

# Comprehensive Plan



Town of Clifton Forge, VA  
August 14, 2012

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# Comprehensive Plan

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## **Chapter 1 Introduction**

### **Vision Statement**

Clifton Forge, nestled in the mountains of the Alleghany Highlands, is a small town with a high quality of life featuring affordable historic homes in safe neighborhoods, a welcoming approach to small business development and growth, a rich railroad heritage, and a long-lasting and sustained history of support of the arts. All of these features, when combined with the natural beauty and abundant recreation in the area provide an ideal location for business success, a destination for travel, an unusual quality of family life, unlimited opportunities in retirement, artistic endeavors and in general, a highly desirable place to live.

### **Purpose of the Comprehensive Plan**

The Plan is intended to serve as a general guide for local officials in their decisions concerning land development, expansion (or development) of community facilities, and the establishment of community-related services. The Plan is intended to be general in nature and emphasizes the long-range needs of the town. As such, the Plan can be utilized to examine trends in order to meet existing needs and respond to new opportunities.

### **Legal Authority and Requirements**

The process and purpose of the Comprehensive Plan is outlined in the Code of Virginia, Title 15.2, Subtitle II, Chapter 22, Article 3, Section 15.2-2223:

In the preparation of a comprehensive plan the commission shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of the existing conditions and trends of growth, and of the probable future requirements of its territory and inhabitants. The comprehensive plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants.

The Code of Virginia mandates that every incorporated jurisdiction in the Commonwealth adopt a comprehensive plan. Furthermore, the Code mandates that each jurisdiction review/reassess their Plan every five years. This mandate supports the need for an on-going process of plan reassessment – the plan should never be viewed as a "static" document.

## Chapter 2 History

In 1971, Elizabeth Corron wrote in her book *Clifton Forge, Virginia* that, the land presently occupied by the City of Clifton Forge was originally part of a land grant to Robert Gallaspy (Gillespie) in 1770 from Lord Botetourt, Governor of Virginia. After the title had changed ownership several times, the land came into the hands of the Williamson family and the Smith family in the 1820s. Several houses were built and a small settlement was located along “Jackson River on both sides from Slaughter Pen Hollow to Smith Creek, extending northward as the population increased.”

The iron industry in Alleghany County and the completion of a road over North Mountain (now U.S. 60) in 1826 began the growth of the settlement. A forge located in the Iron Gate Gorge was named “Clifton” after the boyhood home of the owner. Hence, the name Clifton Forge was formed. The iron was originally shipped by bateaux (flat boats) down the Jackson and James rivers to Lynchburg in rough ingots formed from molten ore poured into pig troughs. With the advent of the railroad in 1850, more cargo could be transported out, thus allowing more development to occur in the Alleghany area.

The War Between the States caused disruption of the region as Union troops destroyed the railroad tracks in the region. However, the tracks were repaired and extended after the war, at which time the Chesapeake and Ohio Company formed from several smaller companies. Clifton Forge became the terminal point for three divisions of the Chesapeake and Ohio. An extension yard facility was also built.

The population numbered about 700 in 1882 when the railroad began referring to the Williamson Stop as Clifton Forge. Several large hotels were built and lots were put up for sale. A bowery grew as well, and barrooms were built “across the tracks.” A reservoir and rudimentary water system were established, along with street lights.

Various businesses were established at this time, including a meat market (Westerman’s), grocery, lumber company, livery stable and a brickyard. Clifton Forge became an incorporated town in 1884.

In 1889 the C&O Development Company was formed and the railroad sold all its excess land to that corporation for \$250,000. Clifton Forge entered a boom period and speculators and promoters claimed it would be the “Altoona of the South.”

The “Heights” part of the town was cleared of trees and brush, and streets were surveyed. Lots in the “flats” were developed by the Clifton Forge Company and land prices skyrocketed as speculators bought and sold land. However, by December 1890, the boom broke and land prices fell.

Fortunately, 1890 also saw the completion of the new C&O passenger depot and repair stops in West Clifton. This marked the wave to the west and the Old Town was left behind. West Clifton incorporated in 1900.

Edward P. Fisher is credited with building the first bridges across Dry and Smith creeks. This improved circulation between the sections of the town. This venture was financed by town taxes (fixed at \$1.00 per \$100 of assessed valuation). A bond issue for \$20,000 in 1899 paid for subsequent steel replacement bridges.

By 1895, nine hotels were in operation in the Clifton Forge area. One eventually became the C&O hospital (later a new hospital was built on the site). The town received telephone service in 1896 when the Clifton Forge – Waynesboro Telephone Company received a franchise. Also the Clifton Forge Light and Water Company was formed and a cemetery (Crown Hill) opened.

In 1906, the towns of West Clifton and Clifton Forge were incorporated as a city. Subsequently, a bond issue of \$75,000 for paved streets, sidewalks, sewers, schools, and a jail was passed. The present courthouse was completed in 1911 and a municipal water system began with development of the Smith Creek Reservoir in 1913. A playground was developed in 1916.

Following World War I, the C&O enlarged its rail yard, altering the channel of the Jackson River in the process. The town was still expanding as new businesses were established. However, new industrial development had not been sought or encouraged.

During the depression the City was assisted by the Works Progress Administration (W.P.A.). Improvements to water, sewers, and streets resulted. The Woodrow Wilson Bridge (old Route 220) was completed in 1937.

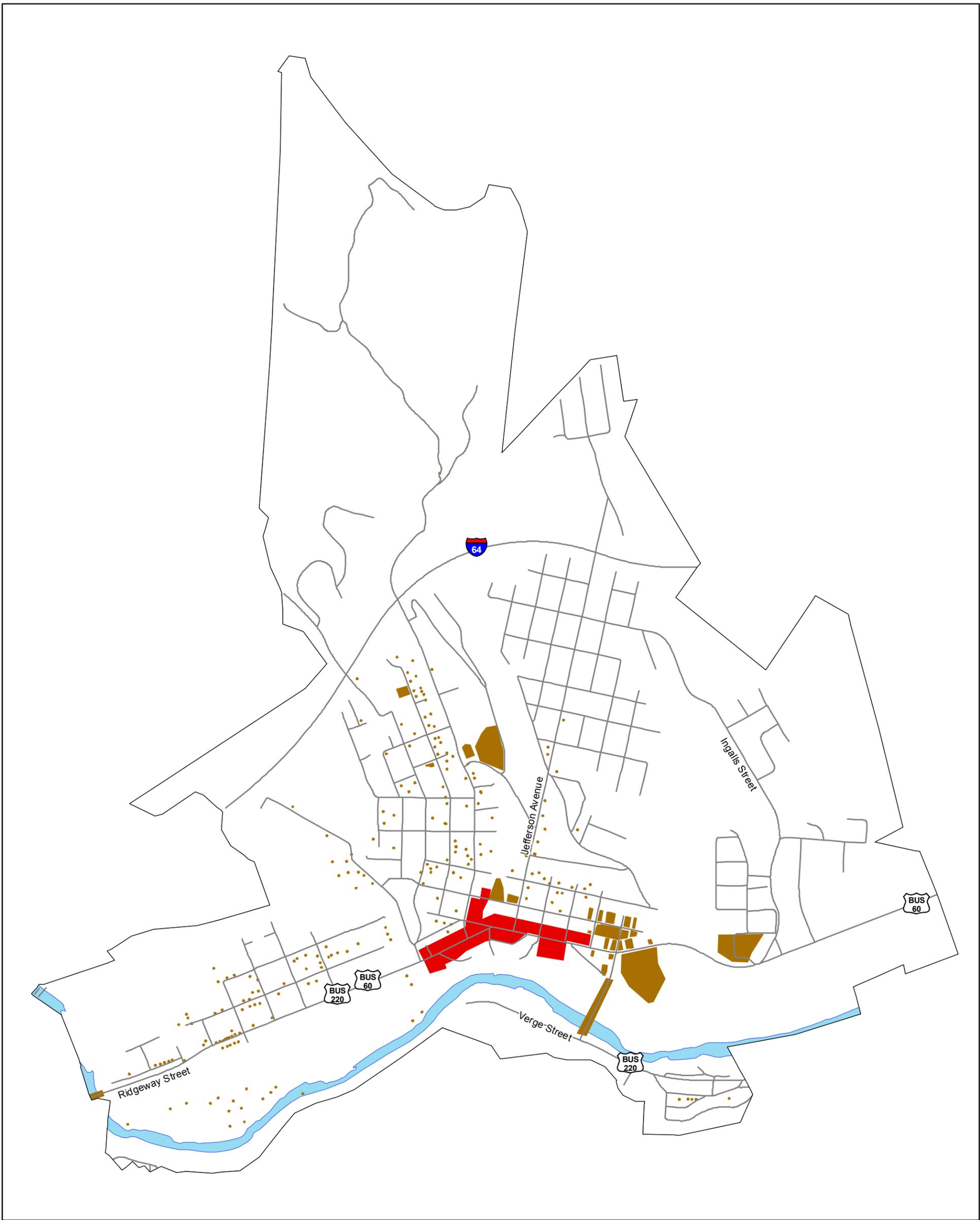
After World War II, Clifton Forge began a decline due to the conversion of the C&O from steam to diesel engines. A number of the repair shops were moved to Huntington, West Virginia. In response to this the Clifton Forge Development Corporation was organized in 1950 to contact new industries. As a result of their efforts, the Mizzy Corporation located in nearby Cliftondale in 1953, the H.O. Canfield Company in Iron Gate (1954), and Jane Colby Enterprises (of U.S. Industries) in 1962 in Alleghany County were established.

Clifton Forge expanded by annexing Fairview Heights from Alleghany County in 1962. New building sites became available. This portion of the City grew during the 1960s and it has been aided by the completion of I-64 north of the City.

In August 1991, the commercial area in downtown Clifton Forge was placed on Virginia's Landmark Register. This nomination formally recognized the unique and valuable architecture characteristics of downtown Clifton Forge.

Clifton Forge became a Main Street Community in April 1992. As of 2005, Clifton Forge is an Affiliate Member of the Virginia Main Street Program. This program's intent is to strengthen the community and economic development potential of downtown business districts. The program also enables the local property owners to take advantage of financial incentives and tax credits when buildings are restored to their original integrity.

Clifton Forge filled notice with the Commission on Local Government of its intentions to petition the court for an order granting it the status of a town in Alleghany County in November 1999. The notice was accompanied by revenue data and other statistics supporting its request. Loss of jobs in the railroad industry, rising costs of maintaining its own schools and a general decline in the economy led to the decision to revert to a town. Over the next 6 months, officials met with representatives from Alleghany County and the Commonwealth of Virginia to reach an agreement on revision to a town. On May 30, 2000, the revision agreement was presented for comment at a public hearing. The city held a referendum on March 6, 2001 and passed by a vote of 1,071 to 617. In July 2001, Clifton Forge reverted from a city to a town. Under the agreement, Alleghany County took over the Clifton Forge school system, solid waste collection, and property tax assessment and collection. The Town of Clifton Forge retained its police department and water and sewer services.



# Town of Clifton Forge

## Map 1 Historic Resources

Scale 0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

### Legend

- Surveyed Properties
- Virginia and National Register

## Chapter 3 Demographics

### Population Trends

Clifton Forge population has fluctuated over the past century with the greatest change occurring during the period of 1900 to 1910. The population has been declining since 1970, dropping from 5,501 to 3,884 in 2010.

Table 1  
Population Change, 1900 - 1990

| Year | Population | Change |
|------|------------|--------|
| 1900 | 3,212      | -      |
| 1910 | 5,748      | 79.0%  |
| 1920 | 6,164      | 7.2%   |
| 1930 | 6,834      | 10.9%  |
| 1940 | 6,461      | -5.5%  |
| 1950 | 5,795      | -10.3  |
| 1960 | 5,268      | -9.1%  |
| 1970 | 5,501      | 4.4%   |
| 1980 | 5,046      | -8.3%  |
| 1990 | 4,679      | -7.3%  |
| 2000 | 4,289      | -8.3%  |
| 2010 | 3,884      | -9.4%  |

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1900-2010.*

### Migration

According to information provided by the Census Bureau, 1,003 persons age 5 and over moved to Clifton Forge between 1995 and 2000. In addition, 562 residents age 5 and over of Clifton Forge moved from one home to another within the Town between 1995 and 2000.

Table 2  
Residence in 1995, Persons Age 5 and Over

| Category                     | Persons |
|------------------------------|---------|
| Total Persons Age 5 and Over | 4,056   |
| Same house in 1995           | 2,438   |
| Different house in 1995      | 1,565   |
| In United States in 1995     |         |
| Same locality                | 562     |
| Different locality           | 1,003   |
| Same state                   | 732     |
| Different state:             | 271     |
| Elsewhere in 1995:           | 53      |

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population, 2000.*

The Census Bureau's American Community Survey provides migration data for 2010. Table 3 provides geographical mobility for persons relative to their residence at the time they were surveyed. According to the survey 200 people moved to Clifton Forge from a different locality in 2010. In addition, 61 people from a different state moved to the town in 2010.

Table 3  
Migration in the Past Year, 2010

| Category   | Persons |
|--|---------|
| Total:   | 3,694   |
| Householder lived in owner-occupied housing units  | 2,479   |
| Householder lived in renter-occupied housing units | 1,215   |
| Same house 1 year ago:                             | 3,303   |
| Householder lived in owner-occupied housing units  | 2,392   |
| Householder lived in renter-occupied housing units | 911     |
| Moved within same county:                          | 130     |
| Householder lived in owner-occupied housing units  | 42      |
| Householder lived in renter-occupied housing units | 88      |
| Moved from different county within same state:     | 200     |
| Householder lived in owner-occupied housing units  | 45      |
| Householder lived in renter-occupied housing units | 155     |
| Moved from different state:                        | 61      |
| Householder lived in owner-occupied housing units  | 0       |
| Householder lived in renter-occupied housing units | 61      |
| Moved from abroad:                                 | 0       |
| Householder lived in owner-occupied housing units  | 0       |
| Householder lived in renter-occupied housing units | 0       |

Source: *Geographic Mobility 2006-2010, American Community Survey, 2012.*

### Natural Increase

Natural increase is a measure of the population change based on the number of births and deaths that have occurred based on place of residence over a period of time. Natural decrease in Clifton Forge from 1999 to 2001 was 76 persons.

Table 4  
Natural Increase, 1999-2001

| Year | Births | Deaths | Natural Increase |
|------|--------|--------|------------------|
| 1999 | 50     | 81     | -31              |
| 2000 | 67     | 91     | -24              |
| 2001 | 22     | 43     | -21              |

Source: *Virginia Vital Statistics Annual Reports, Virginia Department of Health, 1999-2001.*

## Age Distribution

The age composition of the Town has changed from 2000 to 2010. The percentage of population below age 45 decreased by 16.8 percent from 2,280 to 1,898. The number of persons age 65 and over, also decreased during that same period by 13.5 percent. The workforce age population between the ages of 20 and 64 decreased 8.2 percent. The 45 to 54 and 55 to 64 age groups both increased from 2000 to 2010.

It should be noted that the median age in Clifton Forge has been increasing over the last few decades, with a decreasing youth population. The median age statistics illustrate this point. In 1980 the median age was 38.5 years, while in 2010 the figure was 45.8.

Table 5  
Population Distribution by Age

|                   | 2000    |         | 2010    |         | Change<br>2000-2010 |
|-------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------------------|
|                   | Persons | Percent | Persons | Percent |                     |
| Total population  | 4,289   | 100     | 3,884   | 100     | -9.4%               |
| Under 5 years     | 227     | 5.3     | 192     | 4.9%    | -15.4%              |
| 5 to 9 years      | 251     | 5.9     | 238     | 6.1%    | -5.2%               |
| 10 to 14 years    | 262     | 6.1     | 242     | 6.2%    | -7.6%               |
| 15 to 19 years    | 263     | 6.1     | 249     | 6.4%    | -5.3%               |
| 20 to 24 years    | 188     | 4.4     | 183     | 4.7%    | -2.7%               |
| 25 to 34 years    | 474     | 11.1    | 335     | 8.6%    | -29.3%              |
| 35 to 44 years    | 615     | 14.3    | 459     | 11.8%   | -25.4%              |
| 45 to 54 years    | 525     | 12.2    | 578     | 14.9%   | 10.1%               |
| 55 to 64 years    | 469     | 11      | 530     | 13.6%   | 13.0%               |
| 65 to 74 years    | 453     | 10.6    | 425     | 10.9%   | -6.2%               |
| 75 to 84 years    | 387     | 9       | 297     | 7.6%    | -23.3%              |
| 85 years and over | 175     | 4.1     | 156     | 4.0%    | -10.9%              |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, *Census of Population, 2000 and 2010*.

