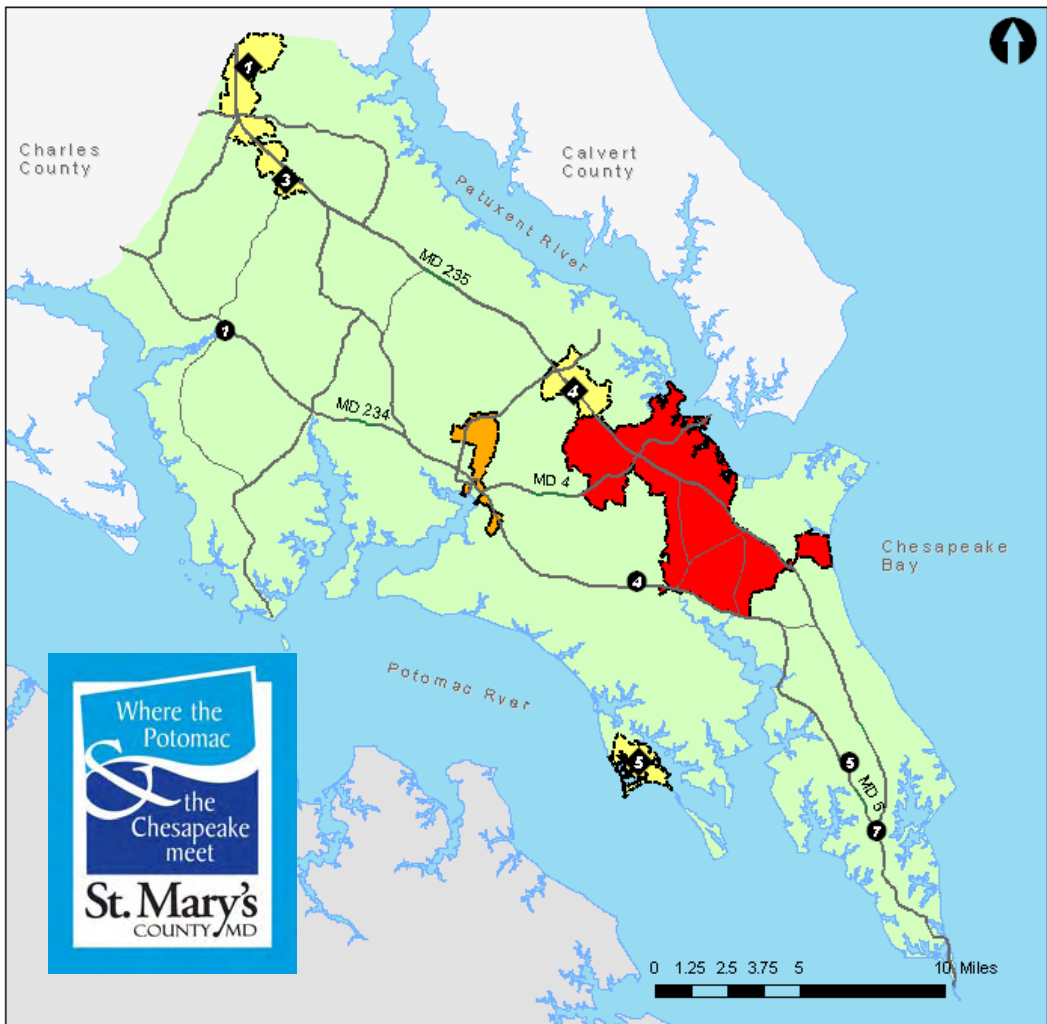


# ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Adopted: March 23, 2010

Effective: April 6, 2010

## QUALITY OF LIFE IN ST. MARY'S COUNTY — A STRATEGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY —

Prepared and adopted  
in accordance with  
Article 66B of the  
Annotated Code of Maryland

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2010-01  
Ordinance No. 39

Subject: Comprehensive Plan

Adoption by Board of County Commissioners

St. Mary's County  
Land Use & Growth Management

Page 1 of 2

ORDINANCE

**WHEREAS**, the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 66B, Section 3.05(b)(2), requires that at least once every 6 years, each planning commission shall review and, if necessary, revise or amend the local plan; and

**WHEREAS**, said Article 66B, Section 3.05(a)(4)(vi) requires a planning commission to make and approve a plan that the commission shall recommend to the local legislative body for adoption and that said plan shall contain a Water Resources Element; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to said Article 66B, Section 3.05(a)(8), and with the Agriculture Article, Section 2-518, a Priority Preservation Areas element must be included to further advance the purposes of the plan; and

**WHEREAS**, in April 2008 the Board of County Commissioners directed the St. Mary's County Planning Commission (hereinafter the Planning Commission) and the Department of Land Use and Growth Management (hereinafter DLUGM) to proceed with the review and revision of the 2002 St. Mary's County Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, interagency and community meetings were conducted in June and July of 2008 for the purpose of gathering input from citizens for the review of the Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, a Public Hearing Draft Comprehensive Plan was assembled and dated April 13, 2009 (hereinafter called the Draft Plan) by DLUGM with direction from the Planning Commission, and included, among other components, a Water Resources Element and a Priority Preservation Areas Element; and

**WHEREAS**, at least 60 days prior to a public hearing, the Planning Commission did provide copies of the Draft Plan to all adjoining planning jurisdictions and to all State and local jurisdictions that have responsibility for financing or constructing public improvements necessary to implement the plan, as required by Section 3.07(c) of said Article 66B; and

**WHEREAS**, in May 2009 letters were sent to the owners of properties potentially affected by proposals within the Draft Plan to reduce the size and status of growth areas defined by the 2002 Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, public hearings on the Draft Plan were duly advertised and conducted by the Planning Commission on June 22, 2009, July 13, 2009 and July 27, 2009; and

**WHEREAS**, the public record was closed on August 3, 2009; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission conducted work sessions in August and September 2009 during meetings that were duly announced and open to the public for the purpose of evaluating the public record; and

**WHEREAS**, instructions were given to DLUGM staff to prepare a revised plan for review and acceptance by the Planning Commission at its regular meeting of September 28, 2009; and

**WHEREAS**, at said meeting of September 28 the Planning Commission gave final instruction to DLUGM staff to transmit a recommended plan to the Board of County Commissioners; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission authorized the Chair to sign PC Resolution No. 09-05 to formally convey to the Board of County Commissioners for St. Mary's County (hereinafter the "Board") its recommended draft of a Comprehensive Plan for St. Mary's County dated September 28, 2009 (hereinafter the "Recommended Plan"); and

RECORDING FEE 0.00

**WHEREAS**, at its October 6, 2009 meeting, the Board received the Recommended Plan and instructed DLUGM to schedule public hearings thereon; and

TOTAL 0.00

**WHEREAS**, following due notice published in the October 9, 2009 and October 14, 2009 editions of *The Enterprise*, a newspaper of general circulation in St. Mary's County, public hearings on the Recommended Plan were conducted by the Board on October 29, 2009, on November 5, 2009 and on November 17, 2009; and

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**WHEREAS**, between December 2009 and March 2010 the Board conducted work sessions during meetings that were duly announced and open to the public for the purpose of evaluating the Recommended Plan and public record; and

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**WHEREAS**, following the work sessions and having diligently considered the public record, the Board gave specific instruction to DLUGM to make certain revisions in the Recommended Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, on March 23, 2010 the Board accepted and approved the Recommended Plan as modified pursuant to the Board's deliberations and specific instructions.

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDAINED** by the Board of County Commissioners for St. Mary's County that the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Plan be repealed and readopted as recommended by the St. Mary's County Planning Commission and as revised and presented to the Board this 23<sup>rd</sup> Day of March, 2010.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** by the Board of County Commissioners for St. Mary's County that, in the event any portion of the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Plan, is found to be unconstitutional, illegal, null or void, it is the intent of the Board of County Commissioners to sever only the invalid portion or provision, and that the remainder of the Plan shall be enforceable and valid.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** by the Board of County Commissioners for St. Mary's County that the foregoing recitals are adopted as if fully rewritten herein.

