

DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION PLAN

CITY OF HOPEWELL, VIRGINIA

GARET S. PRIOR
STUDIO II: SPRING 2012

*MASTER OF URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM
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DOWNTOWN DEVELOPMENT AND REVITALIZATION PLAN: CITY OF HOPEWELL, VIRGINIA

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Hopewell's downtown has seen many of the same declines of like areas where post-WWII housing and retail market patterns led to suburban flight. Within the downtown there is a high building vacancy rate, loitering of non-shoppers, and an unsafe perception from members of the community. Over the past decade plans have been made to revitalize the downtown district, but substantial change has been slow to occur. Therefore, this plan for the City of Hopewell will serve as a guide for future development and revitalization of its downtown.

As for a guiding theory in planning, the National Main Street Five Point Approach was chosen for its history of success in small downtown revitalization planning. To assess the development capacity of the site, an existing conditions analysis was conducted through these Five Points, the categories, questions, and findings are as follows:

Economic Restructuring: What are the major regional and local driving forces in the economy and where are these connections to Downtown Hopewell?

- Hopewell's population in the past decade grew only by one percent (compared to 15 percent regionally), AND has lower educational attainment levels, median household income, and an unemployment rate almost double that of the regional average
- Hopewell has been able to retain a base of chemical manufacturing and health care jobs which combined employ over 3,000 people locally
- Downtown; there is a strong presence of banking and financial investment businesses. Also, the Appomattox Regional Library has 20,000 people walk through its doors annually

Design, Traffic, and Circulation: What design framework, traffic and circulation patterns comprise downtown Hopewell?

- Downtown has the layout and building design of a traditional downtown.
- While there has been improvement of the Downtown's appearance through streetscape and façade improvement programs, 82 percent of the surveyed citizens rated the physical appearance as poor

- Randolph Road, the main artery of traffic through the center of downtown, experiences 12,000 vehicles daily and the main commercial corridor counts 3,000.
- As for pedestrian users, the only major concern was the relative fear of safety brought on by crossing Randolph Road

Safety: What are the levels of real and perceived crime in Downtown Hopewell?

- The perception of crime in Downtown is much greater than actual crime
- The negative image associated with Downtown was the top response from Downtown merchants when asked about the disadvantages of their business location while 66 percent of the citizen respondents rated safety as unsatisfactory

Promotion, Entertainment, and Events: What are the major promotional and entertainment draws within the region and where is Downtown Hopewell's?

- Major regional driving forces are history tourism and outdoor recreational activities. The regional promotional agency is Petersburg Area Regional Tourism Corporation

(PART); which plays a key role as the main source of information for the Ft. Lee community

- Hopewell's major historical draw is Gen. Grant's Headquarters in Historic City Point. Major events within the City include: Hooray for Hopewell Arts and Crafts Festival, City Point 5k Run and Walk, and Weston Manor's "Emma and George Days."
- Hopewell's central promotional agency is the City Department of Tourism. Within the past four years the visitors' center has seen their number of visitors decline by half; which may be attributed to the overall economy, but might be due to spending cutbacks that have a reduction in hours, updated materials, and distribution.

Political and Area Organizations: What are the regional and local organizations that influence Downtown Hopewell?

- Regional level agencies which may be a source of funding are the Crater Planning District Commission (PDC) and Virginia's Gateway Region
- The basic political members who have jurisdiction over Downtown Hopewell are Mayor Christina Luman-Bailey and Rev. Dr. Curtis Harris. Other key non-governmental organizations are the Hopewell Downtown Partnership

(HDP) and Hopewell-Prince George Chamber of Commerce

Retail Market Analysis

A trade area with two different drive times (5 and 16 minutes) was conducted to establish a tertiary and secondary trade market. Within the tertiary trade area, Downtown Hopewell competes with the community level shopping center of Cavalier Square, and the secondary trade area includes a super regional shopping center in Southpark Mall (Colonial Heights), along with a few other community level centers in The Crossings (Hopewell) and Breckenridge (Chesterfield).

When citizens were asked about frequency in which they spent money Downtown, close to half of the respondents (49%) said that they never shopped Downtown. When questioned about the where they spent a majority of their money on shopping and entertainment, 80 percent responded Southpark Mall (Colonial Heights). For stores wanted in Downtown, the following were the top responses: Sit-down quality restaurant (26%), movie theater (23%), and a clothing Retailer (23%). An Unmet Market Demand Model was used to determine the potential new stores, the top categories are displayed in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Store Types with Unmet Demand

5 Minute Drive Time	
<u>Store Type</u>	<u>Potential New Units</u>
PET STORES	6.4
CLOTHING REPAIR AND SPECIALTY SERVICES	5.1
SPECIALTY GROCERY	3.5
16 Minute Drive Time	
<u>Store Type</u>	<u>Potential New Units</u>
CHILDCARE	23.7
CLOTHING REPAIR AND SPECIALTY SERVICES	17.3
SPECIALTY GROCERY	11.1

Housing Market Analysis

Currently, Hopewell is a community that has been growing older because it is failing to retain young families or professionals. When asked during the high school focus group whether students thought they would return to Hopewell post-college, 80 percent said no. When asked why, improvement in educational, entertainment, and housing quality was mentioned.

To address this issue, the market for market rate multi-family apartments within a 16-minute drive time from Downtown Hopewell was analyzed. This trade area includes regional competition in southeastern Chesterfield County and surrounding Ft. Lee. When the housing demand was calculated it can be

assumed that there will be 415 new households added to the area in 2015 with a median household income of \$53,485.

Assets:

- Access to Appomattox River
- Beacon Theater and Appomattox Regional Library
- Streetscaping and façade program
- High traffic count
- Job base in manufacturing and medical
- Existence of banking/investors Downtown
- Historic Downtown buildings and layout
- Access to regional tourism routes
- HDP and Main Street designation

Liabilities:

- High amount of vacant Downtown buildings
- Perception of unclear environment for investment
- Lack of way-finding or cohesive signage
- Unclear or incoherent gateway design
- Perception of Downtown as unsafe
- Out-of-date marketing materials
- Lack of entertainment and recreational options
- Regional demographic and economic trends

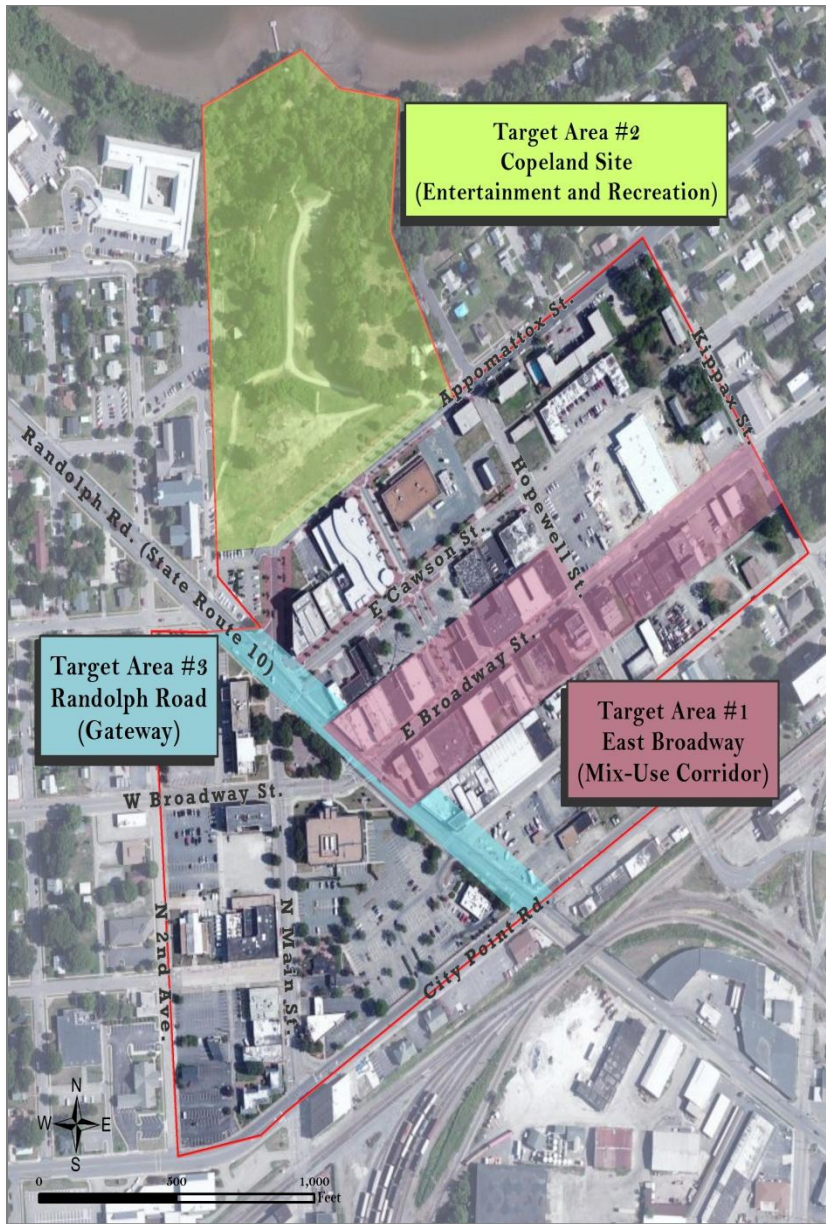
The Vision:

Downtown Hopewell is a **safe and enjoyable place** where a **revived retail market** provides **diversity of shopping and entertainment** options. For those who want to live in this exciting area, Downtown will provide a **range of quality housing options** to suit those who desire a place where one can live, work, and play. Easy **access to the Appomattox Riverfront** and trail system offers a plethora of **outdoor recreational activities** and the Copeland site provides a great **community venue** for family and other entertainment activities. Finally, a **distinct design and marketing plan** for the downtown will feature the **historic and recreational resources** to make Downtown a destination within the region.

Key Target Areas:

To achieve this Vision the plan will center on three target areas to act as a catalyst for future development. The location of these target areas is the Copeland Site, along East Broadway, and along Randolph Road. The prominence of these areas as central to revitalization efforts became apparent during the existing conditions analysis.

Image 1. Target Area Map



Source: Created by author using image from City of Hopewell GIS Department (2012)

Target Area #1: East Broadway (Mix-Use Corridor) – As the traditional and current center of retail and housing in the district, the revitalization of this corridor would serve as symbol for change in downtown, multiplier for regional attractions, and an economic base for future projects.

- Set a clear plan for future development and establish a central organization to work with businesses
- Increase development incentives and continue the current façade improvement and streetscaping programs
- Use the mix of incentives and legal code enforcement tools to upgrade and maintain quality housing standards
- Actively market the district to active retailers and developers of mix-use buildings
- Increase the amount of parking at the edges of the district and pursue a private-public partnership in constructing a parking deck
- Implement the current way-finding plan and establish a tourism office downtown through the HDP
- Fund the development of an upgraded marketing and promotional campaign
- Reduce the amount real and perceived crime through improved outreach efforts and district appearance

Target Area #2: Copeland Site (Entertainment and Recreation) – Making use of Downtown waterfront is a tried and true catalyst to Downtown revitalization, also by concentrating efforts on increasing recreation and entertainment this location could serve the local and regional community.

- Complete the “Blueway-Greenway” trail through working with regional actors
- Market the area as an event space and encourage local groups to hold their activities on-site
- Establish a community venue on the lower section of the property
- Further the process in creating a site assessment and marketing packet for the upper site (previous location of the Copeland School) to a mix-use development

Target Area #3: Randolph Road (Gateway) – First impressions are important and lasting; therefore an appealing gateway can improve the perception of the district and serve as a functional guidance point for travelers.

- Extend the current jurisdiction of the Downtown Design and Review Committee (DDRC) to encompass the Route 10 corridor leading to Downtown from the east and west
- Create corridor guidelines, have them adopted and implemented through incentive and enforcement policies throughout the corridor
- Work to implement regional signage specifically aimed towards “Historic Downtown Hopewell”
- Encourage connectivity throughout the district by completing Phase II of the streetscaping plan
- Promote cross-district advertising and marketing between the retail/restaurant and banking/investment communities
- Introduce traffic-calming measures raised crosswalks, traffic signal timing, and reduced speed limits along Randolph Road to increase pedestrian safety

INTRODUCTION

Client

This Downtown Revitalization Plan for the City of Hopewell, Virginia, was requested by J. March Altman, Director of the Department of Development, and it also fulfills the requirements of the Master of Urban and Regional Planning program in the L. Douglas Wilder School of Government and Public Affairs at Virginia Commonwealth University. The most recent plan for development in Downtown Hopewell was adopted in 2003 with the Downtown Hopewell Vision. The central vision of this plan is to create a revived downtown area that is home to a thriving retail market, is easily walkable, increases housing opportunities, and provides access from Downtown to the Appomattox River (City of Hopewell, 2003).

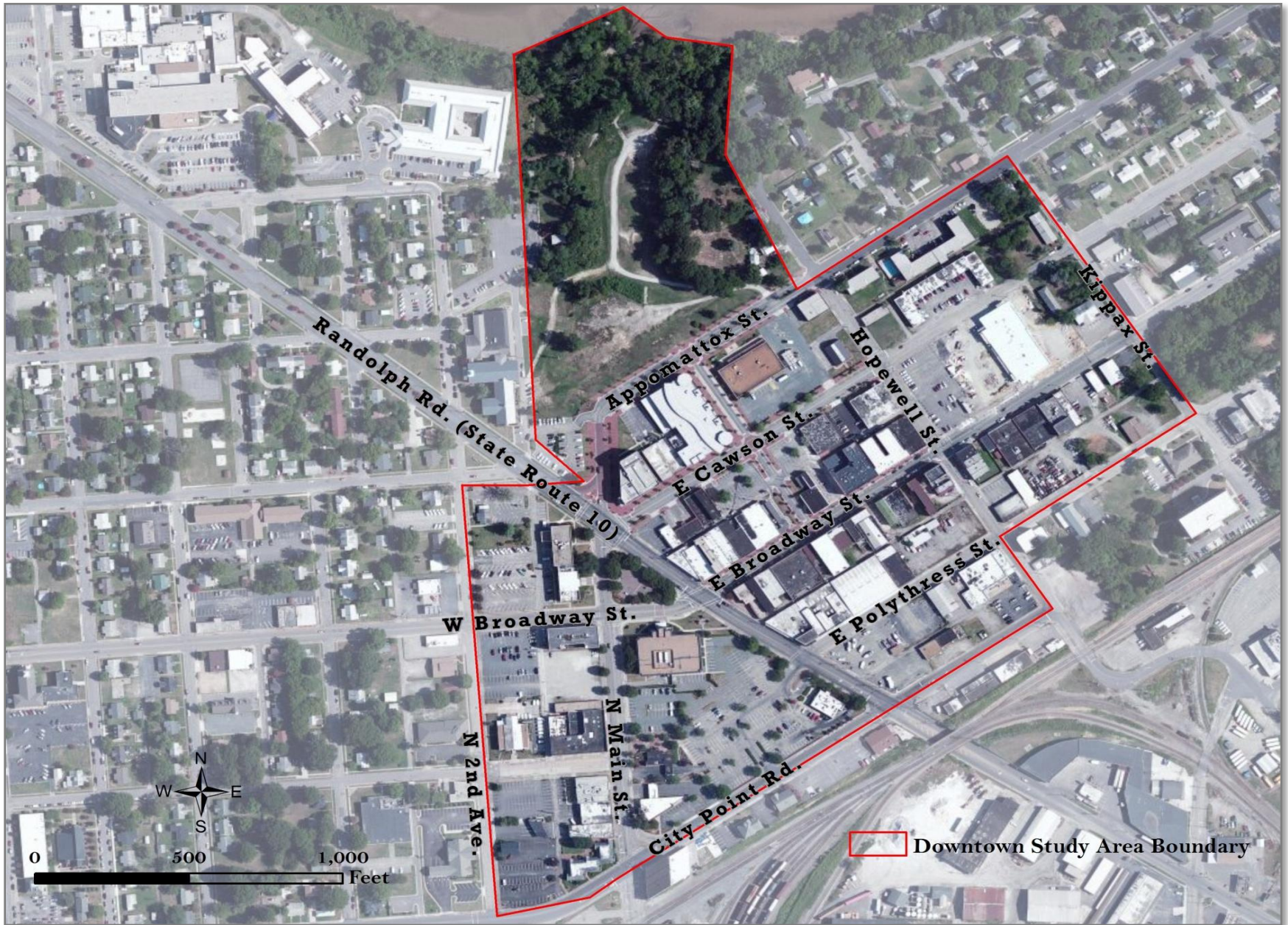
The Department of Development, along with City Council members, City Manager Ed Daley, and Mayor Christina Luman-Bailey, will be the central players in the implementation of this plan. Other stakeholders that will need to be consulted in this process, and may be given responsibility of certain tasks, are as

follows: Hopewell Downtown Partnership (HDP), John Randolph Medical Center, Prince George-Hopewell Chamber of Commerce, Historic Hopewell Foundation, Appomattox Regional Library, Hopewell Redevelopment and Housing Authority, Hopewell Community Industrial Partnership, area property owners, developers, merchants, and invested citizens.

