Part II Vision for the Route 33 Highway Corridor

Vision Statement

ROUTE 33 HIGHWAY CORRIDOR VISION

The rural character along the Rt. 33 highway corridor is protected through defined growth boundaries around town-like-developments that separate commercial core areas along the corridor with open space. Strip development is not permitted along the corridor because commercial areas have distinct boundaries that contain growth. The countryside is preserved in the rural outlying areas and scenic sightlines and vistas are maintained along Route 33. The Rt. 33 corridor will be a visually enjoyable drive for tourists and residents alike while still providing areas for concentrated commercial opportunity areas.

COMMERCIAL CORE VISION

Deltaville, is an enticing vacation spot that continues to draw travelers along the Rt. 33 Corridor to their destination. Deltaville’s unique nautical theme attracts tourists while providing for the needs of year round residents. Deltaville is a community that effectively capitalizes on its close proximity to the Rappahannock River, the Piankatank River, the Chesapeake Bay, and the numerous marinas, which provide numerous boating and water recreation opportunities. Deltaville’s commercial core has a small-town “main street” feel.
that is safe and inviting for both pedestrian and vehicular traffic.

**RURAL OUTLYING AREAS’ VISION**

The lands just outside of commercial core areas remain rural in character, protecting the beautiful countryside along the Rt. 33 corridor in between town-like developments. Permanent measures are in place to protect the open space and scenic elements. Landowners in the rural outlying areas along the corridor are given incentives to preserve land adjacent to Route 33.
Part III  The Route 33 Highway Corridor Plan for Deltaville

Plan Statement

HIGHWAY OVERLAY DISTRICT

The creation of an overlay district is imperative to the implementation of this plan. Overlay districts serve to create an additional layer of regulations and standards that are superimposed over the underlying zoning designation. This useful planning tool allows the County to provide unique and specific attention, by the way of additional standards, to select areas while avoiding the rezoning process. Overlay districts have been used to deal with various planning issues such as historic preservation, environmental protection, economic development, and scenic highway and byway preservation.

Highway overlay districts are used to protect, preserve, and enhance elements along a corridor. A Route 33 Highway Overlay district is the first necessary step in protecting the corridor’s rural character. An overlay district is the appropriate tool because of the necessary flexibility required to address the area’s unique rural character. The following plan recommendations are contingent on the creation of a highway overlay district to encompass Deltaville’s commercial core and the rural outlying areas.
This plan addresses the Deltaville area, which is the last town-like development on the Rt. 33 corridor, and the rural outlying area between it and the next commercial area. However, ideally this plan will be the model that expands its’ concepts along the entire length of Route 33 and other major highways and byways throughout Middlesex County.

**HIGHWAY OVERLAY DISTRICT BOUNDARIES**

The boundaries of the RT. 33 highway overlay district will coincide with those chosen for the study area. The reasoning for the selection of 1000-foot buffer on both sides of Rt. 33 is the fact that this depth encompasses the majority of parcels that front the corridor. However, as commercial cores and the rural outlying areas between developments have unique issues and needs, they require separate and unique overlay district regulations, hence a “commercial core overlay district” and “rural outlying area overlay district” are recommended.

**COMMERCIAL CORE OVERLAY DISTRICT BOUNDARIES**

As there is still more than ample distance between Deltaville and the next town-like development, Hartfield, it was determined that using the existing outer most boundaries of development would be ideal to concentrate growth and also to protect open space between commercial areas. Current development within the Deltaville area begins at Providence Road and ends at Horseshoe Bend Road, making it approximately 12,000 feet in length. Fig. 19 shows that in addition to this linear boundary, a 1000-foot buffer will extend the
commercial core to parcels on both sides of Rt. 33. The boundaries of the commercial core as stated would encompass 750 acres. With 35% of parcels currently undeveloped within these boundaries, there are ample infill development opportunities within the commercial core.

RURAL OUTLYING AREA OVERLAY DISTRICT BOUNDARIES

As Fig. 19 shows, the rural outlying areas will correspond to those areas in between town-like developments. As Deltaville is the most eastern town-like development on the Rt. 33 corridor, the rural outlying area will extend from the eastern edge of Horseshoe Bend Road to the tip of the peninsula at the end of Middlesex County. In addition, a rural outlying area will extend from the western edge of Providence Road to Hartfield, the next town-like development on Rt. 33.
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Fig. 19 Highway Overlay District Boundaries

A Route 33 Highway Corridor Plan for Deltaville
The Plan

Goal 1: The Route 33 Highway is a rural scenic corridor with preserved open spaces, sightlines, and pristine view sheds.

