

Land Use and Zoning

Existing Land Use

The Brooklyn Park Small Area contains approximately 2,680 acres of land. Most of the land area is developed, primarily with residential uses. Industrial uses account for a smaller portion of the land area and are concentrated in a few fairly large areas. Commercial uses are concentrated along the Ritchie Highway corridor and to a lesser extent along Belle Grove Road. Map 14 depicts the existing land uses in the area. The most current data available on land use acreage is based on 2000 mapping and aerial photography and is summarized in the table below.

**Table 14. Existing Land Use in the Brooklyn Park Small Planning Area
(based on 2000 land coverage)**

Land Use Category	Acreage	Percentage of Total
Single Family Residential	997	37 %
Townhouse and Multifamily Residential	125	5 %
Commercial (Retail & Office)	129	5 %
Industrial	356	13 %
Government/Institutional	216	8 %
Open Space and Natural Areas	105	4 %
Recreation and Parks	74	3 %
Transportation/Utility	345	13 %
Vacant and Agricultural	331	12 %
Total	2,678	100 %

Residential Land Use

Residential uses account for 42% of the land acreage in the Brooklyn Park planning area and are the most predominant land use. This represents approximately 1,120 acres. The majority of this acreage is developed with single family homes, which account for 37% of the total land area. Single family residential communities include Brooklyn Heights, Roland Terrace, Olde Brooklyn Park, Arundel Gardens, Harbor Valley Estates, Pumphrey, Lynnbrook, and Sunnyfield Estates.

Townhomes and multifamily dwelling units utilize only about 5% of the total acreage.

Most of these units are older style townhouses, or rowhomes, that are concentrated primarily in

Map 14

three areas: along Old Riverside Road and the County border north of Belle Grove Road, along 11th Avenue and Brookwood Road in Brooklyn Heights, and in the Arundel Village area along Patrick Henry Drive.

Commercial and Industrial Land Use

Commercial office and retail uses account for 5% of the land acreage in Brooklyn Park. Most commercial properties in the area are concentrated along Ritchie Highway north of the Baltimore Beltway, although there are some additional commercial uses scattered along Belle Grove Road. All of the area's major shopping centers are located on Ritchie Highway, including the Arundel Village Plaza, Ritchie Highway Shopping Center, and the mostly vacant Southview Shopping Center. A smaller commercial center is located at the intersection of Belle Grove Road and B&A Boulevard, where there are two relatively new hotels, a few eating establishments, and some highway commercial uses.

There are over 350 land acres used for industrial purposes in the Brooklyn Park area, which comprises 13% of the total land area. This includes a sand and gravel mining operation off of B&A Boulevard; a cluster of light industrial uses south of Belle Grove Road including some trucking, contracting and auto-related businesses; and an area along the Baltimore Beltway at the City border that is used for storage and distribution of petroleum products.

Recreation, Open Space and other Land Uses

Approximately 74 acres of land, or 3% of the total, are devoted to recreation uses. These are primarily small, County-owned community parks. Governmental and institutional uses such as public schools and police stations account for 8% of the land area used. Institutional uses also include the Cedar Hill, Mt. Calvary, Holy Cross cemeteries. There are just over 100 acres of natural open space which represents 4% of the total area and which are primarily wetland and floodplain areas along the Patapsco River and Cabin Branch Creek. Thirteen percent of the land area is used for transportation and utility uses such as major highways and highway right-of-way and utility easements. Lastly, in 2000 there were approximately 330 vacant acres of land in the planning area, representing 12% of the total area. With regard to this planning data, vacant land does not include designated natural open space areas but represents land that has been zoned to allow development but that has not yet been developed.

1997 GDP Land Use

The County's current *General Development Plan* (GDP), adopted in 1997, maps out a land use plan for the entire County that reflects desired future growth patterns over the next 10 to 20 years. The GDP Land Use Map is depicted in Map 15 for the Brooklyn Park Small Area. In general, the current GDP land use plan for the Brooklyn Park area consists of the following elements:

- **Medium Density Residential** land use covering the majority of the planning area including all existing residential communities,

- **Commercial** land use along the Ritchie Highway retail corridor,
- **Light Industrial** land use along the western side of the Harbor Tunnel Thruway and south of Belle Grove Road,
- **Heavy Industrial** land use north of the Baltimore Beltway at the Baltimore City border, and
- **Natural Features** land use covering the Patapsco Valley State Park, the stream valley and floodplains of Cabin Branch Creek, and local parks.

The *General Development Plan* also adopted a new land use category called Mixed Use and specified general areas where this type of land use will be encouraged in the County. One general area was identified within the Brooklyn Park Planning Area where mixed use development would be encouraged and should be studied in greater detail during the Small Area Planning process. This is the area in the vicinity of the North Linthicum Light Rail Station on Camp Meade Road (in the BWI/Linthicum Planning Area) and including the intersection of B&A Boulevard and Belle Grove Road at the western border of the Brooklyn Park Planning Area. The area was designated as a potential Transit Mixed Use Area where a balance of employment, service and residential uses should be promoted in close proximity to the Light Rail Station. After examining the area in more detail during the Small Area Plan process, the idea of zoning this area for mixed use development was rejected. There are currently several highway commercial uses at that location which would be nonconforming uses in a mixed use zone, and the property owners were not supportive of a change to the existing commercial zoning. However, this area is located in a designated Revitalization District, which will allow greater flexibility in terms of uses, and will even allow some residential uses, if redevelopment occurs in the future.

