DRAFT

2040

CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

AUGUST 20, 2025

DRAFT

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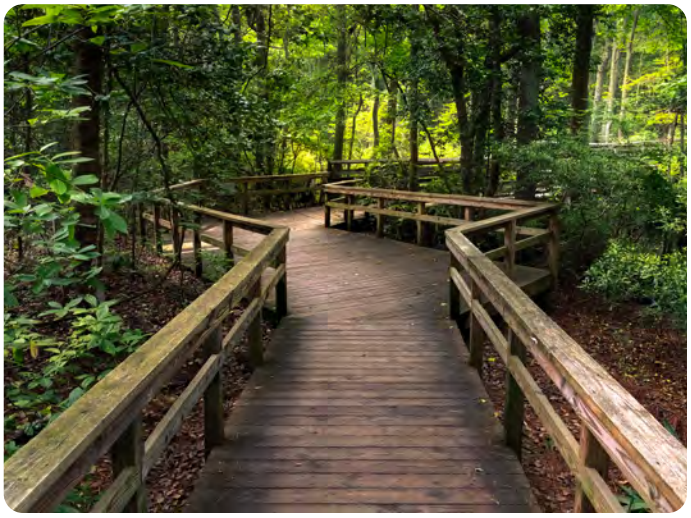
Imagine a city of water, with a variety of **attractive beaches** that draw people from throughout the country and large estuaries of outstanding beauty.

Imagine a city with expanses of **natural lands** connected by natural corridors that create an environmental and open space system where plants thrive and animals move freely.

Imagine a city with a **network of parks and trails** within those natural lands and corridors.



Imagine a city with rural lands and **active farms growing food for Virginia Beach** locals and beyond.

Imagine a city with active and **walkable urban centers** where people come together to work, shop, recreate, and become immersed in arts and culture.

Imagine a city of distinct communities, where neighborhood residents **safely and easily walk or bike to community hubs** to gather, visit farmers' markets, and enjoy parks and playgrounds.

Foreword

imagineVB is an aspirational plan for the future of Virginia Beach. It reflects a clear public desire for the City to grow with balance—economically, socially, and environmentally. Being strategic about growth protects natural resources, existing and future flood prone areas, and rural land while creating places that attract and retain people and businesses, including younger residents, military families, innovative companies, and long-term employers.

Virginia Beach already offers water access and natural beauty. This plan builds on those assets by focusing on strategic growth and advancing a vision for what the City can become: a network of walkable centers connected by a linear park system, supported by robust transit, and anchored in an environmentally sensitive open space framework.

This Plan directs growth away from sensitive areas and toward locations where it can deliver multiple benefits. It includes tools, guidelines, and policies to guide infrastructure investments, improve urban design, and support a high quality of life. The Green Line continues to serve as a transition between urban development and the City's more rural, low-density areas. The Blue Line, located south of the Green Line, affirms the City's intent to limit urban services and direct growth away from farmland, rural communities, and environmentally sensitive areas.

Virginia Beach has limited undeveloped land and must be strategic about the businesses it attracts. Agriculture in the southern half of the City remains a core part of the economy and will continue to be protected. Tourism will continue to be an economic cornerstone, with a focus on attracting people year round to the Resort Area and Princess Anne Commons. Military installations will continue to employ many. The City is actively diversifying its economy into new industries, such as high tech, logistics, ecotourism, advanced manufacturing, sports tourism, entertainment, and defense. The Plan focuses in on locations for those industries.

This Plan's Big Ideas are major investments and initiatives the City can make over the long term to support environmental and rural protection, economic development, and quality neighborhoods. They ensure systems work together and build from current efforts. For example, the linear park system and Environmental Open Space Framework seek to create great, sustainable places and align with the City's Sea Level Wise program.

Most importantly, this Plan reinforces the redirection of the City's growth that began with the 2016 Plan. It builds the foundation for updating the City's implementation tools, most notably the zoning ordinance. Place Types designated in this plan indicate how the updated zoning ordinance should regulate development.

In summary, imagineVB guides the City into an environmentally sustainable, economically vibrant, safe, and secure future.

Chapter 1:
Overview and Context

Introduction

This Comprehensive Plan serves as Virginia Beach's guide for growth through 2040. It integrates ideas based on residents' visions for the future and the strategies for achieving them. A key focus of this Update is the coordination of the City's ongoing initiatives to address sea level rise, flooding, population growth, and economic development while preserving the City's character and enhancing residents' quality of life.

The City faces significant long-term challenges:

- **Flooding and sea level rise risk:** Frequent and intense storms, along with rising sea levels, put low-lying areas, lives, and property at risk. Sunny day and wind-driven flooding are increasing issues in the southern part of the City.
- **Pressure to convert rural and agricultural areas:** The City's natural lands and agricultural areas south of the Green Line are vital ecological and economic assets. The City has a long-standing policy of preserving those farmlands and ecosystems. However, development pressures continue to threaten their long-term viability.
- **Constraints on continued outward growth:** The City must grow "inward and upward, not outward," focusing anticipated growth and future development in the northern part of the City where public infrastructure already exists. Natural areas, water bodies, bordering jurisdictions, fiscal constraints, and the desire to protect rural areas south of the Green Line limit the ability to accommodate expected growth using suburban-style development patterns.
- **Improving quality of life:** Residents are concerned about maintaining safe and secure neighborhoods, the lack of attainable housing, and an over-reliance on automobiles to get around. Residents want more cultural, economic, and recreational options.

The City has taken many steps to respond to these challenges. Strategic efforts like the Outdoors Plan, Active Transportation Plan, the Sea Level Wise Program, the Flood Protection Program, Strategic Growth Area Master Plans, Public Art programs, the Open Space Acquisition Program, and the Agricultural Reserve Program are examples. This Comprehensive Plan Update synchronizes these plans and programs to realize a better future.

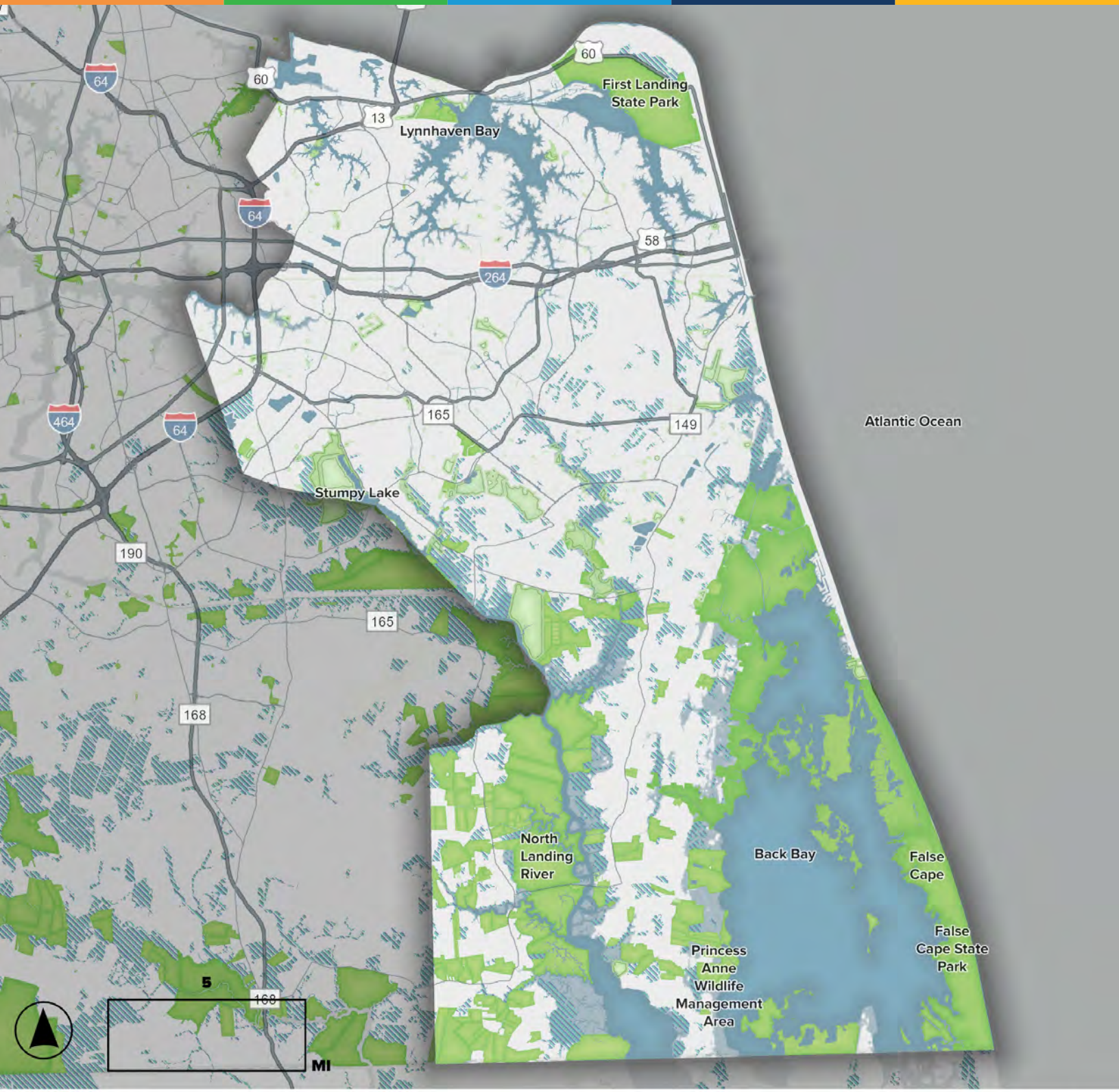
The Comprehensive Plan charts an aspirational course for the future. It presents Big Ideas that translate the City's goals into tangible outcomes. Big Ideas weave together and enhance actions the City has already committed to. They double down on the City's ongoing efforts to protect environmental and agricultural lands and safeguard neighborhood well-being. The plan focuses on transformational changes to auto-oriented development patterns along major corridors to make walking, biking, and transit viable travel options. It includes guidelines to guide the City in updating the zoning ordinance, capital improvement program, and other implementation tools that will support these changes.

Existing Context

Natural Context

Water is the City's biggest attraction and its biggest challenge. Low-lying areas are prone to flooding during storms when water cannot quickly drain into estuaries. Sea level rise is expected to bring the opposite problem: the inward flow of water. The City is actively addressing both issues through its stormwater ordinance and Sea Level Wise planning. The Sea Level Wise Adaptation Strategy outlines ways to strengthen natural systems, build engineered defenses, and adapt based on detailed local sea level modeling. It also weighs cost, potential loss, effectiveness, and local priorities in its recommendations.

Beaches and parks attract tens of millions of tourists to the City annually. **Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge** and **False Cape State Park** protect natural lands in Virginia Beach's southeastern corner. Rural and agricultural lands in the southern part of the City help preserve and protect habitats and ecosystems. **First Landing State Park**, between Broad Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, is a significant natural resource in the northern part of the City.



ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

- Surface waters
- City parks
- Federal & State parks and other protected areas
- Wetland areas (marsh, swamp, bog, prairie)

Figure 1-1 - *Natural Context*

Development Context

The **Hampton Roads region** is among the largest Metropolitan Statistical Areas in the country, and the sixth largest in the Southeastern United States. The region is home to 1.7 million residents and is projected to grow by 300,000 residents by year 2045. Located in the southeast part of the region, Virginia Beach is the most populated City in both Hampton Roads and the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The City's population was about 84,000 in 1963 when it merged with Princess Anne County ***(Table 1-1)***. By 2020, the City's population increased to nearly 460,000. According to the Weldon Cooper Center, the City's population is expected to grow to 484,000 by year 2040 and to 501,000 by year 2050.

Also, according to the same source, the number of people over the age 65 is expected to increase by 77 percent in the City by 2040.

Table 1-1: *Historical and Forecast Population for the City of Virginia Beach*

Year	Virginia Beach Population	% Change from Prior Decade
1960	84,215	N/A
1970	172,106	+ 105%
1980	262,199	+ 52%
1990	395,542	+ 51%
2000	426,824	+ 8%
2010	438,864	+ 3%
2020	459,470	+ 5%
2030	*Forecast* 474,052	*Forecast* + 3%
2040	*Forecast* 483,916	*Forecast* + 2%
2050	*Forecast* 501,022	*Forecast* + 4%

Sources:

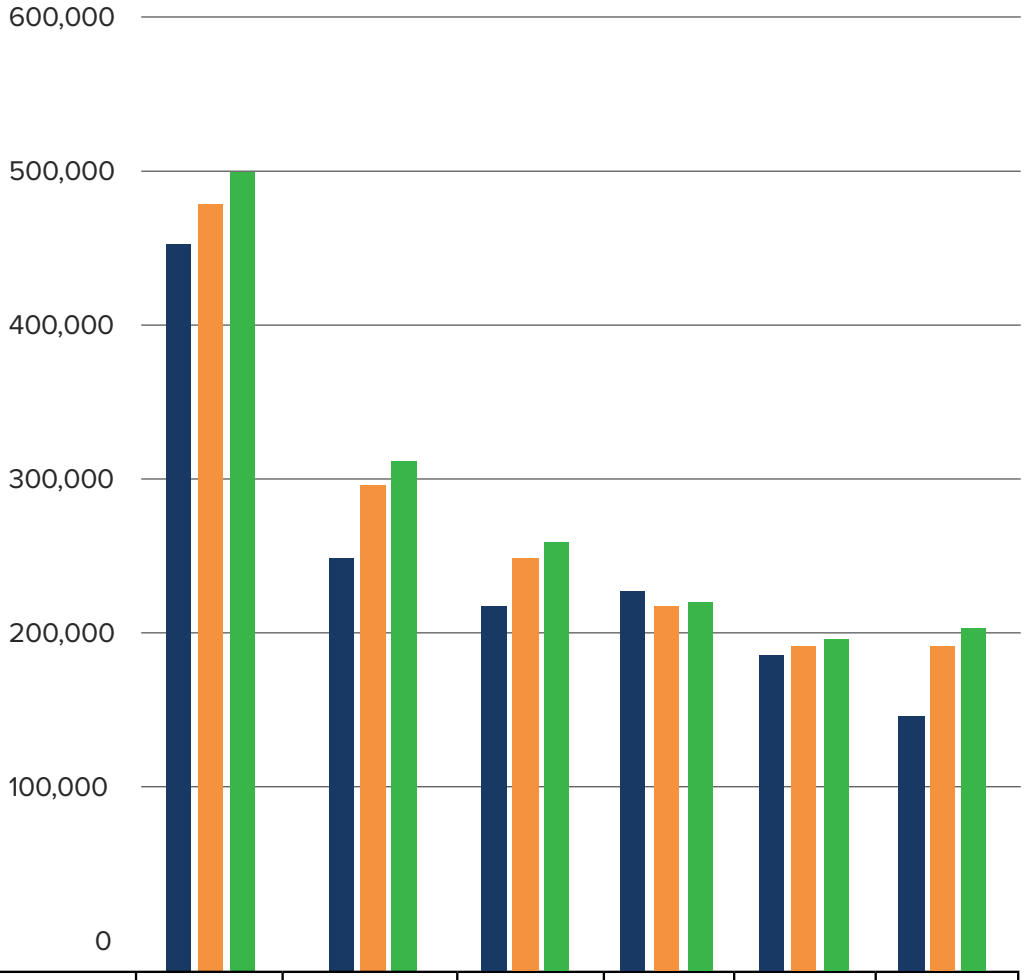
1960: *U.S. Census Bureau (1960). This year includes the population for both the City of Virginia Beach and Princess Anne County, which would merge in 1963.*[ii]

1970 – 2010: *U.S. Census Bureau (2024).*[iii]

2020 – 2050: *University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center. (2022).*[iv]

Virginia Beach absorbed much of the region's growth between 1960 and 1990 when the City grew by around 100,000 people per decade. Since then, the growth rate has slowed considerably to between 20,000 to 30,000 people per decade. The region's growth shifted to Chesapeake and Suffolk which have ample amounts of vacant developable land.

The Weldon Cooper Center forecasts indicate the region's growth rate will remain robust, around 300,000 new residents are expected over the next twenty years. Those forecasts, reflecting past trends, anticipate Virginia Beach will absorb around 30,000 new residents, only ten percent of the region's growth. The growing inward versus outward focus of this Comprehensive Plan update is designed to attract a larger portion of the region's growth.



	Virginia Beach	Chesapeake	Richmond	Norfolk	Newport News	Alexandria
2023 Estimate	453,605	252,478	229,035	238,122	182,268	158,591
2040 Forecast	483,916	293,397	256,015	228,249	189,242	189,163
2050 Forecast	501,022	318,516	270,425	230,050	192,291	204,755

Source: *University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service. (2022).*[iv]

Figure 1-2: *Population forecasts for six largest cities in Virginia (2023 to 2050)*

Employment in the City follows population trends, with high growth rates until 1990 that have slowed since then ***(Table 1-2)***. Through its economic growth initiatives, detailed in the Economic Development Strategic Plan, the City has positioned itself to attract a larger share of the region's job growth. The key strategies are protecting developable land for industrial uses and attracting business clusters seeking high amenity, urban settings. The Comprehensive Plan incorporates those strategies.

Table 1-2: *Historical and Forecast Employment for the City of Virginia Beach*

Year	Virginia Beach Employment	Annual Growth Rate
1970	66,246	N/A
1980	111,607	+ 5.4% / year
1990	187,249	+ 5.3% / year
2000	236,446	+ 2.4% / year
2010	240,506	+ 0.2% / year
2015	254,958	+ 1.2% / year
2045	*Forecast* 271,307	*Forecast* + 0.2% / year

Source: *Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (2019)* [v]

Between 1960 and 2000, the City grew at a rapid rate, from 84,000 to 426,000 residents. Most of that growth was suburban, characterized by single-family subdivisions, shopping centers, and business parks.

Significant investments were made in urban services, water/sewer, new roads, and roadway widenings. Developments were designed to primarily accommodate cars. Development first expanded into farmlands between the City of Norfolk and the Atlantic Ocean. It then expanded south.

While major roadways are essential regional connectors, they also act as barriers that disrupt neighborhood cohesion. The physical and visual divide created by these roadways limits walkability and community interaction, reinforcing a fragmented developed landscape, even for more traditional and compact forms of development. For example, I-264, and at times Virginia Beach Boulevard, act as barriers between many communities in the northern and southern parts of the City.

In 1979, Virginia Beach established a growth boundary, today named the **Green Line *(Figure 1-3)***, to safeguard rural and agricultural lands and control local expenditures. The Green Line was adopted, but not formally named, in 1979 to distinguish zoning districts, with residential zones north and agricultural ones south. The 1985 Comprehensive Plan formally recognized the Green Line, and it has remained in the same location since its inception. The City continues to recognize the role of the Green Line to limit development into the City's southern area and limit costs of expanding infrastructure and services.

In 2004, the City Council adopted a resolution that established the concept of the **Blue Line** as a boundary for potential extension of City water and sewer service. The Department of Public Utilities later developed a policy based on this resolution. While the Green Line has historically served as the primary tool for managing growth in the Comprehensive Plan, this Update for the first time acknowledges the Blue Line as a complementary policy tool. Together, these tools help define a clear transition between urbanized areas and the City's rural, agricultural, and natural areas.

The **GREEN LINE** begins at the Chesapeake–Virginia Beach border, tracing the Interfacility Traffic Area (ITA) boundary northward to Princess Anne Road. From there, it follows Princess Anne Road east to Sandbridge Road and then turns south, bypassing the Sandbridge Special Service District. The Green Line restricts building intensity and density within the Southern Rivers Watershed, an area designated for agriculture and conservation, with notable flood risks.

The **BLUE LINE** runs along North Landing Road to Indian River Road, then extends eastward to New Bridge Road, where it meets the Green Line. Established by Public Utilities in 2004, the Blue Line marks the outer limit for city sewer and water services.

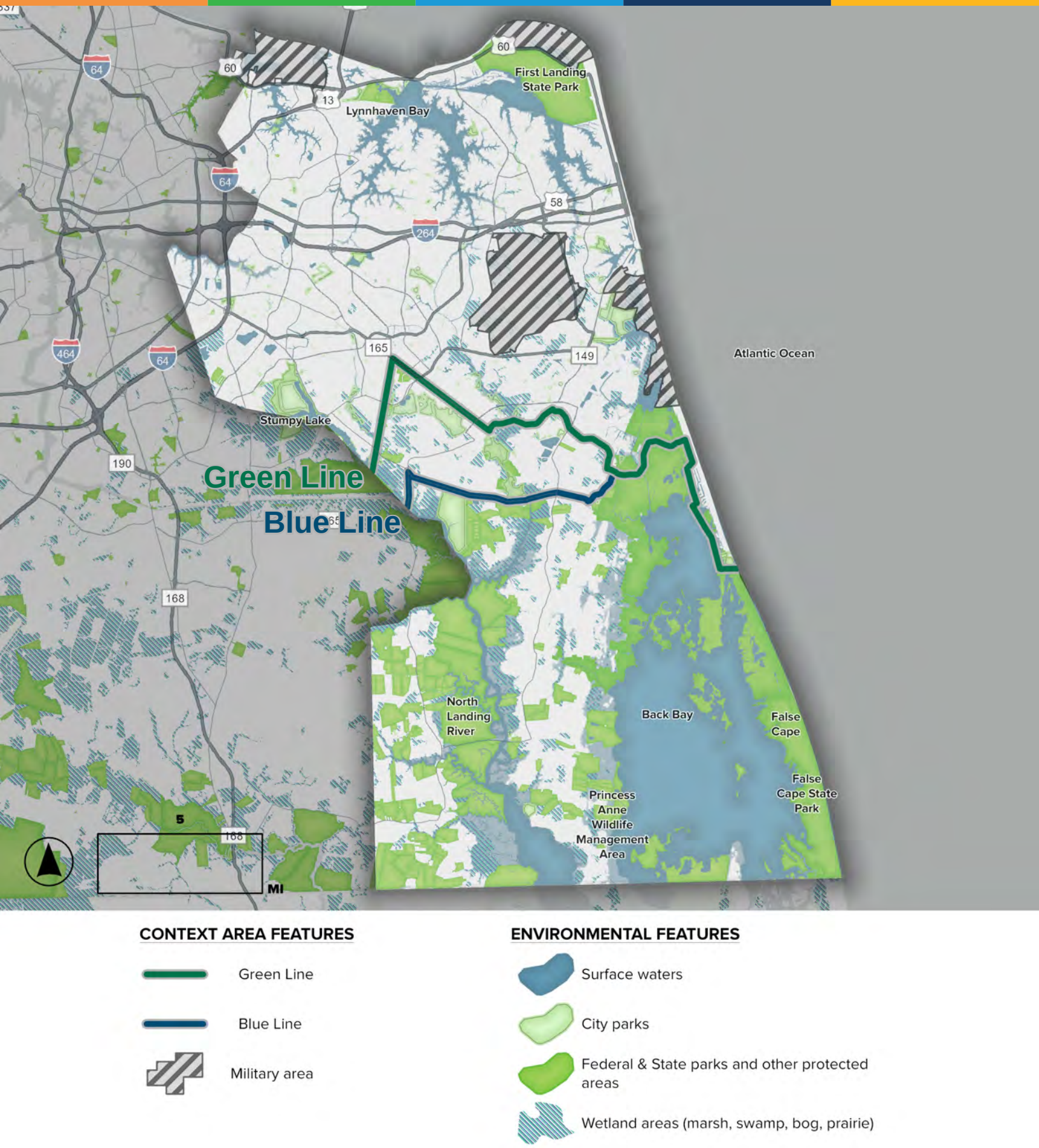
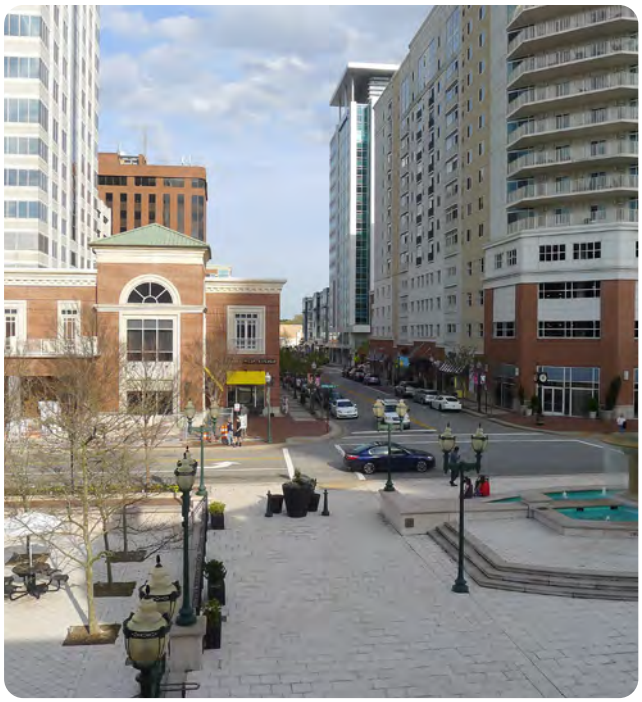


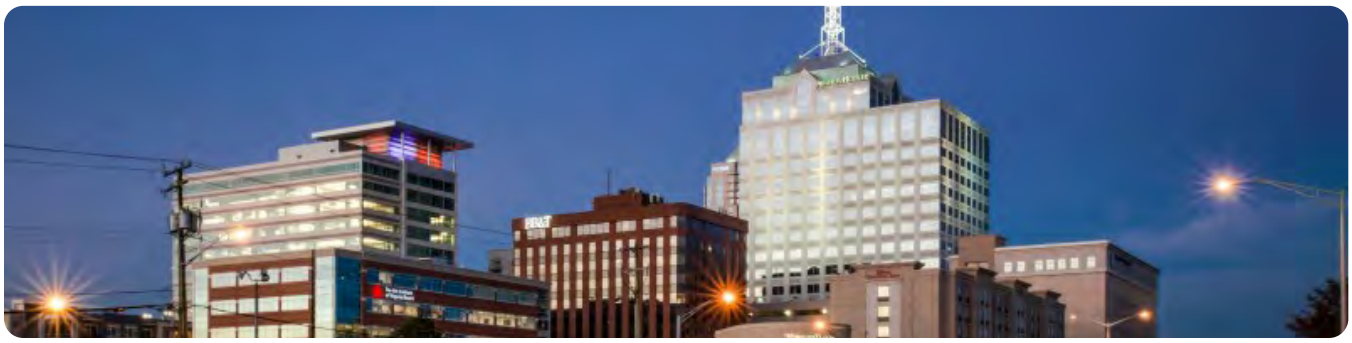
Figure 1-3 - *Green and Blue Lines*

Because the area north of the Green Line is nearly built out, the City will increase its focus to growing inward rather than outward. The City created Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs) to absorb growth using higher density, mixed-use, walkable development patterns. Each SGA has a master plan that illustrates the transformation of existing suburban, auto-oriented development patterns into urban, multimodal patterns.

The SGAs and Centers designated in this Plan north of the Green Line can accommodate growth and help attract businesses that diversify the City's economy. The City is also seeking areas for other targeted industries, notably logistics, advanced manufacturing, sporting events and entertainment, defense and technology sectors, such as cybersecurity, medical technology, and data analytics. Designated planning areas around Naval Air Station Oceana and areas within the Burton Station SGA can accommodate the demand for such industries. Further, this growth needs to be channeled and organized to support the City's sustainability and quality of life goals.

imagineVB directs most growth through infill and redevelopment techniques. **Infill** involves adding new buildings to vacant or underutilized land within already developed areas. **Redevelopment** is replacing or upgrading older buildings or sites to meet today's needs.





Military Partners and Planning

The City of Virginia Beach values its military partners as critical to both the City and regional economies and essential to the community's long-term prosperity. The City will continue working with the military to address disruptions and pursue shared long-term goals. Military bases in the City are shown on ***Figure 1-4***, and include:

A. Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story – U.S. Navy and U.S. Army

Joint Expeditionary Base (JEB) Little Creek–Ft. Story serves as the primary East Coast base for overseas contingency operations. It supports expeditionary forces in the Navy's Atlantic Fleet. The installation spans the Inland and Coastal Context Areas and extends into Norfolk.

B. Naval Air Station Oceana and Dam Neck Annex – U.S. Navy

Naval Air Station (NAS) Oceana is the Navy's only operational Master Jet Base on the East Coast. It hosts FA-18 C/D Hornet and FA-18 E/F Super Hornet squadrons for the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets. Naval Auxiliary Landing Field (NALF) Fentress, located seven miles southwest in Chesapeake, simulates aircraft carrier decks and supports training operations. NAS Oceana lies in the Inland Context Area. Dam Neck Annex is in the Coastal Context Area.

The City has made significant investments to meet the requirements of the Defense Base Closure and Realignment (BRAC) Commission to protect its citizens and keep NAS Oceana in Virginia Beach and will continue to do so.

C. State Military Reservation – Virginia Army National Guard

Located south of the Resort Area, State Military Reservation (SMR, formerly Camp Pendleton) occupies about 300 acres, with 27 additional acres leased from the federal government. It supports the Military Sealift Command and the 203rd RED HORSE of the Virginia Air National Guard.

SMR was listed on the Virginia Landmarks Register in June 2004 and the National Register of Historic Places in September 2005 as the City's first historic district recognized at both levels. SMR is in the Coastal Context Area.

Air Installations Compatibility Use Zones and Accident Potential Zones

Jet aircraft are essential components of the missions supported at NAS Oceana. The City and Navy carefully evaluate and manage noise impacts through the Air Installations Compatibility Use Zones (AICUZ) planning efforts.

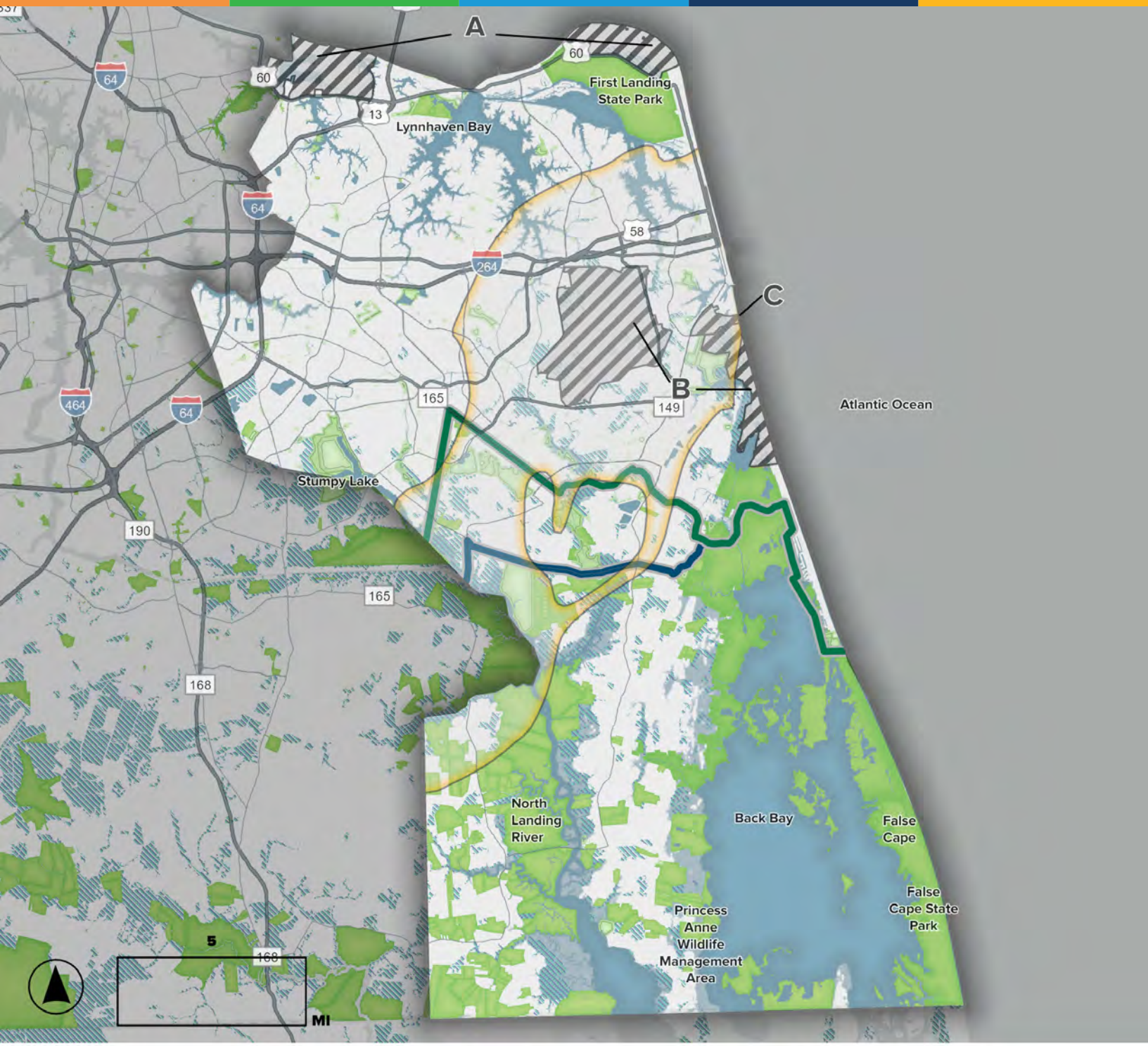
The AICUZ program has modeled noise impacts and divides noise exposure into three noise zones. Noise zones #1 through #3 are developed based on the day-night average sound level, and each noise zone has associated land use control recommendations. The noise zones for NAS Oceana and NALF Fentress are the noise zones presented in the 2005 Joint Land Use Study (JLUS).

The City's AICUZ Overlay Ordinance regulates land use. AICUZ "Subareas" have also been designated by the City of Virginia Beach to correspond to high noise contours. Each of these subareas has associated land use density policies and use restrictions.

Regional Partnerships

The City of Virginia Beach will continue working with regional, state, and federal partners on planning and coordination efforts that serve the broader Hampton Roads area. Key partnerships include:

- Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) and Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), to support coordinated regional planning on land use, housing, transportation, and infrastructure funding.
- Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), to serve Virginia Beach's mass transit needs and to support ongoing transit planning and operations.
- Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS), to monitor shoreline change, wetlands, and water quality in the Chesapeake Bay.
- The U.S. Military (described more on the following pages) to maintain military readiness, manage flood risk, and align coastal and flood resilience efforts with base operations.
- Virginia Department of Emergency Management (VDEM) and Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), to plan for severe weather response, update hazard mitigation plans, and coordinate disaster recovery.
- Eastern Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority (EVRIFA), to develop and market regional business parks and large-scale industrial sites.
- RVA757 is a nonprofit that works with the City of Virginia Beach on planning coordination, advancing connectivity and economic development in the Richmond and Hampton Roads regions.



MILITARY

Military area

AIRCRAFT NOISE

AICUZ

CONTEXT AREA FEATURES

Green Line

Blue Line

ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

Surface waters

City parks

Federal & State parks and other protected areas

Wetland areas (marsh, swamp, bog, prairie)

Figure 1-4 - *Military Bases and AICUZ contours*

The City adopted the **Interfacility Traffic Area (ITA) & Vicinity Master Plan**, as an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan in 2011. An updated version of that plan was adopted by the City Council in 2017. The update recognized a significant increase in land in the ITA purchased by the City as part of the program to support operations at NAS Oceana. The plan guides future land use and development in Virginia Beach within the high noise zone contours between NAS Oceana and NALF Fentress.

The Navy also identifies areas of accident potential based on historical data from aircraft mishaps, known as **Accident Potential Zones (APZs)**, to assist in land use planning. The Navy recommends that certain land uses that concentrate large numbers of people—apartments, churches, and schools—be constructed outside APZs.

The City has adopted the **APZ-1/CZ Master Plan** (2008) to help ensure safety while accommodating growth and long-term planning efforts.

The City's APZ-1 Ordinance limits development in APZ-1 and Clear Zones to stay consistent with Navy safety regulations. These areas influence redevelopment in nearby areas, including the Lynnhaven and Hilltop SGAs.

Military Partnership Policies

- Land uses in the AICUZ should conform to all adopted plans (e.g., APZ-1/CZ Master Plan, ITA & Vicinity Master Plan, and the Strategic Growth Area Master Plans).
- Support the mission of the military installations in Virginia Beach.
- Continue to route to the Community Planning Liaison Officers **(CPLOs)** all discretionary and by-right development applications within "areas of interest." Work closely with the CPLOs to review development applications for "areas of interest" to avoid potentially incompatible uses.

Public Involvement

The Comprehensive Plan Update actively involved City residents and stakeholders through a series of in-person and online engagements. The City's Communications Office supported marketing and developing public engagement activities through targeted social media ads, direct email to City lists, calendar publications, and media promotions. Over 1,500 people participated in the in-person and on-line workshops and events.

Summer 2023: Focus Group meetings

- Two rounds of focus group meetings
- Initial plan themes and concepts are developed

In the Summer of 2023, ten in-person focus group meetings were held with participants from local environmental groups, civic groups, homeowner groups and associations, and business leaders, and members of the Human Rights Commission, the Mayor's Commission on Aging and Committee for Persons with Disabilities. The meetings asked participants to reflect on the City's current conditions and significant challenges, and to convey their visions for a positive future.

Focus group discussions covered transportation, infrastructure, environment, education, economic growth, and quality of life. The Comprehensive Plan's initial themes and Big Ideas emerged from those meetings. *Those initial meetings are summarized in the "Initial Public Engagement Focus Groups" memorandum.*

Fall 2023: "Big Ideas" Workshop events

- November public workshop events to gather more information.
- Major concepts are either affirmed or refined.

Four in-person workshops were held throughout the City where participants were asked to provide feedback on the initial themes and Big Ideas. They were also asked to weigh in on potential Plan concepts such as Place Types. Participants contributed input and ideas through group discussions with facilitators and participant-led report-outs. Groups supported the initial themes and Big Ideas, most importantly maintaining the Green Line and further developing strategies for growing inward. *The workshop events are summarized in the "November 2023* Big Ideas *Workshops memo."*

Spring 2024: Open House events

- Open house events share plan policy concepts
- Online public engagement gathers more feedback

Open house events held in the Spring of 2024 allowed participants to weigh in on the proposed organization of the Plan, notably Context Areas and Place Types, and proposed policies. Residents could also weigh in via an on-line version of the open houses. The in-person and virtual open houses also featured a survey, which garnered over a hundred responses. Most respondents supported the Plan's themes, Big Ideas, organization, and policy direction. *The events and survey responses are summarized in the "Spring 2024 Open House Engagements Report."*

Goals, Objectives, and Big Ideas

The Comprehensive Plan's **Overarching Goals** originated from the initial focus group sessions and evolved over subsequent engagements. Plan goals include:

- Environmental sustainability.
- Rural and agricultural land protection south of the Green Line.
- Infill urban development and multimodal access north of the Green Line.
- Economic sustainability and diversity.
- Community identity and connections.
- Neighborhood well-being and safety.
- Housing attainment and diversity.

The following pages list additional goals and objectives for each overarching goal and iterate through the Plan's chapters.

"Big Ideas" are tangible investments and initiatives the City can make to achieve its goals. For example, creating an environmental and open space framework is a big and bold initiative to ensure the goal of environmental sustainability. The Big Ideas listed below helped guide the policies and recommendations in this Plan.

- **Establish an environmental and open space framework:** Create a citywide Environmental and Open Space Framework that improves flood and sea level rise resiliency, wildlife migration, ecological diversity, and public enjoyment of nature.
- **Create a linear park system:** Establish a Linear Park System with non-motorized pathways for biking, rolling, and walking between new and existing open spaces, parks, and recreational areas.
- **Continue the Green Line and Blue Line, and plan based on the unique contexts created by those lines:** Identify the City's existing four unique landscapes into Context Areas to tailor planning efforts. The Blue and Green Lines are foundational to the Context Areas. Tailor policies and initiatives to meet the needs of each Context Area.
- **Designate centers and multimodal corridors north of the Green Line:** Redevelop strip commercial areas into higher-density, walkable urban centers and invest in walking, rolling, biking, and transit networks to provide travel options for residents and workers.
- **Create unique community identities and connections:** Work with neighborhoods to identify larger communities. Use place-making strategies to brand communities with art, history, and centering local stories. Create small-scale, walkable hubs for civic and social activities, such as farmer's markets.
- **Monitor and ensure neighborhood well-being:** Work with neighborhoods to identify ways to improve well-being, focusing on attainable housing, multimodal access, and safety.

Each of the Big Ideas is presented under the the goals and objectives on the following pages.

Environmental Sustainability

Goals

- Position the City of Virginia Beach as a model of environmental stewardship.
- Enhance healthy ecosystems in the City.
- Improve water quality and mitigate flood impacts.
- Protect, enhance, and connect natural lands and open spaces.
- Increase access to nature and expand eco-tourism.
- Protect residents from natural hazards.
- Encourage efficient land use and green buildings and infrastructure.
- Protect existing properties from sea level rise, flooding, and erosion.
- Enhance the ecological resilience of beaches and natural areas.

Big Ideas

- Establish an **Environmental and Open Space Framework.**
- Create a **Linear Park System.**

Objectives

- Continue to focus on and implement **sustainable practices** that:
  - Encourage the development of green buildings and infrastructure
  - Limit waste and pollution and protect residents from hazards.
- Continue to focus on and implement **water quality and flood protection** programs and strategies that:
  - Improve water quality and protect regulatory floodplains.
  - Monitor and mitigate flooding and sea level rise.
- Continue to strategically **protect and connect open spaces** that:
  - Optimize the ecological value of protected lands and open space.
  - Enhance connectivity between protected lands.
  - Increase public access to natural lands and waterways.
- Develop and implement **major environmental initiatives (Big Ideas).**
  - Sea Level Wise program for flood protection.
  - Environmental and Open Space Framework to connect open spaces.
  - Linear Park System to provide public access to nature.

Holding space for suggested image

Rural and Agriculture Land Protection

Goals

- Protect and sustain natural lands, open spaces, and environmental systems south of the Green Line.
- Support sustainable agricultural production.
- Provide opportunities to access nature.
- Transition development intensities between urban development north of the Green Line and rural-agricultural areas south of the Blue Line.

Objectives

- Continue protecting properties through acquisitions and conservation easements south of the Green Line.
- Continue to limit non-agricultural land uses outside designated Rural Villages south of the Blue Line.
- Continue to limit urban service expansion south of the Blue Line.
- Continue the Agricultural Reserve Program.
- Support access to expansive nature, eco-tourism, and agri-tourism opportunities.

Big Ideas

- **Continue Green and Blue Lines and create Context Areas.**
    - Inland and Coastal north of Green Line.
    - Green Line and Rural south of Green Line.

Infill Development, Redevelopment, and Multimodal Access

Goals

- Direct infill growth into Centers and Community Hubs and develop Centers and Hubs to make walking, biking, and transit viable and safe travel options.
- Modify the designs and operations of designated Multimodal Corridors to make walking, biking, and transit viable and safe options within and between Centers and Hubs.
- Create safe and convenient walking and biking paths between neighborhoods and Community Hubs.

Objectives

- Designate Multimodal Corridors and apply Multimodal Corridor design guidelines to promote safe and convenient walking, biking, rolling, and transit.
- Prioritize transit service improvements that provide access to City job centers.
- Designate Centers and Community Hubs and apply Place Type design guidelines to create land development patterns and multimodal networks that promote safe and convenient walking, biking, rolling, and transit.
- Work with transportation agencies and adjacent jurisdictions to develop and connect regional transit routes and trails.
- Plan, design, and develop walking and biking paths between neighborhoods and local focal points (such as Community Hubs).

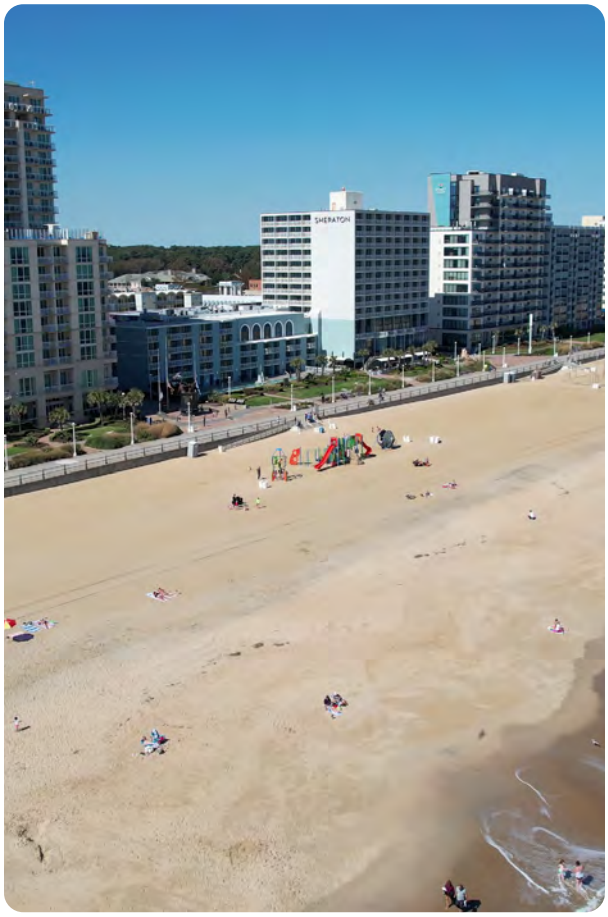
Big Idea

- Designate and design **Centers and Multimodal Corridors**.

Economic Sustainability and Diversity

Goals

- Sustain viable agriculture south of the Blue Line.
- Sustain and grow tourism within the Resort Area and across the city, guided by emerging opportunities.
- Attract quality employers and talent to the City in strategic market sectors defined by the Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- Attract, retain, and grow military contractors and renewable energy businesses to support the Economic Goals of the City and region.
- Continue to foster growth of tomorrow's workforce to retain and attract diverse talent.
- Attract year-round visitors that help sustain the City's economy and tax base.



Objectives

- Apply Center design guidelines to create urban location options for businesses.
- Implement recommendations from the Resort Area Strategic Action Plan (RASAP) and other adopted plans in the RASAP area.
- Continue to promote unique economic development opportunities in the Princess Anne Commons Planning Area.
- Continue using policies and regulations that limit development in the Rural Context Area to support sustainable agricultural production.
- Continue to support policies and regulations that preserve the Rural Context Area to maintain viable farming operations and safeguard long-term agricultural productivity, while exploring opportunities for ag-tech and sustainable farming innovations.
- Continue the Agricultural Reserve Program, and Open Space Acquisition Program.
- Apply Special Economic Growth Area (SEGA) Planning Area policies and design guidelines to support location opportunities for diverse, strategic, and emerging industries.
- Identify and promote areas for business growth that offer urban settings and regional multimodal access, supporting sectors such as light industrial, logistics, renewable energy, and industries with demonstrated momentum.
- Support unique and emerging economic opportunities in strategic market sectors, including innovation-driven enterprises, sports tourism, ecotourism, and other niche industries that contribute to a dynamic and resilient economy.

Community Identity and Connections

Goals

- Recognize the unique histories and identities of communities in the City.
- Promote and sustain community venues, events, and opportunities.
- Provide central locations (Community Hubs) for community residents to gather.
- Provide walking and biking connections between community neighborhoods and hubs.

Objectives

- Work with residents to define community boundaries and their identities.
- Develop community identity-based placemaking strategies, design guidelines, and cultural opportunities.
- Designate one or more centrally located and walkable Community Hubs within each identified community and apply design guidelines to develop Hubs.
- Recognize and protect historic sites within communities.

Big Idea

- **Create unique community identities and connections.**

Neighborhood Well-Being and Safety

Goals

- Promote the integrity, sense of well-being, and safety of neighborhoods by ensuring:
  - Quality housing and safe streets.
  - Safe and convenient access to schools, civic functions, and parks.
  - Protections from the scale and conflicting activity of adjacent non-residential developments.

Objectives

- Develop a neighborhood monitoring program that continually tracks factors of interest to residents and stakeholders in local neighborhoods, such as sense of safety, traffic, sidewalk connectivity, or shade.
- Identify and address improvement needs based on the measures.
- Apply neighborhood design guidelines to ensure development within and adjacent to neighborhoods promotes safety and well being.

Big Idea

- **Monitor and ensure neighborhood safety and well-being.**

Housing Attainment and Diversity

Goals

- Provide a mix of housing types and attainable housing in differing settings across the City.
- Ensure the quality of existing and new housing.

Objectives

- Take advantage of Center redevelopment to increase housing diversity and attainability.
- Find opportunities outside of Centers to increase housing diversity and attainability.
- Apply design guidelines to ensure the development of a variety of housing types affordable across all income levels in Centers and Community Hubs and along Multimodal Corridors.
- Evaluate the adopted zoning ordinance and map to identify barriers to creating or maintaining attainable housing.
- Identify strategies to address increasing senior housing demand.

Priority Policies

The policies listed in the Plan reflect specific actions the City will take to achieve its goals and objectives. Policies are listed throughout the plan. This section lists the policies the City will focus on in the near term. Details for the priority policies are provided in later chapters.

Environmental Sustainability

- Continue implementing programs that ensure water quality and flood protection, notably the Sea Level Wise initiative.
- As described in Chapter 2, identify opportunities in City planning and design efforts and during private development reviews to protect and connect natural lands and open spaces.
- Within five years, prepare the Environmental Open Space Framework Plan described in Chapter 2.
- When making improvements included in the Active Transportation Plan and Outdoors plan and during private development review, identify opportunities to develop portions of the Linear Park System.

Rural Land Protection South of the Green Line

- Continue purchasing land and conservation easements south of the Green Line.
- Continue the Agricultural Reserve Program, and Open Space Acquisition Program.
- Continue the policy of not extending urban services south of the Blue Line.
- Continue limiting development densities in the Green Line Context Area.
- Prohibit density bonuses in the Green Line Context Area.
- Update the zoning ordinance as needed to incorporate Transition Area Design Guidelines and Transition Neighborhood design guidelines in Chapter 7.

Infill and Multimodal Access North of the Green Line

- Use Place Type design guidelines to update the zoning ordinance for properties north of the Green Line.
- Develop a Place Type development review manual based on the process outlined in Chapter 7.
- Use Center design guidelines in Chapter 7 to develop Center plans and development regulations for those designated Centers without adopted Plans and regulations.
- Identify and implement needed development incentives as outlined in Chapter 3 to promote private Center development.
- Within five years, begin the Virginia Beach Boulevard Corridor Study as described in Chapter 3.
- Within ten years, begin the Independence / Princess Anne Road Corridor Study as described in Chapter 3.

Economic Development and Diversity

- Coordinate with the Virginia Beach Development Authority and regional and state development agencies to attract businesses targeted in the Virginia Beach Economic Development Strategic Plan, including:
    - Industrial, logistics, and high-tech bio.
    - Technology and finance businesses.
    - Agriculture.
- Work with the Virginia Beach Convention and Visitors Bureau to sustain and grow tourism, seasonal and year-round, within the Resort Area and across the City, guided by emerging opportunities.
- Identify key areas for redevelopment, including needed infrastructure updates to attract vibrant mixed-use development.
- Identify and inventory suitable land for industrial, high-tech, and logistics industries, including available development and redevelopment parcels in Center and Special Use Place Types, with a focus on unique, high-quality-of-life assets that support a diverse workforce base, including existing military personnel and young professionals.
- Economic Development, Planning and Zoning, Public Works will partner to identify key redevelopment areas and plan necessary infrastructure improvements. This joint effort ensures strategic investment in Centers, anticipates development challenges, and aligns growth with community needs.

Housing Attainment and Diversity

- Implement the Attainable Workforce Housing Performance Grant program.
- Pursue activities adopted by City Council based on recommendations from the City's 2024 Housing Study:
    - Advance discussions with the Virginia Beach Development Authority to fund new, large-scale, mixed-use development projects.
    - Design a housing education campaign to incorporate into successful community engagement.

  - Research opportunities to simplify and streamline the permitting and review process.
- Consider additional 2024 Housing Study recommendations for future action:
  - Develop a City-managed housing trust fund (HTF).
  - Create a Housing Assistance Fund for workers.
  - Leverage Virginia Statewide Community Land Trust (VSCLT) to create permanent attainable homeownership opportunities.
  - Pursue self-sustaining mixed-income, mixed-use rental development.
  - Consider an advisory board to guide new zoning changes and redesign the Workforce Housing Program.
- Explore Focused Action Plan initiatives for attainable housing, including potential tax abatement opportunities through state legislation to support development of attainable housing.
- Update the City's zoning code to allow for density bonuses and smaller lots in districts north of the Green Line.
- Explore land development opportunities for attainable housing, such as through partnerships with Virginia Beach Community Development Corporation, collaboration with religious entities on any excess land, and use of publicly owned property as development incentives.
- Promote use of assistance programs such as U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) HOME funds for down-payment and closing cost assistance for first-time homebuyers, HUD-funded rehab programs using Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and HOME funds, and owner-occupied grants for rehab and manufactured housing.

Community Identity and Connections

- Develop a Community and Connections program that focuses on:
  - Working with local residents to define community boundaries and the unique characteristics of each community.
  - Using unique community characteristics to develop a community brand and brand-based design guidelines.
  - Implementing brand designs (such as banners) in gateways to public spaces within communities.
- Local community members will initiate Community Hub plans, develop Community Hub plans using Community Hub design guidelines listed in Chapter 7. Planned Community Hubs will then be designated in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Develop community walking and biking plans once Community Hubs locations are adopted.

Neighborhood Safety and Well-Being

- Develop a neighborhood monitoring system that continually tracks factors of interest to residents and stakeholders in local neighborhoods, such as sense of safety, traffic, sidewalk connectivity, or shade.
  - Identity well-being measures and data sources.
  - Develop a GIS-based monitoring system.
- Use the monitoring system to regularly report on neighborhood well-being and recommend needed improvements.
- Apply the buffering guidelines from Chapter 7 to ensure neighborhoods are properly buffered from infill development during development reviews.

