Suffolk 2045

DRAFT

February 21, 2024

THE CITY OF SUFFOLK

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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ADOPTION RESOLUTION

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A LETTER TO THE COMMUNITY

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Suffolk 2045

Connecting Our City, Shaping Our Future

THE CITY OF SUFFOLK COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Adopted by the Suffolk City Council
[DATE]
Resolution #[TBD]

Prepared by

The City of Suffolk Department of Planning and Community Development

With assistance from

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction 1
Setting the Stage 2
Guiding Values 12
The Planning Process 14

2. Land Use and Growth Management 23
Land Use Principles 24
Key Findings 26
Existing Land Use 30
Capacity For Development 36
Future Land Use and Growth Areas 40
Objectives and Actions 64

3. Economic Development 71
Existing Conditions Highlights 72
Objectives and Actions 80

4. Transportation 83
Existing Conditions Highlights 84
Objectives and Actions 100

5. Municipal Facilities and services 103
Existing Conditions Highlights 104
Objectives and Actions 123

6. Housing 127
Existing Conditions Highlights 128
Objectives and Actions 132

7. Natural and Cultural Resources 135
Existing Conditions Highlights 136
Objectives and Actions 147

8. Implementation 149
How to Use the Plan 150
Matrix of Implementation Actions 153

Appendices
Appendix A
Public Engagement Summaries
Appendix B
Land Use Analysis Background
Appendix C
Topical Existing Conditions Reports

1
INTRODUCTION

In many ways, the Suffolk 2045 comprehensive plan carries forward the core concepts that have been presented in previous comprehensive plans for the City. It is grounded in the idea that Suffolk should largely focus growth in areas that are already developed and supported by infrastructure while strategically identifying locations for new growth. The plan's process was designed to foster a well-considered approach to making choices about where and how to grow. This chapter provides a foundation for understanding some of the key values that guide the plan and the thorough and thoughtful process that informed it.

Chapter Contents

Setting the Stage 2
Guiding Values 12
The Planning Process 14

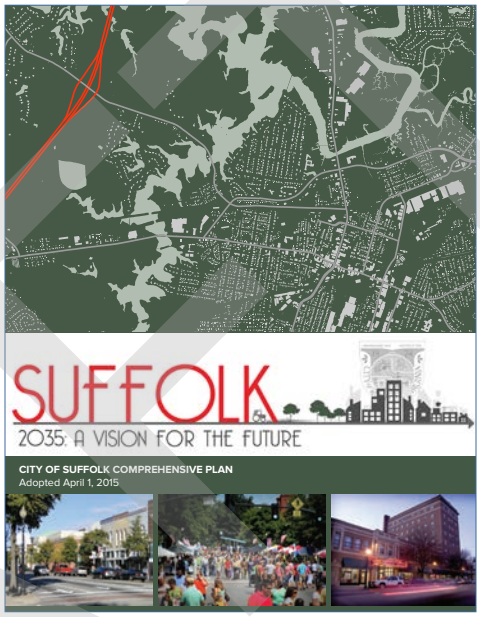
SETTING THE STAGE

What is a Comprehensive Plan?

A comprehensive plan is a long-term guide that expresses the values and aspirations of a community. It is the broadest public policy document a community can create for its future physical development considering the input of residents, businesses, and other stakeholders.

A comprehensive plan should:

- set forth the long-range vision for topics such as land use and community character; transportation and mobility; economic development; housing; and natural, historic, and cultural resources;
- address community needs to prepare for change and protect treasured assets;
- help sustain the City's fiscal health;
- serve as a marketing tool for the City to clearly convey the community's priorities;
- include specific actions and identify timing and responsibilities for those undertaking those actions;
- contain map-based recommendations that indicate the City's intent for where and how it will direct growth and change;
- be implemented over time through many distinct decisions, including consideration of development proposals, annual budgeting, departmental work programs, and setting priorities; and
- recommend an approach for implementation of recommendations.



The previous comprehensive plan, Suffolk 2035, was adopted in 2015. While many of its overarching ideas remain valid today, the Suffolk 2045 update provides an opportunity to address new planning issues and consider new approaches to managing growth and change.

The Need for a New Plan

The 2045 Comprehensive Plan is the fourth iteration in a family of growth management focused comprehensive plans. The first was the 2018 Comprehensive Plan, which was originally adopted in 1998 and provided the foundation for Suffolk's growth management system. The Comprehensive Plan for 2026, completed in 2006, served as the second iteration of this plan and refined and enhanced the City's focused growth strategy. The Comprehensive Plan for 2035, completed in 2015, was the third iteration and carried forward many of the same ideas as the previous iteration. That plan also introduced a different way of addressing future land use using broader Use Districts that provided more flexibility in planning for future land use and a new framework for describing the character that could be expected in these areas.

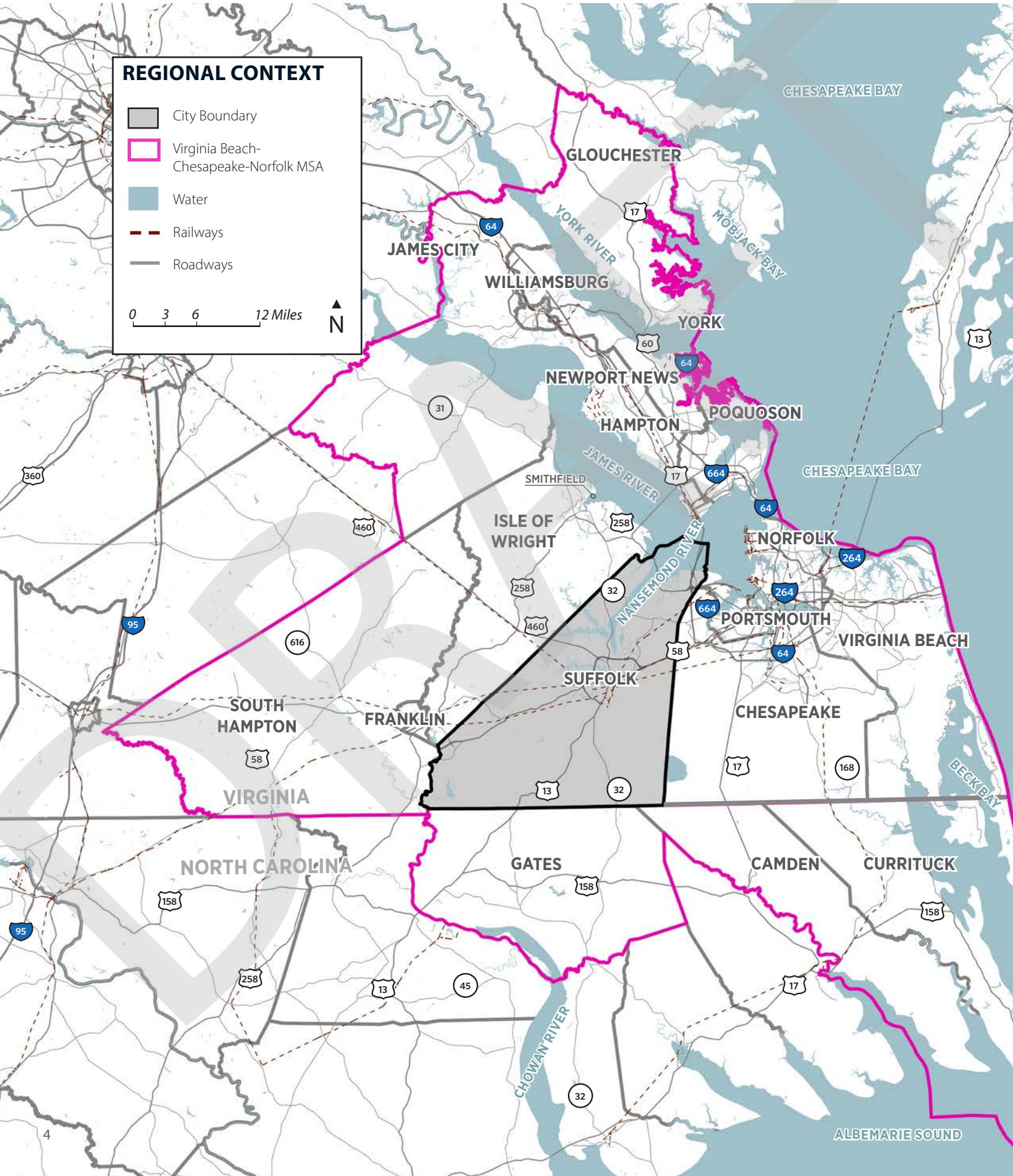
This update reinforces a strong and successful tradition of planning in Suffolk, building off of previous plans while offering new strategies. Notably, this plan provides more guidance on the use of land in specific areas of the City than Suffolk 2035 through more detailed mapping of future land use types. It also includes a more focused set of recommendations that target some of the City's most pressing needs with an emphasis on leveraging current trends to create great places and improve quality of life.

Suffolk 2045 is intended to guide and assist City staff, the public, the development community, City Council, Planning Commission, and others in making decisions relating to development, redevelopment, growth, preservation, and the provision of public services through the year 2045. Existing conditions and new trends relating to economic development, housing, transportation, public facilities and services, and the preservation and enhancement of natural and cultural resources were analyzed. This analysis, combined with community input, provided a foundation for focusing this plan on the most important issues facing Suffolk today.

Suffolk's Development History

Suffolk is located in the Hampton Roads region of southeastern Virginia. The City, encompassing approximately 430 square miles, is bordered by the counties of Isle of Wight and Southampton to the west, the state of North Carolina to the south, the cities of Chesapeake and Portsmouth to the east, and the James River to the north.

The town of Suffolk began near Constant's Wharf, named after John Constant who settled along the Nansemond River to establish his home, wharf, and tobacco warehouses. In 1808, the town was incorporated into Nansemond County and a century later, in 1910, it became a city independent from surrounding Nansemond County. Nansemond County was converted to city status in 1972, becoming the City of Nansemond. Soon after, in 1974, the cities of Suffolk and Nansemond and the unincorporated towns of Holland and Whaleyville consolidated to become the present-day Suffolk. Since that time, Suffolk has continued to grow and develop as a city that shares many characteristics of a typical county, with very large land area that includes a wide variety of land uses in urban, suburban, and rural areas. The City's seven boroughs comprise a system of governance that provides representation for the entire City.


REGIONAL CONTEXT
City Boundary
Virginia Beach-Chesapeake-Norfolk MSA
Water
Railways
Roadways
0 3 6 12 Miles
N
CHESAPEAKE BAY
GLOUCHESTER
YORK RIVER
MOBJACK BAY
JAMES CITY
WILLIAMSBURG
YORK
NEWPORT NEWS
POQUOSON
HAMPTON
JAMES RIVER
SMITHFIELD
ISLE OF WRIGHT
NANSEMOND RIVER
NORFOLK
PORTSMOUTH
VIRGINIA BEACH
SUFFOLK
CHESAPEAKE
SOUTH HAMPTON
FRANKLIN
VIRGINIA
NORTH CAROLINA
GATES
CAMDEN
CURRITUCK
CHOWAN RIVER
BECK BAY
ALBEMARIE SOUND

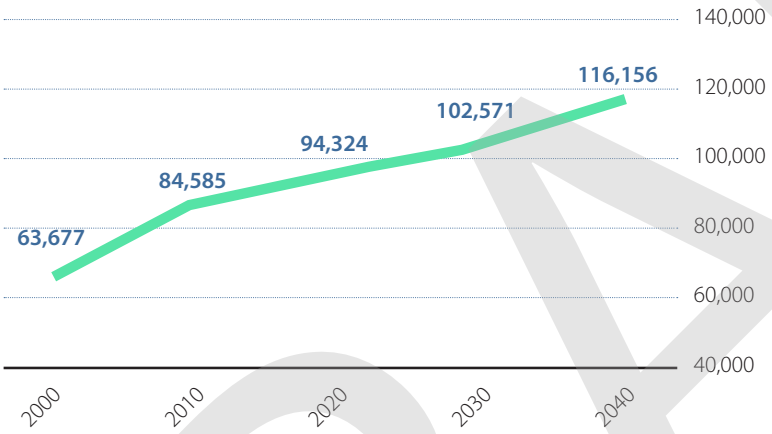
Suffolk in Context

Located within the Virginia Beach–Chesapeake-Norfolk, VA–NC, MSA (often referred to as Hampton Roads), Suffolk is the eighth most populous and largest-by-area city in Virginia. Hampton Roads is comprised of an additional 16 localities, including the independent cities of Virginia Beach, Norfolk, Chesapeake, Newport News, Hampton, Portsmouth, Williamsburg, and Poquoson. It is on the eastern coast of the United States, bordering the Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay. Hampton Roads is also the location of the Port of Virginia, which is the deepest water harbor, the second largest port by tonnage on the U.S. East Coast, and home to the world's largest naval base. Hampton Roads has a rich history as home to the Historic Triangle, including Williamsburg, Jamestown, and Yorktown, three historic colonial communities in the Virginia Peninsula that were important sites in the American Revolution. Suffolk is situated in an area with fertile soils, making much of the city prime farmland, especially for soybeans and peanuts. The Hampton Roads region is home to several natural wildlife resources.

Population Growth

The City of Suffolk's population has steadily increased in recent decades and population projections indicate that this trend will continue. Suffolk's population grew by over 67% between 2000 and 2020, from nearly 63,700 to over 94,300. It is anticipated to continue to grow and reach a population of over 116,000 by 2040.

Population Growth and Projections (2000-2040)



Source 1 – 2000-2020 Decennial Census and Virginia Population Projections
Source 2 – University of Virginia Weldon Cooper Center (2022)

Impacts of Growth

Population growth can present new opportunities to support amenities and services that are desired by the community, supporting businesses, retail, and entertainment in Downtown and North Suffolk. At the same time, population growth can put a strain on existing roadway, water, and sewer infrastructure. It can also contribute to development pressure that can change the look and feel of rural areas. For these reasons, this comprehensive plan sets forth a deliberate strategy regarding which types of new development should be directed to which parts of the City. It also emphasizes a need to focus on the character of new development so that it contributes positively to, and is compatible with, existing areas.

Population Growth and Fiscal Sustainability

Different kinds of development have different impacts on the fiscal health of the City. Development that is not supported by existing infrastructure (roadways, water, sewer) and that is more consumptive of land can be a greater drain on the City's finances. Different growth patterns and uses also have different impacts on demands for services and facilities (schools, emergency services, parks and open space, etc.). Finally, each land use has different implications for the City's tax base. As Suffolk's population increases, the City has maintained a strategy of focusing growth to emphasize development that can rely on existing infrastructure, services, and facilities, while also strategically shaping the mix of uses in consideration of tax implications.

State Statutes

The Commonwealth of Virginia mandates that the City of Suffolk prepare and adopt a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the land within its jurisdiction under Section 15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia. The Code of Virginia requires that this plan be reviewed at least once every five years by the local planning commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan.

The plan must include assessments of existing conditions, growth trends, and future needs for the order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare of the City's inhabitants. The Code of Virginia also requires the comprehensive plan to include a transportation and land use plan. The land use component is encouraged to identify and discuss the location of future public facilities such as parks, schools, waterworks, and sewage disposal, historical areas, areas for redevelopment, affordable housing, and areas of environmental significance.

Planning Tradition and Growth Areas in Suffolk

The City of Suffolk has a strong planning tradition, beginning with the adoption of its first land use plan following the merger of the former cities of Suffolk and Nansemond in 1974. That plan instituted the concept of Urban Development Areas and established a managed growth policy based on directing future growth into these areas in order to prevent urban sprawl and to facilitate the provision of City services.

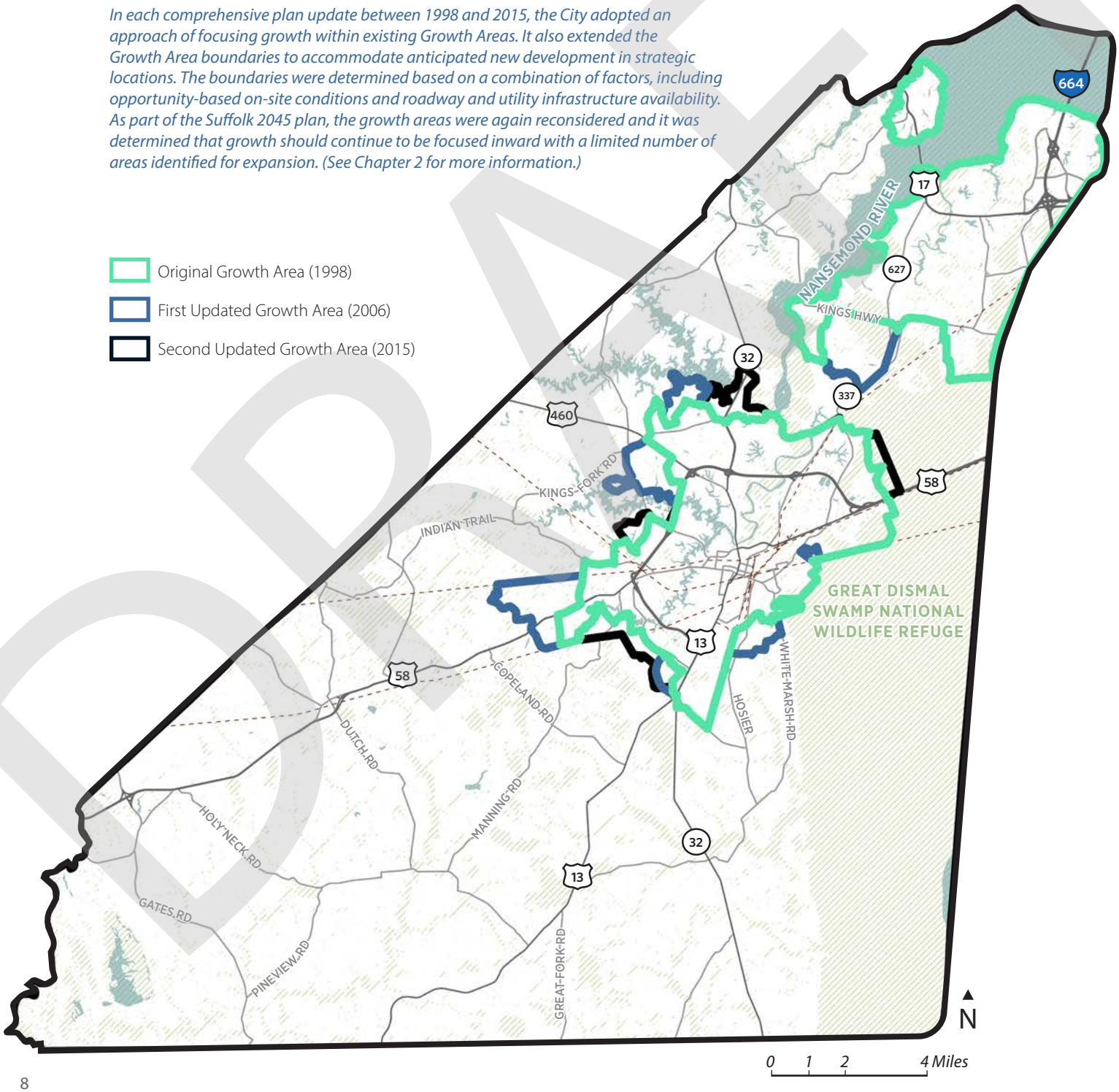
In 1976, the City adopted a comprehensive plan titled the 1990 General Plan, establishing future land use and transportation policies which were designed to guide development through the year 1990. This plan further detailed the Urban Development Areas (UDAs) and identified general areas of the City appropriate for the various types of development anticipated through 1990. The 2005 General Plan continued with that concept and identified large tracts of land adjacent to the UDAs for future residential development.

The process that culminated in the development of the 2018 Comprehensive Plan recognized the strengths of the previous plans, but also identified deficiencies that resulted in "over-abundant" land zoned for residential development. The 2018 Plan modified the City's vision and designated development areas more appropriate to the projected growth of the City. That approach and the Growth Areas envisioned in that plan continued into the Comprehensive Plan for 2026 and 2035 and are still relevant today. This plan validates that approach and carries it forward.

GROWTH AREAS OVER TIME

Previous comprehensive plans include Growth Areas which are intended to show where urban and suburban scale development is anticipated to occur within the City. The Growth Areas are either currently served by, or could in the future be served by, public infrastructure. Suffolk has two distinct Growth Areas: Northern and Central.

In each comprehensive plan update between 1998 and 2015, the City adopted an approach of focusing growth within existing Growth Areas. It also extended the Growth Area boundaries to accommodate anticipated new development in strategic locations. The boundaries were determined based on a combination of factors, including opportunity-based on-site conditions and roadway and utility infrastructure availability. As part of the Suffolk 2045 plan, the growth areas were again reconsidered and it was determined that growth should continue to be focused inward with a limited number of areas identified for expansion. (See Chapter 2 for more information.)



Development Pattern

Before considering potential ways of shaping or directing new development, it is important to understand the existing development pattern of the City.

Suffolk is a predominantly rural area with two major centers of development: the historic downtown core (Central Growth Area) and the more recently developed northern core radiating out from I-664 (Northern Growth Area). The character and development patterns within the City vary greatly. The City features a traditional downtown, a variety of suburbs, villages, rural areas, beautiful waterways, and the Great Dismal Swamp. This variety can make planning for the future challenging because there are many competing demands on how land is used. But it also provides a remarkable opportunity: Suffolk is a City that can support a tremendous variety of activities, lifestyles, and types of development. This contributes to the quality of life, vibrancy, and fiscal health of the City.

The central core is a traditional downtown, with a close-knit, grid-pattern street network that works around historic rivers, lakes, and swamps. Zoning designations in the core area are designed to promote an urban mix of uses which allows for mixed-use commercial uses on the main level and office or residential above. Businesses, offices, and many public facilities are located in the central core. Detached and attached single-family homes and small apartment buildings radiate out from the main commercial streets.

The northern core is more suburban in nature, with commercial uses located mainly in large-scale developments and shopping centers surrounded by residential subdivisions. Residential development in the area features a mix of single-family detached and attached units and multi-family buildings. There has been focus on mixed-use communities in the past decade, with a variety of housing types centered on a walkable, commercial area.

Outside of these major centers of development, Suffolk is largely rural. The density of development decreases as one travels into the rural and agricultural areas of the City. Some villages serve as commercial and activity centers and feature a small business area near a concentration of single-family detached homes. Other villages have less activity and have experienced disinvestment.

More recently, along major corridors Suffolk has seen larger scale warehouse and employment-oriented development.

The City has worked hard to maintain a sense of place through preserving distinctions between urban, suburban, and rural character. This plan builds on this history of planning to promote the best of each of these types of development

Plan Overview

The plan is organized into eight chapters, which include background information, data analysis, objectives, and recommended actions for implementation. A summary of chapter content is below.

Chapter 1: Introduction. This chapter introduces the purpose of and key background information for the plan, presents its overarching values, and describes how the planning process was designed to provide meaningful opportunities for engagement of the public.

Chapter 2: Land Use and Growth Management. This chapter addresses future growth and development within the City. Maps are used to show the location of growth area boundaries, which are intended to manage and direct development towards existing communities. This chapter also presents future land use, using an approach that provides more clear guidance than in the previous plan for where certain types of land uses are desired. This approach also emphasizes community character, with a focus on describing and identifying opportunities for promoting high-quality places in Suffolk through place types that are illustrated in concise text and images.

Chapter 3: Economic Development. This chapter presents how personal prosperity as well as community-wide economic health, including both existing businesses and new businesses, can be supported. It situates Suffolk in a regional and national context while recognizing the unique local conditions that Suffolk has the opportunity to capitalize on. It emphasizes promoting job growth with an orientation toward equity so that all community members have the opportunity to benefit from employment opportunities.

Chapter 4: Transportation. This chapter recognizes the critical relationship between land use planning and transportation. It establishes the strategy for the management of the City's transportation and utility network (water, sewer, and broadband) to accommodate anticipated growth. It also addresses alternative transportation modes including transit, trails, and rail.

Chapter 5: Municipal Facilities and Services. This chapter provides an understanding of how Suffolk is served by schools, parks and recreation, utilities, and safety services. It includes recommendations for these services in order to serve existing communities, accommodate new growth, and provide a high level of service.

Chapter 6: Housing. This chapter addresses the current development pattern, housing availability, and housing affordability within the City. It recommends promoting quality residential development and housing options to support a variety of ages, family types, and preferences. It considers both new housing and reinvestment in existing housing stock. It focuses on developing housing for everyone across the full range of incomes.

Chapter 7: Natural and Cultural Resources. This chapter emphasizes the importance of the area's natural, cultural, and historical assets. It reflects the City's commitment to being good stewards of these limited resources. This chapter provides background information on these resources and guidance on maintaining and enhancing them in light of growth.

Chapter 8: Implementation. This plan will be implemented through the City's land use regulations, capital facility planning, and day-to-day administration of related planning policies and regulations. This chapter contains detailed information on methods for this plan's implementation, including a suggested timeline and implementation matrix.

Structure of Recommendations

The recommendations of this plan are organized as described below. These categories help to arrange the expected outcomes of the plan in a way that is easy to understand and achievable.

Values. At the highest level, the principles represent overarching desired outcomes for the plan.

Topics. Chapters 2-7 are organized by key topics that represent key plan themes.

Objectives. Objectives are sub-sections within the themes that serve to organize actions.

Actions. Actions describe specific projects, policies or programs that are recommendations to be implemented to acheive the goals of the plan.

GUIDING VALUES

The plan's values are statements that represent the shared vision of the community. These statements guide the development of the plan, setting the tone and serving as the foundation for each chapter. The values are consistent with previous comprehensive plans, but have been updated based on key issues that have emerged through community input gathered through the Suffolk 2045 process.

Support and enhance variety in character and types of places in the City. Community members have emphasized that the diversity of place types in Suffolk and the many lifestyles they help support are great strengths for the community. This includes rural and agricultural areas and villages, a mixed-use downtown, and newer neighborhoods in the north. Maintaining this variety and enhancing valued place types will ensure both that community members can continue to enjoy the areas they love and that new development further improves upon these places.

Maintain an efficient transportation network with effective choices for mobility. In any growing community that is focused on expanding economic development opportunity, new development can be expected to contribute to increased traffic. The current development pattern in Suffolk is largely automobile-oriented with congestion between population centers and freight rail lines. However, this plan provides an opportunity to look at land use and transportation together and develop strategies that will both support economic prosperity and quality of life. Efforts have been made to improve the walkability of existing and new developments. Transit will continue to be emphasized to help with citywide connectivity.

Support economic development opportunities with benefits across the community. Suffolk has experienced significant investment in existing and emerging businesses since the last comprehensive plan was adopted. However, while employment has grown, the City and the Hampton Roads region have fallen behind the state as overall GDP has decreased since 2012. Sectors that generate high levels of employment should be targeted in addition to those that support public amenities such as retail and service businesses. Suffolk must position itself competitively both within the region and the state and consider how changes to the concentration of employment in certain industries and commuting patterns relate to land use decisions.

Promote a diverse housing stock, providing options in terms of type, location, and affordability. Changing trends in the housing market support the case for policies that could increase choice in housing options with respect to both unit types and price points. High-quality, mixed-use, and multifamily communities with a range of housing types, including housing on smaller lots and with fewer maintenance needs, continue to be in demand locally and nationally, especially among young people just starting out and older adults. It is also important in order to maintain a competitive workforce across multiple industries and pay grades. This includes both new housing and infill housing in existing neighborhoods. Local and regional examples of new housing development that have been constructed since the last comprehensive plan was adopted provide models that can be instructive for the future.

Protect the natural, cultural, and historical assets of the City. Community members have emphasized the value of Suffolk's natural, cultural, and historic assets. Rural landscapes, parks and open spaces, and wetlands and waterways are treasured in the community and contribute to the quality of life that residents enjoy. These natural assets, as well as the cultural and historic ties to the Nansemond River, the defining early years of America, and agricultural heritage, are a part of what Suffolk is today, and should be preserved for the enjoyment and enrichment of future residents.

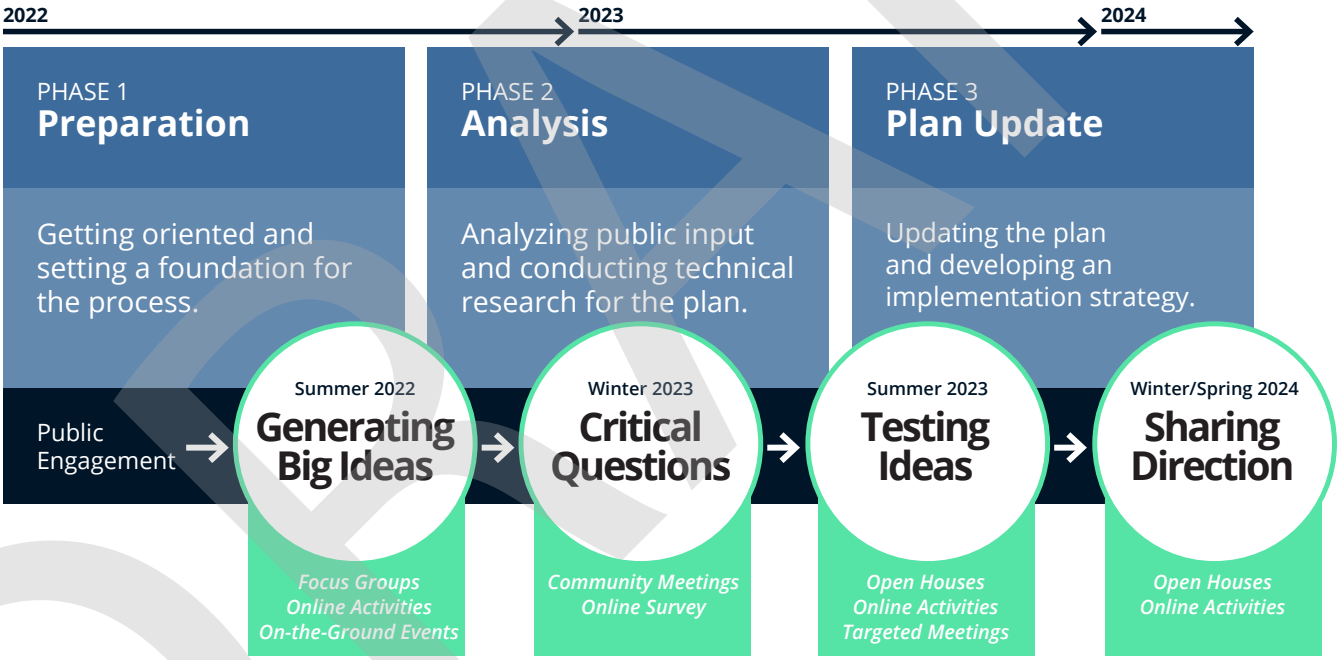
Maintain high-quality services and facilities as growth occurs. As growth occurs, existing services, such as public safety, and facilities will require maintenance and expansion. Facilities and services should be located within current population centers and with future growth in mind to ensure that they are accessible from and adequately serve communities. This includes the quality of schools and parks and their relationship to land use and development.

Preserve the agricultural heritage and character of the City. This plan continues the ideals of the Suffolk 2035 plan regarding the preservation of agricultural land, while recognizing business realities and market forces. It focuses on the idea of providing choices to farmers and agricultural property owners that both encourages the preservation of the rural landscape, where desired, and provides them with flexibility. Related to this idea is the concept of encouraging growth and development in locations with existing infrastructure and supporting placemaking and the concentration of activity in some of the City's villages. This plan carries forward the idea that more rural southern portions of the City will generally be preserved for agricultural uses.

Support Collaborative Regionalism. Suffolk's roadways, sewer and water service, and solid waste program continue to relate to regional plans and agreements. At the same time, Suffolk's challenges and opportunities need to be understood in the context of the regional housing and job market. Roadways are impacted by transportation plans made by VDOT and the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO). A Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD) federal consent order decree may impact the City's expansion of its sewer system, while the Western Tidewater Water Authority influences planned water facility development. Likewise, a regional agreement impacts solid waste management within the City. As with the Suffolk 2035 plan, this plan considers these regional conditions when planning for future land use and growth, in recommendations provided for the transportation network, and in provisions of municipal facilities and services to help ensure that future development within Suffolk continues to support and enhance the vision reflected through these regional plans and agreements.

THE PLANNING PROCESS

The plan update process spanned over two years, starting in January 2022. It was shaped by input from the community and technical research. Public engagement was inclusive and convenient, and informed the focus of the technical work. It also provided a chance for community members to learn about the plan's direction as it evolved. Four rounds of public engagement were conducted in Summer 2022, Winter 2023, Summer 2023, and Winter/Spring 2024. Hundreds of community members participated, and over 6,500 individual comments were



Steering Committee Guidance

A 23-member Steering Committee was carefully selected by City Council to provide guidance on plan substance and to serve as liaisons to the community-at-large. The group was representative of the City's diverse interests, geographies, and backgrounds. The committee held 8 meetings over the course of the project.

Focus Groups

Early in the planning process, ten in-person focus group meetings that engaged over 60 participants were held to collect targeted input on key topics including housing, transportation and mobility, land use planning, and more. Specific key questions were asked to gauge community input and desired outcomes about these areas.

The ten groups covered the following interests:

- Industrial and Logistics
- Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
- Housing
- Commercial and Business Community
- Transportation and Mobility
- Environmental Resources
- Community Services
- Land Use Planning for Growth
- Home Builders (CVBIA)
- Agriculture (Agriculture Committee)

These individuals were kept informed about the planning work and were invited to participate in public engagement opportunities throughout the process.

Outreach and Publicity

Extensive outreach and publicity were conducted to spread the word about the opportunities to participate in Suffolk 2045. The Team has capitalized on existing networks through community groups, organizations, churches, and educational institutions, for outreach. The Suffolk 2045 Steering Committee and City staff played a key role in spreading the word across the community about the importance of this opportunity.

Community events at which input was sought included:

- Stars and Stripes July 4th Celebration
- Family Fridays (multiple dates)
- TGIF Concerts (multiple dates)
- Bridgeport Farmers Market
- Suffolk Famers Market
- Pridefest
- National Night Out
- Peanut Festival

Round 1: Ideas for the Future

The first round of public engagement was conducted between mid-May and late-October, 2022. This round of engagement was designed to solicit big-picture ideas from the public in an open-ended way to lay a foundation for planning work.

Feedback was gathered in the following ways:

- **Online.** Questions about the future and mapping activities were broadly publicized and available online.
- **Paper survey.** Paper versions of the online activities were made available at locations around the City.
- **In-person events.** In-person opportunities to share ideas were offered at several popular festivals and events.

Ideas for the Future included five questions about the City. These questions helped the Team identify areas to focus on that community members in Suffolk expressed were most important to consider as part of the plan update.

1. What has most changed about Suffolk over the past seven years?
2. Suffolk has seen significant new development since the last plan was adopted. How do you think this has impacted the City?
3. What are the greatest opportunities for Suffolk looking out over five, ten, or twenty years? What new municipal services, businesses, etc. would you like to see in Suffolk?
4. What are the greatest strengths in Suffolk? What do you like best about the City or your community?
5. Are there topics that are essential to address as part of this update?

Participants were also asked to identify changes they have noticed in the City, and what they would like to see in the future, on a map of Suffolk. Changes could include places where there has been development, where uses or activities have evolved over time, or where the look and feel are different today than they were before. Hopes for the future included areas where development, different land uses and activities, or improvements in character are desired.

"I appreciate the opportunity to express my thoughts on the future of this community!"

-Engagement Participant

Key Takeaways

- *Suffolk's rural / small town feel was identified as one of the City's biggest strengths.*
- *People see great opportunity in Downtown investment / revitalization.*
- *Open space and parks are viewed as a significant asset.*
- *There is a desire for residential and commercial development in the north that is well planned and coordinated.*
- *The impacts of increased residential development need to be carefully managed.*
- *Traffic congestion is a challenge that should be proactively addressed through careful planning.*
- *There is a desire for more entertainment, restaurants, recreation, and retail in the City.*
- *Making sure that growth and development benefits not just some parts of the City—but the City as a whole—is essential.*

A full summary memorandum can be found in the Appendix.

Round 2: Critical Questions

A second round of engagement was held during Winter 2023, from mid-January through the month of March. Eight meetings were held at convenient locations throughout the City over this period. Meetings included a brief summary presentation followed by the opportunity to share comments on six critical questions that had emerged that the planning team believed warranted special attention in the plan.

1. How can we create inviting places in Suffolk where people feel comfortable and want to spend time?
2. What would you like to be able to do in Downtown or North Suffolk in the future that you are not able to do today?
3. How can the City promote business growth while not negatively impacting day-to-day activities for residents?
4. How can we accommodate new housing and other development that is desired but still protect nature and agriculture?
5. What do you want the look and feel of the City's corridors to be?
6. What kind of housing (size, style, price points) is most needed?
7. Is there anything else you would like us to consider?

Meeting Locations:

- Chuckatuck Borough
- Cypress Borough
- Holy Neck Borough
- Nansemond Borough
- Sleepy Hole Borough
- Suffolk Borough
- Whaleyville Borough

Key Takeaways

- *People want places that are safe, especially through increased lighting and an effective police force.*
- *People want to be able to walk easily to a wide variety of places, including more restaurants and shops.*
- *People think that the City can promote business growth by investing in the downtown area and limiting new warehouse construction.*
- *People think new housing/ development should retain aspects of the City's rural character and can be supported by road infrastructure improvements to accommodate any increased traffic.*
- *People want corridors to have less traffic, especially from trucks and increased tree cover, landscaping, and greenspaces.*
- *People want affordable housing for all incomes and in neighborhoods with good community character and schools.*

A full summary memorandum can be found in the Appendix.

Round 3: Testing Ideas

The third round of engagement was conducted during June and July of 2023. It was designed to test the ideas that were developed through the earlier rounds of engagement and technical analysis to help inform the final plan document.

The engagement was conducted in the following ways:

- **In-person open houses.** Three broadly-promoted in-person open houses were held on three different dates and at different locations throughout the City.
- **Online.** The same materials presented at the open houses were made available online through an interactive online activity and community members were invited to provide responses.
- **Paper survey.** Paper surveys with the same information and questions were also made available in the lobby of City Hall or upon request to anyone who could not attend an in-person open house or participate online. Surveys were also provided to several community groups for distribution to their members.

Key Takeaways

- *It is important to preserve agriculture and rural areas in the City.*
- *Transportation infrastructure and options should be expanded and coordinated with land use decisions.*
- *The City should take advantage of existing unused infrastructure.*
- *Residents are looking for more modern, walkable spaces.*
- *The City should continue to engage with the public about their wants and needs.*
- *The City should encourage quality housing and variety in new housing types .*
- *Generally, infrastructure needs to be expanded in order to support the new and current residents.*

A full summary memorandum can be found in the Appendix.

Each open house was conducted over several hours and designed to maximize convenience as "drop-in" events so that people could come and participate at their own pace, viewing display boards with key information and commenting using worksheets, voting "dots," and comment cards. The open houses also provided an important opportunity for direct communication with the planning team and City staff. In addition to members of the planning staff and consultant team, staff from many City departments participated and engaged in conversation around the topics of transportation, economic development, broadband, public utilities, and parks and recreation.

Input was sought in the following areas:

- **Values and Land Use Considerations.** Participants were asked to provide comments on the updated 2015 draft values and land use considerations.
- **Growth Areas.** Participants were asked to provide comments on potential opportunity areas. These were areas where new growth may provide opportunities to support important goals for the City.
- **Use Districts and Place Types.** Participants were asked to comment on the overall approach of the Suffolk 2035 use districts and place types. Ten place types were presented, along with three images for each place type, which participants were able to comment on.
- **Key Recommendations.** Participants were asked to rate and comment on 24 draft key recommendations.

"I'm proud to be part of the Suffolk community."

-Engagement Participant

Round 4: Sharing Direction

The fourth round of engagement was conducted from late-February through mid-March of 2024. This round was designed to gather feedback on draft Future Land Use and Growth Areas map and plan actions.

The engagement was conducted in the following ways:

- **In-person open houses.** Three broadly-promoted in-person open houses were held on three different dates and at different locations throughout the City.
- **Online.** The same materials presented at the open houses were made available online and were open for comments from the community.

Key Takeaways

- *Key takeaways will be added after the fourth round of engagement is completed*

Participation

- There were over 10,500 webpage views from approximately 4,500 unique visitors during the engagement periods.
- The in-person focus groups engaged over 60 people in ten sessions.
- Over 6,500 unique comments have been collected.
- Over 3,500 people interacted with Staff at in-person events.

Numbers to be updated after 4th round of engagement is completed.

>6,500
UNIQUE COMMENTS

>3,500
INTERACTIONS AT IN-PERSON EVENTS

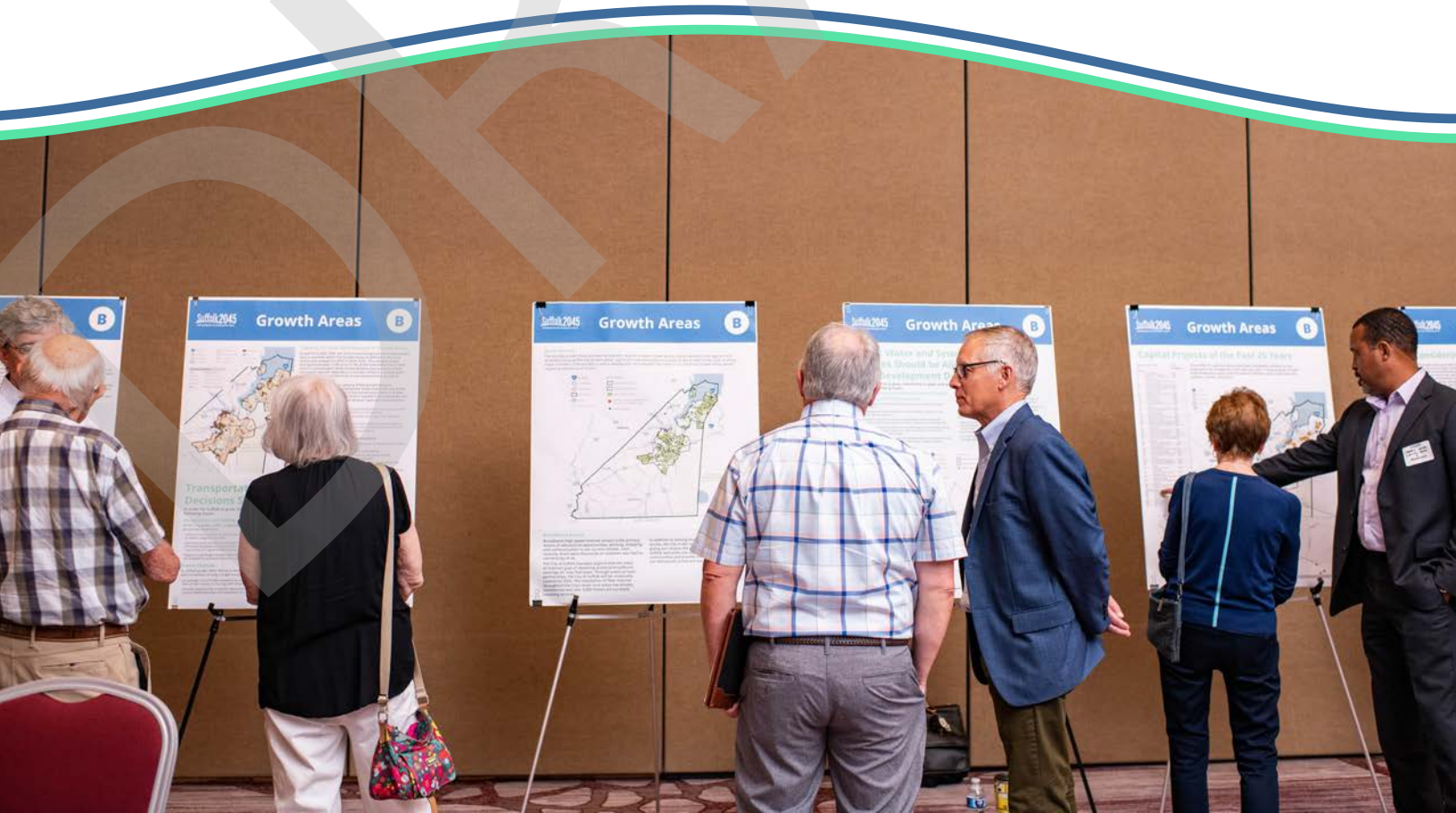
Public Open House, June 14, 2023

Staff Involvement

Many staff departments were very involved in the review of key ideas and analysis relating to the process. Additionally, a number of departments actively participated in the public engagement process, especially the Round 3 (Setting Direction) Open Houses, where they provided information on their work and programs and were available to answer questions from the public.

Elected Official Engagement

Interviews were conducted with City Council throughout the process. Council was kept updated as the process progressed through periodic presentations from the planning team. Elected officials participated actively in public engagement, attending meetings and engaging in conversation with community members.



2

LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Suffolk 2045 is grounded in the idea that focusing growth within existing developed areas is the best way to protect rural character, foster a vibrant mix of uses and activities in Downtown and North Suffolk, leverage existing infrastructure, and promote fiscal responsibility. This has been a consistent idea across the last several comprehensive plans for the City. Suffolk 2045, however, provides more specific guidance than previous plans on what types of uses are desired in which locations in the City. This will provide more predictability and clearer direction for the future. As in previous comprehensive plans, this plan includes the extension of Growth Areas in selected, strategic locations primarily to take advantage of specific opportunities for employment generation. Importantly, this plan sets a high standard for development in these areas, focused on careful design and compatibility with surrounding areas.

