capability classification is 7w. The Virginia soil management group is PP. This soil is hydric.	2,100	0.8	Very Limited
Lynchburg fine sandy loam	Lynchburg is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, somewhat poorly drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 13 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderate content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a moderate available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 12 inches. The land capability classification is 2w. The Virginia soil management group is E. This soil is not hydric.	13,400	4.9	Very Limited
Nansemond loamy fine sand, 0 to 6 percent slopes	Nansemond is a nearly level to moderately sloping, very deep, moderately well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is loamy fine sand about 18 inches thick. The surface layer has a low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderately rapid. It has a low available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 24 inches. The land capability classification is 2e. The Virginia soil management group is F. This soil is not hydric.	18,300	6.7	Very Limited
Nansemond loamy fine sand, 15 to 30 percent slopes	Nansemond is a moderately steep to steep, very deep, moderately well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is loamy fine sand about 8 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderately rapid. It has a low available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 24 inches. The land capability classification is 6e. The Virginia soil management group is F. This soil is not hydric.	1,300	0.5	Very Limited
Nansemond fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Nansemond is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, moderately well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 8 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderately rapid. It has a low available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 24 inches. The land capability classification is 2w. The Virginia soil management group is F. This soil is not hydric.	4,100	1.5	Very Limited

Soil Type	Non-Technical Description	Acres	% of City	Suitable for Septic
Nansemond fine sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	Nansemond is a gently sloping to moderately sloping, very deep, moderately well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 8 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderately rapid. It has a low available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 24 inches. The land capability classification is 2e. The Virginia soil management group is F. This soil is not hydric.	8,700	3.2	Very Limited
Pactolus loamy fine sand	Pactolus is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, moderately well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is loamy fine sand about 2 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is rapid. It has a low available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 24 inches. The land capability classification is 3s. The Virginia soil management group is EE. This soil is not hydric.	4,600	1.7	Very Limited
Rains fine sandy loam	Rains is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, poorly drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 6 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderate content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a moderate available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 6 inches. The land capability classification is 3w. The Virginia soil management group is OO. This soil is hydric.	13,700	5	Very Limited
Rumford loamy fine sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Rumford is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is loamy fine sand about 10 inches thick. The surface layer has a low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderately rapid. It has a low available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The seasonal high water table is at a depth of more than 6 feet. The land capability classification is 1. The Virginia soil management group is DD. This soil is not hydric.	36,600	13.3	Very Limited
Rumford loamy fine sand, 2 to 6 percent slopes	Rumford is a gently sloping to moderately sloping, very deep, well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is loamy fine sand about 10 inches thick. The surface layer has a low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderately rapid. It has a low available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The seasonal high water table is at a depth of more than 6 feet. The land capability classification is 2e. The Virginia soil management group is DD. This soil is not hydric.	340	0.1	Very Limited

Soil Type	Non-Technical Description	Acres	% of City	Suitable for Septic
State fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	State is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 16 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a moderate available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 54 inches. The land capability classification is 1. The Virginia soil management group is B. This soil is not hydric.	830	0.3	Very Limited
Suffolk loamy sand, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Suffolk is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is loamy sand about 11 inches thick. The surface layer has a low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a moderate available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The seasonal high water table is at a depth of more than 6 feet. The land capability classification is 1. The Virginia soil management group is T. This soil is not hydric.	5,300	1.9	Very Limited
Suffolk loamy sand, 2 to 6 percent slopes	Suffolk is a gently sloping to moderately sloping, very deep, well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is loamy sand about 11 inches thick. The surface layer has a low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a moderate available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The seasonal high water table is at a depth of more than 6 feet. The land capability classification is 2e. The Virginia soil management group is T. This soil is not hydric.	6,200	2.3	Very Limited
Tetotum fine sandy loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes	Tetotum is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, moderately well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 11 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a high available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 24 inches. The land capability classification is 2w. The Virginia soil management group is K. This soil is not hydric.	3,800	1.4	Very Limited
Tetotum fine sandy loam, 2 to 6 percent slopes	Tetotum is a gently sloping to moderately sloping, very deep, moderately well drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 11 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderately low content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderate. It has a high available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 24 inches. The land capability classification is 2e. The Virginia soil management group is K. This soil is not hydric.	1,100	0.4	Very Limited

Soil Type	Non-Technical Description	Acres	% of City	Suitable for Septic
Torhunta loam	Torhunta is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, very poorly drained soil. Typically the surface layer is loam about 16 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderate content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is moderately rapid. It has a low available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is frequently flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 12 inches. The land capability classification is 6w. The Virginia soil management group is E. This soil is hydric.	6,750	2.5	Very Limited
Udorthents, loamy	Udorthents consist of soils that have been disturbed during grading for roads, housing developments, and other similar uses. Also, included are sanitary landfills and sand and clay pits.	1,500	0.5	Very Limited
Wahee silt loam	Wahee is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, somewhat poorly drained soil. Typically the surface layer is silt loam about 9 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderate content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is slow. It has a high available water capacity and a moderate shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 12 inches. The land capability classification is 2w. The Virginia soil management group is OO. This soil is not hydric.	1,800	0.7	Very Limited
Weston fine sandy loam	Weston is a nearly level to gently sloping, very deep, poorly drained soil. Typically the surface layer is fine sandy loam about 8 inches thick. The surface layer has a moderate content of organic matter. The slowest permeability is very slow. It has a moderate available water capacity and a low shrink swell potential. This soil is not flooded and is not ponded. The top of the seasonal high water table is at 6 inches. The land capability classification is 3w. The Virginia soil management group is E. This soil is hydric.	6,400	2.3	Very Limited

Chapter 6: Master Thoroughfare Plan

1. Introduction

The *Master Thoroughfare Plan* identifies the general location and classification of roadway facilities that serve traffic from existing and planned development in the City as well as traffic moving through the City. Roadway classification provides an indication of the purpose for which the facility is intended. Thus, each facility in the Plan has a primary purpose. A second purpose of the Master Thoroughfare Plan is to indicate where major roadway improvements – either on existing or new alignments – are to be implemented. These roadway improvements have been included in the Plan because analysis of existing and forecasted development patterns indicates that the improvements will be needed to serve expected traffic volumes, and because potential funding sources for the improvements has been identified.

In developing the Master Thoroughfare Plan in support of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, emphasis was placed on service throughout the City and on access within the growth areas. In addition, several new facilities were included that would both expand access and increase capacity. These included:

- Extension of Kings Fork Road to the east across the Nansemond River connecting Godwin Boulevard with Nansemond Parkway;
- Southeast segment of the Suffolk Bypass (Southeast Suffolk Bypass)
- New Road connecting Kings Fork Road in the west with Copeland Road at Holland Road;
- Parkway on an abandoned railroad right of way between North Suffolk and the Central Core;
- Secondary Arterial extending in an east-west direction across the southern area; and,
- Bypasses around the villages of both Whaleyville and Chuckatuck.



Since the adoption of the 2018 Plan, studies have been conducted in the area between the Suffolk Bypass to the south and Bridge Road to the north. The first study was

the analysis of the relocation of the Kings Highway Bridge and the second was the *Southeast Suffolk Bypass Feasibility Study*.

In conjunction with the study of the Kings Highway Bridge, City Council approved an amendment to the Master Thoroughfare Plan showing the relocation of the Kings Highway Bridge to the south of its existing location and

including an approach roadway from the western shore to Godwin Boulevard. In analyzing the new alignment of Kings Highway, it became clear that forecasted east-west traffic volumes did not substantiate the need for the extension of Kings Fork Road across the Nansemond River. Instead, and as a two-lane facility, the relocated Kings Highway will provide adequate service for anticipated traffic volumes through the year 2030 between Nansemond Parkway and Godwin Boulevard. If future volumes grow beyond the capacity of the two-lane facility, the bridge and approach roads could be widened to four lanes.

At the request of the City, VDOT conducted a feasibility study of the Southeast Suffolk Bypass. The study concluded that a combination of environmental constraints, low forecasted volumes, available alternative routes and expense made implementation of the planned roadway infeasible. In its place, the City will strive to improve access and connectivity to the area immediately southeast of the Central Core between Carolina, Hosier and White Marsh roads.

Impacts of the Focused Growth Approach

In the process of analyzing the Focused Growth Approach, forecasts of the location and intensity of future development were changed to reflect

implementation of revised policies. By changing the forecasted pattern of land use, the location and orientation of travel will also be changed from that anticipated under the 2018 Plan policies. Specifically, the Focused Growth Approach will provide for a greater degree of internalization of trips both within North Suffolk and within the Central Core – the two Mixed-Use Core areas. Furthermore, by reducing the development potential in the northwest area as a result of removing Rural Estate zoning, the policies will also reduce the number of longer trips carried by roadways in this area.

In an effort to preserve the existing rural character, the Focused Growth Approach discourages residential development in the rural south.



Maintaining agricultural zoning in this area will ensure that the existing local roadway system – comprised of rural secondary roads – will provide adequate access throughout the area. To achieve either adequate

capacity or appropriate access, a secondary arterial roadway connecting Holland with Whaleyville will not be needed. However, reclassification of this facility to a collector would be appropriate for its likely use.

In rural areas where volumes are forecasted to remain low and two-lane roads provide adequate capacity, needed improvements focus on deficiencies in roadway geometry, such as narrow pavements widths, narrow shoulders and roadside ditches.

Finally, by increasing the number of residential units anticipated in the Suburban/Urban Development Areas (generally located along Turlington Road and between Carolina Road and White Marsh Road), the Focused Growth Approach shifts residential travel demand to an area where arterial roadways have adequate available capacity. The residential uses can be accommodated as they develop with minor improvements to the secondary arterial and collector system.

In summary, when comparing the major features of the Master Thoroughfare Plan from the 2018 Plan with the needs forecasted from the Focused Growth Approach, four of the six new improvements are no longer forecasted to be needed as originally envisioned and accordingly may be dropped all together or modified to better address future needs and changes in circumstances: 1) the extension of Kings Fork Road between Godwin Boulevard and Nansemond Parkway; 2) the Southeast Suffolk Bypass; 3) the Parkway (on abandoned railroad right of way) between the Central Core and

North Suffolk); and, 4) the east-west secondary arterial crossing the rural southern section between Holland and Whaleyville (reclassified to a collector).

For the Master Thoroughfare Plan, the Focused Growth Approach represents a departure from the 2018 Plan with a shift in emphasis from new suburban and rural roadway improvements to those more oriented to the two Mixed-Use Core areas. The specific improvements are discussed by relative priority in the analysis of future roadway conditions.

Beyond the Master Thoroughfare Plan, the Focused Growth Approach will provide the opportunity for the City to pursue development patterns and densities that will – in time – support the installation and operation of transit service options. To present its citizens with transportation choices, the City must move from a reliance on suburban patterns of growth. In response, the Focused Growth Approach expands the successful policies of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan to provide added dimensions to lifestyle choices.

2. Types and Purpose of Roadways

The Master Thoroughfare Plan indicates the location and purpose of the principal roadway facilities needed to serve travel demand within and through the City. The facilities are defined in three classifications:

1. Principal Arterial – Including freeways, these facilities are intended to carry substantial traffic volumes at high speeds. They include the U.S. and State Interstate and Primary highways. Access to adjoining parcels is to be either prohibited or minimized. With a few exceptions located within the center core, Principal Arterial highways either

are or are planned to be multi-lane facilities. Typical principal arterials include the Suffolk Bypass, Portsmouth Boulevard and Bridge Road. Referring to the classification and roadway sections defined in the Unified Development Ordinance, the following type of facilities (with minimum right of way widths) may be included in the this classification:

- Freeway – 120 Feet
- Expressway – 90 feet
- Parkway – 90 feet
- Boulevard – 90 feet

2. Minor Arterial – In addition to serving through volumes, these facilities also provide access to adjoining parcels and to collector streets. When compared with major arterials, they generally carry lower volumes at lower speeds. Furthermore, several Minor Arterial highways are likely to remain as two-lane facilities through the year 2030, including Kings Highway and Kings Fork Road. The following type of facilities (with minimum right of way widths) may be included in this classification:

- Parkway – 90 Feet
- Boulevard – 90 Feet

3. Collector - Facilities with the purpose of providing access between arterial highways and local streets are classified as collectors. These roadways usually intersect with an arterial highway, but provide a step-down service to adjoining land uses and to local streets. Collectors generally serve low traffic volumes at relatively low speeds. The following type of facilities (with minimum

right of way widths) may be included in this classification:

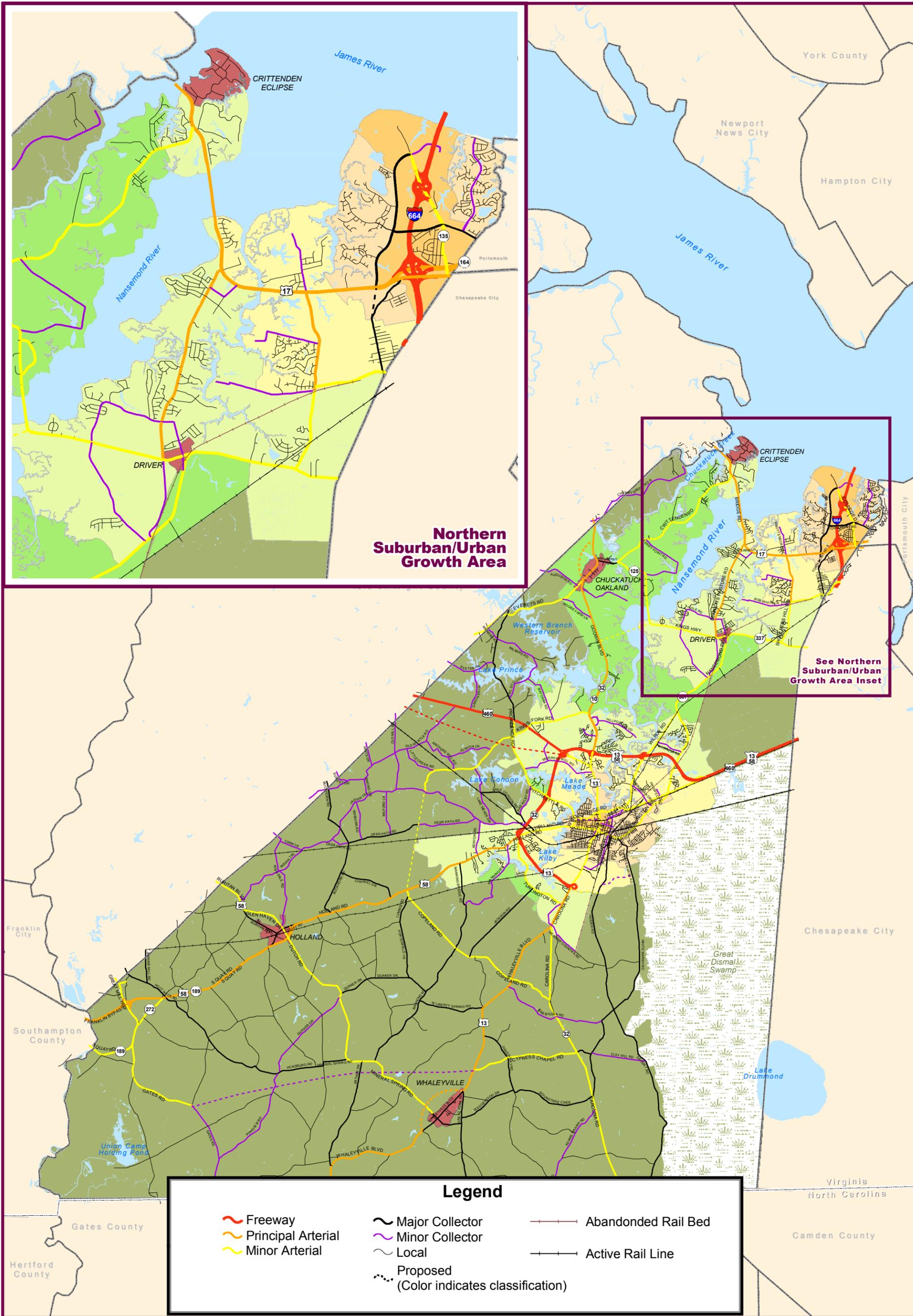
- Main Street – 70 Feet
- Avenue – 70 Feet
- Residential Main Street – 70 Ft.

The Revised Major Thoroughfare Plan is shown in Figure 6-1 (Overall City) and Figure 6-2 (Central Core).

Special Corridor Overlay District

In addition to classifying roads according to purpose, the City has developed as part of the Unified Development Ordinance (See Article 4, Section 31-412, Zoning) the Special Corridor Overlay District (SCOD).

One purpose of the SCOD is to manage development access along designated collector and arterial roadways to minimize movement conflicts between vehicles accessing adjacent local streets and properties and through moving vehicles on the roadway system.

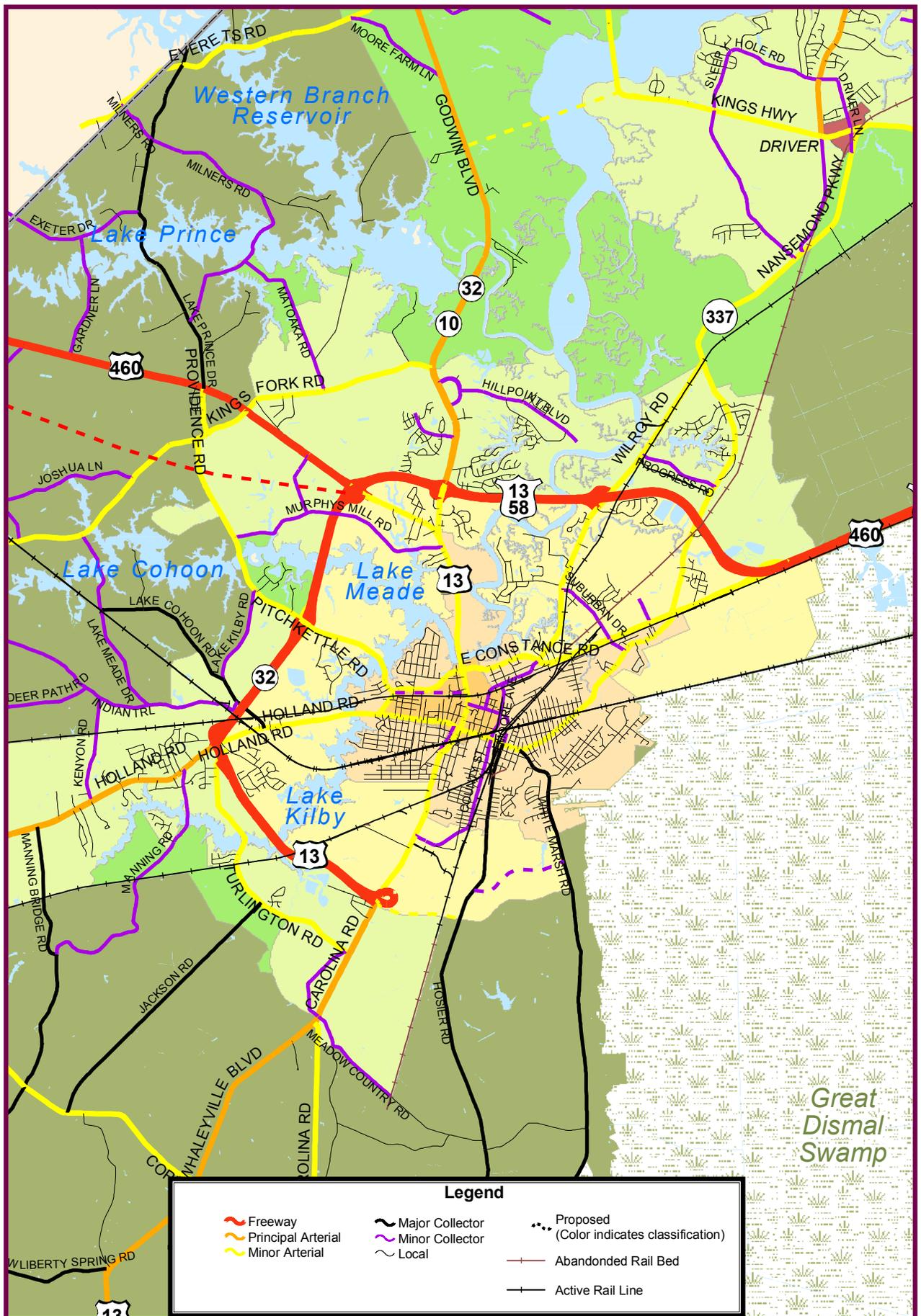


City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan

Master Thoroughfare Plan
(with Northern Suburban/Urban Growth Area Inset)



URS
Figure 6-1



City of Suffolk, Virginia
 2026 Comprehensive Plan
Master Thoroughfare Plan
Central Suburban/Urban Growth Area



3. Existing Roadway Conditions

Existing deficiencies on the City's roadway system generally can be classified into two categories: geometric and capacity. **Geometric deficiencies** involve roadways and intersections that have been designed for one functional need but are now being called upon to serve different purposes. **Capacity deficiencies** include those roadways and intersections that must serve vehicle volumes beyond their design capacity. Congestion can be a product of the presence of either or both categories of deficiencies, but is most

frequently associated with capacity deficiencies.

Level of Service

Figure 6-3 presents a representation of traffic volumes under each level of service. In general, the greater the density of vehicles on a roadway facility, the greater the potential for conflicts and the lower the resulting operating speed. Congestion and lowest speeds are exhibited at Levels of Service E & F.

**Figure 6-3
Levels of Service**



Source: Pictures provided by the Department of Transportation Bureau of Transportation Statistics and the MIT Center for Transportation Studies @1995

**Table 6-1
Year 2004 Daily Volumes and Levels of Service
Critical Roadway Segments**

Street	From	To	2004 Daily Volume	Level Of Service
Godwin Boulevard	Isle of Wight CL	Kings Highway	9,900	B
Godwin Boulevard	Kings Highway	U.S. Route 58	10,000	B
Godwin Boulevard	U.S. Route 58	Pruden Boulevard	18,000	C
North Main Street	Pruden Boulevard	Constance Road	31,000	D
Main Street	Constance Road	Market Street	22,000	D
Main Street	Market St.	Washington St.	14,749	D
Main Street	Western Ave.	Mahan St.	21,827	C
SW Suffolk Bypass	Holland Road	Carolina Road	8,100	A
Suffolk Bypass	Holland Road	Pitchkettle Rd.	29,000	B
Suffolk Bypass	Pitchkettle Rd.	Pruden Boulevard	31,000	B
Suffolk Bypass	Pruden Boulevard	Godwin Blvd.	40,000	B
Suffolk Bypass	Godwin Blvd.	Wilroy Road	47,000	C
Suffolk Bypass	Wilroy Road	Portsmouth Blvd	38,000	B
Portsmouth Blvd	Suffolk Bypass	Chesapeake CL	54,000	D
Wilroy Road	Suffolk Bypass	Pinner St.	10,000	C
Portsmouth Blvd.	Washington Street	Portsmouth Blvd	24,000	B
Bridge Road	Chesapeake City	Bennetts Pasture	24,000	B
Carrollton Blvd.	Bennetts Pasture	Crittenden Road	16,000	B
College Drive	Town Point Rd	I-664	20,000	B
Nansemond	Chesapeake CL	Kings Highway	11,000	D
Pruden Boulevard	Suffolk Bypass	Isle of Wight	14,000	B
Bennetts Pasture	Bridge Road	Kings Highway	7,100	B
Shoulders Hill	Bridge Road	Pughsville Road	4,900	B
Carolina Rd.	Kilby Ave.	Brooke Ave.	11,984	B
Constance Rd.	Broad St.	Western Ave.	9,957	B
Constance Rd.	Main St.	Point St.	14,416	C
Constance Rd.	Washington St.	Gays Row	8,343	B
County St.	Gloucester St.	Old City Limits	3,052	B
E. Washington St.	White Marsh Rd.	Willow St.	9,469	B
Main St.	Market St.	Washington St.	14,749	B
Main St.	Western Ave.	Mahan St.	21,827	C
Pinner St.	Lakeside St.	Old City Limits	8,547	B
Pitchkettle Rd.	Constance Rd.	Lincoln St.	3,752	B
Washington St.	Bosley Ave.	Causey Ave.	10,714	D
Washington St.	Clay St.	Pine St.	9,154	C
Washington St.	Factory St.	County St.	15,155	E
Washington St.	Franklin St.	Pinner St.	10,791	D
Washington St.	Pender St.	Wellons St.	9,693	D
Washington St.	Saratoga St.	Main St.	7,433	B
Washington St.	Tynes St.	County St.	11,628	D
White Marsh Rd.	E. Washington St.	Walnut St.	7,635	B

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation, Suffolk Department of Public Works, and URS Corp., 2004

Table 6-1 shows the year 2004 volumes and the level of service based on peak hour service flow rates on critical highway segments within the City. The table shows that many of the facilities are functioning at or above adequate service levels. Adequate is defined as level of service C or better. The two highest roadway improvement priorities for the City are included in this list: Nansemond Parkway and Kings Highway (Bridge Replacement and Relocation): the former is clearly deficient in both capacity and geometric service while the latter is deficient solely on a geometric service basis.

Current deficiencies – as evidenced by congestion – occur most frequently in the area between northern Suffolk and downtown. Roadways on which congestion is primarily a product of capacity deficiency include:

- Nansemond Parkway (Chesapeake CL to Wilroy Road)
- East Washington Street
- Main Street (Downtown)

Areas where congestion is primarily a product of geometric deficiency include:

- Bennetts Pasture Road
- Shoulders Hill Road
- Nansemond Parkway (Portsmouth Blvd to Wilroy Rd)
- Kings Highway
- Holland Road (Suffolk By-pass to Kenyon Road)

In addition to roadway deficiencies, congestion occurs at critical intersection locations, including:

- Shoulders Hill Rd @ Nansemond Parkway
- Constance Road @ North Main Street
- Wilroy Road @ Nansemond Parkway
- Washington Street @ Main Street
- Godwin Boulevard @ Pruden Boulevard
- Shoulders Hill Road @ Bridge Road.

4. Current Alternative Transportation

The City is provided line-haul bus transit service by the regional transit agency, Hampton Roads Transit (HRT). This service is funded through four principal sources: federal funds, state funds, city funds and fare box revenue. Routes and frequency of service are provided at the request of the City, and reflect the City's effort to balance need with available funds.

Four routes are currently provided. The routes are oriented to the downtown central business district. Transfers are accommodated on Main Street between Constance Road to the north and

Market Street to the south where all four routes overlap.

For the period June 1, 2003 through May 31, 2004, system service and use are as follows:

• Ridership (passengers)	69,959
• Revenue Miles	140,092
• Expenses	\$419,594
• Revenue	\$56,211
• Service Hours	12,332

The Year 2026 Hampton Roads Long Range Transportation Plan shows the addition of a bike facility to be installed with roadway improvements along an

abandoned railroad right of way between downtown and north Suffolk. In the downtown vicinity a portion of this facility has been completed, and the Capital Improvement Program identifies

funds for extending the facility to Nansemond Parkway and future extensions to be completed as funds become available. This facility is part of the regional Tri-Cities Bike Path.

5. Future Roadway Conditions

To evaluate the adequacy of the planned roadway system, forecasts of land use development according to the provisions of the Focused Growth Approach were developed and applied to the Hampton Roads regional travel demand model. The baseline roadway network used in the analysis was the existing network with improvements that are funded (either fully or partially) for implementation in the VDOT Six-Year Improvement Program. The only three facilities funded in the current program are the Finney Avenue Extension (Pinner Street to Washington Street), the replacement of the Kings Highway Bridge, and the widening of Nansemond Parkway (Chesapeake CL to Shoulders Hill Road). Showing both forecasted daily volumes and service levels, the results are summarized in Table 6-2.

Service levels are based on the peak hour traffic volumes on the freeway and arterial highway system as determined in the 2000 Highway Capacity Manual (HCM). Level of service is a qualitative indicator that measures degrees of congestion based on traffic density. The 2000 Highway Capacity Manual designates LOS by the letters A through F, with A representing the least amount of congestion and F the most.

LOS A describes free-flow conditions completely unaffected by other vehicles. At **LOS B** free flow conditions dominate, however other vehicles are beginning to be noticed. **LOS C** represents a range of densities whereby motorists are able to continue at or close to free flow condition speeds, but the ability to

maneuver is beginning to be constrained by other presence of vehicles. At **LOS D**, both the degree of maneuverability and average vehicle speeds are noticeably impacted by the number and density of vehicles. Average speeds decline by approximately up to 10% below LOS C average speeds. At **LOS E**, vehicle densities cause a substantial decline in operating conditions. Flows are unstable, with the range of speeds widely varying along roadway segments. **LOS F** represents the point at which the number of vehicles on the roadway meets or exceeds the capacity of the roadway. Essentially, the facility is considered operating under saturated flow conditions.

