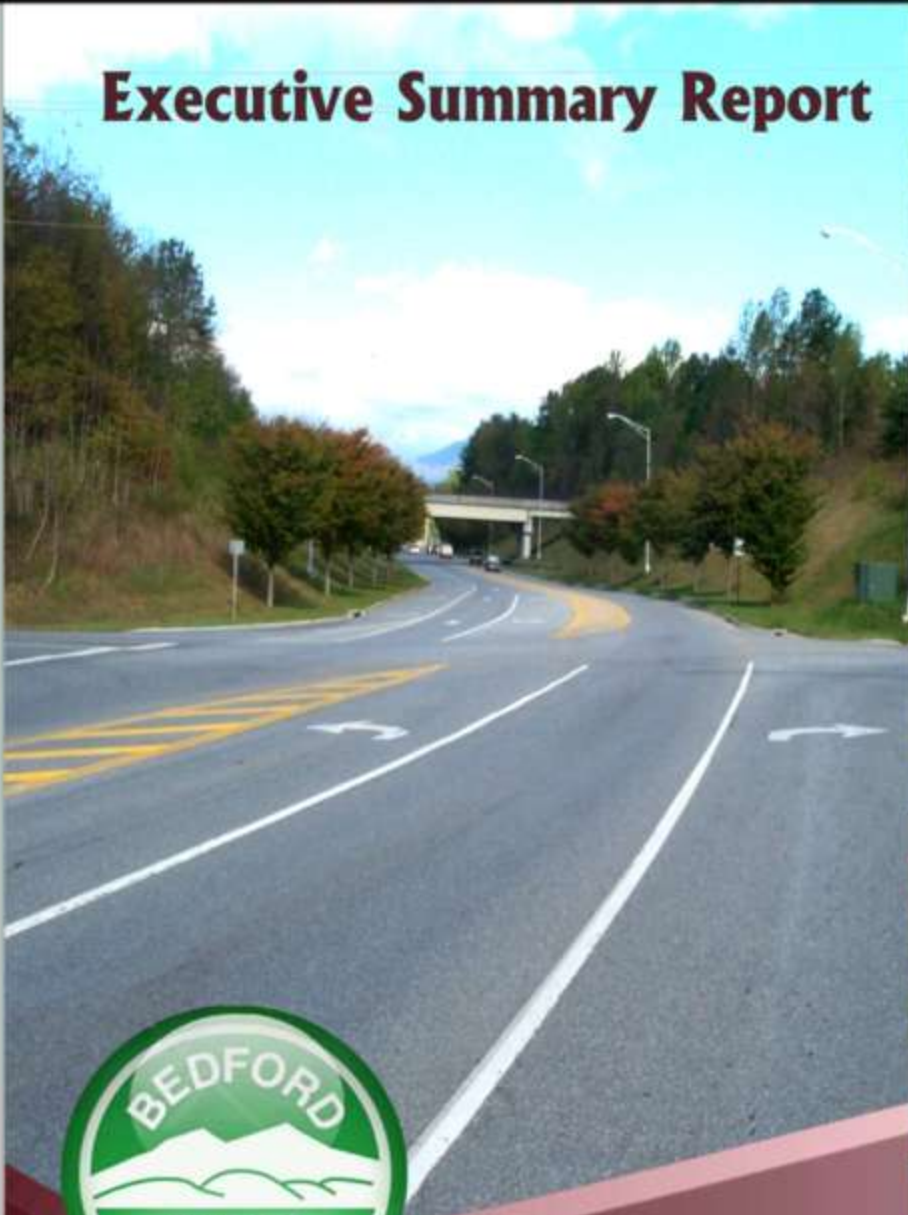


Independence Boulevard Corridor Study

Executive Summary Report



May 2006

**Independence Boulevard (Route 122)
Corridor Study
City of Bedford, Virginia**

Prepared by
Mattern & Craig, Inc.

In Cooperation with
**Region 2000 Local Government Council
City of Bedford, Virginia
and
Virginia Department of Transportation**

May 2006

Executive Summary

The intent of this report is to summarize the Independence Boulevard Corridor Study recommendations in a concise format. More detailed information is included in the Technical Report, which is a companion document to this document. The purpose of the corridor study is to evaluate and make recommendations for the management and future development of Independence Boulevard (Route 122) from its intersection with East Main Street (US 460 Business) to its intersection with Forest Road (US 221) including safety conscious planning (*It should be noted that the Independence Boulevard Corridor Study is a separate study from the Route 122 Corridor Study that was prepared during May 2003*).

