

Middletown, VA



Embody Charm

Comprehensive Plan 2038

Town of Middletown, Virginia

Gateway to Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park

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INTRODUCTION

Legal Authority

All states have enabling legislation addressing comprehensive plans, but in Virginia, state law actually requires comprehensive plans with prescribed content. Section 15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia requires that every local planning commission shall prepare a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction and the governing body shall adopt a comprehensive plan. The Planning Commission shall review the plan at least once every five years to determine if amendments are advisable.

Basis and Adoption

In the fall of 2004, community stakeholders and public officials held joint workshops to engage the public, gather information, and draft general planning concepts for the future growth of Middletown. The end results were published in a document entitled “Foresight Middletown,” which then went on to be fully incorporated into Middletown’s first modern Comprehensive Plan, adopted by Council in 2005. With time, the 160 plus page document proved to be overly cumbersome and in 2009, the Planning Commission was requested to review and revise the plan in preparation potential boundary adjustments (Appendix A). In



February 2012, a special Comprehensive Plan Review Committee was appointed to assume that responsibility and a revision which updated and simplified the plan was completed the same month. In 2017, the Planning Commission and Town Council met to review the comprehensive plan and determine if amendments were

necessary. Work proceeded throughout the year by committee members to update language and the information was compiled by the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission for the Town’s consideration in 2018.

Planning Commission

The Middletown Planning Commission consists of five (5) members appointed by the Town Council, all of whom shall be residents of the Town qualified by knowledge and experience to make decisions on community growth and development. In addition to the five members, a member of the Council serves as a non-voting liaison.

Scope and Purpose of the Plan

In accordance with state code, the comprehensive plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants, including the elderly and persons with disabilities. The plan shall be general in nature and shall designate the general or approximate location, character, and extent of each feature, including any transportation improvements shown on the plan. The plan shall indicate where existing lands or facilities are proposed to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use as the case may be.

As part of the comprehensive plan, each locality shall develop a transportation plan that designates a system of transportation infrastructure needs and recommendations that may include the designation of new and expanded transportation facilities and that support the planned development of the territory covered by the plan. This shall include, as appropriate,



but not be limited to, roadways, bicycle accommodations, pedestrian accommodations, railways, bridges, and public transportation facilities. The plan should recognize and differentiate among a hierarchy of roads such as arterials, collectors, and locals. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) shall, upon request, provide localities with technical assistance in preparing such transportation plans.

The plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive matter, shall show the locality's long-range recommendations for the general development of the territory covered by the plan. It may include, but need not be limited to:

1. The designation of areas for various types of public and private development and use, such as different kinds of residential, including age-restricted, housing, business, industrial,

agricultural, mineral resources, conservation, active and passive recreation, public service, flood plain and drainage, and other areas;

2. The designation of a system of community service facilities such as parks, sports playing fields, forests, schools, playgrounds, public buildings and institutions, hospitals, nursing homes, assisted living facilities, community centers, waterworks, sewage disposal or waste disposal areas, and the like;

3. The designation of historical areas and areas for urban renewal or other treatment;

4. The designation of areas for the implementation of reasonable ground water protection measures;

5. A capital improvements program, a subdivision ordinance, a zoning ordinance and zoning district maps;

6. The location of existing or proposed recycling centers;

7. The plan shall include: the designation of areas and implementation of measures for the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of affordable housing, which is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of residents of all levels of income in the locality while considering the current and future needs of the planning district within which the locality is situated.

8. The plan shall include: a map that shall show road improvements and transportation improvements, including the cost estimates of such road and transportation improvements as available from the Virginia Department of Transportation, taking into account the current and future needs of residents in the locality while considering the current and future needs of the planning district within which the locality is situated

Implementation

The Comprehensive Plan provides a long-term perspective of community change, typically spanning a 20-year period. It is one of the most essential documents produced by the Planning Commission. Implementation of the plan occurs through town ordinances, including zoning ordinances, which contain regulations for the use and development of both public and private property within the town.

Role of Local Government

Comprehensive planning should be a continuous cycle of activity. It begins with preparations and adoption of the plan, followed by implementation, and finally periodic review of and

updates to the plan to ensure it remains a current document. Preparation of the plan usually starts with collecting and analyzing data about the town, which is then used to identify a preferred vision for the town at some point in the future. Projections are also made regarding the future of the town, such as the size of the population and the levels of certain public services that will be required to accommodate this population. The plan then includes goals and specific means for implementation that are designed to help the town achieve its vision for the future.

Once the comprehensive plan is adopted, the next phase of the planning process is implementation. The plan shall serve as the framework for town decision-making to ensure that the town is successfully moving toward its desired future. The comprehensive plan is implemented through the daily decisions of town officials, including the adoption and enforcement of regulations, establishment of new or expanded public services and programs, annual budgeting, and capital improvement planning. The effort and foresight that are put into the comprehensive plan during establishment or review are effective only to the level that the plan is implemented by town officials.

The final part of the comprehensive planning process is the periodic review and updating of the plan. This should be an on-going activity that periodically evaluates the data in the plan, identifies current items that need to be addressed, and examines the plan's objectives and implementation strategies to determine if they are adequately addressing town issues. During a review period, the town should gauge whether or not it indeed is making progress towards its desired future. Thorough and accurate plan review and updating is critical to ensure that the plan continues to provide accurate guidance to town officials.

Respect for the Rights of Individual Property Owners Versus Public Responsibility

The government of Middletown has to balance its responsibilities to the community as a whole with that of individual property owners by encouraging direct community involvement in planning, in an open two-way communication process. Respect for the individual rights of Middletown residents to use their properties without excessive governmental mandates makes Middletown a special place.

VISION: 2038

“In 2038, Middletown will be an authentic, safe, productive, and prosperous small town that respects its history and landscape, takes pride in its fiscal responsibility, embraces diversity, supports its families, and embodies charm.”

Purpose of a Vision Statement

This vision statement represents the desired future-state of Middletown. Each word was carefully chosen by Town leadership in an effort to define a basis for decision making. When discretionary authority exists during a decision-making process, the tenets of this vision statement should be considered.



CORE MISSION: 2038

Core 1

Establish framework for a new revised organization which will be responsible for the short and long-term revitalization goals for the Town of Middletown.

Core 2

Increase the community relations between our youth and the Town of Middletown.

Core 3

Continue to promote business and economic development, while preserving historical structures and landmarks and maintaining a quaint small town feel in the Town of Middletown and continue working relations with Frederick County government officials.

Core 4

Continue to provide high quality services to the Town of Middletown.

Core 5

Continue to promote long-term Small Business Development along Main Street also known as the main artery of our community and continue to fill empty commercial structures in the town limits.

Purpose of these Missions

These 5 items have been identified as core missions, vitally important to achieving the desired vision of the Town.

REGIONAL SETTING AND HISTORY

Regional Setting

Middletown is located in Southern Frederick County within the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. Two factors in the Town's regional setting have greatly influenced its existence and growth. The first factor was the Town's location along the transportation corridor which began as a path for migratory animals, then a Warrior's Trail, The Great Wagon Road, The Valley Turnpike and finally State Route-11. This early route, with its westward extension, known as the Wilderness Road, was the most important frontier highway in Colonial America. The road opened Western Virginia to settlement and also provided a means to market area produce and products.



The second regional factor affecting Middletown has been its location near large urban areas and regional employment centers, enhanced by the modern interstate system whose north-south axis parallels Route-11. The nearness of the Town to the Virginia Inland Port and to such cities as Washington D.C., Baltimore, and Richmond make it possible for local industry to easily transport products to major markets and to develop

regional employment. Local workers have the option to commute to urban areas or to work locally. The junction, of I-81 and I-66, located one mile south of Town, makes Middletown and its surrounding area a central transportation point for the entire Central Shenandoah Valley.

History

Middletown started as one of a series of settlements which sprang up along the Valley Pike, within the boundaries of the 17th Century Fairfax Grant. This was a political payoff to allies of the King during the civil war in England in the mid-1600's. Land here was under control of Thomas Lord Fairfax



and was surveyed initially by a 16-year-old George Washington.

Some of the first documentation of early Middletown dates back to the late 18th century when “Senseney Town” was laid out by Dr. Peter Senseney and his wife Magdalen. The chief factor in establishing the town was the construction of the Macadamized (crushed stone pavement) Valley Turnpike. The doctor was an astute land speculator who realized that a horse changing station was planned for the mid-way point between New Town (Stephens City) and Strasburg. When Middletown was established as a town, by an act of the General Assembly in 1796 and in anticipation of the paved turnpike, the 50-acre community was already laid out in a grid street pattern with 126 lots. Senseney also purposely laid out Main Street in town at a much wider width than normal, to allow traffic to easily pass within the town. Unfortunately, Peter Senseney did not live long enough to see much beyond the early establishment of the town, having passed in 1804. He is buried at Mt. Hebron Cemetery in Winchester.

The first census conducted for the town in 1800 listed its population as 144 free citizens and 12 slaves. It should be noted that many of the formerly enslaved families remained in Middletown following emancipation and one family worked at the Wayside Inn from the horrific days of slavery until recent years.