Comprehensive Plan Framework

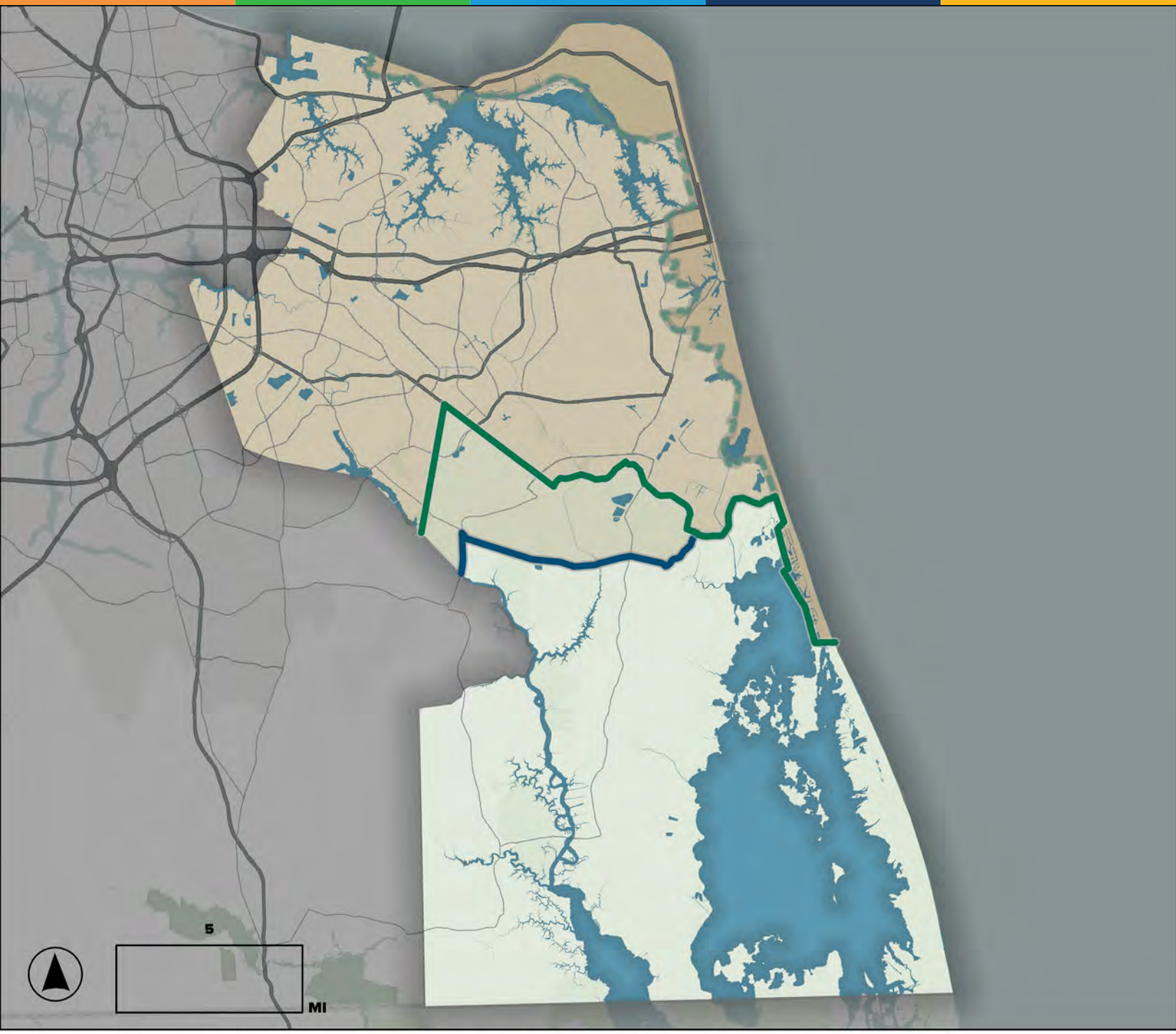
The Comprehensive Plan is organized by:

- Context Areas that define the vision and policies for areas north, south, and between the Green Line and Blue Line.
- Planning Areas that define the plans and policies for strategically important areas in the City.
- Place Types that define the functions and forms of differing settings across the City.

Context Areas

Context Areas capture the four major landscapes across Virginia Beach. The boundaries for the Context Areas are based on the Green Line, Blue Line, and the new Coastal Context Area Boundary –one of the Comprehensive Plan Update's Big Ideas. Context Areas tell the story of these landscapes, including recognizing the environment, major destinations, and historic features, to direct and orchestrate goals and policies. The four established Context Areas are described below and shown in ***Figure 1-5.***

- **Inland Context Area:** Located north of the Green Line, this area is mostly developed and densely populated, featuring numerous neighborhoods, shopping and employment centers, parks, Naval Air Station Oceana, and Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek–Fort Story. The primary goals for the Inland Context Area are to accommodate the City's anticipated growth through the redevelopment of major existing corridors and under-utilized shopping centers. Existing residential neighborhoods will retain their scale, density, and character, with planned enhancements to connectivity and sense of place.
- **Coastal Context Area:** Located along the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean, east of the Inland Context Area and defined by the Coastal Context Area Boundary, this area seeks to cultivate and protect a vibrant coastal landscape and experience. Goals include enhancing access to beaches and First Landing State Park, accommodating anticipated growth in the Resort Area, and giving special attention to managing sea level rise. Existing residential neighborhoods will retain their scale and character.
- **Green Line Context Area:** Located between the Green Line and Blue Line, this area serves as a density and intensity step-down between the developed lands north of the Green Line and the uses south of the Blue Line. Existing policies for Princess Anne Commons and the Transition Area will continue guiding development. Princess Anne Commons emphasizes education, recreation, and habitat preservation. The Interfacility Traffic Area (ITA) & Vicinity Master Plan provides a development program in the area based on aircraft noise contours and other features. The Green Line Context Area seeks to maintain low-density neighborhoods and open space.
- **Rural Context Area:** South of the Blue Line, this area will continue supporting rural and agricultural lands and serve essential conservation functions, being home to areas including Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and False Cape State Park. Agriculture plays a vital role in the City's economy as the city's third-largest industry, following tourism and defense, contributing significantly to local employment, sustainability, and the preservation of rural character.



CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES

- Green Line
- Blue Line
- Coastal-Inland

CONTEXT AREAS

- Coastal
- Inland
- Green Line (context area)
- Rural

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Surface Waters

Figure 1-5 *- Context Areas*

Planning Areas

Planning Areas, shown in ***Figure 1-6***, are specific parts of the city where development is guided by adopted plans or policies. The goals, objectives, and policies of each Planning Area plan will continue to guide development within the designated area. Those policies will be augmented by Place Type guidelines listed in Chapter 7. Planning Areas are described in more detail in later chapters. Planning Areas of note include:

- Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs) are spaced along Virginia Beach Boulevard from the Norfolk city line to the Resort Area and adjacent to I-64 interchanges in the City. SGA plans illustrate the transformation of suburban shopping centers into compact, walkable places. Each SGA is designated as a Center Place Type in the Comprehensive Plan.
- Special Economic Growth Areas (SEGAs) are located around the Naval Air Station Oceana. SEGA policies from the 2016 Comprehensive Plan guide industrial and logistics development in those areas. Each SEGA is designated as an Industrial and Logistics Place Type, which is summarized in the next section.
- Communities that focus on the enhancement of selected neighborhoods across the City, such as Seatack and Shore Drive.

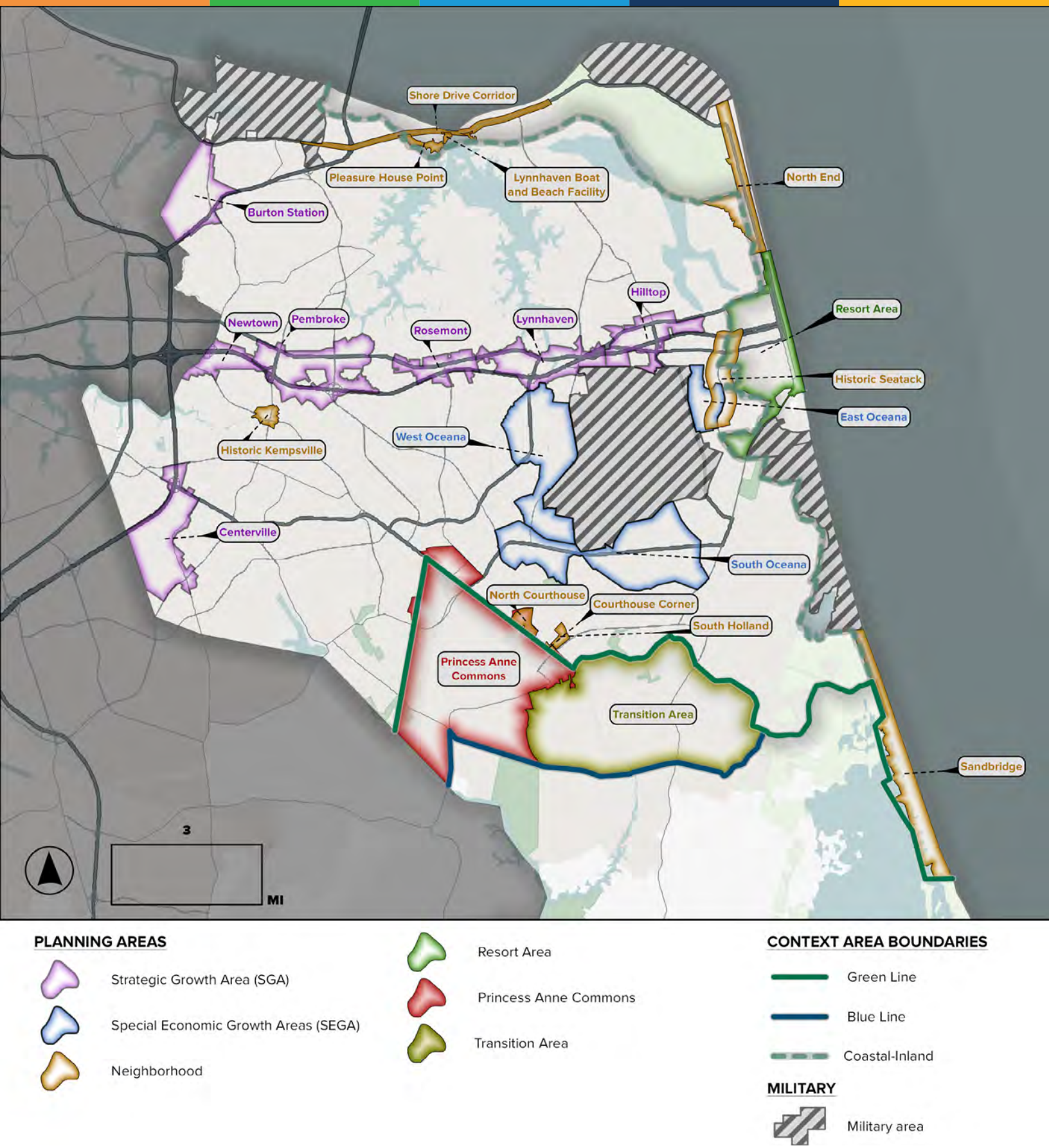
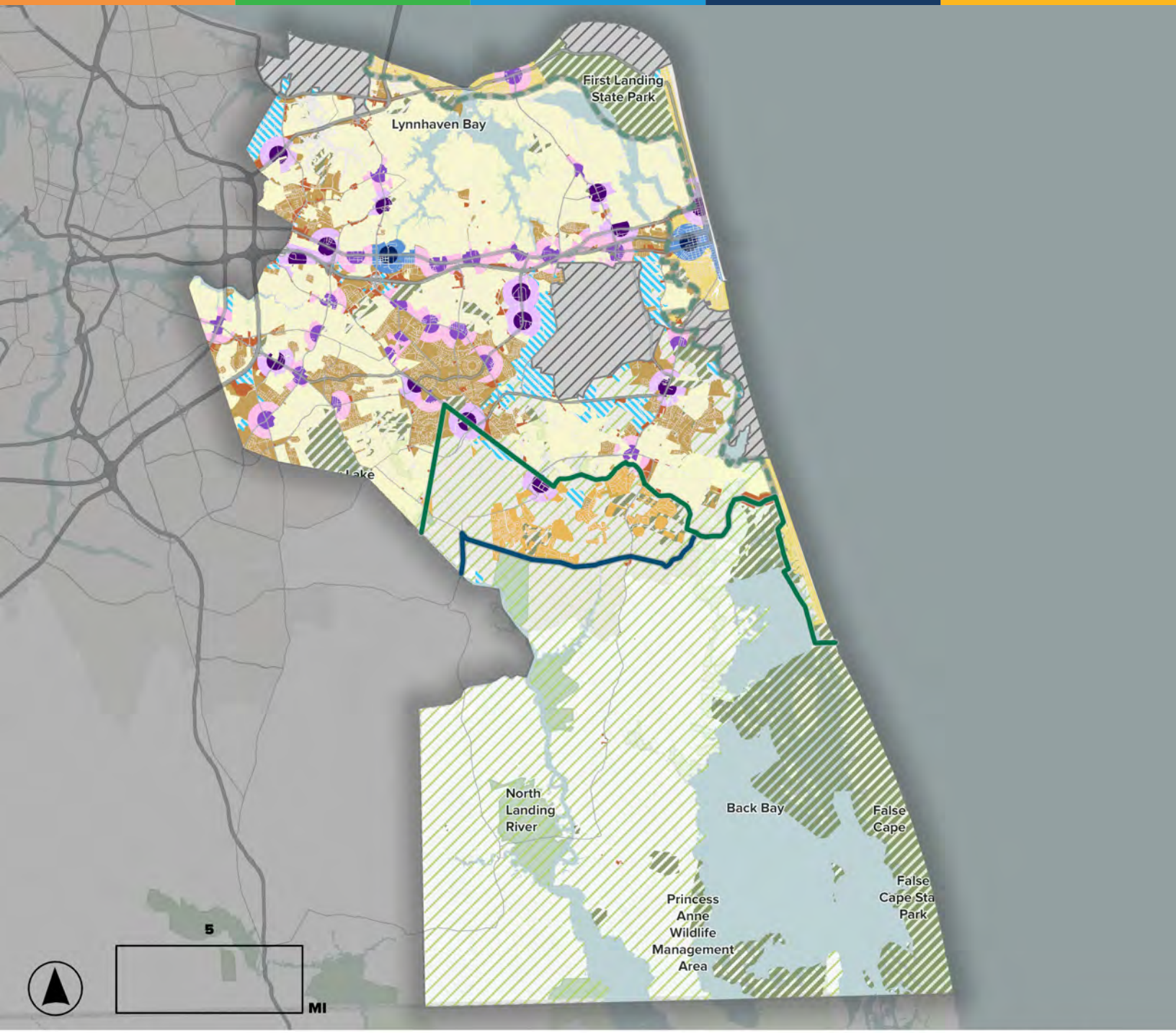


***Figure 1-6** - Planning Areas*

Place Types

Place Types (shown in ***Figure 1-7***) convey the character, function, and development patterns for different settings within each Context Area. **Corridor Types** (shown in ***Figure 1-8***) provide guidance on the design and operations of unique roadways. Each includes a set of policies and design guidelines that guide growth. Centers and Multimodal Corridors Place Types will enhance the City's ability to grow inward and upward by providing direction on function and form. Other Place Types will augment the City's zoning ordinance to reflect the goals and objectives of the Plan. The geographies of designated Place Types in this Plan and the design guidelines for each Place Type are foundational to updating the City's zoning ordinance. The Place Types include:

- **Centers and Multimodal Corridors**
  - **Centers –** settings for compact, mixed-use, walkable, rollable, and transit-oriented development. Centers are located along Multimodal Corridors.
  - **Multimodal Corridors –** transportation routes that provide safe and convenient vehicle, transit, walking, and cycling access to and from Centers. Over time, existing roadways will transform into Multimodal Corridors.
- **Neighborhoods**
  - **Type 1 Neighborhoods –** mostly lower density areas where single family homes are the predominant use; civic uses like schools, religious institutions and parks may also be found in this Place Type.
  - **Type 2 Neighborhoods –** moderate to higher density settings with a range of housing options that span from single-family homes, townhomes, and apartments alongside neighborhood serving commercial and service uses.
  - **Transition Neighborhoods –** lower-density areas designed to fit the unique context between the Blue and Green Lines.
  - **Coastal Neighborhoods –** moderate to higher-density areas with single- and multi-family homes suited to a coastal setting.
  - **Community Hubs –** compact, walkable, centrally located places that provide convenient access for neighborhood-oriented services, facilities, and events.
- **Special Uses and Corridors**
  - **Institutional Districts –** settings for schools, office parks, universities, hospitals, and similar multi-building institutions with specific and interconnected functions.
  - **Industrial and Logistics –** settings that support specialized employment in production, distribution, manufacturing, and logistics sectors.
  - **Business -** non-Center locations for commercial, office, and hotel uses.
  - **Freight Corridors –** transportation routes that provide safe and convenient freight and goods access to Industrial and Logistics districts.
- **Rural**
  - **Rural Villages –** low-intensity collections of locally-oriented stores and services, along with some residences. These are oriented to the Rural Context Area to form a distinct place.
  - **Rural Corridors –** transportation routes that provide farm-to-market access and connections to Rural Villages and other destinations.



PLACE TYPES

Regional
- Core
- Edge

City
- Core
- Edge

Local
- Core
- Edge

Special Use
- Industrial and Logistics
- Business

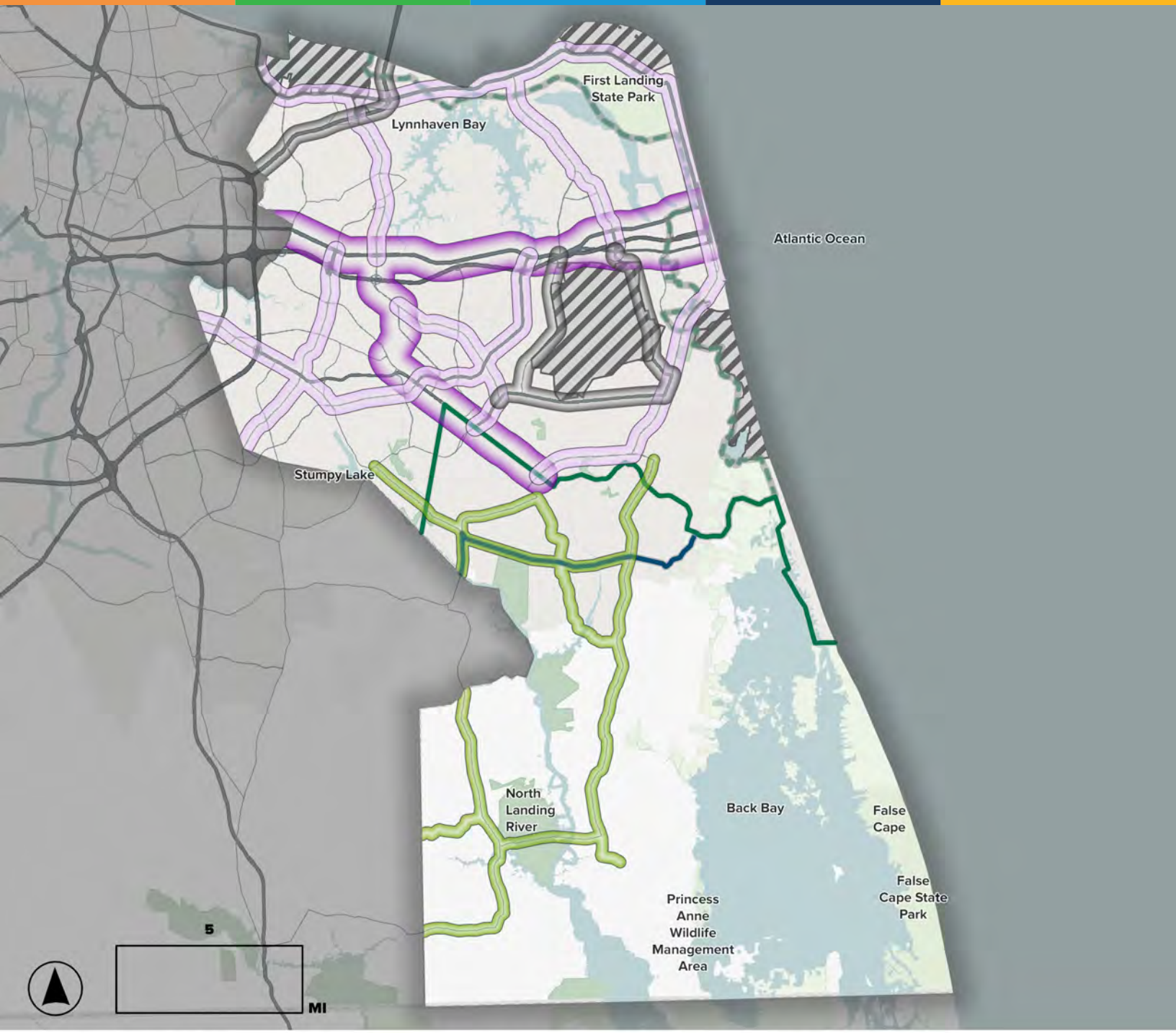
Neighborhoods
- Neighborhood - Type 1
- Neighborhood - Type 2
- Coastal Neighborhood
- Transition Neighborhood

NON-PLACE TYPES
- Agriculture
- Preservation

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES
- Green Line
- Blue Line
- Coastal-Inland

MILITARY
- Military area

Figure 1-7 - *Place Types*



CORRIDORS

- Regional
- City
- Rural
- Freight

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES

- Green Line
- Blue Line
- Coastal-Inland

MILITARY

- Military area

Figure 1-8 - *Corridor Types*

References and Endnotes

- [i] Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), "Hampton Roads 2045 Socioeconomic Forecast and Transportation Analysis Zone Allocation," February 2019. Presentation. Available at: https://www.hrpdcva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1681/2045-Socioeconomic-Forecast—2019-Presentation-PDF. See "Regional Overview."

- [ii] U.S. Census Bureau, "1960 Census of Population, Volume 1: Characteristics of the Population," Table 31: Population of Standard Metropolitan Statistical Areas and Component Areas in the United States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico: 1940 to 1960 (Con.), U.S. Department of Commerce, 1963, p. 1-103. Available at: https://www2.census.gov/library/publications/decennial/1960/population-volume-1/vol-01-01-g.pdf.

- [iii] U.S. Census Bureau, Resident Population in Virginia Beach city, VA [VAVIRG5POP], retrieved from FRED, Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis; https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/VAVIRG5POP, November 1, 2024.

- [iv] University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, "Virginia Population Projections," 2022. Available at: https://coopercenter.org/virginia-population-projections.

- [v] Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), "Hampton Roads 2045 Socioeconomic Forecast and Transportation Analysis Zone Allocation," February 2019. Presentation. Available at: https://www.hrpdcva.gov/DocumentCenter/View/1681/2045-Socioeconomic-Forecast—2019-Presentation-PDF. See Table 1, p. 15.

Chapter 2: **Environment**

Introduction

The City of Virginia Beach's natural landscapes and parks offer wildlife habitats, recreational opportunities, and scenic backdrops for daily life. Safeguarding these environmental assets and addressing challenges like sea level rise and flooding is crucial for the City's future resilience.

Protected and natural areas make up a significant portion of the City, including the following important resources:

- Thirty-eight miles of shoreline along the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay. Twenty-eight miles are along public beaches.
- Fifty square miles of estuaries, creeks, and wetlands (about 15 percent of the total area). Lynnhaven River, Broad Bay, Linkhorn Bay are major waterbodies.
- Major State and Federal parks and wildlife areas, such including: First Landing State Park (2,900 acres), False Cape State Park (3,800 acres), and Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) (9,000 acres).
- Approximately 26,700 acres of agriculturally designated lands, including 10,500 acres of farmland protected by the City through its Agricultural Reserve Program, discussed in Chapter 6.

The City has a longstanding commitment to planning for and safeguarding these resources. Continuing to protect them remains a top priority for the City, ensuring their value is maintained and enhanced for future generations.

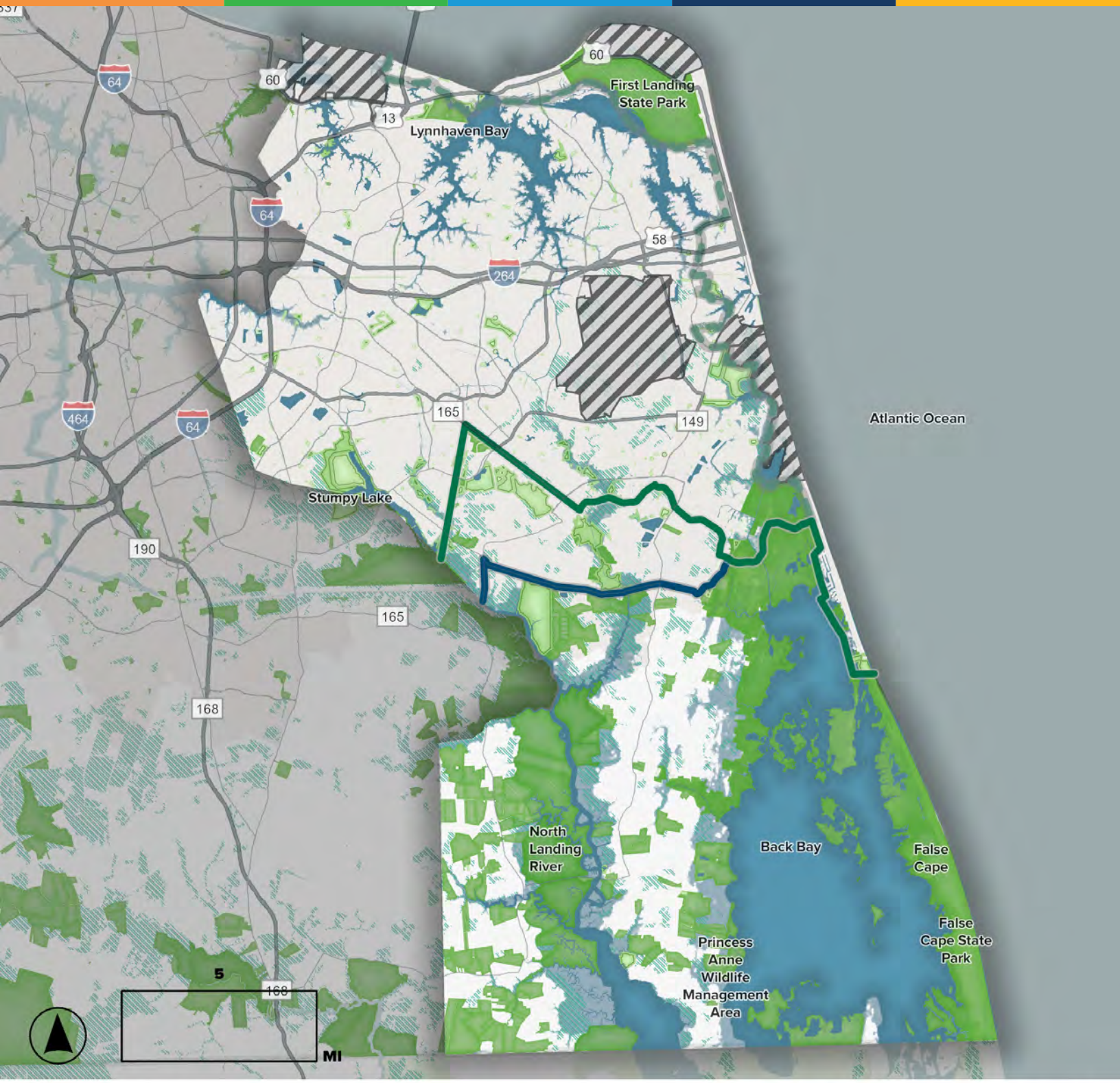
Environmental Goals and Objectives

Goals

- Position the City of Virginia Beach as a model of environmental stewardship.
- Enhance healthy ecosystems in the City.
- Improve water quality and flood protection.
- Protect, enhance, and connect natural lands and open spaces.
- Increase access to nature.
- Protect residents from natural hazards.
- Encourage the efficient use of land.
- Take a proactive stance in mitigating flooding and sea level rise issues.

Objectives

- Expand the City's green infrastructure inventory.
- Review practices that limit waste and pollution.
- Factor hazard mitigation into the planning process.
- Create wildlife corridors.
- Maximize the social and environmental benefits of open space.
- Encourage adaptive reuse redevelopment and green building techniques.
- Develop a Linear Park System and continue to strategically acquire open space.
- Expand public access to waterways.
- Continue managing activities that significantly affect water quality and any regulatory floodplains.
- Plan for increased sea level rise and model high-risk sea level rise and storm scenarios.
- Implement the City's Sea Level Wise Program strategies.
- Proactively collaborate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and other federal, state, and local agencies on the ongoing Coastal Storm Risk Management Study and other resilience-planning initiatives in Virginia Beach.
- Optimize the ecological value of protected lands and open space.
- Enhance connectivity between protected lands.



ENVIRONMENTAL

- Surface waters
- City parks
- Federal & State parks and other protected areas
- Wetland areas (marsh, swamp, bog, prairie)
- MHHW Projected SLR (3.0ft) (SeaLevelWise)

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES

- Green Line
- Blue Line
- Coastal-Inland

MILITARY

- M

Figure 2-1 - *Parks, protected areas, and open spaces map*

Sustainable Practices

The City of Virginia Beach recognizes the importance of integrating environmental stewardship and sustainability practices early in long-range planning efforts. A primary goal for the City is to **lead with environmentally sustainable practices.** The related objectives are:

1. Encourage the use of **green infrastructure.**
2. Promote **efficient land use patterns and buildings.**
3. Review practices that **limit waste and pollution.**
4. Factor **hazard mitigation into the planning process.**

Green Infrastructure

Green infrastructure leverages natural systems as infrastructure solutions in response to issues like extreme urban heat, flooding, and erosion. Green infrastructure has multiple co-benefits besides providing solutions to immediate challenges, namely enhancing access to nature and providing a sense of community pride.

Green infrastructure solutions can be large or small and applied even in densely developed areas. Because green infrastructure works with natural processes, it can have lower operational costs compared to traditional "gray infrastructure" solutions. Living shorelines, the urban tree canopy, and wildlife corridors are among the most essential green infrastructure solutions for the City of Virginia Beach.[i]

Mean Higher High Water (MHHW) is the average height of the highest high tide. Maps throughout this Plan show the projected MHHW for Virginia Beach in the future, based on the City's Sea Level Wise Program data. Areas shown with this designation are expected to be at risk of inundation as sea levels continue to rise.

Living shorelines involve a "shoreline management practice that provides erosion control and water quality benefits; protects, restores or enhances shoreline habitat; and maintains coastal processes through the strategic placement of plants, stone, sand fill, and other structural and organic materials." Living shorelines can slow erosion, provide carbon sequestration, help manage nitrogen levels (limiting harmful algal blooms), provide habitat and biodiversity, and add to natural and scenic beauty. In contrast, hardened shorelines and bulkheads can interrupt and bounce wave energy away from the shore, causing accelerated erosion effects.[ii]

The **urban tree canopy** is the area of the City covered by leaves, branches, and tree trunks when viewed from above. A connected, healthy canopy improves air quality, provides wildlife habitat, and reduces the heat island effect. The trees and plants that form the canopy also help sequester carbon and mitigate stormwater runoff. According to the Arbor Day Foundation, investments in trees in other cities have shown returns of nearly six dollars per dollar spent on increasing tree canopy through improved water quality, stormwater control, energy savings, and increased property values. The City of Virginia Beach's Urban Forest Management Plan (2023 update) aims to capitalize on and expand these benefits and achieve a 45 percent urban tree canopy coverage by 2045 (40.3% as of 2018).

Wildlife corridors are areas that facilitate connections and movement between habitats for animals. In urban areas, well-connected wildlife corridors maintain biodiversity and reduce human-wildlife conflicts. The Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources (DWR) completed the statewide Wildlife Corridors Action Plan in May 2023, which focused on balancing highway safety with wildlife protection. A local understanding of wildlife migration should be studied at the regional scale in partnership with adjacent jurisdictions, the Hampton Roads Regional Planning Council, and DWR.

Efficient Land Use Patterns and Buildings

The City of Virginia Beach is committed to the efficient use of land as part of its sustainability approach. Directing growth to create vibrant, more compact areas can:

- Ease pressures to convert farmland and open space to urban uses.
- Make better use of existing public infrastructure and services (roads, transit, schools, water, sewer, police, fire, and rescue), thereby lowering long-term public expenditures.
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled by placing essential services closer to where people live and work.

The City intends to capitalize on the benefits of compact development using higher-intensity, mixed-use Centers to accommodate its anticipated growth north of the Green Line. Center locations and design guidelines, covered in Chapter 7, define how the City's existing underutilized shopping strips and surface parking lots can transform into more vibrant, walkable, and livable places.

Adaptive Reuse is a concept of re-purposing structures in a way that limits the need for total demolition and new construction and offers a way to bring forward elements of history. Adaptive reuse projects can be more complex, but in return, they offer environmentally friendly ways to provide redevelopment.

Low-impact development **(LID)** aims to minimize environmental impacts and manage resources sustainability in land development by preserving natural systems, reducing impervious surfaces, and using green infrastructure.

Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design **(LEED®)** promotes sustainable building practices to conserve resources, reduce environmental effects, lower ongoing costs, and improve comfort for occupants. Both newly built and existing structures can be LEED®-certified.

Mitigating Natural Hazards

The City of Virginia Beach is vulnerable to a variety of natural hazards due to its coastal location in the mid-Atlantic. The City has created plans related to resilient development from the property scale to the neighborhood scale.

The Hampton Roads Hazard Mitigation Plan (Hazards Plan) (2022) coordinates regional hazard planning efforts, focusing on infrastructure upgrades and planning strategies in response to natural hazards. The plan outlines hazards like coastal flooding, sea level rise, hurricanes, coastal erosion, and other significant threats like tornadoes, winter storms, and extreme heat. The plan's overarching goal centers on increasing community resiliency by reducing vulnerability, especially to flooding. It stresses the importance of education and fostering regional partnerships to ensure the community is better prepared to face these ongoing risks.

The Hazards Plan includes a Vulnerability Assessment[iii] and emphasizes social disparities and equity as part of its analysis. It identifies areas in Virginia Beach as having moderate to high social vulnerability to these hazards and highlights areas marked by repetitive flood loss. This is another area where recognizing underserved communities is essential to ensure the health and safety of all of Virginia Beach. According to the Vulnerability Assessment, as of 2022, the City of Virginia Beach maintains nearly all the items plans recommended under to increase hazard preparedness. The City should continue maintaining these plans.[iv]

Virginia Beach is at a heightened risk for experiencing high temperatures. Urban areas with dense pavements, buildings, and heat-retaining surfaces can expose users to higher temperatures than areas with more open, natural areas. The City has created a local Heat Risk Index for its Census Tracts ***(Figure 2-2)***.

Some of the highest-risk Census tracts occur within areas along and within Multimodal Corridors and Centers. This highlights the importance of planning for open space, green space, and trees, especially in Town Center and Hilltop areas. For those Census tracts outside Centers, monitoring neighborhood conditions should include extreme heat and supporting strategies.

Much of the City's stormwater infrastructure is now nearing the end of its design life-cycle. As originally designed, there was less awareness and information on rising sea levels and changing rainfall patterns. As a result, some of the infrastructure may not perform as originally intended. The City's Sea Level Wise Adaptation Strategy is a comprehensive program for mitigating sea level rise and flooding, detailed later in this chapter.

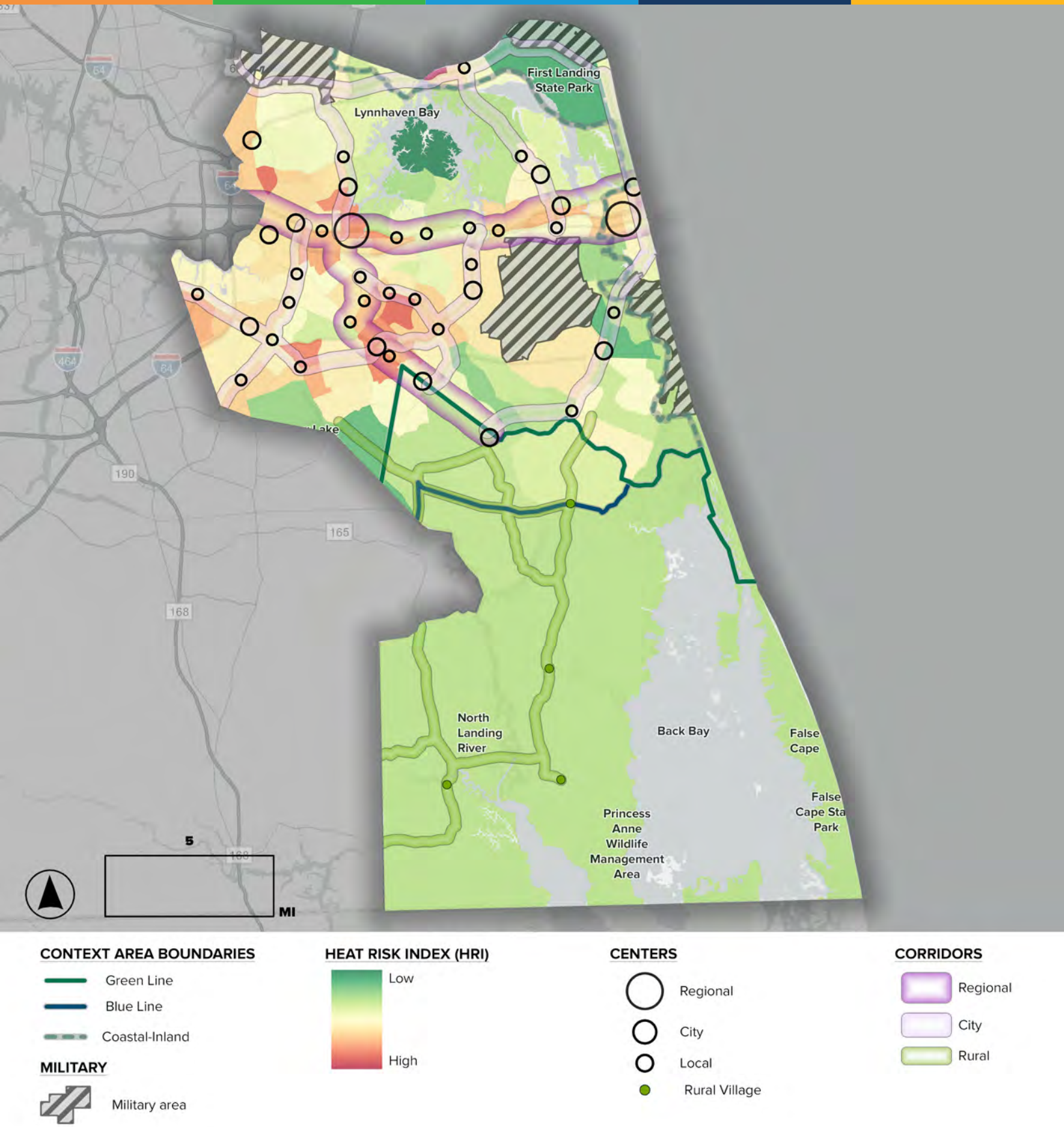


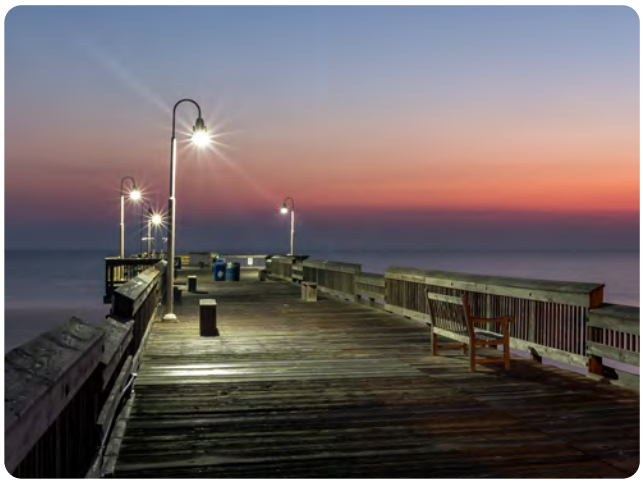
Figure 2-2 - *Heat risk index map*

Limiting Pollution

This section addresses noise, light, solid waste, and air pollution, and outlines strategies to reduce their effects aligned with sustainable growth.

Noise pollution is disruptive sound that interferes with everyday activities and diminishes quality of life. Significant sources of noise pollution in Virginia Beach originate from surface transportation and jet aircraft. These impacts must be minimized against other required planning objectives cited in state law. The Air Installation Compatible Use Zone (AICUZ) program and the recommendations noted in the 2005 Hampton Roads Joint Land Use Study address jet aircraft noise. The Centers and Corridors in the Comprehensive Plan are geared toward shifting auto trips to other modes to help reduce surface transportation noise.

Light pollution is the excessive use of artificial light, causing sky glow, glare, light trespass, and decreased visibility at night. Reducing light pollution restores the natural abilities of wildlife migration, reduces stress on wildlife and humans alike, can improve aesthetic value, and provides energy savings. The City aims to continue monitoring light pollution and implementing strategies to reduce it in existing and future developments.



The City aims to limit and manage **solid waste** effectively. Reducing waste generation is critical because it helps conserve the energy and cost required to produce, transport, and dispose of products. When waste is generated, managing it well is essential to protect the environment from pollution. While the Comprehensive Plan plays a limited role in waste management, the City seeks to maintain its leadership by taking proactive measures and planning for the future demands of solid waste disposal capacity.

Air pollution is the introduction of particulate matter, gases, odors, or other harmful materials into Earth's atmosphere. Air pollution is a significant risk factor for several health conditions, including respiratory infections, heart disease, stroke, and lung cancer. Transportation and vehicle emissions are a primary contributor to Virginia Beach air pollution. The Comprehensive Plan looks to reduce transportation-related air pollution by transitioning trips to less polluting sources and reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The key strategies are to shorten automotive trip lengths and increase non-automotive mode share through the Centers and Corridors in the Comprehensive Plan. The other strategy is to support electric vehicle charging and adoption.

Sustainability Practices

Objectives

- Continue to focus on and implement **sustainable practices** that:
  - Encourage the development of green buildings and infrastructure.
  - Limit waste and pollution and protect residents from hazards.
- Continue to apply the *Urban Forest Master Plan.*
- Continue to follow the recommendations in the Natural Heritage Report and the Historic Preservation Plan.

Policies

- Encourage the development of green buildings and infrastructure.
  - Promote green infrastructure in new development and retrofit to existing structures and sites.
    - Research available incentive or grant programs for private property owners to install small green infrastructure solutions.
    - Encourage and incentivize adaptive reuse of suitable structures to limit waste and the need for all-new construction, as well as protect elements of historical value.
    - Prioritize low-impact design features in the City's projects, especially municipal facilities by pursuing Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver ratings, or higher, in municipal structures.
  - Foster a healthy and complete tree canopy.
    - Increase tree plantings and preservation of existing trees on all public properties.
    - For the City's trees, monitor and track tree planting and removal and ensure that net tree loss is replaced near the location of the loss.
    - Protect and help to enhance connected tree canopies.
    - Maintain the intermediate goal of 45 percent urban tree canopy (UTC) by 2045.
    - Continue maintaining the Urban Forest Management Plan and following its recommended next steps.
    - Encourage the replacement of trees taken down by a proposed development.
  - Promote the expansion of living shorelines.
    - Maintain and update regulations to prioritize living shoreline projects in coastal and waterfront areas.
    - Invest in restoration and maintenance programs for existing natural shorelines.
- Enhance and employ practices that limit waste and pollution and protect residents from hazards.
  - Educate citizens about natural hazards through community awareness campaigns and preparedness efforts.
  - Include social vulnerability dimensions in hazard mitigation planning and projects.
  - Mitigate urban heat island effects and enhance natural cooling.
- Support more sustainable and affordable travel options by expanding active transportation networks that reduce emissions, lower costs, and connect key destinations without needing to drive.

    - Identify urban heat island hotspots within the City, referring to Heat Risk Index efforts.
    - Develop shading and cooling strategies in key urban areas, incorporating equity considerations.
    - In areas with a high prevalence of urban heat, follow strategies such as increasing tree and vegetation cover, green roofs, and cool pavements.
- Continue regional planning and coordination efforts on environmental topics and hazard mitigation.
    - Refer to the City's Capital Improvements Program, Public Works Design Standards, Sea Level Wise Strategy, along with the Hampton Roads Hazard Mitigation Plan (2022), as the guiding frameworks to address upgrades and planning strategies that respond to hazards like flooding, sea level rise, and coastal erosion.
    - Proactively collaborate with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and other federal, state, and local agencies on the ongoing Coastal Storm Risk Management Study and other resilience-planning initiatives in Virginia Beach.
    - Limit the sources and exposure to different forms of pollution.
- Continue to mitigate noise pollution.
    - Adhere to Air Installation Compatibility Use Zones (AICUZ) and other policy and programmatic recommendations cited in the Oceana Land Use Conformity Program and the 2005 Hampton Roads Joint Land Use Study.
    - Relocate existing and locate proposed higher noise-generating businesses and activities to locations inside the City's higher AICUZ zones and away from residential areas.
    - Remain good partners with the Navy and ensure regulations relating to the AICUZ continue to provide the appropriate balance of development restrictions.
- Continue to mitigate light pollution.
    - Ensure that outdoor lighting provides sufficient illumination for a structure or area without unnecessarily contributing to light pollution.
    - Ensure that pedestrian lighting is provided at storefronts, using indirect illumination from the building or direct illumination under canopies or awnings.
    - Ensure that non-residential building lighting is designed as an integral feature of a structure's architecture and as unobtrusive as possible.
    - For rear-building lighting, limit its illumination onto residential properties.
- Continue to mitigate air pollution.
    - Reduce automotive vehicle miles traveled and increase non-automotive mode share.
    - Support the roll-out of electric vehicle charging stations.
    - Pursue strategies that enable residents and local employees to trade automotive trips for transit and non-motorized trips.
- Continue to efficiently and effectively manage solid waste
    - Eliminate, reduce, or recycle waste products to the greatest extent practical.
    - Operate waste management facilities to safeguard land, air, and water resources for economic and environmental efficiency.

Water

A primary goal for the City is to improve water quality and flood protection. The related objectives are:

- Expand public access to waterways.
- Continue managing activities that significantly affect water quality and any regulatory floodplains.
- Implement Sea Level Wise Program strategies.
- Plan for increased sea level rise and model high-risk sea level rise and storm scenarios.
- Optimize the ecological value of protected lands.
- Enhance connectivity between protected lands.

Water Quality

Virginia Beach is a city of water. It is bound on the east by the Atlantic Ocean and on the north by the Chesapeake Bay. There are three primary watersheds: Atlantic Ocean Watershed, Southern Rivers Watershed, and Chesapeake Bay Watershed. These are mapped in ***Figure 2-3***.[v]

Watersheds consist of wetlands, shorelines, riparian buffers, storm drainage systems, and the land from which they drain. These interconnected components determine the environmental health and sustainability of the City's natural resources.

Groundwater refers to water stored in aquifers beneath the Earth's surface. It supplies wells and springs and is essential for drinking water, agriculture, and ecosystems. Residents in the Rural Context Area rely solely on groundwater.

The groundwater near the surface is mostly fresh, whereas local groundwater found at depths of 200 feet and greater is mostly saline and generally too salty to drink or use for irrigation.

Excessive pumping lowers groundwater levels and leads to saltwater intrusion and increased salinity. The proliferation of impervious surfaces also reduces groundwater recharge, which elevates these risks. Other sources that cause groundwater pollution include drainage from croplands, urban lawns, fertilizers and pesticides, livestock, underground failing septic systems, underground failing storage tanks, and unsound construction or demolition practices.

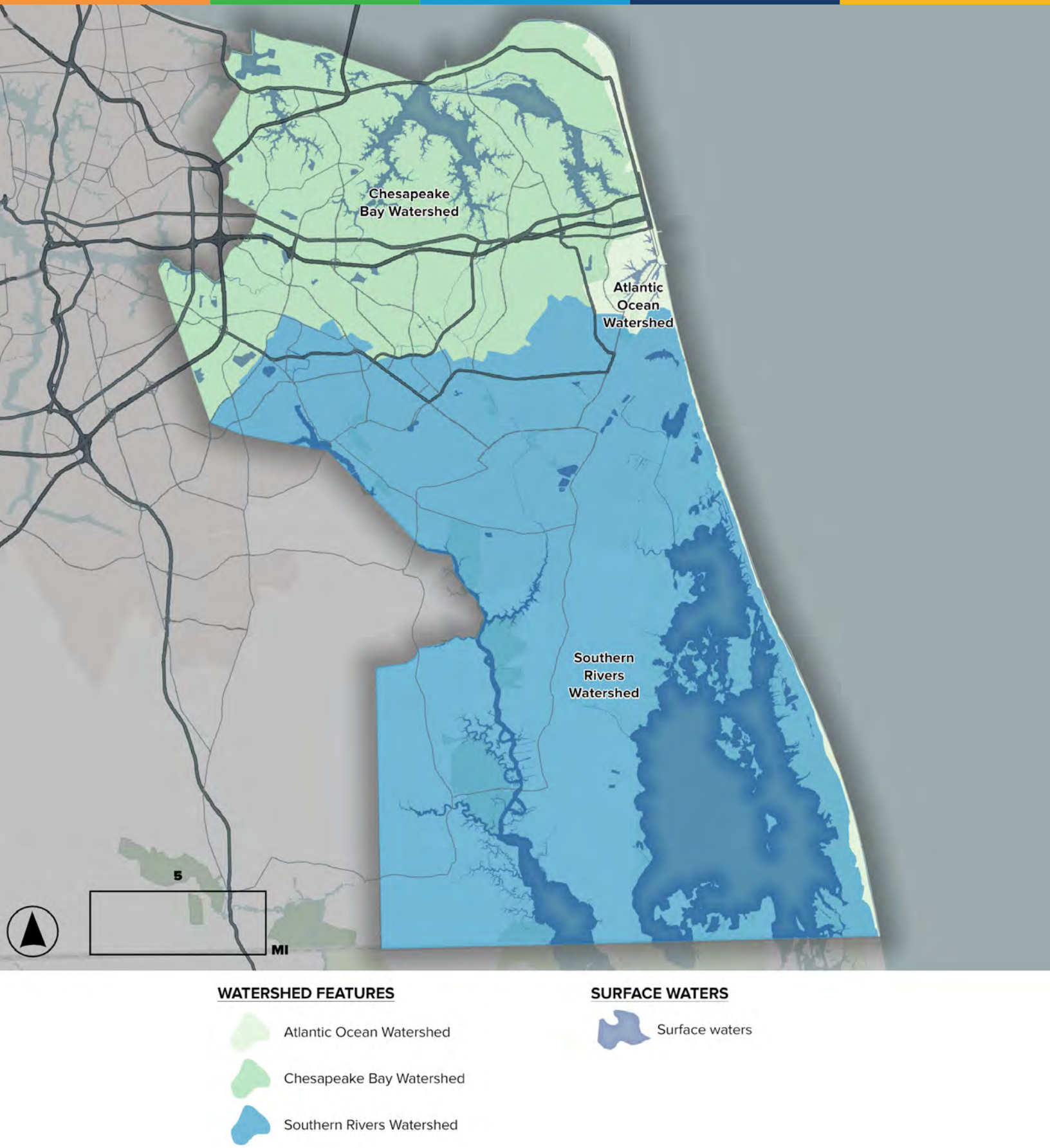


Figure 2-3 - *Primary watersheds map*

The Southern Rivers Watershed

The Southern Rivers Watershed (sometimes called the Southern Watershed) is the City's most extensive watershed, representing over 60 percent of the City's area. The Southern Rivers Watershed is foundational to the City's ecological, tourism, and rural economies. This unique and sensitive watershed includes tidal wetlands, non-tidal wetlands, and hydric soils.

High groundwater elevations and poorly draining soils can increase runoff, limiting capacities of stormwater conveyance systems and reduce the effectiveness of Best Management Practices.

Southern Rivers Watershed Management Area creates a 50-foot buffer as a key regulatory overlay that guides development.

The City strongly recommends that developers conduct drainage studies before a request to approve a discretionary development application involving land disturbance in the Southern Rivers Watershed. The drainage study should evaluate the effects of the development proposal to ensure the proposed drainage system can meet City standards and would not result in flooding within the planned development or to upstream or downstream areas.

The Chesapeake Bay Watershed

The Chesapeake Bay is the world's largest estuary and one of the most ecologically significant. The City of Virginia Beach is located near the southern end of the Bay and depends on its health for economic, environmental, and recreational benefits. Pollution and runoff have degraded the estuary's health during the 19th and 20th centuries, but significant action has helped curb some of these effects.

The Chesapeake Bay Watershed includes most of the northern half of the City. The Commonwealth of Virginia empowers localities to regulate activities in Chesapeake Bay, which the City does via its Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Ordinance. The ordinance is an effort to enhance water quality by protecting environmentally sensitive areas adjacent to waterways, tidal shores, and wetlands, as well as highly erodible soils. These sensitive areas are called resource protection areas (RPAs). The Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection Area includes all the areas closest to the shorelines that have an intrinsic water quality value or are sensitive to the impact of development.

The Ordinance applies to lands included in the Chesapeake Bay watershed within the City of Virginia Beach, including wetlands and a variable width buffer area not less than one hundred feet. The Ordinance specifies rules and standards for development and activities within the Resource Protection Area. The Ordinance includes strategies such as erosion and sediment control, stormwater management, and the preservation of native vegetation.

Flooding

Virginia Beach is exposed to several sources of flooding, including high tide, wind tide, storm surge, rainfall, and groundwater flooding. These flood types are exacerbated by compounding factors due to changes in the natural and built environment. According to the Sea Level Wise project, the City's annual average flood-related losses would increase almost three-fold to $77 million without interventions.

