

REPORT

Exit 45: A Strategic Vision and Action Plan

Presented to:



By

Sanford Holshouser Economic Development Consulting, LLC



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Sanford Holshouser Economic Development Consulting, LLC

US Senator Terry Sanford (1917-1998)
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Exit 45 Study Report

A Vision and Action Plan

The Project

Background:

The Interstate 95, Exit 45 (the exit) in Prince George County, VA (the County) has welcomed motorists, tourists, and event attendees for decades. However, as times have changed in travel and as other competitive exists have developed, Exit 45 has not maintained or progress from its original reputation as a “destination” exit. Redevelopment and needs for improving the Exit have been studied several times over the past 10-12 years but there hasn’t been an action-oriented development plan completed.

In a study entitled, “Exit 45 Revitalization Project Report” (01/07/2014) submitted by Management Analysis, Inc. (MAI), the Exit’s background was written as, “The freeway exit was developed several decades ago through the vision and efforts of the Tedesco family. The Tedescos previously operated the largest hotel at the Exit... as a resort with full amenities.” The same project and report stated that one of the best assets of the exit was its location. The location is a good stopping point for Canadian “snowbirds” traveling annually to and from Florida as well as being a good stopping point for long-haul travelers along I-95 with the following drive times applicable:

Southbound; Exit 45 to	Columbia, SC	4 hours, 41 minutes
	Charleston, SC	6 hours, 44 minutes
	Savannah, GA	6 hours, 15 minutes
	Jacksonville, FL	8 hours, 12 minutes
Northbound; Exit 45 to	Washington, DC	2 hours, 30 minutes
	Philadelphia, PA	4 hours, 56 minutes
	New York, NY	6 hours, 3 minutes
	Boston, MA	9 hours, 35 minutes

When the “resort hotel” (The Steven Kent) was developed and in its “hey day”, the exit was a magnet for both travelers and longer stay guests. Many public and private organizations held their conferences and events at the resort; Exit 45 was truly a magnet destination.

Over the decades, The Steven Kent along with the exit area slowly deteriorated and devolved into an area of blight with new development occurring haphazardly. Beneficial developments (chain hotels and gas stations) co-existing with deteriorating developments

(The Steven Kent, The Continental) with crime and indigence has become more prevalent. One stakeholder in the study likened the current exit to a closet in a home where over the years a lot of different things have been thrown in: some broken, some old, some redundant, etc. Due to the current state of the exit and with a strong desire to develop the exit into a true positive reflection what Prince George County is, and a need for the exit to become a sustainable fiscal asset for the County, the project was initiated.

Project Goals:

- **Focus on the Tourism Zone designated at Exit 45**
- **Investigate Water and Sewer Deficiencies and Make Recommendations**
- **Create Recommendations for Development of a Vision to Transform the Zone formed by**
 - ▶ review of existing and previous data and studies
 - ▶ stakeholder input
 - ▶ comparative review of other exits
 - ▶ team knowledge and experience
- **Investigate Zoning and Code Compliance Issues and Make Recommendations**
- **Create a Matrix of Goals and Action Steps to Achieve the Recommendations Made**

Approach: In order for the goals set for the project to be realized, a clear path of actions and steps were defined. Each member of the team was assigned and contributed to key components that resulted in a whole and complete project. The key steps were:

1. Organize the Project Advisory Committee (PAC) and conduct initial meetings to gather input/direction and to finalize the scope of services and cost of the project
2. Review previous studies, documents and plans related to the Exit 45 study are.
3. Attend a Familiarization (FAM) Tour of the area with designated representative(s) from the PAC.
4. Utilities Review data and recommendations reviewed with Draper Aden Associates (DAA); create a draft action matrix and provide to the PAC.
5. Stakeholder input plan execution utilizing various methods to gather critical input
(See attached stakeholder plan)

6. Economic Development review of parcels, buildings, zoning, and special zone designations.
7. Full project team reviews the information, data, and recommendations and develops draft goals, actions, and activities for the study area.
8. Draft a master matrix consolidating all categories and results, provide to the PAC for discussion and modifications.
9. Review a draft report and action matrices with the Board of Supervisors to gain final input and to answer questions.
10. Deliver a final Utilities and Project Action Matrices and a short-form report.

Provide One Year of Free Support (some restrictions) to Help Implementation of the Matrices Action Items

Creating a Vision

Comparisons to Other Exits:

The first step in creating a vision for the future of the Exit involved looking other exits along interstates. The Project Advisory Committee/County Staff and project team discussed and chose various exits to use in the comparison.

	I-95 Exit #45	I-95 Exit #173	I-95 Exit #11	I-64 Exit #136	I-77 Exit #58
	Prince George County, VA	Halifax County, NC	Greensville County, VA	Louisa/Fluvanna Counties, VA	Bland County, VA
	301/Crater Road/PGC	US 158/Roanoke Rapids	U.S. 58/Emporia	Zions Crossroads	Love's Plaza
AADT Traffic Counts	21,000	16,000	19,000	16,000	12,000
% Capture(ramps total)	14%	50%	16%	62%	12%
Retail	0	16	11	4	1
Hotel	6	9	4	1	0
Chain	84%	100%	100%	100%	0%
Non-chain	16%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Restaurants	6	32	29	10	3
Chain	17%	78%	79%	60%	64%
Non-chain	83%	22%	21%	40%	33%
Travel Services/Gas	4	5 (1 plaza)	16 (1 plaza)	6 (1 plaza)	3 (1 plaza)
Sources: Google Maps, NCDOT, VDOT, https://iexitapp.com					

When evaluating the data, although the Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) count for the Exit is the highest in comparison with other exits, the Capture Percent, or the amount of the AADT exiting onto the ramps, is lower than all the other exits except the very isolated and rural Exit#58 in Bland County.

