

# Transportation Element

## *Introduction*

An adequate vehicular circulation system is vital for Hagerstown to remain a desirable place to live, work, and visit. Road projects that add highway capacity and new road links will be necessary to meet the 2008 Comprehensive Plan's goals for growth management, economic development, and the downtown. This chapter addresses the City of Hagerstown's existing transportation system and establishes priorities for improvements to roads, transit, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities over the next 20 years.

## *Goals*

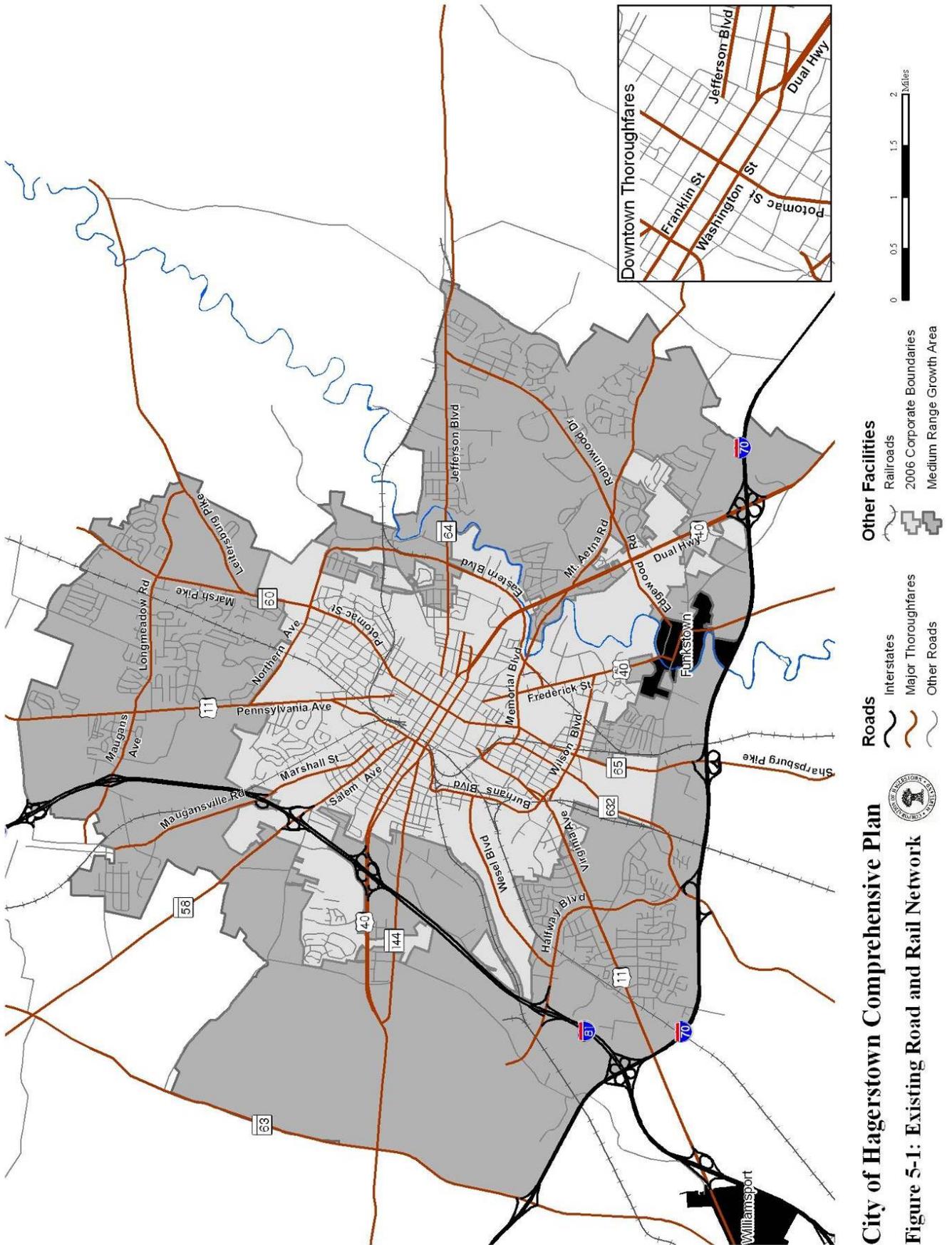
1. The City's transportation network, including roads, transit, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities, will meet the mobility needs of its residents, businesses, and visitors.
2. Transportation projects will support the City's growth management goals.
3. Long-distance traffic will use major highways to travel around Hagerstown rather than through the City.

