



Town of Middletown, Virginia

Gateway to Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park

2013 – 2033

Comprehensive Plan

DRAFT

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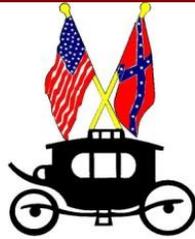
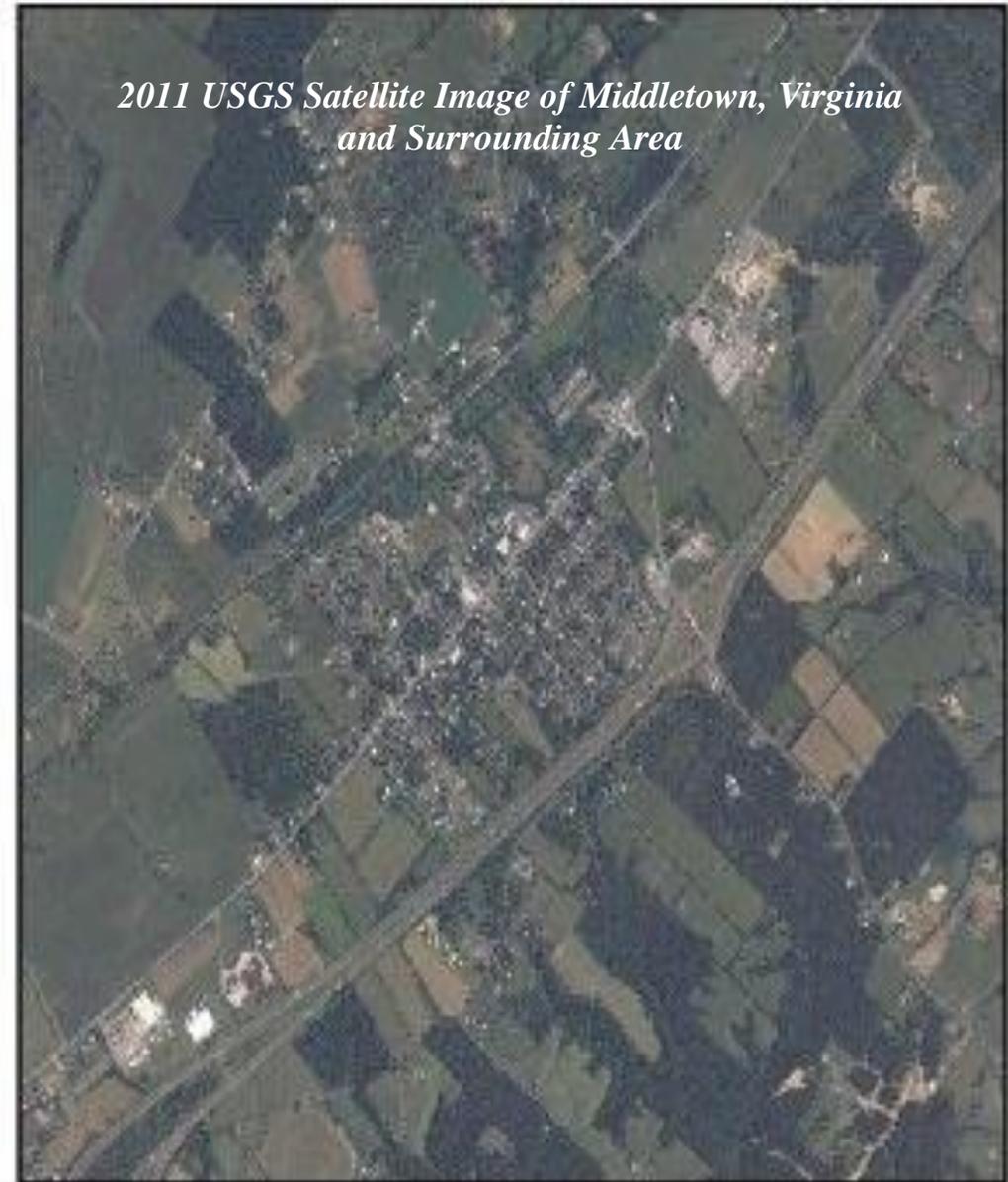