The adopted alignment would require several years to build, and currently no schedule for design or funding sources have been identified, and no public funds have been programmed for any activity beyond completion of the Environmental Impact Statement and the Location Study. Consequently, the analysis included in the update of the *2018 Comprehensive Plan* transportation element has not included consideration of the limited access toll financed improvements to U.S. Route 460. All traffic has been assigned to the existing alignment of Route 460.

In reviewing the evaluation results in Table 6-2, it should be noted that determining level of service for any specific roadway segment must consider a range of factors that may result in roadways with similar volumes

providing different levels of service. However, for this planning study generalizations have been incorporated to evaluate LOS based on average daily traffic volumes and the service flow volumes as computed from hourly count data. It must be stressed that these are generalized levels of service based on

similar roadway functional classifications and characteristics. There may be circumstances where the assumptions may be less than suitable. However, these service flow volume thresholds are adequate as a planning guideline for measuring highway level of service.

**Table 6-2
Year 2030 Daily Volumes and Levels of Service**

ROADWAY	SEGMENT	YEAR 2004 DAILY VOLUME	2030 FORECAST DAILY VOLUME	UNIMPROVED LANES/LEVEL OF SERVICE	FORECASTED YEAR 2030 ADEQUATE NUMBER OF LANES/LEVEL OF SERVICE
I-664	Monitor Merrimac Memorial Bridge Tunnel - College Drive	49,000	85,900	4/E	6/D
	College Drive – U.S. Route 17	50,000	83,800	4/E	6/D
	U.S. Route 17 - Pughsville Rd	65,000	90,200	4/E	6/D
Portsmouth Boulevard	Suffolk Bypass - Washington	24,000	43,300	4/E	6/C
	Washington - Pinner	19,000	30,400	4/D	4/D
Southwest Bypass	Carolina - Holland	8,200	15,900	4/B	4/B
Main Street	Constance - Carolina	22,000	29,900	4/D	4/D
Carolina Road	Main - Southwest Bypass	15,000	22,500	4/C	4/C
	Southwest Bypass - Whaleyville	15,000	18,900	4/C	4/C
Whaleyville Road	Carolina - Copeland	9,400	12,400	2/C	2/C
	Copeland - NC State Line	5,500	8,500	2/C	2/C
Bridge Road	I-664 – Harbour View	19,000	43,200	4/E	6/C
	Harbour View - Shoulders Hill	25,000	42,500	4/E	6/C
	Shoulders Hill - Bennetts Pasture	25,000	46,900	4/E	6/C
	Mills E. Godwin Jr. Bridge	16,000	37,600	2/F	4/C
	Bennetts Pasture - Isle of Wight	16,000	35,400	4/D	4/D
Portsmouth Boulevard	Chesapeake CL - Suffolk Bypass	56,000	92,100	6/F	8/D
Suffolk Bypass	US 58 Bus. - Wilroy	39,000	64,500	4/D	4/D
	Wilroy – Godwin	49,000	68,500	4/D	4/D
	Godwin – Pruden	41,000	59,400	4/D	4/D
	Pruden - Pitchkettle	32,000	49,000	4/C	4/C
	Pitchkettle - Holland	30,000	44,900	4/C	4/C
Constance Road	Pinner – Main	15,000	26,200	4/C	4/C
	Main - Washington	11,000	15,000	2/D	2/D
Holland Road	Washington - Suffolk Bypass	13,000	14,700	2/D	2/D
	Suffolk Bypass - Kenyon	30,000	43,200	4/E	6/C
	Kenyon - Lummis	25,000	31,600	4/B	4/B
	Lummis - Great Mill	23,000	27,800	4/B	4
	Great Mill - Southampton	20,000	25,500	4/B	4
Pruden Boulevard	Main - Suffolk Bypass	14,000	17,000	4/C	4/B
	Suffolk Bypass - Kings Fork	15,000	29,600	4/D	4/D
	Kings Fork – Isle of Wight	15,000	31,000	4/B	4/B
	Isle of Wight - Crittenden	10,000	13,700	2/B	2/B
Godwin Boulevard	Crittenden - Kings Hwy (Relocated)	10,000	16,000	2/B	2/B
	Kings Hwy - Kings Fork	10,000	19,000	2/D	2/D
	Kings Fork - Suffolk Bypass	10,000	25,300	4/B	4/B
	Suffolk Bypass - Pruden	18,000	22,700	4/B	4/B

ROADWAY	SEGMENT	YEAR 2004 DAILY VOLUME	2030 FORECAST	UNIMPROVED LANES /LEVEL OF SERVICE	ADEQUATE NUMBER OF LANES
Main Street	Pruden – Constance	31,000	36,600	4/E	6/C
Carolina Road	Whaleyville - NC State Line	4,400	6,600	2/A	2/A
Kings Highway	Bennetts Pasture - Godwin	0	7,200	0/F	2/C
Nansemond Parkway	Chesapeake CL - Kings Hwy	12,000	21,900	2/E	4/C
	Kings Hwy – Wilroy	9,600	13,000	2/D	2/D
	Wilroy – Portsmouth	4,500	10,000	2/C	2/C
Washington Street	Portsmouth – Pinner	14,000	14,700	2/E	4/C
	Pinner – Main	11,000	12,600	2/D	2/D
	Main – Constance	11,000	12,400	2/D	2/D
College Drive	I-664 - Town Point	20,000	17,700	4/B	4/B
	Town Point - Western Freeway	17,000	32,100	4/D	4/D
	Western Freeway – U.S. 17	13,000	15,000	4/A	4/A
Western Freeway	Portsmouth - College	32,000	75,100	4/E	6/C
	College - I-664	19,000	62,200	4/D	4/D
	I-664 - U.S. 17	9,600	12,700	4/A	4/A
Pitchkettle Road	Kings Fork - Suffolk Bypass	1,800	6,200	2/B	2/B
	Suffolk Bypass- Constance	3,100	6,200	2/B	2/B
Shoulders Hill Road	Nansemond - Pughsville	4,800	9,100	2/C	2/C
	Pughsville – Bridge	5,000	14,700	2/E	2/C
Bennetts Pasture Rd.	Nansemond - Kings Hwy	3,600	3,800	2/A	2/A
	Kings Hwy – Bridge	7,200	13,800	2/E	4/C
Kings Fork Road	Godwin – Pruden	3,000	8,600	2/C	2/C
	Pruden – Pitchkettle	2,100	10,000	2/C	2/C
White Marsh Road	Washington - Seminole	7,400	9,500	2/D	2/D
	Seminole – Hosier	810	1,200	2/A	2/A
Wilroy Road	Nansemond – Suffolk Bypass	8,200	10,000	2/C	2/C
	Suffolk Bypass - Constance	7,100	8,700	2/C	2/C
Town Point Road	Portsmouth CL - College	7,900	14,300	2/D	2/D
	College - Harbour View	5,500	15,400	2/D	2/D
Pughsville Road	Chesapeake CL - Shoulders Hill	3,200	9,600	2/E	2/C
Pinner Street	Washington – Finney	8,300	10,000	2/D	2/D
	Finney – Constance	13,000	17,200	2/E	4/C
Market Street	Washington - Saratoga	5,400	6,200	2/C	2/C
	Saratoga – Main	7,900	10,900	2/D	2/D
Finney Avenue	Main – Pinner	7,600	8,500	2/C	2/C
	Pinner - Washington	N/A	7,900	2/C	2/C
Saratoga Street	Market – Washington	4,600	7,000	2/C	2/C
	Washington - Carolina	4,500	7,800	2/C	2/C
Hall Avenue	Saratoga - Washington	5,300	6,600	2/C	2/C
Harbour View Blvd.	Town Point – Bridge	3,600	8,900	4/B	4/B

Based on the application of HCM service level criteria, the following facilities if unimproved - are forecasted to be considered unacceptable by the year 2030:

- I-664: MMMBT to Chesapeake CL
- Bridge Road (U.S. Route 17): Chesapeake CL to Bennetts Pasture
- Bridge Road (U.S. Route 17): Mills E. Godwin Junior Bridge
- Portsmouth Boulevard (U.S. Route 13, 58 & 460): Chesapeake CL to Suffolk Bypass
- Kings Highway (State Route 125) East shore Nansemond River to Godwin Boulevard – including Kings Highway Bridge relocation;
- Portsmouth Boulevard (U.S. Route 13): Suffolk Bypass to Washington Street
- Holland Road (U.S. Route 58): Suffolk Bypass to Kenyon Road
- Nansemond Parkway (State Route 337): Chesapeake CL to Shoulders Hill Road
- Bennetts Pasture Road (State Route 647): Bridge to Kings Highway
- Washington Street (State Route 337): Portsmouth Blvd. to Pinner Street
- Main Street (State Route 10): Pruden Boulevard to Constance Road
- Finney Avenue: Pinner Street to Washington Street
- Western Freeway (State Route 164): College Drive to Chesapeake CL
- Pughsville Road: Shoulders Hill Road to Chesapeake CL

All of the anticipated improvements listed above provide for the addition of one lane in each direction.

While identified in Table 6-2 as roadway segments which need improvement to provide adequate capacity, three facilities are constrained by adjacent

residential and commercial development or by adopted City policies which preclude roadway widening as a policy. Consequently the following three facilities are not included for improvement in the plan:

1. Main Street (State Route 10: Pruden Boulevard to Constance Road
2. Washington Street (State Route 337): Portsmouth Blvd. to Pinner Street
3. Pinner Street: Finney Avenue to Constance Road

Main Street has recently been widened to a four-lane facility with a two-way center left turn lane, and numerous retail commercial uses have been located immediately adjacent to the right of way. Washington Street's future is defined in the East Washington Street Neighborhoods Initiatives Plan, which emphasizes retail commercial revitalization – a strategy with which roadway widening is not compatible. Pinner Street is lined with residential units that would be adversely impacted by widening of the roadway to a four-lane facility.

Functional Improvements

Many existing roadway segments located within in the focused growth area boundaries were originally built as rural secondary roads. These facilities generally have narrow lanes, little or no shoulders and open ditches for drainage. Right of way widths may be as narrow as 40 feet. Even though the two lanes provided may be considered adequate for capacity purposes, the geometric configuration of these facilities is not adequate for serving existing and forecasted traffic volumes as the surrounding landscape changes from a rural to suburban and urban character.

To provide adequate service, such facilities will not need additional lanes, but instead will need an improved pavement section. Lane widths need to be widened to a width of 12 feet, paved shoulders need to be added, and depending upon right of way availability curb and gutter may be needed. Ensuring that these roadways meet the pavement section guidelines as specified in the Unified Development Ordinance should be a recognized goal. Accordingly, additional lanes may be warranted in the future.

Implementing the needed pavement section improvements will likely be accomplished in two ways. First, as part of the pavement management program and using funds provided to the City by VDOT for maintenance, pavement section will be improved as the existing pavement deteriorates to the point of requiring reconstruction. Second, in association with development of adjacent properties, the City may require improvement to the pavement section along roadway frontage and as turn lanes to properly access driveways

are installed. The costs associated with either method of implementing pavement section improvements is not funded from transportation construction funds, and consequently, is not evaluated as part of the funding required for implementing the Master Thoroughfare Plan (See Figure 6-4 Roadway Improvements).

Cost Estimates

To determine the amount of construction funds needed for implementing the improvements anticipated in the revised Master Thoroughfare Plan, planning level cost estimates were developed using current (2005) prices. The costs for each project are summarized in Table 6-3. The Table also shows that improvements to both I-664 and the Western Freeway are anticipated to be financed with state (and federal) funds since both facilities remain in the VDOT system. Of the total needs of \$427 million, undefined funds will be needed for \$318 million.

**Table 6-3
Cost Estimates of Priority Improvements (2005 Dollars)
Suffolk Comprehensive Plan**

ROADWAY	SEGMENT	NUMBER OF ADDED LANES	COST (\$ million)	CITY FUNDS (\$ million)
I-664	MMMBT - Suffolk ECL	2	\$104	\$0
Western Freeway	Portsmouth CL- College	2	\$5	\$0
Finney Avenue Extension	Pinner - Washington	2	\$5	\$5
Portsmouth Boulevard	Suffolk Bypass - Washington	2	\$6	\$6
Portsmouth Boulevard	Chesapeake CL - Suffolk Bypass	2	\$63	\$63
Holland Road	Suffolk Bypass - Kenyon	2	\$22	\$22
Nansemond Parkway	Chesapeake CL - Kings Hwy	2	\$32	\$32
Bridge Road	I-664 - Bennetts Pasture	2	\$36	\$36
Bridge Road	Mills E. Godwin Jr. Bridge	2	\$60	\$60
Bennetts Pasture	Kings Hwy - Bridge	2	\$42	\$42
Kings Highway Bridge & Roadway	Nansemond River - Goodwin Blvd.	2	\$52	\$52
TOTAL			\$427	\$318

It should be noted that these cost estimates are not adjusted for inflation. Over a period of 20 years, inflation will increase these costs by an approximate factor of 1.42 (assuming an annual average rate of inflation of 3.6%). **Consequently, the cost of needed improvements to be financed by currently undefined funding sources over the planning period is estimated at \$452 million.**

In addition to the roadways identified for improvement, several roadway segments are forecasted to provide a marginally adequate service level of D

by 2030. While these facilities are not identified as an improvement priority due to funding constraints, they are forecasted to serve increasing traffic volumes while exhibiting deteriorating service levels. As part of the annual development of Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) these roads should be evaluated for inclusion as an improvement priority. This evaluation should include monitoring growth in traffic volumes and the growth in the level of development activity.

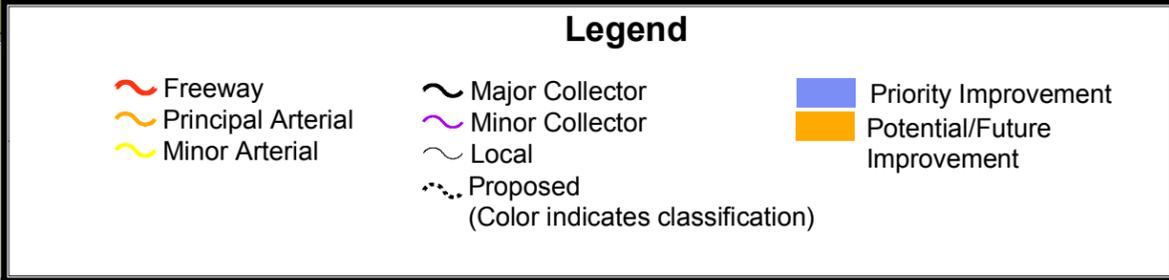
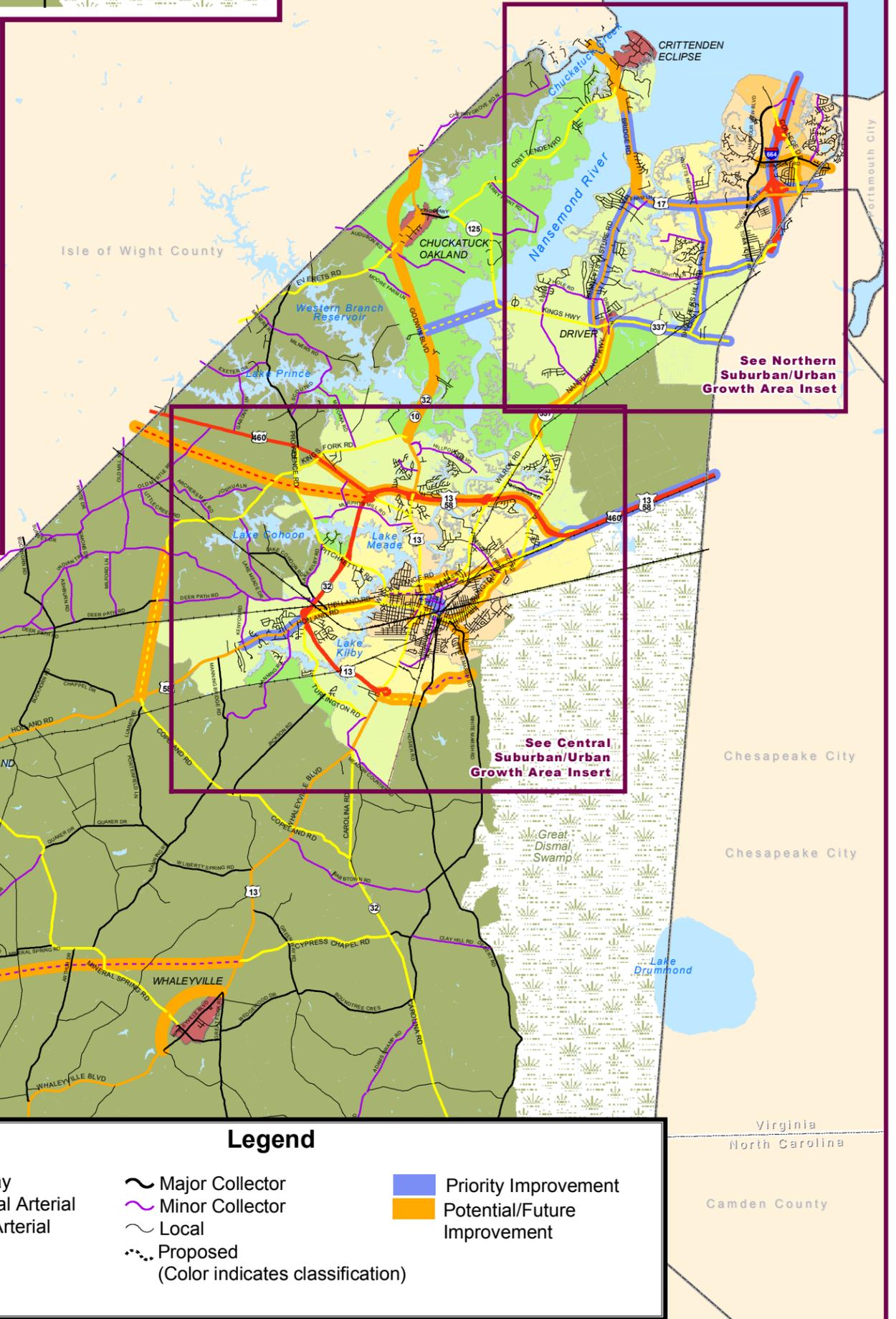
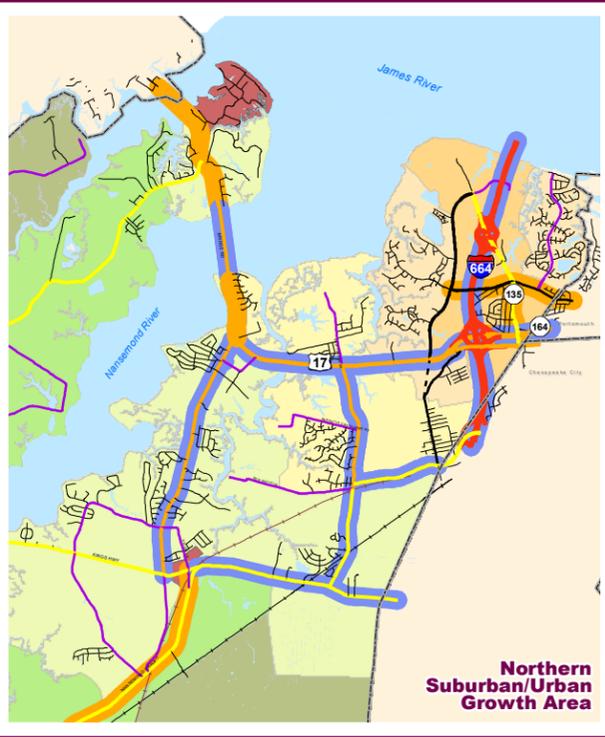
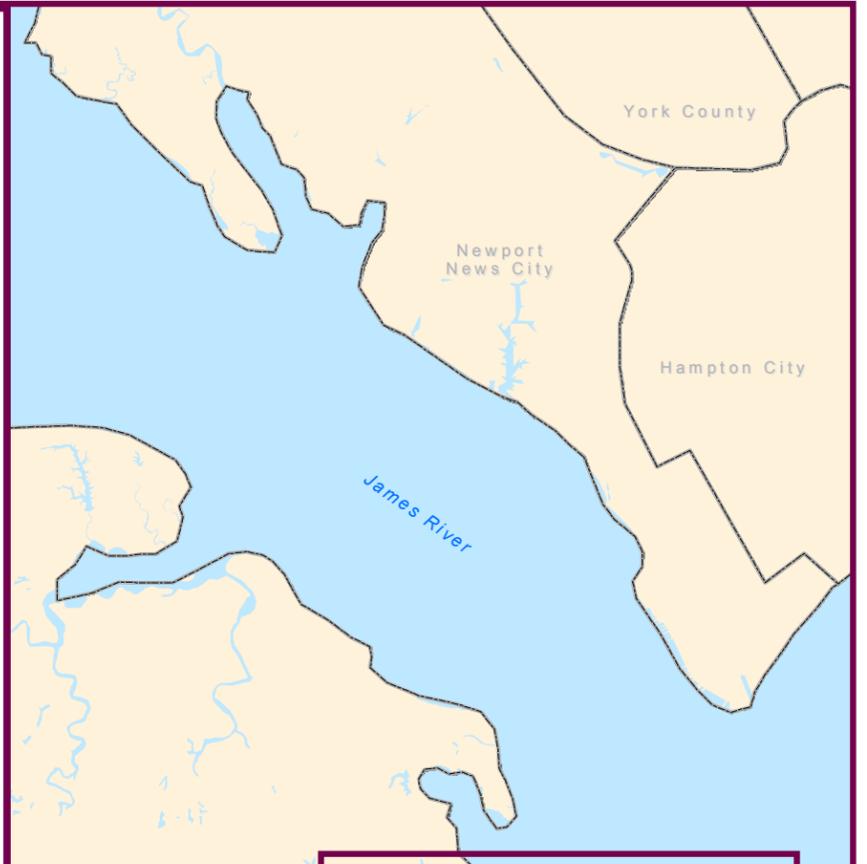
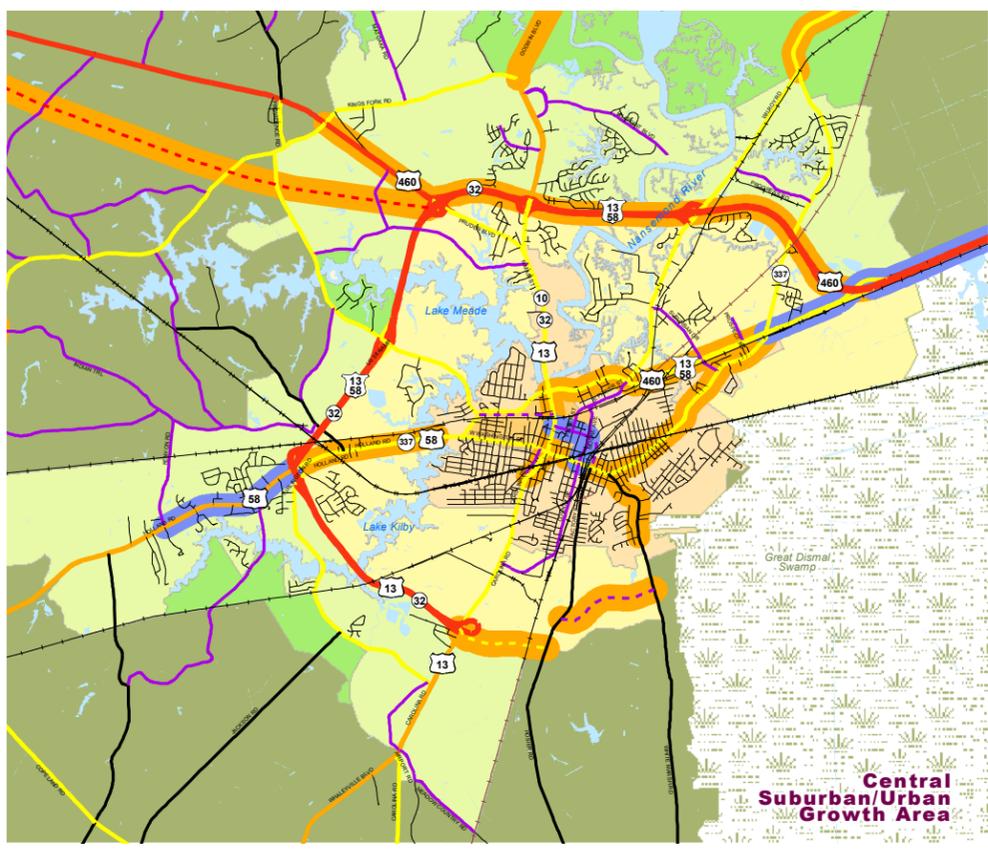
**Table 6-4
Roadways Designated for Periodic Evaluation
Suffolk Comprehensive Plan**

ROADWAY	SEGMENT	YEAR 2004 VOLUME	2030 FORECAST VOLUME	EXISTING NUMBER OF LANES	LEVEL OF SERVICE
Bridge Road	Bennetts Pasture - Isle of Wight	16,000	35,400	4	D
College Drive	Town Point - Western Freeway	17,000	32,100	4	D
Constance Road	Main - Washington	11,000	15,000	2	D
Godwin Blvd.	Kings Hwy - Kings Fork	10,000	19,000	2	D
Holland Road	Washington - Suffolk Bypass	13,000	14,400	2	D
Main Street	Constance - Carolina	22,000	29,900	4	D
Market Street	Saratoga - Main	7,900	11,000	2	D
Nansemond Parkway	Kings Hwy - Wilroy	9,600	13,200	2	D
Pinner Street	Washington - Finney	8,300	10,000	2	D
Portsmouth Blvd.	Washington - Pinner	19,000	30,400	4	D
Pruden Blvd.	Suffolk Bypass - Kings Fork	15,000	29,600	4	D
Suffolk Bypass	US 58 Bus. - Wilroy	39,000	64,500	4	D
Suffolk Bypass	Wilroy - Godwin	49,000	68,500	4	D
Suffolk Bypass	Godwin - Pruden	41,000	59,400	4	D
Town Point Road	Portsmouth CL - Harbour View	7,900	15,400	2	D
Washington Street	Pinner - Constance	11,000	12,600	2	D
Western Freeway	College - I-664	19,000	62,200	4	D
White Marsh	Washington - Seminole	7,400	10,000	2	D
Pughsville Road	Shoulders Hill - Chesapeake CL	3,200	9,600	2	D

6. Required Intersection Improvements

In addition to adding lanes along critical roadway segments, providing adequate service over the transportation system also requires the installation of improvements at major junctions. While not listed in the same detail as roadway

