



Comprehensive Plan Overview

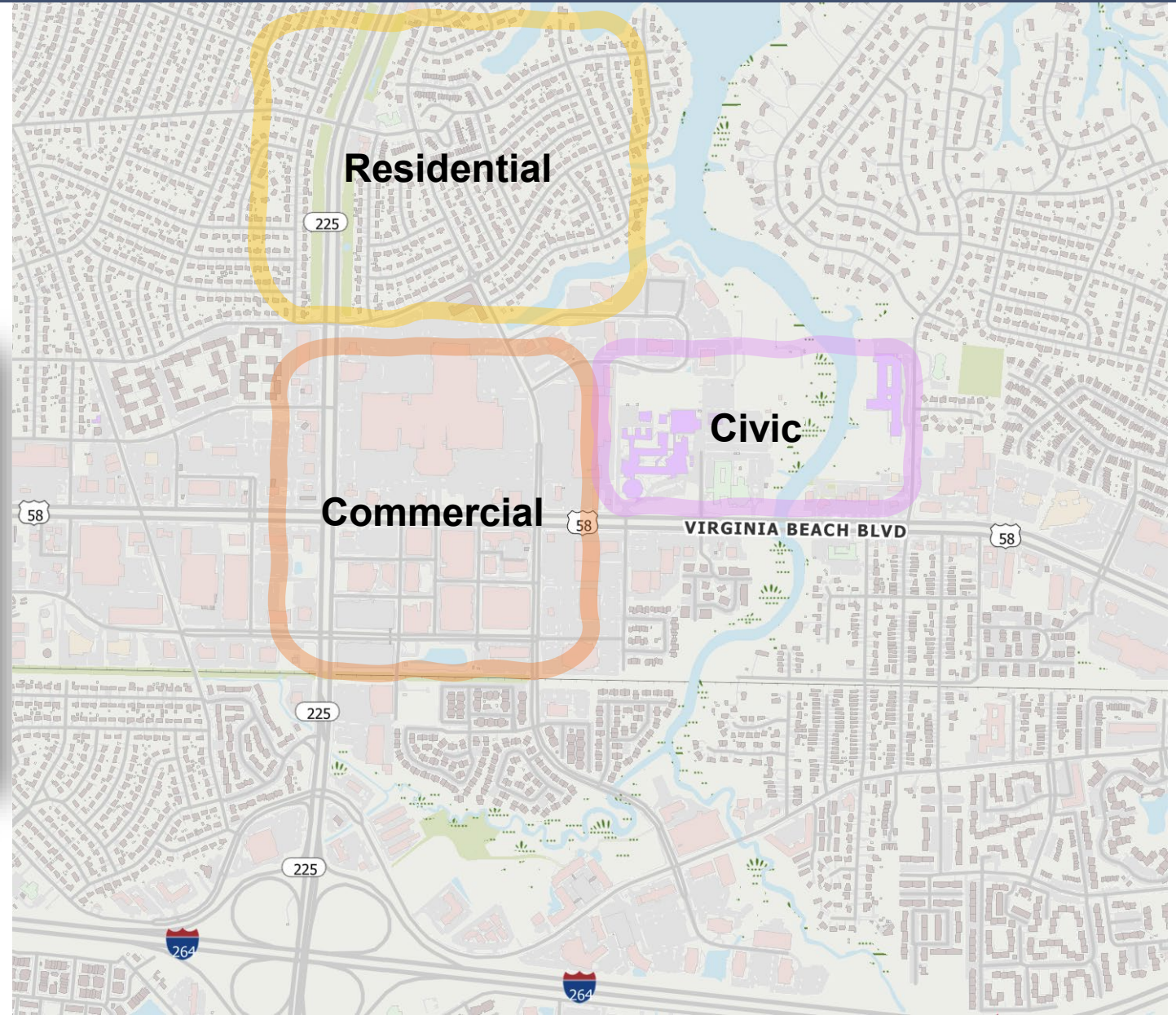
September 2025

Agenda

- What is imagineVB (Comprehensive Plan)?
- Why is it being updated?
- How was it updated?
- What stays the same?
- What changed?
- What's next?

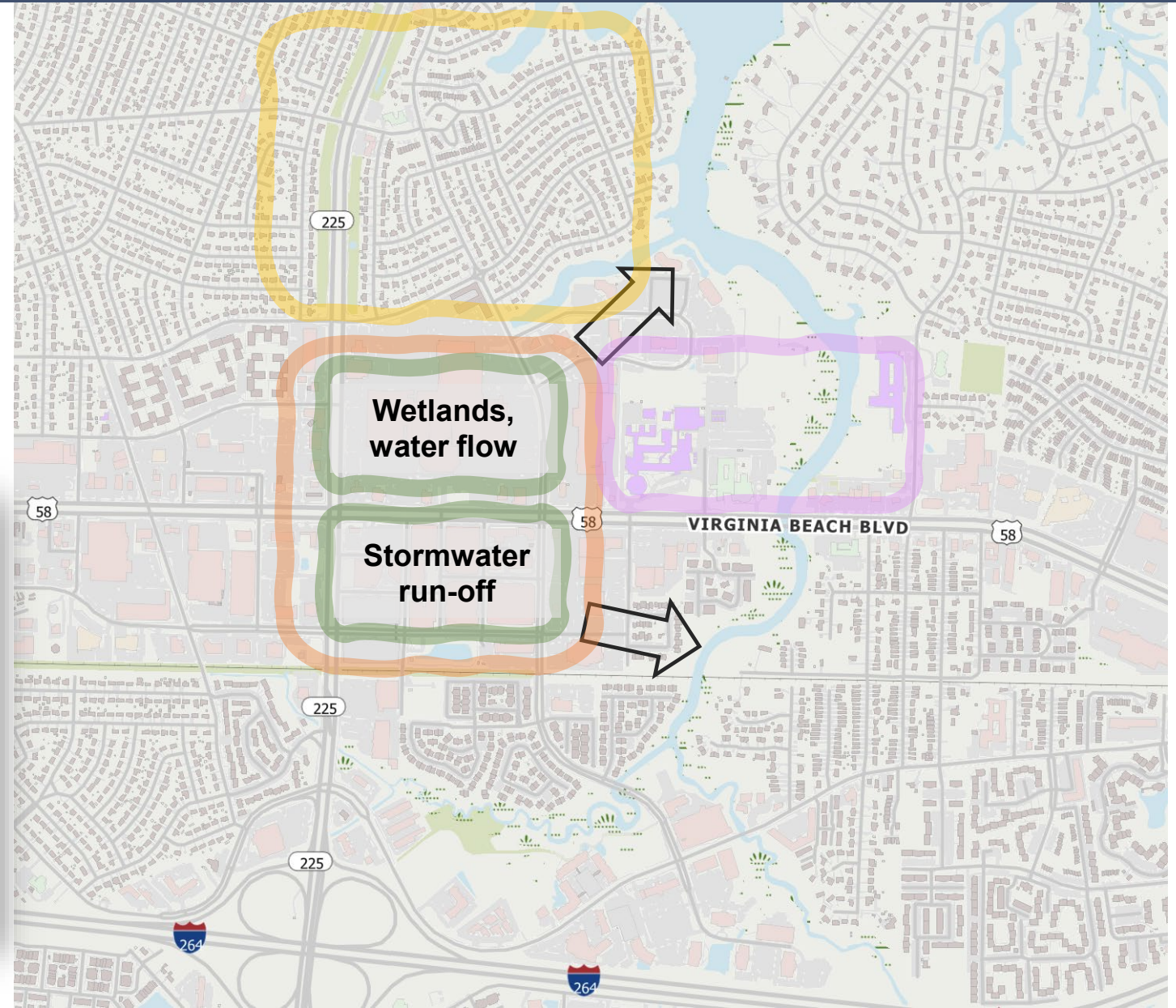
What is imagineVB (Comprehensive Plan)?

Focus is on land use and development patterns and how they influence...



