



4.0 LAND USE

4.1 Overview

Goal: A pattern of land uses that supports the City of Portsmouth's quality of life and economic vitality.

The smallest political jurisdiction in the Hampton Roads region at approximately 34 square miles, Portsmouth is an almost entirely developed city. Existing land uses range from a mix of uses in the Downtown to single-family neighborhoods, multi-family developments, commercial corridors, industrial areas, and governmental installations such as the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Virginia Port Authority, and U.S. Naval Hospital (Map 3). Table 1 shows the percentage and acreage breakdown of existing land uses in the City as of 2004.



High Street in downtown

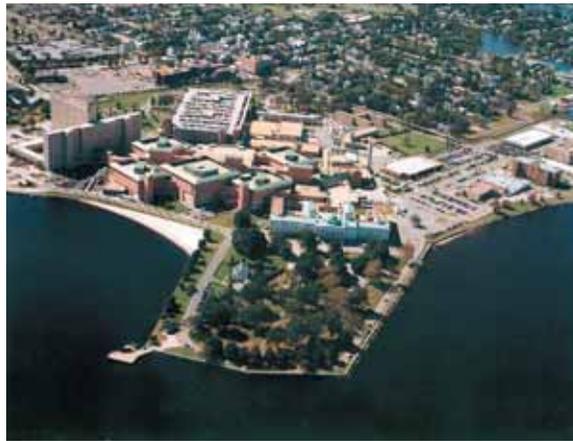
Table 1. Existing Land Use

Land Use	Acres	Percentage
Heavy Industrial	1,361	6.19
Light Industrial	667	3.04
Institutional/Public	1,166	5.31
Commercial	680	3.09
Mixed Use	111	0.05
Office	33	0.02
Federal Government	4,129	18.79
Multi-Family Residential	1,046	4.76
Single-Family Residential (High Density)	267	1.22
Single-Family Residential (Low/Medium Density)	6,044	27.51
Mixed Residential	443	2.02
Preservation/Open Space/Park	763	3.47
Transportation	3,601	16.39
Vacant	1,651	7.51
Uncategorized	12	0.01
Total	21,974	99.38¹

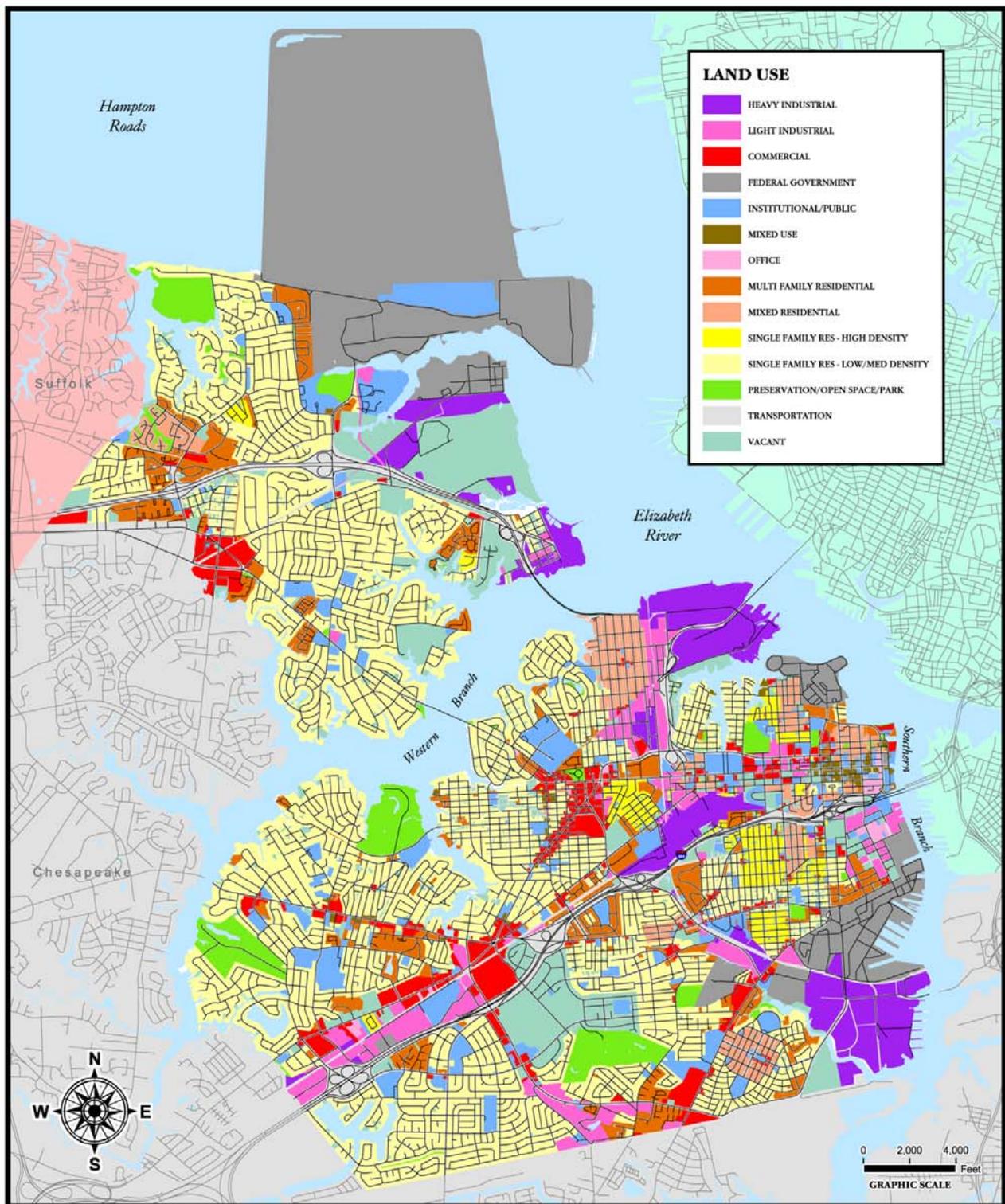
¹Does not add up to 100.00 because of rounding.

