

# COUNTY OF CAROLINE, VIRGINIA

## LADYSMITH COMMUNITY PLAN



ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS  
FEBRUARY 26, 2008

## APPENDIX C - *LADYSMITH COMMUNITY PLAN*

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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## INTRODUCTION

With the adoption of the 2006-2026 Comprehensive Plan in January 2007, the Board of Supervisors adopted the most recent update of the County's Comprehensive Plan, expanding the planning horizon from 10 to 20 years. The Plan includes chapters on growth and development trends, environmental resources, transportation, public facilities and land use. These chapters include an analysis of existing and future trends, and a vision for the future of the County. The 2006-2026 Comprehensive Plan serves as a guide for the future growth and development of the County. It is the official policy guide for development related decisions for Caroline County, including the overall amount and rate of growth desired.

The Comprehensive Plan contains a number of goals designed to help implement the Plan's vision, as well as a number of objectives, with supporting implementation to measure progress of attaining the goals. One such objective states: "Prepare detailed plans for the land use, transportation, and public facilities in each of the primary and secondary growth areas". In support of this objective, the plan further identifies two specific strategies:

- appoint a task force comprised of residents, businesses and landowners in each area to identify development issues and suggest detailed development plans for each area; and
- upon completion of these area plans, incorporate these plans into the overall Comprehensive Plan.

In keeping with these strategies, the Ladysmith Village Plan was developed by the Ladysmith Area Planning Advisory Committee (LACPAC) with assistance from the County planning department. This plan complements, clarifies and expands upon the planning efforts of the committee that preceded it reflecting the dynamics of growth and change that have ensued.

## PLANNING PROCESS

### OVERVIEW

The first area plan to be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan was the initial Ladysmith Area Plan, adopted in February of 2001 by the Board of Supervisors. That area planning process began in the fall of 1997, when the then Board of Supervisors, recognized the development pressure facing the Ladysmith area, and the need for detailed and specific guidance for future development in the area.

Based upon the previously adopted plan, several major mixed-use developments have been approved by the Board, which will bring an additional 6,600 residential units, as well as retail and office opportunities to Ladysmith over the next 20 to 25 years.

Preparation of the updated Ladysmith Area Plan began in the spring of 2005, with the appointment of the Ladysmith Area Community Planning Advisory Committee (LACPAC) by the Board of Supervisors.

The supervisors charged the committee generally with the responsibility for updating the previous planning study of the Ladysmith area and specifically with identifying needed transportation improvements and recommending development/design standards to ensure the previously articulated vision for the Village of Ladysmith would be achieved in the face of even greater development pressures.

The committee reaffirmed the three previously adopted objectives:

- To establish a systematic, participative planning process that would ensure effective planning and provide for full involvement in and input from residents and businesses.
- To conduct a study of the Ladysmith area to include population characteristics, housing, infrastructure, businesses, and land use, as well as an analysis of the perceived strengths and weaknesses of the community, its opportunities, and any potential threats to the community's future.

- To prepare and present a report that includes the findings and conclusions of the study, as well as a recommended vision of Ladysmith's future, proposed goals that will move the community toward the realization of its vision and a plan for achieving the desired goals and vision.

The committee has completed its charge and is pleased to present its findings, conclusions, recommendations and supporting data by virtue of this plan. The plan has been drafted as a guide for decision-makers in the development process. Property owners and developers can implement the goals and objectives of the Plan by following the recommended development standards.

### SCOPE

This plan presents important community planning premises developed by the committee. The plan presents the findings, conclusions and recommendations that the committee developed as a result of research, community surveys, and committee deliberations. In addition, the plan identifies and analyzes actual or perceived community strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats as expressed by citizens. Finally, the plan sets forth a vision of the desired future of Ladysmith, several supporting goals that should be pursued to realize the desired future of the community and a Future Land Use Plan that should be developed to support both the attainment of the goals and realization of the desired vision of the community.

### LIMITATIONS

This plan is designed to be supportive of the strategic plan of the County and the overall Comprehensive Plan. The visioning, goal setting and planning efforts have been limited by the following:

- This amendment to the Plan does not duplicate material that can be found elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan of Caroline County, the Caroline County Strategic Plan or in any other County, regional or state plan.
- The geographical area of this study has been limited to the Community of Ladysmith and its immediate areas as indicated as the Primary Growth areas on the Comprehensive Plan – Adopted 2001 and amended 2004. Included in the general Ladysmith community are the communities of Lake Caroline, Lake Land 'Or, Campbell's Creek, Ladysmith Village, Pendleton and Glen Meadows.
- Detailed planning for needed future infrastructure, such as water and sewer, can be found in the Master Water Supply Plan, the Master Wastewater Plan and the 2006-2026 Comprehensive Plan.

### COMMUNITY PLANNING PREMISES

The planning effort utilized the same guiding principles of community planning that the previous committee developed. The underlying principles are:

- Residents of a community have both a right and a duty to determine, insofar as possible, the desired future of their community, provided that the community's vision, goals and plans supplement and to and support those of the County and region.
- Determining the desired vision of a community's future, developing goals that will lead to achieving the vision and developing and participating in the accomplishment of the plans necessary to realize the community's goals must be a "bottom-up" effort with residents participating from beginning to end.
- Residents of successful communities anticipate change and therefore intervene to plan and manage changes that will impact the future of the community rather than simply waiting for whatever the future might bring.

## CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

In order to encourage citizen participation in the planning process, and to provide staff, the Board of Supervisors, and developers with a better understanding of how residents envisioned future development in their area, the Ladysmith Area Community Planning Advisory Committee (LACPAC) was established. LACPAC was comprised of residents, property owners, and business owners within the Ladysmith area who volunteered their time to serve on the committee.

Through a series of meetings, the Committee reviewed maps and other data pertinent to the area and was educated about land use development and infrastructure issues. With this information, and assistance from County Planning staff, the Committee developed a future vision for the area and measures by which to achieve their goals.

Throughout the process, the committee continuously solicited public input. A community survey was mailed to all households in the area and the responses were tabulated and analyzed to help in the plan update. LACPAC also held monthly public meetings to which the public was encouraged to attend. Finally, the committee held a public information meeting, where the findings of the committee were presented along with the recommended plan.

## COMMUNITY VISION

An integral component of any long-range plan is the establishment of future goals. Far-sighted planning, or visioning, provides local decision-makers with the opportunity to evaluate their community's strengths and weaknesses and identify areas in which to improve. The Ladysmith Area Community Planning Advisory Committee reviewed information pertaining to existing land use, environment, infrastructure, and transportation. Following this process, the Committee developed a vision defining goals for the community's future, as well as specific implementation measures, to assist in achieving those goals.

## COMMUNITY DESIGN

### *A VISION OF LADYSMITH'S FUTURE*

The act of creating a vision for the future of Ladysmith means that the citizens of this area have described the preferred future makeup of their community. A vision statement represents the shared expression of what the residents want their community to become; an expression of optimism about the community's future. That vision of Ladysmith is:

*Ladysmith will become the most populated area in Caroline County over the next 15 to 20 years. A combination of the two existing lake communities and their expansion, along with the approved development plans for Ladysmith Village and Pendleton Golf Community, will fuel this growth. Ladysmith Village will include a library, new school, commercial shopping, a Y.M.C.A. and some 2,800 dwelling units. The Pendleton Golf Community will consist of, but not be limited to, a golf course, 600,000 square feet of retail area, a possible hotel and 3,500 dwelling units.*

The vision for the Village Community Concept in the Ladysmith Area is to successfully manage growth by implementing specific controls and requirements now, so that the future will bring the village atmosphere envisioned for the future residents of the community. The goal is to make Ladysmith an area that will provide an ideal environment, where residents will take pride in their Village, unite with and support local merchants, and work together to form a strong community bond. Each neighborhood within the Village, and Ladysmith as a whole, will be designed to encourage interaction among people and an active living environment. The hope is to maintain a small-town atmosphere for the enjoyment, comfort and convenience of all residents.

In appearance, the Village Community Concept will consist of single family dwellings, villas, town homes, and apartments clustered together with an attractive mix of compatible small and large storefronts (some with housing above), office buildings and some light industry.

The aesthetic appearance of all new commercial and housing development within the Village will be complemented by lighted streets, sidewalks, and, most importantly, well landscaped gathering places such as courtyards, small parks and children's recreation areas.

