

Land Use and Zoning

The recommendations in this report were developed by identifying existing land use, analyzing the *General Development Plan* (GDP) land use and Planning Department growth predictions, and by listening to community input from public forums.

Existing Land Use

The Jessup/Maryland City planning area is characterized by a contrast between the higher, more suburban-type development densities of Maryland City and the MD 198 commercial corridor, and the low density, semi-rural area of Jessup, which is predominantly single family homes on comparatively large parcels of land. The overall breakdown of land use, as based on data from 1995, is summarized in Table 10 below and is depicted in Map 2.

Agricultural, Open Space and Recreation areas comprise nearly one fifth (18.6%) of the land area. The vast majority of this acreage is Open Space contained within the Oxbow Natural Area and the stream valley and floodplain associated with the Little Patuxent River and Dorsey Run tributary. Less than one percent of the land total is used for agricultural purposes, and only another one percent is used for recreation and park uses, which are generally located on small, scattered parcels.

Residential uses account for another one fifth (21.6%) of the planning area. These include the subdivisions in Maryland City, the Russett PUD, and single family homes in Jessup located along Brock Bridge Road and north up to MD 100. This acreage will have increased slightly since 1995 due to the continued build out of the Russett development. **Commercial** and **Industrial** uses combined account for only 7.3% of the land area. These include the Maryland City Plaza shopping center, WalMart and other retail uses along MD 198, the Laurel Park Racetrack, the Tarmac sand and gravel quarry, the Parkway Center II industrial park on MD 100, and scattered commercial sites in Jessup, including the Ridgeview Shopping Center. More recent industrial and commercial uses that have developed since 1995 include the Corridor Market Place on MD 198 and the National Business Park.

Government and Institutional uses account for over 16% of the total land area. Included in this category are the Maryland House of Corrections, the D.C. Children's Center (site of the Oak Hill Detention Center and the Woodland Job Corps), National Security Agency, Waxters Children's Center, and public school properties. This acreage also includes the former Cedar Knolls juvenile detention center, a 106-acre parcel which has been purchased by a private developer and is being developed for industrial park use.

Transportation facilities (i.e. road right-of-ways, Suburban Airport) and utility easements comprise about 10% of the planning area's acreage, and the remaining 25% consists of **Vacant** land. The bulk of the vacant land in the area is residentially-zoned land in Jessup and

Map 2

industrially-zoned land in the Annapolis Junction vicinity and east of the BW Parkway between MD 198 and the Patuxent Research Refuge.

**Table 10. Existing Land Use for the Jessup/Maryland City Small Planning Area
(based on 1995 coverage)**

Land Use Category	Acreage	Percentage of Total
Agricultural/Open Space	1603 acres	17.5%
Recreation	102 acres	1.1%
Residential	1976 acres	21.6%
Commercial	462 acres	5.0%
Industrial	208 acres	2.3%
Vacant	2336 acres	25.5%
Government/Institutional	1510 acres	16.5%
Utility/Transportation	968 acres	10.5%
Total	9165 acres	100.0%

1997 GDP Land Use

The County's current *General Development Plan* (GDP), as 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 3. In general, the current GDP land use plan for the Jessup/Maryland City area consists of the following elements:

- **Low-Medium Density Residential** land use covering almost all of the Jessup area, with the exceptions of a small amount of Low Residential land use along Brock Bridge Road, and some Industrial Park land use surrounding the BW Parkway interchange at MD 100,
- **Government/Institutional** land use covering the State House of Corrections, National Security Agency, and District of Columbia Children's Center properties,
- **Industrial Park** land uses covering the Annapolis Junction area, the Laurel Park racetrack, and a large quadrant of land bordered by the BW Parkway, MD 198, and the Patuxent Research Refuge,
- **Medium Density Residential** land use covering almost the entirety of Maryland City south of the Little Patuxent River,
- **High Density Residential** land use incorporating the Russett PUD,

Map 3

- **Commercial** land use along MD 198 from the BW Parkway west to the County line,
- **Natural Features** land use covering the Oxbow Natural Area, the stream valleys and floodplains of the Little Patuxent and Patuxent Rivers and Dorsey Run tributary, Maryland City Park and other small local parks, and the BW Parkway right-of-way.

