



CHARLES COUNTY GOVERNMENT
Department of Planning & Growth Management

Deborah A. Carpenter, AICP
Director

Phone | 301-645-0692
Email | PGMAdmin@CharlesCountyMD.gov

January 12, 2021

Maryland State Clearinghouse for Intergovernmental Assistance
Maryland Department of Planning
301 W Preston Street, Suite 1101
Baltimore, MD 21201

Re: Comprehensive Plan Amendment for the Maryland Airport

Dear Maryland Clearinghouse:

Please find attached draft documents related to a proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment affecting certain properties around the Maryland Airport. The Charles County Planning Commission is providing these amendments to the State at least 60 days prior to a public hearing pursuant to the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

The proposed Amendment to the 2016 Charles County Comprehensive Plan seeks to amend the land use designation for 558 acres of land in the vicinity of the Maryland Airport from Watershed Conservation District to Employment and Industrial District. The purpose of this change is to ensure the land use designation will be consistent with future planned rezoning of these properties to allow uses that will support a general aviation airport. The airport is located at 3900 Livingston Road, Indian Head, MD 20640.

Included with this submission are two maps: 1) vicinity map showing the location of the airport and surrounding properties to be changed; and 2) focused map showing the affected tax parcels in more detail. Also included are proposed text changes to the following chapters of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan: Chapter 3, Land Use; Chapter 7, Economic Development; Chapter 8, Transportation; and Chapter 12, Implementation Schedule.

The Amendments are also posted on the county's Planning Commission BoardDocs site at www.charlescountymd.gov/government/boarddocs; click in upper right corner to get to Planning Commission; then click on the November 16, 2020 meeting on the left. For reference, the current 2016 Comprehensive Plan can be viewed at <https://www.charlescountymd.gov/home/showpublisheddocument?id=3674>.

Please distribute the draft Amendment to the appropriate state agencies. Comments may be sent to Amy Blessinger, Planner III, at Charles County Planning Division, 200 Baltimore Street, La Plata, MD 20646 or to BlessingA@charlescountymd.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "James B. Campbell".

James B. Campbell, AICP
Planning Director

Chapter 7: Economic Development

Goals and Objectives	7-1
Economic Structure and Employment Growth.....	7-2
Employment Supporting Land Needs.....	7-5
<u>Maryland Airport.....</u>	<u>7-7</u>
Redevelopment and Revitalization.....	7- <u>79</u>
Quality of Place, Tourism and the Arts.....	7- <u>108</u>
Telecommunications and Broadband	7- <u>109</u>
Charles County Economic Development Department	7- <u>119</u>
Policies and Action Items	<u>7-</u>

911

Chapter 7

Economic Development

The ability to create jobs, support growth with an expanding tax base, and to manage growth effectively is related in part to the balance achieved between commercial/industrial development and other plan elements. The purpose of the Comprehensive Plan with respect to economic development is to provide the land use and development environment that supports the County's economic development goals and objectives and ensures its competitiveness as a business location within the region.

This Chapter discusses the County's economic development as it pertains to land use and development, including industrial and commercial development; business retention, attraction, and expansion; and redevelopment and revitalization. The findings and recommendations contained herein are informed by the County's 5-year economic development strategic plan titled A Proactive Approach to Shaping the Economic Future of Charles County, Maryland ("Strategic Plan"), commissioned by the Economic Development Department (EDD) and completed in May of 2016. The Strategic Plan details the product improvement, marketing, and organizational changes that must be made to ensure that Charles County strengthens its competitive position and is able to attract and retain the types of businesses that will create jobs and opportunities for its population.

Goals and Objectives

Economic development ideally refers to the sustained, concerted actions of communities and policymakers that improve the standard of living and economic health of a specific locality. Overall goals of these efforts include:

- 7.1 Expand the number of jobs in the County paying above average salaries and jobs that pay a living wage;
- 7.2 Strengthen the County's economic base through growth and expansion of existing businesses and industry;
- 7.3 Diversify the County's economic base through the attraction of new businesses and encouraging the development of new start-up businesses;
- 7.4 Retain large employers in the County including the Naval Support Facility Indian Head and the University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical Center;
- 7.5 Enhance the County's infrastructure (water, sewer, transportation) through funding an aggressive, yet affordable Capital Improvement Program (CIP) for those functions which are a government responsibility;

7.6 Support tourism development in the County, particularly emphasizing opportunities associated with the County's natural resources, historic and cultural resources, and land- and water-based recreation;

7.7 Promote and support the arts in Charles County as a contributor to County residents' quality of life; and,

7.8 Provide affordable broadband coverage to all of Charles County.

Charles County has many assets to build upon and has the opportunity to set itself apart as a competitive place for several types of industries, beyond its traditional strengths. The Strategic Plan addresses the County's economic development goals, and it culminates in a set of implementable recommendations that will help focus its economic development service delivery to attract identified business targets and position it for the next wave of economic growth. The recommendations reflect items Charles County should undertake to enhance and improve perceptions of the County by site-location advisors and companies looking to invest in the County, as well as tactics the EDD can use to effectively market the County to the recommended business targets.

The Strategic Plan identifies eighteen (18) specific, recommended actions that the county can take to enhance economic development and attract, retain, and expand companies that will create high quality job growth.

Specifically, the strategic recommendations are broken into three categories:

1. Policy changes and investments that should be made to strengthen the County's product;
2. Improved economic development service delivery; and,
3. Tactics to better market the region.

By making a deliberate and organized effort to balance its economy and better highlight its unique advantages, Charles County can shape its economic future and ensure that there are sufficient economic opportunities for its residents. In order to create a context for understanding Charles County's competitive realities, an assessment of economic factors that will impact future business development is contained in the next section.

Economic Structure and Employment Growth

In the past 50 years, the County's economy has changed from an economy dominated by agriculture and seafood industries and has responded to a pattern of suburbanization. An influx of Washington, D.C. area workers into Charles County has contributed to the County becoming the 4th wealthiest county in the state and the 24th in the nation. It boasts a median household income of \$88,481. New residential growth and increasing traffic volumes have drawn substantial retail and commercial services development. However, more than 60% of the workers who live in the County must travel outside the County – often the state – to work in higher paying jobs in their professions.

Charles County's prospects for economic development are interrelated with this workforce and the region's proximity to the Washington metropolitan area, its location on the US 301 corridor, and the military presence in the region. In recognition of this, the County became a full member of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (WashCOG) and also actively engages in the Greater Washington Board of Trade.

Charles County has historically accounted for a relatively small share of the Washington region's household growth and an even smaller share of its job growth. Nevertheless, Charles County is projected to share in an accelerated pattern of employment growth for the entire Southern Maryland region and is projected to grow faster than the state as a whole (see Table 7-1).

Table 7-1
Projected Employment Growth

	2020	2040	Change 2020 to 2040	
			Number	Percent
Southern MD	173,900	204,400	30,500	18%
Charles County	66,700	79,500	12,800	19%
Calvert	36,800	43,100	6,300	17%
St. Mary's County	70,400	81,800	11,400	16%
Maryland	3,755,200	4,161,000	405,800	11%

Source: Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) Planning Data Services, 2016

According to these projections, however, the imbalance between Charles County's residential growth and the local employment base will continue unless an effective public intervention and a concerted effort focused on business development are brought to bear. The projected level of employment growth (a total employment of 79,500 or 12,800 new local jobs by the year 2040) is less than the projected growth of the County's labor force (approximately 16,790 additional people) over this time period.¹ In 2014, the ratio of employment to households in the County was 1 job to every 1.38 households, which actually declined from the 2010 ratio of 1 job to 1.43 households.²

Industry forecasts rely heavily on historical trends and do not necessarily reflect the impact that deliberate and effective public policy may have on actual outcomes. Nonetheless, it is useful to acknowledge industry forecasts to inform ongoing economic development policy measures.

The largest increase in jobs between 2020 and 2040 in Charles County is projected to be in the *Health Care and Social Assistance* industry sector, which is forecast to add 2,000 jobs. *Construction* is projected to add 1,700 jobs in the same period, but is one of the industry sectors most vulnerable to economic downturns.

¹ Maryland Department of Planning, 2014

² U.S. Census Longitudinal Employer-Household Dynamics, 2016

Economic Development

The *Accommodation and Food Services* sector is projected to constitute the third largest growth sector at 1,400 new jobs, followed by *Other Services* (e.g., general repair and maintenance, personal services, etc.) at 1,300 jobs, *Retail* at 1,200 jobs, and both *Professional and Technical Services* (e.g., architects, engineers, legal, etc.) and *Administration* at 1,000 jobs. Job forecasts by industry sector are shown in Table 7-2.

Table 7-2
Forecasts of Jobs by Industry 2020-2040, Charles County, MD

Industry Sector	2020	2030	2040	Change 2020-2040	
				Number	Percent
Agriculture	400	400	400	0	0%
Forestry, fishing, related activities, and other	200	200	200	0	0%
Mining	0	0	0	0	0%
Utilities	600	600	700	100	17%
Construction	5,900	6,800	7,600	1,700	29%
Manufacturing	800	800	800	0	0%
Wholesale trade	1,000	1,000	1,100	100	10%
Retail trade	10,700	11,400	11,900	1,200	11%
Transportation and warehousing	2,000	2,100	2,300	300	15%
Information	600	700	700	100	17%
Finance and insurance	2,000	2,100	2,300	300	15%
Real estate and rental and leasing	4,000	4,300	4,600	600	15%
Professional and technical services	4,000	4,500	5,000	1,000	25%
Management of companies and enterprises	300	400	500	200	67%
Administrative and waste services	3,000	3,500	4,000	1,000	33%
Educational services	900	1,100	1,300	400	44%
Health care and social assistance	6,800	7,900	8,800	2,000	29%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation	1,500	1,800	2,100	600	40%
Accommodation and food services	6,100	6,800	7,500	1,400	23%
Other services, except public administration	5,000	5,700	6,300	1,300	26%
Government and government enterprises	10,900	11,200	11,400	500	5%
Total Employment	66,700	73,300	79,500	12,800	19%

Source: Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) Planning Data Services, 2016

The County's economy is dependent on government employment in several ways. The County's workforce includes many federal government employees who commute into the District of Columbia and its inner suburbs. Locally, the Naval Support Facility at Indian Head is the largest single employer in the County with approximately 3,427 jobs. Overall, active duty military employment consists of just over 1,000 jobs based in Charles County, 64 percent above the national average. The consolidation of bases at the Patuxent Naval Air Station in St. Mary's County during the 1990s drove new residential growth into Charles County as employees were relocated from other parts of the country. In recent years, federal actions such as sequestration and talk of future Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) initiatives have resulted in a renewed focus on the need for economic diversification. While the businesses of federal and defense spending create opportunities for the Charles County economy, it's imperative that other industry sectors be included in long term strategy.

Currently, other large employers in the County are Charles County Public Schools, Charles County Government, the College of Southern Maryland, University of Maryland Charles

Regional Medical Center (health care), Wal-Mart (retail), and the Facchina Corporation (construction).³

Charles County has an opportunity to leverage its educated and talented workforce to expand, create, and attract more companies among a diverse array of industry sectors. The proactive policies presented in this document, along with the recommended actions contained in the 5-Year Strategic Plan, should be implemented in order to foster economic development. Successful business development activities will improve the tax base, increase retail opportunities, stem the outflow of commuter traffic, and move the jobs-to-households ratio in a more positive and balanced direction. Of course, an adequate inventory of the appropriate land and buildings is necessary to support employment, as discussed in the next section.

Employment Supporting Land Needs

The ability to expand the County employment base depends on a number of factors, but a key factor is the availability of an inventory of well-sited buildings and parcels zoned for commercial and industrial uses and served by public utilities. As part of the Comprehensive Plan a *Land Use Market Supply and Demand Analysis* was conducted to research the demand for and supply of land in Charles County to satisfy projected population, housing, and employment growth.⁴ In summary, the Analysis found that:

- Total existing employment acreage in Charles County is approximately 13,000 acres located in many locations including Waldorf, White Plains, La Plata, Bryans Road, Indian Head, and Hughesville;
- Based on the jobs forecasts by type (see Table 7-2) there will be a demand for approximately 2,773 additional acres for future employment development through 2040; and,
- There are approximately 6,807 acres of undeveloped land in Charles County that are designated for commercial/employment uses.

Comparing supply of 6,807 acres to demand for 2,773 acres of commercial/employment demand through 2040 leaves 4,034 acres of commercial/employment land available to meet demands beyond 2040 (6,807 acres - 2,773 acres of demand = 4,034 acres).

Based on this analysis the Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Plan (Chapter 3) does not designate large additional areas of land for employment or commercial use. During the Comprehensive Plan process several participants questioned some of the assumptions in the analysis suggesting that demand for employment and commercial land will be higher than stated. A few participants also questioned whether the undeveloped employment and commercial land supply is well located in relation to demand and truly available for development. A future study to assess the County's inventory of employment and

³ Source: Charles County Budget Book, FY 2012 adopted.

⁴ Land Use Market Supply and Demand Analysis, Technical Memorandum, July 2011. Note, this Memorandum is provided in the Comprehensive Plan Appendix.

commercial land is recommended. The findings of the study should delineate the total amount of undeveloped land that is zoned for employment supporting uses and the inventory of development ready sites that can support business development in the near term.

A development ready site is defined as a parcel of property for sale or lease with a published price and with the entire necessary infrastructure in place, and with the size and capacities that would attract the appropriate investment. In Charles County, there is considerable acreage that is merely zoned for employment supporting uses but is not served by necessary infrastructure such as water and sewer. In some industrial zones areas where water is available, the capacity is inadequate to serve many industrial applications (e.g., craft breweries). Most companies today would require being connected to a municipal water and wastewater system with sufficient capacity to support a broad range of operations.

~~Development ready sites are of most interest to site selection consultants and potential tenants, and an adequate inventory must be maintained to support the County's economic development mission. An example of a development ready site is the 64 acre Waldorf Center (formerly Waldorf Technology Park) in the northeast quadrant of Berry Road and Western Parkway. In contrast, the undeveloped area to the east of Maryland Airport south of Bryans Road is zoned for employment supporting uses but is not development ready and would not be considered a viable location for a new business in its current state.~~

~~The aforementioned Maryland Airport is a privately owned airport that has public usage. It is not rated by the FAA in its most recent classification of public use airports, which gives it limited marketability. With one runway at 3,740 ft., no instrument landing system (ILS), and a general aviation terminal that does not show well, it has limited assets in the attraction of any business that needs air service. Nonetheless, the airport should be preserved as a future economic development asset.~~

Charles County should support business development through assigning priority to the provision of adequate infrastructure, especially transportation and water and sewer facilities, to locations set aside for business use. Infrastructure with sufficient capacity must be in place if the County is to remain competitive in attracting new business and industrial investment.

In summary, the following land use and development policies should be adopted in furtherance of the County Commissioners economic objectives and the recommendations set forth in the 5-Year Strategic Plan:

1. Leverage County-owned land, infrastructure, and other assets, as appropriate, for private economic development investment;
2. Enhance the water and wastewater capacity and availability in the County and develop a plan to extend water and sewer infrastructure to sites identified by the EDD as having the greatest potential to serve the target business sectors. Infrastructure must be in place if the County is to remain competitive in attracting new business and industrial investment;
3. Support ongoing planning efforts for U.S. 301 in relation to mixed use, commercial, and industrial land, with an emphasis on the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor and the Transit Corridor from White Plains to the County line;

4. Encourage redevelopment and/or adaptive reuse of functionally obsolete commercial structures, where practical;
5. Continue to develop incentives for commercial corridor revitalization that promote infilling of business uses;
6. Create a plan to improve gateways into the County—including new signage and landscaping, with a continued focus on Waldorf;
7. Streamline and accelerate the plan approval and permitting process for priority economic development projects;

~~8. Support continued operations at Maryland Airport through the enhancements of its assets and marketability. Continue to evaluate the competitive posture of the County's regulatory environment and recommend, as needed, efficiencies and changes in the permitting and development processes.-~~

Maryland Airport

The support for improvement of Maryland Airport is a key recommendation contained in Charles County's Economic Development Five-Year Strategic Plan. The Economic Development Department (EDD) established a professional relationship with the original owners in 2016 and was very active during the time the airport was marketed for sale, reviewing various business plan and rendering assistance where appropriate such as providing letters of support to the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). In 2019 the Maryland Airport was purchased by PSM Holdings who is currently working on plans to rehabilitate and expand its apron and to build more hangar space to serve the General Aviation Community. A key component of the owner's future improvement plans is completion of the extension of the 3,750-foot runway to 4,300 feet, enabling larger aircraft to access the airport.

The economic dynamics within which Maryland Airport operates are changing rapidly. Located in close proximity to the Nation's capital and in an area currently unencumbered by encroachment issues, the Maryland Airport has the capability to serve a vital role in the National, State and local transportation framework. For example, the opening of the MGM National Harbor Resort, approximately 17 miles from the airport, has already created increased air demand for general aviation within the region. Furthermore, MGM has expressed interest in establishing a corporate hangar at Maryland Airport to service their most valued customers.

Findings of the 2015 Maryland Airport Land Use Study indicate that high levels of aviation activity at a general aviation (GA) airport do not correspond directly to its ability to induce development. This is borne out by the paucity of employment-supporting land uses around other GA airports in the region. However, the level of interest shown by potential investors since aggressive efforts began to market the airport for sale in 2017 would suggest its strategic location in the DC Metro was a stronger attractant than conventional wisdom indicated. In the absence of historical development activity or data to identify market demand, the level of interest demonstrated by would-be and actual investors serves as the best market indicator. The Economic Development Department interviewed over a half-

dozen prospective airport buyers while it was actively marketed, several of whom still seek a presence near the airport.

It is EDD's considered opinion that if PSM Holdings is successful in expanding the airport runway and improving the facilities "inside the fence", then the real estate and business communities will respond with investment "outside the fence". Although it is impossible to quantify what that investment would amount to in any meaningful way, recent activity would suggest that both domestic and foreign investors are keenly interested in the area around Maryland Airport and that the area could support considerable employment supporting development over the next twenty to thirty years.

In addition to the aforementioned sources of demand, in 2020 several companies announced plans to locate in the Town of Indian Head to leverage proximity to Naval Surface Warfare Center Indian Head Division (NSWC IHD). These include a membership association, a multidisciplinary engineering firm, a nanofiber manufacturing company, and a business management consulting firm seeking additional office space outside of NSWC property. If this trend continues, the Maryland Airport area could see a spillover effect in the future as viable properties are consumed in the Town of Indian Head.

It is recommended that the county adopt zoning changes to better facilitate the development of complementary commercial and employment uses on lands in the vicinity of the airport. Suggested permissible land uses include:

Aviation related:

- Flight schools: domestic and international
- Aircraft maintenance
- Avionics

Non-aviation related:

- Office/flex
- Research and development
- Light manufacturing with storage & distribution
- Hospitality, food & beverage

Undesirable (outside of existing uses on Ray Drive):

- Heavy industrial
- Large-scale warehouse/distribution

Redevelopment and Revitalization

The Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC) area of Downtown Waldorf covers approximately 300 acres along the Old Washington Road corridor (MD Route 925), south of Acton Lane to north of Leonardtown Road (MD Business 5), and between U.S. 301 and the CSX railroad tracks. The area has been subject to intensive planning which calls for phased redevelopment to transit-oriented, mixed-use development.

In 2010, the Maryland Transit Administration defined a high-capacity, fixed-route transit alignment corridor between Waldorf and Washington, D.C., proposing a future light rail station adjacent to the selected “Phase One” development site, providing a potential future catalyst for private sector investment in transit-oriented development (TOD) at this location. An implementation strategy contains a conceptual plan for a “Phase One” project with the potential to begin the transformation of the WURC into TOD.

The market analysis for the “Phase One” project at this location indicated support for a development program consisting of 659,000 square feet of mixed-use development—residential, commercial office, and retail—including a specialty grocer, a new 80-100 room hotel, Class A office space, and a fitness center, enhanced by community assets and public amenities such as a public square, parks and open space, a civic center, and a public market. A key initiative spearheaded by EDD in 2016 was to introduce legislation at the state level to allow special taxing districts that include residential mixed-use land uses, which was successfully passed. This will allow the County to create Tax Increment Financing districts as a mechanism to fund public improvements.

Similar efforts are underway in the towns of La Plata, Indian Head, Hughesville, and Benedict. The La Plata Town Center Corporation (LPTCC) was formed to guide the redevelopment of a roughly six block area in downtown La Plata to make it more welcoming and vibrant place. The Urban Land Institute (ULI) was engaged in 2016 to conduct a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP) to help in identifying the best strategy to shape and focus development of this 15-acre area to a mix of uses that are more conducive to a mixed use, pedestrian-friendly environment. The Town of Indian Head will be conducting its own ULI TAP in the summer of 2016 with the aim of revitalization.

These ongoing efforts punctuate the need to continuously evaluate the County’s aging urban centers for the potential of redeveloping and revitalizing vacant and underutilized properties to more productive use. Urban redevelopment and revitalization can have many positive effects, including better quality housing, reduced sprawl, increased economic competitiveness, improved cultural and social amenities, and improved safety.

Charles County should support ongoing planning efforts for the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor and the Transit Corridor from White Plains to the County line, as

well as the redevelopment and revitalization efforts elsewhere in the county. In furtherance of this policy, the County should develop incentives for commercial corridor revitalization that promote infilling of business uses. Non-monetary incentives should include flexible mixed-use, high density zoning and expedited permitting in designated redevelopment areas.

Quality of Place, Tourism, and the Arts

Business location decisions are influenced by a community's quality of place, as well as by the recreational, shopping, and entertainment opportunities afforded its residents. The County shall continue to support activities that encourage the continued advancement of placemaking in various nodes throughout the county. Retail, food & beverage, and entertainment development – particularly in mixed use environments - will contribute to the advancement of the County's overall quality of life.

Charles County has opportunities to further develop its tourism attractions. This ranges from waterfront recreational areas along its extensive shoreline to promotion and enhancement of existing historic sites. Tourism activity has the potential to increase employment in the hotel/motel, restaurant, and other service industries and is a proven job generator.

In 2015 the County, with the assistance of the Maryland Stadium Authority, commissioned a market and economic feasibility study for the proposed multi-purpose civic center component of the new "Phase One" transit oriented development plan for downtown Waldorf with the goals of benefitting area residents and drawing out-of-town visitors. In addition, the new civic center would enhance existing investments and catalyze new investments by attracting a critical mass of new event activity to the area.

The arts have risen to prominence as an important quality of life issue affecting growth and economic development in Charles County. Successful competitiveness for economic growth requires the ability to attract well-educated, talented, innovative, and creative people. Attracting such people requires an environment rich in educational, cultural, and recreational opportunities.

Telecommunications and Broadband

According to a recent 2014 study, Charles County has significantly higher median download speeds for Small Businesses than Washington MSA, Maryland and the United States. The availability, quality, and competitiveness of broadband service have become and will continue to be a key issue for Charles County's attraction of new investment and commercial growth. Various economic analyses have demonstrated a positive correlation between broadband and economic growth, and its importance in the site selection process will not diminish. Utility service has always been among the most heavily scrutinized factors in the site selection process. Locations are routinely eliminated due to issues pertaining to inadequate, or lack of, electric, gas, water, wastewater, or telecommunications infrastructure. Advances in technology have elevated the importance of the internet in economic development and site selection criteria.

Businesses want to operate and expand where there is broadband service. It improves the manner in which the County's target industries i.e. health services, retail, R&D, federal contractors etc. deliver services in the 21st century. Moreover, it has become an essential to

running a business, growing the commercial tax base and attracting new capital investment to the County.

A company is likely to require a direct fiber connection and redundancy. As with electric service, the reliability of the service is heavily scrutinized to ensure the operation will not be placed offline (especially for information-intensive projects like data centers) or that the risk of being offline is minimal. The competitiveness of the service is also important. Locations with numerous providers have an advantage because competitiveness will drive up speeds and drive down cost. (See Appendix “F” for technical data on Telecommunications and Broadband Services in Charles County).

Charles County Economic Development Department

In 2005 the Charles County Economic Development Commission (EDC) became a department of County Government and was named the Economic Development Department (EDD). The EDD was subsequently abolished in 2010; however an interim office was re-created in 2011. It became an official Department of the Charles County Government, once again funded and staffed, effective July 2012. It is charged with both implementing Commissioner developed goals and objectives as well as developing strategic and tactical approaches that the County should take in conducting economic development.

The 5-Year Strategic Plan includes an in-depth analysis of the county’s competitive position relative to business attraction, retention, and expansion in the Washington, D.C. region. The plan provides a roadmap that details the product improvement, marketing, and organizational changes the County must make to ensure that Charles County strengthens its competitive position and is able to attract and retain the types of businesses that will create jobs and opportunities for its population.

POLICIES

The specific recommended actions contained in the 5-Year Strategic fall under three overarching polices:

- 7.1 *Enhance the Product*: Further develop assets and initiatives in key areas that support the area’s desire to attract and grow more high-quality economic activities and to support the current and future residents of Charles County.
- 7.2 *Execute Effectively*: Build a focused economic development service delivery mechanism for existing and potential businesses in the County and collaborate with other municipal economic development entities to work more seamlessly and present a unified brand to external clients.
- 7.3 *Tell the Story*: Share Charles County’s business opportunity story with targeted internal and external audiences.

The plan also includes a Target Business Sector Analysis that identifies four (4) target business sectors for the County that will diversify Charles County’s economic base, as well as build on current areas of strengths. These targets are “best fits” for the County based on the current economic and business climate conditions and are recommended given its attributes and assets. The four target business sectors are:

1. Federal contracting & high-value professional/business services;
2. Health services;
3. Entrepreneurial & retail development; and,
4. R&D, engineering & computing.

An area's economic competitiveness depends on several factors. On a macro level it includes not only the regulatory environment and infrastructure an area provides but also its talent base, available sites, and economic development service delivery. A favorable tax environment and the willingness to offer creative and unique incentive packages are important, as are low operating costs and reliable, affordable sites. Similarly, companies look for areas that offer relevant and scalable skilled labor along with low labor costs as much as they look for quality sites that are flexible and allow for future expansion with minimal development time. Finally, the ability of an area to provide economic development services—for example, clear, succinct, and focused marketing messages; organized and coordinated outreach; and high levels of client service—sets leading areas apart.

In order to succeed in an extremely competitive environment, Charles County must build a business climate with the attributes that companies seek when making investment decisions on where they should locate, grow, or expand. Unnecessary barriers to economic development must be removed and the overall business climate improved to make way for companies looking to invest in the County. The following actions are recommended to support and augment the County's ability to attract high-quality jobs and talent:

ACTIONS

1. Develop sustainable funding sources to improve the County's economic development infrastructure and identify catalytic programs to use the monies effectively;
2. Ensure that the locations and zoning of commercial and industrial land continue to support business growth and attraction;
3. Maintain flexibility in land use and location decision-making to accommodate any significant economic development opportunity that may arise;
4. Utilize an array of incentives, as appropriate, to attract targeted industries and maintain competitiveness throughout the region;
5. Prepare the workforce for jobs of the future by providing educational opportunities targeted to improved occupational preparation;
6. Continue to foster a positive working relationship between the County and the Navy in order to capitalize on the role of the naval facilities as a major employer, and as a source of new commercial technology and local spending;
7. Protect the interests of the Naval Support Facility-Indian Head Division, including the Center for Energetics and other tenant commands on the Naval Support Facility-Indian Head, and promote on and off base expansion and the related public and private development;

8. Support continued operations and expansion of Maryland Airport through the enhancements of its assets and marketability. Continue to evaluate the competitive posture of the County's regulatory environment and recommend, as needed, efficiencies and changes in the permitting and development processes. Adopt zoning changes to facilitate development of complementary commercial and employment uses on lands in the vicinity of the airport.

98. Ensure the County remains positioned to accommodate desired economic growth by monitoring market conditions and industry trends;

109. Support the extension of a high capacity transit service to connect to the regional metro system; and,

110. Continue to participate in broadened regional economic planning efforts, such as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Board of Directors and various committees and studies, as well as the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland's programs.

