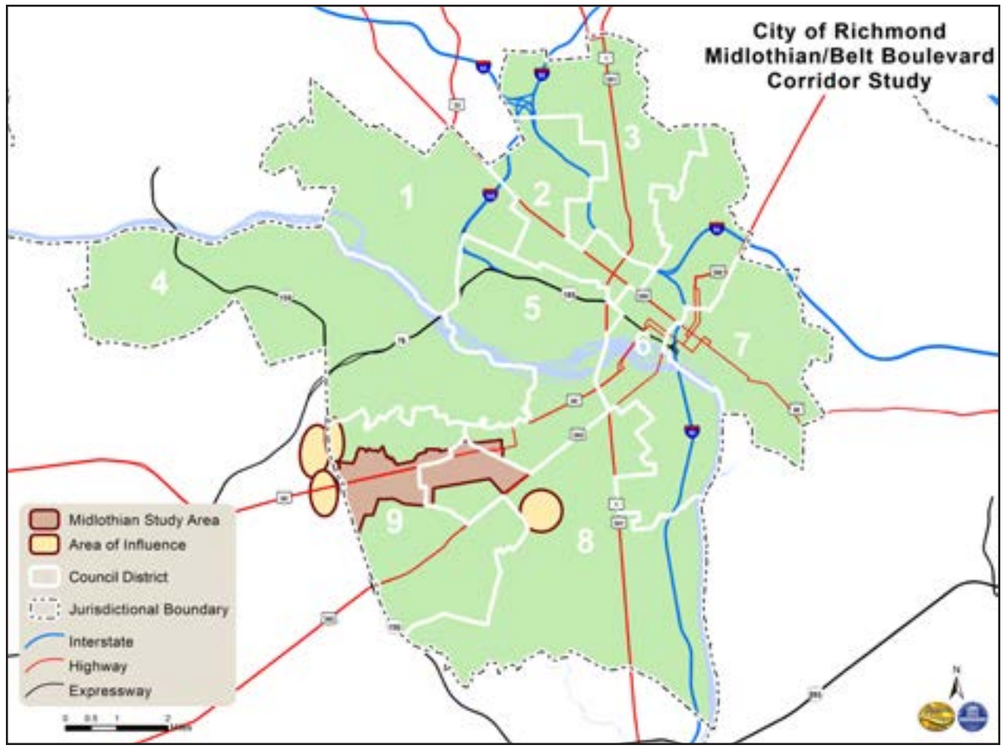
MAXIMIZING POTENTIAL

Midlothian / Belt Boulevard Corridor Study

August 2014



The designated Midlothian/Belt Boulevard Study Area is included in three city council districts.

This project was administered by the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission on behalf of the City of Richmond as the FY14 Large jurisdiction Technical Assistance project.

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Exhibits

What does maximizing the potential along the Midlothian and Belt Boulevard corridors look like?

A public investment of $45 million in the Midlothian corridor has transformed the street functionality for vehicular and pedestrian travel alike. Although not quite a complete street with dedicated bike lanes, clear passage for the other modes of travel, including several transit pull-outs to reduce interruptions to traffic flow, provides a greater sense of order. Pedestrian-timed signals, clearly marked cross-walks, and planted medians with resting spots offer the potential for greater access on foot. Pedestrian destinations along the corridor are not plentiful with the older auto-oriented land use pattern still intact. Belt Boulevard suffers on both counts with neither roadway nor land use pattern conducive to advance revitalization into the next decade.

This corridor study takes a look at the opportunities and obstacles that could change the future of growth and development potential along Midlothian and Belt Boulevard, and by exploring this aging corridor, it is hoped to set in motion similar responses to other corridors in comparable life-cycles.

Traffic

- Midlothian Turnpike finds its origins as a route for transporting the coal from the Midlothian mines to the Manchester dock in the 1730s becoming the first paved road in Virginia in 1808. Belt Boulevard was derived from the Belt Line tracks of the RF&P Railroad, and formed an earlier western bypass in 1934.
- Steady traffic increases along Midlothian through the 1970s have resulted in the 6-lane cross-section we now have today, but subsequent decline in traffic to the east of Chippenham Parkway may provide new opportunities to reconsider the highway's function. Chippenham Parkway now serves as the innermost western parkway Belt Boulevard once served. As Powhite Parkway and Route 288 take on an increasingly important role moving traffic to the west, what can the study of these innermost highway segments do to help guide us in the future?
- The *Richmond Connects: Richmond Strategic Multimodal Transportation Plan* of July 2013 found that transit service operates inefficiently along the Midlothian corridor (Level 3 or 4 out of 4) with a 12-17 hour service span and headways of over an hour by three general service routes of 10-12 buses per direction per day.
- *Richmond Connects* also sets valuable guidelines for land use policy that supports transit in order to be competitive for Federal Transit Administration funding: In a non-central business district within ¼ mile of transit stops – Floor-to-Area Ratio (FAR) of 1.75-2.5; housing dwelling units (DU) of 15-25 DU/acre; and parking ratio of 1.5-2.5 spaces/1,000 square feet(SF). Developed parcels fronting along Midlothian currently have an overall FAR of 0.16. Residential land use density in the Midlothian/Belt Boulevard Study Area (Study Area) is approximately 4.8 DU/acre. Surface parking appears to be ample and reflects parking for past big-box uses or auto dealers that no longer exist, i.e., K-Mart, the Giant Open-Air supermarket [where the Richmond Outreach Center (ROC) now is located], department stores of Miller & Rhodes, Thalhimers, and Mason's in the Southside Plaza area, etc.

Existing Land Use & Zoning

- Existing land use reflects vestiges of both corridors' evolution with an auto-service dominated theme, narrow strip commercial centers, and smaller motels toward the main Chippenham interchange with Midlothian. Larger parcels along the south side of Midlothian have allowed for some adaptive reuse or replacement, i.e., conversion of a 1966 industrial use to the Goodwill, construction of Evergreen manufacturing facility in 2003 and the Richmond Outreach Center adaptation of a 1969 big box. Several freight terminals remain as do two older, non-conforming mobile home parks.
- B-3, or General Business, zoned parcels dominate both corridors. In fact, the amount of B-3 zoned property in the study area represents more than one-half of all the B-3 zoned property within the City. Carrying out the minimum standards for the building envelope along with parking requirements for uses permitted by right in the B-3 zoning district, creates a non-urban, suburban conformity which predicts the low density, spread-out nature of development along a major highway arterial.

Property Values

- Property values in the Study Area, measured in terms of the mean assessed value per acre, do not compare favorably to the values along selected commercial corr0idors in the City, i.e., Broad Street values are 18 times greater than those in the study area, 3 times greater along Forest Hill Avenue, and 1.2 times higher along Jeff Davis Highway.
- As another indicator of economic health, retail rental rates in the larger Midlothian East/Hull Street sub-market area are also relatively low and the vacancy rate higher when compared to other sub-markets in the Richmond area. In contrast, office and industrial space rental rates in what CoStar defines as the "Midlothian Sub-Market" (note the defined areas differ based on types of use) are better than average. Vacancy in the office market is higher than average, but the industrial vacancy rate is lower and has experienced a positive amount of absorption year-to-date. These statistics for the first quarter 2014 may portend some promise for the industrial sector that would be worth additional market review beyond this limited study.

Public Safety

- Primary public safety indicators of health and well-being both for the Study Area as a location in which to do business and for the residents who live there were limited to a 10-year examination of crime statistics and review of recent vehicle accident data to try to answer key questions: Is this an area where it is safe to live and do business? Has the recent Midlothian Turnpike upgrade resulted in a noticeable improvement in traffic safety? All types of crime—property and personal—have decreased from 2004 to 2013. However, the area's share of City-wide homicides has increased. The most positive news can be attributed to a possible relationship between the marked decrease in vehicle accidents along the

improved portion of Midlothian Turnpike, nearly a one-third reduction in the past three years. This will be a statistic to carefully monitor, particularly as improvement options to the Midlothian/Belt Boulevard interchange are considered for funding.

Demographics & Services

- The Study Area population is younger, more Hispanic and African-American than the City population as a whole. The Study Area population is also less affluent than the City population as a whole. Median family income in the Census block groups in and around the Study Area has a wide range from $14,631 to $54,426 with an average of $39,294. This average is about $20,000 less than the average median family income for block groups in the City of Richmond, $59,836.
- Looking at the same area for which demographic statistics are cited includes the CJW Hospital, the area is a net job producer with a ratio of approximately 1.4 jobs for every resident. However, very few live and work in the area, and those who do tend to be earning less than $40,000 annually.
- The Second Police Precinct and Fire Station #23 are both located in the Study Area. George Wythe High School and Jones Elementary also serve the area, although area children may also attend other elementary schools which are not physically located in the Study Area. Indicative of family incomes, the six elementary schools serving the area's children all have high participation rates in Federal free and reduced lunch programs.

Environmental

- The land area within the defined Study Area is considered more than 50% impervious which leads to a level of concern for the environmental quality impacts on the three watersheds which receive runoff and other pollutants from the area. In fact, the immediate study area is significantly more impervious than the receiving watersheds. Future development and redevelopment of the study area should carefully focus on best practices and measures to reduce impervious cover, and thereby, lessen unfiltered runoff from parking lots and other paved surfaces into the area streams.
- Most importantly, Reedy Creek which forms the Study Area's northern boundary and was the subject of the underlying stormwater improvements which yielded an improved thoroughfare, flows directly into the James River. This same stream offers exciting opportunities for natural connection for residents and others if an estimated 2.5-mile trail is constructed to meet an existing trail along the Crooked Branch leading into Forest Hill Park. Intersection with the proposed James River Branch (former CSX rail line) trail in the Westover Boulevard/George Wythe High School vicinity would offer a truly unique catalyst connecting neighborhoods along the way like no other proposal before.

Action Framework

- Midlothian Turnpike consists of 6-travel lanes, a 50'-wide center median, and turn-lanes at 6 signalized intersections. An average of 69,000 vehicles per day pass over Midlothian on Chippenham Parkway which, in effect, functions as the region's inner limited-access loop. Most traffic from Chippenham onto Midlothian heads west into Chesterfield, although a significant increase has occurred to the east to the first intersection with Carnation Drive (39,00 average daily traffic). The traffic volume decreases noticeably east of this intersection. Traffic patterns seem to indicate the desired movement north along Carnation which essentially provides a parallel alternative for traffic headed to CJW Hospital and the medical offices which surround it. A highway arterial like Midlothian Turnpike is capable of providing an adequate level of service for up to 60,000 vehicles per day.
- Looking at trends into the future, this fact offers two somewhat different options:
  - intensify the land use to use the excess roadway capacity,
  - reduce the function of the roadway returning a travel lane to another mode of travel or some increased pervious green space.
- Selecting the first option above calls for multi-purpose action: creation of destination uses that draw or builds upon populations from outside the area. These can range from the attraction of a more regional use for largest open parcel (Gresham Woods) to providing trail connections along Reedy Creek that will invite a different mode of travel, create interest, and connections among the neighborhoods.
  - The first step in this strategy is to lay the groundwork for building a framework to incentivize and intensify potential development at Gresham Woods starting with increased height to be visible from Chippenham. Extension of the Community Unit Plan (CUP) opens the door for active discussion with the property owner and sets the stage for assisting with market exploration and defining the parameters of form and function for the parcel. This can be used as a pilot for subsequent redevelopment along the corridor.
  - A corresponding feature of the second option, or reduced function of the roadway strictly for passenger vehicles or truck traffic, could come into play with the addition of either a dedicated transit lane and/or bike lane that could better serve the destination/population and employment center created in the Chippenham/Midlothian interchange area.
- Essential to the attraction of destination uses to the corridors is development includes; Enterprise Zone (EZ) designation currently offers several tax incentives, but the EZ application for Midlothian is now under review for revision by the end of 2014. Retaining EZ designation for Midlothian will require advocacy and careful analysis of the advantages offered to stimulate revitalization.
- A primary recommendation of this Study is to establish an ongoing multi-departmental project team to focus and coordinate efforts common to all mature highway corridors within the City. Starting with Midlothian/Belt Boulevard, City-sponsored solution chaters of public and private sector participants would pull together foundational findings and mapping of each corridor to explore opportunities constraints and chart a course for revitalization.

Background & Purpose

An approximately two-mile portion of Midlothian Turnpike (Route 60) from Chippenham Parkway (Route 150) to Covington Street, just west of Westover Hills/Belt Boulevard, was recently improved by the City of Richmond as part of a flood management project. The $45.1 million improvement project involved the installation of curbs, gutters, turn lanes, sidewalks, landscaping, streetlights, storm drains and four transit bus pullouts. While the primary purpose of the project was to install a closed drainage system to allow rain water to flow beneath the road and out into Reedy Creek, the resulting complete street design presents an excellent opportunity to explore alternative land uses, redevelopment and infill options that could be generated by the improvement project.

The defined project area of study represents 1,241 acres of mostly commercial frontage of Midlothian Turnpike and Belt Boulevard along with the immediate surrounding residential neighborhoods. As shown by Exhibit 1, large areas of influence outside the Study Area were identified early in the study including Chippenham-Johnston Willis (CJW) Hospital, the Boulders office park, and a new Stone Bridge mixed use development in Chesterfield County as well as the McGuire Veterans Administration Medical Center at the terminus of Belt Boulevard.

The purpose of this study is to capitalize on the significant public investment in the roadway, and offer recommendations for consideration by the City for alternative land uses and implementation mechanisms which together could strengthen the corridor study area for multiple purposes including improved tax base and community service through enhanced access for adjoining neighborhoods.

Exhibit 1

The study process engaged a team of planners from the City Departments of Planning & Development Review and Economic & Community Development in review and discussion of:

1. Defining the boundaries of the Study Area
2. Parcel data update, zoning, land use, property ownership, environmental features, community facilities, assessed values
3. Demographic data by Census tract and block group
4. Traffic data, peak volumes & trends
5. Commuting patterns and transit ridership data
6. Existing relevant plans
7. Known plans for future development and capital improvements

History of Development

In 1701 French Huguenot settlers discovered the existence of coal in Midlothian. William Byrd II, credited as the founder of Richmond, purchased 344 acres (.54 2 sq. mi) of land in the area where coal was found and noted in his 1709 diary that "the coaler found the coal mine very good and sufficient to furnish several generations." It was first commercially mined in the 1730s, and used to make cannon at Westham (near the present Huguenot Memorial Bridge) during the American Revolutionary War. The demand for coal from Chesterfield brought about some significant transportation improvements to move coal ore from the mines to shipping ports on the James River at the Manchester wharves. In 1804, a toll road was built from Falling Creek to Manchester to ease traffic on what is now Old Buckingham Road. Paved in 1808, it was Virginia's first paved road. Today it is known as Midlothian Turnpike.

