The Bates Neighborhood
Community Legacy Plan

Prepared for:
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING
CITY OF ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

October 10, 2005

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EDAW **DESIGN, PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTS WORLDWIDE**

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Introduction

1.0

The Bates neighborhood is located in the City of Annapolis, Maryland, about one mile from the historic core of the City. As part of the greater Baltimore Metropolitan area, Annapolis was established in 1649 and has been growing outward from Church Circle for over 350 years. Most of the historic core of the City remains preserved due to strong historic preservation policies, however, areas surrounding the City have been more susceptible to development trends that were strongly influenced by the automobile.

The City and its environs have been experiencing a growth in population. Along with an influx in residents, new services, including retail, commercial, and institutional facilities have been created to serve the increasing needs of residents and visitors. Traditional corridors, including West Street, were once primarily residential and carried people to the downtown area and center of commerce. Today West Street is mostly commercial and both West Street and Spa Road carry people around and through the City, connecting to regional highways and various job centers.

The Bates neighborhood covers approximately 28 acres, situated between the West Street and Spa Road corridors, immediately west of Westgate Circle. Home to less than 300 residents, the neighborhood is primarily African American and has strong ties to African American heritage, including the old Wiley H. Bates High School. Redevelopment along the major corridors has started to impact the neighborhood as large mixed-use projects get underway bringing new residential, office and commercial uses.

With continued growth expected, the time is right to evaluate mechanisms to further stabilize and improve the Bates neighborhood. The neighborhood is on the cusp of revitalization efforts in the City; it is an ideal time to chart a path for continued neighborhood stabilization and preservation.

Figure 1.1 Study Area Location

Community Legacy is a program of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and is designed to assist urban neighborhoods, suburban communities and small towns that are experiencing decline and disinvestment, but have the potential, with modest public and private investment, to be more vibrant places to live and work.

The Community Legacy Program is intended to assist communities and local decision-makers. The program provides assistance, funding and support for projects aimed at enhancing community life. One requirement of the program is the completion of a Community Legacy Revitalization Plan. Goals of the Legacy Program include:

- Stabilize and Enhance the Community
- Address Local Revitalization Issues
- Develop Comprehensive Recommendations
- Engage a Broad Cross-section of Stakeholders
- Create a Distinctive Sense of Place
- Attract New Investment
- Protect Historic Resources
- Achieve Consensus for Implementation
- Identify Funding Strategies

The City of Annapolis actively pursues funding for the completion of Legacy Plans and other neighborhood improvement programs.

1.2 Other Planning Initiatives

There are several on-going initiatives at both City and County levels that will influence revitalization efforts in and around the Bates Neighborhood. The redevelopment of the Wiley H. Bates High School will add another regional-level attraction for both senior citizens and children. Major redevelopment projects along West Street will also bring additional retail and residential uses to the area. Long term planning is guided by the City's Comprehensive Plan and other on-going studies including corridor plans and policy documents. Together these studies and initiatives exemplify a planned approach to development. Initiatives and studies of particular interest to the Bates Neighborhood have been summarized below.

CENTRAL AND OUTER WEST STREET CORRIDOR LAND USE & URBAN DESIGN PLAN, 1993
Referred to as the West Street Corridor Plan, the study divides West Street into three segments: Inner, Central and Outer. The Bates Neighborhood falls largely within the Central Segment, and a small portion near Westgate Circle is included in the Inner Segment. The Study provides recommendations for the overall land use and urban design of West Street and evaluates the transportation system. The report describes Central West Street as having a non-user-friendly pedestrian environment with unsafe sidewalk conditions that are in disrepair or inaccessible due to automobile encroachment from nearby auto dealers. It recommends the purchase of additional right of way to expand and improve sidewalks, the separation of pedestrians from traffic through landscaped buffers, and the elimination of parking encroachment on Russell Street.

ANNAPOLIS COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, 1998 The City's Comprehensive Plan provides direction for decision makers and citizens for the future development of the City. Building upon the 1985 Comprehensive Plan, this document articulates a City Vision that promotes the City as one community that is diverse yet interconnected and an integral part of a larger region. The Plan identifies Central West Street (from West/Spa/Taylor intersection to the vicinity of Legion Avenue) and recommends maintaining the existing neighborhood character with a balance of residential and commercial uses. Specific actions recommend improving the streetscape, including sidewalks and covered bus stops, and extending the urban design improvements from Inner West Street. Where applicable, recommendations from the Comprehensive Plan have been referenced to support Legacy Plan strategies.

PARK PLACE REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT, 2000
Located on Westgate Circle, Park Place development will include 212 condominium and apartment units, 50,000 SF of retail space, 235,000 SF of office space, 225 hotel rooms and a 950 seat cultural facility.

Park Place located on the Westgate Circle is within walking distance of the Bates neighborhood.

WILEY H. BATES HIGH SCHOOL REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT Efforts are underway to redevelop and reuse the Wiley H. Bates High School. New uses will include 71 Senior Citizen independent living units, a Boys and Girls Club that includes a cafeteria and gymnasium, a Senior Center, memorial space dedicated to Wiley H. Bates, and recreational fields. The entire building is about 125,000 SF. Arundel Community Development Services (ACDS) is managing the project on behalf of Arundel County.

SEVERN BANK REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT, 2004
A five-story building between Westgate Circle and Brown Street will be primarily used for office space, including Severn Bank offices and

a law firm. The building is 82,000 SF and will include first floor retail uses such as a restaurant. Parking will be accommodated in a 4-story parking garage along Brown Street and in one level underground the main building. The project will also include improved sidewalks and coordination with Maryland Hall to share parking during specified events.

MARYLAND HALL MASTER PLAN Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts is engaged in a master planning effort to chart the future of its operations and campus. The Master Plan is considering a range of options, including improved vehicular, pedestrian, and transit access, construction of new performance and classroom space, and reconfigured parking areas. Implementation of the Mater Plan will be subject to a capital fundraising campaign.

1.3 Process and Outreach Approach

The overall planning process was developed in an effort to build support and momentum within a community that was not typically involved in City planning efforts. Over the years, residents of the neighborhood have witnessed significant change around them, however, this planning effort focused on effecting change within the neighborhood, and as a result, residents became invested and motivated. The process was richly influenced by interested and engaged residents.

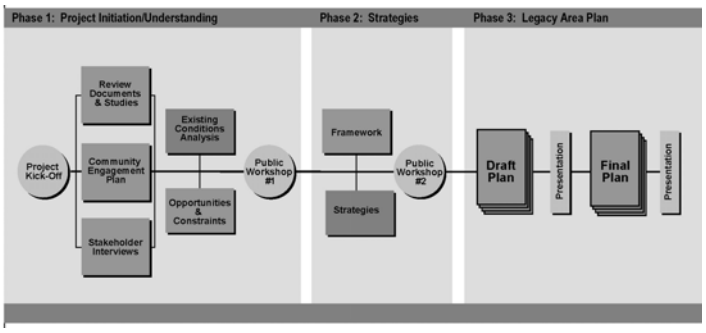
A Community Outreach Plan, created at the beginning of the process, provided valuable direction on the most effective means to reach residents. Throughout the planning process a number of techniques were utilized to reach out to the public including interviews, meetings, fliers, and mailings.

A Bates neighborhood advisory committee (BNAC) was formed to guide the planning process and help develop plan priorities. Members of the BNAC served as neighborhood ambassadors by encouraging friends and neighbors to attend meetings and join in the process. The BNAC convened five times during the process.

Early in the process a number of individual and group stakeholder interviews were conducted to discuss issues and assets as well as to gain an understanding of the neighborhood. Interviews were held with representatives from area businesses, the development community, art and education facilities including the Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts and Bates Middle School, City Parks and Recreation, County Aging Department, and Arundel Community Development Services (ACDS).

In addition, two public meeting were held at Mills Parole Elementary School to engage the public. The first meeting, held December 4th, 2004 presented a summary of neighborhood

Figure 1.2 Planning Process Diagram



Neighborhood residents gathered during public meetings to share their concerns and vision for the neighborhood.

Preliminary recommendations were presented during the second public meeting held in February, 2005.

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conditions and provided residents an opportunity to discuss issues and reflect on positive aspects of the neighborhood and surrounding area. Input received during the meeting was helpful in forming a list of preliminary recommendations which were presented at the second public meeting held on February 16, 2005.

Through further analysis and consultation with City Planners and Transportation Planners, a prioritized list of recommendations and draft plan was developed and presented to the BNAC in May. After a public review period, and public hearing at the Planning Commission on July 7, 2005, the Planning Commission recommended some minor revisions to the Plan. City Council considered the Plan and held a public hearing on September 26, 2005. It was adopted on October 10, 2005.

Throughout the process a variety of outreach techniques were utilized including a newsletter that was published in advance of upcoming meetings, fliers to announce meetings, and a project website.

1.4 How to Use this Plan

The Legacy Plan is a living document that provides decision-makers, interested organizations and others with a clear set of recommendations that will lead toward protecting and improving the neighborhood. Information in the Legacy Plan should be used to help support efforts to obtain funding from federal, state, local and private sources.

To ensure that the plan maintains its applicability, it is recommended that the City revisit the Legacy Plan every two years. As recommendations are initiated and completed, the City should celebrate its successes. Citizens and organizations should stay informed of the progress toward implementing the Legacy Plan and use the recommendations as a guide for initiating grass-roots activities.

On-going involvement of neighborhood residents in the City planning processes is recommended.

1.5 Report Framework

This Community Legacy Plan has been organized to present the analysis and findings of the Bates neighborhood planning effort, describe the project approach and outreach methodology and illustrate the community's priorities for protecting and improving the neighborhood. The process is documented in the following five chapters:

CHAPTER 1 The Introduction provides background information about the neighborhood to fully understand the scope of this project. It describes the planning process and community involvement techniques.

CHAPTER 2 Neighborhood Conditions are presented to understand the past trends and current physical environment of the area and immediate surroundings.

CHAPTER 3 Assets and Issues highlight the neighborhood's best qualities on which to build and to identify areas of concern that need to be addressed.

CHAPTER 4 The Plan Framework clarifies the "big picture" idea of the specific recommendations that are presented and sets the context for future decision making.

CHAPTER 5 Priority recommendations for the Bates Neighborhood are presented in the Implementation chapter as well as key partners and funding considerations.

Neighborhood Conditions

2.0

Car dealerships are the dominant commercial activity along the portion of West Street that travels through the neighborhood.

The development pattern within Annapolis has evolved since its start as a colonial settlement and state seat of government in the late 1600s. Over more recent decades, the City has grown through annexation and its land use pattern has changed to reflect an automobile-oriented society. Development has pushed outward resulting in new roadway corridors, including West Street and Spa Road that connect the City's historic core to residential areas and other uses outside the city center.

As the population grew outward from the downtown, the importance of these corridors became more apparent. Once dominated by residential uses, commercial services began to locate along the corridors to capture the growing number of commuters. Residential areas located along these corridors, including the Bates neighborhood, became popular for their proximity to downtown and to the transportation network that linked it to the larger metropolitan region.

The quality and character of development along these major travel corridors continues to experience change. Today, a high volume of traffic serves as a barrier for Bates neighborhood residents and contributes to safety concerns. The mix of land uses, urban design, and general appearance of the commercial corridors contribute to a congested environment for vehicles and detract from the quality residential core that defines the Bates neighborhood.

2.1 Land Use

The Bates neighborhood study area consists of about 60 acres and includes a mix of uses anchored by major institutions including the Wiley H. Bates High School and nearby Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts and the Bates Middle School. Over the years, although these institutions have grown, the neighborhood has remained a stable and viable community.

The dominant land use in the study area is the commercial/institutional category which includes businesses, offices, and churches, covering about 28 acres, or 48% of the total area. The majority of commercial/institutional uses are located along a 1,900 foot stretch (1/3 of a mile) of West Street and along Russell Street with the exception of the Bates School on Smithville Street which encompasses about 16 acres. Many of the parcels along West Street are between 400 and 450 feet deep and extend to Smithville Street.

Commercial uses along West Street are dominated by automobile sales and services and other personal services. Small offices and retail shops account for the remaining commercial uses. Additional commercial uses exist along Russell Street including a fitness center and coffee shop.

The residential core of the neighborhood is clustered on Smithville, Central, Rosemary, and Nicholson Streets, and Carrolton Avenue, accounting for 16 acres of land or 27% of the total study area. Homes are predominantly single-family detached although some row houses and apartment buildings are located on South Villa and Carrolton Avenues.

