Chapter 6: Mobility

6.1 Introduction

The City of Manassas' transportation system has evolved from the simple paths and streets of its founding years to today's complex, multimodal network. The City's rich history and cultural traditions have shaped the way that residents and visitors travel to and within the City. The transportation system has developed in response to the demands of a growing population, changing economies, and new technologies. Over time, one truth has remained constant: the City's transportation system is inextricably linked to land use decisions and development.

A map of existing roadway conditions (Appendix D, Figure B-11) indicates that a few major corridors carry a substantial portion of the City's traffic. In the western portion of the City, Nokesville Road carries between 17,000 and 28,000 vehicles per day (vpd), and Wellington Road carries over 12,000 vpd. To the north, Sudley Road serves as the main corridor into the City, carrying over 30,000 vpd, with Grant Avenue connecting to the downtown. Centreville Road extends to the northeast, connecting to Manassas Park. The downtown continues to be a traffic hub, bringing automobiles into Old Town Manassas for entertainment, shopping, cultural events, commuter rail and other activities. Construction of the Prince William Parkway has reduced the amount of through traffic passing north-south through the City on Business 234.

Recent Accomplishments

In spite of substantial fiscal constraints during the past few years the City has:

- Completed fifth lane on Centreville Road.
- Completed Battle Street pedestrian improvements to promote a cultural and dining center for downtown Manassas.
- Completed the Rt 28 overpass to promote easier access to Manassas and improve protection and rescue response times.
- Completed Wellington Road widening between Godwin Road and Nokesville Road.

Key Transportation Issues

In order to sustain the City's economic growth and development, its transportation system will need to adapt. To guide this process, an integrated approach that takes into account the unique needs and complimentary aspects of our road, rail, air, bike, and pedestrian facilities is key. The overarching goal of the City's transportation policies is to provide for the safety and convenience of

all users of the system, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit users, freight and motor vehicle drivers.

- Through-traffic will need to be managed efficiently and effectively to carry increasing levels of regional traffic around the City and ease traffic demands on our major activity sectors and neighborhoods. Our residents will also need easy access to regional roads and trails for commuting as well as commercial and recreational activities.

- The City must also take a comprehensive and integrated transportation approach to planning for its citizens and for visitors making Manassas a destination. Safe, multi-modal access throughout the City needs to be promoted so citizens and visitors have a range of mobility choices. Physical and procedural obstacles to such choices need to be removed and projects promoting greater access to and among the City's special districts are encouraged.

Specifically, the following are key transportation issues facing Manassas:

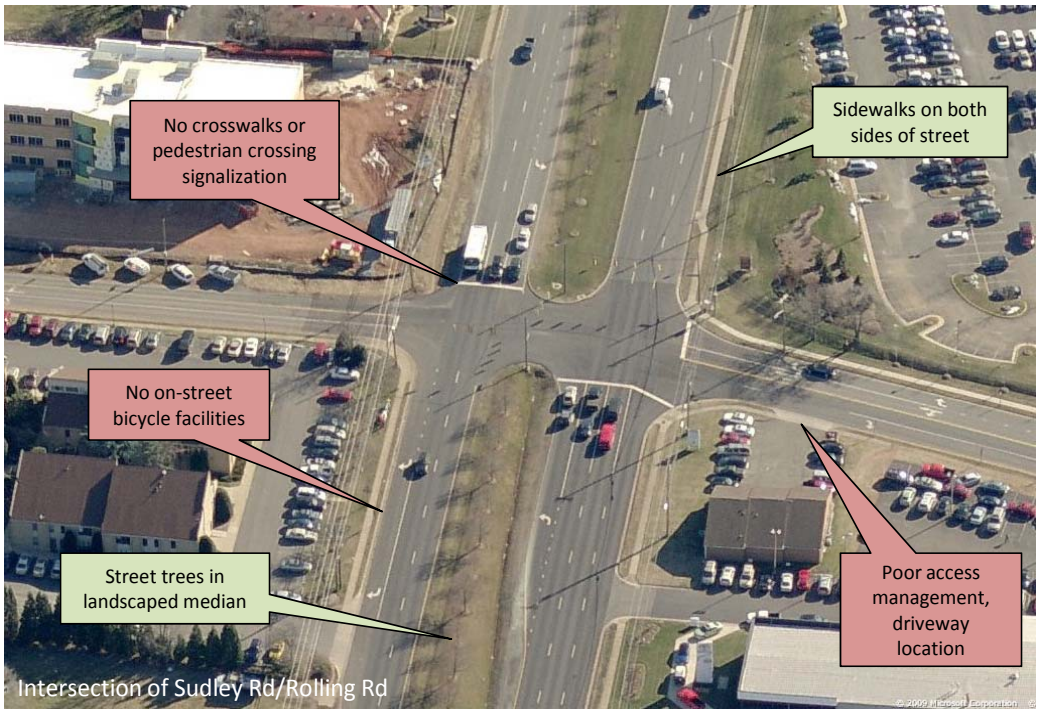
- Managing through traffic to mitigate the impacts of non-local traffic on neighborhoods, and improving the overall efficiency and safety of the transportation system.
- Improving the system of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and amenities.
- Making better road, bikeway, and pedestrian connections to mass transit facilities.
- Developing parking standards and policies for the downtown, Mathis Avenue, Sudley Road, and Manassas Landing areas.
- Defining and planning for integrated, multi-modal local roadway needs.
- Improving regional transportation coordination to facilitate the efficient flow of traffic both around and into the City.
- Encouraging greater utilization and further development of the Manassas Airport as a key provider of air service in the region.
- Developing transportation demand management (TDM) programs to optimize transportation system performance and reduce traffic congestion. Some elements of TDM programs include carpool, vanpool, work from home, flexible work hours, subsidizing transit costs, and locker rooms for bicyclists.

