



Hollins/Wildwood

AREA PLAN

Adopted by City Council
June 20, 2005

**ROANOKE
VIRGINIA**



Contents:

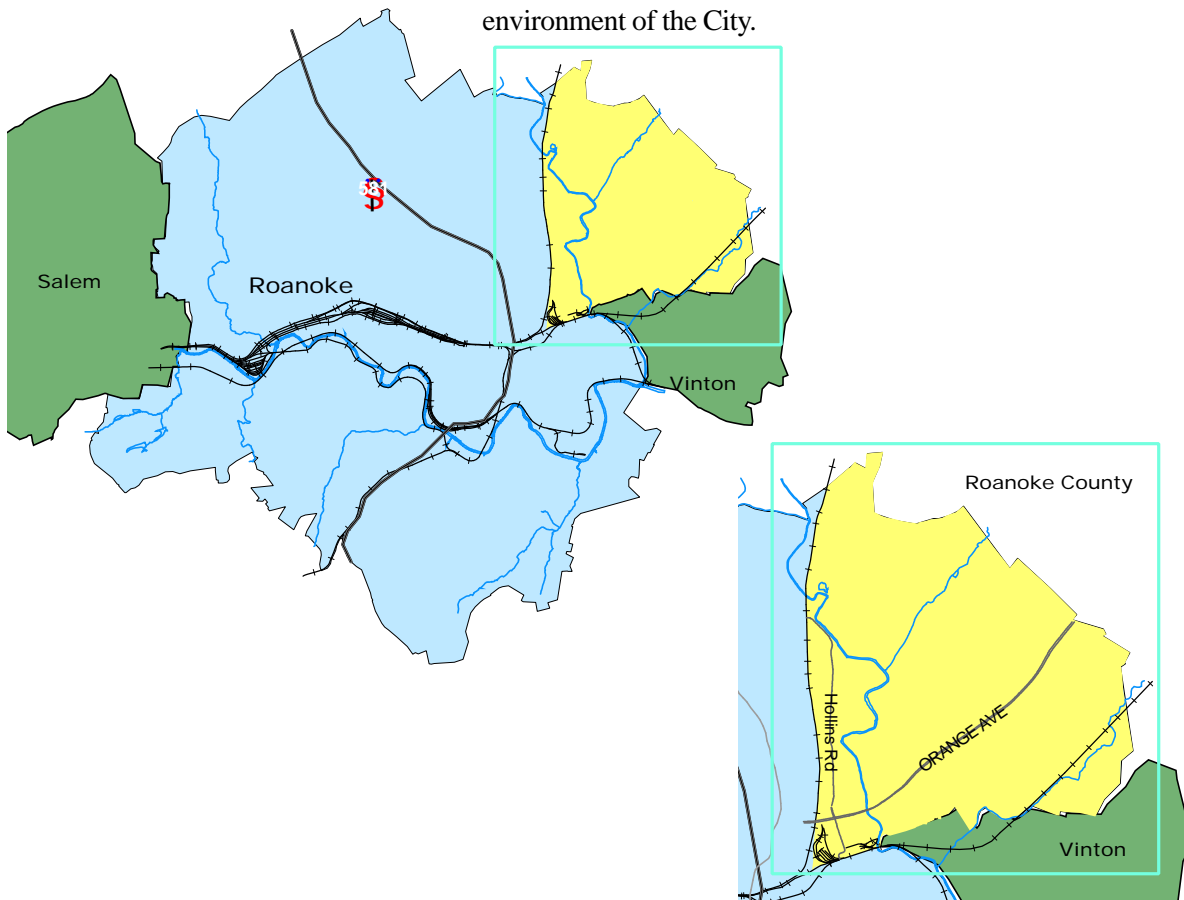
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Planning Building & Development

Introduction

The area included in this plan encompasses five neighborhoods in the northeast portion of the City: East Gate, Hollins, Mecca Gardens, Monterey and Wildwood. This large area is being combined to create a unified area plan because two neighborhood organizations represent virtually all of the area and, historically, this part of the City has evolved in a similar fashion and is today confronted by the same general issues.

Most of the land in Hollins/Wildwood was annexed by the City from Roanoke County in 1976. Much of the land was still rural prior to that time, but also included several subdivisions. Since then, commercial development on Orange Avenue (Route 460) has grown and now encompasses the entire stretch with a few exceptions. Some of the City's large manufacturing establishments are in this area, including the Roanoke Centre for Industry and Technology located off Orange Avenue. In addition, a large amount of the land is dedicated to recreational and agricultural uses. Recently, several new single-family subdivisions have been developed as the area continues to grow at a gradual, steady pace. Despite the great amount of commercial development and traffic, most residents describe their neighborhood as quiet and removed from the urban environment of the City.



Priority Initiatives

- **Infrastructure:**
 - 1.) Sewer connections: Coordinate with residents and the Western Virginia Water Authority to install service for properties that currently have septic systems.
 - 2.) Curb, gutter, and sidewalk installation: Address these improvements with the following considerations:
 - Install curb, gutter and sidewalk on arterial streets and infill of blocks with incomplete networks.
 - New subdivisions - all new developments will have curb and gutter, and sidewalk.
 - In select residential areas, install curb and gutter depending on existing drainage conditions.
 - Focus improvements in areas that have been identified as having storm water problems.
- **Transportation:** Address the Orange Avenue corridor and all adjoining arterial streets collectively, and base future improvements accordingly. Consider widening Orange Avenue to six lanes only as a last resort.
- **Code Enforcement:** Increase canvassing in the area, particularly in the Hollins neighborhood.
- **Residential Development:** Encourage new development per the Future Land Use map and, in certain undeveloped areas, consider rezoning for residential development rather than commercial or industrial.

Early Development History



Belmont, former home of William Fleming

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the main north/south thoroughfare of this area was the Tinker Creek corridor. Predominantly agricultural, the historically significant Belmont, Monterey, and Feller Houses represent this phase of the area's development. These properties are located in close proximity to one another on the east side of Hollins Road, both on and near the present Ole Monterey Golf Course. East of these houses is Mason Mill (and its predecessor mills), which served the agricultural economy of the area. By the late nineteenth century the mill had become tied into larger markets through the highly developed rail network of the region. The Virginia and Tennessee Railroad was built across the corridor near its southern end in the early 1850s and the railhead communities of Big Lick Depot (Roanoke) and Gish's Mill (Vinton) developed to the west and east of the crossing.

Belmont was the home of Colonel William Fleming, an important Revolutionary War-era Virginian politician and military leader, and as such is of national historic significance. Monterey has local historical and architectural significance as an 1840s Greek Revival plantation house, associated with one of the Roanoke Valley's most prominent mid nineteenth-century farmers. Situated on City of Roanoke property near the Roanoke Centre for Industry and Technology, Billy's Cabin and the Oliver Cemetery are significant for their association with Belmont and Monterey. As a log house built around 1800, Billy's Cabin is also one of the earliest surviving houses in the valley.



Billy's Cabin, one of the oldest houses in the Roanoke Valley

The Mason Lee Fellers House on Hollins Road is significant architecturally as a well-preserved late-nineteenth century farmhouse with Victorian detailing, and historically for its association with a prominent area farmer and Roanoke industrialist. The nearby Fellers School is important as an early one-room public school and as one of the few brick schools to survive in the valley.

Although the turn-of-the-twentieth-century Mason Mill is gone, the surviving milldam, race, and restored wheel (recently restored by the City of Roanoke) form the functional core of a 1920s waterworks. The stylistically unified 1920s houses that are located at Mason Mills Heights on Overlook Road are important representations of worker houses associated with the mill during its heyday.

By the early twentieth century, residential development, growing outward from Roanoke and Vinton, converged at Tinker Creek. The neighborhoods along Eastern Avenue and Thirteenth Street represent this development. The rapid urbanization of Roanoke was initiated in the early 1880s by construction of the Shenandoah Valley Railroad along Tinker Creek to intersect the Virginia and Tennessee line just to the west of the corridor. Neighborhood and industrial plants associated with the Shenandoah Valley line development vector include the Liberty Road, Radford Road, and Read Mountain Road neighborhoods and the Johnson Carper Furniture Company Pump House (currently the Singer Furniture plant).

Mason Mill



People



Golfers at Ole Monterey Golf Course

The population of the area has grown in recent years, both in terms of the overall number of residents and households (7% and 17% respectively between 1990 and 2000). The population growth indicates smaller household sizes, which is a national demographic trend.

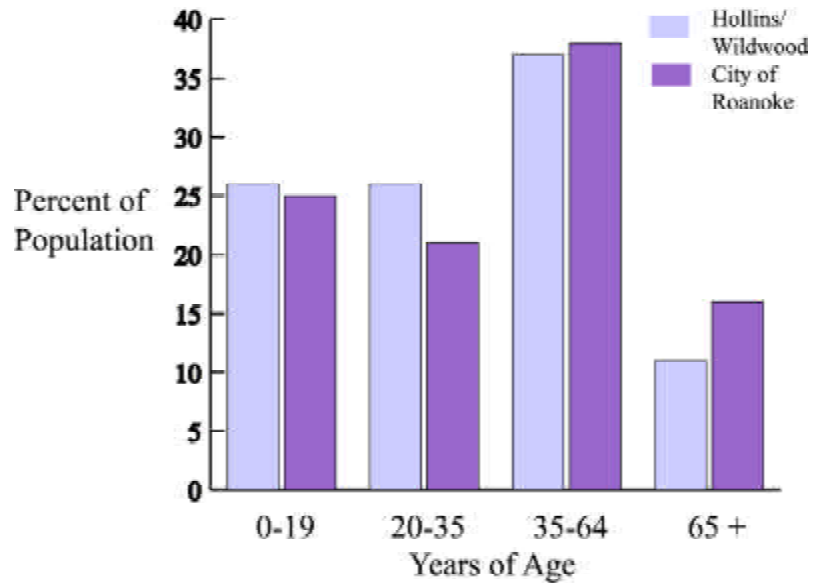
The area has become slightly more racially diverse in recent years as the City has overall. However, Hollins/Wildwood continues to be predominantly white, with white residents comprising 87% of the population.

The age distribution of the area's population has seen some noteworthy changes over the last decade. Over the last two Census counts, there were increases in the number of people 35 years of age and older, while the number of children and teenagers decreased. There was also a slight decline in the young adult category of ages 20 - 34. However, as Table 2 shows, the area still has proportionally more children, teenagers and young adults and fewer senior citizens when compared to the age distribution citywide. The proportion of young adults is comparable to that of the City as a whole. The age distribution indicates a fairly stable population which is less transient than in other parts of the City. Also, recent housing development may have attracted more people in the over 35 age brackets.

Population Demographics			
	1990	2000	Percentage Change
Total Population	6,950	7,468	7%
Households	2,756	3,227	17%
White	6,439	6,524	1%
Black	456	637	40%
Other Races	55	307	458%
Two or more races	n/a	117	n/a
0-19 Years Old	2,010	1,904	-5%
20-34 Years Old	2,020	1,999	-1%
35-64 Years Old	2,219	2,772	25%
65 Years and Over	701	793	13%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 and 2000 Census

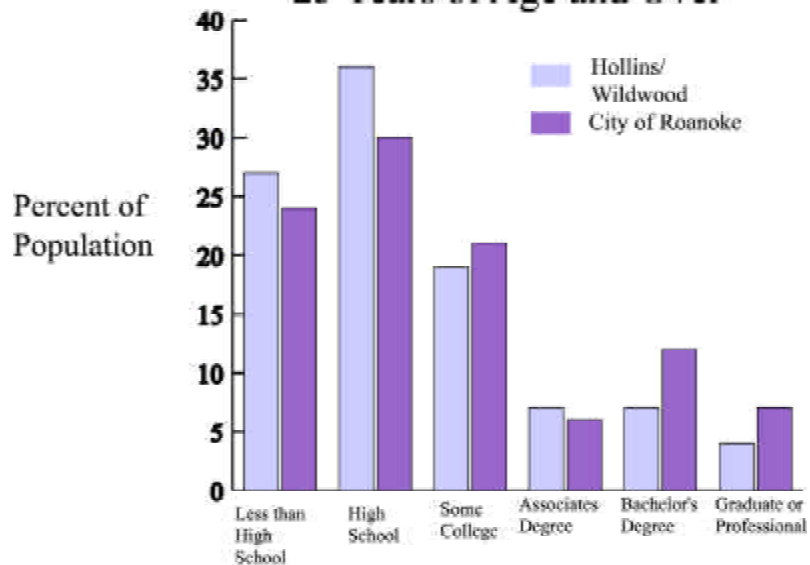
Population Age Distribution



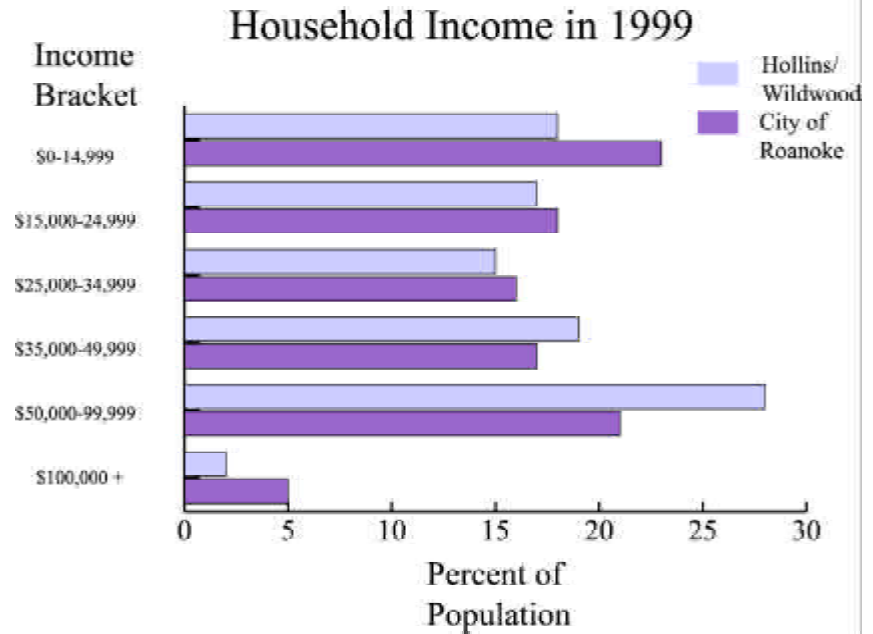
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census

The educational attainment of residents in the area is comparable to the City as a whole. The area has a wide distribution of income. While there are proportionally more residents in the low-income category, there are noticeably more residents in the upper middle brackets when compared to the City as a whole.

