

LIVING AREAS AND COMMUNITY CHARACTER

While there are broad similarities among all living areas, primarily residential communities, in the subregion, each living area is a distinctive place with its own characteristics, advantages, and needs. Living areas in the Developing Tier are primarily suburban in character and therefore quite different from those in the Rural Tier that include more undeveloped land/open space, agricultural uses and lower-density residential development. Living areas in the Developing Tier include major subdivisions and neighborhoods along US 301, MD 202, and MD 223 including Marlboro Meadows, Beechtree, Perrywood, and Sherwood Forest. Living Areas in the Rural Tier include Aquasco, Baden and Croom. At the separate workshops that were held for the communities, issues and concerns were raised that are addressed in this chapter of the plan. Goals, policies, and strategies to ensure a high quality of life for all communities in the Developing Tier and the Rural Tier are presented in this chapter.

This chapter also includes detailed recommendations for areas that were identified during the planning process as having special development opportunities. These include the Town of Upper Marlboro and vicinity, Greater Upper Marlboro, and Marlton, one of the county's first planned communities.

The Town of Upper Marlboro and vicinity presents a unique opportunity for new development, redevelopment, and revitalization. The town, with its historic, small-town character and long-term identity as the county seat, is an underutilized asset, as is the industrially-zoned area east of town along US 301 in what is called Greater Upper Marlboro. This plan includes recommendations for the town that was recently studied as part of a joint effort with the Planning Department and the Town of Upper Marlboro. The study area for the Town of Upper Marlboro revitalization and action plan was slightly larger than the municipal boundary and included properties on the western side of town. The action plan includes recommendations for the study area, identified as the Town of Upper Marlboro and vicinity, aimed at maximizing the area's development opportunities and setting the stage for a long-range strategy for establishing a new development pattern which builds on this area's strategic location.

In addition to the Town of Upper Marlboro and vicinity, recommendations for the area identified as Greater Upper Marlboro are also presented in this chapter. Greater Upper Marlboro includes properties north of MD 4 along US 301 and MD 725 that were the subject of a separate community workshop. At the workshop,

INTRODUCTION



Main Street in the Town of Upper Marlboro.

alternatives for future land uses along US 301 and MD 725 were discussed, as well as the impacts of the various alternatives consisting of commercial and mixed-use development on the east and west sides of US 301. As discussed in the Subregion 6 Transportation chapter, future plans for MD 202 and US 301 include a realignment of these highways through this area as road upgrades occur. This realignment requires careful planning for new development opportunities that support the improved road system while taking advantage of the area's strategic location at the entrance to the county seat and at the intersection of two major roadways. The plan includes recommendations to encourage development, redevelopment, and other improvements in close proximity to the US 301/MD 4 interchange that will provide new employment and appropriate retail and residential opportunities that will

complement the town and surrounding area.

Marlton is the only Developing Tier community located on the east side of US 301 south of MD 4. It is an older planned community, approved in the 1960s, that has slowly been built over time but still has a significant amount of undeveloped properties. Although originally planned to have a mix of residential densities, a commercial center and an employment park, requests were made during the planning process for changes to this mix of recommended land uses. In addition, the original plan has been modified over time as school sites that were determined not needed were supplanted by the Board of Education and later sold for development. To ensure that Marlton continues to develop as the planned community that was originally envisioned, community workshops were held during the planning process to update the Marlton plan. Workshop participants identified the most appropriate land uses for the remaining undeveloped properties, including former school sites, and developed other recommendations to enhance existing neighborhoods.

The following broad goals and policies apply to all the living areas discussed in this chapter, except where specified by tier designation. They provide the foundation on which the individual policies and strategies in the chapter are based.

GOALS

1. Increase civic activism and organizations in communities in the subregion.
2. Protect and improve the quality of life in all living areas in the subregion.
3. Encourage private investment in older communities.
4. Preserve, protect, and enhance important community assets

POLICIES

1. Create new and strengthen existing programs that celebrate the diversity and encourage positive interaction and engagement in the life of the communities.
2. Link open spaces and trails to stream valley parks and ensure road interconnections and sidewalk and trail connections between existing developments.
3. Provide adequate public facilities to meet the needs of existing and future residents that encourage and support infill development and not sprawl.
4. Provide commercial development in strategic locations to serve the needs of communities giving preference to improving existing centers.
5. Promote attractive and compatible development with particular attention to the architecture and layout of development that is visible from primary, collector, and arterial roads.
6. Support the growth and development of civic organizations in older communities.

The Developing Tier in the subregion comprises a network of older and newer suburban communities, interspersed with large institutional uses and open or wooded lands. The 1960s and 1970s saw the start of increased housing development in this area of the county. Some of the communities that were developed during this time are Melwood (east of Joint Base Andrews [JBA], south of MD 4, and west of MD 223), Rosaryville, Marlboro Meadows, and Marlton, a residential planned community. The condition of the older housing stock and infrastructure are important issues that were identified by residents. Ensuring that these neighborhoods remain stable and attractive requires consistent maintenance of both the private properties in these neighborhoods as well as the public facilities which serve them.

The development pattern and community character in the Melwood area is mixed. Close to JBA there are older residential developments interspersed with industrial and commercial service uses and open or wooded land. This development character is expected to change over time. Residentially zoned areas of Melwood are expected to continue to develop and build out following the approved development plans for Mill Creek and Windsong. Over time, undeveloped, infill parcels can be expected to develop, and as they develop it is important that they are designed to connect neighborhoods through an integrated road and sidewalk/trail system.

SUBURBAN/ DEVELOPING TIER COMMUNITIES



Well maintained neighborhoods contain a variety of house styles.

The Rosaryville area consists mainly of single-family detached houses set along winding streets in a suburban setting. Many of the streets in Rosaryville are lined with trees and sidewalks, which enhance the neighborhood feel of the place. Rosaryville Elementary School is located in the northern part of the community off of Rosaryville Road. Several churches are located nearby as well. The area has also experienced an increase in the youth population. As a result of increased demand, local elementary schools are partnering with the Department of Parks and Recreation to provide after-school and summer youth activities.



Housing choices are encouraged within the subregion.

In the last decade the communities north of MD 4 have experienced more residential growth than the rest of the subregion. Much of this residential growth has occurred in the planned community of Beechtree. Beechtree is located in a comprehensive design zone (CDZ), which is a version of planned community, as are many of the newer developments in this portion of the subregion. CDZs provide for a wide

variety of density and housing including condominium units in multifamily buildings, townhouses, and single-family detached houses. They may also contain commercial uses intended to serve the needs of residents and the surrounding communities and offer various recreational amenities, such as a golf course, swimming pools, and community parks. Balmoral is another residential community of single-family homes just south of Beechtree on the west side of US 301, north of MD 725. Another new CDZ, Locust Hill, is currently in the development approval process. Locust Hill is located on the northern border of the subregion on Leeland Road and is proposed for low-density development with a range of unit types and sizes.

Marlboro Meadows consists of mostly single-family detached dwellings. Patuxent Elementary School, which is a park/school having an M-NCPPC community center in the building, is located in the southern portion of the subdivision. When it was developed, connection to WSSC was not available so it was built with a private water and sewer system. As a result of system failures in the recent past connection to WSSC is underway.

The Developing Tier area also has a number of major institutional uses including the Brown Station Road Municipal Solid Waste Facility, which will be closed in 2011. The plan designates this land for future park land/open space which will not only provide land for recreational uses but also for reforestation to further the goals of a sustainable community where not all land is developed. The University of Maryland's Central Maryland Research and Education Center is located on MD 202. This facility

has experimental fields for different crops; currently there are many fields with different varieties of grapes, both table and wine varieties. This regional facility is important not only to developing new niche crops for the subregion but also the county and region. It also provides a significant amount of valuable public open space to this developing area of the subregion. The plan recommends that this area remain as publicly owned open space.

POLICY

Continue to build high-quality, suburban development organized around a network of open space and community facilities with attention to site design.

STRATEGIES

1. Develop a comprehensive trail/sidewalk system to connect the community.
2. Acquire land for active and/or passive recreation along Charles Branch to help create a community focus and provide trails to connect the community.
3. Expand and enhance recreational activities and opportunities for youth particularly in older communities.
4. Ensure the further study of the health of commercial developments in the subregion to promote improvements at Osborne Shopping Center and Marlton Plaza.
5. Ensure that all new development in the area is compatible with existing development in terms of architecture and scale.
6. Install sidewalks along residential streets that currently lack them.
7. Encourage conservation subdivisions in environmentally sensitive areas and adjacent to parks where additional open space would be beneficial.
8. Design site features such as storm water management facilities during the development process so that they become amenities in the development.
9. Provide green edges (woods, and landscaping) in new developments to provide a buffer that blends naturally into surrounding wooded areas.
10. Incorporate historic sites, vistas, archeological resources, and cultural features into development design.
11. Incorporate environmentally sensitive design and green building/energy efficiency techniques.



Some neighborhoods lack proper pedestrian linkages such as sidewalks.



Many neighborhoods contain amenities such as this trail.

