



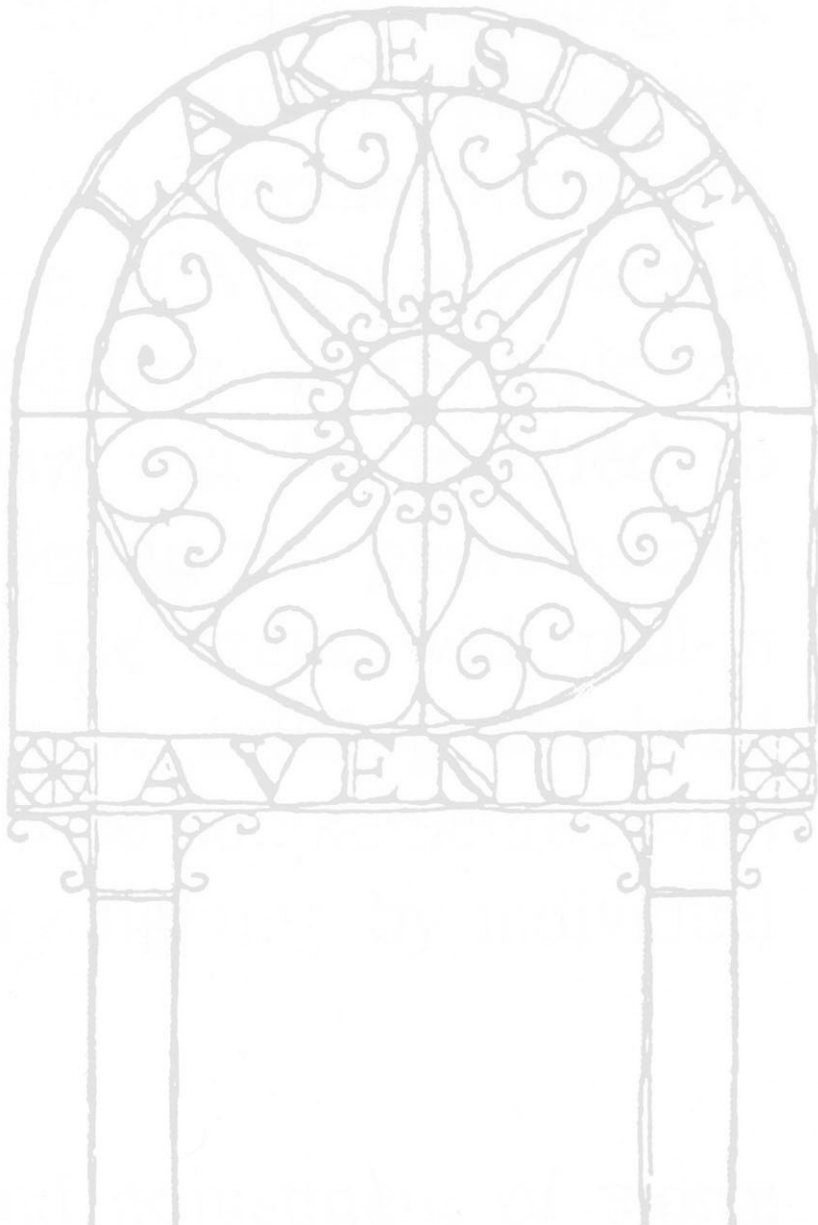
Lakeside Avenue

REVITALIZATION PLAN

Prepared for the County of Henrico & the Lakeside Business Association by:

VCU MASTER OF URBAN AND REGIONAL PLANNING PROGRAM
Fall 2007 Urban Commercial Revitalization - URSP 666





Lakeside Avenue Revitalization Plan 2007

Henrico County Department of Community Revitalization
Lakeside Business Association

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December 2007

The 2007 UCR Class thanks and acknowledges Higgins Associates, Inc., Frazier Associates, and the 1995 *Lakeside Avenue Enhancement Plan* as the source for the Lakeside Avenue bicycle wheel graphic used throughout this plan.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The development of this plan would not have been possible without the generous assistance and commitments from various organizations and individuals whom we wish to acknowledge:

The Lakeside Business Association, for welcoming us to the district and supporting our efforts; and Mary Reynolds, community revitalization planner for Henrico County's Department of Commercial Revitalization, for her guidance and feedback.

We extend our thanks to all who participated in our surveys, focus groups, and interviews, including Lakeside business and property owners, Friends of Bryan Park, staff and volunteers at Lewis Ginter Botanical Gardens, staff and residents of Imperial Plaza, staff and residents of Westminster Canterbury, staff of Jefferson Lakeside Country Club, and patrons and customers of Lakeside businesses.

We also acknowledge the contribution of Ralph Higgins, adjunct professor at Virginia Commonwealth University, whose Lakeside Avenue Enhancement Plan served as a model for our own design recommendations.

We thank Lakeside House and Westminster Canterbury for hosting the presentations of our plan.

Additionally, we thank Kevin Walters, urban planner, for his input.

Finally, we wish to thank the entire Lakeside community for allowing us the opportunity to spend several months in their neighborhood. It is our hope that you find our recommendations helpful.

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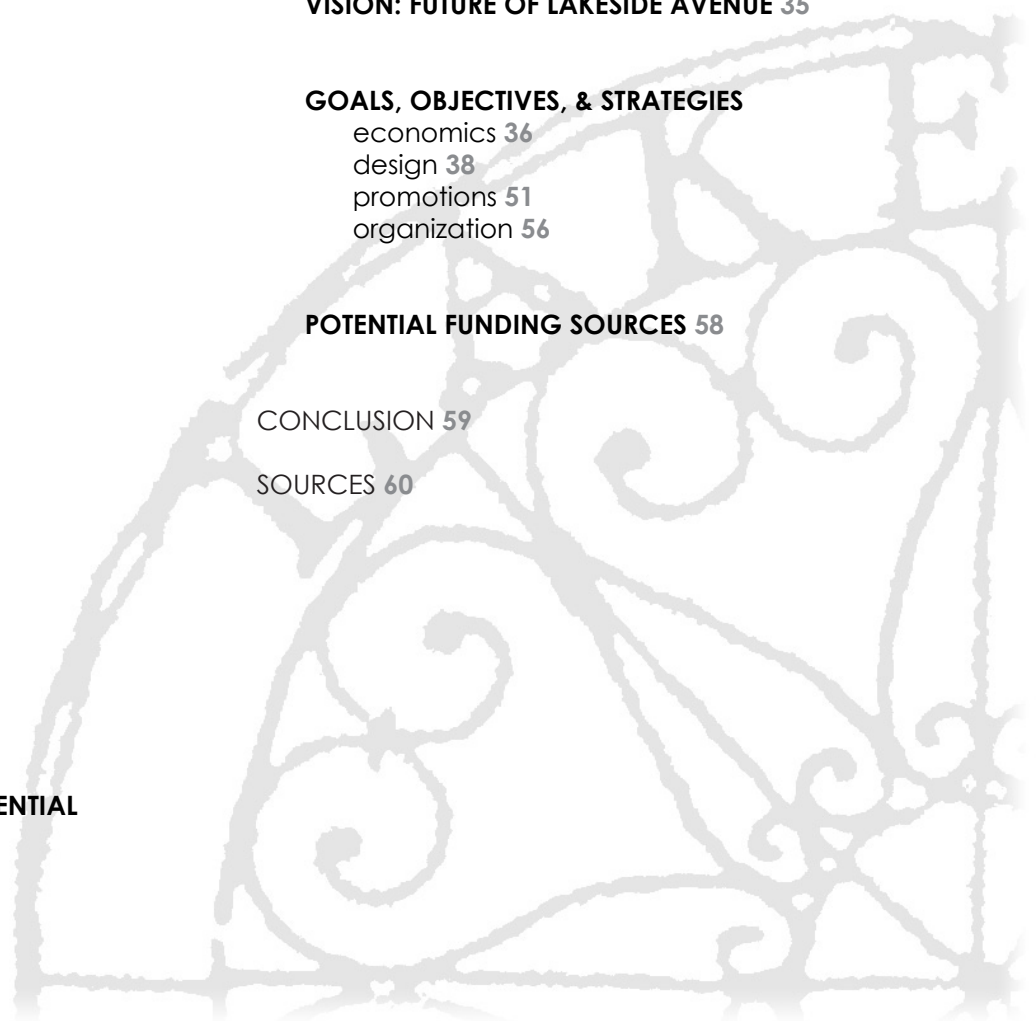
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Lakeside Avenue commercial corridor is located in the first inner-ring suburb of Henrico County, extending north from the county's border with the City of Richmond to Hilliard Road. Advantageously situated between Bryan Park and Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Lakeside is surrounded by stable neighborhoods and is easily accessible by major regional highways. The corridor is home to a number of well-established, independent businesses that contribute to the small-town, friendly atmosphere of the area. Lakeside also has as an active, well-organized business association.

Despite these assets, Lakeside faces a variety of challenges. The corridor is surrounded by a number of other shopping centers that provide goods and entertainment options Lakeside cannot. Additionally, the district does not possess cohesive design elements. Inconsistent sidewalks and an overall lack of pedestrian-scale lighting, street furniture, and attractive landscaping have created an area not conducive to strolling or browsing. Lakeside is further challenged in that the length of the corridor is bisected by a small section of residences, dividing the district into two commercial nodes: a "Park End" and a "Garden End". This in turn has prevented the unification of the northern and southern ends of the district, frustrating efforts to establish a well-defined image for the community.

Nevertheless, Lakeside Avenue has several opportunities upon which it can build. Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and Bryan Park each draw hundreds of thousands of visitors into the district every year. It is imperative that businesses along Lakeside catch the attention of these visitors while maintaining the convenience goods and services which meet the needs of neighborhoods surrounding the corridor.

A competitive market analysis for the district reveals unmet demand for goods and services in the district for the nearby convenience market, as well as new goods and services to attract the wider, shopper's-goods market and the many visitors who come to the area each year. These new uses include sit-down restaurants, women's and girls' apparel, a specialty food store, a garden shop, a coffee/ice-cream shop, and a 1950s-style diner. An examination of existing conditions data, stakeholder views, and the market analysis provides the framework for the following recommendations:

I. Economic

- Recruit new businesses complementing the local, independent character of the area and offering new services that appeal to local and regional customers.
- Strengthen existing businesses through an active retention and enhancement program.



II. Design

- Locate new uses along the corridor in ways that will complement other businesses and stimulate cross-shopping.
- Create a pedestrian-friendly environment.
- Establish a continuous, cohesive, and unique design.
- Enhance access and way-finding for all modes of transportation.
- Establish Lakeside Avenue as a "Green" business district.
- Create medians and right-of-way spaces along Lakeside Avenue that are visually appealing, coordinated, and that reinforce the shopping district's connections to Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and Bryan Park.

III. Promotion

- Use promotional strategies to increase awareness of Lakeside Avenue as a destination.
- Develop retail promotions to attract new shoppers and reward loyal customers.
- Organize special and unique events positively associated with Lakeside Avenue.

IV. Organization

- Establish committees within the Lakeside Business Association to coordinate implementation of the design, economic, promotional, and organizational strategies for the corridor.
- Strengthen the Lakeside Business Association by increasing active membership.
- Encourage individuals in the community to volunteer to help with corridor improvements and special events.



INTRODUCTION

The Lakeside Avenue Revitalization Plan is an economic tool designed to serve as a blueprint for future development along a corridor surrounded by constantly evolving and expanding retail competition. At the request of Henrico County's Department of Community Revitalization, the VCU study team set out to create a plan that focuses attention on the specific ways Lakeside Avenue can position itself as a shopping district that is different. Indeed, Lakeside Avenue has exceptional assets at its disposal – the key to this plan is defining the specific ways Lakeside can command these strengths in a fresh, modern way.

The interest in shopping malls and big retail outlets has peaked. One rarely experiences personal attention, name recognition, or exemplary service at these types of shopping outlets. People desire a more leisurely dining experience at restaurants and friendlier, knowledgeable staff at local shops. The small-town atmosphere is how Lakeside is different now and can distinguish itself in the future.

By utilizing the highly successful National Main Street Four-Point Approach, this plan crafts a set of revitalization strategies that will help Lakeside Avenue thrive well into the future. The first section of this document contains an analysis of Lakeside Avenue's history and conditions that will influence its potential for revitalization. The remaining portions of this document lay the foundation for revitalization, addressing each of the interrelated requirements for

successful revitalization laid out in the Main Street approach. These sections include:

- I. **Economic Restructuring:** Ways to sharpen the corridor's relevancy in today's competitive marketplace through business recruitment and retention strategies that emphasize both local and regional distinction.
- II. **Design:** Techniques to capitalize on the corridor's authentic characteristics and natural alignment through clustering new uses into two identifiable nodes, the Park End and the Garden End, as well as ease-of-travel and aesthetic recommendations.
- III. **Promotion:** Specifically-tailored strategies designed to build a unified image of Lakeside Avenue, as well as attract new customers through high-quality communication tools.
- IV. **Organization:** Structure the Lakeside Business Association to target key objectives allowing the district to compete with other regional shopping and dining destinations.

Lakeside Avenue is at a critical point. This plan is the tool that helps position the corridor to effectively meet the challenges of an ever-changing business climate.



PART I: ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING CONDITIONS AND REVITALIZATION POTENTIAL

LAKESIDE HISTORY

The area through which Lakeside Avenue runs has a colorful and interesting history. Earlier uses include a plantation, the site of an unsuccessful slave rebellion in 1800, a mineral spring known for its healing powers in the 19th century, and grain and lumber mill operations.

The name "Lakeside" comes from the recreational area developed by Major Lewis Ginter in the late 19th century (the current site of Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden). The park was first known as the Lakeside Wheel Club, a social or "country" club for Richmonders who enjoyed bicycling between West Broad Street and the park, along what is now the Boulevard, Hermitage Road and Lakeside Avenue.

The park opened on March 15, 1896 and ultimately included a man-made lake with a clubhouse, boat houses, the region's first golf course, a bowling alley, casino, pavilion, restaurant, and a zoological garden. Lakeside Park was created as a countryside getaway for city residents, offering them a glimpse of the new suburbs being developed nearby at that time.

Business History

The first commercial buildings on Lakeside Avenue were developed in the 1920s and 1930s. One of the best-known early businesses was Lakeside Pharmacy, which opened during the 1930s near the intersection of Lakeside Avenue and Dumbarton Road. The pharmacy and neighboring structures were demolished in the 1990s to make room for the current Rite Aid location.

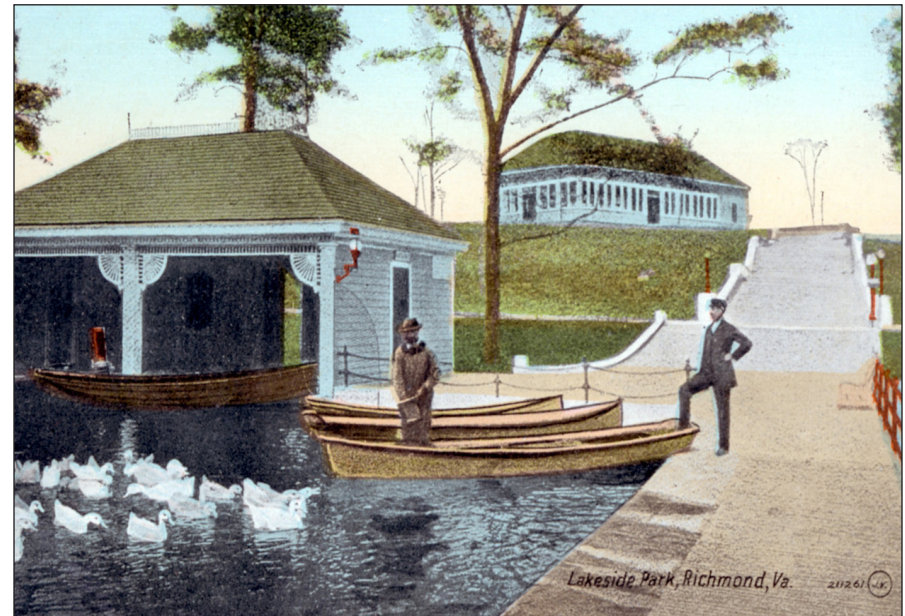


Figure 1: Postcard image of Lakeside Park circa 1900

Business development began to cluster near that intersection and at a second business core developed later to the north near Hilliard Road. In that area, "The Hub" became Henrico County's first shopping center. It was developed in 1947 by M.L. Hubbard who had observed a "U-shaped" shopping complex with common parking in the center during a trip to Florida after World War II.