The need to more efficiently move coal brought about one of the first mulit-modal solution in the country with the objective of separating passenger from cargo traffic. The Chesterfield Railroad, a 13-mile long incline railroad--believed to be Virginia's first railroad--began operating in 1831 as a private stock-held company. Without locomotive power, it made use of gravity to move coal cars from Falling Creek to Manchester and mules to pull the empty cars back. The Chesterfield Railroad operated until 1850 when the steam-driven Richmond and Danville Railroad made it economically obsolete. At full operation it carried 85,000 tons of coal and stockholders were fully repaid in 1844. Remnants of the cyclonical inclined plane can be seen just south of the current highway near the remains of the railroad bridge at Falling Creek.

Horse-car service for the general vicinity began in 1873 when the Manchester Railway & Land Improvement Company ran a line along Hull Street as far as the Belt Line. It later merged with Southside Land & Improvement Company to form the Richmond & Manchester Railway Company and received the rights to cross the river to Richmond on the Free Bridge at Ninth Street. This service was replaced by an electric streetcar service around 1890 and the Hull Street Line connected to Forest Hill Park by way of Midlothian Turnpike at 34th Street. The connection was discontinued sometime before 1930. The Hull Street/Highland Park line was the last line converted to bus service in 1949. [Rails in Richmond, Carlton Norris McKenney, 1986]

In the early 1800s the need to more efficiently move coal brought about one of the first multi-modal solutions in the country.

The Belt Boulevard corridor forms the eastern boundary of the Study Area. The name for Belt Boulevard appears to have derived from the "Belt Line" tracks of the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad (RF&P) and Atlantic Coast Line Railroad (ACL) which had also been built some years earlier to bypass a congestion point and river crossing in downtown Richmond at Byrd Street Station near present-day New Market Corporation.

The road very roughly parallels the belt line railroad about a mile or so east for a large portion of its routing. By 1934, a combination of roads known collectively as the "Belt Boulevard" formed a western bypass of Richmond's most congested areas along the US 1/301 corridor, crossing the James River on Richmond's privately owned Boulevard Bridge, a toll bridge built in 1925.

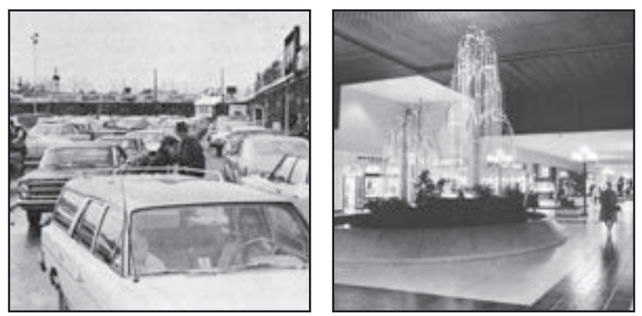
At the western most boundary of the Midlothian Study Area, Chippenham Parkway was upgraded from a standard 2-lane roadway to a largely grade-separated 4-lane freeway with median over a period from 1967 to 1990. The section between Midlothian Turnpike (Route 60) south to Hull Street (U.S. Route 360) occurred in 1971 and north to Forest Hill Avenue in 1973.

As suburbanization from the City center continued to move south and southwest, Midlothian Turnpike and Belt Boulevard emerged as commercial corridors serving the largely 1940-1950s style suburban single-family residences. Land use patterns have been strongly influenced by the major transportation corridors and the commercial development that has occurred along them, and vice versa. In fact, the 1983 City Master Plan notes that the 25% increase in traffic volumes since 1975 necessitated the widening of Midlothian from four to six lanes in 1979 and a new interchange with Chippenham Parkway.

Sources: Brochure from Chesterfield County Office of News and Public Information Services, by Pam Wiley; "Historically Significant Sites on the Mid-Lothian Coal Mining Co. Tract In Chesterfield County, Virginia," a collection of articles and excerpts compiled by Thomas F. Garner, Jr. and located in the Midlothian Branch Library, and libraries of the Virginia Historical Society and Chesterfield Historical Society; "Forerunner of Virginia's First Railway" by Elizabeth Dabney Coleman, Virginia Cavalcade, Volume 4, Number 3, pages 4-7. Virginia State Library: Winter, 1954

Stable and barn crew of the Richmond & Manchester Railway Company pose before a car begins its run.
Photo Source: Valentine History Center, Rails in Richmond, Carlton Norris McKenney, 1986.

The name for Belt Boulevard was derived from the "Belt Line" tracks of the Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad (RF&P) and Atlantic Coast Line Railroad (ACL) built to bypass a congestion point at the river crossing in downtown Richmond.



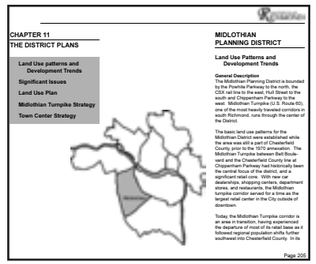
Left: Cars filled the parking lot and exit/entrance lanes at Southside Plaza in the late 1960s. Right: The fountain at the now demolished Cloverleaf Mall in the late 1970s. Photo Sources: www.vintagerva.blogspot.com

Existing Relevant Plans

Moving up to the current day, this Study also relies on a number of relevant planning studies and plans to uncover ideas or recommendations that may still have relevance today.

The following plans provided guidance in assessing the Midlothian/Belt Boulevard corridor Study Area's strength/weaknesses & opportunities/threats along with ideas for recommended improvements in context with the rest of the City and adjacent areas. Key findings and recommendations from each of the relevant plans are summarized chronologically from oldest to newest:

Richmond Master Plan: Chapter 11, Midlothian Planning District, 2000


CHAPTER 11
THE DISTRICT PLANS

Land Use patterns and Development Trends
Significant Issues
Land Use Plan
Midlothian Turnpike Strategy
Town Center Strategy

MIDLOTHIAN PLANNING DISTRICT

Land Use Patterns and Development Trends

General Description
The Midlothian Planning District is bounded by the Powhite Parkway to the north, the CSX rail line to the east, Hull Street to the south, and Chippenham Parkway to the west. Midlothian Turnpike (U.S. Route 60), one of the most heavily traveled corridors in south Richmond, runs through the center of the District.

The basic land use patterns for the Midlothian District were established while the area was still a part of Chesterfield County, prior to the 1970 annexation. The Powhite Parkway, between Belt Boulevard and the Chesterfield County line at Chippenham Parkway had historically been the central focus of the district, and a significant retail core. With new car dealerships, regional shopping, entertainment stores, and restaurants, the Midlothian turnpike corridor served for a time as the largest retail center in the City outside of downtown.

Today, the Midlothian Turnpike corridor is an area in transition, having experienced the departure of most of its retail base as it followed regional population shifts further southwest into Chesterfield County. In its

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Key Findings & Recommendations:

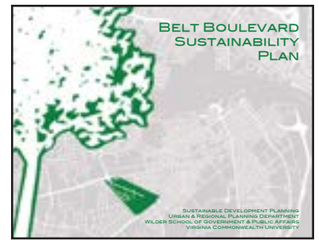
- Basic land use patterns were established while the area was still a part of Chesterfield County prior to the 1970 annexation. Midlothian Turnpike, between Belt Boulevard and Chippenham, has historically been the central focus and retail core of the planning district. In fact, the Midlothian corridor served for a time as the largest retail center in the City outside of downtown.
- Revitalization of Midlothian and Belt Boulevard is a high priority.
- Public park proposed for area along Reedy Creek.
- A connector road is proposed between Carnation Road and Boulders Parkway to increase access to the Boulders office park and other parts of Chesterfield County.
- A connector road (overpass over Chippenham) between Warwick and Cloverleaf Roads is proposed to constitute the southern half of a circular "loop" road designed to alleviate traffic congestion on Midlothian and Chippenham.
- Reconstruct Midlothian to support transit operations and light-rail transit.
- Realign Midlothian to intersect Belt Boulevard at Brandon Road, thus diverting the majority of heavy through traffic away from George Wythe and residential areas along Midlothian to the north.
- Majority of Midlothian recommended for "Economic Opportunity Area" intended to provide flexibility for future development, provided such development enhances the economic base of the City. Existing trucking and transportation-related uses along the corridor are not appropriate. Development of these areas should occur in a comprehensive, rather than piecemeal, manner to more efficiently develop the land. More appropriate uses south of Midlothian would be light industrial, office, institutional, and retail.

Create a Town Center along Belt Boulevard between Midlothian and Hull:

- A focal point for south Richmond with a mix of higher density residential, office, retail, entertainment, and public uses; and
- Town Center should ultimately become the largest concentration of commercial and residential activity outside of Downtown.

Belt Boulevard Sustainability Plan, December 2009

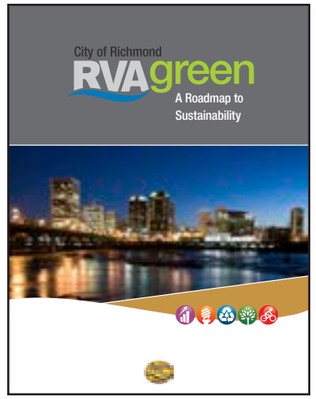
(VCU Masters Program Studio Project)



Key Findings & Recommendations:

- Corridor is unwelcoming for bike and pedestrian users: sidewalks are lacking, no bike infrastructure, public transportation is too infrequent and bus stops are not ADA compliant.
- Vehicle speeds are often unchecked and pose a danger to users of alternate modes.
- In the study area along Belt Boulevard approximately 67% of land cover is impervious surfaces; tree canopy covers approximately 12.4%.
- Proposed recommendations:
  - Integrated recycling facility or commercial nursery proposed for land near interchange with Midlothian;
  - add green spaces throughout the corridor,;
  - higher-density housing near Southside Plaza;
  - traffic calming measures to slow speeds along the corridor and make it more hospitable to modes of transportation other than just the personal vehicle;
  - add sidewalks to both sides of the corridor;
  - parallel alley for service south of Belt Boulevard; and
  - use Southside Plaza as park & ride lot.

RVAgreen: A Roadmap to Sustainability, 2012



Key Findings & Recommendations for a greener, more sustainable city:

- Replace parking minimums with parking maximums;
- Create a green business support and recognition program;
- Educate landlords on the benefits associated with green leases for both residential and commercial buildings. (Green lease requirements assure that tenants are able to make energy efficiency upgrades and improvements during their lease.);
- Designate a Green Business District/Enterprise Zone;
- Repurpose appropriate vacant lots for urban agricultural use;
- Promote electric vehicle use and charging stations;
- Improve accessibility of bike and pedestrian paths;
- Reduce the percentage of impermeable surface area;
- Promote rainwater collection systems; and
- Increase Richmond's tree canopy.

Richmond Connects: Richmond Strategic Multimodal Transportation Plan, July 2013

Key Findings & Recommendations:

- The Midlothian corridor has a high jobs-per-household ratio relative to the rest of the City. Much of the land along the corridor has a jobs-per-household ratio of more than 2.0, with the remaining being 0.5 - 1.0.
- The transit quality of service map indicates that the Midlothian corridor is in the lowest two categories, Level 3 and Level 4, "due to the more auto-dominated land use pattern." Levels 3 and 4 includes routes with a medium to long service span (12-17 hours) and headways of over an hour on average. These routes provide a necessary service, but their headways mean users must be closely tied to the service schedule. The majority of the Midlothian corridor is served by a Level 4 route.
- Midlothian Turnpike & Belt Boulevard are identified as part of the Federal Freight Network.
- 2009 and predicted 2032 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) indicates that traffic along Midlothian is expected to remain above 25,000 vehicles. Traffic along Carnation and Old Warwick is expected to increase.
- The Midlothian-Belt Boulevard interchange was highlighted for interchange improvement, and recommended to include sidewalks.
- Midlothian was identified as a *Transit Priority Corridor* meaning "Improvements would be focused on consolidating stops [4 per mile instead of 8], stop enhancements, intersection priority (including possibly queue jumpers) and off-board fare collection..."
- Sidewalk improvements recommended as well as on-street bike lanes or sharrows on some streets in study area.
- Transit Supportive Land Use Policies: Floor-to-Area-Ratios (FAR) & Dwelling Units (DU)/ acre, and parking space requirements should to be altered to the medium-high Federal Transit Administration (FTA) category listing in order to be competitive for grant funds. The medium-high category includes the following characteristics: non-central business district commercial FAR of 1.75 – 2.5, housing DU/acre of 15 – 25, parking requirements per 1,000 square feet of 1.5 -2.25. These densities and requirements should occur within ¼ mile of proposed transit stops.
- Support bicycling education and infrastructure in low-income communities: require new developments to include safe, convenient bike parking and encourage existing employers to provide safe, convenient bike parking at existing buildings.

Hull Street Corridor Revitalization Plan, January 2013

(A joint plan by the City of Richmond and Chesterfield County)

Key Findings & Recommendations:

- "Investment in the [Hull Street] corridor should first focus on helping existing businesses and local entrepreneurs and improving the physical setting of the corridor – its aesthetics and its pedestrian, bicycle and transit accommodations- so that one can begin marketing to outside companies."
- AADT throughout the corridor has decreased from 2001 to 2011 with a negative growth rate of -5%. This is a signal of economic contraction of the past several years and changing traffic behaviors in the region; capacity far exceeds volume.
- Plan suggests that as land grows scarce around CJW Medical Center located at Chippenham and Jahnke, medical offices may opt for Hull Street given the relative proximity of this alternate location via Chippenham.
- Recommends a Hull Street Corridor Champions group be established consisting of homeowners, business owners, and community leaders to move some initiatives forward.

Recommendations involve the creation of 4 nodes along the corridor. In the City:

- Chippenham & Hull – Design/Health and Wellness Center including indoor recreation center in redeveloped Chippenham Mall Shopping Center, commercial lining both sides of Hull, multi-family uses fronting Elkhardt, central feature of public open space for the expanded residential area, professional/medical offices west of the interchange, a design business cluster centered on the south side of Hull; and
- Hull and Warwick – Town and Family Entertainment Center including two hubs linked by a public green framed by commercial buildings creating a family-oriented node of activity; along local street more residential (multi-family, townhouses, and single family) with a new public park.

Examples of existing commercial uses along Midlothian Turnpike. Photo Source: RRPDC

Existing Land Use

Using the historical backdrop for perspective, the general westward movement of auto dealers and related auto uses finds both Midlothian and Belt Boulevard in a transitional stage of development. Auto dealers, once a mainstay along Broad Street and other major corridors radiating from the city center, have steadily been moving west.

Midlothian reached its heyday in the 1960s and early 1970s as the 'motor mile'. This motor mile has now migrated west into Chesterfield County.

