

CLIFTON FORGE 2020 TRANSPORTATION PLAN

**Developed by the
Transportation Planning Division**

Of the

Virginia Department of Transportation

In Cooperation With

The U.S. Department Of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration

&

**The Town of Clifton Forge
December 2001**

This report does not constitute a standard specification, regulation or provide a funding mechanism for the included transportation recommendations.

INTRODUCTION

The Clifton Forge 2020 Transportation Plan was developed as a joint effort between the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Town of Clifton Forge. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the existing transportation system and future demand in the Town of Clifton Forge and to recommend a set of transportation improvements that could best meet existing and future transportation infrastructure needs.

Improved transportation systems are vital to Virginia's and to the local area's economic growth and development. Providing effective, safe, and efficient movement of people and goods is a basic goal of VDOT's transportation program. This guiding principle, together with consideration of environmental issues and local mobility needs, was the basis for the development of this transportation plan.

VDOT will use this plan when evaluating requests from the local governments for specific transportation projects and/or implementing projects that VDOT initiates. This list of recommendations will also be used in the statewide transportation planning process so that the magnitude of transportation needs statewide can be more accurately quantified.

STUDY AREA AND THOROUGHFARE SYSTEM

Clifton Forge is located on I-64 approximately 32 miles west of Lexington, Virginia. Major roadways in the Town include US 60, I-64, VA 188 and US 220. The thoroughfare system consists of approximately 10 miles of roadway within the Town and the Town's boundary encompasses 3 square miles.

The study area for the 2020 Transportation Plan coincided with the boundary line of the corporate limits. Within this boundary line (commonly called a cordon line), a set of specific roadways was selected and designated as the urban thoroughfares. The analysis and recommendations were limited to these urban thoroughfares and any new facilities recommended in this study.

Thoroughfares are defined as facilities that operate as arterials or collector routes. The distinction between functional classifications (arterial, collector, local street) is based on whether the facility primarily serves "through-traffic" or provides direct access to adjacent land. Thoroughfare roadways in cities and towns with populations over 5,000 have an "urban" designation and those in cities and towns with populations less than 5,000 are designated "rural".

Roadways not classified by this system, but deemed important by local governments, may be in the 2020 Transportation Plan as "non-thoroughfare" roadways. Typically, these are planned roadways or improvements that will be built with funds (public or private) other than VDOT funds.

DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

The Clifton Forge population has been decreasing at a steady rate since the 1930 census. The impetus for this decline occurred after World War II when the C&O railroad converted from steam to diesel powered engines and relocated several repair shops to West Virginia. The year 1970 was the only census year to show a population increase due to an annexation of land from Alleghany County. From 1970 to the 2000 census the population has declined 22 percent, from 5,501 to 4,289 persons. Projections provided by the Virginia Employment Commission for Clifton Forge indicate that by the year 2010 the population will decline another 2.4 percent. Twenty-five percent of Clifton Forge's population is 65 or older and there are very few remaining parcels within the Town available for development. These factors severely limit the amount of revenue the Town is able to generate. As a result, on July 1, 2001 Clifton Forge officially changed its status from City to Town. This change will help the Town pay for public services without raising real estate taxes.

Employment (1990) in Clifton Forge is comprised primarily of service related businesses (28%), manufacturing (18%), communications (14%), and retail trade (12%). Labor force participation rates have decreased from 52.2 percent in 1980 to 49.4 percent in 1990. From 1980 to 1990 total employment decreased by roughly 12 percent with declines in most sectors. Finance, insurance, and real estate was the largest growth sector realizing an increase of 150 percent.

SUMMARY OF APPROACH AND ANALYSIS METHODS

The development of the transportation plan followed a process that included data collection, review, and analysis. The data collected included information such as traffic counts, police accident reports, roadway geometric inventory data, bridge structural inspection reports, at-grade railroad crossing geometric data, tourism surveys, and goods movement surveys. Review and analysis of this data was combined with a review and analysis of previous transportation and land-use plans and other studies. Furthermore, meetings were held with local staff throughout the study process to gather additional input.

