



Route 99

Retail Feasibility Study

Submitted: June 21, 2013

By: New River Valley Planning District Commission
For: Town of Pulaski



New River Valley
Planning District Commission

Disclaimer

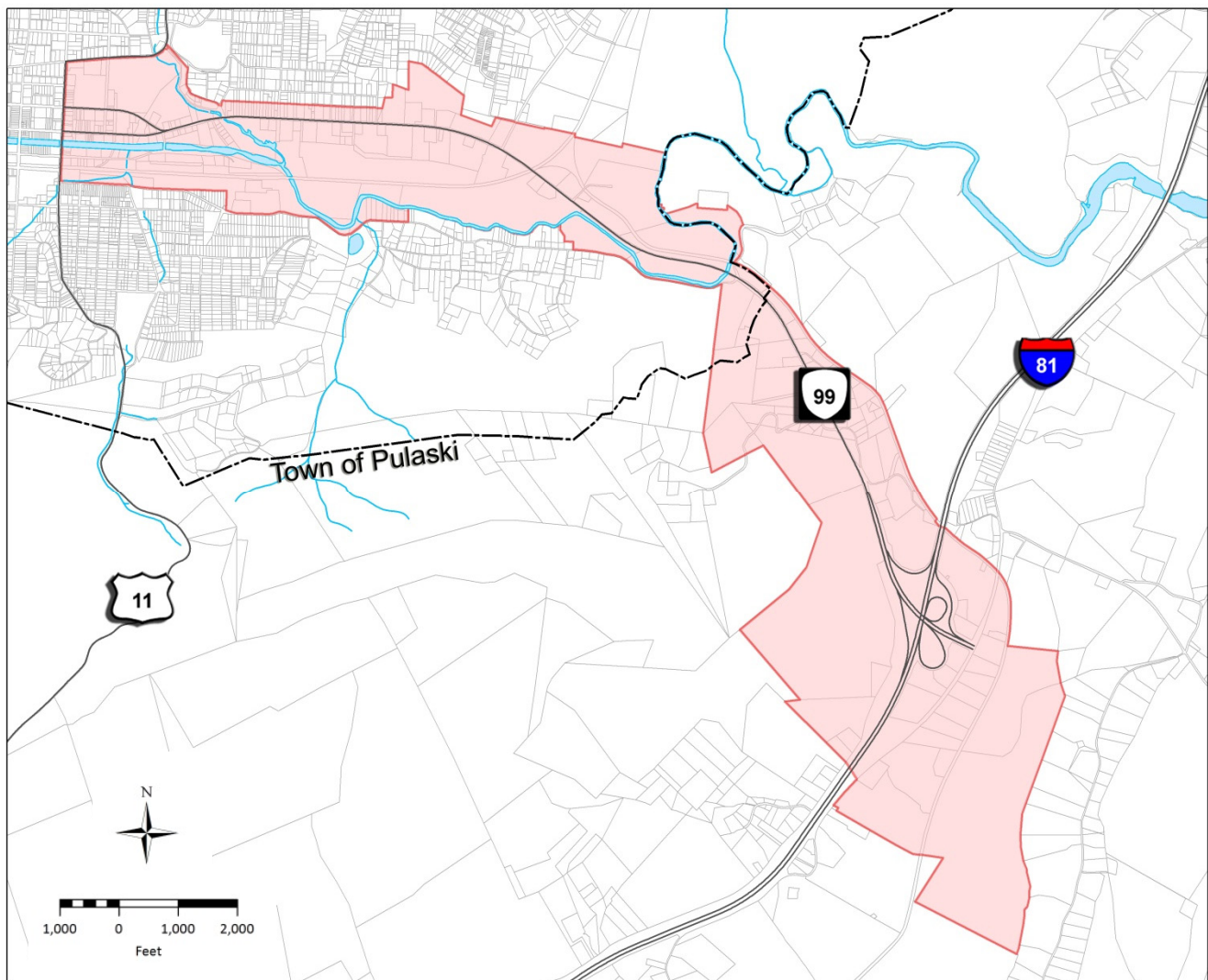
This report was prepared by the staff of the New River Valley Planning District Commission through funding assistance received from the Federal Highway Administration (FHA), United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) through VDOT's Rural Transportation Planning Assistance Program.

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Section 1 – Existing Conditions Analysis

In July 2012, the Town of Pulaski requested a special study to determine the feasibility of retail development along the Route 99 corridor. The study is intended to compliment the 2012 Retail Leakage and Surplus Analysis report developed by Buxton and the 2012 Preliminary Engineering Report developed by Anderson and Associates.

To determine potential opportunities along Route 99, the Planning District Commission worked closely with key Town staff to collect relevant information. The information collected was used to evaluate existing conditions such as: location of existing retail, undeveloped parcels, transportation system, existing market share of the Route 99 corridor, and the proximity of other businesses. The map below illustrates the study area for this analysis.

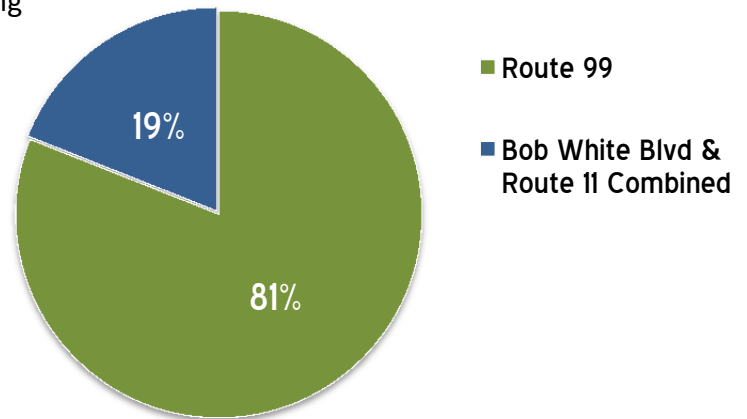


1.1 Composition of Existing Retail

Currently over 80% of the Town of Pulaski's retail sales tax revenue is generated along the Route 99 Corridor. The composition of existing retail includes a mixture of chain and locally owned businesses. Most of the development along Route 99 was constructed in the late 80s and early 90s. There are currently a limited number of modern structures.