The study is intended to complement previous studies including the Bedford 2020 Transportation Plan (*August 2002*), the Bedford Eastside Master Plan (*July 2005*), and the Route 122 Corridor Study (*May 2003*). The Bedford 2020 Transportation Plan, which was developed as a cooperative effort between the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), and the City of Bedford, is the product of a study that evaluated the transportation system in Bedford and recommended a set of transportation improvements to best satisfy existing and future transportation needs. The plan is used by VDOT when evaluating requests from the City of Bedford for specific transportation projects and/or for implementing projects on the state-maintained highway system. The Bedford Eastside Master Plan was prepared to begin the long-range planning process along Independence Boulevard to protect this corridor's mobility while at the same time providing for future growth on the available land. The Route 122 Corridor Study, which included a section of Route 122 from the Franklin County Line to US 460 in the City of Bedford (*total distance of 16+ miles*), was prepared to identify existing transportation and safety concerns along the road, to identify the effects of continued land development on transportation operations and safety, and to develop roadway and land planning projects, procedures, and policies to ensure long-term transportation efficiency and safety along this corridor.

Public involvement was a key element of this study and they were invited to provide comments at two public meetings. Many of the citizen's comments are incorporated in the recommendations. The City of Bedford will monitor a few of the comments that were beyond the scope of work of this project. The inclusion of bicycle lanes for the corridor was discussed and it was determined that decisions on bicycle lanes for the Independence Boulevard corridor should be made as a part of a City-wide bicycle facilities planning process. This process is currently underway as a separate project. The recommendations included in this report do not preclude the addition of bicycle facilities to the corridor. Additional right-of-way may be needed to accommodate such facilities.

Recommendations

Based on information contained in the Technical Report and input from all interested parties, the following recommendations are made:

- Recommend a typical cross-section consisting of a four-lane, undivided, curb and gutter facility and sidewalks (*width of 5 feet and a 2-foot buffer strip*) on both sides of the road from East Main Street to a point north of the Southern States access point and from a point south of Forest Road to Forest Road (See Exhibit ES-1).
- Recommend a typical cross-section consisting of a four-lane, divided, curb and gutter facility with a raised, landscaped median (*width of 16 feet*) and sidewalks (*width of 5 feet and a 2-foot buffer strip*) on both sides of the road from a point north of the Southern States access point to a point near the Norfolk & Western railroad southern right-of-way and from the Norfolk & Western railroad northern right-of-way to a point south of Forest Road (***a minimum right-of-way width of 110 feet would be needed***) including the following features (See Exhibit ES-2):
 1. Median openings will be provided at the intersections of all public roads, Cheatham Park Drive, and Dominion of Bedford, Inc. In addition, a median opening will be provided between Cheatham Park Drive and Orange Street to serve property on both sides of Independence Boulevard (*VDOT guidelines for median openings and nationally recognized guidelines for traffic signal spacing will be used to determine additional locations for median openings*).
 2. Left-turn lanes will be provided at all median openings in both directions of travel (*per VDOT guidelines*).
- Maintain existing cross-section consisting of a four-lane, undivided, curb and gutter facility and sidewalks (*width of 5 feet and a 2-foot buffer strip*) on both sides of the road within the Norfolk & Western railroad right-of-way (*sidewalks have not been installed*) (See Exhibit ES-1).
- Install a traffic signal at the intersection of Independence Boulevard and Orange Street whenever traffic signal warrants are satisfied.
- Encourage the use of various access management techniques to preserve the mobility of the corridor without causing an undue burden to the adjacent property owners. These techniques include, but are not limited to, the use of a raised median, the use of joint access points, interconnectivity between properties, internal roadway networks, buildings located to the front of the property, and parking located to the back of the properties.
- Consider the need for right-turn lanes and/or tapers on a *case-by-case basis* based on guidelines set forth by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT).
- Consistent with city regulations, require developers to fund off-site improvements including, but not limited to, left-turn lanes, right-turn lanes, curb and gutter, sidewalks, closed stormwater drainage systems, street lights, traffic signals, and relocating existing utilities.