New businesses focused on tourism will be attracted to the Village of Ladysmith by its uniqueness and rural charm.

### STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, THREATS AND CONCERNS

All communities have existing assets that can form the basis of planning. Communities also have certain real or perceived strengths and weaknesses. In completing this study, one major task of the committee was to identify community assets, as well as the real or perceived strengths of the Ladysmith area, as reported by the residents through a written survey and as determined by the committee through its research and deliberations. Once identified, a second major task of the committee was to determine how the community might capitalize on its existing assets and its real or perceived strengths and how it might effectively address its real or perceived weaknesses.

Most communities also consider either present or potential opportunities and present or potential threats in planning its future. In completing this study, the committee sought to identify present or potential opportunities or threats for the Ladysmith area. Once identified, the objective was to determine how the community can take advantage of its opportunities and successfully challenge its threats.

#### *BUILD ON STRENGTHS AND EXISTING ASSETS*

The following data provides a descriptive inventory of the existing assets in the Ladysmith area that can form the basis for planning the future of the community. Assets such as population and housing are important assets. The existing population of approximately 8,000 and inventory of about 3,500 homes in Ladysmith provide a substantial base upon which to build the future "village community". The 144 licensed businesses in the community offer a nucleus of future business expansion. The presence of highly rated fire and rescue services and the public water and sewer infrastructure are also valuable assets upon which the future vision of the community can be developed.

In the opinion of responding residents, the rural character of the area (44%), low tax rate (44%) and low crime rate (41%) are the major strengths of the Ladysmith area. Other major strengths that the 607 survey respondents agreed upon were: access to Richmond and Fredericksburg (34%); small town atmosphere (33%); and affordable housing (31%). Distance from the cities, good roads and property appearance were also cited as elements around which the Ladysmith area can be planned and developed. Finally, the four large communities (Lake Caroline, Lake Land 'Or, Ladysmith Village and Pendleton), with a total of approximately 2,700 existing homes and further growth potential of almost 7,800, provide a major economic base, a source of employees for new business, and a source of community leaders to help plan and realize the future vision of the Village of Ladysmith.

#### *ADDRESS WEAKNESSES*

Future traffic congestion (54%); too much residential development (38%); quality of public schools (35%); rising county taxes (33%) were by far the greatest weaknesses cited by questionnaire respondents that need to be addressed for the desired future of Ladysmith to be realized.

#### *TAKE ADVANTAGE OF OPPORTUNITIES*

The committee views the following as near-term opportunities for planned growth that will support attainment of the future vision of the Ladysmith area:

- Proximity to major highway corridors
- Development of adequate public utilities (Rappahannock River intake)

- Adherence to Comprehensive Plan/development standards
- Workforce availability
- Lower housing costs compared to other jurisdictions

#### *MINIMIZE POTENTIAL THREATS*

The committee recognizes that there are a number of threats to the development of the vision of Ladysmith. The committee identified the five greatest threats:

- Lack of transportation funding;
- Outside development pressures and interests;
- Increased crime. Whenever, there is an increase in housing and business opportunities, some increase in crime is possible. However, proper design can mitigate the potential for some criminal activity; and
- Loss of rural character. Duplication of the current overcrowded highways at Carmel Church, or permitting any and all forms of over development without adequate controls, will destroy the strengths of rural character, quality of living, and preclude reasonable housing costs.

#### *CONCERNS*

Traffic congestion and future traffic congestion were the most frequently mentioned concern in the survey (54%). This was followed in importance by concern for: lack of availability of public water (39%); extensive residential development (38%); and quality of public schools (35%). These most important concerns and others must be given consideration in planning the future of the Ladysmith Community.

#### *SWOT ANALYSIS*

The committee discussed the strengths and weaknesses of the Ladysmith community, as well as the opportunities and threats that the community faces (SWOT Analysis). The list that follows is the result of these discussions.

Those items listed by the committee are broad in scope and include a variety of items that fall under specific headings, for example: congested roads or a congested intersection would fall under overall transportation system; golf, boating and fishing would be considered outdoor recreation opportunities. Detailed responses should be considered as being included under the broader headings.

#### **STRENGTHS**

- Quality of life
- Preservation of rural character
- Housing availability/variety
- Low taxes
- Outdoor recreation opportunities

#### **WEAKNESSES**

- Lack of employment opportunities
- Quality of public education system
- Lack of retail
- Overall transportation system
- Public utilities



## **OPPORTUNITIES**

- Proximity to major highway corridors (I-95)
- Development of adequate public utilities (Rappahannock River water intake)
- Adherence to Comprehensive plan/development standards
- Workforce availability
- Lower housing costs vs. adjacent jurisdictions

## **THREATS**

- Lack of transportation funding
- Outside development pressures/interests
- Increased crime
- Loss of rural character
- Competing economic interests from neighboring jurisdictions

## **RESIDENT SURVEY**

In preparing the village plan, LACPAC researched information in County records, conducted interviews with VDOT, County staff, various business leaders and developers, attended a Citizen's Planning Academy, distributed 3,800 questionnaires to residents of the study area, and conducted public discussions on various subjects addressed in the study. Having gathered information from these various sources, the committee then completed an analysis of its findings, determined conclusions from the analysis and prepared recommendations supported by the findings and conclusions.

A description of the findings from the community surveys analyzed by the Committee follows. It presents household information providing a profile of the residents of this area, a list of the most desired additional businesses and services of the Ladysmith area as perceived by the residents.

From the 607 citizen surveys returned, results identify four important elements of value in planning the desired future of the Ladysmith area:

- A profile of the households surveyed, including ages, education, income, employment, and types of homes;
- Collective shopping patterns & commuting patterns of residents in the area;
- New retail and service businesses most desired by the residents; and,
- Additional County services residents would like to have provided.

### **Profile of Households**

- Fewer children than the average, with only 29% of the 607 households having children.
- A more mature population; 53% of adults in households are 45 years or older, while 16% are 65 and over.
- Higher level of education, 92% of survey respondents have an education level above high school.
- Higher level of income; 94% earn \$30,000 and above and 79% earn over \$50,000.
- 61% commute to other areas for employment.
- 96% home ownership rate.
- High percentage of single-family dwellings, 95% of those responding.

### **Shopping Preferences**

Currently, major shopping is conducted in Fredericksburg, Ashland and Richmond, in that order. The most frequent shopping in the Ladysmith area is for gas, postal service, convenience items, cable service, groceries, drug items and heating/air conditioning services.

### **Additional Businesses Desired**

The most frequently mentioned new small businesses desired for the area are restaurants, medical/dental offices and personal services, in that order. Large retail and wholesale business are identified by 11% of the respondents as desirable.

### **Additional County Services Desired**

Additional county services considered most desirable to residents are water/sewer, parks/recreation, better school facilities, full-time fire & rescue personnel, youth programs and a community center.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

### OVERVIEW

Community facilities are those necessary or desired institutions, services or systems that support the citizens and businesses of a community. The quality of these facilities and services contributes to and enhances the quality of life of its residents. Providing suitable and accessible public facilities and services is an essential function of local government. The effectiveness of local government is often determined by its ability to plan for and provide these services.

The location and timing of community facilities can influence where and when development can take place. Therefore, the provision of community facilities is an important growth management tool. The facilities covered in this section include emergency services, schools, libraries, parks and recreation, water, sewer, and solid waste.

Decisions concerning where, when and how to provide services and facilities represent significant opportunities to bring about the vision of Ladysmith. This section establishes the framework for making such decisions in a well-thought out and efficient manner, in support of the Land Use chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. To that end, these decisions will serve as an effective means for guiding growth, reducing the adverse impacts of development, reducing the direct and indirect financial burdens to County resources, improving customer service, and enhancing the quality of life for Ladysmith residents.

### LAW ENFORCEMENT

Law enforcement is provided by the Caroline County Sheriff's Department, staffed by 42 full-time road officers, one full-time uniformed civil process server, and eleven part-time personnel assigned to court security. The main office is located approximately ten miles east of Ladysmith in Bowling Green. The sub-station is located on US Route 1 behind the Ladysmith Post Office and is staffed on an infrequent basis.

The development of Ladysmith over the next 20 years will have a significant impact on the law enforcement needs in the community. With a projected population of 30,000 residents, using a ratio of one deputy per 1,500 residents, a minimum of 20 deputies will be required to adequately serve the Ladysmith community at build-out.

