

VIII. Economic Development



Economic Development is one of the highest priority goals in the 2002 *Prince George's County Approved General Plan*. Generally, economic development goals seek to improve the economic well-being and quality of life for a community by creating and/or retaining jobs as well as growing incomes and providing for a stable tax base. This chapter will provide an overview of current employment trends in Subregion 5, examine various labor markets in Subregion 5 by land use, and offer strategies for accomplishing county economic development goals.

Economic Trends and Outlook

Industry trends in Prince George's County over the past twenty-five years, consistent with regional trends, show an economy shifting from goods-producing activities (manufacturing and warehousing) to a services-producing export base (professional services, finance, insurance, real estate, computer services and software). Since 2000, employment in manufacturing and wholesale trade in Prince George's County has declined as a percentage of total jobs while the services producing sectors have experienced rapid growth¹.

Subregion 5 has a relatively low jobs-to-population ratio compared to the county as a whole; 0.32 jobs per person compared to 0.4 for the county as a whole², reflecting its general status as a residential, bedroom community, with relatively few jobs. As of 2008 approximately 70 percent of the jobs in Subregion 5 were in Clinton, 20 percent in Brandywine, and 10 percent in Accokeek (Table II-2).

Prince George's County is expected to be the beneficiary of a shift in regional, locational comparative advantage reflecting the presence of large tracts of developable land in proximity to the Capital Beltway, good regional accessibility provided by the Capital Beltway and a network of radial highways, such as MD 4 and MD 5, connecting from the District of Columbia to the county's suburbs and the rebuilt Woodrow Wilson Bridge.

In Subregion 5 larger businesses are inclined to prefer locations closest to the Capital Beltway and MD 5. Other locations in the subregion do not offer the appropriate infrastructure or adequate access needed to support major employment areas. The case of Hyde Field, along MD 223 in Clinton, provides an example. Hyde Field was designated for employment-industrial use in the 1993 master plan and zoned E-I-A (Employment and Institutional Area). However, the area has not developed in accordance with this designation due, in part, to the need for extensive improvements to the road network to connect the property to local expressways, MD 5 and MD 210. The future road network will eventually serve this area well; however, needed road improvements (see new roads identified as A-65 and C-514 in Chapter VI, Transportation) are not in the county's Capital Improvement Program. Meanwhile, the property owners of Hyde Field have requested a zoning change from employment zoning to residential and mixed use zoning (see SMA, Chapter X).

¹ Economic Trends and Demand for Industrial, Residential, Retail and Office Land Uses in Prince George's County. Stephen S. Fuller, George Mason University, November 2007.

² 17,669 jobs for 54,511 people (Table II-2).

Currently, the growth expected to occur at Andrews Air Force Base (AFB) over the next ten years will impact the employment in Subregion 5 more than any development project in the county. The number of personnel assigned to Andrews AFB is expected to increase by 2,700 before 2020. A portion of this increase (400 positions) is related to Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) and is expected by 2011. The remainder (2,300 jobs) is related to Department of Defense reassignments to be completed by 2018. These positions are expected to generate “spin-off” jobs and economic development in the form of 13,985 jobs and demand for 10,476 housing units in the county by 2020³. Although Westphalia is planned to absorb much of this growth, some employment uses may locate in Subregion 5 south of the base and along Alexandria Ferry Road.

Goals

- Economic development is achieved at appropriate locations in Subregion 5 as evidenced by increased employment opportunities, income, and tax base.
- An adequate amount of land is provided for commercial and industrial land uses.
- The ratio of jobs to population is increased as employment opportunities improve.
- Quality retail development locates in Subregion 5.
- Residents have increased employment options near their homes as a diversity of new jobs and employers are attracted to Subregion 5.

A. Industrial, Office, and Retail

Industrial

Land once considered appropriate for employment—or industrial development along railroad rights-of-way and major highways—is now obsolete and inappropriate in many locations. An example of this is the Villages of Timothy Branch development in Brandywine. In 2008, the District Council approved a change from industrial zoning to residential and commercial zoning in an area that had been planned for employment land use for several decades.