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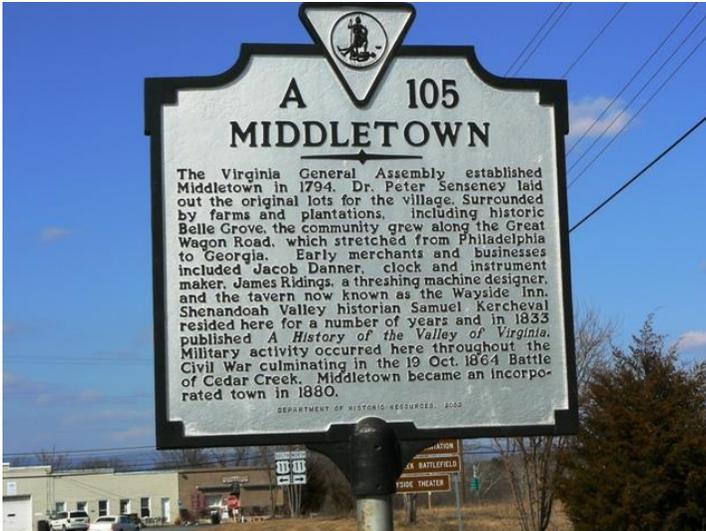
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INTRODUCTION

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 every governing body shall adopt a Comprehensive Plan for the territory under its jurisdiction. The Planning Commission shall update the plan at least once every five years to determine if amendments are advisable. The Town of Middletown's Planning Commission will review the Comprehensive Plan annually on or near the date that the plan was adopted by Council.

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 for an upcoming boundary adjustment (Appendix A).

Planning Commission

The Middletown Planning Commission consists of seven (7) 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. One of those members is also a member of the Council and serves as its liaison. For additional, detailed information, refer to the Planning Commission Bylaws.

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 road improvement and any transportation improvement, shown on the plan and 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 and shall include, as appropriate, but not be limited to, roadways, bicycle accommodations, pedestrian accommodations, railways, bridges, waterways, airports, ports, and public transportation facilities. The plan should recognize and differentiate among a hierarchy of

roads such as expressways, arterials, and collectors. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) shall, upon request, provide localities with technical assistance in preparing such transportation plan.

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:

- 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.
- 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.
- The designation of historical areas and areas for urban renewal or other treatment;
- The designation of areas for the implementation of reasonable ground water protection measures.
- A capital improvements program, a subdivision ordinance, a zoning ordinance and zoning district maps.
- The location of existing or proposed recycling centers.

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 its 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 programming. 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.

Every effort must be made to provide a balanced perspective on planning goals versus real-world effects. The government of Middletown is committed to defending property rights and does not encourage using regulatory means to change or deprive its citizens of legal uses they acquired at the time they purchased their homes, lands and businesses, while at the same time ensuring private uses do not impinge on the property rights of others.



Summary of Changes

The 2013 revision removes dated materials already existing in other stand alone documents (2004 Foresight Middletown Plan, 2002 Historic District Application), makes adjustments reflective of the 2010 U.S. Census, adds goal for expansion across I-81 and adds the 2011 Reliance Road Area Land Use Plan and generally reformats the document.

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. The Valley Pike evolved from an early Indian trail and allowed early settlers to move southward through the territory.

Although Middletown did gain some prominence in the manufacture of quality precision instruments (clocks, watches and surveying equipment) as early as 1786, the town has remained a rural community throughout its long history. It is thought that the distance of Middletown from any stream capable of generating water-power discouraged early industrialization and was a major reason the community never developed as an industrial center.

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 travelers in the valley. Some of the first documentation of early Middletown dates back to the late 18th century when it was a village known as "Senseney Town". Between 1794 and 1791, Major Isaac Hite, Jr. 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. The mansion was restored in the late 1960's and is under the care of the National Trust for Historic Preservation.

In 1796, "Middletown" received its charter by an act of the General Assembly. The 50-acre community was already laid out in a grid sheet pattern with 126 lots.

In 1797, a small tavern built and over the years expanded to become a stagecoach relay station and a successful Inn. It is still in operation today as the Wayside Inn and Restaurant, and is one of the oldest continuously operating Inns in the country.

The American Civil War brought the most destructive event in the history of Middletown. The Battle of Middletown, now known as the Battle of Cedar Creek, was a fierce battle between the opposing forces through the heart of Middletown. Today, many old homes in town lay claim to stories of bullets and cannonballs passing through their walls that day.

In 1878, "Middletown" was incorporated by an act of the General Assembly.

Around 1889, a land scheme to develop "New Middletown" was proposed just west of town and boasted nearly 1,000 acres. The boom failed and its vision was never realized.

From 1878 to 1955, Middletown doubled in size from 50 acres to 106 acres.

