



Palmyra Community Plan

December 16, 2005
Final Report

Prepared by:



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Acceptance of this report as evidence of fulfillment of the objectives of this planning study does not constitute endorsement/approval of the need for any recommended improvement, nor does it constitute approval of their location and design or a commitment to fund any such improvements. Additional project level environmental impact assessments and/or studies of alternatives may be necessary.

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The Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission wishes to thank the citizens and staff of Fluvanna County for their valuable contributions to the development of this plan.

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Executive Summary

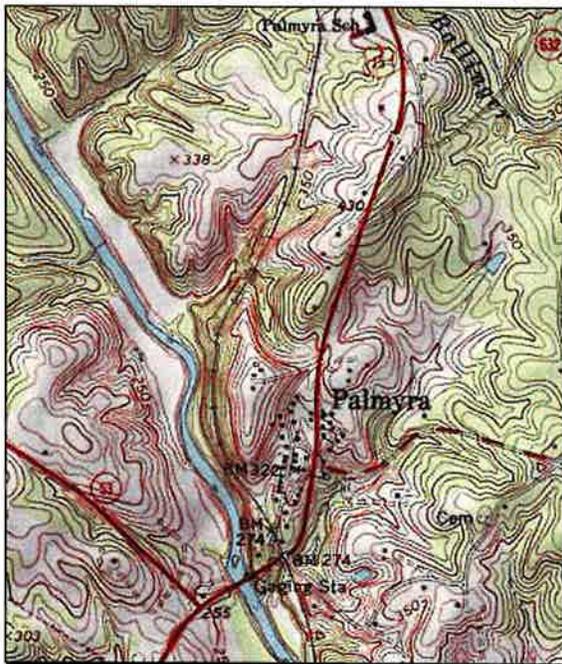
Nestled in the heart of Fluvanna County, the village of Palmyra serves as the centrally located county seat and a testament to the County's rich history and heritage. The area's history and physical form has been shaped by the Rivanna River, which flows west of the existing Village, and by the intersection of Routes 15 and 53. Using the water's resources for commerce and travel, the Village emerged in the early 19th Century as a trading center for farmers and merchants. Trade in Palmyra also benefited from a now defunct rail line that paralleled the river to the east.

Today, Palmyra functions as the governmental center for the County and works to maintain a small village ambience as it balances the potential for growth. The Palmyra Community Plan represents a practical plan to achieve the community-based vision for historic Palmyra Village and the surrounding area. During a series of public workshops, the community expressed their desire for a sustainable village-scaled community served by a safe and efficient multi-modal transportation system.

This Plan rests on this foundation provided by substantial input from Fluvanna County residents, business owners and staff as well as the Virginia Department of Transportation and builds upon the concepts and ideas presented in the 2000 Fluvanna County Comprehensive Plan.

The recommendations of the Palmyra Community Plan serve three major goals:

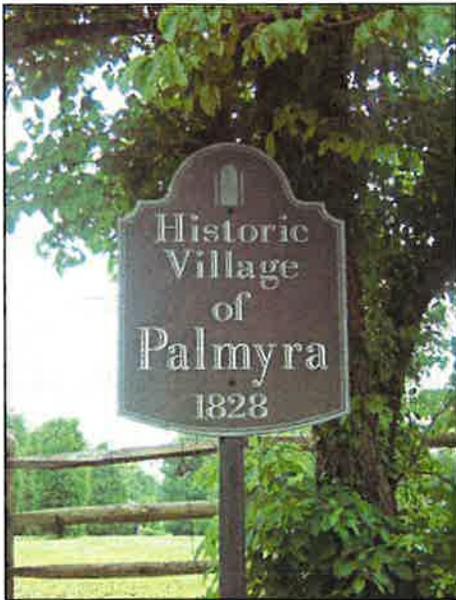
1. **Enhance and maintain the village-scale atmosphere of Palmyra**
2. **Improve the safety, efficiency and diversity of the transportation system**
3. **Protect the social and environmental resources of the area**



The study area for the Palmyra Community Plan extends from the northern intersection of Rt. 15 and Main St. (Rt. 1001) to south of the intersection of Routes 15 and 53. The study area includes the historic village, Rt. 15 commercial area and portions of Pleasant Grove.

Summary of Recommendations

This Plan acknowledges the abundant natural and social resources that together form a vibrant village atmosphere. These assets include the historic courthouse and Old Stone Jail as well as the main street residences and businesses, the county administrative offices and courthouse and the businesses that front Rt. 15 and Rt. 53. Growth in the Palmyra area should occur at a village scale, with economic and residential development complementing the existing conditions and fostering street life. Existing and new development must be served by a safe, efficient, multi-



modal transportation system that respects pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists. Finally, new development and improvements to the transportation system should not compromise the underlying natural and social fabric unique to Palmyra and Fluvanna County.

The recommendations of the Palmyra Community Plan will fulfill the following goals:

- 1. Enhance and maintain the village-scale atmosphere of Palmyra**
- 2. Improve the safety, efficiency and diversity of the transportation system**
- 3. Protect the social and environmental resources of the area**

The major recommendations of the Plan include:

Enhance Village Character

- Encourage active use of Confederate Park by improving access to the Park
- Improve the streetscape by burying utility lines, completing the sidewalk network through the existing village, installing street lamps and constructing a centrally located town clock
- Install a gateway median and welcome signs on Rt. 15

Guide Village-Scaled Development

- Develop guidelines to foster village-scaled developments that include a mix of building types, commercial uses, local jobs, increased retail options such as shopping, cafes, and restaurants and affordable housing
- Seek out commercial uses that complement historic features and integrate new development with existing assets
- Explore expansion of the historical district to include the area south of Stoneleigh Road and east of Rt. 15
- Provide sewer and water service to existing and new village areas to make desired compact form possible

Improve the Safety and Efficiency of the Transportation System

- Coordinate short- and long-term transportation recommendations with the forthcoming Northwest Fluvanna/Southwest Louisa Corridor Study
- Increase transportation choices by improving bus service, increasing participation in RideShare and developing visible and accessible park and ride locations
- Implement a coordinated plan to improve safety on Rt. 15 that includes roundabouts or other safety and capacity improvements, a median island and curb and gutter enhancements for access management
- Create short- and long-term solutions to improve connectivity to Pleasant Grove
- Enhance the pedestrian network by improving access and coordinating pedestrian improvements with streetscape enhancements and traffic calming measures
- Ensure that pedestrian and bicycle facilities on Rt. 15 mirror those on the new Rt. 15 bridge
- Explore the long-term option of constructing a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the Rivanna River as part of a larger network of trails in the surrounding area

Protect the Social and Environmental Resources

- Consider alternative uses for the Palmyra School, including reinstating the facility as a community school or site for after-school programs
- Encourage development that fosters social interaction and takes advantage of the natural beauty of the area
- Actively preserve open space and the rural character of the area by clustering new development in a village-scale, partnering with local and regional agencies and analyzing the size of the Palmyra Community Planning Area
- Support the County's efforts to develop a stormwater management ordinance and a dark sky ordinance



Historic Courthouse



Old Stone Jail

Planning Process

The Palmyra Community Plan is a cooperative effort between the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission and Fluvanna County with support from the Virginia Department of Transportation. The Plan is the third installment in a series of small community plans for Fluvanna County, following the Fork Union and Lake Monticello Plans. The Zion Crossroads plan now underway, along with the results of the Lake Monticello, Fork Union and Palmyra Community Plans, will tie directly into the VDOT-funded Northwest Fluvanna/Southwest Louisa Corridor Study. Each of the four plans also serve as a prelude to the forthcoming update to the Fluvanna County Comprehensive Plan.

The project team began work on the Palmyra Community Plan by collecting and analyzing existing and planned conditions. This analysis included a general inventory of existing buildings, land uses and natural resources, a review of traffic conditions such as volumes, patterns and accidents, and an assessment of the demographic and economic conditions for the Palmyra area. The analysis of planned conditions included a review of the County's current comprehensive plan.

Public Involvement

A kickoff meeting on May 19, 2005 launched the official public process for the Plan. At this meeting, residents, business owners and local officials identified several areas of interest. The first workshop was followed by an exploration of these issues by the project team.

The June 29, 2005 public workshop involved the public through several distinct methods. After a project overview presentation, each person was given five Post-it notes on which to write down five phrases that describe their long-term vision for the community. The participants self-sorted the Post-it notes into topics, in turn demonstrating the common themes held by the group. These themes were reported to the full group.



After receiving an overview of the project, participants scribed their vision on Post-it notes and sorted the notes into categories.



A group visioning session followed the Post-it exercise. During the group visioning portion of the workshop, the group discussed issues affecting the Village. After staff wrote the issues on large paper, each person was given dots with which to vote for their top three priority issues. The resulting issues guided the final exercise of the evening.

The public workshop culminated with a mapping exercise, in which five groups gathered around large aerial photographs of the Village. Using markers and highlighters, each table outlined site-specific strengths, problems and possible solutions. The mapping exercise concluded with the groups summarizing their comments on the map and presenting their findings and recommendations to the larger group. For a detailed description of the comments generated throughout the June 29th workshop, see Appendix B.



Public participation was a key component of developing recommendations. At an August 2005 Technical Team Walking Audit, these recommendations were reviewed.

The information provided through this process was summarized to provide a backdrop for two walking audits conducted in July and August 2005. The walking audits allowed the project team to review the comments and suggestions of the public in a detailed, site-specific context. Representatives from VDOT accompanied the project team on the second audit to conduct a preliminary technical review of the proposed transportation enhancements.

Workshop Results

The Palmyra Community Plan uses input from residents and business owners to identify priority issues for the community. Through a variety of visioning exercises, participants at the June 29th public workshop identified a series of priority issues. These issues included securing the vitality of the Village atmosphere with **village enhancement** and **village-scaled development**, creating a **transportation system** that provides real choice in modes of transportation, and **protecting the environment**. In general, the existing Village refers to the residential, commercial, government and historic area between Rt. 15 and Main Street. (Rt. 1001). Village-scaled development speaks to the expected growth in the surrounding Palmyra Planning Area as defined by the Fluvanna Comprehensive Plan.



Palmyra residents discuss the priority issues.



A workshop participant presents his group's map to the other groups.

Existing Village Enhancement

Several comments from workshop participants centered on the need to enhance the existing features of Palmyra, particularly the commercial and Courthouse areas between Rt. 15 and Main Street. Specific concerns included:

- Maintain the character of the existing village with improvements such as bricking walls and sidewalks
- Add street lamps and a town clock, remove the moat, and improve accessibility to Confederate Park
- Revitalize current buildings for commercial use

Village-Scale Development

In addition to enhancing the existing Village, a host of opinions focused on building upon the layout, street pattern and housing types as the Village expands into other parts of the Planning Area. Specific suggestions included:

- Design new development in the Planning Area after the village-scale growth that includes mixed building types and commercial uses that include local jobs, increased shopping options (stores, cafes and restaurants) and affordable housing
- Consider village-scale development east of Rt. 15 at Church St., on the west side of Main St. between Palmyra Lane and the new courthouse, and south of Rt. 53 and west of Rt. 15
- Keep the post office in the village and consider converting Palmyra School—which is currently the School Board office—back to a community school
- Limit growth/buildings at Pleasant Grove and include Stoneleigh Road in the historical district



Participants noted the potential to develop along Rt. 15 at a village-scale and to utilize the Palmyra School for community use.

