

CHAPTER 3: LAND USE AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Annapolis is a developed and diverse center of economy and culture in a major metropolitan region. It is the location of government, maritime industries, finance, law and professional services, retail and wholesale trade, visual and performing arts, and tourism. This Land Use Plan emphasizes:



Main Street

- ▶ Directing growth to key redevelopment opportunity areas;
- ▶ Conserving the character of downtown and the City communities, including, where appropriate, their mixed-use business and residential character;
- ▶ Responding effectively to long term environmental challenges; and
- ▶ Encouraging economic growth with land use policies that retain and expand existing businesses and promote the emergence of new businesses in locations that provide optimal benefit to the community.

Existing Conditions

The city's geographic location on the Annapolis Neck Peninsula between the South River and Severn River leaves little room for physical expansion. Existing development outside of Annapolis, combined with the expansion of Parole on the western edge, leave Annapolis with few options for growth outside of present boundaries.

Beginning about 40 years ago, major commercial real estate development on the edge of the city and historic changes in the nature of retailing generally, impacted the city's commercial base, as it did many other communities across the nation. These trends created competition for traditional in-town retailers and impacted the commercial real estate market. But after several decades of restructuring, Annapolis remains a vibrant commercial center and it is positioned to capitalize on the energy and vitality created both within its borders and in the adjoining areas. The expansion of Westfield Mall, the continued growth and development of the Anne Arundel Medical Center, and the new Annapolis Towne Centre at Parole all point to the economic vitality of the Annapolis area, of which Annapolis is the center.



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For decades, Annapolis has promoted and supported development policies that are in balance with its geographic constraints and area-wide development trends. The City has optimized land use within its borders, promoted a mix of commercial and residential redevelopment of underutilized land, and conserved and revitalized downtown and its residential districts.¹ These essential policies remain the foundation of Annapolis' comprehensive planning. As indicated below, low commercial vacancy rates and high commercial rents are signaling that the City's commercial land base is vibrant and is, in fact, nearly built-out. The effectiveness of the City's planning and public policies on growth and development are visible, and in this regard key observations are noted here:

- ▶ The historic Annapolis downtown is a center of business, government, and housing. It is located between Spa Creek and College Creek. With its enduring city plan and advantaged waterfront location, downtown Annapolis remains a unique and special American place. The U.S. Naval Academy, St. John's College, and the Maryland State Government are the major institutions located in downtown. Main Street is designated by the State's Main Street Maryland Program and was named one of the Ten Great Streets in America by the American Planning Association in 2008.
- ▶ The city's historic core, a largely intact pre-industrial colonial city, is designated a National Historic Landmark for possessing exceptional value in illustrating the heritage of the United States. Annapolis boasts the largest collection of 18th century buildings in America. Many are open to the public where their beauty and architectural style are major attractions.
- ▶ The city's core is surrounded by residential neighborhoods that vary in age, character, and cost of housing.
- ▶ Throughout the city, land use on the waterfront has evolved over time. City residents have remained supportive of the maritime and sailing industries and large sections of Spa Creek and Back Creek are devoted to water related and/or water dependent enterprises. The maritime industry consists of about 300 maritime businesses, dozens of grassroots-driven organizations and yacht clubs, hundreds of year-round local, national, and international regattas and championships, and more than 3,000 private and commercial boat slips and public moorings.²
- ▶ The neighborhood of Eastport, opposite Spa Creek from downtown, while mostly residential, features a mix of maritime uses, restaurants and local commercial uses.



Annapolis Harbor

¹ Over the past two decades, the City has adopted a series of zoning amendments to implement the major land use recommendations of the 1985 and 1998 Comprehensive Plans. These have included new maritime zones to support maritime uses and protect water views, historic conservation zones to protect the residential character of downtown neighborhoods, a mixed use zone to stimulate new development along Inner West Street, a professional/mixed use and office/residential transition zone to promote office development and protect nearby residential uses and a business corridor enhancement zone to promote better design of commercial development along Outer West Street.

² Annapolis hosts the world's largest in-the-water boat shows, attracting 40,000 to 50,000 visitors each year that contribute an estimated spending of about \$16 million annually within the City. The maritime industry is estimated to have a \$200 million annual economic impact to Annapolis.

- ▶ The revitalized Inner West Street Commercial District, a narrow corridor surrounded by established residential neighborhoods, extends outward from downtown to Westgate Circle. This corridor is newly designated as the Capital City Cultural Arts District, a State designation to promote arts and entertainment.
- ▶ Visual and performing arts venues flourish in Annapolis, supported by a loyal and effective community.
- ▶ Outer West Street (from Legion Avenue west to the City-County line) is characterized by lower intensity, automobile-oriented commercial development.
- ▶ The primary concentrations of industrial land in the city are in the Outer West Street corridor, the Annapolis Business Park along Gibraltar Avenue, and in areas along Chinquapin Round Road and Legion Avenue. These areas feature heavy commercial services, light industrial businesses, warehousing, and other employment uses. These land areas are at or near build-out capacity for their intended uses. At the end of 2007 the city’s industrial vacancy rate was a low 8 percent compared to other jurisdictions in Maryland.³ Flex space in the city was fully occupied and average square footage rents for flex commercial/industrial space in Annapolis were the highest in Maryland.
- ▶ Professional office space is located along West Street, in West Annapolis where access to both U.S. Route 50 and downtown is convenient, in downtown Annapolis, and to a lesser extent along Forest Drive. In 2007 the City had a little over 5 million square feet of office space, of which Class A space constituted about 35 percent. Annapolis is also known as one of the “tightest” office markets in the Baltimore region with low vacancy rates thanks in part to the stabilizing influence of County and State government. The limited availability of prime sites has continued to constrain new office development. Office rents in Annapolis are higher than in many other jurisdictions in Maryland, including the City of Baltimore.⁴
- ▶ Neighborhood-level retail centers are located along Forest Drive; along Bay Ridge Avenue in Eastport; along Taylor Ave. and Annapolis Street in West Annapolis; in the central section of West Street; and at Bay Ridge Road and Hillsmere Drive. There are no vacant or distressed shopping centers in the city. Retail storefronts in neighborhood-level shopping centers are generally occupied throughout the city.
- ▶ Roughly three percent of the land within the city is vacant, 15 percent is devoted to roadways, and the majority of the city’s land area (approximately 56%) is in residential use.

Figure 3-1 Land Use, 2008

Land Use Classification	Acres	Percentage of Total Land
Commercial	346	8%
Industrial	108	2%
Institutional	306	7%
Maritime	64	1%
Mixed Use	20	0%
Recreation & Open Space	326	7%
Residential	2549	56%
Vacant	139	3%
Roadways	696	15%

³ Only Baltimore City and West Baltimore County, at 6 and 5 percent respectively, have lower vacancy rates. Source: MacKenzie Real Estate Services, 3rd Quarter 2007 Market Report.

⁴ Source: Annapolis Department of Economic Affairs.

