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Title of Document: Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District

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Prepared For: City of Norfolk

Date of Preparation: September 18, 2006

Status (as of January 2012): Plan was presented to City Planning Commission and City Council but no action was taken to adopt it. Plan was reaffirmed as a whole by City Council in 2009.

Civic League(s)/Organization(s) Affected: Larrymore Lawns, Oakmont North, Meadowbrook Forest, Park Crescent, Bromley, Shadywood East, Norvella Heights, Azalea Acres, Idlewood, Fox Hall, Lake Taylor, Poplar Hall, Glenrock, Woodbine

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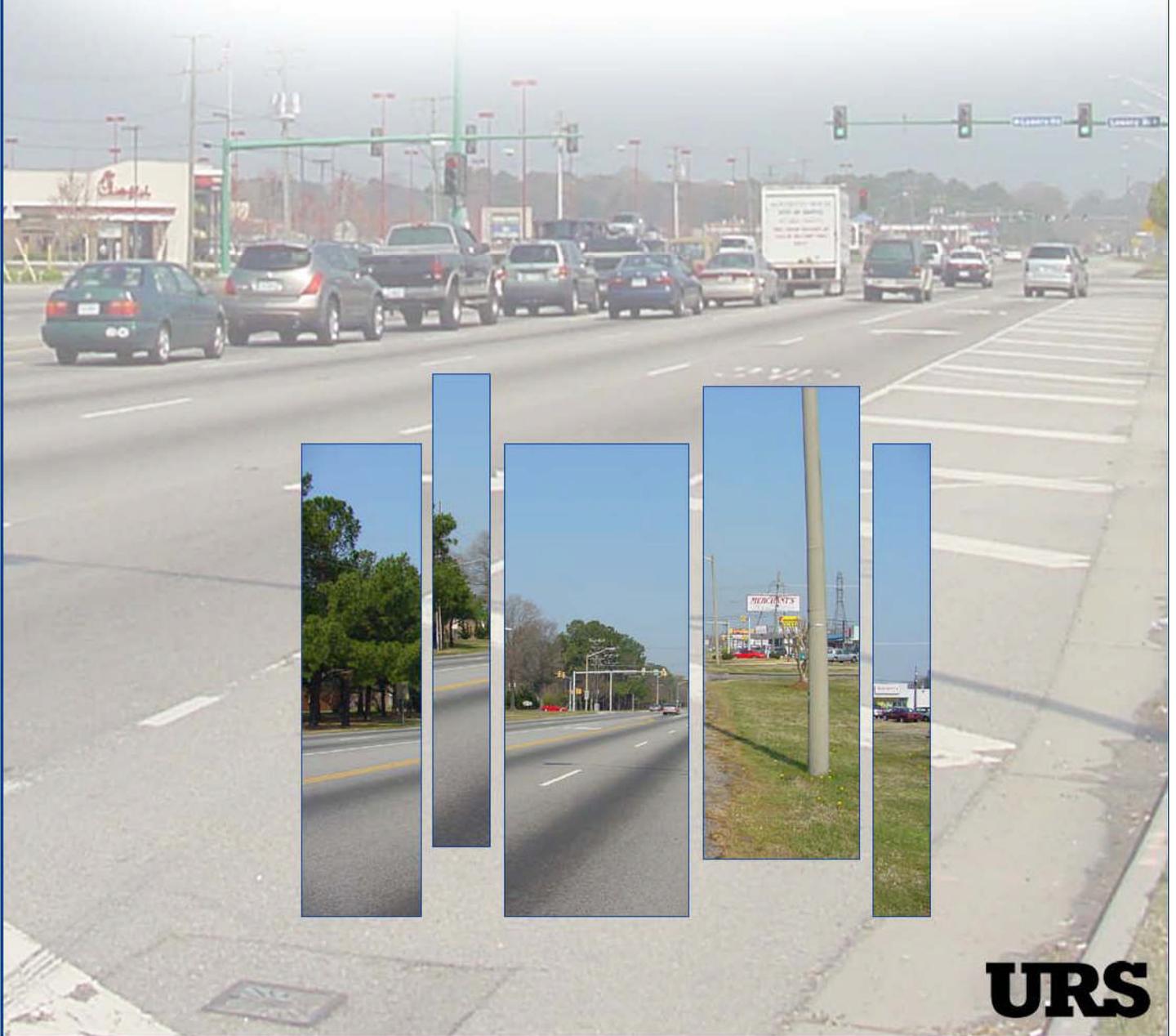


MILITARY HIGHWAY

PLAN

September 18, 2006

Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District City of Norfolk, Virginia



URS

Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District

Final Report

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Military Highway corridor has developed in a manner that is and remains oriented to automobile travel. The type of uses, their scale, settings and markets are focused on accommodating and responding to access via the automobile. Recent commercial investments have exhibited a convergence to major retail centers, and as shoppers to one site are enticed by new facilities, the corridor has become the most active shopping area in the city and a major retail center for the region. The corridor also includes industrial, office and residential uses.

While a model of auto-oriented retail success, the combined effects of aging and dated infrastructure and regional competition present a challenge to its continued vitality. The City and business community are presented with multiple challenges: 1) Continue to accommodate the established pattern of private investment in new facilities; 2) Encourage redevelopment of existing uses that do not realize the corridor's market potential; and, 3) Protect and enhance residential communities that border the commercial corridor.

Study Purpose & Goals

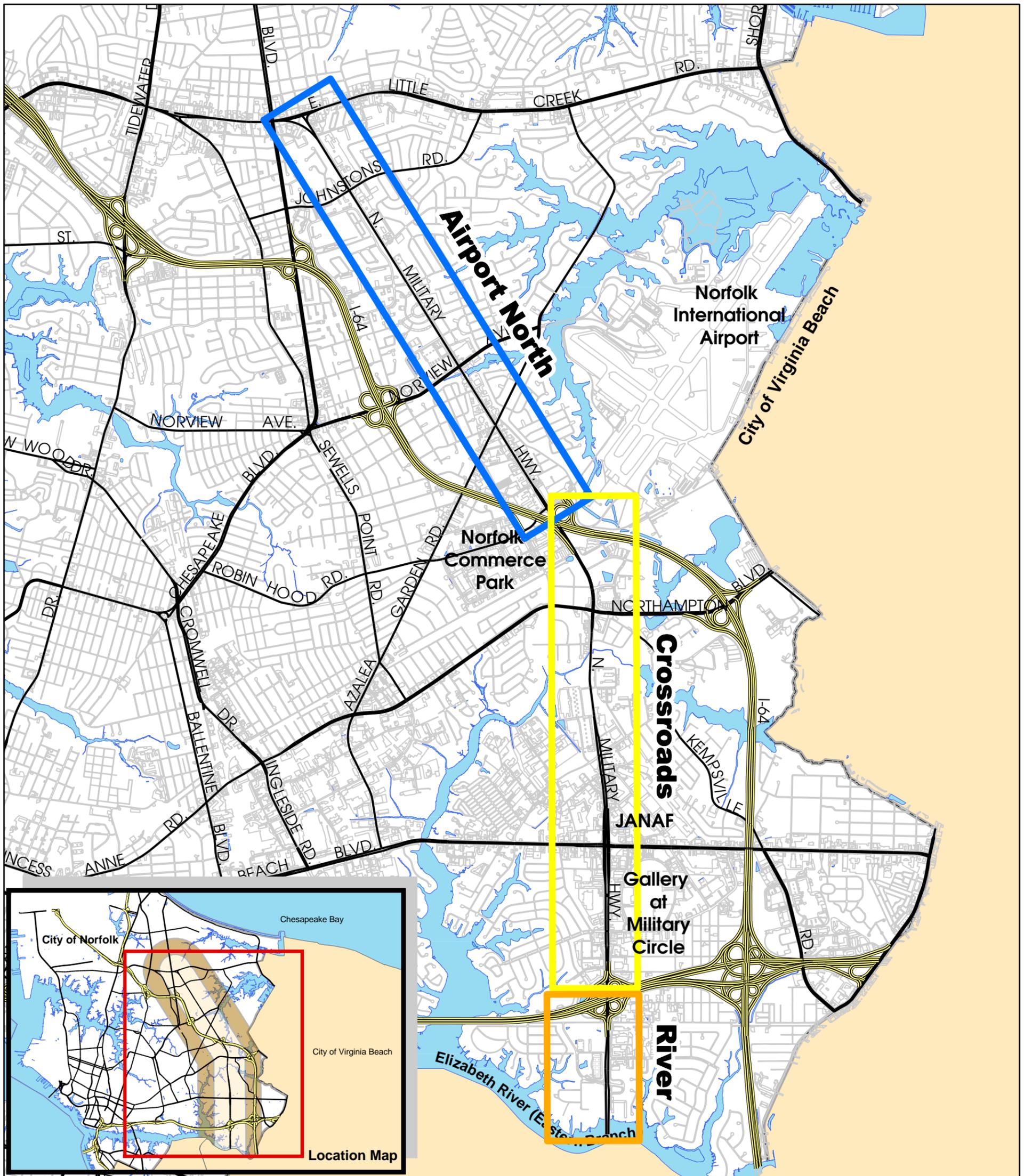
The following goals have been established for the Military Highway Corridor District Plan:

- 1. Encourage and Accommodate Economic Activity**
- 2. Address Transportation Constraints**
- 3. Protect and Enhance Surrounding Neighborhoods**
- 4. Establish an Appealing Aesthetic Identity**

Economic activity is the principal focus of this planning process, and aesthetic, infrastructure and regulatory actions have been developed to accommodate the overall direction in which the Economic Development Plan leads.

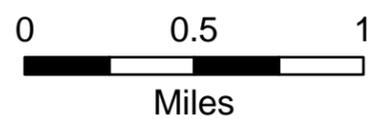
To reflect and focus on its varied conditions and markets, the corridor has been divided into three segments (See Figure ES-1: Corridor Segments). Starting in the south, the limits and character of these are:

- 1. River Segment** (Between the eastern branch of the Elizabeth River and I-264): This segment is characterized by newer development and few access points. The marquee property is Riverside Corporate Center.
- 2. Crossroads Segment** (Between I-264 and I-64): This segment is bounded by two freeway interchanges and crossed by two primary highways – Virginia Beach Boulevard and Northampton Boulevard/Princess Anne Road. It includes the newest and most intense concentration of retail uses.
- 3. Airport-North Segment** (Between I-64 and Little Creek Road): Uses along this segment are principally auto oriented or related to support services for the airport.



Comprehensive Plan for the
Military Highway Corridor District
 Norfolk, Virginia

Figure ES-1: Corridor District Location



EXISTING CORRIDOR CONDITIONS

The Military Highway Corridor District retail trade market is one of the most substantial in the Hampton Roads region. The retail trade market differs from most other retail concentrations in the surrounding area in that it is more of the strip-style development (with only one major enclosed shopping center) with “anchor” stores. Overall, the retail market will likely remain viable as long as “anchor” facilities remain occupied. The lodging and office markets exhibit strength with both recently completed and interest in additional investments.

While the Military Highway Corridor is one of the region’s most active retail corridors and accounts for more than half of the total retail sales in the City with an estimated \$1.2 billion in retail sales, the corridor has a number of challenges limiting its ability to enhance existing businesses and to facilitate new (re)development.

The existing public infrastructure is relatively adequate with one important exception. The segment between Lowery Road and Robin Hood Road is heavily congested for prolonged periods. The Virginia Department of Transportation has programmed widening improvements in this area, but funding limitations have caused several postponements of construction, which is currently scheduled to begin in FY 2010.

The corridor’s aesthetic appearance is generally disjointed and mixed, with some of the newer reconstructed areas having a nice clean and orderly appearance, while some older areas of the corridor show signs of obsolescence and deterioration.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

As the centerpiece of the *Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District*, the Economic Development Plan outlines actions and strategies divided into five major categories. In summary these are:

1. Organizational

Establish the **Military Highway Corridor District Task Force**, a public / private partnership comprising members from the private and public sectors (including civic leagues) who have a vested interest in the success of the Corridor. As the **champion** for the corridor, the Task Force would manage Military Highway initiatives and advise the City on the formation of a more formal organizational entity to guide the long term enhancement and redevelopment of the corridor.

The Task Force would include standing sub-committees focusing on the areas of: 1) Marketing & Business Development; 2) Transportation & Infrastructure; and, 3) Regulations & Urban Design.

The Marketing & Business Development Subcommittee should immediately investigate the level of interest in forming a corridor-wide organization such as a **Business Improvement District (BDI)** or a **Community Development Authority (CDA)**.

2. Regulatory

Develop and adopt a Corridor Overlay District providing the development standards and regulatory guidelines to ensure that new (re)development and reuse along the corridor is high quality and is in line with the overall economic development goals of the corridor. This includes standards related to building use characteristics, facades, setbacks, height, orientation, parking requirements and architectural styles.

3. Marketing

The Corridor is challenged to overcome a poor image including lower quality retail and crime. The program for marketing a positive image of the Corridor should include:

- Prepare a Military Highway Business Directory that includes a map and listing of all businesses along the corridor.
- Develop a marketing program to promote new high quality, upscale retail and restaurant uses as well as new office and lodging at selected locations.
- Evaluate the most likely groups of potential customers and identify aspects of retail niches on the corridor that appeal to these customers.
- Develop an overall advertising and public relations program to promote a positive image for the Military Highway Corridor to attract high quality development.
- Create a branding strategy for the Military Highway Corridor through signs and banners and improved urban design improvements.
- Promote proactive measures to address perceived crime issue, including press coverage and police presence.
- Improve publicizing of financial and zoning incentives.

4. Development

To remain competitive and attract high quality retailers, developers, and property and business owners have to adapt to this changing marketplace, and this process can be best achieved through coordination of public and private efforts. While offering financial and regulatory encouragement, the public sector also can act as a catalyst by providing opportunities for enhancement and redevelopment of selected strategic, underutilized areas. This study identified two such keystone opportunity sites:

A. Flea Market / Automotive Site (Figure ES-2)– 5.5-acre site is located along the east side of Military Highway between Robin Hood Road and Azalea Garden Road adjacent to Norfolk International Airport. If assembled, the parcel has potential to develop as a mixed-use with office, retail and lodging components.

B. Best Square Site – This 12.5-acre site is located on the west side of Military Highway just north of the Interstate 264 interchange and includes a 173,000 square foot strip shopping center

Beyond pursuit of the opportunity sites, the Plan provides for corridor-wide measures that:

- **Facilitate public/private partnerships for high quality development.** The following are specific roles that public/private partnerships can undertake in the context of implementing high quality development along the Military Highway Corridor:

- Market the Military Highway Corridor for Development
- Provide Capital Improvements to Enhance Physical Environment and Improved Transportation Access.
- Formulate a Land Acquisition Strategy For Development
- Prepare Development Agreements / MOUs.



Figure ES-2
Flea Market Site Development Plan

- **Integrate public facilities into the corridor’s redevelopment strategy.** The Military Highway Task Force should explore the possibility of citing new public facilities such as a regional library, community center and 24-hour health care center along the corridor.

5. Financial / Infrastructure

Financing strategies should focus on maximizing private sector investment and providing public sector support where appropriate. Upfront public investments should, over time, create significant spin-off/leverage and matching funds by attracting private sector investments. The approach is to seek funding from a variety of sources to help set the stage for major private sector reinvestment. The following summarizes additional potential financial / funding strategies that can be utilized in the reinvestment of the Military Highway Corridor.

- Incorporate Prioritized Capital Improvements and Aesthetic Design Components Recommendations in City’s Capital Improvement Plan
- Expand Small Area Commercial Façade and Aesthetic Improvement Program to include Military Highway Corridor.

- Urban Public-Private Partnership Redevelopment Fund.
- Provide Incentives for Upgrades to Existing Properties.

CORRIDOR AESTHETIC CHARACTERISTICS

Generally, the Military Highway Corridor, or segments of it, can be described as having the following urban design qualities and characteristics including a lack of definition and identity, sporadic landscaping treatments, a limited amount of private development enhancements and unsightly overhead utilities.

To remedy the deficiencies over time, a set of aesthetic design goals has been recommended. In brief, the eight goal elements are:

- 1. Distinct corridor aesthetic design theme.**
- 2. Green corridor appearance.**
- 3. Consistent urban roadway cross-section.**
- 4. Complementary Pedestrian/bicyclist circulation system.**
- 5. Enhanced and well-maintained public and private properties.**
- 6. Unified, coordinated street furniture system.**
- 7. Minimum amount of overhead utility lines.**
- 8. Coordinated sign system.**

In pursuit of these eight goals, the urban design approach has developed a set of recommendations that emphasize using proven techniques and measures to enhance the Corridor's image. For example, by establishing gateway statements at major entrances and at the Norview Avenue intersection, a sense of place and continuity is established. The recommendations include expansion of Norfolk's successful use of banner poles. On the private side, the recommendations include design guidelines (developed in coordination with the Corridor Task Force) for incorporation in the City's development review process.

The design guidelines have been applied to the Flea/Market Opportunity Site development plan to show the potential results from combined application of aesthetic and economic strategies.

INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Planned infrastructure improvements focus on existing deficiencies in the area between Lowery Road and Robin Hood Road. The current FY2007-12 VDOT transportation improvement program provides for construction to start in FY10. However, full funding during the program period has not been identified, and additional postponements due to funding limitations are possible. This improvement is key to the continued success of the corridor to the south and the enhancement of the corridor to the north.

In addition, intersection improvements in the form of turn lanes are recommended at the Norview Avenue intersection. Here, gateway aesthetic improvements can be unified with infrastructure improvements to recreate the corridor environment. Other public and private

infrastructure within the corridor has been found to be and remain adequate for accommodating anticipated development.

IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

The structure of the implementation program anticipates that the emphasis areas of the plan will vary among the three segments of the Corridor. The appearance of the River Segment can be improved with aesthetic treatments, beginning with an upgrade to the gateway for northbound motorists coming from Virginia Beach

On the Crossroads Segment, the first and most important challenge is to complete the VDOT programmed widening improvements. In the long term, the Airport-North Segment will likely receive the most comprehensive effort to ensure plan implementation since it will need re-development, renovation and renewal, as well as aesthetic enhancements.

Economic Development

The key organizational implementation strategies focus on identifying a collective group to market and represent the *entire* Corridor's business and property interests. A group that represents the Military Highway Corridor District would serve as a **champion** for the corridor and represent and provide assistance to the corridors' public and private interests. These include the formation of a business association, business improvement district (BID) or community development authority (CDA). A Military Highway Corridor District Task Force, a public / private partnership should be established to lead in the areas of:

**Marketing
Regulatory Incentives and Corridor Overlay District Zoning
Capital Improvement Program Advocacy
Design Guideline Development**

To summarize the recommendations for the Corridor and its three segments, the following highlights the overall strategy for plan implementation.

River Segment

- **Establish edge landscaping areas and gateway at south city limits.**
- **Consider rezoning to transit oriented uses with the opening of the LRT station.**

The strategy focus for the River Segment focuses on enhancing the existing uses and quality, and accommodating development opportunities provided by LRT service.

Crossroads Segment

- **Pursue funding to complete VDOT widening improvements.**
- **Improve visibility and accessibility of Best Square site.**
- **Establish edge landscaping areas.**
- **Establish gateway entrances to JANAF and to The Gallery at Military Circle.**

- **Add median landscaping to VDOT widening improvements.**

The strategy focus for the Crossroads Segment is to maintain and enhance the success of the retail areas. The key component is completion of programmed roadway improvements.

Airport-North Segment

- **Adopt Corridor Overlay District.**
- **Streamline regulatory process as an incentive for re-development.**
- **Establish gateway treatments at Military Highway intersections with Azalea Garden Road and Norview Avenue.**
- **Install gateway corridor markers at three intersections.**
- **Remove overhead utilities at the Norview Avenue and Azalea Garden road intersections.**
- **Install turn lane widening and access road closure improvements at Norview Avenue Intersection.**
- **Install and landscape raised median on Military Highway.**
- **Enhance synergy with Norfolk International Airport.**
- **Pursue redevelopment of Flea Market site.**

The strategy focus for the Airport-North Segment is to create an environment where property owners have an incentive to redevelop to more appropriate, higher quality uses. The key component is the establishment of a raised median along the roadway and the adoption of the overlay district.

Corridor-Wide

- **Establish the Military Highway Corridor District Task force to guide future organizational, regulatory, marketing and financial decisions along the Corridor.**
- **Encourage mixed-use and transit oriented development.**
- **Integrate public facilities into the corridor's redevelopment strategy.**
- **Facilitate public/private partnerships for high quality development.**
- **Incorporate Prioritized Capital Improvements and Aesthetic Design Components Recommendations in City's Capital Improvement Plan.**
- **Expand Small Area Commercial Façade and Aesthetic Improvement Program to include Military Highway Corridor.**
- **Establish Urban Public-Private Partnership Redevelopment Fund.**
- **Establish banner pole gateway areas at Little Creek Road and at the north shore of the eastern branch of the Elizabeth River.**
- **Install Corridor Continuity Theme Feature at Intermittent Segments Along Corridor.**
- **Remove overhead utilities line crossing the roadway.**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Corridor Description

As a long-time principal arterial roadway serving marquee addresses in eastern Norfolk, Military Highway (U.S. Route 13 and State Route 165) has accommodated development activity along its corridor for decades. As a suburban location when compared with downtown Norfolk, the Military Highway corridor has developed in a manner that is and remains oriented to automobile travel. The type of uses, their scale, settings and markets are focused on accommodating and responding to access via the automobile.

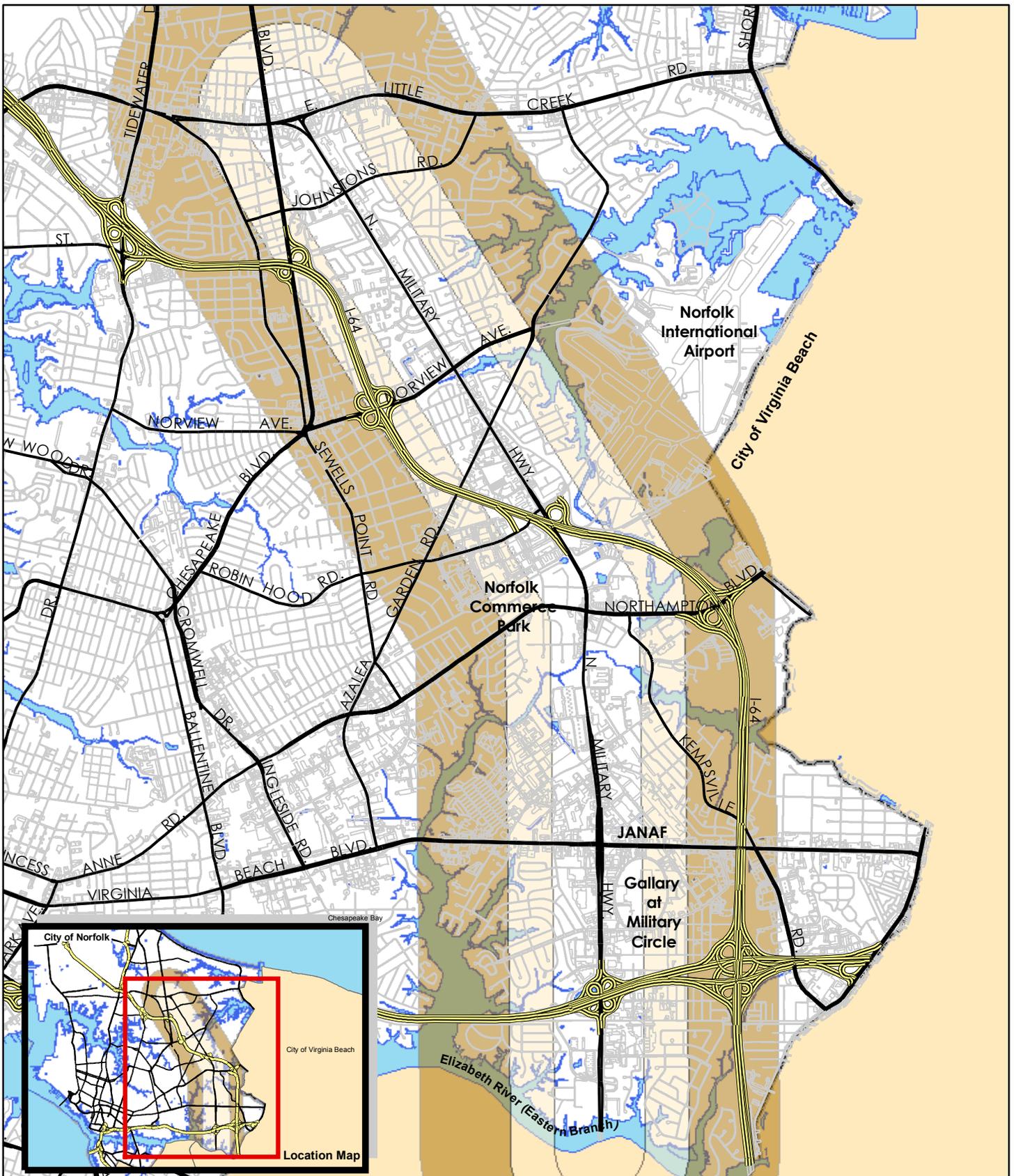
Moreover, the corridor's auto orientation, which was initiated in the mid-twentieth century has been reinforced and confirmed by development and redevelopment activity in the early twenty-first century. Recent commercial investments have exhibited a convergence to major retail centers, and as shoppers to one site are enticed by new facilities, the corridor has become the most active shopping area in the city and a major retail center for the region.



But retail vitality is not the only characteristic exhibited along the corridor. The southern segment includes multi-family housing, and office park and light industrial uses. Beyond the immediate roadway frontage, the predominant use is single-family housing. To the north, the adjacent uses range from residential and retail commercial to auto-oriented service establishments.

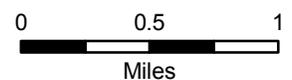
Another variation exhibited along the length of the corridor is the age of structures. In general, the older structures are in the north and the newest ones are located in the middle and south segments.

Beginning in the south at the city limits with Virginia Beach (at the eastern branch of the Elizabeth River) and extending to the north for 7.5 miles to Little Creek Road, Military Highway is a multi-lane highway with a speed limit of 45 mph. It is crossed by two interstate freeways (with interchanges) – I-64 and I-264 – and by two primary highways – Virginia Beach Boulevard (U.S. Route 58) and Northampton Boulevard/Princess Anne Road (U.S. Route 13 and State Route 166). The I-64 interchange with Military Highway is only a partial interchange with certain movements not accommodated at that location (See Figure 1-1: Corridor Location).



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Figure 1-1: Corridor District Location



In addition to providing access to adjacent uses, the roadway is a commuter corridor, a means of access to Norfolk International Airport, and the only north-south arterial highway in the eastern section of the City.

The corridor incorporates a varied arrangement of land uses and building ages, but what does not vary is the importance of the corridor to the City. With an estimated \$1.2 billion in retail sales and the employment opportunities that this level of activity spawns, the corridor exceeds any fiscal and economic standard. But the combined effects of aging and dated infrastructure and regional competition present a challenge to its continued vitality. Moreover, the corridor's success is not uniformly distributed, and segments with robust economic activity have neighboring segments with uses that do not even approach their full potential. Thus, the City and business community are presented with multiple challenges: 1) Continue to accommodate the established pattern of private investment in new facilities; 2) Encourage redevelopment of existing uses that do not realize the corridor's market potential; and, 3) Protect and enhance residential communities that border the commercial corridor.

1.2 Study Purpose & Goals

Recognizing that the Military Highway Corridor is a key asset to its commercial and fiscal health and that the quality of development along the corridor is important to both residents and visitors, the City of Norfolk is seeking a comprehensive strategy for protecting and enhancing the corridor's value. To achieve this overall purpose, the following goals have been established for the Military Highway Corridor District Plan:

- 1. Encourage and Accommodate Economic Activity** - The corridor has shown itself to offer worthwhile opportunities for investment in retail, office, lodging and residential development. To continue providing such opportunities, a coordinated strategy including both "carrot and stick" measures must be implemented.
- 2. Address Transportation Constraints** – The schedule of funding for widening improvements programmed by Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) between Robin Hood Road and Lowery Road should remain among the highest priorities. Additional improvements and access management measures should be implemented to maximize available capacity.
- 3. Protect and Enhance Surrounding Neighborhoods** - The corridor's commercial uses are adjacent to established residential areas, and a symbiotic relationship exists between the two land uses. Corridor enhancement should expand both shopping and employment opportunities for its neighbors without compromising the quality of life enjoyed by local residents.
- 4. Establish an Appealing Aesthetic Identity** – The corridor is without a unique identity or an aesthetic image. To create a sense of both pride and success, public and private interests must commit to including unifying aesthetic treatments as part of overall improvement plans. These improvements should include gateway statements at either end of the corridor and at the Norview Avenue intersection.

Economic activity is the principal focus of the planning process, and aesthetic, infrastructure and regulatory actions have been developed to accommodate the overall direction in which the Economic Development Plan leads. Together, implementation of all aspects of the plan will bring about improvement throughout the corridor.

1.3 Organization & Emphasis

To this end, the *Comprehensive Plan for the Military Corridor District* addresses a broad range of issues, including:

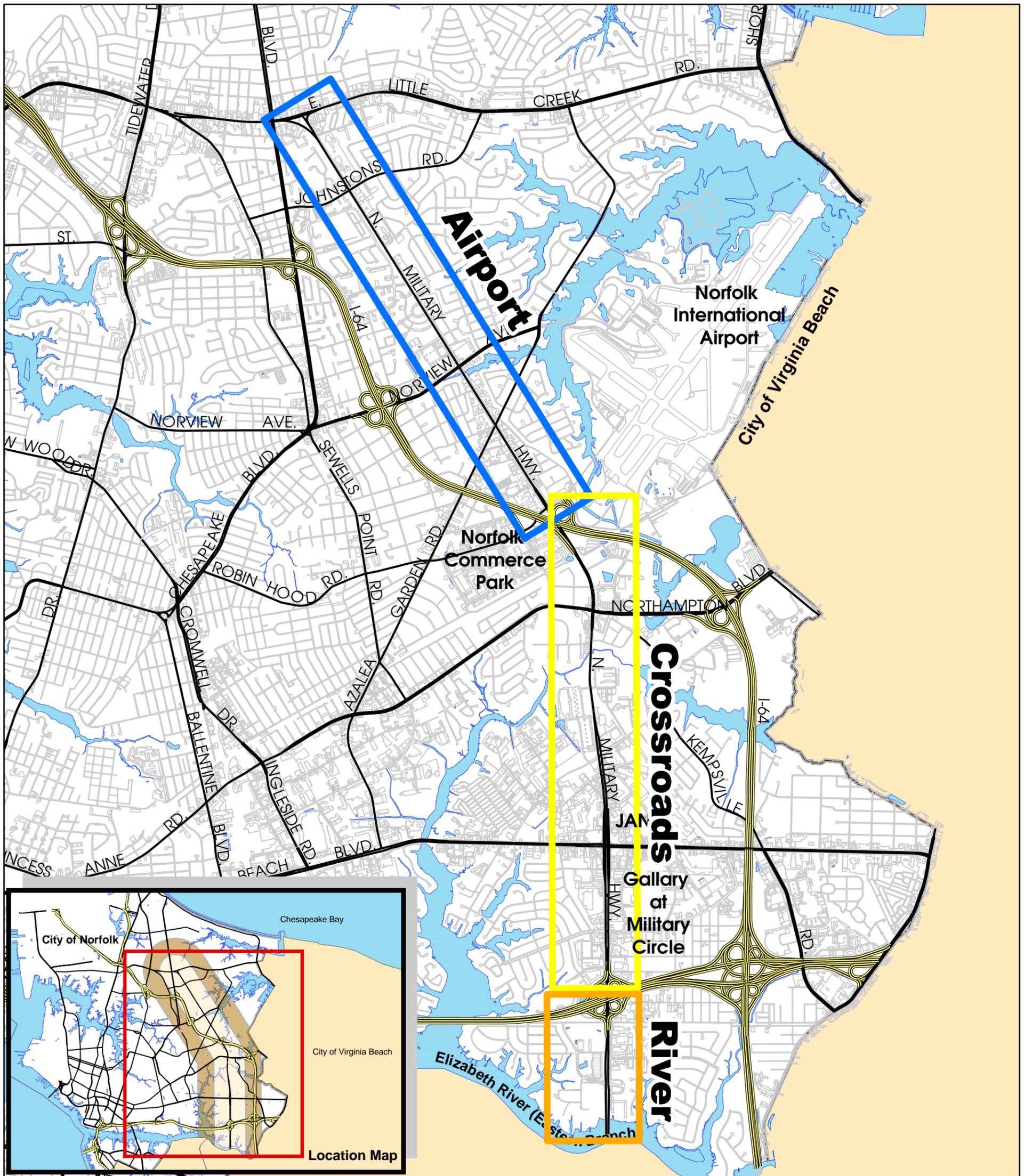
- Documentation of Existing Land Use and Infrastructure Conditions
- Survey of Market Activity
- Development of an Economic Development Plan
- Development of an Aesthetic Design Concept Plan
- Identification of Needed Infrastructure Improvements
- Development of an Implementation Plan

In addition to the functional areas detailed in individual sections, the study process has maintained an on-going process of public involvement. A summary of these activities and the principal participants is included in the final section of this report.

In addition to the organizational structure of the study, the corridor has been divided into three segments (See Figure 1-2; Corridor Segments). Starting in the south, the limits and character of these are:

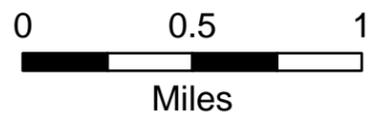
1. **River Segment** (Between the eastern branch of the Elizabeth River and I-264): This segment is characterized by newer development and few access points. The marquee property is Riverside Corporate Center.
2. **Crossroads Segment** (Between I-264 and I-64): This segment is bounded by two freeway interchanges and crossed by two primary highways – Virginia Beach Boulevard and Northampton Boulevard/Princess Anne Road. It includes the newest and most intense concentration of retail uses.
3. **Airport-North Segment** (Between I-64 and Little Creek Road): Uses along this segment are principally auto oriented or related to support services for the airport.

While all three segments are equally considered in this Plan, the emphasis of each strategic area is not equally applied. For example, it is clear that the Crossroads Segment is in need of the greatest amount of public roadway infrastructure investment. On the existing four-lane segment of Military Highway and particularly at the Lansdale intersection, congestion creates gridlock conditions during both weekday and Saturday peak periods. New investments in the properties abutting this segment have only recently been proposed as a result of VDOT's programmed widening.



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Military Highway Corridor District
 Norfolk, Virginia

Figure 1-2: Corridor District Location



Funding limitations have resulted in several postponements, and further delays will result in lost opportunities. Four roadway improvement projects have been programmed in the VDOT current (FY2007-12) Six-Year Improvement Program. These are:

1. Military Highway – widen to 8 lanes from Lowery Road to south of Northampton Boulevard. Begin right of way acquisition – FY 2007; Begin construction – FY 2010.
2. Military Highway – widen to 8 and 6 lanes from south of Northampton Boulevard to north of Robin Hood Road. Begin right of way acquisition – FY 2009; Begin construction – FY 2010.
3. Virginia Beach Boulevard – widen to 6 lanes from Briar Hill Road to Jett Street. Begin construction – FY 2008.
4. Kilmer Lane/Princess Anne Road – add turn lanes. Right of way acquisition is underway; Begin construction – FY 2007.

In contrast, the Airport-North segment requires the most extensive redevelopment effort, a product of both public and private investment. Many of the properties have under used and unattractive uses and structures, and create an environment that retards the opportunity for attracting investment in redevelopment activities. The strategy on this segment will place emphasis on regulatory and financial incentives, infrastructure management and aesthetic enhancement.

2.0 SUMMARY OF EXISTING CONDITIONS

The first step in the study process is to inventory critical information on the status of land use and public infrastructure in the corridor. This section provides a summary of the detailed inventory of land use, the building stock and public infrastructure. The detailed information has been documented in a separate document: *Existing Conditions Inventory*. The information has been used both by professionals conducting the planning and economic development analyses and by the general public and stakeholders in gaining an understanding of the development dynamics at work in the corridor.

