

# TOWN OF GORDONSVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 2000 - 2005



TOWN OF GORDONSVILLE  
P. O. Box 276  
112 South Main Street  
Gordonsville, Virginia, 22942  
Phone 540-832-2233  
E-mail: [gordonsville@NS.gemlink.com](mailto:gordonsville@NS.gemlink.com)

#### TOWN COUNCIL

The Council is elected and serves four-year terms

Ernest Duncan, Mayor	December 31, 2004
Emily Winkey, Vice Mayor	December 31, 2004
Robert Coiner	December 31, 2002
Michelle Locker	December 31, 2002
Rebecca Lynch	December 31, 2002
Donald Yost	December 31, 2004
Peter Zahn	December 31, 2004

#### PLANNING COMMISSION

The Planning Commission are appointed by Council and serve for four year terms, except for the Town Administrator (nonvoting member) and a Council member who serve for the length of their appointment or term of office.

J. Hubert Allen, Jr., Chairman, Non-Voting	
James Bradley	June 21, 2003
Carolyn Carpenter	July 5, 2004
Kathryn O'Leary	March 30, 2002
Brenda Watkins	March 15, 2003
Emily Winkey	December 31, 2004

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112 S. Main Street  
Gordonsville, VA 22942



Ernest Duncan, Mayor  
Emily Winkey, Vice-Mayor  
Robert Coiner, Council Member  
Michelle Locker, Council Member  
Rebecca Lynch, Council Member  
Donald Yost, Council Member  
Peter Zahn, Council Member

J. Hubert Allen, Jr.  
Town Administrator

Ethel Hutchinson  
Clerk/Treasurer

Phone: (540) 832-2233  
Fax: (540) 832-2449

Motion by Peter Zahn to adopt the Gordonsville Comprehensive Plan.  
Second by Emily Winkey.

#### Roll Call Vote -

Coiner	aye
Zahn	aye
Yost	aye
Locker	aye
Lynch	aye
Winkey	aye
Duncan	aye

Motion carries.

May 22, 2001

I, Ethel Hutchinson, the Clerk/Treasurer of the Town of Gordonsville do certify and declare that the above is an accurate copy of an exert of the minutes of March 19, 2001 of the Gordonsville Town Council meeting.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ethel Hutchinson".

Ethel Hutchinson  
Clerk/Treasurer

**TOWN OF GORDONSVILLE – COMPREHENSIVE PLAN  
2000-2005**

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## I. Introduction

### A. Purpose of this plan

Under 15.2-2223 of the Code of Virginia, local Planning Commissions are charged with the duty of writing a Comprehensive Plan every five years. The purpose of this Plan is to give an inventory of present conditions in a community, along with setting goals for the community to strive towards over the next five years. The Plan should not only list the goals to be attained, but should also present an action plan to follow to secure these goals. The Plan should examine the present physical conditions of the community and trends of growth, and the probable future requirements of the community.

The Plan should be general in nature, examine all land and facilities in the area jurisdiction, and where these are to be extended, widened, removed, relocated, vacated, narrowed, abandoned, or changed in use as the case may be. Maps, charts, plats, and other visual media forms are to be used. It should address both public and private development, transportation facilities, and community facilities such as parks and libraries, historic areas, zoning districts, affordable housing, and ground water protection measures and recycling plans. Thus, while general in nature, much work by the Planning Commission is involved in the writing of a Plan.

The local governing body is also charged with the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan, after a Public Hearing and the presentation to the governing body by the Planning Commission. This charge is made under Section 15.2-2233 of the Code of Virginia. In the Town of Gordonsville, both the Town Council and the Planning Commission have diligently worked together to formulate this document.

This is the fourth revision of the Comprehensive Plan for the Town, with the first being adopted in 1979. This is an in-depth rewrite and update of the previous 1995-2000 Comprehensive Plan.

## II. Characteristics of Gordonsville

### A. Location

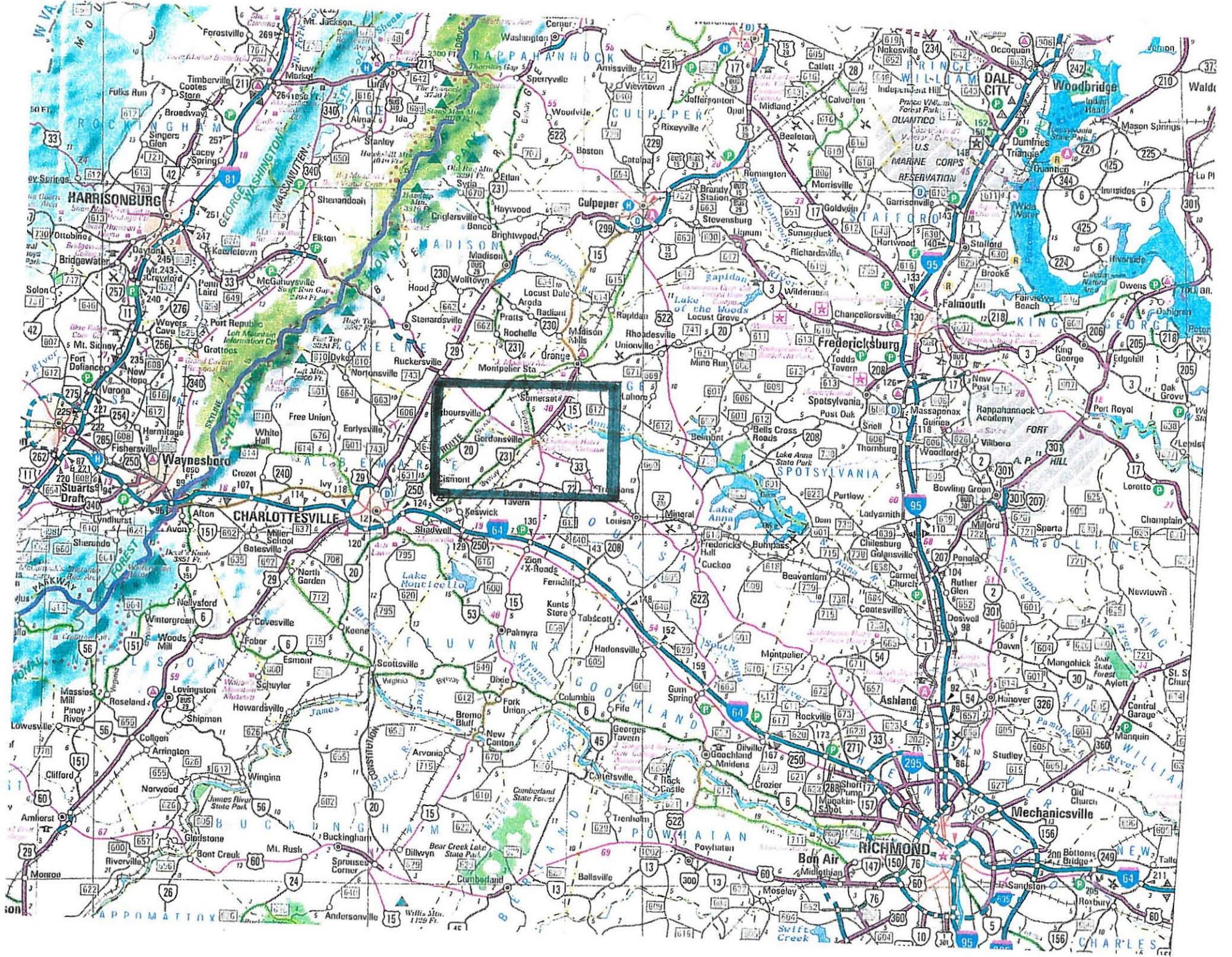
On the center of the southern border of Orange County is the location of historic Gordonsville. Gordonsville lies north and east of the borders of Albemarle and Louisa counties, respectively. Gordonsville is included in the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission (PD-9).