Open space is readily available throughout the neighborhood and is primarily owned by the County and operated by the City. Including the recreational field portion of the Bates School and St. Mary's Cemetery the total open space area is about 14 acres or 25% of the study area. The Spa Creek Trail along the southern boundary of the study area offers connections to Truxtun Park, the City's largest park, as well as the Bates Middle School and Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts. Plans are

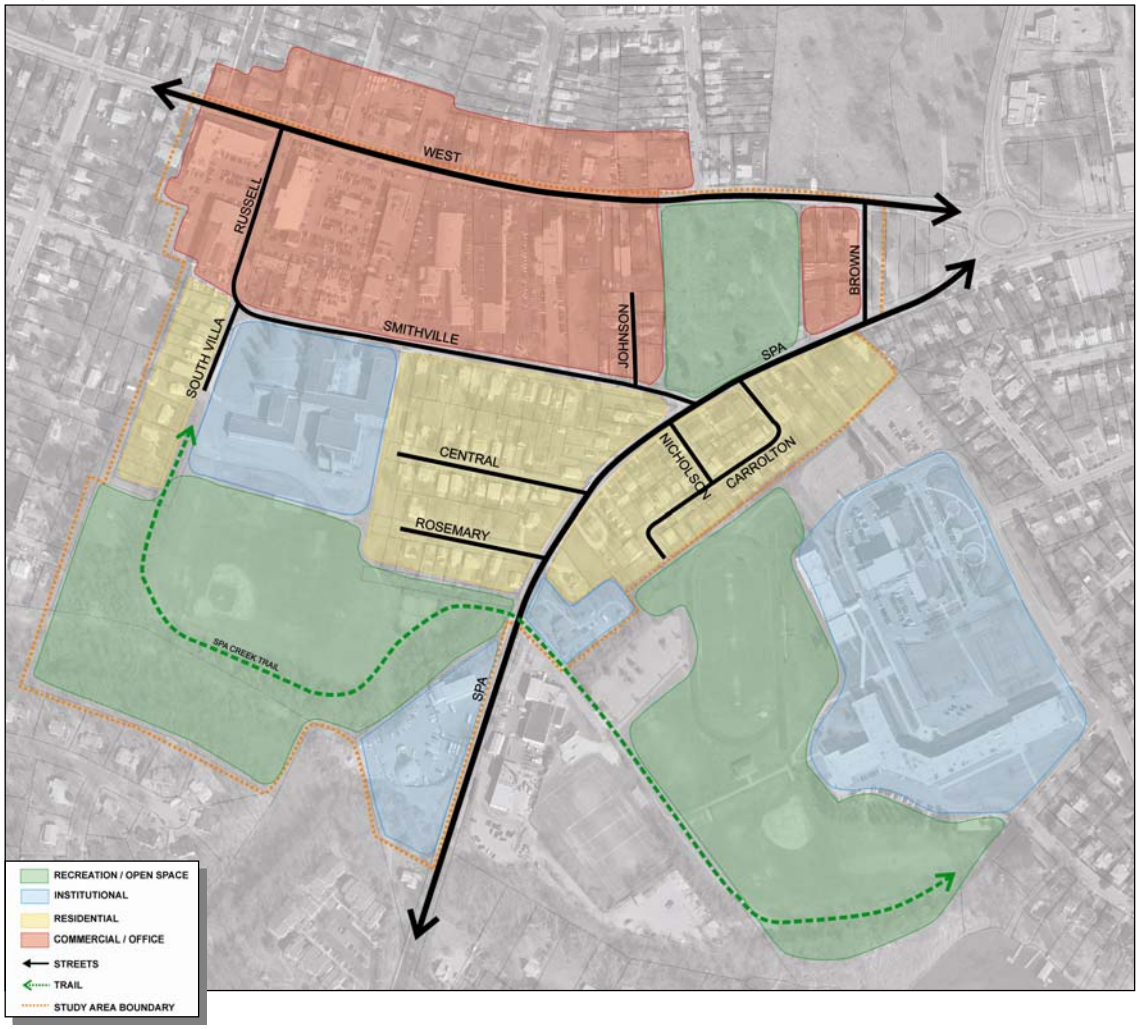
The Wiley H. Bates High School on Smithville Street will be re-developed and revitalized, maintaining its role as a civic and regional institution.

Single-family homes dominate the residential core of the Bates neighborhood.

underway to provide an additional connection to the north, extending the trail through the neighborhood and across West Street. The Spa Creek Trail borders a wooded culvert containing the headwaters of Spa Creek, which divides this neighborhood from neighborhoods further south.

Land use patterns continue to evolve around the periphery of the neighborhood. Development projects along inner West Street, immediately east of the study area, will include housing and additional services creating new opportunities for residents. Within the neighborhood, redevelopment of the Wiley H. Bates High School for use as a Senior Center and Boys and Girls Club has the potential to create a new community focal point and activity node that can help redefine the area, strengthen the residential core, and improve connections for residents. In addition, transitions between land uses in the study area and adjacent to the study area, especially residential and commercial uses, are non-existent.

Figure 2.1 Generalized Land Use



2.2 Transportation and Circulation

The City of Annapolis is well-served by local and regional transportation networks including airports, highways, public transit, water taxis, and trails. The City is approximately 20 miles southeast of the Baltimore Washington International Airport and about 45 miles east of the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport. The Bates neighborhood is centrally located within the City and is a gateway to the Chesapeake Bay.

HIGHWAYS The Bates neighborhood is bisected by two major corridors: West Street (MD 450) traveling east and west through the City, and Spa Road traveling in a southerly direction from Westgate Circle. West Street is a State road. It is a two-lane road without any median or center turn lane. Spa Road is a City road that is two lanes with a center turning lane between Smithville and the Spa Creek Trail crossing.

Travelers utilize both West Street and Spa Road to access downtown Annapolis and to reach regional transportation routes such as Route 50/301, located about 5 miles west of the neighborhood via West Street. These corridors carry a significant amount of daily traffic through the neighborhood. Average Daily Traffic Counts obtained from the Maryland State Highway Administration for 2003 are as follows:

- West Street at Southwood Avenue (west of Smithville Street): 31,550 ADT
- West Street at Westgate Circle: 12,450 ADT
- Spa Road at Spa Creek Trail Crossing: 6,225 ADT

Additional data was collected to better understand the traffic flow on Russell and Smithville during morning and afternoon peak hours over the course of a five day period.

During morning and peak afternoon hours, average traffic volumes averaged in the range of 500 vehicles per hour. Daily volumes were documented as 5,000 vehicles on a weekday, 4,500 vehicles on a Saturday, and 3,100 vehicles on a Sunday. Vehicle speeds were recorded predominantly in the range of 20-35 mph, but speeds in excess of 50 mph were recorded. Truck traffic volumes were moderate with 760 trucks with three or more axels recorded over the five day survey period.

Additional data was obtained portraying accident experience by year, severity and collision type from January 2001 through December 2003 for intersections along West Street and Spa Road. A total of 14 accidents were reported during a three year period at key intersections of Russell Road, Nicholson Street and Smithville Street. Over 50% of the accidents occurred at the intersection of West Street and Russell Road. Eleven of the reported accidents (80%) involved property damage; three (20%) resulted in injury. None of the accidents during this time period involved a fatality.

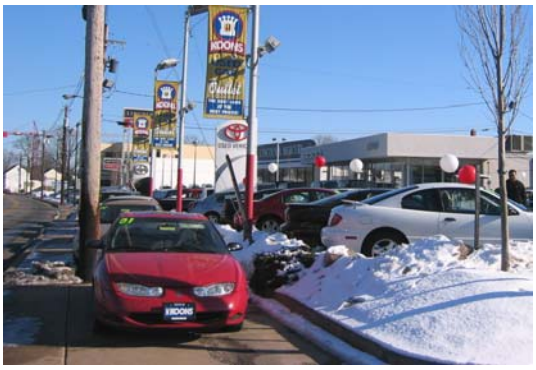
Westgate Circle at the eastern edge of the study area connects West Street and Spa Road through a non-signalized traffic circle, providing continuous flow through this area of the City. However, many motorists avoid Westgate Circle and cut through Smithville Street and Russell Street. This traffic pattern is further complicated by difficult turning geometry at Smithville Street and Spa Road. Heavy traffic volume along Spa Road makes it difficult for motorists on Smithville and Nicholson Streets and Carrolton Avenue to cross traffic. As a result this area experiences vehicle stacking at several intersections.

REGIONAL BUS SERVICE Annapolis Transit and the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) provide local and regional bus service to the area enabling passengers to utilize transit to reach Baltimore, Washington DC, and beyond.

Commuter buses carry passengers between Annapolis and Patapsco Light Rail, linking Annapolis to Baltimore and additional buses travel to New Carrollton, Washington and Bethesda, providing connections to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) regional Metro system, AMTRAK and MARC Trains. A commuter shuttle operates between the City and Kent Island.

Direct bus service to the Bates neighborhood is offered along West Street and Spa Roads through a number of designated Bus Routes and stops. Annapolis Transit operates five fixed routes (Gold, Orange, Green, Yellow, and Red) and a hybrid route (Brown route) that provides curb-to-curb service for the physically challenged.

SIDEWALKS AND CURBING Overall, sidewalks are inadequate throughout the neighborhood. In several locations sidewalks are missing and those that do exist are narrow or blocked and do not provide a safe zone for pedestrians. For example, Russell Street is void of sidewalks or curbing; vehicles park in the road right of way and back into oncoming traffic. West Street and Spa Road are two-lane roads without shoulders and if sidewalks do exist they are very narrow. In general, West Street has multiple curb cuts that encourage turning movements and lead to traffic back-ups in several areas. Carrolton Avenue and Nicholson Street also lack sidewalks or curbing, forcing residents to walk in the street. As a result, these roads are not very conducive to walking or biking. In some cases, especially along Spa Road sidewalks abruptly end and crosswalks lead pedestrians to areas that do not have a safe landing.



Sidewalks are narrow and often blocked by parked vehicles, making it difficult to maneuver on foot, bike or wheelchair.

The Spa Creek Trail, part of the Annapolis trail system, is a paved trail that connects West Street with recreational fields and the Bates Middle School.

As part of the City's TEAM PED program, in 2004, sidewalks and connection routes (including trails) were evaluated for every City thoroughfare. The program identified eight city-wide priority areas for improving pedestrian accessibility on inter-connective routes including Spa Road from Westgate Circle to Hilltop Lane, portions of West Street, and the Spa Creek Trail. In addition, the TEAM PED report map identified Smithville and Greenfield Streets as secondary priorities.

TRAILS The Spa Creek Trail, located along the western and southern boundaries of the neighborhood provides 1.5 miles of paved trail surface, nature areas, and links surrounding communities to major institutions. The trail offers an alternative mode of transportation for commuters and serves as a recreational amenity for neighborhood residents. Better lighting conditions and litter control would improve the usability of the trail. The trail is maintained by the Annapolis Recreation and Parks Department. The Spa Creek Trail is a portion of the Colonial Maritime Annapolis Trail and the national East Coast Greenway.

PARKING The neighborhood is not subject to any City parking programs such as time restrictions, permits, or meters. Street widths throughout the neighborhood are very narrow and therefore can only accommodate on-street parking on one side of the street. Many single-family homes have driveways in which residents park their vehicles, however the driveways are shallow and often accommodate only one vehicle, requiring two-vehicle households to park a vehicle on the street. Multi-family units and apartments are

Narrow streets and a lack of curb and gutter contribute to unfavorable parking scenarios along Carrolton Avenue.

faced with limited parking availability, often resulting in vehicles parked in grass lawn areas.

Parking problems are further compounded during athletic events behind the Wiley H. Bates High School and at Bates Middle School. Patrons often park on residential streets and walk through a fence opening at the end of Nicholson Street to reach the fields. Other parking problems arise in the area of West and Russell Streets where parking is limited for business owners and employees, often creating a shortage of parking spaces for patrons.

2.3 Housing

The development pattern over the years has created three main residential areas within the Bates neighborhood. These areas include homes east of Spa Road, homes between Smithville Street and Rosemary Street, west of Spa Road, and homes along South Villa Road. Based on City land use data, the neighborhood includes about 117 housing units, representing about 0.7% of the City's total housing units (16,165). The majority of dwelling units within the neighborhood are occupied by a single-family, many of which are long-time residents. Because the neighborhood is framed by open space along the southern boundary, each housing area has access to open space and recreational fields. The Bates Middle School, Annapolis Library, and the Spa Road Transit Transfer Station are within a short walking distance of the all the housing areas.

HOUSING SIZE Neighborhood homes are typically single-family and modest in size and include small bungalows and cottage-style homes. Multi-family units or apartments are located on South Villa and Carrolton Avenue and rowhouses exist on Johnson Place. With the exception of West Street, homes range in size between 850 and 1200 SF, with an average size of 1,000 SF. Homes are generally in fair to good condition and well maintained. According to Maryland Property View Data referenced in the Community Legacy Application, neighborhood homes are rated with assessed values of "fair" and "economy" (levels 3 and 2 respectively on a ranking scale of 1 to 9).

Residential lots sizes are also modest and more typical of a traditional development pattern. Lot sizes range between 1,430 SF and 14,690 SF with an average lot size of 4,800 SF.

HOUSING AGE Based on available City land use data for housing structures, a large portion (43%) of homes in the neighborhood were constructed prior to 1950. Housing constructed between 1950 and 1979 accounts for about 31% of the homes. The neighborhood has experienced very little new housing development since 1980, adding only 3 homes (3%). In contrast, while the majority of homes within the overall City were constructed between 1950 and 1979, about 26% of homes have been constructed since 1980, indicating a strong residential market.

Demand for additional residential development is increasing throughout the City. Infill residential development opportunities are being explored for portions of Greenfield Street, east of Carrolton Avenue. Overall land values in the area have been increasing and in some cases exceed the actual value of the home indicating the modest values of the homes and reflecting the increasing development pressure.

Census data indicates a high rate of homeownership among residents of the Bates neighborhood. Over 70% of Bates neighborhood residents own their own home compared to about 50% for the overall City.