Key characteristics of Portsmouth's existing land use pattern include:

- Approximately one-third of Portsmouth's land area is classified as residential, the largest proportion of any land use category. Single-family neighborhoods are found throughout Churchland and other parts of the City.
- The Downtown supports Portsmouth's only significant concentration of mixed uses, including commercial, office, residential, and institutional uses.
- Heavy industry largely consists of maritime-related uses along the waterfront (including the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, shown as "Federal Government" on the Existing Land Use Map). Light industrial and commercial uses are concentrated along major roadway corridors.
- A high proportion of land in Portsmouth is tax exempt. This includes land owned by the federal government (e.g., Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Naval Medical Center, U.S. Coast Guard Support Center) and land in other categories, such as Institutional/Public, Heavy Industrial, and Preservation/Open Space/Park.
- There is very little vacant land available for new development. Of the remaining land classified as vacant, approximately 37% is concentrated in three tracts committed for pending and future development:
 - The 180-acre former Fairwood Homes property, planned for redevelopment as a walkable, mixed-residential community
 - A 300-acre property on the Elizabeth River in Churchland, planned for a deepwater container terminal
 - The 135-acre Victory Crossing Business Park on Victory Boulevard, owned by the City's Industrial Development Authority
- Because of its age, fully developed character, and pattern of land use change, Portsmouth contains a significant amount of underutilized and obsolescent, previously developed properties that could be redeveloped for more productive uses. Upper High Street (between Effingham Street and I.C. Norcom High School) is a good example.



