

Transportation Improvement Plan 2009

Introduction

In the summer of 2008, a Transportation Plan was underway in Page County. Included as a supplement to the Transportation component of the Comprehensive Plan, the Transportation Improvement Plan will provide for the implementation of transportation improvements throughout the county. It is a plan that is designed to be updated annually as trends and statistics change.

A Transportation Subcommittee was formed in the fall of 2008 to review the plan and its proposed improvements. The subcommittee consists of various stakeholder groups throughout the county, as well as Planning Commissioners and citizens. It will be imperative for this group to continue to meet annually, or as needed to address transportation issues facing the county.

The following plan is created with the intent to aid the Board of Supervisors and Planning Commission in decision making when it comes to land use. The Transportation Improvement Plan is a planning tool and its scope does not carry legislative power beyond the intent of a Comprehensive Plan, as defined by Virginia State Code.

Road Improvements

In December 2004, The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) released a long-term planning document known as *VTRANS 2025*. The 20-year plan for Page County's primary roads includes the reconstruction of Route 340 from a 2-lane road into a 4-lane highway with a median strip from Rockingham County to US Route 211. In addition, *VTRANS 2025* recommends widening Business 340 from Luray 10 miles south into a 24-foot wide, 2 lane rural highway.

The next step to making the long-term plan a reality is the six-year plan that VDOT revises annually. The six-year plan projects can be designated "Preliminary Engineering Only", "Preliminary Engineering and Right of Way" or Preliminary Engineering and Right of Way and Construction". The current six-year plan for Page County lists five projects along Route 340 including the bridges at Jeremy's Run, Compton Creek, and Overall Creek and their approaches totaling four miles of reconstruction. VDOT revises the six-year plan for the secondary road system projects after a public hearing held in conjunction with the Page County Board of Supervisors. In addition, VDOT appropriates funds annually for improvements within each town's boundaries. Details of these plans may be found at VDOT's Luray Office.

For the foreseeable future VDOT is not considering 4-laning Route 340 from Luray to the Warren County line. However, the Page County Board of Supervisors continues to work for safety and efficiency improvements on the existing 2-lane road consistent with maintaining the historical, cultural, environmental and rural characteristics called for elsewhere in this Comprehensive Plan.

With these values in mind, the Page County Board of Supervisors supports a new dialogue in Virginia regarding the adoption and full implementation of “Context Sensitive Solutions” (CSS)¹ in current and future road improvement planning. Many of Virginia’s neighboring states have adopted CSS. In 2004 the Page County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution supporting the use of CSS in all road development and improvement projects within the county. In the near future, VDOT will further enhance its use of CSS by conducting a study known as “Shenandoah Valley Transportation Context Study: an evaluation of Context Sensitive Solutions along Route 340.”

Future Road Improvement Areas

Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission (NSVRC)

The Northern Shenandoah Valley Regional Commission (NSVRC) serves the City of Winchester and the Counties of Clarke, Frederick, Page, Shenandoah, Warren, and the Towns of Front Royal, Middletown, Luray, Strasburg, Stephens City, Berryville, Boyce, Edinburg, Mount Jackson, New Market, Shenandoah, Stanley, Toms Brook, and Woodstock. The NSVRC serves these areas by preparing, administering, and coordinating regional land use, environmental programs, resource management, and transportation plans and programs, providing program management, financial, and technical support, facilitating intergovernmental cooperation among multiple jurisdictions.

The NSVRC is currently working on a rural transportation plan with the Virginia Department of Transportation. They are placing five corridors or intersections from each county in the region to make a regional rural transportation improvement plan. These improvements will be made in addition to VDOT’s own six year plan. Page County has suggested the following improvements to be studied for more in depth analysis:

US 340 (North of Luray to County Line)