Midlothian reached its heyday in the 1960s and early 1970s as the 'motor mile'. This motor mile has now migrated west into Chesterfield County in the vicinity of Chesterfield Town Center. Retail centers have followed the population in a similar manner with the demise of the downtown department stores and emergence of suburban malls replacing strip shopping centers. This is evident in the progression from Southside Plaza (ca. 1953) being replaced by Cloverleaf Mall which opened in the early 1970s. Although Southside Plaza still operates as a relatively healthy retail shopping center, the former center of gravity created by Cloverleaf Mall has been replaced further west.

Strip commercial on parcels with shallow depths dominates the parcel and land use pattern in the Study Area.

Existing land uses are mostly commercial, industrial, and institutional. (Exhibits 2 and 3) These higher intensity uses front both the Midlothian and Belt Boulevard corridors. Many of the commercial uses are related or dependent on the automobile. Gas stations, auto body repair and supply, and car rental offices are widely distributed along both corridors. Small motels are clustered at the western end of the Study Area near the Chippenham interchange. Observations indicate that these motels may be used as a temporary, flexible housing alternative, in addition to short overnight stays. Institutions include various churches, Jones Elementary School, and George Wythe High School offering not only educational, but cultural, social and organizing opportunities for Study Area residents. Goodwill is an anchor on the corridor; the location acts as a trucking depot and a training location. Single-family and multi-family residential neighborhoods are located in proximity to the Midlothian Turnpike and Belt Boulevard corridors, but are often separated from the corridors by a buffer of transitional uses. Nearly one quarter of the land in the Study Area is vacant, or undeveloped. 15.7% percent of this undeveloped land has wetlands and other environmental features that affect the capability of the land to be developed. However, much of the undeveloped land, especially a large 118-acre parcel of land known as Gresham Woods at the southeast quadrant of the Midlothian/Chippenham interchange does not appear to be constrained by such environmental conditions and offers one of the few remaining undeveloped interchange quadrants of the Chippenham corridor.

Exhibit 3: Existing land Use - Acreage Distribution

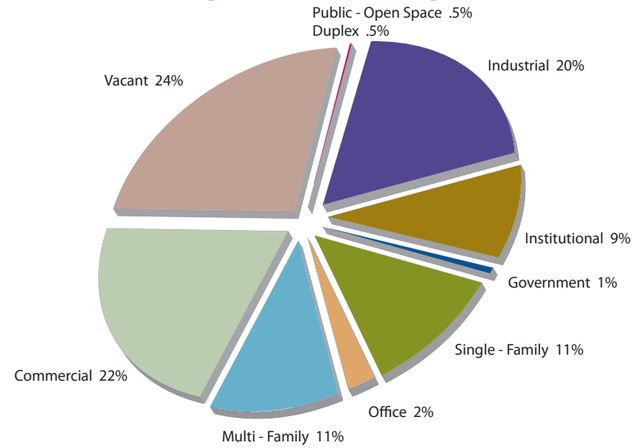
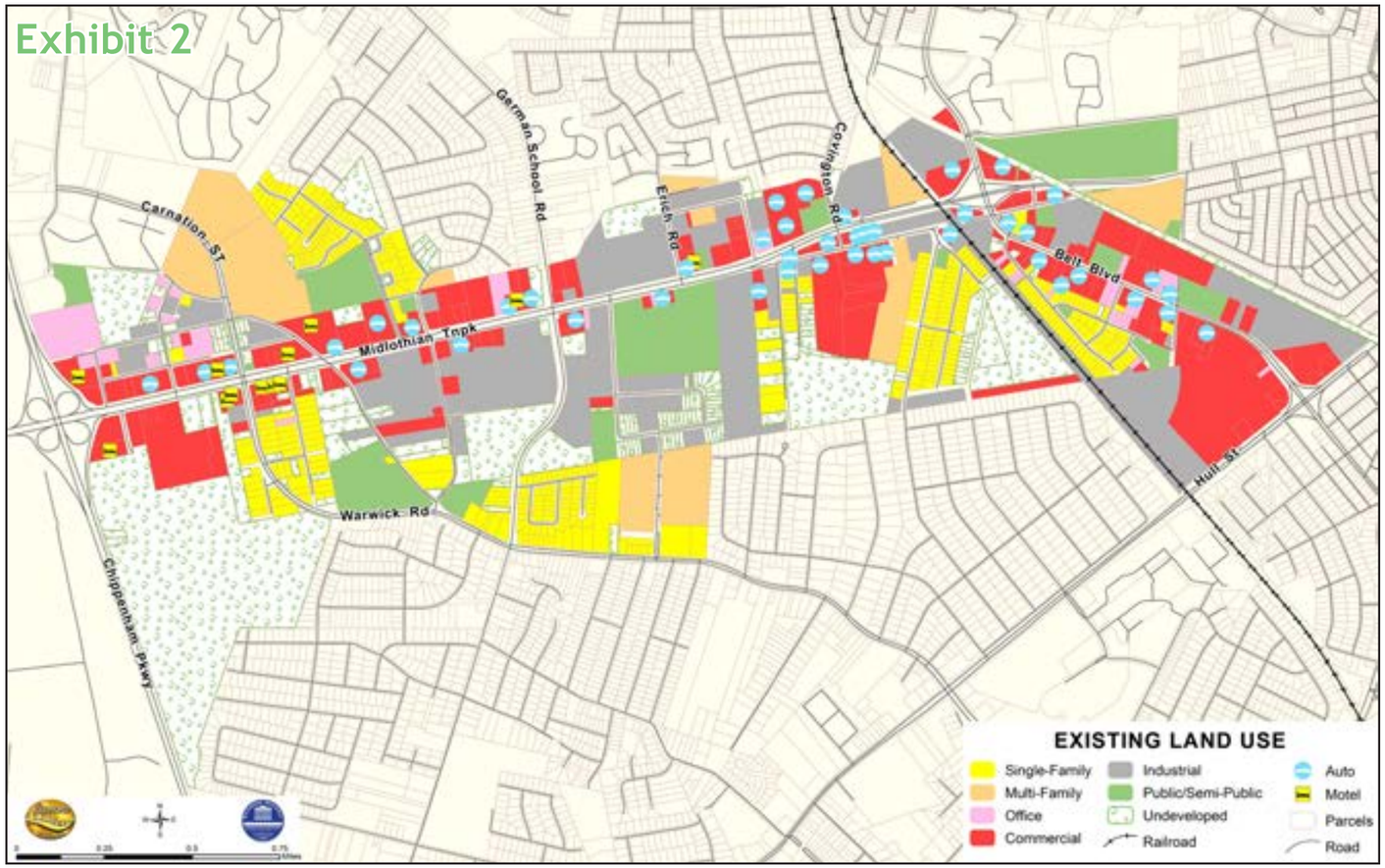


Exhibit 2



Existing Zoning

How a parcel is zoned (Exhibit 5) offers an opportunity to identify some of the underlying reasons why a certain land development pattern has and will continue to emerge along the corridor. Zoning does not necessarily reflect existing parcel land use because zoning offers an indication of a full range of potential land uses given the prescribed allowances of a specific zone designation. Zoning, however, can set the framework and/or be used as a tool to provide incentives or discourage certain types of development patterns. Along with market forces, zoning sets the tone or character for development.

Business Zoning

The amount of B-3 zoned property in the Midlothian Study Area represents more than one half of all the B-3 zoned property within the city. A majority (676 acres, or 54.5%) of the corridor is zoned for B-3 Highway Commercial which allows 60 different permitted principal and accessory uses (Sec. 114-438.1 City of Richmond Zoning Ordinance).

Permitted uses in B-3 are commercial in nature, but also include more intense uses such as freight transfer terminals and distribution facilities with limitations as to size and location relative to other less intensive uses. A number of the B-3 uses such as shopping centers and communication facilities require submission of Plans of Development (POD). Limitations are also placed on transitional sites, defined as a lot or portion of a lot within 50 feet of and fronting on the same block as property in a residentially-zoned district.

The B-3 zoning classification does not require a front yard setback and side and rear yards are only required if adjacent to residentially-zoned property. The ratio of the total floor square footage to lot area (FAR or Floor Area Ratio) cannot exceed 2.0, limiting total building mass to no more than two times the area of the lot. A minimum 0.25 open space ratio is also specified for the B-3 zone, and maximum height is set at 35 feet (with some allowance to exceed, up to 60 feet when yards exceed the minimum).

The amount of B-3 zoned property in the Midlothian study area represents more than one half of all the B-3 zoned property within the City.

These B-3 zoning standards for the building envelope along with minimum parking requirements (assigned on the basis of a specific uses) create a non-urban, rather suburban conformity which predicts the spread-out nature of development along a major highway arterial.

Residential Zoning

The R-3 zoned single-family residential properties flanking the commercially-zoned frontage of Midlothian and Belt Boulevard corridors are buffered either by higher density residentially-zoned (R-4, R-7, R-48) and Office-Service (OS) parcels. Yard set backs and landscape screening requirements provide visual distinction between the dissimilar uses. The OS district provides additional guidance for the screening of parking lots from residential uses, but the same height restriction of no more than 35-feet applies (with no exceptions).

Two mobile home developments are located at the eastern end of the Midlothian corridor in the vicinity of the Belt Boulevard intersection. One of the developments is zoned R-MH (ca. 1976) while the development to the north is zoned B-3 (ca. 1967). Both parks were developed before the current ordinance provisions of 1993 which call for a maximum density of 8 units per acre and set standards for their lot area, placement, and the amount of recreation space required for common use. While they are not conforming to current-day standards, State and Federal Fair Housing Law allows for the property owners to continue placing or replacing mobile homes. Active code enforcement to ensure that housing and neighborhood living conditions are decent, safe and sanitary is on a complaint basis.

Industrial Zoning

Two smaller developments of zoned M-1 Light Industrial are located between the B-3 zoned properties and residential uses within the Study Area. Along Belt Boulevard, one portion of the M-1 zoned property was redeveloped for the headquarters of the Greater Richmond Transit Corporation (GRTC). M-1 allows for a wide variety of "light industrial uses that manufacture, pro-

Exhibit 4: Existing Zoning Districts

Zone	District Title
B-1	Neighborhood Business (<10,000 SF)
B-2	Community Business
B-3	General Business (Floor Area Ration < 2.0)
M-1	Light Industrial
OS	Office - Service
R-2	Single - Family Residential (< 15,000 SF lot)
R-3	Single - Family Residential (> 10,000 SF lot)
R-4	Single - Family Residential (>7,500 SF lot)
R-5	Single - Family Residential (>6,000 SF lot)
R-6	Single - Family / Attached Residential
R-7	Single & Two - Family Urban Residential
R-43	Multifamily Residential (>3,000 SF lot/DU)
R-48	Multifamily Residential (>2,200 SF lot/DU)
R-53	Multifamily Residential,>5,000 SF lot/DU)
R-73	Multifamily Residential (Floor Area Ration < 2.0)
R-MH	Mobile Home (< 8 DU/AC)
RO-1	Residential - Office
RO-2	Residential - Office
Floor Area Ratio = total finished floor area/total land area	

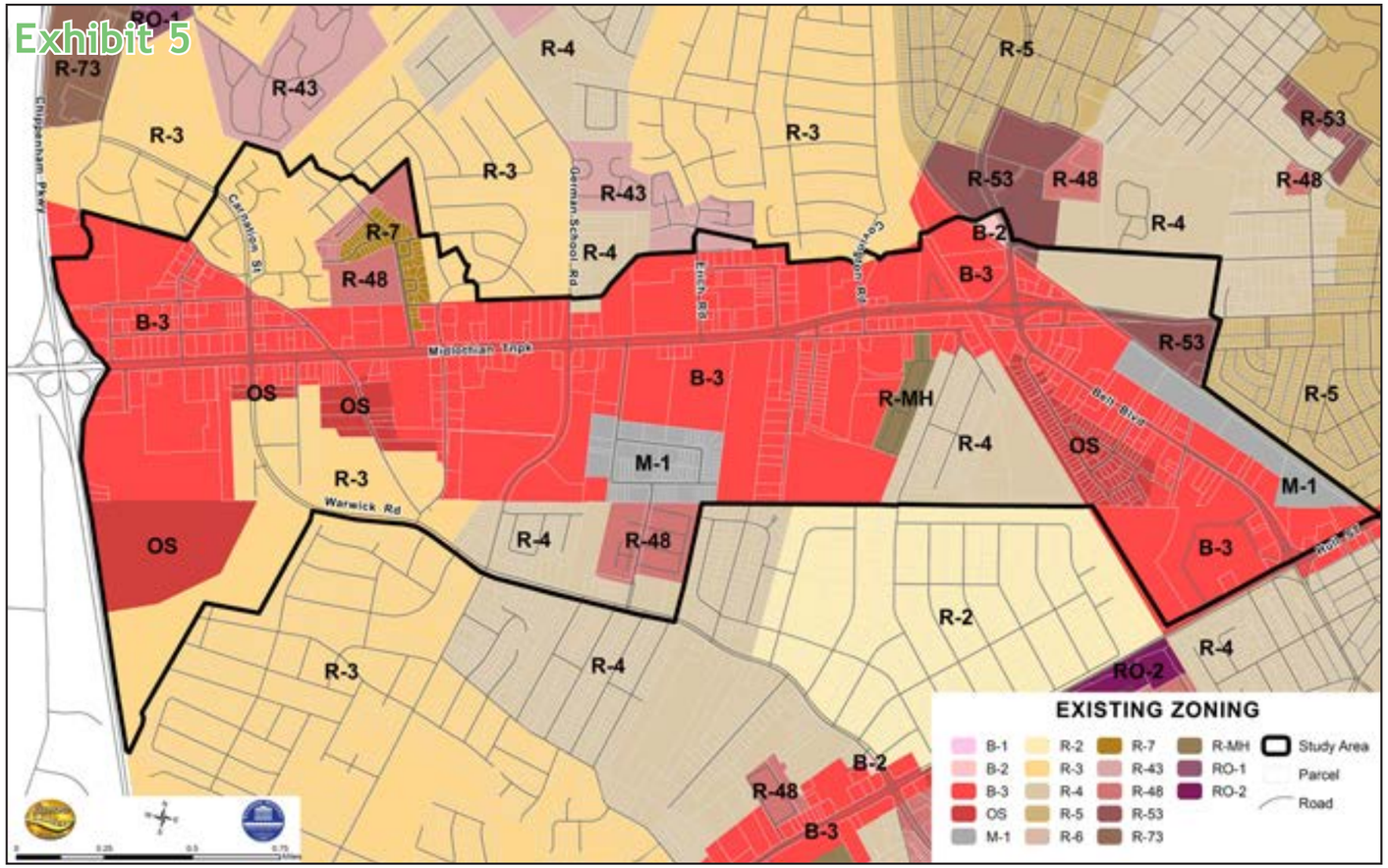
City of Richmond, Virginia Code of Ordinances, Chapter 114 ZONING; accessed via Municode.com, 2014.

cess, store and distribute goods and materials and are in general dependent upon raw materials refined elsewhere and manufacturing, compounding, processing, packaging or treatment…."[Sec. 114-452.1, City of Richmond Zoning Ordinance]. No front yard setback is required and side/rear yards of a minimum of 25 feet when adjacent to residentially zoned property. Maximum height is 45 feet with exceptions specified with appropriate horizontal distances.