### EMERGENCY SERVICES

The Ladysmith Volunteer Fire Department and the Ladysmith Volunteer Rescue Squad provide fire and emergency medical services for the Ladysmith area. Both units are supplemented by neighboring agencies on an as need basis. Bowling Green and Upper Caroline are the two closest facilities in Caroline County, while Spotsylvania County has fire stations located in Thornburg and Partlow, within 10 minutes



**Ladysmith Fire Station**

travel time of the Route 1/639 intersection. In addition, volunteer emergency medical services are supplemented six days a week by career personnel from the Caroline County Department of Fire and Rescue.

### *PERSONNEL*

The number of active volunteer fire and EMS personnel has declined across the County in recent years despite efforts to stem the decline. With the continuing decline and the increasing population in the Ladysmith community, it is likely that Caroline County will have to turn to career firefighters in Ladysmith in the near future.

### *APPARATUS*

The Ladysmith Volunteer Fire Department currently has eight vehicles in its fleet. These vehicles are replaced through the Capital Improvement Program on a schedule developed by the County.

The Ladysmith Volunteer Rescue Squad currently has six vehicles in its fleet, including four ambulances, a response vehicle, and a crash truck. Most of these vehicles are also on a replacement schedule plan through the County's Capital Improvement Program.

### *AFFORDABILITY OF FIRE INSURANCE*

Facilities and response times for fire emergencies impact fire insurance rates for members of the community. Locating new development near existing or proposed fire stations and the proximity of fire hydrants to developments are important factors in reducing the insurance burden on members of the community.

### RECREATION AND PARKS

Open space, parks and recreation facilities and programs are essential to the livelihood and well-being of the Ladysmith community by providing residents with enjoyable activities and settings in which to spend their leisure time. Maintaining open spaces ranked highly on the Ladysmith community survey. Conservation benefits are also derived from the preservation of open space and park areas by maintaining the integrity of watersheds, protecting water quality in streams and underground aquifers, and preserving natural habitats for wildlife. The economic benefits realized from preserving open spaces and offering recreational opportunities include; increases in the value of surrounding properties and an enhanced quality of life.

Table C.1 contains more specific standards appropriate for the Ladysmith community. With a current service area population of about 8,000 people, the area has sufficient population to support many recreational facilities based on these general standards.

A number of recreational facilities presently exist in the lake communities, but are not available to the Ladysmith community at large. Additional open space and recreational areas are planned within areas currently under development (i.e. Ladysmith Village and Pendleton). As additional development occurs, there will be increased demand for facilities and programs to meet the recreational needs of the Ladysmith community.

The committee has identified areas along Routes 639, 683 and 601 to be preserved as open space/flood plain on the land use map. The committee recommends that the area specified on Route 639 be considered for a community/regional park with recreational facilities, such as ball fields and courts.

Many recreational facilities can be funded or constructed through new developments, as projects are approved by the County. However, other funding mechanisms will be required for larger, community-wide facilities.

TABLE C. 1

Activity/Facility	Recommended Space Requirements	No. Of Units Per Population
Basketball - Youth - High School	2400-3036 sq. ft. 5040-7280 sq. ft.	1 per 5,000
Tennis	Minimum of 7,200 sq. ft. single court (2 acres for complex)	1 court per 2,000
Volleyball	Minimum of 4,000 sq. ft.	1 court per 5,000
Baseball (Official)	3.0-3.85 acres minimum	1 per 5,000 Lighted - 1 per 30,000
Football	Minimum 1.5 acres	1 per 20,000
Soccer	1.7 to 2.1 acres	1 per 10,000
1/4 Mile Running Track	4.3 acres	1 per 20,000
Softball/Youth Baseball	1.5 to 2.0 acres	1 per 5,000
Multiple Recreation Court (basketball, volleyball, tennis)	9,840 sq. ft.	1 per 10,000
Trails	N/A	1 system per region
Swimming Pools	Varies on size of pool and amenities, usually 1/2 to 2 acre site	1 per 20,000

LIBRARY

The newly constructed branch of Caroline Library serves the Ladysmith area. The facility, located on Clara Smith Street, contains about 7,000 square feet and houses 20,380 volumes. The facility meets the minimum standards contained in Chapter 7 of the Comprehensive Plan. Based on a population of approximately 8,000 people for the service area, and using the standard of 0.6 sq. ft. per capita and 2.0 books per capita, the minimum facility standards are 4,800 square feet and 16,000 books to serve the current population in the area.



Ladysmith Library

As Ladysmith grows, additional demands will be placed upon the library system to expand and improve service to the community. Using the standards above, the library facility will need to expand to an area of 18,000 square feet with 60,000 books over the next 20 years.

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Public schools perform the essential function of educating our children, preparing them to enter a diverse, expanding work force. In addition, schools are an area of community focus and a gathering place for community and youth activities. There are two schools located in the Ladysmith community, Ladysmith Primary (grades K-2) and Ladysmith Elementary (grades 3-5). A majority of children in grades K-5 in Ladysmith do not have to travel far to attend either school. A new school to house 950 students grades K-5 is under construction at the intersection of Ladysmith Road and Clark and York Boulevard, This will replace the present Ladysmith Elementary School. Middle and high school students are served by the Caroline County Middle and High Schools near the Route 207 – Devil’s Three Jump Road intersection. These schools are approximately eight miles from the intersection of US Route 1 and Route 639 in Ladysmith.

Assuming that current percentages of school age children remain constant with almost half attending elementary school and an estimated 12,000 households in the community over the next 20 years, it can be anticipated that the resulting school impact will be 2,905 elementary students, 1,435 middle school students, and 1,565 high school students, at build out. Thus, based on these estimates, the Ladysmith community will need up to three elementary schools, one middle school and one high school over the 20-30 year lifespan of this plan. In the near term, it appears that the most pressing need will continue to be additional elementary school space.

## SOLID WASTE

Solid Waste is collected in Ladysmith through the operation of a County convenience center. Unless a neighborhood property owner association or individuals contract with private haulers, residents must transport their solid waste and recyclables to the convenience center located on Green Road.

