



Elkton 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

and the

Town of Elkton

August 2002

Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan

INTRODUCTION

The *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan* (the Plan) was developed as a cooperative effort between the Federal Highway Administration, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Town of Elkton. The Plan is the product of a study that evaluated the transportation system in Elkton and recommended a set of transportation improvements to best satisfy existing and future transportation needs. The study identified needs based on the engineering analysis, capacity, and safety of the transportation system.

Effective transportation systems are essential to continued economic growth and development in the Elkton region as well as Virginia as a whole. Providing safe, effective and efficient movement of people and goods is a basic goal of all transportation programs in Virginia. It is with this basic goal in mind, and with further consideration of environmental issues and local government transportation objectives, that this Plan was developed.

VDOT will use this Plan when evaluating requests from the Town of Elkton for specific transportation projects, and when implementing projects on the VDOT-maintained roadway system. The recommendations in this *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan* will also be used as part of the VDOT statewide transportation planning process to ensure that local transportation projects are compatible with and support transportation improvements both statewide and in neighboring localities.

STUDY AREA AND THOROUGHFARE SYSTEM

Elkton is a small town that lies at the foot of the western slopes of the Blue Ridge Mountains. It is located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia, and is in the southeast section of Rockingham County. The area that is now Elkton was first explored by Governor Spotswood on his expedition into the Shenandoah Valley in the early 1700s. In 1726, a settler named Adam Miller, who is regarded as the first European settler in the Shenandoah Valley, built a home about a mile north of Elkton. The home is still in use today.

A subset of the Town's roadway network is designated as the urban thoroughfare system. The thoroughfare system includes roads that are functionally classified as collectors or arterials. Arterial roads serve as the major traffic-carrying facilities in the area. Collector roads carry a lesser volume of traffic and feed traffic to these arterial roadways. The focus of the *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan* is the thoroughfare system, but local streets were analyzed as well. Also, in addition to roadways, improvements to the following other modes of transportation have been evaluated as part of this study: parking; bicycle and pedestrian facilities; intercity rail, bus, and air travel; transit and paratransit; taxi; and the movement of goods.

DEMOGRAPHIC OVERVIEW

In the last U.S. Census conducted in 2000, the population of the Town of Elkton was recorded as 2,042. This represents a slight increase from the town's 1990 population of 1,935. Based on input from local officials, the Town's population is expected to increase slowly through the 20-year horizon of this study.

The primary industries in the Elkton area relate to manufacturing. Less than five miles to the south of the town along Route 340, the Coors Brewing Company and the Merck Company have major production facilities. Also in Elkton area are Virginia Industrial Plastics, which is located to the north of the town on Route 340, and Jaco Racing Products, which is located inside the town limits. Spokesmen for each company expect the number of jobs with each of these local employers to remain steady for the foreseeable future.

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SUMMARY OF APPROACH AND ANALYSIS METHODS

This transportation plan was developed using a process that included:

- Data Collection
- Forecasting of Future Traffic Demands
- Development of Recommendations to Address Existing and Future Transportation Needs
- Coordination with Elkton Government Officials and the Public
- Environmental Overview and Transportation Plan Documentation

Recommendations for the *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan* are based on a comprehensive review of the capacity, safety, and geometry of the existing roadway system. The report also takes into account other issues that affect the area's transportation system, such as parking, other modes of transportation, and goods movement.

The recommendations were divided into three phases. Phase One recommendations address existing deficiencies and the most immediate transportation needs of the area. Phase Two recommendations apply to an interim year of 2010, and Phase Three recommendations are long-term projects (year 2020). Projects in all three phases are intended to accommodate travel demands to the horizon year of 2020.

PHASE ONE: BASE YEAR (2000) RECOMMENDATIONS

This study identified current deficiencies in the Elkton transportation system. Aspects of potential deficiencies in the existing transportation system included traffic flow and safety concerns, parking, and goods movement by truck. Two projects were identified as short-term, immediate improvements and are described below.

Stuart Avenue (Route 340) and Spotswood Avenue

The large size of this intersection makes it difficult for pedestrians to cross. Also, the intersection is at a central location in the Town, and is along the path of a walker traveling from one side of town to the other. To make crossing easier, this report recommends installing pedestrian signal heads.

Stuart Avenue (Route 340) and Rockingham Street

This intersection was identified as a deficient accident location (five or more accidents in at least one year of the three-year analysis period). One factor may be a low stop sign on the westbound approach. As a countermeasure, this report suggests increasing this stop sign height to seven feet, as measured from bottom of sign to the ground. (Current height is five feet.) Also, install advanced warning signs.