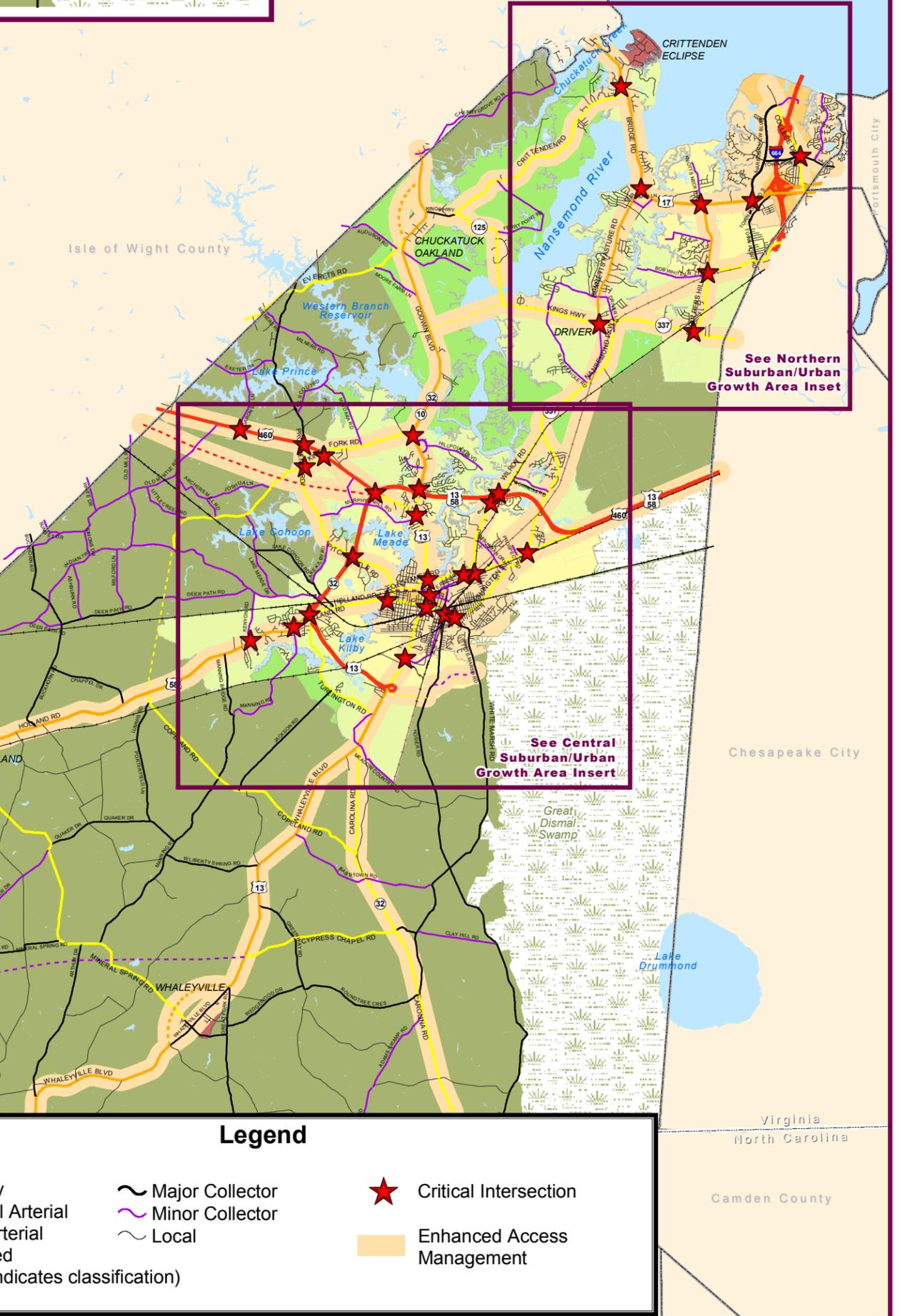
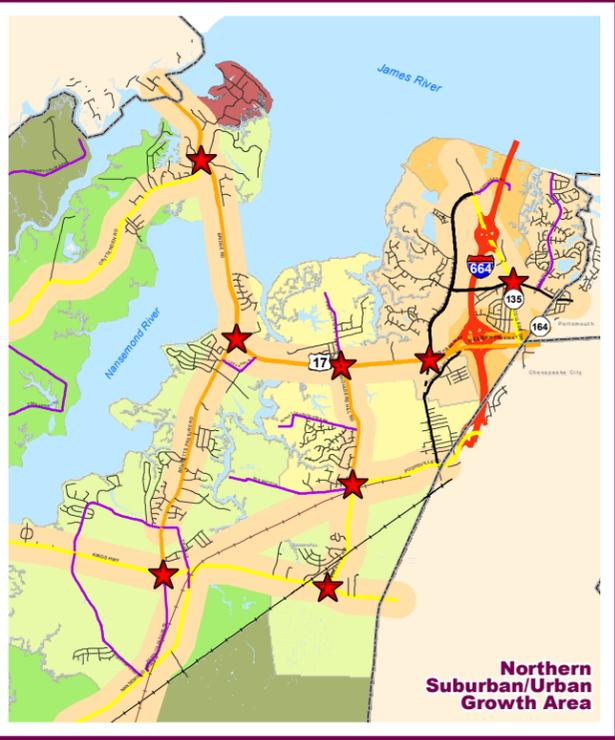
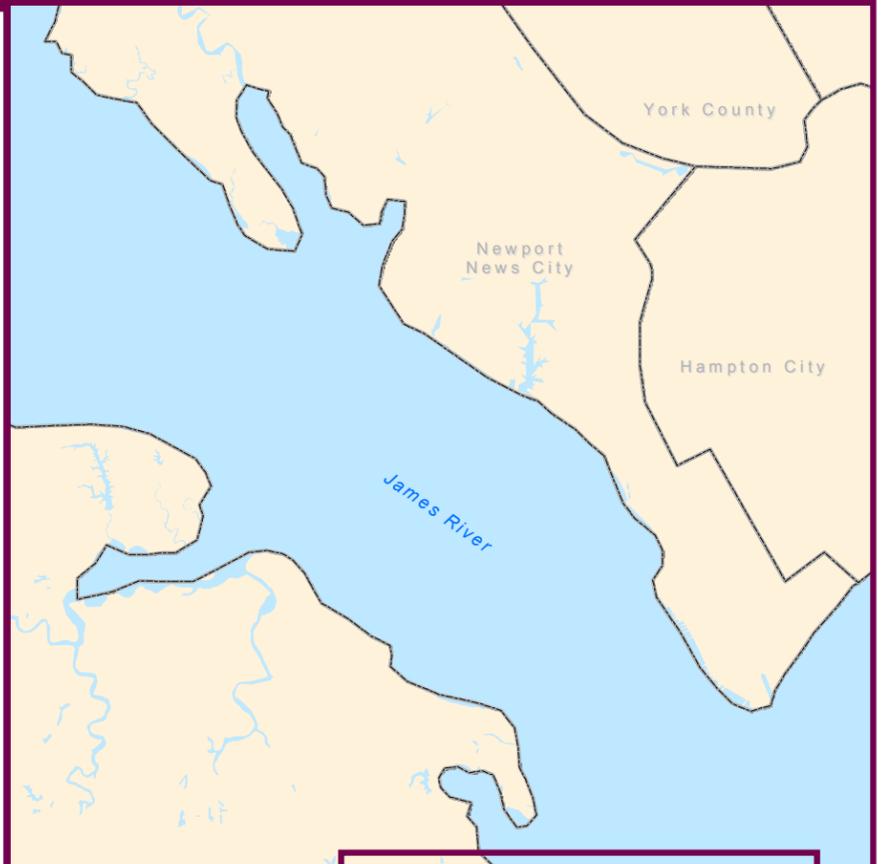
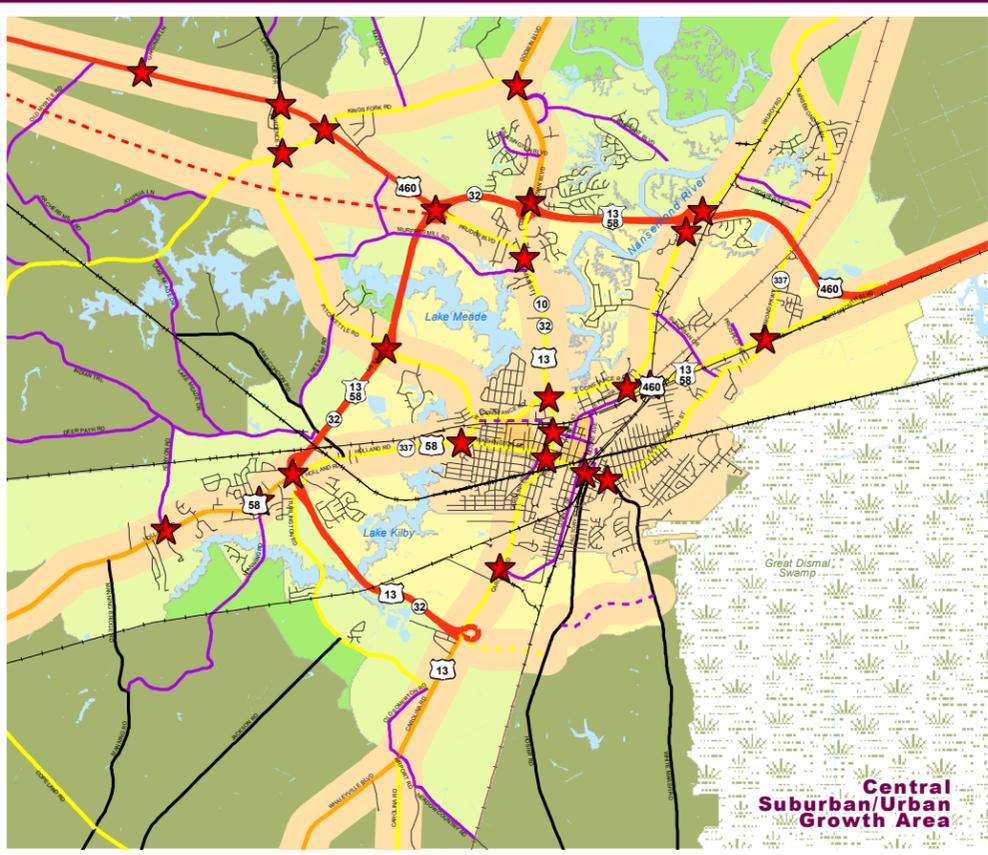
segments, several intersections will function as critical junctions in the network, and ensuring adequate service will be required for meeting the City's goals and objectives. Shown in Figure 6-5, these intersections include:



City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan

Transportation Improvements





Legend

Freeway	Major Collector	Critical Intersection
Principal Arterial	Minor Collector	Enhanced Access Management
Minor Arterial	Local	
Proposed (Color indicates classification)		



City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan
Critical Intersections and Access Management Corridors



1. College Drive at Town Point Rd.
2. Bridge Road at Harbour View Blvd.
3. Bridge Road at Shoulders Hill Rd.
4. Bridge Road at Bennetts Pasture
5. Bridge Road at Crittenden Road
6. Shoulders Hill at Nansemond Pkwy.
7. Bennetts Past. at Kings Highway.
8. Suffolk Byp. Ramps to Wilroy Rd
9. Suffolk Byp. Ramps to Godwin Blvd.
10. Suffolk Byp. Ramps to Pruden Blvd.
11. Suffolk Byp. Ramps to Pitchkettle Rd
12. Godwin Boulevard at Kings Fork Rd
13. Pruden Boulevard at Kings Fork Rd
14. Pruden Blvd. at Lake Prince Rd.
15. Pruden Blvd. at Godwin Blvd.
16. Holland Road at Suffolk Bypass
17. Holland Road at Manning Road
18. Holland Road at Kenyon Road
19. Constance Road at Main Street
20. Constance Road at Washington St.
21. Main Street at Washington St.
22. Portsmouth Blvd at Washington St.
23. Pinner Street at Portsmouth Blvd.
24. White Marsh Rd. at Washington St.
25. Carolina Road at Dill Road
26. Pughsville Road at Shoulder's Hill Road.

- Grade separation (overpass);
- Addition or extension of turn lanes;
- Installation of traffic signals (if warrants are met); and,
- Alignment improvements

Improvements should only be considered after it has been determined that operational improvements (such as modification to traffic signal phasing and timing or changes in traffic signs and pavement markings) will not adequately address the deficiency.

In addition to periodic evaluations, evaluations of these intersections should receive detailed analysis as part of a traffic impact analysis for proposed development in the immediate vicinity. Furthermore, where proposed development occurs within the intersection area, the analysis should evaluate both intersection geometric improvements, traffic control measures and access management actions that will address defined capacity and safety deficiencies.

To ensure that these critical intersections do not develop into congested bottlenecks, they will need to undergo periodic evaluation for needed improvements. The analysis will consist of peak period capacity analysis to monitor the severity of deficiencies, queuing analysis to determine if turn lanes are adequate and safety analysis to determine if congestion related crash rates are increasing to unacceptable levels of severity.

In some instances where a proposed subdivision or site plan will cause traffic volumes that exacerbate an existing deficiency, the City may opt to coordinate with the developer to fully address intersection issues.

Where deficiencies are determined, improvements should be developed and evaluated for inclusion in the Capital Improvement Program. Improvements may include:

Furthermore, as shown on Table 6-5, a number of transportation improvements have been called for through the various village and neighborhood initiatives and revitalization plans. These improvements typically are needed to improve connectivity; provide for redevelopment, revitalization and infill development; and to provide safety improvements.

**Table 6-5
Initiative Plan Transportation Improvements**

Project Name	Associated Plan
Godwin Boulevard (Route 10) Bypass	Chuckatuck/Oakland
Kings Highway/Godwin Boulevard Intersection Improvements	Chuckatuck/Oakland
Eclipse Drive/White Dogwood Trail Intersection Improvements	Crittenden/Eclipse
Southwest Connector	Carolina Road
Driver Lane/Nansemond Parkway Intersection Improvements	Driver
Driver Lane/Kings Highway Intersection Improvements	Driver
Kings Highway/Nansemond Parkway Intersection Improvements	Driver
Kings Highway/Bennetts Pasture Road Intersection Improvements	Driver
Carolina Road/Main Street Traffic Square	Hall Place/Downtown
Carolina Road/Saratoga Street	Hall Place/Downtown
Hollywood Connector	East Washington Street
Cypress Connector Road	East Washington Street
6th Street Spine	East Washington Street
Rosemont Avenue Extension	East Washington Street
Liberty/County/Moore Intersection Improvements	East Washington Street
Whaleyville Boulevard Bypass	Whaleyville
Robertson Elementary School Access Road Connections	Whaleyville
Crepe Myrtle Drive Connection	Holland
Freeman Avenue Entrance Realignment	Huntersville
Hunter Court Extension	Huntersville
Skeet Road Extension	Huntersville
Newport Street Extension	Olde Towne
Prentis Street Extension (West)	Downtown
Finney Avenue Extension (West)	Downtown
Pine Street Extension	Downtown
Smith St. Extension	Downtown
Wellons St. Extension	Downtown

7. Roadway Maintenance and Financing Requirements

On July 1, 2006, the City of Suffolk assumes planning, construction and maintenance responsibilities of all roadways within the city limits with the exception of I-664 and State Route 164 (Western Freeway). In addition to receiving annual payments from the Commonwealth for maintenance activities, the City will receive construction payments as the roadways are included in the City's urban system. Based on an analysis provided to City Council, the total amount of funding for construction provided to the City by the Commonwealth will increase from \$2.3 million (2004) to \$ 3.2 million. Additional funds may become available for improvements to state primary highways within the City's boundaries and for bridge replacement.

The Commonwealth will also be providing funding for maintenance activities. The amount of funding is based upon the lane miles of either arterial or local roadways within a jurisdiction, and the basis of the payments increases with increases in costs. Based on year 2004 cost basis, the annual payments will increase to \$15.1 million from \$4.1 million as a result of the increased lane miles from the City's assumption of the VDOT system. Costs will also increase as the City must provide facilities, material, equipment and staff to conduct maintenance and construction programs. In conclusion service will be improved and costs will be better managed by local control.

By assuming control of the roadway system, the City will be able to effectively manage – according to its own policies – such development related issues as:

- Installation of Traffic Signals
- Location of Median Crossovers
- Location of Access Driveways
- Installation of Turn Lanes
- Setting of Speed Limits
- Incorporation of Traffic Calming
- Adoption of Access Management Policies

In summary, the assumption of roadway maintenance will provide the City with increased flexibility in responding to both transportation needs and development pressures through a wide range of fiscal, regulatory and policy strategies. It will also provide an increase in funds for transportation improvements.

Financing Improvements

With the incorporation of the Focused Growth Approach as a guide for future development, the City is pursuing a growth pattern that emphasizes use of existing facilities. Consequently, when forecasts based on the Focused Growth Approach are incorporated into a travel demand forecast model, the projections of future traffic volumes indicate increased travel demand along existing facilities. In many cases, the capacity of these facilities is adequate to meet the additional demand.

However, if left unimproved, several key facilities will not provide even marginally adequate service, and prolonged and severe congestion is anticipated to develop and worsen over time. Moreover, considering the current forecasts of relatively low investment by the Commonwealth in improving the transportation system, it is unlikely that many of the needed major new improvements can be realistically anticipated within the planning period.

In this sense, the Focused Growth Approach represents the most rational policy because it seeks to focus demand in areas where available capacity can be more effectively used.

To define the limited level to which transportation improvements are anticipated to be funded within the next 20 years, the *Hampton Roads 2026 Regional Transportation Plan* and a proposal for tolls and taxes plan to finance major roadway improvements in Hampton Roads (approved by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission - HRPDC) are referenced. In the *Year 2026 Regional Plan*, only three new projects within Suffolk are identified: the relocation and replacement of the Kings Highway Bridge (with approaches), the Finney Avenue Extension (two lanes) to East Washington Street, and the widening of Nansemond Parkway to four lanes from Chesapeake west to Shoulders Hill Road. While engineering activities have begun on all three, due to financial constraints full funding of these projects through completion of construction has not been approved.

To address the regional funding shortfall, HRPDC has approved for inclusion in the yet to be adopted *Hampton Roads 2030 Regional Transportation Plan* a series of toll and tax measures for consideration by the state legislature. If adopted, these measures would provide for improvements to I-664 (part of the Third Crossing project) and to Portsmouth Boulevard (U.S. Route 58), the Suffolk Bypass and Pruden Boulevard (part of the Route 460 Corridor project).

While two of these major projects are located within the boundaries of Suffolk, they do not address the needs associated with anticipated development

of the City according to the Focused Growth Approach. To meet its needs, the City is expected to receive approximately \$4.0 million annually in urban system construction funds (totaling \$80 million over the next 20 years). This compares with inflation adjusted needs of approximately \$450 million, leaving a shortfall of defined funds of approximately \$370 million.

Financing Options

To address the funding shortfall, the City may pursue several options:

1. Increased state funding;
2. Cash proffers associated with rezoning applications;
3. Roadway improvement proffers associated with rezoning applications;
4. Operations fund financing;
5. Charter bond financing;
6. Roadway bond referenda; and,
7. Special taxing districts.

Each of these options presents challenges for implementation, and either alone or in combination with others, none will fully address the funding shortfall.

System Management

Considering the improvement funding shortfall, it is apparent that without significant increases in resources, the capacity of the roadway system will be strained. To effectively minimize the adverse impacts of the capacity deficiency, several options are available. In general, the purpose of these options is to reduce the conflict points on major roadways from either access driveways or intersecting streets. These include emphasis on coordination of traffic signal timings and policies for access management.

With the implementation of the enhanced provisions regarding Access Management Corridors within selected Special Corridor Overlay Districts and the Adequate Public Facilities provisions

of the Zoning Ordinance, the City has in place the basic tools necessary to effectively implement a strategy for capacity preservation.

8. Potential Other Future Transportation Modes

Transit

Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) has developed a plan for improving transit service over the planning period. In Suffolk, these improvements include new routes that provide new areas of service:

1. New Local Route connecting the Churchland Shopping Center in Portsmouth with Harbour View via Bridge Road, Harbour View Boulevard and College Drive;
2. New Express Route from the Magnolia Park and Ride lot (Portsmouth Boulevard at Nansemond Parkway) to Victory Center in Portsmouth. At Victory Center, service to Norfolk and the Peninsula is provided;
3. New Local Route connecting Magnolia Lot with Chesapeake Square Mall; and,
4. New Local Route connecting the Central Core (Downtown) with North Suffolk (Harbour View).

Combined with the existing service, which is focused on the Central Core, the expanded service will enable residents to travel to previously inaccessible areas – both within the City and the region.

The expanded system proposed by HRT represents a first opportunity to provide expanded transportation choices for residents and employees within the City. To seize the opportunity and expand it, implementation of the focused growth approach will produce land use patterns and densities that include two major areas of transit oriented development. With a goal of requiring an automobile only to either enter or exit the environs, the two Mixed Use Core areas include densities that can be served by internal transit circulator routes. If a trip is beyond the range of pedestrian limits (approximately ¼ mile), the transit circulator service expands the range pedestrians will have confidence to travel.

To more effectively accommodate transit service, the City must also consider it in the process of designing roadway improvements and reviewing development proposals. On facilities where transit service is or is planned to be provided, installing or reserving adequate space for transit vehicle turnouts and stations should be implemented. The traffic signal system should be enhanced to provide transit “queue jumping” or vehicle priority phasing, where appropriate. Finally, Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) communication facilities and systems should be designed and installed to accommodate transit communications.

Taken to the next level, transit service can be expanded to provide a connection between the two mixed use core areas of the City as well as the region. While the abandoned railroad right of way will not be needed for a highway or parkway, it should be preserved as a future multi-modal corridor. It can accommodate light rail transit, bus rapid transit or an innovative transit service.

Trails

The transportation system should also include consideration of pedestrian and biking use. As with transit, design and construction of new and improved roadways should include consideration of facilities for non-motorized transportation.

In the development review process, the pursuit of community inter-connectivity should include consideration of sidewalk and trails (in addition to streets) where subdivision and commercial centers abut existing communities.

Abandoned railroad rights of way can also be used as a resource for recreational trails as well as functional transit. In addition to the trail between north Suffolk and the central core, an abandoned right of way traverses east-west across the rural southern section. If preserved for development as a hiking and biking trail, it has the potential to become one of the regional premier linear recreational facilities.

Rail

The City is well served by freight rail service, and rail lines extend across its boundaries connecting the ports of Hampton Roads with inland markets. The growth in port activity has provided benefits through investment and job creation, but trains also interrupt the

flow of traffic on Suffolk's streets. These impacts are going to become more frequent and prolonged in the immediate future.

Maersk Sealand is developing a containerized terminal on the Elizabeth River in Portsmouth, and rail access to the site traverses Suffolk. The rail system improvements include a siding yard (to combine and split trains) on a site immediately south of Nansemond Parkway Elementary School near Sportsman Boulevard.

As currently estimated, from the opening of service in 2007 the average daily number of trains will increase from 6.5 trains with an average length of 2,300 feet East of Sportsman Boulevard to 13 trains in 2016. West of Sportsman Boulevard, the average daily number of combined trains (average length of 7,500 feet) will increase from 2 in 2007 to 4 in 2016.

The trains will be crossing the following roadways at grade:

- Shoulders Hill Road
- Nansemond Parkway
- Sportsman Boulevard
- Nansemond Pkwy. @ Wilroy Rd.
- Progress Road
- QVC Truck Access
- Olde Mill Creek
- Suburban Drive
- E. Washington Street

While relatively infrequent, the delays from train movement will create extensive periods of congestion, and as both trains and traffic volumes increase, the time required to disperse congestion will increase.

To address the impacts of added train traffic, future analysis improvements should include:

1. Improvements to existing at-grade crossings;
2. Increasing train speeds; and
3. Pursue funding for the Finney Avenue Flyover.

9. Themes, Policies, and Actions

Theme: Balanced Growth

Policy 6-1: Provide opportunities for residents to adopt a lifestyle that is less dependent on auto travel.

Action 6-1A: Focus development in the two Suburban/Urban Growth Areas based on the densities shown in Chapter 3.

The two Mixed Use Core Areas and surrounding Core Support and Inner Ring Suburban Districts provide for uses and design features that emphasize street interconnectivity and multi-modal options for completing commuting, shopping and recreational trips. Both residential, commercial and office uses are scaled so that densities among the various uses are commensurate.

By encouraging more efficient patterns of development in defined areas, specific land use policies and regulations that help significantly decrease both the total number of trips and overall trip lengths, as well as making transit use, bicycling and walking more viable can be implemented.

Action 6-1B: Promote implementation of mixed-use development where facilities, infrastructure and markets will sustain investment.

The two Mixed Use Core Areas are served by a network of arterial and collector roadways that, for the most part, have adequate capacity to accommodate anticipated traffic from intense mixed-use development. In contrast, development in suburban

areas – particularly along Bridge Road, Holland Road and Bennetts Pasture, will cause trips to be routed to congested facilities.

Action 6-1C: Promote the development of an internal transit circulator system within the two mixed use cores.

With a goal of requiring an automobile only to either enter or exit the environs, the two Mixed Use Core areas include densities that can be served by internal transit circulator routes. If a trip is beyond the range of pedestrian limits (approximately ¼ mile), the transit circulator service expands the range pedestrians will have confidence to travel.

Action 6-1D: Continue to tie development approval to the adequacy and funding of public facilities, including highways.

Theme: Responsible Regionalism

Policy 6-2: Suffolk will be a responsible participant in the regional planning and programming process.

Action 6-2A: Develop roadway and transit improvement programs to be consistent with those adopted by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission.

As part of the Hampton Roads urbanized area, Suffolk participates in the regional planning process. Where regional issues are involved, the City's

plans and programs should be consistent with regional strategies.

Action 6-2B: Planned improvements to facilities crossing jurisdictional boundaries should be coordinated with the neighboring locality.

Several roads which cross the boundary with Chesapeake or Portsmouth have been identified for improvement. The two municipalities should coordinate funding and scheduling of construction activities to ensure that motorists experience seamless service along the corridor.

Action 6-2C: Expand the type and location of transit service connections between routes within Suffolk and those serving regional destinations.

The plan for improving service provided by Hampton Roads Transit includes new routes that connect both existing routes and park and ride lots within Suffolk. If implemented, these will provide residents with multi-modal opportunities to live, work and shop region wide. Through HRT, the City should endeavor to implement the proposed improvements.

Exploration of exclusive right of way for new rail service should be considered. This includes heavy rail, commuter rail and light rail services.

Action 6-2D: In conjunction with the TIP annually evaluate the efficiency and need for improvements of those roadways and intersection so designated in Table 6-4 and Figures 6-4 and 6-5.

Action 6-2E: Upgrade Route 460 to a grade-separated freeway from Suffolk westward to I-95. Similarly, consideration should be given to

upgrading Route 58 to a grade-separated freeway from Suffolk westward to I-95.

Theme: Preserve Rural Character

Policy 6-3: Investment in infrastructure will be targeted to areas where need either is or is forecasted to be greatest.

Action 6-3A: Focus investment of transportation resources on facilities that serve growth areas with higher densities and/or provide adequate service to regional facilities.

As a tool to implement the vision of the Comprehensive Plan, investment in transportation facilities should emphasize accommodating desired development patterns and accessing regional markets. Investment in the form of added roadway capacity in rural areas will tend to heighten both commercial and residential development pressures which are the greatest threat to the rural character.

Action 6-3B: Implement the planned bypasses around both of the villages of Chuckatuck and Whaleyville.

To ensure that each village develops as a focus of social and economic activity to serve the surrounding rural areas, through traffic (particularly the truck traffic through Whaleyville) should be routed to a controlled access bypass. Right of way for the bypass should be identified and preserved.

Theme: Core Area Revitalization

Policy 6-4: The City will employ appropriate regulatory and financial incentives to ensure that access to and within the central core area supports private sector initiatives.

Action 6-4A: Prioritize transportation investments to ensure adequate access from Mixed Use Core Areas to regional markets.

To develop at planned densities, the two Mixed Use Core Areas must have access to regional markets. Ensuring adequate roadway capacity and expanded transit service is critical to accommodating market demands within the desired setting. Without adequate access, commercial and office activities will not reach the desired critical mass, and consequently, pressure for residential development will increase.

Action 6-4B: Interconnectivity of the street, sidewalk and trail systems within the Mixed Use Core, the Core Support and the Inner Ring Suburban Districts should be implemented with both public and private resources.

Realizing the trip reducing benefits of mixing uses and higher densities will be compromised if the roadway system is disjointed. The City faces a challenge with the presence of waterways and rail lines. By both development review and capital improvement plan investment, the City should ensure direct and convenient multi-modal travel opportunities are available. The proposed extension of Finney Avenue is an example of such investment.

Action 6-4C: Continue to complete the street network per the adopted initiatives and redevelopment plans, making street connections wherever possible and appropriate.

Theme: Enhance Economic Vitality

Policy 6-5: Provide facilities and policies that ensure adequate multi-modal access throughout the growth areas of the City.

Action 6-5A: Promote the prioritization of investment in major regional improvements that are critical to the City's economic development.

Four major roadway facilities are crucial to the City's access to regional markets:

1. I-664
2. I-64 (East of Bowers Hill)
3. Route 460 Corridor to I-95
4. U.S. Route 58

In cooperation with the HRPDC and VDOT, the City should emphasize the importance of these facilities in the competition for limited improvement funds.

Action 6-5B: Preserve existing capacity on the roadway system by minimizing conflicts between vehicles accessing the local street system and through moving vehicles.

With the Special Corridor Overlay District (SCOD) in the Unified Development Ordinance, the City has a tool to preserve capacity by managing traffic conflicts. By application of the access management provision of the ordinance along major arterial corridors, capacity for through moving vehicles can be maximized until funding for needed roadway widening is available. Corridors where access management policies should be applied include:

1. Bridge Road
2. Holland Road
3. Carolina Road (South of Bypass)
4. Whaleyville Road
5. Godwin Boulevard
6. Pruden Boulevard

Action 6-5C: Increase the minimum allowable spacing between median crossovers to a distance of 1,000 feet on the following facilities:

1. Bridge Rd (I-664 – Isle of Wight CL)
2. Holland Road (Suffolk Bypass - Southampton CL)
3. Godwin Boulevard (Suffolk Bypass – Isle of Wight CL)
4. Pruden Boulevard (Suffolk Bypass – Isle of Wight CL)

Action 6-5D: Conduct periodic and systematic evaluations of critical intersections to define deficiencies and develop improvements.