**BE IT FURTHER ORDAINED** by the Board of County Commissioners for St. Mary's County that this enactment shall be effective on the date written below.

Those voting Aye: 4

Those voting Nay: 1 (Jarboe)

DATE OF ADOPTION: 3/23/10

EFFECTIVE DATE: 4/6/10

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
ST. MARY'S COUNTY, MARYLAND**

*Francis J. Russell*  
Francis J. Russell, Commissioner President

*Kenneth R. Dement*  
Kenneth R. Dement, Commissioner

*Lawrence D. Jarboe*  
Lawrence D. Jarboe, Commissioner

*Thomas A. Mattingly, Sr.*  
Thomas A. Mattingly, Sr., Commissioner

*Daniel H. Raley*  
Daniel H. Raley, Commissioner

ATTEST  
*John Savich*  
John Savich  
County Administrator

APPROVE AS TO FORM AND LEGAL SUFFICIENCY:  
*Christy Holt-Chesser*  
Christy Holt-Chesser  
County Attorney

# THE ST. MARY’S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## **Chapter 1: TRENDS**

### **1.1 A PROFILE OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY**

The County may be described as a Chesapeake Bay peninsula, an early American settlement, a farming community, the site of the Patuxent River Naval Air Station, the outer edge of the Washington, D.C. commutershed, and a regional recreational resource. How do these characteristics influence development?

#### *1.1.1 A Chesapeake Bay Peninsula*

St. Mary's County is bordered on the west by the Wicomico River, on the south by the Potomac River, on the east by the Chesapeake Bay, and on the northeast by the Patuxent River. With over 400 miles of shoreline, 18.3% (43,700 acres) of the County's land area is within 1,000 feet of tidal waters, or within the "critical area" defined under Maryland's Chesapeake Bay Critical Area laws. St. Mary's County ranks fourth among Maryland counties in critical area acreage. Water based recreation and marine economics play a significant part in attracting new residents and visitors to the County.

As the southernmost point in Maryland on the Chesapeake Bay's western shore, the County had been relatively isolated from the pressures of growth in the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan areas. Its links with these metropolitan areas are limited to the Thomas Johnson Bridge to Calvert County, and state highway routes 5, 6 and 234 to Charles County. Expansion of the Patuxent River Naval Air Station has reduced this isolation and the County is now a major employment destination. Metropolitan residents have discovered the rural farms and forests of the St. Mary's countryside, and the relatively low cost waterfront land, summer resort communities, and the recreational access along the rivers, creeks and coves of this peninsula County.

#### *1.1.2 An Early American Settlement*

St. Mary's County, Mother County of Maryland, was settled by English colonists, who landed at St. Clement's Island in the spring of 1634. Leonard Calvert carried with him a charter granted by King Charles I, transferring to the Calvert family all the lands surrounding the Chesapeake Bay. St. Mary's City served as the first capital of Maryland until 1695 when the capital was moved to Annapolis. Leonardtown, the County seat and only incorporated municipality, was settled in 1660. Until the Civil War, the town served as an important tobacco trading post.

The County abounds in sites and structures of historic interest; 31 are listed on the National Register of Historic Places and 779 on the Maryland Inventory of Historic Sites. While many of these resources have been preserved because of the County's relative isolation, they are threatened by the projected growth and development activity. The County's Historic Preservation Commission has been active since 1993 in documenting sites before they are lost, increasing the inventory to 890. In addition, three historic districts have been created.

Historic Preservation Guidelines were completed in 2002 and the County was awarded Certified Local Government status by the Maryland Historic Trust. Through cooperative efforts with planners throughout the Tri-County Southern Maryland, a number of tobacco barns were listed on the National Historic Trust's Eleven Most Endangered Historic Places in 2004, resulting in a \$200,000 grant from Save America's Treasures Fund for restoring tobacco barns. In 2007 the County received a grant from the State Highway Administration to draft a corridor management plan for the Religious Freedom Scenic Byway. While many historic resources have been preserved, the reduction in the County's relative isolation and continued development continue to endanger many of these resources.

### 1.1.3 *A Farming Community*

The 2007 Census of Agriculture reported 68,648 acres of land in farms within St. Mary's County. This accounted for approximately 29.7% of the County's total land area and represented an increase from 68,153 acres or 29.5% of the total land area reported in the 2002 census. The major farm crops are corn, soybeans, wheat, hay and barley. Some of the farms in the northwest portion of the County are operated by the Amish and Mennonite communities, whose farmers market is well known in the region. Farming represents a valued way of life. It is these farms and the extensive areas of forest, which provide the rural character so valued by old and new residents of the County.

Farmland, which is typically flat and well drained, generally proves easy to convert to residential development. The proximity of much of the County's farmland to Three Notch Road increases its susceptibility to development pressures. If farming is to be retained as an important County industry and way of life over the coming decades, it will be necessary to enhance and enforce controls to protect existing farms and areas with highly productive soils from suburban sprawl. It will also be necessary to provide and promote incentives for continued use of these lands for farming purposes. Also important will be to maintain levels of farming activities that will support the kinds of farm supply centers necessary for day-to-day agricultural operations.

Agricultural preservation efforts in the County have consisted of participation in the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Program. As of January 2008, 17,815 acres have been enrolled under the Tax Credit Program for properties placed in a five-year Agricultural Land Preservation District (ALPD). The total agricultural land permanently preserved is 13,778.2 acres as follows:

	Acres
Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) (78 Properties)	8,473.0
Patuxent Tidewater Land Trust utilizing the Rural Legacy (11 Properties)	2,860.0
Maryland Historic Trust (Bachelors Hope)	303.0
Maryland Environmental Trust (11 Properties)	2,142.2
Total as of January 2008	13,778.2

### 1.1.4 *The Home of a Premier Aircraft Testing and Evaluation Facility*

The Navy is a significant presence in St. Mary's County. The 6,384 acre Patuxent River Naval Air Station (NAS), commissioned in April 1943, and its annex at Webster Field, test and evaluate aircraft and related systems. The station is unique in that it has access to 50,000 square miles of airspace for test flights, heavy duty runways of 12,000 feet, as well as of 9,700 feet and 6,400 feet, 18 hangar bays, three seaplane basins, operating lanes in the Patuxent River and Chesapeake Bay, and easy access to the Nation's Capital. The NAS is home to the Naval Air Systems Command Headquarters (NavAir), the Air Test Wing Atlantic Command, and the Naval Air Warfare Center Aircraft Division Command and other defense related activities.

The NAS experienced tremendous growth from the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) decisions in the 1990s. The facility employs approximately 22,000 military, civilians, and defense contractors. Not only is this facility the County's largest employer, but many of these jobs are high technology, highly-skilled positions with average annual salaries in excess of \$75,000 per year. The new income associated with the base expansion has dramatically increased the purchasing power of the Southern Maryland region and spurred successive rounds of economic development in real estate, retail trade, health care and business services. With over 230 high-tech defense contractors, the County has emerged as a world-class center for maritime aviation research, development, testing and evaluation.

### 1.1.5 *The Outer Edge of the Washington, D.C. Commutershed*

From relative isolation prior to the 1990s, St. Mary County has come to be among the fastest growing counties in Maryland. Population growth, as estimated by the Maryland Department of Planning (table below), reflects a 17.8% increase from 86,211 in the 2000 Census to 101,578 as of July 1, 2008. Population increases averaged 1,920 annually from Census 2000, passing the 100,000 mark as of July 1, 2007.