In 2016, Virginia Beach experienced three major storm events, Tropical Storm Hermine, Tropical Storm Julia, and Hurricane Matthew. Hurricane Matthew was devastating, having resulted in 14 inches of rain and damage to over 2,000 structures. A historical rainfall analysis that the City commissioned shows that heavy precipitation events have been increasing; projections indicate and this trend will continue through at least 2060.[vii]

The City's adopted Floodplain Ordinance acknowledges that *"Virginia Beach is facing an increased danger of flooding caused by both sea level rise and subsidence and has adopted the Sea Level Wise Adaptation Report as part of the Comprehensive Plan"* and should continue to maintain the Ordinance and the regulatory framework based on the latest data originating from the Sea Level Wise Program and similar efforts.

The City also uses its Public Works Design Standards Manual, Erosion and Stormwater Management Ordinance, and Master Drainage Study to manage stormwater issues.

In 2019, the Navy, the Cities of Virginia Beach and Norfolk, the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, and the Commonwealth of Virginia completed the Norfolk-Virginia Beach JLUS to assess how sea level rise and tidal flooding threaten mission readiness in Hampton Roads. The study focused on infrastructure key to Naval operations and recommended local projects and regional strategies to strengthen planning and improve data sharing. The JLUS reflects Virginia Beach's ongoing work with the military and regional partners to tackle sea level rise and protect shared infrastructure.

A **floodplain** is defined in the City's Code of Ordinances as "any land area susceptible to being inundated by water from any source." Floodplains are natural buffers, absorbing and slowing floodwaters, reducing damage to infrastructure, and aiding in groundwater recharge by allowing water to infiltrate the soil. They also improve water quality by filtering sediments and pollutants. The development of managed and functional floodplains reduces flooding risks and improves groundwater replenishment.

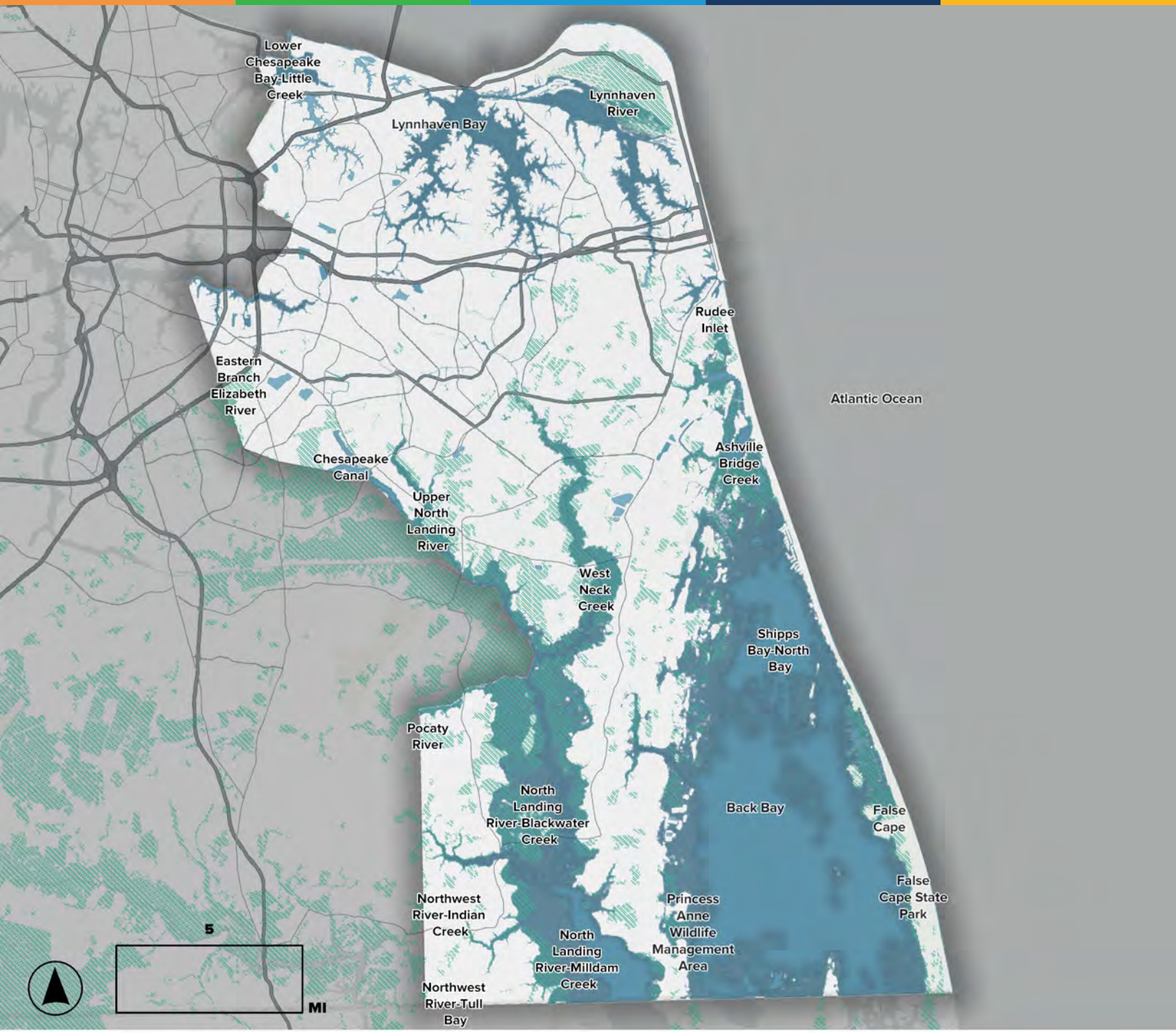
Sea Level Rise

Sea level rise is expected to intensify flooding problems. ***Figure 2-4*** shows the City's projected **Mean Higher High-Water (MHHW)** line under the 3-foot sea level rise scenario to 2075. Increased MHHW levels will result in loss of land, saltwater intrusion, farmland loss, and loss of or challenges to existing wetlands areas. The map shows how the City's low-lying lands are expected to be more frequently inundated by water and prone to storm flooding under the 100-year storm event flood depth (3' SLR projection – 2075), as defined by the City's Sea Level Wise Program.

The City of Virginia Beach's Department of Public Works Sea Level Wise Program has adopted strategies for at-risk lands. Engineered defenses, including levees, sea walls, and gates, are intended to mitigate the impact of sea level rise by keeping ocean and bay waters from flowing into at-risk areas. The program identifies natural mitigation strategies for at-risk areas, such as marsh restoration, creation, and land conservation. It also identifies and adapts structure strategies, including resilient roadways and elevating buildings. The approaches are specific to the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, Atlantic Ocean Watershed, and Southern Rivers Watershed. ***(Figure 2-6*** to ***Figure 2-9)***.

As modeling, projecting, and measuring the effects of sea level rise continue to become more accurate and precise, the City must continue to evaluate climate, sea level rise, flooding, and storm data. The City will review studies and new projections as they are released. The Sea Level Wise project follows an Intermediate Projection of federal sea level rise projections for Hampton Roads. The City should continue to monitor this area of research to ensure that compound flooding events and the latest sea level rise properly account for future risk, including in higher-risk sea level rise scenarios. Of particular interest are how rising sea levels will interact with different types of flood events, and how compounding flood events could result in catastrophic losses that may not be caught by only evaluating one aspect of sea level rise. [viii]

Sea level rise will intensify major flood events. Projections from the City's Sea Level Wise project are mapped on ***Figure 2-5***.



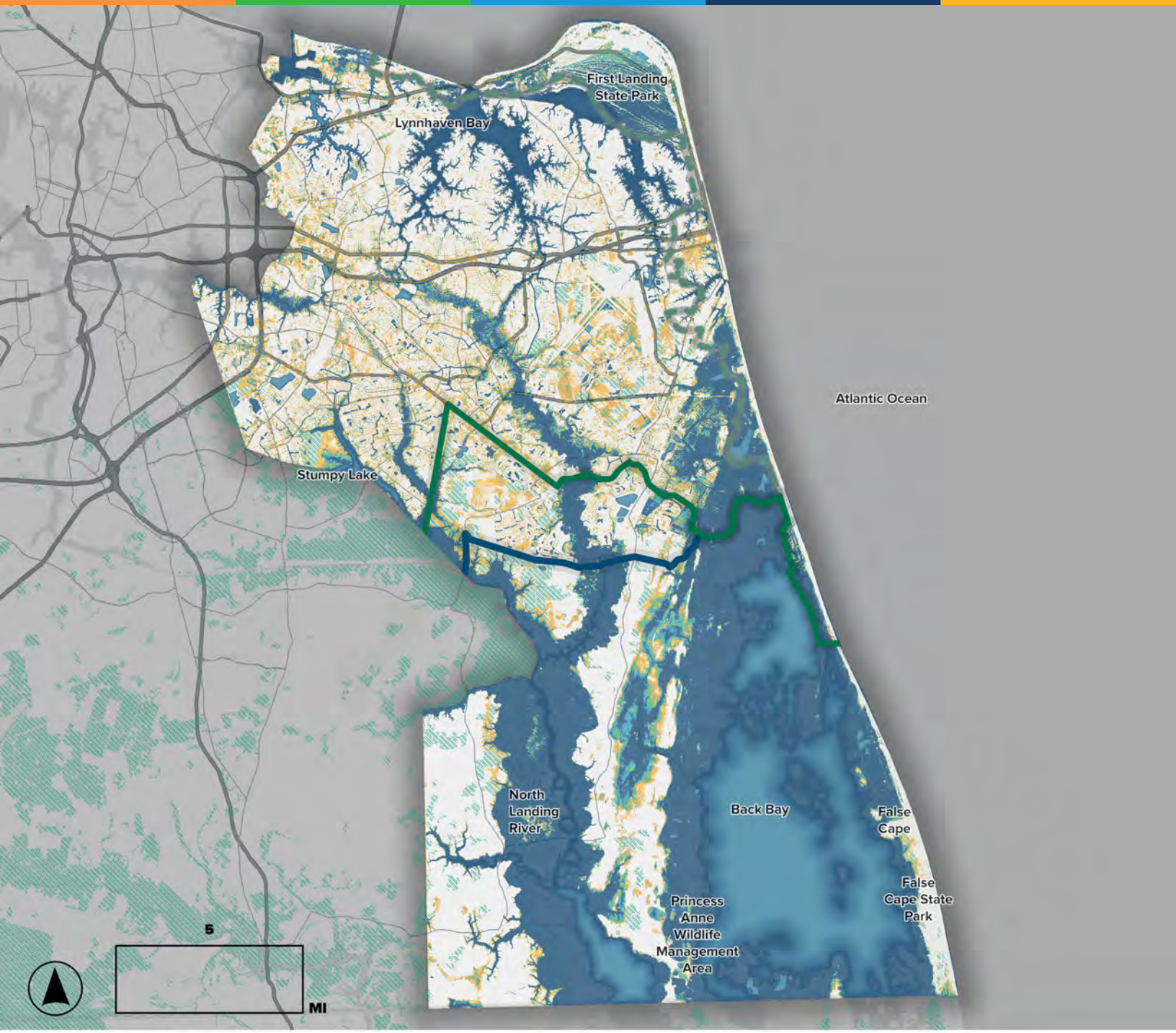
WATER FEATURES

Surface waters

Wetland areas (marsh, swamp, bog, prairie)

MHHW Projected SLR (3.0ft) (SeaLevelWise)

Figure 2-4 - *Water bodies, wetlands, SLR inundation map (3 feet)*



CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES

- Green Line
- Blue Line
- Coastal-Inland

WATER FEATURES

- Surface waters

100-YEAR STORM EVENT FLOOD DEPTH (3' SLR PROJECTION – 2075)

Flood depth

- [No flood depth]
- 0.0 - 0.5 feet
- 0.5 - 1.0 feet
- 1.0 - 1.5 feet
- 1.5 - 2.0 feet
- > 2.0 feet

Figure 2-5 - *100-year storm event flood depth map (2075 projection)*

Figure 2-6 - *Elizabeth River watershed adaption strategies*

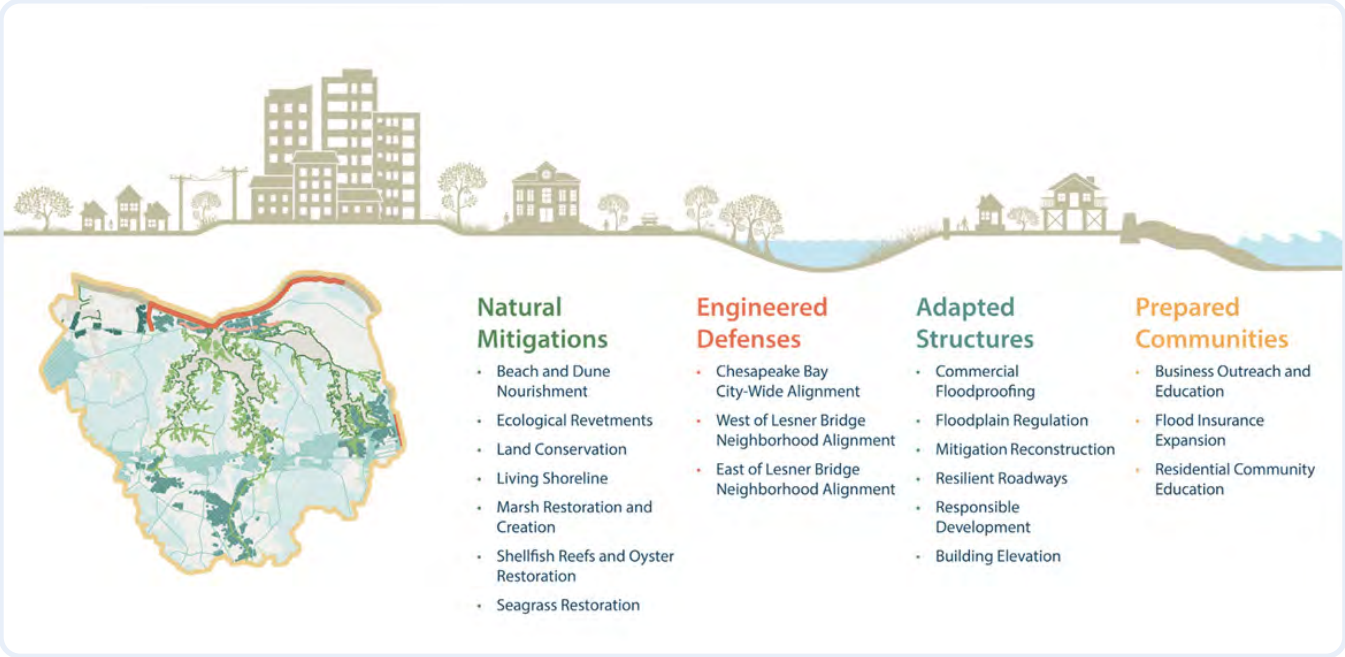


Figure 2-7 - *Lynnhaven River watershed adaption strategies*

Figures originate from the *Virginia Beach Sea Level Wise Adaption Strategy report (March 2020).*

Figure 2-8 - *Oceanfront watershed adaption strategies*

Figure 2-9 - *Southern Rivers watershed adaption strategies*

Figures originate from the *Virginia Beach Sea Level Wise Adaption Strategy report (March 2020).*

Water Quality and Flood Protection

Objectives

- Continue to focus on and implement water quality and flood protection programs and strategies that:
- Improve water quality and protect regulatory floodplains.
- Monitor and mitigate flooding and sea level rise.
- Continue to apply the Flood Resilience Toolkit.

Policies

- Protect the quality of the City's ground and surface waters.
    - Coordinate public water and sewer extension plans with groundwater protection goals for all areas north of the Blue Line where septic tanks and wells have exceeded their life cycle and are failing.
    - Continue to ensure and improve water quality by developing and implementing initiatives to protect water resources.
        - Establish protocols to conserve and protect groundwater on City properties.
        - Develop a targeted educational program that increases public awareness about protecting and conserving non-potable groundwater resources and their use.
    - Demonstrate that provisions of the Clean Water Act are addressed as they apply to achieving total maximum daily load (TMDL) requirements through the City's annual MS4 report.
    - Ensure that the goals set by the Southern Rivers Area Management Program are met.
    - Encourage all golf courses to maximize the use of recycled water for irrigation.
    - Promote partnerships with non-governmental organizations to achieve the City's water quality improvement goals.
- Continue participating in the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) Community Rating System (CRS) and pursue higher classification levels to mitigate risk and increase flood insurance discounts.
- Carefully regulate development within and enhance the integrity of Virginia Beach's floodplains.
- Concentrate new development at higher elevations outside special flood hazard areas.
- Continue recommending that a professional engineer review all discretionary development applications in the Southern Rivers Watersheds, who will review disturbances and potential mitigations to the watershed and any upstream and downstream areas. Maintain the 50-foot buffer to protect the most sensitive part of the Southern Rivers Watershed ecosystem.
- Continue monitoring and regulating development within the Chesapeake Bay Resource Protection Area.
- Continue to pursue grant funding to retrofit and acquire properties designated as repetitive loss by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Revisit the development of a city-funded program for flood retrofits and buyouts that would offer more flexibility than the current FEMA grants.

- Consider equity and community involvement when planning investments related to floodplain restoration, ensuring those at a higher level of risk or vulnerability are heard and prioritized.
- Encourage flood mitigation designs that create multiple benefits and amenities, such as floodable parks that can store water or publicly accessible retention ponds with landscaping treatments.
- Identify opportunities for integrating Linear Park System improvements as these projects are pursued.
- Monitor and plan for sea level rise and recurrent flooding hazards and invest in risk mitigation strategies.
    - Ensure that local ordinances regulating the floodplain are based on the latest understanding of long-term threats and data.
    - Continue researching compound flooding events across all sea level rise projections (low-, intermediate-, and high). Consider incorporating high SLR projections and flooding events data into planning practices and strategies.
    - Reference the Sea Level Wise Program, updating data and findings as needed and supporting ongoing public educational programs and materials.
    - Review and revise the zoning ordinance and connected regulations to protect the City against long-term threats from sea level rise and hazard flooding.
    - Inventory and incorporate sensitive and at-risk lands into the city's zoning ordinance, planning, and engineering initiatives, reducing the intensity or density of uses in those places and providing any feasible defensive solutions.
- When designing for flood mitigation, recommend designs that create multiple benefits and amenities, such as floodable parks that can store water or publicly accessible retention ponds with landscaping treatments.
- Long-term, pursue the creation of an Environmental and Open Space Framework Master Plan that comprehensively studies solutions that address citywide stormwater, sea level rise, wildlife, and open space needs.

Protected Lands, Open Space, and Access to Nature

Virginia Beach is home to abundant natural areas, open spaces, and recreational spaces. These encompass federal lands, such as the Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, state lands, such as First Landing State Park and False Cape State Park, and local City parks, such as Marshview Park, Prosperity Park, and Mount Trashmore Park. Conservation easements are used extensively in the southern part of the City to protect natural and agricultural land from development. State and federal lands are generally established for conservation and are not artificially manipulated or disturbed from their natural condition.

According to the City's Outdoors Plan (2016), 58 percent of Virginia Beach residents live within a ten-minute walk of a park, lower than the national median of 68 percent. Expanding access to nature is a Goal of the plan update.

The City's commitment to conservation also includes long-term planning efforts. For example, the Natural Heritage Technical Report #94-12 provides a framework with key findings on areas of high biodiversity and ecological value in Virginia Beach. This work continues to support grant applications and resource protection planning.

Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge

Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) was established in 1938 as a 4,590-acre refuge for migratory birds. In the 1980s, reacting to significant development activity, the US Fish and Wildlife Service purchased lands and doubled the size of Back Bay NWR, and today it represents nearly 9,250 acres. Habitats include beaches, dunes, woodlands, agricultural fields, and emergent freshwater marshes.

Back Bay NWR provides refuge for birds and other threatened and endangered species, including the loggerhead sea turtle and the bald eagle. Back Bay NWR has a vibrant visitor program that is both a tourist attraction and a benefit to residents. It offers over eight miles of scenic trails, a visitor contact station, and interpretive programming.

False Cape State Park

Between Back Bay and the Atlantic Ocean, False Cape State Park is a large natural area with significant educational and historical programming. The park includes hiking and biking trails and six miles of beach coastline.

First Landing State Park

First Landing State Park (formerly Seashore State Park) is Virginia's first planned state park. First Landing is Virginia's most-visited state park and includes 20 miles of trails and 1.5 miles of Chesapeake Bay beach along the City's northeast corner. The park encompasses nearly 3,000 acres and features bald cypress swamps, lagoons, maritime forest, and rare plants. There are also cabins and campsites. Built in part by an all-African American Civilian Conservation Corps in 1933-1940, First Landing is a National Natural Landmark listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

Princess Anne Wildlife Management Area

Princess Anne Wildlife Management Area, covering about 1,500 acres, is a Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries waterfowl hunting area. Hunting opportunities are further enhanced by a long-standing cooperative agreement with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation that provides limited access to False Cape State Park for visitors.

Beaches

The City's beaches are a vital part of the coastal ecosystem and are an immense attraction for residents and tourists. Many local beaches face erosion issues. The City has already embarked on significant efforts, such as the Beach Management Plan (2002) and other re-nourishment efforts.

Some residents expressed challenges accessing local beaches during the public engagement process for this Comprehensive Plan update. Balancing access, preservation, and protection remains key to maintaining Virginia Beach's most iconic feature.

Environmental and Open Space Framework

The **Environmental and Open Space Framework Master Plan (EOSF)** is envisioned as a long-term action plan the City can take to synergize planning efforts and maximize investments in open space. This is one Big Idea that emerged as part of the visioning for this update.

The Environmental and Open Space Framework will be designed to accomplish three goals:

1. Enhance large, open land areas and environmentally sensitive spaces to address **flood control** and **sea level rise.**
2. Establish **wildlife corridors** to connect fragmented habitats, support ecological health, and promote biodiversity.
    - Where appropriate, identify corridors supporting the **Linear Park System** to amenitize these features and support access to nature.
3. Establish environmentally protective boundaries for development, with particular focus on the Green Line Context Area.

The EOSF can unify the City's separate initiatives into a coordinated effort. Programs such as Sea Level Wise, the Active Transportation Plan, and the Outdoors Plan will align under this framework to ensure that investments are coordinated and prioritized appropriately, given the multiple aims of the City.

Because the EOSF looks to synchronize public investments in open space managed across different departments within the City, it will require the participation of several City departments and planning efforts. Furthermore, the EOSF can orchestrate privately held open space needs without necessarily requiring public acquisition through techniques such as conservation easements.

There is possibility for the EOSF to provide growth management features and specific growth management boundaries as it is developed.

Enhancements and Connections

The EOSF intends to recognize and inventory the major protected open spaces in Virginia Beach. The EOSF will synchronize investments and future connections in land based on what the City and its partners are trying to accomplish with respect to flood protection, sea level rise defense, habitat conservation, and wildlife corridors. Within the framework, there will be opportunities to add walkable and rollable non-motorized paths, which ties into the Linear Park System concept discussed later.

Local waterways should be protected and, where needed, restored or enhanced through buffer areas, open spaces of various sizes, parklands, and low-impact development. These features can form continuous corridors known as greenways, which can also serve as **wildlife corridors**. Virginia Beach should strategically acquire, manage, and protect lands for public use to create an interconnected system of green spaces. This system would provide public access, conserve natural ecosystems, sustain clean air and water, and support flood control, recreation, and civic engagement.

Protected and Connected Open Spaces

Objectives

- Continue to strategically protect and connect open spaces that:
  - Optimize the ecological value of protected lands and open space.
  - Enhance connectivity between protected lands.
  - Increase public access to natural lands and waterways.
- Continue to implement the Outdoors Plan and the Active Transportation Plan.

Policies

- Prepare the Environmental and Open Space Framework Master Plan to:
  - Comprehensively study solutions that address citywide stormwater, sea level rise, wildlife, and open space needs.
  - Identify strategically important lands to protect through purchase, easements, and/or regulations.
  - Use the City's Open Space Program to acquire at-risk or strategically located lands vulnerable to sea level rise in the floodplain and to preserve or create open space.
  - Strive for access to high-quality outdoor spaces using the Linear Park System initiative to coordinate improvements.
    - Develop the Linear Park System by identifying open space opportunities from the Environmental and Open Space Framework Plan, bike and walking connections in the Active Transportation Plan, and parks and recreational needs in the Outdoors Plan.
    - Acquire high-quality park space within a ten-minute walk for residents north of the Blue Line.
    - Prioritize equity when implementing access strategies for parks, beaches, and waterway investments (such as docks, kayak, and boat launches).
- Protect and preserve the City's parks and recreational areas.
  - Monitor the condition, physical accessibility, and appeal of parks and recreational areas.
  - Implement and update the City's Outdoors Plan.
- Maintain and provide access to beaches.
  - Maintain the integrity of Virginia Beach's beaches and dune areas.
    - Actively provide re-nourishment to areas where erosion is persistent and invest in erosion control projects as appropriate.
    - Follow the recommendations as stated in the Beach Management Plan.
  - Pursue private ownership dedication of right-of-way easements to resolve questions surrounding public access.
  - Explore strategies that make accessing local beaches easier for residents, particularly those outside the Coastal Context Area.
- Use the framework and direction established in the Natural Heritage Technical Report #94-12 to guide conservation, stewardship, and planning for ecologically significant areas.

Linear Park System

The **Linear Park System (LPS)** is an aspirational system of trails connecting the city. It is one of the Big Ideas from public focus groups and workshops. The system hopes to provide safe and scenic non-motorized access from neighborhoods to parks, Centers, and other destinations. Parts of the system are already in place, such as the Thalia Creek Greenway and Cape Henry Trail. Others are already in the planning phase. **Trail-oriented Development** standards will help coordinate form and land uses along the trail links.

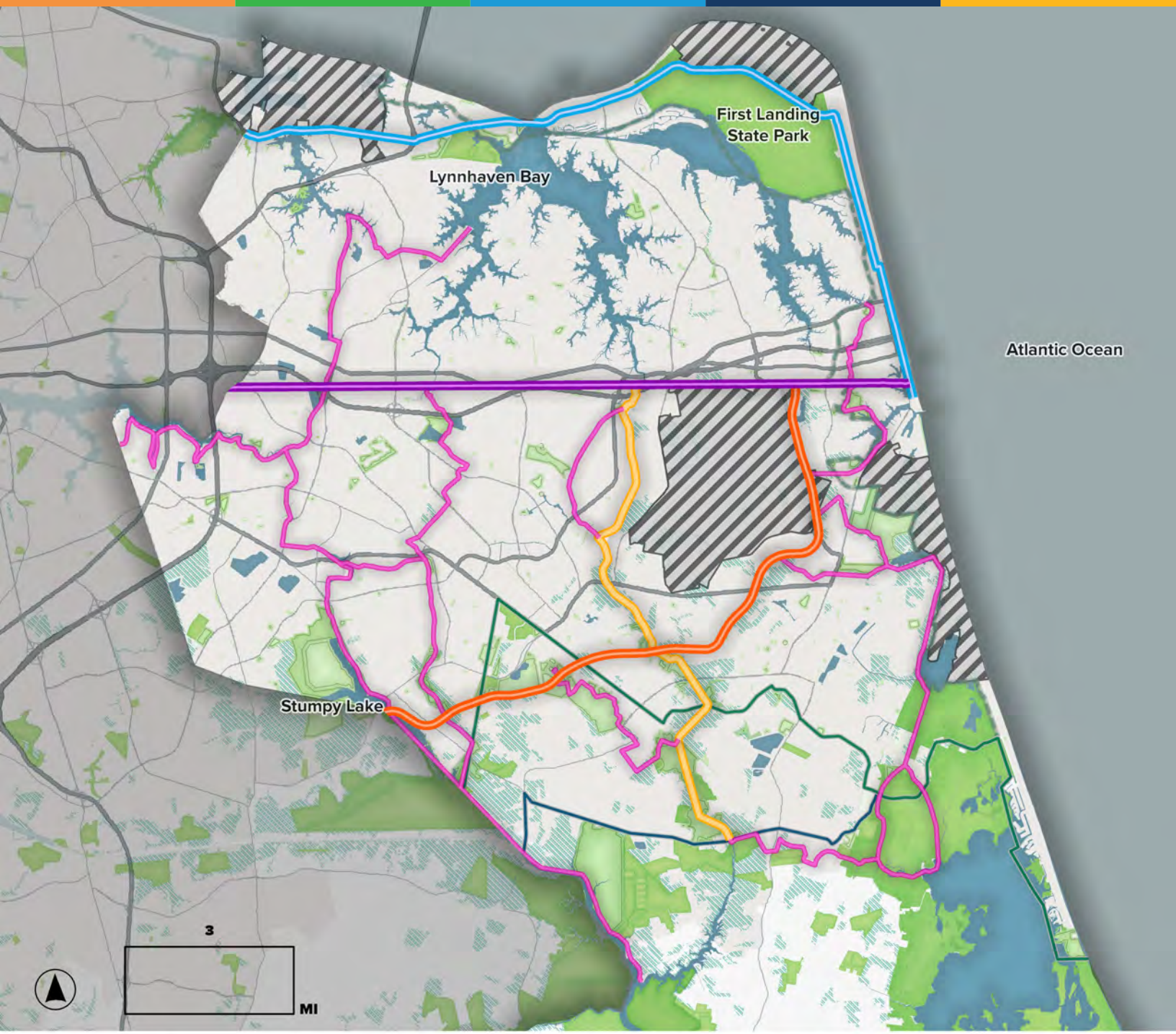
The Linear Park System will serve two primary functions. First, it can become a citywide bicycle and pedestrian network, allowing residents to walk, run, or roll from their neighborhoods into Centers and parks in the Inland and Coastal Context Areas and parks and agricultural and natural lands in the Green Line and Rural Context Areas. Second, it can work to support the City's environmental goals, especially the City's Sea Level Wise Program efforts and stormwater protection programs.

The Linear Park System concept relies on primary **spines** that extend across the City. The LPS Spines are critical pieces for connecting the future trail network. LPS spines include:

- The **Virginia Beach Trail**, following the former Norfolk-Southern ROW parallel to Virginia Beach Boulevard.
- The **Southeastern Trail**, following the former Southeastern Parkway and Greenbelt alignment.
- The **Coastal Trail**, following the Shore Drive and Atlantic Avenue corridors.
- The **West Neck Creek Trail**, following along waterways extending from the Lynnhaven River to the North Landing River.

Secondary and waterway trails connect to LPS spines to create an interconnected trail system. As habitat for wildlife becomes increasingly fragmented by roads and other development and further affected by environmental factors, many species must rely on wildlife corridors for dispersal to suitable habitats, as well as to find food, water, shelter, and to reproduce. These trails can facilitate wildlife movement between habitats.

The initial concept map for these trails is mapped on ***Figure 2-10***.



SYSTEM SPINES

- Coastal Trail
- Southeastern Parkway Greenway
- Virginia Beach Trail
- West Neck Trail
- Secondary City Trails

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES

- Coastal-Inland
- Blue Line
- Green Line

MILITARY

- Military area

ENVIRONMENTAL

- Surface waters
- City parks
- Wetland areas (marsh, swamp, bog, prairie)

***Figure 2-10** - Linear Park System concept map*

Linear Park System Spines

Virginia Beach Trail

The Virginia Beach Trail follows the City-owned right-of-way along the Virginia Beach Boulevard corridor that extends from the Norfolk Virginia Beach city line on the west to the oceanfront on the east. It passes through urban centers (Strategic Growth Areas) and will be designed to reflect the surrounding urban context. Buildings will front the trail, and parks and other recreational and entertainment venues will be located along the trail to promote public interest and activity. Landscaped stormwater retention improvements can support collecting and treating stormwater from nearby properties. This trail ROW could support premium transit in the future.

The Virginia Beach Trail is also an opportunity to identify key properties along the corridor for infill and redevelopment focused on walkability and an urban lifestyle. These sites can support mixed-use development, active ground-floor uses, and improved access for people walking, biking, or using mobility devices.

Coastal Trail

The Coastal Trail follows the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean coastline from the Norfolk Virginia Beach city limit to Rudee Inlet. The trail is within the Coastal Context Area and should reflect its design sensibilities. Given the development along its alignment, the trail may need to be incorporated into the rights of way along Shore Drive (US 60) and Atlantic Avenue. In the long term, the trail could be integrated into the Sea Level Wise Program sea walls and reinforced dunes along the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean.

The Coastal Trail should also intersect or tie in with the existing Cape Henry Trail that runs through First Landing State Park and several neighborhoods in the Bayfront community, which would require coordination with the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, businesses, and nearby residents.

The proposed trail alignment mirrors the Chesapeake Bay Southside Loop Trail indicated by the HRTPO Regional Trails Report (2022).

Southeastern Trail

The Southeastern Trail is planned along the former Southeastern Parkway and Greenbelt alignment. It will extend from the Chesapeake–Virginia Beach line to an area east of Naval Air Station Oceana. The original Parkway was intended to serve as a high-speed roadway connecting Chesapeake and areas to the west with the Resort Area. The City has since limited potential construction to a segment between Indian River Road and Holland Road.

The City owns portions of the right-of-way and has identified potential uses, including multiuse trails and utilities. While the full roadway may not be built, the Active Transportation Plan includes the Southeastern Trail along this alignment.

The trail would follow the full length of the original Parkway and Greenbelt route, connecting the Princess Anne Commons Planning Area to the Virginia Beach Trail near the I-264 and Birdneck Road interchange. This link would create a continuous 10-mile corridor between the Resort Area and the sports and entertainment venues in Princess Anne Commons, accessible by walking, running, biking, or rolling.

The right-of-way should include landscaped stormwater retention features. Parks should be located near road crossings to support access and provide places to rest. The Southeastern Trail can move forward independently of any future roadway development.

West Neck Creek Trail

The West Neck Creek Trail would extend from the Lynnhaven River to the North Landing River along the West Neck Creek. It would cross both the Virginia Beach Trail and the Southeastern Trail. The trail would follow a series of waterways and canals identified in the Sea Level Wise Program. Given anticipated flooding and sea level rise effects (see ***Figure 2-4 and 2-5***), the West Neck Creek Trail can complement the City's response in West Neck floodplain. The trail could be built along at-risk lands, and portions could be integrated into the West Neck Creek flood defense system.

The design feasibility of integrating the trail into the defense system will need to be studied in more detail. Any land acquisition that occurs along the West Neck Creek should consider connecting right-of-way for the West Neck Creek Trail.

Regional Connections

The Linear Park System would also have regional connections. The Virginia Beach Trail will become part of a more extensive regional multi-use trail network segment. Another regional trail is envisioned along the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean coastline ***(Figure 2-11)***.

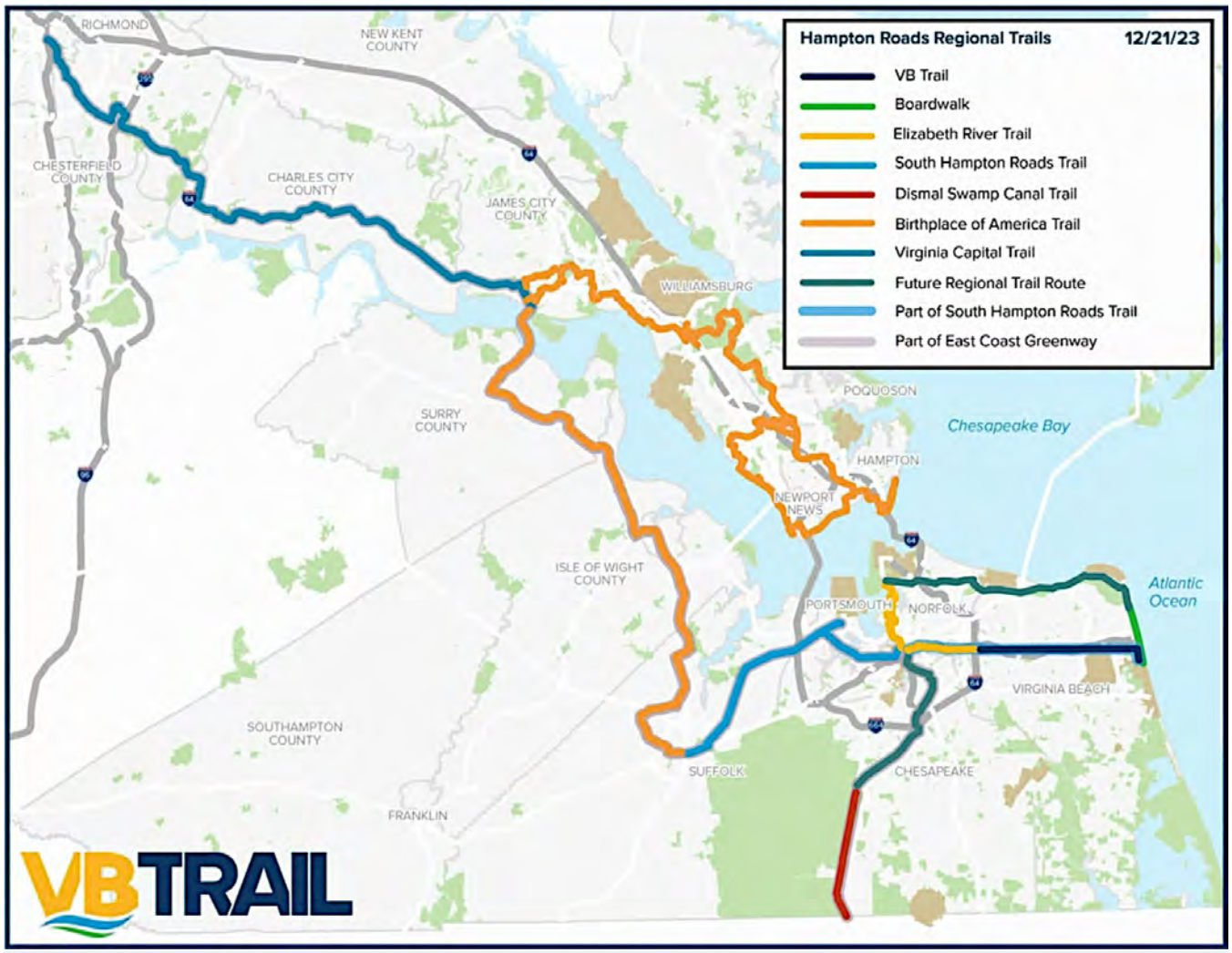


Figure 2-11 - *Linear Park System concept map*

Map from the City of Virginia Beach (VB Trail effort led by Virginia Beach Parks & Recreation Department).

Linear Park System Secondary Trails

Secondary trails connect neighborhoods to spine trails and other destinations. They should be designed to support other initiatives (primarily the Sea Level Wise Program) and reflect the surrounding land and development character. In some cases, they may be boardwalks over the waterway. Multiuse parks should be planned and developed at the intersections of spine and waterway trails.

The City should identify and take advantage of future opportunities for incorporating Linear Park System improvements into other City initiatives, such as natural enhancements and engineering solutions in the Sea Level Wise Program. For example, a trail could be developed along the seawall and gates of the Atlantic oceanfront ***(Figure 2-13)***. The City will want to incorporate Linear Park System opportunities in the development of the Environmental and Open Space Framework Master Plan.

Alignment with the Active Transportation Plan

The City's Active Transportation Plan (last updated 2021) sets out to provide the infrastructure necessary to create a safe, enjoyable environment for walking and cycling in Virginia Beach. The Active Transportation Plan proposes a network of updated trails and routes ***(Figure 2-12)***. The Active Transportation Plan's "Core City Network" includes several important connections and links, including the Virginia Beach Trail, several major north-south corridors that intersect with the Virginia Beach Trail, and two other off-street trails.

The Linear Park System spines ***(Figure 2-10)*** are largely identified on areas already identified as part of the Core City Network from the Active Transportation Plan.

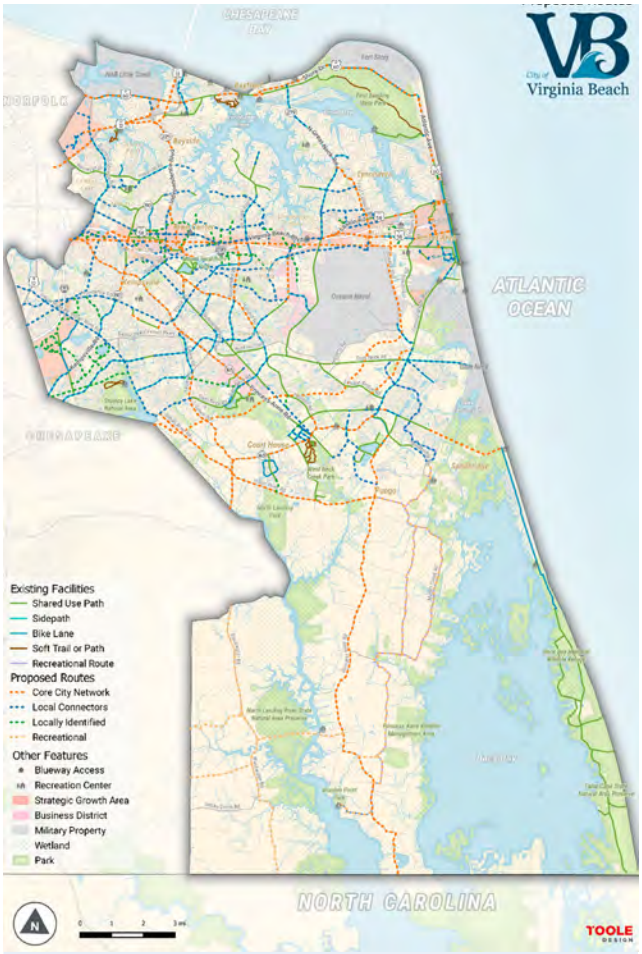
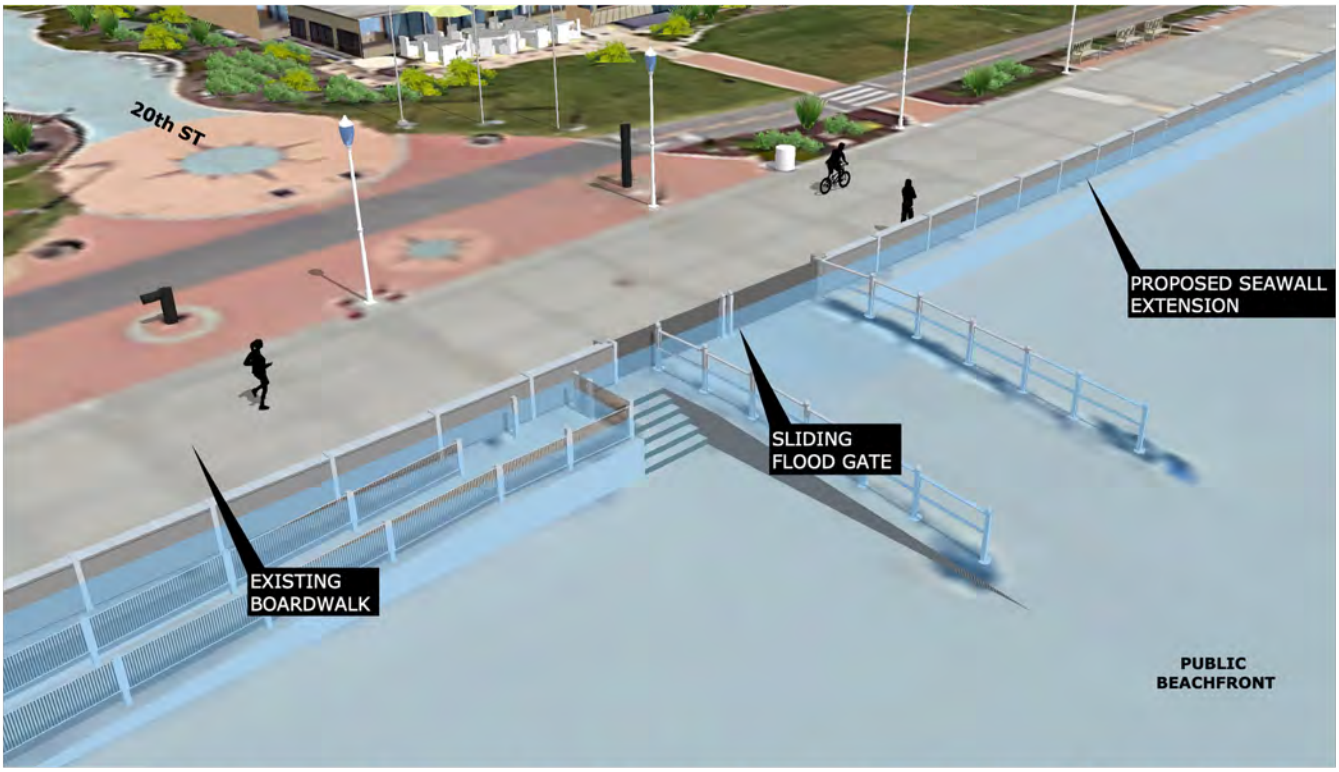


Figure 2-12 *- Current Active Transportation Plan proposed routes*

Atlantic Oceanfront, existing condition



Atlantic oceanfront structural protection system under flood condition

Images from City of Virginia Beach Sea Level Wise Adaptation Strategies, Watershed Strategies

Figure 2-13 - *Diagram showing a shared-use path integrated with seawalls*

Trail-oriented Development Guidelines

For the Linear Park System to develop cohesively, standards for trail design, landscaping, and adjacent land uses are required. This will help ensure that system users feel safe, that destinations relevant to them are available, and that the trail standards are vibrant.

Below is a set of initial trail-oriented development guidelines focused on coordinating form and land uses in areas adjacent to LPS trail links:

- Ensure adjacent public, commercial, and civic uses are functionally and spatially related to trail links.
- When trails occur within designated Centers and Community Hubs:
  - Further reduce building setbacks and automotive parking requirements when adjacent to trail spines.
    - For commercial structures, target a 5-foot setback from the trail edge.
    - For residential structures, target a 15-foot setback from the trail edge.
  - Ensure that trail-adjacent structures have doors, windows, or outdoor amenities that face the trail.
  - Encourage and incentivize adjacent businesses to provide appropriate infrastructure suitable for trails, such as bike parking, water fountains, and possibly public restrooms.
- Screening and separation should be provided when trail links are adjacent to private homes and residences to ensure privacy.
- Promote mixed-use developments along trail corridors to create vibrant, multi-functional spaces that cater to residential, commercial, and recreational needs.
- Limit or exclude auto-oriented uses in areas adjacent to designated trail locations. Auto-oriented uses include surface parking lots, car washes, gas stations, car dealerships, drive-throughs, self-storage, etc.

Linear Park System Policies

- Create a Linear Park System that:
  - Takes advantage of land purchases and protections for other purposes, such as open space preservation, flood protection and wildlife corridors.
  - Integrates with the Active Transportation Plan and Outdoors Plan.
  - Integrates with regional and City trail plans to provide continuous regional recreational trails.
- Acquire and maintain land rights-of-way for the Linear Park System.
  - Prioritize City-ownership of trail land or right-of-way to better ensure the long-term functionality and consistency of the trail system.
  - Pursue external funding opportunities to acquire and build the system.
- Develop a Linear Park System Alignment Map with the preferred and alternative alignments for the trail system, along with any necessary right-of-way parcel acquisitions that may be required.
- Update the Active Transportation Plan and the Outdoors Plan to include the Linear Park System Alignment Map.
- Use the guidelines for trail-oriented development presented in this chapter when creating the system and regarding applicable developments adjacent to designated trail links.
  - Develop refined trail-oriented design standards to guide land uses and the trail system.
  - Review and revise zoning and associated rules to allow trail-oriented design standards.
- To enhance ecological value, preserve natural features like trees, wetlands, and wildlife habitats when building trail links.
- Work with the local, regional, state, and federal partners to develop a robust Linear Park System.
  - Work with communities, businesses, and other stakeholders to discuss the potential for trail-oriented development in Virginia Beach.
  - Coordinate with the other regional agencies to extend the Southeastern Trail into Chesapeake.
  - Promote the completion of regional trail links within the City as identified in the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) Regional Active Transportation Plan.
  - As the HRTPO updates its Regional Active Transportation Plan, include information on the Linear Park System alignments.
  - Evaluate rights of way available in the Southeastern Parkway and Greenway alignment to determine how the Southeastern Trail and other uses can be collocated and how additional rights of way are needed.
- Monitor trail usage and mode share and commit to regular trail maintenance.

Sources and Endnotes

- City of Virginia Beach Parks & Recreation Property's ArcGIS REST Layer: https://data.virginiabeach.gov/ts/43fb1cb5f2d240568136bf5e9470578e_0/about

- Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia State Parks Pages discussing False Cape State Park and First Landing State Park.

- United States Fish & Wildlife Service, Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge Page: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/back-bay.

[i]U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Overcoming Barriers to Green Infrastructure, https://www.epa.gov/green-infrastructure/overcoming-barriers-green-infrastructure#smartgrowth. Quote from the page: "...A green approach to stormwater management is often as cost-effective as—if not more cost-effective than—conventional approaches (which include stormwater ponds, pipes, paving, clearing, and grading). Using cost analyses can quantify many of the costs avoided when green infrastructure approaches are implemented ... Green infrastructure provides environmental, social, and public health benefits that centralized storage and detention facilities do not ... A growing number of municipalities have conducted comprehensive cost benefit analyses demonstrating the potential for green infrastructure to provide more value than gray."

[ii]The reference to living shorelines is reproduced from the Virginia Marine Resources Commission, "Regulation: Pertaining To Living Shoreline Group 1 General Permit For Certain Living Shoreline Treatments Involving Tidal Wetlands," Chapter 4VAC20-1300-10 ET SEQ. https://mrc.virginia.gov/regulations/fr1300.shtm.

[iii]Refer to page 5:89, Table 5.17, Conclusions on Hazard Risk for Hampton Roads

[iv]Refer to page 6:3, Table 6.1, Relevant Plans, Ordinances, and Programs.

[v]The Planning Department refers to the definition of floodplains as provided in the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Ordinance and the Southern Rivers Watershed Management Ordinance). There are no watershed-based regulations for the Atlantic Ocean.

[vi]The reference to floodplains is reproduced from the City of Virginia Beach Code of Ordinances, Appendix K, Definitions, "Floodplain Ordinance," Sec 1.3 Definitions. https://library.municode.com/va/virginia_beach/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CO_APXKFLOR.

Endnotes

[vii]City of Virginia Beach, Department of Public Works. Analysis of Historical and Future Heavy Precipitation. Dewberry, March 26, 2018. Available at: https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/virginia-beach-departments-docs/pw/Stormwater-Planning/Analysis-of-Historical-and-Future-Heavy-Precipitation-March-2018.pdf.

[vi]The reference to floodplains is reproduced from the City of Virginia Beach Code of Ordinances, Appendix K, Definitions, "Floodplain Ordinance," Sec 1.3 Definitions. https://library.municode.com/va/virginia_beach/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=CO_APXKFLOR.

[vii]City of Virginia Beach, Department of Public Works. Analysis of Historical and Future Heavy Precipitation. Dewberry, March 26, 2018. Available at: https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/virginia-beach-departments-docs/pw/Stormwater-Planning/Analysis-of-Historical-and-Future-Heavy-Precipitation-March-2018.pdf.

[viii]City of Virginia Beach, Department of Public Works. (2020). Virginia Beach Sea Level Wise Adaptation Strategy. Retrieved from https://s3.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/virginia-beach-departments-docs/pw/Stormwater-Planning/Sea level-Rise/Virginia-Beach-Sea level-Wise-Adaptation-Strategy-March-2020.pdf. Refer to Page 27 for the federal sea level rise and the selection of an intermediate option.

SPATIAL DATA

- Maps in the plan use wetlands data that originates from the ESRI Wetlands Layer, which is an authorities spatial service generated based on the National Wetland Inventory data. The source is explained here: https://www.esri.com/arcgis-blog/products/arcgis-living-atlas/water/wetlands-of-the-united-states/. Wetland areas shown in the Comprehensive Plan maps do not create authoritative wetlands data for the City.
- The information and spatial data on parks and protected lands area is sourced from Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, Regional Parks ArcGIS REST Service. https://geo.hrsd.com/hrgeo/rest/services/regionalgis/Parks/MapServer.
- The watersheds map uses Virginia's Hydrologic Unit Code 6-digit level (VAHUC6) data, assembled to show the three watersheds per City regulations and the VBMap portal as of February 2025.

IMAGES

- Wildlife Crossing Image | Licensed Adobe Stock ID #373593186
- Living Shoreline Images | LRNow

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Chapter 3: **Inland Context Area**

Virginia Beach will continue to grow to sustain and diversify its economic base and standard of living. The growth will be inward, not outward to protect rural and agricultural lands south of the Green Line. The Inland Context Area, north of the Green Line, will absorb most of the anticipated future development. Suburban retail and office developments along designated Multimodal Corridors will transform into walkable, mixed-use urban centers.

Residents can conveniently walk, bike, and ride transit to Centers and other destinations along those corridors. Neighborhoods will be healthy, safe, and provide a sense of well-being.

Community Hubs will be created as places for neighborhood residents to gather. Walking and biking paths will connect residents to Community Hubs and larger centers.