To avoid the development of bottlenecks at critical intersections, the City should establish a program of routine, scheduled evaluations of both the operation and capacity of these junctions.

Improvements should be considered for inclusion in the Capital Improvement Program. Review of proposed developments in the area of these intersections should consider implementation of access management measures to minimize congestion from conflicts. The City should also consider coordinating publicly funded improvements with improvements associated with private development.

Action 6-5E: Discourage strip retail commercial development along major arterial corridors.

By focusing retail commercial development at appropriate crossroad locations and managing access to such developments, the City will preserve arterial roadway capacity while accommodating fiscally responsible growth. Moreover, focusing retail development provides increased opportunities for the use of non-auto trip

methods – including pedestrian, bicycle and transit modes.

Action 6-5F: Create, designate and implement a bikeway and trail system serving both recreational and functional purposes.

As a quality of life attribute, a multi-modal system of bikeways and trails provides residents with numerous opportunities for non-auto oriented activities. For both residents and businesses, it is a direct indication of the commitment of the City to the high quality of life for its citizens.

For implementation, the design of any new or widened roadway facility should take appropriate accommodation of the bicycle mode into consideration. This includes current design activities on the Kings Highway Bridge, Nansemond Parkway and the Finney Avenue extension.

Action 6-5G: Assure the incorporation of transit related features in conjunction with design and construction of road improvements.

To more effectively accommodate transit service, the City must also consider it in the process of designing roadway improvements and reviewing development proposals. On facilities where transit service is or is planned to be provided, installing or reserving adequate space for transit vehicle turnouts, new and improved park and ride facilities and stations should be implemented. Consideration to establishing exclusive right of way for transit service should also be explored.

Action 6-5H: Continue and enhance the utilization of Special Corridor Overlay District and access management plans to assure the efficiency and function of the City's road network.

Corridor Overlay Districts are planning tools to manage access, function and site and building design along major highways. The design, timing and pace of development along the major transportation corridors need to be master planned and coordinated by way of a series of corridor studies and plans so as to assure the preservation of lands for economic development, job creation and future right of way; promote the prioritization of investment in major regional improvements, that are critical to the City's economic development; and assure the compatibility, efficiency

and function of the City's transportation network and adjacent land uses.

In conjunction with these master corridor plans, the City needs to continue to develop and implement land use strategies that continue to preserve lands within on-half to one mile of major interchanges and intersections for employment uses (office, research and development, for example). Such lands should not be zoned for residential use.

Action 6-5I: Explore to possibility of designating and protecting scenic roadways within Suffolk.

Scenic roads should be identified and protected from inappropriate widening or improvements which may, for example, remove significant trees or structures.

Chapter 7: Municipal Facilities

1. Introduction

The city of Suffolk provides a wide variety of services to its citizens. These include parks, libraries, police, fire, water, sewer, and storm water services among

others. In order to provide an adequate level of service, the delivery plans for these services must be closely coordinated with the City's land use policies.

2. Parks and Recreation

It is now being recognized that parks and recreation are essential to a quality lifestyle, to community health, and to economic prosperity. The value and functions of parks and open space extend far beyond the traditional image of playgrounds and athletic fields. When properly planned, implemented and maintained, a park and open space system provides multiple benefits: to residents through improved health and stress reduction; to the natural environment through resource conservation, flood water storage, and air quality; to the image and identity of the City through cultural resource protection and diversification, increased visitation and investment; and to the community through decreased infrastructure costs, enhanced property values, diversified economic base and revenues from use of special features.



The Parks and Recreation Master Plan, developed in 2000 under separate contract, (the Parks Plan) states that development and management of the City's

parks and recreation system has historically been a fairly low funding priority for the City. Consequently, many park facilities are outdated and in poor conditions. Many facilities do not meet the requirements of the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and are below or at minimum National Recreation and Park Association (NRPA) standards. In addition, according to a staff assessment, the system overall does not provide an adequate variety or quality of recreation experience.

Existing Conditions

The City currently manages 41 park and recreation facilities, which cover slightly over 1,825 acres. The City's parks and recreation facilities are shown in Figures 7-1 and 7-2. These facilities and some specific characteristics are described below.

Special Use Facilities – The City Parks Department operates the six special use

facilities described below. These facilities, which provide specialized programming and function as community gathering areas, are in various states of repair and ADA compliance.

- East Suffolk High School: The East Suffolk High School is currently being renovated as a recreation center.
- American Legion Building: Senior programs are scheduled to move out of this facility in 2006 upon the renovation of Suffolk High School into the Suffolk Center for Cultural Arts.
- National Guard Armory: Although owned by the federal government, this building is operated as a rental facility.
- Suffolk Museum: In the past two years, several facility maintenance issues have been addressed. A master plan for expansion of the museum will begin in 2006.
- Planters Club: The Planters Club is a rental facility that was part of the former Obici Estate along the Nansemond River. Since purchasing the facility in 2005, significant renovations have begun to address maintenance and ADA issues.
- Whaleyville Community Center: Significant interior improvements were made to the facility in 2004.

Mini Parks and Playgrounds – There are 11 mini parks and playgrounds (e.g., Coulbourn Park, Ida Easter, Joyner, Lakeside Tot Lot, Mary Estes, Pughsville, Turlington Park, Tynes Street, Wellons, Magnolia (formerly Wynnewood), and White Marsh. Most are two acres or less in size and comprise a total of 21.2 acres. Many of these facilities are located in older neighborhoods. In 2000-02, new playground equipment was installed in all of the mini parks and playgrounds to replace outdated equipment. A plan is currently being developed to address ADA compliance issues.

Neighborhood Parks – There are 7 neighborhood parks (e.g. Holland Athletic Field, King's Fork Athletic Field, Lake Kennedy Park, Monogram Field, Peanut Park, Planter's Park, and Whaleyville Athletic Fields). Most are 5 to 8 acres in size. Neighborhood parks account for 63.9 acres of the City's park system. Neighborhood parks are generally considered to be the "backbone" of park systems. With only 7 such parks serving the entire City, this category of facility is underrepresented and additional neighborhood parks are needed to meet the needs of the City's growing population.

Community Parks – There are five community parks, including Bennett's Creek and Boat Ramp, Constant's Wharf Park and Marina, Cypress Park and Pool, Sleepy Hole Park, , and Lake Meade (including the Howard Mast tennis courts and KidZone Community Playground). Community parks are intended to serve residents throughout the City and are typically fairly large and may offer distinct facilities such as swimming pools. The City's five community parks vary in size from just under 9 acres to 86 acres encompassing a total of 206.6 acres. These facilities are generally in better physical condition than the City's neighborhoods parks, however, there is concern that some are under-utilized and/or under-programmed. It is noted that programming has increased recently in response to public demand.

Natural Resource Areas – There are currently two designated natural area facilities in Suffolk – Lone Star Lakes, which provides a unique regional attraction, and Crump's Mill Pond, which is a historic and picturesque area. These two areas encompass 1,133 acres.

Sports Complex – Currently there are no sports complexes in the City, although a master planning process for

the former Driver Transmitter Station (transferred to the City through the BRAC process) is currently underway to identify uses and designs for an athletic complex and to address the possible uses for the additional acreage given to the City in 2002. This 380-acre facility is part of the Community Reuse Plan for the Driver Naval Radio Transmitting Facility. The master plan for Driver Park will incorporate Monogram Field – a lighted ball field located just outside the transmitter site. Plans call for Driver Park to become a revenue-generating regional tournament facility.

School/Joint Use –

There are seven joint-use facilities, located on school grounds. These facilities encompass almost 30 acres. According to the Parks Plan, there may be opportunities to expand joint use programs, particularly in conjunction with development of new schools. Another joint use recreation center will be developed in conjunction with the Creekside Elementary School under construction in Northern Suffolk. Use of these facilities is shared between the general public and the schools. The City Parks and Recreation Department has a joint-use agreement with the School Board.

The Parks Plan also includes two new categories. These include:

- Greenways, Blueways and Trails – A Master Plan and feasibility study is currently being developed for trails and blueways. A multi-city trail using abandoned rail rights of way is being developed as a result of this plan.

- Other Open Space such as private open space that is protected as part of conservation easements in subdivisions.

Sleepy Hole Golf Course - The public golf course is an 18-hole facility purchased by the City of Suffolk in 2003. The golf course was renovated and reopened for use in 2004. Future improvements include the development of a clubhouse and renovation of the Obici House Mansion.

Other Public and Private Facilities - In

addition to the facilities owned, operated and/or managed by the City, there are other facilities and recreation programs provided by other public and private entities. There are several private golf courses, marinas, stables and campgrounds in Suffolk that are open for public use. In addition to the joint use facilities noted above, many other schools throughout the City have playgrounds and/or athletic fields that may be used by



the general public. Local athletic organizations offer programs to area residents that utilize athletic fields throughout the City. The Great Dismal Swamp Wildlife Refuge, under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provides a unique natural resource that attracts over 25,000 local, regional and national visitors each year. It currently provides 100 miles of hiking and biking trails, an interpretive boardwalk trail, bird watching, hunting and fishing. There is interest on the part of the City in developing a new visitors center that would be located in Downtown Suffolk or at the

Washington Ditch. Such a facility could foster an increase in tourist activity.

Level of Service

The 2002 Virginia Outdoors Plan recommends a minimum acreage of 10 acres of parks and recreation facilities per 1,000 people and strongly recommends 20 acres/ 1,000 people. According to the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Policy, the 2004 provisional population of Suffolk is 75,500. Therefore, to meet the recommendations outlined by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), the City should provide between 755 and 1,510 acres of parks and recreational facilities. The City currently manages 40 park and recreation facilities, totaling over 1,825 acres, thus exceeding Virginia's minimum recommendation. These facilities are outlined in Table 7-1.

Although Suffolk exceeds the acreage recommendation for parks and recreation facilities, it fails to adequately distribute the acreage into neighborhood, community, district, and regional parks, as recommended by DCR. The 2002 Virginia Outdoors Plan recommends a minimum of 3 acres/ 1,000 people for neighborhood and community parks, and a minimum of 4 acres/1,000 people for district parks. Suffolk manages 7 neighborhood parks totaling 63.9 acres and 5 community parks totaling 200.6 acres. On average, the neighborhood parks are between 5 and 8 acres, while the community parks are 9 acres to 86 acres. Although the size of the individual neighborhood and community parks are aligned with the recommendations outlined in the Virginia Outdoors Plan, the neighborhood and community parks are not achieving the 3 acres /1,000 recommendations.

Although the neighborhood and community parks are insufficient according to state recommendations, the regional

park located in Suffolk far exceeds the recommended size for regional parks. The 2002 Virginia Outdoors Plan recommends that regional parks average between 100 and 500 acres in size, and do not recommend a specific size per 1,000 population. The regional park located in Suffolk, Lone Star Lakes Natural Resource Area, exceeds the size recommended by the state as it is approximately 1,100 acres of land and freshwater.



In addition to the neighborhood, community, district, and regional parks, Suffolk also provides 7 special use facilities, 11 mini parks and playgrounds, 7 joint use facilities, and various public and private facilities. Although space is not yet allocated, the Parks Plan also includes greenways, blueways, trails, and additional open space and the Capital Improvements Plan includes provisions for the development of the Driver Sports Complex. The inclusion of these facilities offers an opportunity to improve the service level of the parks and recreation facilities.

It is recommended that the department strive to provide the recommended 3 acres/1,000 people for neighborhood parks and community parks respectively. Currently, the department provides 200.6 acres of community parks,

which is below the 226.5 acres recommended. Therefore, it is recommended that the department provide additional acreage for community parks.

Furthermore, the Parks and Recreation Department currently offers approximately 14 acres/1,000 people for regional park space. As previously mentioned, this acreage exceeds the acreage recommended for regional parks in the 2002 Virginia Outdoors Plan. Therefore, it is recommended that the department maintain 14 acres of regional park space/1,000 people.

There are no new parks planned for the next 10 years according to the current capital improvement plan. The focused growth framework anticipates growth of approximately 2,500 people per year for the next twenty years. Meeting the recreation needs of these new residents needs to be a priority of the City in order to maintain the high quality of life residents have come to expect. As shown in Table 7-2, by the year 2016 the City will need to purchase an additional 187 acres to maintain the recommended level of service. By 2026, the City will need to plan for the purchase of nearly 700 acres.

**Table 7-1
Suffolk Parks and Recreation Department
System Inventory – Facilities**

Type	Name	Acreage
Special Use Facilities	East Suffolk High School	2
	National Guard Armory	NA
	Obici House	NA
	Planters Club	NA
	Senior Citizen's Center	NA
	Suffolk Museum	NA
	Whaleyville Community Center	NA
	Subtotal	2
Mini Parks	Coulbourn Park	2
	Ida Easter Park	1
	Joyner Park	2
	Lakeside Park Tot Lot	1
	Mary Estes Playground	1.7
	Magnolia Park	5
	Pughsville Park	5
	Turlington Park	1
	Tynes Street Playground	1
	Wellons Park	1
	Magnolia Park	5
	White Marsh Park	0.5
	Subtotal	21.2
	Neighborhood Parks	Holland Athletic Field
King's Fork Athletic Field		5
Lake Kennedy Park		19.9
Monogram Field		8
Peanut Park		5
Planters Park		5
Whaleyville Community Center and Athletic Field		8
Subtotal		63.9

Type	Name	Acreage
Natural Resource Areas	Crump's Mill Pond	70
	Lone Star Lakes	1063
	Subtotal	1,133
Community Parks	Bennett's Creek Park & Boat Ramp	50
	Constant's Wharf Park and Marina	9
	Cypress Park & Pool	30.6
	Lake Meade Park/Howard Mast Tennis Courts/Kidzone	25
	Sleepy Hole Park	86
	Subtotal	200.6
Sports Complex	Driver Park/Monogram Field (Under Development)	360
	Subtotal	360
School-Joint Use	Booker T. Washington Rec. Center and Tennis Courts	5
	Forest Glen Middle School Tennis Courts	0.5
	JFK Middle School Athletic Fields	19.3
	Kings Fork Middle School	N/A
	Mack Benn Jr. Recreation Center	NA
	Northern Shores Recreation Center	NA
	Oakland Recreation Center	NA
	Subtotal	24.8
Total Acreage		1,796.9

Source: City of Suffolk, Department of Parks and Recreation, Parks Master Plan

**Table 7-2
Parks and Recreation
Needs Requirements**

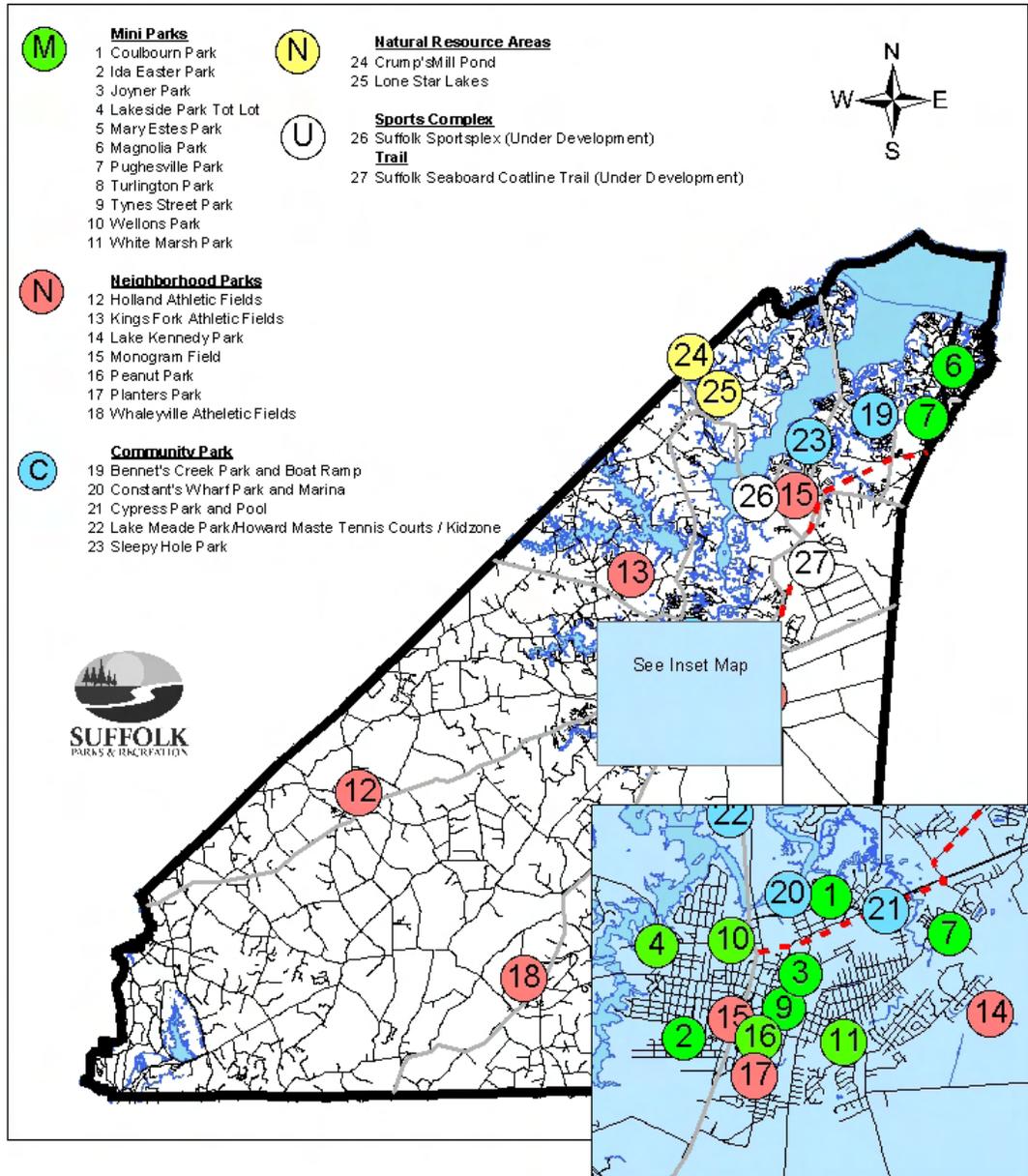
Year	Population	Park Acres ¹	Required Acres at Level of Service Standard (per 1000 people)		Surplus/(Deficit) Acres at Level of Service Standard (per 1000 people)	
			10 Acres	20 Acres	10 Acres	20 Acres
2006	75,500	1,825	755	1,510	1,070	315
2011	88,176	1,825	882	1,764	943	61
2016	100,599	1,825	1,006	2,012	819	(187)
2026	126,108	1,825	1,261	2,522	564	(697)

1. There are no new acreages of parks planned in the current Capital Improvement Plan.
2. Calculations do not account for deficits by area or in specific categories of park facilities

Source: 2005 City of Suffolk Capital Improvements Plan
Calculations by URS Corp., 2006

Figure 7-1

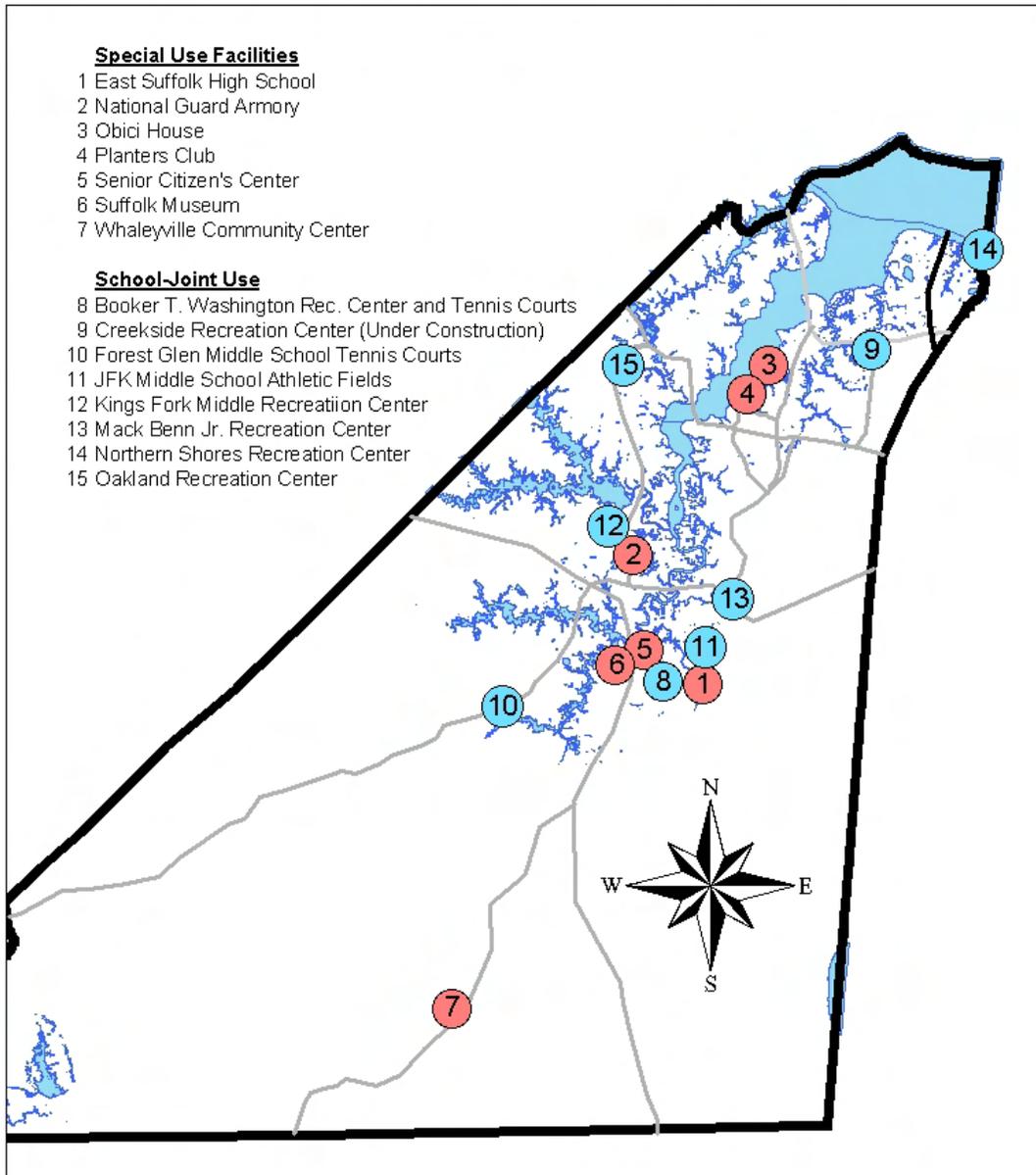
Mini, Neighborhood, Community Parks and Natural Resource Areas



Source: City of Suffolk, Department of Parks and Recreation

Figure 7-2

Special Use and Joint Use Facilities Suffolk, Virginia



Source: City of Suffolk, Department of Parks and Recreation

3. Public Safety

The Suffolk Police Department provides 24-hour per day protection services for the citizens of the City. The Police Department is organized into two sectors with 18 zones. The division between the zones is approximately a line that follows Route 58 to the east through downtown Suffolk to Route 460 in the western section of the City. Sector I covers the southern part of the City including the downtown area. Sector II encompasses the rapidly growing northern portion of the City. The location of the existing police stations and the patrol sectors is shown in Figure 7-3.

Currently, the City is served by 160 sworn officers and 48 civilian employees. The department is budgeted for 163 officers.

Between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004, the department fielded 226,297 phone calls, 55,848 were calls to 911—of which nearly 50% were from mobile telephones. In calendar year 2003, the Suffolk Police Department took 6,818 reports, and 1,679 accidents reports; 2,747 arrests were made during this period.

Public safety in the City of Suffolk is provided 24-hours per day by the City's Police Department and the Department of Fire, Rescue, & Emergency Services.

The Department of Fire, Rescue, & Emergency Services members are committed to providing a superior level of emergency service that continually

improves the quality of life, health, and safety of the citizens of Suffolk. To accomplish this, the Department operates four divisions:

The Operations Division offers a variety of services including 24-hour per day response to requests for assistance from any member of the Suffolk community or any visitor to our City. Responding to structure fires both commercial and residential, vehicle fires, hazardous materials incidents, and administering emergency medical care and transportation to the sick and injured are just a few of the requests for assistance that the Department responds to on a daily basis.



Fire and Emergency Medical Service Operations are provided by two Battalion Chiefs, seven engine companies, two ladder companies, two squad companies, and six advanced life support ambulances that operate out

of eight fire stations 24-hours per day. In 2004, Suffolk Fire, Rescue, & Emergency Services responded to 9,471 requests for emergency assistance. The location of the City's fires stations is shown in Figure 7-4.

The Fire Prevention Bureau insures that codes and ordinances affecting fire and life safety are conformed with; administers the permitting of various hazardous materials processes and storage; develops and presents fire safety programs to the general public; conducts periodic building inspections; investigates complaints of potential fire hazard; and pro-

vides training to update department personnel of current standards and practices. In addition, the Fire Prevention Bureau investigates fires of unknown, suspicious or incendiary origin, fires involving death or injury, explosions, false alarms, and hazardous materials incidents. The Bureau also maintains records and data pertaining to hazardous materials located in the City.

The Training Bureau is responsible for the training of new recruits as well as required continuing education credits for all employees' certification levels. The levels include Firefighter I & II, Emergency Medical Technician, Shock Trauma Technician, Cardiac Technician, and Paramedic. In addition, the Training Bureau teaches and maintains the CPR certification for all personnel in the department.

The Training Bureau offers a variety of activities for existing personnel that include:

- Assignment of regular continuing education and recertification classes for fire fighting, basic life support, and advanced life support.
- Scheduling of officer and management programs and National Fire Academy courses.
- Maintenance of a library of training manuals, textbooks and audio/visual training equipment.

The Emergency Management Division is responsible for coordinating preparedness, response, recovery, and mitigation actions in the City. Daily activities include the maintenance of the City's emergency operation center and emergency operations plan, strategic planning for an all hazards approach to managing natural and man made disasters, and various community outreach projects aimed at educating the public to be prepared for disaster. When a disaster or local emergency affects the City of

Suffolk, the Office of Emergency Management is responsible for coordinating response, recovery, and mitigation with other local jurisdictions that are impacted by the same event, the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

Service delivery in the fire service is impacted by a variety of issues including the number of firefighters per 1000 residents, the response times of firefighting companies, the staffing of firefighting companies, and the deployment of firefighting forces. The most widely recognized and accepted standard with respect to the staffing and deployment of firefighting resources is the National Fire Protection Association's (NFPA) standard for the Organization and Deployment of Fire Suppression Operations, Emergency Medical Operations, and Special Operations to the Public by Career Fire Departments. The standard is also known as NFPA 1710.

In 2005, Suffolk Fire & Rescue was budgeted for 162 full time career firefighter positions and protected a population of 75,000 residents, corresponding to approximately 2.1 firefighters per 1000 people. It is important to note that this method of determining fire service staffing needs does not address the vast geographical land mass of the City of Suffolk.

According to NFPA 1710, the fire department's fire suppression resources shall be deployed to provide for the arrival of an engine company within a 4-minute response time and the initial full alarm assignment within an 8-minute response time to 90 percent of the incidents that require a full assignment of apparatus. A full assignment is generally dispatched to calls involving fires or emergencies in a structure and consists of two Engine Companies, one Squad Company, one Ladder Company, one Medic Unit, and one Battalion Chief.

With respect to emergency medical service calls (EMS), NFPA 1710 calls for the arrival of a first responder with an automatic external defibrillator (AED) to arrive on scene with a 4-minute response time to 90 percent of the incidents. Additionally, the fire department's EMS for providing advanced life support (ALS) shall be deployed to provide for the arrival of an ALS company within an 8-minute response time to 90 percent of the incidents.

Although the staffing levels of Suffolk Fire, Rescue, & Emergency Services are somewhat comparable with those of neighboring jurisdictions in Hampton Roads when balanced against the number of residents, response times of fire and EMS units remain inadequate. Response times are a critical component in determining the level of service that a fire and EMS agency provides to its residents.

In order to reduce both fire and EMS response times, additional fire and EMS stations will have to be constructed to reduce travel times. As stated earlier, the vast geographical land mass of the City of Suffolk is a major hurdle that must be addressed in order to meet the established professional standards as well as the benchmarks that have been established by other fire & rescue agencies.