The preservation of scenic elements along the RT. 33 corridor is an essential component of preserving the overall rural character in Middlesex County. Open space countryside, rural sightlines, and pristine view sheds are all elements this corridor plan seeks to enhance and preserve. Along the Route 33 corridor, development has already begun to spread between town-like development areas merging centers together in a strip development pattern. Immediate action, including incentives to landowners, vegetative requirements, development boundaries, and decreased access, is required to prevent the stripping of the countryside along the corridor.

Objective 1.1: Provide incentives to landowners in the rural outlying areas that encourage the conservation of areas adjacent to Route 33.

While many landowners wish to preserve rural character, it is often not a financially feasible option. Farmers and other landowners often do not have the financial luxury of placing land into conservation. Therefore, educating landowners on existing incentives and developing
new ones are essential strategies in land conservation.

Strategy 1.1-1: Educate and facilitate the use of conservation easements.

Every property comes with a bundle of rights such as farming, timbering, and development rights. Conservation easements are in effect the dedication of a deed to another party, which allows certain rights to be restricted and held by a trust in perpetuity. Often landowners are unaware of the benefits or even the option of placing their property in a conservation easement.

Implementation 1.1-1: The Planning Department should create pamphlets and conduct workshops to educate landowners on the conservation easement process. Secondly, the staff should facilitate the use of conservation easements by acting as a liaison between landowners and conservation agencies such as the Virginia Outdoors Foundation.


Through the 2006 Virginia General Assembly session, localities have been enabled to conduct TDR programs. Transfer of Development Rights program allows the sending or transferring of development rights from one parcel to another. In this process, “sending” areas and “receiving” zones are created. “Sending” areas refer to areas the locality wishes

to preserve and so restrict development. “Receiving” areas refer to areas to which development rights from the restricted area can be transferred, enabling additional development opportunities than normal zoning regulations would allow. The locality creates a market in development rights by issuing transferable development rights “vouchers” to the landowners in the “sending” or restricted areas. The zoning value of these “vouchers” is left to the discretion of the locality and is usually based on acreage, for example, one right per 3 acres. This system allows the free market to compensate landowners for the preservation of their land but still allows the locality to have discretion over the location of the preserve land.

Implementation 1.1-2: The County should designate the rural outlying area parcels as “sending areas,” allowing them to sell their development rights to landowners in “receiving areas.” The commercial core parcels should be designated “receiving areas” able to buy additional development rights.

Strategy 1.1-3: Establish land transfer fee to subsidize reduced tax rate for land donated in easement.

Understandably, if a landowner places their land in a conservation easement, they do not wish to be taxed the same as a property owner who has retained all of his development rights. However, real estate property taxes are a significant funding source for localities.
Creating a “use value” tax, which allows easement donors to pay a reduced rate, requires localities to seek out additional funding sources to balance their budget. Land transfer fees can generate additional revenue for counties by exacting fees when land transfers ownership. This is one time fee per owner and is a designated percentage of the selling price.

**Implementation 1.1-3: The County should adopt a land transfer fee to offset and fund a “use value tax” benefit for easement landowners.**

**Strategy 1.1-4: Provide incentives for conservation of land along Rt. 33.**

Certain lands will not qualify as valuable to conservation agencies due to several factors including land quality and acreage requirements. However, these otherwise invaluable lands from a conservation agency’s standpoint might still have enormous value for the preservation of rural character along the corridor. Incentives should be provided to encourage land conservation when easement holders cannot be found.

For example, in the LDR zoning district, there is a 1:2.5 ratio, one single family dwelling per 2.5-acre lot. An incentive of a 1:1 ratio, one dwelling per 1-acre lot, could be provided if a percentage of land adjacent to the road is left in open space.

By providing incentives to landowners in the rural outlying areas, the County can effectively
contain commercial cores. By having the proper measurements in place to preserve the rural outlying areas you can better contain development areas. A balance between reasonably increased guidelines and attractive incentives is key in preserving rural outlying areas and subsequently containing commercial cores.

In addition to zoning incentives, expedited review of major and minor subdivisions should occur for those developments that conserve land directly adjacent to Rt.33. By making the process simpler for the development community, the County provides a large incentive that can leverage the desired goal.

Implementation 1.1-4: The County should allow for increased densities and expedited review as incentives for the conservation of land adjacent to Rt.33.

Strategy 1.1-5: Educate landowners on local, state, and federal tax incentives.

There are numerous tax benefits for placing land in a conservation easement. Upon the locality’s adoption of “use value” tax, landowners can experience reduced local real estate tax rates for land held in an easement. In addition, the state of Virginia has exceptional tax benefits which Woltz and associates had outlined on their website.