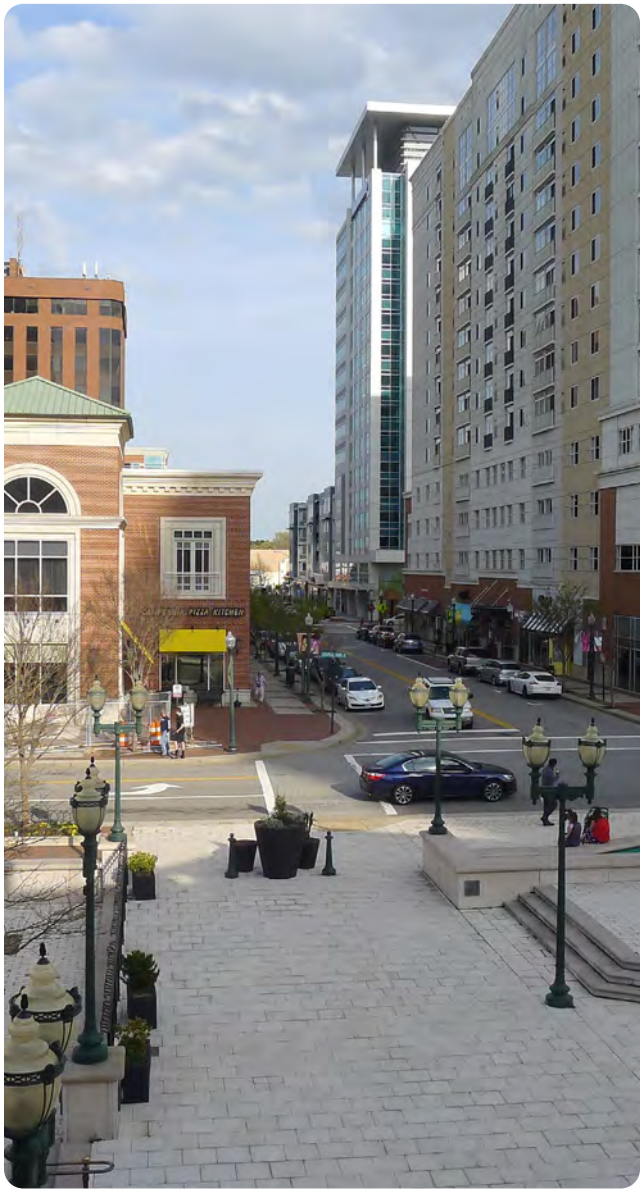
Introduction

The Inland Context Area is home to nearly nine out of ten City residents and supports the majority of the City's jobs (78%). The Context Area encompasses a diverse range of neighborhoods, schools, and major public facilities. It's also home to key military installations, including Naval Air Station Oceana and Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek. Estuarine systems weave through parts of the area, adding ecological value to an already varied landscape.

The Inland Context Area stretches north of the Green Line and is bounded by the cities of Norfolk and Chesapeake to the west and by the Coastal Context Area to the north and east. It covers nearly 41 percent of the City's land area and is nearly built out, with only 6,700 vacant acres remaining ***(Figure 3-1)***. Most of the area was developed between 1950 and 2000, shaped by the suburban and auto-oriented development patterns common during that time. Low-density residential neighborhoods cover a significant portion of the land, while commercial and institutional uses line the central corridors. Key exceptions are areas that have experienced redevelopment as part of SGA planning. The result is a landscape defined by single-use areas, wide roads, and limited connections between places.

There are several historic properties formally designated in the Inland Context Area, including Adam Keeling House, Church Point Manor, Adam Thoroughgood House, Lynnhaven House, Old Donation Church, Ferry Plantation House, Pembroke Manor, Carraway House, Thomas Murray House, Francis Land House, and Upper Wolfsnare Plantation. Some neighborhoods have successfully pursued historic designations in the National Register of Historic Places program, including L & J Gardens, Woodhurst, and Seatack. There are likely properties that are currently eligible but not yet listed and others that could become eligible for historic designation in the future.

During the public engagement process for this update, residents made clear they want to protect the established neighborhoods in the Inland Context Area. Given the limited amount of vacant land, growth will focus on redeveloping shopping centers that stretch along major roads, such as Virginia Beach Boulevard. Many of these areas can support a broader mix of uses, better design, and improved walkability. Over time, these places can become centers of daily activity—places to live, work, shop, and gather—all within reach of existing neighborhoods.



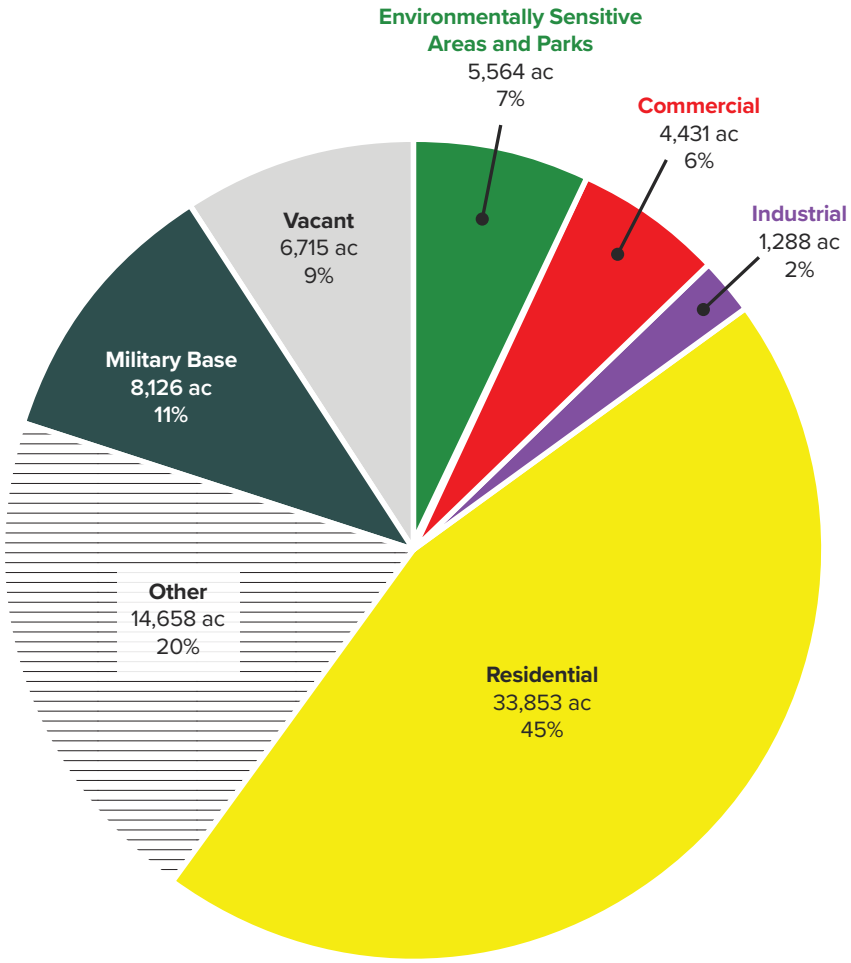
During public engagement for this update to the Comprehensive Plan, the public expressed a strong preference for strengthening rural land south of the Green Line and protecting neighborhoods north of the Green Line. Given the limited availability of vacant land north of the Green Line, much of the City's growth will occur in the Inland Context Area by transforming aging commercial and business properties along major corridors into mixed-use, walkable, transit-oriented Centers.

The limited amount of available land north of the Green Line motivated the City to identify and plan eight Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs) in the early 2000s. All but two are located along Virginia Beach Boulevard. The SGA plans illustrate the steps needed to transform existing lower density commercial properties into higher density, compact, mixed use, and walkable places.

The City's APZ-1 Ordinance limits development in APZ-1 and Clear Zones to stay consistent with Navy safety regulations. These areas influence redevelopment in nearby areas, including the Lynnhaven and Hilltop SGAs.

Figure 3-1 - *Inland Land Uses Pie Chart (in acres)*

**Other includes right of way and areas where the land use is undetermined.*



Inland Goals and Objectives

Citywide Goals

- Environmental sustainability
- Infill urban development and multimodal access north of the Green Line
- Economic sustainability and diversity
- Community identity and connections
- Neighborhood well-being and safety
- Housing attainment and diversity

Inland Goals

Environmental sustainability

- Protect natural lands and resources.
- Protect existing and new development from flooding and sea level rise.

Infill development, redevelopment and multimodal access

- Direct infill growth into Centers and Community Hubs and develop Centers and Hubs to make walking, biking, and transit viable and safe travel options (Centers and Corridors Big Idea).
- Modify the designs and operations of designated Multimodal Corridors to make walking, biking, and transit viable and safe options within and between Centers and Hubs.
- Create safe and convenient walking and biking paths between neighborhoods and Community Hubs.

Economic sustainability and diversity

- Provide locations and other opportunities for businesses seeking urban settings and regional multimodal access.
- Provide locations and other opportunities for industrial and logistics business growth.

Housing attainment and diversity

- Provide a mix of housing types and attainable housing in differing settings across the City.
- Ensure the quality of existing and new housing.
- Take advantage of Center redevelopment to increase housing diversity and attainability.
- Find opportunities outside of Centers to increase housing diversity and attainability.
- Identify locations and strategies for accommodating future senior housing demand.

Community identity and connections

- Recognize the unique histories and identities of communities in the City.
- Promote and sustain community venues, events, and opportunities.
- Provide central locations (Community Hubs) for community residents to gather.
- Provide walking and biking connections between community neighborhoods and hubs.

Neighborhood well-being and safety

- Promote the integrity, sense of well-being, and safety of neighborhoods. (Big Idea)

Inland Objectives

Environmental sustainability

- Continually monitor flooding and water quality and update Sea Level Wise strategies and other flood protection and water quality strategies as needed.
- Implement Sea Level Wise recommendations and other stormwater management efforts to mitigate flooding.
- Continue programs that protect natural lands and develop the Environmental and Open Space Framework Plan to identify how to leverage initiatives such as flood protection land purchases to connect protected lands.
- Find opportunities to develop the Linear Park System.
- Continue programs that protect water quality in Inland estuaries and tributaries.
- Continue to implement the Outdoors Plan.

Infill development, redvelopment and multimodal access

- Promote and direct anticipated job and housing growth into walkable, rollable, transit-oriented Centers along Multimodal Corridors.
- Design and develop Centers to:
    - Attract targeted industry businesses seeking urban settings.
    - Provide a variety of housing types available to households across all income levels, such as duplexes, cottages, coach houses, and accessory dwelling units.
    - Support transit access and ridership along Multimodal Corridors.
- Design and implement transportation improvements along Multimodal Corridors, prioritizing transit, walking, biking, and rolling.
- Continue to implement the Active Transportation Plan.

Economic sustainability and diversity

- Identify and activate strategic locations within the Inland Context Area for business development, particularly in underutilized commercial corridors and centers, to accommodate companies seeking urban settings with proximity to workforce and regional multimodal access.
- Identify and locate new locations along designated Freight Corridors for targeted industries such as advanced manufacturing, healthcare and commercial, and logistics.
- Design and operate Freight Corridors for efficient and safe truck access into existing and new Industrial and Logistics Place Type areas.
- Encourage infrastructure investment and placemaking development to support industrial, logistics, and next-generation business growth, including clean technology, entrepreneurial hubs, health innovation, and small-scale advanced manufacturing.

Housing attainment and diversity

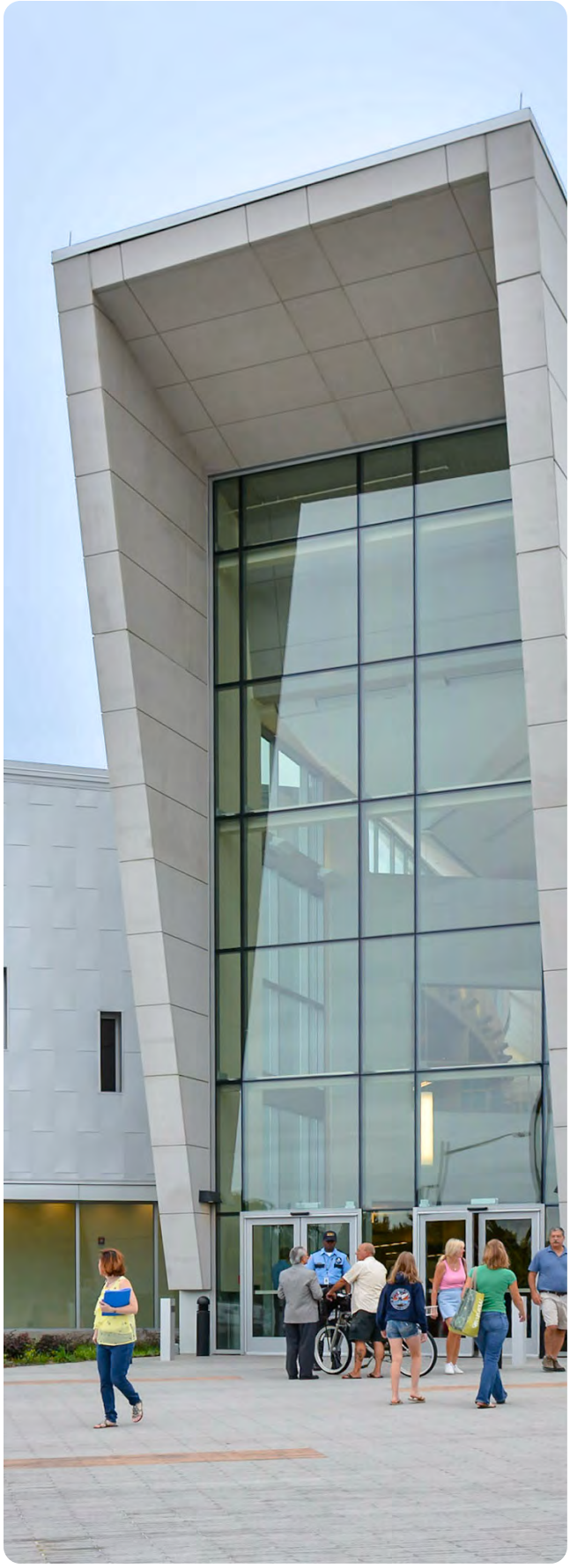
- Implement recommendations adopted by City Council from the 2024 Virginia Beach Housing Study..
- Use Place Type guidelines to increase the diversity of housing types and the number of affordable homes.
- Update zoning regulations to simplify the review of attainable housing projects.
- Work with the Virginia Beach Development Authority to develop a mixed-use, mixed income project in a designated Center.

Community identity and connections

- Identify and "brand" communities through place-making and tailored design guidelines.
- Local community members will initiate Community Hub plans. Planned Community Hubs will then be designated as part of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Develop walking and biking connections between neighborhoods and Community Hubs.

Neighborhood well-being and safety

- Develop a neighborhood monitoring system that continually tracks factors of interest to residents and stakeholders in local neighborhoods, such as sense of safety, housing conditions, traffic, sidewalk connectivity, or shade.
- Use the monitoring system to regularly report on neighborhood well-being and recommend needed improvements.
- Buffer existing neighborhoods adjacent to Centers and Special Use Place Types.



Inland Planning Areas

Planning Areas are designated locations in the City where development is guided by adopted plans or policies. ***Figure 3-2*** shows the Planning Areas in the Inland Context Area, including Strategic Growth Areas, the Kempsville Master Plan, and Special Economic Growth Areas (SEGAs).

Strategic Growth Areas

Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs) were planned between 2008 and 2012. The 2016 Comprehensive Plan identified SGAs for their role in the development of the City's growth. These areas hold tremendous potential for economic growth, mixed-use development, and infrastructure improvements, but accomplishing their original vision will require further planning and a host of other tools such as:

- Small area planning efforts to spur incremental redevelopment scenarios and facilitate the district-wide redevelopment.
- Intentional collaboration with private stakeholders to fostering public-private partnerships, where the majority of land is privately owned.
- Rezonings, opt-in mixed-use zoning overlays, and density bonuses.
- Strategic infrastructure investments potentially funded by Tax Increment Financing (TIF). TIFs are a public financing method used to encourage development and redevelopment in specific areas. The increased property tax revenue generated by new development within a designated TIF district is used to pay for public infrastructure and other improvements needed to stimulate economic growth in an area.

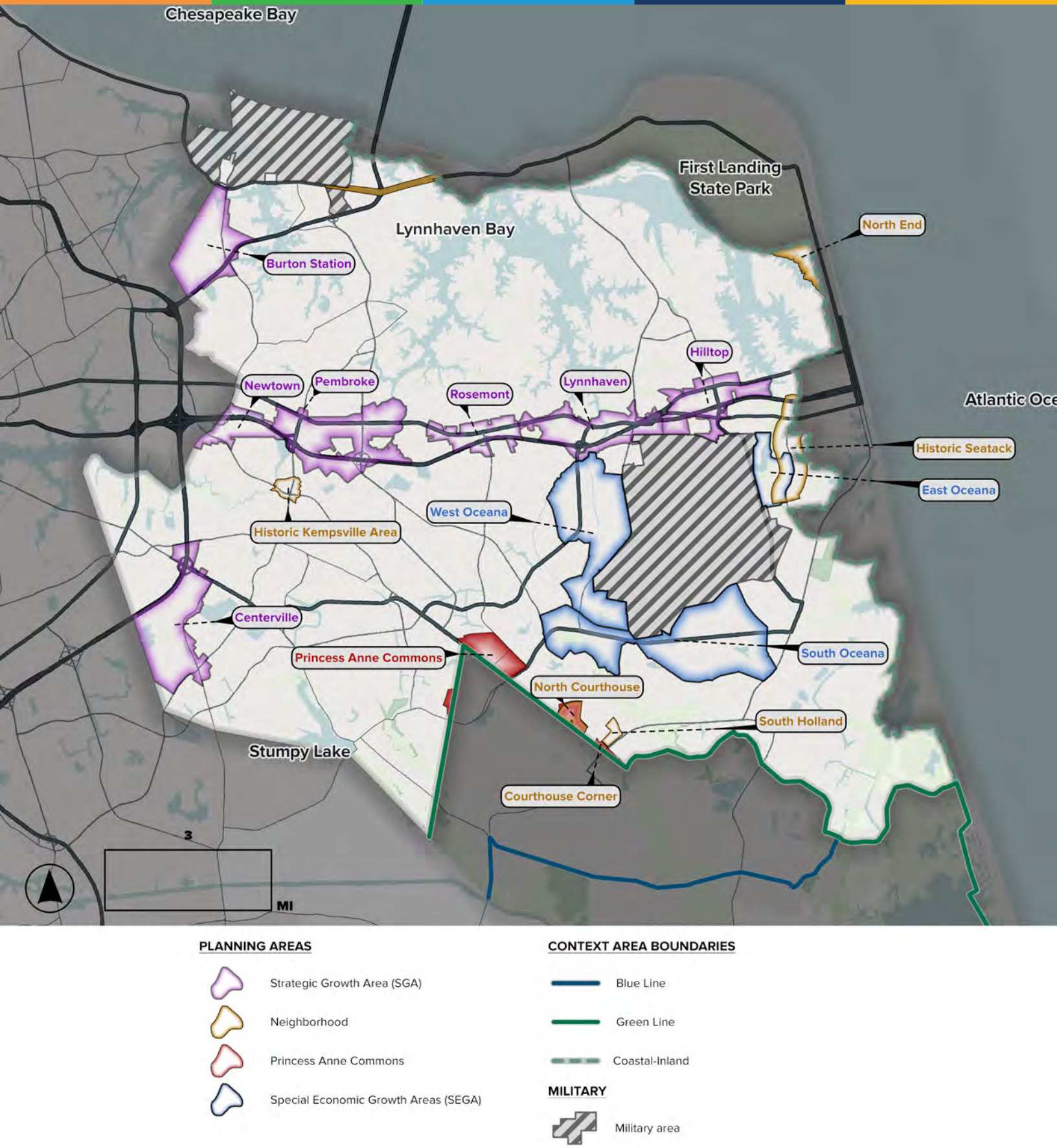


***Figure 3-2** - Inland Planning Areas*

Burton Station SGA Master Plan

Situated in northwestern Virginia Beach is the Burton Station SGA. Burton Station is adjacent to the Norfolk International Airport, Norfolk's Premium Outlet Mall, and the Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story.

Burton Station is a testament to the resilience and growth of an African American community that originated from descendants of two formerly enslaved people. The SGA plan is based on capitalizing on this area's high accessibility and development potential.

Burton Station SGA Key Recommendations state:

- Burton Station Village is redeveloped to create a medium-density commercial and residential village, offering housing options near the surrounding commercial and employment centers.
- The Northampton Boulevard, Diamond Springs, and Baker Road corridors are redeveloped with commercial, traditional office, multifamily residential, or a mix of these uses to expand development opportunities that accommodate market changes without compromising development quality.
- The Airport Industrial Park is preserved and expanded with a flexible development pattern emphasizing light industrial, tech-flex, and office space. As economic trends evolve, portions of the Airport Authority's adjacent property may offer strategic opportunities for larger-scale commercial or advanced industrial uses. Future planning could explore a high-impact employment hub that supports high-value sectors such as aviation, advanced manufacturing, defense, technology, or logistics.

Centerville SGA Master Plan

Situated in southwestern Virginia Beach lies the Centerville SGA. This SGA is adjacent to Regent University and the Christian Broadcasting Network. The Virginia Beach Landfill is also prominent in the existing context. The economic approach is based on capitalizing on Centerville's large single-owner sites and potential coordination with the City of Chesapeake. The Centerville SGA plan seeks to foster a mixed-use center, among other goals.

Centerville SGA Key Recommendations:

- Regenerate existing developed areas to capitalize on existing public infrastructure investments.
- Build a mixed-use center for Centerville.
- Improve connections to existing parks and the Regent University campus through expanded trail networks.
- Mitigate impacts to the Elizabeth River through stormwater best management practices.
- Continue to diversify housing choices, including workforce housing.
- Improve the jobs/housing balance to increase the capture rate and decrease traffic congestion.
- Identify immediate and interim actions for landfills to mitigate adverse impacts effectively.
- Pursue a joint planning strategy with the City of Chesapeake.
- Build a transportation infrastructure network that combines safety, equity, choice, and economy.
- Create an education-oriented, master-planned community as a unique identity for the Centerville SGA.

Hilltop SGA Master Plan

The Hilltop SGA is located along I-264, First Colonial Road / Oceana Boulevard, Virginia Beach Boulevard, and Laskin Road. Development options are limited in the Hilltop SGA because the area is located within the AICUZ and CZ areas. The Hilltop SGA plan imagines the area as a commercial district with an ancillary office and industrial flex space attractive to "soft goods" retailers. The SGA intends to position Hilltop as a premier retail destination and a production, distribution, and repair district.

Hilltop SGA Key Recommendations:

- Incorporate an Urban Tree Canopy Program within the Hilltop SGA to create a pedestrian-friendly environment and aid stormwater management.
- Define a clear hierarchy of streets to establish a structure of development blocks and reconnect places. Major street improvements should support urban, walkable environments positioned to service growth.
- Build upon the existing natural resources to expand access to public open spaces through an interconnected system of parks and trails.
- Evaluate repositioning the proposed transit station to the core of the Hilltop SGA with street and trail improvements to promote transit-oriented economic development.
- Encourage redevelopment of obsolete commercial structures with new buildings placed according to new urban planning standards for the district.

Lynnhaven SGA Master Plan

The Lynnhaven SGA is located in the southeast part of the Inland Context Area. The SGA's planning effort intends to create an open space network, respect and capitalize on the wetlands and marshland areas, and achieve compatibility with AICUZ and CZ area regulations. The built environment in Lynnhaven is auto-oriented and would benefit from improvements in design coherence and walkability.

Lynnhaven SGA Key Recommendations:

- Enable a clear and easy-to-access open space and recreation network.
- Sustain and capitalize on the value of the water and marshlands.
- Meet the Chesapeake Bay Act mandates to protect and restore the Lynnhaven River and its tributaries.
- Locate compatible uses consistent with the APZ-1/Clear Zone Master Plan, APZ Zones, and AICUZ restrictions.
- Strengthen existing neighborhoods by providing community services and convenience retail.
- Improve multimodal connections from adjacent neighborhoods.
- Connect future transit to employment, recreational destinations, and park-and-ride.
- Enable flexible development sites and building types to respond to ever-changing market needs and development programs.
- Coordinate transportation planning and development.
- Build on the existing good balance between homes, jobs, and services.

Newtown SGA Master Plan

Situated along the western edge of Virginia Beach is the Newtown SGA. The Newtown SGA is positioned among I-264 and I-64 and is adjacent to the City of Norfolk. The SGA plan recognizes the potential for premium transit to spur higher densities in the SGA. The plan notes a need for more park space and quality retail.

Newtown SGA Key Recommendations:

- Reinforce the Newtown site as the gateway into Virginia Beach.
- Create interconnected pedestrian and street frameworks.
- Build parks and open spaces throughout the site.
- Build mixed-use, mixed-income, transit-oriented development.
- Strengthen education and training institutions in the district.
- Build at a compatible scale next to existing neighborhoods.
- Extend a bicycle and trail system through the site.
- Celebrate premium transit as a centerpiece in a gateway public space.
- Develop a shared parking strategy.
- Coordinate transportation improvements.
- Develop design guidelines for the district.

Pembroke SGA Implementation Plan

The Pembroke SGA is home to Town Center. Positioned along I-264, the SGA plan highlights the potential for the premium transit to spur higher densities in the area. The Pembroke SGA plan highlights that the area is equidistant from the central destinations, including the Oceanfront, City Hall, and downtown Norfolk. The SGA envisions Pembroke growing with a mix of uses and serving as the core of Virginia Beach.

Pembroke SGA Key Recommendations:

- Implement transit-oriented development around planned transit stations.
- Establish policies for alternative/workforce housing.
- Tailor a form-based code for each district.
- Establish a cultural arts district in the core area.
- Expand the Pembroke SGA to include Mount Trashmore Park and the South Independence commercial corridor.
- Design and build the entire length of Cleveland Street to Greenwich Road as a "complete street" to be an attractive and efficient thoroughfare serving many modes of travel.
- Develop a public facilities strategy for City-owned lands considering recreation, library, museum, theaters, and other uses.

The Pembroke SGA designates distinct urban districts within the Pembroke area. The Central Business Core District Design Guidelines target the Central Business Core District. These guidelines intend to enhance sense of place using traditional and creative urban design. The guidelines promote mixed uses, transportation options, and human-scale development.

Rosemont SGA Master Plan

The Rosemont SGA is located in central Virginia Beach along I-264. The area was developed using strip-commercial uses that discourage walkability, future investment, and a sense of place. The Rosemont SGA plan defines the area's future using mixed-use development, creating a neighborhood center, improved multimodal access, and design guidelines.

Rosemont SGA Key Recommendations:

- Create an implementable series of private and public projects that can be packaged together to transform the heart of the city.
- Design a "transit-ready" framework that permits adequate scale and density coupled with successive phasing of public investment to unlock a corresponding return on investment.
- Promote redevelopment through building the Sentara Way flyover and other new connections within the SGA, supporting potential development and improvements along South Plaza Trail.
- No industrial uses are recommended for this area.
- Introduce the residential neighborhoods south of Virginia Beach Boulevard by realigning Bonney Road, creating more regular development blocks for higher density development, organized around parking garages and liner buildings.
- Establish criteria to humanize Virginia Beach Boulevard. New development along the boulevard to create a village core, and the surrounding lower-density residential neighborhoods will support the commercial uses and transit options introduced.

Special Economic Growth Areas

The City has designated three Special Economic Growth Areas (SEGAs) that can accommodate future industrial and logistics businesses.

- SEGA 1 – East Oceana
- SEGA 2 – West Oceana
- SEGA 3 – South Oceana

Their designation primarily considers proximity to NAS Oceana or location within the Interfacility Traffic Area high-noise overflight zone.

SEGAs do not have formal plans. Recommendations from the 2016 Comprehensive Plan are carried forward.

Special Economic Growth Area 1 – East Oceana

SEGA 1 is located just past the northeast corner of NAS Oceana and includes property on both sides of Bells Road between Oceana Boulevard and Birdneck Road, extending south of Southern Boulevard. It overlaps part of the Historic Seatack Community west of Birdneck Road. Development in this area must consider the neighborhood's context and needs. Much of the area lies within floodplains or Navy-restrictive easements and falls entirely within the highest AICUZ noise zone. The southern portion lies outside any accident potential zone.

Special Economic Growth Area 1 – East Oceana Policies:

- The eastern area should support low-intensity light industrial uses and limited retail, with substantial buffers to protect the surrounding Seatack neighborhood from potential intrusions.
- The western area should accommodate medium-intensity industrial and other utilitarian uses.
- The southern part of the site, located outside accident potential zones, should allow new or relocated commercial and other non-residential AICUZ compatible uses.

Special Economic Growth Area 2 – West Oceana

SEGA 2 is generally bounded by London Bridge Road, Lynnhaven Creek, South Lynnhaven Road, and Potters Road. It includes Lynnhaven Mall, nearby retail and office complexes, and Oceana West Industrial Park. The entire area lies within the AICUZ high noise zone, and much of it is subject to Navy restrictive easements. Most of the land is subdivided and zoned for commercial and industrial uses.

Special Economic Growth Area 2 – West Oceana Policies

- All new or improved development must comply with the City's AICUZ provisions, as the entire area lies within the 75+ DNL noise zone.
- The area west of Lynnhaven Parkway should support corporate office, retail, and similar commercial uses.
- Development should emphasize high-quality site, landscape, and building design.
- The undeveloped tract at the southeast corner of Lynnhaven Parkway and Potters Road is suitable for open space acquisition. If not preserved, it should be developed with low-intensity retail and/or office uses that respect the adjacent natural open space.

Special Economic Growth Area 3 – South Oceana

SEGA 3 is a large, hourglass-shaped area encompassing properties on both sides of Dam Neck Road between Holland Road and Corporate Landing Parkway. The eastern portion, particularly east of London Bridge Road, includes large undeveloped tracts and is home to Corporate Landing Business Park.

The western portion of SEGA 3 faces environmental and operational constraints. These areas are within AICUZ high noise zones and APZs—especially south of Dam Neck Road, and floodplain challenges exist.

The areas north of Dam Neck Road and east of Holland Road are largely free from these constraints and have more development options.

Special Economic Growth Area 3 – South Oceana Policies

- Avoid any residential uses in SEGA 3.
- Ensure all proposed land uses comply with the City's AICUZ provisions and the Oceana Land Use Conformity program.
- Consolidate parcels, where feasible, to support a more unified development pattern.
- Limit access points along London Bridge Road and Holland Road.
- Prohibit direct private access to Dam Neck Road unless no other reasonable access exists, as it is part of the City's Access Controlled Roadway Network.

Communities

Historic Kempsville Area Master Plan

The Historic Kempsville Area Master Plan (2014) outlines a plan to create a village setting at the intersection of Kempsville, Princess Anne, and South Witchduck Roads, blending historic character with new development. The Area Master Plan identifies quadrants that can support a mix of uses: medical offices in the northeast, a village green and mixed-use in the southeast, adaptive reuse of the old Kempsville High building in the southwest, and pedestrian-oriented redevelopment around historic sites in the northwest. The plan's design guidelines are part of the City's zoning ordinance as the Historic Kempsville Mixed-Use District. Historic Kempsville is recognized as a planning area, and the master plan will likely be revised using the Center-based policies detailed in Chapter 7.

Historic Seatack

The Historic Seatack community, located in the City's Oceanfront Resort Area, is believed to be the oldest African American settlement in Virginia and possibly in the United States.

The original settlement was formed by free men and dates to the late 1700s to early 1800s. It takes its name from the words "Sea Attack," based on British warship cannons positioned off the Virginia Beach shoreline that fired inland during the War of 1812.

Historic Seatack is generally centered along the Birdneck Road corridor between Old Virginia Beach and Bells roads. It is bounded on the east by Lake Rudee, Owls Creek and the Marshview Park area and by the Oceana Gardens Neighborhood on the west.

Historic Seatack *(cont.)*

Seatack is a primarily residential community with supporting religious institutions and public facilities, such as a neighborhood park and a recreation center. It also includes some businesses and light industry.

Much of the area falls within the Special Flood Hazard Area, is owned by the federal government, or is subject to Navy restrictive easements. It is also affected by military aircraft accident potential zones and high noise zones due to its proximity to Naval Air Station Oceana.

Key Recommendations include:

- All new development, redevelopment and additions to structures should adhere to the City Zoning Ordinance requirements established in Article 18, Special Regulations in Air Installations Compatible Use Zones (AICUZ) Overlay.
- All new development, redevelopment and additions to structures, will, as required, adhere to the requirements of Code of Virginia Beach, Appendix I, Airport Noise Attenuation and Safety Ordinance.
- New development should respect the historic settlement of this area and should be compatible with the neighborhood. Significant landscape screening buffers should be established between existing residential areas and new nonresidential development to mitigate adverse visual and noise impacts.
- A careful mix of compatible land uses should be maintained where they currently exist and should be encouraged as new land uses are proposed so as to contribute to the day-to-day life of community residents.
- Uses incompatible with existing residential should be discouraged to minimize impact to adjacent residential neighborhoods.
- Building design should be visually interesting, encourage greater social interaction, and provide a memorable character.
- Neighborhood identification signs should be installed at neighborhood entrances/gateways.
- Recognition of historic and cultural landmarks and sites should be encouraged by nomination to the Virginia Beach Historical Register and/or by the installation of interpretive historic site markers.
- In partnership with and guidance from the Seatack Community, explore the potential benefits and regulatory impacts of delineation and adoption of a local Historic and Cultural District, if desired by the community and property owners.
- All new development should be designed such that site drainage and stormwater management does not negatively impact adjacent parcels.
- Maintain stormwater facilities and encourage the retrofit of existing drainage system problem areas.
- New development, redevelopment, and site improvements should be encouraged to use porous materials for driveways, walkways and other similar surfaces, wherever feasible, to achieve a net reduction in impervious coverage.
- Enhance landscaping in the Birdneck Road medians where there are opportunities to do so.
- The Virginia Aquarium & Marine Science Center and City's Marshview Park improvement projects should provide education and recreation opportunities for Seatack residents through neighborhood outreach programs.
- New development and public facilities improvements should accommodate multiple modes of transportation (e.g. pedestrians, bicyclists and drivers) and accessibility needs.

Inland Place Types

Figure 3-3 illustrates the locations of Place Types (Centers, Special Uses, and Neighborhoods) for the Inland Context Area. Chapter 7 details the goals, objectives, and design guidelines for each Place Type. This section details Place Type policies and initiatives for the Inland Context Area.

Inland Center Place Types

The Inland Context Area includes a hierarchy of Center Place Types (Regional, City, and Local) located along designated Regional and City Multimodal Corridors. Centers are designed to be compact and walkable, with moderate to high building intensities, a mix of uses, and multimodal access.

Each Strategic Growth Area Plan prepared by the City over the past 15 years is designated by this Plan Update as either a Regional, City, or Local Center. SGA Plan boundaries define the Center boundaries within which the Center Place Type policies and guidelines will apply.

The Plan also designates new Centers, shown in ***Figure 3-3.*** New Centers are located in commercial and business zoning districts along designated Multimodal Corridors. They are organized around a transit station and defined by the zoning boundaries of Type 1 Neighborhood Place Types. Development and improvements in new Centers will follow guidelines described in Chapter 7.

Regional Center

As described in Chapter 7, a Regional center is compact and walkable, with moderate to high density (three to over 20 story buildings) development pattern, and a jobs-oriented mix of uses. It has safe and convenient access for regionally oriented businesses, cultural attractions, and civic venues.

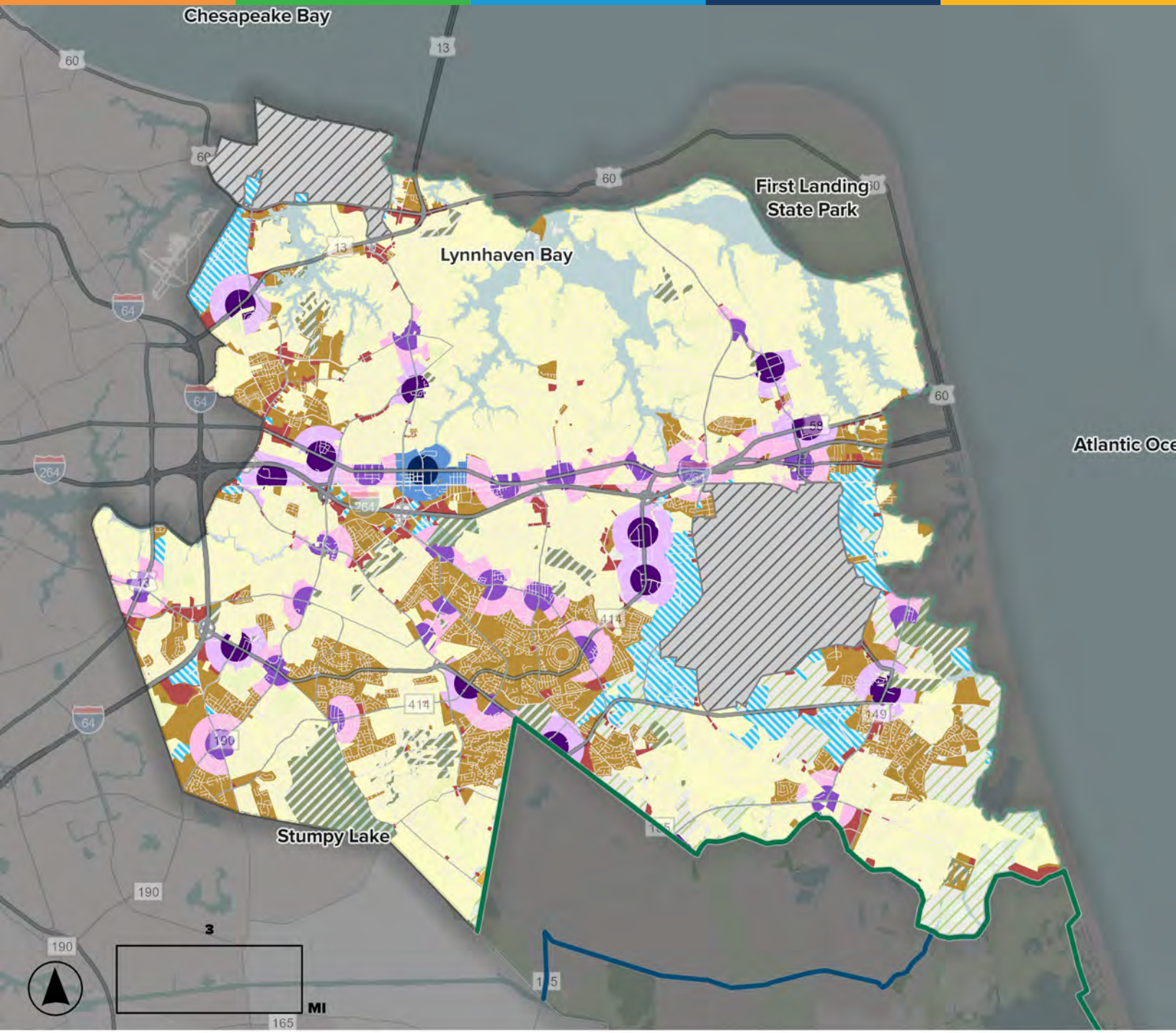
The three Central Business Districts in the Pembroke SGA form the Regional Center in the Inland Area ***(Figure 3-3).*** This area includes Town Center and is recognized as an important economic development location by the City's Economic Development Strategic Plan (see insert). It is also recognized by many as the primary location for regionally oriented entertainment and cultural venues.

City Centers

City Centers are locations for City-oriented businesses and civic functions. They have moderate to high development densities with buildings between three and 10 stories and a balanced mix of jobs and homes. Chapter 7 provides more detailed City Center objectives and design guidelines. Designated City Centers in the Inland Context Area, include the Western Campus District in the Pembroke SGA, the Hilltop, Newtown, and Centerville SGAs, and new City Centers, as show in ***Figure 3-3.***

Local Centers

Local Centers have low to moderate intensities (two to six story buildings) and a high residential mix. Center businesses and civic uses typically orient to those living in the Center and in adjacent neighborhoods. Detailed design guidelines are included in Chapter 7. ***Figure 3-2*** illustrates the locations of designated Local Centers including the Central Village District in the Pembroke SGA, the Rosemont and Lynnhaven SGAs, and new Local Centers.



PLACE TYPES

Regional
- Core
- Edge

City
- Core
- Edge

Local
- Core
- Edge

Special Use
- Industrial and Logistics
- Business

Neighborhoods
- Neighborhood - Type 1
- Neighborhood - Type 2
- Transitional Neighborhood
- Coastal Neighborhood

NON-PLACE TYPES
- Agriculture
- Preservation

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES
- Green Line
- Blue Line
- Coastal-Inland

MILITARY
- Military area

Figure 3-3 - *Inland Context Area Place Types*

3.6 Advance the emergence of Town Center as the region's premier urban center. The continued growth and vibrancy of Town Center would benefit from expanding walkable and cyclable mixed-use areas and green space in and around the development. The benchmark analysis highlights the growing need for near-term investment in residential rental property in Virginia Beach. Promoting and facilitating the development of additional multifamily units, including mid-rise structures in Town Center, would help to strengthen its appeal to residents and businesses and enhance the quality of place for Virginia Beach as a whole. - ***(Economic Development Strategic Plan Town Center objective insert)***

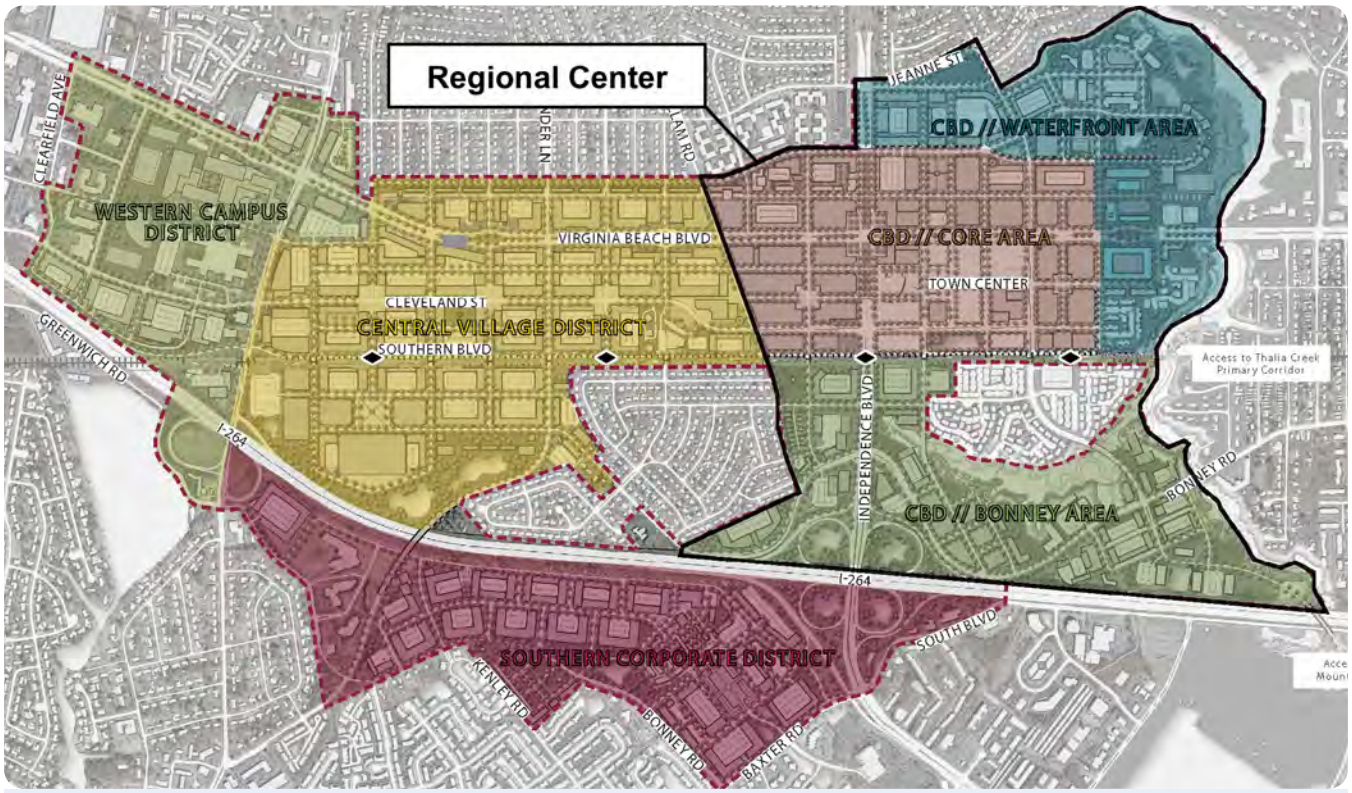


Figure 3-4 - *Pembroke SGA Districts and Regional Center Designation*

Map Adapted from SGA Plan

Inland Center Policies

Types and Locations

- Adopted Strategic Growth Area Centers
  - Adopted SGA Planning Area boundaries define the boundaries of SGA Centers ***(Figure 3-2).***
  - Center type designations for adopted Strategic Growth Areas are as follows:
    - Regional Center
      - Central Business Districts in the Pembroke SGA (Core, Waterfront, and Bonney Area)
    - City Center
      - Western Campus District in the Pembroke SGA
      - Hilltop
      - Newtown
      - Centerville
    - Local Center
      - Central Village District in the Pembroke SGA
      - Rosemont
      - Lynnhaven
- Non-SGA Centers
  - Non-SGA Center locations and types are shown in ***Figure 3-3.***
  - Boundaries for additional Centers are defined by:
    - Locating a transit station along a Multimodal Corridor that becomes the Center's focal point and defining Center zones:
      - Core Zone (1/4 mile from the focal point)
      - Edge Zone (1/2 mile from the focal point).
    - Adjusting the Center's boundary (Core and Edge zones) to exclude properties in a Type 1 Neighborhood Place Type.

Development Reviews

- Create a Center development review manual based on the design guidelines and review process outlined in Chapter 7 to enhance development reviews in Centers.
- In designated Centers with Center plans and regulations, review proposed developments against those regulations.
- In Centers without Center regulations, review projects using the following options detailed in Chapter 7:
  - Zoning or rezoning review will apply existing zoning regulations along with Center design guidelines, the Commercial Area Pattern Book, and the Mixed Use Development Guidelines.
  - Rezoning review based on the creation of a Center wide plan that includes a plan based zoning regulations and an infrastructure plan (street network, parks and stormwater treatment, and parking).

Plans and implementation tools

- The City will develop additional design and implementation tools based on the Center design guidelines detailed in Chapter 7, the *Commercial Area Pattern Book*, and the *Mixed Use Development Guidelines* to support Centers' intended growth and development. The tools include:
    - Center development review manual.
    - A Center plan similar to adopted SGA plans.
    - Plan-based form-based code with detailed building and street design requirements.
    - Plan type-based Infrastructure design covering the following:
        - Internal street network alignments and designated street types.
        - Stormwater treatment improvements and parks.
        - Shared parking locations and types (structured versus surface parking).
    - An infrastructure financing plan.

Incentives

- To better understand potential incentives for private development within SGAs, one or two selected SGA Plans should be reviewed to determine:
    - Year 2050 market demand by building type (i.e., office space, retail, multifamily).
    - Financial feasibility (pro forma) based on market demand, building costs, and infrastructure costs.
    - Methods for addressing the gaps between plans, market demand, and financial feasibility.
- Based on the SGA plan review and the market demand and financial feasibility assessment, the City may elect to conduct a pilot study for an SGA to determine how to address implementation issues and gaps, such as:
    - City / private financing partnerships (i.e., issuing bonds to pay for structured parking and stormwater systems).
    - Approaches to designing and financing Center-wide infrastructure.
    - Changes needed in the zoning ordinance and development review procedures.
    - Developing implementation policies, tools, and mechanisms based on pilot study findings.

Economic development

- Collaborate among City departments to promote economic development in designated Regional and City Centers. Collaboration should focus on:
    - Continually monitoring market demand and needs for businesses seeking urban locations and adjusting Center design guidelines to align with demand and needs.
    - Maintaining an inventory of development sites and opportunities.
    - Coordinating with and incentivizing private developers to provide Center locations for new businesses.

Attainable housing

- Collaborate among City departments, the Virginia Beach Development Authority, federal and state housing agencies, and private developers to meet City-wide housing diversity and attainability goals in designated Centers by:
    - Following Center residential targets and design guidelines detailed in Chapter 7 during development reviews to increase the diversity of housing types.
    - Incorporating attainable housing when developing Center Plans and plan-based zoning regulations to simplify and streamline permitting (from 2024 Housing Study).
    - Working with the Virginia Beach Development Authority to identify locations in designated Centers for large-scale mixed-income, mixed-use, or fully affordable development projects (from 2024 Housing Study).
    - Using incentives, such as infrastructure financing support, to encourage developers to incorporate attainable housing in projects.
- Pursue federal, state, local, and non-profit partnerships for grant options to support affordable housing. Also, as a partnership of the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation, Planning & Zoning, and Economic Development, define areas of Strategic Growth for affordable housing options and use the Attainable Housing Grant administered by the Virginia Beach Development Authority to support development in these areas.

Inland Special Use Place Types

Institutional Place Type

The Inland Context Area Institutional Place Type shown in ***Figure 3-3*** encompass large-scale educational facilities, such as Tidewater Community College and health and civic functions, such as Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital. Institutional Place Type design guidelines in Chapter 7 will inform infill development and redevelopment within existing Institutional areas and the development of new Institutional areas.

Industrial and Logistics Place Type

The Inland Context Area Industrial and Logistics Place Types shown in ***Figure 3-3*** encompass large scale manufacturing and warehousing areas, such Corporate Landing Park.

The policies and design guidelines in Chapter 7 will inform development of and within an Industrial and Logistics Place Type.

As summarized in the previous section, the City has identified Special Economic Growth Areas (SEGAs) immediately surrounding the Naval Air Station Oceana including:

- East Oceana
- West Oceana
- South Oceana

Existing SEGA locations are designated as Industrial and Logistics Place Types on the Comprehensive Plan Place Type Map.

Development within those areas will follow the Industrial and Logistics Place Type objectives and design guidelines in Chapter 7.

Identifying and developing new locations for Industrial and Logistics areas is a City priority. Potential areas include currently zoned agricultural lands south of the Naval Air Station Oceana (north of the Green Line) and land surrounding North Hampton Boulevard, particularly the Burton Station SGA.

Business Place Type

The Business Place Type includes business, office, and hotel zoning districts larger than five acres that lie outside of Centers ***(Figure 3-3)***. These areas will continue to be single-use and business-oriented. The Business Place Type design guidelines in Chapter 7 enhance zoning requirements for those properties.

Special Use Place Type Policies

Locations

- Designated Institutional, Industrial and Logistics, Business Place Types, along with SEGA locations are shown in ***Figure 3-3.***

Development review

- Review proposed developments in a designated Institutional, Industrial and Logistics, and Business Place Types with existing zoning regulations augmented by their corresponding design guidelines provided in Chapter 7.
- Review proposed institutional, industrial-logistics, and business-style developments over 10 acres **outside** a designated institutional, industrial and logistics, and non-center business Place Types using their corresponding design guidelines detailed in Chapter 7. Designate the project area with the appropriate Institutional Place Type (Institutional, Industrial and Logistics, or Non-Place Type Business) if approved.
- Augment the review with Special Economic Growth Area policies if the project is within a SEGA.

Increase land inventory

- Actively identify potential Industrial and Logistics areas, focusing on lands along designated Freight Corridors, including:
    - Agriculturally zoned lands north of the Green Line and south of NAS Oceana.
    - Land along the North Hampton Boulevard corridor, including the potential re-purposing of the Burton Station SGA and purchase of land owned by the Norfolk International Airport.
- Partner with the Department of the Navy to acquire or lease land that is no longer anticipated to be used for military purposes.

Inland Neighborhood Place Types

Type 1 and Type 2 Neighborhood Place Types in the Inland Context Area are defined by zoning district boundaries. The primary distinction between the two is Type 1 Neighborhoods include those zoning districts allowing only single-family homes, Type 2 Neighborhoods include districts allowing a variety of housing types allowing a variety of housing types, along with compatible commercial uses. Chapter 7 identifies the zoning districts included in Type 1 and Type 2 neighborhoods.

Inland Type 1 Neighborhood

Type 1 Neighborhoods include all zoning ordinance districts in the Inland Area that allow only single-family homes. They can range in density from one to five units per acre. Many existing neighborhoods include small-scale civic and retail areas to which residents can walk, bike, or roll.

Inland Type 2 Neighborhood

Type 2 Neighborhoods include all zoning ordinance districts that allow both single and multi-family homes. Densities can range from four to 20 or more units per acre. Most include small-scale civic and retail uses to which residents can walk, bike, or roll.

Inland Neighborhood Policies

Locations

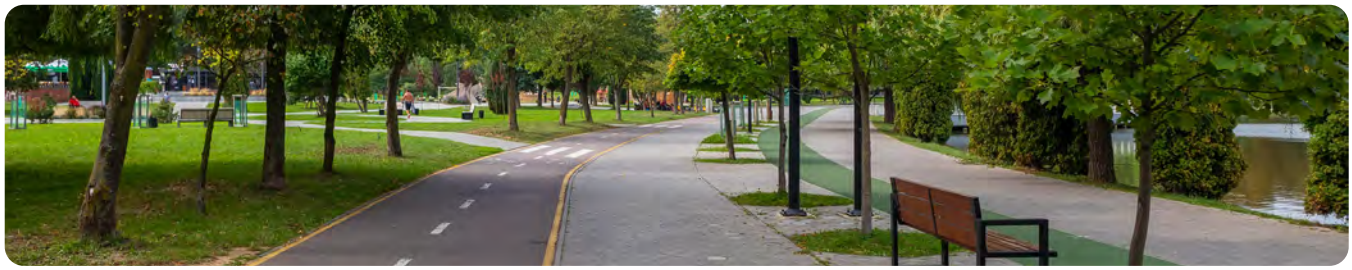
- Designated Type 1 and Type 2 Neighborhoods include zoning districts shown in ***Appendix A*** and are shown in ***Figure 3-3.***

Development review

- Review proposed developments in designated Type 1 or Type 2 Neighborhoods using existing zoning regulations augmented by Type 1 or Type Neighborhoods guidelines or review as a rezoning using Type 1 or Type 2 Neighborhood design guidelines. Augment the review with Neighborhood Plans and policies if the project is located in a Neighborhood Planning Area. Details of the review process are provided in Chapter 7.
- Review proposed Type 1 or Type 2 developments over 10 acres outside a designated Type 1 or Type 2 Neighborhood Place Type using the options detailed in Chapter 7. Once approved, designate the area as a Type 1 or Type 2 Neighborhood.
- Review and update zoning regulations in Type 1 and Type 2 Neighborhoods to identify opportunities for increasing attainable housing and to streamline the review and approval of attainable housing projects.

