

mitigate potentially negative localized impacts along the highway corridor and encourage redevelopment for higher density commercial uses elsewhere along the central corridor.

*The West Bypass Alignment* provides the least potential opportunity for economic gains and the least risk of economic losses to the City. Because only one interchange is planned, the Western Bypass would not open up an abundance of land with highway access for development. In that sense, it would not substantially threaten or enhance either the city industrial and commercial base. Its benefits for regional economic growth would come primarily from the shortened travel time from Roanoke to markets in Michigan, Ohio and North Carolina. Its impact on the City's downtown area could be negative, though, because of traffic congestion impacts. The western bypass would keep northwest-southeast through traffic on I-73 west of the City. However, traffic moving between I-73 south of the City and I-81 northeast of the City would use I-581/US-220 as a shortcut between the two routes. The extra traffic on I-581/US-220, with no plan for expansion of that highway's capacity, would further degrade traffic movement along Roanoke's Central Corridor and significantly increase its congestion levels.

*The East Bypass Alignment* presents the greatest potential threats to the City's commercial base by opening up new sites with three interchanges proposed in Botetourt and in Bedford Counties, the region's highest-growth corridor. These sites could attract commercial investment, trade, and tax dollars away from existing businesses in the city. In addition, the East Bypass provides the greatest "dog-leg" alignment of I-73, so a significant share of the vehicles traveling along I-73 between points north and south of the City would be expected to use I-581/US 220 as a shortcut route. Without no expansion to the I-581/US-220 capacity planned under this alignment, traffic movement along that corridor would also degrade and experience severely increased congestion levels.

*Tradeoffs* among the alternative alignments are summarized in Tables 3-1 and 3-2 on the next pages.