POLICY

Plan for compatible land uses and development around JBA.

STRATEGIES

1. Implement the recommendations in the JBA Joint Land Use Study.
2. Consider the Department of Defense’s Readiness for Environmental Protection Initiative to protect/preserve land west of Sherwood Forest Community Park.

RURAL TIER COMMUNITIES



Unimproved private roads are a common site in the rural tier.



The community center is the focal point for community life in the Town of Eagle Harbor. Every summer Eagle Harbor Day is celebrated here.

The Rural Tier is an extensive area sparsely settled mostly with isolated homes on larger lots interspersed with farms and other agricultural uses. The historic settlements of Aquasco/Woodville, Baden, and Croom provide a sense of place and identity for residents. The Baden community, although never developed into a town, has been a crossroads community since 1735 when it grew up around St. Paul’s Parish church, the earliest surviving Anglican Church in the county. The Baden community sits in a triangular space created on Aquasco, Horsehead, and Baden-Westwood Roads at its edges; St. Paul’s Episcopal Church, Baden Community Center, Baden Library, and Baden Elementary School are located at one corner, Immanuel United Methodist Church and St. Michael’s Roman Catholic Church at the second corner, and Baden Volunteer Fire Department, a market, and a florist as the third corner. The Croom community is centered around Croom Road and St. Thomas Church Road. The community developed around St. Thomas Episcopal Church around 1742 and by 1853 had a post office. An old country store still survives as do a small assortment of houses and agricultural buildings. Winding lanes, rolling farmland, and wooded areas are scattered along this mile-and-a-half stretch of this major north-south route through the subregion. The community of Aquasco, known as Woodville in the nineteenth century, is located in the southernmost portion of the county. A church, country store and residents are grouped on both sides of Aquasco Road, the main route between Brandywine to the north and Benedict to the south in Charles County. The setting is a rural village, having structures with a range of uses. This area was first settled in the 1830s and included several stores, churches, a post office, and a school.

Any new development in or around these rural villages should blend with the new and old through sensitive design. New development should also reflect the overall density and intensity of this rural part of the county to reflect the goals set forth in the General Plan. The Zoning Ordinance contains development standards that are suburban-oriented and are not sensitive to rural areas. In order to ensure that new development is

appropriate in the rural villages, new development standards need to be developed. In addition, small area plans with design standards for rural villages identifying uses should be prepared to guide future development so that it strengthens and enhances the existing rural character.

The Rural Tier is also the site of Wilmer's Park, located on Brandywine Road just west of Baden. The 80-acre Wilmer's Park, one of the major stops along the East Coast "Chitlin' Circuit" in the 1950s and 1960s, was used historically as an African-American music venue. African American musicians, such as James Brown and Stevie Wonder, and audiences found refuge from Jim Crow discrimination at the outdoor facility, making it a cultural landmark. The park has fallen into disrepair since the long time owner Arthur Wilmer died in 1999. Recently, this locally designated historic site was purchased by the M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation and will remain for public use given the cultural importance of the site (PGCPB13-70). This plan reinforces the recommendations of previous plans to retain the prevailing rural character of the southeastern portion of Prince George's County. This plan also recommends that the rural land use be implemented through the lowest residential density currently available (Open-Space) with a maximum density of one dwelling unit per five acres. Specific land use recommendations for these areas are contained in various chapters throughout the plan. Development in these communities must have a conservation subdivision approved, except for family conveyance or development of single lots. The conservation subdivision is intended to concentrate homes leaving more open space to preserve vistas and sensitive areas.



Wilmer's Park was one of the major stops along the East Coast "Chitlin' Circuit" in the 1950's. Concerts continued at the site into the latter part of the twentieth century.

POLICY

Protect and maintain rural villages by promoting compatible development and preservation of scenic and historic roads.

STRATEGIES

1. Design of site features such as stormwater management facilities during the development process so that they become amenities in the development and are designed appropriately to preserve the existing rural character.
2. Protect historic sites, vistas, archeological resources, and cultural features through development design guidelines.
3. Promote environmentally sensitive design and green building/energy efficiency techniques in new development.
4. Amend the lighting requirement in rural villages to maintain "dark sky" lighting.

5. Promote economic development at rural community centers to meet the retail needs at the appropriate density and scale.
6. Ensure that rural development patterns do not force changes to the character of scenic and historic roads in order to meet required road capacities.

Eagle Harbor

Eagle Harbor is the smallest municipality in Prince George’s County. Incorporated in 1929, it is home to between approximately 60 to 360 residents depending upon the time of year. According to town history, development of the town began in the 1920s when an African-American developer, Walter Bean, purchased the land and began selling parcels from his office in Washington, D.C. In a time of segregation, Eagle Harbor quickly established itself as a vacation retreat for middle-class and upper-middle-class African-American families. John T. Stewart, Sr., a successful black undertaker in the District, was the Board of Commissioner’s first chairman after incorporation.

As of the summer of 2008, there were 60 year-round homes and vacation bungalows in the town. A community center with public access to the Patuxent River is a focal point for town meetings and community events. At the northwest corner and entrance to the town sits a former country store, now closed. Over the years, the Board of Commissioners and residents of Eagle Harbor have worked hard to fund and implement community improvement projects, often in partnership with county and other agencies, as well as the neighboring PEPCO (now Mirant) power plant. Town residents have expressed a desire to identify and implement additional improvements, including, but not limited to a public boat ramp, outdoor lighting in strategic locations, a public pier or dock for fishing, a country store, and more.



Fishing piers add to the ambiance in Eagle Harbor.

The waterfront is the town’s greatest asset, yet access to the water is limited. This portion of the Patuxent River has a lot of silt, which makes it difficult to launch boats from the shore. Whether this siltation is a result of the out flow from the Mirant plant to the south or from runoff upstream to the north needs to be determined and a long-term solution to correct the problem is necessary.

One of the challenges the town faces is the age of the majority of the housing stock. Although there have been a few new houses built in recent years, the majority are older houses that are in varying degrees of repair with several currently boarded.

Like many communities built in the early 1900s, Eagle Harbor is not served by public water or sewer and the narrow (25-foot) lot

pattern requires lot assembly in order to build new houses. Both are constraints that have inhibited new development. The inability to expand the tax base by constructing new houses limits the services the town can provide for its residents.

Town of Eagle Harbor Day, held the first Saturday each August, continues to showcase this small town's pride. Each year it draws together residents, their family members, and other invited guests for a parade and town festival complete with music, food, and games at the community center. Backyard celebrations and reunions of family and friends throughout the town are also common on this day.

POLICY

Strengthen and enhance the Patuxent River waterfront in the Town of Eagle Harbor so that it can be actively enjoyed by all.

STRATEGIES

1. Work with the town commissioners and residents to establish public improvement priorities (i.e., lighting, a boat launch, etc.) and identify potential funding sources.
2. Create a public/private partnership with the Board of Commissioners, M-NCPPC Department of Parks and Recreation, DER, and appropriate state agencies for shoreline restoration and stabilization for beautification, halting erosion, and improving fish habitat.
3. Create a partnership with DER and other appropriate county and state agencies to promote energy efficiency improvements among homeowners, as well as environmentally-friendly landscaping techniques for the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area.

POLICY

Provide the public infrastructure to ensure the residents are provided with adequate facilities.

STRATEGY

Work with the town commissioners and residents to create a priority listing of needed public improvements and funding sources.

With an estimated population of 665 in 2007, the Town of Upper Marlboro covers 284 acres, or roughly 0.44 square miles, in the heart of Prince George's County. The town was established in 1706 and became the county seat in 1721. It is a small town surrounded by suburban developments in a metropolitan area.



View facing south along the Patuxent River shore in Eagle Harbor with the Chalk Point Power Plant in the distance.

TOWN OF UPPER MARLBORO AND VICINITY

The Town of Upper Marlboro is the subject of a separate revitalization action plan that establishes a vision for the community and implementation program for inclusion in the subregion plan. The action plan study area includes the municipal boundary of the town and the key properties west of the town that are important to its future. This area is referred to as the Town of Upper Marlboro and vicinity is shown on Map 25.

The town is bordered to the north by two developments: the Marlboro Square and the Marlboro Crossroads Shopping Centers, which serves as the primary commercial services hub for the local community. This area is a gateway to Upper Marlboro entering from the north and west on Brown Station Road and Old Marlboro Pike.

South of town and the MD 4 gateway interchange lies the Prince George’s County Equestrian Center and Show Place Arena,



A panoramic view of some of the businesses on Main Street in the Town of Upper Marlboro.

a major venue for a variety of events, shows, and equestrian activities that is the second largest draw for visitors to Upper Marlboro (the county government center is the largest). A discussion of opportunities to enhance and strengthen this facility and recommendations for improvements are included in the Public Facilities chapter of the plan.