Findings of the currently ongoing 2007 Prince George’s County Industrial Land Needs and Employment Study include the following:

- The county has an oversupply of industrially zoned land in Subregions 3, 4, and 5.
- Countywide, approximately 4,000 acres could potentially be rezoned from industrial to other uses without adversely affecting the availability of industrial land.
- Subregion 5 was among three planning subregions under the greatest pressure for rezoning of industrial land, the others being Subregion 3 (Bowie) and Subregion 4 (inside the Beltway north and south of MD 214, Central Avenue).

As of 2007 the total acreage of industrially zoned land in Subregion 5 was 2,220 acres, accounting for 20 percent of the countywide total of industrially zoned land. In contrast, the rentable building area in Subregion 5 accounted for just 3.4 percent (1.7 million square feet) of the county total. Of the industrially zoned land, 1,324 acres, or 60 percent, was undeveloped, a significantly higher share than the countywide total of 45 percent (**Table VIII-1 opposite**).

³ Prince George’s County BRAC Action Plan, September, 2007.

Table VIII-1 Subregion 5 Industrially Zoned Land

Acres	Zoning District					Total
	I-1	I-2	I-3	I-4	E-I-A	
Total	623	566	275	75	680	2,220
Developed	189	159	117	56	375	895
Vacant	434	407	159	19	305	1,325
Percent Vacant	70%	72%	58%	25%	45%	60%

M-NCPPC, June 2008

Note: Due to rounding some columns or rows may not add up to the total amount.

Based on a recent industrial land use evaluation by M-NCPPC, the following categorizations and recommendations are made:

Industrial Area	Categorization ¹	Recommendations
Woodyard Road/Old Alexandria Ferry Road	Healthy (Type 5)	Provide this established industrial area with adequate infrastructure
US 301 and Brandywine Road	Deindustrializing and transitioning (Type 3)	Given a decline in the demand for industrial zoned land; transition to other zones to respond to the market change
Steed and Piscataway Roads/ Hyde Field	Not characterized (Airport use)	Consider an alternative development plan to replace the Washington Executive Airport in the long term

¹ Industrial lands were characterized using a five point scale: Type 1, no demand for industrial space; Type 2, a history of industrial activity, but high vacancy rates and a drop in rental rates; Type 3, a history of industrial activity and weak demand; Type 4, evidence of healthy industrial activity; and Type 5, industrial areas that are healthy.

Office

Current office use in Subregion 5 is predominately local serving. The strongest office use in Subregion 5 is medical offices. Based on data obtained from CoStar (an online data base of commercial real estate properties), 55 percent of office use is medical. This is probably influenced by the presence of Southern Maryland Hospital. The number of medical offices in Subregion 5 is an opportunity to foster a specialized employment industry that could attract quality development and other economic benefits.

As of now, office use in Subregion 5 is concentrated along MD 223, Old Branch Avenue, and Old Alexandria Ferry Road. In particular, the area surrounding the intersection of Coventry Way and MD 5 has the advantage of being located at the southern boundary of Andrews Air Force Base (AFB). Its proximity to the Capital Beltway should encourage large office development proposals. Such proposals in this northern Clinton area would strengthen the existing stock of commercial office space.

Interestingly, many offices in northern Clinton are not zoned C-O (Commercial-Office) or C-A (Commercial-Ancillary), where typical professional and medical offices would be expected to locate. Most commercial zoning in this area is C-M (Commercial Miscellaneous), which allows highway-oriented commercial uses as well as typical commercial office development. This explains the number of gas stations, auto repair shops, and storage warehouses located here, creating a hodgepodge of uses that do not fully capture the area's employment generating

potential. If more professional office zones were shifted from the southern portion of Subregion 5 to the northern section of Clinton, it is likely that a more balanced office market would develop.

