

# VTrans2040 Multimodal Transportation Plan Urban Development Areas

Designated **Urban Development Areas (UDAs)** and other locally **designated growth areas (DGAs)** represent the community level multimodal travel market component of VTrans2040.

More information is available at: <http://www.vtrans.org/vtrans2040.asp>

## What You Need to Know

**Problem** – The idea of Urban Development Areas evolved from a recognition that a continuing trend of dispersed development patterns generate increased vehicle traffic, limit reasonable alternatives to private vehicle use for all travel, and increase the financial burden to the Commonwealth and local jurisdictions of maintaining and expanding the transportation network and other public utilities.

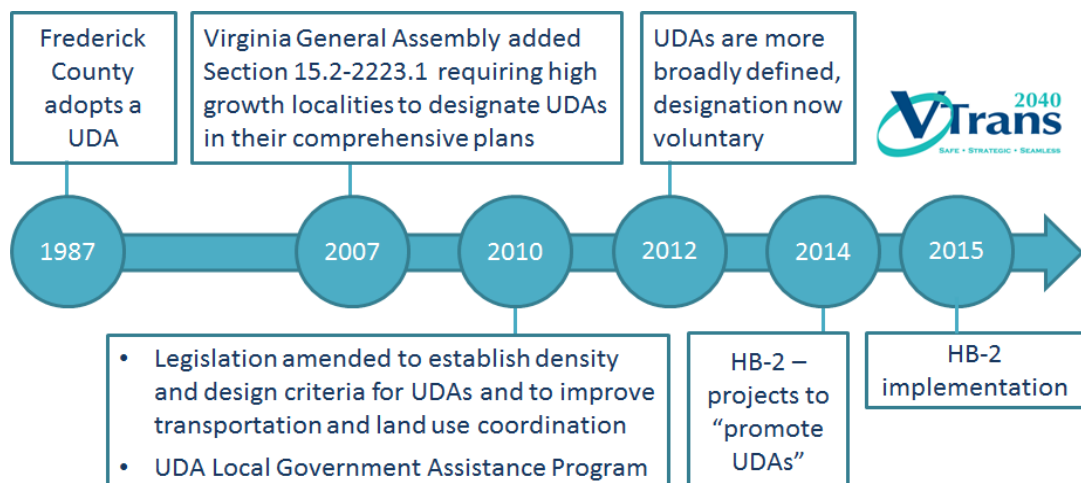
**Legislation** – Starting in 2007, the General Assembly has considered the role of UDAs in coordinated land use and transportation planning:

- In 2007, [Section 15.2-2223.1](#) required high-growth localities to designate UDAs in comprehensive plans. UDAs were to be areas of compact development that can accommodate 10 to 20 years of projected growth.
- In 2010, the legislation was amended to establish density and design criteria for UDAs.
- In 2012, the legislation was amended again to make the UDA designation voluntary across all localities and defined UDAs more broadly to incorporate aspects of Traditional Neighborhood Development (TND).

**Status** – The process in local comprehensive plans to designate UDAs (or code referenced growth areas) has diversified since 2007. Research to date has found over **180** of these types of places in local plans across Virginia.

### What is a UDA?

- Areas designated by a locality that may be sufficient to meet projected residential and commercial growth in the locality for at least 10 years.
- Areas that may be appropriate for development at a density on the developable acreage of at least four single-family residences and an authorized floor area ratio of at least 0.4 per acres for commercial development.
- Areas that incorporate principles of traditional neighborhood development (TND).



# Urban Development Areas/Designated Growth Areas

## Current Status

### Are UDAs all Urban?

The designation of UDAs has taken place in urban, suburban, and rural communities. The key feature of UDAs, traditional neighborhood development (TND), is a concept that seeks to create communities with features traditionally found in Virginia prior to World War II. Many of Virginia's traditional towns, such as Bedford, Harrisonburg, and Fredericksburg exhibit the characteristics of traditional neighborhood development that UDAs seek to promote. Many smaller, rural communities also show these characteristics, including towns like South Hill, Tappahannock, and Luray.

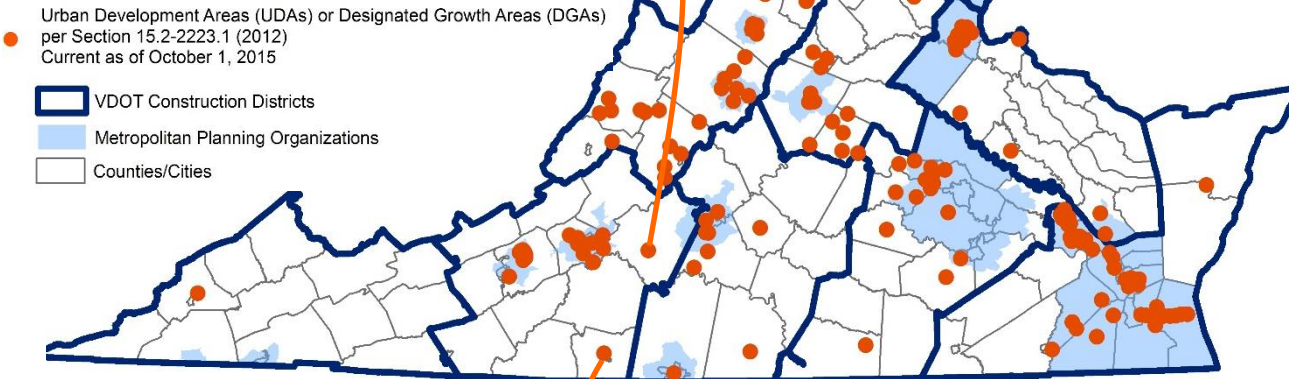
Bedford, Virginia – TND Example



Photo Source: Bedford Main Street, Inc.

### Why are UDAs Important?

While the concept is not new to Virginia, with the passage of HB2 in 2014, transportation projects promoting UDAs are now a part of Virginia's priority transportation funding decisions. VTrans2040 has included outreach with community planners to determine the transportation needs of these places across Virginia.



## Uptown Martinsville

**Locality:** Martinsville City

**Designation:** 2011 Comprehensive Plan Amendment

**Goal:** Adaptive reuse of vacant mill sites and adjacent properties.

**Development:** The New College Institute, built a 52,000 square foot facility on the Baldwin Block in 2014, creating an education and technology hub. A block away, a developer is converting an empty hotel into a mixed use development.



New College Institute (Image: The Roanoke Times)

## What's Next

The Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment (OIPI) is finalizing the VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan in October 2015. For each UDA (and designated growth area), the Plan will include a profile describing planning status, socioeconomic characteristics, and transportation needs.

Keep up to date on everything going on at: <http://www.vtrans.org/vtrans2040.asp>