Chapter 12 Implementation Schedule

The following table is established to provide a framework for implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. The plan contains projections to the year 2040, but is a ten year plan for implementation purposes. The implementation schedule is broken into short range 1-3 years, mid-range 4-6 years and long range 7-10 years and ongoing activities. It utilizes the policies from the various chapters as well as the specific action items in this format for implementation. The time frames are estimated and full implementation may be contingent upon other external factors such as available funding, staffing and changing priorities of the administration. However, it provides a good framework to work towards implementation of this plan and to track progress over time.

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
	Land Use Policies				
3.1	Coordinate the use of the Land Use Plan Map, the zoning map, the subdivision regulations, the capital improvements plan, and the Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan with one another in terms of districts, locations, planned expansions and coordination with the Public School System Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to assure growth management efforts are consistent. Under state law, zoning and development policies and actions must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan (Land Use Article (effective October 1, 2012, Section 1–303).				X
3.2	Maintain the designation of the Development District as a receiving area for development rights that may be purchased and transferred from sending areas in rural areas of the County.				X
3.3	In order to improve the market for the Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs), and to conserve natural resources in the countryside of the county, examine the base densities for residential development in all zoning or development districts or docket, and consider changing and lowering base densities but allowing for established development density thresholds with the purchase of development rights (TDRs).	X			
3.4	Revise the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) regulations to: a) Eliminate the buyback provisions currently in place in order to ensure resource lands remain protected once they are restricted through the TDR process. b) Consider requiring commercial TDRs.	X			
3.5	Use the adequate public facilities ordinance to manage the location and timing of new development and its effects on schools, roads, and other public facilities.				X
3.6	Consider amendments to the Land Use Plan Map and zoning maps to accommodate the expansion of incorporated towns provided:				X
	· Such amendments are based on the incorporated town's Comprehensive Plan;				X
	· Incorporated towns agree to enter into intergovernmental agreements to ensure the provision of adequate public utilities to these areas; and,				X

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
	· The proposed development is consistent with the goals of this Comprehensive Plan.				X
3.7	Coordinate on regional issues by nurturing good, working relationships with the State, with neighboring jurisdictions especially Calvert, Prince George's, and St. Mary's Counties, and with the Towns of Indian Head and La Plata through planning agreements, plan referrals, information sharing, and consultations.				X
3.8	Use land use controls, including but not limited to architectural and site design guidelines, to establish standards for development which improves its quality.				X
3.9	Protect residential areas from incompatible activities and land uses in order to ensure comfortable and safe living environments.				X
3.10	Protect commercial, business and employment areas from incompatible activities and land uses in order to ensure their continued viability and growth.				X
3.11	Guide development away from areas vulnerable to natural hazards.				X
3.12	Protect military installations from incompatible land uses and consider implementation of recommendations contained in approved Joint Land Use Studies.	X			
3.13	Ensure that zoning is consistent with the land use districts as designated on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.	X			
3.14	Establish a Priority Preservation Area (PPA) in the Agricultural Conservation Land Use District.	X			
	<i>Land Use Action Items</i>				
1.	Update the County's land development regulations (zoning, subdivision codes and related ordinances) to implement the Comprehensive Plan's land use chapter and ensure the regulations are consistent with this plan's objectives, policies and direction. In conjunction with this, process a Comprehensive Rezoning of the County's Zoning maps to also be consistent with the objectives, policies and direction of this Comprehensive Plan.	X			
2.	Examine mechanisms, strategies and actions to manage growth and develop a growth rate management model based on best management practices, and present various options to the Planning Commission for review and consideration.		X		

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
3.	Conduct a detailed study of the employment and commercial undeveloped land supply (including location and development potential) to determine whether additional land should be recommended for designation as employment or commercial land.		X		
4.	Develop a small area plan for the Potomac River Crossing/Aqualand/Newburg area. (see also discussion in Chapter 10).	X			
5.	Consider revisions to Transferable Development Rights and potential new receiving areas such as Newburg, Bel Alton and other village locations.		X		
6.	Study and recommend potential changes to the provisions for adequate public facilities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of such systems	X			
7.	Implement the recommendations of the various Joint Land Use Studies. Develop specific measures, ordinances or other actions to ensure compatibility between land uses in Charles County and the associated military installations.				X
8.	Examine opportunities to transfer the Priority Funding Area (PFA) designations for the small sites located within the Cobb Neck Area and transfer those designations to the larger Newburg-Cliffton-Aqualand Sub-Area Plan as needed once the plan has been adopted.		X		
9.	Rezone vacant residential properties that were removed from the Development District in this plan to a lower density in order to limit sprawl development and protect water resources.	X			
10.	Coordinate with the State of Maryland to establish a new Nanjemoy-Mattawoman Rural Legacy Area.	X			
11.	Rezone major stream valleys to one unit per ten acres (1:10).	X			
12.	Rezone the Watershed Conservation District lands to one unit per twenty acres (1:20).	X			
	<i>Water Resources Policies</i>				
	Water:				
4.1	Work with MDE, WSSC, and other agencies, as necessary, to identify, access, and sustainably utilize groundwater resources.	X			

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
4.2	Continue to investigate options for expanded purchases of water from WSSC, coordinating with Prince George's County as necessary.	X			
4.3	Evaluate the feasibility of establishing a new surface water source (likely incorporating desalinization). Specific considerations include the location, engineering requirements, and funding of such a facility.			X	
4.4	Consider interconnection between the County-operated Waldorf water system and the Town of La Plata's water system. Several concerns should be evaluated including impacts on the aquifers and groundwater appropriation amounts, engineering challenges, fair distribution of system costs.		X		
4.5	Work with MDE and developers to investigate the feasibility of wastewater reuse options.				X
4.6	Continue to promote water conservation through media and educational seminars and publications, staff guidance to homeowners, and coordination with home builders to advocate water-conserving designs				X
	Sewer:				
4.7	Consider extending public sewer service to existing communities identified as failing septic areas in the County's Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan, to septic systems in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area, and to septic systems identified by Charles County Watershed Implementation Plan(s).				X
4.8	Ensure that point source pollution discharges stay within safe levels through strict enforcement of state water quality standards for sewage effluent.				X
4.9	Ensure that the County receives nutrient credits for any connection of septic systems to public sewer systems, as well as other actions enumerated in Maryland's Policy for Nutrient Cap Management and Trading.	X			
	Stormwater and Non-Point Source Pollution:				
4.10	Adhere to the Charles County Watershed Implementation Plan(s) to achieve stormwater waste load allocations from Total Maximum Daily Loads for the County's watersheds, as established by MDE and approved by US EPA.				X
4.11	Continue to encourage the installation of septic denitrification systems when retrofitting existing septic systems throughout the County.				X

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
4.12	Continue to use small scale biological treatment facilities (such as the planned Benedict and Hughesville WWTPs) to serve rural villages and clusters of existing septic systems throughout the County as identified in the County's WIP(s).			X	
4.13	Work with MDE, DNR, and the Maryland Department of Agriculture (MDA) to assist farmers in adopting best management practices to reduce nonpoint source loads of nutrients and other pollutants. As part of this effort, develop an educational program and assistance for farmers to improve or limit their runoff.				X
4.14	Encourage the establishment of Soil Conservation and Water Quality Plans on all farms in Charles County to reduce sediment and nutrient export from agricultural activities.				X
4.15	Continue and improve programs, policies, and education and outreach to assure the functional maintenance of stormwater management systems.	X			
4.16	Continue public education and outreach efforts to reduce stormwater pollutants.	X			
4.17	Continue to explore and implement new techniques and technologies to reduce the impacts to streams during mass grading for development, and discourage mass grading for development.	X			
4.18	Encourage the use of open section roads and green streets for stormwater management on new and existing roads.				X
4.19	Plan capital improvements consistent with growth in areas where development is encouraged to locate, especially in the Mattawoman Sewer Service Area.				X
4.20	Place special emphasis on management of the Mattawoman Creek and Port Tobacco River watersheds (the location of most existing and planned development in the County) to balance the protection of natural resources and water quality with development plans and Smart Growth strategies.	X			
4.21	Ensure that stormwater discharges from industrial facilities are appropriately permitted under the NPDES industrial discharge program and that the necessary Pollution Prevention Plans are in place and implemented in accordance with the County's NPDES municipal stormwater permit.				X

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
4.22	Charles County prohibits the use of “fracking” drilling technology at this time until such time further evidence is provided to demonstrate it is safe and environmentally sound practice.	X			
<i>Water Resources Action Items</i>					
1.	Pursue an additional waterline connection and appropriation through WSSC to provide additional support to the Waldorf and Bryans Road Water Systems.		X		
2.	Complete the planned interconnection of the Bryans Road and Waldorf public water systems.			X	
3.	Implement a well field management strategy, as recommended by the 2006 WRAC Report to the County Commissioners.	X			
4.	Complete an Alternative Water Source Study to determine the feasibility of various future water supplies.	X			
5.	Correct sanitary sewage problems in existing problem areas to provide a safe environment for all of the County's residents.				X
6.	Implement a Green Streets policy directive in accordance with the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) Resolution 10-2014 for all County financed transportation facilities to enhance stormwater management within the right of way.	X			
7.	Continue to implement the Mattawoman Creek Watershed Management Plan.				X
8.	Continue to implement the Port Tobacco River WRAS per County Commissioners Resolution 07-57.				X
9.	Continue to identify and map areas of failing septic systems, and reduce nonpoint source nutrient loads from such septic systems through retrofits for denitrification, replacement, pump-outs, or where appropriate, connection to public sewer systems (focusing on the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area as a first priority).				X
10.	Continue to identify locations in need of stormwater restoration, and restore those areas with runoff reduction techniques, structural stormwater treatment, and alternative urban best management practices to comply with the County’s NPDES MS4 permit.				X
11.	Implement a tracking system to ensure the County receives nutrient and sediment credit for all new actions and maintenance activities supportive of the Bay WIP.	X			

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
12.	Develop an urban canopy program to evaluate and maintain the water quality benefits provided by healthy trees in the Priority Funding Areas.		X		
13.	Study Land Uses adjacent to high quality (Tier II) streams in the County and propose mechanisms such as best management practices or other regulatory means for protecting these sensitive waters.	X			
14.	Change the zoning code to prohibit “fracking” drilling technology until such time the environmental impacts can be determined safe for drinking water.	X			
<i>Natural Resources Policies</i>					
5.1	Place special emphasis on watershed management to balance the protection of the Mattawoman Creek’s natural resources and water quality with the County’s development plans. In addition to the Priority Preservation Area (PPA), the Mattawoman Creek watershed should be targeted for acquisition for conservation purposes.				X
5.2	Implement and enhance the County's environmental preservation and conservation objectives through administrative mechanisms including subdivision regulations, sediment and erosion control, environmental review processes, development regulations, and zoning.				X
5.3	Continue to coordinate and implement the goals and objectives of adopted policy plans including the Patuxent River Policy Plan, the Wicomico Scenic River Study and Management Plan, the Zekiah Swamp Rural Legacy Area Plan, the Port Tobacco River Watershed Restoration Action Strategy, Lower Potomac River Coordinated Management Plan (Nanjemoy Peninsula), and other watershed restoration and management plans including watershed implementation plans (see Chapter 4).				X
5.4	Guide development away from areas vulnerable to natural hazards especially areas subject to flooding, storm surge, and shore erosion.	X			
5.5	Require best management practices including low-impact development techniques to minimize the impacts of development on the natural environment.	X			

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
5.6	Through public and private resources, purchase or otherwise acquire conservation easements to preserve environmentally sensitive resources. Develop parks, recreation and open space plans in conjunction with stream valley protection objectives.				X
5.7	Work cooperatively with the Metropolitan Washington Area Air Quality Committee to ensure the area complies with the requirements of the 1992 Clean Air Act.				X
5.8	Utilize the State of Maryland's GreenPrint maps for Targeted Ecological Areas as a guide to focus conservation efforts in Charles County.				X
	Land resources - including floodplains, steep slopes, and forest lands:				
5.9	Restrict development within 100-year floodplains.				X
5.10	Conserve remaining wooded areas in the County. Pursue grant opportunities or other programs to increase, enhance and protect forests, and require new native plantings to support other natural resource objectives including enhancing riparian buffers, reducing erosion and sedimentation, improving air quality, and mitigating the effects of stormwater runoff.				X
5.11	Retain as much of the forest and tree cover as practical within urban areas.	X			
5.12	Require special engineering and construction standards when development occurs on erodible soils, steep slopes, or areas requiring special geotechnical consideration.	X			
5.13	Promote wildlife education through the development of nature centers and park visitor centers to explain the importance of preserving natural habitat areas.				X
5.14	In order to implement the USACOE stream valley protection measures, amend the zoning code to better protect the Resource Protection Zone in stream valley areas to the top of slope.	X			
	Shorelines:				
5.15	Place a high degree of restriction on the use of waterfront land in the form of low residential densities, and high levels of protection for forest land and agricultural land regulated under the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program.				X

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
5.16	Protect in stream and stream bank habitats of anadromous fish spawning waters. Promote land use policies in the watersheds of spawning streams that minimize adverse impacts to aquatic resources.	X			
5.17	Protect shoreline habitats such as tidal wetlands, shellfish harvesting areas, colonial water bird nesting sites, and waterfowl staging and concentration areas through the habitat protection policies established in the County's Critical Area Program.	X			
5.18	Manage development in shoreline areas to minimize problems of shoreline erosion.	X			
<i>Natural Resources Action Items</i>					
1.	Mattawoman Stream Valley. Change the Zoning and development regulations regarding standards to increase protection of the Mattawoman Stream Valley.	X			
2.	Stream Valley Protection. Use State grant funds and County funds as available to target stream valley protection through land acquisition or conservation easements.				X
3.	In order to further protect stream valley areas in the County, review and revise as needed:				
	a) Low impact design standards in the Stormwater Management Ordinance;	X			
	b) Impervious coverage standards in the Zoning Ordinance;	X			
	c) Regulations to ensure protection of Tier II streams and other designated sensitive natural resource areas, including expanding riparian buffer requirements;	X			
4.	Urban forests. Evaluate the existing urban forest and consider adopting an urban forest canopy coverage goal.	X			
5.	Limit forest fragmentation. Adopt regulations that protect forest hubs (greater than 100 acres) and forest corridors for the survival of the remaining biodiversity and Forest Interior Dwelling Species (FIDS) of Charles County. Under the Forest Conservation Ordinance, add a requirement that priority forests be maintained on development sites, unless a variance is granted by the Board of Appeals.	X			

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
6.	Shoreline. Adopt buffers and development setbacks from areas vulnerable to over 3 feet of sea level rise in the next 100 years to protect private and public investments, and accommodate inland wetland migration.	X			
7.	Transfer of Development Rights. Enhance the effectiveness of the Transfer of Development Rights program per recommendations of the LPPRP.	X			
8.	Habitat Protection. Adopt Biodiversity Conservation Network Tier I and II categories as habitat protection areas, and increasing protection for these areas.	X			
9.	Conduct a comprehensive review of the Resource Protection Zone (RPZ) regulations to enhance protections of stream valleys, especially those with assigned Total Maximum Daily Loads.	X			
10.	Apply to the State of Maryland to establish a new Nanjemoy-Mattawoman Rural Legacy Area designation.	X			
<i>Energy Conservation Policies</i>					
6.1	Continue to follow the Energy Conservation Policy for Charles County facilities. Use energy cost savings attributed to the Policy's conservation measures to promote and improve energy reduction within County facilities.		X		
6.2	Develop a sense of ownership for the ways energy is consumed by integrating energy education and including County staff and other facility occupants in energy decisions that affect how individual sites operate.		X		
6.3	Lead the entire Charles County community by exhibiting best practices of energy conservation within County Government.	X			
6.4	Continue to examine energy data to identify new use and efficiency trends and opportunities within both the public and private sectors.			X	
<i>Energy Conservation Action Items</i>					
1.	Continue to implement the recommendations in the Green Codes and Standards Study.	X			
2.	Expand upon the 2012 Energy Baseline Study to include the following:				
	a. Transportation sources and quantify transportation fuel consumption and related transportation system design metrics;			X	

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
	b. A breakdown of the commercial sector into sub-categories that separates industrial users, such as warehouses and factories, from less energy intensive commercial users, such as retail and office buildings; and			X	
	c. Include more details on upstream energy processes, such as energy sources, conversion processes, and transportation.			X	
3.	Continue to monitor energy usage intensities and trends and expand monitoring to all sectors, including transportation.			X	
4.	Investigate local, sustainable energy technologies, including solar and geothermal, for use in new construction and major renovations.		X		
5.	Continue to evaluate the feasibility of implementing renewable energy upgrades, such as solar water heaters and rooftop solar, at existing County facilities.	X			
6.	Implement the recommendations of the 2012 Energy Baseline Study, which include:				
	a. Consider applying the energy management program implemented by the Charles County Public School System to other government sectors and institutions.			X	
	b. Establish an Energy Conservation and Sustainability Working Group of energy suppliers, consumers, developers, and others to share information on a regular basis, update and help disseminate County energy data, establish and monitor benchmarks, and recommend changes to local policies and incentives.			X	
	c. Because of the Mattawoman WWTP's large energy consumption, conduct a follow-up study to determine the impact of nutrient reduction or other upgrades on energy use and identify operational adjustments that may result in future energy reductions.			X	
7.	Implement the conservation measures identified in the County's Energy Conservation Plan. The following are examples (see the Conservation Plan for complete list). Immediate and short-term implementation:				
	a. Turning off lights in offices and common areas when not in use;	X			
	b. Delamping (removing one or more lamps from multi-lamp fixtures or unneeded fixtures);	X			

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
	c. Unplug electrical convenience items, such as cell phone chargers, radios, and coffee pots, to eliminate “vampire or phantom loads”;	X			
	d. Turn off monitors and completely shut down computers when not in use, especially during evening hours and over the weekends and holidays;	X			
	e. Implement standard seasonal thermostat temperature settings;	X			
	f. Implement energy saving methods for County vending machines;	X			
	g. Develop comprehensive procedures for procuring and installing energy efficient (ENERGY STAR-rated) electrical products; and	X			
	h. Provide energy conservation stewardship through the actions of the Energy Conservation Committee, including educating all County staff on the importance of the energy conservation program.	X			
	Long-term implementation:				
	a. Conduct an energy audit for all County buildings;		X		
	b. Incorporate energy efficiency guidelines for all new and existing buildings;				
	c. Purchase only ENERGY STAR equipment;	X			
	d. Evaluate the replacement of lighting fixtures, windows, and heating and cooling systems with more energy efficient equipment; and		X		
	e. Evaluate water conservation measures, such as low-flow toilets and faucets.		X		
8.	Evaluate the adoption of environmentally preferable purchasing policies for products and services.		X		
	<i>Economic Development Policies</i>				
7.1	<i>Enhance the Product:</i> Further develop assets and initiatives in key areas that support the area's desire to attract and grow more high-quality economic activities and the support the current and future residents of Charles County.				X
7.2	<i>Execute Effectively:</i> Build a focused economic development service delivery mechanism for existing and potential businesses in the County and collaborate with other municipal economic development entities to work more seamlessly and present a unified brand to external clients.	X			
7.3	<i>Tell the Story:</i> Share Charles County's business opportunity story with targeted internal and external audiences.				X

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
	<i>Economic Development Action Items</i>				
1	Develop sustainable funding sources to improve the County's economic development infrastructure and identify catalytic programs to use the monies effectively;	X			
2	Ensure that the locations and zoning of commercial and industrial land continue to support business growth and attraction;		X		
3	Maintain flexibility in land use and location decision-making to accommodate any significant economic development opportunity that may arise;				X
4	Utilize an array of incentives, as appropriate, to attract targeted industries and maintain competitiveness throughout the region;				X
5	Prepare the workforce for jobs of the future by providing educational opportunities targeted to improved occupational preparation;				X
6	Continue to foster a positive working relationship between the County and the Navy in order to capitalize on the role of the naval facilities as a major employer, and as a source of new commercial technology and local spending;				X
7	Protect the interests of the Naval Support Facility-Indian Head Division, including the Center for Energetics and other tenant commands on the Naval Support Facility-Indian Head, and promote on and off base expansion and the related public and private development;				X
8	Ensure the County remains positioned to accommodate desired economic growth by monitoring market conditions and industry trends;				X
9	Support the extension of a high capacity transit service to connect to the regional metro system; and,	X			
10	Continue to participate in broadened regional economic planning efforts, such as the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Board of Directors and various committees and studies, as well as the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland's programs.				X
	Transportation Policies				
	Roadway/Network Capacity				

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
8.1	Direct the highway program toward the preservation of peak period capacities at acceptable levels along arterials such as US 301, MD 210, MD 228, and MD 5 through the careful application of access management and the development of a supporting network to separate local traffic.				X
8.2	Require land developers to pay for any alterations, improvements, or additions to public roads and other facilities that will be needed to support the proposed development and will not be provided by normal County programming, including, but not limited to roads, entrances, deceleration and turning lanes, inter-parcel connections for subdivisions, signals, and park-and-ride lots.				X
8.3	Continue to pursue inter-jurisdictional efforts to address transportation issues in key corridors especially US 301.				X
	Land Use				
8.4	Plan improvements to the overall County transportation network to correspond to and support the overall land use plan.	X			
8.5	Concentrate transportation improvements in the form of new roads and transit systems which support new development in the County's Development Districts.	X			
8.6	Limit transportation improvements in Rural Conservation and Agricultural Preservation Districts to essential capacity improvements as well as maintenance and upgrading of non-standard roads and under-capacity bridges. This objective will provide for a safe and functional road system while limiting development in these rural areas.	X			
	Multi-Modal Transportation				
8.7	Reduce the number of trips by single occupancy vehicles through Transportation Demand Management programs, expanded commuter bus systems, ride-share programs, carpool and vanpool programs, and additional park-and-ride lots.				X
8.8	Promote and expand existing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs including telecommuting and teleservices which directly reduce commuter trips. Examples of TDM programs include employee vanpool programs, home-based ridesharing programs, local area paratransit program, new and improved park and ride lots, flexible work hours, transit-oriented developments, bicycle /pedestrian facilities, and telework centers.				X

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
8.9	The County supports the continued operation and expansion of Maryland Airport, and land use and zoning changes to lands surrounding the Airport to facilitate commercial and economic development for the Airport and surrounding area.				X

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
	Capital Programming, Coordination				
8.10	Structure the financial policy for the transportation system to achieve the overall goals of the County. In addition to federal and state funding sources, innovative mechanisms, including private cooperation and financial support by developers should be incorporated into financial policies.	X			
8.11	Foster close coordination between the County, Maryland Department of Transportation, and the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland on matters related to planning and programming improvements transportation systems management, and whenever necessary, pursue legislative incentives on a coordinated basis.				X
	Transportation Action Items				
1.	Develop a standalone Countywide Transportation Master Plan for Charles County.		X		
2.	Develop a transportation model to help identify the functional classification of roads, identify problem links in the road network, and assist in preparing advanced planning studies thereby supplementing the Comprehensive Plan and the ongoing work of the Planning Commission.		X		
3.	Continue to develop access management plans for County roads and incorporate these plans into the County road ordinance.				X
4.	Continue to coordinate with the State Highway Administration on access management programs along US 301, MD 228, MD 5, and MD 210, and on a case-by-case basis when new development and redevelopment plans are proposed. Review access control policy along US 301 with SHA in light of this 2012 Comprehensive Plan not including a western US 301 bypass.				X
5.	Preserve right-of-way and require road improvements consistent with the Road Improvements Map, Functional Classification Map, and the concept circulation plans to be developed for specific areas. Sections 75, 76, and 83 of the Subdivision Regulations provide for reservation and dedication of right-of-way and roadway upgrades and Section 38 of the Zoning Ordinance limits construction of buildings in planned acquisition limits.			X	

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
6.	Continue to develop advanced planning studies in priority areas to prepare conceptual plans, identify future roadway corridors, existing roadways to be improved, and other measures such as access management, or transit improvements. This will allow the County to use the Adequate Public Facilities requirements, subdivision regulations, and zoning ordinance requirements to preserve right-of-way and implement improvements in an orderly manner over time.			X	
7.	Implement the recommendations of the 2012 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Implement needed pedestrian/bicycle improvements in existing communities and incorporate pedestrian-bicycle facilities into future road projects using Figure 8-5 as a guide for location.				X
8.	Include a new hiker-biker trail to replace phases V, VI and VII of the Cross County Connector road project in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and for future Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding.		X		
9.	Preserve right-of-way for future transit ways and acquire parking lots/park and ride sites at future rail stations. Locations are shown in the Waldorf Urban Design Study.			X	
10.	Incorporate VanGO into reviews for new residential and commercial development along existing and future transit routes. The role would include:	X			
	· Ensuring that new development is designed to accommodate transit services.				
	· Identifying new transit trip generators.				
	· Planning for pedestrian and bicycle access around bus stops.				
11.	Participate in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' Transportation Planning Board to coordinate local policies and improvements with regional transportation plans and programs.				X

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
	Community Facilities and Services				
	General:				
9.1	Require developers to fully pay for or provide the added public facilities necessary to support their developments when planned County facilities programming will not result in the timely provision of the services that would support the proposed development. These include but are not limited to, schools, parks, roads, and sewer/water facilities.				X
9.2	Plan community facilities with the capability of adaptive use and reuse. Examples include converting school buildings to accommodate before and after-hours uses such as child care and recreational activities, multi-use public auditoriums, and health clinics.			X	
	Education:				
9.3	Continue to implement the annual Educational Facilities Master Plan.	X			
9.4	Continue to pursue a variety of strategies to avoid overcrowding and ensure provision of school facilities when needed including forward funding facilities, developer agreements, Adequate Public Facilities requirements, and other non-traditional types of construction funding.		X		
9.5	Continue to coordinate the school construction program closely with available school capacities in the County's housing unit allocation system analyses.				X
9.6	Continue to work with the Town of La Plata to ensure that growth in the town works in tandem with area wide school capacity and enrollment, and housing unit allocation considerations.				X
	Parks and Recreation				
9.7	Develop a high-quality public parks and recreation system with adequate space and facilities, providing an appropriate mix of recreation activities for County residents.		X		
9.8	Seek to provide 30 acres of parks, recreation and open space land per 1,000 population, consistent with State goals.		X		
9.9	Implement the recommendations of the adopted Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan.		X		

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
	Fire, Rescue and Medical Services				
9.10	Support the Charles County Volunteer Firemen's Association and volunteer fire departments to implement improvements that would reduce public protection class.				X
9.11	Install dry hydrants at reliable water supplies in rural areas.	X			
9.12	Implement the recommendations of the adopted five-year Hazard Mitigation Plan.	X			
	Public Safety				
9.13	Continue programs such as "COP" (Community Oriented Policing), neighborhood watch, and other programs which seek to reach out directly to citizens and communities.				X
9.14	Incorporate design for community safety into land use decision-making. Design considerations may include lighting and open space, vehicle and pedestrian access, visibility, and location of entrances and exits.		X		
	Public Libraries				
9.15	Continue to maintain information sharing and coordination through the Southern Maryland Regional Library Association, the Maryland Library Association, and the Division of Library Development and Services of the Maryland State Department of Education.				X
9.16	Include Charles County's local educational institutions, the Charles County Board of Education and the College of Southern Maryland in cost sharing efforts.				X
	Solid Waste				
9.17	Explore the feasibility of municipal solid waste collection in the development district.			X	
9.18	Expand the County's recycling program. Expansion will be needed to continue to meet the County's recycling goals. Special emphasis needs to be on residential, commercial/industrial, and institutional recycling and yard waste composting.		X		
9.19	Explore the feasibility of alternate waste disposal technologies in a public/private partnerships including transfer facilities. Zoning regulations may need to be adjusted to allow certain types of facilities that are currently not permitted.			X	

