Purpose of the Plan

The Route 50 East Corridor is one of Frederick County’s longest serving commercial corridors. From its earliest role as a wagon trail on which America’s settlers came to trade, it has provided an entrance into the Winchester-Frederick County community and offered commercial shopping opportunities. Since its peak, the corridor has begun to decline both as a shopping destination and as an attractive gateway into the community. That decline is evidenced by a lack of urban design features and the construction of a multitude of new shopping opportunities throughout the community. Therefore, this Route 50 East Corridor Development Plan creates a means of improving both vehicular and pedestrian safety, enhancing corridor aesthetics, and providing development opportunities to re-invent the corridor.

Overview of the Planning Process and Plan Document

The Route 50 East Corridor Plan is the product of a six-month planning process under the auspices of the Graduate Planning Studio in the Master’s of Urban and Regional Planning program at Virginia Commonwealth University. The following tasks were completed to determine the Route 50 East Corridor’s development potential:

- Review previous plans done for the area
- Conduct interviews with Corridor business owners
- Examine existing conditions of the Corridor, including urban design features, traffic flow, and building condition
- Conduct a survey of competitive supply for the immediate and surrounding areas
- Complete a detailed retail market analysis, reviewing demographic trends for the defined Corridor area

Based upon the findings of the tasks above the following were created:

- Development recommendations for key opportunity sites along the Corridor
- Guidelines for improving the physical appearance of the Corridor
- Strategies for increasing pedestrian and vehicular circulation
- A detailed action plan that outlines the process necessary to achieve development goals

This plan is divided into two parts. Part I, Existing Conditions and Development Potential describes the evaluation of the Route 50 East Corridor as it exists today. Part II, Development
Plan recommends goals, strategies, and implementation measures to assist the Route 50 East Corridor with achieving its potential as an aesthetically pleasing and economically vital entrance Corridor into the Winchester Frederick County Community.
Part I: Assessment of Existing Conditions and Development Potential
History

Frederick County, Virginia, was created in the division of Orange County by the British in 1738 and named after Frederick Louis, Prince of Wales. Winchester, the county’s seat, is the oldest city west of the Blue Ridge Mountains. Frederick County comprises 415 square miles at the northern end of the Shenandoah Valley, bordered by West Virginia on its western and northeastern boundaries. It is approximately 135 miles to the northwest of the State capital, Richmond and 75 miles west of Washington D.C. The close proximity to the population centers of the Metropolitan Washington Area has influenced the past and present development of Frederick County.

The Route 50 Corridor has also played a significant role in the development of Frederick County and the City of Winchester. Route 50 began as an Indian Trail that was used to follow game from the Potomac River to the Shenandoah Valley. Later as Virginia’s coastal developments expanded westward, Route 50 became a more established road carrying those on horseback and those traveling by wagon from the river ports of Georgetown and Alexandria to Winchester and Frederick County for trade. Route 50 would eventually carry westward travelers through the area to St. Louis, Missouri and finally across the U.S. to San Francisco, California.

Route 50 in Frederick County has developed into a commercial Corridor serving both local residents and the traveling public. Its close proximity to Interstate 81 has resulted in the development of multiple hotels and gas station establishments. The Route 50 East Corridor is also home to one of the county’s first large scale commercial strip developments. Built in 1978, Delco Plaza, displayed in Map 2 on page 7, has seen a variety of tenants and served a multitude of community needs. The Corridor is also home to established and new residential subdivisions that are displayed in Map 2 on page 7. The College Park neighborhood, located to the immediate north of the Corridor, has been in existence since the 1960s, while other residential developments in the area, such as Pembridge Heights and The Raven’s Wing have been more recent. Map 1 on the following page shows the Route 50 East Corridor within the larger Winchester Frederick County community.
Previous Studies

In 1994, Frederick County’s Comprehensive Plans and Programs Subcommittee undertook the task of developing land use plans for the county’s commercial corridors. Included in this study were the Route 50 East Corridor, the Route 7 Corridor, and the Route 11 South Corridor. According to the County’s 2000 comprehensive plan, “Corridor Plans were developed as a result of a focused evaluation of the three corridors listed, including careful consideration of the characteristics of the particular areas and the stated desires of their residents.” Common elements of importance for all three corridors were stormwater management, transportation, landscaping, and signage.

Stormwater Management

The proximity of each of the study areas to major drainage basins prompted the committee to recommend that future development in any of the areas implement stormwater management plans to mitigate the impact of runoff. While stormwater management plans are currently required for the development of individual site plans they tend to focus on the quantity, rather than the quality of runoff. The implementation of individual management facilities was left to the discretion of the County Engineer.

Transportation

The control and management of traffic to minimize congestion and delays is a primary goal of the corridor plans. Connector roads were planned to provide alternate travel routes from the main arteries. Traffic controls at major intersections were another important element of the plans. They were to be funded through proffers provided by developers whose impact created the need for the signals.

Landscaping

To promote and create attractive business corridors, landscape buffers between road and parking facilities were recommended. Likewise, landscape buffers were recommended to limit the
conflict between incompatible land uses. The committee recommended that landscape guidelines be developed by the County to produce more aesthetically pleasing developments.³

**Signage**
Limiting the visual impact of signs on the community was a major goal of the committee. It was recommended that the County develop specific sign guidelines for business corridors. Such guidelines can assist in the establishment of character along the business corridors.

**Route 50 East**
The Corridor plan suggests that of the three major corridors studied, “the Route 50 Corridor is the largest and has the greatest potential for additional commercial growth.”⁴ The location of the Corridor and its proximity to both the Winchester Regional Airport and Interstate 81 make it a prime location for future commercial development. Of the 3,000 acres located within the Corridor study area, 1,400 are vacant and 550 are presently zoned for commercial development.

The Route 50 East Corridor land-use plan recommends making use of the existing road network and airport to place business and office uses on vacant parcels in those areas. The plan also recommends creating connector roads throughout the Corridor to ease the traffic congestion at the major intersections in the area. Creating the connector roads also provides another means of ingress and egress, rather than Route 50 or Route 522, for new businesses or offices that may locate in the area. A map of the suggested land use plan is contained in appendix A.

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³ Frederick County 2000 Comprehensive Plan, 6-15
⁴ Frederick County 2000 Comprehensive Plan, 6-17
**Surrounding Influences**

The Route 50 East Corridor is located in the eastern section of Frederick County. Route 50 leads eastward through Washington D.C. to Ocean City, Maryland and westward to San Francisco, California. It served as one of the first transcontinental roads in the United States. Route 50 intersects with Route 522 within the Corridor. Route 522 travels south through Front Royal, Virginia and north through West Virginia and Maryland. The western boundary of the study area is Interstate 81, a major north-south artery and main alternate to Interstate 95 in the northeastern United States. Much of the hotel and restaurant development along the Route 50 Corridor can be attributed to its proximity to I-81.

The majority of the Corridor’s businesses are retail establishments with a small number of office and light industrial uses. The buildings range from one to four stories in height and vary widely in material and color. Residential uses create a boundary to the north and Interstate 81 creates a boundary to the west. The Winchester Regional Airport creates a break in development to the south and the Westview Business Park bounds development to the east.

The residential neighborhoods that abut the Corridor to the north vary greatly. The College Park neighborhood is a 1960’s era development that contains mostly one-story ranch-style homes with values in the mid $100,000 to low $200,000 range. To the east of College Park lies Pembridge Heights, a late 1980’s development with mostly two-story homes with values in the mid $200,000 range. To the east of Pembridge Heights lies the Raven’s Wing, a large new residential development with homes ranging from the low $400,000 to $500,000 range. These homes are reflective of the latest trend of high-end home construction taking place in Frederick County.

Interstate 81 creates the boundary between Frederick County and the City of Winchester. Winchester’s main commercial area is adjacent to the Route 50 Corridor on the opposite side of I-81. Located within this commercial area are The Apple Blossom Mall and Pleasant Valley Road, Winchester’s main commercial Corridor. Also located across I-81 from the Route 50 Corridor is Shenandoah University. Shenandoah is a 3,000-student private university that was
relocated to Winchester from Dayton, Virginia in 1960. Shenandoah has grown tremendously in the past 25 years and has had a significant cultural and economic impact on the community. Shenandoah has recently constructed a football and lacrosse stadium on the eastern side of I-81, drawing crowds to the Corridor area for sporting events.

The Winchester Regional Airport is just south of the Route 50 East Corridor. The airport is large enough to handle corporate aircraft and has spawned the development of a business park. In addition to the Airport Business Park, the Westview Corporate Center is located to the south of the Corridor. These two business parks house a number of employers in a variety of industries. These and the aforementioned surrounding influences are displayed in the following map.
Demographics

As of 2004, the area surrounding the Route 50 East Corridor in a ten mile radius contains approximately 87,673 people in 34,959 households, according to the Winchester-Frederick County Economic Development Commission. That equates to a population density of approximately 279.1 persons per square mile. The total population of 87,673 persons was a 31% increase from the 1990 population and a 9% increase from the 2000 population. It is expected that the population will increase by another 9.6% by the year 2009 to reach a total population of 96,109.

The majority of the residents who live in the area surrounding the Route 50 Corridor are white. As of 2004 approximately 90.2% of the residents are White, 5.9% African American, and 4.4% Hispanic. The predominately White population is slightly lower than the county’s as a whole according to the 2000 U.S. Census, which reported that 94% of Frederick County residents are White.

The estimated median age of the population in 2004 is 37.1 years of age. A large portion of the population, 43.9%, is within the 25-54 year old age cohorts. Outside of those cohorts, the largest age group is 5-14, comprising 13.5% of the population. Therefore, income-producing adults and young children comprise the majority of the population within the ten mile radius surrounding the Route 50 Corridor.

Of the population ages 16 and above, 68.7% are estimated to be in the work force in 2004 and 96.7% of those persons are employed. At the state level, 66.8% of the population ages 16 and above are in the workforce, and 92% of those persons are employed. The persons who are employed in the Route 50 Corridor area are relatively balanced between blue collar (43.5%) and white collar (56.5%) professions. The employees are also fairly well compensated, earning a median household income of $46,730 per year. This is slightly lower than the median household income in Frederick County of $46,941 as reported by the year 2000 Census.

5 Winchester-Frederick County Economic Development Commission, Rt. 522 South Demographic Detail Summary Report.
Safety

Pedestrian

The Route 50 Corridor’s proximity to Interstate 81, the City of Winchester and its connection with Washington, D.C. has created a prime location for hotels and restaurants catering to both the local and traveling public. As is shown in Map 3 on page 23, a cluster of hotels has formed along the north side of Route 50 in close proximity to the intersection with Route 522 and the I-81 interchange. A cluster of restaurants has formed on the southern side of Route 50 at the eastern entrance of Delco Plaza. This restaurant cluster is in a prime location to serve the adjacent hotels and residential neighborhoods, although access is limited to vehicular traffic. Despite the close proximity of neighborhoods and hotels to the restaurants, there are no pedestrian sidewalks or crosswalks along Route 50. Likewise, there is no median separating east and westbound traffic, creating an even more dangerous environment for pedestrians as they have nowhere to stop between the lanes of traffic. Travelers and local residents must use their vehicles to travel distances that can be shorter than 100 yards to access local restaurants without putting their safety in significant danger.