Public water and sewer is currently available within existing town limits and can support redevelopment opportunities. Developers have recently inquired about opportunities outside of town limits, particularly within the vicinity of I-81's Exit 94 interchange. The lack of public sewer and other existing characteristics currently limit development opportunities around the interstate.

Town's Retail Sales Revenue



1.2 Transportation and Housing

Over 90% Route 99 is located within 3-miles of I-81's Exit 94 interchange. Gas, food, and lodging facilities within 3-miles of the interstate are eligible to participate in the Virginia Logo Signing Program (www.virginialogos.com). Nearly 40,000 vehicles pass by Exit 94 and local businesses each day along I-81. In addition to I-81, the New River Trail is also located within the project area. The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation estimates that the New River Trail State Park is the 2nd most visited State Park in Virginia – generating over 1,000,000 visitors each year.

Over 300 Homes are located within a ¼ mile (less than a 10 minute walk) from Route 99.

The section of Route 99 between Route 11 and Bob White Boulevard features existing sidewalk; however, over 300 homes are located within a ¼ mile (less than a

10 minute walk) from Route 99 and do not have supporting bicycle or pedestrian infrastructure. In addition, the current terminus of the New River Trail is 0.3 miles away from the town's existing pedestrian network. The close proximity of businesses, homes, and the New River Trail creates a need to provide non-motorized transportation connections.

1.3 Demographics and Area Information

The Town of Pulaski, located west of Interstate 81 in Virginia's New River Valley, is home to 9,134 people. The town has a relatively high population density, nearly 1,150 people per square mile. Pulaski offers unique opportunities and attractions within the town and immediate vicinity. The town is also known for adaptive re-use of historical structures that helps preserve community character and support new businesses. Some of the most popular attractions include:

- New River Trail State Park and Dora Trail
- Historic Calfee Park, home of the Pulaski Mariners minor league baseball team
- Gatewood Reservoir
- Jefferson National Forest
- Pulaski Railroad Station
- New River Valley Fine Arts Center
- Pulaski Theatre
- The Raymond F. Ratcliffe Memorial Museum
- Numerous historical districts that feature Victorian styled architecture

There are nearly 1,150 people per square mile in the Town of Pulaski.

The median family income within the Town of Pulaski is \$34,326 with a cost of living index of 82.5 (city-data.com). Following is a summary of demographic and economic characteristics for the Town of Pulaski, Pulaski County, and a comparable town, Marion, in Smyth County, Virginia:

| | TOWN OF PULASKI | PULASKI COUNTY | MARION, VA |
|--|-----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Population 2011 | 9,134 | 34,900 | 5,936 |
| Households | 3,914 | 14,884 | 2,363 |
| Median Household Income | \$30,859 | \$40,987 | \$31,470 |
| Median Family Income | \$34,326 | \$50,571 | \$41,743 |
| Median Age | 39.7 Years | 43.6 Years | 42.0 Years |
| Accommodation and food services sales, 2007 | \$9,306,000 | \$40,707,000 | \$15,396,000 |
| Retail Sales, 2007 | \$99,750,000 | \$317,286,000 | \$138,213,000 |
| Retail sales per capita, 2007 | \$11,055 | \$9,062 | \$23,055 |
| Persons Per Square Mile | 1,150 | 109 | 1,448 |

*Source: American Community Survey 2007-2011 Estimates and Census State and County Quickfacts

Section 2 – Exploring Potential Opportunities

The Town of Pulaski recently worked with a consultant (Buxton) to prepare a Retail Leakage Report. The report examined quantitative data to identify potential retail opportunities. The report indicated the town exceeded consumer demand in hardware stores, clothing accessory stores, limited service eating places, and general merchandise stores. Although the report indicated a variety of potential opportunities, five were selected based on staff feedback for scenario development in this report:

1. Full Service Restaurant/Drinking Place
2. Fuel Service Station + Convenience Store
3. Sporting Goods/Hobby Store
4. Warehouse Club/Super Store
5. Hotel/Motel



The Town of Pulaski also worked with a local engineering firm (Anderson & Associates) to complete a Preliminary Engineering Report. The report was prepared to help the Town determine potential costs associated with extending sanitary sewer services beyond town limits – out to Exit 94 on I-81. The report provided potential alignments, capacity, and cost estimates. Anderson & Associates also developed a table to project potential water and sewer demand for the five opportunity sectors (shown below).

| Description | Projected Size ¹ & Traffic Volume | Water/Sewer ² Consumption | Projected ³ Water/Sewer Demand |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|---|
| Shopping Center/Retail I | 130,000 sf | 250 gpd/1,000 sf | 32,500 gpd |
| Gasoline Service Station w/ Convenience Store | 1,300 vehicles/day 2,800 sf | 10 gpd/vehicle 250 gpd/1000 sf | 13,700 gpd |
| Restaurant | 200 seats | 180 gpd/seat | 36,000 gpd |
| Shopping Center/Retail II | 70,000 sf | 200 gpd/1000 sf | 14,000 gpd |
| Hotel/Motel | 100 rooms | 130 gpd/room | 13,000 gpd |

¹ Building sizes based on NRVPC research, Traffic Volume data from Trip Generation, 6th Edition

² Unit consumption data from VDH – Waterworks Regulations and VDEQ – SCAT Regulations

³ Average daily for revenue projections based on Anderson & Associates calculations