What is imagineVB (Comprehensive Plan)? (1)

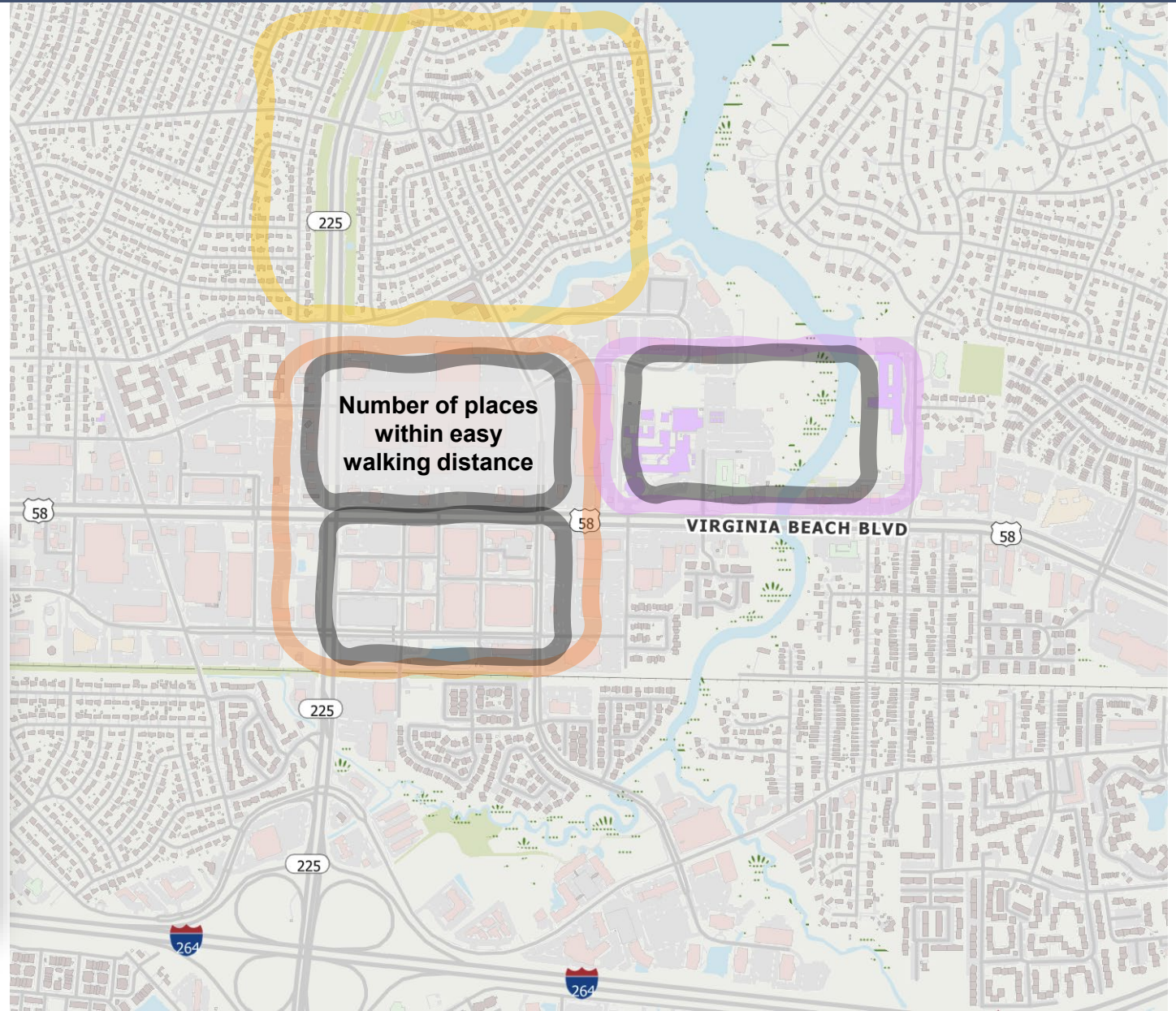
- *Environmental sustainability*
 - *Loss of natural land and wetlands*
 - *Flooding*
 - *Water quantity and quality*



What is imagineVB (Comprehensive Plan)? (2)

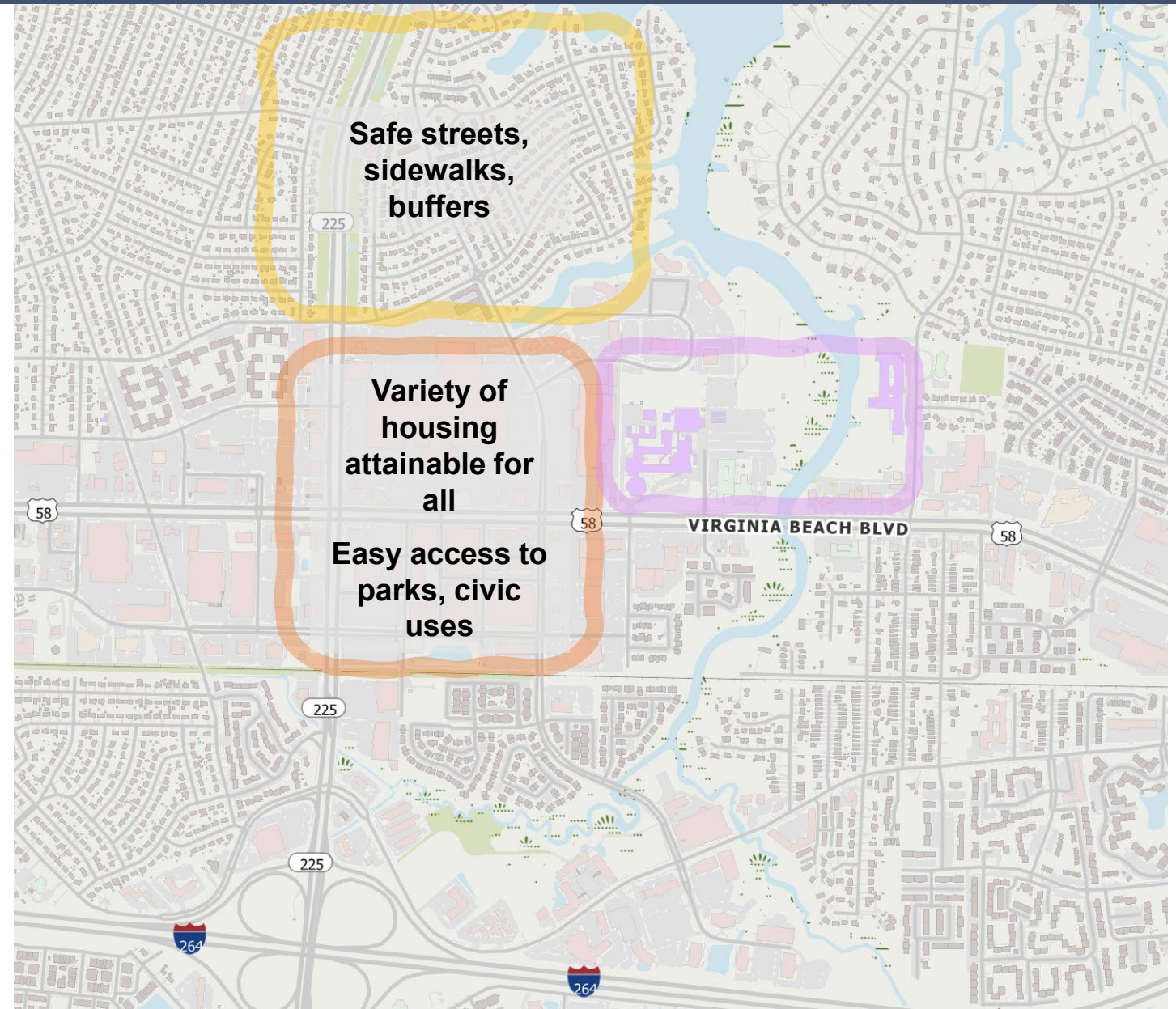
- *Travel*

- *How trips are made (walking, biking, transit, auto)*
- *Network demand and performance (congestion / bus ridership)*



What is imagineVB (Comprehensive Plan)? (3)