Chapter Contents

Land Use Principles.....24
Key Findings.....26
Existing Land Use.....30
Capacity For Development.....36
Future Land Use and Growth Areas..40
Objectives and Actions.....64

LAND USE PRINCIPLES

These land use principles draw from and provide an update to themes from previous plan documents. They were developed to articulate the overarching ideas behind the Future Land Use Plan and its associated recommendations. They are visionary in their depiction of a desired future for Suffolk.

1 Maintain the Focused Growth Approach and Expand Growth Opportunities.

Suffolk has two distinct centers for population and activity. The Central Growth Area features a core of traditional downtown development, able to accommodate retail in storefronts with residential and office uses above, as well as suburban development patterns. The Northern Growth Area features a more suburban commercial lifestyle center, accommodating commercial, office, and institutional uses in often planned developments, sometimes with a residential component. This plan aims to support both while enhancing the unique character and vibrancy of each. However, analysis of growth capacity and public, stakeholder, and staff input, support revisions to the Growth Areas to incorporate additional capacity for future growth both within the areas and expand them strategically.

WHY?

- *Provide opportunities for a wide range of housing, employment options, and social/ gathering spaces in Suffolk.*
- *Ensure the maintenance and appropriate expansion of public services and facilities.*
- *Encourage growth and development in locations with existing infrastructure.*

2 Ensure a High Quality and Character of Development.

The quality and character of development are important to Suffolk residents, and new development should be designed to reflect that value. A series of Place Types was developed in the 2035 plan to guide the site planning and design of future development within the Growth Areas. The 2045 plan addresses a need for more clarity on how the Place Types can be applied in certain locations within the Use Districts. In some locations, there is a desire to reconsider some of the existing Use Districts and Place Types to better support quality of place.

WHY?

- *Support and strengthen the vibrancy and attractiveness of Suffolk.*
- *Ensure community members can continue to enjoy the areas they love.*
- *Improve and enhance the value of places as new development occurs.*

3 Coordinate Transportation and Land Use Considerations.

Transportation improvements are needed to accommodate growth and the continued train, truck, and car volumes that pass through Suffolk, but transportation improvement needs exceed funding. Largely focusing new development within the existing framework for growth, while identifying strategies for funding, will minimize the need to make transportation improvements outside of Growth Areas.

WHY?

- *Ensure that new development is well supported by roadway infrastructure.*
- *Improve walkability of existing and new developments.*
- *Improve citywide connectivity and access.*

4 Protect Natural Resources and Agricultural Lands.

Community members have identified the City's natural resources and agricultural areas as important assets that should be preserved. While the Focused Growth Approach in the 2035 plan sought to achieve this, implementation is key. This plan seeks to identify new opportunities to maintain the conservation of natural resources and agricultural areas outside the Growth Areas.

WHY?

- *Preserve environmentally sensitive areas, open space, and agricultural areas.*
- *Support placemaking and concentration of activity in the City's mixed-use core districts and villages.*
- *Emphasize the value of Suffolk's natural, cultural, and historic assets.*

5 Promote Synergy Between Economic Development and Land Use.

Suffolk's ability to compete regionally and nationally for investment and business development opportunities will impact the City's tax base as well as individual prosperity due to job and wage growth. By extension, it is a critical factor in improving the quality of life of community members. For this reason, land use decisions must be considered alongside economic development opportunities.

WHY?

- *Maintain a competitive workforce across multiple industries and pay grades.*
- *Maximize sectors that generate high levels of employment.*
- *Align housing needs and job opportunities.*

6 Support Fiscally Sustainable Land Use Choices.

Fiscal responsibility is a significant focus for the City as it grows. While not the only consideration, the extent to which certain development contributes positively to the City's overall fiscal position should impact land use decisions. This plan also recommends a fiscal analysis.

WHY?

- *Maintain the City's long-term financial health and continued investment.*
- *Support economic development opportunities.*
- *Make existing employment areas more successful.*

KEY FINDINGS

The assessment of existing land use and analysis of opportunities for the future conducted as part of this planning process illuminated both challenges and opportunities to build upon.

Challenges

Competing for economic development. Suffolk has experienced significant investment since the last comprehensive plan was adopted. However, while employment has grown, the City and the Hampton Roads region have fallen behind the state as overall GDP has decreased since 2012. Suffolk must position itself competitively both within the region and the state and consider how changes to the concentration of employment in certain industries and commuting patterns relate to land use decisions.

Strategizing for infrastructure capacity. Truck traffic will grow with Port of Virginia growth in coming years and new development can be expected to contribute to increased traffic. Similarly, additional water and sewer system capacity will be needed to support future growth. This plan provides an opportunity to look at land use and transportation together and develop strategies that will both support economic prosperity and quality of life. It also considers how and where services should be located within current population centers and with future growth in mind.

Creating housing choice and vibrant neighborhoods. City of Suffolk residents are cost-burdened, spending more than 56% of their income on housing and transportation options. At the same time, there is a growing national trend for more complete communities—neighborhoods with amenities and services—that Suffolk has not yet fully embraced. Changing trends in the housing market support the case for policies that could increase choice in housing options with respect to unit types, price points, and connection to amenities. Local and regional examples of new housing development that have been constructed since the last comprehensive plan was adopted provide models that can be instructive for the future.

Opportunities

Taking a focused growth approach. Suffolk has two distinct centers for population and activity. This plan aims to support both while enhancing the unique character and vibrancy of each. At the same time, an expansion of the Growth Areas along key corridors provides additional capacity for future growth both within the areas and expand them strategically.

Preserving agricultural heritage. Agriculture and forestry make up over one-third of the total land area of the City. This plan continues the ideals of the Suffolk 2035 plan regarding the preservation of agricultural land, while recognizing business realities and market forces. It focuses on the idea of providing choices to farmers and agricultural property owners that both encourages the preservation of the rural landscape, where desired, and provides them with flexibility.

Capitalizing on the regional context. Suffolk is part of the Hampton Roads urbanized area, and its roadways, sewer and water service, and solid waste program continue to relate to regional plans and agreements. As with the Suffolk 2035 plan, this plan considers these regional conditions when planning for future land use and growth, in recommendations provided for the transportation network, and in provisions of municipal facilities and services to help ensure that future development within Suffolk continues to support and enhance the vision reflected through these regional plans and agreements.

Suffolk's Agricultural Heritage

Suffolk is comprised of a large amount of high-quality cropland, much of which can produce a wide variety of crops with high yields. As a result, the agricultural industry continues to play a significant role within the city. However, there are many factors that threaten its continued viability and the preservation of the lands it requires. As the city continues to grow, increasing land values have put development pressure on these agricultural lands, while the continued development of historically contiguous agricultural lands presents challenges to the city's farming community. Development regulations, specifically as they relate to minor subdivisions and utility scale solar facilities, have also led to large pasture areas and crop lands being fragmented, diminishing the ability of land to be cultivated efficiently.

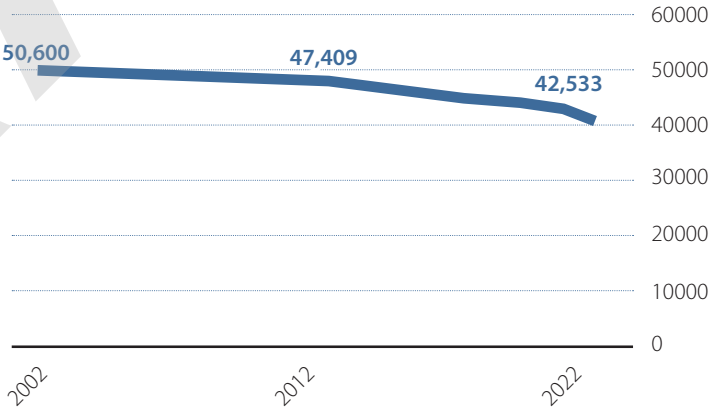
According to the United States Department of Agriculture's (USDA) "Commodity Costs and Returns" data published in October 2023, stagnant crop values and increased production costs have negatively impacted the net value of crops and overall profits. This data shows values fell for one of the more prominent crops in the city, peanuts. Between 2012 and 2020, the net value of peanut production fell by nearly 500 percent per planted acre. Several factors contributed to this trend:

- The increase in operation costs has outpaced consumer prices for crops.
- Federal subsidization of the farming industry has not adjusted with inflation or increased participation in federally sponsored programs.
- The farming industry is being disproportionately impacted by the country's aging population.

The year-over-year loss of productive agricultural lands in Suffolk has also mimicked national trends. According to the "Farms and Land in Farms 2022 Summary" published by the USDA in February 2023, agriculturally productive cropland has decreased by 8,822 acres since 2002, representing a loss of 17.5% of productive crop land in the city.

Understanding the significance of the City's agricultural heritage has been a key principle in each iteration of the City's Comprehensive Plan since 1998. This plan reaffirms these principles and expands on previous goals through the creation of specific actions that acknowledge the agricultural industry's history in the City and the importance of its preservation.

Total Active Farmland in Suffolk (Acres)



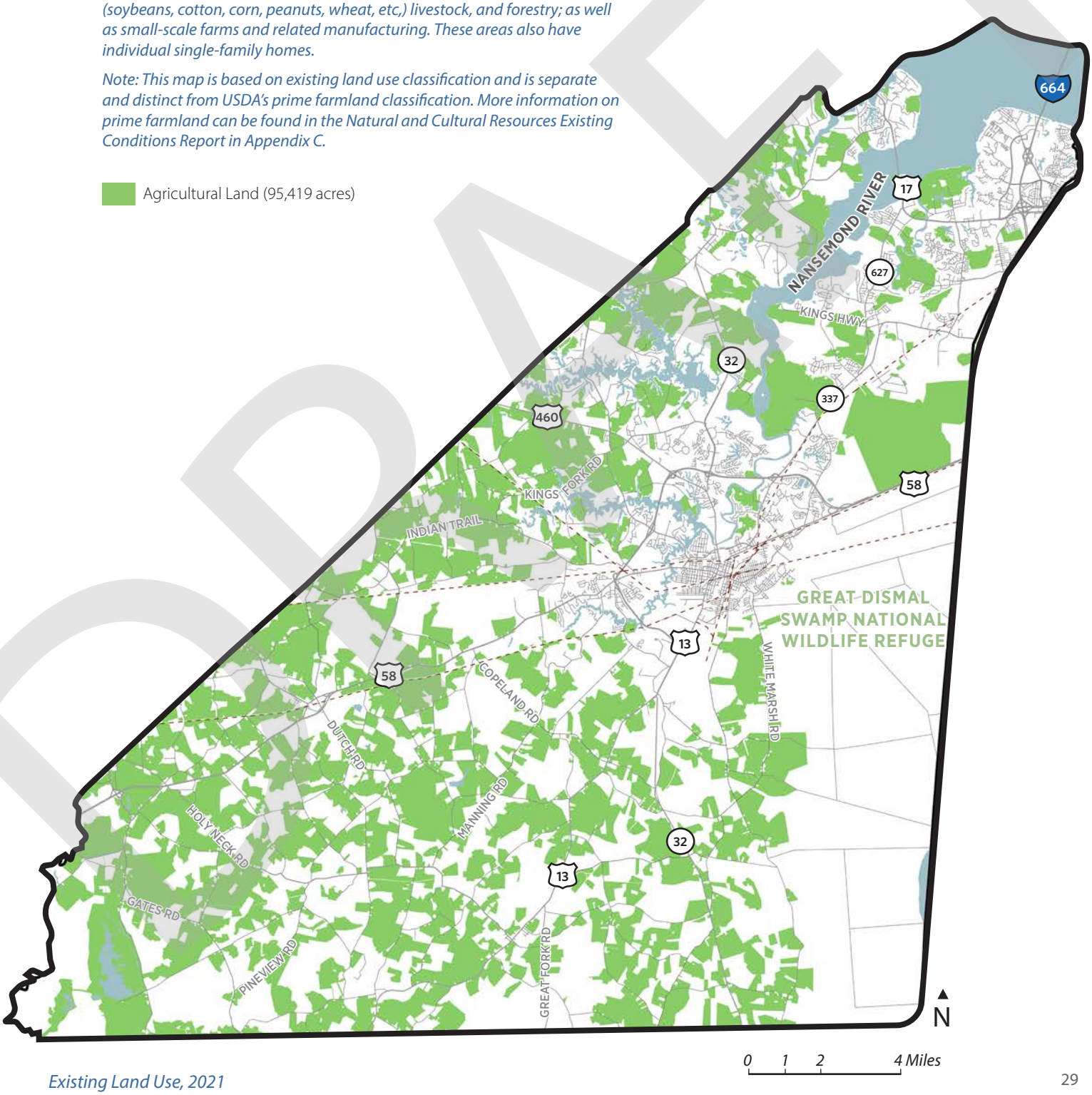
Source: USDA 2023

AGRICULTURAL LAND

Suffolk has approximately 95,419 acres of agricultural land, making up 31.9% of the City's land area. This land is used for large scale crop production (soybeans, cotton, corn, peanuts, wheat, etc,) livestock, and forestry; as well as small-scale farms and related manufacturing. These areas also have individual single-family homes.

Note: This map is based on existing land use classification and is separate and distinct from USDA's prime farmland classification. More information on prime farmland can be found in the Natural and Cultural Resources Existing Conditions Report in Appendix C.

Agricultural Land (95,419 acres)



Existing Land Use, 2021

EXISTING LAND USE

Determining desired future land use changes in Suffolk requires first developing an understanding of current land use and development patterns.

Highlights of How Land is Used Today

Two concentrated areas of development. There is a mix of commercial, residential, industrial, and parks and open space concentrated around the downtown urban core and North Suffolk.

Development along corridors. Extending from the two urbanized areas along major corridors are similar uses to the urbanized areas, with a higher concentration of commercial and industrial uses along certain corridors.

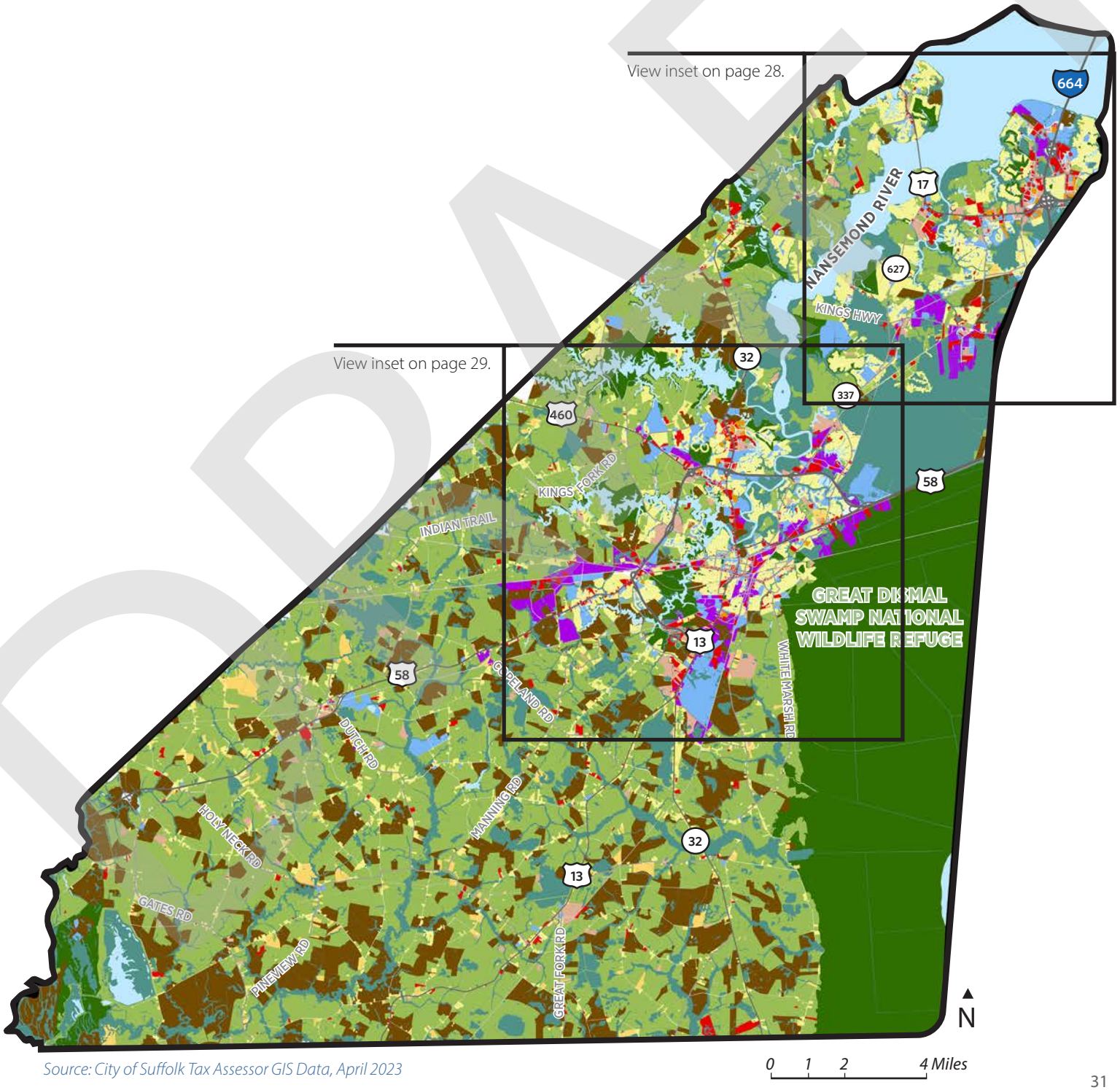
Large portion of agricultural land. Agriculture and forestry make up over one-third of the total land area of the City. In these rural areas are also wetlands, single-family residential development, and some commercial uses.

Preserved Great Dismal Swamp. A portion of the Great Dismal Swamp is in the southeast of the City. It is the most significant large area of parks and open space in Suffolk and contains some of the most important wildlife habitats in the mid-Atlantic region.

Massimo Zanetti Beverage USA, Suffolk, VA

EXISTING LAND USE, City of Suffolk

Legend on page 32.



Source: City of Suffolk Tax Assessor GIS Data, April 2023

Approach

The existing land use descriptions establish a baseline for how the City's land is allocated. The categories identified represent a snapshot of the community at this moment in time and will change with development over time, including the timeframe for the planning process.

The following descriptions were applied to properties across the City for the purposes of the existing land use analysis:

Agriculture. Land used primarily for the production of animal or plant life, cultivation, livestock, and pastures that can range in lot size across the City.

Single-family. Land used for an individual detached, residential dwelling unit on a single parcel that can range in lot size across the City.

Mobile Home. Land used for mobile homes on individual parcels or clustered together in "mobile home parks" on a single parcel.

Multifamily. Land used for residential areas with two or more dwelling units on a single parcel. This include everything from duplex and townhome dwelling units to multi-unit apartment buildings.

Institutional. Land used for government buildings, schools, universities, places of worship, community organizations, non-government community uses, and other similar uses.

Commercial. Land used for retail, restaurants, shopping centers, auto-oriented businesses, mixed-use developments, and other similar uses.

Industrial. Land used for light to moderate manufacturing, warehousing, research and development, logistics uses, and other similar uses.

Right-of-way (ROW). Land used for local, state, or federal roadways and transportation easements.

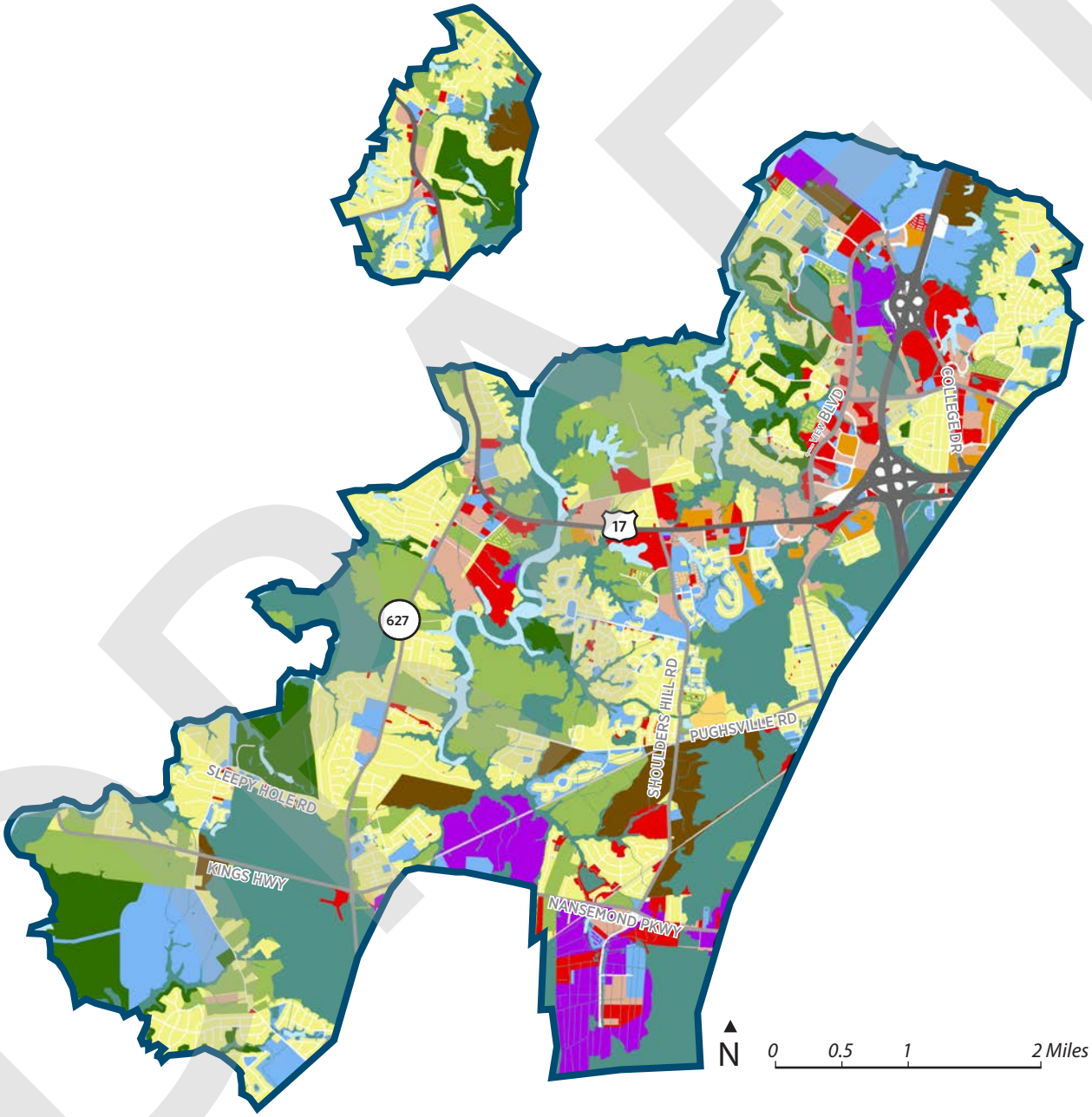
Forestry. Land used for contiguous, forest use on single parcels that are greater than 20 acres in size as defined by City use codes and the 2019 National Land Cover Data (NLCD).

Parks, Recreation, and Open Space. Land used for public parks, protected conservation areas, cemeteries, designated open spaces within neighborhoods, and private or semi-public recreational areas such as golf courses.

Vacant. Land that is currently undeveloped, without a predominant use or primary building.

Wetlands. Land that is undevelopable due to its environmental constraints as waterways and habitats, as identified in the National Wetlands Inventory, maintained by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

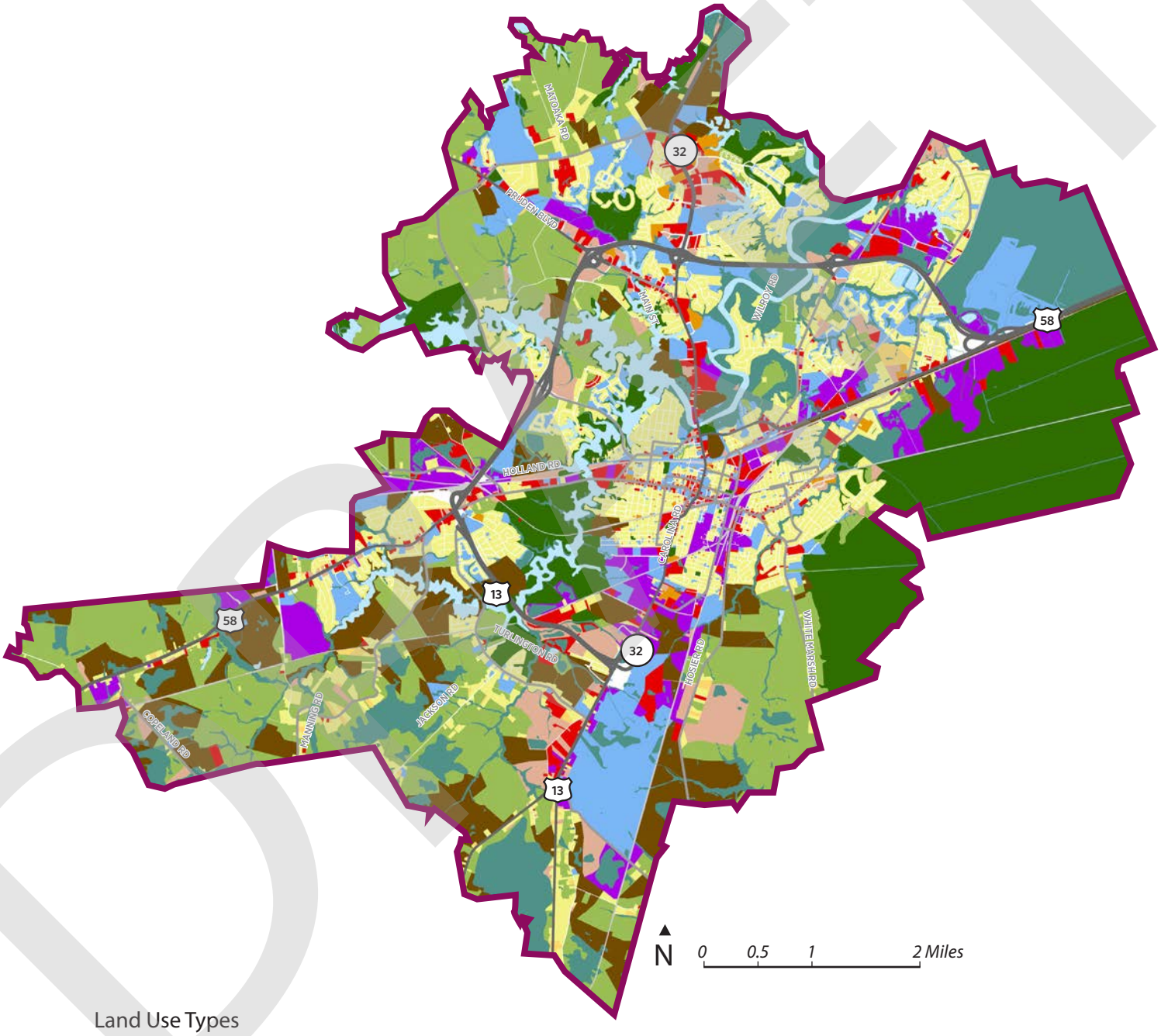
EXISTING LAND USE, Suffolk 2035 Northern Growth Area



Land Use Types

- Agriculture
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Forestry
- Right-of-Way
- Institutional
- Single-family
- Mobile Home
- Multifamily
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Vacant
- Wetlands

EXISTING LAND USE, Suffolk 2035 Central Growth Area



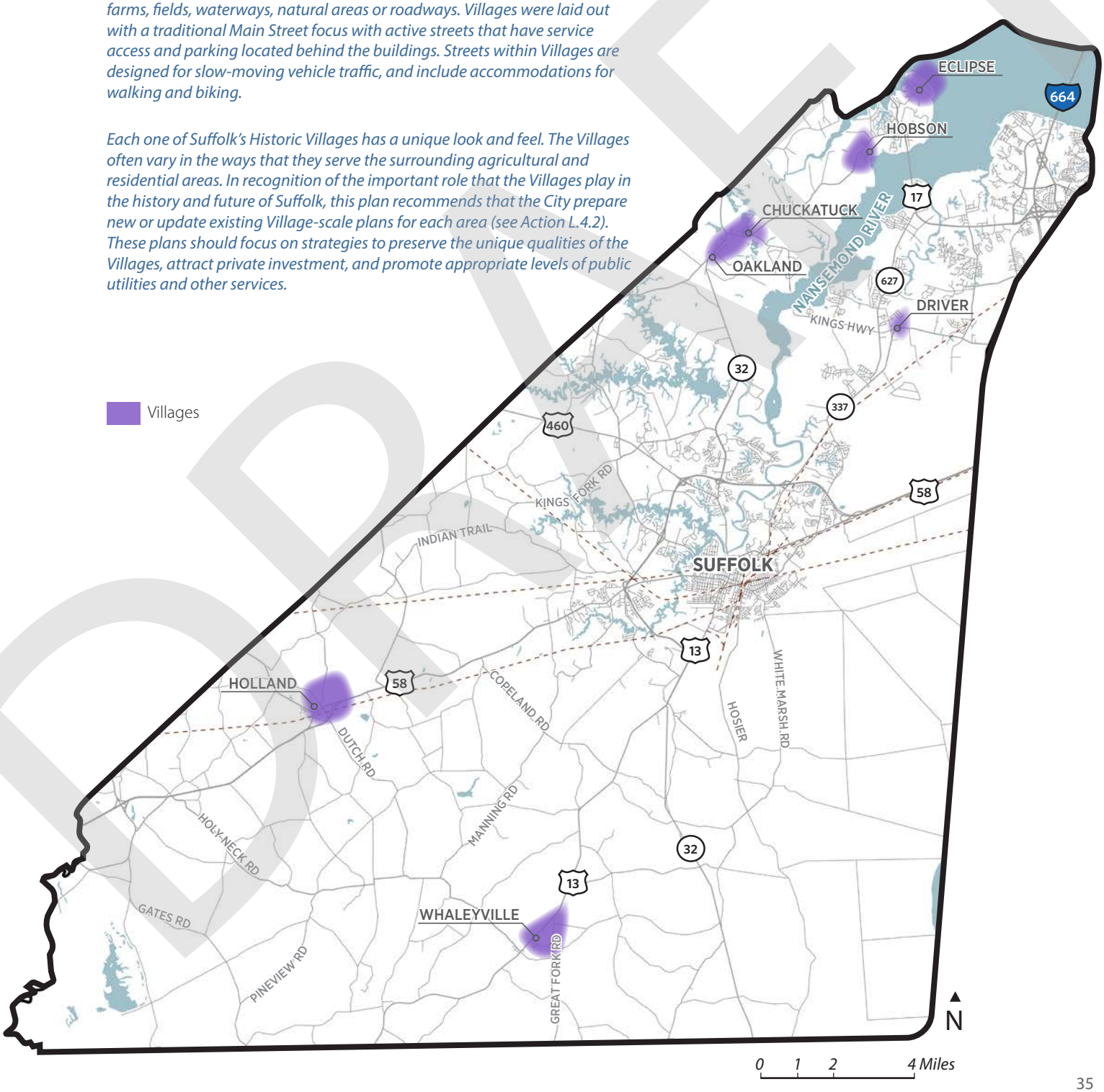
Land Use Types

- Agriculture
- Parks, Recreation, and Open Space
- Forestry
- Right-of-Way
- Institutional
- Single-family
- Mobile Home
- Multifamily
- Commercial
- Industrial
- Vacant
- Wetlands

HISTORIC VILLAGES

Pedestrian-oriented, compact, and mixed use, Suffolk's Historic Villages are the local focus for the areas surrounding them. The Villages have shops, restaurants, and services convenient for local residents and serve as gathering places for locals and visitors alike. Village edges are defined by farms, fields, waterways, natural areas or roadways. Villages were laid out with a traditional Main Street focus with active streets that have service access and parking located behind the buildings. Streets within Villages are designed for slow-moving vehicle traffic, and include accommodations for walking and biking.

Each one of Suffolk's Historic Villages has a unique look and feel. The Villages often vary in the ways that they serve the surrounding agricultural and residential areas. In recognition of the important role that the Villages play in the history and future of Suffolk, this plan recommends that the City prepare new or update existing Village-scale plans for each area (see Action L.4.2). These plans should focus on strategies to preserve the unique qualities of the Villages, attract private investment, and promote appropriate levels of public utilities and other services.



CAPACITY FOR DEVELOPMENT

A capacity analysis was conducted as part of this planning process to identify opportunities to direct development.

Introduction

The Growth Areas defined in the Suffolk 2035 plan provided important guidance on where to direct private development and public investment, and where land should be conserved for agriculture, open space, and the natural environment. The delineation of Growth Areas has been the foundation for policy directives centered on conserving resources, maximizing existing infrastructure, and growing in a sustainable pattern that simultaneously promotes vibrancy in and around Downtown and North Suffolk while maintaining the rural and small town feel in the rest of the City.

In recognition of the fact that Suffolk has continued to grow and develop, as part of the Suffolk 2045 process, the City considered Growth Area boundary expansions. One key factor in determining Growth Area boundary expansion is the capacity for development within existing boundaries. Following this analysis, the City considered other factors pertaining to economic development opportunities and available opportunity sites both within and outside of existing Growth Area Boundaries. Combined, this analysis was used to recommend Growth Area Boundary expansion areas.

Capacity Analysis

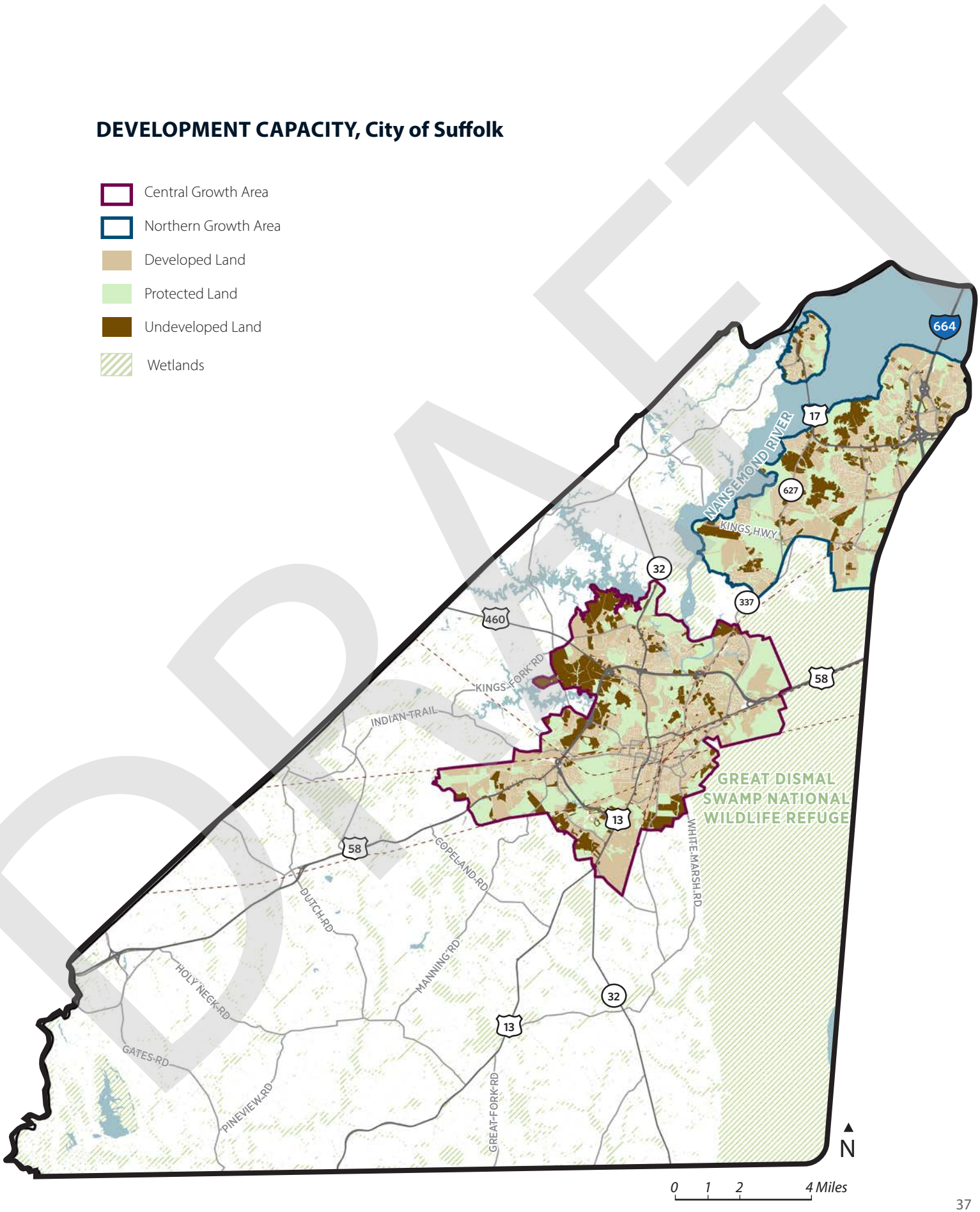
The planning team examined how much developable land is available within the Suffolk 2035 Growth Areas to determine available land for development. All property within the Growth Areas was assessed and put into one of three categories (developed, protected, and undeveloped). These categories were derived from the existing land uses noted below.

- Protected: land that is protected from development due to its environmental constraints or because it is designated as open space (forestry, parks and open space, wetlands)
- Undeveloped: land that has not been built on or altered with private and/or public improvements (vacant, agriculture)
- Developed: land upon which site improvements, such as utility installations, paving, and/or the construction of one or more structures has occurred (all other uses)

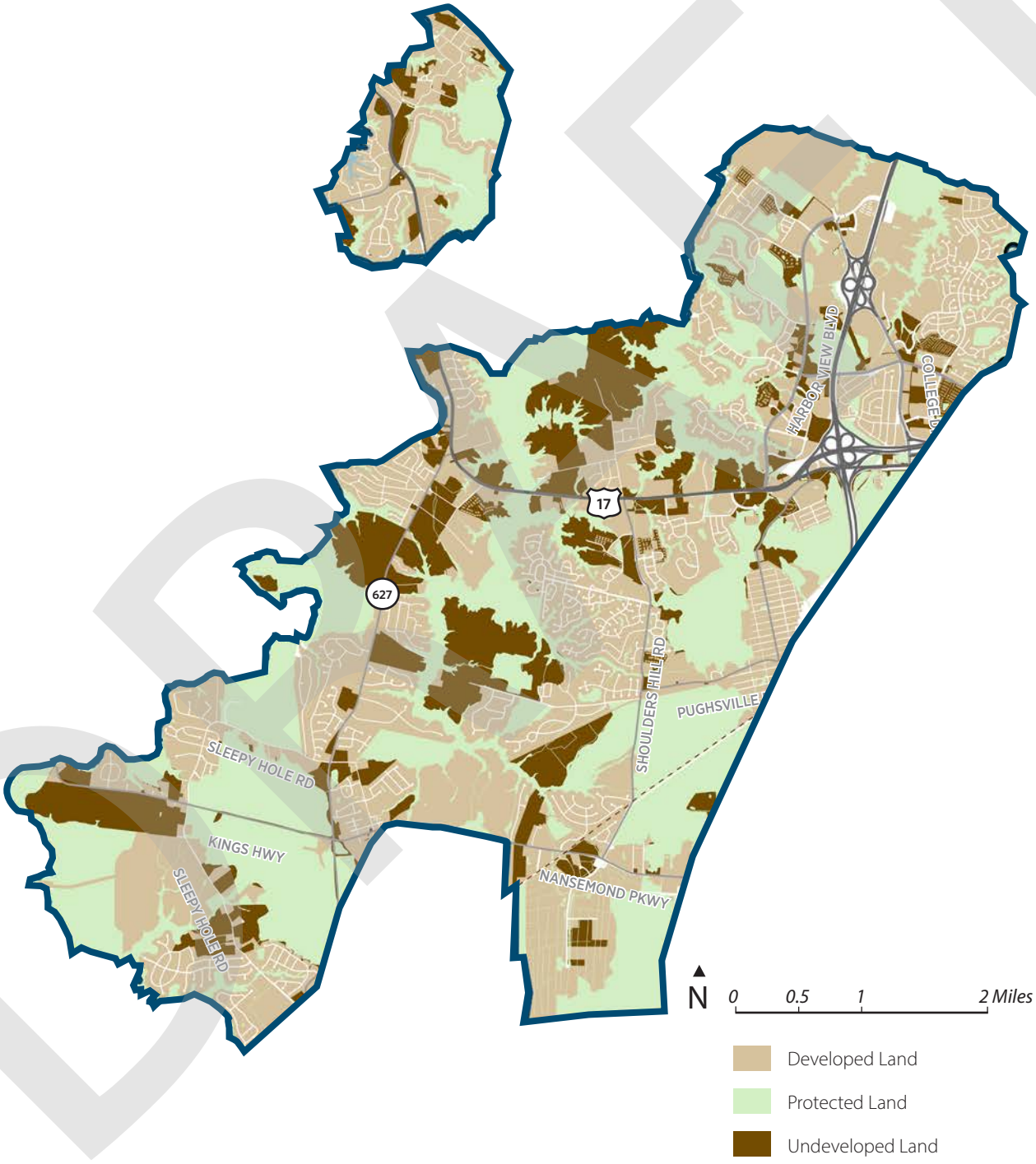
This analysis showed that approximately 7,200 acres (17%) of the land within the Growth Areas is undeveloped. Determining whether that amount of land can support growth depends on a number of factors, including the anticipated types and densities of new development, as well as specific site conditions.

Analysis of the capacity of the Growth Areas to accommodate residential development shows that if the City builds at the densities recommended in the current plan, there is at least three times more land available than is needed to accommodate this development. However, Suffolk 2035 included a wide range of residential densities in many areas and actual densities for new development have often been lower than densities recommended in the plan. In addition, the actual amount of land needed to support anticipated growth will depend on the amount of land needed for other uses, including employment uses (office and industrial), commercial uses, and open space. Finally, many sites that are available for development do not meet the needs for large-scale employment generating uses based on size and infrastructure access.

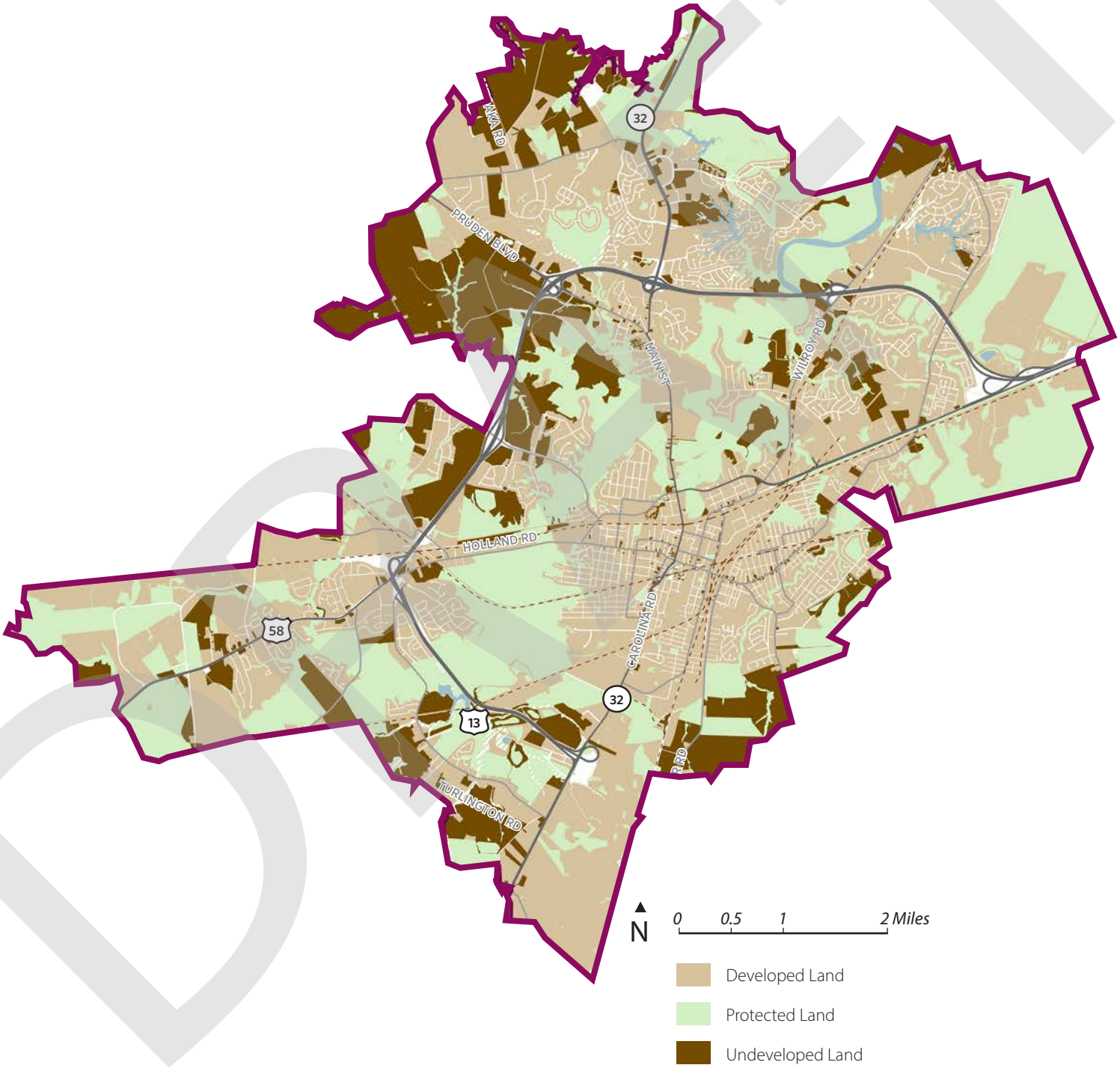
DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY, City of Suffolk



DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY, Suffolk 2035 Northern Growth Area



DEVELOPMENT CAPACITY, Suffolk 2035 Central Growth Area



FUTURE LAND USE AND GROWTH AREAS

This plan recommends a new approach to future and land use that provides more guidance than the previous plan and sets a high standard for new development. It also identifies new opportunities for land use changes to advance key plan objectives.