Town Core

Upper Marlboro’s distinctive town core is generally divided into four quadrants by two primary, commercial-oriented streets: (1) the north-south Elm/Water Street; and (2) the east-west Main Street corridor that is looped by two streets serving major government offices, Governor Oden Bowie Drive to the north and Judges Drive to the south. The northwestern quadrant holds the post office, the Old Marlboro Academy/Marlboro High School, the old Marlboro Primary School, Dr. William Beane’s grave site and a variety of Main Street and Elm Street businesses. The southwestern quadrant is primarily dedicated to retail and office uses lining Main and Water Streets. The northeastern quadrant is much larger and is anchored by the County Administration Building (CAB) and its parking garage, the Duvall building (which serves as a county annex) the Upper Marlboro Public Library, and an assortment of law offices, eateries, and retail shops with rear surface parking. The largest town core area, the southeastern quadrant is anchored by the largest user, the county courts (and supporting parking deck) with surrounding offices, sandwich shops, and a few retail establishments lining Water and Main Streets.



Some commercial buildings in the commercial core of the Town of Upper Marlboro.

Public and private employees, along with government services users, swell Upper Marlboro’s daytime population to approximately 6,000 people. These individuals are the primary patrons of town businesses. In 1993, new courthouse construction caused the business composition of the town to change when, after the completion of courthouse renovations, a number of court offices relocated back into the new courthouse from temporary Main Street space. This left a sudden, large inventory of retail/office space available for lease. Instead of this space being leased by small retail establishments or small service businesses—the ideal occupants for Main Street ground-floor commercial space—many court-oriented businesses moved into the space, including law offices and bail bondsmen. These ground-floor uses persist today and detract from street activity.

Residential Neighborhoods

The majority of residential uses are single-family homes and townhouses; these uses occur mainly in the western and northwestern portions of the town. The residential area of Upper Marlboro is generally composed of four distinct west-side neighborhoods: (1) the historic single-family residential areas of Old Mill Road, Elm Street, Main Street, Church Street, Valley Lane and Old Crain Highway; (2) the Rectory Lane/School Lane single-family neighborhood; (3) the Spring Branch Estates single-family neighborhood; and (4) the Marlborough Town neighborhood, a townhouse and apartment community. One small pocket of residences also can be found along East Main Street between Governor Oden Bowie Drive and the Western Branch. The older residential area in the west part of town has recently been designated as an Historic District in the National Register of Historic Places.

Town of Upper Marlboro Vision and Action Plan

In 2008, the town and The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission undertook a joint effort to develop a revitalization action plan for the town. The plan included intensive public involvement: stakeholder interviews, a series of three public meetings, four advisory committee meetings, and a town hall meeting. This community input served as the foundation for a vision for Upper Marlboro’s future that helped shape the recommendations in the action plan:

TOWN OF UPPER MARLBORO VISION

“Downtown is the historic heart of Upper Marlboro. In the future, it will be an attractive and vibrant place to work, dine, shop and to enjoy the town’s natural beauty. While still a small town, Upper Marlboro will be known throughout the region as a quaint historic village with a strong reputation as a family-friendly community. The town’s water and natural amenities will create opportunities for passive recreation, new residential living, and community-based activities that celebrate the town’s heritage. Upper Marlboro will also be a place where

local residents and visitors will be able to enjoy downtown, whether browsing the local shops, relaxing at a café, attending a community function at the Old Academy building, or meeting friends for an evening meal and walk along the pond. In the future, a new town/county partnership will help address long-standing issues and give Upper Marlboro residents a greater stake in the future of their community.”

Key Principles

Building upon the town vision, a number of principles were created to guide plan recommendations for development and enhancements in and around the Town of Upper Marlboro:

- All initiatives should support the town’s sustainability.
- The Show Place Arena must continue to serve as a regional attraction.
- The Marlborough Village Shopping Center is a prime location for larger retail that cannot be accommodated in the smaller, older structures within the town core. Together, the town core retail and the Marlborough Village Shopping Center can fulfill the retail and service needs of the town’s residents and worker population.
- Commercial and employment redevelopment to the east and southeast must be held to a higher standard of development which complements—not duplicates—the town’s architecture and character.
- The town is currently buffered from surrounding development and roadways by a greenbelt composed of the Western Branch corridor, the Schoolhouse Pond/M-NCPPC park lands, the Villages of Marlborough Golf Course, and undeveloped lands to the west and south. Future development should promote these assets and continue this greenbelt loop in the form of parks, bike trails, open space buffers, etc.
- Establish a regular county/town round table discussion on issues and solutions.

An implementation action plan was created to guide the town in attracting context-sensitive infill development and making public improvements that will complement the small-town character of Upper Marlboro and enhance the town’s role as the county government center. The plan was based on an evaluation of physical environment and market analysis. Key recommendations have been included below for four major elements: Transportation, Public Open Space, Economic Development and Land Use, and Historic Preservation.

Although known throughout the region as a quiet, small town, Upper Marlboro’s daily influx of workers and visitors and frequent weekend events typically create traffic problems associated with larger communities. While the town has good access to regional highways via US 301 and MD 4, its close proximity to these

Transportation

highways also causes cut-through traffic and congestion when traffic incidents occur, as traffic is diverted through town. Special events at the Equestrian Center/Show Place Arena also cause major congestion. Poor drainage on Water Street and occasional flooding causes traffic and access problems as well.

Upper Marlboro currently has a total of two traffic signals in the town core, which is inadequate for peak periods of morning and evening traffic through the town. This results in congested roads as thousands of workers and visitors enter and leave Upper Marlboro each day. Improving the timing of traffic signals would keep traffic speeds lower and staggered queuing would spread vehicle loads over a larger proportion of the street network including behind the town core (in the case of the MD 4 interchange).

Traffic circulation in the town core also can be difficult due to the limited street pattern. The vision and action plan recommends transportation improvements that will improve circulation and access to local businesses. It is recommended that Pratt and Main Streets be converted to a short one-way couplet, with Pratt Street running eastbound and Main Street running westbound on the western edge of town (see illustration). This new one-way pair would also allow for parallel parking that is not possible today because of the two-way traffic. The two roads could be redesigned to create an east end elliptical roundabout, so that businesses on either side of the one-way system would be as visible and accessible as they are today. This solution also would create a civic space like that at the Old Crain Highway Monument on the west end. Other road alignment improvements are recommended to enhance vehicular access and circulation at the western entrances to the town on Old Crain Highway and Old Marlboro Pike and on MD 202 (Largo Road) at Race Track Road.

Upper Marlboro's town core environment suffers from an incomplete and inconsistent streetscape system and a poorly-scaled, highway-oriented vehicular directional sign system. For Upper Marlboro to be better perceived it must have a complete, higher-quality streetscape that creates a comfortable environment for pedestrians. Although the town core is walkable with a pedestrian-scale environment and brick-paved sidewalks, there is a lack of sidewalks on key roadway segments and a total lack of bicycle facilities. Pedestrian system improvements—particularly new and upgraded trails and sidewalks—are essential to the town's vitality. For example, a poor connection exists between Main Street and the courthouse, two major town core destinations. Although the area south of the courthouse possesses an attractive pastoral character and has manicured street trees and a mature tree canopy, it lacks sidewalks and thus limits pedestrian circulation options. A walkway along the south side of Judges Drive should be constructed to connect Water Street to areas south and west of the town core and Governor Oden Bowie Drive to areas north and east of the town core. This walkway should become part of an overall

enhanced system that provides safe, comfortable pedestrian access to all parts of town.

In addition, connections should be provided between the town core and residential neighborhoods. Walkways linking the town core with the neighborhood areas to the west are virtually nonexistent in Upper Marlboro, with the exception of an east-side walkway along Old Marlboro Pike. Residents need to be better connected with the town core and open space amenities through new sidewalk extensions and/or trails along Old Marlboro Pike, Main Street, and Old Crain Highway out to the Boys and Girls Club recreation park. Valley Lane is a historic lane that passes by Trinity Episcopal Church and its cemetery, and curves around to the historically important African-American cemetery of the Union Memorial Methodist Church. Valley Lane leads to a small African-American enclave that developed around the site of the first Union Memorial Methodist Church and a Freedman’s Bureau School that are no longer extant. Union Memorial Methodist Cemetery is subject to erosion from water running downhill from Valley Lane.

The overwhelming presence of overhead utility wires and poles on the narrow walkways of Main, Water, and Elm Streets also act as obstacles to pedestrian movement and diminish the town core streetscape. Equally important to implementing new streetscape enhancements is the need to consolidate poles and wires while also relocating utilities either underground or to the rear of properties, whichever alternative is most cost-effective. While this is primarily an aesthetic improvement, it is also functional in that underground utilities fail less in storms and are easier to access on the ground.

POLICIES

1. Improve the efficiency of the town core road network to enhance traffic flow and public safety.
2. Improve vehicular access throughout Upper Marlboro and relieve traffic congestion in the town core.
3. Create a walkable community that promotes alternatives to automobile use.

STRATEGIES

1. Prioritize and implement the following transportation improvements:
 - Transform Main and Pratt Streets into a one-way couplet.
 - Realign the Old Crain Highway/Old Marlboro Pike/Main Street intersection to form a traffic circle or roundabout.
 - Improve the three-way crosswalk at the intersection of Elm Street and Governor Oden Bowie Drive.