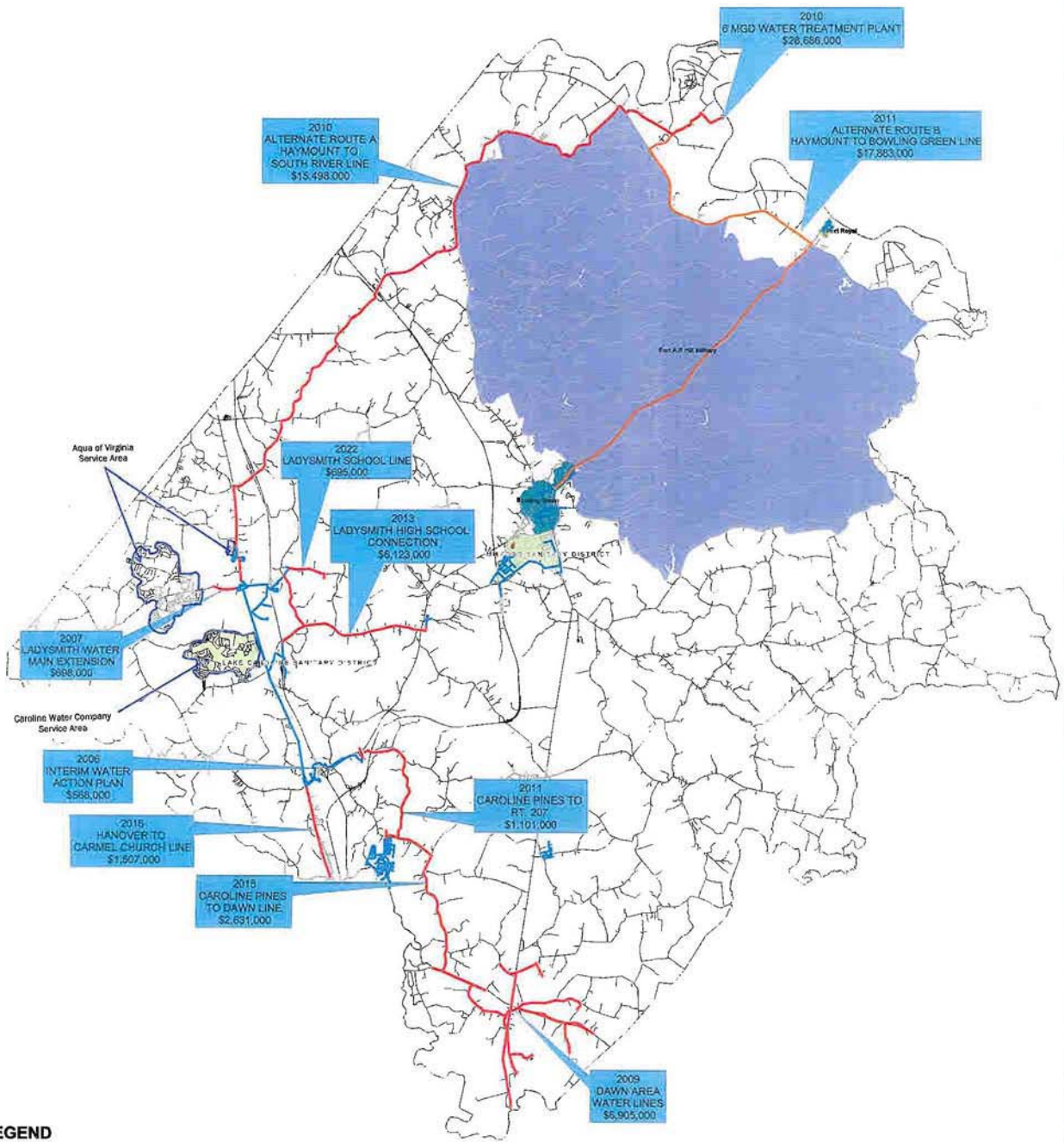
## UTILITIES

The earliest centralized water and sewer systems were established as private systems that spurred the development of Lake Caroline and Lake Land ‘Or. In the mid 1990s, the County extended both water and sewer to the Ladysmith area to spur economic development.

Today, approximately 28% of Ladysmith area residents obtain water from private wells and 72% from public or private utility systems. Approximately 70% of the community uses private septic systems, with the other 30% serviced by public or private sewer systems. Utility service in Ladysmith is provided by a combination of private utility companies and Caroline County. Aqua of Virginia provides water service in two areas, the Lake Land ‘Or/Bridlewoods/Caroline Apartments service area off of Route 639 and the Caroline Village/Warren Park service area near the intersection of US Route 1 and Route 604. The Ladysmith Water Company provides water service to the Lake Caroline community. Aqua of Virginia provides sewer service to a portion of Lake Land ‘Or. Other regions of the Ladysmith area are served by public utilities provided by the County.

In 2002 and 2003, the Department of Public Works prepared a water and wastewater feasibility study for the County, including the Ladysmith area. Pursuant to the approval of those plans, the County embarked upon studies to upgrade and expand both utilities to accommodate anticipated development, as well as to address existing needs within the community.

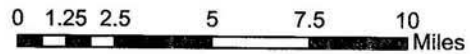
Maps C.1 and C.2 identify the proposed utility improvements across the County. These improvements have been designed to accommodate projects previously approved by the Board of Supervisors, with limited capacity for new projects. Future development proposals will require further analysis of both utilities to determine system capacity or the installation of improvements necessary to accommodate the project. However, all future developments should be served by the County Utility System.



**LEGEND**

- EXISTING WATER
- EXISTING WATER TANK
- PROPOSED WATER
- PROPOSED WATER TANK
- HAYMOUNT WATER LINE ALTERNATE ROUTE B
- WATER TREATMENT PLANT
- ROADS
- RAILWAY LINES
- COUNTY LINE
- Bowling Green
- Fort A.P. Hill Military Reservation
- Port Royal

Map C.1



## CAROLINE COUNTY PUBLIC UTILITIES PROPOSED NEW PROJECTS





## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Availability of leading edge Information Technology (IT) is of major importance to growth and development in the Ladysmith community. Technologies are continuously advancing to allow for the transfer of information at progressively faster rates. Much of the Ladysmith area presently has access to high speed wireless internet services and the current cable provider in Ladysmith is in the process of enhancing its systems to provide digital internet, phone and television service. The presence of high speed internet connections, digital phone services, etc, expected to be completed by April 2008, will attract more IT dependent commercial users, encourage telecommuting and enhance the quality of life for residential users.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

**GOAL C.1:** PROVIDE COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES THAT MEET THE NEEDS OF THE CITIZENS OF LADYSMITH IN A COST-EFFECTIVE MANNER, WHILE SUPPORTING THE DESIRED LAND USE PATTERNS OF COMPACT GROWTH AND SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBORHOOD DESIGN.

**OBJECTIVE C.1.1** - UTILIZE THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS PROGRAM AS AN ONGOING FACILITY PLANNING SYSTEM TO IDENTIFY AND PRIORITIZE NEEDS AND LOCATIONS FOR COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES.

**Action Strategy C.1.1.1:** Minimize the direct and indirect costs of new development borne by the public.

**Action Strategy C.1.1.2:** Locate and design facilities to maximize potential for multiple purposes.

**Action Strategy C.1.1.3:** Reduce the use of scarce and non-renewable resources by utilizing green building principles to the extent practical in new and existing buildings.

**OBJECTIVE C.1.2** - INTEGRATE COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE PROVISIONS INTO THE PATTERN OF LAND USES.

**Action Strategy C.1.2.1:** Plan for community facilities such as libraries, schools, and parks by setting aside land in mixed-use activity centers within Ladysmith.

**Action Strategy C.1.2.2:** Provide safe and convenient pedestrian, vehicular, and bicycle connections between community facilities and the neighborhoods they serve.

**Action Strategy C.1.2.3:** Explore opportunities for co-location of existing and planned public facilities – such as public schools, libraries, emergency shelters, bike and pedestrian pathways, parks, and community and recreational centers – where mutually beneficial and represents an efficient use of resources.

**Action Strategy C.1.2.4:** Establish and maintain high standards for the design and construction of community facilities, and locate facilities to maximize their contribution to the physical character both of the neighborhoods and the community as a whole.

**OBJECTIVE C.1.3** - MAXIMIZE THE EFFICIENCY OF EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE BY ENCOURAGING GROWTH IN AREAS WHERE SERVICES AND FACILITIES ARE ALREADY AVAILABLE, IN LIEU OF EXPANDING SERVICES TO NEW AREAS.

**Action Strategy C.1.3.1:** Prioritize the completion of infrastructure and other capital improvements within the existing Ladysmith growth area.

**Action Strategy C.1.3.2:** Discourage expansion of water, sewer and other public facilities that could increase development pressure on the edge of the Ladysmith growth area or in rural agricultural areas.

**Action Strategy C.1.3.3:** Ensure that new development occurs first in those locations where services and facilities exist or can be economically and efficiently provided, to prevent the premature development of areas which are more difficult and expensive to serve.

**GOAL C.2:** REDUCE UNNECESSARY EXPENSES RELATED TO UNPLANNED SYSTEM EXPANSION DUE TO REZONING OR PREMATURE DEVELOPMENT.

**Action Strategy C.2.1:** Prohibit water and sewer system expansion outside of the Ladysmith Village Area boundaries and ahead of schedule as adopted in the County Capital Improvement Plan (CIP).

**Action Strategy C.2.2:** Evaluate options for combining multiple water and sewer services in the Ladysmith area to increase efficiency and reduce overhead.

**Action Strategy C.2.3:** Discourage the expansion of private utility companies beyond their current service areas.

**GOAL C.3:** PROVIDE FOR ADEQUATE SOLID WASTE DISPOSAL IN THE LADYSMITH COMMUNITY.

**Action Strategy C.3.1:** Plan and provide for expansion of convenience centers in the Ladysmith area and identify sites for future convenience centers.

**Action Strategy C.3.2:** Encourage residents and businesses to reduce per capita waste production.

**Action Strategy C.3.3:** Develop programs to encourage increasing per capita recycling rates in Ladysmith.

**GOAL C.4:** IMPROVE INSURANCE SERVICE OFFICE FIRE RATINGS FOR THE LADYSMITH VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT IN ORDER TO REDUCE INSURANCE COSTS FOR RESIDENTS AND THE LOSS OF LIFE AND PROPERTY.

**Action Strategy C.4.1:** Locate future residential development near existing or planned stations to minimize response times and travel distance.