Community Unit Plans

The Richmond Zoning Ordinance also allows for Community Unit Plans (CUPs) by application by a property owner on any tract of land that is at least ten (10) contiguous acres "for use and development of such land in a manner that does not conform in all respects with the regulations and restrictions….(of the district in which the land is located)" [Sec. 114-456.2].

One such Preliminary CUP is in effect until July 1, 2014, within the Study Area consisting of a tract of approximately 118 acres known as the Gresham Woods located within the southeast quadrant of Midlothian Turnpike and Chippenham Parkway. The preliminary CUP primarily calls for single-family detached and attached units with community common area. Extension until 2017 for filing a Final CUP has been requested by the property owner with the understanding that this Midlothian corridor study may be used to offer alternative "higher and better uses for the property." [Correspondence from GSC, Jonathan S. Perel, May 16, 2014]



Parcel Arrangement & Relationship to the Street

Midlothian Turnpike is a broad street cross-section consisting of 6 travel lanes, turn lanes, a center median within an approximate 140-foot pavement width. Belt Boulevard represents a narrower cross-section of 75-feet without the benefit of a median, but including a center turn-lane. The roadways were ultimately constructed to carry relatively large volumes of commercial traffic, and capable of supporting fairly significant non-residential square footage. One way to describe the character of development is as an average floor-to-area ratio (FAR) and compare it to other similar corridors in the metropolitan area. The average FAR of Midlothian Turnpike is 0.16. In contrast, Broad Street in the vicinity of Short Pump occupies a comparable cross-section and supports an FAR of 0.21.

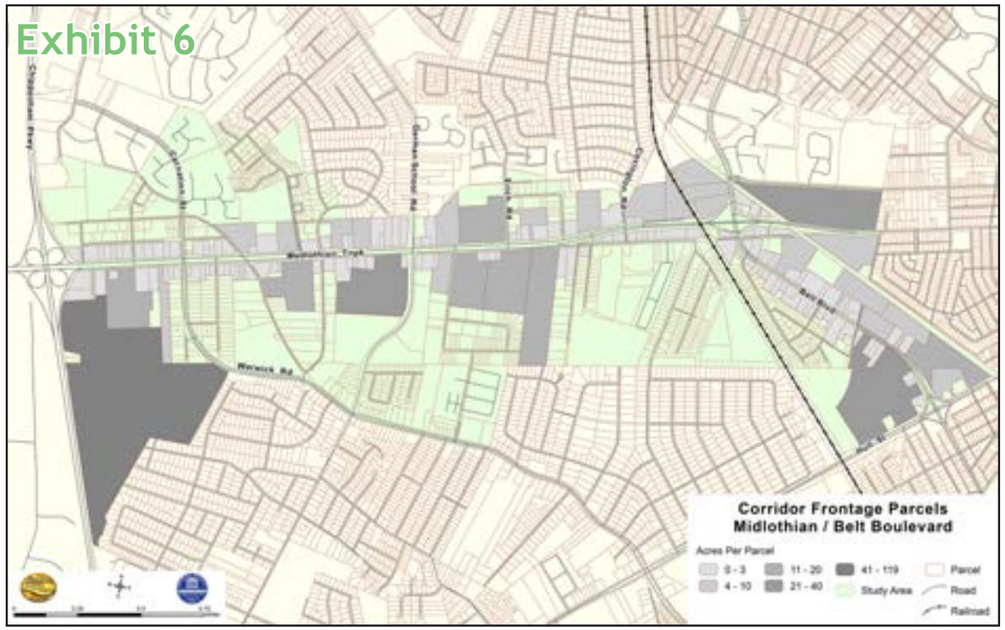
Another way to depict the character of future development potential is through examination of the parcel arrangement and size as shown by Exhibit 6. The parcels fronting Midlothian range widely in acreage: from 0.1 acres to 119 acres. Most of the parcels are at the low end of the range with a few large parcels as outliers at the top end of the spectrum. The average parcel is 3.26 acres and the median parcel size is 0.74 acres. Given the relatively small parcel size and disjointed ownership common along the corridor, redevelopment of any consequence would require parcel assemblage and acquisition. Property and market values would have to warrant the time and expense for significant reuse. For this reason, larger, intact parcels are considered more development-ready especially if values will not allow a profitable return on investment.

The arrangement of parcels is distinctly different from one side of Midlothian to the other with the northern sector set in a grid without much lot depth compared to the southern portion having significant parcel size and lot depth along with greater separation between commercial and residential uses.

The parcels fronting Belt Boulevard vary in size from 0.23 acres to 32 acres. Most parcels are less than one acre with a median parcel size of 0.67 acres. The few large parcels skew the average parcel size higher at 2.1 acres. As with the Midlothian corridor, very few parcels along Belt Boulevard are owned by the same entity, suggesting greater initial expense required for redevelopment.

A majority of vacant parcels in the Midlothian Study Area are small and scattered; in fact 75% of the vacant parcels are 0.5 acres or smaller. In total, the vacant parcels sum to 285 acres, or 26% of the Study Area parcel land area.

Given the relatively small parcel size and disjointed ownership common along the corridor, redevelopment of any consequence would likely require parcel assemblage and acquisition.



Numerous curb cuts along the north side of Midlothian Turnpike near German School Road disrupt safe pedestrian use of sidewalk.

Indicators of Market Transition

In addition to existing conditions a number of factors can serve as indicators of a corridor's readiness for transition to new or different uses; and this study looks at a selection of factors that are most quantifiable, including the following:

1. Assessed Property Values

Alternative assumptions were tested to determine how to best compare the relative property values along the Midlothian/Belt Boulevard corridors to other commercial corridors of the city. One theory that a low improvement (building) to land value expressed as a ratio of 2014 assessed values turned out to be a good way to highlight undeveloped parcels which may be most easily assembled or ready for redevelopment, but not as good an indicator of value relative to other corridors since the ratio is absent of a common unit of measurement such as acreage or square footage.

A simpler approach was taken to compare relative assessed value among commercial corridors as one indicator of potential for a greater return on investment due to lower cost basis in land, improved or unimproved. Shown by Exhibit 7 this analysis indicated that the Midlothian Study Area does not compare favorably to the other commercial corridors analyzed (Exhibit 8) when calculating the mean or average assessed value per acre (2014 City of Richmond Assessed Values).

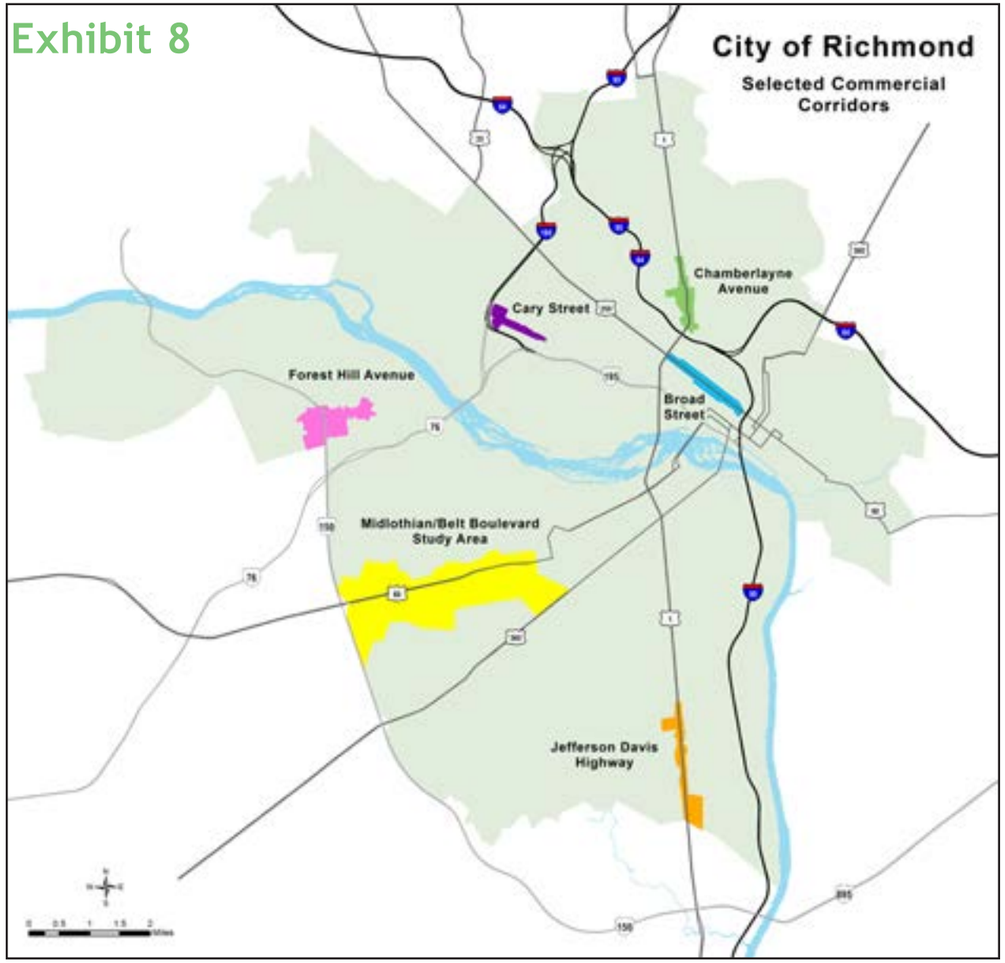
Exhibit 7: Assessed Value of Selected Commercial Corridors

Corridor	Assessed Value
Broad St from Belvidere (west) to I-95 (east)	$6.6 million/acre
Cary Street from I-95 (west) to Boulevard (east)	$5.0 million/acre
Forest Hill Ave from Grantwood (west) to Windsorview (east)	$1.1 million/acre
Chamberlayne Ave from Brook (south) to Lombardy (north)	$559,000/acre
Jeff Davis/Rt 1 from Walmsley (south) to Terminal (north)	$441,000/acre
Midlothian Study Area (Chippenham to Belt Boulevard)	$365,000/acre

Source: 2014 City of Richmond Assessed Values

As another element of marketplace, the Study Area is also the location of a dozen highway-related motels, many of them clustered toward the Chippenham Parkway interchange with Midlothian Turnpike. A cursory review of the advertised per night room rates indicates a lower than average rate in the Study Area than found in the Richmond market. Some Study Area motels are as low as $30 per night up to a high of $50-$65 per night compared to an average per night rate of $94 in the larger Richmond market. The Richmond market ranges from a low of $40/night to a high of $275/night, putting the Study Area motels at the low end of the market. Observations lead to the possibility that some of the motel occupancy in the Study Area is by temporary, weekly residents, but the extent of such use is beyond the scope of this study. Further study of the motels and the two mobile home parks in the context of provision of affordable, decent, safe and sanitary housing in the Study Area is recommended.

Exhibit 8



2. Rental Market

At first glance, the tenant mix along the Midlothian and Belt Boulevard corridors seems to indicate that monthly rental rates may be relatively low. Comparison of properties available for rent within the Midlothian East/Hull Street submarket to other corridors in the region show that in the retail sector (Exhibit 9), the quoted square footage monthly rental rate is below normal, and vacancy rate is higher than average. Within the industrial sector (Exhibit 10), the Midlothian corridor rental rate is somewhat higher than average and the vacancy rate is lower. The office rental rate (Exhibit 11) is somewhat higher than average with a higher than average vacancy rate. Highs and lows within each of these market sectors according to first quarter 2014 reports by the CoStar Group are shown below:

Exhibit 9: Retail Submarkets

Sub Market Area	Quoted SF Rate	Vacant SF	YTD Absorption	Vacancy Rate
Midlothian E/Hull St	$11.23	752,595	11,413	10.7%
Broad St	$16.19	113,328	-5,904	5.6%
Downtown	$14.46	356,812	-23,775	8.0%
East End	$12.84	327,635	-12,152	7.9%
Jeff Davis	$10.50	371,491	-25,568	11.7%
Mechanicsville	$13.28	143,459	13,005	5.2%
Midlothian Village	$18.83	194,115	878	11.9%
Midlothian West	$14.52	349,959	11,099	5.0%
Near West (incl Carytown)	$16.08	117,233	-20,422	3.1%
Regency	$10.33	159,477	8,699	6.3%
Staples Mill/Parham	$16.93	379,621	7,278	5.0%
Willow Lawn	$11.21	120,550	-16,141	4.1%
Average	**$13.87**	**282,190**	**(4,299)**	**7.0%**

Source: The CoStar Retail Report, First Qtr 2014, Richmond Retail Market, CoStar Group

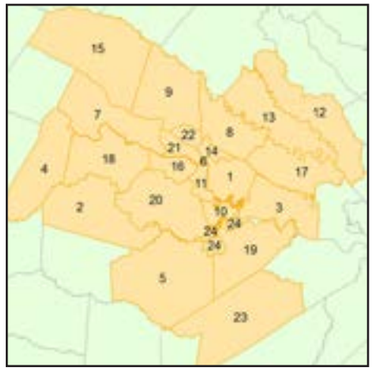
CoStar Retail Submarket Areas

21 Midlothian East/Hull Street
2 Broad St.
7 Downtown
8 East End
15 Jeff Davis
20 Mechanicsville
23 Midlothian West
24 Near West (incl Carytown)
29 Regency
32 Staples Mill/Parham
35 Willow Lawn

Exhibit 10: Industrial Submarkets

Sub Market Area	Quoted SF Rate	Vacant SF	YTD Absorption	Vacancy Rate
Midlothian Corridor	$6.15	259,642	53,220	5.7%
Airport	$4.02	1,648,763	-125,915	9.6%
I-95 North/ Mechanicsville	$5.46	329,553	6,886	4.1%
I-95 North/Ashland	$5.05	655,869	52,691	9.8%
I-95/I-295 S/Rt. 10	$5.11	265,413	4,828	2.3%
Jeff Davis	$2.80	3,623,773	125,162	12.8%
Laburnum/Rt 360	$3.73	418,940	106,502	7.5%
Scotts Add/West End	$5.51	695,324	95,952	6.1%
Staples Mill/Parham	$5.97	743,887	-64,172	11.5%
Average	**$4.87**	**960,129**	**28,350**	**7.7%**

Source: The CoStar Industrial Report, First Qtr 2014, Richmond Industrial Market, CoStar Group



CoStar Industrial Submarket Areas

16 Midlothian Corridor
1 Airport
8 I-95 North/Mechanicsville
9 I-95 North/Ashland
10 I-95/I-295 South/Rt. 10
11 Jeff Davis
14 Laburnum/Rt. 360
21 Scotts Add/West End
22 Staples Mill/Parham

Exhibit 11: Office Submarkets

Sub Market Area	Quoted SF Rate	Vacant SF	YTD Absorption	Vacancy Rate
Midlothian Corridor	$16.05	662,185	-9,084	15.1%
CBD	$20.37	1,400,573	74,792	13.0%
East End	$15.34	22,362	-8,500	3.4%
Glenside/Broad St	$17.42	479,428	-34,499	10.0%
Hull St Corridor	$13.40	164,437	17,525	5.8%
I-95 North/Ashland	$14.16	55,942	9,484	8.1%
I-95/Chamberlayne	$13.48	76,524	0	21.2%
Innsbrook	$17.48	770,153	-5,807	9.5%
Iron Bridge Corridor	$14.00	226,199	-1,334	11.2%
Mechanicsville	$15.15	172,849	-2,230	13.4%
Parham East	$14.58	389,901	15,218	14.6%
Parham South	$13.68	202,099	33,092	19.8%
Shockoe Bottom	$18.15	48,156	16,285	3.1%
Stony Point/ Huguenot	$16.36	137,628	-24,700	9.2%
Average	**$15.69**	**343,460**	**5,732**	**11.2%**

Source: The CoStar Office Report, First Qtr 2014, Richmond Office Market, CoStar Group

CoStar Office Submarket Areas

20 Midlothian Corridor
2 CBD
6 East End
8 Glenside/Broad St.
10 Hull St. Corridor
11 I-95 North/Ashland
12 I-95/Chamberlayne
13 Innsbrook
14 Ironbridge Corridor
19 Mechanicsville
27 Parham East
28 Parham South
32 Shockoe Bottom
33 Stoney Point/Huguenot

Public Safety

Crime Statistics

Crime statistics for the neighborhoods in and around the Midlothian-Belt Boulevard Study Area were gathered for the years 2004 – 2013. Exhibit 12 illustrates the neighborhoods for which crime data was gathered. The total area is similar to that for which demographic and employment data was gathered using Census data products. Demographic data will be discussed later in the Existing Conditions section.