- Evaluate installing new traffic signals on (1) Water Street at the MD 4 interchange ramps, (2) Judges Drive at Water Street, and (3) Governor Oden Bowie Drive at Elm Street.
 - Evaluate realigning Judges Drive to connect with Governor Oden Bowie Drive at Main Street/Marlboro Pike and create a four-leg signalized intersection.
 - Support the future relocation of existing businesses on MD 725 to allow for the realignment of Race Track Road with MD 202.
2. Evaluate the following improvements for future implementation:
- Consider widening the existing Water Street Bridge or constructing a new parallel bridge.
 - Consider extending School Lane and linking it to the future Brown Station Road Extension and Old Crain Highway.
 - Consider constructing a neighborhood street connection from Valley Lane through Water Street and continuing to the Judges Drive intersection.
 - Evaluate the historic character of Valley Lane and maintain its historic alignment to protect the historic Union Memorial Cemetery from further erosion.
 - Explore constructing a new frontage road along the southern side of MD 4 as part of a future development adjacent to the Prince George’s County Equestrian Center.
 - Consider realigning and including a traffic circle at the intersection of Water Street and the Show Place Arena entrance at the MD 4 eastbound ramps.
 - Construct a new neighborhood street along the old railway right-of-way that connects the Valley Lane extension to Old Crain Highway.
 - Construct Brown Station Road Extension between Old Marlboro Pike and Old Crain Highway and establish stop control at the new intersection with Old Crain Highway.
 - Improve and realign Marlboro Race Track Road to connect with MD 202 (Largo Road) at Marlboro Pike (MD 725).
 - Study the impact of county employee parking on traffic conditions in the town.
 - Consider connecting Judge’s Drive to Race Track Road to provide additional access to the town and relieve traffic congestion.
3. Develop and implement wayfinding signage for vehicles to encourage a “Park Once” approach whereby visitors park at a central location and have an easy walk to all destinations within Upper Marlboro’s town core.

4. Develop and complete a pedestrian/bicycle network.
 - Create an interconnected sidewalk/walkway/trail system. The system should connect all parts of town, including the Western Branch, Schoolhouse and Depot Ponds, Judges Drive, Marlboro Race Track Road, the Boys and Girls Club property, and new development on the western side of town on the Clagett and Smith sites.
 - Provide sidewalks for pedestrian access to connect residential neighborhoods along Old Marlboro Pike, Main Street, and Old Crain Highway and new neighborhood crosswalks at Spring Branch Road, Old Mill Road, and the Rectory Lane intersections of Old Marlboro Pike.
 - Construct bicycle improvements: on-street bike lanes or “share the road” lanes on Main and Water Streets, including one-way pairs along Pratt Street and Main Street.
 - Install bicycle racks in public buildings and parking lots to encourage transportation by bicycle.
5. As new development is completed, including the buildout of the Equestrian Center/Show Place Arena Complex, investigate upgrading and branding a unique town “trolley” with new bus stops, bus shelters, and real-time “next bus” information to connect town destinations.

The Town of Upper Marlboro is fortunate to have a variety of park, plaza, and open space amenities in the town core and surrounding neighborhood areas. The Old Duvall Courthouse park, county mall area, brick streetscapes, Marlboro Academy/ Dr. Beane’s grave hillside, Schoolhouse Pond amenities, Darnall’s Chance amenities, landmark gateways, recreation areas, cemeteries, and greenway corridors all create an attractive public realm framework that is unique and extremely valuable, for a town of this size.

The condition, design, and connectivity of these facilities varies greatly. Many of the brick sidewalks are uneven and in need of repair. Overall maintenance is lacking and there is a need to better maintain and upgrade these facilities. Schoolhouse Pond, centrally located across from the County Administration Building, is a community gathering point. Its boardwalk is used for active recreation, including walking, jogging, and fishing. While it has a few benches for picnicking, it lacks many amenities. A facility upgrade can fulfill the needs of the community for an outdoor gathering space and encourage more recreational activities. This upgrade could include the construction of a community amphitheater that is compatible with adjacent residential uses.

Opportunities also exist to create new open space amenities as part of town core infill development or development of larger

Public Open Space

vacant lots. Developing a new park/plaza at Main Street and Governor Oden Bowie Drive on county and M-NCPPC property should be a top priority, as it will help link Governor Oden Bowie Drive visually and physically with Main Street, creating an inviting new northeastern gateway to the town core. In addition, development on the Clagett and Smith tracts on the western side of town should incorporate new neighborhood open space.

Although the town is surrounded by significant natural assets, including the Western Branch, Schoolhouse, and Depot Ponds, they often are hidden and/or difficult to access. Better connections should be provided to these environmental amenities. The Western Branch trail system should be upgraded with passive recreation and trailhead parking facilities at the East Main Street/MD 725 crossing as well as at the Water Street crossing near the Old Port site. These site improvements should follow green building principles and include permeable parking surfaces, stormwater retention and remediation, and lighting compliance with the dark skies initiatives.



The Old Academy/Upper Marlboro High School, sits on a prominent piece of land at the end of Elm Street. This site could be redeveloped with a new park or plaza.

POLICY

Enhance public access to and use of the town core's natural amenities and provide additional places for community gatherings and improve the aesthetic appearance of the public realm.

STRATEGIES

1. Enhance the Schoolhouse Pond park with new amenities, such as a community amphitheater, park, playground, and pavilion and ensure consistent maintenance and improvement of the Schoolhouse Pond boardwalk.
2. Create a new pocket park/plaza on the corner of Main and Elm Streets.
3. Extend the Judges Drive walkway loop along the new Western Branch trail system with passive recreation and trailhead parking facilities at the East Main Street/MD 725 crossing and the Water Street crossing at the Old Port site.
4. Create a gateway park/plaza at Main Street and Governor Oden Bowie Drive.
5. Provide a new neighborhood park and walkway/bikeway linkages within new single-family residential infill projects on the Clagett and Smith sites.
6. Develop an attractive pedestrian connection from the town core to the Show Place Arena.
7. Upgrade the Depot Pond trail system to connect to the community center and proposed Western Branch trail.

8. Develop and implement a site and landscape plan to enhance access to Dr. Beane’s grave with an appropriate pathway and interpretive signage, and ensure consistent maintenance of the hillside and gravesite.

The future vitality of Upper Marlboro relies on compatible new residential development and commercial/mixed-use development in the town core. Given the largely “built out” nature of Upper Marlboro, future redevelopment within the town must respect existing use patterns within the neighborhood areas, while looking to infill and strengthen the gaps in use within the town’s business core.

Economic Development and Land Use

Town Core Economic Development

Given Upper Marlboro’s relatively small land area and the large percentage (approaching 60 percent) of the town dedicated to county administration, courts, the School Board, library, parking, historic, and open space usage, as well as federal post office and courts uses, limited opportunities for economic development exist in the town core. However, several potential sites for infill development/redevelopment exist along Main and Water Streets and at the county daycare site, the fire department site, the town maintenance garage site, the Old Marlboro Academy site, and possibly some small frontage sites along Judges Drive and Governor Oden Bowie Drive.

A new land use designation of mixed use is recommended for the town core. This would allow maximum flexibility to promote a mix of commercial development (retail and office) as well as infill residential development where appropriate. Rezoning will be required to encourage and facilitate this mix of new development that will complement and strengthen the town core’s existing character. It is recommended that a Mixed-Use Town Center (M-U-TC) development plan be completed to rezone the area to an M-U-TC district. This development plan would include design standards, such as building heights, and the possibility for the creation of a local committee to review development proposals.

Although major rezoning for this area is not recommended in this plan, small changes are proposed to ensure that new development is compatible and enhances the area. Of particular importance are the properties at the entrance to the town on MD 725. These properties are currently zoned Commercial Miscellaneous (C-M). The properties currently contain a mix of uses—a dry cleaning establishment, car service shop, and two houses. C-M zoning is not appropriate at this location since it focuses on highway-oriented uses. The plan recommends the rezoning of the commercially zoned properties to a more appropriate zoning category for retail uses, Commercial Shopping Center (C-S-C). In addition, properties owned by the county and M-NCPPC along the Western Branch that are used for floodplain

control and park and open space are recommended to be rezoned to Reserved-Open-Space (R-O-S).

The vision and action plan identifies a number of sites in Upper Marlboro where efforts should be focused to attract new private development. Four key sites on Main Street have been identified as critical for filling in gaps that currently exist in the street wall and providing floor space for additional commercial uses, which in turn will generate more street activity for residents and businesses. These sites include (1) the existing surface lot on the corner of Water and Main Streets, (2) the surface parking lot adjacent to China Taste, (3) the front part of the surface parking lot adjacent to the volunteer fire department, and (4) the corner of the County Administration Building parking deck. A new mixed-use building is also recommended for Water Street near the courthouse. A new infill building in this location will help create a cohesive entryway to the town core and link the courthouse site with Main Street.