The Route 522 Corridor has also seen a clustering of hotels and restaurants, although pedestrian access remains difficult. Route 522 does have sidewalks along both the north and southbound lanes, but has neither crosswalks nor a pedestrian safe median. Therefore, hotel patrons are forced to travel relatively short distances via car rather than having the option of walking to adjacent restaurants.

The lack of sidewalks along Route 50 also prevents the formation of a pedestrian connection between the Corridor and the City of Winchester, which lies to the west across Interstate 81. Several more hotels and Shenandoah University are located...
within the city but are only a short distance from the Corridor across the I-81 Bridge. Such a connection could provide easy access to the Corridor’s services for an increased number of travelers and residents.

**Vehicular**

Approximately 19,000 vehicles pass through the Route 50 Corridor on a daily basis according to Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) estimates. Those vehicles encounter several dangerous conditions along the Corridor. Perhaps the largest danger is the lack of a median along Route 50. Instead of a median, the Corridor contains double “suicide” turn lanes, depicted in figure 2 below, allowing for constant left turning movements and increasing the risk of collisions. As was mentioned above, the lack of median, sidewalks, and crosswalks creates a dangerous interaction between vehicles and pedestrians. Without these pedestrian amenities, drivers are unaware of the possible presence of pedestrians within the Corridor. Therefore, the interaction of pedestrians and vehicles in the Corridor is dangerous for both parties.

*Figure 2: Double Left Turn Lanes*
There are also a large number of curb cuts associated with the businesses along the Route 50 Corridor. These curb cuts, shown in figure 4 below, increase the number of vehicles entering and exiting the roadway and thus increasing the possibility of accidents. Most accidents are caused by the interaction of vehicles traveling at different speeds. While curb cuts are necessary for direct vehicular access to businesses, their presence increases the un-signalized interaction of vehicles traveling at differing speeds and creates the potential for accidents.

Figure 3: High Curb cut Frequency
Figure 4: Curb Cut Frequency
The dangerous nature of the vehicular movements along the Route 50 Corridor is reflected in accident statistics provided by VDOT. In a three-year period measured from February 23, 2002 to February 23, 2005, 86 vehicular accidents occurred along the Route 50 Corridor. As was mentioned above, the “suicide” turning lanes and high number of curb cuts make for frequent interaction of vehicles at differing speeds traveling on different axes. That was reflected by the fact that 56 percent of the accidents that occurred in the Corridor were those that occurred at an angle. The other major accident type that occurred along the Corridor was rear-end accidents, making up 28 percent of the total. A large number of the accidents along the Corridor (46%) caused injury to those persons involved. Two of the accidents were fatal.

The Route 522 Corridor experiences fewer vehicle trips than does Route 50. Approximately 14,000 vehicles passed through this Corridor daily in the year 2003. Unlike the Route 50 Corridor, the 522 Corridor contains fewer curb cuts and a median between the intersection with Route 50 and its first stoplight at the intersection with the entrance to Delco Plaza. Double “suicide” lanes are in place following the end of the median at that intersection, but their use is limited by a second stoplight in close proximity to the first. Likewise, there are fewer curb cuts along Route 522 which funnels traffic to designated turn lanes at the stoplights. This reduces the un-signalized interaction of vehicles traveling at differing speeds.

The presence of sidewalks along Route 522 also provides better pedestrian access and reduces dangerous pedestrian and vehicular interaction. There are still no crosswalks in the area, which creates a difficult scenario for pedestrians attempting to cross the road, but the sidewalks do provide for easier movement along the streets. Both traffic and pedestrian movements seem more controlled along the Route 522 Corridor than they do along the Route 50 Corridor.

Both the safer pedestrian and vehicular environments are reflected in VDOT’s accident reports. Measured in the same three-year increment from 2002 to 2005 the Route 522 Corridor had far fewer accidents than its counterpart. The Route 522 Corridor experienced 33 accidents in the three-year period of which only 11 (33%) caused injury to the vehicle occupants. There were no fatal accidents along the Route 522 Corridor during this period. As was mentioned above, large

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6 Virginia Department of Transportation, HTRIS Accident Analysis
numbers of curb cuts and the interaction of vehicles traveling at differing speeds can be significant contributors to accidents. The smaller percentage of angular accidents (42%) could be a reflection of the lower number of curb cuts and presence of a median on Route 522. Rear-end accidents were the other major category of accidents along the Corridor, comprising 42 percent of the total.

When the accidents that occurred over the three year period on each Corridor are taken as a percentage of the vehicle trips per day, accidents are more than twice as likely to occur on Route 50 (.5%) as they are on Route 522 (.2%).
Aesthetics

Building Orientation

Building orientation along the Route 50 Corridor is highly inconsistent and creates a disjointed and unattractive streetface. This problem is most evident along the south side of Route 50 from its intersection with Route 522 to the Intersection with Purdue Drive. This area is populated by several gas stations and several restaurants. As one travels from west to east along Route 50, the building entrances alternate between orientations facing the street and orientations facing the parking lot. Those buildings oriented towards their parking lots are also inconsistent in the direction they face, creating an even greater disparity among the Corridor buildings. The gas stations in this cluster of buildings contain large canopies above their gas pumps which are oriented in the direction of the building they serve. These canopies only exacerbate the disjointedness of the building orientations.

Those buildings along the Route 50 Corridor whose orientation is on its parking lot have made little effort to screen the side of the building or make any aesthetic improvements. The result is a highly inconsistent and unappealing street face. Because of the difficulty and unlikelihood of buildings being renovated to face the street, vegetative screening or making improvements to the sides of the buildings may be the only way to create an improved street face.

The buildings along the Route 522 Corridor, which for the most part are newer than those along the Route 50 Corridor, have a far more consistent pattern of orientation. These buildings have entrances that face on Route 522 and their orientation is more consistent with those buildings around them. The result of those efforts is a more attractive and appealing Corridor.
Building Material and Color

Like the building orientation along Route 50, the building materials are also highly inconsistent. Along the north side of Route 50, the building materials used range from red brick to split face block. The Holiday Inn is brick construction while the Red Roof Inn, its next door neighbor, is split face block construction. Other construction materials along the Corridor include painted cinder block and vinyl siding. The lack of cohesiveness among the building materials creates a visually unappealing area and detracts from any potential sense of place.

The disparity in building materials is similar on the south side of Route 50. Materials range from the unpainted cinder block construction of the Waffle House, to the tin construction of the Country Store and Shell gas station. The disparity of the building materials on the south side is amplified by the aforementioned building orientations.

Route 522 also contains a variety of building materials used in the construction of its buildings ranging from split face block to red brick. The disparity in building materials is less obvious along this Corridor due to the increased spacing between the buildings. Despite the spacing, the differing building materials are still a major to any sense of place.

Building color is also highly variable along the Route 50 Corridor. Much of this can be attributed to the chain establishments that exist along the Corridor. Chains tend to have defining colors, which is apparent along both Route 50 and Route 522. Included along the Route 50 Corridor are the signature red roof of the Red Roof Inn, the green accents of the Holiday Inn, the bright yellow of the Shell station, the green of the BP station, the blue and red of the Exxon station, and a range of other building and accent colors not associated with major chains. While it may initially seem that this pallet of colors would make the Corridor vibrant and inviting, in reality it is quite distracting.
Building Condition

The buildings along the Route 50 Corridor are in generally good condition. While they may not be overly appealing, they appear to be well maintained. There are, of course, exceptions, the primary example of which is located along the south side of Route 50 west of Purdue Drive and adjacent to the Harley Davidson dealership. The building appears to be vacant and is in substantial disrepair. There are broken windows, pealing paint, and a variety of other conditions indicating that the building is in need of repair.

While the buildings themselves are in good condition, there are a variety of accessory building uses that detract from the appearance of the Corridor. Included in these uses are several trash dumpsters that are in plain site of the roadway. The presence of these dumpsters is an unappealing site to motorists and patrons alike. Similarly, the BP station, which contains an auto repair facility, has a number of vehicles awaiting repair that create an unsightly view. The vehicles are permitted to be there because they are awaiting repair, but they are not screened from the roadway. The inconsistent building orientation mentioned above contributes to some of these problems. The dumpsters of restaurants would typically be located behind the building, but because the buildings are oriented perpendicular to the roadway they are visible to motorists. This problem could be alleviated with proper screening; presently such screening is either inadequate or not present.

Landscaping

There is little landscaping along the Route 50 and Route 522 Corridors. A grass strip exists along both the north and south sides of Routes 50 and 522, but little other landscaping exists on either roadway. The Chinatown restaurant and the Shell gas station have made some landscaping efforts along Route 50 through the use of bushes, flowers, and trees. These efforts have been beneficial, but the landscaping is difficult to maintain due to its close proximity to the roadway. As was mentioned before, there is no buffer between the roadway and business parking lots other than the small grass strip. If a business chooses to landscape
that strip, there is no protection from the harsh elements present on the roadway. These elements include salt, sand, and harsh chemicals used to treat the road in the winter, as well as the dirt, gravel, and exhaust over the course of the entire year. Therefore, what little landscaping that is done has little chance of surviving.

In addition to the harsh elements damaging the landscaping, the large number of curb cuts makes it difficult to create a consistent landscaping theme. The frequent curb cuts create only small islands available for landscaping. The lack of a median in the roadway precludes another potential landscaping area.

**Signage**

Perhaps the largest detractor from the aesthetics of the Route 50 Corridor is the existing signage. The number, size, color, and orientation of the signs create a cluttered and confusing Corridor. The majority of the gas stations along the Corridor contain two signs, one that attempts to be visible from the interstate and another that is visible from Route 50. Those signs geared towards attracting interstate traffic are large and displayed at a high elevation.

**Figure 7: Signage on South Side of Route 50 East**

Despite the attempts to attract interstate traffic, these signs are only visible for a brief period from the interstate because of building development and vegetation growth. Those geared towards the Route 50 traffic are the typical gas station signs that are approximately 20 feet tall and display logos and prices. In addition to the gas stations, every other business along the Corridor displays a sign. There are no similarities in height, size,
style, color, or placement of any of the signs along the Corridor. Contrary to the purpose of the signs, motorists have a difficult time determining where the business is that the sign identifies. The signage along Route 50 is a significant problem that detracts from the aesthetics of the Corridor.

Another feature detracting from the aesthetics of the Corridor is the overhead utility wires. There are a significant number of wires running in a variety of directions along and across the Corridor. In conjunction with the signage, the wires create a tremendous amount of aerial clutter.

**Figure 9: Overhead Utility Lines**
Corridor Development

Existing Building Use
The predominant building use along the Route 50 East Corridor, as is displayed in the following map, is commercial. Of the 48 buildings studied along Route 50, Route 522, Costello Drive, and Prince Frederick Drive, 40 (83%) are commercial, three (6%) are industrial, three (6%) are office, and two (4%) are residential.

Commercial uses consist of a variety of businesses including six hotels, four gas stations, 11 restaurants, a grocery store, two automotive retailers, a craft store, a discount chain, a clothing store, a wholesale food warehouse, a pet store, and a variety of other small retailers. The industrial uses include two metal shops and an auto repair facility. The office buildings include a multi-tenant building, a concrete materials sales office, and a leasing office. Finally, the two residential units are single-family homes.

The travel oriented uses, such as hotels, restaurants, and gas stations are clustered in easily accessible areas. As is displayed on the following map, the hotel uses are clustered near the intersection of Route 50 and Route 522, adjacent to the Interstate 81 interchange. The restaurants are clustered near the intersection of Route 50 and Tulane Drive and the intersection of Route 522 and the entrance to Delco Plaza. The gas stations are clustered along Route 50 between its intersection with Route 522 and Tulane Drive.