Future office demand through 2030 is projected to total about 600,000 square feet. While the net new demand appears to be only 70,000 square feet (600,000 minus 530,000 existing) additional demand can be expected from the need to replace some of the existing Class C space in Clinton and to provide space in the Brandywine Community Center.

Retail

Retail occupancy in Subregion 5 is healthy, as illustrated by an overall vacancy rate of only three percent (Table VIII-2). As of 2008, the eight shopping centers in the subregion had a total net leasable area of 1.1 million square feet available in 158 stores.

Table VIII-2 Subregion 5 Shopping Centers

Name	Community	Acres	Net Leasable Sq. Feet	Number of Storefronts	Vacant Square Feet	Vacancy Percent
Accokeek Village	Accokeek	9	51,695	10	0	0%
Clinton Crossings	Clinton	27	468,680	42	3,250	1%
Clinton Park	Clinton	22	258,851	23	16,000	6%
Clinton Square	Clinton	3	21,761	13	0	0%
Clinton Station	Clinton	3	30,000	13	1,500	5%
Clinton Village Mart	Clinton	5	38,972	19	1,600	4%
Coventry Plaza	Clinton	11	111,077	22	6,018	5%
Manokeek Village	Accokeek	26	99,739	16	0	0%
Sub 5 Totals		105	1,080,775	158	28,368	3%

Source: M-NCPPC, 2008

Currently, the amount of retail development in Subregion 5, mostly located in Clinton, is deemed sufficient to meet the consumer needs of residents and the retail-level job needs of workers in the subregion. Still, additional growth in the subregion through 2030 is projected to generate demand for 250,000 to 350,000 square feet of community retail for day to day needs, including eating and drinking establishments.

Most, if not all of this projected demand will be supported by the development of Brandywine Crossing, a shopping center under construction as of 2008 that will add approximately 780,000 square feet to the retail inventory, primarily for convenience goods. New retail is under construction in Brandywine on the east side of US 301, at Matapeake Business Drive. Another development is on the west side of US 301, south of Chaddsford Drive. This development is to include a 120,000 square foot neighborhood retail center with an anchor grocery store.

In general, to support economic development in Subregion 5, land is provided to commercial zones that encourage small office clusters to develop in the Clinton area; support growing retail demand in the Brandywine area; and retain the existing amount of commercial land in Accokeek.

Policies

- Coordinate implementation of economic development strategies with land use, environmental and transportation planning policies for Subregion 5.

- Direct future employment and retail development to strategic growth areas surrounding designated transit nodes along MD 5/US 301 so residents of Subregion 5 can work and shop near where they live.
- Provide sufficient land for employment development.
- Promote the medical sector as a specialized employment niche for employment growth.

Strategies

Accokeek

- Retain the two existing commercial areas, Accokeek Village and Manokeek Village, including the undeveloped land north of Manokeek Village (zoned M-X-T).
- Support preservation and enhancement of the Livingston Road corridor (see Chapter IV).
- Retain the 2008 level of commercial land use in Accokeek.

Brandywine

- Designate the areas surrounding Matapeake Drive, at its intersection with US 301, as the Brandywine Community Center for mixed use development (residential, retail, commercial) as described in detail in Chapter IV.
- Retain the employment-industrial land use designation for land east of US 301 and south of Timothy Branch.
- Retain the commercial land use surrounding T.B.

Clinton

- Prepare a Clinton Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment (see also Chapter IV, Land Use) to address:
 - * Infill and redevelopment along MD 223—between a point just west of its intersection with Old Branch Avenue/Brandywine Road and the Clinton Park Shopping Center east of MD 5—to emphasize walkability and create a sense of place.
 - * Redevelopment of land near a future MTA bus rapid transit or light rail transit stop, most likely on the east side of MD 5 near or as part of the Clinton Park shopping center, to encourage transit-ridership.
 - * Additional opportunities to develop commercial offices in the north Clinton area.
 - * New office development to strengthen the existing office stock and promote the medical sector as a specialized employment niche for employment growth.
- Designate land west of the intersection of MD 223 and Steed Road for limited mixed-use development.
- Retain existing office/employment areas along Old Alexandria Ferry Road and Kirby Road.
- Ensure future land use and development is compatible with Andrews AFB Accident Potential Zones and noise contours along the west side of Alexandria Ferry Road. (see Chapter IV, Land Use).

