

Lexington, VA Downtown Enhancement Plan

August 2013



CooperPlanning

sympoetica
CREATING COMMUNITY

EPR

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Acknowledgements:

Many thanks to the staff members of the City of Lexington, the Downtown Enhancement Steering Committee, and the community of Lexington for your inspiring ideas and commitment to the planning process that formed this Downtown Enhancement Plan. Your enthusiasm and dedication will take this plan from vision to reality.

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Section One: Introduction

Where does community happen?

Nationally and internationally, many cities are deciding to reconsider streets and the public realm as places for people. In some cases, downtown districts have been completely converted to pedestrian spaces, while others creatively transform parking spots to cafe space or temporary public parks. Many cities have programs where certain streets and traffic lanes are given over entirely to cyclists during certain times of the week or year. Common amongst all these efforts is making downtown space more livable and enjoyable for people.

Given the exceptional level of historic preservation and the comprehensive investments in infrastructure, it is clear that the City of Lexington highly values its downtown area. The next phase of planning for downtown will look at how to enhance what already exists. Even in places of historic stature, the collective decisions of the community constantly shape the built environment. Likewise, we are shaped by the environment in which we live. In this report, we will explore creative ways to use the space you have. In effect, we strive to rebalance the public realm of downtown towards a friendlier environment for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. Safer streets and more comfortable public spaces benefit people in all modes of transit.

Downtown Lexington is a popular destination for residents and tourists to enjoy cultural amenities, unique local shopping, and dining experiences. Like many other historic towns, narrow street widths leave limited room for sidewalks and bike lanes. In 2011, a marketing plan was completed for the City of Lexington by the Southeastern Institute of Research. This report focuses on tourism trends and identifies strategies to increase tourism and dollars spent within the Lexington area. Some salient points to consider:

- Baby Boomers are the major tourist market for Lexington—How can we make a downtown that appeals to an aging population?
- Identify ways to enhance visitor experience—How can we increase the comfort and pleasure of the downtown experience?
- Cross-promote attractions and showcase assets—Use the public realm to build interest about the history and interesting places in Lexington.
- Visitor Centers are important—continue to invest in this resource.
- Increase family activities and consider how to appeal to Gen X and Gen Y—How can we make the downtown area more appealing and user-friendly for all generations?

The City of Lexington has contracted with Cooper Planning to create an Enhancement Plan that addresses a vast majority of the downtown core. The focus of this project has been to explore physical improvements to enhance the pedestrian, cyclist and motorist experience of Downtown Lexington while respecting the existing conditions and historic character of this unique space. The plan shows conceptual level physical improvements and an overall strategy for enhancing downtown. The Plan reflects the unique setting, downtown vision, economic and physical realities, and values of the Lexington community. The public space can be actively shaped to provide safe and functional modes of movement as well as new spaces to linger and enjoy. People-based solutions for the downtown area will also create an economic boost for local businesses.

The Possibility of Transformation

Streets change over time in response to the changing needs of this community. In the 1850's, Main Street was lowered approximately ten feet to create a better topographic transition from the level of the Courthouse to the existing grade downhill at the junction with Jefferson Street. Many buildings along the street reveal evidence of this

massive change to the street. In some cases, original foundations were left exposed due to the excavation. Other buildings have doors that now open into thin air. Even today with modern equipment, lowering the street to this degree would have been a major undertaking. This effort lets us know that transformation is possible for Downtown Lexington because it has happened before. If public spaces are not functioning optimally, we have the opportunity to make them better suited for the needs of the community.

The Lexington Downtown Enhancement Plan is part of an overall strategy to build momentum, synergy and economic development downtown. While this plan focuses on potential conceptual level physical improvements that can bolster the economy, direct economic and marketing strategies can work in tandem with these suggestions. We will explore improvements to the public realm, but much of the downtown is privately owned, so preservation and maintenance efforts must be upheld to the highest standard. A beautiful and comfortable physical environment will set the backdrop for social and cultural activities downtown, therefore the City should actively promote culture and nightlife as these improvements are installed.

The Streetscape Enhancement Project was conceived with the primary intent of improving the pedestrian experience within the downtown core. By improving downtown for the pedestrian, we also improve the way the space functions overall. The **project goal** as defined by the Project Steering Committee for the Lexington Downtown Enhancement Plan is as follows:

“Creating a more attractive, vibrant, walkable, bikeable Downtown to which local residents, students, visitors, shopkeepers and business people are attracted.”

The City of Lexington has incorporated their numerous goals for the downtown area into the singular statement listed above. As a starting point in the process, we can break the goal statement down into its various components to gain a better understanding of the desired outcomes for this planning process.

Creating—Improvements to the downtown area should be a continual and ongoing effort. In the planning process, we will create milestones for implementation, but truly the needs of the community are constantly evolving so the process of planning is never over or complete. There is always room for improvement.

Attractive—The City of Lexington is home to a wonderful combination of historic architecture and natural resources. Within the Downtown Enhancement Plan, we will work to find ways to reduce the visual clutter within the study area and to provide improvements that are harmonious with the architectural and natural legacy of the area. It is important that solutions are unique and customized to Lexington.

Vibrant—We must seek ways to increase the vibrancy and synergy of activity downtown. Physical enhancements can provide more usable gathering and lingering space that can be utilized on a daily basis and also during special events. Programming and Performances in the downtown area can bring more residents and visitors to the downtown area.

Walkable—While sidewalks are available on most streets throughout the study area, the condition of many of the sidewalks is problematic to the pedestrian experience. To create a truly walkable downtown, pedestrians must feel safe and comfortable. To focus on the pedestrian experience, we can think about what is needed to create these conditions. For starters, sidewalks must provide minimum accessibility standards. Adding shade trees creates a more comfortable climate. Places to stop and sit, water fountains, public restrooms and safe street crossings can all contribute to a more walkable environment. This planning effort can also look at how the pedestrian connects with the rest of the City to bring more people downtown on foot.

Bikeable—Bikes offer a great alternative method of transportation that can reduce traffic congestion and the need for excessive parking in the downtown area. To encourage biking within the City of Lexington, resources can be added to improve the biking experience such as: sharrows, signage, bike racks and traffic signals that aren't just geared towards cars.

Summary

All across the country and around the world, people are coming to the conclusion that streets should be rebalanced to effectively address the needs of pedestrians and cyclists. The quality of the public realm is essential to the success of any community. As is the case for Lexington, it is clear that the downtown is already highly successful, but there is still room for improvement through simple and elegant solutions that respond to the needs and desire of your community. By improving and enhancing all of the areas above, a variety of user-groups will be attracted to the downtown area as a destination to linger and enjoy.

Section Two: Background Information

Project Approach

Cooper Planning, in collaboration with EPR and Sympoetica, approached this planning and design process for Downtown Enhancements in four distinct phases. The four primary phases of the project are as follows:

- Phase One: Information Gathering
- Phase Two: Development and Evaluation of Preliminary Sketch Plans
- Phase Three: Selection of Preferred Downtown Enhancement Plan
- Phase Four: Preparation & Presentation of the Downtown Enhancement Plan

Phase One of the Downtown Enhancement planning process was wholeheartedly focused on gathering information from a variety of sources. Before delving into any design work, the team spent several months working with the community, gathering necessary data and reviewing pertinent documentation to understand the historical context, the existing conditions, and the community needs as they relate to the downtown study area. We have documented conditions during various site visits and gathered up-to-date data for all of our traffic analysis. The community has been actively contributing ideas through our first public forum, stakeholder group meetings, individual interviews and email solicitation. Specific feedback can be found later in this document in the public feedback section.

Using the information and feedback from Phase One, the team

created three schematic design alternatives for evaluation by the Steering Committee and the community. Three Alternative designs were provided that take the baseline features and incorporate additional improvements to the Downtown area. The Sketch Plans and Design Matrix were then reviewed with the Steering Committee for feedback.

In Phase Three, the project Team and the Steering Committee closely examined the three design alternatives along with all of the public feedback and rankings charts (see Appendix for more detail) to select a preferred Enhancement Plan. Phase Four has been the detailing of the Plan and the creation of this report. Once the Enhancement Plan is adopted, the City of Lexington can establish priority projects and move forward with detailed engineered plans to fulfill the recommendations of the Plan.

Existing Conditions Evaluation Framework

The study team employed a systems approach to the evaluation of the street segments under review. For analysis purposes this approach organizes the broad streetscape environment, which is quite often a complicated mix of activities, physical conditions and elements, into four key environmental systems:

- Vehicular Environment
- Pedestrian Environment
- Visual Environment
- Activity Environment

These four environments overlap, interrelate and at times complement and/or conflict with each other. The systems approach allows clarity of focus by evaluating the key conditions of each of the environmental systems separately, but within an overarching study area framework.

Vehicular Environment: This environment includes the domain of motorized vehicles, bicycles and parking elements. Here we identify relevant functional, connectivity, and safety aspects of the public rights-of-way, as well as off-street linkages and parking.

Pedestrian Environment: Here we focus on the multi-function zones between the curb and building frontages, where both pedestrians and wheelchair-users should be comfortably accommodated. Key areas of focus include the function, mobility and safety aspects of the environment, particularly dealing with improved pedestrian crossings and the removal of obstacles within the pedestrian domain. The vehicular and pedestrian environments are in close proximity, and overlap at intersections and other street crossings.

Visual Environment: Important aspects of the visual environment include strong visual assets such as beautiful historic architecture, attractive storefronts, flower baskets and brick sidewalks. Another focus is the identification of needed enhancements in the visual environment, such as improved wayfinding systems, more street trees, and a reduction of signs within the downtown visual domain.

Activity Environment: Here we focus on elements that make the City an attractive visitor environment, including existing assets such as historic buildings, museums, walking tours, carriage rides, outdoor dining, and green space. However, key areas for improvement include the need for more event space, more shaded seating areas, and better visitor conveniences.



Key:

- Primary Intersection (Signalized with Post-Top Traffic Signals)
- Secondary Intersection (Non-Signalized)
- Off-Street Public Parking (Typical) P
- On-Street Parking (Typical)
- One-Way Street / Direction of Traffic
- Two-Way Street / Directions of Traffic
- Steep Street Down-Slope Condition
- Existing Building (Typical)
- Vehicular Drive/Alley
- Pedestrian Link & Alley
- City Park / Event Space
- Public Green Space
- Informal Event Space

Public Process

The Public Process was a key component of this Enhancement Plan. By engaging with the public and the Steering Committee, the project team was able to explore a variety of ideas and create potential solutions that are customized for Lexington. Specific Stakeholder groups were also created to address issues of Mobility and Preservation. A Downtown Business and Property Group met during Phase 1 to give their input on enhancement ideas. The Alternative Sketch Plans and Enhancement Plan were developed after extensive public feedback and in direct response to many of the issues and ideas. The primary community feedback themes are listed below:

Community Feedback Themes

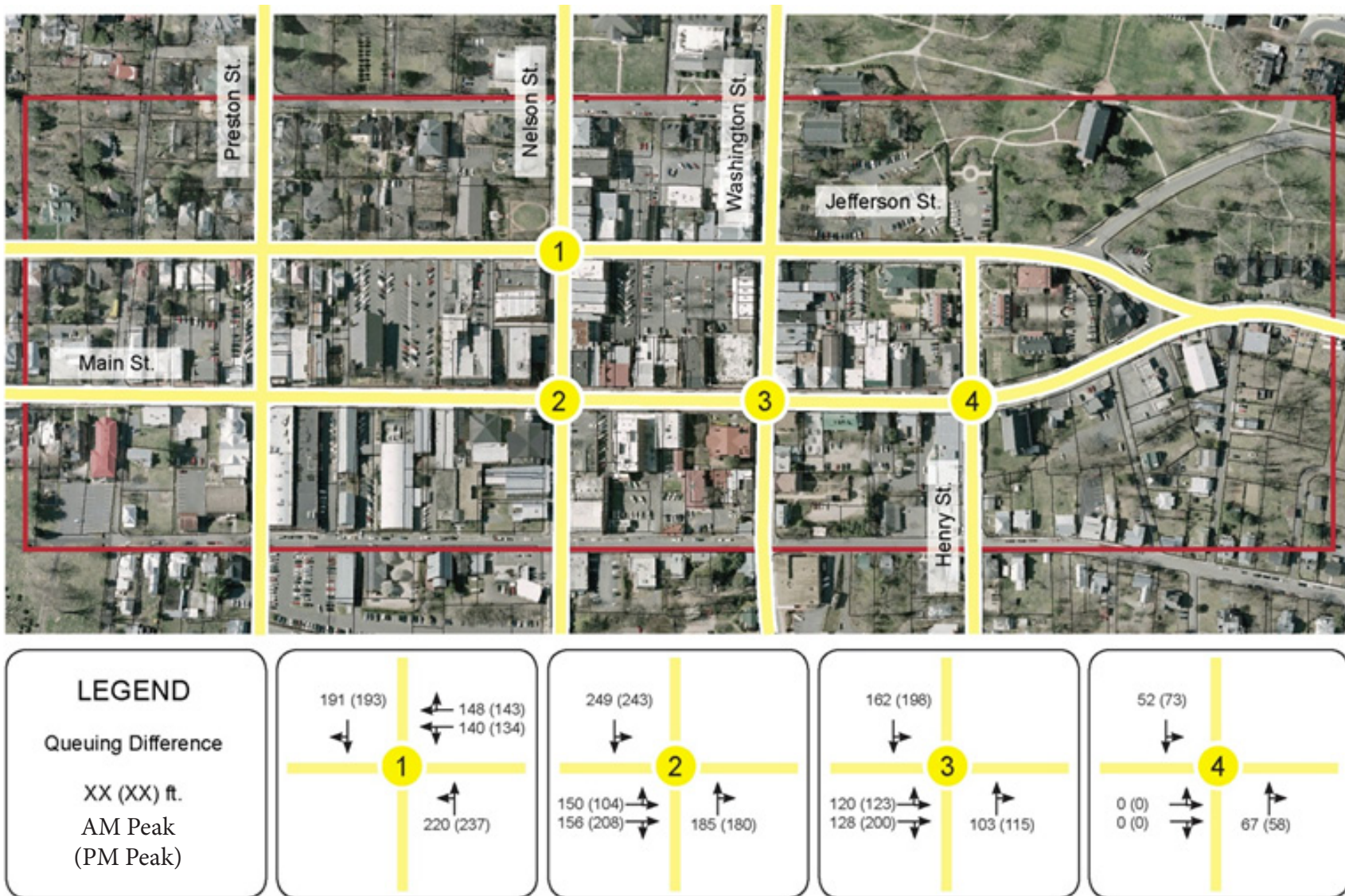
- Pedestrian Improvements
- Create People Spaces
- ‘Greening’ the Downtown
- Activities & Programming
- Improve Wayfinding
- Street Improvements
- Parking
- Increase Housing Downtown
- Historic Preservation
- Marketing the Local Economy
- Code Enforcement



Right: Community Feedback Sessions and meetings of the Steering Committee

Traffic Considerations

An assessment of queuing was made and discussed through the study process. At present, queuing is not excessive at each of the four study intersections. The information provided in the following graphics indicates approximate lengths of queues (in feet) for each of the approaches, and by time of day. The first number indicates the AM peak hour condition, and the second number, which is in parentheses, indicates the queuing that occurs in the PM peak hour of the day.