Transportation

Many workshop participants expressed a strong desire to improve the safety of the Village's roads, especially Route 15. In addition, many comments articulated the need for improvements to pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Comments related to transportation included:

- Construct roundabouts at key intersections, including the Rt. 15/Rt. 601 (Courthouse Rd.) and Rt. 15/Rt. 53 intersections
- Slow trucks and through traffic with roundabouts and median islands
- Create pedestrian and bicycle facilities, including constructing trails to Lake Monticello and expanding the Heritage Trail



Residents support improvements to the pedestrian network and expansion of the Heritage Rail Trail.

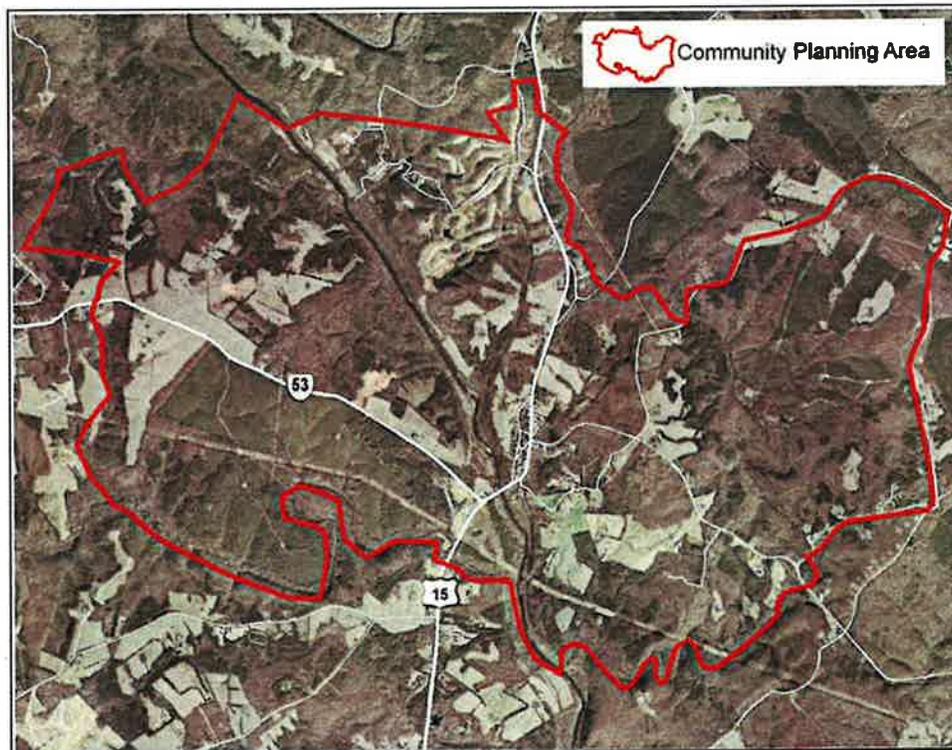
- Improve pedestrian and bicycle connections to Pleasant Grove
- Implement transportation choices such as improved local bus service
- Complete sidewalk network throughout the village with improved crossing of Rt. 15 at Rt. 601 (Courthouse Rd.)

Environment

A variety of comments highlighted the community's interest in protecting the natural resources and rural character of the area that extends beyond the footprint of the Village. Particular comments included:

- Cluster developments to preserve open space
- Deliberate the placement of the sewage plant, with specific recommendations to site the plant down river from the new Rt. 15 bridge (east of the new Rt. 15/Rt. 53 intersection) or at Pleasant Grove and not south of the Rt. 663 (Georges Mill Road)/Rt. 678 intersection
- Protect the water quantity and quality of the Rivanna River
- Preserve the majority of Pleasant Grove as a park, open space, or wooded area

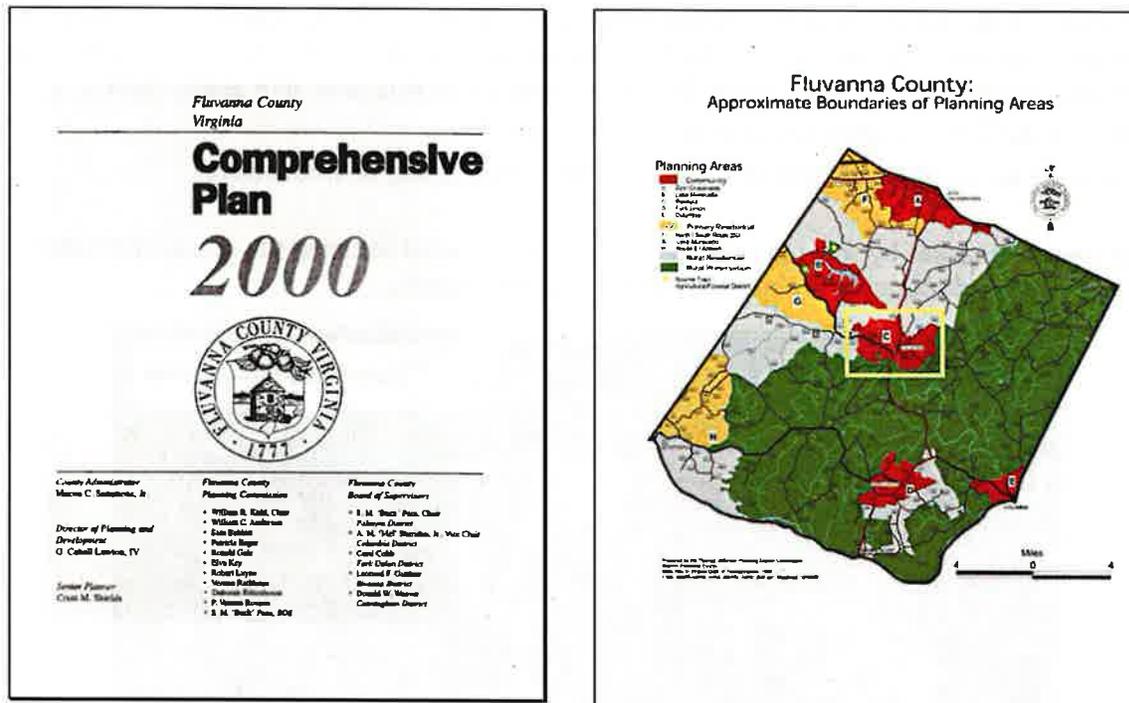
Other issues discussed by some groups and individuals included reducing the size of the Palmyra Planning Area and changing the boundary of the Historic District.



The Fluvanna Comprehensive Plan envisions a mix of residential, commercial and community facilities in the Palmyra Community Planning Area. Participants discussed whether reducing the size of the Planning Area, as designated in the County's Comprehensive Plan, is needed to preserve the rural character of the area.

Recommendations and Strategies

The recommendations and strategies couple the comments and suggestions of citizens, business owners, and government officials with further analysis conducted by the project team. In addition, the Palmyra Community Plan builds on the Fluvanna County Comprehensive Plan's vision for the five Community Planning Areas. According to the Comprehensive Plan, these areas can offer a mix of residential and economic development opportunities. Noting that some areas are less developed than others, the Plan states that each area has the potential to expand upon the existing resources that uniquely qualify the locality for community uses. Likewise, the Planning Areas should capture the majority of new businesses, schools, libraries, and recreation facilities as well as a variety of housing types and densities.



The Palmyra Community Plan builds on the vision of Fluvanna County's Comprehensive Plan, particularly the vision for the Palmyra Community Planning Area (highlighted in yellow).

Direct relationships between the recommendations and strategies of this Palmyra Community Plan and the County's Comprehensive Plan include:

- New development should be integrated with existing assets to promote a cohesive, well-planned community and new housing should complement existing historic resources.
- New housing developments should complement the area's historic nature and provide pedestrian access to a variety of destinations.
- Economic development and tourism should be promoted, including commercial uses that complement the historic aspects of Palmyra and its government center.

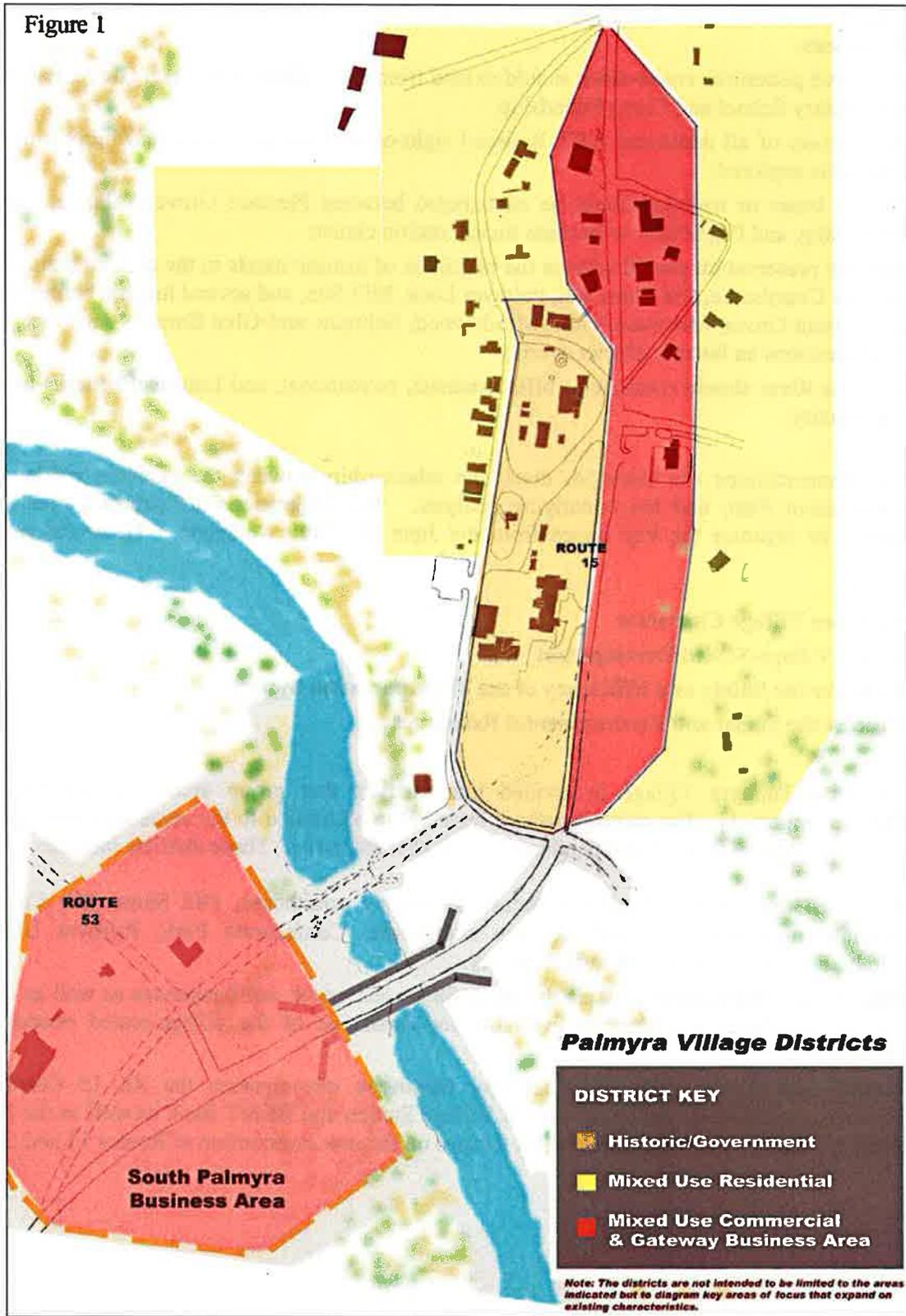
- Expansion of the commercial core should provide pedestrian access and enhance existing businesses.
- Improved pedestrian connections should extend from the Village to Pleasant Grove, Palmyra Elementary School and Camp Friendship.
- Acquisition of all additional CSX Railroad right-of-way for pedestrian and bicycle usage should be explored.
- Shuttle buses or trolleys should be encouraged between Pleasant Grove, Palmyra, Camp Friendship, and Page Place to increase transportation choice.
- Historic preservation should address the multitude of historic assets in the area including the historic Courthouse, Old Stone Jail, Palmyra Lock, Mill Site, and several historic homes such as Pleasant Grove, Mountain View, Meadowood, Solitude, and Glen Burnie. As a tool, the Plan mentions an historic district overlay.
- Rivanna River should continue to offer aesthetic, recreational, and historical benefits to the community.