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
9.20	Study potential ways to expand the life of the county's landfill through integrated waste management practices including solid waste composting, waste densification, and alternative disposal sites such as rubble fills and/or recycling facilities.		X		
	Community Facilities and Services Action Items				
1.	Continue to work with the College of Southern Maryland on its new campus in Hughesville.	X			
2.	Work with multiple agencies and the Town of La Plata on the LPPRP's recommendation for a program of multi-service centers/community centers.				X
3.	Continue to review the need for new fire/EMS stations every five years. Sites recommended in the 1995 Fire, Rescue and EMS Comprehensive Plan with implementation not started are in Beantown, and Bryantown.				X
4.	Review the Sheriff's department space needs on an ongoing basis. As the county grows additional staff and space needs are likely, particularly in the Waldorf area.				X
5.	Work with the Sheriff's Office to locate a facility for police vehicle operations qualification.		X		
6.	Work with the Charles County Public Library to identify a suitable replacement site for the La Plata branch library and expansion plans.	X			
7.	New County landfill. The existing landfill is expected to have capacity through at least 2030. The next Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan will be prepared during the life of this Comprehensive Plan and should evaluate the need to begin planning for a replacement			X	
8.	Explore the feasibility of developing a landfill gas-to-energy project for the county landfill.			X	
9.	Study the potential of impact fees as an equitable way to pay for infrastructure needs.	X			
10.	Study and recommend potential changes to the provisions for adequate public facilities and other tools for providing community facilities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of such systems (see Section 9.8).	X			

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
	Community Development Policies				
	Enhancing Community Character				
10.1	Continue to seek improvement in the design quality of development in the county.				X
	Villages				
10.2	Continue planning, revitalization and enhancement efforts in targeted villages.	X			
	Housing				
10.3	Provide a mix of various housing types within the development district to accommodate a wide range of housing options and income levels. This will be reviewed in the Planning Commission's Annual Report.		X		
10.4	Serve the homeless, with special attention on service-supported transitional housing and permanent housing for family households.		X		
10.5	Develop a variety of elderly care facilities such as, but not limited to, independent living facilities, assisted living accommodations, and retirement communities.		X		
10.6	Create an effective Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program.	X			
10.7	Seek greater housing diversity in the development district and villages.	X			
	Waterfront Development				
10.8	Seek opportunities to increase public access to Charles County shoreline while recognizing Benedict, Port Tobacco and Aqualand as key priorities.	X			
	Historic Preservation				
10.9	Make use of a broad range of preservation tools and strategies to permanently protect the County's most significant historic assets. Develop programs and strategies to educate the public about heritage resources and their preservation.				X
10.11	Continue efforts to document and permanently protect historic structures and archaeological resources, including updating the 2004 Historic Preservation Plan as needed.				X
	Scenic and Historic Roads and Landscapes				
10.12	Preserve targeted scenic and historic roads, byways and landscapes as a key feature of rural and local character.				X

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
	Heritage Tourism, Planning and Development				
10.13	Seek to preserve and enhance key heritage tourism sites as an economic development asset and as an amenity for its citizens.				X
	Community Development Action Items				
	Enhancing Community Character				
1.	Implement the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC) recommendations.				X
2.	Develop a Sub-Area Plan for the Newburg-Cliffton-Aqualand area, including the Potomac River Crossing.	X			
	Villages				
3.	Work with the communities of Bel Alton, Newburg/Cliffton/Aqualand area, and Nanjemoy to develop area plans for those villages, using this chapter as a basis of further discussion.		X		
4.	Implement the Hughesville Village Revitalization Plan, the Benedict Waterfront Village Revitalization Plan and the Port Tobacco Village Plan.				X
	Waterfront Development				
5.	Implement the waterfront access recommendations in the Charles County Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan.				X
6.	Continue to seek waterfront access opportunities in Port Tobacco, Aqualand, and Benedict.				X
	Housing				
7.	Periodically revisit and update the Housing Supply, Demand and Zoning Options Analysis and respond accordingly based on the findings at that time.		X		
8.	Update the County's 2005 Community Development Housing Plan.			X	
9.	Continue programs and policies to upgrade existing substandard housing, both rental and owner-occupied, through private and public actions.				X
10.	Examine options for increasing housing diversity within the development district and villages to include accessory apartments and live-work units.	X			

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
11.	Conduct an Affordable Housing Technical Assistance Program report working with community and county leaders, developers and stakeholders such as the Housing Association of Non Profit Developers, and the Southern Maryland Association of Realtors and a team of professionals from an organization such as the Urban Land Institute, or the American Planning Association in order to develop specific action items that result in a greater supply of low to moderate income housing for the residents of Charles County.	X			
12.	Continue County settlement expense financial assistance loan programs and policies to assist existing Charles County income eligible residents as first time home buyers and to consider home ownership in existing residential communities, and future mixed use communities in Charles				X
Historic Preservation					
13.	Actively seek local landmark designations to protect significant historic resources through outreach, marketing, and the development review process.				X
14.	Incorporate the review for impacts to significant archaeological resources during the development process.				X
Scenic and Historic Roads and Landscapes					
15.	Develop conservation priority mapping for key historic sites and scenic/historic views and vistas.			X	
16.	Explore the most appropriate means to prevent adverse impacts on the Mount Vernon viewshed. These means could include an overlay zoning district covering the viewshed within which development would be subject to special reviews and regulations such as height limits, tree planting, and building siting.	X			
17.	Develop design guidelines or other such means of protection for key historic corridors and districts.	X			
18.	Update the Highway Corridor (HC) Zoning Regulations § 297-147 to delete MD 205, now MD 5, and to add MD 5 Business).	X			
19.	Coordinate the review and approval of future development and redevelopment plans located on County Scenic and Historic Routes and State Scenic Byways with local byway management entities and the Maryland Scenic Byways Program.				X

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
20.	Utilize the guidance provided in the <i>Religious Freedom Byway Management Plan</i> , the <i>Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and Scenic Byway Comprehensive Management Plan and Corridor Management Plan and Environmental Assessment</i> , the <i>Context Sensitive Solutions for work on Maryland Scenic Byways</i> document, and <i>The Southern Maryland Heritage Area Heritage Tourism Management Plan</i> to as part of the review and approval of future development and redevelopment plans located on County Scenic and Historic Routes and State Scenic Byways.				X
	Heritage Tourism, Planning and Development				
21.	Continue to support village revitalization and destination development in Benedict and Port Tobacco.				X
22.	Utilize available grants from State and Federal partners to enhance targeted heritage tourism assets and amenities.				X
	Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Policies				
	Priority Preservation				
PPA 1	Protect and preserve 80% of the remaining undeveloped lands within the designated PPA.				X
PPA 2	Prioritize land preservation acquisitions through the MD Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) and County Purchase of Development Rights (PDR) Programs in the PPA				X
PPA 3	Fully fund agricultural land preservation programs to maximize the ability to leverage matching funds from MALPF and to purchase and retire a consistent number of transferrable development rights annually.				X
11.1	Agriculture, forestry, and fisheries are core targeted industries essential for job creation and the future quality of life of county residents. Minimize conflicts with other uses, especially residential.				X
11.2	Maintain the farmer's right-to-farm.				X
11.3	Support marketing programs for the County's diverse agricultural offerings.				X
11.4	Assist farmers to maintain an economically viable agricultural and forest industry.				X
11.5	Support the ability of commercial watermen and recreational fishermen to have access to sustainable fisheries.				X

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
11.6	Focus agricultural preservation programs to those areas with a land use and zoning of Agricultural Conservation and designated Priority Preservation Areas (PPA).	X			
	Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Action Items				
1.	To supplement the existing land preservation programs the County offers, create a county purchase of development rights program using bond funding, a county transfer tax and/or additional sources to insure a dedicated funding source for the program. If a transfer tax is utilized, 50% of the money could be used for land preservation and 50% could be used to fund infrastructure in Priority Funding Areas to promote growth away from resource based industries. Assign the Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board authority to oversee and make recommendations regarding operation of the program.			X	
2.	Explore the use of a revolving loan fund for land trusts to acquire and protect properties in farming areas. Establish a budget sufficient to start this preservation tool.			X	
3.	Revise the TDR program to incentivize their use, including amendments to the Forest Conservation Ordinance to allow TDRs from forested properties to satisfy requirements of the Forest Conservation Act. Continue to designate productive agricultural and forest land as sending areas for TDRs. Establish a workgroup to examine ways to balance TDR supply and demand as related to sending and receiving areas and make specific recommendations.	X			
4.	Expand the function and role of the existing Agricultural Land Preservation Advisory Board to monitor issues related to agriculture, forestry and fisheries. Include a charge to the Board to meet with state and local agencies that work with these natural resource based industries and report at least annually to the County Commissioners.		X		
5.	Conduct a review of regulations to make it easier for agriculture, forestry and seafood businesses to prosper, including:				
	a. Policies for agricultural worker housing.	X			
	b. Allowing processing facilities for livestock.	X			
	c. Promoting the development of Charles County's forest industry.	X			

Comprehensive Plan Implementation Schedule

		Short Term, 1-3 years	Medium Term, 4-6 years	Long Term, 7- 10 years	Ongoing Activity
	d. Amending the zoning ordinance to specifically allow value added processing, agritourism, and ecotourism uses.	X			
6.	Consider developing an area plan for key rural and eco-sensitive areas, to support implementation of the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan.			X	
7.	Work closely with the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission (SMADC) to grow the agricultural, forestry and seafood economies in Charles County and Southern Maryland. Consider hiring a full time Agricultural Marketing Specialist if the role of SMADC diminishes.				X
8.	Review the County's Right to Farm Ordinance to insure it is current and works to retain farm owner's property rights.		X		
9.	Work with the Board of Education to encourage agriculture classes in the public schools and the return of the Future Farmers of America Program.		X		
10.	Review regulations and recommend changes that would assist in retaining family members who continue farming operations.		X		
11.	Explore methods to retain large contiguous tracts of forest and discourage their fragmentation.	X			
12.	Promote sustainable forest industries and the use of forest stewardship planning throughout the County.				X
13.	Encourage aquaculture enterprises, including the participation in the MD Department of Natural Resource's Oyster Gardening Program.	X			

Chapter 8: Transportation

Goals and Objectives.....	8-1
Issues and Policy Considerations	8-2
Transportation Planning Concepts.....	8-3
Transportation Modes.....	8-3
Capacity.....	8- 43
Level of Service	8-4
Functional Classification.....	8-5
Existing Conditions and Trends.....	8- 65
Roads, Motor Vehicle Traffic.....	8- 65
Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities.....	8- 1211
Transit Planning.....	8- 1312
Bus Service.....	8- 1513
Park-and-Ride Lots.....	8- 1816
Freight Rail Service.....	8- 1816
Air transportation	8- 1816
Water transportation	8- 1917
Transportation System 2040	8- 1917
Future Highway Improvements	8- 1917
Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities.....	8- 2018
Transit Planning.....	8- 3531
Air transportation	8- 3935
Water Transportation.....	8- 4036
Policies and Actions.....	8- 4036
Policies.....	8- 4036
Actions.....	8- 4237

Transportation

Chapter 8

Transportation

Charles County's transportation system requires special consideration for growth management. This element of the Comprehensive Plan sets the transportation framework for the County's growth management efforts. Background for transportation planning is provided through an assessment of the existing transportation network, highway capacity, and planned improvements to identify the issues, problems and opportunities. Finally, this element develops short and long term strategies to satisfy Charles County's 2040 transportation needs.

Goals and Objectives

Overarching goal

- 8.1 Develop, maintain and enhance a multi-modal transportation system to provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods on both an inter- and intra- County basis. This will include short, medium and long term transportation planning.

Roadway Network/Capacity

- 8.2 Maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system to assure an acceptable level of service.
- 8.3 Support regional roadway projects to reduce congestion, and promote commerce and economic development.
- 8.4 Provide the public with adequate transportation facilities while simultaneously providing the opportunity for new development in appropriate locations to continue in the County.
- 8.5 Develop a circulation system that encourages the separation of through and local traffic.
- 8.6 Create greater circulation through road network connectivity, both in redevelopment areas as well as in new development areas between new and existing neighborhoods.

Land Use

- 8.7 Concentrate 75% of residential development in the Development District which includes development density and intensity in mixed use districts in the Transit Corridor to help limit and manage the spread of traffic congestion and encourage and support alternate modes of transportation.
- 8.8 Develop and coordinate land use and transportation improvements that focus on reducing the imbalance of jobs/housing in Charles County.
- 8.9 Where possible, encourage and promote Transit Oriented Development within the established Waldorf Transit Corridor in order to support the planned fixed-route, high-capacity transit service from the Branch Avenue Metro-rail station to Waldorf-White Plains, as well as support the urbanization of Waldorf.

- 8.10 Ensure new development and redevelopment projects do not degrade the adequacy of receiving transportation facilities, or provide the appropriate improvements to mitigate for their impacts.
- 8.11 Require development to reserve and dedicate to the County the right-of-way for roads, park and ride facilities, and the planned fixed-route high-capacity transit service within the established Waldorf Transit Corridor.

Transit

- 8.12 Support local, regional and commuter transit trips to improve roadway congestion, including park and ride facilities
- 8.13 Support and promote the preservation of the locally preferred high-capacity fixed-route transit alignment as designated in the Maryland Transit Administration’s Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study. Ensure that facilities for pedestrian, bicycle and daily parking are considered and included in capital and development projects as appropriate, particularly in the vicinity of proposed transit station locations.

Bicycle & Pedestrian Facilities

- 8.14 Support the implementation of the Charles County Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan, which will provide adequate and safe recreational and functional transportation connections between residential, employment, recreational, shopping and transit centers.
- 8.15 Ensure that all development projects construct the designated amenities described in the Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan that pass through or are immediately adjacent to the proposed development or redevelopment sites.
- 8.16 Ensure development projects provide sidewalk, shared-use path, and trail connections to promote the expansion of the bicycle and pedestrian facility network.

Issues and Policy Considerations

Charles County’s transportation system for the year 2040 requires special consideration in view of several issues:

- Local and regional motor vehicle traffic continues to increase. The primary effects of this are felt in the Development District where a high volume of traffic, both local and through traffic is traveling on the few roads that run east-west and north-south through the area.
- The capacity of the County’s arterial highways is a key to growth management of the County and should be carefully conserved. This implies strict access control and residential and non-residential design standards that emphasize internal circulation systems.
- Development along the US 301, MD 5, MD 5 Business, MD 210, and MD 228 corridors continues to threaten safe and efficient operation along these routes. Congestion along these corridors is not solely the product of increasing traffic volume, but also of conflicting turning movements at intersections and driveways.

- In the Development District and other growth areas, pre-planned expansion of the highway system is required to ensure that the function and viability of the growth centers do not negatively impact traffic.
- The potential reduction in federal funding for transportation projects places more financial responsibility at the state and local levels, as well as on private developers, to fund new transportation projects, roadways, roadway improvements, and transit service.
- With increased road congestion, high fuel prices, and concerns over the impacts of transportation on climate change, a multi-modal and inter-modal system will be needed to serve the County's future transportation needs.
- Commuter transit is limited by constrained funding from the Federal and State government modal agencies, resulting in greater competition across Maryland jurisdictions for those limited transit funds. This creates a greater need for Charles County to be more competitive by implementing high-density, transit-oriented development in the urban center of Waldorf.
- A fixed-route, high-capacity transit service linking Charles County to the metropolitan Washington, D.C. Metro System requires passage through Prince George's County. Increased coordination and partnership is needed with Prince George's County staff and elected officials to align transportation goals and priorities. This includes preservation of highway corridors and the designated transit alignment and funding the local portion of the various stages of the Federal Transit project development process.
- Beyond a strict capacity-based approach to highway systems evaluations, the community character impacts of roads and traffic also need to be considered. This is particularly true in the highway corridor within the redevelopment area of Development District as well as rural villages where historically development has been highway oriented. Within the redevelopment corridor (Waldorf Urban zones) of the Development District, development will need to be re-oriented to an urban design in order to better manage roadway access and improve traffic flow. Both the state and federal government have also begun adjusting road clarifications and standards to permit design more context sensitive roads that fit and contribute to community character. This flexibility is an important toll in creating distinctive communities with a high quality of life.
- The private sector will increasingly be part of the solution of transportation issues, including financing and other transportation system modifications.

Transportation Planning Concepts

Some planning and capacity analysis concepts provide useful background to understanding transportation policy: transportation modes, level of service, and functional classification.

Transportation Modes

A transportation mode is a means of transportation, such as motor vehicle, bus, bicycle, or walking. A multi-modal and inter-modal system will be needed to serve the County's future transportation needs. A multi-modal transportation system is comprised of highway, transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, airport and rail facilities; together with interconnections between each mode.

Since the early 1990s when Congress passed the Intermodal Surface Transportation and Efficiency Act (ISTEA), there has been strong emphasis on developing a multi-modal and intermodal transportation system that is economically efficient and environmentally sound, and that focuses on the efficient movement of people and goods, rather than vehicles.

Capacity

Capacity is a measure of traffic flow that can be accommodated on a given segment of road or at an intersection of two or more roads. Because traffic facilities tend to operate poorly at or near capacity, and are not usually designed or planned to operate in this range, level of service is used in the analysis of capacity.

Level of Service

Level of service is a qualitative measure of operating conditions which a driver will experience while traveling on a particular roadway segment or through an intersection. Level of service reflects driver satisfaction with the following factors that influence the degree of congestion: speed and travel time, traffic interruptions, freedom to maneuver, safety, driving comfort and convenience, and delays. The following six levels of service are used to describe highway flow conditions:

LOS A represents a free flow where individual users are virtually unaffected by others in the traffic stream. LOS A describes a condition with low traffic volumes and high speeds with little or no delays. There is little or no restriction in maneuverability due to the presence of other vehicles. Drivers can maintain their desired speeds and can proceed through signals without having to wait unnecessarily;

LOS B is in the range of stable flow, but the presence of other users in the traffic stream begins to be noticeable. LOS B affords above the average conditions, and is typically used for design or evaluation of rural highways;

LOS C is also in the range of stable flows, but marks the beginning of the range of flow in which the operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by interactions with others in the traffic stream. LOS C is normally utilized as a measure of "average conditions" for design of facilities in suburban and urban locations. It is also considered acceptable in rural locations;

LOS D represents high density, but stable flow. Speed and freedom to maneuver are severely restricted and the driver experiences a generally poor level of comfort. Small increases in traffic

flow will generally cause operational problems at this level. LOS D is considered acceptable during short periods of time and is often used in large urban areas;

LOS E represents operating conditions at or near the capacity level. Operations at this level are usually unstable, because small increases in flow or minor perturbations within the traffic stream will cause breakdowns.

LOS F is used to define forced or breakdown flow. This condition exists wherever the amount of traffic approaching a point exceeds the amount which can traverse the point and queues form behind the point. LOS F is characterized by demand volumes greater than the roadway capacity as complete congestion occurs and, in an extreme case, the volume passing a given point drops to zero. Under these conditions motorists seek other routes in order to bypass congestion, thus impacting adjacent streets.

Levels of service are often utilized as measures of system performance in transportation planning analysis to define public policy concerning highway performance. They are also used in traffic impact analysis to determine local traffic impacts of proposed developments (see Adequate Public Facilities Requirements, below in this chapter). Definitions of level of service differ for intersections and roadway segments, for city streets, and for controlled access highways. In urban and suburban areas, where intersections are closely spaced, traffic signals usually govern arterial and street capacity. US 301 in the Waldorf area is an example of this situation. Thus, in urban and suburban locations, roadway adequacy is addressed at intersections in the traffic impact analysis process.

Functional Classification

Functional classification, relates a particular highway facility to the type of service it is intended to provide. Charles County is served by approximately 1,100 miles of highways, of which the County maintains approximately 700 miles. Each highway is categorized according to the County's functional classification system that categorizes a facility according to the type of service it is intended to provide. The type of service varies according to the type of trip, including local versus through trips, and magnitude of trips accommodated on a facility. The following are definitions and characterizations of the highway functional classifications:

Principal Arterial Carries a high volume of traffic for interstate and intrastate travel, as well as inter-county travel. Also serves the major centers of activity of the urbanized area. Flow is usually uninterrupted from origin to destination.

Intermediate Arterial Carries a high volume of traffic for travel within the county, or for travel to and from adjacent counties. Usually provides a connection to the Principal Arterial. Traffic on this type of road normally has the right-of-way. Controls are used only in areas of high hazard.

Minor Arterial	Carries moderate to high volume of traffic usually for travel within the County. These roads normally serve the higher classification roads providing access to and from the arterials.
Major Collector	Links the arterial system to lower classified roadways. Collects and distributes traffic. Auxiliary lanes for turning traffic are usually provided along the Major Collector. Access is not directly from this road but from a sub-road connected to the collector. They may serve community shopping areas, schools, parks, and cluster developments.
Minor Collector	Serves intra-community travel at a traffic volume lower than that of a Major Collector.
Local	Provides direct access to abutting properties; designed to handle relatively low traffic volumes.

Existing Conditions and Trends

Roads, Motor Vehicle Traffic

Traffic Volumes

Traffic volumes on state roads in Charles County have fluctuated considerably since 2003 (the data used in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan). While volumes increased in some locations between 2003 and 2011 compared to between 1994 and 2003, in others they dropped or increased at a much slower pace. Traffic volumes for major highways in 2011 are shown on Figure 8-1. Volumes from 1994 to 2011 for locations representative of major highway routes for commuting and regional traffic are shown on Table 8-1.

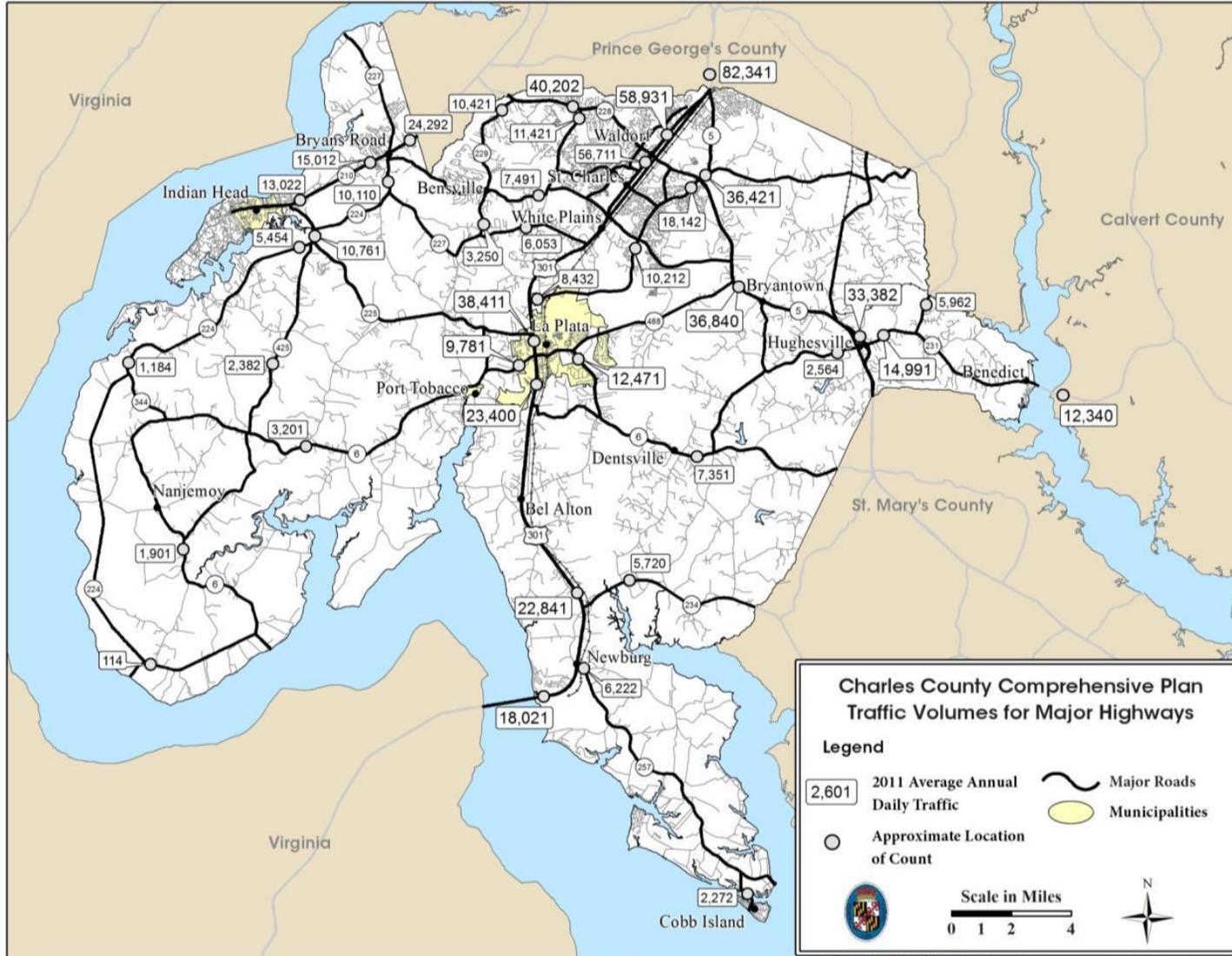
Total Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) on US 301 just north of the Charles County/Prince George's County line exceeded 82,000 vehicles per day in 2011, reflecting the importance of this route as a major connector to Prince George's County, and as a commuter route to work locations in Washington D.C., Northern Virginia, and points north of the County. While this location had a 23 percent increase between 1994 and 2003, volumes increased only one percent between 2003 and 2011.

Table 8-1 Traffic Counts for Major Selected Roads, 1994 to 2011

Location	Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT)						
	1994	2003	2011	Change			
				1994 to 2003		2003 to 2011	
				Number	%	Number	%
US 301 north of Prince George's County line	66,375	81,325	82,341	14,950	23	1,016	1
US 301 north of MD 228	45,350	57,350	58,931	12,000	26	1,581	3
US 301 La Plata	30,950	33,575	38,411	2,625	8	4,836	14
US 301 at Nice Bridge	13,804	16,643	18,021	2,839	21	1,378	8
MD 210 north of Bryans Road	17,576	27,675	24,292	10,099	57	-3,383	-12
MD 5 east of MD 488	28,450	42,775	36,840	14,325	50	-5,935	-14

Source: Maryland Department of Transportation, Traffic Volume Maps

Figure 8-1 Traffic Volumes for Major Highways



Traffic volumes on US 301 in La Plata and at the Nice Bridge increased an average of over 10 percent both between 1994 and 2003 and between 2003 and 2011. MD 210 just south of the Prince George's County line experienced a 57 percent increase in traffic volume between 1994 and 2003, but volume fell by approximately 3,400 vehicles (12%) between 2003 and 2011.

The reasons for the apparently reduced rate of traffic volume increases warrant close attention. Causes could include the recent recession, increase in commuter bus use, the effect of added system capacity due to new roads such as Rosewick Road/St. Charles Parkway, and drivers avoiding state highways in favor of other roads.

Commuter Patterns

Although work trips only represent a portion of all trip purposes, they occur during times of the day when transportation facilities are most heavily used. Of the 61,698 commuters who resided in Charles County in 2000, 36,898 (60 percent) commuted to work outside of the county and 24,800 (40 percent) commuted within the county. Approximately 11,420 workers commuted into Charles County. Compared to 1990 commuter data, the share of workers working outside the County increased slightly from 58 percent in 1990 to 60 percent in 2000.¹

The greatest number of commuters leaving Charles County are destined for job locations in Prince George's County (13,834 commuters or 38 percent). An additional 29 percent commute to Washington D.C. Of the 11,420 commuters who travel into Charles County from other locations, the largest percentage (32 percent) originate from Prince George's County. An additional 29 percent originate from St. Mary's County.

A key factor for the existing and projected transportation congestion is the imbalance between the number of jobs and the number of households in Southern Maryland. Major highways in the region experience congestion each day because they are used by commuters to access jobs in the metropolitan Washington, D.C. area to the north. These numbers are expected to increase significantly through 2040. This trend has been consistent since the 1990s, and was documented in the 2008 U.S. 301 Transportation Study. Within the immediate US 301 Study Area, generally outside of the Capital Beltway and south of US 50, the Study's Task Force found that the number of households was projected to grow by about 90 percent, while the number of jobs was projected to grow by only 50 percent. This projected growth imbalance would create a 450 percent increase in the number of daily trips across the Charles-Calvert County border with Prince George's County. The Task Force determined that improving the jobs/housing imbalance would do more to reduce congestion than any single transportation construction project.

Ridesharing/Commuter Assistance Services

¹ As of 2012, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) was preparing to re-survey commute patterns in Charles County; however, the revised data were not available for inclusion in the 2012 Comprehensive Plan. The County has not observed any significant shift in overall commute patterns (i.e., percentages of commuters) since 2000.