Depicted by Exhibit 13, violent crime and property crime had dropped as of the end of 2013 throughout the Midlothian-Belt Boulevard Study Area by 46% since 2004. From 2004 through 2008, total crime fell by 50%. Substantial decreases in larceny, robbery, and auto theft between 2004 and 2008 contributed to the total crime decrease. However, violent crime and property crime maintained similar shares of total crime throughout the years. Violent crime, including homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, hovered around 15% of total crime in the Study Area. Meanwhile, property crime, including arson, burglary, larceny, and auto theft, remained approximately 85% of total crime. Crime remained relatively steady at a lower level until 2012, when it increased by 13%. This increase was countered in 2013 with a 12% decrease.

Despite the reductions in crime that the Study Area and the City has experienced in the past several years, the Study Area has seen its share of the City's homicides increase. The City-wide declines in homicide have not translated into parallel declines in all parts of the City. In 2004, the City of Richmond had 95 homicides; 11, or 11.6%, were located in the Study Area and its surrounding neighborhoods. In 2013, the City of Richmond experienced 37 homicides. That same year, 7 homicides, or 18.9% of the City total, occurred in the Study Area and its environs.

Source: Major crime statistics provided by the City of Richmond Police Department for the following neighborhoods: Beaufont, Belt Center, Elkhardt, Forest Hill Terrace, Hioaks, Jahnke, McGuire, Midlothian, Northrop, Pocoshcok, Swansboro West, Swanson, Warwick, Westover, Woodhaven, and Worthington.

Exhibit 12

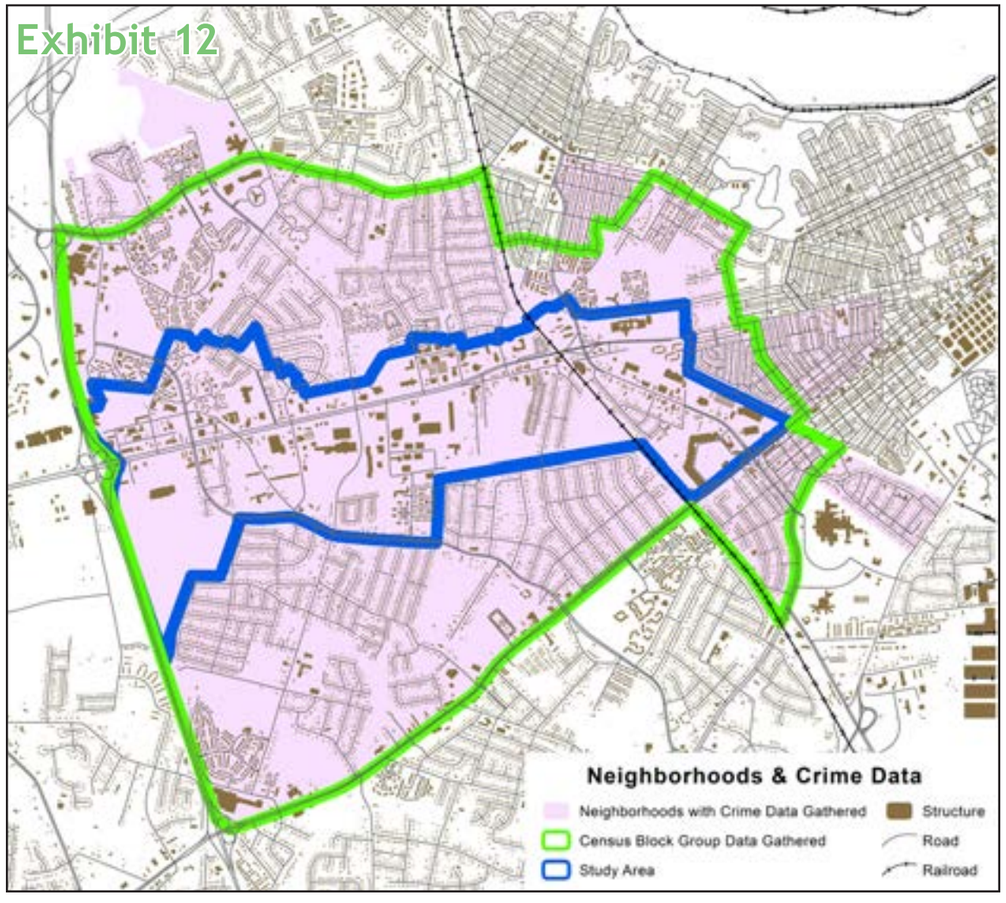
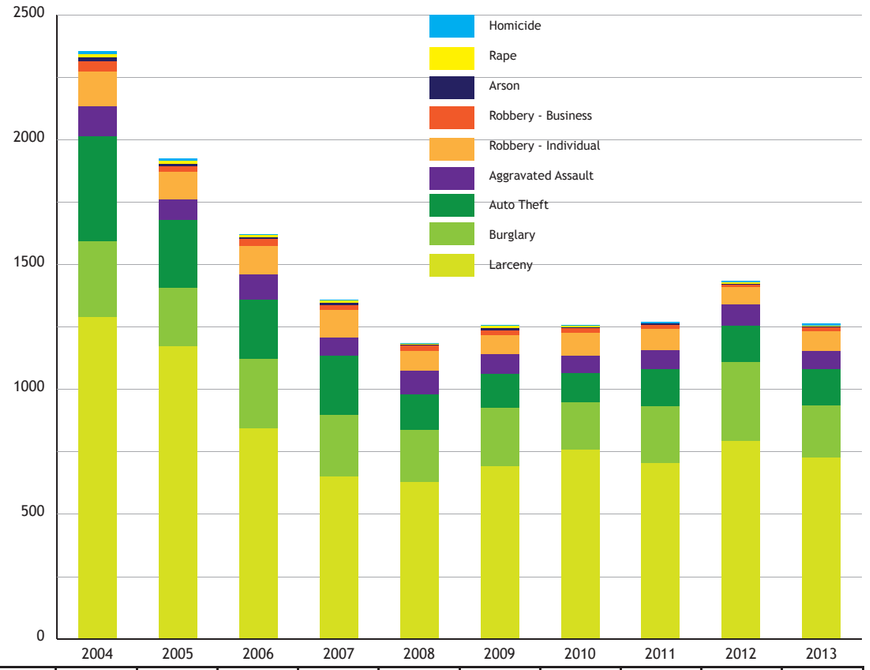


Exhibit 13: Reported Crime Trends



	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Homicide	11	9	2	3	3	6	5	4	6	7
Rape	14	14	8	10	5	8	5	2	5	3
Arson	15	9	8	9	4	11	2	6	5	6
Robbery - Business	41	23	27	21	20	17	20	17	8	14
Robbery - Individual	140	109	113	109	81	76	93	86	69	79
Aggravated Assault	120	81	104	73	94	79	67	73	87	72
Auto Theft	421	274	237	239	143	136	119	150	144	148
Burglary	306	236	278	247	209	234	191	229	318	209
Larceny	1,288	1,171	844	649	628	693	757	703	793	726

Vehicle Accidents

In 2012, the Midlothian – Belt Boulevard Study Area and the surrounding Areas of Influence saw 227 accidents; 98 of these crashes were in the Study Area itself. These crashes resulted in one fatality and caused 149 injuries; five pedestrians were injured and 144 vehicle occupants suffered injuries. These accident and injury numbers may seem high; however, recent improvements along Midlothian have resulted in a reduction of accidents along the corridor as shown by Exhibit 14.

For all years there were numerous accidents along Midlothian in and around the interchange with Chippenham Parkway. In 2012, the interchange alone witnessed 39 accidents: on the ramps, on Midlothian, or on Chippenham. Many accidents also occurred within a half-mile of the interchange along Midlothian. To the east, within the Midlothian – Belt Boulevard Study Area, 17 accidents injured 18 people. Along Midlothian to the west, by the Stone Bridge development, to the intersection with Boulders Parkway, 40 accidents occurred. (Exhibit 15)

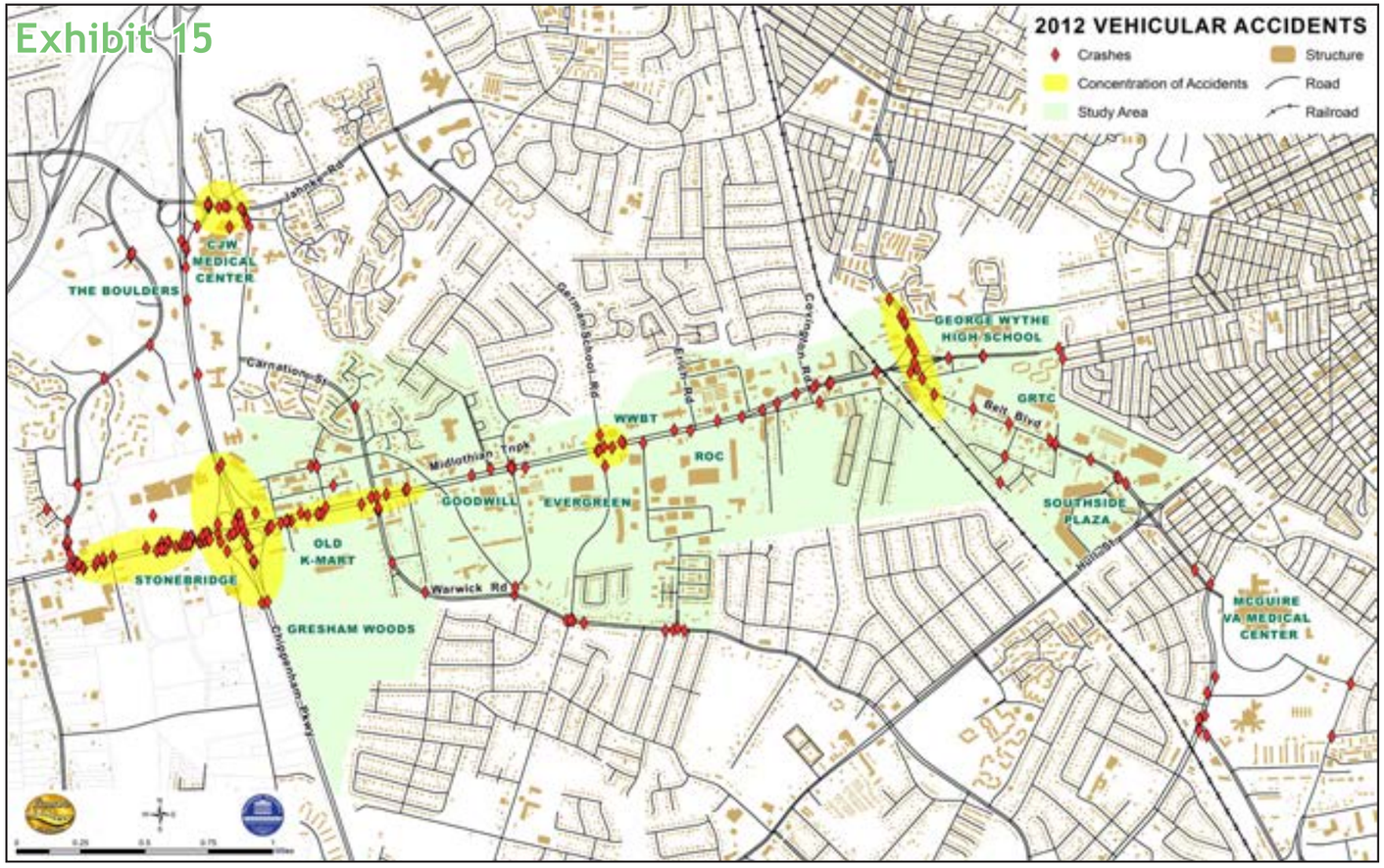
Recent improvements along Midlothian have resulted in a 49% reduction of accidents along the corridor."

Exhibit 14: 2010-2012 Vehicular Accidents

Accidents in the Midlothian Study Area			
2010	2011	2012	% Change 2010 - 2012
112	118	98	-12.5%
Accidents on Midlothian Immediately east of Chippenham			
2010	2011	2012	% Change 2010 - 2012
25	25	20	-20.0%
Accidents along Improved length of Midlothian			
2010	2011	2012	% Change 2010 - 2012
58	57	39	-48.7%

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation, Crash Data 2010 - 2012

Exhibit 15



Demographics

The decennial U.S. Census provides the most complete 100% sample, accurate, and consistent source of demographic data to depict the characteristics of the population living in the defined Midlothian Study Area. Census data must be queried based on delineated Census geographies. The smallest unit of geography, Census blocks are nested in census block groups which are then nested within larger Census tracts. This demographic analysis uses the data provided at a Census block group level as the most universally available.