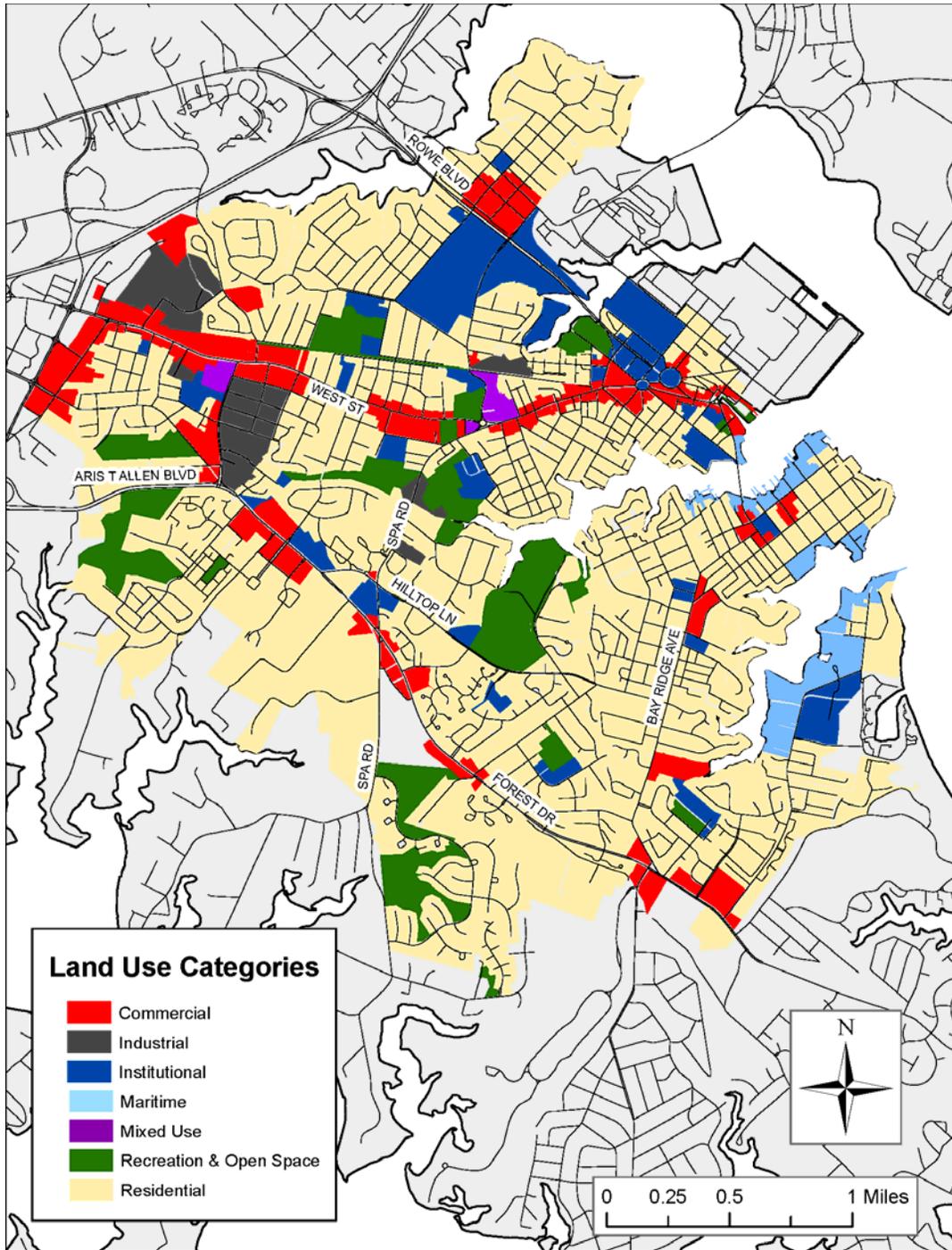


Figure 3-2 Generalized Existing Land Use Map

Principles and Objectives

Guiding principles inform the Plan's policies on land use and economic development. These principles, while universal, address the basic land use planning issues present in Annapolis. Also presented are the objectives of the Annapolis Land Use Plan and policies.

Principle 1. A city's growth and economic vitality does not depend on the outward expansion of its borders.

Because the productive use of land is cyclical, at any given time, there are land areas that are underutilized and buildings that are obsolete when compared to current community needs. A City can target and promote specific areas for redevelopment as part of a sound land use policy that can help guide private sector development decision making.

Objectives:

- ▶ Through 2030, residential and commercial growth will largely be directed to mixed use development projects in designated Opportunity Areas shown in this Plan. With one exception—the Katherine Property⁵—these areas are presently in land intensive, but not land efficient, commercial uses.
- ▶ The development of Opportunity Areas will increase the supply of commercial space in the City.
- ▶ The development of Opportunity Areas, through their layout and design, mix of uses and residential densities will promote efficient and cost-effective public transit (see Ch. 4 – *Transportation*).
- ▶ The redevelopment of lands in the Opportunity Areas will advance and promote ecologically sound approaches to urban development, and result in improved environmental conditions.
- ▶ Channeling residential and commercial redevelopment into appropriate Opportunity Areas can relieve pressure for inappropriate use of buildings in the Historic District.

⁵ The Katherine Property is a 180-acre site located south of Forest Drive. It was annexed into the city in 2005 and is currently in use as horse farms and residential estates.

Principle 2. Infill development can occur, and it should occur in a manner that respects the size, scale, and use of existing and historic development patterns.

Since only three percent of Annapolis' developable land is vacant, by necessity future development in the city will consist of the gradual redevelopment of existing properties and the gradual build-out of scattered vacant lots. Successful infill maintains and/or restores spatial continuity to streetscapes; strengthens neighborhoods and commercial districts; respects historic preservation, existing vistas, and natural resources; and introduces compatible uses that complement community attributes and needs.

Objectives:

- ▶ The gradual improvement of vacant or underutilized parcels will strengthen, not distract from neighborhood and community character.
- ▶ Infill development will promote economic diversity and real estate vitality while respecting neighborhood character.
- ▶ Downtown Annapolis will remain a special American Place; its historic and cultural quality and its economic vitality protected and sustained as a gift for future generations.

Principle 3. Today's land use planning and development must recognize the need to locate investments where they will be secure from hazards, such as flooding, in the future.

Objectives:

- ▶ A City land use pattern that is cognizant of potential flooding hazards due to sea level rise.
- ▶ The best way for the City to respond to the potential impact of sea level rise on downtown Annapolis involves proactive study and planning to promote consensus and guide both public and private decision-making long term.

Land Use Plan

Figure 3-3 shows the generalized land use pattern desired for Annapolis by 2030. This map is the primary guide to the long term development of Annapolis. Population growth in Annapolis between 2008 and 2030 is accommodated primarily in four Opportunity Areas described and shown in the more detailed maps on the following pages.

The Opportunity Areas were selected on the basis of where the character of the area is expected or desired to change. Plans for the Opportunity Areas utilize three separate urban “character types” that reflect expectations for the character, type, and intensity of development: Urban Commercial, Urban Center Low and Urban Center. Figures 3-4, 3-5, and 3-6 describe each of these character types. The statistics describing the mix of uses, gross density, and building height are not intended to serve as rigid development standards, but to describe general characteristics and desired character. The development of design objectives or guidelines and more detailed development standards are recommended for each of the Opportunity Areas, as stated in Policy 1 of this chapter.

For each Opportunity Area, projections of residential and commercial development were completed, and are documented in Ch. 5 – *Municipal Growth & Community Facilities*, and were used as a basis for projecting water and sewer infrastructure needs in Ch. 9 – *Water Resources*. For the sake of infrastructure planning, they represent a build-out scenario as if the entirety of each Opportunity Area were to redevelop. In practical terms, the more likely scenario is that sites within the Opportunity Areas will redevelop, and the desired character will be interpreted specific to that site.

This Plan anticipates that Annapolis will grow during the period covered by this Plan, and its recommendations are formulated to direct and harness that growth according to the community’s wishes and to achieve other City objectives.