The building heights along the Corridor range from one to four stories. The hotels are the tallest buildings and the gas stations the shortest. The majority of the retail structures are one story while the residential structures are two. The multi-tenant office building is three stories and the industrial buildings are one story.
Zoning

As was discussed above, the primary use along the Corridor is commercial. The presence of several large vacant parcels makes the Corridor a prime area for infill development. It is important that the zoning in the area be appropriate for any development idea that is proposed. The overwhelming majority of the land in and around the Route 50 Corridor, as displayed in the following map, is zoned B-2 Commercial, a zoning designation that would allow for both office and retail.

The intent of the B-2 district, as indicated by the Frederick County Zoning Code, is to provide large areas for a variety of business, office and service uses. General business areas are located on arterial highways at major intersections and at interchange areas. Businesses allowed involve frequent and direct access by the general public but not heavy truck traffic on a constant basis other than that required for delivery of retail goods. General business areas should have direct access to major thoroughfares and should be properly separated from residential areas. Adequate frontage and depth should be provided, and access should be properly controlled to promote safety and orderly development.7 A wide variety of uses are permitted within the B-2 zoning district.

Several other individual or small clusters of properties within the Route 50 Corridor are zoned with designations other than B-2. None of those zoning designations would disallow office or retail uses. The only zoning designation along the Corridor that would not allow office or retail use would be the RP residential performance zoning that exists on the north side of Route 50, east of Purdue Drive. Permitted uses include a variety of residential structures at varying densities, as well as schools and churches, fire stations and rescue squads, group homes, home occupations, utilities necessary to serve residential uses, accessory uses and structures, required or bonus recreational facilities, temporary or model homes, libraries, and adult care residences.

7 Frederick County Zoning Code
Ownership

Any effort to improve the Route 50 East Corridor will require the effort and cooperation of the property owners along the Corridor. Fortunately for that effort, a large majority of the owners do live in the Winchester-Frederick County area. Although some of the major property owners are from out of town, those such as the Delco Group owner of Delco Plaza, the largest commercial property owner in the Corridor, have local representation in the form of a property manager. The other major out-of-town property owners are large chain stores or restaurants who have local managers who could be of service in a decision making and compliance capacity.

The largest property owner in the Corridor is the Fredericktown Group, which owns over 60 acres of undeveloped land in and around the Corridor. The property owned by the Fredericktown Group could play a key role in infill development opportunities. The majority of the members of the Fredericktown Group are local residents and thus have a stake in the success of the community.
Future Influences

The Route 50 East Corridor and its opportunities for improvement are influenced not only by its existing conditions and immediate surroundings. The Corridor is also influenced by plans for future improvements. These improvements include planned transportation improvements to Route 522, Interstate 81, and several surrounding roads. They also include planned retail development around the county and office development in the immediate vicinity of the Route 50 East Corridor.

Interstate 81 Improvements

The Virginia Department of Transportation has been planning to widen I-81 to three lanes in both the northbound and southbound directions through the planning area. While the widening of the interstate itself would not affect the planning area, the steps necessary to accommodate that widening would. The largest impact would come from the reconstruction of the entrance and exit ramps as well as the reconstruction of the Route 50 East Bridge crossing the interstate. These improvements will increase the efficiency of an interchange that is currently quite difficult to navigate. Virginia Department of Transportation figures indicate that the Route 50 interchange, exit 313, experiences an accident rate two times higher than normal. Increasing the efficiency of the interchange system will increase access and thus the potential of the Route 50 East Corridor to serve the public.

Despite the potential increase in the efficiency of the improved interchange, the period during construction could be stifling to traffic. The construction, which could last for years, could severely limit the flow of traffic through the area. Currently, the Route 50 Bridge is the only access point to the City of Winchester for several miles. This traffic impediment would be equally challenging to local residents and the traveling public attempting to pass through the area.

Route 522 Improvements

In an effort to improve the traffic congestion problems currently occurring at the intersection of Route 50 and Route 522, VDOT has proposed the realignment of Route 522. These
improvements, included in the Winchester Area Transportation Study, suggested relocating the Route 522 and Route 50 East intersection approximately one-half mile to the east. This realignment would ease current congestion and allow for greater volumes of traffic in the future. Of course, the realignment of the intersection would also require realigning Route 522 from its current position.

The Russell 150
In addition to the proposed alignment changes on Route 522 and the reconstruction of the Route 50 Bridge, private interests have suggested additional road improvements in the area. The developers of a proposed mixed-use center, currently referred to as the Russell 150, have requested in conjunction with their development proposal, to build a bridge crossing Interstate 81 connecting their development with the City of Winchester. The bridge would not only connect their development, but would also connect to the County’s road network, creating a second important access across I-81 in the vicinity of Route 50. This project would be located between I-81 and Route 522 approximately one mile south of Route 50. Creation of a second access point across I-81 would alleviate much of the congestion at the current Route 50 and Route 522 intersection, and provide an alternate route across I-81 while the aforementioned Route 50 Bridge improvements are taking place.

Building a bridge across Interstate 81 would obviously be a costly venture; one that many developers would not be willing to take on alone. To offset the high construction costs, the Frederick County Board of Supervisors recently approved the formation of a Community Development Authority. The Russell 150 Community Development Authority would have the ability to place a higher real estate tax rate on the property that would go toward funding the infrastructure improvements. The increased tax liability of the developed property provides the funds necessary for the infrastructure improvements without burdening the county or its residents. The CDA also provides a much quicker funding solution, than does County or State funding, to the congestion problems faced by the Route 50 East Corridor.
Inverlee Drive

Another significant infrastructure improvement that would increase access to the Route 50 Corridor is the extension of Inverlee Drive. Inverlee Drive currently intersects Route 50 to the south of the planning area. If constructed as planned, Inverlee Drive would provide a direct connection between Route 50 and Senseny Road, approximately 1 mile north of the planning area. Senseny Road is in the heart of Frederick County’s most densely populated area. Inverlee Drive would provide a parallel road to Interstate 81 and increase accessibility to the Route 50 Corridor for a large segment of the county’s population.

The combined effect of these infrastructure improvements would provide premier access and improved traffic flow for the Route 50 East Corridor. Without these improvements it is likely that the Corridor will become increasingly bogged down by traffic congestion, decreasing its accessibility. The improved access, on the other hand, provides the Corridor with the opportunity to serve residents and travelers alike in an efficient manner. This fact only increases the Route 50 East Corridor’s development potential.
Map 6: Proposed Transportation Improvements

Route 50 East Corridor Transportation Improvements

- Russell 150/Winchester Station Improvements
- I-81 Widening
- Route 50 Bridge Improvements
- Route 522 Improvements
- Inverlee Drive Improvements

The improvements shown on this map are only suggestions, and in no way should be interpreted to represent final road plans.

Jon Riley 2005
Future Retail Development

Frederick County, Virginia has experienced significant population growth in the past 20 years as it has transitioned from a quiet agricultural community to a regionally important employment and shopping center. To date, this growing population has relied upon the City of Winchester to support its retail shopping needs. Those needs have been well supported by the Apple Blossom Mall and the Pleasant Valley Road Retail Corridor. As the community grows, so does its desire for increased shopping opportunities. Local and national developers have begun to notice this trend and have set their sights on Frederick County to develop their projects. Many of these developments are in close proximity to the Route 50 East Corridor, including two that are within a one mile radius.

The Russell 150
In addition to providing a bridge over Interstate 81, the Russell 150 project will bring significant retail development to Frederick County. Located adjacent to the Route 50 East Corridor, the Russell 150 project proposes a 150-acre mixed-use development that will include 294 townhouses and 500,000 square feet of commercial and retail space. This development has received approval from the Frederick County Planning Commission and awaits approval from the Board of Supervisors. While the development still requires Board of Supervisors approval, it is highly unlikely that it would not be approved, considering the Board’s recent approval of the Community Development Authority mentioned above.

Winchester Station
While not technically in Frederick County, the Winchester Station project, which is currently in the early stages of development, will have an impact on the Route 50 East Corridor. Winchester Station is located on the opposite side of Interstate 81 from the Russell 150 development. The bridge associated with the Russell 150 will connect the two developments as well as the city and county road networks. Winchester Station comprises twenty acres and will house approximately 200,000 square feet of retail and restaurant space and include users such as Michael’s Craft Store, Linens ‘N Things, Old Navy, Ross Clothing, Red Lobster, and Olive Garden. This project
fills one of the final large tracts of available land along the City of Winchester’s Pleasant Valley Road Retail Corridor.

**Winchester Gateway**

Approximately 1.5 miles to the north of the Route 50 East Corridor is another of Frederick County’s main commercial Corridors. The Route 7 Corridor contains a significant amount of retail development, and carries a large volume of traffic as a main commuter route to the Northern Virginia area. Route 7’s retail space is about to be enlarged via the Winchester Gateway development, which is slated to include a 75,000 square foot Martin’s grocery store, a long awaited Starbuck’s Coffee, and a variety of smaller retail users. The total development will include 180,000 square feet of retail space.

**Kernstown Commons**

One of several Frederick County developments currently underway, Kernstown Commons lies approximately three miles south of the Route 50 East Corridor. Set on 31 acres at the intersection of U.S. Route 11 and Interstate 81, this project will include a 16-screen movie theater, 84-room hotel, and 60,000 square feet of retail space. Retail and restaurant users have been identified as Outback Steakhouse, McDonalds, and a Handymart gas and convenience center housing Dunkin- Donuts and Baskin-Robins.

**Crosspointe Center**

Another development that was recently approved by the Frederick County Board of Supervisors is Crosspointe Center. Crosspointe is intended to be a mixed use development that at build-out will include 1,578 homes and 960,000 square feet of retail space. This is by far the largest development slated for construction in the county. By comparison, the Apple Blossom Mall, Winchester’s most well established retail center, contains only 445,000 square feet of retail space. The residential portion of Crosspointe is scheduled to include 1,378 single-family homes and 200 age-restricted homes. Crosspointe is located in close proximity to the Kernstown Commons development, approximately three miles south of the Route 50 East Corridor.
Round Hill Crossing

Construction has recently begun on the Winchester-Frederick County area’s second Wal-Mart store. Hoping to build upon the success of the current 340,000 square-foot store located on Pleasant Valley Road, Wal-Mart is constructing a 200,000 square-foot store along the Route 50 West Corridor. This project is located on the opposite side of Winchester from the Route 50 East Corridor, approximately 4 miles away. The Wal-Mart has spurred a variety of retail development in its vicinity. The associated retail will likely encompass another 100,000 square feet of space on the 43-acre site and include retail, banking, and dining users.
Map 7: Future Retail Development

Route 50 East Development Plan

- Round Hill Crossing: 300,000 sf
- 3-Miles

New Retail Development

- Winchester Gateway: 180,000 sf
- 1-Mile

City of Winchester

- Winchester Station: 200,000 sf
- Russell 150: 450,000 sf

Kernstown Commons: 200,000 sf

Crosspointe Center: 960,000 sf
New Development Potential

Existing Retail
There are a vast number of retail shopping opportunities in and around the Route 50 East Corridor. Approximately 400 separate retail businesses operate within a 10 minute drive-time radius of the Corridor. The majority of these businesses are concentrated along the major retail Corridors of both Frederick County and the City of Winchester. These Corridors, shown on the following map, include Pleasant Valley Road, Valley Avenue, Jubal Early Drive, Weems Lane, and Papermill Road in the City of Winchester, and Route 7 (Berryville Pike), Route 50 East, Route 522, and Senseny Road in Frederick County.