Major Isaac Hite, Jr., who served in Muhlenberg's regiment during the Revolutionary War, and his wife, Nelly Conway Madison (sister of President James Madison), built a large limestone mansion one mile southwest of Middletown. Belle Grove, as the house and 7500-acre plantation became known, had the assistance of Thomas Jefferson in its design and was completed in 1797. The mansion was restored in the late 1960's and is under the care of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

Early industry in Middletown was centered on the horse changing station connected to Wilkerson's Tavern (Wayside Inn-one of the oldest continuously operating Inns in the country). A wheelwright, blacksmith, harness maker and dry goods shops were all located near the inn. Several other taverns opened in the town, probably giving Middletown a rough stage stop reputation. Civilization came to town when citizens organized the Methodist Episcopal Church on Senseney Street in 1818 and the Episcopal Church in 1835.

Middletown had gained prominence in the manufacture of quality precision instruments (clocks, watches and surveying equipment) as early as 1786 by Jacob Danner, a veteran of the American Revolution, and his partner Anthony Kline. A thriving milling industry also developed on the streams a short distance west of town, because the town run was inadequate for such purposes.



The advent of the American Civil War brought much destruction to the town and the region as armies pursued each other up the Valley toward Harrisonburg and down the Valley toward Winchester. There were a number of camps near town during the war and several fights in and around town. Two major actions occurred in the town.

The first occurred on May 24, 1862 when Stonewall Jackson 's Confederates raced to the Valley Pike, after soundly defeating the Union garrison at Front Royal, in an effort cut-off Bank's Federal Army from Winchester. The Federal camps were in Strasburg and along Cedar Creek. Part of Jackson's Column led by Turner Ashby's cavalry arrived by the Cedarville Road at what is 1st Street and overtook part of Bank's wagon train. They skirmished with the Federals to Stephens City (then called Newtown). Meanwhile the Louisiana Battalion took Buckton Ford Road (Formerly 6th Street-Now Veteran's Way) and cut off Bank's rearguard, which was able to escape back to Strasburg and retreat over the Mountain and eventually to Winchester. This was the start of Jackson's famous 1862 Valley Campaign.

The next major event to impact Middletown was the 1864 Shenandoah Valley Campaign. After defeating the Confederates at Winchester, Kernstown, Toms Brook and Fisher's Hill, Gen. Philip Sheridan's Union Troops followed Early's Confederates to about Harrisonburg and began a retro move back to Cedar Creek, burning farms, crops, mills, barns and anything of use to the Confederate war effort. The Burning, as it is known locally, permanently wrecked the grain industry in the much of the Valley.



Camping the behind the protection of Cedar Creek and assuming little danger from Early's army, Sheridan left Gen. Wright in charge and went to meet with President Lincoln. Confederate General. John B. Gordon and mapmaker Capt. Jedediah Hotchkiss scouted Union positions and designed a surprise attack on the Union camps. On October 19, 1864, just before dawn and following an all-night march, the

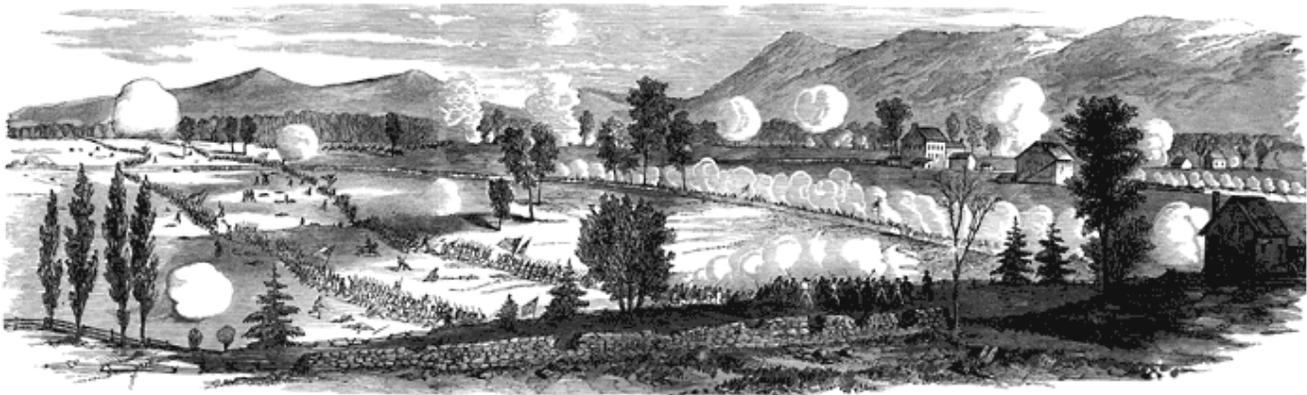
attack opened on the Union 8th Corps camps south of Middletown. Under the cover of a thick fog, and close to the trenches the battle began with a Rebel Yell and a volley from the darkness as Early's army charged the Union trenches. The surprise was complete and the 8th Corps soon abandoned their trenches, rallying briefly on Buckton Ford Rd (Veteran's Way) and giving way through town. Firing roused the Union 19th and 6th Corps. Custer's Cavalry ordered boots and saddles and rode into the fight and tried briefly to stem the Confederate tide with their carbines and flying artillery near Buckton Ford Rd, but soon returned to camp to await orders. The 19th Corps was confused with some units responding and others not. The 6th Corps immediately beat the long roll and readied for the fight. As the battle progressed, the Union troops of the 8th and parts of the 19th Corps were driven back through town and along streams to the west. Minnie Balls and artillery rounds flew thick in the streets. Part of the Union 6th Corps held the cemetery and delayed the Confederate assault long enough for the army to regroup about a mile north of town as Confederates began to ransack the Federal camps for food and supplies. By about noon, Confederate lines were established at the North end of town.

General Sheridan had returned to Winchester the prior evening and after hearing cannon fire on the morning of the 19th, began his famous ride to rally the Union Army. Upon his arrival, he rode the battle line to encourage his soldiers and wanting to be sure of what forces the Confederates had on the field, ordered a cavalry charge to take prisoners. Two attempts were made before this was accomplished. Two hundred horses fell near where Lord Fairfax Community College now stands. Around 4pm, Sheridan ordered his troops forward with the heaviest fighting occurring West of the Valley Pike where Confederate General Ramseur was mortally wounded. Custer's Cavalry flanked the Confederate lines and their morning victory turned into a rout as they scrambled South through and around Middletown, losing their baggage train and nearly all of their artillery. The battle ended at dark as Union artillery shelled the fleeing Confederates from Hupp's Hill in Strasburg.

As the battle flowed north in the morning and back South in the evening, the town suffered tremendous damage from rifle and artillery fire caused by the fighting in the streets and as a result of overshot rounds from both armies. It is thought that most citizens took refuge in their cellars, where the noise of battle was terrifying. According to James Taylor, a reporter and artist with Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper, "on my route out Church Street, I am greeted on each hand with the evidence of the fierce fighting in the struggle back and forth

during the morning and evening of the 19th, in the buildings and fences, which were peppered like sieves.” Taylor also tells a story of a curious citizen who crawled outside for a time to watch the battle as bullets zipped over his head. Today, many old homes in town lay claim to stories of bullets and cannonballs passing through their walls that day. A couple of homes still have blood stained floors.

The wounded of both armies sought shelter in town and surgeries were established at the Methodist Church, with the primary surgery at St. Thomas Church. The St. Thomas field hospital was established by Confederate surgeons in the morning and then the struggle to save lives was joined by Union surgeons in the evening. Confederate doctors remained on duty there and worked side by side with Federal surgeons. St. Thomas Church was struck



at least twice by artillery fire with a round passing through the bell tower and another lodging in the tower. The rounds were likely fired by DuPont’s Battery posted just north of present day Lord Fairfax Community College.

According to historian Dr. Jonathan Noyalis, “the Union army, which entered the battle with an overall strength of 31,610 men, suffered 5,764 casualties, 569 of whom were killed. The Confederate army which consisted of 14,091 men at the battle’s outset suffered approximately 3,060 casualties, 1,860 of whom were either reported killed or wounded.” In an ongoing effort to protect both Belle Grove and the battleground, Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park became the 388th unit of the National Park Service on December 19, 2002.

The Post-Civil War era brought a change in agriculture from wheat to orchards, but as a whole the local economy remained poor for years to come. Small communities like Middletown gradually rebuilt from war damages with towns people often bartering with neighbors for goods and services and sometimes receiving damage reparations from the

Federal Government. It took the Methodists until the 1890's to replace their badly damaged brick building with what we in town now know as Grace United Methodist.

Around 1889, Middletown was tarnished by one of the many land promotion schemes then common. "New Middletown" was to be developed just west of the town boundaries to include the Hotel Belleview (cost \$25,000.00) and "portable houses." Encompassing nearly 1,000 acres of land, it even offered free sites for manufacturing purposes to attract mills, a tin can factory, and others. Sadly, the boom failed with many people losing money and land.

The history of the Town has been one generally of providing business, educational, religious, and social opportunities to the surrounding countryside as well as serving the needs of private and commercial travelers in the valley.

POPULATION AND HOUSING STATISTICS

Historic Rates of Growth

Over the past century, Middletown has seen a significant decline in its overall growth rate as compared to that of Frederick County. While the town grew by an average of 13% each decade, Frederick County increased its population by 21%.

| Year | Middletown Population* | Frederick County Population* | Middletown's % of Frederick County's Population |
|------|------------------------|------------------------------|---|
| 1920 | 454 | 12,461 | 3.6% |
| 1930 | 416 | 13,167 | 3.2% |
| 1940 | 361 | 14,008 | 2.6% |
| 1950 | 386 | 17,537 | 2.2% |
| 1960 | 378 | 21,941 | 1.7% |
| 1970 | 507 | 24,107 | 2.1% |
| 1980 | 841 | 34,150 | 2.5% |
| 1990 | 1,061 | 45,723 | 2.3% |
| 2000 | 1,015 | 59,209 | 1.7% |
| 2010 | 1,265 | 78,305 | 1.6% |
| 2016 | 1,442 | 82,321 | 1.75% |

* Source: U.S. Census Bureau Population counts.