Naval Medical Center

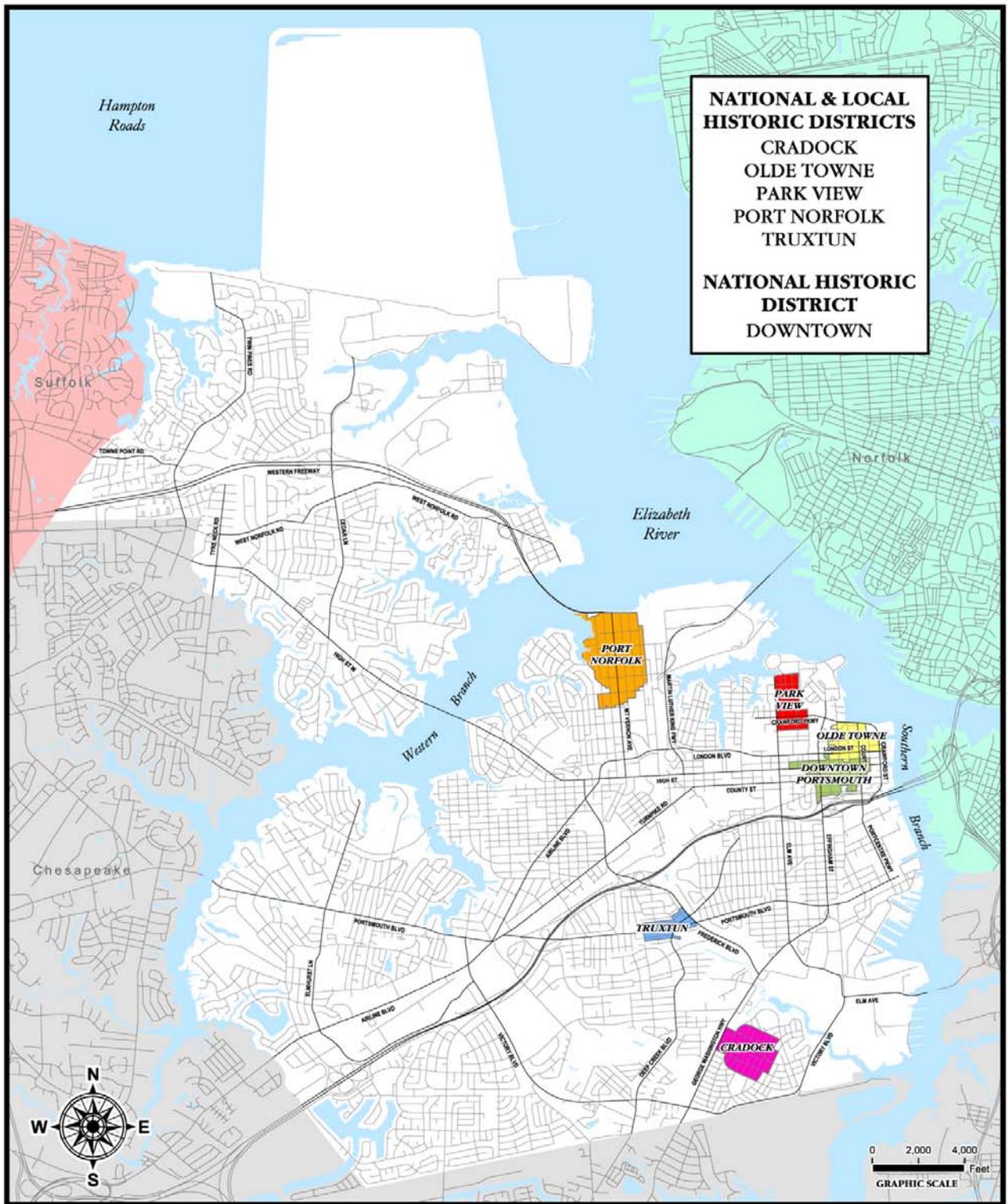


EXISTING LAND USE

PORTSMOUTH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MAP 3

DESTINATION 2025
Setting A Bold New Course



HISTORIC DISTRICTS

PORTSMOUTH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MAP 4

DESTINATION 2025
 Setting A Bold New Course

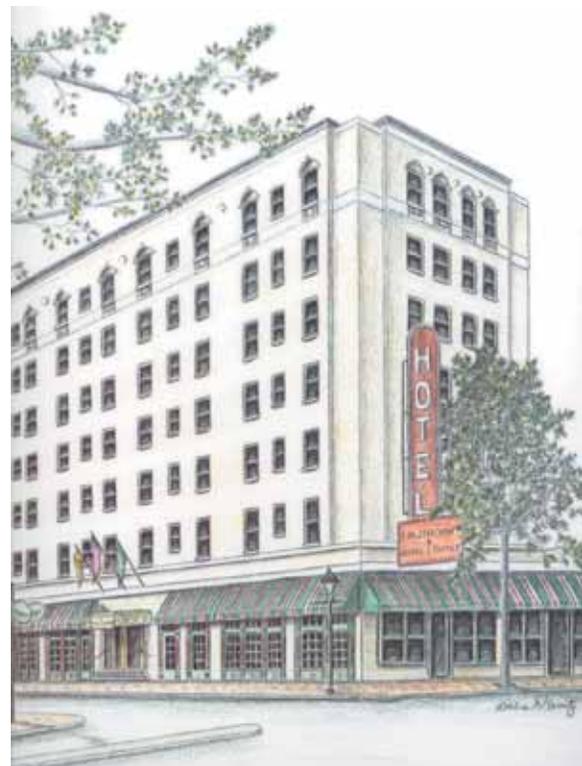


- In recognition of Portsmouth's historic character, there are six historic districts listed on the National Register of Historic Places (Map 4). Five of these districts (Cradock, Truxtun, Olde Towne, Port Norfolk, and Park View) are also regulated as historic districts by two Commissions of Architectural Review (CAR1 and CAR2). A Downtown Historic District has been listed on the National Register and is within the area regulated as a downtown design district.


Historic Olde Towne

Key land use issues include:

- Portsmouth's limited supply of vacant land, high proportion of tax exempt property, and barriers to expansion via annexation contribute to the need to achieve highest and best use of each parcel, both from a fiscal perspective and from the perspective of the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- The same conditions also mean that any future growth in the City will largely be accomplished through infill and redevelopment rather than new development on vacant land. However, infill is made difficult by the configuration of existing development in the City and the City's Zoning Ordinance (see below).
- It has been estimated that 37% of the residentially zoned lots in the City are nonconforming with respect to standards such as size and setbacks. In addition, the Zoning Ordinance lacks tools and standards that other cities use to manage and encourage good urban development in infill situations. For example, it has relatively few standards to address design issues such as landscaping, screening, lighting, signage, and compatibility with adjacent uses. The ordinance contains numerous residential, commercial, and employment zoning districts but no districts (with the exception of office-residential) that permit mixed uses outside of the downtown.


Hawthorn Hotel & Suites



- Because Portsmouth is an old city, there is considerable juxtaposition of incompatible uses, such as industrial and residential in areas such as Port Norfolk and West Norfolk. There are also spillover impacts such as truck traffic in residential neighborhoods. The ordinance lacked buffering standards for residential and commercial uses until recently.
- At approximately three and a half percent, the acreage of park/open space uses as a proportion of the total land area of the City is relatively low compared to 1) the norm for many other cities and 2) accepted national standards. (A typical standard for the amount of parkland is 10 acres/1,000 residents. Portsmouth has 7.6 acres of park and open space land based upon an estimated 2003 population of 99,617 residents.)
- The percentage of commercial land uses (approximately three percent) is also low compared to what is typical for other cities.
- There are differing perceptions regarding the relative benefits and costs of historic designation. On the one hand, such designation can contribute to neighborhood pride, make property owners eligible for tax incentives for eligible restoration projects, and support historic character, which is important to maintaining both quality of life for residents and Portsmouth's attractiveness as a place to visit. On the other hand, there is concern that the standards may impose an undue financial burden on homeowners in neighborhoods such as Cradock and Truxtun.

The land use policies and action strategies are designed to address the above issues. Because Portsmouth is predominantly developed, they do not propose to dramatically change the existing land use pattern. Instead, they are intended to achieve several major objectives:

1. Maintain and strengthen viable land uses and land use patterns, such as stable neighborhoods and economically healthy activity centers.
2. Target land uses and areas that are no longer viable (i.e., exhibit obsolescence and disinvestment) for reinvestment and redevelopment to new uses that support the City's quality of life and economical vitality.
3. Minimize conflicts between incompatible land uses (e.g., impacts of industrial uses on residentially areas, a particularly important issue given the predominance of heavy industrial and port-related uses in the City).
4. "Raise the bar" of quality on new development.