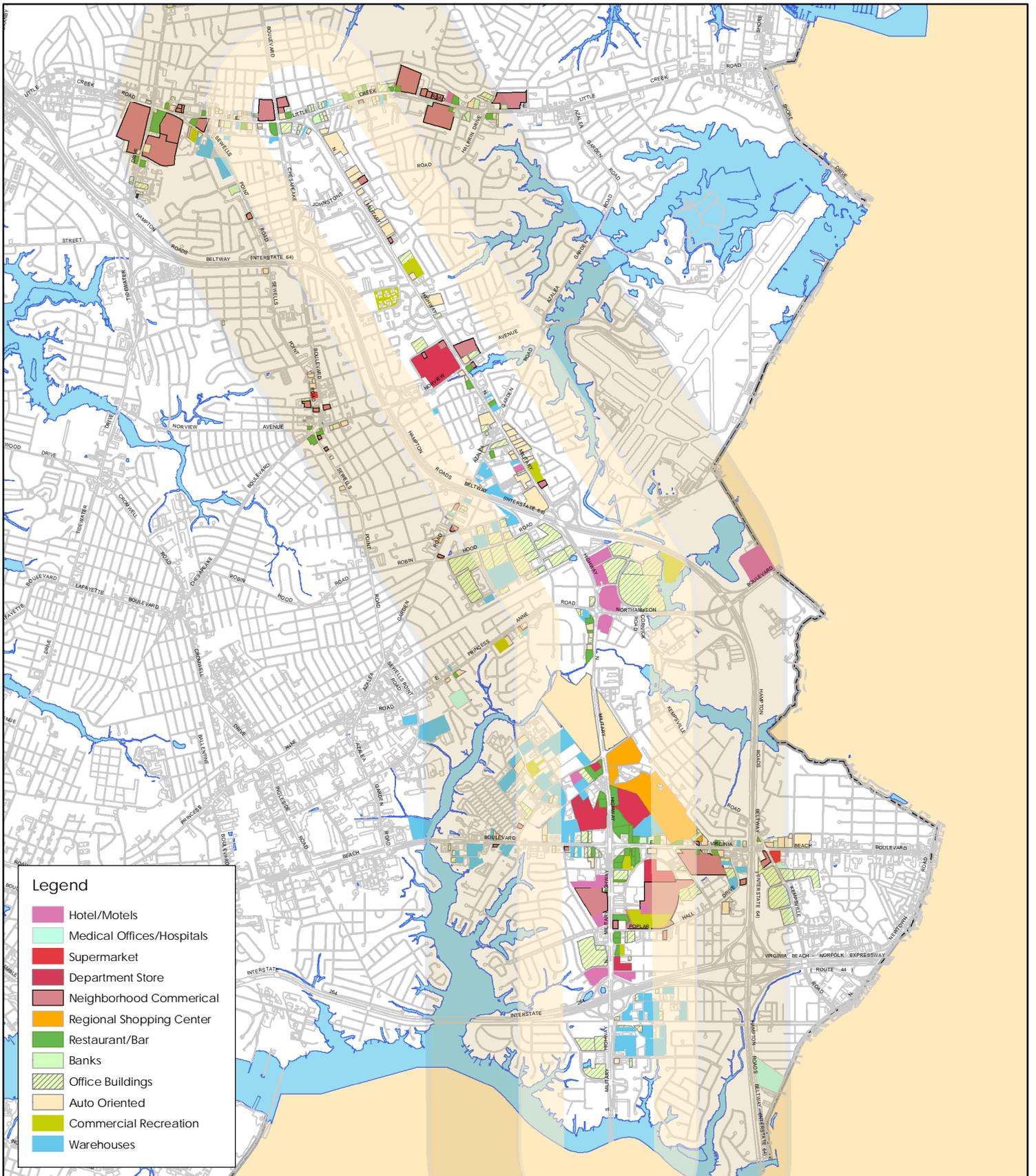
2.1 Land Use

The mix of land use types in the Military Highway corridor are shown in Tables 2-1, which displays land uses as defined by the City Assessors Office. The primary land use is residential, representing more than 57% of all the developable land. Commercial uses, which include apartment buildings along with the more typical commercial uses, make up another 22% of the land, and the remaining 20% of land is defined as miscellaneous municipal uses and industrial buildings. For the entire corridor, 150 acres and 255 parcels are currently classified as vacant commercial use.

TABLE 2-1
Land Use Summary: Military Highway Corridor District
 (Within 0.25 miles of either side of roadway)

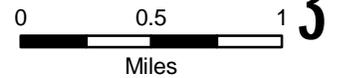
Land Use Type	Acres	% of Total
Industrial	71.9	1.17%
Commercial	1,385.2	22.50%
Residential	3,546.9	57.61%
Other Land Uses	1,152.4	18.72%
TOTAL	6,156.4	100.0%

While industrial uses make up a small proportion of the corridor and tend to be clustered in the middle, commercial land uses are distributed throughout the corridor, but the character and intensity varies (See Figure 2-1: Commercial Sites). Starting with the River Segment at the eastern branch of the Elizabeth River moving north to the I-264 interchange, the primary commercial use is office with Riverside Corporate Park the largest component. Moving north to the Crossroads Segment between I-264 and Virginia Beach Boulevard, the east side of the roadway is dominated by the Gallery at Military Circle, while the west side is primarily occupied by strip-style shopping centers, some with some large vacant or underutilized stores.



Comprehensive Plan for the
Military Highway Corridor District
Norfolk, Virginia

Figure 2-1: Commercial Sites



Continuing in the Crossroads Segment north of Virginia Beach Boulevard to Lowery Road, big box retailing and JANAF Shopping Center dominate the developed landscape. Beyond Lowry Road, the next major commercial area is Lake Wright Executive Center, with the most intense uses located in the northeast quadrant of the intersection, an area that includes several hotels and the USAA Mid-Atlantic Regional Headquarters. Crossing into the Airport North Segment (north of the I-64 interchange), the character of commercial use changes to an orientation focused on auto sales and service and airport related uses, including rental car lots. The most notable exception is the K-Mart Super Center located on the northwest quadrant of the intersection with Norview Avenue.

While commercial uses are most visible from the roadway, the primary land use within the larger corridor district is single family residential. According to data provided by the Assessors Office, 4,117 single-family lots are located within 0.25 mile on either side of Military Highway. However, only 355 of the corridor's single-family lots are located within 500 feet of the roadway.

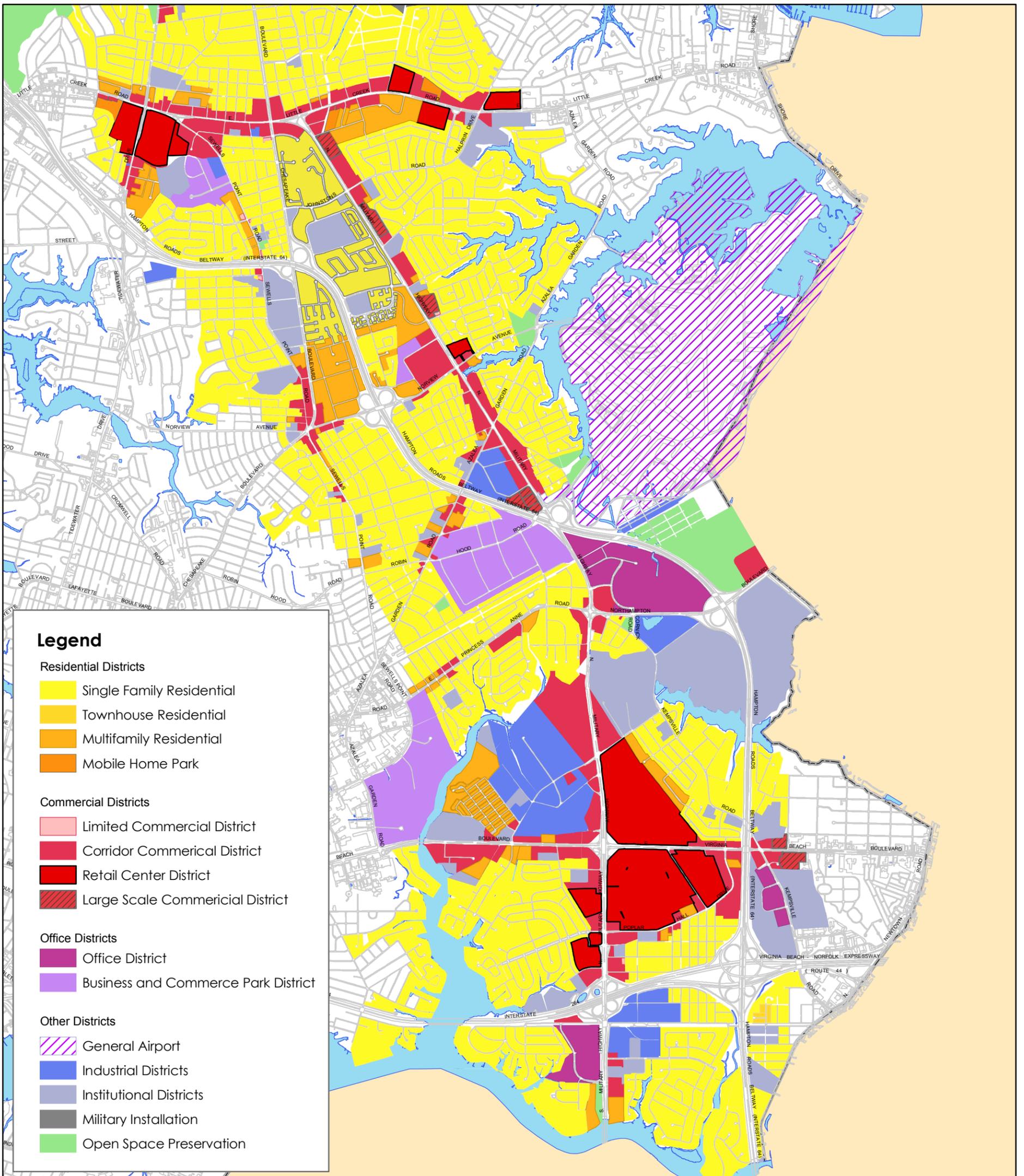
Most of the area identified as "other uses" in Table 2-1 is owned either by the City of Norfolk or by the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (NRHA). The largest concentration of city-owned properties is located south of Northampton Boulevard and east of Military Highway where both Lake Taylor High School and Middle School are located immediately adjacent to the Moores Bridges water treatment and pumping station facility. Within 1,000 feet to the west of these three facilities the City also operates Lake Taylor Hospital, the Norfolk Technical Center and the Norfolk Juvenile Detention School.

2.2 Zoning

A second indicator of land use mix is the location and size of zoning districts, which are shown in Figure 2-2. Within the corridor district, the largest proportion of land is zoned in districts in which single family residential is the primary permitted use. With the exception of the northern segment of the roadway corridor where single-family residential zoning extends to the right of way limits, nearly all of the single-family residential zoning is located off the roadway. In contrast, Figure 2-2 also shows that the roadway corridor is lined with parcels zoned in districts with commercial uses as the primary permitted use. On the roadway segment north of I-64, more frontage is zoned for commercial use than that zoned for all other uses.

2.3 Building Age

Many of the major commercial uses along the corridor have been in use for several decades. For example, The Gallery at Military Circle Mall was originally constructed in the decade 1960-69, but it underwent major renovations in the period 1990-2005. The same procedure has been applied to JANAF Shopping Center, which was originally opened in the decade 1950-59, and has since undergone frequent renovations.



Comprehensive Plan for the
Military Highway Corridor District
 Norfolk, Virginia

Figure 2-2: Generalized Zoning



As is typical for Norfolk, the single-family housing stock in the corridor district is relatively old. Most of the subdivisions were built in the periods 1930-49 or 1950-59. In contrast, many of the commercial uses lining the roadway (especially south of I-64) are newer.

2.4 Infrastructure

The corridor district is served by every major public and private utility, and includes major public utility system facilities. Since utilities usually follow major urban highways and Military Highway both is and intersects with several such facilities, utility lines and the service they provide are present everywhere within the corridor district.

Major water lines provide adequate service throughout the corridor. In addition, two raw water lines (48 inch diameter pipe) are located along the roadway beginning at the Elizabeth River in the south and ending at the Moores Bridges treatment plant. From the treatment plant, major lines extend both north (30 inch) and south (30 inch) along the corridor and to the west along Princess Anne Road (42 inch). Service to adjacent subdivisions and commercial centers is provided from lines ranging generally from 6 inches to 12 inches in diameter. Water service is considered adequate and no major system capacity improvements are programmed.

Sanitary sewer (wastewater) service is provided by a system of gravity line, pump stations and force mains. Pump stations are located at the intersections of Military Highway with Norview Avenue and Lowery Road. Sanitary sewer service is considered adequate and no major system improvements are programmed.

Storm water drainage facilities are available throughout the corridor district. The collection of storm water drainage facilities is served by numerous outfall waterways for discharge, including the Elizabeth River and its tributary to the west, Broad Creek, Lake Taylor and Lake Whitehurst. Lake Wright is part of the Norfolk water system, and storm water drainage is directed away from this waterway. No major improvements are programmed for the public storm sewer system.

In addition to public facilities, the corridor district is served by gas, electric, telecommunications and cable providers. The corridor service by these private utilities is considered adequate.

The corridor district is served by both roadway and transit facilities. The roadways include a full range of functional classifications, while transit service provided by Hampton Roads Transit is characterized as conventional fixed-route service. The major improvement planned for the transit system is the establishment of light rail transit service (LRT) along an abandoned Norfolk Southern rail line beginning at Kempsville Road near the Virginia Beach city limits to the east and extending through downtown Norfolk and ending at the medical center. The service includes a station at Riverside Corporate Center in the corridor district.

The corridor includes several major arterial roadways and two freeways. These include:

Military Highway (U.S. Route 13 & State Route 165) Extending from the Elizabeth River to Little Creek Road, the facility is defined as a **Principal Urban Arterial** under the functional classification system. Military Highway is the primary north/south commercial street in the eastern part of the city. The following Table 2-2 shows daily traffic volumes as determined by the Virginia Department of Transportation for the corridor.

TABLE 2-2
Average Annual Daily Traffic: 2005
Military Highway Corridor District

Roadway	From	To	Volume (AADT)
Military Highway (U.S. Route 13)	Virginia Beach CL	I-264	47,000
	I-264	Virginia Beach Blvd	48,000
	Virginia Beach Blvd.	Lowery Road	49,000
	Lowery Road	I-64	49,000
	I-64	Azalea Garden Rd.	31,000
	Azalea Garden Rd.	Norview Ave	28,000
	Norview Ave.	Little Creek Rd.	30,000
Major Cross Streets			
I-264	I-64	Ballentine Boulevard	128,000
Virginia Beach Blvd. (U.S. Route 58)	Azalea Garden Rd.	Military Highway	28,000
	Military Highway	Kempsville Rd.	28,000
Northampton Blvd (U.S. Route 13)	Military Highway	Kempsville Rd.	49,000
	Kempsville Rd	I-64	38,000
I-64	Military Highway	Northampton Blvd.	160,000
Azalea Garden Rd.	Military Highway	Little Creek Rd.	14,000
Norview Ave.	Military Highway	I-64	28,000
Little Creek Rd.	Military Highway	Halprin Dr.	33,000
	Military Highway	Chesapeake Blvd	43,000

Source: Virginia Department of Transportation, 2004

Four roadway improvement projects have been programmed in the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) current (FY2007-12) Six-Year Improvement Program. These are:

1. Military Highway – widen to 8 lanes from Lowery Road to south of Northampton Boulevard. Begin right of way acquisition – FY 2007; Begin construction – FY 2010.
2. Military Highway – widen to 8 and 6 lanes from south of Northampton Boulevard to north of Robin Hood Road. Begin right of way acquisition – FY 2009; Begin construction – FY 2010.
3. Virginia Beach Boulevard – widen to 6 lanes from Briar Hill Road to Jett Street. Begin construction - FY 2008.
4. Kilmer Lane/Princess Anne Road – add turn lanes. Right of way acquisition is underway; Begin construction – FY 2007.

Upon completion of the programmed improvements to Military Highway north of Lowery Road, all segments are forecasted to provide adequate service levels.

The most congested areas include the intersections of Military Highway with Northampton Boulevard and Princess Anne Road and with Norview Avenue. The improvements included in the widening of Military Highway between Lowery and Robin Hood Road will address the congestion at the former, but no improvements have been programmed to address congestion at the latter due to funding limitations in the current state six-year improvement program.

3.0 SUMMARY OF MARKET ANALYSIS

3.1 Economic and Demographics

The Military Highway Corridor District has a 2005 population of 10,905 which represents approximately 4.6 percent of the population of the City of Norfolk. Population trends within the Military Highway Corridor indicate little significant gains or losses (< 1 percent) during the intervening decade. This trend of zero net population loss/gain is projected to continue from 2005 to 2010. The greatest concentration of population along the Military Highway Corridor District is located in the Airport North Segment, the northernmost section of the Military Highway Corridor (See Table 3-1). Population projections for the next five years indicate that this segment (Airport-North) will, like the overall corridor district, exhibit no growth in total population. According to U.S. Census population projections prepared by ESRI, this is slightly less than the City of Norfolk’s projected population gain of about 1 percent over the same time period and considerably less than the projected 5 percent population growth in the Hampton Roads Region.

TABLE 3-1
Economic – Demographic Overview: Population & Households
Military Highway Corridor District
2005

Segment	Population		Households		Median Household Income	Average Household Size
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Income per Household	Persons per Household
Corridor Total	10,908	100.0%	4,117	100.0%	\$41,320	2.60
River	785	7.2%	364	8.8%	\$52,122	2.16
Crossroads	1,841	16.9%	619	15.0%	\$40,000	2.71
Airport - North	8,282	75.9%	2,134	76.1%	\$41,622	2.63

Source: BBP Associates, ESRI Business Information Solutions

The Military Highway Corridor District is situated within the Hampton Roads (Norfolk-Virginia Beach-Newport News) MSA which encompasses approximately 2,349 square miles and has a 2005 population of 1,656,574 (making it the 34th most populated region in the country). The population of the Hampton Roads Region has grown at an annual rate of about 1.3 percent over the past half-century. Between 1990 and 2000 the region’s population grew

by about 8 percent, adding over 100,000 people. The region’s population has grown over 5 percent since 2000 and is expected to grow by more than 10 percent by the end of the decade.

The Military Highway Corridor District is located entirely within the City of Norfolk which has experienced much different population trends than those of the region. The City of Norfolk is expected to gain population over the next 5 years (at a rate of about 0.2 percent per year). The population increase in the corridor is not forecasted to grow. This does not infer that there will be no new residential development, but rather that older structures will be replaced with newer ones.

Unlike population growth, the median household income within the corridor outpaces that for the City. Specifically, the median household income for the region is \$50,539, and for the City, \$36,930. For the corridor, the median household income is \$41,320 – higher than the City median income but lower than the regional median income.

3.2 Employment

The Military Highway Corridor District has an estimated at-place employment of 13,567. This represents approximately 12 percent of total employment of 94,192 in the City of Norfolk. The largest employment sector in the Military Highway Corridor is retail, which with 6,156 employees, constitutes approximately 45 percent of corridor’s total employment. The second largest sector is the “services” sector, with a total of 2,969 employees - 16 percent of the corridor’s total (See Table 3-2).

**TABLE 3-2
Economic – Demographic Overview: Employment
Military Highway Corridor District
2005**

Segment	At-Place Employment		Retail Trade Employment		Retail Trade Establishments	
	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total	Total	% of Total
Corridor	13,567	100%	6,156	100%	210	100%
River	2,328	17.2%	82	1.3%	8	3.8%
Crossroads	5,053	37.2%	3,802	61.8%	125	59.5%
Airport-North	6,186	45.6%	2,272	36.9%	77	36.6%

Source: BBP Associates, Census Economic Survey 2003

Retail establishments total 43 percent of the 486 establishments located in the Military Highway Corridor District. There are a total of 210 retail trade establishments within the

Military Highway Corridor. The second largest proportion of establishments in the Military Highway Corridor is classified as “service” sector establishments. A total of 112 out of the 486 Military Highway Corridor District establishments (or 23%) are classified as ‘service’ sector (See Figure 3-2).

The distribution of employment along the Corridor indicates that over a third of the corridor’s at-place employment and over 60 percent of the retail trade employment in the Military Highway Corridor District occurs in Crossroads Segment, which is located between the Military Highway/I-264 interchange and the I-64 Interchange. There is significant employment in Airport-North Segment as well, but this employment is concentrated in the FIRE (Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate) sector and Industry sectors (See Figure 3-1).

Figure 3-1: Military Highway Corridor District Employment by Type (2005)

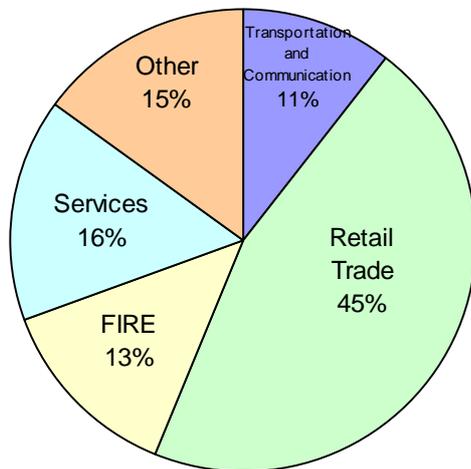
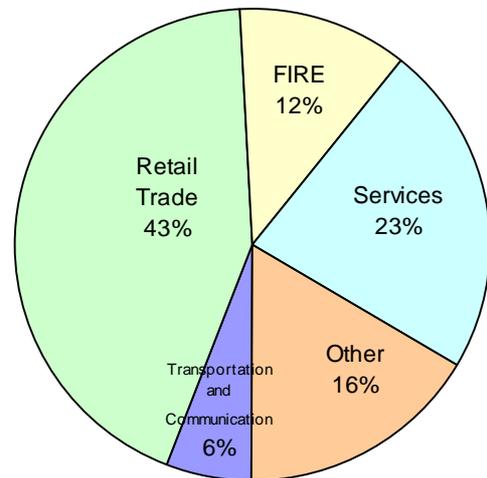


Figure 3-2: Military Highway Corridor District Number of Establishments by Type (2005)



FIRE= Finance, Insurance and Real Estate Employment
 “Other” includes Government, Manufacturing, Wholesale Trade and other unclassified categories.

Source: BBP Associates, U.S. Census ES202 Economic Census 2003

3.3 Retail Market Overview

The Military Highway Corridor is one of twenty-four sub-markets that comprise the Southside. It is the second largest Southside submarket with a retail inventory of 3.4 million square feet of leasable area in the 16 larger properties¹ (25,000+ sq. ft.) located in the Military Highway Corridor. Only the Greenbrier/Battlefield Boulevard submarket, at just

¹ Property data is drawn from the Hampton Roads 2005 Office Market Survey, published by the Old Dominion University Real Estate Center, which provides information for strip shopping centers and regional malls at least 30,000 square feet in size. The survey also includes data for retail-oriented freestanding buildings at least 25,000 square feet in size.

over 3.6 million square feet of leasable space, has more leasable area than the Military Highway Corridor. Both areas are, however, the only Southside submarkets to surpass 3 million square feet of leasable space. The Corridor's retail market is a significant component of the Southside sub-market and Hampton Roads regional market, containing approximately 11.4 percent of the gross leasable area within the Southside market and nearly 7.5 percent of the gross leasable area within the region (Hampton Roads MSA). At 10.8 percent, the Corridor's vacancy rate is higher than that for Southside – 8.9 percent - or the region – 9.4 percent.

The distribution of the Corridor's retail trade and employment has been divided into three retail sub-sectors: 1) Automotive and Automotive Related Services, 2) Shopper Goods, and 3) Convenience Goods. With 963 employees, the "Automotive and Automotive Related Services" sub-sector constitutes approximately 16 percent of total retail trade employment. The "Shopper's Goods" sub-sector accounts for approximately 46 percent, and the "Convenience Goods" sub-sector accounts for nearly 38 percent.

The distribution of the retail trade sub-markets across Military Highway Corridor District Study Area's indicates that the majority of retail trade establishments are located in the Crossroads Segment. A total of 136 retail establishments (60 percent of the corridor's total number of retail establishments) are located along this segment.

The regional market continued to experience strong retail real estate activity throughout 2004 while vacancies created during the previous years have continued to be absorbed by Hampton Roads area retailers. Additionally, overall vacancy appears to be stabilizing in the region and many large vacant properties have been demolished or converted to occupied uses.

The Military Highway Corridor District retail trade market is one of the most substantial retail markets in the Hampton Roads region. The retail trade market differs from most other retail concentrations in the surrounding area in that it is more of the strip-style development (with only one major enclosed shopping center) with "anchor" stores. Vacancy rates have decreased considerably while average rents have steadily increased. Overall, the retail market will likely remain viable as long as "anchor" facilities remain occupied.

Recent reinvestment in retail properties along the corridor, including physical improvements to The Gallery at Military Circle, redevelopment of the former Montgomery Ward site to the a new retail center called the Shoppes at JANAF, a new Suzuki automotive dealership under construction, and Wal-Mart's expansion to a 200,000 square foot Supercenter in JANAF has helped to reinvigorate the corridor. However, with large retail properties that have sat vacant for several years, perceived traffic congestion and a public safety or perception of public safety issue, the retail market is hampered by many challenges. Nonetheless, the Military Highway Corridor District provides a multitude of retail offerings that is unsurpassed in the City of Norfolk with its number of big box centers, automotive sales and service facilities, eating and drinking places, grocery stores and shoppers goods and services.

3.4 Office Market Overview

The Hampton Roads regional office market in 2005 encompasses approximately 25.4 million square feet of space in three major markets – Downtown Norfolk, Southside and Peninsula. Of this space, approximately 22.3 million square feet (or 88 percent) of this space is leasable and approximately 3.1 million square feet is owner-occupied. During 2004, the Hampton Roads office market continued its gradual improvement as the vacancy rate decreased 2.9 percentage points to 10.1 percent and the average asking blended rental rates for Class A and B² office properties increased slightly from \$15.54 per square foot to \$15.61 per square foot.

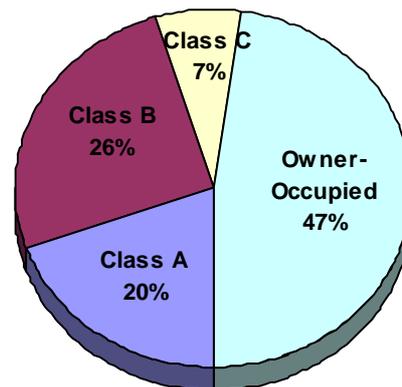
Although little new office space was constructed in the Hampton Roads region (250,000 square feet) in 2004, over 800,000 square feet of office space was absorbed, largely as a result of existing companies expanding within the region

The Military Highway Corridor District is located in the Southside Suburban office submarket which includes Chesapeake, Northern Suffolk, Portsmouth, Suburban Norfolk, and Virginia Beach. The Southside office space submarket is the strongest submarket in the Hampton Roads region as a majority of the 250,000 square feet of new office space constructed in Hampton Roads occurred in the Southside and vacancy rates are lower than those of any other Hampton Roads submarket. The Southside Suburban market encompasses nearly half of the leasable office space in Hampton Roads with 12.7 million square feet. Southside's vacancy rate decreased from 12.8 percent to 8.7 percent between 2003 and 2005 while average asking rents for Class A and B space increased from \$15.13 per square foot to \$15.49 per square foot during the same period.

Between 2003 and 2005 occupancy (i.e. reduced vacancy) and average rents for class A and B office space improved region-wide. The Hampton Roads regional office market vacancy rate decreased over 20 percent since 2003 and is at the lowest level since 2001. The average rent per square foot of class A and B office space has increased steadily at rate of about one percent per year.

The Military Highway Corridor District office market is comprised of the Military Circle and the Airport/Norhampton office submarkets which total more than 1.25 million square feet of the leasable and owner-occupied office

Figure 3-3. Military Highway Corridor District Office Space Distribution by Class - 2005



Source: Old Dominion University, Center for Real Estate and Economic Development

² Class "A" office space is defined as being buildings with high quality finishes, state of the art systems, exceptional accessibility, and a definite market presence. Class "B" space is defined as being building with finishes that are fair to good for the area and with systems that are adequate, but does not compete with Class "A" at the same price (generally rates are \$2 to \$3 less per square foot).

space. The greatest portion of this space is owner-occupied at 602,085 square feet (or 48 percent) with over half of the owner-occupied office space in the USAA building located in the Airport/Northampton office submarket. Class B office space accounts for 323,155 square feet (or 26 percent) of the total inventory for the Corridor – with 62 percent of the Class B space in the Military Circle sub-market (See Figure 3-3).

In terms of leasable office space, the Military Highway Corridor District multi-tenant Class A, B and C space total more than 657,000 square feet of space. 87 percent of this leasable office space is in Class A and Class B buildings. Class A office space comprises 37 percent of the Military Highway Corridor District leasable office space, while Class B space accounts for nearly half of the market. Class C space accounts for 13 percent of the leasable office space.

The Hampton Roads office market continues to show improvement, and after years of anticipation, is finally seeing the positive impact of increased defense and homeland security spending. In terms of product types, the healthiest of all office types is the multi-story, Class A sector that has seen its vacancy decrease to 7.2 percent at year end 2004. It is anticipated that this product type will see a return of new construction with a speculative component although this may be in small quantities. In addition, the increased absorption of office space in the region is projected to put upward pressure on rental rates for the first time in nearly two decades.

With excellent transportation access via air (Norfolk International Airport) and roadways via Interstate 64 and Interstate 264 to the rest of Hampton Roads, the Military Highway Corridor District office market is performing better than the region in terms of lower vacancy rates and higher average rents when compared to the Southside market and the region as a whole. In addition, discussions with office developers in the Military Highway Corridor District finds pent up demand for high quality office space from existing tenants who wish to expand but can not due to limited available space. Discussions with local office builders suggest that the construction of new Class A office buildings (in the range of 160,000 square feet) would likely be absorbed. This is evidenced by the success of the Lake Wright Executive Center (100 percent occupancy in the highest quality office space), the lack of new office space construction (no new construction since 2001), and interviews with real estate developers working in the corridor office market that finds that there is pent-up demand in the corridor. Furthermore, limited opportunities for high quality mixed use development that incorporates office and/or residential with support retail space may be available at selected sites.

Opportunities for speculative new office space construction exist in the Military Highway Corridor District as the continued impact of increased defense and homeland security spending, the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) where Norfolk Naval Station and Support activities is expected to see a net gain of more than 3,600 jobs (bringing their private sector related contractors) will continue to positively affect the office market in the Hampton Roads region and in the City of Norfolk. For example, several large defense contractors (e.g. Lockheed Martin, Boeing, and HDR) are currently located in the Military Highway Corridor District and quality space for expansion does not exist to accommodate potential expansion.

There may be an opportunity to concentrate additional high quality, Class A office space around the Lake Wright Executive Center area proximate to Norfolk International Airport.

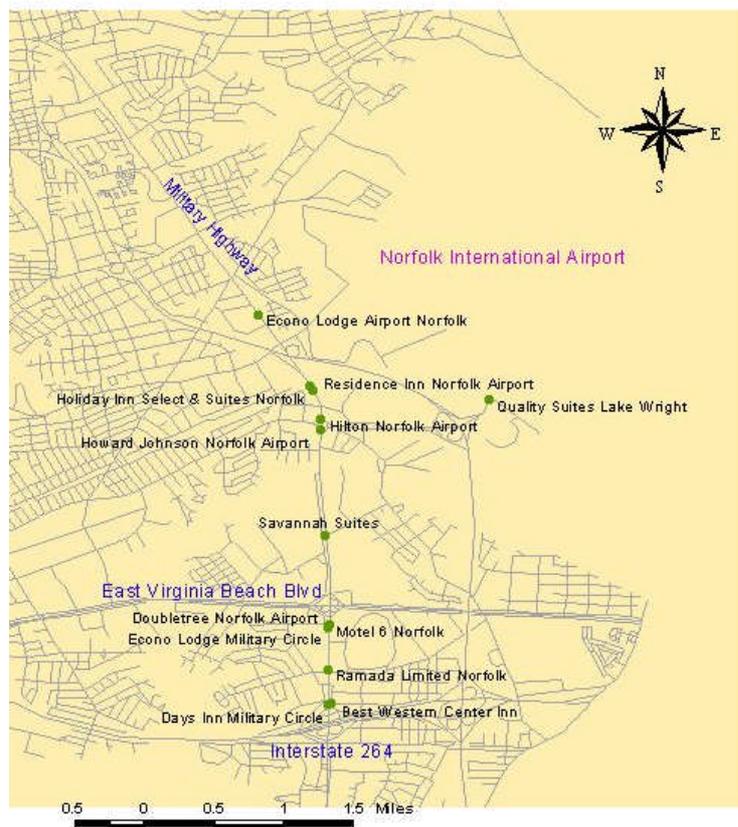
3.5 Lodging Market Overview

The Hampton Roads lodging market has benefited from the growing tourist industry in the region that has seen its tourism grow faster than that national tourism industry from 1999 to 2004. The demand for rooms in Hampton Roads has increased by 7.2 percent during the five year period from 1999 to 2004.³ This is 0.7 percent higher than growth in room demand for the U.S. Within the Hampton Roads region, the City of Norfolk lodging market includes 43 hotels with 5,092 available rooms. The industry caters primarily to the City’s burgeoning tourism industry and downtown revitalization as well as the City as a center for meetings and conventions. Convention and meeting facilities in the City of Norfolk include the Norfolk Waterside Convention Center, the Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel, and the Norfolk Scope Area – a total of 176,000 square feet in meeting space.⁴

The lodging market classifies six distinct categories (“chain scales”) as either “upper upscale”, “upscale”, “midscale with food and beverage service”, “midscale without food and beverage service”, “economy”, or “independent”.⁵ The distinctions between the different categories are based primarily on the actual, system-wide average room rates of the major chains, and independent hotels are included as a separate category.

The Military Highway corridor includes 13 hotels and 1,826 available rooms.⁶ This represents 29.5 percent of the City’s hotels and 35 percent of all available rooms. These hotels serve many of the region’s travelers, as the airport is located only a few miles to the east of the corridor.

Figure 3-4. Military Highway Commercial District Lodging Locations



Source: BBP Associates, Inc.

³ 2005 Hampton Roads State of the Region; Smith Travel Research and Old Dominion University Economic Forecasting Project.

⁴ Norfolk Convention and Visitors Bureau website, 2005.

⁵ Smith Travel Research, 2005 Chain Scales

⁶ Smith Travel Research 2005 Lodging survey (data obtained in September 2005)

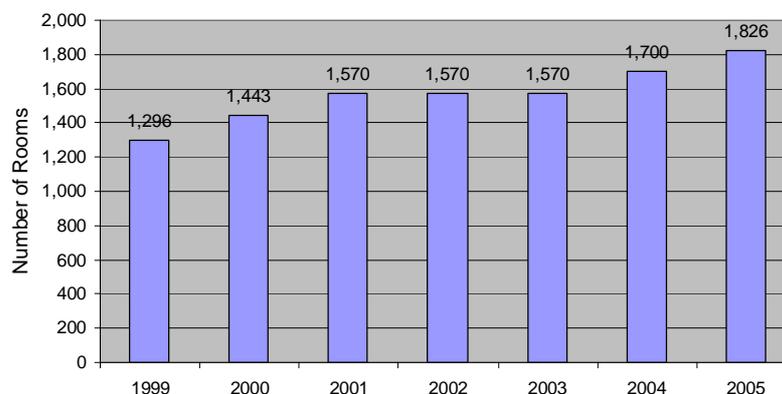
Of the thirteen hotels in the Military Highway Commercial District, two are considered “upper upscale” hotels. The luxury hotels are the Hilton Norfolk Airport and the Doubletree Norfolk Airport, and they account for 449 rooms, or 25 percent, of the room supply. The “upper upscale” hotels feature amenities such as a total of 16,438 square feet of meeting space, restaurants, business centers, fitness facilities, indoor and outdoor swimming pools, and special recreation opportunities such as billiards and tennis courts.

There are four hotels in the “midscale with food and beverage” category, adding 556 rooms to the supply of lodging and representing 33 percent of the corridor’s hotel rooms. “Economy” hotels make up the remaining 20 percent of rooms, and they typically offer few amenities except for cable television, although a few have high speed internet access and pools and one offers limited meeting space.

As Figure 3-4 indicates, all but three of the hotels are located directly on Military Highway. The Days Inn Military Circle, Savannah Suites, and Quality Suites Lake Wright are located on intersecting roads. Apart from the three new hotels constructed within the past five years, Military Highway hotels are relatively old. As surveyed by Smith Travel Research, the average age for the 12 hotels is 21 years, and all but the three new hotels are more than 16 years old. Two hotels are 21 years or older, and three are more than 30 years old.

Figure 3-5 illustrates the incremental increase in the number of rooms from 1998 to 2005. In 2000, the number of rooms increased from 1296 to 1570 with the opening of the Holiday Inn Select and Suites and the Quality Inn Select and Suites, a 21 percent increase. The number of rooms increased again in 2004 by 8 percent with the opening of the Residence Inn. In 2005, the number increased from 1700 to 1826 with the opening of Savannah Suites. The total supply of rooms has increased by 29 percent, or an average annual increase of 88 rooms, between 1999 and 2005.

**Figure 3-5. Military Highway Corridor District
Lodging Supply (Number of Rooms)**



Source: Smith Travel Research, BBP Associates

The strong demand for lodging in the Military Highway Commercial District is attributable in part to the patronage of the business travelers. A comparison of the average 2001 through 2005 average monthly occupancy rates for the City of Norfolk and the corridor shows that the occupancy rates for the commercial corridor are consistently higher than for the City as a whole. The City enjoys occupancy rates over 70 percent only four months out of the year – the peak summer vacation months of May, June, July, and August. Meanwhile, the Military Highway Commercial Corridor District realizes occupancy rates greater than 70 percent seven months out of the year, and in two months the occupancy rate is at 69 percent. Military Highway hotels serve business travelers consistently throughout the year, and during the peak season their occupancy levels are above 80 percent as a result of the summer tourists' patronage.

The Average Daily Rate (ADR) for hotels in the City of Norfolk has increased over time, and the ADR for hotels in the Military Highway Corridor District are similar to the City's ADR and have increased at a similar pace. The greatest increase occurred between 2001 and 2002 when the ADR went up 7 percent from \$64.01 to \$68.57. Revenue per available room (RevPAR), has increased since 1999 by 27 percent; however, the increase has not been even. From 1999 to 2002, RevPAR increased by 36 percent. The increase between 2002 and 2003 was negligible at only 1 percent and decreased by 5 percent between 2003 and 2004. The decline in RevPAR over the past two years is indicative of the short term impact of the addition of a new hotel on the market.

In summary, the Military Highway Corridor District has experienced significant growth in its hospitality sector over the past five years. From 2001 to 2005, four new hotels have been introduced to the corridor lodging market. From 1999 to 2005, the supply of rooms increased by 29 percent or an annual average of 88 rooms per year. Given the age of the existing hotels, the construction of new facilities brought new vitality to the corridor.

Occupancy rates continued to increase through 2002 after the construction of two hotels that increased the supply by 21 percent. However, as with the City, the Military Highway Corridor District experienced a sharp increase in occupancy rates in 2002 followed by a three year period of decline likely to continue through 2005. RevPAR also decreased for the commercial corridor from 2003 and 2005. These two downward trends are explained by the addition of the Residence Inn in 2004 and represent short term responses to an increase in room supply. The 38 percent increase in the total annual number of occupied room nights between 1999 and 2005 indicates that demand is keeping pace with the increase in supply.

