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VIA FIRST CLASS MAIL AND E-MAIL: snash@annapolis.gov

Sally Nash, Ph.D, AICP
City of Annapolis
Chief of Comprehensive Planning
145 Gorman Street – 3rd Floor
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Comments to May 31, 2018 Draft Forest Drive and Eastport Sector Study (the “Sector Study”)

Dear Ms. Nash:

This letter provides constructive comments, feedback, and recommendations to the second draft of the Sector Study. The City of Annapolis (the “City”) has an opportunity to create a smart planned growth strategy to ensure a steady growth in tax revenue for the next 20 to 30 years by allowing new development and redevelopment throughout the area covered by the Sector Study, nearly two-thirds of the City’s geographical area. Without steady growth, the City will be forced to increase property taxes year-after-year, which will inflate property prices and cost of living in the City, the City’s population will steadily decrease, and businesses will shut down or leave the City for cheaper nearby alternatives in the County.

The barriers and hurdles that a developer must overcome to complete a project in the City are at present, very arduous. The Sector Study could encourage developers to come to the City and, when insufficient capacity exists for certain public facilities, the Study could recommend contributions to alternative public facilities or fees-in-lieu for the insufficient public infrastructure. Otherwise, the public facility will remain insufficient indefinitely; community development and economic growth will be stagnant. Anne Arundel County has a program that follows such parameters, so that alternatives exist to simply freezing development.

The Sector Study should also expand on and encourage “Complete Streets” through the study area. The purpose of Complete Streets is to allow for an increased flow of traffic and create connectivity between existing and planned commercial and residential projects and neighborhoods, which, in turn, will allow City residents the ability to utilize alternative modes of transportation (walking, biking, scooters, etc.). This will help alleviate some of the traffic concerns raised by local residents and foster the non-auto, pedestrian-oriented types of neighborhoods that the City’s Comprehensive Plan prioritizes and that citizens say they want. Developers should have the opportunity to provide Complete Streets and to get credit for and against various public facilities. Complete Streets should also include greenways that contribute to the City’s canopy goals.

In regards to green space and Forest Conservation requirements, everyone wants to be good stewards of the Chesapeake Bay, its surrounding watersheds, and the environment as a whole, but the FCA requirements in the City are overly burdensome for a municipality, and they are especially impactful on those few properties that have existing forested areas. There needs to be an alternative method for crediting developments with tree cover. The Sector Study should identify the City

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watersheds that extend into the County and recommend off-site tree plantings and mitigation in those areas. The Sector Study should also encourage and recommend that HOA's, right-of-ways, open spaces, and greenroofs be utilized for tree mitigation, reforestation, and afforestation with the City's limits.

Implementing these recommendations will be difficult if the current Community Character Types are utilized. These Character Types, through their fairly discrete and rigid descriptions, seem to defeat the goal of creating connectivity and continuity within the Sector Study area. Alternatively, the Sector Study should consider a consolidated Character Type that has enough flexibility in it to allow the market some measure of control over what is developed within the Sector Study area. The following table is an example of what that Character Type should look like in order to provide adequate flexibility, but certainty of process and limitations on bulk and scale.

Community Character Type	Urban Village Community Enhancement
Community Role	Provisions for retail, services, employment, entertainment, lodging, and housing; main function is to serve surrounding neighborhoods and compliment nearby retail, services, employment, entertainment, lodging, and housing; provide accessibility for all City residents and tourists alike
Land Use Mix	Mix of commercial uses and various residential types (i.e., townhouses, multi-family apartments, condominiums, scaled SFD's); Vertical mixed-use building encouraged; condominiums/multi-family apartments above or immediately adjacent to retail, services, etc.; townhouses/scaled SFD's encouraged as transition between higher intensity uses and between green/open space
Character	Quasi-urban streetscapes (utilize zero setbacks for vertical/mixed-use buildings where adequate surface parking is available); freestanding and two – to four-story buildings should be setback an appropriate distance from streets to allow and encourage pedestrian and bike access along streetscape; create connectivity between commercial projects and neighborhoods via bike paths, walking trails, and greenways
Building Heights	1 to 6 stories (approximately ± 65' maximum height)
Intensity & Density Range	7 to 35 DUA; intensity determined by height/parking (2.00 to 2.5 FAR)
Parking	On-street parking encouraged on non-arterial/main thoroughfares; provide adequate surface parking for "grab-and-go" commercial/retail businesses; structured parking for areas that utilize mixed-use (commercial/residential) buildings; surface parking (with adequate landscaping and greenways) for buildings with either less verticality or single/limited businesses and tenants
Transportation	Moderately auto-centric; strongly encourage pedestrian and bicycle accessibility; moderately transit supported
Examples	West Annapolis; Eastport; Village Greens; Newport, RI; Nantucket, MA; Dana Point, CA; LoDo, Denver, CO; Cherry Creek, Denver,

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CO; Highlands, Denver, CO; Charleston, SC; Garden District, New Orleans, LA; Uptown, New Orleans, LA
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Once the Sector Study is implemented it is important to then adopt a zoning map which allows the desired uses as "permitted" as opposed to requiring uses to satisfy special exception standards.

The City should not be fearful of increased density. Allowing for more housing types, including affordable housing will allow for the addition of viable commercial services to support sustained growth, all of which should be centered around existing infrastructure.

Very truly yours,

HYATT & WEBER, P.A.



Steven D. Hyatt

SDH/aes
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