St. Mary's County	2000 Census	estimated 7/1/00	estimated 7/1/01	estimated 7/1/02	estimated 7/1/03	estimated 7/1/04	estimated 7/1/05	estimated 7/1/06	estimated 7/1/07	estimated 7/1/08
Population	86,211	86,532	87,455	89,907	92,555	94,898	96,868	98,854	100,378	101,578

St. Mary's County continues to remain an "outer edge" of Washington, D.C. In April 2008 its total civilian labor force was reported at 51,500, with 49,595 employed and 1,905 unemployed. The unemployment rate, 3.7% in 2008, continues to be well below the national average. Approximately 75% of the County's labor force is employed at the Naval Air Station or base related companies. Within the Washington-Baltimore metropolitan area, this is the highest percentage of employees working within the County in which they reside. Continuing employment opportunities within the County are keeping the number of employees commuting to Washington, D.C. consistently below the 5% required to qualify as a commuter shed.

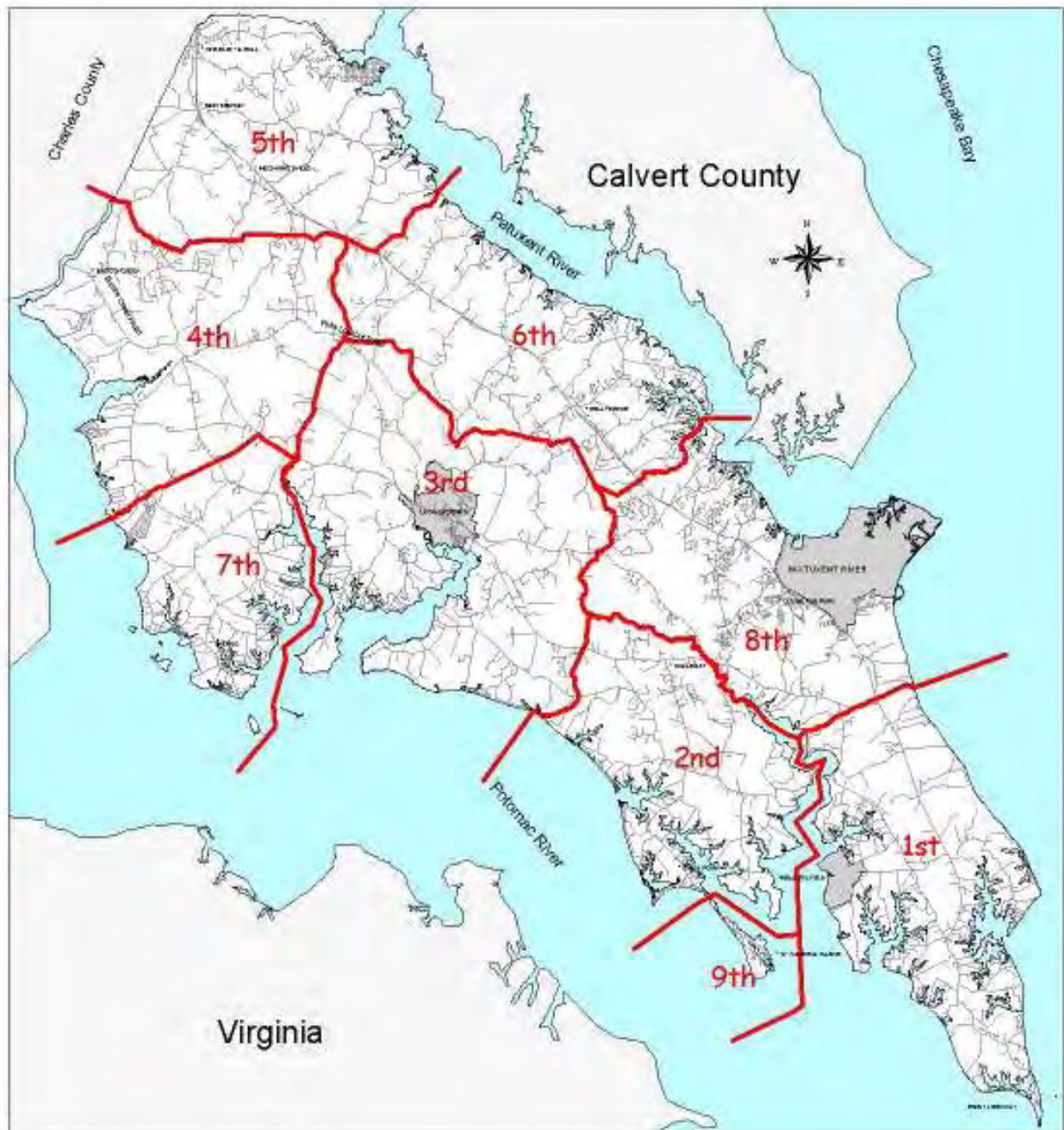
### 1.1.6 *A Regional Historical and Recreational Resource*

St. Mary's County is rich in natural scenic beauty and abounds in sites of historic interest. Its diverse cultural activities augment the appeal of the County to the visiting public. By far the most important fixed visitor destinations in the County are Point Lookout State Park, historic St. Mary's City and Sotterley Manor. Events such as the air exposition at the Naval Air Station in the spring, the Blessing of the Fleet, the Crab Festival and the Oyster Festival in the fall also attract large numbers of people. The Amish Market in Charlotte Hall operates twice weekly and is a significant cultural and focal point. Less formal destinations for residents and visitors include commercial and private marinas, and fishing charter operations located along the creeks and rivers that feed into the Patuxent and Potomac Rivers and the Chesapeake Bay.

Both Point Lookout and St. Mary's City are located at or toward the southeastern tip of the County. This means that visitors to these destinations are drawn through the entire length of the peninsula in order to reach them. While this provides opportunity for purveyors of commercial services to tap the visitor stream, it also means that the County must make certain that roads leading there are kept in good order, from both traffic handling and attractiveness standpoints. The Village of Ridge represents a prime opportunity to capitalize on the needs of the visiting public such as dining locations, fishing equipment, camping supplies, and lodging. Recognizing and accommodating its potential as a developing village center would greatly enhance the economy of this end of the County.

Calvert, Charles and St. Mary's Counties are linked by a circuit of visitor destinations and attractions. They coordinated their efforts to become a designated Heritage Area and adopted the Southern Maryland Heritage Area Plan. This made the three counties eligible for grants, loans, and other benefits. The Plan addresses riverside towns and rolling farmlands with 2,000 sites listed in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties and almost 100 structures listed in the National Register of Historic Places. From the pre-historic culture of the Chesapeake Bay region and the early settlement of the British colonists aboard The Ark and The Dove, the Plan includes the earliest footholds of religious freedom, the colonists' co-existence with the native Indians, the booming prosperity of the tobacco plantations in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the unique culture of watermen and boat builders. The Plan serves to protect and preserve these valuable resources unique to the character and history of the Southern Maryland counties. It identifies 63 sites and

activities in St. Mary's County including historic, cultural, natural, and recreational centers.



# Election Districts

**Election District Legend**

-  Election District Boundary
-  Roads

St. Mary's County is a nationally, and perhaps internationally, recognized center of excellence in sailing, as the St. Mary's College team has won 12 national championships and produced more than 100 collegiate All-American sailors since 1991. The annual Governor's Cup Regatta, that ends in St. Mary's City, is an important highlight of the national sailing season.

## 1.2 THE DYNAMICS OF CHANGE.

### 1.2.1 *Population*

Census 2000 revealed that the County's population had grown by 13.5% since 1990 to some 86,211 residents. The Maryland Department of Planning estimated that the population increased by 1,920 annually through 2008, reaching the 100,000 mark by July 2007. Projections for year 2030 (see table below) anticipate a population of 151,500, roughly double the 1990 population. The greatest concentration of population remains in the 8th election district, that includes Lexington Park, California, and Great Mills. Significant concentrations of population are also found in Election Districts 3 (which includes Leonardtown and Loveville), 4 (which includes Country Lakes and Wicomico Shores), 5 (which includes Charlotte Hall and Mechanicsville), and 6 (which includes Hollywood). As the County's population continues to grow, only these areas are expected to remain as major population centers. Lesser concentrations will continue to be found in Election District 1 (which includes Ridge), and in Election District 2 (which includes Piney Point). The population will remain more widely dispersed throughout the remainder of the County.