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Transportation recommendations are included in the plan as phased recommendations or other recommendations.

Phased recommendations are generally improvements to the VDOT-maintained roadway system and have been phased to establish a basis for prioritization. Phased recommendations are divided into three phases. Phase One recommendations are base year improvements intended to address the most immediate needs of the Town. Phase Two recommendations are interim study year (2010) improvements. Typically, these improvements are not needed in the immediate future. However, planning and budgeting for their future implementation may allow them to be in place for the interim study year of 2010. Phase Three recommendations are long-term (2020) improvements that do not have an immediate or short-term need. However, in the long-term, as traffic grows and existing facilities age, their importance will become more apparent. Long-term recommended improvements may also be re-evaluated as this plan is updated to determine if the need for their implementation has been met, or whether they should be deferred into the future again when their need may develop. In some instances, long-term recommended improvements may be removed from the transportation planning effort if their need does not develop or if other circumstances cause a change of priorities in the study area.

Other recommendations focus on parking, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, intercity rail, intercity bus, air travel, transit, paratransit, taxi, and goods movement and may include areas of special concern. These items are not typically funded as part of the urban transportation plan, but may include components addressed by any of the phased recommendations.

PHASED RECOMMENDATIONS

PHASE ONE: BASE YEAR (2001) RECOMMENDATIONS

Roadway Improvements

- Ingalls Street – Reconstruct Ingalls Street to urban 2-lane standards from US 60 Business (Main Street) to Forester Road (North) including guardrail in cut sections. The length of the roadway is 0.68 miles and the total cost of this project is estimated at \$2,768,500.

Intersection Improvements

- VA 188 (Commercial Avenue) at Church Street – Eliminate on-street parking on southbound VA 188 (Commercial Avenue) at the intersection to improve the turning radius. The total cost of this project is estimated at \$85,000.
- US 60 Business (Main Street) at Ingalls Street – Reconfigure this intersection to improve the turning radius. The total cost of this project is estimated at \$717,500.

Bridge Improvements

- US 60 Business (Main Street) - Replace the US 60 Business (Main Street) bridge over Smith Creek. The total cost of this project is estimated at \$1,383,500.
- US 60/220 Business (Ridgeway Street) - Replace the US 60/220 Business (Ridgeway Street) bridge over Smith Creek. The total cost of this project is estimated at \$1,383,500.

PHASE TWO: INTERIM YEAR (2010) RECOMMENDATIONS

Roadway Improvements

- US 60/220 Business (Main Street) – Reconstruct US 60/220 Business (Main Street) to urban 2-lane standards from Ridgeway Street to B Street. The addition of curb and gutter will improve access control along this roadway segment. The length of the roadway is 0.26 miles and the total cost of this project is estimated at \$271,000.
- US 60/220 Business (Main Street) – Reconstruct US 60/220 Business (Main Street) to urban 2-lane standards from B Street to Hazel Hollow. The addition of curb and gutter will improve access control along this roadway segment. The length of the roadway is 0.21 miles and the total cost of this project is estimated at \$218,300.

Intersection Improvements

- There were no interim year intersection improvements identified for the Town of Clifton Forge.

PHASE THREE: STUDY YEAR (2020) RECOMMENDATIONS

Roadway Improvements

- Jefferson Avenue – Reconstruct Jefferson Avenue to urban 2-lane standards from Benton Street to 0.19 miles north of Ingalls Street. The length of the roadway is 0.26 miles and the total cost of this project is estimated at \$1,220,200.
- Rose Avenue – Reconstruct Rose Avenue to urban 2-lane standards from Church Street to Lafayette Street. The length of the roadway is 0.23 miles and the total cost of this project is estimated at \$743,700.

Intersection Improvements

- There were no long-term intersection improvements identified for the Town of Clifton Forge.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

Parking

Parking in Clifton Forge consists of on-street parallel and angled parking and surface parking lots. The merchants and commercial interests in the central business district of Clifton Forge provide some surface parking. Other surface parking is provided by the Town in designated lots.