Educational Attainment, 25 Years of Age and Over

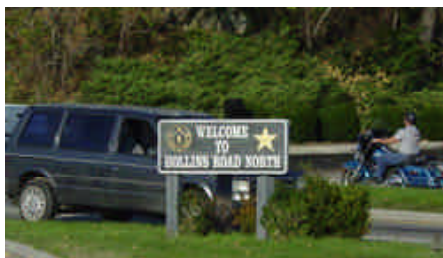


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 Census

Neighborhood Organization



There are two neighborhood organizations that represent virtually all of the area: Hollins Road North and the Wildwood Civic League. Hollins Road North is a loosely organized and less formal organization. Its members continue to meet as a means of networking and communicating about neighborhood issues, but the neighborhood has not faced any galvanizing issues in recent years.

The Wildwood Civic League covers most of the area outside of the Hollins Road neighborhood, and is an active neighborhood organization that meets monthly and regularly submits comments to City officials regarding matters in the neighborhood. Established in 1934, the civic league is one of the oldest in the Roanoke Valley.

Community Design



Anna Avenue



Belle Avenue



Craig Road

Over the course of the neighborhoods' development, the area has undergone a gradual transition from a rural to a suburban landscape. Suburban development is characterized by an orientation to the automobile, wide streets that enable higher traffic speeds, subdivisions of large single-family houses with large front, back, and side yards, and shopping centers and strip commercial establishments with large parking lots in front.

Development has increased since the area was annexed by the City, but it has not increased the density of the population significantly, as the bulk of the growth has been commercial. The majority of development occurred after World War II, yet several single-family subdivisions already existed. The City acquired land from Roanoke County through annexation that was already developed or subdivided with single-family houses on large lots.

Many of the older subdivisions feature smaller lots, often approximately 5,000 square feet, which are not unlike many older neighborhoods in the City. More recent residential and commercial development has been on larger lots and has contributed to the low population density and automobile orientation, both attributes of suburban sprawl.

The undulating terrain of the neighborhoods contributes to the rural character that many residents have cited as one of the greatest attributes of the area. The majority of the residential streets do not have a defined shoulder, curb, gutter or sidewalk. Drainage ditches are found on many streets as a means of channeling stormwater. Several newer subdivisions, such as those below Read Mountain, have curb and gutter per the requirements of the subdivision ordinance.

Most of the older residential streets are narrow, between 20 - 25 feet, while more recently developed residential streets are between 30 - 35 feet. Most houses have driveways and parking areas accessible from the street. Some semblance of a grid street pattern remains from the early development off of Hollins Road and the Wildwood neighborhood, which is south of Orange Avenue and west of Gus Nicks Boulevard. Otherwise, the street pattern is defined by rural arterial streets and suburban neighborhood streets, with quite a few cul-de-sacs and dead ends.

Most of the alleys are 'paper' or unimproved, with the exception of a cluster of several streets in the southwestern portion of the area. Paper alleys can be petitioned for vacation to City Council by adjoining property owners

Houses tend to be uniformly set back from the street, but distances vary widely from block to block. A vast majority of the houses in the area are modest and one-story. The most common architectural styles are Ranch and Minimal Traditional.

The older neighborhoods tend to have smaller lots and less yard space, yet the area has always had a considerable range of lot sizes, many of which have



City corporate line from Vinton

large amounts of green space. Many of the larger homes are in the more recent subdivisions, such as Pinnacle Ridge and the Read Mountain area. These subdivisions feature some of the newest construction in Roanoke and offer single-family homes with exceptional mountain views.

Commercial and industrial development accounts for a great portion, approximately 37%, of the area's total land mass. Orange Avenue is a four-lane arterial commercial corridor. Most buildings are set back from the street with parking lots in the front, accessed by wide curb cuts. In addition to the many commercial services on Orange Avenue, it also provides access for a number of larger industrial developments, including the Roanoke Centre for Industry and Technology (RCIT). *Vision 2001-2020* recommends that commercial corridors such as Orange Avenue feature development with buildings on or close to the property line in front, with parking to the rear or side.

Hollins Road is a two-lane arterial street that serves a number of industrial establishments. Industrial development is scattered between the railroad tracks to the west and along Hollins Road. Despite the industrial development, there is still considerable residential development on Hollins Road and on streets accessed from it.

View of the Mecca Gardens and Wildwood neighborhoods



Zoning and Land Use



The area has a number of houses that abut industrial uses, such as this one on Wertz Avenue.



Corner of Ruth and Anna Streets. This area is predominantly industrial but has retained pockets of housing and has small neighborhood streets.

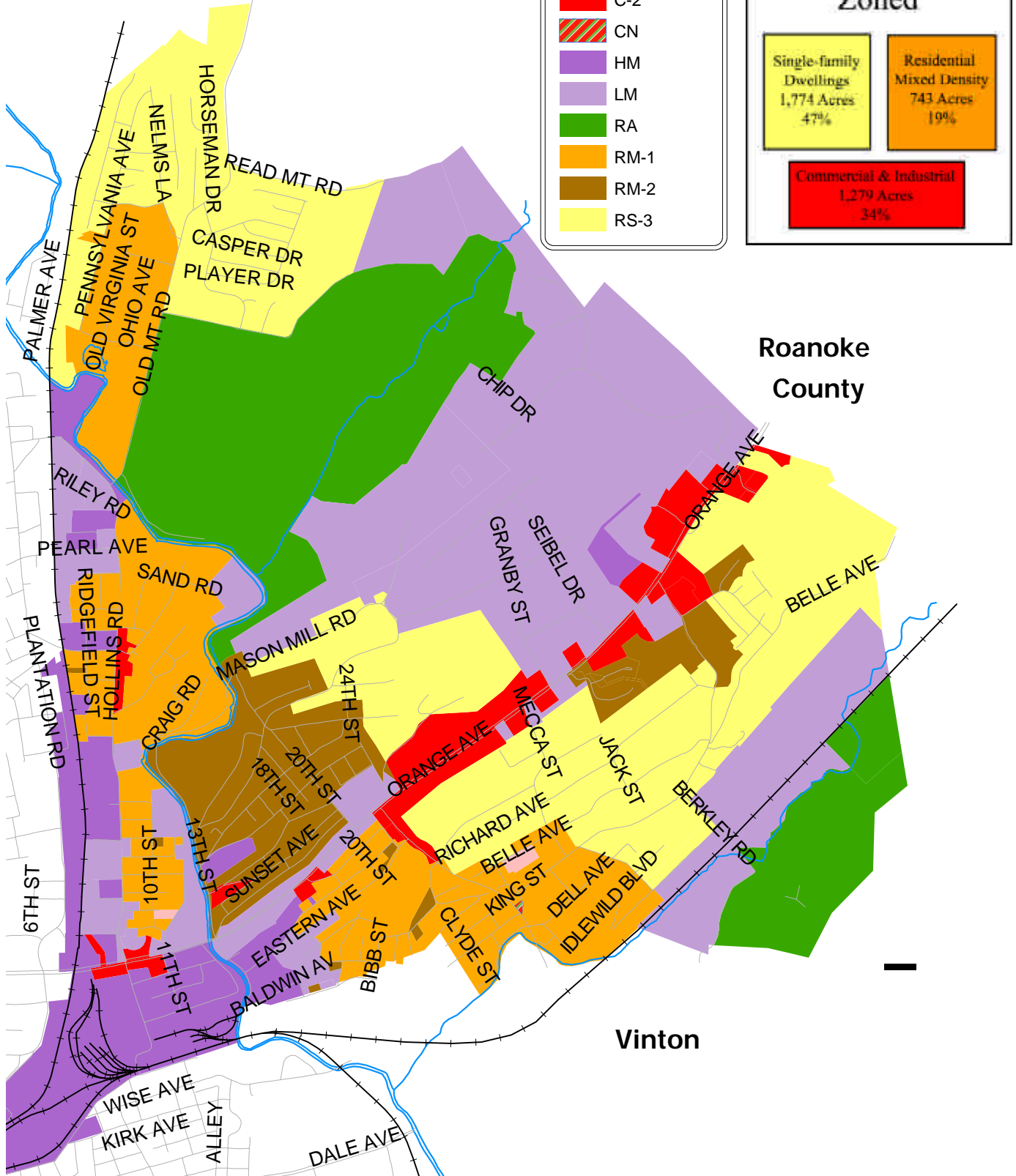
The Hollins/Wildwood area has a wide array of land uses:

- Earlier development in the neighborhoods of East Gate, Wildwood and Mecca Gardens - The development of single-family subdivisions in these neighborhoods gradually increased through the 20th Century. Apartment complexes and duplexes were developed later.
- Hollins Road - By the end of the Great Depression, Hollins Road was the main thoroughfare for several single-family subdivisions. Industrial development occurred in the 1950s and 60s on and between Hollins Road and the railroad tracks, and remains today.
- Recent Single-family Subdivisions:
- Read Mountain area and Pinnacle Ridge Road
- Blue Hills and Ole Monterey Golf Courses - These two golf course/country clubs span over 386 acres in the northeast portion of the planning area.
- Orange Avenue commercial corridor - Orange Avenue is a major arterial street in the Roanoke Valley and has a vast amount of commercial services.
- Roanoke Centre for Industry and Technology (RCIT) - RCIT is the City's largest industrial complex. It is located off of Orange Avenue and is home to 11 companies.
- Statesman Industrial Park - Statesman Industrial Park is just southwest of RCIT. It is accessed via Granby Street and Siebel Drive off of Orange Avenue.
- Industrial districts along the railroad - Norfolk Southern railroad tracks border the area on the south and west. Industrial development lies along both of these track segments.