- Encourage the recommendations contained in the Eastside Master Plan including improvements to Lowry Street and the creation of an internal roadway network to serve future commercial development along this section of Independence Boulevard. Encourage the extension of Lowry Street to serve all possible properties. Although the extension of Lowry Street to Orange Street would be ideal, it is probably cost prohibitive due to terrain issues.
- Encourage the use of various plantings (*per VDOT guidelines*) to enhance the aesthetics of the corridor as a **gateway** to the community without compromising the safety of the traveling public (See Exhibits ES-3, ES-4, and ES-5).

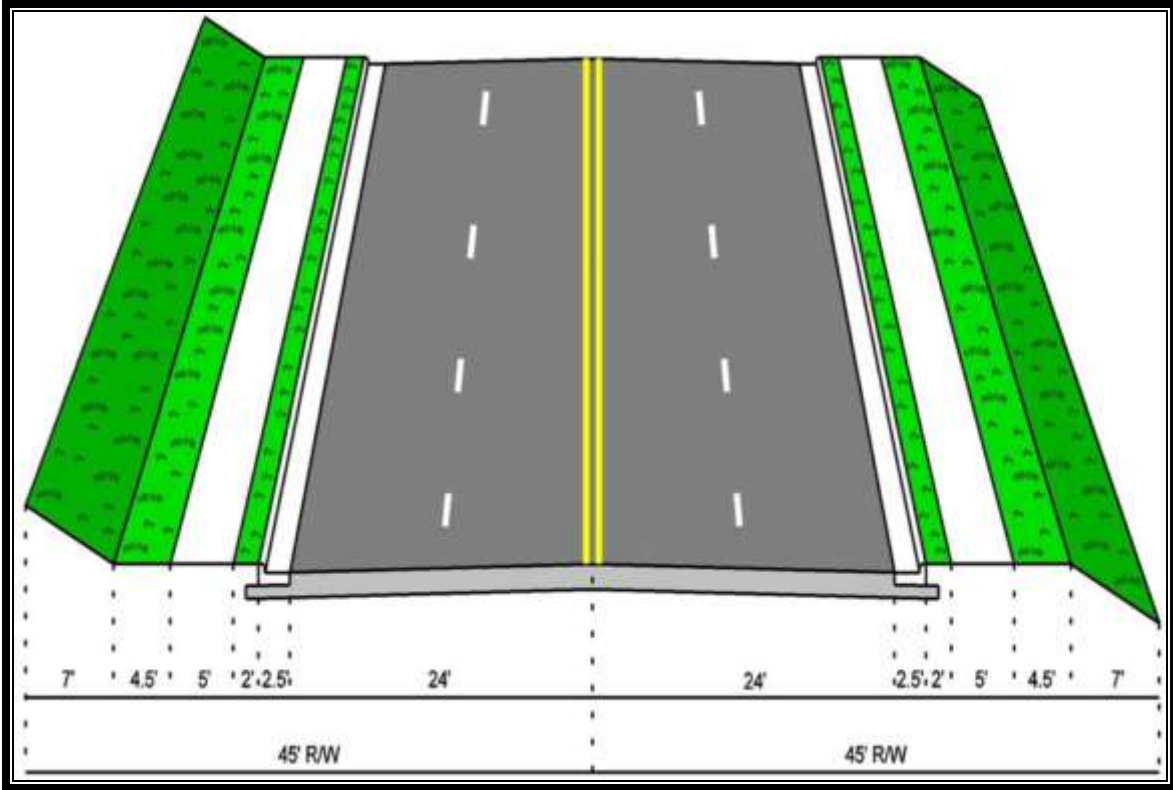


Exhibit ES-1 – Recommended Typical Cross-Section (R/W = 90 feet)