Purpose

This Downtown Revitalization and Redevelopment Plan for the City of Hopewell will serve as a guide for future development within Downtown. Hopewell's downtown has seen many of the same declines of like areas where post-WWII housing and retail market patterns led to suburban flight. Within Downtown there is a high building vacancy rate, loitering of non-shoppers, and an unsafe perception from members of the community. Over the past decade plans have been made to revitalize the Downtown district; but substantial change has been slow to occur. The specific Downtown borders of the study area for this plan were chosen to coincide with previously defined boundaries in the currently adopted vision plan for downtown Hopewell, as seen in Image 2.

Image 2. Downtown Study Area



Source: Created by author using image from City of Hopewell GIS Department (2012)

Previous Plans and Development History

The historic City of Hopewell is located just east of the City of Petersburg in central Virginia. As seen in Image 3, Hopewell is one of three cities in what is known as the Tri-Cities area surrounding the Fort Lee U.S. Army base. Along with the Fort Lee, the towns together have long been the southern base of the greater Richmond region. Hopewell itself is known for its long history as a heavy industrial manufacturing town.

After a fire in 1915 that burnt down much of the town, Hopewell was rebuilt quickly by the DuPont Company, which established their plan in Hopewell on the banks of the Appomattox River and constructed entire neighborhoods for their workers and executives. Hopewell's quick expansion and overflowing job base gave it the nickname "The Wonder City." Post-WWII the town experienced a decline as expansion of the highway system and cheap land prices led to economic flight into the suburban areas. Currently, even though Hopewell has seen a decline in its traditional downtown commercial area, the community has retained its industrial base. This manufacturing base, which began with the DuPont Company, has become mostly chemical in nature, which led to Hopewell's other nickname "The Chemical Capital of the South." This concentration of industry has acted as

Image 3. Context within the Greater Richmond Region



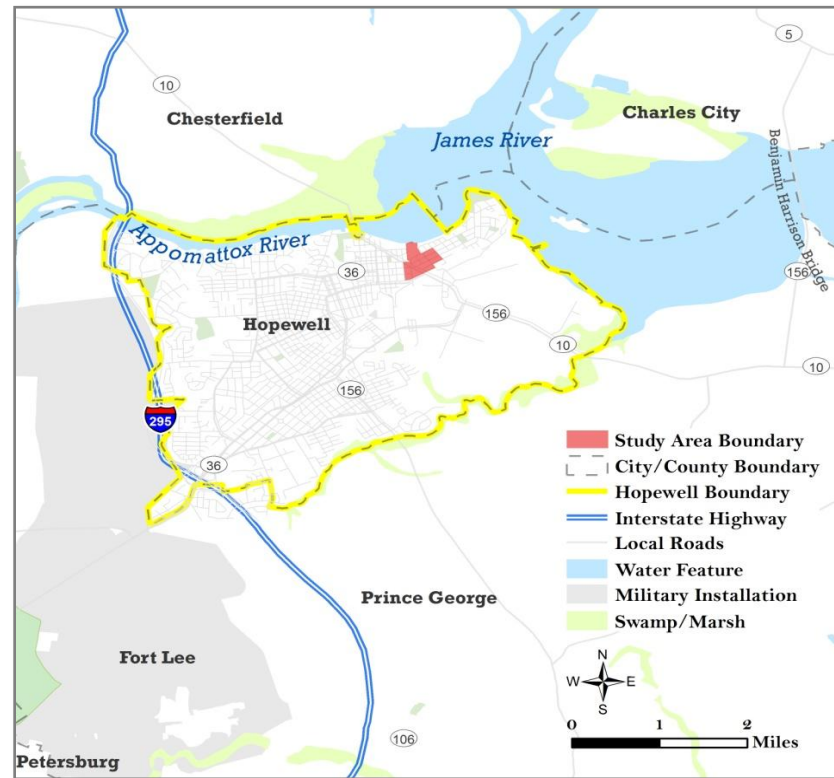
Source: Created by author (2012)

the economic base of the community for many years, but with it comes a negative perception of environmental and community safety issues being adjacent to chemical manufacturing plants. Even though the industry has made progressive steps to remedy these concerns, two major chemical accidents in the 1970s, Allied Signal's dumping of kepone (carcinogenic insecticide) into the James River and a tanker hitting the Harrison Memorial Bridge, negative opinions still shape the perception of living in Hopewell today.

With this long history of manufacturing, Hopewell is a working class community with mostly older, modest housing and relatively few contemporary shopping facilities. The major centers of shopping within the town are at the Crossings and Cavalier Square, which offer a limited amount of major brand grocery and retail options. The area of retail growth within the city has been located in the southern portion surrounding the intersection of State Route 36, Interstate 295, and Ft. Lee.

As seen in Image 4, the Downtown district in Hopewell is located along State Route 10 in the northern section of the city. One of Downtown's major assets is its location at the confluence of the James and Appomattox Rivers. This space connecting the

Image 4. Context within City of Hopewell



Source: Created by author (2012)

downtown to the riverfront is referred to as the Copeland Site because of the elementary school that was previously located on this parcel of land. In 2003 this school was demolished to make way for a larger development on the property, the goal of which was to connect Downtown to the riverfront. Currently, this parcel of land is the site of a city park.

As stated previously, the most recent plan for development in the Downtown area was adopted by City Council in 2003 called the Downtown Hopewell Vision. To achieve the plan's vision the city contracted two nationally recognized redevelopment planning firms, HyettPalma (economic assessment) and Wells and Associates (transportation analysis). In the economic assessment of Downtown, HyettPalma conducted a retail, office, and housing market analysis with a defined 6 to 8 mile trade area. The recommendations from this study called for the establishment of four major districts in Downtown: Arts & Entertainment, Office & Institutional, Waterfront, and Future Development. The priority areas for this plan were to concentrate efforts on enhancing arts and entertainment along East Broadway Street and to prepare the Copeland site for future development. The catalyst projects were to construct a new public library/cultural center, redevelop the housing projects in the Cortez Manor and Conway Apartments, restoring the Beacon Theater; and to establish a Downtown committee to oversee implementation of the Downtown vision.

As for the Wells and Associated transportation analysis, an evaluation of the Downtown street network and parking systems was conducted. Major circulation recommendations were for the

relocation of the truck scales located just west of the district, install traffic calming measures along Randolph Road, and to extend a roadway to the riverfront as development on the Copeland Site progressed. Parking recommendations called for the district to provide a total of 4,500 spaces for projected future development, compared to the 1,927 spaces in the district at the time of the study. To gain additional spaces the plan recommended construction of a two story parking garage adjacent to the new library and increasing the amount of street parking.

One major success of this plan was the creation of the Hopewell Downtown Partnership (HDP), whose current members comprise many of the public, private, and civic leaders in the community. As of 2011, this group was designated as the central organization through which training and funds will be channeled for Hopewell's acceptance into the Virginia Main Street Program. Other positives have been the construction of the new 36,000 square foot headquarters library for the Appomattox Regional Library System, part restoration of the Beacon Theater, a successful mix-use redevelopment project in the Butterworth Lofts, streetscape and design improvements, and the creation of a façade improvement program. Additionally, design guidelines

have been adopted and the Downtown Design Review Committee has been formed to oversee the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness. Major goals from this plan that have not been accomplished are the creation of additional parking spaces through construction of a parking deck, development of the Copeland site; and attraction of businesses to an arts and entertainment district.

Another recent plan conducted in the jurisdiction was the “B” Village Neighborhood Plan (2007). The purpose of this plan was to respond to the growing housing needs coming from Ft. Lee’s expansion in the federal Defense Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC). The city contacted the firm of K.W. Poore and Associates to build upon the previous vision for Downtown by analyzing Hopewell’s position in the regional housing market by surveying possible residents on their satisfaction with, or perception of quality of life factors in Hopewell. To start, an analysis of the physical and environmental conditions of Hopewell was conducted, along with meetings of Hopewell and area citizens, officials, and developers. Major recommendations from this plan were to enhance the gateway from Route 10 into the community by improving the housing quality and streetscaping in this area, increasing the quantity of market-rate

and homeownership opportunities throughout the city, and improving the housing choices in the luxury apartment and \$300,000 to \$500,000 single family home range.

The overall success of this plan is hard to ascertain due to the housing market crash in 2008 and the fact that it was never adopted by the City Council. Therefore, the major takeaways from this plan are in their unmet recommendations and analysis, and they are as follows:

- Revitalization plan for the City Marina and Weston Manor
- Pattern-book for construction and rehabilitation of the housing in Neighborhood B
- Redevelopment plan for the Appomattox Trailer Park
- Detailed section-by-section corridor enhancement plan for the gateway leading into the western part of the city from Route 10

Small Town – Downtown Revitalization

Downtowns, whether large or small, usually share the common characteristics of existing as the traditional historic center, are socially identifiable, and faced a downward trend with the post-WWII expansion patterns that took the economy to the suburbs.

Despite the importance of dispelling this last commonality, most of the professional and scholarly literature on Downtown development has neglected small cities (Robertson 1999, 270). Francavigila's *Main Street Revisited*, describes a key to the urban character of small towns a place of interaction between time, space, and images (Francavigila, 1996). He goes on to specify that to achieve a successful Downtown, one must pay special attention to the design and arrangement of land uses. Kenyon's study of small-towns throughout rural Georgia and focused on the social and community significance of Downtowns and how fostering these relationships was the most important factor in Downtown revitalization (Keyon, 1989). The National Main Street Trust, which has been in the business of small town downtown revitalization for the past three decades, basically takes an approach that combines previous studies with their Four Point Approach. This practice, along with the theories of Mixed-Scanning and Rational Model will be used to specify the shape and scope of this plan.

The Main Street Approach

As for a guiding theory in planning, the National Main Street Four Point Approach, with the addition of a Fifth Point of public safety, was chosen due to its long history of success and

effectiveness in small town revitalization efforts. In a study of 57 small-city revitalization strategies, the Main Street Approach was found more effective than related development strategies of historic preservation, pedestrian improvements, and waterfront development (Robertson 1999, 276). This approach is guided by the five main points of organization, design, economic restructuring, promotion and safety and therefore an existing conditions survey will be conducted in Hopewell for each of these categories.

For further analysis on the economics of this redevelopment plan a retail and housing market analysis will be conducted to determine any unmet demand in the community. Behind these five main points are eight guiding principles, on which the success of the plan usually hangs. These principles are: comprehensive, incremental, self-help, partnership, identifying and capitalizing on assets, quality, change, and implementation. These will inform the recommendations in that the objectives presented must be obtainable in the short run so that the incremental steps towards change can begin. As stated on the Main Street website, it looks to develop a comprehensive approach that ensures all options are on the table, while

incrementally executing plans with success to demonstrate that “new things are happening” in downtown (Main Street, 2011).

Some examples of plans following this Five Point Approach are the *Lakeside Avenue Revitalization* and *Brookland Park Boulevard Commercial Revitalization Plan* which were both conducted by graduate planning students at Virginia Commonwealth University. The major take away from the Lakeside plan was its process of conducting a retail analysis. This plan’s inclusion of extensive shopper, property owner, and merchant interviews added quality depth to a numbers driven retail market analysis.

As for the Brookland Park example, the take away from this plan is the methodology followed in the housing analysis. The connectivity between the residential and commercial uses of Downtown Hopewell has been cited as an area of need in each of the major plans created for the city in the past decade. Therefore, building upon the housing analysis conducted in 2007 to provide an updated look at the current market will be essential to the revitalization of downtown.

Mixed-Scanning and the Rational Model

At the theoretical level, this plan will follow closely the mixed-scanning model derived from Amitai Etzioni’s *Mixed-Scanning: A “Third” Approach To Decision Making*. The basic elements of this approach consist of high-order view of the policy-making process that overlooks the community, followed by targeted incremental plans that present recommendations.

Another planning theory used to guide this plan is the Rational Model. This model follows the traditional process of the scientific method. This theory will inform the plan’s process by stating the goals and purpose of the plan, identifying key questions to be answered, and examining all alternatives before specifying specific goals, an implementation schedule, and method of evaluation.

Combining these theories, this plan will use an approach to data gathering that looks at the macro level of influences on a given area and how they are allocated. In practice, this means the first step in the Hopewell plan will be to survey the regional context to identify the major economic, social and policies forces at play. The second major process will take this same scanning approach to the City of Hopewell, then at the Downtown level. Once the major forces are identified targeted plans to address issues at the downtown level

will be presented. These more focused recommendations will provide the findings from the analysis through specific alternatives.

Methodology

As stated previously, the vision for the city is to create a revived “Main Street” feel to the downtown area that will be home to a thriving retail market, is easily walkable, increases housing opportunities, and provides access to the Appomattox River. Therefore, the goal of this plan is to conduct an analysis of the existing conditions through the Main Street Five Point Approach to present a revitalization and redevelopment plan for downtown Hopewell to accomplish this vision. The following are the guiding questions for the initial analysis of this plan:

- **Economic Restructuring:** What are the major regional and local driving forces in the economy and where are these connections to Downtown Hopewell?
- **Design:** What design framework, traffic and circulation patterns comprise downtown Hopewell?
- **Safety:** What are the levels of real and perceived crime in Downtown Hopewell?

- **Promotion, Entertainment, and Events:** What are the major promotional and entertainment draws within the region and where is Downtown Hopewell’s place?
- **Political and Area Organizations:** What are the regional and local organizations that influence Downtown Hopewell?

To answer the question of economic restructuring, this study includes numerical research on the economic and demographic makeup and trends of the region, City of Hopewell, and the Downtown district. Information from the US Census, State and Regional Development Agencies (Virginia Employment Commission, Virginia Economic Development Partnership, Virginia’s Gateway Region, Crater PDC), and ESRI Business Analyst database for Geographic Information Systems (GIS) will be used to examine the regional outlook and how Hopewell compares.

An effective planning practice, which also adds depth to these numbers, is to include the input of the community. Input for this report was gained through key stakeholder interviews with the aforementioned state and regional development agencies, along with four focus group surveys conducted during the month of

February, 2012. The following groups were consulted on matters of economic restructuring, but were also asked questions about the other sections of the plan. Therefore, any reference to these focus groups in the future will involve one of the following surveys: downtown merchants, local high school students, local church members and business/development community members. A full account of the questions, number of respondents, time and date for these surveys will be provided in the Appendix.

The final components of the economic evaluation of Hopewell will be with the retail and housing market analysis sections. These sections will be addressed at the end of Part I as they follow a separate framework of analysis from the Five Points. Their framework will follow the Unmet Market Demand Model. This is a proven model for guiding marketing and new business recruitment which will determine the potential types and quantity of new business or housing that could be sustained within the trade area.