Over the next 50 years, the town has grown sporadically to a total area of 349 acres. This growth has consisted primarily of residential uses.

In 2002, in an ongoing effort to protect both Belle Grove and the battleground, the Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park became the 388th unit of the National Park Service.



Ca 1905 Postcard "Main Street Looking South"

In 2003, the Middletown Historic District was established. Information concerning the historic district can be obtained from the Town or at the VDHR website.

In 2005, boundary line adjustments were completed on both the North and South ends of Town to increase the Town area from 349 acres to its current size of 479 acres. These most recent increases were planned and designed for a traditional neighborhood style design consisting of mostly residential uses.

As of 2012, neither area has begun construction.



2 p.m., October 19, 1864-The Army of the Shenandoah counterattacks Early's forces North of Middletown.



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%

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

Population Projections

	Historical		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, 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 shows a rapid acceleration in the growth of the elderly population.

Age Group	Middletown	Frederick	Virginia
Under 18	345 (27.2%)	25.2%	23.2%
18 - 24	130 (10.3%)	7.9%	10%
25 - 34	157 (12.4%)	11.7%	13.6%
35 - 49	278 (22%)	22.9%	21.6%
50 - 64	230 (18.1%)	19.6%	19.3%
65 & Over	125 (10%)	12.7%	12.2%
Total Population	1,265	78,305	8,001,024

Source: U.S. Census Bureau Population counts 2010.

Household Projections

	2010	2020	2030
Population	1,265	2,555	3066
Persons Per Household	2.48	2.48	2.48
Number of Households	508	1030	1236



2013-2033 Comprehensive Plan ECONOMY, BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT

Chapter III. Economy, Business and Employment

Business Categories In and Adjacent to Middletown

The economic future of Middletown can be defined in terms of both employment opportunities for residents and in terms of the financial health of the Town. While common economic development practices such as building industrial parks, constructing speculative buildings or recruiting businesses with incentive packages work well in larger municipalities, they do not necessarily apply during this period of our growth or financial capabilities.



Employment Opportunities

Local employment is limited to those factories, offices, stores and other businesses that provide jobs, goods and service to Middletown area residents and visitors. There are about 21 different businesses immediately in and adjacent to the corporate boundaries, while numerous other opportunities also lie within a 15 mile radius in communities such as Winchester, Strasburg, Stephens City, and Front Royal. A recent survey found very few Middletown residents employed by Middletown businesses.

Existing manufacturing plays a major role in the area's employment opportunities representing 35% of the total employment. The educational sector is next with 13%. The remaining 52% are mostly service jobs.

Travel to Work

While some employment is available within the immediate area, a majority of Middletown residents travel more than 30 minutes to work.

Category	Businesses	Employees
Manufacturing	3	300
Education	3	200
Restaurant –Food Establishment	3	75
Services	29	120
Construction	10	75
Government	2	16
Fuel/Convenience Store	4	20
Hotel/Motel	2	15
Church	6	8
Public Administration	1	8
Theatre/Historic Attractions	3	8
Banks/Financial Institution	1	5
Communications	1	5
Retail	2	4
Vehicle Repair	2	4
Apartment/Townhouse Complex	5	2
Car Wash	1	1
Total	78	866

Source: Middletown Business and Professional License Tax Records.

Major Employers In and Adjacent to Middletown

Employer	Product or Service	Employees
Fisher Diagnostics	Biological Products	290
Lord Fairfax	Undergraduate	190
Stowe-Woodward	Printer Roll	50
Carmeuse Stone	Limestone Quarry	30
Total		560

Source: Calls by Middletown staff to local businesses, February 2013.

Gateway to the Future

Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historical Park was established in 2001 and Virginia’s House of Delegates designated Middletown as its official Gateway in 2007. This 3,713 acre park is a joint partnership between the National Park Service, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, Belle Grove Inc, Cedar Creek Battlefield Foundation, Shenandoah County, The Shenandoah Valley Battlefield Association and private land owners. It has placed the Town in a unique position to capitalize on thousands of expected visitors and the associated tourism revenue.



The funding and establishment of a Planning/Economic Development position within the Town government would be especially desirable to design and implement a program to take advantage of this revenue opportunity in the future. The position and program’s goals would be based on:

- Celebrating our history and heritage

- Creating a compelling marketing umbrella that will draw businesses and visitors into Middletown and enhance our economy.
- Focusing on those qualities of being atypical “Small Town America”.