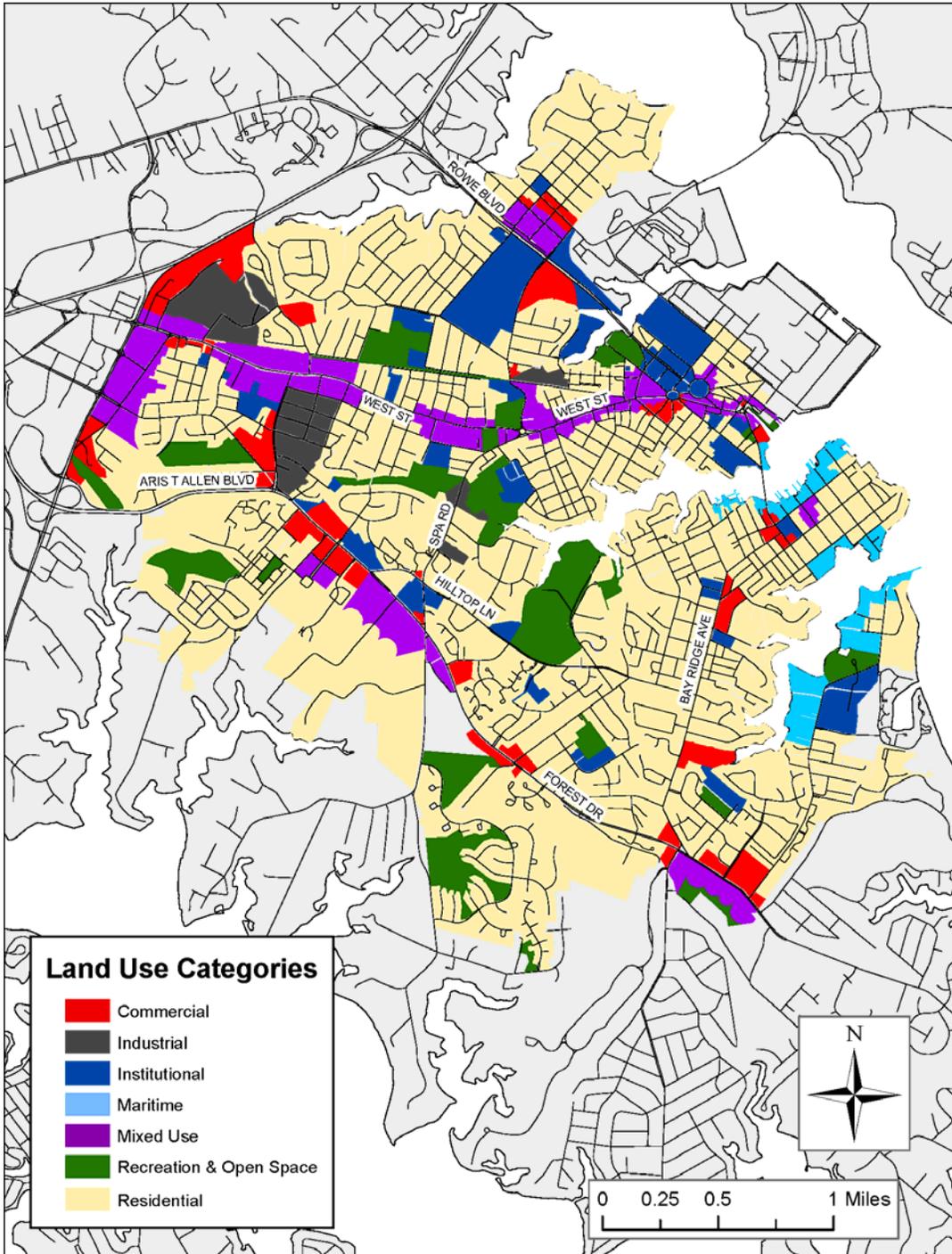


Figure 3-3 Generalized Proposed Land Use Map

Figure 3-4 Urban Commercial Character Type

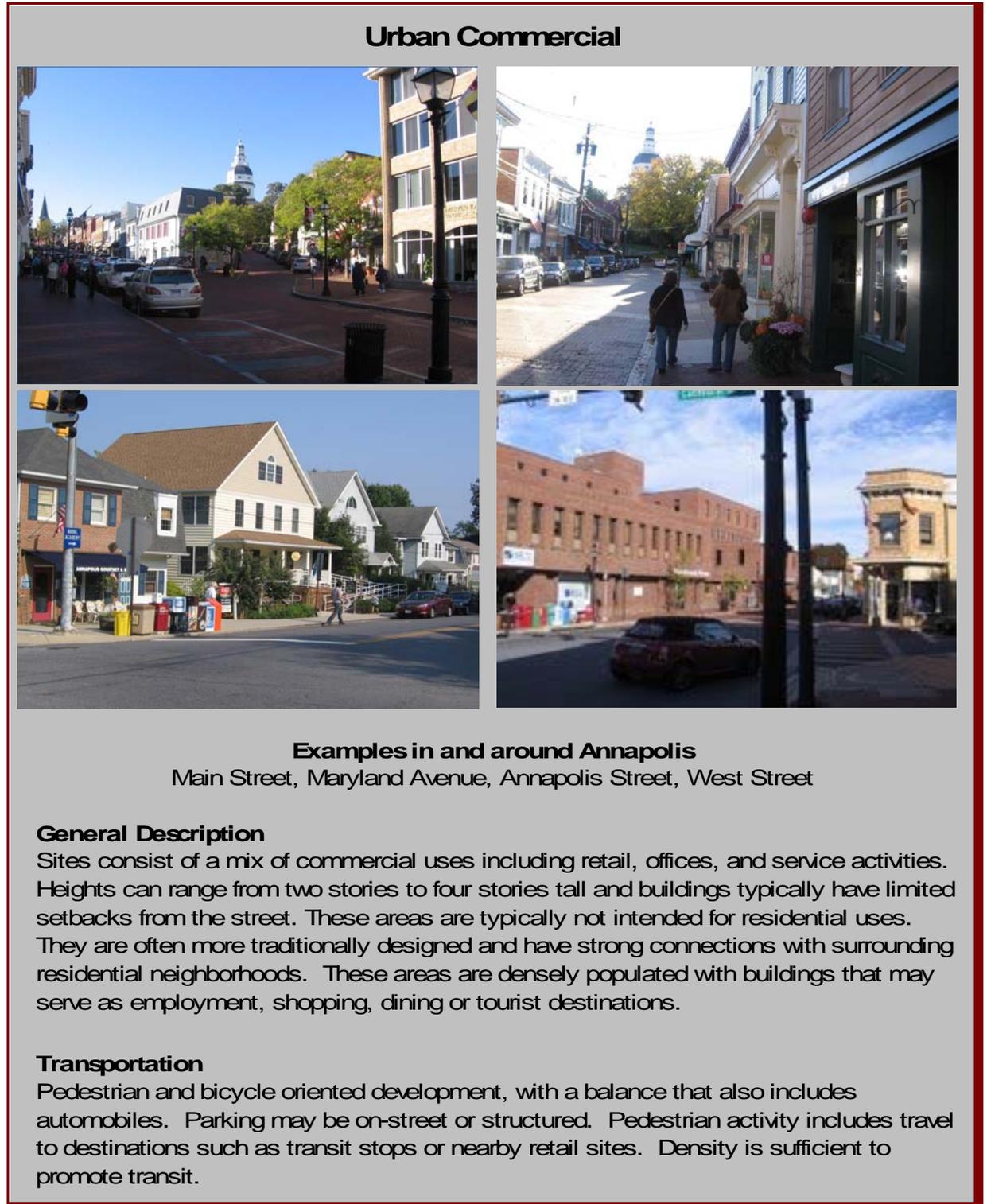


Figure 3-5 Urban Center Character Type

Urban Center

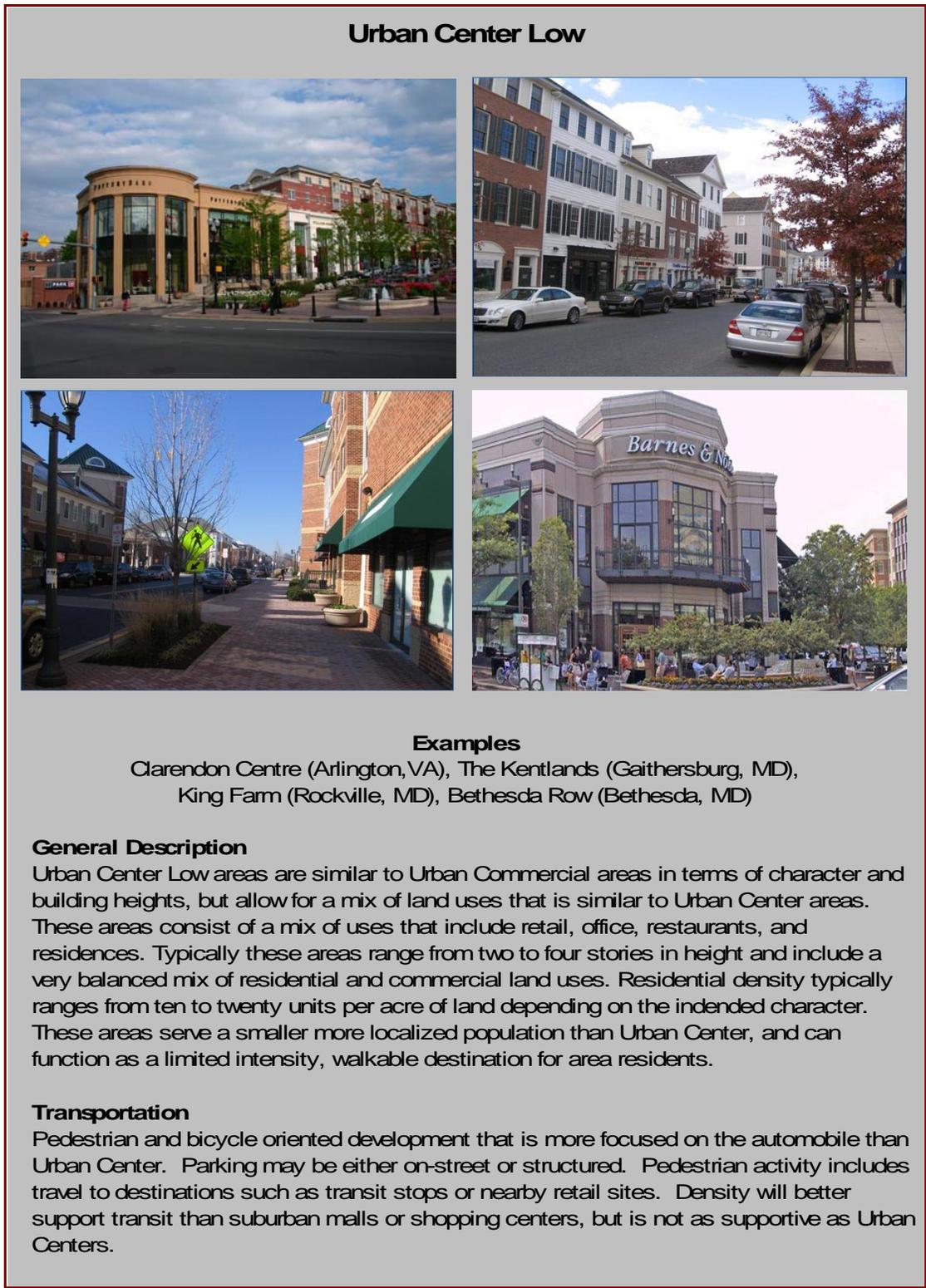


Examples
Park Place
Rockville Town Center (Rockville, MD), City Place (Silver Spring, MD)

General Description
Urban Centers are large scale mixed use areas consisting of retail, office, entertainment, lodging and residential activities. They are often employment, entertainment, shopping, and dining destinations for the surrounding region. These areas include a very balanced mix of residential and commercial uses and are designed to be self-sustaining places where people can live, work and shop while relying less on the automobile. In Annapolis, it is recommended that these areas be designed for a range in height from four to eight stories with residential densities ranging between 35 to 45 units per acre of land.

Transportation
Pedestrian and bicycle oriented development, with less dependence on automobiles. These areas almost always include a significant amount of structured parking, but can also include on-street parking. Pedestrian activity is generated by on-site uses, but can also come from transit stops or nearby residential areas. The large amount of density in these areas promotes and supports local transit systems.

Figure 3-6 Urban Center Low Character Type



Opportunity Areas