Since 1999, Virginia has provided donors with a tax credit worth 50% of their easement

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value, which is the difference between the value of land with and without an easement. This credit can be applied to state income taxes for up to six years. However, initially this tax benefit only profited the exceptionally wealthy and most easement donators have had to leave a significant portion of the tax credit unused. Therefore, recent changes have been made to allow any portion of the tax credit, which is still 50% of the easement value, to be sold to other Virginians within six years.

Two federal tax incentives also may encourage landowners to place land in an easement. First, the donation of an easement is considered a charitable gift for tax purposes. As a charitable gift deduction, the donor may deduct up to 30% of his adjusted gross income per year with the unused portion being carried out for up to five years.

Secondly, the federal government offers a reduction in estate taxes. Often times, surviving relatives must sell their property in order to pay the estate taxes. By placing their land in an
ease, landowners can reduce their heirs’ estate tax liability in two ways. First, the estate is reduced by the value of the easement and secondly, the American Farm and Ranch Protection Act of 1997 allows up to an additional 40% of the remaining value of the land to be excluded from estate taxes. ¹

Implementation 1.1-5: The planning department and planning commission should provide seminars, and workshops, inviting state and federal representatives, to educate the community on the tax benefit potential for easement donations.

¹ For more information on tax benefits please refer to www.woltz.com/conservation.cfm
Objective 1.2: Increase the preservation of existing vegetation in rural outlying areas.

Preserving vegetation in the rural outlying areas in between town-like developments is a key factor in maintaining rural character. Along a highway corridor, vegetation can be a visually relaxing element that balance the visual noise that characterizes commercial areas. Existing vegetation is an important visual resource for the County that warrants protection.

Strategy 1.2-1: Allow cluster development as a by-right option in accordance with new state regulations.

Cluster development allows for the preservation of land by allowing increased densities on a smaller percentage of a parcel or parcels while leaving the remaining acreage undeveloped. Currently there are no opportunities for the clustering of development outside of rezoning a parcel to the Cluster Development zoning district. This can be a cumbersome process for a developer by requiring additional time and paperwork. Therefore, the current cluster option unnecessarily hinders clustering; therefore it can increase land consumption and pose a threat to the overall preservation of rural character.

Implementation 1.2-1: Upon recommendation from the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors should approve an amendment to the current zoning ordinance allowing cluster developments not as a rezoning but as
a by-right option in accordance with new state regulations.

Strategy 1.2-2: Require the delineation of existing vegetation and vegetation to be removed as part of site plan review for major and minor subdivision approval.

Vegetation is not required to be delineated on site plans for major and minor subdivision applications. If one element of rural character is vegetation, how can it be protected if plan reviewers cannot properly inventory it? In order to preserve and enhance rural character along the corridor, maintaining partial existing vegetation has to be a priority for approval of all subdivisions. The Planning Commission and Zoning administrator will be better able to protect visual resources if they have a clear understanding of the vegetative impacts the development will produce.

Implementation 1.2-2: The Planning Commission should recommend that the Board of Supervisors approve a revision to the Subdivision Ordinance’s submission requirements to include delineation of existing and vegetation to be removed. The existing vegetation inventory should require delineation of trees that meet certain diameter requirements as follows:
Strategy 1.2-3: Establish vegetative buffer requirements.

Subsequent to requiring the delineation of vegetation on site plans and subdivision applications, vegetative buffer requirements should be adopted. By requiring at a minimum that some percentage of existing vegetation, along Route 33 be maintained, overall rural character in the rural outlying areas can be preserved.

**Implementation 1.2-3:** The subdivision ordinance should be revised to require a vegetative screening strip consisting of one small hardwood per

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Fig. 20 Tree Delineation Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Examples</th>
<th>Diameter at Breast Height (Breast Height = 4.5 feet)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large Hardwood</td>
<td>oaks, hickories, maples, beeches, poplars, sycamores, ashes, elms, and gums</td>
<td>18 inches or greater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softwood</td>
<td>pine, spruces, firs, hemlocks, cedar</td>
<td>24 inches or greater</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Hardwood</td>
<td>dogwoods, redbuds, hollies, persimmon, hackberry, alders, and cherries</td>
<td>8 inches or greater</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: This chart is an adaptation of Fulton County, Georgia’s tree inventory requirements. The changes reflect differences in species and sizes common to Virginia.*
forty linear foot located at a minimum of 30 feet from edge of the right-of-way must buffer all subdivisions from the road.

In addition, a total of thirty percent retention of existing trees within the rural outlying area’s overlay district must be met in the following allocations:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Existing to Be Preserved</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Large Hardwood</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Softwood</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small Hardwood</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**These figures were based on value of small hardwoods in life expectancy, growth, and screening. Large hardwoods were given large canopy and life expectancy value but a slow growth rate value. Finally, softwoods have shorter life spans and are very common but they do retain foliage year around.**
Strategy 1.2-4: Establish more strict open space requirements and guidelines.