Source: Urban Design Associates



The latter objective is particularly important to achieving the goal of Portsmouth as a “Community of Choice” set forth in the Vision Statement and to raise the City’s image in the region and beyond. The City has made a concerted effort to raise the bar on quality in development projects in which it has been directly involved, such as the Renaissance Hotel, NTELOS, and Westbury. The same standard of quality should be applied to private development in the City.

Portsmouth
Future

Source: Urban Design Associates

Because land use is fundamental to other topics addressed by the Comprehensive Plan, the policies and action strategies address its linkages to other plan elements, particularly transportation and education. As an overall organizing principle, Portsmouth’s future land use pattern is conceived of one of activity centers of different scales, surrounded by and providing services for the City’s residential neighborhoods. These centers range from the downtown – a major draw in the region – to smaller nodes that support commercial and other community-serving uses. The activity center concept is useful to focus and direct policies and action strategies for other plan elements, for example by integrating community facilities such as schools and recreation centers or providing nodes for transit service.

Key mechanisms to implement the policies and action strategies include 1) initiating a major revision to the Zoning Ordinance and development standards and 2) targeting public improvements and decisions on investment to support desired land use changes, such as redevelopment of obsolescent uses. Policy #6 supports the conversion of tax-exempt properties to productive (tax-paying uses) wherever possible, particularly those parcels acquired by the City through the redevelopment process. This policy may be more difficult to achieve with respect to properties owned by other governmental entities due to the extent of federal and other installations in the City and their importance to the economy. However, it does highlight a fundamental principle of the Land Use Element – to achieve the maximum productivity out of each and every parcel in Portsmouth, as measured both by quality of life for residents and revenue generated for the City.

The final section of the Land Use Element presents and describes a Generalized Future Land Use Map for Portsmouth. This map depicts the general distribution of land uses throughout the City to be achieved over the next 10 to 20 years in support of the Vision Statement. The Generalized Future Land Use Map should not be interpreted as a zoning map, nor is it appropriate for application at a parcel-by-parcel scale. Rather, it is meant to be used in conjunction with the policies and action strategies to guide decision-making on land use issues by the City. For example, proposed rezonings should be generally consistent with the Future Land Use Map unless it can be clearly demonstrated that the proposal will contribute to achieving the goals and policies of the Comprehensive Plan.



4.2 Policies and Action Strategies

Policy #1: Maintain Viable Land Uses

Maintain and strengthen viable land uses and land use patterns (e.g., stable neighborhoods, economically sound commercial and employment areas).

Action Strategies

- Prevent impacts/encroachments by incompatible land uses (e.g., industrial encroachments into healthy residential neighborhoods)
- Revise the Zoning Ordinance/enact standards for development that is compatible in character with the surrounding context and Portsmouth’s urban environment [*Policy Link: Community Appearance #1*]
- Apply neighborhood conservation strategies such as code enforcement and housing rehabilitation [*Policy Link: Neighborhoods #1*]
- Ensure proper transitions and buffering (e.g., park and open space areas) between different land uses (Policy #3)

Policy #2: Address Obsolescent Land Uses

Identify and reverse obsolescent (no longer viable) land uses and land use patterns.

[*Policy Link: Neighborhoods #3*]

Action Strategies

- Assemble and make land available for redevelopment for new uses
- Target capital investments by the City (e.g., infrastructure, streetscape improvements, etc.) to support private reinvestment and redevelopment
- Pursue regulatory and investment strategies that change the mix of uses over time in areas characterized by a high degree of obsolescence

Policy #3: Reduce Land Use Conflicts

Reduce conflicts between incompatible land uses.

Action Strategies

- Remove obsolescent land uses (Policy #2)
- Introduce transitional uses between lower intensity and higher intensity uses (e.g., multi-family between single-family and commercial, park/open space areas, etc.)
- Establish standards in the Zoning Ordinance to reduce the impacts of higher intensity on lower intensity uses (requirements for landscaping/buffering/screening, noise, odor, light, traffic, etc.)


Policy #4: Activity Centers

Promote mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly land use patterns, including Regional Activity Centers, Community Activity Centers, Neighborhood Activity Centers, and Walkable Neighborhoods.

Action Strategies

- Intensify and diversify land uses in Regional Activity Centers, including the Downtown, Midtown, and Victory Crossing.
 - Pursue regulatory and investment strategies that promote a healthy mix of uses (e.g., retail, residential, office, and public facilities)
 - Promote redevelopment of underutilized properties to higher intensity uses
- Promote development of Community Activity Centers with complementary mixed uses (e.g., neighborhood-oriented retail, higher density residential, parks, schools, and other community facilities)
- Encourage Neighborhood Centers and Walkable Neighborhoods with development patterns that replicate the scale and character of Portsmouth’s traditional neighborhoods (compact development, interconnected streets, sidewalks, etc.)

Policy #5: Development Quality

“Raise the bar” on private and public sector development.