## *Issues Addressed by this Element*

1. Hagerstown's transportation network needs to be enhanced to maintain safe and efficient flow of people and goods in and around the City.
2. Hagerstown's network of major roads is incomplete, with many missing or partially complete segments.
3. Without upgrades, the existing road network will not be sufficient to accommodate future traffic in and around Hagerstown.
4. Hagerstown's transportation network needs alternatives to the automobile, including transit and bicycle and pedestrian opportunities.

## **Existing Transportation Network**

Known as "Hub City," Hagerstown has long served as a transportation center, first as a waypoint on the National Road—America's first federally funded highway—and later as a railway node. Today, U.S. Routes 40 (the descendant of the National Road) and 11 intersect at the edge of downtown Hagerstown, and Interstates 70 and 81 skirt the southern and western edges of the City. The interstates provide a bypass around the City for long-distance travelers, including truck traffic, while the U.S. routes provide direct access to downtown Hagerstown. Other major roads, such as Wilson Boulevard, Memorial Boulevard, Eastern Boulevard, and Northern Avenue provide a partial circuit around the City center for local traffic (see Figure 5-1).



The older portions of Hagerstown's local road network (primarily those in and near the downtown) are a grid system, divided by a major railroad line, streams, and topographic features. More recent additions to the local road system have broken with the grid pattern.

Hagerstown's road network is mostly adequate to accommodate current traffic flows. Some traffic bottlenecks tend to develop where major thoroughfares meet smaller roads, such as the intersection of Dual Highway (U.S. Route 40 south of downtown) and Edgewood Drive and Eastern Boulevard south of Jefferson Boulevard. Gaps in the circumferential thoroughfare network—specifically the lack of a direct connection between Eastern Boulevard and I-81—also cause some delays. Although not severe, traffic congestion has nonetheless become a concern in Hagerstown—notably in the downtown.

Trucks and commercial traffic traverse the downtown, although most of these trips have either an origin or a destination at a downtown business, or in one of the industrial and commercial areas in the city (see Figure 2-1).

Transit service in the Hagerstown region is provided by the County Commuter service, operated by Washington County. County Commuter operates nine routes that originate in downtown Hagerstown. Destinations for these routes are Valley Mall, Long Meadow Shopping Center, Williamsport, Maugansville (and Washington County Regional Airport), Hagerstown Community College, Smithsburg, Prime Outlets, Funkstown, and the Centre at Hagerstown. The nearest passenger rail facilities are the AMTRAK/MARC stations in Martinsburg and Frederick (the railroad lines that traverse Hagerstown are owned by CSX and Norfolk-Southern, and are used for freight operations).

The Maryland Transit Authority operates a commuter bus route from the park-and-ride lot at the I-70/MD Route 65 interchange to the Shady Grove Metrorail station. The Hagerstown region is served by several other park-and-ride lots, including several along I-70 (at US Route 40, MD Route 66, and MD Route 632), and a lot at the I-81/MD Route 58 interchange. These lots, along with the MTA park-and-ride lot, provide approximately 600 spaces for commuters from the Hagerstown region and beyond.<sup>1</sup>

Washington County Regional Airport provides commercial and private air travel for the four-state region.

Most City streets have sidewalks, although there are some areas where sidewalks are in poor condition or are missing altogether. Hagerstown requires new development and redevelopment to include sidewalks that connect to existing sidewalks, especially where continuous sidewalks facilitate access to parks and schools. Most portions of the Medium-Range Growth Area outside the city lack sidewalks. The City has identified a Hub City Bicycle Loop that provides a recreational bicycle route around the downtown and through adjacent neighborhoods.