Refer to the map on the following page for a general location of Gordonsville. The geographic location of Gordonsville is as follows:

10.9	miles to Interstate 64
56.7	miles to Interstate 95
12.2	miles to Route 29
28	miles southwest of the Town of Culpeper
15	miles northwest of the Town of Louisa
8	miles southwest of the Town of Orange
97	miles southwest of Washington, D.C.
66	miles northwest of Richmond, Virginia
42	miles southwest of Fredericksburg, Virginia
23	miles northeast of Charlottesville, Virginia
27	miles east of the Skyline Drive
13	miles southeast of Montpelier (James Madison's Home)

Golfing, skiing, boating, and swimming are all within a short driving distance from Gordonsville. Gordonsville is located in the center of many working farms. Industries in or within close proximity to Gordonsville include American Press, Liberty Fabrics, VHPS, PBM Products, and KlocknerPentaplast. In addition to the dining, shopping and entertainment offered in Gordonsville, there are additional attractions within a short distance. . Gordonsville is located in the tourist development zone because of the accessibility to northern Virginia, Washington, D.C., Richmond and Fredericksburg, all within short travel distances.

Gordonsville, with its tree-lined streets, historical homes and buildings, makes it a perfect location, rural, yet close to any activity desired.



## B. Geological Information

### 1. Slope

Slope refers to the steepness of the land. It is a constraint on land use suitability for development. Slope is measured as rise (or change in elevation per hundred feet) over run (horizontal distance.) Slope is expressed as a percentage. The greater the percentage, the steeper the land in question. Most of the land surrounding Gordonsville is gently rolling.

The following provides a breakdown of slopes into categories with general land-type characteristics:

0% to 3%	Flat Land
3% to 10%	Rolling
10% to 25%	Hillside
25% and above	Steep, Critical Slope

A large portion of the land in Gordonsville is categorized as less than 10% (rolling). The few critical slopes located with the Gordonsville area are along stream banks and to the north of Town, along the ridge from Cameron Mountain.

### 2. Topography

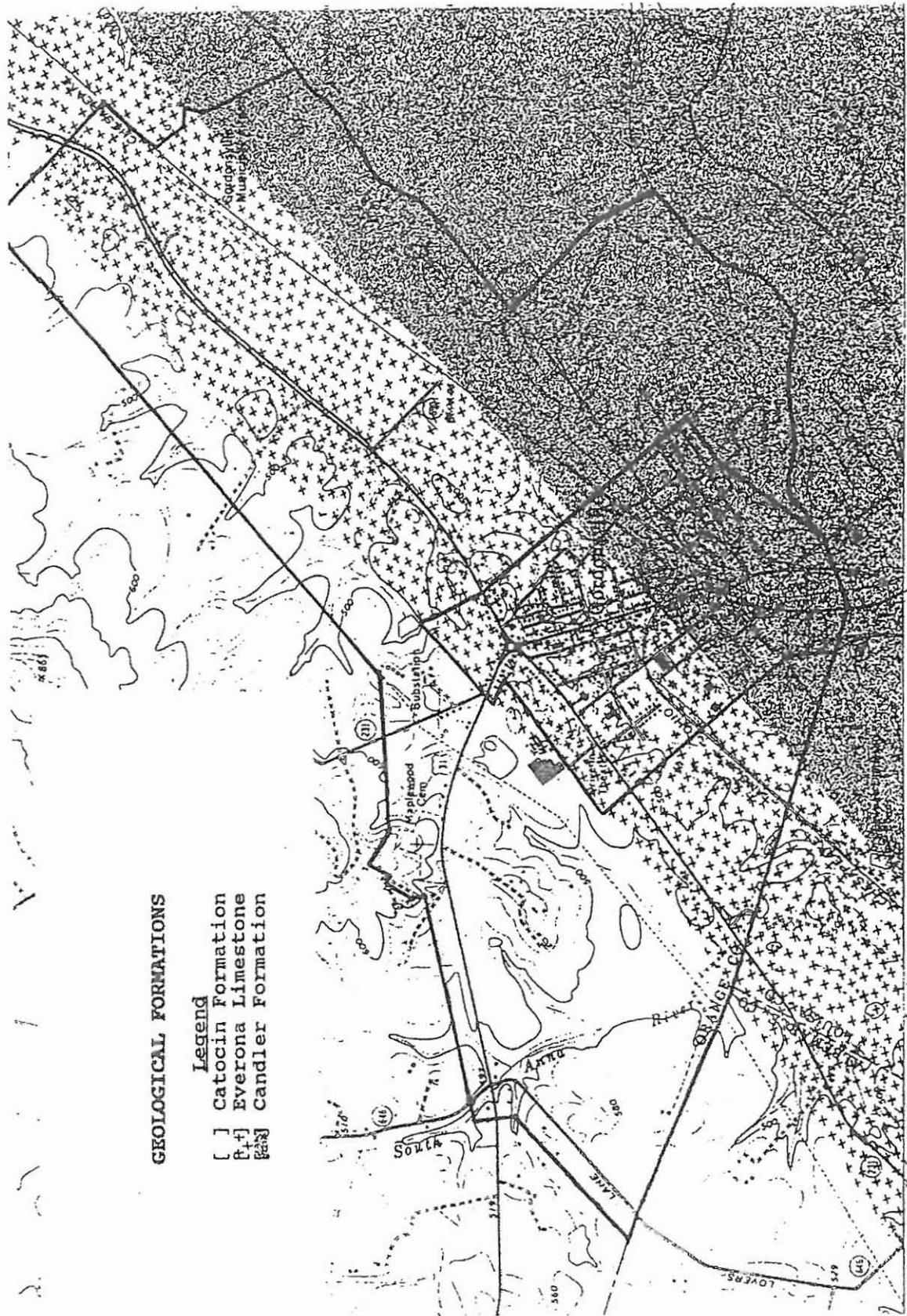
The Gordonsville area lies in the Piedmont Plateau physiographical province at the foot of the Blue Ridge Province. The Piedmont Plateau is a rolling terrain with elevations ranging from 400 to 600 feet, with some ridges 800 to 1200 feet above sea level. The town itself is generally flat with elevations ranging from 480 to 540 feet.

### 3. Geology

There are three geologic formations in the Piedmont Plateau immediate to the area of Gordonsville: The Catocin, the Everona, and the Chandler.

The Catocin formation is metabasalts with inter-layered metasedimentary rocks subaerially deposited. The formation was overlaid by sedimentary phyllite, which are metamorphosed sedimentary rocks interlayered with igneous rocks. Near the Chandler base is a fissile marble called Everona Limestone.

A synclinal infold of Chandler is located in the strike belt of the Catocin formation to the northwest of the main band of Chandler. Generally, all three formations run from the northeast to the southwest.



**GEOLOGICAL FORMATIONS**

- Legend**
- [ ] Catoicin Formation
  - [x] Everona Limestone
  - [•] Candler Formation

SCALE 1:24 000  
 0 1 MILE

In terms of industrial development, the Catocin formation has low ground water potential, from 5 to 15 gallons per minute, which is covered with excellent agricultural lands.

The Chandler formation is a very tight rock with few fractures, making ground water difficult to find. The Chandler formation is usually covered with thin soil which is poor for septic and agriculture.

The Everona formation extends approximately one hundred and twenty miles northeastward from southern Albemarle County and Louisa County's northwest corner, and continues through Orange, Culpeper, Fauquier and Loudoun Counties to the Potomac River. In the Gordonsville area, it is pink and gray marble limestone. The rock is 1,100 feet thick at the Gordonsville Quarry, approximately one-mile southwest of Gordonsville and one-half mile east of Highway 231. That thickness decreases to two hundred feet, five miles northeast of Gordonsville. The metamorphosed marble is an excellent supply of ground water, yielding up to 150 gallons per minute. When the water level is lowered and the water is a part of the roof support, there can be subsidence and sinkholes. There is potential for rapid contamination through the Everona Formation. Exposure is narrow because it is steeply inclined. It is the most unique formation east of the Blue Ridge Mountains.