Population Projections

| | Historical Population | | Projected Population | |
|------------------|-----------------------|------------|----------------------|-------------|
| | 2000 | 2010 | 2020 | 2030 |
| Virginia | 7,079,030* | 8,001,024* | 8,917,396** | 9,825,019** |
| Frederick County | 59,209* | 78,305* | 95,648** | 114,539** |
| Middletown | 1015 | 1265 | 2555 | 3066 |
| % of County | 1.71% | 1.62% | 2.67% | 2.68% |

*Census figures from US Bureau of Census, 1990, 2000 & 2010 respectively.

**Virginia Employment Commission

Age and Distribution 2010

Statistically, Middletown shows little or no difference when compared with Frederick County and the Commonwealth of Virginia. Roughly one quarter of the population is under the age of 18, 62% are of working age, and 10% of retirement age. The aging of the Baby Boom population after 2010 will have a dramatic impact on the growth of the elderly population. By the year 2025, the survivors of the Baby Boom will be between the ages of 61 and 79. During the period 2010 to 2025 all states show a rapid acceleration in the growth of the elderly population.

| Age and Distribution 2016 - ACS 5yr Estimates | | | |
|--|-------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| | Middletown | Frederick County | Virginia |
| Under 5 years | 88 (6.1%) | 4,857 (5.9%) | 490,308 (5.8%) |
| 5 to 9 years | 91 (6.3%) | 5,762 (7%) | 581,721 (11.9%) |
| 10 to 14 years | 89 (6.2%) | 5,433 (6.6%) | 548,480 (5.2%) |
| 15 to 19 years | 95 (6.6%) | 5,186 (6.3%) | 523,549 (7.1%) |
| 20 to 24 years | 102 (7.1%) | 4,857 (5.9%) | 490,308 (10.7%) |
| 25 to 29 years | 101 (7%) | 4,775 (5.8%) | 481,997 (6.7%) |
| 30 to 34 years | 99 (6.9%) | 4,939 (6%) | 498,618 (7.6%) |
| 35 to 39 years | 94 (6.5%) | 4,939 (6%) | 498,618 (7.8%) |
| 40 to 44 years | 97 (6.7%) | 5,680 (6.9%) | 573,411 (4.6%) |
| 45 to 49 years | 101 (7%) | 6,339 (7.7%) | 639,893 (5.3%) |
| 50 to 54 years | 105 (7.3%) | 6,421 (7.8%) | 648,203 (5.7%) |
| 55 to 59 years | 97 (6.7%) | 6,174 (7.5%) | 623,273 (4.7%) |
| 60 to 64 years | 85 (5.9%) | 4,528 (5.5%) | 457,067 (5.5%) |
| 65 to 69 years | 69 (4.8%) | 4,281 (5.2%) | 432,136 (5.3%) |
| 70 to 74 years | 49 (3.4%) | 3,046 (3.7%) | 307,481 (1.7%) |
| 75 to 79 years | 33 (2.3%) | 2,305 (2.8%) | 232,688 (1.6%) |
| 80 to 84 years | 23 (1.6%) | 1,564 (1.9%) | 157,896 (1.8%) |
| 85 years and over | 25 (1.7%) | 1,265 (1.5%) | 124,655 (1%) |
| Total Population | 1,142 | 82,321 | 8,310,301 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Population counts.

Household Projections

| | 2000 | 2010 | 2016 Estimate | 2020 | 2030 |
|-----------------------|-------|-------|------------------|-------|-------|
| Population | 1,015 | 1,265 | 1,442 | 2,555 | 3,066 |
| Persons Per Household | 2.48 | 2.48 | 2.82 | 2.48 | 2.48 |
| Number of Households | 409 | 508 | 512 | 1030 | 1236 |

Significant population growth is expected within the Town due to growth pressures from Northern Virginia, as well as new housing opportunities expected to come on line within the projection period.

ECONOMY, BUSINESS, AND EMPLOYMENT

Middletown boasts a labor force participation rate of 97.3%. While the majority of residents travel outside of Middletown for primary work, Middletown attracts just under 600 people for work daily with a net outflow of 28 residents. Residents travel predominantly to other places within Frederick County, or to the City of Winchester for work. Smaller percentages of residents travel to Warren, Fairfax, Shenandoah, Loudoun, and Prince William counties.

Outflow Job Counts by Distance Traveled (2015)

| | Count | Share |
|-----------------------|-------|---------|
| Total Primary Jobs | 637 | 100.00% |
| Less than 10 miles | 180 | 28.3% |
| 10 to 24 miles | 235 | 36.9% |
| 25 to 50 miles | 106 | 16.6% |
| Greater than 50 miles | 116 | 18.2% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, OnTheMap Application

The current estimated population of Middletown is 1,324, making up 530 households. Both are expected to increase with the delivery of 202 new homes in the Village of Middletown adjacent to the Lord Fairfax Community College Middletown Campus. The median household income for Middletown is \$54,318 and is expected to increase substantially to more than \$70,000 over the next five years.

Middletown Residents 16+ Employed by Industry

| | |
|-------------------------------|-------------|
| Agriculture/Mining | 1.4% |
| Construction | 11.6% |
| Manufacturing | 10.2% |
| Wholesale Trade | 2.7% |
| Retail Trade | 16.0% |
| Transportation/Utilities | 4.4% |
| Information | 1.3% |
| Finance/Insurance/Real Estate | 4.7% |
| Services | 42.7% |
| Public Administration | 5.2% |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2010 with ESRI forecasts for 2018

62.3% of Middletown residents age 25+ have achieved greater than a high school education.

The Villages at Middletown will provide 180 single family homes, and 22 apartment style dwellings above more than 80,000 square feet of commercial space.

In June 2017, Thermo Fisher Scientific announced that they would invest \$9.5 million to expand its advanced manufacturing operations and create an additional 57 jobs for Middletown, keeping Thermo Fisher in the top 15 largest employers in Frederick County and 2nd largest in Middletown. Lord Fairfax Community College is the largest employer in Middletown with 500-999 employees.

Currently there is one 12.5 acre site available in Middletown zoned for M1 (Light Industrial) land use. Other available sites are zoned B2 for commercial use, and are primarily located surrounding I-81 Exit 302.

DOWNTOWN PLAN

What is a Downtown Plan?

In accordance with the State of Virginia Code, Comprehensive Plans, including Downtown Plans (or Small Area Plans) shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the town which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, and the general welfare of the town residents.



The Downtown Plan provides a short and long-term perspective of community change. Implementation of the plan occurs through Town Ordinances, including Zoning Ordinances, which contain regulations for the use and development of both public and private property within the downtown.

Downtown planning should be a continuum of activity that does not end after the plan is drafted. The planning process begins with preparation of the physical document and adoption of the plan by the Town Council. The next steps include the implementation of the plan's elements and review of and amendments to the plan to ensure that it remains a current, "living" document. Preparation of this plan involves the collection and analysis of current data about the downtown core. These existing conditions were utilized to identify a vision for the Town in the future. The plan includes goals and strategies for implementation that are designed to help the Town achieve its collective vision for downtown. Once the Downtown Plan is adopted, it will serve as the framework for decision-making to ensure the plan is implemented. The Downtown Plan is implemented through the policy decisions of the Town Council and Planning Commission, including the adoption and enforcement of regulations.

The final phase of the planning process is the periodic review and updates to the plan. This should be an on-going activity that regularly evaluates the data in the plan, identifies current items that need to be addressed, and examines the plan's objectives and implementation strategies to determine if they are adequately addressing Town issues. Accurate and on-going plan review is critical to ensure that the plan continues to provide appropriate guidance in the Town's decision making. This should be conducted at least annually.



TRANSPORTATION

INVENTORY

Roadways. There are currently 6.5 miles of roads in Middletown. Of these, 6.4 miles are state maintained while the Town maintains approximately 0.1 mile (one block of Sixth Street, between Main and Church Streets; and Fourth Street east from Church Street). VDOT defines Primary Roads as being two to six lanes and connect cities and towns with interstates, while Secondary Roads are state maintained and generally numbered 600 and above. About one (0.89) mile of the streets in Middletown are considered primary (U.S. 11) and the remaining 5.6 miles as secondary roads.



Functional Classification

- Freeways (including Interstates) and arterial roads carry larger volumes of traffic over long distances at relatively high speeds. Middletown is served by Interstate 81 via Exit 302 at Reliance Road.
- Collector roads are those that “collect” traffic from smaller roads and feed it into the arterial system. U.S. 11 and Virginia Secondary Route 627 are classified as major collectors.
- The remainder of the streets in Town are considered local roads which serve to provide access to landowners and carry traffic to collector roads.