---

<sup>1</sup> Source: Maryland State Highway Administration, <http://www.sha.state.md.us/keepingcurrent/maintainRoadsBridges/rideshare/OPPE/parkride.asp>

## Future Transportation Needs

While Hagerstown's roads currently function well, projected increases in regional traffic volumes will have significant negative impacts on travel in and around Hagerstown. The Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Transportation Organization (HEPMPO) is the federally designated body responsible for preparing a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to assess transportation needs of the region that includes Washington County, Maryland and Berkeley and Jefferson Counties, West Virginia through the year 2030. The 2005 LRTP found that the Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle region will experience a 58 percent increase in travel demand between 2000 and 2030.<sup>2</sup> Unless steps are taken to add capacity to the regional road system by 2030, I-81 and I-70 will both operate at Level of Service (LOS) E or F, characterized by extremely slow speeds and heavy congestion (LOS F indicates near-gridlock conditions).

Maintaining capacity on the interstates is critical for the long-term adequacy of Hagerstown's transportation system. Heavy congestion on the interstates will make Hagerstown's thoroughfares and local roads attractive alternative routes for regional through traffic. Specifically, the LRTP found that, if capacity is not added to the interstate system, Dual Highway, Eastern Boulevard, Northern Avenue, and much of U.S. Route 11 will operate at LOS E or F. This would encourage traffic to bypass congested interstates by using downtown streets, which, as a result, would operate at LOS E or F. To avoid these problems, the LRTP recommends a number of transportation upgrades, as listed in Table 5-1 and shown in Figure 5-2. It should be noted that, as of 2008, the vast majority of these projects are unfunded. Since the State has plans to add capacity to I-81, the City contends that the widening of US 11 is not necessary and also would not be feasible given site constraints within the city.

In addition to the LRTP improvements in Table 5-1, Hagerstown has identified a number of improvements that would further enhance the City's transportation network. Those projects, as well as additional improvements from the Washington County Capital Improvements Plan (CIP), are listed in Table 5-2 and shown in Figure 5-3.

---

<sup>2</sup> Travel demand is measured by daily vehicle-miles of travel (VMT). Between 2000 and 2030, the LRTP estimates that regional travel will increase from 6,673,000 VMT to 10,537,000 VMT.

**Table 5-1: Long Range Transportation Plan Recommended Improvements**

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Improvement (see Figure 5-2)</b>	<b>Segment</b>
<b>Interstate 81</b>	A. Widen to six lanes and interchange improvements	Entire length in Washington County
	B. Widen and add collector-distributor lanes	From I-70 to U.S. Route 40
<b>Interstate 70</b>	C. Widen to six lanes	Frederick County line to I-81
	D. Freeway reconstruction	I-81 to I-68
<b>U.S. Route 11</b>	E. Widen to four lanes plus auxiliary lane <sup>b</sup>	I-81 in Williamsport to Terminal Drive
<b>U.S. Route 40</b>	F. Widen to six lanes, divided	I-70 to Eastern Boulevard
	G. Widen to four lanes	MD Route 144 to MD Route 63
	H. Add signalization	MD Route 63 to MD Route 57
<b>U.S. Route 40 (Alternate)</b>	I. Reconstruction	Maple Street (Funkstown) to MD Route 68
<b>MD Route 60</b>	J. Intersection improvements and Transportation Systems Management <sup>a</sup>	Marsh Pike to Leitersburg
<b>MD Route 65</b>	K. Widen to four-lane divided	I-70 to MD Route 68
<b>MD Route 58</b>	L. Widen to three-lane section	I-81 to edge of UGA
	M. Widen and improve signalization	I-81 to MD Route 63
<b>MD Route 63</b>	N. Widen to four-lane divided	I-70 to north of U.S. Route 40
<b>Eastern Boulevard</b>	O. Widen to four lanes, plus auxiliary lane	(U.S. Route 40 to MD Route 60)
	P. Construct new Eastern Boulevard Extension	From Northern Avenue to Marsh Pike
<b>Halfway Boulevard</b>	Q. Construct new four-lane divided arterial segment (with turn lanes)	Current terminus to MD Route 63
<b>Southern Boulevard</b>	R. Construct new road	Oak Ridge Drive to Edgewood Drive
<b>R. Paul Smith Boulevard</b>	S. Construct new road	U.S. Route 40 (at Mt. Aetna Road) to U.S. Route 40 (Alternate)

a: Transportation Systems Management (TSM) refers to strategies that increase the effective capacity of a road or road system without adding or widening roadways. Specific strategies typically include coordination of traffic signals, rapid accident response, and better road signage.