[Policy Link: Community Appearance #1 & 2]

Action Strategies

- Adopt standards in the Zoning Ordinance that set minimum levels for the design quality of new development (e.g., landscaping, relationship to the street, pedestrian environment, meaningful park/open space setbacks, etc.)
- Provide incentives for developments that exceed the minimum requirements for design quality
- Set a standard of quality in the design of public buildings, facilities, streetscapes, roadway corridors, and infrastructure

Policy #6: Tax Exempt Land

Seek opportunities to convert tax exempt lands to productive uses that strengthen the City’s tax base.

Action Strategies

- Work with Portsmouth Redevelopment and Housing Authority (PRHA) to return properties acquired through the redevelopment process to private ownership/development
- Monitor possibilities for converting state or federal lands to tax-generating private development

Policy #7: Land Use/Transportation Connection

Connect the land use pattern to a supportive, multi-modal transportation system.

[Policy Link: Transportation #7]

Action Strategies

- Ensure that major traffic generating uses such as industrial and employment areas have direct access to the regional transportation network (highways, arterial roadways, transit) and do not result in significant traffic impacts on local neighborhoods
- Establish compact, mixed-use development patterns that create a walkable environment and reduce the need to use the automobile (Policy #4)
- Provide convenient, multi-modal access (including sidewalks, trails, bike lanes, etc.) from residential areas to Community Activity Centers (Policy #4)

Policy #8: Land Use/Education Connection

Incorporate public schools and other educational facilities into the land use pattern as centers of community activity and learning. [Policy Link: Education #4]

Action Strategies

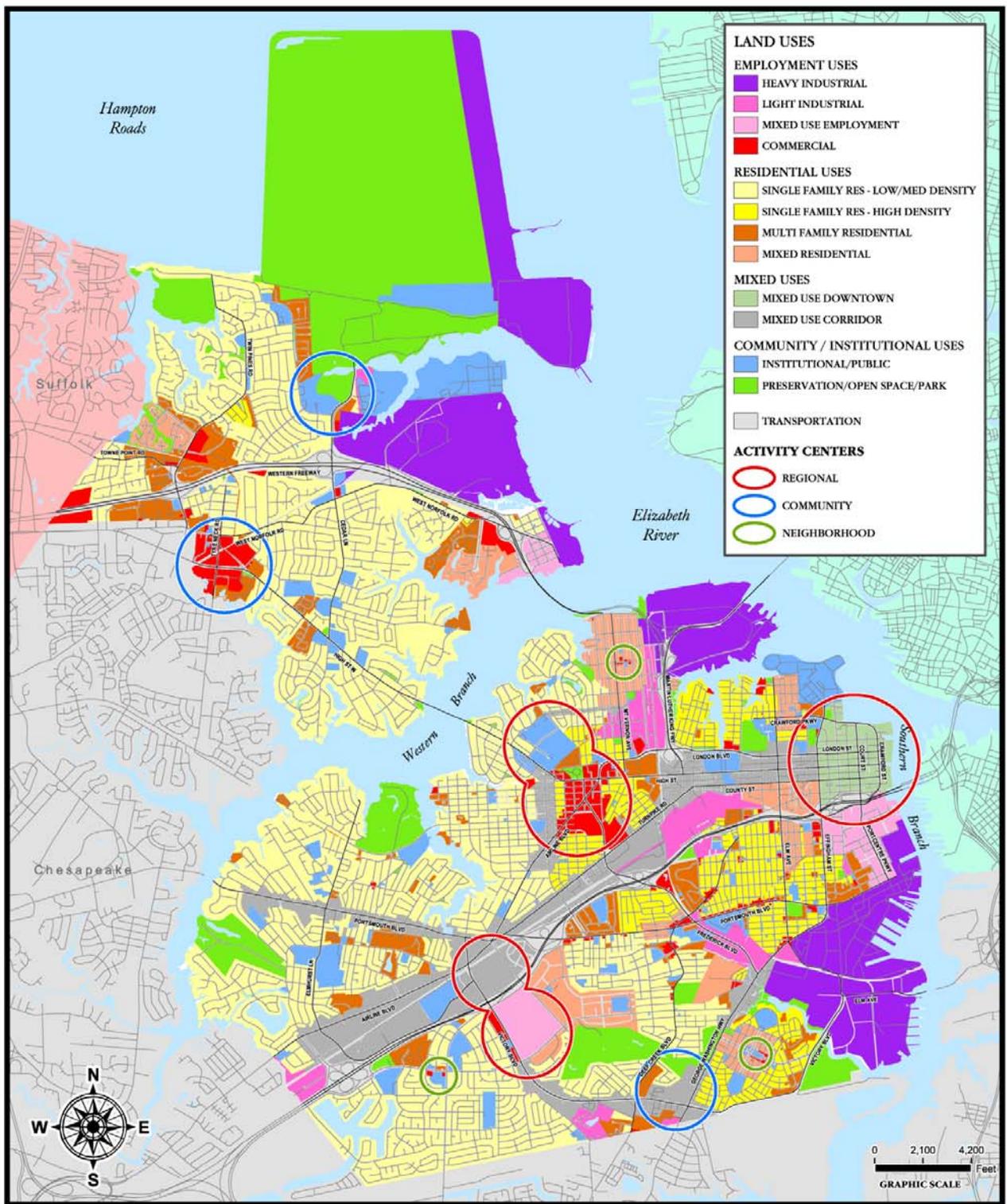
- Seek opportunities to integrate schools into mixed-use activity centers (Policy #4)
- Establish physical connections between schools and surrounding land uses to enhance their roles as centers of community activity
- Ensure that land is available to accommodate projected school siting needs
- Identify new productive uses for obsolete school properties
- Work to establish a new Portsmouth location for a new Tidewater Community College campus

Policy #9: Development Regulations and Processes

Facilitate appropriate development and redevelopment through “user-friendly” development regulations and processes.

