

Chapter 5- GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

The Guiding Principles for Pantops emphasize protection of scenic vistas and maintaining a sense of open space as Pantops continues to grow. It is important with future density increases, that there be intentional creation and preservation of additional natural areas, parks and urban landscapes to preserve the unique scenic and recreational qualities of Pantops. It is especially important that the Rivanna River corridor be maintained as a focal point for the community. The Green Infrastructure recommendations of the Pantops Master Plan are intended to make open space integral to overall community design. The Green Infrastructure system is intended to protect natural systems and to provide greenway connections for residents. Residents and visitors to the area should have convenient access to parks, public gathering places, and natural views whether they are at home, work, or play.

The County's Parks and Recreation Department is responsible for maintaining the public parks and greenway system and for obtaining necessary easements and dedications. Currently, the County manages Darden Towe Park, which is jointly owned by the City and County. The County also owns approximately 25 acres along the Rivanna River from Darden Towe Park south to and around Riverbend Apartments.

Albemarle County's Greenways Plan recognizes the benefits and opportunities that a greenway system provides. It offers additional recommendations on greenways in general that should be consulted as the Pantops Master Plan is implemented. The County's Greenways Plan recommends a trail along the Rivanna River and portions of the trail have been completed. Parking is available at Darden Towe Park and along Free Bridge Lane to access the trail. The Master Plan recommends additional trail head access points for the public, with possible locations at Riverbend Drive, State Farm Boulevard, and in Peter Jefferson Place. The Pantops Master Plan emphasizes the importance of completing the greenway trail and linear park along the Rivanna River as a public park and recommends additional off-river trails, both public access and some private, throughout Pantops and into adjoining Rural Areas.

It is not necessary that the entire greenways system in Pantops be dedicated to the County and maintained for public access. Off-river paths within neighborhoods will be maintained by owner's associations or private property owners. Additionally, most pocket parks and neighborhood scale parks will be owned and maintained by private associations. The County's Parks and Recreation department is expected to be responsible for Pantops community and regional scale parks.

The Green Infrastructure Map illustrates both conservation areas of sensitive environmental features and more formal open spaces with a parks and greenways designation. The Green Infrastructure Map depicts existing and desired future parks as both public and private spaces. The map shows the minimum amount of open space needed for preservation and a park system.

Each neighborhood in Pantops is expected to have a range of open space types, including those centrally located and dispersed throughout Pantops. Each neighborhood center is intended to have green space elements similar to what is discussed as the Civic Green Center type, which is primarily an urban open space and not just a natural area. A Civic Green includes uses fronting onto the center, multiple access points to neighboring residential or employment areas and design elements that provide a sense of arrival and civic presence. In the Mixed Use Neighborhoods this may include a square or green, as discussed in Design Approaches section of the Neighborhood Model. The Peter Jefferson/Martha Jefferson neighborhood will have a larger park component central to the neighborhood of approximately six acres that will connect to the greenway system.

The Pantops Master Plan recommends linking natural and historic/cultural assets, taking advantage of opportunities for public awareness of resources and potential heritage tourism. Some key historic sites have been identified on the Green Infrastructure map as well as properties in Pantops that are 50 years or older. There are important cultural and historical resources in Pantops, especially along the Rivanna River, that the greenway network will make more accessible and better-visited if connected through trails. A more comprehensive, coordinated approach to inventorying resources and establishing this program is recommended.

SUMMARY OF GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE and CULTURAL RESOURCES RECOMMENDATIONS:

- **Expand the existing greenway system** in Pantops as shown conceptually on the *Green Infrastructure Map*. Complete the trail and park along the Rivanna River and important off-river paths connecting neighborhoods to the river and other destinations in the neighborhood.
- Preserve the **Rivanna River corridor should be preserved**. It is shown as green space on the *Green Infrastructure Map* and will create a **linear park** within the Pantops Neighborhood
- Interconnect **greenspace**, where trails lead to parks, neighborhood center, or the Rivanna River.
- Construct trail heads to provide convenient access to the Rivanna River Greenway and linear park. These trail heads will provide for public parking and access with suggested locations at Riverbend Drive, Peter Jefferson Place, and near State Farm on South Pantops Drive.
- Create **promotional materials and events to highlight the greenways** to residents and businesses in Pantops. Consider heritage tourism opportunities and establishing an identity for marketing purposes.
- Build parks at the following locations:
 - Within the Gazebo Plaza site.
 - Within the State Farm property, near the corner of State Farm Boulevard and Pantops Drive, as either a community park or park area for the employment district
 - Between Free Bridge Lane and Route 20, south of Elks Drive.