4. Soils

Surface and subsurface soil can greatly affect the form and structure of a development by imposing engineering limitations or restrictions. Developers should consider soils and their specific characteristics and should contact the Town of Gordonsville for assistance with the development of site plans for their projects.

The bearing capacity and depth of bedrock is zero to fifteen feet, with occasional areas of thirty feet.

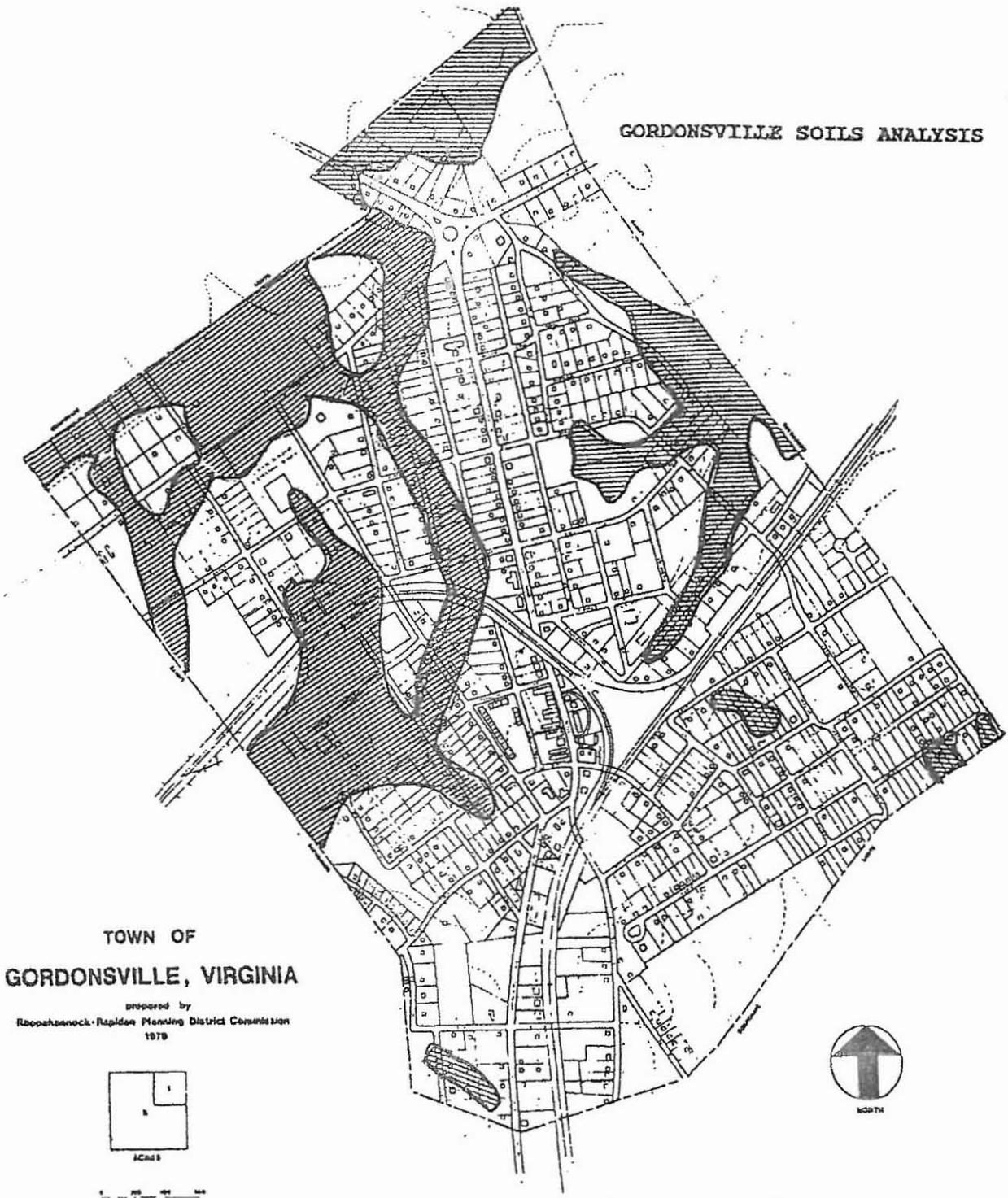
Soil associations are extremely general and useful as an overview. This level of information is not suitable for specific site planning. An engineer should be considered for specific site planning.

Within the Town of Gordonsville there are the Masada-Turbeville and the Nason-Tatum-Mamteo soil associations. Within these associations are roughly fifteen soil types as identified by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The following soil map and table provide a general view of where the soil types are located within the town and restrictions and limitations that each type characteristically impose to development.

Soil Type within the Town of Gordonsville

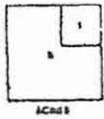
<u>Type</u>		<b>Degree of restriction for:</b>		
		<u>Septic</u>	<u>Build.3+</u>	<u>Street-Park</u>
NsB2	(Nason)	moderate	slight	moderate
NsC2	(Nason)	moderate	moderate	severe
LgB	(Lignum)	severe	severe	moderate
OgA	(Orange)	severe	moderate	moderate
YoB	(York)	severe	moderate	moderate
WoB	(Worshan)	severe	severe	severe
SeB	(Seneca)	moderate	moderate	moderate
TuB2	(Turbeville)	moderate	slight	moderate
Eb	(Elbert)	severe	severe	moderate
MsB2	(Masada)	moderate	slight	moderate
LIB2	(Lloyd)	moderate	slight	moderate
TsB2	(Tatum)	moderate	slight	moderate
DdB3	(Davidson)	slight	slight	moderate
DaB2	(Davidson)	slight	moderate	slight

# GORDONSVILLE SOILS ANALYSIS



TOWN OF  
GORDONSVILLE, VIRGINIA

prepared by  
Roanoke-Rapides Planning District Commission  
1979



SCALE: 1" = 200'



- Nason Silt Loam 2-7% [ ]
- Nason Silt Loam 7-15%
- other soils [ ]

## 5. Hydrology

The headwaters of the York River are located in Orange County and the river flows in a southeasterly direction for approximately 220 miles to its mouth at the Chesapeake Bay. The York River Basin is comprised of the York River and its' two major tributaries, the Pamunkey and the Mattaponi. The Pamunkey River's major tributaries include the North and South Anna Rivers and the Little River.

Gordonsville and the surrounding area lie within the York River Basin. All streams drain toward Louisa County. The elevations generally decrease from north to south. Due to a fall line running approximately down Main Street and Routes 15 and 33, surface water flows southwest to the South Anna River or southeast to the North Anna River. They both flow into the Pamunkey, then the York River, and eventually into the Chesapeake Bay.

The York River Basin watershed boundary runs from Cowherd Mountain east to the ridge north of Cameron Mountain, and on to Merry Mountain. Cameron Mountain is completely within the York River Basin.

The South Anna River and Mountain Run, as well as some low spots within the Town, occasionally flood. Secondary and tertiary streams rarely flood.

Gordonsville is served with water from another watershed, the Rappahannock River Basin. The Towns of Orange and Gordonsville together are the demand center.

The State Water Control Board has recommended the exploration of impoundment sites to serve the Towns of Orange and Gordonsville. RSA undertook a study of that matter in the summer of 2000.

# York River Watershed



- Wastewater Treatment Plants With Flows Greater Than 0.1 MGD
- Major Industrial Discharges



September 1999

Source: Department of Environmental Quality

6. Forests

There are no forested tracts within the Gordonsville Corporate limits. However, most streets in town are trellised and there are old-growth trees in private yards. Through donations of private funds additional trees have been added to the streetscapes of Gordonsville.

7. Climate

Warm, humid summers and mild winters generally characterize the climate in and around Gordonsville, The Atlantic Ocean and Chesapeake Bay to the east and the Blue Ridge Mountains to the west help to control the climate in the area.