Suffolk 2045 Approach to Future Land Use and Growth Areas

The Future Land Use and Growth Areas Map on page 41 expresses the City's intent for how Suffolk should use its land in the future. This map identifies a preferred future land use type for all areas of the City. Each Land Use Type describes attributes of urban form and function including building design, streetscape, site configuration, parking, and other similar characteristics.

The Future Land Use and Growth Areas Map leverages the Place Types and Use Districts in the Suffolk 2035 plan as a foundation while making appropriate updates to provide additional clarity. Throughout the planning process, discussion revealed a desire for the Use Districts and Place Types to include more guidance on where and how areas should develop. Based on staff and public input, the proposed Land Use Type expand on the previous descriptions to provide the level of detail desired by the community.

The 2045 Land Use Types include several new categories to better define future land use intent within the two growth areas. However, four of the Land Use Types (Mixed Use Core, Village, Rural Conservation, and Rural Agriculture) are generally the same as Use Districts identified in Suffolk 2035, primarily focused on mixed-use and rural areas of the City. In addition, within many of the Land Use Types, more specific Place Types are described, which provide detail on the varying character (look and feel of built environment). This provides additional information on the qualities of new development that can be anticipated within each Land Use Type.

Current zoning provided the initial framework for the other Suffolk 2045 land use districts. The City of Suffolk's zoning code describes the relationship between future land use recommendations and development regulations. This served as a baseline for both existing uses that are unlikely to change in the future and desired uses for certain properties.

The capacity analysis conducted provided an additional input for identifying "protected" land, which includes parks, conservation areas, forestry, and other similar environmental areas. All land within the growth areas identified as "protected" are designated as "Parks and Open Space" on the Future Land Use and Growth Areas Map.

The map also recognizes and identifies the name and general location for Suffolk's villages: Crittenden/Eclipse, Hobson, Oakland, Chuckatuck, Driver, Holland, and Whaleyville. The Village place type identified in Suffolk 2035 was carried forward and a Rural Village future land use category has been applied to areas with the Village Center (VC) zoning district. Using zoning and other appropriate criteria, future Land Use Types were recommended for all other properties in Villages that did not have VC zoning.

Suffolk 2045 Land Use Types and Place Types

Suffolk 2045 includes 12 Land Use District categories that are more specific than what is presented in Suffolk 2035. The Use Types are depicted in the table on pages 44-45. A greater level of detail on each Use District is provided on pages 46-67, including a summary statement, statement of intent, primary and secondary uses, photos, figure grounds, "building blocks" describing key characteristics, and applicable Place Types (with photos and descriptions).

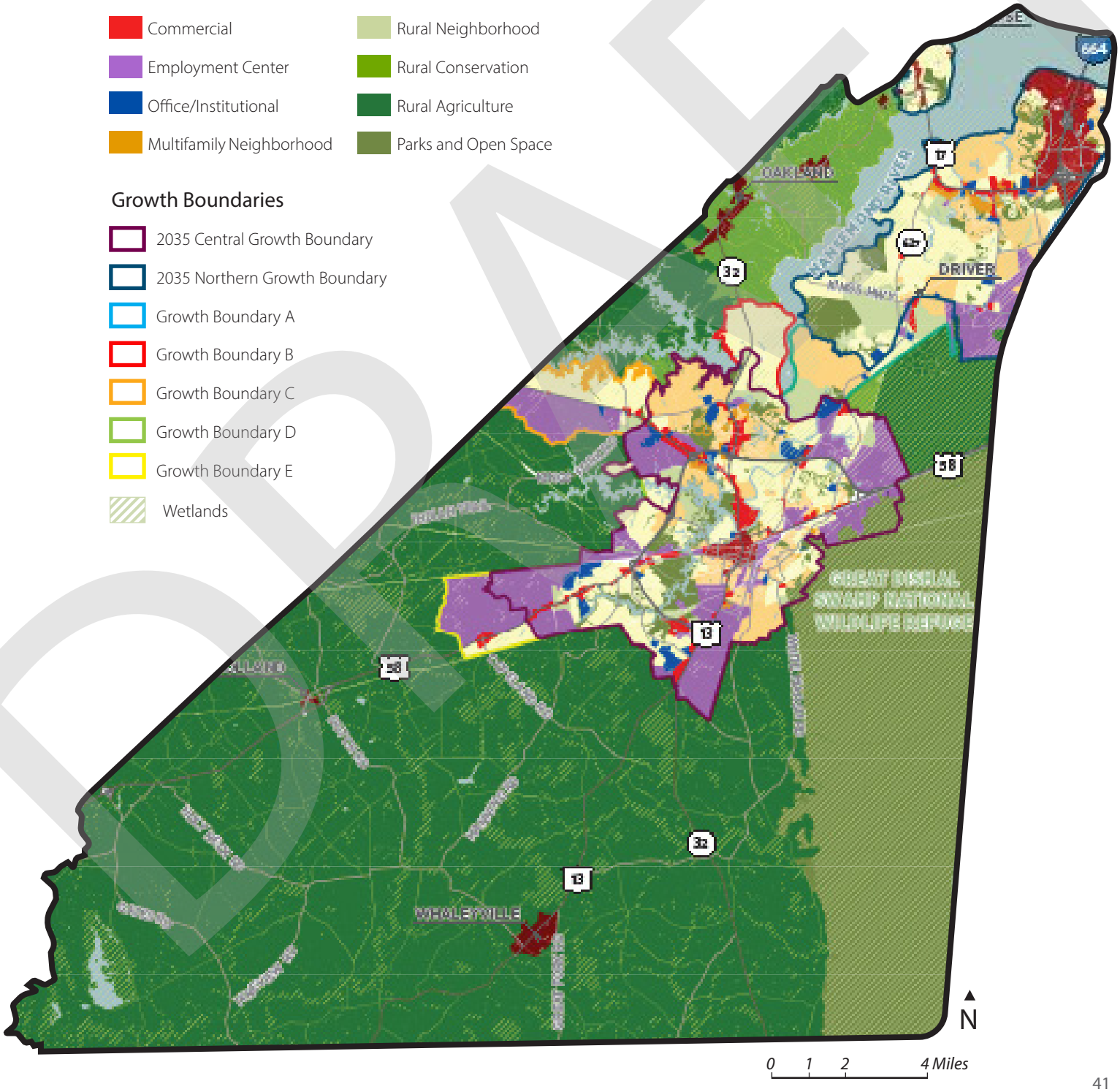
FUTURE LAND USE AND GROWTH AREAS, City of Suffolk

Land Use Types

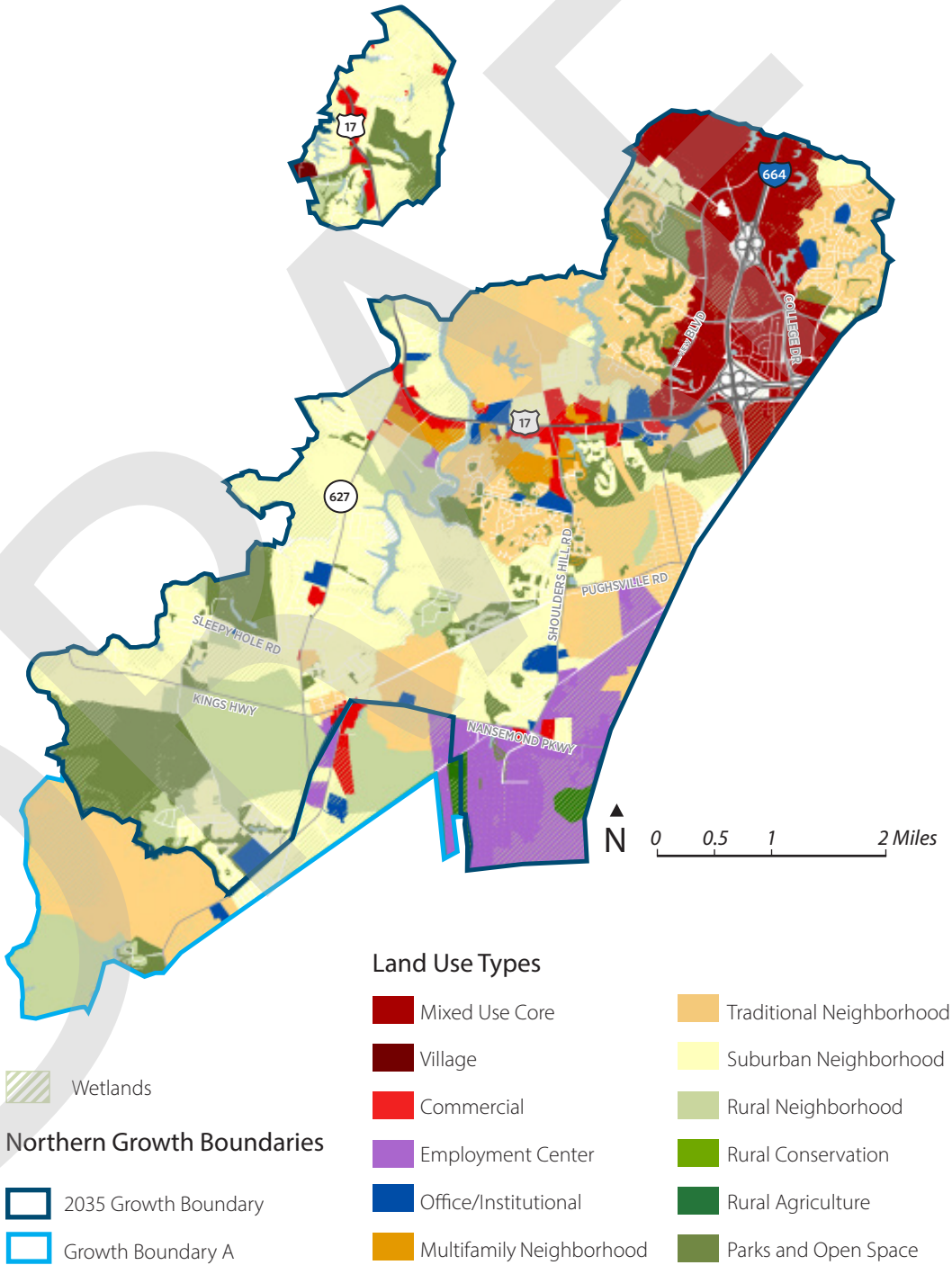
- Mixed Use Core
- Village
- Commercial
- Employment Center
- Office/Institutional
- Multifamily Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Rural Neighborhood
- Rural Conservation
- Rural Agriculture
- Parks and Open Space

Growth Boundaries

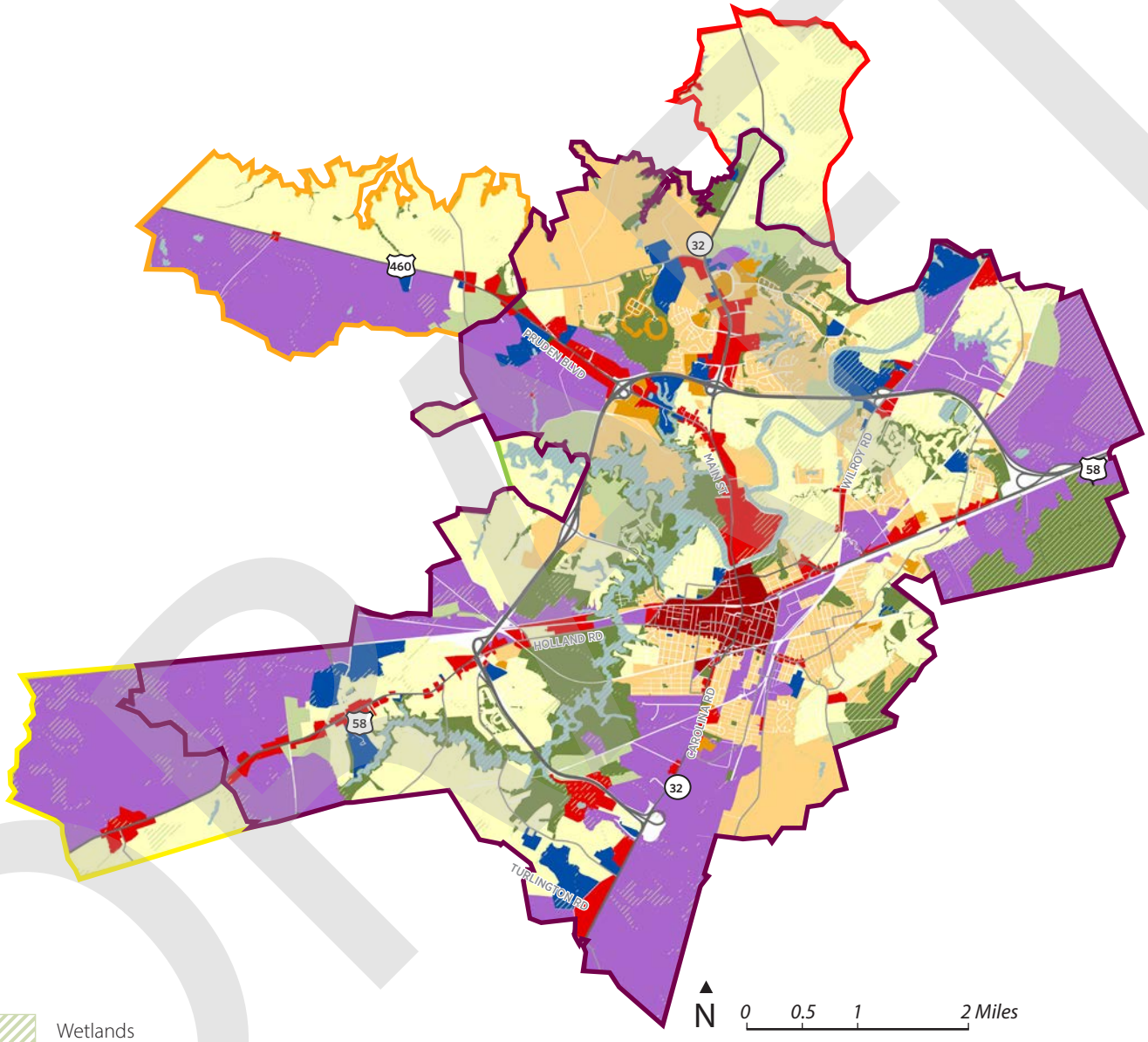
- 2035 Central Growth Boundary
- 2035 Northern Growth Boundary
- Growth Boundary A
- Growth Boundary B
- Growth Boundary C
- Growth Boundary D
- Growth Boundary E
- Wetlands



FUTURE LAND USE AND GROWTH AREAS, Northern Growth Area



FUTURE LAND USE AND GROWTH AREAS, Central Growth Area



Wetlands

Central Growth Boundaries

- 2035 Growth Boundary
- Growth Boundary B
- Growth Boundary C
- Growth Boundary D
- Growth Boundary E

Land Use Types

- Mixed Use Core
- Village
- Commercial
- Employment Center
- Office/Institutional
- Multifamily Neighborhood
- Traditional Neighborhood
- Suburban Neighborhood
- Rural Neighborhood
- Rural Conservation
- Rural Agriculture
- Parks and Open Space

FUTURE LAND USE TYPES

	Land Use Type	Primary Uses	Secondary Uses	Applicable Zoning Districts[1]	Target Density Ranges[2]	Applicable Place Types[3]
Mixed Use	Mixed Use Core	• Commercial • Institutional • Parks/Open Space/ Gathering Places • Multifamily	• Research and Development	• Mixed Use Core-40 (MUC-40) • Central Business District (CBD)	≥16 du per acre	• Mixed Use Core
	Village	• Retail • Restaurant • Personal Services • Single-family Detached Residential • Single-family Attached Residential	• Office • Institutional	• Village Center (VC)	4-8 du per acre	• Village
Commercial	Commercial	• Retail • Restaurant • Personal Services	• Multifamily • Office • Institutional	• General Commercial (B-2) • Neighborhood Commercial (B-1)	8-16 du per acre	• Traditional Neighborhood Center • Suburban Center
Employment	Employment Center	• Manufacturing • Warehousing • Assembly • Logistics • Processing • Research and Development	• Small Convenience Retail • Personal Services • Restaurants	• General (Heavy) Industrial (M-2) • Light Industrial (M-1) • Commerce Park (CP)	N/A	• Flex Warehouse • Logistics
	Office/ Institutional	• Office • Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/ open space) • Hospitals • Medical Office	• Multifamily • Retail • Personal Services	• Office / Institutional (O-I)	N/A	• Office Park • Campus • Suburban Center
Residential	Multifamily Neighborhood	• Multifamily	• Retail • Personal Services • Restaurant • Office • Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/ open space)	• Residential Urban (RU)	8-16 du per acre	• Multifamily Development • Specialty Housing (e.g., Senior Living)
	Traditional Neighborhood	• Single-family Detached • Single-family Attached	• Retail • Personal Services • Restaurant • Office • Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/ open space)	• Residential Compact (RC) • Residential Medium Density (RM) • Residential Urban (RU)	4-10 du per acre	• Historic Neighborhood • Planned Neighborhood
	Suburban Neighborhood	• Single-family Detached	• Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/ open space)	• Residential Low Density (RL) • Residential Low-Medium Density (RLM)	0.5-4 du per acre	• Conventional Suburban • Conservation Subdivision
	Rural Neighborhood	• Single-family Detached, Large Lot	• Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/ open space)	• Rural Residential (RR) • Rural Estate (RE)	0.3-1 du per acre	• Rural Neighborhood

	Land Use Type	Primary Uses	Secondary Uses	Appropriate Zoning Districts[1]	Target Density Ranges[2]	Applicable Place Types[3]
Conservation	Rural Conservation	• Single-family Detached • Agriculture	• Small Convenience Retail • Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/ open space)	N/A	0.3 du per acre	• Rural Conservation
	Rural Agriculture	• Agriculture	• Single-family Detached • Small Convenience Retail • Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/ open space)	• Agricultural (A)	0.3 du per acre	• Rural Agriculture
	Parks and Open Space	• Recreation • Park • Environmental Conservation	• Small Convenience Retail	• Conservation (C)	N/A	• Parks and Open Space

1. **Appropriate Zoning Districts.** The future land use types establish a baseline for how the City's land should be allocated within the roughly two-decade time horizon of this plan. With this in mind, the Future Land Use Types matrix includes the zoning districts that most closely align with the descriptions for each land use type.

2. **Target Residential Density Ranges.** Target density ranges are expressed in dwelling units per acre and proposed only for land use elements that allow residential uses.

3. **Place Types.** Place Types describe categories for areas that convey specific built form within a Land Use Type that conveys its overall look and feel. Some Land Use Types have a single main place type but others can take on different forms depending on the attributes of their specific location. This table provides the names of prevalent Place Types for the Land Use Types that are likely to contain more than one type of place within them. More information on Place Types can be found on pages immediately following the Land Use Type pages. Place Types also include building blocks, which serve as a general guide for the intended scale and character of development. Specific standards including height, setback, and lot size are defined in the Zoning Ordinance and may vary by zoning district.

MIXED USE CORE

Mixed Use Core areas include the historic downtown and the designated mixed-use core in North Suffolk. These core areas focus on a compact, walkable, mixed-use environment with attractive gathering spaces. They provide a variety of commercial, institutional, residential, and recreational uses.

INTENT

- Enable Suffolk to compete regionally and nationally for the most intensive uses by providing both undeveloped and redevelopment sites for urban-scale developments.
- Promote infill development on vacant lots.
- Support multifamily and attached residential development that is compatible with the context.
- Reduce/consolidate surface parking (encourage shared or structured parking) when possible.
- Retain historic character and existing building stock through adaptive reuse of existing buildings.
- Improve connections and transitions to surrounding neighborhoods.
- Employ standards for building form.

PRIMARY USES

- Commercial
- Institutional
- Parks/Open Space/ Gathering Space

SECONDARY USES

- Multifamily
- Research and Development

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	2-stories, minimum (generally at least 25 feet).
Building Form	Variety of types from freestanding buildings to attached buildings. Civic buildings may have varying building form and placement from surroundings.
Building Setback	0-10 feet (generally consistent within a block). Greater setbacks for civic or institutional uses are appropriate.
Streets	Gridded street pattern with short, walkable block lengths (around 300 feet). 8 to 12-foot-wide sidewalks; crosswalks; traffic calming measures, and other streetscape amenities.
Transportation	Walking, biking, transit, automobile.
Parking	Shared surface parking located behind buildings; structured parking; on-street parking. Allow space for pick-up/to-go orders.
Open Space	Plazas, pocket parks, formal parks. Public realm (space between buildings and streets) acts as open space.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

- Mixed Use Core-40 (MUC-40)
- Central Business District (CBD)

TARGET DENSITY RANGES

- ≥16 du per acre

VILLAGE

Village areas include the historic rural communities that provide a mix of concentrated civic, retail, service, office and residential uses at a walkable scale. These traditional centers promote pedestrian activity and preserve the unique character of these areas

INTENT

- Promote land use patterns that complement and help to preserve rural areas.
- Respect the existing pattern of development.
- Accommodate new growth within a limited area that can be supported by existing infrastructure including water, sewer, and roadways.
- Provide opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle connections.

PRIMARY USES

- Retail
- Restaurant
- Personal Services
- Single-family Detached
- Single-family Attached

SECONDARY USES

- Office
- Institutional

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-3 stories.
Building Form	Variety of types from freestanding buildings to attached buildings. Typically smaller footprint buildings.
Building Setback	0-30 feet.
Streets	Gridded street pattern with longer blocks organized by a primary roadway.
Transportation	Primarily automobile, with opportunities to walk or bike.
Parking	On-street and shared surface parking located behind buildings.
Open Space	Plazas, pocket parks, formal parks. Public realm (space between buildings and streets) acts as open space. Passive preserved land and landscaped setback areas, generally private.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

- Village Center (VC)

TARGET DENSITY RANGES

- 4-8 du per acre

COMMERCIAL

Commercial areas include a range of retail, office, and personal services. Commercial areas are typically arranged in three forms: corridors developed along major roadways or at prominent intersections, large shopping centers or malls, and smaller nodes of retail, office, and personal services that service the adjacent neighborhoods.

PRIMARY USES

- Retail
- Restaurant
- Personal Services

SECONDARY USES

- Multifamily
- Office
- Institutional

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

- General Commercial (B-2)
- Neighborhood Commercial (B-1)

TARGET DENSITY RANGES

- 8-16 du per acre

INTENT

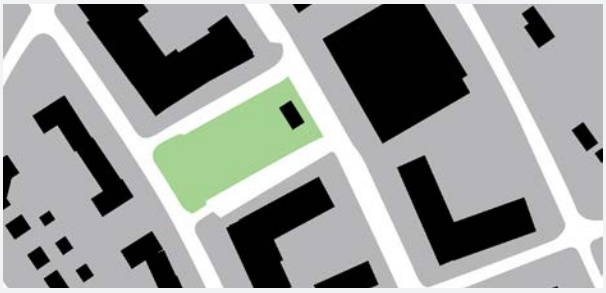
- Accommodate a wide range of commercial uses appropriate for the specific Place Type that defines its character.
- Concentrate future commercial development at major intersections.
- Encourage new buildings to be located near the primary street on at least one side or on an internal street, with parking areas consolidated behind and between buildings in a configuration that can be shared by multiple tenants or uses.
- Where surface parking is adjacent to the sidewalk, provide a suitable buffer (e.g., decorative wall and landscaping.)
- Provide connection to surrounding pedestrian path networks and provide for safe pedestrian facilities within sites.
- Provide connectivity to surrounding neighborhoods and transit service locations.
- Improve/provide public realm features such as signs, sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, and street trees.
- Employ standards for quality building form.

APPLICABLE PLACE TYPES

Traditional Neighborhood Center
Traditional Neighborhood Centers are densely built and walkable. They accommodate neighborhood-serving retail, such as small grocery, dry cleaners, and coffee shops, as well as more compact residential areas and civic or institutional uses including houses of worship and schools.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-5 stories.
Building Form	Smaller footprint buildings clustered together or attached which may have plazas or public space in front.
Building Setback	0-20 feet.
Streets	Streets have short block lengths, wide sidewalks, and street trees.
Transportation	Primarily walking and biking, with some automobile orientation.
Parking	On-street, shared structures, or shared surface lots located to the side or rear of buildings.
Open Space	Community and neighborhood parks, pocket parks, plazas, trails, green infrastructure, and public realm (spaces between buildings and the street) act as open space.

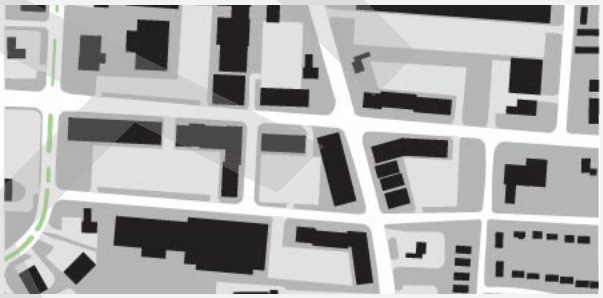


Suburban Center

Suburban Centers are normally made up of single-use commercial buildings or shopping centers, with ample parking, and should be designed to foster connectivity and be distinct from each other. They may also include civic uses and incorporate small open spaces and landscape features. Suburban Centers can develop in traditional, independent patterns, or linearly along major thoroughfares.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-5 stories (generally up to 60 feet).
Building Form	Predominantly 1-story, but may have 2-story appearance. Includes large footprint buildings and both attached and freestanding structures.
Building Setback	Varies.
Streets	Blocks are long and have fewer street connections than in the mixed use districts.
Transportation	Primarily automobile, but site design should consider transportation alternatives.
Parking	Surface lots, which should be located off of a main thoroughfares when possible.
Open Space	Passive preserved land and landscaped setback areas, generally private.



EMPLOYMENT CENTER

Employment Centers include uses such as processing, logistics, warehousing, and flexible office / industrial spaces. This district also includes uses such as manufacturing that require larger buildings, sites, and unique infrastructure needs.

PRIMARY USES

- Manufacturing
- Warehousing
- Assembly
- Logistics
- Processing
- Research and Development

SECONDARY USES

- Small Convenience Retail

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

- General (Heavy) Industrial (M-2)
- Light Industrial (M-1)
- Commerce Park (CP)

TARGET DENSITY RANGES

- N/A

INTENT

- Encourage industrial and employment uses that provide job opportunities and support the City's tax base.
- Carefully manage traffic access and circulation.
- Locate industrial uses away from neighborhoods and utilize natural or man-made buffers (railway, water, forest) to separate industry from other uses.
- Ensure outdoor activities and storage are sufficiently screened from residential uses and the row.
- Reduce on-site exterior lighting and reduce/eliminate light spillover and pollution.
- Encourage "green infrastructure" and site design practices that reduce environmental impacts.
- Provide flexible space to support a variety of high-value activities.
- Encourage the use of higher-quality building materials and landscaping for highly visible sites.

APPLICABLE PLACE TYPES

Flex Space
Flex space buildings are designed for maximum flexibility and accommodate a range of office, research, laboratory, manufacturing, clean assembly, warehousing, or other related business activities. These uses are appropriate as secondary uses in larger economic districts, as a transition between large scale business buildings and less intense uses, such as retail and multi-family. All activities are contained within a building or facility, and display should be kept to a minimum (and appropriately

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-2 stories (generally about 50 ft).
Building Form	Small to medium footprint structures designed for multiple tenants; typically with front office space and flexible rear space.
Building Setback	Varies; shallower and should be consistent with the surrounding context.
Streets	Varies; street design should reflect the surrounding context.
Transportation	Both auto and truck focused, but trip generation rates are lower than other more intensive business uses
Parking	Smaller off-street parking lots and service areas for warehousing.
Open Space	Front yard and perimeter landscaping.

Logistics

Logistics is a large-scale employment use type comprised of warehousing and distribution facilities. Located with nearby highway and rail access, logistics are typically developed in clusters, such as industrial parks, and contain a significant amount of paved space for on-site activities. Exterior storage may be necessary. On-site lighting may be significant, but downlighting and light sources should be screened to reduce light pollution. These facilities should not be adjacent to residential uses.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-2 stories (generally about 50 ft).
Building Form	Large to very large footprint structures, typically designed for a single occupant.
Building Setback	Varies; deeper and should be consistent with the surrounding context.
Streets	Varies; street design should reflect the surrounding context.
Transportation	Principally truck focused, although significant auto usage pending on employment levels.
Parking	Significantly larger off-street parking areas (auto and truck) and large service areas.
Open Space	Front yard and perimeter landscaping.

OFFICE/INSTITUTIONAL

Office/Institutional areas include a variety of public and private uses such as government facilities, schools, higher education institutions, hospitals, and other medical offices.

This district may include low-impact industrial/ employment uses that do not require larger buildings, sites, and unique infrastructure needs.

PRIMARY USES

- Office
- Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/ open space)
- Hospitals
- Medical Office

SECONDARY USES

- Multifamily
- Retail
- Personal Services

TARGET DENSITY RANGES

- N/A

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

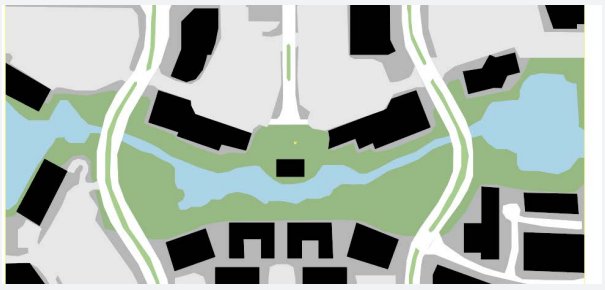
- Office / Institutional (O-I)

INTENT

- Support employment-generating office and institutional uses.
- Locate uses to maximize community access.
- Situate new buildings near the street on at least one side and accommodate parking to the side or rear of buildings; cluster buildings to consolidate and share surface parking.
- Improve/provide public realm features such as signs, sidewalks, landscaping, and street trees.
- Reduce access points into development for pedestrian and vehicular safety.

APPLICABLE PLACE TYPES

Office Park
Office Parks are areas appropriate for employment intensive uses that may include corporate office, light industrial, advanced manufacturing, research and development, support services, or incubator facilities for start-ups. Buildings tend to have a larger footprint, 1-2 story, and may include highbay spaces, and loading areas. These areas tend to be designed in a primarily auto-oriented setting, but should accommodate transportation alternatives.



BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-4 Stories.
Building Form	Variety of large-scale office and industrial buildings.
Building Setback	Varies.
Streets	Primarily car-oriented development and may include accommodation for large trucks. Site design and block length should accommodate biking and other transportation alternatives.
Transportation	Primarily automobile, with opportunities to walk or bike.
Parking	Surface lots or parking garages, which should be located off of main thoroughfares when possible.
Open Space	Trail connections, passive preserved land, and landscaped setback areas; generally private.

Campus

Campuses are academic, governmental, and medical (hospital) campuses, religious centers and retreats, including a range of building types and uses that reflect their unique functions. The core of the campus area may cluster buildings in a walkable pattern with some limitations to vehicular access. This character should apply when there is significant differentiation between campus uses and the

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	Varies per institutional plans.
Building Form	Key campus buildings are strategically placed on major and minor axes, creating vistas terminated by significant architectural elements.
Building Setback	Varies.
Streets	Curvilinear street pattern with long blocks on the district's edges with a walkable central area.
Transportation	Incorporates bicycle facilities, strong pedestrian infrastructure and a campus transit system.
Parking	Surface lots, structured parking and on-street; may be restricted.
Open Space	Formal parks, athletic fields, pocket parks.

Suburban Center

Suburban Centers are normally made up of single-use commercial buildings or shopping centers, with ample parking, and should be designed to foster connectivity and be distinct from each other. They may also include civic uses and incorporate small open spaces and landscape features. Suburban Centers can develop in traditional, independent patterns, or linearly along major thoroughfares.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-5 stories (generally up to 60 feet).
Building Form	Predominantly 1-story, but may have 2-story appearance. Includes large footprint buildings and both attached and freestanding structures.
Building Setback	Varies.
Streets	Blocks are long and have fewer street connections than in the mixed use districts.
Transportation	Primarily automobile, but site design should consider transportation alternatives.
Parking	Surface lots, which should be located off of a main thoroughfares when possible.
Open Space	Passive preserved land and landscaped setback areas, generally private.

MULTIFAMILY

Multifamily Neighborhood areas include primarily multifamily (owner and renter occupied) developments in different forms. These typically provide more dense neighborhoods and may have several different scales and configurations of housing within a neighborhood.

PRIMARY USES

- Multifamily

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

- N/A

TARGET DENSITY RANGES

- 8-16 du per acre

SECONDARY USES

- Retail
- Personal Services
- Restaurant
- Office
- Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/open space)

INTENT

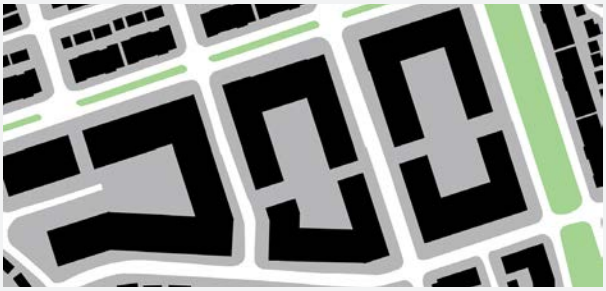
- Provide housing that is attractive to a range of ages and demographic groups at a variety of price points.
- Support high-quality building design in terms of architecture and materials.
- When possible, locate near commercial centers or major corridors.
- Provide vehicular and pedestrian connectivity between developments.
- Improve streetscape features such as consistent sidewalks, lighting, and street trees.
- Provide on-site recreational features.

APPLICABLE PLACE TYPES

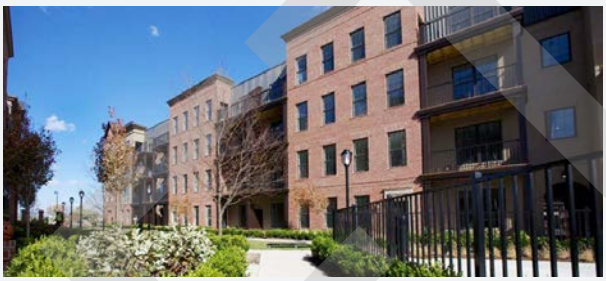
Multifamily Development
Multifamily Development areas contain predominantly multi-family apartment and condominium buildings in various forms. These areas should offer a range of attractive living options at a smaller scale than traditional single-family housing.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	2 or more stories (generally up to 60 feet).
Building Form	Vary in scale and configuration but generally larger buildings with shared entrances and amenities.
Building Setback	0-30 feet (will vary by surrounding context).
Streets	A higher degree of street connectivity with short walkable blocks.
Transportation	Automobile; sidewalks within development should connect to outside sidewalk and trail network.
Parking	On-street and private off-street in shared parking lots or private driveways.
Open Space	Smaller, private pocket parks serve residents with access to larger public parks via sidewalks and bike paths.



Specialty Housing (e.g., Senior Living)
Specialty Housing may have several different scales and configurations of housing within a neighborhood. Sites may develop based on the needs of the target population. For example, independent living or memory care facilities may require on-site supportive uses such as fitness spaces, salons, or pharmacies and may develop around a central courtyard or other private outdoor space. Building forms that support co-housing or other group living uses are also compatible within Specialty Housing areas.



BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-4 stories.
Building Form	Vary in scale and configuration but generally larger buildings with shared entrances and amenities.
Building Setback	0-30 feet (will vary by surrounding context).
Streets	Varied street pattern to accommodate a range of housing densities and development types. Connectivity and the pedestrian experience is important.
Transportation	Automobile; sidewalks within development should connect to outside sidewalk and trail network.
Parking	Typically private off-street in shared parking lots or private driveways.
Open Space	Private interior courtyards and walking paths serve residents with access to larger public parks via sidewalks and bike paths.

TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Traditional Neighborhood areas include neighborhoods constructed around the historic downtown, in the Mixed Use Core District (North Suffolk), and in other, newer areas of Suffolk that are built in a walkable pattern. This district provides a transition to suburban-style development patterns. These neighborhoods may include both attached and detached residential on smaller lots.

PRIMARY USES

- Single-family Detached
- Single-family Attached

SECONDARY USES

- Retail
- Personal Services
- Restaurant
- Office
- Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/open space)

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

- Residential Compact (RC)
- Residential Medium Density (RM)
- Residential Urban (RU)

TARGET DENSITY RANGES

- 4-10 du per acre

INTENT

- Provide single-family housing options that accommodate a range of family sizes and preferences.
- Allow residential infill that fits in with neighboring homes (building scale, placement, etc.).
- Encourage integrated neighborhoods through shared open space amenities and vehicular and pedestrian connectivity, where feasible.
- Provide vehicular and pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods where feasible.
- Promote historic preservation efforts to maintain the existing neighborhood character of historic districts.
- Support neighborhood-scale commercial uses located at the edges of a neighborhood.

APPLICABLE PLACE TYPES

Historic Neighborhood

Historic Neighborhoods are primarily single family housing on average size lots developed in a connected street network. These neighborhoods have a uniform housing pattern with larger average lots and longer blocks, that are more car-oriented. These areas may feature parks and schools within the neighborhood and may be connected to commercial areas.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-3 stories (generally up to 35 feet).
Building Form	Variety of building types and sizes clustered and grouped but linked by a connected street network.
Building Setback	10-30 feet, generally consistent within a block.
Streets	Blocks are small and walkable. Streets form an irregular grid system within the neighborhood; may include alleys.
Transportation	Automobile access with complete sidewalk network; recreational trails.
Parking	On-street and private off-street; may include front-loaded or alley-loaded garages.
Open Space	Preserved passive open space, neighborhood parks, pocket parks, private yards.

Planned Neighborhood
Planned Neighborhoods are appropriate for a mix of compact housing ranging from small-lot single family, to townhomes. Planned neighborhoods have a walkable block pattern with integrated neighborhood amenities such as parks and schools. Small office, commercial, and civic uses may also exist in these areas along major thoroughfares.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-3 stories (generally up to 35 feet).
Building Form	Variety of building types and sizes clustered and grouped but linked by a connected street network.
Building Setback	0-20 feet, generally consistent within a block.
Streets	Blocks are small and walkable. Streets generally form a grid system within the neighborhood; alleys are common.
Transportation	Walking, biking, transit, automobile.
Parking	On-street and private off-street.
Open Space	Preserved passive open space, neighborhood / community parks, pocket parks, private yards, connections to school yards.

SUBURBAN NEIGHBORHOOD

Suburban Neighborhood areas are primarily single-family neighborhoods on relatively larger lots as compared to Traditional Neighborhoods and provide a transition to rural areas of Suffolk.

PRIMARY USES

- Single-family Detached

SECONDARY USES

- Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/open space)

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

- Residential Low Density (RL)
- Residential Low-Medium Density (RLM)

TARGET DENSITY RANGES

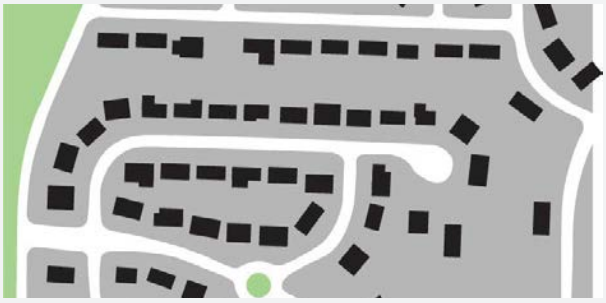
- 0.5-4 du per acre

INTENT

- Provide single-family housing options that accommodate a range of family sizes and preferences.
- Provide vehicular and pedestrian connections to adjacent neighborhoods where feasible.
- Allow for a mix of single-family housing types that, when combined, fall within the target density.
- Promote a cluster pattern of development when environmentally restrictive site conditions are present.

APPLICABLE PLACE TYPES

Conventional Suburban
Conventional Suburban areas contain predominantly single family housing areas generally developed in a car-focused pattern with long blocks and curvilinear streets and fewer intersections than traditional neighborhood types. These areas feature a range of lot sizes, housing size and styles, including some small-scale attached dwellings, but housing styles are highly consistent within a subdivision and tend to have limited connectivity between residential types and non-residential uses.



BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-3 stories (generally up to 35 feet).
Building Form	A range of housing sizes and styles with single-family scale and appearance.
Building Setback	20-30 feet (generally consistent within a block).
Streets	Longer blocks with a curvilinear pattern are common, though connectivity and the pedestrian experience is important.
Transportation	Automobile access with sidewalk network.
Parking	On-street and private off-street, individual drives from street.
Open Space	Public neighborhood parks should be located in prominent, easily-accessible locations. Schools also supplement public parks. Some residential areas include private open space such as golf courses.

Conservation Subdivision

Conservation Subdivisions are intended to conserve forested areas, ridges, wetlands, and other significant natural areas by clustering development and minimizing land disturbance. Generally, these areas conserve between 50-70 percent of a site as natural open space. These places are generally appropriate for residential development in a conservation pattern with lots that are smaller than typical rural lots and are clustered to leave natural areas undeveloped.

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-3 Stories.
Building Form	A range of housing sizes and styles with single-family scale and appearance. Housing is clustered on smaller lots in some portions of the development in order to allow for conservation of open space and other areas.
Building Setback	Varies.
Streets	Varied street pattern to accommodate a range of housing densities and lot sizes. Connectivity and the pedestrian experience is important.
Transportation	Automobile access with sidewalk network.
Parking	On-street and private off-street, individual drives from street.
Open Space	Some private open space, but also includes preservation of larger natural open spaces and shared parks.

RURAL NEIGHBORHOOD

Rural Neighborhoods are areas that have a mix of large-lot residential and agricultural uses. Water and/or sewer access may be provided but the majority of areas are served by private wells and septic systems.

INTENT

- Provide residential growth opportunities while maintaining agricultural use.
- Maintain rural aesthetic.
- Minimize development impact on natural resources (headwaters, stream corridors, natural woodland, etc.)

PRIMARY USES

- Single-family Detached, Large Lot

SECONDARY USES

- Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/open space)

BUILDING BLOCKS

Height Range	1-2 Stories.
Building Form	Individual residential or agriculture-supporting buildings in a low density pattern with large natural open spaces and agricultural areas.
Building Setback	Varies.
Streets	Each lot may have direct access to a corridor.
Transportation	Automobile access.
Parking	Private surface lots.
Open Space	Mostly private. Agriculture and undeveloped private land serves as open space. May have trail access.

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

- Rural Residential (RR)
- Rural Estate (RE)

TARGET DENSITY RANGES

- 0.3-1 du per acre

RURAL CONSERVATION

Rural Conservation are areas of large-lot low-density residential development in traditional, hamlet, and cluster subdivision patterns that share an environment with productive agricultural lands and large natural open spaces and systems.

INTENT

- Preserve existing green space and agricultural land and limit development.
- Protect and enhance natural scenic areas
- Provide access to recreational opportunities.
- Cluster residential development to minimize farmland loss
- Deploy conservation development principles to protect natural systems (e.g., stream corridors and headwaters, wetlands, mature woodlands, etc.).

PRIMARY USES

- Single-family Detached
- Agriculture

SECONDARY USES

- Small Convenience Retail
- Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/open space)

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

- N/A

TARGET DENSITY RANGES

- 0.3 du per acre

RURAL AGRICULTURE

Rural Agriculture areas are intended to maintain continued agricultural use. Retail, wholesale, and industrial uses directly related to the production of agricultural products are allowed on a limited basis. Development in this district is allowed with private drinking water wells and septic systems.

INTENT

- Preserve existing agricultural land and limit development.
- Protect and enhance natural scenic areas.
- Provide opportunity for limited single-family residential, agriculture-related buildings, civic uses, and commercial and industrial uses that primarily support agricultural activities.
- Deploy farming protection to protect water quality on adjacent stream systems, including headwater.

PRIMARY USES

- Agriculture

SECONDARY USES

- Single-family Detached
- Small Convenience Retail
- Civic (schools, houses of worship, parks/open space)

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

- Agricultural (A)

TARGET DENSITY RANGES

- 0.3 du per acre

PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Parks and Open Space areas are integrated into many neighborhoods, providing both active and passive spaces for community gathering, environmental protection, and recreation opportunities.

INTENT

- Preserve existing green space.
- Protect and enhance natural scenic areas.
- Provide access to recreational opportunities and support active lifestyles.
- Support opportunities for historic and artistic features and interpretation.

PRIMARY USES

- Recreation
- Park
- Environmental Conservation

SECONDARY USES

- Small Convenience Retail

APPLICABLE ZONING DISTRICTS

- Conservation (C)

TARGET DENSITY RANGES

- N/A

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

L.1 Focus development in designated Growth Areas and promote development that is consistent with the Future Land Use and Growth Areas Map.

L.1.1 Review development proposals for consistency with the Future Land Use and Growth Areas Map, the Future Land Use Types described and mapped in this chapter, and the Guiding Values, Land Use Principals, Objectives and Actions adopted in this plan.

2.1.2 Review and revise current development regulations, including the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and the zoning map, to improve compatibility with the comprehensive plan. Priority areas for consideration include:

- Downtown Mixed Use Core & Adjacent Neighborhoods
- North Suffolk Mixed Use Core
- Opportunities to Promote Affordable Housing
- Opportunities to Promote Master-Planned Traditional Neighborhood Developments
- Rural Villages/VC Zoning District
- Consistency with Use District and Place Type Definitions and the Future Land Use Plan

L.2 Promote predictable and orderly development.