**Action Strategy C.4.2:** Require all new developments to be adequately equipped with fire hydrants

**Action Strategy C.4.3:** Evaluate methods for improving fire insurance ratings for existing developments in the Ladysmith community

**GOAL C.5:** PURSUE ADEQUATE VOLUNTEER STAFFING LEVELS FOR BOTH THE FIRE AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES TO MINIMIZE AND DELAY THE NEED FOR CAREER PERSONNEL.

**Action Strategy C.5.1:** Recruit and retain sufficient staff for the Ladysmith Volunteer Fire Department and Ladysmith Volunteer Rescue Squad.

**Action Strategy C.5.2:** Evaluate career development and retention programs to encourage volunteerism.

**GOAL C.6:** ENSURE ADEQUATE LAND RESERVATION THROUGHOUT THE COMMUNITY TO ALLOW FOR THE EXPANSION OF EXISTING SCHOOLS OR THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW SCHOOLS, CONSISTENT WITH PROJECTED NEEDS AND THE PATTERN OF FUTURE LAND USES.

**Action Strategy C.6.1:** Work cooperatively with the school system to identify appropriate sites for new schools within the Ladysmith area.

**Action Strategy C.6.2:** Support school funding by strengthening the tax base and exploring opportunities for financial savings related to the construction and operation of schools.

**Action Strategy C.6.3:** To the extent allowed by law, explore the feasibility of adopting an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO), linking residential growth and school capacities.

**GOAL C.7:** ESTABLISH ADEQUATE OPEN SPACES AND NEIGHBORHOOD AND COMMUNITY RECREATIONAL FACILITIES AND PROGRAMS TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE LADYSMITH COMMUNITY.

**Action Strategy C.7.1:** Evaluate short and long-term options to expand recreation opportunities for residents of Ladysmith.

**Action Strategy C.7.2:** Develop recreational, sports, and cultural facilities to provide and maintain an adequate level of service and improve the quality of life;

**Action Strategy C.7.3:** Evaluate specific community needs regarding types of recreational, sports, and cultural facilities desired within the community.

**Action Strategy C.7.4:** Develop neighborhood-oriented, community, and regional parks and open spaces to adequately serve the area's existing and growing population;

**Action Strategy C.7.5:** Identify mechanisms to acquire land for regional parks / recreational facilities and open space as identified in the land use plan.

**Action Strategy C.7.6:** Establish an interconnected system of greenways and trails within and between neighborhoods to connect parks and other community facilities

**Action Strategy C.7.7:** Provide supervised transportation services to those interested in participating in recreational programs offered in other parts of the County.

**Action Strategy C.7.8:** Develop a volunteer network to support the Parks & Recreation Department with recreational programs, maintenance, and notification of upcoming events.

**Action Strategy C.7.9:** Encourage VDOT to construct bicycle lanes and/or paths in conjunction with road widening projects.

**Action Strategy C.7.10:** Formally adopt a school/park and recreation policy that includes the following:

- Specific facility standards and designs for all community type use facilities at new school sites.
- Operational & maintenance agreements with the Park and Recreation Department.
- Evaluation of future sites acquired by either the School Board or Board of Supervisors for joint uses.
- Short and long range planning for the improvement and expansion of school-community use facilities.

**Action Strategy C.7.11:** Require developers to provide neighborhood parks within their developments in accordance with adopted standards. Each new development should have one neighborhood playground within 0.25 miles of each dwelling.

**GOAL C.8:** PROVIDE FOR ADEQUATE LAW ENFORCEMENT TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF THE LADYSMITH COMMUNITY.

**Action Strategy C.8.1:** Evaluate needs for enhancement of the Sheriff's substation in Ladysmith and act accordingly based on the evaluation.

**Action Strategy C.8.2:** Encourage regular evaluation and enhancement of staffing levels and responsibilities within the Sheriff's office to ensure adequate law enforcement coverage in the Ladysmith community.

**GOAL C.9:** ENSURE MEMBERS OF THE LADYSMITH COMMUNITY HAVE ACCESS TO CONTEMPORARY FORMS OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY FOR BUSINESS AND PERSONAL USE.

**Action Strategy C.9.1:** Continuously monitor advances in technology used for communication and information transfer.

**Action Strategy C.9.2:** Negotiate with IT service providers to encourage enhancement of services in the Ladysmith community as technology advances.

**Action Strategy C.9.3:** Ensure that the Ladysmith community has IT choices in terms of types of services and costs of services.

## LADYSMITH TRANSPORTATION PLAN

**TRANSPORTATION GOAL:** ENSURE DEVELOPMENT OF A TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT ENCOURAGES ALL MODES OF TRANSPORTATION IN LADYSMITH – ROADS, BIKE AND WALKING FACILITIES— ALLOWING FOR PLEASANT, SAFE, AND EFFICIENT TRAVEL FOR RESIDENTS AND VISITORS TO, FROM, AND THROUGH THE LADYSMITH AREA.

### OVERVIEW

Ladysmith is served by four major roads: Interstate 95 and Route 1 running north-south, and Routes 639 (Ladysmith Road) and 601 (Golansville Road) running east-west. Route 639 provides a direct connection to I-95 through an un-signalized diamond interchange, dating to the original I-95 construction in the early 1960s. The ease of access to I-95, and the proximity of the Ladysmith area to Richmond to the south, and Fredericksburg and northern Virginia to the north, provides Ladysmith with an appealing geographic location.

Over the last ten to fifteen years, increases in traffic on Ladysmith area roads have been modest, with most roads showing an annual increase of two percent or less. Routes 639 and 712 (Green Road) are exceptions. Route 639 serves as a collector road bringing traffic to the interstate from the west. It also serves as a route for the Ladysmith area to reach the County seat in Bowling Green.

Route 712 has experienced modest commercial development in recent years, adding to its traffic volume. However, it also serves as a route for residents south of Route 639 to access the I-95 interchange without having to travel through the US Route 1/Route 639 intersection. This results in a significant amount of cut-through traffic.

With one exception (Route 639), traffic operations generally performed at an acceptable Level-of-Service (LOS) C or better in the Ladysmith area in 2004. Route 639 carried approximately 9,000 vehicles per day immediately west of its connection with I-95 and performed at LOS D during peak traffic periods. This poor LOS extends west from I-95 approximately four miles to the entrance of Lake Land 'Or and includes the intersection of US Route 1 (Jefferson Davis Highway) and Route 639. The intersection performed poorly during peak traffic periods; however, recent turn lane enhancements at the intersection have improved performance. Since traffic counts were taken in 2004, traffic volumes have increased dramatically at this intersection and along Route 639 due to traffic generated by the additional housing in the area. The performance of Route 639 and its intersecting roads will continue to deteriorate as additional growth occurs.

US Route 1 is the only multi-lane roadway in the Ladysmith study area except for I-95. It is a four lane undivided road carrying approximately 6,000 vehicles per day in 2004.

Most of the secondary roads in the Ladysmith area are rural two lane roads carrying less than 1,000 vehicles per day. There are two exceptions, Route 658 (Jericho Road), carrying 1,000 vehicles in 2004, and Route 712, with 1,300 vehicles per day.

In addition to vehicle access, the Fredericksburg Regional Transit (FRED), providing a limited weekday, route deviated service, recently began servicing the Ladysmith area. Special facilities for pedestrian and bicycle accommodation are just beginning to appear in the area, predominantly in the newer, larger planned residential developments.

Adequate roadway capacity is not the only highway transportation network consideration. Many of the two lane rural roads in the Ladysmith area do not meet current design standards. Most of the roads have pavement widths of less than twenty feet and shoulder widths of four feet or less, most of which are unpaved. Many of the roads have horizontal and/or vertical curvature, which may minimally meet standards. As long as traffic volumes remain low and carry predominantly local traffic, these minimal standard roads may remain adequate. However, as traffic volumes increase, so will the demand for their improvement.

## TRANSPORTATION IMPACTS

Most of the roads in the Ladysmith area are inadequate to accommodate the projected traffic resulting from planned growth. The traditional approach to transportation has been to rely on increasing the road capacity. The LACPAC Plan suggests a more balanced approach, including walking and biking facilities for recreation and local trips, and the potential expansion of transit service.