The key advantage of the hospitality market in the Military Highway Corridor District is the year round patronage by business travelers who wish to stay at hotels near to the airport. This demand enables occupancy rates to remain above 70 percent for more than half the year and speaks to the opportunity for additional lodging for business travelers along the commercial corridor. As total occupied rooms nights continues to increase and the pent up demand for office space in locations such as Lake Wright is met, there will be a need for additional high end hotel rooms.

3.6 Multifamily Residential Market Overview

In 2005, the Hampton Roads Regional apartment market consists of more than 81,800 units in eight submarkets – Chesapeake/Suffolk, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Virginia Beach, Williamsburg and York County. The City of Norfolk contains more than 11,900 multifamily units, or approximately 14.6 percent of the regional total, making the City of Norfolk the largest apartment submarket in the region. The City has experienced recent apartment development activity with more than 430 units under construction including new apartment communities as part of the Broad Creek Renaissance project off of Virginia Beach Boulevard and in the downtown / Ghent area of the City.

The vacancy rate in the City of Norfolk dropped slightly to 2.8 percent in April 2005 from a 3 percent vacancy rate reported six months prior in October 2004. The City's vacancy rate of 2.8 percent remains lower than the region-wide vacancy rate of 3.9 percent. Three bedroom apartments reported the lowest vacancy rate in the City of Norfolk at 2.8 percent compared to 2.8 percent for two-bedrooms and 3 percent for one-bedrooms.

Average rents in the City have increased proportionately, although they remain lower than those of the Hampton Roads region. The average rent of \$731 per month (as of April 2005) in the City of Norfolk is five percent lower than the average rent of \$768 in the Hampton Roads region. Three bedroom apartments in the City of Norfolk reported an average rental rate of \$875 per month, two-bedroom reported an average of \$752 per month and one-bedroom apartments reported an average of \$634 per month.

In addition to rental apartments, the City of Norfolk continues to attract new residents seeking condominium and townhomes as the average cost of a single-family home continues to be priced beyond the means of moderate income households.

The Military Highway Corridor District is primarily a commercial area with retail, office, lodging and civic/institutional facilities. However, there are a few residential communities along the corridor, primarily located on the west side of Military Highway between Norview Avenue and Little Creek Road and south of the Interstate 264/64 interchange on the east side of Military Highway to the Virginia Beach city line. In total, nearly 90 percent of the units (and 5 of the 6 surveyed apartment communities) are located in the Airport –North Segment and the other multi-family residential community is located in the River Segment (Dockside Apartments).

A survey of the Military Highway Corridor District reports six apartment facilities that total more than 1,600 units. A survey of these communities finds that their total vacancy rate (as of September 2005) reported is 2.4 percent which is lower than the 2.8 percent vacancy rate reported in the City of Norfolk and the 3.8 percent vacancy rate in the Hampton Roads region. Several of these apartment communities along Military Highway reported vacancy rates of one percent or less.

Property managers of these apartment communities along the Corridor report that the apartment market is strong with apartments being absorbed quickly. They noted that their

units do not stay vacant for very long. Rental rates for residential units along Military Highway are comparable to the City of Norfolk as a whole.

In summary, the strengths of the apartment market in the Military Highway Corridor District are location and access. Residential for-rent units are proximate to the airport and the Military Highway retail corridor. The airport and the combined uses of the Military Highway Corridor District are significant employers in the City of Norfolk. The abundance of low-to-medium wage jobs in the form of service sector employment both at the airport and along the corridor make the apartment market in the Military Highway Corridor District additionally appealing to those who would like to live nearby their place of employment but lack the funds (or preference) to buy a home.

The market for apartments in the Military Highway Corridor is very strong. Vacancy rates are lower in the Military Highway Corridor District than they are in the City of Norfolk or the Hampton Roads Region. The City of Norfolk apartment market is equally healthy with low vacancy rates and several projects in the pipeline. Overall, the Hampton Roads Corridor has experienced growth in total units and rents and has experienced year-to-year decreases in vacancy rates.

The demand for apartments in the Military Highway Corridor District should continue to be strong. Increased military deployments and base restructuring foreshadow continued good health of the Hampton Roads apartment market. The expected gain in Hampton Roads military/civilian employment as a result of the BRAC base restructuring should also increase demand in the region. The strength of the Hampton Roads market is exhibited in record levels of apartments constructed and absorbed over the past three years. Additionally, well over 2,000 new units are currently in the pipeline for completion in the next year.

3.6 Retail Market Analysis

The Military Highway Corridor District Regional Trade Area for “Automotive” and “Shoppers” goods encompasses the entire City of Norfolk and extends into portions of Portsmouth and Chesapeake to the south and a portion of Virginia Beach to the east. The other trade area used in this analysis is a sub-regional trade area for “Convenience” goods. Sales of “Convenience” goods are made, primarily, to residents living proximate to the Military Highway Corridor District. Consequently, the trade area for “Convenience” goods is an area within one mile of the Military Highway Corridor District.

The median household income has increased in the past 5 years in both trade areas and is expected to continue to increase. The median household income in the Regional Trade Area increased almost 20 percent between 2000 and 2005 and is expected to increase an additional 18.4 percent between 2005 and 2010. Within the Sub-Regional Trade area for “Convenience” goods the median household income rose 19 percent between 2000 and 2005 and is expected to increase an additional 17.9 percent in the next five years. This trend is comparable with increases in median household income region-wide. Hampton Roads is, comparably,

expected to experience a nearly 20 percent increase in median household income over the next five years.

The change in the distribution of income indicates that, rather than an equal distribution of increases across cohorts, particular income cohorts are expected to experience large increases in share over the next five years. Projections indicate that over the 2005 to 2010 period the number of households with earnings of \$150,000-\$200,000 or \$200,000+, the highest income cohorts, will nearly double in the next two years in both of the trade areas.

3.6.1 Market Capture Rate Analysis

To determine and evaluate the conditions within the Military Highway Corridor District, within the trade areas of the three major categories of retail goods (“Automotive”, “Shoppers”, and “Convenience”), the market capture rates for each type of good was calculated. Within the Regional Trade Area there is a total of \$1.6 billion spent on “Automotive” and “Shoppers” retail goods. About half of that total is spent for “Automotive” goods at auto dealerships, repair and maintenance establishments, and gas stations. The remaining 0.84 billion dollars is spent for “Shoppers” goods in building material, general merchandise, apparel, electronics, furniture, office, and other such establishments.

The expenditures in the Sub-Regional Trade Area for “Convenience” goods are almost \$0.2 billion. This amount represents the spending at food and beverage stores, food service and dining establishments, health and personal care stores, and at personal service establishments like barber and dry cleaners.

The Military Highway Corridor District retail market derives a certain amount of its sales from residents living within the trade area and the remainder from outside the trade area. Residents living within and outside of the trade area and residents make a certain amount of retail purchases within the Military Highway Corridor District. Retail sales are made to residents of the trade area and are made to residents who reside outside of the trade area. This variation in sales by location of residence represents the two “market sources” from which Military Highway Corridor District retail sales are made.

Based on discussions with study area business owners and industry knowledge, it was determined that approximately 70 percent of retail sales of “Automotive” goods are made by the residents of the Regional Trade Area. The other 30 percent of the retail sales of “Automotive” goods are made by persons residing outside of the Regional Trade Area. This means that out of the \$450 million in total retail sales of “Automotive” goods \$315 million in sales are made to residents in the Regional Trade Area with the remaining \$135 million in sales representing inflow from persons living outside the trade area.

Much like the sales by market source for “Automotive” goods, it was determined that approximately 70 percent of the retail sales of “Shoppers” goods are made to residents of the Regional Trade Area with the other 30 percent of sales to residents of areas outside of the Regional Trade Area. Retail establishments in the Military Highway Corridor District that sell “Shoppers” goods total \$670 million in sales. Residents of the Regional Trade Area

account for \$469 million of these sales with the other \$201 million in sales made to residents of other areas.

Within the Sub-Regional market it is estimated that the vast preponderance, or approximately 95 percent, of “Convenience” goods retail sales are made to Sub-Regional Trade Area Residents with only 5 percent of the total sales being made to residents of areas outside of the Sub-Regional Trade Area. Of the \$120 million in “Convenience” retail sales in the Military Highway Corridor District, \$114 million is made to people who live within the Sub-Regional Trade Area.

Market Capture Rates

The calculation of the retail sales by source within the Military Highway Corridor District combined with estimates of retail expenditures allows the calculation of the capture rate of trade area expenditures. The capture rate is essentially a measure of the percentage of expenditures “captured” from an area. Total sales to a trade area divided by the total expenditures (demand) of that trade area results in a percentage that is referred to as a capture rate. Those sales not captured represent the net leakage, the amount of expenditures that take place outside of the study area (See Table 3-3).

The total retail expenditure capture rate of the Regional Trade Area by the Military Highway Corridor District is almost 50 percent (48.4 percent). This means that, combined, nearly half of all “Automotive” and “Shoppers” goods expenditures by Regional Trade Area residents are made in the Military Highway Corridor District. The capture rate for “Automotive” goods is 39.1 percent. This indicates that the other 60 percent of “Automotive” expenditures by trade area residents are made outside of the Military Highway Corridor District (this is referred to as “leakage”). The capture rate for “Shoppers” goods is 57.6 percent. Over half of all purchases at “Shoppers” goods establishments by trade area residents are made at establishments located in the Military Highway Corridor District. A total of 32.4 percent of “Shoppers” goods retail sales are made to residents outside of the Regional Trade Area.

Finally, the capture rate for “Convenience” goods of expenditures in the Sub-Regional Trade Area is 62.9 percent. Residents of the Sub-Regional Trade Area are making about 40 percent of their “Convenience” goods expenditures elsewhere. A total of \$118 million in sales of “Convenience” goods are made to trade area residents.

TABLE 3-3
Retail Sales Capture Rates
Military Highway Corridor, 2005

Market	Total Retail Demand (Household Expenditures)	Trade Area Purchases Made in Corridor	Capture Rate	Leakage (Net Outflow)	% Leakage
<u>Regional Trade Area</u>					
Automotive Goods ¹	\$804,772,106	\$315,000,000	39.1%	(\$489,772,106)	-60.9%
Shoppers' Goods ²	\$814,450,288	\$469,000,000	57.6%	(\$345,450,288)	-42.4%
Total	\$1,619,222,394	\$784,000,000	48.4%	(\$835,222,394)	-51.6%
<u>Sub-Regional Trade Area</u>					
Convenience Goods ³	\$181,296,444	\$114,000,000	62.9%	(\$67,296,444)	-37.1%
Total	\$181,296,444	\$114,000,000	62.9%	(\$67,296,444)	-37.1%
1 - Includes Auto Dealerships, Repair and Maintenance, Gas Stations, and Auto Services 2 - Includes Building Materials, General Merchandise, Apparel, Electronics and Appliances, Office, and Other regional stores 3 - Includes Food and Beverage, Food Service and Dining, Health and Personal Care, and Personal Services.					

To determine future retail sales in the Military Highway Corridor, year 2010 projections of households and median household income was used. From 2005 to 2010 the number of households and the median household income in the trade areas will increase and these increases will have an effect on the total retail sales in the Military Highway Corridor District. Assuming that the capture rates and the proportion of sales by market source do not change, an increase in households or median household income will increase the amount of retail sales in the Military Highway Corridor District

The projected increase of expenditures by trade area residents is 6.4 percent in the Regional Trade Area and 8.3 percent in the Sub-Regional Trade area in the next 5 years. The application of capture rates from 2005 to the projected trade area expenditures for 2010 indicates sales of “Automotive”, “Shoppers”, and “Convenience” goods to the trade areas can be expected to be almost \$60 million higher in 2010. The increase in sales to the Regional Trade Area would account for over \$50 million of this increase, with an increase of almost \$30 million in sales of “Shoppers” retail goods in 2010.

The sales by market source rates are applied to the projected 2010 trade area retail sales to determine the total change in retail sales by retail establishments in the Military Highway Corridor. This analysis indicates that retail sales to residents of areas outside of the trade area will increase approximately \$22 million dollars. In total, retail sales are expected to be an

inflation-adjusted \$82 million higher in 2010 in the Military Highway Corridor. Table 3-4 below indicates the increases in retail sales by market source.

**TABLE 3-4
Estimated Retail Sales (Trendline Assumption)
Military Highway Corridor District
2005-2010**

	Retail Sales		2005-2010 Change		Average Annual Change	
	2005	2010	\$	%	\$	%
Automotive Goods ¹	\$450,000,000	\$478,999,375	\$28,999,375	6.4%	\$5,799,875	1.3%
Shoppers' Goods ²	\$670,000,000	\$713,176,847	\$43,176,847	6.4%	\$8,635,369	1.3%
SubTotal	\$1,120,000,000	\$1,192,176,222	\$72,176,222	6.4%		
Convenience Goods ³	\$120,000,000	\$129,943,715	\$9,943,715	8.3%	\$1,988,743	1.7%
TOTAL	\$1,240,000,000	\$1,322,119,937	\$82,119,937	6.6%	\$16,423,987	1.3%
Source: BBP Associates Inc., ESRI BIS, Interviews with Local Business Owners						

Trendline analysis indicates that, assuming capture rates and market penetration from outside the trade area can be maintained, retail sales will increase \$82 million or 6.6 percent over the 2005 to 2010 period. If the area fails to maintain its market position or improves its position through revitalization efforts, the level of market penetration will change. Changes in market position or penetration would change the amount of retail sales projected for 2010.

3.8 Market and Economic Analysis Conclusions

A market and economic analysis of uses along the corridor and in the region finds that while the Military Highway Corridor is one of the region's most active retail corridors, with an estimated \$1.2 billion in retail sales, the corridor has a number of challenges limiting its ability to enhance existing businesses and facilitating new (re)development. With an aging building supply, increased competition and several vacant pockets of retail and underutilized commercial sites along Military Highway the area faces numerous challenges. This combined with an image/visibility issue related to public safety or perceived public safety, a corridor that has been characterized as unattractive, the Military Highway Corridor District has strengths, challenges and opportunities in addressing its continued (re)development and re-use. Table 3-5 summarizes these strengths, challenges and opportunities as they relate to market and economic issues detailed in the previous sections.

TABLE 3-5
Market and Economic Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities
Military Highway Corridor District

Strengths

- Traditionally strong retail demand in terms of sales (estimated at more than \$1 billion)
- Pent up demand for high quality office space in corridor
- Excellent location to serve entire region combined with proximity to the Airport and downtown Norfolk
- Good transportation access (e.g. highway, airport)
- Upscale work force in area (e.g. Lake Wright Executive Center)
- Recent increase in new lodging development along corridor
- Steady job growth, including federal opportunities, in City and region fueling job opportunities and office/retail development in the City
- Growing opportunities for high quality multi-family residential development

Challenges

- Crime or perception of crime inhibits the corridor's appeal to attract new quality retail development and customers
- Older commercial inventory
- Perceived traffic congestion
- Unattractive corridor
- Limited sites/land available for (re)development along corridor
- Long standing vacant retail inventory at selected large sites
- Obsolete and underutilized commercial uses/sites
- Limited marketing to community, retailers, and developers
- Residents travel outside of area (e.g. Downtown Norfolk, Virginia Beach) for desired up-scale shopping, fine dining and entertainment
- Absentee landowners who have no relationship to community/desire to enhance their properties
- No plan to guide development along corridor

Opportunities

- Proximity to Airport
- Central location within region
- Promote a positive image/vision of the corridor to attract customers and retailers
- Initiate public sector initiatives (e.g. business improvement district) to improve safety and attractiveness (e.g. greenery, landscaping, lighting) of corridor
- Undertake coordinated approach to marketing retail activity in the corridor and working with the absentee landowners and absentee management firms
- Undertake mixed use development at selected sites
- Opportunities to expand Class A office space in selected locations/nodes along corridor
- Enhance synergy with Norfolk International Airport with concentrated office/hotel development in node around Lake Wright Executive Center and other selected locations
- Facilitate office development opportunities in selected nodes along corridor through site selection, land identification, etc.
- Conduct transportation improvements to facilitate access along corridor (e.g. roadway widening)
- Provide incentives for businesses to upgrade/beautify their property and businesses
- Plan for transit-oriented development around proposed transit station (e.g. Military Highway LRT station)
- Facilitate potential for development and/or redevelopment at selected available sites
- Provide improved public relations to developers and retailers to locate high quality commercial development within corridor
- Facilitate redevelopment and revitalization of deteriorating and obsolete retail centers into high quality activity centers
- Explore opportunities for civic uses (e.g. library) and medical (e.g. health care center) along corridor

4.0 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PLAN

4.1 Plan Approach

As stated in the Introduction, Military Highway is one of Norfolk's most important corridors, both from a transportation perspective as well as center for economic activity – and these two characteristics are inextricably connected. The corridor accommodates thousands of motorists, employees and shoppers every day. While the corridor is one of the region's most active retail corridors, with an estimated \$1.2 billion in annual retail sales, it is challenged by an aging building supply, increased retail competition, underutilized land parcels, traffic congestion and inappropriate uses that combined with an overall poor image related to perceived public safety presents a challenge as well as an opportunity.

Like many older commercial corridors across the nation, there are areas along the corridor where investment has lagged and both economic activity and appearances have deteriorated. Without coordinated public and private action, the corridor will not achieve its full potential as both a high quality transportation corridor and also a major commercial/retail destination.

One of the centerpieces of the *Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District* is an Economic Development Plan. This plan will highlight economic development strategies and provide recommendations for achieving redevelopment and enhancement of this strategic corridor through the implementation of strategic organizational, marketing, regulatory and financial actions, improved transportation access, aesthetic design improvements, and catalytic demonstration projects. The end result will be a plan that will provide guidance for the City, property owners, businesses and residents to achieve in a coordinated manner the vision for enhancing the overall quality of the corridor.

The economic vitality of the Military Highway Corridor District is at a crossroads. The corridor has an opportunity to reposition itself to attract quality development and businesses, retain and upgrade existing properties, capitalize on transportation access, and provide opportunities for attractive mixed use development. The actions and strategies identified are mutually supportive to raise the quality and type of reinvestment, promoting a greater level of value and quality of life in the corridor. These strategies can be an effective means to stabilize, redevelop, and spark reinvestment for the long-term success of the Corridor.

The Economic Development Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District outlines actions and strategies divided into five major categories:

- Organizational
- Regulatory
- Marketing
- Development
- Finance / Infrastructure

The *Economic Development Plan* provides strategies and recommendations **corridor-wide** for each of these five major categories. In addition, specific recommendations and economic development strategies are also provided for each of the corridor's three segments – Airport-North, Crossroads and River.

4.2 Corridor-Wide Perspective

Corridor-wide economic development strategies include those actions and recommendations that are applicable to the entire Military Highway Corridor District, the 7.5-mile long corridor bounded by the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River to the south (Norfolk-Virginia Beach city limit) and Little Creek Road to the north. These actions focus on enhancing existing businesses and facilitating redevelopment and reinvestment for those properties oriented towards and impacted by Military Highway.

The overall Economic Development strategy for the Military Highway Corridor District is to facilitate the enhancement and revitalization of the corridor through the implementation of: 1) strategic organizational, marketing, regulatory, infrastructure and financial initiatives; 2) improved transportation access and urban design improvements; and 3) implementation of opportunity site enhancements and redevelopment. These strategies are outlined below.

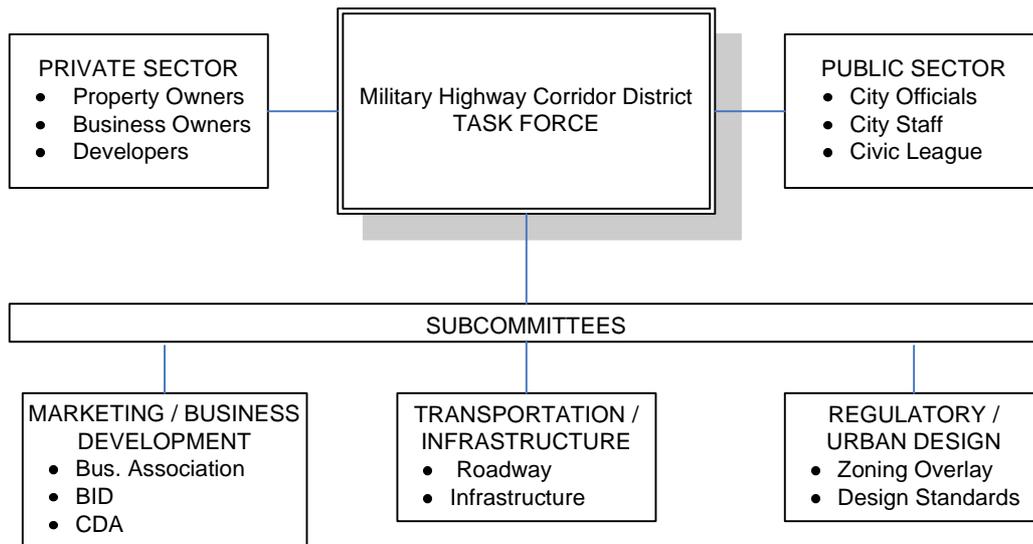
As important as the corridor is to the City of Norfolk, there is no collective group at present to market and represent the *entire* Corridor's business and property interests. While there are several business groups representing specific areas along the corridor (e.g. Lansdale Business Alliance) and the City at large (e.g. Retail Alliance), a group that represents the Military Highway Corridor District would serve as a **champion** for the corridor and represent and provide assistance to the corridors' public and private interests. There are various alternative entities that can be formed to address the enhancement, revitalization and (re)development of the Military Highway Corridor through business development and support, transportation and aesthetic design improvements, crime/safety, infrastructure, regulations, etc. These include, but are not limited to:

- Business Association
- Business Improvement District (BID)
- Community Development Authority (CDA)

These groups all vary in their organizational structure, funding sources, types of programs and services offered, membership and public/private sector orientation. To address which type of group would be most appropriate and feasible for the Military Highway Corridor District, it is recommended that the City of Norfolk form a Military Highway Corridor District Task Force. This Task Force would be a public / private partnership comprising members from the private and public sectors who have a vested interest in the success of the Military Highway Corridor. Private sector members should include property and business owners, developers, and other identified private sector representatives. Public sector members should include City officials (e.g. Mayor, Council member), City staff (e.g. Planning and Community Development, Department of Development, Public Works,

Finance) and local neighborhood/civic associations adjacent to the corridor. In the near term, the Task Force would manage Military Highway initiatives and advise the City on the formation of a more formal organizational entity to guide the long term enhancement and redevelopment of the corridor.

The chart below outlines a potential structure of the Military Highway Corridor Task Force along with the formation of subcommittees that would focus on certain aspects of implementation of the Task Force’s objectives.



One of the public sector representatives on the Task Force would serve as the “corridor liaison”, and would be responsible for facilitating contact between the subcommittees and relevant public agencies. The complexity and interrelationships of the economic development implementation tasks to be undertaken necessitates the formation of a number of issue-specific subcommittees. These subcommittees would be led by identified Task Force members. The subcommittees that would be established include:

- Marketing / Business Development
- Transportation / Infrastructure
- Regulatory / Urban Design

An overview of near term tasks to be undertaken by these subcommittees are provided below. In addition, Sections V and VI of the *Comprehensive Plan* detail the Aesthetic Design Concept Plan and Infrastructure Improvement Plan recommendations that would be addressed by the respective subcommittees.

Marketing / Business Development

One of the first major tasks of the Marketing / Business Development Subcommittee would be to determine the feasibility of creating an organizational entity to represent the interests of the corridor. The tasks assigned to the subcommittee include to promote the corridor, to publicize and organize events, to inform property and business owners of corridor issues, to serve as a clearinghouse of information for visitors, business and property owners and to be the point of contact in the event of any publicity (positive and negative) related to the corridor. The subcommittee's role in the public/private partnership will provide the mechanism for developing, coordinating and implementing the longer-term recommendations for enhancement and redevelopment of the Military Highway Corridor.

This subcommittee should serve as the centerpiece for representing the long term economic viability of the corridor. This group would serve as the liaison between the development community, existing property and business owners, the Convention and Visitors Bureau, and City officials to ensure high quality and effective marketing, programming, repositioning and long-term reinvestment along Military Highway.

4.2.1 Organizational Alternatives

The types of organizational entities to address these economic development initiatives range from the simple (business association) to more complex (business improvement district, community development authority) based on their level of funding and range of programs and services offered. One of the first objectives of the Task Force would be to investigate the need and feasibility of the creation of such an entity and the desired level of service that would be needed. For example, the Task Force may first consider the establishment of a local business association representing the entire corridor's interests that, depending on the success of the business association's initiatives, may evolve over time into a formal district with special assessments such as a Business Improvement District or Community Development Authority.

An overview of the potential different types of organizational entities that may be established is detailed below. A summary table, which outlines the overall differences of these types of organizations based on enabling legislation, governance, adoption, specific powers and termination, is provided below.

- **BUSINESS ASSOCIATION**

Business associations play important roles in promoting and coordinating activities within their defined districts. Business associations typically are the least complex of organizations to establish and are for the most part organized as a non-profit entity. Business associations are active in promoting and enhancing their district's quality of life, which can include retail and business opportunities and can be engaged in attracting cultural and recreational opportunities to the district, designing streetscapes, evaluating public art, supporting local activities, and improving all aspects of life within the area.

The primary funding for many business associations comes from membership dues. These due amounts can vary according to the type of member. Members can include local business and property owners, government officials, residents, real estate professionals, corporations, businesses, trade associations, educational institutions, non-profits, civic groups, and other parties who are interested in promoting and enhancing the Military Highway Corridor.

The types of services business associations provide are wide-ranging, including but not limited to:

- **Produce quarterly newsletter** highlighting corridor activities and providing opportunities for local business advertising
- **Develop marketing and promotional materials** to highlight corridor retail businesses
- **Conduct outreach events** and special activities to promote the corridor
- **Organize public safety training sessions** for local business and property owners
- **Create a Map & Business Directory** identifying retail and shopping destinations, public transportation, including a listing a variety of merchants and services
- **Review and assist in implementation** of transportation and urban design improvements
- **Publicize incentives** for local business to improve their facilities
- **Organize annual awards event** to recognize important contributions to the corridor
- **Maintain Web Page** to promote corridor activities and programs

It is recommended that the Marketing / Business Development Subcommittee investigate the level of interest in forming a corridor-wide organization (e.g. business association, BID) to promote the corridor and serve as the coordinating organization for reinvestment and marketing the Military Highway Corridor as a vital economic and commercial area for the City of Norfolk and the Hampton Roads region. This includes research into current business groups represented on the corridor.

There are a wide variety of names for such an organization including the Military Highway Partnership (MHP), the Military Highway Business Association, or the Military Highway Alliance, to name a few.

- **BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT**

In Virginia, the Commonwealth's enabling legislation allows the formation of Service Districts (Sections 15.2-2400, 15.2-2402 and 15.2-2403 of the Code of Virginia) by local governments. These Service Districts, also known as Business Improvement Districts (BID), are an organizing and financing mechanism in which local business and/or property owners

within a defined geographic boundary agree to assess themselves to provide increased services in the areas of transportation, water, sewer, public parking, street cleaning, economic development, security, maintenance, marketing and special events typically beyond those services and improvements provided by the municipal government that address problems to enhance their area's attractiveness.

BIDs provide a tool for commercial corridor districts, like Military Highway, to fund amenities, provide services and market themselves to compete more effectively with their competitive commercial centers. Nationwide, marketing and district maintenance (e.g. cleaning, graffiti) are the most common BID activities including other "soft" services such as public safety, beautification, special events and promotion that improve the environment for businesses, shoppers, and employees and attract more shoppers and businesses to the district. In addition, the formation of a Military Highway Corridor District BID could serve as the "Go To" organization for any related media/publicity exposure for event happening on the corridor. Currently there is no such organization that can speak on behalf of the corridor when there is negative (or even positive) publicity.

While BIDs are an effective funding mechanism for commercial revitalization and redevelopment, one of their most important attributes is the organization's ability to organize property owners, merchants, and local governments to define common goals and agendas, formulate improvement plans, and work together to implement them. One of the major benefits of BIDs is the myriad of programs and services they can offer. Potential programs that a Military Highway Corridor District BID could undertake include:

- **Business Recruitment and Retention** – publicize financial incentives for new and expanding businesses, marketing to investors
- **Maintenance** – removal of litter and graffiti, cutting grass, trimming trees, planting flowers in public spaces
- **Security** – uniformed security personnel for extra eyes and ears on the street, uniformed "hospitality" personnel, cooperative arrangements with the police
- **Consumer Marketing** – publication of promotional materials, image enhancement, signage/banners, sales promotions
- **Regulatory Enforcement** – building code compliance, assistance in enforcement of laws
- **Urban Design / Infrastructure** – development of urban design guidelines, management of façade and storefront improvement programs

Currently, the City of Norfolk has one BID in the downtown area that is managed by the Downtown Norfolk Council. Within the boundaries of this BID's 48-block geographic area property owners pay for supplemental services including hospitality and security initiatives, cleaning, visual enhancements, and marketing/public relations efforts. The BID has played an important role in contributing to the renaissance and revitalization of downtown Norfolk. The investigation of a similar organization to market and implement initiatives for the Military Highway Corridor District could be viable alternative to maintain and improve the corridor's competitive market position (and subsequent tax revenues) in the region.

BIDs play an important role in advocating and coordinating public and private economic development activity to advance a shared revitalization vision for their commercial districts. The creation of a BID for the Military Highway Corridor could present an opportunity for property and business owners along the corridor who have a vested interest in the enhancement of the area to collectively develop a plan that would benefit not only their particular business/property but the district at large.

The graphic below presents a side-by-side summary of the advantages and disadvantages of forming a Business Improvement District.

Advantages	Issues/Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “Umbrella” organization to ensure a coordinated approach to accomplishing strategies ▪ Provides opportunity for additional and focused services and programs in designated area with a focus on implementing the vision for that area ▪ Provides opportunity for important services in areas where the financial and/or administrative capabilities of the City are constrained ▪ Provides a degree of political insulation from other concerns of local governments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Additional assessments are potential burden on some businesses/property owners ▪ Potential lack of accountability of BID organization

The Appendix contains two case study examples of BIDs applicable to the Military Highway Corridor District.

The first example is the Coliseum Central BID in Hampton, Virginia, a commercial strip district containing more than 3.3 million square feet of commercial and institutional space and more than 700 businesses. In this case, the BID was established after a group of property owners in the area formed a working partnership with the city to implement projects focusing on renewal and changes in function to meet the needs of a changing marketplace (e.g. demographics, competition, lack of opportunities). The Coliseum Central BID provides grants to local businesses for advertising, physical improvements and security.

The second example is the Sunrise Marketplace BID in Citrus Heights, California that was established to bolster the long term economic viability of an older commercial corridor. The corridor benefits from its location in the midst of highly traveled regional thoroughfares, but faces growth from competition from new suburban commercial development. This BID’s district is anchored by a regional shopping center (unlike most BIDs whose focus is on streetfront retail and businesses) and focuses on growing the district’s customer base and thereby increasing business sales and the number of establishments.

- **COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

Another potential organizational entity is a Community Development Authority (CDA). CDAs are allowed by legislative changes to the Water and Sewer Authority Act in 1993-1997 of the Code of Virginia (Section 15.2-5152 through 15.2-5158) that allows the formation of a non-stock corporation to finance public infrastructure within a defined district with special real estate property taxes and/or special assessments. Under Virginia law, CDAs may issue revenue bonds secured by CDA revenues to finance a wide variety of improvements, including, but not limited to:

- Roads, bridges, traffic signals
- Parking facilities
- Curbs, gutters, sidewalks, street lights
- Fencing, landscaping
- Storm water management
- Gas and electric lines
- Parks, recreational facilities
- Cultural and educational facilities

Virginia law allows for the creation of a CDA by petition to City Council by property owners of at least 51 percent of land owners in a proposed district. Landowners maintain a majority control of the CDA and the host jurisdiction may appoint a representative. The legislation allows a CDA to collect revenues in two ways:

1. a maximum legislated rate of \$0.25 per \$100 of assessed value, unless voted by the tax payers to be higher; and
2. a special assessment, such as a flat fee, that may be paid up front by property owners or in installments (there is no limit in the amount of the special assessment which is treated on a priority basis with real estate taxes).

The formation of a Community Development Authority for the Military Highway Corridor District may be beneficial for implementing (financing) a variety of infrastructure improvements to improve the corridor, such as the aesthetic and infrastructure improvements identified in Sections 5 and 6 of this plan. Under Virginia law, the CDA is allowed to issue bonds for financing of identified improvements, whereas the debt service on the bonds is paid back by revenue from the special tax or special assessment. The bonds are usually sold through private placement to institutional buyers.

One of the potential benefits of CDAs (from a public sector perspective) is that under Virginia law, that while the risk of default is low, the host jurisdiction has no obligation to repay CDA debt as a contingent obligation on its financial statements. However, there could be pressure for the local jurisdiction to assist in avoiding a default because though not a liability, it's the jurisdiction's name would be associated with the default.

The following summarizes the advantages and disadvantages of establishing a Community Development Authority. The Appendix provides a case study example of a CDA – the Peninsula Town Center Community Development Authority located in Hampton, Virginia.

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Formation of separate entity (non governmental) removes financing risk from the local jurisdiction ▪ Qualifies for tax-exempt financing under IRS code ▪ Supports the user pay concept ▪ Allows the local jurisdiction to facilitate priority (re)development projects ▪ Presence of CDA financing may bring higher quality developments and in a shorter time frame 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Debt associated with financing could impact jurisdiction’s credit rating when ranking its financial health (overlapping debt) ▪ Local jurisdiction participation may constrain flexibility in development of city-wide capital improvement program

In summary, there are a variety of organizational entities that can be formed to coordinate reinvestment and enhancement of the Military Highway Corridor. For some of these entities such as BIDs and CDAs, Virginia enabling legislation provides the framework for how they can be organized, what their powers are, how they shall be governed and how they are adopted. For others, such as business associations, their establishment is far less complex, often requiring a desire and committed level of effort by interested property and business owners and City officials.

Figure 4.1 summarizes the possible range of organizational entities along with their characteristic differences.

4.2.2 Regulatory

Public policy and regulatory actions and incentives play an important role in guiding re-investment and (re)development along commercial corridors like Military Highway. The public sector must be prepared to make investments and take actions to support its own public policies for reinventing suburban strips and setting the stage for the kind of development that the corridor wants as it evolves. The role of the public sector can be crucial to ensuring that the right kind of development occurs along the corridor – the highest and best use of underutilized properties, re-use of existing facilities and new (re)development opportunities of selected areas. The public sector provides the framework for the development environment and can serve as a facilitator and catalyst for new reinvestment along the Military Highway Corridor.

The following outlines a “toolbox” of corridor-wide regulatory and public policy actions to facilitate re-investment and redevelopment of the Military Highway Corridor.

- **Adoption of Commercial Zoning Overlay District.** The establishment of a zoning overlay district along the Military Highway Corridor should be explored to ensure “higher and better” use of underutilized properties and (re)development opportunities.

Figure 4.1. Summary Profile of Organizational Entities for Military Highway Corridor District

Characteristic	Business Association	Business Improvement District	Community Development Authority
Enabling Legislation	None	Code of Virginia (Sections 15.2-2400, 15.2-2402, 15.2-2403)	Code of Virginia (Sections 15.2-5104 and 15.2-5156)
Adoption	To be determined by organizing entity	Petition by at least 51 percent of property owners (who own not less than 50 percent of the property to be served)	Petition of owners who own at least 51 percent of land area or assessed value of land area
Governance	Non-Profit Entity	Public, Quasi-Public or Non-Profit Entity	Non-stock Corporation to comprise 5 board members
Specific Powers	Primarily “soft” services such as marketing, special events, advertising, publications	Wide-ranging, including but not limited to: providing grants to businesses for improvements, security, maintenance, marketing, special events, business development	Issue revenue bonds to fund infrastructure improvements (not tied to debt of the local jurisdiction) such as roads, parking, public facilities, sidewalk, lighting, utility lines
How Funded	Membership dues, advertising, sponsorship, admission fees	Additional tax on property and business owners	Flat fee or additional tax on property owners (not more than \$0.25 per \$100 assessed value)
Area Included in District	To be defined by governing organization	To be defined by petitioners	To be defined by petitioners
Assessment Collection	None	Collected by City and turned over to organization	Collected by City and turned over to organization
Termination	To be determined by organizing entity	No sunset or reauthorization provisions cited	No sunset or reauthorization provisions cited

This Zoning Overlay District would provide the development standards and regulatory guidelines to ensure that new (re)development and reuse along the corridor is high quality and is in line with the overall economic development goals of the corridor. This includes standards related to building use characteristics, facades, setbacks, height, orientation, parking requirements and architectural styles.

- A key component will be the compliance / enforcement of new (re)development. This could be addressed through the issuance of *Development Certificates* for any building, group of buildings joined by party walls, or structure to be located, constructed, or enlarged within the Military Highway Corridor. This implementation/enforcement mechanism provides for rigorous architectural and/or design overview for any development project within the corridor. Submission of an application on a form or forms provided by the Zoning Administrator shall be required for all development proposals within the Military Highway Corridor District. Section 7 of the *Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District* provides detailed information on the establishment of a Commercial Overlay Zoning District for the Military Highway Corridor.
- **Regulatory Incentives.** Some developers cite length of time and uncertainty in the permit process as primary barriers to development. The permit review process plays a large role in both the time and level of certainty in getting development approval. A powerful incentive would be to facilitate the permit process for projects along the Military Highway Corridor that meet the corridor's overall goals and types of uses desired. Modifying the City's development review program to give priority to development projects located along the corridor that address the desired uses can be an important incentive for developers who are often sensitive to the length and time it takes to navigate through development reviews and approval for complex, mixed use projects. Potential strategies to streamline development review and add certainty to the development process as new investors seek sites in the corridor include:
 - **Establish a "One Stop" Center for Development Applications.** Providing a centralized center for processing applications along the corridor that meet the City's goals for Military Highway and assigning of one city staff as point person to help navigate a project through the various departments and processes can ensure a timely and expedient development review. A developer may be more inclined or "incentivized" to undertake a project adhering to certain principles if they are aware beforehand that that may qualify for an expedited development review that could save them money and time.
 - **Make Sure The Applicable Regulations Are Organized And Easily Accessible.** Simplifying the process for developers and the community by preparing a packet that contains all the regulations along the corridor can be attractive to developers interested in facilitating more complex mixed-use projects.