- Create public spaces at **scenic viewpoint locations**, both within existing development and in conjunction with proposed developments. These areas should have amenities such as outdoor seating, landscaped plazas, and walking routes.
- Provide **historic interpretation** with the Greenways program along the Rivanna River corridor.
- Acknowledge and preserve the **history of the Pantops** area as the neighborhood builds out to help celebrate the neighborhood's identity.
- **Provide a complete inventory** of historic, cultural, and archeological sites within Pantops. Historic sites previously identified include: Buena Vista, George Rogers Clark Museum, Burnley Tavern, Wilton Farmhouse and farm buildings, Franklin Farm , Pantops Farm, Locust Shade, Piraeus Lock and Dam.
- Elevate the history of Pantops within Civic Greens and other **Neighborhood Centers** with **historic interpretation displays**. Some historic sites should serve as the focal point for Neighborhoods.
- **Preserve** historic buildings and natural landscape features that are unique to Pantops.
- Encourage property owners to pursue National and State register designations.
- Protect the character of **Route 20 as a Virginia Scenic Byway**.
- Promote Route 20/Stony Point Road through Pantops as a route tourists can travel along the Journey through Hallowed Ground tour to reach Monticello from Gettysburg and other Civil War sites.
- Promote **tourism** in Pantops, with the Lewis & Clark Exploratory center and in Peter Jefferson Place.

Refer to Neighborhood Model Design Approaches for Parks & Open Space Guidelines in Appendix.

Chapter 6-Transportation

Transportation issues have emerged as are the highest priority issue to be addressed in Pantops. Particularly, the public has identified As identified earlier in the plan, two of the County's major thoroughfares are part of Pantops. Route 250 is a primary highway running east-west through Pantops. Route 20 is also a primary highway, though not as wide, running north-south through Pantops. Traffic congestion which causes backups on Route 250, especially at Free Bridge, is a major problem to residents and commuters. concern. Preservation of the rural and scenic nature of Route 20 as it enters the Pantops development area is important. Pedestrian improvements and bike facilities are also lacking needed in Pantops. Finally, more frequent and expanded transit service is becoming a critical need in Pantops.

The focus of the Pantops Master Plan is local in nature; however, it also incorporates some of the recommendations of the Route 250 East Corridor Study. Traffic in Pantops is a regional issue and efforts are underway to begin steps to address it with the Eastern Connector and other studies. Regional coordination and funding will be needed to address traffic in Pantops and Route 250 to the Fluvanna County Line.

Created with input from residents, business owners, VDOT, and County staff, this section of the Pantops Master Plan describes the existing transportation network – where it works well and where there are deficiencies. It discusses prior and ongoing studies related to transportation in Pantops. Finally, it makes recommendations related to both localized as well as regional needs.

The Pantops Master Plan supports an Eastern Connector and recommends a second Rivanna River Crossing south of Free Bridge into City of Charlottesville be considered, The Master Plan also recommends future improvements at Rt.250/Rt 20 and the I-64 Interchange and the relocation of Hansen's Mountain Road. The Master Plan also suggests an improved internal street grid and neighborhood interconnections, an emphasis on improved transit to reduce traffic and increase ridership services with improved signage and bus stop facilities and Rideshare and park-and-ride lots, improved pedestrian and bike improvements, and trails will also offer walking choices.

Existing Network

The existing network in Pantops consists of streets, bikeways and bike lanes, sidewalks and pedestrian paths, and transit/ridesharing.

Roads

Route 250 East and Route 20 are the primary roads servicing the area. Route 250 East was widened from the Rivanna River to Interstate 64. Other major roadways serving the area are Route 1117 (State Farm Boulevard), Route 1140 (South Pantops Drive) and Route 1116 (Riverbend Drive).

Route 250

Route 250 is a US Primary road that runs from West Virginia to Virginia. It is classified by VDOT as an “other principal arterial” between East Corporate Limits of Charlottesville and I-64 in Pantops, then as a “minor arterial” between I-64 and Route 22. Route 250 from the City of Charlottesville to the I-64 interchange has four lanes, each approximately 12 feet in width with a raised or flushed median, landscaped in some sections and right turn lanes in others and paved shoulders. There is a center turn lane and no median from the Route 20 intersection to approximately the intersection with Hansen Road. Portions of the roadway near the City of Charlottesville are 6 lanes.