#### **Population Projection**

Year	Total Households	Population	Percent change from 1990
1990	25,500	75,974	
2000	30,642	86,211	13.5%
2005	35,050	96,450	27.0%
2010	38,875	105,400	38.7%
2015	44,450	118,200	55.6%
2020	49,350	130,100	71.2%
2025	53,950	141,150	85.8%
2030	58,175	151,500	99.4%

Source: Maryland Department of Planning, February 2009

The projected age distribution of the population shows an aging population. In 2010, the segment of the population age 65+ is projected to increase by 3,785 persons since the 2000 census level of 7,825, an increase of 48.4%. This age group will then represent over 11% of the population. By 2030 those aged 65+ are expected to number 30,230 and represent 20% of the total population. Conversely, the percentage of children is expected to drop. The 2000 census showed the age-19-and-under population to be 26,620 or 30.9 % of the total. By 2030 this age group is expected to number 40,570, comprising 26.8 % of the total population. .

### 1.2.2 *Land Use*

St. Mary's County contains approximately 231,280 acres of land area. As of 2002, 51% of the land was forested, and 26% was in agriculture. The acreage of land in agriculture decreased from 71,920 acres in 1997 to 68,153 acres in 2002, a decrease of 5.5 %. The number of farms also decreased from 658 in 1997 to 577 in 2002. The average farm size increased from 109 acres in 1997 to 118 acres in 2002. The Maryland Department of Planning reported a 5.7% loss in forestland from 125,706 acres in 1997 to 118,502 acres in 2002. Although developed land represents only 21% of the total land area, from a trend perspective, the amount of developed land has dramatically increased by 30.4% from 1997 to 2002.

<b>Distribution by Land Use</b>		
Land Use	Acres	Percent Of County
Low Density Residential	31,773	13.8 %
Medium/High Density Residential	5,814	2.5 %
Commercial/Industrial	3,597	1.6 %
Institutional/Extractive/Open	7,057	3.1 %
Developed Land Subtotal	48,241	20.9 %
Agriculture	60,307	26.1 %
Forest	118,502	51.3 %
Barren	862	.4 %
Wetland	2,887	1.3 %
Resource Land Subtotal	182,558	79.1 %
<b>TOTAL LAND AREA</b>	<b>230,799</b>	<b>100 %</b>

Source: Maryland Department of Planning Generalized Land Use/Land Cover Inventory, 2002

In particular, low-density residential development (less than 2 units per acre) is the most rapidly increasing category, growing by 40% from 1997 to 2002. This type of residential development is very land consumptive and threatens to impact this valuable natural resource acreage. In fact, the 9,074 acre increase in low density residential development from 1997 to 2002 constitutes 78.2% of the 11,600 acres of forest and agricultural land lost during the same time period.

Sprawl is a state-wide and even a national phenomenon. When it spreads across the landscape, it can destroy wildlife habitat, overrun farm lands, displace valuable streamside forests, threaten wetlands, contribute to air pollution, and increase the runoff of sediment, nutrients, and toxins into local waterways and the Bay. Sprawl results from poor or inadequate planning for new growth. The population within the Chesapeake Bay watershed is expected to increase by 3 million by 2030. Maryland will receive 1.1 million of this new population in 411,000 new households. At current rates of residential usage, this will result in a significant loss of resource lands to development and threaten to increase runoff contamination of the Bay.

The Maryland Department of Planning has analyzed current growth trends throughout the state and estimates that 95 acres of agricultural/forest land are lost for each 100 new households created. Under the "Smart Growth" scenario, only 8 acres of resource lands are consumed to create the same 100 households. By concentrating growth in development districts, more rural acreage will be retained, and there will be the opportunity to preserve a significant amount of this area for future generations.

### 1.2.3 *Employment*

Between 2001 and 2006 the County labor force grew 17.3% to a total of 59,487. This is significantly higher than the state wide increase of 9.1% and slightly higher than neighboring Charles County's 17.0% increase. Calvert County's labor force increased by 23.0% during this same time period. It is projected that the labor force will grow to over 77,600 by the year 2030. This will be approximately the same size as that of Charles County and approximately 30,000 more than Calvert County.

The expansion of the NAS and related contractors resulted in significant economic growth and employment opportunities. In 2007 the base's workforce was approximately 22,200. The average salary was \$75,000 with a total annual payroll of \$500 million. Two-thirds of the workforce resided in St. Mary's County. In addition to the 22,200 employees, the base hosted just over 300,000 visitors. The estimated economic impact on Maryland was \$2.3 billion. The

NAS expansion has contributed to a downward trend in the average unemployment rate to a low of 3.1% in 2007. The unemployment rate has been consistently below the state and national averages since 2002.

While still not considered within the District of Columbia commutershed, the relative isolation that St. Mary's County enjoys, and that fosters the rural environment so highly valued by its residents, is beginning to diminish with changes in commuting patterns resulting from increased employment opportunities from NAS-related activities. The Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) reported that St. Mary's County had the eighth fastest rate of job growth at 17.3% over the 2001 to 2006 period with a net gain of 8,759 jobs. Per capita personal income increased from \$29,152 in 2001 to \$35,120 in 2006. Despite this increase, St. Mary's County ranked 15th of the Maryland counties with both Calvert and Charles Counties having higher per capita personal incomes.

Approximately 95% of the County's working population is in the civilian labor force (CLF), that does not include military personnel. The Maryland Department of Planning has reported that 74.3% of the County's CLF was employed in St. Mary's County in 2000. In comparison, Calvert and Charles Counties had 39.4% and 40.2% respectively working in their counties. Of the remaining 25.7% of the St. Mary's County CLF, 18.3% work in other Maryland counties, and 7.4% work outside of Maryland. In 2000, the County CLF was reported to have increased by 5495 workers since 1990, a 15.3% increase. The statewide increase was 6.3% for the same period. Total jobs are expected to increase by 29.9% between 2000 and 2010 compared to 15.2% for the entire state during the same period.

#### 1.2.4 *Housing*

The 1990 census showed 27,830 housing units in St. Mary's County. By 2000 this number had increased by 22.5% to 34,801 units. Future housing needs are determined by population growth, vacancy rates and size of household trends. The County vacancy rate in 1990 was 8.5%, and in 2000 it was 10.1%. The average number of persons per household changed from 2.87 in 1990 to 2.72 in 2000. A reduction in the number of persons per household results in the need for more dwelling units to accommodate the same population. The number of households increased to 30,624 in 2000, and is projected to increase to approximately 39,825 by 2010.

In 2002 The Board of County Commissioners contracted with the Danter Company to complete a report on housing adequacy. The Danter study, released in 2003 stated that development trends in the County were not affordable for a significant portion of the population. More than 3/4 of the jobs in St. Mary's County did not pay enough for people to afford to rent or buy a home. The study also found that the rental housing stock was inadequate, both in quantity and quality. Over 60% of the rental units were built before 1990. In comparison with other parts of the country, the quality of housing in St. Mary's County was not only lower, but also priced above the rental level typical of higher-quality housing. The Danter study concluded that there was an urgent need for modern rental housing and affordable ownership housing including single family homes, manufactured housing and condominium development.

In 2007, a community based workforce housing task force found that in 2003 the average price of a home was approximately \$200,000, and that in 2007 the average price was \$337,500.

#### 1.2.5 *Community Facilities*

A general purpose of this plan is to ensure that public facilities and services are adequate for current and future populations. Among other objectives, County Government must identify and secure sufficient lands to accommodate new or expanded facilities. It must preserve transportation corridors through formal mapping as allowed by state statute. An overview of

facilities follows.