Community Design Issues

- Lack of integration between different uses and neighborhoods
- Encroachment of commercial uses into neighborhoods
- Overabundance of underused pavement
- Disconnected street system, especially north of Orange Avenue

Hollins/Wildwood Current Zoning



Hollins/Wildwood Current Land Use

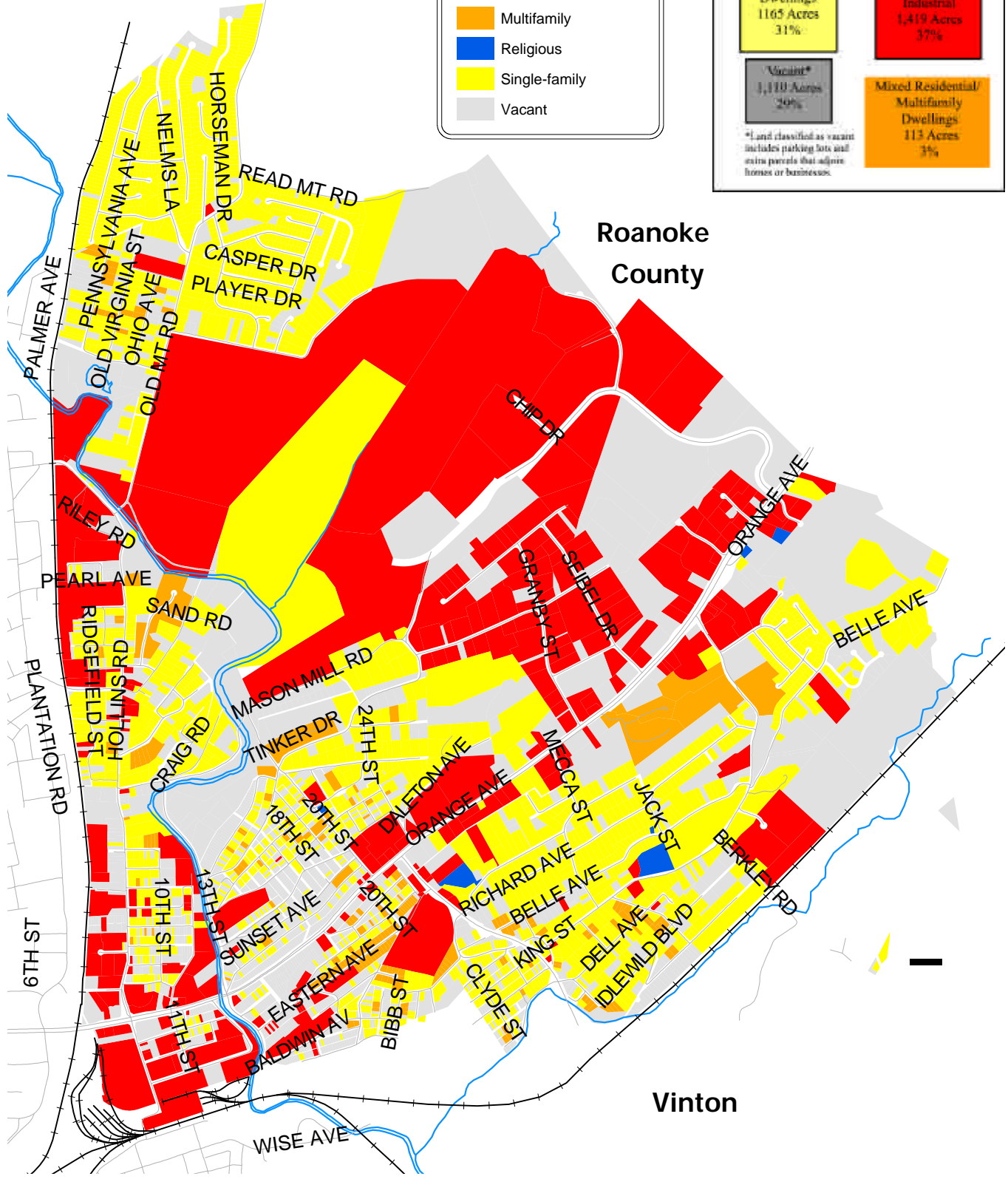
Land Use Category:

- Commercial/Industrial
- Multifamily
- Religious
- Single-family
- Vacant

How Land is Used

<p>Single-family Dwellings 1165 Acres 31%</p>	<p>Commercial & Industrial 1,419 Acres 37%</p>
<p>Vacant* 1,110 Acres 26%</p>	<p>Mixed Residential/Multifamily Dwellings 113 Acres 3%</p>

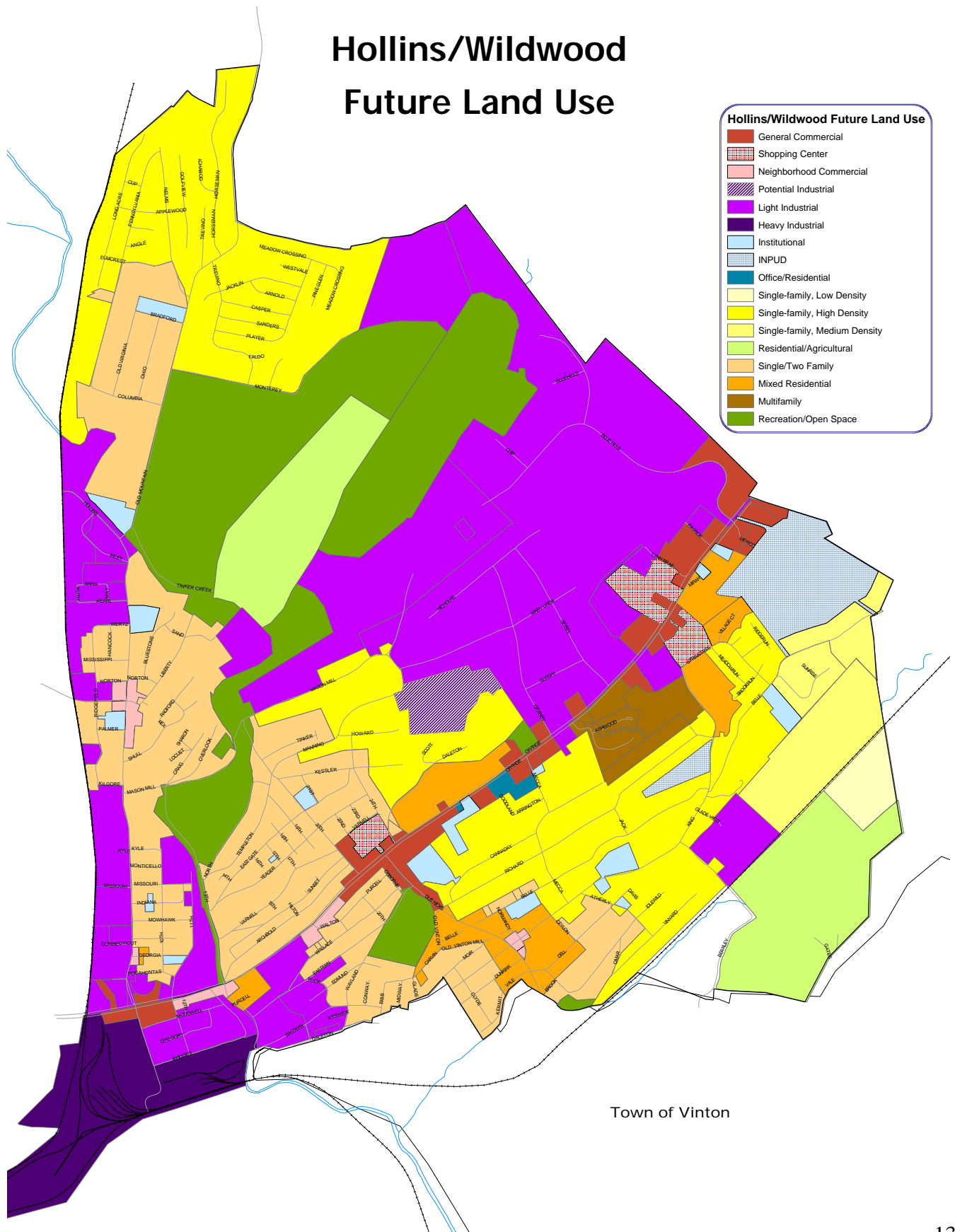
*Land classified as vacant includes parking lots and extra parcels that adjoin homes or businesses.



Roanoke
County

Vinton

Hollins/Wildwood Future Land Use



Residential Development



Pinnacle Ridge has some of the area's newest homes



Hollins/Wildwood has a fairly stable housing stock with some of the newest construction in the City. There are some code enforcement issues in the neighborhood, but overall most of the violations do not pertain to building maintenance. Homeownership is high among single-family homes, and recent development near Read Mountain and off of Belle Avenue is adding more homeowners.

Hollins/Wildwood has seen a gradual and steady increase in housing through the last century, which continues today. Most of the remaining large tracts of vacant land are slated for industrial development; however a number of vacant residential lots have development potential. In many cases lots have remained vacant due to the topography. Particularly in the East Gate neighborhood, many small lots have slopes with a high degree of variation. Some of these lots also pose geological challenges, such as extensive rock near the surface.

Status of Housing Units

Year: (Total Units)	1990 (818)	2000 (808)	Percentage Change	Roanoke Pct. Change
Occupied Housing Units	2,756	3,227	17%	2%
Vacant Housing Units	119	166	39%	-3%
Vacancy Rate	4%	5%	1%	-1%
Owner Occupied	1,671	1,374	11%	2%
Renter Occupied	1,085	57%	27%	3%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau: 1990 Census, 2000 Census



House at Hollins Road and Mississippi Avenue. The Hollins neighborhood features the oldest housing in the area

Residents cited the value of their homes as one of the area's greatest assets. While most of the houses are smaller, the value per square foot is higher than in many areas of the City that feature larger homes. The recent subdivisions in Pinnacle Ridge and below Read Mountain have diversified the housing options by adding larger and higher end units.

Pinnacle Ridge is next to the northeastern most corporate line of the City off of Belle Avenue. It features steel framed houses with Styrofoam insulation, an innovative new construction method that is designed to increase energy efficiency. At the time of the planning process, development of more homes was underway in Pinnacle Ridge.



New housing below Read Mountain

Over the last 10 years a number of homes have been constructed below Read Mountain in two subdivisions, Read Mountain North (which includes the neighborhoods of Monterey Estates and Saint Johnsberry Court) and Read Mountain Estates. Old Mountain Road is the main arterial street to the Read Mountain North subdivision, which includes houses off of Nelms Lane, Horseman Drive, and Golfview Drive. Player Drive is the main access for Read Mountain Estates, with houses off of Meadow Crossing Lane, Pine Glen and Westvale Roads. At the time of the planning process, 110 houses were finished in Read Mountain North and 125 in Read Mountain Estates, with development of more homes underway.

The neighborhoods are primarily comprised of single-family houses, with some scattered duplexes. In addition, several apartment complexes have been built since the 1970s. The two newest complexes, Glade Creek and Hickory Woods, are right next to one another between King Street and Orange Avenue. They are managed by the same company and together combine for 464 units. Tinker Creek Manor Apartments on Tinker Drive off of 20th Street contains 100 units with rents based on each tenant's income.



Bluestone Housing Development

The Bluestone housing development on Bluestone Avenue in the Hollins neighborhood is owned and operated by the Roanoke Redevelopment and Housing Authority. The development features apartment buildings and duplexes, and totals 72 units.

While the increase in apartment units in recent years has decreased the overall rate of homeownership, it has at the same time provided more housing options. The apartments in the area are for the most part well maintained. Residents cited isolated code enforcement problems in the area, but did not single out any of the apartment complexes. Development of multifamily housing, whether by apartment units or duplexes, is well suited for Orange Avenue to support the commercial uses there, and to keep commercial property values high by keeping the market from being saturated with too much commercial zoning.



A major concern voiced by residents was the preservation of their neighborhoods in relation to the natural environment that surrounds them. Many residents describe their neighborhood as quaint, private and peacefully isolated from the City, yet with the convenience of the City not far away. Residents fear that new development, residential and commercial, threatens their quality of life. With limited land resources, the City must encourage efficient development patterns that maximize the potential of the land. Vision 2001-2020 discourages new suburban-style development in favor of traditional urban development patterns. However, established neighborhoods can and should be maintained in a development pattern akin to their origin.



Glade Creek Apartments



Residential Development Opportunities

There are several large tracts of vacant land in the area that have development potential. As noted earlier, the growth of the area over the last few decades has been overwhelmingly commercial. Since commercial development has been the source of growth in recent years and contributed to traffic congestion, most remaining vacant land in the area should be zoned for residential development.

Housing Clusters

Vision 2001-2020 encourages "housing clusters" on large sites. Housing clusters are market-rate developments that consist of a mixture of single-family, duplex, and townhouses. With most of the City's parcels already developed, or 'built out,' vacant or underutilized land is at a premium. New developments need to maximize the use of the land and preserve the natural environment as much as possible. Cluster development is ideal for large sites as it allows for greater densities while still maintaining some green space that benefits all residents.

Design features of housing clusters include:

- Traditional neighborhood design; houses should be oriented close to the street (less than 20 feet) and to each other. Houses have minimal setback distance from the street, and parking should be on-street, or to the rear or side of the house.
- Traditional neighborhood streets; pavement widths need only be between 22-30 feet, and lined with trees, curb, gutter and sidewalk.
- Green space; approximately 20% of the development should be preserved either as natural forest or a landscaped buffer.
- Stormwater management; retention or detention ponds should be incorporated into the development without detracting from the aesthetic quality of the natural environment.

Several sites could be potential housing cluster developments. The City should consider residential development on these sites, only if a detailed plan were created that conforms to the design guidelines of *Vision 2001-2020*, the City's comprehensive plan, and the goals of the forthcoming Strategic Housing Plan. Such a plan would be required to maximize the number of units, limit parking and impervious surfaces, and preserve green space.



Rendering of a housing cluster development. Housing clusters are designed to provide a mixture of housing choices, maximize land and preserve green space.