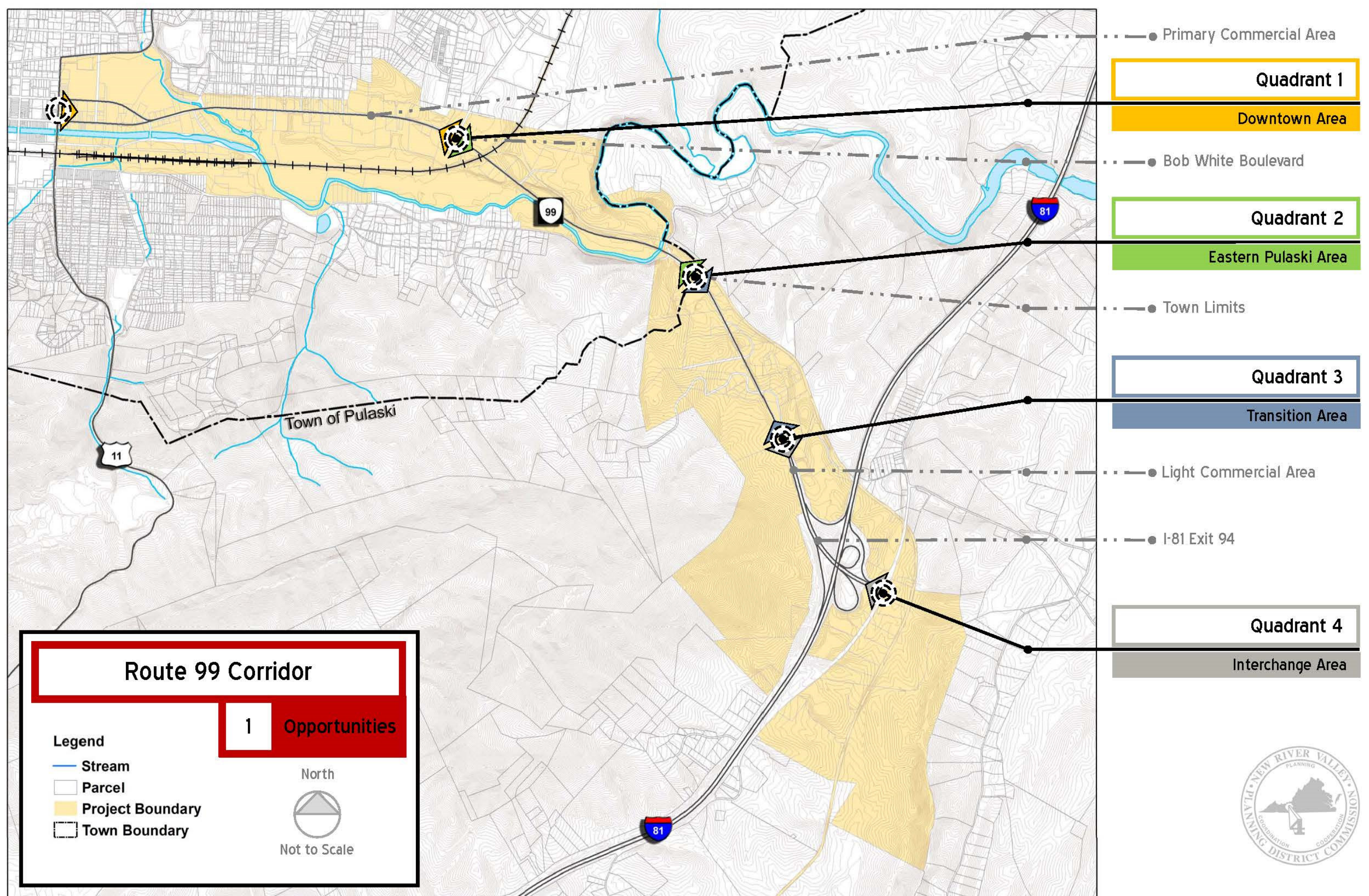
2.1 Site Selection

In order to identify opportunity sites, parcels adjacent to Route 99 were evaluated for existing businesses, and potential for commercial development or redevelopment. The Corridor was broken into four Quadrants: (1) Downtown Area, (2) Eastern Pulaski Area, (3) Transition Area, and (4) Interchange Area. Each segment was evaluated independently for potential retail feasibility opportunities. The maps shown on pages 6 – 10 illustrate opportunities within each segment.

After potential opportunities were identified along the corridor, conceptual scenario sketch plans were developed for two locations. Scenario Development Area 1 is predominantly located in Quadrant 1 (Downtown Area) and demonstrates potential redevelopment opportunities. Scenario Development Area 2 is predominantly located in Quadrant 4 (Interchange Area) and demonstrates new development opportunities. Conceptual Scenario Development Areas are shown on pages 12 – 15 and are intended for planning purposes only.

Quadrants 2 (Eastern Pulaski Area) and 3 (Transition Area) are important linkage segments; however, topography limits commercial development. Although opportunity sites were identified, the opportunities were often limited to a single site that may not support more robust development. Based on limited development possibilities, the recommendations to the Eastern Pulaski and Transition Areas are limited to landscaping, gateway/wayfinding signage, and lighting improvements. Some examples are shown below.














This map illustrates commercial development opportunities for the Downtown Area. Largely located within 3 miles of Interstate 81, the Route 99 corridor features many parcels and structures prime for redevelopment. In addition, the New River Trail is located nearby.

Quadrant 1

Downtown Area

Legend

-  Quadrant 1 (between arrows) 
-  Existing Commercial Building
-  Potential Commercial Redevelopment
-  Route 11's Pedestrian Market Corridor*
-  Route 99's Pedestrian Market Corridor*
-  Existing Sidewalk/Pathway
-  Project Study Boundary
-  3-Mile Mark Distance from I-81's Exit 94**

*Note: Approximately 1/4 mile walking distance. Excluding New River Trail market connector.

**Note: There are specific criteria for gas, food, and lodging facilities to participate in the Virginia Logo Signing Program. 3-miles is the maximum distance a facility can be located from an interchange.

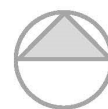


Map prepared by the NRPVDC, 2012. Sources: Pulaski County and VGIN.

Route 99 Corridor

Opportunities

North



500 0 500
Feet

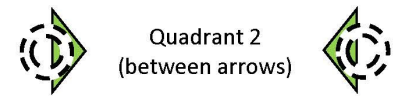
Map 1 of 4

This map illustrates commercial development opportunities for the Eastern Pulaski Area. The New River Trail terminus is within 0.3 miles of the existing downtown commercial area. The Dora Trail currently provides a connection to historical assets, but bypasses local businesses.