Under the Subdivision Ordinance, open space requirements are identified based on average lot size. However, land characteristics and restrictions for open space are not identified. Under the current ordinance, there is nothing to prevent the developer from offering land that would otherwise be unusable for development to meet the open space requirements. Land that is made unusable under local, state, and federal regulations or part of an easement should not qualify as meeting the open space requirements. This is because in a sense to allow this type of proffered land is allowed the developer to offer land that is not his to give. The developer should be required to offer land that would otherwise be allowed to be developed upon.

In the Subdivision Ordinance, the County has chosen to encourage the preservation of rural character in two separate ways, either through larger lots or increased open space. The ordinance requires larger percentages of open space for small lots and at 5 acres or more waives the open space requirements entirely. While it is commendable to have open space requirements, these percentages need to be increased for subdivisions along the corridor in order to further protect the rural sightlines and vistas along.

Implementation 1.2-4: Upon recommendation from the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors should adopt a revised subdivision
ordinance that expressly prohibits the use of land regulated by other local, state, and federal regulations or other easement related lands. In addition, the open space requirements should be increased as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average Lot size in Subdivision</th>
<th>Percent of Total Land for Open Space</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less Than 1 Acre</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Acre to Less Than 2.5 Acres</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5 Acres to Less Than 5 Acres</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater Than 5 Acres</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Strategy 1.2-5: Encourage landowners to lease the road frontage percentage of their parcels to local farmers.

Farm fields are a picturesque scene common to Middlesex County. Losing those visual resources would be a tragedy for the County. The community should be educated on the potential of subleasing a percentage of their parcel adjacent to the corridor for farm use. This could have multiple public benefits by increasing overall farmland, supporting the farming industry, and protecting the County’s visual resources inherent to Middlesex County.
Implementation 1.2-5: The Planning Commission and planning department should facilitate a community forum to bring together local farmers and parcel owners within the rural outlying area's overlay district for the purpose of educating and building land partnerships.

Objective 1.3: Contain town-like development areas or commercial cores along the corridor.

Containing town-like developments is a crucial step in protecting rural character along the corridor. By centralizing and bounding development areas, pressure in the rural outlying area is reduced.

Strategy 1.3-1: Provide central water and sewer in commercial core.

Providing central water and sewer in the Deltaville area would enhance the development potential of the commercial core and thereby relieve growth pressure in surrounding areas. Public water and sewer services often serve to magnetize development and thus centralize it. This will help to relieve growth pressure on surrounding areas and thereby conserve undeveloped land.

Implementation 1.3-1: The County should install central water and sewer within the commercial core with no extensions outside of the overlay...
district boundaries.

Strategy 1.3-2: Create Rt. 33 Highway Corridor subcommittee for development plan review.

In order to dedicate proper attention to containing developments and protecting the rural outlying areas, a separate subcommittee should be created. This allows for an additional filter through which the specific needs of the corridor can be effectively addressed. Allowing developers more opportunity to address the concerns of the County, before final decision is made on the site plan, can greatly benefit the development community. In addition, this can facilitate the expedited review process discussed above in Strategy 1.1-4.

Implementation 1.3-2: A separate highway overlay district subcommittee of the planning commission should be created to hear the initial proposal and make recommendations to the planning commission.

Strategy 1.3-3: Install gateway signage.

Gateway signage helps to clearly define areas. While they are not regulatory tools, they can be very effective in visually conveying boundaries. Placing signage at either end of the
commercial core would aid in containing development by communicating the boundaries.

Implementation 1.3-3: The County should install gateway signage at Providence Road and Horseshoe Bend Road.

Strategy 1.3-4: Adopt Future Land Use Map for Deltaville’s commercial core.

Adopting a Future Land Use Map for the Deltaville commercial core area will help to guide the development community. Designating locations for particular types of commercial activity is important for ensuring compatibility, marketability, and for creating appropriate transitions to the rural outlying areas. Properly defining the future land uses of parcels within the core will ultimately help contain and shape Deltaville’s growth.

Implementation 1.3-4: The Board of Supervisors should adopt an updated Future Land Use Map after it is developed by the Planning Commission with the assistance of citizens representing Deltaville.

Objective 1.4: Decrease access points and promote safety along the corridor in rural outlying areas.

Excessive access points along a corridor can pose safety problems, impede traffic flow, and
mar the visual landscape. Regulating driveway widths, minimum distances between access points, parcel widths, and joint access requirements can reduce points of access along Rt.33.