Traffic volumes

The following roads have the highest volume of traffic within the corporate limits based on AADT (Annual Average Daily Traffic - The estimate of typical daily traffic on a road segment for all days of the week, Sunday through Saturday, over the period of a year):

- Main St. (Route 11), from the South Corporate Limit to the North Corporate Limit: 4,400 vehicles*, of which 95 % are autos, vans, pickup trucks and motorcycles, and 4% are buses and 2-axle/3-axle/semi-trailer trucks.
- Reliance Rd. (Route 627), from the East Corporate Limit to Main St. (Route 11): 2,200 vehicles*.
- Carolyn Avenue, from Massanutten Dr. to Reliance Rd. (Route 627): 1300 vehicles*.
- First St. (Route 627), from Main St. (Route 11) to the West Corporate Limit: 320 vehicles*.
- Carolyn Ave., from Pleasant View Dr. to Massanutten Dr.: 740 vehicles*.
- Carolyn Ave., from First St. to Pleasant View Dr.: 670 vehicles*.
- First St., from Carolyn Ave. to Church St.: 710 vehicles*.
- Church St., from Fifth St. to First St.: 610 vehicles*.
- Fifth St. (Route 625), from Church St. to Main St. (Route 11): 230 vehicles*.
- Fifth St. (Route 625), from Main St. (Route 11) to the West Corporate Limit: 530 vehicles*.

*Source: Daily Traffic Volume Estimates, Special Locality Report 260, Town of Middletown, 2017

Sidewalks

There are approximately 11,800 linear feet of sidewalk in the town. Main Street (Route 11) is lined with sidewalks on both sides from Sixth Street to approximately one block north of First Street. Sidewalks are also found along one side of Church Street from Second to Fifth streets, and along First, Second and Third streets between Main and Church streets. See page 40 for a map of existing sidewalks.

PLANNING ASSUMPTIONS

- Middletown's population is expected to exceed 3,000 by 2030, more than double the 2016 estimated population. Similarly, the number of households will more than double, surpassing 1,200.
- Enrollment at Lord Fairfax Community College is expected to grow from its current 3,000 full-time equivalent student population. The campus master plan, completed in 2013, anticipates the need for four additional academic buildings over its 20-year plan horizon.

- Interstate-oriented commercial uses are likely to develop in the 44 acres surrounding the Exit 302 interchange.
- A technology park is envisioned east of the interchange, covering approximately 259 acres, bisected by Reliance Road (Route 627). The current alignment of Buckton Road, proximate to the interchange, is an impediment to development.

EXISTING AND FUTURE NEEDS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Roadway Improvements

- Some of the primary roadways and most of the secondary roadways within the corporate boundaries have limited or no curb and guttering which are critical to long-term maintenance and storm water control. Rural roads should be evaluated for construction of a grass-lined “ditch section” rather than curb and gutter.
- Transitional gateways at the north and south limits of Main Street and the eastern end of Reliance Road should be designed to clearly delineate the departure from county rural areas into the town. The use of landscaped roundabouts as transitional gateways is an example of how this could be accomplished.
- Heavy industrial traffic generated by the Carmeuse-owned quarry empties out at the intersection of Fifth and Main streets, sending multi-axle vehicles south through the national park or north through downtown Middletown. Actions should be undertaken by the facility to redirect this traffic through a system of internal quarry roadways to their Strasburg entrance, next to I-81 exit 298.
- VDOT and Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC) need to identify joint solutions to ease growing traffic congestion on Main Street and Reliance Road as a direct result of the college growth and expansion. An extension of Carolyn Avenue north to the college would be in the best interest of all parties.



- It is recommended that coordination be undertaken with CSX Railroad to upgrade their existing at-grade crossing on the western end of First Street to include crossing gates and pedestrian/bicycle paths.

Parking

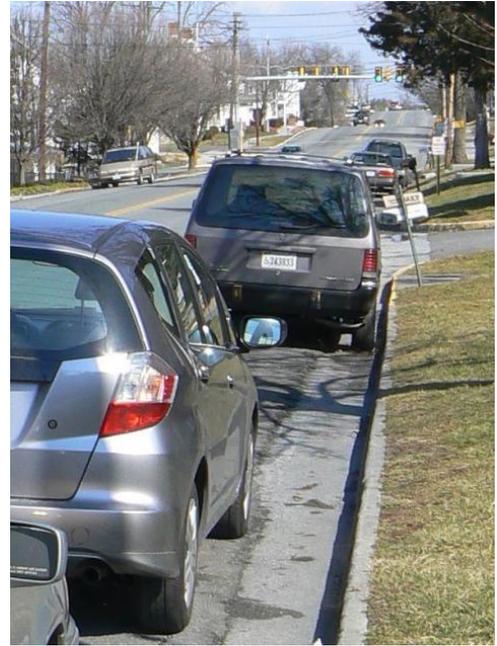
A lack of adequate public parking hampers the growth and infill of businesses along Main Street between First and Fourth streets. Efforts should be made to develop a comprehensive parking strategy along Main Street that will foster more parking for visitors to ensure a healthy and diverse business district.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Accommodations

- The town should create and implement a sidewalk improvement plan as part of the capital improvement program. Strategically sited park benches and litter collection facilities would allow for citizens rest areas as well as delineate stops for future public transportation implementation. Every effort should be made to ensure handicap accessibility to all areas is incorporated into the design of the sidewalk network.
- Clearly delineated bicycle routes along Main Street and Reliance Road can safely and efficiently control two-wheeled traffic. Bicycle racks near local businesses would help the town to become more bicycle friendly. Water fountains could be installed at the town park so bicyclists could recharge and refill their water bottles.

Transportation Demand Management

VTrans2040, the Virginia Multimodal Transportation Plan (see sidebar, page 29), identified the need to preserve Route 11 as a parallel reliever route to I-81 (a Corridor of Statewide Significance), and for greater mode choice along the Route 11 corridor. Evaluation of the demand for transit service between Lord Fairfax Community College and surrounding communities, as well as other Transportation Demand Management measures, is recommended.



Maintenance

Middletown is committed to a uniform system of roadways and will require all new roadways be built to VDOT specifications with an understanding upon completion they will be accepted into the VDOT roadway system. Existing roadways that are not conforming will be listed in our capital improvement plans to upgrade the roadways, so they can be accepted into the state system, or if no longer necessary and no longer serving a public purpose, abandoned to remove the burden from Town maintenance.

PLANNING-LEVEL COST ESTIMATES FOR RECOMMENDED IMPROVEMENTS

A map of recommended transportation improvements is presented on page 41. Planning-level cost estimates for the recommended improvements are presented below:

- Single Lane Roundabout on US 11 at the northern entrance to Lord Fairfax Community College: \$2,800,000
- Single Lane Roundabout on US 11 at the southern Town Limits: \$2,300,000
- Single Lane Roundabout on Reliance Road at the intersection with Carolyn Avenue: \$3,000,000
- Extension of Carolyn Avenue to connect to the southern entrance to Lord Fairfax Community College (2-lane roadway with curb and gutter and sidewalk, approximately 0.38 mile): \$3,600,000

State and federal transportation dollars are now allocated through VDOT in part based on how well projects support the goals and objectives of VTrans2040, Virginia's statewide long-range, multimodal transportation plan. Led by the Commonwealth's Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment, VTrans2040 is a policy document that focuses on the needs of the Commonwealth's Corridors of Statewide Significance, the multimodal regional networks that support travel within metropolitan regions, and improvements to promote Urban Development Areas (UDAs). VTrans2040 establishes goals in the areas of safety and security; system maintenance and preservation; mobility, connectivity and accessibility; environmental stewardship; economic vitality; transportation and land use coordination, and program delivery. Through this document, the state has significantly shifted mobility priorities from being primarily single-occupancy vehicle oriented to a multimodal model.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community Facilities in Middletown

The term “community facilities” describes those buildings or services publicly owned or operated which are necessary for the health, safety and welfare of the people. Community facilities within the corporate limits of Middletown include municipal buildings, a public park, a Veterans’ memorial, a water distribution system, a wastewater treatment plant, and a fire and rescue station.

Parks

Middletown currently has a 7.5 acre recreational park with an entrance at the west end of Second Street. The Park has renovated restrooms, two softball fields, basketball courts, gazebo, children’s playground equipment and a sizeable picnic shelter. At the South End of Town, adjacent to Sixth Street, sits a 1.8 acre lot that has been developed into a Veterans Memorial.



Municipal Buildings

The Town recently renovated its offices located 7875 Church Street. A combined Maintenance Shop/Water Laboratory building is located at the western end of Third Street. Expansion of the facility is needed to include OSHA recommended break areas, training rooms, and storage areas. Three pump stations, one with associated underground stairways, and equipment elevators also maintained by the Town.

Wastewater Management

Middletown upgraded its wastewater treatment system in 2007 to incorporate an enclosed treatment and disinfection process. The upgraded facility allowed the former lagoons to be filled and reclaimed for future parkland or recreational uses. The design capacity is 400,000 gallons per day. A modern laboratory performs monitoring tests to ensure the output meets



state standards. The facility currently operates at 50% capacity. The treatment system plans to start upgrading to an air filtration system by the year 2018 to better support the planned growth of the community.

Storm Water Management



Middletown has an antiquated and inadequate storm water management system with little to no capabilities to even manage minimal run off.

Geographically built atop a north-south oriented ridge that stretches the length of Church Street, water is drained/channeled into either open

roadside ditches to the east or into five storm water culverts running under Main Street which extends into another series of open ditches to the west. An extensive integrated storm water management system with containment ponds and or rain gardens needs to be studied, funded, engineered and constructed to ensure Middletown continues to meet the strict standard set by the Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Program.