Table 6  
Population by Age Group and Sex

|                | 2000  |       |        | 2010  |       |        | Percent Change |       |        |
|----------------|-------|-------|--------|-------|-------|--------|----------------|-------|--------|
|                | Total | Male  | Female | Total | Male  | Female | Total          | Male  | Female |
| Total          | 4,289 | 1,892 | 2,397  | 3,884 | 1,809 | 2,075  | -9.4           | -4.4  | -13.4  |
| Under 5 years  | 227   | 112   | 115    | 192   | 109   | 83     | -15.4          | -2.7  | -27.8  |
| 5 to 9 years   | 251   | 125   | 126    | 238   | 114   | 124    | -5.2           | -8.8  | -1.6   |
| 10 to 14 years | 262   | 127   | 135    | 242   | 123   | 119    | -7.6           | -3.1  | -11.9  |
| 15 to 19 years | 263   | 132   | 131    | 249   | 124   | 125    | -5.3           | -6.1  | -4.6   |
| 20 to 24 years | 188   | 92    | 96     | 183   | 98    | 85     | -2.7           | 6.5   | -11.5  |
| 25 to 29 years | 220   | 97    | 123    | 180   | 89    | 91     | -18.2          | -8.2  | -26.0  |
| 30 to 34 years | 254   | 115   | 139    | 155   | 76    | 79     | -39.0          | -33.9 | -43.2  |
| 35 to 39 years | 275   | 141   | 134    | 229   | 98    | 131    | -16.7          | -30.5 | -2.2   |
| 40 to 44 years | 340   | 155   | 185    | 230   | 114   | 116    | -32.4          | -26.5 | -37.3  |
| 45 to 49 years | 242   | 124   | 118    | 268   | 137   | 131    | 10.7           | 10.5  | 11.0   |
| 50 to 54 years | 283   | 126   | 157    | 310   | 150   | 160    | 9.5            | 19.0  | 1.9    |
| 55 to 59 years | 235   | 113   | 122    | 230   | 112   | 118    | -2.1           | -0.9  | -3.3   |
| 60 to 64 years | 234   | 95    | 139    | 300   | 136   | 164    | 28.2           | 43.2  | 18.0   |
| 65 to 69 years | 205   | 92    | 113    | 212   | 93    | 119    | 3.4            | 1.1   | 5.3    |
| 70 to 74 years | 248   | 88    | 160    | 213   | 97    | 116    | -14.1          | 10.2  | -27.5  |
| 75 to 79 years | 236   | 74    | 162    | 137   | 54    | 83     | -41.9          | -27.0 | -48.8  |
| 80 to 84 years | 151   | 48    | 103    | 160   | 52    | 108    | 6.0            | 8.3   | 4.9    |
| 85 and Over    | 175   | 36    | 139    | 156   | 33    | 123    | -10.9          | -8.3  | -11.5  |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Population, 2000 and 2010.

## Household Characteristics

While the Town's population decreased by 9.4% from 2000 to 2010, the number of households decreased by 7.6 percent. The average household size has decreased by 1.8 percent.

Table 7  
Household Characteristics

| Category               | 2000  | 2010  | Change |
|------------------------|-------|-------|--------|
| Total Households       | 1,841 | 1,701 | -7.6%  |
| Average Household Size | 2.22  | 2.18  | -1.8%  |

Source: U.S. Census, Census of Population, 2000 and 2010.

## Income

Although the median household income in Clifton Forge increased by almost 29% from 2000 to 2010, this amount was still equal to only 56% of the state median in 2010. Family median income was also only 74.5% of the state median family income. Per capita income was approximately 65.1% of the state median per capita income.

Table 8  
Median Income

| Category   | 2000     | 2010     | Change |
|------------|----------|----------|--------|
| Household  | \$26,090 | \$33,621 | 28.9%  |
| Family     | \$31,509 | \$53,787 | 70.7%  |
| Per Capita | \$15,182 | \$20,586 | 35.6%  |

Source: Census of Population, U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau 2010.

Table 9  
Median Income

| Category   | Clifton Forge | Virginia |
|------------|---------------|----------|
| Household  | \$33,621      | \$60,316 |
| Family     | \$53,787      | \$72,193 |
| Per Capita | \$20,586      | \$31,606 |

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.

## Poverty Statistics

Clifton Forge experienced a slight increase in the percentage of persons below the poverty level between 2000 and 2010. The percent of person age 65 and over increased from 10.5% to 12.4 percent. However the percentage of families, families with children, and female householder families below the poverty level all decreased.

Table 10  
Persons Living Below Poverty Level

| Category                                  | 2000  | 2010  |
|---|-------|-------|
| Persons                                   | 19.4% | 20.9% |
| Persons Age 65 and Over                   | 10.5% | 12.4% |
| Families                                  | 15.1% | 11.3% |
| Families with children under 18 years old | 28.2% | 23.5% |
| Female Householder Families               | 35.3% | 26.1% |

*Source: 2000 Census and 2005-2009 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.*

## Chapter 4 Housing

### Housing Units

There was a small decrease in the number of housing units in Clifton Forge for the period 2000 to 2010. The number of vacant housing units increased by almost 33% during the same period.

The percentage of owner-occupied housing increased from 2000 to 2010. The number of owner-occupied units has decreased by 119 units from 2000 to 2010. The number of renter-occupied units decreased by 21 units during the 10 year period.

Table 11  
Housing Units by Occupancy

|                     | 2000  | 2010  | Change | Percentage of Total Units in 2010 |
|---------------------|-------|-------|--------|-----------------------------------|
| Total Housing Units | 2,069 | 2,004 | -3.1%  | 100.0                             |
| Vacant Units        | 228   | 303   | 32.9%  | 15.1                              |
| Occupied Units      | 1,841 | 1,701 | -7.6%  | 84.9                              |
| Owner-Occupied      | 1,153 | 1,034 | -10.3% | 51.6                              |
| Renter-Occupied     | 688   | 667   | -3.1%  | 33.3                              |

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Housing, 2000 and 2010.*

### Housing Type

Single-family units have remained the dominant type of housing in Clifton Forge over the past decade. The number of multi-family units, including duplexes, has decreased.

Table 12  
Housing Type

| Type          | 2000   |         | 2009   |         |
|---------------|--------|---------|--------|---------|
|               | Number | Percent | Number | Percent |
| Single-Family | 1,564  | 75.6%   | 1,583  | 78.1%   |
| Multi-Family  | 499    | 24.2%   | 433    | 21.4%   |
| Mobile homes  | 6      | 0.3%    | 11     | 0.5%    |

*Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census of Housing, 2000 and 2005-2009 American Community Survey, 2010.*

## General Housing Characteristics

The median house value increased by almost 61 percent from 2000 to 2010. The median rent increased 44 percent. The amount of housing stock 30 or more years old increased to more than 95 percent.

The Census figures which best reflect the condition of housing units in the town are percent of occupied units with more than 1.01 persons per room and percent of occupied units lacking complete plumbing for exclusive use. The percent of overcrowded units decreased and the percent of units lacking complete plumbing remained at zero from 2000 to 2010.

Table 13  
Housing Characteristics

| Characteristic  | 2000     | 2009     |
|---|----------|----------|
| Median Value  | \$52,800 | \$84,900 |
| Median Contract Rent  | \$341    | \$491    |
| Percent of Housing 30 Years or Older                                  | 92.1     | 95.2     |
| Percent of Occupied Units with More than 1.01 Persons / Room          | 1.0      | 0.9      |
| Percent of Occupied Units Lacking Complete Plumbing for Exclusive Use | 0.0      | 0.0      |

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.

## Housing Age

Almost half of Clifton Forge's housing stock was built prior to 1950. In general, pre-WWII urban housing stock consists, in large part, of multi-story construction tailored to relatively narrow lots, thereby allowing more square-footage on a smaller footprint such as a city lot. While many of the town's homes can be classified as historic, these units will require additional attention from their owners. Beyond accessibility issues often associated with an aging housing stock, repair, maintenance, and high utility cost can also negatively impact affordability and general quality of life for elderly and/or disabled residents.

Table 14  
Housing Units by Year Structure Built, 2009

| Time Period           | Number | Percent |
|-----------------------|--------|---------|
| Built 2005 or later   | 0      | 0.0%    |
| Built 2000 to 2004    | 9      | 0.4%    |
| Built 1990 to 1999    | 88     | 4.3%    |
| Built 1980 to 1989    | 170    | 8.4%    |
| Built 1970 to 1979    | 203    | 10.0%   |
| Built 1960 to 1969    | 330    | 16.3%   |
| Built 1950 to 1959    | 221    | 10.9%   |
| Built 1940 to 1949    | 181    | 8.9%    |
| Built 1939 or earlier | 825    | 40.7%   |

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.

## Affordable Housing

The Code of Virginia, Sec. 15.2-2223, under the scope and purpose of the comprehensive plan, states that “The plan shall include: the designation of areas and implementation of measures for the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of affordable housing, which is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of residents of all levels of income in the locality while considering the current and future needs of the planning district within which the locality is situated.” Housing affordability should be monitored by local governments to ensure that all citizens are capable of meeting this basic need.

### Summary of Affordable Housing Needs

The Census Bureau’s Comprehensive Housing Affordability Strategy database definition of housing problems includes the following criteria “any occupied units lacking a complete kitchen, lacking complete plumbing, having more than 1.01 persons per room, or costing more than 30 percent of the occupant households (monthly) income.”

Table 15  
Housing Problems

| Criteria   | 2000 | 2009 |
|--|------|------|
| Units Lacking Complete Kitchen   | 0.3  | 0.0  |
| Units Lacking Complete Plumbing  | 0.0  | 0.0  |
| Units With More Than 1.01 Persons Per Room                                       | 1.0  | 0.9  |
| Renters Paying More Than 30% of the Occupant Households Income                   | 34.8 | 50.9 |
| Owners with a Mortgage paying more than 30% of the Occupant Households Income    | 20.5 | 8.7  |
| Owners without a Mortgage Paying More Than 30% of the Occupant Households Income | 4.8  | 16.0 |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010.

In 2010 the Clifton Forge median rent was 53% of the statewide median rent. Approximately 30% of renters in Clifton Forge were paying less than \$300 per month. Fewer than 17% of renters were paying above \$750 per month compared to 66.4% of renters statewide.

Table 16  
Gross Rent

| Category      | Clifton Forge | Virginia |
|---------------|---------------|----------|
| Median        | \$491         | \$931    |
| Below \$300   | 29.5%         | 5.4%     |
| \$750 or More | 16.1          | 66.4%    |
| No Cash Rent  | 17.3          | 6.6%     |

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.

Clifton Forge median owner costs with a mortgage were 51% of the statewide median while median owner costs without a mortgage were 91 percent of the state median. The lower monthly mortgages may be attributed to lower house values, yet similar costs for utilities, maintenance and taxes. The percentage of owners with a mortgage in Clifton Forge was lower than the percentage for the state. This is possibly due to lower median house value and a long term ownership trend in the town creating an opportunity for owners to pay off a mortgage.

Table 17  
Owner Costs

|                                 | Clifton Forge | Virginia |
|---------------------------------|---------------|----------|
| Median Costs with a Mortgage    | \$853         | \$1,668  |
| Median Costs without a Mortgage | \$340         | \$375    |
| Owners with a Mortgage          | 55.2%         | 72.9%    |

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2010.

A standard measure of affordability for both owner and renter is the percentage of income being applied toward housing costs. This cost includes rent or mortgage, utilities, maintenance and taxes. An acceptable rate is 30 percent of the household's income.

In 2010, 8.7% of home owners with a mortgage in Clifton Forge were applying more than thirty percent or more of their income toward housing costs and 50.9% of renters were applying 30 percent or more of their income toward housing costs.

Local housing programs can help residents access safe affordable housing by addressing the needs of specific clients, improving existing housing and assisting in financing. In addition, programs for the elderly and handicapped, energy efficiency and weatherization, water and sewer system programs and local regulations such as the building code and zoning, all play a role in providing affordable housing.

Additional housing resources are available from the following agencies for financial and technical assistance: Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development's Division of Community Development, Virginia Housing Development Authority, USDA Rural Development, and Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project.

## Chapter 5 Economy

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an analysis of the labor force, occupations, major employers, and trade sectors in order to identify important changes and trends in the Alleghany County economy.

Clifton Forge's reversion to a town in July 2001 eliminated data collection performed by many agencies that track figures only for counties and cities. Clifton Forge is counted as a part of Alleghany County by agencies such as the Virginia Employment Commission, the Bureau of Economic Analysis and Bureau of Labor Statistics.

### Labor force Characteristics

The number of persons in the Alleghany County labor force has declined by approximately 1,000 persons over the past 10 years. The annual number of unemployed persons has increased during that same time period from 231 in 2000 to 641 in 2010.

Table 18  
Labor Force Characteristics, Alleghany County

| Year | Civilian Labor Force | Employment | Unemployment | Unemployment Rate (%) |
|------|----------------------|------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| 2000 | 7,684                | 7,453      | 231          | 3.0                   |
| 2001 | 7,764                | 7,441      | 323          | 4.2                   |
| 2002 | 8,064                | 7,639      | 425          | 5.3                   |
| 2003 | 8,087                | 7,714      | 373          | 4.6                   |
| 2004 | 7,578                | 7,229      | 349          | 4.6                   |
| 2005 | 7,512                | 7,162      | 350          | 4.7                   |
| 2006 | 7,349                | 6,997      | 352          | 4.8                   |
| 2007 | 7,000                | 6,695      | 305          | 4.4                   |
| 2008 | 6,857                | 6,484      | 373          | 5.4                   |
| 2009 | 7,179                | 6,515      | 664          | 9.2                   |
| 2010 | 7,122                | 6,481      | 641          | 9.0                   |

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, 2011.

The unemployment rate dropped from a peak of 9.3% in January 2011 to 7.7% in December 2011.

Table 19  
Labor Force Characteristics, 2011, Alleghany County

| Period    | Civilian Labor Force | Employment | Unemployment | Unemployment Rate (%) |
|-----------|----------------------|------------|--------------|-----------------------|
| January   | 7,178                | 6,507      | 671          | 9.3                   |
| February  | 7,201                | 6,556      | 645          | 9.0                   |
| March     | 7,346                | 6,729      | 617          | 8.4                   |
| April     | 7,404                | 6,847      | 557          | 7.5                   |
| May       | 7,458                | 6,895      | 563          | 7.5                   |
| June      | 7,328                | 6,733      | 595          | 8.1                   |
| July      | 7,196                | 6,632      | 564          | 7.8                   |
| August    | 7,204                | 6,612      | 592          | 8.2                   |
| September | 7,277                | 6,710      | 567          | 7.8                   |
| October   | 7,307                | 6,803      | 504          | 6.9                   |
| November  | 7,277                | 6,768      | 509          | 7.0                   |
| December  | 7,248                | 6,692      | 556          | 7.7                   |

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, 2012.

### Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages

The Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages program derives its data from quarterly tax reports submitted to State Employment Security Agencies by employers subject to State unemployment insurance laws and from Federal agencies subject to the Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees program. This includes 99.7% of all wage and salary civilian employment. These reports provide information on the number of people employed and the wages paid to the employees each quarter.

Covered employers in most States report total compensation paid during the calendar quarter, regardless of when the services were performed. Under most State laws or regulations, wages include bonuses, stock options; profit distributions, the cash value of meals and lodging, tips and other gratuities, and, in some States, employer contributions to certain deferred compensation plans such as 401(k) plans. Data for Alleghany County is shown below.

Table 20  
Employment and Wages, Alleghany County

| Year | Average Establishments | Average Employment | Average Weekly Wage |
|------|------------------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| 2001 | 265                    | 4,476              | \$491               |
| 2002 | 301                    | 4,778              | \$503               |
| 2003 | 309                    | 4,830              | \$512               |
| 2004 | 313                    | 4,761              | \$538               |
| 2005 | 312                    | 4,634              | \$563               |
| 2006 | 306                    | 4,522              | \$576               |
| 2007 | 313                    | 4,466              | \$575               |
| 2008 | 321                    | 4,319              | \$595               |
| 2009 | 323                    | 4,216              | \$585               |
| 2010 | 311                    | 4,272              | \$681               |

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011.

Table 21  
Average Weekly Wage, Alleghany County

| Year | Alleghany County | Virginia |
|------|------------------|----------|
| 2001 | \$491            | \$706    |
| 2002 | \$503            | \$716    |
| 2003 | \$512            | \$742    |
| 2004 | \$538            | \$779    |
| 2005 | \$563            | \$813    |
| 2006 | \$576            | \$847    |
| 2007 | \$575            | \$885    |
| 2008 | \$595            | \$908    |
| 2009 | \$585            | \$928    |
| 2010 | \$681            | \$955    |

Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2011.

## Industry of Employed Persons

Industry data describe the kind of business conducted by a person's employing organization. The data provides industry classifications that group establishments into industries based on the activities in which they are primarily engaged. The industry categories do not necessarily reflect the occupation/job of residents. For example, people employed in agriculture include truck drivers and bookkeepers; people employed in the transportation industry include mechanics, freight handlers, and payroll clerks; and people employed in the health care profession include nurses, janitors, security guards, and secretaries.

Table 22  
Industry of Employed Persons, Clifton Forge

| Industry Category  | Number | Percent |
|--|--------|---------|
| Civilian employed population 16 years and over   | 1,522  | -       |
| Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining                                     | 0      | 0.0%    |
| Construction   | 112    | 7.4%    |
| Manufacturing  | 282    | 18.5%   |
| Wholesale trade  | 14     | 0.9%    |
| Retail trade   | 122    | 8.0%    |
| Transportation and warehousing, and utilities  | 64     | 4.2%    |
| Information  | 48     | 3.2%    |
| Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing                              | 68     | 4.5%    |
| Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services | 79     | 5.2%    |
| Educational services, and health care and social assistance                                | 519    | 34.1%   |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services                   | 110    | 7.2%    |
| Other services, except public administration   | 27     | 1.8%    |
| Public administration  | 77     | 5.1%    |

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2011.