The largest retail Corridor in the area is Pleasant Valley Road in the City of Winchester. It contains the majority of the area’s big box retailers and chain restaurants. Store sizes range from 1,500 square feet to the 340,000 square foot Wal-Mart Supercenter, one of the largest and most profitable on the East Coast. Pleasant Valley Road contains almost every category of retail sales and is anchored by major tenants including Target, Wal-Mart, Home Depot, Lowes, and Kohls. Pleasant Valley Road has replaced the Apple Blossom Mall as the predominant shopping location for residents of Frederick County, Winchester, and beyond. With the addition of Winchester Station, the latest retail center along Pleasant Valley, and the direct access being created between it and the Route 50 East area by the Russell 150 project, any new retail development proposals along the Route 50 East Corridor must be carefully evaluated.

The trade area contains an abundance of restaurants, nearly 70, that include sit-down, fast-food, and take-out restaurants of all food genres. Clothing stores occupy another large portion of the total businesses. Big-box stores such as Kohls, Target, and Wal-Mart, as well as the Apple Blossom Mall, amplify the presence of clothing retailers. Entertainment opportunities such as movie theaters, video rental, sporting goods stores, and toy and game retailers makeup another significant portion of area retail shopping opportunities. The final large segment of retailers is comprised of auto-related activities. These users are predominately found along the Valley Avenue Corridor in the City of Winchester.
Development Potential

To determine the Route 50 East Corridor’s potential as a retail center, a retail market analysis was conducted. The market analysis examined the existing retail uses present in the Corridor’s trade area, and evaluated its resident’s level of retail demand. That information was used to determine whether retail development was the ideal development option for the Route 50 East Corridor and what retail uses it could support.

As was mentioned above, nearly 2.5 million square feet of new retail development is scheduled to occur in the Winchester-Frederick County area in the next few years. Several of those developments, including Winchester Station, Winchester Gateway, and the Russell 150 are occurring within the Route 50 East Corridor trade area. Only those uses that have been formally announced were included in the trade area analysis. Therefore, an additional 450,000 square feet of additional retail space, not included in this analysis, will be added to the trade area in the next three years.

Route 50 East Corridor Trade Area

The Route 50 East Corridor trade area, shown on the following map, represents a five- to ten-minute drive time from the Route 50 East Corridor, a distance that is appropriate for a neighborhood convenience-shopping area. The trade area includes year 2000 Census tracts from both Frederick County and the City of Winchester. The county tracts are identified as tracts 509 and 510 and the city tracts as tracts 3.01 and 3.02. The total population of all four of these tracts is 12,269. While the trade area could have been drawn to exclude the strong concentrations of retail development along the Pleasant Valley Road Corridor, ignoring that development and the plans to create direct access between it and the Route 50 East Corridor in the near future would have produced a flawed study.
Market Demand
In order to determine what, if any, new retail uses would be appropriate as infill development opportunities for the Route 50 East Corridor, unmet retail demand within the trade area was measured. To calculate unmet demand, the potential expenditures for each retail category within the trade area were evaluated (See Appendix B). Determining potential expenditures was achieved by using 2000 Census data to obtain the number of households in the trade area as well as the number of commuters who pass through on a daily basis. The median income of each of those households determines the amount they spend on any given retail category (See Appendix C). Commuters were counted using Virginia Department of Transportation traffic volume rates for the Route 50 East Corridor and a capture rate of 5%. A capture rate of 5% is unusually high, but due to the large cluster of travel-oriented uses within the Corridor and its close proximity to the high volume of traffic traveling on Interstate 81, it is appropriate. The median income for Frederick County was used as the commuter income.8

Market Supply
A visual survey of the trade area was conducted to ascertain all of the existing retail uses within its boundaries. A total of nearly 400 retail establishments were observed within the trade area. The 2004 Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers9, was used to classify each of the retail uses into a category based upon business type. The square footage of each retail use was estimated visually and if possible, confirmed using site plans provided by the building developer.10

Unmet Demand
To estimate unmet demand, the potential expenditures of the trade area were applied to the number of existing retail square feet for each expenditure category (See Appendix D). As is displayed in the diagram below, the potential expenditures were divided by the sales per square foot of each category to obtain the number of supportable square feet. The number of existing square feet was then subtracted from the supportable square feet to obtain the square feet of unmet demand.

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9 Published by the Urban Land Institute
Results

The market analysis revealed that all of the major retail categories measured are over-served within the Route 50 East Corridor trade area. This is not surprising considering the vast concentration of retail uses within a short radius of the Route 50 East Corridor. This glut of retail use will be exacerbated in the near future when the additional retail uses discussed above are constructed. It is obvious that these retailers are drawing from a much larger area than the Route 50 East Corridor trade area.

Despite the gross over-service of the area in the major retail categories, there are several sub-categories that are under served in the market. The table below displays the four sub-categories that contain significant unmet demand.

Table 1: Unmet Demand

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Sq. Ft.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Food at Home</td>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>19,399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Food at Home</td>
<td>Specialty (Bakery, Deli…)</td>
<td>8,606</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household</td>
<td>Operations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operations</td>
<td>Laundry</td>
<td>10,705</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal Care</td>
<td>Products</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Products</td>
<td>Men's Barber</td>
<td>8,541</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The high level of unmet demand for food at home found in convenience stores is likely caused by the high number of commuters passing through the area. There are seven grocery stores...
within the Corridor trade area, which more than adequately satisfy the overall demand for food at home, but for those who wish to purchase something like milk or bread quickly at a convenience mart, their options are limited. Approximately 33,000 commuters pass through the Route 50 East Corridor on a daily basis; it is likely that they could support new convenience uses.

The second sub-category under the Food at Home category is specialty food stores, such as delis or bakeries. While fresh bread and meat is available at many of the grocery stores in the area, specialty shops may be more appealing. This is particularly true for those who do not wish to deal with the crowds at the grocery store to obtain specific items such as meat and bread.

The third sub-category is classified under the Household Operations heading. There are only a handful of laundromats within the Route 50 East Corridor trade area. Their marked absence is likely due to the large number of single-family residences within the trade area. Single-family residences are far more likely to contain a washer and dryer than would an apartment or condominium. Therefore, it is likely that the lack of laundry services within the trade area is a product of single-family residences rather than an under-service of the demand.

The final sub-category falls under Personal Care Products and Services. There are very few barbers within the trade area. The majority of the hair-care services are focused on women or unisex salons. It is likely that the men’s hair-service market is underserved.

The Urban Land Institute, in its Dollars and Cents Publication, also provides the median gross leasable area in square feet for each of the sub-categories. Using the gross leasable area and the square footage of the unmet demand, the number of new stores that the market can support is determined. The table below contains the number of new sub-category units that the Route 50 East Corridor trade area can support. Laundry is excluded for the reasons cited above.

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Table 2: Supportable New Units

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sub-Category</th>
<th>Sq. Ft.</th>
<th>Supportable New Units</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Convenience</td>
<td>19,399</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialty (Bakery, Deli...)</td>
<td>8,606</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Men’s Barber</td>
<td>8,541</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Despite the overwhelming over-service of the market by the existing and planned retail in the Route 50 East Corridor trade area, some potential for new development does exist. That development is commuter-oriented and as the community grows, it is likely that this commuter population will continue to increase. Small retail users focused on meeting the needs of commuters would be viable infill development opportunities.
Office Development

The Route 50 East Corridor’s proximity to large retail Corridors such as Pleasant Valley Road and Valley Avenue, as well as new development such as the Russell 150 and Winchester Station, limits its potential for retail-focused infill development. Therefore, alternative development solutions must be considered. One of the most promising options is the development of the Route 50 East Corridor as an office center. Winchester and Frederick County’s role as a regional employment center, as well as a well-educated workforce, bode well for the creation of an office center, particularly with the premiere access possessed by the Corridor. Likewise, recent inquiries from large office users reflect the potential the Winchester and Frederick County communities, and particularly the Route 50 East Corridor, have to attract office users. The following will outline the Route 50 East Corridor’s potential for use as an office Corridor.

Regional Economic Epicenter

As the Winchester and Frederick County community population grows, so does its importance as an employment center. In March of 2003 the Winchester Frederick County Economic Development Commission proclaimed, “The Winchester – Frederick County community is the regional economic epicenter for the Northern Shenandoah Valley region.”13 This statement was in response to year 2000 Census figures that showed that in excess of 4,000 more commuters commuted into the area than out. That figure was more than double what the community had found in the 1990 Census.

Winchester and Frederick County’s role as an employment center is often underestimated, particularly with its proximity to the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area. In fact, according to the Census, almost 75% (31,573 of 42,291) of the community’s working population live within the community.14 The community’s working population is enhanced by the large number of in-commuters who travel from surrounding areas for employment. Nearly 15,000 workers commute into Winchester and Frederick County daily. The majority of those commuters come

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13 Winchester Frederick County Economic Development Commission. “Commuting Patterns.” March 2003
14 Winchester Frederick County Economic Development Commission. “Commuting Patterns.” March 2003
from neighboring West Virginia, with the remaining portion traveling from adjacent communities in Virginia.

In addition to the increase in in-commuting population, the Census data indicated that those persons choosing to move their homes to the Winchester Frederick County area are also choosing to work there. The 2000 Census shows that over 4,600 net new workers chose to work and live in the community.15 There are tremendous benefits for a community when workers chose to live in the community in which they work. Linkages are promoted between employers and their community, increasing their likelihood to stay in the area for a long period of time. Live-work communities also reduce the commuting costs for workers, increasing disposable income and allowing them to spend that money to purchase goods from local retailers. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, it makes the community a more desirable place for new business to locate.16

Well-Educated Workforce
In addition to being a regional employment center, the Winchester Frederick County community and the surrounding region boast a well-educated workforce. As of 2003 only 12.9% of the region’s workforce lacks a high school education, and 19% of the adult population has a 4-year college degree.17 A well educated workforce would be important for attracting office users to the Route 50 East Corridor.

Employment Characteristics
The Winchester Frederick County community has witnessed a transition in employment types in the past few decades. This employment change has mirrored the community’s transition from a rural, agriculturally based area to its present suburban form. Agricultural employment dominated for a good portion of the county’s history, with apples and dairy products representing staple crops. As agricultural activities diminished, they were replaced by production-based employment that took advantage of the area’s transportation access. Major manufacturers in the

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15 Winchester Frederick County Economic Development Commission. “Commuting Patterns.” March 2003
16 Winchester Frederick County Economic Development Commission. “Commuting Patterns.” March 2003
17 Center for Survey Research, University of Virginia. “Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Workforce Survey” 2003
area include Kraft Foods, HP Hood, General Electric, and the Rubbermaid Corporation. Finally, the area has most recently begun to transition into an office-based employment area. The most recent transition is reflected in the concentration of employment types within the community. The largest concentration is Administrative Support, comprising 12.6% of the workforce. Administrative support is followed by Sales, which makes-up approximately 11.7% of the workforce. The third largest employment category is Production at 11.4% of the Winchester Frederick County workforce.18

Prospect Inquiries
The Winchester Frederick County Economic Development Commission monitors the inquiries it receives from businesses who have expressed interest in locating in the community. In the period from 2000 to 2003, ten office users per year inquired about available space in the community. In 2003 offices users represented approximately 11% of the total number of requests for information received by the EDC. While this is a small proportion of the total requests, the consistency of inquiries over the four-year period shows a continued interest in the community.