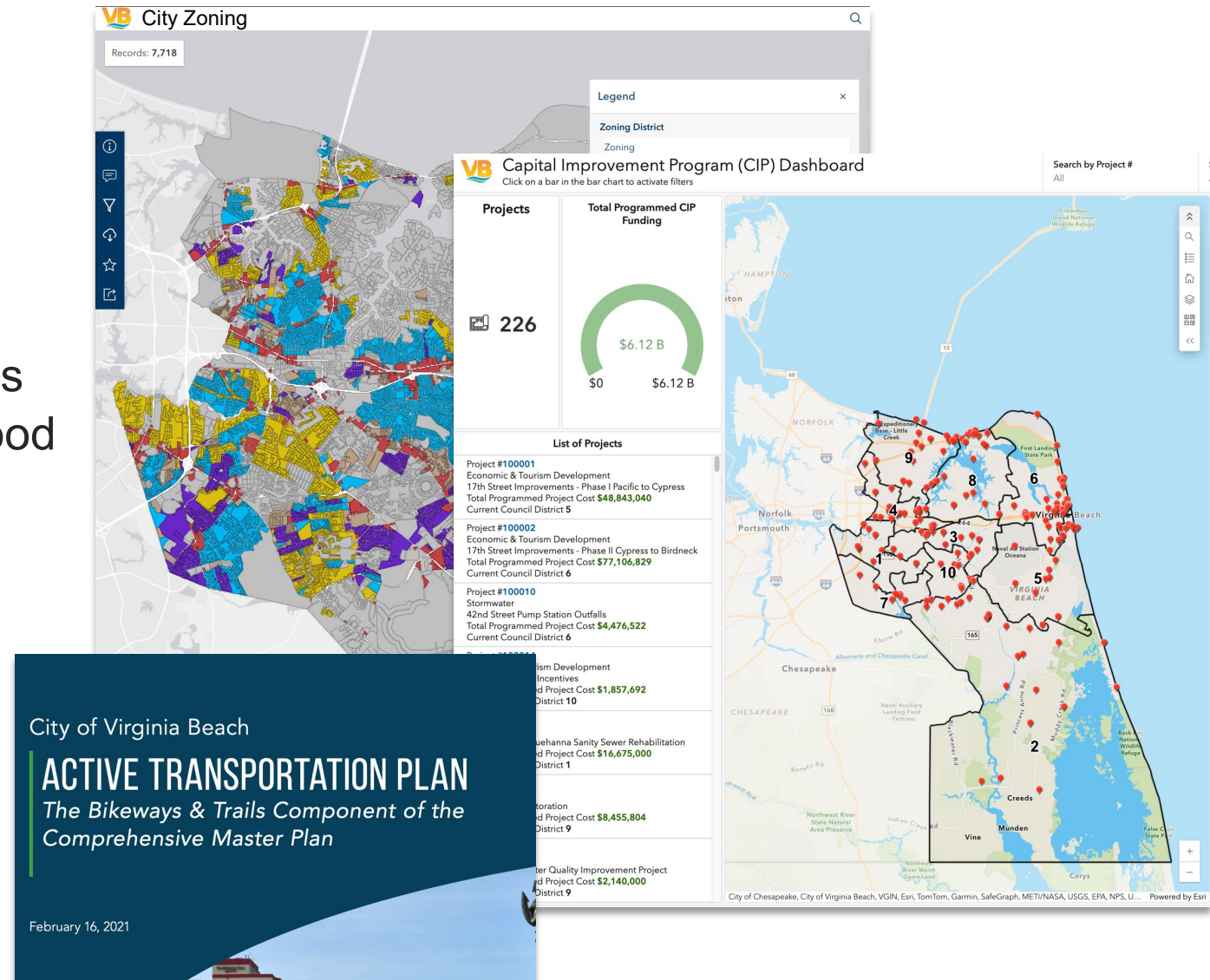
- *Housing, livability, and security*
 - *Types and costs of housing*
 - *Safe streets (sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, lighting)*
 - *Access to parks, schools, shops*



What is imagineVB (Comprehensive Plan)? (4)

Policy document that guides implementation tools and programs

- Zoning ordinance (legally regulates development)
- Capital Improvements Program (funds infrastructure, parks, environment, flood protection)
- Other ordinances and plans (*i.e.*, Transition Area Guidelines)



Why is it being updated?

- Virginia law requires review every five years
- Current plan adopted in 2016
- Revisit and update goals, objectives and policies (*i.e.*, maintain the Green Line)
 - What's working?
 - What's not working?
- Reflect changing conditions
 - Population growth
 - Flooding
 - Blue Line (no urban utilities south)
 - Affordable housing pressures
 - Economic shifts

It's Our Future: A Choice City



CITY OF VIRGINIA BEACH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

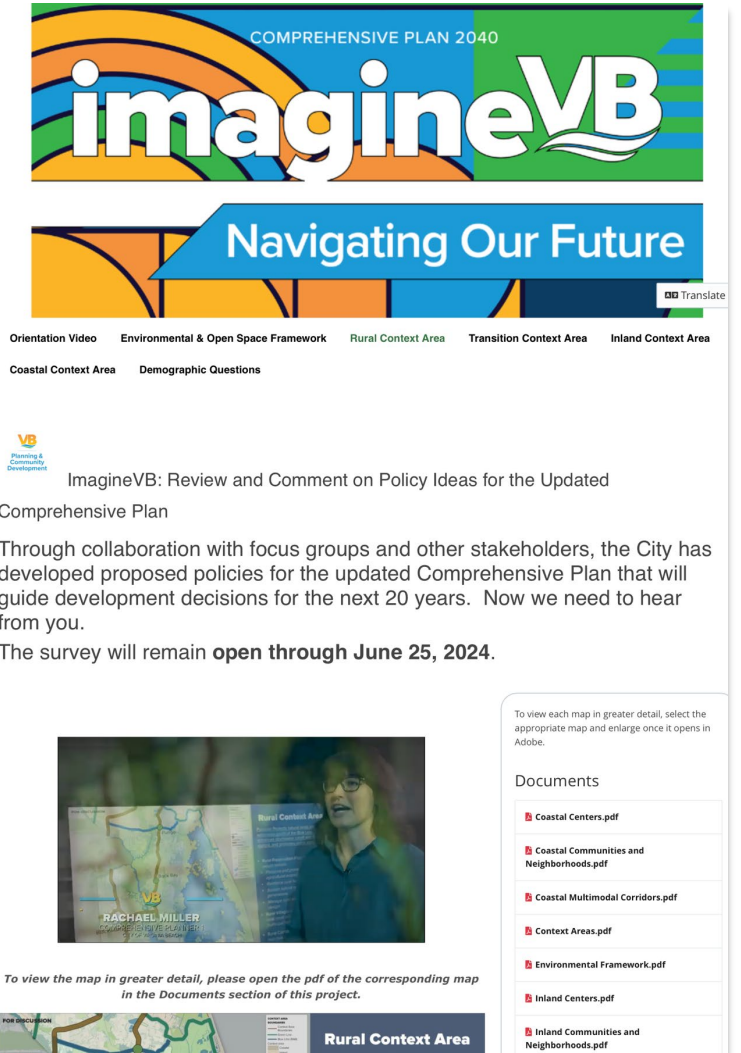


Policy Document

Adopted May 17, 2016
Amended January 17, 2017
Amended June 20, 2017
Amended December 12, 2017
Amended November 20, 2018
Amended June 2, 2020
Amended June 16, 2020
Amended February 16, 2021

How was it updated?

- Identify commonly held aspirations and challenges
 - Focus groups
- Develop goals, objectives, and big ideas
 - Round 1 workshops
- Translate goals and objectives into integrated plan and policies
 - Round 2 survey and workshops
 - City department review
 - Planning Commission review



What stays the same?

- Protect the environment
 - Protect large publicly owned land (First Landing, Back Bay Refuge, False Cape)
 - Protect estuaries, tributaries, and wetlands
- The Green Line and rural protection
 - Protect rural land south of the Green Line
 - Continue to support viable agriculture
 - Maintain adopted plans and policies
- Adopted Planning Area plans and policies
 - Strategic Growth Areas
 - Strategic Economic Growth Areas
 - Interfacility Traffic Area & Vicinity Master Plan
 - Transition Area Design Guidelines

What's new?



2040

imagineVB

City of Virginia Beach
Comprehensive Plan

It begins with a vision...

Imagine a city of water, with a variety of **attractive beaches** that draw people from throughout the country and large estuaries of outstanding beauty.



Imagine a city with rural lands and **active farms** growing food for **Virginia Beach** locals and beyond.

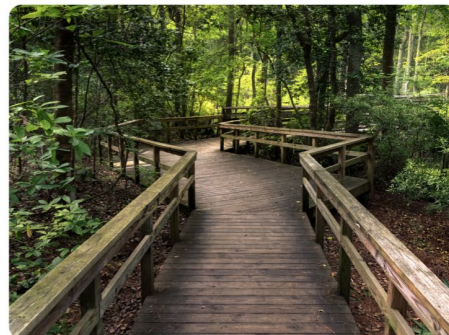


Imagine a city with expanses of **natural lands** connected by natural corridors that create an environmental and open space system where plants thrive and animals move freely.



Imagine a city with active and **walkable urban centers** where people come together to work, shop, recreate, and become immersed in arts and culture.