L.2.1 Continue to review the minor subdivision ordinance requirements to ensure compliance with adequate public facilities standards and other growth management objectives. Review the requirements for minor subdivisions in the Unified Development Ordinance to ensure new single family lots, particularly in agricultural areas, are subject to appropriate and adequate review. In aggregate, this has a detrimental impact on the character of the City's rural areas. Requirements should ensure that new lots are compatible with the surrounding development character, support future land use policy goals, and are well served by public facilities.

L.2.2 Review and update incentives and land use regulations that support traditional neighborhood designs. Existing requirements for street connections, access, sidewalk construction, and cul-de-sac lengths regulate residential patterns to some extent. However, developments designed to maximize the number of lots often lead to a more suburban pattern than desired. Traditional neighborhood designs may include smaller lot sizes than suburban style development and be developed in a more walkable pattern. This is reflected in the Traditional Neighborhood Future Land Use Types which are recommended in many areas of the City as identified on the Future Land Use and Growth Areas Map. Incentives such as density bonuses in exchange for desired neighborhood elements may also lead to better outcomes.

Density Bonuses

A density bonus is an incentive-based tool that permits a developer to increase the maximum allowable development on a site (or a portion of a site) in exchange for in-kind support for specified public policy goals or lowering density on another portion of the site or preserving open space.

L.2.3 Promote master planned developments on certain sites. Master planned developments may be appropriate for large parcels within the Traditional Neighborhood land use districts to support and create complete neighborhoods that are different in character from a more traditional small subdivision, building communities with lasting value. These areas can include a mix of uses and amenities in addition to typical single family residential, including a range of housing types, recreational facilities, parks and trails, and more. They may be pursued as a public-private partnership between the City and the developer.

L.2.4 Ensure that the cluster development provisions allow for more community-usable open space. Consider revisions to the Unified Development Ordinance to require minimum dimensions for public and private open space within proposed cluster developments. Clearly define usable open space by dimension and supported activities. Develop standard proffer language to support consistent implementation and conformance.

The Riverfront at Harbour View

The Riverfront at Harbour View is a master planned community located in Northern Suffolk with easy access to I-664. Fronting two scenic miles of the Nansemond and James Rivers, this riverfront, golf course, resort-style community offers beautifully handcrafted custom homes and condominiums. The community has many private amenities, including

- *Sports facilities for golf, tennis, and volleyball*
- *Private meeting spaces*
- *Swimming facilities*
- *Recreational facilities, including walking/jogging paths, biking trails, and playgrounds*
- *Parks along the riverfront and in the Village Square*
- *Landscaped medians with benches and walkways*

L.3 Promote a balance of residential and non-residential land uses.

L.3.1 Adjust residential density range targets within Use Districts to better align with recent trends and market demands. Evaluate the density requirements within the Unified Development Ordinance for alignment with the Character Types outlined in the Comprehensive Plan. Consider minimum density requirements where additional housing development is desirable. Encourage mixed-income developments with a variety of units at different price points through density incentives to increase the supply of affordable housing.

L.3.2 Continue to develop implementation tools that will help achieve an appropriate jobs-to-housing ratio. Focus efforts to facilitate the retention and expansion of office, research and development, and manufacturing activity in Suffolk through land use planning. (Note: this action is also closely related to Objective E.2 in Chapter 3, Economic Development.) Ensure that appropriately located and zoned land is available to support the maintenance and continued growth of high technology, office, industrial and other employment center uses throughout the City.

L.3.3 Develop guidelines for inclusion of affordable housing units for moderate income workforce housing as part of mixed-use developments. Promote financial tools (such as Low Income Housing Tax Credits) within the development community. Facilitate the production of new affordable units with targeted incentives, including expedited plan review and permitting. Regulatory incentives should be developed in consultation with the development community.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC)

A Low-Income Housing Tax Credit provides a tax incentive to construct or rehabilitate affordable rental housing for low-income households. They subsidize the acquisition, construction, and rehabilitation of affordable rental housing for low- and moderate-income tenants. The LIHTC was enacted as part of the 1986 Tax Reform Act and has since been modified numerous times.

Source: Tax Policy Center webpage

L.4 Promote compatibility in land use patterns and encourage the creation of quality places.

L.4.1 Continue to develop new and expand existing incentives that encourage mixed-use development. Intentionally define permitted uses within commercial, mixed-use, and employment areas to allow for mixed-use developments at various scales by-right. Incorporate design and form-based standards for mixed-use areas to address building and parking locations relative to the street, sidewalk locations and connectivity, building design, and public spaces. Utilize density bonuses or other means to incentivize desired development. Adopted incentives should aim to increase the profitability of a project by increasing density or intensity on a site in exchange for providing more amenities that benefit the community, for example: open space preservation, affordable housing units, amenities, parking, and alternative energy generation.

L.4.2 Prepare or update village area plans to facilitate long-term decision making for Suffolk's historic villages. Historic Villages are identified on page 30 and include: Eclipse, Hobson, Chuckatuck, Oakland, Driver, Holland, and Whaleyville. Village area plans are needed to set land use and design or form-based code standards to maintain a rural village scale, promote pedestrian activity, and preserve their unique character. Given the unique nature of these compact centers, a cohesive and community-driven vision for development should be established for each village.

L.4.3 Promote higher density residential development where growth is well supported by existing infrastructure. This may include areas where transportation corridors and infrastructure are already established and where the proposed use is compatible with adjacent uses and the established development pattern. Continue to evaluate the appropriate residential densities when properties are proposed for rezoning to Mixed Use Overlay Districts (MUD).

Mixed Use Overlay District (MUD)

Mixed-Use Overlay District is a land use designation (zoning district) that permits a complementary mix of residential, commercial, and/or industrial uses in a single district. It can provide many benefits, including:

- *Reducing combined housing and transportation costs for households by providing diverse housing options and alternatives to automobile travel;*
- *Creating cohesive, yet diverse, neighborhoods with increased economic and cultural opportunities, contributing to greater livability and a healthier local economy;*
- *Encouraging healthier lifestyles by creating a pattern of development in which biking and walking are part of everyday travel behaviors;*
- *Reducing vehicle miles traveled, dependence on fossil fuels, and associated greenhouse gas emissions;*
- *Reducing the costs of delivering public services by encouraging infill and redevelopment in areas with existing infrastructure; and*
- *Providing a more compact development pattern that helps preserve open space and natural resources elsewhere in the community or region*

Source: Sustainable Development Code webpage

L.5 Encourage employment-generating land uses and activity centers in strategic locations that contribute positively to the surrounding environment.

This Objective is closely connected to Objective E.1 in Chapter 3, Economic Development.

L.5.1 Identify priority economic development sites and make strategic investments to advance site readiness. Work with property owners and State and regional partners to develop a portfolio of sites suitable for future large-scale employment center uses. Assess and enhance access and infrastructure on identified sites, including but not limited to sites eligible for funding under the State's *Virginia Business Ready Sites Program (VBRSP)*, to improve their development viability and desirability. The Route 460 and 68 corridors included in the expanded growth area boundary contain one or more potential sites for advanced manufacturing or other large site employment. These sites are well-positioned within the region to compete for private sector investment. Develop a policy in privately-owned commerce/industrial parks to encourage a diverse industrial base for long-term economic sustainability. Develop a publicly owned commerce/industrial park to promote diverse industry growth in support of higher-paying jobs.

Virginia Business Ready Sites Program (VBRSP)

VBRSP is a discretionary program to promote development and characterization of sites to enhance the Commonwealth's infrastructure and promote its competitive business environment. The program's goal is to identify and assess the readiness of potential industrial sites in Virginia for marketing in alignment with the goals outlined in the Governor's economic development plan.

The VBRSP has two components:

- *Site Characterization – to assess and designate a site's current level of development, and*
- *Site Development – to further develop a pool of potential sites.*

Source: Virginia Economic Development Partnership webpage on the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program

L.5.2 Prepare master plans and implement development strategies at a strategic area/district scale for Downtown Suffolk and the North Suffolk mixed use core districts. The mixed use core districts are intended to encourage vibrant activity centers with higher density environments, including multi-family housing in redevelopment, adaptive reuse, infill, and greenfield development situations. In support of complete and vibrant core areas, master plans and proposed strategies should support development that is walkable, well-connected, and transit supportive, and that creates a definable sense of place. Develop a cultural arts district for Downtown Suffolk to support existing and attract new cultural arts activities and related organizations and businesses.

L.6 Preserve farmland and rural character.

This objective is closely connected to Actions E.1.3 and E.1.4 Chapter 3, Economic Development.

L.6.1 Review and evaluate amendments to the City's development ordinances and related Codes to promote the preservation of farmland and protect the agricultural industry. Consider increasing residential lot sizes for rural agriculture lands and limiting uses in areas identified as prime agricultural land. Consider a tiered zoning approach to establish criteria for the designation and retention of larger plots for agricultural uses. Discourage expansion of public utilities and other growth-inducing public facilities into agricultural areas to minimize development pressures on those areas. Evaluate the potential of Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) and Agricultural Reserve Programs to protect farmland and the agricultural industry.

Agricultural Education

Other communities throughout the region and the state have benefitted from agricultural education programs geared toward youth. Such programs can help to foster an interest in and excitement about working in the agricultural industry. Programs such as the Isle of Wight County Schools Agricultural Land Lab, a school-owned 30-acre working farm where students enrolled in can experience hands-on learning, may be a model for Suffolk.

L.6.2 Identify and monitor economically productive land and agricultural activities to help guide policy decisions. Farms require sufficient acreage for continued viability. Areas that are flatter and have prime soils are critical to certain agricultural activities, while some specialty agriculture may take place in areas that have different soil types and may have more topography. Defining the amount of agricultural land that is currently available and monitoring the annual change provides a method for ensuring preservation of this land. An active inventory can help inform policy and regulatory decisions that limit prime farmland from being transformed to other uses, maintaining essential agricultural areas for production.

L.6.3 Continue to monitor the impact of recent zoning ordinance amendments on utility-scale solar development and where appropriate consider additional amendments. Monitor the implementation of the most recent amendments to the Unified Development Ordinance (Section 31-724, Adopted 12/20/24) and consider additional amendments as appropriate to protect agricultural land uses in the city.

L.7 Promote fiscally responsible land use and development.

2.7.1 Review and update the City's approach to fiscal impact analysis of land use and development. This effort should include evaluation of existing ordinances and review procedures, coordination with key stakeholders and local officials, and the support of specialized consulting expertise.

Fiscal Impact Analysis

Communities assess and balance multiple priorities when making land use and development decisions including resource conservation, impact on adjacent communities, economic development, infrastructure investment, and fiscal sustainability. An examination of fiscal sustainability determines whether land uses or development patterns will produce sufficient revenues to support the services and infrastructure "demanded" by the development.

More specifically, a fiscal impact analysis measures the cash flow to the public sector from residential and/or nonresidential development. In simple terms, revenues generated from growth such as property taxes, sales and use taxes, and charges for service are compared to public expenditures such as schools, public safety, transportation, recreation, and infrastructure—ultimately determining whether sufficient revenues are available to cover the resulting costs to provide services and infrastructure.

When faced with a land use or development proposal, a fiscal impact analysis can provide a perspective to objectively analyze proposed changes and communicate the overall impacts. This process can provide elected officials and others with additional information to help make decisions and a better understanding of how land use decisions affect a jurisdiction's bottom line. Fiscal impact analysis also helps communities understand potential trade-offs between short-term revenue opportunities and long-term outcomes.

3

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Suffolk is part of a large and dynamic region, the Virginia Beach–Chesapeake-Norfolk, VA–NC Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA), and benefits greatly from its position as part of a significant population and employment center. This also means that Suffolk's local economy must recognize the impact of regional dynamics on its economic position. It is essential that Suffolk takes advantage of its land and infrastructure assets to sustain a robust local economy in light of regional and national competition. This requires focusing on strategic development opportunities, adding good quality jobs, and diversifying the local economy.

Chapter Contents

Existing Conditions Highlights.....72
Actions 80

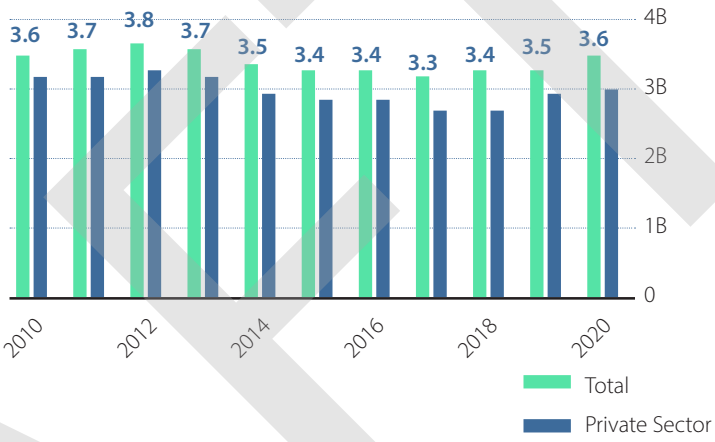
EXISTING CONDITIONS HIGHLIGHTS

The full Economic Development existing conditions report is available in Appendix C.

Growth

In 2020, Suffolk's economy was approximately $3.6 billion (source: bea.gov). The private sector represents $3.0 billion (83%) of the City's total Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and the remainder is public sector. Gross Domestic Product is a measure of economic activity that is based on all of the money earned for all of the goods and services produced in a given place during a specific period. During the last ten years, the economy has fluctuated between $3.4 to $3.8 billion. It has steadily increased from its lowest point in the last decade (2017) but was still below its 2012 peak in 2019. The decline between 2012 and 2017 was largely due to a 64% decrease in manufacturing sector output. This signals that Suffolk may need to look beyond manufacturing as it seeks to bolster its GDP.

Inflation Adjusted City GDP (Rounded 2012 $ billions)



Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of BEA Table CAGDP9

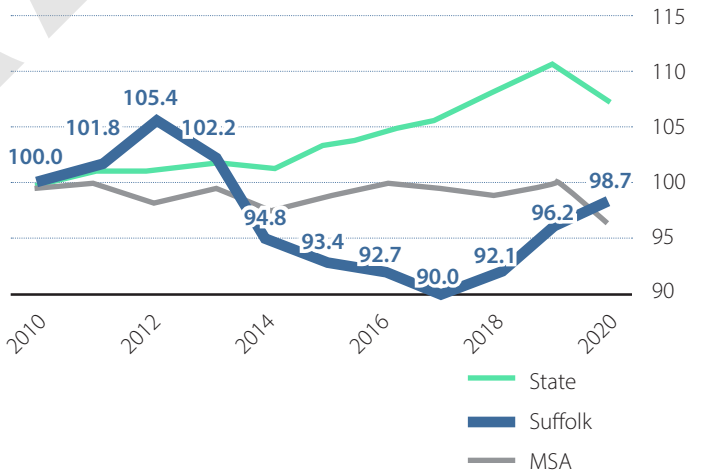
Most economic analysis presented in this chapter was conducted in 2023. Data is from federal sources (taxes, employment records, etc) and lags 2 to 3 years. Some of the data is estimated but demonstrates order of magnitude and direction / trend.

GDP Change

Overall, neither Suffolk nor the Hampton Roads region have kept pace with the State with respect to GDP. The State's economy during the last decade has shown a steady increase in GDP, growing by over 10% in real terms from 2010 until 2020. In contrast, Hampton Roads has remained flat over the last decade and is still below 2010 in GDP. Suffolk has steadily rebounded from its 13 point decline from 2012, and has surpassed the MSA but remains below the State.

To measure change in GDP, 2010 was used as a base year for purposes of comparing the performance across years and geographies following years. To provide context, Suffolk was compared to the Hampton Roads MSA and the State of Virginia.

GDP Performance Index (2010=100)



Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of BEA Table CAGDP9

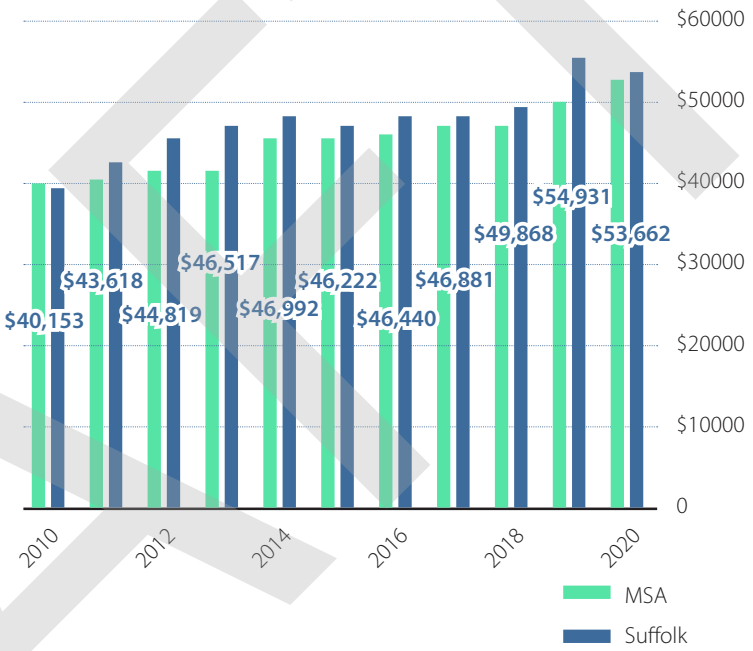
Annual Wage and Earning

Over the last decade, Suffolk's wages have been historically higher than wages in the region. Suffolk's average annual wage was $53,662 in 2020, slightly higher than the $52,883 Hampton Roads Region average. In inflation-adjusted terms, Suffolk has seen real wage growth. 2011 average wages are equivalent to $47,803 in 2020, an increase of slightly under $6,000 over the decade.

Suffolk's wages, however, are more than $11,000 lower than the State average, indicating another measure by which the City is not keeping pace with the State.

Annual wages and salaries are based on the Federal Bureau of Labor Statistics Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages data. QCEW data is based on unemployment insurance reports.

Average Annual Wages



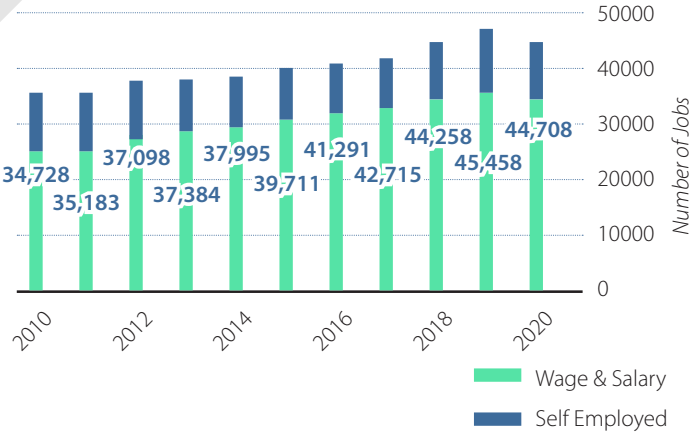
Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of BEA Table CAINC30

Employment

Suffolk has been adding jobs. Prior to COVID, the City hosted over 45,000 jobs with more than 10,000 representing self employed people. The City has added nearly 12,000 jobs since 2010. Self-employment has grown substantially adding more than 2,000 jobs. Suffolk's employment base has also been growing much faster than the region.

Wage and salary employment data is for people who are identified through QCEW information. Self-employed data includes people who reported that they were self employed, such as by declaring 1099 income.

Employment



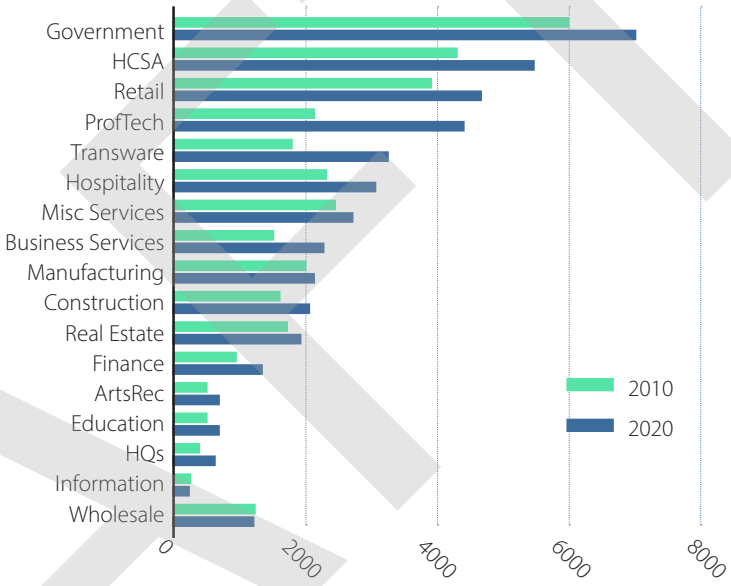
Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of BEA Table CAINC30

Employment By Industry

The top four sectors of employment (government, healthcare / social service, retail, and professional technical) represent 50% of the jobs in Suffolk. Notably, professional technical employment (ProfTech) has more than doubled and transportation / warehousing (TransWare) increased by 80% over 2010.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, office-based industries in Suffolk increased by 3,985 jobs. Office-based employment typically includes government, professional technical employment, business services, real estate, finance, and HQ and information industries. Due to the unique characteristics of the agricultural sector, including many part time workers, the industry does not appear among top sector for employment. However, agriculture is very important to Suffolk. For more information see Chapter 2, pages 28-29, and page 77 of this Chapter. (See Economic Existing Conditions Report in Appendices for more information about employment by industry.)

Sector Employment



Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of US Bureau of Economic Analysis Table CAEMP25N Full and Parttime Employment

Employment By Firm Characteristics

The vast majority of workers in Suffolk work for larger, older businesses. 59% work for companies with at least 250 employees, compared to 56% statewide. Less than 10% of the workers are employed by companies younger than three years old. This is roughly consistent with the statewide percentage and points to the importance of focusing on business retention in addition to business attraction.

Growing Industries Related to Land Use

For Suffolk, growing industries (office-based employment and transportation/warehousing) create very different land use considerations and employment densities (jobs per square feet). Office-based employment impacts on the physical environment and existing infrastructure may be partially addressed through vertical construction. Transportation/warehousing creates horizontal land use demand. Both also have very different employment densities, which impacts the type of development and infrastructure needed. With the exception of government, Suffolk has higher concentrations of these jobs than the MSA. By encouraging a balance between different employment sectors, Suffolk will also achieve a balance between uses that are more and less land-absorbing.

OFFICE AND INDUSTRIAL SITES

Industrial Sites

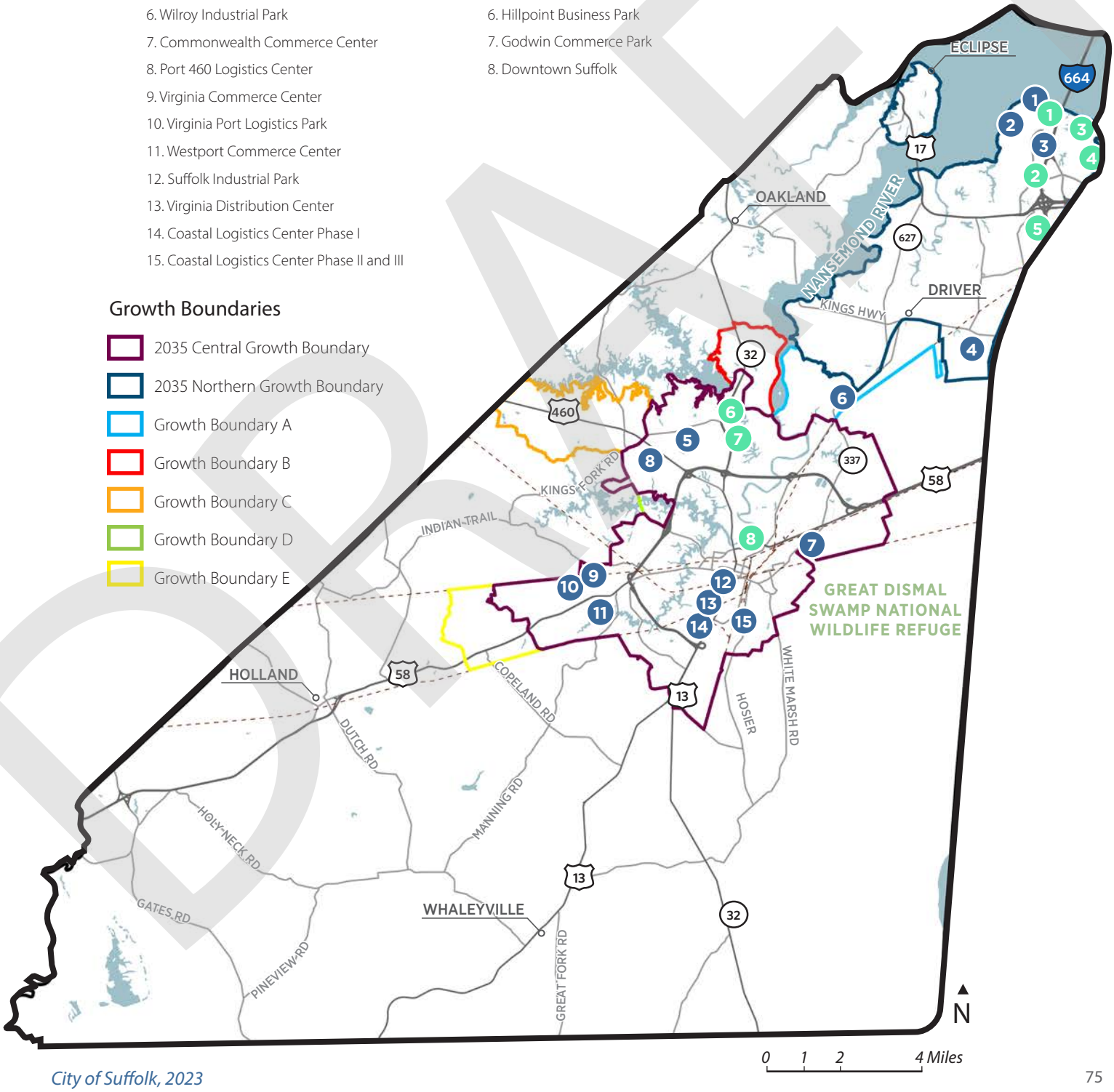
1. Portside Logistics Center
2. Bridgeway Commerce Park
3. Bridgeway Business Center
4. Northgate Commerce Park
5. Virginia Regional Commerce Park
6. Wilroy Industrial Park
7. Commonwealth Commerce Center
8. Port 460 Logistics Center
9. Virginia Commerce Center
10. Virginia Port Logistics Park
11. Westport Commerce Center
12. Suffolk Industrial Park
13. Virginia Distribution Center
14. Coastal Logistics Center Phase I
15. Coastal Logistics Center Phase II and III

Major Office Sites

1. The Point at Harbour View
2. Harbour View Commerce Park
3. Lake View Technology Park
4. MAST Center at Hampton Roads Crossing
5. Belleharbour
6. Hillpoint Business Park
7. Godwin Commerce Park
8. Downtown Suffolk

Growth Boundaries

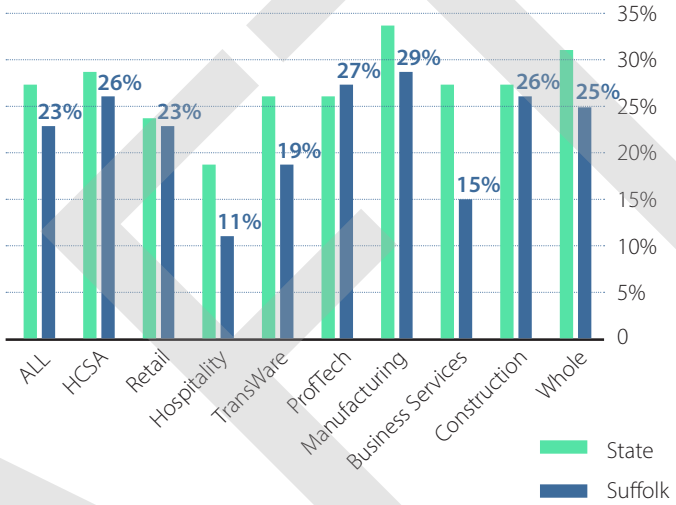
- 2035 Central Growth Boundary
- 2035 Northern Growth Boundary
- Growth Boundary A
- Growth Boundary B
- Growth Boundary C
- Growth Boundary D
- Growth Boundary E



Workforce Demographics

A positive attribute of Suffolk's workforce is that it is younger than the State's, across a range of industries. Only 23% of the City's workforce is older than 55. The notable exception is professional technical employment where the Suffolk workforce is older than the State's. However, the other fast growing sector, transportation/warehousing, is much younger than the State (19% are over 55 vs 25%). This means that Suffolk should anticipate that it will continue to have a proportionally greater number of workers available than in many other parts of the State that may soon be dealing with

Percent Workforce 55+ by Top 10 Sector



Source: Ninigret Partners analysis ofLEHD Workforce Indicator Data

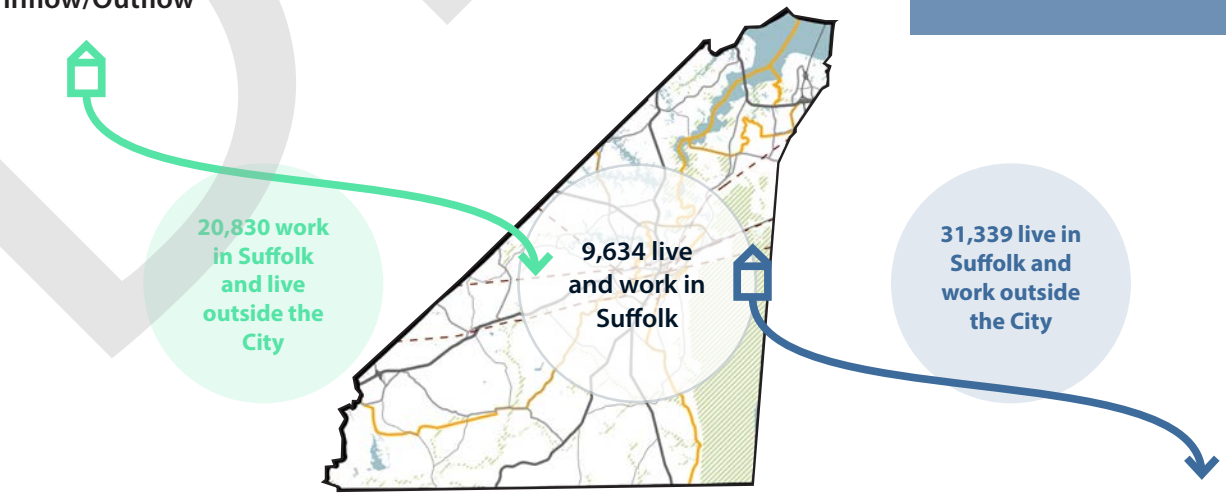
Inflow/Outflow

The relationship between the location of jobs, workers, and residents has a significant impact on a community. People traveling from a city to work elsewhere, or to a city from elsewhere to work, impact infrastructure demands, traffic congestion, land use development patters, economic development, and fiscal sustainability. It is unusual for 100% of residents to work in the community in which they reside. Suffolk is no different, but understanding commuting patterns helps shape housing policy, transportation decisions, and land use planning.

According to OntheMap, less than 10,000 of residents (32%) live and work in Suffolk. Three times that number of residents leave Suffolk for employment. Nearly 21,000 jobs in the City are filled by nonresidents and only 23% of workers employed in trade, transportation and utilities work and live in Suffolk.

OntheMap is a federal data source that uses several different data elements to create a picture of workforce commuting and movement.

Inflow/Outflow

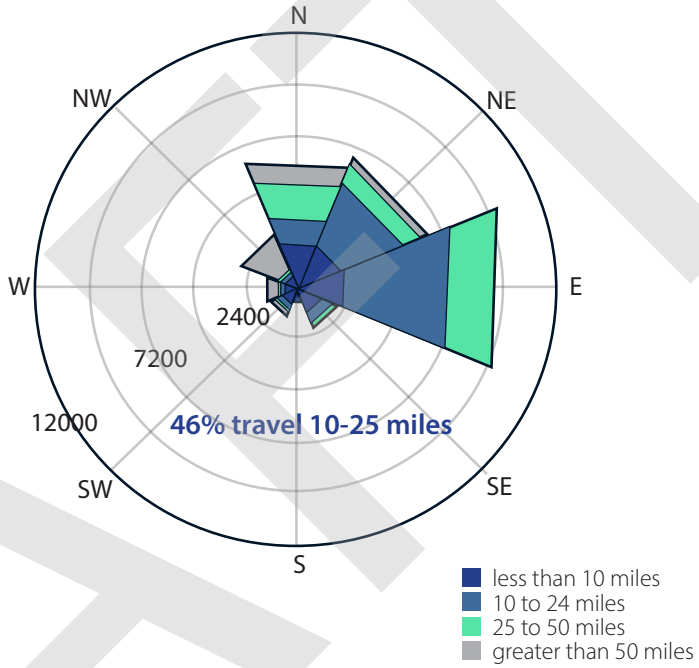


Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of the OntheMap.gov

Outgoing Workforce Distance and Direction

Approximately 12% of Suffolk residents work more than 50 miles away. 46% travel between 10-25 miles for work. Most residents travel east or northeast for employment. There is virtually no commuting to the south. This is important because it will impact where and what type of development takes place along certain corridors, as well as traffic congestion.

Outgoing Workforce Distance and Direction

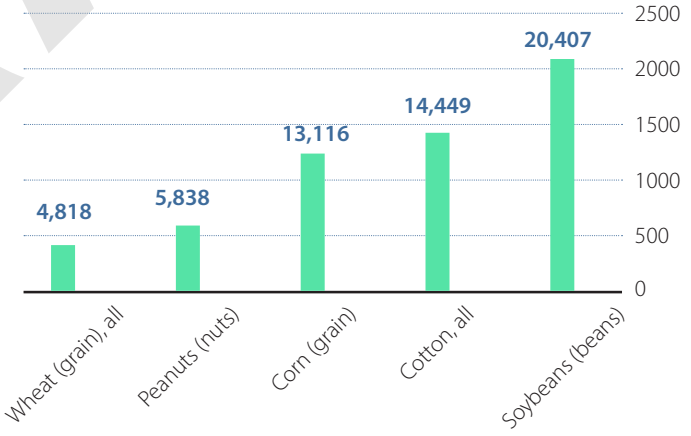


Source:Ninigret Partners analysis of the OntheMap.gov

Impact of Agriculture

The City has approximately 270 farms which employ an estimated 700 employees in agriculture. This is down from 825 in 2010 based on Bureau of Economic Analysis employment estimates. While the industry generates $54 million in revenue annually, 30% of farm producers are over the age of 65. 84% of agricultural production is comprised of crops and 16% is livestock and poultry. Overall, Suffolk's agricultural production ranks 16th in Virginia but 6th in value of crops (versus 49th in livestock and poultry). Nationally, Suffolk's nursery greenhouse and floriculture activity is in the top 10% of the country and poultry and egg operations in the top 20%. The City's agricultural sector is therefore productive and competitive at the regional and national levels but about one third of the sector is nearing retirement. The fact that farm workers are aging is important to consider relative to the future of the industry, including implications for disposition land.

Top Crops by Acreage (2017)



Source: Ninigret Partners analysis of 2017 Census of Agriculture

Financial Tools and Incentives

The City of Suffolk can take advantage of certain financial tools and incentives to shape the future of development in parts of the City. The most important credits when considering potential land use/expanding the growth areas are Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits (HTCs), Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTCs), Opportunity Zone (OZs), and New Market Tax Credits (NMTCs). HTCs are used primarily downtown, LIHTCs can be used anywhere for affordable multifamily projects, and NMTCs must be used in specific historic areas. However, LIHTC and NMTC awards are competitively awarded based on projects meeting a range of criteria. OZ incentives are not competitive because they are a mechanism for an investor to defer and discount their capital gains tax for three years, typically after a large property sale, by investing in a business/development within a designated opportunity zone area OZ census tract.

These tools can have a substantial impact on potential land development in parts of the City. (See map on page X.) For instance, in the NMTC census tracts, developing another industrial park could help attract manufacturers looking to access and utilize this credit to lessen their capital expenditure on buildings and equipment. To be competitive for LIHTC, local actions such as financial participation through a local housing authority or nonprofit, property tax abatements, designated revitalization areas or housing rehabilitation areas (Title 36-55 of the Code of Virginia) provide additional points in the Virginia Housing Qualified Allocation Plan (QAP) process. Being more open to zoning for multifamily could be beneficial, knowing that affordable housing is potentially a viable option there. Older buildings and neighborhoods are eligible for the HTC to support potential renovations and new investment. Buildings must be at least 40 years old and have eligibility as a certified historic structure to qualify for the maximum 25% credit. The state credit may be applicable in some locally designated historic villages in addition to downtown. These areas could be prime for potential mixed-use zoning.

Other local incentives include Economic Development Investment Program (EDIP); Façade Improvement, which allow for a $10k match for facades in key areas, such as downtown and gateways; and Small Business Improvement, which are the same as Façade but for interior buildouts.

Historic Tax Credit (HTC): *an indirect federal subsidy to finance the rehabilitation of historic buildings with a 20 percent tax credit for qualified expenditures.*

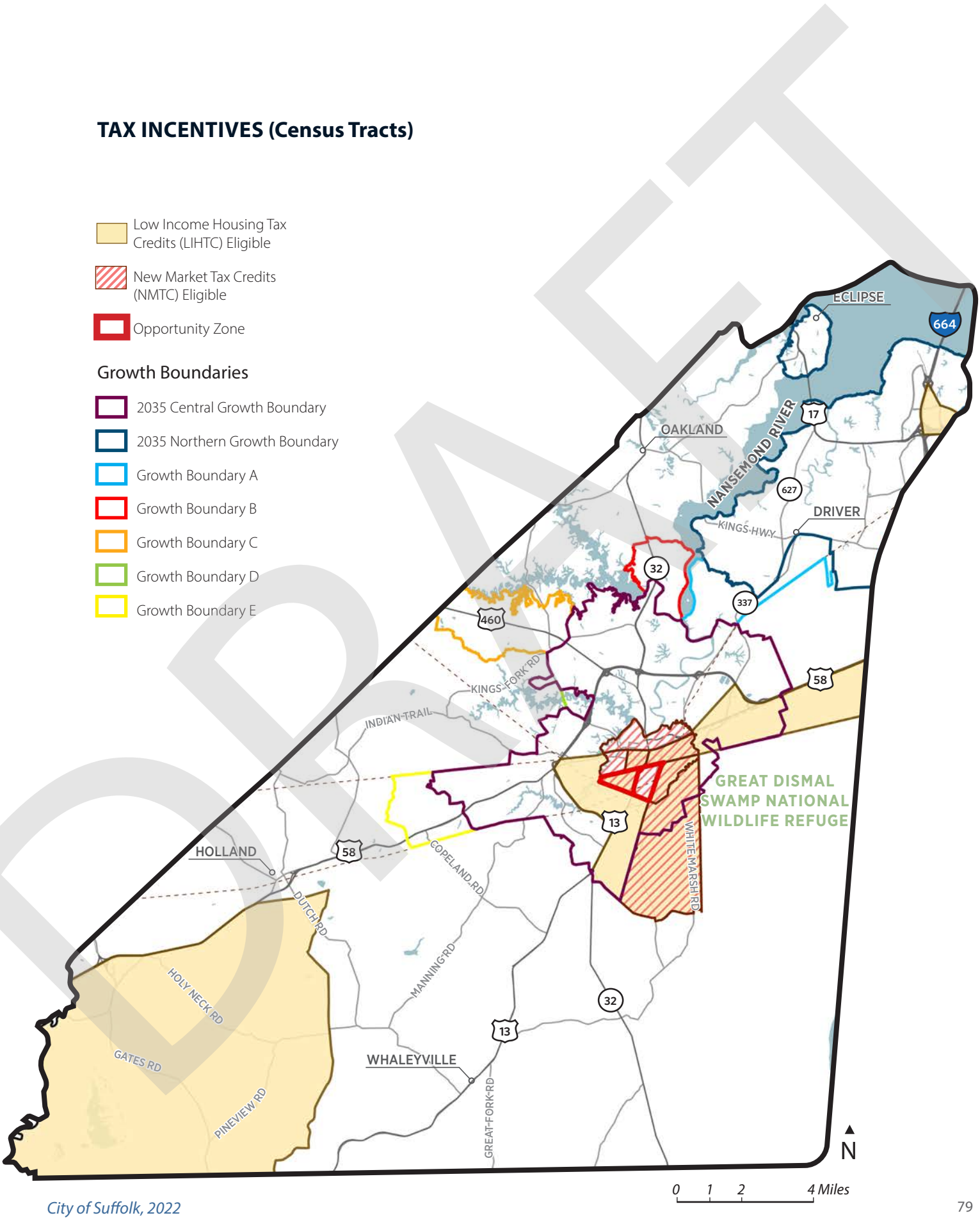
Low-Income Housing Credit (LIHTC): *a tax incentive program designed to increase the supply of quality, affordable rental housing by helping developers offset the costs of rental housing developments for individuals with low- to moderate-income.*

Opportunity Zone (OZ): *an economic development tool that allows people to invest in distressed areas by providing tax benefits to investors.*

New Market Tax Credit (NMTC): *a federal financial program that aims to stimulate business and real estate investment in low-income communities via a federal tax credit.*

Economic Development Investment Program (EDIP): *grants supplied from local funds based on capital investment and job creation available only for targeted industries.*

TAX INCENTIVES (Census Tracts)



City of Suffolk, 2022

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

E.1 Attract and retain employment-generating industries.

E.1.1 Develop a publicly owned commerce/industrial park to promote diverse industry growth in support of higher-paying jobs. The site should be aligned with the Virginia Business Ready program (VBRSP) to leverage the visibility and funding opportunities available at the state level. VBRSP grants are awarded to assist with the costs of site assessment and work (rezoning, surveying, infrastructure improvements, etc.) necessary to increase a site's development readiness.

E.1.2 Develop a cultural arts district for Downtown Suffolk to support existing and attract new cultural arts activities and related organizations and businesses. Consider the development of an incentive program geared toward arts and cultural businesses in Downtown Suffolk, as allowed by state law. Regulatory flexibility for a cultural arts district may include special zoning for the district, simplified permitting processes, and other incentives. For example, a business license tax reduction incentive could be established for qualifying businesses to remain and locate in the district.

E.1.3 Identify and implement strategies to protect and grow the City's agriculture and agriculture-related businesses. Continue to recognize the importance of agriculture in Suffolk's economy. Support development of value-added agriculture businesses, explore agrotourism options, and strategically protect the highest quality agricultural land. Consider partnerships with existing programs, such as the Cooperative Extension Service at Virginia Tech, to expand technical assistance to local farmers.

E.1.4 Ensure that the City's development regulations and other Codes support opportunities for agritourism and other emerging market opportunities that promote preservation of agricultural lands. Attracting visitors to farms for recreational, educational, or retail purposes may increase profit margins for local farmers. Supporting the development of alternative agricultural economic practices such as community supported agriculture (CSA) or cooperative farms and promoting activities such as farm tours, pick-your-own produce, and other experiences would capitalize on existing agricultural assets.

Cooperative Extension Service

Virginia Cooperative Extension was established in 1914 and is a partnership between Virginia's two land grant universities: Virginia Tech and Virginia State University. Extension operates out of 107 offices, 11 Agricultural Research and Extension centers, and six 4-H centers across the commonwealth. They work to assist farmers, empower youth, guide responsible resource management, and advance the wellbeing of all Virginians.

Source: Virginia Cooperative Extension webpage

E.1.5 Expand economic development tools and incentives to support employment-generating uses. Regularly review and maintain the range of incentives that support employment uses in Suffolk. The Virginia Economic Development Partnership maintains a Guide to Incentives (including discretionary incentives, financial assistance, infrastructure assistance, recruitment and training incentives, tax incentives, and regional and local assistance) in the Commonwealth. These programs are intended to reduce the costs of opening or expanding a business facility. For example, Major Eligible Employer Grant Program (MEE) provides grants to companies to make investments and provide a significant number of stable jobs through expansion or new construction.

E.1.6 Strategically expand utility service (water, sewer, fiber) to sites that can support new employment-generating businesses. Develop financing options to facilitate the construction of water and sewer projects to support development. Use City-funded utility capacity improvements as incentives for development. Continue to seek funding for utility infrastructure improvements from federal, state, county, and developer contributions.

Virginia Economic Development Partnership

The Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP) is the state economic development authority for the Commonwealth of Virginia. It collaborates with local, regional, and state partners to encourage the expansion and diversification of Virginia's economy. VEDP works to accomplish these objectives through a variety of activities, including marketing and lead generation; business retention, expansion, and attraction; trade development; business intelligence; competitive benchmarking; site development; performance-based incentives; and talent solutions.

Source: Virginia Economic Development Partnership webpage

E.2 Improve education and labor market alignment to increase the share of people living and working in Suffolk.

E.2.1 Leverage Suffolk's talented workforce to attract and expand high-skilled job options. The Virginia Economic Development Partnership considers the Hampton Roads region "engineered for the future of global business, offering an integrated transportation network, technical innovation, and a skilled workforce". In support of continued workforce alignment, the Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) uses data to inform educational programming, policy, and workforce partnerships across the Commonwealth. Utilize VOEE's resources and data related to labor market alignment in decision making for economic development activities. Consider developing an overall economic strategy that incorporates these metrics around location, access to talent, and available land.

Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE)

The Virginia Office of Education Economics (VOEE) provides a unified, consistent source of analysis for policy development and implementation related to talent development as well as offers resources and expertise related to education and labor market alignment.