US 340 north of Luray to the county line is a major route of travel for residents and businesses traveling to and from the Front Royal area and points north and east. Currently US 340 is a two lane rural highway with little to no shoulders and numerous obstructed entrances leading onto the road. Development along this corridor should provide for right of way dedication to VDOT for widening purposes, as well as increased building setbacks. In addition, an overlay district should be established for this corridor, which will provide for zoning regulations. The Department of Historical Resources should be consulted to help mitigate impacts on historical properties/structures. Special attention should be made to improve two of the most dangerous intersections in the county located along US 340; Pass Run Road and Sunnyview Drive (Exhibit ?43?). These dangerous intersections should be of the utmost importance for improvements. Also, improvements to Rt. 340 near the Steep Hollow Rd. and Carvell Rd. intersections should be made due to accident history in this area. They are not slated for improvement within the VDOT bridge improvement projects, but exist in the bridge improvement area running from Rileyville to the northern county line. It has essentially created a gap $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile long of substandard roadway in the aforementioned bridge improvement area. Furthermore, it should be noted that the intent of these improvements is not to widen US 340 to a four lane roadway, but rather to make the existing roadway safer for travel. Based on the survey findings, a more in-depth survey should be conducted in the county to determine the needs of the citizens and businesses utilizing this corridor.

Priority: High Cost: High

Intersection of Lakewood Rd. (SR 639) and Mill Creek Rd. (SR 638)

Currently where Lakewood Rd. intersects Mill Creek Rd., Lakewood Rd. is offset. This makes the crossing of Mill Creek Rd. dangerous for traffic on Lakewood Rd. With the construction of the new High School and adjacent neighborhoods being developed, traffic through this intersection will increase creating even more of a safety risk. Aligning the intersection will alleviate this risk and improve traffic flow. Furthermore this improvement is necessary in the construction of the Southeastern Connector Road, which is provided for in the Town of Luray Comprehensive Plan.

Priority: High Cost: Low

Intersection of Big Oak Rd. (SR 644) and US 211

With development coming to this area along with the future construction of the Southeastern Connector Road (Town of Luray Comp. Plan) there will be a need to improve this intersection. This can be done by installing a traffic signal and turn lanes at this intersection. If commercial or residential development occurs on properties adjacent or near this intersection they should be providing funding for this improvement.

Priority: High Cost: High

US 340 (South of Shenandoah to the County Line)

Currently US 340 South of Shenandoah is a two lane roadway with little to no turn lanes. The lack of turn lanes and sight distance for traffic turning on and off of US 340 creates a serious safety hazard. To improve this, turn lanes should be added to US 340 along with improved sight distance for traffic turning onto US 340. This improvement would allow for easier access to the Town of Shenandoah and would make it a more desirable place to live for people wishing to commute to nearby Rockingham County.

Priority: Medium Cost: High

US Business 340 (Business Park Improvements)

With the recent purchase of land by the Page County government, north of the Town of Stanley, the county is in the process of making plans to build a business park. When the addition of a business park is made it is important to improve roadways leading to the park. This should include adding turn lanes on US Business 340 to accommodate large vehicles that will be entering the facility and making sure any access roads that are constructed are up to state standards for industrial/commercial traffic. Design elements such as increased building setbacks, reduced signage, and pedestrian improvements should be incorporated with safety improvements that are made to this area of US Business 340.

Priority: High Cost: Medium

US Business 340 (Luray to Stanley)

US Business 340 is currently a major thoroughfare of Page County and is one of only two minor arterials in the county. The stretch of Business 340 that runs from Luray to Stanley sees significant use and is in need of improvement. Increasing building setbacks and receiving right of way dedication through development along Business 340 would enable the ability to add a bike lane or greenway that would run from Luray to Stanley. This would improve the modes of transportation in the county. In order to improve the safety and efficiency of this stretch of road turn lanes should be added to major intersections.

* Note: This project is considered long term and results will probably not be realized for approximately 20-30 years.