Three reasons can be identified for the lack of “capture” at the Exit:

- 1) More and more diverse development at other exits,**
- 2) More blight, unattractiveness and/or sense that Exit 45 is unsafe in comparison to other exits studied,**
- 3) The large numbers of exit options for travelers along the I-95 corridor from Roanoke Rapids, NC to the I-295 interchange in the County.**

In cataloging the traveler assets and amenities for each exit, and in looking at pictures and graphics of those exits, it was very clear that all seemed to be very similar with not much to distinguish one from another. Another indication of the “vanilla” flavoring of the exits is that the hotel/motel STR categories (STR stands for Smith Travel Research, an industry database standard for the hospitality sector) are a mix of “Economy”, “Midscale”, and “Upper Midscale” lodging options. There are no “Upper scale, Luxury, or Resort” lodging options at any of the exits.

Conversely, *The Pinnacle*, a 240-acre shopping center and commercial development located in Bristol, Tennessee has a healthy 36% capture rate. The development includes a BassProShop which is a natural draw for both vehicles traveling the length of I-81, but also for local and regional residents in SW-VA and E-TN. Until *The Pinnacle* was developed (within the past 8 years), only local traffic or traffic getting off the Interstate to access Bristol contributed to the offramps AADT. The singular development at *The Pinnacle* has created a destination and reason to exit I-81 in this rural/semi-urban area.

A mix of unique or sought-after amenities at Exit 45 can be a catalyst for attracting travelers off of the interstate. Additionally, creating a theme through support of regional assets and existing focus, will influence the creation of Exit 45 as a destination for attracting longer term stays and contributing to the local economy.

Stakeholder Input:



Stakeholder Engagement Process – Prince George County Exit 45 Strategic Vision Plan

Proactively considers the needs and desires of anyone who has a stake in the outcome. Fosters connections, trust, confidence, and buy-in. Mitigates potential risks and conflicts with, including uncertainty, dissatisfaction, misalignment, disengagement, and resistance to change.

Staff Input

One on One Interviews and Citizen Input - 14

Focus Groups - 3

- Prince George IDA
- Prince George County Planning Commission
- Exit 45 Business Owners



Common Input and Themes

Current State

- *Exit 45 is like a closet into which, over time, a lot of things have been stuffed; now is the time to clean and organize the closet*
- *Exit 45 is five exits past significance*
- *The exit is in the worst condition of its evolution (demolish)*
- *Eliminate the blight – deal with the “dead fish”*
- *Police calls at the exit are trending upward*
- *Effective code enforcement is lacking*
- *The exit does not reflect a safe environment*

Preferred State

- *Visitors feel a sense of place and relaxation; the Exit is built on greenspaces that are lighted and walkable*
- *The exit becomes a repeat-stop for visitors*
- *The exit reflects quality and pride in its services*
- *Blighted properties are removed, and remaining properties are held accountable*
- *Police calls are significantly reduced in number and scope*
- *Cross-department team enforces codes*
- *Lighting, signage and image present a safe environment*

Keywords and Key Phrases (from stakeholders):

- Clear blight
- Bulldoze Steven Kent, Red Roof Inn, Continental
- It is like a closet into which, over time, a lot of things have been stuffed; now it is time to clean and organize the closet
- Authentic; build authenticity around Nanny’s
- Not just another Interstate exit
- Quality driven
- Create pride and a success story
- Curbside appeal
- Kids and adult friendly
- Promote/support county and regional assets
- Need a gathering place
- Attract visitors and serve local citizens
- Ability to capture repeat visitors
- Interstate visibility of the exit
- Need something unique (BassProShop, TopGolf, Dick’s as examples)
- Sense of place
- Not necessarily “beloved” by community
- Create pedestrian traffic; make it walkable
- Needs to have some unique features: pet friendly services, green space, electric car charging stations
- Greenspace and a small park like some Commonwealth Visitor Center have
- County investment is needed

- Owners lack willingness to reinvest
- NO additional outdoor sporting venues development at Exit 45
- Not enough rooftops to support certain commercial developments (for now)
- Not situated for traditional ED such as advanced manufacturing or logistics
- Complement needs of interstate visitors
- Way finder signage to point to retail, restaurant, and other wider community assets outside of Exit 45; first step is to address the signage issue, consider creating a uniformity of signage by utilizing the Tourism Zone ordinance
- Incorporate small retail store that has everyday amenities for travelers and sports tourists
- Focused marketing needs financial and human expenditures devoted to it.
- Hotel staff (especially frontline) need to exude a level of professionalism and may require some specific skills training
- Need rooftops, residential may be a 10-year goal; Potential to develop over time as a small-town center
- Owners and developers need someone dedicated at the County to coordinate obtaining required approvals across all departments
- Could an “owners’ group” be formed to place pressure on those owners who are letting their properties deteriorate as well as creating a conduit for regular communication with the County? Create a public-private team to revitalize this Exit
- No “old ideas” for use of this exit
- A place that time forgot
- Trees obstruct visibility of services
- Signage is confusing
- New hire or designate duties to existing staff as an “Ombudsman” for the Exit 45 Zone to be a single point of contact for developers/owners and to facilitate across departments any applications related to the zone.
- The IDA needs to be heavily involved
- Be more strategic in setting standards for development in the exit area

Vision for Implementation:

A combination of factors contributed to a vision for the Exit that can be implemented through a set of goals and a sequence of individual actions. Review of previous studies and comparative analysis of a variety of interstate highway exits has shown that most exist to provide services to travelers but may not offer something unique or special that can create a destination. Becoming a destination leads to longer stays and more revenues generated from travelers and visitors alike. Being a destination also helps foster development of traveler services and vice versa.

Stakeholder input was vital in defining the need to promote and benefit from existing regional assets. Regional assets can serve as a catalyst for making Exit 45 a destination much as it was back in its hey-day. In addition to eliminating blight, creating a “safe and welcoming” environment, and adding amenities and traveler services; the exit could become

a home away from home for families and individuals participating in sporting events or riding the many bike and motorcycle trails in the area that are both strong suits for the County.



Common Input and Themes

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The IDA should take the lead in financing, purchasing, owning, and selling or leasing certain target properties. Where possible, the IDA should generate revenues that can be focused on current and future redevelopment of Exit 45.

