

Commercial Revitalization Areas

Assessment and Recommendation Report

December 2019
Anne Arundel County

Anne Arundel County



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Introduction

For many years, Anne Arundel County and the State of Maryland have been adopting policies to promote Smart Growth, which centers on making the best use of finite land and natural resources by steering new development to existing communities and planned growth centers, avoiding sprawling development outside of growth boundaries, and conserving rural and open lands and important natural resources.

Revitalization is an important element of Smart Growth. The Maryland Sustainable Growth Commission defines revitalization as instilling new life and vitality into a community through infill and redevelopment or other activities, such as building reuse and renovations, façade improvements, and beautification efforts. Revitalization contributes to the overall Smart Growth mission of reinvesting in existing communities while protecting environmental resources and promoting growth of a vibrant economy and job base.

Anne Arundel County contains several commercial corridors that are good candidates for revitalization efforts. These are generally located along State arterial highway corridors, and contain a variety of land uses ranging from small retail stores and professional offices to highway commercial uses and “big-box” retail spaces. While a relatively small number of properties along these corridors would be considered as blight, a number of them have experienced prolonged periods of vacancies or low occupancy rates, contain deteriorating structures that may not be in compliance with current building code regulations, are underutilized with regard to achieving the highest use and value of the property, and/or provide minimal aesthetic appeal due to features such as large asphalt parking lots, poor signage, or limited landscaping and streetscape amenities.



Much of the development along commercial corridors is haphazard and aesthetically unpleasing

As a tool to facilitate revitalization along these corridors, the County has established Commercial Revitalization Areas, which are implemented as zoning overlay districts and are adopted in Article 18 – Zoning, of the County Code. The goal is to provide tools that can help stabilize and improve the value and appearance of individual properties that are in decline or beginning to decline, and also to encourage cumulative improvements within these commercial hubs and corridors so that they can better function as destination places for the surrounding communities. To that end, an important criteria used in designating the revitalization overlays was whether the area either serves or has the potential to serve as an activity hub or corridor for the local community.

This report provides a status report of current conditions along these corridors, an assessment of how successful these overlay districts and related incentives have been to date, and also provides some recommendations for improving the use of the overlay districts as a revitalization tool.

Legislative History

In 2001 and 2002, Anne Arundel County adopted legislation establishing 16 Commercial Revitalization zoning overlay districts for the purpose of stimulating private investment and encouraging revitalization of older commercial and industrial properties located along several highway corridors. Bill 97-01 established a Commercial Revitalization Property Tax Credit, and Bill 69-02 amended the County Zoning Ordinance to allow expanded uses in certain commercial zoning districts and more flexible development requirements for improvements in Commercial Revitalization areas. Together, these two pieces of legislation attempted to address vacant, underutilized commercial properties in Commercial Revitalization Areas by offering greater flexibility of use and tax incentives to encourage redevelopment, adaptive reuse, and revitalization.

In 2017, Bill 10-17 refined the boundaries of the overlay districts and eliminated some of the districts that no longer needed a targeted focus for revitalization, with a result of eight highway segments being retained as Commercial Revitalization Areas. Some minor changes were also made to Article 18 to add some additional

permitted uses and to allow conversion of commercial properties to multifamily residential uses without a nonresidential component, which had previously been required. Additionally, the requirement that a property taking advantage of the Commercial Revitalization code allowances must contain at least one vacant structure was removed. In 2018, Bill 86-18 added a ninth overlay district in Ferndale. The property tax credit for qualifying properties has been continuously extended at five year intervals since its initial inception.

Commercial Revitalization Areas

The following chart lists the location of the nine Commercial Revitalization Areas along with a basic description of each. A more detailed Conditions Analysis of each area is included later in this report. The nine areas are shown on Map 1.

Area	Road Segment	Limits of Overlay	Community	Zoning Districts	Principal Land Uses
1	MD 2 Ritchie Highway	Belle Grove Road to south of Cedar Hill Lane	Brooklyn Park	C2, C3, C4, R5, R10	Shopping centers, small retail and service businesses, restaurants, offices, auto service
2	MD 3 Crain Highway & MD 2 Ritchie Highway	Vernon Avenue to Georgia Avenue	Glen Burnie	C3, C4, W1, W3	Car sales, auto services, restaurants, small service providers, retail, self-storage, convenience stores
3	MD 648 Baltimore Annapolis Blvd., 8th Avenue NW, MD 2 Ritchie Highway	Cromwell Shopping Center to 5th Ave. SE	Glen Burnie	TC, C2, C3, C4, W2	Community college, District Court, County Public Service Building, senior public housing, grocery, professional offices, retail service, shopping center
4	MD 3 Crain Highway	1st Avnue SE to Aquahart Road	Glen Burnie	C2, C3, C4	Small retail and service businesses, professional offices
5	MD 177 Mountain Road	Mayer Avenue to east of Edwin Raynor Boulevard	Pasadena	C2, C3, C4	Small retail and service businesses, auto services, restaurants, strip shopping centers, convenience stores
6	MD 173 Fort Smallwood Road	North of Carvel Beach Road to Appian Way	Pasadena	C1, C3, C4	Small retail and service businesses, auto services, restaurants, strip shopping centers, convenience stores
7	MD 175 Annapolis Road	Jackson Grove Road to MD 32	Odenton	O-NOD	Shopping center, grocery, restaurants, small retail and service businesses, convenience stores, auto services
8	MD 198 Laurel-Ft. Meade Road	Laurel Race Track Road to MD 295	Laurel	C2, C3, C4	Shopping centers, big box retail, auto services, offices, restaurants, self-storage, motels
9	MD 648 Baltimore Annapolis Blvd.	5th Avenue N. to south of Ferndale Road	Ferndale	C3	Small retail and service businesses, auto services, restaurants, strip shopping center, convenience stores

Map 1: Existing Commercial Revitalization Areas



Assessment of Incentives for Revitalization

Within the Commercial Revitalization Areas, both development incentives and financial incentives are provided. These are outlined below along with an assessment of how widely they have been used to date.

Development Incentives

The following sections in Articles 17 and 18 of the County Code include provisions for development within Commercial Revitalization Areas.

- §18-14-302 provides that improvements to a property of less than one acre in size may be approved without satisfying the bulk regulations and parking requirements in Articles 17 and 18, provided certain findings are met.
- §18-14-303 (a) and (b) provides for an expanded range of allowed uses on a property located in a C3 or C4 district.
- §18-14-303 (c) provides that properties may be developed with multifamily or townhome dwelling units to a maximum net density of 22 units/acre, which is a higher density than that allowed in commercial districts outside of Commercial Revitalization Areas.
- §17-5-401 (a)(2) provides that a development is exempt from the required road rating of 70 or higher for roads within the impact area for purposes of Adequate Public Facilities testing.

To date there has not been widespread use of these provisions for redevelopment of properties within Commercial Revitalization Areas. To some extent this is likely due to increased flexibility that has been incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance in the years since adoption of the revitalization areas, including allowances for multifamily dwellings as Conditional Uses in most commercial districts, mixed use zoning districts, and expanded uses in other zoning districts or geographic areas. The most significant project that has benefitted from these incentives has been the Woodfall Greens development in Brooklyn Park, which redeveloped a blighted and vacant strip shopping center into a complex of 230 rental apartments using the increased density

allowances in Commercial Revitalization Areas.

Real Property Tax Credit

The County also encourages revitalization in these areas by offering tax incentives to qualifying properties. Section §4-2-306 of the County Code establishes a Commercial Revitalization Tax Credit Program which allows taxpayers who revitalize their properties to receive a property tax credit for up to five years, equal to the incremental increase in their real property tax assessment for improvements of at least \$100,000. The tax credit can be extended for an additional five years for investments of at least \$10,000,000. Properties must be located in one of the nine Commercial Revitalization Areas and certified by the Office of Planning and Zoning as a qualified property. Qualifying improvements may include full site redevelopment, but also may include smaller measures such as new facades, landscaping and signage, lighting, replacing pavement with green spaces, or other measures that improve the physical appearance and aesthetics of the property and increase its economic viability.

To date fourteen properties have taken advantage of the property tax credit. These have been located in revitalization areas in Glen Burnie, Brooklyn Park, Odenton, and Pasadena and have included improvements to restaurants, convenience stores, office buildings, an auto supply store, big box retail stores, self-storage facilities, and shopping centers. Most have involved demolition of all or parts of older commercial buildings followed by redevelopment.

While the tax credit program has generated positive results, its use has likely been limited to some extent by the fact that many of the properties along these corridors are occupied by small businesses for which \$100,000 in improvements represents a significant investment. For these properties, the layering of multiple incentive programs is often required in order to make improvements financially feasible for the business or property owner.

Arundel Community Reinvestment Loan Program

As an additional financial incentive to promote revitalization, Anne Arundel Economic Development

Corporation (AAEDC) administers the Arundel Community Reinvestment (ACR) Fund. This program offers zero interest loans of up to \$100,000 toward property improvements in the adopted Commercial Revitalization Areas. Professional architectural advice is also included for program participants. Eligible improvements include renovations and upgrades to building exteriors and interiors such as façade improvements, signage, and other site enhancements including landscaping.

Since its inception, approximately 40 properties have received loans totaling over \$1.9 million and have used this incentive to complete nearly \$10.8 million in improvements. Recipients have included businesses located primarily in Glen Burnie, Pasadena, and Brooklyn Park and include both professional offices and retail services. Because there is no minimum investment amount required, a wider range of local businesses in these older commercial areas have been able to take advantage of this program, as compared to the property tax credit, and the return on these investments in property improvements has been positive. AAEDC conducts outreach to property owners regularly to market the loan program as well as other financial tools available to business owners.

Other Financial Incentive Programs

While the programs discussed above are limited for use specifically in the designated Commercial Revitalization Areas, there are other financial incentive programs that are offered Countywide that can be used for revitalization projects. AAEDC administers the VOLT Fund in partnership with the Maryland Department of Commerce to assist new and expanding businesses with funds for working capital, equipment, real estate, and other needs. The PACE program (Property Assessed Clean Energy) provides property owners with financing for energy efficient upgrades to commercial and industrial buildings.

Additionally, the State Department of Commerce and Department of Housing and Community Development provide various programs for assistance in community revitalization efforts for property owners, businesses and/or local governments including the Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth Fund, Community Legacy Program, Neighborhood BusinessWorks Program, Job Creation Tax Credit, Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative, Operating Assistance Grant Program, and others.



Dilapidated structures along the County's major commercial thoroughfares negatively impact the visual image of these corridors.



View of the Glen Burnie Town Center Core - B&A Blvd Commercial Revitalization Area, also within the Sustainable Community Area.



The developer of the former Hechinger site took advantage of the commercial revitalization program to convert the site into a successful self-storage facility.

Commercial Revitalization Area Conditions Analysis

This section provides an analysis of each individual Commercial Revitalization Area. It describes the general character, then lists key assets as well as key issues relating to each area. Some recommendations specific to each area are also included here, while additional recommendations applicable to all of the areas are found in a later section.

While the character of each Commercial Revitalization District varies, several features are common to many of them. Predominant land uses include shopping centers, auto dealers and auto service businesses, restaurants, gas stations, and various small retail and service shops. Key issues include vacancies, extensive pavement without landscaping, building and property upkeep, and excessive signage.

Several broad needs are common to many of the Commercial Revitalization Districts. These include:

- efforts to support existing and new small businesses, including market studies (district-wide and targeted for specific, key properties), technical assistance, and active recruitment of new businesses;
- incentives for investment and beautification efforts in aging shopping centers and other properties through tools such as a façade program, design guidelines, incentives to consolidate small parcels, and incentives to “green” existing parking areas with landscaping;
- improved pedestrian facilities, including safe links within and between commercial areas and adjacent residential neighborhoods, ADA improvements, crosswalks and other pedestrian safety features;
- streetscape improvements, including pedestrian sidewalks, parking areas, street trees, and consolidated vehicle entries along the corridors;
- strengthened regulation and enforcement of signage and property maintenance.