Quadrant 2

Eastern Pulaski Area

Legend



Quadrant 2
(between arrows)

- Existing Commercial/Industrial Building
- Potential New Commercial Development
- Potential Commercial Redevelopment
- Route 99's Pedestrian Market Corridor*
- Existing Sidewalk/Pathway
- Project Study Boundary

*Note: Approximately 1/4 mile walking distance.
Excluding New River Trail market connector.



Map prepared by the NRPDC, 2012. Sources:
Pulaski County and VGIN.

Route 99 Corridor

Opportunities

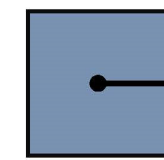
North



500 0 500
Feet

Map 2 of 4

This map illustrates commercial development opportunities for the Transition Area. Residential development is present. Providing attractive wayfinding signage, landscaping, and lighting may be key to retain interstate traveler interest in visiting downtown businesses.



Quadrant 3

Transition Area

Legend

- Quadrant 3 (between arrows)
- Existing Commercial Building
- Potential New Commercial Development
- Potential Commercial Redevelopment
- Route 99's Pedestrian Market Corridor*
- Existing Sidewalk/Pathway
- Project Study Boundary

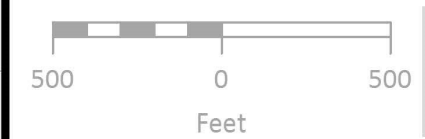
*Note: Approximately 1/4 mile walking distance. Excluding New River Trail market connector.



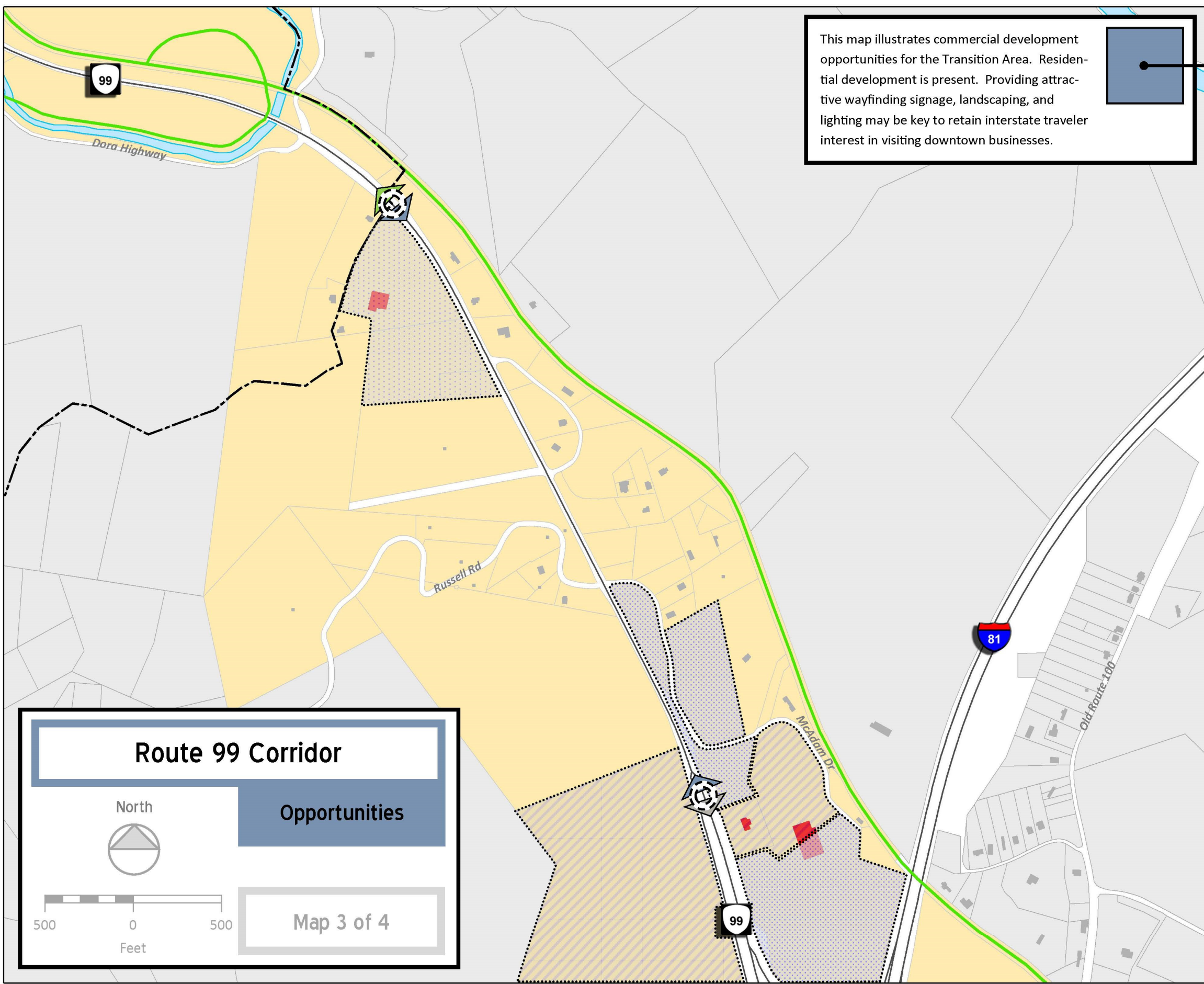
Map prepared by the NRPVDC, 2012. Sources: Pulaski County and VGIN.