West Annapolis Opportunity Area

The West Annapolis Opportunity Area encompasses the intersection of Rowe Boulevard and Taylor Avenue and the commercial sections of West Annapolis along Ridgely and Melvin. It is a major gateway into Annapolis with good highway and transit accessibility to U.S. Route 50, MD Route 450, and downtown.

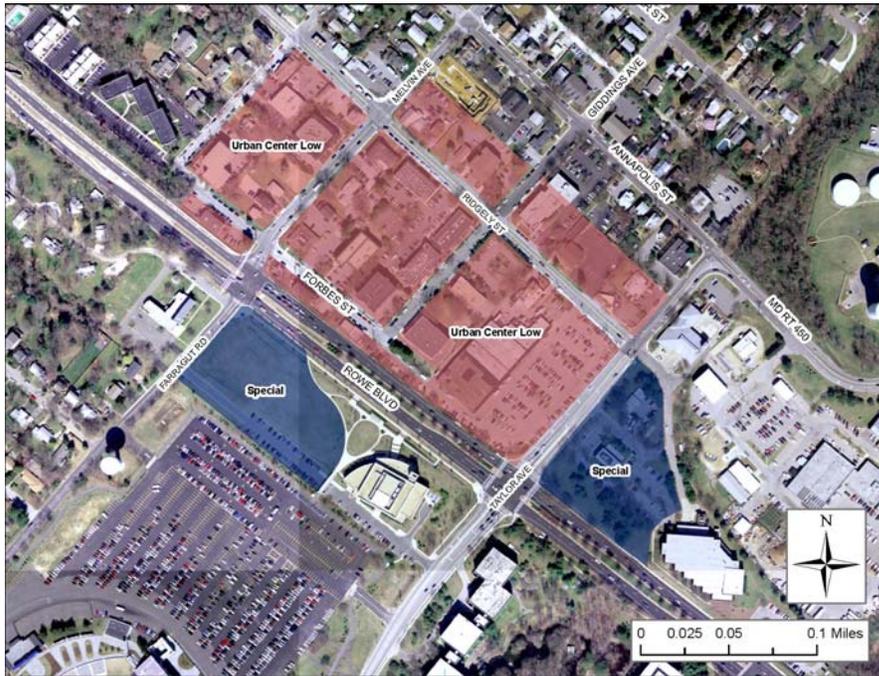


Figure 3-7 West Annapolis Opportunity Area Map

The purpose of designating the West Annapolis Opportunity Area is to:

- ▶ Acknowledge the development potential of this area, anticipate likely development pressure, and articulate the desired future character of the West Annapolis “Village”.
- ▶ Set the stage for detailed area planning that allows more stakeholder and community input and more thorough consideration of the issues important to the area’s future character and economic viability.
- ▶ Acknowledge that Rowe Boulevard is a primary gateway and entry point into Annapolis that defines visitors’ first impression of the city. Rowe Boulevard has more of a ceremonial character than other gateways, and future development along Rowe should reflect and enhance the character of this corridor.
- ▶ Acknowledge that careful planning is needed to ensure the sensitive transition between the quiet neighborhoods of Wardour and West Annapolis, the neighborhood-scale commercial areas abutting the residential neighborhoods, and the larger office buildings on the blocks closest to Rowe Boulevard.