The Regional Ridesharing Program of Southern Maryland provides a computerized match list for carpool/vanpool/commuter bus schedules, rates, and services information for residents and employees of Charles County. The Program also provides information on commuter bus schedules, rates and other transportation services for the region and commuting to Washington, D.C., Northern Virginia, and suburban Maryland.

Adequate Public Facilities Requirements

Adequate Public Facilities (APF) requirements were added to the Charles County Zoning Ordinance in 1992. An Adequate Public Facilities Manual was adopted in 1997 and updated in 2008 and 2011. Under the APF Requirements, most subdivision, site plan, or zoning permit applications must submit an Adequate Public Facilities study to the County that includes the proposed development's impact on transportation facilities. Developers must demonstrate that adequate infrastructure and services exist, are part of an approved CIP project, or will be provided through a mitigation strategy to serve the new development. A facility is considered inadequate if the proposed development would cause the LOS to drop below the standards in Table 8-2.

Table 8-2 *APF Level of Service Standards*

Comprehensive Plan District	Peak hour
Development District	C
Town Centers/Urban Core	D
Village Centers	C
Rural/Agricultural Conservation District and Others	B

Source: *Adequate Public Facilities Manual, 2011*

Access Controls

Access controls along a roadway serve to maintain and enhance the existing quality of the road system. Access controls are particularly important in the Development District where the County is targeting 75% new growth to ensure that the road system meets the demands of the growing population. By implementing access controls, either through partial control of access or access management, the County can prevent the proliferation of driveways and individual access points which intensify traffic hazards and adversely affect the function of arterial and major collector roads. Once effective access controls have been implemented, and the number of conflict points has been minimized, the roadway system will allow for higher speeds, fewer delays, and improved safety at a lower capital investment than the construction of a new highway.

Access management plans for several roads have been developed and, based on these plans, tables in the County Road Ordinance designate access point locations for existing and future development. Roads with completed plans are:

- Billingsley Road
- St. Charles Parkway/Rosewick Road
- Middletown Road
- Western Parkway

Partial Control of Access

Partial control of access involves limiting access points along a roadway to only public roads either at an at-grade intersection or a grade separated interchange. All private driveways and entrances directly on the roadway are eliminated or tied into either a public road or a service road. Under Maryland law, property owners immediately adjacent to a highway have the right to direct access to a highway. This right may be acquired from the property owners by one of the following methods:

- When a parcel is located along a secondary road, access from the primary road may be purchased, and access to the property is shifted onto the adjacent roadway.
- When the parcel is not located adjacent to another roadway, a service road may be constructed to provide access.
- If a parcel is land-locked and it is not feasible to construct a service road, the parcel would need to be acquired.

Access Management

Access Management involves controlling traffic movements and the spacing, design, location and number of access points along a roadway to manage access to adjacent land uses while simultaneously preserving the flow of traffic on the roadway system. Effective access management improves the safety and capacity along densely developed roadways by reducing the friction between local and through traffic.

Access management regulations in the highway corridor overlay zone section of the zoning ordinance currently apply to US 301, MD 5, MD 210, MD 5 Business, and MD 228. These regulations include standards for minimum driveway spacing, driveway widths, access locations, turning lanes and for the reservation of right-of-way for service roads within the corridors.

Charles County and SHA coordinate access management on a case-by-case basis for new development and redevelopment projects. There are several good examples of where access management has been implemented along US 301. South of Plaza Drive the majority of the businesses along US 301 are accessed either from the internal circulation road for the St. Charles Towne Center or from adjacent roads such as St. Patrick's Drive and Smallwood Drive. The few access points which are directly on US 301 along this segment (northbound side of US 301, north of Smallwood Drive) are shared between several businesses and the parking lots are connected allowing cars to travel from one to another without traveling on US 301. North of MD 228 along US 301 there are many examples where no access management has taken place. Access drives are located very close together with two or more per business.

The County will continue to coordinate with the SHA on access management programs along US 301, MD 228, MD 5, MD 5 Business, and MD 210.

US 301

During the 1990s, the US 301 Transportation Study Task Force analyzed partial control of access options along the US 301 corridor. The Task Force proposed that partial control of access programs be implemented along the entire length of US 301, from US 50 to the Potomac River, except for built-up commercial areas such as Waldorf and La Plata. In these built-up commercial areas, an overwhelming number of access points already exist and the building setbacks do not allow enough right-of-way to construct service roads. In these areas the Task Force recommended an access management program.

In 2002 the County Commissioners' Comprehensive Transportation Strategy endorsed Alternative 1A for US 301 which would upgrade key intersections along US 301 in Waldorf without denying access to local businesses between interchanges.

The 2002 Transportation Strategy also included preservation of right-of-way for a western US 301 bypass. This 2012 Comprehensive Plan does not include the western bypass (see below). As a result US 301 will continue to serve both regional and local traffic and means that access control policy along US 301 may need to be revised.

Local Traffic Safety Plan

The Charles County Traffic Safety Committee was formed to evaluate transportation problem areas and provide recommendations to the County Commissioners for authorization of the improvements. The committee is comprised of transportation planners and engineers, local police and safety personnel, and road maintenance officials. Citizens, elected officials, and staff may request the Traffic Safety Committee to review an identified issue or potential problem area. Some examples include, traffic signal requests, a review of roadway safety hazard areas or locations, and other traffic control problems. The Committee findings are presented to the requestor or the County Commissioners if funding is needed. The Committee also performs a cursory technical review of an issue to determine if further technical study is necessary to complete the evaluation.

To identify potential problem areas, the State Highway Administration monitors motor vehicle crashes that occur at each at-grade intersection on the state maintained highway system. Each year they develop a list of high crash intersections for each county. This list enables the County Government and the SHA to prioritize where intersection improvements are required.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Bicycle and pedestrian facilities can be an important element of the transportation network. Under previous Comprehensive Plans, conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists in Charles

County were considered poor. However, under the County's Subdivision Regulation requirements, most new development is required to install pedestrian and bicycle amenities within the proposed community, and off-site connections to nearby facilities, where feasible. St. Charles has a well-developed system of sidewalks and "hiker-biker" trails that are interconnected among neighborhoods and commercial shopping areas. However, safe crossings of major roads are lacking in the older communities. Some of Waldorf's older residential neighborhoods, such as Pinefield and White Oak Village and an increasing number of new ones also have sidewalks. However, they tend to serve only the individual neighborhoods, and do not interconnect with each other to form a true network. Charles County's rural roads are attractive to bicyclists and recreational bicycling is popular. Rural roads with shoulders and/or low traffic volumes are the most attractive but many have hazards such as narrow horizontal sections, lack of paved shoulders, narrow bridges, poor shoulder maintenance (with debris collecting in the shoulders) and, on occasion, hostility from motorists.

In 2002, bicycle lanes and a pedestrian trail were incorporated into the upgrade for Middletown Road, the first County road to be built with these facilities. A considerable amount of pedestrian and bicycle facility planning has been undertaken in Charles County:

- Bryans Road – Indian Head Sub-Area Plan pedestrian-bicycle element
- Waldorf Sub-Area Plan pedestrian-bicycle element
- Southern Maryland Trails and Bikeways Study (SMRTABS), a regional on- and off-road trails study.
- Feasibility Study for four trail alignments: Mattawoman Trail, US Navy Railroad Trail (NSWC trail), Popes Creek Railroad Trail, and Gilbert Run Trail.
- Charles County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, April 2012. A complete listing and discussion of related studies and plans is detailed in that Plan.

Transit Planning

Charles County has the fastest growing commuter bus ridership numbers in the State of Maryland. Due to heavily congested roadways to the metropolitan Washington, D.C. region, a great number of county and regional commuters have moved to public transit service as means of getting to and from their places of work. Transit services currently consist of County operated local bus service and commuter bus services operated by the Maryland Transit Administration. With immense growth experienced since the 1990s, the Commuter Bus Service has struggled to keep pace with the growth in patrons, leading to over-crowded busses, lack of available parking at local park-and-rides, and overwhelming service demand.

In 1996, the Southern Maryland Mass Transportation Alternatives Study examined the regional needs and the various options to serve the area demands, resulting in the highly demanded commuter bus service. As this over-the-road motor coach service continually expanded, the state

legislature funded the 2004 MD 5/US 301 Transit Services Staging Plan (TSSP) through the Maryland Transit Administration. The TSSP analyzed the steps envisioned to transition from the Commuter Bus service to various high-capacity, fixed-route transit services to serve the growing demand. In partnership with Charles and Prince George's Counties, this study analyzed the potential alternatives and a potential progression of higher capacity transit services. The study consisted of an overall review and cost analysis of Enhanced Commuter Bus (express service with limited stops), Moderate-level Bus Rapid Transit (mix of shared and exclusive bus lanes with limited stops), High-level Bus Rapid Transit (exclusive bus lanes with grade-separation at intersections), and Light Rail Transit (fixed-route rail service with grade-separation at intersections). The study concluded that Enhanced Commuter bus Service be the short term focus (through 2015), with a progression to Bus Rapid Transit or Light Rail Transit as the market progressed.

The Maryland State Legislature and the Maryland Department of Transportation continued to realize the transit demand in Southern Maryland. Additional studies of the regional transportation needs ensued to fully evaluate the short-term and long-term needs of the region. These studies included:

- Southern Maryland Transportation Needs Assessment, 2009 (Commission to Study Southern Maryland Transportation Needs, with the Tri-county Council for Southern Maryland and Maryland Department of Transportation)
- Southern Maryland Mass Transportation Analysis, 2010 (Maryland Transit Administration).

Beyond the TSSP and these other regional studies, transit ridership continued to exceed expectations and push the demand for higher capacity transit in Charles County. Based on this demand and continued growth pressures in the area, the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) evaluated the necessary fixed-route path for a high capacity transit service from the Branch Avenue Metro Station to Waldorf/White Plains. The 2010 Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study analyzed the critical path to establishing a corridor alignment necessary for protection of encroachment. In joint cooperation with Charles and Prince George's Counties, the MTA evaluated several alternatives based on their functionality, environmental impacts, property impacts, and costs. Both Counties unanimously selected a preferred alignment, which was adopted in the local planning documents for preservation.

In 2010, the Charles County Commissioners unanimously approved the highest transportation priority for Charles County as the creation of a fixed-route, high-capacity transit service (Light Rail) from the Branch Avenue Metro Station to Waldorf/White Plains. To support the development of the Light Rail alignment, Charles County made significant strides to establish a base for high-capacity transit service to Waldorf and White Plains. The Waldorf Urban Design Study (WUDS) designated a 300-acre redevelopment area, with high-density mixed use development, including transit stations, structured parking, urban streetscapes, and parks. The new zoning and design code enabled the densities and floor area ratios necessary to qualify for

the Federal Transit Administration’s New Start and Small Start programs. The County has worked with the Maryland Department of Transportation to include the project in the State’s Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), necessary to initiate the next phases of the project development.

In November 2011, the Prince George’s County Council signed a Resolution to declare this project as a transportation priority for their County and their renewed commitment to high-capacity transit and the associated land-uses to create the needed ridership. To enhance this regional support, the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland designated this project as the number one regional transit priority for Southern Maryland. This project has further received the support of the County’s Federal representatives and State Delegation in an effort to bring federal funding for this project to fruition.

Bus Service

Bus service is increasing in importance in Charles County especially in the La Plata/Waldorf areas. Both commuter and regular bus service is available. Bus service offers flexible public transit in the short and medium time frame. In the near and mid-term enhanced bus service is needed to support the projected ridership until fixed rail transit is built.

Commuter Bus Service

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) operates five routes in Charles County. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) operates one route (Table 8-3 and Figure 8-2)

Table 8-3 Commuter Bus Routes Serving Charles County

Route	From	To	Trips per day (2012)	
MTA	901	La Plata/Waldorf	Washington D.C.	61
	903	Charlotte Hall/Waldorf	Washington D.C.	14
	905	Charlotte Hall/Waldorf	Washington D.C.	47
	906	Waldorf	Washington D.C.	12
	907	La Plata/Waldorf	Washington D.C.	16
WMATA	W19	Indian Head	Southern Avenue Metrorail	31

Sources: Maryland Transit Administration and Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority, 2012

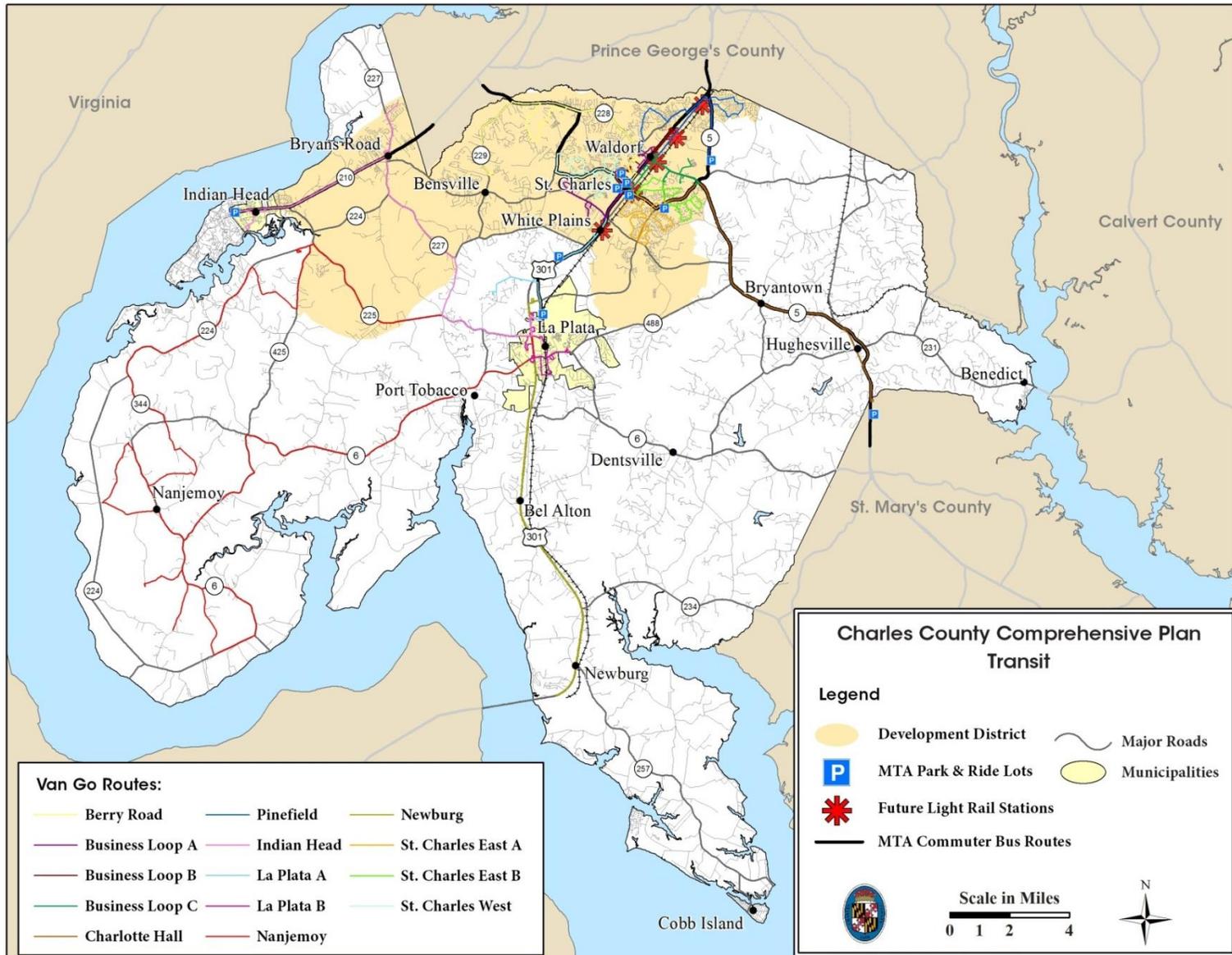
Local Bus Service

The Charles County Department of Community Services has been providing public transportation since 1986. Two bus services are offered:

Transportation

- General Public Transit (VanGO): Deviated fixed service provides transportation throughout the County to shopping and business centers primarily within the Waldorf/St. Charles and La Plata areas (see Figure 8-2).
- Demand Response Service: Utilizes paratransit vehicles to provide general transportation for senior citizens and disabled persons.

Figure 8-2 Transit



Ridership increased 90 percent between FY 2004 and FY 2012 (Table 8-4). A large proportion of the increased ridership is related to medical related trips. This is partially due to an agreement with the local Health Department and changes in Medicare/Medicaid rules. In Charles County a significant proportion of the demand response trips are for dialysis treatment transportation.

Table 8-4 VanGO Ridership

	Annual Ridership			
	FY 1998	FY 2001	FY 2004	FY 2012
Fixed/Deviated Fixed Route	42,360	146,326	388,587	744,516
Demand Responsive	18,460	20,336	19,288	29,413
Total Ridership	60,820	166,662	407,875	733,929

Sources: Charles County Transportation Development Plan, Final Report, Maryland Transit Administration, 2012.

Park-and-Ride Lots

Park-and-ride lots help decrease traffic congestion and improve air quality. Park and ride lots provide convenient transfer points for carpools, van pools, and commuter buses, and are located in the following eight locations (Figure 8-2):

- MD 5 (Mattawoman-Beantown Road)
- La Plata/Washington Avenue
- US 301 at Smallwood Drive
- South Potomac Church
- Smallwood Drive/MD 925 (planned for 2013)
- St. Charles Towne Center
- Smallwood Village
- St. Charles Plaza
- Blue Crabs Stadium

Freight Rail Service

The only freight rail service in the County is provided by the Pope's Creek Branch of CSX. A spur from Brandywine to Chalk Point runs through eastern Charles County north of Hughesville. The Potomac Electric Power Company is a chief user of these railroad lines transporting coal to its Chalk Point and Morgantown power plants.

There is currently no commuter rail service in Charles County. There is strong interest in light rail service, and it has been the subject of considerable planning both in Charles and Prince George's County (see below under transit planning).

Air transportation

National and international airlines operate from Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Dulles International Airport, and Baltimore Washington International Airport (32, 54, and 65 miles from La Plata, respectively). Maryland Airport, a small local privately owned airport at

Pomonkey provides charter service for Charles County. The airport is currently ~~under construction lengthening its runways to service corporate jets and offers that county an opportunity for additional economic development~~ working on plans to rehabilitate and expand its apron and to build more hangar space to serve the General Aviation Community. A key component of the owner's future improvement plans is completion of the extension of the 3,750-foot runway to 4,300 feet, enabling larger aircraft to access the airport. (see Chapter 7, Economic Development).

Water transportation

There are presently no commercial port facilities located in Charles County; however, there is a barge off-loading facility for coal at the Morgantown Power Generation Facility in Newburg, located along the Potomac River. The power plant receives coal by barge in order to reduce its freight rail costs. The Port of Baltimore, about 65 miles north of the County, is the closest major port facility. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maintains navigable waters in the Potomac River and at the mouth of several rivers along the southern and western boundary of Charles County.

Transportation System 2040

Future Highway Improvements

This section identifies future highway system improvements to roads in Charles County. The improvements are listed on Table 8-5 and are shown on Figures 8-3A and 8-3B. They are derived from the following sources:

Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). Each year the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) works with local officials and the public to determine priority County transportation projects. These projects are funded and are programmed in the MDOT's six-year Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP).

Charles County Budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The five year budget and CIP is updated annually and is coordinated with the Comprehensive Plan and the CTP.

Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Highway Needs Inventory (HNI). The HNI identifies future highway improvements that warrant major construction or reconstruction. The HNI is not a construction program, and inclusion of a project on the HNI is not a commitment to implementation. Over time a project may move from the HNI to the CTP.

Charles County Planning Documents. The transportation elements of several Charles County and Town planning documents identify future highway system improvements (see list of adopted plans in Chapter 1).

The projects in Table 8-5 are divided into three categories:

- **Funded projects.** These projects are funded for construction in the CTP, the CIP, or by developers; denoted by an “F” on Table 8-5
- **Projects in active planning.** These are County projects are in the CTP, the CIP, or in the County Commissioners’ 2002 Transportation Strategy; denoted by an “A” on Table 8-5.
- **Longer range projects.** These projects derive from the HNI and Charles County Planning Documents. Table 5-3 identifies the source document(s) that provide a more detailed description of each project. These projects are; denoted by an “L” on Table 8-5.

On Table 5-4, projects to be done by the State are denoted by an “S”, projects by the County by a “C” and projects by the Town of La Plata by a “P”. The table also indicates where the project is on a pedestrian-bicycle route as shown on Figure 8-3. Table 8-5 does not include the following project types:

- Resurfacing and rehabilitation projects
- Streetscapes
- Safety/spot improvements
- Bridge projects
- Town of La Plata projects that are internal to the Town and do not affect the County.

Highway projects are identified in the following time frames:

- **Short:** 0 to 5 Years
- **Mid:** 5 to 10 Years
- **Long:** 10 or More Years

The Functional Classification Map for the year 2025 (Figure 8-4) results from the planned transportation improvements and implementation of the Plan's policies guiding future development. Table 8-6 lists the arterial and major collector roads by classification as defined above in this chapter. At the time of development the functional classification of a road is determined based on both its highway function and on traffic volume (see Section 72 of the County Subdivision Regulations). The County plans to develop a transportation model. Use of the model or changes in traffic conditions, patterns, or development may result in changes to the road classifications in Table 8-6.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

The main barriers to creating a useful, functional pedestrian-bicycle network are distance and separation of uses, lack of pedestrian-bicycle facilities in commercial and employment areas, and the difficulty of safely crossing main roads. A pedestrian/bicycle network should provide continuous connections between residential, employment, recreational, shopping, and transit centers. These facilities must be designed to ensure the safety of the pedestrians and cyclists including adequate access across highways and bridges.

Transportation

Table 8-5 Road Improvements

Number	Project	Description	Funding Source/ Plan Document	Ped/Bike Route	Time Frame
<i>S = State Project, C = County Project, LP = Town of La Plata Project</i>					
Funded Projects					
<i>County Projects</i>					
C-1	Old Washington Road	Reconstruct as Urban Major Collector from south of MD 5 Bus. to Substation Road	Waldorf Urban Transport. Improvement Plan (WUTIP), CIP	Yes	Short
C-2	Acton Lane (Central)	Reconstruct as Urban Major Collector from US 301 to CSX Right-of-Way, consistent with the Waldorf Sub Area Plan and WUTIP.	WUTIP, CIP	Yes	Short
C-3	Acton Lane (West)	Upgrade from Western Parkway northwest to the County line to improve capacity and safety.	CIP		Short
C-4	Acton Lane (East)	Construct as Urban Major Collector from CSX Right-of-Way to MD 5 Mattawoman Beantown Road, with connections to Post Office Road Extended and White Oak Road (See C-11)	1997 and 2006 Comprehensive Plans, Developer	Yes	Short
C-5	Billingsley Road	Corridor Study to evaluate safety and geometric improvements from Middletown Road to MD 227	CIP		Short
C-6	(project removed from funding)				
C-7	Western Parkway	New 4-lane arterial road between Acton Lane and US 301. To be built in phases: Phase II Acton Lane to Pierce Road Phase III Pierce Road to US 301	CIP	Yes	Short
C-8	Mill Hill Road	Extension from Davis Road to Smallwood Dr. West (see CIP Project #C-21).	CIP	Yes	Short
C-9	McDaniel Rd	Reconstruct as major collector and extend from Hallmark Lane to Constitution Drive.	1997 Comprehensive Plan, Waldorf Sub-Area Plan, Developer,	Yes	Short
C-10	Demarr Road	Improve US 301 Demarr Road intersection & reconstruct roadway as major collector (White Plains Business Park & future Transit Oriented Development).	CIP, Developer	Yes	Short
C-11	Post Office Road Extended	Extension of Post Office Road from MD 5 Bus. to north of Acton Lane (East) as a major collector (formerly Eastern Parkway, 1997 Comprehensive Plan) with major collector connections to White Oak Road and MD 5 via Acton Lane.	1997 and 206 Comprehensive Plans, Waldorf Sub-Area Plan, WUDS, CIP, Developer	Yes	Mid

Transportation

Table 8-5 Road Improvements

Number	Project	Description	Funding Source/ Plan Document	Ped/Bike Route	Time Frame
<i>S = State Project, C = County Project, LP = Town of La Plata Project</i>					
C-12	Demarr Road	Reconstruct Demarr Road to provide adequate access for industry-related traffic as a major collector.	CIP		Short
C-13	Middletown Road	Reconstruct from the completed section of the Cross County Connector to MD 227. Study to determine capacity /road design prior to design/construct.	CIP	Yes	Mid
C-14	Turkey Hill Road	Part 1: Reconstruct/realign from MD 227 to US 301. Study to determine alignment/capacity prior to design/construction Part 2: Realignment to eliminate sharp 90 degree bend.	CIP	Yes	Mid
C-15	Hamilton Road	Reconstruct between Western Parkway and Acton Lane. Complete feasibility study to determine necessary improvements prior to design/construction.	CIP	Yes	Mid
C-16	Holly Lane West	Extension/overpass between Post Office Road extended (former Eastern Parkway) and Western Parkway.	CIP	Yes	Mid
C-17	Radio Station Road	Reconstruct from MD 488 to Rosewick Road. Phase 1: Reconstruct as 4-lane boulevard; create 4-way intersection at Jaybee Lane (short term) Phase 2: Reconstruct as 4-lane parkway (long term)	CIP		Short Long
C-18	Stavors Road	Upgrade road to support traffic volumes & provide safety improvements.	CIP		Short
C-19	Bryans Road Town Common	Construct a traffic circle and green/park area in Bryans Road Town center.	CIP, State CTP		Short
Projects in Active Planning					
<i>State Projects</i>					
S-1	US 301 Corridor Study	Upgrade of existing US 301; interchanges along US 301 and at MD 5/St. Charles Parkway. Include consideration of additional lanes between Smallwood Drive and MD 227. Interim improvements needed to improve traffic flow; potential congestion management study.	CTP, US 301 Study; Comprehensive Plan.	Yes	Mid
S-2	MD 5 Bus. at Hughesville (Streetscape)	Construct streetscape on existing MD 5 Bus. (a.k.a. MD 625) consistent with Hughesville Revitalization Plan, to include parking, lighting, lane redesign and bike-ped accommodations.	Comprehensive Plan, CTP	Yes	Short

Transportation

Table 8-5 Road Improvements

Number	Project	Description	Funding Source/ Plan Document	Ped/Bike Route	Time Frame
<i>S = State Project, C = County Project, LP = Town of La Plata Project</i>					
S-3 (not shown on Figure 8-3)	Intersection Evaluations	Evaluate the need for new traffic signals or intersection controls/modifications at County and/or State intersections.	Comprehensive Plan, CIP, CTP		On-going
County Projects					
C-20	Jaybee Lane	Rosewick Road to US 301. Upgrade to provide an alternative north-south route from US 301 into La Plata. Study to determine capacity /road design prior to design/construct.	Transportation Strategy, CIP	Yes	Mid
C-21	Smallwood Drive	Extension of Smallwood Drive between Middletown Road and Mill Hill Road. Envisioned in Waldorf Sub-Area Plan as a revision of the 1997 Comprehensive Plan project C-23 to extend Smallwood Drive to MD 228	CIP	Yes	Mid
C-22	Camp Hedges Place	Extension of Camp Hedges Place between MD 210 and MD 227. Developer built. Allows Marshall Hall traffic to bypass Bryans Road Town Center.	CIP, Developer	Yes	Mid
Longer Range Planning Projects					
State Projects					
S-4	MD 227	Reconstruct (2 lanes) between MD 210 and US 301. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI	Yes	Mid
S-5	MD 229	Reconstruct (2 lanes) between MD 227 and MD 228. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI	Yes	Mid
S-6	MD 5 – US 301	Construct an interchange	HNI		Mid
S-7	MD 5 – MD 5 Bus	Construct an interchange	HNI		Mid
S-8	MD 6 – US 301	Intersection improvements/reconstruction. Evaluate and accommodate lane capacity in all directions/approaches	HNI	Yes	Mid
S-9	US 301	Potomac River to south of La Plata - access control improvements	HNI		Long
S-10	MD 210	MD 225 to County line: divided highway reconstruct, access control improvements, auxiliary lanes, and intersection improvements	Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Long