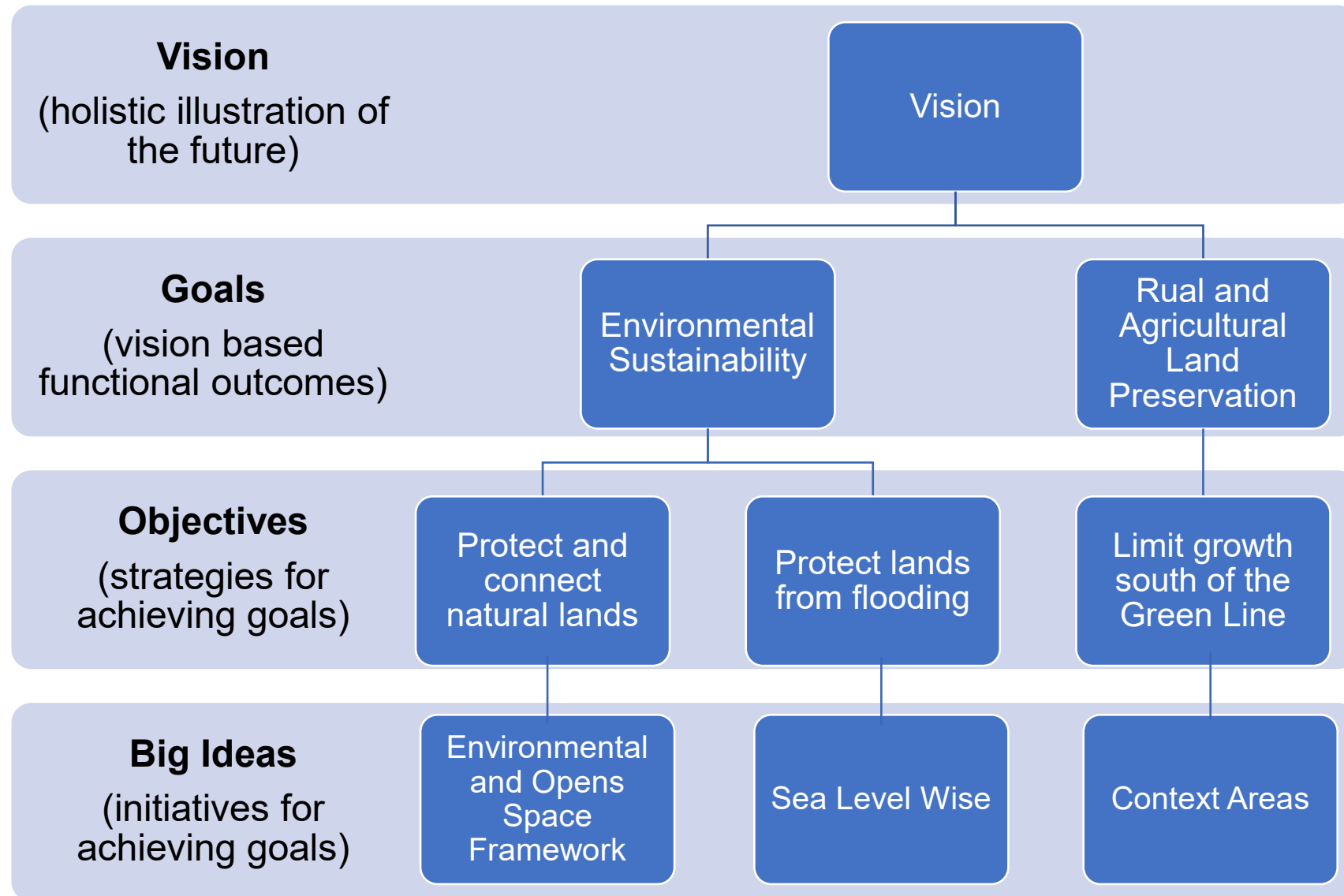
Imagine a city with a **network of parks and trails** within those natural lands and corridors.



Imagine a city of distinct communities, where neighborhood residents **safely and easily walk or bike to community hubs** to gather, visit farmers' markets, and enjoy parks and playgrounds.



Vision supported by goals, objectives, and big ideas



Environmental Sustainability

Imagine a city of water, with a variety of **attractive beaches** that draw people from throughout the country and large estuaries of outstanding beauty.

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Environmental Sustainability (Goals & Objectives)

Goals

- Position the City of Virginia Beach as a model of environmental stewardship.
- Enhance healthy ecosystems in the City.
- Improve water quality and mitigate flood impacts.
- **Protect, enhance, and connect natural lands and open spaces.**
- Increase access to nature and expand eco-tourism.
- Protect residents from natural hazards.
- Encourage efficient land use and green buildings and infrastructure.
- Protect existing properties from sea level rise, flooding, and erosion.
- Enhance the ecological resilience of beaches and natural areas.

Big Ideas

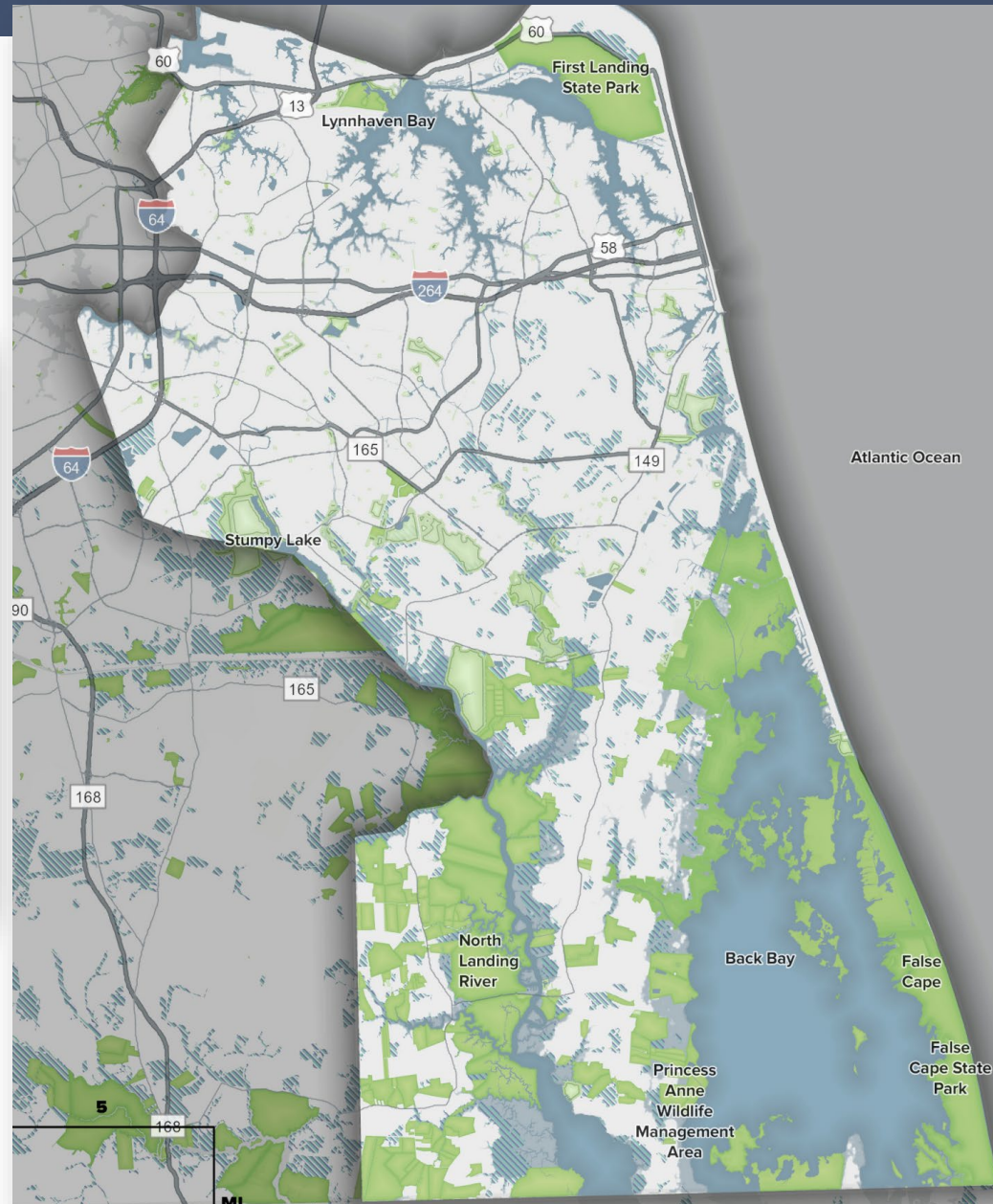
- Establish an **Environmental and Open Space Framework**.
- Create a **Linear Park System**.

Objectives

- Continue to focus on and implement **sustainable practices** that:
 - Encourage the development of green buildings and infrastructure
 - Limit waste and pollution and protect residents from hazards.
- Continue to focus on and implement **water quality and flood protection** programs and strategies that:
 - Improve water quality and protect regulatory floodplains.
 - Monitor and mitigate flooding and sea level rise.
- Continue to strategically **protect and connect open spaces** that:
 - Optimize the ecological value of protected lands and open space.
 - Enhance connectivity between protected lands.
 - Increase public access to natural lands and waterways.
- Develop and implement **major environmental initiatives (Big Ideas)**.
 - Sea Level Wise program for flood protection.
 - Environmental and Open Space Framework to connect open spaces.
 - Linear Park System to provide public access to nature.