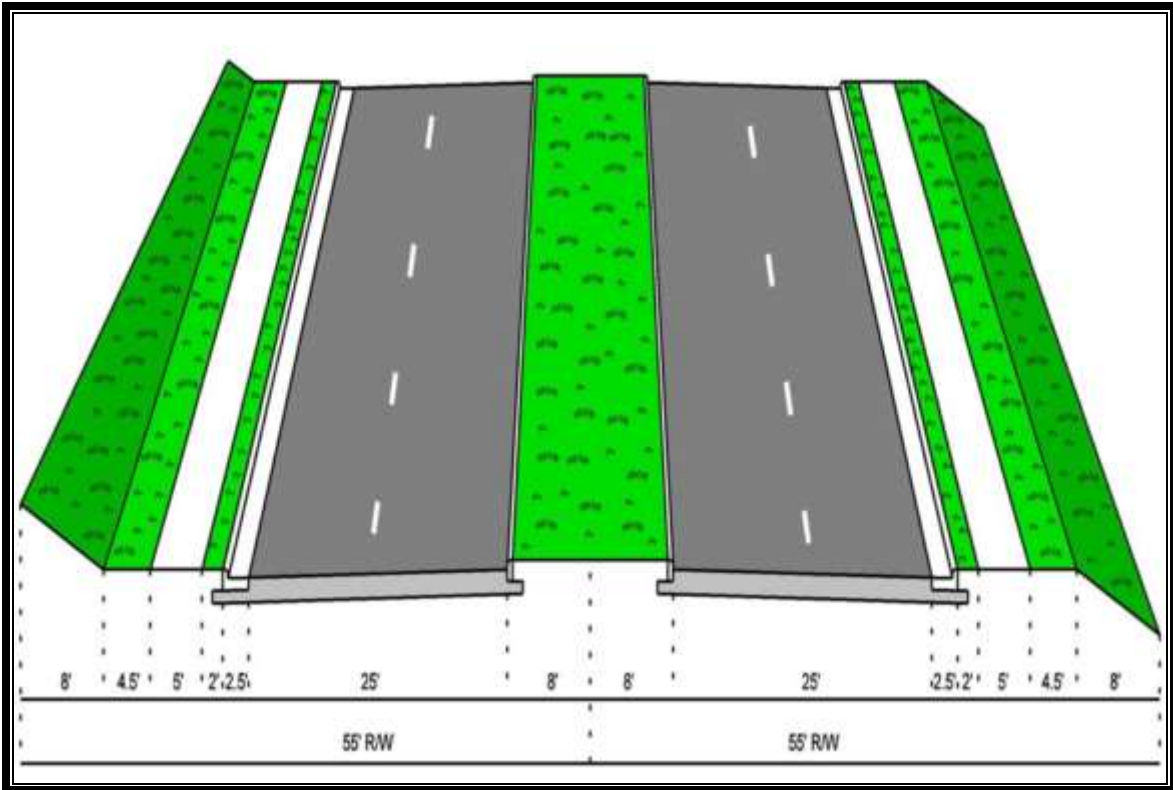


Exhibit ES-2 – Recommended Typical Cross-Section (R/W = 110 feet)