The earliest freeze is usually before the end of October and the latest is the end of April. The average spring temperature is highs in the 60's with lows around 40. The average high temperature of the summer is 88 - 96 degrees. The fall range is 50 to the lower 70's degrees. Winter temperatures range from 30 to 46 degrees. Temperatures lower than 15 degrees or higher than 95 are unusual

The growing season is between the last spring freeze in late April to early November, when the first fall freeze usually occurs. The growing season lasts approximately 210 days.

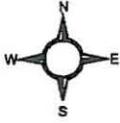
The average rainfall for the Gordonsville area is 48 inches per year, with an average of 3 - 5 inches per month. The average winter snowfall is 23.5 inches per year, averaged over the previous five-year period.

Because of the mild climate, gardening and recreational activities are easily accessible.

8. Population Statistics

According to a Data Summary prepared by the Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission, the population of Gordonsville was 1,498 in 2000.

# Town of Gordonsville Flood Plain



Legend  
 100 Year Flood Plain



Note: Data compiled by Rappahannock-Rapids Regional Commission, October 2000.

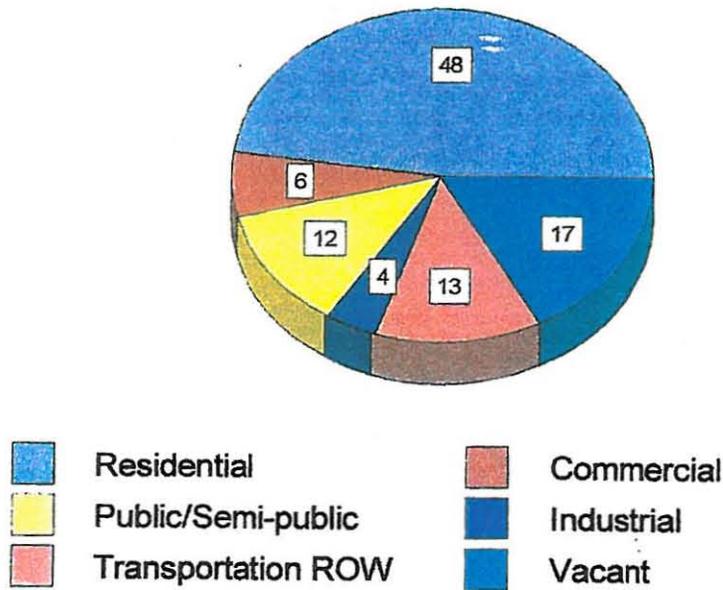
## II LAND USE

A review of how land is presently being used in the Town of Gordonsville will assist in deciding how land might best be used in the future. Further, by describing the Town's current pattern of development, insight can be gained into problems which should be avoided in the future.

### A. Land Use Areas

Approximately 83% of the total acreage in the incorporated area of the Town of Gordonsville is developed in the sense of actually being covered by a structure, or pavement, or being used in connection with a structure as would be a yard or lot. This figure includes residential, commercial, industrial, and public/semi-public uses as well as all transportation right-of-ways.

### Gordonsville Land Use Percentages



The overall breakdown of the Town's land use, as existed in 2000 is provided in the following table.

**Town of Gordonsville  
Land Areas Used - 2000**

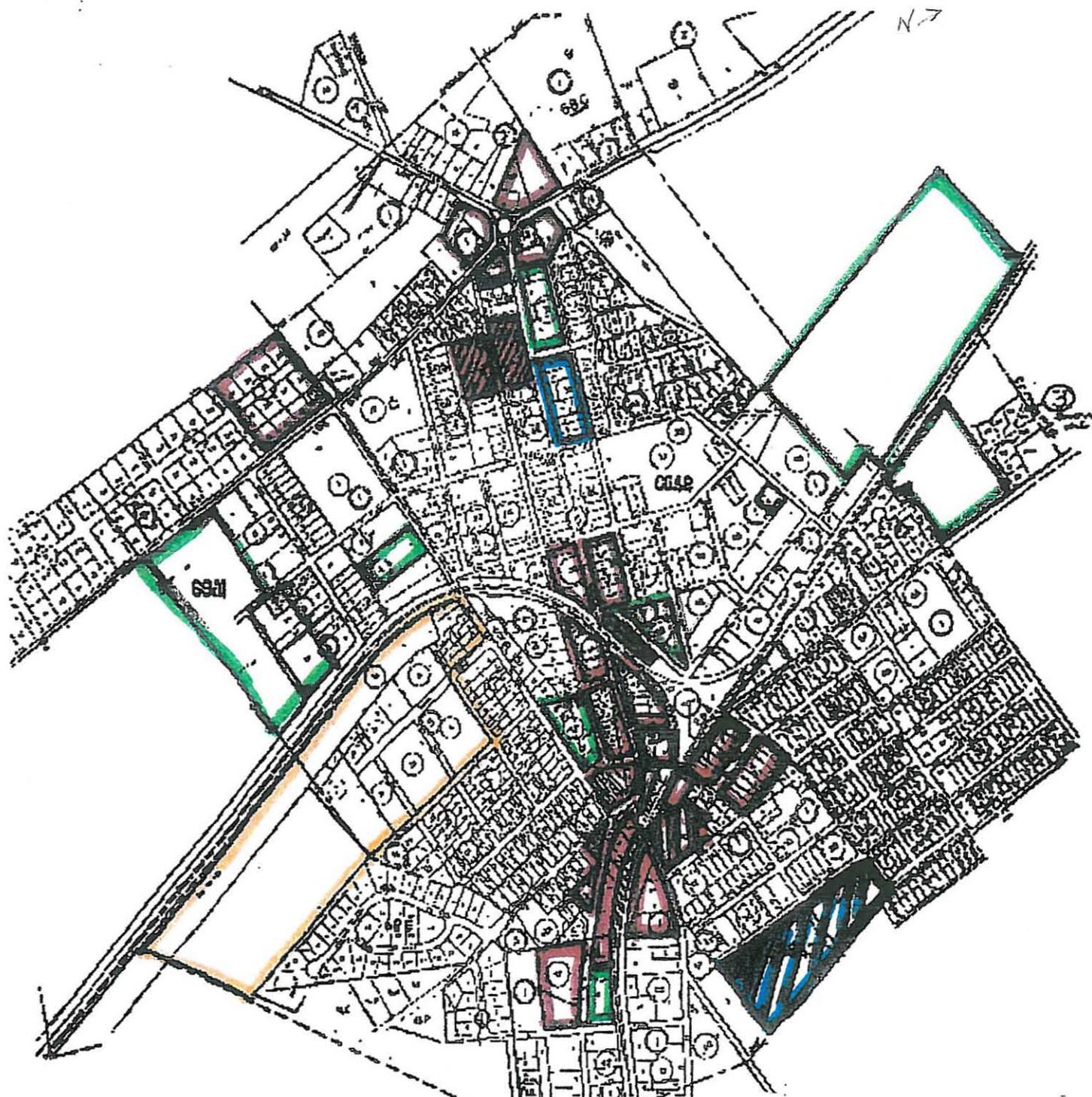
<b>Land use Category</b>	<b>Total Acres In category</b>	<b>Percent of Town Acres</b>
Residential	305	48%
Commercial	40	06%
Public/Semi-Public	74	12%
Industrial	24	04%
<b>Total Developed Land</b>	<b>443</b>	
Transportation R.O.W.	83	13%
Vacant	109	17%
<b>Total Land Area</b>	<b>635</b>	<b>100%</b>

Residential land use is the predominant land use in the Town of Gordonsville, accounting for 48% of the total Town acreage.

Transportation right-of-way accounts for 13% of the total Town acreage. This relatively high percentage primarily is the result of the large amount of railroad right-of-way, which exists within the Town.

The public/semi-public land use category is the third largest developed land use in Gordonsville, which represents 12% of the total Town acreage. These figures point out the importance of such uses as the Gordon-Barbour School, Town churches, Verling Park, and public buildings such as the Post Office, Town Hall and the Fire Station.

The commercial land use category in the Town represents 6% of the Town's total area. The commercial category is composed of three segments: general, retail, and office/service.