As for community design, information on the current architectural makeup, building quality, street network, and traffic counts were classified. Additionally, any community or regional

impacts which pertain to the source of area traffic were examined. Information on architecture and building quality were gained through a personally conducted survey of the buildings using the Dunbar Method. A complete listing of this survey and its findings will be presented in the Appendix. Traffic counts and street hierarchy information was gained from Hopewell's Department of Development. Information on area parking capacity, needs, and assessment was gained from the extensive survey conducted in 2003 for the Downtown Vision. This data was used as the amount of parking space has remained relatively static since that study. Additionally, to include the thoughts of the community, design and traffic questions were presented during the focus groups and key stakeholder interviews.

To address safety issues Downtown, quantitative data was gained from the Hopewell Police Department and through an interview with Police Chief John Keohane. Additionally, throughout the focus group and key stakeholder interview process questions about perception of safety in Downtown Hopewell were posed.

To answer promotional, events, and entertainment questions this study identifies the main activities within the region, city, and downtown. This was done through basic internet research and

interviews with public promotional organizations of Petersburg Area Regional Tourism and Hopewell Department of Tourism. Additionally, the following community organizations were consulted for this report: Historic Hopewell Foundation, Friends of the Lower Appomattox, Hopewell Downtown Partnership, John Randolph Hospital, Appomattox Regional Library, and the Hopewell-Prince George Chamber of Commerce. Other groups associated with events in Hopewell that were not able to be consulted for this plan are as follows: Hooray for Hopewell, Optimist Club, Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, and the local VFW.

The final question of organization will be answered through research identifying the state and regional agencies that influence downtown Hopewell. A full listing of these agencies, their programs offered and contact information will be presented in the Appendix. Additionally, questions were posed in the merchants' survey to determine their satisfaction with the current city programs and support.

Roadmap to the Document

Part I of this document provides information needed to answer questions about the development capacity of the site through an analysis of the existing conditions. This section is guided in shape

by the Five Point and in scope by the Mixed-Scanning and Rational Model Theories.

Part II and III of this document will also provide information needed to answer questions about the development capacity of the site, but are specified into different sections due to their unique framework and analysis. The retail market analysis in Part II specifically addresses the question of what types of businesses the city should recruit. Part III analyzes Hopewell's market rate apartment housing choices, and how it compares to surrounding competitive market choices.

Part IV provides a synthesis of the existing conditions through an assets and liabilities assessment of Hopewell. Then an overarching vision statement is presented to guide the subsequent goals, objectives, and strategies. This framework allows the plan to provide a contextual picture of Downtown while providing step-by-step actions for change. Finally, an implementation timeline describing the responsible party, action, and general estimate of cost is presented.



PART I: EXISTING CONDITIONS

STATE OF THE ECONOMY

What are the major regional and local driving forces in the economy and where are these connections to Downtown Hopewell?

Hopewell’s location in the greater Richmond region places it close to the center of the region’s major thoroughfares. The city is located at the confluence of the James and Appomattox Rivers, offers quick access to major interstate and state highways, and economic drivers in the Port of Richmond, Hampton Roads/Norfolk area, and Richmond International Airport.

Due to this network of transportation infrastructure, a major driving economic force within the region is the increase in population and median household income within the Richmond region over the past decade. As seen in Figure 2, the 2010 Census data displayed that the Richmond MSA, and Crater PDC grew approximately 15 percent in population and have a healthy level of median household income. Further exploration into this data displays that growth is comprised of a population with high levels of educational attainment, home ownership, and a lower-than-

Figure 2. Demographic and Economic Comparison

	Hopewell	Crater PDC	Richmond MSA
Population Change (2000-2010)	1.06%	15.1%	14.3%
Unemployment Rate	10.1%	6.2%	6.6%
High School Graduates	71.8%	81.5%	81.4%
Bachelors or Higher	10.2%	25.2%	27.6%
Renter Occupied	45.0%	25.3%	59.6%
Median Household Income	\$38,815	\$63,578	\$57,328

Source: US Bureau of Labor Statistics (2011) and US Census (2010)

national-average unemployment rate, which is 8.2 percent (Virginia Employment Commission, 2012).

These numbers also display that Hopewell is not capturing a large amount, if any, of the regional growth. The population in Hopewell only grew by one percent, has lower-than-average educational attainment, median household income and rate of unemployment, which is almost double that of the regional average. This data reflects comments made in the business/developers survey when concerns were stated about the

long-term demographic changes in Hopewell that have moved to a population with lower median household values, higher unemployment and a less educated workforce.

Another major economic force within this region is the growth in the aerospace and advanced manufacturing industries with the establishment of the Commonwealth Center for Advanced Manufacturing (CCAM) and the Commonwealth Center for Aerospace Propulsion Systems (CCAPS) located at the Crosspointe Centre in Prince George County. This development, which broke ground in the spring of 2011, is a collaboration between Rolls-Royce, the Commonwealth of Virginia, the University of Virginia, and Virginia Tech. The vision for CCAM is to become a world-class research facility in aerospace design and manufacturing technologies (CCAM Fact Sheet, 2012).

The final, and debatably the largest, regional economic force in the region is the growth in the defense/logistics industry with BRAC at Ft. Lee. BRAC is the federally authorized process to reorganize base structure to more efficiently and effectively support the armed forces, increase operational readiness, and facilitate new ways of doing business. Ft. Lee is home to the

Army Quartermasters which is the major military installation and leading employer in the region. This expansion was completed in 2011 and doubled the base in size both in terms of population and training space. Additionally, Fort Lee is the logistics hub for the Army in Virginia. With BRAC completed the base is the logistical nerve center for the Army worldwide (Virginia's Gateway Region, 2012).

Another major player in the logistics/defense industry is the Defense Supply Center Richmond (DSCR) located in Chesterfield County. DSCR employs more than 2,000 people on 600 acres and is responsible for 1.2 million repair parts and operating supply items for 1,300 major weapons. Additional military products currently produced in the region include: air frame structural components, bearings, aircraft engine parts, electrical cable/power products, lubricating oils, batteries, industrial gases, precision instruments, environmental products and consumable items (Virginia's Gateway Region, 2012).

As compared to other traditional manufacturing-centered small towns which have lost their economic base to international countries, Hopewell has been able to retain a base of chemical manufacturing and health care jobs which combined employ over

3,000 people locally (Virginia Employment Commission, 2012). As seen in Figure 3, the major employers in Hopewell, outside of the John Randolph Hospital, are within the chemical manufacturing industry. Along with being the major employers in the city, these industries provide Hopewell with a strong tax base. According to city budget records, in 2008 the top three manufacturers paid close to \$180 million in taxes which accounted for over eight percent of all revenue for the city that year (Hopewell Virginia Financial Plan, 2008).

Figure 3. Hopewell’s Major Employers

	Product/Service	Employment
Honeywell	Chemical and Fiber Manufacturing	600-999
John Randolph Medical	Health Care	600-999
DuPont	Chemical Manufacturing	300-599
Evonik Industries	Chemical Manufacturing	100-299
Smurfit Stone	Containerboard Manufacturing	100-299
Ashland Aqualon	Specialty Chemical Manufacturing	100-299

Source: Virginia Employment Commission (2011)

Within Downtown Hopewell, one major economic force is the presence of multiple banking and financial investment businesses located along Main Street between City Pointe Road and 2nd Street, as seen in Image 4. Three national banks (BB&T, SunTrust, and Bank of America), along with the investment firms of the Ford Agency, John Randolph Foundation, and Tri City Asset Management have offices in this small downtown.

As for the retail businesses in Downtown, the high majorities are located along East Broadway Street, east of Randolph Road. When surveyed, these merchants have an impressive average of 11.5 years at their location in Hopewell. Advantages to their location in downtown, as stated in the merchant’s survey, were that Hopewell is a community with has a strong small town atmosphere, inexpensive rent and an easy access point with its location in the city. All of these merchants reported that they hoped to be able to continue their current business within the next 3-5 years, while 1/3 are looking to expand or make improvements.

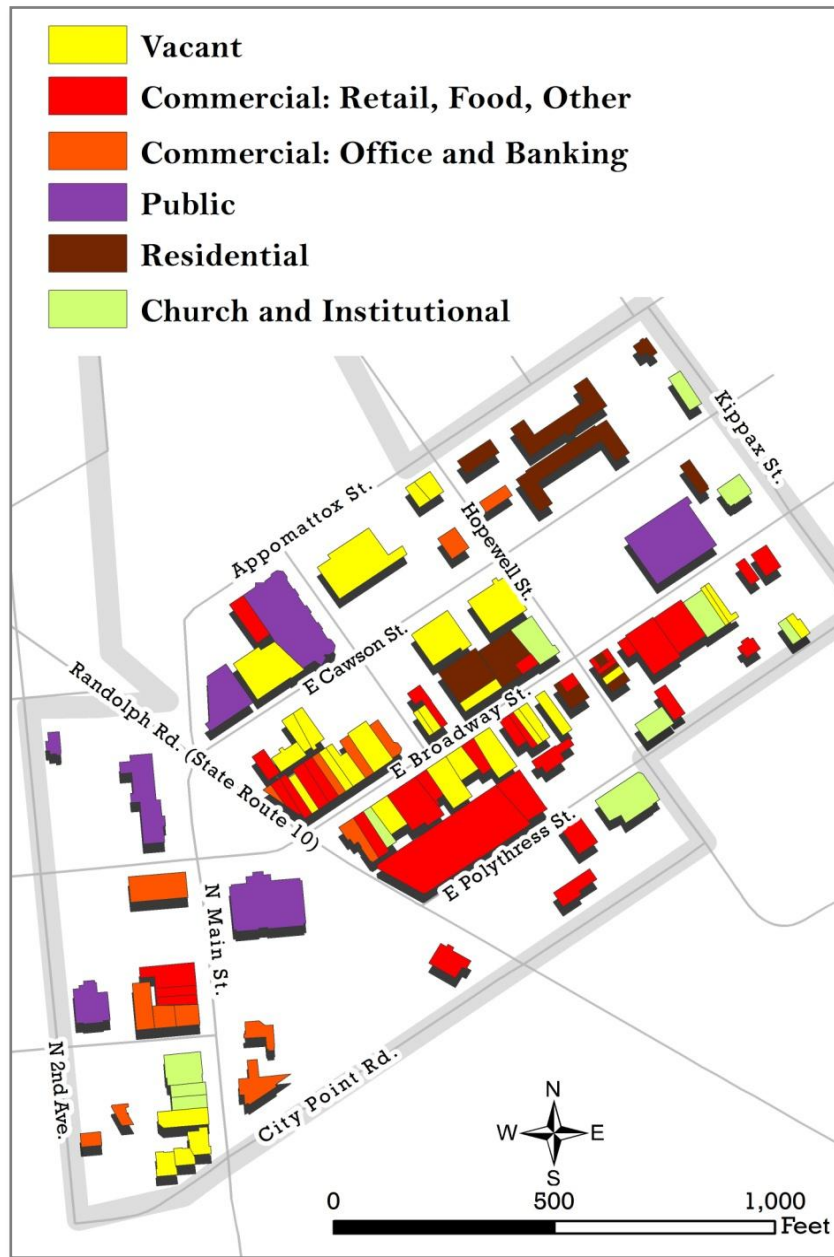
Another potential economic draw to Downtown is the presence of the new Appomattox Regional Library. This establishment caters to all members of the community and region as a state-of-

the-art communication center. The library is home to a non-profit resource center, provides meeting space for local organizations, and has close to 20,000 people walk through its doors every year (Appomattox Regional Library System, 2011).

Additional policy programs exist in Downtown that may incentivize development. A full listing of each of these programs' details will be presented in the Appendix, but below is a brief summary:

- **Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits** – This program offers dollar-for-dollar reductions in income tax liability for taxpayers who rehabilitate historic buildings. Credits are available from both the federal and state government level.
- **Enterprise Zone** – In addition to the incentives offered by the Commonwealth of Virginia, the City of Hopewell offers the local incentives such as a waiver of development fees to attract new businesses to locate or expand in Hopewell.
- **Façade Grant Program** – Administered through the City of Hopewell, this program offers property owners a 50 percent match for costs of façade improvement.

Image 5. Hopewell Downtown Building Use



Source: Created by author using data from City of Hopewell GIS Department (2012)

URBAN DESIGN, TRAFFIC, AND CIRCULATION

What design framework, traffic and circulation patterns comprise downtown Hopewell?

Downtown Hopewell has the layout and building design of a traditional downtown. This includes the location of a central city square surrounded by public buildings, a library, theater, park, and commercial corridor. On the traditional commercial corridor along East Broadway the buildings are close to the street and have a well-constructed and proportional line of height and distance between, as seen in historic Downtowns. This framework for Hopewell to build from is unique to the region in that, outside of the Old Towne district in Petersburg, lacks a central Downtown to anchor the larger community. Counties such as Chesterfield and Colonial Heights were mostly were constructed and designed to fit the model of suburban sprawl. Efforts are currently being made to reclaim a central “Downtown” location in each of these communities, but progress has been slow.

As for the design of the gateways, the city has implemented one of their goals in the Downtown Vision through streetscape improvements in Downtown, east of Randolph Road. This change in streetscaping signals to a person that they have entered the Downtown district. Outside of this program, there is little else to mark Downtown as the gateway recommendations in the Downtown Vision and subsequent Neighborhood “B” Plan have not been accomplished.

While there has been improvement Downtown’s appearance through the streetscape and façade improvement programs, members in the community believe that there is still work to be done. According to the focus group surveys, 82 percent of the respondents rated the physical appearance of Downtown as poor or fair. The top design recommendations for physical elements to be improved Downtown were better facades, landscaping, roadway or traffic improvements and improved lighting.

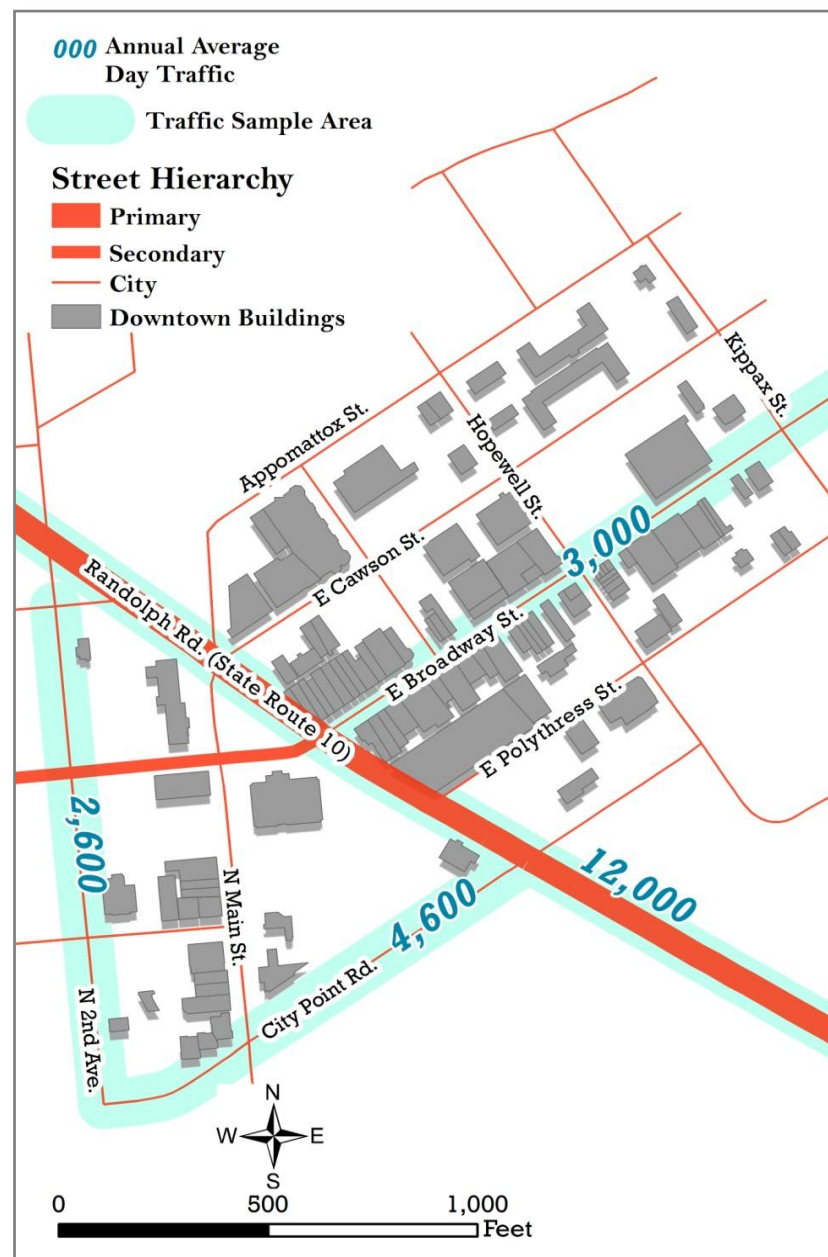
Major regional traffic generators that come into contact with Hopewell are Interstate Highways 295 and 95. According to VDOT traffic counts, approximately 34,000 vehicles pass by the Interstate 295 exit in southern Hopewell on a daily basis (VDOT, 2008). The main avenue for traffic in Downtown travels along Randolph Road (State Route 10) through the center of the

district. As seen in Image 6, the next highest use of annual daily traffic is City Point Road on the eastern edge of Downtown. Heavy traffic volumes on these roads can probably be attributed to the existence of Hopewell’s industrial manufacturing district, which is located about a half a mile from the eastern edge of Downtown on Randolph Road.