Source: Virginia Economic Development Partnership webpage on the Virginia Office of Education Economics

4

TRANSPORTATION

In order for Suffolk to grow, investments in transportation are needed. Through this planning process, the City has identified areas where congestion and traffic safety issues on existing roadways are most problematic. As presented in this chapter, many of these areas are the focus of funded, planned, or envisioned transportation projects. In addition to roadways, the City also has opportunities to expand transportation options. An increase in traffic due to regional development with growth of the Port of Virginia is expected, but the City can help manage the impacts through improvements to areas with truck bottlenecks and supporting the shift of freight to rail when possible. Finally, the City can integrate land use and transportation decision making, encouraging more compact development, and housing and employment generating uses in close proximity, supported by well connected transportation infrastructure.

Chapter Contents

Existing Conditions Highlights.....84
Actions 100

EXISTING CONDITIONS HIGHLIGHTS

The full Transportation existing conditions report is available in Appendix C.

Roadways

The City of Suffolk maintains its own roadways, except for interstates including SR-164, which the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) maintains. The City's roadways are managed by the Department of Public Works, which oversees the design, construction, and maintenance of the system. In addition, it ensures that all engineering, construction, and maintenance work for roads and transit amenities meet acceptable and achievable standards through the efficient use of capital expenditures. As Suffolk grows, and its roadway system is impacted by regional growth, the City's Department of Public Works will have the majority of the responsibility for roadway efficiency and safety, but must also work closely with VDOT and other State and regional agencies. (See Transportation Existing Conditions Report in Appendices for more information about types and purposes of roadways in Suffolk.)

Corridors of Statewide Significance

As per State Code, the City must acknowledge and account for the facilities deemed Corridors of Statewide Significance (CoSS), as designated in the VTrans2040 Final Report, which is the current long-range, statewide multimodal plan. The purpose of the CoSS at the state level is to provide a multimodal network of corridors that helps guide localities in their land use and transportation plans. The corridors are important to comprehensive planning. In some cases, they present specific development opportunities that can help to advance this plan's goals. They are also functionally important to Suffolk's ability to capitalize upon it's position in the region.

Designated transportation facilities in the City include the following:

Heartland Corridor (U.S. Route 460). With U.S. Route 460 virtually bisecting Suffolk and the state, this corridor serves as a major link to points east and west as well as other corridors.

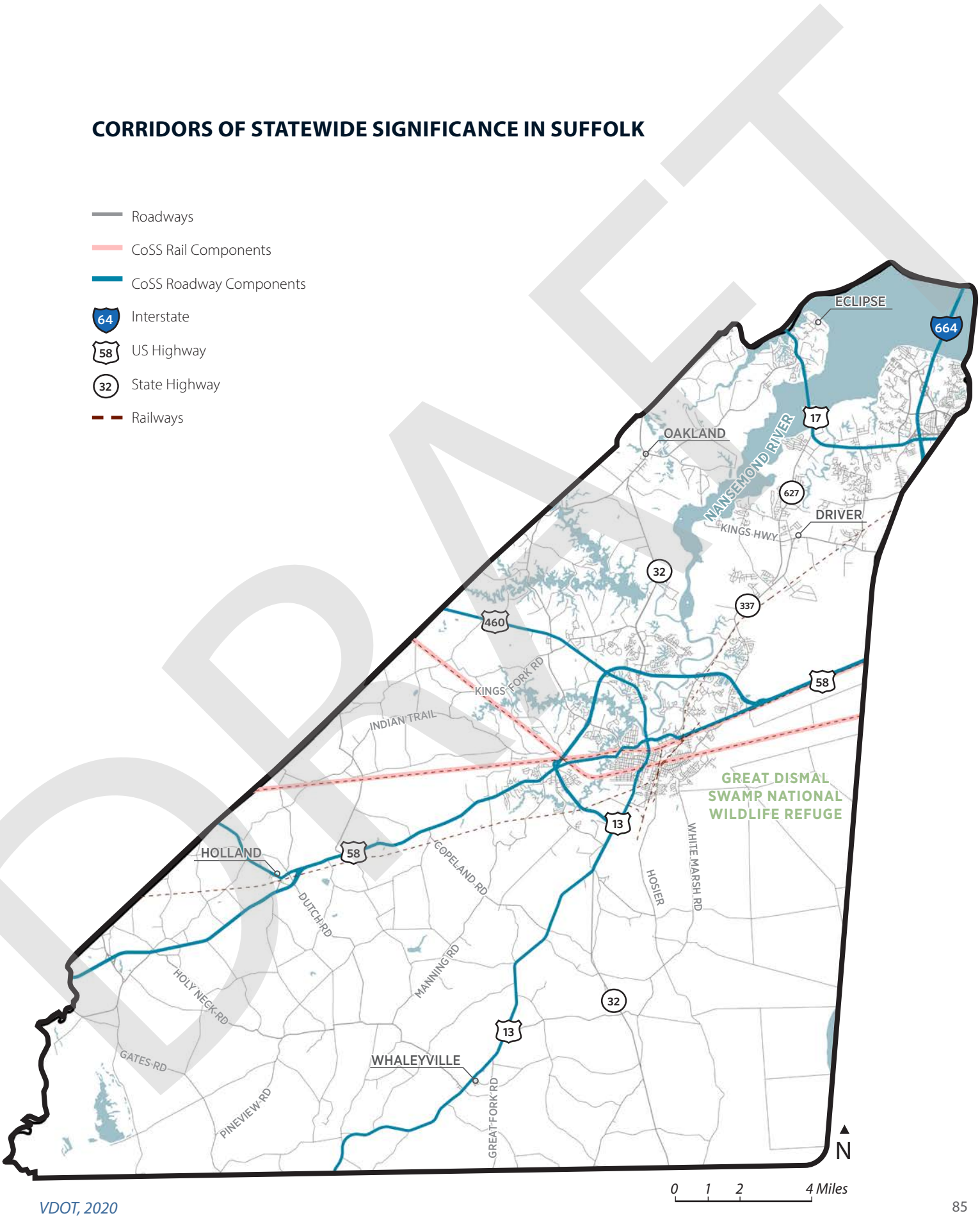
Southside Corridor (U.S. Route 58). The U.S. Route 58 corridor serves as a link for major economic development activities along the Southside of Virginia. This roadway provides local access to the Virginia Beach Oceanfront, is a primary connection to I-95 and I-85 to the west, and is a major artery for goods-to-market movement in the state.

Coastal Corridor (U.S. Route 17). The U.S. Route 17 corridor is a vital I-95 alternative to coastal destinations, a major connection for truck traffic between I-95 and Hampton Roads, and a link to tourism and cultural hotspots throughout the northern neck and middle peninsula.

Eastern Shore Corridor (U.S. Route 13). U.S. Route 13 serves as a major passenger and freight link between Hampton Roads and the Eastern Shore. It is the main road through the Eastern Shore and provides access to recreational opportunities and military installations along the Chesapeake Bay and Atlantic Ocean.

East-West Corridor (I-664). I-664 (which is an auxillery to the I-64 corridor) serves as a valuable link to larger urban areas to the east and west of Suffolk, as a major freight and evacuation corridor, and as a vital link to military, institutional, and cultural facilities within the region and state.

CORRIDORS OF STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE IN SUFFOLK



VDOT, 2020

Vehicle Volumes

As the City grows, understanding current vehicle volumes and their impact on congestion is an important starting point for assessing where and how the City should invest to support future development. An important measurement of vehicle volumes is annual average daily traffic (AADT), which is an estimate of the average number of vehicles driving on a given road segment per day. In Suffolk, as depicted on the map on page 87, I-664 and portions of Route 58 carry the most daily traffic volumes, followed by Routes 460, 32, 13, 17, 337, and 627. This signifies that anticipated increases in traffic volumes on these roadways warrant investments to address traffic congestion.

Level of Service and Congestion

Another measure of traffic conditions is level of service (LOS), which describes the amount of traffic congestion at an intersection or along a roadway. Maintaining adequate service standards is important to maintaining quality of life for the City's residents. LOS places roadways into six letter grades, indicating the quality of service to a typical traveler on the facility. For intersections, LOS is based on the average delay experienced by all traffic using the intersection during the busiest (peak) 15-minute period. LOS A-D is generally considered acceptable.

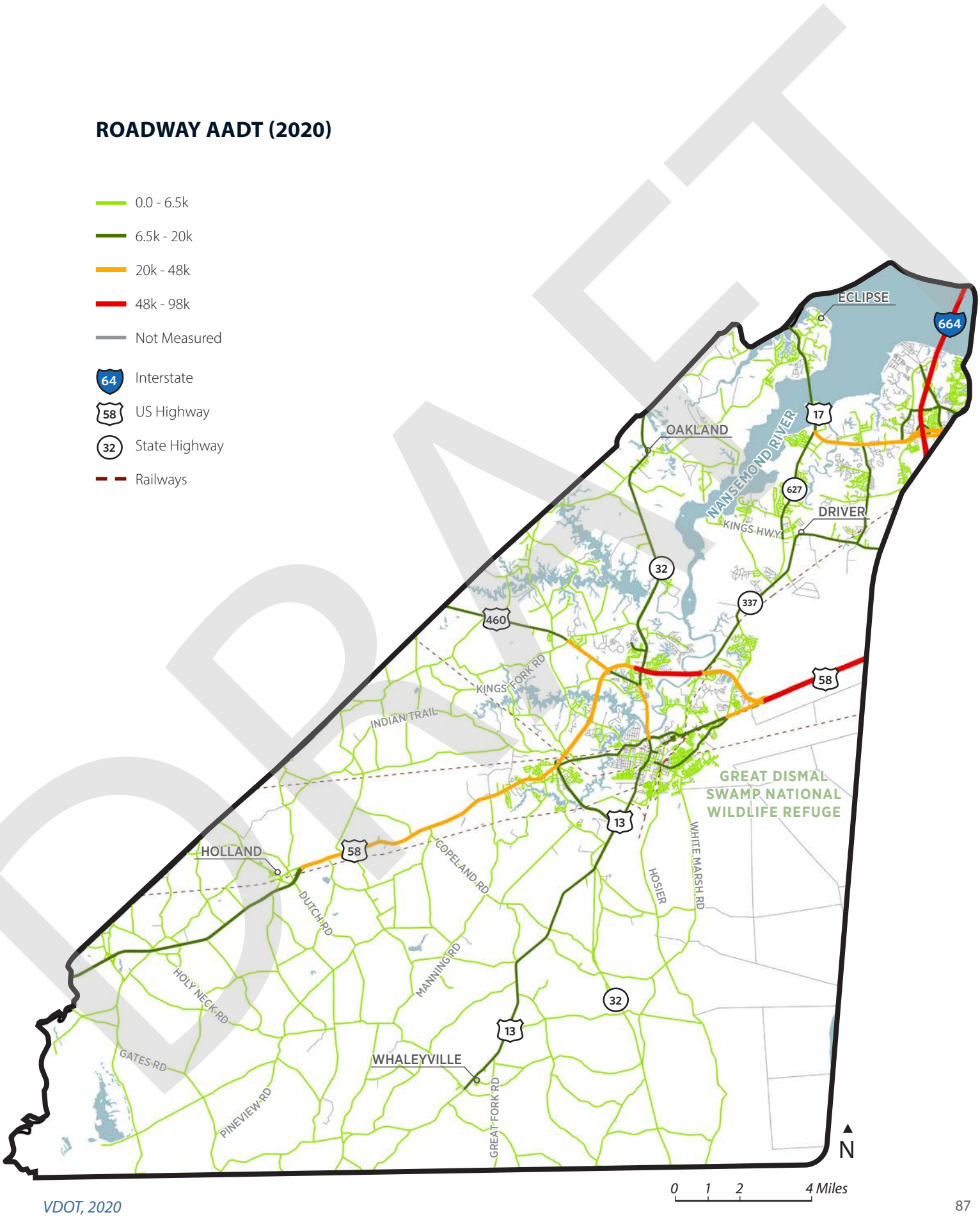
LOS	Conditions
A	Little-to-no congestion
B	Reasonably free-flow speeds
C	Near free-flow speed but maneuverability is becoming noticeably restricted
D	Reduced comfort levels with speeds beginning to decline
E	Operation at capacity with limited usable gaps in the traffic stream
F	Severe congestion, unstable traffic flow, and stop-and-go conditions

As shown in the maps on pages 88 and 89, based on LOS standards, Suffolk's critical roadways are generally functioning at or above adequate service levels. Current deficiencies—as evidenced by congestion—occur most frequently in the afternoon in the downtown and on I-664. As with AADT, this points to areas that should be a focus for improvements, especially with infill and redevelopment opportunities along I-664 downtown and in portions of North Suffolk.

Rural Roadways

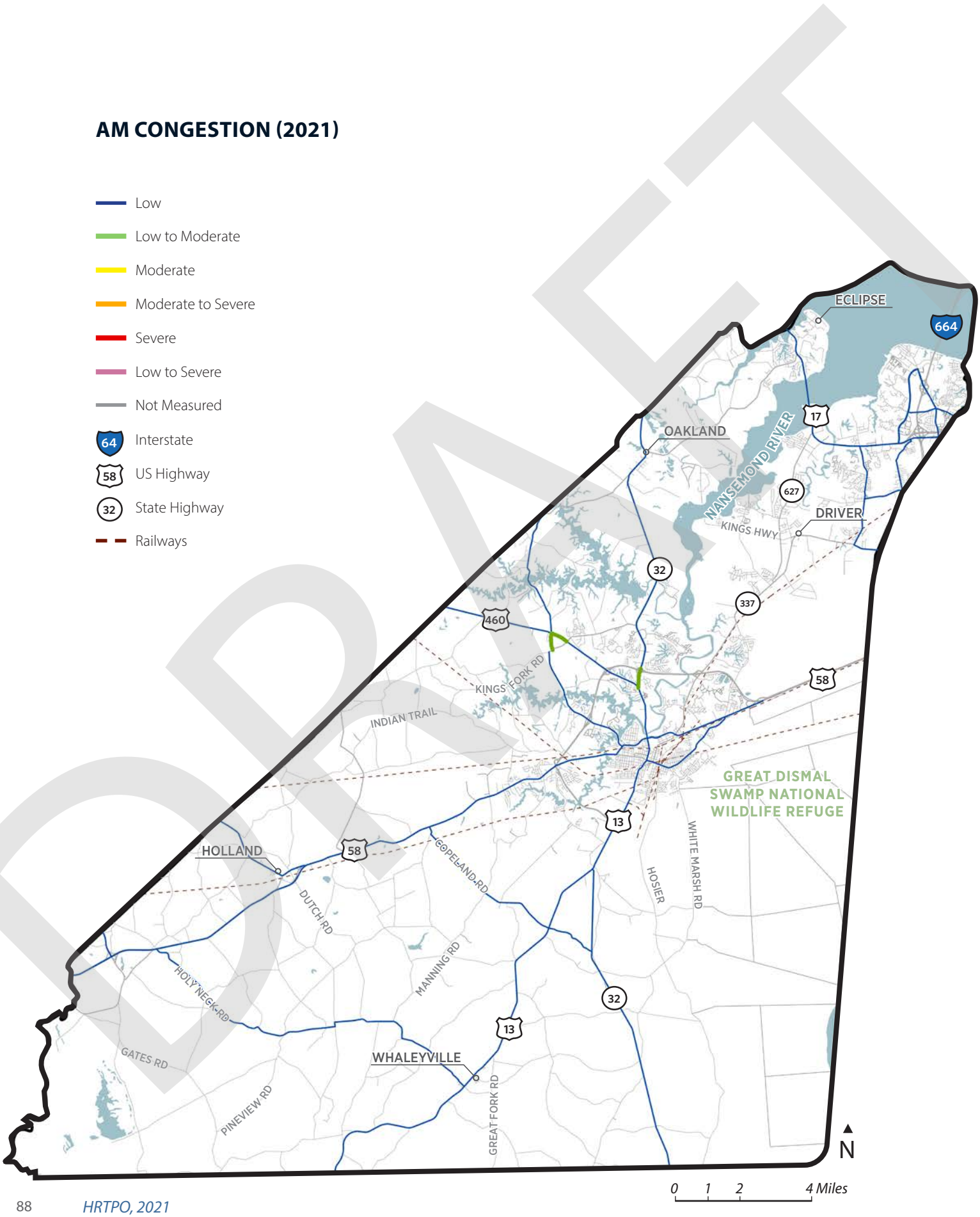
The City of Suffolk is a growing community that has been a rural community for over 400 years with a central core and a later developed area in north Suffolk, as well as several villages in the rural areas. Most of the roadways in the City have evolved from pathways used by the Native American inhabitants for millennia prior to European colonization, which then transitioned to wagon roadways in the 16th to 19th centuries. In 1932, Virginia, through the Byrd Act, consolidated the patchwork of farm, county, and state roadways into the Virginia Highway system. Most of the roadways that became part of this system were 30 feet wide, prescriptive easement road rights of way, with narrow road widths and ditch-type drainage facilities adjacent to the driving areas. Over time, some of these roadways were reconstructed and paved, had a wider right of way established, and utilized a more modern cross-section. It is still common for the roadways in the rural sections of the City to have narrow road widths, narrow-to-no shoulders, and open drainage facilities adjacent to the travel ways. Oftentimes the improvement of these rural roadways are delayed in the competition for roadway funding, as they are outside of the approved growth boundary areas.

ROADWAY AADT (2020)

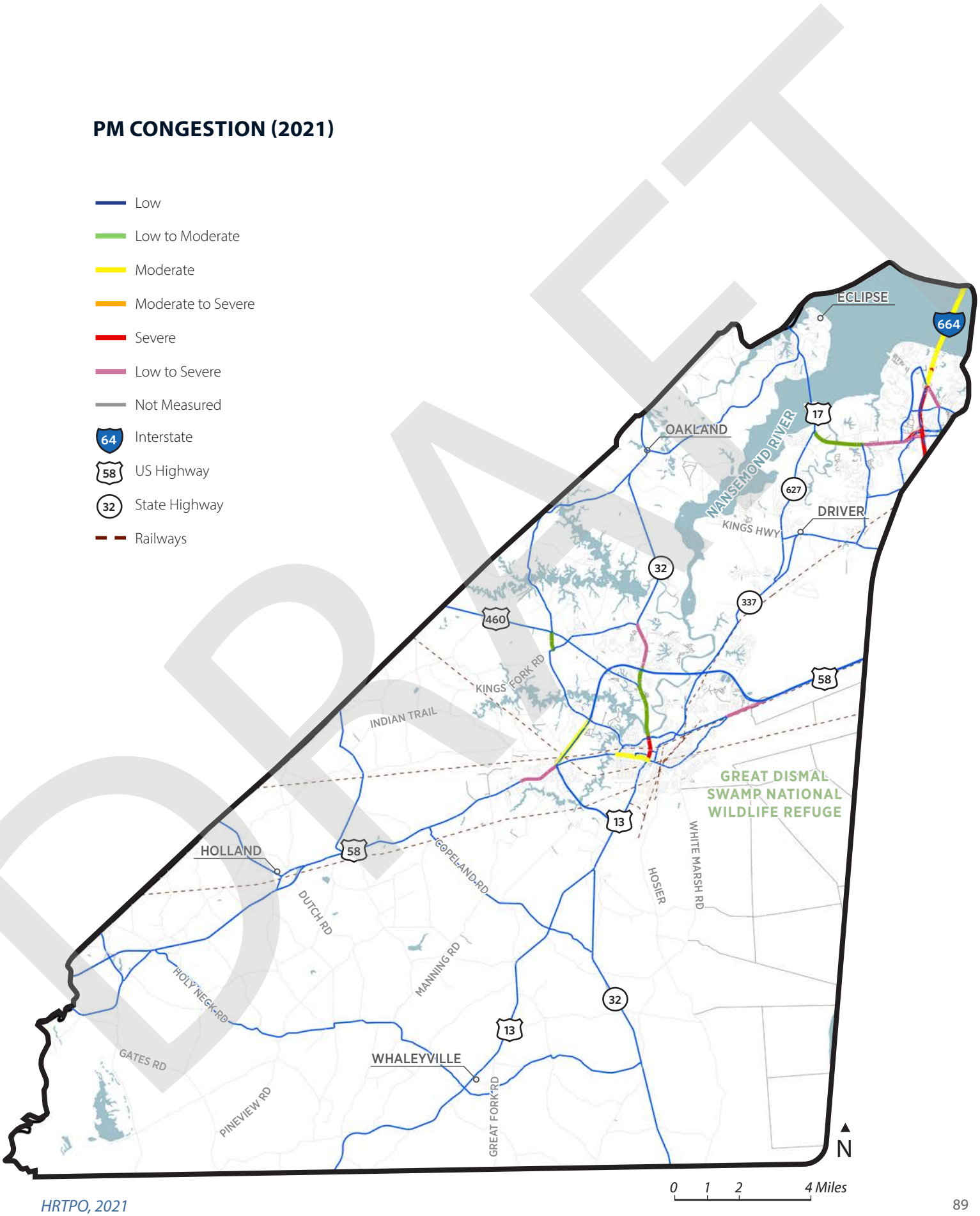


VDOT, 2020

AM CONGESTION (2021)



PM CONGESTION (2021)



HRTPO, 2021

Future Roadway Conditions

Using a statewide Travel Demand Model (TDM) it is possible to asses how future roadway conditions can be anticipated based on anticipated growth. This analysis shows that some roadways will be able to maintain adequate LOS despite anticipated increases in daily traffic volumes, while others will need improvements to accommodate expected increases in traffic and maintain adequate operational conditions. (See Transportation Existing Conditions Report in Appendices for a complete table showing 2045 projected Daily Volumes and Level of Service for specific roadways.)

Areas of potential future concern include:

- Bridge Road
- Godwin Blvd
- I-664
- Nansemond Pkwy
- Pinner Street
- Pughsville Road
- Shoulders Hill Road
- Suffolk Bypass
- Whaleyville Blvd

To evaluate the adequacy of the existing or planned roadway system, traffic volume projections were developed by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) using the 2045 Regional Travel Demand Model (TDM). Daily volumes from the 2017 base year and 2045 horizon year of the HRTPO TDM were compared in order to calculate anticipated annualized growth rates within the study area. The calculated annualized growth rates were applied to existing average daily traffic volumes to develop 2045 future traffic volume projections for the City roadway network shown.

Safety - Crash Locations

Crash locations provide a measure of road safety that can also be used to identify needs for roadway and intersection improvements. Crashes on roadways in the City over a five-year period from January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2021 were documented using the VDOT Crash Analysis Tool. A total of 11,628 crashes occurred in the City during the six-year period. Of those, 76 resulted in a fatality, and 666 resulted in severe injuries. In the six-year period, there have been 6 pedestrian fatalities and 157 pedestrian injuries.

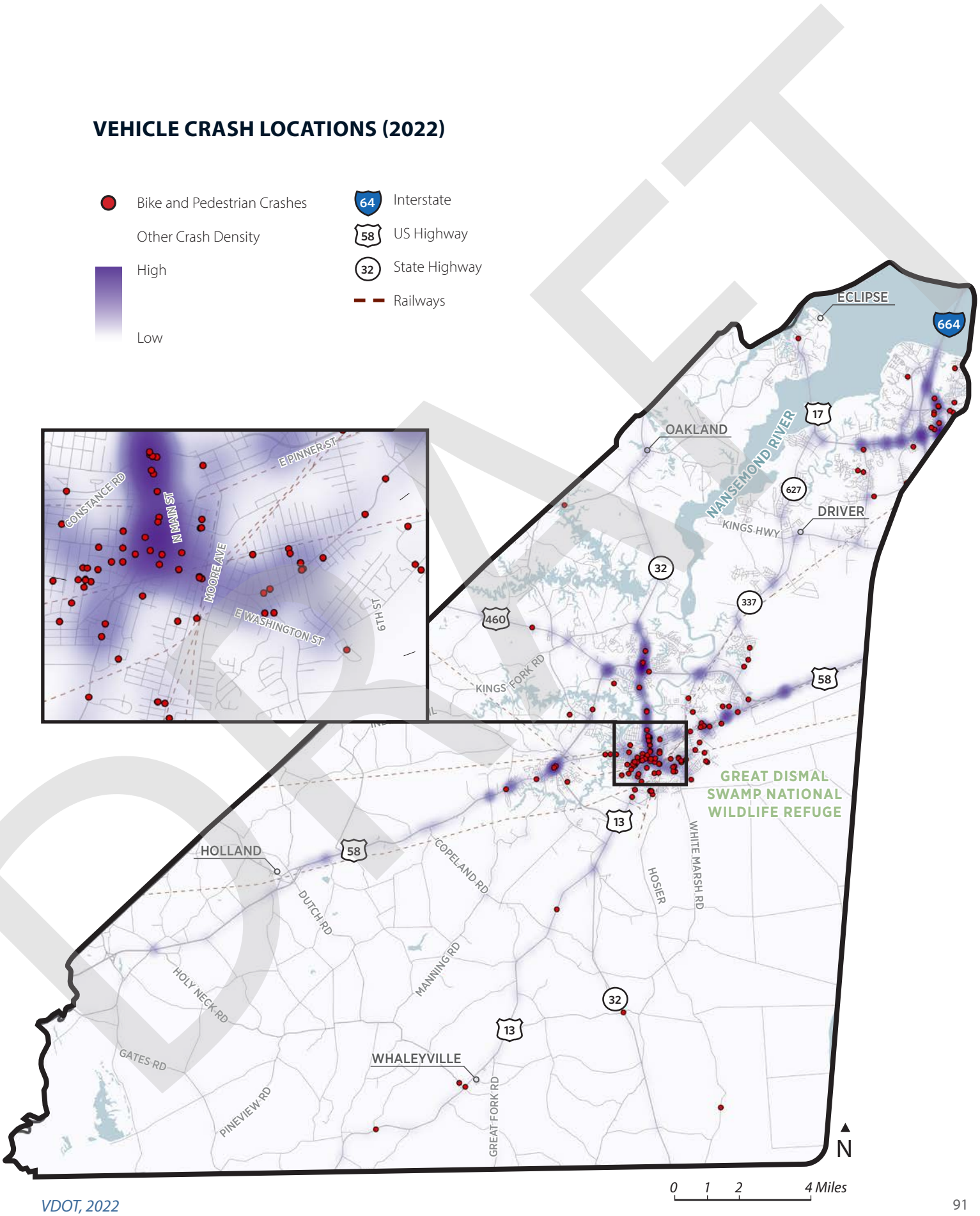
The map on pg. 91 shows where crash clusters occurred between January 1, 2015 through March 31, 2022. The greatest number of crashes occurred on Route 58 followed by Godwin Blvd, Route 13/Whaleyville Blvd, Route 17/Bridge Road and Nansemond Parkway. Pedestrian crashes are concentrated in the downtown area. This indicates areas that should be prioritized for safety improvements as future development moves forward.

The VDOT Crash Analysis Tool was used to document crashes on City roadways from January 1, 2017, to December 31, 2021. The annual totals provide an accurate year-by-year comparison of trends. At the time of this analysis, partial crash data for 2022 was also available. The map illus-trates all crashes within the timeframe covered by the available data. In addition, the following sources of information can be used to help guide safety improvement needs.

- *VDOT has created a statewide network screening process to determine locations for priority consideration for safety improvement projects. Currently, the network screening is performed annually based on total and fatal and injury Potential Safety Improvement (PSI) values, producing the top 100 intersections and 100 miles of roadway segments in the state.*
- *The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) has established policies to identify and prioritize capacity and safety-related transportation needs using performance-based planning to provide transparency and clarity to local and regional partners.*

Maps showing these locations are available in Appendix C.

VEHICLE CRASH LOCATIONS (2022)



VDOT, 2022

Other Mobility Options

As Suffolk grows, there will be a need for more transportation options besides driving a single occupancy vehicle. This will be especially important for City of Suffolk residents who are cost-burdened, as on average Suffolk residents pay more than 56% of their income on housing and transportation costs. The following non-vehicular transit options are currently available or under development in Suffolk.

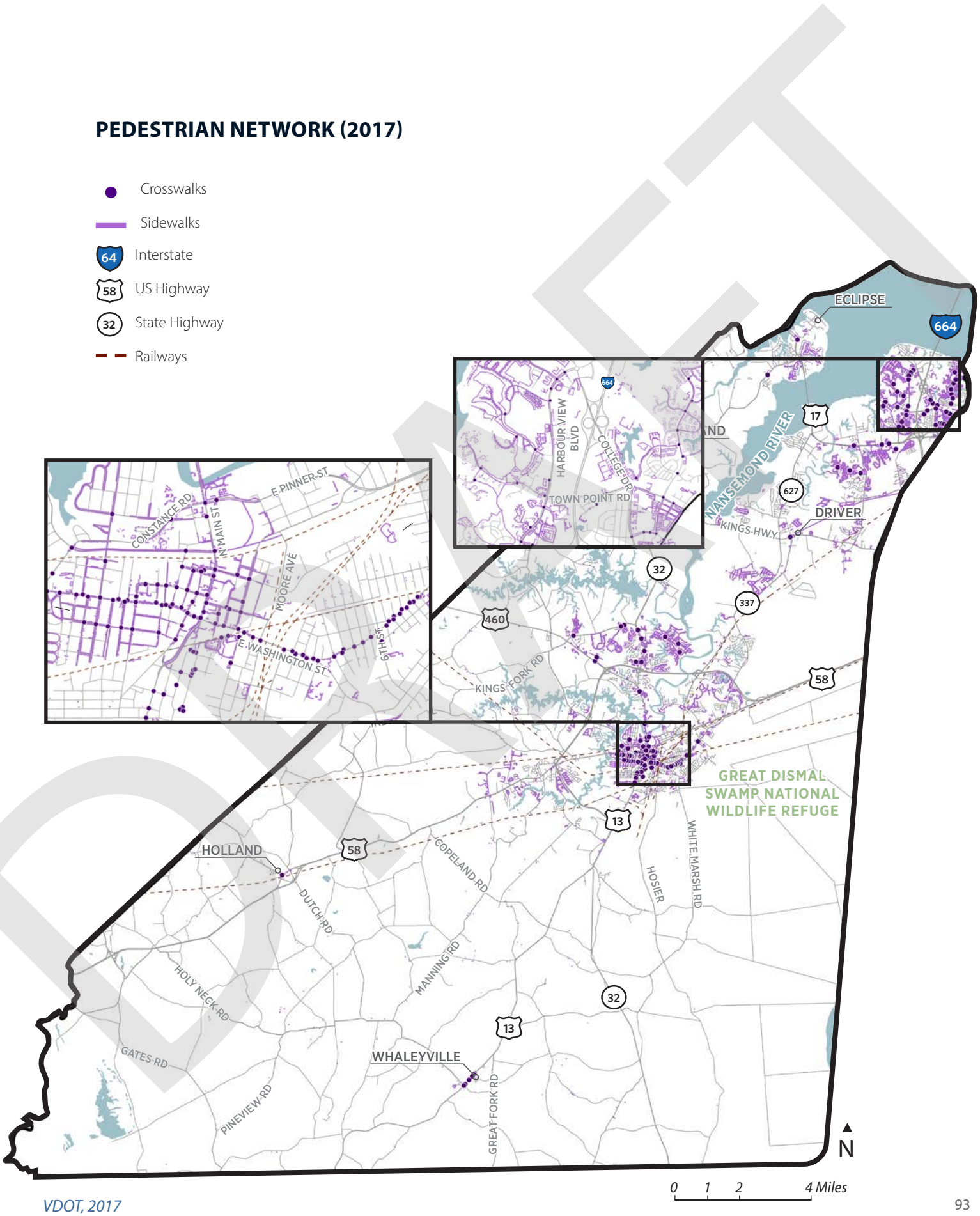
Transit. Suffolk Transit has operated since January 2012. It consists of both fixed-route and paratransit service and has grown from two to seven fixed-routes since its inception. As a division of the Department of Public Works, Suffolk Transit provides safe, cost-efficient transit services to Suffolk's core Downtown service area, Northern Suffolk area, as well as providing a connection from Downtown to Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) in the Chesapeake Square area before continuing on to the North Suffolk Library.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Infrastructure. Most of the existing pedestrian facilities are currently disconnected as shown on the map on page 93. In addition to this pedestrian infrastructure, the City benefits from a number of existing trailways, some of which are undergoing improvements, including the following:

- The Suffolk Seaboard Coastline Trails project involves the construction of a citywide system of multiuse trails linking parks and recreation, cultural and historic facilities, and neighborhoods. The approximately 20-mile trail will be completed in four phases beginning in downtown and ending at the Chesapeake city line near Interstate 664. There are also plans to extend the trail west, towards Isle of Wight County. The trail will connect to the multi-use trail at Prentis St and W Constance Rd and continue 3.3 miles west on a utility easement. To date, Suffolk has built 6.3 miles of the planned 19-mile Suffolk Seaboard Coastline Trail, with an additional 2.8 miles approved for funding. The remaining 10 miles are in the design stage, with plans to apply for matching grants in 2023.
- The South Hampton Roads Trail is a proposed 41-mile multi-use/bicycle route between Suffolk and Virginia Beach. The existing portion of the Suffolk Seaboard Coastline Trail in the Northern Growth Area is a part of this trail. The TransAmerican Bicycle Trail, originating in Oregon and currently terminating in Williamsburg, may be extended to Virginia Beach via this trail.
- The Beaches to Bluegrass Trail is a statewide trail being planned by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. It crosses the entire state, from the Cumberland Gap to the Virginia Beach oceanfront and Eastern Shore, passing through Downtown Suffolk.
- The East Coast Greenway is envisioned as a nearly 3,000 mile route from Maine to Florida. Pieces of the Greenway are already completed. The existing portions of the Seaboard Coastline trail are considered part of the "Historic Coastal Route," an alternate route for the Greenway, which is planned to run into and between both Growth Areas.

The City of Suffolk has an opportunity to improve its system of sidewalks and trails, and draw in visitors from other areas, by providing extensions or connections. In 2017, the City adopted a Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan to create a framework for the future of non-motorized travel in Suffolk. In addition, VDOT developed a statewide Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) to identify safety concerns, address next steps for improvements, and provide guidance on ongoing pedestrian safety initiatives. A map of safety action plan locations follows on page 94. (See Transportation Existing Conditions Report in Appendices for more information on these plans.)

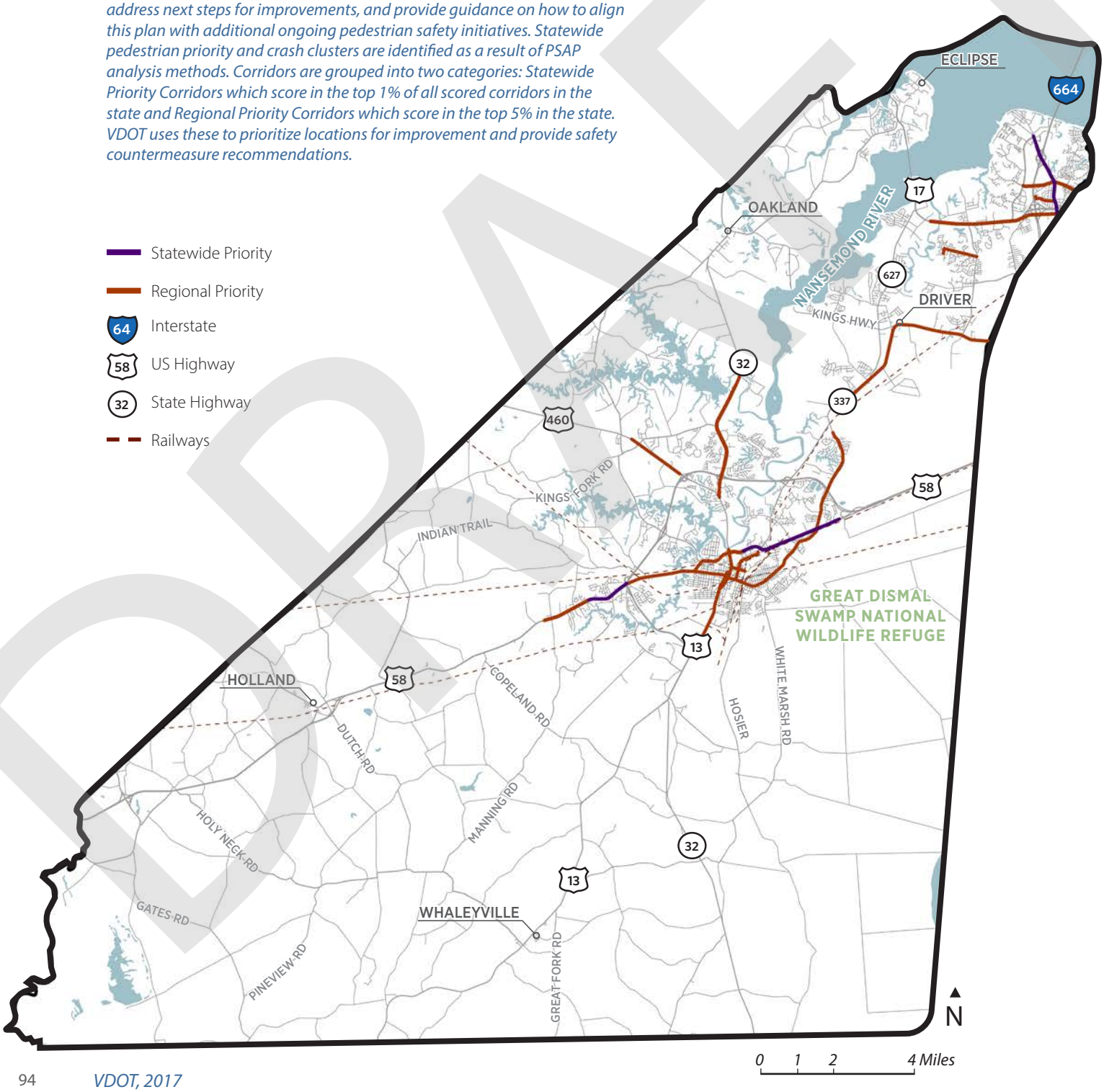
PEDESTRIAN NETWORK (2017)



VDOT, 2017

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY ACTION PLAN LOCATIONS (2017)

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) developed a statewide Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) to identify pedestrian safety concerns, address next steps for improvements, and provide guidance on how to align this plan with additional ongoing pedestrian safety initiatives. Statewide pedestrian priority and crash clusters are identified as a result of PSAP analysis methods. Corridors are grouped into two categories: Statewide Priority Corridors which score in the top 1% of all scored corridors in the state and Regional Priority Corridors which score in the top 5% in the state. VDOT uses these to prioritize locations for improvement and provide safety countermeasure recommendations.



VDOT, 2017

Air Travel. The City of Suffolk is served by two major commercial airports within one hour's driving distance: Newport News-Williamsburg International Airport in Newport News and Norfolk International Airport. These two airports offer daily commercial passenger flights serving both domestic and international travel. The Suffolk Executive Airport is a small general aviation facility located in the south/central area of the City. It is a base for several small private planes, several aviation maintenance businesses, and a recreational skydiving center. There is no scheduled commercial passenger service at this airport, and the population served is confined to tourists and business clientele who travel by private plane.

Airport services include:

- *Aviation fuel*
- *Aircraft parking (ramp or tie-down)*
- *Maintenance*
- *Computerized weather and flight planning*
- *Hangar leasing*

Passenger Rail. Currently there are no passenger rail stations located in Suffolk, although Amtrak service passes through Suffolk. The closest stations are in Norfolk and Newport News, served by the Northeast Regional route. This route connects the Hampton Roads region to Boston, Mass. via Richmond, Va., Washington, D.C., Baltimore, Md., Philadelphia, Pa., New York, N.Y., and New Haven, Conn. The City of Suffolk supports the establishment of a Western Tidewater Amtrak station. Through the City's participation in the HRTPO Passenger Rail Task Force, the City of Suffolk will continue its efforts to establish a rail station along the Northeast Regional line that currently passes through the City.

Freight Rail. The City of Suffolk is well served by freight rail service, and rail lines extend across its boundaries connecting the ports of Hampton Roads with inland markets and inland freight terminals. Continued growth of port activity in Norfolk has the potential to provide benefits through investment and job creation, but trains also interrupt the flow of traffic on Suffolk's streets. These impacts will become more frequent and prolonged as freight rail traffic increases.

Three railroad companies (Commonwealth Railway, Norfolk Southern, and CSX) currently operate within the City limits. Two Class I railroads, Norfolk Southern and CSX, serve the port via on-dock intermodal container transfer facilities at Virginia International Gateway and Norfolk International Terminals. The railroad service is augmented by vital short line rail partners including the Norfolk & Portsmouth Belt Line and the Commonwealth Railway. These trains traverse 51 public at-grade highway-rail crossings in areas that range from open rural to densely-populated residential, commercial, and industrial areas. All three lines travel through the downtown area. With increased container activity at the ports, particularly containers intended for shipment via rail, it is expected that rail activity through the City of Suffolk will steadily increase over the next 20 years. (See Transportation Existing Conditions Report in Appendices for more information on specific railway corridors and anticipated traffic impacts due to increasing freight rail traffic.)

Truck Freight. While there is a desire to shift freight movement to rail, trucks are still the primary method of transporting domestic freight into, out of, within, and through Hampton Roads. The efficient movement of trucks is important to the region since roadway congestion can saddle trucking companies and shippers with additional operating costs, delays, and uncertainty. The economic competitiveness of the Port of Virginia, Hampton Roads, and the state is greatly impacted by the efficient movement of freight. Suffolk's roadways play a critical role in this system.

By 2040, the top corridors for moving freight tonnage are expected to be I-64, Route 58, Route 13/ CBBT, and I-264 in Norfolk and Portsmouth. By 2040, the top two primary gateways for freight by annual tonnage are expected to be I-64 and Route 58 as depicted in the Freight flow Analysis map on page 96.

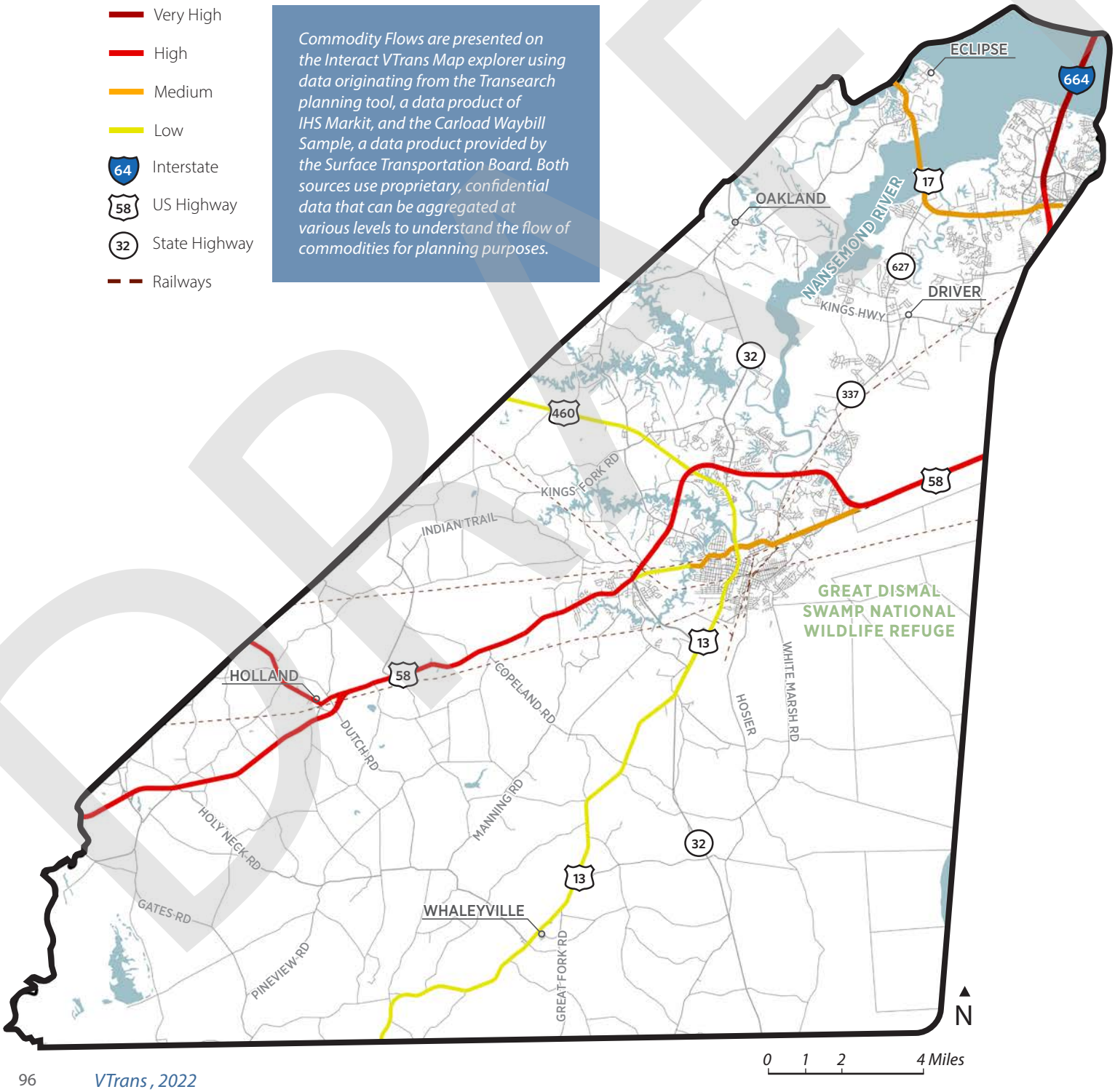
FREIGHT FLOW ANALYSIS (2017-2045)

This map shows the projected growth of freight travel primarily along 58 around the City of Suffolk, with some growth anticipated through the City and along 17, 13, and 460.