Two different Census products were accessed for purposes of this analysis: 1) the 2010 decennial census for population related data; and 2) the Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics (LEHD) for economic related data. The LEHD data uses a small sample size to make inferences about the larger population of an area. Unlike the decennial Census, where data from 100% of the population is gathered at once, the LEHD combines data from multiple Census Bureau and state sources including unemployment insurance earning data, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages data, and other censuses and surveys including the American Community Survey which samples around 10% or less of the population, depending on the geography in question.

As by Exhibit 16, Census block group boundaries do not align perfectly with the Study Area boundary; portions of some block groups extend beyond the Study Area boundary. However the resulting statistics are considered to be good indicators of the population within both the Study Area and in the general vicinity.

Exhibit 16

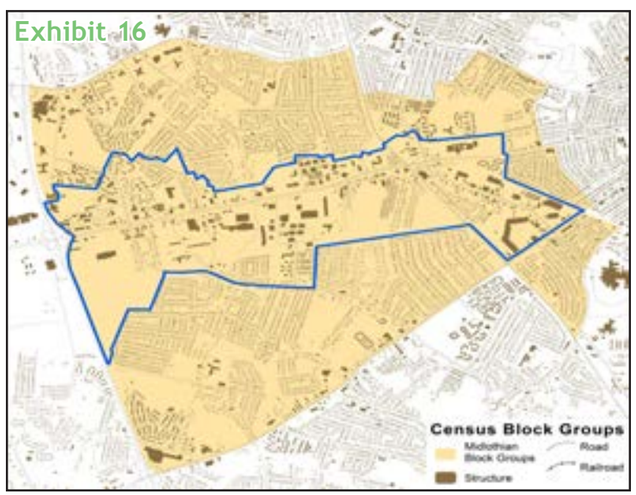


Exhibit 17: 2010 Study Area & Vicinity Population and Age

		Males		Females		Labor Force Population (25-64)		Youth Population (under 18)	
Area	Total Population	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Midlothian Study Area	21,562	9,841	46%	11,721	54%	11,570	54%	5,075	24%
City of Richmond	204,214	97,331	48%	106,883	52%	106,690	52%	38,009	19%

Source: 2010 Decennial Census, Table P12

Who lives in the Study Area?

According to the 2010 U.S. Census, an estimated 21,562 people live in or near the Midlothian Study Area. As summarized by Exhibit 17 this represents 10.6% of the City of Richmond's population. The population within the age range of 25 – 64 is typically considered to be of working age, and represents 54% of the total area population. This proportion is consistent with City-wide data. The labor force is reflective of the male-female composition of the total population: 54% women and 46% men. The biggest difference between the population characteristics of the Study Area compared to the city of Richmond is that nearly one-fourth of the population in the Midlothian Study Area is under age 18, a 5 percent higher proportion than the population under age 18 in the city of Richmond. Another way to look at this difference is that if the city of Richmond had the same youth population proportion as the Midlothian Study Area, there would be an additional 10,056 children in the City of Richmond.

Exhibits 18 and 19 show the population in or near the Study Area has a higher percentage of Hispanics and African Americans than the city of Richmond as a whole. In fact, the population in and around the Study Area has more than twice the concentration of Hispanics as compared to the entire city, 14% compared to 6%. The Study Area and its surroundings also have a higher concentration of African Americans compared to the city at a whole, 67% compared to 51%.

Approximately one quarter of the population living in and around the Study Area has an annual income below the federal poverty level. This rate of poverty is similar to, yet slightly above, that of the city as a whole – nearly 27% (Exhibit 20). The Federal government establishes poverty thresholds based on the size of a family and the ages of its members. For example, the most common type of family in the Study Area, 42% of families, is that of a single parent with children. In 2010, the poverty threshold for a single parent with two children was $17,568.

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, Table B11004. Study Area Families: Married couple with related children under 18 – 666 (13.6%); Married couple with no related children under 18 – 1,211 (24.7%); Single householder with related children under 18 – 2,072 (42.3%); Single householder with no related children under 18 – 946 (19.3%).

Exhibit 18: Race

	Midlothian Study Area		City of Richmond	
Race	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
White	4,058	19%	83,288	41%
Black or African American	14,542	67%	103,342	51%
Native American	112	1%	705	0%
Asian	382	2%	4,750	2%
Some Other & Two or More	2,468	11%	12,129	6%
Total Population	21,562	100%	204,214	100%

Source: 2010 Decennial Census, Table P9

Exhibit 19: Ethnicity

	Midlothian Study Area		City of Richmond	
Ethnicity	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Hispanic or Latino	2,990	14%	12,803	6%
Not Hispanic or Latino	18,572	86%	191,411	94%
Total Population	21,562	100%	204,214	100%

Source: 2010 Decennial Census, Table P9

Exhibit 20: Individuals in Poverty

	Income Less than Poverty Level		Income At or Above Poverty Level		Total
Location	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number
Study Area	5,547	24.9%	16,756	75.1%	22,303
City of Richmond	52,260	26.7%	143,205	73.3%	195,465

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates, table C17002: Ratio of Income to Poverty Level in the Past 12 Months. Dataset Universe: Population for whom poverty status has been determined, not included: people in college dormitories, people in military group quarters, institutionalized population, and unrelated individuals under 15 years old.

Who Works in the Study Area?

The Midlothian Study Area and surroundings can be considered an employment center, largely due to the inclusion of CJW Hospital in the statistical base along with several other large employers on the corridor which employ nearly 3,000 people (as of 2nd Qtr 2012 Virginia Employment Commission).

According to 2010 Census LEHD data, a greater number of people are employed in and around the Midlothian Study Area than reside in the area: 11,488 people actually work in the area compared to 8,319 workers who live in the area.

According to 2010 LEHD data, a greater number are employed in and around the Midlothian Study Area than reside in the area: 11,488 people actually work in the area compared to 8,319 workers who live in the area. LEHD estimates 422 people (or 5% of those who live in and around the Study Area) both live and work in the immediate area, while an estimated 7,897 workers who live in the Study Area commute outside the area for employment. With a total of 8,319 workers living in the Study Area, the labor force participation rate compares favorably to the city-wide rate, 72% to approximately 65% of city labor force residents who are actively working (RRPDC, Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy CEDS, 12/12/14, p. 10). It is not possible to accurately depict the rate of unemployment using 2010 Census and LEHD, an estimated 3,251 people considered to be in the labor force are not actively participating for a variety of factors not just unemployment.

On average those that live and work in the Study Area earn the least; workers who commute out of the Study Area for employment fair better. Workers who commute into the Study Area fare the best, on average, when looking at earnings. Inflow workers, those commuting into the Study Area, are most likely to earn $40,000 a year or more. Inflow workers are also least likely to earn $15,000 or less per year. By contrast, those living and working in the Study Area, are most likely to be earning $15,000 a year or less and least likely to earn $40,000 or more. (Exhibit 21)

Left: Goodwill Industries provides job training and support for many in the metropolitan area. Right: Constructed in 2003, the corporate headquarters and distribution center for Evergreen Enterprises establishes it as one of the corridor's largest employers. Photo Source: RRPDC

Left: The City of Richmond Southside Community Services Building is located in South Side Plaza at Belt Boulevard and Hull Street. Right: The City of Richmond Second Police District is located on Belt Boulevard in the Study Area. Photo Source: RRPDC

Exhibit 21: Worker's Earnings

	Earning $15,000 a year or less per year		Earning $15,001 - $39,996 per year		Earning more than $39,996 per year	
Workers	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**	**Number**	**Percent**
Outflow Workers	2,308	29%	3,647	46%	1,942	25%
Inflow Workers	2,448	22%	4,656	42%	3,962	36%
Interior Workers	142	34%	220	52%	60	14%

Outflow workers are those who live in but work elsewhere - 7,897.
Inflow workers are those who commute from outside the to work - 11,066.
Interior workers are those who live and work in the Study Area - 422.
Percent refers to the percentage of each workers for each commuting pattern (e.g., outflow) earning the indicated amount.

Source: Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, 2010

Community Facilities

As shown in Exhibit 23 a number of churches are located throughout and in close proximity to the Midlothian Study Area. The area is served by the Second Police Precinct located at 117 East Belt Boulevard and Fire Station #23 on Labrook Concourse. Miles Jerome Jones Elementary School and George Wythe High School are located in the Study Area. The school zone for Jones Elementary School includes much of the western portion of the Study Area (Exhibit 22). The majority of the eastern portion of the Study Area is zoned to attend E.D. Redd Elementary School. The residents of the apartments across Midlothian from George Wythe High School are zoned to attend Westover Hills Elementary School. All the schools in and around the Midlothian Study Area have high rates of free and reduced lunch eligibility among their student populations. This indicates that many families with children in the area have relatively low incomes.

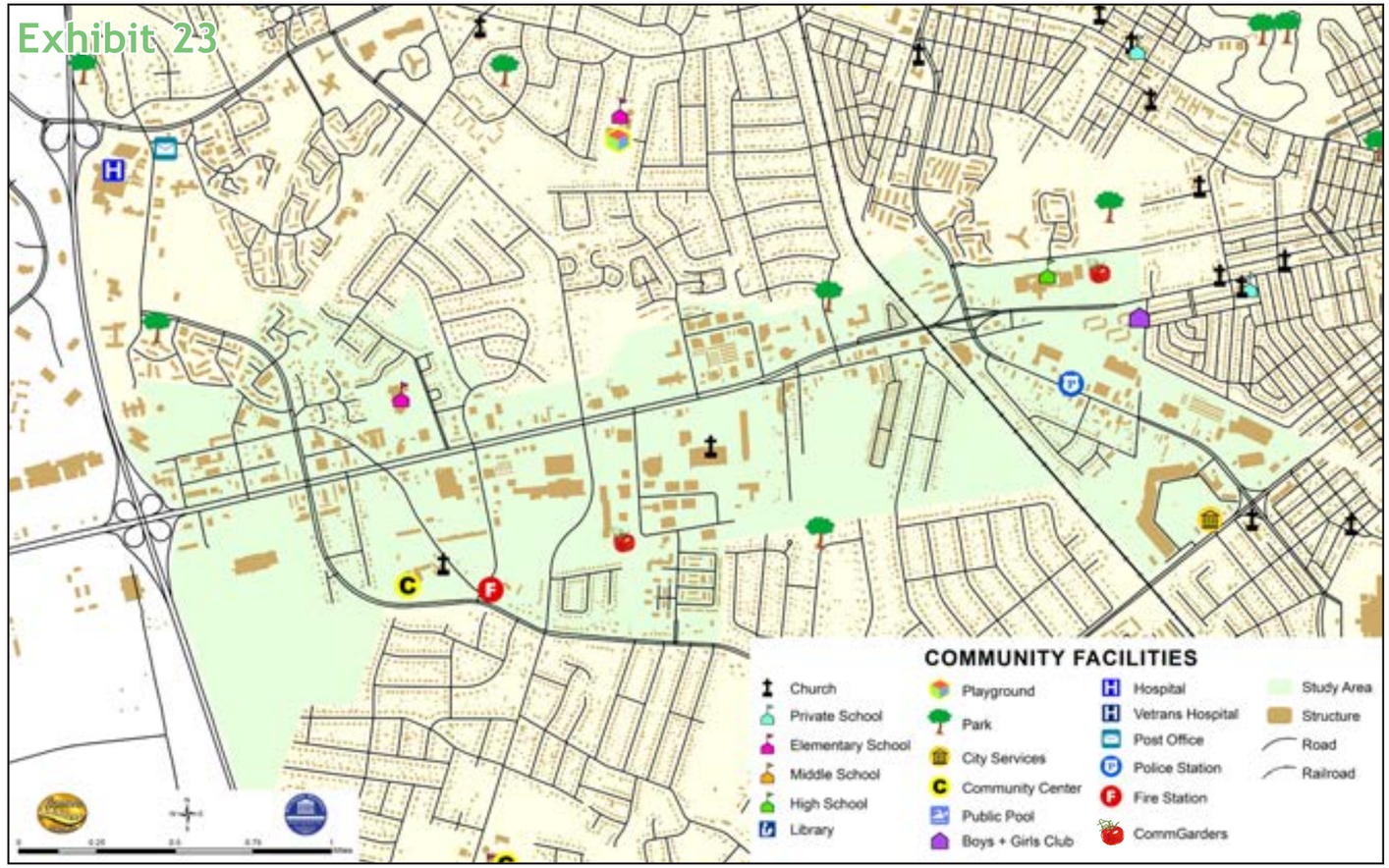
Public recreation and parks are not provided directly to the Study Area population except for those associated with the schools. However, Richmond City Council has approved the purchase of the former ROC Recreation Center located on Old Warwick Road along the southern boundary of the Study Area. The ROC center includes a small school, a full-size gym, a soccer field, two youth baseball fields, and a skate park. Acquisition and operation of this facility by the City of Richmond Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities Department would offer a valuable recreational asset for those living and working in the Midlothian Study Area.