2.4 Parks and Community Resources

The City of Annapolis Department of Recreation maintains the recreational fields at the Wiley H. Bates High School within the study area and the fields adjacent to the Bates Middle School and Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, just outside the study boundary. The Wiley H. Bates High School fields provide 10 acres of recreational fields and include baseball fields, linear play fields and a basketball court. Facilities at the Bates Middle School (referred to as the Bates Athletic Complex) provide 15 acres of baseball fields, linear play fields, restrooms and access to the Spa Creek Trail. Redevelopment of the Wiley H. Bates High School will impact the existing fields behind the Wiley H. Bates High School; however, it will not result in a significant loss of land or facilities. Plans include newly oriented and improved fields.

Programming for the fields is managed through the City Recreation and Parks Department. Fields are used year-round for department-sponsored athletics and league play and are also utilized by community and private organizations. Major athletic events often draw large crowds of people to these facilities. Parking for events is provided at the Bates Middle School and through a partnership with Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts. However, visitors often park on Carrolton Avenue, Nicholson Street and across Spa Road on Central and Rosemary Streets and walk to the events.

The neighborhood does not have any small pocket parks. The wooded culvert behind the Spa Creek Trail contains the Spa Creek headwaters. This culvert is rich with wildlife and vegetation.

NEW COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Redevelopment of the Wiley H. Bates High School will expand the number of community resources available to residents. A new 23,000 SF Boys and Girls Club is planned as part of the redevelopment of the Wiley H. Bates High School building. The facility will provide a place for young children and teens Monday through Saturday and include programmed activities, a gymnasium, a counseling center, a computer room, a teen lounge and a community resource room which will be available for use by community organizations. A new 22,500 SF Senior Center will also be developed that will provide numerous activities and programs for members. The facility will be owned and operated by the Anne Arundel County Department of Aging.

2.5 Demographics

Based on Census data in the Community Legacy Plan Application*, the number of Bates residents in 2000 was 263, a decrease of 24% since 1990. The neighborhood represents a fraction, 0.7%, of the City's overall population of 35,838. The City has been increasing in population and is projected to continue on this trend. The decrease in population in the neighborhood could be attributed to a smaller household size, aging residents who are less likely to have young children at home, and redevelopment along Spa Road and in the area of Westgate Circle.

Many residents in the neighborhood were raised in the area and in some cases in the same houses in which they still live. This trend has resulted in an aging neighborhood. The median age for the neighborhood is 46.3, while the median age for the City is 35.7. From 1990 to 2000 the percentage of residents age 65 and over increased from 34% to 37%. This is significantly higher than the City of Annapolis which reported that 21% of households had a member over age 65 in 2000.

The Bates neighborhood is a historically African-American neighborhood. Although there was a slight increase in the number of white residents from 1990 to 2000, about 86% of all neighborhood residents are African American. In comparison, the City's overall African American population in 2000 was 31%. The Hispanic population of Annapolis is also increasing. In 2000 the Hispanic population represented 6% of the overall City population.

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Assets and Issues

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The Bates neighborhood must take action now to protect itself and capitalize on the opportunities that new development is bringing to the area. With development pressure extending outward from the historic core of the City, residents will need to redefine and strengthen the neighborhood by working with each other and City officials to preserve the assets and amenities that make the Bates Neighborhood a valued and healthy community.

Although the neighborhood is referenced in previous planning studies completed by the City, the Bates Neighborhood Legacy Plan is the first study to evaluate the neighborhood exclusively in an effort to identify opportunities for improvement. Over the past several decades numerous re-development initiatives have impacted the City and the lives of its citizens. Private-sector investment has brought added interest in the area which is defined as the Bates neighborhood. City officials, developers and most of all, residents, recognize the value the Bates neighborhood has in the on-going revitalization of Annapolis. Capitalizing on neighborhood assets while addressing issues and concerns will allow the community to thrive and adapt to change.

3.1 Community Assets

With proximity to downtown, the neighborhood has a number of assets which make it a desirable place in which to live. Residents emphasized the need to build upon and improve these existing assets for current and future residents.

LOCATION The Bates neighborhood is less than one mile from the historic core of Annapolis, Maryland, the State Capital and County seat for Anne Arundel County. Its location is in close proximity to major institutions including the United States Naval Academy. Located between two major travel corridors, West Street and Spa Road, the Bates Neighborhood maintains easy access to downtown and is well connected to the surrounding metropolitan region via Route 50/301. The Bates neighborhood is centrally located within the City and has adequate access to public transportation.

Westgate Circle on the eastern boundary of the neighborhood is a gateway to the historic downtown.

Regional bus routes travel along West Street and Spa Road, providing direct access to public transit.

KEY TRANSPORTATION CORRIDORS The major travel corridors, West Street and Spa Road each carry a significant amount of traffic on a daily basis. These key transportation corridors link the neighborhood to the City. While these corridors create challenges for circulation and safety, they also carry a large number of consumers and residents through the City.

PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION The City has a good public transportation network. Annapolis Transit offers regional bus routes along West Street and Spa Road, providing direct access to the neighborhood. The Spa Road Transfer point near the southern boundary of the neighborhood offers access to all bus routes with the exception of the Brown Route. Bus stops are located along the major corridors of West Street and Spa Road.

Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts is a regional attraction and a neighborhood asset, providing access to classes and other art-related venues.

Neighborhood residents are committed to ensuring the community remains viable and strong.

REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS A number of regional institutions are located within a short walking distance of the Bates neighborhood. These institutions serve a City-wide or larger regional market and attract patrons throughout the year, offering tremendous opportunities for residents and visitors. The presence of these regional institutions in the neighborhood can serve to highlight the community and help initiate partnerships that benefit the neighborhood and the institutions.

Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts provides a broad range of experiences through arts education and programming, including performance, creative, and visual arts. Maryland Hall is the home of the Annapolis Symphony Orchestra, the Ballet Theatre of Maryland, the Annapolis Opera and the Annapolis Chorale, offering year-round performances.

The Wiley H. Bates High School Redevelopment Project will bring additional regional and community assets to the area and will put life back into a vacant school that was once the center of the Bates community. Plans to renovate and reuse the historic building have been underway since the facility closed its doors in 1981. The community endorsed a plan that incorporated a number of new uses including affordable senior housing, a regional Boys and Girls Club, a County Senior Citizens Activity Center, memorial space to Wiley H. Bates, and recreational fields. The project is being directed and managed by the Arundel Community Development Services (ACDS), on behalf of Anne Arundel County.

RECREATION Separated by Spa Road, the Bates Athletic Complex, behind the Bates Middle School and next to Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, and the "Old Bates" Athletic Fields (part of the Bates Redevelopment Project) provide southern and southeastern boundaries to the neighborhood. These facilities provide a combined 25 acres of recreational fields, baseball diamonds and a basketball court for recreational enthusiasts. In addition, the Spa Creek Trail, located along the western and southern boundaries of the neighborhood provides 1.5 miles of paved trail surface and connects West Street to Truxtun Park, the City's largest (70 acres) park. The trail links surrounding communities to major institutions including the Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, the Bates Redevelopment Project site, and the Bates Middle School. The trail offers commuting and recreational opportunities to residents and visitors and an off-road route for children traveling to and from school. Facilities are managed by the Annapolis Recreation and Parks Department.

ENGAGED CITIZENS Many residents in the neighborhood have strong ties to the area. Generations of families have lived on Bates neighborhood streets, demonstrating community pride. Citizens are proud of their heritage and history and are dedicated to developing partnerships to improve their community. Neighborly spirit within residents is alive and present. Residents are committed to maintaining their homes and helping one another.

HISTORY The Bates neighborhood is a historically African American community and has a significant place in African American history within the City and County. Three cemeteries including the Annapolis National Cemetery, the Brewer Hill Cemetery and St. Mary's Cemetery are located immediately west of Westgate Circle on West Street are adjacent to or within the study area. In addition, the old Asbury Church Cemetery located behind the Wiley H. Bates High School at the end of South Villa is the final resting places for members of the church, Annapolis' oldest black congregation. Efforts are underway by the church to restore the property. These historic cemeteries contain the remains of African-American soldiers, former slaves, and other historically significant figures in African American history.

The Wiley H. Bates High School, located in the neighborhood, is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Wiley H. Bates, an African American, was a successful realtor and philanthropist and represented a symbol of pride and success for African Americans. During segregation, the high school served as the County's African American high school, while Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts was the high school for White students.

HIGH HOME OWNERSHIP LEVELS Compared to the city as a whole, residents in the neighborhood have maintained a higher percentage of homeownership. High homeownership levels typically translate to improved maintenance and neighborhood stability by attracting residents that have interest in the long term viability of an area. Often renters are not as interested in maintaining residential property in the same way a homeowner might be and rental properties also have a higher turnover rate than owner occupied units.

DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY SITES Parcels along West Street are large with an average depth of 460 feet. In some cases the lots extend to Smithville Street. The majority of these sites are occupied by viable businesses that utilize the majority of the parcel for automotive – related sales and repair. Opportunities may exist for future infill development in certain areas along West Street that would help separate the block and provide more street frontage to new uses.

Homes in the neighborhood are generally well maintained; high-homeownership is often attributed to increased levels of maintenance.

3.2 Community Issues

Over the years, changes in demographic characteristics, traffic systems, land use development patterns, waterway siltation trends, and increasing land values have resulted in the current issues facing the Bates neighborhood. Through a series of stakeholder interviews, research and analysis, and input from the first public meeting, several community issues were identified. These issues became the focal point of future discussions with the community and emerged as building blocks for developing potential revitalization strategies.

3.2.1 Social Issues

SAFETY Vehicle and pedestrian safety due to traffic volume and speed are major concerns particularly along Spa Road. Vehicle turning movements from Spa Road onto Smithville and from Carrolton Ave. and Nicholson Street onto Spa Road cause traffic back-ups in both directions and are complicated by poor visibility. Accident data obtained from the Maryland State Highway Administration indicates that combined accidents on West Street and Spa Road in the neighborhood averaged about 5 per year from 2001 to 2003. During this three year period, eight accidents occurred at Russell Road and West Street intersection, three accidents occurred at the Spa Road and Nicholson Street intersection, and three accidents occurred at the Smithville Street and Spa Road intersection. Three of these accidents resulted in an injury while 11 resulted in property damage. Half of the accidents that occurred in the three year period involved a left turn or angle, and one was attributed to vision obstruction.

When the roadways are not congested, traffic moves at a high rate of speed. Spa Road lacks adequate sidewalks and the existing crosswalk of Spa Road at Smithville does not lead to any sidewalk. The neighborhood is well utilized by children on their way to school further emphasizing the need for improvements.

Other safety issues related to Spa Creek Trail are somewhat attributed to the secluded nature of the trail. Poor lighting of the trail, litter and the speculation of homeless people have raised concerns of local residents.

Houses in the neighborhood are modest in size and average around 1,000 SF.

MODEST-SIZED HOMES Homes within the neighborhood are small in size and have had minimal investment and improvements. Based on information from Maryland Property View, land values tend to be higher than the houses that occupy the lot. Pressure from developers validates this trend and parts of West Street are undergoing major redevelopment. Providing mechanisms for homeowners to complete improvements could help raise housing values and make homes more marketable to new homebuyers.

AGING POPULATION According to the US Census (2000), 37% of households in the neighborhood have residents over the age of 65, indicating the population of the neighborhood is aging in place. An aging population demonstrates continuity in the area but also indicates the likelihood of impending change. In addition, older residents may rely on fixed incomes, making it increasingly difficult to maintain properties.

3.2.2 Physical Issues

CUT-THROUGH TRAFFIC Russell and Smithville Streets are favored routes for vehicles trying to avoid the Westgate traffic circle or traffic congestion along West Street. Cut through traffic from both Spa Road and West Street is a safety concern (speed and volume) and will further impact the new uses planned as part of the Wiley H. Bates High School Redevelopment project.

Missing sidewalks limit pedestrian movement and force pedestrians into oncoming traffic.

Signage is small, confusing, difficult to read, and poorly placed along Spa Road).

HIGH VOLUME AND SPEED OF TRAFFIC West Street and Spa Road carry high volumes of daily traffic. The current uses along West Street support auto-oriented uses and cater to people in cars. Controlling the high volume and high speed of traffic will improve safety along these main corridors.

INADEQUATE SIDEWALKS The neighborhood's sidewalks and roadways are in need of major repairs. Inadequate sidewalks, or the complete lack of sidewalks, are a safety issue for both adults and children. With the location of Bates Middle School, regional recreational fields and Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts, and the presence of a new Boys and Girls Club and Senior Center, both children and adults will frequently walk along the major corridors and through the neighborhood. Major improvements are needed including widening existing sidewalks, constructing sidewalks and crossings, improved signaling at intersections and crosswalks, and improved signage.

Drainage problems exist along Smithville Street (top) and at the terminus of Nicholson Street (below).

Poorly maintained and narrow sidewalks on West Street create an unsafe pedestrian environment.

LACK OF STORMWATER DRAINAGE In general, the area is plagued by a lack of stormwater facilities to adequately handle runoff. Specific problems have been documented along West Street and Smithville Street during rainfall events and along Carrollton Ave. and Nicholson Street where changes in grade create standing water. There is currently no sub-surface pipe system to handle stormwater, contributing to safety issues, environmental concerns and degradation to existing roadway surfaces.