B. Agriculture

Agriculture maintains a continued presence in Subregion 5, contributing to the countywide industry. The success of agriculture in the subregion, and indeed the county, is predicated on access to high quality agricultural soils, strong markets for farm output, and access to service and supply industries.

As noted in Chapter II, in 2008 approximately 140 parcels greater than 10 acres in size in Subregion 5 had agricultural tax assessments. These parcels totaled approximately 7,600 acres, mostly in the Rural Tier. Countywide, as of 2002⁴, there were approximately 450 farms generating \$12.2 million in sales and supporting approximately 1,130 jobs.

The State of Maryland's Tobacco Buyout Program, initiated in 2000, created a period of realignment and uncertainty in the agriculture industry that has impacted both its structure and profitability. The effects of the buyout are easily seen in declining farm income, with the average farm in the county losing nearly \$3,500 per year between 1997 and 2002. The consequences are a dramatic decline in farm profitability and investment as farmers seek alternatives to tobacco production as the primary cash crop, which historically provided up to 65 percent of farm income.

Farmers are looking toward their suburban and urban neighbors as a source of new markets, and are crafting their farm transition plans to meet the demands of these consumers. The structural change is to smaller and more flexible farm operations that often offer a more diversified array of goods such as produce, livestock, equine, and agritourism events rather than traditional grain and tobacco operations.

Goals

- Agriculture remains viable in Subregion 5.
- Conflicts between agricultural operations and surrounding non-agricultural uses are minimal.

Through the public input for the master plan, farmers and other rural landowners raised the following issues that are important to the future growth of the agricultural industry:

1. In order to effectively manage agricultural transition, farmers need to have a suite of tools available to them to protect access to productive land as a means for expansion and growth.
2. Farmers need to adapt to modern production and marketing techniques by integrating processing, retailing, agritourism, and production into their operations.
3. Farmers need to have the necessary legal protections to practice the business of agriculture. Such protections include better protection from nuisance claims and an arbitration system to keep such claims out of the courts and reduce the cost of legal defense.
4. The ability to use agricultural land for a greater variety of related uses such as farm-based marketing and processing, wine grapes, and agritourism needs to be allowed.
5. Service and supply industries in the county which have significantly diminished since the loss of the tobacco market need to be increased. The lack of infrastructure

⁴ The most recent Census of Agriculture.

particularly influences emerging industry clusters such as equine, wineries, organic produce, and horticulture whose small size makes scale efficient purchases difficult and forces farmers to travel farther and pay more for inputs.

6. Young and beginning farmers and nontraditional agricultural operations, such as agritourism need greater access to capital; they typically cannot access traditional funding sources such as commercial banks.

Policies

- Promote the continued transition of agriculture from a tobacco base to a more urban, market-driven agricultural base.
- Increase economic opportunities for farmers by enlarging the number of commercial uses and activities that can be undertaken on farms.
- Support the development of new agricultural enterprises and agricultural product markets as part of a long-term strategy to enhance the agricultural economy.
- Integrate county agricultural programs with region-wide agricultural development initiatives such as those of the Southern Maryland Agricultural Development Commission.
- Improve linkages between agricultural production and the research and development capacity at the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, in order to encourage the attraction, retention, and development of regionally significant agricultural infrastructure.