1. Purchase and Redevelop Stephen Kent

- Enter negotiations with owner and consider:
 - Equity purchase (negotiated price, issue deed of trust to current owner with purchase and small interest amount, guarantee a periodic payment for a term, pay extra when acres sold or when County wants to complete a buyout),
 - OR buy outright
 - Finance through issuance of bonds (use Virginia Resources Authority – VRA) OR finance a loan through Virginia Community Capital (low rates, low costs, track record of loaning to IDAs and localities, terms favorable)
- Demolish existing buildings and infrastructure
- Retain 1-2 acres in front to:
 - Develop a small public facility to house various public entities (government or related organizations – tourist bureau, ED offices, CoC offices, State offices, branch library, etc.), building not just a place to get maps and info, but possibly a place to facilitate (player check-in, hotel assignments, arrange shuttles to trials, etc.) the athletic tournaments and outdoor activities
 - Develop a small “conference center” adjacent/connected to public facility to create a community (local, regional) gathering place.

- Possibly develop an incubator kitchen (example: The Maker Market in South Hill) OR a “ghost kitchen” that prepares food for 4-5 local or chain brand restaurants and provides pick-up or delivery to Zone hotels.
- Prepare the balance of the site (approximately 7 acres) to be offered to a travel plaza (no truck stop) that has a unique and strong retail component (Buc-ees). Target specific companies and work toward creating a proactive development partnership between the company and the County.
- Consider land lease or giving land or selling at a significant discount to entice the right company. Base deal on reasonable and long-term RoI.
- Retain and improve a perimeter walking trail, retain and improve the picnic pavilion, create a small dog park, and add any small amenities that might be attractive to families coming off the interstate or staying for multi-day events (putt putt?).

2. Obtain the Continental property and Redevelop

- Enforce codes strictly, look for other means available to condemn and shut down the use of this property (a priority)
- Purchase or obtain the property
- Demolish buildings and redevelop site
- Use property to specifically attract a sit-down chain restaurant (e.g., Panera, Olive Garden) or to attract a retail/commercial entity that will support outdoor and sports tourism visitors (see below) such as Dick’s, REI, etc.

3. Create a Center of Support for Regional Assets

- There is a keen opportunity to develop Exit 45 around a unique unifying theme to help distinguish it from other generic exits along I-95 in the region.
- Redevelopment recommendations and ideas can be significantly focused on supporting local and regional assets and activities in the areas of 1) sports tourism and events (softball, soccer, or other “rectangular” sports); 2) bike and water trails/outdoor tourism; 3) history/heritage tourism. As discussed, the exit should be the “home away from home” for sports teams and their parents participating in local and regional tournaments. Additionally, with three significant bike/hike trails in various stages of development (Capitol Trail, FOLAR Trail, Fall Line Trail) and the Five and Dime Ferry Motorcycle Run trail, Exit 45 can be a “base camp” for riders on these trails. There is extensive published information on the positive impact of supporting the three types of assets listed (trail impacts most readily available are GAP & CO trails focused on Cumberland, MD, Capital Trail, VA)
- Besides 2-3 new restaurants (brand, family, sit-down) help expand exposure and marketing of existing “authentic” restaurants such as Nanny’s, El Arriero, and Lighthouse) and solicit a local/regional authentic pizza provider.
- Attract at least one more hotel that is “and suites”. Families staying for tournaments would welcome this type of lodging.
- Become heavily involved in discussions recently initiated to develop a shuttle service to take riders/hikers to and from the various trails.

- Recruit either a brand sports store that has repair/maintenance services for bicycles OR attract a local/regional bicycle shop that could also serve as a shuttle service provider or operator.
- Longer-term, become a regional advocate for connecting Exit 45 directly to the Fall Line Trail and the FOLAR Trail in downtown Petersburg (crow fly 8.5 miles) possibly using the VDOT Smart Scale program to fund a route along US301N. The Fall Line is a 43-mile north-south trail that travels the entire region [from Ashland to Petersburg](#) and is unique for its rural, suburban and urban sections that Parsons said will be a complement to the Capital Trail as an east-west route.
- Significantly increase enhanced marketing budget as the exit is revitalized. There will be a need to either hire an experienced outdoor/sports marketer or contract with a specialty firm to provide these services. Exit 45 needs a focused strategy and some type of clear and targeted brand for this effort, creative placement of promotion in geographic and sector specific media outlets and formation of specific collaborative partners who can serve as “multipliers”. For example, ensure that Exit 45 is marketed to and part of any promotion that a sports or outdoor promoter or presenter uses to provide lodging, dining, and amenities options to participants in their tournaments, events, etc. A redeveloped Exit 45 needs to be shown to be a safe, convenient, and supportive environment for multi-stay sports, outdoor and historic tourism activities.