Additionally, many of the heavy trucks and industrial vehicles traveling to the manufacturing plants have to stop at the weigh station located adjacent to the eastern edge of Downtown along Route 10. Relocation of this station by working with VDOT was a recommendation from the Wells and Associates traffic study for the Downtown Vision in 2003. Furthermore, the average annual daily traffic counts display that the main commercial corridor in the district along Broadway Street has a healthy 3,000 vehicles travel daily through the district.

During the focus group survey process, residents of the district were asked about their level of satisfaction with the ease of getting around town and a majority of those surveyed said that they were generally satisfied with Hopewell.

Image 6. Downtown Traffic Volume and Circulation



Source: Created by author using data from VDOT (2008)

Alternative forms of transportation, such as public transportation, have increased within the past year. The City of Hopewell and the Petersburg Area Transit (PAT) have set up a test commuter bus line which connects Hopewell with the larger system to which PAT reaches. The agreement for this line is on a three (3) year trial basis.

As for biking or pedestrian level circulation in Downtown, there are few biking amenities such as bike racks, road line designations, or pump stations. As for pedestrian users to the district, the only major concern brought up in the merchants' survey was the relative fear of safety brought on by crossing Randolph Road (State Route 10). The wide physical setup, few crosswalks, and heavy industrial traffic act as a strong impediment that divides the district east/west. The problem of this road as a division line was cited in the Downtown Vision, and recommendations for traffic easing measures were called for but never implemented.

When asked about parking downtown, 78 percent of local merchants surveyed responded as being unsatisfied. Merchants commented that they have received complaints from customers

about the location, quantity and quality of parking in Downtown and lost customers due to the lack of parking, or that their customers feel unsafe in regards to the overall appearance and distance from the parking lots to the stores.

The concern of parking was made apparent in studies conducted for the Downtown Vision which projected that if the district were fully developed, peak demand for parking would be 4,500 spaces. In 2003, there were 1,927 parking spaces and is roughly the same today. Downtown has gained spaces with the streetscape improvements, but lost about 50 spaces with the redevelopment of the Human Services building. The previous plan for development called for the old Health Services building, located adjacent to Patrick Copeland site, be redeveloped into a multi-level parking deck. During the key stakeholder interviews it was mentioned that redevelopment has not occurred due to a lack of funding and a change in political will towards the adopted vision for Downtown.

PUBLIC SAFETY

What are the levels of real and perceived crime in Downtown Hopewell?

According to reported numbers from the City of Hopewell Police Department the number of crimes within the larger Downtown area has increased within the past year, as seen in Figure 4. Even though these numbers have increased, there are a few caveats in this data. First, the city’s crime reporting system has the crime attributed to police beats, which in this case comprise not just the Downtown district as defined in this plan, but the entire City Point and Neighborhood “B” areas. Additionally, as noted by the police chief, some of the crimes for which an address could not be attributed were coded as happening at City Hall. Therefore, a more truthful outlook on crime in Downtown was gained through interviews with Hopewell’s Police Chief John Keohane and through the focus group surveys. According to the police chief, the perception of crime in Downtown is much greater than actual crime (Keohane Interview, 2012).

As for the perception of the Downtown district as one that is unsafe due to crime, this was cited by a high majority of the

Figure 4. **Downtown Hopewell Crime Data**

Beats 212-213	2010	2011
Homicide	0	1
Forcible Rape	0	3
Robbery	11	12
Aggravated Assault	19	14
Violent Crime	30	30
Property Crime	175	187
Total	205	217

Source: Hopewell Police Department (2012)

respondents throughout the survey process. The negative image associated with Downtown was the top response from Downtown merchants when asked about the disadvantages of their business location. The top reason cited for this was the problem of non-shopper loitering. The high school students and local church members also echoed these concerns about Downtown when 66 percent of the respondents rated Downtown Hopewell at the unsatisfactory level or lower for public safety. This conflicts with the fact that when church members and students were asked about factors that were most important in considering where to live, 86 percent of the

respondents said that safety and security are a very important characteristics.

Key area stakeholders and participants in the business/developers focus group mentioned that Hopewell's poor perception of safety within the region is due to the high concentration of intensive chemical manufacturing plants located adjacent to local neighborhoods and sensitive environmental features. An example of this initial image for Hopewell can clearly be seen when entering the city from the west along Route 10, as pictured in Image 7. Additionally, this was mentioned in the student survey, where comments were made about the unsafe feeling some students had in their neighborhoods, feeling that there was little buffer between their homes and the manufacturing plants. As stated previously in the introduction, a few chemical contamination outbreaks in the 1970's are still shaping the perception within the region.

To remedy this perception local leaders of manufacturing have joined with local public and private organizations to set up the Hopewell Community & Industrial Panel as a forum to report and discuss the safety procedures taking place at manufacturing plants as pertaining to the environment and community.

Additionally, the location of the previous superfund site at Exeter PCB, in the eastern portion of the city, was remediated in 2002, and is now the site of the closed Appomattox Bio-Energy Plant. (Confidential Interview, 2012).

Image 7. State Route 10 leading into Hopewell from the West



Source: Author taken, 2012

PROMOTION, ENTERTAINMENT, AND EVENTS

What are the major promotional and entertainment draws within the region and where is downtown Hopewell's place?

The major regional driving force for promotional, tourism, and entertainment activities is Civil War and Colonial history. With the City of Richmond as the capital of the Confederacy and major colonial city, and the Williamsburg area triangle of historical locations, history is a major economic driver within the region. Adjacent to Hopewell are the Petersburg National Battlefield and the James River Plantations (accessible via the Harrison Memorial Bridge).

Another major tourism driver are outdoor recreational activities due to the quality and diversity in the natural environment of this region. State, regional, and local parks offer fishing, hunting, hiking, picnicking, boating, ball fields, playgrounds, and water sports. The 1,680-acre Chippokes Plantation State Park in Surry County is a popular recreational site. Chesterfield County supports 35 parks and athletic complexes with over 9,200 acres, including the 3,000 acre Lake Chesdin and the nearly 2,000-acre

Pocahontas State Park. Yacht clubs, marinas, and a variety of water-related activities are encouraged on the James and Appomattox Rivers (VEDP, 2011).

As for recreational activities, Greensville County, located about an hour south of Hopewell on Interstate 95, is home of the East Coast's largest bicycling event in the Great Peanut Ride. Held annually in September, this three-day ride is attended by over 1,700 cyclists from across the nation. The annual Pork, Peanut, and Pine Festivals held each July in Surry County attract over 75,000 visitors. These two-day events offer musical entertainment, exhibits, arts and a variety of specialty foods. Furthermore, popular arts festivals and events are held in the Petersburg-Richmond area throughout the year (VEDP, 2011).

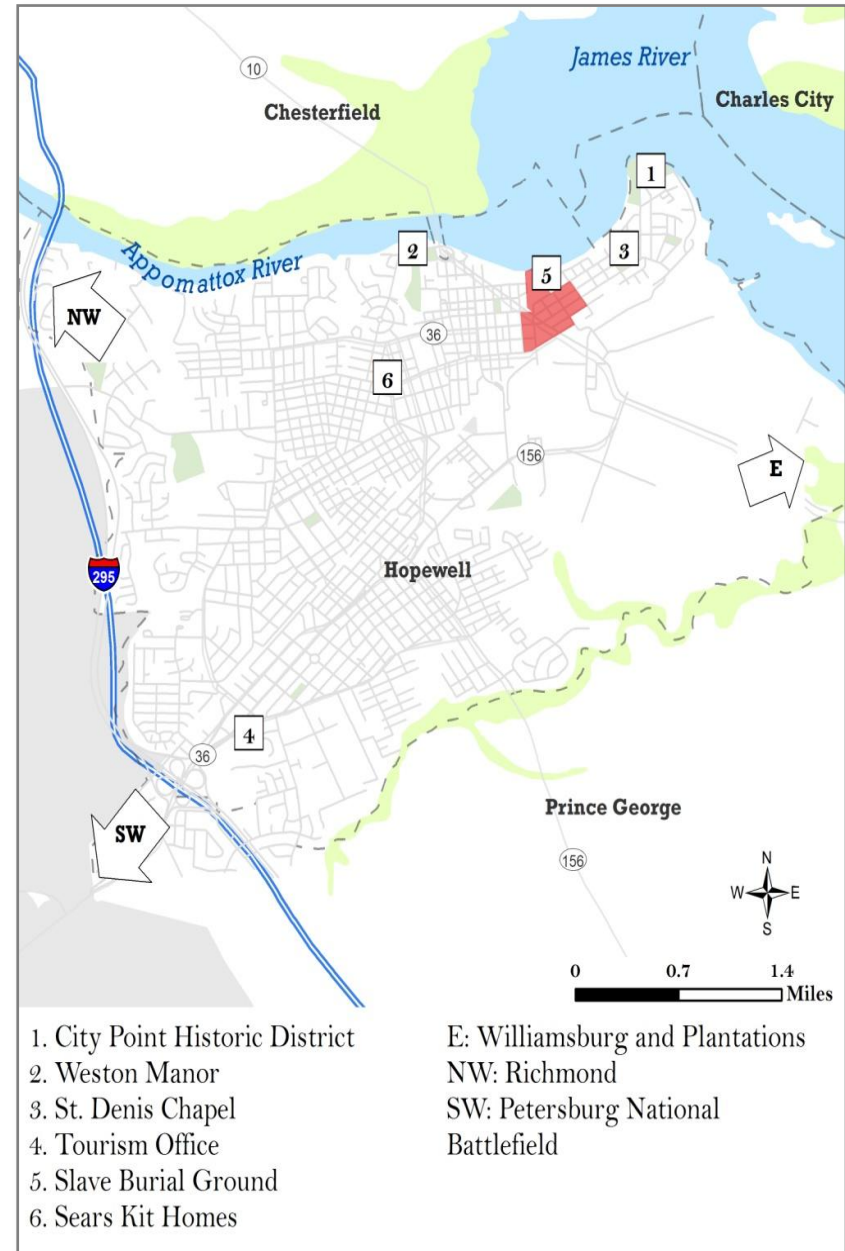
This region's central promotional agency is the Petersburg Area Regional Tourism Corporation (PART), which is a part of the Crater PDC. This organization works with area jurisdictions, economic development agencies, visitor centers, and tourism departments to promote regional tourism. This organization also plays a key role as the main source of regional event and activity information for the Ft. Lee community. Information from PART is used in the base's newspaper, the Ft. Lee Traveller, and two

organizations affiliated with the information on the surrounding communities for military personnel, Moral, Welfare, and Recreation (MWR) and Army Community Service (ACS).

Hopewell's location within the region places it in prime position to take advantage of the historical, recreational and entertainment activities happening throughout the region. Hopewell's major historical draw is tied to the Civil War Battlefield travelers through the location of Gen. Grant's Headquarters in Historic City Point. This location is administered by the National Parks Service and is promoted on the State tourism website as a stop in the Virginia Civil War Trails Guide. As seen in Image 8, other features of historical significance include St. Denis Chapel, Weston Plantation, Slave Burial Ground, Beacon Theater, Flowerdew Hundred Farm, and the Sears Catalog Homes.

Outside of Grant's headquarters, the most visited attraction is the Weston Plantation which estimates an annual visitor average of 3,000 people (Historic Hopewell, 2012). The Manor is also home to a riverfront venue where weddings have been conducted, social clubs regularly meet and the occasional summer music event has been held.

Image 8. Historical and Recreational Sites in Hopewell



Source: Created by author (2012)

As for outdoor recreational activities, Hopewell's location at the confluence of the James and Appomattox Rivers provides the unique opportunity to take advantage of regional entertainment activities. One tie into these regional activities is through Hopewell City Council member and Vice-mayor Wayne Walton, who is a board member of the Friends of the Lower Appomattox River (FOLAR). The signature event for this organization is the 10 mile "Battle or Paddle" which takes place on the Appomattox River from Petersburg to Hopewell. This organization is the leader behind developing a "greenway-blueway" network of hiking and water trails along 22 miles of the lower Appomattox from Petersburg through Hopewell (FOLAR Brochure, 2012).

Hopewell is home to a growing number of outdoor events and activities. The Hooray for Hopewell festival is a regionally attended arts and crafts fair held in Downtown. The City Point 5k Run and Walk takes place in the historic City Point neighborhood and is sponsored by key community groups in the John Randolph Foundation, City of Hopewell, and John Randolph Medical Center. Historic Hopewell Foundation's signature event at the Weston Manor is "Emma and George Days" where families and children experience plantation life. The Hopewell Downtown Partnership has held multiple "Movie at

Image 9. Events at the Historic Weston Manor



Source: Historic Hopewell Foundation (2011)

the Park" nights on the Copeland Site. Though not in existence for the past decade, a previous relationship between the leaders of industry and the city existed under the Hopewell Manufacturers Association (HMA), and this group worked to sponsor successful community recreational leagues (i.e. softball, baseball, basketball, etc.).

Hopewell’s central promotional agency is the City Department of Tourism. The Hopewell Tourism Center was moved to its location at the Interstate 295 exit in south Hopewell in recent years. This places Hopewell in the unique situation of having the only certified local visitors’ center along Interstate 295 (Confidential Interview, 2012). Within the past four years the visitors’ center has seen their number of visitors decline by 50 percent, as shown in Figure 4. This may be attributed to the overall economy, but might also be due to the 2008 cut in spending which has forced the office to be closed for two days a week, limit distribution of marketing materials at state-wide locations, or funds for an updated marketing campaign. Additionally, the previous 2007-08 marketing campaign by department, prior to budget cuts, was recognized by the State Tourism Corporation and the Director was recognized as Tourism Person of the Year.

The major factors drawing visitors to Hopewell can be seen in a 2009 tourism survey conducted by the City Department of Tourism. This study asked visitors to the tourism center to fill out a short survey on information related to their intention in visiting Hopewell. The top purpose for commuter visits to the area was pleasure, followed by military and then business. The

highest response given as their source for hearing about Hopewell was from billboards (47%), word of mouth (29%), and brochures (11%). A high majority of the respondents (69%) stated that they were not planning on staying in Hopewell, but just passing through and their top destinations were Williamsburg (30%), Petersburg (9%) and Richmond (8%) (Visitor Center Survey, 2009).

Figure 5. **Tourism Survey**

Year	Visitors
2011	6,636
2010	10,121
2009	12,110
2008*	12,387
2007	14,374
2006	16,111
2005	16,812
2004	17,373

*Funding cutbacks

Source: Hopewell Department of Tourism (2012)

The current promotional materials used by downtown merchants, as surveyed, was the internet, followed by newspaper and word of mouth. Several of Downtown businesses said that they have their own personal websites or use free internet advertising such as Facebook groups. Several merchants viewed the possibility of a joint marketing venture positively when mentioned in discussions.

POLITICAL AND AREA ORGANIZATION

What are the regional and local organizations that influence Downtown Hopewell?