Transportation

Table 8-5 Road Improvements

Number	Project	Description	Funding Source/ Plan Document	Ped/Bike Route	Time Frame
<i>S = State Project, C = County Project, LP = Town of La Plata Project</i>					
S-11	MD 225	MD 210 to US 301: multi-lane reconstruct. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI	Yes	Long
S-12	MD 5	Between St. Mary's County line and MD 5 Business. Divided highway reconstruct with access control	HNI	Yes	Long
S-13	MD 6	MD 344 to east of Wards Run. Two-lane reconstruct. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI	Yes	Long
S-14	MD 425	Reconstruct (2 lanes) between MD 6 at Grayton (south of Nanjemoy) and MD 6 at Ironsides. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI		Long
S-15	MD 425	Reconstruct (2 lanes) between MD 224 and MD 6 at Ironsides. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI		Long
S-16	MD 257	Reconstruct from US 301 to MD 254. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Long
S-17	MD 231	Reconstruct from Patuxent River Bridge (Benedict) to MD 5. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	HNI	Yes	Long
S-18	MD 925	Increase capacity/reconstruct to Urban Major Collector from vicinity of Terrace Drive to MD 5 Business, consistent with the Waldorf Urban Transportation Improvement Plan.	Comprehensive Plan, WURC, WUTIP	Yes	Mid
S-19	MD 228	Feasibility Study to determine the design & impacts of a 6-lane reconstruction from MD 210 to US 301.	HNI	Yes	Mid
S-20	Governor Harry Nice Bridge	Replace bridge with 4 lane structure, including hiker/biker accommodations.	Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Long
<i>County Projects</i>					
C-23	(project removed from funding)				
C-24	Substation Road	Reconstruct as an Urban Major Collector between US 301 and MD 5, consistent with the Waldorf Sub-Area Plan.	1997 Comprehensive Plan		Mid

Transportation

Table 8-5 Road Improvements

Number	Project	Description	Funding Source/ Plan Document	Ped/Bike Route	Time Frame
<i>S = State Project, C = County Project, LP = Town of La Plata Project</i>					
C-25	Mitchell Rd	Reconstruct from US 301 to MD 225. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	1997 Comprehensive Plan		Mid
C-26	Piney Church Road	MD 488 to MD 5. Upgrade (4 lanes plus realignment)	1997 Comprehensive Plan, Waldorf Sub-Area Plan	Yes	Mid
C-27	Bumpy Oak Road	Reconstruct from MD 224 and MD 225. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	1997 Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Mid
C-28	Quailwood Parkway	Extend Quailwood Parkway between MD 225 and Rosewick Road.	1997 Comprehensive Plan. Vision Plan for Greater La Plata.		Long
C-29	Holly Tree Lane	Extension/overpass between Post Office Road extended (former Eastern Parkway) and Western Parkway. Holly Lane and Holly Tree Lane are envisioned as overpasses of US 301 (not an interchange) allowing local traffic to cross US 301 between interchanges. Extensions to new Post Office Road involve a railroad crossing. If this is not feasible, eastern terminus should be Old Washington Road.	1997 Comprehensive Plan, Waldorf Sub-Area Plan	Yes	Long
C-30	Poplar Hill Road	Reconstruct from MD 5 to Malcolm Road/Iowa Road. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	2006 Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Long
C-31	Wheatley Road/Olivers Shop Road	Reconstruct from MD 6 and MD 231. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	2006 Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Long
C-32	Gallant Green Road, Woodville Rd.	Reconstruct from MD 5 and Iowa Road. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	2006 Comprehensive Plan		Long
C-33	Penns Hill Road	Reconstruct from MD 234 to MD 6. Complete feasibility study to evaluate auxiliary lanes, shoulders and drainage improvements prior to design and construction.	2006 Comprehensive Plan	Yes	Long

Town of La Plata Projects

Transportation

Table 8-5 Road Improvements

Number	Project	Description	Funding Source/ Plan Document	Ped/Bike Route	Time Frame
<i>S = State Project, C = County Project, LP = Town of La Plata Project</i>					
LP-1	MD 6 to Rosewick Road (MD 6 connector)	New road between MD 6 and US 301 (Willow Lane to Heritage Green Pkwy.), with branch up to Rosewick Rd.	HNI, La Plata Comprehensive Plan, Waldorf Sub-Area Plan.	Yes	Mid
LP-2	Quailwood Parkway	Extension south of MD 6 to Old Stagecoach Road.	La Plata Comprehensive Plan		

Figure 8-3A Road Improvements

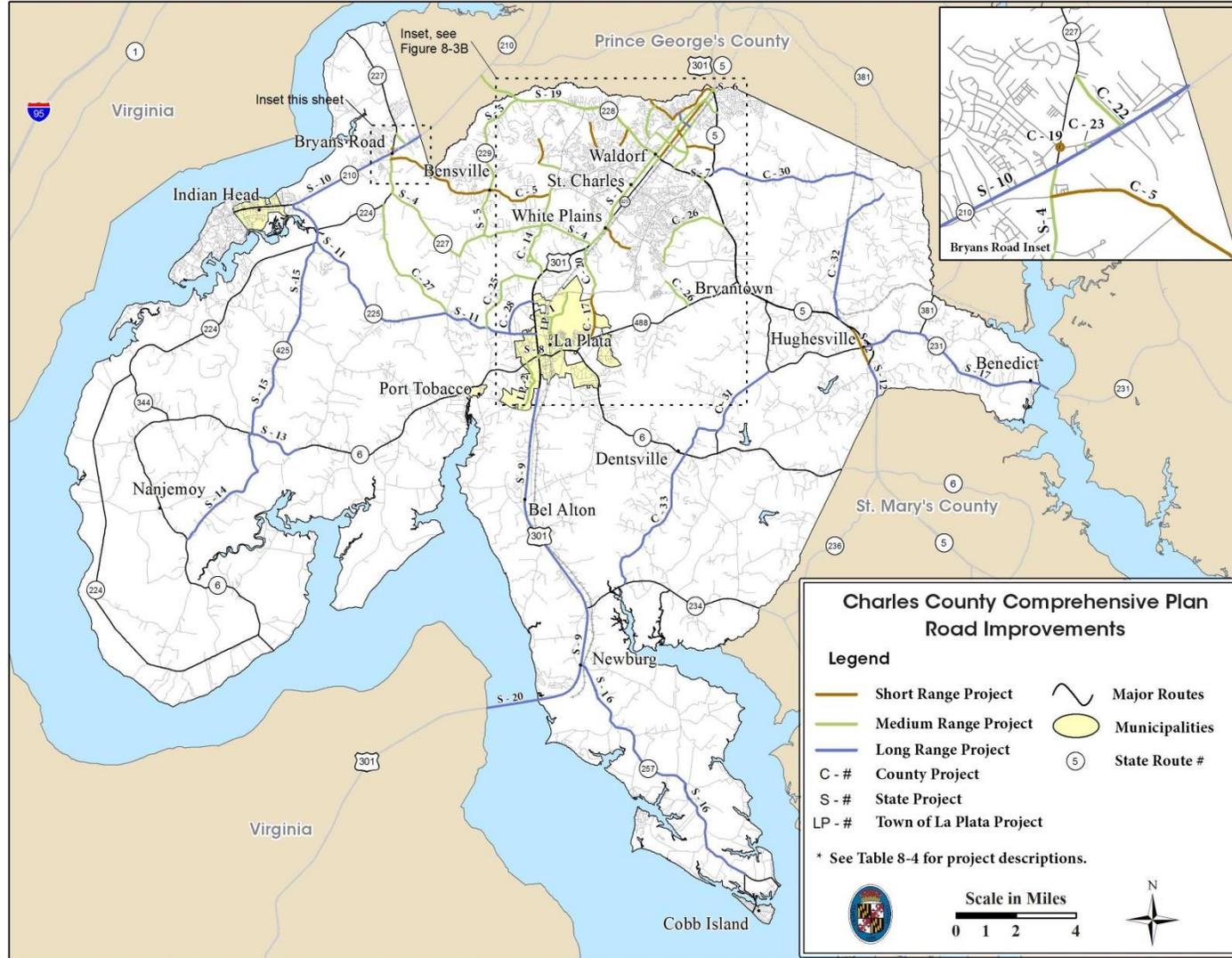
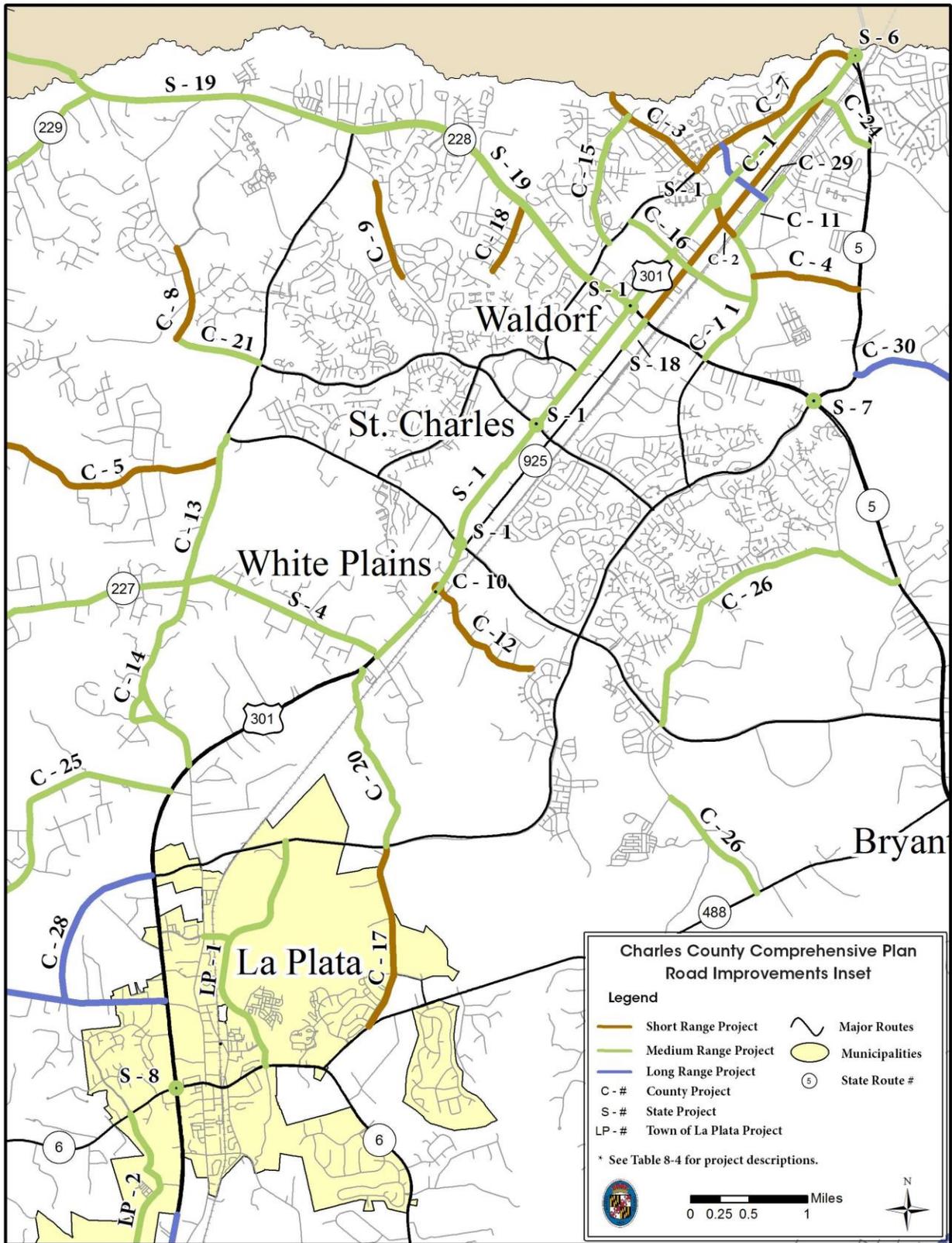


Figure 8-3B Road Improvements Waldorf/La Plata Area Inset



Transportation

Table 8-6 Functional Classification of Highways

Road/Class	From	To	Road/Class	From	To
<i>Principal Arterial</i>			<i>Minor Arterial</i>		
US 301	Entire length		MD 6	Rose Hill Rd.	US 301
<i>Intermediate Arterial</i>			MD 225	MD 210	La Plata
MD 5	Entire length in Charles County		MD 488	MD 6	MD 5
MD 5 Business	Entire length in Charles County		Middletown Rd.	MD 228	Cross County Connector (existing)
MD 6	US 301	St. Mary's County line	Mill Hill Road Ext.	Smallwood Dr. Ext.	Davis Road
MD 210	NSFIH	Prince George's County line	Poplar Hill Rd.	MD 5	Covington Rd.
MD 228	Entire length in Charles County		Radio Station Rd.	MD 488	Rosewick Rd.
MD 231	MD 5	Patuxent River	Rosewick Rd.	US 301	Cross County Connector (existing)
MD 234	Entire length in Charles County		Saint Charles Pkwy.	Rosewick Rd.	MD 5
Cross County Connector (existing)	Middletown Road	MD 5	Saint Patrick's Dr.	US 301	Cross County Connector (existing)
			Smallwood Dr. E.	US 301	St. Charles Pkwy.
			Smallwood Dr. W.	Middletown Rd.	US 301
			Western Pkwy.	US 301	St. Patrick's Dr.
<i>Major Collector</i>					
MD 6	MD 344	Rose Hill Rd.	Matthews Rd.	MD 227	MD 210
MD 224	MD 344	MD 225	McDaniel Rd.	Middletown Rd.	Smallwood Dr. West
MD 224	MD 225	MD 227	Middletown Rd.	Cross County Connector	MD 227
MD 227	Marshall Hall	US 301	Mill Hill Rd.	MD 228	Smallwood Rd. Ext.
MD 229	MD 228	MD 227	Mitchell Rd.	US 301	MD 225
MD 257	US 301	Rock Point	Oaks Rd.	County Line	Olivers Shop Rd.
MD 344	MD 224	MD 6	Old Washington Rd.	MD 228	Sub-Station Rd.
MD 381	MD 231	Prince George's County line	Olivers Shop Rd.	MD 5	MD 6
MD 925	Cross County Connector (existing)	MD 5 (Business)	Penns Hill Rd.	MD 6	MD 234
Billingsley Rd.	MD 227	Middletown Road	Piney Church Rd.	Renner Rd.	MD 488

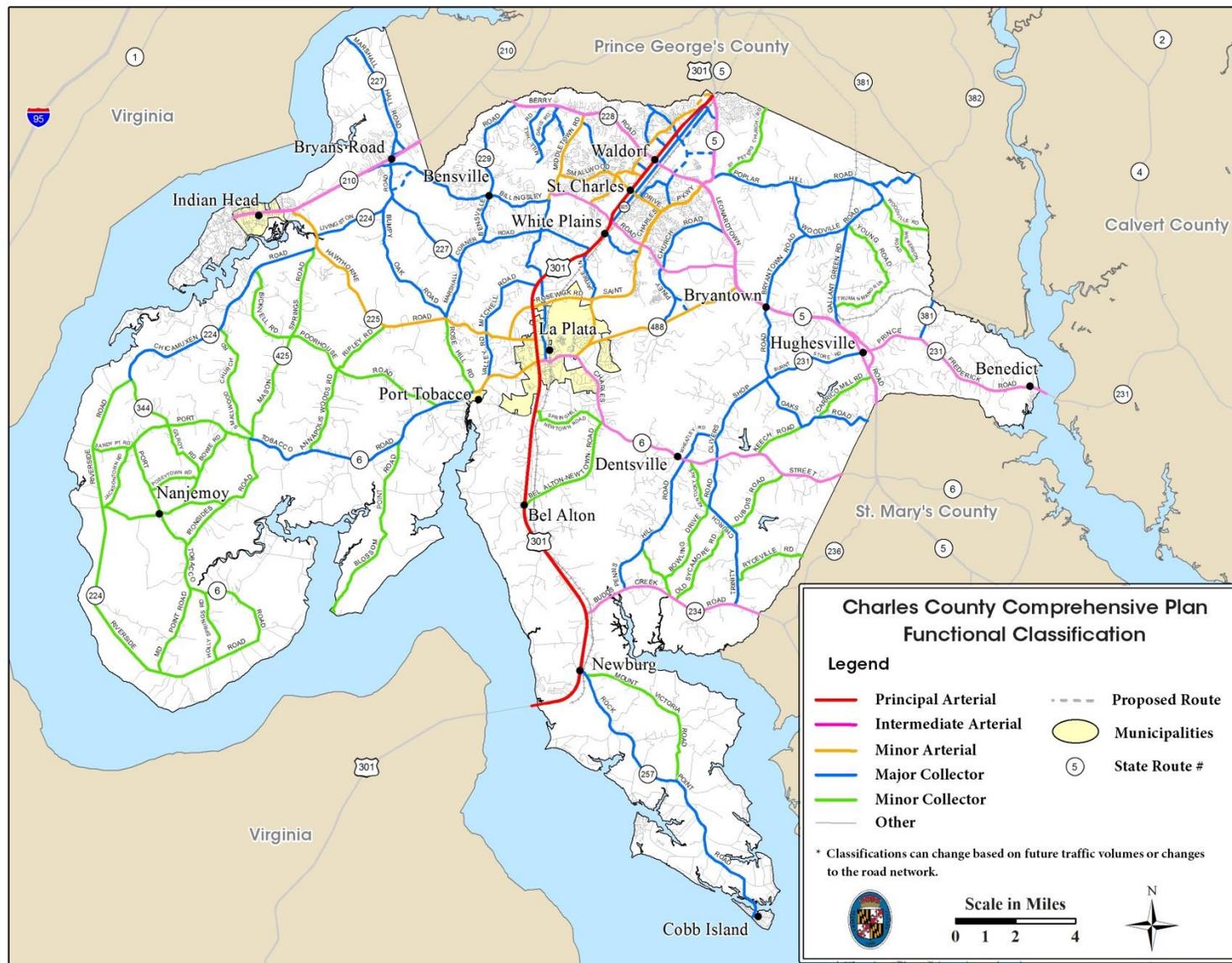
Transportation

Table 8-6 Functional Classification of Highways

Road/Class	From	To	Road/Class	From	To
Bryantown Rd.	Dr. Samuel Mudd Rd.	MD 5	Plaza Dr.	Western Pkwy.	US 301
Bumpy Oak Rd.	MD 224	MD 225	Plaza Drive	Western Parkway	US 301
			Pomonkey to Billingsley Road	MD 227	Billingsley Road
Burnt Store Rd.	Olivers Shop Rd.	MD 5	Post Office Rd.	St. Charles Pkwy.	MD Bus 5
Camp Hedges Place	MD 227	MD 210	Post Office Rd. Ext.	MD Business 5	Old Washington Rd.
Covington Rd.	Poplar Hill Rd.	Prince George's County line	Quailwood Pkwy.	Old Stage Coach Rd.	US 301
Demarr Rd.	US 301	Rosewick Rd.	Renner Rd.	Piney Church Rd.	MD 5
Dr. Samuel Mudd Rd.	Poplar Hill Rd.	Bryantown Rd.	Springhill Newtown Rd.	MD 6	MD 301
Gallant Green Rd.	Woodville Rd.	MD 5	Sub-Station Rd.	MD 5	US 301
Hamilton Rd.	Western Pkwy.	Acton Lane	Trinity Church Rd.	MD 6	MD 234
Holly Lane	US 301	Western Terminus	Turkey Hill Rd.	MD 227	US 301
Hungerford Rd.	MD 227	MD 210	Valley Rd.	MD 225	MD 6
Industrial Park Dr.	Post Office Rd.	Copley Ave	Washington Avenue	US 301	MD 6
Iowa Rd.	Poplar Hill Rd.	Woodville Rd.	Wheatley Rd.	Olivers Shop Rd.	MD 6
Jaybee Lane	Rosewick Rd.	US 301	White Oak Dr.	Post Office Rd. Ext.	Sub-Station Rd.
Marshall Corner Rd.	MD 227	MD 225	Woodville Rd.	Iowa Rd.	Dr. Samuel Mudd Rd.

Figure 8-4 *Functional Classification*

Transportation



As noted above, a considerable amount of pedestrian and bicycle facility planning has been undertaken in Charles County. The combined results of this planning are captured in the 2012 Charles County Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. That Plan is incorporated by reference into the County's overall Transportation Plan.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan indicates a commitment of Charles County to making the County more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly. The County seeks to include bicycle and pedestrian projects in the short-term and long-term planning processes to help create connectivity. The first three chapters of this document identify a need for improvements to bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Charles County, including new facilities, upgrades to existing facilities, and links between existing facilities.

The Plan has identified current conditions, plans, reports, studies, ordinances, and guidelines currently in use by the County and Region. Chapter 2 of the Plan identifies specific goals, objectives, and priorities for moving Charles County forward with a consistent and orchestrated plan to make Charles County more bicycle and pedestrian-friendly.

The Plan also identifies specific implementation actions and future study needs. This Plan is intended to be a working document which is continuously monitored and updated to create an environment in which pedestrians and bicyclists within the County have the ability to conveniently and safely walk and ride for transportation, recreation, and fitness.

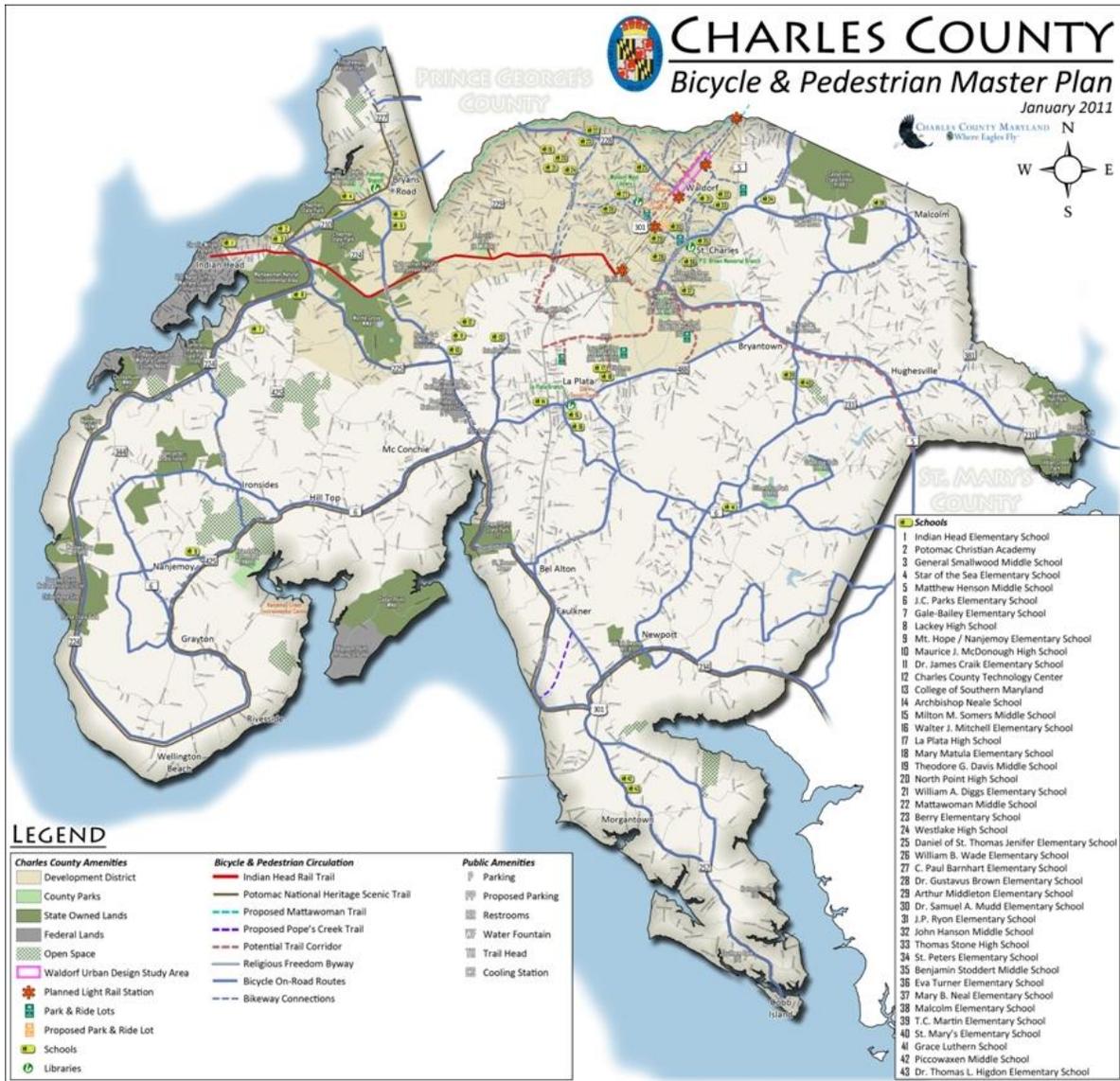
The Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation Map, Figure 8-5 is based on the 2012 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and shows the overall framework of the County's existing and proposed bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure. The Map features the following in trails and routes. The major trails are:

1. **Indian Head Rail Trail.** This partly on-road, partly off-road trail follows the U.S. Government Railroad from Indian Head to White Plains following Old Woman's Run. From White Plains potential trail corridors connect to White Plains Regional Park, and follows MD 5 to Hughesville. From Hughesville the route would head towards Lexington Park via the Three Notch Trail (the former Southern MD Railroad right-of-way).
2. **Potomac National Heritage Trail.** This on-road, regional route enters the County near Bryans Road and runs roughly parallel to the Potomac River around the western and southern sides of the County and on into St. Mary's County.

The major pedestrian and bicycle routes on Figure 8-5 complete a countywide spinal system. Key elements of the system are as follows:

3. Routes along major roads serving key destinations, especially mixed-use centers in the Transit Corridor.
4. Connections between the east and west sides of US 301.

Figure 8-5 Pedestrian and Bicycle Routes



5. Connections to Bryans Road, Indian Head, and La Plata.
6. Scenic routes connecting villages on low automobile-volume roads.

Neighborhood and community sidewalks and pathways are not shown on Figure 5-5 but are important locally and should connect where possible to the countywide system.

Transit Planning

Bus Service

Charles County's 2010 Transit Development Plan (TDP) creates a blueprint for transit development in the County over the next five years. Improving the efficiency of the current system is a top priority as well as increasing service frequency and expansion of services to

growth areas. The TDP found that there was little coordination between the land use approval process and VanGO planning of bus routes. The TDP recommended that VanGO participate in reviews for new residential and commercial development along existing and future routes.

As noted above, bus service is increasing in importance in Charles County especially in the La Plata/Waldorf areas. In response to the increased demand for service the Department of Community Services is expanding the number of contractors supporting the VanGo program. The service delivery is also planned to interconnect with Prince Georges County's local bus system. There are plans to expand the function of the Smallwood Park and Ride as the main transit hub by constructing a transfer pavilion.

Park-and Ride-Lots

In order to meet the growing demand for commuter parking, the County closely coordinates with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to develop new park and ride sites to facilitate commuter needs. In many cases, the strategic planning and design of the park and ride site can facilitate the future location of planned light rail stations. The County has worked with the MTA to develop the new park and ride site and future light rail station at the intersection of MD 925 (Old Washington Road) and Smallwood Drive. This site facilitates 500 to 600 commuter parking spaces, with a planned future light rail station platform adjacent to the identified transit corridor. The County has also planned a park and ride facility as part of the Waldorf Gateway Transit Oriented Development project, located along the transit corridor and Substation Road in northern Waldorf. This location will serve both local bus and commuter bus services, with an ultimate development as the first light rail station as you enter Charles County from the north.

The County continues to seek additional park and ride facilities for both short term and long term uses, including the development of future light rail stations along the adopted transit alignment corridor.