Complete Streets Concepts

- Safe access for all users
- Encourage walking and bicycling for health
- Common features include sidewalks, bike lanes, wide shoulders, special bus lanes, accessible public transit stops, frequent crossing opportunities, raised crosswalks, median islands, curb extensions, and more.

Complete Streets

An increasing number of communities are adopting “complete street” policies for developing and redeveloping roadways that safely and efficiently accommodate multiple modes of transportation within the same right-of-way. As the looks to maximize its current infrastructure for future demands, it is essential to adopt “complete street” policies and standards that conform to the City's needs and conditions. Each element of a complete street should be incorporated as can be accommodated in each situation. Bicycle facilities should be included based on the Bike Trail Master Plan.



The intersection of Sudley Road and Rolling Road is typical of area commercial corridors and demonstrates the need for integrated, multi-modal transportation planning.

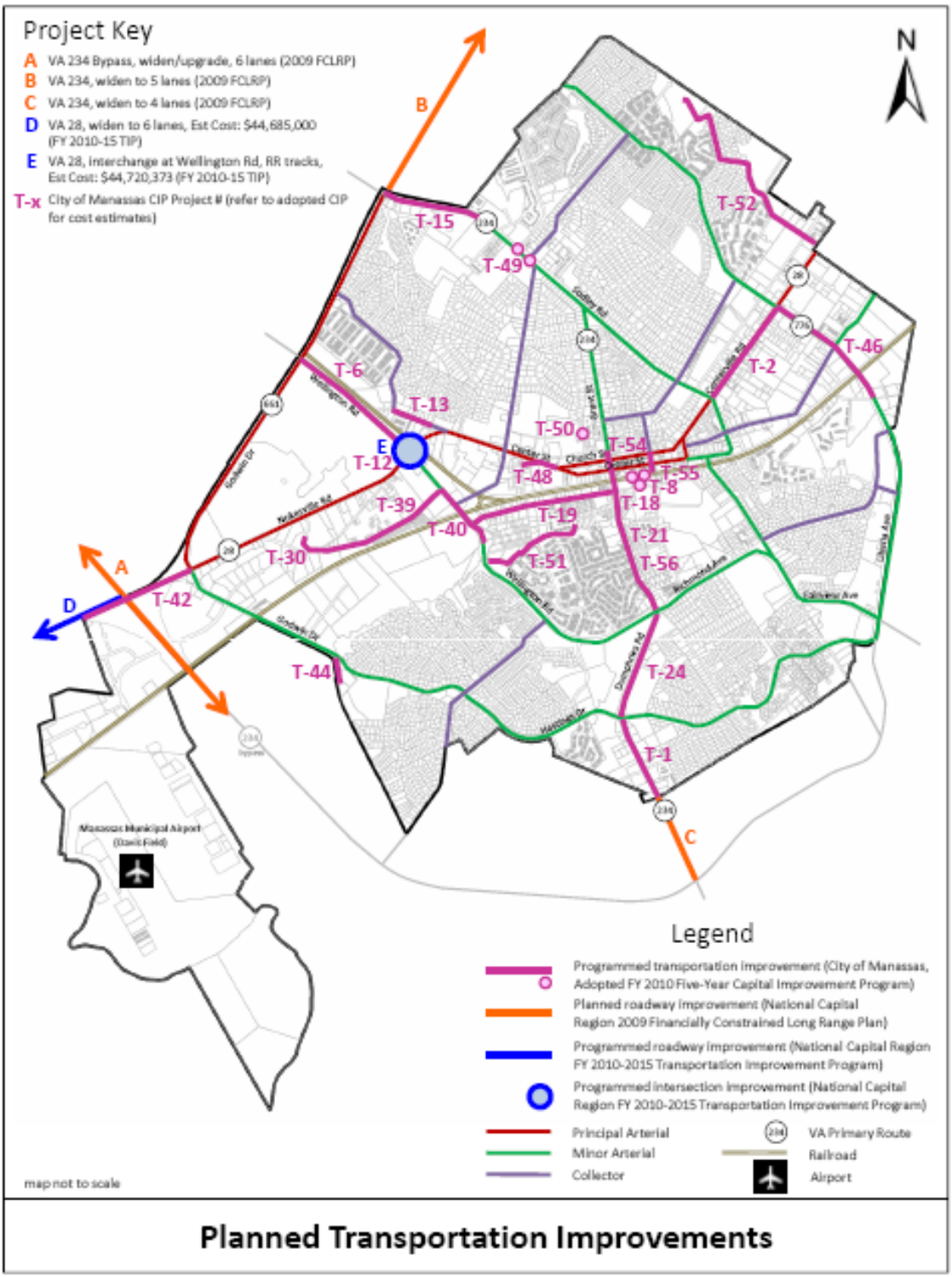
Cross-section of a "Complete Street" depicts a design that facilitates multiple modes of travel.

Legislative Requirement

Section 15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia requires that a Comprehensive Plan include "a map that shall show road improvements and transportation improvements, including the cost estimates of such road and transportation improvements as available from the Virginia Department of Transportation, taking into account the current and future needs of residents in the locality while considering the current and future needs of the planning district in which the locality is situated. "

The following sections of this chapter outline the City's goals, objectives and strategies for transportation and mobility. Figure 6 identifies currently proposed transportation projects included in the Capital Improvements Program.

Figure 6: Planned Transportation Improvements



Planned Transportation Improvements

6.2 Goals and Objectives

Goal