The GDP 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. The concept of mixed use development allows residential, commercial, employment, open space, recreation, and community uses to be combined in close proximity to one another. The concept generally promotes not only a mix of uses but also a mix of development densities, with higher densities used to concentrate development into more compact areas, thereby reducing the amount of land consumed by development. Other benefits of this type of development include shorter travel distances between home, work and shopping, thus reducing commuter times and auto emissions; better pedestrian access; and creation of a stronger sense of place and of community. Examples of existing mixed use communities in the County include downtown Annapolis, Ferndale, Shady Side, and Crofton. Design criteria which are strongly encouraged in mixed use areas are compatibility with surrounding neighborhoods, quality design, improved pedestrian circulation, public open space, plazas, parks or recreation areas, and improved access to public transportation.

The GDP outlined four different types of mixed use areas with varying levels of use and intensity. The four mixed use types are Employment, Transit, Commercial, and Residential Mixed Use. Six general sites within the Jessup/Maryland City Planning Area were identified as potential mixed use sites that should be studied in greater detail during the Small Area Planning process. The study areas included the Dorsey, Jessup, and Savage MARC Station areas; vacant land around Blob's Park; vacant land north of the National Business Park; and vacant land at the southeast quadrant of MD 198 and the BW Parkway.

Existing Zoning

Currently, the majority of the land area in Jessup/Maryland City (nearly 60%) is zoned for residential use, with over 50% being zoned for Low to Low-Medium Residential densities (R1, R2, and R5). By far, the largest category of residential zoning is R1, which comprises 43% of the total land area, including the greater Jessup area and most of the State and Federal government facilities. Most of Maryland City's residential areas are zoned R5 for Low-Medium density uses. Medium and High Residential zoning categories (R10, R15, and R22) make up a much smaller percentage of the planning area and are confined to the Russett PUD and the MD 198 corridor west of the Parkway. Land zoned for Industrial uses (W1, W2, and W3) accounts for about 18% of the planning area and includes the National Business Park, Annapolis Junction area, Laurel Park Race Track, MD 100 corridor, and the area bordered by MD 198 and 295 and the Patuxent Research Refuge. Commercially-zoned land comprises only 5% of the total area

and is generally located along MD 198 and to a lesser extent along MD 175. Floodplains, natural areas and parkland are zoned Open Space and make up nearly 18% of the land area. Current zoning in the planning area is depicted in Map 4.

Table 11. Current Zoning in the Jessup/Maryland City Small Planning Area

Zoning Category	Acreage	Percentage of Total
Low to Low-Medium Residential (R1, R2, and R5)	4,763 acres	52.0%
Medium to High Residential (R10, R15, and R22)	576 acres	6.3 %
Commercial (C1, C2, C3, and C4)	509 acres	5.5%
Industrial (W1, W2, and W3)	1,683 acres	18.4%
Open Space	1,634 acres	17.8%
Total	9,165 acres	100.0%

Airport Noise Zone

Development in the Jessup and Dorsey area is controlled not only by the County’s Zoning Ordinance but by the BWI Airport Noise Zone (ANZ) which is established by the Maryland Aviation Administration to control incompatible development in areas where aircraft noise exposure levels are higher than the established limits. Within the ANZ, an airport zoning permit must be obtained from the MAA for any development activities prior to County approval of the development plan. The Airport Noise Zone encompasses the area within which levels of cumulative noise exposure are 65 Ldn or greater. The current limits of the ANZ are illustrated in Map 5.

In general, residential land uses are considered incompatible in areas with cumulative noise levels of 65 Ldn or greater. The MAA has established a voluntary land acquisition program to acquire properties considered to be severely impacted by aircraft noise provided that the properties are zoned by local government to transition from residential to compatible land uses (i.e., commercial and industrial uses). The County has zoned all large contiguous areas of undeveloped land within the 65 Ldn noise contour for non-residential, noise compatible uses (generally industrial uses) where appropriate in order to facilitate acquisition by the MAA should the property owners choose to participate in the buyout program. The northernmost portion of the Jessup/Maryland City planning area falls within the 65 to 70 Ldn range. The 65 Ldn contour line runs westward from just below the BW Parkway interchange at MD 100 and crosses Forest Avenue between Maple Avenue and Crestview Road in Jessup. There are some existing

Map 4

Map 5

residential uses within this area. According to the MAA's Quarterly Report as of April 2002, there were 343 properties eligible for the Voluntary Noise Acquisition Program, with 239 properties acquired to date, 5 properties in the process or on the waiting list, 43 homeowners who have declined to participate in the program and 56 who have not applied for the program. The majority of these properties lie within the BWI/Linthicum Planning Area to the north of Jessup.