- ▶ Acknowledge that the widening of Rowe Boulevard created an awkward intersection at Forbes and Melvin and created very narrow lots between Forbes and Rowe. A reconfiguration of the intersection and parcels could benefit the function of the area as a whole.
- ▶ Acknowledge that the current zoning of the area may not enact the desired character for West Annapolis and should be reviewed for its appropriateness. Review of, and change to zoning could be done as part of an area planning effort.
- ▶ Facilitate the comprehensive treatment of features important to the area's future character and identity, circulation and economic viability: pedestrian and bicycle facilities, in particular those that enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety; a parking strategy; signage; streetscape improvements; road alignment; access management; transit service; and connections to the bicycle network.
- ▶ Acknowledge the regionally significant role of Rowe Blvd. and Taylor Avenue/MD450 as an overflow route to US 50. A balance must be found between regional transportation needs and local circulation and mobility.

Recommendations for the West Annapolis Opportunity Area are:

- ▶ The area shown in figure 3-7 should transition over time to the Urban Center Low character to enhance the "Village" quality and function of West Annapolis. In West Annapolis, the Urban Center Low designation directs redevelopment to achieve a mix of retail, offices, restaurants, and housing, and preserve essential neighborhood services.
- ▶ As part of the redevelopment of the opportunity area, a park should be created to serve as a community gathering place that creates a recognizable focal point for the West Annapolis Village. Such a park could encompass both "green" and hardscape features.
- ▶ The form of development - articulated by building massing and height, site coverage, relationship of buildings to streets, building setbacks, architectural detailing - should enhance the urban "village" character. New development along Rowe should be designed within the context of Rowe Boulevard being the ceremonial gateway into Annapolis, along which other prominent buildings are located- the District Court building, DNR building, and State Archives building. As such, higher buildings along Rowe are inappropriate.
- ▶ Views and sight lines should be taken into consideration in the redevelopment of this area, in particular the protection of scenic viewsheds into downtown. Environmental features in the area should be preserved, with special attention to preserving mature trees.
- ▶ Two portions of the West Annapolis Opportunity Area are designated "Special Use." These are public use sites and there is one principal guideline for their development and/or redevelopment: the future use should bring substantial recognition and prestige to the City of Annapolis while conferring direct benefits to the City's residents.
- ▶ Urban design amenities (pedestrian and bicycle facilities, planting, signage, streetscape treatments, public spaces) should be implemented throughout the opportunity area and serve to create cohesion and enhance the West Annapolis Village as a recognizable "place". Measures to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety should be implemented.

- ▶ Parking should be located in structures or underground to allow the most efficient use of space for commercial activity.
- ▶ The Transportation chapter of this Plan recommends an engineering feasibility study to address the goals of alleviating peak period traffic congestion, handling Route 50 overflow traffic, improving transit efficiency, and enhancing access to and circulation within West Annapolis.

Bay Ridge Opportunity Area

The Bay Ridge Opportunity Area encompasses the south side of Bay Ridge Road between Hillsmere Drive and the city's eastern boundary. The purpose of designating the Bay Ridge Opportunity Area is to:

- ▶ Acknowledge the development potential of this area and articulate the desired future character;
- ▶ Acknowledge that the opportunity area is part of an already existent commercial center utilized by the communities on this portion of the Annapolis Neck peninsula that could provide for more of the community's commercial needs;
- ▶ Acknowledge that this stretch of Bay Ridge Road is a busy, 4-lane street that effectively divides the south side of the street from the north and presents challenges for implementing bicycle and pedestrian and bicycle features;
- ▶ Set the stage for more detailed area planning that allows more stakeholder input and more thorough consideration of issues important to the area's circulation and character.



Figure 3-8 Bay Ridge Opportunity Area Map

Recommendations for the Bay Ridge Opportunity Area are:

- ▶ The area shown in Figure 3-8 should transition over time to the Urban Center Low character. The focus will be on retail and office uses, although some residential development should be included.
- ▶ Permanent open space should be preserved as part of new development. In particular, a green space buffer is recommended between new development and the residential area to the south and this should be implemented through the site design review process.
- ▶ Extend Edgewood Road and Georgetown Road south across Bay Ridge Road, and connect them within the opportunity area. These road connections should allow circulation and access within the opportunity area and onto adjacent streets. A pedestrian and bicycle connection to Old Annapolis Neck Road is recommended, possibly utilizing an existing right of way corridor.
- ▶ Features to create an attractive urban activity center that is transit, bike, and pedestrian- friendly should be implemented, including consistent streetscape treatments and comfortable sidewalks.

Forest Drive Opportunity Area

The proposal for the Forest Drive Opportunity Area should involve an integrated and coordinated mixed use development that prioritizes maximum land conservation. Much of the Opportunity Area is proposed to maintain its natural and forested character. Approximately 75 acres of the 180-acre Katherine Property, which is in this Opportunity Area, will be preserved by a conservation easement required as part of the annexation of this property. Development of the Katherine Property is also subject to a Master Plan to be reviewed and approved by the City, also a requirement of its annexation approval.



Figure 3-9 Forest Drive Opportunity Area Map

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There are three goals for development within the Forest Drive Opportunity area as a whole. These goals should be incorporated into the Master Plan for the Katherine Property. The three goals are:

- ▶ The more intense development should be closest to Forest Drive. The area closest to Forest Drive is recommended for an Urban Center Low land use character. To preserve the natural character of the remainder of the area, clustered residential development with extensive open space requirements is recommended. Residential clusters could be sufficiently intense to allow for housing that could be served efficiently with public transit and other City services, while maintaining the natural areas.
- ▶ A mix of uses is recommended for new development. Incorporating employment uses is an important part of this recommendation.
- ▶ Connections to adjacent areas should be incorporated. Road connections should be made so as to contribute to relief from traffic congestion on Forest Drive and increase connectivity to adjacent areas. Gemini Drive, for example, should be extended across Forest Drive and should then run parallel to Forest Drive and provide inter-parcel connections and redundancy in the street network. The conceptual alignment of the Forest Drive Relief Road (see Ch. 4 - *Transportation*) could also connect to Forest Drive within the Forest Drive Opportunity Area.

The Forest Drive Opportunity Area has two particularly unique characteristics – substantial acreage and unified ownership. These factors combine to provide an excellent opportunity to fulfill many of the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. The development approved in this Opportunity Area should be aimed at creating a mixed-use neighborhood with retail and offices uses; providing a variety of housing opportunities; helping to address the traffic concerns in the area; and setting forth a model for sustainable development.