PHASE TWO: INTERIM YEAR (2010) RECOMMENDATIONS

The interim year recommendations for the *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan* include projects that are intended to address existing deficiencies but, based on projected costs and potential impacts, would require a number of years to plan and fund. No projects were identified as interim improvements for Elkton.

PHASE THREE: FUTURE YEAR (2020) RECOMMENDATIONS

The Phase Three 2020 recommendations in the *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan* are intended to support the economic and business needs of the community while enhancing both the appeal and traffic operations of the Elkton downtown area. No projects fit in this category for Elkton.

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OTHER MODES AND GOODS MOVEMENT

In developing the *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan*, all modes of travel were considered. This included an assessment of the availability of modes of transportation other than private automobiles.

Elkton has a limited number of other modes of travel available, which is typical for a town of its small size. Paratransit service is the only other mode of travel directly available in Elkton itself. However, within a short drive of Elkton there are a number of other modal options. Taxi service and intercity bus service are available out of Harrisonburg, located 15 miles to the west. Intercity rail is available in Staunton, about 30 miles to the southwest, and commercial air service is available out of the Shenandoah Valley Regional Airport, about 20 miles to the southwest.

Providing a wide variety of other modes travel options in a town as small as Elkton is not financially feasible. However, this study recommends that the Town encourage the establishment of an Elkton-based taxi service, as well as intercity bus stop (Greyhound).

Most goods movement in and through Elkton is accomplished by truck. With the Route 33 Bypass and wide intersections in town, truck flow through Elkton is generally adequate. This report makes no recommendations regarding goods movement.

LOCAL PROJECTS

No locally funded projects are planned in Elkton other than those mentioned in other sections of this report.

ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW

An environmental overview was conducted for the projects in the *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan*. There were no environmental features identified in Elkton that would preclude the implementation of any of the included recommendations.

LOCAL COORDINATION AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The development of the *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan* included coordination meetings with local Town officials and a public meeting with citizens, local officials, and VDOT representatives.

The three coordination meetings held for this study were as follows: 1) a kick-off meeting, (2) an existing conditions meeting, and (3) a draft recommendations meeting. The kick-off meeting, held in November 1999, enabled the project team to discuss the purpose and scope of the study, the schedule for data collection and plan preparation, and the coordination process. At the second meeting, held in October 2001, the project team presented the results of the base year and horizon year traffic analysis and discussed potential projects to address projected transportation needs. During a third meeting, held in November 2001, a draft set of transportation improvements was discussed among the project team, Town officials, and VDOT representatives.

A public meeting was held February 12, 2002, to present the draft transportation plan to Town officials, citizens and other interested parties. Meeting participants were invited to provide comments that were considered in the development of the final *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan*.

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PLAN ADOPTION

The Elkton Town Council voted to adopt the *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan* June 17, 2002.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Detailed information on the development of the *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan* and the study recommendations will be included in the *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan Technical Report*. This document will be available for review at the Elkton Town Hall and the local library. The technical report will also be available in Richmond at the central office of VDOT's Transportation Planning Division, the VDOT District office in Staunton, and the VDOT Residency office in Harrisonburg.

Projects included in the Virginia Transportation Six-Year Program (FY 2002-2008) are not part of the *Elkton 2020 Transportation Plan*. The Six-Year Program can be reviewed online at www.VirginiaDOT.org.

Information on the Six-Year Program projects for the Town of Elkton can also be found by contacting the VDOT Resident Engineer at the Harrisonburg Residency Office (540-434-2586).

Route	Facility Name	From	To	Road Segment Length	Recommendation	Estimated Cost [1]	Existing Typical Section	Recommended Typical Section	Average Daily Traffic		
									Year 2000	Year 2010	Year 2020
Route 340	Stuart Avenue at Spotswood Avenue	N/A	N/A	N/A	Install pedestrian signal heads	\$24,000	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Route 340	Stuart Avenue at Rockingham Street	N/A	N/A	N/A	Increase stop sign height to seven feet, as measured from bottom of sign to ground. Current height is five feet. Also install advanced warning signs. Improvement is for stop sign on westbound approach.	\$9,000 [2]	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
ESTIMATED TOTAL THOROUGHFARE SYSTEM COST						\$33,000					

[1] The cost estimates included in this table are planning level costs in year 2000 dollars. These cost estimates are based on statewide unit cost averages and should be used for planning purposes only. Actual construction and right-of-way costs may vary based on local conditions.

[2] Assumes a per-sign cost of \$3,000 for signage and installation.

N/A - Not applicable