A key political individual at state level is Republican House Delegate Riley Ingram who is a former City Council member and Mayor of Hopewell. One state organization which will play a larger role in Downtown Hopewell is the Virginia Main Street Program under the Department of Housing and Community Development. With designating Hopewell as a Main Street community, this organization will provide direct training through the Hopewell Downtown Partnership for Downtown revitalization efforts.

Important regional level agencies that may be sources of funding and resources for Downtown Hopewell are the Crater Planning District Commission (PDC) and Virginia's Gateway Region. A central focus of the Crater PDC is workforce training and small business development. The commission also works closely with the Ft. Lee community and has done impact and planning studies on how to accommodate the BRAC growth. Furthermore, this organization can offer funding for transportation improvements

and environmental consultation with compliance to measures in the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. Virginia's Gateway Region is solely an economic development agency whose mission is to work with area businesses on expansion or retention, while actively recruiting new business to the area. In discussions with these regional officials a need for Class A office space in Hopewell was mentioned.

The basic political members who have jurisdiction over development in the downtown Hopewell are Council representatives from Wards 1 and 2: Mayor Christina Luman-Bailey (1) and Rev. Dr. Curtis Harris (2). The current City Manager would be involved in administration of these city policies and the Department of Development oversees administration of code enforcement, CDBG funds, economic development, GIS, planning, and zoning programs.

One key non-governmental organization within the community is the Hopewell-Prince George Chamber of Commerce. This organization is comprised of many of business interest within the community and is looking to take an active role in the redevelopment of Downtown. An example of this is their

coordination efforts to set up a catered luncheon for the business/developers focus group survey conducted for this plan.

Another influential non-governmental organization is the Hopewell Community & Industrial Panel (HCIP). As discussed previously, this group of industrial and community leaders looks to open a line of communication to the public about industrial practices and the environment.

The organization most directly tied to development in Downtown is the Hopewell Downtown Partnership (HDP). This organization was created from recommendations in the Downtown Vision, has been in existence since 2007 and has worked with the city to develop design guidelines for Downtown and spread education about the façade improvement program. With Hopewell’s designation as a Main Street community, this is the organization through which training and funds will be directed. This organization includes a healthy cross-section of Hopewell’s key stakeholders. As seen in Image 10 at the HDP kickoff event, this group is making regional ties and will expand its efforts by hiring an executive director during the spring of 2012.

Image 10. **Virginia Main Street Kickoff Event**



Pictured: Mayor Christina Luman-Bailey (Hopewell) and Mayor Brian Moore (Petersburg)

Source: Author taken, February 2012

As for other church and civic organizations with influence on Downtown, an important group due to their location adjacent to the Beacon Theater is First Baptist Church. Other groups in the community include the Kiwanis Club, Optimist Club, Hooray for Hopewell, Historic Hopewell, the American Legion, and countless other church groups and civic associations.

Throughout the focus group surveys, questions were posed about the level of satisfaction with Hopewell’s small town atmosphere, churches and social groups. Overwhelmingly, each group agreed that the small town atmosphere, area church and social groups were strengths of Hopewell, as seen in Figure 6. This strong sense of community was the top response given from downtown merchants about the advantages of doing business in Hopewell.

As for the business and development community, when general questions were posed about Hopewell’s perception within the region from a development standpoint, concerns were raised about political changes affecting plans for development in Downtown and leading to an unsure feeling for private investors. When businesses and developers are looking to invest in a site one important factor is the knowledge and perception of a clear vision from the political community on plans for future development.

The local merchants were asked a question in the survey about their level of satisfaction with support from the local government. A majority (55%) claimed that they were at least satisfied with their level of support. One of the top three

responses for advantages of their location in Hopewell was the low cost of rent in the Downtown.

Figure 6. **Community Quality of Life Survey**

	NEIGHBORHOOD IMPORTANCE	SATISFACTION WITH HOPEWELL	DIFFERENCE
Small Town Atmosphere	2.54	3.06	0.51
Ease to Get Around Town	2.94	3.20	0.26
Churches and Social Groups	3.09	3.14	0.06
Distance to Work	2.82	2.88	0.05
Cost of Living	3.54	2.91	-0.63
Recreational and Entertainment	3.00	2.29	-0.71
Access to Green and Open Space	2.83	2.11	-0.71
Neighborhood Appearance	3.46	2.46	-1.00
Quality of Schools	3.74	2.52	-1.22
Safety and Security	3.83	2.20	-1.63

***Scale: 1 (Least) – 4 (Most)**

PART II: RETAIL MARKET ANALYSIS

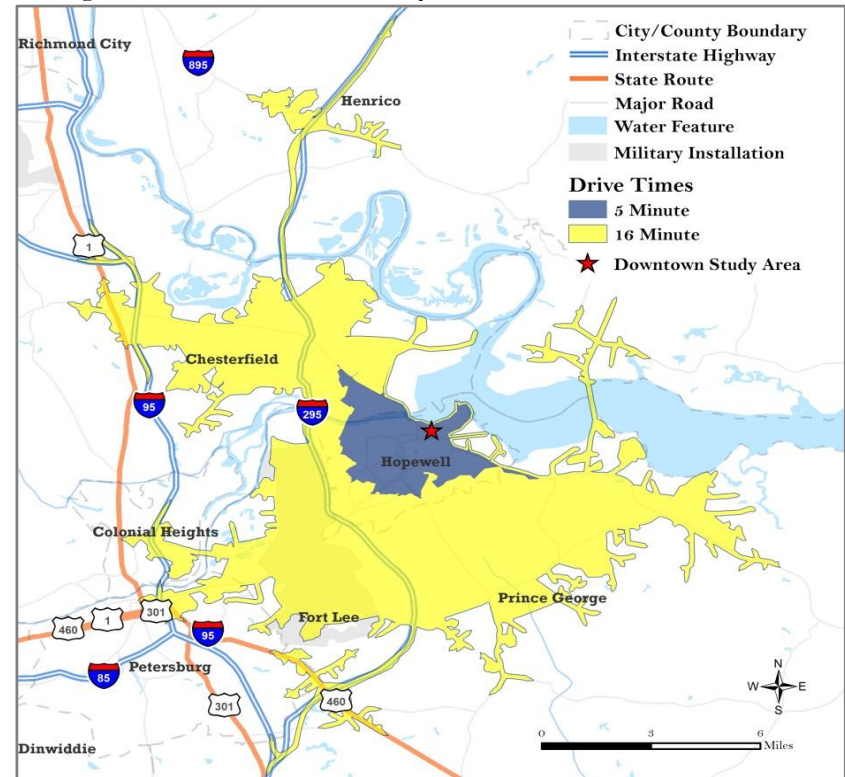
The purpose of this retail market analysis is to identify business uses and services to be targeted for recruitment because unmet market demand within the community. Currently, Downtown Hopewell is home to several small restaurants, antique retail and convenience stores, but the high amount of vacant buildings deters the area from creating a commercial mass to fill the surrounding buildings. Through the survey process it became apparent that there is demand in the community for a Downtown with a mix of retail uses including stores targeted to active and younger users, specialty restaurants and dinner service dining and a possible grocery/pharmacy option.

Definition of Trade Area

As stated in the traffic and circulation assessment, a high amount of people travel through Downtown district via automobile on a daily basis. Therefore, to capture the buying power of these possible clients, a trade area with two different drive times (5 and 16 minutes) was conducted to establish a tertiary and secondary trade market. The tertiary market is located mostly in the northern section of Hopewell covering the Downtown district and adjacent neighborhoods, as seen in Image 11. The secondary

trade area displays the far-reaching access Downtown Hopewell could possibly have within this small drive time due to its location on major thoroughfares. This trade area will help determine if there is any demand for a unique type of retail or store that could be a regional destination.

Image 11. Retail Market Analysis Trade Area



Source: Author created with ESRI Business Analyst Software (2012)

Surrounding Commercial Influences

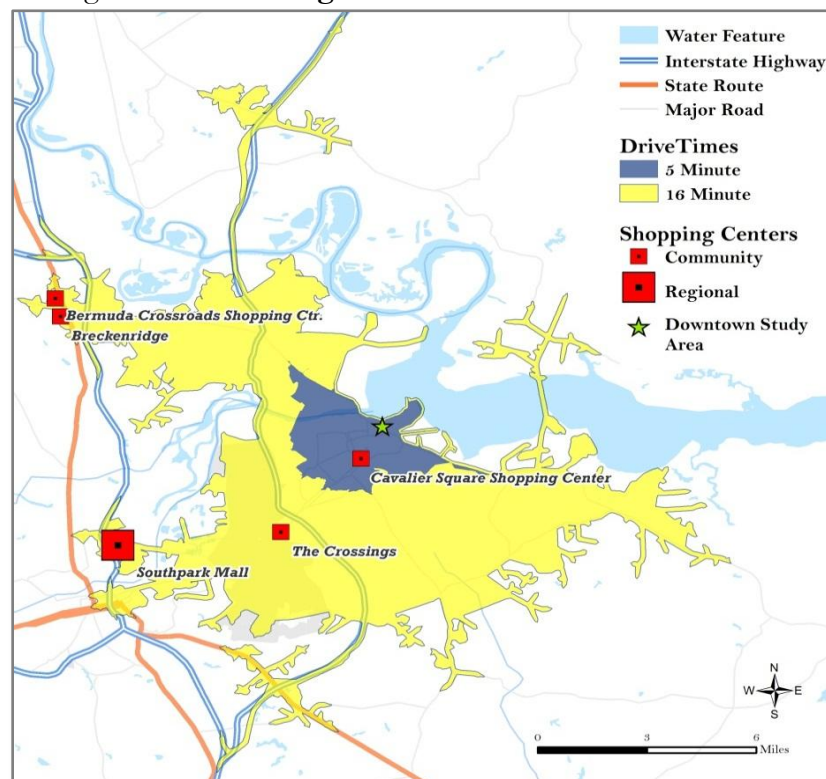
Within the tertiary trade area, Downtown Hopewell competes with the community level shopping center of Cavalier Square, as seen in Image 12. The secondary trade area includes a super regional shopping center in Southpark Mall (Colonial Heights), along with a few other community level centers in The Crossings (Hopewell) and Breckenridge (Chesterfield).

Community Input

On the focus group surveys, questions about spending habits on retail and entertainment options were directed to church members and high school students, therefore when this section refers to the “community” answer to a survey question, it is referring to answers reposted during surveys of these groups.

To determine the community’s current use of Downtown retail and entertainment services, questions were asked on the frequency and intensity of shopping patterns, along with a question about possible new stores wanted. When asked about the frequency in which the community spent money Downtown, close to half of the respondents (49%) said that they never shopped Downtown. Close to 1/3 of the respondents (32%) shop monthly, followed by weekly (16%) and daily (3%). When

Image 12. Surrounding Commercial Influences



Source: Author created with ESRI Business Analyst Software (2012)

questioned about the intensity of money spent, a high majority (86%) of community members chose the \$0-\$50 range spent on retail and entertainment services Downtown on a monthly basis, (11%) chose the \$51-\$100 range, and only a small group (3%) reported spending above \$151 Downtown on a monthly basis. The final question pertaining to the services Downtown asked about the type of stores they would like to see.

The following were the top responses:

- Sit-down quality restaurant (26%)
- Movie Theater (23%)
- Clothing Retailer (23%)
- Unique/Targeted retail - recreational, independent book or music (12%)
- Grocery/Pharmacy (9%)

To determine the current spending patterns outside of Downtown Hopewell, focus group survey questions were posed to the specific location and intensity of spending patterns on entertainment and retail outside of Hopewell. The location that a high majority (73%) of community respondents identified as where they spend a majority of their money on these services was Southpark Mall or Colonial Heights in general. The next highest responses were for Cavalier Square (9%), then Richmond and The Crossings (6%). As for the intensity of shopping patterns, 66 percent of surveyed community members responded spending over \$100 on a monthly basis on retail and entertainment services. Within this specific group 86 percent identified Southpark Mall or Colonial Heights as their destination.

A final point from the focus group surveys is that when discussing positive examples of Downtown retail districts with the high school students and business/developers group, Petersburg's Old Towne District was mentioned as highly favorable. The high school students commented on the quality designs in the buildings and the active entertainment and restaurants in the area. The business/developers group also mentioned these same features as positives, but also attributed the historic preservation tax credit program and investments from the city for fostering a positive environment for development.

Building and Property Owner Survey

Building quality plays a vital role in determining the type of development which can occur on a certain site. Other factors such as public safety, district perception and development attraction can all be tied back to the outside appearance of a building. Therefore, to determine the quality of buildings in Downtown Hopewell, this plan used the Dunbar Method, a nationally used evaluation system for building quality, to assess the strength of the building stock. This method determines building quality by surveying the buildings for defects in the structural elements. The determination of a structure that has

major, intermediate, or minor defects results from the evaluation of the structural elements at two levels. There are three degrees in which a building can be classified: sound, deteriorating, or dilapidated. A complete explanation of the Dunbar Method's criteria, survey sheet and a complete listing of its findings by building can be found in the Appendix.

Survey results of the Downtown display that there are a total of 117 structures. When applying the Dunbar Method's survey criteria, 110 buildings received a rating of sound, with the remaining 7 buildings receiving a classification of deteriorating. All but one of the buildings classified as deteriorating were located on the main commercial corridor of East Broadway.

Property owners are a key group when conducting revitalization plans for a district because public programs, which provide incentives for building improvements, are mostly associated with providing incentives for this group. Therefore, by identifying the key property owners in the district, policies can be set in place to help further the redevelopment process. Information on the property owners was gained through the City of Hopewell's GIS Department parcel level data. A full listing of these parcels and owners will be provided in the Appendix.

An analysis of parcel ownership Downtown identified the largest single owner of property in Downtown is the City of Hopewell with 26 parcels. As seen in Image 13, the location of these parcels concentrated in the blocks leading from the commercial area on East Broadway to the Appomattox River, and around the small city park at the center of the district. When examining the home location of the property owners, it was found that there is close to a 2:1 ratio of property owners who live in Hopewell compared to those whose home mailing address is outside of the city. Within those property owners who live outside of the city, only four (4) live outside of Virginia.

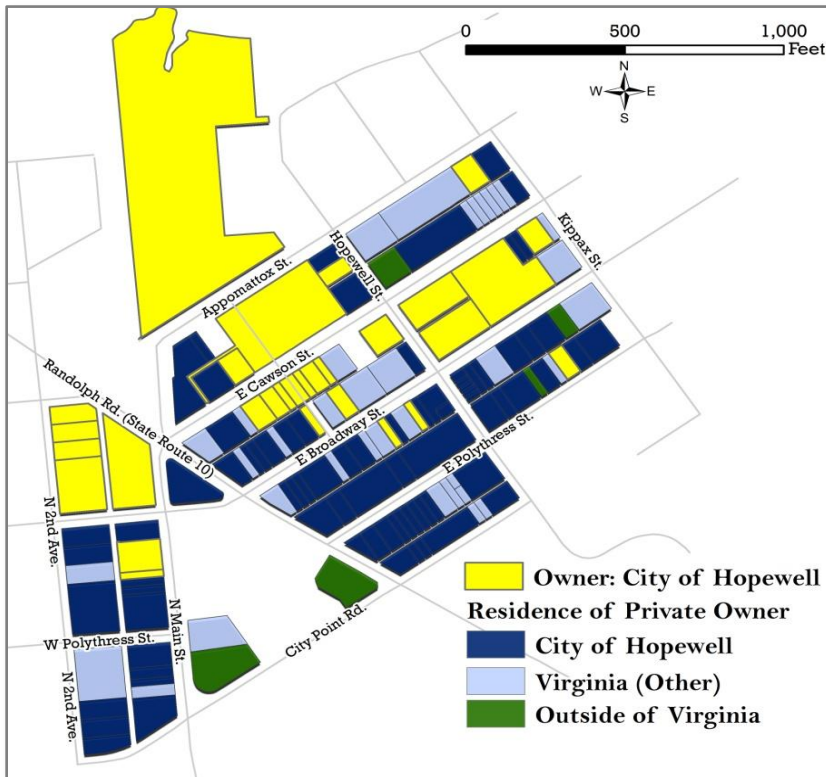
Demand-Supply Analysis

The methodology used in this plan is known as the Unmet Market Demand Model. This is an established model for determining the market potential in existing business corridors.