Water Dependence

All drinking water is purchased from a sole source, the City of Winchester, which draws the water from the Shenandoah River just south of Middletown. Due to the need to replace its own aging infrastructure, the cost of water continues to rise dramatically. An older Town well can no longer be used; as it was capped in the early 1950's and no longer meets Virginia Department of Health Standards. The need for identifying additional water supplies is apparent throughout the Shenandoah Valley as demand is placing stress on the existing sources of supply. As of this writing the Town is dedicated to 249,710, gallons per day (gpd) from its current Winchester allotment for property development. Any additional commercial expansion would be predicated on obtaining additional water.

Water Distribution System

Middletown's water distribution infrastructure is dated and in poor repair. Although each of the water metering devices is current, most of the mains and laterals date back into the early 1950's. As of this writing over \$500,000 would need to be allocated to replace and upgrade the aging lines.

Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act

The Commonwealth of Virginia enacted the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, an act intended to protect the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and any of its tributaries flowing into the Bay. Middletown's storm water runoff and its effluent from the waste water treatment plant empties into Meadow Brook which flows through Middletown, Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical park, empties into Cedar Creek, the north fork of the Shenandoah River, the Potomac River, and eventually the Bay itself. Section 10.1-2100 of the Virginia Code requires Middletown to incorporate general water quality protection measures into the comprehensive plan, zoning ordinances, and subdivision ordinances. Although the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has designated Cedar Creek as an impaired waterway, Middletown has not been identified as a contributing factor. It is important to the health of the Chesapeake Bay that Middletown, along with other communities, aggressively continue to seek to reduce or eliminate pollutants with a potential for negative impacts on these waters.



ACTION PLAN

OVERVIEW

One of the most important parts of a comprehensive plan is the preparation of policy statements called goals and strategies. Goals state the general manner and direction in which residents would like to see the town develop. Strategies are more detailed statements showing how to help achieve the goals.

There are two overall policies that impact the future of Middletown: Middletown should expect moderate residential, commercial and industrial growth while maintaining its rich small-town character. Most if not all industrial growth should occur outside of the historic district; and, elected and appointed officials should, through the planning process; as implemented through this Comprehensive Plan, a Capital Improvement Plan and related ordinances, maintain an adequate level of community facilities and services for the health, safety and general well-being of the residents of the town and surrounding area.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Goal: The town will attract and maintain a desired mix of business establishments, and ensure that the business types, their scale, and their locations are in compliance with the planning policies.

Strategy A: For each area of town targeted for business development (for example, downtown core, 1-81 Interchange areas), create a comprehensive list of business types generally regarded as desirable and in compliance with the planning policies.

Strategy B: Define and implement steps to encourage business development, including marketing and advertising, financial incentives, grant/loan acquisition and working with other organizations in the northern Shenandoah Valley.

Strategy C: Develop a process to encourage adaptive reuse of under-utilized or unused structures within the existing town. In conjunction with Strategies A and B, this may entail working with a property owner to attract a specific business to a specific location.

Strategy D: Establish a planning/economic development position within the Town government.

Strategy E: Create a Middletown Chamber of Commerce to support the current businesses in town and help facilitate others to come in the area.

STREETS, STREET LIGHTING AND SIDEWALKS

Goal: Middletown will construct sidewalks and add street lighting throughout the community to enhance pedestrian safety and develop a sense of “connectivity.” Traffic control devices will be installed where appropriate.

Strategy A: Provide, through systematic planning and prioritization, a system of sidewalks throughout the town. Evaluate pedestrian traffic flow to determine where sidewalks are most needed; to include sidewalks along Main Street to both the north and south corporate boundaries.

Strategy B: Create a uniform street lighting throughout the town that enhances the historical feel of the area and serves as a “path” at the beginning and end of Middletown.

Strategy C: In partnership with Lord Fairfax Community College, provide a walking path to the college from the town boundary to provide pedestrian safety and access to recreation.

Strategy D: Incorporate a sidewalk map and priority list into the Capital Improvement Plan and relevant ordinances.

PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES

Goal: Parks will have to be expanded to meet population growth.

Strategy A: Additional parkland is needed on the East side of Main Street to serve residents and avoid crossing Main Street. Neither major equipment nor buildings are necessary. At least one playground for public use should be incorporated into newly developed areas.

Strategy B: Install tree screening as needed on the West side of the existing park to screen the expanded wastewater treatment plant.

Strategy C: Include requirements for parkland, open space and equipment in revised and updated zoning, subdivision and other relevant ordinances.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

Goal: Comprehensive storm water management initiatives will be in place to mitigate flooding and potential damage to property, structures and public facilities within the limitation of the Town's natural topography.

Strategy A: Develop a map of existing and needed storm water management routes and structures.

Strategy B: To prevent water from collecting on streets, provide drainage at driveways that presently have none through partnering with adjoining property owners and VDOT where appropriate.

Strategy C: Coordinate with VDOT to address existing problems on Main Street as well as streets and driveways intersecting with Main Street.

Strategy D: Incorporate a storm water management map and priority list into the Capital Improvement Plan and relevant ordinances.

Strategy E: Enact or otherwise implement best practices for the design and engineering of storm water management facilities, independently or in cooperation with Frederick County.

PROPERTY MAINTENANCE

Goal: Properties will be properly maintained to protect public health, safety and promote the general well-being of residents.

Strategy A: Enforce the existing code and enact additional ordinances as required.

ZONING ADMINISTRATION AND ENFORCEMENT

Goal: Zoning code provisions, site plan agreements and special use permit terms will be consistently enforced in order to protect public health, safety and ensure compliance.

Strategy A: The zoning administrator, together with appropriate town officials and staff should review all business use, at least annually, to determine whether the use and conditions are in compliance with the relevant approvals.

Strategy B: Maintain an appropriate record keeping system.

HISTORIC DISTRICT

Goal: Historic district assets will continue to be viable components of the Town's identity.

Strategy A: Foster programs that encourage maintenance, renovation and re-use of historic structures.

Concepts:

- Establish an event unique to Middletown such as a "Founders Day Celebration" to enhance civic pride and celebrate the town's rich history. As part of the celebration, sell historic plaques to owners of contributing properties inside the National Historic Register Boundary and encourage owners to research their homes and previous occupants. If any revenue is generated it could be held in trust or donated to already preserve sites like St. Thomas Trust to demonstrate the need for preservation and the continued need of funding.
- Implement a basic, non-intrusive historic district or heritage area ordinance, which acknowledges the boundaries set by the National Historic Register. The ordinance should establish clear guidelines for both demolition and construction within the boundaries, including penalties for Demolition by Neglect, which will enhance the streetscape by reducing unsightly properties. It should offer basic guidelines for outward appearances of new construction within the district. It should encourage tax incentives for maintenance and restoration of contributing properties as a benefit of the plan. It should only encourage correct looking repairs and renovations without any restrictions regarding color, materials etc. including roofs.

- Revise the B-2 Residential/Commercial Ordinance as applied to Main Street and other appropriate zoning ordinances to prevent further construction of unsightly box stores, warehouses and factories on all streets of the old town within the National Register Boundaries. Re-adopt the acceptable building types from the earlier Vision Middletown document.

Strategy B: Foster ongoing dialog among residents, town officials, property owners and experts to understand the need to retain historic assets. There has been fierce opposition to any Historic District or Heritage Area Ordinance. Failure to protect our historic resources and treasures is clearly out of step with neighboring towns in our region. The town should sponsor a series of informational presentations by battlefield, architectural, structural and natural resource preservationists to demonstrate the value of preserving our small-town appearance, foster pride in our historic homes and educate the public about preservation issues. Under each of the past three administrations, at least three contributing sites to the National Register Historic District have been demolished. These should be stricken from the map and the district description should be amended to reflect this. Middletown has much to lose by allowing continued demolition of contributing structures which destroy the streetscape and the character of the town. Few towns had battles fought through them and fewer have had the same battle rage through the streets twice. The town has a number of homes which were here prior to and during the war. Many were damaged as a result of fighting in our streets and are worthy of preserving. These points should foster dialog between town officials, homeowners within the district boundaries and the general public.

Strategy C: Encourage the Middletown Heritage Committee and other similar organizations to continue and expand its programs such as the Walking Tour. The Heritage Association is a tool whereby citizens can gain knowledge of the town's history, but lacks a driving force beyond informational events. A stronger citizen led organization with a non-profit status is needed to buy and renovate valuable historic resources or work with owners to preserve them. For example, a partnership could be established to with a local church to preserve the circa 1818 Methodist Church and later African American Church. This is likely one of the few standing log churches remaining in the region and is in great need of proper preservation. It should be considered the most endangered historic property in the town. The town should encourage the establishment of a town museum by taking the following actions: assist in providing initial funding, assist in providing space in which to display items loaned or donated

by citizens, become a central collection point for such items. An informative display is needed to present and interpret relics discovered during the archaeological survey conducted prior to construction of the Veteran's Memorial as well as those recovered within the town. The town should increase contact with the National Park Service who conduct tours of our streets and town officials should take these tours to enhance their awareness of historic resources in town. The town's liaison to the Park Service should encourage the National Park Service to draw town citizens to their tours and should provide an annual report to the council and citizens. The town should also encourage commercial tours as well which may have themes such as Ghost Walks or where Civil War generals and other notables conducted their business, early settlers and other thematic tours.