The following sites should be considered for future housing cluster development:

Ole Monterey Golf Course

This property is designated in the Future Land Use Plan as Recreation and Open Space and should be zoned as such as part of the new zoning ordinance. Residents like the course's presence as it maintains green space that contributes to the quality of life in the area. Residents expressed a desire to see Ole Monterey remain, and if it were to be sold that it continue as a golf course. While this site could continue indefinitely as a golf course, it is identified for potential development opportunities in the event that a land use change is initiated by the owner. Increased competition from regional golf courses combined with the location and lack of vacant land in the City, increases the likelihood that the Ole Monterey properties may not be viable long-term as a golf course.

The property could support new residential development either in place of, or in conjunction with, the golf course. Development, if it occurs at all, should be orderly and planned rather than through incremental, piecemeal subdivisions along the periphery of the courses. If development of the property occurs, it should be as a cohesive, planned development.

One potential obstacle to further developing this site is the limited access. The golf course is accessed via a private drive off the dead end of Tinker Creek Road. Tinker Creek Road is accessed from Old Mountain Road, which is off of Hollins Road. A bridge on Old Mountain Road over Tinker Creek is at the signalized intersection with Hollins Road. Both streets have two lanes, and the bridge would make any intersection improvements difficult and costly to engineer.

Given the additional traffic demand that would result from development of this site, any prospective development would need to consider access improvements. The site could be accessed from Monterey Road from the north, Old Mountain Road from the west and Tinker Creek Road from the south. This portion of Tinker Creek Road is in the 100-year flood plain, which could present problems if it were the only point of access. A traffic study by a prospective developer and an evaluation by City Transportation Division staff would likely be necessary to determine the best course of action.



Ole Monterey Golf Course





Site Plan of Colonial Green, a housing cluster currently being developed off of Colonial Avenue. This site plan illustrates how a large number and variety of housing units can be developed with commercial buildings and landscaping while retaining green space.

Wildwood and Mecca Gardens Neighborhoods (King Street Corridor)

Parcels on King Street between Gus Nicks Boulevard and Orange Avenue tend to be larger, most are over 10,000 square feet and a considerable number are over 20,000. Most of these large lots are single-family residences and offer ample subdivision opportunities. Some of the City's last vacant developable land is on or near King Street.



Vacant land on King Street

East and south of Virginia Transformer in the northeastern corner of the City, there are several vacant parcels on the north side of the railroad tracks. This area is hilly, pristine and rural in character. It stretches to the northeast below the Pinnacle Ridge subdivision. Topography and access issues will make this land somewhat difficult to develop. Portions of this area are also within the 100-year flood plain. The best possible development on these parcels would be of a low impact and sensitive to the surrounding environment. Its current Light Manufacturing (LM) zoning is inappropriate because it would allow for far more intensive development than the land is suited.

The parcels in this area are designated for single-family use on the Future Land Use Map. However, small housing clusters are possible on some of these parcels. By developing this land with housing clusters, more open space can be preserved. In addition, any design should avoid development in the flood plain and provide adequate access that would minimize traffic impacts on the existing street network.

Orange and Daleton Avenues

From the north side of Orange Avenue between 24th and Granby Streets, to the south side of Daleton Avenue, there are nine parcels that span over 41 acres with only five houses. The best point of access to most of them is from Daleton Avenue, off of 24th Street and uphill from Orange Avenue.

This land is proposed for "mixed residential" in the future land use map. While the topography poses development challenges to this land, it could be developed at a much higher density while still preserving green space as a natural buffer along Orange Avenue.



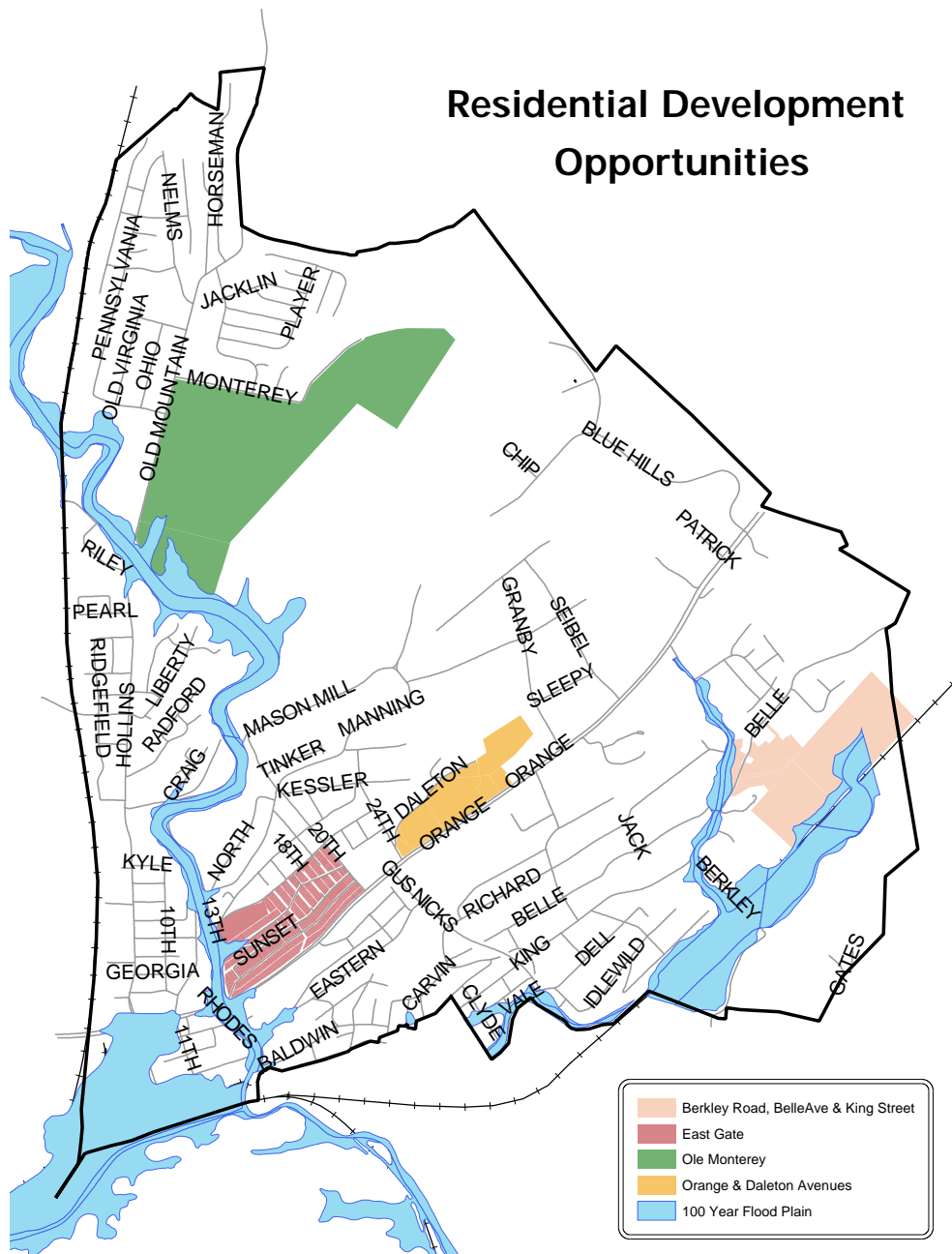
Vacant land on Daleton Avenue

East Gate Neighborhood

Below East Gate Park and the north side of Orange Avenue between 13th and 20th Streets are a large number of vacant lots. This includes parcels on Archbold, Orange, Sunset, Varnell, and Yeager Avenues. These parcels have likely remained vacant due to topographical and geological challenges on the rocky and hilly terrain. Most of them are approximately 5,000 square feet, which also makes grading less economically viable unless they can be combined with others.

Residential Development Issues

- Encroachment of commercial uses into neighborhoods
- Resident opposition to higher density development
- Increasing property maintenance violations
- Development pressure leading to haphazard development patterns



Economic Development

Orange Avenue

Commercial establishments on Orange Avenue comprise a major contribution to the City's tax base. In addition, there is a great deal of industrial development in Hollins/Wildwood, and a large portion of the area is in a state Enterprise Zone. Enterprise Zones offer incentives to businesses operating within them.

There are a number of vacant lots on Orange Avenue, however many are too small by themselves for most commercial uses. An abundance of commercial zoning can impact the market negatively, as increasing the supply lowers the value. For the most part the commercial development on Orange Avenue has not undergone the generational changes and cycles that other areas have, e.g. Williamson Road, that lead to neglect and disinvestment once establishments close. In such cases where commercial zoning, vacant lots, and vacant buildings are aplenty, market tendencies are to develop the vacant commercial land rather than recycle underused sites. This exacerbates the cycle that leaves existing commercial structures vacant to deteriorate, often spreading more blight in the area as adjacent properties become less attractive for investment in the process. Residents stated that existing commercial properties should be redeveloped before vacant commercial land. Maintaining a healthy balance of commercial and multifamily residential zoning on Orange Avenue will help to maintain the long-term viability of the corridor's commercial establishments. Therefore, some commercially-zoned sites should be considered for residential zoning classifications, particularly where the property is vacant or has a residential use.



Orange Avenue is dominated by strip commercial development



Roanoke Centre for Industry and Technology (RCIT)



RCIT is home to 12 companies and will add more with the extension of Blue Hills Drive, below.



Created in 1983, the Roanoke Centre for Industry and Technology (RCIT) is a 440 acre, City-developed industrial complex located just minutes from Interstates 581 and 81. The RCIT land was acquired and is marketed by the City. Individual parcels are sold to companies for use. Companies that wish to purchase property at RCIT must create 10 jobs per acre or generate \$7,500 per acre in new revenue. In addition, a number of restrictive covenants are in effect.

Recognizing further economic potential of the site, City Council authorized the purchase of an additional 140 acres in 1990. At present, nine sites in the park are occupied by 12 companies, leaving approximately 130 acres for additional development. Four new sites have been graded and are ready for development.

Since its inception, there have been eight expansions within RCIT. Over \$122 million has been invested by private companies who currently employ over 4,350 people.

All of the properties in RCIT have deed restrictions that regulate their development. Deed restrictions are legal restrictions between private property owners and are not enforced by government entities, however since the City is the grantor of property within RCIT, it is the enforcer of deed restrictions on these properties.

The RCIT deed restrictions have fostered a suburban development pattern. While suburban style development was favored at the time of its development, today the City realizes that land is a scarce resource and development regulations should at the least be flexible enough to permit more urban scale development. Blue Hills Drive, the park's main access street, is exceedingly wide with four lanes and 50 feet of pavement. It is slated to be extended 3,500 feet further to the southwest, allowing for access to a 73 acre parcel. Deed restrictions on the properties within RCIT dictate that all access is from Blue Hills Drive and no connections will be made to any neighborhood streets.

While plans have been established for the extension of Blue Hills Drive, any other future development of streets in the park should be in conformance with the design guidelines of *Vision 2001-2020*. As the grantor of the properties in RCIT, the City should revisit the deed restrictions in order to provide for more intensive development of the sites. The restrictions at present limit the lot coverage for each parcel to such a degree that the land is underutilized. *Vision 2001-2020* recommends that new industrial and commercial development is of an urban nature with little to no setbacks from the street, a high percentage of lot coverage, and parking to the rear or side of the building.

Statesman Industrial Park

Statesman Industrial Park is home to over 50 business establishments, most of which are warehouse and heavy manufacturing uses. It is accessed via Granby Street and Siebel Drive off of Orange Avenue and is almost self-contained. It is set in a small grid street pattern with only one through street, Mary Linda Avenue, which is seldom used. Although street connectivity is an important *Vision 2001-2020* design guideline, the intensive and naturally invasive uses in the park are well served in its enclosed layout. Unlike RCIT, the parcels in Statesman are relatively small and don't have much open green space. In addition, the park's two main entrance roads and lack of signage make it indistinguishable from other uses on Orange Avenue.

Overall, Statesman Industrial Park is a well utilized industrial complex that contributes to the City's tax base while having only a minimal impact on its surroundings.



View of industrial development from the Hollins Road Bridge

Railroad Track Industrial Districts

In addition to RCIT there are several older industrial districts in Hollins/Wildwood. Past zoning philosophy was to zone all land adjoining or near railroad tracks for industrial use. Railroad tracks border the area on the south and west.

Hollins Road has concentrations of industrial development on its northern and southern ends. Most of the development is on the western side of Hollins Road and abuts the railroad tracks; however there is a mixture of commercial and industrial uses on the southeastern side closer to Orange Avenue.

The industrial uses on the northern end of Hollins Road are on large sites well situated to the street with offices in the front and the more intensive parts of their operations to the rear abutting the railroad tracks. The topography helps buffer these uses from the neighborhood, as they sit atop a hill that slopes downward to Hollins Road.

Most of the uses on the southern end are on smaller lots and are situated closer to the street. The topography is flatter on this end of Hollins Road and industrial properties are closer to residences.

Eleventh Street features a number of industrial uses from Orange Avenue to its dead-end near Missouri Avenue. Most of these operations are warehouse and trucking establishments. Part of the Hollins neighborhood is sandwiched between the industrial uses on 11th Street and Hollins Road.