Area 1: Brooklyn Park - Ritchie Highway

General Character:

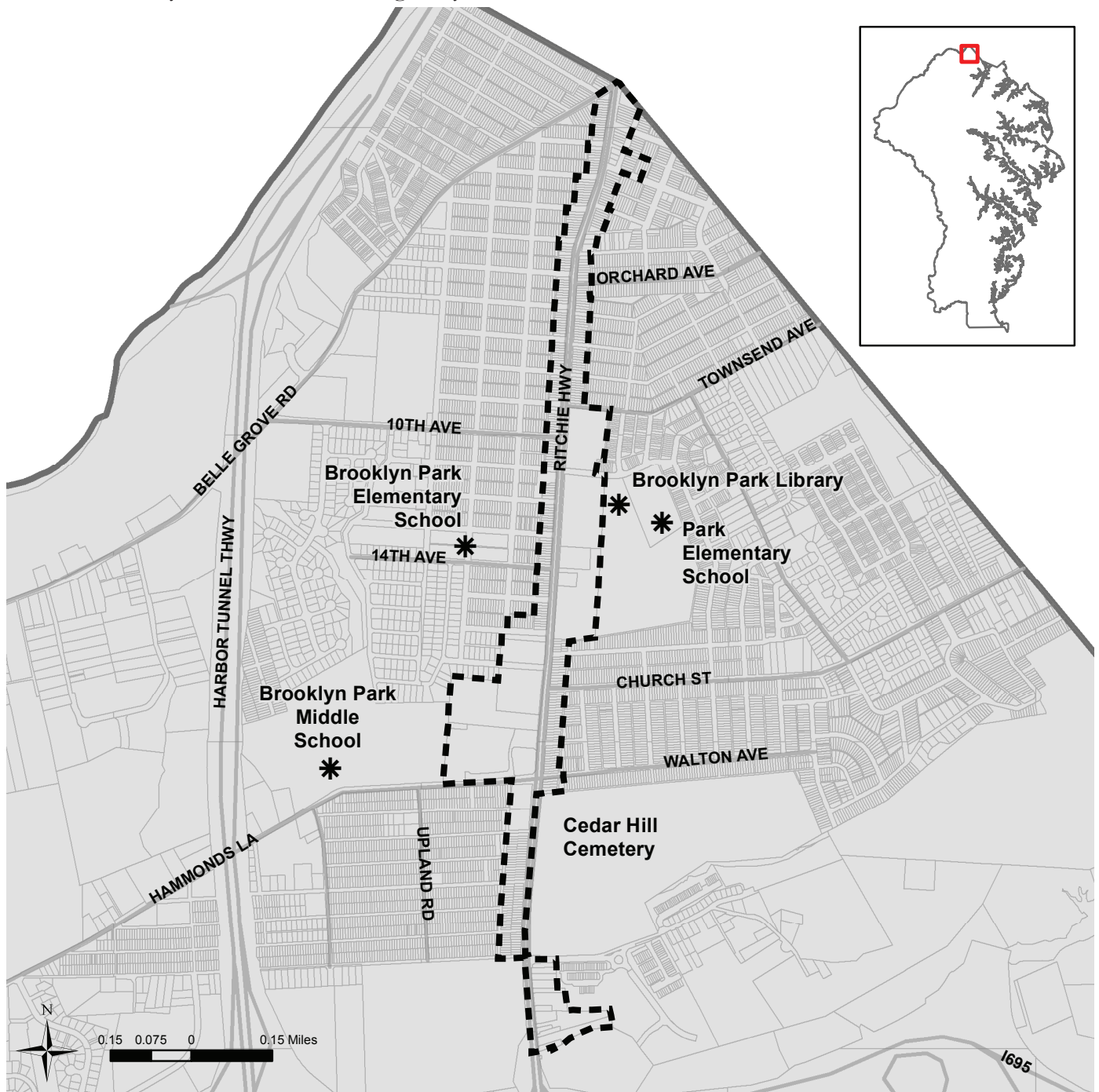
Located in the northernmost part of the County adjacent to Baltimore neighborhoods, Area 1 is one of the oldest developed parts of the County. Many lots are small commercial or residential lots, though there are several shopping centers, including the Ritchie Highway Shopping Center and Arundel Village Shopping Center. Land uses include small retail and service businesses (national chain and “mom-and-pop”), restaurants, offices, auto service, gas stations, and two large cemeteries. Many properties north of Audrey Avenue and Frankle Street are zoned and used for residential dwellings. The character of the corridor from Doris/8th Avenue north to the Baltimore City line is primarily residential, with historic single-family structures that have been converted for small business use.

Several plans and studies establish a baseline of information on this corridor. The 2004 Brooklyn Park Small Area Plan opens with a vision for the future of Brooklyn Park, which includes “lovely streetscapes...with well-maintained sidewalks, landscaping and lighting.” Along Ritchie Highway, the vision is for “attractive building facades, landscaping, street trees, and sidewalks,” with a town center that residents can walk to for a vibrant mix of shops, galleries, restaurants, offices, and residential units, organized around a public plaza. General goals and recommendations impacting revitalization along this corridor include:

- streetscaping and façade improvements,
- improved maintenance and property management,
- leveraging business programs to strengthen the mix of neighborhood businesses and restaurants,
- targeting 9th Avenue to Cedar Hill Lane as the redevelopment focus of the corridor, with pedestrian-friendly redevelopment and public spaces, and
- improving the streetscape along Ritchie Highway to be more compatible with adjacent neighborhoods.

The 2010 Brooklyn Park Urban Design Study proposes a number of land use and redevelopment concepts to revitalize the Ritchie Highway corridor. The plan focuses on opportunities to improve the physical appearance of the area by:

Area 1: Brooklyn Park - Ritchie Highway



- labeling many areas south of 9th Avenue as opportunities for mixed use redevelopment,
- proposing townhomes and artist live-work spaces in an Arts District near the Chesapeake Arts Center,
- providing guidance for streetscape improvements to better integrate pedestrian amenities and landscaping, and
- recommending design policies and guidelines to improve the physical form of development along the corridor.

With one or two exceptions, the corridor does not suffer from extensive vacancies or deteriorated properties. The issues instead relate to outdated commercial buildings and site designs that focus on surface parking lots as the most visual features. Sidewalks are present along Ritchie Highway, but the combination of traffic volumes, extensive asphalt, and lack of on-site landscaping does not create a pleasant walking experience for pedestrians.

Redevelopment projects in this area that have taken advantage of the Commercial Revitalization Tax

Credit include the construction of a new Auto Zone store at Brooklyn Park Plaza, and the new Woodfall Greens apartments. A few other businesses have made improvements using the Arundel Community Reinvestment Loan, including a gas station, a salon, and a lumber supply business.

More recently, a new community development organization known as the Greater Baybrook Alliance (GBA) was formed to focus on revitalizing the Brooklyn, Curtis Bay, and Brooklyn Park communities in both Baltimore City and Anne Arundel County. The GBA has been successful in obtaining State revitalization funds through the Baltimore Regional Neighborhood Initiative and other funding programs for community beautification and rehabilitation projects. Funds have been used to complete a branding and marketing study and to establish a retail improvement grant program for interior and exterior upgrades to retail properties. The grant program can be used to provide matching grants for façade improvements coupled with AAEDC's ACR Fund program. Additionally, the Ritchie Highway corridor is located within the Brooklyn Park Sustainable Community, making other State revitalization programs potentially available for projects in the area.

Historic Resources:

- Based on research conducted by the Office of Planning and Zoning, large portions of Brooklyn Park including the Olde Brooklyn Park neighborhood have the potential to qualify as a National Register eligible historic district. Obtaining this designation would require completion and submittal of a Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) application. With this designation, properties along the Ritchie Highway commercial corridor within the historic district would be eligible for State and Federal commercial property tax credits for future restoration or adaptive reuse. The County plans to conduct outreach among the community to determine if there is interest among local property owners in pursuing a historic district designation.

Key Assets:

- proximity to Baltimore and BWI Airport
- availability of bus transit and nearby light rail

- affordable housing (relative to the region)
- community facilities, including:
 - fire station (at 11th Avenue)
 - post office (16th Avenue)
 - library (11th Avenue)
- Brooklyn Heights Park
- Brooklyn Park Middle School
- Chesapeake Arts Center
- landscaped medians
- recent redevelopments
- adjacent residential areas (market for corridor businesses)
- Sustainable Community designation

Key Issues:

- overhead utilities dominate the east side along most of the corridor
- aging building stock and outdated site designs throughout the district reduce the vitality and visual quality of the area
- large paved parking areas with little landscaping to mitigate the visual and environmental impact
- several areas have a minimal buffer between commercial uses and adjacent residential areas, particularly between Walton and Seward Avenue and between Hammonds Lane and Holy Cross Cemetery
- multiple entrances to commercial properties along the corridor create safety and traffic flow concerns
- small shallow lots limit commercial uses
- concentrations of commercial signage detract from aesthetics of the corridor
- community struggles with a negative image related to crime

Area 1 Needs:

- Establish the area from Cedar Hill Lane to 9th/Townsend Avenue as the priority for revitalization.
- Provide incentives for targeted beautification and revitalization efforts in aging shopping centers. Beautification efforts should encourage landscaping, coordinated signage, façade improvements and

pedestrian amenities. Infill and/or full redevelopment should be considered for the most underutilized and blighted properties, consistent with the Urban Design Study.

- Work with state agencies, developers, and local groups to implement the concepts of the Urban Design Study. Evaluate the design guidelines to determine whether these should be incorporated into the County Code as requirements for redevelopment projects in Area 1.

Area 2: Glen Burnie Town Center North - Crain Highway and Ritchie Highway

General Character:

The district is two corridors: Ritchie Highway to the east and Crain Highway to the west, together forming the northern gateway into the Glen Burnie Town Center. The district is devoted primarily to automotive services, from car sales to financing, detailing, repair, car washes, rentals, and gas stations. Other businesses among these include restaurants, small service providers, retail, self-storage, and convenience stores. In this area, the Commercial Revitalization Tax Credit was used to demolish an old restaurant site and redevelop a new IHOP restaurant.

At the northern end, Dover Road has large tracts available for infill or redevelopment. The former County landfill and Baymeadow Business Park are across the MD 10 Expressway, representing a future opportunity to connect the business park to the Ritchie Highway corridor via Dover Road. A site plan for retail development has been approved for Glen Burnie Crossing on the south site of Dover Road (32 acres).

The Glen Burnie Small Area Plan calls for general corridor revitalization, with an illustrated boulevard concept for Ritchie Highway. The 2013 update to the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan lists pedestrian and bike improvements along Ritchie Highway as Tier I priorities.