WATER INDEPENDENCE

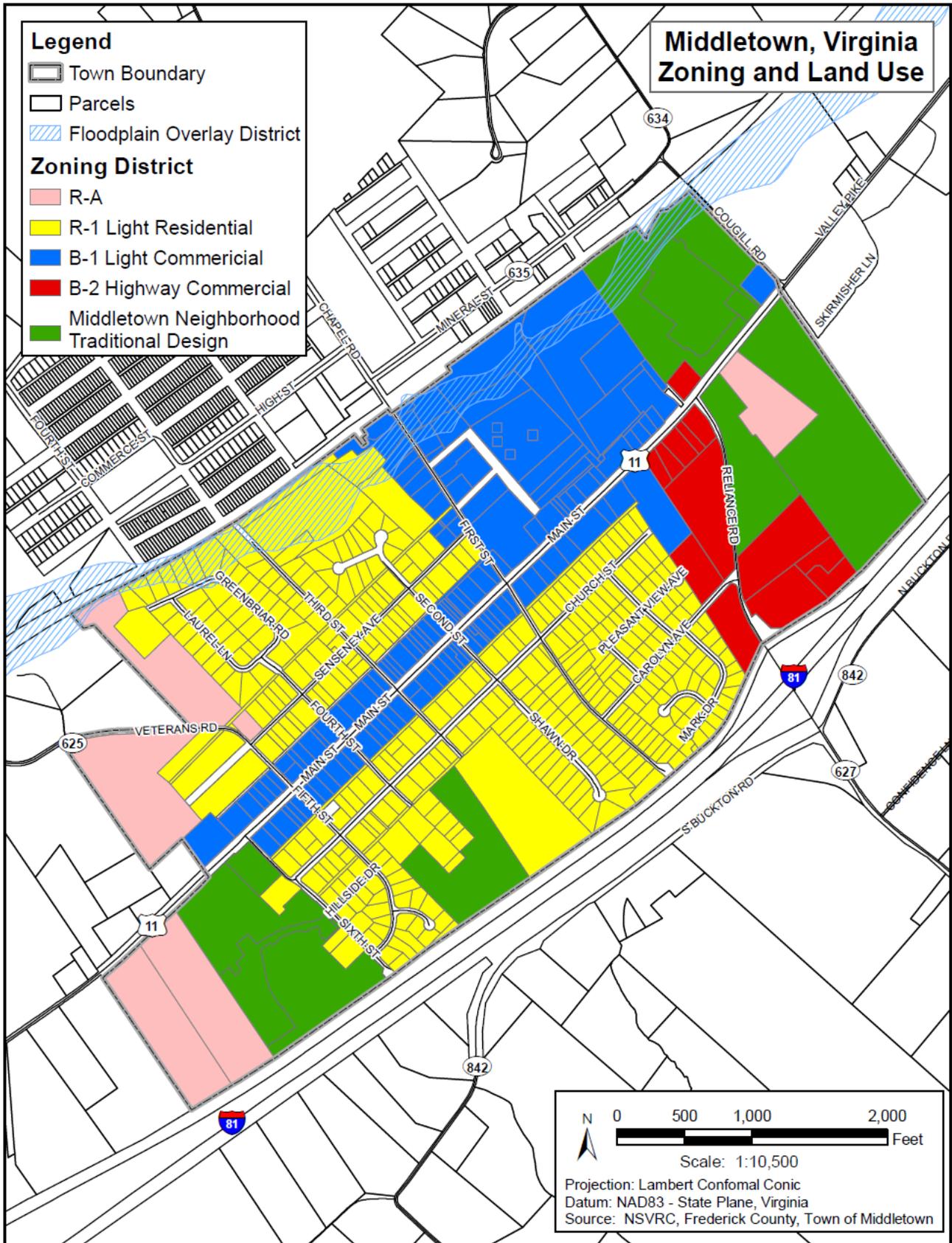
Goal: The Town will produce its own drinking water and sell excess to outside accounts.

Strategy A: Implement a program to bring on line sufficient fresh water wells and treatment facilities to meet current and future demands.

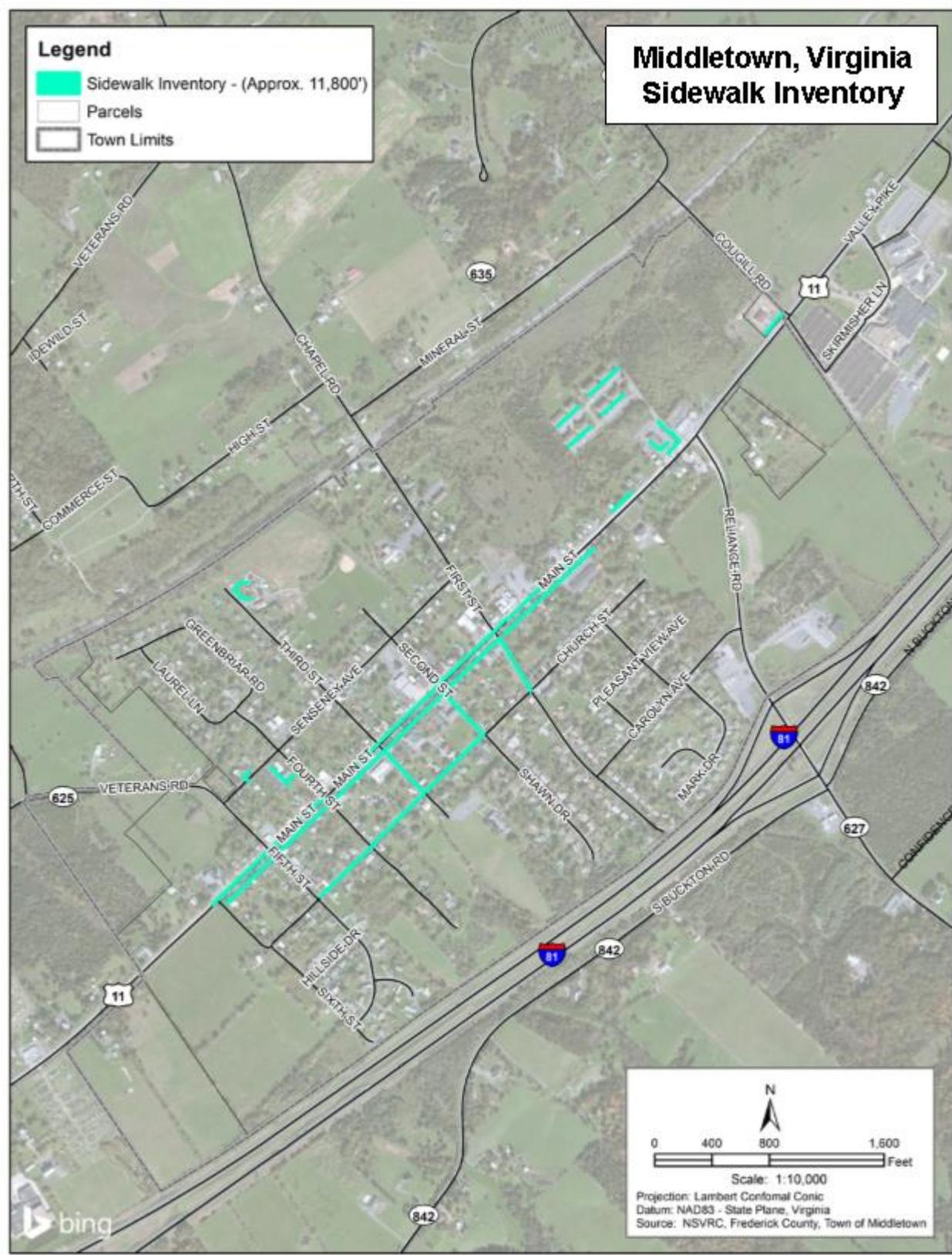
Strategy B: Include upgrades to the water treatment facilities in the CIP in order to meet the growing needs of the town population.