- **Review Prior Appeals To Identify Opportunities.** Reviewing appeals or requests for exemptions from regulations can unearth procedural and regulatory opportunities, such as density bonuses, affordable housing options, and special zoning statutes.
- **Allow For Flexibility In The Permit Process.** Some development applicants may favor a speedy, predictable process while others may prefer some flexibility to achieve a less-traditional proposal. There should be the opportunity to choose between a fast-track method that must meet predetermined standards, or perhaps a flexible method with performance criteria and a more interactive review process.
- **Conduct Some Of The Permit Steps In Advance Of The Development Proposals.** Examining specific impact issues in a planning process, such as transportation or utility capacity, can reduce project uncertainty and permit review time for developers. This is especially true if the plan specifically evaluates the impacts and establishes mitigation for the level of development envisioned in the plan.
- **Adoption of Aesthetic Design Concept Plan.** As part of the *Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District*, an Aesthetic Design Concept Plan was prepared which addresses the aesthetic design components for upgrading and improving the image and appearance of the Military Highway Corridor. A key component will be the adoption of the Design Concept Plan by the City of Norfolk and subsequent compliance and enforcement of these design improvements to ensure successful implementation. A key strategy is to dedicate City staff to monitor and frequently access the corridor to ensure that the prioritized design improvements (e.g. signage, landscape, lighting, medians, etc.) are being implemented in a timely manner, coordinated with existing or planned public improvements in the corridor and follow the *Aesthetic Design Concept Plan* recommendations.
- **Facilitate Land Assembly where appropriate.** Provide options that facilitate parceling and land assembly for new (re)development and reinvestment opportunities to accommodate recommended changes in land use configurations. These can include providing finance incentives, streamlining permitting/rezoning, minimum lot size, building community support, serving as a public/private development partner, and providing streetfront and midblock development on multiple sites or combining separately owned parcels to create new development options. The difficulty of land assembly and acquisition in close-in urban communities remains a chief impediment to urban redevelopment. Issues such as high land costs, limited supply, difficult site assembly requirements, long chains of title, unwillingness of property owners to convey/sell their property and the desire of property owners to hold property indefinitely for speculative use hinder opportunities for larger scale site redevelopment.

4.2.3 Marketing and Merchandising

One of the Military Highway's greatest challenges is overcoming a poor image: the public's perception of lower quality retail at selected areas along the corridor and its perception of

crime, which inhibits the corridor's appeal to retain and attract new customers, businesses and developers. While market demographics indicate solid but modest growth in population, households and housing units in the corridor's retail trade area, additional actions need to be undertaken to sustain (and increase) the Military Highway Corridor District's market presence. While there is no organization that markets the entire corridor, the Military Highway Corridor Task Force, Business Association or similar entity could be charged with addressing these issues.

The following steps highlight actions that should be undertaken to address these challenges of attracting higher quality retail and new customers to the corridor in the presence of ever increasing retail competition:

- Develop a unified Marketing Campaign/Strategy to promote development opportunities in the corridor, planned aesthetic design and roadway improvements that would increase the corridor's provider of retail goods and services and help draw new customers to the area.
 - Prepare a Military Highway Business Directory that includes a map and listing of all businesses along the corridor including a description of the unique characteristics and assets the corridor can offer potential visitors. The convenience of nearby roadway and airport access is a good example.
 - Develop a marketing program to promote new high quality, upscale retail and restaurant uses as well as new office and lodging at selected locations. Showcase the corridor's strengths such as its location in the region, proximity to airport, upscale work force and high quality commercial office space (e.g. Lake Wright), and steady job growth.
 - Assess the corridor's current customer base and evaluate the most likely groups of potential customers. It should be determined whether there are customer subsets that can be categorized according to varying tastes, lifestyles, preferences, or buying patterns. Possible untapped market segments should be considered.
 - Identify aspects of retail niches on the corridor that appeal to these customers. Using this information, a marketing strategy should be developed that seeks to target the identified customer groups by communicating to them the benefits of shopping on the Military Highway Corridor. This strategy may include the development and distribution of a corridor logo and slogans, special events, retail and service promotional events, and advertising to target different customer groups.
 - Assist local property and business owners in providing up to date information and assistance regarding the Virginia Department of Transportation's plans to widen Military Highway from Robin Hood Road to Lowery Road.

- Develop an overall advertising and public relations program to promote a positive image for the Military Highway Corridor to attract developers (and retailers) skilled at developing high quality mixed-use projects.
 - Create a branding strategy for the Military Highway Corridor through signs and banners and improved urban design improvements. Branding ensures that the entire concept, design, name and marketing for the corridor are cohesive.
 - Focus on public relations initiatives to counter the perceived crime/safety issues along the corridor. This includes promoting positive media coverage, increased police presence, potential private security coverage and implementing “Ambassador” programs to be the “eyes and ears” on the street.
 - Improve publicizing of financial and zoning tools/incentives available to property and business owners along the corridor and potential developers interested in enhancement/redevelopment of existing properties through direct mail, public web site information and public meetings and/or forums.
- Improve marketing/publicizing of financial and zoning tools/incentives available to property and business owners located in the Military Highway Corridor District interested in enhancement/redevelopment of existing properties.

4.2.4 Development

Suburban strips such as Military Highway have become the main street of retail shopping because of its easy access, high visibility, convenient parking and adaptability to large retail formats. This has helped the Military Highway Corridor become one of the region’s most active retail corridors. However, an aging building supply, increased competition, and several vacant and underutilized commercial sites along the corridor presents challenges to the future economic success of this vital corridor. Furthermore, the continuing evolution of the retail product from traditional strip shopping centers and enclosed malls and changing demographics are altering the retail landscape to new, high quality, mixed use, pedestrian-friendly centers. To stay competitive and attract high quality retailers, developers and property / business owners have to adapt to this changing marketplace.

In addition to encouraging existing property and business owners to renovate and improve their properties, another important component – and one that has the potential to play an important role in catalyzing additional reinvestment along the corridor and adapt to this changing retail environment – is providing opportunities for enhancement and redevelopment of selected strategic, underutilized areas along the corridor. These keystone opportunity sites, or demonstration projects, can provide a standard for high quality that the corridor should strive for in terms of development and can set the tone for further reinvestment in the corridor.

Based on an analysis of corridor development patterns, potential opportunity sites and interviews with property and business owners, we have identified two areas as potential opportunity sites. These are areas that, over the long run, can facilitate further reinvestment along the Military Highway corridor if properly improved and/or redeveloped. These opportunity sites include:

- **Flea Market / Automotive Site** – This 5.5-acre site is located along the east side of Military Highway between Robin Hood Road and Azalea Garden Road adjacent to Norfolk International Airport. This site, which comprises six different properties, is currently under one owner and comprises a flea market and several automotive related uses. The property/business owner has indicated an interest to redevelop the site. This site, along with the Norfolk Airport Authority-owned 10.5-acre site nearby (at the intersection of Robin Hood Road and Miller Store Road) currently used primarily as a parking lot presents a major opportunity to undertake a catalytic redevelopment project.
- **Best Square Site** – This 12.5-acre site is located on the west side of Military Highway just north of the Interstate 264 interchange includes a 173,000 square foot strip shopping center. This underutilized shopping center enjoys an excellent location with regional transportation access yet is hindered by high retail vacancy and poor site access. There is a near term opportunity to improve site access and modest improvements and a potential longer-term opportunity for site redevelopment working with the property owner.

As part of the Economic Development Plan as part of this *Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District*, Section 4.3 (Airport-North Segment) and Section 4.4 (Crossroads Segment) outline a potential redevelopment and infrastructure program and phasing strategy for these opportunity sites based on current market conditions, the adoption of a Zoning Overlay District and implementation of aesthetic design standards.

Other corridor-wide development strategies include:

- **Facilitate public/private partnerships for high quality development.** Public/private partnerships are the backbone of most successful high quality projects. To ensure that the development goals of the *Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District* are met and that relevant high quality development projects move expeditiously towards implementation, a process for coordination between the City and development/business community is critical. This partnership needs to be established before the physical planning begins and to ensure that the plans are truly compatible with the desired corridor development. The following are specific roles that public/private partnerships can undertake in the context of implementing high quality development along the Military Highway Corridor:
 - **Market the Military Highway Corridor for Development.** Prepare a marketing strategy that "sells" development opportunities at selected sites to the variety of players that make up the development community, including developers, property owners, bankers, and others.

- **Formulate Plans.** Identify potential development opportunities, such as infill development, that are supportive of the vision for the longer term enhancement and success of the corridor.
 - **Provide Capital Improvements to Enhance Physical Environment and Improved Transportation Access.** Coordinate with City and CIP to prioritize necessary infrastructure and facility improvements and ensure that they adhere to corridor-supportive design principles.
 - **Formulate a Land Acquisition Strategy For Development.** Assist the local development community with identifying potential land acquisitions, including packaging, securing, and assembling land for development.
 - **Prepare Development Agreements / MOUs.** Identify and enter into agreements (memoranda of understanding) between the City and local organizations/developers to undertake public/private development opportunities at selected locations.
- **Integrate public facilities into the corridor's redevelopment strategy.** Public facilities can facilitate the leverage of private investment on surrounding sites or within the site as part of a mixed use development to help create a focus for the community and provide a destination for visitors and residents for non-retail activities. With a limited number of public facilities along the corridor, the Military Highway Task Force should explore the possibility of citing new public facilities such as a regional library, community center and 24-hour health care center along the corridor.

4.2.3 Financial / Infrastructure

Financing strategies should focus on maximizing private sector investment and providing public sector support where appropriate. The initial phase of this implementation plan will require initial public sector support (e.g. City, Commonwealth) funding to start or “seed” reinvestment in the corridor through investment in organizational structures, marketing and infrastructure improvements. Capital improvements represent a significant action that the public sector can undertake to facilitate redevelopment and reinvestment of the Military Highway Corridor. These include long-term capital investments and immediate streetscape and aesthetic design improvements that can help improve the quality and appearance of the corridor and the standard of development occurring there. These public investments can set the tone for matching private investment and increases in property values throughout the corridor. These improvements include road beautification, landscaping, signage, underground utilities, enhanced street lighting, and attention to water, sewer, and drainage issues.

These upfront public investments should, over time, create significant spin-off/leverage and matching funds by attracting private sector investments. The approach is to seek funding from a variety of sources to help set the stage for major private sector reinvestment within the Military Highway Corridor District.

The following summarizes additional potential financial / funding strategies that can be utilized in the reinvestment of the Military Highway Corridor.

- **Incorporate Prioritized Capital Improvements and Aesthetic Design Components Recommendations in City's Capital Improvement Plan.** Currently, City funding for capital and aesthetic design improvements along the Military Highway Corridor is limited. Before private capital will come to an area, public improvements are often needed to improve the safety, appearance, or function of an area. These investments also demonstrate a public commitment to an area and can signal increased investments over time, which can be a positive sign to the development community. Including a modest amount of funding for selected improvements (e.g. landscaping, lighting, signage, banners, medians, gateway improvements, new traffic signals) in the CIP in the near term can help "jump start" corridor revitalization and show the private sector that the public sector is invested in improving the Military Highway Corridor.

Examples of public sector investment along the Military Highway Corridor include: signage, gateway improvements, medians, placing certain utilities underground, and location of public facilities (libraries, community center, etc.). Adoption of a priority-based Capital Improvement and Aesthetic Design Component policy (e.g. See Section 7.3 Aesthetic Priorities) with focused infrastructure investments and incentives for the Military Highway Corridor should be pursued. This includes designation of Military Highway as a "priority area" for receipt of infrastructure funding which acts as an incentive to attract market capital.

- **Expand Small Area Commercial Façade and Aesthetic Improvement Program to include Military Highway Corridor.** Currently, the City, together with the Norfolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority, has formed partnerships with various business associations to encourage the exterior aesthetic improvement of commercial properties in certain areas of the city such as Riverview, 35th Street, Little Creek, Five Points and Fairmount Park. With the development of a potential business entity to guide future growth along the Military Highway Corridor, the City could examine potential inclusion of the Military Highway Corridor in this program to assist local establishments with improving their properties.
- **Urban Public-Private Partnership Redevelopment Fund.** To promote urban revitalization, Virginia General Assembly created the Urban Public-Private Partnership Redevelopment Fund in 2000. Administered by the Department of Housing and Community Development, the fund is designed to help local governments finance redevelopment of building sites, including costs for assembling, planning, clearing and remediation of sites to private developers for redevelopment. The fund was created to address the serious problem of a lack of developable land in urban areas of the Commonwealth and the high cost of redeveloping such land.
- **Provide Incentives.** Provide incentives for small retail centers and strips to physically upgrade their facilities that have proven market feasibility. Priority should be given to property owners/businesses that improve their mix of goods and services or reuse

commercial space for another appropriate use, such as high quality retail and restaurants. Create an “incentives expert” for developers and property/business owners to market and facilitate (re)development within the corridor.

4.3 Airport-North Segment

The Airport-North Segment of the Military Highway Corridor District is a four-mile section extending from Lansdale Circle (Princess Anne Road/Northampton Boulevard) in the south to Little Creek Road in the north. Norfolk International Airport is located immediately to the east of this segment between Norview Avenue and Robin Hood Road (both access points to the Airport).

The use of land within this segment is consistent with the original development patterns of the corridor (including service stations, automotive sales and repair, and selected retail and service establishments) along with new development including high quality office parks (e.g. Lake Wright Executive Center) and lodging facilities. The northern portion of this segment (primarily extending from Norview Avenue) is comprised of several large scale automotive dealerships on the east side with a large section of residentially zoned property on the western side (primarily multi-family).

The primary economic development strategies within the Airport-North Segment is to facilitate the “highest and best” use through redevelopment of underutilized properties and the implementation of demonstration projects to catalyze reinvestment in this important corridor, increase synergy with Norfolk International Airport and encouraging the growth of a retail/hotel/office cluster.

The following summarizes the economic development strategies that should be undertaken for this portion of the Military Highway Corridor.

Regulatory

- **Utilize Overlay District zoning/land use regulations to facilitate “higher” and “better” use** of underutilized and unsightly properties along this portion of the corridor. This Zoning Overlay will provide the regulatory framework to facilitate private developers in implementing the public’s strategy for the corridor. These include development standards that deal with architectural quality, building uses, amounts, heights, setbacks, and signage that are crucial to the overall health of the corridor.
- **Implement the recommended priority Aesthetic Design improvements** to provide identity, improve attractiveness and facilitate improved access along the corridor including the I-64 interchange, Robin Hood Road, Norview Avenue, and Princess Anne Road/Northampton Boulevard intersection. Note that the widening of the segment between Lansdale and Robin Hood Road is in the current VDOT improvement program (see page II-6).

Marketing

- **Market opportunities for new business location/investment** (seeking high quality Class A office space) to Airport/Lake Wright node. This area could serve as a high quality office space node for the City of Norfolk for companies seeking regional transportation access and adjacency to the airport. Companies could include professional services firms, defense contractors, technology companies and others.
- **Work with local developers and the private sector community** to identify potential sites/land for high quality Class A office space, including a potential Class A office park around the Military Highway / Northampton Boulevard area. Other potential uses include medical related office space.
- **Work with VDOT to conduct public outreach** to inform property and business owners regarding the future plan to widen Military Highway from Robin Hood Road to Lowery Road so they can plan accordingly.

Development

- **Encourage concentrated high-quality office/hotel development around the Airport / Lake Wright node.** Work with the private sector businesses and developers to facilitate the location of new high quality, Class A office development and lodging facilities in the vicinity of Norfolk International Airport and Lake Wright Executive Center.
- **Encourage public/private partnerships.** Focus on resolving land assembly issues, ensuring the sites are development-ready, easing the entitlement process, contributing land, and funding infrastructure costs for high quality development opportunities.
- **Enhance synergy with Norfolk International Airport.** As part of the Airport master planning process, the City of Norfolk should work with the Norfolk Airport Authority (NAA) regarding the NAA-owned Airport employee parking lot and adjacent parcels located at the intersections of Robin Hood Road, Miller Store Road, and Military Highway, including potential commercial development. This site is an important gateway to the City for the travelers to the region.
- **Use opportunity sites to build “critical mass”.** The redevelopment of underutilized sites such as the Flea Market/Automotive site described in the following section presents an opportunity to catalyze redevelopment of this important area along the corridor. This could lead to a phased reinvestment program to transform this long underutilized area into a vibrant commercial node.

Financial / Infrastructure

- **Enhance Corridor "Gateways" such as Azalea Garden Road, I-64, Norview Avenue, and Robin Hood Road.** This includes the development of special gateway treatments for unique facilities such as Norfolk International Airport at Norview Avenue and Robin Hood Road and the Norfolk Botanical Gardens at Azalea Garden Road. Special gateway treatment can include markers, landscaping, banners/poles, flower accents, etc.

- **Investigate potential roadway improvements** to facilitate access to the Lake Wright Executive Center such as providing an on-ramp to provide access to east bound I-64 and making Northampton Boulevard a cloverleaf exchange at Military Highway.

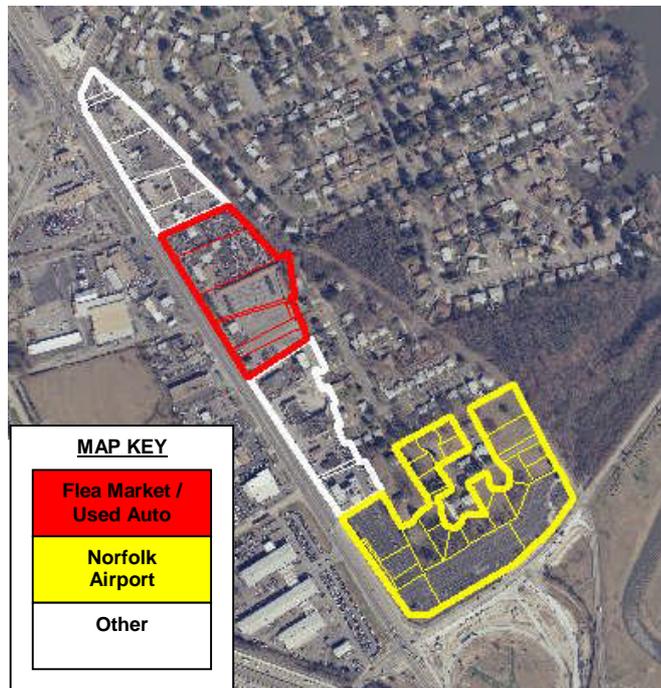
4.3.1 Opportunity Site

Based on the economic and market analysis, site reconnaissance and interviews with selected business and property owners, government officials and other key stakeholders, BBP Associates has identified concentrated locations or key opportunity areas for redevelopment and reinvestment along the Military Highway Corridor. This includes an analysis of development patterns and underutilized properties along the corridor that, over time, could serve as potential redevelopment sites to catalyze reinvestment along the corridor.

One of the key opportunity sites is the area along the east side of Military Highway between Robin Hood Road and Azalea Garden Road adjacent to Norfolk International Airport. This portion of the corridor is a collection of properties that has been characterized by unsightly and underutilized with a particular focus on the flea market site and adjacent automobile uses. The flea market/automobile site is a 5.5-acre site made up of six different properties (see Figure 4.2, highlighted in red). These properties are currently under single ownership, which presents an opportunity to undertake selected redevelopment. The other major property owner within this portion of the corridor is the Norfolk Airport Authority which owns approximately 10.5 acres at the intersection of Robin Hood Road and Miller Store Road. The NAA property consists of a surface parking lot (used as employee and overflow parking) and several vacant parcels. The remaining properties are owned by several different owners and comprise auto related uses and retail services.

Figure 4.2. Military Highway Corridor District Opportunity Project Site

The flea market/automobile site is one of the largest sites owned by one property owner within this portion of the Military Highway Corridor. Discussions with the property owner indicate that he has expressed an interest to redevelop his property at some point. The property owner has no current plans for the type or amount of redevelopment they would like to have on their site and is open to suggestions for the type of development that could take place on their site, such as retail, hospitality, office, etc., and are potentially interested in working with the



City in such a redevelopment. **A ready and willing land owner, a site of sufficient size with good visibility, and good market conditions presents a major opportunity to undertake a high quality redevelopment that can be a catalyst for revitalization and reinvestment within the Military Highway Corridor District and can serve as a model demonstration project.**

BBP Associates has prepared a potential development program for this site, which is based on current real estate market conditions, interviews with the property owner and consistency with land use/zoning guidelines as part of the proposed Zoning Overlay District (see Figure 4.3). The development program is a proposed mixed use office/hotel/retail development on the 5.5-acre site. We have prepared a development program at two development densities – 0.5 FAR (Floor Area Ratio) for a total of up to 120,000 square feet of development and 1.0 FAR for a total of up to 240,000 square feet of development. Increasing the FAR to 1.0 would allow for a greater amount of development on site, including additional office and retail and a larger hotel.

Figure 4.3. Military Highway Corridor District Opportunity Site Potential Development Program			
Site Size	5.5 acres (240,922 SF)		
FAR		0.5	1.0
Gross Floor Area		120,000 SF	240,000 SF
Uses	Office/business services	50,000 SF (3-story with ground floor retail)	100,000 SF (5-story with ground floor retail)
	Hotel (full service)	50,000 SF (100 rooms, 3-4 story)	100,000 SF (200 rooms, 5-6 story)
	Retail (includes restaurant)	20,000 SF	40,000 SF
Parking	Office/business services	200 (4/1,000 SF)	400
	Hotel (full service)	94 (1.25/room, 75% occupancy)	188
	Retail (with restaurant)	140 (7/1,000 SF)	280
	Shared Parking Reduction (office/hotel)	40% of hotel shared with office	40% of hotel shared with office
	Total Number of Parking Spaces (SF)	396 spaces (138,600 SF) (2-deck parking structure)	792 spaces (277,200 SF) (4 deck parking structure)

The preliminary layout includes multi-story buildings (office and a hotel) with open space and parking (structure parking and surface parking). For a density (FAR) of 0.5, the potential development program could include a 50,000 square foot, three-story Class A office building (ground floor retail with two stories of office above); a 100-room, 3-4 story hotel; and 20,000 square feet of retail. A portion of this retail could be located on the ground floor of the office building with the remaining located on pad sites. Retail uses could include high quality restaurants, community-serving retail and business related services, such as a bank. Potential office users could include government contractors, professional business services firms, Airport-related tenants or other types of companies seeking high quality office space with excellent transportation access (highway, airport). The hotel could be a high quality, full service hotel with meeting space and a restaurant. Parking for this development would be provided on-site with a 2-deck structured parking facility (approximately 400 spaces) that would allow for shared parking between the office and hotel uses and additional surface parking. Approximately one acre of this site (representing 20% of the total site) could be reserved for open space and buffer the commercial and residential uses on the rear site of the site adjacent to Miller Store Road.

Increasing the site density to 1.0 would double the amount of the development that could be located on site to up to 240,000 square feet. This could include a 100,000 square foot, five-story office building (ground floor retail with four stories of office above); a 200-room, 5-6 story hotel; and 40,000 square feet of retail. Parking would be provided with the same footprint but would be twice as tall (4-deck facility, approximately 800 spaces) with additional surface parking. Figure 4-4 presents a preliminary massing diagram for the Flea Market / Automotive site based on a FAR of 0.5 and 1.0 (the development footprint would be the same for both levels of density only differing in the height of the buildings).

The redevelopment of this site could catalyze additional reinvestment at adjacent properties within this area, such as the Norfolk Airport Authority parcels located at the intersection of Military Highway, Robin Hood Road and Miller Store Road (See Figure 4.2 above, highlighted in yellow).

Currently, the Airport is undergoing a *Master Plan Update* for Norfolk International Airport which will be used to support growth and guide development to meet existing and future needs of Airport users for the next 20 years. As part of this Master Plan Update, the Airport will be considering the future role of the current Airport employee parking lot (and adjacent parcels in the vicinity of the parking lot owned by NAA), including potential commercial development. Furthermore, this Master Plan Update will be addressing the potential widening and straightening of Robin Hood Road which would enable Robin Hood Road to serve as a more effective entrance to the Airport terminal area.

An opportunity exists for the City of Norfolk to work with the Norfolk Airport Authority to evaluate potential redevelopment of the NAA parcels to a high quality development that could serve as an important gateway to the Airport. For example, a recently released Economic Impact Study shows that Norfolk International Airport's overall economic impact on the region has nearly doubled during the past seven years, soaring from \$795 million in 1997 to \$1.36 billion in 2004, making it a vital economic engine to the community.



**MILITARY
HIGHWAY**
PLAN

URS **BBP**
Associates



0 100 Feet



Site Data

Site Area = 241,000 SF (5.5 Acres)
 Gross Building Area = 120,000 SF
 FAR = 0.5
 Total Parking = 396 Spaces
 (174 Surface Lots + 222 Structured)

Figure 4.4

**Flea Market / Automotive Site
Development Concept A**

Demonstration Project

September 18, 2006

As the Airport continues to serve as a gateway for visitors and travelers to Hampton Roads and with increased air traffic, facilitating the redevelopment of this site into a high quality, mixed use development will go a long way in helping to make the Military Highway/Robin Hood Road intersection more of a place/destination and a more attractive “gateway” to the Airport.

This type of key opportunity site redevelopment can minimize the gap between planning for revitalization and actual implementation which can help change the perception and image of the area. The early success of a public/private development project such as this will show the corridor that the public sector is effective at improving and enhancing commercial development opportunities along the Military Highway Corridor.

Role of Public Sector in Demonstration Project	Action
Development Planning & Approvals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Initiate discussions with property owner about potential redevelopment of site ▪ Outline possible public/private joint development arrangements ▪ Assist property owner / developer in determining approximate type/mix of development and ensure that project meets overall corridor goals and objectives ▪ Define goals/objectives of Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District to property owner / developer and public sector’s potential role in redevelopment (e.g. infrastructure, parking) ▪ Involve Military Highway Corridor District Task Force or other similar entity in initial discussions ▪ Facilitate development approval/permitting ▪ Determine public/private sector roles
Permitting/Development Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Expedite development approval process for project that adheres to design standards and other corridor regulations ▪ Support increased densities where appropriate
Financing/Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Small Area Commercial Façade and Aesthetic Improvement Program or similar program ▪ Urban Public-Private Partnership Redevelopment Fund ▪ Performance-based Grants or other public sector financial incentives
Infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Possible sharing of infrastructure, streetscape, parking, access, open space, etc.

This near term redevelopment project is a significant opportunity for the City of Norfolk to work with the property owner on a high quality, mixed use development that can create

momentum for the reinvestment at this area along the corridor. **Every effort should be undertaken by the public sector within the next year to initiate discussions with the property owner and to work with them on identify public/private joint venture arrangements, potential developers, development planning, permitting/development approval, financing/funding and incentives that meet the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District, the community, the public and the private sector.**

As this redevelopment opportunity begins to take shape over the next few years, the public sector should continue to maintain dialogue and publicize other redevelopment opportunities along the corridor.

4.4 Crossroads Segment

The Crossroads Segment is a three mile section of the Military Highway Corridor that extends from the Interstate 264 interchange in the south to the interchange with Interstate 64 in the north. This segment of the corridor is the retail core of Military Highway primarily comprised of large scale, big box and regional shopping center retail (e.g. JANAF Shopping Center, The Gallery at Military Circle, Best Square, Wal-Mart and Broad Creek Shopping Center), automobile dealerships (e.g. Green Gifford Nissan), automotive repair and several lodging facilities.

The primary economic development strategy for this Subarea focuses on reinforcing and reinvigorating the retail core of the Military Highway Corridor, capitalizing on infill and redevelopment opportunities, marketing the area for high quality and upscale retail and restaurant uses and improving the safety and attractiveness of this portion of the corridor.

The following summarizes the economic development strategies that should be undertaken for this portion of the Military Highway Corridor.

Organizational

- **Undertake public relations initiatives to counter the perceived crime/safety issues** along the corridor. This includes promoting positive media coverage, increased police presence, potential private security coverage and implementing “Ambassador” programs to be the “eyes and ears” on the street.

Marketing

- **Develop a marketing program** that showcases the community’s desire for high quality, upscale retail and restaurant uses, such as a large bookstore (e.g. Barnes and Noble, Borders) and other big box retail (e.g. Bed Bath & Beyond, Linens-n-Things) currently not present along the corridor.

- **Development outreach program** for property owners to facilitate business and site reinvestment, particularly for “out-of-town” property owners to improve their relationship with the community.

Development

- **Encourage public/private partnerships** focusing on resolving land assembly issues, ensuring the sites are development-ready, easing the entitlement process, contributing land, and funding infrastructure costs.
- **Facilitate enhancement and longer-term phased redevelopment of opportunity site** to transform underutilized area into a vibrant commercial center. Underutilized retail centers such as Best Square and The Dump have excellent location along the corridor and have the potential to evolve into high quality retail destinations.

Financial / Infrastructure

- **Improve the attractiveness of the area** with enhanced greenery, landscaping, lighting and other aesthetic design improvements. This includes the implementation of banners and markers to give identify to this retail node.
- **Investigate roadway improvements to improve access** to key opportunity sites such as the Best Square site. Improved access will help maximize the business and development opportunities at the site, including a higher level of retail tenancy.
- **Facilitate development of new bus transfer station** at Military Circle Mall along Poplar Hall Drive and Ring Road. This station will provide enhanced access to public transportation system. Explore potential linkages to planned Military Highway LRT station south of Interstate 264 interchange.

4.4.1 Opportunity Site

One site that has been identified by stakeholders as an underutilized retail site is Best Square. Constructed in 1985, Best Square is a 173,000 square foot strip shopping center located on a 12.5-acre site on the west side of Military Highway just north of the Interstate 264 intersection. While this site enjoys an excellent location with regional transportation access and is located adjacent to several big box retailers and a regional mall, for many years, the shopping center has carried the highest retail vacancy in the corridor. For example, the center has yet to fill the old Phar-Mor space (37,000) after the tenant vacated several years ago.

The shopping center has struggled to find the right merchandising mix to improve its position as a retail center. Currently, Best Square is anchored by RoomStore, a furniture retailer, and includes several other smaller business services and specialty retail shops. Other issues identified by key stakeholders include poor access that encumbers access to the site.

While Best Square has struggled to attract quality retailers to its site in recent years, there have been some positive signs lately. Altschul’s, a clothing retailer that has been in Norfolk since the late 1800s, has recently leased 13,000 square feet adjacent to the Room Store, moving from Granby Street to Best Square. Furthermore, the property owner is currently

seeking a new retail tenant for the old Phar-Mor space that has been vacant for several years. They are currently in discussions with a bargain outlet store will either occupy this space or another location on Military Highway. In addition, the owner is seeking a destination retailer for the Best Square site, such as a Bass or Gander Mountain Outdoors store, that would occupy a significant amount of space at the retail center.

Based on discussions with the property owner and other stakeholders, market conditions and identified site opportunities, issues and constraints, the near term strategy should focus on maximizing the retail tenancy of the center with access and site enhancements as appropriate. In the longer-term there may be an opportunity for the public sector to work with the property owner to investigate site redevelopment to a new, enhanced, high quality retail / mixed use format that could include uses such as retail, residential, lodging, office or entertainment.

The following summarizes the near-term and potential longer-term economic development strategies for the Best Square site.

Near-Term

- **Strategic marketing of site to facilitate securing a destination retailer and improving retail tenancy.** This could include a higher level of marketing by the Norfolk Visitors and Convention Bureau to promote Military Highway as a regional retail destination. Additionally, the property owner and the public sector should work together to outline potential public sector assistance (e.g. tax incentives) that could be utilized to secure a destination-type retailer.
- **Facilitate “upscaling” and attractiveness of site with façade improvements and urban design improvements.** As new tenants are secured, the property owner should work with the City of Norfolk to explore public sector assistance to create a more attractive retail center. This could include improvements such as landscaping, improved lighting, signage and façades.
- **Investigate feasibility of transportation improvements to improve access and ease navigation to site.** Current access to the site is hindered and poorly sighted. The property owner should work with organizational entity (e.g. Military Highway Task Force) that is promoting the corridor to explore alternative site access improvements to facilitate more direct access to site.
- **Define character of future retail users.** This includes exploration by the property owner as to the merchandise mix that the retail center should focus on (e.g. value-oriented retail center or more upscale retail center).

As development pressures increase and land values rise along suburban strips such as Military Highway, the character of strips should densify and diversify and mixed use development could become an essential part of this change. For example, retailers are increasingly considering mixed use environments as alternatives to conventional shopping centers. Well known retailers such as Pottery Barn, Restoration Hardware and the Gap seek

out such locations. Best Square occupies a strategic position along Military Highway serving as the gateway to the retail core from the south and could serve as an ideal location for a high quality mixed use development given the site's size.

Long-Term

- **Work with the property owner to explore potential redevelopment of site.** The Best Square site is ideally situated along the corridor within the JANAF/The Gallery at Military Circle retail node. As today's most desired retail formats have evolved from the traditional strip shopping centers to more of a mixed use/lifestyle center, the property owner should work with the City of Norfolk to explore integration of an enhanced retail format for the site. The site's existing size of approximately 12.5 acres would allow for a variety of high quality uses such as mixed use, retail, lodging, multi-family residential, office and entertainment.
- **Apply the Zoning Overlay District.** The Zoning Overlay District would provide the development standards and regulatory guidelines to ensure that new (re)development and reuse is high quality and is in line with the overall revitalization goals of the corridor. This includes standards related to building use characteristics, facades, setbacks.

4.5 River Segment

The River Segment is a one mile section of the Military Highway Corridor that is bordered by the Eastern Branch of the Elizabeth River (Virginia Beach border) to the south and by the Interstate 264 interchange to the north. Land uses within this subarea comprise commercial (e.g. Riverside Corporate Center) and multi-family residential on the western side of Military Highway and industrial and residential (e.g. large apartment complex) uses on the east side of the highway. This segment also incorporates the site of a planned Light Rail Transit Station adjacent to Riverside Corporate Center on the southwest quadrant of the Military Highway/Interstate 264 intersection.

The primary economic development strategy for this segment focuses on facilitating the creation of a Transit-Oriented Development node with a mix of high quality office, medical-related, and residential uses.

Regulatory

Regulatory actions include implementing the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Zoning Ordinance at Military Highway Light Rail Transit Station. Currently under consideration by the City Council and Planning Commission, the intent of the TOD Zoning Ordinance is to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation by ensuring compact development of those lands surrounding light rail transit (LRT) stations once the light rail is in operation.

The Military Highway LRT Station is located within the proposed TOD-2 (Suburban) zoning classification. These TOD regulations serve to concentrate employment and residential

activity, blend land uses, and enhance the urban design around those areas. More specifically, the TOD Overlay District is intended to:

- *Provide the concentrated employment and residential activities* necessary to support high capacity transit;
- *Create rail-linked mixed use environments* conducive to walking, bicycling, and transit commuting and non-commuting trips; and
- *Promote walkability, social interaction, and safety* through the use of urban design features.

The TOD Zoning Overlay District would have precedence over the City's existing zoning regulations and proposed Corridor District Overlay Zoning. The TOD Zoning Overlay would provide regulations guiding new development within the Military Highway station area including: building facades and architectural styles, building orientation and building setbacks.

Furthermore, the TOD Zoning Overlay District would provide architectural design guidelines and mechanisms for implementation/enforcement of these guidelines. For example, all new development or redevelopment within the station area would require approval of a *TOD Development Certificate* that is based on following Principles of Transit Oriented Development. These TOD principles have been prepared by Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) and are designed to provide direction for the development and redevelopment around the proposed transit stations and focus on land use, mobility, and urban design issues.

These principles include:

- **Mixed and Concentrated Land Use** – Locate within easy walking distance of the transit station a diverse mixture of complementary uses that are well-integrated, promote balanced levels of transit ridership throughout the day, promote pedestrian activity and reduce dependence on the automobile
- **Transit-Supportive Densities** – Encourage densities of housing and employment that will provide a larger transit customer base, justifying improved transit service in both day and evening hours. Improved transit service, in turn, will attract additional riders and stimulate new investment in transit corridor
- **Appropriate built form** – Building orientation, design and location can encourage walking and biking and establish the transit station area as a welcoming environment. Context-sensitive design can make higher densities compatible with existing neighborhoods and acceptable to residents
- **Supportive Access Patterns** – Create or foster circulation patterns that form a convenient, safe and accessible network for all types of transportation, connecting surrounding areas to the transit station.
- **Parking** – Provide adequate, preferably structured, parking facilities that do not dominate the transit station area or consume large amounts of land

- **Efficient and Comfortable Transit Connections** – Transitions between LRT and feeder bus routes or other forms of transit should be designed for direct and convenient pedestrian access with a high level of comfort and convenience
- **Enhanced Corridor Environment** – Create an environment in the station area that is attractive, safe and orderly. Organize public and private spaces to encourage pedestrian activity and incorporate design elements that increase public comfort and security

This implementation/enforcement mechanism provides for rigorous architectural and/or design overview for any development project within a TOD Overlay District.

Marketing

- **Market selected sites as Transit-Oriented Development opportunities** in cooperation with the private sector development community.