Key Assets:

- proximity to I-97 and the Beltway
- northern gateway into the Glen Burnie Town Center
- underutilized connection over MD 10

Key Issues - Crain Highway:

- more uniformly dedicated to automotive services
- two lanes, with a wide shoulder of inconsistent width
- right-of-way varies from approximately 30' to approximately 43'
- east side of highway has overhead utilities and “back of house” areas for businesses
- inconsistent sidewalk provisions
- inconsistent streetscape and setbacks
- multiple entries
- several vacancies and underutilized buildings
- minimal landscaping in some areas, and very few trees throughout
- above-ground utilities extend along the east side of the corridor

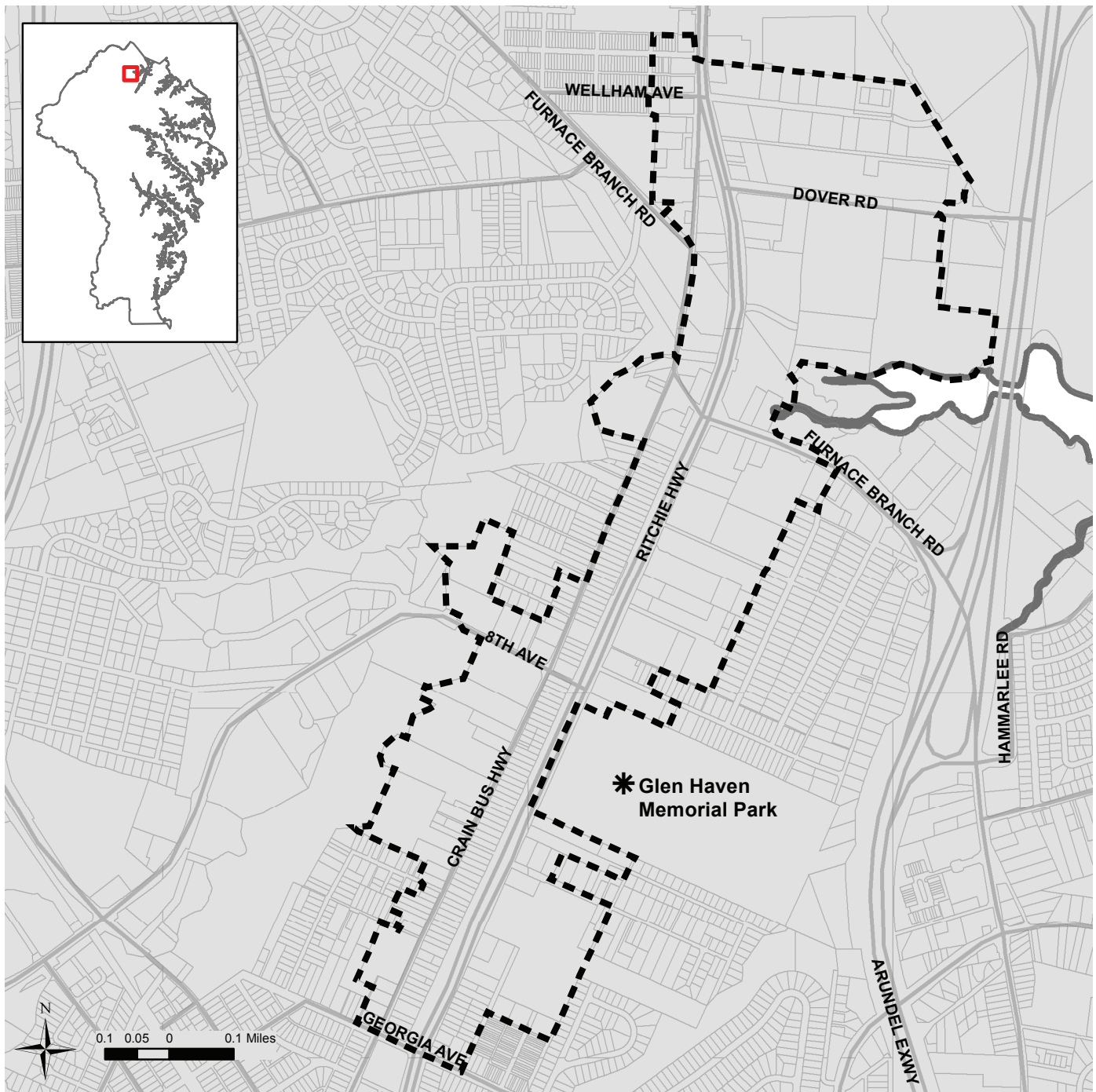
Key Issues - Ritchie Highway:

- larger artery, with six lanes and a wide median
- approximately 175' of right-of-way
- large paved areas without landscaping
- median has some mature trees, but the landscaping has an unkempt appearance and should be updated
- very few sidewalks available, reinforcing the auto scale of the corridor
- many properties have a wide landscape strip at the front, though most have no planting

Area 2 Needs:

- Study the potential for improvements along Crain Highway. With the existing wide shoulders, the area may be reconfigured to include street trees, bike lanes, a turning lane, on-street parking, and/or sidewalks. The narrow right-of-way will limit the range of potential solutions. Underground utilities appear to be at the edge of the right-of-way on both sides of the road, which may limit some potential solutions.

Area 2: Glen Burnie Town Center North - Crain Highway and Ritchie Highway



- Consider incentives to reduce large paved lots with landscaped islands and pervious paving. Shade trees, with ample pervious surface area in the root zone, should be encouraged to mitigate the heat island effect and visual impact. Look for state or federal funding partners for projects that incorporate stormwater quantity/quality BMPs.
- Update and improve landscaping of existing medians along Ritchie Highway. Implement an effective maintenance work program. An adopt-a-spot program may help fund some improvements and maintenance.
- Consider prohibiting display of vehicles for sale on unpaved surfaces or better enforcing existing regulations against parking in the right-of-way or landscape buffer.
- Prioritize revitalization efforts for properties fronting directly on the Ritchie and Crain corridors.

Area 3: Glen Burnie Town Center Core - B&A Boulevard

General Character:

This area primarily includes commercial properties fronting along Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard from the Cromwell Shopping Center eastward through the Glen Burnie Town Center, but also includes the segments of Crain Highway between Georgia Avenue and 1st Avenue SE, Ritchie Highway between Georgia Avenue and 5th Avenue SE, and 8th Avenue NW to Penrod Court. Glen Burnie, including Revitalization Areas 2, 3, and 4, is a State-designated Sustainable Community.

The Glen Burnie Town Center is a small downtown hub, with approaches lined with small retail spaces, wide pedestrian sidewalks, and street trees along several corridors. The central plaza has a 1980s character and hosts community activities and ice skating in the winter. Major land uses include the community college, District Court, the County Public Service Building, Glen Square senior apartments, and Food Lion. The Glen Burnie Town Center Enhancement Area Plan has design concepts and recommendations to enliven the area, and offers a vision of the Town Center as “the focal point of civic activity and the central community gathering place,” with cultural, shopping and entertainment activities. Plan recommendations include establishing a shuttle service between the Town Center and residential areas and Cromwell Light Rail Station, and recruiting a hotel.

At the western end of Area 3 is the Cromwell Field Shopping Center, with older commercial development leading southeast into the Glen Burnie Town Center. The shopping center includes two anchor spaces, one occupied by Roses and the other formerly occupied by Giant but currently vacant, along with several small retail stores, service businesses, and chain fast food restaurants. The Glen Burnie Small Area Plan outlines a redevelopment concept for this area as a mixed use transit neighborhood, illustrating a potential means for integrating office, residential, large and small retail, and lodging uses with the light rail station, civic open space, and pedestrian amenities.

The eastern end of Area 3 includes the Ritchie Highway

corridor. This section of the corridor has large lots, is auto-oriented, and is similar in character to the adjacent Crain Highway North corridor (Area 2). Revitalization techniques should be coordinated between these two areas.

The 2013 update to the County Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan lists as a Tier I priority bicycle improvements along Dorsey Road leading to Cromwell from I-97. Tier II priorities include extensions of the B&A Trail along B-A Boulevard, with a connection to the Cromwell Park-and-Ride.

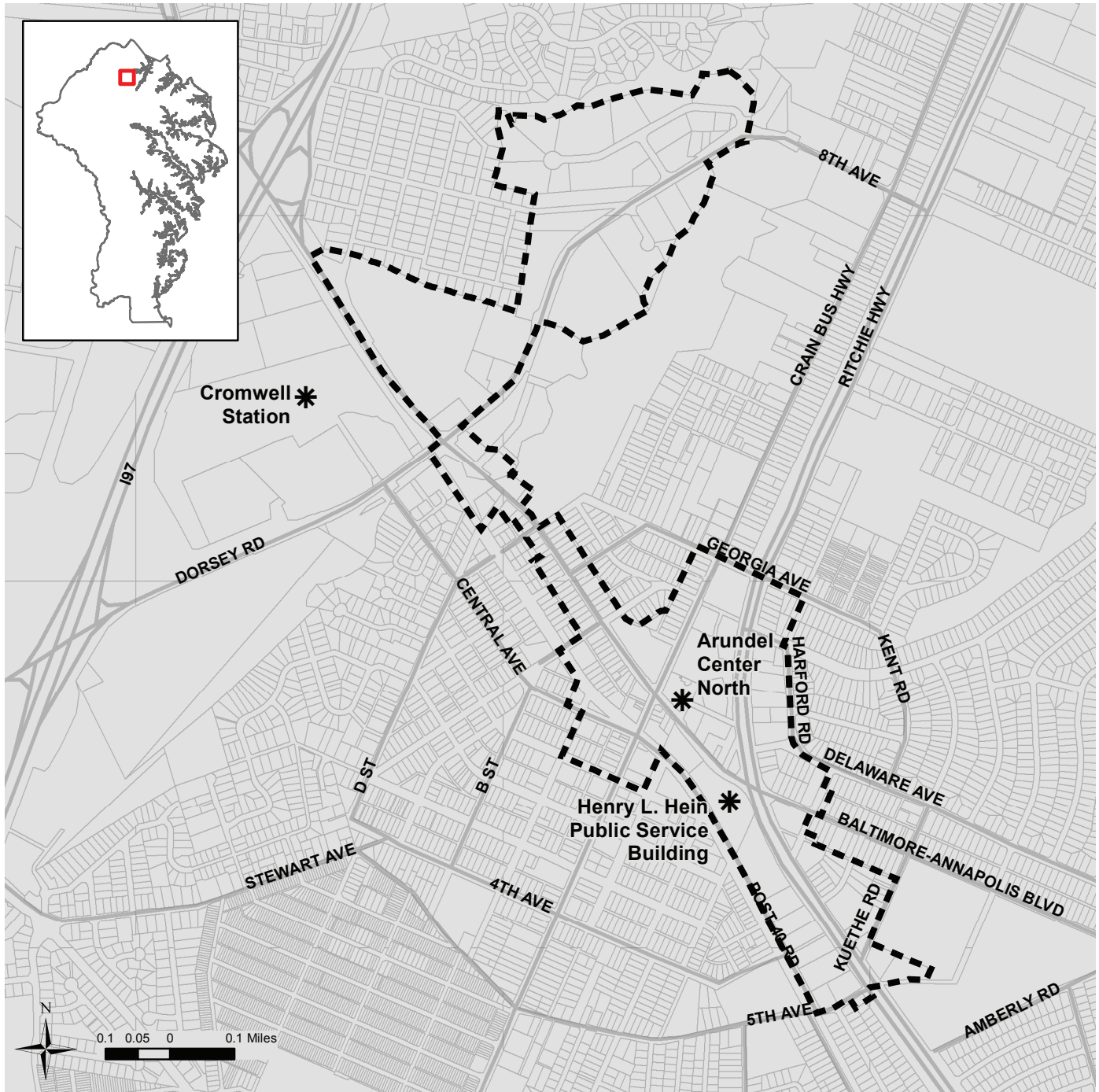
In Area 3, the Commercial Revitalization Tax Credit has been used to renovate and improve three office buildings, including the Flagger Force office. Other offices and restaurants have made renovations using the ACR Loan. However, a number of properties remain that are declining in appearance and that struggle to retain long-term tenants. The segment in greatest need of revitalization is that portion of B-A Boulevard extending from Dorsey Road eastward to Crain Highway, and the first block of Crain Highway North. The County is planning to conduct a targeted redevelopment study focusing on the block between Oak Lane and Crain Highway in 2020.

Historic Resources:

The County’s Historic Resources Inventory includes several properties located within the vicinity of the Glen Burnie Town Center (in Revitalization Areas 2, 3, and 4). While most are residential properties, there are some resources that involve commercial uses and that may have potential for adaptive reuse or rehabilitation using the County’s historic preservation property tax credit.

- AA County Sanitary Commission (AA-2168): The original part of the building was built between 1922-1929, along with a small brick building within the complex. The building has been enlarged through one or more expansion programs. Not enough information to determine local significance or integrity at this time. Possibly has potential to receive local historic tax credits.
- Oak Lane Survey District (AA-2159): The district is comprised of a mix of residential and commercial properties, and one religious property. With the

Area 3: Glen Burnie Town Center Core - B&A Boulevard



exception of the church which was built in 1919, the other buildings were built between 1920 and 1931. It was determined not eligible for the National Register; however, there may be individual properties that are locally significant and that could be eligible for the local historic tax credits. Additional research and survey work would be warranted.