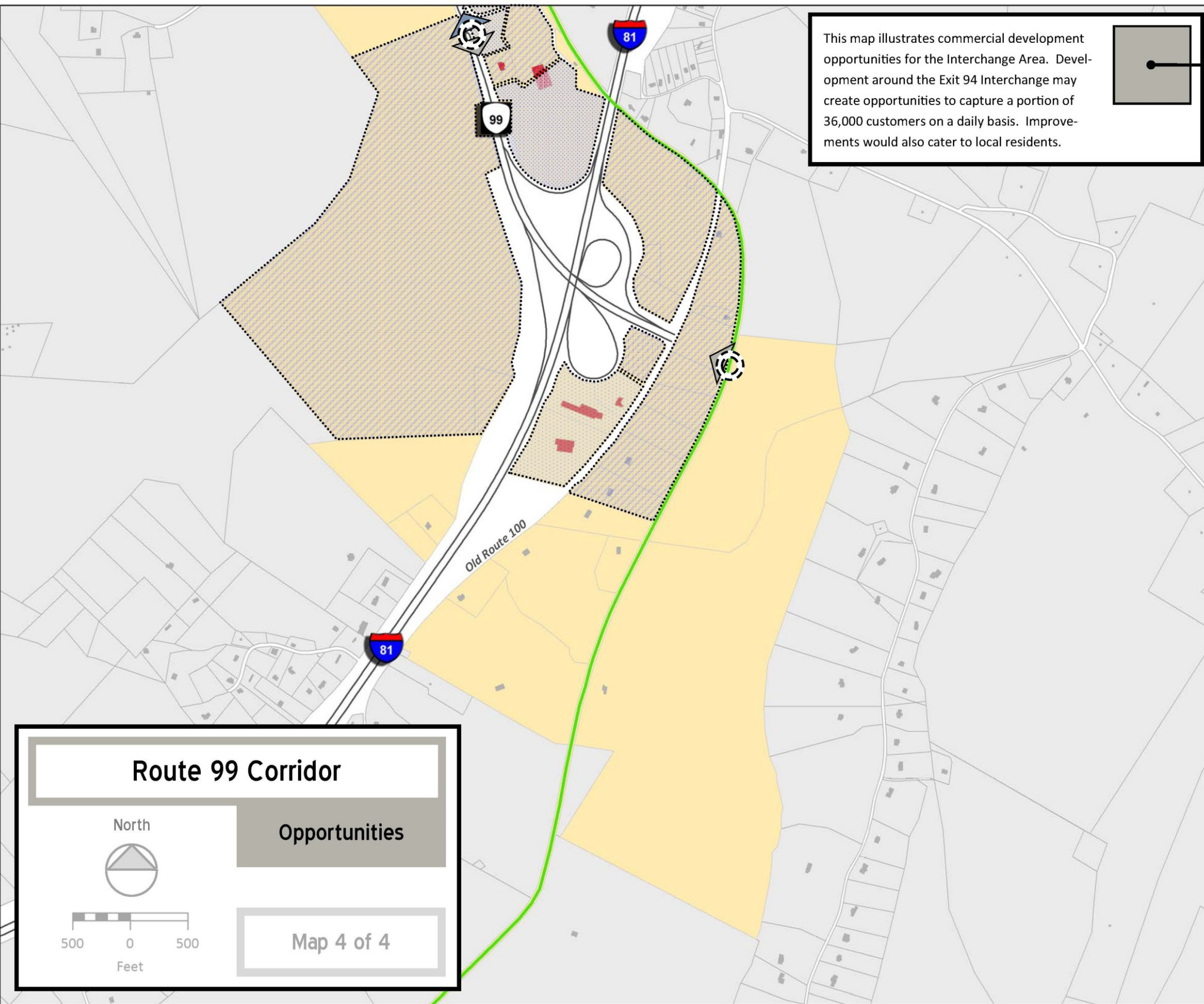
Route 99 Corridor

Opportunities



Map 3 of 4













This map illustrates commercial development opportunities for the Interchange Area. Development around the Exit 94 Interchange may create opportunities to capture a portion of 36,000 customers on a daily basis. Improvements would also cater to local residents.

Quadrant 4

Interchange Area

Legend

-  Quadrant 4
(between arrows) 
-  Existing Commercial Building
-  Potential New Commercial Development
-  Potential Commercial Redevelopment
-  Route 99's Pedestrian Market Corridor*
-  Existing Sidewalk/Pathway
-  Project Study Boundary


*Note: Approximately 1/4 mile walking distance.
Excluding New River Trail market connector.



Map prepared by the NRVPMC, 2012. Sources:
Pulaski County and VGIN.