The following are the key steps in conducting this analysis:

1. Define the commercial trade area. (See previous)
2. Calculate the total amount of market demand and translate that into supportable square feet.
3. Calculate the current number of business types and total square feet in the trade area.

Image 13. Downtown Property Owner's Home Location



Source: Author created with data from Hopewell GIS Department (2012)

4. Subtract the current number of square feet from the number of supportable square feet to see how many potential new units of a store type could be supported in the district.

Step 1: This was accomplished by using Geographic Information System (GIS) software which draws from a database of information prepared by the company ESRI. This company uses data from the U.S. Census and Bureau of Labor Statistics, along with information from their own projections and data surveys to produce analysis reports commonly used in business market analysis.

Step 2: The expenditure data produced by ESRI takes an in-depth look at the demographic and economic makeup of the community while basing its consumer spending amounts on the different spending patterns of the top three tapestry segments within the set area. For the 5-minute drive time the top three segments were: City Dimensions, Rustbelt Traditions, and Rustbelt Retirees. For the 16-minute drive time the segments were: Rustbelt Traditions, Cozy and Comfortable, and Sophisticated Squirrels.¹

¹ **Sophisticated Squires** neighborhoods enjoy cultured country life on the urban fringe. These city escapees accept longer commutes to live near fewer neighbors. **Rustbelt Traditions** are neighborhoods primarily a mix of married-couple families, single parents, and singles that live alone. **Rustbelt Retirees**, most of the households in these neighborhoods are married couples with no children or singles who live alone. **Cozy and Comfortable** residents are middle-aged married couples who are comfortably settled in their single-family homes in *(footnote continued)*

Step 3: The total number of businesses was determined from personal interaction with the area, internet searches, and a previous ESRI retail market survey conducted for Hopewell. To determine the total number of square feet already in the trade area per type of store, the number of business types was multiplied by a national estimate of the median gross leasable area (GLA) for that type of establishment. This information is from a Dollars and Cents of Shopping Cents Survey, which is produced by the Urban Land Institute (ULI) (2008). A complete account of the calculations can be found in the Appendix.

Step 4: Once the number of supportable square feet of spending for a store type in the trade area (demand) and the current number of square feet committed to that type of store in the community (supply) was calculated, the supply was then subtracted from the demand to provide the total number of potential supportable new units.

The retail market analysis displayed levels of unmet market demand potential for at least one unit in ten different categories

older neighborhoods. **City Dimensions**, diversity in household type and ethnicity characterizes these neighborhoods.

for tertiary trade market, and six different categories for the secondary trade market. The top five categories for each trade market are listed in Figure 7.

Figure 7. **Top Areas of Unmet Demand**

5 Minute Drive Time	
<u>Store Type</u>	<u>Potential New Units</u>
PET STORES	6.4
CLOTHING (REPAIR AND SPECIALTY)	5.1
SPECIALTY GROCERY	3.5
FAST FOOD RESTAURANT	3.4
WOMEN’S CLOTHING	2.7
16 Minute Drive Time	
<u>Store Type</u>	<u>Potential New Units</u>
CHILDCARE	23.7
LAWN OR GARDEN SHOPS	18.3
CLOTHING (REPAIR AND SPECIALTY)	17.3
PET STORES	11.6
SPECIALTY GROCERY	11.1

Source: Dollars and Cents Survey, ULI (2008) and ESRI Business Analyst (2012)

PART III: HOUSING MARKET ANALYSIS

A stable residential base is essential to attracting and retaining retail and service businesses to any community. Currently, Hopewell is a community that has been growing older because it is failing to retain young families or professionals. When asked during the high school focus group whether students thought they would return to Hopewell post-college, 80 percent said no. When asked why they would not return, improvement in educational, entertainment, and shopping choices in the community were top responses. Others mentioned the issue of poor quality housing choices and neighborhood safety as an issue.

A 2007 study conducted on determining the redevelopment of the “B” Neighborhood brought some of these same concerns to light. Specifically, this report stated that Hopewell had seen little new development of multi-family housing in the past few decades and this aging stock of apartments caused the city to fall behind surrounding areas in its ability to provide attractive market rate apartments. This in turn has led to Hopewell becoming known for its availability of low-income housing (12).

Additionally, the unbalance caused by a concentration of low income housing around the downtown commercial district was mentioned as the top priority for change in the business/development community focus group survey.

To address this important issue, this study will analyze the market for high quality market rate multi-family apartments within a 16-minute drive time from Downtown Hopewell. The methodology used in this study will follow a similar framework to that used in the housing market analysis in the aforementioned Neighborhood “B” Plan (2007). This analysis will start by defining the trade area and identifying the current market rate quality apartment developments within the trade area. Next, future housing demand will be projected using ESRI 2015 housing projections then applying a capture (absorption) rate for households outside of Hopewell. The end result will display the total number of projected growth in middle to upper income households in Hopewell within the next five years.

Definition of Trade Area

The trade area for the housing market analysis was based on a 16-minute drive time from the Beacon Theater in Downtown Hopewell. This trade area was chosen due to its inclusion of the regional influences in the housing market that exist in southeastern Chesterfield County and surrounding the Ft. Lee base, as seen in Image 14. Even though a large supply of individual rental units exist within the trade area, this study will concentrate on the seven major multi-family market rate apartments housing developments within the trade area. Additionally, these sites were determined from discussions with development officials in Hopewell and had previously been identified in the Neighborhood “B” Plan (2008).

Surrounding Housing Influences

To determine the types of multi-family market rate apartments that would be competitive to a development in Downtown Hopewell, the following section will be comprised of a brief description which examines the market through a pricing, size, and market observation comparison. The current rates and apartment sizes were determined through personal research and direct contact with the development companies, while the observations were gained from the 2008 Neighborhood “B”

analysis of the area and in discussions with key stakeholders. A full amenity listing for each housing development is presented in Figure 8.

- **River’s Bend:** This development was completed in 1999 and includes a total of 250 units. One-bedroom units rent for approximately \$950 a month and are around 740 sq. ft. in size. Their two and three bedroom units range in rent from \$1,050 to \$1,270 a month and are 1000 – 1300 sq. ft.

Image 14. Surrounding Housing Influences



Source: Author created using data from ESRI Business Analyst (2012)

in size. This development represents the high-end rental units in the area. These apartments benefit from good schools and location within Chesterfield County. The large size of these units, attractive finishes, and amenities in the complex result in higher rents.

- Chesterfield Gardens:** This development was completed in 1999 and includes 105 units with two bedroom apartments for \$990 a month at approximately 1,000 sq. ft. and three bedroom apartments for \$1,200 a month around 1,200 sq. ft. This development is typical of many newer apartment complexes in Chesterfield which offer a high level of amenities and slightly larger units.
- Jefferson Pointe:** This development was completed in 1999 and includes 220 units. One bedroom units are 972 sq. ft. and rent for \$830 a month, while two and three bedroom apartments range from 1,110 to 1,280 in size and \$930 – \$1,038 in rent per month. This is a prime example of the potential for high-quality, market rate apartments in Hopewell. Its location just outside of Hopewell offers it easy access to the Ft. Lee community and its larger unit sizes and wide array of unit and project amenities commands higher rents than the other adjacent Bailey’s Ridge and Riverside complexes.

Figure 8. **Housing Amenities Comparison**

	River's Bend	Chesterfield Gardens	Jefferson Pointe	Bailey's Ridge	Mallonee School Lofts	Riverside Park	Butterworth Lofts
W/D in unit							
AC/Central air							
Cable or satellite							
Alarm system							
Full kitchen appliances							
Fully furnished							
Balcony/patio							
Covered parking							
Ceiling fan							
Pet friendly							
Pool							
Clubhouse							
Fitness center							
Hardwood flooring							
Outdoor rec. facilities							
Extra storage							
Utilities (trash only)							
Utilities (water/sewer)							

Source: Varied development websites (2012)

- **Bailey's Ridge:** This development of 156 units was constructed in 1999 using low income housing tax credits and rents affordable units to residents earning less than 60 percent of the area median income. This development offers two and three bedroom equivalent apartments from \$735 - \$850 a month with apartment sizes from 970 to 1178 sq. ft. Despite being financed as affordable housing, these apartments are commanding higher rates than most of the market rate apartments in Hopewell. Their location adjacent to Ft. Lee and variety of unit and complex amenities offers an attractive option to other multi-family complexes in Hopewell.
- **Riverside Park Apartments:** This development, which was completed in the late-1960s includes a total of 120 units. One bedroom apartments rent for \$650 a month, two and three bedroom apartments rent from \$695 - \$895 a month and are 750 – 1,050 sq. ft. in size. This development is evidence that a well-managed apartment property in Hopewell can generate reasonable rents. Despite its low rent, when compared to the other newer, more attractive properties in the surrounding communities it offers fewer amenities and is less

aesthetically pleasing, making it less competitive in the trade area market.

- **Mallonee School Lofts:** This development is a conversion of the historic James E. Mallonee Middle School (c. 1925) which was completed in 2010 and offers 50 units. One bedroom apartments rent for \$800 a month for 850 sq. ft., whereas the two and three bedroom rents are \$1,050 – 1,350 a month with a range of 1,000 – 1,750 sq. ft. units. This development is able to charge higher-than-average rent due to its full range of amenities and quality décor, capped by their unique outdoor recreational amenities of a full track and field adjacent to the complex.
- **Butterworth Lofts:** This development is a historic revitalization of the former Butterworth Furniture Company building in Downtown Hopewell, completed in 2010. This complex offers 24 units with one bedroom units renting for \$700 a month at 600 sq. ft, and two bedroom apartments at \$950 a month at 1080 sq. ft. The location in Downtown Hopewell limits the amount of space to offer amenities when compared to other developments, but these apartments have been well received due to their quality construction and indoor amenities offered.

Future Housing Market Analysis

In order to project the demand of the market rate multi-family apartment housing this report will examine the natural population change within the trade area (16 minute drive time) To examine the natural growth of this area, projections for 2015 population and household growth were obtained from ESRI. This growth was then defined by geographical area and household income tiers, as seen in Figure 8. General trends display gains in middle income and higher income housing, while the area is reducing the amount of households in the lowest income brackets.

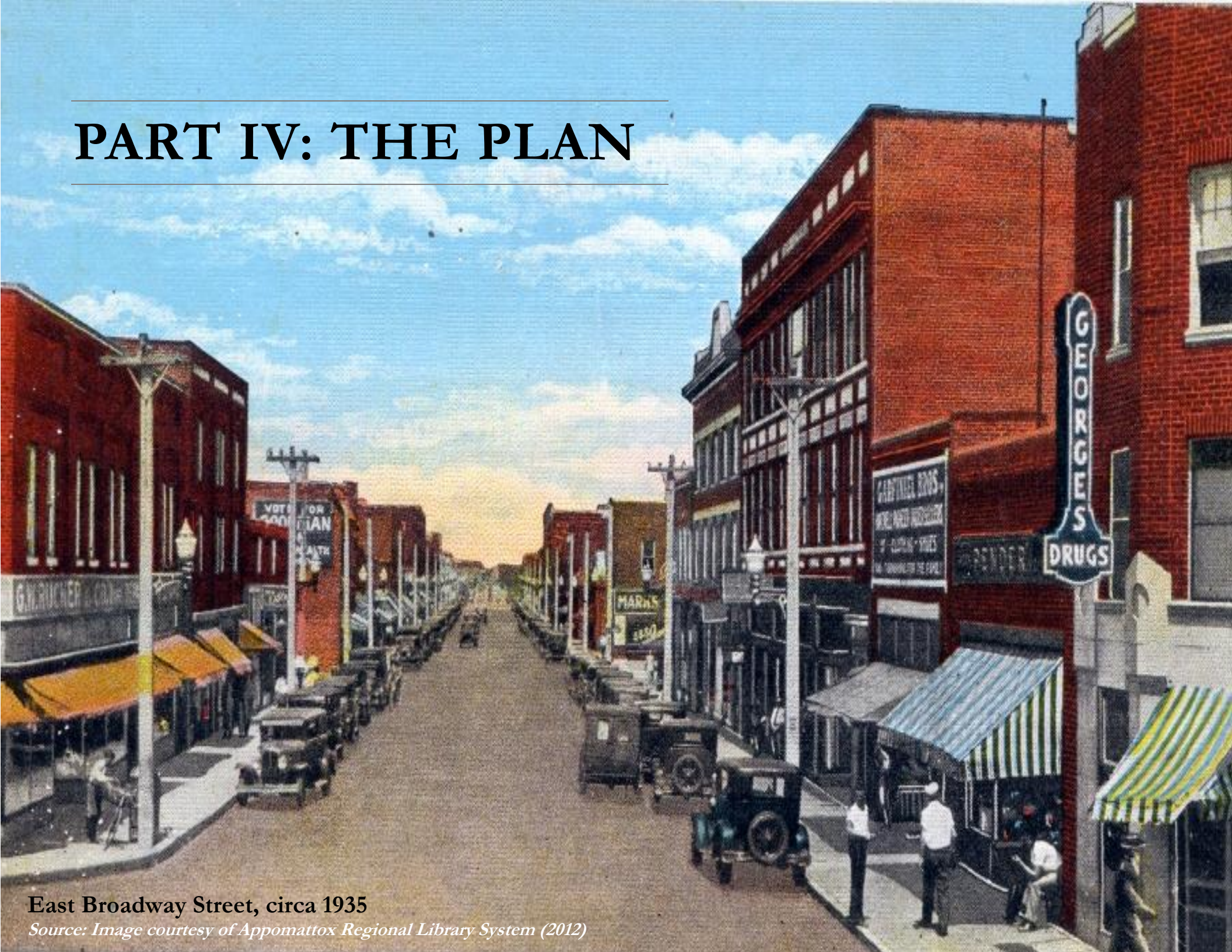
The next step is to apply an absorption (capture) rate to the actual gain-loss of households in the area. For the city and downtown levels a 100 percent capture rate was assumed because this was accounting for the natural growth, and a conservative 25 percent rate was applied to area outside of Hopewell, but still within the trade area. When this was calculated it can be assumed that there will be 415 new households added to the area in 2015 with a median household income of \$53,485.

Figure 8. Household Change by Income Brackets 2010-2015

Household Income	2010-2015 Change		
	Downtown Only	Hopewell City	Trade Area
<\$15,000	-2.6%	-2.3%	-2.0%
\$15,000 - \$24,999	-1.8%	-1.9%	-1.9%
\$25,000 - \$34,999	-2.7%	-2.1%	-2.0%
\$35,000 - \$49,999	-1.2%	0.3%	-2.7%
\$50,000 - \$74,999	2.1%	0.0%	0.1%
\$75,000 - \$99,999	1.5%	1.6%	0.2%
\$100,000 - \$149,999	3.1%	3.4%	6.7%
\$150,000 - \$199,999	1.3%	0.6%	1.1%
\$200,000+	0.3%	0.2%	0.5%

Source: ESRI Business Analyst Projections (2012)

PART IV: THE PLAN



East Broadway Street, circa 1935

Source: Image courtesy of Appomattox Regional Library System (2012)

DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY

Determining the development capacity was accomplished through the existing conditions, and the housing and retail market analysis in Part I – III. This page will serve as a synthesis of these findings by presenting the district’s assets and liabilities, followed by a brief

ASSETS

- Access to Appomattox River
- Beacon Theater and Appomattox Regional Library
- Streetscaping and façade program
- High traffic counts
- Job base in manufacturing and medical
- Existence of banking/investors downtown
- Historic downtown buildings and layout
- Access to regional tourism routes
- HDP and Main Street designation

LIABILITIES

- High amount of vacant downtown buildings
- Perception of unclear environment for investment
- Lack of way-finding or cohesive signage
- Unclear gateway design or incoherent
- Perception of downtown as unsafe
- Out of date marketing materials
- Lack of entertainment and recreational options
- Regional demographic and economic trends

When the previous Vision Plan for Downtown Hopewell was adopted in 2003, the analysis of the district reported many of the same assets and liabilities (positives and negatives) listed here. This is not to say that nothing has been accomplished, but that potential for development has been stagnant at best. Furthermore, this stagnation is unique to Hopewell when compared to the surrounding communities. Regional growth has occurred in the past decade and is projected to continue with new industries in areas of defense, logistics, and distribution moving in every day. These major economic base providers are not exclusive from Hopewell. The location of the John Randolph Hospital and manufacturing plants provide a high concentration of jobs and tax base rarely seen in a small town. Even within the Downtown district there is a healthy presence of a banking and investment community. Therefore, as Downtown Hopewell moves forward, the opportunity still exists to tap into the community and regional forces to accomplish revitalization and redevelopment, but the change must start from within.