Neighborhood safety and well being

- Develop health, safety, and well-being measures as part of the neighborhood monitoring system and regularly review neighborhood conditions. Work with neighborhoods to make needed improvements. The measures could include:
  - Health
    - Walkable access to schools and parks
    - Tree canopy shading
  - Safety
    - Safe streets
    - Sidewalks and bike paths
    - Traffic volumes
    - Traffic speeds
    - Cut-through traffic
    - Crime rates
    - Emergency service response times
  - Well-being
    - Quality of housing
    - Age of housing (for potential historical designation)
    - Quality of neighborhood civic facilities, including parks
    - Flood protection
- Work with neighborhoods to identify, pursue formal designation of, and maintain historical resources, including districts, structures, and sites.



Inland Communities and Community Hubs

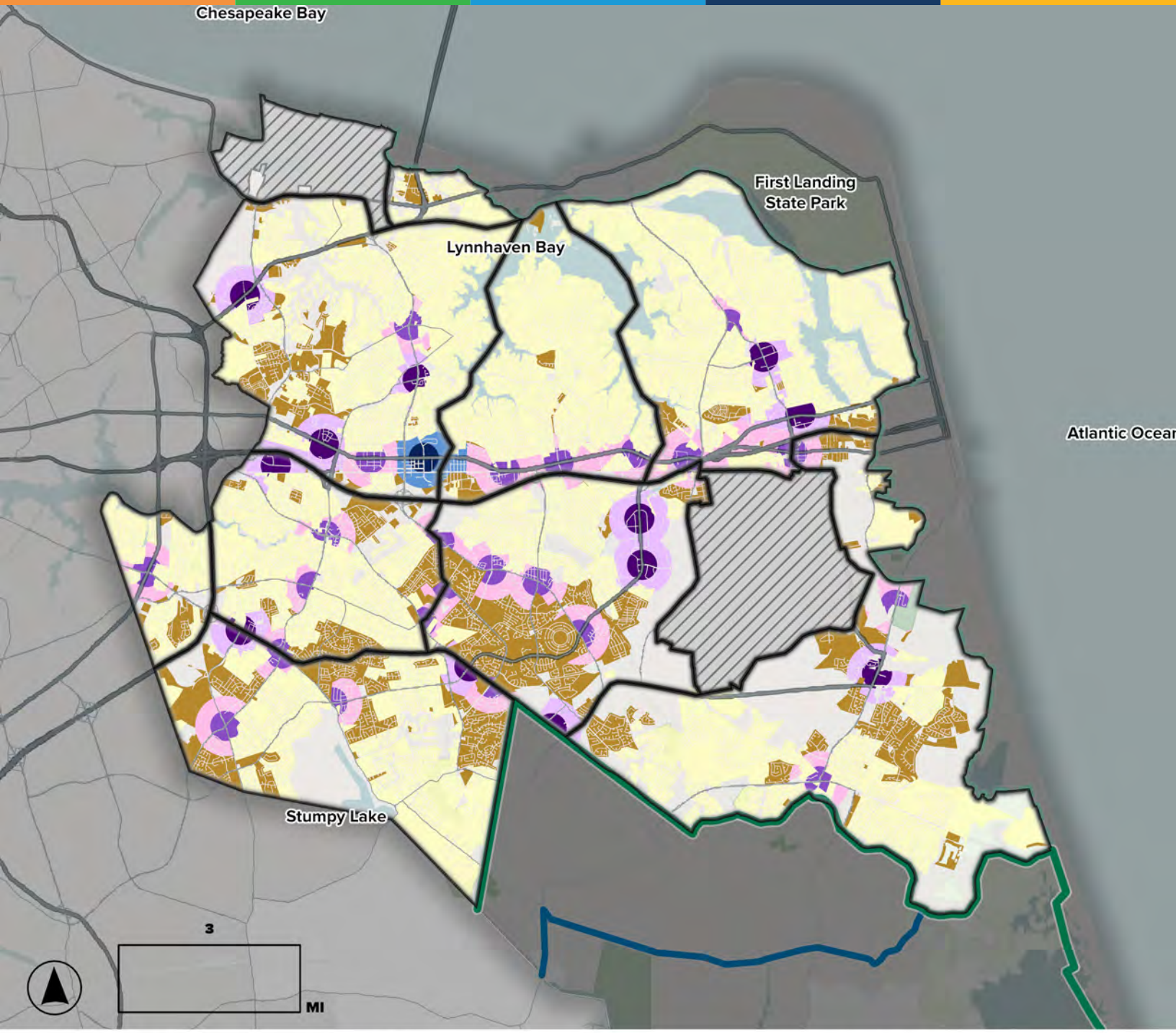
Communities

Communities are collections of neighborhoods bounded by the City's major roads, estuaries, and tributaries. Some communities are unofficially recognized and named, such as the Great Neck and Little Neck communities. ***Figure 3-5*** illustrates a potential set of communities in the Inland Context Area including:

- Great Neck bounded by eastern branch of the Lynnhaven River, the Coastal Context Area Line and Virginia Beach Boulevard.
- Little Neck bounded by the eastern and western branches of the Lynnhaven River, and I-264.
- Bayside bounded by the western branch of the Lynnhaven River, the Coastal Context Area Line, the Norfolk City Limit, and I-264.
- Kempsville bounded by I-264, the Norfolk City Line, and Ferrell Parkway, and Windsor Oaks Boulevard.
- Woodstock bounded by I-264, the Norfolk City Line, and the Chesapeake City Line.
- Indian River bounded by I-264, the Chesapeake City Line, Ferrell Parkway, Princess Anne Road and the Green Line.
- Lynnhaven bounded by I-264, Windsor Oaks Boulevard, Princess Anne Road, Dam Neck Road, and the Naval Air Station Oceana.
- Dam Neck / Nimmo bounded by Naval Air Station Oceana, Dam Neck Road, the Green Line, and the Coastal Context Area Line communities.

Community Hubs

Community Hubs are compact, walkable locations for community activities, such as schools, churches, parks, farmers markets, etc. Community Hubs are centrally located in defined communities with safe and convenient multimodal access to adjacent neighborhoods. The Historic Kempsville Master Plan Planning Area functions similarly to what is envisioned for Community Hubs. Chapter 7 includes Community Hub Place Types policy and design guidelines. Locations for Community Hubs will be identified once communities are defined, as described in the next section. Local community members will initiate Community Hub plans.



COMMUNITIES

- Potential Community Boundaries

PLACE TYPES

Regional centers
- Core
- Edge

City centers
- Core
- Edge

Local centers
- Core
- Edge

Neighborhoods
- Neighborhood - Type 1
- Neighborhood - Type 2

MILITARY

- Military area

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES

- Green Line
- Blue Line
- Coastal-Inland

Figure 3-5 - *Illustrative community boundaries*

Inland Community Policies

Community Identity and Branding

- Use the preliminary community boundaries shown on ***Figure 3-5*** to begin defining communities and community boundaries.
- Once community boundaries are defined, name and brand each community and design and deploy branding techniques in gateways and other prominent community locations.
- Inventory community facilities and programs and identify potential improvements, such as the need for more community civic functions, community parks, and recreational centers.
- Work with neighborhoods to identify, pursue formal designation of, and maintain historical resources, including districts, structures, and sites.
- Use all available resources to preserve designated historic resources, including those provided by the City's Historical Review Board and Historic Preservation Commission, the Princess Anne County/ Virginia Beach Historical Society, and the Interfacility Traffic Area and Transition Area Citizens Advisory Committee.
- Efforts to retain historic resources should be accomplished responsibly and innovatively. This should include providing land use planning guidance and tax credit assistance to owners of historic properties to help protect and preserve the City's limited number of valuable historic resources and surrounding open space areas.

Community Hubs and Connections

- Local community members will initiate Community Hub plans, using Community Hub design guidelines listed in Chapter 7. Planned Community Hubs will then be designated as part of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Plan for and build walking and biking connections between neighborhoods, Community Hubs, and other destinations in the community.

Inland Corridor Types

The Comprehensive Plan includes both Multimodal and Freight Corridors Types ***(Figures 3-6 and 3-7)***. Facility design and operations and land development patterns along Multimodal Corridors should make travel by all modes safe and prioritize travel by non auto modes (transit, walking, and biking). Freight Corridors connect the City's designated Industrial and Logistics areas with destinations beyond the City to support the safe and efficient flow of truck traffic.

Multimodal Corridors

Regional Multimodal Corridors

Regional Multimodal Corridors provide safe and convenient access between the City and the region. Travel funneling into Regional Corridors combined with travel from high density development along the corridor requires high speed and capacity roadways (arterials and expressways) and transit (bus rapid transit or a similar technology).

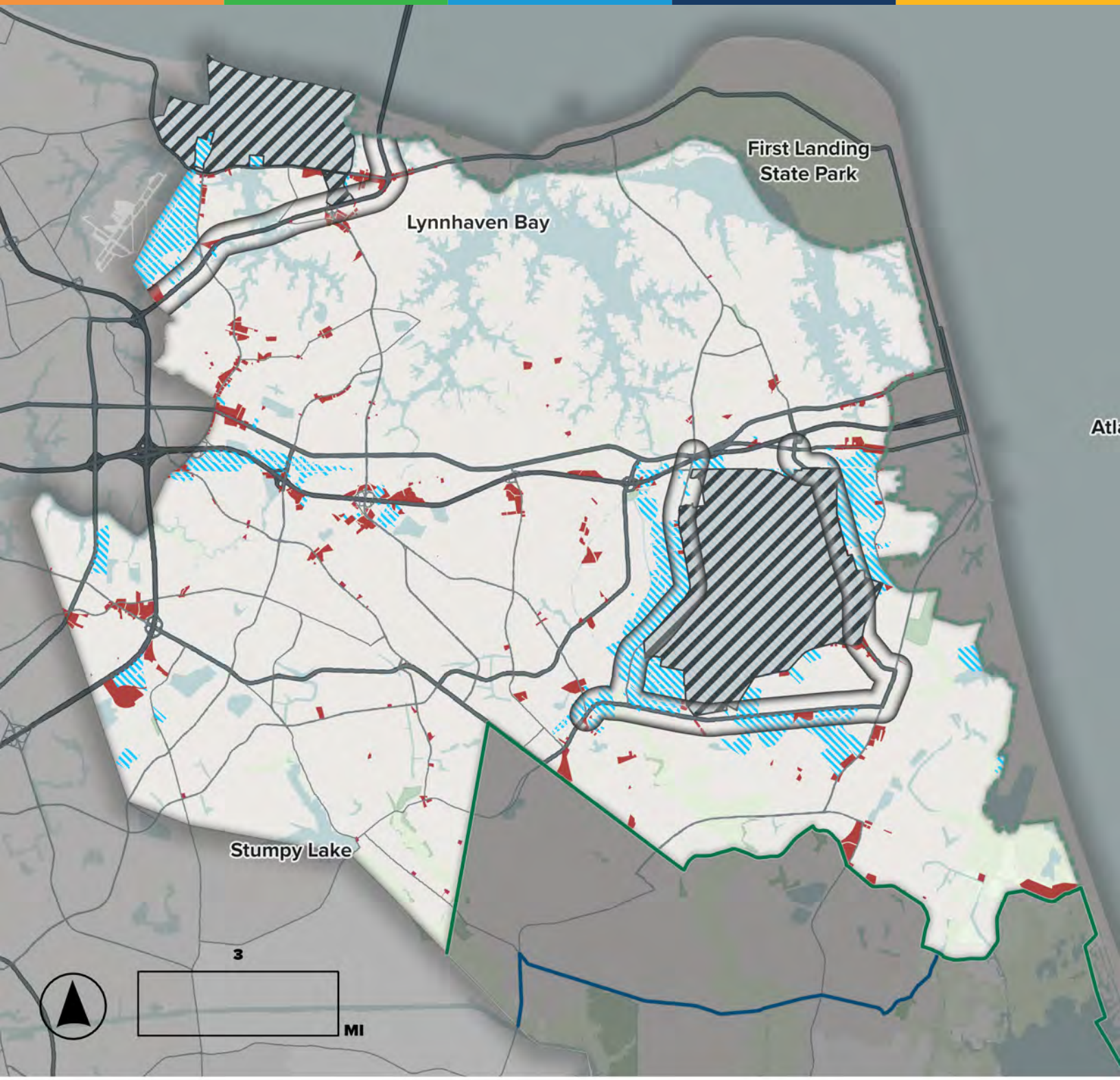
The Inland Context Area includes two Regional Multimodal Corridors, Virginia Beach Boulevard / I-264 from the Norfolk City line to the Resort Area and Independence Boulevard / Princess Anne Road from Virginia Beach Boulevard to the Municipal Center. Both corridors are currently auto centric with roads designed and operated to move cars quickly, and adjacent development patterns designed to allow auto access into surface parking lots. The transformation for both corridors will be guided by the Corridor and Place Type objectives and design guidelines in Chapter 7.

Virginia Beach *Boulevard Regional Multimodal Corridor*

The Virginia Beach Boulevard Multimodal Corridor includes Virginia Beach Boulevard and I-264, each serving a differing function ***(Figure 3-7)***. I-264 will continue to move longer vehicle trips. It also provides truck access to industrial areas such as the Special Economic Growth Areas surrounding the Naval Air Station Oceana. With I-264 carrying high auto and truck volumes, Virginia Beach Boulevard can be designed and operated to serve non-auto as well as auto travel.

With proper planning and design and supportive transit-oriented development, premium transit (such as bus rapid transit) can be a feasible investment along the corridor in the future.

SGAs along the corridor are organized and designed to support premium transit. The key planning and design challenge to be addressed is the premium transit alignment and station locations within SGAs, including the connection to the Tide Light Rail system. As detailed under the policies, that question and others can be answered with an integrated Virginia Beach Boulevard Regional Multimodal Corridor Study.



PLACE TYPES

Special Use

- Industrial and Logistics
- Business

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES

- Green Line
- Blue Line
- Coastal-Inland

CORRIDORS

- Freight Network

MILITARY

- Military area

Figure 3-6 - *Inland Corridors*

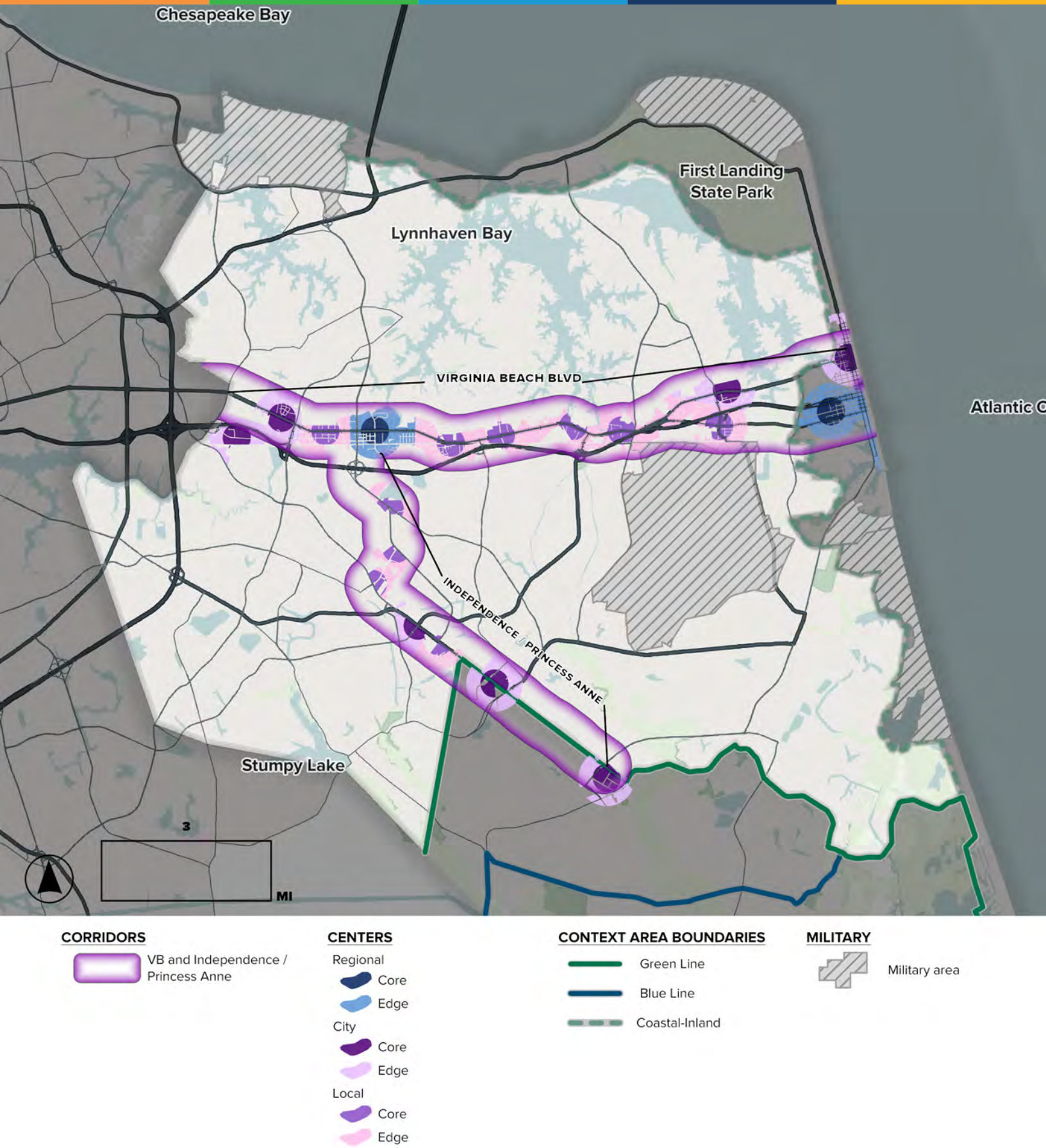
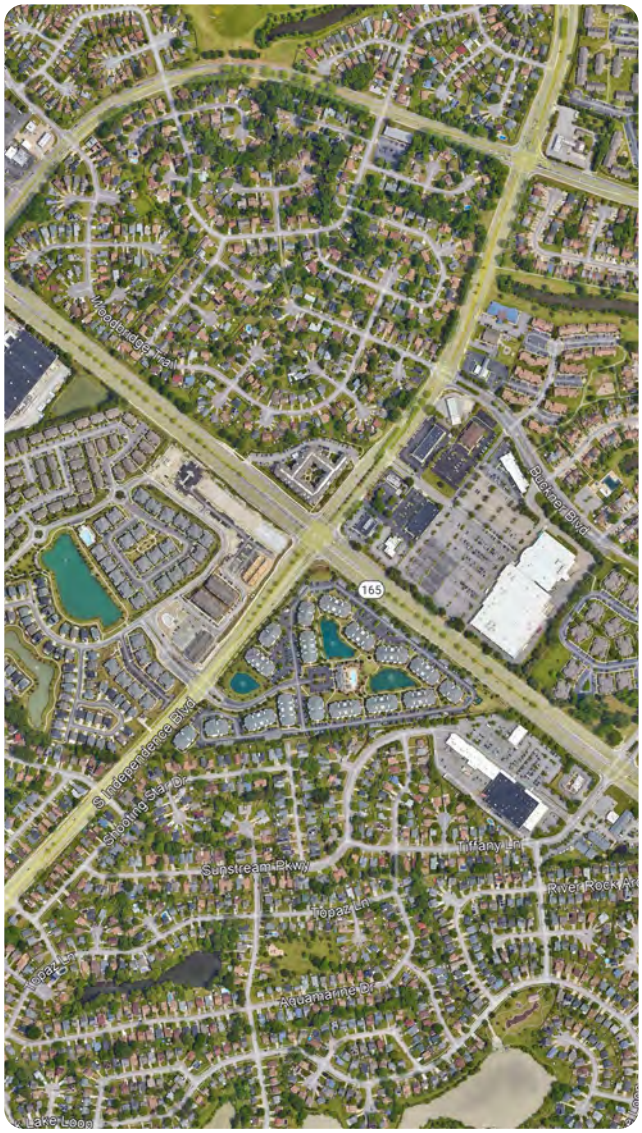
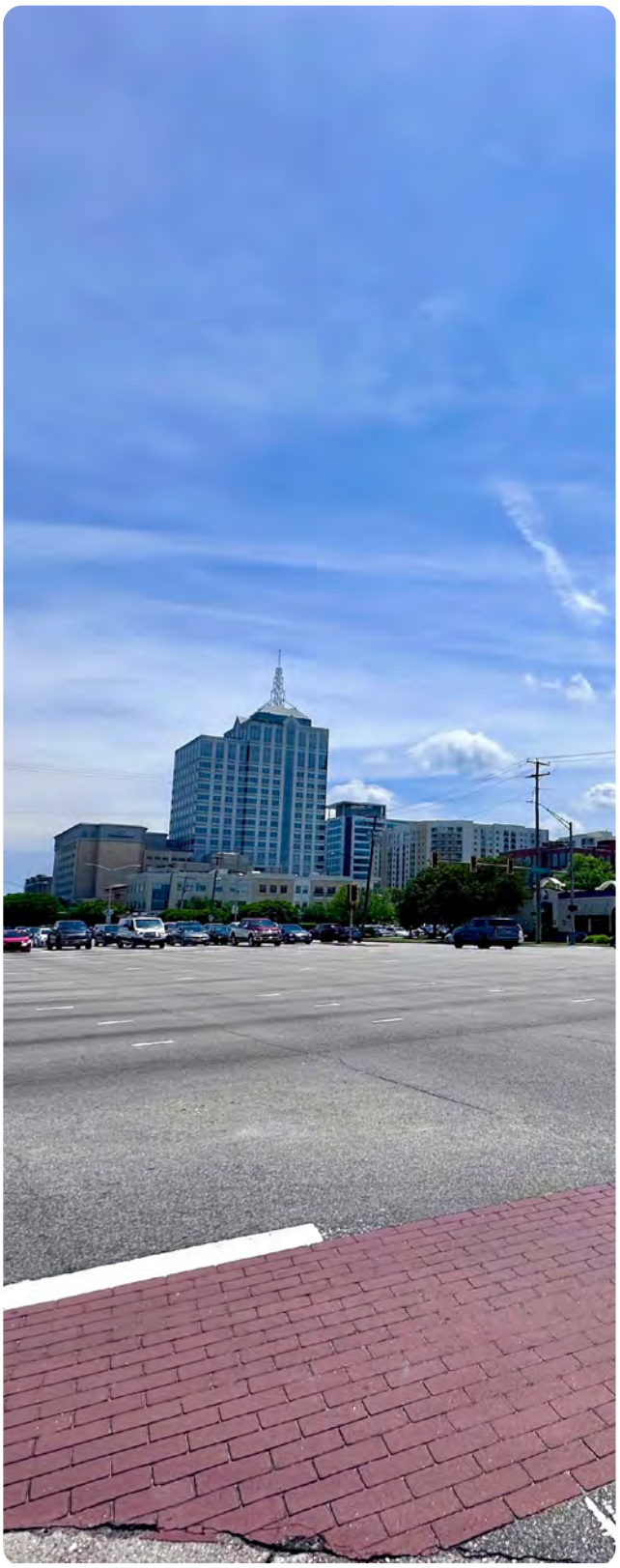


Figure 3-7 - *Virginia Beach Boulevard and Independence / Princess Anne Road Study Corridors*

Independence Road / Princess Anne Road Regional Multimodal Corridor

The Independence / Princess Anne Multimodal Regional Corridor is anchored by Town Center on the northern end and by the Municipal Center on the southern end ***(Figure 3-7)***. Many of the non-residential shopping areas along the corridor can be transformed into transit-oriented urban Centers. Supportive land uses can ultimately generate ridership that makes premium transit.





City Multimodal Corridors

City Multimodal Corridors are currently auto-oriented, but will be redesigned to provide safe and convenient access for all travel modes (auto, transit, biking, rolling, and walking).

City Multimodal Corridors primarily serve local City travel, although they often help funnel regional travelers onto regional facilities. As such, City Corridors are not likely to generate enough transit ridership to make premium transit such as bus rapid transit feasible. They are well suited for fixed-bus transit. Chapter 7 details design guidelines tailored to prioritize walking, biking, rolling, and transit in the design and operations of City Multimodal Corridors.

The City Multimodal Corridors shown in ***Figure 3-6*** include:

- Shore Drive (US 60) from the Virginia Beach / Norfolk City Line to the eastern end of First Landing State Park (portions are in the Coastal Context Area)
- Atlantic Avenue from Shore Drive to the northern Resort Area SGA boundary (completely within the Coastal Context Area)
- Independence Boulevard from Shore Drive to Virginia Beach Boulevard
- Witchduck / Kempsville Road from Virginia Beach Boulevard to the Virginia Beach / Chesapeake City Line
- Indian River Road from the Virginia Beach / Norfolk City Line to Lynnhaven Parkway
- Lynnhaven Parkway from Kempsville Road to Virginia Beach Boulevard
- Great Neck Road / First Colonial Road from Shore Drive to Virginia Beach Boulevard
- General Booth Boulevard / Princess Anne Road from the Rudee Inlet Bridge to the Municipal Center

Multimodal Corridor Policies

Locations

- Designated Regional and City Multimodal Corridors in the Inland Context Area are shown in ***Figure 3-6.***

Improvements and operations

- Improvements to and operations of Regional and City Multimodal Corridors will follow *the Master Transportation Plan* augmented by the Regional and City Multimodal Corridor design guidelines presented in Chapter 7 and the *Local Road Safety Action Plan* and *Complete Streets Policy*.
- Referencing Chapter 7, and furthering the City's Complete Streets Policy, monitor and improve sidewalk and bike lane facilities, especially along all Regional and City Multimodal Corridors.
    - Monitor and inventory the location, width, condition, continuity, safety features, and sidewalk and cycling network separation along Multimodal Corridors.
    - Benchmark the non-motorized facility inventory with complete street design guidance, Americans with Disabilities Act and Universal Design standards, and operational best practices to identify any deficiencies.
- Inventory, review, and improve as needed transit service along City Multimodal Corridors:
    - Work with Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) to develop a City-wide transit system plan that prioritizes fixed-route service along Multimodal Corridors and recognizes the potential for premium transit along the Regional Multimodal Corridors.
    - Identify necessary short-, mid-, and long-term transit improvements, and work with HRT and HRTPO to identify funding sources.
    - Implement the transit system plan.
- Within 10 years, develop a multimodal corridor plan for Virginia Beach Boulevard. The planning process should include the following:
    - Guidance by an inter-agency and interdepartmental steering group that includes, but is not limited to:
        - Virginia Beach Planning, Public Works (including Traffic Engineering division).
        - Hampton Roads Planning District Commission
        - Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization Hampton Roads Transit.
        - Virginia Department of Transportation
        - Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation.
        - Active Transportation Advisory Committee.
        - Virginia Port Authority
    - The corridor extends from the Virginia Beach-Norfolk City Line, and includes Virginia Beach Boulevard, Laskin Road, I-264, the Virginia Beach Trail, and the Newtown Tide light rail station.
    - A robust public engagement process.
    - Inclusion of adopted SGAs and Center design guidelines.
- In 10 to 20 years, initiate and complete the Princess Anne / Independence Corridor Plan, organized similarly to the Virginia Beach Boulevard Regional Multimodal Corridor Plan.

Inland Freight Corridors

Freight Corridors provide high speed truck access between Industrial and Logistics Place Type locations in the City to the region to support existing and attract new manufacturing and logistics industries. Chapter 7 includes objectives and design guidelines for the facilities. Freight Corridors include:

- US 13 (North Hampton Boulevard) from I-64 to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel,
- Arterials ringing Naval Air Station Oceana, including London Bridge Road, Oceana Boulevard, and Dam Neck Road **(shown in *Figure 3-6*)**.

Inland Freight Corridors Policies

Locations

- Designated Freight Corridors in the Inland Context Area are shown in ***Figure 3-6.***

Improvements and operations

- Improvements to and operations of Freight Corridors will follow the Master Transportation Plan augmented by the Freight Corridor design guidelines in Chapter 7 and the Local Road Safety Action Plan and Complete Streets Policy.

SHERATON

Chapter 4: **Coastal Context Area**

The Coastal Context Area stretches along the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean. Its beaches and dunes, long part of the natural ecology, face growing risks from sea level rise, erosion, and more frequent severe weather. These beaches draw both tourists and residents. Businesses in the Resort Area and along parts of Shore Drive bring outside income that supports the City's economy and tax base. Neighborhoods feature a mix of housing, from single-family homes to multistory apartments and condominiums, many designed to complement the coastal setting.

The area's defining characteristics will be preserved and refined. Beaches and dunes will be strengthened to reduce flooding.

The Resort Area will remain a major tourist draw while becoming a more vibrant and accessible destination for residents. Neighborhoods will keep their diverse housing and distinct character while offering options for all income levels. Walking, rolling, and biking trails will link neighborhoods and Community Hubs.

Introduction

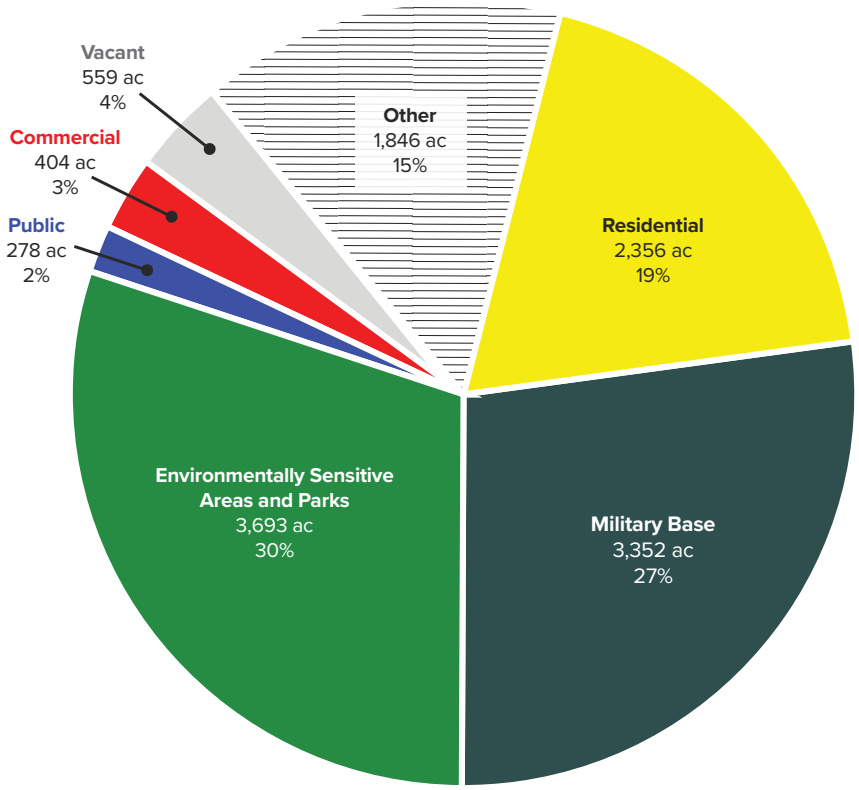
The Coastal Context Area captures much of what defines Virginia Beach. It includes the city's most iconic destinations, from the oceanfront boardwalk to First Landing State Park. The area also provides open space and public access to the water. It is home to three military installations: the Fort Story side of JEB Little Creek–Fort Story, the State Military Reservation, and the Dam Neck Annex of NAS Oceana. The Cavalier Hotel, the beaches, and the boardwalk are longstanding landmarks that contribute to the city's culture and history and continue to serve both residents and visitors.

There are historic properties formally designated in the Coastal Context Area, including Seatack/U.S. Coast Guard Installation, deWitt Cottage, and historic districts connected to First Landing and the State Military Reservation.

There are likely properties that are currently eligible but not yet listed and others that could become eligible for historic designation in the future.

The Coastal Context Area stretches along the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean coastline from the Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story to Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge. It lies north and east of the Green Line. Like the Inland Context Area to the west, this area can absorb anticipated population and job growth. However, with less than 1,000 acres of vacant land ***(Figure 4-1)***, growth will be inward and upward in the designated Centers, most notably the Resort Area.

Figure 4-1 *- Coastal Land Uses Pie Chart (in acres)*



Coastal Goals and Objectives

Citywide Goals

- Environmental sustainability
- Infill urban development and multimodal access north of the Green Line
- Economic sustainability and diversity
- Community identity and connections
- Neighborhood well-being and safety
- Housing attainment and diversity

Coastal Goals

Environmental Sustainability

- Protect existing properties from sea level rise, flooding, and erosion.
- Enhance the ecological resilience of beaches and natural areas.

Infill urban development, redevelopment and multimodal access

- Absorb a portion of the City's anticipated growth in Centers.
- Apply Place Type design guidelines to create land development patterns and multimodal networks that promote safe and convenient walking, biking, rolling, and transit.
- Designate Multimodal Corridors and apply Multimodal Corridor design guidelines to promote safe and convenient walking, biking, rolling, and transit.

Economic sustainability and diversity

- Attract year-round visitors that help sustain the City's economy and tax base.
- Create jobs to foster economic growth and vitality.

Housing attainment and diversity

- Take advantage of Center redevelopment to increase housing diversity and attainability.
- Find opportunities outside of Centers to increase housing diversity and attainability.
- Identify locations and strategies for accommodating future senior housing demand.

Community identity and connections

- Enhance the unique coastal identities of Coastal Context Area communities.
- Provide easy walking and bike access to Community Hubs.

Neighborhood well-being and safety

- Promote the integrity, sense of well-being, and safety of neighborhoods. (Big Idea)

Coastal Objectives

Environmental sustainability

- Continually monitor flooding and water quality and update Sea Level Wise strategies and other flood protection and water quality strategies as needed.
- Implement Sea Level Wise recommendations and other stormwater management efforts to mitigate flooding.
- Continue programs that protect natural lands and develop the Environmental and Open Space Framework Plan to identify how to leverage initiatives such as flood protection land purchases to connect protected lands.
- Find opportunities to develop the Linear Park System.
- Continue programs that protect water quality in Coastal estuaries and tributaries.
- Continue programs that protect the resiliency, ecological value, and attractiveness of Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay beaches, and provide easy walk and bike access to those beaches.
- Continue implementing the *Outdoors Plan.*
- Continue to implement the *Beach Management Plan.*

Infill urban development, redevelopment and multimodal access

- Continue to promote mixed-use redevelopment in Resort Area Centers.
- Design and implement transportation improvements along Multimodal Corridors, prioritizing transit ridership, walking, and biking.
- Provide multimodal access for residents and tourists to beaches.
- Continue implementing the Active Transportation Plan.

Coastal Objectives *(cont.)*

Economic sustainability and diversity

- Continue to support and implement the objectives, policies, and recommendations in the RASAP.
- Continue to monitor the tourism market and develop strategies to increase tourism in non-summer months.
- Plan for and invest in public amenities and facilities that will attract tourists and residents to the Resort Area.

Housing attainment and diversity

- Implement recommendations adopted by City Council from the 2024 Virginia Beach Housing Study.
- Use Place Type guidelines to increase the diversity of housing and the number of affordable homes in Resort Area Centers.
- Update zoning regulations to simplify the review of attainable housing development in Coastal communities.

Community identity and connections

- Identify and "brand" seaside communities through place-making and tailored design guidelines.
- Integrate Community Hub plans developed by local community members.
- Develop walking and biking connections between neighborhoods and Community Hubs.
- Use the Oceanfront Resort District Connector Park Design Guidelines (2017) to enhance pedestrian links and upgrade the linear parks connecting Atlantic Avenue to the Boardwalk.

Neighborhood well-being and safety

- Develop a neighborhood monitoring system that continually tracks factors of interest to residents and stakeholders in local neighborhoods, such as sense of safety, housing conditions, traffic, sidewalk connectivity, or shade.
- Use the monitoring system to regularly report on neighborhood well-being and recommend needed improvements.
- Buffer existing neighborhoods adjacent to Centers.

Coastal Planning Area

The Coastal Context Area has a single Planning Area that is guided by the Resort Area Strategic Action Plan (RASAP) ***(Figure 4-2)***.

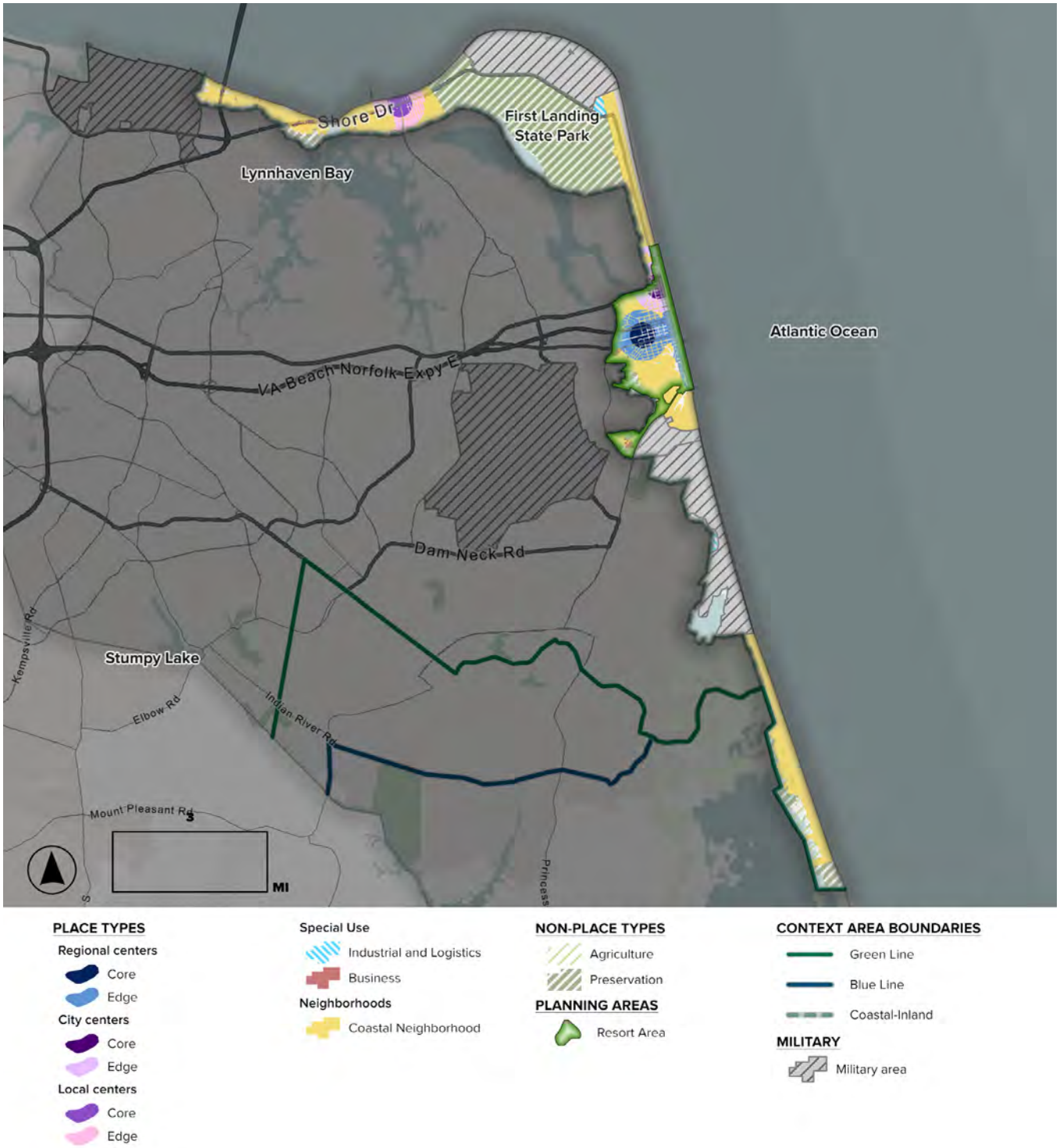


Figure 4-2 *- Coastal Context Area Place Types*

The Resort Area Strategic Action Plan (RASAP) boundaries extend from 42nd Street and Laskin Road on the north to Rudee Inlet and Norfolk Avenue to the south and from Birdneck Road and Little Neck Creek on the west to the oceanfront ***(Figure 4-3)***.

The objectives and policies from the RASAP and its supporting plans will guide growth in the Resort area.

The Oceanfront Resort District Form-Based Code (FBC) applies to the Oceanfront Resort District and adjacent Resort Tourist zoning districts. It replaces use-based zoning with rules for building form and site design. The FBC sets standards for height, setbacks, transparency, and frontage.

It implements part of the RASAP by establishing rules that support walkability, mixed uses, and cohesive design.

The Oceanfront Resort District Design Guidelines (2017) also apply to the Oceanfront Resort District and Resort Tourist zoning districts. The Guidelines support the goals of the RASAP and address building proportions, human scale, building articulation, quality materials, façade balance, and pedestrian orientation. When a development proposal meets the FBC, the Guidelines offer a vision for higher quality and more sustainable design. Projects using Optional Forms of Development or Alternative Compliance must follow the Guidelines.

The RASAP's mobility objectives are planned through the Resort Area Mobility Plan (RAMP). The RAMP includes detailed multimodal and parking strategies tailored to the Resort Area.

The City completed the Central Beach Small Area Plan that overlaps with the designated Regional Center area. The Plan illustrates how the area should redevelop, with a focus on the future use of City owned property. The Plan was created using the Regional Center Design design guidelines in Chapter 7.

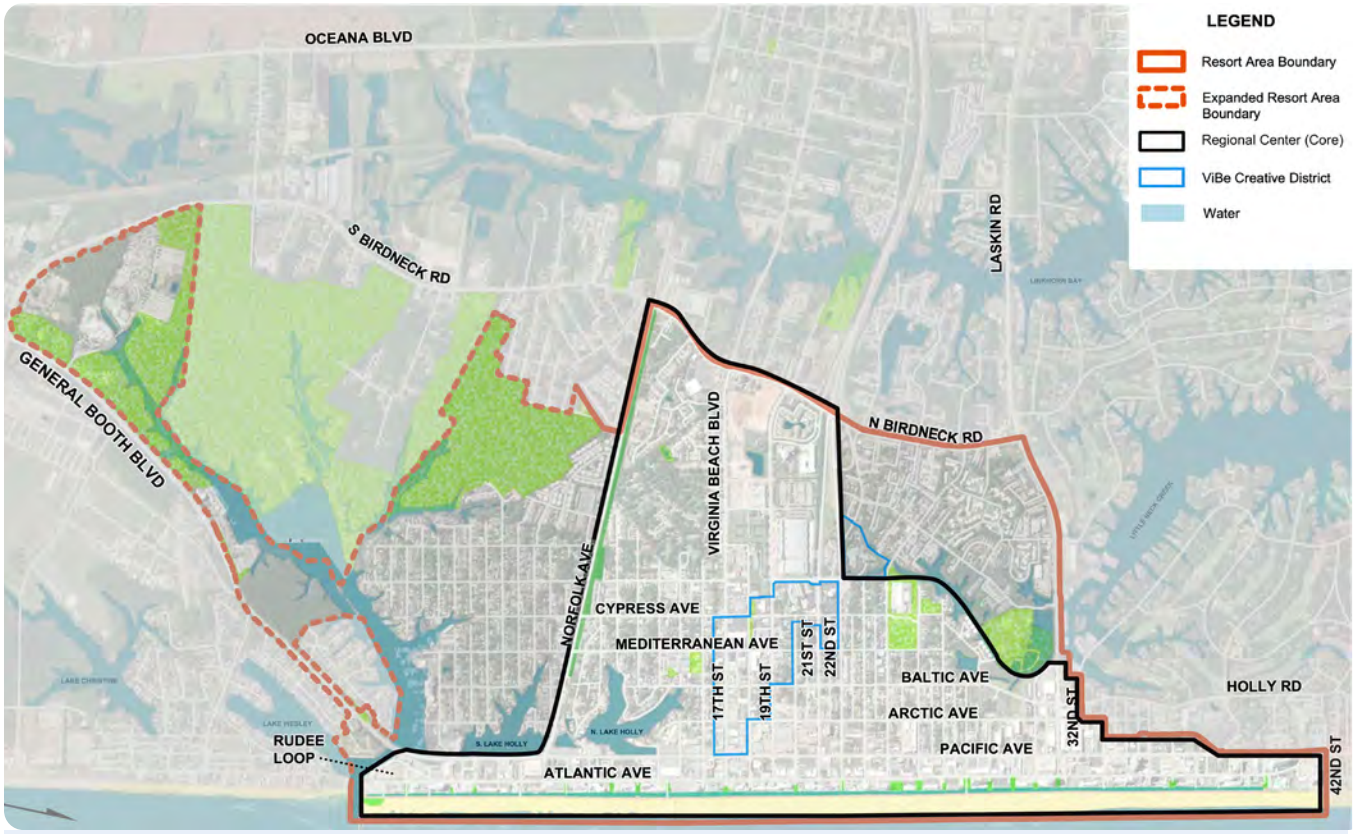


Figure 4-3 *- RASAP Boundary (revised map originating from the RASAP Plan, 2020)*

Coastal Place Types

Centers

The Coastal Context Area includes three Centers: one Regional Center, one City Center, and one Local Center ***(Figure 4-2)***. The Regional Center is located in and is primarily guided by the RASAP. The Central Beach Small Area Plan coincides with the Center and provides more detail on how redevelopment should occur. The City Center is oriented on the 31st Street and Pacific Avenue intersection. Its development is guided by the RASAP implementation tools described above.

There is one **Local Center Place Type** at the intersection of Shore Drive and Great Neck Road. Boundaries are defined by Core and Edge Zones surrounding a transit station focal point and modified by Type 1 Neighborhood Boundaries.

Coastal Centers Policies

Types and locations

- The boundaries for the two RASAP Centers are shown in ***Figure 4-2.***
    - The Central Beach Center is designated as a Regional Center.
    - The North East Center is designated as a City Center.
- The location for the designated Local Center outside the RASAP is shown in ***Figure 4-2***.

Development reviews

- Review proposed developments in the two RASAP designated Centers using the RASAP plan, Center design guidelines, policies, and plan-based zoning regulations.
- Review proposed developments in the one Coastal Center outside the RASAP without plan-based zoning regulations using the following options detailed in Chapter 7:
    - Zoning review based on existing zoning regulations augmented by Center design guidelines, the Commercial Area Pattern Book, and the *Mixed Use Development Guidelines.*
    - Rezoning review using Center design guidelines, the *Commercial Area Pattern Book*, and the *Mixed Use Development Guidelines.*
- Rezoning review based on creating a Center-wide plan that includes a plan-based zoning code and an infrastructure plan (street network, parks and stormwater treatment, and parking).

Economic development

- Collaborate among City departments to promote economic development in the designated RASAP Regional and City Centers. Collaboration should focus on:
    - Continually monitoring tourist market demand and needs and adjusting RASAP policies to align with demand and needs.
    - Maintaining an inventory of development sites and opportunities.
    - Coordinating with and incentivizing private developers to provide Center locations for new businesses.
- Identify aging retail centers in need of redevelopment or renovations to attract quality business services and employment.

Attainable housing

- Collaborate among City departments, housing agencies, and private developers to meet City-wide housing diversity and attainability goals in designated Centers by:
    - Following Center residential targets and design guidelines detailed in Chapter 7 during development reviews to increase the diversity of housing types.
    - Incorporating attainable housing when developing Center Plans and plan-based zoning regulations to simplify and streamline permitting.
    - Using incentives, such as infrastructure financing support, to encourage developers to incorporate attainable housing in projects.
- Pursue federal, state, local, and non-profit partnerships for grant options to support affordable housing.
- Create a partnership among the Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation, Planning and Zoning, and Economic development to define areas for providing affordable housing options and use the Attainable Housing Grant administered by the Virginia Beach Development Authority to support development in those areas.

Coastal Neighborhoods

All of the communities in the Coastal Area are designated as **Coastal Neighborhoods.** As described in Chapter 7, Coastal Neighborhood include zoning districts that allow various housing types. ***Appendix A*** identifies the zoning districts in Coastal neighborhoods.

Coastal Neighborhood Policies

Locations

- Designated Coastal Neighborhoods include zoning districts shown in ***Appendix A*** and are shown in ***Figure 4-2.***

Development review

- Review proposed developments in designated Coastal Neighborhoods using existing zoning regulations augmented by Coastal Neighborhood design guidelines in Chapter 7 and Neighborhood Plans policies for projects located in a designated Planning Area, including the following adopted plans and policies:
    - Old Beach Design Guidelines
    - Seapines Station Voluntary Guidelines
    - Shore Drive Corridor Plan
- Review and update zoning regulations in Coastal Neighborhoods to identify opportunities for increasing attainable housing and to streamline the review and approval of attainable housing projects.

Neighborhood safety and well-being

- Develop health, safety, and well-being measures as part of the neighborhood monitoring system and regularly review neighborhood conditions. Work with neighborhoods to make needed improvements. The measures could include:
    - Health
        - Walkable access to schools and parks
        - Tree canopy shading
    - Safety
        - Safe streets
        - Sidewalks and bike paths
        - Traffic volumes
        - Traffic speeds
        - Cut-through traffic
        - Crime rates
        - Emergency service response times
    - Well-being
        - Quality of housing
        - Age of housing (for potential historical designation)
        - Quality of neighborhood civic facilities, including parks
        - Flood protection
- Work with neighborhoods to identify, pursue formal designation of, and maintain historical resources, including districts, structures, and sites.

Coastal Communities

The Coastal Context Area includes several communities, most including several neighborhoods and all having a mix of housing types, a limited amount of small-scale commercial and civic uses, and a seaside-coastal design and character.

Shore Drive

The Shore Drive community extends from the Little Creek Naval Base to First Landing State Park. The community includes single-family homes and duplexes, with high-rise condominiums on the Lynnhaven Inlet. It includes several pockets of small-scale commercial development, one at Lookout Road and Sea View Avenue intersection and another on Shore Drive around Powhatan and Albemarle Avenues, and more intensely developed commercial areas on Shore Drive on the Lynnhaven Inlet and at the intersection of Shore Drive and Great Neck Road.

The Shore Drive Design Guidelines, adopted in 2002, and the Shore Drive Corridor Plan, adopted in 2000, guide the development and growth for the Shore Drive community.

North End

The North End Community extends from First Landing State Park to the Resort Area. It includes a mix of single-family homes and duplexes along Atlantic Avenue. There are several commercial areas, including one at the intersection of Atlantic and 56th Street. The North End Overlay District in the City's zoning ordinance guides development in the community.

Old Beach

The Old Beach neighborhood is south of Laskin Road and north of 22nd Street. It is one of the oldest neighborhoods in Virginia Beach, featuring a gridded street network and a mix of single-family homes, apartments, and condominiums.

It is also one of the city's most walkable neighborhoods, with stores, restaurants, schools, and religious centers within a quarter-mile walk of most homes. The neighborhood is in the Resort Area Strategic Growth Area.

South End / Shadowlawn

The South End / Shadowlawn Community extends from 17th Street to Rudee Inlet and from Pacific Avenue on the east to the wetland area on the west.

Single-family homes, duplexes, and small-scale multifamily buildings characterize the community. There are two commercial areas: the ViBe District in the north and the Marina District in the south. The ViBe District Connectivity Plan, 2017, is a community-driven effort that outlines a vision for improved connectivity within the ViBe Arts and Cultural District. The community lies within the Resort Area Strategic Growth Area.

Sandbridge

The Sandbridge Community extends from the Dam Neck Naval Station to the Back Bay Wildlife Refuge. It is a thin strip of beaches and dunes between the Atlantic Ocean and Back Bay. Its single-family homes are raised above major storm flooding levels. Condominiums on the north and south end of the community have ground-floor parking with units located above. Small-scale retail at the north and south ends could become Community Hubs.

Coastal Community Hubs

As detailed in Chapter 7, Community Hubs are compact, walkable gathering places for community activities, such as schools, churches, parks, or farmers markets. They are located near the midpoint of defined communities and have safe and convenient multimodal access to neighborhoods. Local community members will initiate Community Hub plans.

Coastal Community Policies

Locations

Designated Coastal communities include:

- Shore Drive
- North End
- Old Beach
- South End / Shadowlawn
- Sandbridge

Community Hubs and Connections

- Reference the ViBe District Connectivity Plan for recommended strategies, corridor priorities, and typical street sections concepts to ensure alignment with the community's connectivity vision in the ViBe District.
- Local community members will initiate Community Hub plans, using Community Hub design guidelines listed in Chapter 7. Planned Community Hubs will then be designated as part of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Plan for and build walking and biking connections between neighborhoods, Community Hubs, and other destinations in the community.

Identity and Branding

- Brand each community and design and deploy branding techniques in gateways and other prominent community locations.
- Inventory community facilities and programs and identify potential improvements, such as the need for more community civic land, community parks, or recreational centers.
- Work with neighborhoods to identify, pursue formal designation of, and maintain historical resources, districts, structures, and sites.
- Use all available resources to preserve designated historic resources, including those provided by the City's Historical Review Board and Historic Preservation Commission, the Princess Anne County/ Virginia Beach Historical Society, and the Interfacility Traffic Area and Transition Area Citizens Advisory Committee.
- Efforts to retain historic resources should be accomplished responsibly and innovatively. This should include providing land use planning guidance and tax credit assistance to owners of historic properties to help protect and preserve the City's limited number of valuable historic resources and surrounding open space areas.

Coastal Corridor Types

The Coastal Context Area includes the eastern end of the Virginia Beach Boulevard / I-264 Regional Multimodal Corridor. The Virginia Beach Boulevard Multimodal Corridor Plan detailed in Chapter 3 will define potential transit alignments and station locations within the RASAP.

The Coastal Context Area includes two City Multimodal Corridors ***(Figure 4-2):***

- Shore Drive from Little Creek Naval Amphibious Base to Atlantic Avenue.
- Atlantic Avenue from Shore Drive to Rudee Inlet.