I-81 Exit 302 is the last undeveloped exit within Frederick County. Its close proximity to the national park makes it an ideal transit point for park visitors, but its lack of facilities discourages traffic, allowing communities further south to take advantage of the economic benefits.

The Town expects growth in the near future as approved residential and commercial developments are constructed along the North and South Gateways, as well as infill just east of Church Street.

Reliance Road Area Boundary Line Adjustment

In 2009, a totally separate but interdependent action took place. Land owners adjacent to and east of I-81, approached Middletown officials with a request to place 275 acres of their property within the Town’s corporate boundaries. The landowners wish to keep their property(s) zoned as specified by Frederick County.

GOALS AND STRATEGIES**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.

LAND USE

Current and Future Land Use Plans for the Town of Middletown are spelled out within the Comprehensive Plan in the appendices and Land Use Map.

Appendix A – Land Use Plan developed by Frederick County for a proposed boundary line adjustment between the County and the Town of Middletown.

Appendix B – Implementation Tools

Future boundary adjustments to include: Lord Fairfax Community College and Foundation Land needs to be considered after the approval of the Reliance Road area is brought into Town.

LAND USE GENERAL POLICIES**MAIN STREET**

- Preserve and improve Main Street as a pedestrian-friendly, mixed-use corridor.
- For new infill development and redevelopment, encourage small scale, mixed use projects that maintain the traditional Main Street pattern of shop fronts and civic buildings interspersed with residential properties.
- Encourage live/work development with residential units above shops or small scale employment uses.
- Ensure that new infill development is compatible with existing character.
- Maintain the visual character and historic architectural fabric of Main Street.
- Encourage porches, plazas, street furniture, sitting areas and other pedestrian friendly design elements.
- Limit the number of driveway entrances along Main Street.
- Uses along Main Street should be mixed – residential, commercial, office and institutional.

NORTH END

- Discourage new commercial uses to the north of the town boundary and limit Main Street commercial uses in this area to small scale, traditional designs that are compatible with the overall Main Street character.
- Traffic calming features are desirable at the northern Main Street gateway that will deflect a natural slowdown of southbound traffic into town. Divided boulevard features with a landscape median or other design features at or near the college such as

landscaped buffers, community signage, public art and interpretive markers could be utilized.

- Ensure that new commercial construction at the gateway, as well as at the Main Street/Reliance Road intersection, be carefully designed with high quality architectural design and parking located behind the building, not in the front.
- The area behind Wayside Inn (Infill Addition) should be developed with compatible residential infill uses and/or with small scale low traffic impact civic or community uses such as a church or conference center.

VILLAGE AT MIDDLETOWN

- An approved Specific Implementation Plan (SIP) has been established for this development that has yet to begin construction at this time.

SOUTH GATEWAY

- Develop traffic-calming features to safely channel northbound traffic through the southern entrance to Middletown. Features to explore are; divided boulevard with a landscaped median, landscaped buffers, community signage, public art or interpretive markers.
- Ensure that buildings fronting on the Southern Gateway are set back with landscaped buffers to Main Street intersections. Discourage new commercial uses to the south of the town boundary and limit any commercial uses within the southern town fabric to small scale, traditional designs that are compatible with Main Street and sensitive with their proximity to the Cedar Creek Battlefield Park.

SOUTHEAST

- A portion of this area has already been approved for Medium-Density Residential development, through the “Adams Property” Specific Implementation Plan (SIP).
- Developing the remaining acreage in this area as a low-density residential neighborhood, with the primary consideration being protection of the view shed from the Cedar Creek Battlefield. Main Street/Route 11 frontage should be defined with large lots and open space with deep setbacks. The lower density frontage lots can be balanced by higher density lots behind the large frontage lots.
- Ensure extensive buffers and setbacks from any new development to the battlefield area. Views of the area from Route 11 should maintain a rural character.
- Tie new development into the existing Town street grid, as a large lot grid pattern close to Route 11 and as a limited extension of the existing Town block pattern nearer to I-81.

SOUTHWEST

- Develop as a low-density residential neighborhood, with the primary consideration being protection of the viewshed of the Cedar Creek Battlefield. View protection from the battlefield could be established using permanent, undisturbed wooded buffer along any frontage adjacent to the battlefield and extensive setbacks for any new development.
- Tie new development into the existing Town street grid, either as a large lot rural grid pattern or as limited extension of the existing Town block pattern.

- The overall policy for any development should be that it appears rural in character and constitutes a “soft” edge to the Town so that it is compatible with the battlefield.