Action Strategies

- Enact provisions and standards in the Zoning Ordinance that make it easier to develop in Portsmouth’s urban environment
- Develop streamlined review and approval procedures for development projects that are consistent with the land use policy directions
- Review the historic district regulations and standards for opportunities to facilitate reinvestment in properties within the districts while maintaining overall historic integrity



GENERALIZED FUTURE LAND USE

PORTSMOUTH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



DESTINATION 2025
Setting A Bold New Course

MAP 5

4.3 Future Land Use

The Generalized Future Land Use Map (Map 5) identifies the general pattern of future land use in Portsmouth for application of the policies and action strategies contained in the Land Use and other Comprehensive Plan elements. It recognizes the City's existing development pattern as the basis for future uses while indicating areas in which the existing pattern should be modified over time to achieve the policies and action strategies. In particular, the map emphasizes **Mixed Uses** and **Activity Centers** as important components of Portsmouth's future land use pattern.

Land Use Categories

The major categories of land use shown on the Generalized Future Land Use Map are Employment, Residential, Mixed Use, and Community/Institutional. While federal government properties are not subject to local jurisdiction, they have been designated as discrete land uses to indicate their roles in Portsmouth's overall land use pattern. These designations are consistent with the current or projected use of these properties by the federal government.

The following text describes the different types of land use shown on the Map for each of the four major categories.

Employment Uses

Heavy Industrial: Heavy Industrial uses include manufacturing, ship repair, and other port-related activities associated with Portsmouth's working waterfront along the Elizabeth River. This designation applies to existing privately owned industrial properties, governmental facilities (the Norfolk Naval Shipyard and Virginia Port Authority Terminal), and two vacant waterfront sites (the former Cox property in Churchland, currently planned for a deepwater container terminal, and the eastern shore of Craney Island, projected for future port facilities).

Heavy Industrial uses such as container storage yards are discouraged away from the working waterfront, both to prevent adverse impacts on surrounding land uses and to promote more productive use of the land. An existing industrial area in the vicinity of I-264 and Frederick Boulevard, including the City Public Works Compound (Operations Center) is recommended for conversion to Mixed Employment uses.



Policy issues associated with Heavy Industrial uses include:

- Provide proper buffering from and minimize impacts on residential and other less intensive land uses (Land Use Policy #3)
- Provide proper access for vehicular traffic to the regional road network (Land Use Policy #7)
- Minimize visual impacts on major roadway corridors (Community Appearance Policy #2)

Light Industrial: The Light Industrial category includes light manufacturing and assembly, warehousing and distribution, and similar uses. Many of the existing Light Industrial uses in the City are located in areas designated as Mixed Use Corridors on the Generalized Future Land Use Map, including Airline Boulevard and Victory Boulevard south of I-264. In addition, there is a significant concentration of Light Industrial uses in the Port Norfolk area, where efforts are needed to reduce conflicts with residential uses. The policy issues identified above for Heavy Industrial uses also apply to Light Industrial uses. In addition, the evolving nature of the 21st century economy and the extent to which Light Industrial uses are integrated into Portsmouth's overall land use pattern suggest that flexibility should be provided to accommodate different uses that meet specified performance standards (e.g., appearance, impacts on adjacent uses).



Mixed Employment: The Mixed Employment category applies to areas of Portsmouth with existing or future office and related uses that are planned as a unified development. These include the existing PortCentre Commerce Park and Victory Crossing Business Park, which is planned for Class A office buildings with 40 acres reserved for a Portsmouth campus of Tidewater Community College (shown as Public/Institutional on the Generalized Future Land Use Map). In addition, the area in the vicinity of I-264 and Frederick Boulevard, which contains a former rail yard and other industrial uses, is recommended for future redevelopment as a Mixed Employment business park.

Land Use Policies #3 and #7 identified above for Heavy Industrial uses also apply to the Mixed Employment category. Mixed Employment parks should be planned to incorporate consistent standards of development quality, thus addressing Community Appearance Policy #2. In addition, ensuring the continued availability of sites for quality employment uses is important to Economic Development Policy #3, which addresses office and industrial uses as one of Portsmouth's three key business sectors.

Commercial: This designation applies to areas within the City to remain in predominantly commercial uses, such as the Midtown commercial core and the Victory Crossing, Churchland, and Williams Court Shopping Centers. Strategies for these areas should seek to 1) strengthen retail uses and associated sales and tax revenue (Economic Development Policy #3) and 2) introduce complementary mixed uses (e.g., public facilities, high-density residential) that can reinforce the retail base and enhance their roles as activity centers (Land Use Policy #4).

Residential Uses

Single-Family Residential (Low/Medium Density): This residential use category applies to single-family neighborhoods with lots that are approximately 7,500 square feet or greater in size. Areas designated as Low and Medium Density Single-Family Residential are mostly



stable neighborhoods located in Churchland and the western part of the City, whose existing character should be maintained and strengthened in accordance with Land Use Policy #1 and Neighborhoods Policy #1. A few are designated as transitional neighborhoods for which more active intervention is called for to promote reinvestment and revitalization (Neighborhoods Policy #2).