INADEQUATE SIGNAGE Directional signage pointing people to Bates Middle School and Maryland Hall for the Arts on Spa Road is poorly placed and in poor condition. Better signage is needed to direct patrons to these facilities and designated parking areas. Adequate signage will be needed to direct people to new uses in the Wiley H. Bates High School site and to recreational playing fields.

COMMUNITY BARRIERS Spa Road is a major community barrier, both physically and psychologically for residents. Factors contributing to this include the lack of adequate street crossings, high volumes of traffic, and difficult turning movements for vehicles. Spa Road is a dangerous corridor and presents challenges for both pedestrians and vehicles.

Other barriers include dead-end streets that limit pedestrian movement. Redevelopment of the Wiley H. Bates High School offers an opportunity to improve pedestrian access in the area of Rosemary and Central Streets, linking residents to the new community center and eliminating the need to drive to the facility to gain access.

LACK OF BUFFER BETWEEN USES Although the auto-related commercial uses along West Street extend to Smithville Street they are oriented to West Street and not to the homes along Smithville. The type of activity on these properties is primarily vehicle storage and maintenance. Vehicle movement, loading and repair activities are not shielded or buffered from the residents along Smithville. Screening along the rear of these properties would provide relief for residents and help improve the visual quality of the area.

3.2.3 Economic Development Issues

REGIONAL ATTRACTIONS Regional attractions in the downtown and surrounding the Bates Neighborhood such as Maryland Hall and recreational fields are positive influences for the local neighborhood and the larger region. However, these uses also contribute to traffic congestion, overflow parking on neighborhood streets, and in some cases property trespass. Improved signage, parking restrictions and coordinated shared parking may help ease neighborhood impacts.

DEVELOPMENT PRESSURE The Inner West Street Corridor, primarily east of Westgate Circle, has undergone a major transformation with redevelopment focused on commercial retail, office and residential uses. As an extension of downtown, West Street is prime real estate for continued investment. Pressures on existing commercial businesses and homeowners to sell their properties for redevelopment demonstrate the strong desire and market for new uses. Increased pressure to sell may also lead to neighborhood fragmentation and increased difficulty in maintaining neighborhood stability.

Poorly maintained retaining walls and chain-linked fencing do not adequately screen commercial uses along Smithville Street.

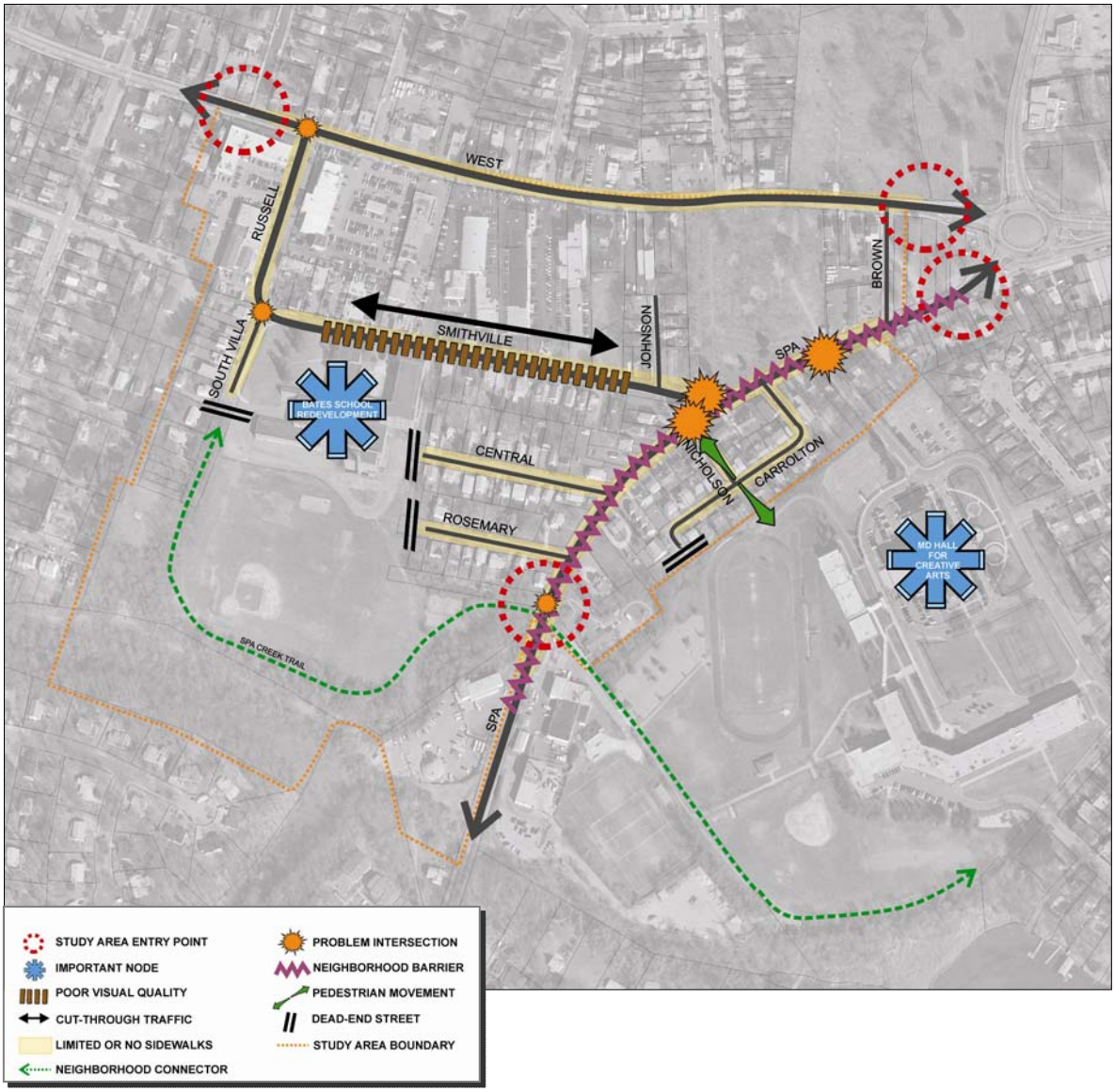
There is no vegetative buffer along the rear property lines of commercial uses on Smithville Street.

INFILL OPPORTUNITIES Redevelopment opportunities on single-family lots, including new construction and major renovation projects, should conform to the surrounding neighborhood character and be of a similar scale. Infill opportunities arise when homes fall into disrepair and are condemned or new buyers consider demolition and redevelopment of the site.

LIMITED RETAIL OPPORTUNITIES There are few basic retailers along West Street near the neighborhood, such as dry cleaners or video rental shops, although there is a convenience store and two restaurants. A major portion of the businesses are auto-related or professional offices that are not geared toward the immediate neighborhood. The majority of retail is focused east of Westgate Circle. Safe access to additional commercial services would especially benefit senior citizens.

TRAFFIC IMPACTS New development spurs new traffic patterns. Traffic impact studies were done for the developments on Westgate Circle and for the Bates School redevelopment. These studies estimate that these developments could cumulatively add approximately 880 vehicle trips to the morning peak hours, and 1,150 trips to the afternoon peak hours. These trips would be dispersed over the public street system. To accommodate this increase in traffic, improvements to Taylor Avenue and the Taylor/Rowe intersection were completed, and widening of Greenfield Street is planned.

Figure 3.1 Summary of Assets and Issues



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Planning Framework

4.0

The Bates neighborhood, as demonstrated in the previous chapters, has experienced changes in demographics, socio-economics, and physical conditions. As a result, Bates is now at a critical point in its continuing evolution as a community.

The Community Legacy Plan is based on existing strengths and assets, addresses current issues and constraints, and provides a vision for the future. The overall intent of the Legacy Plan is to develop a coordinated strategy for protecting and strengthening this vulnerable residential area. More specifically, the Legacy Plan attempts to balance quality of life, community character, and socio-economic issues in developing ideas and methods to achieve the following goals:

- Ensure that the Bates Neighborhood remains a stable and viable community with continued high homeownership.
- Build community leadership and empower residents to play an active role in the future of the neighborhood.
- Provide the Bates neighborhood with a distinctive and appropriate sense of place.
- Maximize the recreation assets that are available and identify linkages to other community resources.
- Establish an appropriate balance between the competing needs of pedestrian, bicycles, local vehicular traffic and through traffic.
- Promote existing businesses and attract new commercial uses to strengthen economic vitality and provide community amenities.
- Identify and assess opportunities for underutilized properties.

Protecting the residential core of the Bates neighborhood is a primary goal of the Community Legacy Plan.

Most importantly, the Legacy Plan is a product developed in collaboration with the community. With respect to Bates, the Plan has engaged residents that have previously not been involved and provided a community forum for the self determination of the neighborhood.

4.1 Plan Framework Components

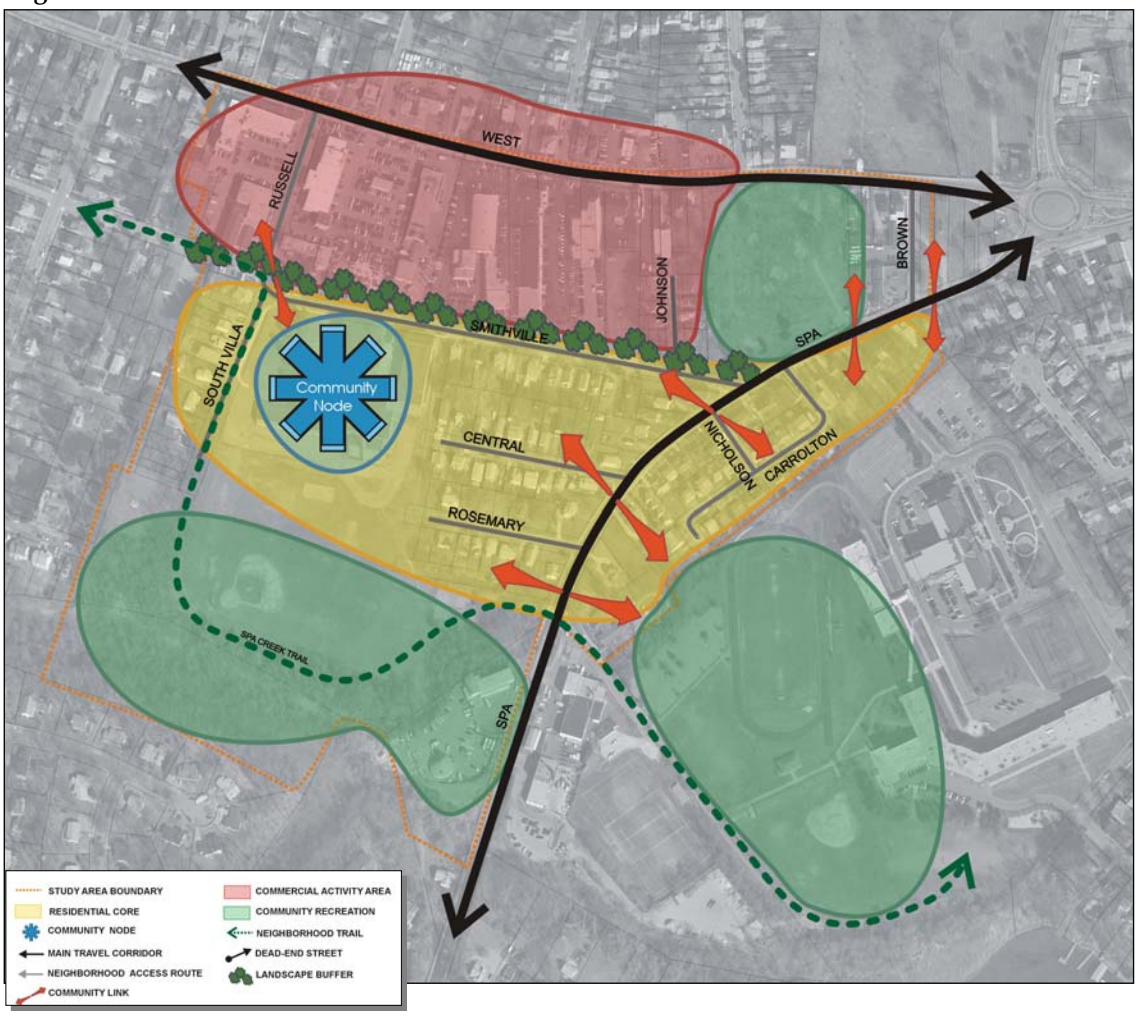
This Chapter provides clear direction, or Framework, for positive change in the community. Developed through the sharing of information, effective communication, and consensus-building, the Framework provides a foundation for the five community strategies presented in detail in Chapter 5.

The Framework for the Bates neighborhood includes several key aspects relating to the future of the community, including transportation, infrastructure, government services, physical enhancements, and programs to build community capital.

The Framework:

- Protects residential areas by providing transitional buffers for adjacent high-activity areas;
- Organizes the neighborhood around the redeveloped Wiley H. Bates High School community center;
- Enhances the pedestrian environment to improve safety through roadway modifications and new sidewalk crossings; and
- Links recreational open spaces with improved trails.