The recommendations and strategies detail the relationship between the people's vision, the Comprehensive Plan, and the underlying analysis. The suggestions are grouped into four categories to organize the key issues from the June 29, 2005 workshop. These categories include:

1. **Enhance Village Character**
2. **Guide Village-Scaled Development**
3. **Improve the Safety and Efficiency of the Transportation System**
4. **Protect the Social and Environmental Resources**

The existing Palmyra Village is divided into districts that group areas with need-based similarities [Figure 1]. The districts are not intended to be limited to the areas indicated but to diagram key areas of focus that expand on existing characteristics. These districts include:

- **Historic/Government District** includes the historic courthouse, Old Stone Jail, County administration buildings and the new courthouse, Confederate Park, Palmyra United Methodist Church and the historical society.
- **Mixed Use Residential** contains the Main Street residences and businesses as well as land on the peripheral that may be favorable for expansion of the village-scaled residential network.
- **Mixed Use Commercial and Gateway Business** encompasses the Rt. 15 Corridor, including commercial buildings such as Village Station and BB&T Bank as well as the Post Office. Another portion of this district focuses on the new intersection of Routes 15 and 53.

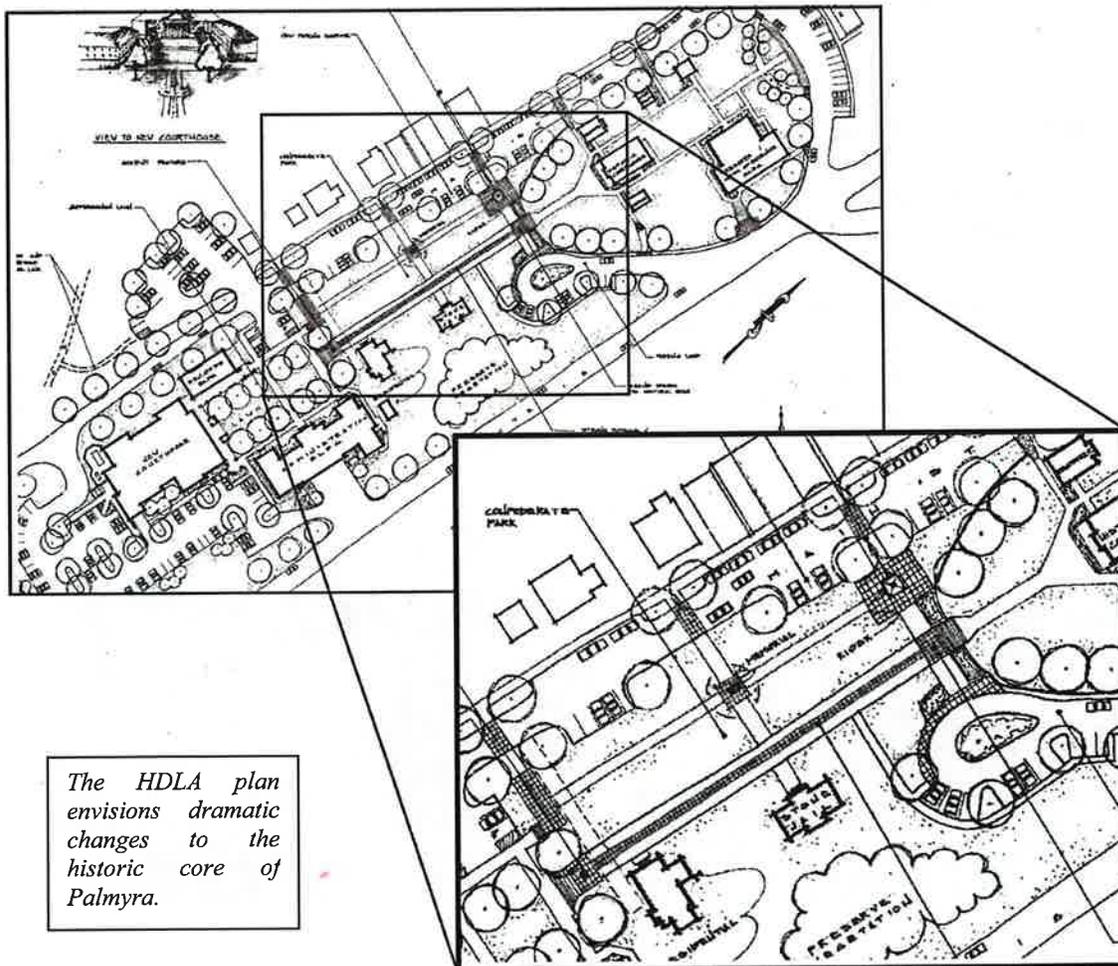


Enhance Village Character

The Palmyra Community Plan acknowledges the abundant resources that combine to create a vibrant village atmosphere. For Palmyra, these assets include the historic buildings in the Village Core—the courthouse and the Old Stone Jail—as well as Confederate Park, the head of the Heritage Trail, Main Street residences and businesses, the new courthouse and administration buildings, and many more.

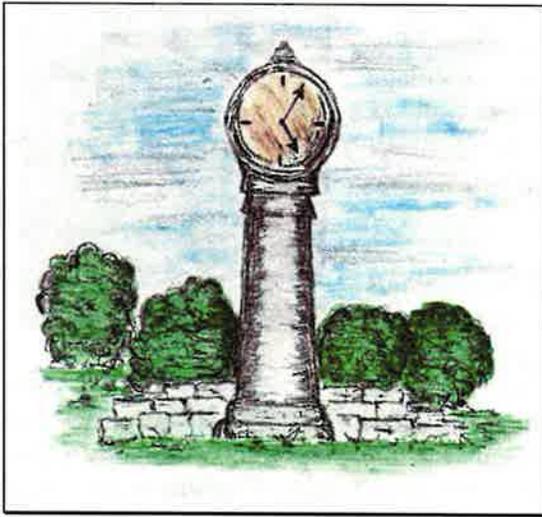


A variety of options have been explored regarding improvements to the central village at Confederate Park. A detailed plan completed in June 2002 by Harvey Delaney Landscape Architects (HDLA) proposes a new pedestrian district between the Historic Courthouse and the new courthouse. Some participants expressed concern about the extreme changes suggested by this plan. The HDLA plan should be reviewed and updated with more detailed community input. This review can be accomplished as part of the NW Fluvanna/Louisa Corridor study being conducted with TJPDC and VDOT.



The HDLA plan envisions dramatic changes to the historic core of Palmyra.

Construct a town clock at a central location in the Village.



A town clock can serve as a focal point for Palmyra while being faithful to the stone architecture of the village.



Improving the pedestrian network with buffered sidewalks, street trees, and streetlamps can enhance the appearance and safety of the village as shown in this photo visualization.

Install streetlamps throughout village.

Complete sidewalk network through existing Village (See Enhance the Pedestrian and Bicycle Network).

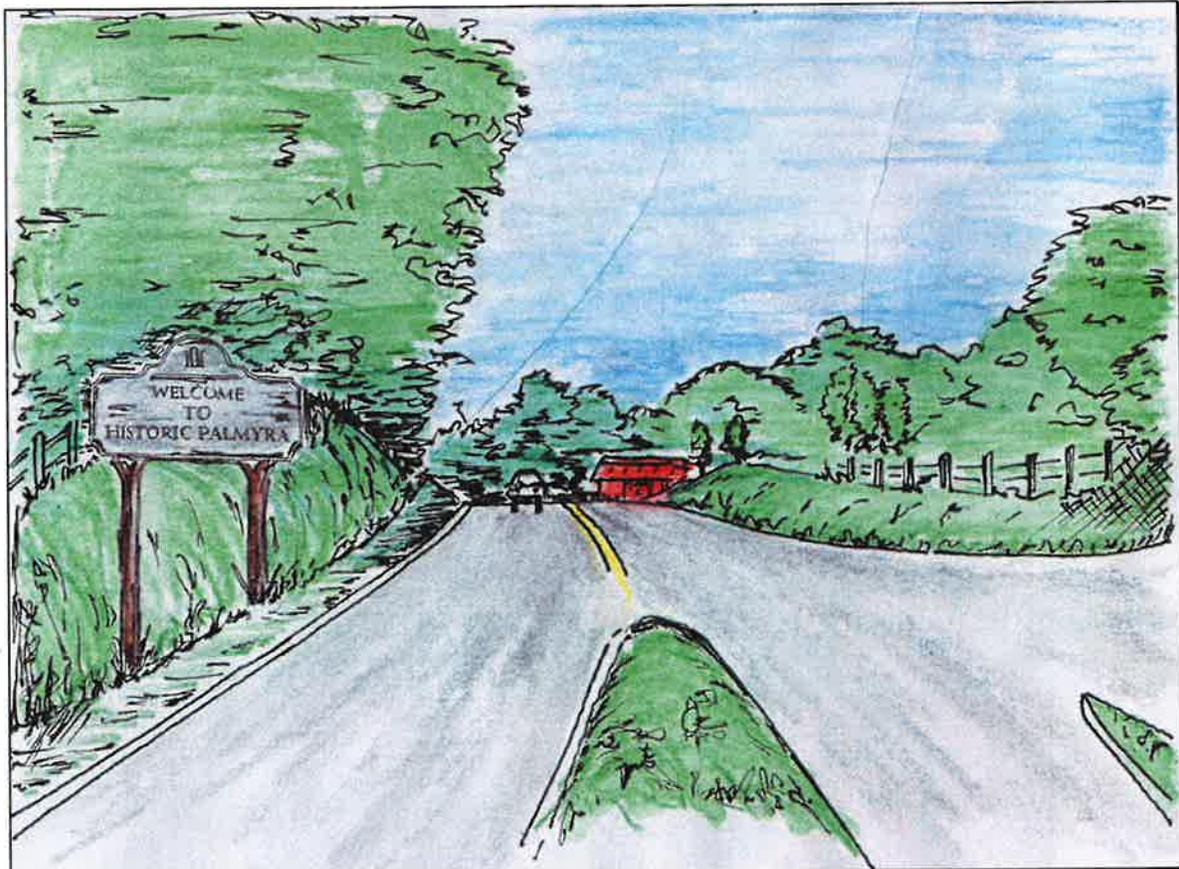
Face concrete walls with brick and/or ivy.

Bury utility lines to enhance aesthetics and foster a village-scaled atmosphere. In addition, burying utilities increases reliability of service during adverse weather, eliminates hazards for pedestrians and motorists and signals an investment in the economic vitality of the Village.