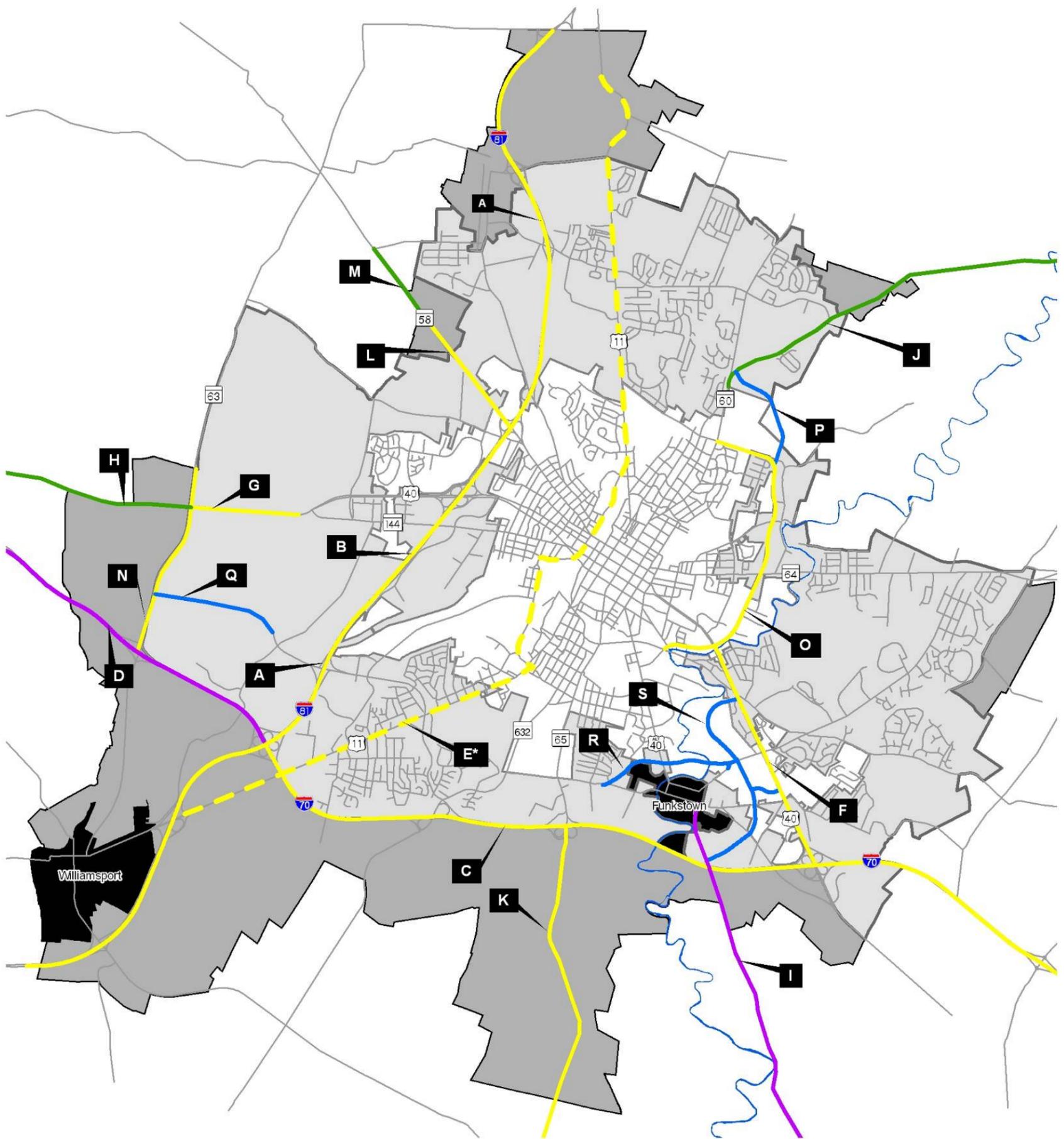
b: Since the State has plans to add capacity to I-81, the City contends that the widening of US Route 11 is not necessary and is also not feasible with the city given site constraints. The City recommends intersection improvements as an alternative to widening.