Figure 4.1 Plan Framework



The Framework Diagram illustrates the overall intent of the Community Legacy Plan to strengthen the Bates neighborhood by protecting residential areas, connecting the neighborhood with the new community center, and enhancing the pedestrian environment, improving traffic conditions, and linking open spaces.

Implementation

5.0

Throughout the course of the Community Legacy planning effort, the Bates Neighborhood Advisory Committee has provided strong direction on planning priorities. Based on this feedback, and the information obtained through analysis, five strategies have been developed to organize action items and implementation steps for the Plan. These strategies are intended to address the goals of the Plan described in Chapter 4, and are focused on improving safety, preserving affordable housing, enhancing public services and systems, beautifying the neighborhood and building community leadership.

1. Promote pedestrian safety by balancing the needs of people with vehicles.
2. Preserve the existing character of the Bates neighborhood and promote reinvestment in the housing stock.
3. Improve the function and effectiveness of public services and systems.
4. Beautify the neighborhood and establish a Bates identity.
5. Empower neighborhood residents and build community support.

Each strategy includes specific "Priority Action" items that will initiate Plan implementation. The eight Priority Actions are intended to help the City focus its efforts on resources and projects that will result in early successes and build support for future efforts. To further focus efforts and reaffirm neighborhood priorities, implementation steps have been identified within each Priority Action. Each Priority Action identifies the entity or organization with primary responsibility for implementing the action, suggests support partners, and estimates order of magnitude costs.

Residents of the neighborhood should continue to play an active role and work with the City on implementing Priority Actions.

Order of magnitude costs should be used for estimating purposes only. Actual costs for implementing each action will depend on a variety of factors including available funding sources, partnership agreements, volunteers, and timing. It is recommended the City develop more accurate cost estimates for each action for budgeting purposes

Additional implementation "next steps" are provided within the strategies to continue to improve the neighborhood.

Strategy # 1: Promote pedestrian safety by balancing the needs of people with vehicles.

With heavy traffic speeds and volumes, residents of the Bates neighborhood ranked safety as a number one priority for the community. Balancing the needs of pedestrians and vehicles through roadway modifications and design techniques is a primary focus of the following action steps.

Priority Action #1: Reconfigure Smithville Street to an east-bound one-way street.
To reduce cut through traffic, calm traffic speeds, and improve the pedestrian environment, a series of improvements are recommended for Smithville Street. These improvements should be pursued in a comprehensive manner beginning with changing traffic on Smithville Street from two-way traffic to one-way traffic, eastbound, as shown in Figure 5.1. Heaviest cut-through traffic occurs during the peak AM and PM hours. This change will eliminate cut through traffic traveling from Spa Road to West Street; vehicles will be required to utilize Westgate Circle. Traffic will still be able to use the Russell Street/Smithville connection when traveling from West Street to Spa Road, however, new traffic calming measures will reduce speeds. Russell and South Villa remain two-way providing adequate access to the Wiley H. Bates High School site. Additional recommended improvements to Smithville Street are described below.

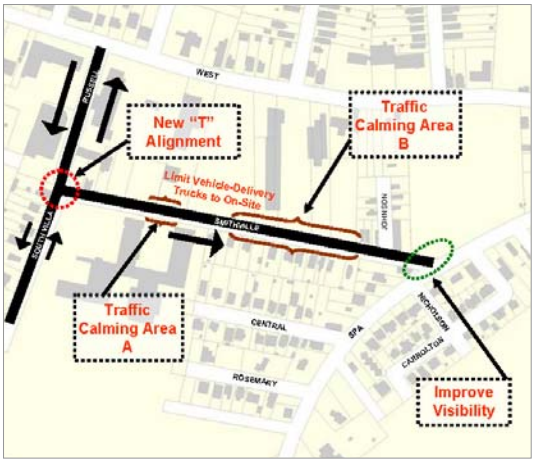


Figure 5.1 Summary of Smithville Street Modifications

The current right-of-way along Smithville is 30 feet which includes two 13 foot travel lanes and 4 feet of sidewalk along the southern edge. The new one-way street will require only one travel lane, thereby allowing excess area for on-street parking, a sidewalk zone and planted fence buffer. The roadway width in front of the Wiley H. Bates High School widens and will not include parking. Additionally, there will be a vehicle pull-off in front of the Wiley Bates Memorial Courtyard. A proposed layout is shown in Figure 5.2. The fence buffer should include ornamental vines and low shrubs and the sidewalk could be expanded greater than 4 feet.

One Travel Lane: 14 feet
Sidewalk Zone: 4 feet (5 feet where pedestrian volume will be higher)
Parking Lane: 8 feet
Fence/Buffer: 4 feet

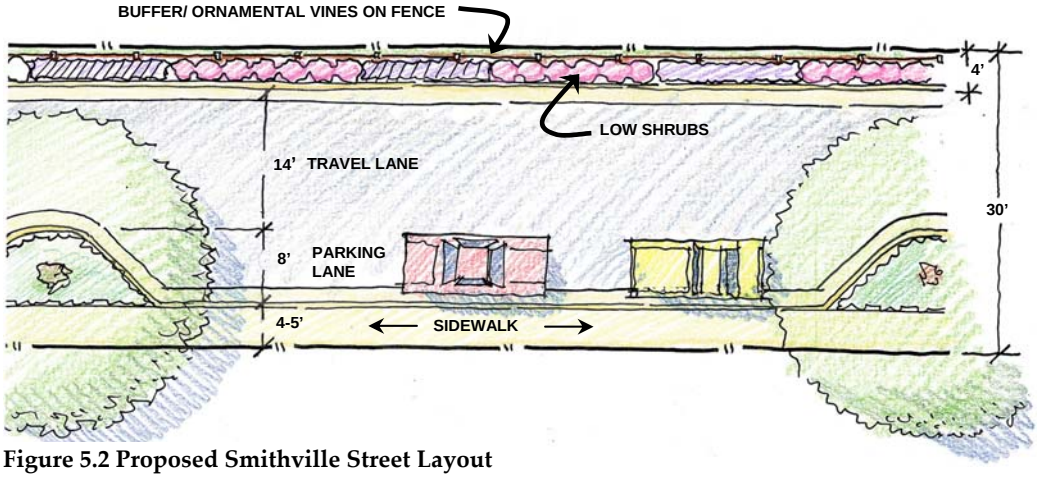


Figure 5.2 Proposed Smithville Street Layout

REALIGN THE INTERSECTION OF SMITHVILLE, RUSSELL, AND SOUTH VILLA.
The current alignment of this intersection is off-set; sight lines are not clear and traffic speeds often exceed the posted speed limit. This arrangement is further complicated by a lack of sidewalks or crosswalks, making this area dangerous for pedestrians. With Smithville Street as one-way, it is recommended the current intersection be realigned to a more standard geometric configuration (i.e. a "T" intersection), as shown in Figure 5.3.

The existing right of way along South Villa is 30 feet including an 18 foot travel lane which is very narrow for two-way traffic accessing the Wiley H. Bates High School. Redevelopment plans for the Wiley H. Bates High School will accommodate an 8 foot sidewalk and a 4 foot planting strip along the east side of South Villa, within the property (not affecting the right-of-way). It is recommended that the City designate two 12 foot travel lanes on South Villa and a 5 foot sidewalk along the west side of the street. The City should work with the corner property owner to secure a small section of right-of-way for the sidewalk, just north of the crosswalk. Intersection improvements would increase safety for vehicles and pedestrians through better visibility, a new crosswalk, and direct connections via sidewalks to the new facilities and Spa Creek Trail.

Clearly defined crosswalks improve pedestrian safety and are recommended around the old Bates School.

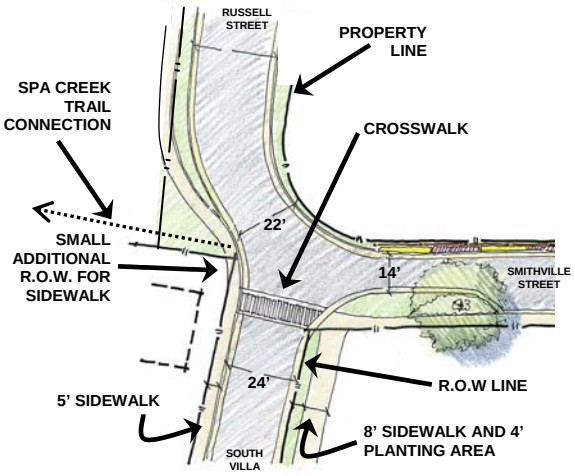


Figure 5.3 Proposed Smithville/Russell Alignment

DEVELOP A NEW CROSSWALK LINKING THE WILEY H. BATES HIGH SCHOOL AND RUSSELL STREET.
As part of the realignment, a new crosswalk should be developed to provide a safe pedestrian crossing of South Villa. Crosswalk features should extend to a new sidewalk on the west side of Russell Road. This area will be utilized by seniors, children and people walking to the redeveloped Wiley H. Bates High School facilities or people using the Spa Creek Trail, further necessitating improvements to ensure safety and visibility. This sidewalk will provide a link the proposed alignment for a Spa Creek Trail connection.

DEVELOP A LANDSCAPED SCREENING ALONG THE NORTH SIDE OF SMITHVILLE STREET.
To visually screen rear views of commercial businesses along Smithville Street a 4-foot landscaped strip (buffer) should be employed that incorporates a fence and attractive low shrubs and plantings, as shown in Figure 5.2. The fence should be a minimum of 6 feet high, aesthetically designed and offer screening capabilities. The type of fence material will affect overall cost. Suitable materials include vinyl, aluminum, or iron. Certain fence styles may require additional plantings to ensure adequate screening is provided. The buffer will soften the transition between commercial uses and residential uses and can be accommodated within the existing 30 foot right-of-way.

The City may be able to increase the size of the buffer by working with business owners to secure additional rights-of-way or property easements in coordination with public improvements to the West Street Corridor. Businesses should be encouraged or enticed to participate voluntarily and could be offered cost savings in materials and supplies through a City-organized program. The buffer, including the fence, should be installed and maintained by the City.

IMPROVE THE PEDESTRIAN ENVIRONMENT ALONG THE SOUTH SIDE OF SMITHVILLE STREET.

The existing sidewalk zone along the south side of Smithville Street should be replaced and incorporate street trees or landscaping features. On-street parking should be provided along the south side of the road and clearly designated through the use of bump-outs. Bump-outs are an extension of the sidewalk zone and will formalize the parking areas, protect vehicles from other traffic, and improve safety conditions. When combined, on-street parking, bump outs, landscaping, and buffer treatments will help to calm traffic speeds along Smithville Street

REDUCE TRUCK UNLOADING ON SMITHVILLE STREET.

The City should work with car dealerships along West Street that utilize Smithville Street for vehicle delivery and unloading and enforce requirements for on-site delivery, loading and unloading. Dealerships should be encouraged to orient their internal circulation and parking to accommodate loading and unloading on-site.

IMPROVE VISIBILITY AT THE SPA ROAD INTERSECTION.

To improve visibility for vehicles pulling out onto Spa Road, the City should remove any overgrown vegetation in the right of way.

Implementation of these recommendations should be coordinated with improvements to the Wiley H. Bates High School. It is suggested that the City leverage its ability to provide future public improvements along West Street when working with property owners to achieve the maximum number of improvements along Smithville Street. New traffic patterns should be publicized and well-marked with new signage.

Implementation Steps:

1. Work with existing property owners to identify a feasible intersection alignment for Smithville Street, Russell Street and South Villa that incorporates a new crosswalk.
2. Meet with Smithville Street businesses to discuss buffer opportunities.
3. Meet with the County to coordinate traffic calming with planned improvements to the entrance of the Wiley H. Bates High School.
4. Develop streetscape design for Smithville Street that incorporates expanded sidewalks, traffic calming, on-street parking and landscaping features.
5. Investigate the installation of a traffic light on Spa Road at the Greenfield Street/Spa Road intersection.
6. Identify costs and secure funding for improvements.
7. Construct roadway improvements.