Industrial development near the east-west railroad tracks

Enterprise Zones



All companies in RCIT, such as Roanoke-based Advance Auto Parts above, can benefit from enterprise zone incentives

An Enterprise Zone is a geographically defined area designated by the Governor. The state and local government enter into a 20-year partnership to encourage business expansion and recruitment by offering both state and local incentives. Businesses locating within the boundaries of any Enterprise Zone may qualify for state or local incentives. The City has two enterprise zones and portions of both are in Hollins/Wildwood.

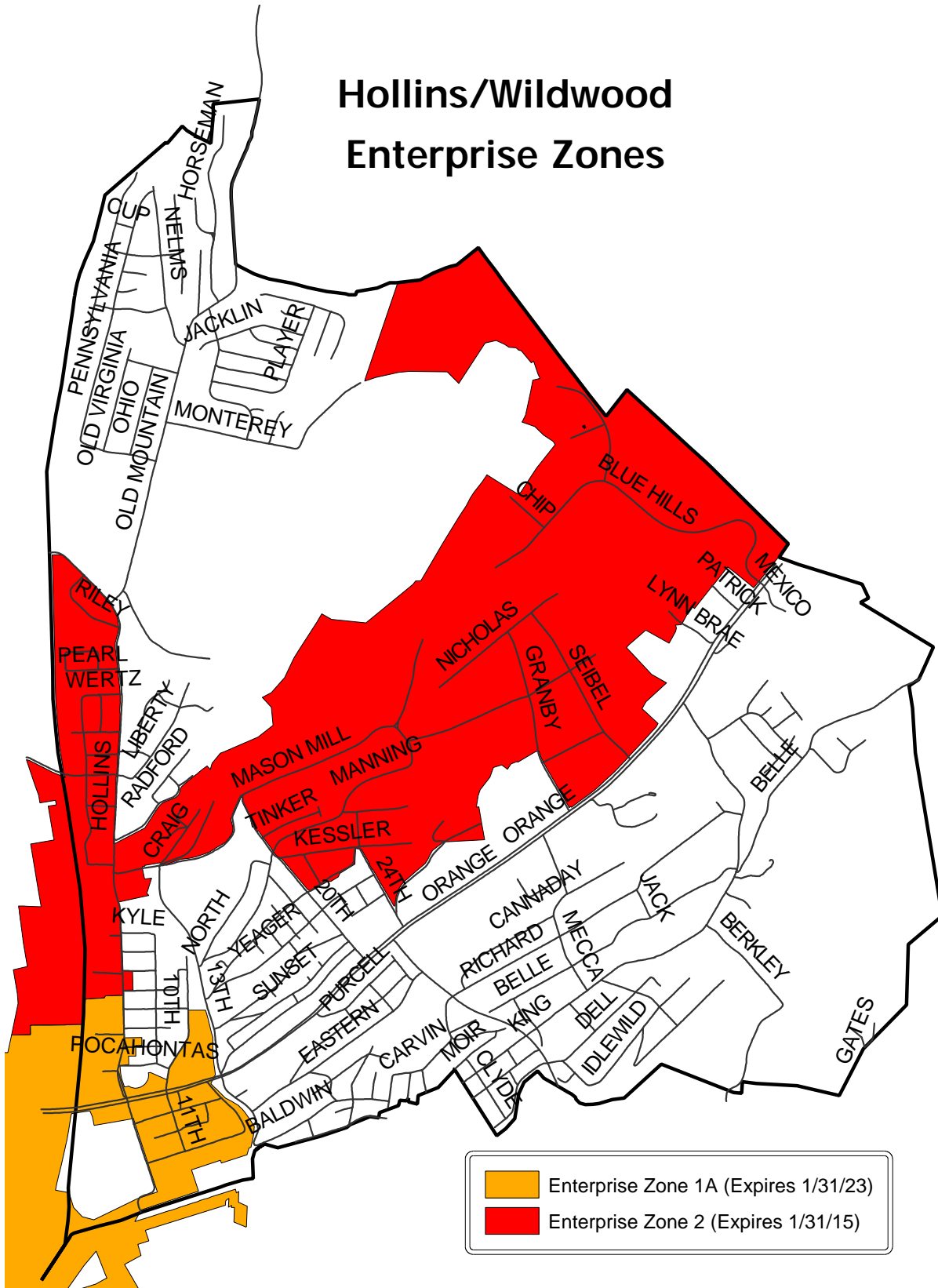
Enterprise Zone One A encompasses 1,702 acres in the City, with a small portion in the southern end of the Hollins neighborhood. It will be in effect until December 31, 2023. Enterprise Zone Two includes much of the East Gate neighborhood, most of the industrial district in the Hollins neighborhood, RCIT, and Statesman Industrial Park. It will be in effect until December 31, 2015.

A substantial number of properties within Enterprise Zone Two are currently residential. These properties in the Hollins and East Gate neighborhoods are proposed as residential on the future land use map. Inclusion of residential property in enterprise zones is commonplace, and should not be misconstrued as intent to replace residential with commercial development. Several enterprise zone incentives award employers for hiring employees that live within the zone. Thus, inclusion of residential properties increases the pool of workers for this benefit and may provide job opportunities for those residents.

Four residentially-zoned parcels in Enterprise Zone Two have been identified for potential industrial use. To the southwest of Statesman Industrial Park lies over 31 acres of vacant land that is currently zoned RS-3, Single-family Residential, High Density District. Access is the foremost concern with these properties. Three of the parcels are on Manning Road. The other is officially on Scott Road, although it doesn't have access available from Scott Road. To access it from Scott Road, an access easement would be necessary to cross an adjoining property owner's lot. However, this parcel also has access from Howard Avenue at its terminus, which is unimproved for approximately 300 feet. The owner of these parcels (currently all are owned by the same person) currently has two options for access; improve Howard Avenue or combine all of the parcels and create one point of access off of Manning Road. Ideally, this site would be best accessed from Mary Linda Avenue or Granby Street if the owner could either obtain an access easement or buy the land needed from an adjoining owner.

The future land use map designates these parcels as "Potential Industrial." Due to issues with access to the site, however, the zoning should remain residential. This plan would support a future petition for a conditional rezoning to an industrial district where access issues are appropriately addressed.

Hollins/Wildwood Enterprise Zones



Hollins Road Village Center



The Hollins Road village center has potential for more neighborhood commercial development



Vision 2001-2020 recommends the creation of village centers. Village centers are centers in neighborhoods containing a mixture of higher density residential and neighborhood commercial uses, e.g. convenience stores and restaurants. They serve as the focus of neighborhood activity, and provide nearby residents with shopping options without leaving their neighborhood.

Vision 2001-2020 identifies a village center at Hollins and Liberty Roads. The intersection of Hollins and Liberty Roads is busy and is a good central point for neighborhood commercial activity. While at present this area has some village center attributes, additional commercial establishments and streetscape improvements would enhance its identity and attract more people. Establishments have the potential to serve the surrounding neighborhood and at the same time reap the benefit of the steady flow of traffic on Hollins Road.

Streetscape improvements to this section of Hollins Road should be done in accordance with any future improvement projects. Storm water drainage is poor on Hollins Road, so the first priority of any streetscape improvements would be to mitigate current drainage problems. Long-range plans for Hollins Road are discussed in the Transportation section of the plan. Improvements to the village center should focus more on overall beautification than a change to the function of the street. Improvement strategies should address the following goals:

- Improve overall livability along the street
- Improve pedestrian safety
- Minimize disruption of the existing neighborhood
- Reduce speed - at least 85% of the traffic should travel at 30 m.p.h. or less
- Retain capacity to handle current and future volumes, while not inducing more traffic
- Keep commuter traffic off of side streets
- Ensure other thoroughfares carry their "fair share" of traffic

Streetscape and traffic-calming measures can respond to these goals. Following are some potential streetscape/traffic-calming tools that may be used along Hollins Road:

- Planting large species trees on both sides of the street.
- Installing curb extensions at intersections and mid-blocks to reduce crossing distance for pedestrians.
- Marking pedestrian crossings with stamped asphalt or other material to create a change in color and texture.
- Painting the shoulder to reduce the apparent pavement width and keep traffic away from street trees.
- Lateral shifts in the travel lanes from one side of the street to the other.
- Speed tables and raised intersections

A large-scale traffic calming project, such as the Bullitt/Jamison corridor or Grandin Road, is not warranted for Hollins Road. Due to the existing traffic signal at Hollins and Liberty Roads, pedestrian improvements such as a stamped or raised asphalt crosswalk would benefit the village center with little negative impact on traffic flow. In addition, landscaping and signage would help its appearance and identity.

Economic Development Issues:

- Underused commercial and industrial land
- Efficient use of industrial land
- Village center lacks identity

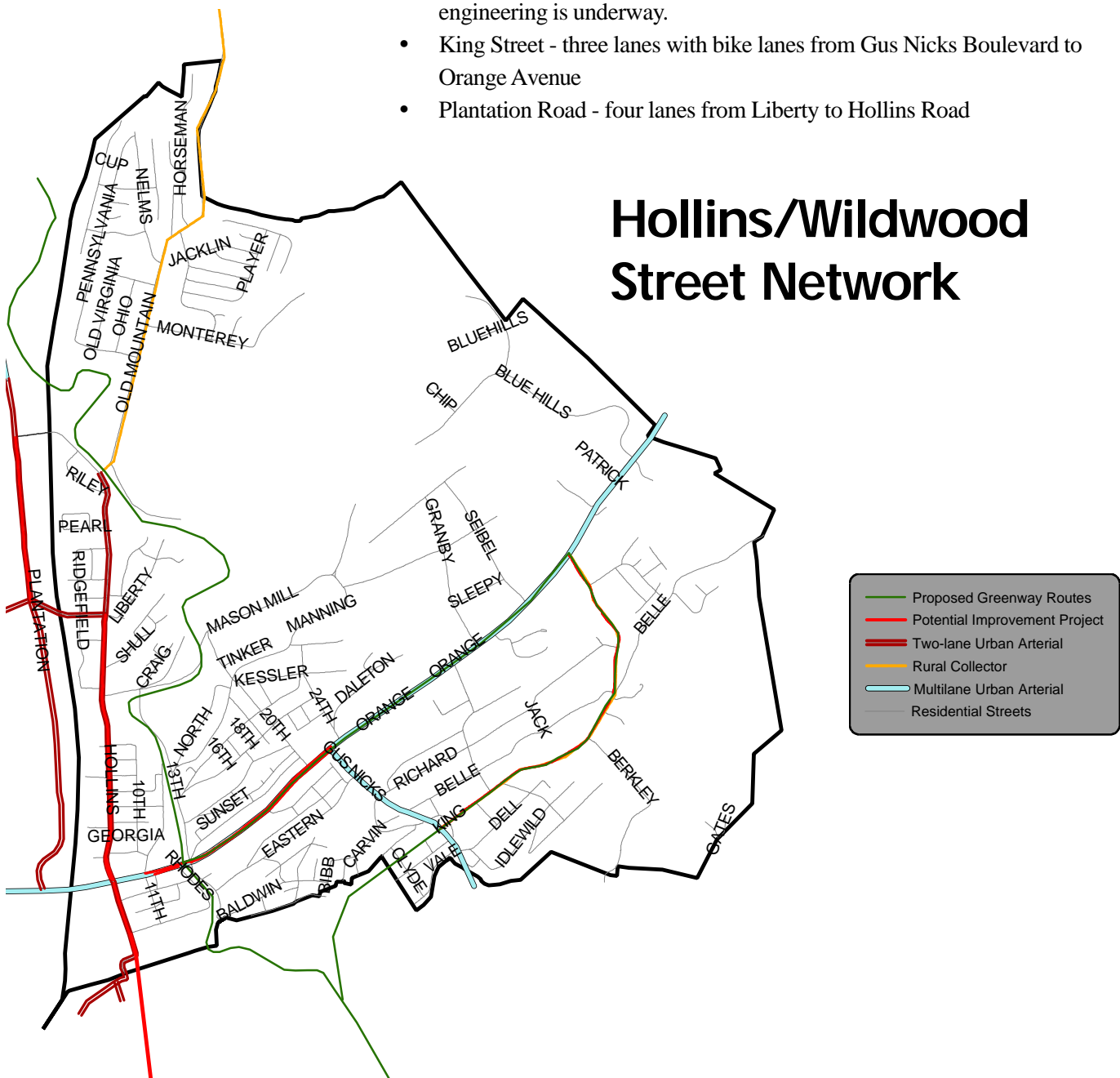
Infrastructure

Transportation

Transportation is one of the major issues affecting Hollins/Wildwood. Traffic volumes on the arterial streets in the area have long been high. There are currently four projects listed in the Roanoke Valley Long-Range Transportation Plan. These projects are not fully funded as of yet:

- Orange Avenue - six lanes from 11th Street to Gus Nicks Boulevard.
- 13th Street S.E./Hollins Road - four lanes with bike lanes from Dale Avenue to Orange Avenue, including a bridge over the railroad tracks. Preliminary engineering is underway.
- King Street - three lanes with bike lanes from Gus Nicks Boulevard to Orange Avenue
- Plantation Road - four lanes from Liberty to Hollins Road

Hollins/Wildwood Street Network



Orange Avenue



Increasing traffic on Orange Avenue is a major concern of residents in the area



Orange Avenue is a four-lane arterial street and is one of the City's most congested. Residents and business owners alike stated concerns with the level of congestion, and fear that it will get progressively worse. Several fairly recent factors contribute to the increase in traffic:

- Increased commercial and industrial development on Orange Avenue.
- Increases in population east of the City in Bedford and Botetourt Counties.
- Increased employment and development in downtown.

