



Maryland Department of Planning

Sustainable _____ Attainable

November 5, 2014

Sally Nash, Acting Director
City of Annapolis Planning and Zoning
145 Gorman Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Ms. Nash,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the West Annapolis Sector Plan. It is our understanding that if adopted by the City Council, the plan would amend the City's existing Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2009. The City is to be commended for their effort in developing a well-rounded plan and for providing clear and in some cases, very specific recommendations to address both land use and transportation related issues.

The plan as submitted to the Maryland Department of Planning is consistent with the 2009 Annapolis Comprehensive Plan which recommended further study of key neighborhoods and other districts within the City. The Plan does appear to distance itself from the recommendation in the 2009 plan that this area be designated as a City Urban Center Concept that could change the residential and commercial intensity that currently exists within the West Annapolis study area.

Thank you again for the opportunity to review this draft plan. If you have any questions please feel free to contact me at (410) 767-4553. Again, thank you for the opportunity to review the West Annapolis Sector Plan.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter G. Conrad', is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Peter G. Conrad, AICP
Director, Local Planning Assistance

cc: Rich Josephson, MD

Martin O'Malley, Governor
Anthony G. Brown, Lt. Governor

Richard Eberhart Hall, AICP, Secretary
Amanda Stakem Conn, Esq., Deputy Secretary

**Maryland Department of Planning
Review Comments
Draft West Annapolis Sector Study
November 6th, 2014**

Purpose

The Plan states that The City’s 2009 Comprehensive Plan identifies West Annapolis as one of four Opportunity Areas—locations where the City intends to direct new growth and development. However, the Plan appears to be more focused on transportation and walkability verses evaluating future development needs.

Transportation

The transportation section has done a good job at establishing visions, goals and policies to meet the needs of its resident’s while recognizing the need to preserve and enhance quality of life in West Annapolis.

The West Annapolis Sector Study’s transportation section is well-written and provides a thorough inventory of existing transportation issues and potential solutions. The study recognizes strategies to address both short and long-term transportation solutions and delves into details on local, State and Federal transportation funding opportunities.

MDP appreciates that the study considers improvements in transit, bicycle and pedestrian, traffic management (traffic signal system operation, real-time traffic monitoring) and places less emphasis on roadway widening. Much of the traffic congestion experienced during the PM-peak rush hour and event-related transportation issues impacting West Annapolis may be solved by better managing the existing road capacity.

There is significant pedestrian and bicycle traffic that comes through Shiley Street and onto Badger Road (on Navy property). The new bridge has become very attractive to walkers, joggers and bicyclist. This can be seen virtually every evening with dozens of people walking, jogging or bicycling over the bridge. Though Badger Road is on Navy property, the City may be well served to have discussion with the Navy on how to

improve bicycle and pedestrian access to the Severn River Bridge from Shiley Street through Badger Road.

Market Analysis

On page 62, Table 3.6 shows major commuting routes from Annapolis to Baltimore, Washington, Columbia and Montgomery County. It is very surprising that there was no commuter information provided that tracks commuters from Annapolis to Fort George Meade in Severn.

Information on future residential build out contained on page 76, Section 3.7 clearly shows that future residential build out through 2018 and beyond is limited at best with an average of 3 – 7 new units annually absorbed in West Annapolis. This supports the City's decision to not focus its efforts on creating a more urban center in West Annapolis.

Land Use and Community Design

West Annapolis with its existing grid system of streets and sidewalks should be a very walkable community. In some places it is and some where it is not. The City is highly encouraged to implement the Annapolis Streetscape Design Plan as a guide for sidewalk improvements in the West Annapolis sector, particularly with regards to landscaping along Annapolis Street, opportunities for unique signage and the creation of places such as a community square that help define West Annapolis.

Once completed, the MainStreets Annapolis Partnership Design Handbook will help the City in creating a unique place that will attract residents and visitors to West Annapolis. The City is encouraged to adopt these design guidelines.