Manassas will have a safe, efficient, multi-modal transportation system with streets sufficient to support businesses and residents, providing public transportation and pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly facilities, while being sensitive to the design context of the City and its neighborhoods.

Objectives and Strategies: Mobility

- (Objective 6.1) Maximize the efficiency and effectiveness of the City's connections to the regional road, rail, air, and bikeway transportation system. Ensure through-traffic is accommodated without burdening the City's destinations and neighborhoods, so residents and businesses have easy access to major roads, rails, trails, and air facilities.
    - (Strategy 6.1.1) Promote coordination with regional transportation planning partners to ensure orderly development and access to various transportation funding sources.
    - (Strategy 6.1.2) Advocate and support regional transportation improvements, such as the Manassas Route 28 Bypass that promote the efficient flow of through traffic.
    - (Strategy 6.1.3) Improve access to regional and local transit services for all residents by supporting the expansion of VRE and OmniRide as cost-effective alternatives to driving and to accommodate the City's growing transportation needs.
    - (Strategy 6.1.4) Promote Manassas Airport as a vital component of the region's transportation system and the City's economy. Work with neighboring jurisdictions to improve access to the airport's facilities. Continue to improve facilities to enhance safety, comply with FAA design standards, and accommodate greater numbers of aircraft and payloads under a wider range of conditions.
- (Objective 6.2) Develop an integrated, multi-modal transportation system within the City that provides residents, tourists and visitors a range of mobility choices and easy access to the City's major centers. Support programs that emphasize the special transportation needs of children, the elderly and the disabled and reduce the impact of travel on community resources including air and water quality, and increase energy efficiency.