INFILL DEVELOPMENT

- Develop infill parcels within the Town in a manner similar to the prevailing development patterns of the existing Town.
- Encourage a mixture of residential development types and densities in the infill areas. Other uses may be mixed in with the predominately residential uses in the infill areas provided that they are small scale and do not overwhelm the residential character of the general neighborhood.
- Ensure that infill development continues the Town street grid and connects to existing streets, wherever possible.
- Ensure that road, block and lot patterns are consistent with Middletown’s existing traditional development form.

ADJACENT INDUSTRIAL LAND USES

- In conjunction with property owners and Frederick County, advocate and encourage additional development within the existing industrial acreage along Route 11. Incorporate landscaped setbacks to Route 11 and be comprised of structures with low building heights, screened with an informal pattern of vegetation that uses muted colors that blend with the landscape and skyline so as not to deter from the existing view shed from the battlefield area or from Route 11.
- Advocate and encourage that the northern-most portion of the industrially-zoned acreage be rezoned for low density residential uses and developed with a limited number of large lot residential units. This will achieve an appearance and profile

that is more compatible with views from the battlefield.

BATTLEFIELD AREA, GENERAL

- Strive to ensure the protection of the new Cedar Creek and Belle Grove National Historic Park from development or land uses that would be detrimental to the historic setting and rural character of the battlefield landscape.

I-81 INTERCHANGE EAST

- Encourage the areas just east of I-81 and adjacent to the Middletown interchange to be developed as a business or technology park or similar industrial or employment use, serving a regional market.
- New development in the area may include highway oriented commercial uses, but should be designed and sited to present an orderly appearance to travelers.
- Inappropriate uses include “big-box” commercial uses and truck stops, appropriate uses include a gas station/convenience store, fast food or hotel/motel.
- Ensure that the area follows a coordinated plan of development with access management and signage and design controls to form an attractive gateway to the Town and surrounding area.
- This area may be provided with Town services and should thus be added to the Town’s incorporated area.

RELIANCE ROAD

- Design and develop Reliance Road from I-81 to Main Street so as to provide a unique entrance to Middletown that makes local citizens proud.

RELIANCE ROAD (Continued)

This will be achieved by balancing the market preferences of commercial developers with the economic development and historic preservation goals of the Town, through the following policies.

- Ensure that Reliance Road is developed as an attractive and visually harmonious “gateway” into Middletown.
- Provide a strong pedestrian orientation along the street frontage, with parking and auto-oriented functions like drive-through windows located mainly at the rear of buildings.
- Design new land uses and entrances along Reliance Road to create a gateway to the Town that is oriented to motor vehicle access but also provides pedestrian convenience with quite understated and well landscaped visual appearance.
- Orient building fronts toward main streets, especially Reliance Road, and service backs of buildings through alleyways where feasible.
- Locate parking behind or to the side of buildings and screen parking from adjacent (non-compatible) uses with landscape buffers. Encourage shared common parking resources across multiple specific uses.
- Provide street connections, site-to-site located behind using the “block” configuration to the extent possible.
- Install landscaping along the frontage of Reliance Road, carefully designed and placed as to enhance the visual impacts of structures and reduce the visual impacts of parking, but not limit visibility of the commercial establishment from the road.
- Encourage small-scale commercial and employment uses, with small building

footprints that are architecturally compatible with the existing Town.

- Develop and implement an access management plan along Reliance Road to limit the number of access points.
- Limit commercial uses to the narrowest practical depth of land along Reliance Road, with residential uses behind the commercial frontage uses.
- Encourage inter-parcel connections and access for both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
- Limit driveway access points along the road and encourage public street connections.
- Limit height and size of signs and require that all freestanding signs be “monument style” and all wall signs not protrude above the building facade.
- Locate high traffic generating commercial uses mainly to the east side of I-81.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Middletown currently has affordable housing such as Cedar Creek Apartments and future housing developments should fall into the affordable housing category; moderate range. Pending future studies/surveys; additional information will be available regarding sufficient affordable housing in Middletown.

EXPAND CORPORATE LIMITS ACROSS I-81

Middletown will work cooperatively with Frederick County and affected land owners, Middletown will complete a Boundary Adjustment east across I-81 along Reliance Road and bring approximately 250 acres into Middletown’s corporate limits. Utilizing existing zoning designations provided by Frederick County and coordinating closely with Frederick

County and VDOT to ensure optimum traffic flow design and management as build out progresses. Middletown will strive to adopt and implement Frederick Counties B-2, General Business and OM, Office Manufacturing Zoning Districts into the current Zoning Ordinance.