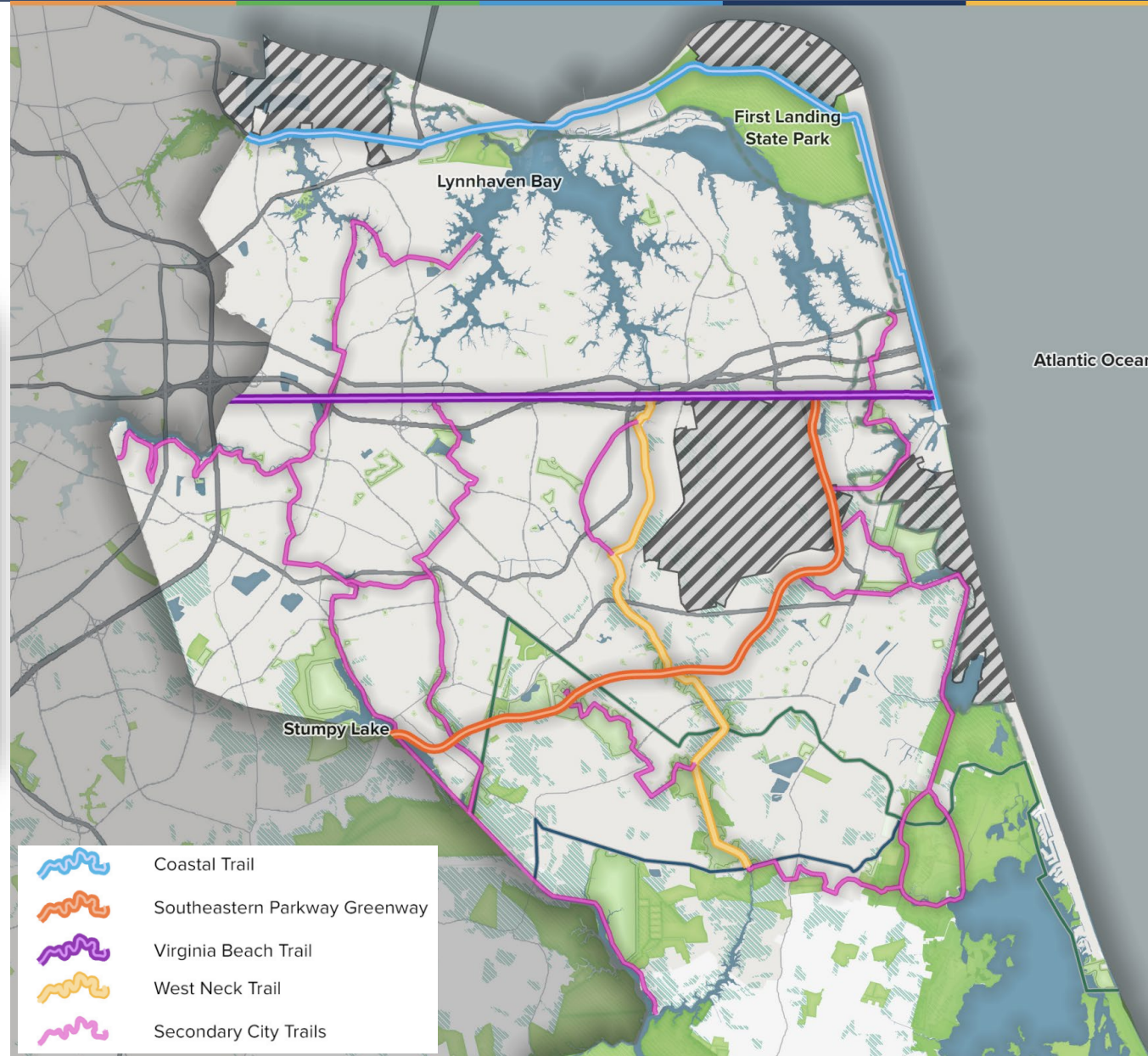
Big Idea – Environmental and Open Space Framework

Imagine a city with expanses of **natural lands** connected by natural corridors that create an environmental and open space system where plants thrive and animals move freely.



Big Idea – Linear Park System

Imagine a city with
a **network of parks
and trails** within those
natural lands and
corridors.



Rural and Agricultural Land Protection

Imagine a city with rural
lands and **active farms**
growing food for
Virginia Beach locals
and beyond.



Rural and Agricultural Land Protection (Goals)

Goals

- Protect and sustain natural lands, open spaces, and environmental systems south of the Green Line.
- Support sustainable agricultural production.
- Provide opportunities to access nature.
- Transition development intensities between urban development north of the Green Line and rural-agricultural areas south of the Blue Line.

Objectives

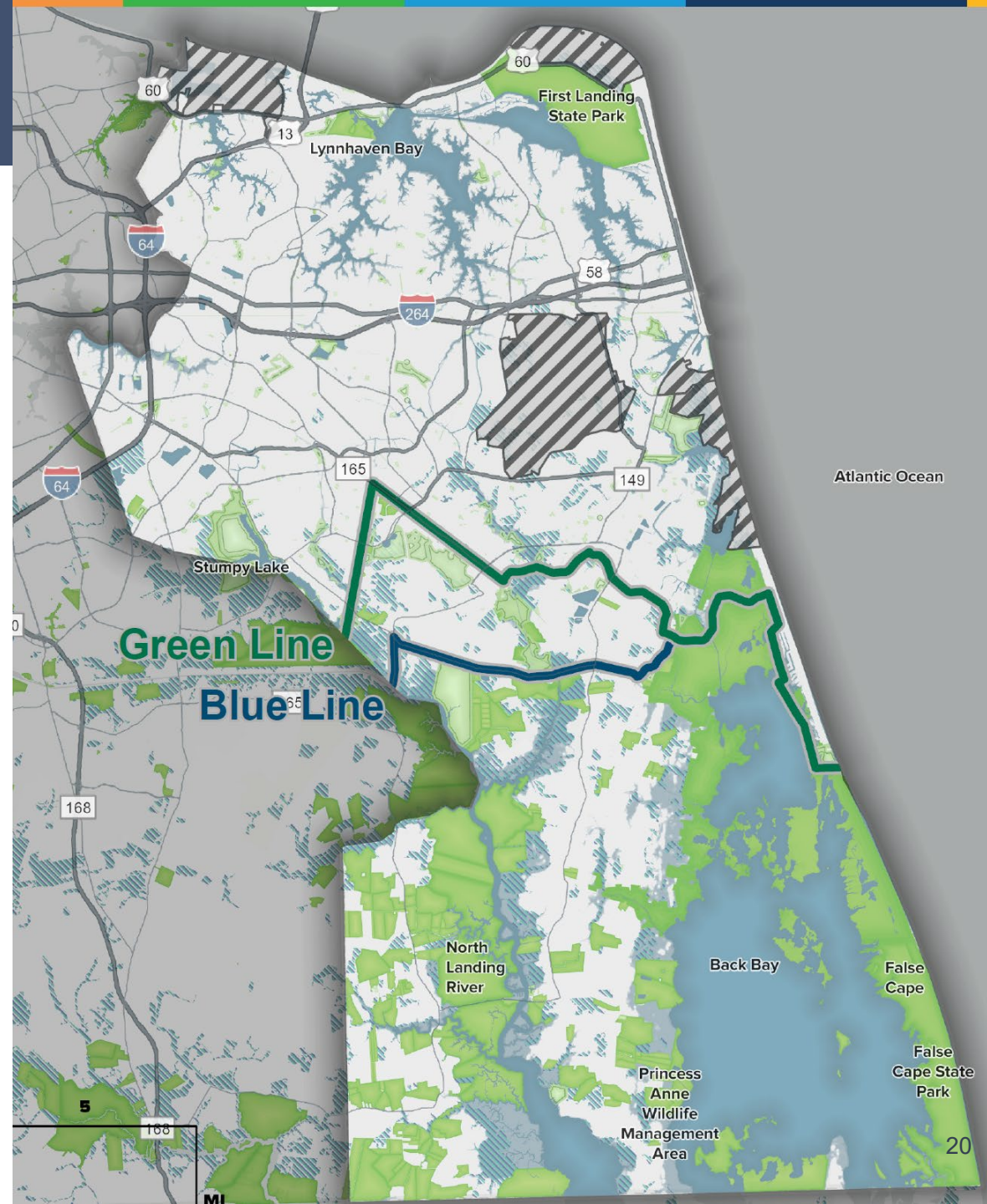
- Continue protecting properties through acquisitions and conservation easements south of the Green Line.
- Continue to limit non-agricultural land uses outside designated Rural Villages south of the Blue Line.
- Continue to limit urban service expansion south of the Blue Line.
- Continue the Agricultural Reserve Program.
- Support access to expansive nature, eco-tourism, and agri-tourism opportunities.