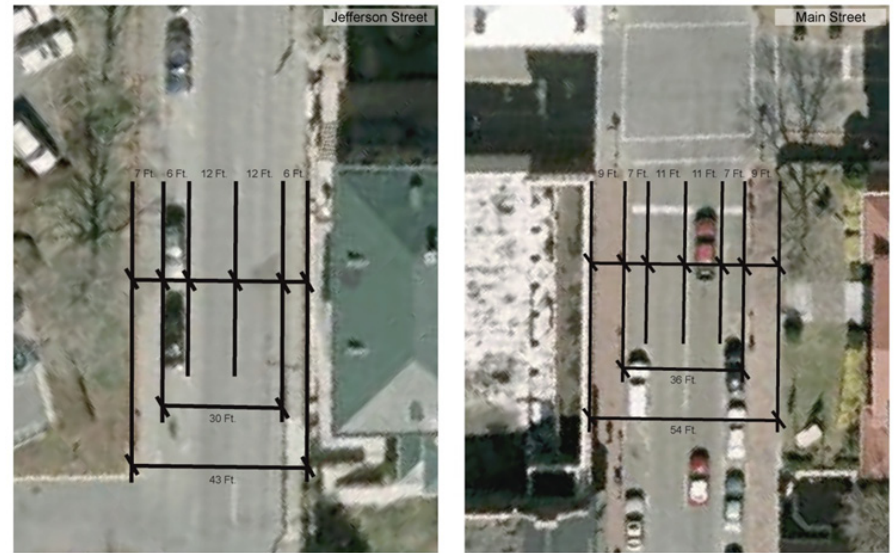


Field observations were conducted to observe traffic flows and queuing within the study area. These observations are useful for validating the traffic operational model results. The manual turning movement counts, along with the field observations, were used to create a traffic model as needed to examine existing levels of service and queuing at the intersections. Per the modeling effort, it was found that the existing levels of service are in the B range in the weekday afternoon peak hour and there do not appear to be any major traffic operational concerns with the existing laneage and signal timings. The Main and Jefferson intersections with Nelson were found to have the greatest queuing. Queuing along Nelson extends nearly the length of the block between Jefferson and Main. However, queuing on the Jefferson and Main approaches was found to be moderate, with the 95th percentile queue (queue is less than this length 95% of the time) around 5 to 6 vehicles per lane.

Representative Road Geometry

Per field measurements, it was found that Main Street has a roadway section consisting of 36 feet of pavement between the curb faces. Jefferson Street has a 30 foot typical section between the curb faces. The figure to the right illustrates these measurements.

Right and Below: Measurements of the existing streetscape and a conceptual diagram showing diagonal parking on Main Street.



The Question of Diagonal Parking

Very early in the planning process, the project team explored the idea of creating diagonal parking along Main Street. Due to the limited space within the streetscape and the space needed for angled parking, diagonal parking would leave only one lane of traffic. The public resoundingly agreed that they did not want to sacrifice travel lanes on Main Street to parking or bike lanes. This design exercise allowed the team to pursue other creative strategies that fit within the limited space, preserve both traffic lanes and create a more pleasant environment for pedestrians and cyclists.



Two Way Traffic Flow Concept

For the preferred enhancement plan, the concept was explored for changing the traffic flow along Main Street to allow for two-way traffic south of Nelson Street. Per the traffic analysis, there is a potential reduction in the intersection level of service at Nelson/Main. The traffic modeling indicated that additional queuing would occur, especially in the southbound direction. A queue comparison diagram was utilized (see below) to illustrate the changes in queues that might be anticipated by reducing southbound Main Street to one lane south of Nelson Street.

In this graphic, the blue line represents the distances of the existing queuing, and the orange line represents approximate queue distances if the change in lane use is provided to the south of Nelson Street along Main Street. The red line shows what happens with one southbound lane, one through lane and one turn lane for northbound vehicles. As shown, we might expect a doubling of the northbound queue (5 cars to 10 cars). The eastbound queue between Jefferson and Main would remain as it currently operates with a full block of queuing. Regardless of this change, cars could still make it through this intersection in one signal cycle.



Right: Queuing diagram that shows existing and proposed conditions at the Main and Nelson Street Intersection.

Alternative Sketch Plans

During Phase 2 of the project, Three Alternative Sketch Plans were developed to explore different enhancement concepts and themes for the Downtown Study Area. With the overarching goal to improve the pedestrian environment, the plans each concentrate on a particular theme and focus area for improvements. For example, the first alternative really focused the most energy on improvements within the historic core. The second alternative moved the focus down to the intersection of Main Street and Nelson as the modern gateway to downtown Lexington. The third alternative expanded the focus to South Main Street. Within each alternative, there was a consistent menu of improvements that serve to enhance the four environments previously discussed—Pedestrian, Vehicular, Visual and Activity Environments. These improvements are explored in more detail in Section Four of this report. The Alternative Sketch Plans and the Menu of Plan Concepts are both included in the Appendix of this report.

Project Resources

Below is a list of the primary project resources that were evaluated during the planning process. Additional information is provided on the Bicycle Plan and the Traffic Data below and City Council Vision and Public Input are provided in the Appendix at the end of this report.

- City Council 2026 Vision (Revised 4/19/11)
- City of Lexington Comprehensive Plan
- 2010 Desman Parking Study & Addendum <http://www.lexingtonva.gov/pdfs/Parking%20Final%20Mgnt%202010.pdf>
<http://www.lexingtonva.gov/pdfs/Parking%20Final%20Mgnt%20Addendum.pdf>
- City of Lexington Zoning Ordinance
- SIR Report
- Wayfinding Package
- Central Shenandoah Bicycle Plan
- 2012 Traffic Data Count
- Representative Road Geometry
- Public Forum #1 Public Input
- Mobility Stakeholder Bike Plan & Priorities
- Preservation Stakeholder Feedback
- Downtown Business and Property Owner Stakeholder Feedback

Section Three: The Enhancement Plan

Evolution of the Preferred Plan

The study team worked closely with the Steering Committee to develop the three alternative sketch plans (see appendix). The team and Steering Committee, with citizen stakeholder input received in the public forums, further refined Alternative C as the foundation for the preferred plan. Essentially, the preferred plan represents a hybrid of elements of the various alternative sketch plans. Large scale versions of the plan are attached and available at the City of Lexington offices. Notable characteristics of the preferred plan include:

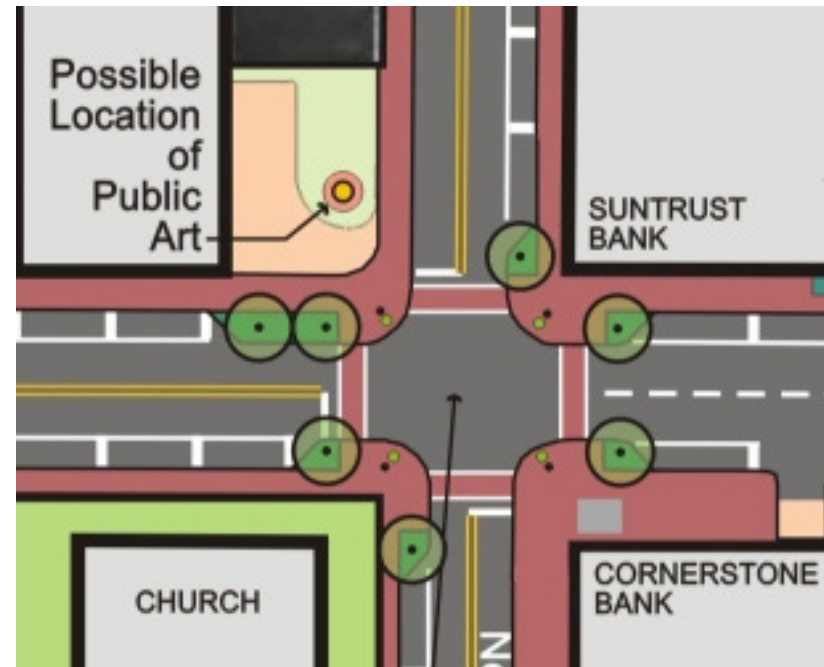
Theme:

The preferred plan offers an expanded concept combining the “Expanded Main Street Corridor” theme (from Alternative C) and key elements of the “Historic City Center” theme (from Alternative A).

The resulting theme features a look toward incorporating South Main Street (Preston to Nelson) as the traditional “Main Street”, while expanding the “Historic City Center” thematic scope to include Washington Street (Randolph to Jefferson).

Primary Area of Focus:

The focus for the plan combines elements of Alternatives A and C to include Main Street (from Preston to Washington), Nelson Street (Randolph to Jefferson), and Washington Street (Randolph to Jefferson). This focal area includes the key intersections of Main and Nelson, the vehicular/transportation center of the downtown, and of Main and Washington, the historic center of the original city plan. Secondary intersections proposed for streetscape improvements include: Main at Preston, Nelson at Randolph and Jefferson, and Washington at Randolph and Jefferson.



Intersection of Nelson and Main Street showing bulb-outs, landscaping, crosswalks and the potential for public art in the Wells Fargo Plaza.

Eastern Downtown Gateway:

Nelson Street, linking Interstate 81 and the downtown, remains as the predominant gateway in the preferred plan. The new Nelson Street bridge gateway opportunity and the inclusion of the South Main Street block from Preston to Nelson as a two-way street both are key determinants here. Also, the proposed enhancement of the Wells Fargo Bank plaza as a potential area for public art and private landscape enhancements creates additional focus on Nelson Street as a key downtown gateway.

The northern gateway from Interstate 64 via Main and Jefferson Streets will be another key gateway. The “split” at Jefferson and Main Streets is recommended as the potential site of a gateway and place-making opportunity, such as a fountain, in the longer term framework plan.

Visitor Center:

Reflecting guidance from the Steering Committee and public input, consideration should be given to relocating the Visitor Center to an appropriate site within the historic core of Downtown Lexington. Any new site would require easy pedestrian and vehicular access, high visibility, a quality visual environment, adequate parking, and bus access and drop-off capabilities.

Above Ground Utilities:

Long-term, it is the City's desire to place all remaining overhead utility lines to underground locations within the study area. The Preferred Plan calls for placement of existing overhead utility lines underground along Jefferson Street at the intersections with Nelson and Washington.

Traffic Patterns:

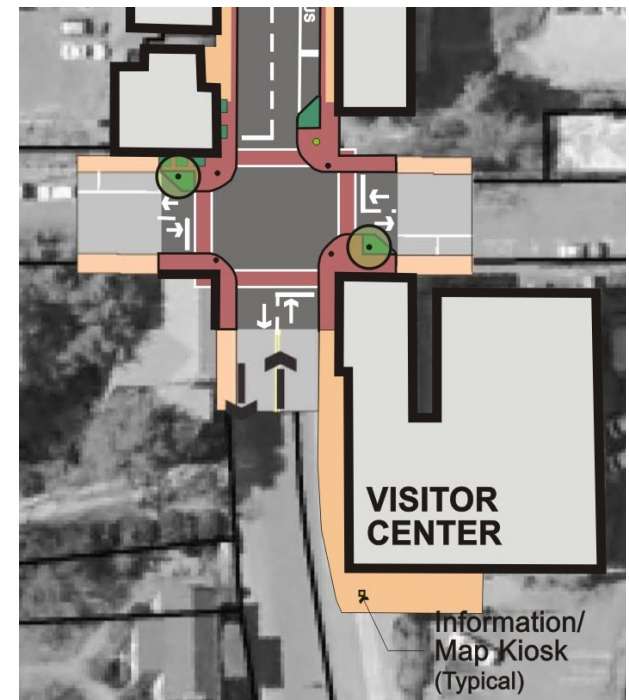
The Preferred Plan calls for the evaluation of instituting a two-way traffic pattern on South Main Street from White Street to Nelson Street. Prior to any implementation of potential traffic changes, a Traffic Impact Study will be completed. It should be noted that the proposed streetscape improvements, including bulbouts at key intersections, will not be affected by either a two-way or one-way traffic pattern along Main Street; therefore, should the City decide in the future to alter the traffic pattern in this street segment, there will be no negative effects on the streetscape improvements proposed under the Preferred Plan.

Chicanes were proposed under Alternative sketch plans B and C along Jefferson Street at the intersections with Nelson and Washington. The intent was to provide enhanced pedestrian mobility at these intersections through shifting the Jefferson Street alignment to the west. The Steering Committee's recommendation to place existing overhead utilities in this area underground achieves the overarching goal to remove these obstacles., however this element of the plan will likely

be a future phase due to cost and challenges associated with moving utilities underground.

In the interim, there is a sidewalk network on the western side of Jefferson Street that functions adequately for pedestrians. Ensure all signage is removed from the pedestrian through zone on this side of the street. Alternatively, the City could create small pedestrian bulb outs around power poles and obstacles on the eastern sidewalk in the McCrum's block. Bulb outs would extend towards McCrum's Parking lot, requiring reorganization of the space and movement of landscape elements and newspaper boxes.

While the Enhancement Plan focuses just on the study area as defined for this project, it should be viewed and implemented within the context of the broader Framework Plan. The Framework Plan provides context and shows how the plan elements link to the rest of the City. The Plan shows systems and linkages; both pedestrian and vehicular.