Coastal Multimodal Corridors Policies

Locations

- Designated Multimodal Corridors in the Coastal Context Area include Atlantic Avenue, Pacific Avenue, Shore Drive, and portions of Virginia Beach Boulevard ***(Figure 4-2)***

Improvements and operations

- Improvements to and operations of Multimodal Corridors will follow the Master Transportation Plan augmented by the Multimodal Corridor design guidelines in Chapter 7, the Local Road Safety Action Plan and the Complete Streets Policy.

COMMISSIONER
OF
REVENUE
DROP BOX
TREASURERS
OFFICE
DROP BOX

Chapter 5:

Green Line Context Area

The Green Line Context Area will continue to buffer urban and suburban land north of the Green Line and rural land south of the Blue Line. Enhancements and connections among open spaces and environmental lands will create a connected open space system. Low-density neighborhoods will be a place for refuge, connected to neighborhood-oriented businesses and civic uses with walking and biking trails.

The Princess Anne Commons Planning Area in the western portion of the Green Line Context Area will continue to be a place for low-impact and low-intensity businesses and activities that help diversify the City's economy and culture.

The Transition Area will continue to support low-density residential and residential-serving uses while prioritizing the preservation of open space.

Green Line Context Area Introduction

The **Green Line Context Area** takes its name from the original seat of Princess Anne County. The Green Line complex, now referred to as the Municipal Center, houses most City government offices. It reflects both the agricultural and urban contexts of Virginia Beach.

The Green Line Context Area includes important natural systems, such as West Neck Creek and its surrounding wetlands that create a wide north-south natural corridor through the Area. The North Landing River and surrounding wetlands cover much of its southwest corner.

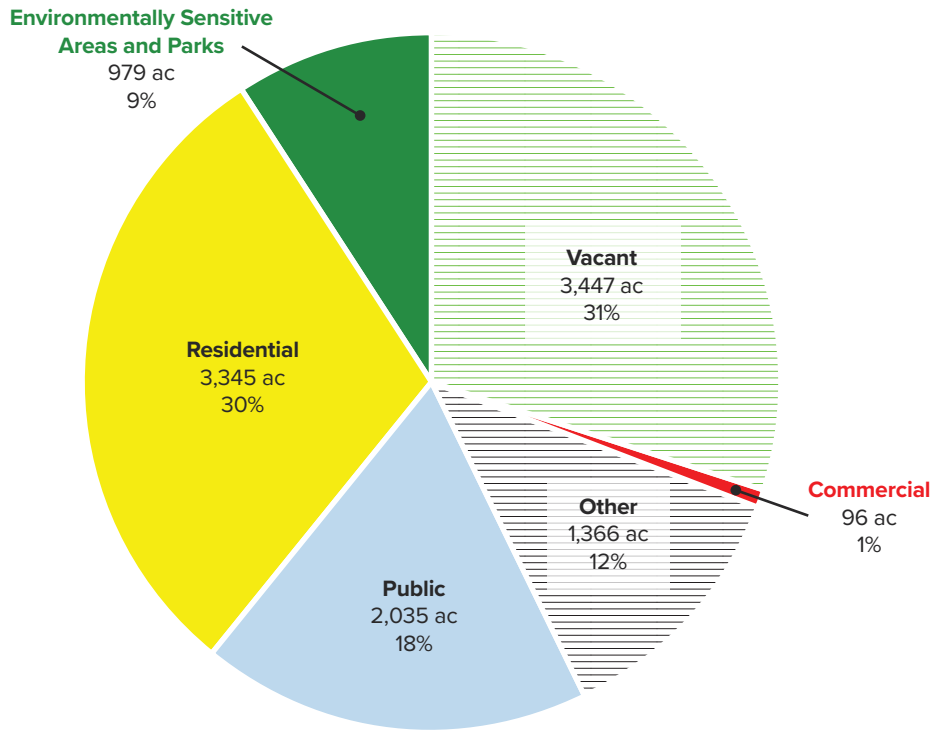
There are historic properties formally designated in the Green Line Context Area, including Nimmo Church, Thomas Lovett House, and the Green Line. There are likely properties that are currently eligible but not yet listed and others that could become eligible for historic designation in the future.

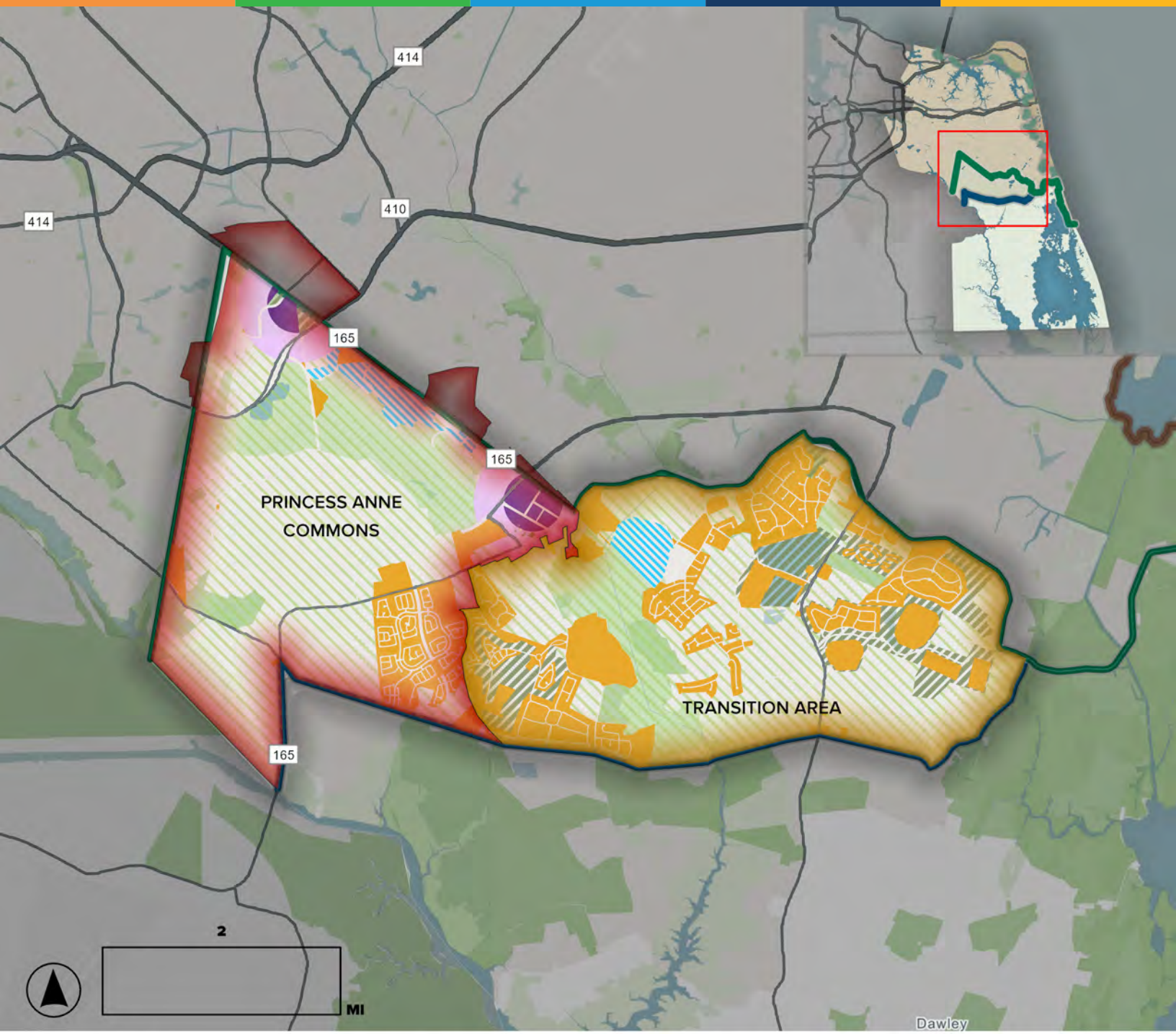
The Green Line Context Area covers around 11,300 acres ***(Figure 5-1).*** Nearly a third of the area (3,400 acres) is either vacant or agricultural. Almost another third is low-density residential neighborhoods.

There are small pockets of commercial and higher intensity residential development.

The Green Line Context Area includes two Planning Areas, the Transition Area in the eastern half and the Princess Anne Commons Area in the western half. It also includes two City Centers, including the Municipal Center and the Health Education Center located along Princess Anne Road. This area is also home the Transition Neighborhood Place Type. ***(Figure 5-2)***.

Figure 5-1 – *Land uses by area in the Green Line Context Area (in acres)*





PLACE TYPES

City Centers
- Core
- Edge

Special Use
- Industrial and Logistics

Neighborhoods
- Transitional Neighborhood

NON-PLACE TYPES
- Agriculture
- Preservation

PLANNING AREAS
- Transition Area
- Princess Anne Commons

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES
- Green Line
- Blue Line

Figure 5-2 *- Green Line Area Planning Areas and Place Types*

Green Line Context Area Goals and Objectives

Citywide Goals

- Environmental sustainability
- Rural and agricultural land protection
- Economic sustainability and diversity
- Housing attainment and diversity
- Community identity and connections
- Neighborhood well-being and safety

Green Line Area Goals

Environmental sustainability

- Improve water quality and mitigate flood impacts.
- Protect, enhance, and connect natural lands and open spaces.
- Increase access to nature.
- Protect residents from natural hazards.
- Encourage efficient land use and green buildings and infrastructure.
- Protect existing properties from sea level rise, flooding, and erosion.
- Enhance the ecological resilience of natural areas.

Rural and agricultural land protection

- Transition development intensities between urban development north of the Green Line and rural-agricultural areas south of the Blue Line.
- Protect and sustain natural lands, open spaces, and environmental systems south of the Green Line.

Economic sustainability and diversity

- Retain and create jobs to foster economic growth and vitality in the Princess Anne Commons Planning Area through light industrial, technology-based uses, and unique venues and activities such as sports tourism, esports, ecotourism, and educational opportunities that attract year-round visitors and sustain the city's economy and tax base.
- Nurture and expand existing businesses to facilitate economic growth.

Holding space for suggested image

Housing attainment and diversity

- Ensure the quality of existing and new housing.
- Take advantage of Center redevelopment to increase housing diversity and attainability.
- Find opportunities outside of Centers to increase housing diversity and attainability.

Community identity and connections

- Identify and enhance the unique identities of Green Line communities.
- Provide easy walking and bike access to Community Hubs.

Neighborhood well-being and safety

- Develop a neighborhood monitoring system that continually tracks factors of interest to residents and stakeholders in local neighborhoods, such as sense of safety, housing conditions, traffic, sidewalk connectivity, or shade.
- Use the monitoring system to regularly report on neighborhood well-being and recommend needed improvements.
- Protect the health, safety, and wellbeing of neighborhoods.
- Provide ample and connected open spaces within neighborhoods appropriate to the Green Line Context Area.

Holding space for suggested image

Green Line Area Objectives

Environmental sustainability

- Continually monitor flooding and water quality and update Sea Level Wise strategies and other flood protection and water quality strategies as needed.
- Continue implementing Sea Level Wise recommendations and other stormwater management efforts to mitigate flooding.
- Continue programs that protect natural lands and develop the Environmental and Open Space Framework Plan to identify how to leverage initiatives such as flood protection land purchases to connect protected lands.
- Apply the Transition Neighborhood design guidelines that create connected open spaces within new neighborhoods.
- Find opportunities to develop the Linear Park System.
- Continue programs that protect water quality in local water bodies.
- Continue to use the Green Sea Blueway and Greenway Management Plan for grant applications and to support the Outdoors Plan.
- Continue to implement the Outdoors Plan, the Active Transportation Plan, and aquire more open space via the Open Space Acquisition Program.

Rural and agricultural land protection

- Follow both the Transition Area Design Guidelines and the Transition Neighborhood Place Types design guidelines when reviewing proposed neighborhood development.
- Use the City Center design guidelines for the two Centers identified along the Green Line to guide development within the Centers and to protect adjacent neighborhoods and open spaces surrounding Centers.

Economic sustainability and diversity

- Continue to update and follow the Interfacility Traffic Area and Vicinity Master Plan to guide the development of unique sports and cultural venues, agriculture, and innovative technology businesses in the Princess Anne Commons Planning Area.

Housing attainment and diversity

- Implement recommendations adopted by City Council from the 2024 Virginia Beach Housing Study.
- Use Transition Neighborhood Place Type guidelines to increase the diversity of housing types and the number of affordable homes.
- Update zoning regulations to simplify the review of attainable housing development in Green Line neighborhoods.
- Identify locations and strategies for accommodating future senior housing demand.

Community identity and connections

- Identify and “brand” Green Line communities through place-making and tailored design guidelines.
- Local community members will initiate Community Hub plans. Planned Community Hubs will then be designated as part of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Develop walking and biking connections between neighborhoods and Community Hubs.

Neighborhood well-being and safety

- Continually monitor housing conditions and well-being in neighborhoods and make improvements as needed.
- Buffer existing neighborhoods adjacent to Centers.

Green Line Area Planning Areas

Transition Area

The **Transition Area** covers the eastern portion of the Context area and is primarily low-density residential and residential service uses that focus on maintaining open space. The Nimmo Church is an important historic resource in the Transition Area. The character and pattern of development has been orchestrated by the Transition Area Design Guidelines, adopted in 2015, which provides for environmental protection, historical character, and a more rural pattern of development. The Transition Area Design Guidelines also includes maps indicating areas where new local trails are appropriate (refer to Transition Area Design Guidelines - Appendix A). The boundaries of the Transition Area remain the same, and are not changing as part of the update to the Comprehensive Plan.

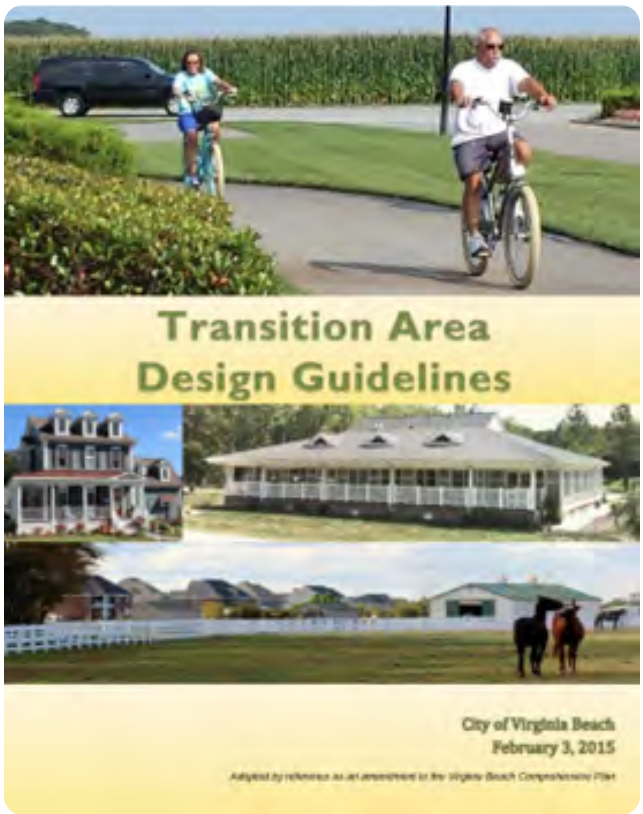


Figure 5-3 – *Cover for the Transition Area Design Guidelines*

Transition Planning Area Policies

- Continue to follow the goals, objectives and design guidelines in the Transition Area Design Guidelines augmented with the Transition Neighborhood design guidelines during development reviews and rezonings.
- Do not allow densities bonuses.
- Using Center Place Type design guidelines, ensure buffers between designated Centers and Transition Neighborhoods.
- Through neighborhood development reviews and land acquisitions, find opportunities to create a connected open space network.
- Develop the trails included in the Transition Area Design Guidelines and new trails that could be developed on new connected open spaces to create the Linear Park System trails within the Green Line Context Area.
- Use the Environmental Open Space Framework Plan, once developed, to identify opportunities and strategies for creating open space connections and strategies for protecting those connections, including land purchases and proffers, and easements.
- Encourage the protection of golf courses and other privately owned public spaces for public use if the owners seek to shift their use.

Princess Anne Commons

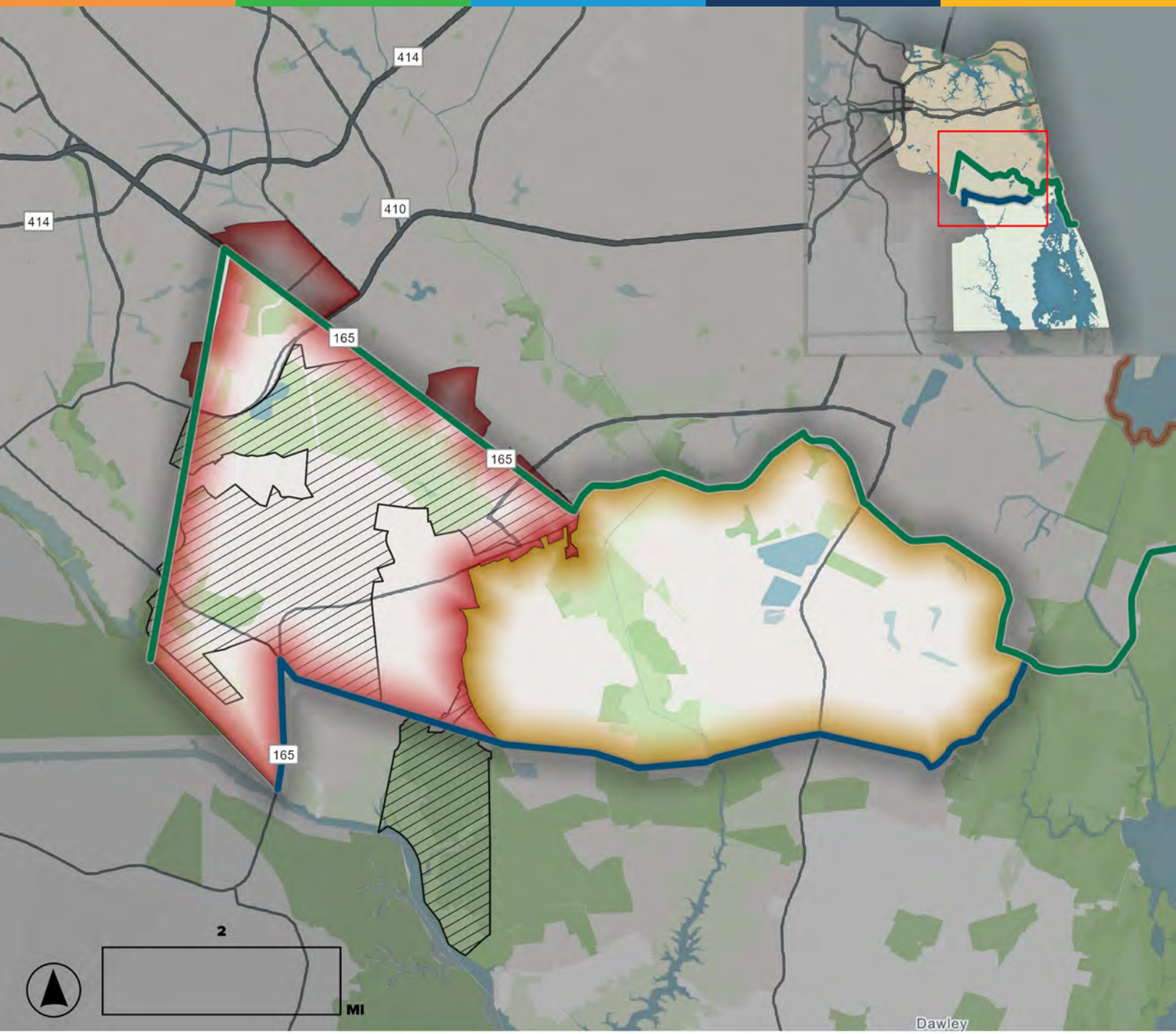
The **Princess Anne Commons Planning Area** in the western portion of the Context Area includes a mix of unique non-residential uses and activities of City-wide importance, including Innovation Park, Tidewater Community College, Veterans United Home Loans Amphitheater, Sentara Princess Anne Hospital, and the Virginia Beach Sportsplex. Development in Princess Anne Commons has been guided by the Interfacility Traffic Area and Vicinity Master Plan.

The ITA Plan, shown in ***Figure 5-4*** and whose boundaries are shown in more detail in ***Figure 5-5***, is the main guiding document for the Princess Anne Commons Planning Area. The plan establishes land use policy that supports military operations by ensuring compatibility with frequent jet overflights between NAS Oceana and NALF Fentress. Via the ITA Acquisition Program, the City has purchased roughly 60 percent of land in the ITA as of 2017.

Figure 5-4 – *Interfacility Traffic Area and Vicinity Master Plan (2017)*

Princess Anne Commons Planning Area Policies

- Continue to follow the design concepts and principles of the ITA and Vicinity Master Plan as updated by City Council.
- Continue to follow the Innovation Park Design Guidelines.
- Continue pursuing the target industries identified in the ITA and Vicinity Master Plan, focused on the designated Initiative Areas like Innovation Park, Sportsplex, and Municipal Center, while allowing flexibility for evolving economic activities.
- Pursue the ITA and Vicinity Master Plan goal to increase resilience to sea level rise and flooding by exceeding stormwater regulations, utilizing innovative solutions, and improving public infrastructure.
- Incorporate the recommendations for the Southeastern Parkway and Greenway, including developing the Southeastern Trail within the right of way, into the ITA and Vicinity Master Plan. Update the plan's trail system accordingly and integrate the final design into the Linear Park System.



PLANNING AREAS

- ITA and Vicinity Study Area
- Princess Anne Commons
- Transition Area

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES

- Green Line
- Blue Line

Figure 5-5 - *ITA Area and Green Line Area Planning Areas*

Green Line Area Place Types

Figure 5-2 illustrates the organization of Place Types in the Green Line Context Area. The Area includes:

- Portions of two City Center Place Types along Princess Anne Road, the Municipal Center and the Sentara Princess Anne Hospital.
- Special Use Place Type as defined by the Interfacility Traffic Area and Vicinity Master Plan within the Princess Anne Commons Planning Area, and
- Transition Neighborhood Place Types.

Details regarding the objectives and design guidelines for Place Types are provided in Chapter 7.

Green Line Area Centers

The **Green Line Context Area** includes two mixed-use, walkable, employment-oriented, City Centers along Princess Anne Road – the Municipal Center and the Health Educational Center. Both Centers straddle the Green Line, with portions located in the Inland Context Area and in the Green Line Context Area.

Centers are oriented around potential transit stops, with higher intensity development in the Core Zone transitioning to lower intensity development in the Edge Zone. Buffers along the Edge Zone transition Center development to match the scale and type of development adjacent to the Center. Center boundaries extending a half mile from their focal point are adjusted inward by either agricultural or Transition Neighborhood zoning district boundaries ***Figure 5-2.*** Details of Center design guidelines are provided in Chapter 7.

Green Line Area Center Policies

Locations

- Designated City Center locations and boundaries are shown in ***Figure 5-2.***

Development review

- Proposed development within each designated Center has the following options:
  - Where applicable, develop according to the existing zoning requirements for the property (by-right development) and as informed by the ITA and Vicinity Master Plan.
  - Develop according to City Center Place Type design guidelines appropriate for the property's location within the Center (Core versus Edge Zone guidelines) and informed by the ITA and Vicinity Master Plan, where applicable, and Transition Area Design Guidelines.
- Limit building heights to four stories in the Municipal Center and six stories in the area's northwestern Center.
- The City may update and enhance the Interfacility Traffic Area and Vicinity Master Plan to align with Center design guidelines. Updates could include:
  - A form-based code that adds design requirements for proposed development.
  - Center infrastructure, including:
    - Internal street network alignments and designated street types.
    - Stormwater treatment improvements and parks.
    - Shared parking locations and types (structured versus surface parking).
    - An infrastructure financing plan.

Green Line Area Neighborhoods

Most of the development in the Transition Area of the Green Line Context Area is low-density residential neighborhoods. Development of those neighborhoods has been regulated by the zoning ordinance and the Transition Area Design Guidelines, which states:

"...encourage innovation and creativity in the appropriate design of buildings and sites so that all development and redevelopment in this unique area of the City will be respectful of its natural heritage and historical legacy and sensitive to its environmental value."

Neighborhoods currently zoned for single family homes are designated as Transition Neighborhood. The objectives and design guidelines for the Transition Neighborhood Place Type, detailed in Chapter 7, will work in combination with policies in the Transition Area Design Guidelines and zoning regulations to guide residential development in the Green Line Context Area. The few neighborhoods in the Area currently zoned for multifamily and single homes are designated as Type 2 Neighborhoods ***(Figure 5-2)***.

Green Line Area Neighborhood Policies

Locations

- Designated Transition Neighborhoods include zoning districts shown in ***Appendix A*** and are shown in ***Figure 5-2.***

Development review

- Review proposed development within designated Transition Neighborhoods using zoning regulations augmented by Transition Area Design Guidelines and Transition Neighborhood Place Type design guidelines detailed in Chapter 7.
- Review neighborhood development rezoning requests using the Transition Area Design Guidelines and the Transition Neighborhood Place Type design guidelines in Chapter 7.
- Use Place Type design guidelines in Chapter 7 to ensure proper buffering between neighborhoods and Centers.
- Density bonuses are not allowed in the Green Line Context Area.
- Review and update zoning regulations in Transition Neighborhoods to identify opportunities for increasing attainable housing and to streamline the review and approval of attainable housing projects.

Neighborhood safety and well being

- Develop health, safety, and well-being measures as part of the neighborhood monitoring system and regularly review neighborhood conditions. Work with neighborhoods to make needed improvements. The measures could include:
  - Health
    - Walking access to schools and parks
    - Tree canopy shading
  - Safety
    - Safe streets
    - Sidewalks and bike paths
    - Traffic volumes
    - Traffic speeds
    - Cut-through traffic
    - Crime rates
    - Emergency service response times
  - Well-being
    - Quality of housing
    - Age of housing (for potential historical designation)
    - Quality of neighborhood civic facilities, including parks.
    - Flood protection

Green Line Area Communities

East of Princess Anne Commons is the Transition Area. Neighborhoods in this area all form a unique community. The City will work with residents and the TA/ITA CAC to develop a brand that reflects the character for the community. The brand will be used in the designs of potential gateways and other prominent locations within the Green Line Context Area. The City will also work with residents and the TA/ITA CAC to identify locations and plan for one or more Community Hubs and walking and biking connections to those Hubs.

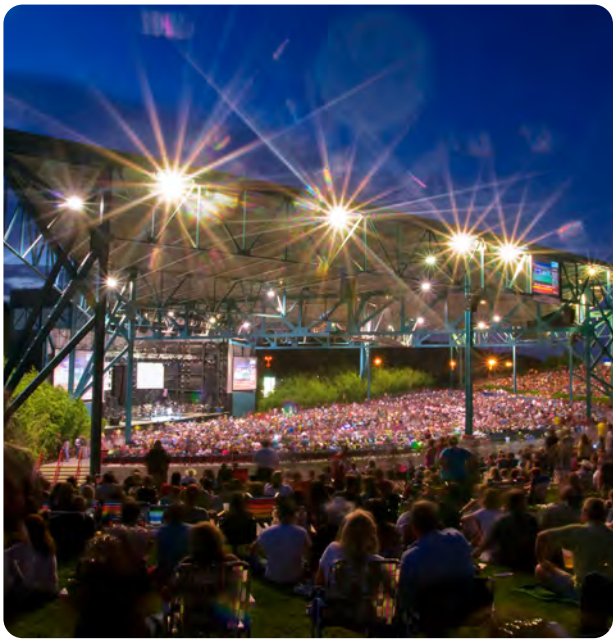
Green Line Area Community Policies

Identity and Branding

- Identify and brand Green Line communities and design and deploy branding techniques in gateways and other prominent community locations.
- Inventory community facilities and programs and identify potential improvements, such as the need for more community civic land, community parks, or recreational centers.
- Work with neighborhoods to identify, pursue formal designation of, and maintain historical resources, including districts, structures, and sites.
- Use all available resources to preserve designated historic resources, including those provided by the City's Historical Review Board and Historic Preservation Commission, the Princess Anne County/ Virginia Beach Historical Society, and the Interfacility Traffic Area and Transition Area Citizens Advisory Committee.
- Efforts to retain historic resources should be accomplished responsibly and innovatively. This should include providing land use planning guidance and tax credit assistance to owners of historic properties to help protect and preserve the City's limited number of valuable historic resources and surrounding open space areas.

Community Hubs and Connections

- Local community members will initiate Community Hub plans, using Community Hub design guidelines listed in Chapter 7. Planned Community Hubs will then be designated as part of the Comprehensive Plan.
- Plan for and build walking and biking connections between neighborhoods, Community Hubs, and other destinations in the community.



Endnote

Front page image:

- WikiMedia User. (2017, December 24). Virginia Beach City Hall [Photograph]. Wikimedia Commons. Licensed under CC BY-SA 3.0. https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Virginia_Beach_City_Hall.jpg

Chapter 6:
Rural Context Area

The City will enhance and connect rural and natural lands continue to support viable agriculture south of the Blue Line. It will strive to create an open space system that safeguards the rural landscape and agriculture, supports eco-tourism opportunities, mitigates flooding, promotes wildlife migration, and provides public access to nature and recreation.

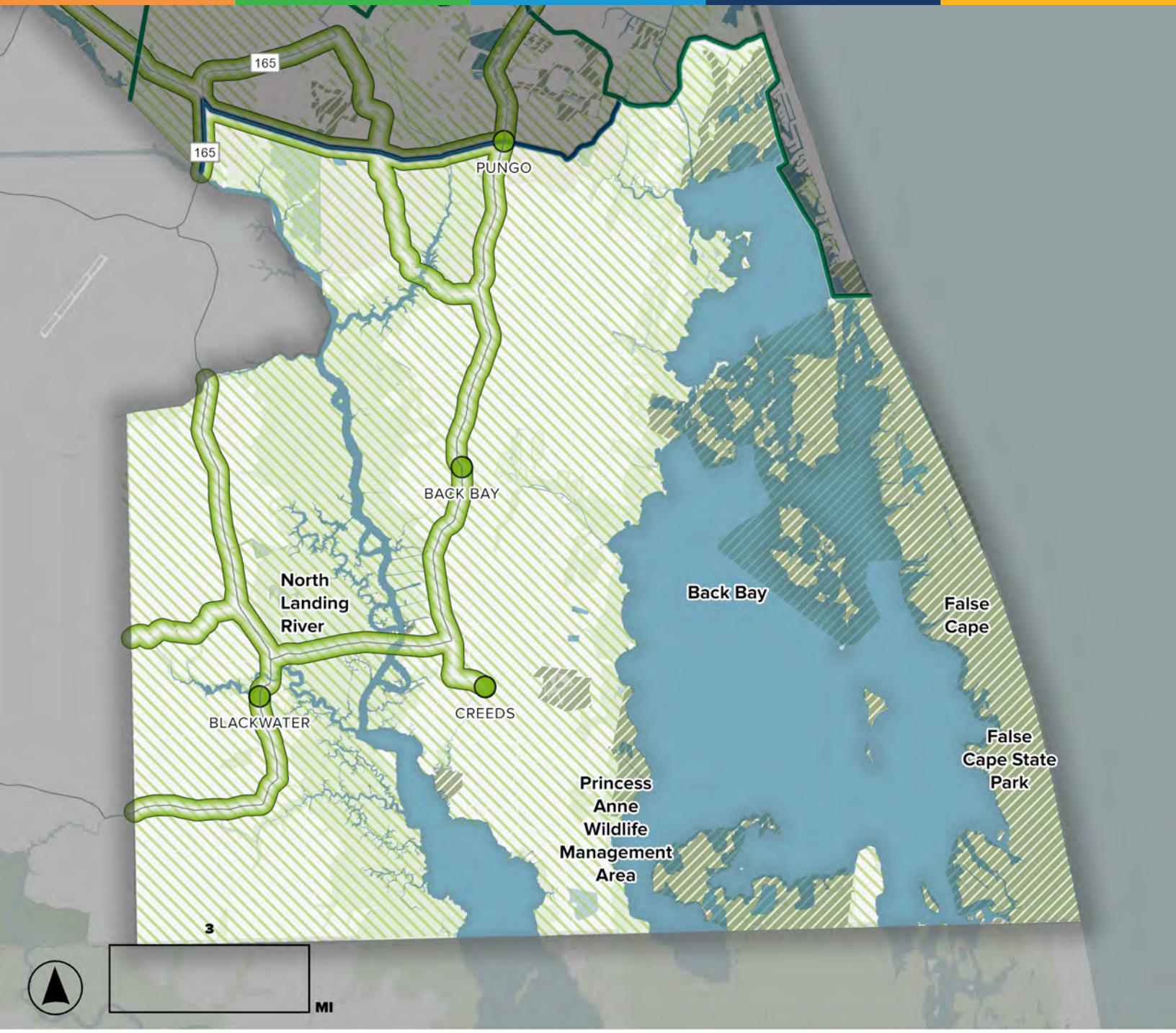
Introduction

The **Rural Context Area** is the southernmost area of the City of Virginia Beach. It is bounded on the north by the Blue Line and the Green Line, which follow Indian River Road, Newbridge Road, and Sandbridge Road; on the west by the City of Chesapeake; on the east by the Atlantic Ocean; and on the south by the City limits and the state line ***(Figure 6-1).***

Many residents in the Rural Context Area refer to the area as "The County" in recognition of Virginia Beach's roots as Princess Anne County. Most of area's jobs are associated with agriculture. Its activities include farmstands, eco-tourism, and seasonal festivals. It is home to the Military Aviation Museum. The Pleasant Ridge School Historic District was recently added to the National Register of Historic Places. Other areas and structures in the Rural Context Area may also become eligible or be nominated for historic designation in the future.

Most of the Rural Context Area is comprised of soils not suitable for major residential development. Rural residential development is limited to areas capable of handling septic systems and in places where it would complement, rather than conflict, with the landscape.

The Rural Context Area covers 142 square miles, around 46 percent of the City's total area. Most if the area is environmentally protected land or farmed. It contains large and vital natural landscapes, including protected lands such as Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge and False Cape State Park. ***Figure 6-2*** shows the land use breakdown for the Rural Context Area.



CENTERS

Rural Village

CORRIDORS

Rural

ENVIRONMENTAL

Surface waters

RURAL PLACE TYPES

Agriculture

Preservation

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES

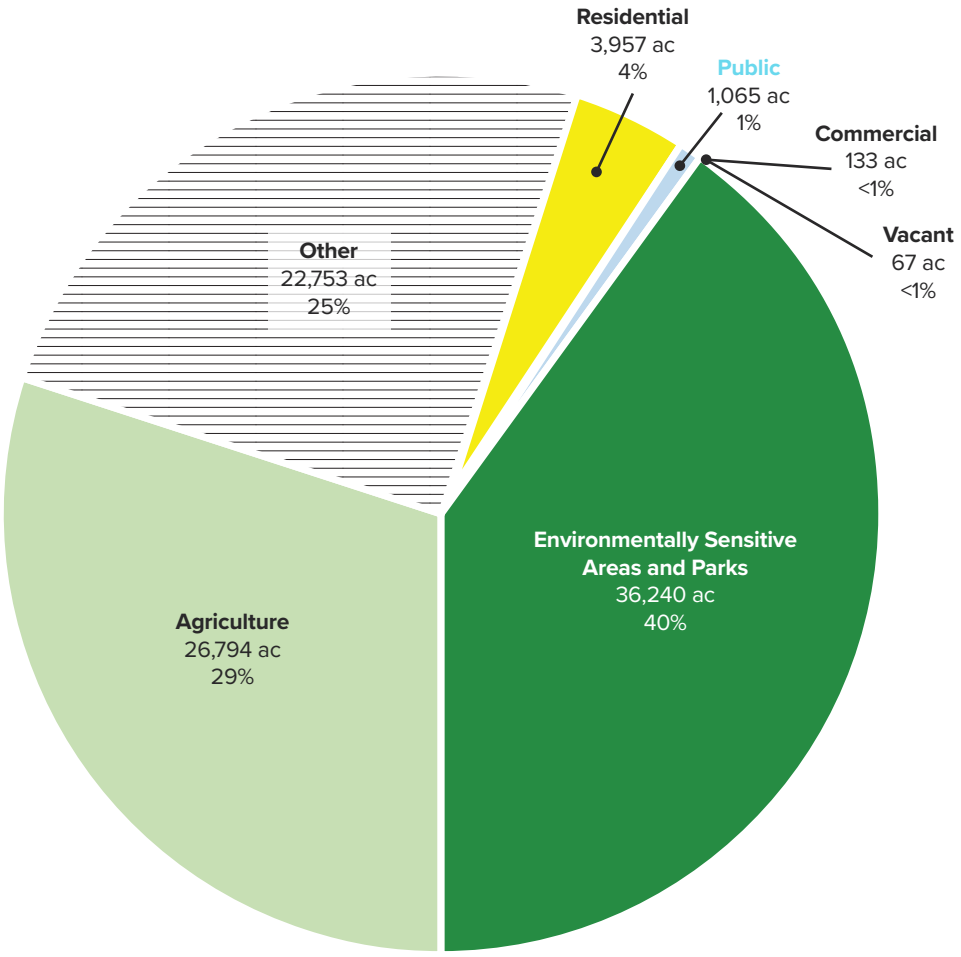
Green Line

Blue Line

Coastal-Inland

Figure 6-1 - *Rural Context Area*

***Figure 6-2** – Land uses in the Rural Context Area (in acres)*



Agricultural Reserve Program protects the viability of agriculture for the City's future. Landowners sell development rights to productive farmlands to the City, but the land remains privately held. As of 2024, the program protected over 10,000 acres of farmland.

Goals and Objectives

The goals for the Rural Context Area are:

- Protect and sustain natural lands, open spaces, and environmental systems.
- Support sustainable agricultural production.
- Provide opportunities to access nature.

Supporting objective include:

- Implement Sea Level Wise strategies for flood control.
- Continue the Agricultural Reserve Program and Open Space Acquisition Program..
- Limit non-agricultural land uses outside designated Rural Villages.
- Support access to expansive nature, eco-tourism, and agri-tourism operations through the Linear Park System.

Place Types

Rural Village is the only Place Type in the Rural Context Area. Village locations shown in ***Figure 6-1*** include Pungo, Back Bay, Creeds, and Blackwater. Rural Villages are distinctive hubs of small-scale retail and civic uses oriented to those living and working in the Rural Area. They extend no more than 50 acres around crossroads along Rural Corridors, with buildings no higher than two stories. Rural Village design guidelines are detailed in Chapter 7.

Corridor Types

Rural Corridor is the only Corridor Type in the Rural Context Area. Rural Corridors include roads extending from the Rural Area into other parts of the City and into Chesapeake and North Carolina. Their primary functions are farm-to-market connections and access to destinations within the Rural Context Area. They have no more than two lanes with drainage into parallel swales. Property access is limited in support of the policy for low development densities. Rural Corridor design and operational details are provided in Chapter 7.

Policies

The following policies apply across the entire Rural Context Area.

Natural Land and Open Space Protection

- Enhance and connect natural systems and open spaces as recommended by the Environmental and Open Space Framework Plan, once adopted, and the Natural Heritage Technical Report.
- **Support public access to protected natural and open spaces** along with state and federal partners, maintain the accessibility and quality of recreational areas.
- Develop the Linear Park System as outlined in Chapter 3.

Area-Wide Development

- **Preserve historical properties by:**
  - Using available resources, including those provided by the City's Historical Review Board and Historic Preservation Commission, to preserve designated historic resources.
  - Providing land use planning guidance and tax credit assistance to owners of historic properties to help protect and preserve historic resources and surrounding open space areas.
  - Encouraging owners of qualified properties to participate in the Virginia Beach Historical Register program.
- **Limit development outside Rural Villages by:**
  - Following existing agricultural zoning requirements that limit development intensities and uses.
  - Reviewing and updating the zoning ordinance as needed to ensure compatibility with the goals and objectives of the Rural Context Area. At a minimum, the update should:
    - Limit significant development activity outside Rural Villages, especially non-agricultural development.
    - Ensure existing agricultural zoning districts function as intended and do not inhibit desirable primary or secondary agricultural activities.
  - Prohibiting new residential development in the regulatory floodplain.
  - Not allowing the extension of water, sewer and utilities, and limiting all other infrastructure investments apart from those directly supporting roadway safety, stormwater management, and flood mitigation.
  - Limiting farmland conversion pressure by not allowing utility-scale solar installations in the Rural Context Area. These uses should be allowed only as small-scale or accessory uses that generate solar power exclusively for on-property use, where small scale means energy generated only for use by the property. Reconcile these changes in the update to the City's zoning ordinance.
  - Emphasizing the importance of a physically accessible, walkable, and rollable footprint Rural Villages.
  - Ensure proper environmental stewardship in areas with significant excavation, such as borrow pits.

Sustainable Agriculture

- Continue the Agricultural Reserve Program (ARP) and investigate enhancements to the program.
- Evaluate a pilot farmland restoration fund to add farmlands that are under-utilized, challenged, or requiring remediation.
- Prioritize adding farmlands that form contiguous farmland areas.
- In partnership with regional educational institutions, promote innovative farming career opportunities, such as hydroponics, greenhouse growing, and restorative farming practices.

Rural Villages

- The following Rural Villages are designated in the Comprehensive Plan and shown in ***Figure 6-1:***
    - Pungo
    - Creeds
    - Back Bay
    - Blackwater
- Development within Designated Rural Villages will be reviewed using existing zoning regulations and Rural Village Place Type design guidelines included in Chapter 7.

Rural Corridors

- Designated Rural Corridors are shown in ***Figure 6-1*** and include:
    - Princess Anne Road
    - North Landing Road
    - Blackwater Road
    - Nimmo Parkway
    - Head River Road
    - Indian Creek Road
    - Pungo Ferry Road
- Ensure consistency between the Rural Corridor design and operational guidelines and the Master Transportation Plan.
- Evaluate and improve Rural Corridors according to the Rural Corridor design and operational guidelines.

SHERATON

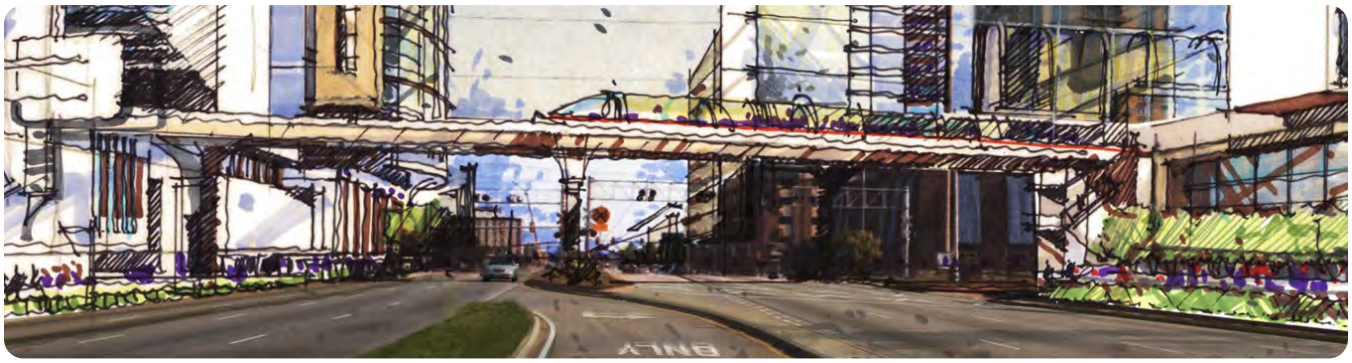
Chapter 7:
Place Type Polices and Design Guidelines

Introduction

Place Types and Corridor Types define the vision for unique areas across Virginia Beach and build on the "Big Ideas" from Chapter 1 that advance goals in resilience, environmental sustainability, quality of life, and transportation choice.

This Chapter establishes **policies and design guidelines** for **Place Types and Corridor Types.** Each Place Type defines an area's intended land use and character, incorporating transportation, design, and environmental factors. Corridor Types guide the design and operations of major roadways that connect with Place Types. Much like the zoning ordinance regulates development within designated zoning districts, the policies and guidelines in this Chapter direct development patterns within Place and Corridor Type areas designated in this Plan and shown in ***Figure 7-1***.

The Place Type guidelines included in this chapter, particularly Center design guidelines, focus on key design concepts that integrate differing elements and properties across a designated Place Type area. They illustrate how to create a cohesive, legible, and functional place. They reference City efforts, such as the Local Road Safety Action Plan (2023), to calibrate guidelines. They inform planning and design at differing scales, ranging from Center plans and regulations (e.g., the Pembroke SGA Plan), to the design of infrastructure (e.g, a stormwater system), to privately initiated site design and City review of that design.



Place Types and Zoning

Core to the City's growth strategy is redeveloping commercial properties along major corridors in the Inland and Coastal Context Areas. The designated Place Types in the Comprehensive Plan are the primary mechanism that will orchestrate the transformations.

The City's adopted zoning ordinance is the primary tool for regulating land use and development. It is currently organized by residential, commercial, and industrial land use types. The designated Place Type districts in this Plan geographically and functionally relate to existing zoning districts (Relationships Place Types and the zoning ordinance are detailed in ***Appendix A***).

The Place Type design guidelines in this Chapter illustrate how current zoning regulations should be updated to better align with the goals and objectives of the Plan. They also can be used to augment development reviews until the zoning ordinance is updated.

Place Type and Zoning Relationship

The zoning ordinance helped define Place Types and their boundaries. ***Appendix A*** lists the relationships.

Development reviews for properties within designated Place Types will be augmented with the policies and design guidelines for the designated Place Type.

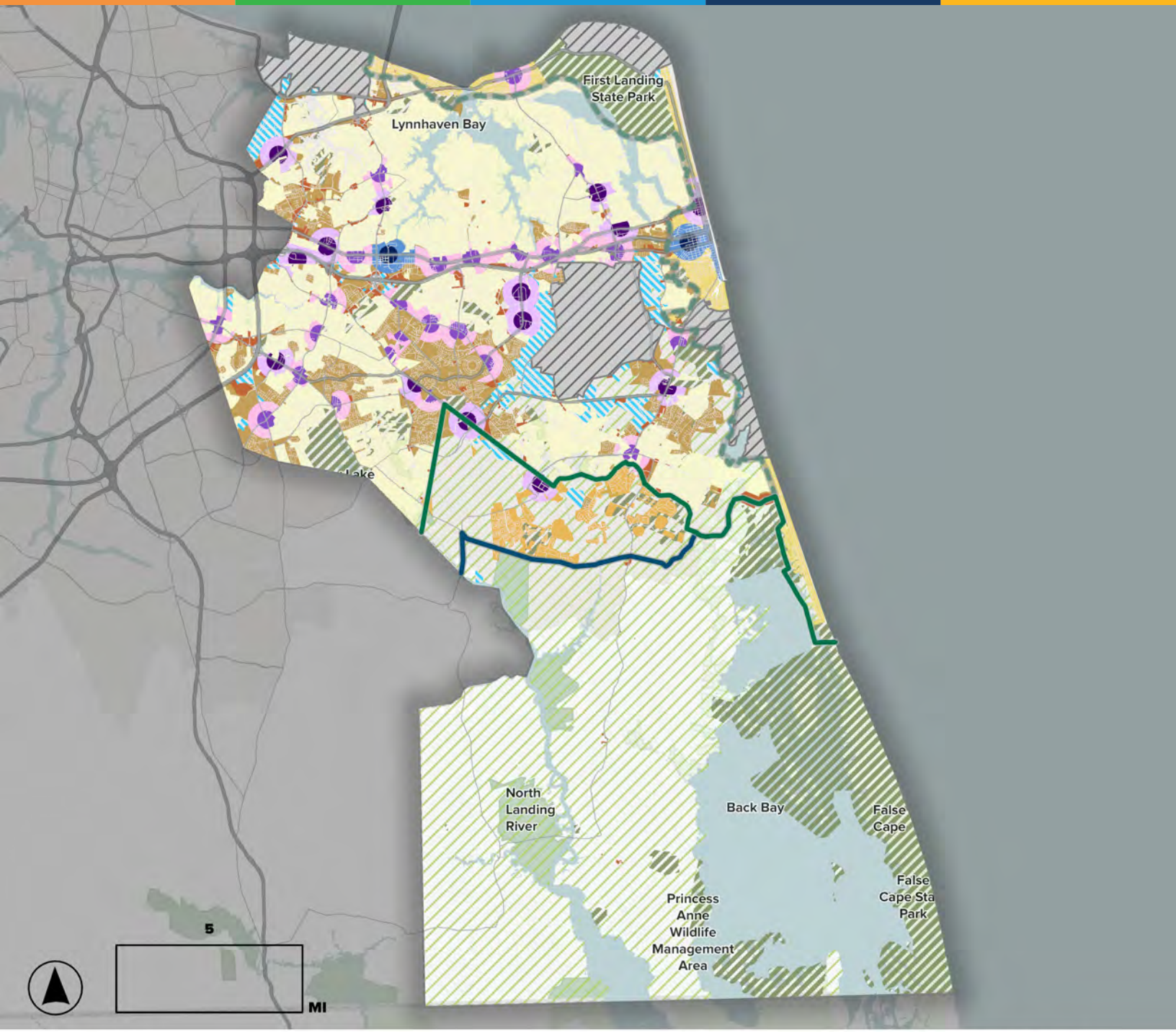
Development Options within Place Types

The development of properties will follow existing zoning regulations (by-right development) augmented by Place Type design guidelines. Details of development options are provided later in this chapter.

Planning Areas, Zoning, and Place Types

Development reviews for properties located in Planning Areas are guided by specific plans and policies. Planning Areas include the Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs), Special Economic Growth Areas (SEGAs), Princess Anne Commons, the Transition Area, and others. Planning Area details are provided in the Inland, Coastal, and Green Line chapters of the Plan.

Some Planning Areas and Place Types overlap. This plan provides policies that guide activities between the two.



PLACE TYPES

Regional
- Core
- Edge

City
- Core
- Edge

Local
- Core
- Edge

Special Use
- Industrial and Logistics
- Business

Neighborhoods
- Neighborhood - Type 1
- Neighborhood - Type 2
- Coastal Neighborhood
- Transitional Neighborhood

NON-PLACE TYPES
- Agriculture
- Preservation

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES
- Green Line
- Blue Line
- Coastal-Inland

MILITARY
- Military area

Figure 7-1 *- Map of Place Types across Virginia Beach*

Centers

The Big Idea of **Multimodal Centers and Corridors** emerged from the public's continuing interests in:

- Maintaining the City's urban growth boundary, the Green Line, to protect rural, natural, and open space in the southern half of the City,
- Protecting neighborhoods that cover most of the land north of the Green Line,
- Continuing to grow and diversify the City's economic and cultural opportunities, and
- Improving walking, rolling, biking, and transit as viability alternatives to driving a car.

Given those interests, much of the City's growth will be directed toward redevelopment and infill of non-residential parcels along major corridors north of the Green Line, creating easily accessible, compact, mixed-use, and pedestrian-friendly patterns. Those transformations will optimize the relationships between land use **(Centers)** and transportation **(Multimodal Corridors)**.

Designated Centers, as shown in ***Figure 7-2***, will be designed with gridded street networks to make walking and rolling safe and convenient. They will have a mix of land uses and activities that are within convenient walking distance. They will feature accessible, walkable, and human-scale patterns. Street networks and buildings will orient around a transit station, making transit a safer and more convenient travel option to places beyond the Center. ***Figure 7-3*** highlights the key design concepts that optimize relationships.

There are three Center Place Types: **Regional, City,** and **Local**. Each serves a different geographic range of travel to and from the Center. This can also be thought of as the Center's market area. These differences affect the size, building heights, massing, and mix of jobs and housing.

- **Regional Centers** are compact, high-intensity, mixed-use settings for regionally oriented businesses and civic venues. They are active places for people across all income levels to live.
- **City Centers** are compact, medium to high-intensity, mixed-use settings for city-oriented businesses and civic venues. They are active places for people across all income levels to live.
- **Local Centers** are compact, low-to-moderate intensity settings with a diverse range of housing types for people across all income levels, emphasizing locally oriented businesses and civic uses.

The following sections lists functional objectives applicable ***to all three Center types***, covering land use, organization and access, building form and massing, environment and parks, and parking and loading. ***Appendix A*** at the end of this section lists differences in size, scale, and approach for the three types of Centers.