Average Daily Traffic Volume Estimates for Route 250 (2005):

52,000 (Charlottesville City Line to Route 20)

43,000 (Route 20 to I-64)

22,000 (I- 64 to Route 22)

Route 20

Route 20 is a two-lane road that varies in right-of-way width and the most current annual average daily traffic volume estimates from 2005 indicate 13,000 on Route 20 from Route 250 to Dorrier Drive.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Pedestrian and bicycle access is an important aspect of the County’s overall transportation system. There are deficiencies in the Pantops that must be addressed and no complete sidewalk system exists and there are no bike lanes. Walkways and bikeways provide for safe and convenient travel and improve the efficiency of the roadway system by reducing potential conflicts between motor vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists. Pedestrian and bicycle access improvements can also complement and enhance the mass transportation system by improving access to bus stops and places of economic activity. The provision of an effective pedestrian/bicycle system can also enhance the sense of community within developed or developing areas of the County by providing pedestrian/bicycle facilities that interconnect communities and facilitate and encourage interaction within the area.

Transit/Rideshare

The County of Albemarle contracts public transit service from the City of Charlottesville Transit Service (CTS). Currently, buses on Route 10 serving the area run on the hour from 6am-7pm with stops at Pantops Shopping Center, Wilton, Westminster Canterbury/Social Security offices, State Farm, Martha Jefferson Hospital, and DMV. RideShare is a program of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission that works to reduce traffic congestion and increase mobility throughout the City of Charlottesville and the Counties of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, and Nelson. They offer free carpool and SchoolPool matching, a vanpool start-up service, and a Guaranteed Ride Home program, which provides free rides home in an emergency to users of alternative transportation. RideShare also works with employers to develop and implement traffic reduction programs, and market the region's Park and Ride lots.

RideShare is a member of the Commuter Information Team (CIT), a partnership that includes JAUNT, Charlottesville Transit Service (CTS), University Transit Service (UTS),

and Greene County Transit. The CIT acts as a transportation information and referral center for the region, including Albemarle County, as well as contributing to joint marketing and awareness efforts.

The Park and Ride Committee is an informal group of agency staff and local planners that meets quarterly to review, update, and implement plans related to creation and maintenance of park and ride lots in the region. Members include VDOT, Charlottesville Transit Service, JAUNT, one urban locality staff member, one rural locality staff member, and TJPDC staff. A park and ride lot is currently located at Darden Towe Park and the Pantops Shopping Center. State Farm has a successful van pool program that allows for a high percentage of their employees that commute from outside the area to participate.

The focus of the Pantops Master Plan will be local in nature; however, the plan will also incorporate the recommendations of the Route 250 East Corridor Study. Traffic in Pantops is a regional issue and efforts are underway to begin steps to address it with the Eastern Connector and other studies. Regional coordination will be needed and major funding to address traffic in Pantops. The Pantops Master Plan supports an Eastern Connector and recommends a second Rivanna River Crossing south of Free Bridge into City of Charlottesville be considered, The Master Plan also recommends future improvements at Rt.250/Rt 20 and the I-64 Interchange and the relocation of Hansen's Mountain Road. The Master Plan also suggests an improved internal street grid and neighborhood interconnections, an emphasis on improved transit to reduce traffic and increase ridership services with improved signage and bus stop facilities and Rideshare and park-and-ride lots, improved pedestrian and bike improvements, and trails will also offer walking choices

Studies

Unlike the Crozet or Places29 Master Plans in the County, there is not a specific transportation study that accompanies this Master Plan; however, there are several studies already completed, underway or planned to that will address the issues of improving traffic flow in Pantops, especially along Route 250. (The status of each is noted below.) These completed studies and studies underway These studies will provide opportunities to better understand traffic impacts in the area and assess recommended improvements. As part of the Pantops Master Plan, VDOT has provided some data and input regarding transportation needs/conditions and alternative improvements in the area.

Eastern Albemarle Sub-Area Study-*underway*

A study of the eastern part of Albemarle County, Fluvanna and Louisa Counties is This study is a sub area analysis of a larger Fluvanna and Louisa Counties Multi-Modal Study being undertaken by the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission for those counties. The Eastern Albemarle Sub-Area Study will includes an area bounded by I-64 on the west, Route 22 on the north, the Albemarle/Fluvanna County line on the east and Route 53 on the south., It will also includes a network analysis of connections to Route 250 west of I-64 interchange in the Pantops area. Key objectives of the study are:

- Analyze key intersections in the study area given the findings of the network analysis.

- Evaluate alternative multi-modal transportation networks that complement the Comprehensive Plan recommendations.
- Identify short-term and long-term transportation projects that can be complemented through both the public sector and as part of private development proposals.