The Town of Middletown can now dedicate an additional 10,000 gpd each year to development on the East side of I-81. This is in addition to the dedicated 18,000 gpd of water listed in Frederick County’s Reliance Road Area Land Use Plan (Appendix A).

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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 conformance with the planning policies.

Middletown will strive to 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. Middletown will also develop a process to encourage adaptive reuse of under-utilized or unused structures within the existing town and establish a Planning/Economic Development position within the town government if feasible.

STREETS, STREET LIGHTING AND SIDEWALKS

- 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.
- Evaluating pedestrian traffic flow to determine where sidewalks are most needed; to include sidewalks along Main Street to both the north and south corporate boundaries.
- Incorporate the sidewalk map and priority list into the Capital Improvement Plan.
- Recommend redirecting Lord Fairfax Community College (LFCC) student generated traffic exiting I-81 away from Main Street. Connect Carolyn Avenue with Skirmisher Lane on the LFCC campus via an elongated traffic circle at the current intersection of Reliance Road and Carolyn Avenue.

PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITES

- 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. Middletown will pursue opportunities with local landowners to partner in the creation of park areas for citizens.
- Installation of tree screening as needed on the West side of the existing park to screen the expanded wastewater treatment plant.

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

Comprehensive storm water management initiatives will be in place to mitigate flooding and potential damage to property, structures and public facilities. Middletown will work collaboratively with Frederick County and the Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission (NSVRC) to study, develop and implement a detailed storm water management plan.

HISTORIC DISTRICT

Historic district assets will continue to be viable components of the Town’s fabric. Encourage homeowners to maintain the historic character of existing historic homes and encourage the Middletown Heritage Committee and other similar organizations to continue and expand its programs such as the Walking Tour.



TRANSPORTATION

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.

Roadways are also classified by their function:

- Arterial roads are those which carry larger volumes of traffic over long distances at relatively high speeds. I-81 is the only arterial road impacting Middletown.
- 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 remainders of the streets in Town are considered local roads which serve to provide access to landowners and carry traffic to collector roads.

Significant attention is needed in these areas:

- Some of the primary 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. Isolated areas that are more rural in nature may be evaluated for construction of a grass lined “ditch section”, rather than traditional concrete curbing.



- Transitional gateways at the north and south extremities of Main Street and the eastern end of Reliance Road should be designed to clearly delineate the departure from county rural areas into the community. Traffic calming devices such as roundabouts can be effectively incorporated at these points as well as the use of divided roadways with tree-lined grass medians along the two major thoroughfares.
- 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.
- 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.

PEDESTRIAN ACCOMODATIONS

A long-term and extensive sidewalk construction plan needs to be implemented throughout the Town to safely isolate pedestrian traffic from

vehicular traffic. Strategically sited park benches and litter containers 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.

BICYCLE ACCOMODATIONS

Clearly delineated bicycle paths along Main Street and Reliance Road can safely and efficiently control two-wheeled traffic. Adding public bicycle racks and outdoor water fountains would further enhance these trails to encourage usage by both the community and visitors.



VDOT

While Middletown can recommend changes, VDOT has the final word on any improvements as well as the responsibility for maintenance. But, exploratory talks are underway to shift the burden of secondary road maintenance responsibilities from the state level to the county level and ultimately to the municipality level. The establishment, in the very near future, of a transportation improvement fund would not be considered unreasonable.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

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. The only community facilities within the corporate limits of Middletown are municipal buildings, two public parks, a water distribution system and a waste water treatment plant.

PARKS

Middletown currently has a 7.5 acre town recreational park with an entrance at the west end on 2nd Street. The park has restrooms, a softball field, basketball court, gazebo, children’s playground and a picnic shelter. There is also a 1.8 acre non-recreational park located south and adjacent to Sixth Street that has yet to be developed. Consideration should be given to those design elements that would attract both residents and visitors to ensure optimum utilization while keeping maintenance requirements at a minimum.

MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

The Town has limited assets that are adequate at this time to meet its mission requirements. The small staff of the Town Office works in a renovated 1880 school building at 7875 Church Street, along with the Police Department. Council chambers, located in a modern addition to the same building, are also suitable as a community meeting room. A large, second floor storage area, accessible only by an exterior fire escape, could be converted into additional office space. As the community expands and personnel requirements increase, funds should be allocated for construction of an internal staircase and renovation of the upper floor. More immediate needs include a replacement heating

and AC system with associated ductwork to heat/cool both existing offices and storage room.