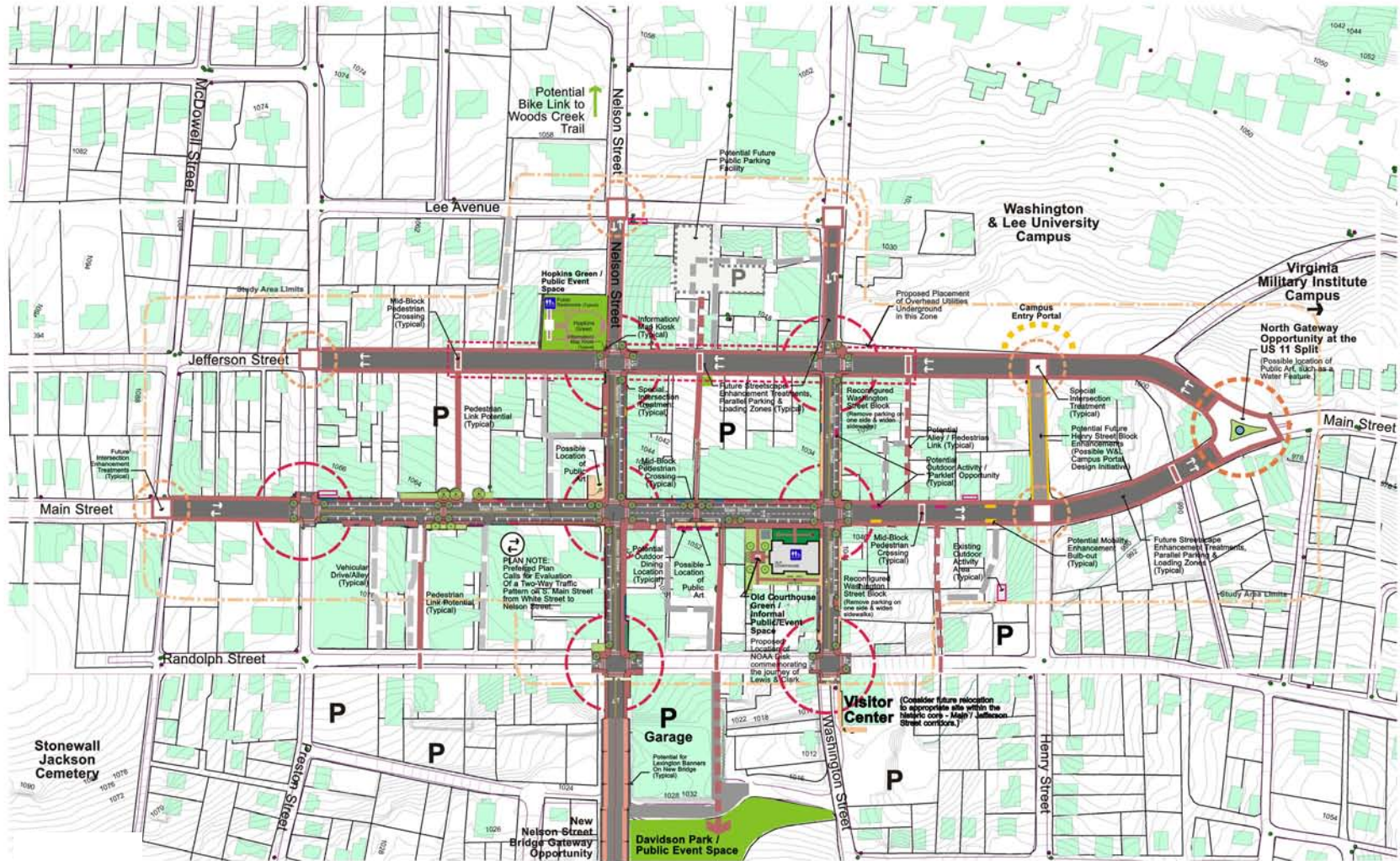


Current Visitor Center and Washington Street Improvements

West Gateway
I-64 Link

South Gateway
I-81 Link

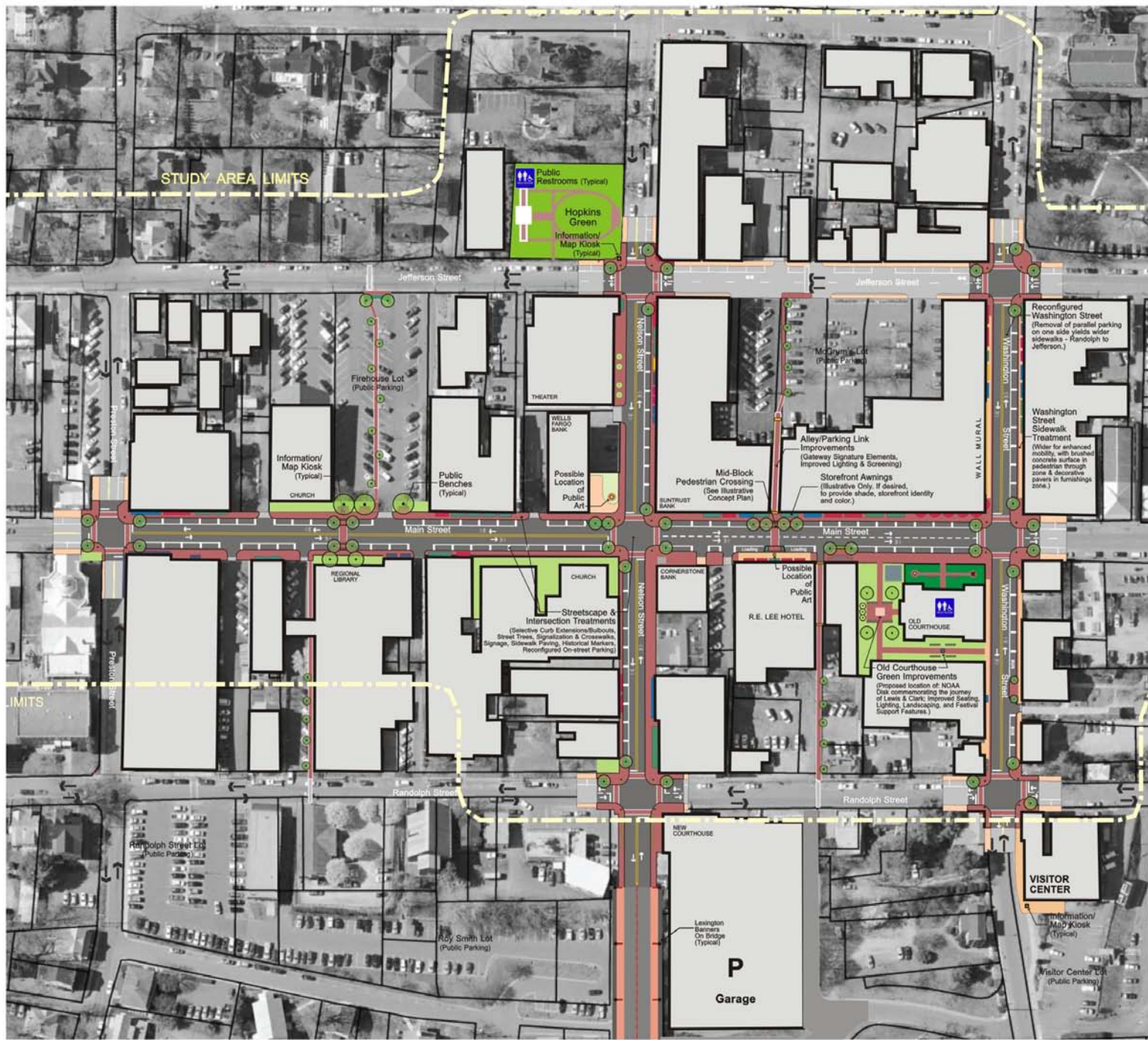
North Gateway
I-64 Link
Potential
Bike Link to
Chessie Trail



Nelson Street
Gateway /
East Gateway
I-81 Link

Lexington Downtown Enhancement Plan
Study Area Framework Plan

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July, 2013

Lexington Downtown Enhancement Plan

Theme: New Nelson St. Gateway / Expanded Main St. Corridor & Historic Gateway Center

Preferred Plan Illustrative

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Illustrative Sketches

Bulbouts / Curb Extensions Furnishings:

Mid-block bulbouts with pedestrian crossings are recommended at two locations on Main Street per the Preferred Plan. Key crossing elements include bollards and landscape buffers between pedestrians and passing vehicles, all designed not to impede the driver's view of pedestrians. Benefits include: shortened crossing distances for pedestrians (improving safety) and creating opportunities for landscaping and seating areas, freeing up of pedestrian through-zone area (improving mobility).

Sidewalk Furnishings:

Provide new pedestrian lighting, possibly with hanging flower baskets, along the street furnishings zone behind the curb. Place street trees in bulbout areas only in order to maintain clearance within the pedestrian through-zone. Consolidate sign posts within the furnishings zone.

Wall Mural Opportunities:

Consider creation of wall murals on highly visible, blank building walls, as appropriate. Mural themes may vary, but local artists could be invited to create these downtown placemakers, and they could change over time.

Pedestrian Alley Gateways:

Opportunities exist for enhanced pedestrian alleys in a number of locations within the downtown, particularly those alleys that connect to public parking lots. It is suggested that signature, ornamental gateway elements be created to identify and enhance these entries.



Historical Markers:

Implement local initiatives to place historical markers along Main Street as insets into the existing sidewalk paving. Consider clustering markers by historical topic or timeframe. If possible, do not place markers within the center of the pedestrian through-zone.

Storefront Awnings:

Illustrative only. If desired, to provide shade, storefront identity and color.

Public Art:

Consider installation of signature, unique, ornamental public art in key locations as focal elements. Artist & artisan competitions may be used to create art works that enhance & energize the downtown visual environment.

Bicycle Accommodations - Sharrows:

Sharrows are recommended for Main, Jefferson, Nelson and Washington Streets in the downtown. Sharrows are street markings that indicate that a bicyclist may use the full lane. Sharrows remind drivers that the presence of bicyclists is to be expected. MUTCD guidance states that the centerline of the sharrow marking should be located 11' from the curb when parking is present.

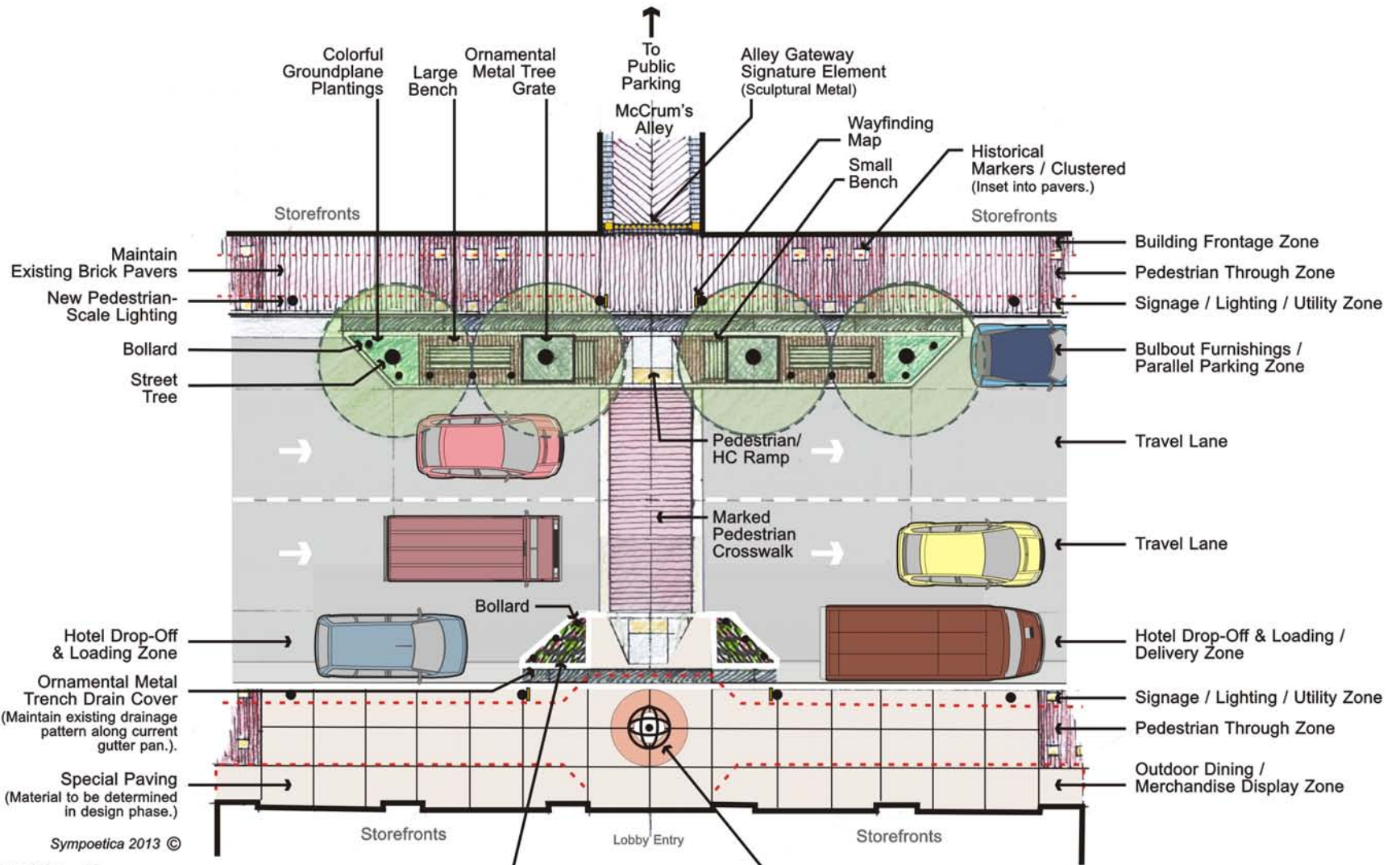
Sympoetica 2013 ©

Date: 5/26/13
7/2/13 Revision

Note:

This is an illustrative graphic in support of the Downtown Enhancement Plan. It is conceptual in nature and is not intended to represent the actual final location or design of proposed streetscape and facade improvements.

Preferred Plan Imagery:
Main Street Mid-Block Crossing
(Robert E. Lee Building &
McCrum's Alley Entrance)



Date: 4/17/13, 7/1/13 Revision

Note:
 This is an illustrative plan for planning,
 and programming purposes only. It is not
 to be used for construction purposes.

Illustrative Concept Plan:
 Key Elements for a Mid-block Crossing
 (Main Street Example)

Wall Mural Opportunity:

The Grand Furniture Store's blank wall provides an excellent opportunity for a wall mural painting. This sketch shows traditional "storefronts" recreated between the vertical elements of the wall, along with articulated roof lines, awnings for shading the sidewalk.

Reconfigured Washington Street:

Proposed removal of parallel parking on one side of street provides space needed for widening sidewalks on both sides of the street from Randolph to Jefferson.

New Signalization:

New vehicular and pedestrian signals are proposed at all intersections as identified in the Preferred Plan. These signals will be grouped on an ornamental metal pedestal, preferably black in color, designed in keeping with the historic character of the downtown. Street signs and traffic directional signs will also be clustered on the pedestal. All signals and signage must meet VDOT and MUTCD design guidance.

Storefront Awnings:

Illustrative only. If desired, to provide shade, storefront identity and color.



New Streetscape Furnishings:

New streetscape furnishings are proposed on all blocks as identified in the Preferred Plan. Furnishings include: street trees, pedestrian/roadway street lighting, bollards, sign posts, trash cans, benches, planters, and ornamental tree grates, where applicable.

Bulbouts / Curb Extensions - Furnishings:

Full or partial bulbouts are recommended at key intersections per the Preferred Plan. Benefits include: improved safety for pedestrians & motorists at key intersections; increasing visibility & reduction of speed of turning vehicles; encouragement for pedestrians to cross at designated locations; prevention of vehicles from parking at corners; and, shortening pedestrian street crossing distances.

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Date: 5/23/13
7/3/13 Revision

Note:

This is an illustrative graphic in support of the Downtown Enhancement Plan. It is conceptual in nature and is not intended to represent the actual final location or design of proposed streetscape and facade improvements.

Preferred Plan Imagery:
Reconfigured Washington Street
(Randolph to Jefferson)

Lexington Downtown Enhancement Plan



Wall Mural Opportunities:

Consider creation of wall murals on highly visible, blank building walls, as appropriate. Mural themes may vary; local artists could be invited to create these downtown placemakers, and they could change over time.

Pedestrian Alley Gateway Elements:

Consider the creation of signature, unique, ornamental gateway elements for each alley entrance. Incorporate the name and destination of each alley as an aid in downtown wayfinding. Artist & artisan competitions may be held to increase interest and energy in improving the downtown visual environment.

Pedestrian Alley Enhancement:

Consider improvements to pedestrian alleys: remove vertical obstacles as is feasible; remove existing light poles and attach new pedestrian lighting to building walls. Create safe pedestrian "landing zones" at parking lot entries, along with signature gateway elements which incorporate the name and destination of each alley. Locate pedestrian wayfinding maps at alley entries.

Bulbouts / Curb Extensions Furnishings:

Mid-block bulbouts with pedestrian crossings featuring handicapped ramps are recommended at two locations on Main Street per the Preferred Plan. Key crossing elements include bollards and landscape buffers between pedestrians and passing vehicles, all designed not to impede the driver's view of pedestrians. Benefits include shortened crossing distances for pedestrians (improving safety) and enhanced opportunities for landscaping and seating areas, thus freeing up of pedestrian through-zone area (improving mobility).

Sympoetica 2013 ©

Date: 5/28/13, 6/30/13 Revision

Note:

This is an illustrative graphic in support of the Downtown Enhancement Plan. It is conceptual in nature and is not intended to represent the actual final location or design of proposed streetscape and facade improvements.



Pedestrian Crosswalk With Special Paving Handicapped Ramp Tree Grate

Sidewalk Furnishings:

Provide new pedestrian lighting, possibly with hanging flower baskets, along the street furnishings zone behind the curb. Place street trees in bulbout areas only in order to maintain clearance within the pedestrian through-zone. Consolidate sign posts within the furnishings zone.