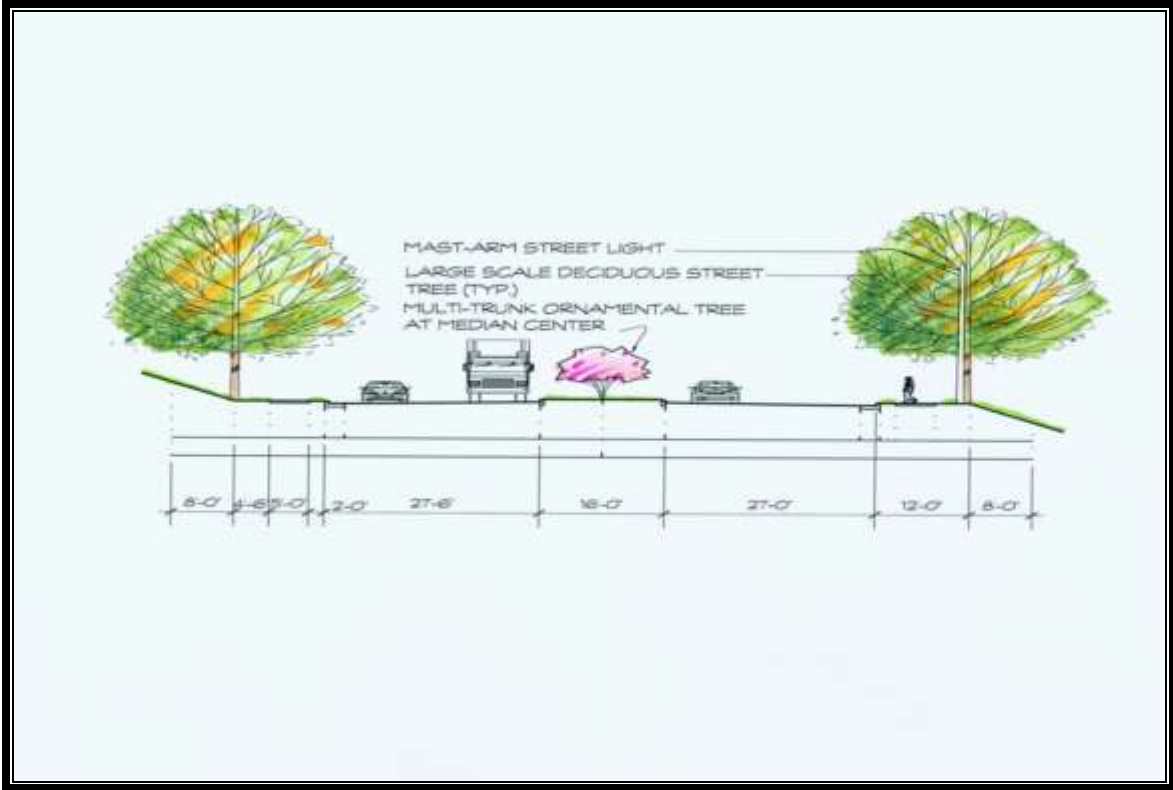


Exhibit ES-3 – Typical Landscaping Along Independence Boulevard



Exhibit ES-4 – Typical Landscaping Near East Main Street



Exhibit ES-5 – Typical Landscaping Near Commercial Development

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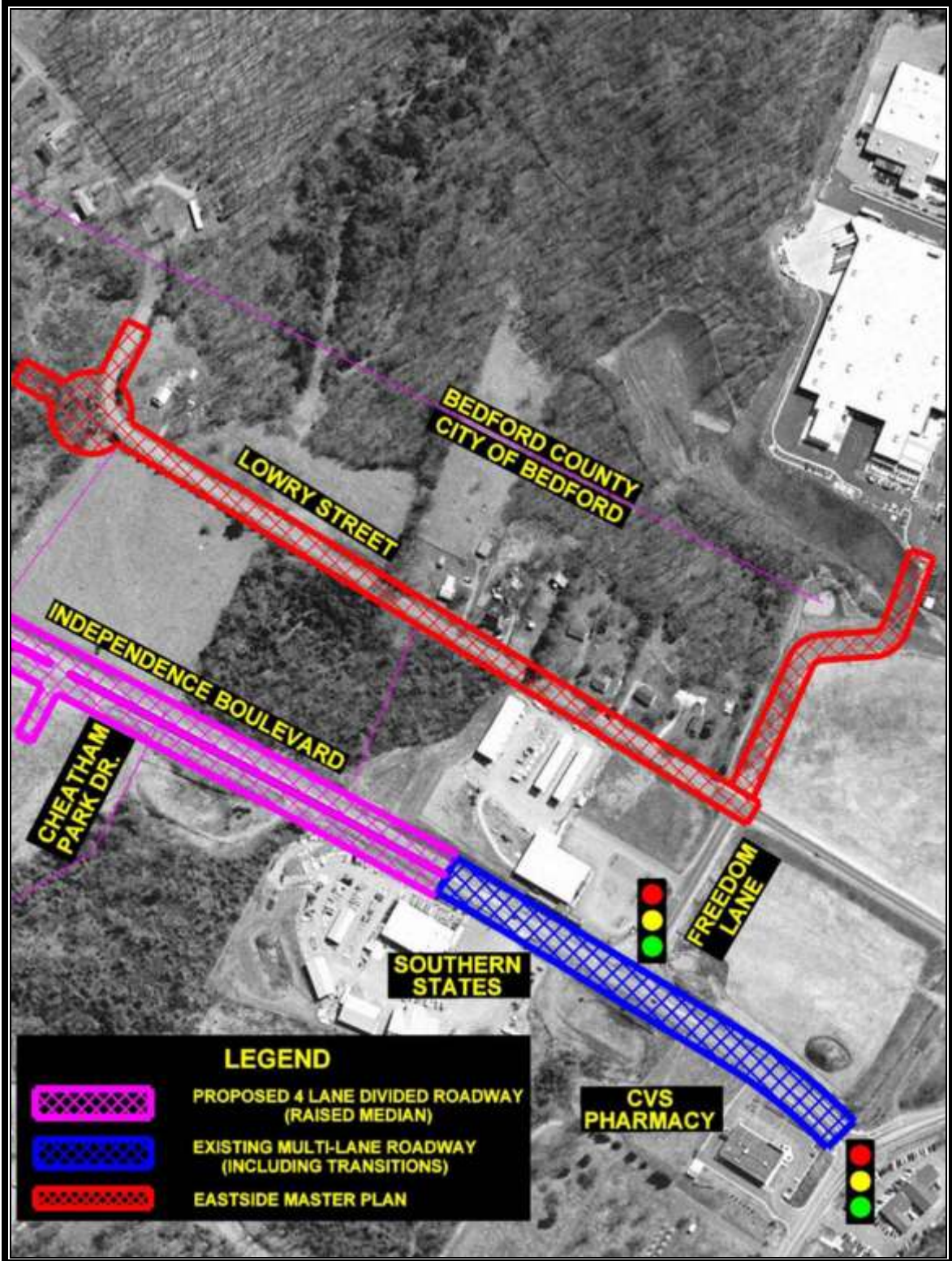