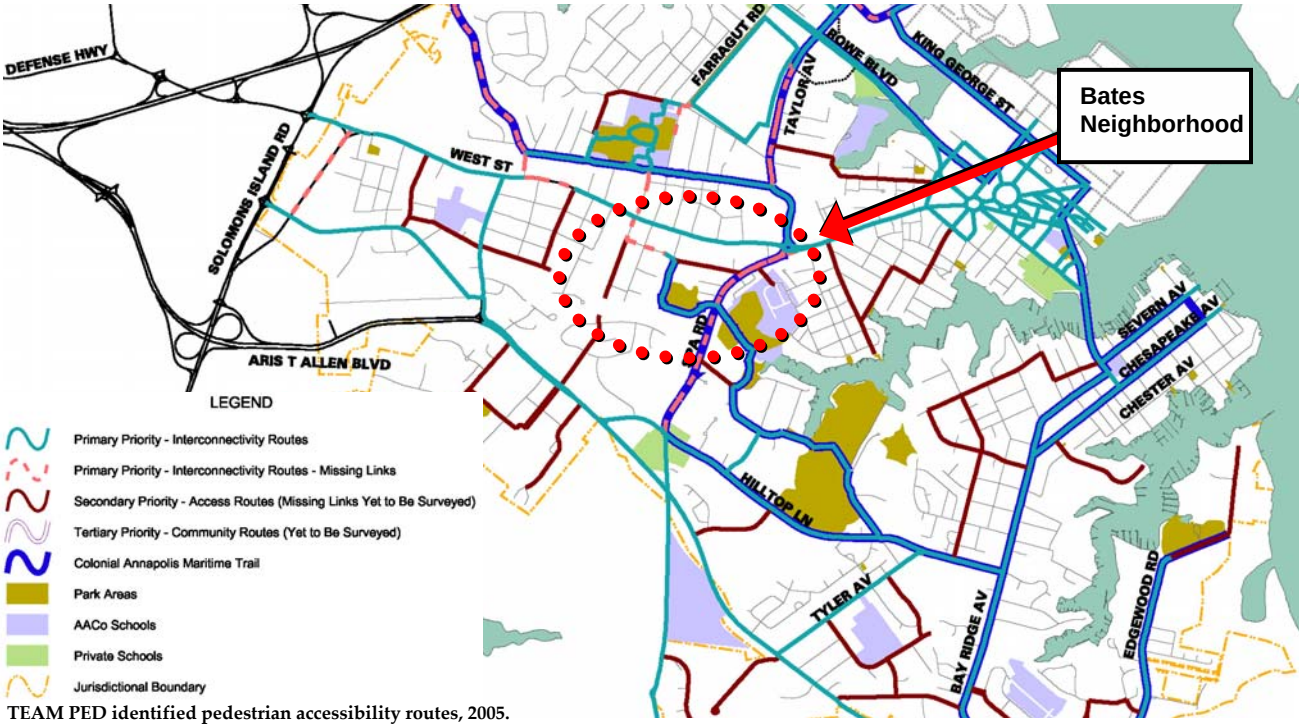
Order of Magnitude Costs: $ 1 Million
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Roles: Anne Arundel County, Businesses along Smithville Street, Residents

Priority Action #2: Improve and expand neighborhood sidewalks.
As identified by TEAM PED, a number of sidewalks in the area are absent or in poor condition, discouraging or preventing pedestrian movement and creating unsafe conditions. The TEAM PED Study identified as primary priority two routes through the Bates neighborhood – sidewalks along Spa Road, and a connection between the Spa Creek Trail and Poplar Trail. This Plan concurs with those recommendations. The exact route for the connection between the Spa Creek Trail and Poplar Trail is subject to more detailed study. The connection could be made by pursuing a link from South Villa to McGuckian via a treed area at the edge of the coffee shop parking lot, then along S. Cherry Grove and N. Cherry Grove. Alternately the connection could be made via Russell Street, West Street, and N. Cherry Grove. TEAM PED City-wide recommendations are shown below.

It is also recommended that the City include Russell Street as a secondary priority area. With the redevelopment of Wiley H. Bates High School and the extension of Spa Creek Trail, Russell Street will experience an increase in pedestrian activity. A sidewalk exists along the west side of Russell Street that is at an equal grade with the road and is encroached upon by cars in angled parking spaces. At a minimum, four foot wide sidewalks and six inch high curbs should be placed along the western side of the road. Sidewalks along Russell Street will provide a safe route for trail users, children visiting the Boys and Girls Club and senior citizens visiting the Senior Activity Center.

Sidewalks are at equal grade with the road on Russell Street and vehicle parking practices force pedestrians into travel lanes.

Connecting absent sidewalk sections along Spa Road should be a priority.



TEAM PED identified pedestrian accessibility routes, 2005.

West Street is a primary travel route and an identified primary priority sidewalks area. Sidewalks along West Street are narrow and offer no separation from vehicles in the travel lane. This situation is further compounded by car dealership vehicles that are parked to the very edge of, or in some cases actually in the sidewalk right-of-way. Streetscape improvements along West Street, described in Strategy #3, could address these issues with an expanded right of way, increased sidewalk widths, and other safety features. At a minimum, it is recommended that the City work with property owners to create a safer sidewalk environment along West Street between Russell Street and Westgate Circle. This area is heavily used by children and is currently unsafe for people of all ages.

Rosemary and Central Streets have intermittent sidewalks and Nicholson Street and Carrolton Avenue completely lack sidewalks. These streets are very narrow and primarily serve local residents. For these reasons they are identified as tertiary priority areas by TEAM PED. Sidewalk improvements along South Villa should be incorporated into redevelopment plans for the Wiley H. Bates High School. It is also strongly recommended that pedestrian connections from Rosemary and Central Streets to the Wiley H. Bates High School site are provided to encourage walking and reduce the need for vehicle trips by residents to the facility. Overall, sidewalk improvement priorities for the Bates neighborhood include, in order of importance:

- Spa Road (missing links)
- Pedestrian connection between the Spa Creek Trail and Poplar Trail
- Smithville Street
- Russell Street
- West Street
- South Villa

Implementation Steps:

1. Work with property owners along Spa Road, Russell Street and West Street to secure necessary right-of-way in areas where sidewalks are missing or blocked.
2. Earmark funds for sidewalk improvements.
3. Construct sidewalk improvements where applicable.

Sidewalks with planting strips provide added protection for pedestrians and improve visual quality.

Order of Magnitude Costs: $ 250,000. Costs would be dependent on the linear foot of sidewalk and the type of material.
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Roles: West Street Businesses, Spa Road Businesses, Bates Neighborhood Association, Residents

Additional Steps for Strategy #1

A. Improve Spa Road Street Crossings.
The City should improve the roadway crosswalks on Spa Road to improve pedestrian safety. High vehicular speeds and large traffic volumes contribute to dangerous conditions for pedestrians along Spa Road. Existing street crossings exist in the area of the intersection of Smithville Street/ Spa Road/Nicholson Street and at the Spa Creek Trail crossing.

The Spa Road crosswalk from Smithville Street to Nicholson Street is the only identified street crossing between Westgate Circle and the Spa Creek Trail crossing. Pedestrians using the crosswalk are unprotected from oncoming traffic and do not have a safe landing area near Nicholson Street. The landing areas should be enlarged, and striping should be repainted regularly in a pattern that minimizes wear. Signage to alert drivers to pedestrians should be installed.

The crosswalk on Spa Road at Nicholson Street is in poor condition.

The Spa Creek Trail crossing on Spa Road currently has a traffic signal. A sign to indicate a trail crossing could be installed to improve driver awareness and should be considered during overall neighborhood signage improvements, further discussed in Priority Action #5.

Spa Road crosswalks could be improved with reflective features that are flush with the roadway surface to alert drivers during night time hours. Design of the crosswalk should comply with City standards; the ideal width of a crosswalk is 10 feet.
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Roles: BNA, Residents

B. Address Pedestrian Crossings Between Westgate Circle and MD Hall.
New development on Westgate circle is expected to generate additional pedestrian traffic. Shared parking agreements between MD Hall and the Severn Bank building on Brown Street will likely mean more pedestrians will be crossing Spa Road to reach MD Hall. It is recommended that pedestrians be directed to the existing Westgate Circle crossing, or to a new crossing at Greenfield Street.
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Roles: BNA, MD Hall, Residents

C. Re-evaluate Traffic Needs Periodically.
A number of development efforts currently underway, including the redevelopment of the Wiley H. Bates High School, will impact the transportation network upon their completion. For this reason, it is recommended that the City re-evaluate the traffic conditions on Russell Street and Smithville Street (and to a larger extent along the West and Spa Road corridors) to monitor the effectiveness of existing traffic patterns and parking supply. Initial monitoring should occur six months to one year following the opening of the Senior Activity Center and Boys and Girls Club.

During traffic monitoring periods the City should meet with the BNA, leaders of the Senior Activity Center and Boys and Girls Club, Anne Arundel County, and interested residents to fully understand the localized impacts of the new development. Any future modifications to the traffic pattern along Smithville to address local issues should involve the community and should be designed to protect the residential areas along Smithville, South Villa, Rosemary and Central Streets.
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Roles: BNA, Anne Arundel County, Boys and Girls Club, Senior Activity Center, Businesses

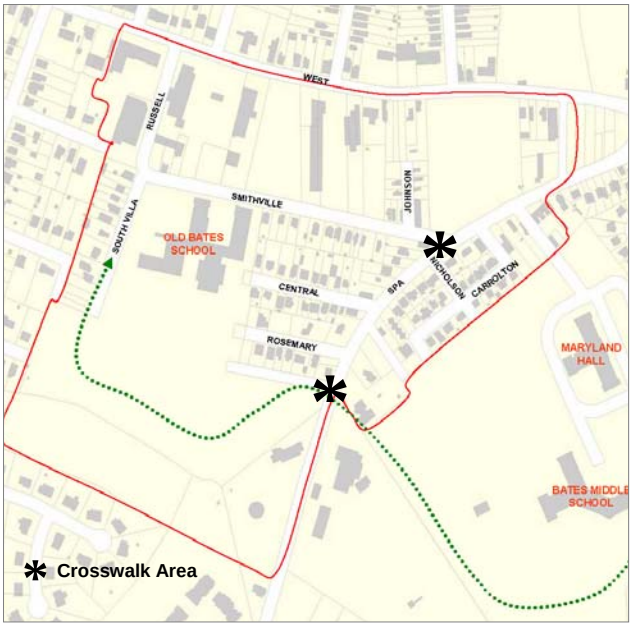


Figure 5.4 Recommended Spa Road Crosswalks

Clearly defined crosswalks that incorporate colored paving and texture alert drivers visually that they are approaching a pedestrian area.

D. Improve the approach to Asbury Cemetery at the south end of South Villa Avenue.
This historic, small cemetery is the final resting place for early members of Annapolis' oldest black church, Asbury UMC. This end of South Villa Avenue is shrouded in trees and vegetation, the pavement has crumbled, and there is no sidewalk. Nothing signals this historic resource to passersby. Plans to improve the approach to the cemetery should be done in concert with Asbury UMC.
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Role: Asbury United Methodist Church

Strategy #2: Preserve the existing character of the Bates Neighborhood and promote reinvestment in the housing stock.

Maintaining a stable and viable residential core is an integral part of maintaining the entire Bates neighborhood. The focus of these action steps is to encourage investment in the existing housing stock, prevent disinvestment and decline, and to maintain the current high levels of homeownership.

Priority Action #3: Initiate a program to restore, enhance, and beautify the exterior of homes in the Bates neighborhood.

Reinvestment in the neighborhood housing stock is needed. On many properties, the land is valued higher than the house that occupies the lot, putting the area at risk for speculative buying. Many houses are small by modern standards (median house size is 1,024 sq. ft.) but in fair condition, according to assessment records.

Programs to assist homeowners with rehabilitation of their homes are currently in place, administered by the City and State. These programs are focused toward applicants at certain income levels and can be used for certain kinds of repairs. Eligible applicants' household income cannot exceed limits set by federal guidelines, currently 50% or 80% of the regional median income. Repairs can address code deficiencies (for example, faulty electrical wiring, leaking roofs, hazardous furnaces, deteriorated windows) and provisions for disabled persons (for example, ramps, wheel chair lifts, grab bars). Neighborhood marketing of these rehab programs is recommended.

A program to restore and beautify housing exteriors is warranted to facilitate wide-spread reinvestment. Funds could be in the form of loans or grants. A model for this program could be the Facade Enhancement Program currently in place in the Clay Street Neighborhood.

Implementation Steps:

1. Develop goals and criteria for a program to restore, enhance, and beautify the exterior of homes in the Bates neighborhood.
2. Seek funding for the new housing rehabilitation program.
3. Publicize the availability of funds.
4. Select a pilot group of properties.
5. Monitor program outcomes. Revise program goals and criteria if needed.

Order of Magnitude Costs: To be determined by the City
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Roles: BNA, Residents

Additional Steps for Strategy #2

A. Preserve and expand affordable housing for home ownership by working with non-profit affordable housing developers.
There are vacant sites in the Bates neighborhood where new housing could be constructed. The City has worked with non-profit organizations such as Homes for America, Inc., and Habitat for Humanity to construct affordable housing for home ownership on similar sites. These organizations have also been successful at rehabilitating and re-selling affordable homes for ownership. Finding property owners willing to sell their property for infill housing construction or rehab is not always easy. The City will continue its outreach efforts to find suitable candidate sites.
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Roles: Non-profit Affordable Housing Developers, BNA, Residents

B. Encourage compatible infill housing.
Preserving the scale and character of the residential portion of the Bates neighborhood is a primary concern for residents. New infill housing should blend with existing residential structures and positively contribute to the character of the street and overall neighborhood. The City's Zoning Ordinance sets forth regulations for future development and is the primary mechanism to promote compatibility of future development projects and redevelopment efforts. The majority of residential uses within the neighborhood are zoned R3 with the exception of homes located on South Villa (zoned R2) and Johnson Place (zoned R4-R). R3 is a standard zoning category that permits, by right, the development of single family homes and two-

family dwellings. Multi-family homes, including townhomes, are considered Special Exception uses and must receive approval through the development review process.