Development

Development activities within this Subarea should focus on creating a Transit-Oriented Development node at the Military Highway LRT station. While most of the Military Highway is automotive oriented and low-density, promoting a higher density, mixed use node in a pedestrian friendly environment can facilitate increased transit usage and reduced automobile dependence.

Specific strategies include:

- **Create a Transit Oriented Development plan** for the area surrounding the light-rail station. Plan and zone for higher densities to facilitate vertical development and to achieve pedestrian concentration that create lively, safe, attractive and entertaining streetscape.
- **Encourage mixed-use development** at appropriate locations with recognition of the importance of transformation to a pedestrian-friendly environment through strategic investments in infrastructure and public/private partnerships.

Financial / Infrastructure

- **Coordinate with Hampton Roads Transit** to link the planned LRT station to the public transportation network within the Corridor.
- **Implement the recommended aesthetic design improvements to provide Gateway signage** (e.g. banner poles) at the intersection with I-64 to enhance important Corridor entrance.

Appendix to Section 4.0 Economic Development Plan

Innovative Partnerships In Transportation And Economic Development

THE BALTIMORE WASHINGTON INTERNATIONAL (AIRPORT) BUSINESS PARTNERSHIP, INC., ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY, MARYLAND

The BWI Business Partnership, Inc., a non-profit economic development and transportation management association, for the area in and around BWI Airport in Maryland. Founded in 1985, the mission of the Partnership is to improve the transportation infrastructure through sound commuter alternatives and to attract corporate investment and relocation to *The BWI Business District* while retaining the area's existing business base and continuing economic growth. The Partnership conducts a variety of activities in economic development and transportation management including:

- **Economic Development** – The BWI Business Partnership collaborates with public and private economic development entities in the area to market the region as "*The BWI Business District -- Where Opportunity Takes Off.*" The Partnership conducts market research; provides networking opportunities for area businesses, state and local officials, and key individuals at BWI Airport; prospect targeting in conjunction with state and local economic development officials and business leaders for specific industry niches and business prospects; and business retention to assure that its members – employers located in The BWI Business District – current needs are being met and to help them deal with local, state, and federal laws and regulations.
- **Transportation Management** – The Partnership performs research to monitor employment, development, and demographic trends that affect future transportation needs; facilitates the ongoing transportation planning process in collaboration with state and local officials, addressing traffic management and highway funding issues; traffic management by promote ridesharing, flextime, preferential parking, telecommuting, and other traffic management techniques; and advocacy by consulting with state, county, and local governments on transportation-related programs and improvements.

Business Improvement Districts**COLISEUM CENTRAL BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT (BID),
HAMPTON, VIRGINIA**

Coliseum Central is a Business Improvement District formed in 1996 established to maintain the Coliseum District as the dominant commercial center on the Peninsula and one of the major commercial centers in Hampton Roads. Coliseum Central is a 1,800-acre area on the northern edge of the city of Hampton and is bisected by Interstate 64.

Coliseum Central is a strip commercial district containing more than 3.3 million square feet of commercial and institutional space and more than 700 businesses. Included within the boundaries of the BID are the Hampton Coliseum arena, the Coliseum Mall, three major strip shopping centers, scattered freestanding retail and entertainment facilities, ten hotels, and a new hospital and medical office complex. It is surrounded primarily by residential development.

Formation

The BID was formed in 1999 when a group of property owners became convinced that the area needed to undergo renewal and changes in function to meet the needs of a changing marketplace. Changing demographics, strong new competition, and a lack of opportunities in the area was causing Coliseum Central to lose its market share with retail sales down to approximately \$130 per square foot, well below expectations of performance (\$230 per square foot). This group of property owners formed a working partnership with the city of Hampton to establish a BID that could raise funds for implementing needed projects, including security improvements, upgrading the area's appearance and marketing the area.

The property owners and the City went through an eight month process for establishing a common vision for the area, held meetings, met with other key property and business owners and conducted surveys to obtain input from district users and property and business owners. This resulted in a master plan that would be developed by the new BID. A steering committee was formed to create a BID business plan that proposed funding by a supplemental tax of \$0.04 per \$100 of assessed value on commercial properties within the district and supplemental funding from the City's general revenues in an amount equal to the amount raised through the BID assessment.

After receiving approval from more than 70 percent of the assessed valuation in the district, the BID was approved in 1996 for a term of five years and the steering committee became its board of directors. The BID was renewed in 2001 for another five year term with an increase in the assessment to \$0.07 per \$100 of assessed valuation and continued supplemental funding from the city.

Programs

Coliseum Central offers a variety of programs and services to the businesses located in the District. These programs include the following:

- **Security Partnership** – BID members and the city pool their resources to hire extra duty police officers to provide enhanced patrols of properties of program participants.
- **Physical Improvement Program** – BID offers matching grants of up to 50 percent to businesses that make façade, landscaping or other improvements to their property.
- **Advertising Matching Grants** – BID offers matching grants of up to 50 percent to businesses that advertise or promote their business in a way that identifies being part of the Coliseum Central District.
- **Banner Installation** – BID installed banners along Mercury Boulevard and Coliseum Drive to create a sense of identity and give the district a more festive atmosphere.
- **Quarterly Newsletter** – BID provides a newsletter Central Coliseum to keep shoppers, employees, and business and community leaders informed.
- **Video about Coliseum Central** – For use in presentation to community groups, prospective developers, and other groups important to the BID.
- **Business Roundtable Meetings** – To encourage cooperative ventures, networking and more productive relationships within the district.

Security was an important issue for the new BID. They implemented two programs – Business Watch and CPTED (crime prevention through environmental design) to address this issue. Business Watch is a crime prevention program that enlists the active participation of merchants in partnership with the Hampton Police Department. CPTED involves instruction on how the physical environment can be changed to reduce crime and fear of crime.

Level of Success

With the development of the Master Plan, the Coliseum Central BID has successfully leveraged its small initial financial outlay into millions of dollars of improvements. Completed streetscape improvements along Mercury Boulevard and Coliseum Drive have help to redefine the district's physical image. Retail sales have also increased after years of steadily decreasing sales before the BID's establishment. The district is attracting new investment and shoppers with several large development projects representing hundreds of millions of dollars recently completed such as the Power Plant, a retail/entertainment complex and new hotel and convention center and a new hospital. Furthermore, existing retailers such as Barnes & Noble, Kmart, Home Depot, Target, Wal-Mart and Lowe's have invested millions of more dollars in stores in the district.

Coliseum Central BID Revenues

Coliseum Central BID Revenues, 1999 – 2003						
	BID Assessment	City Contribution	Interest Income	Trolley	Event Sponsorships	Total
1999	\$166,040	\$156,300	\$3,471	\$12,381		\$338,192
2000	\$166,570	\$173,053	\$4,644	\$3,000		\$347,267
2001	\$171,034	\$153,557	\$8,306			\$332,897
2002	\$308,520	\$315,375	\$5,179		\$3,000	\$632,074
2003	\$302,728	\$297,715	\$3,266		\$8,000	\$611,709

Source: Coliseum Central Business Improvement District; Urban Land Institute Business Improvement Districts

Lessons Learned

A key challenge for the BID was the revitalization and reinvention of obsolete, highway-oriented strip shopping centers. Lessons learned since the formation of the BID include:

- The formation of a BID and a productive partnership with the City was the best type of organization and financial structure to remain vital for the long haul after decades of gradual decline
- Anything less than a BID would have not been the right organization to undertake the programs and services for the property and business owners. With BIDs, programs have a steady and predictable funding source and property and investors can count on the completion of multi-year improvement projects.
- The development of a Master Plan enabled the fledgling BID to focus its efforts and gain essential state and local government support. The BID has achieved relatively small successes that have strengthened its resolve to pursue more challenging goals such as improving highway access, upgrading landscaping and creating public spaces.

SUNRISE MARKETPLACE – A SUBURBAN COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR BID**Overview**

The Sunrise MarketPlace BID services a suburban commercial corridor in Citrus Heights, California. Sunrise MarketPlace BID district is anchored by a regional shopping center, Sunrise Mall, the largest shopping destination in the area and includes a number of neighborhood shopping centers. The district's retail centers total nearly 2 million square feet of leasable space. Freestanding businesses, including financial institutions, dining spots, and recreation venue, office buildings complete the district's business mix.



Source: City of Citrus Heights website

Formation

The BID was formed in late 1999 as an alliance between business and property owners and the city to bolster the long-term economic viability of the vital commercial corridor. The mission of the BID is to grow the district's customer base and thereby increase business sales and the number of establishments. Its strategy is to position itself as the premier business district in the area, an exciting social hub and a community gathering place.

Structure

The Sunrise MarketPlace Business Improvement District represents approximately 70 property owners as well as over 500 businesses. The BID is funded through a mandatory assessment on property that generates \$500,000 annually. Properties zoned for retail and shopping uses are assessed \$0.04 per square foot of land per year and properties zoned for office, business and professional uses are assessed \$0.02 per square foot of land per year.

The district attracts \$500 million in sales revenues, thereby generating more than 50 percent of the total sales tax contribution totaling 40 percent of the city's general fund revenue.

Programs

The BID pursues a number of marketing and business development goals with a focus on image building and destination marketing activities including:

- Create a distinct identity for the district
- Raise awareness of businesses in the district
- Enhance the image of the district
- Maintain market share
- Make shopping in the district a preferred choice of local and regional shoppers
- Leverage BID assessments to generate public sector investment and private investment
- Collaborate with brokers and lease management companies
- Work with city on making doing business in Citrus Heights easier

To meet these goals the BID provides the following services and programs:

- **Advertising and Web Site** – public awareness activities include radio, cable television and print advertising. The district also offers a cost-effective co-op participatory advertising program for local businesses. The web site includes a searchable database of all district businesses.
- **Special Events** – special events promote the district as a community-gathering place. Thousands of people have attended district events, which include an annual Fourth of July celebration and several holiday events. The district is now proud to also host the World Team Tennis champions, the Sacramento Capitals. Events are held with the goal of creating awareness for businesses and generating media coverage.
- **Sunrise MarketPlace Map Guide** – directory includes a complete listing including phone numbers of all Sunrise MarketPlace businesses.
- **Public Relations and News Media Coverage** – With consistent, united voice promoting and representing the district, Sunrise MarketPlace has received a significant amount of coverage in the local news media. The BID has generated more than 38 million free media impressions.
- **Banner and Holiday Decor Program** – The district has implemented a banner program to physically define the area as a destination and to promote brand awareness and special seasons, such as Fourth of July and the holidays. The district also installs custom-designed holiday decorations.
- **Advocacy** – serves as an advocate, representing district businesses with the city of Citrus Heights, keeping the city focused on maintaining the physical environment, including road repair and code enforcement.

Results

Since its formation, the Sunrise MarketPlace BID has been successful in promoting the district and its economic viability. Major property owners in the district believe that the BID has helped increase business in the district and prevented loss of retail business to competition in the suburbs. BID members have found that the organization gives them the ability to collaborate with the city, meet with peers and work on mutually beneficial goals.

This has resulted in the one of the primary benefits of the BID – the partnership that was created between the city and the property owners. The partnership gave district stakeholders a strong voice in city investments in physical improvements that have resulted in \$2.5 million for improvements that included the installation of 30-foot high gateway icons, colorful signage at entry points, new landscaping, lighting, brick planters and the use of specialty stamped asphalt. Furthermore a recently completed joint city/BID wayfinding project was undertaken that included a business directory, directional signage, themed street signs and new banners.

This increased public investment and the BID's commitment to the area facilitated millions of dollars of new construction, renovations and marketing undertaken by district property owners, including a \$10 million renovation by Sunrise Mall. A number of office buildings and neighborhood shopping centers have also completed extensive improvements to their buildings.

Community Development Authorities**PENINSULA TOWN CENTER COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY (CDA), HAMPTON, VIRGINIA**

In March 2006, the Hampton City Council established the Peninsula Town Center Community Development Authority in order to provide public improvements as part of a \$207 million redevelopment of the Coliseum Mall. The existing mall building would be torn down and replaced with a town center concept complete with city streets and blocks of smaller buildings with apartments and offices above the retail space. Sidewalks would line the stores and restaurants.



Source: Steiner & Associates, <http://www.steiner.com>

Formation

The 33-year old Coliseum Mall is the city's largest taxpayer, but has struggled in recent years to adapt to a changing retail environment. With more than 40 percent of the space vacant, sales at the mall dropped \$28 million over a five year span to \$112 million in 2004.

The formation of a CDA is allowed under the Water and Sewer Authority Act in 1993-1997 of the Code of Virginia. The Peninsula Town Center CDA was formed as part of a plan to reverse declining sales and make it more competitive with new retail shopping centers on the Peninsula and in South Hampton Roads. The formation of the CDA essentially allows the city and the owners of the mall, Mall Properties, to levy additional taxes on real estate and sales strictly within the 76-acre mall property. That money would allow the CDA pay for \$65.5 million in infrastructure improvements including new streets, parking decks, utilities, and public spaces, while Mall Properties would privately finance the remaining \$142 million.

Structure

The CDA is structured as a not-for-profit development corporation comprised of five board members. The establishment of the CDA allows it to issue bonds for the public costs and oversee the special taxes. The CDA would levy an extra real estate tax of \$0.25 per \$100 of assessed value on all properties in the 76-acre mall and an additional 0.5 percent on gross sales at the mall.

One of the proposed benefits of the formation of the CDA is that the bond debt won't technically count against the city because the CDA is a separate entity. However Wall Street lenders view it as overlapping debt when ranking the city's financial health.

As part of the CDA's articles of incorporation, the policy adopted by the City Council requires that the CDA and the City enter into a Memorandum of Understanding to the City specifying a plan of finance which will include: a development plan of the district, proposed district projects and improvements, including estimated costs; a preliminary feasibility study; a schedule of proposed revenue bond financing together with their purpose and estimated amounts; a plan of finance structure, including the sources of repayment of the revenue bonds; and a methodology for the determination of the special assessment in the district.

Program

The project will involve the demolition of the entire mall, with the exception of the Hecht's store, which will receive a new exterior.

Phase I will include demolition of a small portion of the mall and construction of two buildings to relocate existing tenants, including JC Penney and another large anchor tenant. A 1,300-space, three-level parking garage will also be built as part of the first phase.

Phase II will include demolition of the remaining portion of the mall and the construction of the balance of the town center, including a new department store, space for more than 65 retail and dining tenants, and a second parking structure.

When completed, Peninsula Town Center will encompass nearly one million square feet of mixed uses, consisting of three department stores as well as specialty retailers situated around a town square and a public park with a fountain. There will be nearly 500,000 square feet of in-line and large-format retail, dining and entertainment. Upper story uses include a cinema, boutique office space, and modern residential living.

Schedule

Work will begin on the redevelopment in summer 2006 although the mall won't be razed until sometime in 2007. The revamped mall is scheduled to be open in the fall of 2008, but that schedule is tentative.

5.0 AESTHETIC DESIGN CONCEPT PLAN

This chapter addresses the aesthetic design components for upgrading and improving the image and appearance of the Military Highway Corridor. It includes an Overview, Inventory/Assessment, and Recommendations regarding proposed aesthetic urban design and landscaping treatments and improvements. A list of aesthetic treatment priorities, along with approximate cost ranges, is included in Chapter 7.0, Implementation Plan.

5.1 Overview

Highway corridors vary greatly in their function and purpose, as well as in their appearance and visual appeal. The functional requirements can range from primarily a through traffic channeling responsibility, such as is the case with most interstate highways, to strictly providing service and access to local businesses and residential neighborhoods, such as is the case with many local business corridors. Military Highway falls somewhere in-between these two extremes with a need to carry a considerable amount of through traffic, while, at the same time, the need to provide access to the various uses along the Corridor. In terms of aesthetic design and appearance, the Military Highway Corridor also falls somewhere in the middle of the spectrum of aesthetic treatments with some of the newer reconstructed areas having a nice clean and orderly appearance, while some older areas of the corridor show signs of obsolescence and deterioration.

Typically, a number of elements make up the physical environment of roadway corridors including: the developments that are located along the corridors and their landscaping treatments; the roadway configuration, infrastructure elements, and pavement sections; the roadway urban design and landscaping treatments; and miscellaneous items, such as traffic control devices and signs. Although all of these various components contribute to the overall aesthetic character, or to the lack of it, not all of them may lend themselves to be upgraded, or the improvements may not be feasible due to extremely high costs. A key determinant in what improvements can be reasonably expected in any one roadway corridor is the overall character and nature of the corridor and the community's ability to finance and implement the improvements.

In newly developing corridors, a variety of special treatments and features can be incorporated in the developments that adjoin the corridors and in the roadway improvements. This can be accomplished by the use of development guidelines and incentives and through forethought and special effort in the implementation of the urban infrastructure components. However, in older, developed corridors this is a lot more difficult, since improvements have to be implemented either through insertion of the recommended improvements into the existing environments and urban fabric, through retrofitting or replacement of existing elements, or through redevelopment of older or obsolescent areas and properties.

The Military Highway Corridor is fully developed and the southerly end has been recently reconstructed. This means that careful consideration needs to be given to what type of enhancements and improvements are truly feasible and practical. In addition, because of the length of the corridor, improvements or enhancements that are applied consistently to the whole corridor may be relatively expensive.

5.2 Inventory/Assessment

Some of the existing conditions in the Military Highway Corridor have already been described in Chapter 2.0, Summary of Existing Conditions. This section focuses on the aesthetic character and overall visual appearance of the Corridor. The aesthetic characters of the existing conditions, along with the aesthetic design recommendations, are illustrated in Figures 5.1 through 5.4.

5.2.1 Overall Corridor Aesthetic Characteristics

The Military Highway Corridor segment in the City of Norfolk extends from Little Creek Road on the north to the Elizabeth River on the south and it includes a relatively large variety of land uses as well as visual environments. The land uses along the Corridor range from single-family residential to regional shopping centers and the roadway character ranges from a five-lane, rural section, in the northerly half, to a six-lane, highway-type section with landscaped medians in the southerly half of the Corridor.

Generally, the Military Highway Corridor, or segments of it, can be described as having the following urban design qualities and characteristics:

- **Lack of Definition and Identity.** There are no features or elements that define or identify the Corridor as a distinct and special place.
- **Lack of Consistency.** There are no urban design or landscaping treatments that are continuous for the whole length of the corridor.
- **Lack of Embellishments.** There are few special features or elements that stand out or provide a sense of character or uniqueness.
- **Inconsistent Streetscape Elements.** The streetscape elements in the Corridor, such as street lights and traffic signals, lack uniformity and consistency in style and color.
- **Sporadic Landscaping Treatments.** Some sections of the Corridor have some very nice landscaping treatments along the edges or in the medians, while others are completely bare and lack any kind of landscaping.
- **Limited Amount of Private Development Enhancements.** Very few of the private developments along the Corridor include any substantial amount of landscaping treatments or other enhancements.
- **Unightly Overhead Utilities.** A few segments of the corridor have an extensive amount of unsightly overhead utility lines.

5.2.2 Detailed Assessment and Evaluation of Corridor

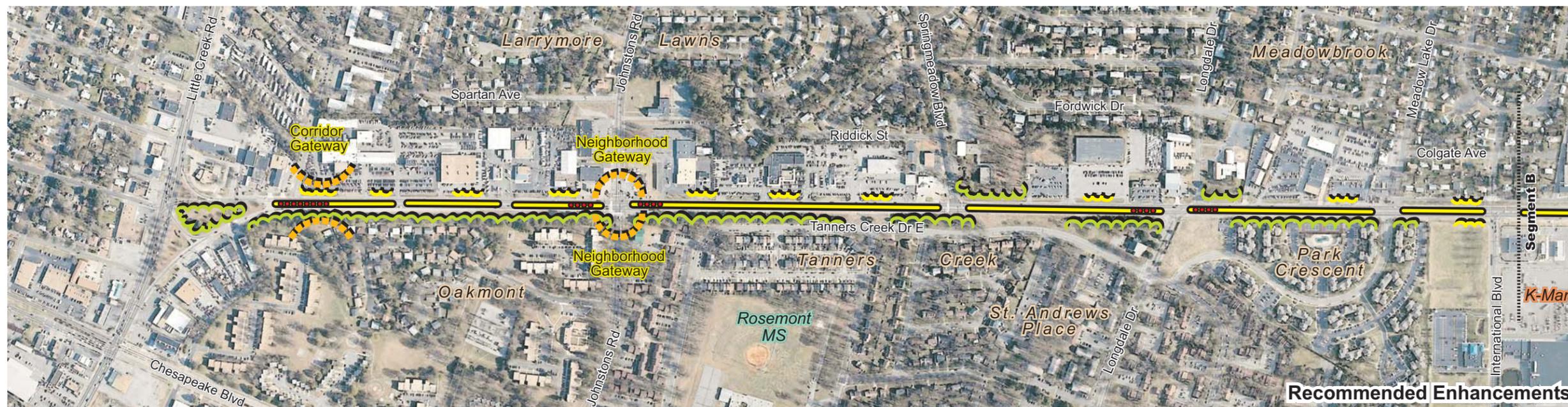
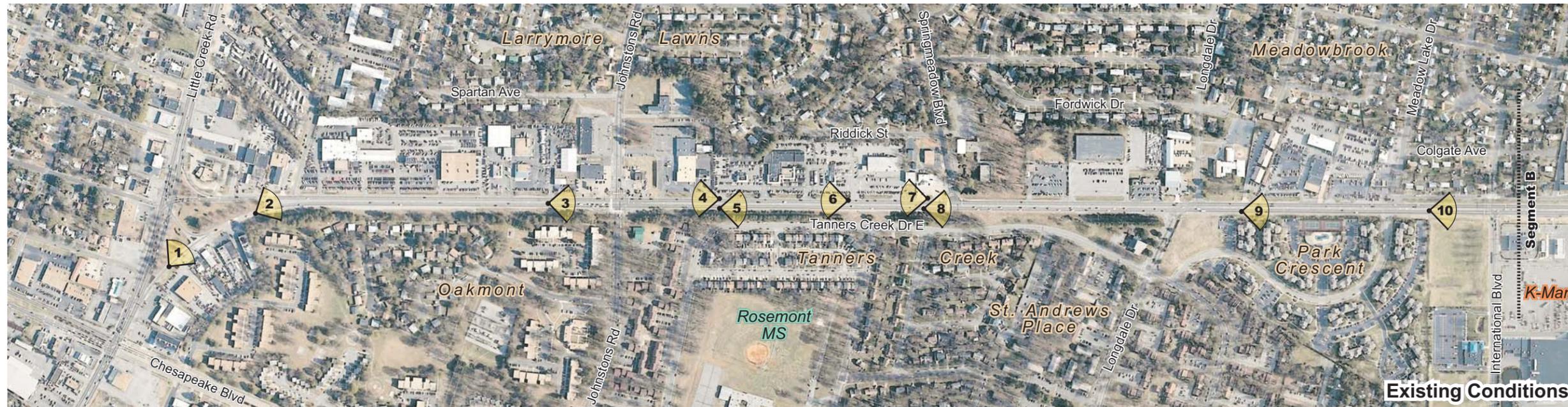
Following is a detailed aesthetic assessment and evaluation of the Military Highway Corridor, starting at Little Creek Road, at the northerly end:

Intersection with Little Creek Road: The intersection at Little Creek Road is the northerly entry to the Military Highway Corridor. There are no signs or markers to designate this gateway. However, the large triangular island in the middle of Military Highway has a very nice stand of mature trees (Figure 5.1, Image 1) that is very distinct and could serve as one of the components of a new gateway for the Corridor.

Figure 5.1

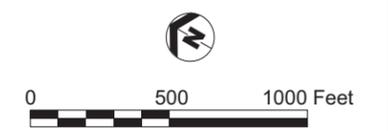
Segment A Aesthetic Design Plan

September 18, 2006



Legend:

-  Existing Conditions Photo Viewpoints
-  Existing Landscaping to be Preserved
-  New Landscaping Clusters
-  Existing Landscaped Medians
-  Proposed Landscaped Medians
-  Groupings of Banner Poles
-  Gateways
-  Potential Redevelopment Areas



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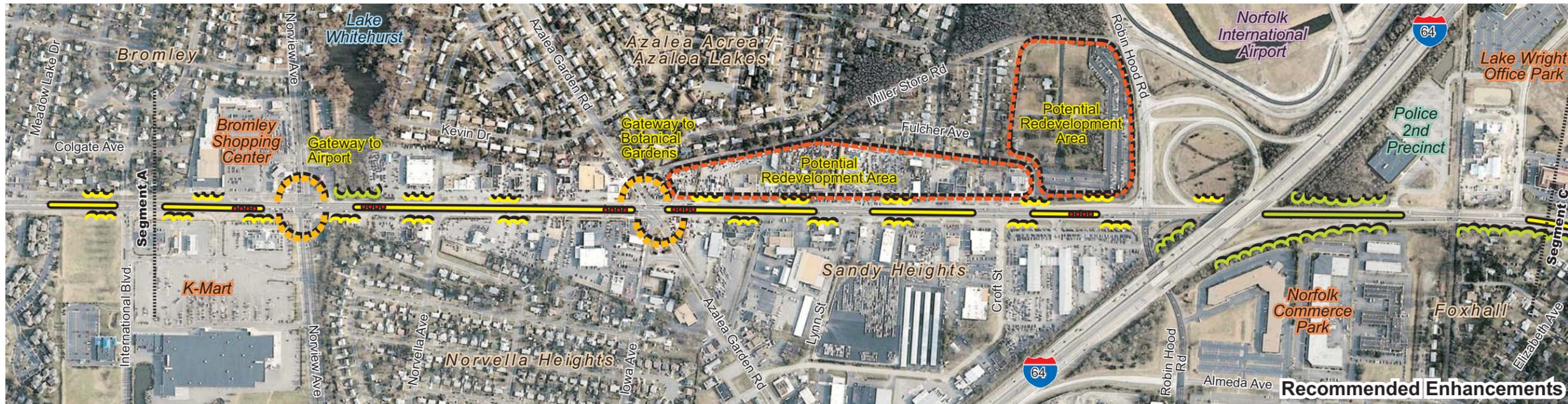
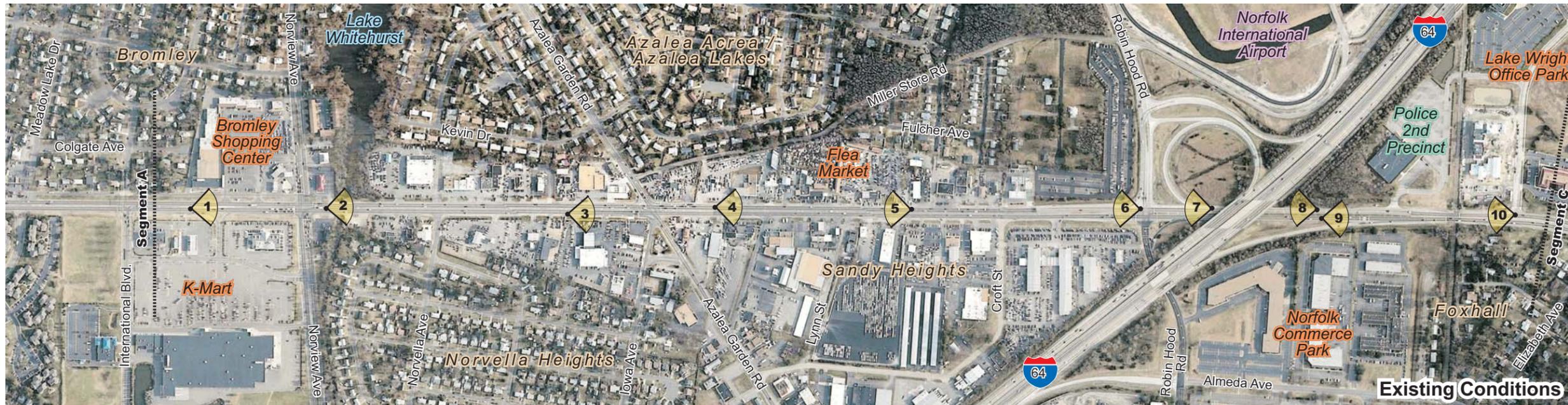
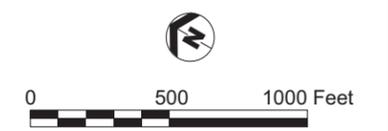


Figure 5.2
Segment B
 Aesthetic Design Plan
 September 18, 2006

- Legend:**
- Existing Conditions Photo Viewpoints
 - Existing Landscaping to be Preserved
 - New Landscaping Clusters
 - Existing Landscaped Medians
 - Proposed Landscaped Medians
 - Groupings of Banner Poles
 - Gateways
 - Potential Redevelopment Areas



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Figure 5.3

Segment C Aesthetic Design Plan

September 18, 2006



- Legend:**
- Existing Conditions Photo Viewpoints
 - Existing Landscaping to be Preserved
 - New Landscaping Clusters
 - Existing Landscaped Medians
 - Proposed Landscaped Medians
 - Groupings of Banner Poles
 - Gateways
 - Potential Redevelopment Areas

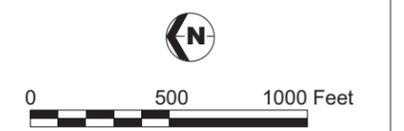


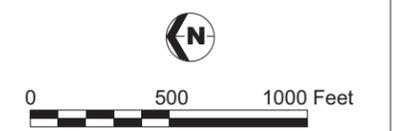
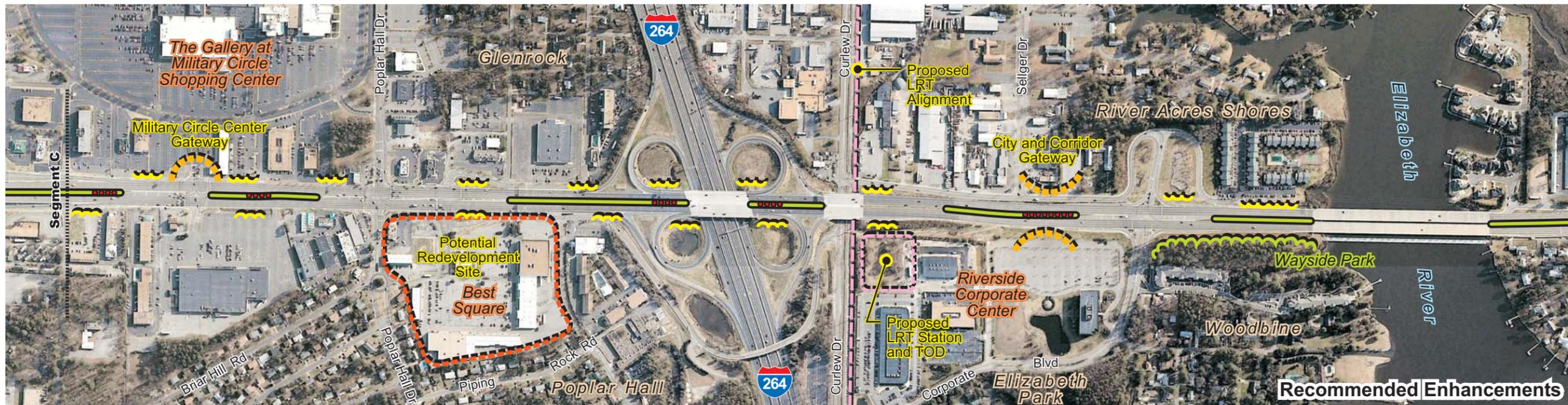
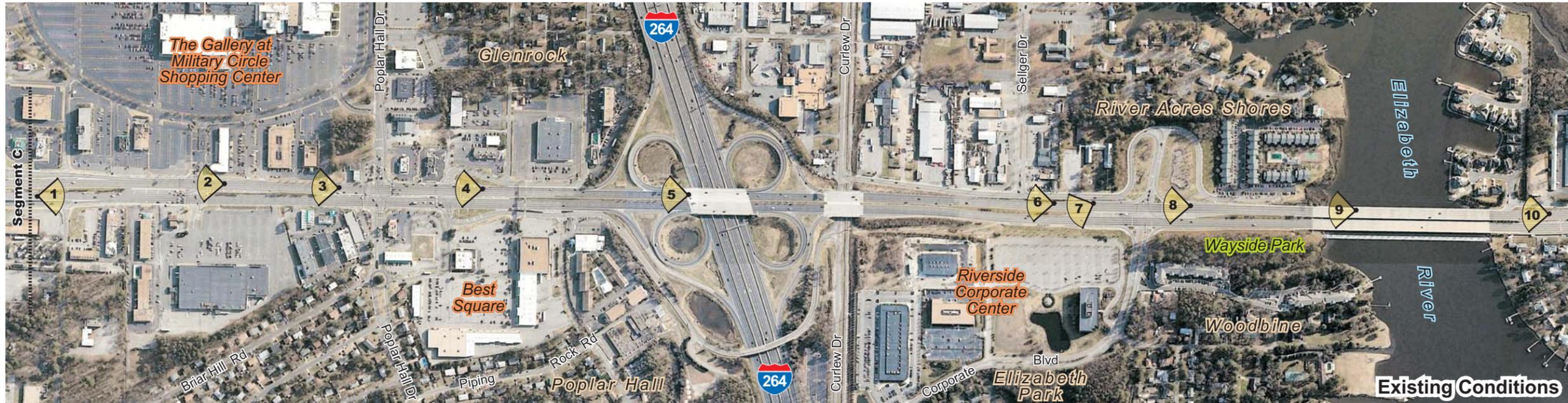
Figure 5.4

Segment D Aesthetic Design Plan

September 18, 2006

Legend:

-  Existing Conditions Photo Viewpoints
-  Existing Landscaping to be Preserved
-  New Landscaping Clusters
-  Existing Landscaped Medians
-  Proposed Landscaped Medians
-  Groupings of Banner Poles
-  Gateways
-  Potential Redevelopment Areas



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Little Creek Road to International Boulevard (Figure 5.1): This segment of the Corridor includes single-family and multi-family developments on the west side of the road and primarily auto dealerships and other businesses on the east side. Key visual features of this segment are:

- **5-Lane, Rural Cross-Section.** The roadway includes 4 traffic lanes with a continuous left-turn lane in the middle and no curbs and gutters.
- **Dense Rows of Trees.** This segment includes a number of very distinct rows and groups of large trees along the west side of the roadway, which provide screening for the adjoining residential developments (Figure 5.1, Images 2 through 9).
- **Auto Dealerships.** The east side of the Corridor is lined with auto dealerships with their highly visible rows of cars and advertising displays, such as the extensive rows of American flags hung from light poles (Figure 5.1, Images 2 through 7). Most of the auto dealerships have very little landscaping treatments or enhancements (Figure 5.1, Images 5 through 7), except in a few isolated cases (Figure 5.1, Image 4).
- **Neighborhood Gateway.** Johnstons Road serves as the access point to the Larrymore Lawns, located on the north side, and Oakmont and Tanners Creek residential neighborhoods, which are located on the south side of the Military Highway Corridor. Major overhead utility lines cross the Military Highway Corridor at this location.

International Boulevard to Robin Hood Road (Figure 5.2): This segment of the Corridor includes a mixture of small and large businesses, car-rental agencies serving the airport, and underutilized land. This segment, especially the portion between Lake Whitehurst and Croft Street, is the most aesthetically distressed area of the whole Corridor and it has the least visual quality. Key visual features of this segment are:

- **5-Lane, Rural Cross-Section.** The roadway includes 4 traffic lanes with a continuous left-turn lane in the middle and no curbs and gutters.
- **Airport Gateway.** Norview Avenue serves as the primary access point to Norfolk International Airport and the Bromley residential neighborhood, which are located north of the Corridor. The intersection includes the Bromley Shopping Center, K-Mart, and various other businesses. A frontage road is located in the NE quadrant. There are no markers or treatments to identify it as the Airport Gateway.
- **Lake Whitehurst.** Immediately south of the Norview Avenue intersection, a drainage channel to Lake Whitehurst crosses the Corridor. It is marked by a large stand of trees on the east side of the roadway (Figure 5.2, Image 2).
- **Norfolk Botanical Gardens Gateway.** Azalea Garden Road serves as the primary access point to the Norfolk Botanical Gardens and the Azalea Acres/Azalea Lakes residential neighborhoods, which are located north of the Corridor. There are no markers or treatments to identify it as the Botanical Gardens Gateway.
- **Driveways and Parking Lots.** The segment between Lake Whitehurst and Croft Street includes a large number of driveways and parking lots that are located immediately adjacent to the roadway (Figure 5.2, Images 2 through 5).

- **Overhead Utility Lines.** Virtually the whole length of this segment of the Corridor includes extensive overhead utility lines on both sides of the roadway (Figure 5.2, Images 1 through 5).
- **Cable-Suspended Traffic Signals.** The Norview Avenue and Azalea Garden Road intersections have cable-suspended traffic signals, which contribute to a cluttered visual appearance.
- **Advertising Signs and Billboards.** This segment of the Corridor includes the most visible and the greatest number of business signs and billboards for off-site advertising (Figure 5.2, Images 2 through 5).
- **Lack of Landscaping.** This segment of the Corridor has the least amount of landscaping and it appears bare and somewhat desolate.
- **Flea Market and NAA Redevelopment Areas.** The area east of Military Highway, between Azalea Garden Road and Robin Hood Road, which includes the Flea Market site and the NAA parcels, consists of a variety of older, obsolescent, and vacant properties. This area is a potential candidate for redevelopment, which would permit the implementation of enhanced urban design, landscaping, and specialty treatments and improvements.

I-64 Interchange (Figure 5.2): The I-64 interchange serves as a primary access point to the Military Highway Corridor and the freeway bridge represents a major landmark in the Corridor (Figure 5.2, Image 8). The interchange area includes a considerable amount of landscaping and landscaped medians (Figure 5.2, Images 8 and 9). In the future, the interchange may be modified to provide a direct ramp connection for northbound Military Highway to eastbound I-64 traffic movements.