Exhibit ES-6 – Independence Boulevard Corridor (Sheet 1 of 4)

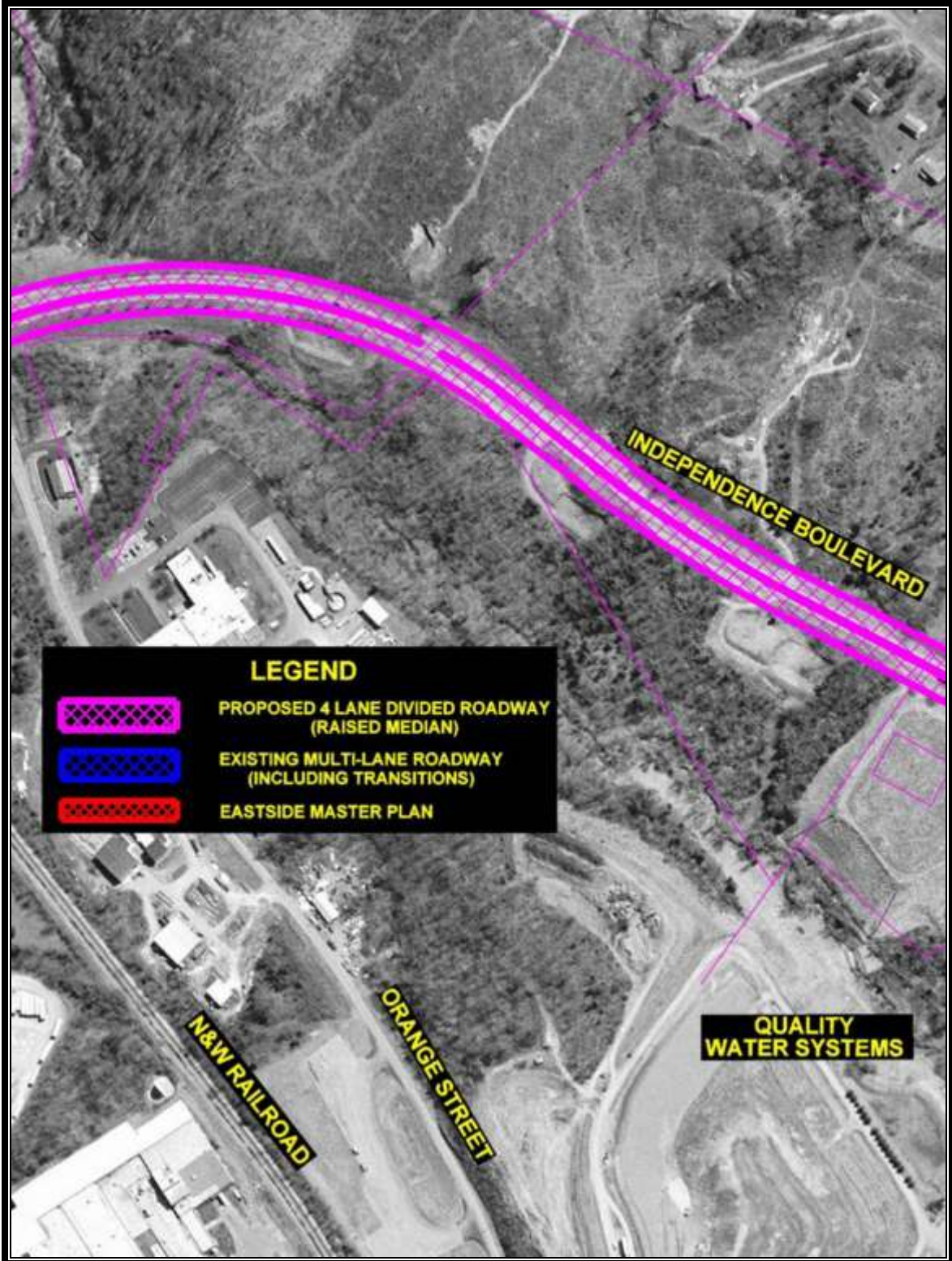


Exhibit ES-7 – Independence