Route 99 Corridor

North



500 0 500

Feet

Opportunities





Map 4 of 4

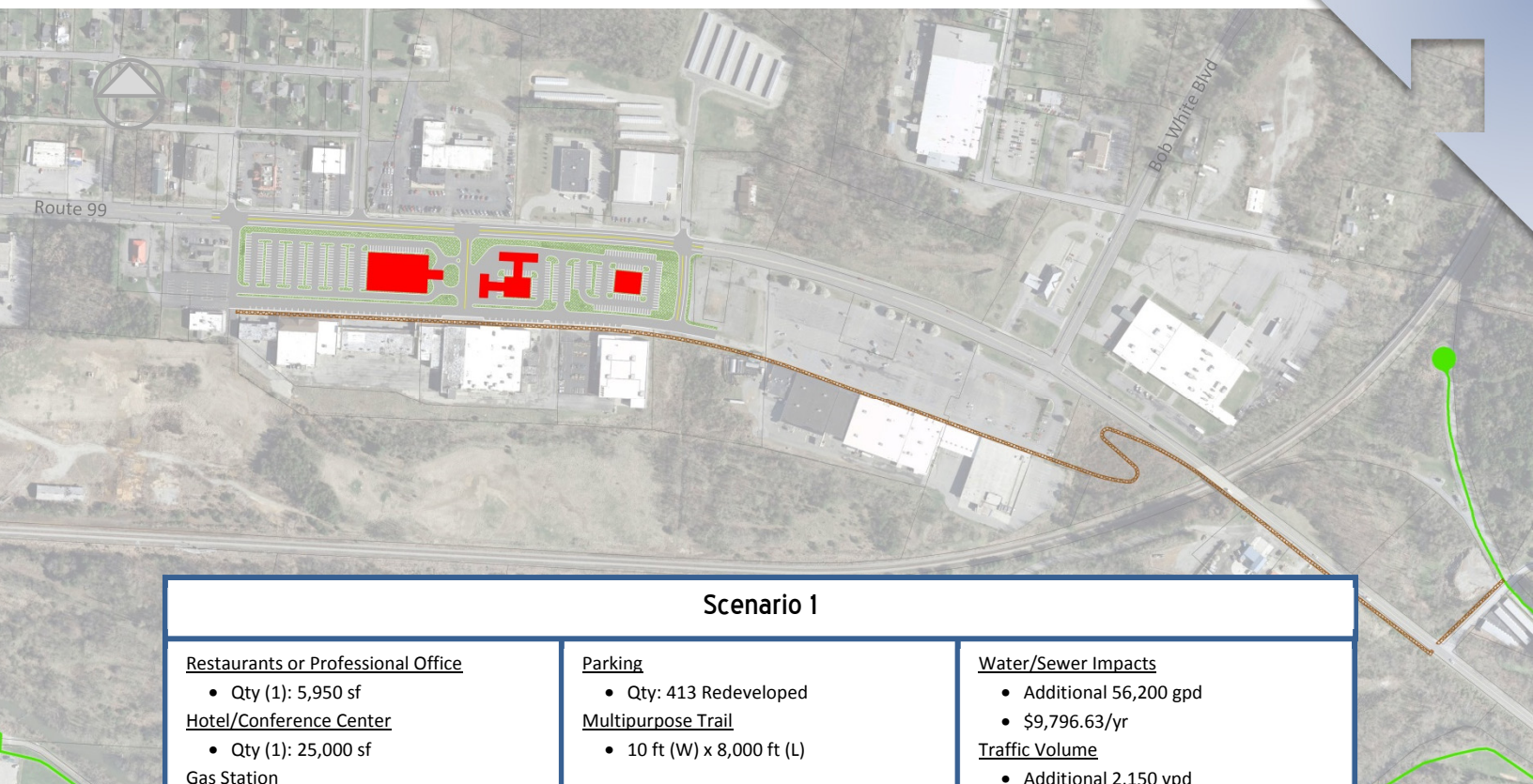
Section 3 – Conceptual Scenario Development Area 1

The first conceptual scenario development area is comprised of existing commercial parcels near the intersection of Route 99 and Bob White Boulevard. The area is currently served by public water and sewer infrastructure, is within close proximity to the New River Trail, within 3-miles of Exit 94, and offers a mix of residential and commercial land uses.

First, each scenario is based on one of three different intensities of development. Second, the quantity of anticipated utility usage and traffic volume increases are calculated. The final conceptual plan is intended to help the town determine the feasibility of economic development and supporting infrastructure opportunities. Conceptual scenarios for the downtown area are illustrated in Section 3 of this study.

Map Legend

| | |
|---|--|
|  | Proposed Commercial Building Footprint |
|  | Proposed Roadway Improvement |
|  | Proposed Multipurpose Trail |
|  | Proposed Grass/Landscaping |