The consultant will prepare a final report that documents the recommended plan, including existing and forecast future conditions, deficiencies, projects, and strategies. One of the most important products of this study will be a specific list of projects that the County can use to guide developer contributions as new development comes online. The study will include a list of specific capital projects, a schedule for implementation and estimated cost. There will be opportunities for public input on the findings and recommendations of this study. Staff anticipates completion of the study in mid 2007.

Eastern Connector Study-*underway*

The Eastern Connector Study is a joint planning effort by the City of Charlottesville and the County of Albemarle. The two localities have jointly and equally funded this \$500,000 study. Staff anticipates a contract with a consultant to be completed by December 2006. The study will provide a minimum of three alternative road alignments that will provide a connection between US 250 east of Route 20 and US 29 between Rio Road and Proffit Road. The alternatives will be evaluated in regards to impacts on traffic, the environment, existing neighborhoods and private property, project cost and other fiscal impacts. This study will begin this fall and will include opportunities for public input. Staff anticipates a Fall/Winter 2007 completion for this study phase of the project.

This study is listed as a new construction project to be studied in the UnJam 2025 MPO Plan. The Eastern Connector would connect the 250 East/Pantops area with Route 29 North and address the significant volume of traffic traveling in an “east to north” pattern both now and in the future. This study is listed as a new construction project to be studied in the UnJam 2025 MPO Plan. UnJam is the combined urban and rural transportation plan for the area, adopted by the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission. The CHART Study states “project funding is included in the CHART recommended projects lists for construction if a feasible route can be identified that provides cost-effective transportation benefits, while minimizing impacts on neighborhoods and the environment.” All regional projects of significance and requiring funding have to be listed in CHART. Residents from Key West and adjacent neighborhoods have expressed concern about potential impacts on neighborhoods, parks, historic properties and natural areas. These concerns should be carefully looked at in the study.

The Eastern Connector Study is a joint planning effort by the City of Charlottesville and the County of Albemarle. Each locality equally funded this \$500,000 study with the County. Staff anticipates a contract with a consultant to be completed by mid to late September. The study will provide a minimum of three alternative road alignments that will provide a connection between US 250 east of Route 20 and US 29 between Rio Road and Proffit Road. The alternatives will be

evaluated in regards to impacts on traffic, the environment, existing neighborhoods and private property, project cost and other fiscal impacts. This study will begin this fall and will include opportunities for public input. Staff anticipates a Fall 2007 completion for this study phase of the project.

Route 250 East Corridor Study – (completed March 2004)

ROADS

Starting in 1998, VDOT undertook a study of the traffic, projected traffic, and street improvement needs for improving traffic flow on Route 250 East. This study included Route 250 from Free Bridge easterly to the Fluvanna County line. A long list of needs was generated from the study with estimated costs. Prior to VDOT expending money on any projects in the study area, it is necessary for the Albemarle County Board of Supervisors to endorse the project. The recommendations of this study have been considered as part of the development of the Pantops Master Plan.

The Route 250 east Study suggested that these short-range recommendations be addressed to meet 2022 travel demands.

- Provision of a left-turn lane on eastbound Route 250 at Edge Hill
- Improvement of Route 22/250 Intersection
- Provision of a Park & Ride lot at Route 250/I-64 Interchange
- Provision of a Park & Ride lot at Route 250/Route 616
- Provision of Express Bus Service to I-64 at Zion Crossroads

Long Range Alternatives included:

- VDOT's recommendation for Route 250 at Free Bridge to the I-64 six through travel lanes and continuous right turn lanes with a shared use path that may be located outside the proposed right of way.
- I-64 Interchange improvements are recommended along with relocating Hansens Mountain Road to Glenorchy Drive with this study.

Charlottesville Area Transit Development Plan

CTS recently updated Transit Development Plan (TDP). The County has participated in the development of this plan update which will improve frequency of service on the existing routes in Pantops from 60 minutes to 30 minutes. Specifically, the plan includes the following for CTS Route 10, which serves Pantops:

Prior to FY 2006, Route 10 operated on 30 minute headway between the Downtown Mall and Pantops Shopping Center and served Wilton Farm and State Farm on alternating trips. To extend service to the Martha Jefferson Hospital Campus and the Westminster/Canterbury neighborhoods, the Pantops/State Farm and Pantops/Wilton Farm branches were merged into a single branch with 60-minute headway. In FY 2008, the headway on Route 10 should be reduced from 60-minutes to 30-minutes because it would provide higher frequency service to essential services, including the Social Security Administration, Department of Motor Vehicles, and Martha Jefferson Hospital Campus, as well as several neighborhoods. This would likely make transit a more enticing option and attract more riders. Implementation is contingent upon funding from Albemarle County.

TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

Route 250/Richmond Road-

Recommendations for improvements are as follows: The Pantops Master Plan has considered public input in making recommendations that address the Route 250 Corridor. As noted, VDOT's long term planning does call for additional widening of Route 250. However, based on the desire to have pedestrian crossings and a walkable Pantops, the recommendations of the Pantops Plan are not consistent with VDOT's plan with regard to widening.

- Route 250 improvements should provide for multi-modal transportation, including sidewalks, bike lanes and other pedestrian crosswalk and other safety features.
- ***Improvements to Route 250 should not include excessive widening and no more than six lanes total are recommended, to include two travel lanes with a continuous right turn lane.***
- Address signalization and improve turning lanes and turn movements with a center median from the Route 20 intersection to the top of the mountain.
- Reconstruct Route 250 should have a boulevard character. as a boulevard with a planted median and completed sidewalk system, with crosswalks at strategic crossing points.
- Develop a corridor landscaping plan to unify and beautify both sides of Route 250 East. This plan may distinguish portions of the corridor with different landscaping treatments. The most formal urban design and character along Route 250 should begin at Peter Jefferson Parkway/Westminster Canterbury and continue to Free Bridge.

As stated earlier in the report, Route 250/Richmond Road is functioning at a D Level of Service and VDOT's long term plan calls for additional widening Route 250 from 2-lanes to 3-lanes plus a continuous right-turn lane. Based on the desire to have usable pedestrian crossings and a walkable Pantops, the recommendations of the Pantops Plan are not consistent with VDOT's plan with regard to widening.

Route 20-

Recommendations for improvements are as follows:

- Widen Route 20 from Route 250 to the Elks/Fontana Drive intersection to 4 lanes with curb/gutter, bike lanes, and sidewalks.
- Maintain rural character on Route 20 north of Elks/Fontana Drive.
- Additional pedestrian paths should be considered to Darden Towe Park along Route 20, possibly along the park frontage and leading to the future Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center.

Hansen Mountain Road/I-64 Interchange-

Recommendations for improvements are as follows:

- Improve the Level of Service of the I-64 /Route 250 Interchange, including double left turn lanes on the east bound off ramp. Other traffic management and signal improvements should be considered.
- ***improvements are recommended in VDOT's Route 250 Study along with rRelocate theing Hansens Mountain Road intersection with Route 250 to align with the existing entrance into Peter Jefferson Place (Glenorchy Drive/Peter Jefferson Parkway).*** Several possible alignment options for Hansen Mountain Road are identified on the Pantops Master Plan.

Local Connections-

Improving the local street grid internal to Pantops was a primary reason for initiating the master plan process. These interconnecting local street systems are intended to reduce vehicle trips on Route 250. They have been illustrated on the Transportation Map and also the Framework Map. This map suggests important connections that should be made, in as many places as could be determined feasible with the information available. ***Completion of parallel roads to Route 250 on both the north side and the south side are considered high priorities.*** All road connections shown would have to be fully evaluated and discussed with VDOT and the public again prior to moving forward. In most cases, it would be expected that these connections would be made as part of development projects and it has not been determined at this point which roads may be County initiated or public/private partnerships. The implementation component of the Master Plan (which will be developed next) will include additional information on priority and implementation strategy.

Prior to making interconnections to existing neighborhoods, the design of the existing roads in those neighborhoods should be considered and the pedestrian system should be evaluated. Any improvements or traffic calming measures should be installed before interconnections are made. Most recently, the Planning Commission has heard from residents in Fontana regarding safety concerns with interconnections to their neighborhood. This will also be an issue that to be addressed if Hansen Mountain Road is connected to Glenorchy through the Gazebo Plaza site.

Recommendations for improvements are as follows:

- Provide parallel roads to Route 250 on both the north side and the south side of Route 250. These roads are not intended as service roads, but alternate east-west routes for local traffic.
- Provide interconnecting north-south streets on both sides of Route 250 East to complete the internal street network.
- As opportunities arise, interconnect existing neighborhoods to new neighborhoods and developments using streets, and pedestrian and bike facilities.
- Where interconnections from or to existing neighborhoods occur, consider the need for installation of traffic calming measures as needed before the interconnections are made.
- Consider upgrading certain neighborhood streets which are (or will be) interconnected with other neighborhoods but were not constructed with facilities necessary to support interconnections. (ex. Fontana Drive)

Additional Connections to the City of Charlottesville-

A priority of the Pantops Master Plan is to improve linkages to the City of Charlottesville. Road crossings of the Rivanna River, south of Free Bridge, have been explored including a connection to High Street from the Pantops Shopping Center and a connection from State Farm Blvd to Market Street. A Rivanna River crossing to High Street in the City of Charlottesville is the preferred option. Further discussion with the City of Charlottesville is needed and engineering and cost feasibility have not been fully considered. The Eastern Connector Study will provide information helpful to deciding whether this project should be pursued. The property owner of the Pantops Shopping Center has indicated a willingness to discuss the road connection and has noted that they would not like to see the east wing of the shopping center, with the Food Lion, and the Roses wing impacted by a road project.