The Lakeside Avenue business district experienced dramatic growth in the 1940s and early 1950s with grocery stores such as Sanitary



Stores, Lukehart's Market, and Town and Country Grocery. A number of other businesses serving residents' needs opened; these included Lakeside Appliance, Nestor's Bicycle shop, Jerry's Shoe Service, Lawrence Hardware, Fin and Feather Pet Center, and First Merchants Bank.

The nation's growing love affair with automobiles after World War II was also reflected on Lakeside Avenue. Businesses such as Lawrence Motor Company and several early service stations, including a Shell station and in 1957, an Esso Station, opened near the current Lakeside Town Center.



Figure 2: Roy's Big Burger has been popular with area residents since its opening in the middle of the 20th century. Courtesy: "Images of America – Henrico County," Louis H. Manarin, 2006.

New shopping centers opened nearby and drew shoppers and businesses away from the Lakeside Avenue district in the late 1950s and 1960s. Willow Lawn Shopping Center opened three miles southwest at Broad Street and Willow Lawn Drive on November 5, 1956, and the now-razed Azalea Mall opened in August 1962, just east of Lakeside Avenue at Brook Road and Dumbarton Avenue. Additional commercial development emerged over the next thirty years, and included Brook Run, the shops on MacArthur Avenue, Virginia Center Commons, North Park, Staples Mill, and Brook Hill. These new retail centers drew customers and businesses away from Lakeside Avenue and in doing so, stunted the growth Lakeside had experienced since World War II.

Despite sluggish growth, some businesses on Lakeside Avenue experienced tremendous success. Franco Ambrogi opened the first Franco's men's clothing store in 1972 on Dumbarton Road. The store's success resulted in construction of a new, larger building on Lakeside Avenue, just a few blocks south of the original store. In October 1985, Franco's celebrated the grand opening of its complete fashion gallery. Today, Franco's is an internationally-known clothing business.

Lakeside Avenue faces increasing competition from the ever-growing commercial corridors nearby. To survive and thrive, Lakeside must capitalize on its unique assets, including its vibrant history, locally owned businesses, small-town charm, and strategic location between Bryan Park and Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden. By doing so, the corridor will once again become a vibrant retail corridor.



RELATED PLANS

The Lakeside Avenue commercial corridor has been the subject of or has been included in two recent plans: the *Lakeside Avenue Enhancement Plan* and the *Henrico 2010 Land Use Plan*. The plans have provided some guidance and direction for the district, and have resulted in several improvements, including extensive infrastructure and landscaping enhancements. However, these two plans have not presented a more comprehensive vision for Lakeside's development.

Lakeside Avenue Enhancement Plan

Prepared in 1995 by Higgins Associates, Inc. and Frazier Associates, the plan focused on the physical conditions that affected the appearance and function of the Lakeside Avenue corridor, and provided recommendations for improvements. Issues addressed included streetscape, signage, parking, traffic movement, drainage and architectural appeal. Special emphasis was placed on parking alternatives, although the recommendations would require further study. Market and economic analyses were given a cursory mention but were not detailed in the plan.¹

Henrico 2010 Land Use Plan

Adopted on December 13, 1995, the plan specifies the goals, objectives and policies of economic development, residential, governmental and semi-public, historic and cultural planning for the entire county. The Economic Development Goals have been designed to guide development in all areas with Office, Commercial, or Industrial land-use classifications. The plan focuses

on achieving a diversified and balanced economy for the county by:

- attracting new businesses
- expanding commercial and industrial development
- preserving Prime Economic Development Sites²
- promoting a better distribution of employment opportunities

Currently, the *Henrico County 2026 Comprehensive Plan* is in draft form. Until the plan is adopted by the Board of Supervisors, the *Lakeside Avenue Revitalization Plan 2007* must rely upon the existing *Henrico 2010 Land Use Plan*.³



Figure 3: Residential neighborhood near Bryan Park

¹ See Appendix A for additional plan details, recommendations, and implementation timeline.

² Sites identified in consultation with the Industrial Development Authority as sites that are currently being marketed and sites with future potential for economic development. Lakeside Avenue is currently not designated as such.

³ See Appendix A for additional plan details, recommendations.



SURROUNDING INFLUENCES

The Lakeside Avenue commercial district is on the City of Richmond's northern border, and is the first inner-ring suburb in Henrico County. Located less than one mile from I-95 and I-64, Lakeside Avenue is convenient for those traveling from other destinations. The parks and golf courses are the primary institutional influences. The surrounding neighborhoods and those located within 3 miles are economically healthy and can support a lively commercial area.



Figure 4: Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden

Neighborhoods

The neighborhoods that immediately border the Lakeside commercial corridor are: Bryan Parkway, Bryan Park Heights, Bryan Park Gardens, Bloomingdale, and Hermitage Court. These neighborhoods are characterized by a mixture of one- and two-story houses, as well as a variety of housing types and architectural styles. Established beginning in the mid 1920s, these neighborhoods continued to develop over the following 40 years.

Ginter Park, one of the city's first planned developments, is located within two miles of the business district. It has retained most of its turn-of-the century residential planning qualities that established its reputation as "Queen of the Suburbs." Occupying a twenty-one block area, architectural styles vary from Victorian cottages to Colonial Revival mansions.

The Bellevue neighborhood extends north from Ginter Park to the city limits along Westbrook Avenue. It is within one mile of the commercial district. Just west of Bellevue is the expansive Joseph Bryan Park, with walking trails, lakes and recreational amenities.

In addition, the senior residences of Westminster Canterbury and Imperial Plaza provide homes for hundreds of elderly individuals.

Parks

Joseph Bryan Park is a 262-acre public park on the North Side of the City of Richmond. The park offers a wide variety of amenities, including athletic fields, a nine-hole "disk golf" course, tennis courts, and picnic shelters. An estimated **450,000 people** use the park each year, 70% of whom are Henrico County residents.

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, located at the intersection of Lakeside Avenue and Hilliard Road, offers 40 acres of spectacular gardens and the mid-Atlantic's only classically-styled conservatory



open to the public. This regional attraction draws approximately **250,000 visitors** annually, and employs 50 full-time workers and 300 volunteers. The garden offers a number of educational programs for adults and children, as well as the annual GardenFest of Lights in December and a summer concert series.

Golf Courses

Belmont Golf Course, located east of Lakeside Avenue along Hilliard Road, features an 18-hole PGA Championship golf course. Albert Warren Tillenghast, one of the best course architects of his time, designed Belmont Golf Course for the Hermitage Country Club in 1916. In 1949, the course was host to the PGA Championship won by Sam Snead. Henrico County purchased the golf course, recreation center, and other buildings in 1976. This public golf course attracts about 42,000 users annually, and hosts several tournaments throughout the year.

Jefferson Lakeside Country Club, located on Lakeside Avenue, adjacent to Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, is a private recreational

club offering golf, swimming, tennis, social events, and other recreational activities to its members. Founded in 1917, the club sponsors several golf tournaments and opens its facilities for a limited number of special functions such as weddings and business meetings. Currently, about **500 families** belong to the Jefferson Lakeside County Club.

Schools

Neighborhoods surrounding the Lakeside Avenue business district are served by Lakeside Elementary School, Moody Middle School and Henrico High School. These schools enroll a total of more than 3,100 students and employ nearly 250 people.

J. Sargeant Reynolds Community College is located three miles north of the corridor. Virginia Union University and Union Theological Seminary are located three miles southeast of the district. Virginia Commonwealth University is five miles south of Lakeside Avenue.

Institution	Proximity to Corridor	Employees	Users
Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden	<1 mile	50	250,000
Joseph Bryan Park	<1 mile	n/a	450,000
Jefferson Lakeside Country Club	1 mile	30-60	11,000
Belmont Golf Course	2 miles	30-35	42,000
Westminster Canterbury	1 mile	700	863 apts.
Imperial Plaza	1.5 miles	250	900 apts.

Source: Urban Commercial Revitalization Class, Fall 2007



Figure 5: VCU is located five miles south of Lakeside Avenue



Major Employers

Westminster Canterbury, one mile south of Lakeside Avenue, is a large continuing-care retirement community with 863 apartments. It employs nearly 700 persons full-time.

Imperial Plaza, just south of Westminster Canterbury, is another senior apartment community located within one mile of the corridor. The facility offers over 900 apartments and employs over 250.

Medical Facilities

Henrico Doctors Hospital, 7700 Parham Road, and St. Mary's Bon Secours Hospital, 5801 Bremono Road, are located approximately three miles south and west of the district, respectively.



Figure 6: Crossroads Shopping Center

SURROUNDING COMMERCIAL CORRIDORS

The Lakeside Avenue commercial corridor competes with over 20 nearby retail nodes such as North Park Shopping Center, Brook Run, Brook Hill, Dumbarton Square, Crossroads, and commercial corridors along Staples Mill Road and West Broad Street. Each of these draws both customers and businesses away from Lakeside.

In addition to the threat of chain stores in these shopping areas, Lakeside also faces competition from nearby, older neighborhood retail districts, such as MacArthur Avenue and Bellevue Avenue, which, like Lakeside, also boast a unique and independent business character.

To thrive in this environment, Lakeside Avenue will need to recruit distinctive businesses that serve surrounding neighborhoods and



Figure 7: Bellevue Avenue neighborhood retail area



Table 2: Goods and Services Surrounding the Lakeside Avenue Commercial Corridor

Shopping Destination	Food at/ Away from Home	Alcohol/ Tobacco	Household Operations	House- keeping Supplies	Housekeeping Furnishings/ Equipment	Apparel	Transportation	Health Care	Entertainment	Personal Care/Products
Azalea Avenue	■		■	■	■	■	■		■	■
Bellevue Avenue	■	■	■		■			■	■	
Brook Hill S.C.	■		■	■	■	■			■	■
Brook Run S.C./Brook Road	■	■	■	■			■	■	■	■
Chamberlayne Avenue					■					■
Dumbarton Square	■		■	■				■		
Impala Place					■		■			
Lakeside Avenue	■		■	■	■	■	■	■		■
MacArthur Avenue	■	■	■				■		■	
North Park Shopping Center	■		■	■	■	■	■	■		
Northside Avenue	■						■			
Oakview Avenue			■				■			
Old Hilliard Road			■				■	■	■	
Staples Mill Road / Staples Mill S.C.	■	■	■				■	■	■	■
Talley Road				■						
Willow Lawn/Broad Street	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

Source: Urban Commercial Revitalization Class, Fall 2007

a wider market area. The market analysis section of this report addresses that task. Table 2 illustrates these commercial destinations and their many offerings.

PUBLIC SAFETY

Public safety is comprised of two topic areas: traffic safety and crime trends. Compared with Henrico County as a whole, the Lakeside Avenue corridor experiences a very low percentage of all types of traffic accidents. Of significant importance is that there have



been no fatal crashes along the corridor in the past three years and relatively few crashes involving injury. With regard to crime, despite some perceived criminal activity mentioned by the Community Police Officer and community members, there is no evidence of a significant crime problem in the Lakeside business corridor.⁴

Traffic Safety

Between 2005-2007, the most prevalent traffic accident type reported along Lakeside Avenue was Property Damage Only Crashes (P.D.O.). Crashes involving injury to persons ranked second and non-reportable P.D.O. crashes ranked as the third highest crash type. No fatal crashes occurred in any of the past three years in Lakeside.

Crime Trends

The most prevalent type of crime committed on Lakeside Avenue is larceny, which makes up more than 80% of the 240 crimes that have occurred between 2005 and 2007. Yet, larceny has decreased six percent in the past three years. Within the larceny category, the majority are failure to pay for gasoline. Also, during this time Lakeside Avenue experienced zero homicide or sexual assault incidents.⁵

CIRCULATION AND PARKING

Lakeside Avenue was developed as a classic suburban highway business district. The corridor is directly accessible from major roads and as a result Lakeside Avenue has evolved as an auto-dominated commercial zone. Shoppers typically drive to a single destination, park, shop, and leave without patronizing nearby businesses. The absence of sidewalks and clustering of complementary businesses



Figure 8: Lakeside Avenue is an auto-dominated commercial zone

makes it difficult for shoppers to walk between businesses and browse.

Road Network Overview

Lakeside Avenue (State Route 161) is designated by Henrico County as a major collector and runs north and south along the original trolley line extending from the City of Richmond into Henrico County; it is a continuation of the City's Hermitage Road. Lakeside Avenue parallels Route 1 and is advantageously located near Interstates 64, 295 and 95, with a direct exit from northbound I-95 (there is no direct exit from southbound I-95).

⁴ All public safety information provided by Henrico County Police Department.

⁵ See Appendix A for more detail and comparison to Henrico County as a whole.



This 1.5 mile stretch of Lakeside Avenue has four lanes with a center median. Two major east-west roads intersect Lakeside Avenue: Hilliard Road at the northern end and Dumbarton Road in the middle of the corridor. These are the only intersections controlled by a traffic signal with turn lanes. All other intersections along Lakeside Avenue are stop-sign controlled with Lakeside Avenue travelers having the right-of-way.

Most intersecting local roads are two-way residential streets with on-street parking, although a handful of streets are one-way only.

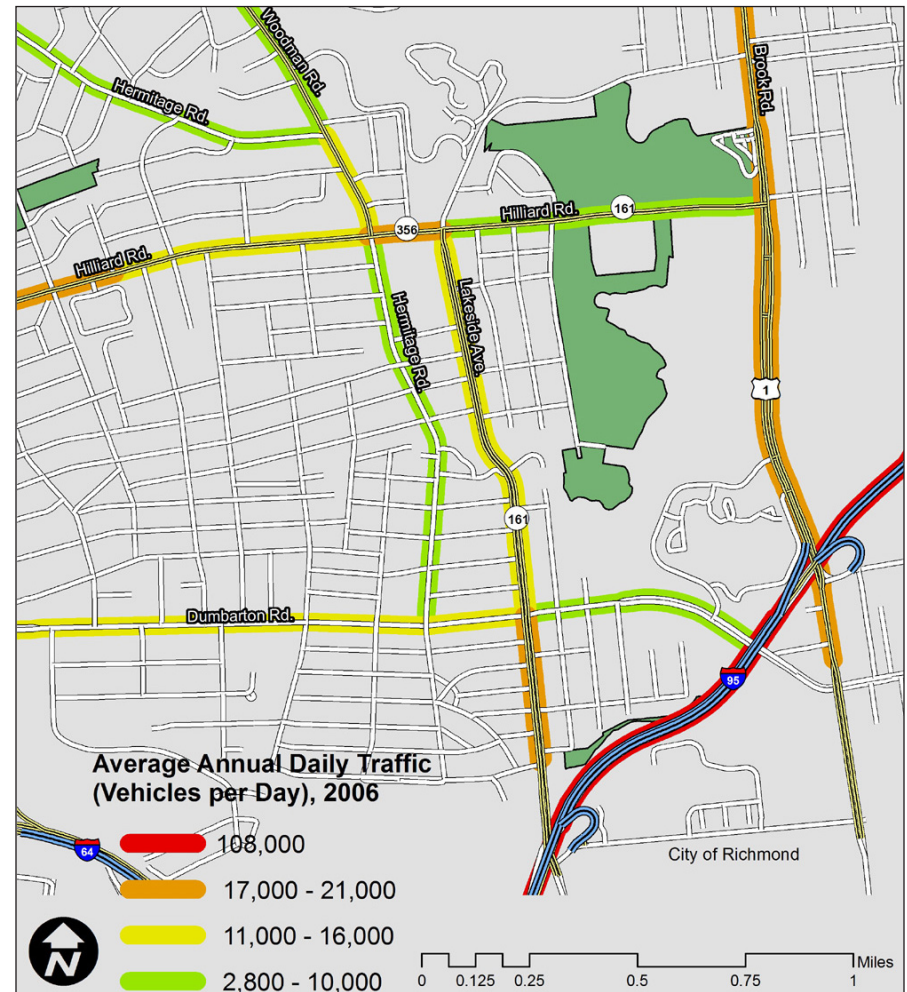
Traffic Analysis

Lakeside Avenue experiences a relatively low level of traffic compared to surrounding corridors.⁶ The average daily traffic count on Lakeside Avenue and Dumbarton Road is 14,000 cars. Each day, nearly 108,000 drivers travel on the north and southbound lanes of I-95 near Lakeside Avenue. They should be viewed as potential customers.

Parking Inventory & Analysis

While the Lakeside Avenue corridor has no shortage of parking spaces, very few of these could be considered “public;” the majority of parking is privately owned. Most of the parking along Lakeside Avenue has no time limit; the only exceptions are the parking spaces in front of The Hub, which have a two-hour limit. Public parking can only be found along some of the side streets. The parking configuration along the west side of Lakeside Avenue between Dumbarton Road and Winnwood Road presents conflicts between automobiles and pedestrians. This is created by the curb cuts that run the length of the storefronts. The parking here is angled and presents an additional challenge when someone is backing up and leaving.

Map 1: Average Annual Daily Traffic



Source: Virginia Department of Transportation

⁶ See Appendix A for AADT chart.



Other Modes – Bicycle, Public Transit, Pedestrian

Other modes of travel are lacking or non-existent within the study area. No bike lanes exist along the corridor and no businesses offer bike racks. GRTC (Greater Richmond Transit Company) used to provide service to the Lakeside area, but this was recently discontinued.

The pedestrian atmosphere of Lakeside Avenue lacks connectivity and a sense of safety. The “Garden End” of the corridor (near Hilliard Road) has a good network of sidewalks, with curb cuts at each corner, making the area accessible to all visitors. This does not hold true for the area south of Dumbarton Road. Sidewalks have been replaced with curb cuts that run the entire length of the block, leaving the pedestrian lost and competing with vehicles looking to park. The study area lacks an adequate number of pedestrian crosswalks, making it difficult to negotiate the four lanes of traffic, or identify safe places to cross. The only location of a painted crosswalk and pedestrian signals is at the intersection of Lakeside Avenue and Dumbarton Road. The 35 mile-per-hour speed limit along Lakeside Avenue is also a concern, as there is little that separates the pedestrian from the busy traffic.

The existing sidewalks do not provide connections to the surrounding neighborhoods; this does not encourage local residents/customers to walk along the corridor. As a result, these customers are forced to drive and park at a particular destination rather than taking advantage of the many offerings located along the corridor in which they might be more likely to visit if on foot.

Currently, Henrico County is in the midst of completing a large-scale road improvement project along Lakeside Avenue. Phase II of this enhancement project includes upgrading the sidewalks, street, and median along Lakeside Avenue from The Hub to Dumbarton Road.



Figure 9: Lack of sidewalks in the Park End south of Dumbarton Road

ZONING

Currently, five different zoning classifications exist for the over 100 parcels fronting Lakeside Avenue between the City of Richmond border and Hilliard Road.⁷ These include: Business Districts 1, 2, and 3, Office District 2, and Residential District 4. While the current zoning classifications reflect the classic suburban highway business model, these may limit future attempts to fuse the corridor into one unified district.

The following list provides an overview of each zoning classification in the Lakeside Avenue commercial corridor:

⁷ See Appendix A for more detail on Henrico County-wide zoning.



B-1, B-1C: Business District 1

The B-1 zoning designation is for low-intensity retail and personal-service uses. These uses may be grouped as coordinated units or individual parcels. These are primarily oriented towards the needs of nearby residential neighborhoods through limited square footage allotments and other restrictions, such as height, use, and business hours (6:00 AM-12:00 AM).

B-2, B-2C: Business District 2

The B-2 zoning classification is for commercial and community shopping, recreational, and services activities that are located along a major collector or arterial road. Extended business hours are permitted as a provisional use.

B-3, B-3C: Business District 3

The B-3 zoning classification is for commercial, automotive, recreational, and service oriented activities located along arterial thoroughfares serving wide areas of the county.

R-4, R-4C: One Family Residential Uses

Uses in the R-4 district include one-family dwellings, churches, and schools.

O-2, O-2C: Office District 2

The O-2 zoning classification is meant to apply to large and small areas, creating compatibility between office buildings and adjacent medium density residential neighborhoods. Accessory dwellings are allowed as a provisional use.

Source: Henrico County

Map 2: Henrico County zoning map



Source: Henrico County



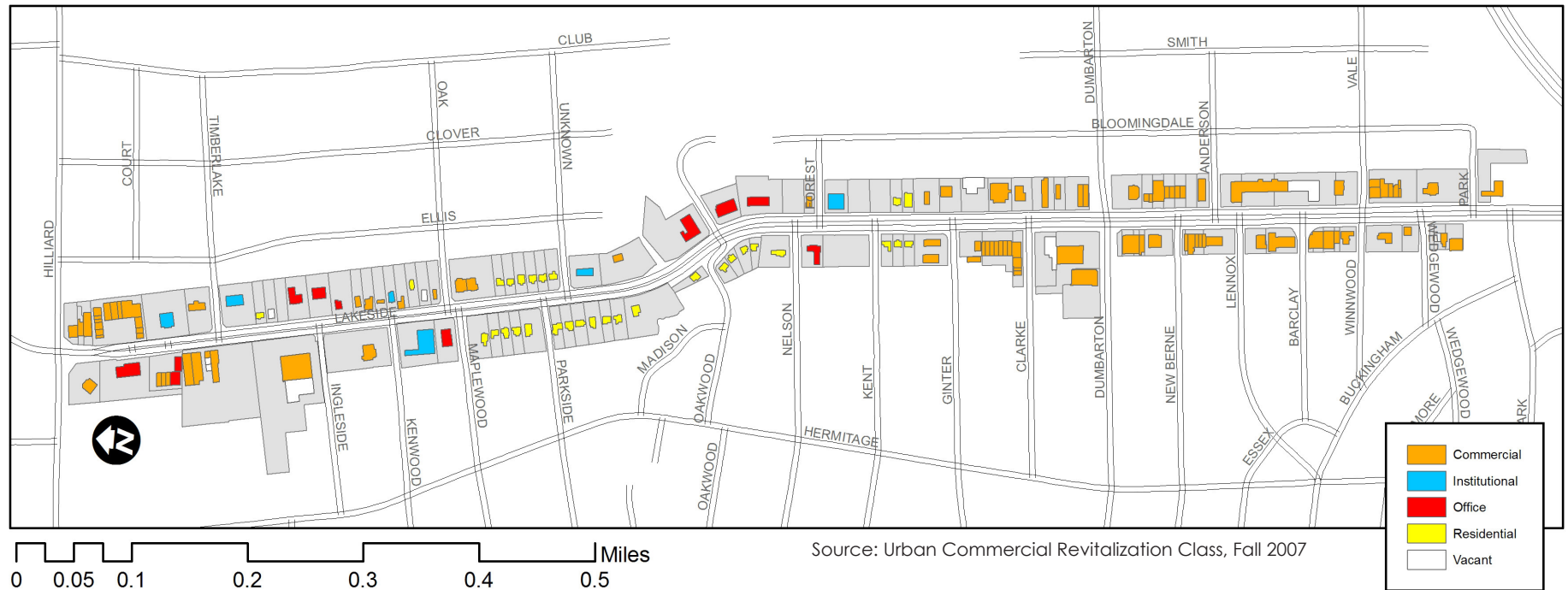
BUILDING CONDITIONS, USES, AND REAL ESTATE TRENDS

The 1.5 mile-long Lakeside Avenue study area is broken into two commercial nodes, bisected by a small residential area. The northern "Garden End" has more diverse uses, including commercial, institutional, and office. The southern "Park End" is largely comprised of commercial uses. The approximately 100

individual buildings along Lakeside Avenue and intersecting streets are categorized into five uses:

- Commercial
- Office
- Residential
- Institutional
- Vacant

Map 3: Building uses along the Lakeside Avenue Corridor



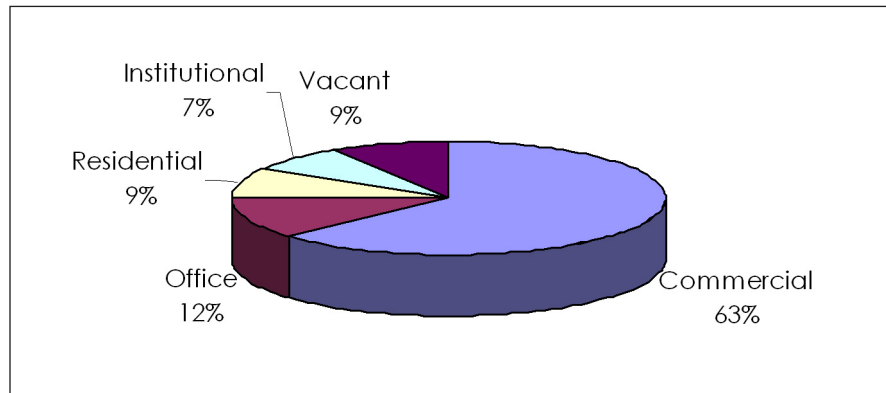


Totaling over 400,000 square feet of space, these buildings feature over 150 individual uses, including 53 service-oriented companies, 35 retail establishments, 31 residences, 11 offices, nine restaurants, and six institutions. In addition, five stand-alone buildings are vacant, while another four vacant spaces are available in partially-occupied buildings, for a total of 36,501 square feet of vacant space.

Square Footage by Use

Commercial uses comprise the largest share of floor space: 63% of the 405,571 total square feet available along the Lakeside Avenue corridor. Offices occupy the second largest amount of square-footage at 12%. Residential and institutional uses represent nine and seven percent of total square-footage respectively. Finally, vacant spaces comprise nine percent of total space along the corridor.

Figure 10: Square footage by use



Source: Urban Commercial Revitalization Class, Fall 2007

Building Conditions

Building conditions along Lakeside Avenue were evaluated using criteria developed by Peter Dunbar & Associates.⁸ Of the 100 buildings located along the corridor, only one was found to be in deteriorated condition. All of the other buildings are in sound condition. A fire station is currently under construction and should be operational by early 2008.

Property Owner Trends

There are approximately 82 property owners along Lakeside Avenue; 87% live in the Richmond metropolitan area. This is a strength because local owners tend to be more invested in the community, and more accessible and accountable for property maintenance. Thirteen of the owners hold more than one property, which accounts for 38% of the 100 properties along Lakeside Avenue. Of note, three of the property owners hold 16% of the properties along Lakeside. The County of Henrico holds a number of properties as well. During the development of this plan, properties have changed hands and this may not be reflected in the assessment records.⁹

DESIGN AND STREETScape, STREET FURNITURE, AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Design plays a vital role in determining the success of a commercial district. People who feel comfortable in their physical surroundings are more likely to spend greater amounts of time in the area, which can translate into greater sales for a retail corridor.

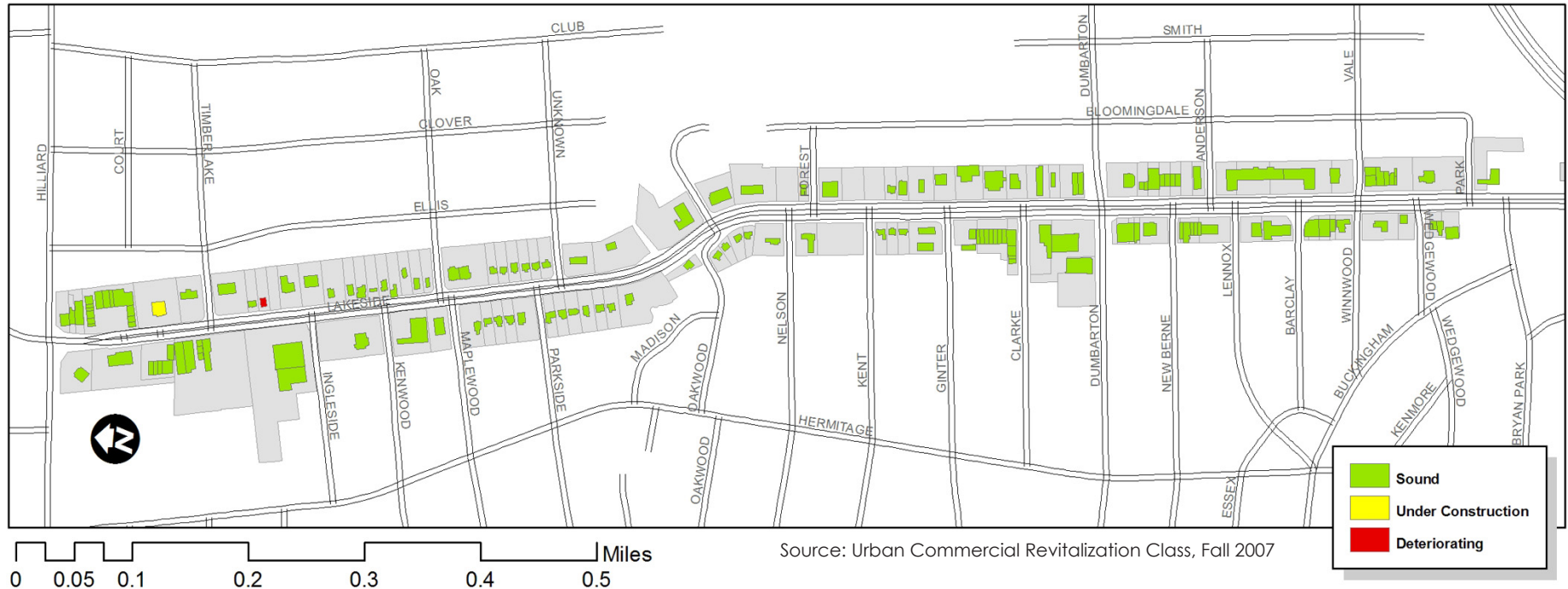
The Lakeside Avenue area has several design problems that have led to a sense of disconnect, making it difficult for the corridor to embody a unified sense of place. The classic suburban ribbon model worked in the past, but increased competition has required the development of clusters and nodes where people will feel comfortable walking, browsing, and shopping at more than one store.

⁸ A Dunbar Criteria summary may be found in Appendix A.

⁹ See Appendix A for the most recent real estate property assessment values.



Map 4: Building conditions along the Lakeside Avenue Corridor



Design and Streetscape

The retail and professional buildings vary in age, style, and size. Most are one-story, and many have flat or shed roofs, but are treated with different materials.

The retail spaces generally have large plate glass windows that allow for attractive window displays visible from the sidewalk and street, but the buildings themselves are without much architectural detail. Setback from the street varies from building to building, as does the amount of open space between structures.

The parking arrangements for individual businesses are also inconsistent; some have a narrow strip of angled parking directly in front of the store, while others have large lots beside the businesses. The lack of consistency in massing, style, material, and spacing prevents the district from presenting a unified front.

Recent landscaping efforts have improved the appearance of the corridor. A number of trees have been planted along sidewalks and medians in the district, and these plantings hide empty spaces such as parking lots or vacant storefronts, provide shade for pedestrians, and create a sight line that draws one's eye down the street.



However, the plantings are not consistent throughout the corridor, and treeless spaces accentuate the feeling of exposure, in stark contrast with greener areas.

Street Furniture

There is very little street furniture along Lakeside Avenue. A few benches provide seating for shoppers in the district, and these are located primarily in The Hub and near Lakeside Appliance.

These benches have been purchased by individual property and business owners and are not of one particular style or size. Several businesses provide pedestrian lighting for their patrons, since the area is very dark at night, but many do not.

Gas stations are the only businesses that make trash receptacles available outside. This lack of street furnishings does not encourage shoppers to linger in the area.

Infrastructure

Street and sidewalk improvements were recently completed after several years of construction and these have helped to solve some of the area's circulation and drainage problems. But, exposed power lines that criss-cross Lakeside Avenue continue to contribute to visual clutter.



Figure 11: The benches outside Lakeside Appliance are some of the few in the district



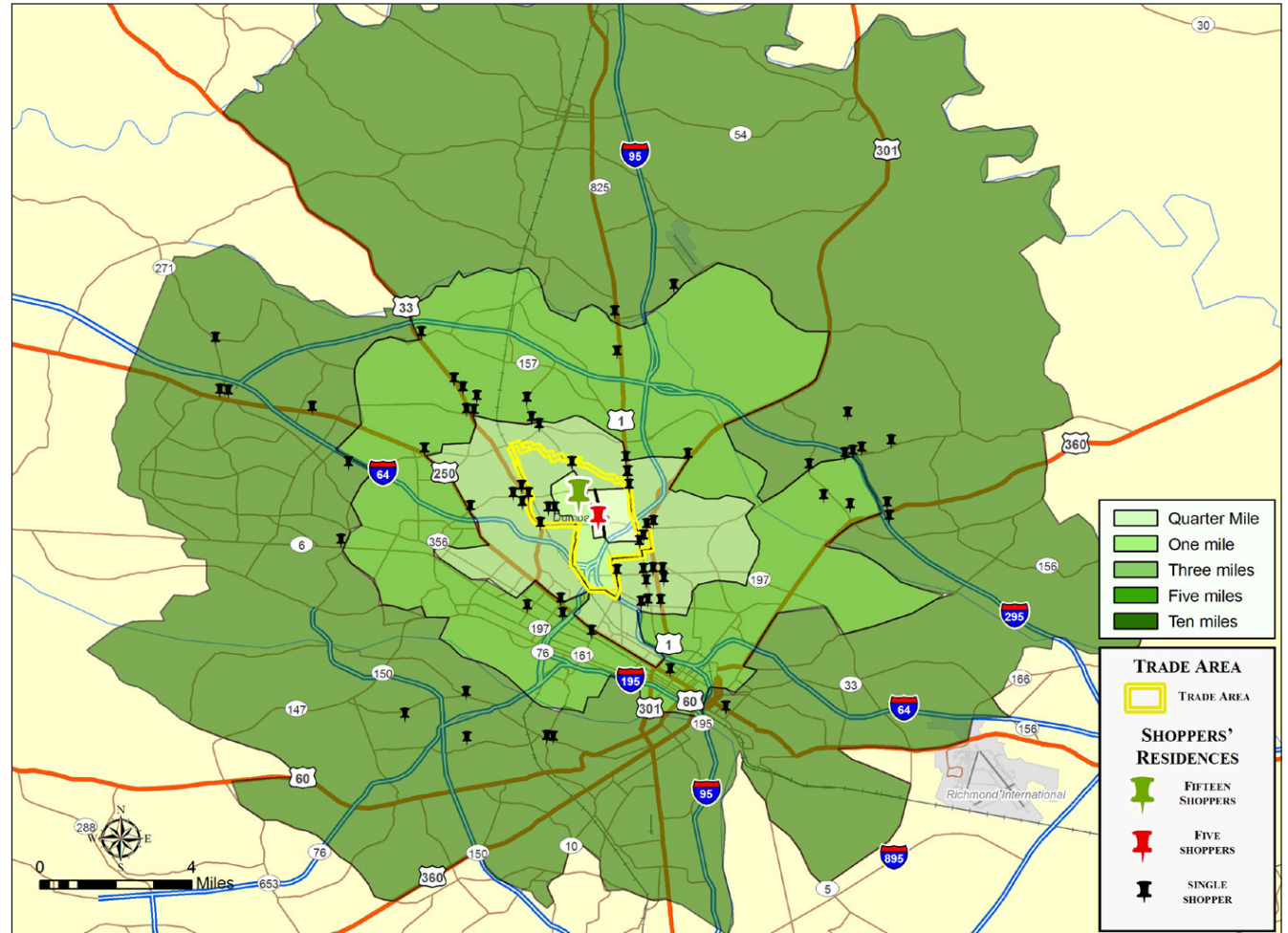
The success of a revitalization plan is contingent upon the support of various **stakeholders** in the community. These include shoppers, merchants, property owners, surrounding institutions, and residents.

SHOPPERS SURVEY¹⁰

The study team surveyed 100 random shoppers at various locations along Lakeside Avenue to gauge their perceptions about the quality of the commercial corridor. Customers were asked to state the frequency of their visits, to rate shopping, appearance and atmosphere of the district, as well as to provide recommendations for improvements.

In addition, those surveyed were asked to list the locations they most frequently visit to purchase various retail items, such as clothing and groceries. Demographic information, such as age, gender, race, household composition, income, and the nearest intersection to their residence were

Map 5 : Lakeside Avenue trade area and shoppers' residences (regional)



Source: Urban Commercial Revitalization Class, Fall 2007

¹⁰ Refer to Appendix B for the survey instrument and for quantitative survey results.



also noted. Shoppers were interviewed at The Hub, 7-11, Roy's Big Burger, Feathernesters, Consignment Connection, and Rite Aid over a period of two weeks in September 2007.

Nearly 60% of those surveyed shop on Lakeside Avenue either weekly or monthly. Just over a third of the respondents (35%) said they seldom shop on Lakeside Avenue. Most participants rated shopping in the district as either good or average, (31% and 32%, respectively); very few respondents rated the shopping as poor (5%). However, a majority of those surveyed expressed lukewarm feelings about specific retail characteristics of the corridor.

Characteristic	Rated Fair	Rated Poor
General Appearance of Buildings	76%	
Prices	72%	
Store Hours	69%	
Signage	69%	
Selection of Stores & Goods	68%	
Personal Safety	54%	
Vehicular Access	53%	
Entertainment Options		68%
Special Sales Events		56%
Places to Eat		43%
Available Parking		28%
Poor Signage		21%
Pedestrian Atmosphere		20%

Source: Urban Commercial Revitalization Class, Fall 2007

Respondents were asked to rate types of businesses they would like to see added to the Lakeside district.

Business Type	% of Respondents
Entertainment Options	76%
Restaurants	70%
Grocery Store	56%
Clothing Store	34%
Sporting Goods Store	20%

Source: Urban Commercial Revitalization Class, Fall 2007

Survey respondents do much of their retail shopping at numerous locations that compete with Lakeside Avenue. However, several items were bought specifically on Lakeside Avenue, these include: appliances (19%), pharmaceutical drugs (27%), professional and financial services (13%), and restaurant food (12%).

Participants had several opportunities to answer open-ended questions regarding their likes and dislikes of the corridor. **Many of the shoppers expressed concern that there is simply nothing to do for entertainment.** Some respondents went into detail, explaining the need for clusters of restaurants and other forms of entertainment. Expounding on this theme, many participants considered the restaurants (or lack thereof) as one of the weakest aspects of the corridor.



A majority of respondents do not consider the Lakeside Avenue corridor as a connected and cohesive shopping district. They consider it simply as an avenue with individual stores that a particular shopper might patronize from time to time.

In fact, many of the participants did not realize the types of stores available at the opposite end of the avenue from the one at which they were interviewed. The most frequent complaint throughout the survey process related to the amount and duration of the road construction along the corridor, which, shoppers stated, hampered normal traffic patterns and access.

Shoppers mentioned many positive aspects of Lakeside Avenue. Participants that were familiar with the corridor called the district an up-and-coming area, noting specifically the specialty shops and boutiques new to the area, as well as recent enhancement projects. **Shoppers like the small-town atmosphere in the district.**

In addition, many respondents noted the ease of accessibility and convenience of the area to the region as a whole. These attributes are the keystones upon which to build an effective revitalization plan for the Lakeside Avenue corridor.

MERCHANTS SURVEY¹¹

The study team interviewed 35 merchants who have been operating on Lakeside Avenue from as little as two months to as long as 53 years. They represent retail, services and restaurants.

They are largely confident in the corridor's future. Most are experiencing steady or growing sales. Just two plan to go out of business in the next three years; one is retiring and the other cites a

lack of sales growth. Relocations away from Lakeside Avenue are being considered by three merchants.

Merchants identified the following advantages and disadvantages of operating on Lakeside Avenue.

ADVANTAGES

- Location & highway accessibility
- Near Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden
- Surrounded by established neighborhoods
- Reasonable rents
- Strong relationships with customers and other merchants
- Independent and unique businesses
- Low crime rate

DISADVANTAGES

- Negative perceptions of area deterioration
- Not "connected" to neighboring attractions
- Lacking specific business types (groceries, restaurants, or an "anchor" store)

Joint Advertising

Merchants are willing to cooperate on joint advertising or promotions but are evenly split on whether they would change operating hours as part of a special promotion.

Business Association

Most merchants are aware of the Lakeside Business Association. Reasons for not participating in the Lakeside Business

¹¹ See Appendix B for quantitative interview summary.



Association include:

- Inconvenient meeting times
- Membership dues
- No time
- No benefit/not interested
- Haven't been asked

County Programs

Far fewer merchants are aware of Henrico County programs to assist them. Reasons for not participating include a belief those programs are for property owners only or the process is too complicated or too restrictive.

Suggestions

Merchants suggested new types of businesses:

- More sit-down restaurants
- A grocery store
- An ice cream shop
- More specialty retail stores



Figure 12: Merchants suggested more sit-down restaurants as new businesses

PROPERTY OWNERS SURVEY

Eleven owners of property along the Lakeside Avenue corridor were interviewed to determine their opinions on property and roadway improvements, rental demand, and future retail prospects for the area.¹²

A majority of those surveyed own multiple properties along the corridor and have owned property for more than 20 years. In fact, three began acquiring properties in the 1970s.

¹² See Appendix B for a complete summary of the owner interviews.

The majority of owners are both positive about owning property on Lakeside Avenue and about the corridor's future. Below are summarized reasons for the positive attitude:

- Great location, convenient to major arterial highways
- Proximity to owner's place of residence
- Good real estate investment
- Little to no difficulty finding tenants
- Some sense of cooperation among property and business owners
- Up-and-coming area
- Sense of community



Disadvantages mentioned include:

- Ongoing construction
- Occasional perceived crime problems
- Disappointment with the Enterprise Zone program
- Lack of street/median maintenance along Lakeside Avenue
- Poor lighting

These owners are all active in the maintenance and upkeep of their properties and appear to be willing to accommodate tenants when necessary. Five have even utilized the County's façade program, with mixed results.

Owners' suggestions for the future of Lakeside Avenue vary to some degree but many hold the same long-term goal of establishing Lakeside as a vibrant community within which to shop, dine, and enjoy spending time. Owners, like shoppers and merchants, want to see high-end retail and locally-owned restaurants. They want the corridor to be driver-AND-pedestrian-friendly with additional sidewalks, street-lighting and better maintenance of the medians.



Figure 13: Property owners expressed disappointment with ongoing road construction

Most importantly, the majority of owners maintain a positive attitude concerning what it takes to reach these common community goals. While they admit that the individual spirit among merchants and admittedly, themselves, may be an obstacle, they understand that the success of their properties requires cooperation.

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS' VIEWS

The study team conducted several interviews and focus groups with surrounding neighborhood associations, senior center residents, and visitors and employees of Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, to ascertain their views of the Lakeside Avenue area.

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden Focus Group

The focus group consisted of staff and volunteers who have been working at Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden for at least ten years and who are very familiar with the study area. Several themes emerged from the lively discussion, including circulation and parking, the "1950s feel" to the area, Lakeside unity, and the types of shops and services staff and visitors would like to see along Lakeside Avenue.

Participants responded positively to the small-town, mom-and-pop character of the area, from its small-scale architecture to its friendly, personal customer service.

-- Circulation and Parking

Several mentioned the danger of excessive speed in the area, particularly at the middle section of the corridor where the road curves. All agreed that parking is a problem in the community, but when they started analyzing the subject, some informed the group of under-utilized parking lots behind retail centers along the corridor. Most participants responded negatively about angled parking in



front of businesses, though one individual thought it was quick and convenient. Recommendations for the corridor include:

- More designated thoroughfares for pedestrian and bike traffic
- A bus line
- Safe, attractive linkages between rear parking lots and shops
- A reduced speed limit for Lakeside Avenue

-- *1950s Feel and Lakeside Unity*

One of the themes that emerged repeatedly throughout the discussion was the 1950s feel to the area. All the participants responded positively to the small-town, mom-and-pop character of the area, from its small-scale architecture to its friendly, personal customer service. The entire group sees this as a significant asset to the area, and thinks merchants and property owners should capitalize on this aspect.

Many stated that Hilliard Road acts as a barrier between Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and the Lakeside commercial corridor. Some said that complementary businesses such as garden shops could help breach the psychological distance between the two entities.

-- *Shops and Services*

Almost all of the participants shop along the corridor on a regular basis, mostly for convenience goods. They would like to see the following locate on Lakeside:

- Coffee and bagel shop
- Clothing store (perhaps consignment)
- Restaurants that are open in the evening
- Ice cream parlor

Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden Visitor Survey¹³

The study team surveyed 38 visitors to Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden on two different occasions. The first surveying effort took place during the Flowers After Five wine tasting and jazz event, while the second occurred on a Sunday afternoon around the Children's Garden.

Over 70% of respondents were female, and nearly 50% were estimated to be between the ages of 40 and 65. More than half of those surveyed visit the Garden on a weekly or monthly basis.

The majority of these individuals seldom or never shop on Lakeside Avenue. When asked why they do not shop there, a large majority of visitors said that they are never in the area except to visit the Garden. Nearly 20% of the respondents said that the shops on Lakeside Avenue do not appeal to them.

Goods and Services	Physical Improvements
Garden Centers	Additional Landscaping
Restaurants	Better Sidewalks
Wine and Coffee Shops	Outdoor Seating

Source: Urban Commercial Revitalization Class, Fall 2007

Senior Center Focus Groups

The study team conducted focus groups at Westminster Canterbury and Imperial Plaza, the two senior centers located just south of the study area. Though the two centers differ demographically, each complex offers similar amenities to its residents. When asked about what they would like to see along Lakeside Avenue, respondents

¹³ See Appendix B for a complete summary of the visitor survey.



voiced the need for more entertainment. Some recommendations for Lakeside include:

- Better handicap-accessible accommodations
- More dining options
- Movie theater
- Small bed and breakfast or hotel for senior-center guests

Neighborhood Associations Focus Group

To assess what residents think about the business district, a focus group was conducted with members from the Bryan Park Civic Association, The Friends of Bryan Park and the Bellevue Civic Association. Six individuals participated in the Saturday morning discussion. While the group was small, they were open in their discussion and eager to share their thoughts and ideas about the business district.

Focus group participants suggest improving communication between the merchants and residents by advertising in civic association newsletters and at Bryan Park.

The participants in the focus group expressed very strong views about the nature of the district and how it functions. Overall, they want a neighborhood-based retail district that provides goods and services that meet their needs. They see the district as a major contributing factor to the sense of community and are optimistic yet realistic about the possibilities for future development. Participants were emphatic that the “working-class” ambiance of the neighborhood should remain intact.

The participants all shop in the district for convenience goods and services. They expressed a desire for a coffee shop, bakery/ice cream shop, a mailing services business (especially since there is no longer a post office), and a family-friendly restaurant with



Figure 14: Neighborhoods focus group members want an ice cream parlor

reasonably-priced food. They were very clear about what they do not want as well – Starbucks, Ben & Jerry's, or an expensive restaurant. Participants also think there would be room for a bicycle or soccer store, since Bryan Park attracts thousands of local athletes on a yearly basis for cycling and soccer events.

The focus group members value the “small-town” feel in Lakeside, but several stated that the corridor is disorganized and lacks a clear identity. They believe Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden is an asset to the community, but it is not visually or functionally connected to Lakeside.

Participants mentioned it is impossible for pedestrians to safely cross Hilliard Road to access the Garden, and that admission is too expensive for any regular use by local residents. They suggest Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden collaborate with merchants to provide reduced admission prices for individuals in the community who might not be able to afford to go to the Garden otherwise.



TRADE AREA

The purpose of the market analysis is to recommend uses that will complement the current Lakeside Avenue commercial mix, and assist in further distinguishing the corridor from its competition. A market analysis is an economic development tool used to assess the development potential of an area. The primary method used here is the so-called unmet demand approach, which consists of three steps.

First, the total dollar amount of potential demand for each good and service within a specific geographic trade area is calculated. Second, the number of business establishments (and square feet of each) that provide specific goods and services in the trade area is counted. The information from steps one and two is then combined to determine if there is unmet demand for new goods and services inside the trade area.¹⁴

Additionally, proprietors of establishments that sell goods or services that appear to have unmet demand in the market are interviewed to determine minimum market sizes.

A community shopping district such as Lakeside Avenue typically requires support from both a nearby “convenience goods” market and a larger “shopping goods” market. Convenience goods include food, drugs, health and beauty aids, gasoline, and fast food or casual meals. This convenience goods market consists of households within one to two miles of Lakeside Avenue.

The shoppers’ goods market supports items such as clothing, pet supplies, garden supplies, specialty/gift items, fine dining, and legal services. The shoppers’ goods market consists of households within about three miles of Lakeside Avenue, but for some goods, could extend over five miles from Lakeside Avenue.¹⁵

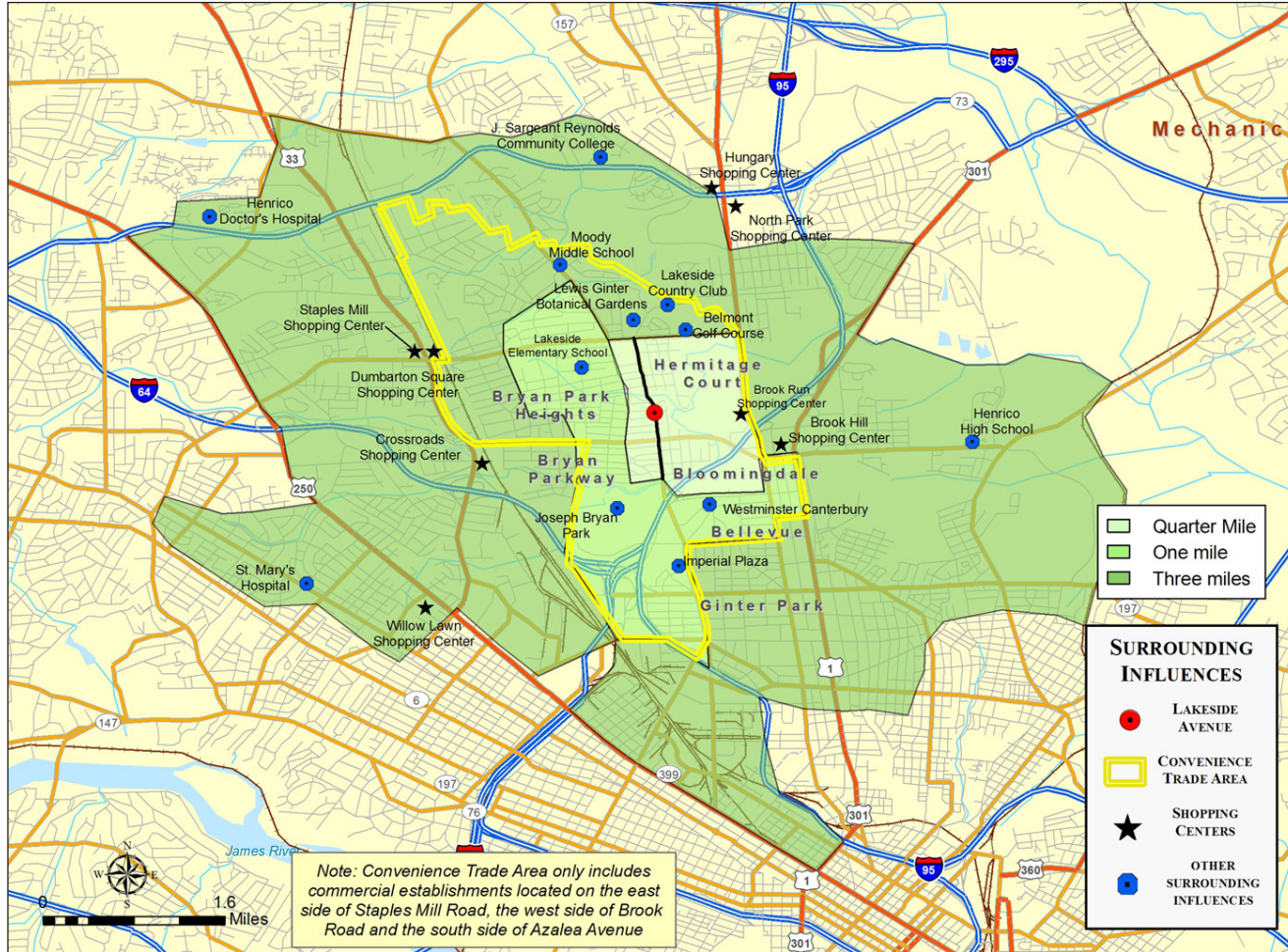
¹⁴ The shopper-intercept surveys, focus group discussions and stakeholder interviews identified a number of new goods and services that potential customers would like to see on Lakeside Avenue. We subjected this information to tests of market feasibility. First, a quantitative analysis examined shopping patterns and population to estimate market demand for retail goods and services in the trade area and to evaluate the range of potential new uses for the commercial corridor. Using the 2000 Census, number of households and median household income was acquired for the census tracts and block groups within the trade area (additional data for commuters and visitors to surrounding institutions were collected in a similar fashion. Please refer to the spreadsheets in Appendix C for further explanation). This data, along with national data on spending patterns from the [Consumer Expenditure Survey](#) was used to understand the total market demand for a variety of goods and services within the Lakeside convenience trade area. To assess competition a windshield survey of existing retail establishments was conducted using the categories in [The Dollars and Cents of Shopping Centers](#). The results of the trade area market analysis show unmet demand for only a few of the commercial categories. This can be partially attributed to the plethora of shopping centers adjacent to Lakeside Avenue that offer a wide variety of retail stores and services to residents within the trade area. However, the wider shoppers’ goods market (within three miles) will add support for several uses that the convenience market alone cannot support.

Second, we interviewed the proprietors or managers of several potential new uses in the trade areas to determine the kind of market necessary to support their type of businesses. The results of these interviews provide further evidence that new uses can be viable on Lakeside Avenue.

¹⁵ The trade area boundary was established by examining the surrounding commercial nodes to determine an approximate distance from which shoppers would travel to Lakeside Avenue for convenience goods, such as bread and milk or hardware. The trade area extends to include retail on the west side of Brook Road, including the Brook Run Shopping Center. It also includes the section of Azalea Avenue that extends to Chamberlayne Avenue. Additionally, the trade area reaches the east side of Staples Mill Road between Dumbarton and Hilliard Roads. The trade area extends to the south in order to include residents of Bellevue Avenue and Imperial Plaza Retirement Community, as well as other neighborhoods surrounding Bryan Park since local residents have easy access to the Lakeside Avenue commercial corridor via Hermitage Road.



Map 6 : Lakeside Avenue surrounding influences and trade area



Source: Urban Commercial Revitalization Class, Fall 2007

In addition to the convenience and shoppers' markets, Lakeside Avenue also has a very large, but to date, untapped visitor market comprised of the 250,000 annual visitors to Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, the 450,000 annual users of Bryan Park, and the more than 42,000 annual users of the Belmont Golf Course and Jefferson Lakeside Country Club.

These visitors will patronize eating establishments, some specialty food stores, and perhaps some apparel and gift stores, if they are properly marketed.



TRADE AREA DEMOGRAPHICS

Stable Population: Lakeside Avenue's Convenience Trade Area¹⁶ extends roughly 1.5 miles from the commercial district. The population in this area is stable, having increased slightly from 20,210 to 20,884 between 1990 and 2000.

Population within Lakeside Avenue's shoppers' goods trade area – roughly three miles from the commercial district – declined slightly over the 1990 – 2000 period, from 64,942 to 63,497 persons. This compares favorably with the City of Richmond's slight population decline from 1990 to 2000. The population of Henrico County overall, by contrast, grew rapidly over this same period (See Table 6).

The median age within the 1-mile convenience trade area is relatively high at 40.8 years. However, the median ages within the 3-mile and 5-mile areas of 35.9 years and 33.9 years, respectively, more closely resemble the Richmond and Henrico medians.

Middle-Income Households and Single-Family Home Ownership:

The Lakeside Avenue area is characterized by solid, middle-income households. And from 1990 to 2000, household income growth in the 1-mile Lakeside trade area outpaced both that of the City of Richmond and of Henrico County overall. This appears to be a strong market.

Home ownership in the Lakeside area is also favorable, with almost 50% of the homes being owner-occupied.

	Population		Population Change	Median Household Income		Income Change	Median Age
	1990	2000		1990	2000		
1/4 Mile	2,596	2,596	0*	\$29,179	\$39,571	35.6%	51.2
1 Mile	11,595	11,344	-2.2%	\$26,506	\$38,929	46.9%	40.8
3 Miles	64,942	63,497	-2.2%	\$28,473	\$36,410	27.9%	35.9
5 Miles	204,479	228,858	11.9%	\$28,047	\$42,364	51.0%	33.9
10 Miles	460,579	536,918	16.6%	\$32,160	\$47,395	47.4%	36.4
Henrico County	217,881	262,300	20.4%	\$35,604	\$49,185	38.1%	36
City of Richmond	203,056	197,790	-2.6%	\$23,551	\$31,121	32.1%	33.9

Source: U.S. Census of Population, 1990 and 2000

*A change in Census geography between 1990 and 2000 makes it impossible to calculate change at this level

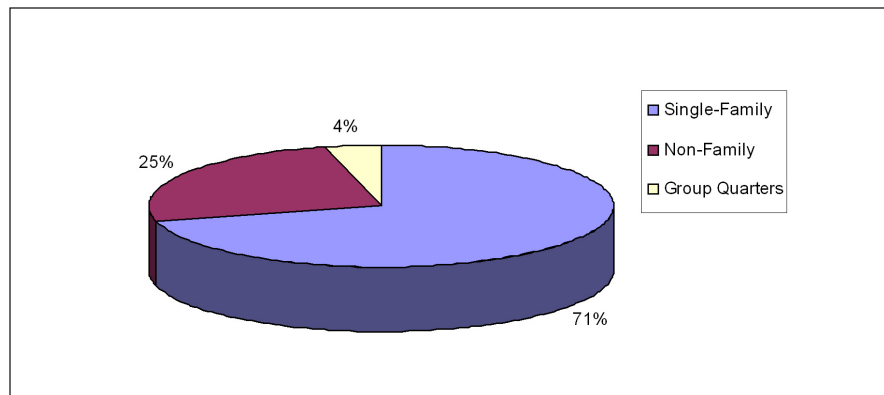
¹⁶ The Lakeside area includes a total of 21 Henrico County & Richmond City census tracts. A complete listing of these can be found in Appendix A.



Single-Family Households: Lakeside Avenue is a community of small, single-family households. The vast majority of the residents in the Lakeside Avenue area – 71% – reside in single-family households. Of this group, about 15% are children under the age of 18. About 25% of the population lives in non-family households. About four percent live in group quarters.

The majority of these households have one or two persons. Only about 15% have more than three persons; the average household size of the study area is 2.15 persons. About four times as many families are female-headed versus male-headed, indicating a number of single-mother families.

Figure 15: Household composition



Source: U.S. Census of Population, 2000

POTENTIAL NEW USES BASED ON MARKET AND DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Taken together, the convenience-goods market, shoppers-goods market and the large annual visitor market can support a number of new uses on Lakeside Avenue, if the uses are well-marketed. These uses – in addition to the establishments already located on Lakeside Avenue – include at least one sit-down restaurant, a small convenience grocery, a coffee/ice-cream shop, a specialty food store (such as organic foods, wine & cheeses, or a delicatessen), a farmers' market, a family-style diner, perhaps with a 1950s theme, a garden center, a jewelry or similar type of gift shop, some women's and girls' apparel shops, and tobacco products.

Supportable New Uses On Lakeside Ave

- Sit-down restaurants
- Coffee/Ice cream shop
- Convenience grocery
- Specialty food store
- 50s-style diner
- Garden center
- Farmers' market
- Women's and girls' apparel
- Jewelry or related gift shop



Specific market and site requirements for some of these uses, derived from interviews with the proprietors of similar establishments in the Richmond area, follow below.

Coffee/Ice Cream Shop

- Population base of 5,000 people within quarter mile
- Population of 15,000 within one mile
- Household income between \$35,000 and \$40,000
- Average age in 30s

2,596 people live within a quarter mile of Lakeside Avenue and 11,344 people within one mile. These numbers, plus even a tiny percentage of the more than 700,000 persons coming annually to Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Bryan Park, and Jefferson Lakeside



Figure 16: A coffee shop can draw neighborhood and regional shoppers

Country Club, as well as the many people working and residing just over a mile away at Westminster Canterbury and Imperial Plaza ensure that there is sufficient market for a coffee/ice-cream shop to do well on Lakeside Avenue, if it is properly marketed. In addition, the population surrounding Lakeside correlates well with the additional profile requirements.

Organic/Specialty Food Store

- Population base of 50,000 people within three miles
- Household income of \$30,000 and above

Lakeside Avenue can accommodate this need with over 60,000 people within a three-mile radius. Median household incomes surrounding Lakeside Avenue and beyond can support this type of establishment.

Garden Center

- Population base of 25,000 people within three miles
- Average customer age in their 40s
- Average household income of \$100,000

Since over 63,497 people reside within a three-mile radius of Lakeside Avenue, the population requirement for the Garden Shop is easily met. In addition, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden has over 250,000 annual visitors that would help support this type of business. Considering the median household income of the Lakeside area as well as the income of visitors to Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and Bryan Park, Lakeside Avenue should be able to support a garden shop.



Family or 1950s-Style Diner

- Population base of 5,000 people within quarter mile
- Population of 15,000 within one mile
- Moderate to upper income customers

Customers targeted by a diner would be similar to those of a coffee shop. The majority of patrons would most likely come from surrounding neighborhoods. 11,344 people reside within one mile and 228,858 people within five miles of Lakeside Avenue. Lakeside also has moderate to upper income customers.

Farmers' Market

- Parking
- Facility for vendors
- Shade trees, grassy areas, resting spots
- Strong surrounding neighborhoods
- Wide-ranging income and age base
- Availability of vendors



Figure 17: William Byrd Farmers' Market

The majority of the customers come from nearby neighborhoods. Approximately 60% of the shoppers are female and 40% male. Suitable conditions for attracting a farmers' market include a grassy area with shade trees, parking, facilities for vendors (bathrooms), and community space for other activities. The availability of vendors is the primary consideration for starting a market, so coordination with other farmers' market days will be necessary to ensure success.



STRENGTHS

Location is one of the Lakeside Avenue business district's greatest strengths.

- Accessible from the region's major highways
- A marked exit from northbound Interstate 95
- Near Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and Bryan Park
- Surrounded by stable neighborhoods

The district is also filled with well-established, unique, and independent businesses and offers a “small-town” atmosphere for customers. The vacancy rate is low, the business association is well-organized and active, and the outlook among merchants and property owners is positive. The district is located within Henrico County's Enterprise Zone and boasts a low overall crime rate.

WEAKNESSES

The Lakeside Avenue business district is surrounded by other shopping areas, giving potential customers many alternative choices. The district lacks entertainment and evening activities as well as a variety of restaurants. Moreover, Lakeside Avenue does not possess a well-defined image.

The district also lacks consistent urban design elements, including:

- Pedestrian-scale lighting
- Landscaping
- Street furniture

This inconsistency creates an environment not conducive to strolling and browsing. **The district also lacks linkages to Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and Bryan Park.**

Currently, a residential area bisects the commercial zone. Also, no shared/public parking exists along Lakeside Avenue. Merchants know little about County programs, and merchants and property owners believe current government regulations are too restrictive.

OPPORTUNITIES

Lakeside Avenue has the potential to capture the visitors of surrounding attractions, including Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, which attracts approximately **250,000 visitors a year** and Bryan Park, which also attracts **hundreds of thousands of visitors** annually for recreation and youth sporting events. Other potential customers could be drawn from the membership of Jefferson Lakeside Country Club and patrons of Belmont Golf Course, as well as residents of Westminster Canterbury and Imperial Plaza senior living centers.



Figure 18: Bellevue is one of the stable neighborhoods that surrounds Lakeside Avenue



The district could attract new businesses to serve current unmet retail demand, including:

- Clothing stores for women and girls
- Specialty food/organic grocery
- Sit-down restaurants
- A garden center
- A 1950s-style diner
- A farmers' market
- Coffee/ice cream shops
- Jewelry or related gift shops

Vacant space near CVS could be developed or used for special events which could be held in conjunction with surrounding institutions. Business leaders can expand on the existing "1950s" feel of the corridor through special events, pursue additional and joint advertising, and promote local artisans' work in restaurants and shops.

GRTC is in a growth phase which could result in the addition of bus service to the corridor, bringing in new customers from outside areas and shuttling existing customers between the "Garden" and "Park" ends of the district.

Lakeside Avenue could capitalize on growing awareness and market demand for environmentally-friendly goods and services. Becoming "green" could involve improved landscaping along medians and right-of-ways, new businesses such as a farmer's market or organic grocery store, and by promoting environmentally friendly designs in future building projects.

THREATS

The greatest threat to Lakeside Avenue is the ongoing development and redevelopment of surrounding shopping centers.

Shoppers continue to favor discount, "big-box" stores, which are plentiful in nearby commercial areas like Brook Road. Continued growth and reinvestment in nearby commercial corridors, such as Dumbarton Square Shopping Center, could pull customers away from Lakeside Avenue.

At the same time, surrounding neighborhood districts such as MacArthur Avenue and Bellevue Avenue are experiencing a resurgence. These districts, like Lakeside Avenue, offer a number of unique and independent shops and are poised to capture customers and lure businesses from Lakeside Avenue.

The continued loss of key signature businesses with long histories in Lakeside could also negatively affect the district as a destination for shoppers. Potential cuts in government funding for revitalization could hamper the district's ability to respond to these threats.



Figure 19: Dumbarton Square Shopping Center is one of many surrounding retail centers competing for customers



PART II: PLAN FOR THE REVITALIZATION OF LAKESIDE AVENUE

VISION: FUTURE OF LAKESIDE

The Lakeside Avenue commercial corridor has long been the choice for the convenience needs of nearby residents. While shops have come and gone, Lakeside has consistently maintained a variety of goods and services. In recent decades, the commercial nodes surrounding Lakeside Avenue have been saturated by formula retail businesses, eroding the corridor's stable customer base and compelling Lakeside to reinvent itself.

Envision a Lakeside Avenue that appeals to a variety of people, from the hungry soccer player at Bryan Park, to the busy commuter heading home from work, the out-of-town visitor to Lewis Ginter, and the energetic senior seeking a night on the town. Whether it's the first cup of coffee in the morning or that unique gift you cannot find anywhere else, Lakeside Avenue provides an array of businesses that cater to a wide variety of needs, from specialty to necessity. The "Park End" of the corridor includes a diner and an ice cream parlor, while the "Garden End" offers an organic market, a garden shop, and sophisticated sit-down restaurants. These commercial nodes are linked by the livable, mixed-use area in the center of the corridor.

Imagine a retail corridor that provides discerning customers an alternative to long lines and impersonal service, a place where one does not feel pressured or hurried. Shoppers who come to Lakeside Avenue choose to experience the small-town charm of the locally owned businesses at their own pace. Unparalleled service and friendly and knowledgeable merchants make a trip to Lakeside a step back into the past, reminiscent of a time when shop owners knew your name and took the time to provide personal attention. The unique shopping experience is further complemented by Lakeside's "Green" elements. The lush landscaping is not only attractive, but it serves to remind visitors that Lakeside has made it a priority to promote environmentally conscious construction and business practices. Visualize a Lakeside Avenue that is unlike any commercial corridor in the entire state, attracting visitors with its environmental integrity and unsurpassed beauty.

Finally, envision a Lakeside Avenue shopper who, upon arrival, suddenly relaxes and smiles, knowing that Lakeside Avenue is unlike any other shopping corridor in the Richmond region. It is here that one can find delicious food, unique gifts, friendly merchants, a garden-like atmosphere and environmental stewardship. **This** is Lakeside Avenue.



Figure 20: Independent businesses demonstrate creativity and bring diversity to a retail district



ECONOMIC RECOMMENDATIONS

A vibrant business corridor must include a core of strong businesses and be inviting to new prospects. A successful revitalization plan must focus on retaining existing businesses while attracting new ones.¹⁷

Goal 1: Recruit new businesses that complement the local, independent character of the area and that offer new services that appeal to local and regional customers. This should be a long-term, permanent activity.

- **Objective 1.1:** Target businesses that meet the retail needs of Lakeside Avenue.

Why: Market analysis indicates untapped support in the convenience and shoppers' markets, as well as from visitors.

Who: The Lakeside Business Association will create a two-person Business Recruitment Committee to work with a representative from the Henrico County Department of Community Revitalization.

What: The committee is responsible for using the market analysis information and demographic data included in this report to identify and recruit new businesses to locate along Lakeside Avenue.

When: Recruitment should be ongoing.

- **Objective 1.2:** Create and maintain a current Business Recruitment Packet.

Why: An up-to-date Business Recruitment Packet provides potential new businesses with detailed information on both



Figure 21: Recruit new businesses that complement the local, independent character of the area

Henrico County and Lakeside Avenue. This information includes the most recent trade-area statistics, economic and demographic data, and descriptions of possible target markets. In addition, the packet includes specific sites and locations available for development. The Business Recruitment Packet conveys to the user the character and description of Lakeside Avenue and highlights what sets Lakeside Avenue apart from surrounding shopping corridors. Packets should be customized for each potential new business.

Who: Henrico County Department of Community Revitalization, working jointly with the Lakeside Business Association. Henrico County will continue to act as the primary point of contact for new businesses.

¹⁷ Please see Appendix C for detailed results of the retail market analysis and Appendix D for reports on the development potential analysis.



What:

- A master list of available properties and corresponding datasheets for each property
- Henrico County fact sheet, which includes demographic trends and business incentives
- Lakeside Avenue fact sheet, which includes local demographic trends, zoning regulations, and business incentives
- The packet must be updated on a regular basis to provide the most current information
- The packet must be distributed to Lakeside Business Association, Henrico County, and local real estate agents

When: This information should be assembled during the first quarter of 2008.

Goal 2: Strengthen existing businesses through an active retention and enhancement program.

- **Objective 2.1:** Create a Business Enhancement and Retention Strategy.

Why: Existing businesses account for the majority of new jobs created and for capital expansion. The Lakeside Avenue corridor has many long-standing businesses with established local and regional clientele. Business assistance and educational opportunities can help existing businesses strengthen their business practices and may help them use the Internet as a way to reach new customers.

Who: The Lakeside Business Association should establish a Business Enhancement and Retention Committee, made up of two Association members, to create a Business Enhancement and Retention Plan. The committee is responsible for working with a representative from the Henrico County Department of

Community Revitalization to coordinate and prioritize efforts. In addition, a partnership will be formed with the Retail Merchants Association of Greater Richmond.

What: Responsibilities of the committee include:

- Offering business assistance and educational opportunities on website development, advertising, and merchandise presentation in storefront windows
- Promoting events in the corridor
- Increasing awareness of the benefits of the Enterprise Zone
- Partnering with the Retail Merchants Association of Greater Richmond to create a volunteer training program to assist small businesses in recruiting employees, creating strategic and business expansion plans, and forming owner succession strategies

When: The Committee should begin this work during the first quarter of 2008.

Henrico County's Enterprise Zone Program provides many forms of assistance for local business owners. Committee members should become familiar with available programs, qualifying criteria, and the benefits of each of the programs offered.

It is the responsibility of the Committee to inform the businesses along Lakeside Avenue of available programs and to act as the point of contact for those interested in participating.

Partnering with the Retail Merchants Association of Greater Richmond will create a dialogue between business owners along Lakeside Avenue and those throughout the greater Richmond area.

The Greater Richmond Chamber of Commerce Small Business Development Center (GRSBDC) and the Virginia Department of



Business Assistance offer educational classes on small business development. The GRSBDC offers courses and seminars for a nominal fee.

Creating a mentoring program for new and established businesses along Lakeside Avenue will foster a support network along the corridor and help to ensure business retention.



Figure 22: One function of the Business Enhancement and Retention committee is to promote events such as Holly Jolly Christmas

DESIGN RECOMMENDATIONS

Design plays a vital role in achieving vitality in a commercial district. The strategic placement of new retail uses combined with streetscape enhancements not only entices visitors to shop, but encourages them to shop longer. Design elements that stimulate a pleasant atmosphere to stroll along, “window shop” and possibly dine, equals more business for merchants. The key is introducing design elements that are unique to Lakeside, tying the “Garden” and “Park” into the overall blooming of the corridor.

Goal 1: Create clusters of complementary uses that stimulate cross-shopping opportunities.

- **Objective 1.1:** Place newly-recruited retail uses in the Park End or Garden End of the avenue based on connections to the surrounding uses and influences.

Why: Developing concentrated nodes of complementary uses will stimulate cross-shopping, reach out to visitors of neighboring anchor institutions such as Bryan Park and Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, and offer extended enjoyment of the corridor.

Who: The Lakeside Business Association's Business Enhancement and Retention Committee in partnership with Henrico County's Department of Community Revitalization and property owners.

What/Where: Clusters of complementary uses at each end of the corridor. Table 7 shows the list of the suggested uses and their recommended location.

When: The identification of specific businesses and available locations for these businesses should begin at the beginning of 2008.



Garden End (North)	Park End (South)
Garden Center	Coffee/Ice Cream Shop
Coffee shop	1950s-style Diner
Sit-down restaurant	Women's & Girls' apparel
Farmers' Market	Wine Shop
Wine Shop	Organic or specialty food market

Source: Urban Commercial Revitalization Class, Fall 2007



Figure 23: A garden center is a recommended new use at the Garden End

- **Objective 1.2:** Create a livable mixed-use district within the center of the corridor.

Why: The creation of first-floor small-business office and retail space with living space above built closer to the sidewalk will create a shopping corridor that is tied together from end to end. These additions will continue to provide living spaces for local residents while creating a 24-hour-seven-day-a-week community.

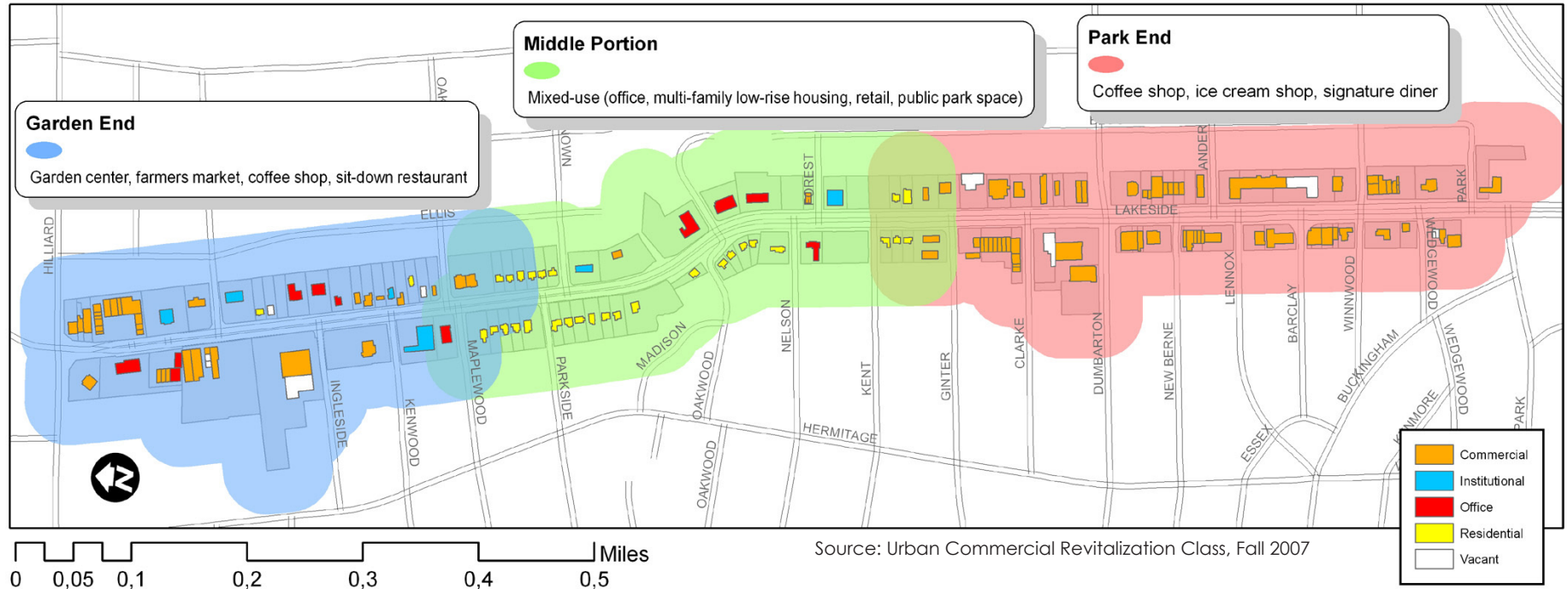
Who: Henrico County should approve the rezoning of the residential and office uses in the center to Urban Mixed-Use zoning, as well as consider acquiring properties within this area as they becomes available to ensure desired development.

What/Where: New construction should be set closer to the curb in order to promote continued pedestrian activity from the Garden End. Potential uses include small companies and independent businesses as well as other small retail uses like coffee or pastry shops. Building residential units above commercial space will help to keep the area active throughout the day.

When: As properties become available. The first potential property may be the temporary Henrico Fire Station #5. As properties become available they should be acquired by the County to avoid excessive land value inflation that may imperil revitalization efforts.



Map 7 : Lakeside Avenue proposed and existing uses



Goal 2: Create a pedestrian-friendly environment.

- **Objective 2.1:** Install crosswalks at strategic locations along Lakeside Avenue.

Why: To make large intersections in the corridor safer for pedestrians to cross.

Who: Lakeside Business Association’s Design Committee, Henrico County Director of Public Works and the Department of Public

Works Traffic Engineering Division.

What: This objective includes the following tasks in the order in which they should take place:

- Paint crosswalks on the street surface
- Installation of pedestrian-accessible crosswalk signals with the “countdown” feature. Also consider audible feature that aids those individuals with vision difficulties in crossing
- Ensure that curb cuts with tactile strips have been placed where each crosswalk intersects the curb



When: The Design Committee should begin working with the County Public Works department immediately to determine design and cost of this project.

Where: Intersections of Lakeside Avenue and Dumbarton Road and Lakeside Avenue and Hilliard Road. Additionally, mid-block crosswalks should be installed between The Hub and Lakeside Towne Center, Consignment Connection and the shopping area with Mentos, and Spring Park with Bryan Parkway neighborhood.

- **Objective 2.2:** Decrease the speed limit along Lakeside Avenue from Hilliard Road to the City/County line from 35 miles-per-hour to 25 miles-per-hour.

Why: The current speed of 35 miles-per-hour intimidates pedestrians who might otherwise walk around Lakeside Avenue. Reducing the speed to 25 miles-per-hour will allow traffic to continue to flow through the corridor, but improve the accessibility of the corridor for the pedestrian.

Who: Lakeside Business Association Design Committee, Henrico County and VDOT.

What: Once the speed is lowered, the County should provide strict enforcement through regular patrols by Henrico County Police.

When: During the first quarter of 2008.

Where: Lakeside Avenue from Hilliard Road to the City/County line.

- **Objective 2.3:** Install pedestrian-scale lighting along the length of the corridor.

Why: Currently, Lakeside Avenue is poorly lit in many areas, creating an environment that is not conducive to evening



Figure 24: The speed limit on Lakeside Avenue should be reduced to 25 mph

shopping or entertainment. Adding appropriate lighting adds not only to the safety of the area, but creates a pleasing ambience for customers.

Who: Lakeside Business Association Design Committee and Henrico County.

What: Lighting should be installed at appropriate intervals along Lakeside Avenue. The design of the lights should be unique to Lakeside and allow for the hanging of banners and/or flower baskets.

When: This should occur by January 2009.

Where: Along Lakeside Avenue at evenly-spaced intervals.



- **Objective 2.4:** Improve pedestrian access to the area of Lakeside Avenue south of Dumbarton Road.

Why: The lack of sidewalks and open parking areas can cause confusion for pedestrians. Improved access will encourage the pedestrian to walk in front of the businesses and not behind the parked vehicles. It also distinguishes parking lot from pedestrian pathway.

Who: Lakeside Business Association in conjunction with the property owners along this area.

What: Install sidewalk paths from the corner of each street up to a sidewalk along the front of the buildings. A great example of this can be found at Fin and Feather.

When: Begin design and cost-estimating process in the Fall of 2008. Construction should begin in 2010.

Where: All properties along the west side of Lakeside Avenue from Dumbarton Road to Bryan Park Avenue.

- **Objective 2.5:** Re-design of Lakeside Avenue to improve mobility and accessibility for all modes of traffic.

Why: This is important if Lakeside Avenue is going to become a unique shopping destination that allows shoppers to stroll and which connects to its surrounding influences. The features mentioned below are not all-inclusive and will require extensive traffic studies to determine their feasibility. It should be stressed that these changes should try to reduce the impact on traffic volumes while improving the pedestrian experience.

Who: Lakeside Business Association Design Committee in conjunction with Henrico County.

What: Due to the recent completion of construction along



Figure 25: Raised intersections will improve mobility and access for all modes of traffic

Lakeside, as well as the desire to see the area revitalize prior to investing millions of dollars in streetscape improvement, this objective should be last. However, any future study of streetscape design should look to incorporate the following:

- Raised pedestrian crosswalks constructed of different materials (perhaps porous) that distinguish the area from the road
- Re-design of the intersection of Lakeside Avenue and Hilliard Road to incorporate a roundabout
- Re-design of the intersection at Lakeside Avenue and Dumbarton Road to be a raised intersection
- Creation of on-street parking along Lakeside Avenue from The Lakeside Towne Center to Maplewood Road
- Reduction of the number of curb cut entrances to businesses along Lakeside Avenue where appropriate

When: Within the next two to three years of the completion of this plan.

Where: The entire length of Lakeside Avenue.



Goal 3: Establish Continuous, Cohesive & Unique Design.

- **Objective 3.1:** Enhance the visual identity of Lakeside through specific design elements.

Why: These design changes will create a uniform vision for Lakeside Avenue and better define the boundaries of the corridor.

Who: Lakeside Business Association Design Committee, Henrico County Department of Community Revitalization, Dominion Virginia Power, and VDOT.

What: Below is a list of techniques that can instantly establish a distinctive look for the corridor:

- Install street furniture (trash cans, benches, and bike racks) along Lakeside Avenue that are uniform in color and material and are unique to Lakeside
- Develop eye-catching gateway signs with official Lakeside Avenue logo
- Place distinctive banners along the corridor that announce the visitor's arrival into the commercial area
- Bury utility lines along Lakeside Avenue to reduce visual clutter of the area

When: For signage, design and placement locations should be chosen in January 2008. The installation of the signs and banners should occur by the following year. Burial of utility lines is a long-range objective.

Where: Banners should be placed at all street lamps or on every other street lamp. All street signs along Lakeside Avenue from Hilliard Road to Bryan Park should be replaced with the redesigned signs. Utility lines should be buried from the City/County line to Hilliard Road. Gateway signage should be placed initially near the City/County line and Hilliard Road



Figure 26: Attractive street furniture can enhance the visual identity of Lakeside Avenue

intersection. VDOT and Henrico County Traffic Engineering will better determine specific locations. Secondary locations have been identified along Dumbarton Road near the intersection with Lakeside Avenue (medians will need to be constructed here as well).

- **Objective 3.2:** New design elements should provide connections to surrounding influences and history.

Why: Lakeside's rich history and proximity to regional attractions are two of the area's biggest strengths. Design elements can help create positive linkages with a particular entity and help establish an identity for the corridor.

Who: Lakeside Business Association Design Committee and Henrico County.



What:

- Hang flower baskets from street lamps
- Lakeside banners should correspond to Lakeside Avenue special events or seasons of the year
- Place public art or elaborate plantings inside the proposed roundabout at Hilliard Road and Lakeside Avenue

When: Flower baskets and banners should be installed in conjunction with the installation of the street lamps. The public art or plantings should be done in conjunction with the roundabout. This would be a long-term project.

- **Objective 3.3:** Building design and redesign should be unique to Lakeside Avenue, while assisting with Goal 2.

Why: Well-designed buildings contribute to the overall aesthetic of the corridor, creating an attractive destination for shoppers.

Who: Henrico County Departments of Community Revitalization and Planning

What: New and redeveloped buildings should be built with similar heights and setbacks that are in scale with current construction. Where possible, bring the storefront closer to the sidewalk and provide parking in the rear. The creation of new zoning or a special overlay may be necessary to create this style of building that enhances the pedestrian experience.

When: The necessary zoning and overlay districts should be examined and created within the next year. Building changes will be made as new structures and redeveloped structures are completed.



Figure 27: Hanging flower baskets can provide connection with surrounding gardens

Goal 4: Enhance Access and Way-Finding for All Modes of Transportation.

- **Objective 4.1:** Create public or shared parking areas.

Why: There are few public parking lots (not associated with a particular store or retail strip) on Lakeside Avenue, which dissuades customers from parking and shopping at multiple stores.

Who: Lakeside Business Association, Henrico County, and individual property owners.



What: In order to establish public or shared parking in lots of other existing businesses or retail centers, the Lakeside Business Association should start a conversation with the property owners to determine their willingness to give up parking spaces for the public good. The County can look to purchase vacant lots on Lakeside Avenue to convert into public parking lots. In keeping with the “green corridor” concept, any new parking lot can be paved with porous pavement or other pervious coverings. In this way, the County/LBA can take the lead in implementing the green corridor concept.

When: Negotiations on sharing parking lots can begin January 2008. Purchase of vacant lots and use of County land for parking is a longer-range objective.

Where: Improve the existing lot behind The Hub and look into creating public parking at the Lakeside Towne Center, in conjunction with any building uses that may locate in the vacant parcel at Kent Street, behind Franco’s and the Zed Café retail strip.



Figure 28: The parking lot at Lakeside Towne Center

- **Objective 4.2:** Place way-finding signs on Lakeside Avenue that show the direction and distance to public parking and area attractions.

Why: Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and Bryan Park both draw a large number of visitors to the area, but the signage directing the visitor to these attractions is minimal. Other historical attractions and small parks have even less signage. Once public parking lots are created, they will need to be publicized.

Who: Henrico County, Lakeside Business Association, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, the Friends of Bryan Park, the City of Richmond, and VDOT.

What: Place signs directing visitors to area attractions and public parking.

When: Place signs immediately after deciding which attractions to list and coming to a cost-sharing agreement. Parking lot signage should be placed immediately upon agreements being reached on shared lots or construction of new parking.

Where: Signs to the attractions should be placed at both ends of Lakeside Avenue and also on all corners of the intersection at Lakeside and Dumbarton. Parking lot signs should be placed wherever new public or shared parking lots are created and at logical spots leading up to these lots.

- **Objective 4.3:** Install identifying sign for Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden.

Why: Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden welcomes over 250,000 visitors every year, and currently there is no sign to the front entrance or anything telling the visitor that he or she has located the Garden.



Who: Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and Henrico County.

What: A sign that tells the visitor that he or she has found the botanical garden. The land owned by Lewis Ginter is zoned conservation (C-1) and has restrictions on what type of signage can be placed there. In order to place a sign at this corner, Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden will have to apply for an exception to the zoning with the Henrico County Permit Center.

When: This is an objective that should be implemented as soon as is possible.

Where: On Lewis Ginter property at the corner of Lakeside and Hilliard.

- **Objective 4.4:** Increase connectivity between Lakeside Avenue and the surrounding neighborhoods.

Why: Lakeside Avenue lacks connectivity to its surrounding neighborhoods. Creation of sidewalks and connections to sidewalks on Lakeside will encourage pedestrian activity. Restoring two-way traffic on side streets will aid circulation to and around Lakeside Avenue, and will improve connectivity between the surrounding neighborhoods and Lakeside Avenue.

Who: Henrico County's Department of Community Revitalization and Department of Public Works Traffic Engineering Division.

What: Implementation of this objective will undoubtedly cause disruption in the surrounding neighborhoods and would need support from the residents. Some of these side streets are narrow, and construction of sidewalks or restoration of two-way traffic could potentially take away on-street parking. If sidewalks on both sides of side streets are not possible, perhaps sidewalks on one side of the street will work. A more in-depth study by the aforementioned departments would be necessary before implementation.

When: This is a long-range objective.

Where: On all side streets that connect to Lakeside Avenue and can accommodate sidewalks or two-way traffic.



Figure 29: Lakeside Avenue needs to increase connectivity to the surrounding neighborhoods

- **Objective 4.5:** Install bike racks at several locations along the corridor.

Why: Historically, Lakeside Avenue was a biking trail that led to the Lewis Ginter park. As more people return to this mode of travel, installing bike racks along Lakeside is a fairly easy and inexpensive way to welcome bicycle riders back into the corridor.

Who: Henrico County, the Lakeside Business Association, and property owners.



What: Property owners could donate parking places in their lots for bike racks. Any new parking lots built by the County should also have at least one bike rack. Bike racks should be placed into the ground rather than being freestanding. To introduce a unique flair, the County or LBA can provide money to have a bike rack design competition. This could result in an interesting design for bike racks that is unique to Lakeside, and the design competition would be a wonderful promotion tool.

When: Spring and summer 2008.

Where: At several locations along Lakeside Avenue where property owners are amenable to having a bike rack on their property.



Figure 30: Bike racks should be installed along Lakeside Avenue

Goal 5: Establish Lakeside Avenue as a “Green” Business District.

- **Objective 5.1:** Expand the current Enterprise Zone incentives to support green building and design practices.

Why: To capitalize on any funding available in order to undergo small to large-scale green building implementation. Advanced green design techniques offer aesthetic, economic and environmentally sustainable benefits when effectively applied in a business or residential district. Examples include Sun Trust bank's green roof in downtown Richmond and Henrico County's decision to replace conventional fluorescent lights with LED lights in New Bridge School's gym to provide more light and reduce the school's electric bill. Lakeside Avenue's location between Bryan Park and Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden naturally lends itself to the implementation of green design systems, which creates a unique opportunity for the corridor. In conjunction with landscaping, median design, and other design elements distinctive to the Lakeside community, green design implementation will help push Lakeside Avenue into the upper echelon of regional retail destinations.

Who: All current and future Lakeside Business Association members, Henrico County General Services when they expand Lakeside House – use energy efficient lighting, cisterns, rain gardens, and porous pavement where feasible.

What: There are multitudes of green design possibilities ideal for Lakeside Avenue. They include:¹⁸

- Rain gardens
- Permeable paving techniques
- Vegetated swales
- Green roof technology
- Photovoltaic energy technology (converting solar energy into electricity)
- LED lighting

¹⁸ Please see appendix E for information on permeable paving, rain gardens, vegetated swales, green roofs, photovoltaic technology, and Virginia's Net Metering Program.



When: New incentives for the Henrico County Enterprise zone should be available in late Spring 2008 pending state approval. The Lakeside Business Association should encourage green building practices beginning in 2008.

Where: Any property that is suitable for green design elements.



Figure 31: Green roof technologies reduce storm water runoff

- **Objective 5.2:** Use current and future Enterprise Zone incentives to gain education and training in regards to green building design.

Why: It is important to keep abreast of new developments in environmental sustainability as new advances come along frequently, and green-design practices become more affordable each year. Connecting to conservation agencies will provide education regarding cheap and simple ways for Lakeside Avenue to “go green.”

Who: Everyone involved with the Lakeside Business Association should be encouraged to attend workshops and training seminars for green business practices.

What: Many opportunities for education are available through the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The DEQ Small Business Assistance Program offers workshops for air quality, waste management, water quality, and other relevant information associated with environmental sustainability. Additional programs available through the Henricopolis Soil & Water Conservation District include rain barrel and rain garden workshops.

In addition to workshops, there is currently an Architectural Assistance Program available through Enterprise Zone incentives. Through this incentive, Lakeside businesses can seek professional assistance for green design implementation and other landscaping improvements.

When: Lakeside Business Association members should become involved in training seminars as soon as possible.

Where: Seminars occur frequently at the Henrico Human Services Building sponsored by the Henricopolis Soil & Water Conservation District.

- **Objective 5.3:** Create green business standards for Lakeside Avenue based on four criteria: Solid Waste Reduction & Recycling, Energy Conservation, Water Conservation, and Pollution Reduction.

Why: Dedicated implementation of low-cost, environmentally-responsible business operations will create a business district that maximizes profit and sustainability. Green business practices will



strengthen operation efficiencies, improve employee wellness, and give Lakeside a marketing edge over the competition, establishing it as the regional leader in environmental operations and the preeminent shopping destination for environmentally conscious consumers. Lakeside Avenue, as a Green Business District, will receive publicity through Green Business Program websites, county and agency newsletters, and a Green Business logo for use in advertising or on window decals and other promotional material.

Who: All businesses in the Lakeside Business Association.

What: The Lakeside Avenue Design Committee will partner with the Henrico County Department of Community Revitalization to create a checklist, based on the San Francisco Green Business Program, for certifying green businesses on Lakeside Avenue.¹⁹ In addition, the Virginia Department of Environment Quality Small Business Assistance Program will provide initial assessments of current business practices within each of the four main criteria.

When: Lakeside Avenue Businesses should begin to meet requirements on the Green Business Certification Checklist immediately.

Where: All businesses on Lakeside Avenue.

Goal 6: Create medians and right-of-way spaces along Lakeside Avenue that are visually appealing and coordinated.

- **Objective 6.1:** Participate in the Roadside Management Program by preparing an application and landscaping plan to submit to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).



Figure 32: Solid waste reduction/recycling programs are part of green business standards

Why: Participating in this program is the primary vehicle for implementing landscaping improvements along state-right-of way areas.

- Who:** A successful effort will require cooperation between:
- The Lakeside Business Association
 - Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and/or a private landscape architect to serve as a consultant for plant selection and planting advice
 - Henrico County
 - Area residents should also be encouraged to get involved in the process

¹⁹ Please refer to Appendix E for the full Green Business Certification Checklist.



What:

- Step 1: Request an informal presentation to the Lakeside Business Association by VDOT's Comprehensive Roadside Management Program Manager.²⁰ The meeting may involve the director of VDOT's Sandston Residency and a representative of Henrico County.²¹ VDOT representatives will describe how the program works and the responsibilities of those who participate.
- Step 2: An application must be submitted by Henrico County's Department of Community Revitalization, who can coordinate with other planning and economic development authorities.
- Step 3: If the members of the Lakeside Business District wish to proceed, professional consultation about flowers, plants and trees, soil types, and planting and maintenance are recommended. We suggest beginning this process with representatives of Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, Henrico County Extension Service, and the County's landscape architect. Preliminary landscaping suggestions for hardy and easy-to-maintain plant ideas include well-pruned crape myrtles, daffodils, and day lilies.

When: Winter 2008.

Where: Landscaping shall be along the median on Lakeside Avenue.

- **Objective 6.2:** Implement a landscaping plan for the Lakeside Avenue medians.

Why: An eye-catching corridor will attract regional attention and can establish Lakeside Avenue as a horticultural corridor



Figure 33: Lakeside medians can become a regional attraction

that complements Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and Bryan Park.

Who: The Lakeside Business Association will coordinate efforts among Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, private property owners, local residents, and business owners.