The traditional neighborhood development (TND) or “village” concept articulated in this plan shows promise to reduce the number of vehicle trips made and for those trips to be shorter than those that normally accompany conventional land development patterns. In the analysis developed for this plan, a trip rate reduction of about 30% was assumed, supported by a combination of the following factors:

- Mixed-use development as a key element of the land use plan,
- A mix of housing types,
- Integration of pedestrian and bicycle facilities within the existing and proposed transportation network,
- Transit service being initiated in the area,
- Retirees being targeted by the design and marketing efforts of several planned developments, and
- An established pattern of vehicle trip reduction within the existing large developments in the area that already exist.

While it is reasonably expected that this trip reduction will materialize, should it not, the projected 2025 traffic volumes contained in this plan will need to be re-examined and adjusted as necessary. Throughout the development of the Ladysmith area, the traffic volumes must be closely monitored and correlated to new development that is occurring to ensure that the trip reduction materializes. Existing and future traffic volumes are shown in Table C, Ladysmith Area Traffic Volumes, 2004 and 2025 of the Draft Ladysmith Area Transportation Plan by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).

## TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS

Not all traffic impacts are associated with capacity concerns. There are significant safety considerations when traffic volumes increase on roads that do not meet current design standards. Many of the two lane rural roads in the Ladysmith area are a concern due to the additional traffic that will be added to them. Consequently, a number of roads are recommended for improvement.

To improve traffic operations, increase capacity, and enhance safety, access management practices should be included with every road improvement project in the Ladysmith area. Major applications of access management include entrance design; the provision of turn lanes to shelter slower turning traffic, regulated median crossover, traffic signal spacing and inter-parcel connections.

### *RURAL ROADS*

The condition of the rural roads in and around the Ladysmith area is identified as a growing concern. It is likely that the more urbanized character projected for Ladysmith will also attract residents to the outlying areas. Even with a relatively low density of one lot per ten acres of land, sufficient development is likely to occur to increase the traffic volumes on rural roads to the extent that improvements will be sought. While many of these roads are adequate to carry today’s traffic volumes, they do not meet current de-

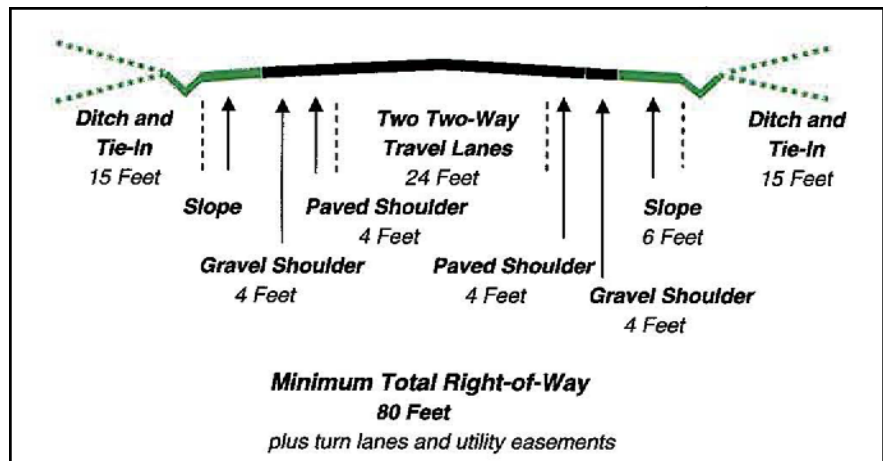


Figure D from VDOT Draft Ladysmith Area Transportation Plan

sign standards. Concerns for motorist safety, especially for young and senior drivers, may become the driving force for improvements to these facilities. In addition, the current state of these roadways does not encourage dynamic modes of transportation. A standard typical section for a two lane rural road, with full width travel lanes and shoulders, is shown in Figure D from VDOT's transportation plan for Ladysmith.

#### *PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE FACILITIES*

Many features designed to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians are included in previously discussed road improvements and shown in the typical sections for those improvements. Major roads, such as US Route 1 and Route 639, are to be upgraded to multi-lane roads with a raised median of sufficient width to provide a pedestrian refuge, a wide curb lane for bicycle travel, and sidewalk with a buffer strip between the curb and sidewalk. Most secondary roads will retain a rural character, with a shoulder and ditch design, but are to be upgraded with increased pavement width and improved vertical and horizontal alignment. A paved shoulder will provide accommodation of bicycles on these roads. Estimated costs of these facilities are included in the individual road segment cost estimates of the Draft Ladysmith Area Transportation Plan.

Multi-use paths for bicycles and pedestrians and sidewalks are incorporated into the design of new neighborhoods and developments. An interconnected system of bicycle and pedestrian facilities connecting various neighborhoods with new improvements is an important component of these planning efforts.

#### TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES

Research has identified the focal point of any Ladysmith area transportation plan as minimization of traffic through the Route 639 - US Route 1 intersection and other intersections likely to become more congested as a result of increased residential, commercial, industrial, and retail development.

**OBJECTIVE 1 - ENCOURAGE MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION (WALKING, BICYCLING) THROUGH ROADWAY DESIGN, SIGNAGE, AND PUBLIC SERVICE CAMPAIGNS, INCLUDING:**

**Action Strategy 1.1:** Wide right lanes (minimum of 14') for vehicle turning movements into and out of adjacent properties, bicycle travel accommodation, and potential transit stop pull-off locations on improved four lane roads;

**Action Strategy 1.2:** Paved shoulders (4-6 feet) on improved rural roadways with higher speed limits and limited vehicle turning movements;

**Action Strategy 1.3:** A buffer strip between the travel lane and sidewalk to accommodate the placement of highway signs, minor landscaping, and to provide for additional separation between the pedestrian and vehicle traffic;

**Action Strategy 1.4:** A wide median to accommodate dual left turn lanes to enhance intersection vehicle capacity, to provide a mid-crossing refuge for pedestrians at crosswalks, and minor landscaping.;

**Action Strategy 1.5:** Share the Road signs;

**Action Strategy 1.6:** Sidewalks for pedestrians;

**Action Strategy 1.7:** Cross walk & pedestrian cross lights at signalized intersections;

**Action Strategy 1.8:** Requiring commercial establishments to provide appropriate parking facilities for bicycles;

**Action Strategy 1.9:** Public service campaigns to encourage active transportation;

**Action Strategy 1.10:** Education for safe driving and shared road use for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians.

**OBJECTIVE 2 - PROVIDE SUFFICIENT ROUTES SO RESIDENTIAL TRAFFIC CAN AVOID COMMERCIAL AREA;**

**OBJECTIVE 3 - PROVIDE CONNECTIONS WITHIN AND BETWEEN COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS TO TAKE TRAFFIC AWAY FROM US ROUTE 1 AND ROUTE 639;**

**OBJECTIVE 4 - PROVIDE CONNECTIONS WITHIN AND BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS IN A MANNER THAT ENCOURAGES AVOIDING MAJOR ROADS WHEN MOVING BETWEEN NEIGHBORHOODS, BUT DISCOURAGES USE OF THESE SAME ROADS FOR THROUGH TRAFFIC; AND**

**OBJECTIVE 5 - STUDY OPTIONS FOR MOVING TRAFFIC FROM I-95 TO COMMERCIAL AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS.**

The intersection of US Route 1 and Route 639 is the current hub of traffic flow through Ladysmith. As development increases, so too will traffic volume. The primary objective of any future Ladysmith traffic system must be to redistribute the traffic flow and reduce the effects of increasing traffic volume. VDOT has developed a transportation plan to accommodate the increased volume. The plan does, in fact, redistribute volume away from the US Route 1 and Route 639 intersection.

LADYSMITH AREA COMMUNITY PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE STRATEGIES

The Ladysmith Advisory Committee shares the VDOT objective of redistributing traffic volume away from the US Route 1/Route 639 intersection, but differs in perception of project priority. Viewing the Ladysmith road system as four quadrants divided by the intersection of US Route 1 and Route 639: NE, SE, NW and SW, committee strategies are as follows:

*NE QUADRANT:*

- Construct I-95 on/off ramps at the Cedon Road overpass with associated commuter parking. I-95 on/off ramps at Cedon Road are far enough from Route 639 to influence drivers going to Ladysmith Village to make a conscious differentiation between Route 639 (Exit 110) and Cedon Road. The Committee considers VDOT's proposed I-95 access at Route 622 (Durette Road) too close to Route 639 to effectively reduce traffic volume on Route 639.
- Widen Cedon Road to three or four lanes from I-95 to US Route 1.
- Construct NE Loop of four lanes (in essence a continuation of Green Road from Route 639 to US Route 1) facilitating movement of commercial traffic through the NE industrial area, as well as residential traffic to Ladysmith Village to alleviate congestion at the Route 639/US Route 1 intersection.
- Widen US Route 1 to four lanes divided from Route 712 (Green Road) to Cedon Road.