**Legend**

- B-1 General Business (Red Outline)**
- B-2 Res/Bus (Red Outline/Cross Hatch)**
- R-1 Residential (No Color)**
- R-2 Multi-Family/Town House (Green Outline)**
- R-3 Prof/Bus. (Blue Outline)**
- R-4 Low Density Residential (Blue Outline/Cross Hatch)**
- M-1 Industrial (Orange Outline)**

**TOWN OF GORDONSVILLE**

**ZONING MAP**

Industrial use accounts for 4% of all developed land. Given Gordonsville's population, the amount of industrial land in Gordonsville is significant and represents a larger percentage of the total Town area than many similarly sized rural localities.

B. Existing Town Land Use Pattern

The current land use pattern of the Town of Gordonsville consists of three prominent features. First, there is the central cluster of buildings running along Main Street between King and Grove Streets, which comprises the central area of Town. This area is currently undergoing a complete renovation with retail and specialty shops being located in this area.

Another commercial concentration exists in the vicinity of the Gordonsville Traffic Circle at the junction of U.S. Routes 15 and 33. This area consists primarily of automotive related uses such as gas stations, drive-in restaurants, and a convenience store.

The final area of commercial concentration is located on West Gordon Avenue (Route 231) at the Gordonsville Plaza Shopping Center. This area consists of a major grocery chain store, retail shops, and restaurants.

Several industries have located in the Town. These industries are concentrated from the western to the southern areas of the Town. While not all of the industries are located within the corporate limits of the Town, they do receive services from the Town due to their proximity to the Town.

The remaining areas of the Town are basically of a residential character, consisting of a wide range of housing styles and ages.

## IV Housing

The housing stock of a town is one of its most important characteristics. In large part, the residential areas of a community, and the houses which compose them, give the Town its character and uniqueness. Thus, an analysis of the housing stock provides an insight into the Town's social and economic needs for shelter and a safe living environment.

### A. General Characteristics

According to the 1990 U. S. Bureau of the Census, 552 housing units were located within the Town of Gordonsville. This represents a .01 % increase from 547 units listed in the 1980 census. This increase is due to the building of individual homes along with the increase in apartment buildings.

### B. Owner-Renter Mix

Of the 552 total housing units in Gordonsville in 1990, 335 or 61% percent were occupied by the owner. These units have an average of 6.2 rooms, with a median value of \$64,800.

There were 169 rental units occupied in 1990, or 31% percent, which is an increase in the availability of rental property since the census of 1980. The median rent for units in the Town of Gordonsville is \$340 monthly.

Note: The figures listed in General Characteristics and in Owner-Renter Mix are taken from the 1990 Census which were the most recent, accurate figures available. The statistics from the 2000 Census will be published in March of 2001.

### C. Housing Development

Gordonsville is characterized by older housing stock, which is quickly apparent as you drive down Main Street with its lovely homes. A large percentage of the homes in Gordonsville date prior to 1939. This is a part of Gordonsville's past that should be preserved.

## V Political and Administrative Structure

Title 15.2, Chapter 11, Article I of the Code of Virginia Towns and Cities the ability to operate as a municipal corporation. These political bodies were designed to provide services that counties in the Commonwealth cannot provide legally or financially. The Town of Gordonsville exercises those powers granted to it under this Section of the Code of the Commonwealth. Additional powers are granted by the Constitution of the Commonwealth of Virginia to its political subdivisions, and guaranteed by this Code Section.

Gordonsville is governed under the general councilmanic form of government. Administrative oversight authority is vested in the Mayor. The Mayor and Council are elected at large by the registered voters in town. The Council, as a governing body, consists of the six Council members and the Mayor. Terms of office are four years. Three Council members will stand for election in November 2002, and the Mayor and other three members in November 2004. A Vice-Mayor is appointed by the Council to serve in the absence of the Mayor.

The day to day operations of the Town are carried out by a Town Administrator who is directly responsible to the Mayor and Council. This position is empowered by the governing body to oversee all Town government operations and employees, and directly supervises the Utilities and Public Services Department. In addition, Council also appoints a Cleric/Treasurer who is charged with all financial matters concerning Town government, Clerk for the Council, and a Police Chief, who is the chief law enforcement official for the Town. The Police Chief supervises a department consisting of five full-time officers and three auxiliary officers, and operates under the operational policy directions of the Police Committee.

At present, Council meets once a month, with special meetings as needed. Council is divided into various committees, which allows Council members to specialize in certain areas. Committees meet on a regular basis, or as required, and report to the full Council.

## VI Municipal Services

One way to evaluate a community is through the quality of the services offered and the impact that these services have on the community. Municipal services are also an indicator of the future growth possible in the service area. Growth follows the service areas, with water and sewer services influencing the areas of growth the greatest. This is true in the Town of Gordonsville, as growth is now occurring in areas that these services are available to developers.

Municipal services are defined as any services provided by a local governmental body. This includes water and sewer service, police service, fire and rescue services transportation, parks and recreation and other infrastructure assets. Gordonsville provides many services for its citizens that other small communities are unable to match. However, the Town is constantly striving to improve and/or increase these levels of service.

### A. Water System

Water service is a primary component of the services provided by the Town. Water is purchased from the Rapidan Service Authority, which in turn buys the processed water from the Town of Orange. This water is transported from Orange to Gordonsville by a ten-inch transmission line, where it enters the Town distribution system. This line can adequately transport approximately 800,000 gallons per day. The Town has a contract with the Service Authority for 25 million gallons of water per month. This contract will expire in 2011.

Starting in the late 1980's the Town has undertaken an aggressive construction program to update its water distribution system. A new 500,000-gallon storage tank has been built and numerous new distribution lines have been installed to replace old lines that quite frequently caused service interruptions due to leaks. New meters were installed at this time and these meters are capable of being electronically read with some upgrades to the present reading system. Presently, the Town is formulating construction plans to replace lines that run along East and West Gordon Avenue with new lines.

In conjunction with the construction activities, the Town also developed a computer model of the entire Town water system. This model allows for various scenarios to be studied and the impact on the system to be determined prior to an actual demand being imposed upon the system. This is useful especially to determine the impact of new housing developments and industrial development. Developers may use this model at a minimum cost after contacting the Town.

The Town has undertaken a study searching for additional sources of water that could be developed for use by the Town. The Rapidan Service Authority has also completed a study of additional water sources for their service area, which includes the Town. As of the date of this writing, no action has been taken to develop any additional water source for the Town.

B. Wastewater System

The wastewater system is owned and operated by the Rapidan Service Authority. The lines are of concrete, tile, and plastic. The treatment plant is located southwest of the Town in Louisa County, adjacent to Gordonsville Energy Limited Partnership. The plant can treat up to 660,000 gallons of wastewater per day, with the current daily average being approximately 400,000 gallons. Liquids are currently sprayed onto a 40-acre area after treatment. There are plans for an upgrade to the plant within the next two years. While this will not increase the capacity of the plant, it will increase the efficiency of the facility.

C. Electrical Service

Dominion Virginia Power and Central Virginia Electrical Co-operative currently provide electrical service to the Town. Effective in January 2001, consumers may contract with other electric companies to provide their power under deregulation. The transmission lines however will continue to be owned by these two companies and these two companies will provide maintenance to the lines.

D. Natural Gas

Natural gas service is provided by Columbia Gas of Virginia. Gas is provided by a system of lines ranging in size from eight inches to two inches. All of these lines are high-pressure lines. Columbia Gas Transmission also operates a twenty-inch high-pressure line that serves the Gordonsville Energy Limited Partnership (GELP) facility. Gas service is limited to the western area of the Town and the Downtown Business District. Main Street is the demarcation line for service.

Natural gas will also be under the deregulation changes that are occurring. Consumers will be able to purchase from the lowest priced supplier, as they will with their electrical service, with Columbia Gas of Virginia continuing to own and operate the distribution system. This is predicted to lead to greater competition in the industry and to decreased rates for consumers.