Existing Zoning

Zoning is one of the primary planning tools used to regulate the use and intensity, development, and preservation of land in the County. All land in the County is assigned a zoning classification. Since most of the land in the Brooklyn Park area is developed, the zoning reflects, for the most part, what exists. Current zoning in the Brooklyn Park planning area is shown on Map 16. Zoning classifications include residential, commercial, industrial, and open space.

Land zoned for low density residential uses accounts for 6% of the land area. A portion of this is zoned Residential Agricultural (RA) but was used in the past for sand and gravel operations as a permitted Special Exception Use, although that operation has ceased and the property is being reclaimed. The remainder of the low density residential land is zoned R1 and contains the area's three cemeteries, which are permitted Special Exception Uses in an R1 zone.

Map 15

Map 16

Table 15. Existing Zoning in the Brooklyn Park Small Planning Area

Zoning Category	Acreage	Percentage of Total
Low Density Residential Zones (RA, R1)	156	6 %
Medium Density Residential Zones (R5)	1,421	53 %
High Density Residential Zones (R15)	150	6 %
Commercial (C1, C2, C3, C4)	189	7 %
Industrial (W1, W2, W3)	463	17 %
Open Space (OS)	292	11 %
Total	2,671	100 %

Encompassing over 1,400 acres, land zoned R5 for medium density residential uses comprises over 50% of the land area in Brooklyn Park. Most of this area is developed with single family homes on quarter acre lots or smaller, although there are some subdivisions with larger lots outside of the older core of Brooklyn Park and Brooklyn Heights. The large sand and gravel mining property is also zoned R5 but has operated for many years as a legal nonconforming use. While most of the R5 land is developed, there is a fairly large area of vacant land south of Cedar Hill Lane that is zoned to allow medium density residential uses, and there are additional vacant parcels scattered throughout the planning area.

Properties zoned R15 for higher density residential uses account for 6% of the planning area. These areas include the townhouse communities between Belle Grove Road and Old Riverside Road and in Brooklyn Heights. Some additional land zoned R15 is located at the interchange of Ritchie Highway and I-695.

The 189 acres zoned for commercial use consist primarily of land zoned either C3 for general retail uses or C4 for highway commercial uses. These properties are on Ritchie Highway, Belle Grove Road, or B&A Boulevard. The commercial acreage also includes approximately 13 acres along Ritchie Highway zoned C2 for office commercial use. A section of properties on Church Street near the Baltimore City border is zoned C1 to allow local commercial uses.

Land zoned for industrial use covers 17% of the Brooklyn Park area. Over half of the industrially-zoned land in the planning area is zoned W3 which permits heavy industrial uses. Part of this land is used for storage and distribution of petroleum products and portions of it are undeveloped. Most of the remaining industrially-zoned land is zoned W2 which permits light

industrial uses such as those found along Belle Grove Road. There is some undeveloped land zoned W1 for industrial park use along the interstate ramp from I-97 onto the Harbor Tunnel Thruway.

The nearly 300 acres of land zoned as Open Space includes the Patapsco Valley State Park, stream valleys and floodplains, and local park lands. Land zoned as Open Space is generally intended for conservation purposes and has only a limited number of permitted uses, most of which are related to recreational uses and allow minimal development.

Proposed Land Use Changes

This Small Area Plan proposes a new Land Use Plan for the Brooklyn Park area that attempts to refine the 1997 *General Development Plan* by more accurately reflecting both current development patterns and desired future growth over the 10 to 20 year planning period. Map 17 depicts the proposed Land Use Plan, and Table 16 lists the specific locations as well as the rationale for each of the proposed Land Use Map changes. Since the Brooklyn Park SPA is primarily developed, the land use pattern reflected in the 1997 GDP is in general carried forward in this Plan.

Several general Countywide changes in Land Use Map categories were made subsequent to the 1997 *General Development Plan* and are reflected in the Small Area Plan Land Use Maps. These are listed below and reflected on the Proposed Land Use Map for the Brooklyn Park area.

- Industrial Land Use categories used in the GDP (Industrial Park, Light Industrial, Heavy Industrial) have been combined into one Land Use category (Industrial).
- A new Land Use category, Transportation/Utility, has been added to indicate highway right-of-way, public utility easements, and similar land uses.
- The Government/Institutional Land Use category was used in the GDP to indicate major Federal and State facilities or land holdings located in the County, such as the Maryland House of Corrections, BWI Airport, Fort Meade military base, the U.S. Army Depot at Curtis Bay, and the U.S. Naval Station. This category has been expanded and now includes County-owned facilities, such as public schools.
- Various scattered commercial and industrial properties across the County were not indicated on the GDP Land Use Map, due to the significant number of these and the small map scale of the Countywide GDP Land Use Map. Small Area Plan Land Use Maps are prepared at a larger map scale and allow more detail to be included. All properties that are used for commercial or industrial purposes and planned to continue as such are now indicated on the Land Use Map with the appropriate designation.

During the Small Area Planning process for Brooklyn Park, property owners and other interested parties were provided an opportunity to request a change in zoning of any property in the Small Planning Area. There were 26 applications submitted. The Land Use Map in this Small Area Plan is to serve as a guide for comprehensive zoning changes, which will be proposed and adopted subsequent to adoption of this Plan.

Map 17

Table 16 p1

Table 16 p2

Table 16 p3

Table 16 p4