Strategies

- Develop an agricultural marketing program that will continue to support agricultural transition away from tobacco and enhance market access for local farmers.
- Create an agricultural marketing position in county government to implement the agricultural marketing program.
- Create a new farmer development program to both attract farmers to Subregion 5 and assist with the development and financing of new and expanding operations.
- Review and amend the county Zoning Ordinance to ensure it permits a broad array of agricultural and agricultural-related uses to support the economic viability of farming and allow farmers to specialize their production base and infrastructure while expanding their capacity to sell local farm products at on-farm retail stands.
- Support expansion of easement language in programs such as those run by the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation to integrate sand and gravel operations within easement contracts (see below under Sand and Gravel).
- Strengthen the county's right to farm policy (Code Section 30-101) to include the following measures:
 - * Affirmatively declare the intent of the county to protect the rights of farms to carry out generally accepted agricultural practices.
 - * Notify new residents in the Rural Tier that it is an agricultural industry area and that agriculture, as a normal course of business, may produce inconveniences, odors, and disruptions to other uses.

- * Provide for dispute resolution through an agricultural arbitration board to protect farmers from unwarranted claims.
- Integrate agriculture within economic development lending programs to enhance access to development capital, such as those provided by the Small Business Initiative Program at the Prince George’s County Economic Development Corporation.
- Explore the viability of a county-supported agribusiness incubation and processing facility development to encourage entrepreneurship at the farm level.
- Involve the Prince George’s County Council, the Prince George’s Soil Conservation District, the Prince George’s County Planning Board, and the Department of Parks and Recreation in exploring creation of a “a critical farms program” to encourage protection of these farms in the region. Evaluate programs in other jurisdictions to determine the viability, criteria and cost of implementation.
 - * Provide a means to acquire such lands through fee simple purchases for later disposition for agricultural use.
 - * Create a revolving loan fund to assist new and existing farmers with the acquisition of farms that enhance land preservation goals.

C. Forestry

While forest covers approximately 55 percent of Subregion 5 and 65 percent of the Rural Tier, there is almost no forest industry in Subregion 5 such as tree farming, timbering, or lumber milling. This is due in part to the lack of worktable timber in this area and lack of local markets. In neighboring Subregion 6 forestry is a small but not insignificant economic activity generating approximately \$4.2 million in annual output. Forestry should become a stronger contributor to the Subregion 5 agricultural economy, in concert with goals and strategies in this Subregion 5 master plan to preserve the Rural Tier and to maintain the viability of agriculture. Increasing forest productivity will require a multifaceted approach:

- Protect forest resources. Producing high quality forest resources begins with protecting high quality forest soil types while improving the landowner management techniques. This subregion plan’s land use recommendations are intended in part to protect forest resources, especially in the Rural Tier.
- Improve timber quality. Improving timber quality may involve the removal of invasive species and low value succession trees that overgrow old farm fields. This type of vegetative management lends itself to on-site lumber milling, pulpwood operations, and biomass energy development.
- Enlarge the market for forest resources. Without improvement to the forest products marketplace, there will be little demand for local timber products beyond removal of the highest value hardwood species and cyclical pulpwood extraction.

Goal

- Forestry is a strong contributor to the Subregion 5 and the Prince George’s County’s agricultural economy.

Policies

- Maintain large contiguous blocks of timberland through easement acquisition and conservation subdivisions.
- Protect prime forestry sub-soil types in the Rural Tier.
- Increase financial returns to land owners by encouraging more active timber stand management and improvements to timber stand quality.
- Recruit new forest product businesses that fit within the community context and add value to local timber markets.