Priority: Medium Cost: High

Dangerous Intersections

Through work with VDOT, Page County has identified the most dangerous intersections in the county based on accident reports from May 1, 2003 to April 30, 2008. Due to the high crash rates at these seven dangerous intersections improvements to them should be sought when funding is available. The accident data is as follows:

Exhibit 1

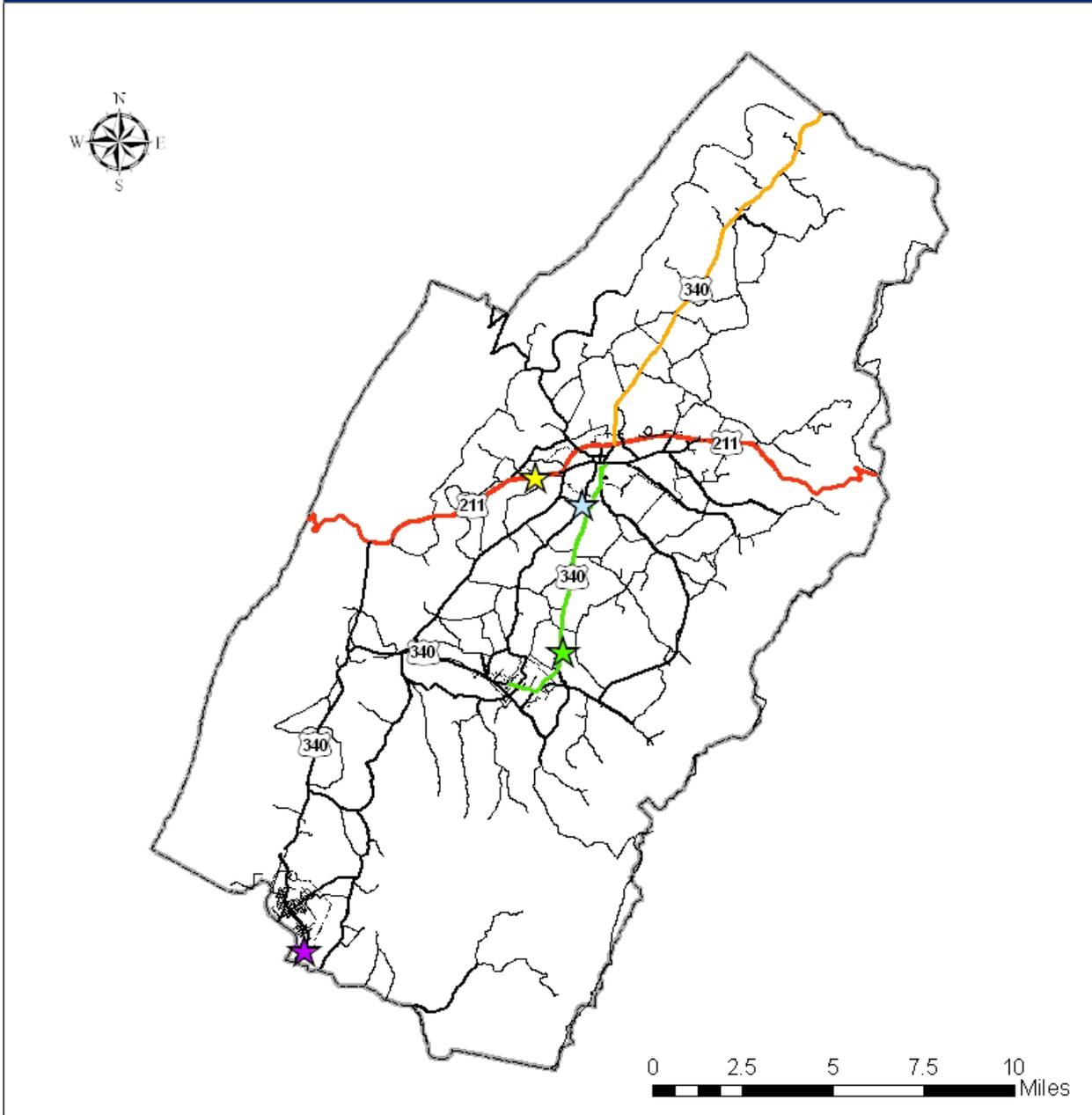
Intersection	Accident Reports
US 211 and Red Church Road (Rt. 674)	27
US 340 and Strole Farm Road (Rt. 613)	25
US 211 and Trail No. 415	24
US Business 340 and Leaksville Road (Rt. 616)	20
US 211 and Kimball Road (Rt. 611)	17
US 340 and Pass Run Road (Rt. 658)	15
US 340 and Sunnyview Drive (Rt. 661)	15