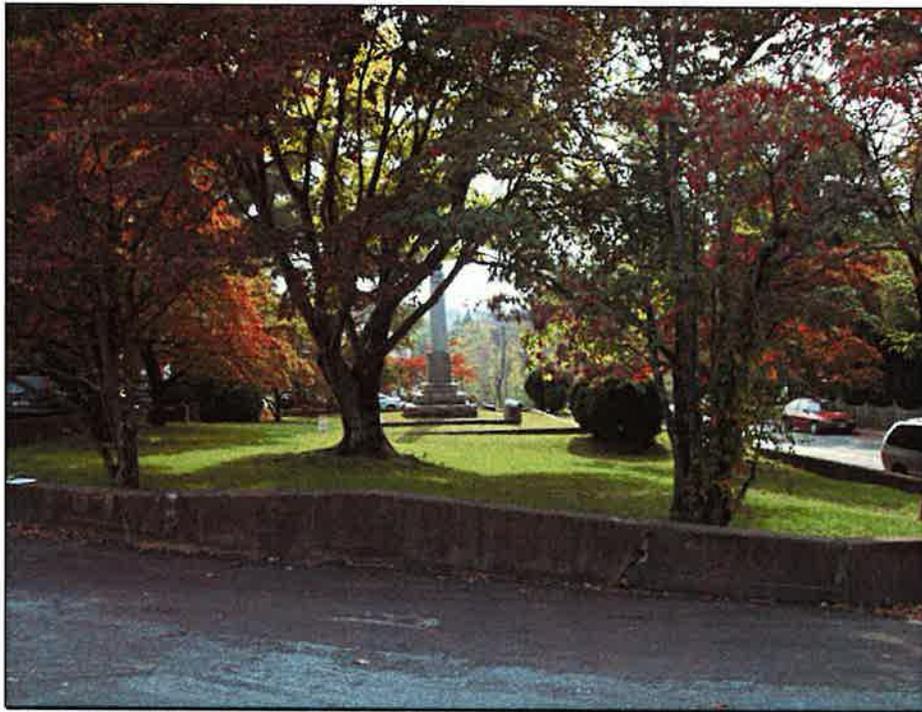
In addition to improving the visual appeal of the area surrounding Village Station, burying utility lines reduces maintenance, improves safety and fosters economic development.

Place gateway and welcome signs in a newly constructed median on Route 15. Two locations are proposed: north of the intersection of Main St. and south of the intersection of Rt. 53. The gateway medians serve the dual purpose of calming traffic and marking the entrance to the village. Specific locations will be determined with property owners and VDOT officials.



A gateway median and welcome sign greets motorist traveling south on Route 15 at Main Street.

Encourage active use of Confederate Park by removing the moat to improve accessibility to park and removing portions of the wall around the Park to improve access.

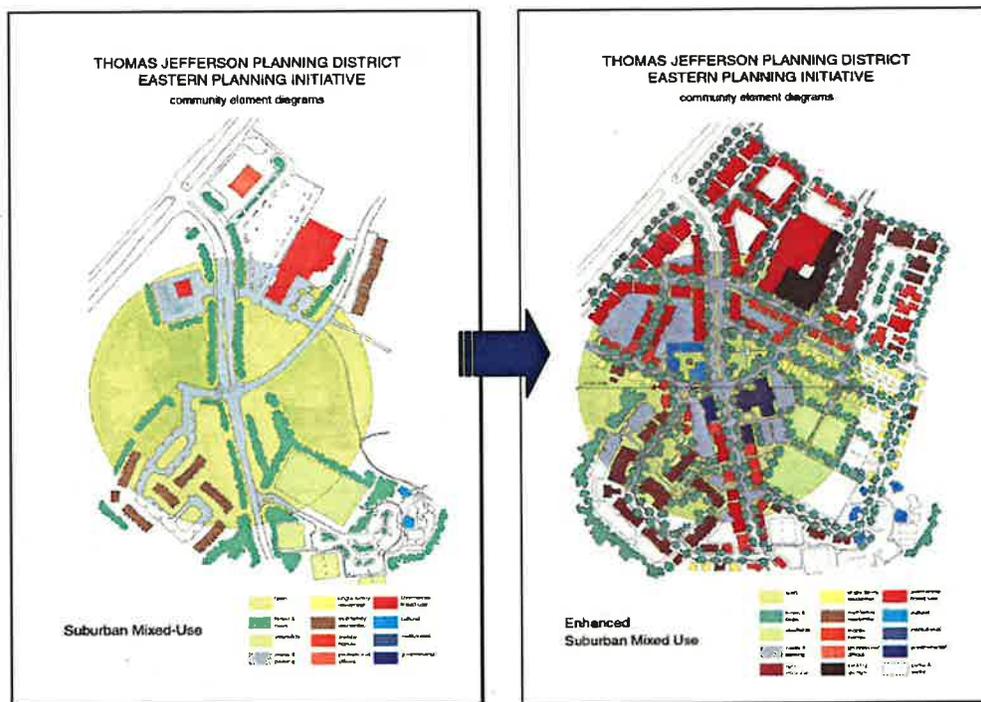


Improving access to and use of Confederate Park can be achieved by removing a portion of the wall and adding benches.

Guide Village-Scaled Development

Village-scale development should be encouraged as the Village expands. During the public workshops, participants noted the following locations for consideration for village-scaled development: Rt. 15 at Church St., the west side of Main St. between Palmyra Lane and the new courthouse, and south of Rt. 53/west of Rt. 15. Regardless of the location, extending the Village identity to developing areas requires a commitment by the community. In return, the community will receive the economic development benefits without compromising the village atmosphere.

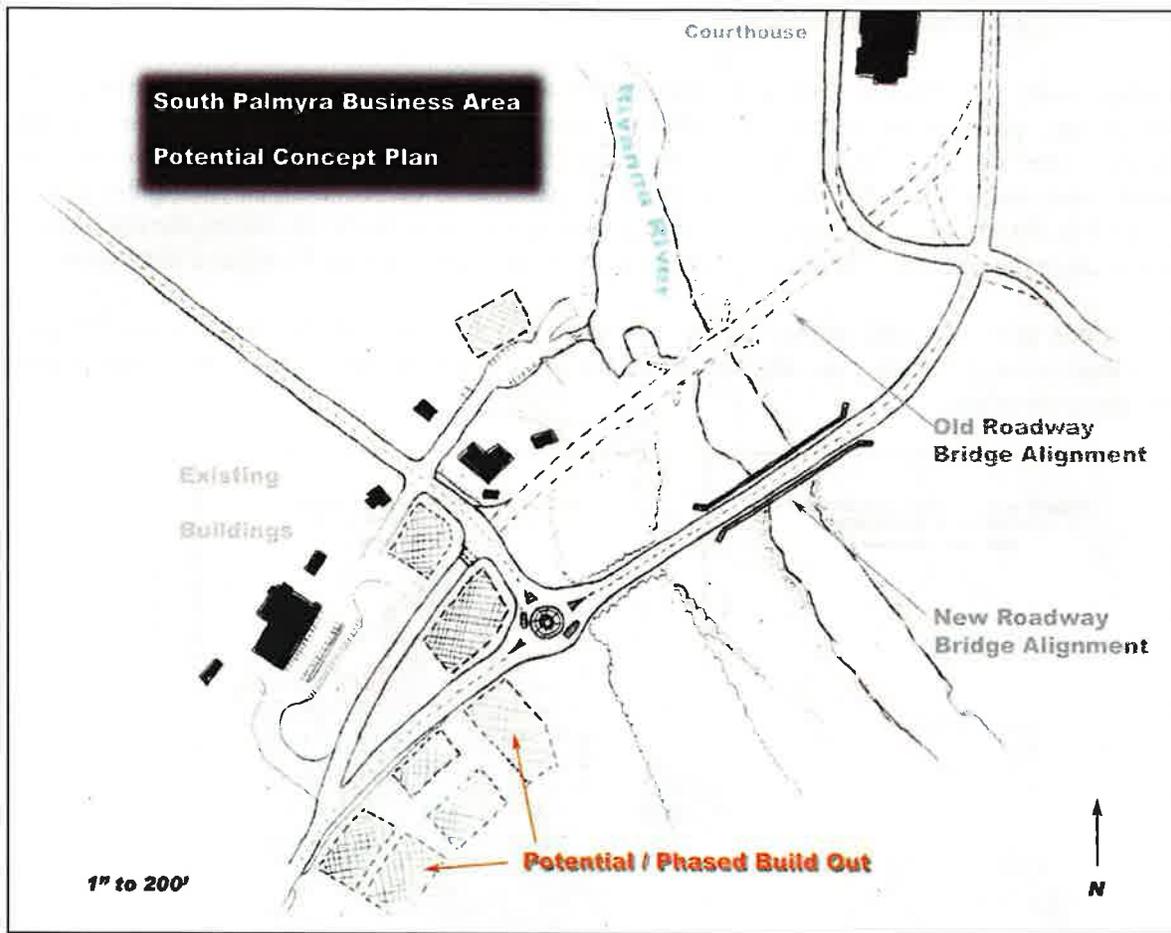
Complete a water and sewer system, which will be required for the desired compact development and system planning should be completed in conjunction with the village-scaled development plans.



Village-scaled development in the Palmyra area will build around existing commercial establishments.

Seek out commercial uses that complement historic features such as the historic Courthouse and the Old Stone Jail.