Single-Family Residential (High Density): High Density Single-Family Residential areas are developed with lots generally less than 7,500 square feet in size. Similar policies apply to these areas as apply to Low and Medium Density Single-Family Residential areas, except that High Density areas have a higher proportion of neighborhoods designated as transitional. In addition, their more compact development pattern makes them potential models for “Walkable Neighborhoods” in Portsmouth in accordance with Land Use Policy #4.

Multi-Family Residential: This category largely applies to existing multi-family uses (apartments and condominiums) in Portsmouth. Efforts should be made to maintain and improve the quality of existing multi-family developments in accordance with the policies of the Housing Element. Future multi-family developments should be planned to provide a greater range of housing choices for Portsmouth residents, including units attractive to middle and higher income residents (Housing Policy #1). They should be located so as not to intrude on established single-family neighborhoods, (e.g., as part of Mixed Use Centers or Corridors, or in selected waterfront locations where their value will be enhanced by views and access to the water).

Mixed Residential: The Mixed Residential category applies to residential areas developed as unified developments with a mix of housing types (e.g., single-family residences with a range of lot sizes, townhouses, and apartments). The Westbury neighborhood on the former Ida Barbour public housing site is a good example. Non-residential components (e.g., community facilities, neighborhood-oriented retail and services) can be included in the mix of uses. Policy issues associated with Mixed Residential uses include:

- Design as Walkable Neighborhoods (Land Use Policy #4) with compact development patterns, interconnected streets and sidewalks, and integrated parks and open space
- Provide transitions between different housing types, densities, and non-residential uses. For example, single-family homes could transition to townhouses and apartments, with the latter integrated into a mixed-use center with commercial and other community uses that is accessible by foot from the entire neighborhood while fronting on a larger thoroughfare.

Mixed Use

By definition, mixed use refers to several types of activity, each of which could function independently but that would benefit from proximity to each other. An unfortunate legacy of zoning practice in this country in the post-World War II era has been to promote the separation of land uses into discrete and uniform residential, commercial, and industrial categories. The initial intent, to protect public health and welfare by removing noxious influences from residential areas, was valid. However, the result has been to segregate uses (particularly in suburban areas) to such an extent as to create a total reliance on automobile travel for activities that were formerly located within walking distance in older, more mixed-use urban settings. As an historic city, Portsmouth retains mixed-use characteristics in certain areas, such as the Downtown. (The impacts of industrial uses on adjacent residential areas in other parts of the City are a less positive manifestation of mixed use.)

The Generalized Future Land Use Map indicates areas of the City where mixes of complementary uses are to be encouraged or maintained. A number of these areas are **Activity Centers** that are shown as “overlays” on top of the underlying land use categories (see text below). Mixed land use categories shown on the Map include the **Downtown** and **Mixed Use Corridors**.

Downtown Mixed Use: Downtown Portsmouth supports the greatest concentration of mixed uses in the City. In accordance with Land Use Policy #4, the Downtown’s role as a center of activity for Portsmouth and the region should be strengthened through a more intensive mix of retail/restaurant/entertainment, residential, office, and public uses and destinations. Strategies that should be pursued to achieve this overall objective include, among others:



NTELOS Pavilion

- Promote redevelopment and reuse of underutilized properties
- Maximize the use and value of the downtown waterfront
- Develop and market “niche” attractions and destinations, such as the NTELOS Pavilion, Renaissance Hotel and Conference Center, and Children’s Museum of Virginia (Economic Development Policy #6)
- Develop a comprehensive parking strategy to accommodate the intensification of uses in the Downtown (Transportation Policy #6)
- Ensure that more intense uses do not adversely impact established residential neighborhoods (Land Use Policy #1)

A detailed Downtown Master Plan is needed to more specifically define the strategies that the City will pursue to promote enhancement of the Downtown as a regional activity center.

Mixed Use Corridor: This designation applies to major roadway corridors in Portsmouth that support a mixed pattern of non-residential (commercial and light industrial) and residential land uses. These uses have typically evolved over time in isolation on the individual parcels that front the roadway, resulting in a disconnected linear pattern of development. Mixed Use Corridors fall into two categories: Stable and Revitalization. Portsmouth Boulevard from Airline Boulevard to Mayflower Road is classified as Stable because it supports a mostly viable mix of non-residential and residential uses. Revitalization Corridors designated on the Generalized Future Land Use Map include Airline Boulevard, High Street between Effingham Street and Airline Boulevard, Victory Boulevard south of Greenwood Drive/George Washington Highway south of Frederick Boulevard, and Turnpike Road. These corridors are characterized by the presence of underutilized properties, obsolete uses, land use conflicts, or other conditions that make them candidates for coordinated revitalization actions.

Strategies for Mixed Use Corridors should:

- Encourage a more coherent, connected land use pattern, including compatible transitions to adjacent residential areas (Land Use Policies #1 and #3)
- Promote private investment and replacement of obsolete with more viable land uses in Revitalization Corridors (Land Use Policy #2). More detailed planning should be undertaken for these corridors to determine the appropriate mix of uses and the specific regulatory and investment strategies to be undertaken by the City to support corridor improvement. If these strategies are successful, Revitalization Corridors will evolve into Stable Corridors over time.