E. Solid Waste

Solid waste disposal is provided to all residents and businesses in the Town of Gordonsville. Service is provided under contract by Updike Industries of Culpeper. Pickup is made on a weekly basis at curbside, with the western side of Main Street receiving pickup on Tuesdays and the eastern side on Fridays. The Town will also pay at present for one dump of a Dumpster per week for business and apartment owners in the Town. In addition to weekly pickup, Town residents may also use the County "Green Boxes". The two closest to Gordonsville are located at Gordon Barbour Elementary School and on Route 33 in Barboursville.

The Town sponsors a Fall Clean Up and Spring-Clean up campaign each year. During these events, large items are collected and disposed of by Town crewmembers without any charge to the residents. These items are normally large, bulky items that are not subject to removal by Updike Industries. Items not collected during these campaigns are, at present, tires and hazardous substances.

Wood and brush are handled by the Town crew on an as needed basis. All woody materials are disposed of by burning at the Town burn site, located just south of the Town limits.

F. Law Enforcement

Law enforcement duties are handled currently by a nine-member department composed of six full time officers and three auxiliary officers. All full time officers are certified by the Department of Criminal Justice and undergo periodic in-service training. The Chief encourages all officers to specialize in an area of interest to them, and offers additional training in those areas. The department enforces all local ordinances and state laws. Assistance, if needed, is provided by the Orange County Sheriffs Department and the Virginia State Police upon request.

Auxiliary officers are all volunteers who have an interest in law enforcement. Maximum strength of this force is set at ten by the Town Council. These officers assist the Department with various duties, and mainly work during times of high manpower needs. Principal duties are traffic control and patrol. These officers also receive training, most of which is performed in-house to State requirements.

G. Parks and Recreation

The Town of Gordonsville provides the citizens with a pool/park complex with a tennis court, picnic shelter and playground equipment. The Dix Memorial Pool is leased to the Orange County Parks and Recreation Department during the summer months where they sponsor swimming classes and activities. The Dix Pool is also home to the Gordonsville Gators Swim team, affiliated with the Jefferson Swim

League. Further attention to the pool will be included at a later section of this Plan.

Verling Park is maintained by the Town and is available for day-to-day use. The Park may be reserved by the community for special events.

The Orange County Parks & Recreation Department offers youth athletic programs in soccer, football, wrestling, basketball and baseball, all of which practice in Gordonsville. Games in these sports are held throughout the county. The VFW in Gordonsville has provided soccer and baseball fields for these leagues.

Gordonsville also boasts a sanctioned Little League field known as Blue Omohundro Park. This is a lighted field with concession, bleachers and restrooms and is an asset to the community.

The Parks & Recreation Department also offers before and after-school child care at Gordon-Barbour Elementary School. This program is licensed and regulated by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

#### H. Airport

The Town of Gordonsville owns a general aviation airport, located two miles north of the Town on Route 15. The airport is currently leased to a fixed base operator. The airport is on a 34-acre tract with thirteen hangars, of which one is owned by the Town and the remaining hangars owned by private owners. The Town hangar is 67 feet by 67 feet and is one of the original two hangars from Langley Air Force Base in Hampton. There is a terminal building with a small hangar attached, and thirteen "T" hangars. There are also tie downs on the apron in front of the hangers.

The runway is bi-directional and is 2300 feet by 40 feet. Runway 22 has a 400 feet offset threshold; Runway 4 has no offset threshold. Runway surface is asphalt, and it is lit for night operations. Lights may be activated by radio from the air. Fuel is available on site from a 4,500-gallon tank farm.

There are approximately thirty flights a week at the airport. Most are general aviation, with some business aircraft on an infrequent basis. Medical evacuation operations are very frequent, mainly being utilized by the University of Virginia medical evacuation helicopter. Operations are also conducted by various Federal agencies from the airport. These include training and other missions.

Currently, there is no Federal funding for the airport; all funding comes from the Virginia Department of Aviation.

I. Streets and Sidewalks

The Town currently maintains less than one mile of streets in the Town. These streets are in residential neighborhoods and for the most part are not heavily traveled. The majority of the streets in the Town are maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and these streets are both primary and secondary in nature. The Main Street is composed of U.S. Route 15 and U.S. Route 33, and traverses the Town in a north to south direction. New streets are built to VDOT specifications and are then transferred to VDOT for maintenance purposes.

Sidewalks are of concrete construction in the Town. New walks are added yearly, mainly in the residential areas of the Town. Plans call for sidewalks to be built along State Route 231 from its intersection with High Street to the corporate limits; from High Street to the corporate limits on the south along Route 15; and along Stonewall Avenue. The Town, with curbs and gutters being maintained by VDOT, maintains sidewalks.

J. Maplewood Cemetery

The Town of Gordonsville owns Maplewood Cemetery just west of the Town on Route 33. This cemetery was established in the mid - 1800's. After the Civil War it was the final interment site for the dead from the Gordonsville Receiving Hospital at the Exchange Hotel. The Town has formed a Board of Trustees to oversee the administration and financial concerns of the cemetery. The Board consists of seven members who are nominated by the Town Council and are appointed by the Orange County Circuit Court judge. The trustees serve an indefinite term. The trustees contract out all maintenance.

K. Educational Services

The Town of Gordonsville is served by the Orange County Public School system. Gordon-Barbour Elementary School is located within the Town limits and contains grades kindergarten through sixth grade. Prospect Heights Middle School, located in Orange, serves grades six through eight, and the Orange County High School, also in Orange, serves grades nine through twelve.

Gordon-Barbour Elementary School was constructed in the mid-1960's and has a current enrollment of 357 students. The school is staffed with 32 teachers for a teacher/student ratio of 1:11. Gordon-Barbour is unique in that it is community based, with many members of the local community volunteering in the school and having a large number of students who walk to the school. The school, in conjunction with the Department of Parks and Recreation, also operates the largest after school program in the Town.

With the increase in technology use in the workplace, the Orange County School System has developed a technology-training center located at the high school. This has been accomplished using support from the school system, state government, and the local business community. The goal of the Hornet Technology Center is to train students in technology who are not planning to attend college.

Gordonsville does not lack the accessibility to institutions of higher learning. In close proximity to Gordonsville are numerous colleges and universities. There are eight within a one hour commute of Gordonsville - the University of Virginia and Piedmont Community College in Charlottesville, James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Germanna Community College which has campuses in both eastern Orange County at Lake of the Woods and Fredericksburg, Mary Washington College in Fredericksburg, Mary Baldwin University in Staunton, and the University of Richmond and Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond. With the exception of the two community colleges, all of the above listed colleges and universities offer Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral degrees in wide areas of study.

#### L. Emergency Services

Emergency services are divided into two categories, fire/rescue and medical emergency. The Orange County Rescue Squad provides medical emergency services in the Town. The squad has a satellite station in the Town on High Street. Most of the personnel are volunteers, with some paid staff being provided by the County. Rapid response/primary response units are staffed by paid personnel who respond to a scene, stabilize a patient for transport, and wait for the ambulance to arrive for transport. In critical care cases, use is made of the University of Virginia medical evacuation helicopter. All personnel are certified by the Commonwealth of Virginia as Emergency Medical Technicians or higher.

Fire services and heavy rescue services are also handled by a volunteer organization. Gordonsville Volunteer Fire Company, Company 24, is based on Baker Street in the Town. Companies from Orange and Barboursville support them if necessary. Fire companies have access to numerous hydrants throughout the Town, the majority of which are connected to high volume lines. An aerial ladder truck is based at the fire station in Orange. All firefighters are certified under Commonwealth of Virginia training standards. The Commonwealth of Virginia also certifies numerous Gordonsville firefighters as First Responders or Emergency Medical Technicians.

## VII Gordonsville's History

Nathaniel Gordon, having purchased a plantation at the foot of the southwest mountains in Orange County in 1787, operated a tavern there at a crossroads past which stages ran on the "Fredericksburg Great Road" leading north and the Richmond Road leading east. Familiar until as recently as the 1940's, the Gordon Inn Tavern stood near the commemorative monument at the traffic circle in present day Gordonsville.

During the early national era, prominent people, both neighbors and travelers, stopped at Gordon's Tavern. In 1802, Thomas Jefferson recommended it as a "good house", and in 1824, Major General the Marquis de Lafayette was given a reception there. By 1813 the tavern and its dependencies had become known as Gordonsville, when Nathaniel Gordon was appointed the first postmaster at that place.

After Gordon's death, the tavern was sold but Dr. Charles Beale, Gordon's son-in-law, retained some of the property. When the Louisa Railroad, later the Virginia Central, then the Chesapeake & Ohio, (currently known as CSX) reached Gordonsville in 1840, it was Dr. Beale who foresaw and planned a town, essentially the Gordonsville of today. In the spring of 1853 Beale made his will and directed that Dr. Newman "come down immediately after he plants his corn" to lay out lots on both sides of Main Street, to number them and to plan for streets and alleys.

In the early 1850's, the junction of the Orange & Alexandria Railroad with the Virginia Central, and the intersection of the two turnpikes from the Valley of Virginia served to bring produce and passengers to early Gordonsville. This caused the Town and surrounding areas to grow and develop.

During the Civil War, Gordonsville was of vital importance to General Robert E. Lee and his Confederate Army of Northern Virginia in the transportation of troops and supplies. In 1862, Major General Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson had his headquarters at the old Gordon Tavern for several days. Wounded soldiers were brought to Gordonsville to be cared for at the Gordonsville Receiving Hospital (centered around the Exchange Hotel) and in churches and private homes. Some 700 of those who died at the Receiving Hospital were later re-interred in Gordonsville's Maplewood Cemetery.

By Act of the General Assembly of Virginia, passed on July 9, 1870, Gordonsville became an incorporated town, one of only two in Orange County. The General Assembly also established the town's boundaries and provided for the town's administration.

Also during this time, there was flourishing activity in Gordonsville, largely encouraged by the railroad companies and in particular by the Chesapeake & Ohio. Throngs of black women swarmed about the station platform when the many trains came in, balancing on their heads large platters of succulent edibles. Gordonsville's fried chicken was nationally famous until after World War I. Dr. George Bagby, Virginia author, humorist, and in 1870 a newspaper editor in Gordonsville, proclaimed the Town "the chicken-leg center of the universe."

From 1890 to 1892, a land development scheme, the "Gordon Land Company", momentarily fired the imagination of its promoters into conceiving a vast and spectacular plan for expanding Gordonsville into a "great industrial center, The luckiest point in Virginia" where there would be "quick sales!" and sure profits!" But the glorious bubble burst in the financial collapse of 1892-1893 and all that remains is a wonderful map of the whole project, now displayed in the Town Office, and a street named Gordon Avenue.

By the end of 1920, two disastrous fires had nearly destroyed the business section of Town. It was after the first fire that the Gordonsville Volunteer Fire Company was organized on April 1, 1916. Today this organization has a yearly parade and carnival, which attracts many people from the surrounding communities.

Gordonsville lies at the crossroads of its past and its future. Just as the railroads revolutionized the crossroads character of the Town in the 1800's, and as the automobile did in the 1900's, today Gordonsville is preparing for its future, in which the welcoming hospitality of the community reaches and serves its residents and neighbors, its businesses, and its visitors from throughout the world.



VIII Areas of Accomplishment

- A. Meadow Run Housing Development
- B. Water Project

Phases 1, 2, and 3, and 4 are completed which include:

1. Meter equipment and pressure reduction valve and lines from the tank to that location.
  2. Installation of 10" water line from Faulconer to Mayhugh Streets and along Depot Street.
  3. Installation of 10" line along Holladay Street, crossing the railroad tracks and across to South Main Street.
  4. Construction of a 500,000 gallon Water Tank
  5. Installation of water lines on Main, Commerce, King, Wright Streets and Martinsburg Avenue
- C. Attraction of Gordonsville Energy Limited Partnership
  - D. New Municipal Building
  - E. Attraction and completion of Shopping Center
  - F. Development of the Allen Commercial Building
  - G. Continued expansion of American Press
  - H. Attraction of PBM Products
  - I. Increase in rental and owner housing
  - J. Substantial improvement in low and moderate income housing
  - K. Opening of the Gordonsville Branch of the Orange County Library

## IX Goals

Our overall goal is to improve the long-term quality of life for all citizens. Just as railroads revolutionized the crossroads character of the Town in the last century, and as the automobile did in this century, today Gordonsville is preparing the road to its future, in which the quintessential welcoming hospitality of the community reaches and serves its residents and neighbors, its businesses visitors throughout the world.

### A. Water System

Water is a key component in a community's future growth. The Town should strive to provide high quality water to all customers at a reasonable price. In order to accomplish this task, the Town should continue to upgrade all older water lines in the Town, replacing metal lines with plastic to improve water quality and reduce leakage. The Town needs to continue to explore the availability of additional water sources to reduce the reliance on the Rapidan Service Authority, and the single source of water that the Authority draws from in Orange.

The Town should also extend lines into adjacent areas of the corporate limits to promote growth and to control the use of these areas through proper land management and planning. This should be done in cooperation with the adjoining counties.

### B. Boundary Adjustment

Annexation or boundary adjustment, is a growth issue that faces many small towns throughout the State, Gordonsville included. Like most small incorporated towns, Gordonsville is faced with the ever growing expense of providing services. Public utility services and police protection are becoming more expensive to fund. One method of raising additional capital is through annexation or boundary adjustment.

Along with broadening the tax base for continued expansion of services, the Town of Gordonsville will consider to annex by boundary adjustment into the corporate limits those areas contiguous to the Town that currently receive services and impact the community through their operations and land use. It is vital that Gordonsville expand its governmental jurisdiction so it can protect the community as a whole.

C. Business District

Although there continues to be vacant storefronts on Main Street, with the recent acquisition and remodeling of these properties by private individuals, the Town can look toward to a shopping area with all vacancies filled. It should be the goal of the Town and of the citizens to fully cooperate with and support the landowners and their tenants to insure their success

Additional downtown parking, traffic control and adequate lighting need to be included in any goals and plans for the shopping area.

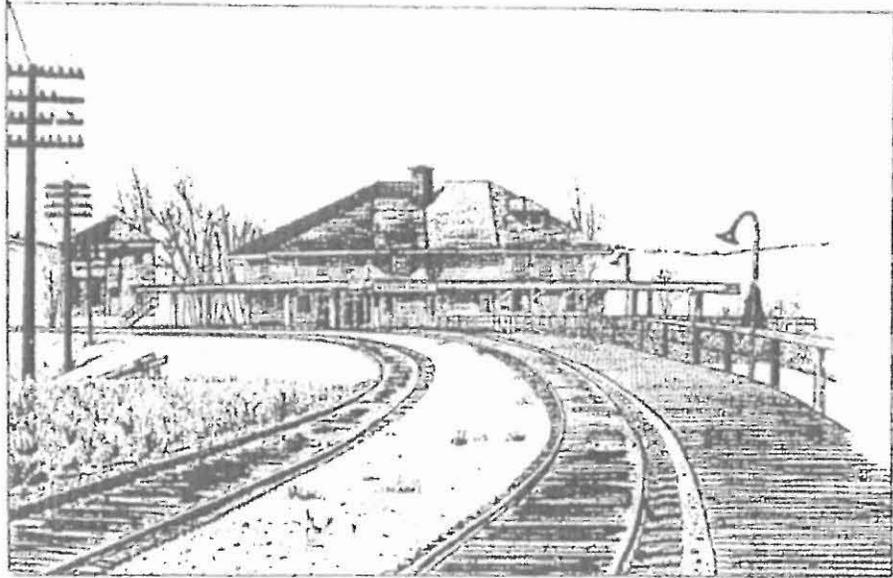
D. Historical District

Gordonsville, Virginia, a town with deep historical ties to the Commonwealth and the Nation as a whole, has a duty to try to preserve its past for future generations. Gordonsville, commonly known as a historic crossroads town, has several antebellum buildings and numerous structures built just after the War Between the States. Most of Main Street, on both the east and west sides have dwellings that certainly date back to those periods. Presently, the Town has one museum, The Exchange Hotel Civil War Museum. This structure is owned and operated by Historic Gordonsville, Inc.