Truck Commodity Growth Ratio (2017-2045)

- Very High
- High
- Medium
- Low
- 64 Interstate
- 58 US Highway
- 32 State Highway
- Railways

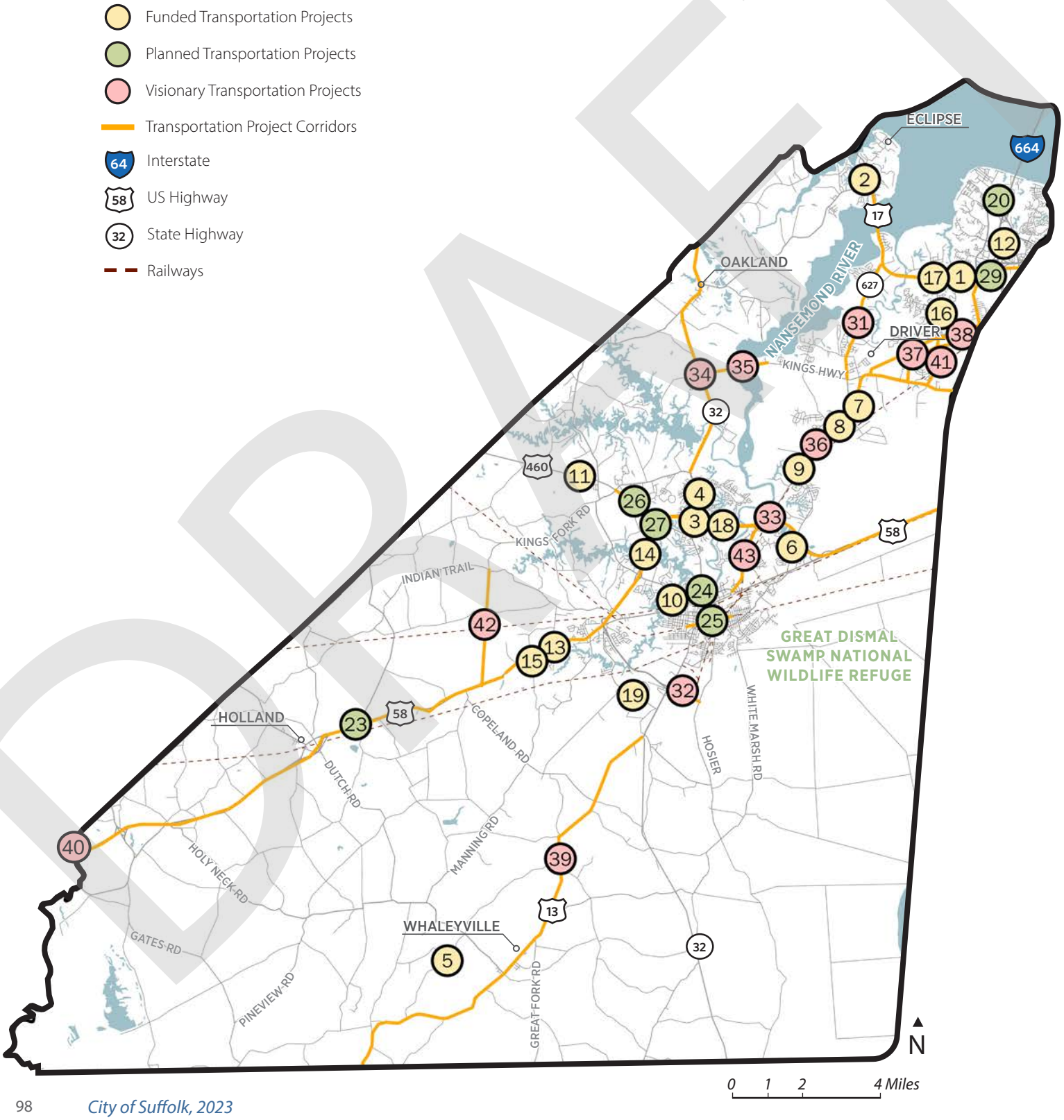
Commodity Flows are presented on the Interact VTrans Map explorer using data originating from the Transearch planning tool, a data product of IHS Markit, and the Carload Waybill Sample, a data product provided by the Surface Transportation Board. Both sources use proprietary, confidential data that can be aggregated at various levels to understand the flow of commodities for planning purposes.



Committed Projects

Taking into consideration the existing roadway network and the congestion and safety considerations described, as well as opportunities and needs relative to other modes of transit and freight, the City of Suffolk has identified priority transportation projects. These projects can be categorized as funded, planned, or visionary (desired if funding can be acquired). The map on page 98 and associated project list on page 99 illustrates that many of these projects align with the most challenged areas with respect to traffic and safety, with a focus on denser urban areas and key corridors. Many of these project locations also support future development in the City's growth areas. In combination, they provide an opportunity to anticipate the impact of continued regional development as well as the strategic policy decisions around future land use in the City described in Chapter 2. They are also reinforced by the Actions described beginning on page 100 of this plan.

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS (2023)



Funded Transportation Projects

PROJECT NO.	PROJECT
1	Bridge Rd Traffic Signal Upgrades
2	Crittendon Rd and Route 17 Intersection Realignment
3	Godwin Blvd Interchange Improvements at Route 58 Bypass
4	Godwin Boulevard Widening
5	Longstreet Ln Construction over Somerton Creek
6	Nansemond Pkwy Replacement over Beamons Mill Pond
7	Nansemond Pkwy Traffic Signal Upgrades
8	Nansemond Pkwy/Bennetts Pasture Rd Intersection Improvements
9	Nansemond Pkwy/Wilroy Rd Overpass over Commonwealth Railway
10	Pitchkettle Rd Realignment
11	Pruden Blvd/ Prudence Rd Intersection Improvements
12	Pughsville Area Drainage Improvements
13	Route 58 Corridor Improvement
14	Route 58 IAR Study
15	Route 58/ Manning Bridge Rd Intersection Improvements
16	Shoulders Hill Rd Multi Use Path
17	Shoulders Hill Rd/Route 17 Intersection Improvements
18	Suffolk Bypass ITS Improvements
19	Turlington Rd Replacement over Kilby Creek

Planned Transportation Projects

PROJECT NO.	PROJECT
20	College Dr Median Improvements
21	Downtown Railroad Warning System
22	Electric Car Charging Stations
23	Rte 58 Improvements - RCUT @ Holland Bypass
24	Kimberly Bridge Elevation
25	Railroad Crossing Improvements
26	Route 460 Improvements
27	Safety Improvements - Route 58, six lane section
28	Signal System Upgrades
29	Townpoint Rd Sidewalk Construction

Visionary Transportation Projects

PROJECT NO.	PROJECT
30*	Amtrak Station Stop
31	Bennetts Pasture Rd
32	Carolina Rd Connector
33	Commonwealth Railway Realignment
34	Godwin Blvd, Isle of Wight County Line to Kings Fork Rd
35	Kings Highway Bridge Study
36	Nansemond Pkwy from Wilroy Rd to Northgate Blvd
37	North Suffolk Connector
38	Realigned Pughsville Rd
39	Route 13, Whaleyville Blvd from Airport Rd to NC State Line Widening
40	Route 58 - Hampton Roads Gateway Connector
41	Shoulders Hill Rd, Phase 4
42	Western Connector
43	Wilroy Rd from Suffolk Bypass to Nansemond Pkwy Widening
44*	Bypass/Pitchkettle Road
45*	Bennetts Pasture/Kings Hwy
46*	Bridge/Harbour View
47*	College/H.V. Blvd
48*	Godwin/K.H.
49*	Portsmouth/Wilroy/Pinner
50*	Portsmouth/E. Washington
51*	Pughsville/Shoulders Hill Road
52*	Bypass/Wilroy
53*	White Marsh/E Washington

*not currently mapped

More information on Funded, Planned, and Visionary projects is available in Appendix C.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

T.1 Align transportation system investments with land use.

T.11 Prioritize transportation investments to address corridors that will be most affected by growth in local development and regional traffic, both within and outside of the Growth Areas. Maintain the City's commitment to incorporate Transportation System Management Strategies (TSM) and Transportation Demand Management Strategies (TDM) to improve operational management and better utilize existing and new roadways. Prioritize and evaluate roadway segments and intersections identified in Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) Potential for Safety Improvement (PSI) and Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) for future study and enhancement. Continue to pursue efforts to secure and construct a Western Tidewater Amtrak station.

Transportation System Management (TSM)

Integrated strategies to optimize the performance of existing infrastructure through the implementation of multimodal and intermodal, cross-jurisdictional systems, services, and projects designed to preserve capacity and improve security, safety, and reliability of the transportation system; and the consideration of incorporating natural infrastructure. TSM may include Transportation Demand Management strategies.

Source: USDOT Federal Highway Administration, Organizing and Planning for Operations Glossary

T.2 Expand multi-modal transportation options.

T.2.1 Ensure that new growth will improve multimodal connectivity in the Growth Areas through complete streets and better pedestrian, bike, and transit connections. Incorporate bicycle, pedestrian, and transit related features in conjunction with design and construction of new roadways and road improvements. Implement the recommendations developed as part of the Transit Strategic Plan. Implement the recommendations developed in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, with particular emphasis on identifying corridors that can support separated bicycle and pedestrian facilities (such as shared use paths and/or separated bike lanes and sidewalks).

Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan

The City of Suffolk Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan creates a framework for the future of non-motorized travel in Suffolk. It guides the City toward a multimodal future and begins the process of creating a network of paths that provide community members and visitors with real options for traveling and recreating within and between the City's two Growth Areas.

Source: Suffolk Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, 2017

T.3 Proactively address traffic congestion and safety issues.

T.3.1 Promote the prioritization of investment in major regional transportation improvements that can improve the flow and safety of freight traffic in the city. Work with the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC), Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), VDOT, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), and the Virginia Port Authority to plan, build, and maintain efficient transportation systems for the movement of freight and goods through the region. Preserve existing capacity on the roadway system by minimizing conflicts between vehicles accessing the local street system and through moving vehicles via access management provisions within the Special Corridor Overlay District (SCOD) in the Unified Development Ordinance.

T.3.2 Continue to consider the adequacy and funding of public facilities, including roads, in the development review process. Promote implementation of mixed-use development where facilities, infrastructure, and markets will sustain investments. Focus new development in the designated Growth Areas shown in the Land Use Chapter of this plan to create places that are efficient, compact, and provide a variety of transportation choices.

Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC)

The Hampton Roads Planning District Commission is one of 21 Planning District Commissions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. The HRPDC serves as a resource of technical expertise to its seventeen local government members. HRPDC staff also serve as the support staff for the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO), which is responsible for transportation planning and decision-making in the region.

Source: Hampton Roads Planning District Commission webpage

Special Corridor Overlay District (SCOD)

The purpose of the Special Corridor Overlay District in the Unified Development Ordinance is to:

- *maintain the long-term mobility function of arterial and collector roadways;*
- *limit access and the number of conflict points and, thereby, reduce the need for additional crossover locations and traffic signals;*
- *promote improved pedestrian and vehicular circulation;*
- *encourage land assembly and the most desirable use of land in accordance with the Comprehensive Plan;*
- *promote architectural continuity;*
- *encourage designs which produce a desirable relationship between individual buildings, the circulation systems and adjacent areas; and*
- *control signage visibility obstructions and clutter and to permit a flexible response of development to the market as well as to provide incentives for the development of a variety of land uses and activities of high quality.*

Source: Unified Development Ordinance, Section 31-412

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT)

DRPT administers public transportation funding and planning in Virginia. The department oversees programs and initiatives that support freight investments, planning recommendations, and policies for both passenger and freight rail. They also manage investments in local and regional commuter assistance programs that mitigate congestion, manage transportation demand, and promote and encourage the use of transit, vanpools, and carpools.

Source: Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation webpage

T.3.3 Consider options to mitigate impacts of rail traffic through grade separation, new road connections, or rail relocation. Work proactively with the Virginia Port Authority, Commonwealth Railway, Norfolk Southern, and CSX to improve safety and level of service on the surface transportation network (i.e., at-grade railroad crossings) that traverses the City's street network. Consider implementing a comprehensive driver information system and technology that would inform drivers to seek safe alternate routes with real time updates.

T.4 Promote responsible regionalism.

T.4.1 Coordinate planned improvements to facilities crossing jurisdictional boundaries with the neighboring locality. Develop roadway and transit improvement programs that are consistent with those adopted by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission. In conjunction with the regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), annually evaluate the efficiency and need for improvements of those roadways and intersections designated as Committed Projects. Cooperate with the Hampton Roads Gateway initiative plans to upgrade Routes 58 and 460 from Suffolk westward to I-95. Consider emergency evacuation needs as part of planning, design, and funding of major corridor improvements. Participate in and support the funding and advocacy activities of the Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC).

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

A TIP is a document developed by a metropolitan planning organization in cooperation with the State and any affected public transportation operators. The TIP contains "projects consistent with the current metropolitan transportation plan, reflects the investment priorities established in the current metropolitan transportation plan," and, once implemented, is designed to make progress toward achieving the established performance targets.

Source: USDOT Federal Highway Administration, Organizing and Planning for Operations Glossary

Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission (HRTAC).

Comprised of locally elected officials, the commission acts as the organizational structure to determine how new regional money, approximately $200 million annually, is invested in transportation projects.

Source: Hampton Roads Transportation Accountability Commission webpage

5

MUNICIPAL FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Suffolk's municipal facilities and services include water, sewer, and broadband infrastructure; parks and open space; fire and police; schools; and libraries, all of which are essential to the City. In general, facilities and services are concentrated in the existing Growth Areas where the majority of the City's population lives and works. Within the timeframe of this plan, there are several priority opportunities for Suffolk to improve facilities and services in these areas in ways that enhance quality of life, public safety, and overall well-being. As Suffolk continues to grow, it will also be important that facilities and services are expanded. It is critically important that plans for new and expanded facilities and services are closely coordinated with land use policies that will shape where and how development takes place.

Chapter Contents

Existing Conditions Highlights 104
Actions 123

EXISTING CONDITIONS HIGHLIGHTS

The full Municipal Facilities and Services existing conditions report is available in Appendix C.

Water Distribution

While Suffolk's existing Growth Areas are well-served with respect to water, in order for Suffolk to grow, investments in water utilities are needed. Sewer expansions must also be planned for and funded in coordination with new development. Water service in the existing Growth Areas are depicted on the map on page 106. The City's two water treatment plants and transmission and distribution mains provide water to most developed and developable areas within both the Central and Northern Growth Area boundaries. Within the Suffolk 2045 Growth Area Boundary expansion areas there is also generally good coverage as shown on the maps on page 107 and 108. Service is provided along the Route 58 Corridor extending west beyond the current Central Growth Area. Generally, villages are not served by water with some exceptions including in Holland and Oakland. Planned new transmission mains along Route 460 to the west from the Central Growth Area boundary and south from the City's water treatment plant to Route 460 will be required as development increases.

Accommodating Future Growth and Timing of Utility Expansion

Additional water and sewer system capacity will be needed to support future growth. The following critical needs must be addressed:

- *Utility expansions must be planned for and funded in advance of the arrival of new development.*
- *The capital costs of new or expanded facilities must be balanced with minimizing utility rate impacts to the City's customer base.*
- *Service for planned development must be evaluated against the existing sanitary sewer system and water system and with expanded service areas to accommodate development needs.*
- *Extension of public sanitary sewer and water to areas currently not served by City public utilities must be based on the sanitary sewer and water system extension petition process.*

Future Drinking Water Regulations

Future drinking water regulations as well as changes to current regulations will impact utility rates and will require planning to meet mandated regulatory schedules. These regulations include:

- **Lead Service Line regulations** that may require removal of all lead service line piping on both public and private property
- **Perfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) regulations** that may require advanced water treatment processes
- **Fluoride regulations** that may require connection of the Village of Whaleyville water system to the main City of Suffolk water system.

Water Supply Planning

The City's primary water supply comes from lakes within the City. These lakes also serve other memebers of the Western Tidewater Water Authority. To meet upcoming water demands, expansion of the G. Robert House Water Treatment plant capacity will be required. This is a costly project and the expansion timing needs to be balanced against projected water demand that is influenced by growth. Similarly, upcoming water demands will require the construction of new, large diameter water transmission lines, the timing of which will also need to be balanced with projected water demands, as well as the water quality contained within the piping.

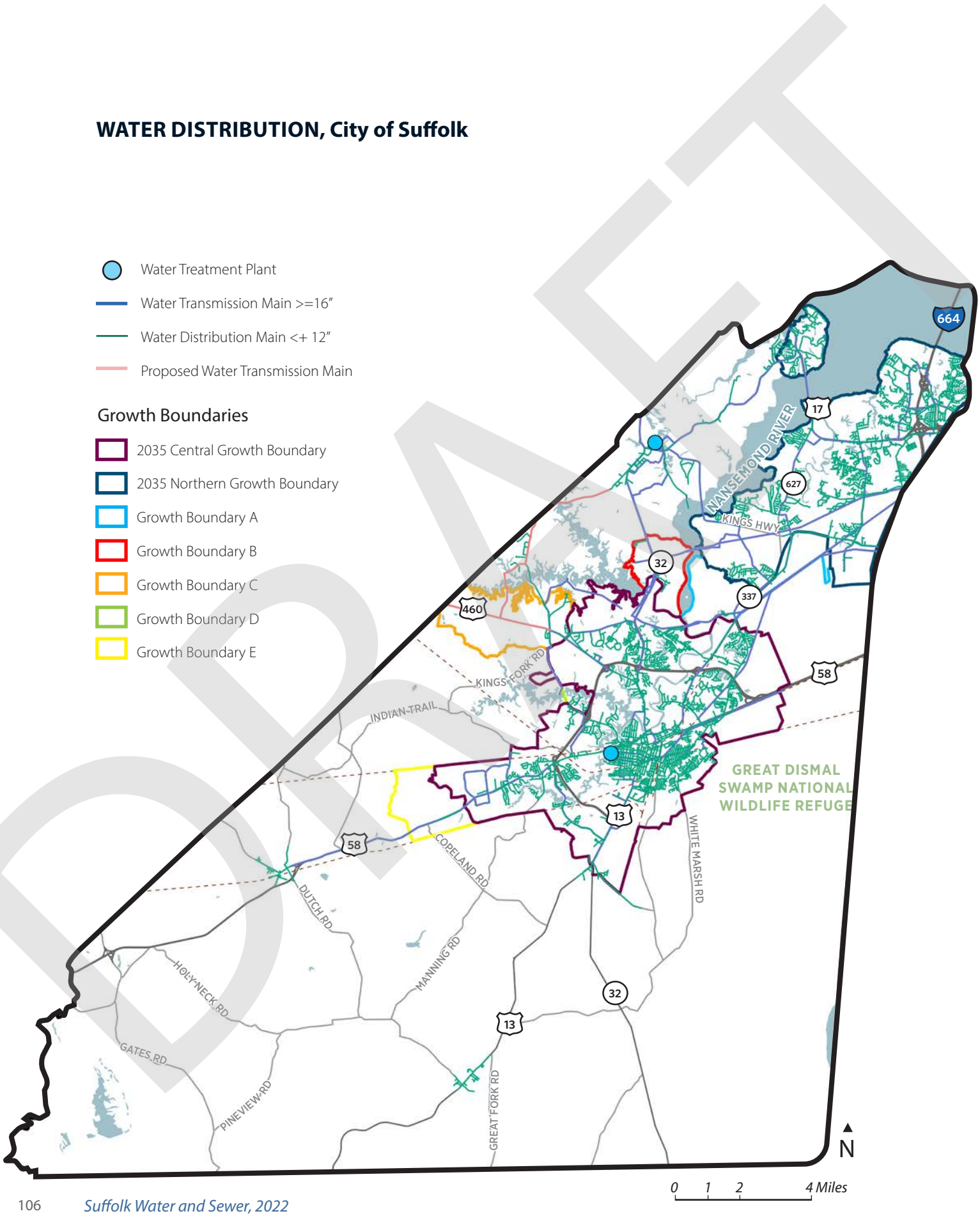
Sewer Service

Sewer pump stations provide coverage to most developed areas within the existing Growth Areas. Significant new development outside of the Growth Areas, such as along major corridors of 58 and 460 or within developable land between the Central and Northern Growth Areas would require an extension of service.

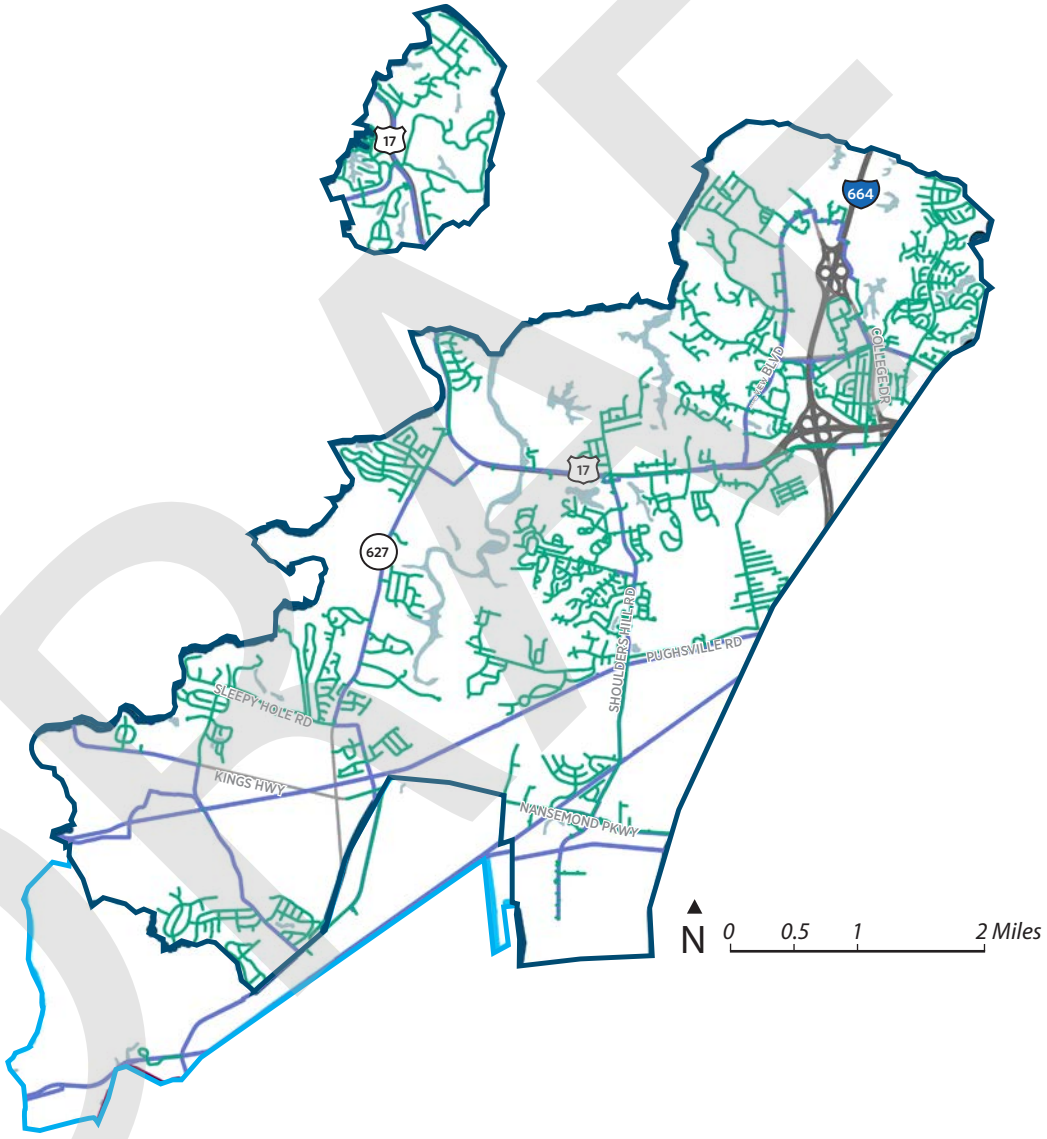
Stormwater

The City's stormwater system is critical to protecting both the environment and property from flood damage. Stormwater is the result of rainfall in the community. Typically, some rainfall is absorbed back into underground aquifers through the soil. The remainder is known as runoff. This runoff moves over impervious surfaces such as streets, driveways, and roof tops into the City's streams and rivers through ditches and storm drains. Runoff can be a problem because as the water moves across the ground it can pick up contaminants and various pollutants. Some of these pollutants may include silt and soil, nutrients, trash, bacteria, oils, and heavy metals. The City of Suffolk has a distinct, separate stormwater system from the sanitary sewer system.

WATER DISTRIBUTION, City of Suffolk



WATER DISTRIBUTION, Suffolk 2045 Northern Growth Area

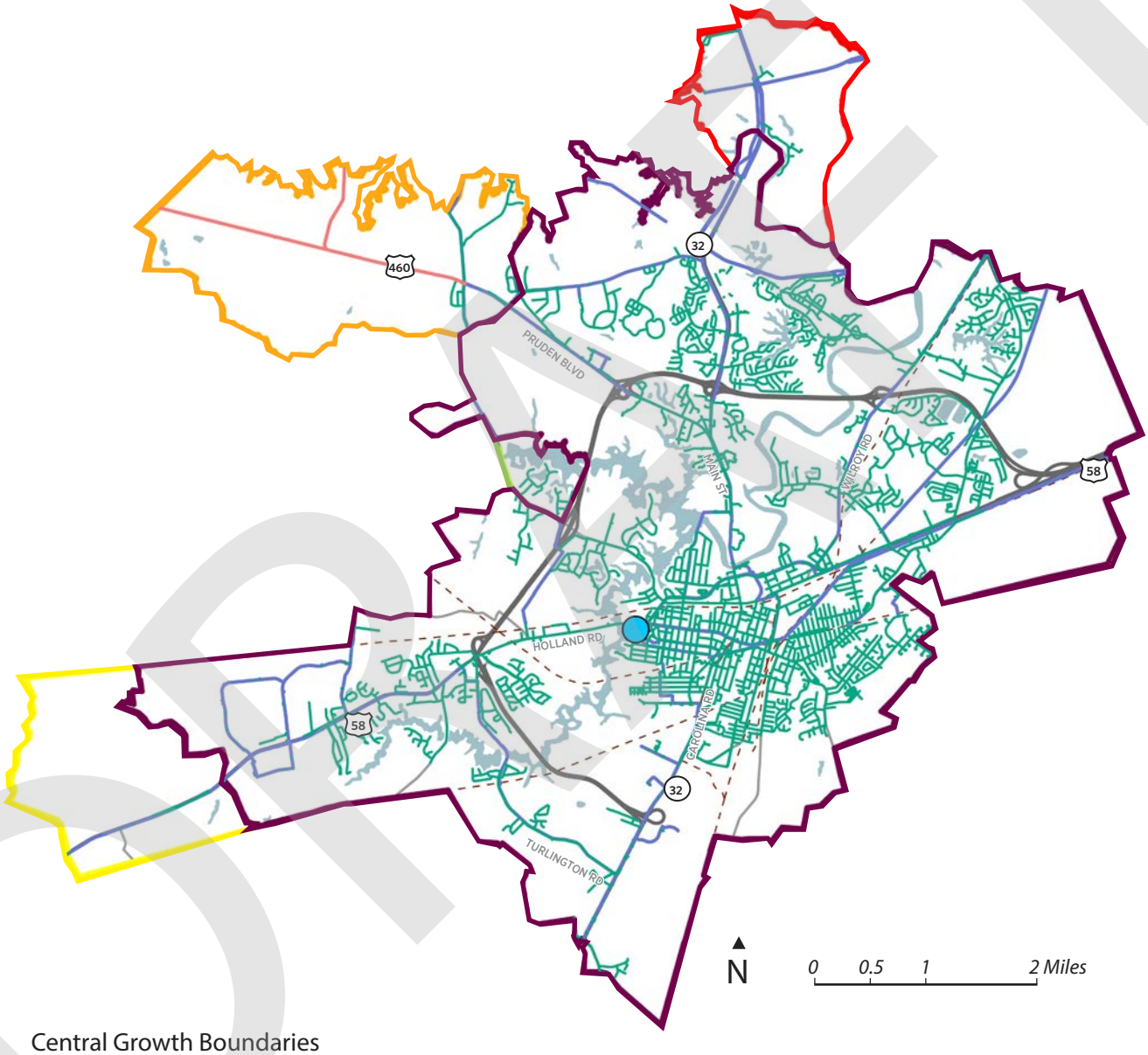


Northern Growth Boundaries

- 2035 Growth Boundary
- Growth Boundary A

- Water Transmission Main >=16"
- Water Distribution Main <+ 12"

WATER DISTRIBUTION, Suffolk 2045 Central Growth Area

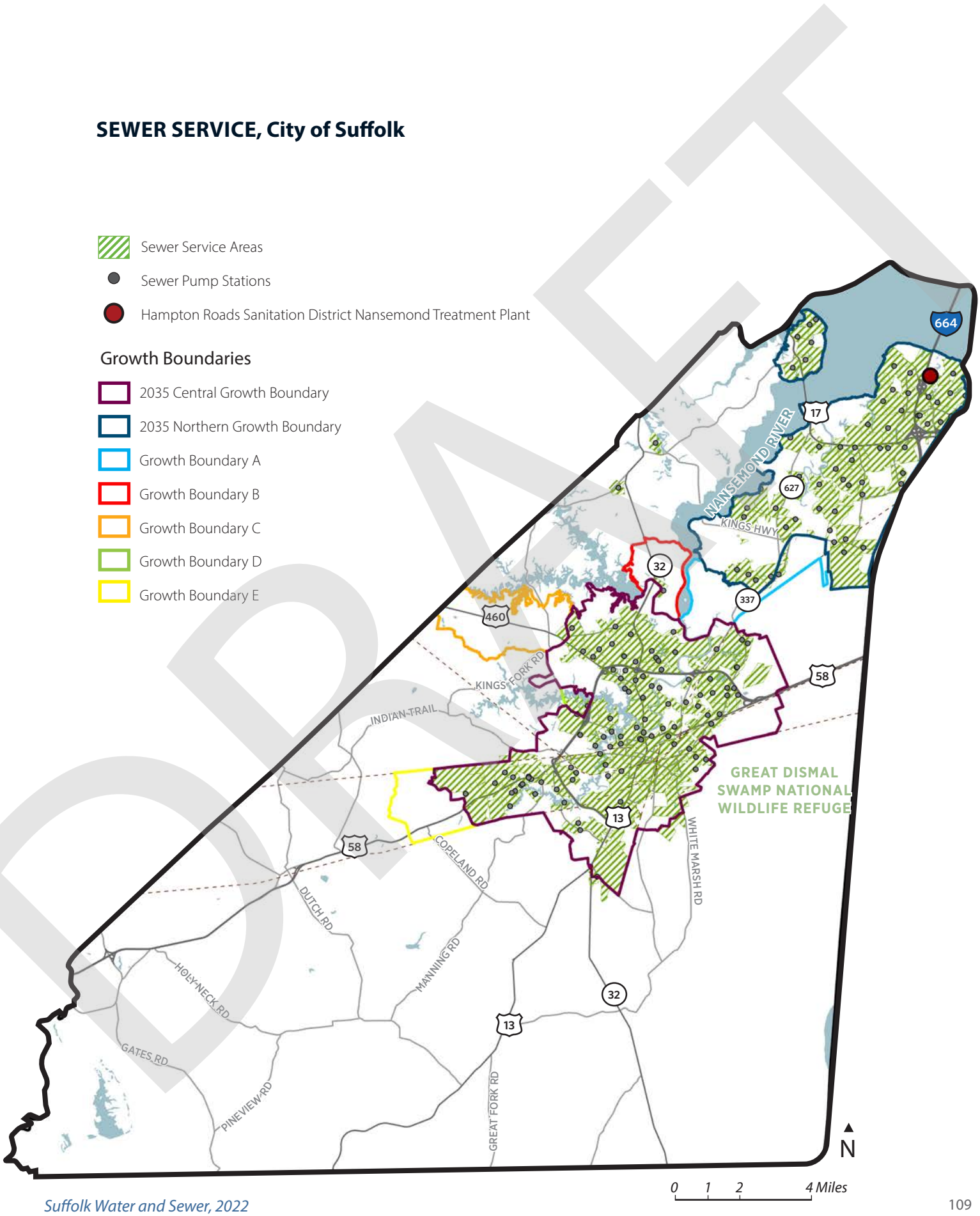


Central Growth Boundaries

- 2035 Growth Boundary
- Growth Boundary B
- Growth Boundary C
- Growth Boundary D
- Growth Boundary E

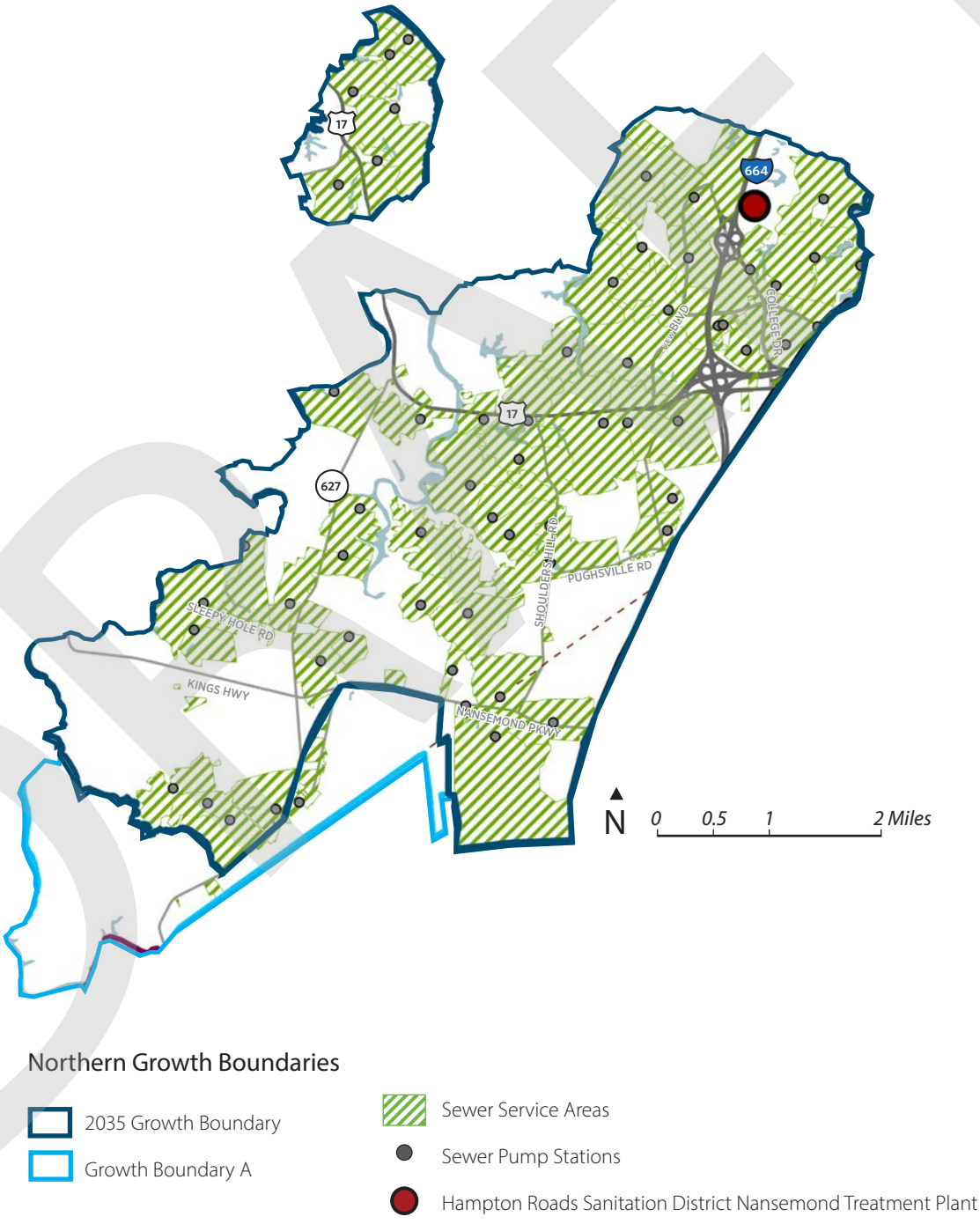
- Water Treatment Plant
- Water Transmission Main >=16"
- Water Distribution Main <+ 12"
- Proposed Water Transmission Main

SEWER SERVICE, City of Suffolk

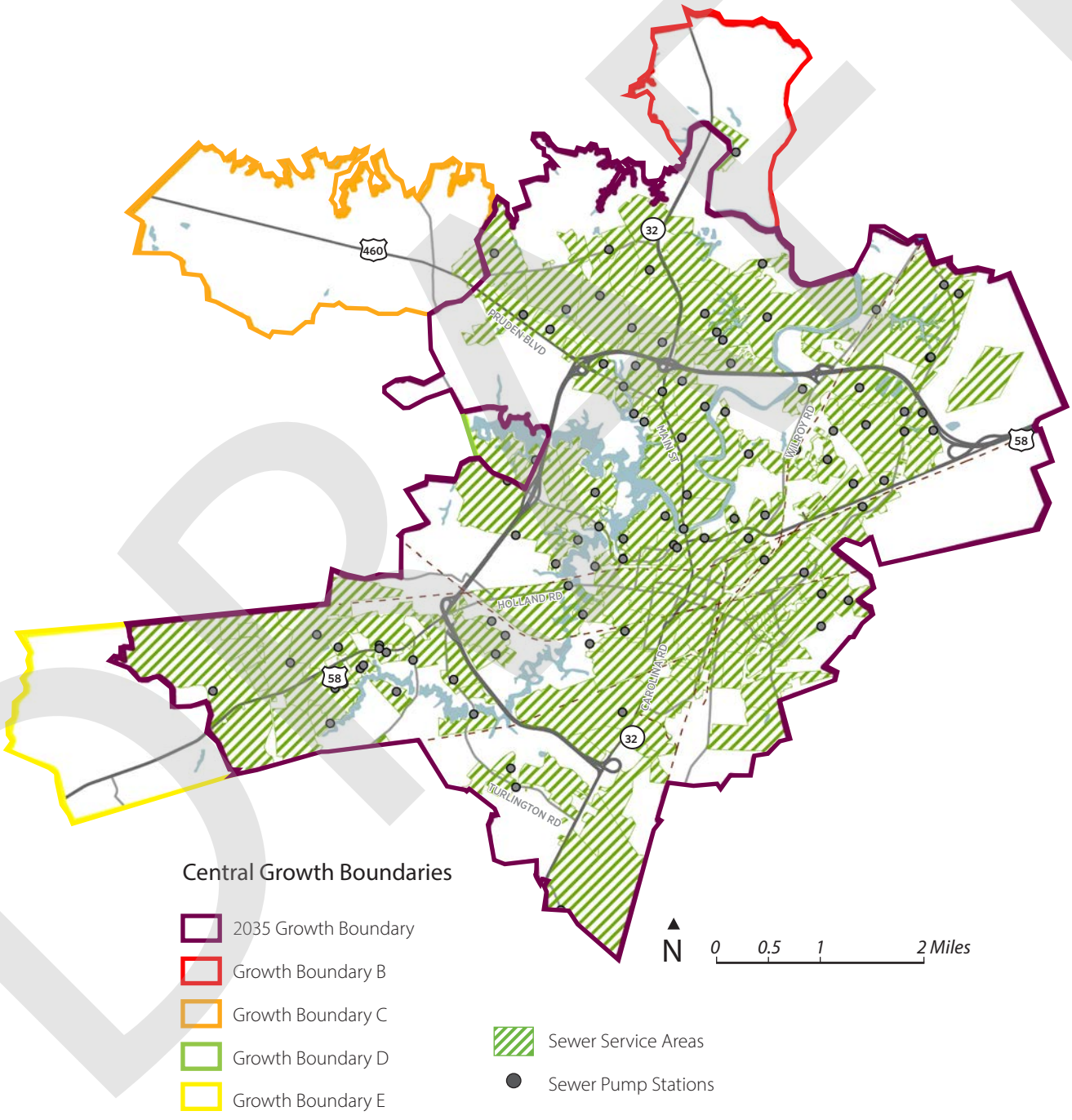


Suffolk Water and Sewer, 2022

SEWER SERVICE, Suffolk 2045 Northern Growth Area



SEWER SERVICE, Suffolk 2045 Central Growth Area

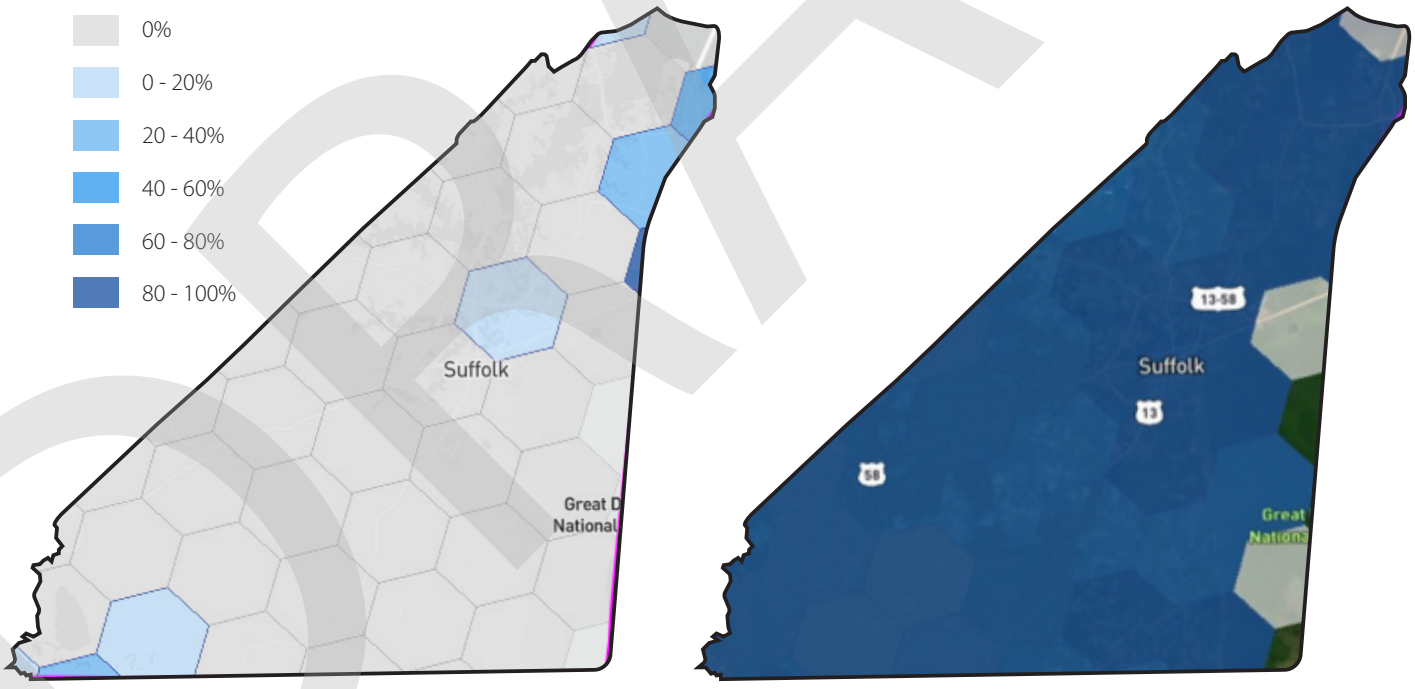


Broadband Access

Broadband (high-speed internet access) is the primary means of educational opportunities, working, shopping, and communication in our current climate. Until recently, there were thousands of residents who had no connectivity. The City of Suffolk has been aligned with the State of Virginia's goal of obtaining universal broadband coverage for over five years. Through grant opportunities with existing internet service providers, the City of Suffolk will be universally covered by 2025. The installation of fiber broadband internet throughout the City's most rural areas has already commenced and over 2,200 homes are currently receiving services.

In addition to serving those residents with little to no access, the City has additional broadband service providers our citizens and businesses the options they desire. The City of Suffolk welcomes the opportunity to grow alongside our communities and provide the necessary connectivity in our fast-paced connected world.

BROADBAND ACCESS



Fiber Broadband Coverage - June 2022

FCC National Broadband Map, 2023

Expected Fiber Broadband Coverage - December 2024

City of Suffolk, Department of Information Technology, 2023

Parks and Recreation

Parks and recreation amenities are essential to quality of life, community health, and economic prosperity. When properly planned, managed, and maintained, a park and open space system provides multiple benefits to many groups:

- **Residents.** Improved health and stress reduction
- **Natural environment.** Resource conservation, flood water storage, and water and air quality improvement
- **Image and identity of the City.** Cultural resource protection and diversification, increased visitation and investment
- **The community.** Decreased infrastructure costs, enhanced property values, diversified economic base and revenues from use of special features

In February 2016, City Council approved the Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Master Plan Update put together by the City's Parks and Recreation Department. The plan is based on community values and aligned with the National Recreation and Park Association's three Pillars of Health and Wellness, Conservation, and Social Equity. The City conducted community engagement to gauge human needs and facility assessments to gauge structural needs. Using these results, a list of actions relating to funding and revenue was created, as well as other strategic actions including health and wellness, transportation, and public safety and education. They also created a Historical, Cultural & Natural Resource management plan that built upon the Suffolk 2035 Plan.

Parks

The City currently manages 43 park and recreation facilities, which cover slightly over 2,019 acres. A summary is included below and a map of facilities on page 114. (See Municipal Facilities and Services Existing Conditions Report in the Appendices for a complete inventory with acreage.)

Regional Parks. Suffolk's regional parks are Bennett's Creek Park, Lake Meade Park, Lone Star Lakes Park, and Sleepy Hole Park. These parks provide unique and attractive outdoor activities.

Neighborhood Parks. There are 14 neighborhood parks within Suffolk, ranging in size from less than an acre up to 30 acres, totaling over 160 acres. These parks typically are designed to serve the neighborhood they are located in. Some of the parks include larger amenities such as swimming pools and tennis courts, while others may have a small playground.