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 classroom, storage and an additional maintenance bay. Again, consideration should be given to the construction of shelters for the Public Works vehicle fleet, as well as security fencing to encircle the building and parking/outdoor equipment storage areas. Other building assets include a wooden picnic shelter, a wooden gazebo and a concrete block bathroom in the Town park. Three pump stations, one with associated underground stairways and equipment elevators, are also maintained by the Town and in need of upgrade.

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 of the upgraded treatment



facility is 400,000 gallons per day. A modern laboratory performs monitoring tests to ensure the output meets State Standards. The facility currently operates at 30% capacity and is expected to be capable of supporting the planned growth of the community for the next 20+ years without need of expansion.



STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

Middletown has an antiquated and inadequate storm water management system with little or no capabilities to manage even minimal runoff. 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 extending into another series of open ditches to the west.

WATER DISTRIBUTION SYSTEM

Although all of the water metering devices are current, most of the mains and laterals date back into the early 1950s. As of this writing, over \$400,000 needs to be programmed to replace and upgrade existing water system lines.

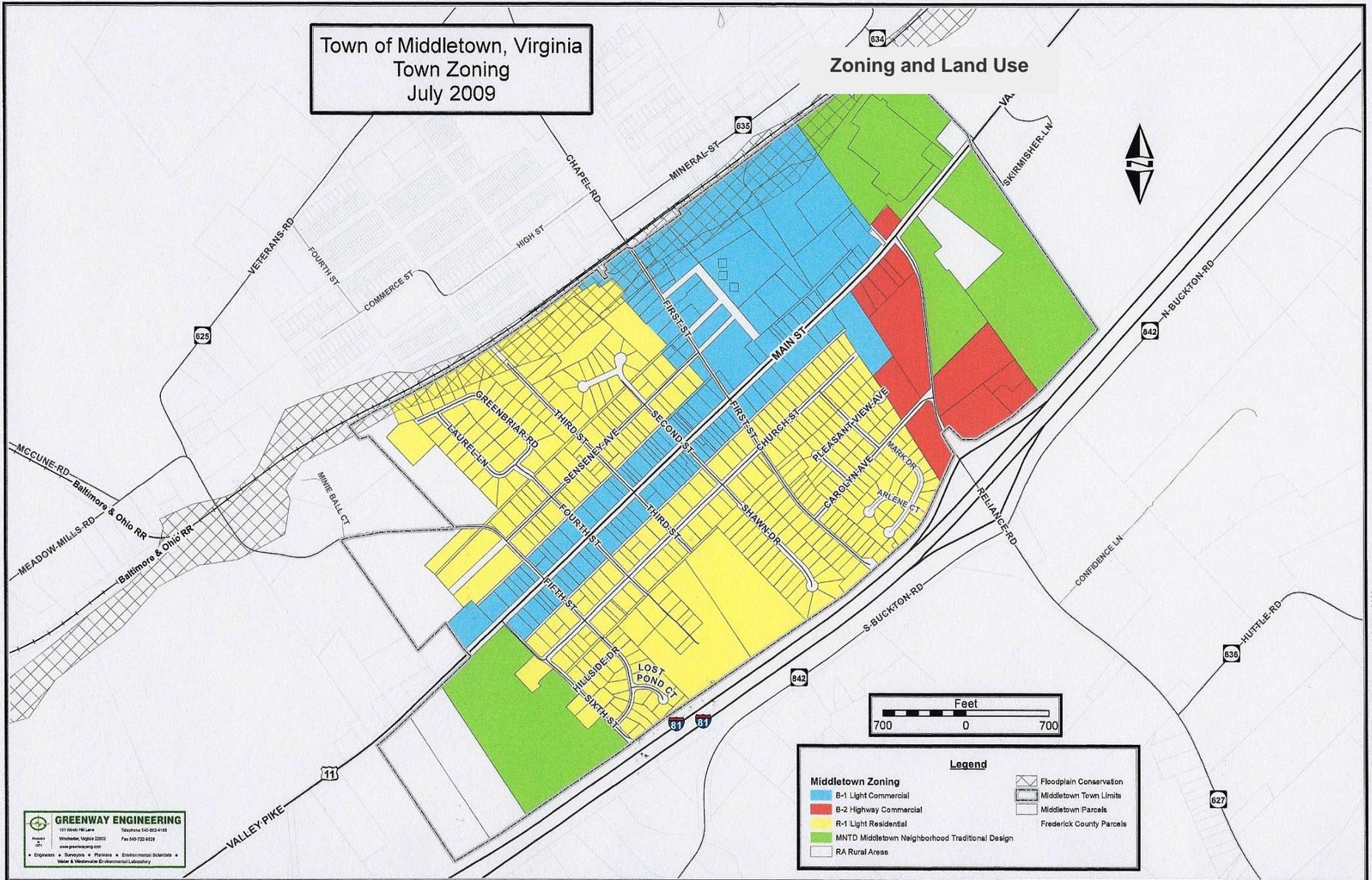
CHESAPEAKE BAY PRESERVATION ACT