Recommendations for connections are as follows:

- Provide a bridge crossing the Rivanna River, connecting Riverbend Drive/South Pantops area to High Street in the City of Charlottesville.
- Explore opportunities for pedestrian bridges over the Rivanna River to link residential areas with employment areas and recreation.
- Consider recommendations of the upcoming Eastern Connector Road Study.

State Farm Boulevard Area-

Recommendations for improvements are as follows:

- Improve the Improvements to the intersections of Rolkin and Abbey Roads with State Farm Boulevard to improve traffic flow.
- Provide a roundabout or improve the alignment at along with the intersection of Hickman/Isham Drive and State Farm Boulevard.
- When warrants are met, provide a signal at Tthe northern end of State Farm Blvd where it intersects with Route 250 has been identified as a problem area by public and State Farm, who has requested that the intersection of State Farm and Route 250 be considered for a traffic signal. (VDOT is in the process of evaluating the intersection and conducting a warrant analysis for signalization.)
- Provide for parallel streets on both sides of State Farm Boulevard. It is recognized that these parallel streets are a long-term improvement and would be possible only with a change in the current concept plan for the Peter Jefferson site.

The parallel roads shown on both the east and west side of State Farm Boulevard were of concern to Peter Jefferson Place during review of the Master Plan, who has indicated that the plan of development for the property should be mimicked in the Pantops Master Plan. Given the expected land uses, such as the hospital and museum uses, on the east side of State Farm Boulevard it is not expected that the parallel road would be built in the near future. However, the street network and blocks shown are meant to address the form of any development that should occur in the long term future.

TRANSIT

The Pantops Master Plan recognizes that transit can help relieve traffic congestion and is an alternative to road construction, particularly in more densely developed urban areas. There is an emphasis in the plan to alternatives to major road construction and auto dependence. The County of Albemarle contracts public transit service from the City of Charlottesville Transit Service (CTS). Currently, buses run on the hour from 6am-6pm with stops at Pantops Shopping Center, Wilton, Westminster Canterbury/Social Security offices, State Farm, Martha Jefferson Hospital, and DMV. The City is currently preparing an updated Transit Development Plan (TDP). The County has participated in the development of this plan update which will improve frequency of service on the existing routes in Pantops from 60 minutes to 30 minutes.

Recommendations for transit improvements are as follows:

- Expand bus service and continue to improve frequency of service within Pantops, focusing on daytime ridership to central services located at the Downtown Mall.
- Provide additional stops in the Pantops neighborhood to improve service to the City and other County neighborhoods. Continued monitoring and coordination between the County and CTS is needed to ensure that new development will be served with transit. Ultimately, provide 30 minute headways for service to Pantops.
- Improve signage and shelters at bus stops to encourage ridership.
- Consider initiating trolley/bus service within Pantops serving major origins/destinations within the neighborhood.
- Ensure new development is transit ready.
- Consider providing express or rapid bus service between Zion Crossroads to the City on Route 250 and between Pantops to Route 29 North, linking to services proposed in Places29.
- Encourage new development to contribute to funding transit services to offset the cost of service and to reduce traffic impacts of development proposals.

The public during the master plan process, has continued to provide guidance on the issues of transit service and has indicated that they are in support of the recommendations in the plan, which include:

- Expand bus service and continue to improve frequency of service within Pantops, focusing on daytime ridership to central services located at the Downtown Mall and central business district.
- Provide additional stops in the Pantops neighborhood to provide improved service to the City and other County neighborhoods. Continued monitoring and coordination between the County and CTS is need to ensure that stops are provided where needed, especially with new businesses like the hotel opening
- Improve signage and shelters at bus stops, encourage people to want to ride the bus.
- Consider initiating trolley/bus service within Pantops serving major origins/destinations within the neighborhood.
- Ensure new development is transit ready.

- Express or rapid bus service be considered between Zion Crossroads to the City on Route 250 and between Pantops to Route 29 North, linking to services proposed in Places29. These would likely be long-term recommendations.