- (Strategy 6.2.1) Provide crosswalks and other intersection improvements to remove barriers between neighborhoods and provide greater pedestrian access and safety.
- (Strategy 6.2.2) Diminish the impacts of through-traffic on existing residential neighborhoods.
- (Strategy 6.2.3) Develop pedestrian-oriented connections and transitions between Old Town, the Courthouse area, and the Mathis Avenue sector. Study and promote feasible transportation programs (e.g. improved local transit, bike share programs) connecting special sectors and tourist attractions in the City.
- (Strategy 6.2.4) Plan and implement, where feasible, "complete streets" designs in constructing and maintaining roadways so that the safety and convenience of all uses of the City's transportation system including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transit riders, and motor vehicle drivers are accommodated and balanced. This includes providing facilities so that even the most vulnerable can travel safely within the public right-of-way. Promote the installation (infill and redevelopment) of sidewalks at least 5 feet wide, or wider, where appropriate.
- (Strategy 6.2.5) Improve the aesthetic quality of the pedestrian environment in each of the special sectors by providing trees, street furniture, and designs that improve pedestrian safety.
- (Strategy 6.2.6) Develop comprehensive parking policies and standards that meet the needs of the business community, visitors, commuters, civic organizations, and residents.
- (Strategy 6.2.7) Update the current Bikeway and Pedestrian Trial Master Plan to include the results of completed sector studies, and develop a "complete streets" approach for providing bikeway, sidewalk network, and amenities. Focus priorities on creating links to schools and parks, as well as transit, employment, and cultural centers.
- (Strategy 6.2.8) Increase energy efficiency and reduce hydrocarbon emissions by encouraging and accommodating non-motorized travel, public transit, carpooling, telecommuting, and alternative-fuel vehicles.
- (Strategy 6.2.9) Minimize the creation of impervious surface area for streets and other transportation facilities, and manage the collection and release of runoff in an effective and environmentally sensitive manner.
- (Strategy 6.2.10) Respect and accommodate historic and cultural resources throughout the transportation planning and construction process.

- (Objective 6.3) Maximize the contribution of new and existing transportation capital improvement projects as well as the City's transportation policies and procedures to the objectives and strategies of this Comprehensive Plan.
    - (Strategy 6.3.1) Justify and prioritize transportation capital improvement projects according to their contribution to promoting the flow of through traffic or their contribution to promoting multi-modal access throughout the City.
    - (Strategy 6.3.2) Ensure that improvements and new/redevelopment projects, such as sidewalk widening and bike path development, are included as line item projects in the Capital Improvements Plan, and identify additional funding sources to complete such projects.
    - (Strategy 6.3.3) Review approved sector plans, identify and prioritize recommended transportation projects according to the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, and include them in the City's Capital Improvement Plan process.
    - (Strategy 6.3.4) Review and adjust regulations and requirements for new development or redevelopment projects to upgrade access provisions and support the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Implement access management programs to study and evaluate the comprehensive impacts of new projects.
    - (Strategy 6.3.5) Undertake a rewrite of Parking Standards in the Zoning Ordinance as well as the City's transportation policies and procedures to reflect the priorities of this plan and the recommendations of approved sector plans.
    - (Strategy 6.3.6) Investigate the possible use of impact fees to help fund transportation improvements.
    - (Strategy 6.3.7) Incorporate approved neighborhood planning initiatives into City-wide transportation plans.
- (Objective 6.4) Provide transportation system operations that are safe and secure, and enable prompt and effective emergency response.
    - (Strategy 6.4.1) Use data on transportation accident rates to guide infrastructure investments that minimize rates of injuries and accidents.
    - (Strategy 6.4.2) Improve signage, shelters, pedestrian crosswalks and signaling, road markings, and sidewalk design to ensure that transit riders, pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorists feel safe and comfortable at all times when traveling in Manassas.
    - (Strategy 6.4.3) In conjunction with the City's Emergency Operations Plan, invest in facilities and improve traffic management capabilities that optimize the transportation system's

ability during emergencies to execute emergency responses, including evacuation when necessary.