- Glen Burnie Historic District (AA-996): The Glen Burnie Historic District was determined eligible for the National Register. The district is a mix of residential, commercial, and religious properties.

Being a National Register eligible district, contributing historic buildings within the district automatically qualify for local historic tax credits. New infill development would also be eligible to receive a 5% tax credit. Its NR eligibility also makes properties within the district eligible for the competitive 25% State and 25% Federal commercial tax credit programs.

- Glen Burnie Ice Manufacturing Co. (AA-2169): Built c. 1922, the company was established by Glen Burnie resident, Elisha Dunker. It retains its architectural integrity and is significant as a local historic

commercial resource in Glen Burnie; it still operates as an ice manufactory to this day. Would be eligible to receive local historic tax credits.

- Menshaw’s Store (AA-2163): Frank Menshaw was one of the earliest merchants in Glen Burnie and opened his store at this location in 1896. It was determined not eligible for the National Register by the MHT based only on its architectural character, because it has been modified. Additional research and evaluation may reveal that the property meets other criteria for historic significance not evaluated at the time, and it could meet the criteria to be locally significant and eligible for the local historic tax credits.

Key Assets:

- central activity node for Glen Burnie, particularly with the seasonal ice skating rink
- B&A Trail connecting to Annapolis
- traditional “downtown” urban fabric
- street connectivity and proximity to light rail and bus routes
- maturing trees in parts of the district
- on-street parking during the day along B-A Boulevard and Crain Highway
- Cromwell Field Shopping Center has potential as a future TOD opportunity site
- entry landscaping (including mature shade trees) at Cromwell Field and within some parking areas
- Sawmill Creek greenway segment, east of Dorsey Road
- wide medians in Ritchie Highway, with some mature trees
- recent redevelopment on some parcels provides attractive landscaping and sidewalks

Key Issues:

- numerous vacancies in town center and approaches; lack of critical retail mass for area to be a destination
- large parking areas lacking sufficient landscaping, especially near Food Lion, the Public Service building and District Court, and Cromwell Shopping Center; lots west of Crain Highway need improved organization, resurfacing and landscaping

- inadequate pedestrian connections at Food Lion Shopping Center
- dated appearance of Town Center plaza and area furnishings
- mass and architecture of buildings surrounding Town Center plaza (Arundel Center North, District Court and Public Service Building) is out of scale with surrounding small retail and precludes comfortable human scale
- dated and worn appearance of many buildings
- excessive hardscape of the plaza is harsh
- balance of office/institutional uses versus retail commercial
- frequent vacancies in Cromwell shopping center
- lack of pedestrian facilities within shopping center campus
- inadequate pedestrian crossings at Dorsey and B-A Blvd. intersection
- above-ground utilities along both sides of B-A Boulevard add to cluttered appearance
- insufficient buffer area between commercial and residential uses in some areas
- community struggles with negative image related to crime and homelessness issues

Area 3 Needs:

- Introduce additional landscaping and updated site furnishings in the Town Center Plaza to mitigate the hardscape and improve the human scale of the space.
- Improve pedestrian connections and the delineation of pedestrian and vehicular circulation routes in the right-of-way north of Food Lion.
- Work with the North County Chamber on programs supporting small businesses, on reducing vacancies in retail spaces, and improving the street appearance/merchandising of businesses in the Town Center.
- Update and strengthen design guidelines to better guide the character of the Town Center core area, addressing architectural façade features, signage, and other streetscape elements.
- Consider budgeting architectural improvements in the facility management plan of the Arundel Center to

update the architectural quality, improve the human scale, and enhance the appearance of the building on the Town Center plaza.

- Consider ways to strengthen buffers between commercial uses or the public works facility and adjacent residential uses.
- Provide complete pedestrian connections along B-A Boulevard to connect adjacent residential areas and the B-A Trail to the Cromwell shopping center and Light Rail. Encourage improved pedestrian facilities within the shopping center complex.
- Work with MTA and other transit providers to implement multi-modal transit links between Cromwell Station and area activity centers.

Area 4: Glen Burnie Town Center South - Crain Highway

General Character:

Area 4 is a key southern gateway into the Glen Burnie Town Center. It extends from 1st Ave. SW to Aquahart Road and generally has a compact, urban character. A southern portion of the corridor, from Aquahart north to 5th Avenue, is the area of greatest revitalization need along the corridor. Elsewhere, a number of properties have been redeveloped and set a precedent for higher quality development. The Glen Burnie Small Area Plan outlines a vision for Crain Highway South as a Town Center gateway, lined with attractive building facades, landscaping, street trees, and sidewalks offering pedestrians a pleasant stroll into the core of the Town Center. There are several specific guidelines listed to help improve the appearance of this corridor. The 2013 update to the County Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan lists bicycle and pedestrian improvements along Crain Highway through this area as a Tier I improvement.

Key Assets:

- proximity to Glen Burnie Town Center, B&A Trail, and residential areas to the east and west
- shade trees within verge north of 5th Avenue unify the corridor
- excellent trails and sidewalks throughout much of the area

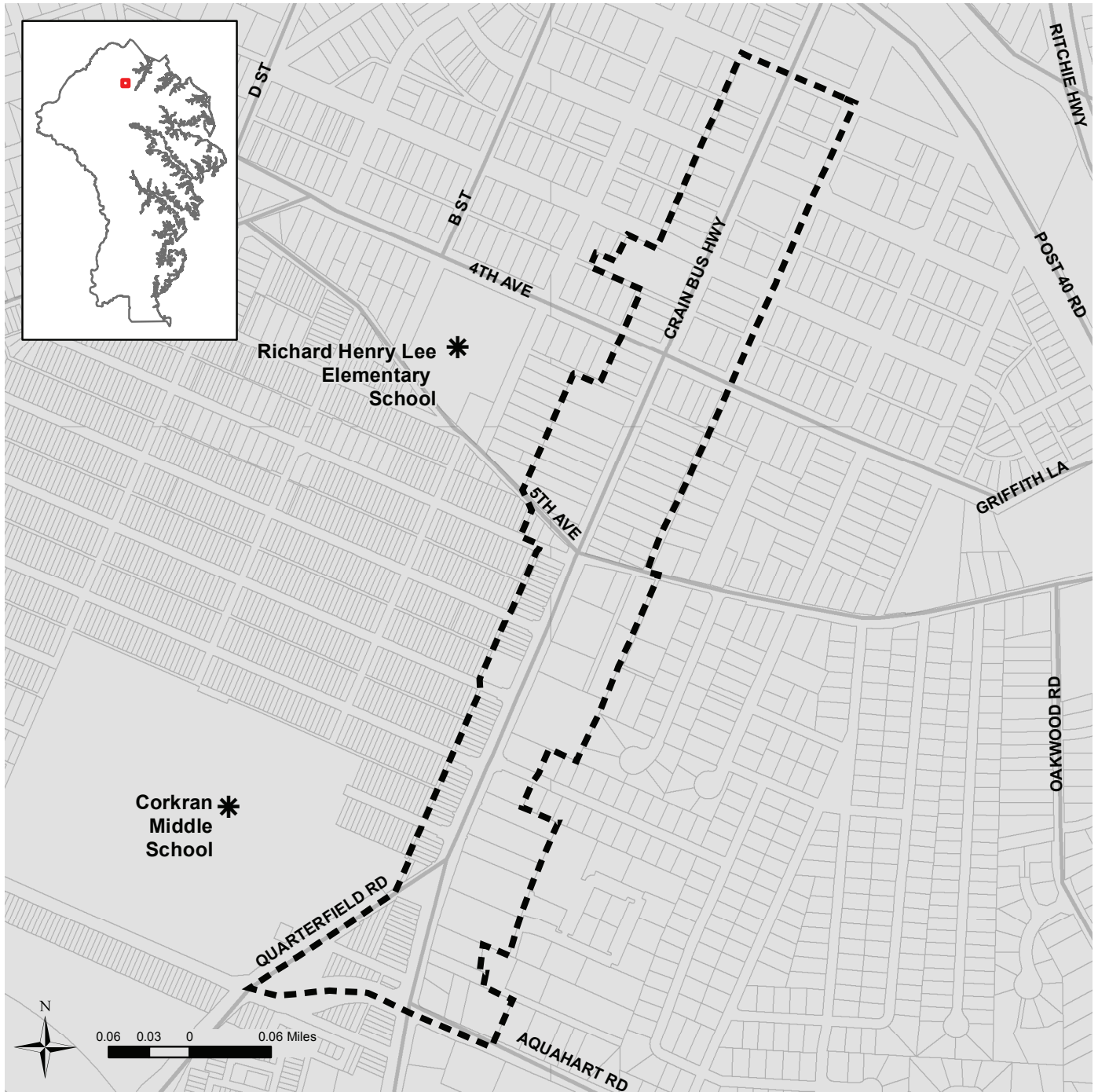
Key Issues:

- large paved areas without landscaping
- disorganized parking areas
- small front setbacks with front parking for direct pull-in off the road
- gaps in the line of street trees north of 5th Avenue
- signage clutter, both private business signs and public safety signage
- gaps in the sidewalk south of 5th Ave.
- older properties in need of update
- small and shallow parcels, particularly from Quarterfield Road to 5th Avenue

Area 4 Needs:

- Prioritize the southern portion of the district, from 5th Avenue to Aquahart, for revitalization efforts.
- Strengthen buffers between commercial uses on Crain Highway and adjacent residential areas.
- Infill gaps in the street tree fabric north of 5th Avenue, and extend street trees where practical in the southern end of the district. Coordinate planting with above- and below-ground utilities, vehicle sight-lines, and other constraints. Where there is not sufficient space in the right-of-way, develop a program to encourage coordinated plantings by property owners. Continue the existing tree species where practical.
- Consolidate drive entries where feasible and encourage connected and/or shared parking areas between adjacent businesses.
- Prioritize areas for pedestrian improvements, particularly where lot sizes and development are appropriate for pedestrian scale.

Area 4: Glen Burnie Town Center South - Crain Highway



Area 5: Pasadena - Mountain Road

General Character:

A key access route into the Pasadena area, Mountain Road is an older commercial corridor with small lots, narrow right-of-way, and strip shopping centers. A number of auto-related uses are located here along with retail and service establishments and restaurants. The Pasadena/Marley Neck Small Area Plan calls for improvements to traffic flow and quality of development along the corridor as well as design guidelines with recommendations for building siting, design of parking, signage, sidewalks, and overhead utilities.

The County recently completed a corridor study of Mountain Road from Solley Road to Edwin Raynor Boulevard to assess traffic operations and safety needs. The study identified a need and made specific recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements as well as corridor and intersection specific improvements for vehicular traffic. The County has approved funding for design and right-of-way acquisition costs, and has requested the SHA to contribute funding for construction costs. The project has completed the preliminary design phase and will next move into final design.

A new Royal Farms store was recently developed that was able to take advantage of the Commercial Revitalization Tax Credit, and two properties have been able to use the Arundel Community Reinvestment Loan for site improvements, including the Mountain Road Shopping Center. Otherwise there has not been a significant amount of commercial redevelopment along this corridor in recent years.