Another factor that dramatically impacts a fire departments service delivery is staffing. Along with response times, there are several professional standards and benchmarks that have been established for the fire and EMS service staffing. The National Fire Protection Association's 1710 also addresses fire department staffing as a factor of service delivery. NFPA 1710 states that fire company staffing requirements shall be based on minimum levels for emergency operations safety, effectiveness, and efficiency. More specifically, NFPA 1710 states fire companies should be staffed

with a minimum of four on-duty personnel. Suffolk Fire & Rescue apparatus are routinely staffed with three on duty personnel.

The 2005-2006 Capital Improvements Plan allocates funding to a variety of fire and rescue related projects, which will presumably improve the service levels of the department. Projects include purchasing additional fire engines, aerial ladders and ambulances; repairing and adding to existing fire-rescue stations; construction of new fire-rescue stations; developing a fire training center; and implementing an emergency vehicle pre-emption system.

Level of Service

According to the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission (VLEPSC) and the Suffolk Police Department, there is no formal recommended level of service for public safety services. Rather than strive for a level of service recommended by a national or state agency that is external to the community, it is recommended that each police department strive to meet the priorities and needs unique to their community.

In order to provide an adequate level of service, according to the VLEPSC, the City Manager and the Police Chief must determine the services that are necessary to ensure public safety in the jurisdiction, the services that are desired by the residents, and the manner in which to best provide these services. Frequently, the City Manager and the Police Chief base the needs and priorities of the community upon knowledge and trends specific to the community. For example, in the Suffolk Police Department, the number of police officers necessary to provide adequate services is based on a variety of factors including but not limited to population, calls for service, quality of life, response times,

and the working philosophy of the department.

The Suffolk Police Department currently employs 155 officers, corresponding to approximately 2.1 officers/1,000 people. Although national and state standards do not exist to determine whether this level of service is adequate, it is possible to compare this ratio to national averages and to other jurisdictions. For example, in the Local Police Departments 2,000 edition, the Department of Justice estimated that the average number of police officers per 1000 people was 1.8 in municipal police departments serving populations between 50,000 and 99,000. Unfortunately, the Department of Justice only collects law enforcement data once every 3 or 4 years, which limits the validity of the comparison. Similarly, the Uniform Crime Report, published annually by the Federal Bureau of Investigation, reported that cities with a population of 25,000 to 99,999 averaged 2.3 police officers per 1,000 people in 2003.

Currently, at a minimum, 2.1 officers/1,000 people is sufficient. However, it is recommended and desirable that the City establish “target” level of service to achieve is 2.5 officers/1,000 people. In the future as Suffolk matures, consideration should be given to establishing an “aggressive” level of service of 3.0 officers/1,000 people. An aggressive level of service provides an opportunity to enhance the department’s ability to perform proactive services like Traffic Unit, Special Investigations Unit, Computer Fraud Unit, Sex Crimes and Domestic Assault Investigator and Intelligence Unit. Table 7-3 shows the required staffing to meet this level of service. By 2026, the City will need to hire an additional 113 police officers to meet the 3.0 officers/1000 people standard.

In the Fire and Rescue Department, level of service is primarily determined by two factors: the number of fire fighters per 1,000 residents and the average response time. With the current staffing level of 197 full time career firefighters, 25 emergency management services staff, and 75 volunteers, the current fire staffing average in Suffolk is 2.5 firefighters per 1,000 residents. According to the Fire Chief, 2.5 firefighters per 1,000 residents is a standard recommended in many fire manuals and is also used as a standard in municipalities throughout the nation.

Currently, at a minimum the Fire Department should maintain its current level of service of 2.5 firefighters/1,000 people. However, it is recommended and desirable that the City establish a “target” level of service is 3.0 firefighters/1,000 people with a response time of 5 minutes. In the future as Suffolk matures, consideration should be given to establishing an “aggressive” level of service of 3.5 fire personnel/1,000 people to ensure fire protection services are adequate for the growing population of Suffolk. Increasing the levels of service beyond the 2.5 firefighters/1,000 people to the “target” and “aggressive” levels of service offers an opportunity to lower the Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating and the corresponding insurance rates. Table 7-4 shows amount of staffing required to meet this level of service. By 2026, the City will need to hire an additional 126 firefighters to meet the 3.5 firefighters/1000 people standard.

Although staffing levels are compatible with fire manuals and other municipalities, the response time of the fire and rescue department is inadequate. Response time is a crucial component in determining the level of service. Ideally, a unit should be on the scene of the incident within 5 minutes of the call. According to the Suffolk Fire Chief, units

arrive, on average, 7 to 8 minutes after the initial call due to the size of the City and the limited number of fire stations.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) also outlines a variety of recommendations, which can be used to determine the adequacy of service. For example, NFPA Standard 1,710 recommends that a minimum of 4 career firefighters are needed to operate an engine. Although the Suffolk Fire Department attempts to abide by the recommendations outlined by the NFPA, they are currently incapable of complying with some of the recommendations, such as Standard 1,710, due to staffing limitations, the apparatus required, and the need for additional fire stations.

The 2005-2006 Capital Improvements Plan allocates funding to a variety of fire and rescue related projects, which will presumably improve the service levels of the department. Projects include purchasing additional fire engines, trucks,

and ambulances; repairing and adding to existing fire stations; constructing new fire stations; developing a public safety center; and implementing an emergency vehicle pre-emption system.

It appears that when the facilities and improvements that are currently outlined in the 2005-2006 Capital Improvements Plan are completed, the department should achieve an average response time of 5 minutes, and the level of service would become adequate.

However, it is also recommended that an analysis be done to investigate whether the existing and proposed locations of fire stations are able to serve the entire city with Fire Protection Service Zones of 1.5-mile response radii. Such an analysis would indicate whether and where more fire stations are needed to achieve the adequate response time.

**Table 7-3
Police Staffing Requirements**

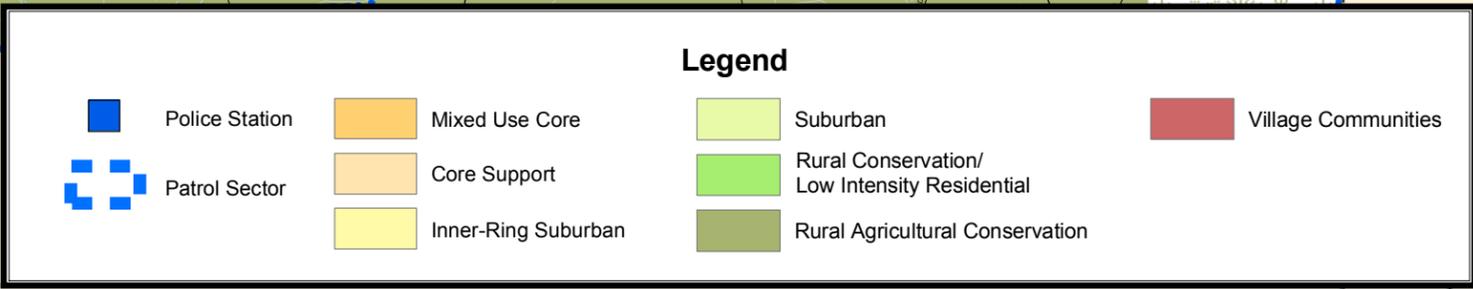
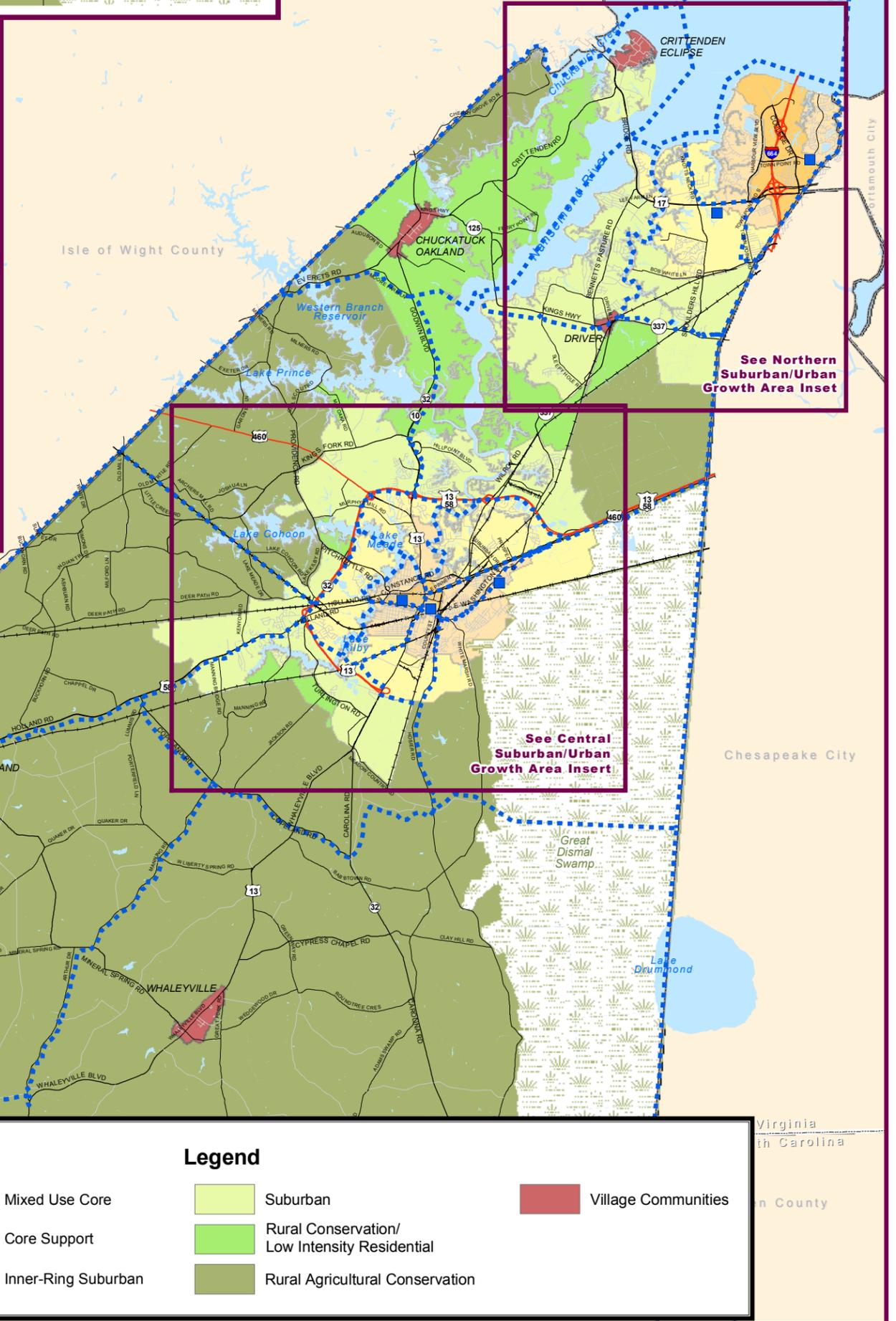
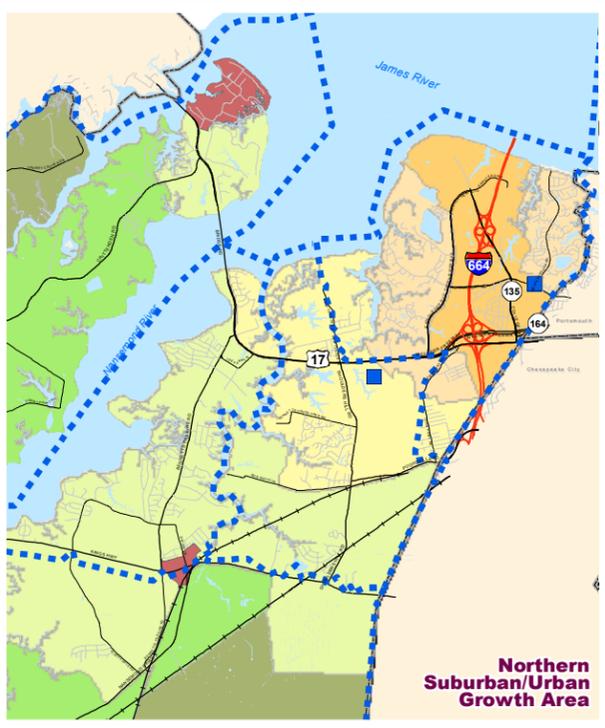
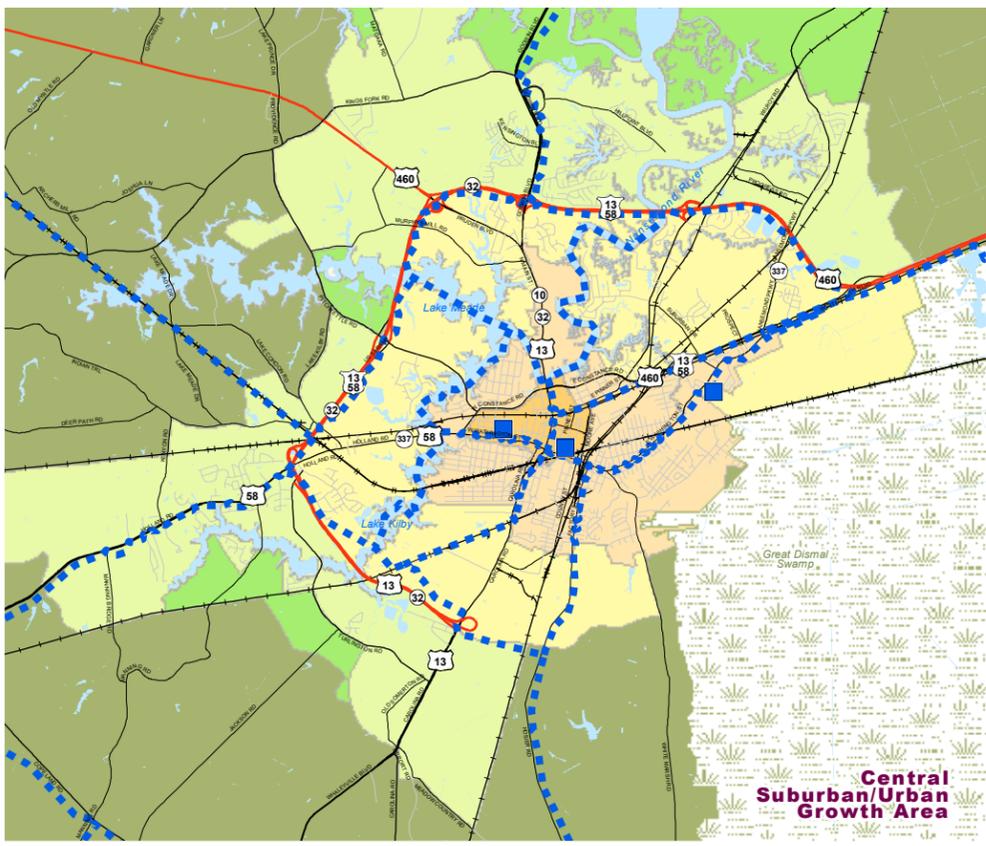
		Number of Officers at Current Level of Service	Required Officers at Level of Service Standard			Additional Officers Needed to Meet Level of Service	
Year	Projected Population	2.1 Officers	2.5 Officers	3.0 Officers	2.5 Officers	3.0 Officers	
2006	75,500	159	189	227	30	68	
2011	88,176	185	220	265	35	79	
2016	100,599	211	251	302	40	91	
2026	126,108	265	315	378	50	113	

1. Level of service based on officers/1,000 people.
Calculations by: URS Corp., 2006

**Table 7-4
Fire/Rescue Staffing Requirements**

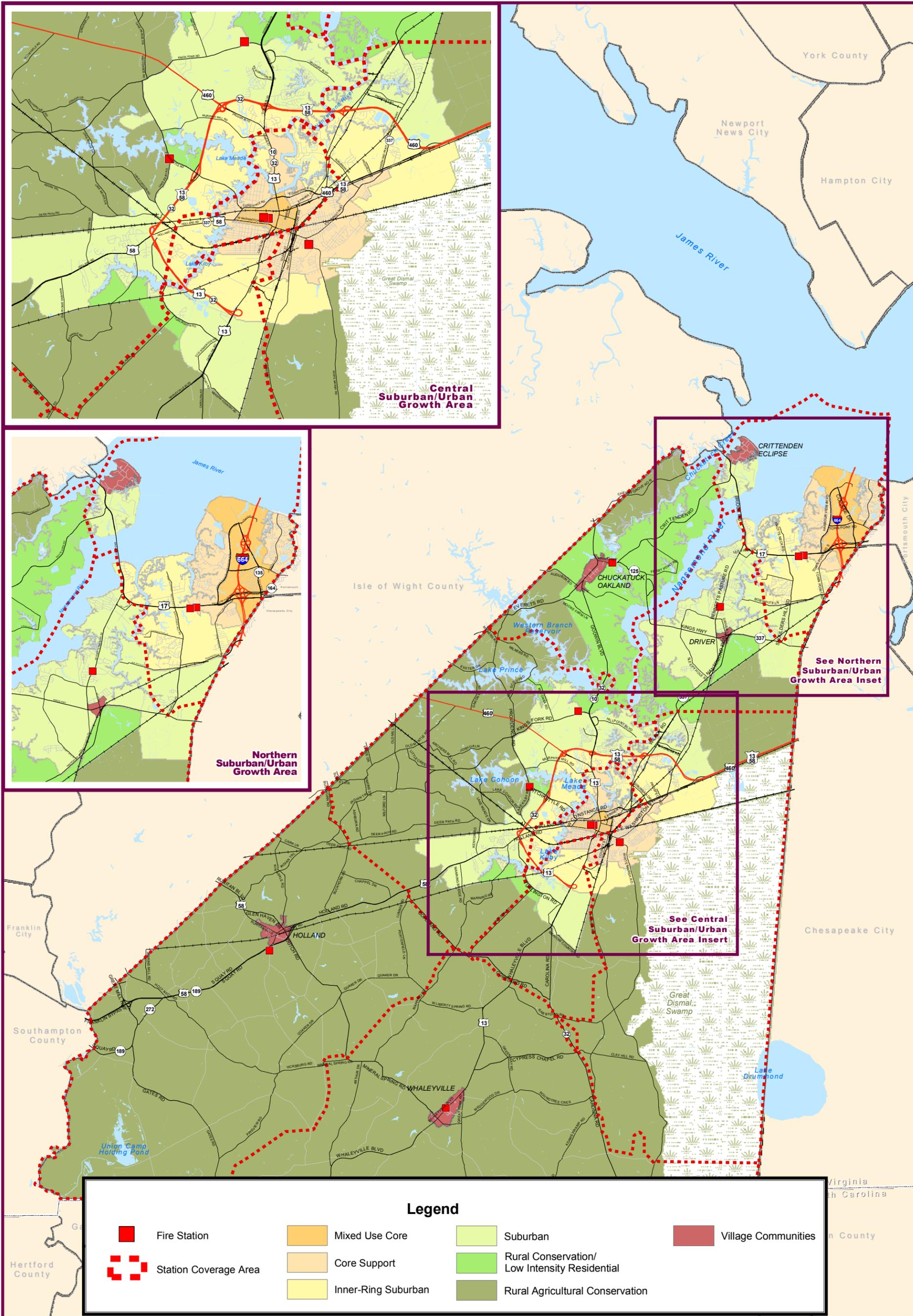
		Number of Firefighters at Current Level of Service	Required Firefighters at Level of Service Standard			Additional Firefighters Needed to Meet Level of Service	
Year	Projected Population	2.5 Firefighters	3.0 Firefighters	3.5 Firefighters	3.0 Firefighters	3.5 Firefighters	
2006	75,500	189	227	264	38	76	
2011	88,176	220	264	308	44	88	
2016	100,599	251	302	352	50	101	
2026	126,108	315	378	441	63	126	

1. Level of service based on firefighters/1,000 people.
Calculations by: URS Corp., 2006



City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan
**Police Stations
and Patrol Zones**





City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan

Fire Stations and Coverage Zones



URS
Figure 7-4

4. Schools

Rapid residential growth in the City of Suffolk has constrained the capacity of the public schools. As capacity decreases, the demand for new schools increases. Subsequently, new school construction has become a standard component of the City's capital budget. The Suffolk Public School System currently has 19 schools—12 elementary, 4 middle, and 3 high schools. Figure 7-5 shows the location of the current schools in Suffolk. The system has a membership of more than 13,000 pupils from pre-kindergarten through the 12th grade.

In recent years, new schools have been built at a rate of one per year and significant renovations have been completed at several existing schools. The newest schools to be built have been the Mark Benn Jr. Elementary School, the Kings Fork Middle School, and the Kings Fork High School. Furthermore, a new elementary school in the northern portion of the City, Creekside Elementary School, is nearly completed.

Over the past several years, the schools division has been constructing large schools to take advantage of economies of scale in the physical plant, administration, and other areas. The newest elementary schools in the City are now being built to accommodate nearly 800 students. Because of the lower density land use pattern in the City, this size school has been the most logical. As a result, there are few areas of the City where elementary school students can walk a safe, reasonable distance to school.

Recently, however, the City Council and school system has begun exploring the idea of smaller-scale, more neighborhood-oriented schools. These schools

could be located within walking distance of homes, and could serve as community centers and gathering places. To date, the City's land use pattern has not supported this except in limited locations.

In the fall of 2005, the City Council endorsed a set of smart growth principles for school facility planning. The principles recommended that the school board and the City council work together to plan for public schools, that:

- Provide the highest quality education
- Involve broad community involvement in facility siting and planning
- Involve site selection that is consistent with the City's long-range growth plan (Comprehensive Plan)
- For some facilities, particularly lower grades, the size of facility and site acreage may be smaller in size and fit well within context of the neighborhood or village in which they are located
- Function as centers and anchors of community by physical linkages to surrounding areas and after-school uses
- Support ease of accessibility for alternative modes of transportation (e.g. biking, walking)

Future school site selection and funding will be based on these principles.

The capacity of Suffolk schools has been an important issue in the City, as it is one of the levels of service standards used in the existing adequate public facilities review policy for re-zoning and conditional zoning cases. Capacity is generally dependent upon the programs offered in each school, funding sources, and other external factors. While capacity varies between schools, a target capacity is necessary in order to design

new facilities and evaluate the level of service offered by each school.

Level of Service

In November 2005, representatives from the City and the Suffolk Public School System agreed to define the design capacity and subsequently the level of service as building square footage per student. Table 7-5 illustrates the level of service that the public schools must strive to maintain or achieve.

While data pertaining to the number of students currently enrolled in Suffolk Public Schools is not available, the November 2003 enrollment provides an estimation of the level of service offered by the Suffolk Public Schools. Table 7-6 illustrates the square footage of each elementary, middle, and high school; the November 2003 enrollment; and the level of service as defined by the standards agreed to in November 2005. As illustrated in Table 7-6, only one school, Southwestern Elementary School, exceeds the level of service for elementary schools. Conversely, three of the middle schools exceed the selected 143 square feet per student. Both high schools, for which data is available, are drastically below the level of service selected for high schools. The completion of the Kings Fork High School has alleviated this situation.

To provide a more recent estimation for level of service, the average square footage per student in 2004 was 107

square feet, 143 square feet, and 139 square feet for elementary, middle, and high schools respectively. Newly constructed schools, on the other hand, were 130 square feet, 138 square feet, and 153 square feet for elementary, middle, and high schools respectively. Excluding newly constructed schools, the existing level of service for elementary schools and high schools was below the selected square footage in 2004. While newly constructed elementary and high schools provided an adequate level of service, newly constructed middle schools were below the selected square footage in 2004.



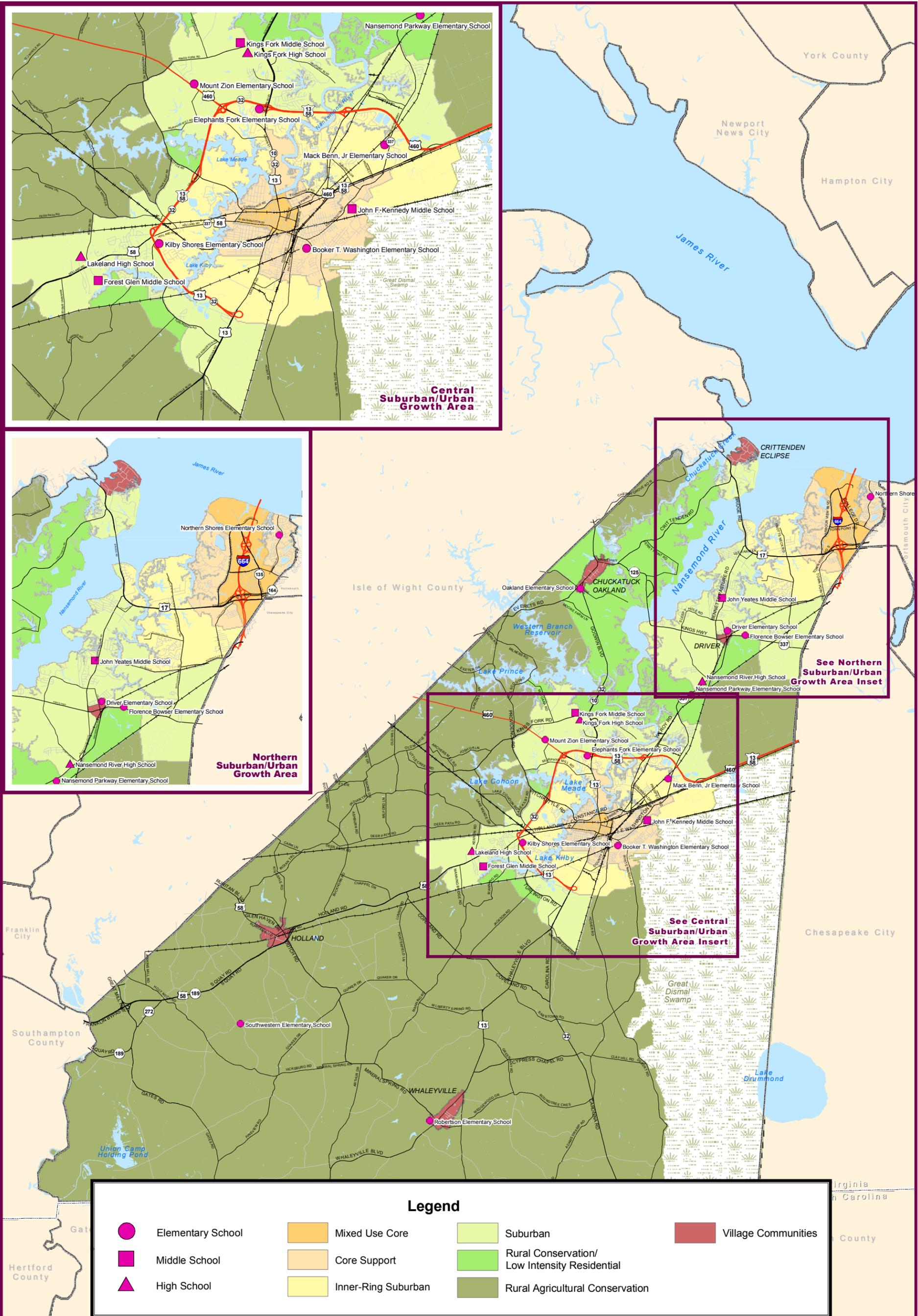
School facility planning will continue to be an issue with the City as it continues to grow. The school system uses a general rule of thumb that for each new housing unit developed, ½ of a new student appears

somewhere in the school system. Table 7-7 shows the estimated number of new school pupils based on the Focused Growth Framework. As shown in the table, an estimated 2,500 additional students will be added to the school system during the first five years of the Plan and an additional 2,500 students during the second 5-year period. With this in mind, and acknowledging the overcapacity of the current elementary schools, additional school capacity will need to be a City priority in the future. As shown in Table 7-8, to accommodate growth, the City needs to plan for the equivalent of an additional 6.4 elementary schools, 2.1 middle schools, and 3.0 high schools.