I-64 Interchange to Lowery Road (Figure 5.3): This segment has the greatest variety of visual environments in the Corridor, ranging from almost rural to highly developed. It is planned to be widened by VDOT to 8 lanes, with medians and turn lanes, similar to the recently widened Corridor segment south of Lowery Road. Key visual features of this segment are:

- **Lake Wright Office Park Area.** This area includes the new Lake Wright Office Park developments on the east side (Figure 5.3, Image 2) and the Fox Hall single-family residential neighborhood on the west side, which is screened from the roadway by a dense row of trees and landscaping (Figure 5.3, Image 1).
- **Princess Ann Road/Northampton Boulevard Intersection.** This intersection has expansive right-turn lanes, which occupy a large site and create large islands (Figure 5.3, Image 3).
- **Cable-Suspended Traffic Signals.** The Princess Ann Road/Northampton Boulevard intersection has cable-suspended traffic signals (Figure 5.3, Images 1 and 2), which contribute to a cluttered visual appearance.
- **SW Quadrant Redevelopment.** The SW quadrant (Harris Tire) may be redeveloped, presenting opportunities to enhance the visual appearance of the Corridor.

- **Broad Creek Area.** The area where Broad Creek crosses Military Highway is a natural open space and includes a large tree mass adjacent to the roadway (Figure 5.3, Image 4). This area adds variety to the Corridor and should be preserved and reinforced.
- **Broad Creek to Lowery Road.** This segment is flanked by the Norfolk Tech-Voc Center, the Broad Creek Shopping Center, and big-box retail stores with their large parking lots adjacent to Military Highway. It has no distinguishing features and it is devoid of any kind of landscaping treatments (Figure 5.3, Images 5 and 6).

Lowery Road to Elizabeth River (Figures 5.3 and 5.4): This segment of the Corridor has been rebuilt with 8 traffic lanes, turn lanes, and a landscaped median. It includes: two regional shopping centers, Janaf Shopping Center and Military Circle Shopping Center; a number of big-box retailers; smaller businesses; and, south of I-264, a mixture of industrial, office, and residential uses. Two major infrastructure elements in this segment are the bridge overpasses and access ramps over Virginia Beach Boulevard and over I-264/Curlew Drive. Key visual features of this segment are:

- **Landscaped Medians.** Some of the most significant visual elements in this segment are the landscaped medians, which add visual interest and variety (Figure 5.3, Image 10 and Figure 5.4, Images 1, 3, and 5).
- **Janaf Shopping Center.** The Janaf Shopping Center is barely visible from Military Highway, because of the continuous row of outlot commercial buildings along the edge of the highway. The access drive opposite Raby Road serves as the primary entrance to the Janaf Shopping Center and a large sign marks this gateway (Figure 5.3, Image 8), although it is somewhat difficult to read, due to the clutter of multiple business signs in this area.
- **Virginia Beach Boulevard Interchange.** Military Highway passes over Virginia Beach Boulevard on a large bridge structure with extensive access ramps. This is a primary access point to the Corridor from Virginia Beach Boulevard. It also presents expansive views of the surrounding developments (Figure 5.3, Image 10).
- **Military Circle Shopping Center.** The Military Circle Shopping Center, similar to the Janaf Shopping Center, is barely visible from the highway, except for some of the taller buildings, due to the outlot commercial buildings along the highway. The primary access point to the shopping center is marked by only a small sign on the signal cross-arm (Figure 5.4, Image 2).
- **I-264 Interchange and LRT Station.** Military Highway passes over I-264 and the Curlew Drive/railroad corridor on two large bridge structures with extensive access ramps. I-264 is a primary access point to Military Highway from the regional highway network. The bridge area also presents expansive views of the surrounding developments (Figure 5.4, Image 5).

The proposed LRT alignment is located along the south side of Curlew Drive and an LRT station with transit-oriented developments (TOD) is planned to be located in the northeast corner of Riverside Corporate Center. Also, a high-voltage power line crosses the Military Highway Corridor at this location.

- **Southerly Corridor and City Gateway.** The segment south of the I-264/Curlew Drive bridges represents the southerly gateway area to the Military Highway Corridor, as well as to the City of Norfolk. It includes the Riverside Corporate Center, an industrial area, residential uses, and Wayside Park on the west side of the Corridor, adjacent to Elizabeth River. A small City gateway sign is located in the median (Figure 5.4, Image 7), a well-developed screen wall and landscaped edge treatment is located at Sellger Drive (Figure 5.4, Image 6), and a wonderful, large stand of mature trees in Wayside Park marks this southerly entrance to the City (Figure 5.4, Image 9).

5.3 Aesthetic Design Goals

Goals can be very broad and general, or they can be narrow and specific. Webster's Dictionary defines a goal as: "The end toward which effort is directed". Therefore, the goals for the Military Highway Corridor should represent end states or end conditions that the community would like to see occur in the Corridor in the future. Goals are also useful in case the recommended courses of action do not work out and the design direction needs to be reevaluated and redirected in the future. In addition, the goals statements can be useful for communicating, in a concise fashion, the vision for the Corridor to the general public and the stakeholders in the Corridor.

Each goal statement can be used to complete the following sentence: "The Military Highway Corridor will have..." The order of the goal statements is not intended to represent any kind of specific hierarchy or priority. Following is a recommended set of aesthetic design goals for the Military Highway Corridor:

Goal 1: A distinct corridor aesthetic design theme. An aesthetic design theme that provides interest and variety should be developed for the Corridor to give it a distinct and unique look.

Goal 2: A 'green' corridor appearance. The Corridor should have a lush, 'green' appearance. Existing landscaping should be preserved, as much as possible, and it should be supplemented with new landscaping in medians and along the edges of the Corridor.

Goal 3: An urban roadway cross-section throughout the Corridor. Some segments of the Corridor, which currently have a rural cross-section with ditches, should be upgraded to an urban roadway cross-section with curbs and gutters.

Goal 4: Pedestrian/bicyclist circulation system. Although the Military Highway Corridor is not an ideal pedestrian environment, due to the width of the roadway and the amount of traffic it carries, provisions should be made so that pedestrians and bicyclists can circulate along the Corridor, as well as between the residential neighborhoods that adjoin the Corridor and the various uses and developments in the Corridor.

Goal 5: Enhanced and well-maintained public and private properties. The public sector areas and the private sector properties in the Corridor should be enhanced and they should be well-maintained.

Goal 6: A unified, coordinated street furniture system. All street furniture items, such as street lights, traffic signals, and signs, should have a unified, coordinated look.

Goal 7: A minimum amount of overhead utility lines. All existing overhead utility lines along the Corridor, except the high-voltage lines that cross the Corridor, should be relocated to another location or placed underground. No new overhead utility lines should be permitted in the Corridor.

Goal 8: A coordinated sign system. Private business signs should be well-designed and in scale with each respective business facility and off-premise advertising billboards should be prohibited, or kept to a minimum.

5.4 Aesthetic Design Options and Recommendations

This section presents general framework recommendations for upgrading and improving the visual image and appearance of the Military Highway Corridor. It includes: a discussion of each issue; illustrative examples, where appropriate; and the recommendations.

The purpose of this aesthetic design framework is to outline an overall vision for aesthetic treatments in the Military Highway Corridor. It is intended to provide direction for the infrastructure improvements and enhancements over the next 20- to 30-year period; although some of the improvements may be implemented much sooner and some of the implementation may even start immediately.

This section presents the overall intent for aesthetic design in the Corridor. The accompanying figures illustrate the general intent of each of the recommendations. A more detailed action program, which spells out specific improvements, priorities, timeframes, and approximate cost ranges, is included in Chapter 7.

1. Primary Objective – Improve the Image and Appearance of the Military Highway Corridor (Figure 5.5, Upper Half)

The Military Highway Corridor is one of the primary business districts in the City of Norfolk. Parts of it have been reconstructed and improved while others lack improvements and are somewhat deteriorated. In order to provide the appropriate setting for a healthy business climate, the visual appearance of the Military Highway Corridor should be improved and enhanced. While aesthetic design improvements and enhancements, by themselves, can not guarantee economic success, they can contribute to the way that a business district or corridor is perceived by the public and they can set the stage for maintaining and improving the business environment.

Recommendation 1: *The City and the Military Highway business community should improve the image and appearance of the Military Highway Corridor in order to foster and support a healthy business environment.*

2. Overall Design Approach – Simplicity (Figure 5.5, Lower Half)

Military Highway is a major arterial roadway that is primarily traffic oriented and that will be 4 to 8 lanes wide, including turn lanes, with access and egress ramps and major bridge structures. Most of the developments are well set back from the roadway and the Corridor appears wide with extensive vistas. This type of environment does not lend itself to small, detailed urban design features or treatments.

Recommendation 2: *All Urban Design treatments should be simple, bold, and in scale with the character of the Corridor.*

3. Overall Design Approach – Build upon Existing Strengths (Figure 5.6, Upper Half)

Long roadway corridors, typically, are difficult to treat, or the aesthetic design treatments can be very expensive. In order to reduce costs and maximize benefits, the City should build upon existing strengths and reinforce them.

Recommendation 3: *The City should build upon and reinforce existing strengths, such as the existing median treatments in the southern half of the Corridor and the rows and clusters of large mature trees that are located in portions of the Corridor.*

4. Overall Design Approach – Realistic Enhancement Program (Figure 5.6, Lower Half)

Although one can explore various design opportunities and options, one also needs to be realistic about what is feasible and what can be implemented and maintained. This is especially true about roadway corridors that already have been improved and where implementing new features would require reconfiguration or reconstruction of the existing facilities. Since a large portion of the southern half of the Corridor already has undergone reconstruction, no major changes may be feasible for this area.

Recommendation 4: *The design enhancement program for the Corridor should consider creative options, but needs to be realistic and based upon the City's and business community's ability to implement and maintain the enhancements.*

5. Unified Corridor Theme vs. Multiple District Themes (Figure 5.7, Upper Half)

Although the Military Highway Corridor includes a number of sub-areas, it would not strengthen or benefit the aesthetic image of the Corridor to break it up into sub-districts.

Recommendation 5: *In terms of aesthetic design enhancements, the Corridor should be treated as one, unified entity.*

6. Continuity Areas – Medians (Figure 5.7, Lower Half)

In order to strengthen the image of the Corridor as one entity, aesthetic elements or treatments should be provided that are continuous for the whole length of the Corridor. Since much of the Corridor is already built up and since there may be very little opportunity to create a sense of continuity in the developments that adjoin the Corridor, the only options for providing continuity are the medians.

Recommendation 6: *The medians should be made the continuity element that unifies the Corridor and as many landscaped medians as possible should be installed throughout the Corridor.*

The locations of the proposed medians are illustrated in Figures 5.1 through 5.4. A key objective in developing the medians should be to maximize the area that can be landscaped. To accomplish this, as sharp a taper as feasible should be used. Also, in order to maximize landscaping and to provide space for special features, the new medians in the northern part of the Corridor should be made 18 feet wide with the narrower medians adjacent to turn lanes 6 feet wide.



Examples of Existing Conditions

1. Primary Objective – Improve the Image and Appearance of the Military Highway Corridor



Complex Solutions



Simple Solutions

2. Overall Design Approach – Simplicity



Figure 5.5
Recommendations 1 and 2
 Aesthetic Design Plan
 September 18, 2006



Landscaped Medians



Landscaping Clusters or Rows of Trees Along Edges



3. Overall Design Approach – Build upon Existing Strengths



Too Complex and Expensive

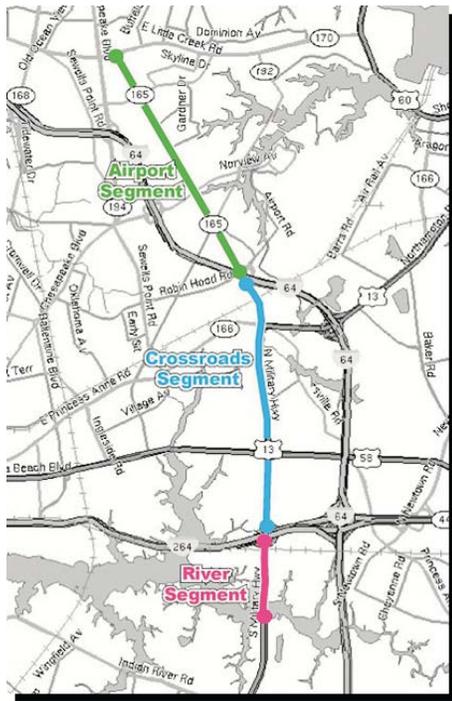


Appropriate Level of Improvements for Long Corridors

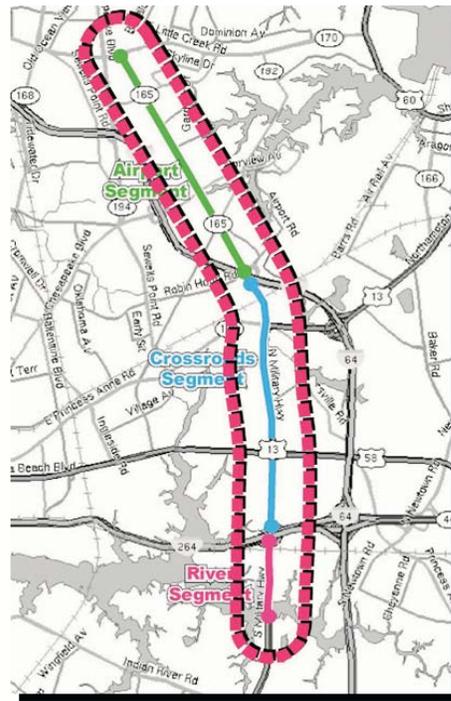
4. Overall Design Approach – Realistic Enhancement Program

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Figure 5.6
Recommendations 3 and 4
Aesthetic Design Plan
September 18, 2006



Multiple Districts



Recommended Unified Corridor

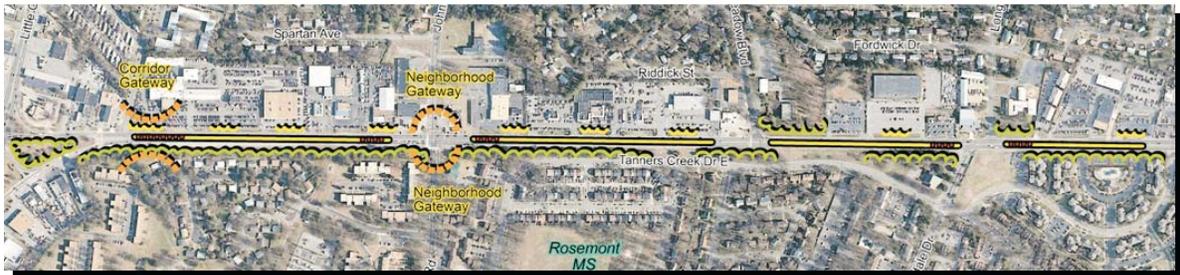
5. Unified Corridor Theme vs. Multiple District Themes



Existing Medians



Short Median Tapers



Example of Proposed Medians

6. Continuity Areas - Medians



Figure 5.7
Recommendations 5 and 6
 Aesthetic Design Plan
 September 18, 2006

7. Continuity Theme Feature (Figure 5.8, Upper Half, and Figure 5.9)

In order to reinforce the image of the Corridor as one entity and to assist in the branding of the Military Highway Corridor as a destination, a logo or symbol should be created for the Corridor.

Recommendation 7: *A symbol or logo, which can be applied as an urban design feature throughout the Corridor, as well as used in promoting and advertising the Corridor, should be created for the Corridor.*

The images in Figure 5.8 provide examples of various types of theme features that have been used to create an identity and image for other corridors and districts. Figure 5.9 illustrates an example of a theme feature, and a variation of it, for the Military Highway Corridor.

Example Concept 1 represents a simple star motif that could be attached to street light and signal poles. Example 2 is the same star with a decorative band. This type of a theme features could be made from painted aluminum blades, similar to highway and roadway signs. Consideration would need to be given to wind loading and special materials may need to be used, such as screen material, to minimize horizontal wind loads.

Overdoing a theme feature can be detrimental, can become boring and could be very expensive. The recommendation would be to apply the theme features periodically, in selected segments of the Corridor, such as at the primary entries, gateways, and adjacent to major, key developments.

8. Additional Landscaping Enhancements (Figure 5.8, Lower Half)

The Corridor currently has a wide variety of landscaping treatments that range from very dense rows or clusters of large trees along the edges of the roadway to nicely landscaped medians, to virtually no landscaping at all in some of the segments. “Greening up” of the Corridor would improve its overall appearance and image.

Although additional landscaping would vastly improve the appearance of the Corridor, it would need to be used judiciously, in order not to block critical views of the adjoining commercial activities.

Recommendation 8: *Additional landscaping treatments should be provided for the Corridor.*

9. Landscaping Emphasis Areas (Figure 5.10, Upper Half)

The areas that the City has the most control over are the medians. Because of this, the medians should become the primary landscaping treatment emphasis areas. However, since landscaping along the edges is also essential for greening up the Corridor, strategies and programs, such as use of landscaping easements on private properties, should be developed to provide additional landscaping on the sides of the Corridor.

Recommendation 9: *The landscaping program should put emphasis in two areas:*

- a. *Extensive landscaping in the medians*
- b. *Clusters of landscaping along the edges to fill in large gaps in landscaping treatments, as development requirements permit.*



**Medallion or Finial
Theme Feature Examples**

7. Continuity Theme Feature (See Next Page for Military Highway Examples)



Existing Edge Landscaping



**Comprehensive Landscaping
Program to 'Green Up' the Corridor**

8. Additional Landscaping Enhancements

		<p>Figure 5.8 Recommendations 7 and 8 Aesthetic Design Plan September 18, 2006</p>
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Existing View of Corridor



**Example Concept 1:
Simple Star Motif**

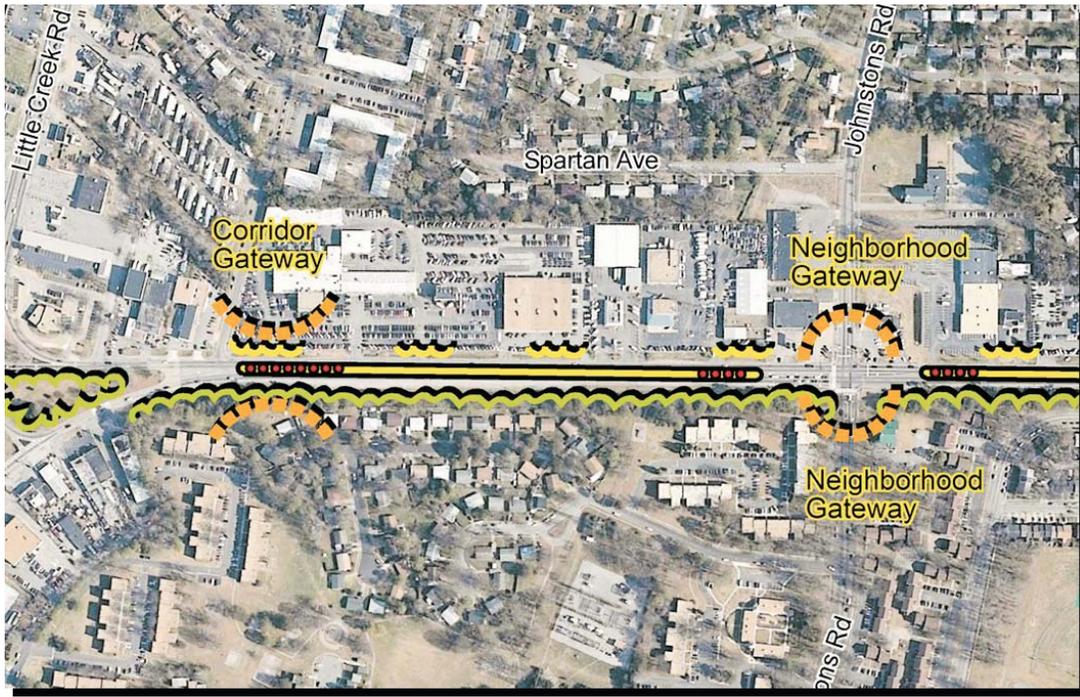


**Example Concept 2:
Star with Decorative Band**



7. Continuity Theme Concept Options

 		<p>Figure 5.9 Recommendation 7 Example Concepts Aesthetic Design Plan September 18, 2006</p>
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Landscaped Medians and Clusters of Landscaping Along the Sides of the Corridor

9. Landscaping Emphasis Areas



Landscaping Theme Examples



Recommended Landscaping Theme: Pruned-Up Pines

10. Landscaping Theme



Figure 5.10
Recommendations 9 and 10
 Aesthetic Design Plan
 September 18, 2006

Figure 5.10 illustrates an example of the landscaping emphasis areas. The locations shown of the landscaping clusters along the edges is for illustrative purposes only and will need to be further evaluated and finalized in future design phases. Figures 5.1 through 5.4 identify the landscaping program for the whole corridor.

Where there is insufficient right-of-way to add landscaping along the edges of the Corridor, programs would need to be worked out with the private property owners to install clusters of landscaping on landscaping easements, or on the private properties.

10. Landscaping Theme (Figure 5.10, Lower Half)

Landscaping treatments, if used in a definitive and distinctive way, can be a very effective means for contributing to the image of an area and in making it more memorable.

The one existing urban design feature that is somewhat unique and that makes the Military Highway Corridor memorable are the pruned up pines in the medians in the southern half of the Corridor. This type of landscaping treatment, if installed periodically throughout the Corridor, could greatly strengthen and unify the image of the Corridor.

Recommendation 10: *A strong landscaping theme, such as the pruned up pines in the medians, should be implemented throughout the whole Corridor.*

For the landscaping along the edges of the Corridor, no specific theme is recommended, since it would be virtually impossible to implement such a theme, due to the many pre-existing conditions. Instead, a diverse mixture of landscaping treatments along the edges could add interest and variety.

11. Landscaping Screens (Figure 5.11)

The area that needs the most improvement are some of the edges of the Corridor that totally lack any kind of landscaping or other urban design treatments. Since it is important to maintain some views of the adjoining businesses, especially of the car dealerships, solid landscape screens may not be desirable. However, low planting beds or shrub massing may be acceptable.

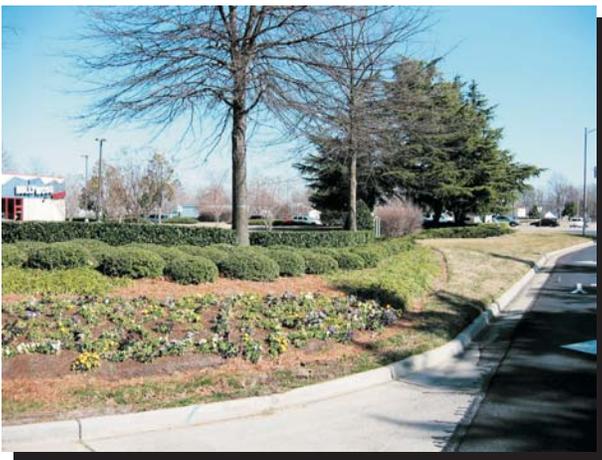
The images in Figure 5.11 provide examples of various types of landscaping and fencing screen installations that would add to the “green” image of the Corridor, without too severely impacting the visibility of the adjoining uses.

Recommendation 11: *Low landscaping screens should be used where large landscaping massing is not desirable.*

12. Landscaping Accents (Figure 5.12, Upper Half)

Special landscaping treatments, such as flowers or ornamental flowering shrubs or trees, can be used to provide interest, variety, and emphasis at special areas or intersections. Since these special treatments require extra care and can be expensive, they may need to be used selectively and sparingly.

Recommendation 12: *Special landscaping treatments should be implemented to provide interest, variety, and emphasis at key locations, such as gateways, in the Corridor.*



Examples of Landscaping Screens

11. Landscaping Screens and Edge Treatments



Figure 5.11
Recommendation 11
 Aesthetic Design Plan
 September 18, 2006



Flower Groupings or Ornamental Shrubs and Trees



12. Landscaping Accents



Existing City Gateway at Airport



Gateway Examples



Existing City Gateway North of Elizabeth River

13. City Gateway

		<p>Figure 5.12 Recommendations 12 and 13 Aesthetic Design Plan September 18, 2006</p>
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13. City Gateway (Figure 5.12, Lower Half)

The Military Highway Corridor serves as a gateway to the City of Norfolk from the south. A relatively small City gateway sign has been installed in the median immediately north of Corporate Boulevard. Since this is a primary entry to the City, as well as the Military Highway Corridor, it warrants a more significant entry statement. This would help strengthening the City's branding program as well as announce the Military Highway Corridor as a special area. The City Gateway should include a larger sign that could possibly be elevated above the median and more substantial landscaping for emphasis.

Recommendation 13: *A larger and more highly visible city gateway statement should be developed in the Military Highway Corridor at the Elizabeth River entry to Norfolk.*

14. Special Gateways (Figure 5.13, Upper Half, and Figure 5.14)

A number of special facilities, districts, and neighborhoods adjoin the Military Highway Corridor. Signs, markers, or gateway monuments on Military Highway would help to promote these facilities, as well as add interest to the Corridor.

Recommendation 14: *Special gateway treatments should be developed for unique facilities, such as the Norfolk International Airport, the Norfolk Botanical Gardens, the residential neighborhoods, and major commercial facilities that adjoin the Corridor.*

The locations of the recommended special gateways are identified in Figures 5.1 through 5.4. Figure 5.13, top half, provides examples of special gateways used for various purposes, such as parks, entertainment areas, and educational institutions.

Figure 5.14 illustrates one potential special gateway configuration for the entry to the Norfolk International Airport at Norview Avenue. The gateway treatment shown includes large pylons and landscaping on the four corners of the intersection and two groups of four banner poles each in the medians on either side of the intersection. In addition, signing would be included on the pylons, on the east side, to direct people to the Airport.

The special gateways throughout the corridor could be designed to look essentially the same, for continuity and a more uniform appearance, or they could be individually designed for each application. In locations where there may not be enough right-of-way on all four corners, the gateway treatments may be installed in only those quadrants that are available. Also, at the Janaf and Military Circle Shopping Centers, the gateway treatments should be installed only on the shopping center side.

15. Corridor Markers (Figure 5.13, Lower Half, and Figure 5.15)

The Military Highway Corridor currently has no features or elements that identify it as a distinct and special place. The only identifying features are regular street signs.

An urban design feature that serves as an identifying marker or monument would greatly help in defining and giving a special identity to the Corridor. The images in the bottom half of Figure 5.13 illustrate examples of various corridor pylons and markers. A feature that could serve this purpose in the Military Highway Corridor is the banner system that the City has developed and implemented in various parts of the City, as shown in Figure 5.15.

The banner system, which consists of groupings of three to eight tall banner poles, with large vertical banners, is a very aesthetically pleasing, distinctive, and highly visible urban design treatment. The program includes City theme banners, as well as custom banners for special districts, such as the ODU campus.

Extending this banner system to the Military Highway Corridor would reinforce the City's branding program, as well as provide a distinctive feature for the Military Highway Corridor. Custom banners could be designed for the Corridor to provide a distinct identity, as well as to announce special events along the Corridor.

Recommendation 15: *A banner program, based upon the existing city program, should be implemented in the Military Highway Corridor to mark corridor entries, as well as special districts or features along or in the vicinity of the Corridor.*

The two small maps in Figure 5.15 illustrate typical banner applications and Figures 5.1 through 5.4 identify all the proposed banner locations. The recommendation is to install the banner poles in groups of four, at the special gateways and major corridor entries, and in groups of eight, at the two major corridor gateways.

In order to create maximum impact at the special gateways, the banner poles should be placed as close as is feasible to the intersections, without interfering with traffic signals and other roadway signs. Therefore, in order to permit the installation of the banner poles close to the intersections, it is recommended that the narrow medians adjacent to turn lanes be at least six feet wide, as was discussed and recommended previously under Item 6.

16. Color Scheme (Figure 5.16, Upper Half)

A special, unified color scheme can contribute greatly to improving the image and appearance of a roadway corridor. For new streetscape elements, such as street lights and signal lights, this adds virtually no extra cost and for existing fixtures this can be a very cost-effective way to improve their appearance. Currently, two colors appear to be predominant – green and white or light grey.

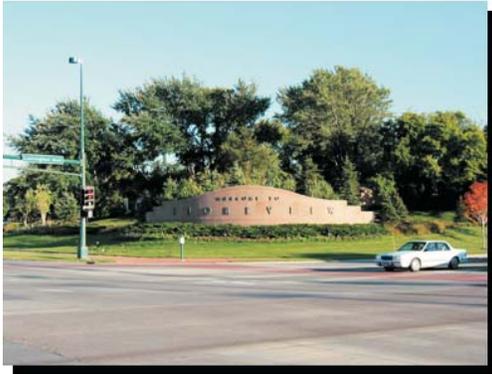
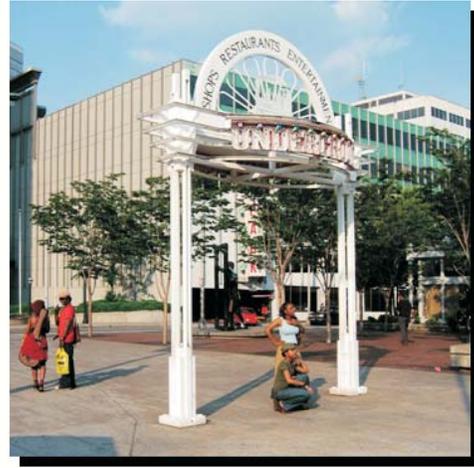
Recommendation 16: *A unified and distinct color scheme should be developed for all the Corridor streetscape fixtures, such as street lights, signals, and sign poles and structures.*

A very dark blue color might be one choice for a Corridor theme color. If a unified color scheme can not be achieved for all the streetscape elements, efforts should be made to paint as many of the elements as is feasible in the same color.

17. Overhead Utility Lines (Figure 5.16, Lower Half)

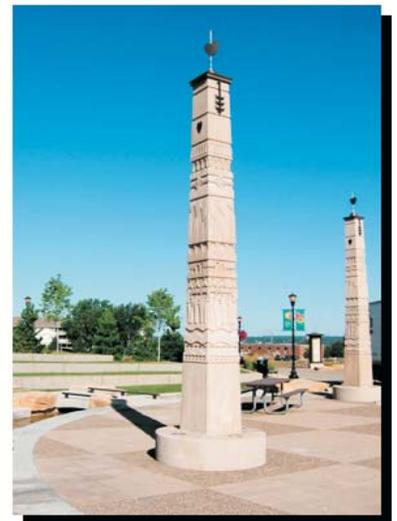
Segments of the Corridor, such as the area between Robin Hood Road and Norview Avenue, have an excessive amount of overhead utility lines that are unsightly and that create visual clutter. Relocating overhead utility lines underground can be very expensive. However, long term, and especially in areas that will be redeveloped, the overhead utilities should be placed underground or relocated to less visible locations.

Recommendation 17: *The overhead utility lines should be placed underground or relocated to less visible locations.*



Examples of Special Gateways

14. Special Gateways

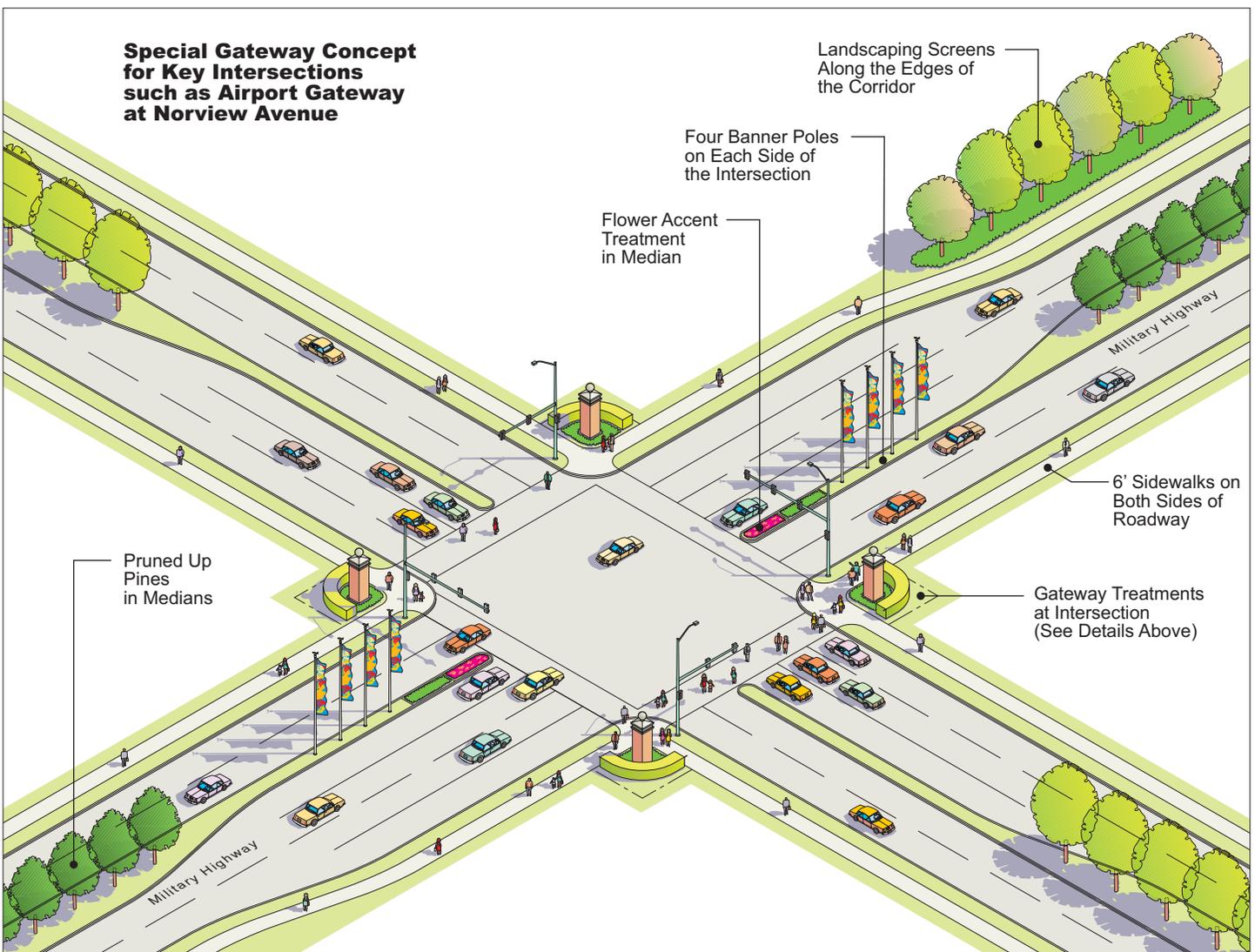
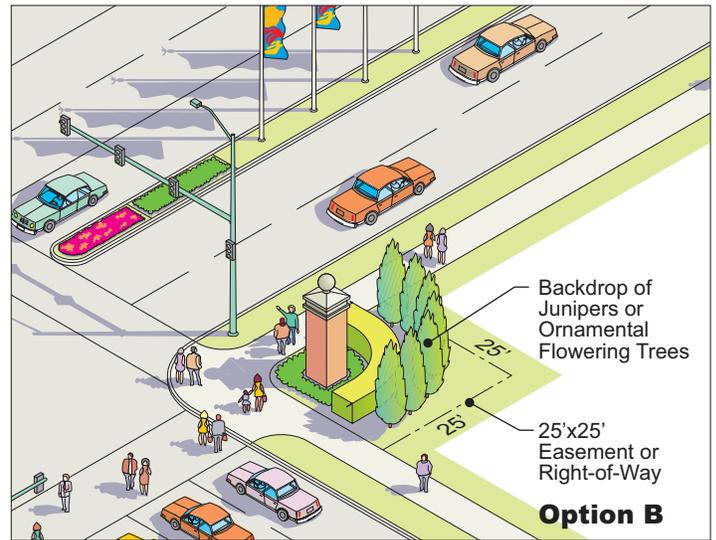
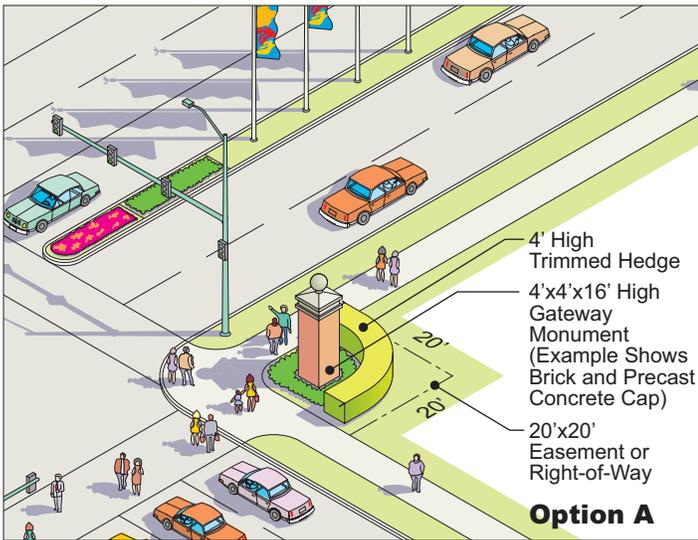


Examples of Corridor Markers

15. Corridor Markers



Figure 5.13
**Recommendations
 14 and 15**
 Aesthetic Design Plan
 September 18, 2006





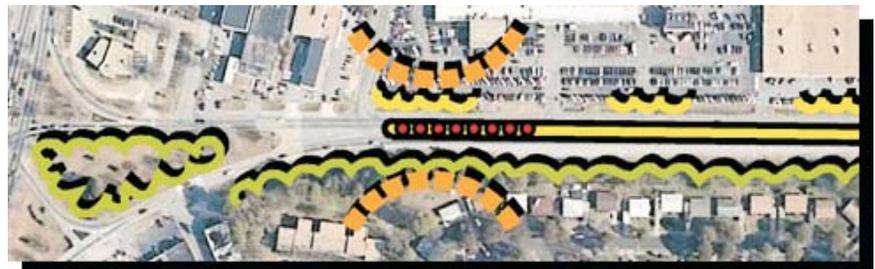
Group of 8 Banner Poles on Waterfront Drive



Group of 4 Banner Poles on Ballentine Blvd. at NSU



Custom Banners at ODU



Group of 8 Banner Poles at Each Corridor Gateway

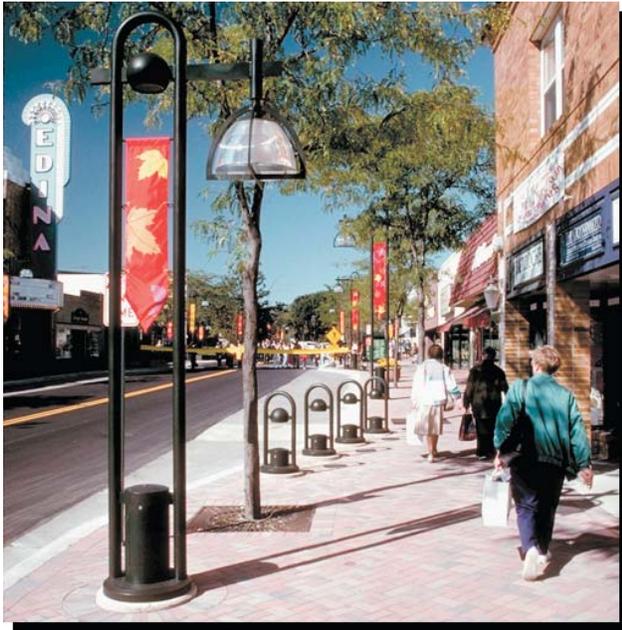


Groups of 4 Banner Poles on Each Side of a Special Gateway

15. Corridor Markers



Figure 5.15
Recommendation 15
 Aesthetic Design Plan
 September 18, 2006



Example of Common Color Schemes for All Streetscape Elements



16. Color Scheme



Place Overhead Utility Lines Underground or Move Them to a Less Visible Location

17. Overhead Utility Lines

		<p>Figure 5.16 Recommendations 16 and 17 Aesthetic Design Plan September 18, 2006</p>
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18. Traffic Signals (Figure 5.17, Top of Page)

New, painted metal pole and bracket-arm traffic signals have been installed in the southern part of the Corridor and at some intersections in the rest of the Corridor. However, a number of intersections still have the cable-suspended signals which are unsightly and create visual clutter.