*SE QUADRANT:*

- Move the Green Road entry at Route 639 to the west (to coincide with the VDOT proposed NE loop) and widen to four lanes enabling traffic bound for Pendleton, Lake Caroline and points south to avoid the US Route 1/Route 639 intersection. Commercial traffic to the SE Quadrant will also be drawn away from the Route 639/US Route 1 intersection.

*NW QUADRANT:*

- Widen Route 639 to four, not six, lanes from I-95 to US Route 1
- Construct a Ladysmith Village connector from Route 604 (Gatewood Road) to Route 639. This will alleviate traffic at Route 639/US Route 1 by allowing some portion of the Lake Land 'Or traffic to bypass the intersection.
- Widen Route 604 to two lanes improved from Ladysmith Connector to US Route 1.

*SW QUADRANT:*

- Construct a Pendleton Connector from Route 683 (C C C Road) to Route 639. This would meet with the Ladysmith Village Connector at Route 639 forming a continuous connector from Route 683 to Route 604.



- Widen Route 639 to four, not six, lanes from US Route 1 to the Ladysmith Village Connector.
- Improve two lanes of Route 683 from US Route 1 to Pendleton Connector.

*ARTERIAL AXES:*

**ROUTE 639 (LADYSMITH ROAD):** widen to four lanes divided from approximately one mile East of I-95 to Lake Land 'Or. Current traffic volumes and projected traffic volumes are such that four to six lanes will be required to prevent unacceptable back up and traffic density on this road. VDOT recommends six lanes divided from just East of I-95 to just past Ladysmith Village connector/Pendleton connector. Providing alternate traffic flow patterns should reduce the need for six lanes and allow for four lanes. Four lanes are more attractive to pedestrians and bicyclists. Six lanes would encourage fewer alternative modes of transportation.

**US ROUTE 1:** Widen to four lane divided from Route 604 to Route 601. VDOT recommends widening to six lanes divided from Route 712 to Route 622. Again, four lanes are more attractive to pedestrians and bicyclists. Six lanes would encourage less active modes of transportation.

Given the anticipated increase in commuters, one or more commuter park-and-ride lots should be considered near I-95. The lots should be sized to accommodate specific service areas and designed for commuter bus access. Consideration should be given to locating a lot west of I-95 and south of Route 639, perhaps in conjunction with the proposed relocation of the Route 712 connection to Route 639. Consideration should also be given to locating a facility near the proposed I-95/Cedon Road interchange, to serve commuters north of Ladysmith Road. These lots may also serve as satellite terminals for FRED.

Available resources for these projects are, and will be, extremely limited. State and Federal funding is anticipated to be almost non-existent. It is incumbent upon County leaders to develop and aggressively pursue a program that identifies and implements all funding options including, but not limited to: Local Transportation Districts, Community Development Authorities, road impact fees for new development, proffers, local bonding authority and a local gas tax. The appropriate mix and match of these potential funding sources will be contentious and demand the expertise of a professional marketing firm to convince all stakeholders of the importance of participation and support. Only then will a road system ensuring the desired quality of life in Ladysmith come to fruition.

*ADDITIONAL RECOMMENDATIONS:*

- Reduce speed limit on US Route 1 from Route 601 (Golansville/Cedar Fork Road) to the VDOT work site to 45 mph; VDOT work site to Route 604 (Gatewood Road) to 35 mph to encourage a lower speed in the Ladysmith area.
- Reduce speed limit on Route 639 from Route 1 to Ladysmith Village Connector to 35 mph; from Ladysmith Village Connector to Lake Land 'Or or Route 603 (Countyline Church Road) to 45 mph.
- Provide turn lanes off major thoroughfares in the Ladysmith area where the volume of traffic or the number of roof tops warrant such safety features. When the volume of traffic increases, so does the number of accidents involving turning vehicles.
- Provide pedestrian crosswalks and traffic lights at intersections on major thoroughfares where traffic volumes necessitate their inclusion for public safety.
- A two-bus circulator system may be an appropriate expansion of the current service, as the area continues to develop and additional service is warranted. The circulator would travel between established neighborhoods, carrying residents to shopping and other services in the immediate Ladysmith area. Current bus operations for FRED are funded by local government contribution, state funding, federal demonstration funds, fare box recovery, and business and institutional donations. A rider-

ship survey should periodically be conducted to determine the market for and the potential usage of the service prior to any expansion of the present service.

- Require commercial construction provide connections between neighboring commercial establishments.
- The consideration and provision of bicycling and walking mobility in accordance with the VDOT Policy for Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations should be incorporated into construction projects in the area.

## LAND USE & COMMUNITY DESIGN

The design of our community is important in accomplishing. The community design element establishes the goals and policies related to the form, function and appearance of the built environment. This chapter seeks to promote a unique “village” character, to create attractive and distinct neighborhoods, and to create livable, pedestrian friendly streets with a clear and coherent circulation pattern that accommodates all modes of transportation. The design guidelines set forth in this chapter are intended to facilitate higher quality development by integrating the Community’s vision with the resources and interest that developers bring to the land development process.

Community design is an integral component of the overall land use planning and growth management process. Design affects the pattern of land use, the transportation network and livability of neighborhoods, natural resources, and the placement of community facilities. Thus, it both affects, and is affected by the other chapters in the plan.

This Plan promotes changes to the suburban development trends that have historically affected Ladysmith in particular, and the County in general. In promoting change, this chapter seeks to identify ways to effect change and to understand the need for the changes.

### CREATION OF THE “VILLAGE CONCEPT”

Throughout the development of the Ladysmith Area Plan, the creation of the Village Concept was identified by the advisory committee as a major concern. It was agreed that the functional center of the Village Community for the Ladysmith area should be the intersection of Route 1 and Ladysmith Road (Route 639).

Development standards should work to achieve the community goal of a traditional neighborhood development with interconnecting street patterns, integrated and balanced uses (mixed use neighborhoods), focus of buildings toward the street and street fronts becoming gathering areas.

The Ladysmith area has a unique opportunity to implement development guidelines that work to preserve and encourage the creation of a Village Concept by utilizing more of the specific design features of the traditional neighborhood design elements, including:

#### *BUILDINGS*

- A human scale should be used with no structures overpowering in height with a possible limit of two stories and maximum height of approximately 35 feet.
- Use of soft warm colors, such as earth tones: browns, tans, greens, etc.
- All structures should be residential in character.
- Maximize the use of the natural materials, such as brick, stone, and natural wood, which minimizing the use of materials such as vinyl siding, bright aluminum panels, and painted block walls.
- Retail and office buildings should have overhangs and covered walks or awnings to promote circulation from one store to another.
- Storefront windows should be smaller and residential in character. Larger glass areas should be broken up with actual or decorative mullions.
- Buildings should be finished on all sides exposed to the view of the public.
- The display of product in the windows cannot be restricted, however, such things as paper signs should not be allowed.
- Residential buildings should be designed to encourage community interaction by the inclusion of architectural details such as front porches.
- There should be a visual continuity between old and new buildings.

**Large, flat blank expanses on the facade of a structure are not acceptable. The large “box” development should be limited to designated commercial/industrial areas (i.e., warehouse building and large retail).**

### *SITE DESIGN*

- Each neighborhood, and the village as a whole, should be designed with sidewalks, paths, etc. for use by pedestrians and bicyclists to discourage unnecessary use of the private automobile.
- Tree-lined streets and parking areas with low landscaping should be located near building fronts, but not directly in front of buildings.
- Site lighting should be residential in character and height should be limited to approximately 12 feet.
- Light lumens should not cross the property lines.
- Create traditional neighborhoods that are accessible to open space amenities, replicate historic development patterns and create a strong community identity.
- Multiple accesses along a roadway frontage, which result in complicated or confusing traffic patterns, should not be permitted.
- Limit parking in front of commercial structures to parallel and angle parking on the street; other parking must be behind or at the side of the building.