The Transportation Subcommittee decided that it was best to prioritize intersection improvements that were a result of poor safety conditions. The above accident data was used to supplement the list. The key component though that resulted from the following list was a study that was conducted by VDOT in 2007 in conjunction with the Board of Supervisors. The following list is intended to provide intersections in the County that are of highest importance due to safety concerns and should be improved when either funding is available or development arises near it:

1. **Collins Ave. (Rt. 718) / Rt. 340**, improve sight distance, add turn-lanes off Rt. 340
2. **Rt. 211 / Rt. 340- Base of the Massanutten**, extend/add turn-lanes
3. **Kibler Hill Rd. (Rt. 660) / Rt. 340**, align intersections, realign Rt. 340, add turn lanes off Rt. 340
4. **Mill Creek Crossroads (Rt. 633) / BSN 340**, improve sight distance, realign intersection
5. **Vista View Rd. (Rt. 713) / BSN 340**, improve sight distance, pave gravel portion of the road
6. **Strole Farm Rd. (Rt. 613) / Rt. 340 (both intersections)**, improve sight distance
7. **Red Church Rd. (Rt. 674) / Rt. 211**, add turn lane off Rt. 211.

EXHIBIT 2
NSVRC Major Road Improvements for Page County

NSVRC Improvements



Legend

Road Network

- Rural Other Principal Arterial
- Rural Major Collector
- Rural Minor Collector
- County Boundary
- Town Boundary

US 340 North Improvement

US 340 North Improvement

US 340 Business Improvement

SR 644 (Big Oak Rd) at US 211

US 340 (South of Shenandoah to the County Line)

SR 639 (Lakewood Rd.) at SR 638 (Mill Creek Rd.)