Big Ideas

- **Continue Green and Blue Lines and create Context Areas.**
 - Inland and Coastal north of Green Line.
 - Green Line and Rural south of Green Line.

Green and Blue Lines

- Green Line identified in 1979 to limit growth in southern half of City.
- Blue Line identified in 2004 to limit the extension of urban services to the southern half of City.



Big Idea – Context Areas

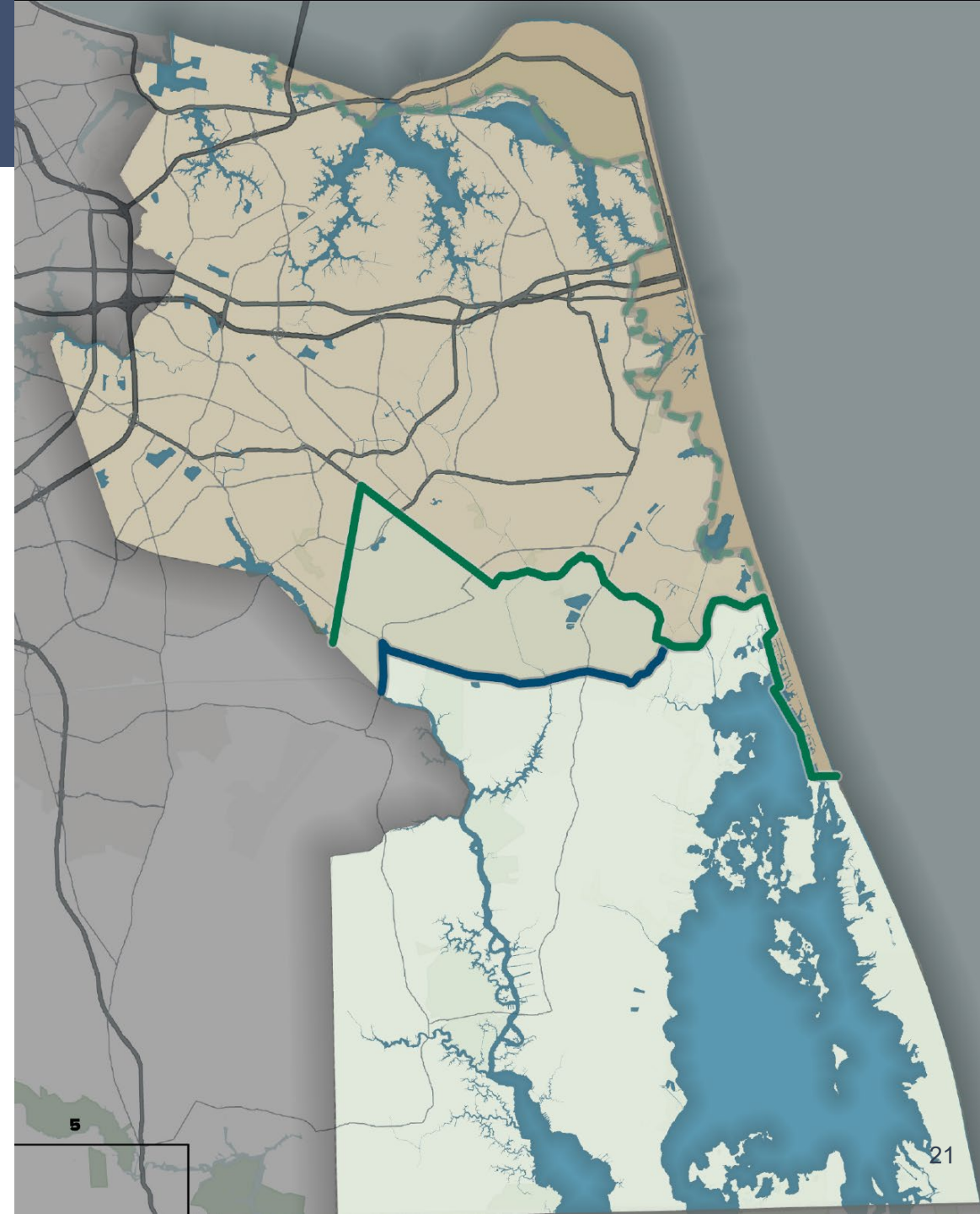
Plans and policies oriented to the unique land use and development contexts created by the Green and Blue Lines.

CONTEXT AREA BOUNDARIES

-  Green Line
-  Blue Line
-  Coastal-Inland

CONTEXT AREAS

-  Coastal
-  Inland
-  Green Line (context area)
-  Rural



Infill, Redevelopment, and Multimodal Access

Imagine a city with active and **walkable urban centers** where people come together to work, shop, recreate, and become immersed in arts and culture.



Infill, Redevelopment, and Multimodal Access (Goals)



Goals

- Direct infill growth into Centers and Community Hubs and develop Centers and Hubs to make walking, biking, and transit viable and safe travel options.
- Modify the designs and operations of designated Multimodal Corridors to make walking, biking, and transit viable and safe options within and between Centers and Hubs.
- Create safe and convenient walking and biking paths between neighborhoods and Community Hubs.

Objectives

- Designate Multimodal Corridors and apply Multimodal Corridor design guidelines to promote safe and convenient walking, biking, rolling, and transit.
- Prioritize transit service improvements that provide access to City job centers.
- Designate Centers and Community Hubs and apply Place Type design guidelines to create land development patterns and multimodal networks that promote safe and convenient walking, biking, rolling, and transit.
- Work with transportation agencies and adjacent jurisdictions to develop and connect regional transit routes and trails.
- Plan, design, and develop walking and biking paths between neighborhoods and local focal points (such as Community Hubs).

Big Idea – Centers and Multimodal Corridors

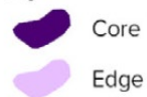
Focus new development into urban centers located along corridors where walking, biking, and transit are encouraged.