**Table 5-2: Locally Identified Transportation Improvements**

(In addition to LRTP-identified improvements)

<b>Facility</b>	<b>Improvement (see Figure 5-3)</b>	<b>Segment</b>
<b><i>City-identified improvements</i></b>		
<b>Marsh Pike</b>	1. Widen to 3-4 lanes	Longmeadow intersection to MD Route 60/Eastern Boulevard Extended intersection
<b>Terps Boulevard</b>	2. Construction of new road	Between Marshall Street and Salem Avenue
<b>Haven Road Extension <sup>a</sup></b>	3. Extend and cross railroad to join Salem Avenue	Northwest terminus of Haven Road to Marshall Street
<b>Haven Road</b>	4. Reconstruction	Pennsylvania Avenue to end
<b>Marshall Street</b>	5. Reconstruction	Rhode Island Avenue to corporate boundaries
<b>Northern Avenue at Eastern Boulevard</b>	6. Widen intersection and approaches.	
<b>Garland Groh Boulevard</b>	7. Signalization	Entire length
<b>Wesel Boulevard</b>	8. Dualization	Burhans Boulevard to existing 4-lane segment.
<b>Professional Court Extended</b>	9. New major collector	Connect Eastern Boulevard and Robinwood Drive, via Professional Court, connecting to Yale Drive and passing north of Village at Robinwood out to Robinwood Drive.
<b>Edgewood Drive</b>	10. Widen to 3 or 4 lanes	Entire segment inside corporate limits.
<b>Hub City Bike Loop</b>	Establish a designated bicycle loop within the City.	
<b><i>Identified in the 2006-2011 Washington County Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)</i></b>		
<b>Maugans Avenue</b>	11. Widen to 5-lane section 12. Widen to 3-lane section	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Between I-81 and U.S. Route 11</li> <li>• Between I-81 and Maugansville Road</li> </ul>
<b>Longmeadow Road</b>	13. Widen to 3-lane section	Between Marsh Pike and Pulaski Drive
<b>Robinwood Drive</b>	14. Widen to 4 lanes. 15. Realign segment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entire length.</li> <li>• Community College to MD Route 64</li> </ul>
<b>Halfway Blvd and Massey Blvd</b>	16. Widen intersection and approaches.	
<b>Mt. Aetna Road at Dual Highway</b>	17. Widen intersection and approaches.	
<b>Edgewood Drive at Dual Highway</b>	18. Widen intersection and approaches.	

a: The City's Northwest Connector study examined options for this improvement.