Presently Historic Gordonsville, Inc. and the Town are partnering to renovate and remodel the 1841 freight depot. Funding for the project is through a TEA-21 Grant. Upon completion of the remodeling, the depot will become part of the Exchange Hotel Civil War Museum.

In October of 2000, the Town of Gordonsville and the Orange County Visitors Bureau agreed to partner in seeking a grant to develop African-American historic sites within the Town of Gordonsville.



X. Goals and Objectives

Overall Planning Goal

To promote and enhance the public health, safety, and general welfare of the citizens of Gordonsville, while protecting and enhancing the Town's unique rural character and way of life.

A. Community Wide

**Housing Goal**

To provide safe, decent, and sound housing for all residents of the Town of Gordonsville.

**Objectives**

- To promote a wide variety of housing types which reflect the needs of all residents while recognizing the single family dwelling as the town's major residential unit.
- To support the development of a sufficient amount of rental housing as new residential development occurs.
- To support the rehabilitation and repair of deteriorated housing within the Town, wherever possible.

**Strategies**

- To pursue grants for rehabilitation and repair of housing.
- To encourage the development of subdivisions; the Town should assist with utility development.
- To reexamine the Town Code to promote the upkeep of housing properties.

## **Recreation and Open Space Goal**

To promote diverse facilities to satisfy the recreational needs of all Town residents, to protect all open spaces which contain recreational potential or enhance and preserve the natural environment.

### **Objectives**

- To protect and enhance the existing Town park and play areas.
- To encourage the development of family oriented recreational/fitness facilities, both privately and publicly owned.
- To support organized recreational activities for all age groups.
- To support the completion of new recreational facilities within the Town of Gordonsville.

### **Strategies**

- To support the Orange County Parks and Recreation Department and our representative on the Orange County Parks and Recreation Advisory Commission.
- To require developers to leave green space and recreational land available.
- To continue financial support of activities for youth.

### **Beautification Goal**

To provide an outdoor environment that is pleasing to the eye and conducive to the orderly development of trade and residential activities. The outdoor environment should attract people to the Town and make the Town a focal point for the surrounding area.

### **Objectives**

- To promote the ornamental planting and care of flowers and trees.
- To promote the renovation of existing structures so as to maintain the local character and identity of the community
- To maintain and improve the unique character of the traffic circle as a location for ornamental flowers.
- To support the use of ornamental plantings to beautify the area within the town and to encourage streetscape development.
- To plan, design, and develop the area adjacent to the Town Hall into a green space to be named Cooke Park.

### **Strategies**

- To seek support of private funding.
- To seek grant funding, specifically TEA-21 grants, for gateway enhancement.
- To implement an “adopt a street or area” project.
- To develop an overall streetscape and landscaping plan.
- To seek Town budget funding for beautification.

## **B. Public Facilities Goal**

To develop and maintain new and existing, publicly owned facilities and provide an ever expanding range of services to the taxpayers of Gordonsville.

### **Objectives**

- To acquire from CSX Transportation the property known as the Verling Park complex and to maintain this area for use by all ages.
- To encourage the Administration of the Town to apply for available grants and low interest loans to lessen the financial burden of public facilities development on the taxpayers of Gordonsville.
- To support the Orange County Board of Supervisors and the Orange County School Board for improved educational facilities for the County.
- To remove the Town shops, maintenance buildings, and storage yards to a more discreet location.
- To development additional parking in the downtown area.
- To cooperate with the efforts of the Orange County Parks and Recreation Department in the construction of a new competition size pool to be located in the Knighting Road area

### **Strategies**

- Town Council should actively pursue land acquisition for new shop location and budget for the same.
- Removal of the Town Shops would allow additional parking spaces in the downtown area. The town should also work with private owners for the development of parking.

### **C. Capital Improvement Goal**

Through systematic improvement of Town infrastructure, the Town should endeavor to provide an ever expanding and increasing level of services and facilities to the residents of Gordonsville.

#### **Objectives**

- The Town should construct additional curbs/sidewalks and streets annually. This should include replacement of existing and/or construction of new sidewalks.
- To encourage the use of brick sidewalks in the downtown area.
- To replace existing overhead street lighting with period carriage lights.
- To promote aesthetically pleasing trash receptacles on the street.
- The Town should continue its efforts in establishing an alternate/supplemental water supply.

#### **Strategies**

- To seek TEA-21 funding for pedestrian walkways.
- To increase budget funding for pedestrian walkways.
- To encourage private property owners to use period lighting in keeping with the Town's history.
- To encourage developers to place utilities underground throughout the Town.
- Use litter control grant funding to replace trash receptacles.

D. **Boundary Adjustment Goal**

The Town should encourage boundary adjustment of those areas contiguous to existing boundaries where services are already being provided, and those areas that wish to be adjusted into the Town boundary. Boundary adjustment in those areas would allow the citizens of Gordonsville to have a direct and effective voice in land-use as well as other issues central to this community.

**Objective**

To promote the residential, commercial, and industrial development of land contiguous to the existing boundaries of the Town. Through planned and controlled development of these parcels, the Town can expand its water services while reducing the financial burden of the individual taxpayer. A series of boundary adjustment agreements with the surrounding county authorities can make this objective affordable and expedient.

E. **Historical Goal**

It should be the intent of the Town of Gordonsville to encourage the development/renovation and maintenance of historical and museum resources throughout the Town.

**Objectives**

- To enthusiastically support the historical character of the Town.
- To promote the restoration of the 1841 Freight Depot.
- To promote historic tourism within the Town.
- To promote the historic diversity of all ethnic groups.
- To promote and designate historic sites in the Town.

**Strategies**

- To support continued TEA-21 funding for the freight depot renovation.

F. Economic Development Goal

To encourage the controlled development of both business and industrial based activity throughout the Town.

**Objectives**

- The Town administration should investigate various grant programs for the expansion of existing, and the development of new, industries. The Town should act as the lead agency for these programs on behalf of interested industry.
- To promote the development of a motel/conference center located within the Town limits to serve both the tourist and business markets.
- To support business through the use of agencies such as the Virginia Department of Business Assistance and the Department of Housing and Community Development.
- To encourage commercial development and to increase the amount of industrial zoned land in the Town through the boundary adjustment of those areas contiguous to the Town which are consistent with the present or planned land use for those areas.
- Electronic Commerce Initiative. In this new world of cyberspace and electronic commerce, it is possible for Gordonsville's retailers to market to the world. Accordingly, this project is intended to help identify specific opportunity areas, to attract the right types of businesses, and to help design and implement the needed infrastructure.

**Strategies**

- To identify specific E-Commerce opportunities for Gordonsville.
- To ensure that the needed infrastructure is available, seeking grants from major companies where feasible.

Secure networks  
Hardware platforms  
Software solutions  
Telephone lines

Broadband cable  
Fiber optics  
ISP service  
High speed Internet service

- To search beyond the town limits for E-Commerce businesses that would possibly locate in Gordonsville.

## References

U. S. Bureau of Census, 1990

Code of Virginia

Rappahannock-Rapidan Regional Commission

Columbia Gas Engineering Department

Northern Piedmont Research Station, Virginia Polytechnic Institute

Rapidan Service Authority

Gordonsville, Virginia Historic Crossroads Town, by William H. B. Thomas

Orange County Parks and Recreation Department

Gordon-Barbour Elementary School

Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Transportation

Town of Gordonsville, Virginia

Virginia Chesapeake Bay Local Assistance Department

*Special thanks to B. Edwin Talley, Jr., for allowing the use of his sketches of Gordonsville Landmarks throughout this Plan.*