The Alleghany-Roanoke Valley Planning District Commission recently completed a streetscape plan for Clifton Forge, which recommends creating a farmer's market in the Central Business District. Part of this recommendation involves reconfiguration of on-street and off-street parking in the designated farmer's market area. This plan supports these recommendations and incorporates them by reference.

Bicycle/Pedestrian

Currently Clifton Forge has no dedicated bicycle facilities within the corporate limits. Although bicycles may be ridden on all streets and highways within Clifton Forge, there are no routes or paths designated specifically for bicycles. Clifton Forge is currently providing streetscape improvements that include improved pedestrian connections in the central business district. No additional bicycle or pedestrian recommendations were identified as part of this plan.

Intercity Rail

There is an intercity rail stop (un-staffed) in Clifton Forge, Virginia on the east-west rail route. A full service station on the same line is located in Prince, West Virginia (98 miles west) and Charlottesville, Virginia (98 miles east). The nearest direct access to the north-south line is located in Lynchburg, Virginia (80 miles southeast). No enhancements to intercity rail are recommended at this time.

Intercity Bus

Greyhound Lines bus service is located in the Town of Clifton Forge on Ridgeway Street and provides regularly scheduled access to transfers nationwide. No enhancements to intercity bus are recommended at this time.

Air Travel

Commercial air passenger service is offered at two airports within 50 miles of Clifton Forge. The nearest airport to the Town of Clifton Forge is the Greenbrier Valley Airport in Lewisburg, West Virginia (42 miles west). The Greenbrier Valley Airport is served by two commercial carriers which offer daily service to Washington D.C., Pittsburgh, Charlotte, and Atlanta. In addition, the Roanoke Regional Airport is located 47 miles south of Clifton Forge in Roanoke, Virginia. The Roanoke Regional Airport is served by five commercial carriers, which offer service to several domestic hubs.

Commuter air services are offered at both the Roanoke Regional Airport and at the Greenbrier Valley Airport. There are no recommendations regarding air travel at this time.

Transit, Paratransit, and Taxi

The Roanoke Area Dial-A-Ride (RADAR) provides transit service to certain locations within Clifton Forge and between Covington, Clifton Forge, and Roanoke. Service is available to all Clifton Forge residents. It runs on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM with stops every half hour. The Clifton Forge Senior Center delivers Meals on Wheels to homebound elderly and also provides on-call transportation service for the elderly to fulfill medical, health, and shopping needs. Taxi service is available in Clifton Forge. There are no recommendations regarding transit, paratransit, and taxi at this time.

Goods Movement

Truck traffic moving through the area tends to use US 60, I-64, and US 220. The major goods moving industries in the Town include:

- Hall's Transfer and Storage - located near Pine St; movement occurs on US 60/220 Business (Main Street) and Church Street
- Coca Cola Distributor - located at the intersection of C Street & Main Street; movement occurs primarily on US 60/220 Business (Main Street)
- Fueling Station at CSX rail yard - located on US 60/220 Business (Ridgeway Street); goods movement occurs on US 60/220 Business (Ridgeway Street)

Recommendations to improve turning radii for trucks have been included in this plan. Local officials do not see any intermodal opportunities for freight movement and there is no indication of goods movement issues that hinder economic development in the Town of Clifton Forge.

Tourism

Major tourist attractions or events in Clifton Forge include Family Day in June, the Alleghany Arts & Crafts Festival, the Stonewall Theater, and the October Fall Festival. Parking for these events consists of on-street and surface parking.

Clifton Forge is also part of the Virginia Main Street Program. This program is available to Virginia Communities with populations under 75,000 who have realized an economic downturn. This program assists localities in revitalizing downtown commercial districts by helping them develop their own strategies to stimulate long-term economic growth in the traditional community center. Part of this plan for Clifton Forge is to increase tourist activity in the Town. Currently, Clifton Forge is undergoing streetscaping improvements and is also planning to host a Farmer's Market in the central business district. Local officials have not identified any transportation deficiencies that currently inhibit tourist activity.