Location Attributes
One of the Route 50 East Corridor’s strongest arguments for use as an office center is its location. The amenities surrounding the Route 50 East Corridor are well suited for the needs of an office community. Perhaps the most important of these location attributes is transportation access. Route 50 intersects one of the two major North-South highways on the East Coast that provides access to a multitude of important areas in Virginia and beyond. Interstate 81 also provides easy access to other areas of the Winchester Frederick County community, including large population and business centers. Route 50 provides direct access to the Metropolitan Washington Area and all of the amenities it offers. Route 50 would be a prime location for branch governmental or service operations with headquarters in the Metro Washington area.

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18 Center for Survey Research, University of Virginia. “Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Workforce Survey” 2003
The planned transportation improvements listed above will serve as direct links to both population and retail centers within the community. The extension of Inverlee Drive will create a direct connection between the Route 50 East Corridor and the Senseny Road/Route 7 area, one of the communities most densely population areas. Likewise, the construction of the I-81 Bridge associated with the Russell 150 project will improve traffic flow in the area and provide access to a multitude of retail shopping opportunities. The restaurants and service-oriented businesses such as banks located along the Pleasant Valley Road Corridor would be ideal shopping destinations for employees working along the Route 50 East Corridor.

The existing retail uses along the Route 50 East Corridor are ideal to support an office center. The multitude of restaurants would be prime lunch-time destinations for employees in the Corridor. Likewise, the grocery store could serve the needs of those workers who wish to purchase their groceries on the way home from work. The hotels would provide guest accommodations directly adjacent to the employment center, decreasing travel time for out-of-town business associates. The existing uses, in conjunction with an increase in convenience uses as was indicated by the market study, would serve an office Corridor quite well.

Similar to its proximity to an abundance of retail, the Route 50 East Corridor’s proximity to residential development makes it a perfect location for an office development. The Corridor has recently witnessed significant residential development only a short distance away. The most recent development has been anchored by homes ranging in price from $350,000 to $500,000. It is quite likely that professional office workers are the people purchasing these homes. The ability to walk to work in an office development along the Route 50 East Corridor would be an added bonus for residents of the area.

Finally, the Route 50 East Corridor is directly adjacent to the Winchester Regional Airport. This airport has the capacity to handle a variety of aircraft, including small corporate jets. The Corridor would be an ideal location for businesses that frequently shuttle clients or employees via aircraft. Having to travel less than two miles to the airport, it is likely that an employee could leave an office along the Route 50 East Corridor and be in the air within 20 minutes. While there is currently no commercial air service available at the Winchester Regional Airport, a strong
presence of office development around the airport could help spur interest in its future development.

**Homeland Defense**

One of the effects of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 and the subsequent creation of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has been a concerted effort to relocate vital portions of Homeland Security agencies outside of the Washington D.C. area. Doing so would limit the impact that a terrorist attack on the Washington Metro Area could have on these agencies. As a result, several agencies have begun looking for new sites outside of the immediate Metro area that contain adequate resources and access. The Winchester and Frederick County community would be a prime site for these agencies.

The Winchester Frederick County area is 70 miles west of Washington D.C. and would likely not feel direct effects from an attack on the Capitol. At the same time, several transportation routes, including Route 7, Route 50 and Interstate 66, lead directly from Washington to the area. This ideal location has sparked interest from several Homeland Security agencies. If these agencies were to locate in the Winchester Frederick County area, their combined employment levels would likely exceed 1,500 workers and require new office space. The Route 50 East Corridor would be a prime location for the new development.

One such agency has already chosen to locate in the Winchester Frederick County area. In January of 2004, the Federal Bureau of Investigation announced its new Centralized Records and Maintenance site would be located in the community. They cited the need to have access to an educated workforce while being located more than 50 miles outside of Washington D.C., but within a five-hour drive. While they have yet to select a site, the FBI expects to open the new $10 million facility by 2009 or 2010.19

**Adjacent Development**

In addition to the promise of Homeland Security agencies locating in the area of the Route 50 East Corridor, the purchase of properties along Airport Road by private firms for office use

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19 Winchester Star, March 12, 2005
provides hope that the area will develop into an office center. Airport Road, located only a few miles south of the Route 50 East Corridor, has always been an area of interest for office development. It is directly adjacent to the Winchester Regional Airport and the Westview Business Center, an existing business park located along Route 50, east of the Corridor. The development of the Route 50 East Corridor as an office Corridor would create an excellent network of office nodes, as is shown in the map below, to include the Airport Road area, the Westview Business Center, and Route 50 East. A network of office uses in the area would have direct access to residential development, retail development, and the Winchester Regional Airport.

**Vacancy Rates**

According to data from the Winchester Frederick County Economic Development Commission, the vacancy rates among Class A office space have decreased over the last year. The decrease in vacancy rates is a sign that the Winchester Frederick County community is of interest for office users. According to the Economic Development Commission’s Director, Patrick Barker, the vacancy rate for office space is below 7%, down from 15% the previous year. During that period, office spaces of 24,000 square feet, 13,200 square feet, and 7,500 square feet were occupied by new tenants. The low vacancy rate combined with the interest shown in the area by Homeland Security Agencies is promising for the Route 50 East Corridor’s development as an office center.
The analysis above provides strong support for the development of the Route 50 East Corridor as an office center. With the abundance of retail already in place and the large amounts set to come on-line in the next few years, developing the Corridor as a retail center would be risky. At the same time, the Corridor’s excellent access and close proximity to residential and retail uses, makes it a prime candidate for office use.
Assets and Liabilities

The assessment of the existing conditions in the Route 50 East Corridor presents a number of important assets that can be utilized in the improvement and future development of the Corridor. Those assets most important to the success of the Route 50 East Corridor are listed below.

Location

- The Route 50 East Corridor’s location along Interstate 81 provides easy access to the Corridor from all areas of Frederick County and beyond.
- Route 50 is a direct link to the employment and population centers of Northern Virginia.
- Proposed transportation improvements would provide direct access to one of Frederick County’s largest population centers and the City of Winchester’s retail Corridor.
- 33,000 vehicles pass through the Route 50 East Corridor daily.
- The Corridor is adjacent to a growing residential population comprised of mid- to high-income residents.

Existing Business

- The area contains a host of viable retail uses including entertainment, apparel, food, and vehicle sales.
- The Route 50 East Corridor contains a large number of traveler-oriented businesses including hotels and restaurants.
- The majority of property owners are local residents.
- There is ample property available for infill development within the Corridor.
- A multitude of new retail uses are planned or under construction in the vicinity of the Corridor, that in addition to local retail uses, will provide an abundance of shopping opportunities for Corridor residents and employees.

Unfortunately, the Route 50 East Corridor contains a number of liabilities that detract from its overall success and must be overcome to assist further development. The liabilities that are most detrimental to the Corridor are listed below.
**Pedestrian Safety**

- There are no sidewalks along Route 50 East.
- There is no median separating the eastbound and westbound lanes of Route 50.
- There are no crosswalks or signal crossing aids along the Corridor.

**Vehicular Safety**

- Route 50 East contains a significant number of curb cuts, increasing the frequency of interaction of vehicles at differing speeds.
- The lack of a median and the presence of too many left turn lanes increases the potential for head-on collisions.

**Appearance**

- There are no urban design elements, such as street furniture or plantings, present along the Route 50 East Corridor.
- Only a few of the businesses along the Corridor have planted landscaping on their property.
- The inconsistent building materials and colors used along the Corridor create a visually unattractive area.
- Overhead utility lines and large signs create aerial clutter along the Corridor.
Part II: Development Plan
The Plan

The preceding analysis of the existing conditions and development potential of the Route 50 East Corridor highlights the Corridor’s potential to serve the Winchester Frederick County community as an office center. Before the successful development of the Corridor can take place, a number of improvements must occur. The vision statement below should act as the guide for the development of the Route 50 East Corridor as a successful office center for the community.

The development of the Route 50 East Corridor as an office center will introduce an increased level of traffic in the area. This traffic will be comprised of both local employees and visitors from outside of the area. Therefore, this plan will be focused on creating a safe and inviting environment for employees and visitors alike. As a key entrance into the Winchester and Frederick County community, an aesthetically pleasing Corridor is vitally important. Likewise, with increased levels of both pedestrian and vehicular traffic, the safety of both must be addressed. Equally important to the development of office space in the Corridor is strengthening existing businesses and developing new retail opportunities that cater to the new office uses. The creation of an effective business association to monitor and assist with the improvements to the Corridor will be vitally important to the success of the plan.

Vision: The Route 50 East Corridor is an attractive entrance Corridor into the Frederick County and Winchester community that includes office and retail uses and provides a safe and efficient pedestrian and vehicular network for its employees and visitors alike.

The following goals are recommended to achieve the vision for the Route 50 East Corridor.

Goal 1: Focus the development of the Route 50 East Corridor on office uses and retail uses that support those office uses and locate them on key sites in the Corridor, particularly those on the south side of Route 50, east of Purdue Drive.

Goal 2: Create an aesthetically pleasing entrance into the Winchester Frederick County Community.
Goal 3: Create a pedestrian network between retail and office uses along the Corridor to improve pedestrian access and safety.

Goal 4: Provide safe and efficient vehicular access to uses along the Corridor while maintaining adequate flow for through-traffic.

Goal 5: Establish an institutional framework of business owners and citizens to monitor and guide the development of the Route 50 East Corridor.

To clarify the preceding goals and establish a means by which they will be achieved, the following outlines a series of objectives to be achieved by each goal and implementation strategies describing how they will be achieved and by whom.

**Goal 1:** Focus the development of the Route 50 East Corridor on office uses and retail uses that support those office uses and locate them on key sites in the Corridor, particularly those on the south side of Route 50, east of Purdue Drive

**Objective 1.1:** Develop Corridor parcels TM 64-A-97, TM 64-A-100, TM 64-A-100A, TM 64-A-100B and adjacent Corridor parcels TM 64-10-1 and TM 64-10-2, shown in figure 10 below, for use as an office center with supporting retail.
Strategy 1.1-1: Of the seven parcels listed as prime opportunity sites along the Corridor, five are owned by the same ownership group. Those parcels comprise 34.4 of the 41.8 acres outlined for development. Therefore, the owners of that property are key players in the future development of the Route 50 East Corridor. The owners should be made aware of the improvements that are taking place within the Route 50 East Corridor and their property should be actively marketed as an office development site.

Implementation 1.1-1.1: Making the current property owners aware of the development potential of their parcels should be the responsibility of the County
Planning Department. The Winchester Frederick County Economic Development Commission should be the responsible for the active marketing of the site to the development community with an emphasis on its use as an office center.

**Strategy 1.1-2:** The County should not interfere with the development decisions of the owners that possess the parcels identified as key opportunity sites for development. Nevertheless, based upon the findings of this document, the County should strongly recommend that the owners develop the parcel as an office use. The current volume of retail use that exists in close proximity to the Route 50 East Corridor combined with the nearly 2.5 million square feet of new retail that is coming on-line in the Winchester Frederick County community limits the success that retail development could have in the Corridor. On the contrary, the location advantages provided by the Route 50 East area and the strong workforce in the community create the potential to develop the opportunity sites as an office center. One design option for an office center has been included below.