**City of Hagerstown Comprehensive Plan**  
**Figure 5-2: LRTP Recommended Upgrades**

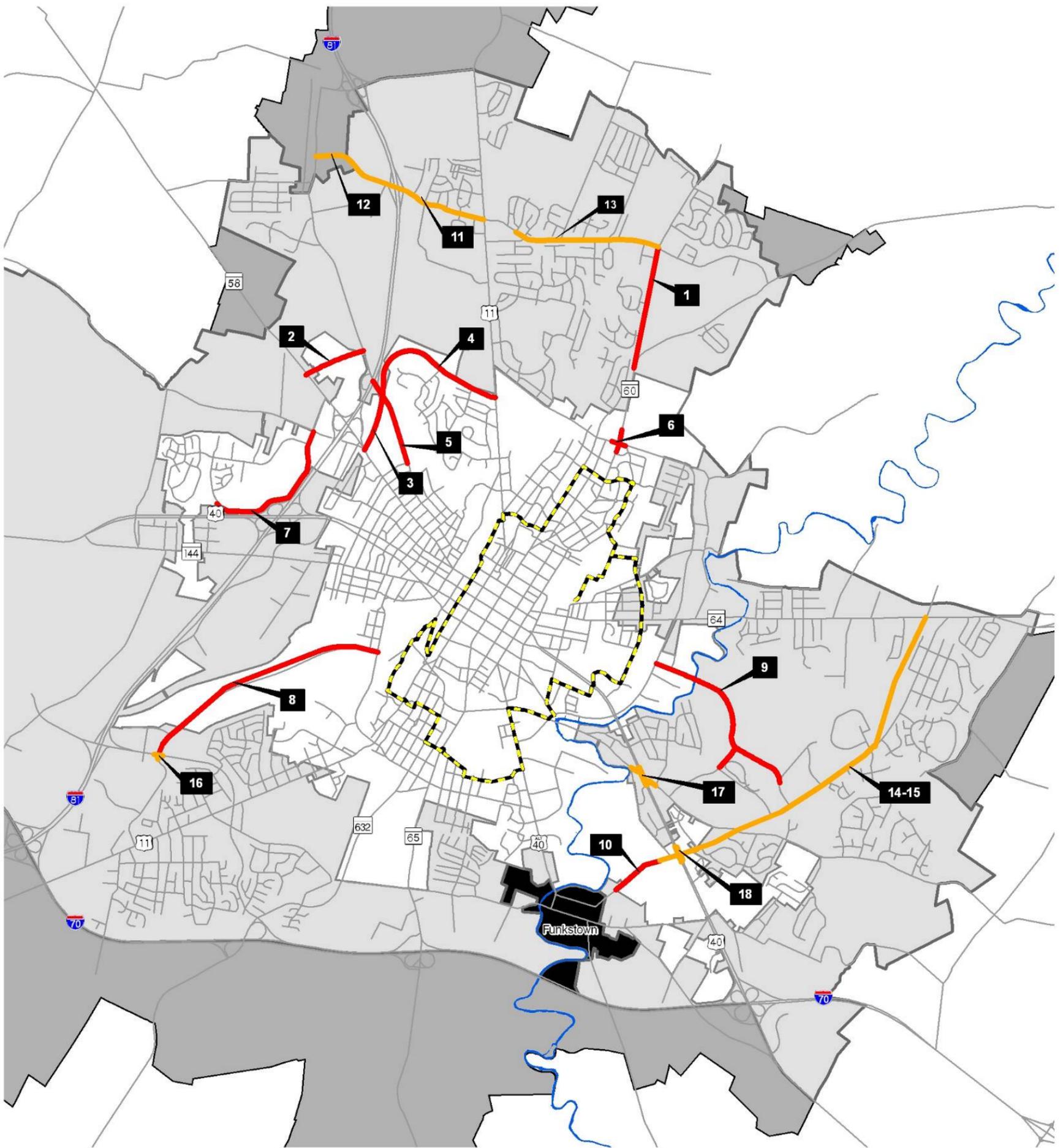


**Legend**

Improvements listed in HEPMPO Long Range Transportation Plan (See Table TR-1)

- Widen
- Reconstruction
- Long-Range Growth Area
- New Segment
- Signalization/TSM
- Medium-Range Growth Area

\* The City believes that widening of US Route 11 is not necessary due to planned improvements on I-81, and may be infeasible due to site constraints (See note in Table 5-1).



**City of Hagerstown Comprehensive Plan**

**Figure 5-3: Locally Recommended Transportation Improvements**



**Legend**

**Locally-Identified Improvements  
(See Table 5-2)**

- Improvements identified by the City of Hagerstown
- Projects in the Washington County Capital Improvements Plan (CIP)
- Hub City Bike Loop
- Medium-Range Growth Area
- Long-Range Growth Area

Among the projects shown in Tables 5-1 and 5-2, Hagerstown's Mayor and City Council listed the following priority road projects.<sup>3</sup>

Current Projects (underway or soon to be underway as of 2008):

- Eastern Blvd widening from Conrad Ct. to Jefferson Blvd.
- Intersection improvements at US Route 40 and Edgewood Drive
- Jonathan Street streetscape project (not included in Tables 5-1 or 5-2)
- Intersection improvements at MD Route 60 and Northern Avenue
- Marshall Street Reconstruction