Key Assets:

- adjacent residential areas and westbound commuters provide a local market for businesses along the corridor

Key Issues:

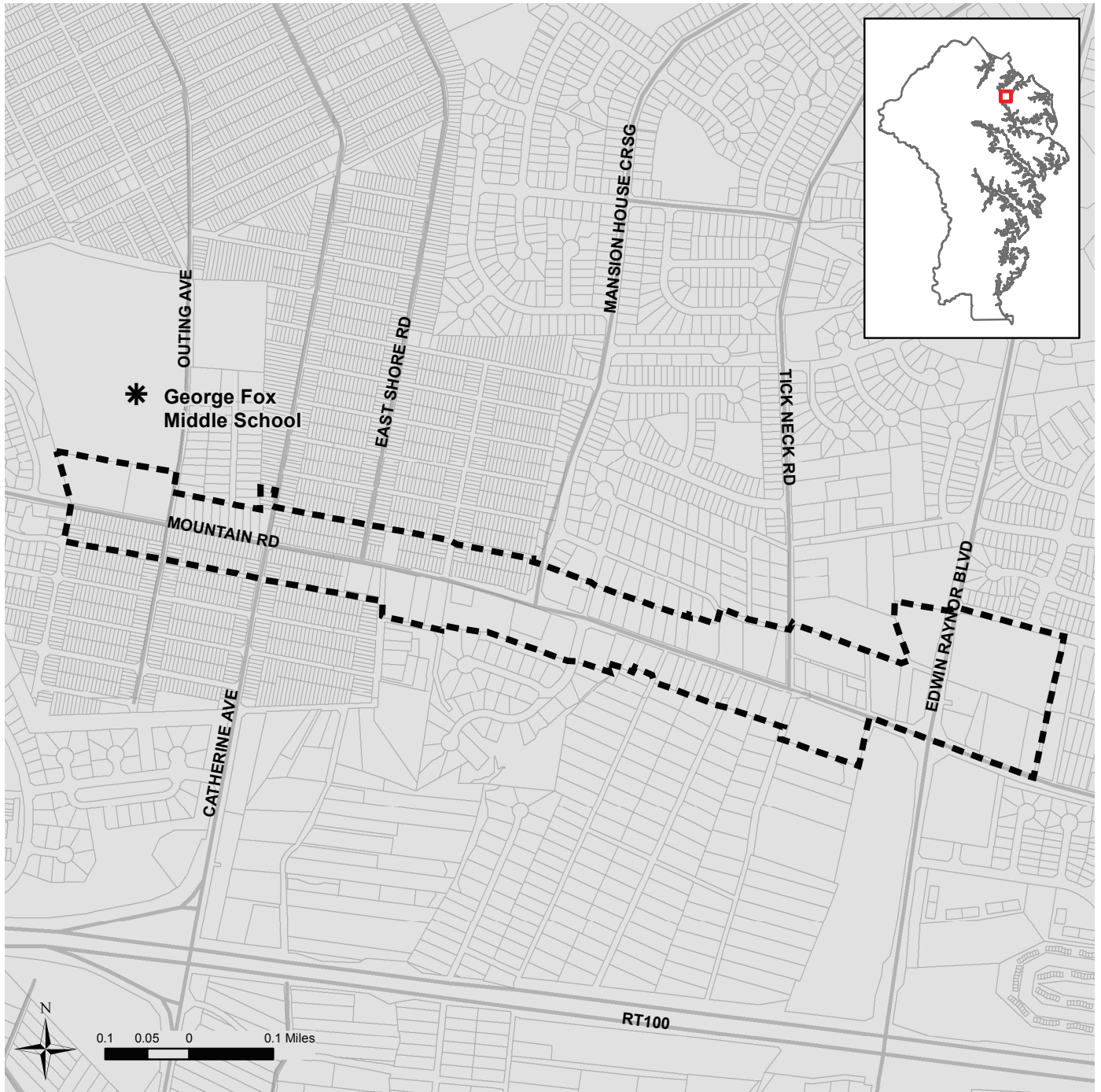
- inconsistent provision of sidewalks and landscape buffers
- inconsistent street edge

- multiple drive ingress/egress points for many lots
- narrow right-of-way limits potential travel lane and bike/pedestrian improvements
- small, shallow lots limit redevelopment potential and site design
- utilities flank both sides of the road in the western portion of the corridor
- aging building stock and multiple vacancies

Area 5 Needs:

- Continue to work with SHA to complete the road and streetscape improvements recommended in the Mountain Road Corridor Study.
- Evaluate whether a unique set of design standards is feasible for the corridor and if so, expand on the design guideline framework outlined in the Mountain Road Corridor Study to better guide the character of development and rehabilitation along the corridor. Guidelines should address architectural façade features, signage, and other streetscape elements.

Area 5: Pasadena - Mountain Road



Area 6: Riviera Beach - Fort Smallwood Road

General Character:

This corridor extends through the Riviera Beach community and is divided by the Stoney Creek Bridge. It has a mix of aging properties on small lots and more recent development, including strip malls, chain fast food restaurants and retail, and auto-related services. The segment east of Stoney Creek is not experiencing significant deterioration, although there are some vacant buildings along the corridor. The segment west of Stoney Creek appears to have a larger need for revitalization, with several underutilized, vacant or deteriorating properties. Varying setbacks and inconsistent provision of sidewalks leads to a poorly-defined street edge along the highway. The Pasadena/Marley Neck Small Area Plan highlights the area as an older commercial development in need of revitalization, with a mixed-use concept plan for the Ft. Smallwood/Bar Harbor intersection. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan prioritizes the main intersection for pedestrian improvements.

Within the corridor, two convenience stores and a chain restaurant have made renovations using the Commercial Revitalization Tax Credit, and another property is being renovated using the ACR loan program. There remain a number of underutilized properties in need of revitalization.

Key Assets:

- stable residential areas surrounding the commercial corridor
- adjacent elementary school and park
- access to Stoney Creek

Key Issues:

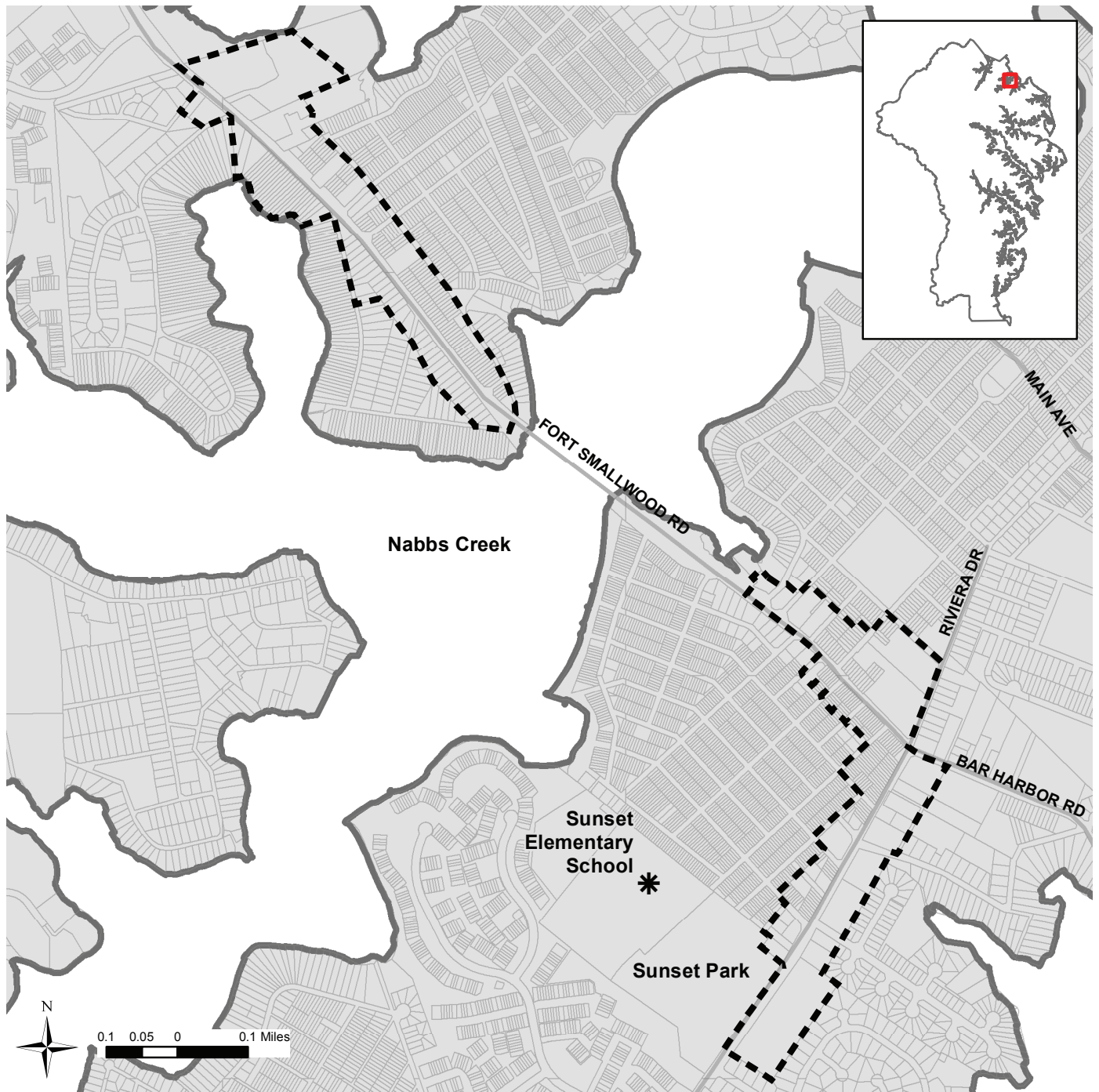
- provision of sidewalks is inconsistent and street edge is poorly defined in many areas
- many sidewalks are in poor repair
- multiple drive entries
- inconsistent setbacks and narrow ROW
- several vacancies, including in Pine Grove Village Shopping Center
- unmaintained vacant lots

- large parking areas along the streetfront with little landscaping
- small, shallow lots limit redevelopment potential and site design in some areas
- overhead utilities dominate portions of the streetscape
- aging building stock and many unkempt properties

Area 6 Needs:

- Work with MDOT to study and plan corridor improvements, including improvements to traffic congestion and provision of bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities.
- Evaluate whether a unique set of design standards is feasible for the corridor and if so, expand on the design guideline framework outlined in the Pasadena/Marley Neck Small Area Plan to better guide the character of development and rehabilitation along the corridor. Guidelines should address architectural façade features, signage, and other streetscape elements.

Area 6: Riviera Beach - Fort Smallwood Road



Area 7: North Odenton - MD 175

General Character:

Area 7 is located within the Odenton Town Center, but is separated from the core of the Town Center by MD 32. Stretched along the east side of Annapolis Road (MD 175), the district is situated between the residential community of Seven Oaks to the east and Fort Meade to the west. The area is a mixed commercial area, with a number of attractive redeveloped retail and convenience properties among older buildings and properties that need updates to improve the area's appearance. The Odenton Town Center Master Plan calls for the area to serve the needs of Ft. Meade personnel/families, surrounding neighborhoods, and local office development, with improved access management, facade improvements, and pedestrian facilities to revitalize the area.

Properties along the corridor that have used the County's financial incentives include a new All American Steakhouse restaurant which utilized the Commercial Revitalization Tax Credit, and a new dental office which used the ACR loan program. Other recent or ongoing redevelopments in this area include a car wash, self-storage facility, and a retail and office center, so that the corridor is experiencing some positive revitalization. However, there remain a number of deteriorated properties in need of improvement.

A key issue here is that the current business mix does not meet the need of the demographics of the surrounding residential and business community. The current business mix contains older retail uses (liquor stores, tattoo parlors, older bars, drycleaners, gas stations, and motel) while the surrounding demographics, including many higher income civilian positions on the Fort Meade base, would support a higher end business tenant mix.

Planned road improvements along MD 175 in the area will provide improved traffic flow and streetscaping which should be beneficial to revitalization efforts. The SHA plans to widen the existing road to a six-lane highway with a raised median, sidewalk and shared-use path. The project has completed preliminary design but has not yet been approved for final design.