Cost Effective Measures for Bulbouts:

Consider cost reduction strategies as:
 ▶ Allowing utilities to remain under sidewalk extensions.
 ▶ Use of trench drains (channels covered with metal grating) to eliminate the need to relocate catch basins or re-grade streets for drainage.
 ▶ Allowing fire hydrants to remain in place whenever reasonable; bulbouts keep area clear of illegally parked cars, improving access to hydrants.

Environmentally Friendly Considerations for Bulbouts:

Consider these tools:
 ▶ Bioretention Curb Extensions and Sidewalk Planters: Tree or planting boxes that take runoff from the street. Infiltration and storage reduces runoff volumes and attenuates peak flows; stormwater is filtered through vegetation and soil.
 ▶ Permeable Interlocking Concrete Pavers: Modular concrete paver systems installed with gaps between them that allow water to pass through to the base. An aggregate base provides structural support, runoff storage, and pollutant removal through filtering and adsorption.
 ▶ Sidewalk Trees and Tree Boxes: Benefits include reducing the urban heat island effect and stormwater runoff, improving the visual & user environment, and improving air quality. Provide adequate soil volume and a good soil mixture. Options to larger tree boxes include structural soils, root paths or "silva cells" under sidewalks to expand root zones and allow tree roots the space they need to grow to full size.

Wayfinding Map
 Trench Drain With Decorative Metal Grate Cover
 Shaded Benches
 Pedestrian Safety Bollards

Preferred Plan Imagery:
 McCrum's Alley Gateway
 (West side of Main Street, across from Robert E. Lee Building)

Lexington Downtown Enhancement Plan

Section Four: 25 Ideas to Enhance Downtown Lexington

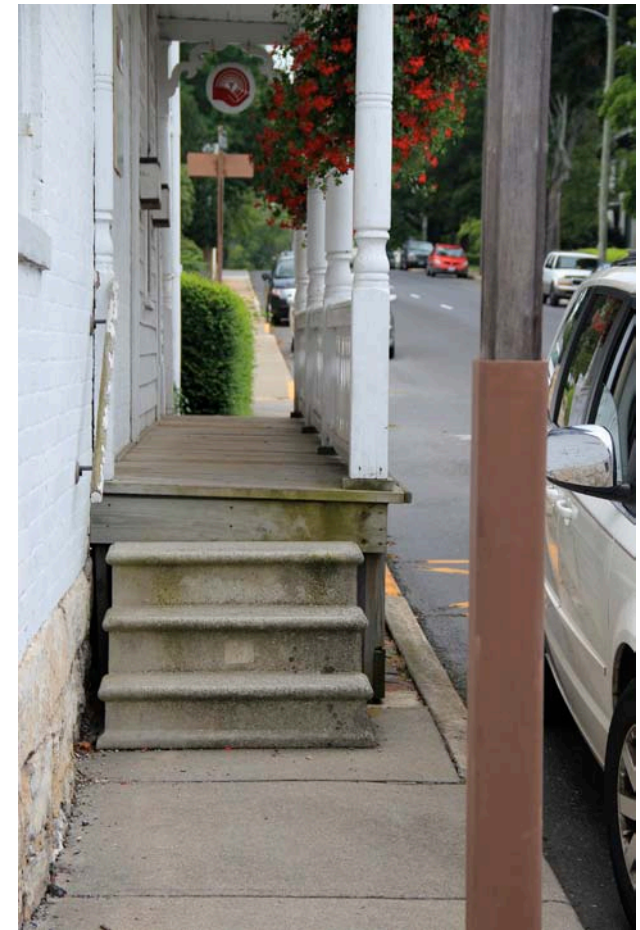
1. Achieve Minimum ADA Standards

At the heart of this plan is the strong desire to make downtown a better place for pedestrians. The downtown area is full of obstructions. Buildings, poles, and signs obstruct the sidewalk and bricks create an uneven surface. Oftentimes, pedestrians choose to walk in the street to avoid these obstacles. The minimum passage width for an ADA-compliant sidewalk is 36 inches (3 feet), but ideally 48 inches wide. The texture of a sidewalk must be firm, stable and slip-resistant. Curb ramps are required wherever a sidewalk crosses a curb. This is particularly important at street intersections, where individuals will interact with traffic.

Mobility Bulb-outs will be provided in such areas where the minimum ADA standards cannot be achieved under existing conditions because of obstructions.



A Mobility Bump-out is proposed in front of Hess Jewelers on Main Street



Sections of Main St and Randolph St have major obstructions to the sidewalk

2. Curb Extensions and Sidewalk Paving

Bulb-outs, or curb extensions, help provide additional sidewalk space for safe pedestrian movement to and from the sidewalks and streets. Full or partial bulbouts are recommended at key intersections per the Preferred Plan. Benefits include: improved safety for pedestrians & motorists at key intersections; increased visibility & reducing the speed of turning vehicles; encouragement for pedestrians to cross at designated locations; prevention of vehicles from parking at corners; and, shortened pedestrian street crossing distances.



Consider cost reduction strategies such as: Allowing utilities to remain under sidewalk extensions, use of trench drains (channels covered with metal grating), and allowing fire hydrants to remain in place whenever reasonable; bulbouts keep area clear of illegally parked cars, improving access to hydrants.

Design tree or planting boxes that take runoff from the street. Infiltration and storage reduces runoff volumes and attenuates peak flows; stormwater is filtered through vegetation and soil. Permeable Interlocking Concrete Pavers: Modular concrete paver systems installed with gaps between them that allow water to pass through to the base. An aggregate base for planters provides structural support, runoff storage, and pollutant removal through filtering and adsorption.

While bulbouts have advantages in terms of pedestrian comfort and safety, there is a potential implication relative to providing sufficient room in the intersections for large trucks to turn without encroaching over the curb. Prior to implementation of the bulb-out program, a study will need to be performed that identifies truck routing and delivery policies relative to vehicle size. This will help to facilitate a compromise relative to where truck turns should be accommodated while still allowing for curb extension improvements.

There are a variety of paving patterns throughout the Downtown study area. The Plan recommends maintaining the brick paving patterns where they currently exist within the Downtown Core. New bulb-outs will match brick pattern within this core area. In areas of concrete sidewalk, improvements will be concrete with a brick edging pattern. Washington Street is reconfigured to feature brushed concrete for the pedestrian through zone and decorative brick for the furnishing zone and bulb-outs.



Proposed enhancements for Main St showing bulb-outs, sidewalks, street trees, lighting and outdoor dining.

3. Sidewalk Trees and Seasonal Plantings

According to the Virginia Department of Forestry, urban tree canopy provides many benefits to communities including improving water quality, saving energy, lowering city temperatures, reducing air pollution, enhancing property values, providing wildlife habitat, facilitating social and educational opportunities, and providing aesthetic benefits. The City of Lexington overall has a significant tree cover, however the Downtown area is dominated by hardscape with very few trees. This creates a hotter microclimate downtown with very little shade. Sidewalk trees could greatly enhance the pedestrian experience, especially during the summer months.

The Plan recommends adding trees to the Downtown area in select locations to provide shade while not blocking out views of the significant historical architecture. For this reason, trees are dispersed and the City should install tree types that don't overwhelm the architecture.

Seasonal Plantings create a major visual impact in downtown areas for a minimal investment. Plantings provide continually evolving visual interest and pleasant aromas lending to the sensual experience of the downtown area. Well-maintained plantings send a clear message that the downtown area is a priority. Lexington currently has hanging baskets with seasonal plantings in the downtown area.

The Plan recommends keeping the hanging baskets throughout the study area and adding ground level potted plantings are shown at mid-block crossings and bulb-outs. The City could encourage business owners to adopt small areas for adding and maintaining such plantings.

4. Underground Utilities on Jefferson Street

To reduce visual clutter and increase pedestrian mobility, utilities should be relocated underground for key portions of Jefferson Street (as indicated on the plan). Utilities are already underground on Main Street, reducing obstacles in the sidewalk and allowing the historic architecture to be highlighted.

This element of the plan will likely be costly and challenging given the many obstacles to placing utilities underground. However, the long term benefit for pedestrian mobility combined with the potential grant money funding sources make this an important component to the long term updates for downtown.

Prior to this major commitment of funds, the City could create some small bulb outs into parking areas around existing obstacles to achieve minimum standards for mobility. The City should also carefully consider the location and consolidation of newspaper boxes so as not to block the sidewalk.

5. Pedestrian Through Zone

The Pedestrian through zone creates a consistent corridor, ideally 48 inches wide but a 36 inch minimum, in the sidewalk that is dedicated specifically to the movement of people. This area will be completely free of obstructions, including displays, poles, signs, merchandise, street furniture, etc.

6. New Color Scheme—Black vs. Brown

New fixtures and a new color scheme have the same effect as a fresh coat of paint on the outside of a building. The Plan recommends new black fixtures, poles, trash receptacles and seating to be installed. Black fixtures create a timeless and classic look and create a slight contrast from the backdrop of buildings and storefronts. These fixtures will replace the existing brown fixtures, which are fading and outdated for current mobility and traffic standards.



Above: A NOAA Disc will be placed near the Old Courthouse. SmartArt Tour in Ottawa, Canada.

7. Public Art

Opportunities exist throughout the downtown to infuse the space with public art. Artwork can bring a modern flair to a historic setting. Public artwork competitions engage the creative community and create dialogue about the look and feel of downtown Lexington. Artwork can be permanent in nature or more temporary so spaces continue to evolve and provide visual interest over time. The Wells Fargo Plaza at the corner of Main and Nelson is one example of a location where public art could be installed to create a positive visual impact.

8. SmartArt Tour/ Sounds Around Virginia

Lexington should take advantage of smartphone technology and self-guided audio tours available to help promote the story of this area. By making the narrative of Lexington more accessible, visitors are likely to stay longer and spend more money downtown. Programs such as the Street SmART tour of Ottawa allow visitors to move through the City and learn in an interactive treasure hunt. Danville, VA's Sounds Around Virginia website includes audio files about key sites to help people become more familiar with the area prior to visiting. Brochures and audio/smartphone tours could help to cross market all of the key attractions in the area.

9. Historical Markers

Implement local initiatives to place historical markers along Main Street as insets into the existing sidewalk paving. Consider clustering markers by historical topic or timeframe. If possible, do not place markers within the center of the pedestrian through-zone.

The William Clarke Committee for Rockbridge County has proposed a sidewalk enhancement for Lexington's Main Street of new granite blocks with the names of historical figures of significance to Rockbridge County. The granite blocks will be placed within the existing sidewalks connecting downtown to the Jackson Cemetery. We propose grouping the blocks in clusters to provide the most visual interest and least physical impact to the sidewalk.

To honor their contributions to mapping, The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) has proposed to place a special disc in Lexington commemorating the journey of Lewis and Clark. The suggested location for installation is plaza of the Old Courthouse Green.

Information Kiosks will be installed at key locations (Visitor Center, Hopkins Green, and S. Main Street mid-block crossing) throughout the downtown area to orient visitors to shops, restaurants and attractions. Kiosks also provide an opportunity to display information about special events and performances.

10. Wall Mural Opportunity:

The Grand Furniture Store's blank wall provides an excellent opportunity for a wall mural painting. The sketch of Washington Street shows traditional "storefronts" recreated between the vertical elements of the wall, along with articulated roof lines, awnings for shading the sidewalk. Consider the creation of wall murals on highly visible, blank building walls, as appropriate. Mural themes may vary, but local artists could be invited to create these downtown placemakers, and they could change over time.

11. Public Greenspace Utilization:

Green space and public parks are minimal in downtown Lexington, therefore, spaces such as Old Courthouse Green should be redesigned as inviting spaces that welcome lingering and interaction. At a minimum, new seating options should be added. Old Courthouse Green can be transformed into a place where people spend their lunch break, eat an ice cream cone or enjoy a game of chess. Small concerts could be held here or in Hopkins Green. As referenced previously, a NOAA disc will be installed in the Old Courthouse Green to commemorate the journey of Lewis and Clark.

The plan also proposes upgrades to the green space in front of the Library and the Old Firehouse Parking Lot. There is room in front of the movie theater for seating and plantings. Public restrooms should be provided in several locations Downtown as a standard visitor convenience. Restrooms should be located within Hopkins Green and in the direct vicinity of the Old Courthouse Green. Hopkins Green Restrooms should be designed to integrate architecturally with existing structural arbor.

Left: Wall Mural idea for Washington St along the side of the Grand Furniture Building and an idea sketch for additional seating in the Old Courthouse Green





FRAZIER ASSOCIATES

ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY REGIONAL WAYFINDING
ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Wayfinding package as proposed for Lexington and the surrounding region.
Design by Frazier and Associates.

12. Wayfinding: Automobile & Pedestrian Scale

In September 2012, Frazier Associates developed a regional wayfinding system for the Rockbridge County area including the Lexington and Buena Vista communities. At this time, the fabrication and installation of the signage package has not been funded. This work is important because there is a strong desire for the creation of a simplified and effective local wayfinding system. This system would cover local wayfinding and should coordinate with any changes to traffic or relocation of the Visitor Center.

13. Sign Diet (reduction of parking space signage)

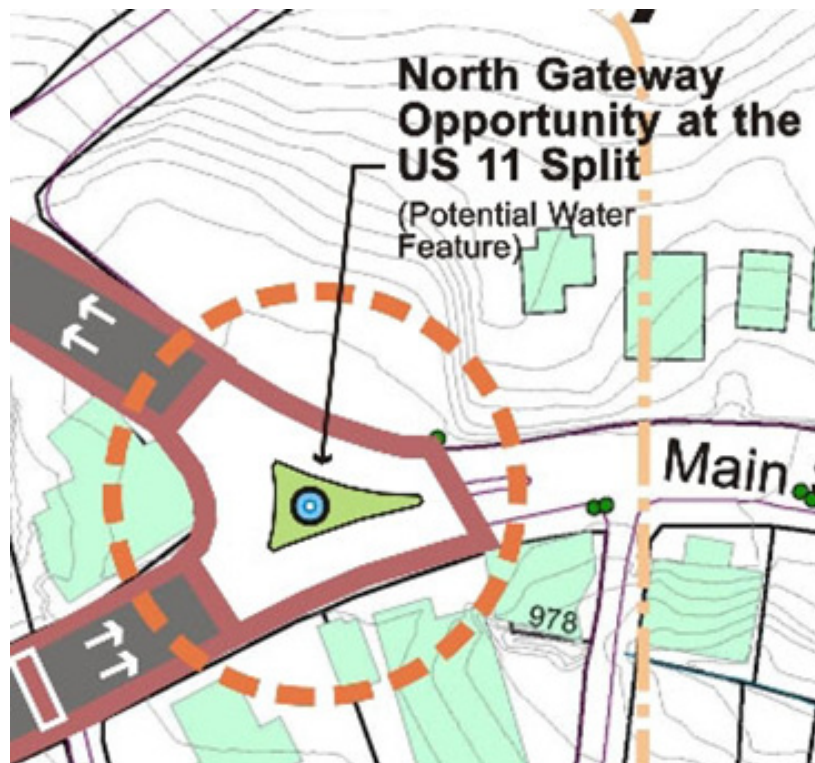
Downtown Lexington has a proliferation of signage. While signage can be useful, too much signage creates confusion, detracts from the historic architecture and it creates mobility obstructions along the sidewalk. This is especially true regarding parking signage. Almost every space has a separate sign currently. For a cleaner look, parking signage could be consolidated with multiple spaces adhering to rules outlined in one sign.



Washington St improvements with widened sidewalks.