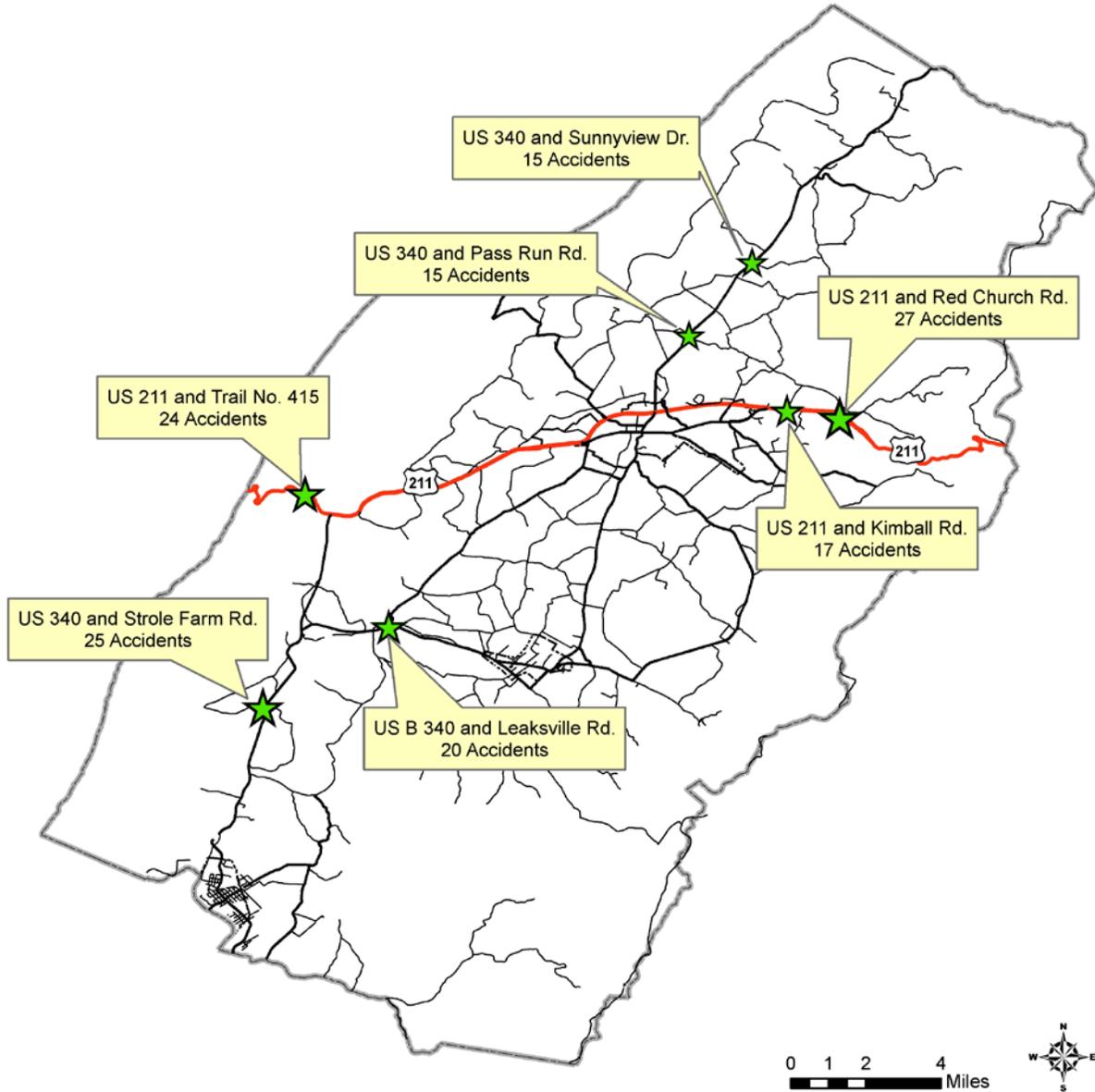
US Business 340 Industrial Park



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EXHIBIT 3
Dangerous Intersections

Dangerous Intersections



Legend

Intersections of Interest



Key to Features

Road Network

- Highway
- Major Road
- Arterial
- Collector Street
- County Border
- Town Border



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Virginia Department of Transportation Six Year Plan (2009)

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) conducts numerous projects and studies to determine the need, costs and impacts of proposed highway projects across the commonwealth. These projects are financed through the Six-Year Improvement Program.

Every county within the Commonwealth has its own Six-Year Improvement Program. The Six-Year Improvements for Page County are in the document entitled Secondary System Page County Construction Program and are as follows (*Please note that in 2009 some of the improvements listed below came off the official list, but are still recognized by the county as being extremely important upgrades to the secondary system. The improvements that were removed from the 2009 Six Year Plan are italicized.*):

SR 616 (Leaksville Rd.)

Currently Leaksville Rd. is a two lane rural roadway. With the construction of the new High School and adjacent residential growth Leaksville Rd. needs to be improved to accommodate an increase in traffic. Updating Leaksville Rd. in the area from Lakewood Rd. to Rt. 211 Business, from a rural two lane roadway to an urban two lane roadway with gutters, curb and sidewalks will improve driver and pedestrian safety in the area around the new High School.

SR 603 (Fleeburg Rd.)

The bridge crossing Naked Creek along Fleeburg Rd. is in need of replacement. Currently the bridge is constructed of steel with a road surface constructed of wood. These construction methods plus the age of the bridge make it no longer adequate for the crossing. Construction of a new bridge along with an improved approach to the bridge would solve these problems.

SR 653 (Sedwick Rd.)

Currently the portion of Sedwick Rd. that runs from SR 675 to SR 654 is a non-hardsurfaced road. Reconstruction of this portion will improve this segment of Sedwick Rd.

SR 603 (Aylor Grubbs Ave.)

The condition of Aylor Grubbs Ave is currently inadequate. Reconstructing this road and improving the drainage will solve this problem. Sidewalk improvements are the main focus of this project. Note: Aylor Grubbs Ave is located within the Town of Stanley but is still included in the Secondary System Construction Program.

SR 759 (Jollett Rd.)

The drainage structure along Jollett Rd. 1.57 miles east of SR 607 at the Big Creek tributary is currently inadequate. Replacing the current pipe overflow with a box culvert overflow will solve this problem.