Recommendation 18: *The cable-suspended traffic signals should be replaced with metal pole and bracket-arm signals.*

19. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Facilities (Figure 5.17, Middle)

The Military Highway Corridor, due to the nature of the major developments along the Corridor, which include a major shopping center, big-box retailers, and auto dealerships and rental agencies, the width of the roadway, and the large volume of traffic, is not a very bicyclist- or pedestrian-friendly environment. Only a short segment of the Military Highway Corridor, between Curlew Drive and the Elizabeth River has been designated as a bicycle route and it includes only a limited number of sidewalks, which are located mainly in the Military Circle and Janaf shopping center areas.

Despite this adverse environment, it would be beneficial to permit pedestrian and bicyclist circulation along the corridor, in order to link the neighborhoods to the commercial developments and to interconnect the various commercial uses.

Recommendation 19: *Provisions should be made to include a six-foot wide combination walkway/bikeway along both sides of the Military Highway Corridor.*

20. Redevelopment Area Standards (Figure 5.17, Bottom of Page)

A number of areas along the Corridor, such as the Flea Market area and the NAA parcels east of it, the Harris Tire area, and the Best Square area, include incompatible or obsolescent uses, or are vacant and should be redeveloped. These areas represent opportunities for improving and upgrading the image and appearance of the corridor. Landscaping standards should be established for these areas to “green up” the Corridor.

Recommendation 20: *Areas that are redeveloped or upgraded should be required to include landscaping treatments that will complement and contribute to the “green” image of the Corridor.*

This chapter presented the inventory and the overall recommendations for aesthetic design improvements and enhancements in the Military Highway Corridor. A more specific application of the recommendations, along with general time frames and approximate cost ranges, is included in Chapter 7.0, Implementation Plan, Section 7.3, Aesthetic Priorities.



Cable-Suspended Traffic Signals

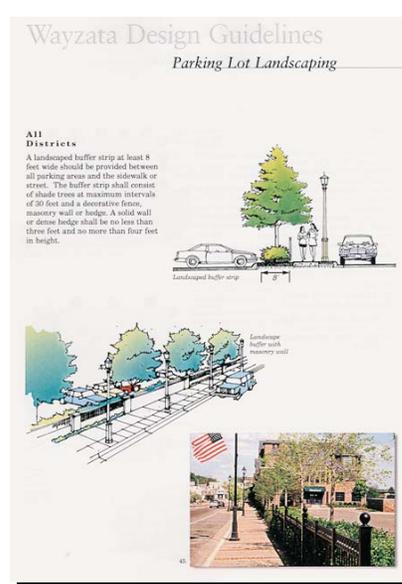
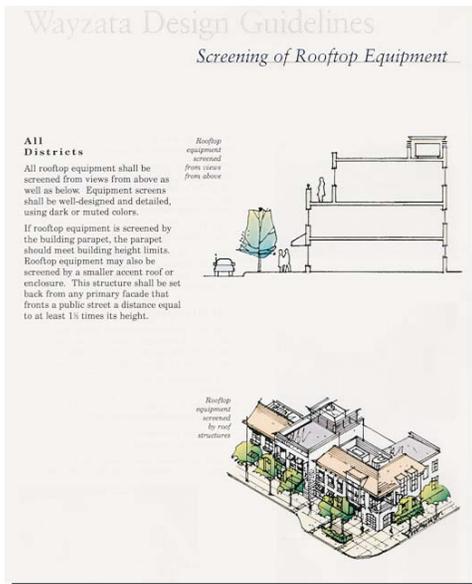


Metal Pole and Bracket Traffic Signals

18. Traffic Signals



19. Pedestrian and Bicyclist Facilities



Example of Landscaping and Screening Guidelines

20. Redevelopment Area Guidelines

MILITARY HIGHWAY
PLAN

URS

Figure 5.17
Recommendations 18, 19, and 20
Aesthetic Design Plan
September 18, 2006

6.0 INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

To accommodate implementation of the economic development plan, public and private infrastructure must provide adequate service so the desired private investment will have the opportunity to generate competitive returns. As discussed in *Section 2.0 Summary of Existing Conditions*, much of the infrastructure in the corridor is considered adequate. Principally both public and private utilities are and are forecasted to continue to provide adequate service without major system upgrades.

The same cannot be said for transportation. Referring again to *Section 2.0*, traffic congestion on the segment from Lowry Road north to the I-64 interchange exhibits severe periods of congestion during both weekday and weekend conditions. The southern half of this segment (from Lowry Road to 0.3 miles south of Northampton Boulevard) is scheduled to be widened by the Virginia Department of Transportation with construction to begin in 2010. The segment between Northampton Boulevard and Robin Hood Road has no improvement scheduled for the next six years due to overall funding limitations. However, design activities have been initiated.

6.1 Forecasted Traffic Volumes

While adequate funding is not currently available for all of the widening projects for the corridor, the improvements are included in the regional long range plan, and are expected to be completed by the forecast year 2026. Improvements to another area of existing congestion – the intersection of Military Highway with Norview Avenue – are not included in the long range plan. While congestion is severe today, the forecasts indicate it will continue to worsen.

Using both existing volumes and forecasted year 2026 volumes provided by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, an evaluation of the transportation system was conducted. The analysis will be based on daily volumes and service flow rates, and will define levels of service as detailed in the *Year 2000 Highway Capacity Manual*. Table 6-1 shows the forecasted year 2026 average annual daily traffic (AADT) volumes in comparison to the existing AADT. Larger increases in volume, 19-32%, are found at the south end of Military Highway through the 6 and 8-lane cross-sections. The northern sections, which are 4-lane cross-sections, show little or no change in traffic volumes.

The methodology for determining level of service was the Year 2000 Highway Capacity Manual's arterial analysis. Input data for this analysis was derived from three sources, the Year 2026 HRPDC Travel Demand Model, 2004 VDOT count data, and the *Norfolk Level of Service Study* (January 2000) developed by the HRPDC. Forecasted daily volumes were taken from the Year 2026 HRPDC travel demand model. Many of the other data inputs (directional split, k-factor, PHF, etc.) were derived from the VDOT counts and the *Norfolk Level of Service Study*.

TABLE 6-1
Forecasted Average Annual Daily Traffic
Military Highway Corridor District

Roadway	From	To	Existing Volume (AADT)	Forecasted Year 2026 Volume (AADT)
Military Highway - (US 13 & SR 165)	Virginia Beach CL	I-264	47,000	61,900
	I-264	Virginia Beach Blvd	48,000	60,300
	Virginia Beach Blvd.	Lowery Road	49,000	63,400
	Lowery Road	Northampton Blvd	49,000	55,600
	Northampton Blvd	Robin hood Road	49,000	55,800
	Robin Hood Road	Norview Ave	28,000	28,500
	Norview Ave.	Little Creek Rd.	30,000	30,000
Major Cross Streets				
I-264	I-64	Ballentine Boulevard	126,000	135,500
Virginia Beach Blvd.	Azalea Garden Rd.	Military Highway	28,000	28,000
	Military Highway	Kempsville Rd.	27,000	41,000
Northampton Blvd	Military Highway	Kempsville Rd.	49,000	41,700
	Kempsville Rd	I-64	36,000	42,500
I-64	Military Highway	Northampton Blvd.	165,000	152,800
Azalea Garden Rd.	Military Highway	Little Creek Rd.	13,000	19,200
Norview Ave.	Military Highway	I-64	28,000	29,000
Little Creek Rd.	Military Highway	Halprin Dr.	32,000	27,400
	Military Highway	Chesapeake Blvd	40,000	39,200

The results of the capacity analysis show that will the improvements planned for the corridor, service levels will generally function as adequate to marginally inadequate (Level of Service D) along the major roadway segments. For most of the roadway segments, marginally adequate (LOS D) service levels to near failing (LOS E) service levels were forecast for Military Highway. The only segment forecast at a service level worse than D is the River Segment during the p.m. peak period. However, this segment has only one traffic signal intersection and few points of adjacent street or property access. It may function better than the analysis indicates.

TABLE 6-2
Forecasted 2026 Roadway Segment Service Levels
Military Highway Corridor District

Roadway	From	To	PEAK HOUR	
			AM	PM
Military Highway (US Route 13 and State Route)	Virginia Beach CL	I-264	D	E
	I-264	Virginia Beach Blvd	C	D
	Virginia Beach Blvd.	Lowery Road	D	D
	Lowery Road	Northampton Blvd	D	D
	Northampton Blvd	Robin Hood Road	D	D
	Robin Hood Road	Norview Avenue	D	D
	Norview Avenue	Little Creek Road	C	C

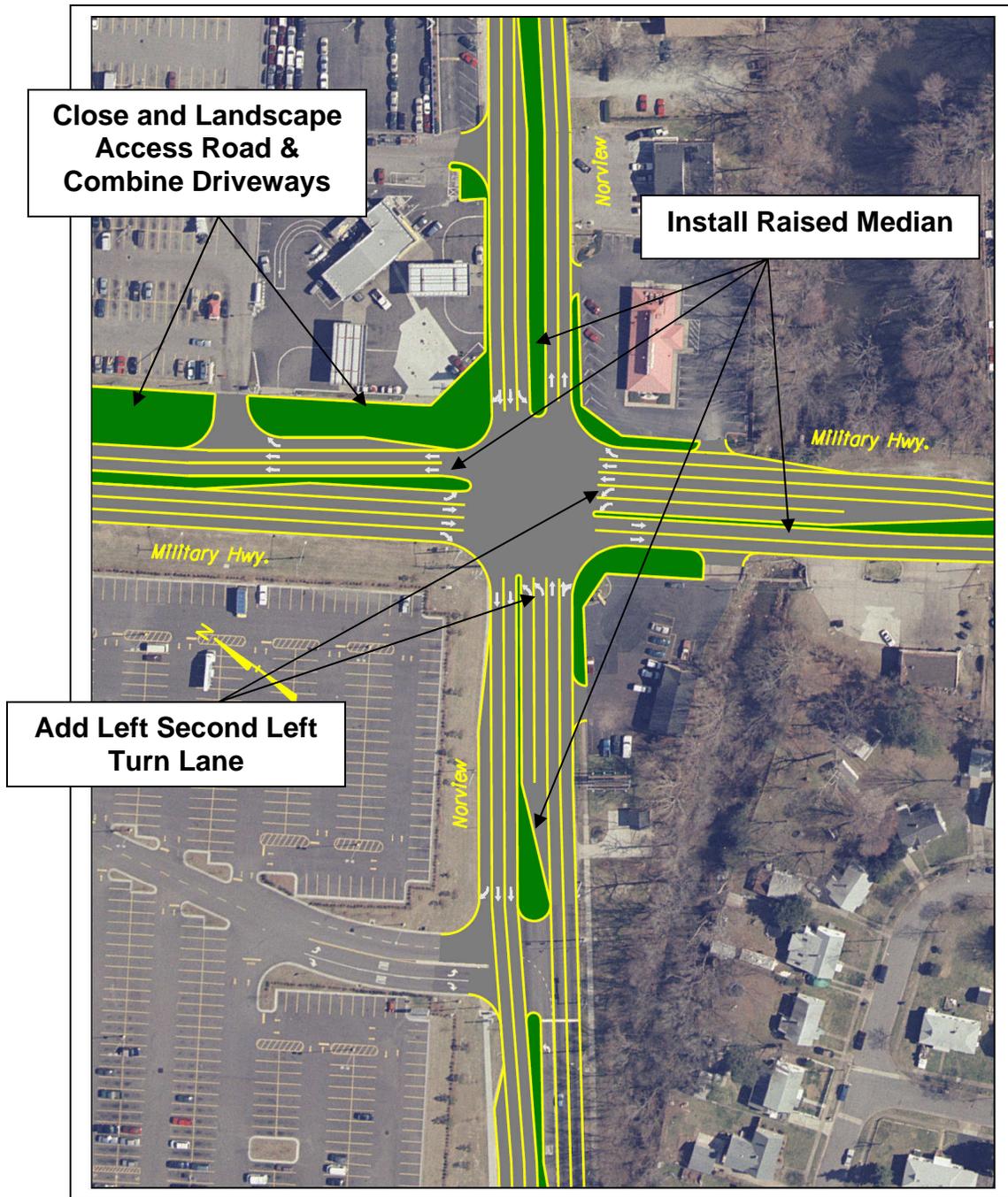
6.2 Norview Avenue Intersection

Forecasted turning movement volumes for the intersection of Military Highway and Norview Avenue were developed utilizing the HRPDC Regional Transportation Model. Growth was calculated by comparing the year 2000 Model to the Year 2026 Model. These models forecast volumes on a daily basis. Growth at the intersection was as follows:

- Military Highway north of Norview Avenue: 10.1%
- Military Highway south of Norview Avenue: 6.3%
- Norview Avenue west of Military Highway: 0%
- Norview Avenue east of Military Highway: 13.6%

These growth values were then applied to the existing conditions turning movement counts to develop the year 2026 turning movement counts at the intersection. The 2026 volumes were then analyzed using the Synchro Software package, which computes service levels using methods developed in the *2000 Highway Capacity Manual*. The analysis includes the recommended improvements included in the separate report, *Inventory of Existing Conditions*. A drawing of the improved intersection is provided below in Figure 6-1.

As shown if Figure 6-1, the improvements are intended to address several deficient performance issues at the intersection. First, to improve the overall performance, dual left turn lanes have been added to the eastbound Norview Avenue and northbound Military Highway approaches. By increasing the capacity available for these movements, less green time can be allocated to them in the traffic signal phase, making more available for other movements. This results in lower average vehicle delay for the overall intersection performance.



Comprehensive Plan for the
Military Highway Corridor District
 Norfolk, Virginia



**Figure 6-1: Military Highway at Norview Avenue:
 Recommended Improvements**

In addition to insufficient capacity, the intersection currently presents motorists with an excess of potential conflicts, resulting in slower traffic conditions and excessively long vehicle queues. For example, in the northeast quadrant, the service station has three driveways directly to the adjacent street system. Accommodating vehicles using these driveways compromises the ability of motorists moving westbound on Norview Avenue to clear the intersection. Another area of multiple conflicts involves the access road between the shopping center and the mainline of Military Highway. The access roads functions as a fifth junction in this four-way intersection. It is not controlled by the traffic signal, and motorists have been observed using it to enter the intersection. The combination of a lengthy vehicle queues, multiple conflict points and slow speeds causes delays that could be easily avoided with more effective management of access.

TABLE 6-3
YEAR 2026 CAPACITY ANALYSIS-WITH IMPROVEMENTS
NORVIEW AVENUE at MILITARY HIGHWAY
Military Highway Corridor District

APPROACH (Movement)	AM PEAK HOUR		PM PEAK HOUR	
	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
EB Norview Avenue (Left)	32.0	C	52.1	D
EB Norview Avenue (Through)	27.1	C	41.4	D
EB Norview Avenue (Right)	24.2	C	34.3	C
NB Military Highway (Left)	34.6	C	52.3	D
NB Military Highway (Through)	25.4	C	46.8	D
NB Military Highway (Right)	20.7	C	25.8	C
SB Military Highway (Left)	33.9	C	54.7	D
SB Military Highway (Through)	22.2	C	34.3	C
SB Military Highway (Right)	18.0	B	25.4	C
WB Norview Avenue (Left)	34.8	C	52.4	D
WB Norview Avenue (Through/Right)	31.4	C	52.5	D
Overall Intersection	26.5	C	43.9	D
Volume to Capacity (v/c) Ratio	0.56		0.83	

The recommended improvements incorporate both additional capacity and access management measures to improve intersection performance. As Figure 6-1 shows, raised medians have been proposed for all approaches. These will prohibit left turn movements across turn lanes in the opposite direction. Next, driveways have been combined to reduce the overall number of conflict points, providing better clearance from the intersections.

Finally, the access road has been closed and converted to a landscaped area. The landscape area will provide more opportunities for developing a corridor and airport gateway statement at the intersection, and will provide a physical separation of the shopping center parking area from the roadway, enhancing the corridor's aesthetic environment. While the gateway treatment at the intersection may include larger features, the treatments along the roadway to the north should be less intrusive to maintain a reasonable level of visibility for the shopping center.

A summary of the capacity analysis is found in Table 6-3. The results show that with the recommended improvements, the intersection is forecast to operate with marginally adequate service levels in the year 2026. The overall intersection levels of service were forecast to be LOS C and D for the a.m. and p.m. peak hours, respectively. In the a.m. peak hour the lowest individual movement level of service was LOS C and in the p.m. peak hour the lowest individual movement level of service was LOS D. The volume to capacity ratios (V/C) show room for additional growth, the forecasted a.m. peak hour is 0.53 and the forecasted p.m. peak hour is 0.83.

Based on general cost elements and the preliminary layout in Figure 6-1, the construction cost of improving the Norview Avenue intersection is estimated \$1.4 million

6.3 EVALUATION OF UTILITIES

While utilities have been evaluated as adequate, the City is concerned that aesthetics of the corridor are and will continue to be adversely impacted by the overhead utility lines. Of particular concern are the lateral overhead utility lines, which give the corridor an industrial appearance. Within the corridor there were 41 lateral overhead utility crossings. Of these crossings two were major electrical transmission lines (See Figure 6-2). The other 39 lateral crossings were more typical power distribution, traffic signal, telephone, and cable crossing from one wooden utility pole to another (See Figure 6-3). Nearly all of these crossing occur in the north of Lowery Road, and most occur along the Airport Segment.

To provide a basis for estimating the cost to underground these overhead utility lines we use the recently completed East Washington Street Utility Undergrounding in downtown Suffolk, Virginia. The engineering for this project was conducted by URS Corporation. The project began construction in 2003. This project was approximately 900' in a downtown urban corridor with sidewalks and building adjacent to the edge of pavement. Using the average bid of \$2,030,577, which includes the utility company fees, divided by 900' feet, an average cost per foot of \$2,256 was derived. Because this project was constructed in a more urban environment than the utility crossings on Military Highway, it is assumed that this fact provides for a large margin of error. This margin of error should account for increases in material cost and labor since its construction. Since nearly all of the utility crossings on Military Highway occur over 4-lane sections of roadway we are going to assume the average crossing distance is 100'. For the two transmission line crossings we assume a distance of 500' between towers. The total linear footage estimate for undergrounding the utilities comes to 4900'. This yields a cost of \$11,054,400. Cost will vary with inflation and the extent of project activity associated with the utility relocation.

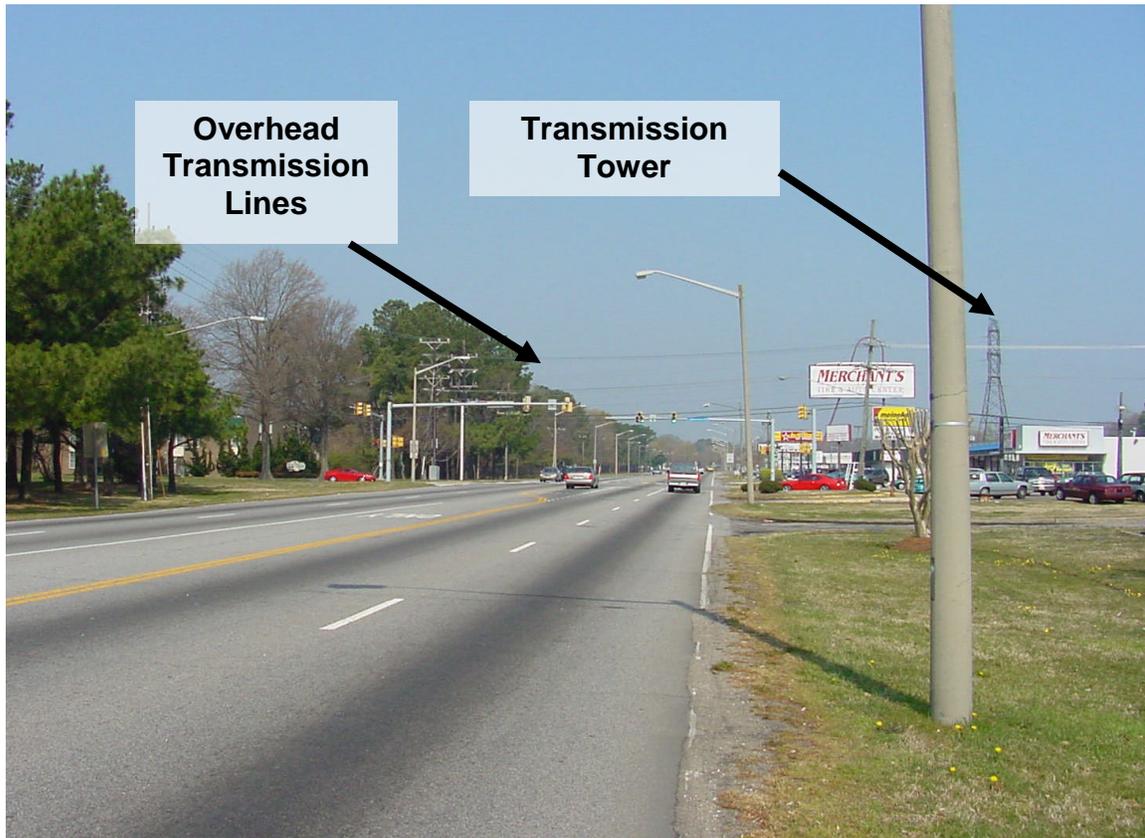


Figure 6-2
Transmission Lines and Towers
Military Highway Corridor District
September 18, 2006

6.4 Access Management

In the course of undergoing development and redevelopment, Military Highway has had hundreds of driveway access permit applications. On the segments of the Corridor where development review occurred under the City's control, access has been reasonably well managed, and both curb and gutter pavement sections and driveway spacing and frequency has been controlled. For the most part, segments exhibiting at least modest access management practices are located to the south.

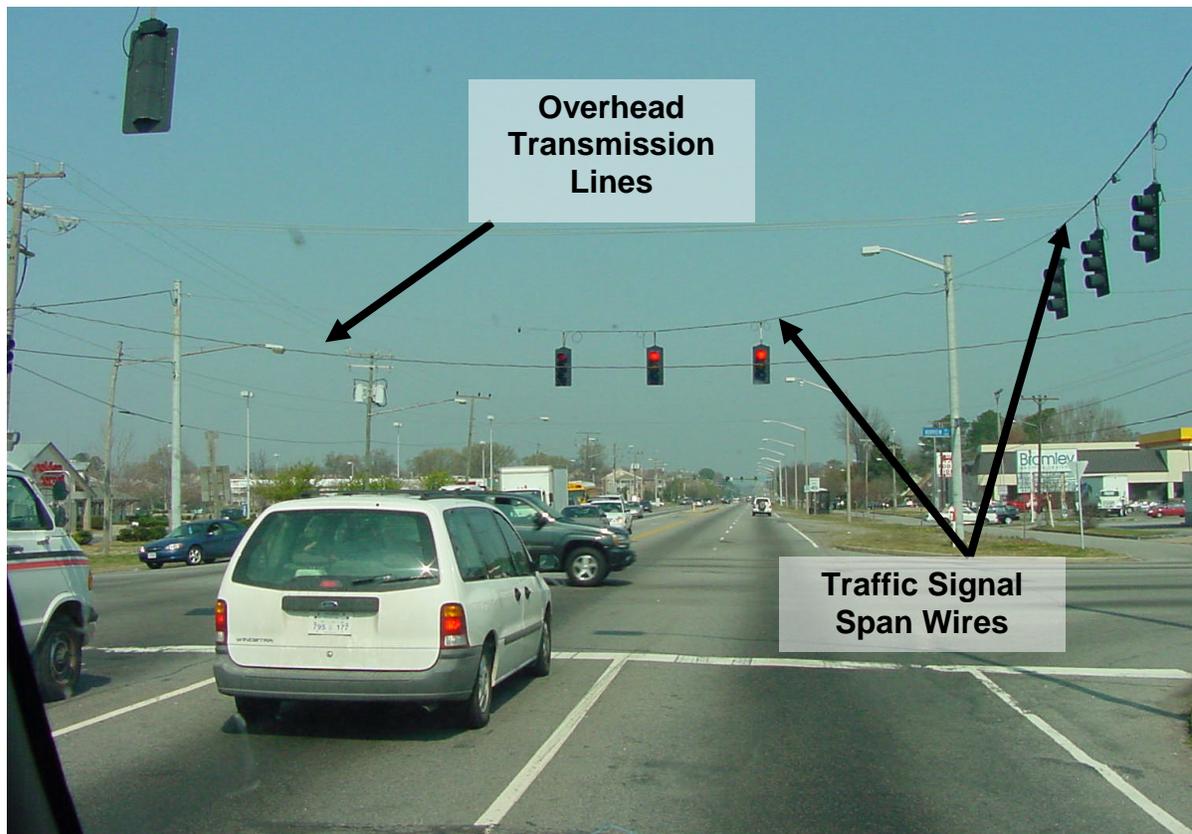


Figure 6-3
Transmission Lines and Signal
Span Wires

Military Highway Corridor District
September 18, 2006

Along the Airport-North Segment – starting north of Robin Hood Road – much of the development review was conducted either when the highway was maintained by VDOT (or its predecessor, the Virginia Department of Highways) or before the City developed access management provisions for application in development review. Regardless of the review circumstances, properties adjoining Military Highway today generally have frequent and wide areas of access. In several instances, driveways are so wide that employees or customers park in the driveway area. At several used car lots, the driveway areas are used to display inventory. Unless a property is redeveloped, it is unlikely that more conventional access designs will be installed.

In addition to an absence of control of driveway frequency and location, the pavement section north of Robin Hood Road features a two-way center left turn lane for its length to Little Creek Road. The only exceptions are at approaches to major signalized intersection

where the center lane is designated as a left turn lane. A two-way center left turn lane is designed to accommodate access to adjoining parcels.

To improve the function of traffic flow along the corridor and provide opportunities for aesthetic improvements, a series of access management measures have been developed. To be most effective, these measures should be developed and applied in conjunction with modifications to the zoning ordinance (See discussion in Section 7). In addition, implementation of the access management measures can be phased over time with the use of public funds. For example, the improvements to the Norview Avenue intersection are estimated to cost approximately \$1.4 million. If the City were to annually program \$750,000 for capital improvement implementation in the Corridor and this intersection were to be the first priority, the project could be programmed and completed within three years.

Another approach would provide for the use of public funds to encourage and leverage private investment. For example, to encourage redevelopment of the proposed opportunity site presented in Section 4, Economic Plan, the city would allocate sufficient funds from the annual capital fund balance to complete median and shoulder improvements as provided in the Access Management Measures. In exchange, the property-owner (or developer) would install and maintain streetscape treatments as provided in Section 5, Aesthetic Design Concept Plan. The product is implementation of successful redevelopment, implementation of access management and aesthetic improvements, and incentives for the property-owner to maintain plantings and signs.

In the development of a raised median as part of an access management strategy, design consideration must be given to accommodating an increased number of U-turns. Studies have shown that when compared with accommodating left turn movements with no median treatments, accommodating U-turns at unsignalized median crossover intersections offers greater safety and efficiency. At signalized intersections, overall safety is not affected by accommodating U-turns, but prohibition of right-turn-on-red should be considered to enhance safety. Since U-turning vehicles are slower than left turning vehicles, U-turns should not be permitted at the corridor's congested intersections, such as Norview Avenue.

In the design of improvements to Military Highway at locations where U-turns are likely, a widened pavement section or paved shoulder of 10-12 feet in width should be provided for a distance of approximately 75 feet from the intersection. This will adequately accommodate vehicles completing U-turns on the four-lane segment Military Highway. Additional pavement is not needed where the pavement section exceeds four through lanes.

The recommended access management measures for the Airport-North Segment are presented in Figures VI-4 through VI-7. In general, the guidelines for determining access points and median crossovers are:

1. Small parcels retain one access driveway;
2. Median crossover occur at public street intersections; and,
3. Median crossovers will be minimized.



Comprehensive Plan for the
Military Highway Corridor District
Norfolk, Virginia

Figure 6-4: Proposed Access Management Measures





Military Highway Corridor District Norfolk, Virginia

Figure 6-5: Proposed Access Management
Measures





Comprehensive Plan for the
Military Highway Corridor District
Norfolk, Virginia

Figure 6-6: Proposed Access Management Measures





Comprehensive Plan for the
Military Highway Corridor District
Norfolk, Virginia

Figure 6-7: Proposed Access Management Measures



7.0 IMPLEMENTATION PROGRAM

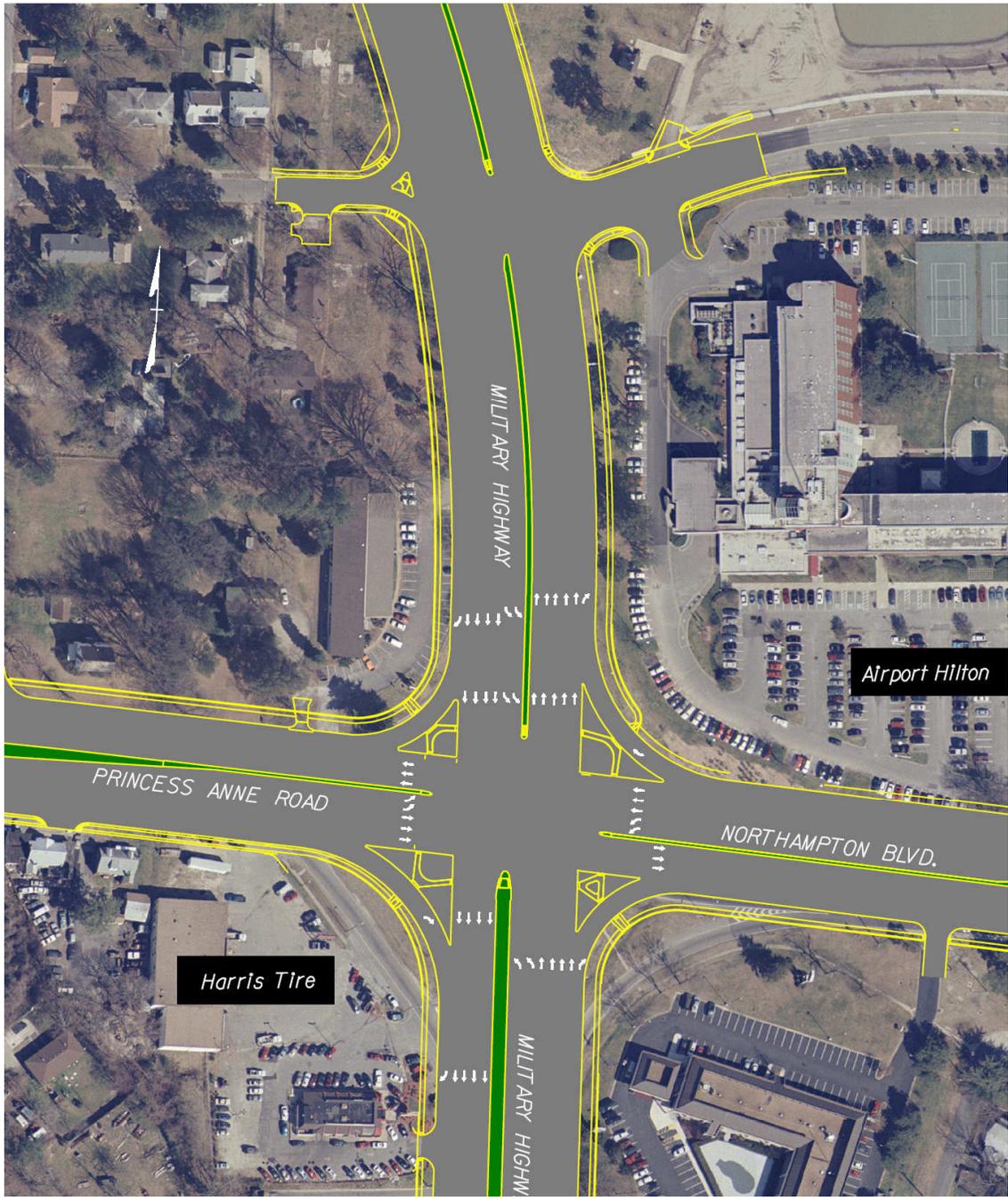
In the previous six sections of this report, the Military Highway Corridor District has been documented and evaluated as a principal roadway and a major commercial area. Its character has been defined as so varied that only by splitting the Corridor into three segments can consistency of use, age and quality be conveyed. Problems or opportunities on one segment may not exist on another, and implementation programs designed to bring about desired results will not achieve uniform corridor-wide success. Consequently, the character of the corridor dictates that to be effective the implementation program includes flexibility in its application.

To be sure, the Corridor is confronted with corridor-wide issues – congestion, appearance and regional competition – but the most effective methods for addressing them will depend upon the condition of the specific corridor segment.

When comparing the analysis of the three segments, it has become evident that improving the River Segment requires an emphasis on its aesthetic image. Being closely bounded by existing single-family residential neighborhoods and comprised of comparatively recent developments, the existing uses are appropriate for the setting. Any revisions to the zoning or development regulations should be considered once the operation of the Light Rail Transit service has been established, and its effect on market opportunities can be fully evaluated. The roadway section is in its ultimate planned configuration, and provided that access is minimized and additional median crossovers are avoided, no further improvements should be required.

The appearance of the River Segment can be improved with aesthetic treatments, beginning with an upgrade to the gateway for northbound motorists coming from Virginia Beach. Recommendation 13 (Section 5) provides for a more vertical and visible entry statement crossing the eastern branch of the Elizabeth River into the city. The open views of the shoreline and bridge approach ensure that a modest investment at this location will heighten the visibility of a gateway enhancement. The gateway statement is to be supplemented by accent landscaping at appropriate locations, as detailed in Recommendation 12.

When compared with the River Segment, the challenges confronting the Crossroads Segment are more complex and are a direct result of the level of retail marketing success. The first and most important challenge is to complete the VDOT programmed widening improvements. The widening between Lowry Road and 0.3 miles south Northampton Boulevard (Lansdale intersection) is scheduled to go to construction in 2010. While widening this section will improve traffic flow – particularly at the entrance to major retail centers – improvements to the Lansdale intersection are crucial for improving access from two nearby interchanges with I-64. The retail uses cannot be considered fully accessible with adequate traffic service until the improvements shown in Figure 7-1 have been completed. Therefore, the most important action for this segment is to pursue full funding of the widening project from 0.3 miles south of Northampton Boulevard to Robin Hood Road.



Comprehensive Plan for the
Military Highway Corridor District
Norfolk, Virginia



**Figure 7-1: Proposed VDOT Improvements
Military Highway at Northampton Blvd.**

While the roadway improvements will address congestion issues at the north end of the Crossroads Segment, the remainder of the segment includes combination of new and older retail that, for the most part, can be accessed relatively easily at all times of day. The challenge is to maintain and enhance the environment for retail commerce.

By any definition evaluated in this study, the Airport-North Segment has not achieved a level of success. While the River and Crossroads segments have areas in need of enhancement, their overall development quality and economic vitality are viewed by the City as examples of the corridor's successful responsiveness to regional market demands. Unlike the other two segments, the successes along the Airport-North Segment are more the exception than the rule. The K-Mart Super Center and three new car dealers stand out as examples of uses around which redevelopment can follow, but the remainder of this long segment features a disjointed mix of uses, small parcels, poorly maintained sites and structures, and visual blight. To achieve its economic and development potential, the Airport-North Segment will need re-development, renovation and renewal, as well as aesthetic enhancements.