LOCAL PROJECTS¹

The Town of Clifton Forge has identified the following local roadways for improvement. They are listed to provide continuity and consistency between local plans and VDOT plans.

- Commercial Avenue – Convert Commercial Avenue to one-way northbound from US 60/220 Business (Ridgeway Street) to US 60/220 Business (Main Street). The length of the roadway is 0.04 miles and the total cost of this project is estimated at \$18,000.
- US 60/220 Business (Ridgeway Street) at Commercial Avenue – Eliminate the traffic signal at this intersection. The total cost of this project is estimated at \$30,000.
- US 60/220 Business (Main Street) at Jefferson Avenue – Replace the traffic signal at this intersection. The total cost of this project is estimated at \$90,000.

ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW

An environmental overview was not conducted for the Clifton Forge thoroughfare roadway recommendations. At the planning stage, it is prudent to reserve for environmental overview those recommendations only involving roadway widening or new facilities. However, all recommendations should be evaluated, well prior to implementation, for impacts to the environment as more details become available. Local projects included in this plan are for information purposes only and are not necessarily supported by VDOT. Therefore, they were not reviewed for environmental impacts as part of this plan.

LOCAL COORDINATION AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The development of the Clifton Forge 2020 Transportation Plan included several coordination meetings with Town staff and a public meeting held with VDOT representatives, Town officials and residents from Clifton Forge.

The coordination meetings consisted of a kick-off meeting, an existing conditions meeting, and a draft recommendations meeting. The kick-off meeting, held in July 2000, enabled the project team to discuss with local staff the purpose and scope of the study, the schedule for data collection and plan preparation, and the coordination process. The second meeting (existing conditions), held in April 2001, allowed the project team to present the results of baseline and horizon year traffic analysis and also allowed local staff to communicate desired transportation needs. Finally, at the draft recommendations meeting, held in August 2001, the project team presented and discussed with Town officials the draft 2020 Transportation Plan recommendations. From these recommendations, Town staff provided input that was then used to draft the final recommendations.

After the series of coordination meetings, a public meeting was held at the Clifton Forge Fire Station on October 3, 2001. The purpose of this meeting was to present the recommendations to Town officials, citizens, and other interested parties, to receive comments on the plan, and to allow the Town Council to consider adopting the plan.

PLAN ADOPTION

The Small Urban Area Transportation Plan for the Town of Clifton Forge was adopted by the Clifton Forge Town Council on December 13, 2001. The modifications to the plan that were requested by the Town Council have been reflected in this document.

¹ Local recommendations are included for information purposes only and are not necessarily supported by VDOT.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

More details on the development of the Clifton Forge 2020 Transportation Plan and the study recommendations are available in the Clifton Forge 2020 Transportation Plan Technical Report and at the Clifton Forge 2020 Transportation Plan website, <http://www.vdoturbanplans.com/clifton.htm>. Copies of the Technical Report are located at the Clifton Forge Town Library and the Clifton Forge Town Hall. They are also available for review at the VDOT Transportation Planning Division at the central office in Richmond, Virginia, at the VDOT Staunton District office in Staunton, Virginia, and at the VDOT Residency office in Lexington, Virginia.

Projects included in the Virginia Transportation Development Plan (VTDP) are not part of this recommendations package. The VTDP can be reviewed online at VDOT's website, <http://www.virginiadot.org>.

Information on VTDP projects for the Town of Clifton Forge can also be obtained by contacting the VDOT Resident Engineer at the Lexington Residency office in Lexington, Virginia (540-463-3108).