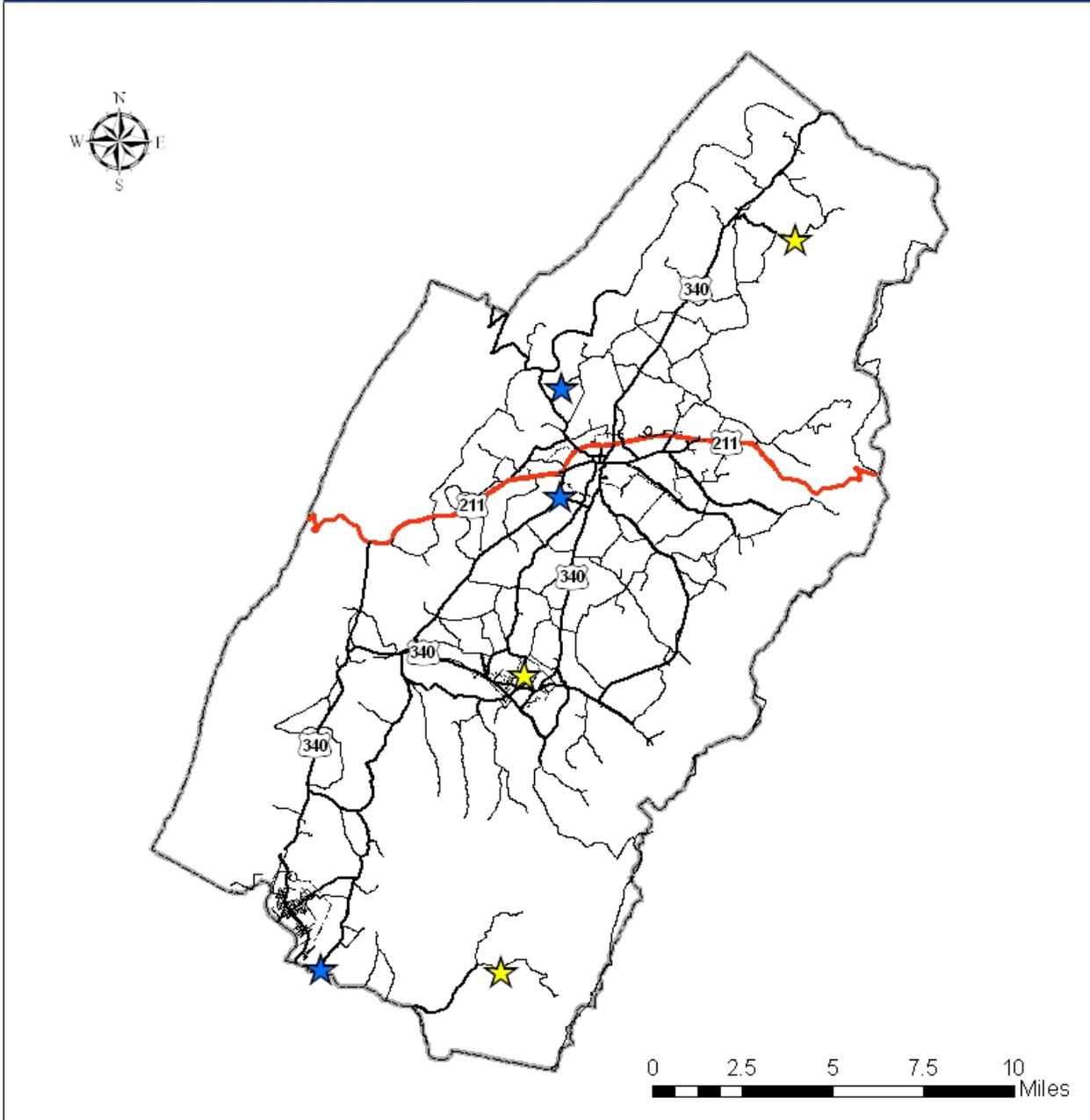
SR 662 (Rileyville Rd.)