**Strategy 1.4-1: Require joint access in minor and major subdivisions.**

In addition to posing safety threats and impeding the flow of traffic, multiple access points along the corridor visually pollute an otherwise scenic drive. Both minor and major subdivisions currently are not required to provide shared driveways or interior roadways. Requiring joint access would greatly decrease points of entry.

**Implementation: 1.4-1:** Upon recommendation from the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors should approve a revised subdivision ordinance. The revision should require all minor and major subdivisions within the rural outlying area’s overlay district to provide joint access to the divided parcels with a maximum of one access point on Rt.33.

**Strategy 1.4-2: Set a minimum distance between access points.**

An individual parcel can have multiple access points. This can have several negative impacts on the corridor including visual, safety, and traffic flow concerns. Adopting a minimum distance between access points will help limit the number of points of entry along the
Implementation 1.4-2: The rural outlying area’s overlay district should carry additional zoning requirements to include a minimum distance between access points as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posted Speed Limit</th>
<th>Feet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Strategy 1.4.3: Increase road frontage requirements.

Increasing the minimum road frontage requirements for parcels adjacent to the corridor will
increase the width of newly created parcels. This also will reduce overall access points by decreasing the number of individual parcels fronting on the corridor. Also, this could encourage developers to subdivide land off the corridor and provide joint access.

Implementation 1.4-3: The rural outlying area’s overlay district should carry additional zoning requirements to include minimum road frontage of in feet of parcels accessing Rt. 33 to be directly correlated with the speed limits in the above table.

Strategy 1.4-4: Set minimum and maximum driveway widths.

Driveways are not currently regulated within the County. Minimum and maximum driveway width requirements are needed to discourage unrestricted and confusing access points. The size of a driveway affects the speed at which a driver may enter and exit the road. Too large of a driveway width can allow drivers to exit the highway at high speeds. While
excessively small widths require drivers to significantly reduce speeds and disturb the flow of traffic.

**Implementation 1.4-4:** The rural outlying area’s overlay district should carry additional zoning requirements to include driveway widths at a minimum of 8 feet and a maximum of 15 feet per lane. 

\(^1\) Adapted from Access Management Guidelines, Nashua Regional Planning Commission, 2002.
Goal 2: Deltaville is a mixed-use town-like development with a strong commercial core that continues to have regional tourist appeal as well as provide for the needs of its year-round residents.

Deltaville’s commercial core should provide a mixture of uses with both residential and commercial opportunities. Allowing residential and commercial uses to coexist can strengthen businesses by increasing consumer traffic and accessibility. In addition, individual business within the commercial core can flourish by strengthening and improving the overall integrity of existing businesses.

Objective 2.1: Improve and strengthen the existing businesses within the commercial core.

In order to maintain Deltaville’s continuing appeal, businesses within the commercial core need to be strengthened. The business community must unify with the common objective of improving the commercial core. Cooperation among merchants as well as between merchants and the local civic association are crucial in carrying out the necessary strategies involved in supporting existing businesses.

Strategy 2.1-1: Create merchant association for Deltaville’s commercial core.

A merchant association is a joining of business owners within a commercial area for the
common purpose of promoting and improving existing business. Merchant associations cooperate on promotional efforts for the business community as a whole. The basic concept is that more can be accomplished together than through individual efforts. The creation of a merchant’s association specifically dedicated to the needs of the Deltaville commercial core is necessary.

Implementation 2.1-1: The Planning Commission and Board of Supervisor members from the Pinetop magisterial district should work together in cooperation with the existing local civic association to solicit interest and involvement in the creation of a Deltaville merchant association.

Strategy 2.1-2: Encourage cooperation between civic and merchant associations.

A Deltaville community association currently exists and has been active for many years. The community association should join efforts with the newly created merchant’s association in order to build a strong Deltaville area that addresses the needs of current citizens as while encouraging future tourism and residential opportunities. By combining efforts between the civic and merchant associations, resources can be saved and used more effectively.
Implementation 2.1-2: The local civic association and the newly created merchant’s association should combine efforts by collaborating on events and meeting together as needed.

Strategy 2.1-3: Facilitate joint advertising among merchants.

Joint advertising ventures among merchants can be an extremely powerful promotional tool. Joint advertising is beneficial because it facilitates cooperation among business owners, encourages pride in the area as a whole, saves financial resources, and presents the area as a cohesive commercial area rather than simply a collection of individual shops.

Implementation 2.1-3: The newly created merchants association should facilitate and coordinate joint advertising efforts between area merchants.

Strategy 2.1-4: Civic association to give bi-annual award to outstanding local business.