In addition to the Voluntary Noise Acquisition Program, the MAA offers a Homeowners Assistance Program to provide financial assistance to certain property owners located in areas exposed to 65 Ldn or greater but who are not eligible for the acquisition program. The Homeowners Assistance Program offers a Resale Assurance option to provide assistance to homeowners wishing to relocate, and a Soundproofing option to assist homeowners in making modifications to their homes to reduce interior noise levels. As of April 2002, there were 902 properties eligible for this program, with 640 of these completed (537 soundproofed and 113 using the resale assurance program), 66 on the waiting list (64 for soundproofing and 2 for resale assurance program), and 153 property owners who had not applied.

Commercial Revitalization Districts

In an effort to facilitate revitalization in some of the County's older commercial corridors, the County adopted legislation in 2002 creating sixteen Revitalization Districts throughout the County and establishing a community revitalization program which allows taxpayers who revitalize commercially or industrially zoned properties to receive a property tax credit for up to five years equal to the incremental increase in their real property tax assessment. One Revitalization District lies within the Jessup/Maryland City Small Planning Area and is shown on Map 6. The district covers the MD 198 corridor west of the BW Parkway. A subsequent legislative bill was adopted which established new conditional uses, including commercial uses and residential dwelling units and apartments, to be allowed on properties in Revitalization Districts that are zoned for general commercial or highway commercial uses (C3 and C4 zones) and that have principal buildings that are vacant or being leased temporarily. It is hoped that this new legislation will help to reduce the number of vacant commercial facilities in these Districts and promote reuse or redevelopment of these properties.

Proposed Land Use Changes

This Small Area Plan proposes a new land use plan for the Jessup/Maryland City area that attempts to refine the 1997 GDP by more accurately reflecting both current development patterns and desired future growth over the 10 to 20 year planning period. Map 7 depicts the proposed Land Use Plan, and Table 12 lists the specific locations as well as the rationale for each of the proposed land use changes.

In general, the land use pattern reflected in the GDP is carried forward in this Small Area Plan. Proposed revisions to the Land Use Plan that reflect new growth policies include a change to Low Density Residential for the majority of the Jessup area north of MD 175, creation of a

Map 6

Map 7

Map 7A

Table 12 p.1

Table 12 p.2

Table 12 p.3

small commercial center on MD 175, and defined boundaries for two Mixed Use areas. An amendment to the GDP has already been adopted for the National Business Park and former Cedar Knolls properties to designate this area for Industrial Park use. Other changes being proposed are for the purpose of addressing incompatibilities with surrounding land uses, or to correct inconsistencies between the Land Use and Zoning Maps.

Proposed Mixed Use Areas

Four of the potential mixed use sites identified in the *General Development Plan* were rejected due to conflicts with current development plans, the character of the area, and/or restrictions imposed by the Airport Noise Zone regulations. The Dorsey MARC Station area falls within the Airport Noise Zone where new residential development is discouraged. The vicinity of the Jessup MARC Station is generally industrial in character, and the adjoining properties in Howard County are planned and zoned for industrial use. The area was therefore considered inappropriate for new residential development. The Annapolis Junction area around the Savage MARC Station was determined to be most suitable for industrial uses, given the presence of a freight rail line and the nature of the businesses currently located there. However, two of the study sites were determined to be feasible locations for future mixed use centers. These are the Blob's Park properties and the Clarks Hundred site north of the National Business Park

Blob's Park Site. This area comprises over 250 acres of land on the south side of Annapolis Road (MD 175) just east of the BW Parkway. The area, as shown on Map 7, is proposed to be designated for Residential Mixed Use development. With the exception of a few parcels, the majority of the land area is under the ownership of a single family estate. The family has owned and operated the Max Blob's Park dance hall for many years, an establishment which has a long history in the Jessup community. The area is designated in the 1997 GDP for Low-Medium Density Residential use and, with the exception of the dance hall site which is zoned C3, the property is currently zoned R1. The property abuts some existing commercial uses along MD 175, including the Ridgeview Shopping Center.