## Occupation of Employed Persons

Occupation describes the kind of work a person does on the job. The data is used to formulate policy and programs for employment, career development and training; to provide information on the occupational skills of the labor force in a given area to analyze career trends; and to measure compliance with antidiscrimination policies. Companies also use this data to assist in deciding where to locate new plants, stores, or offices based on the implied skills of the existing labor force.

Table 23  
Occupation of Employed Persons, Clifton Forge

| Occupation Category   | Number | Percent |
|---|--------|---------|
| Civilian employed population 16 years and over                | 1,522  | -       |
| Management, professional, and related occupations             | 547    | 35.9%   |
| Service occupations   | 247    | 16.2%   |
| Sales and office occupations                                  | 295    | 19.4%   |
| Farming, fishing, and forestry occupations                    | 0      | 0.0%    |
| Construction, extraction, maintenance, and repair occupations | 162    | 10.6%   |
| Production, transportation, and material moving occupations   | 271    | 17.8%   |

Source: 2005-2009 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau, 2011.

## Major Employers

The following table shows major employers for Alleghany County in 2011 based on data provided by the Virginia Employment Commission. Major employers represent several sectors including industrial, retail, medical and government.

Table 24  
Major Employers, 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter, 2011

| Employer                                  | Industry   | Size Class    |
|---|--|---------------|
| Mead Westvaco                             | Paper Manufacturing  | 1000 and over |
| Alleghany Highlands Public School Board   | Educational Services   | 250 to 499    |
| Alleghany Regional Hospital               | Hospitals  | 250 to 499    |
| Wal Mart                                  | General Merchandise Stores                                   | 250 to 499    |
| County of Alleghany                       | Executive, Legislative, and Other General Government Support | 100 to 249    |
| Dabney S. Lancaster Community College     | Educational Services   | 100 to 249    |
| Mead Westvaco                             | Paper Manufacturing  | 100 to 249    |
| Bacova Guild                              | Textile Product Mills  | 100 to 249    |
| Covington City School Board               | Educational Services   | 100 to 249    |
| City of Covington                         | Executive, Legislative, and Other General Government Support | 100 to 249    |
| Alleghany Highland Mental Health Services | Social Assistance  | 50 to 99      |
| GGNSC                                     | Nursing and Residential Care Facilities                      | 50 to 99      |
| Team Carriers                             | Truck Transportation   | 50 to 99      |
| AFS of Low Moor Inc                       | Nursing and Residential Care Facilities                      | 50 to 99      |
| Kroger                                    | Food and Beverage Stores                                     | 50 to 99      |
| WVVA Health Care Alliance                 | Ambulatory Health Care Services                              | 50 to 99      |
| The Woodlands                             | Nursing and Residential Care Facilities                      | 50 to 99      |
| Boys Home                                 | Nursing and Residential Care Facilities                      | 50 to 99      |
| Hammond Mitchell                          | Heavy and Civil Engineering Construction                     | 50 to 99      |
| McDonald's                                | Food Services and Drinking Places                            | 50 to 99      |
| Kmart                                     | General Merchandise Stores                                   | 50 to 99      |
| Mead Westvaco                             | Management of Companies and Enterprises                      | 50 to 99      |
| Waco Inc.                                 | Specialty Trade Contractors                                  | 50 to 99      |
| YMCA                                      | Social Assistance  | 50 to 99      |
| Manpower International                    | Administrative and Support Services                          | 50 to 99      |
| Cucci Pizzeria                            | Food Services and Drinking Places                            | 50 to 99      |

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, 2012.

## **Chapter 6**

### **Natural Physical Environment**

#### **Geology**

Clifton Forge lies within the Valley and Ridge physiographic province. In Virginia, the Valley and Ridge province is characterized by long, narrow ridges traveling in a northeast-southwest direction and capped with an erosion resistant layer of sandstone, with intervening valleys underlain by more easily erodible limestone or dolomite.

Although there are no detailed geological maps of the town, generally the rocks underlying Clifton Forge are sedimentary in nature and belong to the upper Silurian and lower Devonian geologic periods. The Devonian period is characterized by sandstone, shale, limestone, gypsum and coal. Limestone, dolomite, shale, and sandstone are typical components of the Silurian period. Sandstone from the Cayuga Group and the Clinton formation is prevalent in a small southwest and south-central part of town including the Main Street area downtown and part of the CSX rail yard.

#### **Topography**

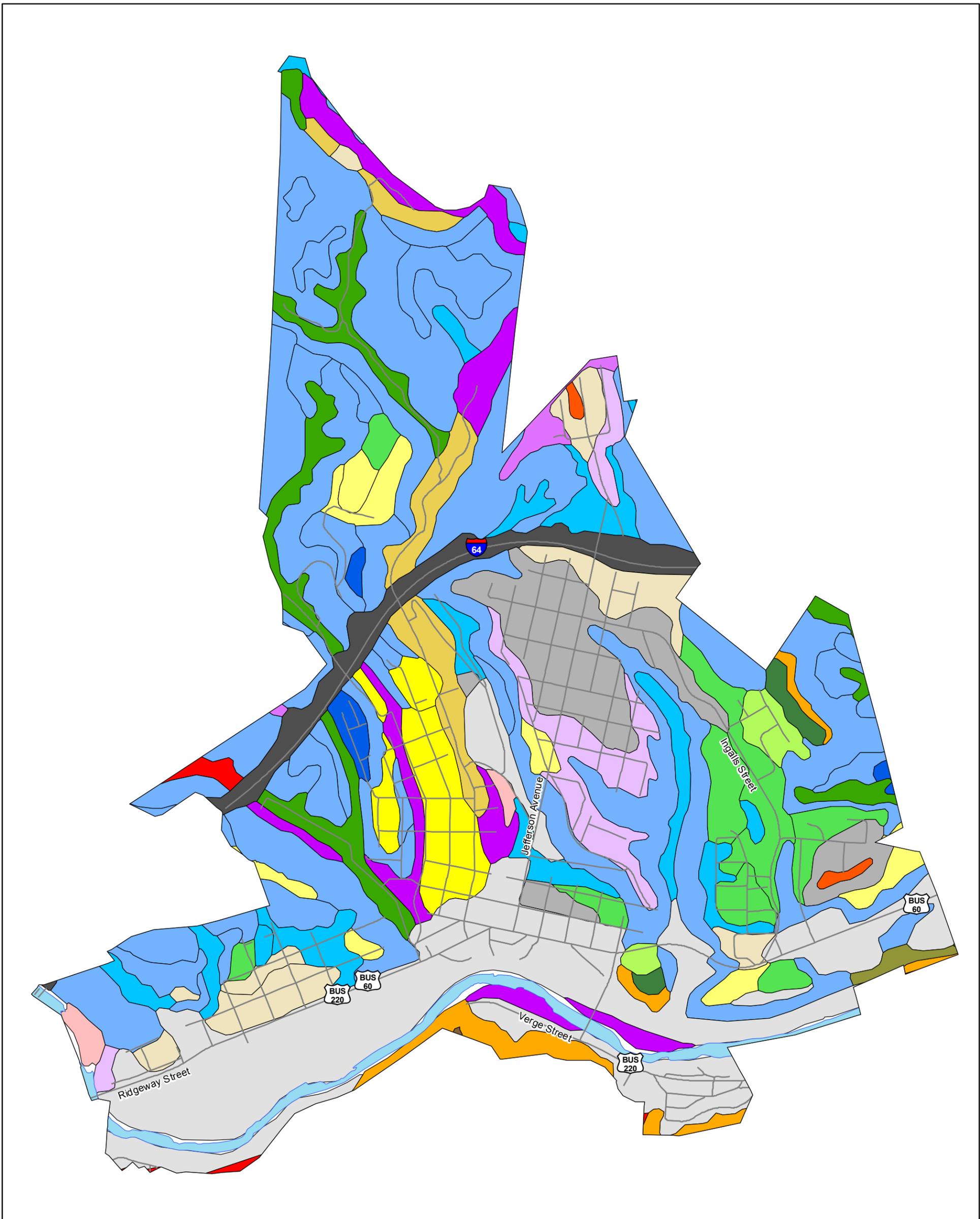
Clifton Forge is characterized by two basic landforms: the valley of the Jackson River in the south and the hilly terrain rising above the river in the north. Elevations range from 1025 to 1520 feet above sea level. The northern upward sloping area is dissected by several streams; Dry Run, Hazel Run, Smith Creek, and East Branch. Much of the town's level land and moderate slopes have been developed for residential and commercial use.

#### **Soils**

Virginia is characterized by two of the major types of soils: utisols, which are very old, nutrient-poor, have distinct horizons, and are yellow to red in color, and inceptisols, which are young, have few or faint horizons and are gray to red in color. The Alleghany Highlands is primarily inceptisols.

The most recent soil survey for Alleghany County was completed in 2006 by the National Resources Conservation Service. This data consists of georeferenced digital map data and computerized attribute data. The data includes a field verified inventory of soils and miscellaneous areas that normally occur in a repeatable pattern on the landscape and that can be cartographically shown at the scale mapped. This data set is not designed for use as a primary regulatory tool in permitting or citing decisions, but may be used as a reference source. The mapping and information in the survey and the Comprehensive Plan is for reference only and cannot be used for design or construction.

Map Unit Delineations (see Map 2) are described by the National Soil Information System database. This attribute database gives the proportionate extent of the component soils and the properties for each soil. The database contains both estimated and measured data on the physical and chemical soil properties and soil interpretations for engineering, water management, recreation, agronomic, woodland, range, and wildlife uses of the soil. The complete Soil Survey Geographic database for Alleghany County, Virginia should be referenced for additional soil information.



# Town of Clifton Forge

## Map 2 Soil Classifications

### Legend

- |  |                                |  |                                 |
|--|--------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
|  | Alonzeville loam               |  | Nicelytown silt loam            |
|  | Berks-Weikert complex          |  | Ogles very cobbly loam          |
|  | Caneyville silt loam           |  | Oriskany cobbly sandy loam      |
|  | Cottenbend silt loam           |  | Purdy                           |
|  | Cottenbend-Urban land complex  |  | Shelocta-Berks complex          |
|  | Coursey-Ogles-shelocta complex |  | Sugarhol silt loam              |
|  | Dekalb-Lily complex            |  | Udorthents rock outcrop complex |
|  | Escatawba loam                 |  | Urban land-Udorthents complex   |
|  | Gilpin silt loam               |  | Watahala-Frederick complex      |
|  | Gladehill loam                 |  | Weikert-Berks-Rough complex     |
|  | Lily-McClung-Dekalb complex    |  | Wharton-Blairton complex        |
|  | Murrill loam                   |  | Zoar-Urban land complex         |

Scale 0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

## **Groundwater**

Detailed studies of groundwater in Clifton Forge are not available. At present, water supplies are mostly derived from surface water, with very few consumers depending on well water.

General information about groundwater and aquifer systems in this part of Virginia indicates groundwater quantity and quality may be variable in Clifton Forge. The area is within the Mississippian-Devonian-Silurian aquifer system, which is composed primarily of shale, siltstone and sandstone, with some limestone. The shale is able to hold large quantities of water but its permeability is low, leading to slow moving water. Sandstone's permeability is better, but it is usually found in the higher elevations causing its recharge rates to be relatively low. Consequently, well yields in either rock would not be high. Quality problems are sometimes encountered because of high concentrations of iron, sulfur and pockets of methane gas.

## **Surface Water**

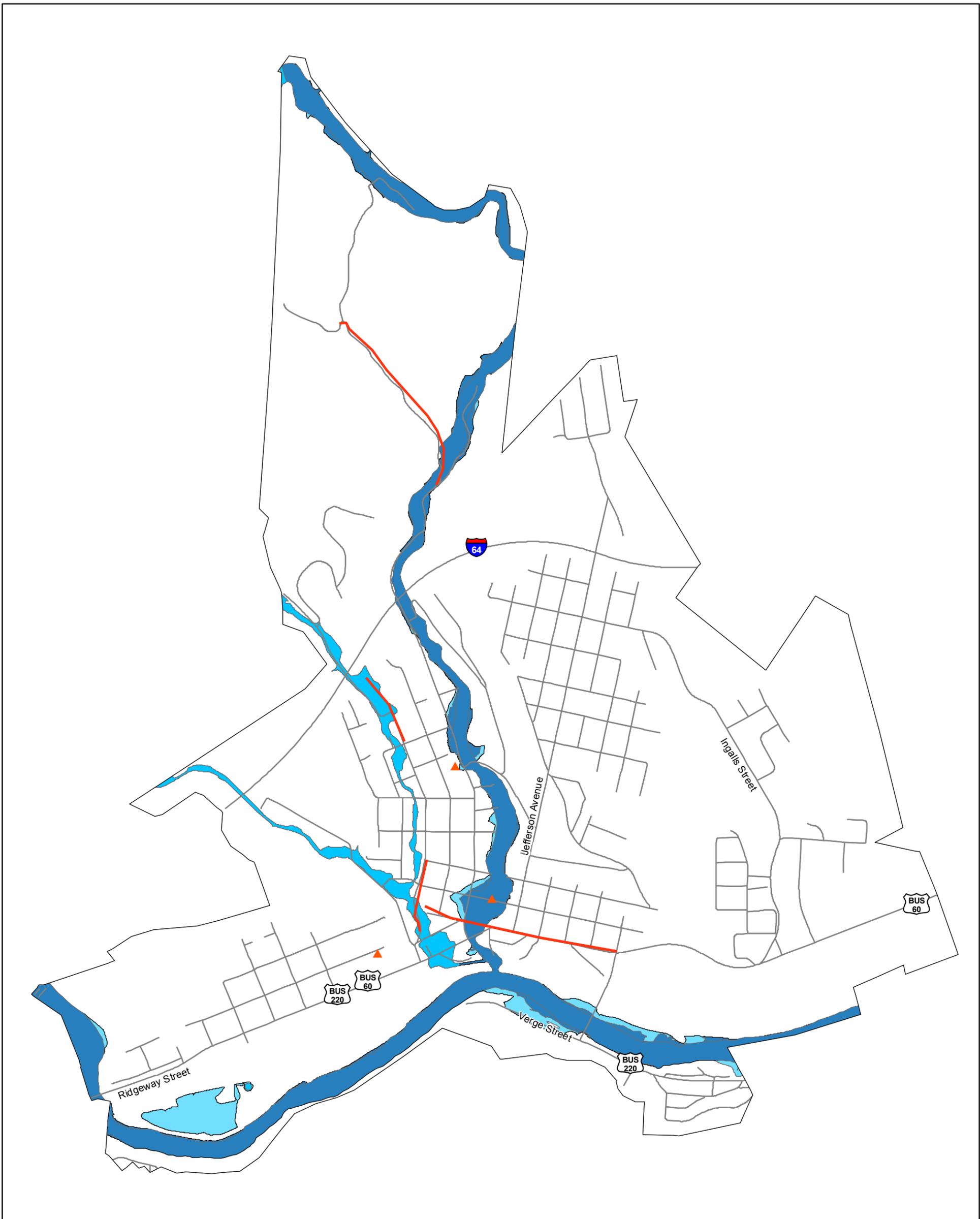
The town lies within the drainage basin of the Jackson River, which flows west to east through the southern part of town. The Jackson River's confluence with the Cowpasture River forms the James River a short distance downstream from Clifton Forge. Within town, several smaller streams enter the Jackson River from the north including Smith Creek, Dry Creek, East Branch, Hazel Run, and several other small unnamed tributaries. The Jackson River and its tributaries drain approximately 900 square miles of Virginia and West Virginia.

There are three dams in Alleghany County that could impact the Town of Clifton Forge. These are the Clifton Forge Dams along Smith Creek (owned and maintained by the Town of Clifton Forge), Gathwright Dam (US Army Corps of Engineers), and Mead Westvaco #2 Flyash Lagoon Dam (Mead Westvaco). Gathright Dam was completed in 1979 and is operated for flood control. The facility is managed by the Army Corps of Engineers.

Clifton Forge has three (3) dams located on Smith Creek. Smith Creek Reservoir serves as the water supply for the Town of Clifton Forge and indirectly supplies water to portions of Alleghany County and the Town of Iron Gate. The Town of Clifton Forge is responsible for the maintenance of the dams. All of these dams are subject to the National Dam Safety Program Act of 1996 and the resulting 1998 Federal Guidelines for Dam Safety. FEMA requires all dam owners to develop an Emergency Action Plan for warning, evacuation and post-flood actions. The dams are also subject to the Virginia Dam Safety Act that is administered by the by the Department of Conservation and Recreation and Dam Safety Regulations enacted by the Virginia Soil and Water Conservation Board. All dams are in good standing with State and Federal regulatory agencies at this time.

## **Flood Hazards**

Clifton Forge has adopted a Floodplain Management Ordinance which requires new residential buildings to be elevated to or above the base flood elevation. Additional requirements prevent the obstruction of the floodway. The Town has a Floodplain Overlay in its Zoning Ordinance. The Town participates in a flood warning system developed by the National Weather Service called Integrated Flood Observing and Warning System (IFLOWS). Through the use of radio-transmitted information, this system provides advanced flood forecasting to the Town Emergency Operation Center. There are no IFLOW stations located in the Town. Clifton Forge also participates in the Regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan that outlines goals for mitigation of flooding and other natural disasters.