MAPS

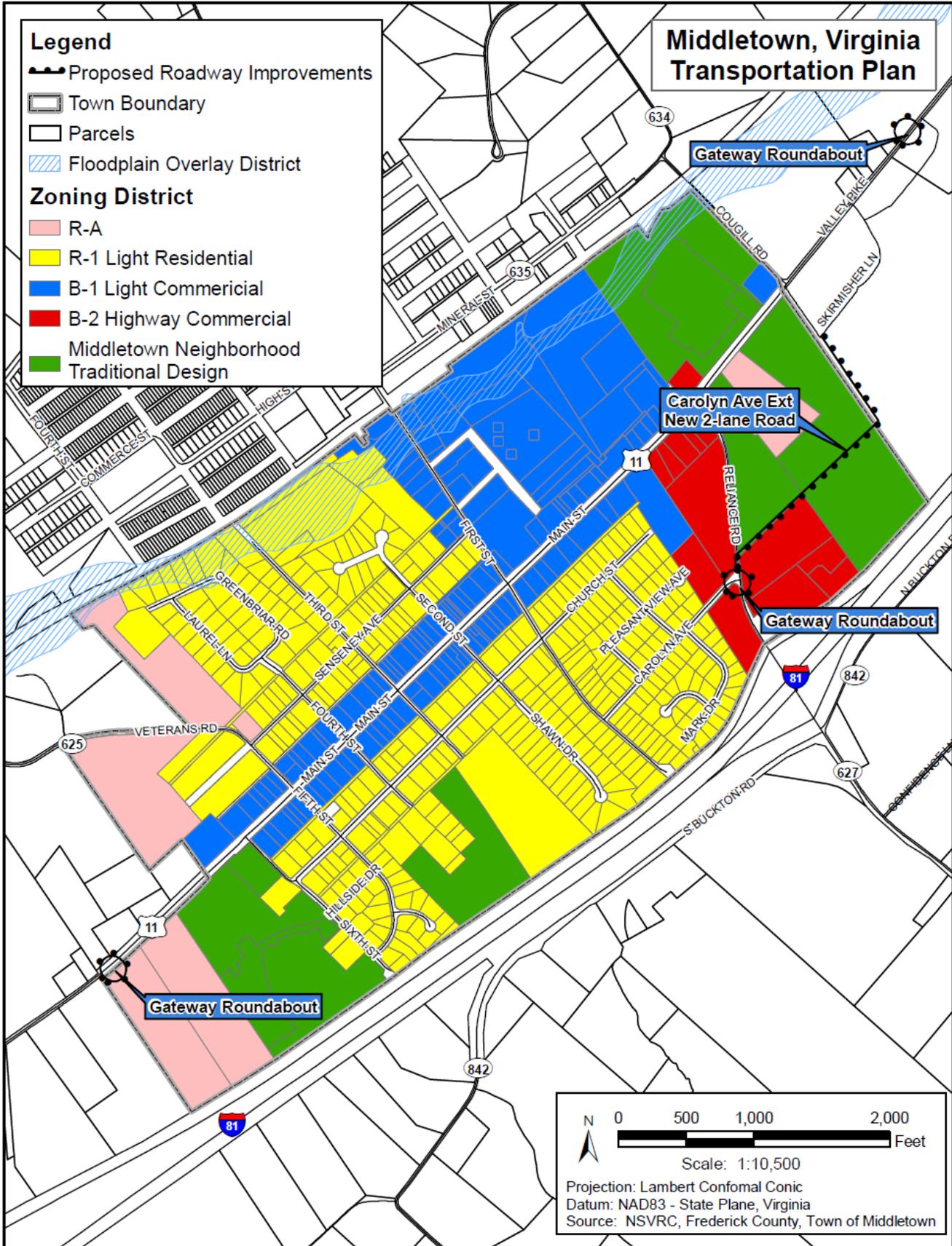
Zoning



Existing Sidewalks



Transportation Plan



APPENDICES

Appendix A: Reliance Road Area Land Use Plan

RELIANCE ROAD AREA LAND USE PLAN

In spring 2010, the Town of Middletown expressed interest in expanding its boundaries to incorporate approximately 250 acres of land on the east side of 1-81, Exit 302, following Reliance Road. Shortly thereafter, the Reliance Road Steering Committee (RRSC) was convened. The RRSC was composed of representatives from the Town Council and the Board of Supervisors.

The RRSC met various times over the ensuing months. The Town representatives also held a community meeting and met with individual property owners within the study area to gain an understanding of the interest of the property owners in terms of the Town's desired boundary line adjustment with the County, as well as future land use opportunities. These meetings were summarized and presented to the RRSC by Town representatives. It was noted that while approximately 37 acres of B2 Business General Zoning exists within the study area, only one site has been developed and benefits from the Town's water and sewer system: the 2.7 acre site occupied by an existing Exxon service station.

The RRSC also evaluated the existing transportation network in addition to water and sewer availability. The RRSC considered the Foresight Middletown plan (adopted into the Town's Comprehensive Plan in 2005), which promoted the implementation of a technology park east of the interstate. The results of these findings led to the crafting of the Reliance Road Area Land Use Plan as a means to illustrate the potential land uses, and the supporting transportation and public water and sewer for the area, to foster further discussions.

The land use plan is envisioned to guide land use decisions for an area of approximately 311 acres over the next 20 to 30 years. Recognizing the Town's current water availability, development within the study area will initially be limited until all additional water supply is more readily available. Additionally, policy enabling the Town to provide water and sewer service to the County properties would require Board approval.

LAND USE

The proximity of the study area to I-81, Exit 302, enhances the opportunities for land uses that benefit from the interstate. As such, commercial and technology uses would be most beneficial at this location.

The plan calls for the establishment of approximately 44 acres of commercial uses that serve the traveling public, such as hotels, gasoline service stations and restaurants. The commercial opportunities would be located immediately east of the interstate interchange on the north and south sides of Reliance Road. This is also the area where public water and sewer presently serve the existing Exxon service station. These land uses could be implemented through the B2 Business General Zoning District.

Technology uses are envisioned both north and south of Reliance Road, covering approximately 259 acres. Based on the targeted businesses identified by the Winchester-Frederick County Economic Development Commission, the technology uses would include economic sectors such as: Advanced Security, Assembly, Business Services, and Life Sciences. These land uses would be implemented through the OM Office Manufacturing Zoning District.

In recognition of the continuation of the agricultural and large lot residential land uses adjacent to the study area, efforts should be implemented through the rezoning and development process that mitigate and lessen the adverse impacts that the commercial and technological uses may introduce. Mitigation techniques such as 100-foot distance buffers and landscape screening would be expected.

TRANSPORTATION

While the existence of I-81, Exit 302, is a strong asset to the area's transportation network, the actual configuration of the interchange and its close proximity to Buckton Road is not conducive to accommodating future traffic demands. In order for the interchange to operate efficiently and effectively in the future, it is essential to migrate the existing intersection of Reliance and Buckton Roads further east, creating a greater separation distance from the I-81 northbound on/off ramps. Increasing this separation distance will avoid significant degradation of the interchange, similar to what has occurred at Exit 307 in Stephens City.

In rapidly growing areas, as noted in the Foresight Middletown plan; controlling and coordinating the number, design and location of new access points to major roadways is critical to maintaining the safety and capacity of the road system as traffic volumes increase. Accordingly, access to Reliance Road should be managed and limited. The plan calls for limiting Reliance Road access to three points: a managed access entrance point in the vicinity of Confidence Lane, and two appropriately spaced roundabout or signalized intersections.

The initial access point onto Reliance Road would be established with the relocation of Buckton Road. A second access point onto Reliance Road would be established with the relocation of Huttle Road, to create a single intersection on Reliance Road for relocating Huttle Road and a new road servicing the southern land area.

These three Reliance Road access points would facilitate traffic movement to/from Reliance Road to the various future land uses to the north and south. It may also be appropriate to utilize a roundabout at the relocated Buckton Road intersection with Reliance Road as a means to define where the developed portion of Reliance Road ends and the rural land uses of the County begin. A similar technique was suggested by the Foresight Middletown plan as a means to create an entrance to the developed area.

Finally, the Foresight Middletown plan calls for Reliance Road within the Town limits to be a boulevard with a landscaped median: the Reliance Road Area Land Use Plan carries this design concept forward east of the interstate.

Consistent application of Comprehensive Plan Goals to achieve an acceptable level of service on area roads and overall transportation network, level of service C or better, should be promoted. Further, efforts should be made to ensure that additional degradation of the transportation beyond an acceptable level of service shall be avoided. Consideration of future development applications within the study area should only occur when an acceptable level of service has been achieved and key elements and connections identified in this plan have been provided.

WATER AND SEWER

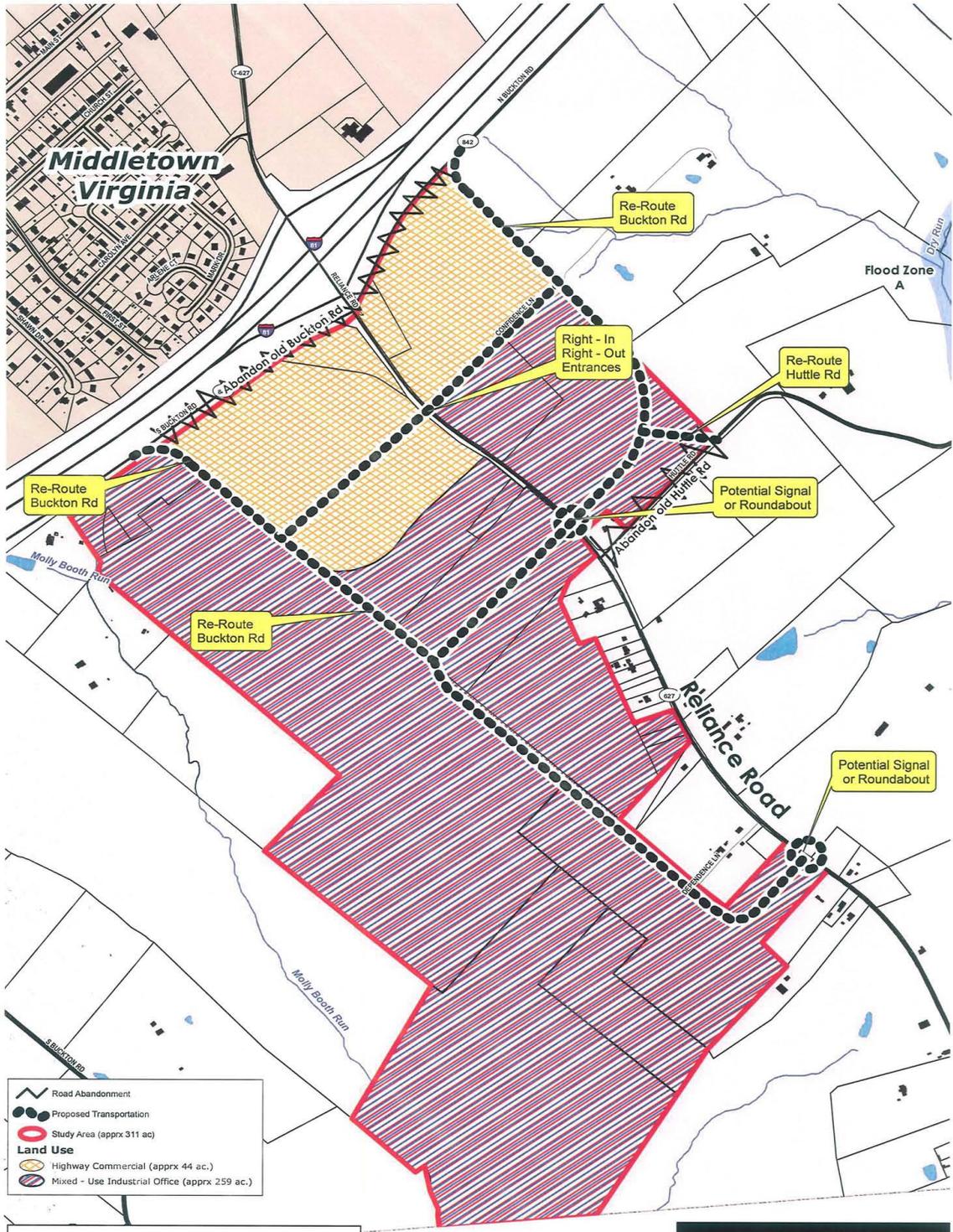
The Town completed an upgrade to its wastewater treatment facility in 2010 which enables it to treat upwards of 400,000 gpd. The treatment system plans to start upgrading to an air filtration system in the near future to better support the planned growth of the community.