The *General Development Plan* designated this area as a potential Residential Mixed Use site (formerly referred to as Community Mixed Use) due to its location along a major arterial roadway and its proximity to major employment centers such as the National Business Park, National Security Agency, and Fort Meade. Mixed use development will allow for a wider range of housing opportunities, including townhomes, condominiums, and/or senior housing, as well as some office uses and local retail services. It may also serve to inspire and promote redevelopment or site improvements on some of the abutting commercial properties along MD 175. The intention of the property owners is to retain the Blob's Park commercial establishment as well as the existing family homes on the site. A concept plan for development of the property was prepared by a private developer working with the property owners, and is included in the Community Design section of this Plan along with a description of the conceptual site layout, densities and types of units, and suggested development guidelines.

This proposal is supported by the property owners as well as the Small Area Plan committee. However, there are some concerns that have been voiced by members of the Jessup community at large. The primary concerns include traffic congestion along MD 175, overcrowding of area schools, and the general change in character of the Jessup area over the past several years. Traffic congestion has been a problem during peak rush hours along MD 175 both east and west of the Parkway. Development of this property, which will have access onto MD 175, will generate additional trips along this section of highway. Possible overcrowding of area schools due to increased development has been another local concern. This site currently falls within the Jessup Elementary, Meade Middle, and Meade High School districts. None of these schools are projected to be over capacity in 2012, according to the County's current *Educational Facilities Master Plan*. However, planning estimates indicate that development of the Blob's Park property as a mixed use center would most likely cause capacity at the Jessup Elementary school to be exceeded. With other proposed development in this area, this would almost certainly be the case. It is therefore highly likely that new school construction, expansion of the existing elementary school, or redistricting of the elementary school districts in this part of the County will be required within the next ten years. Strict adherence to the County's Adequacy of Public Facilities requirements, with regard to impacted roads and schools, will ultimately govern the amount of new development that can be approved on this site.

Clarks Hundred Site. This site is located just west of the BW Parkway and is bordered by MD 175 to the north, Brock Bridge Road to the west, and National Business Park (NBP) to the south. Approximately 210 acres here are proposed to be designated for Residential Mixed Use development, as indicated on Map 7. Over 190 acres of the site are owned by the developer of National Business Park, with the remaining parcels owned by various private owners. An historic property is located at the north end of the site, set back from MD 175. The entire area was designated in the 1997 *General Development Plan* for Low-Medium Density Residential use and, with the exception of a small commercial property on the corner of Brock Bridge Road, is zoned R1. There are existing residential uses fronting along MD 175 and on Brock Bridge Road along with an existing church and post office.

Like the Blob's Park property on the other side of the Parkway, the GDP designated this site as a potential Residential Mixed Use area for similar reasons – its location along a major arterial roadway and its proximity to major employment centers. The developers of National Business Park are interested in developing the southern portion of this site with similar office park uses to be connected with road access to the National Business Park, and in developing the remainder of the property with a mix of single family homes and townhomes, a village center with a mix of commercial and civic uses, and a community recreation center. They are also exploring the feasibility of providing some age-restricted housing on the site, which would address the anticipated increase in demand for this type of housing and would lessen the impacts on local schools. A concept plan for development of the property was prepared by the property owners and is included in the Community Design section of this Plan along with a description of the conceptual site layout, densities and types of units, and suggested development guidelines.

As is the case with the Blob's Park site, some members of the greater Jessup community are concerned about traffic and school impacts related to this proposal as well as the general change in character of the community. Although the primary access to the mixed use development would be from Brock Bridge Road or from the National Business Park, MD 175 would be impacted by an increase in traffic volume. This segment of MD 175 between the Parkway and the Howard County Line has been an ongoing concern to local residents. Traffic backups are frequent, truck traffic volume is heavy, and the accident rate is higher than average. A traffic study completed by the State Highway Administration in 1999 resulted in installation of a new traffic signal at Brock Bridge Road, and some ramp improvements at the Parkway interchange. While these improvements have helped to some degree, the traffic situation on MD 175 is still considered by area residents to be unsafe. With regard to local schools, the discussion above as related to the Blob's Park property also applies here, since the Clarks Hundred site would also be served by Jessup Elementary, Meade Middle, and Meade High Schools. Planning estimates indicate that build out of the Clarks Hundred property as a mixed use center would most likely cause capacity at the Jessup Elementary School to be exceeded, and new school construction, expansions or re-districting will likely be required in the next ten years.