Outer West Street Opportunity Area

The areas that comprise the Outer West Street Opportunity Area are shown in color on Figure 3-10. This Plan recommends a transformation of the area, from an automobile oriented suburban commercial pattern to an urban character focused on residential development and commercial uses. It is important to note that the Plan also recommends the land presently in industrial use remain intact and economically viable. These areas are shown as “industrial” on Figure 3-10. Several other elements of this Opportunity Area plan are noted below:

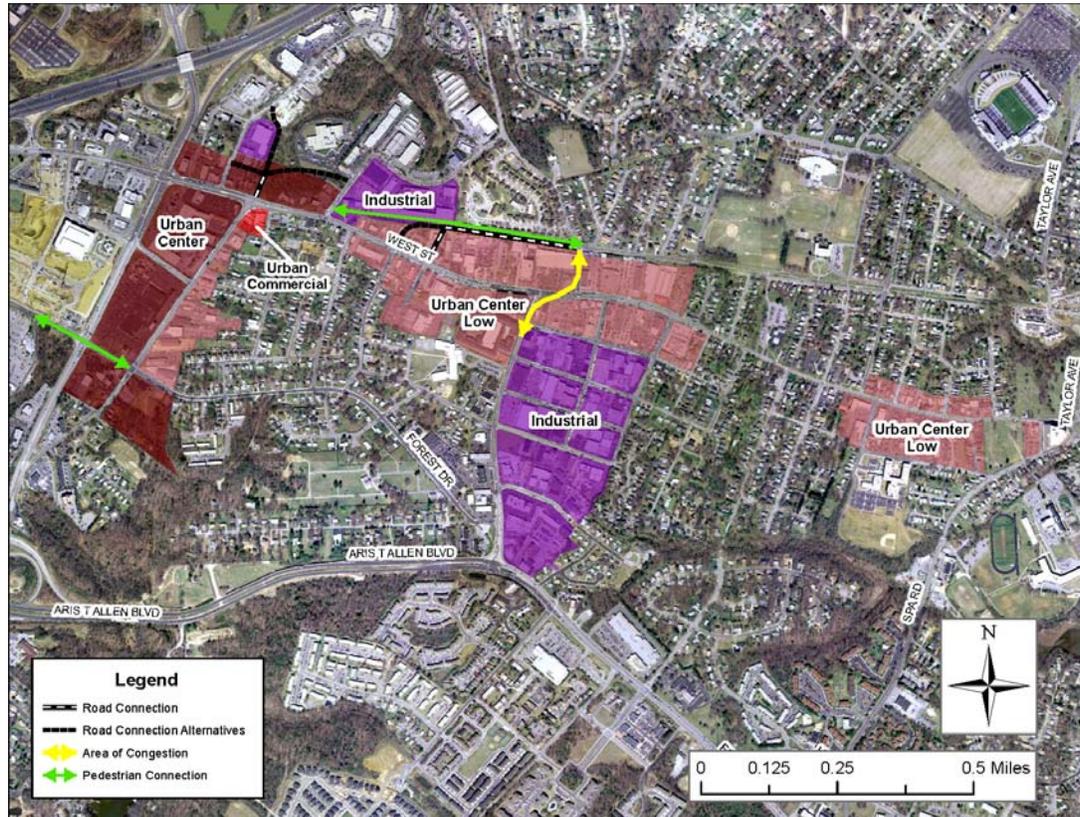


Figure 3-10 Outer West Street Opportunity Area Map

- ▶ Urban mixed use redevelopment is targeted to strategic points along the West Street Corridor and near the Annapolis Towne Centre at Parole. New structures may include residential and/or office space on upper floors. Alternatively, redevelopment might integrate fully-residential structures with nearby non-residential structures.
- ▶ Buildings should front directly onto West Street with little or no front yard setbacks and little interruption of facades. At the same time, use of extensive buffer yards and design requirements (including transparency, differentiation and sky exposure angle) are recommended to assist in creating strong urban form while also remaining sensitive to the impact on surrounding neighborhoods.
- ▶ Buildings along the east side of Old Solomon’s Road are anticipated to serve as a transitional region between the Parole Neighborhood and the more intense development to the west. That character is largely in existence currently.

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- ▶ A new park should be created to provide a recognizable focal point for this corridor and provide open space and a gathering place to support new residences and the adjacent neighborhoods. A park is critical to the idea of “place-making” and transforming the area into an urban corridor over time. Integrating transit with the park encourages its use as an active urban space. The exact size and location of the park should be determined as part of more detailed area planning, however it should front on West Street. An urban park concept incorporated into a multi-level building could be considered.
- ▶ The Plan recommends transition of existing adjacent industrial areas into “clean industry parks” specifically with a focus on environmentally responsible practices aimed at reducing the carbon footprint and impact on water quality.
- ▶ The Plan calls for the realignment of Admiral Drive and Chinquapin Round Road to form a full intersection and important local street connections to improve traffic flow and safety. (See Policy 4, Ch. 4 - *Transportation*).
- ▶ Construction of a Multi-Modal Transportation Center is desirable, perhaps in the vicinity of the intersection of Old Solomons Island Road and West Street. (See Policy 3, Ch. 4 - *Transportation*).
- ▶ Noting that West Street was the historic entrance to the city, demarcate this “Gateway” into the city with streetscape improvements and other design features to convey arrival and welcome. It is recommended that the street transition to an urban boulevard in character with widened sidewalks, enhanced pedestrian and bicycle crossings, street trees, transit features, and street lights.
- ▶ The Plan recommends pedestrian, bicycle and transit-friendly design in general, and a major pedestrian-bicycle connection over MD Route 2 between Annapolis Towne Centre at Parole and the Opportunity Area, perhaps using Old Forest Drive.
- ▶ In light of the changing character of this area, a sector study is recommended. A sector study should complement the detailed area planning called for in this chapter’s Policy 1 and should include the entire Outer West Opportunity Area and the Parole Neighborhood. A sector study allows greater participation by affected residents and businesses in planning for the future of this sector of Annapolis and more thoroughly responds to current conditions and forces of change. In addition to the recommendations noted above and shown in Figure 3-9, a sector study should address:
 - Maintaining conditions that allow numerous small businesses to provide significant employment opportunities and economic activity;
 - The influx of newer residents in recent years, with resulting language and cultural issues;
 - Awkward traffic flow at the intersection of Old Forest, Chinquapin Round, and Forest Drive/MD 665;
 - The need for better connectivity throughout this area.
 - The sector study should address the merits of expanding the urban character to properties adjacent to the identified opportunity area, in particular:
 - * extending south along the east side of Old Solomon’s Road, and
 - * along the north side of West Street in the vicinity of the proposed northward extension of Old Solomon’s Road.

- The sector study should also undertake an examination of the zoning along West Street directly to the east of Legion Avenue. This Plan recommends the retention of the existing character in that stretch of West Street (the R3-NC zone), however, a look at uses permitted in that zone is merited. This examination acknowledges that while the character of that stretch of West Street should remain, the commercial function of the buildings has become as important as their residential use and should be supported.

Policy Recommendations

Policy 1. Growth will be directed primarily to four Opportunity Areas, illustrated in Figures 3-7 through 3-10 and reflected in the Future Land Use Map.

Over the next decade, the City will formulate detailed land use and urban design plans or sector studies for each of the four opportunity areas.

- 1.1 The detailed area plans should identify the necessary role of the City and other public entities in facilitating redevelopment, including, for example, infrastructure improvements and zoning changes.
- 1.2 Each of the four opportunity areas should be developed as models for ecologically sustainable urban development.
- 1.3 Each of the four opportunity areas should be seen as vital nodes on the network of public transit routes. Each area should be developed to promote a high transit demand so as to encourage the effective provision of transit city-wide. In other words, the development of the opportunity area and its transit demand should have a positive spillover effect on the quality of transit service. As an example, the development in the Outer West Street Opportunity Area should demand service to such a degree that residents elsewhere in the city benefit by virtue of their proximity to the same bus routes serving Outer West Street.

Policy 2. Infill development, redevelopment, and expansion outside of the four defined Opportunity Areas should be consistent with the character of the surrounding community.

- 2.1 Future development and improvements within the city should respect or restore, not distract from, the character of the surrounding community. A community is physically characterized by the scale and patterns of its roads and buildings, by the placement of buildings and automobiles within the landscape, by the types and granularity of its buildings, by the diversity and intricacy of their designs, their materials, their textures, and their detailing, by the relationship of buildings and landscape to the human scale, and by the mix of land and building uses within the community.