Recreational and Arts-Oriented Facilities

Special Use Facilities. The City Parks Department operates five special use facilities described below. These facilities provide specialized programming and function as community gathering areas.

East Suffolk Recreation Center. The former East Suffolk High School was renovated and opened as a recreation center in 2009. It has 22,500 SF of area and hosts various programs including after school programs, fitness, basketball, and senior activities.

Planters Club. The Planters Club is a rental facility that was part of the former Obici Estate along the Nansemond River. Since purchasing the facility in 2005, significant renovations have continued to address maintenance and ADA issues, including major electrical improvements in 2017. A living shoreline was established in 2019.

Suffolk Art Gallery. Originally a library constructed in the 1960s, this space was re-purposed into an art gallery. In 2020, the entryway and reception area of this facility was updated, and the floor was replaced. In 2022, the ADA restroom was renovated.

Curtis R. Milteer, Sr. Recreation Center. Formerly known as the Whaleyville Recreation Center, this facility was renovated and reopened in 2016. The 8.4 acre facility has a community room, computer lab, commercial kitchen, group exercise room and game room.

Bennett's Creek Recreation Center. Formerly the 1LT Richard T. Shea U.S. Army Reserve Center, it housed the 1st Battalion, 317th Regiment, which was formed in 1917. Called the "Blue Ridge Division" because most men were from Virginia, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. The location served as a Nike missile site in the 1950s and 60s before it became an Army reserve site. The current building was erected in 1981.

Athletic Facilities/Recreation Centers. The City's athletic facility is the John F. Kennedy Athletic Complex, located at John F. Kennedy Middle School on East Washington Street in the Central Growth Area. Other athletic facilities include Kings Fork Athletic Fields and Holland Athletic Fields. Additional facilities are located at Forest Glen Middle School, John Yeates Middle School, Monogram Field, Peanut Park, and Wellons Parks.

Greenways, Blueways, and Trails

The Suffolk Seaboard Trails project involves the construction of a citywide system of multi-use trails linking parks, recreation, cultural, historic facilities, and neighborhoods. To date, Suffolk has built 6.3 miles of the planned 17.2 mile Suffolk Seaboard Coastline Trail, with an additional 2.8 miles approved for funding. The trail is expected to be completed by fall of 2027

A number of recreation trails planned or developed at the national, state, and regional levels include the City of Suffolk along their routes. Among these are the Captain John Smith National Historic Trail, the Birthplace of America Trail and the proposed Southside Hampton Roads Trail. As the first national water trail, the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail follows the historic routes of John Smith's travels, which includes the James and Nansemond River, and East Coast Greenway.

Sleepy Hole Golf Course

The public golf course is an 18-hole facility purchased by the City of Suffolk in 2003. The golf course was renovated and reopened for use in 2004. The Obici House Mansion has also been renovated and has reopened as a club house and rental facility. The golf course is operated by a vendor.

The Great Dismal Swamp

The Great Dismal Swamp Wildlife Refuge, under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is a nearly 113,000-acre wildlife preserve in parts of Virginia and North Carolina, including Suffolk. It is home to almost 300 different species of animals and plants, and contains over 50 miles of walkable trails. In 2023 the Great Dismal Swamp was signed into the National Heritage Area Act, which made it a heritage area in recognition of its history and connections with local Indigenous tribes and African American history. It provides a unique natural resource that attracts over 75,000 local, regional, and national visitors each year.

Coordination with Other Parks and Recreation Plans

The 2018 Virginia Outdoors Plan provides recommendations and guidelines for the state and for local governments regarding both outdoor recreation and natural resources that play an important role in residents' quality of life. A part of this Outdoors Plan is to provide recommendations on a regional level. The City of Suffolk is included in the Hampton Roads region, which covers approximately 2,500 square miles and 22 local governments. The Outdoors Plan does not include formal recommended level of service standards. Rather, the plan provides specific recommendations and priority considerations for each region. The priorities identified for the Hampton Roads region are: health, youth, trails, water access, and land conservation.

To determine the needs of the region, the Outdoors Plan includes the results from the 2021 Virginia Outdoors Demand Survey which ranks the most popular outdoor recreation activities per region. The results for the Hampton Roads region show trails for hiking and walking being the most popular and trails for motorized off-road vehicles being the least popular.

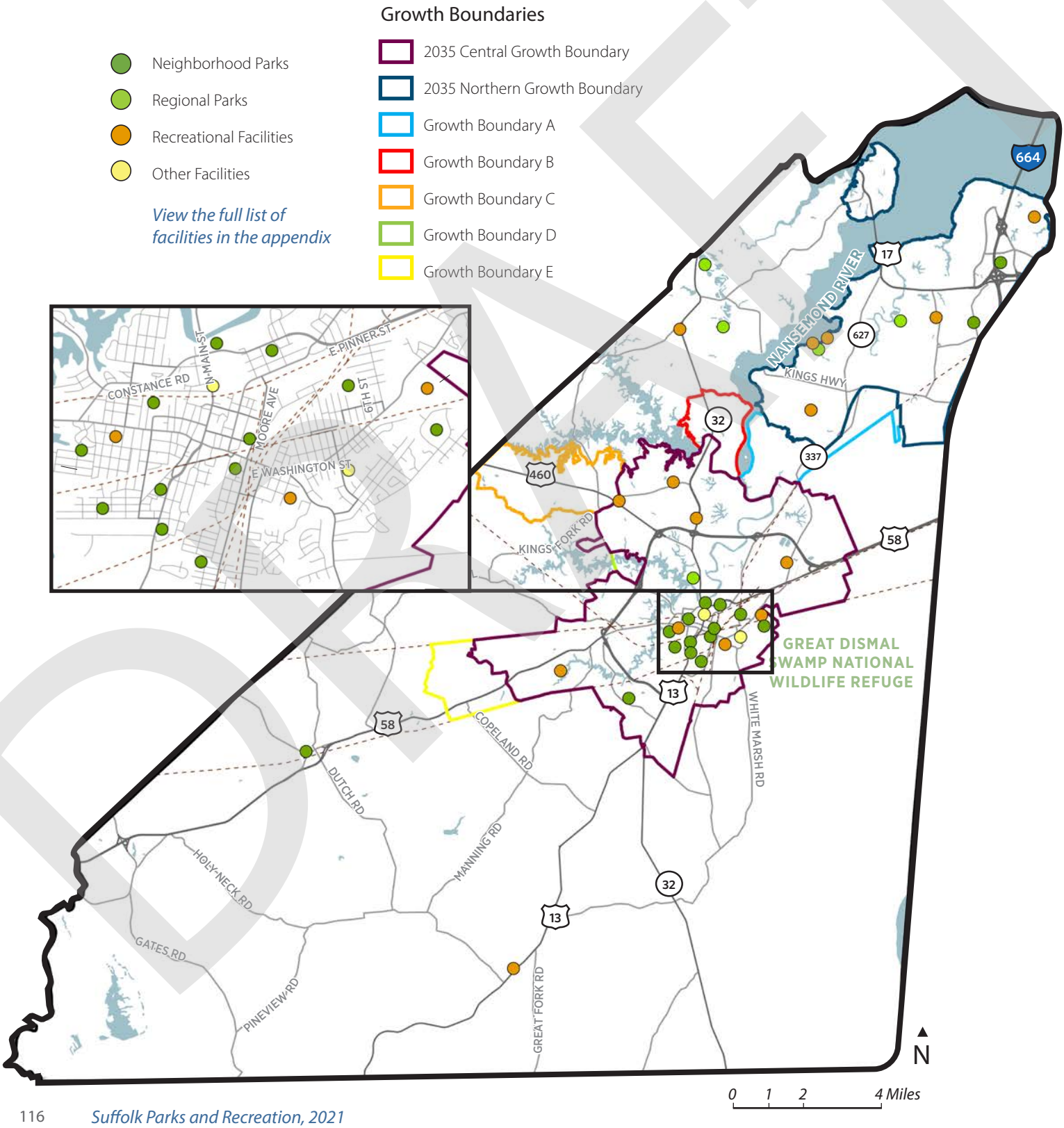
Other Public and Private Facilities

Other recreational facilities not managed by the City include

- *Golf Courses*
- *Marinas*
- *Stables*
- *Campgrounds*
- *School playgrounds/athletic fields*

The 2016 Parks and Recreation Master Plan Update developed a framework to create memorable experiences at Suffolk parks and recreational facilities through a culture of fun and customer service excellence. It aimed to fulfill the National Recreation and Park Association's (NRPA's) 3 Pillars of Health and Wellness: Conservation and Social Equity; Innovation; and Financial Sustainability and Customer Service Excellence, to create a realistic yet ambitious road map with strategic actions items and performance metrics tied to them. This community-driven process developed recommendations across short-, mid-, and long-term timeframes that prioritized improving existing facilities, increasing accessibility, partnering with local entities, and taking advantage of more natural resources (i.e., waterfronts) around the City.

PARKS AND RECREATION FACILITIES



Public Safety

Public safety in the City of Suffolk is provided 24-hours per day by the Suffolk Police Department and the Suffolk Department of Fire & Rescue. The Police Department is organized into two precincts and 18 patrol districts. Precinct 1 covers the southern part of the City including the downtown area. Precinct 2 encompasses the northern portion of the City. Police services are also provided out of Police Headquarters, which is located in downtown Suffolk. The Department of Fire & Rescue is organized into two battalions, with nine fire stations covering the city. Battalion 1 covers from the downtown to Whaleyville/Holland and up to the Wilroy Road/Nansemond Parkway. Battalion 2 covers the northern part of the city including Harbourview, Chuckatuck, and the Driver area. (More detailed information about the Police Department and Department of Fire & Rescue is available in Appendix C.)

Police

Quality service delivery is impacted by a number of factors including geography, population size, population age, calls for service, nationwide crime trends and special service areas such as walking and bike trails, or retail establishments. In early 2022, the Suffolk Police Department had 198 officers, but was down 29 and had faced challenges in recruiting people with necessary skills. Mental health is a major focus for the department, followed by traffic and gunfire. While department leadership has expressed confidence in the department's ability to service growth, recruiting was identified as a significant challenge and many of the same factors that have been identified as necessary to attract residents and workers more generally (amenities and services) have been cited as important to attracting the quality police force that is desired by the community.

Fire & Rescue

The Department of Fire & Rescue is committed to providing a superior level of emergency service that continually improves the quality of life, health, and safety of the citizens of Suffolk. To accomplish this, the Department operates four divisions.

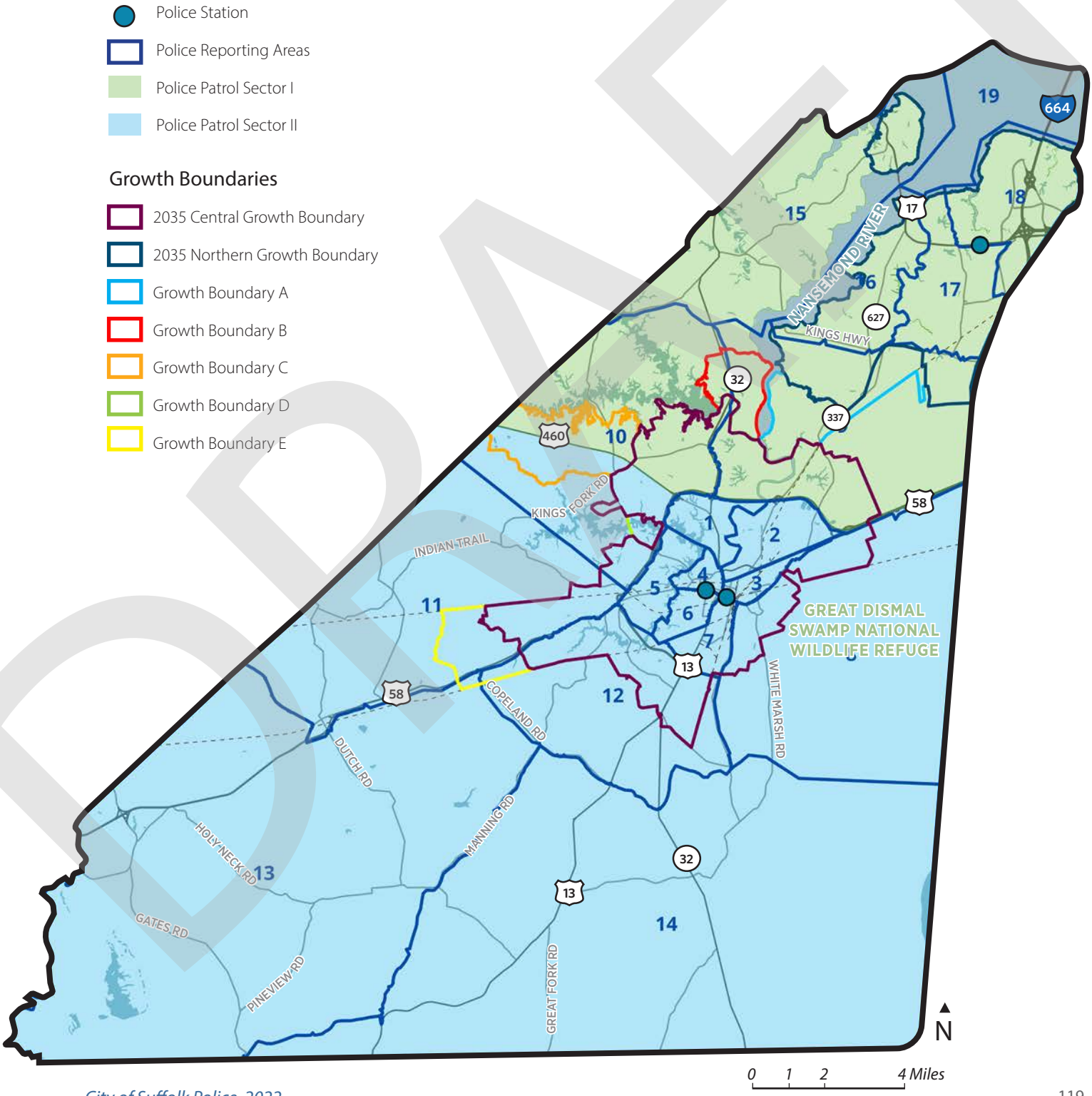
Service delivery by emergency services is impacted due to a variety of issues including the number of personnel per 1,000 residents, the response times of emergency apparatus, the staffing of each unit, and the deployment of firefighting forces. In 2023, Suffolk Fire & Rescue was budgeted for 318 full time career firefighters for a population of approximately 99,000 residents corresponding to approximately 3.2 firefighters per 1,000 people. The fire department's fire suppression resources should be deployed to provide for the arrival of an engine company within a 4-minute response time and the initial full alarm assignment within an 8-minute response time to 90% of the incidents that require a full assignment of apparatus.

In order to reduce both fire and EMS response times, additional fire and EMS stations will have to be constructed to reduce travel times. The vast geographical land mass of the City of Suffolk is a major hurdle that must be addressed in order to meet the established professional standards as well as the benchmarks that have been established by other fire & rescue agencies.

Another factor that dramatically impacts a fire department's service delivery is staffing. Along with response times, there are several professional standards and benchmarks that have been established for the fire and EMS service staffing. The National Fire Protection Association's 1710 also addresses fire department staffing as a factor of service delivery. NFPA 1710 states that fire company staffing requirements shall be based on minimum levels for emergency operations safety, effectiveness, and efficiency. More specifically, NFPA 1710 states fire companies should be staffed with a minimum of 4 on-duty personnel. In 2023 Suffolk Fire & Rescue staffs only rural Engine Companies and the Rescue Company with 4 person staffing, however Suffolk Fire & Rescue desire to staff all Engine Companies and Ladder Companies with the NFPA recommendation of 4.

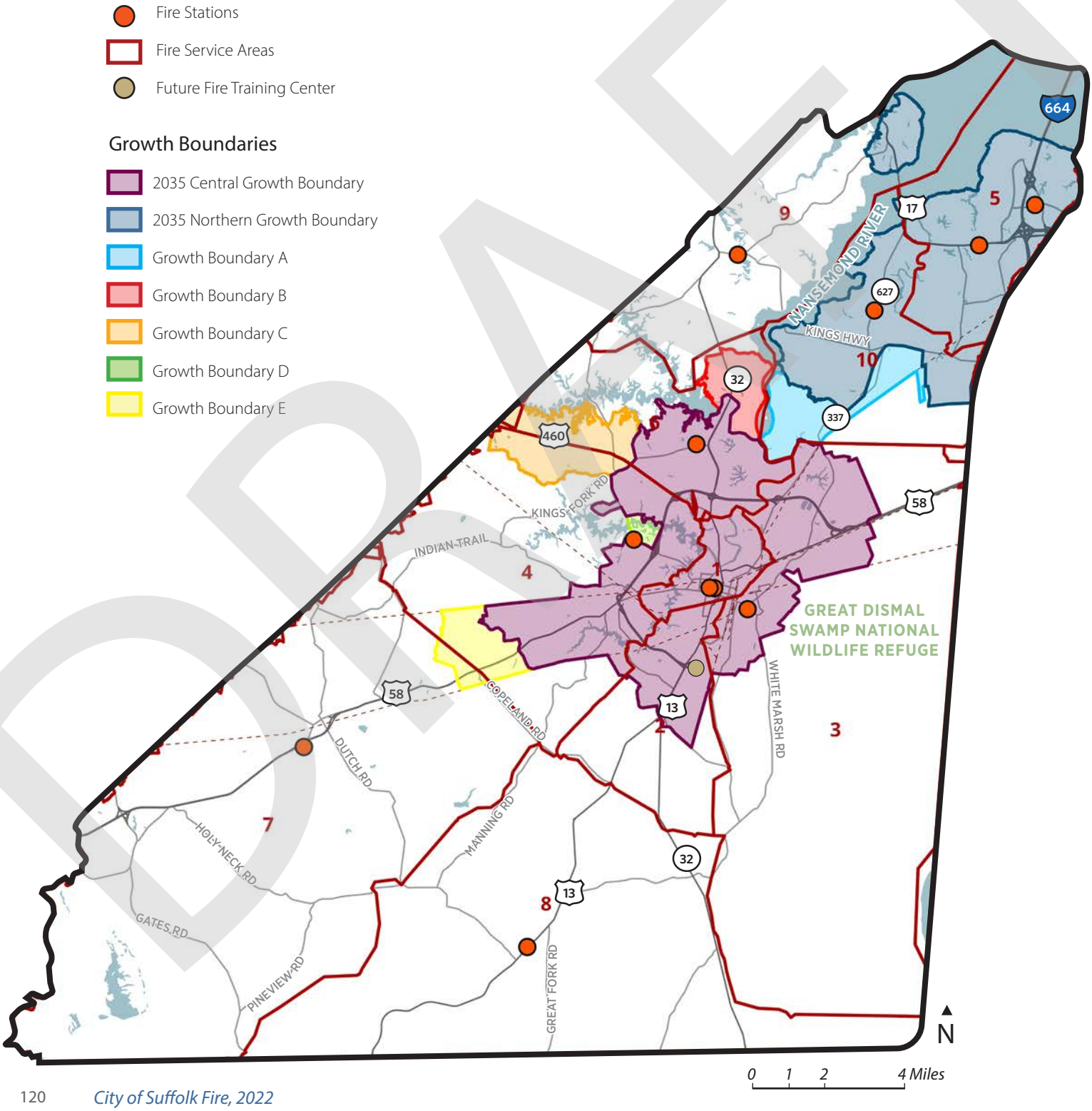
The 2023-2032 Capital Improvements Plan allocates funding to a variety of Fire & Rescue related projects, which will presumably improve the service levels of the department. Projects include purchasing additional fire engines, ladder trucks, heavy rescue trucks, and ambulances to serve new growth and replace aging or out of service equipment, repairing and adding to existing fire and rescue stations, construction of new fire and rescue stations such as Fire Station 11 which is currently under construction in the Harbourview area, constructing a fire training center, which the burn building was approved during the FY22 budget cycle and is now in the design phase. Additionally, the replacement of critical equipment such as self-contained breathing apparatus and Personal Protective Equipment utilized by Firefighters is programmed into the CIP.

POLICE STATIONS AND SERVICE AREAS



City of Suffolk Police, 2022

FIRE STATIONS AND SERVICE AREAS



Schools

The quality and capacity of Suffolk schools has been an important issue for the City. Not only are schools a priority that was expressed by residents engaged in the planning process, but school capacity is one of the levels of service standards used in the existing adequate public facilities review policy for rezoning and conditional zoning cases. Overall quality of schools, and the specific strategies for addressing facility or capacity needs are addressed through facility planning that takes place outside of the comprehensive plan process. However, the comprehensive plan must consider the relationship between population growth and change, development, and the quality and capacity of schools.

Suffolk Public Schools (SPS) serves nearly 14,400 students and employs 2,325 employees. The District includes eleven elementary schools, five middle schools, three high schools, and four specialty centers. An April 2021 Facility Condition Assessment was performed by a consultant team in partnership with a steering committee. Based on the results of the facility study and the collaboration between the City of Suffolk City Council and the School Board, a new John F. Kennedy Middle School is underway with an expected opening in the Fall of 2026. The work included comprehensive site inspections to document the condition of 18 of the 21 existing schools and the SPS maintenance building. Based on the limited age of three schools, an assessment was not performed for Southwestern Elementary School, Florence Bowser Elementary School, and Colonel Fred Cherry Middle School.) The Suffolk School Board, City Council, consultants and others have continued to work through options, including consideration of detailed cost estimates for options. (More information on Schools and enrollment is available in Appendix C.)

Libraries

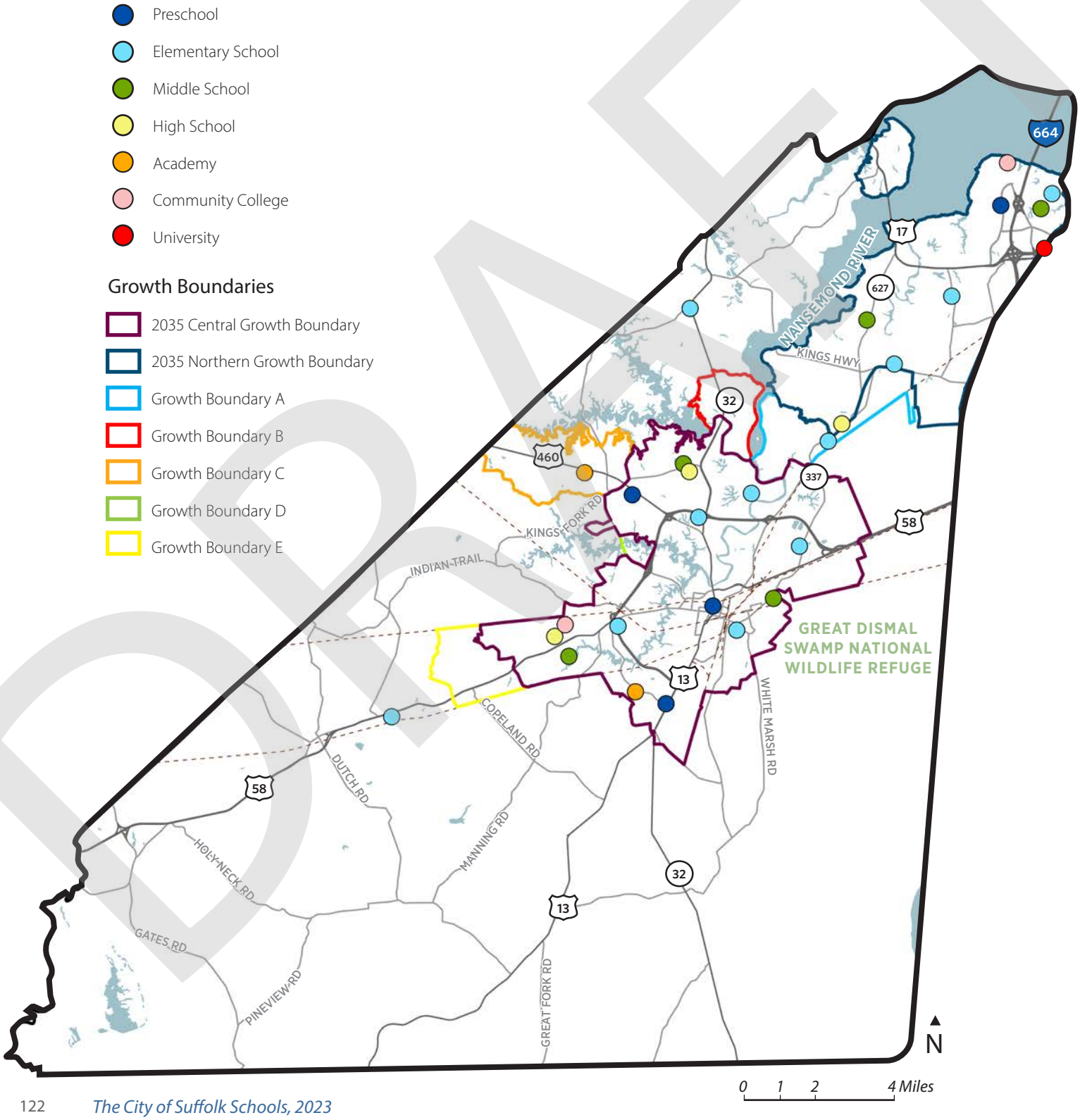
In addition to the main library, the Morgan Memorial Library, the City also offers 2 library locations—North Suffolk Library and Chuckatuck Library—as well as a citywide bookmobile. A new, 37,800 square foot Morgan Memorial library located on three downtown properties just down West Washington Street from the current Morgan Memorial Library is under design.

The library system offers over 160,000 books on CD, magazines, as well as digital books, movies, and music. It serves an estimated 186,000 visitors per year. In 2021, the library reported 614,936 wireless sessions from 10,832 users, 1,556 computer hours from 2,460 computer users, and 22,241 attendees at in-person events as well as 54,952 at virtual events (views). The library has a fleet of vehicles designed to bring resources and services out into the community and conducts outreach and supports activities through numerous community partnerships.

Customer service is a main focus of the library system. This is demonstrated in the library's 2022-2027 strategic plan, which put forth the theme of working in a way they reflects the reality of peoples' lives. Under that theme the library reinforced its commitment to inclusive and accessible spaces, technology access that makes a difference, equity-based service deployment, and more.

The library staff includes 49 positions. All librarians require a master's degree in library science and recruitment is conducted on a national level.

CITY OF SUFFOLK SCHOOLS



OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

M.1 Coordinate infrastructure investments with the Growth Areas.

M.1.1 Ensure that the planning for and availability of public infrastructure, services, and facilities is coordinated with the Growth Areas. Continue to focus on the adequacy and funding of public facilities, including roads and public utilities, in the review and approval of new developments. Ensure that the extension of the City's water distribution/ transmission system and wastewater collection systems to unserved or underserved developed areas are consistent with the Growth Management strategy of this plan.

M.1.2 Continue to develop and implement water and sewer infrastructure projects within the City's Capital Improvements Plan. Focus on the repair or replacement of system assets to ensure sufficient capacity to meet current and future demands, promote economic development, and protect adjacent surface water bodies within the City. Continue to develop appropriate schedules for the implementation of water treatment and transmission projects to deliver drinking water in a timely manner to meet the future demands within the City's and Isle of Wight County's service districts while balancing the costs and utility rate impacts of these improvements. Maximize the use of capital improvement funds to replace and rehabilitate deteriorated sanitary sewer assets to continue to reduce the amount of sanitary sewer overflows as required by the Regional Special Order by Consent.

M.1.3 Coordinate improvements to water and sewer infrastructure with the Hampton Roads Sanitation District (HRSD). Support the Hampton Roads Sanitation District in their efforts to ensure that the wastewater treatment and conveyance needs of the region, both current and future, are adequately met.

Capital Improvements Plan

The purpose of the CIP is to plan for the renovation and construction of significant public improvements and the acquisition of major new and replacement equipment over a 10-year period. Years 1 through 5 serve as the capital improvements program, while the plan covers a 10-year horizon. The CIP is intended to:

- *Plan for the construction and renovation of facilities and acquisition of equipment in support of the City's public service responsibilities;*
- *Improve financial planning by comparing needs with resources, operating impacts, and annual tax rate implications; and*
- *Prioritize limited available funds for projects that will have a positive impact on Suffolk's citizens.*

Source: City of Suffolk Capital Improvements Plan, 2023

M.1.4 Continue to implement stormwater management projects and enforce stormwater management regulations to control flooding and protect water quality. Develop context sensitive stormwater management solutions in higher density, mixed use and historic areas such as Downtown Suffolk, North Suffolk's Mixed-Use Core Area and Suffolk's historic villages. Recommend context sensitive stormwater management solutions as a part of the master planning process for these strategic areas.

M.1.5 Prioritize investments in the school system in accordance with the join facilities plan while maximizing efficiency of existing facilities. Focus on rehabilitating, expanding, or rebuilding schools, while conducting priority preventative maintenance of existing schools such as replacing HVAC, roofs, and playgrounds. Implement a regular data collection and review of school capacity, attendance zones, and student population to accurately anticipate student generation as populations shift and family dynamics change generationally.

M.1.6 Support the provision of high-speed, reliable, and affordable fiber internet service to City residents and businesses. Monitor and track progress of broadband infrastructure build-out, and work with the local broadband service provider to assess service area gaps. Promote broadband affordability programs to qualifying homeowners. Continue to seek grant opportunities and partner with internet service providers to provide high-speed, reliable, and affordable fiber internet network to unserved homes and businesses.

M.1.7 Provide adequate fire protection, emergency medical services, and emergency management throughout the City. Continue to work with the appropriate City departments to ensure that fire and medical service response times and resources meet necessary standards. This is especially important as the City grows. The City should provide service that is in keeping with existing service area maps. Maps should be evaluated and adjusted to align with anticipated new development due to growth area boundary changes.

Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI)

The Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI) is a program of the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development's Office of Broadband, that extends broadband service to currently unserved areas. VATI prepares communities to build, utilize, and capitalize on telecommunications infrastructure with the goal of creating strong, competitive communities.

Source: Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development webpage on the Virginia Telecommunication Initiative

M.2 Connect people to parks and open spaces.

M.2.1 Improve access to parks and natural spaces through trailway enhancements. In tandem with trailway expansion for transportation benefits described in chapter 4 of this plan, build upon and leverage recent park and trail extensions to provide additional connections that will improve community access to parks and natural spaces. This may include trailway access to the to the Great Dismal Swamp Wildlife Refuge and/or further extensions to the Suffolk Seaboard Coastal Trail and the East Coast Greenway Trail.

M.2.2 Implement the 2016 Parks and Recreation Master Plan with a focus on enhancing neighborhood parks, recreational opportunities, and programming in underserved areas. Continue to improve the quality of neighborhood parks in developed areas, especially downtown and North Suffolk mixed-use core, in coordination with infill housing development. Prioritize facilities and programming in accordance with the plan. Continue the Tech2Go initiative that provides wireless hotspots, laptops, and tablets for people to borrow. In combination with broadband access improvements, provide expanded wireless access in City parks.

M.2.3 Increase public waterfront access. Provide public access points and amenities, including boat launches/marinas, walking paths, fishing piers, and viewpoints for the public as the city develops along waterfront locations. Consider public restrooms and shelters to encourage use. Encourage commercial activity and a mix of uses that will serve to enliven public waterfront areas. Shoreline access can also include shoreline restoration projects that can add to the scenic value of areas, serve as habitat restoration areas, provide natural storm surge buffers, and stormwater and erosion management areas.

M.3 Protect Suffolk's regional water sources.

M.3.1 Ensure that low-lying areas of the City located along the James and Nansemond Rivers and their associated tributaries are not adversely impacted by sea level rise. Pursue the recommendations of the City's 2022 Resilience Plan pertaining to flood prone areas. Periodically evaluate the City's floodplain ordinance and Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs).

M.3.2 Continue to enforce regulations and undertake actions which ensure reservoir protection and watershed preservation. Continue to enforce the Chesapeake Bay Protection Area requirements. Continue to work with the health department to update septic system regulations to better protect water quality.

Resilience Plan

Suffolk's Resilience Plan identifies the area's vulnerabilities due to flooding, reviews previous and ongoing efforts, and provides information related to future opportunities to combat flooding and develop resilience. The aim of the proposed projects included in the Plan is to strengthen flood management systems to reduce damage caused by flooding. These projects identify opportunities to address weaknesses or provide additional hazard reduction in the City of Suffolk.

Source: City of Suffolk, Resilience Plan, 2022

6

HOUSING

Housing is an essential element of planning and is fundamental to the quality of life of residents. Housing also affects how businesses and service providers plan for expansion and growth, as well as how everyone in the City perceives neighborhoods and districts. While single-family detached housing predominates in Suffolk, there has long been a variety of housing options in the City, and the physical characteristics of the city-wide inventory of housing have remained stable even as the City grows. However, that stability is being confronted by changes to demand in the regional and national housing markets, rising costs, demographic shifts, and evolving preferences. In order to address these challenges, Suffolk must continue to pursue policies for housing as part of its overall planning.

Chapter Contents

Existing Conditions Highlights 128
Objectives and Actions 132

EXISTING CONDITIONS HIGHLIGHTS

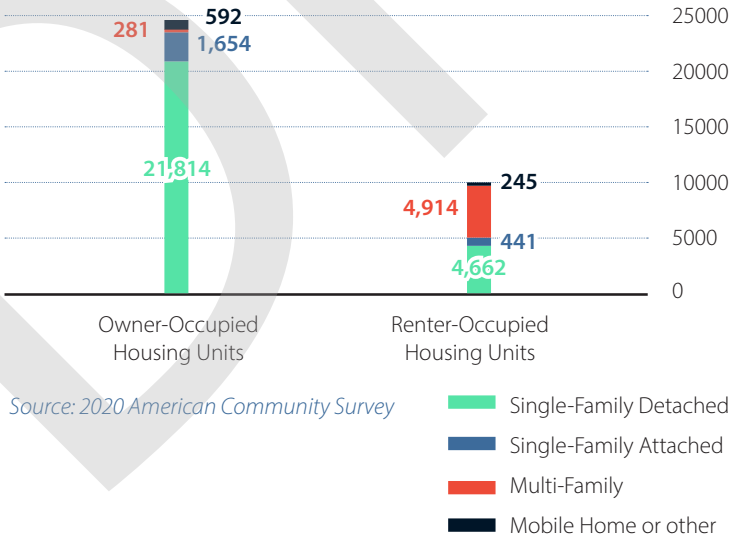
The full Housing existing conditions report is available in Appendix C.

Housing Inventory, Occupancy, Age, and Conditions

Occupancy and Ownership. From 2012 to 2020, the profile of Suffolk's housing stock did not change significantly. According to ACS, 4,000 housing units were constructed within this period. Internal data sources show that significant growth has continued since 2020. The proportion of single- and multi-family homes, and the proportion of vacancies, has remained stable. Single-family detached homes are still the majority of owner occupied housing units, while rental units are still split nearly evenly between single-family detached and multi-family. The number of renter-occupied units however, has grown faster than owner-occupied units, and renters now make up 30% of units (up from 25% in 2012). Suffolk has a residential vacancy rate of seven percent (down from 8% in 2013). This is less than the rate for Virginia (10%), Norfolk (9%), or Portsmouth (10%); and slightly more than for Chesapeake (6%). This signals that the housing market has remained relatively tight by comparison to many communities in the State and region.

Housing tenure (owner versus renter residents) shows a concentration of renters around downtown and in the northeast portion of the City. The rest of of the City is comprised largely of homeowners.

Housing Inventory by Units in Structure



Source: 2020 American Community Survey

Different Housing Needs in A Community

Housing needs apply to the full range of market and subsidized housing stock. Examples of housing needs in the City include:

- *Fair and accessible housing for socially and socioeconomically disadvantaged populations*
- *Homeownership and rental housing*
- *Housing for all incomes*
  - *Very low-income housing**
  - *Low-income housing**
  - *Moderate-income housing**
  - *High-income housing**
- *Housing for retirees and those in need of additional care*
  - *Assisted living facilities and long-term care facilities*
  - *Active senior housing*
  - *Housing for those on fixed or retirement incomes*
- *Subsidized Housing*
  - *Housing for the homeless*
  - *Publicly-assisted housing*

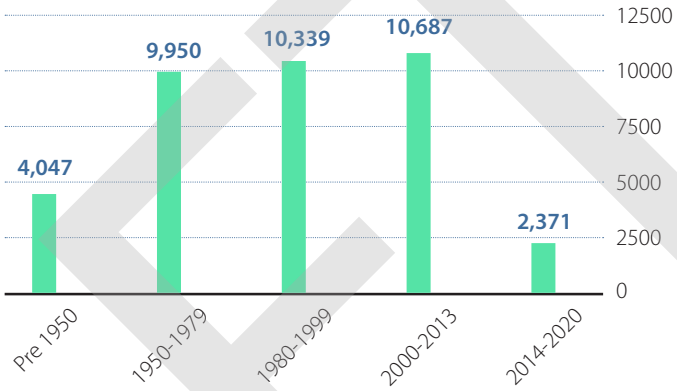
** Though these four bullets can be understood as a need for housing affordable to a wide range of incomes, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) also defines these categories in terms of household income compared to the Area Median Income (AMI). Very low income households earn no more than 50% AMI, Low income from 50% to 80% AMI , Moderate from 80% to 120% AMI, and High income above 120% AMI.*

Housing Stock Age and Composition. Only a small percentage of Suffolk's housing stock was built before 1950 (11%). Generally speaking, homes built before 1950 that still remain will continue to be a part of the housing stock, but may need to be retrofitted with modern utilities as needed. Some of the older housing units may be maintained with the assistance of historic building tax credits, if applicable, or other programs targeting rehabilitation of older housing, such as the City's tax abatement program implemented by the Assessor's office. The oldest housing is predominantly in downtown Suffolk. (More information on Housing Stock Age and Composition is available in Appendix C.)

Twenty-seven-percent of the City's housing was built between 1950 and 1979. Depending on the construction quality, these homes have variable durability and remodeling potential. Older homes in this category are now also eligible for historic designations, and associated tax credits and other federal programs, if applicable.

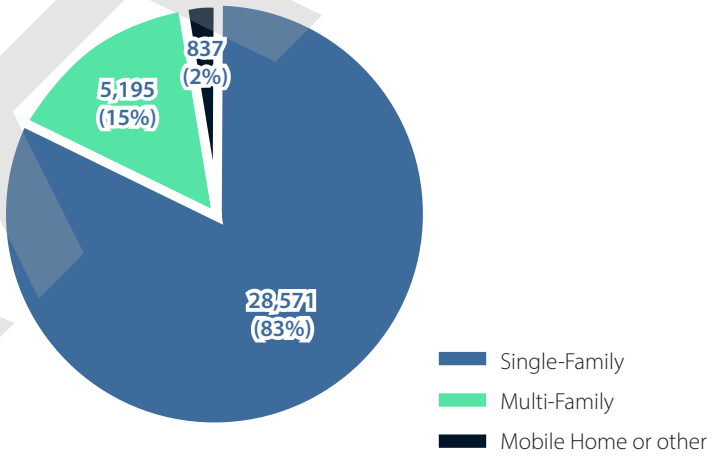
A majority of Suffolk's homes (56%) were built between 1980 and 2013, with an additional 6% built since 2014. It appears that since Suffolk 2035 was adopted there has been construction of new homes with little loss of older housing stock.

Age of Housing Stock



Source: 2020 American Community Survey

Housing Composition



Source: 2020 American Community Survey

Housing Values and Affordability

Growth of the housing market affects home values and affordability. Between 2014 and 2020, the City's housing stock increased by 2,371 units, which averages out to 339 units per year. This is half the growth rate in the years leading up to Suffolk 2035, though real estate and development sector professionals point to key indicators that Suffolk is becoming a viable development target for broader sectors of the housing market, which could accelerate growth in the future. Key indicators include the rising cost of renting and the rising income of renters.

Since 2012, the median household income for renters grew by nearly 40%, over twice the rate for owner occupied households (18.7%) as measured in the American Community Survey.

Along with the increase in both income and housing costs, housing affordability remains a challenge. 27.9% of owner-occupied households with a mortgage and 51.3% of renter householders in Suffolk pay more than 30% of their income in rent or mortgage (a standard measure of challenges to affordability). There is especially a need for more rental units overall and more affordable rental units to meet demand. (More information on Housing Values and Affordability is available in Appendix C).

Factors That Impact Housing Values

- *Design and construction standards*
- *Financial lending rates*
- *Land costs*
- *Land availability*
- *Local development costs*
- *Regional cost of living*
- *Types of housing allowed by ordinance*
- *Zoning and allowed density*

Housing Values and Affordability Facts

Median Household Income

- *All Households: $79,899*
- *Owner Occupied: $97,129*
- *Renter Occupied: $45,381*

Median Monthly Housing Costs

- *All: $1,438*
- *Owner Occupied: $1,594*
- *Renter Occupied: $1,231*

Median Housing Value

- *Owner Occupied: $265,600*

*Households Paying **30%** or More of Income on Rent or Select Monthly Ownership Costs (Including Mortgage)*

- *Owner Occupied with Mortgage: 5,104 - 27.9% of households with mortgages*
- *Owner Occupied without Mortgages: 817 - 13.6% of households without mortgages*
- *Renter Occupied: 4,900 - 51.3% renter households*

Source: 2020 American Community Survey, DP04

Housing Connection to Community Planning

Housing needs to be considered alongside other aspects of community planning. Since Suffolk 2035 was adopted, the City has worked hard to integrate consideration of housing needs into policy decisions. This has included policies that align with the following concepts:

Housing is connected to land use and character. The size, orientation, and spacing of housing units, and how they connect to other types of services or development, are all intrinsic parts of land use and character. Building upon the foundation set in the previous plans, the Future Land Use and Place Type descriptions in Chapter 2 of this plan are designed to provide guidance on the character of future housing in Suffolk.

Housing is connected to economic development. The requirements that modern entrepreneurs consider when either starting or relocating a business include whether there is sufficient housing nearby to generate enough demand for their product and a local workforce for new employees. The City has proactively embraced opportunities to encourage mixed use developments and the proximity of residential and employment-generating uses.

Housing is connected to transportation. Much of housing demand is regional and additional trips will be made as the region grows. When housing demand is accommodated outside of the City, the City may still feel the impacts of traffic as drivers pass through without any benefits of residency or influence over location. Access to quality reliable public transportation can be a key part of ensuring housing meets the needs of its occupants, especially in denser areas like the downtown. Public transportation has also been a key focus for Suffolk.

Housing, Community Planning, and Community Development Block Grants (CDBG)

One particular tool where the City has been successful in connecting housing and community planning is in the administration of Community Development Block Grant funds.

There has already been a designation of $800,000 for affordable housing on Portsmouth Blvd. and in downtown Suffolk. These projects are projected to bring in over 200 rental units to the area.

The 2025 Consolidated Plan, a planning document required for pursuing CDBG projects, includes references to affordable rental units, and assistance for first time homebuyers.

OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

H.1 Encourage the development of housing options at a variety of price points.

H.1.1 Revise the Unified Development Ordinance (which includes zoning and subdivision regulations) to promote additional affordable/workforce development housing in the City. Focus residential density bonus provisions and related incentives in the City's land use regulations to target production of affordable units.

H.1.2 Monitor the production of affordable/workforce housing to align initiatives with ongoing needs. Establish a comprehensive tool for tracking production of workforce housing in Suffolk. Consider tailoring proffers and fees to match those of surrounding communities that are creating and maintaining diverse housing. Continue to review and revise standard proffer language and development fees in alignment with trends in housing production.

H.1.3 Increase the availability of affordable and workforce housing by offering or facilitating tools that support the rehabilitation of existing homes. Continue to provide staff assistance to manage and promote existing housing assistance programs, such as revolving loan funds and historic tax credits, to support maintenance of Suffolk's older housing stock. Continue to research, identify, and pursue a variety of financing strategies to encourage availability of diverse housing types.

Workforce Housing

Housing that is affordable for those earning between 80% and 120% of area median income, or the midpoint of a specific area's income distribution.

Source: Housing and Urban Development Loans blog, Who Finances Workforce Housing?, *2022*

Revolving Loan Funds (RLF)

Revolving funds are structured so that repayments are deposited back into the fund to support future affordable housing projects. This approach may prevent repayments from being diverted for other non-housing purposes and can help to create a self-sustaining program. For example, a fund may provide low-cost financing to support the creation and rehabilitation/preservation of rental housing affordable to low-income households, including naturally occurring affordable housing that doesn't receive federal or other subsidies.

Source: US Economic Development Administration Program List

Historic Tax Credits

Federal or state tax credits for property owners who undertake the rehabilitation of historic buildings in compliance with the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Source: Virginia Department of Historic Resources webpage on Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits

H.1.4 Continue to review and update the City's Consolidated Plan. Ensure that the Consolidated Plan conforms to and is consistent with the policies and implementation strategies of the comprehensive plan. Updates to the Consolidated Plan should continue to address affordable rental units and assistance for first time homebuyers. This tool helps the community access Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) programs and assistance, including Community Development Block Grant funds.

H.1.5 Promote greater awareness of the City's affordable housing goals and its incentive and assistance programs through public outreach materials and programming. Continue to work with the Suffolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority to notify citizens of available housing programs, conduct housing workshops, and offer housing counseling. Further develop promotional materials for existing programs to help homeowners access technical assistance and educate them about the process for accessing assistance. Promote similar targeted efforts in the real estate industry.

Suffolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (SRHA)

The Suffolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority (SRHA) is a medium-sized Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) and Public Housing Agency serving Suffolk, VA. SRHA's goal is to provide equal opportunities in affordable housing, community development, and human services through low-income housing, homeownership opportunities, and redevelopment activities. SRHA manages and maintains 260 Public Housing units, 1,193 Housing Choice Voucher units and apartments for elderly and disabled individuals. Housing Counseling and Down payment Assistance Programs are also available.