The Small Area Plan Committee proposed some specific development guidelines that, as part of the adopted Small Area Plan, would apply to any mixed use development plan submitted for the Clarks Hundred property. The Committee's proposed guidelines are partly in response to the concerns discussed in the above paragraphs and are listed below:

- The total number of residential dwelling units should not exceed 400 units;
- The total number of townhouse units should not exceed 250 units;
- Multifamily dwelling units should be excluded from any development plans; and
- A buffer should be provided along the eastern boundary of the site with a minimum width of 150 feet, to screen any new development from the existing residential uses to the east.

Additional development guidelines recommended are discussed along with the concept plan in the Community Design section of this Plan.

MD 175 Small Business District

In August 2000, the County Council adopted an ordinance on Zoning – Small Business (SB) Districts. This new zoning category allows residential structures that are located in transitional areas along arterial roads to convert from residential uses to small business uses that will serve the existing residential communities. The intent is to permit small-scale business and commercial enterprises to locate in transition areas adjacent to stable residential neighborhoods, open space, or agricultural lands, while maintaining residential compatibility and character. Small businesses could locate in residential-looking structures on sites where residential uses may no longer be desirable, and where the range and intensity of the standard commercial zones (C1, C2, C3 and C4) in terms of use, traffic, architecture or site character would be inappropriate and intrusive. The intent is to widen the range of acceptable uses for residential structures and/or

lots without degrading the stability and value of the adjacent homes and surrounding residential neighborhoods. Small Business zoning allows for local-scale retail and service uses, such as bookstores, day care centers, bakeries, coffee shops, florists, and professional offices. Locations where the zone might be applied are areas where older residential homes front onto roads and intersections that have become too busy to provide attractive living environments.

The properties fronting along MD 175 between the BW Parkway and the Jessup Elementary School have been identified as an area that may be appropriate for a transition to small business and local commercial uses. The majority of the properties are zoned R1 and are improved with single family residences, although a florist, a church, and the YMCA are also located along this segment of MD 175. Most of the homes are located on half acre lots and many are set relatively close to the road right-of-way. The increase in traffic over the years along this stretch of highway has reduced the viability of some of the older homes located here. A transitional zone such as Small Business would recognize this change in character by permitting the conversion of existing residences into small scale commercial operations. The south side of MD 175 in this area is proposed to be designated for Residential Mixed Use as part of a cohesive plan for the Clarks Hundred property. It is felt that with this redevelopment occurring over time, the residential lots on the north side of MD 175 in this area may be best suited to allow some local-scale commercial uses.

A concept plan was developed for a Jessup Village that includes a local-scale planned commercial complex on MD 175 across from the proposed Clarks Hundred mixed use development, a row of small business uses, and a new residential subdivision between the commercial center and the Champion Forest residential community to the rear. This concept plan is described further in the Community Design section of this plan. The proposed Land Use Plan designates this area for a mix of Commercial and Low Residential uses.

Area-wide Land Use Map Changes

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 Jessup/Maryland City 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.

Additional Land Use Goals and Recommendations

Current population projections indicate that population growth in the Jessup/Maryland City Small Area will increase by over 30 percent by 2025. In addition, the number of people aged 65 and older is expected to increase significantly over the next two decades. The predictions for this population growth and maturity challenges the County to plan for growth and development of homes and businesses that will maximize the use of public facilities, preserve the assets, and improve the character of the community.

As a result of public forums, the community has identified major issues to consider when addressing land use in this planning area. These issues include increasing recreational/park facilities, preserving open space, managing development (scale, design, attractiveness), preserving the rural character of Jessup, and improving communication between the County and its residents regarding growth and development of land.

Goal 1: Balance new higher-density development planned for this area with an increase in public use areas.

This plan proposes land use changes that will allow increased densities in new development in this area. Currently, only 1% of the land area is dedicated to public activity uses such as recreation. This should increase to accommodate population growth and preserve a high quality of life in the Planning Area.