**Landscape parking areas to screen them from the corridor and surrounding areas. Also, use landscaping in the interior of parking areas to define vehicular and pedestrian paths.**

### *SIGNAGE*

- Monument signs, wooden signs, and signs should be allowed on buildings. Signs should be no taller than six feet and no more than 50 square feet in area.
- Require unobtrusive signage that is compatible in scale, size, material, and character with the building.
- Signs should have indirect lighting or cut-out letters.
- Building signage should be required to address size and color when applying for a permit. In a shopping area containing more than five shops, only two primary colors should be allowed. Signage is determined by the square footage of the building wall facing either the parking lot or the street front. Only one sign per store should be allowed without a special exception.

### *FENCING*

Chain link, or similar fencing, should be limited to the back or side yards in residential and non-residential areas and use shrubbery or climbing vines to minimize the appearance from the street. Fences of natural materials (i.e., wooden and stone) should be permitted in the front facing the street, and along the side lot line of the front yard.

### LADYSMITH AREA LAND USE PLAN

The Ladysmith Area Land Use Plan is an appendix of the County's Comprehensive Plan. The vision statement, goals, objectives and implementation strategies adopted in the 2001 Comprehensive Plan generally apply to the Ladysmith Area Plan. However, an area plan has the benefit of providing specific guidance for development within the boundaries of the planning area. This is accomplished through more specific goals, objectives, implementation strategies, and development standards for the area.

Two main themes evolved in the design of the Ladysmith Area Plan: Creation of the "Village Concept" for the Ladysmith Area; and the establishment of a community identity. The Plan achieves these themes through land use classifications.

This report provides prospective developers, businesses, individuals and other organizations who may be interested in locating in the Ladysmith area information on the community's planned future.

The Ladysmith Community Plan recommends the following:

- Priority be given to controlled growth development in order to create the "traditional neighborhood" environment.

- County leaders should fund the needed additional infrastructure and/or services to support housing growth , such as public water and sewer services, additional crime prevention and protection services from law enforcement, and improvement in the quality of the schools in the Ladysmith area and all communities to stimulate quality growth.
- The Director of Economic Development should approach the owners of the large tracts of developable land in the immediate area of Ladysmith to determine their interest in pursuing development and how the County might support such development of the area.

Additionally, the Caroline County Land Use Map and Zoning Ordinance should be amended to include the following:

*LAND USE MAP*

- Reduce the present primary growth area on the western boundary of Ladysmith to comply with Caroline County’s planned 3.5% growth rate.
- Eliminate the term “Future Growth“ from the map because the description is vague and makes development difficult to control.
- The zoning and land use maps should be adjusted to eliminate any conflicting land uses on two sides of the same traffic corridor.
- If any individual lot is held under single and separate ownership and is or has been divided by the imaginary Primary Growth line or boundary of the Land Use Map then that entire property may be considered to be within the area plan, subject to the following restrictions:
- The parcel must be consistent with the County’s adopted utility plan and the improvements must be included in the adopted utility plan.
- Development preference shall be given to existing parcels located within the core of the Primary Growth Area.

*ZONING ORDINANCE*

The Zoning Ordinance needs to be adjusted to allow for flexibility of development. There is a need to create subsets within each category, for example the business district should be expanded into various categories of business. Minimum lot area and street front provisions should also be provided. The following are general descriptions of proposed zoning changes:

**RURAL BUSINESS (RB)**

In the RB district, the maximum building footprint shall not exceed 25,000 gross square feet with no single use to exceed 12,000 gross square feet.

**NEIGHBORHOOD BUSINESS (B-1)**

The maximum building footprint in this district shall not exceed 50,000 gross square feet and no single use shall exceed 25,000 gross square feet. Such districts are intended for strategic sites in relation to population centers and transportation networks where adequate public facilities are established.

**COMMUNITY BUSINESS (B-2)**

The building footprint of the B-2 district should not exceed 75,000 square feet with no single use to exceed 35,000 square feet. Such districts are intended for strategic sites in relation to population centers and transportation networks and where adequate public facilities are established.

### **GENERAL BUSINESS (B-3)**

The general intent of this district is to provide for a variety of commercial ventures to serve the County at medium-high intensity to increase the tax base and provide employment opportunities within the County. The building footprint of the B-3 district shall not exceed 100,000 square feet with no single use to exceed 50,000 square feet.

### **REGIONAL BUSINESS (B-4)**

The building footprint of the B-4 district may exceed 100,000 gross square feet. Regulations provided are intended to encourage planned commercial centers with carefully organized buildings, service areas, parking areas, and landscaped areas. Such districts are intended for strategic locations in relation to population centers and transportation networks (adequate to accommodate traffic generated by the development) and where adequate public facilities are established.

### **OFFICE BUSINESS (OB)**

The general intent of this district is to establish areas of the County for certain types of business uses, predominately office buildings and office parks set out in a campus-oriented development. This district must be located where adequate public utilities and transportation networks are established.

### **LIGHT INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (I-1)**

The general intent of this district is to encourage the development of light industrial developments and facilities. With proper buffering and landscaping, these types of industry will not detract from the residential desirability of adjacent properties.

### **GENERAL INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (I-2)**

The general intent of this district is to encourage the development of medium industrial developments and facilities offering employment opportunities and expanding the tax base. Such uses are suitable within planned business parks or on stand alone parcels provided adequate landscaping and buffering is provided to prevent conflicts with surrounding land uses.

### **HEAVY INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT (I-3)**

The general intent of this district is to encourage the development of heavy industrial, manufacturing and assembly plants, offering employment opportunities and expanding the tax base. These types of uses should be located within industrial parks or on large tracts of land to provide maximum buffering from other less intense land uses.

## GOALS, OBJECTIVES & ACTION STRATEGIES

The Committee's research has shown that the rural character of the Ladysmith area is one asset that should be preserved. With the anticipated growth, the concept of a Village Community, in conjunction with, not at the expense of the rural character, is the main goal of this plan.

Future development within the study area should be required to cluster the development to better harmonize with the existing rural character. This type of development supports the County's goals of creating the Village Concept in the Ladysmith Area.

**GOAL 1:** MINIMIZE THE VISUAL IMPACT OF NEW DEVELOPMENT ON THE EXISTING COMMUNITY.

**Action Strategy 1.1:** Use traditional neighborhood development design principles in the creation of the Village at Ladysmith.

**Action Strategy 1.2:** Establish a planning area for the large “Big Box” retail stores to be built on the east side of I-95 along Ladysmith Road. “Big Box” retail should complement not take away from retail in mixed use developments.

**Action Strategy 1.3:** Carefully plan ingress and egress routes and encourage multiple routes designed for multiple modes of transportation including non-motorized and public (bus) transit.

**Action Strategy 1.4:** Require open space and landscaping throughout the planning area with an emphasis on preserving existing vegetation and terrain (rolling hills, etc) to the greatest extent possible.

**Action Strategy 1.5:** Remove the area of future growth and reduce the Primary Growth area as indicated in the Comprehensive Plan dated 2001 to allow controlled expansion.

**Action Strategy 1.6:** Modify many of the Business and Industrial “zoning rules and regulations” to allow for better control of development.

**GOAL 2: MINIMIZE SITE DISTURBANCE DURING NEW CONSTRUCTION.**

**Action Strategy 2.1:** Roads should follow existing contours to the extent possible.

**Action Strategy 2.2:** Disturbance for the construction of roads, basins and other improvements should be kept to a minimum.

**Action Strategy 2.3:** Disturbance on individual lots should be limited.

*ADDITIONAL PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS*

Change and accompanying growth are inevitable. Change can either be allowed to occur without intervention, opposed vigorously, or planned and managed. With the full support of area residents, the LACPAC advocates a planned and managed approach to future development of the Ladysmith area.

The essence of a planned approach is to create a vision. While necessary, a vision alone is not sufficient. The vision must be brought to life through: (1) the development of measurable or verifiable goals ; (2) the preparation of and implementation of specific plans ; and, (3) ensuring that the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance are fully supportive of and facilitate the attainment of the goals and plans that support the vision of the community.

This committee was appointed to work together with the citizens of the Ladysmith area to proactively define and pursue a vision of the community’s future meeting the desires of its residents. The thrust of this plan is to encourage leaders of both the community and the County to work together to manage the forces of change rather than allowing these forces to take the community and the County in a direction of uncontrolled growth.