#### A. Parks

Parks and recreation planning and acquisition goals are established in the County's Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP). As of the 2005 edition of the LPPRP, there are 4 state parks, 20 regional and community parks, and 4 indoor recreation centers. In addition, public schools provide 22 facilities used by the public for recreation. Other major facilities include the Great Mills swimming pool, the Wicomico Shores golf course and clubhouse, the Three Notch Trail hiker/biker route, and 22 State and County-owned water access points. There is a total of 9,100 acres of recreational land in St. Mary's County (2,100 County and 7,000 State). In preparing the LPPRP in 2005, the County conducted a needs analysis, comparing recreation facility supply to demand. Sizable deficits existed for a number of facilities. These deficits will increase through 2020 and beyond as the population increases unless facilities are programmed and developed to keep pace. The most significant deficits were for baseball/softball diamonds, multipurpose fields for team sports, indoor facilities for basketball, volley ball, etc., pedestrian and bike trails, and fishing areas. An analysis was also made of population and demand for recreation land by sub-areas of the County. Projecting the acreage needs out to 2020, the greatest needs will be in Election Districts 8 and 5, followed by Districts 3, 6, and 1. St. Mary's County's goal for land acquisition is the default State recommended goal of 30 acres per 1,000 population. As of 2005, the County is short of this goal by a little over 1,000 acres. If no more land is acquired and the population increases as projected, the deficit will increase to over 1,600 acres by 2020. Considerable recreation land exists in the County, which, under the State's guidelines, may not be counted towards meeting the goal. In 2008 and 2009 the State and County acquired three large properties known as the Hayden (Leonardtown), Beaven (California) and Maryland Province Society of Jesus (Jesuit) properties (St. Inigoes and Newtowne Neck). These acquisitions will contribute to fully meeting recreational goals.

#### B. Schools

Total public school enrollment increased by 802 students or 5.2% between 2002 and 2007. The greatest increase occurred at the high school level (grades 9-12), increasing by 544 students or 11.5%. The middle school (grades 6-8) enrollment increased by 31 students or 0.8% and the elementary school (grades K-5) enrollment increased by 227 students or 3.3% for this same time period. The school system continues to show a constant positive growth trend.

Based on spring 2008 enrollment projections, system-wide the elementary schools are in a period of increasing enrollments. A steady increase is expected through 2018 that will exceed the available capacity. Even with the completion of Evergreen Elementary School in 2009, two additional new elementary schools are planned to meet student capacity needs.

Middle school enrollments are currently static and have not exceeded the overall capacity of the four schools. Beginning in 2011, an increase in enrollment is projected as the currently expanding elementary school population "bubble" passes through the middle school grades. Projections indicate that the enrollment will begin to level off again beginning in 2017. A significant shortfall of middle school seats is expected by 2013. Based on this, a new middle school is slated for planning approval in 2015.

At the high school level, enrollments are expected to be steady through 2012. This could be followed by four years of declining enrollments, followed by increases beginning in 2016. Enrollment projections will be monitored to determine the need for a new high school in the future.

Non-public school enrollment was 3,006 in September 2007, representing 15.1% of the County's total school enrollment. There are 33 private schools in the County.



The Southern Maryland Higher Education Center (SMHEC), located on a 24 acre site in the Wildewood Professional and Technology Park, was established by the State of Maryland in 1994 to provide a regional facility with state of the art technology to serve the university and professional training needs of the Southern Maryland region. In 2009, the Center hosted almost 70 graduate university degree programs and almost 20 bachelor completion degree programs, presented in their entirety at SMHEC by eleven university partners in the professional fields of engineering; education; management; clinical and community counseling, and school counseling; criminal justice and law enforcement; information technology; business administration; engineering technology; technical management; communications; and human resources, financial, health care, marketing and project management. During a typical school year, about 250 seminars are held at the Center, with about 3,000 class enrollments.

The College of Southern Maryland (CSM) is a two-year, fully accredited, public, regional community college. Total continuing education students in 2007 totaled 12,000, about 3,600 of whom were from St. Mary's County. The Leonardtown campus includes labs for advanced technology, electronics, chemistry, physics, biology, microbiology / anatomy, and physiology.

St. Mary's College of Maryland, established in 1840, is a four-year, fully accredited, public, secular liberal arts college located in St. Mary's City, Maryland. It occupies 47 buildings on a 319-acre campus on the St. Mary's River. It is a member of the Council of Public Liberal Arts Colleges and designated as a Public Honors College (the only one in the state of Maryland and one of few around the U.S.). Average enrollment is about 2,000 students. The institution offers baccalaureate degrees in 22 disciplines, of which psychology, biology, and economics are among the most popular. The institution also offers one postgraduate degree, a Masters of Arts in Teaching. Much of its campus is shared with Historic St. Mary's City, the fifth site of colonization in British North America and one of the premier archaeological sites on the East Coast.

### C. Water Resources and Wastewater Treatment Facilities

Potable water is provided by four aquifers: the Piney Point-Nanjemoy, Aquia, Magothy, and Patapsco. Historically the County has withdrawn a majority of its groundwater from the Aquia and Piney Point-Nanjemoy aquifers. A report by the Maryland Geological Survey (MGS) in 2001 indicates that computer simulations of projected draw-downs of the Aquia aquifer, particularly in the Country Lakes area, could approach its limit by 2020. In 2005, MGS reported that the Patapsco aquifer is of excellent quality and should provide adequate supply through 2030 based on current County population projections. The St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission has enacted a policy that requires new public wells to utilize the Patapsco aquifer to relieve stress on the Aquia.

Groundwater resources have been and are expected to be adequate to meet the needs of a growing population through 2030. Reservoirs are not a viable option for supplying drinking water in St. Mary's County. There are four wastewater treatment plants in the County: Leonardtown and Marlay-Taylor, which serve the Leonardtown and Lexington Park development districts respectively, and St. Clements Shores and Wicomico Shores that serve these neighborhood conservation districts. The St. Clements Shores and Wicomico Shores wastewater treatment facilities are currently at capacity with no plans for expansion. The Leonardtown and Marlay-Taylor facilities are planning expansions that will accommodate projected demand through 2030. The Marlay Taylor Water Reclamation Facility is to be upgraded for enhanced nutrient removal (ENR), and facility expansion will be planned or designed approximately 2013, with expansion construction anticipated by approximately 2015 or 2016.

#### D. Solid Waste

The County maintains State permits for both a Solid Waste Transfer Station and Processing Facility and a Landfill Expansion located at the St. Andrews Landfill property. These primary contingency plans may be utilized once long-hauling waste and out-of-county is no longer feasible or is otherwise discontinued. Currently, the landfill property is not used for landfill operations, but is utilized as a homeowner drop-off site for residential bulk waste and recyclables. Items are sorted and placed in dedicated areas and the materials are then transported to various solid waste and recycling acceptance facilities. To serve the solid waste disposal needs of a growing population, this plan calls for a County permitted transfer station. Such a facility will utilize the productive capacity of private enterprise for the collection, disposal, and disposition of solid waste and will assure the public is served by an efficient, effective, economical, and well managed solid waste disposal program.

Both the County and private firms provide collection services in the County. St. Mary's County owns and operates six convenience centers where residents may drop off waste, recyclables, used motor oil, and antifreeze. Businesses may also use them for dropping off recyclables only. Residents not wanting to use the convenience centers can contract with one of the permitted private haulers in the County.

The system of six convenience centers and the St. Andrews Landfill bulk waste drop-off site provides adequate service for disposal and collection of residential waste and recyclables for residents who prefer not to contract with a private hauler or who live in rural areas where commercial haulers do not offer service. As usage increases, convenience centers will be modified and/or expanded. The County does not presently plan to establish additional convenience centers.

#### E. Transportation

The dominant mode of personal transportation in St. Mary's County is the private automobile and the vast majority of travel occurs on public roads and highways. In addition, most of the goods produced or consumed in the County are hauled by truck or horse-drawn buggy over these same roadways. However, recent rising fuel prices and traffic congestion are forcing a new look at other alternative modes of mobility. Although the railroad that once served this area is long gone and is not likely to return, its right-of-way is being maintained for a possible future light rail extension from Waldorf to Lexington Park. Daily commuter transit service to the D.C. area is well utilized and ridership has increased over the years. Local transit service is provided through the St. Mary's Transit System that has also experienced an increase in ridership. While the automobile has long been the preferred mode of transportation in St. Mary's County, this plan encourages efforts to lessen dependence on the automobile. As noted, mass transit service, bicycling, and horse-drawn buggy traffic have increased and should be further supported.