The Deltaville community association can encourage local businesses to have pride in their shop, store, or office by creating a little healthy competition. A bi-annual award for outstanding local businesses should be created with the award displayed for the community outside the business. There could be separate categories such as best customer service,
best window displays, best landscaping design, etc…

**Implementation 2.1-4:** The local civic association should determine award eligibility requirements and establish an impartial panel to select a local outstanding business.

**Strategy 2.1-5:** Provide business related workshops.

Workshops should be provided to the business community to aid them in such things as storefront displays, customer service, tax tips, and employee retention. These workshops can provide not only useful information but they can bring businesses together to share ideas and build strong relationships.

**Implementation 2.1-5:** The newly created merchant’s association will provide workshops to its members on business related issues. The merchants can take turns between them to host the workshop at their shop.

**Objective 2.2:** Encourage residential and commercial mixed-use opportunities within the commercial core.

Mixed-use opportunities should be encouraged within the commercial core in order to promote Deltaville’s seasonal resident or tourist and full time resident appeal. Mixed use
development can be encouraged within the commercial core by both removing existing barriers to mixed use development and encouraging residential uses on the second floor of buildings.

Strategy 2.2-1: Change supplementary district regulations to encourage not discourage mixed use.

Currently the supplementary district regulations have provisions which discourage the mixture of uses. Commercial uses are not allowed to conduct business closer than 50 feet from a residential use. Furthermore uses are isolated by requiring commercial uses to construct a minimum six foot in high fence. These regulations unnecessarily hinder a mixed use town-like development and weaken the commercial core.

Implementation 2.2-1: Upon recommendation of the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors should revise the Supplementary District Regulations section of the zoning ordinance. The minimum 50 feet distance between residential and commercial uses and also the minimum six feet in height fence separation between commercial and residential uses should be removed from the ordinance.
Strategy 2.2-2: Promote second story residential opportunities.

In addition to removing the barriers to mixed-use development, the County needs to educate the community about the benefits of creating second story residential opportunities. There are obvious financial advantages for individual building owners but the entire business community will benefit from as pedestrian traffic increases.

Implementation 2.2-2: The County should conduct a community meeting with the local civic association and newly created merchant association to explain the many advantages of using the second floor of buildings within the commercial core for residential use. New developments should also be made aware of this opportunity.
Goal 3: Deltaville's commercial core is both safe and inviting for pedestrian and vehicle traffic.

Creating a safe and inviting commercial core that caters to both pedestrian and vehicle traffic has numerous benefits such as encourages consumer activity, alleviates vehicular dependency, and promotes ease of access. Establishing strong pedestrian links, calming traffic, and reducing access points are essential in developing a more safe and inviting commercial core.

Objective 3.1: Establish strong pedestrian links between the commercial core and both the marinas and residential areas.

Currently Route 33 has about 40% of sidewalk coverage. However, this percentage exists only along side the actual corridor itself and does not feed into surrounding residential areas or the various marinas. This fosters vehicle dependency and discourages pedestrian traffic.
Strategy 3.1-1: Revise subdivision requirements to include sidewalks.

Sidewalks are not required as part of subdivision improvements for major subdivisions. Requiring sidewalks in residential subdivisions within the commercial core area would promote pedestrian traffic and stimulate business.

Implementation 3.1-1: Upon recommendation by the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors should revise the Subdivision Ordinance to require sidewalks as part of the mandatory subdivision improvements for major subdivisions.

Strategy 3.1-2: Revise site plan review requirements to include sidewalks.

Site plan approval does not require businesses to provide sidewalks or connect to existing sidewalks. The current 40% sidewalk coverage is due to a state grant received several decades ago. As new development has not been required to provide sidewalks in connection with the existing sidewalks, business has increased along the corridor while sidewalk coverage has not.
Implementation 3.1-2: Upon recommendation of the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors should require sidewalks as part of the site plan review requirements.

Strategy 3.1-3: Recruit bike rental and/or trolley service between marinas and commercial core.

A bike rental shop and or trolley service between the marinas and the commercial core would greatly facilitate consumer activity within the core. Many individuals dock at the marina with no means of land transportation to explore the commercial core. By recruiting a business to transport people to and from the marina, the commercial core could be accessed by more customers.

Implementation 3.1-3: The newly created merchant’s association should plan an active role in soliciting and encouraging private interest in a bicycle rental and/or trolley service between marinas and the commercial core.

Objective 3.2: Calm traffic to facilitate pedestrian movement throughout the commercial core.

Pedestrians need to feel comfortable traveling throughout the corridor, if vehicular dependency is to be reduced. Crosswalks, bump-outs, and lowered speed limits are essential steps to calm vehicular traffic along the corridor and thereby facilitate pedestrian
movement.