Opportunities for new condominiums and townhouses at appropriate locations should be considered to improve the mix of housing available in the town core. New infill housing development in downtown districts is becoming more popular around the country and could be an attractive option for Upper Marlboro in the right location. Upper Marlboro has been a small town that primarily caters to single-family homeowners. Over time, the town's lack of housing diversity has limited options for young singles, young couples, and seniors looking to downsize from their current single-family homes. According to local real estate professionals, there is pent-up demand for other housing types that meet the needs of people who are not inclined, nor ready, to purchase single-family homes. The town's ability to attract younger households, particularly households headed by workers employed by the county court system or administration, should be considered an important goal. This could reduce the amount of daily commuting traffic into and out of the town. It would also bring new local consumers to town to support local retailers, which is critical to ensuring the improvement of the town core's business mix. County employees, young professionals, and "empty-nester" households are the primary targets for non-single-family housing. New residential condominiums and townhouses should be developed along the Western Branch off a realigned and extended Judges Drive.

Most town core infill will occur on underutilized properties, such as surface parking lots. Surface lots detract from the town core streetscape and diminish the pedestrian experience. For example, the presence of surface parking lots on both sides of the mall visually impairs the quality of the space and discourages pedestrian activity. Two new infill buildings and/or an outdoor farmers market pavilion are recommended to help define the edges of the existing open space. The proposed structures are not meant to reduce any of the existing open space but rather to introduce and encourage public use and activity in the plaza.

At the same time, however, providing adequate parking is critical to new development. Although there are a large number of parking spaces available throughout the town, these spaces are spread out. In addition, with the exception of the two public garages for the county and courthouse employees, all other parking is located in surface lots. Much of this parking lot is privately owned and for employees in existing buildings. Visitor parking is limited to metered public parking in several surface lots, on-street parking, and in the Equestrian Center/Show Place Arena lot off MD 4 south of the town core. It should be noted that the Equestrian Center/Show Place Arena parking availability is becoming more limited and that a need exists for additional parking spaces to support the town's activities. The town, in conjunction with the county, should implement a shared parking program which includes structured parking, particularly as part of new development in town.

In addition to focusing on new development in the town core, the town should work on improving its mix of businesses and provide programs to retain and support those that provide community-serving retail and services. This might include hiring a part-time Main Street business marketing manager whose primary role would be to help market existing town core businesses and recruit new businesses to fill vacancies. In a parallel effort, the Town Commissioners and county must encourage the business community to organize an Upper Marlboro merchants association to better coordinate and communicate the needs of the businesses to the Town Commission and marketing manager.

While new development will be initiated by the private sector, the town may have to encourage urban infill development by creating partnerships with private property owners and developers. One way for the town to improve the town core's redevelopment potential is to reinvest in its streetscape (e.g., streets, sidewalks, pedestrian benches, signage, landscaping, etc.).

Residential Development

New residential development also can help the town expand its tax base. Future residential infill should reinforce the existing single-family development pattern on the western side of town. The current land use and zoning for these residential areas should not be changed. Instead, emphasis must be placed on appropriate design of new residential infill to ensure its compatibility with existing neighborhood character.

The vision and action plan recommends that new development on the western edge of town consist of housing to strengthen the area's residential character. In some cases, properties are landlocked and new road construction is necessary to provide access. The connection of Brown Station Road with



A National Register property in the Town of Upper Marlboro is an example of an early town dwelling associated with many prominent local families.

Old Crain Highway would provide access to the Sasscer farmland property that is currently zoned Rural-Residential (R-R) for single-family home development. This road project is in the county Capital Improvement Program, and priority should be given to constructing the road (which would also improve circulation in the town). The new development should be compatible in scale and character with the adjacent established neighborhoods and should be linked with the existing town street network. The new Brown Station Road Extension should be planned to ensure that it preserves mature trees in the area to the greatest extent possible and should be designed as a greenway with a landscaped median.

The undeveloped area on the south side of Old Crain Highway is currently zoned Rural-Residential (R-R) as well. If residential development were to occur on that site, it should ensure the retention of the largest possible amount of mature trees and should be planned with larger, rural-style lots. The proposed development should guarantee compatibility with adjacent residences, provide appropriate connectivity with the existing street network, and encompass a neighborhood green space.

POLICIES

1. Improve the town core's business mix to better serve the needs of Upper Marlboro residents, workers, and visitors.
2. Promote infill and site redevelopment in the town core to discourage commercial encroachment in residential areas.
3. Diversify the town's residential products to attract young professionals, young families, and "empty-nester" households.
4. Seek a more efficient use of the town core's parking resources.
5. Improve the availability and appearance of parking in the town core.

STRATEGIES

1. Create a program to retain current community-serving businesses and recruit new businesses to fill existing building vacancies.
2. Consider hiring a main street business manager.
3. Promote and incentivize mixed-use infill development at priority locations:
 - Four vacant sites along Main Street (two-story maximum buildings).
 - Water Street (three-story maximum building).
 - Mall plaza (two-story maximum building and/or farmers market pavilion).

4. Work with the county to promote the adaptive re-use of the Old Marlboro Academy building to a publicly or privately owned community civic use.
5. Construct a new surface parking lot on the northeastern corner of Old Mill Road and Elm Street to support the Old Marlboro Academy re-use and create structured parking on the Water Street shared surface parking lot to support new mixed-use infill buildings.
6. Encourage single-family residential infill vacant sites at key locations:
 - The northwestern corner of Elm Street and Old Mill Road.
 - The Clagett and Smith sites on the western side of town.
 - The vacant site along Old Marlboro Pike.
 - The site south of Old Crain Highway zoned Rural-Residential (R-R).
7. Promote residential infill development overlooking the Western Branch (maximum three stories). Relocate the county daycare facility and volunteer fire department to enable this redevelopment.
8. Pursue shared parking agreements and parking reconfigurations to optimize both public and private surface and structured parking resources in the town core.
9. Develop an effective parking system by consolidating town core parking into centralized, shared, consumer-oriented facilities in each block.
10. Upgrade surface parking lots in town with paving and striping, landscaped screening, lighting, and signage.
11. Increase and improve parking at the Equestrian Center/Show Place Arena parking lot for town core – off site parking.



The Traband House, built in the 1890's in the Town of Upper Marlboro is a good example of late Victorian architecture.

Upper Marlboro began as a tobacco port town along the banks of the Western Branch of the Patuxent River when it was a much larger, less silted, and navigable body of water. Like most historic communities, Upper Marlboro has evolved since it was first created in the eighteenth century, although its function as a government center has endured. In the mid- to late-twentieth-century the town core saw major changes, including multiple tear-downs, modern construction, and severe alterations to existing historic resources. These changes have impacted the town's historic character to the degree that the overall architectural integrity of the town has been compromised. Upper Marlboro may no longer retain enough historic fabric to qualify as a local or National Register of Historic

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

Places historic district.

The community needs to look at other options to protect its remaining historic properties. Individually listing buildings is one possibility, as is a multiple listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Specific areas of the town should be reviewed for their potential to form smaller historic districts (e.g., a residential historic district). This is particularly true given the large number of historic sites in the residential areas of the town.

Even with the building alterations in the town core, the town's appearance is still that of a small historic town. New development should build on this theme and can enhance the building fabric that is left. Appropriate design standards should be developed that respect the historic character that remains. The town also should develop activities to promote and celebrate its rich history, such as walking tours and marketing materials.



Tobacco barns are found throughout the subregion.

POLICIES

1. Maintain the integrity and character of Upper Marlboro's historic neighborhoods and town core.
2. Celebrate Upper Marlboro's extensive history and historic resources.

STRATEGIES

1. Conduct a survey to identify additional properties that may be individually eligible for local or National Register listing. In addition, evaluate the residential areas of the town to determine if there is potential to create a residential historic district.
2. Develop a preservation plan for the town.
3. Create voluntary design guidelines for the town's undesignated historic resources and incorporate design standards for these resources into a future M-U-TC design standard.
4. Encourage creative adaptive use of older buildings in town. Work with the Parks Department to transform the Old Marlboro Academy's headmaster's house into a town visitors center.
5. Document the Old Marlboro Academy building through measured drawings and large-format photography to the standards of the Historic American Buildings Survey (HABS).
6. Create a walking tour highlighting existing historic buildings and historic sites in Upper Marlboro.
7. Create interpretive panels or wayside signs for installation at key locations in Upper Marlboro.
8. Create brochures illustrating the history and architecture of the town.

GREATER UPPER MARLBORO



The area east of the Town of Upper Marlboro was also analyzed in detail as part of the Subregion 6 plan process. This area is referred to as Greater Upper Marlboro and is strategically located just north of the intersection of US 301 and MD 4 and offers a unique opportunity for new development and redevelopment. As described in the Development Pattern/Land Use chapter, this plan supports redevelopment and infill development in existing and planned development areas over “green field” development that takes up natural resource lands. This plan emphasizes the need to develop strategies with a focus on the industrial area east of the Town of Upper Marlboro, concentrating on improving the gateway MD 725 corridor leading into the town and county seat as well as the four quadrants of the US 301 and MD 725 intersection.