# Town of Clifton Forge

## Map 3 Flood Hazard

### Legend

- USGS Stream Gages
- IFLOWS Gages
- ▲ Flood Loss
- Flood Prone Roadways
- 500 Year Flood
- 100 Year Flood
- Floodplain
- Outside of Floodplain

Scale 0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

## **Chapter 7 Community Facilities**

### **Department of Public Works**

The Department of Public Works is the operation arm of Clifton Forge. It maintains and operates the Town's physical plant. All street related maintenance, including road and sidewalk conditions, snowplowing and salting, are performed by Public Works staff. Water, sewer and stormwater infrastructure are also maintained by the department, working closely with the water plant staff to assure that the utilities provided to our citizens are delivered consistently and without interruption.

Significant resources are devoted to supporting service organizations for their seasonal activities and projects.

### **Clifton Forge Wastewater Treatment Plant**

The Clifton Forge Wastewater Treatment Plant was originally constructed in 1957 to treat municipal sewage from the then City of Clifton Forge. It underwent upgrades in the mid 1970s the early 1990s and the most recent upgrade between 2000 and 2002, which added a 3.6 million gallon flow equalization system. Currently, the facility is rated at 2.0 million gallons per day and treats sewage from the Town of Clifton Forge, the Town of Iron Gate, Westgate, Cliftondale Park and Selma.

In late 2010, the facility was converted to a pump station and flow equalization facility as part of an approximately \$40 million regional wastewater treatment plant project. Flows from Clifton Forge are pumped to the new Lower Jackson River Wastewater Treatment Plant located in Iron Gate. This new plant is designed to reduce Total Nitrogen and Total Phosphorus discharges as part of the Chesapeake Bay restoration program and provide state of the art treatment for the anticipated future.

### **Clifton Forge Water Treatment Plant**

Construction of the Clifton Forge Water Treatment Plant began in mid-1958. The plant went online in January 1960. Prior to 1960, WTP operations were handled at a small shack while disinfection, piping and storage were the only treatment provided.

All homes, businesses, industry and public buildings within the town obtain potable water from this plant. Also many areas of Alleghany County receive water from the Clifton Forge WTP. Alleghany County buys water from Clifton Forge, pipes it throughout their distribution system and resells it to their customers. Iron Gate (along with a small section of Botetourt County) along with Douthat State Park is served by Clifton Forge.

The Clifton Forge plant is a conventional, surface water plant with a design of 3 million gallons per day, with a safe yield from its Smith Creek source of 2.2 MGD. In 2009, the plant treated 513.177 million gallons with a monthly average of 42.765 million gallons. During 2009, the low

month was in September with 39.429 million gallons and a high flow of 50.137 million gallons was treated in January.

The WTP may obtain its raw water from three different intakes located on three different inline reservoirs. Each reservoir has its own dam along with its own intake works. Intakes include screens that prevent large objects/debris and fish from entering the WTP. Plant staff is in charge of initiating and reporting flood stages during times of rainfall and snowmelt. Likewise, during dry seasons, staff report conditions to community leaders to issue stricter water conservation measures. Both flood stages and drought conditions are measured using staff gauges trending water flowing over the spillway.

When water has traveled through a number of processes and has come into contact with the necessary chemicals, the water enters the distribution system. The town of Clifton Forge employs miles of piping with varying diameters along with two pumping stations and four ground storage water tanks and one elevated storage water tank for both water storage and pressure. This offsite storage equals 1,527,400 gallons when all are full.

Fire hydrants are placed throughout the town and parts of areas where the town sells water. Hydrants are used primarily for firefighting, but may be used to flush lines to establish better water quality in the distribution system.

There have been upgrades and additional treatment added to plant processes throughout the years. The plant staff is pleased to announce that with the years of service to the community, a large percentage of its treatment plant and its components are original equipment.

## **Recycling and Solid Waste Management**

Currently, recycling is not done by the town or county. Recycling is available at collection centers located at Kroger and in west Clifton Forge at Matthews Park, or can be taken to Jackson River Enterprises. A private recycling service is available and a new metal recycling business has opened in the town.

Clifton Forge Public Works staff provides weekly brush and bulk pick-up throughout the town. They maintain all municipal property within the Town limits, including the Town's three cemeteries and four public parks. The water and sewer crew provide water meter readings to the finance Department for billing and consumption tracking.

Alleghany County provides weekly curbside solid waste pickup to residents of Clifton Forge and Alleghany County. Refuse collection for businesses within the town and Alleghany County is also provided. There is a transfer station available to County residents as well as the Town of Clifton Forge and the Town of Iron Gate. This facility is located on Valley Ridge Road. Use of this facility to County residents is free, except for the disposal of tires. Fees apply to construction contractors for use of the facility.

## **Public Safety**

### Clifton Forge Police Department

The Patrol Division of the Clifton Forge Police Department is responsible for responding to all calls for service within the town limits. These calls for service run the entire gamut between major crimes, both in progress and which have passed, to unlocking vehicle doors. In addition, CFPD's Patrol Division is also responsible for traffic enforcement, accident investigation, business and security checks, aiding disabled or stranded motorists and travelers, and enforcing all state, federal, and local laws, and serving criminal court documents.

CFPD's Patrol Division responds to an average of 4,500 calls per year. In addition, its officers issue an average of 600 traffic summons, 275 misdemeanor and 100 felony arrests, serve 600 court documents, issue 300 parking violations, investigate an average of 75 traffic accidents, find about 150 unsecured buildings, and provide an average of 140 money/funeral escorts.

The Patrol Division consists of ten sworn officers, which includes four Sergeants, one Lieutenant and a Chief.

Patrol officers at CFPD assist the Alleghany County Sheriff's Office and CSX Railroad Police in dealing with situations and calls for service which arise in areas surrounding the town (and in the case of CSX, within the town).

Traffic enforcement is perhaps one of the patrol division's most visible tools. Its purpose is to provide for the safe and smooth flow of traffic within the town. Through vigilant enforcement of traffic laws, through accident investigations, identification and eliminating traffic hazard and strict DUI enforcement, CFPD strives to make the town streets safe for everyone.

CFPD's patrol officers reach out into the community by means of personal contact, professional service, by conducting department tours, and by conducting and arranging talks with school children as well as various civic and community organizations. Community relations are very important to all of CFPD's patrol officers and each officer strives to increase community support on a daily basis.

In August 1997, the Clifton Forge Police Department became the first department locally to utilize police officers on bicycles as a means of regular patrol. The program, due to the enthusiasm of the officers involved, enjoyed instant success. During the first three weeks of operation, the bike officers affected 60 arrests which included; drug related, DUI, traffic infractions, drunk and disorderly in public, suspended drivers, and warrant service.

The officers in the bicycle patrol use specially designed Raleigh mountain bikes to conduct patrol and work special events. They also participate in bicycle safety demonstrations for schools and civic organizations.

Bicycle patrols, in addition to other types of patrols, have emerged as an effective way to patrol communities. It allows the officer to cover more ground and at the same time provides less of a barrier than a vehicle for improving community relations. In addition, the bicycles allow officers to get into areas normally not easily accessible by patrol vehicles, and allow the officers to "sneak-up" on the bad guys. The availability of this type of patrol is dependent upon the bicycle officer's schedules, the necessity of motorized patrol, and of course, weather.

## Animal Control

The Police Department is responsible for animal control within the town limits of Clifton Forge. Animal control is handled by all Police Officers, who, in addition to the respective patrol activities receive additional training on animal control related topics such as; animal control laws, search and seizure and capture techniques.

Animal control averages approximately 50-70 complaints a month such as dogs running at large, capturing wild cats and cruelty cases. In Clifton Forge, there are laws requiring dogs to be vaccinated by the time they are 4 months old and they must be licensed every year. Animals which are captured are taken to the Alleghany Humane Society. Dogs are held at the shelter for 10 days then placed up for adoption to the public. Cats are kept for a maximum of 7 days.

The main purpose for animal control is to ensure people are safe from animals and that animals are safe and properly cared for.

## E-911

The Clifton Forge E-911 Communications Center was merged with the Alleghany County E-911 Communications Center in Covington in 2010. Communication Officers at the Sheriff's Office answer all Clifton Forge E-911 calls and dispatch Clifton Forge Police, Fire, and EMS accordingly. The Clifton Forge Police Department still handles all of their administrative calls and has an employee to address administrative duties during normal business hours. The Town has kept its dispatch center intact and maintained in the event it is needed as a back-up center to the County's Communication Center.

## **Clifton Forge Fire Department**

The Clifton Forge Fire Department was founded in 1886 and today has an average of 39 volunteer firefighters and three professional firefighter/EMTs that drive and operate the engines. The Fire Department coverage varies from residential and business throughout the town as well as providing mutual aid to surrounding departments within Alleghany County.

Today, the Department apparatus consists of two engines, one equipment truck, one support truck, and our newest addition, a 2002 Pierce 105' aerial truck. The engines are a 1992 Grumman pumper with a four man jump seat; it carries 750 gallons of water and is able to pump 1,250 gallons per minute. The department's second engine is a 2000 Ferrara pumper and it carries 1,000 gallons of water and is able to pump 1,250 gallons per minute. It carries a variety of equipment from extra packs to brush fire equipment. The department's support truck is a 2004 Dodge Ram 4-door, 4x4 pickup and is used to transport members to calls.

## **Clifton Forge Rescue Squad**

The Clifton Forge Rescue Squad is all volunteer, but well staffed and highly trained and competent. The squad was founded in 1945. The squad averages between 1,400 and 1,800 calls per year. The squad currently has one of the largest coverage areas of any volunteer rescue squad in the state of Virginia covering four counties, two towns, and providing mutual aid for 11 other agencies. All of this is accomplished with a current roster of approximately 30 members.

## **Education Facilities**

The Town of Clifton Forge is served by the Alleghany County School System. Students from Clifton Forge attend Alleghany County High School, Clifton Middle School, and Clifton Elementary School in Low Moor. In addition, students may attend the Jackson River Governor's School at Dabney S. Lancaster Community College or the Jackson River Technical School in Low Moor.

## **Clifton Forge Public Library**

The Clifton Forge Public Library is housed in a modern brick building constructed in 1998. It contains approximately 50,000 books, tapes and discs and has an annual circulation (FY10) of 27,370. The library sponsors special events for children, including a summer reading program. The library web site provides public access to the library's catalog, an events calendar, hours and information, resource links and the Friends of the CFPL Newsletter.

## **Healthcare Facilities**

Lewis Gale Hospital at Alleghany is located in Low Moor, Virginia, only 4 miles from Clifton Forge. This 190 licensed bed facility serves eight counties in Virginia and West Virginia. The hospital includes 68 general medical and surgical beds, six pediatric rooms, a 10-bed Intensive Care Unit, an 8-bed Progressive Care Unit, five Operating Rooms, one cystoscopy room two endoscopy rooms and a 10-bed Emergency Department.

Specialties at LewisGale Hospital at Alleghany include family practice, internal medicine, emergency medicine, cardiac services, pulmonology, infectious diseases, orthopedics, nephrology, general surgery, urology, gynecology, ophthalmology, anesthesiology, radiology, pathology, pediatrics, psychiatry and otolaryngology.

Lewis Gale Hospital at Alleghany is the second largest employer in the region and is a part of the HCA Virginia health care system.

## Chapter 8 Transportation

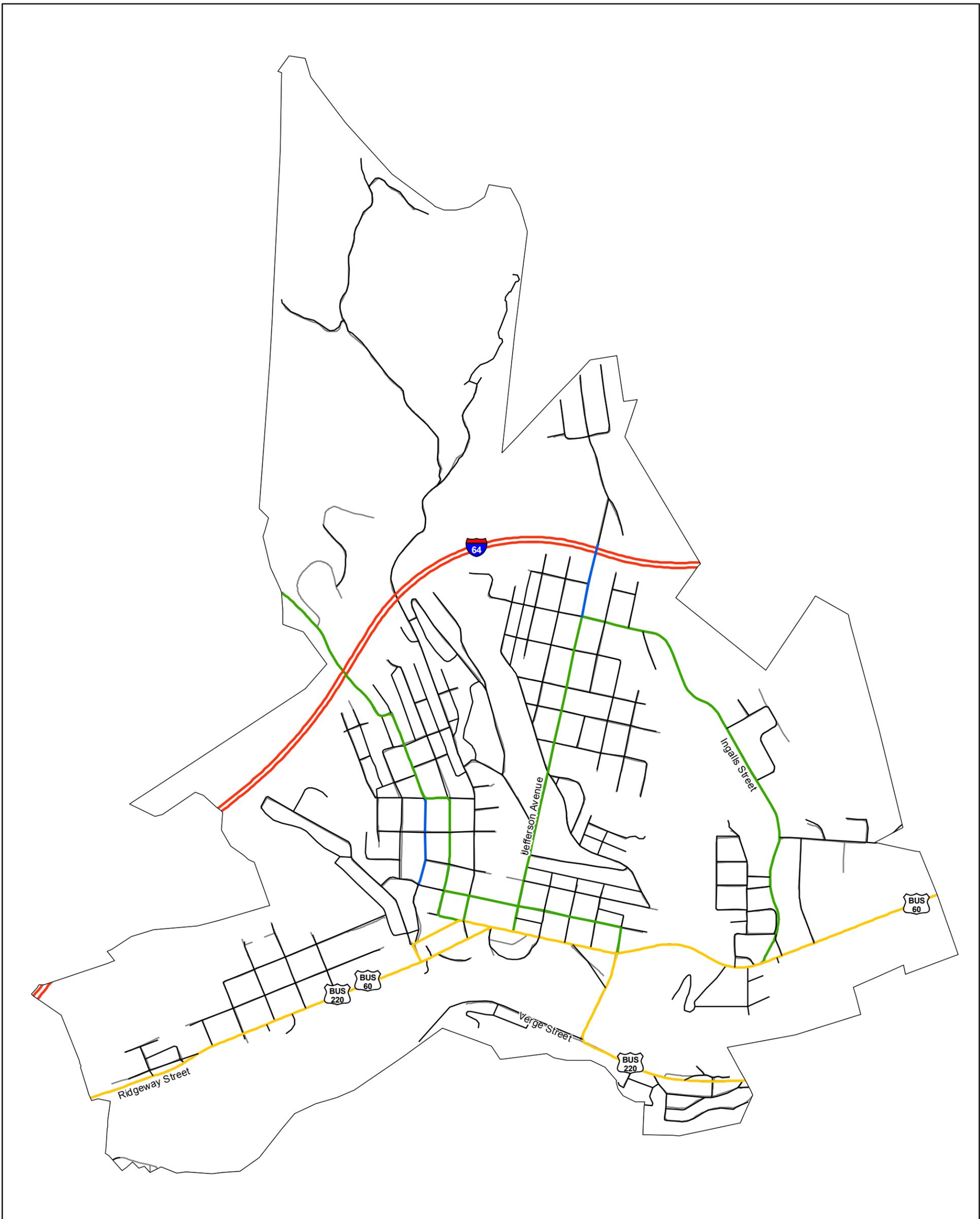
### Highway Network

The Town of Clifton Forge is crossed east to west by Interstate 64, US Highway 60, and US Highway 60 Business. US Highway 220 provides north-south travel entering the Town in the I-64/US 60 corridor from Botetourt County, then going west to Covington. Route 220 Business enters the town from the east, following Verge Street and passing over the Jackson River and through downtown to rejoin I-64 near the western town limits. Virginia Primary Routes 188 travels north from downtown into Alleghany County and eventually to Bath County. The highway network is made up of Urban Interstate, Urban Collector, Urban Minor Arterial, Urban Local and Town streets (Map 4).

Table 25  
Annual Average Weekday Traffic (AAWDT) Volume Estimates

| Highway                                       | Distance | From                                      | To   | 2005   | 2010   |
|---|----------|---|--|--------|--------|
| US 60/I-64/US 220                             | 1.55 mi. | WCL Clifton Forge                         | ECL Clifton Forge                          | 14,000 | 12,000 |
| Bus. US 60/Bus. US 220<br>Ridgeway St.        | 0.27 mi. | WCL Clifton Forge                         | 6 <sup>th</sup> St.                        | 8,600  | 8,700  |
| Bus. US 60/Bus. US 220<br>Ridgeway St.        | 0.61 mi. | 6 <sup>th</sup> St.                       | Roxbury St.                                | 9,100  | 9,500  |
| Bus. US 60/Bus. US 220<br>Ridgeway St.        | 0.14 mi. | Roxbury St.                               | Commercial Ave.                            | 9,200  | 9,600  |
| Bus. US 60/Bus. US 220/SR 188<br>Ridgeway St. | 0.07 mi. | Commercial Ave.                           | Main St.                                   | 9,400  | 9,200  |
| Bus. US 60/Bus. US 220<br>Main St.            | 0.26 mi. | Ridgeway St.                              | B St.                                      | 6,300  | 8,400  |
| Bus. US 60/Bus. US 220<br>Main St.            | 0.06 mi. | B St.                                     | Bus. US 220                                | 6,800  | 7,000  |
| Bus. US 60                                    | 0.87 mi. | US 220 Bus.                               | ECL Clifton Forge                          | 5,900  | 6,200  |
| Bus. US 60/Bus. US 220<br>Roxbury St.         | 0.05 mi. | Ridgeway St.                              | Keswick St.                                | 5,600  | 6,000  |
| Bus. US 60/Bus. US 220<br>Keswick St.         | 0.14 mi. | Roxbury St.                               | Main St.                                   | 9,200  | 9,600  |
| SR 188 Main St.                               | 0.05 mi. | US 60, Keswick St.                        | McCormick Blvd.                            | 3,000  | 2,900  |
| SR 188 Commercial Ave.                        | 0.05 mi. | Bus. US 60/Bus. US 220, E<br>Ridgeway St. | Bus. US 60,<br>Bus. US 220,<br>Main Street | 1,800  | 1,600  |
| SR 188 Commercial Ave.                        | 0.06 mi. | Bus. US 60, Bus. US 220,<br>Main St.      | Church Street                              | 3,000  | 2,900  |
| SR 188 Church St.                             | 0.07 mi. | Commercial Ave.                           | McCormick Blvd.                            | 1,900  | 1,900  |
| Bus. US 220                                   | 0.70 mi. | SCL Clifton Forge                         | Bus. US 60                                 | 2,400  | 2,000  |

Source: Average Daily Traffic Volumes 2005, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), 2006. Average Daily Traffic Volumes 2010, VDOT, 2011



# Town of Clifton Forge

## Map 4 Highway Network

### Legend

#### Road Inventory Functional Class

- Interstate; Urban Interstate
- Urban Collector
- Urban Minor Arterial
- Urban Local
- Town

Scale 0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

## 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan

The Transportation and Mobility Planning Division of the Virginia Department of Transportation has worked with other agencies and local governments to develop VTrans 2035, Virginia's multi-modal long range plan and a more detailed subset report known as the 2035 Surface Transportation Plan. The highway element of the 2035 Surface Transportation Plan includes proposed improvements on Virginia's federal functionally classified roadways. This Rural Long Range Transportation Plan is one piece of the 2035 Surface Transportation Plan.