14. Gateway Improvements at ‘The Split’

The area known as ‘The Split’ creates the Northern gateway to the Downtown area. Located near VMI and Washington & Lee, the split is so named because at this point Main Street splits and Jefferson Street is the one-way entrance to town and Main Street is the one-way exit that joins together here. Right now, this part of Downtown is particularly problematic due to lack of sidewalks, but this is a real opportunity spot for a gateway feature and improved pedestrian amenities. The plan shows new crosswalks and sidewalks in this important area near the two colleges. Additionally, the area in the middle of the two roads provides an ideal place for public art.



Right: A sketch showing potential gateway improvements including a water feature or public art, pedestrian improvements and signage. Above: Plan view of improvements at ‘The Split’.



15. Two Way Traffic on South Main Street

The Plan proposes that two-way traffic on South Main Street from Nelson to White Street be investigated further. This is the only potential change to existing traffic patterns. This suggestion arose from discussions with the Downtown Business Stakeholder Group as an effective means for improving access to this part of town. Two way traffic on South Main allows direct access from the Nelson Street entry to Downtown businesses south of Nelson.

16. Nelson Street Bridge & Gateway at Nelson and Main Street

It is important to create a sense of arrival to the Downtown area. A majority of traffic enters the downtown area from I-81 to Nelson Street. With the replacement of the Nelson Street Bridge, signage leading downtown should clearly lead visitors in this direction towards the many public parking options. The bridge is an opportunity to make a visual statement with seasonal banners and plantings, new lighting and bicycle lanes. The Nelson Street Bridge, like all of the gateways, serves a 'Welcome to Historic Downtown' function leading pedestrians, cyclists and motorists to the key intersection of Main Street and Nelson, the arrival point.

17. Visitor Center Relocation

Reflecting guidance from the Steering Committee and public input, consideration should be given to relocating the Visitor Center to an appropriate site within the historic core of Downtown Lexington. Any new site would require easy pedestrian and vehicular access, high visibility, a quality visual environment, adequate parking, and bus access and drop-off capabilities.

18. New Streetscape Furnishings:

New streetscape furnishings are proposed on all blocks as identified in the Preferred Plan. Furnishings include: street trees, pedestrian/roadway street lighting, bollards, sign posts, trash cans, water fountains, benches, planters, and ornamental tree grates, where applicable. New furnishing areas should include electric outlets that are accessible for Special Event Vendors.



Gateway improvements along the newly constructed Nelson Street bridge leading into Downtown. This image shows new street signs, bike lanes, banners, pedestrian scale lighting and wayfinding.

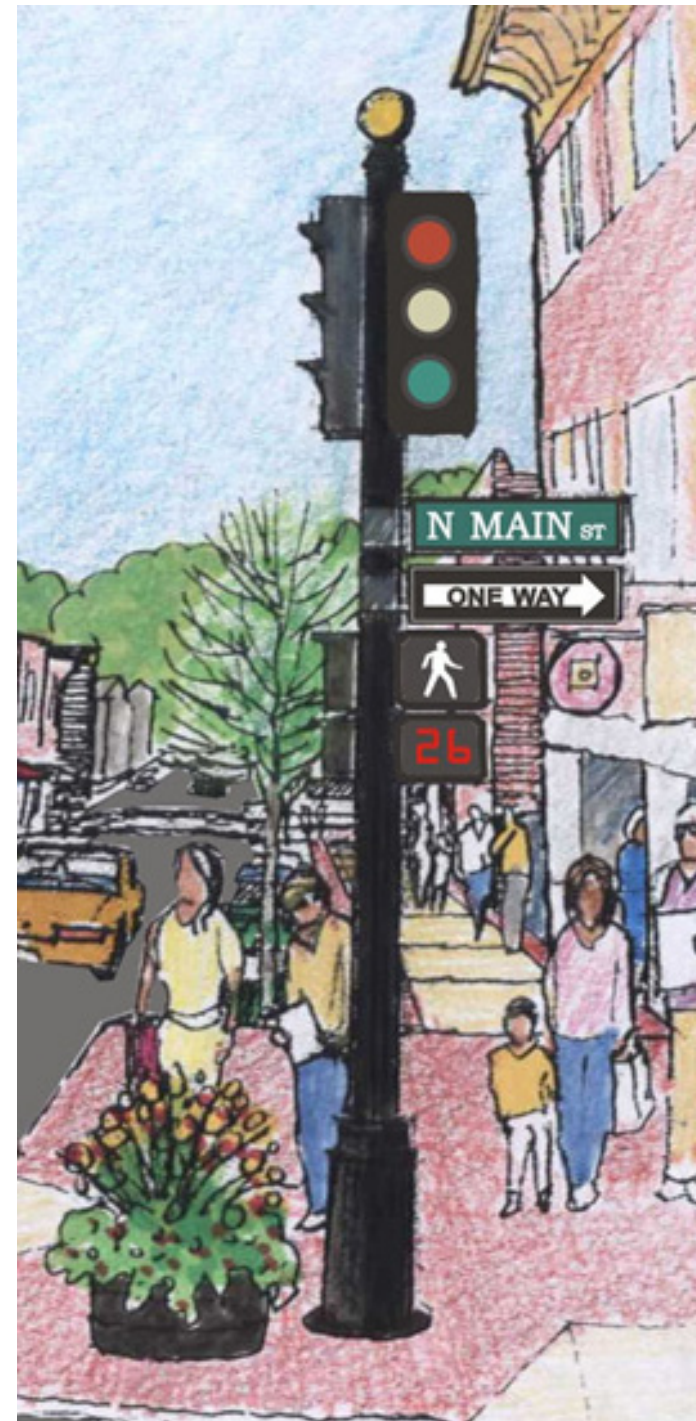
19. Pedestrian Scale Lighting

Provide new pedestrian lighting, with hanging flower baskets, along the street furnishings zone behind the curb. Lighting poles will conform to black color scheme. New light poles will be outside the pedestrian through zone for enhanced mobility. Lighting will conform to the latest dark sky recommendations with appropriate shielding and pleasant down lighting.

20. Updated Traffic Signals

New vehicular and pedestrian signals are proposed at all intersections as identified in the Preferred Plan. These signals will be grouped on an ornamental metal pedestal, preferably black in color, designed in keeping with the historic character of the downtown. Street signs and traffic directional signs will also be clustered on the pedestal. All signals and signage must meet VDOT and MUTCD design guidance. Specifically, the existing traffic lights are problematic because they were designed for two-way traffic on streets that are now one-way. This can be very confusing and unsafe for motorists, cyclists and pedestrians. Community members also complained that the existing lights only change when activated by a vehicle; new lights could be activated by a pedestrian or a cyclist. The brown color scheme means existing lights tend to blend in with the background. While this may be a positive feature for harmonizing with the historic architecture, we want an appropriate level of visibility for traffic lights to create a safe situation downtown.

Pedestrian Crosswalk Signals will be installed throughout the downtown study area to give pedestrians a clear indication as to when it is safe to cross the road. This feature, combined with the updated crosswalks and bump-outs at the intersections, creates pedestrian comfort and convenience.



Right: A scene showing a new traffic signal at the intersection of Main and Washington St. New signals will meet all current safety standards while also incorporating new signage and pedestrian crossing signals. This sketch also shows new planters and street trees.



21. Bike Accommodations

In general, more can be done to encourage cyclists in Lexington. Bike parking is proposed at select locations downtown. Several of the universities and colleges offer bicycle parking areas (outdoor racks) on campus. People will be more encouraged to ride downtown if they know there is a convenient spot to park their bike. Bike accommodations can also reduce damage to lampposts and ensure that the sidewalks remain clear for pedestrian mobility.

A sharrow is a shared lane street marking installed to indicate that a bicyclist may use the full lane. Sharrows are recommended for Main, Jefferson, Nelson and Washington Streets in the downtown. Sharrows remind drivers that the presence of bicyclists is to be expected. Studies have shown that sharrows increase the separation between motor vehicles and bicyclists, encouraging safe practices for cyclists and motorists.

Community members felt strongly that the existing number of lanes for motorists should be maintained downtown, eliminating the possibility for bike lanes except along the new Nelson Street Bridge and potentially at the northern entrance to the City near VMI on Main Street (outside current study area limits). MUTCD guidance states that the centerline of the sharrow marking should be located 11' from the curb when parking is present. The regional bicycle plan and the Mobility Stakeholder group both call for bike facilities within the Downtown Study Area.



A cyclist heading north on Main Street. Sharrows, or a shared lane marking, are recommended throughout the Downtown Study Area to create greater safety and awareness amongst cyclists and motorists.

22. Outdoor People Places

A parklet is a small space serving as an extension of the sidewalk to provide amenities and green space for people using the street. Parklets emerged from the streets of San Francisco where interested business owners built out their sidewalks onto platforms in parallel parking spaces. The parklet is an extension of public space that requires less investment than a full revamping of street infrastructure, and may be a way to test ideas, in a sense using the street as a public laboratory. It is this kind of thinking that will be helpful in imagining options for rebalancing the downtown Lexington streetscape.

Parklets are intended for people. Parklets offer a place to stop, to sit, and to rest while taking in the activities of the street. In instances where a parklet is not intended to accommodate people, it may provide greenery, art, or some other visual amenity. A parklet may accommodate bicycle parking within it, or bicycle parking may be associated with it.

Downtown Lexington currently has very few outdoor dining areas. This is most likely due to the very limited area between buildings or on the sidewalk. By expanding some of the sidewalks downtown and allowing restaurants to create dining areas in the form of 'parklets', outdoor dining can invigorate the streetscape with more human activity.

23. Mid-block Crossings (concept shown to the right)

Mid-block bulbouts with pedestrian crossings featuring handicapped ramps are recommended at three locations on Main Street and three locations on Jefferson Street per the Preferred Plan. Key crossing elements include bollards and landscape buffers between pedestrians and passing vehicles, all designed not to impede the driver's view of pedestrians. Benefits include shortened crossing distances for pedestrians (improving safety) and enhanced opportunities for landscaping and seating areas, thus freeing up of pedestrian through-zone area (improving mobility).



Example of a parklet in San Francisco that also provides an area for outdoor dining.



The mid-block crossing links with the pedestrian alley to McCrum's parking lot. This feature allows for pedestrians to safely cross the street while providing shade and creating areas to stop and linger. This sketch also shows sharrows along Main Street.

24. Washington Street Pedestrian Improvements

Washington Street is a primary pedestrian corridor in the Downtown Area, connecting Washington & Lee to the Historic Core, shopping and restaurants. Proposed removal of parallel parking on one side of the street provides space needed for widening sidewalks on both sides of the street from Randolph to Jefferson. The block of Washington between Randolph and Main Street has numerous mobility issues that would also be resolved through widening the sidewalks.

New Street signs are proposed throughout the downtown study area to create a fresh and updated look with signage that meets modern standards.

According to the Desman Parking Study, Lexington has adequate parking downtown. In creating bulb-outs and mid-block crossings to enhance the pedestrian experience, the Enhancement Plan is careful to maintain a comparable count of on-street parking. In fact, along several blocks, one or two more spaces will be available because of a more efficient use of the space available. Overall, the plan creates a net decrease in parking of only 12 total spaces due to Washington Street pedestrian improvements.



25. Placemaking Opportunities & The Pedestrian Alley System

The Downtown Enhancement Plan is ultimately one large placemaking process. By placemaking, we mean the creation of physical places throughout the community that allow for public enjoyment and pleasure of the senses. We aim to create places of distinction that capture the imagination and increase the vibrancy of downtown while harmonizing with the historic context. Public art and ‘green’ spaces are placemaking opportunities. Pedestrian enhancements along the alleys winding through Downtown can also create pleasurable and memorable places, thereby encouraging the use of these secondary pedestrian systems. Placemaking can also be as broad as creating the ‘brand’ and look of a place so that all features are coordinated and tie in with the overall narrative of the place.

While the primary pedestrian network is along the sidewalks bordering the streets, a secondary pedestrian system could be encouraged by upgrading the alley network in the key blocks of the study area. Opportunities exist for enhanced pedestrian alleys in a number of locations within the downtown, particularly those alleys that connect to public parking lots.

Consider improvements to pedestrian alleys: remove vertical obstacles as is feasible; remove existing light poles and attach new pedestrian lighting to building walls. Create safe pedestrian “landing zones” at parking lot entries. Locate pedestrian wayfinding maps at alley entries.

It is also suggested that signature, ornamental gateway elements be created to identify and enhance these entries. Incorporate the name and destination of each alley as an aid in downtown wayfinding. Artist competitions may be held to increase interest and energy in improving the downtown visual environment.

Left: McCrum’s Alley existing and with proposed placemaking concept. Actual alley entrances are recommended to be designed by local artists to encourage usage of this secondary pedestrian system.



Section Five: Potential Funding Sources and Opinion of Probable Cost

This section provides a toolbox of strategies that could be utilized for implementation of the plan recommendations. The strategies generally entail various VDOT or grant funding opportunities.

Community Development Block Grant - Community Improvement Grants	
Purpose	Provides funding to local governments to support business district revitalization efforts to improve economic and physical conditions in the community.
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No local match indicated in program description.
Eligible Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Comprehensive Community Development. Economic Development, including business district revitalization, job creation and retention. Community Facilities, including street improvements.
Eligible Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Units of local government in non-entitlement localities.
Evaluation Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Government Fiscal Stress. Alignment with regional priorities. Project Needs and Outcomes. Costs and Commitment. Project Group Readiness and Capacity. Impact. Fulfillment of National Objectives.
Contact	Chris Thompson: chris.thompson@dhcd.virginia.gov

Virginia Main Street Program	
Purpose	A preservation-based economic and community development program that offers services and assistance to communities interested in downtown revitalization.
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preference given to applicants with a demonstrated financial commitment to extend beyond the 3-5 year project period.
Eligible Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of local public and private organizations. Marketing and promotion activities. Town and architectural design. Economic restructuring to strengthen existing businesses and attract new businesses.
Eligible Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Towns and cities with a population of no more than 75,000 with at least 50 commercial enterprises and 70 commercial structures in a proposed Main Street district.
Evaluation Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fulfillment of site eligibility. Demonstrated organizational. Financial commitment to revitalization.
Contact	mainstreet@dhcd.virginia.edu www.dhcd.virginia.gov/mainstreet

Safe Routes to Schools Program (SRTS)	
Purpose	This program provides funding for engineering, education, enforcement and encouragement projects that are aimed at making it safer and more appealing for children to walk and bicycle to school.
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All the cost of the program can be financed with Federal funds (This is a reimbursable program).
Eligible Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engineering projects such as traffic calming, sidewalk installation, intersection. Improvements, warning signage and crosswalks markings, among others education programs such as pedestrian and bicycle safety classes, bike rodeos, and motorist education programs. Encouragement programs such as Walking School Buses, Bike Trains, Walk to School Day, and other incentives to encourage children and their parents to walk and bicycle to school.
Eligible Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any local government, state agency, or non-profit may apply to the program.
Evaluation Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce fatalities and injuries, as well as reduce risk associated with walking and bicycling to school. Affect the behavior shift of students and motorist. The number of new partnerships created as a result of the program, and the number of students and/or schools reached through the program. Measurements of student health, air quality, congestion, and other metrics, and improvements to the built environment that benefit the ability to walk and bicycle to and from schools.
Contact	Local Program Coordinator: Robert Williams Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT): http://www.saferoutesinfo.org/program-tools/find-state-contacts/virginia

Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP)	
Purpose	This program is overseen by Commonwealth Transportation Board's (CTB) for allocating funding for rail, public transportation, commuter assistance, bicycle, pedestrian, interstate and primary highway transportation projects over the next six years.
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allocations are applied to projects in the SYIP based on the type of funding.
Eligible Projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local governments work with citizens and Virginia's transportation agencies to develop a plan that anticipates land use changes and travel patterns more than two decades into the future.
Eligible Applicants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Governments, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO).
Evaluation Criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Statewide and regional plans that identify transportation needs and projects required to serve future travel demands over a 20- to 25-year period. An analysis of projected traffic volumes and population, as well as business and residential growth. An evaluation of the priorities for implementation of the transportation plan. Citizen and community participation meetings to receive input on the transportation priorities. Residents' input on transportation priorities at the SYIP public hearings is important in determining which projects to add to the program.
Contact	Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT): http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/syp-faq.asp

MAP-21 Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act	
Purpose	MAP-21 is a milestone for the U.S. economy and the Nation's surface transportation program. By transforming the policy and programmatic framework for investments to guide the system's growth and development, MAP-21 creates a streamlined and performance-based surface transportation program and builds on many of the highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies established in 1991
Funding	\$105 Billion for 2013-2014 (divided amongst a variety of programs)
Eligible Projects	<p>MAP-21 continues the Surface Transportation Program, providing an annual average of \$10 billion in flexible funding that may be used by States and localities for projects to preserve or improve conditions and performance on any Federal-aid highway, bridge projects on any public road, facilities for nonmotorized transportation, transit capital projects and public bus terminals and facilities.</p> <p>The Highway Safety Improvement Program emphasizes a data-driven, strategic approach to improving highway safety on all public roads that focuses on performance. The foundation for this approach is a safety data system, which each State is required to have to identify key safety problems, establish their relative severity, and then adopt strategic and performance-based goals to maximize safety.</p> <p>MAP-21 establishes a new program to provide for a variety of alternative transportation projects that were previously eligible activities under separately funded programs.</p>
Eligible Applicants	State and Local governments
Contact	Additional information related to MAP-21 is available on the Federal Highway Administration website at http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21 .