Population increase and economic growth are typically accompanied by an increase in traffic volumes and highway - related commercial activities competing for visibility and access. The result has been significant peak use problems of congestion, delays and slower speeds, especially within the Three Notch Road (MD 235) corridor. Major efforts have been made to lessen traffic congestion on Three Notch Road (MD 235) and other roads serving the Lexington Park Development District where development is concentrated to encourage people to "live where they work" and to facilitate walking or biking to their place of employment. This helps lessen the number of cars on the roadways.

In order to meet present and future transportation needs of the County in a coordinated and efficient way, not only for today but into the future, an integrated transportation plan was

adopted in 2006. A five (5) year Transportation Development Plan (TDP) was approved in October 2007 by the Maryland Transit Administration to enhance and improve public transit services operated by the County. Failure to adequately plan for the future will result in higher future transportation operational and improvement costs, reduced traffic safety, increased air pollution, reduced economic viability, and a lower quality of life for all County residents.

### **1.3 QUALITY OF LIFE**

What makes St. Mary's County a desirable place in which to live, work and play? What are the challenges we face to maintain/improve the quality of life? To answer these questions, the County retained the services of Milton Herd, President of Herd Planning and Design, Ltd to facilitate local planning and public consensus building sessions. His mission was to obtain input for revisions to the 2002 Comprehensive Plan. On June 11, 2008, an interagency charrette was held at the St. Mary's County Airport to gain input from government department representatives and community leaders. This was followed in July by a series of five community meetings to solicit citizen opinion.

Concerns were expressed about development trends, funding priorities, environmental impacts, and economic issues. Most stated their interest in maintaining the quality of life they have long enjoyed. Comments indicated a continued consensus that there are many features and characteristics of the County that make it a good place to live and warrant preservation. The widest recognition was given to the value of the County's rural character, natural resources, and historic features. Also very highly valued were employment opportunities and access to nearby metropolitan areas. Considerable importance was attributed to the clean environment, ease of internal movement, outdoor recreation, educational opportunities and the relaxed lifestyle. Participants mentioned sense of community, which is enriched by ethnic and cultural diversity. Valued as positive features were proximity and access to the waterfront, tourism opportunities, and the Naval Air Station.

Recommended changes and improvements derived from these inputs included limitation of sprawl development, improvement of the transportation system, and the revitalization of Lexington Park. The need to provide growth area infrastructure, especially public sewer, was emphasized to support development where intended. The consensus of opinions strongly favored guiding future growth away from rural areas. Recommendations included containment of development within existing growth areas and enhancement of agricultural land and sensitive areas preservation programs. In some cases, adjustments to growth area boundaries were suggested to better facilitate growth while lessening the impact to sensitive areas.

A consistent subject in need of improvement was transportation. Many participants supported specific road improvements that are currently planned or underway, including the Pegg Road extension and completion of FDR Boulevard; there was also support for evaluating the potential environmental impacts of these projects. There was broad support for improved bicycle and pedestrian lanes and trails. There were also multiple mentions of the need for additional park and ride lots and improved mass transportation. Several participants suggested ambitious ideas such as ferry service and new bridges crossing the rivers. Others advocated the need for improved access management for major thoroughfares and the need for traffic calming devices such as roundabouts. The Patuxent Beach Road corridor (MD 4 to the Thomas Johnson Bridge) and Leonardtown bypass were also identified as major traffic system improvement needs.

The need for new services and facilities was also expressed at the meetings, particularly for new or expanded library facilities. Several participants cited the need for new or expanded recreational facilities, including parks, water access (including expanded parking), swimming beaches, and an arts center. By far, the most frequently listed need was for expanded sewer service to serve growth areas, particularly in the northern part of the County.

There was not a lot of fundamental disagreement among participants about the County's major growth management policies. What conflict did emerge centered mainly on the level of priority for growth that should be assigned to the Charlotte Hall and Piney Point Town Centers. There was also some minor disagreement about the benefit of the Pegg Road extension. At least one participant expressed fear that it could undermine existing businesses in Lexington Park by providing a de facto "by-pass". Finally, there were some relatively minor disagreements about the specific edges of the Lexington Park and Leonardtown development districts pertaining to whether, where, and how much they should be expanded or contracted. This area of conflict, however, was relatively small in the context of the whole County, and involves fairly precise details, rather than a fundamental policy approach.

Overall, those who participated in the meetings were civil, enthusiastic, and well-informed about growth, development, and preservation in the County. The discussions were constructive and positive, with little debate. Despite various disagreements about particular issues, participants were moderate and balanced in their views, and generally supportive of the thrust of the County's current long-range planning efforts. In the context of various recommendations for refinements, infrastructure improvements, and stronger implementation efforts, participants essentially affirmed the basic elements and direction of the County's 2002 Comprehensive Plan.

# THE ST. MARY’S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## **Chapter 2: SUCCESES AND REMAINING CHALLENGES SINCE ADOPTION OF THE 2002 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The 2002 Comprehensive Plan was based on eight visions of a future that would characterize the quality of life in St. Mary's County. Paralleling the growth of population and development in the years since 2002 were many improvements in the facilities and services provided by the County as prescribed by the 2002 plan to achieve the visions. While much remains to be done in the years ahead to ensure quality of life, much has been accomplished.

### **2.1 SUCCESES**

Vision 1. Development is concentrated in suitable areas.

- A. The adoption of the Comprehensive Plan in February 2002 was followed by a comprehensive rezoning (text and maps) in May 2002. Notable changes to the zoning ordinance to implement the Comprehensive Plan include such features as:
1. Emphasis on compact development served by adequate roads and utilities. The ordinance provides opportunities for high density housing (townhouses or apartments) that is clustered to preserve open space.
  2. Design standards including parking requirements, height limits and building setbacks were revised to reduce building coverage and allow more open space.
  3. Accommodation of a mixture of land uses, e.g., commercial, residential and office space in a single zone.
  4. Because the Comprehensive Plan reduced the size of the Lexington Park and Leonardtown Development Districts, corresponding areas northwest of Leonardtown and southwest of Lexington Park were down-zoned from Residential Low Density (RL) to Rural Preservation District (RPD).
  5. New zoning regulations increased the number of potential dwellings that may be built within the growth areas while reducing the number of potential dwellings in the RPD. A program to transfer residential development out of the RPD and into growth areas – the TDR program – was carried forward and improved from the previous plan. The TDR program was also expanded to allow increased commercial development using TDRs from rural areas.
  6. In-fill and redevelopment were encouraged in the growth areas.
    - a) A number of businesses received Enterprise Certification resulting in over 450 new jobs.
    - b) The Lexington Manor Redevelopment Project is a multi-million dollar project designed, in the early phases, to eliminate blight and residential encroachment on Patuxent River Naval Air Station. In later phases, the northern segment may be redeveloped for commercial and recreational use.
- B. In 2003 the Callaway Village Center concept plan was updated to include a school site.
- C. In 2005 the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan was updated.
- D. In 2005 the Lexington Park Development District Master Plan was adopted and incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan; this was followed in 2006 by a

comprehensive rezoning for this Development District.

- E. In 2006 a County-wide transportation plan was adopted, incorporating the 2002 master plan for the County airport.
- F. In 2008 the Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan (CWSP) was revised and re-adopted to further implement the Comprehensive Plan.
  - 1. Areas removed from the Lexington Park and Leonardtown Development Districts by the 2002 Comprehensive Plan were designated as not planned for service.
  - 2. The policy was carried forward to prohibit extension of public water and sewer service from within a designated growth area into a rural preservation area except to correct health hazards such as septic system failures.

Vision 2. In rural areas, growth is directed to existing population centers and resource areas are protected.