Scenario 1

Restaurants or Professional Office

- Qty (1): 5,950 sf

Hotel/Conference Center

- Qty (1): 25,000 sf

Gas Station

- Qty (1): 5,525 sf

Parking

- Qty: 413 Redeveloped

Multipurpose Trail

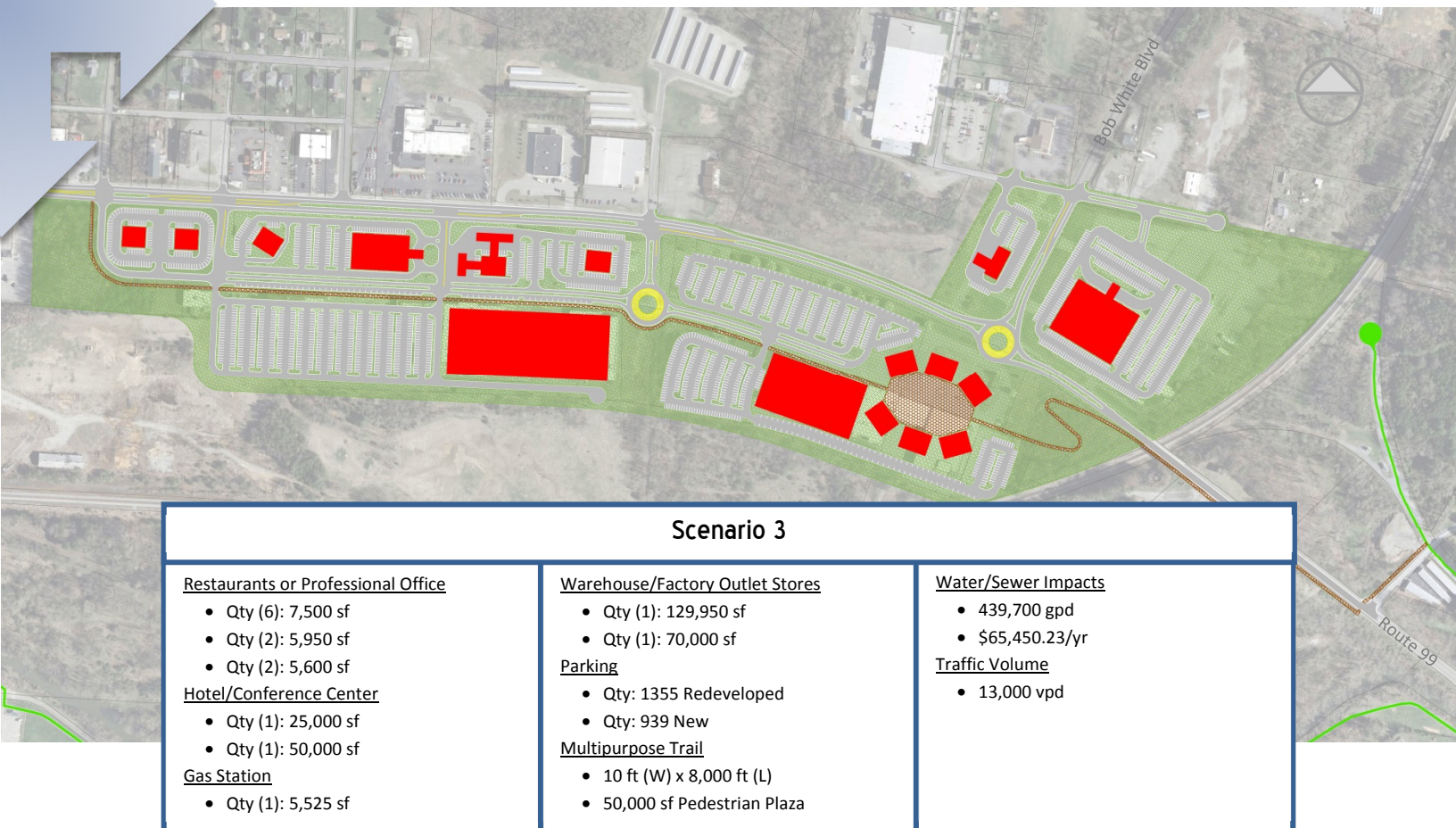
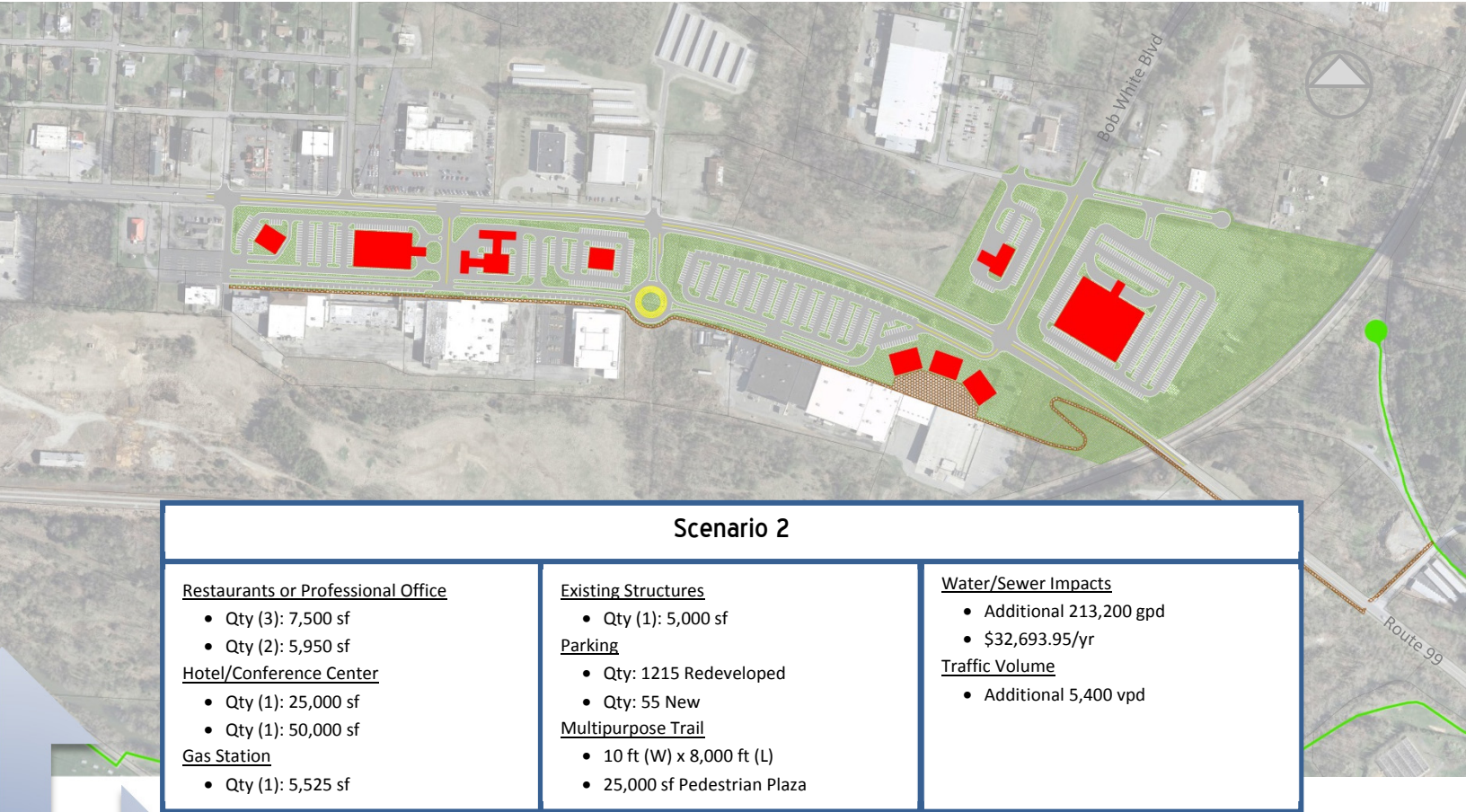
- 10 ft (W) x 8,000 ft (L)

Water/Sewer Impacts

- Additional 56,200 gpd
- \$9,796.63/yr

Traffic Volume

- Additional 2,150 vpd







Section 4 – Conceptual Scenario Development Area 2

The second conceptual scenario development area is comprised of existing parcels located adjacent to the I-81 Exit 94 Interchange. Parcels adjacent to Exit 94 have access to public water; however, do not have access to public sewer. Land use is currently mixed between agricultural, light commercial, and residential uses. The vicinity of the interchange and close proximity of the New River Trail may encourage additional commercial development.

First, each scenario is based on one of three different intensities of development. Second, the quantity of anticipated utility usage and traffic volume increases are calculated. The final conceptual plan is intended to help the town determine the feasibility of economic development and supporting infrastructure opportunities. Conceptual scenarios for the interchange area are illustrated in Section 4 of this study.