The possibility of adding an "R" overlay zone to the existing R3 zoning was discussed with the BNAC. An R3-R zoning classification would maintain all permitted uses but would allow some additional flexibility. An R3-R classification would also require additional reviews for construction projects. The City will continue dialogue with neighborhood residents to evaluate re-zoning options that would best serve the neighborhood in the future.
Lead Organization: BNA
Supporting Roles: City

C. Encourage neighborhood-wide home improvements.
Maintaining or improving a home is often overwhelming for homeowners due to a lack of required maintenance skills, not having the appropriate tools, or not having enough help. On-going interior and exterior up-keep is necessary to maintain the overall quality of a home for existing and future residents. Property appearance is tied to the overall impression of an area; a well-maintained area demonstrates pride.

To encourage home improvements, it is recommended that a new Bates Neighborhood Association (BNA) establish a Bates Home Improvement Day or take advantage of other programs such as the County's annual Rebuilding Together event. An event could be held annually or during the spring and fall of each year. The purpose of this day would be to focus on one improvement area, with assistance provided by City Staff and volunteers from local businesses and organizations. The BNA should identify the focus of the improvement day such as: landscaping and fencing; interior utilities (water heaters, air conditioners, furnaces); exterior features (roofs, porches); and painting (exterior surfaces such as shutters and trim).

The BNA could work with local organizations such as churches, the Boys and Girls Club, MD Hall, or other interested groups to identify support roles in these efforts. The event could include sponsorship from area businesses and a recognition event for participants. As a neighborhood initiative, residents can share skills, labor, tools, and time, making improvements more likely.
Lead Organization: BNA
Supporting Roles: City

D. Improve or replace chain-linked fencing.
Many properties in the Bates neighborhood use chain-linked fencing to delineate property lines and provide low level security. Some fences are in adequate condition while others are in various stages of disrepair. Poorly maintained fences, particularly in front yards, contribute to a negative perception of an entire street and no longer function to provide security. Alternative fence materials and designs are available and successfully used in other neighborhoods to achieve the same purpose. Wooden fences or low landscaped hedges provide an attractive alternative to chain-linked.

It is recommended that poorly maintained chain-linked fences be removed. Residents should consider replacing chain-linked fencing with more attractively styled fencing that better represents the strong community identity that exists within the neighborhood. The new Bates Neighborhood Association could initiate these actions and work with the City to identify potential funding sources or help secure reduced rates for shrubs or fence installations. Any new fence or hedge construction or alternation requires a permit from the Department of Neighborhood and Environmental Programs.
Lead Organization: BNA
Supporting Roles: City

New residential fencing, at left, can provide low levels of security and be visually attractive.

Dilapidated fencing is unattractive and contributes to the perception of blight.

Strategy #3: Improve the function and effectiveness of public services and systems.

Public services and systems provide residents with valuable amenities and are the foundation of a safe and well-functioning community. Recommendations to improve the function and effectiveness of public services and systems for the Bates neighborhood will require action by the City and, in some cases, private property owners. Overall, these actions are intended to address safety issues related to inadequate stormwater drainage and poor signage, improve physical conditions of roadways and enhance the overall environment for users of public transit.

Priority Action #4: Address localized drainage issues.

The majority of the neighborhood falls within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area designation and therefore appropriate stormwater controls are required to minimize impacts to the sensitive habitats of Spa Creek, a tributary to the Chesapeake Bay. Stormwater during rainfall events often collects in specific areas of the neighborhood, contributing to safety concerns for pedestrians and vehicles, degrading the road surface, and causing erosion. Nicholson Street, Carrolton Avenue, Russell Street and South Villa lack any sidewalk, curbing, or subsurface drainage pipes and inlets. As a result, heavy stormwater runoff volumes regularly flood low-lying areas. Rosemary, Central and Smithville maintain inlets near the intersection of Spa Road.

A swath of City-owned land located between two residences at the base of Nicholson Street functions as an informal stormwater collection area and allows a pedestrian connection between Carrolton Ave. and the Bates Athletic Complex. A chain-link fence demarcates the boundary between the City-owned swath and the County-owned school site and athletic fields behind it. On the school site, the terrain slopes from the back of the Carrolton residences down to the running track. A storm grate is located in a low-lying area on the school site, although it is clogged and overgrown with weeds. A paved walkway extends from Carrolton to the edge of the County-owned school site, then becomes a grassy footpath. The swath acts as an informal drainage area receiving runoff from Carrolton and Nicholson, although water pools at the entrance due to uneven grading. The fence at the edge of the school site has become clogged with debris and weeds and acts as a dam slowing drainage to the storm grate located on the school site. Pedestrians use this as a cut-through; children on their way to school, spectators during sports events, and lone adults at night.

Improper stormwater controls have resulted in erosion along many neighborhood streets.

Implementation Steps:

1. Improve the stormwater drainage area and pedestrian connection at the base of Nicholson Street, including:
   - Replace the County-owned chain-link fence that has become clogged with debris and weeds and divides the walking corridor. This is also addressed in detail in Strategy 4, Step A.
   - Clear debris and weeds from the stormwater channel and storm grate.
   - Construct curbs or an asphalt barrier at the entrance of the swath to channel the water appropriately.
   - Formalize the stormwater channel with terracing, stones and a planted swale.
   - Re-grade Carollton Ave. in conjunction with street re-paving. This is also addressed in Strategy 3, Step A.
   - Standardize the walkway all the way from Carrolton into the athletic complex.
   - Make other improvements to improve visibility and safety, utilizing CPTED principles (Crime Prevention through Environmental Design)
   - Plant flowers and ornamental grasses to beautify this small pocket park.
2. Conduct a comprehensive study of stormwater management throughout the entire study area, including the Spa Creek headwaters, and including management techniques for public and private property. Consider traditional and alternative stormwater management methods.
3. Clear stormwater collection mechanisms at various locations of debris.
4. Evaluate opportunities to address localized flooding concerns by re-grading and re-paving streets and utilizing low-impact infiltration mechanisms.

Storm drains and road gutters would minimize drainage problems.

Order of Magnitude Costs: To be determined by the City
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Roles: Anne Arundel County, Residents, Spa Creek Conservancy

Priority Action #5: Improve signage and wayfinding assistance for regional and local facilities.

A number of regional attractions are located within or on the periphery of the Bates neighborhood that draw visitors throughout the year. Signage to these facilities is currently not adequate because it is in poor condition, difficult to read, or is confusing based on location of the sign. Current signage is often too small or obscured by multiple postings making it difficult to understand. The current location of signs is shown on Figure 5.5.

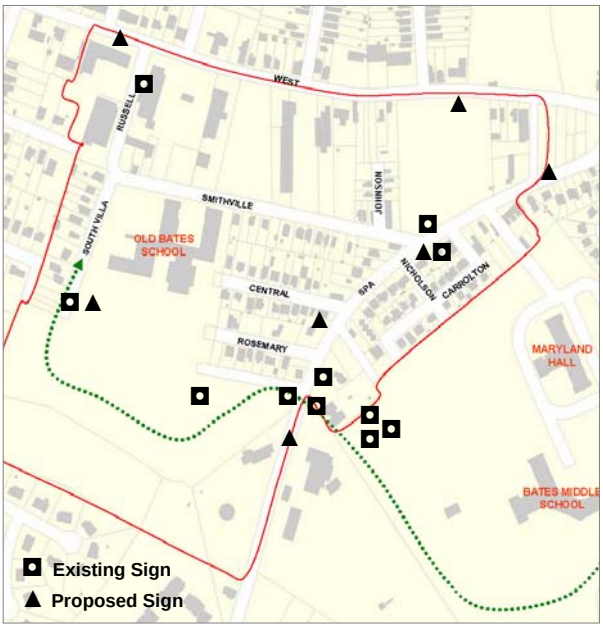


Figure 5.5 Existing and Proposed Sign Locations

The City should utilize the new Navigate Annapolis program to improve wayfinding signage around the neighborhood. Navigate Annapolis is a communication system intended to educate visitors on how to appreciate the city while showing consideration for those who live and work there. The system includes a series of comprehensive, easily recognizable, and user-friendly signs that incorporate a compass rose logo and a color code based on location. The sign system is intended to eliminate redundant signs and improve overall readability and effectiveness.

Improved signage will provide clear direction to motorists and facilitate traffic flow along West Street and Spa Road. New wayfinding signs should direct motorists and pedestrians to key facilities and available public parking areas, thereby minimizing the chance that people will park in neighborhood streets. The following facilities should be incorporated into new wayfinding signs:

- Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts
- Bates Athletic Complex (Weems-Whelan Fields, Panther Stadium Field, and Bates Running Track)
- Wiley H. Bates Heritage Park
- Annapolis Senior Center
- Chesapeake Children's Museum
- Spa Creek Trail
- Annapolis Public Library
- Truxtun Park Athletic Complex
- Transit Transfer Station

NAVIGATE Annapolis

Existing signs are small, difficult to read, and do not offer motorists enough time to prepare to turn. New wayfinding signs will improve navigation through the City and help ease confusion.

Navigate Annapolis signs should replace existing signage to the maximum extent practical. The signs should be placed well in advance of facility entrance points to allow travelers ample time to prepare for turning movements. Recommended sign locations are shown on Figure 5.5.

Implementation Steps:

1. Contact representatives from each of the facilities identified to discuss signage needs and the Navigate Annapolis program.
2. Finalize the list of facilities and resources to be included in each wayfinding sign.
3. Finalize the location for each wayfinding sign.
4. Identify funding sources for development and installation of signs.
5. Remove old signage.
6. Install new Navigate Annapolis signs.

Order of Magnitude Costs: To be determined by the City
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Roles: Anne Arundel County, MD Hall, Chesapeake Children's Museum, East Coast Greenway

Additional Steps for Strategy #3

A. Evaluate and improve street surface conditions.
Road surfaces in many parts of the Bates neighborhood are suffering from wear and are further impacted by a lack of stormwater drainage mechanisms. Surface water collects in low-lying areas and contributes to roadway erosion. It is recommended the City evaluate surface conditions, focusing initially on Carrolton Avenue, Nicholson Street, and South Villa Road and schedule repaving for areas that warrant improvements.
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Roles: BNA

B. Improve and upgrade bus stops with shelters.
Bus stops in the Bates neighborhood are located along Spa Road (two stops) and West Street (three stops) and are void of benches, sheltered structures or other amenities. The waiting area for many of the stops is problematic, due to a narrow right of way and little or no sidewalk; often riders must stand within a few feet of oncoming traffic. Signage for the stops is small and often incorporated with other uses making it difficult to see. With new development around Westgate Circle, new housing along Greenfield Street and the redevelopment of the Wiley H. Bates High School, it is likely that transit use will increase at the stops surrounding the Bates neighborhood.

Existing bus stops along Spa Road and West Street do not have shelters and offer little protection from vehicles or the weather.

The City is pursuing the placement of bus shelters for neighborhood bus stops beginning with stops along West Street. To date, the narrow sidewalks and right of way has precluded shelters. The City must secure written permission from residents and businesses to locate a shelter on private property. The City is working with ACDS to evaluate the need for bus service along Smithville Street to serve the new uses within the Wiley H. Bates High School. If bus service is appropriate, a stop in front of the building should be incorporated into roadway improvements.

It is also recommended that the City move the existing bus stop along the southbound lanes of Spa Road, (across from Greenfield Street) to a more suitable area that has sidewalks. This area is identified as a priority for sidewalks, as described under Goal #1. Bus shelters along Spa Road would need to consider impacts on residences, limited rights of way, and safety concerns with high volumes of traffic. All bus signs should be clearly marked.
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Roles: BNA, Residents

Strategy #4: Beautify the neighborhood and establish a Bates identity.

Improving the appearance of both public and private properties will build recognition of the Bates neighborhood. Well maintained homes, businesses, and attractive street corridors exemplify neighborhood stability and will help attract new businesses and investment to the business corridor.

Priority Action #6: Install attractive gateways to the neighborhood.
As visitors and residents travel along the West Street and Spa Road corridors, there is no visible expression that indicates entrance to the Bates neighborhood. Development of a landscaped sign feature announcing the entrance into the Bates neighborhood would help define a gateway for the community. The suggested locations for a gateway sign are shown on Figure 5.6 and include West Street near Russell Street, Spa Road and near the Wiley H. Bates High School site. The City should work with the residents to prioritize gateway locations.

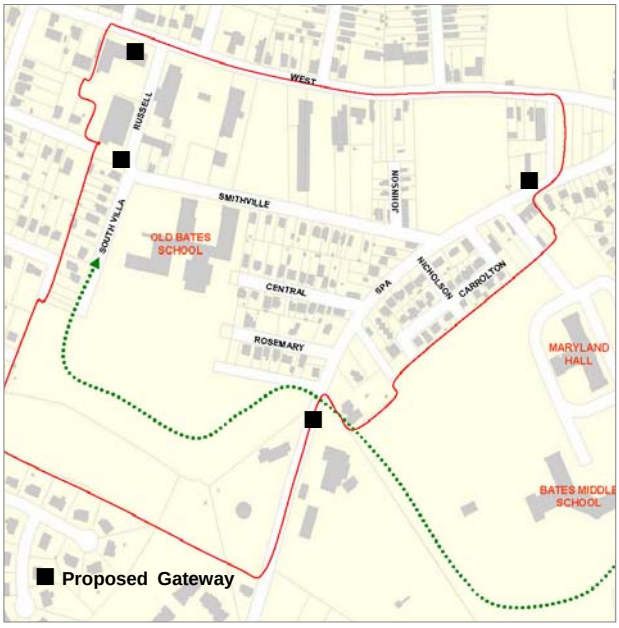
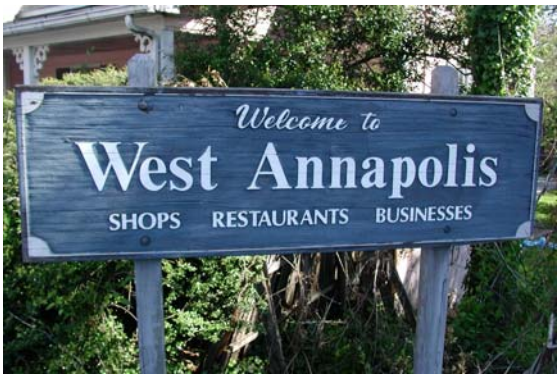


Figure 5.6 Recommended Gateway Areas

The design of the gateway sign could be of a monument form with decorative landscaping features and should not interfere with the flow of traffic along West Street. Appropriate materials for the gateway sign could include brick or stone and lettering for the sign should be easy to read.