Currently the portion of Rileyville Rd. that runs from SR 605 to SR 705 is a non-hardsurfaced road. Reconstruction of this portion will improve this segment of Rileyville Rd.

EXHIBIT 4

Virginia Department of Transportation Six Year Improvements for Page County (2009)

VDOT Six Year Plan (2009)



Legend

Road Network

-  Rural Other Principal Arterial
-  Improvements removed from VDOT 2009 Plan
-  Rural Major Collector
-  VDOT Six Year Plan Improvements
-  Rural Minor Collector
-  County Boundary
-  Town Boundary



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Conceptual Southeastern Connector Road

As the community grows along with the opening of the new Luray High School and development in the area around the Luray High School, a need will arise for a road that travels east to west on the Southern edge of the Town of Luray. This conceptual southeastern connector road will be made possible by the construction of new roadways joining roads that already exist. Several improvements will need to be made to the existing roadways to make the connector road a possibility. In order for the connector road to be constructed the following improvements will need to take place:

1) Intersection of Big Oak Rd. (SR 644) and US 211

With development coming to this area along with the future construction of the Southeastern Connector Road there will be a need to improve this intersection. This can be done by installing a traffic signal and turn lanes at this intersection. If commercial or residential development occurs on properties adjacent to this intersection they should be providing funding for this improvement.

Priority: High

2) Southeastern Connector Road, Phase 1

With the construction of the new High School there is a need to improve access to the school and adjacent neighborhoods. Currently the High School only has one access point which is on Leaksville Rd. (SR 616). By Constructing a new urban two lane road with gutters curb and sidewalks running from Big Oak Rd. (SR 644) to Lakewood Rd. (SR 639) it will be possible to create an additional point of ingress and egress from the school. Furthermore linking these two roads together will create a partial bypass around the town of Luray and provide better access to both routes 211 and Business 340.

Priority: High

3) Intersection of Leaksville Rd. (SR 616) and Lakewood Rd. (SR 639)

Currently the structure that sits on the North East corner of Leaksville Rd. and Lakewood Rd. obstructs the visibility of oncoming traffic. With the opening of the new High School and adjacent residential growth this obstruction is sure to cause an even greater safety risk. Removing or relocating the structure will greatly improve the intersections visibility and safety.

Priority: High

4) Lakewood Rd. (SR 639)

Currently Lakewood Rd. is a two lane rural roadway. With the construction of the new High School and adjacent residential growth there is a need to improve this roadway to a two lane urban roadway with gutters curb and sidewalks. This improvement should be made from Leaksville Rd. to US Business 340. By installing sidewalks it will open this road up to pedestrian and bicycle traffic and help in the creation of the Southeastern Connector Road.

Priority: Low

5) Intersection of Lakewood Rd. (SR 639) and Mill Creek Rd. (SR 638)

Currently at the intersection of Lakewood Rd. and Mill Creek Rd., Lakewood Rd. is offset. This makes the crossing of Mill Creek Rd. dangerous for traffic on Lakewood Rd. With the construction of the new High School and adjacent neighborhoods traffic through this intersection will increase creating even more of a safety risk. Aligning the intersection will alleviate this risk and improve traffic flow.

Priority: High

6) Intersection of Lakewood Rd. (SR 639) and US Business 340

Currently the view for traffic on Lakewood Rd. turning onto US Business 340 is obstructed. This creates a safety hazard that is only due to increase with the opening of the new High School and residential development in the area. To alleviate this hazard, sight lines from Lakewood Rd. should be improved along with the addition of turn lanes on US Business 340.