Strategies

- Evaluate the potential for use of biomass fuels at county facilities such as schools, administrative, and recreational facilities to create a baseline demand for local biofuels.
- Review and amend the county Zoning Ordinance to ensure it contains provisions supportive of forest industry development. Such provisions should include:
 - * Allowing for biomass processing and storage of chipped and roundwood biomass.
 - * Assuring reasonable accommodation of best practice forestry activities such as harvest, thinning, planting, and minimal processing such as chipping of tops and slash.
- Include right-to-timber provisions in the strengthened right-to-farm policy recommended above.
- Support adoption of statewide forest land tax legislation that would enable the county to offer a county property tax benefit. Provisions should include:
 - * Managed forests of at least 10 acres containing highly productive forest soils would be eligible.
 - * Beneficiaries would provide forest land protection over a typical forest management cycle of 30 years.
 - * Encourage participation in the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Forest Conservation and Management Program.
- Develop and implement a forestry industry marketing campaign in collaboration with the recommended agricultural marketing program to recruit forest products industry such as timber management operations and wood products manufacturing, improve service and supply infrastructure, and enhance market outlets.
- Improve forest products industry integration with existing economic development programming through outreach and active business retention activities.
- Develop landowner outreach and training programs to improve forest management as well as the adoption of best management practices relative to environmental conservation.
- Consider county economic development incentives to the forest products industry to include incentives for commercial adoption of biomass heat and power.

D. Sand and Gravel

Sand and gravel is an essential element of new construction in the Washington, D.C., region. Major sand and gravel deposits associated with the Brandywine geological formation (see **Map IV-4, page 46**) are located in Subregion 5. There is significant potential for sand and gravel mining due to the existence of large unmined reserves. It is a diminishing resource because of depletion from ongoing mining and because new development on top of sand and gravel reserves eliminates potential future extraction.

Goal

- The county capitalizes on the extraction of sand and gravel resources prior to the land being pre-empted by other land uses.

As of August 2008, Subregion 5 supported seven active mines comprising approximately 1,580 acres, and there were approximately 2,130 acres of closed and reclaimed mines. There is a sand and gravel washing and processing plant on Accokeek Road in Brandywine. Additionally, the mining industry supports other independent businesses in the region, predominately in the trucking industry, thus generating additional economic spin-offs in the local economy.

Because of its high weight-to-size ratio, sand and gravel from the Brandywine Formation is most cost effective to extract, process and transport near its local end use. The aggregate industry's contribution to the local economy is likely to increase as neighboring counties, particularly Anne Arundel County, reduce sand and gravel output due to mine closures. Furthermore, as transportation costs continue to rise, sand and gravel operations located within the Washington, D.C., metropolitan marketplace will have a competitive advantage over outlying sources of aggregates in Virginia and the Eastern Shore. However, the region's sand and gravel industry faces several issues and challenges:

- Access to new mining capacity is becoming limited as land is subdivided for development or broken-up into uneconomical units of production.
- Mining places a traffic burden on a rural road system that is also increasingly used by commuters, creating traffic conflicts.
- Public opinion on the effectiveness of mine reclamation often puts the community at odds with the industry, although many mine reclamation issues cited by the public as poor practice are, in fact, related to mining activities that predated current reclamation practices.

Over time, costs associated with these issues could lead to disinvestment in the industry and its eventual relocation. Improving the public's understanding and acceptance of the industry and protecting long-term access to the resource is the focus of the following policies and strategies.

Policies

- Provide commercially viable access to sand and gravel resources to accommodate current and future demand. Ensure that entrances meet applicable county regulations.

- Improve access to financial and work force development incentives to support economic development of mining regulations.
- Foster dialogue between community residents and members of the sand and gravel community to address concerns. Discuss the benefits of mining and the mining application approval process.
- Prevent the preemption of mineral resource extraction by other land uses (see Chapter IV).

Strategies

- Explore the feasibility of developing a mineral overlay zone to protect mineral resources. Issues to be evaluated include:
 - * Real estate notices
 - * Dispute resolutions
- Expand easement language in programs such as those run by the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) to integrate sand and gravel operations within easement contracts.
- Integrate the sand and gravel industry within traditional economic development programming such as tax credits and abatements, workforce assistance, and assistance with state and federal small business financing.
- Conduct community outreach to improve understanding of the sand and gravel industry and to improve industry integration within the rural communities.
- Ensure that sand and gravel mine applications address all impacts on surrounding communities.

See additional mineral-related recommendations in Chapter IV (Land Use—Development Pattern), including guidelines for the review of new and expanding projects including post extraction uses.