- A. The comprehensive rezoning of 2002 reduced development potential in the rural preservation areas.
  - 1. The base residential density in the rural preservation area was reduced from 1 dwelling per three acres down to 1 dwelling per five acres.
  - 2. The program for transferring development rights (TDR) was strengthened.
- B. The revised ordinance also accomplished the following:
  - 1. Family conveyance provisions were clarified.
  - 2. Zoning categories were created for rural service centers (RSC) and for existing rural limited commercial uses (RCL).
  - 3. Regulations were added for the purpose of protecting sensitive areas.
  - 4. Right-to-farm measures were adopted.
  - 5. Major residential development is required to be clustered and open space is to be preserved.
  - 6. Scenic highway corridors are to be protected through zoning regulations.
  - 7. Agricultural easement programs were enhanced.
  - 8. The TDR program was modified to further reduce development potential in rural areas and especially in rural legacy areas.
  - 9. Community water systems are required for rural subdivisions of 25 or more lots.

Vision 3. Sensitive areas are protected.

- A. Sensitive area protection was increased with the 2002 comprehensive rezoning. The new ordinance:
  - 1. Implemented protection of portions of McIntosh Run and St. Mary's River watersheds by down zoning lands in those two watersheds that were removed in 2002 from the Development District boundaries.
  - 2. Down zoned the Bushwood Village Center to reinforce protection of Church Swamp.



3. Implemented protection of sensitive areas with Resource Protection Standards in the zoning ordinance to create a single set of protection standards for development countywide (similar regulations apply in and out of the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area).
  4. Implemented setbacks from sensitive area buffers to reduce or eliminate damage to buffers due to initial construction and daily activities once built.
  5. Reduced building setbacks and removed the 2-acre exemption for stormwater management to facilitate clustering.
  6. Streamlined the process to meet forest conservation regulations for projects that fully protect sensitive areas.
  7. Enhanced floodplain regulatory protection to prevent encroachment of development and to reduce risk for floodplain residents.
- B. Protection of cultural and historic resources was achieved through identification, surveys, development of management plans and implementation of regulations including:
1. Two phases of a historic roads survey were completed.
  2. A Religious Freedom Byway Corridor Management Plan was adopted and incorporated by reference in the Comprehensive Plan.
  3. The St. Michael's Manor historic district overlay was created.
  4. The Southern Maryland Heritage Areas Management Plan was adopted and incorporated in the Comprehensive Plan.
- C. Subdivision regulations were amended to require preservation of a minimum of 50% open space for major subdivisions in the rural preservation district (RPD) and low density residential (RL) zoning districts.
1. Developed and adopted plans for preservation and protection of resource lands.
  2. In 2005 the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan was updated.
- D. A watershed restoration action strategy (WRAS) was adopted for the McIntosh Run watershed; efforts to prepare a WRAS for the St. Mary's River watershed were initiated.
- E. Countywide mapping of sensitive areas and improved access to the mapping via geographic information system (GIS) software has allowed improved identification of potential impacts, enhanced review of projects, and increased protection of sensitive areas.
- Vision 4. Stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and the land is a universal ethic.
- A. The importance and influence of the Chesapeake Bay on the character of the County and quality of life was emphasized in the adopted Community Vision of the 2002 Comprehensive Plan and continues to be a shared value.
  - B. Stewardship of the Bay and of the land benefited from the new regulations and initiatives for protection of sensitive areas listed above in Vision 3.
  - C. Responsibility for stewardship of the Bay was extended to all landowners via the Resource Protection Standards that created uniform protection standards for development countywide.

- D. Water resource protection was enhanced via updated stormwater management regulations that address both water quantity and quality and protection for stream channels from damage due to smaller storm events.
- E. Forest protection is recognized as critical to protection of water quality and sensitive resources. Regulations to protect forest land were made more consistent in and out of the Critical Area by rules governing conversion of harvested lands, countywide protection of forest interior dwelling species (FIDS) habitat, and requirements for maintaining state mapped green infrastructure when sites are developed.
- F. Native vegetation is required for mitigation planting to enhance and restore native habitats. Regulatory incentives are provided to allow removal of non-native invasive vegetation that is harmful to natural habitats.
- G. Watershed planning and development of implementation strategies have identified responsibility and action needed for Bay restoration and stewardship as a first step.
  - 1. The Breton Bay WRAS and the St. Mary's River WRAS focus on problem identification and citizen involvement.
  - 2. Development of total maximum daily load (TMDL) caps for impaired water bodies identify problem areas, sources of the problems and goals for implementation.
  - 3. Tributary Strategies use a sub-watershed focus to tailor actions to the local jurisdictions. These have been partially successful in achieving regulatory and fiscal implementation by the state, and are promoting local voluntary actions to reduce nutrient loads and enhance the health of the watershed.

Vision 5. Conservation of resources, including a reduction in resource consumption, is practiced.

- A. The comprehensive rezoning of 2002:
  - 1. Provided non-residential development bonuses for construction standards that improved energy efficiency or incorporated "green building" design.
  - 2. Created mixed use zones and design standards that will foster more efficient development and accommodate "live where you work" objectives of smart growth.
  - 3. Augmented forest conservation provisions that streamline processing for projects that fully protect sensitive areas.
- B. The renovation of Banneker and Leonardtown Elementary Schools incorporated elements of "green building" design. The new Evergreen Elementary School is a "green building".
- C. Re-use of obsolete and abandoned structures included:
  - 1. Chesapeake Charter School.
  - 2. The old Lexington Park Library on Coral Drive is now the Three Notch Players Theater.
  - 3. The former Bay District VFD is now an operations facility for Habitat for Humanity.

- 4. Charlotte Hall Visitors Center.
  - D. The County's Commission on the Environment and its Water Policy Task Force have been active in efforts to conserve resources.
  - E. In 2007 legislation was adopted at the state level to require a water resources element in comprehensive plans.
  - F. The County's recycling program has been expanded.
  - G. County government adopted a policy to increase its use of recycled products.
  - H. Public transportation has expanded. St. Mary's Transit System, or STS, now connects with Charles and Calvert Counties, as well as with the Maryland Transit Authority's commuter service to Washington. STS also serves the southern portion of the County and offers weekend service. A Transportation Development Plan (TDP) was completed in 2007 and approved by the Maryland Transit Administration.
  - I. The Lexington Park Master Plan and the 2006 Transportation Plan call for an expanded network of sidewalks and bicycle trails to accommodate alternatives to automobile use.
  - J. The County has encouraged alternative energy, renewable energy and reliability for demand and growth.
- Vision 6. Economic growth is encouraged and regulatory mechanisms are streamlined.
- A. The strategic partnership with the U.S. Navy includes a signed MOU on encroachment mitigation and prevention.
  - B. Provisions to accommodate natural resource extraction, farming and forest production, and marine commerce have been strengthened.
  - C. Agricultural development included a wholesale auction house, farmers markets in the north and central parts of the County, and expanded parking for patrons at the northern farmers market.
  - D. A streamlined process for approval of roadside stands was adopted.
  - E. Acquisition of the Fenwick property (150 acres), including a site for a year-round farmers market in the southern part of the County was completed.
  - F. The County expanded and improved land preservation programs, including the Mattapany Rural Legacy Area, new TDR provisions, and the use of Installment Purchase Agreements to acquire agricultural land.
  - G. Agricultural diversification was evidenced by two new agri-tourism venues that have been established, a new winery initiative, and several new winegrowers in place.
  - H. Workforce housing and affordable housing initiatives were advanced, including offering payment in lieu of taxes and impact fee waivers and deferrals.
  - I. Lexington Park revitalization continued, including implementation of a business loan guarantee program, streetscape improvement program, Lexington Park Enterprise Zone and a restructured Community Development Corporation.
  - J. Landscape improvement programs were utilized, including matching grants for enhanced land or streetscape of commercial and industrial properties located on Great Mills Road (MD 246), Three Notch Road (MD 235) and Point Lookout

Road (MD 5).