CENTERS

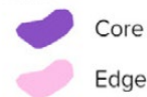
Regional



City



Local



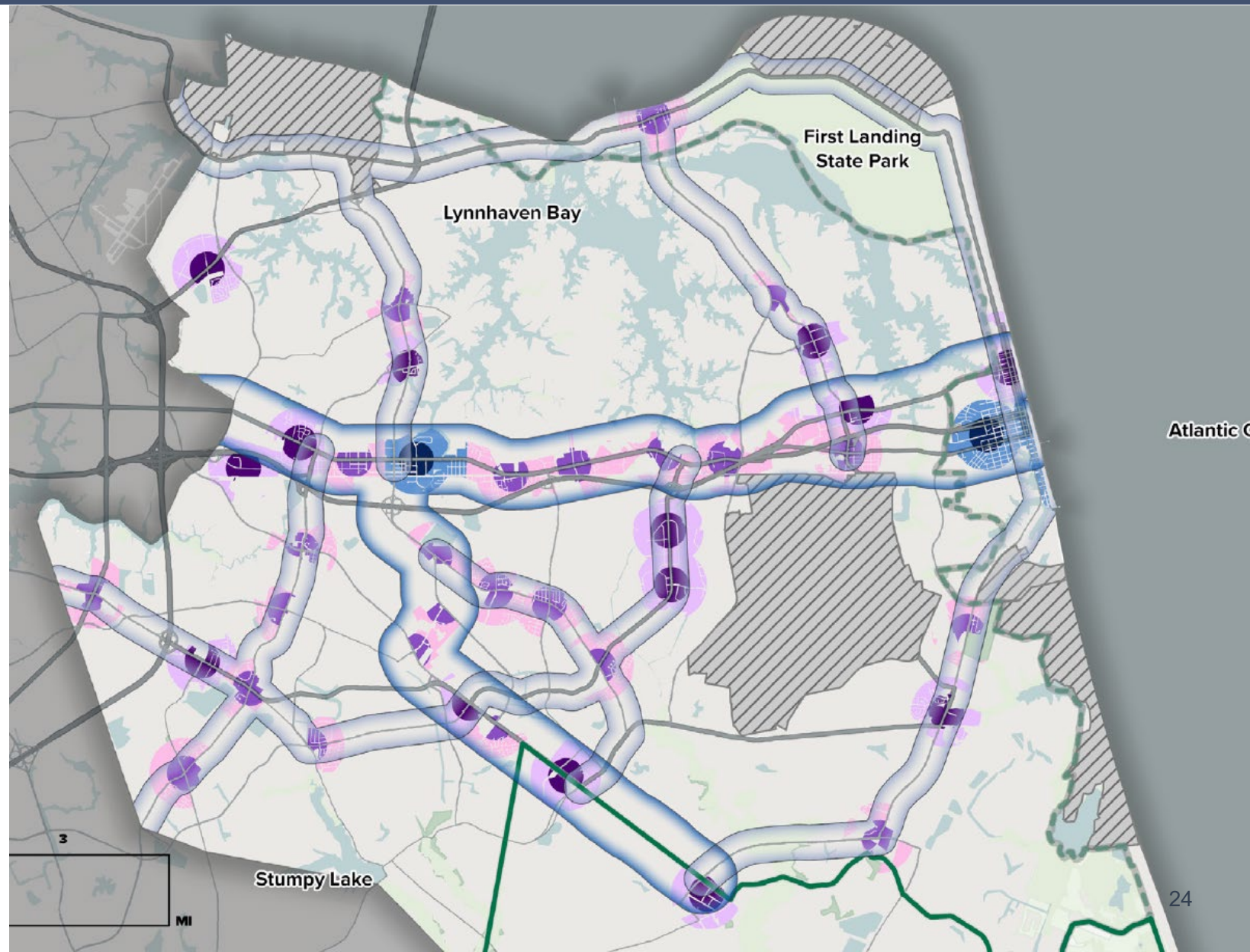
CORRIDORS



Regional



City



Economic Sustainability and Diversity

Goals

- Sustain viable agriculture south of the Blue Line.
- Sustain and grow tourism within the Resort Area and across the city, guided by emerging opportunities.
- Attract quality employers and talent to the City in strategic market sectors defined by the Economic Development Strategic Plan.
- Attract, retain, and grow military contractors and renewable energy businesses to support the Economic Goals of the City and region.
- Continue to foster growth of tomorrow's workforce to retain and attract diverse talent.
- Attract year-round visitors that help sustain the City's economy and tax base.





Objectives

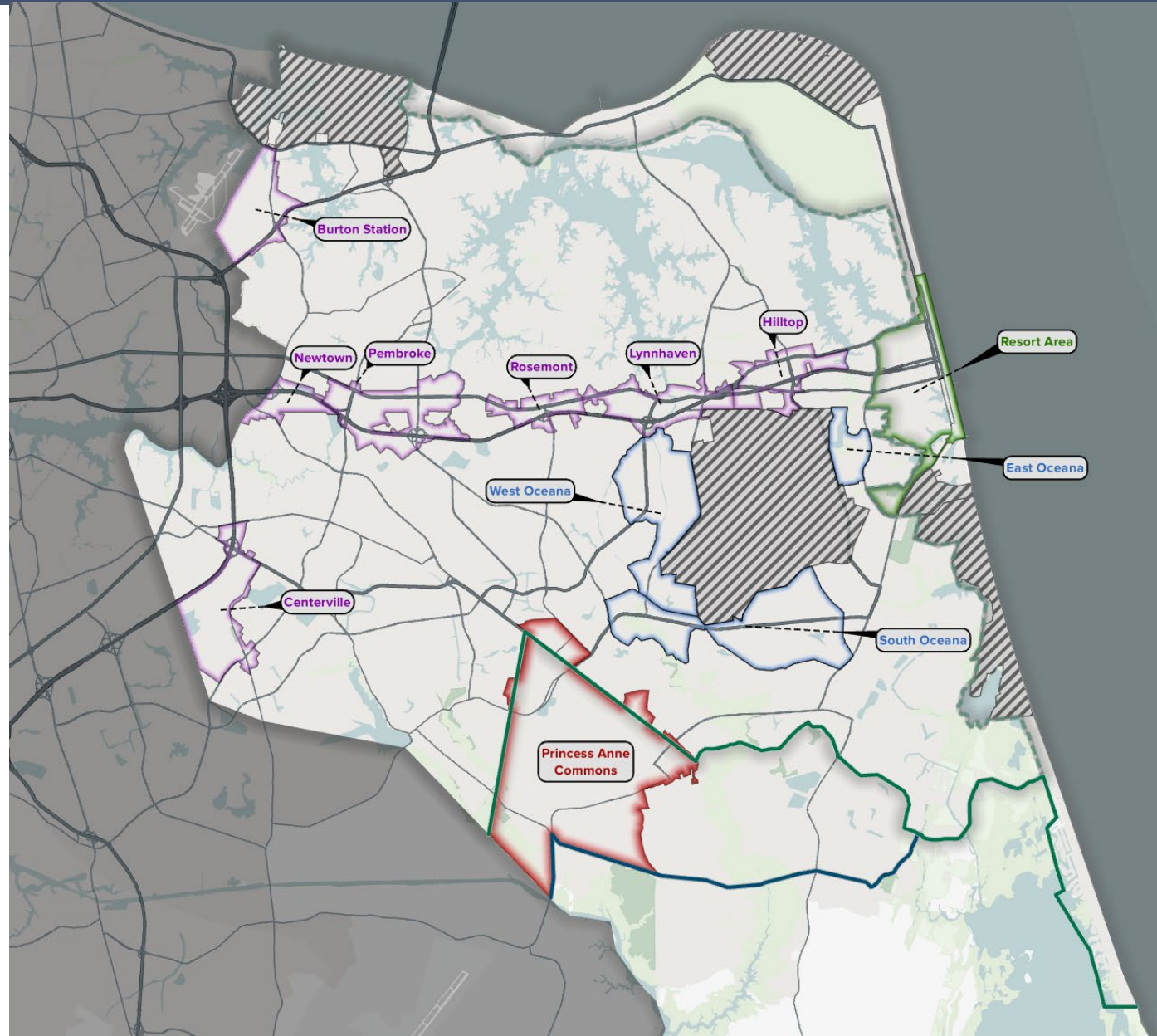
- Apply Center design guidelines to create urban location options for businesses.
- Implement recommendations from the Resort Area Strategic Action Plan (RASAP) and other adopted plans in the RASAP area.
- Continue to promote unique economic development opportunities in the Princess Anne Commons Planning Area.
- Continue using policies and regulations that limit development in the Rural Context Area to support sustainable agricultural production.
- Continue to support policies and regulations that preserve the Rural Context Area to maintain viable farming operations and safeguard long-term agricultural productivity, while exploring opportunities for ag-tech and sustainable farming innovations.
- Continue the Agricultural Reserve Program, and Open Space Acquisition Program.
- Continue the Agricultural Reserve Program, and Open Space Acquisition Program.
- Apply Special Economic Growth Area (SEGA) Planning Area policies and design guidelines to support location opportunities for diverse, strategic, and emerging industries.
- Identify and promote areas for business growth that offer urban settings and regional multimodal access, supporting sectors such as light industrial, logistics, renewable energy, and industries with demonstrated momentum.
- Support unique and emerging economic opportunities in strategic market sectors, including innovation-driven enterprises, sports tourism, ecotourism, and other niche industries that contribute to a dynamic and resilient economy.

Strategic Growth Areas

Focus economic growth into Strategic Growth Areas.

PLANNING AREAS

-  Strategic Growth Area (SGA)
-  Special Economic Growth Areas (SEGA)
-  Resort Area
-  Princess Anne Commons



Community Identity and Connections

Imagine a city of distinct communities, where neighborhood residents **safely and easily walk or bike to community hubs** to gather, visit farmers' markets, and enjoy parks and playgrounds.



Community Identity and Connections (Goals)

Goals

- Recognize the unique histories and identities of communities in the City.
- Promote and sustain community venues, events, and opportunities.
- Provide central locations (Community Hubs) for community residents to gather.
- Provide walking and biking connections between community neighborhoods and hubs.

Objectives

- Work with residents to define community boundaries and their identities.
- Develop community identity-based placemaking strategies, design guidelines, and cultural opportunities.
- Designate one or more centrally located and walkable Community Hubs within each identified community and apply design guidelines to develop Hubs.
- Recognize and protect historic sites within communities.

Neighborhood Well Being and Safety

Goals

- Promote the integrity, sense of well-being, and safety of neighborhoods by ensuring:
 - Quality housing and safe streets.
 - Safe and convenient access to schools, civic functions, and parks.
 - Protections from the scale and conflicting activity of adjacent non-residential developments.

Objectives

- Develop a neighborhood monitoring program that continually tracks factors of interest to residents and stakeholders in local neighborhoods, such as sense of safety, traffic, sidewalk connectivity, or shade.
- Identify and address improvement needs based on the measures.
- Apply neighborhood design guidelines to ensure development within and adjacent to neighborhoods promotes safety and well being.