Opinion of Probable Costs for the Construction of the Downtown Lexington Pedestrian Improvements

EPR, P.C.							
Jul-13							
ITEM #	DESCRIPTION	UNIT	QTY.	UNIT PRICE	TOTAL		
1	Mobilization	LS	1	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00		
2	Maintenance of Traffic and Signal	LS	1	\$24,000.00	\$24,000.00		
3	Demo Existing Curb & Gutter	LS	1	\$3,000.00	\$3,000.00		
4	Demo Existing Asphalt	SY	778	\$18.00	\$14,004.00		
5	Asphalt milling at intersections and crosswalks	SY	3815	\$5.90	\$22,523.76		
6	Asphalt overlay at intersections and crosswalks	SY	3815	\$10.74	\$40,973.10		
7	Concrete Bulbouts (brick pavers)	SF	3600	\$21.60	\$77,760.00		
8	4" white type B, Class I pavement markings	LF	6767	\$1.02	\$6,902.34		
9	4" white skip type B, Class I pavement markings	LF	1035	\$1.50	\$1,552.50		
10	4" yellow type B, Class I pavement markings	LF	2257	\$1.02	\$2,302.14		
11	24" White Type B Class I Markings (Thermo.)	LF	1884	\$10.80	\$20,347.20		
12	Sharrow pavement markings	EA	34	\$150.00	\$5,100.00		
13	Stamped Asphalt at intersections (crosswalks and midblock crossings)	SY	690	\$216.00	\$149,040.00		
14	New Signal Poles and Signalization at intersections	EA	3	\$102,000.00	\$306,000.00		
15	Removal of Utility Poles along Jefferson Street	EA	33	\$252.00	\$8,316.00		
16	Jefferson Street upgrade of utilities from overhead to underground (mainlines, laterals, service drops, etc.)	LF	2980	\$446.40	\$1,330,272.00		
17	Jefferson Street upgrade of utilities from overhead to underground (Communications - cable and fiber)	LF	2980	\$97.80	\$291,444.00		
18	Jefferson Street upgrade of utilities from overhead to underground (duck banks)	LF	3000	\$42.00	\$126,000.00		
19	Jefferson Street upgrade of utilities from overhead to underground (Junction Boxes)	EA	30	\$840.00	\$25,200.00		
20	Install Handicap ramps (CG-12)	EA	56	\$3,960.00	\$221,760.00		
21	Landscape Trees (medium set within vegetated wells/pits)	EA	38	\$780.00	\$29,640.00		
22	Landscape Trees (large set within vegetated wells/pits)	EA	40	\$900.00	\$36,000.00		
23	Landscape Trees (ex large set within vegetated wells/pits)	EA	5	\$780.00	\$3,900.00		
24	Landscape Trees (large set within tree pits covered by metal ornamental tree grates)	EA	8	\$1,224.00	\$9,792.00		
25	Relocation of Drainage Structures and associated pipe	EA	4	\$3,840.00	\$15,360.00		
26	Install trench drain along midblock crossing to maintain gutter (ornamental grate)	LF	500	\$50.40	\$25,200.00		
27	Brick Walks (Firehouse Lot and south of Main)	SF	2500	\$15.30	\$38,250.00		
28	Concrete Sidewalks with brick paver border design	SF	7320	\$12.90	\$94,428.00		
29	Concrete Sidewalks with brushed finish (repair/replacement sidewalk)	SF	7580	\$11.70	\$88,686.00		
30	Concrete Sidewalks (Plazas)	SF	1800	\$11.70	\$21,060.00		
31	Pedestrian Alley improvements (North and south of Main Street)	EA	2	\$30,000.00	\$60,000.00		
32	Neighborhood street signs, decorative posts and signage (street, directional)	EA	72	\$351.60	\$25,315.20		
33	Neighborhood street light, decorative posts and fixtures	EA	108	\$3,300.00	\$356,400.00		
34	Bollards	EA	20	\$420.00	\$8,400.00		
35	Benches 6' with backs	EA	36	\$1,980.00	\$71,280.00		
36	Benches 6' without backs	EA	8	\$1,980.00	\$15,840.00		
37	Benches 4'	EA	12	\$1,980.00	\$23,760.00		
38	Trash receptacles	EA	36	\$708.00	\$25,488.00		
39	Bicycle Racks (6 units)	EA	18	\$630.00	\$11,340.00		
40	Newspaper Racks	EA	6	\$198.00	\$1,188.00		
41	Information Kiosks	EA	3	\$27,000.00	\$81,000.00		
42	Planters	EA	48	\$2,100.00	\$100,800.00		
43	Utility adjustments (meter tops, etc)	LS	1	\$18,000.00	\$18,000.00		
44	Wells Fargo Plaza - colored unitized pavers	SF	675	\$15.30	\$10,327.50		
45	Wells Fargo Plaza (demo & site prep - remove existing plaza)	LS	1	\$12,000.00	\$12,000.00		
46	Wells Fargo Plaza - ornamental metal lighting poles with luminaires	EA	6	\$3,300.00	\$19,800.00		
47	Courthouse Green Plaza - Brick Patio	SF	2400	\$14.10	\$33,840.00		
48	Courthouse Green Plaza - Wood Stage	SF	300	\$42.00	\$12,600.00		
49	Courthouse Green Plaza - Stage Power	LS	1	\$4,800.00	\$4,800.00		
50	New Restroom at Hopkins Green	LS	1	\$60,000.00	\$60,000.00		
51	Hopkins Green - Utility connections for Restroom	LS	1	\$18,000.00	\$18,000.00		
	Sub-Total				\$4,020,991.74		
	Grand Total				\$4,020,991.74		

Section Six: Appendix

Project Resource Review

City Council 2026 Vision

(Revised 4/19/11)

The City Council 2026 Vision provides a snapshot of the long term goals and vision as expressed by Lexington's City Council. While the Comprehensive Plan provides a more extensive analysis of long terms trends and goals, this document provides the essence of what makes Lexington so distinctive and the many qualities that City Council would like to promote. The vision states, "Lexington is a city for living, loving, learning, lingering, growing, remembering, and adapting." For each category, there is a description and specific goals to enhance each particular quality.

This vision statement contains numerous goals and priorities that relate to the Lexington Downtown Enhancement Plan. For example, each of the subject areas mentioned above could tie into any improvements for the downtown area. Within the 'living' component, there is mention of strengthening the retail base downtown as well as more promotion of the local food culture. The 'loving' component specifically prioritizes creating bike lane along Main Street and /or Nelson Street within City limits. Installing bike racks and bike signage are also a priority.

Within the Downtown Enhancement Plan, a major goal is to promote lingering and people places. While the Vision 2026 has lingering as one of its primary categories, this section focuses more on healthcare and other community services. The 'growing' section of the document elaborates on recreational opportunities throughout the City. Within the enhancement plan, we strive to promote more opportunities for recreation within the City while also capitalizing on connec-

tions to parks and trails within the larger natural context of Lexington.

Lexington has done an excellent job in protecting and preserving its heritage and architectural resources. Within the 'remembering' section, there are specific priorities to create a grant program for enhancement and preservation of downtown buildings. This section also references the desire to bury utility lines on Randolph Street. In the final section on 'adapting', Lexington is looking to the future. One priority is to open the R.E. Lee hotel, a property within the heart of downtown. This property is currently under renovation and is slated to be reopened as a hotel. This type of development activity has a positive impact on downtown while providing a variety of accommodations for tourists and visitors. There is also reference to assessing narrow streets to ensure safe passage of Fire and Rescue. Any enhancements to the downtown area will not only be safe and functional, but they will also consider the aesthetic qualities and historic context within the core of Lexington.

Central Shenandoah Bicycle Plan

A Bicycle Plan (Plan) was prepared by the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission in 2006. The following issues were identified as being important for the future of bicycling:

- safety
- desire for bike lanes
- connectivity
- places for families and new riders
- sharing the road
- recreation/tourism

The Plan is intended to ensure that bicyclists can use the roadway network in the future. The Plan details a comprehensive network of

cycling facilities connecting neighborhoods, communities, and key destination points. Creating bike lanes or paths is the number one strategy for accommodating bicycles, but in Lexington, such opportunities are limited by narrow street widths, on-street parking, and limited building setbacks. Nevertheless, painted sharrows, marking a lane shared by cars and bicycles, where there is not enough space to create separate bike lanes, would suit many Lexington streets. This could connect residents with their identified destinations, including Rockbridge County High School, grade schools, public libraries, and shops.

A bicycle route within the city could also connect Lexington with other cities and towns via Route 11. Route 11 is becoming a bicycle corridor and ultimately would require bike lanes and paved shoulders along its entire length; but within Lexington, the route could be created inexpensively by clear marking with sharrows.

City of Lexington Comprehensive Plan

(Excerpts)

The City of Lexington Comprehensive Plan is the primary long range planning tool and guide to decision making for City staff, the Planning Commission and City Council. The information below is excerpts from the Comprehensive Plan that relate to the goals and feedback thus far for the Downtown Enhancement Plan. Some statements have been underlined by our team for emphasis. As we move forward with design recommendations, more synergy is created when the conceptual plans for downtown are aligned with the overlapping goals and recommendations of other planning documents.

Transportation

Encourage street and pathway design that moves persons, goods, and services safely and efficiently, with minimal traffic congestion. Exploit or enhance the City's distinctive walkable character and ready access to natural resources. Support energy-efficient alternatives to the single-occupancy vehicle, such as public transportation, walking, and bicycling. Acknowledge present limitations in state and local funding while allowing for future opportunities and new funding mechanisms.

GOAL: Increased commercial activity and tourism in Lexington.

GOAL: Easier, more obvious, and attractive access to downtown, parking, Washington & Lee, VMI, and special destinations for those unfamiliar with Lexington.

Walkability and Wayfinding Recommendation: Public restrooms available for use by cyclists and walkers—such as those planned for Jordan's Point Park—will be clearly indicated within this system.

GOAL: A more walkable City seen as a destination for non-vehicular tourism.

A comprehensive wayfinding system offers an opportunity to create a connected system of sidewalks, paths, and trails and to make the City streets safer and more welcoming for non-vehicular transport. Lex-

ington's planning has traditionally emphasized convenient parking, as critical to downtown's economic health; however, since the City's last Comprehensive Plan, studies have established that walking matters as much, or more. They have shown that:

- 1) The most successful shopping districts are those which provide the most comfort and pleasure for walkers.
- 2) Improving walking conditions in a community significantly increases retail sales.
- 3) Such improvements raise property values.

Better walking conditions also strengthen tourism, since many tourists select destinations precisely because they offer opportunities for walking, rather than driving. With gas prices soaring, communities that allow visitors to avoid driving can only grow in popularity. Though the automobile is the principal means of travel in Lexington, almost everyone does some walking and/or cycling daily. Walking serves as a basic means of transportation for those who do not drive or own cars, especially school-aged children, seniors and persons with disabilities.

Within the City, walking and cycling are often the fastest and most efficient ways to perform short trips. Many residents who live within walking distance of downtown or their work places choose to walk or bike rather than drive. Some simply enjoy healthy exercise and the casual opportunities for people to meet and interact that attractive streets with safe walking and cycling provide. Studies have shown that walking is up to three times more common in a community with pedestrian-friendly streets. As a result, communities that improve walking conditions can significantly reduce vehicular travel, which, in turn, reduces traffic congestion, demand for parking, and the need to locate parking on the commercial district's valuable land. Improving walking conditions thus is the cheapest way to bring more shoppers into downtown without the infrastructure costs associated with automobile use. Many of Lexington's narrow streets already feel pedestrian-friendly. Wide roads, fast vehicular traffic, and high traffic volume discourage walking.

Ideally, all City roadways should be made safe for cycling and walking. The absence of sidewalks along busy streets discourages foot traffic and puts pedestrians at higher risk. In the past, walking within Lexington was hindered by the lack of sidewalks in some parts of the City. To address this deficiency, the City has made sidewalks an integral part of its Capital Improvement Program for the past decade.

Simply having sidewalks is not enough to encourage foot or wheelchair traffic. Some sidewalks feel too exposed to traffic, though they are actually safe. Landscaping and amenities that create a feeling of separation from the roadway may be needed, to encourage walkers. In built-up areas of the City, especially downtown, light and utility poles, signs, fire hydrants and other infrastructure interrupt sidewalks, limiting their use. In many places, inadequate width bars wheelchairs. The City is presently exploring the engineering and economic feasibility of placing the utilities underground along Randolph Street between Nelson and Washington Streets. Burying utilities would both enhance the appearance of this important block and make its narrow sidewalks more usable.

Recommendation: In addition to reviewing intersections, to identify vehicular problems, the Planning, Public Works, and Police departments should work together to identify ways to improve pedestrian mobility and safety.

Recommendation: Examine the neighborhoods within ½ mile of commercial areas to determine where improvements to pedestrian linkages are needed.

Hazards include potholes, sewer grates, missing curb cuts, missing route links and uneven or cracked sidewalks. Utilities such as light poles and fire hydrants, as well as mail boxes, should be kept out of new sidewalks and, where feasible, removed from existing ones.

Recommendation: Public Works should develop a “spot improvement program” to reduce hazards along major pedestrian and bicycle routes

through small-scale, low cost improvements. Larger projects may be funded by grants, property-owner participation and other non-general fund revenues.

Recommendation: When study shows that existing sidewalks are underused, the Planning Department should consider additional design features to make walkers feel more secure.

Work to improve walkability should engage the community in identifying specific problems and possible solutions. Individual user surveys can allow those using specific walking routes on a regular basis to identify specific problems and barriers to pedestrian travel. The City can then develop small, focused projects to address these problems and prioritize projects for possible funding and implementation.

A potential model for this work is already in place. The Lexington City Public Schools have received a Safe Routes to Schools grant from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).