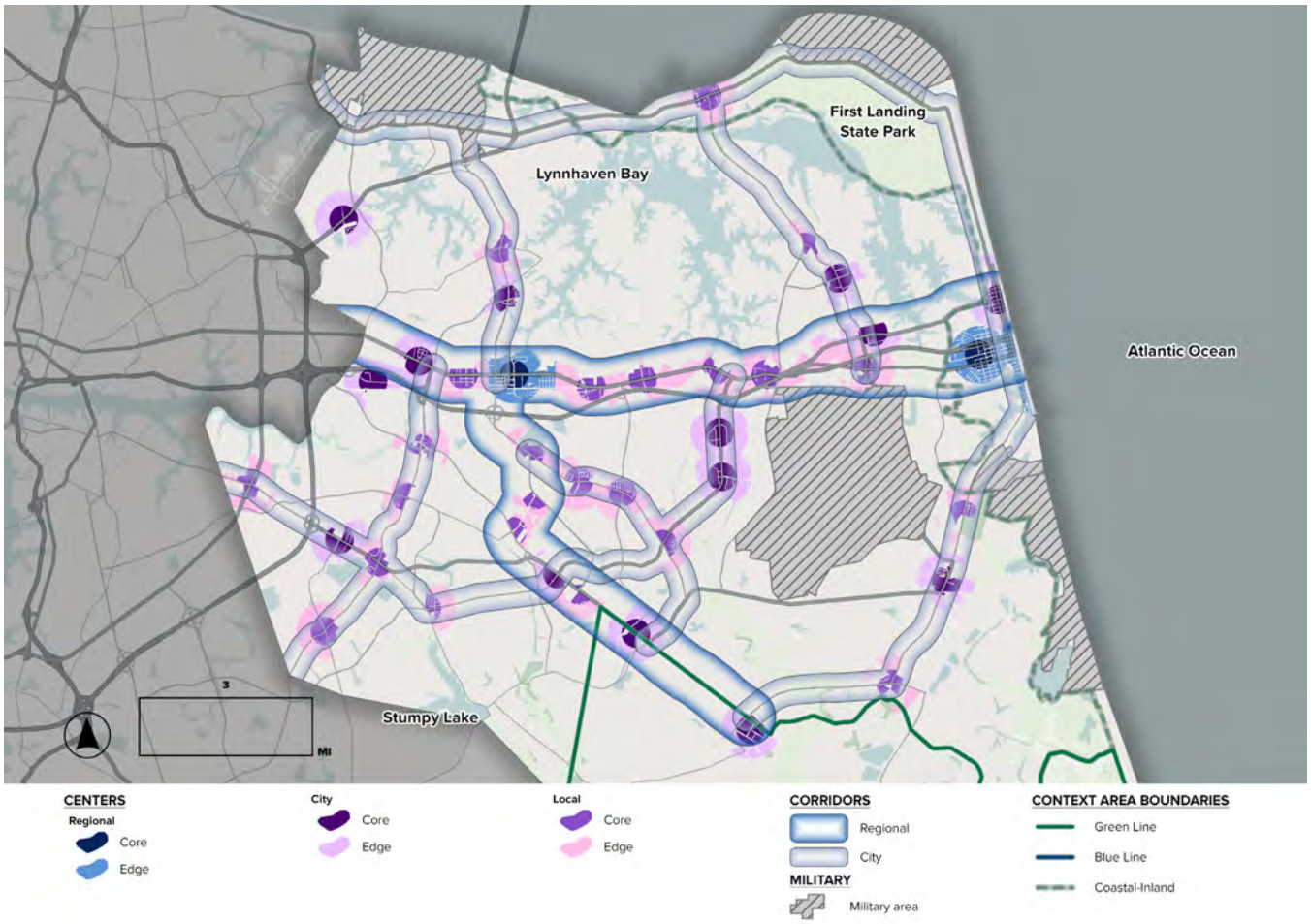


Figure 7-2 *- Map of Centers and Multimodal Corridor Place Types North of the Green Line*

Figure 7-3 *- Key Center Design Features*

Centers Guidelines

The following functional objectives and guidelines apply to all center types. ***Table 7-1*** defines targets for development occurring in Regional, City, and Local Centers.

Land Uses

Functional Objectives

- Increase the diversity of work, retail, entertainment, and civic options in the City.
- Increase the number of housing units and the diversity of housing types, with an emphasis on attainability.
- Increase the viability of non-auto travel options (walking, biking, rolling, and transit).

Figure 7-4 *- Regional Center Illustration*

Design Guidelines

- Encourage a mix of uses within buildings (vertical mix) and among buildings (horizontal mix).
- Provide locations for buildings and venues suited to the scale and needs of business and civic uses based on the designated Center market area (Regional, City, or Local).
- Target a high, moderate, or low jobs-to-housing ratio based on standards from ***Table 7-1***. The ratio is highest in Regional Centers and lowest in Local Centers. Jobs should be concentrated in the **Core Zone**. Densities and intensities should graduate down in the **Edge Zone *(Figure 7-4).***
- Encourage a mix of active land uses that support consistent daily activity, such as:
    - Office, hotel, retail, entertainment, grocery, pharmacy, and service establishments.
    - Civic uses, such as theaters, libraries, museums, galleries, and places of worship.
    - A mix of residential building types, affordable across all income levels, including condominiums, apartments, and townhouses.
- Discourage auto-oriented land uses, such as:
    - Auto service and repair locations,
    - Detached single-family homes, and
    - Industrial, logistics, and uses that are primarily or exclusively automotive.

Organization and Access

Functional Objectives

- Provide safe, convenient walking, rolling, and cycling routes within the Center and to nearby destinations.

Design Guidelines

- Locate Centers near intersecting Multimodal Corridors appropriate to their type—Regional Centers on Regional Corridors, City Centers on City or Regional Corridors, and Local Centers on smaller corridors, typically City Corridors.
- Define the Center boundary as a compact 150-600-acre, walkshed-based footprint, or roughly a quarter to one square mile in area. Regional Centers have the largest footprints, and Local Centers the smallest.
- Modify the Center boundary using Neighborhood boundaries.
- Increase the convenience and viability of transit by:
    - Selecting a **multimodal focal point** along a Regional or City Multimodal Corridor that can strengthen an existing transit stop or serve as a viable future stop.
    - Establishing **Core** and **Edge Zones** based on distance from the focal point; the Core captures the ¼- to ½-mile area, with the Edge Zone varying but extending up to ½-mile from the edge of the Core Zone limit. ***(Figure 7-5)***.
    - Local Centers may not be large enough to have or use an Edge Zone.
    - Identifying safe walking, rolling, and cycling paths to the focal point from throughout the Center.
- Increase the convenience and viability of walking, rolling, and cycling by:
    - Designing sidewalks and bike lanes with proper spacing and separation to maintain comfort and safety.
    - Defining and signing walking and cycling paths and exclusive trails that connect Centers and neighborhoods.
    - Referencing safety measures from the Local Road Safety Action Plan that prioritize pedestrian and bicyclist safety.
- Increase safety and optimize flow by:
    - Limiting vehicle speeds on certain facilities within the Center. Refer to ***Table 7-1.***
    - Connecting local streets in adjacent Type 2 Neighborhoods and other commercially-oriented Place Types.
    - Developing an internally connected street grid with the following street types ***(Figure 7-6)***:
        - **Front streets:** pedestrian-oriented streets with building fronts and entries and on-street activities, such as dining.
        - **Primary front streets:** front streets extending perpendicularly from the designated multimodal focal point into the Center, with the highest building densities/intensities in the Core Zone.
        - **Rear streets and alleys:** streets for vehicle access into parking garages, surface lots, and truck deliveries.
        - **Side streets:** streets providing cross-access.

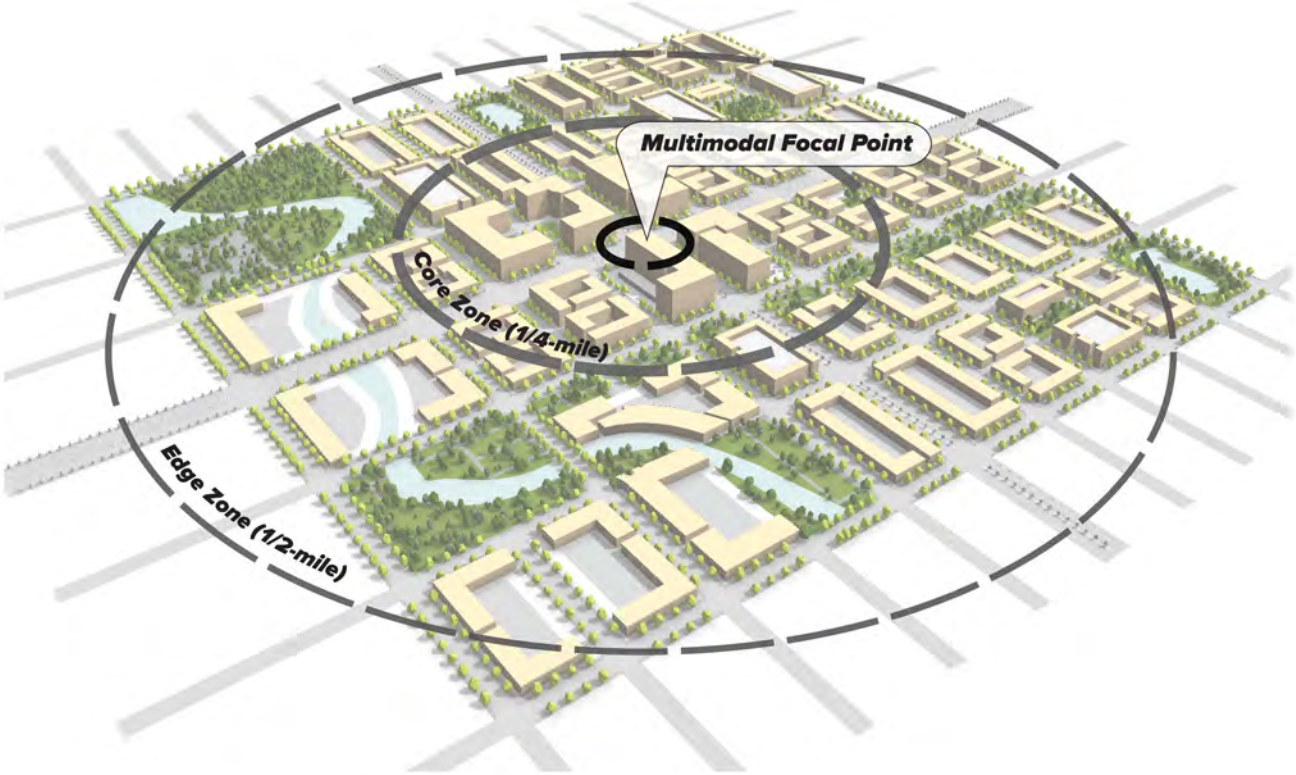


Figure 7-5 *– Station Location and Core and Edge Zones*

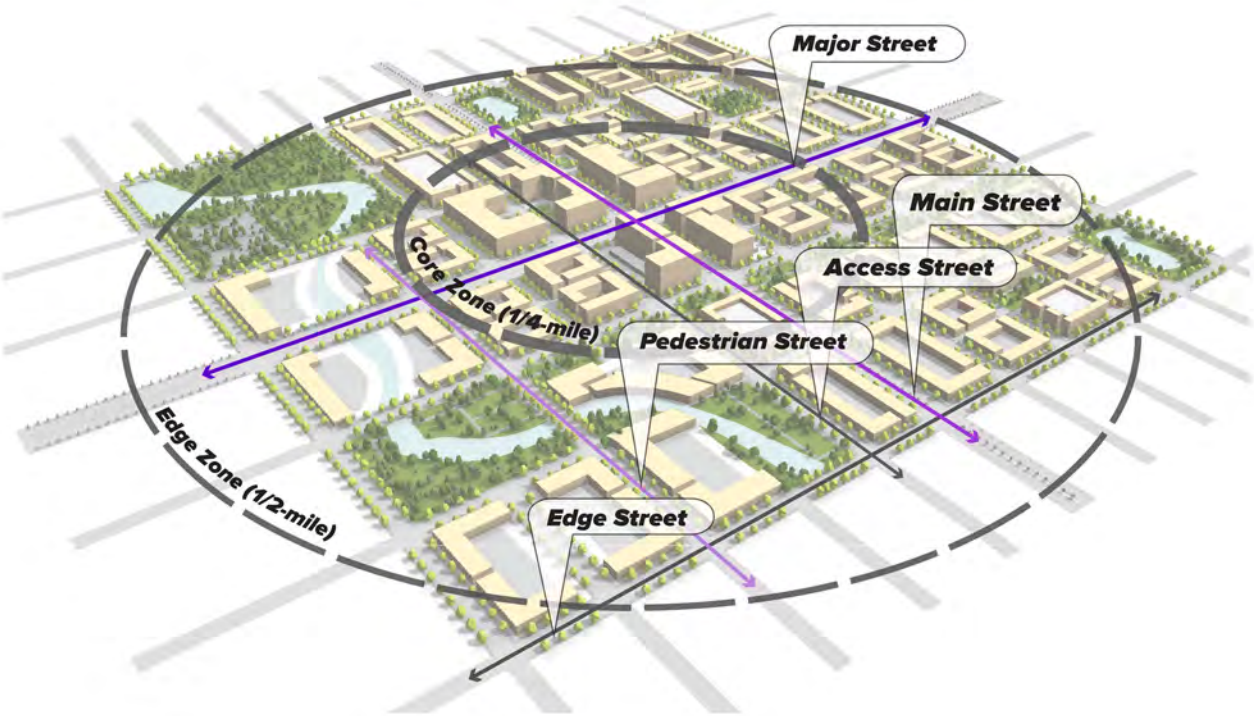


Figure 7-6 *- Center Front, Side, and Rear Streets*

Building form and Massing

Functional Objectives

- Provide orientation, legibility, and a sense of continuity for Center residents, workers, and visitors.
- Provide a compatible buffer between Centers and adjacent Neighborhood Place Types.
- Support expanded alternative mobility and transit options by concentrating activity and building intensities in the Center Core Zone.
- Enhance compact development patterns.

Design Guidelines

- Organize buildings by two-to-three-acre blocks (500 feet by 250 feet on average). Block sizes can be larger for special uses.
- Transition building heights and sizes at mid-blocks and rear streets to create compatible building massing on front streets.
- Design for architecturally varied façades on front and side streets.
- Refer to ***Table 7-1*** for building massing targets for the Core and Edge Zones across the three Center types (Regional, City, Local).
- Create a buffer area between the Edge Zone and with adjacent, non-Center development:
    - Open space with natural screening (trees, shrubs, etc.) informed by the City's Landscaping Guide (2002)
    - Buildings with heights and parcel coverage ratios like those in adjacent neighborhood properties.
    - Building height increases by no more than 100 percent per block from Edge to Core.

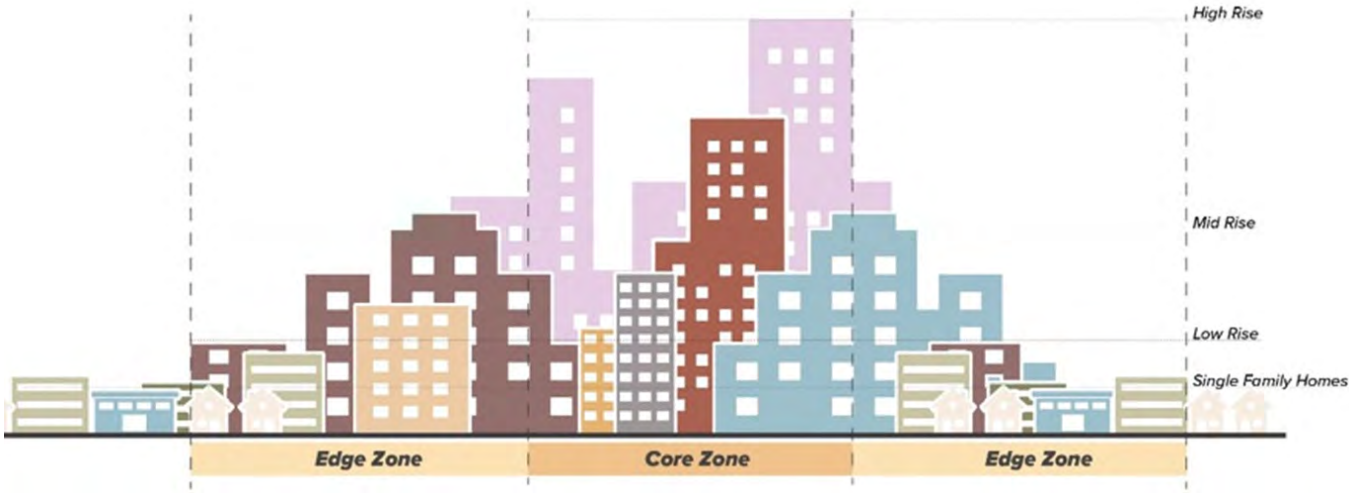


Figure 7-7 *- Core and Edge Zone Building Heights*

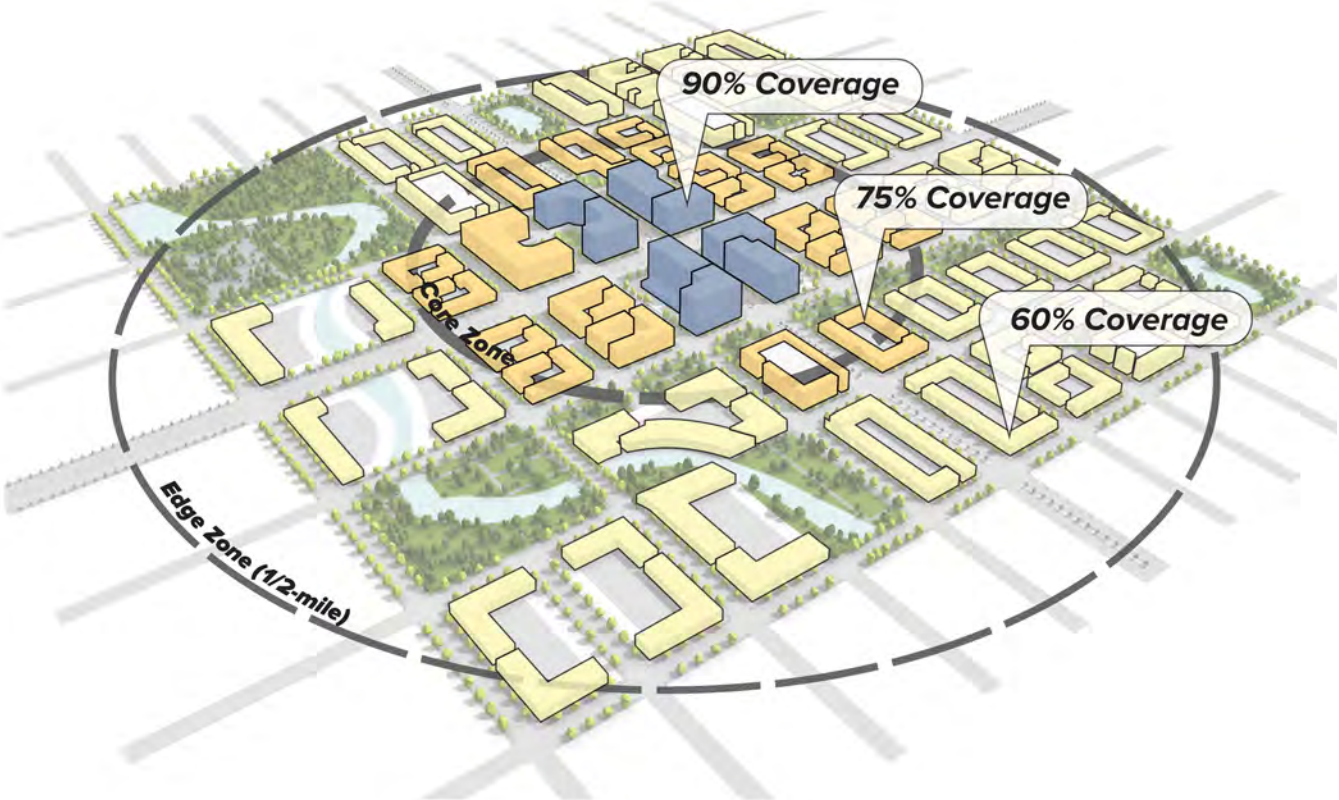


Figure 7-8 *- Building Footprint to Parcel Ratios*

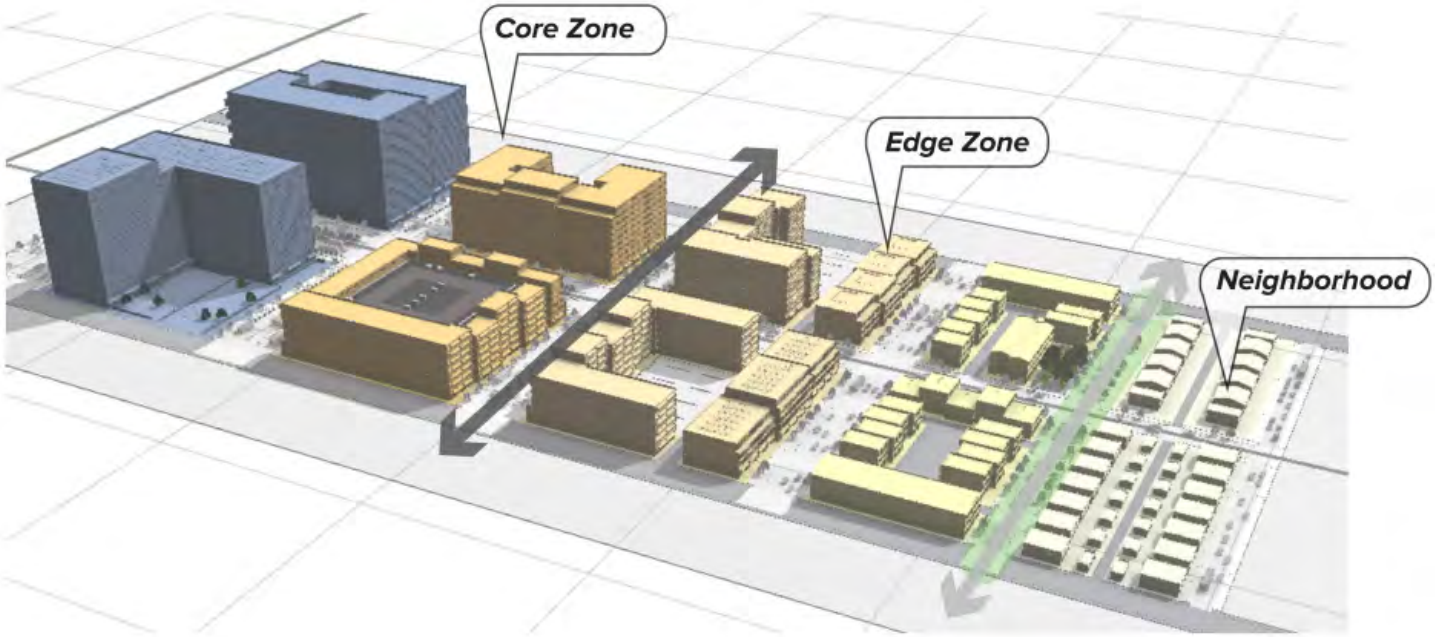


Figure 7-9 *- Center Buffer Area Illustration*

Environment and Parks

Functional Objectives

- Enhance and connect protected environmental land.
- Provide access to natural open spaces and parks.
- Protect Centers from stormwater and sea level rise flooding.
- Treat and clean rainwater before it enters tributaries and waterbodies.
- Minimize stormwater treatment surface area to increase building footprint coverage and compact development.

Design Guidelines

- Create an environmental and open space framework for each Center that accounts for:
    - Building and infrastructure siting that sustains the protected environmental areas and open open space lands (i.e., wetlands along tributaries, parks).
    - Opportunities to enhance and connect sensitive environmental and open space lands.
    - Public access to, and the passive use of, open spaces.
- Plan for a variety of accessible parks, such as those illustrated in ***Figure 7-10***, by:
- Locating sites for small pocket and civic parks spaced around two blocks from each other in the Core Zone.
- Locating sites for half-acre active parks and playgrounds spaced around two blocks from each other the Edge Zone.
- Co-locating stormwater treatment ponds and similar facilities with parks, whenever possible.
- Provide for flood control and stormwater treatment, as shown in Figure 7-11, by:
    - Locating stormwater treatment storage ponds and vaults near the Center boundary with access to nearby tributaries.
    - Identifying how stormwater will be conveyed from each Center block to stormwater ponds and vaults.
    - Identifying in-street and in-park stormwater treatment facility locations and improvement types.
    - Using the Flood Resiliency Toolkit to identify urban-oriented stormwater treatments across the Center.
- Enhance the character and appeal of streets and open spaces by:
    - Using landscaping suited to each street type (e.g., smaller canopy trees along front streets, larger ones on access streets).
    - Using plantings and design treatments that match the recreational and ecological function of parks and natural open spaces.
    - Designing surface stormwater ponds with landscaping to create park settings.

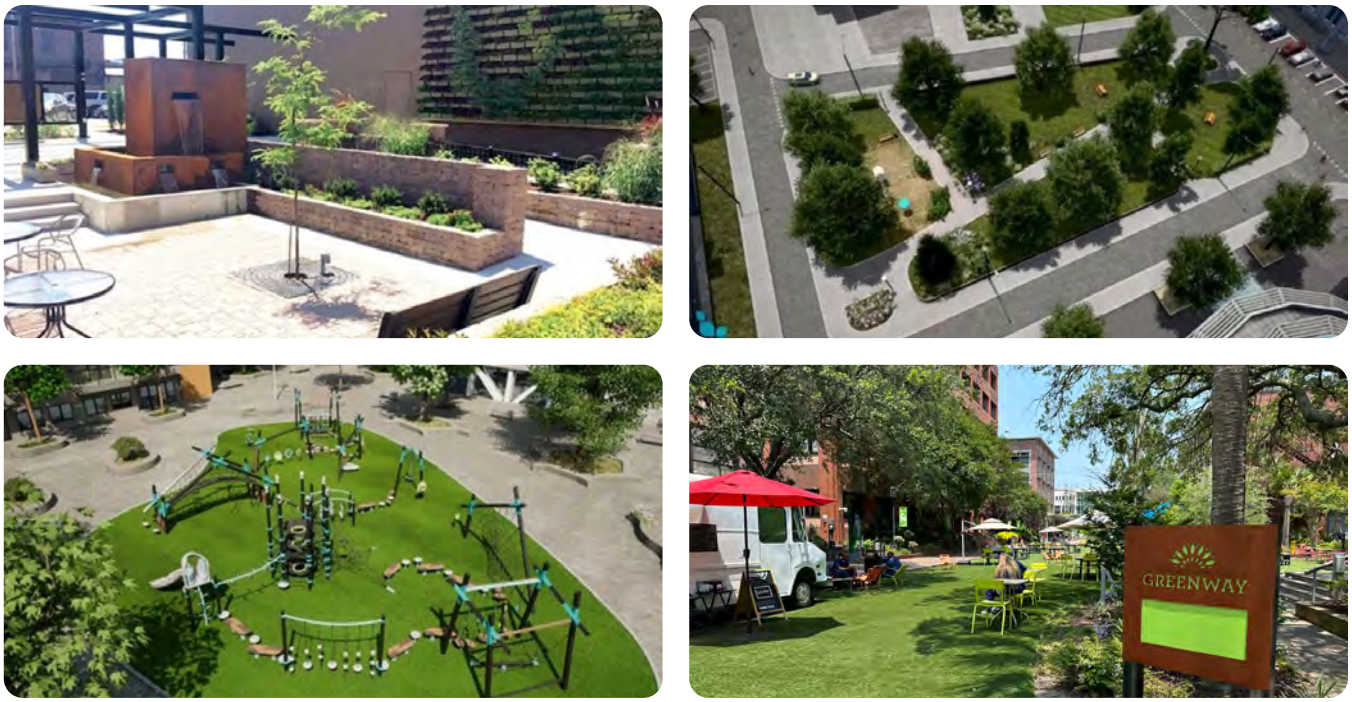


Figure 7-10 *- Urban Park Types*

Figure 7-11 *- Illustration of Center-wide Stormwater Treatment*

Parking and Loading

Functional Objectives

- Accommodate anticipated parking needs, considering travel by non-automotive modes.
- Minimize the amount of land devoted to automotive parking.
- Minimize vehicle turning movements on front streets by locating parking and delivery access on side and rear streets.

Design Guidelines

- Accommodate parking demand by:
  - Determining requirements based on City and/or developer-initiated parking studies.
  - Identifying shared and compact parking opportunities to balance peak demands for differing activities. For example, parking may serve office uses during the day and restaurants and entertainment at night.
- Provide needed parking spaces and delivery access, as illustrated in ***Figure 7-12***, by:
  - Designing on-street parking throughout the Center, including Center arterials, when safe and feasible.
  - In the Core Zone:
    - Locating structured on-site parking and/or structured off-site parking with first-floor retail and services.
    - Locating structured parking entrances on side or rear streets.
    - Locating loading zones on side or rear streets.
  - In the Edge Zone:
    - Locating structured and surface parking within a parcel wrapped by buildings.
    - Locating parking access on side or rear streets.

Holding space for image

Figure 7-12 *- Center Parking Features (TBD)*

Center Targets

Table 7-1 *shows target standards for development within Regional, City, and Local Centers.*

Target/Center Zone	Regional Center Core Zone	Regional Center Edge Zone	City Center Core Zone	City Center Edge Zone	Local Center Core Zone	Local Center Edge Zone
Typical Walk-shed Radius	0.5 mi	1.0 mi	0.25 mi — 0.5 mi	0.5 mi – 1 mi	0.1 mi	0.25 mi
Jobs to Hous-ing Ratio	High	Moderate	Moderate	Low- to moderate	Low- to moderate	Low
Target Speed: Arterial Road	35 MPH	35 MPH	35 MPH	35 MPH	35 MPH	35 MPH
Target Speed: Internal Road	25 MPH	25 MPH	25 MPH	25 MPH	25 MPH	25 MPH
Building Scale	Mid- to high-rise	Low- to mid-rise	Mid- to high-rise	Low- to mid-rise	Low- to mid-rise	Low-rise
Building Height*	5 – 20 stories	3 – 10 stories	5 – 12 stories	2 – 6 stories	3 – 6 stories	2 – 6 stories
Lot Count per 2 - 3 Acre Block	1 – 10	10 – 30	5 – 20	10 – 30	10 – 20	10 – 30
Building Foot-print Coverage Minimum**	80%	60%	70%	60%	70%	60%
Setback: Front (from ROW)	5 – 10 feet	5 – 10 feet	5 – 10 feet	6 – 12 feet	5 – 10 feet	6 – 12 feet
Setback: Side and Rear (from ROW)	10 – 20 feet	10 – 20 feet	10 – 20 feet	10 – 20 feet	10 – 20 feet	10 – 20 feet

**or as defined by adopted form-based code and AICUZ regulations (Figure 7-7)*
***or as defined by adopted form-based code*
**** In the Green Line Context Area, limit buliding heights to four stories in the Municipal Center and six stories in the area's northwestern Center.*

Special Use Place Types

The Institutional Place Type and the Industrial and Logistics Place Type offer settings for large scale unique and specialized uses. They attract people from across the City and region, therefore require direct access to major roads. Industrial and Logistics Place Types are served by Freight Corridors described later in the chapter. The Business Place Type is expected to capture non-Center growth for single-use commercial, office, or hotel types The locations of Special Use Place Types are illustrated on ***Figure 7-15.***

Institutional

The overarching goal of the Institutional Place Type is to provide an easily accessed, well-landscaped setting for a large-scale school or civic function serving residents from the City and greater Hampton Roads region. Institutional Place Types align with compatible zoning ordinance regulations ***(Appendix A)****.*

Land Use

Functional Objectives

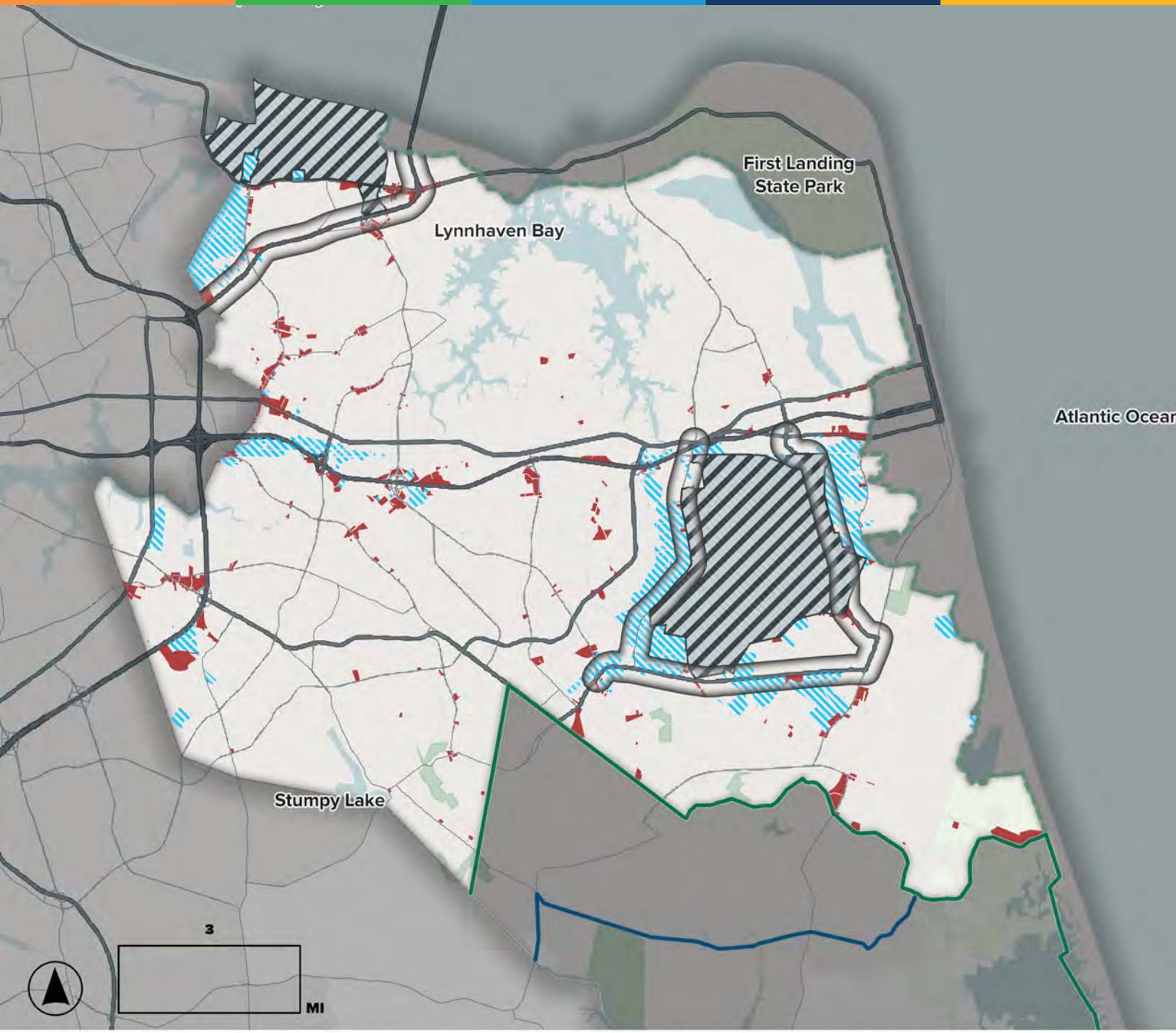
- Provide a location for large scale, City, and regionally oriented school campuses (i.e., Tidewater Community College) and civic buildings and venues (Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital) and supportive uses. ***(Figure 7-13*** *and* ***Figure 7-14)***

Design Guidelines

- Design for larger educational campus and/or civic buildings and related/supporting uses, such as medical buildings, restaurants, bookstores, public services, etc.

Figure 7-13 *- Tidewater Community College*

Figure 7-14 *- Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital*



PLACE TYPES

Special Use

- Industrial and Logistics
- Business

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES

- Green Line
- Blue Line
- Coastal-Inland

CORRIDORS

- Freight Network

MILITARY

- Military area

Figure 7-15 *- Special Use Place Types and Freight Corridors Map*

Organization and Access

Functional Objectives

- Provide safe and convenient multimodal access from across the City.
- Provide safe and convenient walking and biking within the Place Type area.

Design Guidelines

- To optimize multimodal access, locate near intersecting arterials on designated Regional or City Multimodal Corridors, where feasible.
- Land area should support larger buildings (20 acres or more) and be defined by Type 1 Neighborhoods zoning boundaries.
- To increase the convenience and viability of transit:
    - Orient entrance of primary building or venue to be within ¼ mile of designated transit station or existing transit stop.
    - Define safe walking and cycling paths to and from the designated station or stop.
- To optimize the flow and increase the safety of vehicle movements:
    - Limit vehicle speeds on arterials and other major roads within the Place Type to 35 miles per hour or less.
    - Limit vehicle speeds on internal streets to 25 miles per hour or less.
- To increase the convenience and viability of walking, rolling, and cycling:
    - Design sidewalks and bike lanes along all Place Type streets, with proper spacing to maintain comfort and safety along major roads and arterials.
    - Define and sign walking and cycling paths along local streets and/or on exclusive trails that extend into adjacent Centers and neighborhoods.

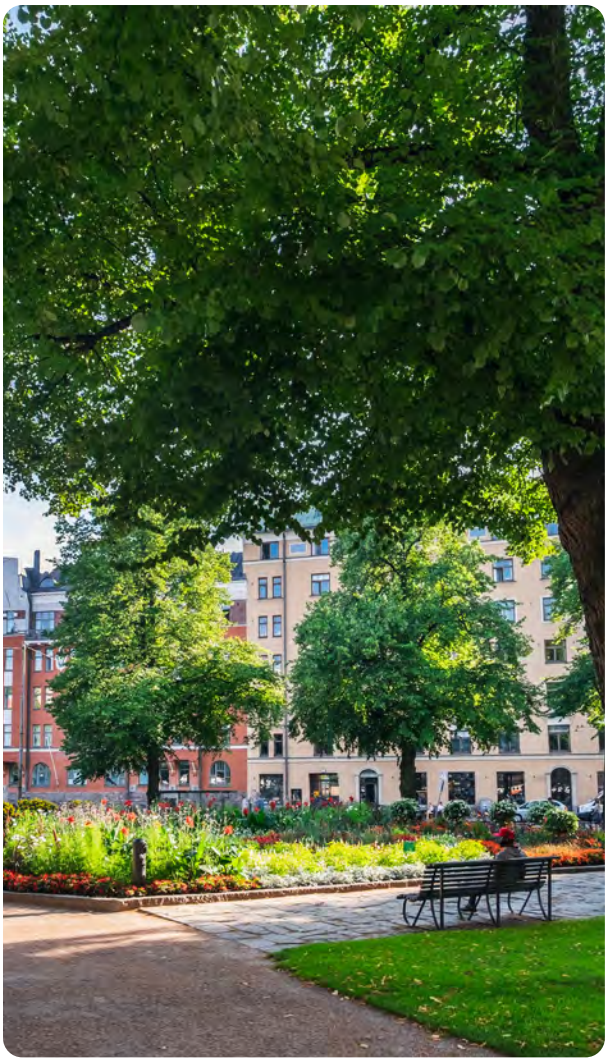
Building form and Massing

Functional Objectives

- Locate buildings to increase the convenience of walking between buildings.

Design Guidelines

- Create a buffer area between the Place Type and Type 1 Neighborhood boundary with:
    - Open space with natural screening (trees, shrubs, etc.)
    - Buildings with heights and parcel coverage ratios like those in adjacent neighborhood properties.



Environment and Parks

Functional Objectives

- Enhance and connect protected environmental land.
- Provide access to natural open spaces and parks.
- Protect Center from stormwater and sea level rise flooding
- Enhance compact development patterns
- Treat and clean rainwater before reentering tributaries. meeting City, state, and federal requirements.

Design Guidelines

- Create an environmental and open space framework by:
    - Locating and designing buildings and infrastructure to optimize the sustainability of protected environmental areas and open open space lands (i.e., wetlands along tributaries, parks).
    - Identifying opportunities to enhance and connect protected environmental and open space lands.
    - Providing public access to, and the passive use of, existing and enhanced open spaces.
- Provide for flood control and stormwater treatment by:
    - Locating stormwater treatment storage ponds and vaults near the Place Type boundary with access to nearby tributaries.
    - Identifying in-streets and other innovative stormwater treatment locations and improvement types.

Parking and Loading

Functional Objectives

- Accommodate anticipated parking needs, accounting for travel by non-auto modes.
- Minimize the amount of land devoted to parking to support compact development.

Design Guidelines

- Accommodate parking demand by:
    - Determining Place Type area parking requirements based on City and/or developer-initiated parking studies.
    - Identifying shared parking opportunities to balance peak demands for differing activities (i.e., parking used during the day for employment, during the night for restaurants and entertainment).
- Provide needed parking spaces and parking and delivery access as illustrated in ***Figure 7-12*** by:
    - Designing on-street parking throughout the Center, including arterials, when safe and feasible.
    - Locating structured on-site parking and/or structured off-site parking with first-floor retail/services where feasible.

Industrial and Logistics

The overarching goal of the Industrial and Logistics Place Type is to provide a well-landscaped and buffered setting for large-scale industrial and logistics buildings with safe and convenient truck access to the City and greater Hampton Roads region. The design and locations for Industrial and Logistics Place Type align with compatible zoning ordinance ***(Appendix A).***

Land Uses

Functional Objectives

- Provide a location for large-scale industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, and logistics buildings (i.e., Corporate Landing Business Park) ***(Figure 7-16).***

Design Guidelines

- Design for large-scale industrial, manufacturing, warehousing, and logistics buildings and related supporting uses, such as restaurants, retail stores, services, etc.
- Refer to the latest Design Guidelines for Innovation Park and Corporate Landing Business Park to guide the vision for large-scale industrial land use patterns.

Parking and Loading

Functional Objectives

- Accommodate anticipated parking needs.

Design Guidelines

- Accommodate parking demand by determining Place Type parking requirements based on City and/or developer-initiated parking studies.
- Provide adequate parking for employees and truck access for operations.

Figure 7-16 *- Corporate Landing Business Park*

Business

Land Uses

- Uses and intensities as allowed by underling zoning.
- Mix of uses and higher intensities encouraged.

Organization and Access

- Apply the Commercial Area Pattern Book.
- Access
  - Identify non-auto travel paths to building entrances.
    - Provide legible, attractive, and safe biking and rolling paths to and between entrances.
      - Provide safe separation of biking paths / lanes along major streets.
      - Provide safe separation of biking and walking paths where co-located.
      - Identify off- street biking and rolling paths where needed.
      - Provide landscaping and wayfinding as needed.
      - Provide biking storage near building entrances.
    - Identify legible paths between a transit station / stop and entrances.
      - Identify nearby transit stops and work with transit agency to move stops to minimize distances to entrances if possible.
      - Identify and provide legible, attractive, safe, and direct walking and biking paths between the transit station / stop and entrances.

Example of commercial area redevelopment phasing from the Commercial Area Pattern Book that integrates green stormwater solutions and new outparcel styles.

Open space, stormwater treatment

- Open space dictated by zoning.
- Identify and meet stormwater treatment requirements.
    - Calculate stormwater quantity based on requirements.
    - Identify stormwater treatment strategies.
        - Identify minor rainfall treatments.
            - Rooftop treatments
            - On-street treatments (example)
    - Identify major rainfall treatments.
            - Underground vaults (preferred because they can become part of an urban system) located on side / rear street.
            - Ponds as part of park like open space on side / rear street.
    - Design ponds / vaults to potentially transform into urban stormwater system.

Parking

- Identify and meet parking demand.
    - Calculate parking demand using parking requirements / studies.
    - Identify off site availability (on street and shared parking within a block of site.
    - Calculate on-site parking demand (net demand).
- Accommodate remaining demand on site.
    - Structured and/or surface parking (based on net demand).
    - Parking locations
        - Wrap structured / surface parking with buildings.
        - Parking in rear of building with rear entrances.
    - Design large surface parking with:
        - Well defined walking paths between parking aisles.
        - Landscaping (shade trees) along walking paths.
        - Landscaping to minimize heat island effect.

Neighborhoods

Most City residents live Type 1 or Type 2 Neighborhoods. Type 1 Neighborhoods have single-family homes, while Type 2 Neighborhoods have a mix of housing types. Transition Neighborhoods provide natural, quiet and safe settings for single-family homes appropriate between the Green and Blue Lines. Coastal Neighborhoods provide a mix of home styles that embrace a coastal feel. Community Hubs are compact, walkable settings with neighborhood-oriented businesses and civic facilities. Neighborhood Place Types are mapped on ***Figure 7-17.***

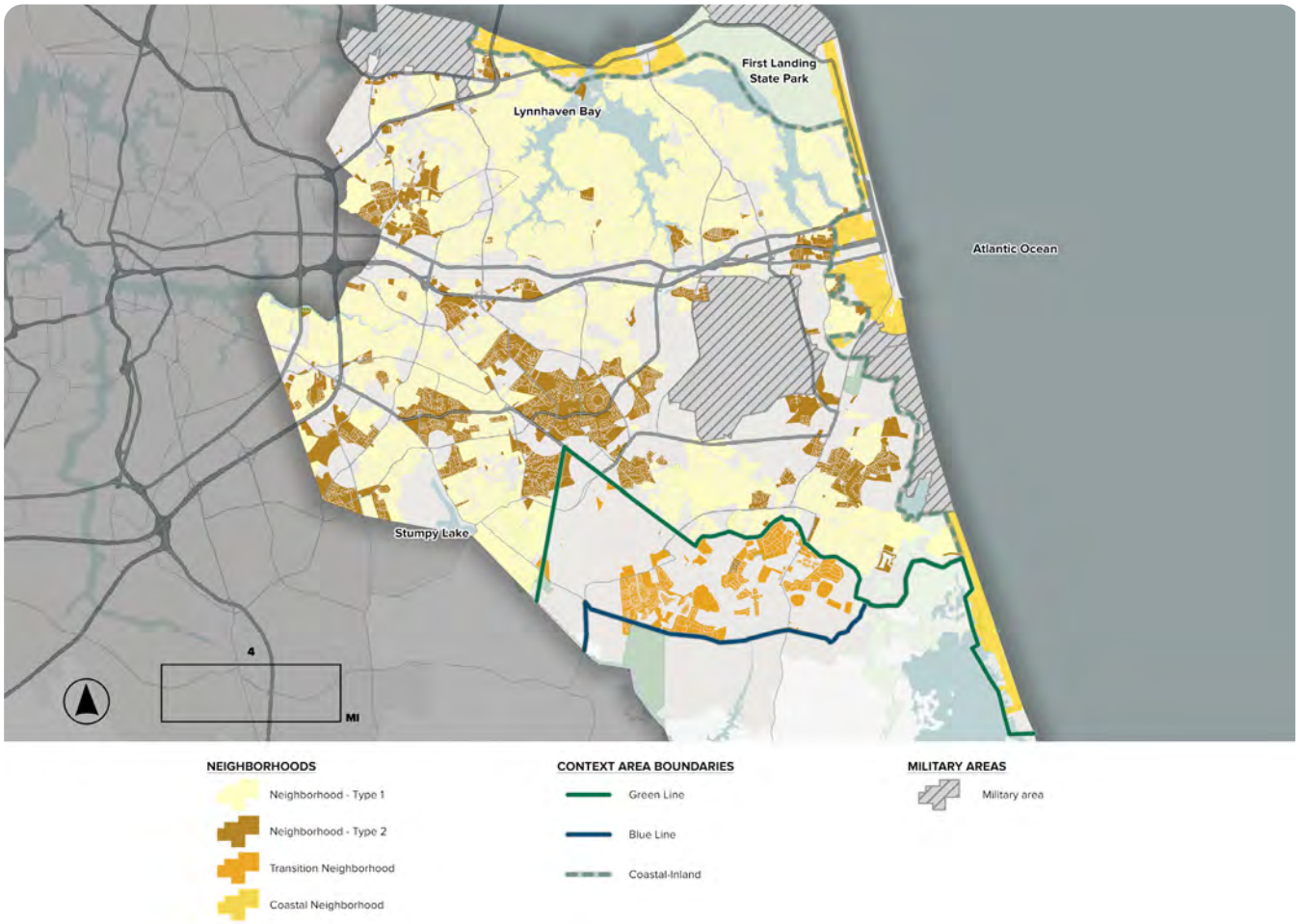


Figure 7-17 *- Neighborhood Place Types Map*

Type 1 Neighborhoods

The overarching goal of the Type 1 Neighborhood Place is to provide a well-landscaped, quiet, and safe setting for single-family homes. The design and locations for Type 1 Neighborhood Place Type align with compatible zoning ordinance ***(Appendix A).***

Land Use

Functional Objectives

- Provide landscaped locations for single-family homes with small-scale civic uses, such as local parks and elementary schools. ***(Figure 7-18)***

Design Guidelines

- Design for single-family homes surrounded by private yards. Can include small-scale civic uses and parks.

Figure 7-18 *- Type 1 Neighborhood*

Organization and Access

Functional Objectives

- Provide safe and convenient multimodal access to Community Hubs, Centers, and other destinations.
- Provide safe and convenient walking and biking within the Place Type.
- Provide safe walking and biking routes to schools.

Design Guidelines

- Design internally connected local street network that:
  - Forms around three-to-ten-acre blocks.
  - Limits the number of cul-de-sacs.
  - Limits access points to major roads to reduce non-neighborhood, or cut-through, traffic.
- Limit vehicle speeds on internal streets to 25 miles per hour or less.
- Enhance the convenience and safety of walking, rolling, and cycling, design sidewalks along all internal streets.
- Promote the design of alleys and rear loaded garages to reduce the dead space created by garage doors.
- Identify opportunities for exclusive walking and cycling connections into adjacent Centers and neighborhoods.
- Refer to countermeasures from the Local Road Safety Action Plan that address the Primary Emphasis Areas of School Zones, Unsignalized Intersections, Unprotected Occupants, Speeding, Bicyclists, and Pedestrians to guide safety-focused design in neighborhood settings.

Building Form and Massing

Functional Objectives

- Provide a variety of single-family home types available for differing types of households.

Design Guidelines

- Subdivide area into 1/8 acre to 1 acre lots with homes ranging from 1,000 square feet up to 4,000 square feet of living space. Allow for:
  - Accessory dwelling units to provide needed attainable housing.
  - Detached and rear garages.
- Design similar-sized lots and homes within a block, allowing for the lots and houses half again larger or smaller on adjacent blocks.
- Design homes that enhance the enjoyment of streets by encouraging:
  - Front porches and windows.
  - Garages on the back of the home are accessed by alleys or side yard driveways.

Environment and Parks

Functional Objectives

- Where feasible, enhance and connect protected environmental land.
- Protect homes and streets from stormwater and sea level rise flooding.
- Treat and clean rainwater before entering tributaries, meeting City, state, and federal requirements.

Design Guidelines

- Create an environmental and open space framework by:
  - Locating and designing homes and infrastructure to optimize the sustainability of protected environmental areas and open open space lands (i.e., wetlands along tributaries, parks).
  - Identifying opportunities to enhance and connect protected environmental and open space lands.
- Plan for a variety of accessible parks by:
  - Locating sites for both passive and active parks and playgrounds located within four blocks of all homes.
  - Where feasible, co-locate stormwater treatment ponds and similar facilities with parks.
- Provide for flood control and stormwater treatment by:
  - Locating stormwater treatment storage ponds and vaults near the Neighborhood boundary with access to nearby tributaries.
  - Identifying how stormwater will be conveyed from each Neighborhood block to stormwater ponds and vaults.
  - Identifying in-street and in-park stormwater treatment locations and improvement types.

Parking and Loading

Functional Objectives

- Accommodate anticipated parking needs.

Design Guidelines

- Allow for on-street parking on local streets.
- Require on-site parking either in garages or driveways.
- Promote garages on the back of the lot.

Type 2 Neighborhoods

The overarching goal of the Type 2 Neighborhood Place Type is to provide a well-landscaped, quiet, safe, and vibrant setting for a mix of single and multifamily home types alongside neighborhood-serving commercial and service uses. Type 2 Neighborhood Place Types align with compatible zoning ordinance regulations ***(Appendix A).***

Land Use

Functional Objectives

- Provide landscaped locations for a mix of home types available and affordable for a wide range of households, with small-scale civic uses, such as local parks and elementary schools and retail and services. ***(Figure 7-19)***

Design Guidelines

- A diverse mix of housing types including single-family homes, townhomes, duplexes, and apartments integrated with neighborhood-serving commercial and service uses.
- Small to medium-sized civic and recreational uses such as local parks, schools, and community facilities.

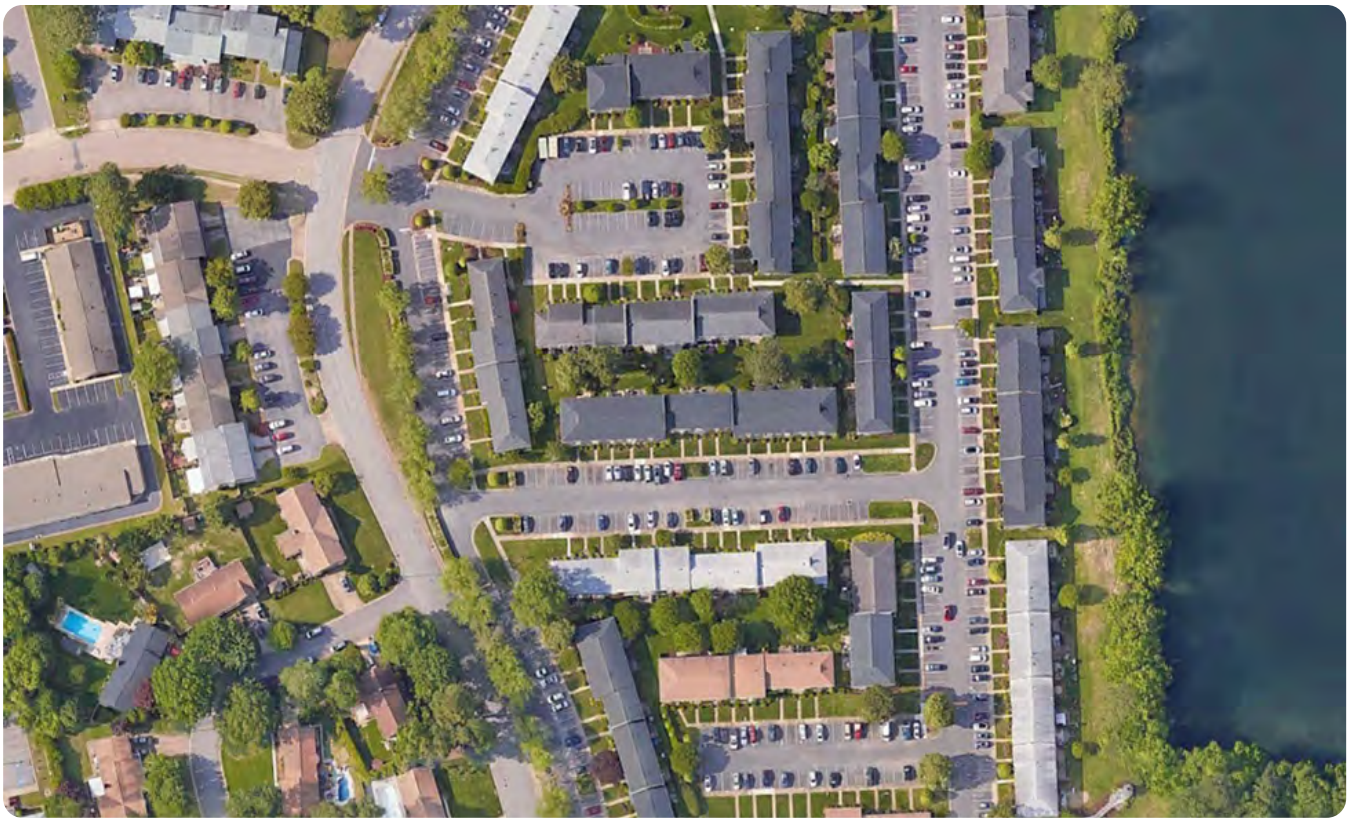


Figure 7-19 *- Type 2 Neighborhood*

Organization and Access

Functional Objectives

- Provide safe and convenient multimodal access to Community Hubs, Centers, and other destinations.
- Provide safe and convenient walking and biking within the Place Type.