Key Assets:

- proximity to Fort Meade - the primary visitor gate to the campus is just north of the district, at Reese Road; Blue Water Blvd marks a limited access gate for personnel
- streetscape unified with mature trees on west side of Annapolis Road
- recent commercial developments along the corridor include attractive landscaping and architecture
- potential small retail "downtown commercial" scale north of Charter Oaks Blvd
- Seven Oaks Shopping Center

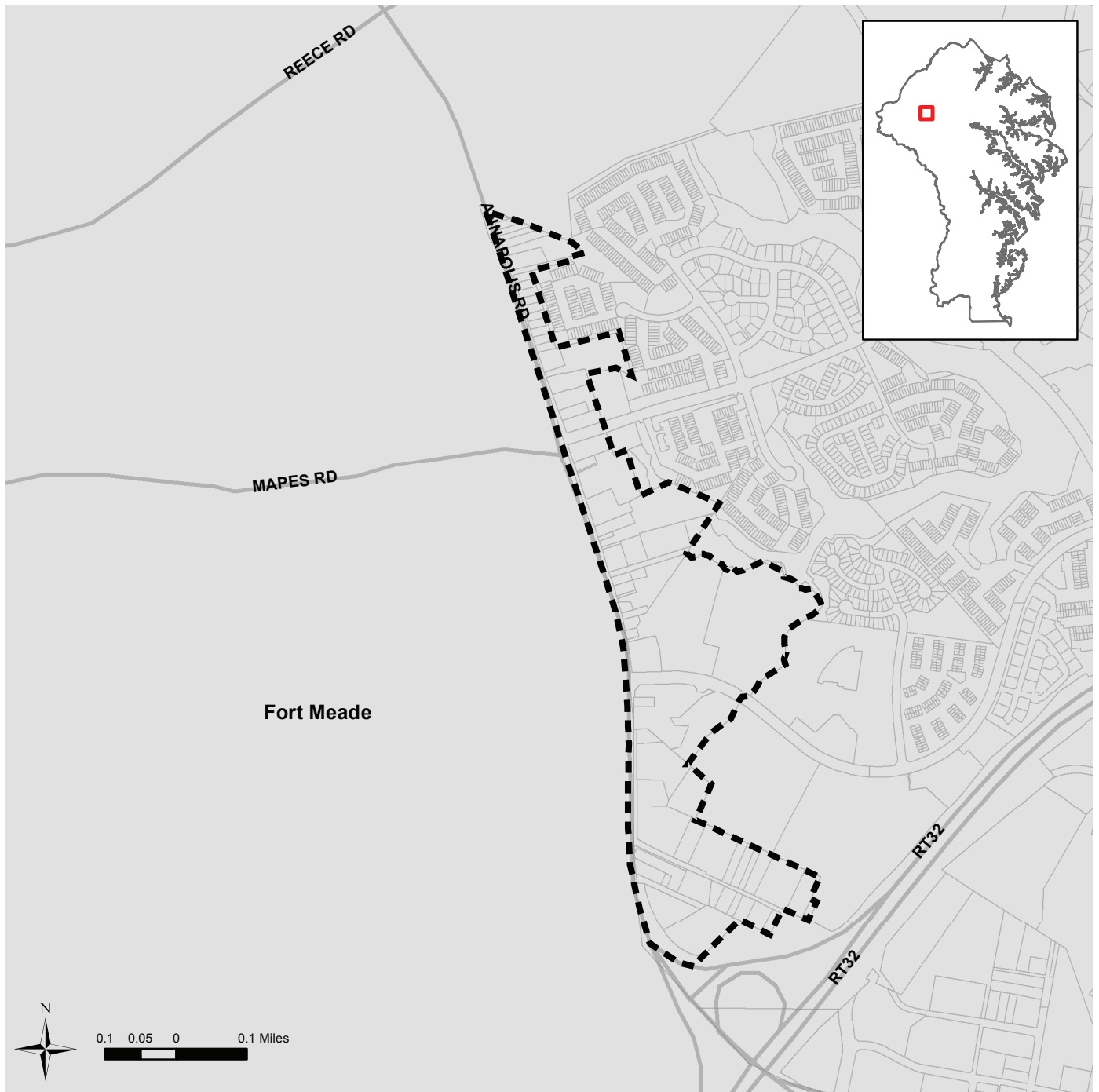
Key Issues:

- poor maintenance, façade blight, and undesirable uses detract from surrounding properties
- small lots at key points along corridor limit redevelopment potential
- business mix does not meet the needs of the surrounding residential and business community
- vacancies and cleared parcels
- overhead utilities along east side of road
- inconsistent sidewalks
- signage and billboards
- multiple vehicle entries along the corridor

Area 7 Needs:

- Completion of SHA road improvements along MD 175.
- Study whether future development should reinforce a "downtown" node north of Blue Water Boulevard, considering the impact on the development of the core area of the OTC. Potential opportunities to reinforce a small retail and pedestrian character include:
 - coordinating entry locations
 - improving the streetscape with façade improvements, street furnishings (streetlights, banners, street trees, benches, waste receptacles, etc.), and reduced maximum setbacks for infill buildings
 - pedestrian connections to adjacent residential areas

Area 7: North Odenton - MD 175



Area 8: Maryland City / Russett - MD 198

General Character:

Area 8 extends from the Baltimore-Washington Parkway to Laurel Park Race Track. Commercial land use varies and includes large and small shopping centers, big box retailers, auto sales and service, offices, gas stations, fast food restaurants, motels, and a self-storage facility. The Russett planned community lies on the north side and the Maryland City community to the south of the corridor. The Jessup/Maryland City Small Area Plan includes several specific recommendations for the corridor. Many of the recommendations have been effectively implemented and may serve as a model for successful policies in other commercial corridors. Additional recommendations to be implemented include site furnishings and street trees to complement sidewalks, and creation of a focal point at the corner of MD 198 and Whiskey Bottom Road. The 2013 update to the County Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan lists several Tier II and III improvements along the corridor, including intersection improvements at the Russett Green intersection and pedestrian and bicycle improvements along MD 198.

This revitalization area generally shows fewer signs of decline and appears less dated than most of the other Commercial Revitalization areas. The number of large shopping centers and auto dealers limits the potential for a more urban-scale pedestrian character, but properties along the corridor are well-maintained. There are some motel properties that have experienced issues with crime and code violations and that may represent opportunities for revitalization.

Key Assets:

- sidewalks extend along MD 198 for the length of the corridor
- well-landscaped and maintained medians throughout the corridor
- new developments with attractive landscaping
- few vacancies in the district
- proximity to Laurel Park which is renovating the existing race track to create an entertainment destination

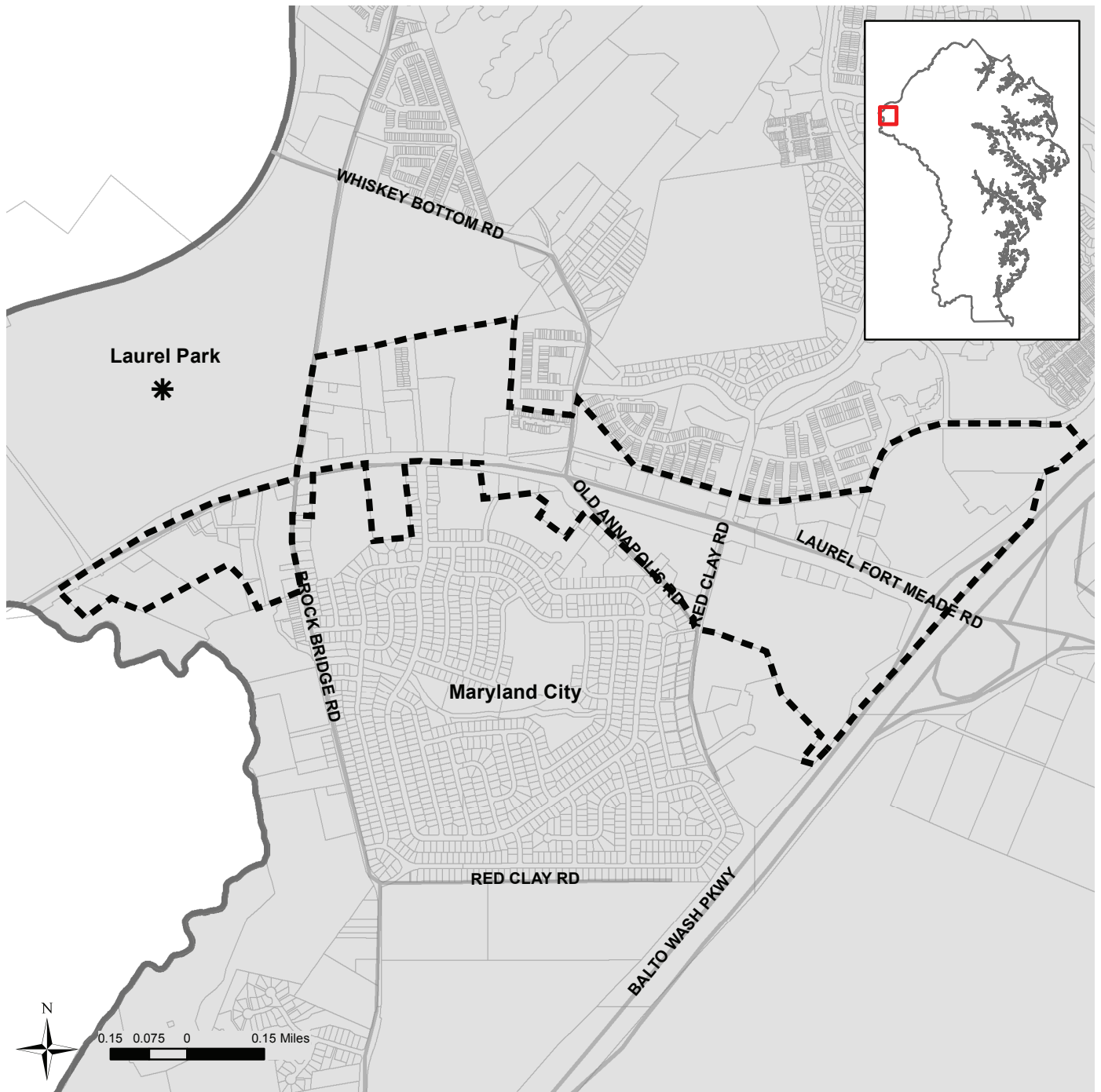
Key Issues:

- older properties that are poorly maintained and detract from new investment along the corridor
- auto service businesses on parcels in the floodplain (environmental risks and limited redevelopment potential)
- excessive signage for some businesses
- lack of landscaping, particularly shade trees, in some parking lots
- lack of sidewalks along Brock Bridge Road to connect residential areas to the commercial corridor
- auto sales businesses displaying vehicles on grass areas at the front of their lots.
- a history of crime and code enforcement issues at low budget hotels
- business mix does not meet the need of the demographics of the surrounding residential community

Area 8 Needs:

- Consider prohibiting long-term parking or displaying vehicles for sale on unpaved surfaces, or better enforce existing regulations prohibiting display within the landscape buffer or public right-of-way.
- Extend sidewalk connections into residential neighborhoods, particularly along Brock Bridge Road.

Area 8: Maryland City / Russett - MD 198



Area 9: Ferndale - Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard

General Character:

Area 9 extends along the eastern side of Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard and the MTA Light Rail line from 5th Avenue North to Ferndale Road and the Ferndale Light Rail Station. This commercial corridor has a small, compact urban character and contains a variety of local retail businesses including auto service and repair shops, convenience markets, restaurants and taverns, a church, and salons. Although historically the corridor has served as a local activity center for Ferndale area residents, in the years since the last recession it has experienced some downturn including a number of building vacancies and issues related to noncompliance with building and/or zoning code regulations. Nevertheless, the corridor retains high potential to be an attractive and small-scale local destination place with public transit access.