MD 725 at the intersection with US 301 is a gateway into the Town of Upper Marlboro and an important part of the greater road system in the area. The new interchange at US 301 and MD 4 highly impacts the land to the west of present US 301.

Policies and strategies have been developed to guide future development and redevelopment for the land on the west side of US 301 that can best support the Town of Upper Marlboro’s revitalization. This area represents an opportunity for the public sector to maximize the use of existing and planned infrastructure while promoting attractive and compact development.

MD 725 west of US 301 is a primary access road into the Town of Upper Marlboro, the county seat, and as such, has a high degree of visibility. It is an important image corridor for Upper Marlboro and Prince George’s County because of its prominent role in transportation and its linkage from US 301 and MD 202 to the downtown area.

Uses along the street include retail, service commercial, residential, and industrial. Land uses are varied, building and parcel relationships to the roadway are not uniform, and some properties are poorly maintained or vacant. Many of these properties are located in the floodplain and are subject to periodic flooding.

These conditions do not provide a pleasant travel experience through the corridor and convey a poor image of Upper Marlboro. Private investment in this gateway area is desirable to upgrade the mix and type of uses. Barriers to investment include current market demand and costs, design, and policy issues related to development in the floodplain. In the short-term, improvements to site and corridor design would significantly upgrade the appearance of the corridor, improve gateway image to the county seat, and help prime the area for future investment. One of the most effective methods to improve a corridor is to develop a corridor aesthetic that softens adjacent land uses, defines the corridor, and directs/keeps views within the defined travel corridor.

MD 725 CORRIDOR



Southwest Quadrant

The area on the west side of US 301 south of MD 725 conveys a mixed image of Upper Marlboro. Uses such as Home Depot, built in 2004, mixed with older 1950s and 1960s warehouse/storage and industrial uses create a haphazard, disjointed appearance, lacking visual identity or continuity. There are approximately 17 parcels north of Home Depot with an average size of 1.7 acres and 4 larger parcels to the south averaging 5.8 acres. A large part of the area is in the 100-year floodplain, which complicates the redevelopment investment and reinvestment potential. Immediately north of Home Depot is the right-of-way for the future MD 202 relocation (See Map 26: Greater Upper Marlboro).

The area's businesses range from retail establishments (McDonald's, 84 Lumber) to warehouse/storage facilities (Ripple's Service and Fort Knox) to professional service business (Enterprise Rent-a-car and Limousines, Inc.) to industrial uses (Chaney Concrete and Davenport Insulation). A class "B" office building shares a parcel with a heavy equipment rental company at the northwest quadrant of US 301 and MD 4.

This disparate grouping of uses is the result of the historic uses in the area combined with an evolving marketplace. The area historically housed tobacco warehouses, creating the industrial/warehouse base. However, these businesses eventually became untenable, opening opportunities for new uses. A good example is the Shell gas station site at the corner of MD 725 and US 301, which formerly housed a tobacco warehouse.

Redevelopment and reinvestment potential is mixed. Interviews with businesses revealed the following: Several businesses are not dependent upon their current locations; they have regional customers/clientele and could relocate; several businesses noted inadequacies about their current site, such as needing a larger site and/or desire to have better access from US 301, suggesting opportunities to work with the businesses to improve their situation; and some businesses/property owners will be less interested in change/relocation because they benefit from their current location, rent, and/or property valuation. A comprehensive reinvestment strategy might nevertheless be attractive to them.

While investment and redevelopment would improve the image and appearance of the area and increase property values, it would need to be done very carefully. Comprehensive redevelopment would likely need government support and would not be inexpensive. While redevelopment would create new opportunities and improve the image of the area, the loss of existing businesses and their related jobs could negate gains. Redevelopment of the study area faces four primary challenges.

1. A large percentage of the study area is in the floodplain. As such, particular attention will need to be placed on the final

design of the redevelopment strategy to incorporate local, state, and federal interests and requirements. A comprehensive approach is recommended considering the entire floodplain on the east side of the Town of Upper Marlboro.

2. The county will have to actively participate in parcel assembly to create larger, more easily developable land bays. It is very unlikely that a private interest will undertake this effort.
3. Almost all of the sites in this area are occupied by viable businesses. The county would have to develop a relocation program to assist any businesses that would be displaced.
4. Redevelopment will need to consider future plans for US 301. The current limited access and relocation plan could adversely impact the long-term viability of these sites, particularly the fast-food restaurants and the gas stations, by greatly reducing the direct access of pass-by traffic.

This area is recommended for future study to determine the best strategy to enhance and revitalize this area. Opportunities for redevelopment and the most appropriate land use for this area should be addressed as part of this study.

Northwest Quadrant

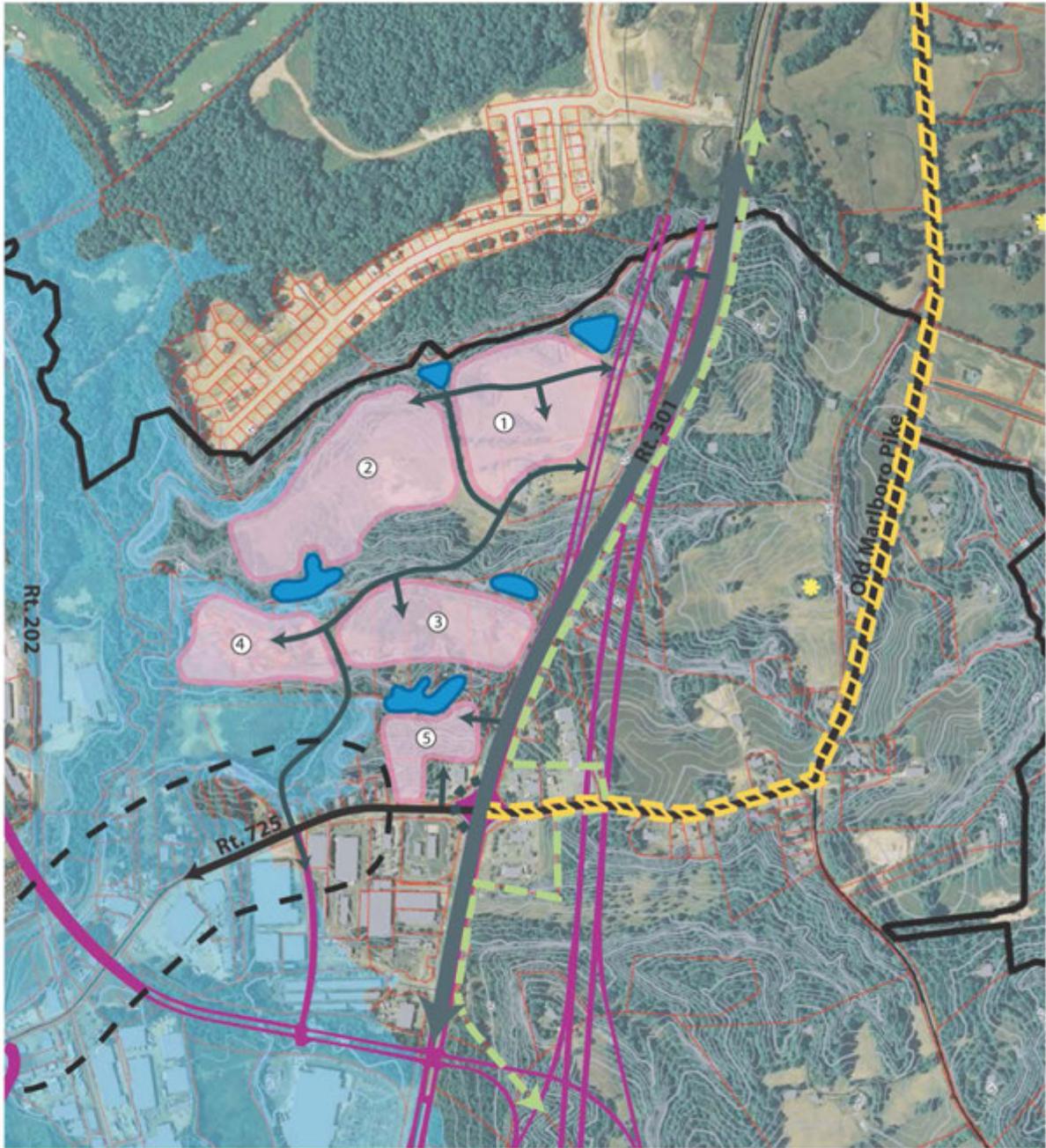
The Future Land Use Map designates a mixed-use area in this quadrant north of MD 725 and east of US 301. This area represents an opportunity to promote new development in close proximity to the interchange of MD 4 and US 301. The new development would provide an attractive gateway as well as new retail, office, and residential uses. This new development would also serve the increased demand generated from the new residential developments north of Upper Marlboro in Beechtree, Balmoral, and Locust Hill. A new road network is proposed as part of the mixed-use development to provide better circulation and improve access to the Town of Upper Marlboro. Opportunities for development in this area are discussed below.