Commuter Rail Service

The Charles County Commissioner's highest longterm transportation priority is the construction of the fixed-route high capacity transit service (Light Rail) from the Branch Avenue Metro Station to Waldorf/White Plains. To ensure the local commitment to the Maryland Department of Transportation, the County has committed local funds to the project to meet the Federal funding requirements. The project has been included in the State's capital funding program, known as the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). The Maryland Transit Administration, Prince George's County and Charles County have jointly applied for Federal funds to initiate the Planning Phase of the project. The completion of the Planning Phase will determine a specific alignment through the Alternatives Analysis process, and enable the project to complete the Federal Environmental Impact Analysis process and Preliminary Engineering. Once completed, this project will be eligible for additional Federal funds for detailed engineering, right-of-way acquisition, and construction.

These plans are based on the 2010 Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study (2010) which identified the alignment corridor for future development into a high capacity transitway along the MD 5/ US 301 Corridor from Waldorf/White Plains to the Branch Avenue Metrorail station in Prince George's County. (See Figures 8-6 and 8-7)

The Preservation Study acted as a guiding tool that determined the locations of potential transit stations, parking and other facilities, and provides Charles and Prince George's counties with a specific transit alignment to protect in their local land use plans. The Preservation Study notes that a successful transit corridor requires proactive planning on the part of the local jurisdiction to plan and execute transit supportive land uses and a transportation vision for the corridor which is integrated into the county's Master Plan and other appropriate land use policy documents. Acting now to preserve a transit right-of-way in the study area is the first step towards reaching the goal of a future transit system along the MD 5/US 301 corridor.

This 2016 Comprehensive Plan responds to the Preservation Study by designating a transit corridor on Land Use Plan Map as a sub-area of the Development District, surrounding and including the business and commercial centers along US 301 from Waldorf to White Plains. This area encourages an integrated mix of medium to high density residential, business, and employment uses in a compact, well-designed, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly environment (see Chapter 3).

To support the Plans for Light Rail Transit Service to Waldorf/White Plains, the County concurrently completed the 2010 Waldorf Urban Design Study which sets forth a vision for a study area comprising the Acton and Waldorf Activity centers, two of four activity centers identified in the Waldorf Sub-Area Plan. The County adopted the new transit-oriented, mixed-use zoning and the associated design code to determine the uses and scale of the re-development. The new zoning code re-creates Waldorf as a vibrant downtown community where businesses and residential uses are integrated as a walkable community. To strategically plan the local infrastructure investment and provide the necessary incentives for re-development, the County completed a comprehensive evaluation of local transportation improvements through the Waldorf Urban Transportation Improvement Plan (WUTIP). The WUTIP provides cost estimates and a planned prioritization of local investments in capital construction of several roadway and other transportation improvements. Following this analysis in 2011, the County began an additional Infrastructure Study in the form of an implementation plan for the water, sewer, stormwater, and other infrastructure. The Infrastructure Study included an analysis of structured parking to serve the development/re-development of the area now being referred to as the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor.

Figure 8-6 Southern Maryland Transit Corridor Preservation Study

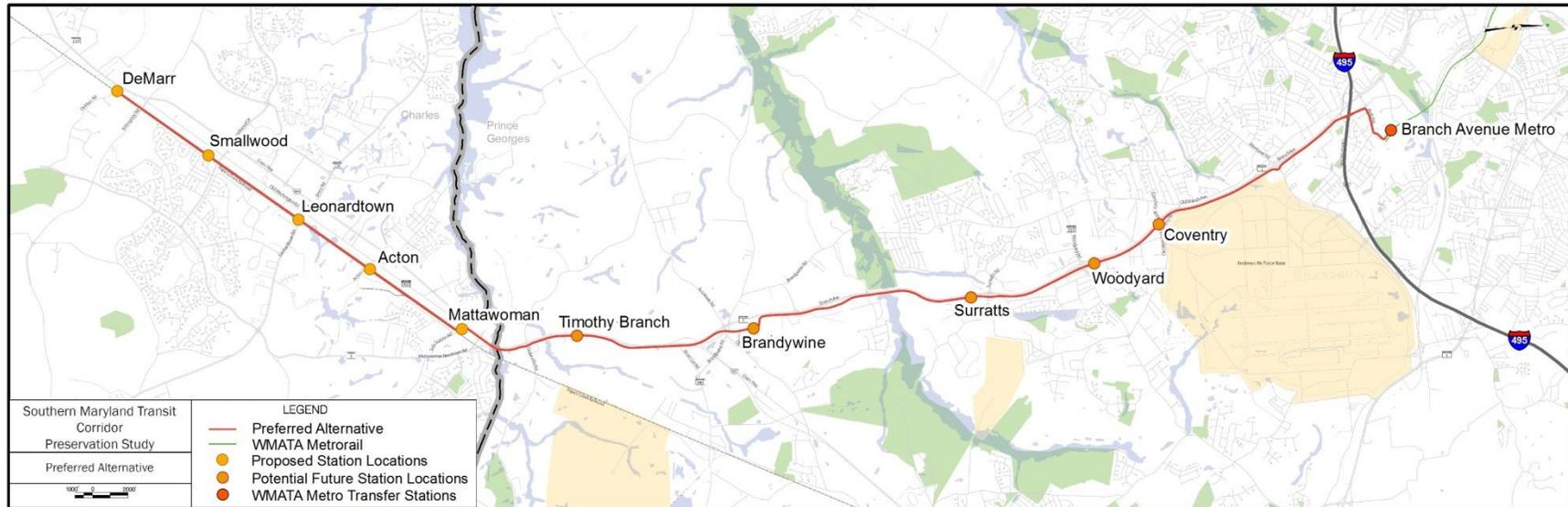
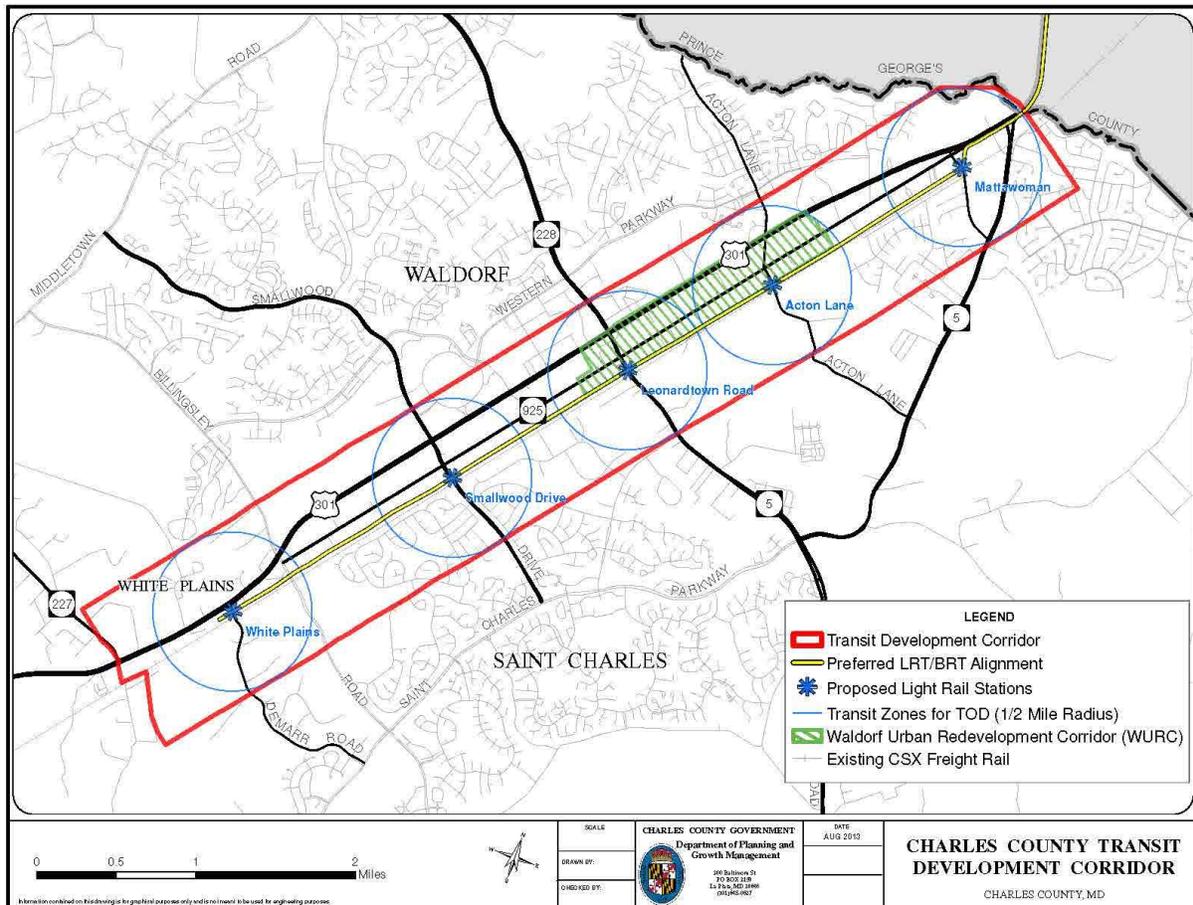


Figure 8-7 Charles County Transit Development Corridor



Air transportation

In 2002 the Federal Aviation Administration approved concept plans for capital development at Maryland Airport with three major components:

- A longer runway and parallel taxiway to better accommodate larger aircraft and to allow the airport to serve as a reliever to Ronald Reagan airport.
- Construction of a corporate aviation facility—parking aprons, hangars, automobile access and parking.
- Expansion of T-hangar facilities to accommodate general aviation growth.

The Maryland Airport has received Federal Grants through the Federal Aviation Administration to expand the runway length and load capacity to handle small to medium corporate jets, as a reliever to the Washington, D.C. area airports. The runway expansion will be completed in 2013. In addition, the owner of the private airport is planning the construction of a new terminal facility to increase airport operations. In 2019 the Maryland Airport was purchased by PSM

Holdings who is currently working on plans to rehabilitate and expand its apron and to build more hangar space to serve the General Aviation Community. A key component of the owner's future improvement plans is completion of the extension of the 3,750-foot runway to 4,300 feet, enabling larger aircraft to access the airport.

Water Transportation

A commuter water taxi service has been an alternative mode of transportation that has been studied by jurisdictions on both sides of the Potomac River since the late 1990's. In 2010, Prince William County Virginia completed a Commuter Ferry Study, in partnership with Fairfax County Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Charles County Maryland, to determine the travel times and vessel types for this type of service. The results indicated that the service could achieve significant time advantages for commuters over roadway travel times. However, shore-side infrastructure would be needed at the port locations in order for the service to be feasible.

Operations of this service were envisioned to be private, similar to taxi cab services. In 2011, the Northern Virginia Regional Commission received a grant to complete a Commuter Ferry Market Study, including contributions from Charles County and several Virginia jurisdictions. The Study results were completed in 2013 and found that the short distance routes were the most feasible options in the short term (National Harbor to DC Waterfront for example). For locations like Indian Head, Maryland and Woodbridge Virginia, it was found that they would have less likely success rate once the short distance services were well established. These farther locations were suggested to be long term options.

Policies and Actions

Policies

Roadway Network/Capacity

- 8.1 Direct the highway program toward the preservation of peak period capacities at acceptable levels along arterials such as US 301, MD 210, MD 228, and MD 5 through the careful application of access management and the development of a supporting network to separate local traffic.
- 8.2 Require land developers to pay for any alterations, improvements, or additions to public roads and other facilities that will be needed to support the proposed development and will not be provided by normal County programming, including, but not limited to roads, entrances, deceleration and turning lanes, inter-parcel connections for subdivisions, signals, and park-and-ride lots.
- 8.3 Continue to pursue inter-jurisdictional efforts to address transportation issues in key corridors especially US 301.

Land Use

- 8.4 Plan improvements to the overall County transportation network to correspond to and support the overall land use plan.
- 8.5 Concentrate transportation improvements in the form of new roads and transit systems which support new development in the County's Development Districts.
- 8.6 Limit transportation improvements in Rural Conservation and Agricultural Preservation Districts to essential capacity improvements as well as maintenance and upgrading of non-standard roads and under-capacity bridges. This objective will provide for a safe and functional road system while limiting development in these rural areas.

Multi-Modal Transportation

- 8.7 Reduce the number of trips by single occupancy vehicles through Transportation Demand Management programs, expanded commuter bus systems, ride-share programs, carpool and vanpool programs, and additional park-and-ride lots.
- 8.8 Promote and expand existing Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs including telecommuting and teleservices which directly reduce commuter trips. Examples of TDM programs include employee vanpool programs, home-based ridesharing programs, local area paratransit program, new and improved park and ride lots, flexible work hours, transit-oriented developments, bicycle /pedestrian facilities, and telework centers.
- 8.9 The County supports the continued operation and expansion of Maryland Airport, and land use and zoning changes to lands surrounding the Airport to facilitate commercial and economic development for the Airport and surrounding area.

Capital Programming, Coordination

- 8.10 Structure the financial policy for the transportation system to achieve the overall goals of the County. In addition to federal and state funding sources, innovative mechanisms, including private cooperation and financial support by developers should be incorporated into financial policies.
- 8.11 Foster close coordination between the County, Maryland Department of Transportation, and the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland on matters related to planning and programming improvements transportation systems management, and whenever necessary, pursue legislative incentives on a coordinated basis.

Actions

1. Develop a standalone Countywide Transportation Master Plan for Charles County.
2. Develop a transportation model to help identify the functional classification of roads, identify problem links in the road network, and assist in preparing advanced planning studies thereby supplementing the Comprehensive Plan and the ongoing work of the Planning Commission.
3. Continue to develop access management plans for County roads and incorporate these plans into the County road ordinance.
4. Continue to coordinate with the State Highway Administration on access management programs along US 301, MD 228, MD 5, and MD 210, and on a case-by-case basis when new development and redevelopment plans are proposed. Review access control policy along US 301 with SHA in light of this 2012 Comprehensive Plan not including a western US 301 bypass.
5. Preserve right-of-way and require road improvements consistent with the Road Improvements Map, Functional Classification Map, and the concept circulation plans to be developed for specific areas. Sections 75, 76, and 83 of the Subdivision Regulations provide for reservation and dedication of right-of-way and roadway upgrades and Section 38 of the Zoning Ordinance limits construction of buildings in planned acquisition limits.
6. Continue to develop advanced planning studies in priority areas to prepare conceptual plans, identify future roadway corridors, existing roadways to be improved, and other measures such as access management, or transit improvements. This will allow the County to use the Adequate Public Facilities requirements, subdivision regulations, and zoning ordinance requirements to preserve right-of-way and implement improvements in an orderly manner over time.
7. Implement the recommendations of the 2012 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. Implement needed pedestrian/bicycle improvements in existing communities and incorporate pedestrian-bicycle facilities into future road projects using Figure 8-5 as a guide for location.
8. Include a new hiker-biker trail to replace phases V, VI and VII of the Cross County Connector road project in the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan and for future Capital Improvement Program (CIP) funding.
9. Preserve right-of-way for future transit ways and acquire parking lots/park and ride sites at future rail stations. Locations are shown in the Waldorf Urban Design Study.

10. Incorporate VanGO into reviews for new residential and commercial development along existing and future transit routes. The role would include:
 - Ensuring that new development is designed to accommodate transit services.
 - Identifying new transit trip generators.
 - Planning for pedestrian and bicycle access around bus stops.
- ~~11. Implement the findings and recommendations from the Maryland Airport Land Use Plan which was completed in 2015. (See additional detail under Actions in Chapter 3)~~
- ~~12.11.~~ Participate in the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' Transportation Planning Board to coordinate local policies and improvements with regional transportation plans and programs.

Chapter 3: Land Use

Land Use.....	3-1
Goals and Objectives.....	3-1
Land Use Plan.....	3-2
Changes from the 2006 Land Use Map.....	3-4
Other Land Use Map elements	3- 13 <u>36</u>
The Sustainable Growth & Agricultural Preservation Act (Land Use Tiers).....	3- 21 <u>18</u>
Growth Rate.....	3- 23 <u>19</u>
Rights of Development, Grandfathering.....	3- 24 <u>0</u>
Regional and Inter-Jurisdictional Coordination.....	3- 25 <u>0</u>
Summary.....	3- 25 <u>1</u>
Policies.....	3- 28 <u>4</u>
Actions.....	3- 29 <u>5</u>

Chapter 3

Land Use

The land use plan is the most important element of the Charles County Comprehensive Plan because it establishes the relationship between the County's existing pattern of development and the location, distribution, and scale of future development.

The land use element integrates goals and objectives from all chapters, and expresses a future vision of Charles County's pattern of development and preservation.

Goals & Objectives

- 3.1 Maintain a planned land use pattern that gives opportunities to create great places to live, work, play and a vibrant county economy.
- 3.2 Concentrate most future growth in areas of the County already served or proposed to be served with public water and sewer. Direct 75 percent of future residential growth to the sewer service areas and to the Towns of Indian Head and La Plata.
- 3.3 Plan for and encourage the highest development densities along the planned US 301 transit corridor.
- 3.4 Provide adequate land area for the approximately 32,000 new dwelling units projected to be built in the County by 2040 and to expand the county tax base and accommodate at least 20,898 new jobs.
- 3.5 Ensure that the amount and rate of development in the County is consistent with its ability to provide necessary public facilities and services in a timely, cost effective and efficient manner.
- 3.6 Locate future employment uses in and near existing employment areas in Waldorf (including St. Charles), in White Plains, ~~within-on properties in the vicinity of~~ Maryland Airport, in the Towns, selected villages, and adjacent to the Harry Nice Bridge.
- 3.7 Concentrate commercial and business areas primarily in the currently developed portions of the development district and in the towns of La Plata and Indian Head, and secondarily in the development districts and village centers rather than sprawling along the County's major roads.
- 3.8 Provide services for rural areas in existing villages while protecting their unique character.
- 3.9 Protect the County's natural resources.

Land use plan

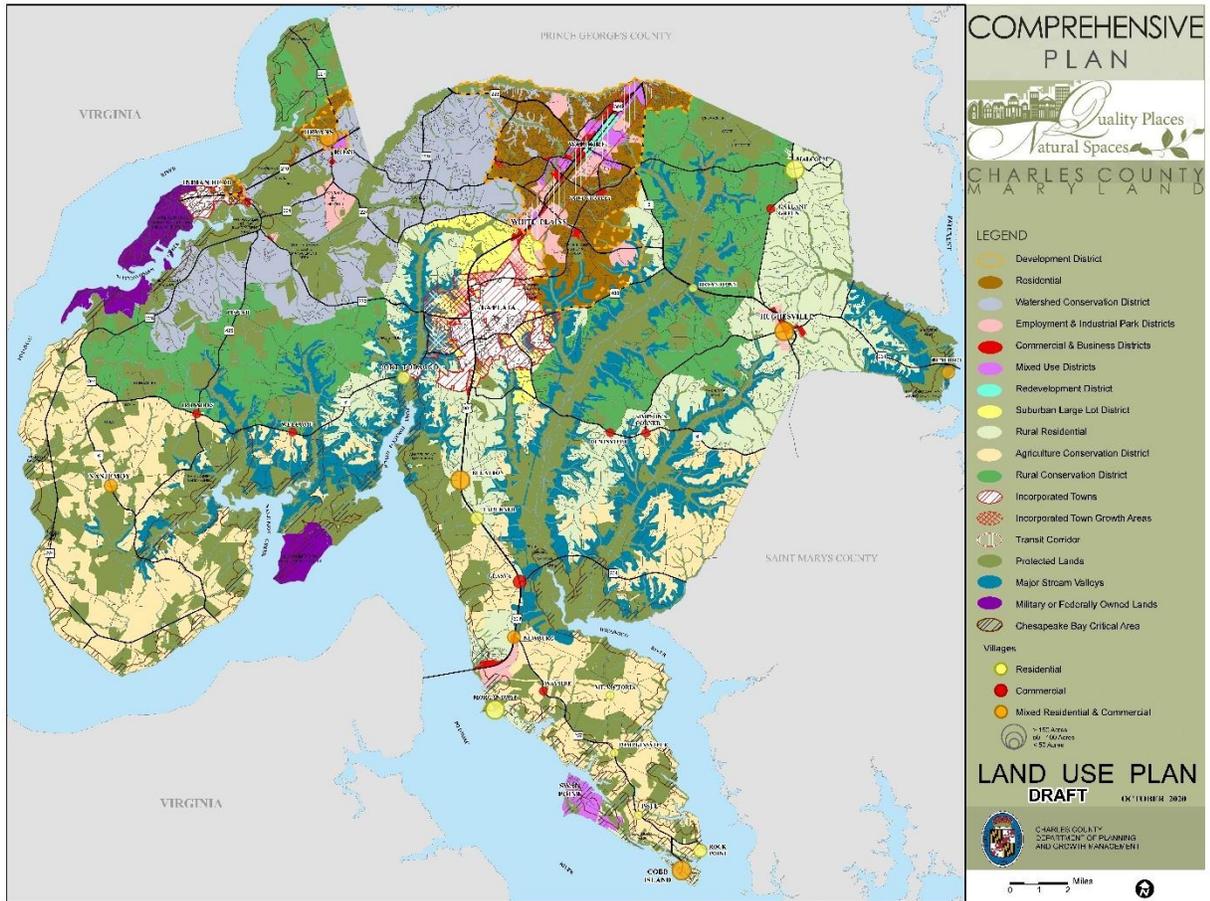
The County future land use plan contains 12 general land use areas or districts:

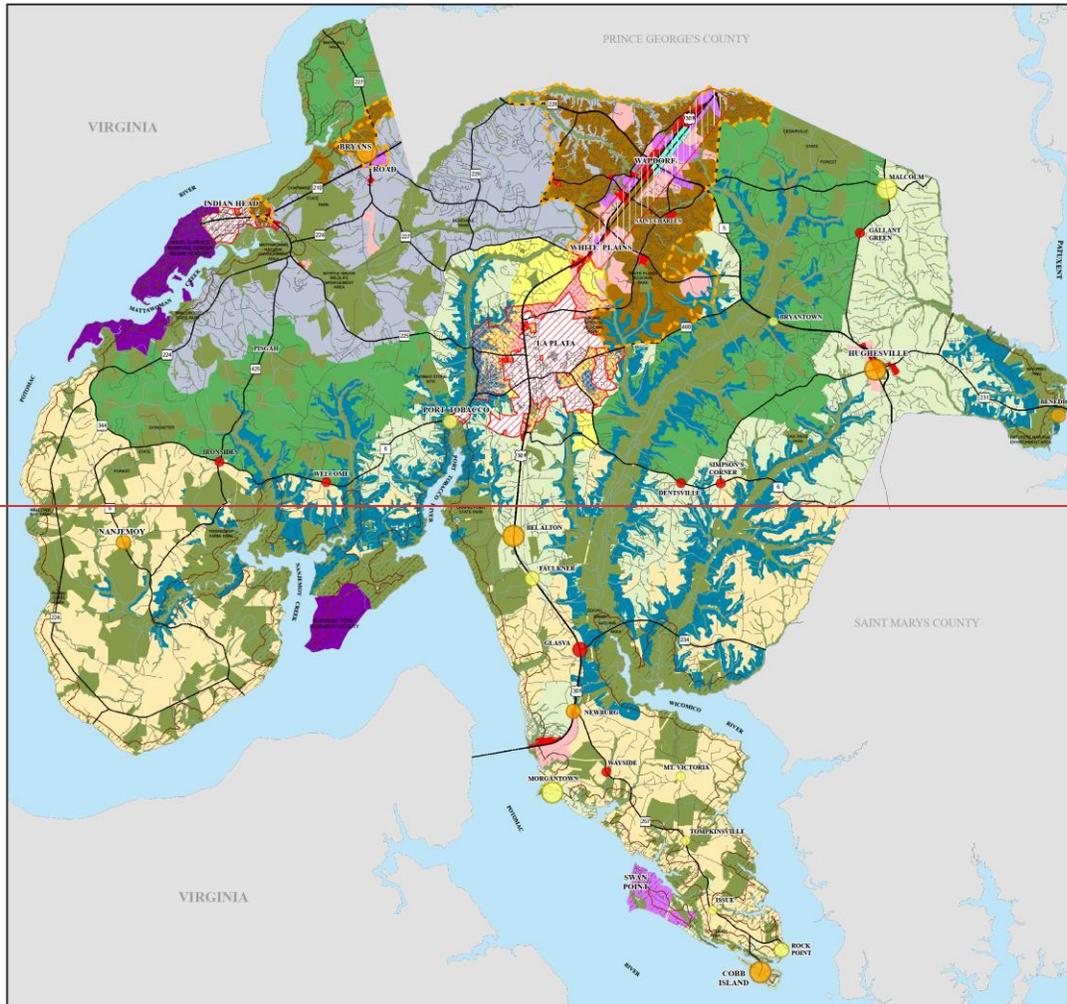
1. Development District
2. Residential District
3. Employment and Industrial Districts
4. Commerical and Business Districts
5. Mixed Use Districts
6. Redevelopment District
7. Watershed Conservation District
8. Villages
9. Rural Conservation District
10. Agricultural Conservation District
11. Suburban – Large Lot District
12. Rural Residential District

The districts derive from a number of inter-related determinants including: existing land use patterns; projected growth and development trends; the natural capacity and suitability of the land to support development; the availability or proposed availability and adequacy of development infrastructure (roads, sewer and water); and the Comprehensive Plan's goals and objectives. The district descriptions below outline the general type, intensity and/or character of development envisioned for the district.

The Land Use Plan Map (Figure 3-1) shows the general location of the districts and establishes the framework and basis for a further refined classification of land into districts for zoning purposes. The land use plan also serves as a guide to County decision makers regarding community facilities (primarily schools, and water and sewer) and transportation planning. The land use map graphic was updated from the previous 2006 plan to better graphically illustrate the land use relationship with the existing protected lands.

Figure 3-1 Land Use Map





COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Quality Places
Natural Spaces

CHARLES COUNTY MARYLAND

LEGEND

- Development District
- Residential
- Watershed Conservation District
- Employment & Industrial Park Districts
- Commercial & Business Districts
- Mixed Use Districts
- Redevelopment District
- Suburban Large Lot District
- Rural Residential
- Agriculture-Conservation District
- Rural Conservation District
- Incorporated Towns
- Incorporated Town Growth Areas
- Transit Corridor
- Protected Lands
- Major Stream Valleys
- Military or Federally Owned Lands
- Chesapeake Bay Critical Area

Villages

- Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed Residential & Commercial
- > 150 Acres
- 50 - 100 Acres
- < 50 Acres

LAND USE PLAN

JULY 12, 2016

CHARLES COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

0 1 2 Miles

Changes from the 2006 Land Use Map

This 2016 Comprehensive Plan makes a number of significant changes to the 2006 Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Concept Plan:

1. Replaces the 2006 Plan's Urban Core with a Transit Corridor. The Urban Core was first established in the 1990 Comprehensive Plan to encourage high-density suburban or urban centers. With a few exceptions the Urban Core has developed at medium rather than at high density and intensity. To encourage higher density, transit-supportive development this 2016 Plan designates future transit stations. The new Transit Corridor further focuses density more directly on the US 301 corridor from Waldorf to White Plains.
2. Designates a new "Redevelopment District" over the Waldorf Urban Design Study area, now referred to as the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC) (see below).
3. Revises the Rural Conservation District (RC) to include the Rural Legacy Area, other lands predominantly covered by agricultural and forest uses, and parts of the County's Zekiah Swamp Run watershed which is the County's Rural Legacy Area. These areas are designated as a "Tier IV" Area of the Tier Map by the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012.
4. Deletes all future road improvements from being shown on the land use map, but it includes them in the Transportation Element (see Chapter 8).
5. Deletes the Neighborhood Conservation Districts. These districts were established in 1990 to recognize residential subdivisions that had already been developed in the County. In these districts future development was to be permitted to continue in the density and pattern at which the respective subdivisions were designed at the time they were first planned. The 2006 Plan deleted these districts in the Development District but in the Deferred Development District, minor subdivisions at a base density of one dwelling unit per acre is permitted. These subdivisions have now had 12 years to complete their development plans since the Deferred Development District was created in 2000, and future development should occur in a manner consistent with this 2016 Comprehensive Plan. Implementing this Comprehensive Plan provision will require revising the County Code at §297-88.
6. All of the Villages from the 2006 Plan are retained; however the 2016 Plan classifies them by size and future function and includes Bryans Road as a mixed use village (see below and in Chapter 10).
7. Does not show the Highway Corridor District. This district was created in the 1990 Comprehensive Plan and first mapped in the 1997 Plan. The Highway Corridor District is an overlay district designed to protect and improve the visual appearance along key highway corridors and to ensure that buffering, landscaping, lighting, signage, and proposed structures are internally consistent and of a quality that contributes to County

character. This district is well established and is codified in Article X of the zoning code, so it is no longer needed on the Land Use Plan Map.