Existing limitations in water availability and the conveyance lines under the interstate may hinder development in the near future. As the Town secures additional water availability, upgrades to the conveyance system could easily be undertaken.

Reflective of current water availability, the Town is positioned to dedicate up to 18,000 gpd of water to development on the east side of I-81. This available water resource could facilitate an initial expansion of the commercial land uses to include a hotel, expanded gasoline service station/ convenience center, and a restaurant. Any additional commercial uses would certainly warrant additional water resources.

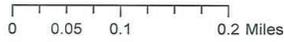
Development of the technology park land uses will be limited until additional water resources are identified and available. Technology uses that require limited water resources would certainly be more desirable initially, until the expanded water supply has been secured and accessible.

Adopted and included as an amendment to the Frederick County, Virginia, Comprehensive Plan on December 14, 2011



- 1) There is potential that additional through lanes would be needed depending upon the scope of development.
- 2) This change would require a traffic study under chapter 527. This study would give the needed information to refine roadway system improvement expectations.

Area Plan
 Reliance Road Area
 Land Use Plan



2030 Comprehensive Policy Plan Map
 Approved: xxxxxxx, 2011
 DRAFT



Appendix B: Implementation Tools

The preparation of a Comprehensive Plan for Middletown is only the beginning of the planning process. The recommendations and goals in the report can only be achieved through a program of implementation.

This appendix describes the legal, financial, and administrative tools, which can be used to carry out the proposals presented.

While cooperation between government and the private sector is essential to accomplish the recommendations of this report, the following paragraphs will stress Town government's important role in the implementation process.

Legal Implementation

Subdivision Regulations

These are locally adopted laws, which control the conversion of open-space land into building sites. New development is prohibited until the Town Council approves a plat of the proposed changes. Approval is based upon compliance with all standards set forth in the subdivision regulations. The standards provide for platting procedure, lot sizes, street standards, utility easements and setback related regulations for the orderly development of subdivision areas.

These regulations serve many purposes. To the developer they become a protection against substandard competitors, which may destroy the value of surrounding areas. It affords a convenient step in securing adequate land title record for tax officials. The consumers are assured they will receive a buildable lot with adequate facilities. For everyone, the regulations protect against undesirable development that could be financially burdensome due to improvements and/or services that the town may be compelled to provide. Middletown adopted a subdivision ordinance in 1977. This ordinance should be reviewed and revised as needed.

Zoning Ordinance

Zoning is the legal method of imposing conditions on the development of land and establishing controls on land use, building use, building size, building height, area, lot sizes, bulk and location of structures. The purpose of zoning is to control the development of vacant land. It has no direct effect upon existing land use and structures, however, as buildings are removed, modified or have a change of use, properties that do not conform then to the

ordinance can gradually be brought into conformance with current policy. This characteristic enables zoning to be one of the most important tools available for implementing the land use portion of the Middletown Comprehensive Plan.

Middletown adopted a zoning ordinance in 1967. It represents what the town thought was the best use of its land. The zoning ordinance should be updated regularly to keep abreast of changing laws. It is the responsibility of the Middletown Planning Commission to review existing planning policy and recommend appropriate changes. It is important for the zoning map and land use plans to conform. This will help achieve the goals of the Comprehensive Plan, since the plan has no direct power to control development.

Other Legal Devices

There are a number of other legal controls available. A few of these are: sanitary codes, nuisance ordinances and housing codes. Controls such as these will help Middletown attain the goals of the plan and they should be enacted as the need arises.

Financial Implementation

State-Federal Aid

Some state and federal aid (primarily in the form of loans and technical assistance) is available to municipalities for community improvements. The following publication should be consulted for information on possible aid programs: Catalogue of Federal Assistance Programs, office of Management and Budget (Washington, D.C., U.S. Government Printing Office). Also, additional state and foundation publications can be accessed on the Internet. Current programs of importance to Middletown include but are not limited to:

Cops Program

This program is used to fund salaries for additional police personnel.

Virginia Community Development Block Grants

This program, which was formerly administered by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Developments, has as its goal the improvement of the economic and physical environment in Virginia communities and neighborhoods for the primary benefit of low and moderate-income citizens. The program's three major objectives are to assist local governments in:

- Increasing business and employment opportunities.
- Conserving and improving housing conditions
- Improving the availability and adequacy of community facilities.

Division of Motor Vehicle Grants

Funds are available through the Virginia Division of Motor Vehicles to fund salaries for additional police personnel and for the purchase of traffic control devices and alcohol detection devices such as radar and breathalyzers.

Fire Administration Grants

This grant is used to upgrade equipment within fire departments such as breathing apparatuses, protective equipment for firemen and training.

Authorities

An authority is a public corporation organized by a municipality under state enabling legislation to carry on a specific function outside the regular structure of government. There are various kinds of authorities including, but not limited to, those for schools, water, sewers, parking and airports.

Authorities are formed by communities because of the high cost of needed projects and limited resources available. Too often, public improvements are necessary but the municipality does not have the current revenue to finance such improvements. With authorities, the borrowing power of the county, city or town is not used; it is rather the estimated cost of, and revenues from, the proposed projects that form the base for the bond issue.

Bonds

Middletown is permitted by State law to issue bonds for borrowing money. The money, with interest, is repaid from future revenues. Because population growth has increased demands for community facilities, the expanded use of bonds for major projects should be considered. While it is cheaper to pay for major improvements out of current revenue, it is unlikely that the Town will be able to build up enough reserves to establish a “pay as you go” capital improvements program. Additionally, a bond will assure that future residents who will be using the facility will bear some of the cost.

Administrative Implementation

Continuing Comprehensive Planning

The Comprehensive Plan serves a number of purposes:

- It presents a framework of desirable short, medium and long-range development for Middletown and provides a systematic guide for the Town Council to review projects.

- It enables the Town Council and residents to consider and develop definite policies, which would lead to a specific pattern of future physical development.
- It is an inventory of existing community facilities and a source of information concerning economic and social conditions.
- It assists those involved in the planning process in relation to the social and economic issues involved in problems of physical development.
- It serves as a guide for the zoning ordinance and should assist local officials in making future zoning changes.

To be successful, a Comprehensive Plan must be implemented as well as adopted. The residents of Middletown should understand and support their plan. The plan should reflect the general goals of the people as well as the economic and social forces shaping the physical land uses in the Town. The town should review and revise this plan as the need arises.

Capital Improvement Program

The orderly determination and scheduling of major public improvements for a period, usually five years into the future, is called a Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). Towns often find it necessary to spend large sums of money to provide the facilities needed to serve its residents. Major public improvements such as water and sewer systems are called capital improvements.

Few jurisdictions have enough money at any one time to meet all demands for new or enlarged improvements. Therefore, it's important that all public projects be prioritized and developed as part of a long-range program. Cost estimates for each proposal as well as estimates for future expenses and revenues including grant money should be prepared. Projects are selected after the need and cost of individual proposals are determined. A schedule is then made for the beginning and completion of the chosen improvements. A capital budget should be prepared annually detailing those projects to be undertaken during the first year of the five-year capital program. This budget serves as the annual implementation of the CIP. The CIP is a major tool for guiding public improvements along desirable channels and for insuring that they proceed in an orderly manner.

It requires operating departments and elected officials to plan for the future and to anticipate capital expenditures, thus establishing a sound basis for budget decisions. Substantial

savings may occur by providing more efficient use of equipment through long-range scheduling.

Most importantly, capital improvement planning provides an opportunity to spread the cost of improvements over a period of years, avoiding the great tax increases that are often caused by postponing community responsibilities.

Reference: Code of Virginia, 15.2-2239

Summary

Reference to the Middletown Comprehensive Plan and implementation of its provisions is part of an on-going process. Review and modification of ordinances and codes may also be necessary to bring about the recommendations of this plan. Assistance from many levels of both governmental and non-governmental groups will be important in implementation. The goals of this plan cannot be fully attained unless local officials and citizens work together to understand and solve issues, and to guide development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan, which aspires for the common good.