Key Assets:

- Light Rail Station within walking distance
- continuous sidewalk along the east side of Baltimore Annapolis Blvd.
- surrounded by stable residential neighborhoods
- small retail “downtown core” scale
- some buildings front next to sidewalk for more urban feel

Key Issues:

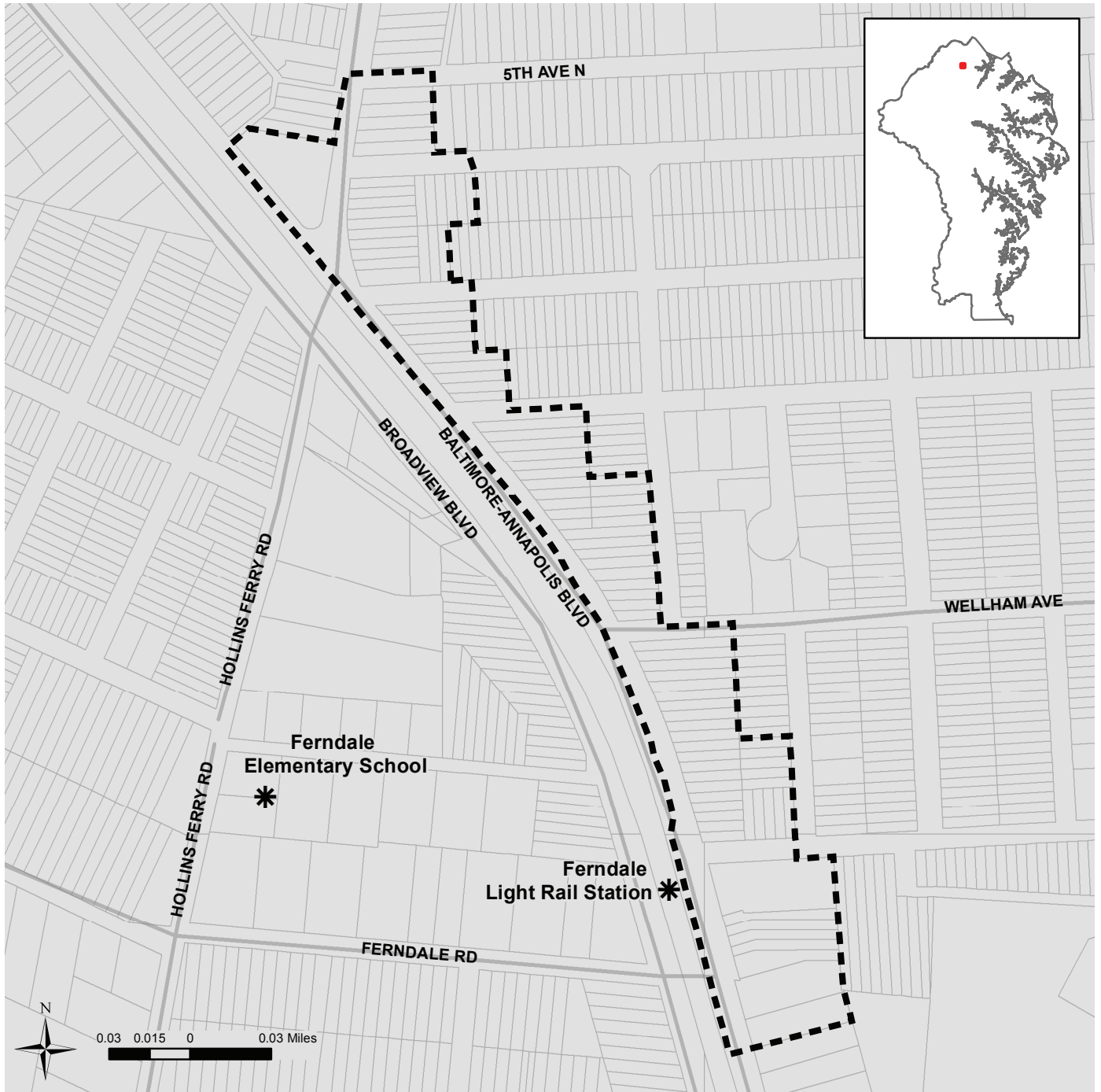
- some underutilized and poorly maintained properties in need of update
- lack of adequate landscaping and streetscaping
- small front setbacks with front parking for direct pull-in off the road
- small and irregular lots limit redevelopment opportunities
- vacant property at northern gateway (B&A Blvd. and Hollins Ferry Road)

Area 9 Needs:

- Strengthen buffers between commercial uses and adjacent residential areas.

- Infill gaps in the street tree fabric and improve landscaping on commercial properties.
- Consolidate drive entries where feasible and encourage connected and/or shared parking areas between adjacent businesses.

Area 9: Ferndale - Baltimore Annapolis Boulevard



Opportunity Sites for Future Redevelopment

Based on the assessment of these corridors, six sites have been identified as areas that should receive a priority focus for targeted redevelopment. Due to their location, proximity to key amenities, parcel size and configuration, or other factors these sites represent potential opportunities for better utilization of developed land to achieve revitalization and sustainability goals. In some cases, redevelopment opportunities may occur in the near

term where market conditions will support improvements, while other sites may be economically viable at the present time and therefore represent longer term opportunities for redevelopment. At the appropriate time, targeted redevelopment studies should be conducted for these sites in collaboration with the property owners, developer and real estate interests, and community stakeholders to create feasible redevelopment programs.

Area	Site / Location	Future Opportunities
1	Brooklyn Park Plaza and Arundel Village Plaza / Ritchie Highway north and south of 11th Avenue	Given the central location of these sites within the commercial corridor and proximity to public amenities (library, park), they are candidates for long term redevelopment with mixed retail, employment and residential uses. See concepts in the Brooklyn Park Urban Design Study.
3	Cromwell Field Shopping Center	Located across from the Cromwell Light Rail Station, this site represents an opportunity for future TOD redevelopment. Light industrial properties across B&A Blvd. could potentially be part of a larger redevelopment concept. See concepts in the Glen Burnie Small Area Plan.
3	Southwest quadrant of Crain Highway N. and Baltimore Annapolis Blvd. in Glen Burnie	This block is in a primary visible location in the Glen Burnie Town Center and presents an opportunity to contribute to a more vibrant activity hub. Opportunities for coordinated redevelopment of multiple properties should be created and pursued. See concepts in the Glen Burnie Town Center Enhancement Plan.
5	Northwest quadrant of Mountain Road and Outing Avenue	Relatively large and underutilized commercial parcels with outdated structures may represent a future redevelopment opportunity to create a more attractive local activity hub adjacent to the George Fox Middle School.
6	Intersection of Fort Smallwood Road and Riviera Drive	Properties surrounding this intersection are currently well-utilized, with a CVS, a newly renovated McDonald's, and the Riviera Plaza. The northeast quadrant contains a vacant parcel for sale. With its central location in the Riviera Beach community, there may be opportunity for longer term redevelopment into a more vibrant activity center. See concepts in the Pasadena/Marley Neck Small Area Plan.
6	Intersection of Fort Smallwood Road and Hilltop Road	This is a central intersection in the commercial corridor that has a number of vacant and deteriorated properties and poor visual appeal. Opportunities for coordinated redevelopment of multiple properties should be explored to create a small business activity center.

Recommended Commercial Corridors and Hubs for Designation as Commercial Revitalization Areas

In addition to the nine existing areas, the following areas should be considered for designation and adoption as Commercial Revitalization Areas. This may be done collectively in the near term via a text amendment to the

Zoning Ordinance. However, it may be desirable to first present these recommendations during a plan process, such as an update to the General Development, a regional plan, or small area plan, so that community outreach and more specific development and design standards, if desired, may be more easily incorporated into the process.

Road / Location	Description of Area	Issues / Opportunities
Baltimore Annapolis Blvd. from Harding Road to MD 10, Glen Burnie	Corridor with primarily auto-related commercial uses and a strip shopping center.	Abundance of stored vehicles with no landscaping creates poor visual appeal along this eastern gateway into the Glen Burnie Town Center and adjacent to the Glen Burnie High School.
Ritchie Highway (MD 2) and Aquahart Road, Glen Burnie	Harundale Plaza and adjacent commercial properties along Aquahart Road, primarily older office buildings, zoned C3.	Older commercial properties in need of upgrades; expansive surface parking; inadequate buffering with adjacent residential areas. Good location across from Glen Burnie Regional Library and less than 1/2 mile from the Glen Burnie High School.
Intersection of Camp Meade Road/Belle Grove Road (MD 170) and Baltimore Annapolis Blvd. (MD 648), Linthicum	Small commercial hub zoned primarily C4. Contains a mix of auto services, chain restaurants, and hotels.	Underutilized properties in need of upgrades and improvements. Area is within walking distance of the North Linthicum Light Rail Station and presents an opportunity for future redevelopment as a small TOD center.
Marley Station Mall	80+ acre regional shopping mall serving the Greater Glen Burnie, Pasadena, and Severn communities.	Currently occupancy rates are reasonably stable. The mall has longer term redevelopment potential into a more updated retail center, possibly incorporating a mixed use concept and a bus transit hub.
Deale Churchton Road and Deale Road (MD 256)	Local commercial hub zoned C3, C4 and MC containing many maritime uses as well as retail businesses	Some older or underutilized properties in need of improvements. Good location near public facilities (library, school, post office) with potential to be a more vibrant activity center for Deale and Churchton communities. See concepts in the Deale / Shady Side Small Area Plan.

Recommendations

In addition to some of the specific needs listed above in each area, there are several recommendations below that should be explored and implemented where feasible. These relate to development requirements, financial incentives, planning initiatives, and coordination with the State Highway Administration on road improvements.

Development Requirements and Incentives:

- Evaluate whether additional flexibility or exemptions to specific provisions in the development code can be granted for revitalization or redevelopment projects to help address the challenges associated with this type of development. Some ideas for further study are noted below.
 - To accelerate both redevelopment and new infill development, expand the authority granted to the Planning and Zoning Officer (PZO) in §18-14-302 (b) to approve redevelopment of lots greater than one acre (in addition to lots less than one acre) that do not satisfy bulk regulations and parking requirements and for both existing improved and unimproved lots in revitalization areas.
 - Revise the County Landscape Manual, Section V.A: General Standards (2) to add a sentence that allows for alternative landscaping techniques in the Commercial Revitalization Areas to better suit their urban setting without reducing the total landscape requirements. In addition, consider revising Section III. F: Redevelopment, Retrofitting and Expansion of Existing Development (1) so that in addition to requiring compliance for increases in gross floor area or parking spaces, require partial compliance for redevelopment involving any alteration to the structure or site.
 - Waiving the parking space requirements in Art. 18 could provide helpful flexibility for redevelopment projects. A parking study would still be needed. Section §18-3-105 already allows for reduced parking requirements with sufficient justification, and also allows for joint use parking,

and 18-3-106 requires parking programs that supersede the standard parking requirements for mixed use projects. Potentially these sections in the code could be altered to speak specifically to redevelopment projects.

- The code currently includes allowances for stormwater management (SWM) for redevelopment projects that relax the standard requirements to some extent (see 16-4-202(b)) by allowing that a minimum 50% impervious area can be treated by Environmental Site Design (ESD) to the Maximum Extent Practicable (MEP) or by reduction in impervious area. It may be difficult to provide any more flexibility than what is currently provided in this code section, since the counties cannot be more lenient than what is allowed by COMAR. However, alternative approaches should be given consideration with regard to redevelopment projects. For example, the County can cost share improvements to downstream SWM infrastructure that are needed to meet SWM requirements. This is currently allowed per the Design Manual in certain situations.
- While full exemption from Adequate Public Facilities (APF) requirements may not be feasible, there may be options for providing more flexibility for redevelopment projects. With regard to Road APF requirements, two ideas that could be further considered might be more flexible traffic impact study (TIS) requirements for redevelopment projects that generate additional traffic, and/or more flexible mitigation requirements. It is noted that §17-5-901 already allows for some flexible mitigation options for roads when a development is within ½ mile of bus or rail transit. Regarding School APF requirements, with at least one school currently closed in each of the revitalization overlay areas, full exemption from these requirements may not be feasible, but alternative approaches to mitigation could be evaluated beyond the current provisions provided in §17-5-901 (g).
- Improve enforcement of existing codes or the capacity of the County enforcement process to

prevent and eliminate nuisance properties. Issues needing improved enforcement in commercial revitalization areas include the following.

- Auto sales display in landscape buffer or public right-of-way (Landscape Manual V. C: Automotive Display Areas (3)).
- Display window advertising sign limits (County Code: 18-3-301(g)).
- Limits on temporary directional signs (County Code: 18-3-306(b)), including enforcement of real estate advertisements.