**Implementation 1.1-2.1:** The County Planning Department should be responsible for advising the land owners on the potential for the development of their land as well as encouraging its development as office space.

**Office Development Option:**
The office layout depicted includes approximately 100,000 square feet of office space in three buildings on the parcel. To remain consistent with the current development of the Corridor, the office center is low density and designed in a campus like setting. Ample landscaping features and green space are incorporated to provide an aesthetically pleasing setting. Likewise, stormwater management ponds are included as prominent design features. A 15,000 square foot retail center is included in the center of the development to provide convenience goods to employees as well as commuters along the Corridor. The retail center may also provide space for a daycare service for employees. The natural terrain of the site is utilized to provide parking under the office buildings.
and reduce the visual impact of large parking surfaces. Heavy vegetative screening is used to reduce the visual impact of the visitor and retail parking at the center of the development. All employee access will be from Costello Drive, behind the development, decreasing the amount of traffic on Route 50 East. See the rendering below for a potential site layout.
Objective 1.2: Maintain and enhance existing retail business.

Strategy 1.2-1: The existing businesses along the Corridor are viable uses that provide important services to the traveling and local public. Those businesses should be encouraged to continue providing their current services as well as increasing their focus on meeting the needs of the new office uses proposed for the Corridor. Those needs include convenience goods, food service, and accommodations. Improvement in services related to the needs of office workers will only strengthen the Corridor.

Implementation 1.2-1.1: The Winchester Frederick County Economic Development Commission should assist the existing businesses with focusing their services on meeting the needs of the new office uses. The Commission should hold seminars for the businesses along the Corridor, as well as any other business in the county, to provide information on how businesses can best serve the needs of their customers.

Strategy 1.2-2: As property values increase from the development of new office uses in the Corridor, property owners should be encouraged to make physical improvements to their properties or investigate the profit making opportunity available from the sale of their land. Likewise, existing businesses should be required to comply with the design guidelines outlined below within three years of their approval by the Frederick County Board of Supervisors. Improving the physical appearance of the Corridor makes for a more inviting environment.

Implementation 1.2-2.1: The County Planning Department should be responsible for monitoring the exterior improvements being made to the Corridor businesses. Each business should provide a timetable to the County describing the improvements they plan to make and when they will occur. Those businesses that
do not comply with the time schedule they provided will be subject to penalties, the nature of which will be determined by the County Planning Department.

**Objective 1.3:** New retail uses should serve office and commuting users.

*Strategy 1.3-1:* In addition to the office uses proposed, the Corridor can support retail uses that appeal to commuters and office workers. Food retail, such as convenience stores and specialty shops would provide dining opportunities for commuters, office workers, and local residents alike. The Corridor also has the capacity to support service retail opportunities such as barber shops. As the Corridor develops, additional retail analysis should be conducted to ensure that its retail needs are being met.

**Implementation 1.3-1.1:** The Winchester Frederick County Economic Development Commission should monitor retail interest in the county and steer those users that would be an appropriate fit for the Corridor to available sites therein. The Commission should also be responsible for conducting retail analyses to ensure that adequate supportive retail exists for the office development.

**Objective 1.4:** New office uses will be complementary to the existing and developing office uses in the Corridor.

*Strategy 1.4-1:* Office uses that are added to the Corridor should be complementary to or supportive of the existing office uses existing in the Corridor area. This would include governmental, medical, or defense oriented uses.

**Implementation 1.4-1.1:** The Winchester Frederick County Economic Development Commission should work with the Virginia Economic Development Partnership to market the new office development as a prime location for Homeland Defense Agencies and other related users looking to relocate.
Likewise, the Commission should monitor its own requests for information and steer appropriate users toward the site.

**Goal 2:** Create an aesthetically pleasing entrance into the Winchester Frederick County community.

**Objective 2.1:** Recognize the Route 50 East Corridor as a gateway into the Winchester Frederick County community through signage and design features.

**Strategy 2.1-1:** Community signs should be erected at the entrance and exit points of the Corridor. Four foot by six foot signs, encased in brick cabinets and similar to the one shown below, should be placed in the median at the intersection of Route 50 East and Route 522 and the intersection of Route 50 East and Prince Frederick Drive. The sign at the intersection of Route 50 and Route 522 will be directed towards traffic traveling eastbound on Route 50 and contain the message, “Frederick County, Established 1738.” The sign placed at the intersection of Route 50 and Prince Frederick Drive will be directed towards westbound traffic on Route 50 and contain a community related message to be determined by a local authority. Landscaping elements, particularly those with seasonal colors, should be used to accent the gateway signs.

**Implementation 2.1-1.1:** Acquisition, placement, and maintenance of the signs should be the responsibility of the Frederick County Department of Public Works. The design of the signs, as well as the messages to be placed on them, should be the responsibility of the Winchester Frederick County Tourism Board.
**Strategy 2.1-2:** Themed banners similar to those shown below should be hung from light poles along the Corridor. Three foot by one foot themed banners should be hung from light poles along the Corridor to identify a cohesive Corridor and welcome visitors to the community. The banners should be seasonal and contain either an image or message that is related to the season, Corridor, or an event taking place in the community.

**Implementation 2.1-2.1:** The banners should be placed and maintained by the proposed Route 50 East Corridor business owners association. The design of the banners should also be coordinated by the proposed business owners association in conjunction with the Winchester Frederick County Tourism Board.
Objective 2.2: Create a sense of place within the Route 50 East Corridor through landscaping, building design, and distinctive design elements.

Strategy 2.2-1: Utilize landscaping features to provide beauty and create a sense of enclosure within the Corridor. Landscaping along the Corridor should include trees, shrubs, and other plantings that are attractive as well as functional. Hardy species should be used to reduce the amount of maintenance necessary for their survival. Likewise, plantings throughout the Corridor should include seasonal colors that enhance its overall beauty when they are in bloom. In addition to enhancing the physical beauty of the Corridor, increased landscaping increases driver preference for the Corridor. A study conducted by the University of Washington Center for Urban Horticulture revealed that preference ratings for roadsides increased with the amount of landscaping present. Vegetation used to
frame businesses assisted drivers with distinguishing individual businesses in an environment inundated by roadside information.²⁰

**Implementation 2.2-1.1:** The planting and maintenance of the landscaping should be coordinated by the proposed Route 50 East Corridor business owners association. The proposed business owners association should work with a local landscape architect to determine what species of plants would be appropriate for the Corridor. Likewise, the proposed business owners association should work with the landscape architect to determine the ideal placement of landscaping elements.

**Strategy 2.2-2:** The exposed environment created by the inconsistent setbacks of buildings from the roadway and each other should be addressed through the use of street trees. The trees can fill in gaps along the Corridor and create a street edge. In addition to creating a street edge, the trees create a buffer between the street and pedestrians increasing their safety. The trees also provide shade and a more pleasant walking environment for pedestrians. Tree species used in the Corridor should be consistent with those already present or those native to the Winchester Frederick County area. The species used should also be appropriate for the Corridor conditions, including available sunlight, water, and growth space.

**Implementation 2.2-2.1:** Placement and selection of street trees should be a coordinated effort between the Frederick County Department of Public Works and the proposed Route 50 East Corridor business owners association.

**Strategy 2.2-3:** Landscaping should not be limited to the areas directly adjacent to Route 50 East. Businesses set back from the roadway, particularly those with large parking surfaces, should implement landscaping in their parking areas and on their entrance roads. An example of a large un-landscaped parking lot along the Corridor is shown below in figure 15. The landscaping measures should comply with existing county zoning requirements. In addition to improving the appearance of the Route 50 East Corridor and the parking areas, shade provided by trees makes the parking areas more hospitable for patrons.

**Implementation 2.2-3.1:** Parking lot landscaping is the responsibility of the property owner. The Frederick County Department of Planning in conjunction with the Department of Public Works will assist the property owners with the most beneficial planting locations within each parking lot.

*Figure 14: Street Trees can Create an Edge*

*Figure 15: Rendering of Landscaped Parking Area*
**Strategy 2.2-4:** New buildings constructed along the Route 50 East Corridor should add to its sense of place. The height and width of any new buildings constructed directly adjacent to the Route 50 East Corridor should be of a consistent height and width with those buildings that surround it.
Implementation 2.2-4.1: The Frederick County Department of Planning should be responsible for monitoring the height and width of proposed buildings and ensuring that they are consistent with those buildings around them.

Strategy 2.2-5: The façade of new buildings constructed along the Corridor should face on Route 50. If a building contains two entrances, the primary entrance should be that which faces Route 50.

Implementation 2.2-5.1: The Frederick County Department of Planning should be responsible for ensuring that the main entrances of new buildings constructed along Route 50 face the roadway.

Strategy 2.2-6: New construction should include building materials that are consistent with those buildings that exist within the Corridor. For the Route 50 East Corridor, masonry is the most appropriate building material. The materials used for construction should be consistent on all sides of the building. The color of building elements should be complimentary to the colors of adjacent buildings. A flat roof design should be used to remain consistent with the existing structures along the Route 50 East Corridor.

Implementation 2.2-6.1: The Frederick County Department of Planning should be responsible for ensuring that the building material, color, and design elements of new buildings constructed along Route 50 East are consistent with the existing structures along the Corridor.

Strategy 2.2-7: Franchise businesses that move into the Corridor should be encouraged to use design alternatives that reduce their visual impact along the Corridor and have similar features to the existing buildings.

Implementation 2.2-7.1: The Frederick County Department of Planning should work with property owners and potential franchise operators to use a building
design prototype that is consistent with the character of the Corridor. Despite their reluctance to construct alternative prototypes, most franchise operators have a portfolio of building design options, one of which is likely to fit well with the existing Corridor.

Figure 17: A McDonald's Designed to Fit its Environment, New York, NY

Strategy 2.2-8: If new gas stations are constructed along the Corridor, their canopies should use materials that are compatible with the material of the building they serve. If possible, the canopy should be attached to the building, rather than a separate element. The canopy should also use colors that are similar to those used in the gas station building.

Implementation 2.2-8.1: The Frederick County Department of Planning should work with potential new gas station operators to ensure that new vehicle fuel sale facilities integrate their canopies with the building and use materials that are consistent with the existing building.

Strategy 2.2-9: Distinctive design elements should be used in the median and along the sidewalks to create a sense of place. Local artists or students from Shenandoah University should be commissioned to design art pieces to be included along the Corridor. These pieces should be reflective of the Corridor.
and the community. The art should be placed in the median in close proximity to the gateway signs as well as along the sidewalks near intersections.

**Implementation 2.2-9.1:** The Winchester Frederick County Tourism Board should institute a design competition that is marketed to local artists and students to create artwork for the Corridor.

**Strategy 2.2-10:** The art along the sidewalks should be used to create small pedestrian nodes with benches that allow pedestrians to stop and appreciate the Corridor.

**Figure 18: Functional Street Art**

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**Objective 2.3:** Improve the façades of existing buildings.

**Strategy 2.3-1:** Add design features to reduce the impact of blank walls that face on the Corridor. Those buildings with entrances that do not face the street should make improvements to their street-facing facades to create a more coherent streetface. Improvements should consist of existing features along the Corridor and be consistent in color and material with the existing structure. Features such as windows and cornice treatments would be ideal for creating a more inviting environment.
**Implementation 2.3-1.1:** The Frederick County Department of Planning should work with existing business owners to improve the appearance of their buildings. The department should provide information on grant programs or other funding sources that could assist businesses with deferring the cost of making façade improvements to their building.