VISION STATEMENT

Downtown Hopewell is a **safe and enjoyable place** where a **revived retail market** provides a **diversity of shopping and entertainment** options. Visitors to Downtown are met with an **appealing gateway design** and **functional way-finding signage** that creates a welcoming environment and provides easy access to Hopewell's historical features. For those who want to live in this exciting area, Downtown will provide a **range of quality housing options** to suit those who desire a place where one can live, work, and play. Easy **access to the Appomattox Riverfront** and area trail systems offer a plethora of **outdoor recreational activities**, while the upper Copeland site is home to a **district anchor mix-use development**. This active living and working environment will attract businesses and investors to the area, and they will be met with a **unified public-private front** that provides a **clear plan for future development**. Finally, an aggressive promotion and **marketing plan** features the district's lifestyle, historical and recreational resources to make Downtown a destination within the region.

KEY TARGET AREAS

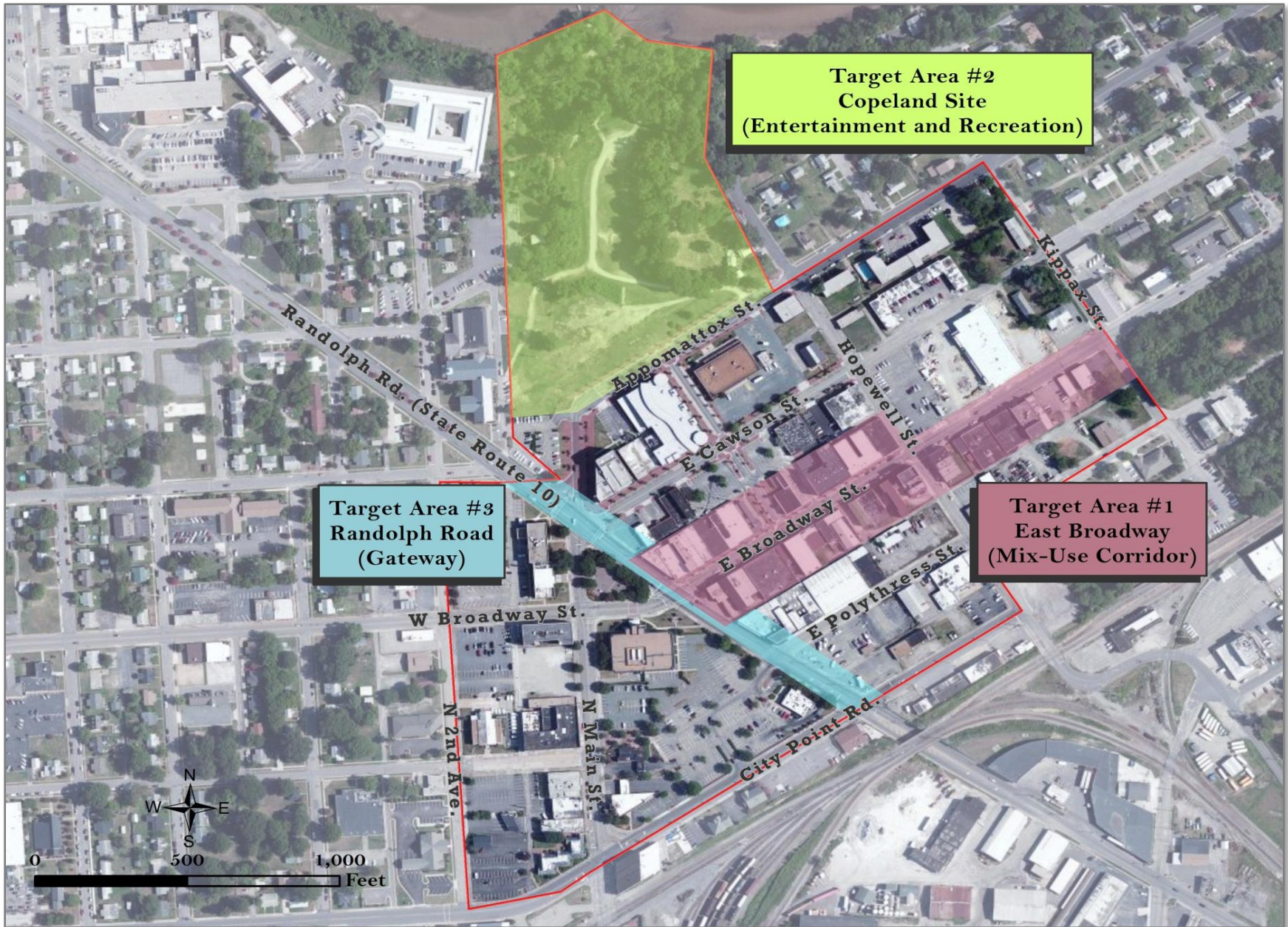
To achieve this Vision the plan will center on three target areas to act as a catalyst for future development. The location of these target areas are the Copeland Site, along East Broadway, and along Randolph Road, as seen in Image 15. The prominence of these areas as central to revitalization efforts became apparent during the existing conditions analysis.

Specifically, during this analysis it became clear that the physical composition of the district plays a major role in the use of the area. Downtown Hopewell is a compact area bisected by Randolph Road (State Route 10) into eastern and western halves. The western half is in a better economic state with multiple public buildings, banks, and other professional office space. There are a few restaurants and other commercial uses. The eastern half has a high building vacancy rate along Broadway and is located adjacent to a high number of multifamily housing units. Additionally, this area is the home to key assets that could provide substitutive change Downtown by creating a thriving retail corridor, furthering access to the Appomattox River and enhancing the gateway image at the Beacon Theater. Therefore,

with the importance of the eastern half of the district, the following three target areas were chosen:

- **Target Area #1: East Broadway (Mix-Use Corridor)** – As the traditional and current center of retail and housing uses in the district the revitalization of this corridor would serve as symbol for revitalization Downtown, multiplier for regional uses and an economic base for future projects.
- **Target Area #2: Copeland Site (Entertainment and Recreation)** – Making use of the Downtown waterfront is a proven generator of economic revitalization, and by concentrating efforts on recreation and entertainment this location could serve local and regional community.
- **Target Area #3: Randolph Road (Gateway)** – First impressions are important and lasting; therefore an appealing gateway can improve the perception of the district and serve as a guiding point for travelers.

Image 15. Recommendation Target Areas



Source: Created by author using image from City of Hopewell GIS Department (2012)

TARGET AREA #1: EAST BROADWAY (MIX-USE CORRIDOR)

Goal 1. Create a healthy balance of active retail and market rate housing apartment options along the corridor.

Objective 1.1: Set a clear plan for future development.

Strategy: The HDP should conduct a visioning process to set the framework to guide a plan for future development in the district. This visioning process can build off of the current vision for the city that was adopted by the City Council. Essential to the success of this plan is the involvement of a wide range of stakeholders within the community. A large majority of these members currently exist, but the following community organizations must be included: Hopewell-Prince George Chamber of Commerce, Department of Development, John Randolph Hospital, Local Industrial Leaders and Department of Economic Development. The HDP can use data and recommendations from this plan as a starting point for discussion.

Objective 1.2: Establish central organization to work with new and established businesses.

Strategy: The Executive Director of the HDP should be the central business contact for development on the Broadway. This person should work closely with city development officials (Economic Development, City Manager, Assistant City Manager, and Members of Council).

Objective 1.3: Increase development enticing incentives

Strategy (A): Through the Department of Development, use public parking to fulfill new development zoning requirements when necessary or offer city owned properties at lower than market rates with specific quality development specifications in the contract, as offered in the Butterworth Lofts redevelopment.

Strategy (B): Along with continuing the current programs offered by the City (Façade Improvement and Enterprise Zone), the Department of Economic Development should promote the use of available loan programs through the Virginia Housing Development Authority (Loan Guaranty Program and Mixed Use/Mixed Income Loan Project). Additionally, this department should start discussions with the local banking community about developing a Micro-Loan Program. An example of a current Micro-Loan program can be found in the City of Harrisonburg, Virginia. All details of Harrisonburg's incentives and loan programs are available in the Appendix.

Objective 1.4: Restore all buildings along the corridor from a state of blight or vacancy.

Strategy: The Department of Development in coordination with the HDP should research and establish a catalog of all properties along the corridor, but

especially the blighted and vacant properties. This catalog would include the name and location of the property owner, their wants and needs for the property, possible asking price and notation of any back taxes or history of notifications from previous code enforcement violations. These properties should then be actively targeted through a number of “carrot and stick” strategies to ensure that improvements are being made to the property. For assistance, on possible measures, contact the Better Housing Coalition (BHC) for possible help with research, strategy, and possible funding on blighted property redevelopment. Listed in the Appendix is the contact information for the BHC and a full description of “carrot and stick” measures available to the City of Hopewell.

Objective 1.5: Increase the amount of competitive market rate apartment options.

Strategy (A): The City Department of Development should actively market to developers the current available building space for construction of market rate luxury apartments. This should be done in coordination with the appointed HDP Executive Director in creating a marketing packet by using information from this study on possible sites and incentives within the district.

Strategy (B): Establish a plan between the Hopewell Redevelopment and Housing Agency, Department of Development, and HDP for the redevelopment and relocation of the Cortez Manor to a place within the

district that will better serve its residents and the adjacent commercial uses on the corridor.

Strategy (C): The City Council should expand the City’s Rental Inspection program to include the downtown area. This would call for an inspection of a percentage of the residential rental units once every four (4) years.

Objective 1.6: Actively pursue businesses which have unmet market and community demand.

Strategy: The City Department of Development should actively target the following types of commercial uses to locate in the district: specialty grocery, sit-down restaurant, outdoor recreational. This should be done in coordination with the appointed HDP Executive Director to create a marketing packet by using information from this study on possible sites and incentives within the district. Possible businesses which exist within Hopewell and should be contacted about relocation or expansion are the Appomattox River Peanut Company (Specialty Food and Wine Store) or K&L Barbeque (Sit Down Restaurant). By relocating or expanding these businesses these establishments could act as a multiplier for the other businesses in Downtown by acting as a generator through their already established name recognition and customer bases. If needed, these businesses should offer incentives or subsidies to help with their establishment or relocation Downtown. In the Appendix is Downtown Harrisonburg’s Business recruitment Guide which

includes a full listing of services offered, possible incentives and available sites in a graphically pleasing way.

Goal 2. Offer easy and safe access to corridor for pedestrian and auto users.

Objective 2.1: Increase the amount of parking spaces which would offer easier access to the corridor.

Strategy (A): The Department of Development should contact Randolph-Polythress Properties LLC about possible acquisition or development of parking spaces for store employees and owners on their parcel of property at the corner of E. Polythress and Hopewell Street.

Strategy (B): The Department of Development should start discussions for a joint effort with the John Randolph Hospital to construct a parking deck at 200 Appomattox Street (site of Old Human Services Building). The City would provide the funding for a 24 hour shuttle bus from deck to hospital.

Objective 2.2: Enhance the appearance of parking lots to improve the perception of safety.

Strategy: Concentrate efforts on city owned parking lots along Library Street between E. Cawson and E. Broadway Street to implement landscaping and screening improvements as stated in the Downtown Vision design guidelines. Additionally, through the HDP, create a program and contact area church and civic groups to develop an “Adopt a Lot” program which asks organizations to sponsor certain lot improvements.

Actively promote to these organizations benefits, which would include recognition in all marketing materials, and incentivize them with reserved parking spaces individual members or an organization’s name.

Objective 2.3: Create an organized way-finding signage design in corridor that coincides with the citywide plan.

Strategy: Concentrate efforts on city-owned parking lots along Library Street between E. Cawson and E. Broadway Street to construct clear signage for major attractions in downtown (i.e. Historic Main Street, Library, City Hall, Human Services Building, Appomattox Riverfront) Construction of the signage type should be coordinated through the HDP and Virginia Main Street Program, but with inclusion of members from the Department of Development, Tourism, and Downtown Design Committee. Outside of city finds, possible-funding sources could be through VDOT grants, State Department of Tourism or Crater PDC Transportation Grants. Contact information and program details will be listed in the Appendix.

Objective 2.4: Create a central information point for local and regional users of the district.

Strategy: Locate the office of the HDP Executive Director on East Broadway in one of the first floor vacant office buildings.

Goal 3. Create an effective promotion campaign for downtown.

Objective 3.1: Create a central website for cross-promotional activities.

Strategy: Create a central website under the HDP that combines information from the Hopewell-Prince George Chamber of Commerce and City of Hopewell websites to act as a cohesive information portal on Downtown. Place an ad in the local newspaper to contract the services of a local webpage design firm, or contact teachers at Hopewell High School about creating a student competition for the best designed webpage template for the business district.

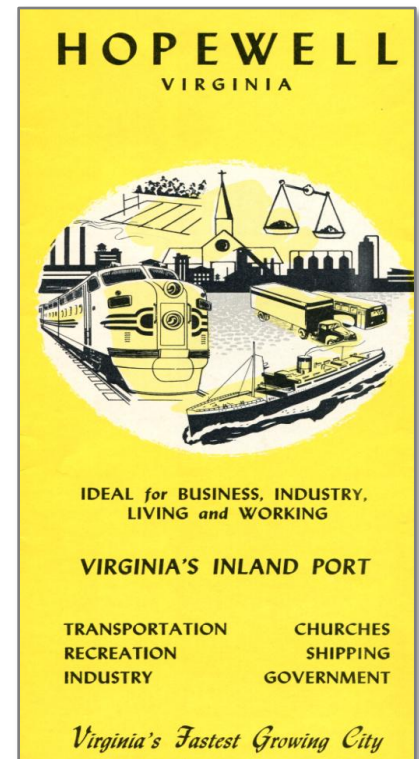
Objective 3.2: Create an online presence for all the businesses along the corridor.

Strategy: Offer training sessions on a group or individual basis until all of the businesses are at minimum registered on Google places, have a Facebook page, Trip Advisor review, and a QR code (www.kaywa.com) which links to the business homepage on their front door. For further information on setting up these accounts and other promotional activities contact members of the Small Business Development Center in Petersburg. Information can be found in the Appendix.

Objective 3.3: Create a marketing campaign for Downtown that promotes its central location and historical role within the context of the region.

Strategy: The promotion committee of the HDP should lead the effort to create an updated marketing campaign for Downtown. This committee must include the following groups: History and Genealogy Center at the Appomattox Regional Library, Historic Hopewell Foundation, PART, and the Department of Tourism. Contact Jeanie Langford at the Appomattox Regional Library for access to historical marketing materials which display Hopewell as “The Wonder City,” as seen in Image 17. For an in-depth look at a comprehensive marketing plan, attached in the Appendix are the marketing guidelines for the City of Winchester, VA.

Image 16. Hopewell Chamber of Commerce Brochure, 1954



Source: Image courtesy of Appomattox Regional Library System (2012)

Objective 3.4: Track investment and results from new development and funding.

Strategy: The Executive Director of the HDP should use the available Virginia Main Street services or contact economist Charles Kennington at the Virginia Economic Development Partnership about developing a Return on Investment (ROI) model for tracking funding and improvement in Downtown. Then, publish and update this data on the HDP website.

Goal 4. Reduce the amount of perceived and real crime Downtown.