The proposed widening of Orange Avenue to six lanes from 11th Street to Gus Nicks Boulevard conflicts with the goals of the comprehensive plan. The street design principles of *Vision 2001-2020* state the need for streets to be capable of accommodating pedestrians and bicycles, and pavement kept to the minimum width necessary. Widening streets generally induces greater vehicle speeds and makes pedestrian crossings difficult and dangerous. In addition, widening streets tends to induce more traffic.

City staff and VDOT are in the preliminary stages of studying possibilities for alternatives to widening Orange Avenue. While it's widely acknowledged that Orange Avenue is beyond its capacity for much of the business day, the source and destination of traffic on this corridor is still not fully understood.

West of Williamson Road and I-581, traffic on Orange Avenue/460W is considerably lighter in both directions. The juncture of Williamson Road and Orange Avenue is a major transportation hub. In addition to the high volumes of traffic on Williamson Road and I-581, downtown is less than a mile to the south. Williamson Road is a major corridor and I-581 is the Valley's only interstate highway. Both certainly receive traffic from Orange Avenue; however, the volume and direction of these trips is uncertain.

To improve traffic flow and conditions on Orange Avenue, a comprehensive approach to the entire corridor needs to be taken. Most of the congestion occurs at the intersections with other arterial streets. The four aforementioned long-range VDOT projects are all heavily traveled streets that intersect Orange Avenue. Improvements to these streets or optimizing the function of these intersections may alleviate some congestion on Orange Avenue. Intersection improvements and the other long-range projects should be considered before undertaking a project to widen Orange Avenue. In addition, alternate connections should be considered given the poor connectivity of streets in areas parallel to the corridor.

13th Street, S.E. and Hollins Road



Hollins Road doesn't have much right-of-way to install curb, gutter and sidewalks.

The VDOT *Six Year Improvement Program* includes a project to realign and widen 13th Street, S.E. and Hollins Road. The project is currently being evaluated by City and VDOT staff and preliminary engineering is underway. The current schedule and estimated costs are shown in Table 6 below:

13th Street and Hollins Road Project		
Phase	Estimated Cost	Commencement
Preliminary Engineering	\$1,910,000	Underway
Right-of-Way Acquisition	\$5,400,000	Fiscal Year 2007
Construction	\$19,900,000	Fiscal Year 2009
Total	\$27,210,000	

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation

The project would widen 13th Street to four lanes from Orange to Dale Avenues including a bridge over the railroad tracks and Lick Run. This would entail realigning 13th Street and Hollins Road to connect the two. This realignment, combined with the bridge, would enable a direct route between two major arterial streets; Dale and Orange Avenues, which serve motorists heading to and from the east. The most critical element is the bridge, which would provide a reliable connection as motorists would not have to wait for passing trains.

At the time of the planning process, this project is entering the preliminary design stage and is the most likely to be constructed. However, further research by City and VDOT staff may yield different conclusions or changes in the scope and design of the project as additional analysis and engineering study is undertaken.



Despite the industrial development, sections of Hollins Road are still a residential street.



The *Roanoke Valley Long Range Transportation Plan* calls for Hollins Road to be widened to four lanes with bike lanes from Orange Avenue to Liberty Road. This project has not been allocated any funding.

Hollins Road is a two-lane minor arterial street. Industry is scattered along it with concentrations on the western side. In between the industrial development, there are older residential subdivisions with healthy neighborhoods. The mix of land uses that are accessed from Hollins Road, and its connection to Orange Avenue, make it a problematic street to improve without sacrificing its historic character as an early suburban road.

If the 13th Street/Hollins Road project is constructed, it may seem logical to widen Hollins Road north of Orange Avenue. However, several factors should be carefully evaluated before this project even reaches the preliminary design stage.

Considerations include:

- Widening streets generally devalues residential properties and at the same time increases their attractiveness for commercial or industrial development. As noted previously, there is an abundance of property in the area zoned for commercial and industrial use.
- The current proposal would widen Hollins Road to four lanes only to Liberty Road. This could create a bottleneck north of Liberty Road that wouldn't occur if Hollins remains two lanes. Widening the entire length of Hollins Road would entail widening the bridge over the railroad tracks to Plantation Road, which would likely be cost prohibitive.
- The right-of-way width varies on Hollins Road. Additional right-of-way would likely need to be acquired for the project, making it more expensive and potentially requiring demolition of some structures.
- Sections of Hollins Road have been identified as storm water problem areas. Additional pavement will exacerbate the problem.
- Evaluation of the long-range plan to widen Hollins Road should also be weighed against other street improvement projects in the area with the presumption that residential neighborhoods should be preserved as much as possible.

King Street



King Street has curb, gutter and sidewalk on its western end, but is still a rural collector street



King Street is a winding two-lane street that extends from a few blocks west of Gus Nicks Boulevard to Orange Avenue, both of which are heavily traveled four-lane arterial streets. King Street is busy at these intersections and it has fairly high traffic counts for a two-lane street. However, adding travel lanes to King Street would negatively impact the character of the street and its development pattern.

The function of King Street has the potential to have a broad impact on the surrounding area. Any future improvements to King Street that allow faster and easier access will induce development and bring additional traffic to Gus Nicks Boulevard and Orange Avenue. Parcels on King Street between Gus Nicks Boulevard and Orange Avenue tend to be larger, most are over 10,000 square feet and a considerable number are over 20,000. Most of these large lots are single-family residences and offer ample subdivision opportunities.

The VDOT plan to add a center turn lane and bike lanes on each side from Gus Nicks Boulevard to Orange Avenue would make left turns much easier and the street more attractive for the development of apartments or single-family subdivisions. Some of the City's last vacant developable land is on or near King Street.

If the current evaluation of the Orange Avenue and 13th Street/Hollins Road projects leads City and VDOT staff to believe that the King Street project is a high priority, then it could result in additional development.

Consideration of any improvements to King Street should take into account the following:

- Additional development: vacant and underused land will be made more attractive with any improvements to King Street.
- Impact on Orange Avenue: Improvements to King Street may divert traffic from Orange Avenue, or add congestion at its intersection.

Plantation Road



Traffic patterns on Plantation Road impact Orange Avenue and Hollins Road

Although Plantation Road isn't within the boundaries of Hollins/Wildwood, it is a minor arterial street that is close by with access from Orange Avenue and Hollins Road. Plantation Road has a mixture of residential and industrial uses, with a number of trucking terminals. The pavement is excessive between Orange Avenue and Kanter Road, at 60 - 70 feet wide, yet narrows to 20 - 22 feet between Kanter and Webb Road, then widens to over 60 feet to the north for most of its remaining stretch within the City.

The *Roanoke Valley Long Range Transportation Plan* designates the section from Liberty Road to Hollins Road to be widened to four lanes with curb, gutter and sidewalk. This would not change the approximately 2,100 foot section between Kanter and Liberty Road that is only two lanes. The *Williamson Road Area Plan* recommends intermediate steps; using excess pavement on Plantation Road for striping to denote bike and parking lanes, and adding green spaces.

Plantation Road should be examined in the future Orange Avenue corridor study. However, its impact on Orange Avenue is most likely predominantly attributable to the industrial uses on Plantation Road, and less to cut through traffic. If Plantation Road is widened to four lanes, it will become more attractive for industrial and commercial industries, and thus more truck traffic. At the same time, Plantation Road may be a viable alternative route to Hollins Road or Williamson Road.

The long range plan and any additional widening of Plantation Road should only be implemented if it can improve the flow of traffic in the Orange Avenue corridor. The long range plan also designates improvements to Hershberger Road from Williamson Road to the eastern City limits where it connects to Plantation Road. If these two projects can collectively improve the Orange Avenue corridor, they should be prioritized accordingly as a single project.

At the least any widening of Plantation Road should be discouraged if it is not part of a comprehensive improvement plan for the Orange Avenue corridor and the surrounding area. The current proposal in the long range plan will merely increase vehicle speeds. In lieu of any of the long range projects, the recommendations of the *Williamson Road Area Plan* should be implemented on Plantation Road.

Infrastructure

General infrastructure improvements were identified in the public workshops as a major shortcoming of the area and are one of the priority initiatives of this plan. Curb, gutter and sidewalk are lacking on many streets in Hollins/Wildwood, and several households in the neighborhood are not served by City water and/or sewer lines.

Requests for infrastructure improvements - curb, gutter, sidewalk, and storm drainage mitigation - are submitted to the Engineering Division of the Department of Public Works. All requests are reviewed by several City departments and rated based on their need, feasibility, and relationship to any concurrent City project areas. One criterion is the location's inclusion in a neighborhood plan. In addition to providing direction for individual requests, this plan should serve as the primary source for determining where infrastructure funds should be allocated in Hollins/Wildwood.



Orange Avenue

Water and Sewer



Richard Avenue lacks public sewer service



Residents cited the lack of sewer lines in some areas as the greatest concern during the planning process. Some houses in the area are served by wells, but water connections are not as vital as sewer. Connecting sewer service to every home that currently has a septic tank is the highest priority of this plan. Septic tanks are entirely the responsibility of private property owners, however, they pose public health risks if owners fail to maintain them properly.

In 2003 City Council adopted an amendment to the City Code that would require all new development to connect to City sewer lines. Only in circumstances where gravity connections or pump stations are impossible can a property owner install a septic tank. The recently created Western Virginia Water Authority now processes and administers all sewer and water connections. The Authority's policy for extending main sewer lines requires residents of a given area, usually a block or more of a street, to cover half the costs. This is a considerable expense for most property owners and it requires significant time for them to reach consensus and organize their efforts. In addition, fees for water and sewer connections have increased since the creation of the Authority, and as a regional government organization it serves Roanoke County as well as the City, making the selection of projects more competitive during each year's budget.

The Authority recognizes that septic tanks can become problematic and as a matter of policy would like to connect as many properties to public sewer lines as possible. The Authority should continue to evaluate sewer line extensions within the parameters of the current extension policy, and, in conjunction with the City, examine alternative means for providing such extensions, if necessary.

Two main areas are in need: 1) in the Mecca Gardens neighborhood on Cannaday Road, Idlewild Boulevard, and Richard Avenue, and 2) in the Monterey neighborhood on Old Mountain Road, Pennsylvania Avenue, Columbia, Ohio and Old Virginia Streets. There are also sections of other streets without service, but most of them have vacant land and would be required to install sewer connections if ever developed.

Curb, Gutter, and



Sidewalk New curb and gutter at 24th Street and Daleton Avenue

Aside from the arterial streets in Hollins/Wildwood, most do not have curb, gutter and sidewalk. Some residential streets have curb. On some streets it isn't feasible to install curb, gutter and sidewalk due to the lack of residual right-of-way, rolling topography and drainage issues.

Arterial streets are the highest priority for a complete system of curb, gutter and sidewalk. Many residential streets could benefit from curb installation only, and are not developed densely enough to justify sidewalk installation.

The *Infrastructure Improvements* map lists all streets that lack curb, gutter, and sidewalk. A number of factors should be considered when making decisions for the installation of curb, gutter and sidewalk:

- *Vision 2001-2020*: The comprehensive plan addresses streetscape improvements as a priority, including sidewalk installation.
- The Subdivision Ordinance: The ordinance requires that developers install curb, gutter, and sidewalk whenever subdividing land for development.
- Width of the street's right-of-way: Many streets in the area are not wide enough to install sidewalks, but can accommodate curb and gutter.
- Pedestrian safety and volume of traffic: Sidewalk installation improves pedestrian safety, especially on heavily traveled streets.
- Storm water drainage problems: curb and gutter can alleviate drainage and run-off problems on many streets, but often have little to no impact on properties below the grade of the street.