7.1 Economic Development

The Economic Development Plan presented in Section 4.0 outlines the opportunities, constraints and associated actions to enhance Military Highway, one of Norfolk's most important corridors, as a center for economic activity. While the corridor is one of the region's most active retail corridors, the Military Highway Corridor is challenged by an aging building supply, increased retail competition, underutilized land parcels, traffic congestion and inappropriate uses that combined with an overall poor image presents a challenge as well as an opportunity.

Like many older commercial corridors across the nation, there are areas along the corridor where investment has lagged and both economic activity and appearances have deteriorated. Without coordinated public and private action, the corridor will not achieve its full potential as a high quality transportation corridor that provides both easy access and is a commercial/retail destination.

This section presents an implementation plan focusing on Economic Development to realize these opportunities, address challenges, and take advantage of the strengths that the Military Highway Corridor offers. The action plan focuses on implementing a range of economic development strategies, which include:

- Organizational initiatives;
- Regulatory and land use planning actions;
- Aggressive marketing techniques and public relations activities;
- (Re)Development opportunities
- Infrastructure/finance investment; and
- Aesthetic design guidelines

The strategies will achieve a number of objectives related to the opportunities, strengths, and challenges identified in the Market Analysis section and Economic Development Plan of this

report. These strategies are prioritized based on time required to implement and their potential to realize short and long term success. The final result is a plan that will provide guidance for the City, property owners, businesses and residents to achieve in a coordinated manner the vision for enhancing the overall quality of the Military Highway Corridor District. These actions are mutually supportive to raise the quality and type of reinvestment, capitalize on transportation access and retain and upgrade existing businesses to promote a greater level of value and quality of life in the corridor. The following tables present a summary of the economic development strategies, their priority level, responsible parties, and potential funding sources.

Organizational implementation strategies focus on identifying a collective group to market and represent the *entire* Corridor's business and property interests. A group that represents the Military Highway Corridor District would serve as a **champion** for the corridor and represent and provide assistance to the corridors' public and private interests. These include the formation of a business association, business improvement district (BID) or community development authority (CDA). In the near term, we suggest that the City of Norfolk form a Military Highway Corridor District Task Force, a public / private partnership comprising members from the private sector and public sector who have a vested interest in the success of the Military Highway Corridor, to explore the feasibility of these types of organizational entities and which one would be most appropriate, in the near term, to jumpstart the project.

The need for a champion has been recognized in a recent (2003) publication of the Urban Land Institute, *Ten Principles for Rebuilding Neighborhood Retail*. In describing the first principle, Great Streets Need Great Champions, the publications states:

Every revitalization project needs a champion—someone to initiate the process, fight to ensure it is done right, and follow through to completion...In most situations, the champion will be a person(or group of people) who is committed, responsible stakeholder who recognizes the problem, has dreams of something better, and has the passion to overcome obstacles to achieve results. Without a champion, retail revitalization efforts will most likely get lost among competing needs in a community when it comes time to fight for attention and limited resources.

The second economic development implementation strategy focuses on public policy and regulatory actions and incentives that can play an important role in guiding re-investment and (re)development along Military Highway. This includes the adoption of a *Commercial District Overlay Zone* and implementation of *Aesthetic Design* priorities (discussed in the following sections) that will lay the framework and ensure that the highest and best use development and investment occurs along the corridor.

Economic Development Implementation Strategy					
		Short Range (1-3 years)	Long Range (3-5 years)	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Sources
Organizational					
1	Form a <i>Military Highway Corridor District Task Force</i> (made up of representatives from public and private sectors)	X		City Staff, Property and Business Owners	N/A
2	Explore the feasibility of forming a corridor-wide entity (e.g. Business Association, Business Improvement District, Community Development Authority) to market and represent the Corridor's business and property interests	X		Military Highway Corridor District Task Force	N/A
Regulatory					
1	Adopt <i>Commercial Corridor Overlay District Alternative</i> to facilitate "higher and better" use of underutilized properties and redevelopment opportunities	X		City (Planning and Zoning)	N/A
2	Provide regulatory incentives to facilitate redevelopment opportunities and land assembly in line with the Corridor's overall goals	X	X	City, Property and Business Owners	N/A
3	Adopt <i>Aesthetic Design Concept Plan</i> and priority items	X	X	City	N/A
4	Implement the Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Zoning Ordinance at Military Highway Light Rail Transit Station	X		City (Planning and Zoning)	N/A

Improving marketing / public relations of the Military Highway Corridor as a destination for retailing, dining out and employment is one critical action to address the Corridor's poor image perception and crime / safety issues. These implementation strategies focus on developing a unified marketing campaign, undertaking a public relations initiative and improving marketing and publicizing of financial incentives and tools to property and business owners and developers interested in investment along the Corridor.

Economic Development Implementation Strategy					
		Short Range (1-3 years)	Long Range (3-5 years)	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Sources
Marketing					
1	Develop a unified Marketing Campaign / Strategy to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote (re)development opportunities in the corridor showcase community's desire for high quality, upscale retail and restaurant uses facilitate planned aesthetic design and roadway improvements 	X	X	Business Association, Business Improvement District	Membership dues, sponsorship, advertising, tax, fees
2	Develop an overall advertising and public relations initiative to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> promote a positive image for the Corridor to attract developers (and retailers) skilled at developing high quality mixed-use projects address crime/safety issues inform property and business owners regarding future plan to widen Military Highway 	X	X	Business Association, Business Improvement District	Membership dues, sponsorship, advertising, tax, fees
3	Improve marketing/publicizing of financial and zoning tools/incentives available to property and business owners interested in enhancement / redevelopment of existing properties.	X	X	Business Association, Business Improvement District	Membership dues, sponsorship, advertising, tax, fees
4	Market opportunities for new business location/investment (seeking high quality Class A office/medical space) around Airport-North/Lake Wright node.	X	X	City (Dept. of Development), Private Sector	N/A

The fourth major implementation strategy focused on (re)development along the Corridor. While suburban strips such as Military Highway have become the main street of retail shopping because of its easy access, high visibility, convenient parking and adaptability to large retail formats, increased competition and the presence of vacant and underutilized commercial sites along the corridor present challenges to the future economic success of this vital corridor. In addition, the evolution of the retail product to new, high quality, mixed use, pedestrian-friendly centers and investment in new hotel and office uses, present an opportunity for property and business owners to stay competitive and attract high quality retailers, take advantage of proximity to Norfolk International Airport and capitalize on increased demand for high quality office space around the Lake Wright Executive Center. Near-term implementation strategies focus on catalyzing additional reinvestment along the corridor with enhancement and redevelopment of selected strategic, underutilized areas, such as the area around the Lake Wright / Airport-North node.

Financing strategies and infrastructure investment focuses on maximizing private sector investment and providing public sector support where appropriate. The initial phase of this implementation plan will require initial public sector support funding to start or “seed” reinvestment in the corridor such as streetscape and aesthetic design improvements that can help improve the quality and appearance of the corridor and the standard of development occurring there. These upfront public investments should, over time, create significant spin-off/leverage and matching funds by attracting private sector investments.

Economic Development Implementation Strategy					
		Short Range (1-3 years)	Long Range (3-5 years)	Responsible Parties	Potential Funding Sources
Development					
1	Catalyze reinvestment (e.g. retail, hotel, office) along Corridor through redevelopment / enhancement of selected opportunity sites / underutilized nodes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Flea Market / Automotive site ▪ Best Square site ▪ The Dump site ▪ Airport-owned parcels (Robin Hood Rd) 	X	X	City (Dept. of Development), Property Owners, Developers	Private Sector, City
2	Facilitate public/private partnerships for high quality (re)development	X	X	City (Dept. of Development), Private Sector	City, Private Sector
3	Integrate selected public facilities (e.g. regional library, community center, health care center) into the corridor’s redevelopment strategy			City	City
4	Encourage concentrated high-quality office/hotel development around the Airport-North / Lake Wright node			City (Dept. of Development), Private Sector	Private Sector, City
5	Enhance synergy with Norfolk International Airport through Airport master planning process	X		Norfolk International Airport, City	NIA, Private Sector, City
Finance / Infrastructure					
1	Incorporate prioritized capital improvements and aesthetic design priorities recommendations in City’s Capital Improvement Plan	X	X	City	CIP
2	Expand Small Area Commercial Façade and Aesthetic Improvement Program to include Military Highway Corridor	X	X	City, Property and Business Owners	City
3	Enhance appearance of Corridor "Gateways" such as Azalea Garden Road, I-64, Norview Avenue, and Robin Hood Road	X	X	City	City, CIP

7.2 Planning and Zoning

After designation of a champion, the second implementation strategy is ensuring appropriate land use controls in place to allow and encourage land uses that are consistent with the new vision and to restrict uses that are not. The highlight of this strategy is the adoption of a corridor overlay district. The emphasis of the overlay district is a product of the complexity of the City's Zoning Ordinance and the range of uses established along the corridor.

Many comments were made throughout the study process about the types of land uses that are present on the corridor. Those contacted felt that the uses along portions of the corridor did not represent the highest and best use of the land. In general, land uses in the City of Norfolk in general and the Military Highway corridor in particular are controlled by the City of Norfolk Zoning Ordinance. The ordinance sets out a series of zones which control development in discrete areas of the city. The Military Highway corridor contains a mix of types of zoning categories and associated land uses. These have been defined in detail in the report, *Existing Conditions: Comprehensive Plan for the Military Highway Corridor District*.

There are areas along the corridor zoned for offices, residential, general commercial, retail centers, and large scale commercial. For example, the areas around the intersection of Military Highway and Virginia Beach Boulevard are zoned C-3: Retail Center District. This zoning district has encouraged and enabled large scale retail development to occur there with JANAF Shopping Center and The Gallery at Military Circle. In addition, O-1: Office District zoning on the north-east corner of the Northampton/Military Highway Intersection has successfully drawn the USAA office development. On the west side of the same intersection BC-1: Business and Commerce Park zoning accommodates the Norfolk Commerce Park.

Most remaining land fronting Military Highway is zoned C-2: Corridor Commercial. This designation is a very permissive zoning category, allowing most uses normally associated with highway commercial corridors including strip shopping centers, fast food, automobile repair, etc. The result of this zoning is the mix of uses, building types, and site designs on the corridor today.

According to the Norfolk City Zoning Code, the C-2 Corridor Commercial District is intended to provide locations for commercial uses primarily along heavily traveled arterial streets such as Military Highway. Uses are generally automobile oriented, and are generally patronized on single purpose trips. The district emphasizes large general merchandise establishments, sale of large or bulky items, commercial services, repair services, automobile related sales and repair, various types of convenience stores, restaurants, and other recreational and entertainment uses. The C-2 District is also suited to accommodate travel oriented uses such as hotels and motels and gas stations. These uses are for the most part freestanding destination businesses to which one or more of the following characteristics are necessary for business success: (1) high volume of traffic passing in front of the establishment; (2) impulse attraction as customer draw; (3) customer loading and unloading facilities; (4) service directly to customers' vehicles; (5) substantial parking areas; and/or (6) service to customers while in their vehicles.

Uses currently permitted in the C-2 district are shown as follows:

RESIDENTIAL

Dwelling Unit, above ground floor only (S)

OFFICE AND RELATED USES

Day Care Centers
Financial Institutions
Offices

RETAIL SALES AND SERVICES

Adult Bookstore (S)
Adult Mini-Motion Picture (S)
Adult Movie Picture (S)
Auction Sales
Automobile Repair (S)
Automobile Sales and Service (S)
Automobile and Truck Rental
Boat Sales and Service
Car Wash (S)
Commercial Drive-Through (S)
Eating and Drinking/Entertainment Establishment (S)
Eating Establishment
Establishments for the sale of alcoholic beverages for off-premises consumption (S)
Establishment for the sale of distilled spirits (S)
Gas Station (sales only) (S)
Gas Station (sales and minor repair) (S)
Health and Fitness Facility
Manufactured Home Sales and Service
Massage Parlor (S)
Pawnshop
Retail Goods Establishments
Retail Services Establishments

Retail Goods Establishments (operating after midnight) (S)
Retail Services Establishments (operating after midnight) (S)

INSTITUTIONAL USES

(Sites < 1 Acre) Adult Day Care Center
Child Day Care Center
Dental Offices/Clinics

INSTITUTIONAL USES (continued)

Government Building and Site (excluding those of an industrial nature)
Medical Offices/Clinics
Museum
Music Conservatory
Religious Institutions
Schools, kindergarten
Schools, professional and vocational

HEAVY COMMERCIAL AND MANUFACTURING

Bakery
Laboratory; Medical, Dental, Optical
Laboratory; Testing
Mini-Warehouse
Motion Picture Studio
Photofinishing Lab
Plant and Garden Shop
Sign Painting

RECREATION, CULTURAL & ENTERTAINMENT

After Hours Membership Organizations (S)
Amusement Park
Arena, Stadium, Sports Field
Art Gallery
Art Studio
Commercial Indoor Recreation
Commercial Outdoor Recreation (S)
Commercial Recreation Centers (S)
Dance Studio
Live Performance Theaters
Membership Organizations
Movie Theaters
Personal Watercraft Rental (S)

MISCELLANEOUS

Assembly Hall
Boatels (S)
Commercial Parking Garage
MISCELLANEOUS (continued)
Communication Tower/Antenna (Commercial) (S)
Contractor's office (no exterior storage)
Farmer's Market
Fishing Pier
Flea Market (indoor)
Flea Market (outdoor)
Funeral Home
Hiring Hall
Hotel or Motel

Marinas, excluding boat repairs
Mixed Uses (S)
Off-Site Parking (S)
Outdoor Advertising Signs (S)
Public Utility Building and Site (excluding storage and maintenance facilities)
Radio, Television Station
Recycling Collection Station
Veterinary Office
Yacht Club
Vendors

C-2: Corridor Commercial zoning is typical of post World War II conventional suburban development practices. Unfortunately the resulting development patterns include:

- Isolated single use parcels such as shopping centers, office parks, and residential area. Each use is accessible only by automobile.
- Parking lots typically dominate the visual character of the area. Parking requirements control the scale of the streets and the level of development on each parcel.
- Buildings are set well back from the street frontage. This does not develop a sense of place along the corridor.

There are three options for revising the zoning code that underlies the use and bulk restrictions along the corridor. They are:

- 1. Revise the text of the existing C-2 zoning district.** Because so much of the corridor is zoned C-2, changing the language for this zone could have a drastic impact on the types and intensity of development that occurs in the corridor. This is probably the simplest of the three options as it would only require text changes to the ordinance and no changes to the city's zoning map. However, since C-2 zoning exists in other areas of the city, a change that would be potentially positive to the Military Highway corridor may negatively impact another area of the city. Changes that could be made to the text include:
 - **Changing the permitted uses** to restrict or encourage particular uses
 - **Raising the minimum lot size.** This would have the effect of reducing the number of developable parcels but it could create larger, more economically desirable types of development.
 - **Revise the parking and setback requirements** to enable a more flexible development standard. Reducing the number of parking spaces required for each development type would allow the corridor's land resources to be used more efficiently.
- 2. Rezone specific areas of the corridor to a zoning category already in the ordinance** that would encourage a more desirable mix of uses. Rezoning could be made from C-2 to C-3. C-3: Retail Center District requires a larger minimum lot size (30,000 square feet as opposed to 5,000 square feet) and significantly reduces the number of permitted uses. According to the zoning code the C-3 Retail Center District provides for two basic types of destination shopping centers: (1) the traditional shopping center with significant concentrations of related commercial establishments with one or more anchor tenants, shared parking, consistent architectural and site design treatment, and unified or coordinated management; and (2) the large single store facility offering a broad and varied range of consumer merchandise. While there may be outside storage and display of some merchandise, this should be screened from view from public rights-of-way. The C-3 District provides the opportunity for customers to satisfy much retail and service needs on a single trip. This type of use may be more desirable than the small

disparate uses typical of C-2 zoning. Figure 7-2 shows areas where rezoning from C-2 to C-3 may be appropriate.

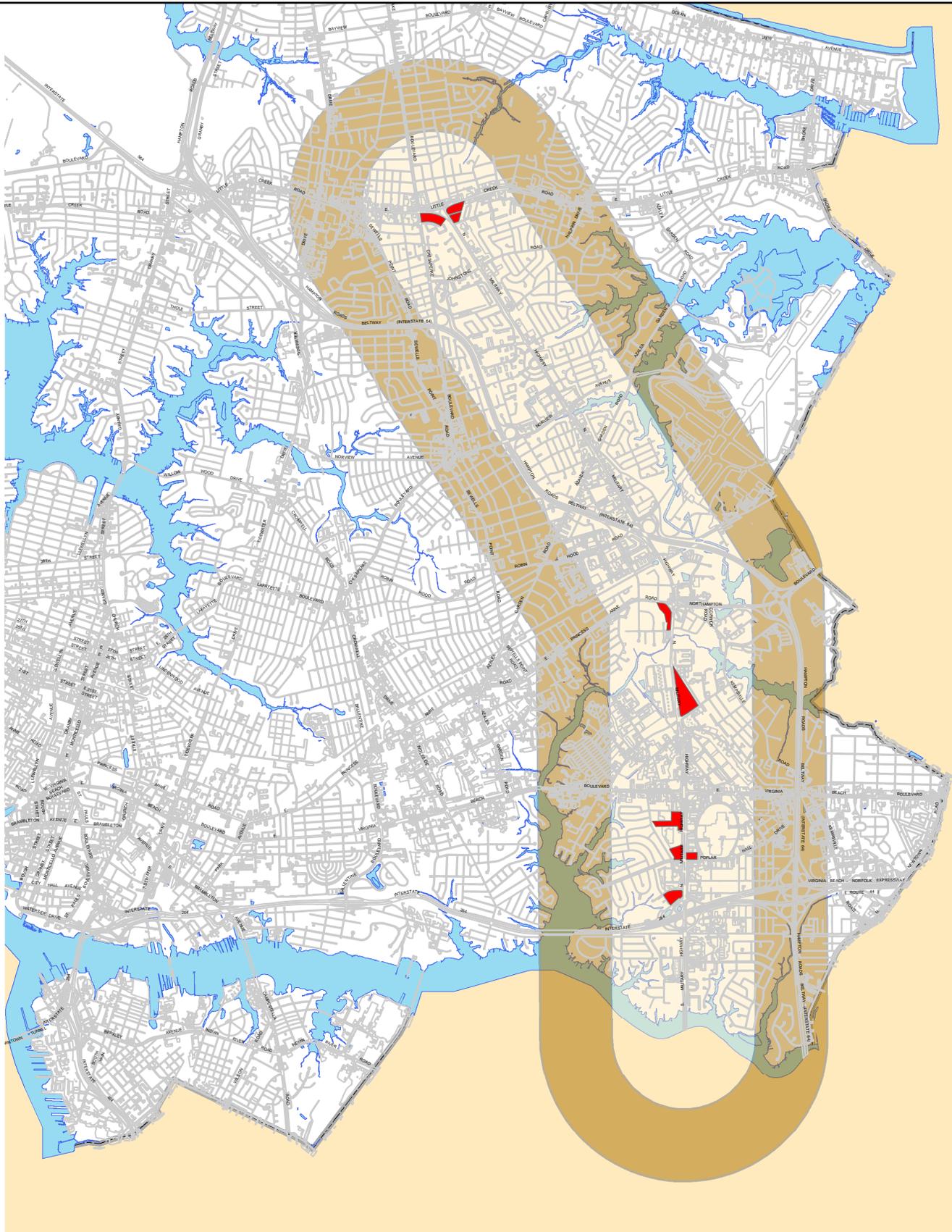
A better, but more complex rezoning within the existing code structure may be to encourage more developers on larger parcels to use **Chapter 27 of the City's Zoning Code, Planned Development (PD)**. According to the zoning code, the purpose of this district is to encourage the efficient use of land and resources, to promote greater efficiency in public and utility services, and to encourage innovation in the planning, design and building of all types of development in the city. There are no specific use or development intensity restrictions in the PD district; however, the minimum lot size for the PD designation is five acres. Using this zone, developers are given significant flexibility to create mixed use (PD-MU) developments within the existing zoning code.

- 3. Develop and map a new corridor overlay district** for all or a portion of the corridor. Chapter 11 of the City's zoning code states that an **Overlay District** is intended to provide supplemental regulations or standards pertaining to specific geographic features or land uses, wherever these are located, in addition to "base" or underlying Zoning District regulations applicable within a designated area. Whenever there is a conflict between the regulations of a base Zoning District and those of an Overlay District, the Overlay District regulations shall control. The City has a number of overlay districts currently regulating everything from signage in specific areas, to neighborhood commercial uses, to specific residential design features. None of the current overlay districts regulates an area with such an intensive auto-dependant nature as the Military Highway Corridor.

Developing a corridor overlay district would give the city an opportunity to regulate uses and development types with more precision than the two other options. The most likely area for an overlay district would be in the Airport-North Segment of the corridor. More specifically an overlay district would likely have the biggest impact if placed on the existing C-2 and C-3 zoned properties from I-64 to Little Creek Road (Airport-North Segment). A map of this area is shown in Figure 7-3.

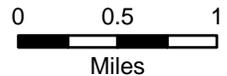
The Corridor Overlay District provides measures that address access issues associated with retail commercial development. Once the overlay district is mapped, its regulations will apply to all development activities. There are seven components to the Commercial Corridor Overlay District Alternative:

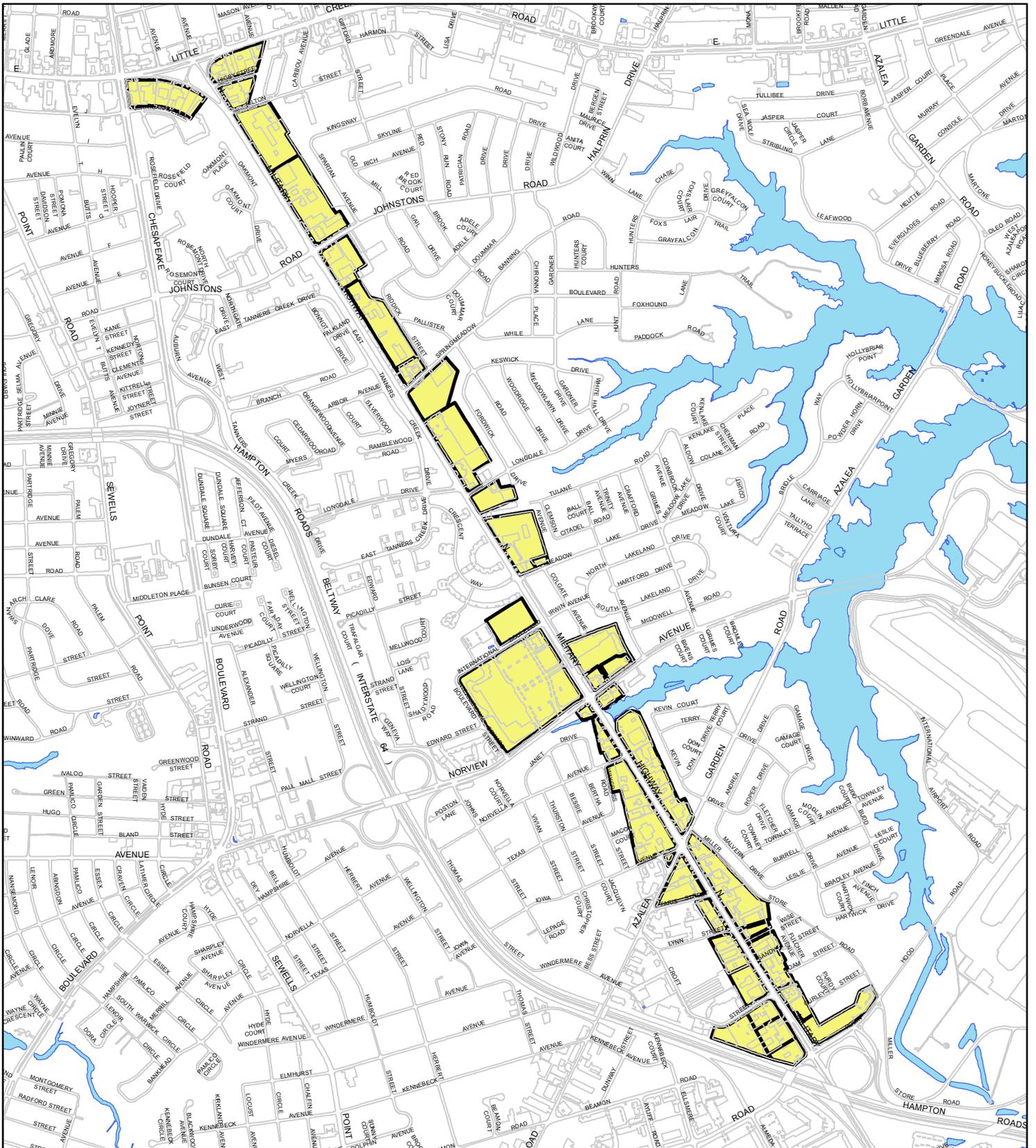
- 1. Increased Building and Parking Lot Setback Dimension from the Right of Way.* The purpose of this provision is to ensure that future development activities do not continue the current practice of parking vehicles along the roadway frontage;
- 2. Increased Minimum Lot Size & Roadway Frontage Dimensions.* All parcels are entitled to reasonable access, but a continuous row of small commercial parcels with minimal roadway frontage can result in frequent and closely spaced driveways. Based on VDOT minimum standards, driveway centers can be as close as 80 feet. Through the use of increased lot size and frontage dimensions, the City can reduce the number commercial driveways and increase distance between driveways to a preferred 200 feet;



Comprehensive Plan for the
Military Highway Corridor District
 Norfolk, Virginia

Figure 7-2: Areas Where Rezoning to C-3 May Be Appropriate





Comprehensive Plan for the
Military Highway Corridor District
 Norfolk, Virginia

Figure 7-3: Potential Area for Overlay District



3. *Limit Access to One per Parcel.* Small parcels such as convenience stores and service stations and used car lots often have more than one driveway access point. Although two points of access to a corner parcel may be preferable, a limit of one driveway to all mid-block parcels would also limit the frequency of commercial driveways.
4. *Shared Access Between Parcels.* There are two elements to this provision. First, to minimize the amount of traffic forced to use Military Highway to move between two adjoining commercial parcels, the establishment of cross access easements between parcels is proposed. Second, to minimize the number of individual driveways, commercial parcels should be encouraged to share a driveway access to more than one parcel.
5. *Access Management Plan.* For those larger parcels that may require more than one access point or parcels that may undergo further subdivision of commercial parcels, an Access Management Plan must be developed and submitted prior to subdivision. The Plan will identify all proposed points of access to the adjoining street system, improvements intended to address any deficiencies associated with those access points, and the location of cross access arrangements between separate parcels; and,
6. *Traffic Impact Study.* Concurrent with the submittal of a re-zoning application, preliminary subdivision plat or preliminary site plan, a traffic impact study should be developed and submitted for review. The study should address access issues at proposed driveways and at adjacent major intersections.

7.3 Aesthetic Priorities

Supplementing the regulatory strategy is the development of a prioritized program of aesthetic improvements. Section 5 presented the inventory and the overall recommendations for aesthetic design improvements and enhancements in the Military Highway Corridor. This section provides more detailed information regarding the priorities for the improvements, in what time frame they might be implemented, and what the approximate cost ranges might be for installing the improvements and enhancements. The aesthetic improvements and enhancements are grouped into four priority categories:

- Level 1 Priority Items includes improvements and enhancements that would contribute most to upgrading the image and appearance of the Corridor and that should be implemented as soon as is feasible.
- Level 2 Priority Items includes improvements and enhancements that are not quite as critical as Level 1 items and therefore could be implemented in the second phase.
- Level 3 Priority Items includes improvements and enhancements that could be implemented last.
- Level 4 Priority Items includes placing the overhead utilities underground, or moving them to another location. This is the most expensive item of all the improvement and enhancement items.

The four priority groups are summarized in Table 7-1. The implementation periods indicated represent only general recommended time-lines and may vary considerably, depending upon the availability of funding and, in some cases, upon the availability of required right-of-way and/or easements. Also, the implementation of some of the aesthetic improvements and enhancements will depend upon the timeline for redevelopment of the adjoining areas. If at any time additional funding becomes available, selected items could be moved up in the time-line. Also, if needed, the items listed could be re-prioritized.

Some of the items, such as new traffic signals and placing overhead utilities underground, although they basically are a general infrastructure and traffic improvement items, are included in this section, because they represent a significant aesthetic improvement. It is assumed that new traffic signals at Elizabeth Avenue and Northampton Boulevard will be installed as part of the VDOT project and new street lights will be installed as part of roadway reconstruction and, therefore, are not included in this estimate.

The cost estimates presented here represent preliminary, concept level design. More detailed cost estimates should be prepared once more detailed design development of each of the improvement and enhancement items has been completed.

A key issue that always needs to be considered and kept in mind when considering aesthetic improvements and enhancements, as is also the case with all infrastructure improvements, is the upkeep and maintenance requirements. All the aesthetic improvements and enhancements will require some level of upkeep and maintenance.

Some items may require a higher level of upkeep and maintenance than others and some, such as the banner poles, have built-in upkeep and maintenance requirement, because the banners, which typically last between four to six months, will need to be changed on a regular basis. Therefore, before any of the improvements are implemented, a careful assessment should be conducted of the upkeep and maintenance requirements, who will be responsible for the upkeep and maintenance, and will there be sufficient funding available to pay for the upkeep and maintenance.

**TABLE 7-1
Aesthetic Design Components
Priorities and General Cost Projections**

Level 1 Priority Items (0 to 5 Years)

No.	Item	Quantity	Unit Cost	Amount
1.1	Median Landscaping – North End Little Creek Road to Robin Hood Road (Does not include construction of medians) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assumes 16’ average median width, trimmed-up pines at average 30’ on center, 50% shrubs and ground covers 	6,600 LF	\$ 60 / LF	\$ 396,000
1.2	Median Landscaping – VDOT Project Segment Robin Hood Road to Lowery Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assumes 16’ average median width, trimmed-up pines at average 30’ on center, 50% shrubs and ground covers 	4,200 LF	\$ 60 / LF	\$ 252,000
1.3	Banner Poles – North and South End Corridor Gateways <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups of 8 banner poles at each gateway, including lighting 	16 Banner Poles	\$ 8,000 / Banner Pole	\$ 128,000
1.4	Banner Poles – 2 Special Gateways a. Norview Avenue – Airport Gateway (8 Banner Poles) b. Azalea Garden Road – Botanical Gardens Gateway (8 Banner Poles) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Groups of 4 banner poles on each side of intersections, including lighting 	16 Banner Poles	\$ 8,000 / Banner Pole	\$ 128,000
1.5	Corridor Edge Landscaping Clusters (As opportunities arise) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 20 Areas @ 100 LF Each Each area to include 6 trees, 100 shrubs and ground covers, plus miscellaneous 	20 Areas	\$ 12,000 / Area	\$ 240,000
Level 1 Priority Items Total				\$ 1,144,000

Over the 5-year period, assumed for the Level 1 aesthetic improvements and enhancements, the average total implementation costs would be approximately \$ 230,000 per year.

2. Level 2 Priority Items (5 to 10 Years)

No.	Item	Quantity	Unit Cost	Amount
2.1	Banner Poles – Major Developments and Access Points to the Corridor a. Johnstons Road – Residential Neighborhoods (8 Banner Poles) b. I-64 (4 Banner Poles – North Side) c. JANAF Shopping Center Entrance at Raby Road (8 Banner Poles) d. Virginia Beach Blvd. (8 Banner Poles) e. Military Circle Shopping Center Entrance (8 Banner Poles) f. I-264 (8 Banner Poles)	44 Banner Poles	\$ 8,000 / Banner Pole	\$ 352,000
2.2	Place Overhead Utilities Underground at Two Special Gateway Intersections a. Norview Avenue – Airport Gateway b. Azalea Garden Road – Botanical Gardens Gateway	2 Intersections	\$250,000 / Intersection	\$ 500,000
2.3	Install New Traffic Signals at Two Special Gateway Intersections a. Norview Avenue – Airport Gateway b. Azalea Garden Road – Botanical Gardens Gateway	2 Intersections	\$200,000 / Intersection	\$ 400,000
2.4	Special Gateway Markers and Associated Landscaping – North and South End Corridor Gateways • Two large markers at each gateway	2 Gateway Areas	\$80,000 / Gateway	\$ 160,000
2.5	Special Gateway Markers and Landscaping at 3 Key Intersections a. Johnstons Road – Residential Neighborhoods (4 Quadrants) b. Norview Avenue – Airport Gateway (4 Quadrants) c. Azalea Garden Road – Botanical Gardens Gateway (4 Quadrants)	12 Quadrants	\$40,000 / Quadrant	\$ 480,000
2.6	Corridor Edge Landscaping Clusters (As opportunities arise) • 20 areas @ 100 LF each • Each area to include 6 trees, 100 shrubs and ground covers, plus miscellaneous	20 Areas	\$ 12,000 / Area	\$ 240,000
Level 2 Priority Items Total				\$2,132,000

Over the 5-year period, assumed for the Level 2 aesthetic improvements and enhancements, the average total implementation costs would be approximately \$ 430,000 per year.

3. Level 3 Priority Items (10 to 15 Years)

No.	Item	Quantity	Unit Cost	Amount
3.1	Corridor Continuity Theme Feature – Intermittent Segments Along Corridor <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Similar to the star symbol with ribbon illustrated in Example Concept 2 in Figure 5.9, applied to light poles at average 100' on center • 30 applications in each group • 15 groups along Corridor 	450 Units	\$ 600 / Unit	\$ 270,000
3.2	Special Gateway Markers and Landscaping at 2 Key Intersections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. JANAF Shopping Center (2 Quadrants) b. The Gallery at Military Circle (2 Quadrants) 	4 Quadrants	\$ 40,000/ Quadrant	\$ 160,000
3.3	Corridor Edge Landscaping Clusters (As opportunities arise) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 Areas @ 100 LF Each • Each area to include 6 trees, 100 shrubs and ground covers, plus miscellaneous 	20 Areas	\$12,000/ Area	\$ 240,000
3.4	Install New Traffic Signals at Two Intersections <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Northampton Boulevard b. Elizabeth Avenue 	2 Intersections	\$200,00/ Intersection	\$ 400,000
Level 3 Priority Items Total				\$1,070,000

Over the 5-year period, assumed for the Level 3 aesthetic improvements and enhancements, the average total implementation costs would be approximately \$ 215,000 per year.

Grand Total for Levels 1–3 **\$ 4,335,000**

Over the 15-year period, assumed for the Levels 1 through 3, the average total implementation costs would be approximately \$ 290,000 per year.

4. Level 4 Priority Items (0 to 20 Years)

No.	Item	Quantity	Unit Cost	Amount
4.1	Place Overhead Utilities Underground Along the Corridor – Little Creek Road to Raby Road (Note: This estimate is very approximate and will need to be reviewed and verified with the utility companies)	20,000 LF	\$200/LF	\$ 4,000,000
Level 4 Priority Items Total				\$ 4,000,000

7.4 Program Summary

To summarize the recommendations for the Corridor and its three segments, the following highlights the overall strategy for plan implementation.

River Segment

- **Establish edge landscaping areas and gateway at south city limits.**
- **Consider rezoning to transit oriented uses with the opening of the LRT station.**

The strategy focus for the River Segment focuses on enhancing the existing uses and quality, and accommodating development opportunities provided by LRT service.

Crossroads Segment

- **Pursue funding to complete VDOT widening improvements.**
- **Improve visibility and accessibility of Best Square site.**
- **Establish edge landscaping areas.**
- **Establish gateway entrances to JANAF and to The Gallery at Military Circle.**
- **Add median landscaping to VDOT widening improvements.**

The strategy focus for the Crossroads Segment is to maintain and enhance the success of the retail areas. The key component is completion of programmed roadway improvements.

Airport-North Segment

- **Adopt Corridor Overlay District.**
- **Streamline regulatory process as an incentive for re-development.**
- **Establish gateway treatments at Military Highway intersections with Azalea**

Garden Road and Norview Avenue.

- **Install gateway corridor markers at three intersections.**
- **Remove overhead utilities at the Norview Avenue and Azalea Garden road intersections.**
- **Install turn lane widening and access road closure improvements at Norview Avenue Intersection.**
- **Install and landscape raised median on Military Highway.**
- **Enhance synergy with Norfolk International Airport.**
- **Pursue redevelopment of Flea Market site.**

The strategy focus for the Airport-North Segment is to create an environment where property owners have an incentive to redevelop to more appropriate, higher quality uses. The key component is the establishment of a raised median along the roadway and the adoption of the overlay district.

Corridor-Wide

- **Establish the Military Highway Corridor District Task force to guide future organizational, regulatory, marketing and financial decisions along the Corridor.**
- **Encourage mixed-use and transit oriented development.**
- **Integrate public facilities into the corridor's redevelopment strategy.**
- **Facilitate public/private partnerships for high quality development.**
- **Incorporate Prioritized Capital Improvements and Aesthetic Design Components Recommendations in City's Capital Improvement Plan.**
- **Expand Small Area Commercial Façade and Aesthetic Improvement Program to include Military Highway Corridor.**
- **Establish Urban Public-Private Partnership Redevelopment Fund.**
- **Establish banner pole gateway areas at Little Creek Road and at the north shore of the eastern branch of the Elizabeth River.**
- **Install Corridor Continuity Theme Feature at Intermittent Segments Along Corridor.**
- **Remove overhead utilities line crossing the roadway.**

The strategy focus for the corridor-wide program is to develop an overall sense of identity of and commitment to the interests and needs of the corridor. Two key components are the establishment of the Corridor District Task Force and the Urban Public Private Redevelopment Fund.