**Table 7-5:
Level of Service for Suffolk Public Schools
Sq. Feet of Design Capacity Per Pupil**

	1-10 Year Projections*	11-20 Year Projections*
Elementary Schools:	120 sq ft	125 sq ft
Middle Schools:	143 sq ft	148 sq ft
High Schools:	153 sq ft	158 sq ft

**The design capacities/level of service agreed upon by the representatives from the City and the Suffolk Public may increase within the next 20 years. Due to potential programmatic changes the required square feet per student was adjusted for years 11-20 of the plan.*



Legend

	Elementary School		Mixed Use Core		Suburban		Village Communities
	Middle School		Core Support		Rural Conservation/ Low Intensity Residential		
	High School		Inner-Ring Suburban		Rural Agricultural Conservation		



City of Suffolk, Virginia
 2026 Comprehensive Plan
Public Schools

0 3
 Miles

URS
 Figure 7-5

**Table 7-6:
2003 Level of Service of Suffolk Public Schools**

School	Sq. Ft.	Nov. 2003 Total Enrollment	Sq. Feet/Student	Standard Sq. Feet/Student*
Booker T. Washington Elementary	63,000	530	119	120
Driver Elementary	64,100	550	117	120
Elephant's Fork Elementary	58,800	671	88	120
Florence Bowser Elementary	26,600	352	76	120
Kilby Shores Elementary	58,800	695	85	120
Mack Benn Jr Elementary	86,100	722	119	120
Mount Zion Elementary	27,600	347	80	120
Nansemond Parkway Elementary	58,800	632	93	120
Northern Shores Elementary	72,800	818	89	120
Oakland Elementary	62,000	544	114	120
Robertson Elementary	16,900	182	93	120
Southwestern Elementary	52,300	382	137	120
Overall Elementary Schools	647,800	6,425	101	120
Forest Glen Middle	77,000	468	165	143
John F. Kennedy Middle	142,400	822	173	143
John Yeates Middle	105,100	841	125	143
King's Fork Middle	187,000	1,139	164	143
Overall Middle Schools	511,500	3,270	156	143
Lakeland High	222,400	1,913	116	153
Kings Fork High	No Data	No Data	No Data	153
Nansemond River High	222,400	1,585	140	153
Overall High Schools	444,800	3,498	127	153

Source: City of Suffolk Schools Division, LOS Calculations by URS Corp.
 Note: * Standard represents 1-10 Year Projections from Table 7-2

**Table 7-7
Estimated New Students
Based on Focused Growth Framework**

		Plan Year 1 - 5		Plan Year 6 - 10		Plan Year 11 - 20	
		Housing Units	Estimated New Students	Housing Units	Estimated New Stu- dents	Housing Units	Estimated New Stu- dents
Growth Area	District						
Central	Core	65	33	90	45	245	123
	Core Support	420	210	467	234	1,121	560
	Inner-Ring Suburban	645	323	615	307	1,168	584
	Suburban	675	338	642	321	1,216	608
Total Central		1,807	904	1,813	907	3,750	1,875
Northern	Core	414	207	607	304	1,656	828
	Core Support	390	195	434	217	1,041	520
	Inner-Ring Suburban	756	378	706	353	1,342	671
	Suburban	1,295	648	1,118	559	2,119	1,060
Total Northern		2,855	1,428	2,865	1,433	6,158	3,079
Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential		280	140	254	127	432	216
Rural Agricultural Conserva- tion Area		47	24	47	23	94	47
Total		4,988	2,494	4,980	2,490	10,434	5,217

Source: URS Corp, 2006

**Table 7-8
Equivalent New Schools Required Under
Focused Growth Scenario**

	2006-2011	2012-2016	2017-2026	2006-2026
Elementary School Students	1,047	1,045	2,295	4,388
Required Sq. Feet	125,697	125,495	286,938	538,131
Equivalent Schools	1.5	1.5	3.4	6.4
Middle School Students	598	597	1,311	2,506
Required Sq. Feet	85,594	85,456	194,134	365,183
Equivalent Schools	0.5	0.5	1.1	2.1
High School Students	947	946	2,076	3,969
Required Sq. Feet	145,001	144,768	328,148	617,917
Equivalent Schools	0.7	0.7	1.6	3.0

1. School equivalencies calculated based on recent school construction
 2. Equivalent school calculations do not account for over/under capacity at existing schools or attendance districts at existing schools.
 3. Student generation rates based on Unified Development Ordinance Section 31-306.
 4. Square feet per student based on Level of Service standards shown in table 7-2
- Calculations by: URS Corp., 2006

5. Libraries

In addition to the main library, the Morgan Memorial library, the City also offers three branch libraries – Bennetts Creek, Chuckatuck, and East Suffolk – as well as a citywide bookmobile.

At present, residential growth in the City of Suffolk has outpaced the growth of the Public Library System, resulting in an inability to provide adequate library facilities and materials to serve the rapidly growing population.

While the definition of adequate library facilities and materials is often specific to individual communities, the Library of Virginia offers public libraries guidance in determining the definition of “adequate” for their community. To aid Virginia public libraries in defining “adequate facilities and materials”, the Library of Virginia created *Planning for Library Excellence*, which includes access to standards and guidelines, as well as assistance in assessments, long-range and strategic planning, and evaluations.

For example, in a previous addition of *Planning for Library Excellence*, the Library of Virginia recommended that library facilities be designed to provide 0.6 square feet of library space per capita. It further recommended that the library meet the minimum “Guidelines for Determining Space Needs”, as defined by the *Planning for Library Excellence*. These included spatial guidelines for print and non-print collections; study and leisure reading areas; staff work and lounge areas; computer, listening, and viewing stations; and miscellaneous needs such as space for heating and cooling equipment; elevators; and general meeting and conference space.

While the recommendations for library space per capita are only a guideline for achieving adequate facilities, it is helpful to compare Suffolk’s current square footage to this recommendation.

Level of Service

Considering that the 2004 provisional population of Suffolk is 75,500, the Suffolk Public Library should provide approximately 45,300 square feet of library space to accommodate the current population, as recommended in a previous edition of *Planning for Library Excellence*. According to the Library Director, the Suffolk Public Library currently has 19,741 square feet of library space. The Morgan Memorial Library is 15,984 square feet; Bennetts Creek is 1,890 square feet; Chuckatuck is 1,300 square feet; and East Suffolk is 567 square feet. Although the library system offers four locations and a bookmobile to the residents of Suffolk, the 19,741 square feet of library space is currently inadequate.

However, a new library was included in the 2005-2006 Capital Improvements Plan and is under construction. The building is scheduled for completion in January 2007. Library space in the new building is estimated to be approximately 19,000 square feet. With the addition of this library, the square footage offered by the Suffolk Public Library will improve significantly to between 35,000 and 40,000 square feet. This square footage is still not sufficient to accommodate the 2004 provisional population; however, a new main library to replace the Morgan Memorial Library, located near the Suffolk Center for the Cultural Arts, is scheduled for development in approximately 7 years. The addition of these new facilities offers an opportunity

to improve the services offered by the public library.

In addition to the square footage of library facilities, adequacy can also be defined by the quality, format, and breadth of the library circulation materials, or holdings, offered by public libraries.

While the Library of Virginia does not recommend a specific number of holdings per capita, it is possible to compare the holdings of the Suffolk Public Library with other Virginia public libraries, such as those located in neighboring communities and serving similar populations. Although the Library of Virginia does not offer a recommendation, it does publish statistics comparing factors such as circulation per capita, expenditures per capita, holdings per capita, library visits per capita, and the rate of turnover each year.

In Table 7- 9, the holdings per capita of the Suffolk Public Library are compared to 14 community libraries located in the region. As shown in the table, the City of Suffolk lies within the lower 33 percentile of community library holdings. While Suffolk holding is comparable to the three communities with similar populations – Bedford, Lynchburg, and Augusta County, Suffolk’s 2.4 holdings per capita is significantly lower than the median number of holdings per capita – 3.62 - in Virginia. Therefore, it is recommended that the library system provide additional holdings per capita. It is

recommended that the library system strive to provide at least 3.62 holdings per capita, the average number offered by libraries in Virginia. Table 7-10 shows the number of square feet of library space and holding required to meet this level of service. By 2026, the library system will need to increase its holding by an estimated 290,273 volumes to meet this standard.

Furthermore, as previously described, the square footage of library space is insufficient. The 19,000 square feet outlined in the 2005-2006 Capital Improvements Plan, while beneficial for the improvement of the library’s facilities, is still not sufficient to accommodate the current population or the anticipated growth. The new library, scheduled for completion in January 2007, significantly increases the total square footage offered, and improves the level of service, but fails to increase the square footage to recommended levels. It is recommended that the additional library, scheduled for development in approximately 7 years, be designed to provide the amount of square footage needed to accommodate the provisional population as well as the anticipated growth.

Finally, it is recommended that the Suffolk Public Library use the “Formula for Recommended Staffing,” outlined in *Planning for Library Excellence*, to ensure that the number of library personnel is sufficient to provide an adequate level of service.

**Table 7-9
Holdings Per Capita of Suffolk Public Library Compared to Libraries Serving Similar Populations**

Library	2000			2002			2004		
	Population	Total Holdings	Holdings per Capita	Population	Total Holdings	Holdings per Capita	Population	Total Holdings	Holdings per Capita
Franklin County	46,000	91,719	1.99	47,286	92,407	1.95	48,700	98,010	2.01
Hampton	136,200	294,177	2.16	146,437	294,305	2.01	145,200	307,060	2.11
Gloucester	34,500	58,921	1.71	34,780	67,891	1.95	35,000	76,801	2.19
Virginia Beach	421,000	868,584	2.06	425,257	935,407	2.20	428,400	1,003,831	2.34
Suffolk	63,500	131,463	2.07	63,677	160,932	2.53	69,200	166,238	2.40
Lynchburg	64,600	171,387	2.65	65,269	160,130	2.45	65,600	158,322	2.41
Newport News	179,900	445,233	2.47	180,150	465,332	2.58	179,300	482,643	2.69
Augusta County	62,400	193,602	3.10	65,615	187,528	2.86	66,300	185,604	2.80
York County	57,500	109,359	1.90	56,297	148,124	2.63	58,800	166,905	2.84
Bedford	63,900	225,429	3.53	66,670	192,290	2.88	67,800	199,554	2.94
Chesapeake	197,000	669,073	3.40	199,184	735,713	3.69	205,100	649,389	3.17
Norfolk	225,700	1,064,512	4.72	234,403	1,125,944	4.80	234,100	791,206	3.38
Portsmouth	97,200	335,468	3.45	100,565	325,348	3.24	98,400	372,304	3.78
Poquoson	11,400	42,703	3.75	11,566	50,755	4.39	11,600	52,644	4.54
Williamsburg	58,300	298,491	5.12	60,100	333,048	5.54	64,400	358,517	5.57
Virginia Average	6,865,501	19,280,877	2.81	7,061,607	21,463,802	3.44	7,305,228	22,117,991	
Virginia Median			2.93			3.44			3.62

Source: Virginia Public Libraries

**Table 7-10
Required Library Space and Holdings**

Year	Population	Required Sq. Feet	Required Holdings	Surplus/Deficit	
				Sq. Feet	Holdings
2006	75,500	45,300	273,310.00	-5,300	-107,072
2011	88,176	52,906	319,197.12	-12,906	-152,959
2016	100,599	60,359	364,168.38	-20,359	-197,930
2026	126,108	75,665	456,510.96	-35,665	-290,273

1. Surplus/deficit calculations assume worst case scenario of no new construction or acquisition of additional holdings
 2. Required holdings based on 3.62 holdings/capita
 3. Required Sq. Feet based on .6 square feet per capita
 Calculations by: URS Corp., 2006

6. Potable Water

The City of Suffolk is the host community for a majority of the surface water reservoirs serving the south Hampton Roads region. Within the City’s boundaries there are nine water bodies that are currently used as municipal surface drinking water supplies. Table 7-11 show the public water supply reservoirs located within the City’s boundaries.

Current zoning adjacent to the water supply reservoirs is primarily Rural Estate and will continue under the focused growth framework. In suburban areas, the primary concerns for maintaining a healthy water supply revolve around minimizing water quality impacts due to

construction activities, pollutant loading due to normal runoff from urban surfaces, and potential pollutants due to accidental spills of hazardous materials. In the Rural Estate area the primary concerns relate to failing septic systems and direct pollutant loading from agricultural runoff. The lower density of development within the Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential District helps protect water supply reservoirs by minimizing the amount of impervious surface (and thereby the amount of direct runoff). Land use in this area also tends to maintain large areas of natural vegetation that filter pollutants such as phosphorous and nitrogen. Hazardous

**Table 7-11
Water Supply Reservoirs in the City of Suffolk**

Reservoir Name	Owner/Operator	Surface Area (acres)
Crumps Mill Pond	Suffolk	14
Lake Cahoon	Portsmouth	505
Lake Kilby	Portsmouth	226
Lake Meade	Portsmouth	511
Lake Prince	Norfolk	775
Lone Star Lakes	Suffolk	100
Speights Run Lake	Portsmouth	94
Burnt Mills	Norfolk	711
Western Branch	Norfolk	1600

spills are a lesser concern in this area because the activities associated with possible contaminants occur less frequently.

Municipal Water Supply

Residents of the downtown area of the City have received treated water for more than 100 years. The system has grown along with the City since the first connections were made in 1889. Since 1982, the City has operated a centralized water treatment and distribution system serving most customers discussed below, and currently operates a series of four community well systems serving discrete areas of the City, discussed later in this section.

The City’s potable water is derived from a combination of surface and groundwater sources. Surface water is drawn from the Lone Star Lakes Reservoir system and Crumps Mill Pond Reservoir.

The Lone Star Lakes Reservoir system consists of three larger lakes (F- West, F- East, and I) and four smaller lakes (A, B, C, and D). The three larger lakes are connected in series via 48-inch pipes. Characteristics of these lakes are shown in Table 7-12. The four smaller lakes are connected to the larger lakes via the Southern Lakes Pumping Station. In to-

tal, the Lone Star Lakes Reservoir system has a total useable storage volume of 355 million gallons (MG). .

The Crumps Mill Pond Reservoir has a surface area of 14 acres and a useable volume of 19.2 MG with a useable depth of 4.2 feet.

The safe yield of these sources is approximately 1.2 million gallons per day (MGD) of raw, untreated water

The City of Suffolk and Isle of Wight County formed the Western Tidewater Water Authority (WTWA) in 1998. The purpose of the Authority is a regional approach to meeting its member jurisdiction’s long-term water supply needs. In July 2005, the WTWA received a new groundwater permit from the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) providing an annual withdrawal of 8.34 MGD. Utilization of this permitted groundwater source will be withdrawn at the City’s three existing production wells and a proposed WTWA well in northern Suffolk. Water from these wells comes from the Middle Potomac Aquifer, which is known for having high levels of naturally occurring fluoride and sodium. The capacity of all of the groundwater wells in the City’s system is shown in Table 7-13.

**Table 7-12
Lone Star Lakes Reservoir System**

Name	Area (Acres)	Volume (Million Gallons)	Depth (Ft.)
Lake F-West	9.7	39	14
Lake F-East	19.7	79	14
Lake I	40	130	11.4
Lake A	2.1	7	12
Lake B	9.5	33	12
Lake C	13.7	47	12
Lake D	5.7	20	12

**Table 7-13
Ground Water Sources**

Name	Test Yield MGD	Current Type
EDR Well	4.5	Production
Reids Ferry Well	4.5	Production
Fluoride Well	1.0	Production
Crittenden Well (WTWA)	4.5	Production
City Farm #2 Well	3.5	Emergency
Wilroy #2 Well	.5	Emergency

Source: WTWA Groundwater Permit

In addition to these city-owned sources, the City currently has an existing water supply agreement with the City of Portsmouth to purchase an annual average of 2.54 MGD of treated water from their Lake Kilby Water Treatment Plant located in downtown Suffolk.

Raw water drawn from the Suffolk-owned surface and groundwater sources is treated at the G. Robert House Jr. Water Treatment Facility in the Chuckatuck area of the City. The facility produces potable water by blending both treated surface water with treated and untreated groundwater.

The G. Robert House Jr. Water Treatment Facility uses two different methods of treatment before distributing water to the public. For surface water, conventional treatment is used with a typical

series of sedimentation and chemical processes to reduce turbidity and remove organic material.

Groundwater entering the treatment facility is treated separately from the surface water sources. Groundwater is treated using a membrane treatment technology known as Electrodialysis Reversal (EDR) to remove dissolved ions (primarily fluoride) from the deep well site located on the grounds of the treatment plant. The recently expanded treatment facility has the capacity to yield 7.5 MGD using this technology. The combined capacity of the two treatment processes is approximately 11 MGD. In addition, a Phase II expansion is currently under design and anticipated to be operational in 2009 with a combined plant capacity of 17.25 MGD.

**Table 7-14
City Water Storage Facilities**

Tank Name	Capacity (MG)
City Farm Tank	.75
County Street Tank	.5
North Suffolk Tank	1.5
Wilroy Road Tank	.2
Plant Ground Storage	4.0

Treated water from the traditional treatment area and the EDR area is blended with water from a production well that has high fluoride levels. This adds fluoride and provides alkalinity for water stabilization prior to delivery into the water distribution system.

The City's water distribution system consists of 260 miles of transmission and distribution lines. These include pipe diameters ranging from 2 inches to 36 inches. To offset for various peak water uses including fires, the City also has a series of elevated and ground level storage tanks. A listing of these facilities is shown in Table 7-14.

With the completion of the Phase II EDR Plant Expansion and WTWA northern well and pipeline, it is anticipated the City will meet projected combined water demands of Suffolk and northern Isle of Wight through 2015. Currently, the City has approximately 21,500 active water accounts inclusive of commercial/industrial services.

As noted above, four community well systems are operated by the City. These

well systems are susceptible to the same high levels of fluoride and sodium as the City's primary sources. The City has entered into consent orders with the Virginia Department of Health to bring two of these systems (Holland, and Whaleyville into compliance with drinking water standards through the installation of new wells. The City will connect the other two wells within the Crittenden area to the City's water distribution system. Table 7-15 shows the existing community well systems in the City and the schedule for connection to the City's water system or other means to achieve regulatory compliance.

Level of Service

As part of the City's Water Master Plan completed in December 2004, Hazen and Sawyer, a consultant under separate contract, reviewed the City's long-term water needs. As shown in Table 7-16, between 1987 and 2002, the average daily production demand for water has more than doubled from 2.49 MGD to 5.06 MGD. In 2005, Suffolk's average daily demand had increase to 6.00.

**Table 7-15
Community Well Systems in Suffolk**

Community Well System	Compliance/Connection to City System
Independent Water System	Fall, 2007
Eclipse	Fall, 2007
Whaleyville	New source wells being constructed compliance by 2008
Holland	New source wells being constructed compliance by 2009

Source: City of Suffolk Department of Public Utilities

**Table 7-16
Historical Water Demand Analysis**

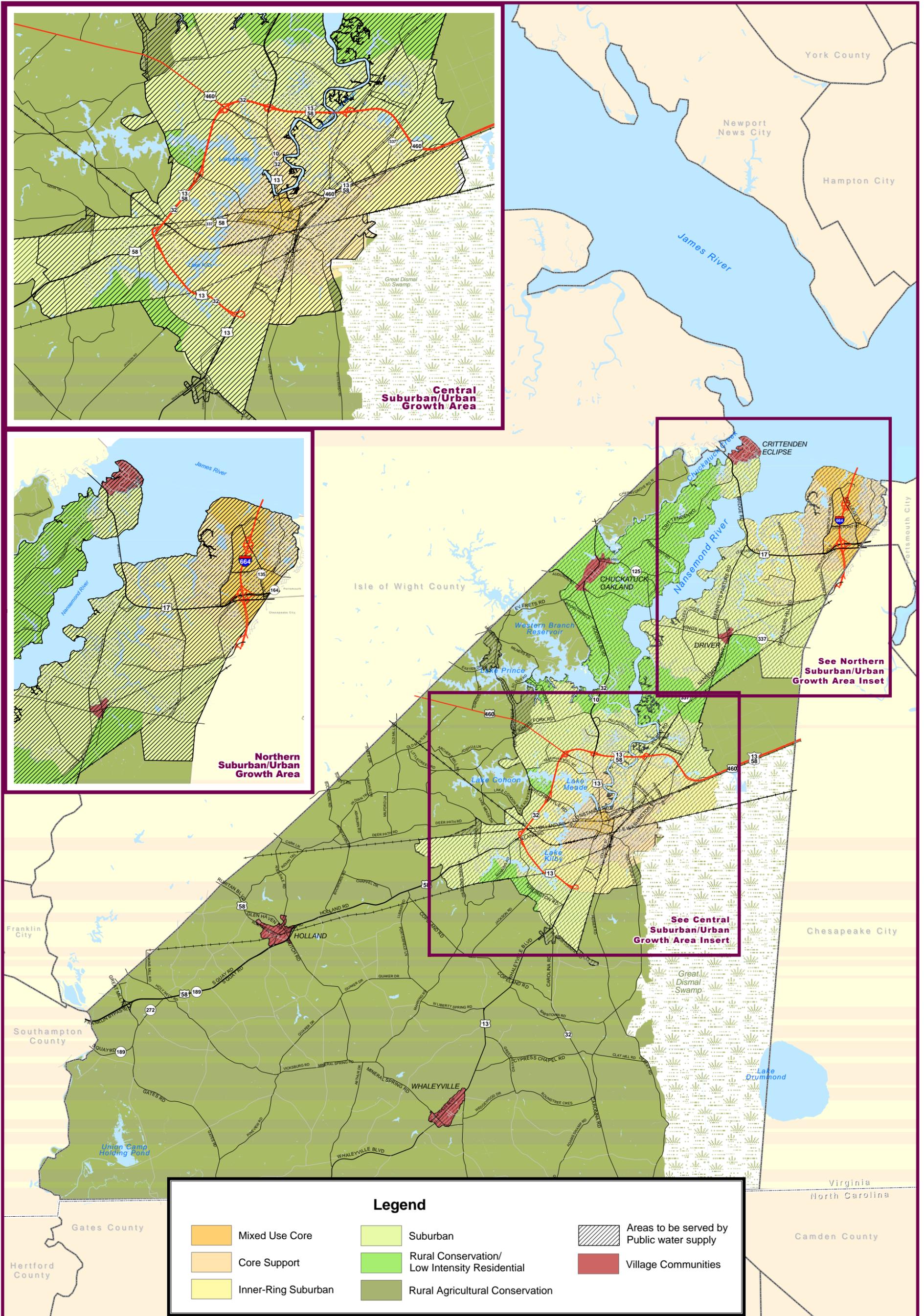
Year	Average Water Use (MGD)	Maximum Day Demand (MGD)	Peak Hour Demand (MGD)
1987	2.49	3.36	4.98
1988	2.41	3.1	4.82
1989	2.52	4.0	5.04
1990	3.19	4.8	6.38
1991	3.22	5.06	6.44
1992	2.77	3.68	5.44
1993	2.82	3.78	5.64
1995	3.03	3.68	6.06
1996	3.45	5.42	6.9
1997	3.55	4.73	7.1
1998	2.52	3.94	5.04
1999	4.36	7.19	8.72
2000	4.13	5.82	8.26
2001	4.65	7.08	9.3
2002	5.06	7.6	10.12

Source: City of Suffolk, Master Water Plan, 2004

Water demand growth for the City is directly correlated to the City’s population and economic growth. Demand projections provide the basis for evaluating future water system needs. Currently approximately 75% of the City’s residents use city provided water. This number is expected to grow to more than 95% by 2030. The future average, maximum, and peak demands are shown in Table 7-17. Included in these projections are the demands for the Northern and Central portions of Isle of Wight County. This demand is being generated by Suffolk’s agreements with the Western Tidewater Water Authority to supply these areas with treated water. The City’s Water Master Plan did not specifically identify any new sources for raw water. However, the WTWA and the City continue their long-term water development planning to develop or acquire new sources to meet the projected demands beyond 2015. The City also continues to expand its water system facilities in accordance with recommen-

dations provided within the City’s Master Plan. These recommendations include the treatment plant expansion projects provided above, transmission system improvements, and the repair and expansion of distribution pipes.

The City’s Water Master Plan’s recommendations are generally consistent with the identified growth boundaries of the Focused Growth Framework. Included in the plan’s long-term horizon is a new water main extending down Hosier Road, allowing public water into the largest area of Urban/Suburban expansion south of the downtown core. The future water service area is shown in Figure 7-6. The timing of this expansion needs to be coordinated with necessary rezonings and other infrastructure improvements. Other water service area expansions need to be consistent with the focused growth framework’s policies, unless directed due to public health and welfare factors.



City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan

Public Water Service Area



URS
Figure 7-6

**Table 7-17
Projected Future Water Needs
City of Suffolk and Portions of Isle of Wight County**

	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Suffolk Average Day Demand Projection	4.46	5.96	7.47	9	10.55	12.11	13.69
Suffolk Maximum Day Demand	7.13	9.53	11.96	14.41	16.88	19.38	21.91
Isle of Wight County Maximum Demand	0.06	1.54	3.31	4.67	5.5	6.35	7.18
Total Treatment Capacity Required	7.2	11.07	15.27	19.08	22.39	25.73	29.09

Source: City of Suffolk, Master Water Plan, 2004

7. Public Sewers

Approximately two-thirds of the City's population is served by the public sewer system, with the remaining population using on-site septic systems. The City's collection system consists of approximately 188 miles of sanitary sewer mains and 120 pumping stations. The interceptor force mains and treatment plants are owned and operated by the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD), a regional wastewater authority serving all of the jurisdictions from Williamsburg to the Atlantic Ocean, including portions of Isle of Wight, Smithfield, and Suffolk. Neighboring jurisdictions of Southampton County and the City of Franklin are not currently served by HRSD.

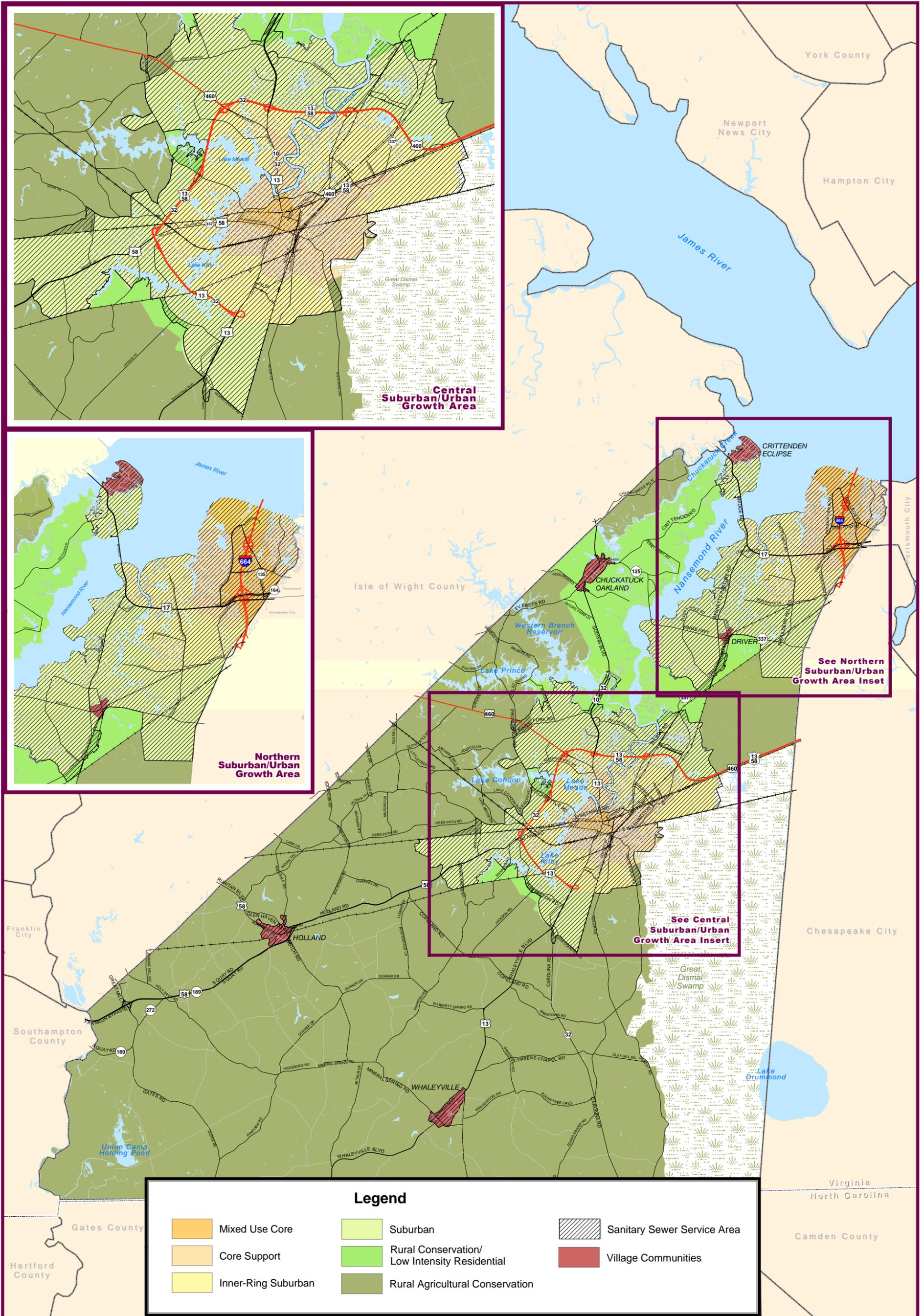
The Nansemond Plant, located in north-east Suffolk, just east of I-664 at the Monitor-Merrimac Memorial Bridge-Tunnel, treats wastewater from those western jurisdictions south of the James River within the HRSD service area. According to the HRSD *Development Plan*

2000, Suffolk produced 3 million gallons per day (MGD) of wastewater in the year 2000.