The transportation system within the rural areas for each region was evaluated, and a range of transportation improvements - roadway, rail, transit, air, bicycle, and pedestrian - are recommended that can best satisfy existing and future needs. Each rural regional plan has a horizon year of 2035 and addresses the anticipated impacts of population and employment growth upon the transportation system. Each rural plan was developed as a vision plan, addressing all needs of the transportation system studied regardless of anticipated funding availability. It is envisioned that each regional plan will be used as a basis to identify transportation funding priorities. This plan will be reviewed and updated as needed.

### **Future Transportation Needs**

The Town of Clifton Forge is a small rural locality where most developable land is already in use. The Town's topography of steep slopes, streams and the Jackson River has determined where past development could occur and will limit future development. The Town is not anticipating any substantial new growth for the 5-year planning period.

There are three ongoing efforts by the Town which could result in growth through reuse of existing properties and new development: 1) Preservation and reuse of downtown commercial property; 2) Preservation and reuse of historic residential properties; and 3) development of a new business park.

The Town is encouraging reuse of existing commercial building in the central business district in an effort to revitalize its economy. While marketing of downtown properties and recruitment of businesses to fill vacant buildings will bring new businesses and consumers to town, these activities are not expected to have a dramatic impact on the transportation network. A majority of the projects listed in the Transportation Priorities listed in Table 26 will occur in the downtown and will address traffic flow and parking issues associated with commercial activities.

Clifton Forge recently expanded its State designated Historic District to encompass much of the residential area adjacent to downtown as part of the Town's effort to encourage the preservation and reuse of its historic homes. It is anticipated that through this preservation homes will be available for new residents and result in moderate population growth. Again, this activity is not expected to impact the transportation network. Three of the projects in the Transportation Priorities are located in residential areas - numbers 2, 4, and 6.

Development of a new site at the Business Center is a major economic development undertaking for the Town that will impact the region. The Town is working with an engineering firm and the VDOT Staunton District Office to design a new access road from US 60/220 Business north to Chestnut Street adjacent to the business park. Future development at the park is expected to be commercial in nature with low traffic volumes and little truck traffic which would impact the transportation network.

The overall transportation priorities discussed in this chapter were selected following review of existing planning documents and gathering of public input. Existing VDOT plans (Six Year Improvement Plan, 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation) were used as the basis for development of the priority listing. Local plans including design of the business center access road, Downtown Vision & Strategic Plan, Downtown Marketing Strategy, and the Clifton Forge Trail master Plan were all taken into consideration.

Projects were initially reviewed by the Comprehensive Plan Citizen's Committee, Town Council, and Town staff. Projects were further reviewed with VDOT staff during meetings and a field trip before creating the priority project list. All projects were reviewed based on need, impact on the transportation network, construction time required and cost.

Described on the following pages and shown on Map 5 are the priority transportation projects endorsed by the Town of Clifton Forge.

Table 26  
Transportation Project Rankings, 2012

| Rank | Location   | Description   | Cost Estimate |
|------|--|---|---------------|
| 1    | New Road to Future Business Center from U.S. 60/220 Business (Main Street) to Chestnut Street (0.14 miles) | Construct a new road from U.S. 220 Business (Main Street) to Chestnut Street.   | \$1,100,000   |
| 2    | US 60/220 Business (Main Street) at Jefferson Avenue   | Pending further study, consider alternate traffic control devices.  | \$300,000     |
| 3    | Jefferson Avenue at Church Street  | Determine if traffic control signal is still warranted. If warranted, replace with modern traffic control signal. If signal is not warranted cost = (4 x Cost of installing a stop sign).                               | \$300,000     |
| 4    | VA 3551 (Sioux Avenue) from Clifton Forge corporate limits to Tremont Street (0.4 miles)                   | Consider widening to 12 foot lanes and maintaining clear area near shoulders to improve sight distance and travel speeds (Add sidewalk).  | \$3,100,000   |
| 5    | US 60 Business (Main Street) at Ingalls Street   | Reconfigure intersection to improve turning radius. Realign Ingalls Street to intersect at a 90-degree angle with Main Street.  | \$200,000     |
| 6    | Ingalls Street from US 60/220 Business (Main Street) to 0.49 miles south of Jefferson Avenue (0.6 miles)   | Reconstruct to rural two-lane roadway standards including guardrail in cut sections.  | \$3,600,000   |
| 7    | VA 188 (Church Street) from Commercial Avenue to McCormick Boulevard                                       | Reduce width of parking spaces to 7-foot wide. Consider experimenting with no stripping for parking spaces. Consider stripping for sharrows in each direction to accommodate bicyclists. (Re-Striping).                 | \$500         |
| 8    | VA 188 (McCormick Boulevard) from Main Street to Church Street   | Narrow width of parking spaces to 7-feet. Add parking on the east side from the alley to Church Street. Consolidate the outbound lanes from two to one single lane. (Re-Striping)                                       | \$500         |
| 9    | US 60/220 Business (Main Street) from US 60/220 Business (Ridgeway Street) to Hazel Hollow (0.48 miles)    | Reconstruct to urban two-lane standards with curb and gutter. Improve Access control.   | \$3,100,000   |
| 10   | Jefferson Avenue from Benton Street to I-64 (0.23 miles)   | Reconstruct to urban two-lane roadway standards with sidewalk on both sides. Consider east side if funds are limited. Extend project limit south to Park Street to connect with the existing sidewalk on the east side. | \$2,300,000   |

Source: Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan 2011, Virginia Department of Transportation Staunton District Office, and Town of Clifton Forge.

**Priority 1 - New Road to Future Business Center from U.S. 60/U.S. 220 Business (Main Street) to Chestnut Street**

Reference: *This project is not in the Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan.*

Project Description:

The Town of Clifton Forge would like to have a new roadway constructed between Main Street and Chestnut Street to make land accessible for economic development. The E-Z Pass Service Center already exists off of a portion of this partly-constructed roadway. Additional parcels would become accessible with the roadway's completion.

Recommendations:

- Construct a new road from U.S. 60/U.S. 220 Business (Main Street) to Chestnut Street.

**Priority 2 - U.S. 60/U.S. 220 Business (Main Street) at Jefferson Avenue**

Reference: *Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, page 11, #41.*

U.S.60/220 Bus. (Main St.)/Jefferson Ave. – Short-term replace existing traffic signal with a new signal.

Project Description:

The traffic control signal at U.S. 60/U.S. 220 Business is located in front of the Clifton Forge Town Hall. The Town has had difficulty finding replacement parts for the signal due to its age. Additionally, traffic on Jefferson Avenue is currently prohibited from turning left onto Main Street. In addition to studying alternate traffic control devices for this intersection, an evaluation of left-turn prohibition should be done to determine if it is still warranted.

Recommendations:

- Pending further study, consider alternate traffic control devices.
- Determine if the prohibition against left turns onto Main Street is still needed, and if not, remove related signage.

**Priority 3 - Jefferson Avenue at Church Street**

Reference: *This project is not in the Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan.*

Project Description:

The traffic control signal at Jefferson Avenue and Church Street needs to be evaluated to see if there is still a need for it. If the signal is still warranted, it should be replaced to current standards.

Recommendations:

- Determine if the traffic control signal is still warranted. If it is warranted, replace it with a modern traffic control signal.

- Conduct a signal warrant analysis on all traffic control signals within the Town of Clifton Forge limits.

**Priority 4** - VA 3551 (Sioux Avenue) from Clifton Forge northern corporate limits to Tremont Street

Reference: *Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, page 10, #34.*  
Sioux Ave. /Northern Corp. Limits – Clifton Forge to Tremont St. – Long-term consider widening to 12-foot lanes and maintaining clear areas near shoulders.

Project Description:

VA 3551 (Sioux Avenue) serves as an alternate route for tourists to access Hot Springs. At the Clifton Forge/Alleghany County line, a double yellow line exists on the county side. In Clifton Forge, this road needs to be widened to the standard road width, striped, and a sidewalk constructed on the residential side.

Recommendations:

- During road repaving, provide standard width travel lanes and stripe a double yellow center line.
- Construct a sidewalk in front of the houses and connect it to the existing sidewalk on Rose Avenue.

**Priority 5** - U.S. 60/220 Business (Main Street) at Ingalls Street

Reference: *Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, page 10, #37.*  
US 60 Bus. (Main St.) at Ingalls St. – Short-term reconfigure intersection.

Project Description:

When vehicles on Ingalls Street are waiting to turn left or right onto U.S. 60/220 Business (Main Street), they are challenged with poor sight distance in both directions. Realigning Ingalls Street to intersect at a 90-degree angle with Main Street would improve safety by providing better sight distance.

Recommendations:

- Realign Ingalls Street to intersect at a 90-degree angle with Main Street.

**Priority 6** - Ingalls Street from U.S. 60/220 Business (Main Street) to 0.49 miles south of Jefferson Avenue

Reference: *Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, page 11, #42.*  
Ingalls St. /US 60/220 Bus. (Main St.) to 0.49 miles south of Jefferson Ave. – Short-term reconstruct to urban two-lane roadway standards including guardrail in cut sections.

Project Description:

Ingalls Street is used by many residents in Clifton Forge as a bypass, avoiding the central business district to access residential areas on the north part of town. In some sections, Ingalls Street is narrow and windy. Contrary to the information in the Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, Ingalls Street should be reconstructed as a *rural* two-lane roadway, north of Camden Street. Lane widths and roadway geometry should meet current standards. Guardrail is needed on the east side.

Recommendations:

- Reconstruct to rural two-lane roadway standards north of Camden Street with guardrails on the east side.

**Priority 7 - VA 188 (Commercial Avenue) from Main Street to Church Street**

Reference: *Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, page 10, #31.*

VA 188 (Commercial Ave.)/Main St. to Church St. – Long-term consider access mgmt. and alternative methods of traffic control.

Project Description:

This block of Commercial Avenue is a two-way street, 33-feet wide, with 8-foot parking lanes on both sides. As the street name indicates, the adjacent land uses are commercial in character. Commercial Avenue serves as a primary north-south thoroughfare. The marked parking spaces are wider than necessary. They should be reduced to 7-feet wide. The Town may also consider removing the parking striping on this block and test how the street functions without the striping. Not having striped parking would reduce maintenance costs.

Recommendations:

- Reduce the width of parking spaces to 7-feet wide.
- Consider experimenting with no striping for parking spaces.
- Consider striping sharrows in each direction to accommodate bicyclists.

**Priority 8 - VA 188 (McCormick Boulevard) from Main Street to Church Street**

Reference: *Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, page 10, #33.*

VA 188 (McCormick Blvd.)/Main St. to Church St. – Long-term consider access mgmt. and alternative methods of traffic control.

Project Description:

McCormick Boulevard between Main Street and Church Street currently accommodates one-way northbound traffic. There is a church on the northwest corner along with a few residences. On-street parking is located on the west side of the street and on the east side, south of the alley. By consolidating the two outbound lanes at Church Street into one single lane, additional parking could be added on the east side between the alley and Church Street.

Recommendations:

- Narrow the width of parking spaces to 7-feet.

- Add parking on the east side from the alley to Church Street.
- Consolidate the outbound lanes from two to one single lane.

**Priority 9** - U.S. 60/U.S. 220 Business (Main Street) from U.S. 60/U.S. 220 Business (Ridgeway Street) to Hazel Hollow

Reference: *Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, page 11, #44.*

US 60/220 Bus. (Main St.)/US 60/220 Bus. (Ridgeway St.) to Hazel Hollow – Mid-term reconstruct to urban two-lane roadway standards, with curb and gutter and access mgmt.

Project Description:

The primary concern on Main Street between Ridgeway Street and Hazel Hollow (near Booker T. Washington Park) is the lack of adequate curb height, which is currently almost at street level. As a result, intersections often flood during rainstorms. Additionally, in narrow sections of sidewalk, the placement of utility poles may create an obstacle for people with disabilities.

Recommendations:

- Reconstruct the street to provide adequate curb height and accessible sidewalks.

**Priority 10** - Jefferson Avenue from Benton Street to I-64

Reference: *Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, page 11, #45:*

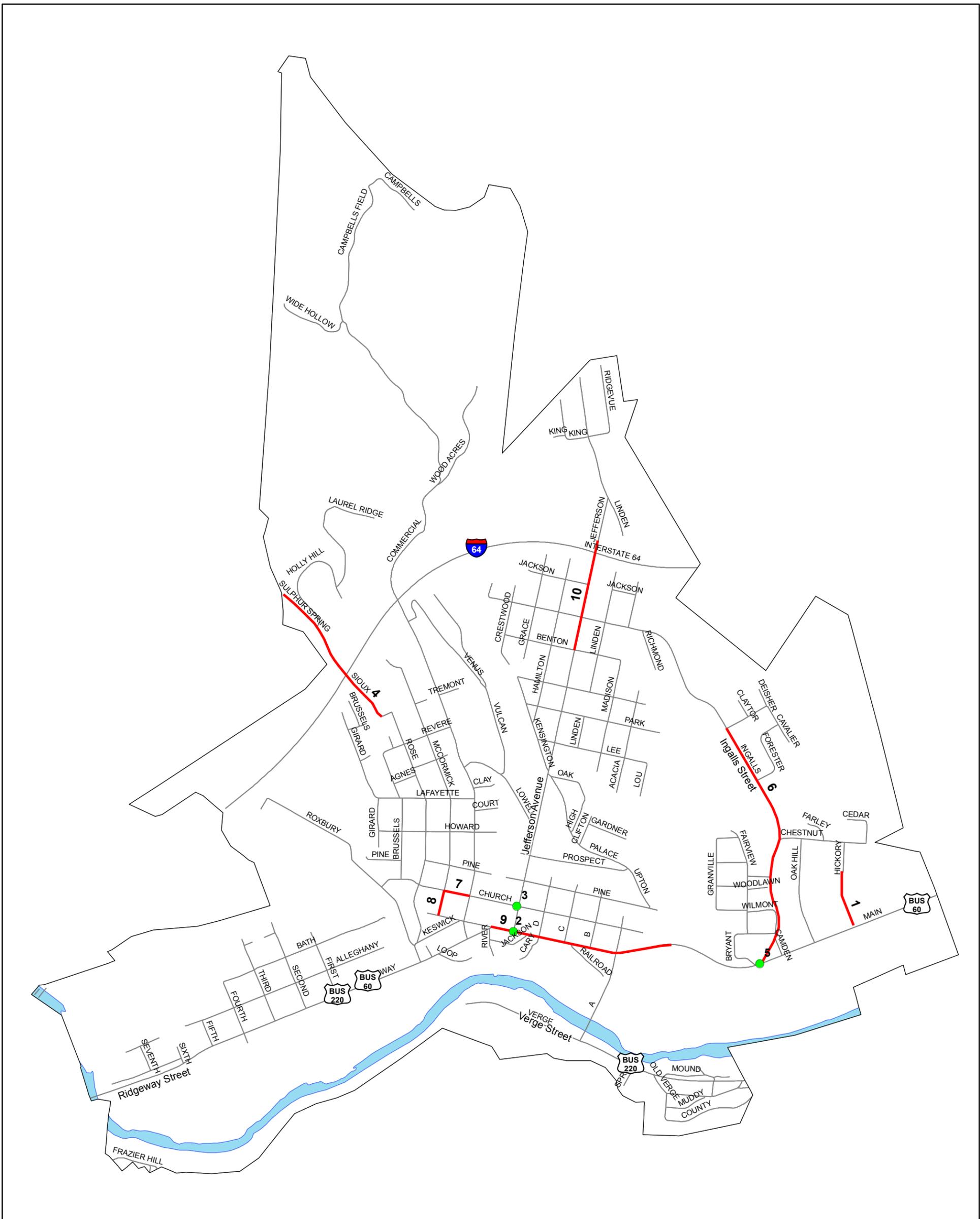
Jefferson Ave. /Benton St. to I-64 – Long-term reconstruct to urban two-lane roadway standards.