**Strategy 3.2-1: Install crosswalks with bump-outs at regular intervals within commercial core.**

Crosswalks with bump-outs provide an extra layer of safety at intersections by restricting traffic flow in the right-of-way and also shorten the distance that pedestrians have to cross the right-of-way. Providing crosswalks at regular intervals throughout the commercial core area can effectively slow down vehicular traffic and allow pedestrians to traverse both sides of the corridor safely.
Implementation 3.2-1: The County should work with Virginia Department of Transportation to install crosswalks with bump-outs at Providence Road, Horseshoe Bend Road, Fishing Bay Road, Lovers Lane and Timberneck Road. Fig. 26 shows the proposed location of crosswalks and bump-outs within the commercial core.
Fig. 26 Commercial Core: Crosswalk and Bumpout Locations

Legend
- Roads
- parcels
- general_puller_1000_buffer
- Crosswalks and Bumpouts

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A Route 33 Highway Corridor Plan for Deltaville
Strategy 3.2-2: Lower speed limit within commercial core.

The posted speed limits are high within the commercial core with speeds of 35 and 45 miles per hour. In most commercial areas with pedestrian traffic, the posted speed limit is 25 miles per hour. This speed allows drivers enough time to react to pedestrian movement and makes pedestrian feel more at ease when crossing the street.

Implementation 3.2-2: The County should petition the Virginia Department of Transportation to lower the speed limit to 25 miles per hour within the commercial core boundaries.

Objective 3.3: Reduce access points onto Route 33 within the commercial core.

As with the rural outlying areas, excessive access points along a commercial core can pose safety problems, impede traffic flow, and mar the visual landscape. Prohibiting unrestricted access, restricting number of access points per parcel and establishing incentives for joint access and alternative access can reduce access points along the commercial core. In addition, setting minimum widths of parcels, minimum distance between access points, and maximum widths of access points can improve access management.

Strategy 3.3-1: Prohibit unrestricted access.

Unrestricted access points should not be allowed along the corridor as they pose significant
safety concerns. Unrestricted access points can allow drivers to exit the road at excessive speeds. Also, they do not delineate proper driving patterns for entry and exit and therefore do not allow drivers to effectively plan their own course of action as well as anticipate other drivers’ intended courses of action.

**Implementation 3.3-1:** Upon recommendation from the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors should amend site plan review section of the zoning ordinance to strictly forbid the use of unrestricted access points.

**Strategy 3.3-2:** Establish minimum lot widths in VC and GB zoning districts.

Village Community and General Business are the two primary zoning districts within the commercial core. Both zoning districts have no minimum lot width, which could be extremely problematic in reducing overall access points. Each parcel is required by law to have access; if for example lots were created 50 feet in width then there would at least one access point every 50 feet. Establishing minimum lot sizes in these districts can also help control minimum distances between access points in the commercial core.

**Implementation 3.3-2:** Upon recommendation from the Planning Commission, the Board of Supervisors should amend the Village Community and General Business zoning districts to require that lots be a minimum of 200 feet in
Strategy 3.3-3: Provide incentives for alternative access and joint access without accessing Rt.33.

Joint access between adjacent parcels should be encouraged by the County. Granting incentives to developers, who provide joint access between adjacent parcels or who provide alternative access points, would reduce overall vehicle traffic on the corridor thereby enhancing traffic flow and providing ease of access for shoppers.

Implementation 3.3-3: The Site Plan review process should be updated to provide incentives to developers who provide alternative and joint access.

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Strategy 3.3-4: Create side roads parallel to Rt. 33.

By constructing parallel roads on both sides of the Rt.33 corridor within the commercial core area, overall traffic on the corridor could be reduced making it more vehicle and pedestrian friendly.

Implementation 3.3-4: The County should work with Virginia Department of Transportation to create side roads parallel to Rt. 33.

Strategy 3.3-5: Set maximum number of access points per parcel.

Establishing a maximum number of access points per parcel within the commercial core is necessary to reduce access points along the corridor. An individual parcel can have multiple access points, which can have several negative impacts on the corridor including visual, safety, and traffic flow concerns. Adopting a minimum distance between access points on a parcel will aid in regulating the number of points of entry along the corridor.

Implementation 3.3-5: The commercial core overlay district should carry additional zoning requirements to include maximum number of access points per parcel. The maximum number of access points should correlate to the posted speed limit and the distance between those points as follows:
Access Separation Distances by Speed Limit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Posted Speed Limit</th>
<th>Feet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45</td>
<td>450</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>590</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


**Strategy 3.3-6: Set maximum width of access points.**

Assess widths are not currently regulated within the County. Maximum access width requirements are needed to discourage unrestricted and confusing access points. The size
of access points can affect the speed at which a driver may enter and exit the road. Too large of a driveway width can allow drivers to exit the highway at high speeds while also not effectively communicating desired course for drivers.