Community/Institutional Uses

Institutional/Public: This designation applies to private institutional uses (e.g., churches, the Maryview Medical Center) and city, state, and federal governmental facilities that function as institutional activity centers (e.g., public schools and libraries, the Naval Medical Center, the future Portsmouth campus of Tidewater Community College). Policy issues associated with Institutional/Public uses include:

- Enhance the roles of Institutional/Public Uses in establishing Portsmouth as a “Center of Knowledge” through improved programs and connections (Education Policies #1-5)
- Enhance the roles of Institutional/Public Uses in reinforcing the vitality of Activity Centers, e.g. Midtown (Maryview Medical Center) and Victory Crossing (future TCC campus) (Land Use Policy #4)
- Enhance the roles of uses such as schools and libraries in strengthening surrounding neighborhoods by functioning as centers of community activity (Neighborhoods Policy #4)



Maryview
Medical Center

- Ensure that city facilities do not occupy land that is better used for high-value private development (Community Facilities, Services, and Infrastructure Policy #2). For example, the City Public Works Compound (Operations Center) near the I-264/Frederick Boulevard interchange should be considered for relocation to an appropriate site to make the property available for a more productive use, possibly in conjunction with the development of the Mixed Employment business park proposed in this vicinity.

Parks/Open Space/Conservation: The Parks/Open Space/Conservation category applies to existing parks and open space areas (e.g., City Park, Bide-A-Wee Golf Course, Hoffer Creek Wildlife Reserve, cemeteries) and two areas designated as future open space: a greenway corridor along Paradise Creek and the western portion of Craney Island. It is expected that additional park and open space opportunities will be identified in the City’s Parks and Recreation Plan (Parks, Open Space, and Environment Policy #1). This plan should establish numeric standards for the provision of active and passive parkland open to the public. Pending completion of the plan, the target should be to provide a minimum of 10 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents.

Activity Centers

Activity Centers are concentrations of higher intensity uses that function as destinations for the surrounding area. Activity Centers are shown as overlays on the Generalized Future Land Use Map, generally in areas of mixed or other relatively intensive land uses. Land Use Policy #4 addresses Activity Centers as essential components of Portsmouth’s future land use pattern. Three types of Activity Centers are designated on the Generalized Future Land Use Map based upon size of the center and the area served: Regional, Community, and Neighborhood.

Regional Activity Centers: These are the largest scale centers, representing present or future concentrations of intense uses (commercial, employment, entertainment, recreation, etc.) that serve residents both of Portsmouth and the larger region. These include the Downtown (discussed above under Mixed Use), Midtown, Victory Crossing, and a center of regional recreational activity in Churchland.

The **Midtown** area of Portsmouth historically supported a mix of commercial and office uses. The Activity Center designation supports revitalization of Midtown through redevelopment of underutilized and substandard properties for predominantly commercial but also office, residential, and mixed-use development. This designation is reinforced by present and future destinations in the surrounding area, which include:



Concept plan for Midtown

Source: Wallace Roberts & Todd, LLC

- Maryview Medical Center
- The proposed “Park and Arts” Center at the Hunt-Mapp Middle School property
- The proposed Mixed Employment business park in the vicinity of I-264 and Frederick Boulevard, including future redevelopment of the City Public Works Compound (Operations Center)

Redevelopment of Howard Homes and Jeffry Wilson Homes will also support establishment of Midtown as a Regional Activity Center.

Located along Victory Boulevard next to the I-264 interchange, **Victory Crossing** is developing into a Regional Activity Center that draws residents from all of Portsmouth and beyond. Major present/future destinations include the Victory Crossing Shopping Center and Victory Crossing Business Park, which will include a Portsmouth campus of Tidewater Community College. Redevelopment of the former Fairwood Homes property as a Mixed Residential community with a retail component will reinforce this designation.

The **Churchland** Regional Activity Center consists of a concentration of schools, some higher intensity private land uses, and recreational facilities that are used by residents of Portsmouth, Chesapeake, and Suffolk.

Community Activity Centers: Community Activity Centers serve residents drawn from relatively large areas within the City of Portsmouth. Two Community Activity Centers – Churchland and Williams Court – are shown on the Generalized Future Land Use Map. Both are commercial centers that are in need of revitalization to strengthen their roles as focuses of activity for the surrounding community.

Neighborhood Activity Centers: Neighborhood Activity Centers are smaller scale centers containing concentrations of retail, service, and/or community uses that cater to a surrounding neighborhood. Three such centers are shown on the Generalized Future Land Use Map: the Broad Street/Detroit Street area in Port Norfolk, Afton Square in Cradock, and the Greenwood Drive/Cavalier Boulevard area in the Cavalier Manor neighborhood. The Broad Street/Detroit street area supports a stable mix of shops, restaurants, and services, as well as a nearby recreation center. Afton Square contains the basic elements of a neighborhood center (library, post office, commercial uses fronting on a community green). However, the commercial uses are marginal and the area should be addressed as part of a revitalization strategy for the Cradock neighborhood. The Cavalier Manor Neighborhood Activity Center is formed by the Cavalier Manor Recreation Area and adjacent commercial and multi-family uses. Additional opportunities to establish Neighborhood Activity Centers focused on community facilities and/or commercial uses should be pursued as part of a neighborhood revitalization strategy (Neighborhoods Policy #4).



Afton Square
proposal



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