**Strategy 2.3-2:** Walls facing the roadway that contain utility connections or service areas should be adequately screened using landscaping.

**Implementation 2.3-2.1:** The Frederick County Department of Planning should be responsible for making sure that all businesses along the Corridor adequately screen all utility connections and service areas.

**Strategy 2.3-3:** Connect existing gas canopies to the main building structure. Existing vehicle fuel sales facilities along the Corridor should be encouraged to connect their canopies to the building structure through an integrated roof. The connected structures create a more visually appealing facility.

**Implementation 2.3-3.1:** The Frederick County Department of Planning should provide assistance to vehicle fuel sales facilities in the form of information on facilities that have integrated their canopies and information on accessing funding sources that could offset the costs of making the improvements.

![Figure 19: Gas Station with Integrated Canopy](image)
**Objective 2.4:** Reduce the negative visual impacts created by signs and aerial clutter within the Corridor.

**Strategy 2.4-1:** Utility lines should be relocated underground. The large volume of utility lines running through the Corridor obstructs views and detracts from the appearance of the Corridor. Those lines should be relocated underground. In addition to improving the appearance of the Corridor, maintenance, weather-related repair, and service disruption costs will be reduced. All new businesses in the Corridor should be required to connect to existing utilities via underground lines.

**Implementation 2.4-1.1:** The Frederick County Department of Planning should coordinate with the local utility providers to place existing utility lines underground.

**Strategy 2.4-2:** Existing aerial signage should be removed. Existing aerial signage designed to attract interstate traffic should be removed. The building construction and vegetative growth along the Route 50 East Corridor restricts the visibility time of these signs to between 1 and 2 seconds for vehicles traveling at 65 miles per hour in the southbound lanes and to virtually zero for vehicles traveling at 65 miles per hour in the northbound lanes. Therefore, their removal would not have a significant impact on business gained from interstate travel. Because the interstate signs are a by-right use, the County should provide some compensation for their removal.

**Implementation 2.4-2.1:** The Frederick County Department of Planning should work with businesses to remove aerial signage along the Corridor.

**Strategy 2.4-3:** In exchange for the removal of the interstate signs, Frederick County should provide coordinated signs along the interstate, advertising the businesses within the Route 50 East Corridor. The signs would be similar to
those currently along the interstate that advertise gas, food, and lodging locations by exit, but should have a design theme commensurate with the Route 50 East Corridor’s place-defining features. The Virginia Department of Transportation’s, “Travel Destination Logo Sign Program”, under which current sign advertising falls, charges a $750 annual fee for advertising; any fees associated with advertising on new signs will be paid for by the County out of sales tax revenues generated by the businesses.

![Figure 20: Existing VDOT Signage](image)

![Figure 21: Wayfinding Signage](image)

**Implementation 2.4-3.1:** The proposed Route 50 East Corridor business owners association should coordinate with the Virginia Department of Transportation to allow for a Route 50 East Corridor wayfinding sign system. The proposed Route 50 East business owners association should also coordinate with the Winchester Frederick County Tourism Board to develop a design for the sign system.

**Strategy 2.4-4:** The visual impact of existing and future Corridor signage should be reduced. No sign along the Corridor should be in excess of 12 feet high and no sign should contain more than 50 square feet of surface area coverage. Shopping centers containing more than three stores would be excluded from this requirement and should be permitted to have one sign with a maximum height of 25 feet and a maximum of 100 square feet of surface area coverage. All signs along the Corridor should be encased in a consistent cabinet or have a consistent base, the style of which will be determined by the proposed Route 50 East business owners association. Special accommodations should be made for those businesses that are negatively affected by the sign requirements.
**Implementation 2.4-4.1:** The Frederick County Department of Planning should be responsible for enforcing the new sign regulations.

![Attractive Signage Example](image)

**Figure 22:** Attractive Signage Example

**Objective 2.5:** Institute a design review authority to oversee Corridor development.

**Strategy 2.5-1:** Frederick County should add language into its zoning ordinance that allows the county, in addition to its ability to regulate the height, area, bulk, and size of buildings, to regulate the design and appearance of buildings and their appropriateness for use in their specific area. This review authority should be particularly focused on the community entrance Corridors.

**Implementation 2.5-1.1:** The Frederick County Department of Planning should submit a request to the County Board of Supervisors to create a design review authority. The authority should be comprised of professional architects and urban designers as well as regular citizens.

**Strategy 2.5-2:** The authority should have the ability to make advisory recommendations to the Planning Commission or Board of Supervisors in the following areas:

i. Architectural Design

ii. Texture, color and materials of construction
iii. Scale of development  
iv. Aesthetic and spatial relationship of development  
v. Landscaping configuration  
vi. Location of signs and exterior lighting

The Two Examples Below Show What the Corridor Could Look Like If the Above Recommendations are Implemented.

Changes 1: Corridor Looking West

Changes 2: Corridor Looking East
**Goal 3:** Create a pedestrian network between retail and office uses along the Corridor to improve pedestrian access and safety.

**Objective 3.1:** Improve pedestrian movement with the construction of sidewalks along Route 50 East.

**Strategy 3.1-1:** Sidewalks should be constructed along the north and south sides of Route 50 East, and run parallel to the roadway. To maintain current travel lane width, the sidewalks will be constructed with an eight-foot setback from the roadway. This provides a buffer between pedestrians and traffic. The eight-foot buffer will provide area for the landscaping measures previously mentioned.

**Implementation 3.1-1.1:** The placement and construction of sidewalks should be the responsibility of the landowner, but should be coordinated by the proposed Route 50 East Corridor business owners association and the Frederick County Department of Public Works to ensure consistency.

**Strategy 3.1-2:** Sidewalks should extend adjacent to Route 50 East on both the north and south sides of the road from Route 522 to Prince Frederick Drive. The sidewalk should be five feet wide and of standard concrete construction. Adequate handicap ramps should be provided at all intersecting curbs, and to increase safety, the sidewalk should extend to the street or corresponding crosswalk at street intersections.

**Implementation 3.1-2.1:** The Frederick County Department of Public Works should ensure that the newly constructed sidewalks adequately meet the needs of all citizens and are of durable and quality construction.
Objective 3.2: Provide safety measures for pedestrians crossing Route 50 East.

Strategy 3.2-1: Safety measures should include crosswalks and crossing signal aids to assist pedestrians with crossing the travel lanes. Only one crosswalk should be initially provided along the Corridor. The crosswalk should be located at the intersection of Route 50 and Tulane Drive, which is currently a signalized intersection. A crosswalk at Tulane Drive should draw pedestrians away from Route 50’s intersection with Route 522, reducing pedestrian interaction with the most heavily trafficked portion of the Corridor. The crosswalk should be a white hashed painted strip across the roadway to alert vehicles and pedestrians of the presence of a crosswalk. A concrete island should be provided as the end-cap to
the median at this intersection, providing a resting place for pedestrians crossing the roadway.

**Implementation 3.2-1.1:** Construction of the crosswalk at Tulane Drive should be the responsibility of the Frederick County Department of Public Works.

**Figure 24: Appropriate Crosswalk**

**Strategy 3.2-2:** In addition to the painted crosswalk, signal crossing aids should be provided at the intersection of Route 50 and Tulane Drive. These crossing aids will indicate to pedestrians when it is safe to cross the roadway. A flashing red countdown will be displayed on the crossing aid following the initial white walk indicator, to alert pedestrians to the amount of time remaining for safe crossing. Because there are a high number of left turning movements into and out of Delco Plaza at the Tulane Drive light, the signal timing should be changed. The timing should be such that it allows for pedestrian crossing unimpeded by vehicular traffic.

**Implementation 3.2-2.1:** The installation of the signal crossing aids should be the responsibility of the Frederick County Department of Public Works. The retiming of the stoplight should be a coordinated effort between the Department of Public Works and the Virginia Department of Transportation.
Figure 25: Standard Crossing Signal

Figure 26: Proposed Crosswalk Location
Objective 3.3: Provide inter-parcel pedestrian connections.

**Strategy 3.3-1:** Pedestrian connections should be provided between the sidewalk network along Route 50 East and the existing retail uses and proposed office uses set back from the roadway, as is shown in figure 26 below. These connector sidewalks should extend through the existing parking lots of Delco Plaza and the Big Lots center to connect the sidewalks along their building frontages with the sidewalks along Route 50. In the future, the sidewalks along Route 50 East and within the shopping centers should connect with the proposed office development along the Corridor.

**Implementation 3.3-1.1:** Construction of the connecting sidewalks should be the responsibility of the property owners. Location advice will be provided by the Frederick County Department of Public Works. The Frederick County Department of Planning will provide information on grants and other financial assistance that may be available to property owners who install sidewalks.

Objective 3.4: Extend pedestrian network into adjacent residential areas.

**Strategy 3.4-1:** In addition to the extension of the pedestrian network to the retail and office developments along the Corridor, sidewalks should be extended into the residential neighborhoods. The sidewalks will provide pedestrian access to the shopping and employment opportunities along the Corridor, encouraging residents to walk rather than drive to their destination.

**Implementation 3.4-1.1:** The extension of sidewalks into residential areas should be a coordinated effort between the Frederick County Department of Public Works, property owners, and the developers of the residential properties.
Objective 3.5: Pedestrian lighting should be added to increase safety for pedestrians.

Strategy 3.5-1: The lighting plan should be coordinated with the landscape plan to ensure pedestrian areas are well lit and prevent problems created by the conflict of lights and trees.

Implementation 3.5-1.1: The Frederick County Department of Public Works should be responsible for ensuring that landscaping does not interfere with any new lighting constructed.
**Strategy 3.5-2:** Light poles should be human scale with painted metal poles and designed fixtures that contain a base, shaft, and luminaire. The fixture design should be compatible with the surrounding area.

**Implementation 3.5-2.1:** The Frederick County Department of Planning should coordinate with the Frederick County Department of Public Works and the proposed Route 50 East business owners association to choose a style of lighting appropriate for the Corridor.

![Pedestrian Light Example](image)

**Strategy 3.5-3:** Lighting should be focused at transit stops and in parking lots to increase the feeling of safety for pedestrians. Likewise, lighting should be adequate at crosswalks to increase the visibility of pedestrians crossing the roadway.

**Implementation 3.5-3.1:** The Frederick County Department of Planning in conjunction with the Frederick County Department of Public Works should coordinate the placement of pedestrian lighting to maximize visibility and safety.
**Goal 4:** Provide safe and efficient vehicular access to uses along the Corridor while maintaining adequate flow for through traffic.

**Objective 4.1:** A landscaped median should be constructed to separate the eastbound and westbound lanes of Route 50 East.

**Strategy 4.1-1:** The installation of a median, in the location shown in figure 28 below, will improve the safety of the Corridor. A median will eliminate uncontrolled left turning movements that currently exist in the. A median will also provide pedestrians with a safe stopping point in the middle of the roadway, so they do not have to cross all travel lanes at once. Likewise, the median reduces the total number of travel lanes that must be crossed by pedestrians.

**Implementation 4.1-1.1:** Construction of the median will be a combined effort of the Frederick County Department of Public Works and the Virginia Department of Transportation.
**Strategy 4.1-2:** The median should be landscaped with small trees and flowering vegetation. The trees used in landscaping the median will be ornamental tree species such as red maples and dogwoods. Care should be taken to include tree species that are consistent with the few trees that currently exist along the Corridor or are native to the area. Trees should be placed at 30 foot intervals to preserve adequate sightlines and ensure vehicular safety. An irrigation plan will be prepared to ensure preservation of the median landscaping features.