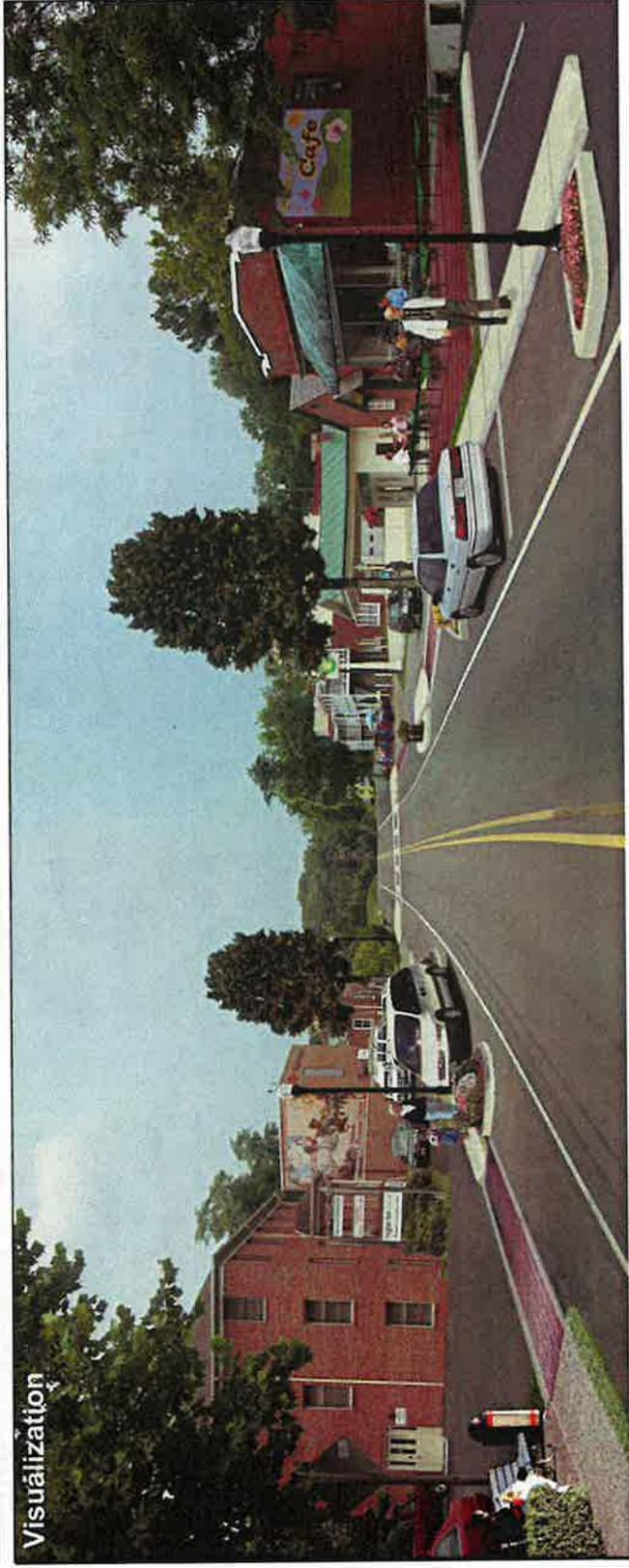
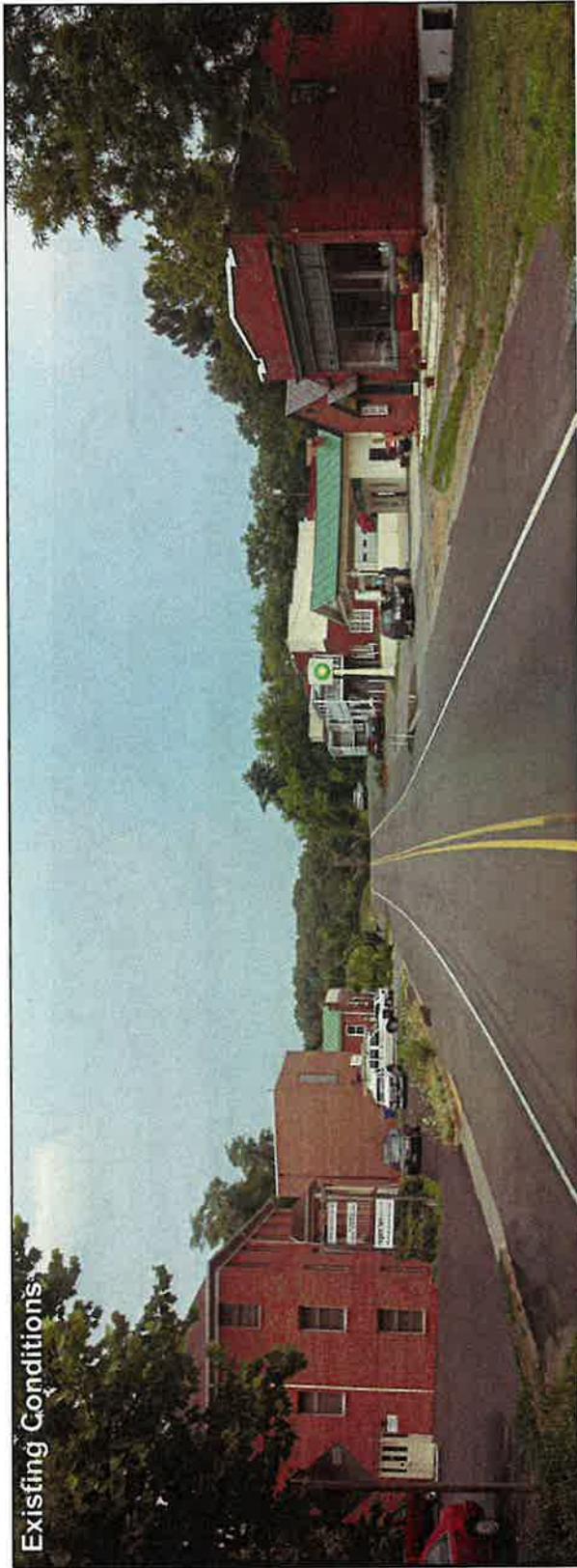
Integrate new development with existing assets.



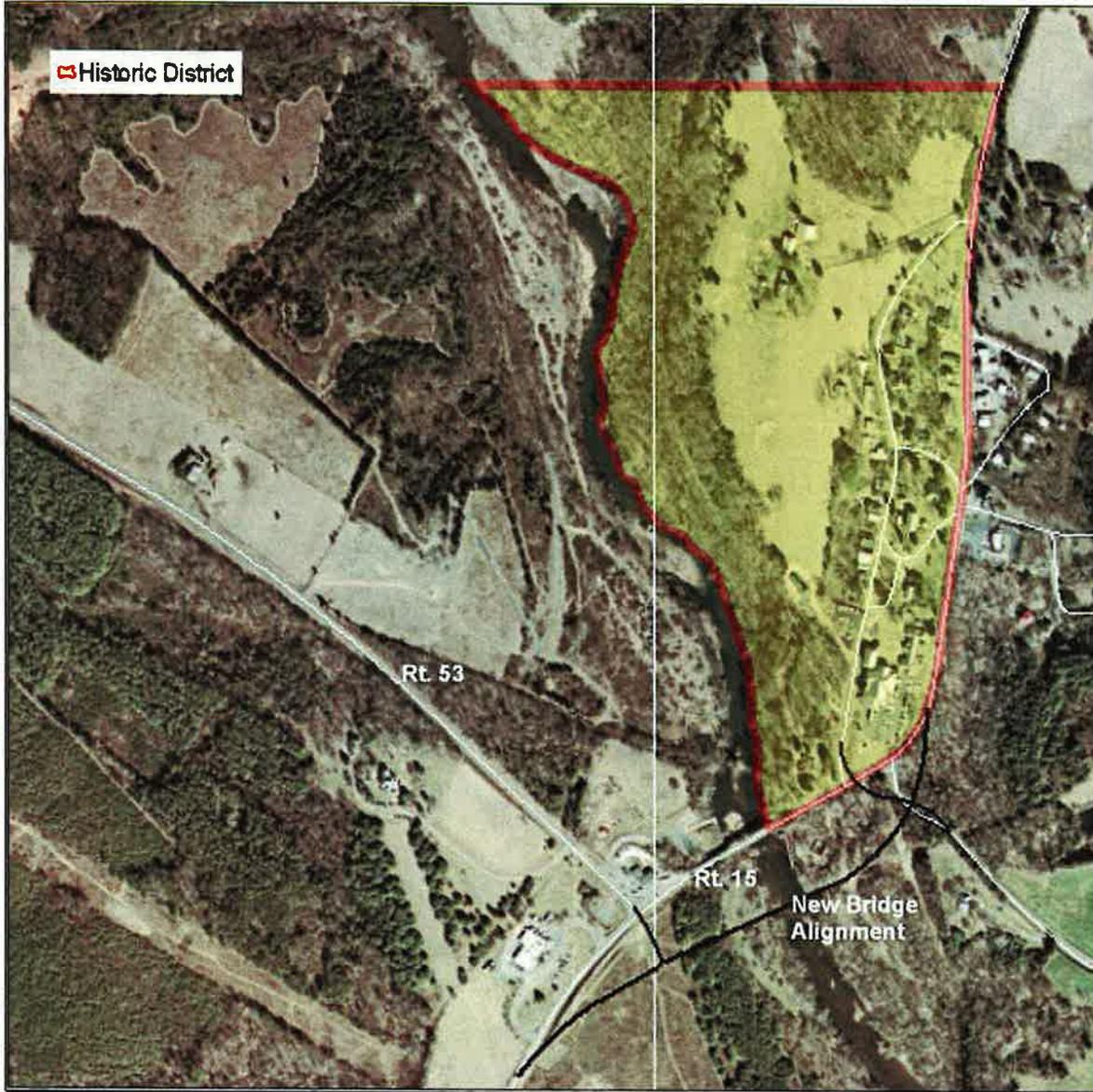
Developments surrounding the new intersection of Routes 15 and 53 capitalize on existing assets. These assets include the Rivanna River, an improved intersection and commercial establishments such as the E.W. Thomas store.

Explore alternatives to keep post office in the Village.

Establish Village Development Guidelines to foster village-scaled developments. The guidelines should create a framework for development that includes a mix of building types, commercial uses, local jobs, increased shopping options such as stores, cafes, and restaurants and more options in housing that function in a pedestrian-friendly environment. The images on the following page present a conceptual photo visualization of such development guidelines



Explore the expansion of the historical district, including protecting the area south of Stoneleigh Rd. and east of Rt. 15. Currently, the boundary for the Courthouse Registry extends from 0.3 miles north of the intersection of Rt. 15 and Rt. 601 (Courthouse Rd.) to the intersection of Rt. 15 and the Rivanna River. The district is bounded to the east by Rt. 15 and to the west by the Rivanna River. The current boundary is shown below.



Protect the historic Mill and locks during construction of the Rt. 15 bridge.

Improve the Safety and Efficiency of the Transportation System

Palmyra is ideally located at the intersection of two significant regional highways, Rt. 15 and Rt. 53, and on the banks of the Rivanna River. The two highways provide regional accessibility to the existing Village and will serve as a cornerstone for the village-type development that is envisioned. Immediate efforts to protect and enhance these corridors must be coordinated with long-range transportation and land use solutions. The Transportation Master Plan [Figure 2] shows some of the recommendations and suggestions necessary to secure the safety and efficiency of Palmyra's transportation system.

The Palmyra Transportation Master Plan presents a few of the major recommendations for the areas transportation network. The Master Plan is a conceptual representation of some the ideas that follow.

Coordinate short- and long-term transportation recommendations with the forthcoming Northwest Fluvanna/Southwest Louisa Corridor Study.

Increase alternative transportation options by improving bus service (JAUNT) including creating transit target stops in the Village. Also, actively encourage greater participation in RideShare and construct visible and accessible park and ride locations. A park and ride lot should be constructed in the near term on VDOT-controlled land near the intersection of Rt. 15 and Stoneleigh Rd as the new bridge is constructed. Any decisions on future locations should be the result of a coordinated effort with RideShare, JAUNT, local officials and citizens.



Increasing transportation choices requires coordination with regional transportation providers and programs

Develop a coordinated plan to improve traffic safety on Rt. 15 while maintaining capacity in accordance with VDOT requirements and in anticipation of changing vehicular activity with the construction of the Palmyra Bridge. As part of the plan, explore the following improvements.