All arterial streets, such as Gus Nicks Boulevard above, should have curb, gutter and sidewalk



This intersection at Gus Nicks Boulevard and Orange Avenue does not have any pedestrian amenities

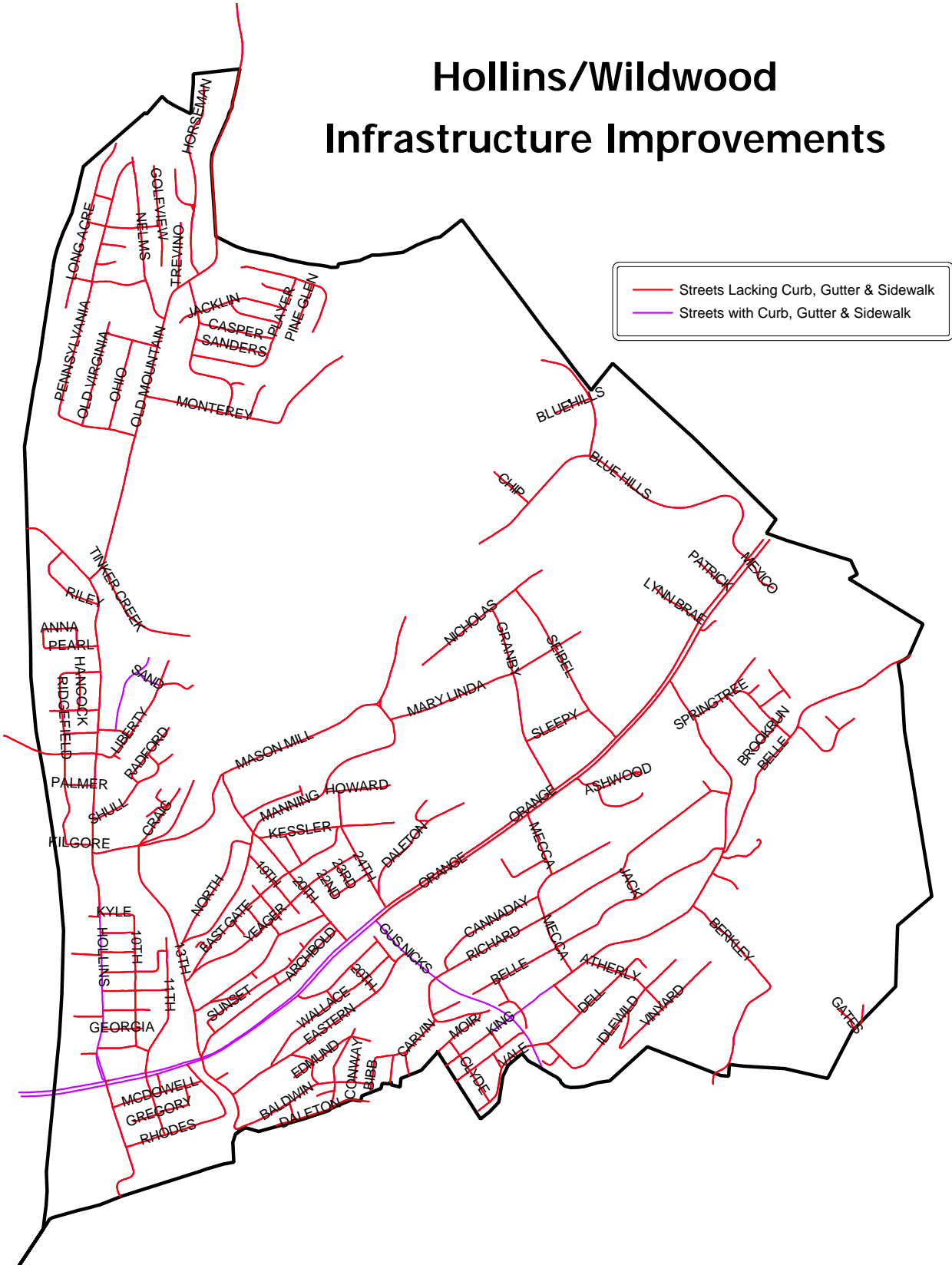
Infrastructure Issues

- Congested traffic on Orange Avenue Corridor
- Lack of connectivity of streets concentrates traffic on a few arterial streets
- Disconnected street system, especially north of Orange Avenue
- Lack of curb, gutter, and sidewalk on most streets
- Lack of City sewer and water on some streets
- Storm water drainage



New curb installation in conjunction with new development on Craig Road

Hollins/Wildwood Infrastructure Improvements



Public Services

Police



Stable for the horses of the Police's mounted patrol off of Blue Hills Drive

Hollins/Wildwood is not a high crime area. Based on calls for service data compiled by the Police Department, the area falls in the lower half of districts within the City for total calls. Most crime in the area is domestic or property related, and residents cited overall safety as one of their neighborhood's best attributes.

In 2004 the Police Department replaced the COPE (Community Oriented Policing Effort) units with Geographic Policing. Under the Geographic Policing initiative, the City is demarcated into four police response zones. Hollins/Wildwood is within Zone 2.

Each zone is assigned a police lieutenant who serves as zone commander. The lieutenant is assisted by sergeants who are responsible for day-to-day supervision of patrol officers. Patrol functions include community policing, school resource officers, personnel assignments and response to citizen concerns. Each zone also contains a Community Resource Officer, who is responsible for facilitating community policing and problem-solving initiatives throughout the zone. The Community Resource Officer involves each officer in resolving quality of life and community policing issues.

Fire/EMS

Fire Station Number 14 is on Mecca Street. A new fire engine that also has ladder capability is assigned to the station. The Fire/EMS Strategic Business Plan recommends future improvements to the station to continue its operation. Station Number 14 is one of the newer stations in the City and is listed in the plan as the lowest in terms of maintenance needs.

Code Enforcement

Residents addressed concerns with frequent code violations, particularly junk storage and inoperable vehicles. Housing maintenance has not been a significant issue, though some of the older housing may need more attention to ensure its preservation.

Code enforcement functions are undergoing continuous improvement with better strategies, staffing levels, and strengthened ordinances. Although Hollins/Wildwood is not especially problematic, it needs increased enforcement activity by code enforcement inspectors, particularly in the Hollins neighborhood.



Code enforcement is an increasing concern in the area



Other Public Services

The Roanoke Valley Resource Authority's Tinker Creek Transfer Station at 1020 Hollins Road is a regional solid waste transfer station. The Authority is a partnership between the City, Roanoke County, Vinton, and Norfolk Southern. The three valley localities generate 700 tons of waste every day. Each locality collects its own trash, using its own equipment. After collection, refuse trucks deliver the trash to the Tinker Creek Transfer Station, where waste is loaded into rail cars. Each rail car holds 65 tons of waste, making them among the largest on the railroad. At the end of the day, all waste collected and loaded into the rail cars is transported 16½ miles by Norfolk Southern's Waste Line Express to the landfill. The City provides automated refuse and recycling collection throughout the area.

Despite the large land mass of the Hollins/Wildwood area, the population is too small and dispersed to support a school or library. Residents voiced support for more public facilities, such as a post office, schools, or police station.

Public Services Issues

- Increased need for code enforcement
- Lack of public service facilities such as a post office, library, and schools



The Tinker Creek Transfer Station

Quality of Life



Hollins/Wildwood has a low crime rate, good value in its housing options, convenience to many commercial services and two main parks. Overall, residents of Hollins/Wildwood seem proud of and happy with their neighborhoods. At the same time, residents have expressed needs in several areas in which the City will need to prioritize long-term funding.

Residents of the area cited problems with litter in Tinker Creek. Maintaining Tinker Creek and its surroundings is vital to the overall environment of the area. While private property owners are responsible for most of its pollution, future attention should be paid to it by City staff and the Western Virginia Water Authority.

Parks and Recreation



Mason Mill Park

The area has three parks: East Gate, Mason Mill and Thrasher. All of the parks are valued highly by residents, yet overall maintenance was also cited as needing improvement. Thrasher Park is a popular site for picnics and recreation. It features a basketball court, tennis court, baseball diamond, playground, picnic shelter and Thrasher Park Center, a meeting facility where the Wildwood Civic League meets on a monthly basis. It covers almost 22 acres, most of which is open green space that provides a pleasant view for nearby residents and a sound buffer from traffic on Gus Nicks Boulevard.

East Gate Park is on the site of a former landfill. The park, dedicated in 1968, has two playground structures, a picnic shelter, a basketball court, and a gravel parking lot. Trees line the perimeter of the park along 13th Street, and most of it is open green space.

Vision 2001-2020 encourages diversifying park facilities to enhance the quality of life in the City, suggests the implementation of user fees, and encourages public/private partnerships as a means of implementing plan items.

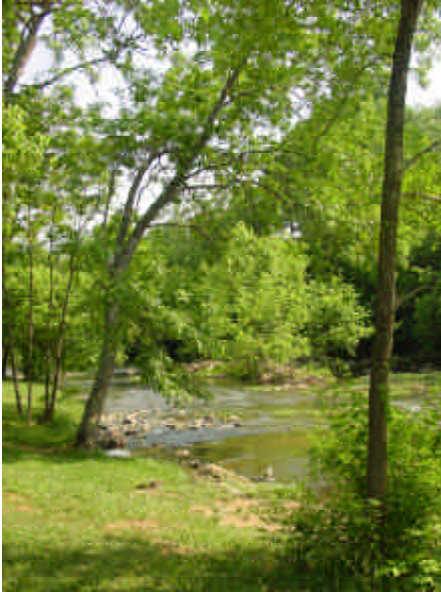
In 2002 City Council voted that the use of part of East Gate Park for the Scott Robertson Memorial Fund First Tee Golf Program was substantially in accord with *Vision 2001-2020*. Although the program eventually located elsewhere, similar uses for the park should be considered in the future.

Mason Mill Park is home to the surviving milldam, race, and recently restored wheel from the original mill that was built at the turn of the 20th Century and thrived in the 1920s. Located along Tinker Creek, the park is a popular spot for fishing and picnicking.



Thrasher Park

Greenways



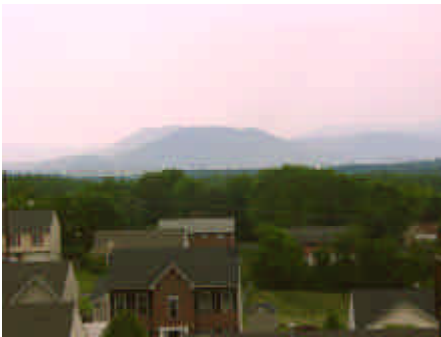
The area has three potential greenway routes that are included in the *Roanoke Valley Conceptual Greenway Plan*, Tinker Creek, 460 Challenger and Glade Creek.

The Tinker Creek Greenway is identified as one of the major greenway corridors in the valley. The route runs alongside all of the section of Tinker Creek within the City. A portion of this route has been completed on the southern end in the Fallon neighborhood. The portion within Hollins/Wildwood has yet to be constructed. Completion of the Tinker Creek Greenway will add a quality recreational amenity to the area, and increase exposure to the creek and surrounding neighborhoods.

The 460 Challenger route connects to the Tinker Creek route on the south by the railroad tracks and the western edge of Vinton, runs along King Street east to Orange Avenue and loops west back to the Tinker Creek Route. If this route is developed, it will mainly be on-road bicycle lanes.

The Glade Creek route follows the Glade Creek stream through the southeastern edge of Hollins/Wildwood in a southwest direction from Roanoke County to Vinton. It is an off-road route that would provide access to downtown Vinton.

Read Mountain



Development below Read Mountain offers great views of the valley, yet could disrupt the view of the mountain itself



In 2001 City Council adopted a resolution to support the efforts of the Read Mountain Alliance (RMA) to preserve Read Mountain. The RMA is a non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve the natural environment of the mountain and prevent its ridges and slopes from being disturbed by development. It is associated with the Western Virginia Land Trust (WVLT), another non-profit organization whose mission is to preserve land and natural resources in the counties of Bedford, Botetourt, Carroll, Craig, Floyd, Franklin, Henry, Montgomery, Patrick and Roanoke.

The WVLT serves as a third party with property owners in conservation easements, legally binding agreements that limit the use of the owner's property. While the owner sacrifices some of their land's economic potential, there are valuable tax credits that are gained in return, thus making the arrangement economically viable with only a very minimal investment.

Although Read Mountain is in Roanoke and Botetourt County, it is near the City's corporate limits, north of Read Mountain Road. There are unobstructed views of the mountain from virtually every part of the City, but especially in Hollins/Wildwood.

Vision 2001-2020 states that ridgeline development has had an adverse impact on the City, although the vast majority of such is outside the City's borders. Recent development in the City below the mountain has reinforced the City's desire to limit development on ridgelines and steep slopes. Although these

recent subdivisions achieved a current City goal in adding more housing choices, they also created or contributed to storm water runoff problems.

The City has a vested interest in the view shed and environmental preservation of Read Mountain. The resolution affirms the City's support of the goals of the Read Mountain Alliance. Future funding should be considered to assist the Read Mountain Alliance and the Western Virginia Land Trust in obtaining conservation easements on properties on and around the mountain.