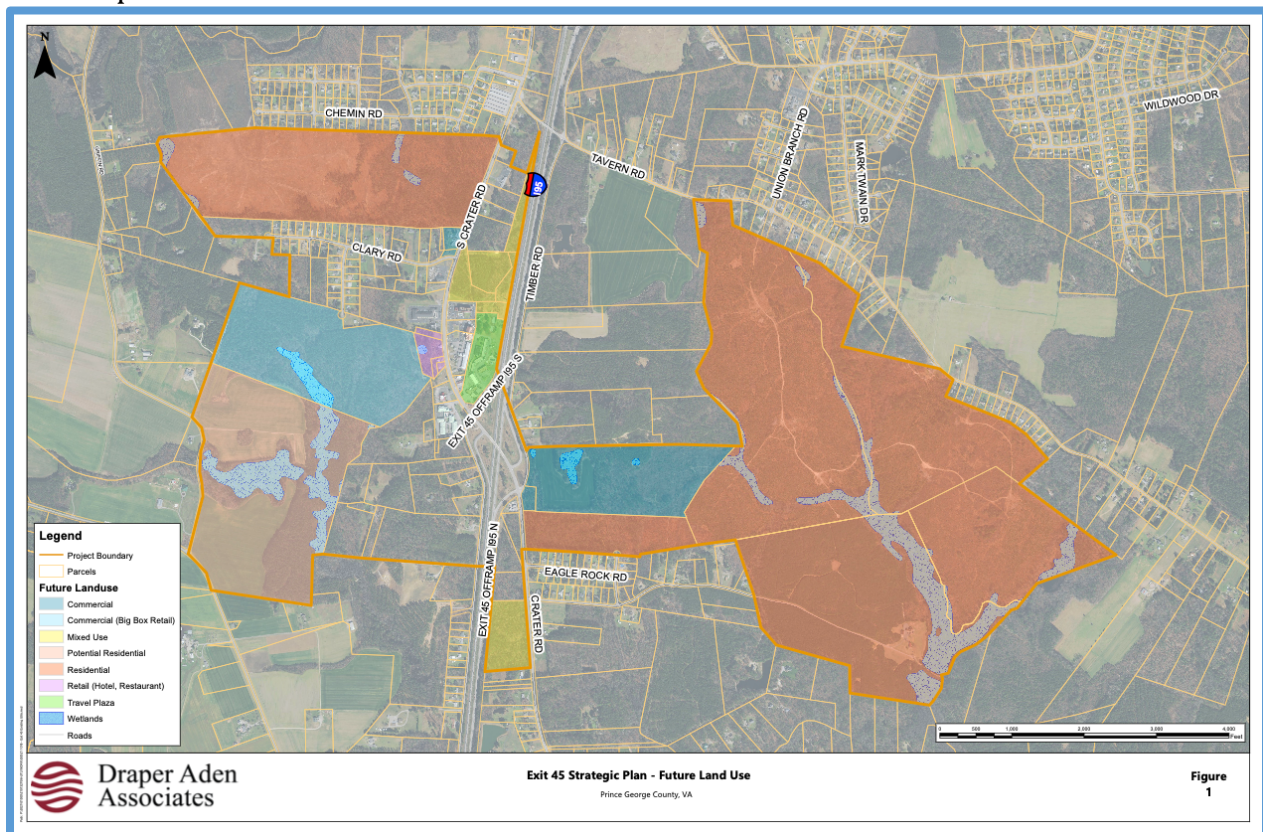
4. Ongoing Activities Recommended

- Establish and/or reinvigorate an Exit 45 merchants and owners’ group. The County can set up and facilitate but it should probably be an owner led group with a leader. The meetings should be held on a regular monthly schedule to share information, provide input and to help set goals for making the Exit the best that it can be. It also provides a measure of peer pressure. Even though this has not been completely successful in the past, there is a greater need for good communication and collaboration between the County and existing and new business owners in the Exit 45 Zone. New and re-doubled efforts must be made.
- The above group wants to see and feel that the County is a partner not an enforcer. Set up some specific incentives to aid the owners/merchants to do the right thing for the area and to offset reluctance due to them having to carry the entire burden. For example, establish a sign ordinance and then help offset the cost of sign replacement/upgrade with an earned subsidy. For example, there already is some discounts available through the County and rebates specifically in the Tourism Zone totaling \$30,000. A (Possible) example might be creative assistance to keep Nanny’s open on normal restaurant hours; especially heavy tournament and travel days/hours.
- Set specific “tourism zone” covenants for type and nature of new development. This could include a sign covenant (new development) and ordinance (for existing). The Tourism Zone has been established and ordinances and codes within can be tweaked to better accommodate entities and activities within the Zone.
- At night, lighting an area seen from the interstate will serve as an enhancement and attraction for travelers to stop. Bright and comprehensive lighting gives the

impression that the exit is safe and developed so the driver feels comfortable stopping. If possible, continue to light the exists and entries. Develop streetlight type lighting to illuminate the entire exit zone along Crater from the Petersburg side of the zone, across the interstate to the exit on the opposite side.

- Stimulate residential development on large, designated parcels West of 301N and East across the Interstate (when water and sewer issues are resolved)
- In general, the parcel N. of Clary Rd. is a good target for residential development
- Develop a Concept/Master Plan the area. Such a plan gives focus to where the Exit is ultimately going (the end game), what is missing at any point in time, what needs to be developed or specific type of business needs to be recruited and gets owners/merchants excited about potential for business establishment and long-term growth.
- Shift from being reactive in recruitment of businesses and organization to the Exit to proactively targeting businesses in certain sectors and a small, short list of businesses in those sectors to recruit directly. Create marketing/promotional materials, incentives, etc. to each target business's specific needs.

Based on this vision, a projection of use of land within the study zone was developed. Such a land use vision was necessary to project needs for water and sewer enhancements as well as a precursor for the recommended Master Plan development for the Tourism Zone as a road map for the future.



Water and Sewer Issues:

Current Conditions

	Current Capacity (GPD)	Current Average Demand of Exit 45 Businesses (GPD) (From Well Withdrawal Data)	Remaining Amount Available for Future Development under Current DEQ Permit (GPD)
Water	124,300	32,908	91,392