- 2.2 Community character is directly influenced by external elements: vistas, parks, and adjacent or nearby natural resources. Future development and improvements within the city should maintain or enhance a community's relationship to these elements.

Policy 3. Land areas devoted to light industrial and flex space will remain productive and sound for the operation of business.

- 3.1 As shown in the Outer West Opportunity Area plan and the future Land Use Plan Map, areas currently designated as light industrial or heavy commercial should remain in those uses and be protected and buffered from incompatible uses.
- 3.2 The City should work to ensure that the circulation and accessibility needs of industrial users is protected and secured, especially in light of planned land use changes in the Outer West Street corridor.
- 3.3 The City's economic development efforts should focus on business retention, intensification and expansion within areas zoned for light industrial use and in areas zoned for maritime businesses.

Policy 4. Support the expansion of professional office space such that office employment and the services provided by office-based businesses are readily accessible to all residents.

- 4.1 Professional office space should be a component of the development of Opportunity Areas recommended in this Plan.
- 4.2 Office space throughout the City should be maintained and expanded in a manner that complements the character of surrounding neighborhoods.

Policy 5. Protect and promote the neighborhood commercial retail centers in the city.

- 5.1 The City should follow land use planning and development strategies to protect and support the expansion of neighborhood commercial retail centers that serve local residents.
- 5.2 The City's economic development efforts should focus on business retention, intensification and expansion within areas zoned for neighborhood business.

Policy 6. Enhance the Public Realm of City Dock and its Environs.

City Dock and its environs are fundamental to the city's character and identity as a small seaport town with a rich history. Main Street has been designated one of Ten Great Streets in America by the American Planning Association for its role as a living museum, a place that makes significant contributions to Annapolis' downtown economy at the same time that the entire downtown remains physically and visually connected to its history, maritime culture, and architectural character.

Given the importance of the City Dock area to Annapolis, a plan for its future must be developed with broad participation by the entire community, as well as downtown residents and businesses. A plan for the public realm of City Dock and its environs should begin with forming a Vision, from which specific implementation steps be developed. Such a plan should update or replace the 1993 *Ward One Sector Study*, which has been the guiding planning document for the downtown area.

The plan shall deem the public property from the Dock to and including the Market House to be Civic Space for residents of the city. The plan shall be drafted by the Planning & Zoning Department with the advice of a committee representative of residents, downtown merchants and representatives of maritime interests and with the assistance of such professional consultants as are deemed necessary. The Plan, which shall be presented to the City Council by September 1, 2010, shall:

- ▶ Maximize public access to the waterfront;
- ▶ Maximize pedestrian and bicycle friendly features;
- ▶ Incorporate a variety of open places, both large and small, for people to congregate for various purposes;
- ▶ Accommodate boats of all types, as well as docking for cruise boats, commercial vessels, and water taxis;
- ▶ When hosting public events, balance the needs and interests of residents, businesses, and the event;
- ▶ Include a transportation element which will clear the proposed Civic Space of parking places for motor vehicles, and provide an alternate nearby site for such parking and/or remote parking with shuttle transportation;
- ▶ Propose measures, including those related to transportation and parking, which are necessary to keep existing Dock Street merchants viable.

Policy 7. Acknowledging the importance of the Maritime Industry to Annapolis' character, identity, and economy, strive to ensure the Maritime Industry's sustained health and viability.

- 7.1 Promote Annapolis for maritime business, maritime tourism, and charter and fishing activities as part of Economic Development efforts.
- 7.2 Maritime property owners and businesses in Annapolis are impacted by national, regional, and local trends in the boating industry. In order to assist these businesses to remain competitive, the City will evaluate and implement programs and policies with the objective of maintaining a supportive business climate. This should include periodic assessments of the City's rates and regulations that apply to the maritime industry.
- 7.3 Assure safe and efficient navigation of Annapolis' waterways and promote the efficient use of the Annapolis Harbor. This policy acknowledges that the city's waterways have seen an increase in the number of larger vessels and at times experienced crowding due to build-out of residential and maritime waterfront properties and a robust population of transient boaters. It also acknowledges that the Harbor is the primary access point by the boating public and is used for many special events. The City will not limit access to the Harbor but can take measures to promote the efficient use of the space and balance the many demands placed on it.
- 7.4 Replace the *2003 Draft Waterways and Harbor Plan* to address issues that are having an immediate impact on Annapolis' harbor and waterways: the increase in the number of recreational, transient, and stored vessels in city waters, the city's ability to accommodate them, their collective effect on boating safety, and the quality of the boating experience. Specifically, the Plan should address:
- ▶ Market trends and economic impacts and the response of the Annapolis maritime community;
 - ▶ Improving the efficient use of Annapolis' waterways given the increase in boat traffic;
 - ▶ The trend toward larger vessels, how Annapolis' public and private facilities can accommodate them and their impact on a marinas' relationship to the adjacent waterway;
 - ▶ Overall use of the harbor, including docking and mooring;
 - ▶ Public and private deficiencies in serving the boating public;
 - ▶ Rates and regulations pertaining to the use of public docks and moorings;
 - ▶ The pros and cons of privatizing City dock and mooring operations.
- 7.5 Celebrate the entire maritime heritage of the city and link the sites associated with this heritage by water transportation.

Policy 8. Continue to maintain stringent historic preservation requirements in the downtown area and protect and conserve neighborhoods utilizing the neighborhood conservation zoning designation.

8.1 The City's Neighborhood Conservation districts (shown on Figure 3-11) should remain in place and be continually monitored to ensure their effectiveness.

- ▶ A reevaluation of the R2-NC district in Eastport should be undertaken; this district has presented challenges since its inception in balancing design flexibility with the community's vision of appropriate scale and context.
- ▶ As development adjacent to the Presidents Hill neighborhood (R3-NC2 district) occurs, ensure a sensitive transition between new development and the neighborhood that protects the character of the neighborhood. Light and noise impacts on the neighborhood should be considered as part of the development review process.

8.2 The City will work with neighborhoods wishing to implement a neighborhood conservation designation to protect neighborhood character.

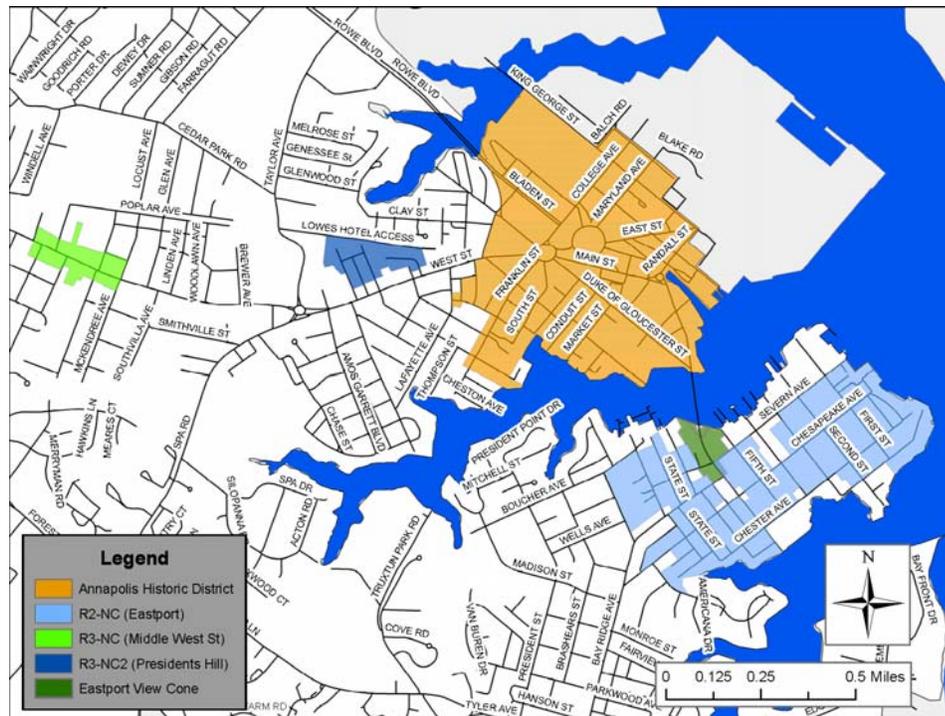


Figure 3-11 Neighborhood Conservation Districts Map

Policy 9. Annapolis' rich cultural history and wealth of current historic and cultural offerings will be protected and enhanced.