Future Projects (varying funding commitments in the City CIP):

- Eastern Blvd widening and extension to Marsh Pike
- Construction of Northwest Connector from New Haven Road to Salem Avenue
- Extension of Professional Court to the proposed hospital site
- Construction of R. Paul Smith Blvd
- Construction of Southern Blvd

Widening I-81 and I-70 is essential to alleviate the projected congestion in the Hagerstown region and will reduce bypass trips through the City. Improving major thoroughfares outside of the Corporate Boundaries (but within the UGA)—especially by upgrading Maugans Avenue, Longmeadow Road, and Marsh Pike to complete the northeast section of a circumferential route around the City—will keep intra-regional travel on the City's periphery, rather than in the downtown. New roads such as the Haven Road extension and the Eastern Boulevard/Robinwood Drive connector will shorten trips and alleviate traffic on Dual Highway, Pennsylvania Avenue, and other arterial roads, and will add interconnectivity and flexibility to the road system.

In addition to accommodating future traffic, these transportation improvements also support the City's growth management goals. Added road capacity and new connections are concentrated in the northern and eastern portions of the Medium-Range Growth Area, where there is a large amount of undeveloped land and several potential annexation properties. Setting aside rights-of-way for new or widened roads during the development review and permitting process should become a priority. This can provide important connections between new development, redevelopment, and existing neighborhoods.

---

<sup>3</sup> Mayor and City Council Work Session, March 20, 2007.

## ***Transportation Policies***

**Policy 5-1.** The 2008 Comprehensive Plan recommends completion of the Long Range Transportation Plan projects and City-identified projects listed in Tables 5-1 and 5-2, and shown in Figure 5-2.

**Policy 5-2.** The City of Hagerstown will work with Washington County, the Towns, the State of Maryland, and Hagerstown Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization (HEPMPO) to pursue the timely completion of selected projects that facilitate traffic movement around the City's periphery. Specific projects are:

- Widening of I-81 and I-70.
- Widening and extension of Eastern Boulevard.
- Widening of US 40 and improvements to Edgewood Drive.
- Construction of Southern Boulevard
- Construction of the Northwest Connector

**Policy 5-3.** Transportation improvements will support the Comprehensive Plan's growth management and land use goals.

**Policy 5-4.** Desired alignments for new roads will be identified in advance of new development, and developer participation will be sought.

**Policy 5-5.** The City encourages alternatives to automobile travel, specifically:

- Expansion of the County Commuter system
- Inclusion of sidewalks and pedestrian paths as part of new development, and
- The establishment of bicycle routes on existing and new City streets.

**Policy 5-6.** Continue to encourage ride-sharing by maintaining existing park-and-ride lots, and by developing new park-and-ride lots as necessary.

### ***Transportation Implementation Actions***

- Action 5-1.** Work with Washington County, the Towns, the State of Maryland, and the HEPMPO to complete the transportation improvements identified in this Comprehensive Plan. In particular, review and comment on the annual City and County Improvement Programs (CIPs) and the State Consolidated Transportation Program as they relate to furthering objectives of this plan.
- Action 5-2.** Work with Washington County to review County Commuter bus service, to evaluate the adequacy of existing routes, transit information, and bus shelters in light of the Growth Management and Land Use Element of this Comprehensive Plan.
- Action 5-3.** Work with the Maryland Transit Authority to evaluate the need for expanded commuter bus service and additional commuter bus stops in Hagerstown.
- Action 5-4.** Expand the City's pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure by considering the following improvements:
- Develop a new walking path/greenway along Antietam Creek (see Figure 9-5).
  - Reserve right-of-way on new or expanded roads for bicycle lanes.
  - Re-use abandoned rail lines as pedestrian and bicycle paths.
- Action 5-5.** Investigate the feasibility of alternate funding sources for transportation projects, such as the local share of the Washington County excise tax, development impact fees and assessment districts, as well as increased State and Federal aid.
- Action 5-6.** Continue to require new development and redevelopment to include sidewalks that connect to existing sidewalks, especially where continuous sidewalks facilitate access to parks and schools.