The Commonwealth of Virginia enacted the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act, an act intended to protect the water quality of the Chesapeake Bay and any and all tributaries flowing into the bay. Middletown's storm water runoff and effluent from its waste water treatment plant empties into Meadow Brook which flows through Middletown and the 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 continues to seek to reduce or eliminate pollutants with a potential for a negative impact on these waters.





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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 I-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 noted 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 an 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

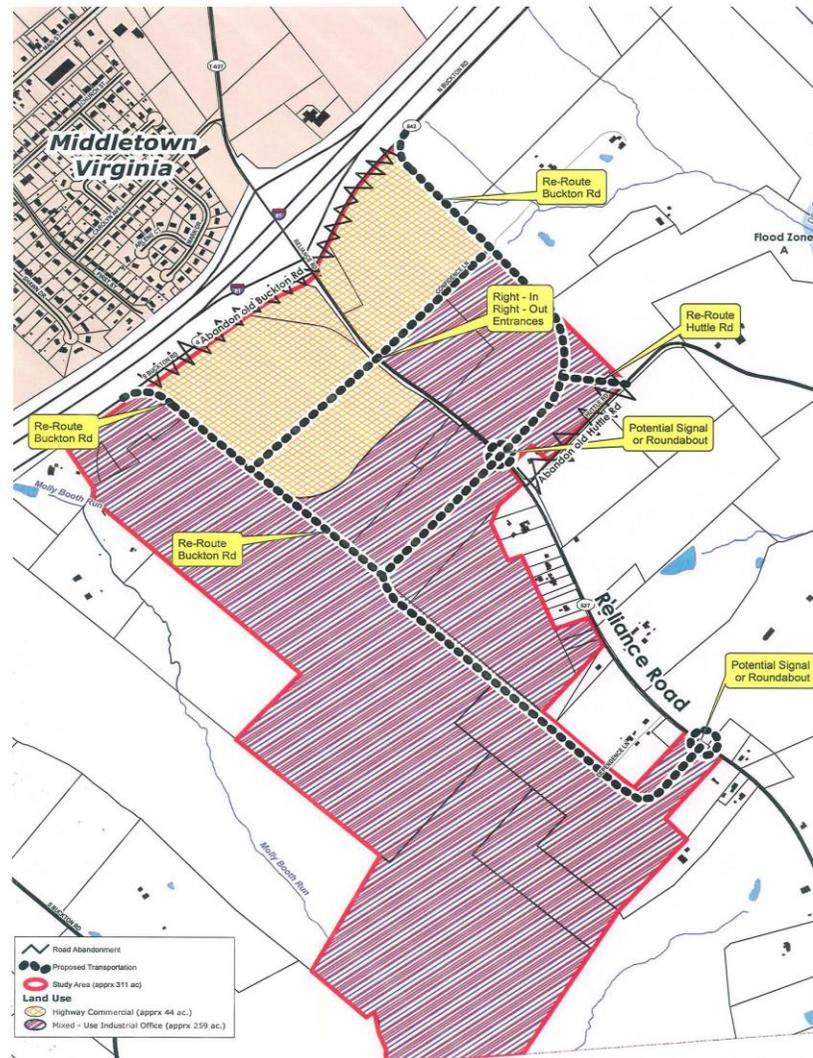
The Town recently completed an upgrade to its wastewater treatment facility which enables it to treat upwards

of 400,000 gpd. Reflective of the slowing economy and the Town's limited water availability, the wastewater facility is currently operating at less than 30 percent capacity; the facility is available to service future wastewater demands. 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

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 (VCDBG)**- This program, which was formerly administered by the Federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, 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 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.

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, and to guide development in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan, which aspires for the common good.