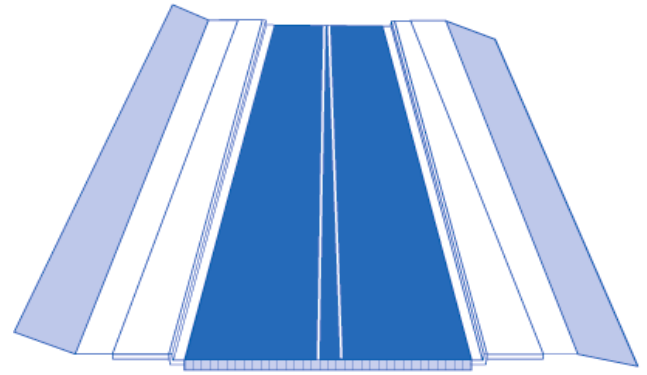
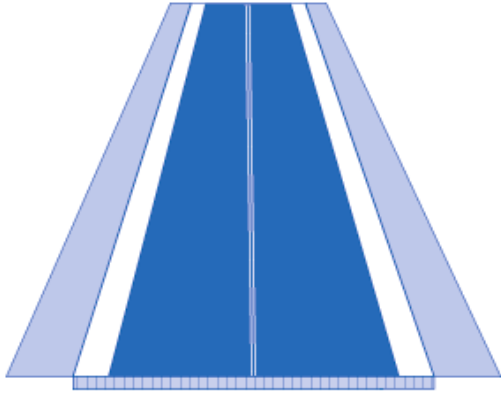
CLIFTON FORGE TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS²

Route #	Route Name	From	To	Road Segment Length (Miles)	Recommendation	Cost (Yr 2000 \$)	Existing Typical Section (Width)	Recom. Typical Section (Width)	Average Daily Traffic (ADT)		
									Year 2000	Year 2010	Year 2020
	Ingalls St	US 60/220 BUS (Main St)	0.49 MS Jefferson Ave	0.68	Year 2001 reconstruct to urban 2-lane standards including guardrail in cut sections	2,768,500	R2 (17')	U2 (30')	620	700	800
US 60/220 BUS	Main St	US 60/220 BUS (Ridgeway St)	B St	0.26	Year 2010 reconstruct to urban 2-lane standards (Add curb and gutter and improve access control)	271,000	U2 (36')	U2 (36')	9,020	10,000	10,900
US 60/220 BUS	Main St	B St	Hazel Hollow	0.21	Year 2010 reconstruct to urban 2-lane standards (Add curb and gutter and improve access control)	218,300	U2 (40')	U2 (40')	7,800	8,700	9,400
	Jefferson Ave	Benton St	0.19 MN Ingalls St	0.26	Year 2020 reconstruct to urban 2-lane standards	1,220,200	R2 (22')	U2 (30')	2,320	2,600	2,800
	Rose Ave	Church St	Lafayette St	0.23	Year 2020 reconstruct to urban 2-lane standards	743,700	U2 (17')	U2 (30')	1,760	2,000	2,100
	Intersection Improvement	VA 188 (Commercial Ave)	Church St		Year 2001 eliminate on-street parking on SB Commercial Ave at intersection to improve turning radius	85,000	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Intersection Improvement	US 60 BUS (Main St)	Ingalls St		Year 2001 reconfigure intersection to improve turning radius	717,500	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Bridge Improvement	US 60/220 BUS (Main St)	@ Smith Creek		Year 2001 replace bridge over Smith Creek	1,383,500	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
	Bridge Improvement	US 60/220 BUS (Ridgeway St)	@ Smith Creek		Year 2001 replace bridge over Smith Creek	1,383,500	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Total						8,791,200					

² Only thoroughfare roadways with recommendations are shown. For a complete listing of thoroughfare roadways, please refer to the Clifton Forge 2020 Transportation Plan Technical Report or the Clifton Forge 2020 Transportation Plan website, <http://www.vdoturbanplans.com/clifton.htm>.

TYPICAL SECTIONS

- R2 Rural 2-lane roadway with standard shoulders and ditches
- U2 Urban 2-lane roadway with curb and gutter



- U3 Urban 2-lane roadway with curb and gutter and center turn-lane