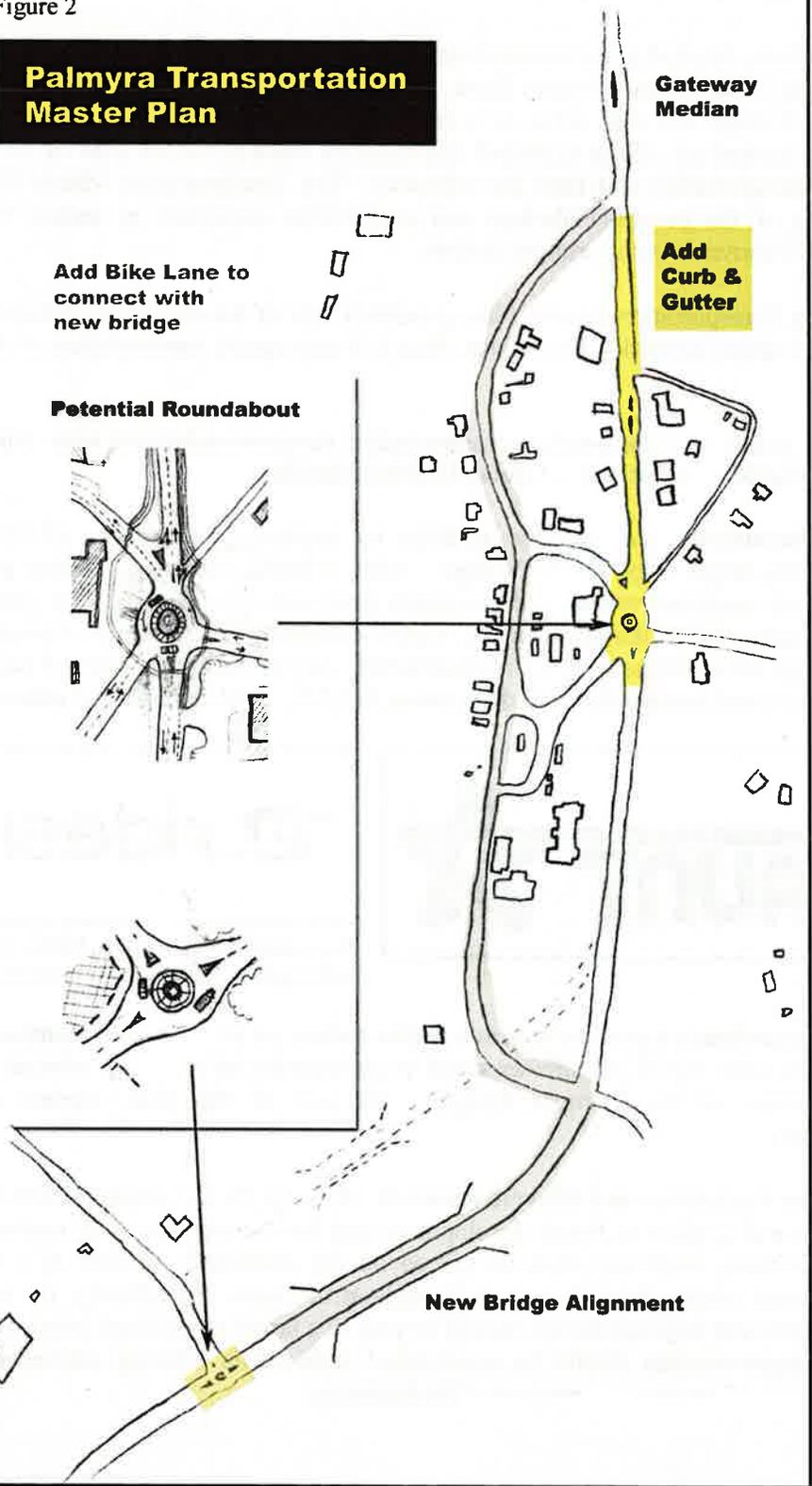
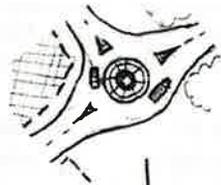
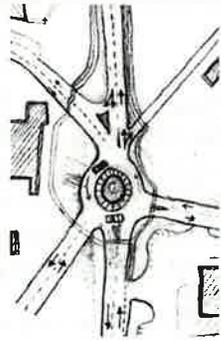
Enhance the Pedestrian and Bicycle Network. In order for the village-scaled environment to be enhanced and applied to future development and for the transportation system to operate at optimal efficiency, emphasis must be placed on the continued creation of a pedestrian and bicycle network within the Village and throughout the area. Specifically, the network should improve access and implementation should be part of a larger streetscape improvement program. Pedestrian improvements should be coordinated with traffic calming measures on Rt. 15 to improve pedestrian access to areas east of the highway.

Figure 2

Palmyra Transportation Master Plan

Add Bike Lane to connect with new bridge

Potential Roundabout



Gateway Median

Add Curb & Gutter

New Bridge Alignment

Construct a roundabout or other safety and capacity improvements at the intersection of Rt. 15 & Courthouse Rd. (Rt. 601) and the new intersection of Routes 15 and 53.

Roundabouts

Modern roundabouts are an alternative to traffic signals at arterial intersections. Unlike conventional signalized intersections, which tend to speed traffic up at the most critical locations, roundabouts slow traffic down as they approach and pass through the intersection. Due to the lower speeds, they reduce crashes 50-90% and handle 30% more traffic at intersections previously controlled with traffic signals or stop signs. They improve the efficiency of all forms of traffic, increase safety, create terminating vistas, and add to green space. Designed correctly, roundabouts provide a safe atmosphere for pedestrians and bicyclists. Splitter islands and

marked crosswalks form a network for pedestrian travel that is separate from motorized traffic, while bicyclists benefit from the slower speed and constant movement. As well, roundabouts create a sense of place and can act as an entry to a particular neighborhood or district.

For Palmyra, the public identified the potential for roundabouts to serve as a traffic solution at several key intersections. A preliminary technical review identified the intersection of Rt. 15 and Courthouse Rd. (Rt. 601) and the new intersection of Routes 15 and 53. Figure 3 shows a conceptual rendering of the Rt. 15/Courthouse Rd. intersection with possible pedestrian flow. Figure 4 illustrates the new Rt. 15/Rt. 53 intersection with a roundabout and potential expansion of the commercial base. By slowing vehicles and alerting motorists of a change in surroundings, they could provide an attractive and functional gateway into the village area. The transportation master plan also identifies possible roundabouts at the new intersection of Routes 15 and 53.

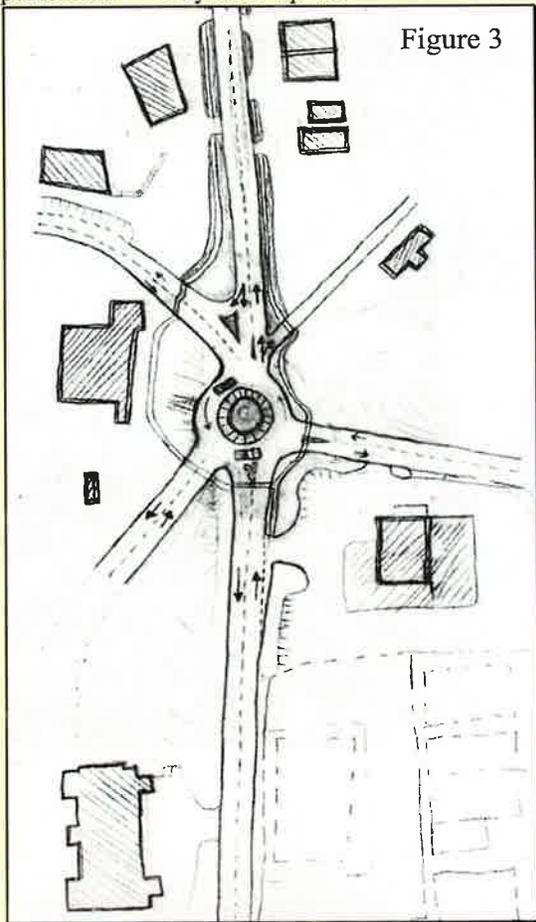


Figure 3

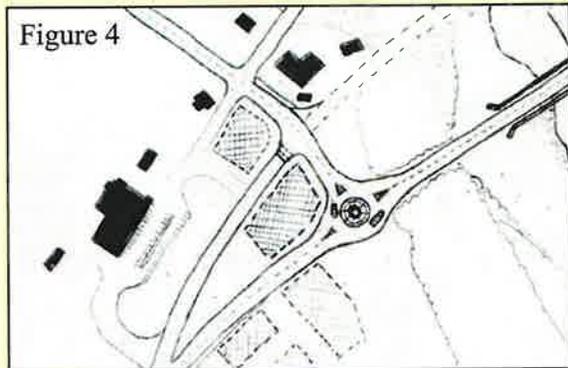


Figure 4



Figure 3 depicts a conceptual schematic of a proposed roundabout for the intersection shown in the photograph to the right.

Build a median island on Rt. 15.

Install curb and gutters along Rt. 15 through commercial district. The priority areas for curb and gutters are noted on the Transportation Master Plan. When coordinated with the area streetscape plan, such improvements will improve the safety of the transportation system and create a gateway feature.

Coordinate access management on Rt. 15 through commercial district, by working with local business owners for shared access and incorporating access management devices into the streetscape plan.



The existing access management of Rt. 15 should be improved with a coordinated plan of curb and gutter, clear driveway and pedestrian zones, and other devices.

Ensure pedestrian and bicycle features similar to those on the new Rt. 15 bridge will be built on north- and southbound Rt. 15.

Create connections to Pleasant Grove. In the short-term, residents should use the new Rt. 15 bridge. For the long-term, citizens could actively pursue the financing and construction of a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the Rivanna River at an ideal location that increases connectivity to both sides of the river and between Palmyra and Pleasant Grove.



Two examples of wooden pedestrian/bicycle bridges (Courtesy of York Bridge Concepts)

The pedestrian and bicycle network will not be complete until direct connections are established between the historic village and Pleasant Grove. In addition to the long-term pedestrian/bicycle bridge, trails should be constructed to Lake Monticello and the rail trail should be expanded.

Protect the Social and Environmental Resources

The most significant social resource in Palmyra—the village atmosphere—may be preserved and improved by addressing existing and new development and establishing a safety and diverse transportation system. Other social resources as well as the abundant environmental resources unique to the Palmyra area need to be protected with an organized plan.

Promote the social and environmental benefits of a village-scaled community.

Establish an alternative use for the Palmyra School—the current offices of the School Board—including considering the reinstatement of the facility as a community school or as the site for after-school programs.

Support the County's efforts to develop a stormwater management ordinance that will protect the water quality and quantity of the Rivanna River and surrounding waterways.



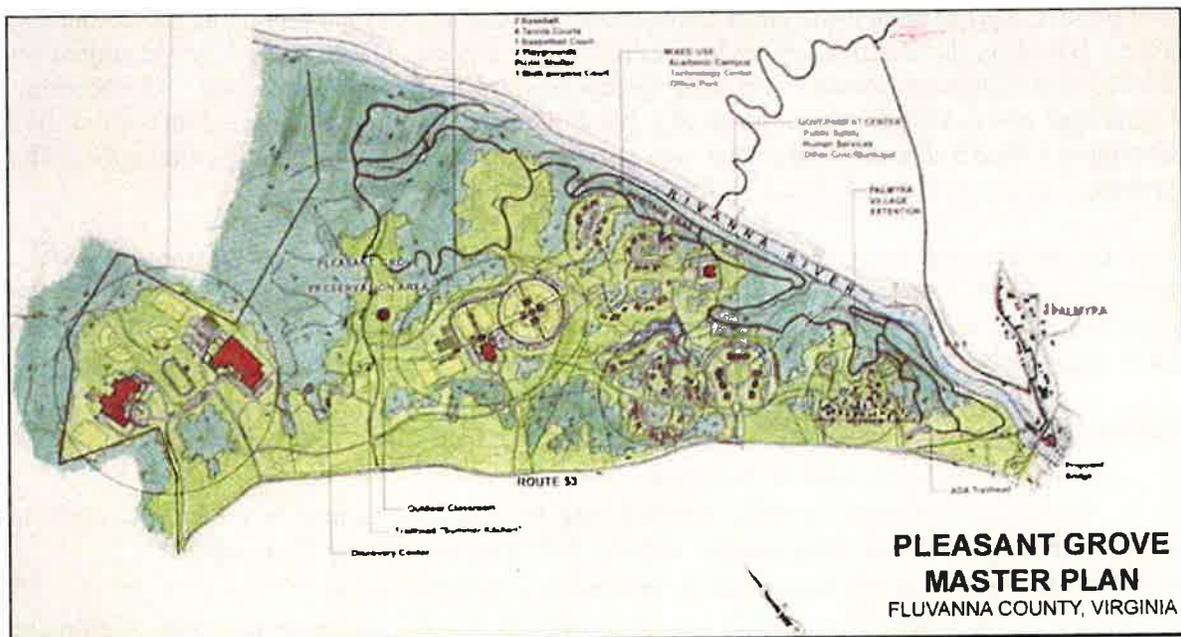
The community should leverage the social value of the Palmyra School and protect the environmental resources of the Rivanna River.

