

# **The Transportation Corridor Overlay District**

## **Introduction**

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The City of Chesapeake is committed to managed and orderly development within the City and is dedicated to the provision of adequate services for its citizens. While the City has taken a proactive stance in the development of public policies designed to better regulate the timing and location of residential development, it has limited policy guidelines regarding directing beneficial, revenue generating economic development. The City recognizes that certain types of economic development will promote the overall economic health of the City and will result in the improved ability to provide a high quality of life for all citizens, both corporate and private.

The need for additional opportunities for the expansion of Chesapeake's economic base coupled with the need to develop a strategy for the management of future transportation corridors gave rise to a City Council resolution to address such issues. On September 21, 1999, Chesapeake City Council adopted a resolution directing staff to "conduct studies and engage in special planning for major transportation corridors...to determine and implement the most productive and beneficial use of land within... such corridors." A task force composed of representatives from the City Council, Planning Commission, City Attorney's Office, City Manager's Office, School Administration, and Departments of Planning, Economic Development, Public Utilities, Public Works, and Parks and Recreation was then formed to address the Council directive. Working through the subcommittees of land use and timing, design, and access, a concept was developed. This initial effort was titled the Economic Opportunity Development Opportunity District (EDOC).

This concept was then circulated for review and received a significant amount of public comment and suggestion. Three public information meetings (two televised), a public hearing (televised), meetings with a Business Focus Group and Citizen Focus Group were conducted. Presentations were also made to interested civic leagues and other interest groups. The document was also posted on the City's web site and in all public libraries. A considerable amount of input was received and the document refined to the resulting in the Transportation Corridor Overlay District (TCOD).

When the revised TCOD went before City Council in January 2000, a significant number of citizens requested that there be additional public input into the development of this policy. Two additional public meetings were then scheduled and a Citizen's Working Group established. Participation in the Working Group was open to all citizens who wished to participate and included persons who lived, owned land, or operated a business in the area of the proposed corridors. Thirty-two persons participated in the process.

The Working Group's mission was to develop a group consensus recommendation to the City Council on preferred guidelines for future development along significant transportation corridors. The Group met over a nine-week period, working through many difficult issues and attempting to develop a group consensus on what guidelines should be developed. Most issues were extensively debated with votes necessary to clarify majority opinion. The resulting report was then presented to City Council in May 2000.

Staff was then directed to evaluate the recommendations of the Working Group and to make recommendations for appropriate modifications to the TCOD. Many of the Working Group's recommendations were incorporated into the draft and were subsequently adopted by City Council on June 13, 2000.