Cultural resources encompass at least two broad categories: 1) the historical assets, architecture, and venues for which Annapolis is renowned, and 2) cultural offerings, including performing and visual arts. Although Annapolis is a small city, it currently supports cultural activities of a variety and quality beyond most cities even much larger than Annapolis. These cultural offerings include an excellent symphony orchestra, ballet company, choral society, opera company, theatrical groups and numerous visual arts activities.

9.1 Encourage the success of the Capital City Cultural Arts District, building on Inner West Street's progress as a vibrant urban corridor. Create an "identity" for the District and foster the types of arts and cultural venues consistent with that identity. Ensure that the District's arts and cultural identity acknowledges the proximity of the adjacent residential neighborhoods and is consistent with the residential character and quality of life in those communities. Utilize the District to support and enhance the numerous arts and cultural organizations already active in Annapolis and to create opportunities for new cultural arts resources which will enhance the cultural diversity and vitality of the city.

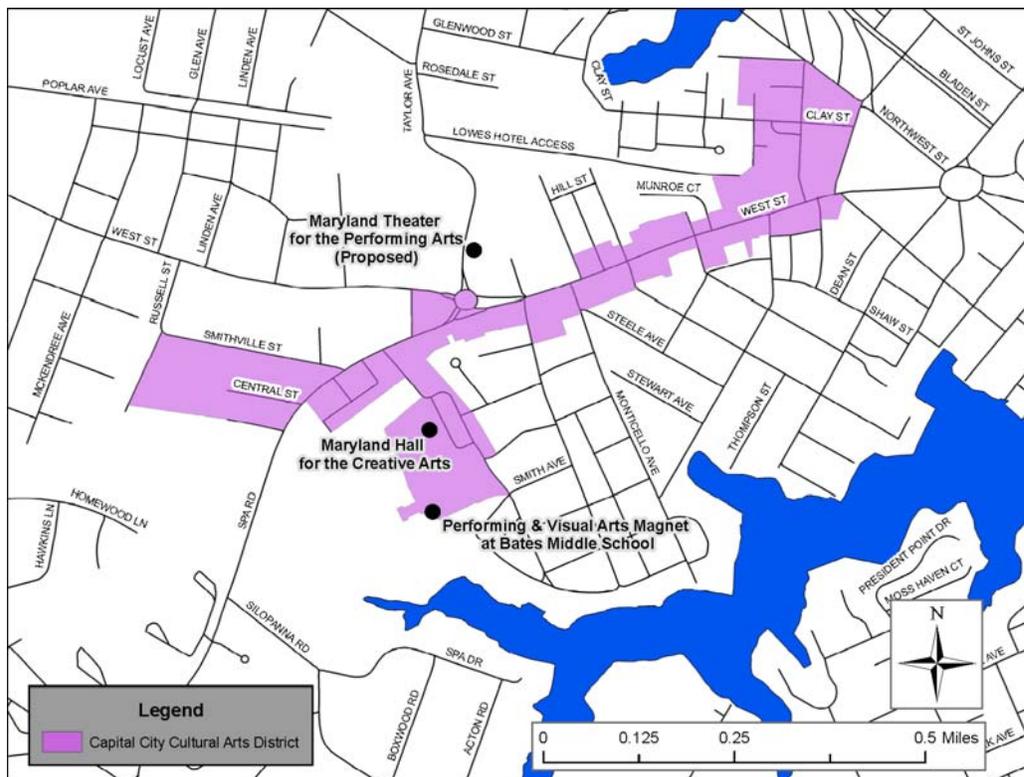


Figure 3-12 Capital City Cultural Arts District Map

9.2 Support the development of a world-class performance venue suitable for the orchestras, dramatic troupes, ballet and opera companies in the Annapolis area that can accommodate their potential audiences and attract patrons from Annapolis and throughout the greater Washington-Baltimore area. The expression of support for the development of a world class performance venue does not commit the City to providing public funds for the construction or operation of such a facility.

9.3 Preservation of Historical Assets:

- ▶ A new Survey of the Historic Structures in the Historic District needs to be completed, building on the last one performed in 1984. The Survey allows the City to document change, manage future changes within the District in a comprehensive fashion, and evaluate resources needed.
- ▶ A comprehensive examination of cultural and historical assets in Annapolis outside the Historic District should be conducted.

9.4 Under-grounding overhead utilities in the Historic District must continue, to improve safety, protect the historical assets, and improve the attractiveness of the area. Under-grounding of utilities must be continued as a serious strategic effort and financial commitment, with the involvement of State and Federal partners, and building on the under-grounding that has been completed or is programmed for Main Street, Church Circle, State Circle, Inner West and Hanover Street.

9.5 Work with the cultural heritage organizations active in the Annapolis area to create a cultural heritage strategic plan to address the following challenges and needs:

- ▶ A Strategic plan for Advocacy, Education, and Marketing;
- ▶ Growing audiences and supporters by reaching new residents with interests in the arts;
- ▶ Expanding the organizational capacity of arts organizations;
- ▶ Coordinated public access to shuttles, transportation, and parking that serve arts venues.

Policy 10. Evaluate risks from sea level rise in decisions involving land use along the waterfront.

The parts of the established downtown which are prone to severe flooding and may be expected to be impacted by sea level rise should be the subject of a study to determine the costs and benefits of public decision-making in mitigating property damage. Refer to Figure 7-7 and Policy 3 in Ch. 7 – *Environment* for further treatment of the City’s policy position on sea level rise. Notwithstanding this, land use in areas that are prone to flooding should be evaluated carefully when land use changes are proposed.

As land use changes are evaluated, decisions should be consistent with the City’s Hazard Mitigation Plan. The Hazard Mitigation Plan (HMG) is prepared according to regulations issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) in response to the Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000. The Federal Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 was created “to provide an orderly and continuing means of assistance by the Federal Government to State and local governments in carrying out their responsibilities to alleviate the suffering and damage which result from disasters.” The City is required to prepare the HMG in order to be eligible for FEMA funds in the event of a disaster.

Policy 11. Through land use planning and economic development activities the City will work to ensure the maintenance of its AA+ bond rating or better.

- 11.1 The City should biennially review land development trends and policies with the goal of maintaining and/or improving the City bond rating. In this regard, the City should develop evaluative criteria related to land use change and the value added to property assessments, the cost of municipal services to serve development, and growth and change in employment and commercial land use base.
- 11.2 The City should examine zoning and subdivision regulations and determine where streamlining of regulations and procedures could produce reductions in development approval times, while maintaining a high quality of plan review and public information about and oversight of development approval.
- 11.3 The City should maintain high standards of development design, landscape architecture and adherence to architectural standards to elevate and sustain the tax base and value of the built environment.