Boulevard Corridor (Sheet 2 of 4)

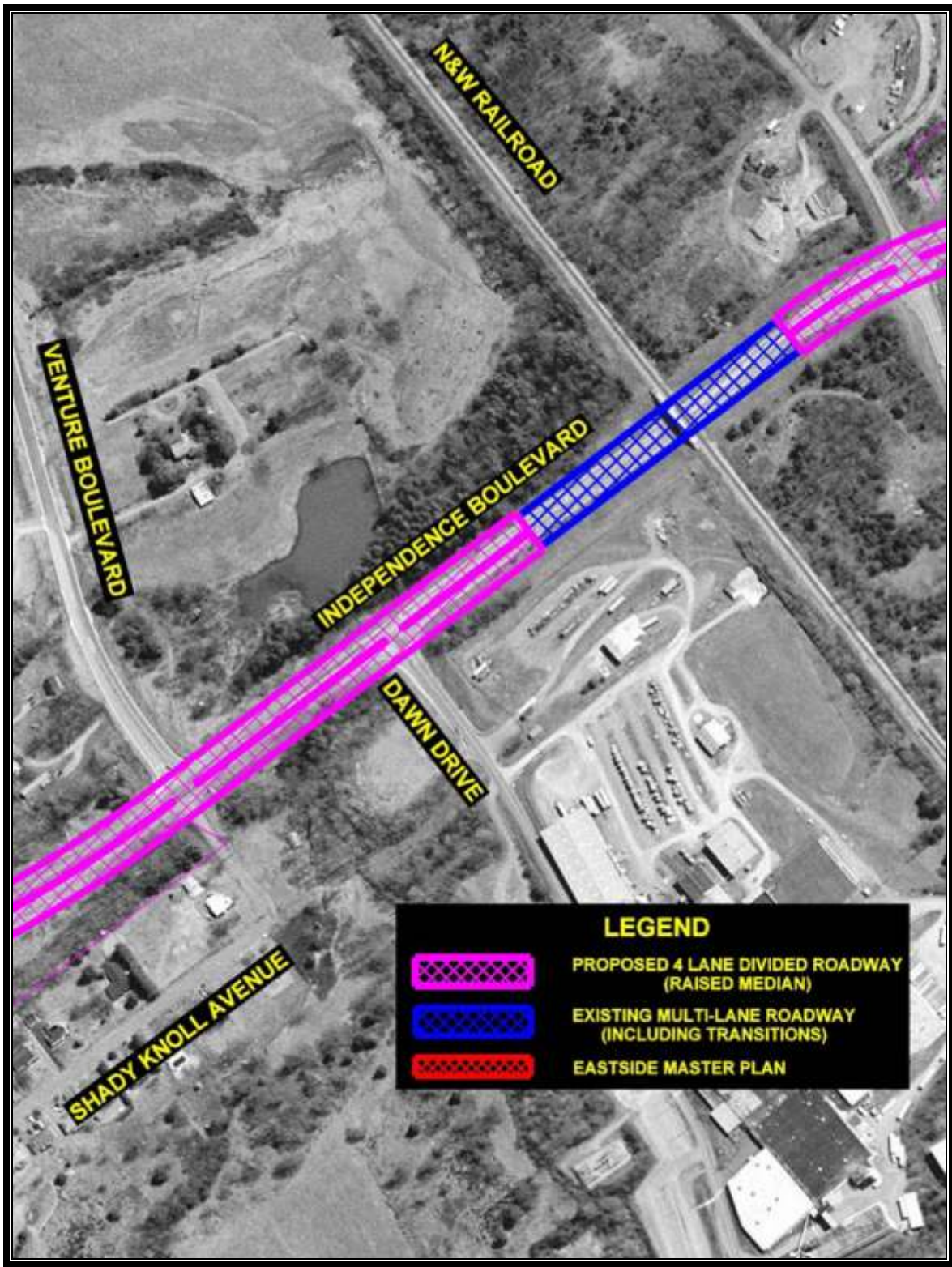


Exhibit ES-8 – Independence Boulevard Corridor (Sheet 3 of 4)