RIDESHARE/Park and Ride

The intent of the Pantops Master Plan is to provide opportunities for ridesharing along the major commuter corridors before traffic enters onto Route 250. These roads include I-64, Route 22, and Route 616. Park and Ride facilities already exist in the Pantops Shopping Center and at Darden Towe Park. RideShare is a program of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission that works to reduce traffic congestion and increase mobility throughout the City of Charlottesville and the Counties of Albemarle, Fluvanna, Greene, Louisa, and Nelson. They offer free carpool and SchoolPool matching, a vanpool start-up service, and a Guaranteed Ride Home program, which provides free rides home in an emergency to users of alternative transportation. RideShare also works with employers to develop and implement traffic reduction programs, and market the region's Park and Ride lots.

RideShare is a member of the Commuter Information Team (CIT), a partnership that includes JAUNT, Charlottesville Transit Service (CTS), University Transit Service (UTS), and Greene County Transit. Our work with the CIT includes acting as a transportation information and referral center for the region, as well as contributing to joint marketing and awareness efforts.

The Park and Ride Committee is an informal group of agency staff and local planners that meets quarterly to review, update, and implement plans related to creation and maintenance of park and ride lots in the region.

Members include VDOT, Charlottesville Transit Service, JAUNT, one urban locality staff member, one rural locality staff member, and TJPDC staff.

A park and ride lot is currently located at Darden Towe Park and the Pantops Shopping Center; State Farm has a successful van pool program and has noted that a high percentage of their employees commute from outside the area. There are many opportunities to enhance the RideShare and Park and Ride programs in Pantops.

The Pantops Master Plan recommends the following:

- Provide additional other park and ride lots east of Pantops to address regional commuter traffic. Possible sites are located near the Route 250/I-64 Interchange, the Route 250/Route 22 intersection near the Rivanna Village/Route 616 area.
- Encourage and promote *Rideshare* programs. Identify needs and opportunities of Pantops residents to improve rideshare and commuter programs.

Sidewalks, Pedestrian Paths and Bikewayss

The Comprehensive Plan recommends that Master Plans for each development area identify potential walkway, bicycle, greenway, and streetlight projects and incorporate the recommendations of the Jefferson Area Bicycle, Pedestrian and Greenway Plan. Pedestrian and bicycle access is an important aspect of the County's overall transportation system. Walkways and bikeways provide for safe and convenient travel and improve the efficiency of the roadway system by reducing potential conflicts between motor vehicles and pedestrians/cyclists. Pedestrian and bicycle access improvements can also complement and enhance the mass transportation system by improving access to bus stops and places of economic activity. The provision of an effective pedestrian/bicycle system can also enhance the sense of community within developed or developing areas of the County by providing pedestrian/bicycle facilities that interconnect communities and facilitate and encourage interaction within the area. Pedestrian connections will be prioritized based on the concept that the highest density residential areas and employment areas should be connected with commercial and recreational destinations within the neighborhood. Residents have noted that any sidewalk or bike path should be designed so that people are comfortable walking or biking, with an emphasis on width and pavement materials and having paths removed/buffered from busy roadways.

The pedestrian and bike system in Pantops is inadequate to meet existing residents needs and they identified the need to improve the pedestrian system and walkability in Pantops, including crossings on Route 250; to provide safe bicycle routes and to consider additional street lights. To address these goals in the Pantops Master Plan, an expanded system of trails has been developed and is illustrated on the Green Infrastructure Map along with improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian system are recommended:

- Develop *convenient* pedestrian/bicycle crossings across Route 250 East at two or three key locations.
- **Key intersections to focus pedestrian improvements and to provide safe crossings area Route 20/250 and at Rivanna Ridge Shopping Center from Rolkin Road/Eckerds across Route 250 and mid-block between these two locations.**
- **These crosswalks should be provided as controlled crossings at a minimum and potentially grade separated if necessary.**
- Pedestrian crossing points should be clearly identified and physically defined by landscaping and other features.
- Provide connected sidewalk system: Complete sidewalk system on Route 250 to Peter Jefferson Place/Glenorchy, Route 20, Riverbend Drive, South Pantops Drive, and State Farm Boulevard.
- Sidewalks should be provided on both sides of Route 20 from the Route 250 intersection to Elks/Fontana Drives; an asphalt path should be provided from the Elks Drive intersection to the northern Pantops Development Area boundary, including to the Broadus Memorial Baptist Church and Lewis & Clark Exploratory Center.
- All roads should have sidewalks to encourage and facilitate walking. Sidewalks should be buffered from the roadways so that pedestrians are comfortable walking along the roadways.
- An improved trail system (*See Green Infrastructure Map*) within Pantops that will provide pedestrian and bicycle connections as an alternative to automobiles.