Development Concepts

Map 26 shows the development framework for the area, which includes five development bays, or areas. These bays represent the most appropriate areas for development as they are in the Developing Tier and outside of known environmentally sensitive areas and floodplains. The concepts are suggestions for ways these bays could develop. The concept descriptions include design principles which should be incorporated into any development that is proposed, even if different from the concepts illustrated here.

DEVELOPMENT BAY 1. This bay is envisioned as a mixed-use or commercial development focusing on retail with a potential office component. Designed as a village center, it will open directly to the US 301 access road. Building placement would

MAP 25: GREATER UPPER MARLBORO



LEGEND

- Existing Road (Main)
- Existing Road
- Historic Corridor
- Historic Site
- Proposed Road
- Rural Tier Boundary, 2007
- Development Bay
- Stormwater Facility
- 100-year floodplain

PARCEL	ACRES	LAND USE
1	3.28	retail
2	17.52	residential
3	10.14	residential
4	7.89	residential
5	4.28	retail

line the west, north, and south edges with an internal road traversing the site east/west from the “new” US 301 access road into Development Bay 2. The development character is envisioned as two-story retail with a potential office component above. Store fronts would be human in scale with retail shops having awnings on the first floor. The adjacent sidewalks between the stores and parking bays would be intensively landscaped with ample seating areas for pedestrians. Outparcels would have a strong connection to other retail stores and have the same architectural character as the dominant building.

DEVELOPMENT BAY 2. This bay is a high-ground peninsula bordered to the north and south by relatively significant drainage corridors; the western most edges are in floodplain. This area could be an extension of the commercial development in Development Bay 1. This bay also provides an opportunity for residential development with a high number of “amenity” lots; lots backing-up to or adjacent to open space, in this case the drainage corridors. Single-family lots of approximately 7,000 feet square could be developed, yielding approximately 60 lots. The western most edge of the parcel provides an opportunity to connect to the floodplain and any development should provide an open space lot and trail connection and utilize this area as an amenity to the development.

DEVELOPMENT BAY 3. This bay is another high-land peninsula bordered to the north and south by significant drainage corridors. Its proximity to an existing commercial development site and US 301 suggests that a higher density, alternative type of residential development may be appropriate such as zero-lot line residential. An average lot size of approximately 6,800 square feet is envisioned, yielding approximately 30 lots.

DEVELOPMENT BAY 4. This bay is a high-land peninsula bordered to the north with a significant drainage corridor and to the south by a large floodplain area which is consistently wet or marshy. It is the westernmost end of a larger area peninsula of land—west of Development Bay 3. This prime land provides an opportunity for a redevelopment to a higher grade of housing. The westernmost edge of the parcel provides an opportunity to make a pedestrian path to the larger floodplain. Redevelopment should provide an open space lot or trail connection to the floodplain. It should be noted that the development concept includes a possible new road south from Development Bays 3 and 4, creating an intersection with Chrysler Way Extended (P609).

DEVELOPMENT BAY 5. This bay is located directly behind (to the north and west) of the existing Dunkin Donuts store. As an adjunct to that property, its proximity to US 301 and the gateway US 301/MD 725 intersection, this parcel would best be served by extending the existing commercial development into

it. Preliminary studies suggest that two outparcels appropriate for restaurants (one adjacent to US 301 and the other to MD 725) could be developed with an interior retail building of approximately 26,000 square feet.

Northeast Quadrant

The northeast quadrant is primarily located in the Rural Tier and developed mostly with single-family houses. The intersection of US 301 and MD 725, which is in the Developing Tier, has two businesses located there, a gas station and a Southern States store. The east boundary is Old Crain Highway, a county-designated historic road. This section of road is designated as Historic Road 19 (Road 26 in 1739 and Road 3:1 in the 1828 Road Surveys). The west boundary is US 301. The north boundary is Village Drive and to the south is Old Marlboro Pike. As discussed in the Transportation chapter the proposed new alignment of US 301 impacts this quadrant, being located directly east of the Southern States store and continuing north to Village Drive.

Along this part of Old Crain Highway there are four designated historic sites, one of which, Bowling Heights, is also listed in the National Register of Historic Places. This area of the subregion is primarily the only area north of MD 4 that retains its rural character with historic 1830s tobacco barns and horse pastures intermingled with a few modern houses on large parcels of land.

This plan is not proposing changes to this quadrant to ensure the continuance of the current character of the community following the policies of the General Plan for the Rural Tier and also accounting for the US 301 realignment.

Southeast Quadrant

The southeast quadrant, like the northeast quadrant, is primarily located in the Rural Tier. The portion of land in the Developing Tier is west of the realigned MD 202 and developed with a car dealership as well as a small parcel of land at the southeast corner of US 301/MD 725, which is developed with a fast-food restaurant and other commercial uses. The majority of the proposed new US 301/MD 4 interchange north of MD 4 is in this quadrant. This proposed interchange lies directly over the car dealership and will take almost a third of the land area of the quadrant. The east/west boundaries are Marlboro Pike and US 301 and the north/south boundaries are Marlboro Pike and MD 4.

Similar to the northeast quadrant, there are historic resources in the Rural Tier portion of the area. Wells Corner, at the southwest corner of Marlboro Pike and Old Crain Highway, has had a tavern and country store for many years and serves the local community. South of the corner on the west side of old Marlboro Pike is Ashland, and on the east is Compton-Basset, both of which are also listed in the National Register of Historic places.

This plan is not proposing any changes in this quadrant to ensure the preservation of the current character following the policies of the General Plan for the Rural Tier and also accounting for the US 301 realignment. The county should undertake a sector plan and SMA when the final location of the alignment of US 301 is determined or when other circumstances arise, to recommend a better mix of development to take advantage of the new alignment or to address these new circumstances, and to assess the appropriate uses and tier designation of property on the east side of US 301 from north Village Drive to MD 725. This sector plan should determine the most appropriate boundary for the Rural Tier and create design guidelines so that development on the edge of the Developing Tier creates an adequate buffer to protect rural communities. The sector plan should include all of the area impacted by the realigned highway so that a complete evaluation of land use and zoning can be undertaken to determine the most appropriate long-term development pattern for the greater Upper Marlboro area.

POLICY

Promote high-quality development and redevelopment around the Town of Upper Marlboro at the intersection of US 301 and MD 725

STRATEGIES

MD 725 Corridor

1. Develop an implementation program that includes development requirements and necessary road improvements for the MD 725 corridor from US 301 to the Town of Upper Marlboro. This plan should include:
 - Incorporation of street trees and planting zones into design elements.
 - Develop a pedestrian safe zone with sidewalks and crosswalks.
 - Minimize parcel access points and consolidate curb cuts.
 - Focus efforts to improving signage: remove abandoned signs, consolidate signs when possible.
2. Work with business/property owners and develop incentives to improve facades, signs, and property appearance for businesses along the MD 725 corridor.
3. Promote signage and landscape improvements to “gateway” intersections: US 301/MD 725 and MD 202/MD 725.
4. Achieve consistent design and setbacks for public and private improvements along MD 725.

5. Develop a comprehensive streetscape program for MD 725 which would include:
 - Installing curbs along MD 725 to create a safety barrier, define parcel entrances, and generally define the roadway corridor.
 - Screening surface parking with hedges, walls, or fences.
 - Installing ornamental street lighting.
 - Burying overhead utilities.
 - Creating a street tree planting buffer zone adjacent to the back of the curb.

Southwest Quadrant

Undertake a study and prepare an implementation plan for revitalizing the industrially and commercially zoned properties south of MD 725 west of US 301. As part of this study consider appropriate land use recommendations and site configurations in consideration of the floodplain.

Northwest Quadrant

1. Rezone the properties south of Balmoral to MD 725 to the M-X-T Zone to maximize opportunities for high-quality, mixed-use development.
2. Provide a mix of development opportunities, including different types of housing that complement and support the Town of Upper Marlboro in the M-X-T Zone.
3. Incorporate development and redevelopment with the new US 301 limited access highway alignment and proposed parallel local access road.
4. Develop a secondary road network to provide access to development bays west of US 301 and minimize traffic impacts to US 301/MD 725 intersection.
5. Respect the extensive system of floodplain “fingers” by preserving natural drainage corridors and limiting development to upper level plateau areas.
6. Incorporate environmentally sensitive design techniques to reduce stormwater impacts.
7. Decrease development density/intensity as development moves away from MD 301 toward the floodplain.
8. Provide open space access into floodplains from edges of development parcels.
9. Consider county relocation assistance for residents of Peerless Avenue as this area develops.

MARLTON

Marlton is a residential planned community (R-P-C) located south of Croom Road and east of US 301. The community was conceptualized in 1965 when a local developer, Orville Ritchie, bought a large tract of land and began building homes. Mr. Ritchie then applied for rezoning of 2,000 acres. In 1969 negotiations with regard to density, community character, and buffers led to the approval of the R-P-C by the County Council. The provisions set forth approved for Marlton allowed 6,392 single-family and multifamily dwellings units not to exceed 16.8 persons per acre. The approved plan was for a mix of housing densities and types throughout the site. The area included multifamily high density residential (R-10), medium-family medium density (R-18), townhouse (R-T), and any combination of single-family residential uses (R-80 and R-R) ranging from two to four units per acre. Marlton has always had a center commercial core and an area for employment as it was envisioned as being a completely self-sufficient and sustainable community in the then-rural countryside. Over the past 40 years there have been a number of amendments to this approved R-P-C making changes to the mix of uses and the density allowed in some areas.