Recommendations

1. Significantly increase the size of Jessup Park on Montevideo Road to allow sufficient quantities of ball fields as well as wooded passive use areas and other amenities, and allow access from Race Road. The property located adjacent to the existing park has not been developed. A transfer of development rights could be considered for current landowners.
2. Provide a Senior Center in the Small Area. Given the population density in the area and the projected 50 percent increase in the number of people aged 65 and over, a senior center would ensure that older adults have opportunities and choices that lead to healthy, active lifestyles. This center also could be modeled after the Senior/Teen Community Center of Tinley Park in Chicago, IL, which gives both teen and seniors in the area a place to interact and teach each other skills. It also gives teens an opportunity to

volunteer and complete community service hours.

3. Seek locations within the Planning Area to establish an active use park that is easily accessible to Maryland City and Russett.
4. Encourage new development to incorporate natural features and open space into its design to the extent possible.

Goal 2: Explore long range opportunities for use of government-owned properties that may be available for acquisition in the future.

Recommendation

1. D.C. Children’s Center property: This property consisting of over 650 acres is currently the site of the Oak Hill Detention Center which is owned by the U.S. Department of Interior and leased by the District of Columbia. It is uncertain as to how long the District plans to continue operation of this facility, although no definite plans to close the facility have been announced to date. Should the facility cease operation in the future and the opportunity for acquisition and development arise, the County should explore the potential uses for the site and promote opportunities that would serve some of the regional needs in this part of the County. Area residents have expressed a desire and need for educational opportunities, such as a community college, and a regional park with active recreational uses to serve the residents in the western part of the County. If the property is acquired by a private interest, the developer should be encouraged to explore the benefits of providing a mix of employment, retail, and residential uses as well as other uses such as educational or recreational uses that would serve the region.
2. Board of Education property adjacent to Russett: The 76-acre parcel of land abutting the Russett community, accessible from Whiskey Bottom Road, was formerly considered a site for a future elementary school next to Russett and Laurel Highlands. County budget considerations and school enrollment projections have made this unlikely in the foreseeable future. In the event that the property is made available for acquisition, needs that have been identified by the local community include age-restricted single family dwelling units, and active and/or passive recreational opportunities. The property is currently zoned to allow low to medium density residential use. The property will continue to be designated for government/institutional use on the proposed Land Use Map at this time. However, this designation may be amended in the future should the parcel be sold to a private interest.

Goal 3: Create affordable housing for seniors.

Recommendation

1. Provide incentives to developers to build a minimum of 10 percent affordable housing for seniors in all new residential development. This would provide housing opportunities for a growing segment of the population and not put a strain on school capacity. It also may create additional employment opportunities to accommodate a senior market.

Goal 4: Improve communication between Anne Arundel County and residents regarding land use and development.

Recommendation

1. Schedule an annual community meeting in each Small Area to provide updates on the Small Area Plan and General Development Plan implementation schedule. Augment with quarterly reports in local newspapers.

Economic Development

“Today, businesses are free to shop for an appealing location, and they clearly prefer communities with a high quality of life, including an abundance of open space, nearby recreation, and pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods.”

(The Economic Benefits of Parks and Open Space: How Land Conservation Helps Communities Grow Smart and Protect the Bottom Line. The Trust for Public Land, 1999)

Overview

The Jessup/Maryland City area has been described as “the future” of Anne Arundel County. This area has tremendous resources that can play an important role in the tax base and revenues of the County. The area is also in the heart of the State’s Smart Growth Corridor between Baltimore and Washington.

The area has some excellent economic assets:

- The National Business Park, which has the potential to be the envy of any metropolitan area.
- Proximity to government employment centers including Fort Meade, the National Security Agency, and the Goddard Space Flight Center.
- Laurel Park Race Course, which keeps the spirit of the Maryland horse industry alive, and adds to the economy of the local area and the County.
- Proximity to the Baltimore-Washington International Airport which makes this area easily accessible to business travelers.
- Suburban Airport and Tipton Field, which provide small aircraft, executive-style access.
- A good system of roadways, including MD 32 and MD 100, the Baltimore-Washington Parkway, and easy access to Interstate 95.
- An abundance of natural features, including wetlands, wooded areas, and open space that make this area a desirable place to live.

The Jessup/Maryland City area also faces significant challenges:

- Balancing growth with the desire for a higher quality of life.