What: The Lakeside Avenue Landscaping Plan will provide further direction.

When: Following the state approval of Henrico County's application on behalf of Lakeside Avenue.

Where: Landscaping should be along the median.

²⁰ Currently Bryan Waymack at 804-662-7512.

²¹ Currently Torrence Robinson at 804-328-3097

Henrico County maintains its own roads with Virginia Department of Transportation funds, but VDOT maintains state highways through Henrico County, including the portion of Lakeside Avenue (Route 161) from the county/city line to Hilliard Road. Any potential roadside landscaping and median improvements in the Lakeside Avenue business district are subject to specific state rules and regulations but must be proposed by the County. (Lakeside Avenue north of Hilliard Road becomes a Henrico County maintenance responsibility.)



- **Objective 6.3:** Work with individual property owners to create complementary landscaping wherever possible on their private properties.

Why: Complementary landscaping expands and reinforces the ambiance created by landscaped medians. Individual efforts when brought together with each other and the state right-of-way program will provide landscaping unity and a green link from Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden to Bryan Park.

Who: Lakeside Business Association and Lakeside Avenue property owners.

What: The Lakeside Business Association should meet with property owners to share the plan and encourage the planting of similar plants, flowers and trees. The Lakeside Business Association should also encourage landscaping as a decorative shield to large parking lots, particularly in areas where landscaping will not hide signage, and request that Henrico County enforce existing landscaping regulations.

When: Following VDOT approval of Henrico County's application on behalf of Lakeside Avenue.

Where: Properties along Lakeside Avenue.

PROMOTIONS RECOMMENDATIONS

The marketing and promotions recommendations are intended to brand an image of Lakeside to existing and potential customers that emphasizes the area's strengths as a commercial corridor.

While the following promotions recommendations offer distinct objectives, they have in common two prerequisites in order to maximize effectiveness. First, the graphic quality of materials used

to promote Lakeside Avenue in logos, brochures, advertisement, or other images must be of high, professional standards. Secondly, the themes, placement, design style, and usage of these graphical elements must be coordinated to ensure consistency among promotional materials.

Goal 1: Use promotional strategies to increase awareness of Lakeside Avenue as a destination.

- **Objective 1.1:** Develop a position statement (slogan) that will guide all future promotional efforts.

Why: A position statement creates a distinctive identity and quickly tells people why they want to visit the corridor.

Who: Lakeside Business Association.

What: The position statement/slogan describes in very brief terms how the corridor should position itself in the marketplace. This statement must reflect community values and preferences and be realistic.

When: This task is one of the very first to be undertaken when developing a promotional plan. It sets the tone and vision to be strung throughout the entire strategy.

- **Objective 1.2:** Develop, print and distribute a Lakeside Avenue Retail Map/Brochure.

Why: To effectively educate regional and local visitors about the shopping experience along Lakeside Avenue.

Who: Lakeside Business Association, Henrico County's Department of Community Revitalization and Economic Development Authority.



What:

- An informational brochure on high-quality recycled paper with a map of the area locating each shop and brief sections describing how to become a volunteer, special events throughout the year, and historical information. This map should show also area parking, public restrooms and be organized in retail sub-categories or by retail locational nodes. A smaller map should show Lakeside Avenue within a regional perspective.
- A discount coupon redeemable at participating locations can also be attached to this brochure.

When: Brochures with coupons should be distributed at the same time as Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden's Spring Plant Sale and before Mother's Day.

Where: Distribute at the Visitors Center of Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden, State welcome centers along interstate highways, the Greater Richmond Visitor's Center, as well as hand out at Bryan Park soccer tournaments and within individual stores.

- **Objective 1.3:** Establish an online presence by enhancing the DiscoverLakeside.com web site, creating a Lakeside specific blog, and advertising the corridor as a shopping area on local and regional web sites.

Why: An online presence for Lakeside Avenue offers an opportunity to draw many shoppers and visitors to the area.

Who: Lakeside Business Association

What:

- Update the DiscoverLakeside.com site by incorporating graphical elements used on other promotional materials, such as the area's logo, slogan, and other design themes.
- Create a blog associated with the web site as a way to detail news and special events that affect Lakeside Avenue and linked to other sites, such as RVABlogs.com that serve as directories for local blogs.
- Explore online advertising opportunities available on popular local and regional sites. These sites range from local community sites such as NorthRichmondNews.com and more regionally focused sites such as InRich.com and Richmond.com.

When: The enhancement of the DiscoverLakeside.com web site should begin immediately after the logo and slogan for Lakeside Avenue have been finalized. Efforts to create the blog and the purchasing of online advertisement should begin immediately.

Where: Online advertising should be purchased at the following sites: RVANews.com, InRich.com, NorthRichmondNews.com, FDHub.net (Fan District), WOTB.net (West of Boulevard), Richmond.com.



Figure 34: Example of informational brochure with map of shopping district



- **Objective 1.4:** Design and display street banners along Lakeside Avenue.

Why: To reinforce the positive image of Lakeside Avenue and identify the district.

Who: Lakeside Business Association.

What: Street banners with the logo of Lakeside Avenue (or related design) along the entire corridor. If possible, 2-4 sets of flags should be purchased to accentuate the changing seasons. Attention to quality and consistency of design, as well as durability of materials is important.



Figure 35: Street banners help to reinforce image of retail area

When: Begin concept and design planning in January 2008 with the unveiling of banners along Lakeside Avenue in late April, one week before Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden's Spring Plant Sale and two weeks before Mother's Day.

Where: Visibly displayed throughout the corridor.

Goal 2: Develop retail promotions to attract new shoppers and reward customers loyal to the area.

- **Objective 2.1:** Develop successful cooperative/cluster advertising promotions that highlight the stores along Lakeside Avenue that offer similar goods such as antiques or home décor.

Why: To show the consumer that Lakeside Avenue has a range of shops from which to choose. Cooperative promotion shows what the commercial area has to offer.

Who: Lakeside Business Association and business owners.

What:

- Coordinate design of all promotional material with Lakeside Avenue logos, branding, color schemes for consistency and high quality look. Change details of ad in clever ways to change the focus of the message.
- Cluster promotions by grouping shops that offer antiques, home décor and furniture, specialty gifts, food, car services, bridal and special-event planning.
- Cluster promotions by geographic location into "Park End" and "Garden End" shops.

When: Throughout the year. Cooperative promotions during holidays, shopping center or business anniversaries, and other important dates are being done and should be continued.



Where: Advertise in local and regional print and internet sources. These include local bridal magazines such as the Greater Richmond Bridal Guide, free local newspapers such as North of the James and Hanover Lifestyle, and major sources such as Richmond's Style Weekly Magazine, Richmond Times Dispatch and the Richmond Guide.

- **Objective 2.2:** Develop cross-promotional strategies to encourage multiple-destination shopping within the Lakeside Avenue Corridor.

Why: Cross-promotional strategies encourage the shopper to visit new businesses and linger in the district, which should translate into greater sales for area merchants.

Who: Lakeside Business Association

What:

- One type of cross promotion is cross-product placement. For example, a table from a furniture store such as Against the Grain can be borrowed and used to display items for sale in a home décor store such as Consider the Lily.
- A second type of cross promotion is cross-coupons where one business offers discount coupons as incentives for shoppers to visit a related business within the area. For example, Franco's, a clothing retailer, and Humming Cleaners can offer coupons to their customers to encourage patronage to both businesses.

When: Cross-promotional strategies should be implemented immediately

- **Objective 2.3:** Extend retail marketing to niche markets.

Who: Lakeside Business Association merchants

What:

- The large elderly populations at Westminster Canterbury and Imperial Plaza make this market a logical choice for niche promotions efforts. These efforts can include offering shuttle services during special events or on a regular basis, placement of brochures with a merchant listing at these institutions, and advertising in magazines geared toward mature lifestyles such as Seniors Guide, or Boomer Life.
- Groups that frequent Bryan Park should also be targets of niche promotions. Sponsorships of leagues or events associated with groups such as the Central Virginia Soccer Association, various frisbee golf open leagues, and cycling groups who use park facilities are good ways to reach these potential markets.

When: Niche marketing should be implemented immediately



Figure 36: Cyclists at Bryan Park should be targets of niche promotion



Goal 3: Organize special and unique events that will be positively associated with Lakeside Avenue.

- **Objective 3.1:** Develop a successful retail event during the winter holiday season utilizing the unique assets of the Lakeside Avenue community.

Why: This traffic-building event is important because it establishes a positive image in the minds of shoppers, generates future sales in the area by introducing new consumers to the district and reinvigorates the experience along Lakeside Avenue for current customers.

Who: Lakeside Business Association, merchants, volunteers, surrounding institutions, property owners.

What: Establish the Lakeside Illumination. This event builds upon the successful foundation laid by the Holly Jolly Christmas Open House held during November 9 and 10, 2007. Merchants should illuminate storefronts along the entire Lakeside Avenue corridor with white Christmas lights.²²

When: The Lakeside Avenue Winter holiday retail event should better correspond with Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden's GardenFest of Lights. Plan for official Lakeside Illumination and Holly Jolly festivities to occur during same initial weekend in late November.

Where: Throughout the Lakeside Avenue corridor.

- **Objective 3.2:** Develop a successful retail and promotional event in early May to capitalize on spring, Mother's Day

shopping, and the unveiling of the new image of Lakeside Avenue.

Why: This traffic-building event is important because it establishes a positive image in the minds of shoppers, generates future sales in the area by introducing new consumers to the district and reinvigorating the experience for current customers.

Who: Lakeside Business Association, merchants, volunteers, surrounding institutions.

What: *The Lakeside in Bloom!* event would be a retail event promoting gifts for mothers, with activities related to spring, and would include the unveiling of the new promotional campaign of Lakeside Avenue. This is also the weekend of Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden's large flower bulb sale.²³

When: This event should be held the weekend before Mother's Day.

Where: Throughout the Lakeside Avenue corridor.

- **Objective 3.3:** Develop a unique antique automobile-oriented event in early September to capitalize on the fall season, going back to school, and the 1950s history of Lakeside Avenue.

Why: Lakeside is the perfect location to host an event such as this because of its history, its layout and current property and business owners that are involved in the automobile industry. Few events of this theme are offered in the Richmond area at this time.

Who: Lakeside Business Association, merchants, volunteers, property owners & surrounding institutions.

²² More information can be found in Appendix D.

²³ More information can be found in Appendix E.



What: The Lakeside Antique Car Crawl would establish multiple venues along the corridor at various locations and parking areas for the display of antique cars and memorabilia. An auto-oriented event will draw shoppers to Lakeside Avenue.

When: This event should be held in early September.

Where: Along the entire Lakeside Avenue business corridor.



Figure 37: An antique car event will draw shoppers to Lakeside Avenue

ORGANIZATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The organization recommendations are designed to specify who will oversee the economic, design and promotion recommendations previously outlined. Lakeside Avenue is fortunate to have a strong and well-organized business association. By working with dedicated citizens and government liaisons, the Lakeside Business Association will be able to move forward with implementation of these goals.

Goal 1: Organization of Committees.

- **Objective 1.1:** Establish committees to coordinate and prioritize design, economic, promotional and organizational goals of the Lakeside Business Association.

Why: These sub-committees are important to continue ongoing efforts and enhance them with additional opportunities for responsibility and participation. They will coordinate, organize and prioritize the projects listed in this and previous sections.

Who: Lakeside Business Association members

What: Members form committees that work with representatives of Henrico County to coordinate, organize and prioritize tasks. Committees include:

- The Design Committee is responsible for coordinating physical improvements of the corridor.
- The business enhancement and retention committee is responsible for assisting in recruiting and retaining businesses.
- Promotions and Special Events Committee is responsible for building an image for Lakeside Avenue.
- The Organization Committee is responsible for strengthening the Lakeside Business Association.

When: Organize committees in January 2008.



Goal 2: Strengthen the Lakeside Business Association.

- **Objective 2.1:** Increase active membership.

Why: The first step to strengthening the Lakeside Business Association is to increase the number of active dues-paying members. A large organization is more visible in the community and can achieve more.

Who: Lakeside Business Association Organization Committee members.

What: Members of the Organization Committee are responsible for informing new businesses of the advantages of membership, answering questions, keeping existing members active in the organization and encouraging existing businesses to join if they are not members.

When: This should start in January 2008 and be an ongoing effort.

- **Objective 2.2:** Encourage community members and groups to volunteer their time to help with improvements and special events.

Why: Volunteers are an asset to any organization. The Lakeside Business Association has an opportunity to work with local individuals and groups to promote and beautify the Lakeside Avenue corridor. By utilizing local groups, such as Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, and Lakeside Avenue Elementary School or church groups, the Lakeside Business Association can build partnerships that are beneficial to all. Individuals who are more likely remain volunteers on a long-term basis can be assigned to work with established committees on long term projects.

Who: Lakeside Business Association Organization Committee member.

What: An individual is responsible for seeking out and organizing volunteers as necessary. This individual can assign volunteers to establish committees to help with special or on-going projects in the Lakeside Business Association or temporary committees for special events.

When: This should start in January 2008 and be an ongoing effort.



POTENTIAL FUNDING SOURCES

Lakeside Avenue commercial corridor is located within an established Enterprise Zone that provides access to a variety of grants and assistance programs to new and existing businesses.

Henrico County

- Commercial and Industrial Rehabilitation grants are available to enhance the appearance of the zone by renovating older structures. The grants are 33% of total costs up to \$30,000 for façade renovation and to correct code violations.
- Architectural Assistance is available for façade and exterior improvements including landscaping.
- Rehabilitation Real Estate Tax Exemptions on the increase in assessed-property value resulting from certain rehabilitation on commercial, industrial or multifamily real estate
- Off-site improvement grants of 33% of total costs up to \$10,000 are available for off-site drainage and water and sewer improvements.
- Henrico County Commercial Assistance Program provides technical assistance to property owners and businesses in the Enterprise Zone.
- Community Revitalization planners are available to provide design and technical assistance and to assist with Enterprise Zone administration.
- Training seminars on topics such as: merchandising, conducting special events, building maintenance, design recommendations, etc., are available.
- Plan Review/Permit Fees Waivers: Rezoning, Plan Development, landscaping and Lighting Plans, Provisional Use Permits, Conditional Use Permits, Temporary Use Permits, Variances, Sign Permits, Building Permits.
- Fire Safety and Crime Prevention through environmental analysis and educational seminars.

Commonwealth of Virginia

- Real Property Improvement Grants—These grants are for new construction or renovation. If less than \$5 million invested, grant is 20% of eligible costs up to \$125,000. If \$5 million or more is invested, grant is 20% of eligible costs up to \$250,000.
- Job Creation Grants—These are wage-based grants for certain types of businesses; manufacturing, warehouse, transportation and construction businesses are eligible. Companies must meet threshold of four new jobs, and jobs must pay at least 175% of minimum wage.

Sanitary District

Sanitary Districts are created for water and/or sanitary sewer, and in some cases for street lights. Special tax rates may apply to property owners within sanitary districts.

Commonwealth of Virginia Incentives

Funding is available for creative projects that integrate transportation into communities and environment.

- Crosswalks
- Sidewalks
- Trails and
- Bike lanes
- Historic lighting fixtures, street furniture, trash receptacles, planters, and bus shelters are also eligible expenses

Funding is accessed through Virginia Department of Transportation.

Richmond Regional Planning District Commission Transportation Improvement Plan

Henrico County receives for funding for specific road improvements and lighting projects.

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality

Small Business Assistance Program offers free technical assistance through seminars, educational materials an online help.



CONCLUSION

The Lakeside Avenue commercial corridor is home to well-established, independent businesses which offer friendly service and a small-town feel. Nearby attractions such as Lewis Ginter Botanical Garden and Bryan Park offer an opportunity to reach hundreds of thousands of potential new customers. But Lakeside Avenue also faces competition from nearby shopping centers and neighborhood business districts.

The Lakeside Avenue Revitalization plan is designed to help business leaders capitalize on the district's strengths, minimize weaknesses, seize opportunities and respond to threats. Following the plan's economic, design, promotion, and organization recommendations will help Lakeside Avenue thrive as a local retail center for years to come.



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