Encourage development—such as an outdoor entertainment venue or outdoor market—that fosters social interaction and takes advantage of the natural beauty of the area.

Actively preserve open space and the rural character of the area by clustering new development at a village-scaled as a preservation strategy; encouraging participation in the Fluvanna County Land Use Valuation Program to emphasize rural preservation; coordinating open space and natural resource protection with local and regional organizations; and analyzing the size of the Palmyra Community Planning Area to ensure its effectiveness in protecting the rural character that surrounds the historic village.

Work with the County to enhance existing codes pertaining to outdoor lighting to discourage excessive lighting from commercial areas and to improve existing lighting over time.

Ensure that the built environment at Pleasant Grove fosters social interaction and sustainability with a mix of recreation and community resources.



The public's vision for Pleasant Grove includes protecting the environmental resources and fostering social interaction with community features.

Implementation

The project team presented the Draft Palmyra Community Plan to the public on September 28, 2005. Based on this community review, priorities for implementation have been generated by TJPDC and Fluvanna County staff with assistance from a steering committee. The Steering Committee was formed for the purpose of generating and evaluating ideas regarding the Palmyra Community Plan and monitoring the progress of the following implementation strategies. The project team will continue to focus on funding options for model projects.

The Implementation Strategies that follow are presented in three general time frames—Immediate, Short-Term and Long-Term. Priority for individual projects is not implied in this list and should be considered in the context of funding availability. The designation as Short-Term and Long-Term is not meant to be a final categorization nor is it tied to a specific time period.

Immediate

- Form a Steering Committee (Completed)
 - In addition to assisting with implementing the Palmyra Community Plan, the steering committee will assist the County with the 2005 Comprehensive Plan update.
- Combine pedestrian and pavement improvements with sewer work
- Funnel any available construction or safety funds to improvements on Route 15 to alleviate potential increases in speed due to new geometry (Concurrent with construction of new Route 15 bridge)

Short-Term

- Draft Village Development Guidelines
- Construct roundabout tied to new bridge alignment
- Apply TEA grant money to expansion of rail trail and construction of parks
- Expand water and sewer service beyond the government district
- Develop interim connections to Pleasant Grove
- Partner with business owners for pedestrian, access and village enhancements
- Construct a Park and Ride lot on VDOT-controlled land

Long-Term

- Fund and construct a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the Rivanna River that connects the Village with Pleasant Grove

In addition, more detailed analysis will be conducted as part of the VDOT-funded Northwest Fluvanna/Southwest Louisa Corridor study that will tie together the Fork Union, Lake Monticello and Zion Crossroads Plans. The deliverable products from this study include more detailed land use diagrams and spot improvements for transportation and additional implementation strategies.

The Palmyra Community Plan will be incorporated into the 2005 Comprehensive Plan update.

Appendices

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Appendix A: Participants from All Workshops

Participants

Phoenix Bellamy

Alice Clifford

Toni Cox

Patricia Eager

Carrie Farruggio

Mick Finn-McKenzie

Tammy Grigg

Bill Grigg

Wanda Himes

William Michael Hooper

Eillot Kerins

Father Kyrill

Cabell Lawton

Walt Lindenmann

Fred Lewis

Bridgette Madison

Michael Madison

Betty McGehee

Minnie Lee McGehee

Overton McGehee

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TJPDC

Andy Sorrell

Fluvanna County

Jonathan Whitehurst

TJPDC

Appendix B: Results from Exercises

**Palmyra Community Plan
May 19, 2005 Workshop Results
Priority Issues**

- Retain green and open space
- Extend the village concept
- Community and family gathering areas
- Affordable and mixed use housing
- Walkability and connected spaces
- Good design and design standards
- Economic development and jobs—expand the tax base
- Development of infrastructure—water and sewer
- Preserve historic fabric

**Palmyra Community Plan
June 29, 2005 Workshop Results
Post-it Note Exercise**

After a project overview presentation, each person was given five Post-it notes and a few minutes to write down five phrases that describe their long-term vision for the community. The participants self-sorted the Post-it notes into topics, in turn demonstrating the common themes held by the group.

Historic Preservation

- Maintain historic structures
- Build on village's historic assets—Courthouse
- Preserve the Village, with improvements
- Historic neighborhood preservation
- Preserve the Jail, Mill, Lock and Courthouse
- Keep the heart of Palmyra as it is
- Retain the historic flavor—village-style
- Keep buildings in line with existing structures (appearance)
- Consider historical issues as expansion continues
- Preserve historic image through zoning
- Recognize historic building style
- Keep courts and County government in Village

Economic Development

- No big tourism, just make it a nice place to visit
- More commercial activity
- Focus on tourism potential and possibilities
- Non-gourmet restaurants/café and coffee shop
- Quality shopping/dining—little shops and stores
- Develop stores, shops and services within the community—have practical business places such as a barbershop and diner—especially to encourage pedestrian traffic
- Small businesses
- Shopping—antiques, coffee
- Create a business area
- More jobs
- Small-scale retail, restaurants and other neighborhood amenities in the Village and in existing shopping centers along Rt. 15
- Create a management plan for guiding development
- Limit growth
- Space for retail

Traffic Safety

- Reduce traffic through town
- Alternative public transportation in County and beyond
- More parking
- Facilitate traffic flow

Village-Scaled

- Farmer's Market
- Keep Village peaceful
- Consider other side of Route 15
- Expansion of Village (How far will we grow?)
- Community enhancement
- Keep changes simple
- Keep walls that are in the Village but brick them
- Town clock in triangle in front of Courthouse
- Brick sidewalks throughout Village
- Streetlamps along sidewalks
- Keep changes small

Pedestrian and Bicycle Friendly

- Path to Lake Monticello
- Rail to trail
- Connect to Pleasant Grove

Housing Diversity (Affordable & Senior)

- Housing within the Village
- Retirement housing
- More residential housing
- Expand residential up Rt. 53 and Rt. 15
- Slow residential growth...until we have local job growth

Family, Youth and Community Events

- A pleasant place to gather
- Better transportation infrastructure
- Central point of County
- Make room for a larger post office in Village
- Water, sewer, sidewalks, streets, parking
- Bury electric lines
- Move sewer plant to Pleasant Grove—ensure sewer plant doesn't smell
- Secure water availability—concern over Lake Monticello water
- Outdoor entertainment, concert nights

Natural Resource Protection

- Preserve open space and protect the river
- Extend trails

**Palmyra Community Plan
June 29, 2005 Workshop Results
Group Prioritizing Exercise**

For the Group Prioritizing Exercise, the group discussed general and specific issues affecting the Village. After staff wrote the issues on large paper, each person was given dots with which to vote for their top three priority issues. The resulting issues provided the framework for the Mapping Exercise.

Key Topics

- Reuse of Pembroke Petit Bridge
- Traffic Calming
- Walkability
- Post Office location
- Sewage Plant location
- Economic Development

Dots Issue

Reuse of Bridge

- 13 What about reuse of old bridge?
 - Historic, pedestrian bridge
 - Connection to Pleasant Grove
- 1 We want to keep old bridge
 - Example: bridge in Greenfield, CT

Traffic Calming

- 8 Trucks and cars slow down
 - More pedestrian friendly
 - Traffic calming
- 5 Use of roundabouts should be encouraged to slow traffic
 - Good for flow and pedestrians

Walkability*

- 5 Walkability in Village
- 5 Crossing from Palmyra to post office

Post Office Location

- 12 Post office in Palmyra
 - Walkability
 - Post office needs more space

Sewage Plant Location

- 10 Sewage plant location (Pleasant Grove or other?)
- 2 Location of sewage plant?
 - Several options

Economic Development

- 9 Extension of village include services commercial

*Walkability also mentioned in discussing:

- Traffic Calming
- Post Office Location

Other Topics

- Village appearance
- Community school
- Economic development
- Traffic calming
- Village character
- Housing diversity
- Environmental stewardship
- Bus service

Other Topics

<u>Dots</u>	<u>Issue</u>
7	Students back into Palmyra school
6	Local job/workplace growth Village concept
5	Burying utilities Aesthetics
4	Ensuring water quality in Palmyra
3	Aging in place/senior housing
3	Stamped stone/more attractive Walls around park Example: Goochland Courthouse, Grace Church
2	53 & 15 hard to get to/traverse
2	Noise control from Rt. 15 Trucks
2	Underutilized commercial property here in Palmyra—housing on Church St.
2	Connections to Pleasant Grove from Lake Monticello and Palmyra
2	Extend Palmyra village-scale across river
1	Enforcement of speeding all hours of day
1	New bridge may increase speeds?
1	Utilizing existing businesses and parking/access onto Rt. 15
1	JAUNT service more in county
1	Access to Old Mill Park
1	Zoning changes in area

**Palmyra Community Plan
June 29, 2005 Workshop Results
Mapping Exercise**

The Mapping Exercise involved five small groups. Each group wrote comments and recommendations on separate aerial photographic maps and then summarized the main points. Listed below are the main comments for each group as well as the notations from the large maps.

Group 1

Main Comments

- Leave layout of village as is with some improvements/changes
 - Bricking of walls and sidewalks to residents
 - Street lamps
 - Town clock
 - Remove moat
 - Improve accessibility to Conf. Park
 - Extend sidewalks to North Palmyra
- Maintain pedestrian bridge
- Keep post office in village
- Include Stoneleigh Rd in historical area
- Village Station as a commercial growth area
- More retail—place to get a cup of coffee

Map

- Do not put sewage plant south of the Rt. 663 (Georges Mill Rd)/Route 678 intersection
- Keep post office as close to village as possible
- Keep old bridge for pedestrian walkway
- Roundabout at Rt. 53 and Rt. 15
- Include Stoneleigh Rd in historic district
- Post office northeast of the Rt. 53 and Rt. 15 intersection
- Start traffic calming at the Rt. 15/Rt 661 intersection; End on Rt. 15 at southern boundary of the Community Planning Area
- Notes on HDLA Plan
 - Get rid of the moat
 - Just give Palmyra Village a facelift
 - Keep post office in Palmyra
 - Plan calls for too much change; leave as is with some improvements
 - Leave roadway the same
 - Suggested improvements
 - Brick cement walls surrounding parks (like Goochland)
 - Open Confederate Park from all four sides (keep wall—fill in moat)
 - Brick sidewalks and extend to include all residents up to Rt. 15
 - Streetlamps
 - Town clock

- Taking out the middle roadway access would create too much traffic on one road and it would lose the character of the village

Group 2

Main Comments

- 2 roundabouts
- Village development (stores, parks) 53-15
- Walkway across river
- Crosswalks and traffic calming
- Revitalization of current buildings
- Add land east of 15 to historic area

Map

- Add area east of Rt. 15 to historic area
- Traffic calming on Rt. 15 north of Church St to the southern intersection with Main St
- Roundabout on Rt. 15 at Rt. 601 (Courthouse Rd)
- Roundabout at the Rt. 15/Rt. 53 intersection
- Pedestrian crossing on Rt. 15 at Rt. 601 (Courthouse Rd)
- Village with stores south of Rt. 53 and west of Rt. 15
- Allow pedestrian use for old bridge