- Successfully competing with Howard, Montgomery, and Prince Georges Counties in attracting employers that provide high quality, sustainable employment.

Vision for Economic Development in the Jessup/Maryland City Area

In keeping with the overall vision of the Small Area Plan, the Economic Development Plan strives to blend areas of a semi-rural nature with the vital and vibrant economic forces at play in this area. The Plan vision recognizes the area's role as a leader in economic development in Anne Arundel County:

- The centerpiece of economic activity in this area is the National Business Park. The Park attracts various employers who support the work being done at Fort Meade, the National Security Agency, Goddard, and other high-technology hubs.
- The success of the National Business Park has encouraged development of other land assets as additional "Class A" office and research and development space. The area is a formidable competitor in Central Maryland in terms of high-technology employment.
- Laurel Park Race Course exists as a productive partner with the community. It continues to contribute to the economy of the area and the State.
- The retail environment is robust; the area has successfully measured the need for retail space such that vacancy rates are minimized.
- Commercial and retail space is attractively planned, landscaped, and located in such a way as to enhance the beauty of the surrounding neighborhoods and natural areas.
- The area offers a high quality of life that makes it a desirable place to locate a business, live and work; there are a variety of housing options from rural neighborhoods to the suburban planned communities; parks, green spaces and recreation facilities add to the desirability of the area.
- The area showcases numerous business opportunities, from small to large size businesses, and encompassing a variety of different types of businesses.
- Schools in the area provide the type of quality education that attracts high quality employers.

Goals and Recommendations

Goal 1: Make streetscape improvements in the MD 198 Commercial Corridor in order to attract and retain business, and to attract customers to the area.

Recommendations

1. Work with County and State officials to landscape the median of MD 198, from the Baltimore-Washington Parkway west to the Anne Arundel/Prince Georges County line.
2. Install benches and trash receptacles and plant street trees at regular intervals along MD 198, to complement roadside trails and the landscaped median.
3. Remove unessential highway signs from the median and sides of MD 198, to reduce the visual clutter.
4. Develop commercial signage standards for the MD 198 Commercial Corridor that will avoid causing negative visual impacts and that are compatible with the residential character of the surrounding area.
5. Complete underground installation of all the telephone and utility lines on MD 198.
6. Work with the State Highway Administration to provide safe pedestrian crossing areas on MD 198. Locations where crossings are needed are: the intersection at Old Line Ave. and the Laurel Dale business park; the intersection at Brock Bridge Road; the intersection at Whiskey Bottom Road; and the intersections at Russett Green East and West.
7. Establish general design standards for commercial building facades and landscaping.
8. Extend sidewalks along MD 198, from the BW Parkway west to the County line, and create sidewalks or trails, as appropriate, east of the Parkway to the Patuxent Wildlife Refuge.
9. Enhance the small parcel of land on the southeast corner of MD 198 and Whiskey Bottom Road, adjacent to Maryland City Plaza, to create a community focal point.

Goal 2: Encourage quality commercial development in the MD 198 Commercial Corridor from the Baltimore/Washington Parkway west to the Anne Arundel County line, and plan for light industrial and other appropriate development east of the Parkway to MD 32.

Recommendations

1. Develop economic incentives and other strategies to attract high quality restaurants to this commercial corridor.
2. Improve vehicular traffic access for the Maryland City Plaza to/from MD 198.
3. Develop economic incentives to encourage use of the existing empty commercial space on MD 198.
4. Support the multimillion-dollar improvement effort at Laurel Park Race Course.
5. Widen MD 198 from the BW Parkway east to MD 32, and add streetscape improvements, including bicycle access, to match the boulevard style that is planned for the Commercial Corridor west of the Parkway.

Goal 3: Create a Jessup Village Corridor along MD 175 which contains facilities and amenities for the growing Jessup community and which is planned in a manner that provides a sense of intimacy and a sense of place.