Wastewater flow capacity at the Nansemond facility is currently 30 MGD, with an ultimate design capacity of 100 MGD. The average plant flow in 2003 was 20.69 MGD and the peak 3-month flow was 21.32 MGD.

Currently, HRSD has no limitation on the amount of sewage it can treat within its system; its policy is to expand to meet increasing population and commercial/industrial growth. However, the future sewer service area is shown in Figure 7-7.

The City is currently in the process of updating its master sewer plan. Information and recommendations from that report were not available at the time of the publication of this 2026 Comprehensive Plan.



City of Suffolk, Virginia
2026 Comprehensive Plan

Sanitary Sewer Service Area



8. Storm Water

The City's storm water system is critical to both protecting the environment and protecting property from damage due to flooding. Storm water is the result of rainfall in the community. Typically, most of the rainfall is absorbed back into underground aquifers through the soil. The small amount of rainfall that remains is known as runoff. This runoff moves over impervious surfaces such as streets, driveways, and roofs into the City's streams and rivers through stormdrains. Runoff is a problem because as the water moves across the ground it picks up contaminants and various pollutants. Some of these pollutants may include silt and soil that increases turbidity in surface water, oils, heavy metals, selenium from tires, phosphorus, trash, and others. The City of Suffolk has a separate storm water system from the sanitary sewer system. This results in untreated storm water runoff being discharged directly into surface waters.

The City currently owns and maintains numerous drainage facilities throughout the core downtown. Maintenance responsibilities will increase with the road maintenance takeover July, 2006 to include facilities throughout the City. These facilities include pipes, culverts, channels, and other structures. There are also numerous direct discharge structures from the City's roads and bridges. The goal of these city owned facilities as well as privately owned storm water management ponds is to reduce pollutants entering the surface waters of the City to the greatest extent possible and to manage stormwater discharge in order to reduce flooding risks throughout the City.

The discharge of storm water into surface waters is regulated by various Federal, state, and local laws and regulations. The City of Suffolk's storm water system is closely regulated under the Virginia Pollution Discharge Elimination System for Small Municipal Separate Sewer Systems (MS4). Under this permit the City must adopt the following minimum control measures:

- Public education and outreach on storm water impacts
- Develop a system to detect and eliminate illicit discharges into the storm water system
- Develop, implement, and enforce a program to reduce pollutants in storm water runoff from construction activities that result in a land disturbance of greater than or equal to one acre.
- Develop, implement, and enforce a program to address storm water runoff from new development and redevelopment projects that disturb greater than or equal to one acre, including projects of less than one acre that are part of a larger common plan of development or sale.
- Develop and implement an operation and maintenance program that includes a training component and has the ultimate goal of preventing or reducing pollutant runoff from municipal operations.

As shown in the City's 2004 storm water Management Plan, Tables 7-18A through 7-18F, document the measures for implementing the permit requirements under the VDPES:

**Table 7-18A
Storm Water Management Compliance Measures**

Target	Measure 1: Public Education and Outreach Cost Estimate: Minimal based on existing HR Storm and HR Clean participation.
1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue voluntary contribution to the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC), membership in the Hampton Roads Regional Storm Water Management Committee (RSMC), and utilization of the regional HR STORM and HR CLEAN programs for public education and outreach.
2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue voluntary contribution and membership in HRPDC and RSMC and continue utilization of the regional HR STORM and HR CLEAN programs for public education and outreach.
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue voluntary contribution and membership in HRPDC and RSMC and continue utilization of the regional HR STORM and HR CLEAN programs for public education and outreach.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue voluntary contribution and membership in HRPDC and RSMC and continue utilization of the regional HR STORM program for public education and outreach.

Source: Stormwater Master Plan, City of Suffolk, May, 2004

**Table 7-18B
Storm Water Management Compliance Measures**

Target	Measure 2: Public Participation and Involvement
1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue voluntary contribution to the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC), membership in the Hampton Roads Regional Storm Water Management Committee (RSMC), and utilization of the regional HR STORM program for public participation and involvement.
2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue voluntary contribution and membership in HRPDC and RSMC and continue utilization of the regional HR STORM program for public education and involvement.
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue voluntary contribution and membership in HRPDC and RSMC and continue utilization of the regional HR STORM program for public education and involvement.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continue voluntary contribution and membership in HRPDC and RSMC and continue utilization of the regional HR STORM program for public education and involvement.

Source: Stormwater Master Plan, City of Suffolk, May, 2004

**Table 7-18C
Storm Water Management Compliance Measures**

Target	Measure 3: Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination
1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop plan for tracing illicit discharges. ● Identify, map, screen, and inspect 25% of major municipal outfalls (concentrating first on Shingle Creek sub-watersheds NSC20 through NSC 100 in the core urban area of the City) for illicit discharges. ● Perform storm/sanitary sewer inspection and mapping in the core urban area of the City, concentrating first on Shingle Creek sub-watersheds NSC20 through NSC100. ● Compile inventory of industrial sites. ● Compile inventory of municipal facilities with high potential for illicit discharges. ● Hold public hearings for addition of ordinance prohibiting illicit discharges. ● Implement storm drain stenciling as appropriate.
2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify, map, screen, and inspect 50% of major municipal outfalls for illicit discharges. ● Perform SSES with wet weather flow analysis in mapped Shingle Creek sanitary sewer system sub-watersheds NSC20 through NSC100. ● Perform storm/sanitary sewer inspection and mapping in core city sub-watersheds NRV20, NRV40, and LKILBYDAM. ● Finalize and enact ordinance prohibiting illicit discharges. ● Establish certification program to indicate that buildings have been checked for illicit connections.
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify, map, screen, and inspect 75% of major municipal outfalls for illicit discharges. ● Perform storm/sanitary sewer inspection and mapping in core city sub-watersheds NNR30 and NRF20.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Identify, map, screen, and inspect 100% of major municipal outfalls for illicit discharges. ● Perform additional SSES and wet weather flow analyses in core city area based on results of the sanitary sewer inspection and mapping activities.

Source: Stormwater Master Plan, City of Suffolk, May, 2004

**Table 7-18D
Storm Water Management Compliance Measures**

Target	Measure 4: Construction Site Storm Water Runoff Control
1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue existing local program compliance with Virginia erosion and sedimentation control (ESC) regulations. ● Develop database for tracking the number of regulated land disturbing activities, the total disturbed acreage, the number of construction sites inspected, and the number of violations, complaints and fines assessed.
2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue existing local program compliance with Virginia erosion and sedimentation control (ESC) regulations. ● Record data with tracking database.
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue existing local program compliance with Virginia erosion and sedimentation control (ESC) regulations. ● Record data with tracking database.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue existing local program compliance with Virginia erosion and sedimentation control (ESC) regulations. ● Record data with tracking database. ● Analyze and report trend in violations, complaints and fines assessed since implementing tracking database.

Source: Stormwater Master Plan, City of Suffolk, May, 2004

**Table 7-18E
Storm Water Management Compliance Measures**

Target	Measure 5: Post-Construction Storm Water Management in New Development and Redevelopment
1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue existing local program compliance with the Virginia Storm Water Management Act and the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. ● Develop database for tracking inventory of structural BMPs (name, type, dimensions, geographic location {Hydrologic Unit Code}, receiving water body, number of acres treated), owner and BMP maintenance agreements as applicable, condition (results of annual inspections), and number and type of corrective actions required. ● Inventory all existing impoundments (lakes, ponds, BMPs), evaluate their condition and dimensions, and calculate the associated pollutant removal credits per sub-watershed.
2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue existing local program compliance with the Virginia Storm Water Management Act and the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. ● Perform annual BMP inspections and record data with tracking database.
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue existing local program compliance with the Virginia Storm Water Management Act and the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. ● Perform annual BMP inspections and record data with tracking database.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Continue existing local program compliance with the Virginia Storm Water Management Act and the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. ● Perform annual BMP inspections and record data with tracking database. Record data with tracking database. ● Analyze and report trends in condition of structural BMPs and number of corrective actions required since implementing tracking database.

Source: Stormwater Master Plan, City of Suffolk, May, 2004

**Table 7-18F
Storm Water Management Compliance Measures**

Target	Measure 6: Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping for Municipal Operations
1 year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Compile inventory of municipal facilities with high potential for illicit discharges and conduct baseline inspection of facilities and prepare site-specific storm water management plans (SWPPPs). ● Conduct baseline storm water management awareness survey of municipal employees during facility inspections. ● Prepare training plan for municipal employees. ● Prepare disposal plan for sediment/spoil and debris removed from drainage conveyances, appurtenances, and BMPs.
2 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Implement SWPPPs for municipal facilities, including employee training. ● Prepare management plan for spill response; snow and ice control on roadways; pesticide, herbicide and fertilizer applications; and recycling and/or disposal of used motor oil and the disposal of used anti-freeze.
3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Prepare Flood Project Management Plan to document Suffolk’s existing design and review program for assessing and protecting water quality impacts related to flood control projects per the requirements set forth in Virginia storm water and ESC regulations. ● Perform annual inspection of municipal facilities as part of the SWPPP.
4 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Perform annual inspection of municipal facilities as part of the SWPPP. ● Perform follow-up storm water management awareness survey of municipal employees and record results.

Source: Stormwater Master Plan, City of Suffolk, May, 2004

In addition to the policy actions recommended in the storm water plan, the City recently created a storm water utility, which will have the ability to charge a fee to property owners based on their impact to the storm water system. The amount of the fee will be based on impermeable surface area on the site, with the basic measurement tool being the equivalent residential unit (ERU). An

ERU is roughly equal to 3,200 square feet of impermeable area. Money collected from this fee will be used for preventive and general maintenance of the storm water facilities including ponds in residential neighborhoods, street sweeping, updating of computerized databases, plan review and approval processes, infrastructure site inspection, and capital improvements.

9. Themes, Policies, and Actions

Theme: Balanced Growth

Policy 7-1: Coordinate the planning of municipal facilities with the land use map shown in Figure 3-5. Relate the pace of growth to the ongoing availability of infrastructure and services.

Action 7-1A: Amend the City’s master water plan to ensure that it is compatible with the Focused Growth Framework and Public Water Service Area maps.

The City’s recently revised water master plan is generally consistent with the focused growth framework. As development within the urban/suburban growth area must be connected to public water, the timing of an extension of water service to an area within the growth area can be an effective growth management strategy.

Of course, in the case of designated emergencies and health risk, it may be necessary to provide limited service to specified communities and neighborhoods beyond the generally delineated service boundaries.

Action 7-1B: Amend the City’s master sewer plan to ensure that it is compatible with Focused Growth Framework and the Public Sewer Service Area maps.

The City’s sewer master plan is currently being revised. As it moves forward, efforts need to be made to coordinate the revised land use map with future sewer service areas. Consistency needs to be maintained between the sewer master plan and the comprehensive plan policies to limit major subdivision activity in the Suburban/Urban Development Areas to those areas with

public sewer access. The sewer master plan and the associated capital improvement program is one of the most effective development timing mechanisms that the City has available. As development within the urban/suburban growth areas must have public sewer, slowing the growth of the sewer service area has the effect of slowing development potential.

Of course, in the case of designated emergencies and health risk, it may be necessary to provide limited service to specified communities and neighborhoods beyond the generally delineated service boundaries.

Action 7-1C: Continue to review and modify the HRSD Master Sewer Plan to reflect Suffolk’s land use plan and sewer service priorities.

Action 7-1D: Review and update the City’s Storm Water Master Plan to ensure that it is compatible with the Focused Growth Framework map.

Policy 7-2: Continue to provide a high level of police and fire protection throughout the City.

Action 7-2A: Plan for the expansion of the City’s police and fire departments to meet the needs of the projected population distribution as shown in Chapter 3.

Action 7-2B: Ensure that the City’s police and fire systems meet and exceed the level of service standards established in Chapter 7, Municipal Facilities.

Police and fire protection were both highly rated by citizens during the public involvement process. One of the best measure of both fire and police protec-

tion level of service is citizen perception. Fire stations and police stations and their associated staffing need to be constructed to keep pace with the growing city. New stations and service areas should be planned where high growth is anticipated such as the Mixed Use Core, Core Support, and Inner Ring Suburban Districts. However, existing levels of service in the other areas of the City need to be maintained in order to continue to maintain the high levels of public trust that they currently have.

Policy 7-3: Provide a highly rated parks and recreation system for the enjoyment of the citizens of Suffolk and the region.

Action 7-3A: Define and strengthen the role of Parks and Recreation and its relationships within the City and region.

The value of Parks and Recreation in community life has not been fully recognized in the City of Suffolk in the past, or at least since the merging of the City and County. As stated in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, “without public policies to address passive and active open space needs, Suffolk’s attractiveness as a place to live and do business will surely decline.” The first step to addressing these needs is to establish a high priority for the support of the Parks and Recreation system of the City, and consequently for the Department that plans, operates, and maintains the system. Just as importantly, the Department serves as advocate for citizen recreational and open space needs.

Action 7-3B: Refine and enhance programming offered to reflect the desires of the community, sound business practices, and to emphasize opportunities unique to Suffolk.

Many facilities are underutilized, with the exception of athletic fields and the

single swimming pool in the public parks. At the same time, there is unmet need and demand, either because of location amenities provided, or programming deficits. Prior to developing new facilities, the use of existing ones should be maximized by essential improvements and through programming realignments. In addition to providing programs that meet citizen desires and needs, methods of providing transportation and access to the programs must be explored. Although driving to programs is common and an option in many parts of the City, in other parts, particularly for youth and senior populations, it is not a viable option.

Action 7-3C: Develop a system of Parks and Recreation facilities distributed throughout the community, providing equitable opportunity for all citizens to utilize recreational programs, while emphasizing the unique attractions and qualities of the City.

As summarized above there are deficits in some types of parkland in Suffolk, as well as inequities in distribution of the land, both issues that need to be addressed. The prior national standard of parkland was ten acres per thousand population, but in communities that recognize the economic value of Parks and Recreation, a more common standard is twenty acres per thousand. Identification of areas that need or will need future parks, acquisition of parkland or gaining parkland into the system through the development process will be important to meet increasing demand for recreational space. It is also important to purchase land, particularly in southern portions of the City, or to provide additional regional facilities. The existing parkland inventory is also currently more concentrated in the Core City, due to the park system development in the old City of Suffolk as compared to the former Nansemond County.

Action 7-3D: Develop a system of greenways, blueways, and bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular trails throughout the City, with connections to other regional systems; relate the system to an ecotourism initiative.

With its diversity of land use and range of environmental character, Suffolk has the opportunity to develop an interconnected system of greenways, trails, open space and waterways. This system can help to meet multiple goals of this Plan, as it can help to provide buffering and environmental protection as well as serving as a recreational opportunity not only for citizens, but also for tourists. Planning for this network of resources should begin immediately, in order to identify critical lands and connections.

Action 7-3E: Adopt development guidelines and policies that support the Parks and Recreation system and master plan and produce compatible public amenities and open spaces.

The Unified Development Ordinance in place in the City has wisely recognized the need to consider Parks and Recreation, open space, environmental protection and pedestrian and bicycle routes as essential considerations of the development process. The impact of the standards and provisions of the ordinances should be evaluated to be certain they will allow the Parks and Recreation Department to meet its goals. The standards and requirements should allow maximum discretion and judgment on the part of the Department to determine if proposed land and facilities fits within and enhances the system and connectivity. Design standards and guidelines should require conformance to the identity and quality that will be established by the Department.

Maintenance and enhancement of rural and village character is a fundamental

policy of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Open space, trails, parks and community spaces all are major contributors to community character, and proposed green spaces should be evaluated for appropriateness to the context in order to avoid a cookie-cutter type of green-space development.

Action 7-3F: Utilize Parks and Recreation facilities, programs and staff to promote ecotourism as a contribution to economic development.

One direct contribution of a Parks and Recreation system to economic development is the opportunity it creates for ecotourism promotion. With its rural character, the tremendous resource of the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge, and the riverine system provided by the Nansemond River, Chuckatuck Creek, and Bennetts Creek and their tributaries, Suffolk is rich in the opportunity to enhance the economy of the region while providing quality of life resources to the residents. The ecotourism planning should relate to the Heritage Tourism planning of adjacent North Carolina counties, as well as to regional Hampton Roads tourism marketing. Private efforts to develop ecotourism support, including equipment rentals, supplies, restaurants, and accommodations, should be encouraged within or adjacent to park and greenway sites.

The City should work with rural landowners interested in agricultural activity that serves as recreation for adjacent urban areas. This may include farms that cater directly to tourists, but also can be activities like pumpkin sales, pick-your-own fruit, and farmer's markets. Support of agricultural activities that can benefit from the proximity to development will help to retain rural land use and rural character in areas that might otherwise succumb to development pressure.

Policy 7-4: Provide a public school system that provides a high level of service to the children of Suffolk.

Action 7-4A: Maintain or exceed the level of service standard for schools as determined by the standards as shown in Table 7-5.

The Unified Development Ordinance's adequate public facility section identifies a level of service standard. This standard needs to be amended to the levels agreed upon as shown in Table 7-5.

Action 7-4B: Establish, by a joint effort with the schools division and the Planning Department, a quantitative approach to predicting student generation from new development.

In order to continue to assess the potential impact to the school system from proposed developments, the Planning Department should, periodically review and update the student generation rates. This new rate needs to be incorporated in the Unified Development Ordinance.

Action 7-4C: Work collaboratively with the School Board to implement the smart growth in school planning principles:

- Provide highest quality education;
- Involve broad community involvement in school facility siting and planning;
- Site selection consistent with city's long-range growth plan (Comprehensive Plan);
- Smaller in size and fit well within context of the community in which they are located;
- Ease of accessibility;
- Function as centers and anchors of community;
- Support community uses after hours; and

- Mix of new construction and renovation programs.

A framework for agreement on incorporating smart growth concepts in school facility planning was reached in the Fall of 2005. The School Board and the City Council need to work collaboratively to implement this framework.

Policy 7-5: Provide an improved library system that supports the needs of the citizens of Suffolk

Action 7-5A: Support the funding and construction of an additional library in Suffolk.

Action 7-5B: Increase the overall library holdings in each of the existing libraries to be consistent with the level of service standards.

The level of service analysis for libraries determined that one additional library beyond the one planned and programmed would be required to meet the needs of the City. In addition, the holding of the existing libraries need to be increased to keep pace with the educational and cultural needs of Suffolk.

Policy 7-6: Provide potable water to all Suffolk citizens and businesses within the Urban/Suburban Growth Areas and the Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential Area.

Action 7-6A: Identify new sources of potable water to meet the future demands of the City and the portions of Isle of Wight County served by the Western Tidewater Water Authority.

To keep pace with development, the Western Tidewater Water Authority and the City should continue their proactive planning efforts to evaluate, develop, and acquire sufficient water sources to meet the City's needs in the future.

Chapter 8: Implementation

Comprehensive planning is central to the City's past success and to its future prosperity. In Suffolk the comprehensive plan is truly a community based "vision" document that maps out how the community wants to grow, evolve, and mature. In every sense it is a "road map" toward the future. The comprehensive plan looks out over the big picture, connecting all of the dots in regard to the complex interrelationships, issues and impacts growth and development have on the City and the lives of its citizens; establishing strategies on how best to manage and address those impacts over time in order to improve life in the City of Suffolk.

The current comprehensive plan, adopted in 1998, laid the foundations for the City's growth management system, and has served the City well for the past seven years. Nevertheless, because the comprehensive plan is a working document used by community leaders and decision makers regularly, helping and guiding them through their deliberations, it is wise to periodically review and update the plan to determine where and how well the City is progressing towards its vision. This allows the community and decision makers to assess changes in circumstances and to modify strategies accordingly.

The 2026 Comprehensive Plan is the product of such a review and update. As emphasized, this reexamination process established that the 2018 plan has been a successful guide to the future. However, time has moved forward and so has Suffolk. Accordingly, as laid out in the preceding chapters, this 2026 Comprehensive Plan acknowledges these changes in circumstances and provides a wide variety of updated strategies that will help the City achieve its vision. This 2026 Comprehensive Plan is innovative and forward thinking, and as used and implemented will continue to generate new attitudes about the comprehensive plan, build new habits of use, and further institutionalize the plan's role in City decision-making.

There is an axiom that says a community's comprehensive plan is only worthwhile if it is systematically and continually implemented, influencing and guiding how a city (or other unit of government) writes its regulations and spends its money; leadership and encouragement alone are rarely sufficient to effect significant changes. Therefore, the plan should provide guidance in these areas. Table 8-1 below provides this guidance.

**Table 8-1
Implementation Plan**

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame	
			<i>High/Med/ Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/ Continuing</i>	
3-1	Create a system of focused growth development areas within the two main urban and suburban growth areas in the city.				
	3-1A	Develop a coordinated system of focused growth zoning to support both the historic downtown central core and the northern core development areas.	Planning Commission	High	Short Term
	3-1B	Revise the existing growth area boundaries south of the central core to establish a pattern of development areas of decreasing densities consistent with the Focused Growth Framework.	Planning Commission	High	Short Term
	3-1C	Revise the existing growth area boundary north of the Central Core Suburban / Urban Development Area to establish a pattern of development areas for a mixture of office and commercial uses consistent with the Focused Growth Framework that may include opportunities for related housing and public / semi-public uses.	Planning Commission	High	Short Term
	3-1D	Define and encourage accommodative zoning districts for two mixed-use core areas: one in the north and the other in the downtown core.	Planning Commission	High	Short Term

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame	
			<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>	
	3-1E	Promote low intensity development in the drinking water watersheds and rezone some of the current RE lands to A to enhance protection of the regional water supply in the northwest quadrant and accommodate the policy of “no net increase” in residential development potential due to modest expansion of central suburban / urban growth area boundary as shown on Figure 3-15.	Planning Commission	High	Short Term
	3-1F	Continue the policy that there can be no justification for rezoning to residential uses outside the Comprehensive Plan growth areas.	City Council and Planning Commission	High	Continuing
	3-1G	There can be no justification for additional residential rezoning contrary and inconsistent with the Focused Growth Framework and associated themes, policies and actions, and smart growth principles of this 2026 Comprehensive Plan.	City Council and Planning Commission	High	Continuing
3-2	Moderate the pace of future residential growth to current levels.				
	3-2A	Assume an annual average growth rate of 1,000 residential units per year.	Planning Department	Medium	Continuing
	3-2B	Pursue expanded growth management authority from the General Assembly	City Council	High	Continuing

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame
			<i>High/Med/ Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/ Continuing</i>
	<p>3-2C</p> <p>Closely coordinate school location planning to the identified growth areas and rural villages, focusing new schools in the areas of highest residential density in accordance with the following smart growth in schools planning principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide highest quality education; • Involve broad community involvement in school facility siting and planning; • Site selection consistent with City's long-range growth plan (Comprehensive Plan); • Smaller in size and fit well with context of the community in which they are located; • Ease of accessibility; • Function as centers and anchors of community; • Support community uses after hours, and; • Mix of new construction and renovation programs. 	<p>Schools Division and City Council and Planning Department</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Continuing</p>

Policy	Action		Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame
				<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>
	3-2D	Provide sewerage and potable water service only to those areas that have been identified for growth, with the highest priority on core, core support, inner-ring suburban, and suburban use districts. Exceptions can be made for existing developed areas that have a large number of failing septic systems or have been identified by the City's health department as having significant potable water quality concerns.	Public Utilities	High	Continuing
3-3	Enable high-quality, well planned development to occur in a predictable and orderly manner.				
	3-3A	Develop incentives to better promote and encourage, as appropriate, mixed use development in more zoning categories.	Planning Commission	Medium	Continuing
	3-3B	Continue incentives in the zoning ordinance to support "New Urbanist" and traditional neighborhood designs where appropriate in the City.	Planning Commission	High	Continuing
	3-3C	Continue the use of cluster developments to preserve and protect the natural environment with revisions to allow for more community-usable open space.	Planning Commission	Medium	Continuing

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame	
			<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>	
	3-3D	Amend the development regulations to assure that transportation system planning and the preservation of right-of-way for transit are incorporated into the design and construction of new development projects, particularly large-scale developments in the Mixed Use Core and Core Support districts.	Planning Commission	High	Short Term
3-4	Balance residential and non-residential land uses.				
	3-4A	Assume a future jobs/housing ratio of between 1.0 and 1.56. Continue to develop implementation tools that will help achieve help the higher number.	Planning Department and Economic Development Department	High	Continuing
3-5	Facilitate the expansion of office, R&D and manufacturing activity in Suffolk.				
	3-5A	Ensure that there are adequate amounts of land zoned to support the growing high technology corridor in the northern suburban/urban growth area as well as office and industrial uses in other parts of the City.	Planning Department and Department of Economic Development	High	Short Term
	3-5B	Revise the existing growth area boundaries west of the central core suburban/ urban development area to establish a pattern of development areas for continued economic development and job creation consistent with the Focused Growth Framework.	Planning Commission	High	Short Term

Policy	Action		Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame
				<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>
	3-5C	Revise the existing growth area boundary west of the Central Core Suburban / Urban Development Area to establish a pattern of development areas for continued economic development and job creation consistent with the Focused Growth Framework.	Planning Commission	High	Short Term
3-6	Ensure the long-term viability, operation and function of the Suffolk Executive Airport and protect it from the encroachment of non-compatible land uses.				
	3-6A	Establish an Airport Protection and Compatibility Overlay Zone where land use in general proximity to the airport is designated for low-intensity, non-intrusive and compatible employment or agricultural usage and not converted to suburban residential uses.	Planning Commission	High	Short Term

Policy	Action		Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame
				<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>
	3-6B	Establish an Aircraft Overflight District, as shown on Figure 3-14 where land use in close proximity to the airport and located in the designated aircraft overflight areas, as illustrated in the <i>Carolina Road Corridor and Southern Land Use Strategy</i> (incorporated herein by reference) are designated for low-intensity, non-intrusive and compatible employment or agricultural usage and not converted to suburban residential uses.	Planning Commission	High	Short Term
4-1	Build upon the work of the Affordable Housing Task Force and implement the recommendations of the Task Force's report.				
	4-1A	Encourage development of a balanced housing stock with high end, moderate and affordable housing goals to accommodate demand.	Planning Department	Medium	Continuing
	4-1B	Establish a new Affordable Housing Overlay District in both Suburban/Urban Development Areas.	Planning Commission	Medium	Short Term

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame	
			<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>	
	4-1C	Implement the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) provisions of the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) to their fullest potential by effectively negotiating with developers for the construction of affordable dwelling units and adjusting the incentives and requirements to better match market conditions.	Planning Commission	High	Continuing
	4-1D	Continue the housing taskforce established by the Mayor and the City Council as a way to advise the City Council on key housing issues throughout the city.	City Council	High	Continuing
	4-1E	Encourage the construction of affordable housing in mixed use communities.	Planning Commission	High	Continuing
	4-1F	Streamline the City's approval process for development of affordable housing.	Planning Department	Medium	Continuing
	4-1G	Encourage increasing the supply of homes selling in the \$100,000 to \$200,000 price range.	Planning Department	High	Short Term
	4-1H	Encourage increasing the supply of housing that is affordable to low- and moderate-income households, including both homeownership and rental opportunities.	Planning Department and SRHA	High	Short Term
	4-1I	Utilize existing housing assistance programs to generate more homeowners.	Planning Department and SRHA	High	Continuing

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame	
			<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>	
	4-1J	Generate a greater awareness of the City's affordable housing goals and its incentive and assistance programs.	Planning Department and SRHA and Housing Task Force	Medium	Continuing
	4-1K	Pursue a variety of financing strategies to encourage a variety of housing types.	Planning Department and SRHA	Medium	Continuing
	4-1L	Establish a comprehensive approach to increasing workforce housing in Suffolk and the ability of consumers to benefit from such opportunities.	Planning Department and SRHA and Housing Task Force	Medium	Long Term
	4-1M	Review and update the City's Consolidated Plan to ensure that it conforms to and is consistent with the policies and implementation strategies of the Comprehensive Plan.	Management Services	High	Short Term
	4-1N	Encourage opportunities for retirement housing.	Planning Commission and Planning Department	Low	Continuing
	4-1O	Continue to strike the right balance between moderate-cost housing needs and opportunities for higher-end housing.	Planning Commission	Medium	Continuing
	4-1P	Continue to create incentives for higher-end housing.	Planning Commission	Low	Continuing
4-2	Encourage housing development in the core area.				
	4-2A	Revise the City's development ordinance to ensure that it is compatible with infill development in existing communities.	Planning Commission	High	Short Term
4-3	Provide for modest development in the City's rural villages.				