Sections known as Rollingwood, Rosaryville Estates, and part of Curbside were the first to develop while the remaining land was sold to other developers that eventually built single-family homes, townhouses, and garden apartments. Residential development did not occur quickly due to factors such as lack of adequate road infrastructure, water, sewer, and physical barriers such as the CSX railroad track and creeks. Furthermore, weak economic conditions also slowed development during the 1970s and 1980s. The pace of development increased in the late 1980s. Several developers bought over 1,000 acres of land to build townhouses and single-family detached homes. As Marlton continued to grow, the main entrance proved inadequate for the increased traffic flow. Heathermore Boulevard was built to accommodate new residents and today there are plans to expand this road southeast toward Duley Station Road. Heathermore Boulevard is the main corridor connecting the town center with the rest of the community. While West Marlton is developed, East Marlton has not developed, primarily because of the need to cross over the CSX railroad tracks that physically divide the community.

Today, Marlton's character can be described as an inclusive suburban residential community that integrates various residential densities and commercial uses. These factors, along with the mature trees and tranquil atmosphere, define the makeup of Marlton. Marlton's final phases of development includes a commercial center as envisioned in the original plans, although at a smaller scale. Significant residential development is expected on the east side of Marlton. Heathermore Boulevard now stops at the tracks and a bridge is planned to provide access to the new residential development as well as the planned linear community park which



The entrance feature to the planned community of Marlton.



These townhouses are an example of the diversity of housing types available in the subregion.

is just to the east of the railroad tracks. It is estimated that an additional 1,328 dwelling units are to be built in the eastern part of Marlton, which would result in 4,500+ units at the time of buildout excluding any county-owned land that could be a surplus property in the future. This number is below the originally approved density.

Property maintenance and code enforcement in the older neighborhoods has been an issue in Marlton as well as the rest of the subregion. Ensuring that owners keep up their property in a consistent manner is vital to the well being and vitality of these neighborhoods within the larger Marlton community.

When first conceived in the 1960s, Marlton was planned to become a city of the future; having a civic space is the first step and this was the plan. This commercial area is one of the last pieces of undeveloped properties in West Marlton. With the existence of two shopping centers in close proximity to Marlton on US 301, special attention was focused on this commercially zoned property to determine the most appropriate land use to best serve the needs of the community. This commercial area presents the opportunity to develop into a civic center providing a much-needed community gathering place with a mixture of residential, neighborhood retail, and public land uses. Options such as townhouses, apartments, and senior citizen living spaces should be considered.

Since the original approval of the R-P-C in 1965, there have been numerous revisions to the official plan. It became evident as new development applications are reviewed for the undeveloped properties remaining in Marlton, that it is necessary to consolidate all of the relevant changes and conditions that have been made to the Marlton Plan over the last 40 years into one document. This will help us update conditions to meet current regulations. As a result of this effort, a revised Official Plan Amendment for Marlton has been included in the appendix to this master plan. The new official plan will update conditions that are still applicable, clarify issues that have been addressed while working with the community, and provide more concise mapping and guidance for the buildout of Marlton. (See Appendix B & C)

The area is currently zoned for retail businesses with an older zoning classification of C-2. This type of zoning designation allows businesses such as restaurants and ice cream shops, dry cleaners, and other neighborhood businesses that are desired by the community. Ultimately, a comprehensive design zone, L-A-C, which

would permit the mix of residential and commercial is envisioned for this site. This comprehensive design zone would also allow for a specific design plan that could incorporate a high-quality design for the buildings and public spaces that would be necessary to create the civic core appropriate for the Marlton community. The civic core should provide public spaces that offer residents the opportunity to organize events and socialize with their neighbors in an attractive and safe outdoor setting. It should serve as a focal point for the community and help bring the residents of the older developed areas of Marlton on the west side together with the newer residents from the developing neighborhoods to the east. This civic core should include transit stops to reduce traffic congestion on the main thoroughfare and provide alternative transportation choices for residents. A basic plan showing major land uses in the proposed L-A-C is shown in the accompanying illustration. (See Appendix D)

The employment portion of Marlton has not developed for a number of reasons, the main one being its location on the east side of the railroad tracks dividing West and East Marlton. With no industrial development opportunities around Marlton and the conclusions of the 2007 Prince George’s County Industrial Land Needs and Employment Study, which states that the county has a surplus of industrially zoned land, this plan is recommending that the approved Marlton plan be amended to change the employment land use to residential use.

At the time Marlton was initially developed, pedestrian and environmental considerations were not taken into account as much as these issues are planned for today. Sections of streams were routinely enclosed by piping and developers used limited stormwater management controls. Current developments within Marlton are more mindful of the environment due to new state and county environmental regulations that are designed to mitigate development impacts such as providing larger setbacks from streams than previously required. Nonetheless, new housing should not only mitigate but also restore environmental assets.

The Marlton area is currently characterized by well-established residential neighborhoods. However, some of these neighborhoods are disconnected from one another. Marlton’s civic core and the Marlton Community Park are inaccessible to southern Marlton residents by foot or bicycle. The railroad tracks and Marlton golf course are two physical barriers that force residents to drive even within their community. The following policies and strategies will address these concerns and try to implement the vision for Marlton.



Freight railroad tracks crisscross the subregion.

POLICY 1

The county should undertake traffic-calming, pedestrian, and transportation improvements on key roads.

STRATEGIES

1. Install traffic-calming features along major roadways and streets within Marlton when possible.
2. Retrofit streets to provide sidewalks within half a mile from elementary schools to provide safe walking routes to school and public facilities.
3. Create a maintenance plan to expand the existing tree canopy within Marlton by planting and replacing trees within the right-of-way. Trees provide shade and encourage walking. Also trees tend to slow traffic by giving a sense of narrow roads which reduces speeds.
4. Enforce the scenic road guidelines when development proposals are submitted to ensure that the rural character of Croom and Duley Station Roads is preserved.

POLICY 2

Maintain and enhance current park and trails systems.

STRATEGIES

1. Incorporate exercise circuits within trails to provide residents with a multipurpose experience while on the trail.
2. Consider land swap of county-owned former school site north of Heathermore Boulevard and on the east side of the railroad tracks with the privately owned site on the west side to enlarge the Marlton Linear Park.

POLICY 3

Preserve and enhance the housing stock within Marlton.

STRATEGIES

1. Ensure that new development matches the scale and character of existing Marlton residences.
2. Ensure that new development adjacent to the Rural Tier has similar scale and character as existing Rural Tier houses. New development should not disturb the scenic views.
3. Ensure that new development has an interconnected network of pedestrian-friendly streets, sidewalks, and bikeways with multiple connections to nearby neighborhoods and commercial centers.
4. Enforce private property standards and maintenance of public property to ensure that houses are kept in good repair.



Residential street with parking on both curbs.

POLICY 4

Encourage high-quality design of mixed-use development within Marlton's commercial and civic core.

STRATEGIES

1. Encourage new development to include mixed-use vertical development that provides for upper level residential opportunities and/or office uses.
2. Encourage housing options for senior residents to age in place within the civic core.
3. Consider L-A-C zoning to promote a mix of uses with high quality design.
4. Incorporate attractive and appropriate public spaces to create a focal point for the community to gather.

POLICY 5

Expand opportunities to encourage alternative modes of transportation.

STRATEGIES

1. Develop a network of trails and sidewalks leading to activity centers.
2. Retrofit and require new developments to have sidewalk and trail connections to neighborhoods, parks, activity centers, and public transportation.
3. Investigate feasibility of providing a park and ride stop near MD 301 and Heathermore Boulevard for The Bus.
4. Study the possibility of purchasing easements along the railroad tracks, PEPCO right-of-way, and Marlton golf course to provide crossings and improved connectivity to allow bicycling and walking throughout Marlton.

POLICY 6

Protect green infrastructure network within the Marlton area.

STRATEGIES

1. Promote low-impact development to protect stream water quality.
2. Avoid using pervious surfaces for trails near stream corridors to help mitigate stormwater runoff that can degrade the water quality.
3. Restore and protect network gaps during development and redevelopment.



Bucolic paths are found throughout the subregion.

4. Preserve natural features including mature trees and sensitive sites that surround new development.
5. Encourage the use of native plants in HOA open space and in landscaping in existing and new development.
6. Preserve viewsheds and promote greenway trails to access natural areas allowing the community to maintain a connection with the green infrastructure network.

POLICY 7

Provide areas to support local community civic spaces and community gardens.

STRATEGIES

1. Establish a public/private initiative to identify community garden spaces for family food production in public parkland and community open space.
2. Identify possible locations and open space areas for nature and environmental demonstration centers.