Map Legend

-  Proposed Commercial Building Lot
-  Proposed Roadway Improvement
-  Proposed Multipurpose Trail
-  Proposed Grass/Landscaping



Scenario 1

Restaurants or Professional Office

- Qty (2): 5,950 sf

Gas Station

- Qty (2): 5,525 sf

Parking

- Qty: 600 (9x18)

Multipurpose Trail

- 12 ft (W) x 2,200 ft (L)

Water/Sewer Impacts

- Additional 99,400 gpd
- \$29,041.54/yr

Traffic Volume

- Additional 4,200 vpd



Scenario 2

Restaurants or Professional Office

- Qty (2): 5,950 sf
- Qty (4): 7,500 sf

Warehouse/Factory Outlet Stores

- Qty (1): 70,000 sf

Gas Station

- Qty (2): 5,525 sf

Parking

- Qty: 1403 (9x18)
- Qty: 10 (12x30)

Multipurpose Trail

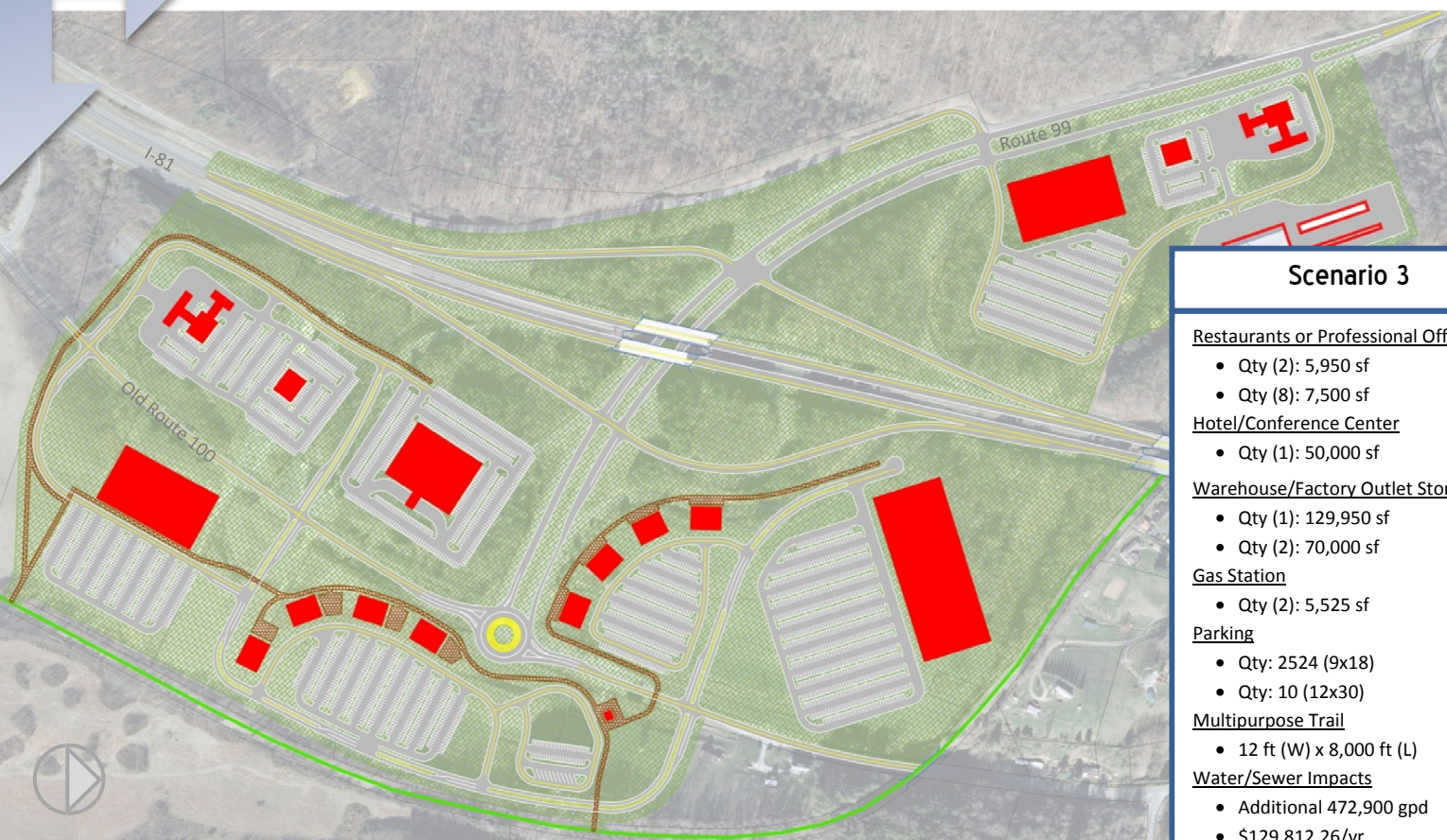
- 12 ft (W) x 6,000 ft (L)

Water/Sewer Impacts

- Additional 263,900 gpd
- \$75,392.26/yr

Traffic Volume

- Additional 9,300 vpd



Scenario 3

Restaurants or Professional Office

- Qty (2): 5,950 sf
- Qty (8): 7,500 sf

Hotel/Conference Center

- Qty (1): 50,000 sf

Warehouse/Factory Outlet Stores

- Qty (1): 129,950 sf
- Qty (2): 70,000 sf

Gas Station

- Qty (2): 5,525 sf

Parking

- Qty: 2524 (9x18)
- Qty: 10 (12x30)

Multipurpose Trail

- 12 ft (W) x 8,000 ft (L)

Water/Sewer Impacts

- Additional 472,900 gpd
- \$129,812.26/yr

Traffic Volume

- Additional 16,400 vpd



Section 5 – Key Takeaway Points



Advantages _____

- 80% of town's retail sales = Route 99
- Proximity of New River Trail State Park
- Proximity of Interstate 81
- Existing water & sewer infrastructure
- Potential redevelopment opportunities in downtown
- Potential for new development around interchange

Challenges _____

- Water & sewer infrastructure limited to town
- Aging retail space
- Floodplain within downtown quadrants
- Topography limits new development around interchange
- Risks of investing public funding into:
 - Transportation System (Interchange)
 - Water & sewer infrastructure
 - Redeveloping retail properties