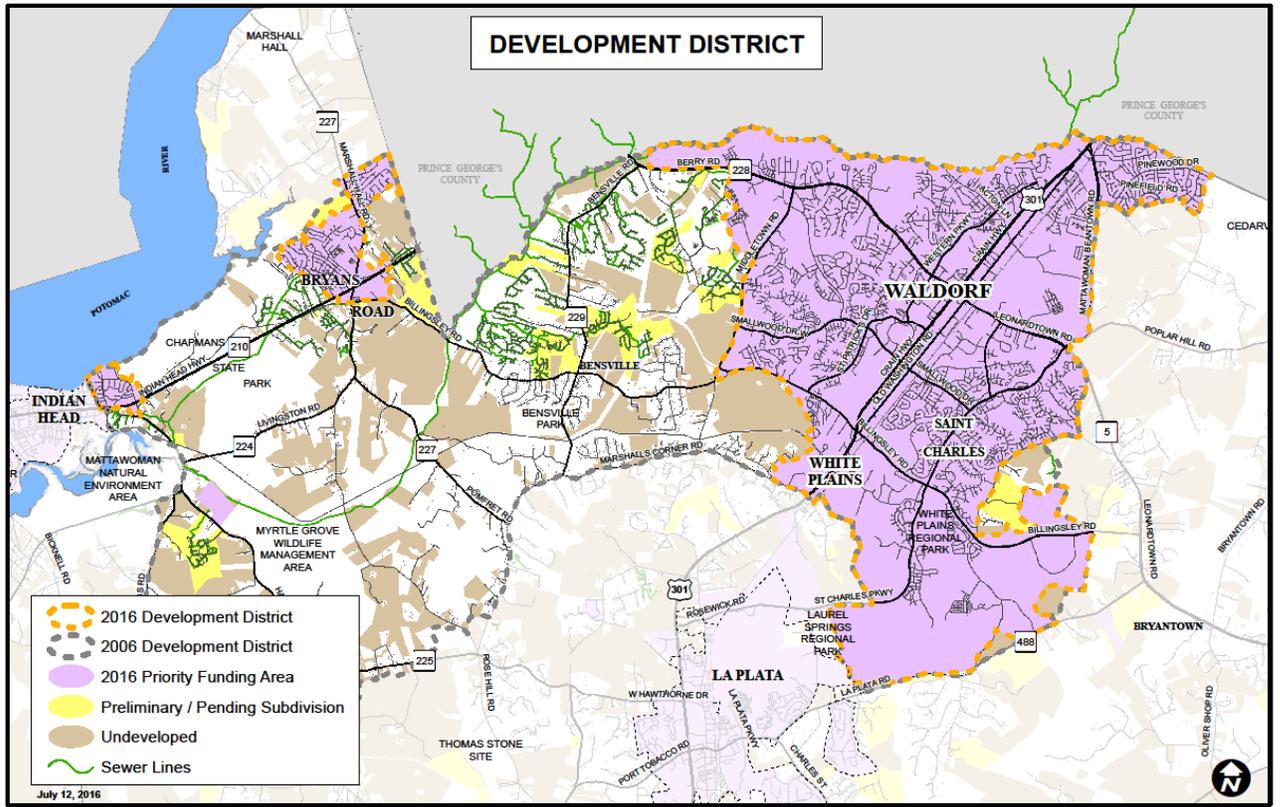
8. Shows lands protected as of 2014 to provide a framework for land use policy decisions. Protected lands are recreation or natural resource-oriented open space lands under government or conservation organization ownership or perpetual easement, plus land in the Resource Protection Overlay Zoning district.
9. Revises the Rural Residential Land Use Category to be more accurately described as Suburban – Large Lot (1 unit per acre) to correspond with the designation of this area as either “Tier II” or “Tier III” (depending on its location) on the Tier Map. Provides direction for future comprehensive rezoning of this area as such.
10. Revises the majority of the previously designated Rural Conservation land uses to be more accurately described as Rural Residential Land Use (1 unit per 3 acres) to correspond with the direction to designate this area as “Tier III” on the Tier Map such that the future vision for the land use will no longer be dominated by agriculture or forestry, but predominantly residential large lot uses of 3 acres or greater. Provides direction for future comprehensive rezoning of this area as such.
11. Eliminates the Deferred Development District (DDD) from the Land Use Map. This is revised to designate a new land use category titled: “Watershed Conservation District (WCD)” with a density of one unit per twenty acres (1:20) to recognize the importance of protecting the Mattawoman Stream Valley and Creek with limited impervious coverage and to better align with the Tier Map designation of a “Tier IV” area.
12. Revises the Agricultural Conservation (AC) Land Use District to designate an area south of State Highway 6 in the southern county as such. This designation keeps the land use density at one unit per three acres, but recognizes that it may not be possible to achieve this density because of the Tier Map restrictions limiting development to minor subdivisions on septic systems of no more than seven (7) lots regardless of parcel size. However, the intent of this designation is to recognize the importance of farm and forest lands in Charles County and to better prioritize farmland protection policies and programs to this area to help preserve farmlands. (See Chapter 11, Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry for the PPA area map).
- ~~13.~~ Reduces the Development District in the Waldorf area and Bryans Road by over 30,000 acres, redrawing it to match a revised Priority Funding Areas (PFA) in this vicinity. The result of this is the need to rezone the remaining undeveloped lands to a lower and more appropriate density outside of the Development District.
- ~~14.13.~~ ~~Revises the previously designated Industrial and Employment based land uses around the Maryland Airport and for the Indian Head Science and Technology Park to Watershed Conservation District in order to further protect water quality and the Mattawoman Creek.~~
- ~~15.14.~~ Reduces densities only in the major stream valleys of the rural areas in Agricultural Conservation and Rural Conservation from one unit per three acres (1:3) to one unit per ten acres (1:10).

The following land use districts correspond to permitted densities, intensities and zoning as stipulated in Tables 3-2 and 3-3 of this Chapter. In addition, they also correspond to tier map designations regarding allowance of development on septic systems or those areas to be serviced by sewage treatment facilities, and subject to other criteria, as stipulated in the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 (SB236). (See Figure 3-3 and associated text further in this Chapter for additional information).

1. Development Districts

The Land Use Plan Map designates a primary Development District of approximately 22,189 acres. This Development District is the principal center of population, services and employment for the County. The incorporated Towns of La Plata and Indian Head serve as separate development districts, although the towns are not under the planning authority of the Charles County government. The Development Districts are the most suitable areas for new population growth. This plan reduced the Development District from previous plans by matching the Development District with the modified Priority Funding Area in the northern part of the County, in part to limit sprawl development and further protect the Mattawoman Creek from runoff from development. It also eliminated the Deferred Development District, converting it to a new Watershed Conservation District. Overall, these changes reduced the Development District from the previous 2006 Comprehensive Plan from 52,200 acres to 22,189 acres for a total reduction in the Development District of 30,011 acres.

Figure 3-2, Development District



The major advantage of the Development District concept is to map in advance those areas where 75% of the County’s residential growth will occur and the County will provide infrastructure to support growth, including water and sewer, schools and roads. By providing opportunities for development in these areas, the County can better achieve its resource protection and agricultural preservation objectives by reducing pressure for development in areas dominated by farming activity or natural resources. To further these objectives, the Development District is designated as a receiving area for development rights that may be purchased and transferred from agricultural conservation and rural conservation areas of the County.

Natural resources such as the Mattawoman Creek as well as elements of rural character that are considered desirable within the Development Districts will be protected.

2. Residential District

The Land Use Plan Map shows the general locations of Residential Districts within the Development District. Because the Development District was reduced in size by this plan, it resulted in large areas of existing residential development to be located outside of the Development District. These areas will be grandfathered and continue, while other projects that are not built and vacant properties now located outside of the Development District

may be subject to being downzoned to Watershed Conservation District (WCD) to prevent further development at unacceptable densities in these areas.

These districts may contain other uses especially institutional and open space uses. A few small areas of commercial, business, and employment uses may also occur in residential districts, but some of these areas are not identified on the Land Use Plan Map due to their small size.

Residential density within the Residential District will vary ranging from low to moderate density in some areas such as Bensville, Pinefield, and near Indian Head, to higher density in other areas, especially in and near the Transit Corridor. Housing types will be primarily single-family detached, but with townhouses and multi-family units in higher density areas.

A large portion of the east side of the Residential District is St. Charles, a large, mixed use Planned Unit Development that functions under approvals originally granted in the 1974 County Zoning Ordinance. St. Charles covers 8,300 acres and is approximately 65 percent complete. St. Charles will continue to develop consistent with the terms of its approval and in conformance with any other pertinent regulations. St. Charles contains various land uses and is, in part, governed by Docket #90, a land development agreement between Charles County and the developer.

Clustering of residential development is encouraged within the Development District. Since the 1992 comprehensive zoning, most subdivisions in the Development District have followed cluster development procedures that encourage better design than development regulations that apply to conventional subdivisions. The procedures assist in the provision of open space, active and passive recreational areas, landscaping and buffering and, in the case of mixed-residential developments, require a design code for such items as street, block and lot layout, streetscape, and architectural standards.

3. Employment and Industrial Districts

To provide locations for additional up-graded and diverse tax base, business that provides higher quality jobs and more job opportunities in general in the County, the land use plan designates several areas for development into employment and industrial districts. These designations were made based on the following considerations:

- Provide a variety of districts in locations near collector and arterial highways and which have or could have access to water and sewer.
- Proximity and relationship to nearby residential areas.
- Allow for a variety of types of industry job opportunities with varying land use requirements.
- Provide sufficiently large land areas.
- Minimize negative environmental impacts.

Employment and industrial areas are located in several key locations: in and around the established industrial parks at White Plains and DeMarr Road; adjacent to the commercial core in Waldorf; on Billingsley Road near MD 5; in Morgantown; in Hughesville; and ~~within the boundary of~~ the Maryland Airport property and properties in the vicinity of the airport.

As part of the Comprehensive Plan, a Land Use Market Supply and Demand Analysis was conducted to research the demand for and supply of land in Charles County to satisfy projected population, housing, and employment growth¹. Based on this Analysis, the Comprehensive Plan does not designate new large additional areas of land for employment or commercial use (see additional discussion in Chapter 7). During the Comprehensive Plan process several participants questioned some of the assumptions in the Land Use Market Supply and Demand Analysis, suggesting that demand for employment and commercial land will be higher than stated. A future study to assess the County's inventory of employment and commercial land is recommended. (See below under Actions).

Commercial and Industrial Floating Zone

To promote economic development and increase the opportunities to attract target industries designated by the Economic Development Department, Commercial, Business and Industrial Parks with a minimum 10-acre area are permitted as a floating Planned Development zone. Such areas would be in addition to the Employment and Industrial Districts designated on the Land Use Plan Map. Guidelines call for a park-like atmosphere providing an attractive buffer between commercial uses and other neighboring land uses. Among the locational criteria considered when approving such a floating zone is the availability of direct traffic access to arterial or collector routes.

4. Commercial and Business Districts

The Land Use Plan Map indicates several core areas in Waldorf and other locations where future commercial development should occur. These areas are centrally located to serve the most concentrated population areas of the County and are accessible to the region by major highways. Combined with the Mixed Use Districts and Villages, these areas will channel commercial development into nodes.

Site plan approval procedures for business parks are required and facilitate coordinating new activities with existing ingress and egress points onto the local street system. Traffic controls can be provided in accordance with anticipated volumes. On-site parking facilities and internal traffic patterns as well as landscaping and buffering are controlled via the site plan review process.

Technical Memorandum, July 2011. Note, this Memorandum is provided in the Comprehensive Plan background materials in the County's Planning Division. (See Appendix "C")

Commercial zoning districts establish access control and landscape or buffer performance standards appropriate to their redevelopment or infill development over time. Where possible, service roads or access management policies will be applied to existing commercial areas adjacent to major routes (e.g., Routes 301, 210, and 5) to protect their through-traffic capacity and function.

The Waldorf area has a legacy of older commercial and business land uses. The Waldorf Sub-Area Plan and the Waldorf Urban Design Study discuss ways in which over time these areas can improve their viability, aesthetics and functionality.

5. Mixed Use Districts

The Land Use Plan Map shows Mixed Use districts in several locations in Waldorf and also in Bryans Road. These areas were first identified as mixed use areas in the Waldorf and Bryans Road-Indian Head Sub-Area Plans. These areas encourage a mix of medium to high density residential, business, and employment uses in a compact, well-designed, pedestrian-friendly environment. The Sub-Area Plans and the Waldorf Urban Design Study contain detailed guidance plans, as well as design concepts to help guide development in these areas. The direction of this plan is to reduce development in the Bryans Road area by focusing development more into a Bryans Road Village center, while rezoning vacant properties previously designated for residential growth by the Bryans Road Sub-Area Plan which are not already fully vested for development. Retail sales over 100,000 square feet on one story is not a use compatible with the intent or purpose of this district (Mixed Use District) and the Transit Corridor.

One other mixed use district is identified on the Land Use Plan Map, Swan Point between Newburg and Cobb Island. This Planned Unit Development functions under a unique approval granted pursuant to the 1974 Zoning Ordinance, and the project will continue to develop consistent with the terms of its approval and with any other pertinent regulations.

6. Redevelopment District

The Redevelopment District recognizes an approximately 320-acre area along Old Washington Road in the heart of Waldorf. The Waldorf Sub-Area Plan (2004) was followed by the Waldorf Urban Design Study (WUDS) that sets forth a vision for a study area comprising the Acton and Waldorf Activity centers, two of four activity centers identified in the Waldorf Sub-Area Plan. The vision is to create a downtown center, an attractive focal point for the larger Waldorf community and a destination with a unique sense of place not offered elsewhere in Waldorf. The WUDS was adopted in 2010 along with changes in the zoning regulations designed to facilitate the types of development that would begin to achieve the vision. This area is now referred to as The Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC) and is discussed further in Chapter 10.

Transit Corridor

The Transit Corridor is a sub-area of the Development District, surrounding and including the business and commercial centers along US 301 from Waldorf to White Plains. This portion of the County has the closest links to the Washington metropolitan area, and has the best opportunity for the use of alternative modes of transportation, including transit.

This area encourages an integrated mix of medium to high density residential, business, and employment uses in a compact, well-designed, mixed-use, pedestrian-friendly environment. Such higher density development promotes alternative modes of transportation, including mass transit and efficient investment in urban services.

Since the highest residential densities are envisioned in the Transit Corridor and mixed use area, lower densities are prescribed in other portions of the Development District.

The County envisions that transit-oriented redevelopment will ultimately emanate from the Redevelopment District (Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor) out into the entire Transit Corridor. Redevelopment proposals consistent with the intent of this corridor will be viewed favorably.

7. Watershed Conservation District (WCD)

The Watershed Conservation District (WCD) incorporates the Mattawoman Stream Valley, most of the watershed, plus an additional 1,160 acres on the eastern end of the district which is within the Port Tobacco Watershed. This eastern area is to be removed from the Priority Funding Area (PFA) designation, except for the property planned for a future school site which will retain the PFA designation. The entire WCD covers 37,455 total acres.

The WCD includes protected lands, steep slopes to the top of bank and wetlands. It was defined by analysis completed by the US Army Corps of Engineers and the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. This area is mostly undevelopable due to its topography and natural resources. (See Mattawoman Creek Stream Valley Map in the Natural Resources Chapter 5, Figure 5-5). However, there are additional transitional lands in between the fingers of the slopes. These areas were previously defined as a “Deferred Development District” which was a holding area for potential future development and assigned a density of one unit per ten acres (1:10). This plan protects this sensitive natural resource for its long term value to the community, its ecological, aesthetic and scenic values, and for its recreation and economic value of a sustainable natural resource. New zoning will be developed to implement this land use district and the density will be set at one unit per twenty acres (1:20) on a permanent basis and no longer as a holding area for development. The updated zoning code should also examine the Resource Protection Zone (RPZ) areas to ensure they are compatible with this new land use district. This plan recognizes that there are existing development projects on sewer and water located within the WCD land use area which will be legal non-conforming uses once the zoning is enacted to implement the new land use district.

8. Villages

The concept of the Village is included in the land use plan to recognize and provide for the special needs of these rural, unincorporated population centers. Villages perform a number of functions in the growth management program, including serving as rural service centers, maritime centers, satellites for heritage tourism and ecotourism and locations for rural residential development. Characteristics common to most of the villages are post offices, country stores, locally owned businesses, religious institutions, small residential enclaves and volunteer fire departments/community centers. Villages tend to be basically residential in character, but they can offer some employment through limited retail, commercial services as well as public or institutional uses.

Village designation in the Comprehensive Plan is important in that designated villages are Priority Funding Areas (PFAs). PFAs are areas where the County and State encourage economic development and growth under the state's Smart Growth policies. PFAs are eligible for grants and other funding and assistance to achieve these objectives provided a project is consistent with these policies. In villages consistency means that a project must serve to maintain the character of the community and not serve to increase the growth capacity of the area except for limited peripheral and in-fill development. Removing village designation would take away the eligibility for funding and assistance and should only be done if further development of a village in a particular location would be undesirable.

Collectively villages play an important part in Charles County life. Villages range in scale from a fork in the road where a general store and service station are located (often referred to as a "commercial crossroads"), to a residential cluster, or "hamlet" surrounding a long-standing business or institutions, and up to a rapidly expanding community that is beginning to emerge as a true mixed-use service center village of regional scope, such as Hughesville. Some, such as Bryantown, have historic designations or heritage elements which suggest future development near them should be limited in scale. As waterfront villages, both Benedict and Cobb Island serve as home to the County's commercial seafood industry work boats that provide it with a unique identity worthy of protection. Benedict is also historically significant for its role in The War of 1812, and is a planned stop on the Star Spangled Banner National Historic Trail that the National Park Service is currently developing between the mouth of the Patuxent River and Fort McHenry to celebrate the bicentennial of this historic event. In 2012, the County adopted a Benedict Waterfront Village Revitalization Plan.

Each of the villages, except Newburg, have either a Village Commercial (CV) or a Village Residential (RV) zoning designation, or a mix of both zoning designations². This plan envisions new zoning categories to be enacted to implement Village Master Plans.

² Newburg was zoned differently as it was located close to the former designated Newburg Town Center.

As part of this 2016 Comprehensive Plan update, the County conducted a special assessment of the County’s 22 villages to assess their function and potential for growth. This assessment resulted in the following classification of villages, which indicates each village’s intended future function and size (see Table 3-1 and the Land Use Plan Map).

Table 3-1 Village Classification

Residential	Commercial	Mixed Residential / Commercial
Small Scale – up to 50 acres		
Bryantown	Dentsville	
Issue	Gallant Green	
Mt. Victoria	Ironsides	
Tompkinsville	Simpson's Corner	
	Wayside	
	Welcome	
Medium Scale - 50 to 150 acres		
Faulkner	Glasva	Benedict
Port Tobacco		Nanjemoy
Rock Point		Newburg
Large Scale - 150 acres plus		
Malcolm		Bel Alton
Morgantown		Cobb Island
		Hughesville
		Bryans Road

Other places in Charles County, such as Pisgah, provide similar functions as the designated villages. To avoid confusion these places are not shown as villages on the Land Use Plan Map because they cannot be PFAs. PFAs only recognize villages that were designated when the Smart Growth Act took effect in 1998. Future development in these places will be considered on a case by case basis. The county will examine opportunities to eliminate the Priority Funding Area (PFA) designations for the small sites located within the Cobb Neck Area which are not in use and transfer those designations to the larger Newburg-Cliffton-Aqualand Sub-Area Plan as needed once the plan has been adopted.

Chapter 10, Community Development, contains additional discussion of development in villages including design concept plans for Bel Alton and Newburg.

9. Rural Conservation District (RC)

The area designated on the Land Use Map as Rural Conservation is a diverse land use and ecological area and includes several current and former sand and gravel mining areas, farm and forest lands, and those lands of most importance for conservation in the Zekiah Swamp Run Watershed. It is focused on land outside the development district and the Zekiah Swamp Run Watershed. Parts of this area have also been designated by the state and County as the Rural Legacy Area. This designation was established in 1998. It is a voluntary program that offers State, federal and local conservation monies for land acquisition or conservation easements on qualifying land to willing property owners seeking to conserve their land. While the zoning allows for 1 unit per 3 acres in upland areas, any development in the ecologically sensitive portions of this area should be designed to minimize impacts to the watershed, drainage and environmentally sensitive resources. This area is designated as “Tier IV” in accordance with the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 which only permits minor subdivisions served by individual sewage disposal systems. It is further the intent that areas designated Tier IV are predominantly conservation areas. All major stream valleys within this land use district are restricted to a density of one unit per ten acres (1:10).

10. Agricultural Conservation District (AC)

The area designated on the Land Use Map as the Agricultural Conservation District most closely corresponds to those areas where farming is prevalent. Included are farmlands, open fields, woodlands, stream valley and marshes. In this District, the County seeks to preserve the agricultural industry and the land base necessary to support it. The County’s fine agricultural soils are looked upon as a natural resource to be retained for farm use wherever possible. Although the district allows housing at a density of one unit per three acres (1:3) in upland areas, the Agricultural Conservation District’s objective is to promote agricultural conservation by prioritizing this area to concentrate governmental fiscal resources that can be used for agricultural conservation easements. Therefore, it supports clustering of lots with a minimum lot size of 40,000 square feet to reduce the impacts of development on farms and forests. Efforts and techniques to preserve the County farmland resources and agricultural industry are discussed in Chapter 11. All major stream valleys within this land use district are restricted to a density of one unit per ten acres (1:10).

This area is designated as “Tier IV” in accordance with the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 which only permits minor subdivisions served by

individual sewage disposal systems. It is further the intent that areas designated Tier IV are predominantly conservation related uses.

The area east of Highway 301 where most of the larger tracts of farmland are located is designated as a part of the County's Priority Preservation Area (PPA). By designating this as the PPA, the County will further prioritize this area within the district to focus its farmland preservation programs such as Transfer of Development Rights (TDR's), Purchase of Development Rights (PDR's), Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF), the US Navy's Readiness and Environmental Protection Integration Program (REPI) to buffer nearby military bases from new residential development, and other programs as they become available.

11.Suburban – Large Lot District (SL)

Suburban Large Lot Districts (SL) are areas that surround the Town of La Plata and generally serve to buffer the development district edges from the more rural residential areas of the County. These areas tend to be fairly close to community services and facilities including schools and major roads.

Development in these areas are at one unit per acre with one unit per three acres in the adjacent Rural Residential (RR) land use area. Residential development in this area corresponds to "Tier II" or "Tier III" on the tier map associated with the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012. Therefore these are consistent with areas planned and zoned for large lot development.

12.Rural Residential Districts (RR)

Rural Residential Districts are intended to allow for rural development at one unit per three acres while preserving the rural character and open space whenever possible. However, major stream valleys within these areas are also subject to a density of one unit per ten acres.

Rural Residential also provides for a full range of agricultural and farming uses and the farmer's right to farm is acknowledged with no restrictions on hours of operation of farm equipment, normal agricultural related noise and odors, and sale of farm products produced on the farm.

Rural Residential Districts are intended to accommodate residential densities up to one dwelling unit per acre with cluster development practices provided the overall gross density remains at one unit per three acres.

This area is designated as "Tier III" per the requirements of the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012. This designation means that the area is planned and zoned for large lot development on septic tanks as the intended predominant use. Any major subdivisions proposed in Tier III areas require public hearings per the requirements of the legislation.

While farming can and is expected to continue in the near future, the long-range land use over time can be replaced by rural residential housing on large lots as the dominant use. Therefore, the designation of Tier III is appropriate and the designation to Rural Residential (RR) is provided to match this policy. Future comprehensive rezoning of this area will be required to better match the land use designation.

Other Land Use Plan Map elements

Protected Lands

To provide a framework for land use policy decisions the Land Use Plan Map shows “protected lands”. Protected lands are recreation or natural resource-oriented open space lands already under government or conservation organization ownership or perpetual easements, plus land in the Resource Protection Zoning district. Protected lands are shown as of 2014 (see Chapter 5).

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area

The Land Use Plan Map shows land in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area. Maryland’s Chesapeake Bay Critical Area law, adopted in 1984, covers lands within 1,000 feet of tidal waters as critical environmental areas in need of protection.

Growth Allocation refers to the size of growth areas assigned to each county based on their shoreline. Charles County has a fixed amount of approximately 1,120 acres of Growth Allocation available for the purposes of increasing the acres of Intensely Developed and Limited Developed Zones. As of 2016, approximately 927 acres remain unallocated (see Chapter 5).

Waterfront Development

Of the County’s more than 180 miles of shoreline, relatively little is developed. From an economic development perspective waterfront development can be very valuable and increasing access to the water is also a County recreation objective. A 1999 Waterfront Development Opportunities study identified seven locations as most appropriate for targeting future waterfront development.

Upper Potomac River shorefront	Mattawoman Creek/Sweden Point
Wades Bay/Mallows Bay Corridor	Port Tobacco River
Potomac River 301 Corridor Crossing	Lower Potomac Area
Village of Benedict	

In 2010, the County Commissioners reviewed development concepts for these seven areas and prioritized Port Tobacco, Benedict, and Potomac Crossing/Aqualand for further work.

A Benedict Waterfront Village Revitalization Plan was adopted in 2012 and a plan for Port Tobacco was completed in 2012. This Comprehensive Plan recommends further study to develop a sub area plan for the Potomac River Crossing/Aqualand/Newburg area (see also Chapter 10).

Incorporated Town Growth Areas

The Land Use Plan Map shows Growth Areas around La Plata and Indian Head. As noted in Chapter 1, under state law, the towns have their own planning authority and adopt their own comprehensive plans and land use regulations. Town comprehensive plans must include a “municipal growth element” that identifies the towns’ future growth (annexation) areas. The County coordinated the development of the Comprehensive Plan with the towns. The Land Use Plan Map shows La Plata’s and Indian Head’s future growth area as shown in its Comprehensive Plan.

Federally owned lands – military installations

Charles County is home to two military installations, Naval Support Facility Indian Head and Blossom Point Research Facility. Both are important facilities that the County supports and wants to retain in the County. Two other military installations are located nearby: The Naval Support Facility at Dahlgren, located in King George County, Virginia, and also the Naval Air Station – Patuxent River NAS, located in St. Mary’s County, Maryland. The Dahlgren facility is closer, directly across the Potomac River. Although Charles County is within the Military Awareness Area boundary of Patuxent River NAS, it is far enough away to limit most potential land use compatibility issues.

Charles County has participated in Joint Land Use Studies related to all of these facilities. These studies are designed to examine compatibility of the facilities and the neighboring communities in an effort to ensure the facility’s long term ability to meet its mission at their locations. The studies have several common recommendations including:

- Establish a Military Influence Area in the Comprehensive Plan land use map, based on noise, frequency and other impacts.
- Develop a process for County staff and the facility staff to review and comment on various development applications within the influence areas.
- Assure that Charles County real estate disclosures are up to date and in place so that potential buyers are made aware of potential issues related to these facilities.
- Target priority properties near the facilities for acquisition and/or protection to ensure compatibility.
- Review the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that county zoning regulations adequately address concerns with development encroachment of the various facilities.

The following exhibits/figures illustrate the areas of potential concern when considering the

various ways to implement the JLUS study recommendations. Pertinent policy and implementation action items related to these studies are included at the end of this chapter.