Objective 4.1: Establish a public/private committee to oversee safety issues.

Strategy: Create a “Safety” group in the HDP to specifically address this issue. Members of this group should include area merchants, shoppers, property owners, downtown resident, Chief of Police, and members of the City Council Redevelopment Housing Authority. This group should establish a plan which identifies the major concern in the community (baseline provided in this plans surveys) and establish guidelines for a future plan of action.

Objective 4.2: Provide an update to the community about the safety in the downtown on a quarterly basis.

Strategy: This “Safety” group in the HDP should produce a one page summary of how crime is being lowered and deterred in Downtown on a quarterly basis.

This report could be included in promotional materials produced in conjuncture with other area marketing materials.

Objective 4.3: Improve building façades and window arrangements to improve the perception of the downtown.

Strategy: Studies on human perception have shown that appearance of an area affects one’s image/perception (ie. Broken Windows Theory). Therefore, by improving the aesthetic look of the district, the perception of Downtown as a safe and friendly place will improve concurrently. To accomplish this City Council should continue funding the façade improvement program. The HDP should take an active role facilitating grant approval and design selection, and if possible with funding of sign/façade construction until all buildings are restored to a historic design. For the window displays, the HDP should work with area businesses on helping merchants create an appealing window display. Specific display strategies and item presentation tips can be obtained through the Virginia SBDC, and in the Appendix is a listing of contact information and educational materials.

TARGET AREA #2: COPELAND SITE (RECREATION)

Goal 1. Create an active recreational and entertainment site on the Lower section of the Copeland Site.

Objective 1.1: Complete the “Greenway-Blueway” trail.

Strategy: The Department of Development, along with the HDP, FOLAR, and members of Prince George County should first complete a full design of the “Greenway” from its current ending location in Petersburg to the Copeland Site in Hopewell, as seen in mage 18. In this design plan specific construction needs, costs, and implementation timeline should be identified to complete this project as soon as possible. As seen in Image 18, the “Blueway” is complete through the Hopewell Marina, but improvements should be made to the water landing area at the Copeland Site. The responsibility for the completion of these improvements falls to the Department of Parks and Recreation, with possible funding trough FOLAR or HDP.

Objective 1.2: Establish a committee to determine a plan of action for establishing a riverfront venue.

Strategy: The Executive Director of the HDP should collaborate with City officials and the Virginia Main Street Program to research literature and contact other successful communities who have developed and marketed a success outdoor amphitheater.

Image 17. Copeland Site Sections

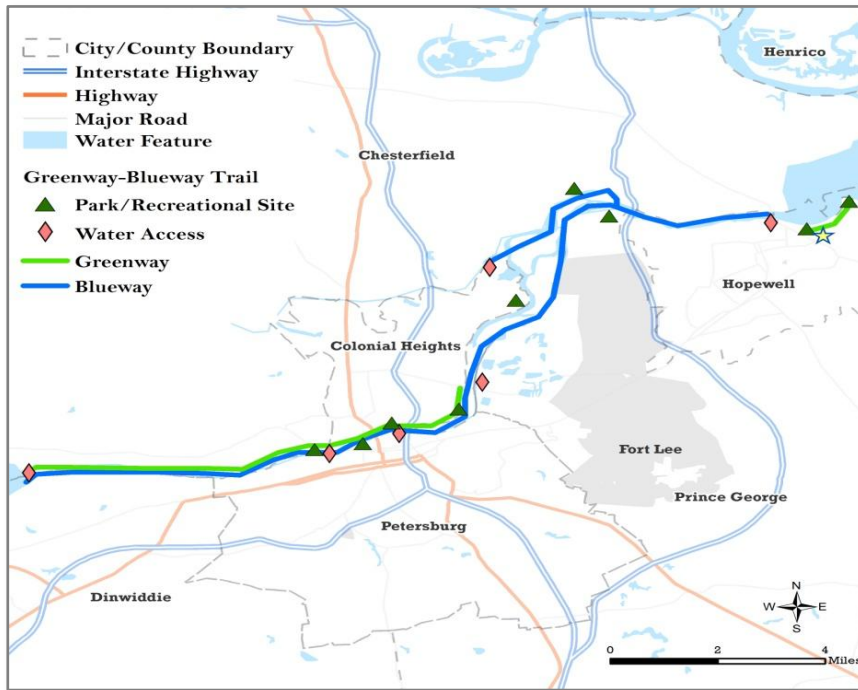


Source: Author taken photo (2012)

Objective 1.3: Market the lower section and riverfront area to key regional and local groups as an event space.

Strategy: The HDP along with City officials involved in marketing should contact current groups that use the site for events (Hooray for Hopewell, FOLAR, HDP, City Point 5k) to retain long-term relationships, while also

Image 18. “Blueway-Greenway” Trail



Source: Map created by Author with information from FOLAR Website (2012)

actively marketing the area to other regional groups as a possible event site. Interests in the area include a possible catfish fishing tournament or regional bike event with cycling groups in Chesterfield County. Additional regional groups of interest would be the Ft. Lee community, African American history tours in conjunction with the Richmond Slave Trail, Virginia Civil War Trails, and upriver water recreational businesses.

Objective 1.4: Create an updated comprehensive calendar of recreational and community events.

Strategy: The HDP should work with the Hopewell News to create a listing of the current events on their site and present them through an updated interactive blog like that provided by the Richmond Times-Dispatch's website, www.timesdispatch.com.

Goal 2. Market the site of the former location of the Patrick Copeland School (Upper section) for a mix-use development.

Objective 2.1: Actively market the site to a possible anchor for a mix-use development.

Strategy: Continue to list the site on the City's website for available sites within the city. Collaborate with regional economic groups, such as Virginia's Gateway Region to market the site to industry. Possible development scenarios could be as follows: John Randolph Hospital in conjunction with the VCU Medical Center establishes a satellite education center, Class A Office Space is constructed which would fill unmet demand in the regional market, or a University teams with the local Manufacturers to establish an industry specific training school.

TARGET AREA #3: RANDOLPH ROAD (GATEWAY)

Goal 1. Create an appealing and distinct gateway design.

Objective 1.1: Establish a committee to oversee the implementation of corridor enhancement along Route 10 leading into Downtown from the east and west.

Strategy: The City Council should extend the jurisdiction of the Downtown Design and Review Committee (DDRC) to encompass the Route 10 corridor from Hopewell's boundary in the west to the intersection with Route 36 in the east.

Objective 1.2: Adopt corridor development guidelines along Route 10 leading into the downtown from the east and west.

Strategy: The DDRC should then work with the Planning Commission, Department of Development, and HDP to create a set of corridor guidelines to extend throughout. Once these are established they will need to be approved by City Council. An example of possible guidelines for the western section can be found in the already completed Neighborhood "B" Plan. With the eastern industrial section, the Town of Smithfield, Virginia has set clear and graphically displayed guidelines for roadways abutting manufacturing areas. A full listing of each can be found in the Appendix.

Objective 1.3: Implement the adopted corridor development guidelines along Route 10 leading into Downtown from the east and west.

Image 19. **Broadway Gateway Design, 1965**



Source: Image courtesy of Appomattox Regional Library System (2012)

Strategy: For actions which fall within the public right-of-way the City Council should appropriate the necessary money through the Department of Development to contract out services for item construction. For all other recommendations on private land, the city should create a set of “carrot and stick” policies which offer a mix of code enforcement and incentives to encourage 100 percent compliance along the corridor.

Goal 2. Provide clear guidance to the district through uniform and appealing way-finding signage.

Objective 2.1: Identify funding sources and implement the current Gallagher and Associates Way-finding System Design Plan throughout the city.

Strategy (A): The HDP in collaboration with the Department of Development should work together in fundraising and writing grant applications to gain the funds to implement uniform signage throughout the city. The primary area for signage should be along the Route 10 corridor downtown leading to City Point. Full guidelines for the current Gallagher and Associates Way-finding System Design Plan can be found with City Assistant Manager March Altman.

Strategy (B): The Department of Tourism should contact the VDOT about getting “Historic Hopewell” signage on Interstates 95 and 295 around exists.

Goal 3. Enhance the safety and connectivity between the eastern and western sections of Downtown.

Objective 3.1: Introduce traffic-calming measures along Randolph Road.

Strategy: The Department of Development and VDOT should work to implement traffic-calming measures such as raised crosswalks, traffic signal timing and reduced speed limits along Randolph Road.

Image 20. **Current Way-finding Signage**



*Source:
Author
taken
(2012)*

Objective 3.2: Continue the streetscape improvements throughout the entire district.

Strategy: The City Council should appropriate the funding to complete Phase II of the streetscape plan which would extend the streetscaping improvements through the entire downtown district. A view of the Phase II streetscape plans can be found in the Appendix.

Objective 3.3: Promote cross-district advertising between the retail/restaurant and banking/investment communities.

Strategy: The HDP should work with area merchants to offer special deals and sales to those working in the downtown. The business/investment community should be encouraged to display downtown marketing materials in their offices.

Image 21. Phase I Streetscaping on Broadway Street



Source: Author taken (2012)

IMPLEMENTATION TABLES

Target Area #1. Strategy Description	Responsible Actor (Others to Consult)	Time*	Possible Funding Source	Estimated Cost**
Objective 1.1: Set a clear plan for future development	HDP (Dept. of Development, Dept. of Economic Development, H-PG Chamber of Commerce)	S	HDP	Small
Objective 1.2: Establish central organization to work with new and established businesses	HDP	S	N/A	None
Objective 1.3: Increase development enticing incentives (A)	Dept. of Development	M	N/A	None
Objective 1.3: Increase development enticing incentives (B)	City Council and Dept. of Economic Development	M	City	Medium
Objective 1.4: Restore all buildings along the corridor from a state of blight or vacancy	Dept. of Development and HDP (Code Enforcement, Redevelopment Housing Authority)	M/L	City/HDP/RHA	Small
Objective 1.5: Increase the amount of competitive market rate apartment options (A)	Dept. of Development and HDP	S	City/HDP	Small
Objective 1.5: Increase the amount of competitive market rate apartment options (B)	Dept. of Development, Redevelopment Housing Authority, HDP	M/L	City/Private	Large
Objective 1.5: Increase the amount of competitive market rate apartment options (C)	City Council	S	City	Small
Objective 1.6: Actively pursue businesses which have unmet market and community demand	HDP and Dept. of Development	S	City/HDP	Small
Objective 2.1: Increase the amount of parking spaces (A)	Dept. of Development	M	City/Private	Small
Objective 2.1: Increase the amount of parking spaces (B)	Dept. of Development (John Randolph Hospital)	M	City/Private	Large
Objective 2.2: Enhance the appearance of parking lots	HDP	M	N/A	None
Objective 2.3: Create an organized way-finding signage design in corridor	HDP and Dept. of Development	S	City/HDP/Private	Medium
Objective 2.4: Create a central information point for local and regional users of the district.	HDP	S	HDP	Small

* **S** = Short Term (Within 1 Year), **M**= Midterm (1 – 3 Years), **L** = Long Term (3 – 5 Years)

**Estimated Cost = Small (\$0-20,000) Medium (\$20,001-100,000) Large (greater than \$100,001)

Target Area #1. Strategy Description	Responsible Actor (Others to Consult)	Time*	Possible Funding Source	Estimated Cost**
Objective 3.1: Create a central website for cross-promotional activities.	HDP (Hopewell HS)	S	HDP	Small
Objective 3.2: Create an online presence for all the businesses along the corridor.	HDP (VA Small Business Develop. Center)	S	HDP	Small
Objective 3.3: Create a marketing campaign for Downtown.	HDP (Dept. of Tourism, Historic Hopewell, Appomattox Reg. Library)	M/L	City/HDP/Private	Medium
Objective 3.4: Track investment and results from new development and funding.	HDP (VA Main St., VEDP)	S	HDP	Small
Objective 4.1: Establish a public/private committee to oversee safety issues.	HDP	S	N/A	None
Objective 4.2: Provide an update to the community about the safety in the downtown	HDP (Police Dept., Local Churches and Civic Associations)	M	HDP	Small
Objective 4.3: Improve building façades and window arrangements	Dept. of Development and HDP (VA Small Business Develop. Center)	M	City/HDP/VASBDC	Medium

Target Area #2. Strategy Description

Objective 1.1: Complete the “Greenway-Blueway” trail	Dept. of Development (HDP, FOLAR, H-PG Chamber of Commerce, Dept. of Parks and Rec.)	S	City/Private	Large
Objective 1.2: Create a committee to determine a plan of action for establishing a riverfront venue	HDP, Dept. of Development, Dept. of Tourism	M	N/A	None
Objective 1.3: Market the location to key regional and local groups as an event space	HDP (Hopewell News, Progress Index, Dept. of Parks and Rec.)	S	N/A	Medium
Objective 1.4: Create a comprehensive calendar of listed community events downtown	HDP	L	HDP	Small
Objective 2.1: Actively market the site to a possible anchor for a mix-use development	Dept. of Economic Development, HDP	S	City	Medium

* **S** = Short Term (Within 1 Year), **M**= Midterm (1 – 3 Years), **L** = Long Term (3 – 5 Years)

**Estimated Cost = Small (\$0-20,000) Medium (\$20,001-100,000) Large (greater than \$100,001)

Target Area #3. Strategy Description	Responsible Actor (Others to Consult)	Time*	Possible Funding Source	Estimated Cost**
Objective 1.1: Establish a committee to oversee the implementation of corridor enhancement along Route 10	City Council, DDRC	S	N/A	None
Objective 1.2: Adopt corridor development guidelines along Route 10	DDRC (HDP, Planning Commission, Dept. of Development)	M	City	Small
Objective 1.3: Implement the adopted corridor development guidelines along Route 10	Dept. of Development (HDP, Crater PDC)	M	City/Private/Grants	Large
Objective 2.1: Identify funding sources and implement the Gallagher and Associates Way-finding System Design Plan (A)	Dept. of Development (HDP)	M	City/Private/Grants	Medium
Objective 2.1: Identify funding sources and implement the Gallagher and Associates Way-finding System Design Plan (B)	Dept. of Tourism and VDOT	M	VDOT	Small
Objective 3.1: Introduce traffic-calming measures along Randolph Road.	City Engineer, VDOT, DDRC	L	City	Medium
Objective 3.2: Continue the streetscape improvements throughout the entire district.	Dept. of Development, City Council	M	City	Medium
Objective 3.3: Promote cross-district advertising between the retail/restaurant and banking/investment communities.	HDP	S	Private	Small

* **S** = Short Term (Within 1 Year), **M** = Midterm (1 – 3 Years), **L** = Long Term (3 – 5 Years)

**Estimated Cost = Small (\$0-20,000) Medium (\$20,001-100,000) Large (greater than \$100,001)

CONCLUSION

The future of Downtown Hopewell is a bright one, but those involved must understand that the journey will take time. As seen in other successful small town downtown revitalization efforts, the process to build momentum is a rocky path with victories and defeats along the way. As for the Hopewell Downtown Partnership, its formation and acceptance into the Virginia Main Street Program is a terrific resource and should take on the central role in coordination of redevelopment efforts through its executive director.

Another encouraging factor is that Hopewell, when compared to other small towns around the state and nation, is unique in its immediate access to a strong and growing regional economy. The newly constructed Rolls-Royce Crosspointe Center, Amazon.com Distribution Center, and the continued expansion of Ft. Lee provide an opportunity to capture a highly educated and compensated workforce. Additionally, within the City of Hopewell major industrial manufacturing facilities, a regional hospital, and a concentration of local bankers and investors offer a uniquely strong base on which to build.

Downtown Hopewell's location is also central to regional tourism and recreational activities. Through the Copeland Site and adjacent roadways, downtown residents can have access to the Appomattox and James Rivers, regional bike routes and hiking trails. Grant's Headquarters and other historic features in the community place the downtown as the central point for movement through the region.

Therefore, by restoring Downtown Hopewell to a place which offers a lively retail and entertainment district, access to the Appomattox River and recreational activities, and a quality living option for active professionals Hopewell can reclaim the nickname of "The Wonder City."

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