Project Description:

Jefferson Avenue is the primary north-south road in Clifton Forge. There is curbing along the east side of this section of Jefferson Avenue and overhead utilities on the west side. The pavement width in this section is 25' wide or 30' from the face of the utility poles to the face of curb. Based on the project limits stated in the Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, it appears the project intention is to continue curb and sidewalk along the west side of Jefferson Avenue. However, based on terrain, the presence of utilities, and the fact that curb already exists on the east side, a sidewalk constructed first on the east side of Jefferson Avenue may be more feasible. If such sidewalk were constructed, the project limit on the south end should be extended to connect with the existing sidewalk at Park Street. Ultimately, it is desirable to continue sidewalks on both sides of the street.

Recommendations:

- Provide curb, gutter, and sidewalks on both sides of the street. Consider first the east side if funds are limited.
- Extend the project limit south to Park Street to connect with the existing sidewalk on the east side.



# Town of Clifton Forge

## Map 5

### Rural Long Range Transportation Plan Priorities

#### Legend

- Intersection
- Street

Scale 0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

## **Trails, Pedestrian Paths, Bicycle Paths and Sidewalks**

Currently Clifton Forge has no dedicated bicycle facilities within the corporate limits. Although bicycles are permitted on all streets and highways within Clifton Forge, there are no routes or paths designated specifically for bicycles.

Clifton Forge has much potential to be a bicycle-friendly town, without extensive on-street accommodations. It is compact, with many key destinations within easy biking/walking distance; traffic pattern and speeds in areas of the town (i.e., central business district) allow for safe bicycling conditions; neighborhood streets provide areas for safe bicycling. The provision of ancillary facilities, such as bike racks, signage and pavements markings could be a cost effective method of improving bicycling conditions and promote bicycling in the town. Potential locations for bike racks include town hall, library, commercial destinations, area schools, and locations throughout the downtown and central business district.

### Rural Bikeway Plan

The Rural Bikeway Plan (2006) is an update to the Rural Bikeway Plan for the Fifth Planning District Commission, completed in 1997. The Rural Bikeway Plan covers the rural portions of the Regional Commission's service area: Alleghany, Craig, and Franklin Counties, the City of Covington, the town of Clifton Forge, and portions of Botetourt and Roanoke Counties.

The purpose of the Rural Bikeway Plan is to provide information and guidance on the planning and provision of bicycle accommodations at the local and regional level, which enhance and encourage bicycling, thereby better enabling citizens to enjoy the transportation, health, and economic benefits of a bicycle-friendly environment. Consideration is given to both utilitarian (i.e., bike commuting, running errands) and recreational uses of the transportation infrastructure. This plan also considers briefly the relationship between bicycling and tourism and the potential economic benefits of a bicycle-friendly environment.

Detailed planning would be required, at the local and regional levels, to develop and implement a bicycling network and realize the benefits of bicycling.

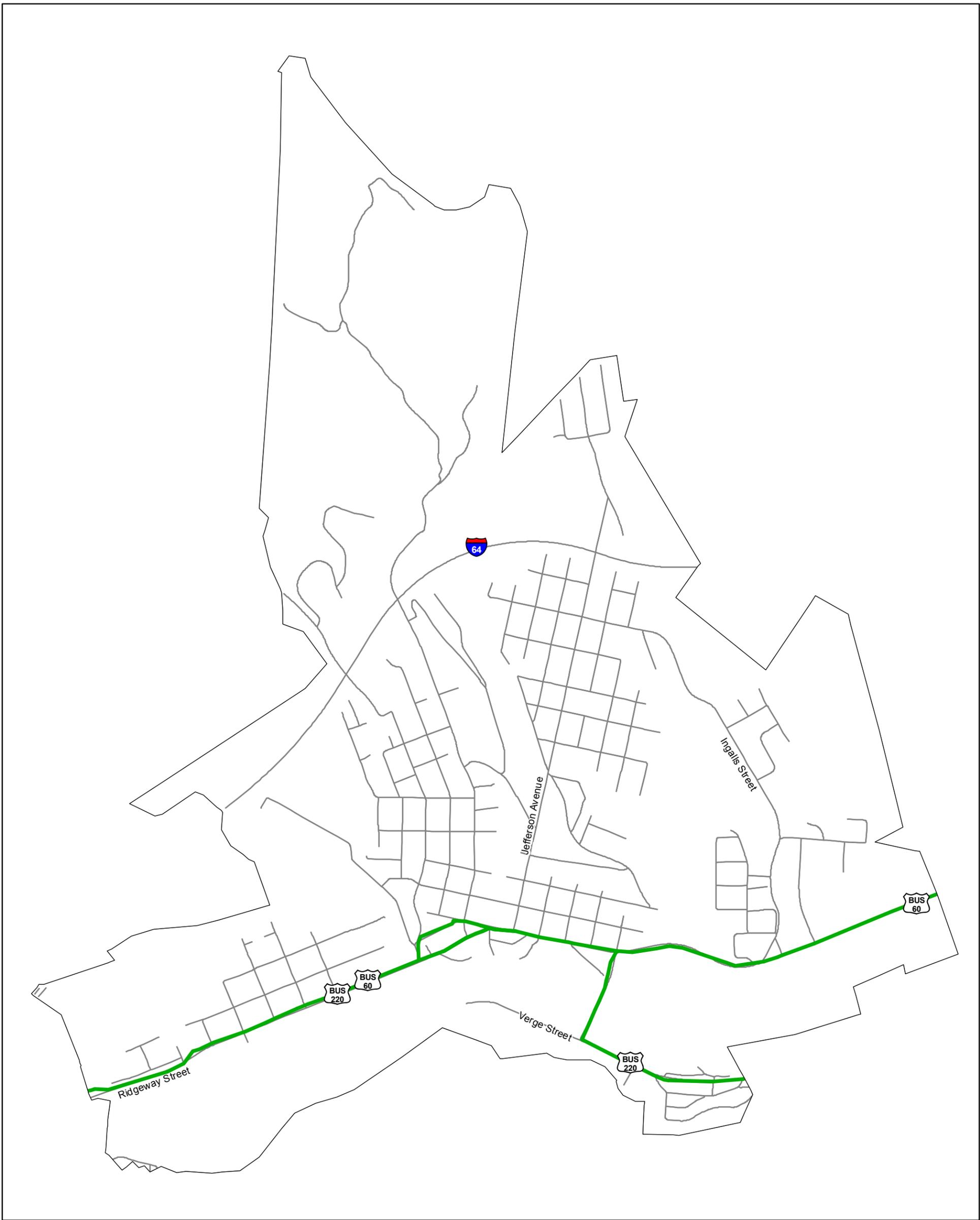
The list of roadways for bicycle accommodation was developed based on review of demographic and spatial data, fieldwork, and local staff and citizen input. Accessibility and connectivity between activity centers and tourism/outdoor recreation opportunities were also considered in developing these tables. The 2004 VDOT Policy for Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations improved the ability of a locality to use its secondary roads allocation to plan, design, and construct bicycle facilities. This policy eliminates the past VDOT policy requiring that a roadway be included in an adopted bikeway plan in order for bicycle accommodations to be considered as part of roadway improvements using Federal and State funding.

It should be noted that all VDOT maintained roads, in addition to the recommended corridors, are covered by the VDOT Policy for Integrating Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations. As such, the table presents a practical, yet limited, listing of corridors to be considered for bicycle accommodation.

Table 27  
Rural Bikeway Plan Recommendations

| Roadway                       | From                | To                  |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| US 60                         | Alleghany County CL | A Street            |
| US 60 / 220 (Main Street)     | A Street            | Keswick Street      |
| US 60 / 220 (Keswick Street)  | Main Street         | Rose Avenue         |
| US 60 / 220 (Rose Avenue)     | Keswick Street      | Roxbury Street      |
| US 60 / 220 (Roxbury Street)  | Rose Avenue         | Ridgeway Street     |
| US 60 / 220 (Ridgeway Street) | Main Street         | Dabney Drive        |
| US 220 (A Street)             | Verge Street        | Main Street         |
| US 220 (Verge Street)         | A Street            | Alleghany County CL |

Source: Rural Bikeway Plan, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, 2006.



# Town of Clifton Forge

## Map 6 Rural Bikeway Plan Proposed Routes

### Legend

 Bikeways (proposed)

Scale 0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

## Commuting Patterns

According to the Census Bureau's American Community Survey, almost 95% of workers living in the Town of Clifton Forge drove to their place of employment. Only 13.4% carpooled to work. Less than one percent walked to work and none commuted to work by public transit, bicycle or other means. The percentage of those that worked at home was 4.5 percent. Almost 71% of workers are employed outside their county of residence and had a travel time to work of more than 30 minutes.

Table 28  
Means of Transportation to Work, Clifton Forge Residents

| Subject                                   |       |
|---|-------|
| Workers 16 years and over                 | 2,582 |
| Car, truck, or van                        | 94.7% |
| Drove alone                               | 81.2% |
| Carpooled                                 | 13.4% |
| In 2-person carpool                       | 13.2% |
| In 3-person carpool                       | 0.3%  |
| In 4-or-more person carpool               | 0.0%  |
| Workers per car, truck, or van            | 1.08  |
| Public transportation (excluding taxicab) | 0.0%  |
| Walked                                    | 0.8%  |
| Bicycle                                   | 0.0%  |
| Taxicab, motorcycle, or other means       | 0.0%  |
| Worked at home                            | 4.5%  |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey.

Table 29  
Place of Work, Clifton Forge Residents

| Place                              | Percentage |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| Worked in state of residence       | 95.7%      |
| Worked in county of residence      | 25.0%      |
| Worked outside county of residence | 70.7%      |
| Worked outside state of residence  | 4.3%       |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey.

Table 30  
Travel Time to Work, Clifton Forge Residents

| Time                               | Percentage |
|------------------------------------|------------|
| Less than 10 minutes               | 9.1%       |
| 10 to 14 minutes                   | 1.7%       |
| 15 to 19 minutes                   | 6.2%       |
| 20 to 24 minutes                   | 7.1%       |
| 25 to 29 minutes                   | 5.5%       |
| 30 to 34 minutes                   | 15.8%      |
| 35 to 44 minutes                   | 21.4%      |
| 45 to 59 minutes                   | 21.7%      |
| 60 or more minutes                 | 11.6%      |
| Mean travel time to work (minutes) | 41.4       |

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2005-2009 American Community Survey.

### **Rail Services**

CSX Transportation provides freight and piggyback services in Clifton Forge. CSX operates a major rail yard on the western edge of downtown Clifton Forge with a fueling station and turntable facility.

Amtrak provides passenger rail service in Clifton Forge. There is an intercity rail stop, unstaffed, in Clifton Forge on the east-west Cardinal Route. The station is open on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday. The current train depot is scheduled to be relocated to the C&O Heritage Center. A full service station on the same line is located in Prince, WV and Charlottesville. The nearest direct access to the north-south line is located in Lynchburg, VA (Northeast Regional and Crescent routes).

The Town is working with representatives from Amtrak and CSX Transportation to determine the feasibility of increasing the number of days of passenger rail service. The Town of Clifton Forge supports additional days of service for Amtrak to make Clifton Forge a destination for visitors as well as a regional point for Amtrak.

### **Freight Movement**

Truck traffic moving through the area tends to use US 60, I-64, and US 220. The major goods moving industries in the Town include:

There is a fueling station at the CSX rail yard located on US 60/220 Business (Ridgeway Street). Currently, fuel tankers travel along US 60/220 Business (Ridgeway Street and Main Street) to access the station.

### **Bus Service**

There are no national commercial bus service stops in Clifton Forge.

## **Transit, Paratransit and Taxi**

The Roanoke Area Dial-A-Ride (RADAR) operates the “Mountain Express” bus service. The Mountain Express is a public bus service in and between Covington, Clifton Forge and Iron Gate. Service operates between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., Monday through Friday. The Mountain Express offers a deviated fixed route service. A fare of fifty cents per trip is charged and must be paid when boarding the van. Exact change is required. Children under the age of six years old ride at no charge. Individuals who are ADA certified may request the van to deviate off its route to make pick-ups and drop offs. This distance may not exceed 3/4 of a mile off the route.

Clifton Forge does not have a local taxi service located in town.

## **Parking**

Parking in Clifton Forge consists of on-street parallel and angled parking and surface parking lots. The merchants and commercial interests in the central business district of Clifton Forge provide some surface parking. Other surface parking is provided by the Town in designated lots.

## **Air Travel**

Commercial air passenger service is offered at two airports within 50 miles of Clifton Forge. The nearest airport to the Town of Clifton Forge is the Greenbrier Valley Airport in Lewisburg, West Virginia (42 miles west). The Greenbrier Valley Airport is served by two commercial carriers which offer daily service to Washington D.C., Pittsburgh, Charlotte, and Atlanta. In addition, the Roanoke Regional Airport is located 47 miles south of Clifton Forge in Roanoke, Virginia. The Roanoke Regional Airport is served by four commercial carriers - Allegiant Air, Delta, United Airlines, and US Airways - which offer service to several domestic hubs.

Commuter air services are offered at both the Roanoke Regional Airport and at the Greenbrier Valley Airport. There are no recommendations regarding air travel at this time.

## Chapter 9 Tourism

The *Alleghany Highlands of Virginia Tourism Strategic Plan* was completed in 2012 by the Alleghany Highlands Chamber of Commerce and Tourism with assistance from the Virginia Tourism Corporation.

A full situational analysis was completed for the document which led to a vision statement, mission, and goals for the region. The analysis included the review and editing of tourism assets, target customers, strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats determined within the previous tourism plan.

The stakeholder committee included business owners, non-profit groups, and public officials from Clifton Forge as well as Alleghany County and the City of Covington. This tourism strategic plan is intended to assist officials and stakeholders in building upon past tourism development and marketing efforts while implementing new programs in a strategic and financially effective way.

The Clifton Forge Comprehensive Plan Committee, along with the Planning Commission and Town Council endorsed the Tourism Strategic Plan in April 2012 with the intent of supporting specific projects and goals in the plan that will impact the town. The overall vision, mission and tourism goals and objectives from the Tourism Strategic Plan are listed below.

### Vision Statement

To be recognized as Virginia's premier historic and scenic mountain destination with abundant recreation and cultural opportunities, charming and safe small towns, with friendly people who welcome visitors like friends

### Mission Statement

To further develop the Alleghany Highlands as a multi-faceted tourism destination, to improve and diversify the economic viability of our community

### Tourism Goal

To fully implement the necessary initiatives and infrastructure to sustain a successful tourism program.

Objective 1 - Implement an effective tourism marketing program.

Objective 2 - Improve/enhance tourism infrastructure.

Objective 3 - Adequately fund the tourism program through multiple funding sources, to sufficiently achieve the mission, with transparency and focused on return-on-investment.

Objective 4 - Improve/enhance tourism policy.

Objective 5 - Improve/enhance tourism education/training (including volunteers, resident community leaders, and tourism related businesses).

The following projects identified in the Tourism Strategic Plan are endorsed as having an impact on the town:

1. Trail connection needed between Clifton Forge and Douthat State Park
2. Bicycle lane plan to connect town with assets
3. Need Bicycle rental locations
4. Unique/Differentiated lodging needed, such as cabins and B&B's
5. Need a protection plan/strategy for historic structures
6. Develop a regional signage program
7. Adoption of downtown plan

Using the Tourism Strategic Plan as a guide, the Town of Clifton Forge and its partners in the Alleghany Highlands will continue to make progress toward implementation of the vision, mission and goals for tourism. While specific items have been identified in this Comprehensive Plan, it should be noted that the Tourism Strategic Plan will be reviewed and updated on a quarterly basis, therefore readers should reference the most recent version for up to date information.

## Chapter 10 Downtown

The *Covington & Clifton Forge Visioning & Strategic Plan* was completed in 2011. The plan provides economic revitalization, physical improvement, and implementation strategies for the downtowns in the Town of Clifton Forge and City of Covington.

The findings of this plan were based on economic and tourism data analysis along with multiple community meetings, management team meetings, surveys, stakeholder meetings, and site investigations.

The Strategic Plan developed site-specific, revitalization-based physical improvement strategies that support economic growth. It was found that the building stock, utilities, and other physical conditions within each downtown are in generally good condition and are fully able to support economic revitalization efforts. Analysis performed during plan development also revealed that each downtown will benefit from wayfinding systems, aesthetic improvements to entry corridors, and increased green space and access to the Jackson River. Readers should reference the complete *Covington & Clifton Forge Visioning & Strategic Plan* for detailed analysis and recommendations.

Goals developed through the strategic planning process are listed below.

- Goal 1: Clifton Forge and Covington partner to achieve success.
- Goal 2: Downtown is revitalized through successful marketing and promotion efforts.
- Goal 3: The physical plan of the downtown business district supports a healthy mix of businesses.
- Goal 4: Desirable architecture is rehabilitated, preserved, and constructed.
- Goal 5: Each property type is utilized to the greatest extent possible.
- Goal 6: Downtown supports great neighborhoods with diverse housing opportunities.
- Goal 7: Downtown provides unique and convenient community and visitor amenities and programs.
- Goal 8: Downtown supports a system of parks and recreation that promotes community and visitor activity and interaction.
- Goal 9: Downtown is easy to locate and navigate.
- Goal 10: Downtown provides exemplary infrastructure and utility services to residents and visitors.