Recommendations

1. Develop a comprehensive plan for a Village Corridor in Jessup along MD 175 between Old Jessup Road and the BW Parkway. The plan should incorporate the following recommendations.
 - This segment of MD 175 already contains several facilities which serve the local community, including the Jessup Improvement Association Community Hall, the Jessup Elementary School, and the post office. Additional public facilities which would enhance the feel of a community center along this corridor should be considered for location here, such as a passive use park with a bandstand for outdoor concerts and shows.
 - Commercial uses should include the types of businesses typically found in a small village. These could include a café, boutique, gift shop, coffee shop, book store, bakery, flower shop, and professional offices.
 - The historic homes along the village corridor should be preserved and could be used as professional offices, art studios, craft shops, restaurants, etc.
2. The Village Corridor Plan should integrate the design standards applied in the Residential Mixed Use Zone and the Small Business District, and should contain a set of design guidelines or standards that includes the following elements:
 - streetscape improvements: a planted median, landscaped in a decorative manner, is recommended along the center of MD 175
 - sidewalks and pedestrian benches should be provided on both sides of the

- highway along the village corridor
- attractive lampposts would provide lighting along the sidewalks and also on the landscaped medians
- signage designating the area as the Jessup Village would be located in the median at the eastern and western ends of the village corridor
- architectural guidelines that serve to maintain and enhance a village character.

Goal 4: Revitalize scattered commercial areas.

Recommendations

5. Revitalize and beautify the following commercial areas through the County's Scattered Sites Renewal Program and/or any other applicable State or County program:
 - the commercial area on MD 198 east of the Baltimore/Washington Parkway and just west of the Patuxent Research Refuge entrance.
 - the commercial area on Brock Bridge Road in Laurel, just south of MD 198.
 - the commercial strip on MD 175, just east of the Parkway.
 - the parcel of land at the southeast corner of Sellner Road and MD 175.
6. Address the special problems of unused gas station properties by offering economic incentives to potential buyers/owners of the old Texaco Station on MD 198 (across from the fire station) and the old gas stations in the Utopia Liquor Store area. The incentives should encourage needed environmental remediation at those sites.

Goal 5: Promote the growth of the National Business Park.

Recommendations

1. Encourage high quality and attractive building, landscaping, parking and signage standards to minimize negative impacts.
2. Work with the Grassland Foundation to encourage restoration of this National Historic place.

Goal 6: Improve the quality of life in the area in order to attract businesses and customers, and retain the character of historical neighborhoods.

Recommendations

2. Continue the tri-county effort to end crime and related problems in the Bacontown area.
3. Increase the frequency of County litter removal along Whiskey Bottom Road in the Bacontown neighborhood.
4. Create a partnership between area business owners and the citizens of Bacontown to

- creatively enhance and preserve the historical buildings and heritage of that neighborhood.
5. Develop a greenway for hikers/bikers in the open space to the north and east of Russett along the north side of the Little Patuxent River.
 6. Create a greenway for hikers/bikers from the north end of the National Business Parkway up to MD 175.
 7. Support the preservation of Blobs Park as an asset in the Jessup community.
 8. Create a plan, with resident and the business community involvement, to develop a Senior Citizens Center and Assisted Living facilities.
 9. Use Federal, State, County or special bond funds specifically earmarked to buy open space in West and North County.
 10. Seek legislation to require community benefit fees to mitigate the impact of the State correctional facilities on the local community.

Goal 7: Improve maintenance of roadways, sidewalks, and train stations.

Recommendations

1. Utilize government, business, and youth organizations to maintain the cleanliness and light upkeep (trash and weed removal) along the roadways in the area and at the train stations.
2. Enforce restrictions on temporary signs.
3. Repair/replace vandalized public property including areas vandalized by graffiti. Establish a liaison between local civic groups and the appropriate government agencies to facilitate this.

Goal 8: Prepare for future development in the area.

Recommendations

1. Designate a County staff member as “Lead Planner” to work with the Jessup/Maryland City community to implement the recommendations in this plan.
2. Establish a Citizens Advisory Board to review, evaluate, recommend, and monitor uses of the community benefit fees received from Laurel Park Race Course.

3. Develop a liaison with the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation (AAEDC) or similar County organization to promote smart business growth in the Jessup/Maryland City area.

“It is important to recognize that all development is not created equal. Too many communities delude themselves into thinking that it doesn’t really matter whether a project is good or bad, consistent with the local plan or inconsistent, so long as it produces jobs and tax collection opportunities....successful communities understand that when they say no to development that is contrary to the long-term health of their community, they will almost always get better development in its place.”

(Edward T. McMahon, “All Development is Not Created Equal”, Planning Commissioners Journal, Issue 32, Fall 1998)