Future gateway signs could be located along the northbound travel lane of Spa Road in the area of the Transit Transfer Station. If placed on private property, cooperative agreements between property owners and the City will be required.

Implementation Steps:

1. The City should meet with interested residents and the new Bates Neighborhood Association to discuss the shared benefits of gateway entry signs and potential design options.
2. The City and leaders of the BNA should discuss options for location, gateway design, and landscaping.
3. Obtain endorsement from the BNA for the gateway and landscaping plan.
4. Seek and secure funding for construction, development, installation and maintenance.
5. Seek regulatory approvals and permits if necessary.
6. Install gateway improvements.

Gateway signs contribute to an improved neighborhood appearance and foster community pride.

Order of Magnitude Costs:
$25,000 (West Street and Spa Road)
Lead Organization: City, BNA
Supporting Roles: Property Owners, Residents

Priority Action #7: Extend West Street streetscape improvements.
The Bates neighborhood falls within an area identified as central West Street. The transformation and beautification of the West Street corridor began in the 1980s with the implementation of a new zoning concept known as "mixed use." Since that time, and through various revisions to the code, the City has played a major role in the redevelopment of inner West Street by leveraging public dollars and improvements to attract private investment. Inner West Street streetscape and roadway improvements were completed in three phases, not including Westgate Circle, totaling over $12 million. Physical improvements to the central West Street corridor will help establish an attractive setting for businesses and investment. The existing streetscape is not inviting to pedestrians or potential customers. Sidewalks are very narrow and often force pedestrians to walk within feet of on-coming vehicles. Persons with disabilities would have a difficult if not impossible time along this portion of West Street due to obstacles in the sidewalks including telephone poles, steep curb cuts, and poor quality sidewalks. Dealership vehicles parked adjacent to the sidewalk in some cases encroach on the sidewalk. The central portion of West Street is plagued by numerous curb cuts, a lack of left turn lanes and poorly marked pedestrian crossings.

In the Bates area, central West Street is primarily a commercial corridor, identified by the Comprehensive Plan as a mixed use center with a variety of commercial uses dominated by automobile dealerships and smaller office uses. The Comprehensive Plan provides the following recommendation in support of a strategy to extend improvements to central West Street - "improve the streetscape, including pedestrian amenities such as sidewalks, covered bus stops, as an extension of the urban design improvements programmed for Inner West Street".

The existing West Street corridor is unattractive and unfriendly for pedestrians.

Sidewalks can incorporate a variety of materials such as brick and concrete to create interesting patterns.

Clearly identified crosswalks are part of the inner West Street corridor improvements that should be applied to the central West Street area.

In 1993, a Land Use and Urban Design Plan for Central and Outer West Street Corridor was completed that identified several streetscape improvements intended to improve the function, appearance and performance of the corridor. It is recommended that the City revisit this study as it plans for extending improvements along central West Street. Additional rights-of-way should be acquired to widen and upgrade the sidewalks. Landscaped buffers should be placed between the sidewalk and vehicle travel lane where feasible and businesses should be limited to one clearly defined entrance or a combined entrance where possible. Attractive street lights, trash receptacles, banners, benches and other furnishing should be incorporated into the design.

These improvements will create an attractive streetscape that enhances property values and improves safety. This portion of West Street is a State road; therefore, improvement plans will need to be developed in coordination with the MD State Highway Administration.

Implementation Steps:

1. Meet with the SHA to discuss the need for streetscape improvements.
2. Meet with property owners and business tenants along central West Street.
3. Establish preliminary project boundaries.
4. Assemble a Task Force of property owners and business tenants.
5. In conjunction with a funding agency and the Task Force, develop a preliminary budget and scope of work.
6. Seek and secure funding for a traffic and engineering study, design and installation of streetscape improvements.
7. Prepare and issue a request for proposal for design and engineering.
8. Interview and select preferred design and engineering firm.
9. Conduct design development.
10. Hold on-going meetings with Task Force and public.
11. Seek regulatory approvals and permits.
12. Install streetscape improvements.

Order of Magnitude Costs: $3-5 Million
Lead Organization: City and MD SHA
Supporting Roles: Business owners

Additional Steps for Strategy #4

A. Erect a new attractive fence behind Carrolton Avenue.
The rear property line of homes along Carrolton Avenue is separated from Maryland Hall for the Creative Arts and the athletic fields of the Bates Middle School by a chain linked fence that is in deplorable condition. The physical condition of the fence is most likely attributed to neglect, erosion, and destabilization of the embankment that provides a grade transition behind the residences, and the fence is functioning as a retaining wall. Originally intended to provide a secure barrier for the residences, in some areas the fence has sunk to where it is possible to easily step over it. Residents have experienced trespass situations in this area due to the ineffective fence.

To provide an improved separation between the residences, the athletic fields and MD Hall, the embankment area should be stabilized and re-graded, if necessary. The existing fence should be removed and replaced with a secure, decorative fence and landscaping treatments. Native plant species along the fence line should provide a transition between the grass area and fence line. In addition, this recommendation should complement stormwater outfall pipe requirements and be incorporated into the long-term facility plans of the MD Hall. The current fence is owned by the Board of Education.
Lead Organization: Board of Education, Anne Arundel County Public Schools
Supporting Roles: MD Hall, Carrolton Avenue residents, Bates Middle School, City

The existing fence behind Carrolton Avenue is in very poor condition and no longer provides security protection.

A new attractive fence will provide residents with improved security. Landscaping elements can be incorporated into the fence design to provide additional protection and beauty.

B. Improve the off-road connection between Nicholson Street and the Bates Middle School playing fields.
An informal pathway is located between two residences on Carrolton Avenue and it connects Nicholson Street to the Bates Athletic Complex. This pathway offers a direct visual connection to the school and is highly utilized by school children that walk to school and by visitors attending recreational events. The path includes a narrow sidewalk leading to a set of stairs which are accessed by passing through a chain-linked fence. It is recommended that the pathway be improved to include new pavers and landscaping and that the steps are replaced with a safer and more durable structure. This area is afflicted with drainage issues which should be considered during the development of improvements and selection of planting materials. Ongoing maintenance of this area is the responsibility of the City.

This project should occur in coordination with fence improvements and bank stabilization along the school property line that abuts Carrolton Avenue residents.
Lead Organization: City
Supporting Roles: BNA, Residents

Improvements to this area can also address drainage and should be coordinated with rear fence improvements.

C. Improve or enhance the Spa Creek Trail.
Improvements to the Spa Creek Trail should aim to enhance the environmental quality of the headwaters while also improving the overall conditions of the trail. Enhancements could include litter removal, new plantings, or other landscaping techniques that balance trail use with environmental protection. The Spa Creek Conservancy organizes clean-ups of the area periodically therefore coordination with that group could be productive. The City's GreenScape program could be utilized to help provide discounted trees and plants in exchange for volunteer support from residents. Clean up of the Spa Creek Trail could become an organized neighborhood event.
Lead Organization: BNA
Supporting Roles: City, Spa Creek Conservancy

Strategy #5: Empower neighborhood residents and build community support.

Many residents in the Bates neighborhood have called this area home for years. The Community Legacy planning process has revealed a true neighborhood spirit that can provide a vehicle for plan implementation and help further establish the Bates neighborhood as a strong and stable community. Action steps to empower the residents and build support for the residential area are intended to provide a structure for ongoing community involvement in both neighborhood level and City-wide initiatives.

Priority Action #8: Establish a neighborhood association.

A Bates Neighborhood Association (BNA) would provide the residents and business owners of the community a collective voice and help reach a segment of Annapolis that has historically been under-served. The BNA should be comprised of volunteer residents and business owners. Members of the BNA should establish a core mission statement to guide the implementation of this plan and provide guidance on future initiatives throughout the City. Activities of the BNA should focus on improving the pedestrian and safety environment around the neighborhood, improving relationships between the business community and residents, opening the lines of communication between the City and residents and encouraging involvement in community events and activities.

Promotion of the BNA could occur though hand-delivered flyers to residents and businesses. After the BNA is more fully established, a quarterly newsletter could highlight neighborhood-related activities and issues, provide a progress report on the Legacy Plan, and provide information on upcoming meetings and events.

Examples of successful neighborhood organizations are found throughout the City. The West Annapolis Civic Association (WACA), http://www.westannapolis.org, provides an example of a formalized organization of residents, businesses and other interested citizens working toward improving the conditions in West Annapolis. The Murray Hill Residents Association, http://murrayhill.annapolis.com, was established to represent the interests of residents of the Murray Hill neighborhood of Annapolis. Other groups of interest include the Parole Neighborhood Association and the Ward One Residents Association. A complete listing of City neighborhood associations is provided on the City website, http://www.annapolis.gov/comorg. Members of these established organizations, as well as the Community Association of Annapolis can provide guidance on establishing a Bates Neighborhood Association.

Implementation Steps:

1. Interested residents should establish a BNA committee to discuss the idea of a BNA.
2. The City should provide lists of people who participated in this plan to the BNA committee in advance of their meeting.
3. Neighborhood leaders should develop a flyer for distribution to encourage BNA membership.
4. Meet with representatives from other established neighborhood associations.
5. Establish a Board of Directors (President, Vice President, Secretary, Treasurer), meeting schedules and membership protocol.
6. Establish a preliminary work plan and committees. Initial committees should include both business owners and residents and could include parking, traffic and safety, social activities, communication, and beautification.
7. Develop and distribute a BNA newsletter.

Costs associated with establishing the BNA should be minimal. In addition, businesses could be invited to financially support the BNA through financial support, the use of equipment (such as copiers), or in-kind services.

Order of Magnitude Costs: $5,000
Lead Organization: Residents, Businesses
Supporting Roles: City, MD Hall, Bates Middle School, Boys and Girls Club, Senior Activity Center

Additional Steps for Strategy #5

A. Publicize tax relief programs available through the City, County, and State.
A home is generally the biggest investment a person makes and often the greatest source of personal wealth. Over time, the initial investment made in a home, and the potential return on it, grows as a function of home improvements, surrounding development, and market demand. Embracing the increase in value is often difficult due to increasing property taxes that go along with a rise in property value. Residents on fixed incomes are often faced with difficult situations on how to pay for rising taxes. In 2004, the City reduced the property tax rate, however, many homeowners still received higher tax bills due to increasing home values.
Lead Organization: City, BNA

B. Explore the concept of a residential permit parking zone.
Many residents expressed concerns about overflow parking that occurs on residential streets during events at the Bates Athletic Complex and MD Hall. The redevelopment of the Wiley H. Bates High School adds another regional attraction to the neighborhood. The BNA or interested residents should explore ideas on how to address parking concerns, including the idea of a residential parking zone. Residential parking zones are established by the City and cover specified areas. Residents (permit holders) are permitted to park in the area without limitations; however non-permit holders are restricted from long term parking. Costs associated with a permit parking zone include the cost of applying for the zone and yearly permit fees for residents.

Should a residential parking zone be desired, the residents should present the City with their petition to create a district. Information concerning the petition can be obtained from the City's Transportation Department.

Parking constraints may be improved with the new Severn Bank building which includes structured parking. Developers plan to share parking with the MD Hall for the Arts during peak times. Other nearby shared parking opportunities should be considered prior to establishing a residential permit parking zone.
Lead Organization: BNA, Residents
Supporting Roles: City

C. Develop interpretive signage along the Spa Creek Trail.
Interpretive signage along the neighborhood's portion of Spa Creek Trail about the history of the neighborhood and the Wiley H. Bates High School would provide a link from the past to the present. The planned Wiley H. Bates Legacy Center (part of the redevelopment of the Wiley H. Bates High School) could be noted on the trail. Signage could provide information about Asbury cemetery, flora and fauna habitat and the importance of the Chesapeake Bay tributaries, and the origins of the neighborhood. As a regional trail system, Spa Creek could become an educational journey between regional destinations. Safety and trail signage design considerations should comply with City standards.
Lead Organization: City, BNA
Supporting Roles: MD Hall, Bates Middle School, Boys and Girls Club, Senior Activity Center, Spa Creek Conservancy, Chesapeake Bay Foundation

Residential parking restrictions are applied through an established residential parking zone.

Interpretive signage along the Spa Creek Trail could be coordinated with the new Wiley H. Bates Museum at the old Bates School.