Group 3

Main Comments

- Outdoor entertainment venue
- Keep Pembroke Petit Bridge for pedestrians
- Slow traffic with circles etc. (and speed bumps)
- Accessibility for pedestrians, bikes
- Trails to L.M. and on rail trail farther north and south
- All construction should fit architecturally with village of Palmyra (both sides of river)
- Cluster development to keep open space
- Residential growth should include affordable housing
- Nursing home across from Pleasant Grove
- Connected commercial buildings
- Open and indoor markets
- Shrink growth area
- Keep post office in village

Map

- Outdoor entertainment on Rt. 15 east or west of Rivanna
- Café and stores east of Rt. 15 at Church St
- Stores, café and restaurants on the west side of Main St south of Church St
- Trail from Pleasant Grove to Lake Monticello (Lake Monticello pays ½)

- Open and enclosed market for food, flowers, specialty and gourmet products
- Speed bumps in village
- Keep the post office in Palmyra
- Extend Village of Palmyra across river to south side
- Outdoor dining on river and in town
- Roundabout at Rt. 15 and Rt. 53
- Sidewalks throughout village
- New commercial buildings connecting existing buildings on Rt 15 in Palmyra Village
- Remove from growth area all land east of Rt. 678 (Georges Mill Rd & Stoneleigh Rd)
- Continue rail trail for walking and biking along Rt. 15
- Walking and biking trail along river to Lake Monticello
- Nursing home south of Rt. 53
- Keep the existing Pembroke Petit bridge for pedestrians
- All buildings on both sides of river should fit architecturally with Palmyra
- Path connecting the two courthouses instead of street
- Add parking in village
- All residential growth should include some affordable housing
- Cluster major developments to preserve open space

Group 4

Main Comments

Palmyra Planning Area

- Make this growth area smaller
- Protect Rivanna River (water quantity and quality)
- Sewer plant at Pleasant Grove
- Preserve majority of Pleasant Grove as park/open space/wooded area
- Promote village-type development
- Expand Palmyra Historic District
- Convert Palmyra School back to a school

Village of Palmyra

- Traffic calming on Rt. 15 (Roundabouts)
- Keep existing bridge—convert to Pedestrian
- Clean up Church St./Better entrance onto Rt. 15
- Brick walls around Historic Courthouse
- Preserve cannons
- Small scale retail/commercial

Map

- Preserve valuable cannons
- Brick walls around 1830 courthouse
- Keep old bridge
- Roundabout at the Rt. 15/Rt. 53 intersection
- Potential roundabout on Rt. 15 at Rt. 601 (Courthouse Rd)
- Traffic calming—all of Rt. 15 through Palmyra

- Clean up Church St and better Rt. 15 exit
- Make Palmyra School a school again
- Add area east of Palmyra to Historic District
- Protect Stoneleigh and Solitude
- Village-type development
- Preserve most of Peasant Grove as a park
- Put human services facilities at Pleasant Grove
- Make growth area smaller
- Put sewer plant at Pleasant Grove
- Protect Rivanna River (water quality and quantity)

Group 5

Main Comments

- Roundabouts at 15/53 and 15/601
- Park and Ride at 15/53 (S.E.)
- Pedestrian bridge over Rivanna from Palmyra to Pleasant Grove
- Sewage plant down river from new bridge
- Small business area—south of Rt. 61 (E.)
- Leave the old bridge
- Post office to remain in Palmyra
- Local bus service
- Speed controls on Rt. 640

Map

- Roundabout on Rt. 15 at Rt. 601 (Courthouse Rd)
- New small business area east of Rt. 15, south of Rt. 601 (Courthouse Rd)
- Leave old bridge
- Road access from Palmyra to Pleasant Grove
- Walking access from Palmyra to Pleasant Grove
- Local bus service
- Roundabout or stoplight at Rt. 15/Rt. 53 intersection
- Sewage treatment plant on Rivanna River east of Rt. 15/Rt. 53 intersection
- Speed bumps on Hayden Martin Rd
- Limit growth/buildings at Pleasant Grove

Appendix C: Census Data

Population and Race

Total Population:	586
Population of one race:	570
White alone	435
Black or African American alone	134
Asian alone	1
Population of two races:	16
White; Black or African American	10
White; American Indian and Alaska Native	6

Household Size

Average household size	1.7
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Occupancy

Total:	215
Owner occupied	176
Renter occupied	39

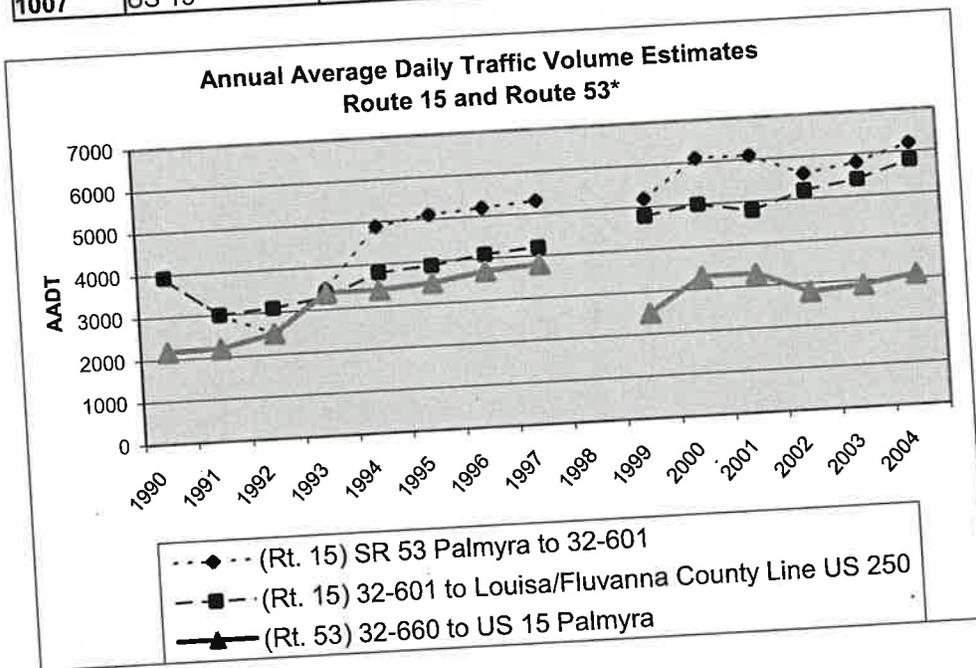
*Based on the 2000 Census. The boundaries of some blocks (notably Tract 201/Block Group 2/Block 2031, Tract 202/Block Group 1/Block 1030, and Tract 203/Block Group 1/Block 1000) extend beyond the boundary of the Palmyra Community Area.

Appendix D: Traffic Data

Traffic Volumes (VDOT 2003 Mobility Management Division)

Primary Road				Length	2003
Route	Segment	to			
15	SR 53 Palmyra	to	32-601	0.42	6200
15	32-601	to	Louisa/Fluvanna County Line US 250	8.23	5800
53	32-660	to	US 15 Palmyra	3.28	3100

Secondary Road				Length	2001
Route	Segment	to			
601	US 15	to	32-663; 32-1007	0.55	1000
601	32-663; 32-1007	to	32-615	3.06	740
1001	Dead End	to	US 15 South	0.10	8
1001	US 15 South	to	32-1003	0.14	380
1001	32-1003	to	32-1002	0.09	360
1001	US 15 North	to	US 15 North	0.17	200
1002	32-1001	to	US 15; 32-1005	0.05	230
1003	32-1001	to	US 15	0.06	290
1004	32-1001	to	32-1003	0.05	200
1005	US 15; 32-1002	to	Dead End	0.10	46
1006	32-601	to	Dead End	0.20	30
1007	US 15	to	32-601; 32-663	0.85	30



*No data for 1998

Route and Segment				AADT	Truck Percentage of AADT				
	to		Bus		2 Axles	3+ Axles	1 Trailer	2 Trailers	
15	SR 53 Palmyra	to	32-601	6200	1%	3%	1%	5%	0%
15	32-601	to	US 250	5800	1%	3%	1%	6%	0%
53	32-660	to	US 15 Palmyra	3100	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%

Source: 2004 VDOT AADT Data

Safety Data

2003 DMV Crash Facts

Fluvanna had 322 total accidents, 10 fatalities and 192 injuries.

Virginia State Police

Approximately 15 crashes on Route 15 between (north of 1001) and (south of 53) from 1997 to 2001:

Accidents from 1997 to 2001

<i>Location</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Weather</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Date</i>
North of 1004	Passenger trucks	Clear, dry, daylight	Collision	08/28/99
North of 1004	Passenger trucks	Misty, wet, daylight	Rear-end	08/31/00
North of 1004	Passenger car-van	Clear, dry, daylight	Collision	09/03/99
North of 1004	Single car	Clear, dry, darkness	Run off road	08/13/99
North of 1004	Single car	Clear, dry, darkness	Run off road	11/08/99
At 1004	Passenger cars	Clear, dry, daylight	T-bone	02/07/00
South of 1004	Flatbed truck-passenger car	Sleeting, icy, dark	Collision	12/23/98
At firehouse	Passenger truck-passenger car	Clear, dry, daylight	Rear-end	10/02/98
At firehouse	Passenger truck-passenger car	Clear, dry, daylight	Rear-end	08/26/97
At firehouse	Passenger cars	Raining, wet, daylight	Rear-end	06/05/98
South of 1001	Passenger truck-van	Clear, dry, daylight	Rear-end	09/11/97
At 53	Passenger cars	Raining, wet, daylight	Rear-end	09/21/99
South of 53	Tractor trailer-passenger truck	Clear, dry, daylight	Rear-end	09/19/97
South of 53	Passenger cars	Clear, dry, daylight	Rear-end	09/07/00

Source: Virginia State Police

Fluvanna County April 2003 priority projects for VDOT to consider

- New Route 15 bridge will have what impact (get design/location from VDOT)
- How does the location of new County administration building increase/affect the daily traffic load from the Village over the bridge to Pleasant Grove?
- Are there real plans for a no-vehicular bridge north of the new bridge (to connect to Pleasant Grove)?

Email from Mike Brent (Chief of Fluvanna County Fire Department)

(to Chris Gensic February 4, 2005)

- Speed is the primary factor in collisions
- Although speed limit reduced to 35 mph, much of the through traffic exceeds the limit
- Hills on Route 15 reduce sight distance for through traffic and those entering Route 15
- Notes that the Fire Department has had several near misses over the years trying to enter Route 15
- Several accidents have occurred as emergency vehicles enter Route 15; accidents usually rear-end collisions
- Rear-end and t-bone collisions most common in Village
- Around Village—especially from the Route 15/Route 53 intersection to Pleasant Grove, vehicles losing control and over-correcting resulting in roll-overs is the most predominate type of incident; Notes that driver inattention, not roads, are the cause of these accidents
- Concerned about a hazardous materials incident that would require evacuation of the Village; An earlier study earmarked the Route 15/Route 53 intersection as a “highly probable” location for a hazardous material incident
- Notes large truck, tractor trailer traffic has increased greatly through the Village in the last 5 years
- Traffic in general has increased greatly due to increasing population of County
- Speeding is commonplace on Route 15 through the Village
- Offers the following solutions
 - More speed enforcement in and around the Village
 - Stoplight at the intersection of Route 15 and Route 53
 - Changing the vertical curves for better sight distance