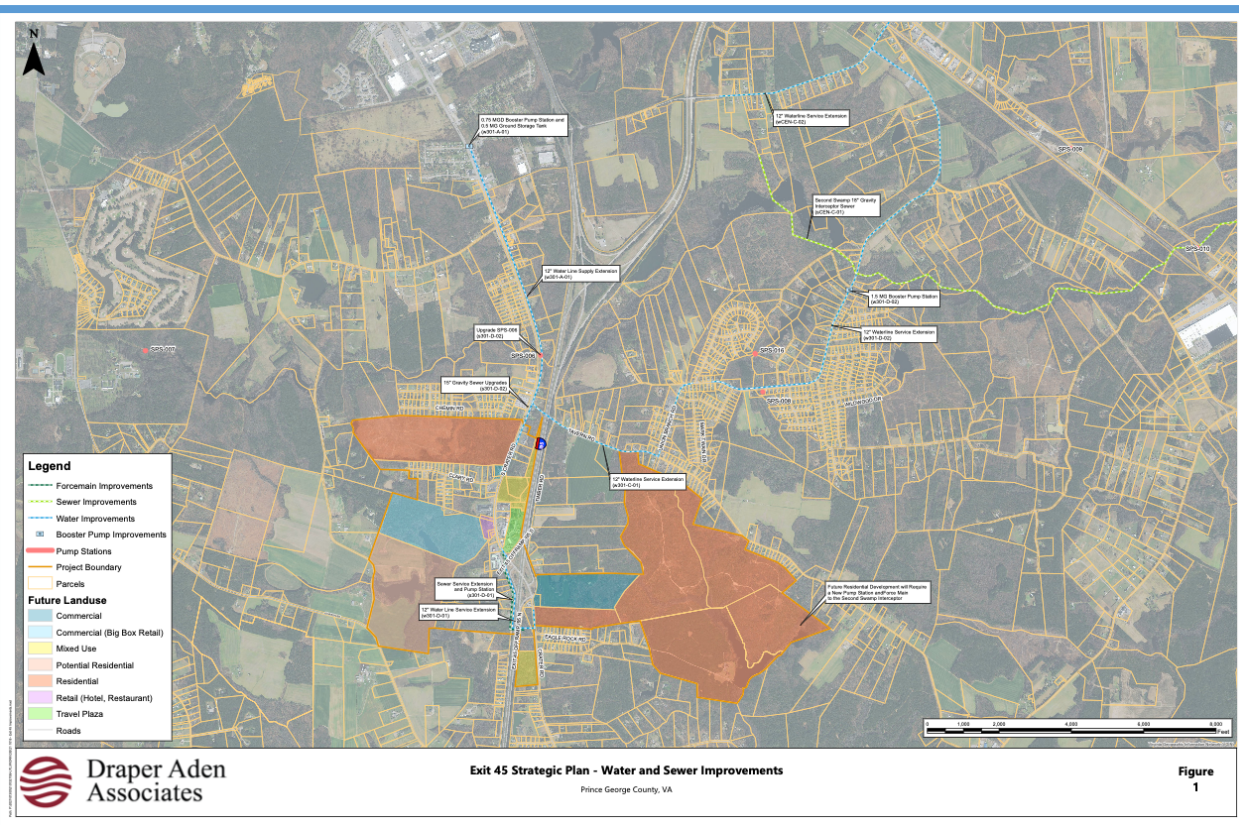
	Current Capacity Allowed by City of Petersburg Agreement (GPD)	Current Average Sewer Usage by Existing Exit 45 Businesses (GPD) (From SPS-006 Meter Readings*)	SPS-006 Design Capacity (GPD)	Remaining Amount Available (per City of Petersburg Agreement) for Future Development (GPD)
Sewer	291,000	161,431	261,099	129,569

* The current average flow from SPS-006 includes flow from neighborhoods served by SPS-008 and SPS-016.

- Sewer Capacity Now:** The existing sewer system has capacity to convey up to the 291,000 gallons per day average daily limit.
- Sewer capacity if the County upgrades pipes and pumps in County only:** If the County upgrades the gravity sewer, pump station and force mains within the Route 301 system the average day capacity would be approximately 700,00 gallons per day, however, the limiting factor is the agreement with the City of Petersburg as noted below.
- Sewer limit before re-negotiations must occur with City of Petersburg (Legal limit):** 291,000 gallons per day is the average daily conveyance capacity the County can send to Petersburg from the Route 301 system.
- What is status of Hampton Inn water tank? Reuse?** The Hampton Inn well facility has a 125,000-gallon storage tank that primarily provides fire protection for the Hampton Inn. The County owned 500,000-gallon elevated storage tank provides fire protection and storage for the remainder of the Route 301 water system.
- Water tank - DEQ permit change withdrawal limits and residential use. What are water limits currently?** The Route 301 water system is permitted for an average day demand capacity of 124,300 gallons with a max day demand of 272,160 gallons. The County is in the process of renewing the Groundwater Withdrawal permit to increase the capacity and allow for residential use.

Key Goals for Water and Sewer

1. Develop new well to provide additional water capacity for Mid Term development demands.
2. Extend waterline south along Route 301 to serve retail, commercial and residential development adjacent to and east of Interstate 95 .
3. Receive additional water capacity from Petersburg and construct 12-inch waterline, storage tank and booster pump station along Route 301.
4. Interconnect the Route 301 water system and Central water system .
5. Upgrade 12-inch gravity sewer south of SPS-006 to 15-inch.
6. Upgrade SPS-006 to add a third pump .
7. Construct new gravity sewer, pump station and force main as part of commercial and retail development east and adjacent to Interstate 95.
8. Construct new gravity sewer, pump station and force main as part of residential development east of Interstate 95.



Action Matrices

Summary of work to develop the Goals and Action Items for Water and Sewer

1. Reviewed the Water and Wastewater Master Plan and met with Frank Haltom to discuss existing water and sewer system capacity and long-term plans for the Route 301 system.
2. Developed a future land use map to include retail, commercial, and residential designations.
3. Developed water and sewer demand projections based on future land use designations and future developments and associated development timeframes within the Exit 45 planning area.
4. Identified water and sewer system deficiencies and developed goals to address the system deficiencies and provide water and sewer service to the Exit 45 planning area.

Goal No.1: Develop new well to provide additional water capacity for Mid Term development demands

Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
<u>Water</u>			
Request additional withdrawal amount and new well in the Groundwater Withdrawal Permit Application – currently in process		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Receive approval from DEQ on the requested withdrawal amount and new well – the amount of additional withdrawal that DEQ will approve is unknown at this time		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Site and develop new well		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Design interconnection of new well to the existing distribution system		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Construct interconnection of new well to the existing distribution system		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom

Goal No.2: Extend waterline south along Route 301 to serve retail, commercial and residential development adjacent to and east of Interstate 95

Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
Water			
Design waterline improvements project w301-D-01 (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan) to extend service to development east of Interstate 95	retail & commercial residential	Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Construct waterline improvements project w301-D-01 (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan) to extend service to development east of Interstate 95	retail & commercial residential	Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom

Goal No.3: Receive additional water capacity from Petersburg and construct 12-inch waterline, storage tank and booster pump station along Route 301

Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
Water			
Renegotiate agreement with Petersburg to receive additional water capacity – if available		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Design waterline, storage tank and booster pump station improvements project w301-A-01 along Route 301 (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan)		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Construct waterline, storage tank and booster pump station improvements project w301-A-01 along Route 301 (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan)		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom

Goal No.4: Interconnect the Route 301 water system and Central water system

Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
Water			
Design waterline improvements project w301-D-02, w301-C-01 and wCEN-C-02 (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan) to interconnect the Route 301 water system to the Central water system		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Construct waterline improvements project w301-D-02, w301-C-01 and wCEN-C-02 (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan) to interconnect the Route 301 water system to the Central water system		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom

Goal No.5: Upgrade 12-inch gravity sewer south of SPS-006 to 15-inch			
Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
<u>Sewer</u>			
Design of upgrade of existing 12-inch gravity sewer project s301-D-02 (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan)		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Construct upgrade of existing 12-inch gravity sewer project s301-D-02 (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan)		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom

Goal No.6: Upgrade SPS-006 to add a third pump			
Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
<u>Sewer</u>			
Renegotiate agreement with Petersburg to accept additional sewer flow		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Design of pump station upgrade s301-D-02 project (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan) to add a third pump		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Construct pump station upgrade s301-D-02 project (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan) to add a third pump		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom

Goal No.7: Construct new gravity sewer, pump station and force main as part of commercial and retail development east and adjacent to Interstate 95			
Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
<u>Water and Sewer</u>			
Design new gravity sewer, pump station and force main project s301-D-01 (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan) to pump flow to the existing gravity sewer upstream of SPS-006.		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Construct new gravity sewer, pump station and force main project s301-D-01 (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan) to pump flow to the existing gravity sewer upstream of SPS-006		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom

Goal No.8: Construct new gravity sewer, pump station and force main as part of residential development east of Interstate 95

Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
Sewer			
Design new gravity sewer, pump station and force main to pump flow to the future Second Swamp interceptor sewer project sCEN-C-01 (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan) or to SPS-006.		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom
Construct new gravity sewer, pump station and force main to pump flow to the future Second Swamp interceptor sewer project sCEN-C-01 (outlined in the Water and Wastewater Master Plan) or to SPS-006.		Utilities / Engineering	Frank Haltom

Key Goals for Vision to Reality

1. Implement activities for general blight mitigation and as a launch point for future development and “curb side appeal” of Exit 45 Tourism Zone in its current state.
2. Obtain and redevelop the Continental property.
3. Obtain and redevelop the former Steven Kent property.
4. Create programs, develop assets, and recruit businesses that will support County strengths; in particular, sports tourism/events and outdoor tourism/trails.
5. Intensify promotion and marketing of Exit 45 as an overnight interstate traveler and longer stay sports/outdoor participants tourist.
6. Seek and recruit developers to create mixed use and residential developments on the west side of the interstate (limited) and on the east side of the interstate (denser). Proactively pursue new businesses that will support mixed use, residential, retail, etc. to support the Exit 45 vision for visitor amenities and for resident needs.

Goal No.1: Implement activities for general blight mitigation and as a launch point for future development and “curb side appeal” of Exit 45 Tourism Zone in its current state.

Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
<u>Vision Developments</u>			
Develop a conceptual master plan with visual renderings of the zone to better communicate with government, stakeholders, funding sources, developers, and businesses. The plan will capture the vision and include walking connectivity, development types (travel, hotel, etc.) uses, etc.		Planning Department – County Master Plan	Tim Graves
Contract with a Travel/Tourism firm to develop a brand for Exit 45 based on the vision developed and reflected in the concept plan.		Economic Development	Stacey English
Develop a lighting and landscape plan for the exit (both sides) and zone area on the west side of the exit. Create image of safe and accessible exit and a tree lined and well lighted “boulevard” along US 301 in the Zone. Make exit visible by clearing trees blocking the area immediate to the Interstate and light the exits.		Planning Department	Julie Walton

Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
Establish and/or reinvigorate an Exit 45 merchants and owners' group to make them part of the solution to issues at the Exit and to give them a voice and ownership.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Develop a package of incentives to stimulate owner participation by rewarding compliance and improvements as well as to stimulate attraction of new businesses to the Zone.		Code Compliance	Charles Harrison
Contact VDOT and resolve issues related to Exit instructions (re. "Exit Only" southbound) and confusion created by existing sign as to whether traveler is exiting I-95 at Exit 45 OR if Exiting onto I-295 (northbound)		Community Development	Julie Walton
Design wayfinding signs within the Zone (using the branding created) to show navigation from the Interstate to developments within the Zone and, from the Zone on 301N toward Petersburg amenities.		Economic Development	Stacey English
Hotel staff (especially frontline) need to exude a level of professionalism and may require some specific skills training. Work with the local colleges (RBC, Community Colleges) to partner on a training program.		Economic Development (HPG Chamber)	Stacey English (Becky McDonough)
Create a standing "Task Force" of key representatives across county government, IDA, Planning Commission and (possibly) owners/developers in the Tourism Zone. This group will be responsible for directing and influencing reaching of goals and actions for the Zone and in keeping elected officials informed.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Create an Ombudsman position within the County to smooth and accelerate any applications, permissions or permits requested by those seeking to develop in the Tourism Zone.		Community Development	Julie Walton
Zoning and Code Enforcement			
For clarity, check and possibly modify permitted uses allowed under B1 and to add		Planning Department	Andre Green

convention and conference centers and related facilities, outdoor recreational facilities, travel plazas.			
Either through creation of an overlay zone or through additions to the current Tourism Zone; create a sign ordinance to mitigate and regulate existing signs and future signs for blight mitigation and branding of the Zone. Add a provision to code compliance to address removal of signs within 30 days following the closing of an operation which makes the sign obsolete. Add a provision in codes to state that any existing sign that is deteriorated to more than 50% of its value as determined by the Code Enforcement Officer shall be removed.		Planning Department	Tim Graves
Move from a reactive/complaint approach to code enforcement to a proactive enforcement of the codes in the Tourism Zone.		Code Enforcement	Charles Harrison
Instruct code enforcement to inspect and enforce existing regulations regarding overgrown lots, trash, and debris and property maintenance on a quarterly basis until the area gets cleaned up vs. on a complaint basis; solicit input from merchant's/owner's group on violations they observe.		Code Enforcement	Charles Harrison
Add abandoned, junked, or non-tagged or out of date tagged vehicles to the items listed under code enforcement. Any car that is not displaying a current tag or is inoperable should be removed within 30 days.		Police Department	Lt. Paul Burroughs
Explore, and possibly establish, new codes in the Tourism Zone that restricts overnight stays by "locals", discourages cash payment of room stays and limits long term stay to established long term stay hotel brands only.		County Attorney	Dan Whitten
Create a cross-department code enforcement team responsible for proactive monitoring of Exit 45 and coordinating between members on enforcement. Clearly		Code Enforcement	Charles Harrison

define roles and responsibilities and meet regularly. Develop a clear plan of action for the team.			
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Goal No.2: Obtain and redevelop the Continental property.			
Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
<u>Vision Developments</u>			
Evaluate market value, determine a purchase range PG is willing to pay; develop a negotiation strategy.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Purchase or taking acquisition (see "Zoning and Code Enforcement") by IDA. If purchase, arrange finance either from county funds or through IDA funds or bonds proceeds.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Demolish the building and, if no immediate sale to a new owner, grade, seed and ensure utilities are available.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Develop a graphic and data intensive prospectus of the property to use as a pitch to target businesses. Proactively recruit appropriate business for property according to the master plan. Use property to specifically attract a sit-down chain restaurant (e.g., Panera, Olive Garden) or to attract a retail/commercial entity that will support outdoor and sports tourism visitors (see below) such as Dick's, REI, etc.		Economic Development	Stacey English
<u>Zoning and Code Enforcement</u>			
Ensure the property is zoned for desired uses.		Planning Department	Tim Graves
Immediately monitor and enforce all codes related to violations on site; PROACTIVELY		Code Enforcement	Charles Harrison

Goal No.3: Obtain and redevelop the former Steven Kent property.			
Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
<u>Vision Developments</u>			
Explore options: purchase, types of purchase, land lease, or joint venture with owner.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
If Purchase: Evaluate market value, determine a purchase range PG is willing to pay; develop a negotiation strategy.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Purchase by IDA. Arrange finance either from county funds or through IDA funds or bonds proceeds.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Demolish building and if no immediate sale to a new owner, grade, seed and ensure utilities are available.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Design and develop a perimeter greenway/park on property incorporating a dog park area, renovated existing picnic area. Leave core of site for commercial/mixed-use development.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Retain 1-2 acres in front to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a small public facility to house various public entities (Examples- government or related organizations; tourist bureau, ED offices, CoC offices, State offices, branch library, etc.), building not just a place to get maps and info, but possibly a place to facilitate the athletic tournaments and outdoor activities (player check-in, hotel assignments, arrange shuttles to trails, etc.) • Develop a small “conference center” adjacent/connected to public facility to create a community (local, regional) gathering place with capacity for 50-100 attendees • Possibly develop a “ghost kitchen” that prepares food for 4-5 local or chain brand restaurants and provides pick-up or delivery to Zone hotels. Specifically seek developers of this type of facility. 		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke

Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
In the core 7 acres, either develop a mixed commercial/retail “town center” or recruit and attract a key brand retail as a destination (Examples: Bass Pro Shop, IKEA, REI, etc.)		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Develop a graphic and data intensive prospectus of the property to use as a pitch to targeted businesses. Proactively recruit appropriate business for property according to the master plan.		Economic Development	Stacey English
Proactively approach potential developers and businesses that fit the vision and plan. Become a team in developing the site to the purposes desired.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
<u>Zoning and Code Enforcement</u>			
Design developments in compliance with zoning ordinances and codes to be enforced.		Planning Department	Tim Graves
Enforce all codes and ordinances developed in Goal No. 1.		Code Enforcement	Charles Harrison

Goal No.4: Create programs, develop assets, and recruit businesses that will support County strengths; in particular, sports tourism/events and outdoor tourism/trails.

Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
Vision Developments			
Attract at least one more hotel that is “and suites”. Families staying for tournaments or longer stay outdoor tourists would welcome this type of lodging.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Recruit 2 new restaurants (brand, family, sit-down); help expand exposure and marketing of existing “authentic” restaurants such as Nanny’s, El Arriero and (perhaps Lighthouse) and solicit a local/regional authentic pizza provider.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
From Goal No. 3: Possibly develop a “ghost kitchen” that prepares food for 4-5 local or chain brand restaurants and provides pick-up or delivery to Zone hotels. Specifically seek developers of this type of facility. This would mainly serve families and teams of major sporting events/tournaments.		Economic Development	Stacey English
Recruit either a brand sports store that has repair/maintenance services for bicycles OR attract a local/regional bicycle shop that could also serve as a trails shuttle service provider or operator.		Economic Development	Stacey English
From Goal No.3: Develop a small public facility possibly as a place to facilitate the athletic tournaments and outdoor activities (player check-in, hotel assignments, arrange shuttles to trails, etc.)		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Become heavily involved in discussions recently initiated to develop a shuttle service to take riders/hikers to and from the various trails.		Economic Development (Crater PDC/MPO)	Jeff Stoke (Ron Svejkovsky)
Increase County efforts to develop tournaments but also tap into wider regional organizations and offer to be a resource for fields, rooms and staff support.		Parks and Recreation – Sports Tourism Coordinator	Rob Eley

Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
Longer-term, become a regional advocate and active stakeholder for connecting Exit 45 directly to the Fall Line Trail and the FOLAR Trail in downtown Petersburg (as the crow flies= 8.5 miles) possibly using the VDOT Smart Scale program to fund a route along US301N.		Economic Development (Crater PDC/MPO)	Jeff Stoke (Ron Svejkovsky)

Goal No.5: Intensify promotion and marketing of Exit 45 as an overnight interstate traveler and longer stay sports/outdoor participants tourist.

Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
Vision Developments			
Hire a branding consultant to create a unique and memorable brand for Exit 45. Exit numbers are NOT unique but a brand name (e.g., "Travelers Rest", "Adventure Gateway") is and all marketing and promotion can be built around the brand.	And Ongoing	Economic Development	Stacey English
Develop marketing/promotion materials specifically around the Zone being a "home base" for 1) sports tourism and events (softball, soccer, or other "rectangular" sports); 2) bike and water trails/outdoor tourism; 3) history/heritage tourism. Highlight the regional assets that can be accessed from the Zone "home base" or "base camp".	And Ongoing	Economic Development	Stacey English
Significantly increase enhanced marketing budget as the exit is revitalized. Implement a comprehensive, "out of the box" developed approach to marketing and promotion for a re-purposed Exit 45 as a unique and distinctive exit.	And Ongoing	Economic Development	Stacey English
Either hire an experienced outdoor/sports marketer or contract with a specialty firm to provide these services. Exit 45 needs a focused strategy and some type of clear and targeted brand for this effort, creative placement of promotion in geographic and sector specific media outlets and formation of specific collaborative partners who can serve as "multipliers". For example, ensure that Exit 45 is marketed to and part of any promotion that a sports or outdoor promoter or presenter uses to provide lodging, dining, and amenities options to participants in their tournaments, events, etc.	And Ongoing	Parks and Recreation – Sports Tourism Coordinator	Rob Eley

Goal No.6: Seek and recruit developers to create mixed use and residential developments on the west side of the interstate (limited) and on the east side of the interstate (denser). Proactively pursue new businesses that will support mixed use, residential, retail, etc. to support the Exit 45 vision for visitor amenities and for resident needs.

Actions	Timeframe	Department	Champion
Vision Developments			
Develop a PROACTIVE program to acquire, represent owners and/or recruit desired businesses and developments that are Consistent with the Vision for the Tourism Zone and according to the Master Plan .		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke
Develop an inventory of all available sites in the Zone that are considered prime for development. Include information on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Owner, appraised or FM Value, wiliness to sell, price (if provided), realtor representative, etc. • Strategy for each property: County buys, County Controls, Represent for Owner, Recruit for the Owner, etc. • Develop a set of incentives to stimulate development on properties in the inventory for purposes envisioned. 		Economic Development	Stacey English
Develop promotional, data driven materials for all key sites targeted for development which in cases of the larger/prime sites should include renderings. (see attached)		Economic Development	Stacey English
Just as would be done for an industrial prospect for Economic Development purposes, actively market and conduct recruitment activities for businesses and developers who can “populate” the Zone according to the Vision.		Economic Development	Jeff Stoke

ATTACHMENT

Stakeholder Input Plan

County Stakeholder Engagement

Prepared By:
The RiverLink Group

October 2021

Importance of Stakeholder Input:

Within the partnership of the Sanford Holshouser Economic Development Consulting team, the RiverLink Group will move forward with stakeholder interviews and discussions from August 2021 – October 2021. The purpose of stakeholder engagement is to *proactively consider the needs and desires of anyone who has a stake in the outcome. Stakeholder engagement fosters connections, trust, confidence, and buy-in. Further, it mitigates potential risks and conflicts with, including uncertainty, dissatisfaction, misalignment, disengagement, and resistance to change.*

As noted in the proposal to the County, a series of one-on-one and group interviews of economic development stakeholders from local, regional, and state organizations will be conducted. The stakeholder input will be guided by a series of questions related to the County's economic development focus area.

We propose the following stakeholders to be included and note that these will be either one-on-one interviews or focus groups, conducted virtually or in person as time and scheduling permits. There are a total of 13 solo interviews and 4 focus groups proposed.

A pre-session survey will be used for two of the focus groups (the IDA and the Planning Commission).

The outcome of this input will inform the action plan made in the final report to the County.

Stakeholder Engagement Schedule

Proposed Timing	Stakeholder	Format	Comments
September 2	County Administrator	Solo – in person	1PM, County Administration Building, Completed notes to DD
September 8	Regional Development Organization	Solo – virtual	9:00AM Completed notes to DD
September 8	Regional Tourism Organization	Solo – Virtual	3:15PM Completed notes to DD
TBD	District 1 BOS	Solo – telephone	Call to interview
September 16	Virginia Tourism Corporation Regional Development Manager	Solo – virtual	10:00AM; Completed notes to DD
September 20	County Planning Commission	Focus Group – in person	5:30PM, County Administration Building; completed notes to DD
September 21	Chamber of Commerce	Solo – telephone	4:00PM (rescheduled); completed notes to DD
September 22	County IDA	Focus Group - in person	12 noon, County Administration Building; completed notes to DD
October 6	District 2 BOS	Solo – in person	2:30PM, County Administration Building; completed notes to DD
October 7	District 2 BOS	Solo – in person	1:00PM, County Administration Building; completed notes to DD
October 7	Property Owners	Focus Group – in-person	3:00PM, Holiday Inn Express; completed notes to DD
October 12	Commercial Real Estate Firm	Solo – telephone	8:30AM; completed notes to DD
October 12	District 1, BOS	Solo – in person	12:00PM, County Administration Building; completed notes to DD

October 12	Chief of Police, Selected Detectives	Focus Group – in person	1:00PM; Police HQ completed notes to DD
October 13	District 2, BOS	Solo – in person	3:00PM, County Administration Building; completed notes to DD
October 14	Significant Property Owner/Developer	Solo – telephone	11:30AM; completed notes to DD
November 1	County Engineer	Solo – telephone	2:30PM; completed notes to DD