Quality of Life Issues

- Maintaining both a high quality of life for residents and a concentration of commercial services
- Upkeep of Tinker Creek
- Overabundance of wildlife, e.g. deer
- Maintenance and programming of park facilities
- Development of ridge lines and slopes

Bird in Tinker Creek



Recommendations

Recommended Policies and Actions

Recommendations are organized by the Plan Elements (community design, residential development, etc.). Recommendations take the form of “policies” or “actions.” Policies are principles or ways of doing things that guide future decisions. Generally, policies are ongoing. Actions are projects or tasks that can be completed and have a definite end.

Community Design Policies

- **Neighborhood Character:** Established neighborhoods should retain their current character and development patterns. Higher density residential development should be concentrated on the edges of commercial development and closer to arterial streets.
- **Design:** Future commercial development should adhere to the design principles of *Vision 2001-2020* for commercial corridors:
 - o Concentrations of higher-density, mixed use development and live/work space at key intersections
 - o Minimal curb cuts, shared parking, increased lot coverage, signs co-located, no excessive lighting, and orientation of buildings close to the street
 - o Major corridors should have breaks in commercial development
- **Zoning:** Commercial and residential zoning districts should be clearly delineated with the intensity of uses minimized in some areas.
- **Parking:** Paved parking spaces should be minimized.

Community Design Actions

- **New Development:** Require new developments to incorporate urban amenities (e.g. sidewalks and curbs), and mixed-use (commercial and residential) where possible.
- **Orange Avenue Corridor:** Update the zoning ordinance to require the design guidelines of *Vision 2001-2020*; buildings should be closer to the street with parking to the side or rear.
- **Zoning:** Establish commercial boundaries in the update of the zoning ordinance and note transitional areas as a component of the future land use map.
- **Parking:** Limit the number of parking spaces for new developments in the update of the zoning ordinance.
- **Lighting:** Address the intensity of lighting in commercial developments as much as is possible under state law.

Residential Development Policies

- Neighborhood Character: Older neighborhoods should retain their current residential character.
- Zoning: Zoning should reinforce the existing character of neighborhoods.
- New development: New development should be well-planned and use limited land resources wisely. Infrastructure should be installed in conjunction with new development, including street improvements to address added traffic.
- Property Maintenance: All property should be maintained up to code standards.

Residential Development Actions

- Zoning: Maintain the density of existing neighborhoods in the update of the zoning ordinance, and promote higher densities close to commercial properties and arterial streets.
- Housing Clusters:
 - o Support the rezoning of vacant or underutilized large sites for mixed density housing that is consistent with the design guidelines of *Vision 2001-2020*.
 - o Consider the development of several properties in the areas denoted on the Residential Development Opportunities map.
- Vacant Parcels: Identify and promote appropriate new development on vacant parcels.
- Property Maintenance: Increase enforcement efforts of staff and reporting of violations by residents.

Economic Development Policies

- Commercial Corridors: Commercial areas should accommodate competitive businesses that have aesthetic and functional compatibility with adjoining residential areas.
- Commercial Centers: Small- to medium-sized concentrations of commercial establishments should be developed differently in terms of mass, parking, landscaping and street orientation than larger strip commercial developments.
- Industrial Districts: Industrial uses should have sufficient land to operate, and have a minimal impact on adjoining properties.
- Village Centers: Village centers should provide a pedestrian-oriented commercial area for nearby residents.
- Zoning: Commercial and residential zoning districts should be clearly delineated with the intensity of uses minimized in some areas.

Economic Development Actions

- Orange Avenue: Maintain commercial zoning that will retain existing businesses and attract new establishments.
- Commercial Centers: Identify or create nodes along Orange Avenue for commercial centers; concentrations of small- to medium-sized commercial establishments. Avoid strip commercial zoning patterns.
- Maximize Use of Existing Commercial Districts: Avoid further expansion of commercial districts to encourage quality development and more efficient use of land in existing districts.
- Industrial Districts: Evaluate underused industrially zoned land and demarcate or rezone to maximize its potential.
- RCIT: Review and revise deed restrictions to promote more efficient land use.
- Hollins Road Village Center: Enhance and denote the village center with landscaping and stamped asphalt crosswalks.

Infrastructure Policies

- Streetscapes: Streetscapes should be well maintained, attractive and functional for pedestrian, bicycle and motor traffic.
- Connectivity: The connectivity of streets and the grid street system should be promoted and maintained.
- Street width: Streets should be kept at the minimum width necessary to accommodate vehicular traffic and on-street parking.
- Sewer/Water: All new developments will be served by public sewer and water lines, unless it can be demonstrated that connection is not possible. Existing development should be evaluated for connections within the framework of existing policies.
- Curb, Gutter and Sidewalk Improvements: New developments and arterial and collector streets should have urban amenities such as sidewalks and curb and gutter. Appropriate species of trees should be planted as a part of such improvements.
- New Development: Infrastructure should be installed in conjunction with new development, including street improvements to address added traffic. Traffic studies by prospective developers may be required.
- Stormwater Drainage: Stormwater runoff should be mitigated as much as possible through improvements that are consistent with the character of the neighborhood.

Infrastructure Actions

- Orange Avenue Corridor: Improve the Orange Avenue corridor with the following considerations:
 - o Identify the arterial streets of the Orange Avenue corridor as Orange Avenue, Hollins Road, Gus Nicks Boulevard, and King Street. Address improvements to the corridor based on collective analysis of how the intersecting arterial streets affect Orange Avenue.
 - o Determine the origin and destination of daily traffic on Orange Avenue.
 - o Analyze and consider development of alternative routes that could efficiently disperse the traffic demand on Orange Avenue, as well as improvements to Hollins Road, Gus Nicks Boulevard, and King Street that would improve the traffic flow on Orange Avenue.
 - o Analyze and consider intersection improvements as an alternative to adding more travel lanes on arterial streets.
 - o Consider adding more travel lanes per the *Roanoke Valley Long-range Transportation Plan* only after exploring other alternatives.
- Hollins Road:
 - o Improve storm water drainage on Hollins Road before installing any additional paved surface improvements.
 - o Consider alternatives to widening Hollins Road north of Orange Avenue such as shoulder improvements.
- Sewer/Water: Install sewer and water connections where possible within the framework of existing connections policies.
- Curb, Gutter and Sidewalk Improvements: Determine the need for improvements based on the following factors:
 - o Install curb, gutter and sidewalk on arterial streets and infill of blocks with incomplete networks.
 - o New subdivisions - all new developments will have curb and gutter, and sidewalk.
 - o In select residential areas, install curb and gutter depending on existing drainage conditions.
 - o Focus improvements in areas that have been identified as having storm water problems. Sidewalks may be installed on only one side where residual right-of-way is limited.
- Stormwater Management: Alleviate stormwater runoff as much as possible through alternatives to curb and gutter. Install curb and gutter in select areas that will alleviate drainage problems.

Public Services Policies

- Police officers should keep neighborhood residents informed of any occurrences of crime in the area
- Fire/EMS stations should be outfitted to provide the most efficient service possible
- Code enforcement inspectors should take a proactive approach to addressing all property maintenance violations

Public Services Actions

- Continue communication between the neighborhoods, Neighborhood Services and the Police Department regarding crime prevention
- Improve Fire/EMS Station Number 14 per the recommendations of the Fire/EMS Strategic Business Plan
- Increase code enforcement efforts in the Hollins neighborhood
- Consider the area for future placement of public facilities such as schools, libraries and post offices

Quality of Life Policies

- Commercial/Industrial Development: Commercial and industrial development should be economically viable without threatening the environment and high quality of life of the area.
- Recreation: Neighborhood and area parks should provide excellent recreational facilities for residents
- Greenways: The greenway routes of the Roanoke Valley Conceptual Greenway Plan should be developed to enhance the quality of life in the area.
- Ridge Lines and Steep Slopes: Development should be avoided on ridge lines and steep slopes that negatively impact views, runoff and erosion and sediment control.

Quality of Life Actions

- Zoning: Establish defined commercial boundaries in the update of the zoning ordinance
- Recreation: Maintain and enhance access to recreation resources
- Tinker Creek: Ensure that the conditions of Tinker Creek are closely monitored and that expedient enforcement of City Code violations is pursued in known cases of litter and other pollution.

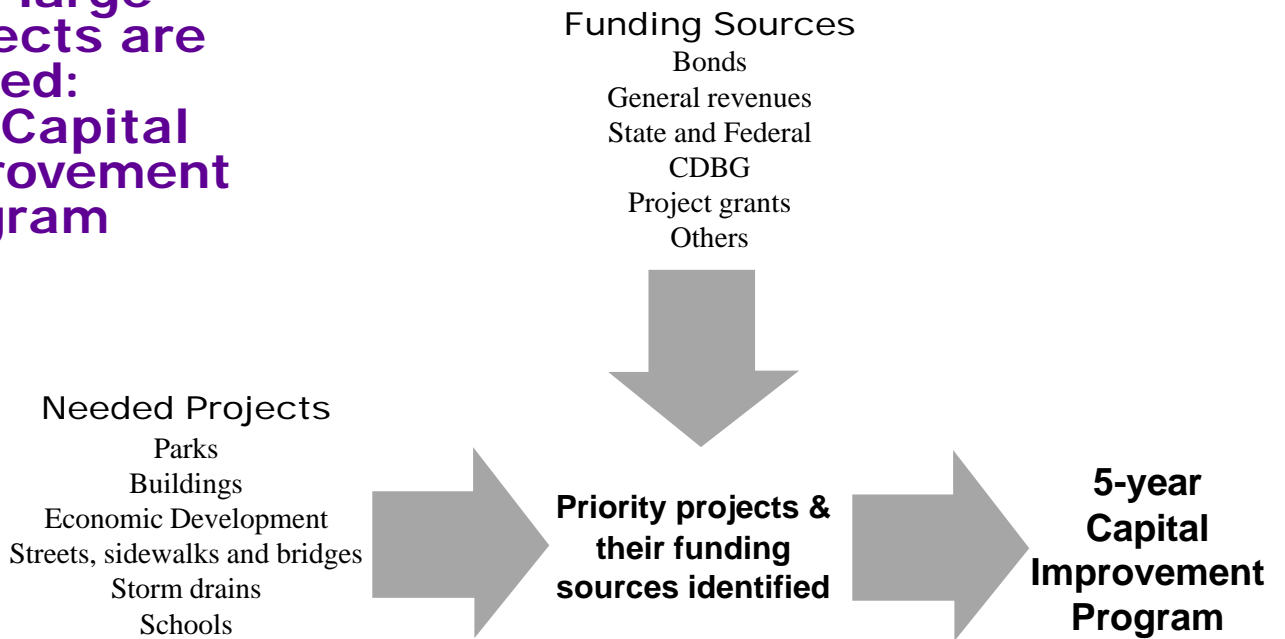
Implementation

Funding

Funding for major infrastructure projects is generally provided through the City’s Capital Improvement Program. Funding can come from a variety of sources, including CDBG, transportation funding, state and federal funds, and general revenue. The Capital Improvement Program is developed by identifying needed projects and matching them with potential funding sources. Each project is reviewed and ranked in terms of priority.

The chart on the following page identifies major projects, their time frame, the lead agency or department, and potential sources of funding. The cost of most projects such as streetscape improvements cannot be determined until more detailed planning is completed.

How large projects are funded: The Capital Improvement Program



Below is a general guide to the time needed to carry out the actions of this plan. It is intended to assist with scheduling priority projects, but does not provide a specific timeframe for each item.

Action	Year						Lead Agency	Potential funding sources
	1	2	3	4	5	Ongoing		
Zoning Changes		*					PBD	PBD Operating Budget
Improvements to Hollins Road Village Center					*		PW	PW capital account
Improvements to the Orange Avenue corridor					*		VDOT	VDOT, Tea-21, Bond, PW capital account
Improvements to Hollins Road			*				PW	PW capital account
Install curb, gutter, and sidewalk on arterial streets						*	PW	VDOT, Tea-21, Bond, PW capital account
Install curb, gutter, sidewalk on residential streets						*	PW	PW capital account
Install sewer/water lines						*	WVWA	Residents, WVWA capital account
Complete storm water projects						*	PW	PW capital account
Improve Fire/EMS Station Number 14					*		Fire/EMS	GS Operating Budget
Increase Code Enforcement in the Hollins neighborhood						*	HNS, PD	n/a

*Included in VDOT 6 year plan and fully funded, still subject to public review of design proposals

**Included in VDOT 6 year plan, but not funded

Abbreviations:

PBD = Roanoke Planning Building and Development

PD = Police Department

P&R= Roanoke Parks and Recreation

PW = Roanoke Public Works

TEA-21 = Transportation Enhancement Act (Federal transportation funding)

VDOT = Virginia Department of Transportation

WVWA = Western Virginia Water Authority

Acknowledgments

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Vice Mayor Beverly T. Fitzpatrick, Jr.
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Alfred T. Dowe, Jr.
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