Design Guidelines

- Design internally connected local street network that:
  - Forms around three-to-ten-acre blocks.
  - Limits the number of cul-de-sacs.
  - Limits access points to major roads to reduce non-neighborhood, or cut-through, traffic.
- Limit vehicle speeds on internal streets to 25 miles per hour or less.
- Enhance the convenience and safety of walking, rolling, and cycling, design sidewalks along all internal streets.
- Promote the design of alleys and rear loaded garages to reduce the dead space created by garage doors.
- Identify opportunities for exclusive walking and cycling connections into adjacent Centers and neighborhoods.
- Refer to countermeasures from the Local Road Safety Action Plan that address the Primary Emphasis Areas of School Zones, Unsignalized Intersections, Unprotected Occupants, Speeding, Bicyclists, and Pedestrians to guide safety-focused design in neighborhood settings.

Building form and Massing

Functional Objectives

- Provide a variety of single and multifamily home types available for differing types of households.

Design Guidelines

- Design single-family sites homes that allow for:
  - Accessory dwelling units to provide needed attainable housing.
  - Detached and rear garages.
- Design similar-sized lots and homes within a block, allowing for the lots and houses half again larger or smaller on adjacent blocks.
- Allow careful increases in density when promoting attainable housing.
- Design homes that enhance the enjoyment of streets by encouraging:
  - Front porches and windows.
  - Garages on the back of the home are accessed by alleys or side yard driveways.

Environment and Parks

Functional Objectives

- Enhance and connect protected environmental land.
- Protect homes and streets from stormwater and sea level rise flooding.
- Treat and clean rainwater before entering tributaries, meeting City, state, and federal requirements.

Design Guidelines

- Create an environmental and open space framework by:
  - Locating and designing homes and infrastructure to optimize the sustainability of protected environmental areas and open open space lands (i.e., wetlands along tributaries, parks).
  - Identifying opportunities to enhance and connect protected environmental and open space lands.
- Plan for a variety of accessible parks by:
  - Locating sites for both passive and active parks and playgrounds located within four blocks of all homes.
  - Where feasible, co-locate stormwater treatment ponds and similar facilities with parks.
- Provide for flood control and stormwater treatment by:
  - Locating stormwater treatment storage ponds and/or vaults near the Neighborhood boundary with access to nearby tributaries.
  - Identifying how stormwater will be conveyed from each neighborhood block to stormwater ponds and vaults.
  - Identifying in-street and in-park stormwater treatment locations and improvement types.

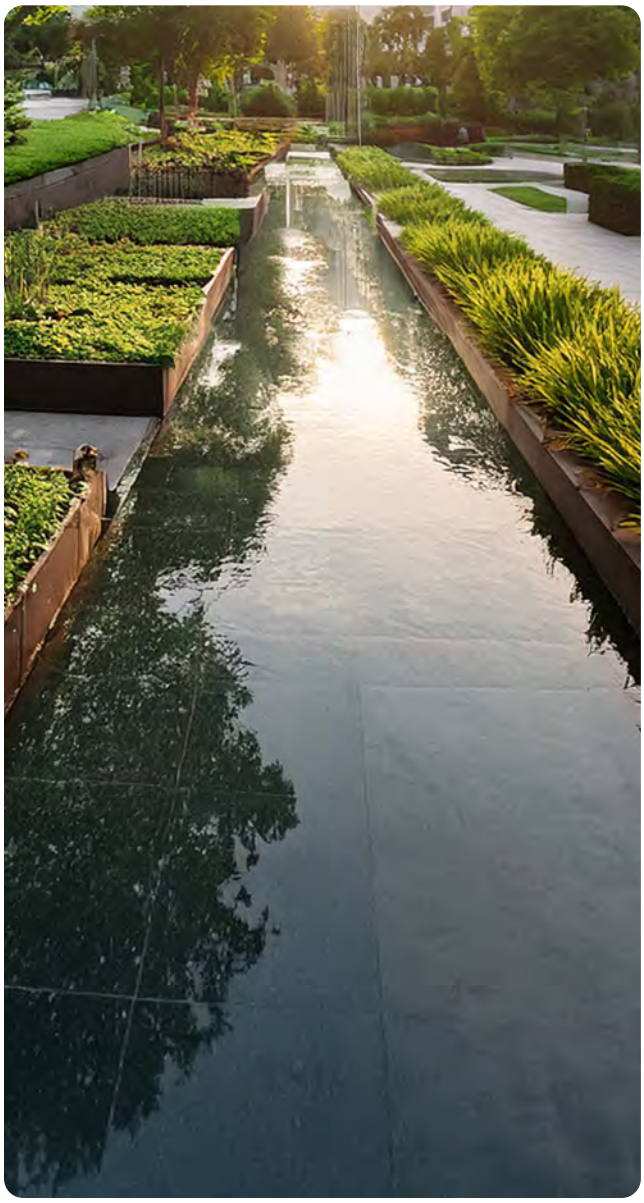
Parking and Loading

Functional Objectives

- Accommodate anticipated parking needs.

Design Guidelines

- Allow for on-street parking on local streets.
- Require on-site parking either in garages or driveways.
- Promote garages on the back of the lot.



Coastal Neighborhoods

The overarching goal of the Coastal Neighborhood Place Type ***(Figure 7-20)*** *is to provide a setting for a mix of single and multi-family homes that embraces a coastal location, including easy access to nearby beaches, landscaping consistent with shoreline flora, and coastal architecture.*

*Coastal Neighborhood Place Types align with compatible zoning ordinance regulations within the Coastal Context Area (****Appendix A).***

Land Use

Functional Objectives

- A mix of housing types available and affordable for a wide range of incomes, with small-scale civic and retail easily accessed by walking and biking and easy access to nearby beaches.

Design Guidelines

- A diverse mix of single-family homes, townhomes, duplexes, cottage homes, apartments, and condominiums, with small-scale civic uses, such as local parks and elementary schools and retail and services organized by a gridded street network and with walking and biking paths throughout.
- Allow for both permanent and seasonal use of homes, with limits on seasonal uses controlled through the zoning ordinance.

Figure 7-20 *- Coastal Neighborhood*

Organization and Access

Functional Objectives

- Provide safe and convenient multimodal access to adjacent beaches, Community Hubs, Centers, and other destinations.
- Provide safe and convenient walking and biking within the neighborhood.
- Provide safe walking and biking routes to schools.

Design Guidelines

- Internally connected gridded local street network that:
  - Forms around three-to-five-acre blocks.
  - Limits the number of cul-de-sacs
  - Limits access points to major roads to reduce non-neighborhood, or cut-through, traffic.
- Vehicle speeds on internal streets of 25 miles per hour or less.
- Enhance the convenience and safety of walking, rolling, and cycling, design sidewalks along all internal streets.
- Promote the design of alleys and rear loaded garages and parking lots to reduce the dead space created by garage doors.
- Identify opportunities for exclusive walking and cycling connections into adjacent Centers, beaches, and neighborhoods.
- Refer to countermeasures from the Local Road Safety Action Plan that address the Primary Emphasis Areas of School Zones, Unsignalized Intersections, Unprotected Occupants, Speeding, Bicyclists, and Pedestrians to guide safety-focused design in neighborhood settings.

Building form and Massing

Functional Objectives

- Provide a variety of single and multifamily home types available for differing types of households.

Design Guidelines

- Design with coastal architecture and landscaping.
- Design single-family homes that allow for:
  - Accessory dwelling units to provide needed attainable housing.
  - Detached and rear garages
- Design similar-sized lots and home types within a block, allowing for the lots and houses half again larger or smaller on adjacent blocks.
- Allow careful increases in density when promoting attainable housing
- Design homes and buildings that enhance the enjoyment of streets by encouraging:
  - Front porches and windows
  - Garages and parking lots on the back of the home are accessed by alleys or side yard driveways.

Environment and Parks

Functional Objectives

- Enhance and connect with adjacent beaches and protected environmental lands.
- Protect homes and streets from stormwater and sea level rise flooding.
- Treat and clean rainwater before entering tributaries, meeting City, state, and federal requirements.

Design Guidelines

- Create an environmental and open space framework by:
  - Locating and designing homes and infrastructure to optimize the sustainability of protected environmental areas and open open space lands (i.e., beaches, wetlands, and parks).
  - Identifying opportunities to enhance and connect with adjacent beaches and adjacent environmental and open space lands.
- Plan for a variety of accessible parks by:
  - Providing frequent walking and biking paths to adjacent beaches.
  - Locating sites for both passive and active parks and playgrounds located within four blocks of all homes.
  - Where feasible, co-locate stormwater treatment ponds and similar facilities with parks.
- Provide for flood control and stormwater treatment by:
  - Locating stormwater treatment storage ponds and/or vaults near the Neighborhood boundary with access to nearby tributaries.
  - Identifying how stormwater will be conveyed from each neighborhood block to stormwater ponds and vaults.
  - Identifying in-street and in-park stormwater treatment locations and improvement types.

Parking and Loading

Functional Objectives

- Accommodate anticipated parking needs.
- Provide limited parking for non-residents along beach access streets.
- Provide parking for non-residents in City owned parking lots.

Design Guidelines

- Allow for on-street parking on local streets, but with limited spaces available for non-residents.
- Require on-site parking either in garages or driveways.
- Promote garages on the back of the lot.
- Locate non-resident parking lots in locations with easy auto access to major streets and easy walk access to public beaches.

Transition Neighborhoods

The overarching goal of the Transition Neighborhood Place Type is to provide a natural, quiet, and safe setting for single-family homes and small commercial properties adjacent to those neighborhoods. Transition Neighborhood Place Types align with compatible zoning ordinance regulations within the Green Line Context Area ***(Appendix A)****.*

Land Use

Functional Objectives

- Single-family homes surrounded by a connected open space system.
- At least 50 percent of the net residential and open space system land area is devoted to open space.
- Provide locations for neighborhood-serving businesses and civic uses adjacent to the neighborhood.

Design Guidelines

- Single-family homes on large lots (minimum of 15,000 square feet) surrounded by connected open spaces
- Net density of at least one dwelling unit per acre, including residential lots and open space.
- Locate small-scale commercial and civic uses that front arterial and collector streets, and are buffered from adjacent homes.

Figure 7-21 *- Transition Neighborhood*

Organization and Access

Functional Objectives

- Safe and convenient walking, rolling, and bike access to Community Hubs, City Centers, and other destinations outside neighborhoods.
- Safe and convenient walking, rolling, and bike paths along streets and within open spaces with the neighborhood.
- Provide safe walking and biking routes to schools.

Design Guidelines

- Internally connected local street network that:
  - Forms 10-to-20-acre blocks
  - Allows for cul-de-sacs
  - Limits access points to major roads to reduce non-neighborhood, or cut-through, traffic.
- Slow vehicle speed on internal streets.
- Provide sidewalks along internal streets to increase the convenience and safety of walking.
- Where feasible, provide exclusive walking, rolling, and cycling paths through an internal open space system that connect into external neighborhood paths.
- Refer to countermeasures from the Local Road Safety Action Plan that address the Primary Emphasis Areas of School Zones, Unsignalized Intersections, Unprotected Occupants, Speeding, Bicyclists, and Pedestrians to guide safety-focused design in neighborhood settings.

Building Form and Massing

Functional Objectives

- Low intensity one- or two-story single family homes on large lots (15,000 square feet or greater).
- Small commercial buildings on access streets adjacent to neighborhood.

Design Guidelines

One-or two-story single-family homes that allow for:

  - Accessory dwelling units
  - Detached and rear garages

- Allow for and encourage:
  - Front porches and windows
  - Homes fronting open spaces with vehicular access from the rear.
- Small commercial buildings on adjacent business parcels, no more than 2 stories and 10,000 square feet.
- Buildings moved to the fronting street and parking behind the building allowed.
- Minimum of 50 feet buffers between building and parking areas and adjacent homes.

Environment and Parks

Functional Objectives

- Enhance and connect environmentally unique land within the neighborhood to environmental lands and open spaces adjacent to the neighborhood.
- Internal connected open space system that supports flood protection and recreation.
- Homes and streets protected from stormwater and sea level rise flooding.
- Stormwater ponds and other treatments that meet City, state, and federal requirements.
- Opportunities for passive and active recreation within open space system.

Design Guidelines

- Provide environmental and open space system that:
  - Covers at least 50 percent of the combined residential lot and open space system land area.
  - Enhances and connects with sensitive and protected environmental and open space lands within and adjacent to the neighborhood.
  - Connects across blocks, when feasible.
- Homes and infrastructure to optimize the sustainability of protected environmental areas and open open space lands.
- Promote passive and active parks and trails within the open space networks.
- Flood control and stormwater treatment by:
  - Stormwater treatment storage ponds, integral to the open space system and allowing for public access.
  - Allowing for innovative in-street and in-park stormwater treatment improvements.

Parking and Loading

Functional Objectives

- Accommodate automotive and cycling parking needs.

Design Guidelines

- Allow for on-street parking on local streets.
- Require on-site parking either in garages or driveways.
- Encourage garages on the back of the lot.

Community Hubs

The overarching goal of the Community Hub Place Type is to provide a place where residents from adjacent neighborhoods can go to shop at small retail stores, to recreate, and to enjoy civic functions and events. Local community members will initiate Community Hub plans. Planned Community Hubs will then be designated as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Depending on the decisions of local residents during the Community Hub planning process, the City's zoning ordinance may be updated to allow for walkable, small-scale uses, including smaller-scale commercial uses. The design guidelines include standards for these uses.

Land Use

Functional Objectives

- Provide an easily accessible location for shopping, recreation, and civic activities. ***(Figure 7-22)***

Design Guidelines

- Design for small scale retail, service, and civic buildings, allowing for multifamily homes.

Organization and Access

Functional Objectives

- Provide safe and convenient multimodal access to and from adjacent neighborhoods.
- Provide safe and convenient walking and biking within the Community Hub.

Design Guidelines

- Locate to optimize access to and from adjacent neighborhoods, with a size of around 50 to 100 acres.
- Design an internally connected local street network that forms around two-to-three-acre blocks (around 500 feet by 250 feet blocks).
- Limit vehicle speeds on internal streets to 25 miles per hour or less.
- To increase the convenience and viability of walking, rolling, and cycling, design sidewalks along all internal streets.
- Identify opportunities for exclusive walking and cycling connections into adjacent Centers and neighborhoods.
- Use the following targets to set building massing (length, width, and height):
    - Low to mid-rise buildings, minimum two stories, maximum four stories, or as defined by adopted form base code and AICUZ regulations.
    - Building lengths and widths, defined by parcel sizes of ten to 20 parcels per typical two-to-three-acre block and building footprint to parcel ratios greater than 50 percent; or as defined by an adopted form-based code.
    - Building setbacks from five to 10 feet on front street right of way, and 10 to 20 feet on side and rear street rights of way.
- Create buffer area between the Hub and Type 1 Neighborhood boundary with:
    - Open space with natural screening (trees, shrubs, etc.)
    - Buildings with heights and parcel coverage ratios like those in adjacent neighborhood properties.
- Refer to countermeasures from the Local Road Safety Action Plan that address the Primary Emphasis Areas of School Zones, Unsignalized Intersections, Unprotected Occupants, Speeding, Bicyclists, and Pedestrians to guide safety-focused design in neighborhood settings.

***Figure 7-22 - Potential** Community Hub*

Building form and Massing

Functional Objectives

- Design for small to medium size retail and service businesses and civic functions.

Design Guidelines

- Organized buildings by two-to-three-acre blocks (500 feet by 250 feet on average).
- Design for architecturally varied façades on fronting and side street.
- Use the following targets to design building massing (length, width, and height):
    - Low to mid-rise buildings, minimum two stories, maximum four stories, or as defined by adopted form base code and AICUZ regulations.
    - Building lengths and widths, defined by parcel sizes of ten to 20 parcels per typical two-to-three-acre block and building footprint to parcel ratios greater than 50 percent; or as defined by an adopted form-based code.
    - Building setbacks from five to 10 feet on front street right of way, and 10 to 20 feet on side and rear street rights of way.
- Create buffer area (250 feet or more) between the Hub and Type 1 or Transition Neighborhood boundary with:
    - Open space with natural screening (trees, shrubs, etc.)
    - Buildings with heights and parcel coverage ratios like those in adjacent neighborhood properties.

Environment and Parks

Functional Objectives

- Enhance and connect protected environmental land.
- Protect homes and streets from stormwater and sea level rise flooding.
- Treat and clean rainwater before it enters tributaries, meeting City, state, and federal requirements.

Design Guidelines

- Create an environmental and open space framework by:
  - Locating and designing homes and infrastructure to optimize the sustainability of protected environmental areas and open open space lands (i.e., wetlands along tributaries, parks).
  - Identifying opportunities to enhance and connect protected environmental and open space lands.
- Plan for a variety of accessible parks and entertainment venues (such as farmers' markets) by:
  - Locating sites for both passive and active parks and playgrounds.
  - Where feasible, co-locate stormwater treatment ponds and similar facilities with parks.
- Provide for flood control and stormwater treatment by:
  - Locating stormwater treatment storage ponds and/or vaults near the Neighborhood boundary with access to nearby tributaries.
  - Identifying how stormwater will be conveyed from each Neighborhood block to stormwater ponds and vaults.
  - Identifying in-street and in-park stormwater treatment locations and improvement types.

Parking and Loading

Functional Objectives

- Accommodate anticipated parking needs.
- Optimize vehicle access into parking areas.

Design Guidelines

- Accommodate parking demand by:
  - Determining development parking requirements based on zoning requirements and/or developer-initiated parking studies.
  - Identifying shared parking opportunities to balance peak demands for differing activities.
- Provide needed parking spaces with:
  - On-street parking throughout the Hub.
  - Surface parking within a parcel wrapped by or at the rear of buildings.

Rural Village

The overarching goal of the Rural Village Place Type is to provide a place where residents and farmers in the Rural Context Area can go to shop at small retail stores, to recreate, and to enjoy civic functions and events.

Land Use

Functional Objectives

- Provide an easily accessible location for shopping, recreation, and civic activities. ***(Figure 7-23)***

Design Guidelines

- Design for small scale retail, service, and civic buildings, and gas pumps.

Figure 7-23 *- Rural Village*

Organization and Access

Functional Objectives

- Provide safe and convenient multimodal access to and from the Rural Context Area.
- Provide safe and convenient walking and biking within the Rural Village.

Design Guidelines

- Locate at or near intersecting Rural Corridors to optimize access to and from the Rural Context Area, with a size of around 10 to 20 acres.
- Limit vehicle speeds on streets to 35 miles per hour or less.
- Create rear access streets and alleys for buildings fronting the major streets.
- Enhance the convenience and safety of walking, rolling, and cycling, design sidewalks along all internal streets.

Building Form and Massing

Functional Objectives

- Design for small to medium size retail and service businesses and civic functions, allow for small homes.

Design Guidelines

- Orient buildings to face major streets, with parking located in the rear and access by rear streets and alleys.
- Buildings no more than two stories, and footprints of no more than 2,000 square feet.
- Refer to countermeasures from the Local Road Safety Action Plan that address the Primary Emphasis Areas of School Zones, Unsignalized Intersections, Unprotected Occupants, Speeding, Bicyclists, and Pedestrians to guide safety-focused design in neighborhood settings.

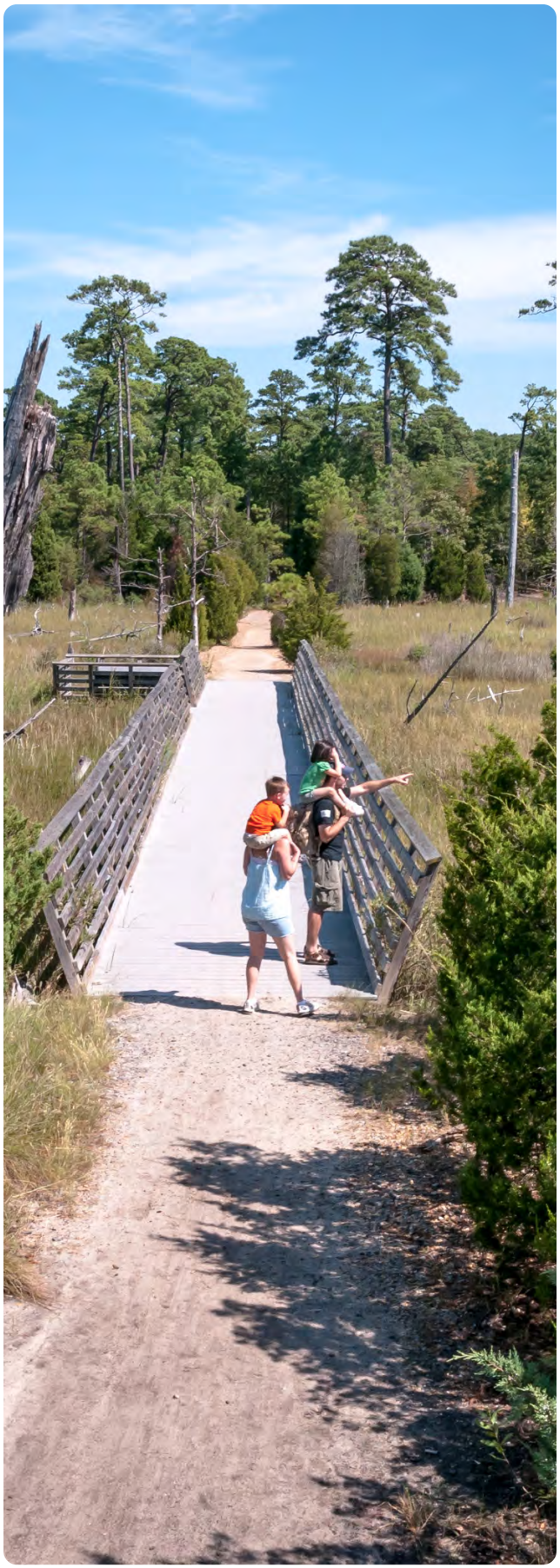
Environment and Parks

Functional Objectives

- Enhance and connect protected environmental land.
- Protect buildings and streets from stormwater and sea level rise flooding.
- Treat and clean rainwater before it enters tributaries, meeting City, state, and federal requirements.

Design Guidelines

- Create an environmental and open space framework by:
  - Locating and designing homes and infrastructure to optimize the sustainability of protected environmental areas and open open space lands (i.e., wetlands along tributaries, parks)
  - Identifying opportunities to enhance and connect protected environmental and open space lands.
  - Provide for flood control and stormwater treatment by locating stormwater treatment storage ponds and/or vaults near the Rural Village boundary with access to nearby tributaries.



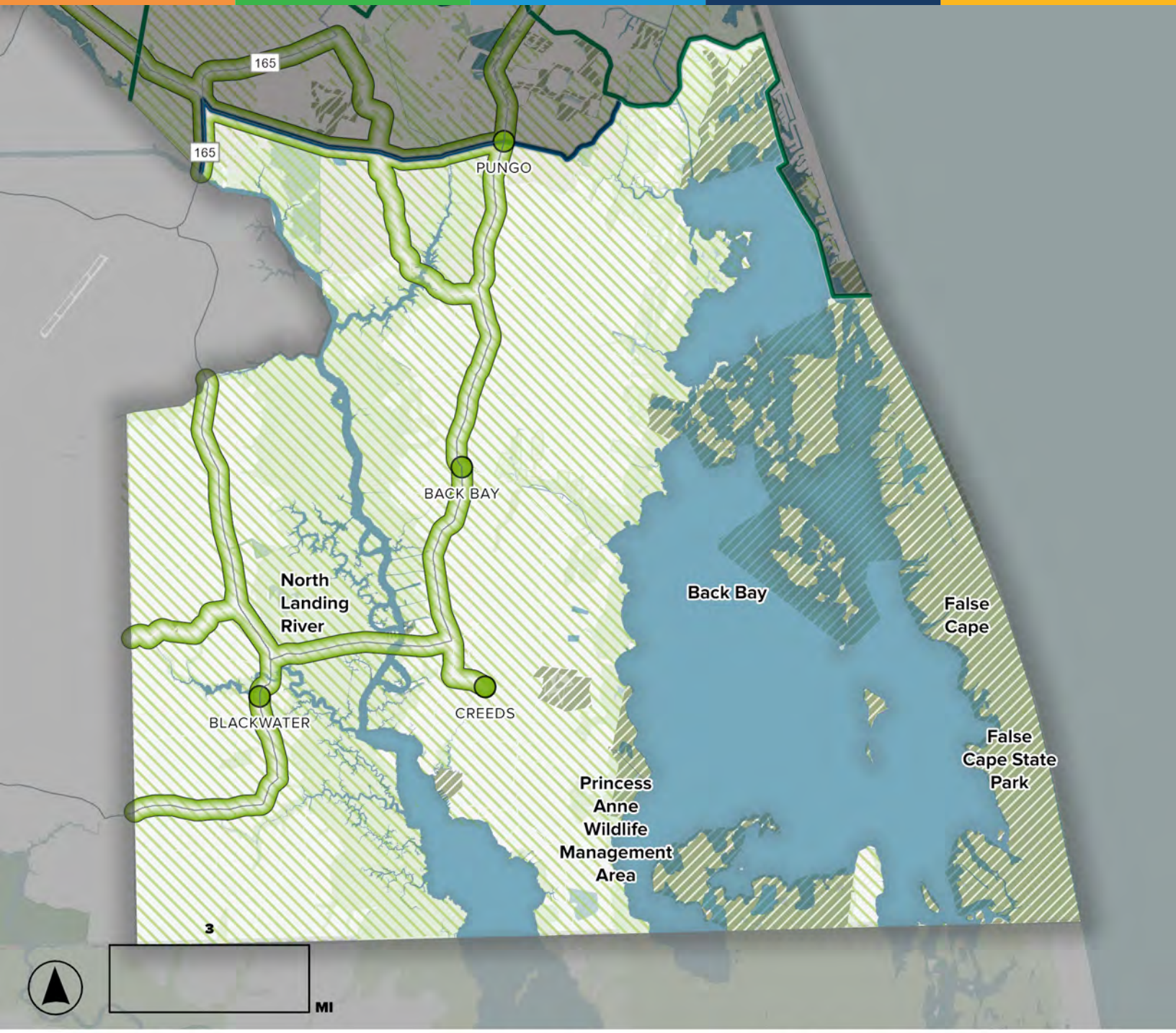
Parking and Loading

Functional Objectives

- Accommodate anticipated parking needs.
- Optimize vehicle access into parking areas.

Design Guidelines

- Accommodate parking demand with rear parking lots.



CENTERS

Rural Village

CORRIDORS

Rural

ENVIRONMENTAL

Surface waters

RURAL PLACE TYPES

Agriculture

Preservation

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES

Green Line

Blue Line

Coastal-Inland

Figure 7-24 *- Rural Place Types Map*

Multimodal Corridor Types

Designated Multimodal Corridors are intended to provide safe and convenient access via walking, rolling, biking, and transit modes between Centers. ***Figure 7-2*** is a map that shows the location of the Multimodal Corridors. **Regional Multimodal Corridors** are organized to optimize the operations, ridership, and feasibility of premium transit. **City Multimodal Corridors** are organized to optimize fixed-bus transit. The two corridor types are similar in most ways, with the primary difference being the long-term transit improvement envisioned for each.

Regional Multimodal Corridors

Regional Multimodal Corridors are designed to optimize bus transit in the short term and the feasibility of premium transit, either bus rapid transit or similar transit technology, over the long term.

Premium transit operates in right of way dedicated to the transit vehicle to avoid congestion along a roadway. It has stations spaced around one mile apart to minimize the number of times transit vehicles slow down and stop to pick up and drop off passengers.

Each station is surrounded by **transit-oriented development (TOD)**, with higher intensity and mixed-use development within one half mile walk to and from the station. Centers detailed in the last section incorporate TOD patterns, each having a Core Zone within a quarter mile from the station and an Edge Zone between ¼ and ½ mile from the station. ***Figure 7-25*** shows a stylized cross-section of a Regional Multimodal Corridor.

Figure 7-25 - *Regional Multimodal Corridor Cross Section*

Functional Objectives

- Provide safe and convenient corridor access by all travel modes (auto, transit, biking, rolling, and walking).
- Make premium transit (bus-rapid transit or similar) a viable travel option and financially feasible operation through higher intensity, mixed-use, walkable transit-oriented development around stations.

Design Guidelines

- **Transit Operations**
  - Vehicle speeds: 20+ miles per hour (including stops), 35–40 miles per hour between stops.
  - Station spacing: ~1 mile apart.
  - Infrastructure: Exclusive transit rights-of-way or queue-jumping lanes at intersections.
  - Transit priority at signals.
- **Service Features**
  - Frequent service: Maximum 15-minute headways.
  - Long service hours: 20+ hours daily, 7 days a week.
- **Corridor Design**
- **Transit-Oriented Development (TOD):**
  - Jobs-housing balance to optimize trips and boost ridership.
  - Hierarchical Centers:
    - Regional Centers: 20+ stories, job-intensive hubs.
    - City Centers: Up to 12 stories, spaced ~ 2–3 miles apart, job-focused.
    - Local Centers: Up to 6 stories, housing-dominant.
  - Center zones within ½ mile of transit stations:
    - **Core Zone (¼ mile):** Higher density, job-heavy.
    - **Edge Zone (¼–½ mile):** Lower density, mixed-use.
- **Street and Mobility Network**
  - Walkability and connectivity prioritized within and between Centers.
  - Roadway design:
    - Posted speeds slow in Centers.
    - Traffic signals prioritize pedestrians, cyclists, and transit.
  - Local street grids:
  - Block sizes: ~250x500 to 300x600 feet.
- **Bicycle and Pedestrian Features**
  - Dedicated bike lanes, sidewalks, and separated paths.
  - Parallel walking, rolling, and biking paths where feasible.
- **Performance Measurement**
  - Metrics: Destination accessibility, mode split, quality of service.
  - Development of multimodal network standards by FHWA should be used when completed.

City Multimodal Corridors

The design guidelines for City Multimodal Corridors mirror those for Regional Multimodal Corridors. The primary difference is they are not designed to optimize the feasibility of premium transit over the long-term because they do not have strong development potential to support premium transit ridership.

City Multimodal Corridors are to be organized to optimize fixed-route bus service, where buses operate in the same travel lanes as vehicles and stop more frequently. ***Figure 7-26*** shows a stylized cross section of a City Multimodal Corridor.

Functional Objectives

- Provide safe and convenient corridor access by all travel modes (auto, transit, biking, walking).
- Optimize fixed bus route ridership with higher intensity, mixed-use, walkable transit-oriented development around stations in Centers along the corridor and easy neighborhood access to stops between Center stops.

Figure 7-26 - *City Multimodal Corridor Cross Section*

Design and Operational Guidelines

Bus Transit Operations

- Transit vehicles share lanes with automobiles.
- Signal priority for transit vehicles where feasible.
- Service frequency: 20–30-minute headways.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD)

- Development concentrated within ½ mile of transit stations.
- Non-motorized networks for optimized access within station areas.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure

- Bike lanes and sidewalks along arterial corridors.
- Separation of bike lanes and sidewalks from auto lanes for safety.
- Parallel bike and walking paths where feasible.

Roadway Design

- Prioritize pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- Speed limits: 35 miles per hour within centers, 45 miles per hour between centers.
- Signal timing favors pedestrians, cyclists, and transit vehicles.

Performance Standards

- Use multimodal metrics for design and operation.
- Align with evolving FHWA multimodal performance standards.

Freight and Rural Corridors

Transportation routes providing safe and convenient access to Industrial and Logistics Districts, and rural areas in the southern part of the City.

Freight Corridors

Functional Objectives

- Providing safe and convenient freight and goods access to Industrial and Logistics Districts.
- Place heightened safety measures to manage conflict points between trucks and neighborhoods, pedestrians, and cyclists.

Design Guidelines

- Network design and operations.
  - Maintain targeted roadway levels of service D or better at intersections and along corridors.
  - Roadway design standards that accommodate truck traffic (i.e., turning radius).
  - Minimize through-movement conflicts.
  - Pursue appropriate landscaping along Freight Corridors designed to buffer activities, noise, and support air quality.
- Refer to countermeasures from the Local Road Safety Action Plan with a Primary Emphasis Area of Heavy Vehicles.

Rural Corridors

Functional Objectives

- Provide safe and convenient access to destinations within the Rural Context Area.
- Limit development of adjacent properties to protect the rural landscape.

Design Guidelines

- No more than two lanes.
- Rural cross section (drainage to ditches/swales).
- When separated cycling facilities are not feasible, pursue 4’ - 6’ paved shoulders with 4’ gravel shoulders.
- Access management to limit the development of adjacent properties.
- Refer to countermeasures from the Local Road Safety Action Plan with a focus location of Rural Area.

Center Place Type Development Review

Center policies in the Inland, Coastal, and Green Line chapters of the Comprehensive Plan promote the creation of Center plans and plan-based regulations for each of the designated Centers in the Plan.

Figure 7-27 shows the development review options for proposed developments on properties within designated Center place type boundaries. Reviews will follow plan-based regulations if they have been adopted for a Center.

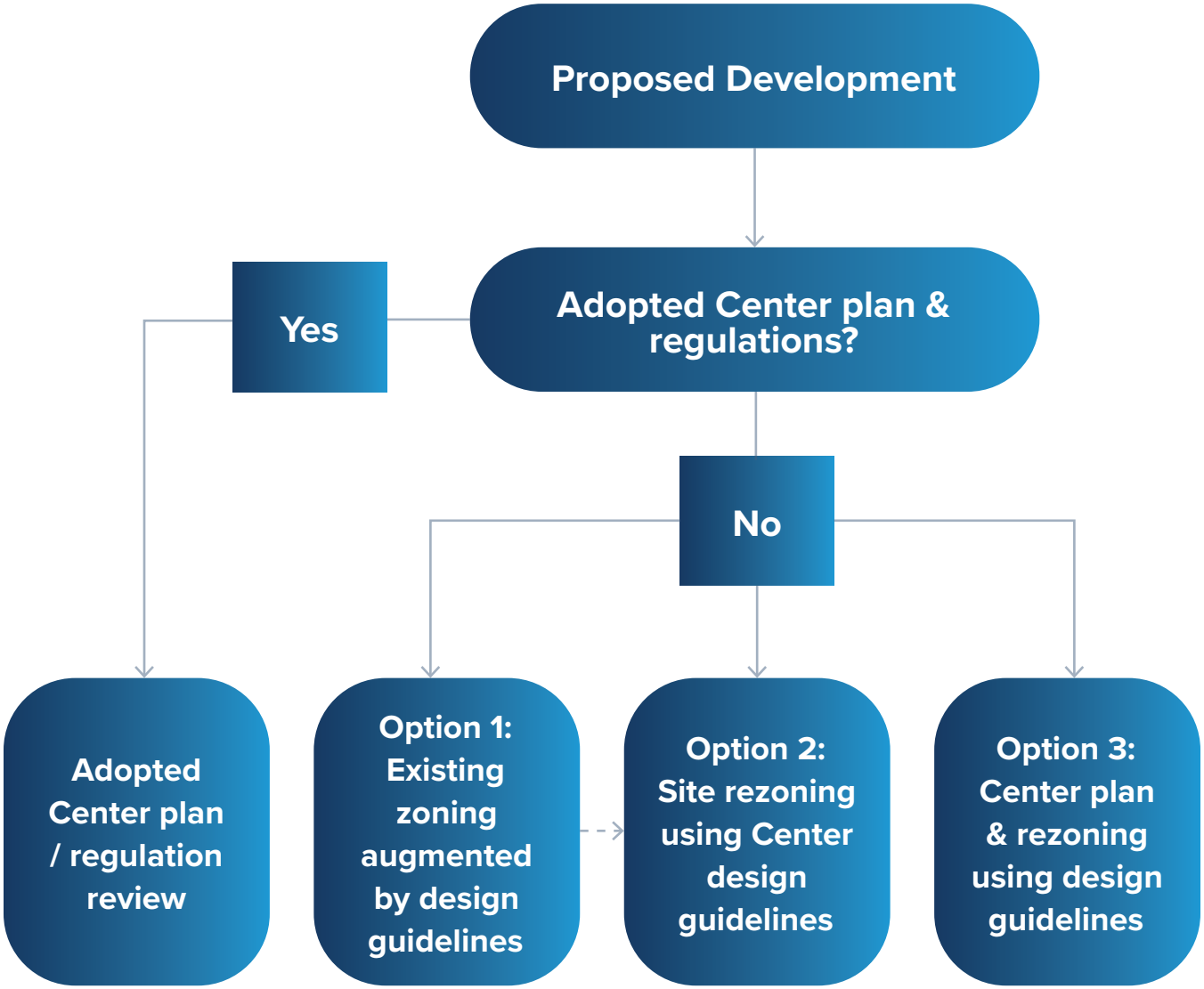


Figure 7-27 - *Center Place Type Development Review Options*

Without those regulations, development applications have three options:

1. Review the development proposal using the adopted zoning on the property augmented by design guidelines (by-right development). If there is a conflict between zoning requirements and design guidelines, the applicant has the option to request a rezoning under Option 2 or Option 3.

2. Review the application as a rezoning and review the project using the applicable design guidelines (Center type and Core / Edge zone). The rezoning review should consider how infrastructure on the property, including street networks, open space, stormwater, and parking, would support Center-wide infrastructure and the provision of attainable housing.

3. Apply the Center design guidelines to develop a Center Plan and plan-based regulations and review the property based on the plan and regulations. This option would include the planning and design of Center wide infrastructure and inclusion of attainable housing.

Site Rezoning (Option 1)

Option 1 development reviews would include the following steps:

- Determine whether the property is in a Core or Edge zone. A property falling within both zones should define the zone boundary in the development proposal.

- Develop a site plan that illustrates how the plan aligns with existing zoning requirements and the applicable Center type (Regional, City, Local) and zone (Core, Edge) for the property. The site plan should identify inconsistencies between existing zoning requirements and Center design guidelines that preclude the development from meeting design guidelines.

- Review how the site plan addresses inconsistencies to determine whether the plan should be approved under existing zoning or move forward as rezoning (option 2).

Site Rezoning (Option 2)

Development reviews for applicants who choose Option 2, site rezoning would include the following steps:

- Determine whether the property is located in a Center or Edge zone. A property falling within both zones should define the zone boundary in the development proposal.

- Develop a site plan that illustrates how the plan aligns with the design guidelines listed in this chapter

- Illustrate how the buildings and infrastructure design in the site plan could align with Center wide development and infrastructure and with attainable housing objectives. This step could help frame proffer negotiations between the developer and City. ***Figure 7-28***, illustrates the steps in the Center wide planning and design process:

    - Refine the locations of the Core and Edge Zones if needed (A)
    - Refine the Center boundaries if needed (B)
    - Illustrate the local street network (C) and street types (D)
    - Illustrate the locations and functionality of stormwater collection and treatment facilities, and park locations and types (i.e., pocket park versus community park) (E)
    - Illustrate shared parking locations and types (F)

- A more detailed site plan is then prepared based on Center-wide illustrations. Development review for the site plan would include proffer negotiations between the City and developer, including infrastructure financing and attainable housing.

Center Plan and Regulations (Option 3)

Development reviews for applicants who choose Option 3, Center rezoning would include the following steps:

- Use Center design guidelines to develop a detailed Center wide plan using the following steps:
    - Refine the locations of the Core and Edge Zones if needed (A)
    - Refine the Center boundaries if needed (B)
    - Design the local street network (C) and designate street types (D)
    - Design the locations and functionality of stormwater collection and treatment facilities, and park locations and types (i.e., pocket park versus community park) (E)
    - Identify shared parking locations and types (F)
    - Develop a Center infrastructure financing plan
    - Identify building locations and massing and opportunities for attainable housing and develop a Center development regulations (G)
- A detailed site plan is then prepared based on Center wide infrastructure designs and development regulations. Development review for the site plan would include proffer negotiations between the City and developer, including infrastructure financing and attainable housing.

Figure 7-44 *- Illustration of Center Wide Design (images A. - G. continue on next page)*

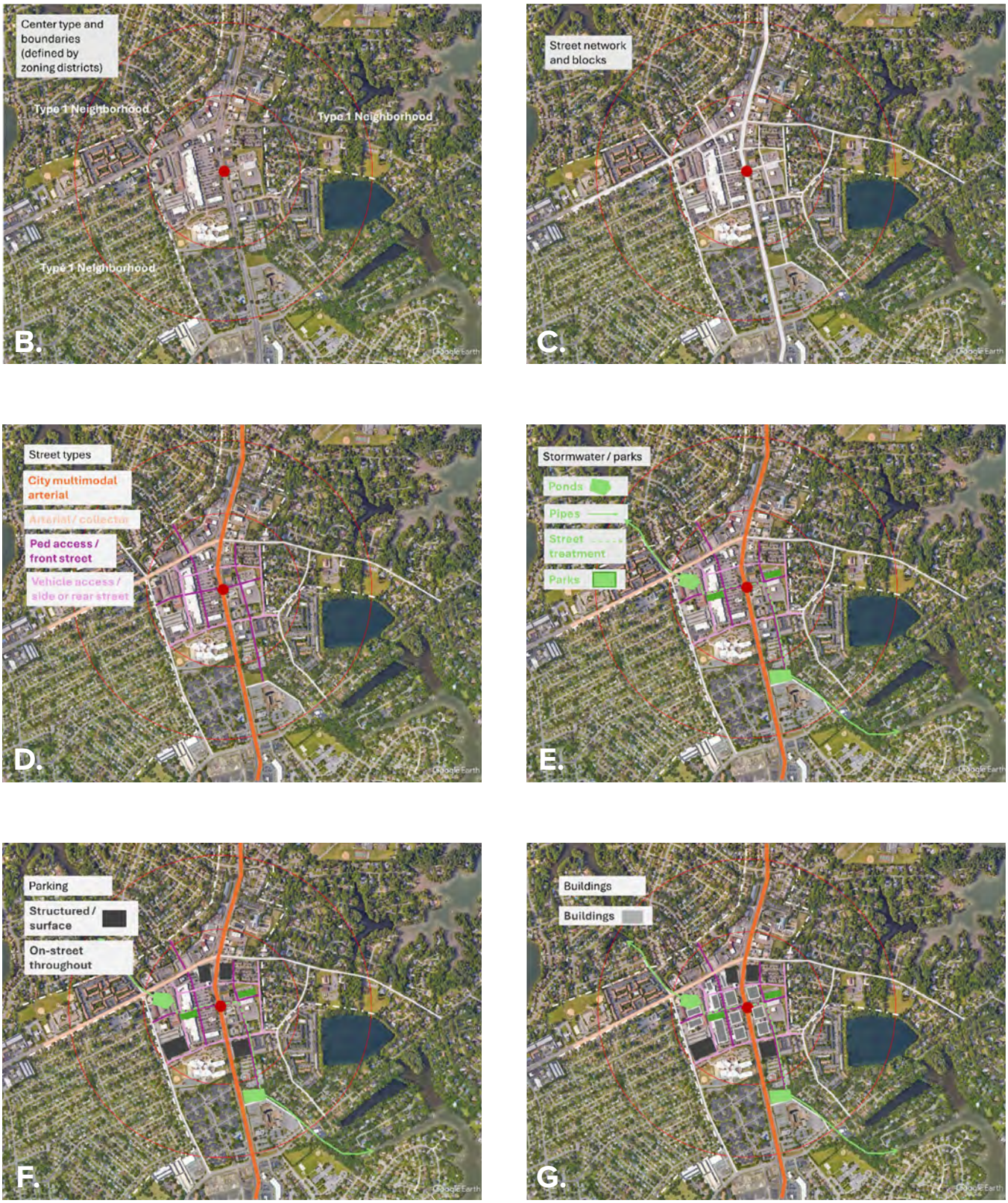


Figure 7-25 *(continued) - Illustrations of Center Wide Design (images A.- G.)*

References are still in progress, TBD

- Standards for building heights and job-housing balance in Centers and Corridors centers is informed by:
    - Multimodal System Design Guidelines. Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, March 2020. https://drpt.virginia.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/multimodal-system-design-guidelines.pdf. Refer to Chapter 3 (Multimodal Districts and Multimodal Centers).

Appendix A:

Zoning Districts to Place Types

Place Types assignments are based on the City's current zoning code and map as this is the best source of land use information. The zoning code will be revised in the coming years to better achieve the Comprehensive Plan. The updated zoning code should evaluate:

- Additional/expanded zoning categories.
- More mixed-use zones.
- Higher permissible residential densities in appropriate Centers.
- Zones/overlays for accessory dwelling units.
- Removing parking minimums in areas designed to support walkability.
- Shared district approaches to open space and stormwater requirements. Shared district approaches allow nearby properties to contribute to or utilize larger open spaces and stormwater systems rather than providing small, individual facilities that are disconnected.

The following tables (in development for this draft) will supply a detailed look at how the City's existing zoning districts connect to each of the Place Types.

Table Notes and Key These tables align the Comprehensive Plan Place Types with the City's existing zoning districts. DRAFT	
NPT	Non-Place Type. Areas without a formal Place Type, guided by separate policies.
X	The zoning district's primary Place Type.
E	The zoning district can contribute to a Place Type based on surrounding context.
E (1)	Limited Eligibility: The zoning district, agriculture and preservation north of the Blue Line, may qualify as a Center or Neighborhood Place Type in certain limited scenarios.
E (2)	Limited Eligibility: The area may qualify as part of a Center under limited conditions. This designation applies only to Oceanfront Resort (OR) and Resort Tourist (RT) districts occurring in the Inland Context Area.
[No X Provided]	The zoning district is not eligible to contribute to the Place Type.
Note: Rural Villages	Rural Village zone-Place Type assignments are provided on matrix, but the spatial assignment of Rural Villages in the map is not provided since the focal point of Rural Villages may shift.

		Inland Context Area								
Group	**Current Zoning Districts**	**Type 1 Neighborhood**	**Type 2 Neighborhood**	**Center Core**	**Center Edge**	**Special Use: Institutional**	**Special Use: Industrial**	**Special Use: Business**	**(NPT) Preservation**	**(NPT) Agriculture**
Apart.	A-12 Apartment District		X	E	E					
	A-18 Apartment District		X	E	E					
	A-24 Apartment District		X	E	E					
	A-36 Apartment District		X	E	E					
Agri.	AG-1 Agricultural District									X
	AG-2 Agricultural District									X
Biz.	B-1 Neighborhood Business District			E	E			X		
	B-1A Limited Community Business District			E	E			X		
	B-2 Community Business District			E	E			X		
	B-3 Central Business District			E	E			X		
	B-4 Mixed Use District		X	E	E					
	B-4C Central Business Mixed Use District		X	E	E					
	B-4K Historic Kempsville Area Mixed Use District		X	E	E					
	CBC Central Business Core District.			E	E			X		
Hotel	H-1 Hotel District			E	E			X		
Indus.	I-1 Light Industrial District (No Military)			E	E		X			
	I-2 Heavy Industrial District (No Military)			E	E		X			
Offi.	O-1 Office District			E	E	E		X		
	O-2 Office District			E	E	E		X		
Ocean	OR Oceanfront Resort District (2)			E (2)	E (2)					
Pres.	P-1 Preservation District								X	
PHD	PD-H1 Planned Unit Development District		X							
	PD-H2 Planned Unit Development District		X							
Resid.	R-10 Residential District	X								
	R-15 Residential District	X								
	R-2.5 Residential Townhouse District		X	E	E					
	R-20 Residential District	X								
	R-30 Residential District	X								
	R-40 Residential District	X								
	R-5D Residential District		X	E	E					
	R-5R Residential District (3)		X	E	E					
	R-5R Residential District NE (3)	X		E	E					
	R-5S Residential District		X	E	E					
	R-7.5 Residential District	X								
Resort	RT-1 Resort Tourist District			E (2)	E (2)					
	RT-3 Resort Tourist District			E (2)	E (2)					
	RT-4 Resort Tourist District			E (2)	E (2)					

		Coastal Context Area							
Group	**Current Zoning Districts**	**Coastal Neighborhood**	**Center Core**	**Center Edge**	**Special Use: Institutional**	**Special Use: Industrial**	**Special Use: Business**	**(NPT) Preservation**	**(NPT) Agriculture**
Apart.	A-12 Apartment District	X	E	E					
	A-18 Apartment District	X	E	E					
	A-24 Apartment District	X	E	E					
	A-36 Apartment District	X	E	E					
Agri.	AG-1 Agricultural District								X
	AG-2 Agricultural District								X
Biz.	B-1 Neighborhood Business District		E	E			X		
	B-1A Limited Community Business District		E	E			X		
	B-2 Community Business District		E	E			X		
	B-3 Central Business District		E	E			X		
	B-4 Mixed Use District	X	E	E					
	B-4C Central Business Mixed Use District	X	E	E					
	CBC Central Business Core District.		E	E			X		
Hotel	H-1 Hotel District	X	E	E					
Indus.	I-1 Light Industrial District (No Military)		E	E		X			
	I-2 Heavy Industrial District (No Military)		E	E		X			
Offi.	O-1 Office District		E	E	E		X		
	O-2 Office District		E	E	E		X		
Ocean	OR Oceanfront Resort District (2)		E	X					
Pres.	P-1 Preservation District		E (1)	E (1)				X	
PHD	PD-H1 Planned Unit Development District	X							
	PD-H2 Planned Unit Development District	X							
Resid.	R-10 Residential District	X							
	R-15 Residential District	X							
	R-2.5 Residential Townhouse District	X		E					
	R-20 Residential District	X							
	R-30 Residential District	X							
	R-40 Residential District	X							
	R-5D Residential District	X	E	E					
	R-5R Residential District (3)	X	E	E					
	R-5R Residential District NE (3)	X	E	E					
	R-5S Residential District	X	E	E					
	R-7.5 Residential District	X	E	E					
Resort	RT-1 Resort Tourist District	X	E	E					
	RT-3 Resort Tourist District	X	E	E					
	RT-4 Resort Tourist District	X	E	E					

		Green Line Context Area							
Group	**Current Zoning Districts**	**Transition Neighborhood**	**Type 2 Neighborhood**	**Center Core**	**Center Edge**	**Special Use: Institutional**	**Special Use: Industrial**	**(NPT) Preservation**	**(NPT) Agriculture**
Apart.	A-12 Apartment District	X		E	E				
	A-18 Apartment District	X		E	E				
	A-24 Apartment District	X		E	E				
	A-36 Apartment District	X		E	E				
Agri.	AG-1 Agricultural District	E (1)		E	E				X
	AG-2 Agricultural District	E (1)		E	E				X
Biz.	B-1 Neighborhood Business District	X		E	E				
	B-1A Limited Community Business District	X		E	E				
	B-2 Community Business District	X		E	E				
	B-3 Central Business District	X		E	E				
	B-4 Mixed Use District	X		E	E				
Indus.	I-1 Light Industrial District (No Military)			E	E	E	X		
	I-2 Heavy Industrial District (No Military)			E	E	E	X		
Offi.	O-1 Office District	X		E	E	E			
	O-2 Office District	X		E	E	E			
Pres.	P-1 Preservation District							X	
PHD	PD-H1 Planned Unit Development District	X							
	PD-H2 Planned Unit Development District	X							
Resid.	R-10 Residential District	X							
	R-15 Residential District	X							
	R-2.5 Residential Townhouse District	X			E				
	R-20 Residential District	X							
	R-30 Residential District	X							
	R-40 Residential District	X							
	R-5D Residential District	X		E	E				
	R-5R Residential District (3)	X		E	E				
	R-5S Residential District	X		E	E				
	R-7.5 Residential District	X							

		Rural Context Area			
Group	**Current Zoning Districts**	**Rural Village**	**Special Use: Business**	**(NPT) Preservation**	**(NPT) Agriculture**
Agri.	AG-1 Agricultural District				X
	AG-2 Agricultural District	E			X
Biz.	B-1 Neighborhood Business District		X		
	B-1A Limited Community Business District		X		
	B-2 Community Business District	E	X		
	B-3 Central Business District		X		
Indus.	I-1 Light Industrial District (No Military)				
	I-2 Heavy Industrial District (No Military)				
Offi.	O-1 Office District		X		
	O-2 Office District		X		
Ocean	OR Oceanfront Resort District (2)				
Pres.	P-1 Preservation District			X	
PHD	PD-H1 Planned Unit Development District				
	PD-H2 Planned Unit Development District				
Resid.	R-10 Residential District				
	R-15 Residential District				
	R-2.5 Residential Townhouse District				
	R-20 Residential District				
	R-30 Residential District				
	R-40 Residential District				
	R-5D Residential District				
	R-5R Residential District (3)				
	R-5S Residential District				
	R-7.5 Residential District				

Appendix B:
Center Area Map Series

Center Area Map Series are provided as a separate attachment for this draft.