Exhibit 22: Elementary School Zones

Miles Jerome Jones Elementary School located on Beaufont Hill Drive north of Midlothian Turnpike in the Study Area. Photo Source: RRPDC

United Nations Church International located at Midlothian Turnpike and Covington Road. Photo Source: RRPDC

Exhibit 23



Environmental Features

Natural Features

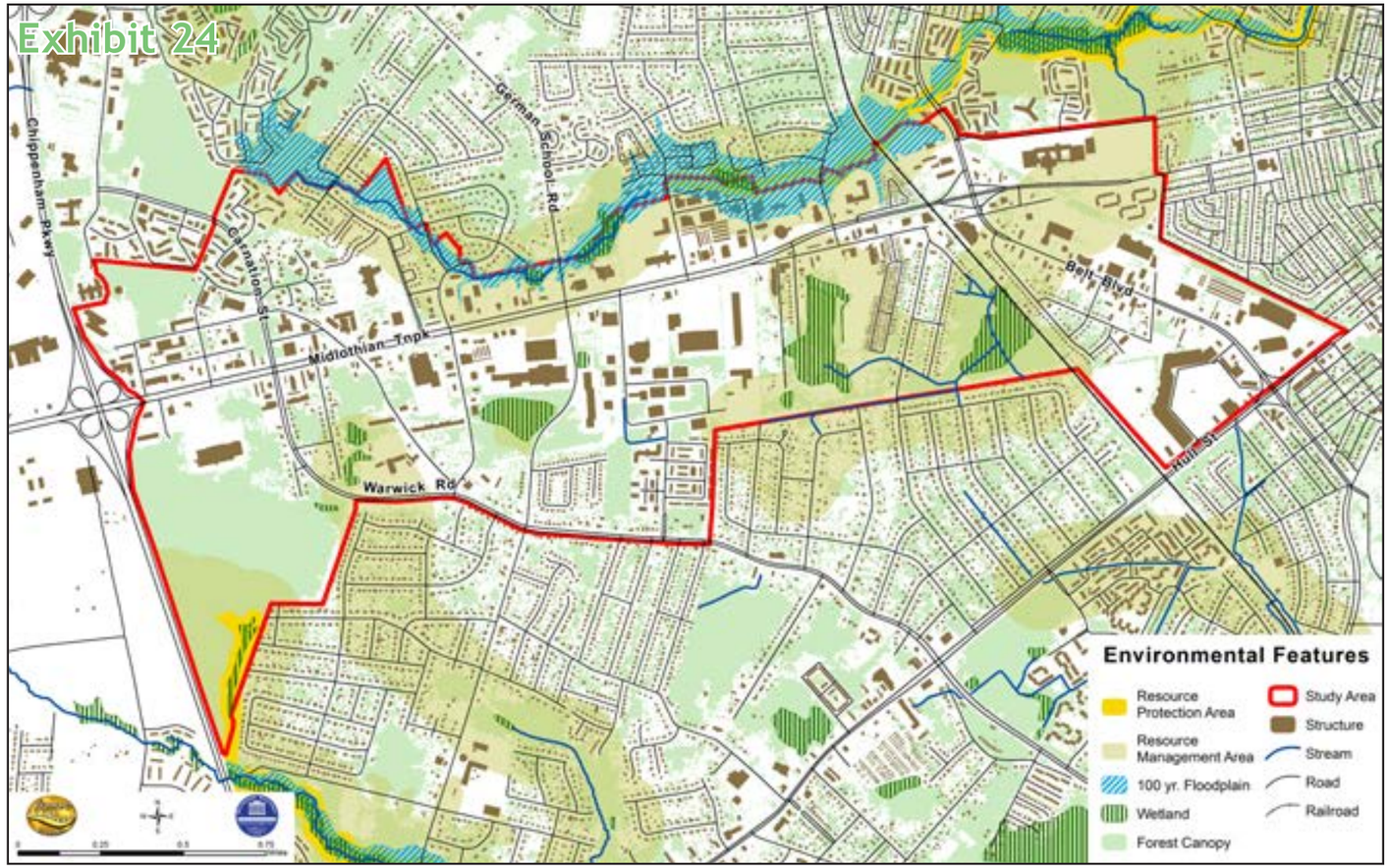
The northern boundary of the Study Area coincides with Reedy Creek (Exhibit 24). Throughout the western portion of the Study Area Reedy Creek has a natural stream bed; heading east, the stream becomes channelized in a large concrete channel. The Chesapeake Bay Act resource protection area and the 100 year floodplain as identified by the Federal Emergency Management Agency surround the creek. The National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) indicates potential wetlands across many of the larger, undeveloped parcels to the south of Midlothian. Site observations while in the field and the fact that these parcels remain undeveloped in spite of surrounding development suggest that wetlands do exist to some degree on these parcels.

Community Gardens and Urban Agriculture

Urban agriculture and community gardens are a powerful tool for improving the environment in urban settings. These urban oases naturally reduce and clean stormwater runoff while offering residents opportunities to grow food, organize community, learn, and increase access to jobs. The Midlothian-Belt Boulevard Study Area is already home to two community gardens. George Wythe High School is home to a large school garden and small orchard. The students are responsible for garden care and maintenance as the gardens are incorporated into the classroom setting. The Jerusalem Connection – Renew Richmond Urban Farm is located at the Jerusalem Connection on Giant Road, south of Midlothian Turnpike. The urban farm was recently expanded with a goal of ultimately occupying 2.5 acres. The farm includes greenhouses and raised beds for agricultural production.

Policies that promote urban agriculture to reduce impervious surface should be explored for the Study Area. For example, the reduction of large parking lot impervious surfaces for urban agriculture purposes could be incentivized for various uses along the Midlothian and Belt Boulevard corridors.

Exhibit 24



Jerusalem Connection Community Garden
Photo Source: RRPDC

Okra Blossom
Photo Source: RRPDC

Yellow Squash
Photo Source: RRPDC

George Wythe Community Gardens
Photo Source: RRPDC

Urban Tree Canopy

In 2010 the Virginia Geospatial Extension Program performed an urban tree canopy analysis for the City of Richmond in cooperation with the Chesapeake Bay Program and the Virginia Department of Forestry. The analysis was based on aerial imagery from 2008, and classifies land cover into the following categories: building impervious, non-building impervious, non-tree vegetation, tree canopy, and water. The analysis shows the Study Area is approximately 50% impervious surfaces and slightly more than one third of the total area is tree canopy. The City of Richmond as a whole has a higher tree canopy coverage than the Study Area, 34% compared to 40%. The City as a whole also has a lower percentage of impervious land: 33%. Exhibit 25 displays the full results of this analysis for the city of Richmond and the Study Area.

Exhibit 25: Urban Tree Canopy

	Midlothian Study Area		City of Richmond	
Type	**Acres**	**Percentage**	**Acres**	**Percentage**
Building Impervious	129	10%	4,139	10%
Non-Building Impervious	491	40%	9,332	23%
Non-Tree Vegetation	199	16%	8,917	22%
Tree Canopy	422	34%	16,121	40%
Water	0	0%	1,502	4%
Total Area	**1,241**	**100%**	**40,009**	**100%**

Source: Urban Tree Canopy Analysis GIS data created by the Virginia Geospatial Extension Program at Virginia Tech's Department of Forest Resources and Environmental Conservation;
base year for analysis was 2008.

Impervious Surface & Water Quality

According to the City of Richmond's Department of Public Utilities, the Study Area is more impervious than the broader watersheds in which it is located. The land area within the Study Area primarily drains to three (3) different watersheds: Reedy Creek, Broad Rock Creek, and Westover Hills/Crooked Branch (Exhibit 26). All of these watersheds are less than 40% impervious.

Research by the Center for Watershed Protection (CWP) and others has shown that stream water quality declines as impervious surface coverage increases as a percentage of watershed area. The CWP's Impervious Cover Model indicates streams can become impacted as impervious cover approaches 10% of land area in the watershed. As impervious surfaces increase to 25% or more of the watershed area, severe degradation is likely to occur. According to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's 2012 Water Quality Assessment Integrated Report, segments of Reedy Creek in and downstream of the Study Area have been identified as impaired due to high levels of E.coli bacteria, low concentrations of dissolved oxygen, and pH. The sources for these impairments are urban stormwater runoff from the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) and general non-point source runoff. Programs and policies that will encourage the reduction of impervious surfaces such as the inclusion of urban gardens is described on the previous page will improve water quality and livability in the Study Area.

Exhibit 26

Transportation

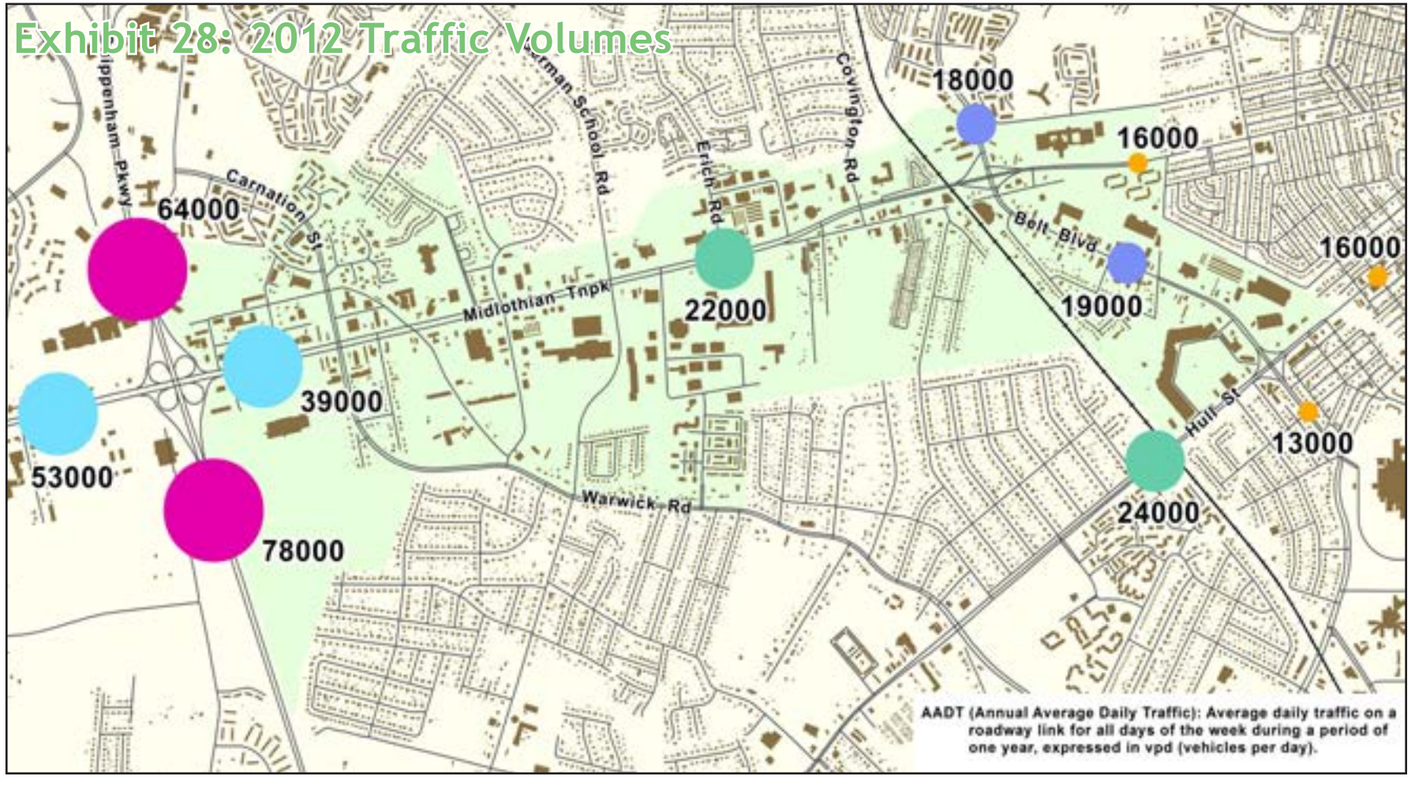
Midlothian Turnpike is a 6-lane highway spanning an approximate 140-foot pavement width with a center vegetated median and turn lanes. Bus Pull Outs, sidewalks, and pedestrian crosswalks increase the hospitality of the street for pedestrians and users of public transit. Belt Boulevard is a 5-lane roadway with 4 travel lanes and one center-turn lane. Sidewalks exist in patches along the road, yet do not span the length of the roadway in the Study Area. The interchange located at the intersection of the two roads is awkward for motorists and unsafe for pedestrians as it spans over the nearby train tracks and returns Midlothian Turnpike to grade east of Belt Boulevard.

Traffic

Chippenham Parkway (Route 150) is the most heavily travelled artery in the area, and has remained relatively consistent at an average of 69,000 vehicles per day (Average Annual Daily Traffic, or AADT) over the past 15 years from 1997 to 2012. Chippenham traffic has increased to a greater degree south of Midlothian. Chippenham divides the Midlothian Turnpike (Route 60) traffic with greater amounts travelling west than east (53,000 AADT in 2012). As shown by Exhibit 28 traffic has steadily declined to the west in the last 15 years, the Midlothian traffic east from Chippenham to the first intersection of Carnation Drive has dramatically increased by nearly 70% to 39,000 AADT in 2012. This change in traffic volume may be attributable to increased travel north on Carnation toward CJW Medical Center or south on Carnation/Warwick toward Hull Street. AADT on Midlothian from Carnation east to Belt Boulevard falls once again to approximately 22,000 vehicles per day. An arterial highway designed to Midlothian Turnpike's specifications (6 travel lanes with turn lanes) is capable of handling up to 60,000 AADT while maintaining an adequate level of service, meaning as of 2012, the corridor was operating with an excess capacity of 21,000 to 38,000 AADT. Moving east through the more residential portion of the corridor, Midlothian between Belt Boulevard and Roanoke Street traffic declines to 16,000 vehicles per day. Belt Boulevard to the north and south of Midlothian has consistently had less than 20,000 vehicles per day over the same 15-year period.

An arterial highway designed to Midlothian Turnpike's specifications (6 travel lanes with turn lanes) is capable of handling up to 60,000 AADT while maintaining an adequate level of service, meaning as of 2012 the corridor was operating below full capacity.

Exhibit 28: 2012 Traffic Volumes



Public Transit

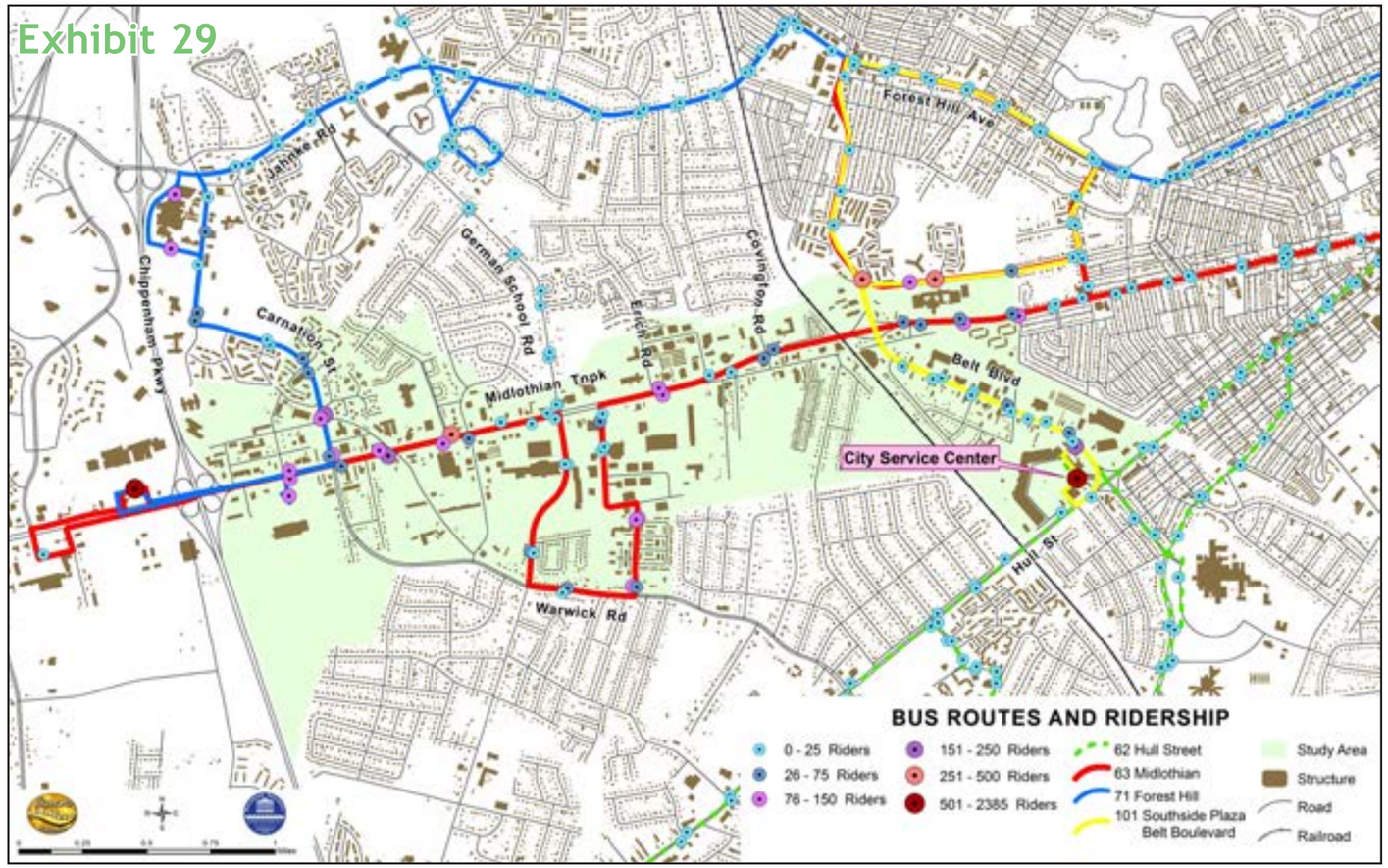
Four GRTC routes serve the Study Area; however, no single route provides consistent, continuous service from one end of the Study Area to the other, as shown by Exhibit 29:

- Route 62 (green) runs from downtown, across the Mayo Bridge, south along Hull Street. On weekdays one variation of Route 62, 62CM, stops throughout the day at the bus shelter at McGuire Veterans Hospital. On weekends, Route 62 does not stop at McGuire Hospital thereby limiting weekend access to employment for those using public transit.
- Route 63 (red), which runs in the Study Area on weekdays and some limited weekend times and serves the Kroger of Stone Bridge (just west of the Study Area, and the closest complete grocery store) only on Saturdays.
- Route 71 (blue) runs from the CBD to the Study Area by way of CJW Hospital, only on weekdays, which leaves many Study Area residents without access to transit on the weekends.
- Route 101 (yellow) runs in a loop from the Forest Hill area to Southside Plaza, again only on weekdays, leaving area residents without access to transit on weekends.

There are 59 total transit stops in the Study Area. Of these, the 2012 average ridership is 127 combined boardings and alightings. Ten stops have greater than average boardings and alightings, ranging from 138 to 2,385. Forty-nine of the stops have fewer boardings and alightings than average, with 13 stops having fewer than 25 combined boardings and alightings. The four stops with the highest use have a bench, and of the 42 stops with the lowest ridership (combined boardings and alightings of 108 or lower), only two have benches. This suggests a correlation between stop usage and amenities.

Three bus pull-outs were constructed as part of the overall Midlothian Turnpike improvements to enable buses to pull out of traffic to pick up passenger. All are located on the south side, one at the intersection of Arcadia Street and Midlothian Turnpike, one in front of the Goodwill, and one at the Richmond Outreach Center (ROC). Although three stops are among the ten highest in terms of usage, it may be more likely due to their location rather than the amenities; benches and trash cans are randomly provided, but shelters were not incorporated into the design or construction. The data indicates no correlation between stop use and the new bus pull-outs.

Exhibit 29



The *Richmond Connects* transit study names Midlothian as a "priority corridor" and recommends eliminating low-activity stops in order to increase efficiency along the rest of the corridor. The plan recommends limiting stops to four (4) per mile instead of the typical eight (8) per mile; in some cases on Midlothian there are more than eight (8) per mile.

The Richmond Connects transit study names Midlothian as a "priority corridor" and recommends eliminating low-activity stops in order to increase efficiency along the rest of the corridor.

Bike & Pedestrian

Due to the recent corridor improvements, the Midlothian corridor is more pedestrian-safe than it had been previously; sidewalks line Midlothian Turnpike and extend down some cross streets such as German School Road. Crossing signals with ample time for pedestrians are located at the six signalized intersections along the corridor. Minor intersections where cross streets are governed by stop signs do not have timed pedestrian crossing signals.

The relatively high number of curb cuts across the sidewalks can present hazards to the pedestrian (see image). In addition, the large scale of the buildings, the deep setbacks and the lack of walkable (non-auto use) destinations create an environment that is not necessarily conducive to walking being a choice mode of transportation. There are no bike lanes or other bicycle accommodations on the corridor.

Both Chippenham Turnpike and Belt Boulevard represent significant barriers to both pedestrians and cyclists along Midlothian. As Chippenham crosses over Midlothian, there is only a narrow gravel shoulder on the south side on which a cyclist or pedestrian can travel, with no room on the north side. In addition, a slight curve in the road and frequent traffic off the ramp creates unsafe pedestrian or cyclist conditions. As Midlothian crosses over Belt Boulevard, the bridge and flyover separating the two roads presents another very dangerous combination of high traffic volumes and speeds with no pedestrian accommodations. Walking or biking from Midlothian to Belt requires a pedestrian or cyclist to traverse hazardous territory.

Belt Boulevard has fewer accommodations for pedestrians than Midlothian. Curb and gutter extend along the length of the corridor and narrow sidewalks are scattered along both sides of Belt. Where sidewalks do not exist, foot paths worn from frequent pedestrian use are clearly visible. There are frequent curb cuts along the corridor offering access to the numerous small commercial and office parcels that line the roadway. This high frequency of curb cuts translates into many conflict points with motor vehicles for pedestrians. Belt Boulevard also has no bike lanes or other accommodations for cyclists. The two potential trail projects described earlier offer wonderful opportunity to increase integration within the Study Area and attract those from outside.

1. The Chippenham interchange overpass over Midlothian is unsafe for pedestrians to traverse, lacking any facilities such as sidewalks or even a wide shoulder.
2. Car dealerships and other businesses block sidewalks with displays and products.
3. The ramp connecting Belt Boulevard to westbound Midlothian at the interchange of the two roads. Sidewalks or a shoulder are lacking forcing pedestrians to walk along the guardrail.
4. Well-worn footpaths dot Belt Boulevard where sidewalks are absent.

Photo Source: RRPDC

Proposed Greenways

Offering potential to provide better connection between the commercial corridors and surrounding neighborhoods, two potential greenways have been under discussion in recent years and intersect within the Study Area: (Exhibit 30)

- The Reedy Creek Greenway would follow the route of Reedy Creek from its entrance into Forest Hill Park at Forest Hill Avenue upstream and through the northern extent of the Study Area, parallel to Midlothian Turnpike. The route of the Reedy Creek Greenway intersects the James River Branch Trail at George Wythe High School, connecting the students to adjacent neighborhoods and offering enhanced recreational and transportation alternatives. Significantly, the Reedy Creek Greenway connects Study Area neighborhoods with Forest Hill Park, the James River Park System and the Capital Trail, vastly increasing the recreation and transportation opportunities for residents of the Study Area.
- The James River Branch Trail (JRBT) is a three-mile abandoned CSX rail corridor running southeast from the Study Area and has great potential to become a greenway. When built, the trail would connect large neighborhoods currently with a lack of public open space, recreational facilities and pedestrian and bicycle amenities.

STRENGTHS

- *Recent $45 million public investment in extensive improvements to Midlothian Turnpike; aesthetics and functional improvements moving toward a more complete street; 2010-2012 accident data along the improved portion of the corridor shows a dramatic decrease which most likely is attributable to the improvements*
- *Several strong anchors along corridor, i.e., Goodwill, Evergreen Enterprises, WWBT*
- *Easy regional accessibility via Chippenham Parkway*
- *Natural buffer of Reedy Creek between commercial frontage and neighborhoods to north*

WEAKNESSES

- *Few shoppers' goods that make walking practical or necessary along the corridor; totally impractical to walk to Chesterfield side with Chippenham as a barrier*
- *Trade area dominated by low-and-moderate income households, relatively weak retail market*
- *Stigma imposed by several undesirable uses*
- *Land in-between, pass-through traffic, little identity of its own*

S W O T

OPPORTUNITIES

- *Large parcels (particularly south of Midlothian) with possibility to transition to another use*
- *Southeast quadrant of Chippenham/Midlothian represents only large parcel left in undeveloped status; owner willing to explore alternatives*
- *Introduction of stronger ethnic/culturally-based retail built on core of businesses that exist*
- *Neighborhood/trail based services oriented to Reedy Creek and James River Branch*
- *Capability to make natural assets, i.e., Reedy Creek, James River Branch, community gardens, former ROC recreation center, work together for neighborhood benefit*
- *Proximity to two large hospital centers, CJW and VA Hospital employ almost 4,000*
- *Renewed activity on Chesterfield County side of interchange, i.e., Stone Bridge, Virginia College at Spring Rock shopping center*

THREATS / CHALLENGES

- *Loss of Enterprise Zone designation & other incentives*
- *Preponderance of B-3 Highway Commercial zoning which is all-inclusive and sets limited standards*
- *Market forces led by new roof tops continuing to move west, by-passing this older portion of Midlothian and Belt Boulevard*
- *Older properties typically following the strip commercial format, i.e., large parking lots on front, non-descript buildings set-back, little attention to aesthetics; transitioning to a new use often necessitates demolition, beyond remodeling*

Key Findings

Recommendations and Strategies

Economic Opportunities

- **Create a climate that supports transformative anchor uses on key parcels along the corridor**
  - Identify parcels/nodes which are appropriate for new uses and increased density; prepare schematic ideas for potential reuse
  - Meet with property owners, strong corridor anchors and prospective developers to share this study along with a cohesive vision for the corridor and key parcels
  - Take guidance from these meetings to craft appropriate zoning ordinance revisions, new incentives, public investment priorities and public/private partnerships
  - If appropriate, work with the Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) to retain Enterprise Zone designation
- **Explore feasibility of possible anchor uses such as an International Market or Medical Center/Hospital related uses that could serve as a regional anchor**
  - Research site selection decision requirements for a short-list of potential anchors
  - Work with property owners/developers as appropriate to provide attractive packages to recruit the most feasible anchors
- **Support and expand on culturally-based businesses already on the corridor**
  - Work with the Multi-Cultural Commission and/or Retail Merchants Association to convene a discussion group of existing Latino business owners along corridor in order to gauge interest in promoting their businesses together
  - Emphasize the regional nature of Latino businesses in the corridor, and offer research/survey of customers, with permission/support of business owners
  - Create plan for promoting the corridor as a regional destination for Latino products
  - Identify funding sources accessible to business owners which will allow physical improvements to business (e.g., ECD loans at low fixed rates)




Environmental Enhancement

- **Reduce impervious surfaces along the corridor to enhance water quality and aesthetics**
  - Provide models of good site design and market research that shows the economic and environmental benefits from increased landscaping, smaller paved parking fields, and reduced front yard setbacks as part of the discussion with property owners/prospects
  - Work with the Department of Public Utilities-Stormwater Division to prepare a simple calculation whereby credits toward non-residential stormwater utility fee so that Low Impact Design (LID) standards can be understood in the discussion with potential developers
  - Explore opportunities to tap existing or potential grant resources to offer additional incentives to developers of environmentally sensitive site design using Low Impact Design (LID) measures that contribute to the City's Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) goals
- **Employ all resources to implement the James River Branch Trail and Reedy Creek Greenway projects**
  - Conduct discussions with CSX to arrive at a fair price for acquiring the James River Branch corridor; proceed with formal abandonment
  - Work with area advocacy groups such as Groundwork to promote and plan for the trails and their intersection within the Study Area
  - Investigate the potential of volunteer labor, such as the Army Corps of Engineers, who can provide not only manpower but expertise
  - Link greenways to Study Area through signage, trail heads and trail-based neighborhood connections and services
- **Capitalize on existing urban agriculture locations (Jerusalem Connection/Renew Richmond and other community gardens) and anchor based community resources**
  - Create provisions by which property owners are encouraged to allow small businesses such as greenhouses or other food production-based businesses to locate on vacant land or oversized parking lots
  - Work with the City of Richmond's Maggie Walker Initiative/Social Enterprise working group to promote the idea of using parcels along the corridor for small business start-ups that supply anchor institutions in the area

Functional Improvements

- **Work with GRTC to consolidate bus stops and provide each with full-service amenities (shelter, benches, information kiosk, etc.) to encourage more active ridership**
  - Assess whether the most active bus stop locations are viable priorities for improvement from a system standpoint
  - Identify other priority sites based on walking distance, accommodations for buses (pull-outs) and adjacent vacant parcels that could be redeveloped in conjunction with bus stop improvements
- **Explore design options for providing direct bike/pedestrian connections under Chippenham along Midlothian, starting with a possible median solution which takes advantage of the gateway feature plaza and offers a safe haven**
- **Work with the Department of Public Works to incorporate bike/pedestrian connections in Belt Boulevard intersection redesign plans, considering possible linkage to the James River Branch & Reedy Creek greenway trailhead proposed for Belt Boulevard at Crutchfield Street**
  - Document need and explore funding sources to extend any pedestrian improvements proposed for the intersection further east along Belt Boulevard which would also incorporate connections to the James River Branch Trail
- **Create opportunities for appropriate affordable housing to be developed in the Study Area**
  - Work with existing organizations such as Better Housing Coalition, Partnership for Affordable Housing, and Virginia Supportive Housing to identify locations as well as funding sources and developers to create new infill developments of affordable housing targeted toward families now living in mobile home parks and de facto residential motels
  - Ensure that new housing is reflective of family budgets, expectations and lifestyles and is truly welcoming of populations currently living along corridor

Implementation Tools

- **Assign a lead City staff person to form a team to focus on mature highway corridor revitalization using both this study and the Hull Street study as impetus to identify common challenges and opportunities, including strategies for removing obstacles and expanding opportunities that incorporate measures to:**
  - Comprehensively review options to reduce or replace the amount of B-3 zoning on the corridor
  - Revise or replace B-3 zoning or its applicability within corridors in transition with provisions that acknowledge better orientation of uses to the street, encourage a higher FAR, provide for maximum parking standards, and dictate greater building heights or mass at key intersections
  - Consider additional provisions for restricting certain uses currently allowed in the B-3 district
  - Modify OS zoning district for better application to the Midlothian corridor to encourage transitional uses to replace the traditional highway commercial uses
  - Research other models of form-based overlay zones employed by other localities such as the City of Arlington VA
- **Advance private development partnerships for redevelopment of key properties through proactive engagement of property owners and/or developers with common interests.**

Photo Source: RRPDC

Midlothian / Belt Boulevard Corridor Study