Financial Incentives:

- Evaluate whether adjustments can be made to existing development fee requirements that would help to incentivize revitalization and redevelopment of declining or underutilized properties. Some ideas that could be evaluated for feasibility are listed below.
 - Evaluate an approach of scaling impact fees, or making future increases to the fees not apply to redevelopment projects that meet specified criteria. Also consider the option of exempting redevelopment projects from certain impact fees. Given the current situation with school capacity issues in so many schools, any exemption from school impact fees may not be feasible, and these fees would only apply to redevelopment projects with a residential component such as a mixed use project. Reduced transportation impact fees for projects that are located within walking distance of a transit station is another idea that could be studied. This might help only a small number of redevelopment projects, but may be worth consideration. This would likely need to be evaluated as part of a more comprehensive update to the impact fee rates.
 - Evaluate whether certain development and permit fees could be waived for redevelopment projects in general or for projects that meet particular criteria. This could include sketch, final, preliminary, and site development plan fees, permit application fees (building, grading,

electrical, mechanical, etc.), inspection fees, or others. Another option could be to require the fees at time of application, and then provide a credit back to the developer once all permits and inspections have been completed. It is noted that the code (§17-11-102) currently allows the Planning and Zoning Officer to authorize application fee reductions up to 50% for development that exceeds the ESD criteria in the code and that is justified by a cost benefit analysis.

- Evaluate whether there are alternative approaches for payment of security for public improvements (public works agreements) that would facilitate redevelopment projects.
- Evaluate the feasibility of exempting redevelopment projects from a portion of capital facility connection charges, or a more flexible payment plan.
- Consider establishing a Community Reinvestment fund in the County's Capital Budget and Program that can fund predevelopment costs such as engineering, architecture, planning, and feasibility analysis related to redevelopment and revitalization projects in designated revitalization and opportunity areas.
- Budget for identified public improvements, including streetscape and parking improvements, landscaping, and public pedestrian facilities in these districts.
- Consider the use of financial incentives such as special improvement districts, special tax districts, tax increment financing, and other finance tools to encourage and support redevelopment.
- Explore the potential use of a tiered fee structure to make redevelopment and revitalization projects less expensive in targeted areas.
- Consider establishing and funding a matching grant program to help cover project costs to facilitate reuse and renovation of underutilized or vacant properties.
- Identify opportunities for increased use of Public-Private (P3) Partnerships in implementing redevelopment projects.
- Expand financial assistance programs offered through AAEDC and explore additional marketing strategies to promote the programs. A matching grant program

that could be used with the ACR loan program is one idea.

- Evaluate the need and feasibility of forming a Redevelopment Authority which can partner with both for-profit and non-profit developers to acquire underutilized or vacant properties for development.

Planning Initiatives:

- Conduct targeted redevelopment studies for key opportunity sites. The studies should include an assessment of the market potential of the area, community engagement with property owners and local stakeholders, and development of short and long term redevelopment and revitalization concepts for the study area. They can be done as a stand-alone initiative, or as part of corridor management plan or other planning effort.
- Provide annual funding in the Office of Planning and Zoning operating budget for consultant services to conduct revitalization studies such as targeted redevelopment studies.
- Take advantage of State funding and technical assistance programs that are available for revitalization projects in Sustainable Communities, such as the Community Legacy, Strategic Demolition Fund, Operating Assistance Grant, Community Safety and Enhancement, and Sidewalk Retrofit programs.
- Evaluate the use of overlays, form based ordinances, and adjustments to mixed use zoning districts for select areas as tools for facilitating redevelopment and revitalization.
- Consider whether different types or categories of Commercial Revitalization overlays should be established in the zoning ordinance, with development allowances and incentives tailored to each specific category (for example, some categories could be: main street corridor, community retail corridor, general commercial corridor, suburban shopping mall, etc.). As part of this assessment, evaluate whether the current allowance for redevelopment of commercial uses to high density residential uses is still appropriate for all of the overlay areas.
- Promote high quality design in revitalization areas through use of urban design standards and guidelines. There are various approaches that can be used to

establish development and design standards for specific commercial revitalization areas or for specific clusters of properties within a revitalization area. This can be done through targeted redevelopment studies, through future regional, small area, or town center plans, through individual corridor plans, or through adoption of a Commercial Revitalization Master Plan. Regardless of the approach, consider whether the standards can be codified through an overlay or other mechanism to ensure they are treated as requirements. (See example components for design standards in Appendix 1).

- Conduct or update market studies and retail analyses to identify current opportunities and gaps in the commercial mix of priority revitalization districts.
- Organize or engage existing civic associations to help implement initiatives, promote revitalization, and liaise with local officials. Civic groups may also carry out other identified programs such as neighborhood/business watch programs, volunteer service projects and nuisance abatement.

SHA Coordination:

Each of the existing nine Commercial Revitalization Areas is located along a State highway. While this presents opportunities for partnering with the State Highway Administration (SHA) on road and streetscape projects, it also presents challenges in that the County does not have sole authority for improvements along these corridors. Funding for State road improvements is very competitive across the State. Additionally, in most cases State design standards must be strictly adhered to, which may limit flexibility needed to address specific local concerns.

Two of the corridors have planned road improvements that are in varying stages of completion. These projects are critical to revitalization of the corridors, and the County should continue to include these as SHA priorities and to coordinate with the State toward completion.

- Mountain Road (MD 177) corridor: Complete the final design phase and continue to work with SHA to get additional funding for construction costs to implement the recommended corridor and intersection specific improvements for vehicular traffic as well as bicycle and pedestrian safety improvements.
- Annapolis Road (MD 175) corridor: Complete the final design and construction of this project which includes widening of the highway and installing a median, sidewalk, and shared-use path.

Appendix 1: Example Design Standards

Improving the visual quality of existing and new businesses in the County's Commercial Revitalization Districts is key to enhancing the image of these areas. An appealing environment of rehabilitated buildings, enticing window displays, and clean sidewalks creates an inviting setting for customers, tenants, and investors. The County's Small Area Plans stress the significance of good design in revitalizing commercial corridors and building community character, and many also include site-specific design studies and conceptual plans that establish policies for future development. The 2009 County General Development Plan also encourages placemaking by promoting urban design features that reflect community character in revitalization areas.

Through the administration of carefully drafted design standards, the County's commercial corridors could transform from clusters of strip malls into community commercial districts with a strong sense of place. The following recommendations are an example of the type of design standards that can guide developers, architects, and other design professionals for new construction and rehabilitation of existing properties in commercial revitalization districts. County staff, community groups, business owners and other stakeholders should expand and adapt these best practices to develop design standards that are more property-specific, detailed and representative of the character of each commercial district, where warranted.

Building Setbacks

Existing building setbacks in commercial revitalization districts vary widely. To unify the character along corridors and reinforce a pedestrian-friendly environment, infill construction and building renovations or additions should use a narrow front setback to better relate to the street and sidewalks.

- New construction should have a narrow front setback.
- Existing shopping centers and other businesses with deep front setbacks are encouraged to minimize the front setbacks by landscaping additions, building additions, infill construction, and building renovations.



Front setbacks should be minimized to create an urban character. Surface parking lots should be located on the side or rear of the property.

- Use front setbacks for pedestrian amenities such as seating, outdoor eating, public art, or a park setting.

Façade Articulation and Fenestration

The design of a building's exterior walls should contribute to a high-quality visual character of a commercial district and reinforce a human scale that is comfortable for pedestrians. Large, blank wall faces contribute to a barren, imposing, and uninviting character.

- Provide design features that break up large wall planes on exterior wall façades oriented toward the public street. Articulation such as wall projections, wall recesses, fake windows, projecting windows,



The exterior wall facades oriented towards the public street should be well articulated and transparent in character. The ground floor facades should be differentiated from upper stories by varying the materials, colors and sign bands.



An example of fast food restaurant that is well articulated and abuts the sidewalk.

overhangs, contrasting textures, and other design features add visual interest along the streetfront.

- Add window openings on all façades visible from public streets.

Parking and On-site Vehicle Circulation

Parked cars are the dominant visual element along many commercial corridors in the County. Many existing parking lots lack planting islands and pedestrian walkways, and multiple entries along the road present traffic and safety problems. Parking requirements should reflect an urban and pedestrian-friendly character. Parking should be deemphasized, but sufficient for the customer and employee needs of the properties.

- Locate on-site surface parking to the rear or side of buildings where possible. Avoid surface parking along the public street, on a major site entrance, or on corner lots abutting street intersections.
- Screen parking areas from public sidewalks and streets with an evergreen hedge, solid wall, or other ornamental architectural or landscape feature.
- Use shared parking agreements between adjoining property owners to meet parking requirements.
- Share entry points between adjacent property owners, where possible.
- Soften parking surfaces at car dealerships with landscape islands, planting strips between parking lots and the public streetscape, and ornamental architectural features.
- Include active uses such as shops, offices, or other public and residential spaces along the ground level of the street frontage of parking structures.



Surface parking lots should be screened from the public sidewalk by extensive landscaping and other architectural features like brick retaining walls and ornamental fences.



Structured parking along the public street should include active uses like restaurants, cafes, and offices on the first floor.

- Structured parking spaces should be architecturally consistent with the surrounding areas.
- Use pervious paving and other parking lot best management practices to promote environmentally sensitive and sustainable designs.

Signage

Effective signage advertises a business and contributes positively to the streetscape character. Haphazard placement of signage creates clutter, detracting from the visual appeal and character of the community.

- Limit the number, size and height of signs. All signs should complement their surroundings without competing with each other.

- New construction and renovation should develop a sign program that unifies the building signage through colors, typefaces and material.
- Limit signage to one per business on each street elevation. Repetitive signage information on the same building elevation is discouraged.
- Tall pole signs are discouraged in commercial revitalization districts.
- Design and scale monument signs to identify multiple tenants in a building or business owners in a shopping center.
- Develop creative and unique signage for businesses. The best signs convey a sense of place and reflect the character of either the business they advertise or the district in which the business is located.
- Banner signs are encouraged to add color, liveliness and texture to a sidewalk along the commercial corridor. Limit banner signs to community identification, events and seasonal decorations. All banners must be properly secured to buildings and/or light poles. Banners mounted flush to a building facade are not permitted for long-term use.
- Use durable, low-maintenance surfaces such as pavers and bricks to distinguish crosswalks and sidewalks from driving surfaces. Coordinate paving materials, colors, patterns and design throughout the commercial corridor for a unified character.
- Place street furniture like benches, trash cans and bike racks at strategic points including overlooks, transit stops, plazas, and restaurants. Use a coordinated design that reflects the community character. Orient furniture to avoid sidewalk clutter. Group vending machines along walls or in areas outside the direct flow of pedestrian traffic.
- Use pedestrian-scale light fixtures along sidewalks. Fixtures should range between 10 and 15 feet tall and emit warm light. Ensure a consistent style, size and placement along a block.
- Use well-designed lighting schemes to illuminate commercial building façades and signs and to provide visual interest along the streetscape. Coordinate sign lighting on all buildings with multiple storefronts. Shield lights to direct lighting onto target areas and avoid light spillover. Bare bulbs are prohibited.
- Strategically place civic art in pocket parks, plazas, and at district gateways to bolster a unique community identity.
- Use street trees to screen gaps along the edges of vacant lots, surface parking areas, and blank walls.

Streetscape

Many commercial corridors in the County lack lighting, furnishings, and connected pathways that create a safe, inviting setting for pedestrians. The following guidelines will reinforce the walkability of these areas.

- Provide sidewalks of at least 5' in width along public streets. Allow adequate clearance around obstacles such as trees, light poles, street furniture, and signage.



Commercial signs play an important role in the appearance commercial corridors.



All pedestrian crosswalks should be well marked. Banners, flags, flower baskets on the street lights, all add interest to the streetscape.



Commercial corridors should have wide, beautifully landscaped sidewalks. Sidewalks should be lit with pedestrian scaled lighting, and the maximum distance between sidewalk trees should be 30'.



Civic art should be well integrated into public activity spaces. Art stimulates the cultural life of the district. It promotes economic development, cultural tourism and commercial revitalization.