Source: Suffolk Redevelopment and Housing Authority webpage

Consolidated Plan

The Consolidated Plan is designed to help states and local jurisdictions to assess their affordable housing and community development needs and market conditions, and to make data-driven, place-based investment decisions. The consolidated planning process serves as the framework for a community-wide dialogue to identify housing and community development priorities that align and focus funding from formula block grant programs.

Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development. Community Planning and Development

Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)

Established in 1965, HUD's mission is to increase homeownership, support community development, and increase access to affordable housing free from discrimination. To fulfill this mission, HUD will embrace high standards of ethics, management and accountability and forge new partnerships — particularly with faith-based and community organizations — that leverage resources and improve HUD's ability to be effective on the community level.

Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development Glossary

Community Development Block Grant

Created under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, this program provides grant funds to local and state governments to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing with a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities to assist low- and moderate-income residents. CDBG replaced several categorical grant programs, such as the Model Cities program, the Urban Renewal program, and the Housing Rehabilitation Loan and Grant program.

Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development Glossary

H.2 Promote housing options that reflect the unique and diverse character of Suffolk.

H.2.1 Encourage continued development and revitalization efforts in downtown Suffolk. Investigate the feasibility of a land bank or land trust that assists in developing housing affordable to a wide range of incomes in downtown. This could include long-term land assembly, continued ownership of land separate from its development, or in support of development partnerships. Investigate the feasibility of Conservation Areas or other related programs to promote investment in the maintenance and rehabilitation of existing housing units.

H.2.2 Encourage a variety of housing options in Suffolk. Ensure that the City's land use regulations allow for a variety of housing types such as single family detached, single family attached, multi-family, duplex, triplex, quadplex, and cottage courts. Revise the UDO to encourage construction of infill housing in the existing neighborhoods through additional flexibility of dimensional, parking, and landscaping standards or additional allowances for nonconforming housing structures in these areas.

H.2.3 Encourage the development of contextually appropriate housing units in Suffolk. Revise the UDO to allow or encourage additional housing types in Suffolk that respect the character of existing neighborhoods and rural areas. Consider additional design standards that ensure the new housing types fit appropriately with the character of the area.

Land Bank

A governmental or nongovernmental nonprofit entity established, at least in part, to assemble, temporarily manage, and dispose of vacant land for the purpose of stabilizing neighborhoods and encouraging re-use or redevelopment of urban property.

Source: US Department of Housing and Urban Development Glossary

Land Trust

A land trust is a community-based, nonprofit organization that works to permanently conserve land. In some cases, land trusts acquire land outright. They also partner to conserve land that remains the property of willing landowners using a tool called a conservation easement.

Source: Land Trust Alliance webpage

Nonconforming Housing Structures

A lawfully constructed structure or building, the size, dimensions, or location of which complied with the regulations in effect at the time of the construction, but which does not conform to the requirements of current regulations. Even though the structure could not be constructed in the same way under the current regulations, its continued existence and use is still legal.

7

NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

Understanding the interaction of the man-made and the natural environment is crucial to being good stewards of the City's limited resources. The City of Suffolk is the largest municipality in the state in terms of land area, encompassing 430 square miles. Suffolk benefits from an abundance of natural areas including the wetlands of the Great Dismal Swamp and the tidal wetlands along the banks of the City's rivers and creeks. Suffolk's stewardship of its natural assets contributes to the health of the Chesapeake Bay and the City is host to most of South Hampton Roads' water supply. Suffolk also both contains important historic resources and is part of, and contributes to, an historic region. It is the responsibility of the City to develop policies to protect and preserve natural and cultural resources, while balancing economic development and other needs and priorities.

Chapter Contents

Existing Conditions Highlights 136
Actions 147

EXISTING CONDITIONS HIGHLIGHTS

The full Natural and Cultural Resources existing conditions report is available in Appendix C.

Water Resources and Chesapeake Bay Preservation

Water resources are an integral part of the quality of life for residents of the City of Suffolk. The management of development and land disturbing activities directly affects the quality of surface water, drinking water, fisheries and wetland habitat.

In the Commonwealth of Virginia, the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (CBPA), and the associated Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Designation and Management Regulations, adopted by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), address non-point source pollution in the Chesapeake Bay watershed. Nonpoint source pollution is caused by rainfall moving over and through the ground. As the runoff moves, it picks up and carries away natural and human made pollutants, depositing them into lakes, rivers, wetlands, and coastal waters. The map on page 137 shows the Preservation areas within the City of Suffolk.

Examples of nonpoint source pollution include sediments generated from construction, agriculture, or other land disturbing activities, nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorous from fertilizers, pesticides, animal waste, and petroleum products such as oil from automobiles. Areas that have been disturbed by construction activities often transport these pollutants into our waterways. Land in agricultural production and forestry activities can also contribute to water pollution problems.

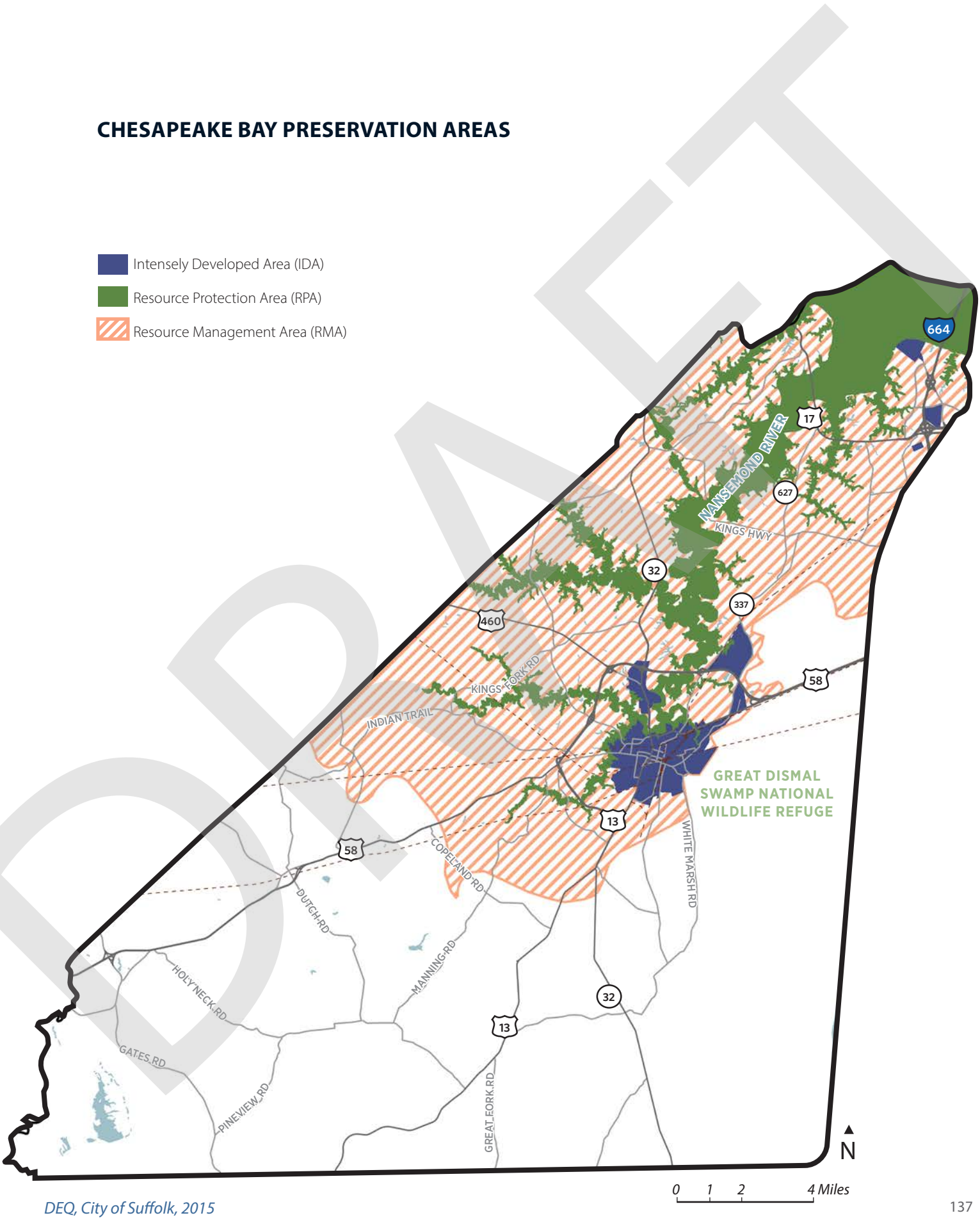
The Regulations identify and provide management strategies for portions of the basin, the CBPAs—lands where development has the potential to impact water quality most directly. Land within a CBPA is categorized as either a Resource Protection Area (RPA), a Resource Management Area (RMA), or an Intensely Developed Area (IDA). RPAs are sensitive lands as defined in the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Overlay District (section 31-415) of the Zoning ordinance and include tidal wetlands; non-tidal wetlands connected by surface flow and contiguous to tidal wetlands or water bodies with perennial flow; tidal shores; drinking water reservoirs from the water's edge; and a vegetated buffer area not less than 100 feet in width located adjacent to and landward of these components and along both sides of any water body with perennial flow. Development within RPAs is limited and may include water dependent uses or redevelopment. RMAs are lands within the designated CBPA but outside of the RPA that, without proper management, have the potential to significantly degrade water quality or to damage the protective features of the RPA. RMAs may include flood plains, highly erodible soils associated with steep slopes, highly permeable soils, nontidal wetlands outside of the RPA and other lands necessary to protect water quality. RPAs can assist, for example, in preservation of natural vegetation, which filters potential runoff from development. An IDA is a designated redevelopment area which incorporates portions of the RPA and RMA.

Within the CBPA, Intensely Developed Areas (IDAs) have been designated by the City to serve as areas in which development is concentrated and where little natural environment remains intact. Further, one of the following conditions must exist:

- development has severely altered the actual state of the area such that it has more than 50% impervious cover;
- public sewer and water is constructed and currently serves the area; or
- housing density is equal to or greater than 4 dwellings per acre.

Development and redevelopment within the IDAs can be permitted provided that water quality impact assessments are conducted and Best Management Practices are established to achieve a 10% reduction in non-point source pollution. The City also requires water quality improvements through the use of BMPs and buffer restoration where possible. Each of these areas is subject to specific regulations and the areas also provide guidance to inform local policy.

CHESAPEAKE BAY PRESERVATION AREAS



DEQ, City of Suffolk, 2015

Hydrology (Streams and Watersheds)

There are five primary watersheds within the City and 28 rivers and streams, including the Nansemond and James Rivers, Chuckatuck and Bennett's Creeks, and their tributaries. For the purpose of developing the City's Stormwater Master Plan, the City is divided into three major watersheds: the James River, the Great Dismal Swamp, and the Chowan River. The Stormwater Master Plan defines the ultimate drainage outfall or receiving water body and identifies Stormwater Capital Improvement Projects necessary for ultimate development in accordance with the adopted Comprehensive Plan and current zoning approved by City Council. The City's streams and watersheds are shown in the map on page 139. (More information on Hydrology is available in Appendix C.)

Floodplains

Floodplains play a vital part of the City's ecosystem. Floodplains include all areas subject to inundation by waters of the 100-year flood. A 100-year flood has a 1% chance of occurring in any given year. These areas include the designated floodway and flood-fringe. The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) also designates areas as being in the 500-year flood plain, where there is a 0.2% chance of a flood occurring. The floodplains in the City are shown in the map on page 140.

The City's Floodplain District limits development within floodplain areas and/or provides design requirements in keeping with floodplain regulations. Additionally, the City has an emergency plan to evacuate residents during hurricane emergencies. The City manages development within the Coastal High Hazard Area to minimize flood and tidal impacts. FEMA and the National Flood Insurance Program have defined the Coastal High Hazard Area as areas within the 100-year coastal floodplain and additional hazardous areas associated with storm waves.

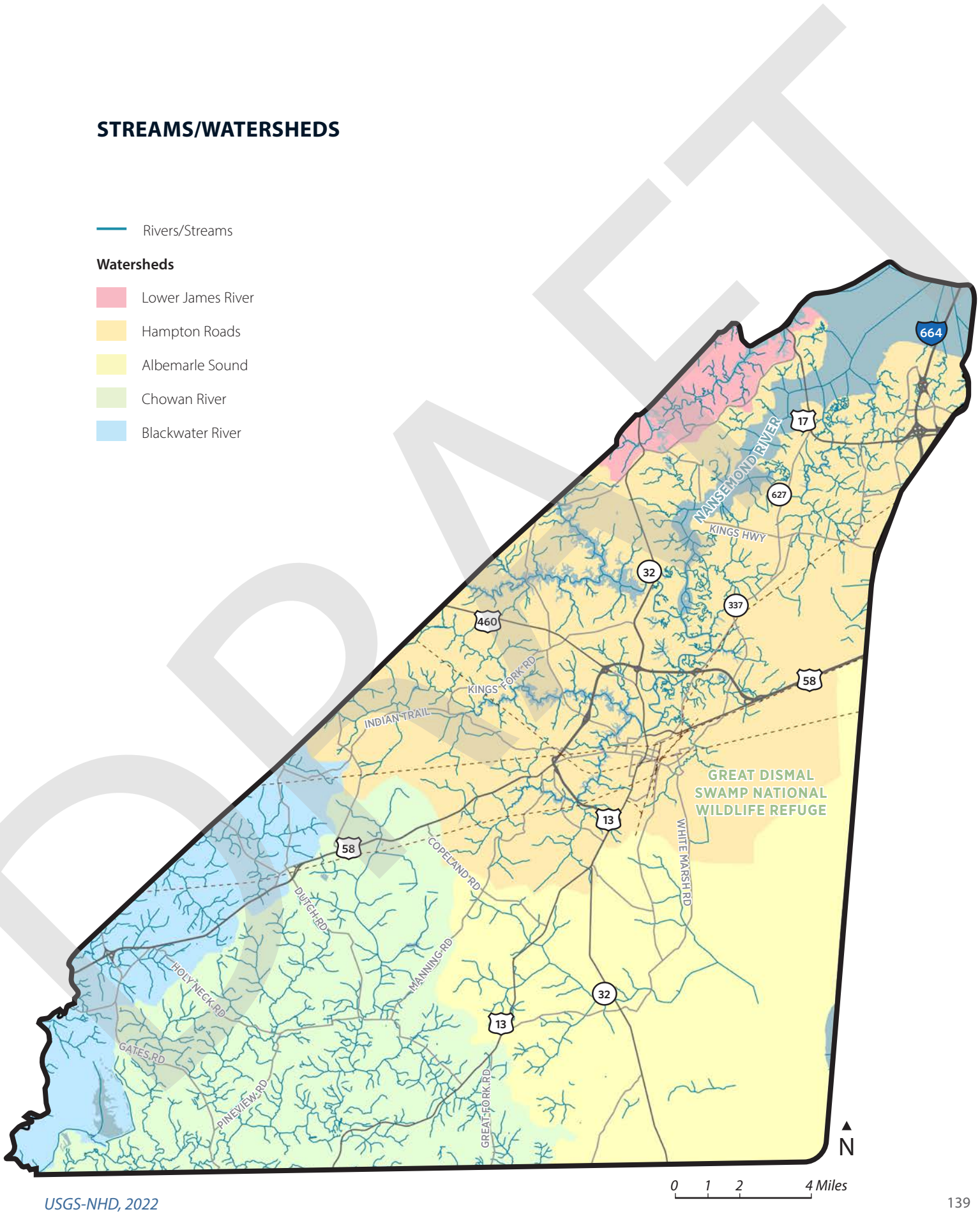
Tidal and Non-tidal Wetlands

The protection of wetlands within the City of Suffolk is vital to the City's ability to regulate water levels within watersheds; improve water quality; reduce flood and storm damages; provide important fish and wildlife habitat; and support hunting, fishing, and other recreational activities.

The City includes approximately 95,000 acres of wetlands. Wetlands occupy tidal areas, stream corridors and broad flat swamps such as the Great Dismal Swamp. Wetlands are either tidal or non-tidal. Tidal wetlands can be found along protected coastlines and are influenced by the motion of ocean tides. Tidal marshes include freshwater marshes that may be brackish (somewhat salty) or may have a higher salinity (salty). While tidal wetlands are areas of land that are flooded by tidal action and have salinity levels that fluctuate with the tides, non-tidal wetlands are areas of land covered by water that are not directly influenced by tidal action and have stable water levels and salinity. Suffolk also has non-tidal wetlands composed of fresh water, either seasonally or perpetually wet, such as Chapel Swamp in the Village of Holland.

Wetlands are protected by federal, state and local regulations. The Army Corps of Engineers regulates all wetlands that are adjacent to or connected to navigable waters. Generally, this includes all wetlands associated with watercourses, both intermittent and perennial, as well as tidal wetlands. The Department of Environmental Quality and Marine Resources Commission regulate freshwater and tidal wetlands. The City's local Wetlands Board reviews request for impacts to tidal wetlands located within the mean low water to 1.5 times mean high water. All agencies require mitigation for proposed impacts in accordance with the federal policy of "no net loss". The City's Tidal and Non-tidal Watlands are shown in the map on page 141. (More information on Tidal and Non-tidal Wetlands is available in Appendix C.)

STREAMS/WATERSHEDS



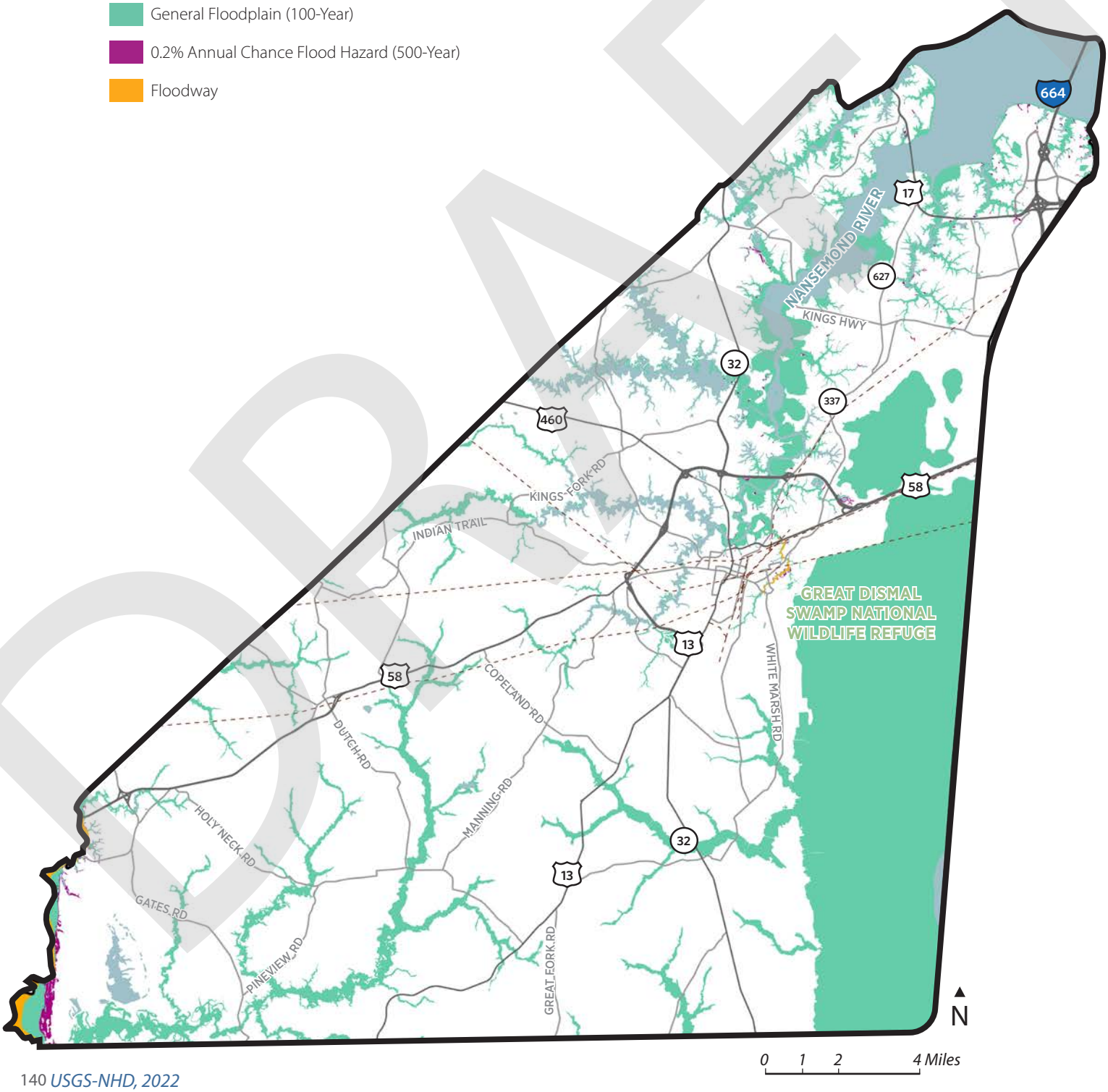
USGS-NHD, 2022

FEMA FLOODPLAINS

General Floodplain (100-Year)

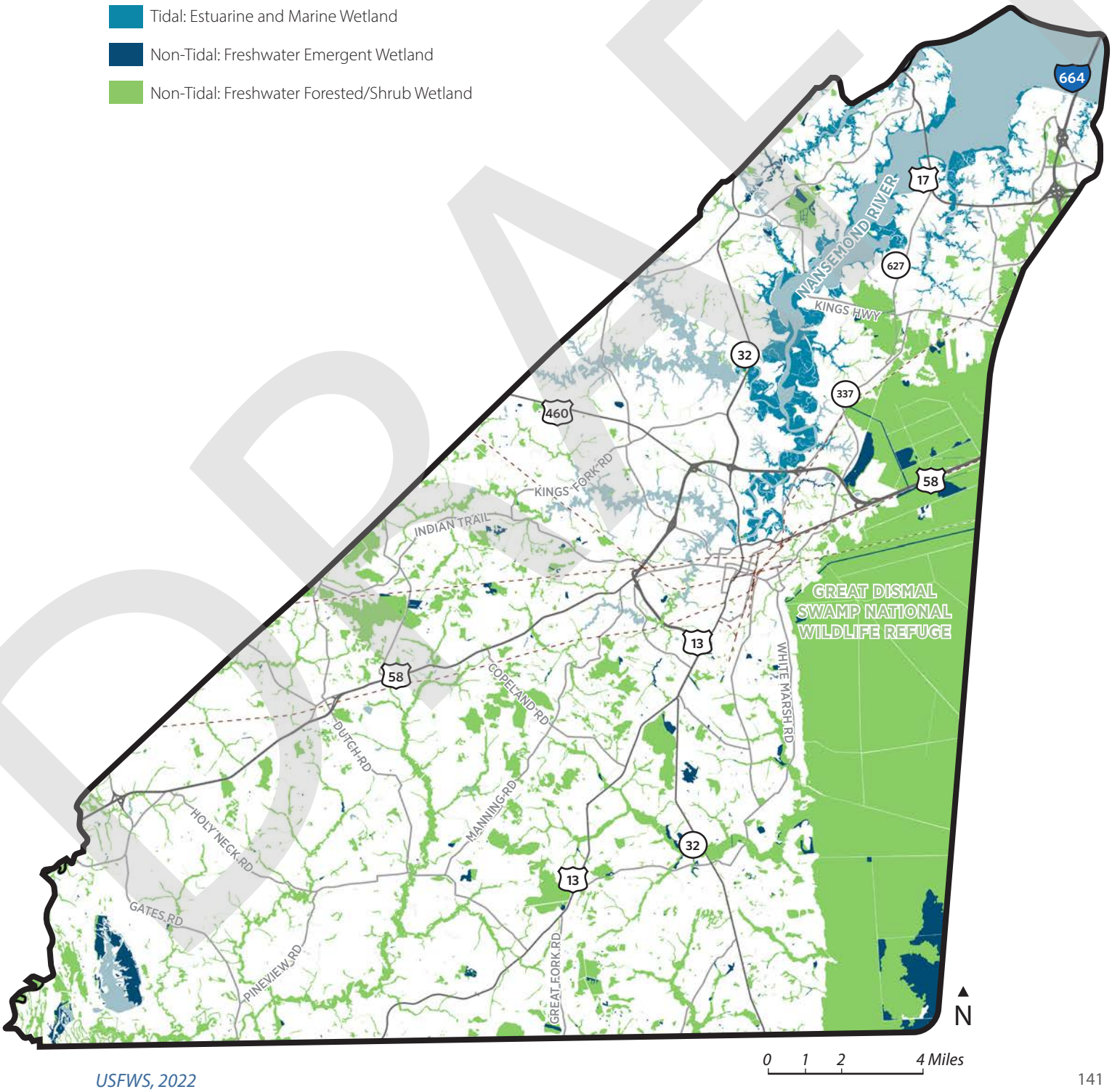
0.2% Annual Chance Flood Hazard (500-Year)

Floodway



 USGS-NHD, 2022

TIDAL AND NON-TIDAL WETLANDS



USFWS, 2022

Shoreline Features and Erosion Control

The City waterfront contains approximately 150 miles of shoreline bordering the Nansemond and James Rivers, Chuckatuck and Bennett's Creeks, and their tributaries. Shoreline elevations in Suffolk average from three to eight feet, with some locations having higher elevations. Shoreline erosion is generally not considered to be a significant issue in most areas of the City as the Nansemond River is a low energy waterbody. Typically, storm surges are two feet or less above normal high tide, leaving only marshlands proximate to the river as flooded. The downtown area around North Main Street experiences flooding when strong northeast winds and tidal surges occur.

Shoreline areas often provide access to the local river systems and to the Chesapeake Bay through public and private piers. Shoreline areas along the lower Nansemond River, Chuckatuck Creek, Bennett's Creek, Knotts Creek and Hoffler Creek have extensive marshes. These marshes provide medium to high quality habitat for wildlife and fisheries, as well as buffering the shore from erosive forces.

While existing land uses along the shoreline should work to control erosion, future development goals should be to direct development or redevelopment away from shoreline areas which are identified as critically-eroding, and to areas where suitable access can be developed without degradation of water quality or sensitive living resources through related construction, operation, or maintenance activities. (More information on Shoreline Features and Erosion Control is available in Appendix C.)

Waterfront Access

Access to the waterfront is important to the people of Suffolk due to the aesthetic, recreational, commercial and economic benefits that it provides. According to the Center for Coastal Resources Management's Shoreline Inventory Report (2013), there are 360 docks in the City. This calculates to a density of 0.26 docks per 1,000 feet of shoreline. Nansemond River has the highest density in the City with more than 4 docks per 1,000 feet of shoreline. Further, there are seven marinas – two at Bennett's Creek, two at Chuckatuck Creek, and three at Nansemond River.

While the people of Suffolk desire additional waterfront access, the development of additional facilities may potentially impact water quality. The magnitude of the impact will depend on the type of access. The types of shoreline access generally include marinas, motorized and non-motorized boat access ramps, and piers and docks for fishing and pedestrian access. The type that presents the greatest impact to water quality is marinas. (More information on Waterfront Access is available in Appendix C.)

Sea Level Rise Projections

Sea level rise driven by global climate change is a risk for coastal communities for coming decades and centuries. Rising sea levels and land subsidence are combining, and will continue to combine, with other coastal flood factors, such as storm surge, wave effects, rising coastal water tables, river flows, and rain fall. The result will be a dramatic increase in the exposure and vulnerability of coastal populations, as well as the critical infrastructure related to transportation, water, energy, trade, and coastal ecosystems and the supporting services they provide. (More information on Sea Level Rise Projections is available in Appendix C.)

Fisheries

Important fish spawning areas for migrant fish species (anadromous) are located in the James River near the Suffolk shoreline from Pig Point east to Hoffler Creek. The marsh system along the James River shoreline in Suffolk, particularly along the Nansemond River, and the West, Streeter, and Hoffler Creek marsh complex are noted for being of a high resource value for marine life. As such they can be expected to be nursery areas for many of the species of finfish and shellfish in the Hampton Roads Region.

Many of the lakes and streams of the City have been stocked with a variety of finfish to support species restoration and recreational fishing. Shellfish restoration has been a significant issue in the Chesapeake Bay over the past several years. Shellfish are extremely susceptible to contamination from human activity especially from sewer and storm water outfalls and failing septic systems. The Nansemond River has historically been a highly productive area for growing oysters. There are numerous private leases for shellfish beds along the bottom of the river. There are several large public oyster beds (Baylor Survey) off the shoreline of the City, and near the confluence of the Nansemond and the James River. More information on Fisheries is available in Appendix C.

Water Quality

As part of on-going evaluation and regulation of water quality, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has developed a list of impaired water bodies in Virginia. To be listed as impaired, a water body has to have documented pollutants that exceed normal tolerances for the designated use of the waterway.

Pollution sources include stormwater, leaking underground storage tanks, failing septic systems, hazardous waste clean up sites, improperly dug or abandoned wells, landfills, use of pesticides and fertilizers (agriculture).

The 2020 Virginia Water Quality Assessment provides an overall assessment of quality conditions and trends in the navigable waters of the state between January 2013 and December 2018. Waters that have been determined to be impaired require a plan to restore water quality and associated designated use(s). The Virginia DEQ schedules each of these waters for development of a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), which is a reduction plan that defines the limit of a pollutant(s) that waters can receive and still meet water quality standards. A TMDL Implementation Plan is developed after a TMDL is approved by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Once fully completed, a TMDL Implementation Plan is intended to restore the designated uses of an impaired water body and maintain its water quality into the future. (More information on Water Quality is available in Appendix C.)

Habitat

The preservation of habitat is broadly defined as the place where a plant or animal species naturally lives and grows; or consists of the characteristics of the soil, water, and biologic community (other plants and animals) that make this possible. Habitat enhancement and preservation is important because it is necessary for the survival of native species, maintains natural ecological processes, sustains air and water resources, and contributes to the health and quality of life for Suffolk residents.

As the City continues to develop, the relatively large tracts of farmlands and woodlands are converted to smaller parcels of residential property or urban lands. This development has resulted in "fragmented" habitat that supports a lower diversity of wildlife species. Wetlands and waterways tend to be preserved under existing regulations, providing essential corridors for wildlife. However, wetlands and waterways tend to have a lower overall quality because of disturbance, surface water impacts and fragmentation of the adjacent cover types. Development also results in an increase in wildlife nuisance problems, such as the current and increasing nuisance problem with the black bear population in the City when development infringes into habitat areas. (More information on Habitats is available in Appendix C.)

Natural Heritage Resources

Natural heritage resources as defined by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation – Division of Natural Heritage (DCR) are the habitat of rare, threatened, or endangered plant and animal species, unique or exemplary natural communities, and significant geologic formations such as caves and karst features. The City of Suffolk is currently home to 100 distinct types of natural heritage resources with 216 total occurrences throughout the City. In addition, DCR has identified 17 terrestrial and three aquatic conservation sites as areas necessary for their survival. (More information on Natural Heritage Resources is available in Appendix C.)

DCR identifies and protects natural heritage resources statewide and maintains a comprehensive database of all documented occurrences of natural heritage resources in Virginia. Conservation sites do not represent protected lands. They are recommended for protection and stewardship because of the natural heritage resources and habitat they support, but are not currently under any official protection designation. Great Dismal Swamp Conservation Site has been given a very high biodiversity significance ranking.

Historic Resources

Suffolk's extensive cultural and historical resources are recognized at the state and national level. There are 16 individual historic buildings or building complexes, two archaeological sites, and 12 historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places. In addition, there are dozens of sites identified as historic by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources (DHR). (A complete list of historic districts and sites is available in Appendix C.)

These historic districts and buildings are important representations of Suffolk's past and help community members to understand and appreciate their history. They contribute to the architectural richness of the City and are a physical manifestation of the City's evolution over time.

In August 2023, the City of Suffolk adopted new Historic District Guidelines for the City's Historic Conservation Overlay District. The intention of the district is to protect the historical significance of contributing structures to the historic district and to encourage uses which will lead to their continuance, conservation, and improvement in a manner that preserves the cultural and historic heritage of the City. The Guidelines are designed to inform historic preservation activities as well as maintenance, repair, and replacement; new construction; site, setting, and signage; alternative materials consideration, and relocation and demolition within the historic context. The guidelines are implemented over time, as proposals for changes to structures that are located in the City's Historic Conservation Overlay District are proposed. (A list of all Historic Sites and Buildings in the City of Suffolk is available in Appendix C.)

HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND DISTRICTS

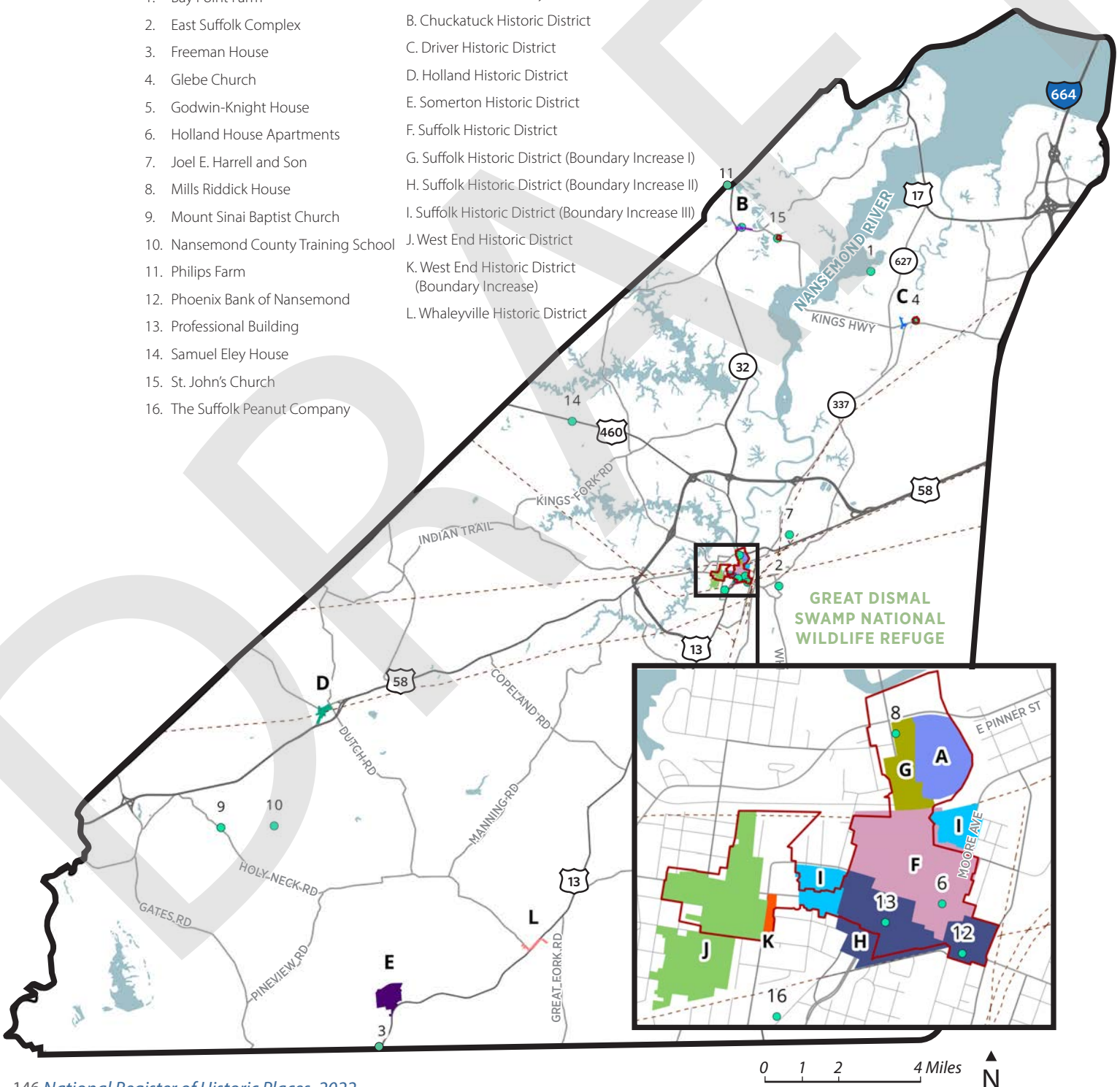
Historic Conservation Overlay District

Historic Buildings

1. Bay Point Farm
2. East Suffolk Complex
3. Freeman House
4. Glebe Church
5. Godwin-Knight House
6. Holland House Apartments
7. Joel E. Harrell and Son
8. Mills Riddick House
9. Mount Sinai Baptist Church
10. Nansemond County Training School
11. Philips Farm
12. Phoenix Bank of Nansemond
13. Professional Building
14. Samuel Eley House
15. St. John's Church
16. The Suffolk Peanut Company

Historic Districts

A. Cedar Hill Cemetary
B. Chuckatuck Historic District
C. Driver Historic District
D. Holland Historic District
E. Somerton Historic District
F. Suffolk Historic District
G. Suffolk Historic District (Boundary Increase I)
H. Suffolk Historic District (Boundary Increase II)
I. Suffolk Historic District (Boundary Increase III)
J. West End Historic District
K. West End Historic District (Boundary Increase)
L. Whaleyville Historic District



OBJECTIVES AND ACTIONS

N.1 Protect and enhance Suffolk's natural resources, including the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

N.1.1 Continue to enforce regulations and undertake actions which protect water quality, wetlands, and open space. Continue to implement and enforce the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act. Explore and implement new and innovative techniques to apply water quality protection measures beyond those of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act and Regulations. Continue to identify, adopt, and implement appropriate measures to protect water quality and wetlands in other City watersheds (Blackwater River, Chowan River, Albemarie Sound and the drinking water lakes).

Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act

The Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act (Bay Act) was enacted by the Virginia General Assembly in 1988 as a critical element of Virginia's nonpoint pollution source management program. The purpose of the Bay Act program is to protect and improve water quality in the Chesapeake Bay by requiring the implementation of effective land use management practices.

Source: Virginia Department of Environmental Quality webpage on the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act

N.1.2 Continue to work closely with neighboring jurisdictions in efforts to improve the effectiveness of the region's watershed management program. Improve connectivity between natural habitats and environmentally critical areas; discourage fragmentation and isolation of natural habitats.

N.1.3 Support the implementation of shoreline protection measures. Promote coastal water quality improvement initiatives for the protection of spawning and nursery grounds and preserve tidal marshes. Seek public outreach opportunities to educate citizens and stakeholders on new shoreline management strategies including Living Shorelines. Utilize VIMS' Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Portal (CCRMP) Shoreline Best Management Practices for management recommendations for all tidal shorelines in the city. Continue to enforce the provisions of the Floodplain Overlay District and associated Flood Insurance Rate Maps.

N.1.4 Recognize eco-tourism as a method for continuing the preservation of the City's natural resources. Increase public access to Suffolk's shoreline and water bodies using water quality-friendly techniques. Evaluate opportunities to provide full access to waterways and rivers for boating activities.

N.1.5 Promote use of cluster development to protect environmentally sensitive areas. Continue to implement and enforce stormwater regulations related to pre- and post- development activities.

Cluster Development

Cluster development reduces the footprint of new development, helps to protect development from hazard areas, and works to protect sensitive areas such as wildlife habitat and migration corridors. This type of lot is characterized by flexible lot patterns to respect unusual or environmentally restrictive site conditions. These lots may be located on a loop lane or, in unusual circumstances, a cul-de-sac.

Source: UDO, Article 4, Sec. 31-411 – Use Patterns

N.2 Protect the City's cultural and historic resources. Promote public and private investment in these resources to ensure their long-term preservation.

N.2.1 Implement Historic District Design Guidelines within the City's Historic Conservation Overlay District. Monitor the effectiveness of the recently updated Historic Conservation Overlay District and Historic District Guidelines. Consider additional updates as needed. Work within the process of the next Downtown Master Plan update to evaluate historic district boundaries and consider additional regulatory and incentive approaches for promoting private investment in historic buildings in Downtown.

N.2.2 Prepare updated master plans for the City's historic villages to promote the preservation of historic and cultural resources in these areas. Identify areas where historic resources within villages should be protected and buffered from new development so that they continue to contribute to the villages' character and sense of place.

VIMS' Comprehensive Coastal Management Portal (CCRMP)

The Virginia General Assembly directed the Virginia Institute of Marine Science to provide general shoreline management guidance to coastal zone localities. Each locality portal is a gateway to current and historic shoreline management information, including interactive mapping tools, shoreline and tidal marsh inventory reports, sea level rise and flooding information, GIS data for downloading, and other locality-specific VIMS shoreline publications.

Source: Virginia Institute of Marine Science Center webpage on Shoreline Management

Flood Insurance Rate Maps

Flood maps show how likely it is for an area to flood. Any place with a 1% chance or higher chance of experiencing a flood each year is considered to have a high risk. FEMA maintains flood maps in part to help communities develop strategies for reducing their risk.

Source: FEMA Flood Maps webpage

8

IMPLEMENTATION

Suffolk 2045 is a long-term policy guide and action agenda that will serve the community for the next 20 years. It is not the responsibility of any one department or organization to implement the plan. Rather, it is imperative that a collaborative approach is taken to implementation. City departments, boards and commissions, private businesses, civic organizations and individually interested community residents can and should all have a role in turning the plan's recommendations into reality. This chapter provides guidance for the plan's implementation.

Chapter Contents

How to Use the Plan 150
Matrix of Implementation Actions. 153

HOW TO USE THE PLAN

This chapter has been developed to help guide implementation of the comprehensive plan. It includes both overarching strategies and process guidance as well as a matrix of plan actions with associated timeframes and responsible parties.

Implementation Strategy

The overarching strategy for implementation includes three main areas of focus.

Monitoring

The plan should be monitored on a regular basis for implementation effectiveness and relevancy. This review should happen formally no less than once per year. A status report and presentation to City Council and relevant departments and commissions should accompany this review and the results of the review should be communicated throughout the city so that community members are kept informed.

Collaborating

Some aspects of implementation for the plan statutorily fall to the Department of Planning and Community Development. However, it is not intended to be solely implemented by this department. Many actions will require the coordinated efforts of individuals and organizations representing the public, private, and civic sectors of the community. Active participation by many individuals and entities will also help to ensure those actions are included and pursued as part of the public agenda.

Updating

Future updates and amendments to the plan will be initiated by Council. Updates should be considered at least every five years. In the interim, key milestones may be reached which necessitate an update sooner than a five-year cycle. There may be circumstances that warrant formal amendment of the plan, which would be a less intensive process than a complete update. Amendments to the plan will be made only with careful consideration and compelling justification.

Integration into City Operations and Processes

The specific ways in which the plan will be incorporated into City operations and processes include the following.

Regulatory Updates

Revisions to the City's zoning code and other regulations should be made in accordance with the plan. The process for updating the zoning code will be led by City Staff in collaboration with the Planning Commission and will be determined following the adoption of the plan. This will provide the City with the regulatory authority to enforce recommendations in the Future Land Use Map and promote other desired outcomes expressed through the plan's actions.

Development Approvals

Administrative and legislative approvals for development proposals will be reviewed for consistency with the plan. Decisions by the Planning Commission and reports by Planning & Community Development staff will reference relevant plan goals, objectives, and actions as well as the Future Land Use Map.

Capital Improvements

Suffolk's Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) provides a roadmap for present and future infrastructure projects. The City's CIP will be reviewed for consistency with the plan's principles, objectives, and actions.

Annual Work Programs

Departments, administrators, and relevant boards and commissions should be cognizant of the principles, objectives, and actions in the plan when preparing annual work programs and budgets. Similarly, it will help in tracking implementation of the plan if these entities report back to the Department of Planning and Community Development staff on progress toward implementation for annual tracking. This should be systematized so that check-ins are scheduled for the same time on an annual basis prior to an overarching annual review of implementation progress.

Private Development Decisions

Property owners and developers should consider the principles, objectives, and actions in the plan in their land planning and investment decisions. Public decision-makers will be using the plan as a guide in their development deliberations such as zoning matters and infrastructure requests. Property owners and developers should be cognizant of and complement the plan's recommendations.

Economic Incentives

Future economic incentives should be considered and prioritized relative to their consistency with the plan's goals, objectives, and actions. They should reinforce the land use and economic development objectives put forth in this plan.

Future Partnerships

Formal and informal collaborations with surrounding communities, regional and state agencies and organizations, and institutions, should be informed by the plan's goals, objectives, and actions. Existing partnerships within the Virginia Beach-Chesapeake-Norfolk Metropolitan Statistical Area can benefit from deliberate consideration of the actions presented in the plan and purposeful efforts to integrate them into existing work. In some cases, new partnerships may be warranted to implement the plan's actions.

MATRIX OF IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS

Action		Timeframe	Lead	Support
L.1	**Focus development in designated Growth Areas and promote development that is consistent with the Future Land Use and Growth Areas Map.**			
L.1.1	Review development proposals for consistency with the Future Land Use and Growth Areas Map, the Future Land Use Types described and mapped in this chapter, and the Guiding Values, Land Use Principals, Objectives and Actions adopted in this plan.			
L.1.2	Review and revise current development regulations, including the Unified Development Ordinance (UDO) and the zoning map, to improve compatibility with the comprehensive plan.			
L.2	**Promote predictable and orderly development.**			
L.2.1	Continue to review the minor subdivision ordinance requirements to ensure compliance with adequate public facilities standards and other growth management objectives.			
L.2.2	Review and update incentives and land use regulations that support traditional neighborhood designs.			
L.2.3	Promote master planned developments on certain sites.			
L.2.4	Ensure that the cluster development provisions allow for more community-usable open space.			

This matrix is included as an example. It will be completed for all actions following the final round of public engagement for the planning process.

Suffolk2045