This grant will engage a consultant to inventory and evaluate the existing infrastructure for walking and biking within a 3/4 mile radius of both Waddell and Downing schools. The evaluation will include sidewalks, pathways, traffic directions on streets, crosswalks, stop and yield signs, other significant signage, approximate sight distances and another other physical structures which affect walking and biking. Based on this evaluation, priority improvement projects to enhance walking and biking will be developed, including schematic designs and preliminary cost estimates to enable future funding and implementation. This project could serve as the basis for expanding similar analysis throughout the City.

Recommendation: The Planning, Police, and Public Works Departments should use the Safe Routes to Schools project as the basis for expanding similar analysis throughout the City. A focused community-wide evaluation of the quality of walking conditions--including safety, comfort, and convenience--should also address problems of access for people with special needs, including those using wheelchairs,

walkers and strollers.

Pathways and Trails

City residents and visitors enjoy access to a number of walking trails both in the City and extending into the county. These include:

- The Woods Creek trail - a 2.4 mile walking trail along Woods Creek through the heart of Lexington, extends from Waddell Elementary School, through the campuses of Washington and Lee University and the Virginia Military Institute to Jordan's Point Park on the banks of the Maury River.
- The Brushy Hills Preserve walking trails - a network of hiking trails through the preserve located approximately 3 miles west of Lexington.
- The Chessie Trail - a 6 mile walking trail along the Maury River extends from the north side of the Maury River opposite Jordan's Point Park to Buena Vista. This trail, presently owned by VMI was constructed on the abandoned C&O railroad corridor. There have previously been bridges across the Maury River at Jordan's Point which utilized the abandoned piers for the railroad bridge and trestle which spanned the river and the Point to connect the Woods Creek and Chessie Trails. These bridges have all been lost to floods. Efforts continue to construct a new bridge or develop another means of access.

The City should continue to support and encourage efforts to link these extensive, significant and beautiful trail systems. In addition to a connection across the Maury River, there may be possible additional extensions to current trails which have not yet been considered. The City should continue to be alert to opportunities to expand its trail network. Extending the trail network has immediate benefits for residents of the Rockbridge area.

Bicycles

GOAL: A network of safe and convenient bikeways within Lexington that allows residents to substitute bicycles for cars and attracts bicycle tourism.

Another way to move more people without additional automobiles is to provide a network of safe, convenient bikeways. Many people already ride bicycles in and around Lexington. Some adults and many young people use their bikes as a basic means of mobility, riding them to and from schools or jobs. Many recreational riders cycle for fun as well as a way to exercise. Lexington already hosts many bicyclists who participate in organized recreational rides through the Valley.

At present, thanks to the age of the City, its many narrow streets and limited rights of way, and extensive use of streets for automobile parking, Lexington lacks safe routes for bicycles within the City and especially within the downtown. The very limitations that make Lexington dangerous for bicyclists make improving routes within the City very challenging.

Nevertheless, new policies urge such improvements. In 2004, the Commonwealth Transportation Board adopted a new state policy for integrating bicycle and pedestrian accommodations into roadway projects. This policy essentially reversed previous VDOT policies which required substantial public and political support for bikeways and sidewalks to be considered for inclusion in transportation projects. The new policy states that "VDOT will initiate all highway construction projects with the presumption that the projects shall accommodate bicycling and walking."

It essentially requires bikeways and sidewalks whenever a roadway project occurs in an urban or suburban area. For the past 10 years, Federal transportation policies have provided a consistent source of funding.

Thanks to the VDOT policy's lead and increasing interest in cycling, Lexington has an opportunity to build a reputation as a destination for people seeking an active vacation. The Central Shenandoah Valley is positioning itself as a bicycle touring destination. Bicycle touring is a low impact tourist activity that brings dollars to small town

businesses, museums, and other cultural institutions, but does not add to automobile traffic and pollution. A Central Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Plan (Plan) was prepared by the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission in 2006 with input from representatives from each political jurisdiction within the Planning District, including Lexington and Rockbridge County.

The Plan details a comprehensive network of cycling facilities connecting neighborhoods, communities, and key destination points. The Plan's study concludes that bicycling has the potential to be very convenient in established urban areas such as Lexington, Staunton and Waynesboro because these jurisdictions have higher building densities, streets with lower motor vehicle speeds and a concentrated mix of offices, stores, parks and residences. The downtown streets and narrow neighborhood streets of these communities are most often two-lane roads with parking on both sides and speed limits set at 25mph. Nevertheless, proper planning can create safe bicycle routes. Painted sharrows—symbols combining a bike icon and a chevron that indicates the direction of travel—mark a lane shared by cars and bicycles, where there is not enough space to create separate bike lanes. Sharrows alert motorists to expect and accept cyclists as users of the roadway. This treatment would suit many Lexington streets.

Parking Studies suggest, however, that while parking matters, it should be viewed as subservient to the needs and functions which draw people downtown. People come downtown not for parking, but for the wide variety of functions conveniently clustered there, including stores, restaurants, entertainment, tourist attractions, services, housing, government functions and offices.

Concentrating activities, buildings and services and cultural activities in a small area increases efficiency and maximizes economic health by attracting large numbers of people and minimizing the distances they must travel. These concentrated downtown entities succeed in part because of the synergistic benefits that downtown proximity to other nearby activities provides. Many small businesses depend on walk-

in traffic which is highest in the downtown. Providing downtown parking requires balancing the increasing demands of those needing a place to park, while sustaining and enhancing the qualities of a healthy downtown, including a higher density, a pedestrian-friendly environment, and a strong sense of place. Providing parking should not detract from the unique features that make the downtown a lively place to visit, work, shop and live.

2010 Desman Parking Study & Addendum

<http://www.lexingtonva.gov/pdfs/Parking%20Final%20Mgnt%202010.pdf>

The Desman traffic study was reviewed. Particularly salient information from this document includes the following:

- current estimated surplus of 214 parking spaces (574 of 876 were utilized in the peak hour)
- under a “what if” scenario – sufficient parking is available if all commercial space downtown were utilized
- Some core city blocks are at or near practical capacity levels (i.e. over 85% utilized)
- Majority of the surplus is in the Roy Smith Lot (County Courthouse Garage)
- Suggested some operational changes – many have been implemented (parking times, signage, layout of various lots, enforcement, permit parking, parking zone ordinance, pay for parking scenarios)

Parking Summary

Preferred Plan / On-Street Parking Summary Lexington Downtown Plan

Draft

5/22/13
Sympoetica

<u>Block Location:</u>	<u>Current Parking</u>	<u>Preferred Plan Parking</u>	<u>Gain or Loss</u>	<u>Note:</u>
Main Street				
Preston to Nelson Streets	36	38	2	Currently, parking both sides. Planned, parking both sides.
Nelson to Washington Streets	24	22	-2	Currently, parking both sides. Planned, parking both sides.
Nelson Street				
Randolph to Main Streets	8	10	2	Currently, parking on one side only. Planned, parking on one side only.
Main to Jefferson Streets	10	10	0	Currently, parking on one side only. Planned, parking on one side only.
Washington Street (Reconfigured for Wider Sidewalks)				
Randolph to Main Streets	13	7	-6	Currently, parking both sides. Planned, parking on one side only. Bus parking included.
Main to Jefferson Streets	18	10	-8	Currently, parking both sides. Planned, parking on one side only.
Total	109	97	-12	

General Notes:

- Current on-street parking counts from field observation or aerial photography review; counts are approximate.
- Estimated parking space counts under the Preferred Plan include opportunities for inclusion loading zones, and bus parking in appropriate locations.

Rankings Charts

Key Distinguishing Characteristics Ranking: Public Forum #2

<u>Theme</u>	Totals
Historic City Center	8
Nelson & Main Core	3
Expanded Main Street Corridor	12
<u>Area of Focus</u>	
Main Street-- Nelson to Henry Washington Street-- Randolph to Jefferson	5
Main Street—Nelson to Henry Nelson St-- Randolph to Jefferson	5
Main Street—Preston to Washington Nelson St-- Randolph to Jefferson	13
<u>Eastern Gateway</u>	
Washington Street	2
Nelson Street-- New Bridge	21
<u>Visitor Center</u>	
Same as Existing	6
Move to Vicinity of Nelson & Randolph Intersection	3
Move to South Main Street-- Preston to Nelson Area	13
<u>Above Ground Utilities</u>	
Same as Existing	2
Underground on Jefferson St and Randolph St	6
Underground throughout Study Area	14
<u>Traffic Patterns</u>	
Same as Existing	11
Existing + Chicanes on Jefferson St at Nelson and Washington	7
Existing + Chicanes + Option for 2-way traffic on Main Street south of Nelson	5
<u>South Main St 2-way Traffic Options</u>	
Maintain Existing One Way Pattern	16
Sub-Alternative 1A	3
Sub-Alternative 1B	4

Rankings Guide: Highest Number = Top Preference

Top Preference for Each Category

Menu of Concepts Feedback Ranking

Visual Environment	Totals
Directional Signage-Vehicular	50
Directional Signage-Pedestrian	47
Visual Clutter	43
Northern Gateway	46
History/ Architecture Interpretation	53
Public Art	48
Seasonal Plantings	45
Compatible Streetscape Materials	48
Vehicular Environment	
Parallel Parking	45
Bulb Outs	39
Loading Zones	56
Traffic Signals	55
Ornamental Street Lighting	54
Sharrows	51
Bike Racks	48

Pedestrian Environment	
Accessibility: Function, Mobility & Safety	36
Sidewalks (Through Pedestrian Zone)	41
Sidewalks (Furnishings Zone)	51
Outdoor Activity/Dining Areas	41
Alleys/Potential Pedestrian Links	49
Pedestrian Signals at Intersections	56
Mid-block Crossings	56
Special Intersection & Paving Treatments	52
Activity Environment	
Street Trees-columnar canopy	50
Public Green Space	37
Private Green Space	55
Seating & Trash Receptacles	42
Water Fountains	60
Visitor Conveniences & Public Restrooms	46
Event Spaces	44

Ranking Guide:
Lower Number = Higher Priority

Highest Priority
Mid-Level Priority
Lower Level Priority
Lowest Priority

Rankings were determined from public feedback received during and after the Public Forum #2 for the Lexington Downtown Enhancement Plan.

Public Feedback

Lexington Downtown Enhancement Plan
Public Forum #1 August 28th, 2012, 6-8pm

Top 5 Ideas

Group 1:

1. Improve interior blocks
2. Stay true to historical identity (no cookie cutter design)
3. Focus on tourism
4. Parklets (small, park like spaces)
5. Live music downtown

Group 2:

1. Outdoor business environment
2. Evening hours/nightlife
3. Connectivity to adjacent attractions (natural and business)
4. Visitor friendly activities events, attractions
5. Improve the north entrance (hook 'em)

Group 3:

1. Centralized parking garage
2. Abundant seating - everywhere
3. Mid-block street crossing
4. Bike lanes on Randolph St.
5. Improved / updated signage

Group 4:

1. More shade trees and foliage
2. Wider side walks
3. 2 lane of traffic on Main Street
4. Delivery trucks - better access

5. Pride of ownership: care of facades

Group 5:

1. Pedestrian friendly, sidewalks / atmosphere, more welcoming, utilities underground
2. Keeping businesses open, attracting new business and financial entity to help owners maintain and improve facade
3. Promote historical aspect
4. College buys in to viability of downtown
5. Trolley? To bring visitors from hotels or horse center to downtown

Others: more cooperation from businesses to work together for events and evening hours

- more full time residents above stores
- deliveries off main street.

Group 6:

1. Define a clear identity and underscore economic impact on downtown business
2. Maintain 2 lanes traffic - Main and Jefferson
3. Explore pedestrian mall on Washington Street
4. Plan must include VMI VC SJC Garage and Davidson park culture
5. Relieve parking pressure critical commercial parking zones business owners and employees

Group 7:

1. Better Signage and Wayfinding
2. Friendlier Environment (daylight and dark) for youth and older lingering
3. Greening and Cleaning spaces
4. Downtown Employee and owner education on parking
5. More space and attractions (movie in Hopkins, street performers)

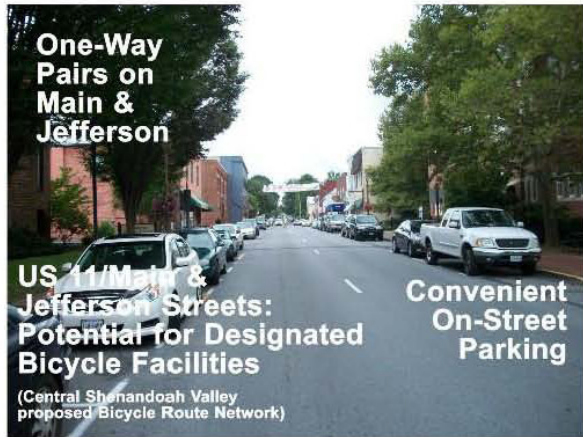
Why is it important to accommodate pedestrians and encourage walking in the community?

1. We're all pedestrians—Whether for recreation or practical purposes, most people make several trips a day on foot, even if it's only a block or so from a parked car to the entrance of a building.
2. It will make the road safer—Making streets safer for pedestrians, the most vulnerable road user, usually makes the roads safer for everyone, including bicyclists and drivers.
3. Many cannot or choose not to drive—Non-drivers include people who choose not to drive; children; adolescents; people with physical, visual, and mental disabilities; people with financial constraints; people who are temporarily disabled; and many older adults.
4. It's cheaper to walk—There are many costs associated with driving (e.g., cost of vehicle, gas, insurance, annual inspection and registration, maintenance, parking fees, traffic violation fees, etc.), but virtually none with walking. Additionally, walking can save money by improving health and reducing health care costs.
5. It's good for business—Providing pedestrian access to retailers and commercial centers provides economic benefits and can promote tourism and further economic development.
6. Other modes depend on walking—To get from places to their cars, bicycles, buses, or trains, people need to be able to walk.
7. Walking is good for the environment—Unlike driving, walking does not contribute to air, noise, or water pollution.
8. Walking can reduce the demand for existing and new roadways—Many streets carry more traffic than they were designed to handle, resulting in gridlock, wasted time and energy, and pollution. Providing opportunities to walk can help get more people out of frustrating traffic congestion.

9. Walking can improve people's health—Regular walking can aid in weight loss; lower blood pressure; improve cholesterol, blood sugar, immune system function, and insulin dynamics; prevent bone-loss; reduce the risk of coronary heart disease, stroke, and other chronic diseases; and improve mood and mental performance.

10. Walking improves the quality of our lives—Walking provides intangible personal benefits (such as a sense of independence and freedom of choice), as well as social benefits (such as opportunities to interact with others and build community closeness and trust) that enrich the lives of children, families, and neighbors.

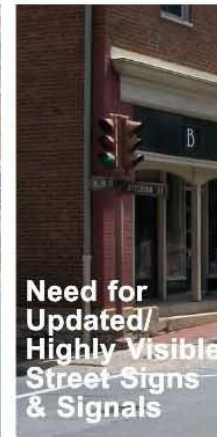
Source: Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center, <http://www.walkinginfo.org>.