**Implementation 4.1-2.1:** Median landscaping should be contracted to a local landscaper by the Frederick County Department of Public Works.
Objective 4.2: Lower the speed limit to 25 miles per hour on Route 50 East from Route 522 to Prince Frederick Drive.

Strategy 4.2-1: Lowering the speed limit along Route 50 East to 25 miles per hour is necessary with the addition of a median and increased pedestrian activity. The interaction of pedestrians and vehicles at speeds higher than 25 miles per hour is extremely dangerous. Signs indicating the presence of pedestrians will be added in close proximity to speed limit signs and small orange flags will be added to speed limit signs to note the reduced speed limit.

Implementation 4.2-1.1: Reduction of the speed limit on Route 50 East should be the responsibility of the Virginia Department of Transportation.
Objective 4.3: Install a traffic light at the intersection of Route 50 East and Purdue Drive.

*Strategy 4.3-1:* The installation of a traffic light at Purdue Drive, as shown in figure 30 below, will reduce the pace of traffic moving east and west along Route 50. The light will also assist residents of the College Park Neighborhood attempting to make a left hand turn from Purdue Drive onto Route 50. In addition, the traffic light should serve as a future crosswalk site, creating a direct pedestrian connection between the College Park Neighborhood and the office and retail uses on the opposite side of Route 50.

*Implementation 4.3-1.1:* The traffic light at Purdue Drive should be constructed by the developers of the proposed office park. All funding for the light should be provided by the developers of the proposed office development that will be benefited by the traffic light.
Objective 4.4: Reduce the number of curb cuts along Route 50 East.

Strategy 4.4-1: The high frequency of curb cuts along Route 50 East creates a hazardous traffic condition along Route 50 East by increasing the number of variable-speed vehicle interactions. To reduce this problem, businesses along the Corridor should be limited to one curb cut rather than the two most currently have. A teardrop island should be constructed in the middle of each curb cut to separate vehicles turning into the business from those turning out. Only right turns should be permitted into and out of the properties with the exception of signalized intersections.
**Implementation 4.4-1.1:** The property owners along the Corridor, in conjunction with the Frederick County Department of Public Works should be responsible for the removal of unnecessary curb cuts. The Department of Public Works should coordinate with the property owners and the Virginia Department of Transportation to determine the best location for the single curb cut.

**Objective 4.5:** Designate left turn lanes along the newly constructed median to eliminate continuous left turn lanes.

**Strategy 4.5-1:** Two designated left turn lanes, shown in figure 31 below, should be constructed in the median to provide access to businesses for motorists traveling in the opposite direction. The eastbound left turn lane should occur adjacent to the entrance of the Big Lots strip center. A turn lane at this location provides access to the Super 8 Motel and Chinatown Restaurant on the north side of Route 50. The turn lane will prevent motorists exiting the Big Lots center from making a left hand turn across the eastbound lanes of Route 50 to travel westbound. Instead, motorists will be funneled through the Delco Plaza parking area along an existing access road, reducing unsafe left-hand turns across Route 50.

**Strategy 4.5-2:** The westbound left turn lane should be located adjacent to the Exxon gas station providing access to the uses along the southern side of Route 50, west of the existing stoplight at Tulane Drive. This alignment will not allow motorists to reach the eastbound lanes of Route 50 from the Holiday Inn or Red Roof Inn on the north side of the roadway. To alleviate this problem, an inter-parcel connection should be created between the Red Roof Inn and Holiday Inn and an access point to Tulane Drive will be created from the parking lot of the Holiday Inn. Tulane Drive provides signalized access to the eastbound lanes and creates a much safer route for hotel guests.
**Implementation 4.5-2.1:** Construction of designated left turn lanes should be a coordinated effort between the Virginia Department of Transportation and the Frederick County Department of Public Works.

**Figure 32: Proposed Left Turn Lanes**

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<tr>
<th>Route 50 East Corridor Development Plan</th>
<th>Proposed Left Turn Areas</th>
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<td>Tulane Drive</td>
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**Objective 4.6:** Create a public transit stop along the Corridor.

**Strategy 4.6-1:** To further reduce the number of vehicles along the Route 50 East Corridor a public transit stop should be created. The creation of the stop will require the extension of an existing Winchester Public Transit route into the Corridor area. A transit stop on the Corridor would be a logical extension of the route that currently serves the Apple Blossom Mall. The stop should be located within the Delco Plaza shopping center to limit the interaction of vehicles with a slow moving bus and provide riders with more direct access to the shopping opportunities within the Corridor. It will also allow the bus to enter Delco Plaza.
at the first entrance adjacent to Waffle House, and exit at the second entrance at Tulane Drive.

Following the construction of the office center, a second transit stop should be added to provide workers with an alternative travel option. The transit stop should be located along an internal access road within the office development, the location of which will be the discretion of the developer.

*Implementation 4.6-1.1:* The location and construction of the new public transit stop along the Route 50 East Corridor will be a coordinated effort between the Frederick County Department of Public Works and the Winchester Public Transit Authority.

**Goal 5:** Establish an institutional framework of business owners and citizens to monitor and guide the development of the Route 50 East Corridor.

**Objective 5.1:** A Route 50 East Corridor business association should be formed.

*Strategy 5.1-1:* The primary function of the Route 50 East Corridor business owners association should be to provide support for existing businesses and guide the development of the Route 50 East Corridor. The association should consist of business owners and property owners as well as representatives of the adjacent neighborhood associations. The business owners association should oversee the aesthetic aspects of the development of the Route 50 East Corridor in conjunction with the County Design Review Authority. In addition to having to comply with county code, any new business entering the Corridor should be required to comply with the aesthetic, landscaping, and structural requirements set out by the business owners association and their design guidelines.
**Implementation 5.1-1.1:** The Frederick County Department of Planning should be responsible for assisting the business owners within the Route 50 East Corridor with forming a business owners association.

**Strategy 5.1-2:** The business owners association should also be responsible, in conjunction with the Winchester Frederick County Economic Development Commission, for marketing itself and the Route 50 East Corridor to the outside community. Likewise, it should be responsible for actively seeking new members from within the local business community. The business association should be overseen and assisted by the Frederick County Department of Planning.
## Implementation Schedule

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<td>Placement of Pole Banners</td>
<td>BOA</td>
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<td>2.4-4.1</td>
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<td>Construct Sidewalks</td>
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<td>Ensure Sidewalks Constructed Properly</td>
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<td>Construct Pedestrian Lighting</td>
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<td>4.1-1.1</td>
<td>Construct Median</td>
<td>WDPW/VDOT</td>
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<td>4.1-2.1</td>
<td>Landscape Median</td>
<td>Private Landscaper</td>
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<td>4.2-1.1</td>
<td>Reduce Speed Limit</td>
<td>VDOT</td>
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<td>Market the BOA</td>
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### Appendix B – Demand Side Analysis

#### Table 1: Annual Expenditures by Household Income Before Taxes, 2001*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>$0 to $9,999</th>
<th>$10,000 to $14,999</th>
<th>$15,000 to $19,999</th>
<th>$20,000 to $29,999</th>
<th>$30,000 to $39,999</th>
<th>$40,000 and over</th>
<th>New Housing Units</th>
<th>Commuters</th>
<th>Undercount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Food at Home</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Grocery</td>
<td>0.65</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.8%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
<td>0.5%</td>
<td>0.4%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Specialty (Deli, Bakery...)</td>
<td>0.1</td>
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<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
<td>0.7%</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Food away from home</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Out-Dining Restaurants</td>
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<td>2.3%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fast Food</td>
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<td>3.1%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Alcoholic beverages</strong></td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.1%</td>
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<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
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<td><strong>Household operations</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
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<td>Other Household Expenses</td>
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<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
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<td>Laundry</td>
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<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cleaning supplies</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
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<td><strong>Apparel and services</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Men and Boys</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Women and Girls</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
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<td>Medical services</td>
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<td>0.1%</td>
<td>0.1%</td>
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<td>Prescription &amp; Drug</td>
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<td>0.1%</td>
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<td>0.1%</td>
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<td>Restaurants</td>
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<td><strong>Personal care products and Services</strong></td>
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<td>Tobacco and smoking supplies</td>
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### Estimated Annual Expenditures, Route 50 East Trade Area, 2004

<table>
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<th>Household Income Range</th>
<th>$0 to 9,999</th>
<th>$10,000 to 14,999</th>
<th>$15,000 to 19,999</th>
<th>$20,000 to 29,999</th>
<th>$30,000 to 49,999</th>
<th>$50,000 and over</th>
<th>New Housing Units</th>
<th>Commuters</th>
<th>Potential Expenditure</th>
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<td>Average Annual Expenditures</td>
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<td>$8,500</td>
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<td>$12,812</td>
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<td>Item</td>
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<td>Alcoholics</td>
<td>Food</td>
<td>Food Away from home</td>
<td>Gasoline</td>
<td>Household Costs</td>
<td>Other Transportation Costs</td>
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<td>$55,960</td>
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<td>$61,269</td>
<td>$167,593</td>
<td>$214,013</td>
<td>$606,633</td>
<td>$90,347</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$1,234,239</td>
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<td>$16,459</td>
<td>$10,548</td>
<td>$14,416</td>
<td>$41,561</td>
<td>$63,094</td>
<td>$62,945</td>
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<td>$28,344</td>
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<td>$11,607</td>
<td>$6,288</td>
<td>$10,872</td>
<td>$34,604</td>
<td>$37,204</td>
<td>$27,634</td>
<td>$116,190</td>
<td>$12,401</td>
<td>$775</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Household Operations**
- Men and Boys: $1,382,535
- Women and Girls: $29,973,570

**Household Furnishings and Equipment**
- Furniture: $428,212
- Clothing: $87,780

**Apparel and services**
- Apparel and Motor oil: $29,973,570

**Transportation**
- Transportation: $1,382,535

**Public transportation**
- Public transportation: $87,780

**Health care**
- Health care: $584,883

**Entertainment**
- Entertainment: $416,959

**Fees and admissions**
- Fees and admissions: $87,780

**Video rental**
- Video rental: $416,959

**Sports/Recreation**
- Sports/Recreation: $29,973,570

**Computers/Community Center**
- Computers/Community Center: $29,973,570

**Televsions, Radios, Sound Equipment**
- Televisions, Radios, Sound Equipment: $29,973,570

**Electronics**
- Electronics: $111,670
Appendix C – Supply Side Analysis

The sales per square foot data was obtained from the ULI’s 2004 Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers and uses the same category’s used in estimating the market. The categories used by the Urban Land Institute don not match the categories used in the Consumer Expenditure Survey. To remedy the situation, the ULI categories were placed under each Consumer Expenditure Survey category to which they could contribute. As a result, the square footages of certain categories such as grocery stores, were spread among the different Consumer Expenditure Survey categories to which they applied.

To match the potential expenditures categories with the sales per square foot data, a set of potential expenditures was estimated for each of the divided ULI subcategories. A percentage of the Consumer Expenditure category is assigned to each of the linked ULI subcategories.

For those ULI categories that did not report data on sales per square foot, it was impossible to estimate unmet demand. As a result, the results of the unmet demand were evaluated at the Consumer Expenditure Survey category level.