Figure 3-3 Naval Support Facility Indian Head - Military Awareness Area

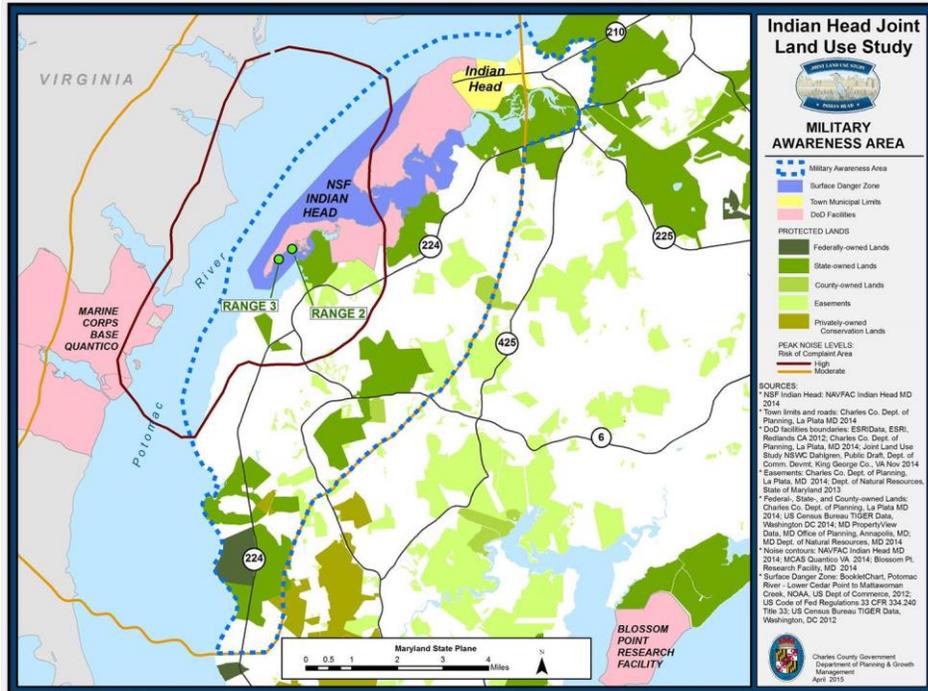


Figure 3-4 Blossom Point Research Facility – Military Awareness Area

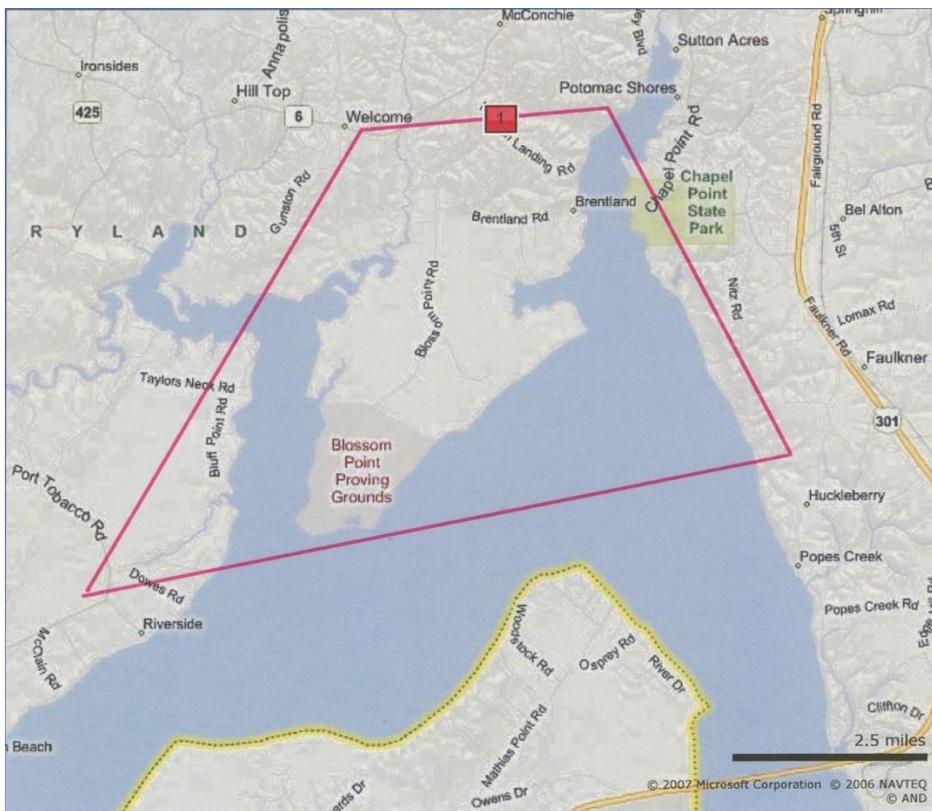


Figure 3-5 Naval Support Facility Dahlgren (King George County, VA) - Military Awareness Area

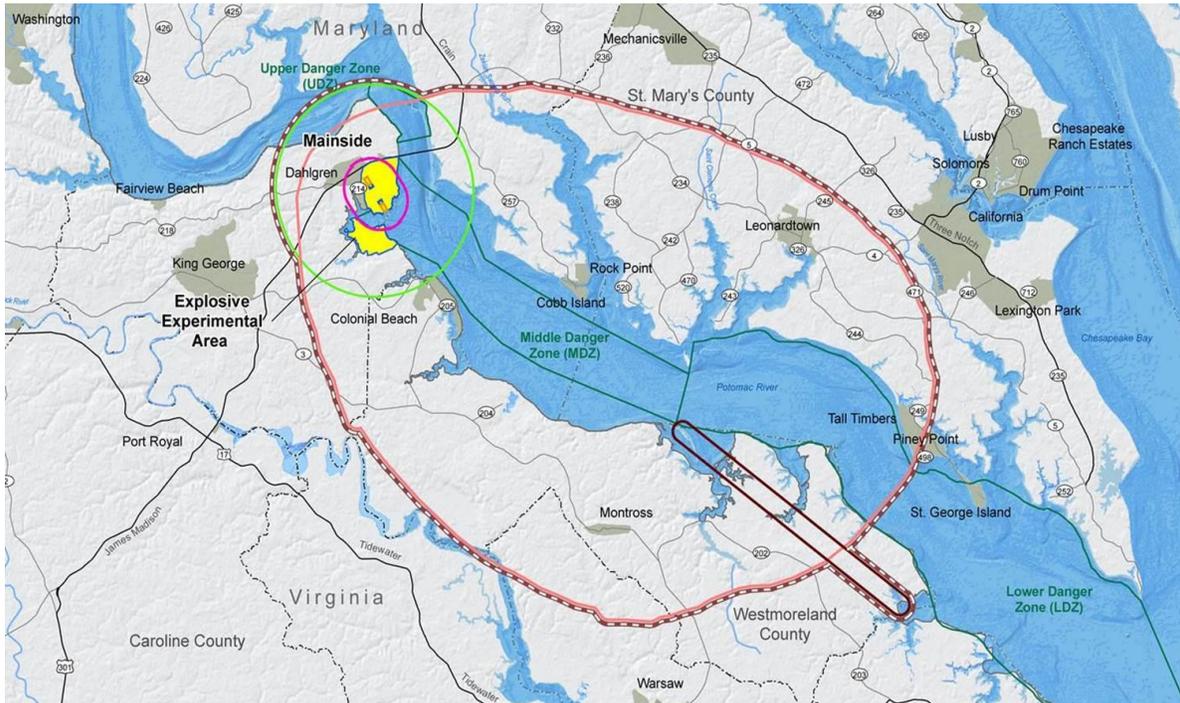
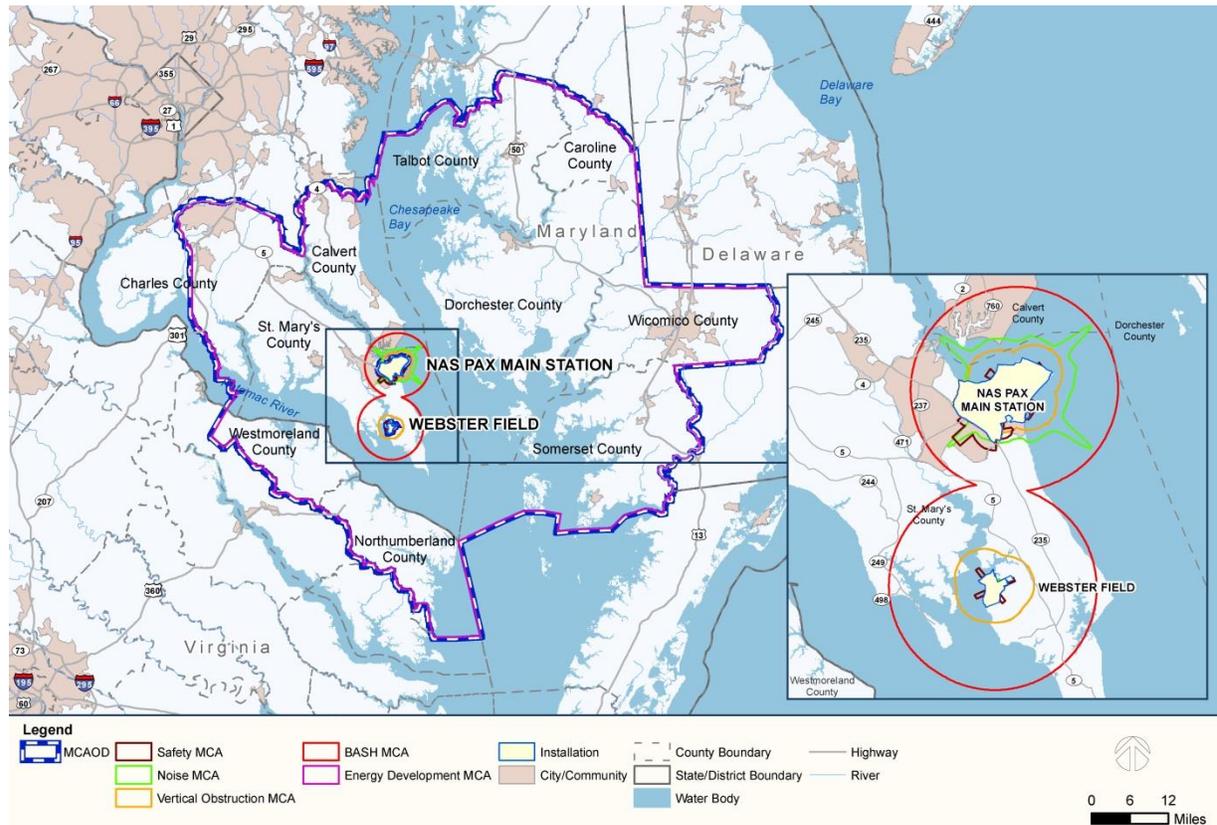


Figure 3-6 Naval Air Station Patuxent River (St. Mary's County, MD) - Military Awareness Area



The Sustainable Growth & Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012. Land Use Tiers

The Maryland General Assembly approved the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act (Senate Bill 236), also known as the septic bill, during the 2012 General Assembly session. The bill is intended to limit the spread of septic systems on large-lot residential development to reduce nitrogen pollution into the Chesapeake Bay and other waterways.

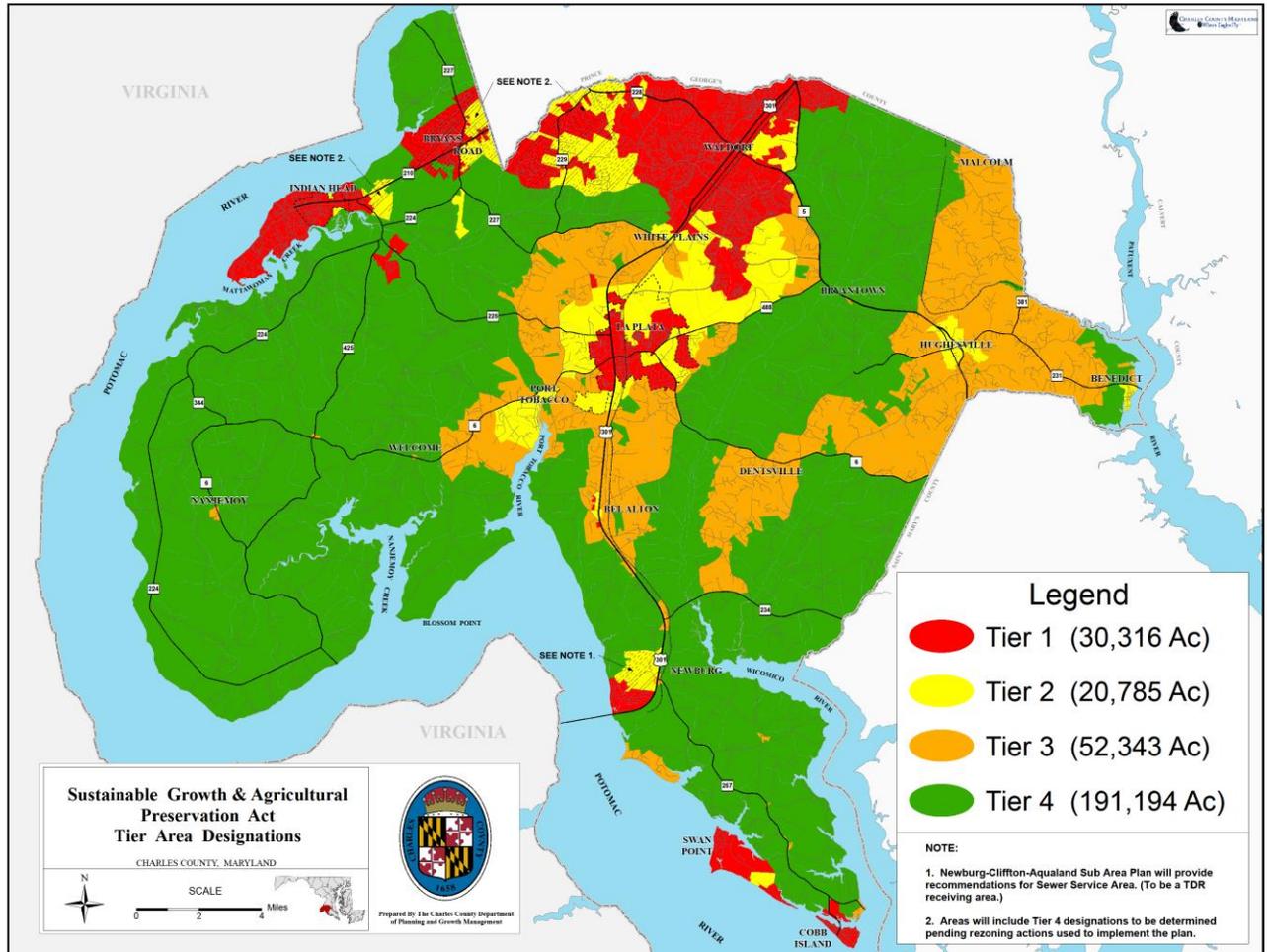
Under the bill, counties and towns must classify all land under their jurisdiction into four “tiers” (I, II, III, and IV).

- Tier I areas are areas that are served by public sewerage systems.
- Tier II areas are areas planned for public sewerage service. Within Tier II areas, community, shared and individual on-site sewage disposal systems are permitted for residential minor subdivisions. However, these systems are considered interim systems until public sewerage service is made available.
- Tier III areas are areas that are not dominated by agricultural or forest land and are not planned for sewerage service. Generally these are areas planned for large lot and rural development on septic systems.

- Tier IV areas have significant contiguous agricultural and forest land. Residential major subdivisions are prohibited in Tier IV areas.

Charles County adopted a “Tier Map” on April 29, 2014. However, this Comprehensive Plan provided a new land use policy framework that resulted in changes to the Tier Map. The new Tier Map was incorporated into this plan and adopted along with the Comprehensive Plan on July 12, 2016. (See figure 3-7 on the following page). The Tier Map and the Comprehensive Plan’s Land Use Map (See Figure 3-1) are consistent.

Figure 3-7 Tier Map



Growth rate

As noted in Chapter 2, the County’s average annual rate of growth was 1.97 percent, higher than its 1.8 percent rate between 1990 and 2000, and from 2004 to 2014 was 1.35 percent.

While Charles County’s growth has remained within its objective, during the Comprehensive Plan process several participants raised the issue of the County’s growth rate. Some participants stated the rate was too high, while others stated that the rate has slowed significantly since the economic recession began in 2007. The County Commissioners’ actions to curb sprawl, reduce the development district size and limit densities in sensitive natural resource lands is anticipated to result in a slower rate of growth than in previous decades, to approximately 1% or less – which is the intent of this plan. This should be

monitored during the course of this plan to determine the effect of these new growth management land use policy provisions as it impacts the rate of growth over time.

Rights of Development, Grandfathering

Grandfathered rights means that a property owner is permitted to move forward with a development proposal even though a change in the applicable law would currently prevent such development³.

During the Comprehensive Plan process which included public outreach in 2011-2012, several participants raised the issue of grandfathering. The Department of Planning and Growth Management reported to the Planning Commission⁴ that the current process is not fair to the applicant (developer) or to the public for the following reasons:

1. At some point a development should be allowed to proceed without the need to come back to the county for additional reviews and extensions even though the project is not yet 100% completed.
2. The public has the right to know that projects, once approved, will be advancing in the development process in a timely manner and complying with the most appropriate development regulations. Development should not have secure permits forever without doing any improvements, as is currently allowed.
3. The County accounts for public facility impacts for each project; so if a project does not move forward it could be locking up facility capacity that would otherwise be available for projects that are prepared to move forward but cannot because the capacity is lacking. The school allocation process is a good example.
4. The current system is a waste of time and resources for both developers and the County staff.

As a result of this public feedback, the county implemented changes to the Subdivision Code in 2014 which now incorporates time limits on preliminary plans and plan renewals. If applicants fail to meet these time restrictions, their plans become void and will be required to re-submit and begin the process again under any new policy or regulations put in place

³ Cases on vesting in Maryland include: *Pemberton v. Montgomery County*, 275 Md. 363, 340 A.2d (1975) and *Prince George's County v. Sunrise Development, L.P.*, 330 Md. 296, 623 A.2d 1296 (1993). To claim a vested right in Maryland, a property owner must meet a two-part test: 1) The property owner must have followed existing procedures and laws or representations of government (generally this means spending money to progress through the development process); and 2) The property owner must have made changes on the property that can be discerned as a manifestation of the commencement of work, thereby giving notice to the public. Generally this means that some kind of construction has occurred on the property, such as digging and the pouring of footings. Source: Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Commission, Planning Board and Board of Appeals Education Course 2010.

⁴ Planning Commission Meeting of February 27, 2012. Comprehensive Plan Work Session #I.

since the original approval. Additional analysis and changes to the County's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance may also be of value.

Due to other significant changes to this plan, projects will be reviewed on a case by case basis to determine consistency with this plan and vested development rights or changes required to previously approved plans to comply with the Comprehensive Plan.

Regional and inter-jurisdictional coordination

Today's complex land use and growth management issues cross jurisdictional boundaries and frequently require inter-jurisdictional and regional solutions. Vital regional issues include: transportation, especially highways and transit; environmental issues, especially water and air quality; groundwater; economic development, including agricultural markets, marketing, and tourism promotion; public safety, fire and emergency services, and recreation. Benefits of coordination include:

- Compatible goals to guide development and resource protection.
- Improved environment, better business climate, and higher quality of life.
- More efficient and more cost effective service delivery.
- Fewer conflicts and political and legal battles.

Charles County participates actively in numerous regional organizations including the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland and its various committees and commissions, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Southern Maryland Travel and Tourism Commission and the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission.

The County coordinates closely with the Towns of Indian Head and La Plata especially in the areas of public safety, emergency management, housing and development policies as they relate to school capacity, and recreation. While agreement on all issues is not always forthcoming, there exists a good working relationship between the three jurisdictions.

Summary

Table 3-2 summarizes proposed residential densities by Comprehensive Plan Land Use Districts. Table 3-3 lists the zoning districts that are consistent with the Land Use District designations. Land use and zoning must be consistent prior to consideration of development approvals. The base densities will be further examined after adoption of the plan in order to consider changes as a mechanism to improve the use of transferable development rights (TDRs). (See policies that are located at the end of this chapter).

Table 3-2 General Guidelines for Residential Densities by Land Use District

Comprehensive Plan Land Use District	Dwelling Units Per Acre	
	Base densities for the respective district that may be permitted by right	Anticipated average densities for all residential development in the district
Residential District	1 ¹	2 to 4 ²
Mixed Use Districts	0 to 2 ³	2 to 6 ²
Village Centers	Per approved village plans	1-5
Suburban Large Lot	1	1
Rural Conservation	0.33	0.2
Agricultural Conservation	0.33	0.2 ⁴
Watershed Conservation	0.05	0.05 ⁴
Rural Residential	0.33	0.2
Redevelopment District/ Transit corridor (including Mixed Use Districts)	12-15 ⁴	14-24 ⁵

Notes

- ¹ The overall densities in the areas of St. Charles and Swan Point are determined by existing agreements and Zoning and Subdivision Code restrictions. Densities in planned development will be determined on a case by case basis. WCD zoned areas within the Residential District may have a density of one unit per twenty acres.
- ² To achieve these average densities, per-site densities (dwelling unit yield) allowed in portions of each planning district will be higher. Maximum residential densities may be achieved through floating zones, density bonuses of varying types, and/or transfer of development rights
- ³ The zero figure reflects the fact that the base district in some mixed use districts is non-residential.
- ⁴ Although these land uses allow one unit per three (1:3) acres, the approved "Tier Map" restricts the total number of units allowed on septic systems to minor subdivisions in Tier IV areas (conservation land uses), up to seven (7) units. Therefore, overall gross density varies based on how much land is proposed for development
- ⁵ Zoning Code §297-96 Activity Center Zones; Waldorf Urban Design Study

Table 3-3 Land Use District Zoning District Consistency

Land Use Category Designation	Consistent Zoning Districts*
Residential	RR, RL, RM, RH, RO, PRD, MX, PMH, TOD, WCD
Watershed Conservation District	WCD
Employment & Industrial Park District	IG, IH, BP, MX, PEP, TOD
Commercial & Business District	CN, CC, CB
Mixed Use Districts	CC, CB, MX. (WPC & Docket #250 for Swan Point)
Redevelopment Districts	WC, AUC – Waldorf. CRR, CER, CMR – Bryan’s Road
Rural Conservation	RC, WCD
Agricultural Conservation	AC, WCD
Rural Residential	Rural Residential (RR) to be revised, updated.
Suburban – Large Lot	Currently RR, to be rezoned SL to be a new zoning district.
Incorporated Towns	(See La Plata and/or Indian Head Zoning Codes)
Transit Corridors	CN, CC, CB, Transit Corridor = MX, TOD
Protected Lands	Per underlying zoning
Military or Federally Owned Lands	RC (Federal Jurisdictions)
Chesapeake Bay Critical Area	IDZ, LDZ, RCZ (and underlying zones)
Villages	RV, CV, MX, PEP (or village master plan zoning)
St. Charles Area	PUD*

Consistent zoning may vary based upon land use boundaries, parcel sizes, permitted densities or other regulations such as Chesapeake Bay Critical Area, Wetland Protection Regulations, Resource Protection Zones, Septic Tier restrictions or other local, state or federal regulations. St. Charles PUD is also regulated by Docket #90.

Please see Appendix “C” at the end of this plan for a description of each Zoning District as abbreviated above. Zoning districts not shown by the corresponding land uses in the table above shall be considered inconsistent with the land use.

Policies

- 3.1 Coordinate the use of the Land Use Plan Map, the zoning map, the subdivision regulations, the capital improvements plan, and the Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan with one another in terms of districts, locations, planned expansions and coordination with the Public School System Capital Improvements Plan (CIP) to assure growth management efforts are consistent. Under state law, zoning and development policies and actions must be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan (Land Use Article (effective October 1, 2012, Section 1–303).
- 3.2 Maintain the designation of the Development District as a receiving area for development rights that may be purchased and transferred from sending areas in rural areas of the County.
- 3.3 In order to improve the market for the Transfer of Development Rights (TDRs), and to conserve natural resources in the countryside of the county, examine the base densities for residential development in all zoning or development districts or docket, and consider changing and lowering base densities but allowing for established development density thresholds with the purchase of development rights (TDRs).
- 3.4 Revise the Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) regulations to
 - a) Eliminate the buyback provisions currently in place in order to ensure resource lands remain protected once they are restricted through the TDR process.
 - b) Consider requiring commercial TDRs.
- 3.5 Use the adequate public facilities ordinance to manage the location and timing of new development and its effects on schools, roads, and other public facilities.
- 3.6 Consider amendments to the Land Use Plan Map and zoning maps to accommodate the expansion of incorporated towns provided:
 - Such amendments are based on the incorporated town's Comprehensive Plan;
 - Incorporated towns agree to enter into intergovernmental agreements to ensure the provision of adequate public utilities to these areas; and,
 - The proposed development is consistent with the goals of this Comprehensive Plan.
- 3.7 Coordinate on regional issues by nurturing good, working relationships with the State, with neighboring jurisdictions especially Calvert, Prince George's, and St. Mary's Counties, and with the Towns of Indian Head and La Plata through planning agreements, plan referrals, information sharing, and consultations.
- 3.8 Use land use controls, including but not limited to architectural and site design guidelines, to establish standards for development which improves its quality.
- 3.9 Protect residential areas from incompatible activities and land uses in order to ensure comfortable and safe living environments.

- 3.10 Protect commercial, business and employment areas from incompatible activities and land uses in order to ensure their continued viability and growth.
- 3.11 Guide development away from areas vulnerable to natural hazards.
- 3.12 Protect military installations from incompatible land uses and consider implementation of recommendations contained in approved Joint Land Use Studies.
- 3.13 Ensure that zoning is consistent with the land use districts as designated on the Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map.
- 3.14 Establish a Priority Preservation Area (PPA).

Actions

1. Update the County's land development regulations (zoning, subdivision codes and related ordinances) to implement the Comprehensive Plan's land use chapter and ensure the regulations are consistent with this plan's objectives, policies and direction. In conjunction with this, process a Comprehensive Rezoning of the County's Zoning maps to also be consistent with the objectives, policies and direction of this Comprehensive Plan.
2. Update the county's land development regulations to limit the footprint of a single-user retail building use in the mixed use district and transit corridor to 100,000 square feet.
3. Examine mechanisms, strategies and actions to manage growth and develop a growth rate management model based on best management practices, and present various options to the Planning Commission for review and consideration.
4. Conduct a detailed study of the employment and commercial undeveloped land supply (including location and development potential) to determine whether additional land should be recommended for designation as employment or commercial land.
5. Develop a small area plan for the Potomac River Crossing/Aqualand/Newburg area. (See also discussion in Chapter 10).
6. Consider revisions to Transferable Development Rights and potential new receiving areas such as Newburg, Bel Alton and other village locations.
7. Study and recommend potential changes to the provisions for adequate public facilities to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of such systems
8. Implement the recommendations of the various Joint Land Use Studies. Develop specific measures, ordinances or other actions to ensure compatibility between land uses in Charles County and the associated military installations.
9. Examine opportunities to transfer the Priority Funding Area (PFA) designations for the small sites located within the Cobb Neck Area to the larger Newburg-Cliffton-Aqualand Sub-Area Plan as needed once the plan has been adopted.

10. Rezone vacant residential properties that were removed from the Development District in this plan to a lower density in order to limit sprawl development and protect water resources.
11. Coordinate with the State of Maryland to establish a new Nanjemoy-Mattawoman Rural Legacy Area.
12. Rezone major stream valleys to one unit per ten acres (1:10).
13. Rezone the Watershed Conservation District lands to one unit per twenty acres (1:20).
- 13.14. Develop new zoning to facilitate development of compatible commercial and employment uses on lands in the vicinity of the airport, to support airport operations and future expansion.

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

PLAN



CHARLES COUNTY
MARYLAND

LEGEND

- Development District
- Residential
- Watershed Conservation District
- Employment & Industrial Park Districts
- Commercial & Business Districts
- Mixed Use Districts
- Redevelopment District
- Suburban Large Lot District
- Rural Residential
- Agriculture Conservation District
- Rural Conservation District
- Incorporated Towns
- Incorporated Town Growth Areas
- Transit Corridor
- Protected Lands
- Major Stream Valleys
- Military or Federally Owned Lands
- Chesapeake Bay Critical Area

Villages

- Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed Residential & Commercial
- > 150 Acres
- 50 - 100 Acres
- < 50 Acres

LAND USE PLAN

PROPOSED MD AIRPORT AREA REVISION

OCTOBER 2020



CHARLES COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT

