

Chapter 2  
**Goals for the Future of Williamsburg**

The 2012 Comprehensive Plan is designed to guide the physical and economic development of Williamsburg by offering a distinctive vision for both its natural and built environment. The planning process has incorporated a range of public participation opportunities to allow citizens to express their visions and expectations for the future of the City. A number of neighborhood planning forums, three community forums in conjunction with James City County and York County, as well as multiple work sessions with both public officials and citizens, have been or will be conducted. The comments received, as well as a review of the recommendations of the City’s past Comprehensive Plans, were used by the Planning Commission in establishing these goals and objectives, which have been grouped into eight general categories:

- I. Character of the City**
- II. Economic Vitality**
- III. Transportation**
- IV. Public Safety**
- V. Education and Human Services**
- VI. Recreation and Culture**
- VII. Environmental Sustainability**
- VIII. Implementation**

Within each of these categories, specific goals and objectives are listed to serve as the basis for planning and evaluating the City’s future.

**I. Character of the City.**

Protect and enhance Williamsburg’s unique character as defined by its residential neighborhoods, urban places, open spaces, and by its iconic places – the Colonial Williamsburg Historic Area and the campus of the College of William and Mary.

- A. Protect the character and integrity of the Colonial Williamsburg Historic Area, the historic campus of the College of William and Mary, and the City’s historic neighborhoods and commercial areas.
- B. Improve the quality of life in the neighborhoods surrounding William and Mary by building and maintaining effective working relationships between the city, college, students, neighbors and landlords, and by supporting the work of the Neighborhood Relations Committee.
- C. Encourage appropriate scale and character for new and infill residential development, taking into consideration the scale and character of existing neighborhoods, environmental constraints, and the capacity of existing and proposed services.
- C. Encourage an appropriate mix of housing and commercial uses in mixed-use developments, particularly in the Downtown, Midtown, Northeast Triangle, High Street and Quarterpath Road areas.
- D. Evaluate and update regulations, design standards and capital improvements to ensure that they properly implement the City’s goals and that they facilitate new or adaptive reuse projects supported by the Comprehensive Plan.

## **II. Economy Vitality.**

Increase employment opportunities, income, business success, and City revenues by supporting and promoting the City's economic base of heritage tourism and education and other development and redevelopment opportunities.

- A. Support and expand visitation through tourism-oriented destinations and related businesses, visitation to the College of William and Mary, and promotion of arts, sports and other special events related to tourism.
- B. Participate in efforts to advance regional tourism and economic development goals both within the Historic Triangle and the greater Hampton Road region.
- C. Support business expansion and job opportunities related to Colonial Williamsburg and the College of William and Mary.
- D. Encourage high quality commercial and institutional development consistent with the character of the City in order to expand the City's economic base.
- E. Encourage the creative economy through support for the City's Arts District, The Colonial Williamsburg Art Museums, and the future William and Mary Fine and Performing Arts Complex.
- F. Identify areas suitable for infill development and redevelopment, and develop strategies to encourage such development and redevelopment.
- G. Support the economic development goals of the City's Economic Development Authority as reflected in the EDA's Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- H. Cooperate with the Colonial Williamsburg Foundation, the College of William and Mary, and Riverside Healthcare Systems to coordinate their land use planning and economic development efforts with the City's Comprehensive Plan and Economic Development Strategic Plan.

## **III. Transportation.**

Provide an effective transportation system which is compatible with the future land use plan, serving pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists, and promoting the expanded use of transit and rail.

- A. Improve and expand bicycle and pedestrian facilities as an important part of the transportation system, with special emphasis on filling in gaps to create a safe and interconnected system with connections to transit services.
- B. Support the Williamsburg Area Transit Authority's provision of an acceptable level of transit service for the Williamsburg area, including the continuation of the Williamsburg Trolley service, an improved system of bus shelters, and maintaining a regional multimodal hub at the the Williamsburg Transportation Center.
- C. Incorporate traffic-calming measures in appropriate locations to minimize traffic impacts on the City's neighborhoods.
- D. Evaluate existing parking regulations and facilities to ensure that adequate parking is provided for residents and visitors.
- E. Support the development and implementation of improved high-speed rail down the Virginia Peninsula, with at least one additional train per day both ways, as well as future light-rail service, with the Williamsburg Transportation Center serving as the regional multimodal hub.
- F. Complete the widening and improvement of Ironbound Road between Richmond Road and Longhill Connector.
- G. Work with the Beautification Advisory Committee to improve the character of the City's entrance corridors, and also with James City County and York County to ensure that the visual quality of the entrance corridors is consistent among the three jurisdictions.

#### **IV. Public safety.**

Secure an ever safer community by enabling police, fire, emergency management and judicial operations to protect and serve City residents, visitors, businesses and historical assets.

- A. Maintain and upgrade public safety facilities to enable the City to provide quality services for law enforcement, firefighting, communications, and emergency operations.
- B. Support safe residential communities by increasing community participation in neighborhood watch programs to enhance and improve police/community partnerships, particularly in the Merrimac Trail area.
- C. Support the operation and maintenance of the Williamsburg-James City County Courthouse, the Virginia Peninsula Regional Jail, and the Middle Peninsula Juvenile Detention Facility (Merrimac Center).

#### **V. Human Services and Education.**

Seek opportunities and implement programs that address the educational, health, social and training needs and expectations of City residents and workers.

- A. Encourage adequate housing opportunities by creating a balanced distribution of housing types throughout the City.
- B. Facilitate the work of private and quasi-public agencies such as the Williamsburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority and Williamsburg Housing Partnership, Inc. in creating and improving moderately priced owner-occupied housing, and coordinate these efforts with neighboring jurisdictions to address housing needs on a regional basis.
- C. Support the expansion of affordable senior housing on the Williamsburg Redevelopment and Housing Authority's Blayton Building property on Scotland Street.
- D. Investigate the use of zoning incentives to increase the supply of new workforce housing in Williamsburg, particularly in the areas of prospective development such as the southeast quadrant of the City.
- E. Support the operation of the Williamsburg-James City County school system and provide necessary facilities within the City.
- F. Provide appropriate public support for human services agency facilities and other capital improvements as needed to meet critical health and human service needs, especially for vulnerable populations.

#### **VI. Recreation and Culture.**

Add to the quality and availability of cultural and recreational facilities and programming, as might be typically available only in larger communities, to meet the needs and expectations of City residents and visitors.

- A. Expand and enhance the City's system of parks, open space and recreational facilities, serving all segments of the population.
- B. Encourage conservation of open space in the City and promote preservation, maintenance and access to natural areas and historic sites through efforts such as public acquisition, delineation of greenbelt corridors, private dedication of easements, and passive recreational use.
- C. Protect significant archaeological resources by preservation or recovery through resource management plans.
- D. Preserve the portion of the Country Road between the Mounts Bay County Government Complex and South England Street near the Williamsburg Lodge as a multiuse trail under City and County ownership.
- E. Encourage regional cooperation in the development, expansion and promotion of arts festivals, sports tournaments and other special events.
- F. Support the development of the City's Arts District, improvements to The Colonial Williamsburg Art Museums, and the future William and Mary Fine and Performing Arts Complex.

## **VII. Environmental Sustainability.**

Build an evermore sustainable and healthy City pursuing multiple strategies for conservation and restoration, and providing essential environmental services related to drinking water, waste water, stormwater and solid waste.

- A. Protect Waller Mill Reservoir from the adverse environmental impacts that could result from future development within the watershed.
- B. Continue to upgrade the City's water distribution system to provide adequate quantity and quality for both daily usage and fire flows.
- C. Continue to maintain and expand the City's sanitary sewerage system, including both distribution lines and pump stations.
- D. Continue to coordinate the City's Stormwater Management Plan with other City land use regulations, such as zoning, erosion and sedimentation control and site plan review, and ensure that future development meets the standards of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.
- E. Update the City's Stormwater Management Plan to incorporate new state standards.
- F. Continue to implement and promote solid waste disposal and recycling programs which meet community needs and state mandates in the Peninsula region.
- G. Evaluate and revise architectural standards to allow more flexibility in green building design and in the use of environmentally sustainable materials.

## **VIII. Implementation**

Implement the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan by updating the City's zoning, subdivision and site plan controls, and by incorporating the Plan's recommendations into the Capital Improvement Program.