- Provide destinations within a quarter-mile of residential areas. The proposed Pantops Land Use Plan encourages a mix of uses and centers closer to residents.
- Bike Lanes should be considered for inclusion on Route 250 if possible. This may be accomplished with bike lanes next to travel lanes or with multi-purpose paths adjacent to the road in some portions of Pantops.
- Provide bike lanes on South Pantops Drive, Route 20, Riverbend Drive, and the proposed northern parallel road to Route 250.
- Encourage businesses to install bike racks for patrons.
- Identify streets for additional pedestrian and street lighting to improve safety within Pantops.
- Greenways have also been identified in the Pantops Master Plan as a way of connecting neighborhoods by providing safe bike and pedestrian paths. Refer to the recommendations of the Green Infrastructure Maps for neighborhood to neighborhood trail connections.

SUMMARY OF TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS:

Route 250 improvements should provide for **multi-modal transportation**, including sidewalks and bike lanes, and other pedestrian safety features.

Improvements to **Route 250** should not include excessive widening and no more than six lanes are recommended, to include two travel lanes with a continuous right turn lane.

Hansen Mountain Road/Route 250 safety improvements are needed. In the short term, the **cross over of Hansens Mountain Road on Rt. 250 should be closed**. In the long term, the Hansen Mountain Road should be **relocated** so that traffic is rerouted, likely to **Glenorchy Drive**.

Route 250/Route 20 Intersection--Further study is needed to identify improvements needed and funding.

Eastern Connector Study *–underway*

- Ensure active neighborhood participation in MPO study of **Eastern Connector**, with attention to neighborhood-to- neighborhood benefits.

Improved **linkages to the City of Charlottesville** crossing the Rivanna River have been explored, including a connection to High Street from the Pantops Shopping Center and a connection from State Farm Blvd to Market Street.

A **Rivanna River crossing to High Street** in the City of Charlottesville is the preferred option. Further discussion with the City of Charlottesville is needed, along with engineering and cost feasibility considerations.

Improve **street grid** internal to Pantops, **interconnecting local street systems**, reducing vehicle trips on Route 250.

Prior to making **interconnections** to existing neighborhoods, evaluate the pedestrian system within the neighborhood and establish if any improvements or traffic calming measures should be installed before interconnections are made.

Consider closing **Free Bridge Lane to automobiles** and providing an enhanced greenway/park in that area.

Route 250 should have a boulevard character.

Develop a **corridor landscaping plan** to unify and beautify both sides of Route 250 East. This plan may distinguish portions of the corridor with different landscaping treatments. The most formal **urban design and character along Route 250** should begin at **Peter Jefferson Parkway/Westminster Canterbury and continue to Free Bridge**.

Provide safe **bicycle and pedestrian paths** throughout the Pantops neighborhood.

Pedestrian crossing points should be clearly identified and physically defined landscaping and other features.

Develop **convenient pedestrian/bicycle crossings** across Route 250 East at two or three key locations.

Provide connected sidewalk system: Complete sidewalk system on Route 250, Route 20, Riverbend Drive, South Pantops Drive, and State Farm Boulevard.

An improved **trail system** (*See Green Infrastructure Map*) within Pantops will provide **pedestrian and bicycle connections** and an alternative to automobiles.

Provide **destinations** within a quarter-mile of residential areas. The proposed Pantops Land Use plan encourages a mix of uses and centers closer to residents.

All roads should have sidewalks to encourage and facilitate walking.

Bike Lanes should be included in Route 250 improvements, new roads, and as part of improvement projects to existing roads. This may be accomplished with bike lanes next to travel lanes or with multi-purpose paths adjacent to the road.

Encourage businesses to install **bike racks** for patrons.

Identify streets for additional pedestrian and street lighting to improve safety within Pantops.

A park and ride lot is currently located at Darden Towe Park and the Pantops Shopping Center; State Farm has a van pool program. Provide other park and ride lots east of Pantops to address regional commuter traffic.

Encourage and promote **Rideshare** programs. Identify needs and opportunities of Pantops residents to improve rideshare and commuter programs.

Consider initiating **trolley/bus service** within Pantops serving major origins/destinations within the neighborhood.

Expand bus service within Pantops, focusing on daytime ridership to central services located at the Downtown Mall and central business district.

Provide **additional stops** in the Pantops neighborhood to provide **improved service** to the City and other County neighborhoods.

Ensure new development is **transit ready**.

New development should help to pay for transit and provide amenities to riders.