Many of these goals and strategies identified in the *Covington & Clifton Forge Visioning & Strategic Plan* applied directly to the Town of Clifton Forge. The following goals and strategies are endorsed as having an impact on the town:

- Goal 1: Support bike paths and trails for exercise and recreation for residents and visitors.
- Goal 2: Support additional days of service for Amtrak to make Clifton Forge a destination for visitors as well as a regional point for Amtrak.
- Goal 3: Support the amphitheater project affiliated with the Masonic Theater preservation.
- Goal 4: Support the development of living quarters located in the upper levels of businesses in the downtown business district.
- Goal 5: Support the promotion of the rail facilities in Clifton Forge as a destination for train enthusiasts.

## Chapter 11 Land Use

### Existing Land Use

The Existing Land Use map identifies the town's current land uses by category. Map 7 illustrates the existing land use in Clifton Forge.

The Town of Clifton Forge contains approximately 3 square miles (1,920 acres) of land. Most of this land is dominated by residential land use (approximately 43%). Most of the residential land use is single-family dwellings as opposed to multi-family and duplex units. This may change as the increasingly elderly population begins to express its need for more maintenance-free, affordable rental housing.

The second major land use is conservation. The conservation category contains both developable and non-developable land. The majority of developable land in Clifton Forge is located in the northern section of the town, north of Interstate 64. Non-developable areas are found along the Jackson River, Smith Creek and several small streams that are limited by potential flooding. Steep slopes limit development in neighborhoods in the northern half of town. Open space constitutes approximately 17% of the total land use in Clifton Forge.

Land owned by the Town of Clifton Forge is the third largest category of land use in Clifton Forge. Specific land uses in this category include parks, cemeteries, and other public facilities. Public land use constitutes less than 3% of the total land area in Clifton Forge.

Industrial land use constitutes approximately 1.7% of the total land area in Clifton Forge. The CSX rail yard contains 8.1% of the total land in the town.

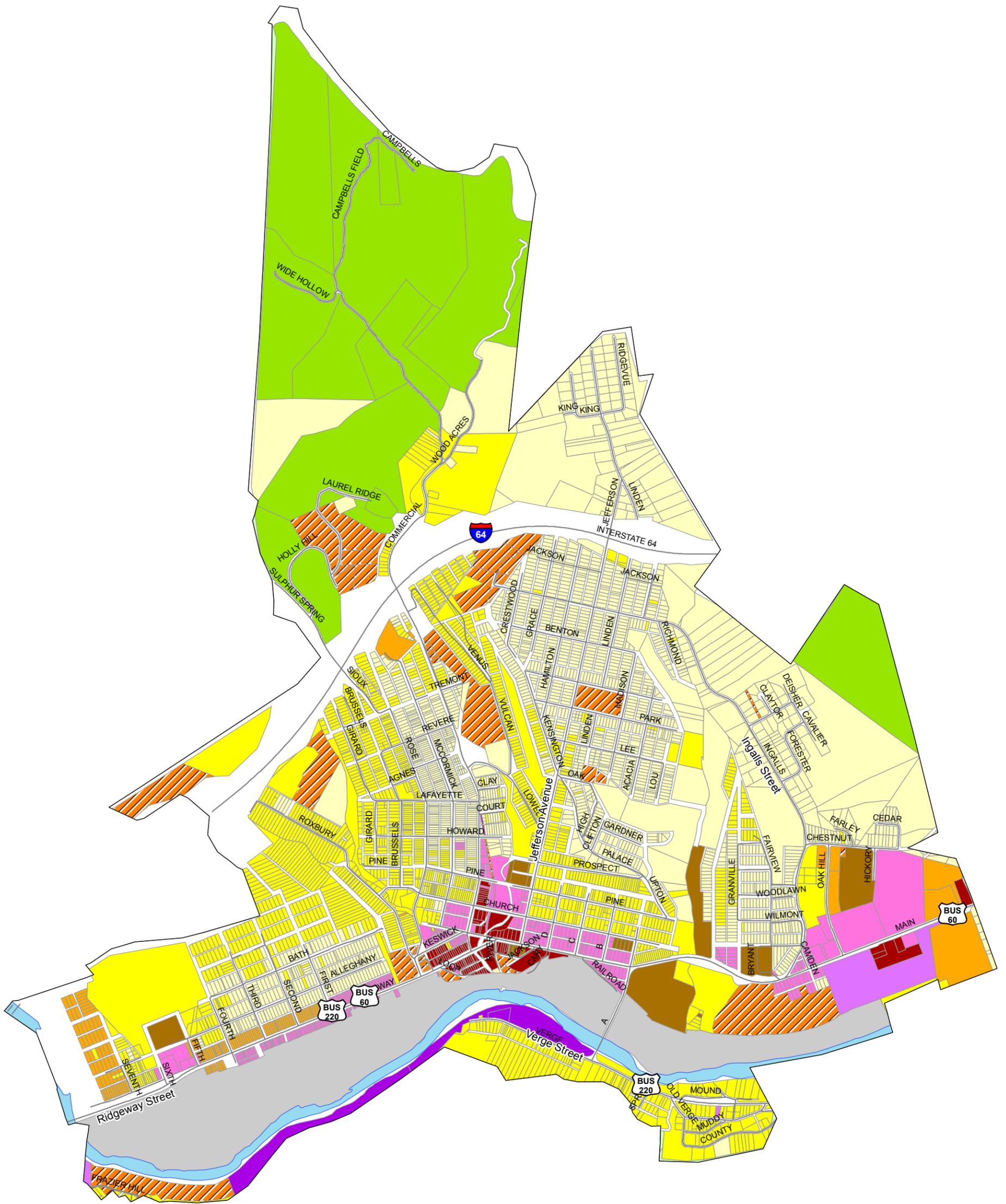
Commercial land use makes up approximately 3% of the total land use in Clifton Forge. The majority of the commercial land use in Clifton Forge is found in downtown and along the Route 60 corridor.

Other land uses include rights-of-way for local streets and VDOT maintained highways and the area comprised of the Jackson River that make comprise almost 20% of town.

Table 31  
Existing Land Use (Zoning)

| Classification                             | Acres   | Percent |
|--|---------|---------|
| BD - Business, Downtown                    | 15.38   | 0.8%    |
| BG - Business, General                     | 42.76   | 2.2%    |
| CF - Clifton Forge                         | 46.62   | 2.4%    |
| CN - Conservation                          | 334.65  | 17.4%   |
| M1 - Manufacturing, Light                  | 13.2    | 0.7%    |
| M2 - Manufacturing, Heavy (incl. CSX yard) | 18.68   | 1.0%    |
| R1 - Residential, Low Density              | 472.08  | 24.6%   |
| R2 - Residential, Medium Density           | 316.99  | 16.5%   |
| R3 - Residential, High Density             | 38.44   | 2.0%    |
| Unknown                                    | 91.58   | 4.8%    |
| CSX  | 156     | 8.1%    |
| VDOT, streets, Jackson River               | 373.62  | 19.5%   |
| Total                                      | 1920.00 | 100.0%  |

Source: Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission and Alleghany County GIS, 2012.



# Town of Clifton Forge

## Map 7 Existing Land Use (Zoning)

### Legend

|    |         |
|----|---------|
| AR | M2      |
| B1 | NF      |
| B2 | R1      |
| BD | R2      |
| BG | R3      |
| CF | RR ROW  |
| CN | UNKNOWN |
| M1 |         |

Scale 0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

## Future Land Use

The existence of developable land in Clifton Forge indicates the potential for an increase in economic development in the town. The proposed Future Land Use map identifies these uses by category. The map and the recommendations in this narrative are intended to provide general guidelines for future land use practices and should not be interpreted as being legally binding for any particular property.

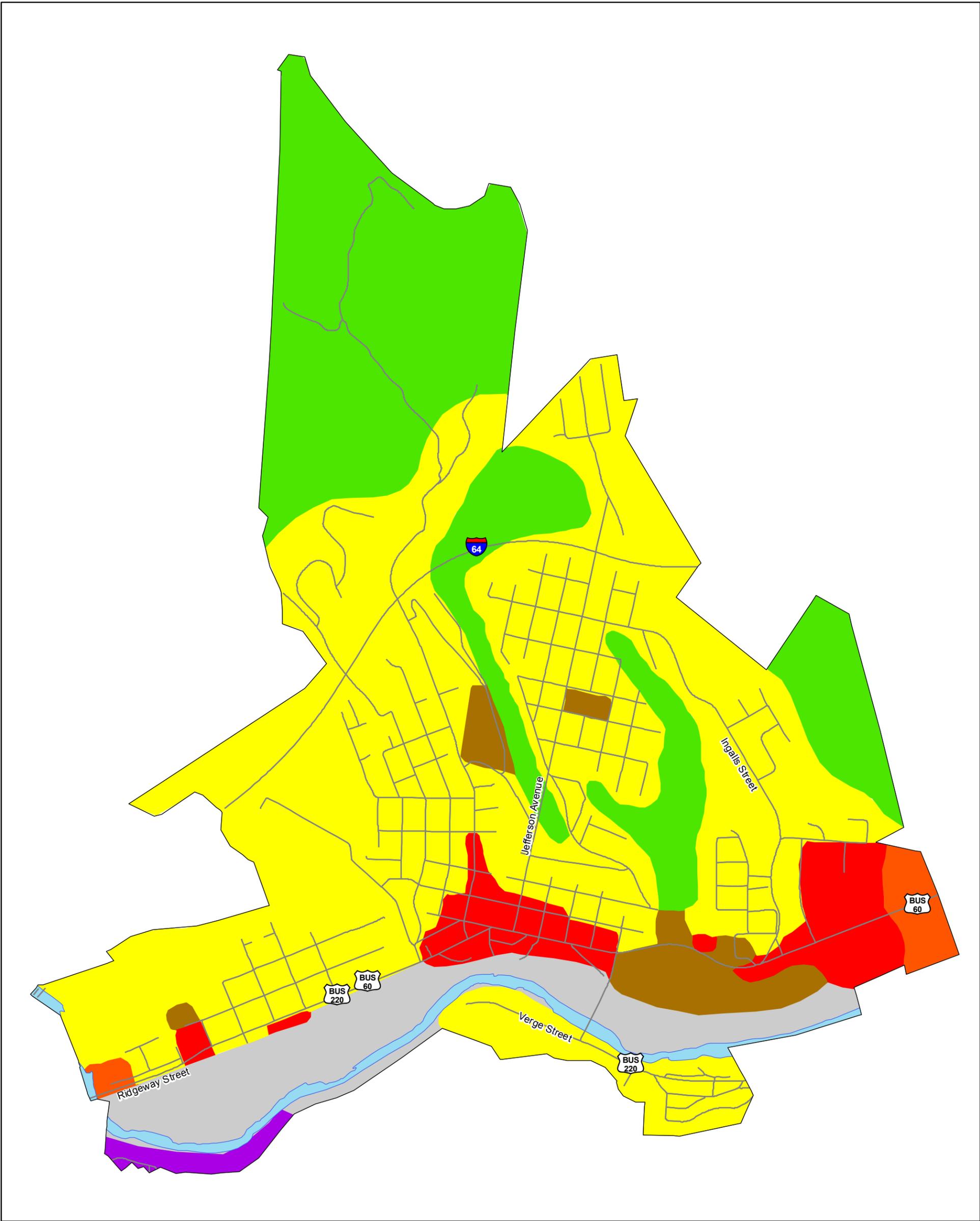
Because of the increasing elderly population in Clifton Forge and the possible population increase that may result from nearby industrial development, the amount of residential land use in Clifton Forge is expected to increase from nearly 50% to 65% over the next 10 years. Seventy-eight percent of the current amount of developable open space in Clifton Forge has the potential to accommodate the increasing need for housing in the town. The northern tip of the town would be suitable for the construction of low density housing to meet the needs of single families that may move into the area. The construction of low-maintenance, high-density housing in the area west of Roxbury Street in the western section of town would help meet the housing needs of the increasing elderly population in Clifton Forge.

The amount of industrial land use in Clifton Forge is expected to increase from 5% to 9% within the next few years. Although CSX decreased its workforce in town, the potential to support light industry remains. The first of these located along the Jackson River and CSX yard in the southern portion of town. The second opportunity is the Clifton Forge site of the Alleghany Regional Commerce Center, located north of U.S. Route 60 in the eastern section of Clifton Forge. CFW Communications, Inc. recently located a facility there, employing 145 workers. The limited amount of land available for industrial expansion indicates the need for small scale, light industrial activities to diversify the industrial base and to provide more employment opportunities for residents in the area.

Although the current amount of commercial land use in Clifton Forge is relatively small, it is expected to increase from 4% to 5% over the next 10 years. The promotion of Clifton Forge as a historic railroad community will create a market for tourism and help to boost commercial development.

The Clifton Forge Historic Commercial District, while not a specific land use, plays a large role in the development and use of land in the town. The historic district, established in 1991, is approximately 10 acres in size and is shown on Map 1. Placement on the State and National Register by the state and federal governments recognizes the historic value of a property and encourages present and future owners to continue to exercise good stewardship. Owners of registered properties may donate historic preservation easements (which can reduce real estate taxes), qualify for the state and federal historic rehabilitation tax credits, receive technical assistance from department staff for maintenance and rehabilitation projects, and purchase plaques that mark the property's significance. Historic designations benefit the community by providing a tool to assist in maintaining neighborhood character and encouraging the renovation and reuse of existing buildings. In 2012 a survey of structures in the areas adjacent to the existing district was completed and recommended the inclusion of 597 additional structures.

The Clifton Forge Zoning Ordinance was first enacted in 1967. It was amended in 1985 and 1992. In 2012, a consultant was contracted to update the zoning ordinance. The zoning ordinance is being re-written to comply with state and federal law, to clarify and streamline the ordinance and to address issues identified in the current ordinance.



# Town of Clifton Forge

## Map 8 Future Land Use

### Legend

- Commercial
- Conservation
- Industrial
- Public Use
- Residential High Density
- Residential Low Density
- Railroad

Scale 0 500 1,000 2,000 Feet

## Chapter 12 Goals and Objectives

### Commercial and Industrial

1. Determine what requirements are necessary to promote residential use for downtown.

| <i>Action</i>  | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Contact business owners to determine their interest.      | Town Staff                      |
| 2. Perform Chapter 34 Historic Review for interested owners. | Town Staff/Consultant           |
| 3. Investigate sources for funding.                          | RVAHRC                          |

2. Business recruitment for additional downtown businesses.

| <i>Action</i>                       | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Recruit small businesses.        | Chamber of Commerce             |
| 2. Recruit large businesses.        | AHEDC                           |
| 3. Update progress.                 | Chamber/AHEDC                   |
| 4. Identify services needed/wanted. | Citizen Committee               |

3. Hiking, biking and exercise trails in Clifton Forge.

| <i>Action</i>  | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Forest Service to review prior application to Alleghany Foundation. | Town Staff                      |
| 2. Look into sources for funding for exercise trails and bike trails.  | Town Staff                      |

4. Look into possibility of a conference/lodging center near downtown Clifton Forge

| <i>Action</i>                             | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Evaluate demand (size and scope).      | Town Staff                      |
| 2. Review local space options.            | Town Staff/Committee            |
| 3. Discuss concept with local businesses. | Town Staff                      |
| 4. Contact hotel operators.               | AHEDC                           |
| 5. Explore consultant resources.          | AHEDC                           |

5. Complete construction of amphitheater and parklike greenspace.

| <u>Action</u>            | <u>Responsible Organization</u> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Promote amphitheater. | Masonic Theater                 |

6. Loop Street parking/development

| <u>Action</u>  | <u>Responsible Organization</u> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Contact businesses along Loop Street to determine what their ideas are. | Town Staff/CF Main Street       |
| 2. Determine the improvements necessary to promote this area.              | CF Main Street                  |
| 3. Discuss land swap with current owner.                                   | Town Staff                      |

## Housing

1. Adoption and enforcement of ordinances targeting appearance of properties in and adjacent to the historic business district, with consideration of expanding the historic district to include a historic residential district with similar requirements.

| <i>Action</i>  | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Review and update existing ordinances.  | Town Staff                      |
| 2. Expand both residential and commercial historic districts to include citizen input. | Town Manager                    |

2. Identify or develop effective incentive plans which encourage improvement or renovation of existing homes, with a focus on continued upkeep and maintenance of improvements. Actively promote programs once identified or developed.

| <i>Action</i>  | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Tax abatement for homeowners.                                       | County and Town                 |
| 2. Provide information packet for homeowners on renovation assistance. | Library                         |
| 3. Enforce property maintenance ordinance.                             | Community Development Office    |

3. Identify funding sources (grants, loans, tax credits, etc.) to assist owners with renovations and improvements. Consider creation of a non-profit entity to provide bridge and rehabilitation loans.

| <i>Action</i>  | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Create non-profit organization to provide rehabilitation loans. | AHEDC                           |
| 2. Formation of loan pool.   | Banks                           |

4. Provide resources for homeowners considering renovation that will provide them with necessary information regarding “What and How” to know and do for a successful project (i.e. permits, design, financing, working with a contractor, etc.).