Main Street



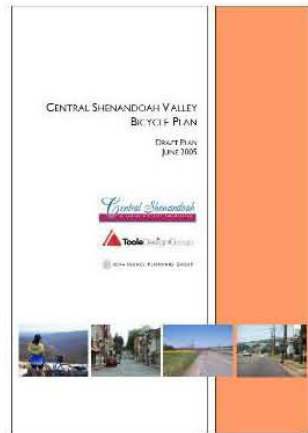
Nelson Street



Washington Street



Randolph to Main



Regional Bicycle Plan



Washington Street



Main Street



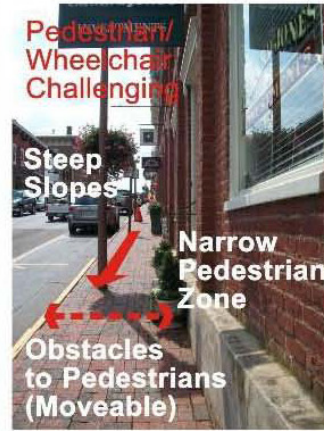
Jefferson Street



Main Street



Main Street



Washington Street



Jefferson Street



Main Street



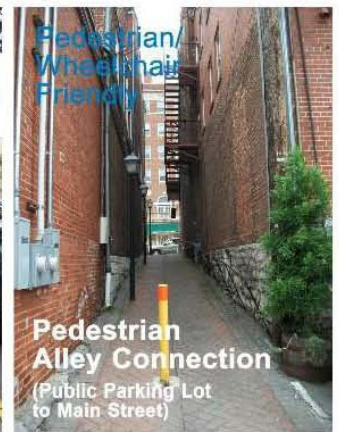
Jefferson Street



Main Street



Main Street



Main Street



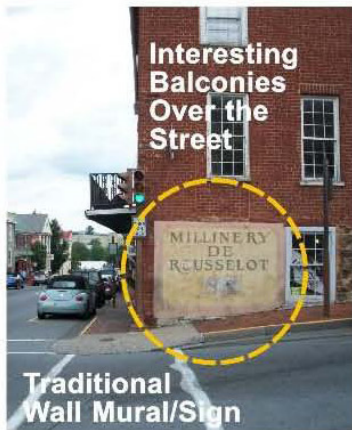
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Washington Street



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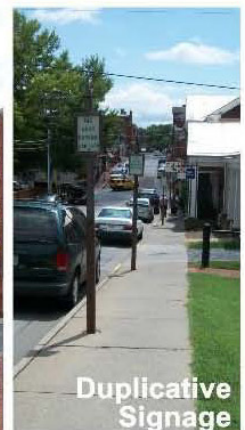
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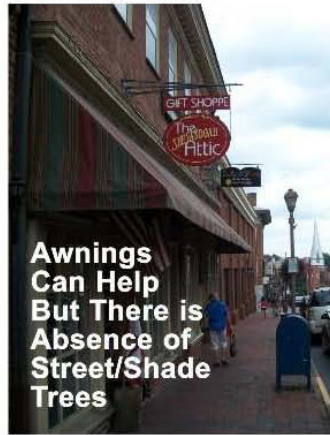
Main Street



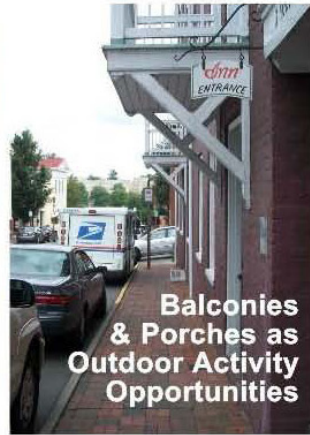
Washington Street



Washington Street



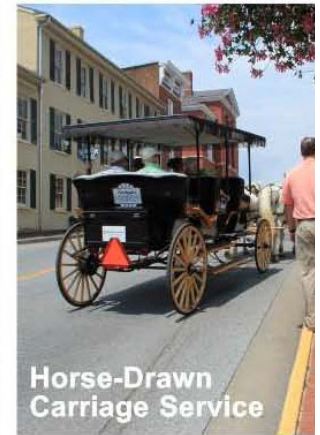
Main Street



Main Street



Main Street



Washington Street



Jefferson Street



Main Street



Main Street



Main Street



Main Street

Concept Alternatives: Menu of Concepts & Distinguishing Characteristics

Concept Alternatives Instructions: The chart below describes some of the distinguishing characteristics of each Conceptual Plan. For each concept idea (column #1), please circle your top preference. One item should be circled per row.

Concept Idea	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Theme	Historic City Center	Nelson & Main Core	Expanded Main Street Corridor
Primary Area of Focus	Main Street—Nelson to Henry Washington St—Randolph to Jefferson	Main Street—Nelson to Henry Nelson St—Randolph to Jefferson	Main Street—Preston to Washington Nelson St—Randolph to Jefferson
Eastern Downtown Gateway	Washington Street	Nelson Street—New Bridge	Nelson Street—New Bridge
Visitor Center	Same as Existing	Move to Vicinity of Nelson & Randolph Intersection	Move to South Main Street— Preston to Nelson Area
Traffic Patterns	Same as Existing	Chicanes on Jefferson St at Nelson and Washington	Chicanes + Option for 2-way traffic on Main Street south of Nelson
Above Ground Utilities	Same as Existing	Underground on Jefferson St and Randolph Street	Underground throughout Study Area

Concept Alternatives: Menu of Concepts & Distinguishing Characteristics

Menu of Concepts Instructions: Please rank the following improvements based on level of priority for Downtown Lexington with ‘1’ being a top priority, ‘2’ being something you’d like to see happen at some point, and ‘3’ being a low priority. You are allowed to use each number for a maximum of ten improvements.

Visual Environment	Menu of Concepts: All Alternatives	Description
	Directional Signage-Vehicular	Integrate with Wayfinding System
	Directional Signage-Pedestrian	Informational Kiosks & Maps at Select Locations
	Visual Clutter	“Sign Diet” & Consolidation
	Northern Gateway	Main Street at the ‘Confluence’—water feature
	History/ Architecture Interpretation	Table-top signs at select locations
	Public Art	Select Locations
	Seasonal Plantings	Throughout Study Area
	Compatible Streetscape Materials	New Bulb-outs and furniture zones

Vehicular Environment	Menu of Concepts: All Alternatives	Description
	Parallel Parking	Throughout Study Area
	Bulb Outs	Select Locations—see each alternative
	Loading Zones	Designated for each block
	Traffic Signals	New Posts & Signals
	Ornamental Street Lighting	New Lights & Placement for enhanced pedestrian mobility
	Sharrows	Within Travel Lanes throughout study area
	Bike Racks	Visitor Center and Select locations as indicated on each alternative

Pedestrian Environment	Menu of Concepts: All Alternatives	Description
	Accessibility: Function, Mobility & Safety	Remove obstacles
	Sidewalks (Through Pedestrian Zone)	Provide Clearance
	Sidewalks (Furnishings Zone)	Within bulb-outs as needed
	Outdoor Activity/Dining Areas	New Bulb-outs and Parklets
	Alleys/Potential Pedestrian Links	Main to Randolph & Main to Jefferson in 4 locations
	Pedestrian Signals at Intersections	New Traffic Signals
	Mid-block Crossings	Select Locations
	Special Intersection & Paving Treatments	Bulb-outs and select locations—see alternatives maps

Activity Environment	Menu of Concepts: All Alternatives	Description
	Street Trees-columnar canopy	Within bulb-outs at select locations
	Public Green Space	Hopkins Green, Old Courthouse & Parklets
	Private Green Space	Opportunity sites in key blocks
	Seating & Trash Receptacles	Bulb-outs and existing green space
	Water Fountains	Existing Green Space & Kiosk Locations
	Visitor Conveniences & Public Restrooms	Visitor Center, Hopkins Green and Old Courthouse
	Event Spaces	Hopkins Green, Old Courthouse, Davidson Park & Temporary Street Closures



Lexington Downtown Plan

Washington St Gateway / Historic City Center

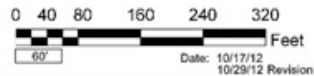
Alternative Sketch Plan **A**

City of Lexington, Virginia

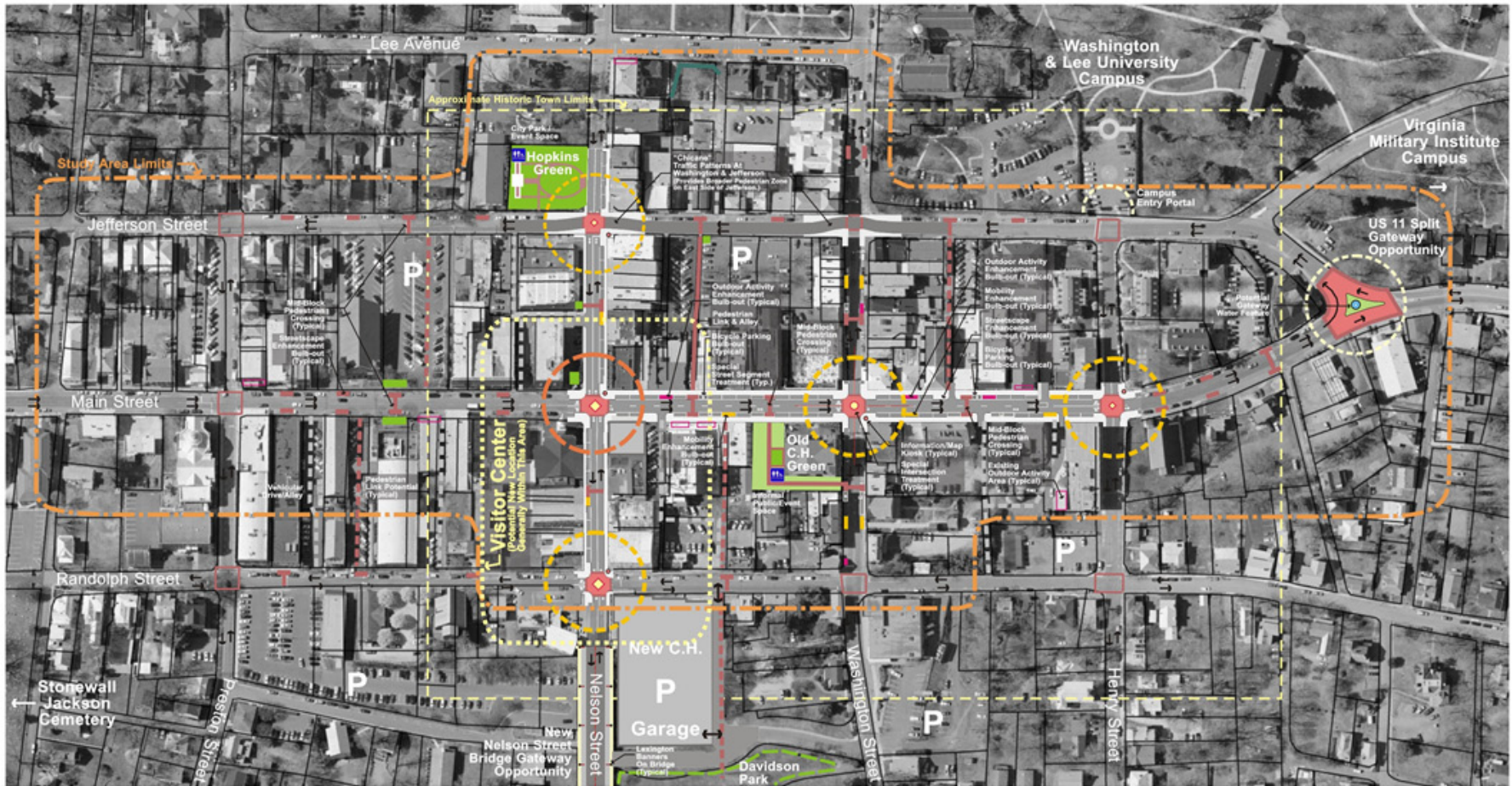
sympoetica

CP
Cooper Planning

EPR



Note: This Alternative Sketch Plan illustrates an array of possible plan and program elements, which when selectively combined with elements from the other alternative sketch plans, can form a preferred downtown plan and program.



Lexington Downtown Plan

New Nelson St Gateway / Historic Main Core

Alternative Sketch Plan **B**

sympoetica

CP
CooperPartners

EPR



Note: This Alternative Sketch Plan illustrates an array of possible plan and program elements, which when selectively combined with elements from the other alternative sketch plans, can form a preferred downtown plan and program.

Date: 10/17/12
10/29/12 Revision

City of Lexington, Virginia



Lexington Downtown Plan

New Nelson St Gateway / Expanded Main St Corridor

Alternative Sketch Plan **C**
City of Lexington, Virginia

symoetica

CP
Cooper Planning

EPR



Note: This Alternative Sketch Plan illustrates an array of possible plan and program elements, which when selectively combined with elements from the other alternative sketch plans, can form a preferred downtown plan and program.

Date: 10/17/12
10/29/12 Revision

Firm Background Information

Cooper Planning

Cooper Planning is a Charlottesville, VA based planning firm that specializes in property analysis, project management, and community facilitation. Cooper Planning was established by Ashley Cooper in 2008 to successfully manage projects with 'out of the box' responses to modern needs. Cooper Planning provides the highest quality services, from visioning and consensus building, to identifying and assessing various strategies, incorporating property and zoning analysis, to entitlements and plan implementation. Given Ashley's background in public sector planning, she maintains a firm commitment to the public good and a special understanding of the needs and perspectives of elected and appointed local officials, as well as community stakeholders. A primary goal of Cooper Planning is to create projects and proposals that are rooted in community values.

Cooper Planning has a variety of experience serving cities, counties, and communities. We also work with private development interests, on a selective basis, to bring creative solutions to the realm of land development. Cooper Planning works to bring the most effective planning process, while ensuring that projects conform to applicable development goals and regulations. Our focus is in creating lasting places of value as well as lasting relationships within communities in which we work. We believe in helping communities grow and evolve in the most beneficial ways. For more information, please visit our website at: <http://www.cooper-planning.com/>

Contact Information:

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Sympoetica / Creating Community

Sympoetica was established in 1986 as Strategic Land Planning, Inc. In 2001, in celebration of the company's 15th anniversary and the beginning of 21st Century, we changed our name to Sympoetica, a name that reflects our collaborative approach to community planning. Barry Carpenter, ASLA, and Phoebe Kilby, AICP, founders and principals, began the practice in Alexandria, Virginia. In 1994, we moved to Woodstock, Virginia, where we have expanded our practice to serve clients throughout the Shenandoah Valley, Virginia and the United States. Our web page at www.sympoetica.net provides additional background on our firm, our experience and planning philosophy.

Dedicated to land use planning and community design that is responsive to local community needs, we specialize in plans and initiatives that create quality places to live and work while preserving the unique historic, recreational and natural resources of each community. Our practice offers expertise in new and innovative planning and design forms, such as traditional neighborhood development and Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) thoroughfare design. Sympoetica employs the latest in community involvement techniques to identify and resolve conflicting issues and goals in the public planning environment. We have a real knowledge and appreciation of the development process, regulatory controls, zoning techniques, and political sensitivities that can come into play in community planning and development implementation efforts. Our private-sector community design work informs us of the market and financial impacts of public plans and ordinances.

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EPR

EPR is a civil and multimodal transportation engineering and planning firm founded in 2004. EPR's staff focus on the individual needs of each project and work closely with the project "owners" to help identify goals, objectives, and an effective project approach that leads to a successful project outcome. EPR has experience in working with agencies, communities, and the private sector throughout the mid-Atlantic and Florida on diverse projects that address the gamut of design and planning challenges. Within the planning realm, EPR has a unique focus on integrating transportation, land use, and urban design considerations to create effective and lasting plans and designs. EPR is a DBE/WBE firm.

EPR Specialized Services:

Traffic Engineering Operational Analyses Community Planning
Long Range Transportation Planning Innovative Public Involvement
Traffic Engineering Analysis and Design Geometric Design
Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Parking Studies
Stormwater Studies and Design Roadway, Civil, and Site Design
Integrated Land Use and Transportation Corridor Planning

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