Priority: High

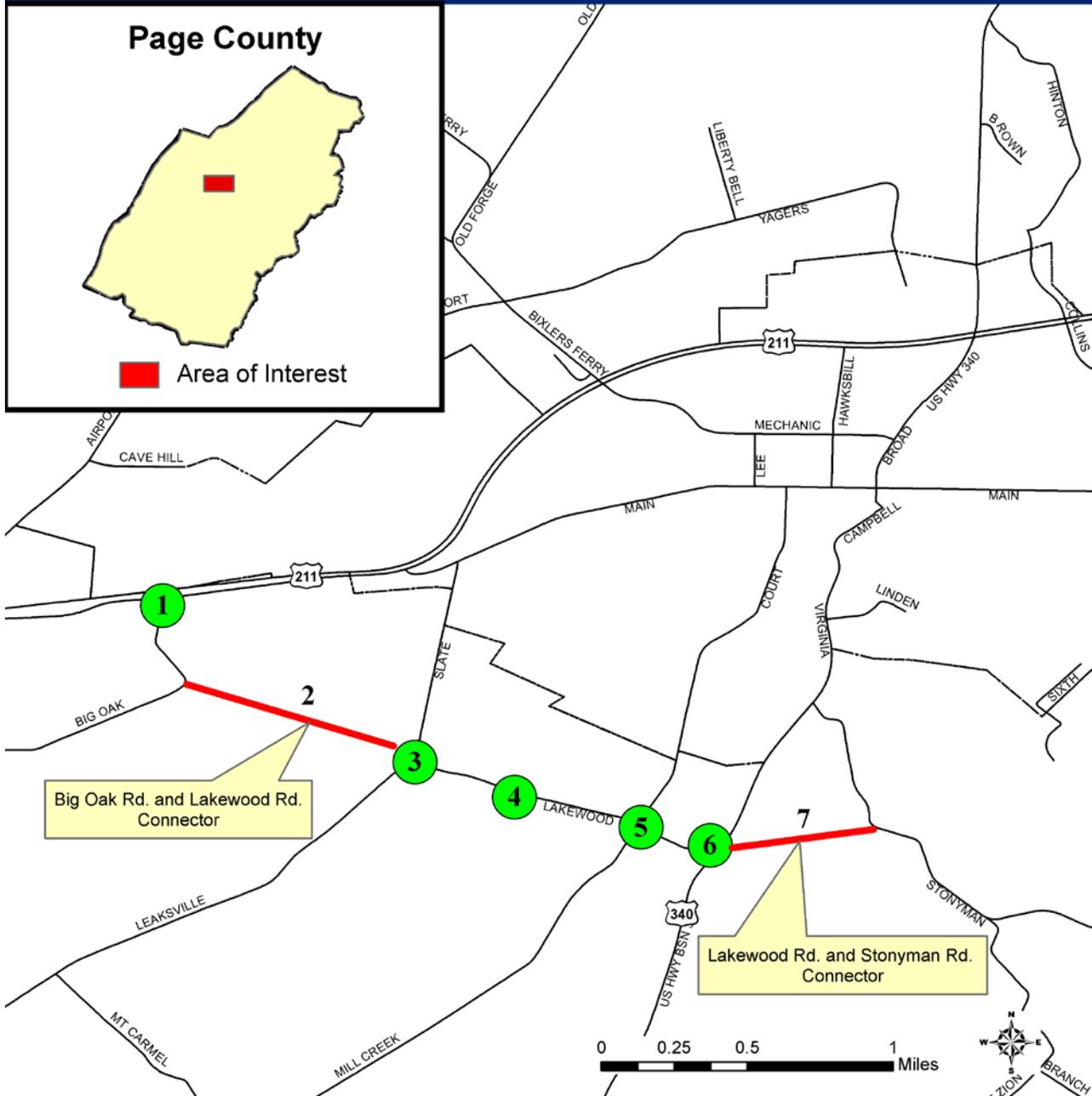
7) Southeastern Connector Road Phase II

In order for the Southeastern Connector Road to be completed a new roadway joining Lakewood Rd. and Stonyman Rd. (SR 642) will need to be constructed. This will be the most difficult part of the construction of the connector road. To build this section of road a bridge will be needed to cross Hawksbill Creek. Also, attention must be given to the historical nature and environmental constraints of the area.

Priority: Low

EXHIBIT 5
Conceptual Southeastern Connector Road Improvement Areas

Conceptual Southeastern Connector Road



Legend

Key to Features
Southeastern Connector Road

— Existing Roads	● Needs Improvement
--- County Border	— Road to be Constructed
- - - Town Border	* Numbers Correspond to Areas of Construction



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