Neighborhood Plans

- Follow existing plans and policies
- Update and develop new neighborhood plans as needed (such as Shore Drive Corridor Plan)

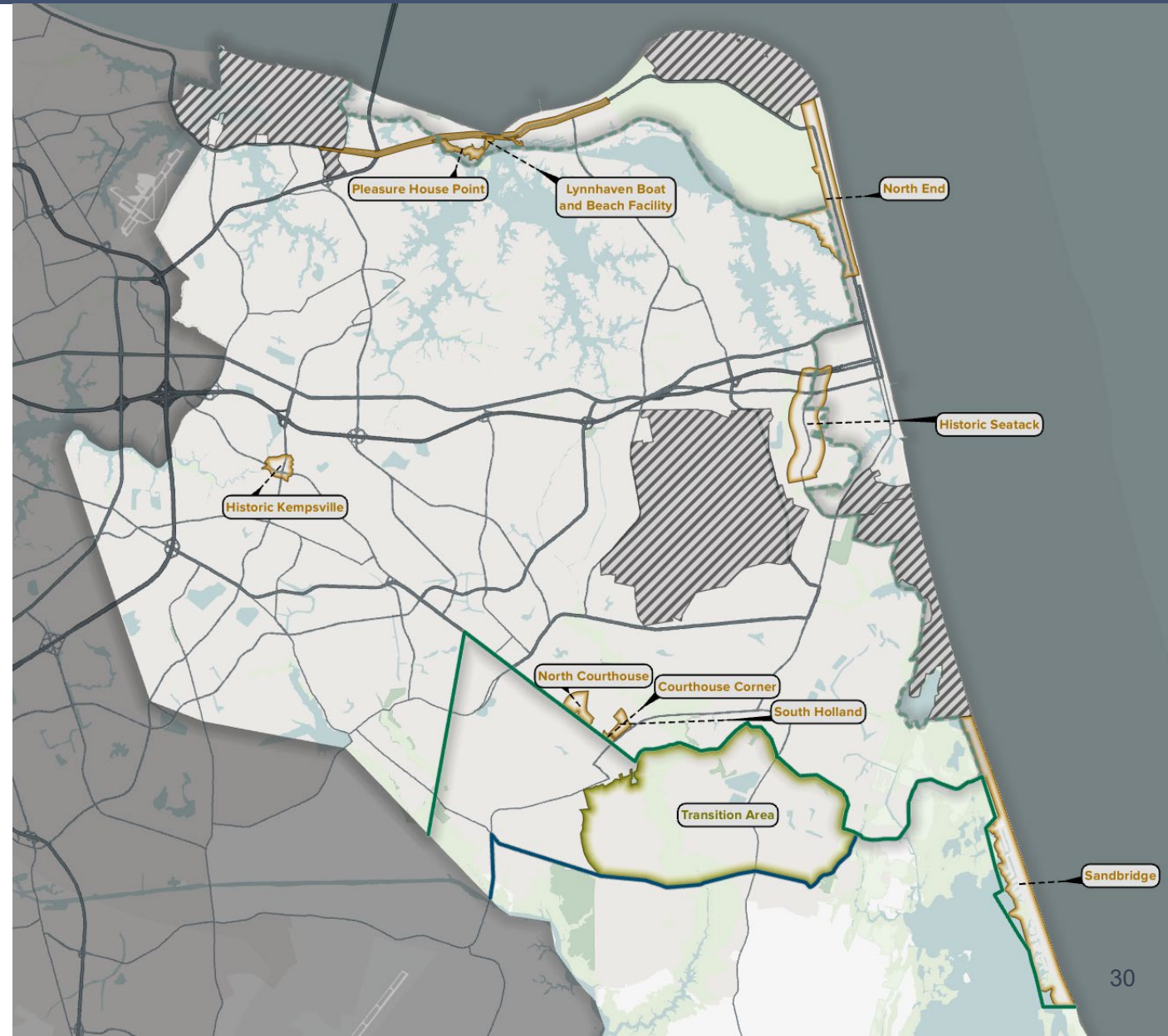
PLANNING AREAS



Transition Area



Neighborhood



Housing Attainment and Diversity



Goals

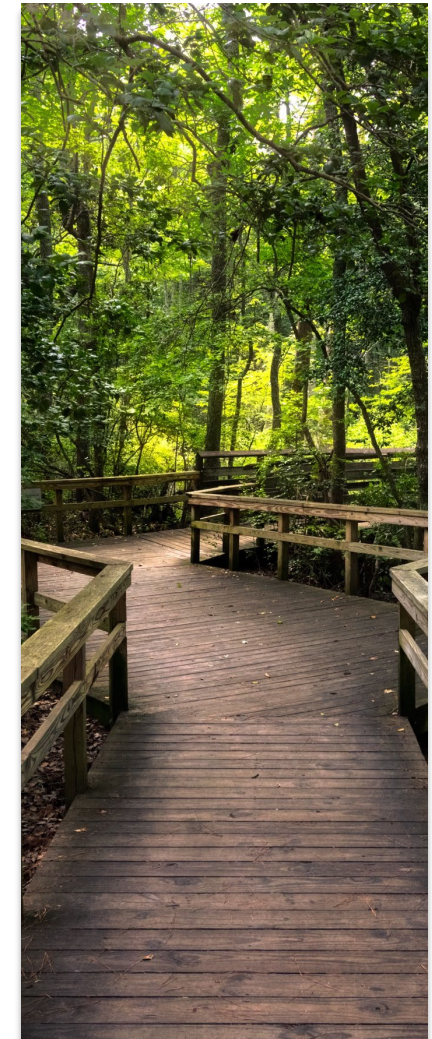
- Provide a mix of housing types and attainable housing in differing settings across the City.
- Ensure the quality of existing and new housing.

Objectives

- Take advantage of Center redevelopment to increase housing diversity and attainability.
- Find opportunities outside of Centers to increase housing diversity and attainability.
- Apply design guidelines to ensure the development of a variety of housing types affordable across all income levels in Centers and Community Hubs and along Multimodal Corridors.
- Evaluate the adopted zoning ordinance and map to identify barriers to creating or maintaining attainable housing.
- Identify strategies to address increasing senior housing demand.

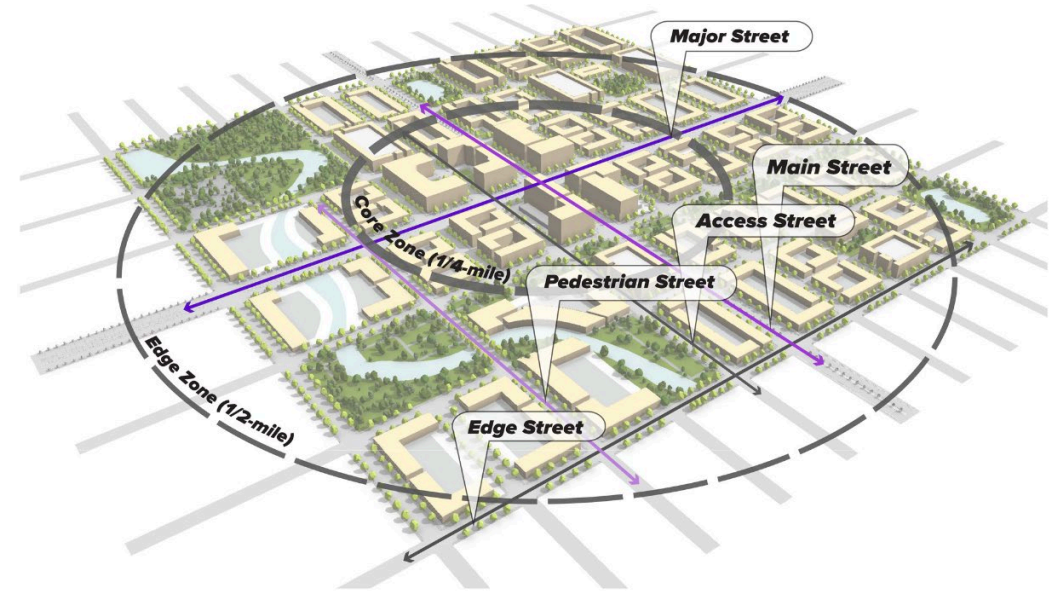
What's next? [Farming, Open Space]

- Integrate programs and attract grant money to develop the Environmental and Open Space Framework and Linear Park System
- Continue protecting rural areas and farming
 - Appropriate zoning
 - Agricultural Reserve Program
 - Conservation easements



What's next? [Infill & Redevelopment North of Green Line]

- Update zoning ordinance and development review process based on design guidelines and policies
- Attract a diversity of jobs
 - Strategic Growth Areas (SGAs)
 - Special Use Place Types (SEGAs)
- Transform multimodal corridors to make travel by transit, biking, rolling, and walking safer and viable options
 - Initial focus on Virginia Beach Boulevard



What's next? [Housing, Neighborhoods]

- Update / create neighborhood plans (*i.e.*, Shore Drive update)
- Create a quality neighborhood program and neighborhood monitoring system
- Focus on Affordable Housing Study recommendations





Comprehensive Plan Meeting

September 2025