

## **Regional Planning and Inter-jurisdictional Cooperation**

Situated on a peninsula between two rivers and a bay, the land of both the City of Annapolis and its neighboring Anne Arundel County has become an area where the jurisdictional boundaries are beginning to blur. Joint problems, such as traffic congestion, are bringing citizens together to talk about a unified future. The Annapolis Neck Small Area Plan is tackling the problem of two jurisdictions having two separate land use plans and zoning ordinances impacting a confined area, by suggesting a “regional planning” approach.

The residents of both jurisdictions are now addressing the policy aspect of rapid growth, with concern for the diminution of open space, air and water pollution issues, and the long-standing problem of traffic congestion.

### **Inter-jurisdictional and Regional Issues**

#### ***Annexation***

Since the adoption of the County’s 1985 *Annapolis Neck Sector Plan*, at least five annexations have taken place. These annexations have occurred primarily along or south of Forest Drive. Currently, additional proposed annexations have been filed with the City of Annapolis Planning Office.

From a regional land use perspective, the result of the more recent annexations is that there are now isolated County lands on many of the peninsulas south of the City border, including those bordered by Church, Crab, Aberdeen, and Harness Creeks. Some properties located in the County, such as the Harness Woods subdivision and other properties adjoining Quiet Waters Park, are now almost completely surrounded by City property. This fragmentation of local jurisdictions causes some government functions such as land use planning and the provision of public services to become more complex and often less efficient.

#### ***Natural and Historic Resources***

Annapolis Neck has an abundance of environmental and historic resources in need of protection. Numerous goals, policies and recommendations have been identified by both the County and the City related to environmental protection. Coordination between the County and the City is essential for implementation.

#### ***Transportation***

The transportation system serving Annapolis Neck is important for not only residents and employees of the area but tourists as well. Multiple government and private entities are involved in providing and operating necessary transportation resources in the planning area. To realize the vision of convenient, cost effective and integrated transportation options requires cooperation and coordination among these entities.

***Community Facilities***

Police, fire and trash collection services from both jurisdictions are inefficiently allocated to the same collector roadways in order to access communities in two separate jurisdictions. The communities of Hillsmere, Arundel On The Bay, Annapolis Roads and Bay Ridge (to name a few communities on the Outer Neck) rely partially on City police and entirely on City fire resources to provide first response service based on a contractual agreement initiated in 1979 to ensure public safety. It is possible that even more lands south of Forest Drive may petition for annexation in order to obtain public water and sewerage facilities and become subdivision developments in the future. This could create a future where the Outer Neck, from Hillsmere Drive eastward to the bay shore, may become an island of County land surrounded by the City. The provision of County services to this area would then become even more inefficient.

**Goals and Recommendations**

***Goal: Establish a framework for regional cooperation between the County and the City of Annapolis with regard to planning issues.***

***Recommendations***

1. Develop a framework that will mandate and facilitate inter-jurisdictional cooperation between the County and City on issues of regional concern including land use planning, development, transportation planning, environmental protection, and annexation of properties.
2. Complete a Regional Transportation Study in conjunction with the City of Annapolis, State of Maryland, and Naval Academy to identify all aspects of transportation system deficiencies and make recommendations for improvements.
3. Work with the City of Annapolis to establish mutually agreeable boundaries. Seek change in State law if necessary.