Implementation 3.3-6: The commercial core overlay district should carry additional zoning requirements to include maximum width of access points at 36 feet. ¹

¹ Adapted from Access Management Guidelines, Nashua Regional Planning Commission, 2002.
Goal 4: Deltaville’s strong development character serves to define it as a fun unique place.

The commercial core of Deltaville already has a unique development character consisting of a nautical theme. Fun beach inspired colors, boat related signage, and landscape elements work together to give Deltaville a strong identity. However, these are all voluntary elements, as no development guidelines currently exist. Guidelines need to be addressed to ensure future development continues this nautical theme. Also Deltaville’s unique image needs to be marketed in such a way to maintain its resident and tourist appeal.

Objective 4.1: Strengthen Deltaville’s seasonal destination image.

Deltaville’s popularity as a seasonal destination needs to be effectively marketed. The creation and utilization of a logo in advertising ventures, the hosting of an annual festival and the clustering of marine related businesses will all aid in promoting the commercial core as a unique destination.
Strategy 4.1-1: Hold annual summer festival within Deltaville’s commercial core.

An annual summer festival likened to the Urbanna Oyster Festival could effectively attract visitors to the area. In this way individuals would have an opportunity to come familiarize with what makes the Deltaville area such a unique place to live, visit, work, and play.

Implementation 4.1-1: The merchant association and civic association work together to create and hold annual summer festival.

Strategy 4.1-2: Create logo for Deltaville area.

A logo helps people to make instant visual connections. The adoption of a logo specific to the Deltaville area could help to market the area.

Implementation 4.1-2: The merchant association in collaboration with the civic association should create a unique logo for the Deltaville area.

Strategy 4.1-3: Use logo in joint advertising ventures.

Upon the adoption of a logo unique to the Deltaville area, local merchants could use these on advertising ventures. They could be used in newspaper advertisements, brochures,
bumper stickers, and storefront banners.

**Implementation 4.1-3:** Deltaville’s unique logo should be used in joint advertising and other promotional sources in order to market the commercial core as a cohesive whole.

**Strategy 4.1-4:** Promote the unique clustering of marine related businesses.  
Clustering marine related businesses will contribute to the creation of Deltaville as a destination spot for these products. Grouping these businesses together will aid in strengthening their individual markets. The idea is that if a consumer is stopping to buy this particular type of product they may be also be enticed to go to a nearby shop that sells related products.

**Implementation 4.1-4:** The merchant’s association should develop a subcommittee for marine-related businesses within the commercial core. The subcommittee should focus on retaining, clustering, and attracting new marine-related businesses as well as marketing Deltaville as a one-stop-shop for marine supplies.

**Objective 4.2:** Improve and strengthen the existing nautical development theme
apparent within the commercial core.

Deltaville’s nautical development theme is an asset to the commercial core but it is strictly voluntary. Newer developments have not always conformed to the standard. Without encouraging appropriate architectural, landscape, and sign guidelines, Deltaville stands to lose one of its greatest assets.

**Strategy 4.2-1: Control development character within the commercial core.**

Architectural guidelines within the commercial core should address development character. Building setbacks, height, construction, and colors should be addressed to effectively maintain the nautical theme. A landscape ordinance should be adopted to address the specific character of the Deltaville commercial core. Native beach species as well as other beach landscape elements should be encouraged as fulfillment of landscape requirements. The sign ordinance should also character to the specific commercial core theme. The County should encourage heights, font varieties, building materials, and character that support the beach inspired theme. In addition, parking requirements should be addressed.

**Implementation 4.2-1: The planning commission should evaluate site plans based on a flexible point rating system.** The point rating system should set a required number of points to be attained for approval but allow flexibility in attaining that number. Fig. 27 shows an example of a point rating system:
## Fig. 27 Example of Site Plan Review Pointing Rating System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pedestrian Access</th>
<th>2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Second Story Residential</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Overhangs</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bicycle Racks</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pedestrian Plazas</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parking</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Side</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rear</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pervious Surface Materials</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetative Screening</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Access Management</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alternative Access</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joint Access</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Development Character</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Architectural Compatibility</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Landscaping (nautical theme)</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rooflines (not in continuous planes of 50 feet or more)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Windows and Entryways (cover min. of 60% of facade)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Color and Texture (variations on building)</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Screened Service, Delivery and Storage Areas</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sign Compatibility</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Total Possible Points                       | 64  |
References