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame	
			<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>	
	4-3A	In accordance with the adopted village initiatives plans, promote land use patterns within or adjacent to the villages where affordable and market-rate construction of new housing units is feasible.	Planning Department	Medium	Long Term
5-1	Preserve and protect Suffolk’s agricultural heritage.				
	5-1A	Create an agricultural development board as an advisory committee to the City Council and Planning Commission.	City Council	High	Short Term
	5-1B	Examine the opportunities for a Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) program or conservation easement program and begin to establish a financing mechanism to fund such a program through the Capital Improvements Program (CIP).	City Council	Medium	Continuing
	5-1C	Ensure that the UDO allows for the necessary agricultural industrial uses in the Agriculture (A) district to support a thriving farming economy.	Planning Commission	Medium	Continuing
	5-1D	Continue to support the plans and policies set forth in the 2018 Comprehensive Plan to limit extensive residential development in the Agriculture (A) district by not permitting major subdivisions as an allowed use in the Agriculture (A) district and by requiring major subdivisions to have public water and sewer.	Planning Commission	High	Continuing

Policy	Action		Responsibility	Priority <i>High/Med/Low</i>	Time Frame <i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>
	5-1E	Support alternative agricultural economic practices such as community supported agriculture (CSA), cooperative farms, and hobby farms.	Planning Commission	Low	Long Term
	5-1F	Consider increasing the minimum qualifying acreage for <i>Land Use Valuation</i> for open space as allowed by state code.	City Council	Medium	Short Term
	5-1G	Modify the subdivision and other development regulations to prevent the lining of rural roads with small residential lots.	Planning Commission	Medium	Short Term
5-2	Protect the City's lakes, rivers, streams, and reservoirs from the negative impacts of development.				
	5-2A	Continue to implement and enforce the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.	Planning Department	High	Continuing
	5-2B	Preserve tidal marshes along City shorelines.	Planning Department	Medium	Continuing
	5-2C	Increase public access to Suffolk's shoreline and water bodies using water quality-friendly techniques.	Parks and Recreation Department	Medium	Continuing
	5-2D	Implement the Community Rating System once it is approved by FEMA.	Planning Department	Low	Short Term
	5-2E	Provide resources to implement farm planning programs and update the agricultural farm plan inventory.	City Council and Virginia Cooperative Extension	Medium	Continuing
	5-2F	Continue to support the implementation of shoreline erosion mitigation measures.	Planning Department	High	Continuing

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame	
			<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>	
	5-2G	Promote coastal water quality improvement initiatives dealing with commercial and recreational fisheries, restricting development patterns, uses, and activities adjacent to spawning and nursery grounds in order to preserve and protect them from adverse impacts.	Planning Department	Low	Continuing
	5-2H	Study the opportunities and environmental constraints of providing full access to currently blocked waterways and rivers for boating activities.	Public Works Department	Low	Long Term
	5-2I	Protect the quality of ground water and well water and the water quality in the region serving lakes and reservoirs.	Public Utilities Department and Planning Department	High	Continuing
	5-2J	Promote low-intensity and low density development in the drinking water watersheds.	Planning Commission	High	Continuing
	5-2K	Continue to explore new and innovative techniques to apply water quality protection measures beyond those of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and Regulations.	Public Works and Planning Department	Medium	Continuing
	5-2L	Continue to identify and adopt appropriate measures to protect water quality in the Great Dismal Swamp.	Planning Commission	Low	Continuing

Policy	Action		Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame
				<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>
	5-2M	Continue to work with the health department to adjust regulations for septic systems to better protect water quality.	Planning Department and Public Utilities Department and Health Department	Medium	Continuing
	5-2N	Work with the Peanut Soil and Water Conservation District to promote the development and implementation of Farm Conservation Plans.	Planning Department and PSWCD	Low	Continuing
	5-2O	Continue to work closely with neighboring jurisdictions in efforts to improve the effectiveness of the region's watershed management program.	Public Utilities Department	Medium	Continuing
5-3	Promote the City of Suffolk as a destination for eco-tourism as a method of continuing to preserve the City's natural resources.				
	5-3A	Continue to work with the National Wildlife Service to promote and protect the Great Dismal Swamp.	Parks and Recreation Department and Tourism Department	Medium	Continuing
5-4	Preserve the City's Historic Resources				
	5-4A	Pursue funding and opportunities for preservation through the City's new designation as a Preserve America Community.	Planning Department	Medium	Continuing
	5-4B	Continue to survey areas of the city for their contribution to the cultural heritage of the City and designate new historic districts as they are located.	Planning Department	Medium	Continuing

Policy	Action		Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame
				<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>
	5-4C	Update the City's design guidelines for historic buildings in the downtown core by use of a pattern book and work to ensure that private developers understand and appreciate the value of preserving historic architecture.	Planning Department	Low	Continuing
	5-4D	Establish development encroachment protection zones around the City's historical villages and individual properties to better protect and buffer these cultural resources from encroaching non-compatible development.	Planning Commission	Medium	Short Term
6-1	Provide opportunities for residents to adopt a lifestyle that is less dependent on auto travel.				
	6-1A	Focus development in the two suburban/urban growth areas based on the densities shown in Chapter 3.	Planning Commission	High	Continuing
	6-1B	Promote implementation of mixed-use development where facilities, infrastructure and markets will sustain investment.	Planning Department	High	Continuing
	6-1C	Promote the development of an internal transit circulator system within the two mixed-use cores.	Planning Commission and Planning Department and Public Works	Medium	Long Term
	6-1D	Continue to tie development approval to the adequacy and funding of public facilities, including highways.	Planning Commission	High	Continuing
6-2	Suffolk will be a responsible participant in the regional planning and programming process.				

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame	
			<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>	
	6-2A	Develop roadway and transit improvement programs to be consistent with those adopted by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission.	Public Works Department	High	Continuing
	6-2B	Planned improvements to facilities crossing jurisdictional boundaries should be coordinated with the neighboring locality.	Public Works Department	High	Continuing
	6-2C	Expand the type and location of transit service connections between routes within Suffolk and those serving regional destinations.	Public Works Department	Medium	Continuing
	6-2D	In conjunction with the TIP, annually evaluate the efficiency and need for improvements of those roadways and intersections designated in Table 6-4 and Figures 6-4 and 6-5.	Public Works Department	High	Continuing
	6-2E	Upgrade Route 460 to a grade-separated freeway from Suffolk westward to I-95. Similarly, consideration should be given to upgrading Route 58 to a grade-separated freeway from Suffolk westward to I-95.	Public Works Department	High	Continuing
6-3	Investment in infrastructure will be targeted to areas where need either is or is forecasted to be greatest.				
	6-3A	Focus investment of transportation resources on facilities that serve growth areas with higher densities and/or provide adequate service to regional facilities.	Public Works Department	High	Continuing

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame	
			<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>	
	6-3B	Implement the planned bypasses around both of the villages of Chuckatuck and Whaleyville.	Public Works Department	Low	Long Term
6-4	The City will employ appropriate regulatory and financial incentives to ensure that access to and within the central core area supports private sector initiatives.				
	6-4A	Prioritize transportation investments to ensure adequate access from Mixed Use Core Areas to regional markets.	Public Works Department	Medium	Continuing
	6-4B	Interconnectivity of the street, sidewalk and trail systems within the Mixed Use Core, the Core Support and the Inner Ring Suburban Areas should be implemented with both public and private resources.	Public Works Department	High	Continuing
	6-4C	Continue to complete the street network per the adopted initiatives and redevelopment plans, making street connections wherever possible and appropriate.	Public Works Department and Planning Department	Medium	Continuing
6-5	Provide facilities and policies that ensure adequate multi-modal access throughout the growth areas of the City.				
	6-5A	Promote the prioritization of investment in major regional improvements that are critical to the City's economic development.	Public Works Department and Economic Development Department	High	Continuing

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame	
			<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>	
	6-5B	Preserve existing capacity on the roadway system by minimizing conflicts between vehicles accessing the local street system and through moving vehicles.	Public Works Department and Planning Department	High	Continuing
	6-5C	Increase the minimum allowable spacing between median crossovers to a distance of 1,000 feet on selected roadways (See Chapter 6).	Public Works Department	Medium	Short Term
	6-5D	Conduct periodic and systematic evaluations of critical intersections to define deficiencies and develop improvements.	Public Works Department	High	Continuing
	6-5E	Discourage strip retail commercial development along major arterial corridors.	Planning Commission and Planning Department	Medium	Continuing
	6-5F	Create, designate and implement a bikeway and trail system serving both recreational and functional purposes.	Parks and Recreation Department and Public Works Department	Medium	Short Term
	6-5G	Assure the incorporation of transit related features in conjunction with design and construction of road improvements.	Public Works Department	High	Continuing
	6-5H	Continue and enhance the utilization of the Special Corridor Overlay District and access management plans to assure the efficiency and function of the City's road network.	Planning Department and Public Works Department	High	Continuing
	6-5I	Explore the possibility of designating and protecting scenic roadways within Suffolk.	Planning Department and Public Works Department	Low	Long Term

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame
			<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>
7-1	Coordinate the planning of municipal facilities with the land use map show in Figure 3-5. Relate the pace of growth to the ongoing availability of infrastructure and services.			
	7-1A	Amend the City's master water plan to ensure that it is compatible with the Focused Growth Framework and the Public Water Service Area maps.	Public Utilities Department	High Short Term
	7-1B	Amend the City's master sewer plan to ensure that it is compatible with Focused Growth Framework and the Public Sewer Service Area maps.	Department of Public Utilities	High Short Term
	7-1C	Continue to review and modify the HRSD Master Sewer Plan to reflect Suffolk's land use plan and sewer service priorities.	Department of Public Utilities	Medium Continuing
	7-1D	Review and update the City's Storm Water Master Plan to ensure that it is compatible with the Focused Growth Framework map.	Department of Public Works	High Short Term
7-2	Continue to provide a high level of police and fire protection throughout the City.			
	7-2A	Plan for the expansion of the City's police and fire departments to meet the needs of the population distribution as shown in Chapter 3.	Police and Fire Departments	High Continuing
	7-2B	Ensure that the City's police and fire systems meet or exceed the level of service standards established in Chapter 7, Municipal Facilities.	Police and Fire Departments	High Continuing

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame	
			<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>	
7-3	Provide a highly rated parks and recreation system for the enjoyment of the citizens of Suffolk and the region.				
	7-3A	Define and strengthen the role of Parks and Recreation and its relationships within the City and region.	Parks and Recreation Department	Medium	Continuing
	7-3B	Refine and enhance programming offered to reflect the desires of the community, sound business practices, and to emphasize opportunities unique to Suffolk.	Parks and Recreation Department	High	Continuing
	7-3C	Develop a system of Parks and Recreation facilities distributed throughout the community, providing equitable opportunity for all citizens to utilize recreational programs, while emphasizing the unique attractions and qualities of the City.	Parks and Recreation Department	Medium	Long Term
	7-3D	Develop a system of greenways, blueways, and bicycle, pedestrian, and vehicular trails throughout the City, with connections to other regional systems; relate the system to an ecotourism initiative.	Parks and Recreation Department	Medium	Long Term
	7-3E	Adopt development guidelines and policies that support the Parks and Recreation system and master plan and produce compatible public amenities and open spaces.	Parks and Recreation Department and Planning Commission	Medium	Short Term

Policy	Action		Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame
				<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>
	7-3F	Utilize Parks and Recreation facilities, programs and staff to promote ecotourism as a contribution to economic development.	Parks and Recreation Department and Tourism Department	Medium	Continuing
7-4	Provide a public school system that provides a high level of service to the children of Suffolk.				
	7-4A	Maintain or exceed the level of service standard for schools as determined by the standards agreed as shown in Table 7-5.	Schools Division and City Council	High	Continuing
	7-4B	Establish, by a joint effort with the schools division and the Planning Department, a quantitative approach to predicting student generation from new development.	Schools Division and Planning Department	Medium	Short Term

Policy	Action	Responsibility	Priority	Time Frame
			<i>High/Med/Low</i>	<i>Short/Long/Continuing</i>
7-6	Provide potable water to all Suffolk citizens and businesses within the Urban/Suburban Growth Areas and the Rural Conservation/Low Intensity Residential Area.			
	7-6A	Identify new sources of potable water to meet the future demands of the city and the portions of Isle of Wight County served by the Western Tidewater Water Authority.	Public Utilities	Medium

Chapter 9: Fiscal Impacts of the Plan

1. Introduction

This chapter details the analysis of the fiscal impact of growth associated with the 2026 Comprehensive Plan. To determine the impact, a fiscal model was developed. The model projects revenue and expenditures in the city's general fund based on budgetary data provided by the City, submitted development calculations, and assumptions regarding future service levels.

The result obtained from the fiscal impact model show an \$101,189,000 positive balance in the general fund over the first 10 years of the plan. Thus, the development anticipated in the City under the Focused Growth Framework will boost revenues while maintaining the current level of service for city functions.

2. Methodology for Model

The Suffolk fiscal model is based on historical data and the current financial condition of the City. The model uses this data to predict future fiscal conditions based on development projected in the Focused Growth Framework.

The first step in the process of creating the model is gathering financial data from the City. This data was entered into the model using the same categories the City uses in the budgeting process. For this model, the data from the 1995 through 2006 budgeted fiscal years was used. It is assumed that the data for that period will be representative of future years and that the levels of service and revenue streams will remain reasonably constant.

After compiling the historical data, estimates were developed for future

residential and non-residential development based on the development calculations shown in Table 3-12. This table shows that by 2025 approximately 20,400 housing units will be constructed and the City's population will increase by 50,600 people. The number of commercial jobs in Suffolk is estimated to increase by almost 50,000 with the construction of 16,226,000 square feet of commercial space. In the industrial sector, another 16,300 jobs will be added, along with 16,226,000 square feet of space.

Taking into consideration the above development calculations and model format, expenditures and revenues were estimated for the City. The following section offers a description of how each of those parts was calculated.

3. Descriptions of Projections

For the Suffolk fiscal model, revenue (money taken in by the city through taxes and other means) and expenditure (money spent by the city or transferred to other accounts) projections are limited to the City's general fund. The general fund is used for the day to day activities of city government. In addition, the City has enterprise funds, debt service, and special revenue funds which have been excluded for this model as they are self supporting through fees.

General Fund Revenue

Revenue to the City's general fund is classified in three categories each with several subcategories. The first category – Fees, Charges, and Services – has historically provided nearly 80% of the City's General Fund revenue. Funds from the Commonwealth make up nearly 20% of the General Fund City revenue. The final category, Federal grants, makes up less than 1% of the General Fund revenue. These three categories are presented in Table 9-1

Future revenue from these categories was forecasted using a variety of methods and mathematical equations according to the type of revenue and historical trends. The process of deciding how to project each of the revenue sources involved significant analysis and discussion with representatives from the City.

Population and employment growth were the most common factors driving the revenue projections. In general, the approach for forecasting future revenues included the calculation of historical per-person or per-employee revenues (as appropriate), and

projection using the forecasted population and employment scenarios.

General Fund Expenditures

Table 9-2 provides an overview of expenditures for the most recent three budget years. The table shows the aggregate expenditure categories for the general fund which were included in the model. These categories are also used to organize the expenditure items for the purpose of forecasting future City expenditures under the assumed development schedule. All projections are made under the assumption that the current level of service remains constant. As explained in Chapter 7, Municipal Facilities, the City may need to expend additional funds in various categories to achieve the "targeted" (desired) level of service in regards to, for example, schools, public safety, parks and recreation, and libraries. However, the positive funds balance may be able to accommodate some of that increased spending.

After determining which City departments were components of each category, variables were determined that would drive prediction of future expenditures. These "expenditure drivers" were decided upon as the factor most closely tied to the department's expenditures. After meetings with the City and discussions with department representatives, a single expenditure driver was identified and agreed upon for each department. For many departments, population growth was the driving factor, while for others, housing growth or changes in employment were most appropriate.

After understanding which variables drove the expenditures for each

department, the model was able to generate regression equations for each department's expenditures. This regression estimation provides the average relationship over time, for the 5 years of data available, between the expenditures of each department and the expenditure driver. This regression equation is essentially an average cost

method that uses the average relationship from the 5-year period, as opposed to a standard average cost method that only accounts for 1 or 2 years. Then, using future values of the expenditure driver, it was possible to estimate the future expenditures of the department.

**Table 9-1
Revenue for the City of Suffolk**

Revenue Category	Fiscal Year		
	2004 Actual	2005 Budget	2006 Budget
Fees, Charges, and Services			
General Property Taxes	\$51,400,944	\$57,094,095	\$67,364,395
Other Local Taxes	\$25,040,092	\$26,816,605	\$28,812,808
Permits, Fees, and Licenses	\$1,459,690	\$1,820,000	\$1,825,700
Fines and Forfeitures	\$654,009	\$550,000	\$650,000
Use of Money and Property	\$1,411,712	\$5,360,268	\$1,247,540
Charges for Services	\$1,406,911	\$1,489,036	\$1,611,287
Miscellaneous	\$633,219	\$716,000	\$763,500
Recovered Costs	\$170,610	\$195,942	\$195,942
Total Fees, Charges, and Services	\$82,177,187	\$94,041,946	\$102,471,172
Commonwealth			
Non-Categorical Aid	\$3,041,024	\$3,392,129	\$3,571,742
Shared Expenses	\$2,966,351	\$2,103,169	\$2,258,790
Categorical Aid	\$7,645,535	\$7,802,666	\$8,217,943
Total Commonwealth	\$12,645,910	\$13,297,964	\$14,048,475
Federal	\$128,327	\$146,000	\$51,000
Total Revenue	\$97,579,649	\$106,861,330	\$120,599,974

Source: City of Suffolk, 2005

**Table 9-2
Expenditures for the City of Suffolk**

Expenditure Category	Fiscal Year		
	2004 Actual	2005 Budget	2006 Budget
General Government	\$6,082,177	\$6,747,564	\$7,485,805
Judicial	\$3,883,652	\$4,251,142	\$4,573,125
Public Safety	\$21,020,757	\$23,608,072	\$26,655,661
Public Works	\$6,698,913	\$8,114,862	\$9,101,457
Health and Welfare	\$9,186,246	\$10,287,763	\$10,798,768
Support of Schools	\$30,386,932	\$34,231,400	\$39,213,979
Parks, Recreation, and Culture	\$3,594,021	\$4,119,477	\$4,711,243
Community Development	\$4,545,738	\$5,818,859	\$6,226,838
Non-Departmental	\$5,896,400	\$7,105,188	\$9,182,259
Other Public Services	\$2,261,511	\$2,577,003	\$2,650,839
Total General Fund	\$93,556,347	\$106,861,330	\$120,599,974

Source: City of Suffolk, 2005

4. Results of Model

The Suffolk fiscal model was created to project revenues over the first 10 years of the plan's 20 year horizon. The results of the model are primarily dependent upon the development projection assumptions. To project beyond the first 10 years is not warranted due to the inherent inaccuracy of projecting so far into the future. However, as the plan is implemented and growth tracked over time, the analysis can and should be periodically conducted.

This model predicts future revenues and expenditures based on the expected development of the City. These development calculations were projected based on available land, zoning, and current residential and commercial absorption rates. The fiscal

impacts are sensitive to the specific development patterns and the accuracy of the development calculations.

Revenues

Table 9-3 shows the projected revenues from the fiscal model by category for fiscal years 2007, 2010, and 2015.

The two largest categories of revenue (general property taxes¹ and other local taxes and fees) represent over 70% of the City's revenue. Table 9-4 provides a detailed breakdown of those two categories. Within those two categories, the largest contributors of revenue to the City are: personal property taxes, utility

¹ Property appreciation was based on a 20-year historical average of 5.4% annual growth.

taxes, businesses licenses, and the restaurant and food tax. Personal property taxes are driven by population growth and, due to recent and anticipated population growth, these taxes are forecast to grow. Utility taxes and restaurant and food taxes are driven by the rate of combined population and employment growth.

Essentially, when more people are in the City, there is a greater usage of restaurants and utilities. Finally, the business license fees are driven by employment growth. As the City adds jobs, these companies are required to pay licensing fees, which represent an important source of revenue.

**Table 9-3
Projected Future Revenue for the City of Suffolk**

Revenue Category	Fiscal Year		
	2007 Projected	2010 Projected	2015 Projected
Fees, Charges, Services			
General Property Taxes	\$81,427,000	\$107,151,000	\$166,862,000
Other Local Taxes	\$26,848,000	\$30,249,000	\$36,875,000
Permits, Fees, and Licenses	\$1,576,000	\$1,733,000	\$2,039,000
Fines and Forfeitures	\$671,000	\$734,000	\$838,000
Use of Money and Property	\$404,000	\$433,000	\$488,000
Charges for Services	\$1,476,000	\$1,620,000	\$1,861,000
Miscellaneous	\$640,000	\$700,000	\$799,000
Recovered Costs	\$163,000	\$179,000	\$204,000
Total Fees, Charges, Services	\$113,205,000	\$142,799,000	\$209,966,000
Commonwealth			
Non-Categorical Aid	\$3,757,000	\$4,105,000	\$4,673,000
Shared Expenses	\$2,563,000	\$2,805,000	\$3,200,000
Categorical Aid	\$9,332,000	\$10,210,000	\$11,644,000
Total Commonwealth	\$15,652,000	\$17,120,000	\$19,517,000
Federal	\$101,000	\$110,000	\$126,000
Total Revenue	\$128,958,000	\$160,029,000	\$229,609,000

Source: URS Corp., 2006

**Table 9-4
Projected Future Revenue Breakdown for Selected Categories**

Revenue Category	Fiscal Year		
	2007 Projected	2010 Projected	2015 Projected
General Property Taxes			
Real Estate Tax	\$49,708,000	\$71,507,000	\$123,348,000
Public Service Corporation Tax	\$1,777,000	\$1,858,000	\$2,002,000
Personal Property Tax	\$29,097,000	\$32,674,000	\$39,781,000
Penalties and Interest on Taxes	\$845,000	\$1,111,000	\$1,731,000
Total Property Taxes	\$81,427,000	\$107,150,000	\$166,862,000
Other Local Taxes			
Sales and Use	\$6,173,000	\$6,914,000	\$8,364,000
Business and Occupation Licenses	\$4,550,000	\$5,540,000	\$7,170,000
Franchise	\$324,000	\$354,000	\$404,000
Motor Vehicle	\$1,505,000	\$1,647,000	\$1,879,000
Bank Stock	\$245,000	\$247,000	\$250,000
Recordation	\$772,000	\$844,000	\$963,000
Probate	\$11,000	\$12,000	\$14,000
Tobacco	\$1,481,000	\$1,621,000	\$1,849,000
Admission	\$389,000	\$426,000	\$486,000
Hotel and Motel	\$263,000	\$409,000	\$555,000
Restaurant and Food	\$2,977,000	\$3,335,000	\$4,034,000
Emergency Telephone Service	\$1,383,000	\$1,512,000	\$1,726,000
Utility	\$6,775,000	\$7,589,000	\$9,180,000
Total Other Local Taxes	\$26,848,000	\$30,249,000	\$36,875,000

Source: URS Corp., 2006

Expenditures

Table 9-5 shows the projected expenditures from the fiscal model by category for Fiscal Years 2007, 2010, and 2015. The model was created to project expenditures over a 10-year period, but not all years are necessary for illustration. All of the figures in the table are in 2005 dollars.

There are two areas of expenditure that may have a significant impact on the fiscal condition of the City; education and transportation.

Education spending is one of the largest expenditure categories for the City. In Suffolk, the population and number of public school students has been increasing in recent years. More than one out of every three dollars the City spends is in support of schools. These increases, along with the projected increases in population and number of students have precipitated the need for school expansion and construction which will increase the support of Schools for the City. Table 9-6 provides historical data and projections for the future. All future projections are in 2005 dollars.

The analysis performed by the fiscal model assumed that capital spending per pupil would remain consistent based on current trends. However, as shown in Chapter 7, the City's schools are currently over the recommended level of service based on square feet of space per pupil. To meet the recommended level of service, additional capital spending would be required, lowering the overall positive impact of the model. However, this would be required independent of growth in the City.

Transportation is the other item that may materially impact the results of the fiscal model. As shown in Chapter 6, the City has large pool of unfunded roadway construction need. According to analysis done for this 2026 Comprehensive Plan, there are approximately \$450 million in needed roadway projects with only \$80 million in anticipated Commonwealth construction dollars over the 20 year planning horizon. Additional construction dollars will need to be found either from the City, Commonwealth, or federal sources to meet the need.

**Table 9-5
Projected Future Expenditures for the City of Suffolk**

Expenditure Category	Fiscal Year		
	2007 Projected	2010 Projected	2015 Projected
General Government	\$7,715,000	\$9,129,000	\$11,457,000
Judicial	\$4,773,000	\$5,483,000	\$6,642,000
Public Safety	\$28,031,000	\$34,741,000	\$45,800,000
Public Works	\$8,933,000	\$10,755,000	\$13,742,000
Health and Welfare	\$11,458,000	\$13,328,000	\$16,382,000
Support of Schools	\$41,961,000	\$50,754,000	\$65,116,000
Parks, Recreation, and Culture	\$4,820,000	\$5,820,000	\$7,453,000
Community Development	\$7,006,000	\$8,504,000	\$10,951,000
Non-Departmental	\$9,486,000	\$13,089,000	\$18,974,000
Other Public Services	\$2,886,000	\$3,420,000	\$4,301,000
Total General Fund	\$127,069,000	\$155,023,000	\$200,818,000

Source: URS Corp., 2006

**Table 9-6
Education Breakout**

Category	Fiscal Year				
	1995 Actual	2000 Actual	2005 Actual	2010 Projected	2015 Projected
Support of Schools	\$13,955,000	\$22,902,000	\$34,231,000	\$52,370,000	\$67,462,000
Number of Students	10,020	11,610	13,850	16,220	18,543
Expense per student	\$1,393	\$1,973	\$2,472	\$3,229	\$3,638

Source: URS Corp., 2006

In addition to forecasting expenditures, the model forecasted the number of full time equivalents (FTEs) for certain positions. All calculations for the number of FTEs were made holding constant the level of service provided by the City. Using regression analysis, the model looked at the population of the City and the number of employees for each position over an 11-year period. Future population figures were entered into the equation to produce the number of FTE needed for each position.

Table 9-7 presents this data for selected positions and for all budgeted City employees. As stated above, and in Chapter 7, Municipal Facilities, additional employees would be needed to raise the level of service for some departments. For example, based on the highest level of service standard, 264 police officers would be required in 2011, while the model predicted 230—a number sufficient to maintain the City’s current level of protection. The fire department would also require additional employees, not accounted for in the model to meet the most aggressive level of service standard.

**Table 9-7
Projected Full Time Equivalent City Employees**

Category	Fiscal Year				
	1995 Actual	2000 Actual	2005 Budgeted	2010 Projected	2015 Projected
Police ¹	110	130	190	230	270
Fire ²	60	120	190	280	360
Sheriff	16	20	20	30	30
Public Utilities	70	90	100	110	130
Public Works	30	60	90	140	180
Total Employees	630	780	990	1250	1480

1. 264 police officers required to meet highest LOS standard in 2011, 302 in 2016. (See Table 7-3)
 2. 308 firefighters required to meet highest LOS Standard in 2011, 352 required in 2016. (See Table 7-4)
 Source: URS Corp., 2006

5. Summary

The net impacts of development, shown in Table 9-8, were calculated by subtracting the expenditure projections from the revenue projections. The fiscal model shows that development is a net gain to the City. The aggregate benefit

to the City of development over the first 5 years is a net gain of \$13,125,000. Over the entire ten year planning period a cumulative positive balance of \$101,189,000 is projected.

Table 9-8
Net Fiscal Impact of Development on City of Suffolk

	Fiscal Year(2005\$)		
	2007 Projected	2010 Projected	2015 Projected
Revenue Projections	\$128,958,000	\$160,029,000	\$229,609,000
Expenditure Projections	\$127,069,000	\$155,023,000	\$200,818,000
Net Impacts ^a	\$1,889,000	\$5,006,000	\$28,791,000

Source: URS Corp., 2006

^a Reported net impacts reflect the fiscal year's impacts and not an aggregate amount. Parentheses indicate negative values.