| <i>Action</i>   | <i>Responsible Organization</i>         |
|---|---|
| 1. Formation of neighborhood homeowners associations.                     | Homeowners                              |
| 2. Provide “How To” resources to homeowners.                              | CF Main Street                          |
| 3. Annual Home Improvement Award.   | Town Council                            |
| 4. Provide and keep updated a “Who to go to” list of Local “Mr. Fix Its.” | CF Main Street and Local Hardware Store |

5. Encourage development of “low upkeep” housing opportunities such as townhomes, etc.

| <i>Action</i>                                    | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Advertise locations for possible development. | AHEDC / Town                    |

6. Implement a Multiple Listing Service (MLS) among area realtors to remove existing barriers to finding available housing for new residents.

| <i>Action</i>                                     | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Contact Realtors.                              | Chamber of Commerce             |
| 2. Offer incentives (i.e., free office space).    | Town of Clifton Forge           |
| 3. Provide educational seminar to local realtors. | AHEDC                           |

7. Develop a model “green” neighborhood attractive to a demographic interested in the developing environmentally friendly movement.

| <i>Action</i>                                  | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Research existing green communities.        | AHEDC                           |
| 2. Find appropriate location in Clifton Forge. |                                 |
| 3. Hold open house for interested parties.     | Town of Clifton Forge           |

8. Create opportunities for varied housing stock such as development of existing downtown structures into “loft style” residential units not typically found in rural communities, perhaps attracting a younger demographic as well as increasing foot and business traffic downtown.

| <i>Action</i>   | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Contact building owners for interest in converting existing space into loft style residential units. | Town of Clifton Forge           |
| 2. Assist owners with obtaining funding sources.  | AHEDC                           |
| 3. Use appropriate advertising venues to target young individuals.                                      | Town of Clifton Forge           |

9. Create a multi-stage retirement living community near an existing nursing home which provides single story housing with maintenance free exteriors in an area designed with and older resident’s needs in mind (good lighting, level sidewalks, green space with benches, etc.).

| <i>Action</i>   | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Approach existing nursing facilities for interest in expansion To multi-stage retirement living. | Town of Clifton Forge           |
| 2. Investigate other avenues.   | AHEDC                           |

## Community Services and Facilities

1. Make the Comprehensive Plan and its updates available on-line and in report form at the Clifton Forge Public Library, and incorporate parts, and where appropriate, in its entirety in documents used to market the town and its attributes.

| <u>Action</u>  | <u>Responsible Organization</u> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Put the plan on the town's website.               | Town Manager                    |
| 2. Put printed copies in the library.                | Town Staff                      |
| 3. Make printed copies available at the Court House. | Town Staff                      |

2. Leave west Ridgeway Street as a permanent two-way street.

| <u>Action</u>                  | <u>Responsible Organization</u> |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Speak with business owners. | CF Main Street                  |
| 2. Check with VDOT.            | Town Staff                      |
| 3. Check with Council.         | Town Manager                    |

3. Relocate the train depot to the C&O Heritage Center.

| <u>Action</u>                         | <u>Responsible Organization</u> |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Check with CSX.                    | Joe Sargent                     |
| 2. Check with C&O Historical Society. | Town Staff                      |

4. Initiate a Downtown façade improvement program.

| <u>Action</u>                           | <u>Responsible Organization</u> |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Check with merchants.                | CF Main Street                  |
| 2. Contact owners.                      | CF Main Street                  |
| 3. Make a list of contractors available | Town Staff                      |

5. Initiate Loop Street parking upgrades.

| <u>Action</u>                                | <u>Responsible Organization</u> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Get thoroughfare.                         | Town Staff                      |
| 2. Check with businesses with rear openings. | Town Staff                      |

6. Build an amphitheater behind the Masonic Theater.

| <i>Action</i>            | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Already in the works. |                                 |

7. Increase availability of RADAR service because of higher percentages of elderly, disabled and low income individuals are residing in the area.

| <i>Action</i>               | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. New contract with RADAR. | Community Services              |

8. Support improvements to U.S. 220 from Eagle Rock to Clifton Forge.

| <i>Action</i>             | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|---------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Need approval of VDOT. | VDOT                            |

9. Initiate a signage and way finding program to make Clifton Forge streets and buildings easily identifiable by visitors, as well as emergency services personnel.

| <i>Action</i>                     | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Make citizens aware of this.   | Town Staff                      |
| 2. Check each house and building. | Police and Fire Dept.           |

10. Investigate the feasibility of installing an internet accessible camera (web cam) in the CSX yard to show around the clock rail activity.

| <i>Action</i>                         | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Check with C&O Historical Society. | CSX                             |

11. Landscape and improve the underground passageway beneath downtown Clifton Forge from Smith Creek to the Jackson River.

| <i>Action</i>                           | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Create committee to make suggestions | Town Council                    |
| 2. Work with the Recreation Board.      | Town Staff                      |
| 3. Include CSX in early discussions.    | CSX                             |

12. Create a creek side park at the Pod behind the Masonic Theater.

| <i>Action</i>                | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Contact citizens to help. | Recreation Dept. & staff        |

13. Increase marketing efforts to improve awareness of downtown’s offerings.

| <i>Action</i>                            | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|--|---------------------------------|
| 1. Advertisements, sales, and discounts. | CF Main Street                  |

14. Create walking/bike trails for downtown and from Clifton Forge to Douthat State Park.

| <i>Action</i>                      | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Involve hikers and bike riders. | Recreation Department           |

15. Create formal picnic sites at town parks along creeks and at riverside.

| <i>Action</i>         | <i>Responsible Organization</i>      |
|-----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1. Need public input. | Town Staff and Recreation Department |

16. Build a downtown river park with access for boat entrance/exit.

| <i>Action</i>                         | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Involve boat owners and fishermen. | Town Staff                      |
| 2. Involve area businesses.           | CF Main Street                  |

17. Build a permanent building for the summer Farmers Market.

| <i>Action</i>                                 | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|---|---------------------------------|
| 1. Involve participating merchants (farmers). | Town Staff                      |

18. Implement evening hours once a week to relevant businesses.

| <i>Action</i>               | <i>Responsible Organization</i> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Talk to business owners. | CF Main Street                  |

19. Determine location and create a downtown pedestrian park.

| <u>Action</u>               | <u>Responsible Organization</u> |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. Need to find a location. | Town Council and Town Staff     |

20. Improve quality and availability of downtown housing.

| <u>Action</u>   | <u>Responsible Organization</u>         |
|---|---|
| 1. Involve real estate offices and rental owners.   | CF Main Street and Town Staff           |
| 2. Address “blight” by forming a 3 locality task force that   | Town Council, Town Staff, and Covington |
| 3. would use existing ordinances and, as one body, enforce the current/new codes. The composition of the task force would be multiple parties that could give “cover” to a member addressing a controversial issue in his/her own community. The task force would be empowered by the appointing locality to do this. | City Council                            |

## Appendices

**Appendix A**  
**Public Input Meeting Comments**  
**June 21, 2012**

## Notes from discussion at June 21, 2012 Public Input Meeting

Doug Glass

### Housing

1. Get judge on board for adjudication of current ordinances.
2. Incentives. Yard of the month could “win” basic water bill free next month.
3. Most improved property/house/store. Same as #2.
4. Multiple Listing Service for real estate is a must to get us on map and in 21st century. Getting realtors on board will be EXTREMELY difficult.

### Community Services

1. Signage. Good Eagle scout project.
2. Farmer's market at amphitheater site near library.
3. River access for boaters in cooperation with Iron Gate and Eagle Rock.

John Hillert, Roy Wright, Steve and Karen Swoope

We focused mainly on brainstorming ideas for developing commercial and industrial opportunities with a major focus on small business that could fill empty downtown storefronts,

We agreed strongly with John's strategy of **pooling support services** for startup small businesses, to support their success and reduce costs, and would like Herb and Dave to explore avenues for funding “small business incubator” or co-op services such as payroll and accounting, etc. which could then evolve into paid services or competent “do it yourself” with technology strategies. Since these are often problematic for small entrepreneurs, **working with the available state economic development programs** to get these going locally should be pursued.

Roy's experience with other communities who had active “**call all day looking for people who want to start up a \_\_\_\_\_ business**” seemed like a productive model for filling niches in our town services., e.g. “**Who wants to own and run a Laundromat?**” since we have one in town that's closed and for sale seems like a model worth pursuing. Kind of like Darlene's pursuit of the new cleaners business. Who's out there that might want to expand their business to our town? Or do something novel like the “Suds and Duds” model so wildly successful in other towns. Maybe we don't need beer, BUT a business that sets itself up as a place to hang out and socialize in a pleasant atmosphere while doing your laundry might fly.

Ditto **ADD other services to increase profitability** such as we wash and fold for you, OR YES! We iron your stuff and sew on buttons!

Maybe link that to a **PET GROOMING** service? We'll groom your pet, OR provide the **DOGWASH** facilities so you can do it yourself. Maybe while you're doing your laundry! Pet groomer business could add a “drop your pet off and we'll take them to a kennel for you and bring them back when your vacation is over?” Sell froy froy pet products, order special dog food, etc. The ideas are out there...

Since WATER and sewer are so problematic at this point, **why not have the town BOTTLE AND SELL our excellent water as a way to keep residents' costs down and PUBLICIZE our place?** Bottled water is a very expensive product which we could produce at very little additional cost, and offset our small number of residents! (See attached newspaper clipping) A strong brand with cachet could put us on the map and in the money. We could print (local business can do) and **label personalized bottles for local events, weddings**, blah, blah. It's done profitably elsewhere, why not here? Especially as one of our budget problems is occurring because residents aren't buying enough water from the tap. And they buy bottled water at Walmart etc., go figure! Don't say we can't afford it, look into it, it's being done very profitably elsewhere in tinier towns than this (e.g. Elk River, Idaho, pop. Less than 300). HOW could it be done affordably?

How about a **microbrewery**? Anyone looking to start or expand their business? What about a "make your own beer (or wine) in our do it yourself facility? This is currently being done in Arizona, probably elsewhere, get details. I feel a competition and festival coming on.

Revive the SPEAKEASY! Historic and fun at the same time.

Actively recruit legal IMMIGRANTS who want to start their own businesses, see "The Millionaire Next Door", they're the most entrepreneurial group in the country, by necessity. Usually they're young families with kids for our schools (we obviously need more students to keep them open). New immigrants often see opportunities where the rest of us might see too much work and risk for too little reward.

Think about doing what the Midwest has done to **counter population loss**, offer FREE LOTS (or free dilapidated houses) to people who agree to fix them up in X amount of time, and are vetted for the money and skills to do so. (Deal is off if they don't perform).

**CAMO and AMMO sports shop** (thanks Roy!) where we might have a **virtual shooting range, virtual archery range with virtual deer, etc. electronic hunting**. It's already possible and being done elsewhere...Could it work here? Old Riders Up location?

A small town version of **Play It Again Sports** equipment with used top quality gear at reasonable prices. And as an added service, they could do (or broker) **trophies and recognition items**?

**Bird and Butterfly** store, sell books, binoculars, and related stuff. They could even have **guides for hot local areas for birding, butterfly hangouts, kind of a Riders UP for the bird and butterfly crowd**.

Would link in perhaps with a **VAN TOUR business** for visitors and locals, e.g. why not a "**Historic Hot Springs**" tour? Scott Hill has a number of fun destination tours for residents, this business could make those destinations available for visitors and locals.

What about an **auto rental** pickup/drop off and/or **taxi** service with a visible downtown presence? Maybe linked to the van tour business????

In conjunction with the C&O, work on building and selling **special train trips on a private car** attached to Amtrak ) e.g. Baseball train to Cincinnati/Baltimore? Ask Roy for more details.

Is there room for a **MUSIC STORE** selling and/or renting instruments, giving lessons, etc?

Could we get a **Wildflower bakery** here? Rumors keep surfacing about someone who wants to start a bakery...follow up?

**Housekeeping service** on the order of **MERRY MAIDS**, with VETTED workers, training on how to do things the right way, uniforms, e.g. professionally trained and managed, reliable, easy to find housekeeping service. Could offer employment opportunities as well as a needed service.

**ME AND MY TRUCK** type service, for cleaning out, hauling away stuff, picking up mulch, etc. For folks who don't have the vehicle or the physical capacity to move and haul what needs to be handled. Again, professional, background checked workers who are trained, supervised, uniformed, etc.

A local **GOSSIP SHEET** with "news too small to print " in the Virginian Review, cheap place for yard sale ads, etc. A small town local rag...supported by CHEAP ADS and CHEAP SUBSCRIPTIONS, delivered by little kids to library, local businesses, folks on their own street (don't want them out among strangers) who do their little paper route rather than lemonade stands! Can we work it out for our town? It's extremely popular in Colfax WA. We'll really need it when The Shadow retires....Add jokes and everybody reads it...

**Appendix B**  
**Clifton Forge Main Street, Inc.**  
**Economic Restructuring Committee Recommendations**

**Appendix C**  
**Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee on Business**  
**Ten Most Critical Businesses to Make Room for in Clifton Forge**

**Comprehensive Plan Subcommittee on Business  
Ten Most Critical Businesses to Make Room for in Clifton Forge  
February 28, 2011**

INTRODUCTION:

This response is intended to shine light on future possibilities and is not meant to presuppose businesses because they are “sure things,” as relates to profitability, demand, need, or fit within the framework of the community. Only the investor can conduct the feasibilities, and only circumstances can dictate the fitness of a project for the area. These are guesses gathered from my customers and from my own daydreams about a future for Clifton Forge.

NUMBER ONE:

Manufacturing

Notwithstanding the wisdom of stimulating tourism, elderly recruitment, etc., it appears to me that we have infrastructure, such as it is, that can be exploited with a view toward higher paying jobs that can support other business in the Highlands. I suggest that we solve the environmental and legal challenges to sites that are possibilities, e.g. the Shops, Parker Hanifin (sp?) in Iron Gate, and Clifftondale Park.

NUMBER TWO:

Downtown Retail

The RKG study estimates that there is virtually no room for retail growth in Clifton Forge. Indeed, with the exception of several roaring, and predicted, successes, most downtown businesses are either fragile economically or not really all that appropriate for a busy retail downtown. That said, the biggest responses I have received to the question of the future of Clifton Forge seems to center around expanded retail, feasible or not. While RKG suggests an electronic store and a clothing store strictly from the data projections, there were a few more suggested in the 6 years of gathering ideas.

Women’s Clothing, better than Wal-Mart  
Children’ Shop  
School Trophies, etc.  
Additional evening food and beverage  
Bakery  
Jewelry Store, middle grade  
Pet Shop  
Laundry/Dry Cleaning/Shoe Repair  
Office Supplies

Women’s Shoes  
Athletic Clothing  
Athletic Equipment  
Wine and Cheese shop  
Breakfast Shop  
Boutique gifts, art gifts  
  
Art Supplies

### NUMBER THREE:

#### Conference Center

Education seems to be big business in many communities and we have the beginnings of a credible educational draw with DSLCC. While I find it problematic that Dabney has regionalized, I suppose I can understand how their administration has endeavored to “bring Mohammed to the mountain.” At the same time, we do have an educational infrastructure with the School System, JRI, the Hospital, TAP, Douthat VoTech, etc. Why not a Conference Center at Exit 27? Combine the motel property, the Cliftondale Golf Course, and the former Immanuel Baptist Church and you will have most of the pieces necessary for a legitimate Conference Center. Exit 27, not only has land, buildings, a golf course but also highway access to the region and to the State Park.

### NUMBER FOUR:

#### Recreational Attractions

- Swim Club
- Skating Rink, roller or ice
- Recreational Movies
- Masonic Theatre
- More offerings at the Heritage Center
- Outdoor concerts (between CF and Covington?)
- Events, e.g. logging exhibition (DSLCC), Magic in the Mountains, Train Day, Geo Wash Train Show, Fall Festival, and Farmers Market are examples.

### NUMBER FIVE:

#### Warehousing/Depot

- Space available in Low Moor
- Intermodal Facility
- Coke Plant? space

### NUMBER SIX:

#### Senior Services

- Live at Home Senior Block in Town
- Golf cart paths throughout town
- Free Educational opportunities
- Book clubs via the Library
- Geriatric Clinic downtown
- Senior living facility at Rainbow Gorge overlook

## NUMBER SEVEN:

### Miscellaneous

- Bottled Water
- Microbrewery
- Winery
- Laundry Processing Facility

## NUMBER EIGHT:

### Housing

One consultant stated that affordable housing was the greatest strength in Clifton Forge. An effort should be made to organize an approach to outside buyers through the formulation of housing rehab partnerships with a marketing activity in northern, expensive cities.

### Lodges

Smaller, specialty, overnight housing might include bed and breakfast, lodges, and possibly an overnight stay on a train car at the Heritage Center.

## NUMBER NINE

## NUMBER TEN:

## IMPLEMENTATION:

Coming up with a plan that could actually be implemented is a challenge that fights our historical behavior. This planning activity is a major step forward whose time has come. Once the final product is developed, it needs a progress report and an update annually, and it needs to be instrumental in the development of budgets for the Town. This plan should be divided into short term objectives, 5 year objectives, and futures for the longer term horizon.

For this plan to be realized, the Town should be accountable for the achievement of objectives, whether they be governmental or whether they involve the private sector. Obviously, once an entrepreneur or investor is involved, it is their responsibility, but the Town should always concern itself with the success of the objective.

An advisory committee of stakeholders should “partner” with the Town to assure that progress is monitored. Existing business should always be included in the planning process.

Submitted by  
Roy Wright  
February 28, 2011