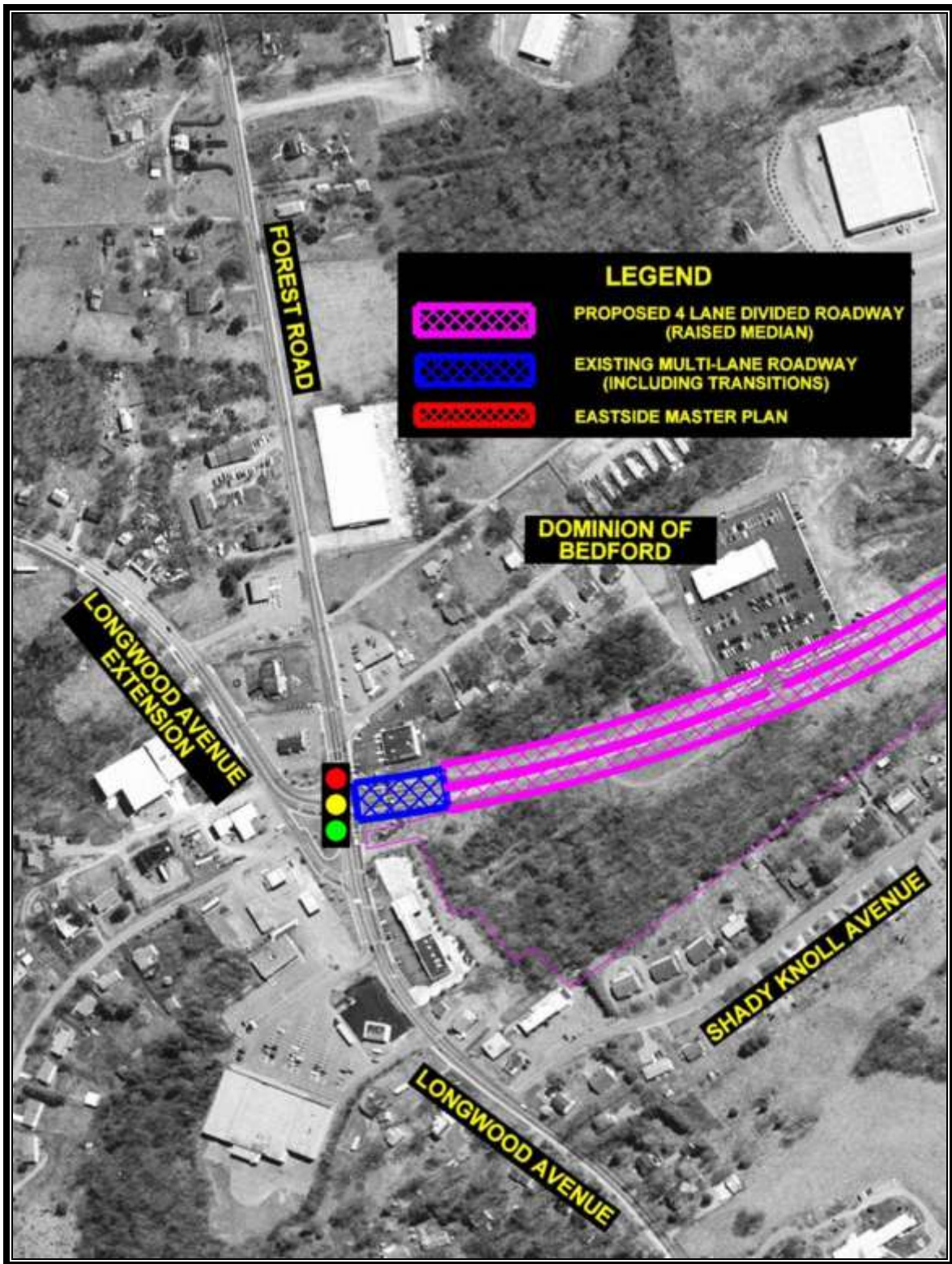


Exhibit ES-9 – Independence Boulevard Corridor (Sheet 4 of 4)