- K. The Small Business Development Center and the College of Southern Maryland were supported through collaboration in developing business programs and services to expand the St. Mary's County economic base.
- L. Cooperative efforts were made with the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) to stimulate private investment, create jobs, attract new businesses, encourage the expansion and retention of existing companies, and provide businesses with workforce training and financial assistance.
- M. The County continued to work with the St. Mary's Chamber of Commerce, the Patuxent Partnership, Southern Maryland Navy Alliance, Leonardtown Business Association and St. Mary's County Economic Development Council.
- N. On-going close working relationships were fostered with local contractors concerning upcoming base programs.
- O. Participation continued in industry conferences and annual publication of the Technology Handbook for St. Mary's County.
- P. The County enjoyed on-going collaboration with the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development (DBED) - International to capitalize on international business opportunities for St. Mary's County companies in an effort to expand and diversify the local economy.
- Q. St. Mary's County Board of County Commissioners conducted business tours – "On the Road with the County Commissioners."
- R. Maintenance and provision of a list of available commercial buildings and sites was published to assist potential businesses in locating to the County.
- S. Expanded support and opportunities for tourism included:
  - 1. The new Welcome Center serves as Visitor Gateway to the County. It also serves as an anchor for tourism growth in the northern part of the County.
  - 2. New sites and infrastructure including the Leonardtown Wharf revitalization, Historic St. Mary's City new and refurbished exhibits, adaptive re-use of historic barn at Sotterley to meeting and events space, the new Patuxent River Naval Air Museum, Blackistone Lighthouse Replica, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum and Park, and Potomac River exhibits and site enhancements.
  - 3. New regional programs include the State Tourism Area Corridor Signs, Southern Maryland Heritage Area, Religious Freedom By-way Corridor Management Plan, State Civil War Trails program, Potomac Heritage Trail, Southern Maryland Trails and Southern Maryland Bicycle Routes.
  - 4. Expanded lodging opportunities exist through multiple bed and breakfast facilities and hotels.

Vision 7. Adequate Public Facilities and Infrastructure are available or planned in areas where growth is to occur.

- A. Water and Sewerage Service: the Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan was revised and readopted in 2008.
- B. The reconstruction of Patuxent Park's sewer and water lines and roadways began

in 2008.

- C. Transportation improvements provided increased capacity and enhanced options for travel:
1. In 2006 a County-wide transportation plan was adopted.
  2. Three Notch Road (MD 235) was reconstructed between the intersection of Patuxent Beach Road (MD 4) and Great Mills Road (MD 246), and was fitted with bike lanes and sidewalks.
  3. FDR Boulevard:
    - a) Alignment has been confirmed through the Lexington Park Development District Master Plan and the Transportation Plan.
    - b) Segments have been completed in association with development projects.
  4. Chancellors Run Road (MD 237) has been widened, and Norris Road has been aligned with Buck-Hewitt Road.
  5. Pacific Drive has been extended to Pegg Road.
  6. Service road connections have been installed to serve the First Colony and South Plaza Shopping Centers, the Laurel Glen Shopping Center (which includes K-Mart), and Wal-Mart.
  7. A State Highway Access Control Plan has been developed for Three Notch Road (MD 5 and MD 235) from Patuxent Beach Road (MD 4) to the Charles County line.
  8. Lawrence Hayden Road has been planned to be realigned to connect with Indian Bridge Road as part of a system of cross-County connector roads. The extended road would also serve the new Evergreen Elementary School.
  9. A “roundabout” has been completed at the junction of Maddox Road (MD 238) and Budd’s Creek Road (MD 234).
  10. Trails:
    - a) The Three Notch Trail alignment has been confirmed through the Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan, the Transportation Plan and the Lexington Park Development District Master Plan. Portions have been completed.
    - b) A planned network of bicycle paths and trails has been adopted in the approved Transportation Plan.
  11. Grants have aided the County in maintaining bridges and correcting flood areas.
- D. Solid Waste. As it was revised and readopted in 2005, the Solid Waste Management and Recycling Plan:
1. Assures protection of public health and the environment (e.g. the St. Andrews Landfill gas migration system).
  2. Encourages reduction in the amount of waste generated.
  3. Promotes the re-use of waste materials.

4. Expands the range of materials to be collected for recycling.
  5. Supports single stream collection of recyclable materials to reduce cost and to increase participation.
  6. Facilitates the recycling of resources recovered from waste.
  7. Guides the re-use of landfills.
- E. Recreation and Parks. The 2005 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan identifies a wide range of recreational sites and facilities that have been upgraded or installed since 2002:
1. Northern Senior Activity Center.
  2. Chaptico Park.
  3. Leonardtown Wharf Waterfront Park.
  4. Great Mills swimming pool.
  5. Myrtle Point Park Master Plan adopted October 2005.
  6. John G. Lancaster Park improvements, including off-leash dog area, disk golf course, and pedestrian pathway.
  7. Wicomico Shores golf course, clubhouse, and Riverview Restaurant.
  8. 7th District Park playground and tennis courts.
  9. Chancellors Run Park 90' baseball field, playground, and pavilion.
  10. Cecil Park playground and tennis courts.
  11. Elms Beach Park playground.
  12. Nicolet Park facilities expansion, including a spray park and skate park.
  13. Carver Recreation Center.
  14. Three Notch Trail, Phases I, II, and parts of III and IV.
  15. Improvements at public landings: Forest Landing, Bushwood Wharf, Abell's Wharf, and St. Inigoes.
  16. St. Clements Shores playground.
  17. The County secured a long-term lease for the use of the park owned by St. Peter Claver Church (known as Cardinal Gibbons Park) in the 1<sup>st</sup> District.
- F. Libraries:
1. A new 25,000 SF library was built in Lexington Park at a cost of \$6.1M. This replaced a 10,000 square foot facility. The Lexington Park Library offers amenities not available at the other County libraries including a computer lab and a coffee bar.
  2. Leonardtown Library's 2nd floor was renovated for the library system's administrative offices.
  3. Public transportation is available to all three library branches through STS.
  4. In 2006 a consultant was hired to conduct a county-wide study to determine the need for library facilities through 2025. The report, *St. Mary's County Library Comprehensive and Integrated System Analysis*,

was approved by the Library Board in March 2007 and presented to the County Commissioners to guide future growth of the library system.

5. A library system assessment was completed, and it identified Leonardtown Library as the highest priority for expansion. A new 39,000 sq. ft. "green" library was subsequently programmed for design and construction on the "Hayden property" in Leonardtown.

G. Schools. New, renovated or planned schools since 2002 include:

1. Lexington Park Elementary School.
2. Esperanza Middle School.
3. Leonardtown High School.
4. Forrest Technical Center.
5. Chesapeake Charter School.
6. Piney Point Elementary School.
7. Carver Elementary School.
8. Evergreen Elementary School.
9. Leonardtown Elementary School.
10. Margaret Brent Middle School.
11. Fairlead Academy.
12. New elementary and middle schools are planned for the "Hayden property" in Leonardtown.

H. Fire and rescue:

1. A new Bay District fire hall was constructed.
2. A new fire and rescue station was built near Golden Beach.
3. A residential sprinkler ordinance was adopted requiring automatic fire sprinkler systems to be installed in new homes served by a public maintained water system.

I. Human Services: The Dr. J. Patrick Jarboe Family Education and Head Start Center, dedicated in July 2002, is home to the Housing Authority's Family Self-Sufficiency Program, Southern Maryland Tri-County Community Action Committee's Head Start Program, and Tri-County Youth Services Bureau programs. The center also provides space for Boys and Girls Club meetings, and "GED" (general education degree) classes.

J. Storm Water Management, (e.g. improvements at Governmental Center Campus)

Vision 8. Funding is available to achieve these Visions.

A. Grants.

1. Certified Local Government grants have been utilized and continue to be available for historic preservation initiatives.
2. State grants have supplemented the County's implementation of the Critical Area Program.
3. Program Open Space and other state grants.

- 4. Transportation enhancement funds.
- B. Tax credits for restoration of designated local historic landmarks are available.
- C. A fee in lieu schedule provides an alternative to the purchase of TDRs for development in certain areas. These funds are available for agricultural land preservation programs. Fees in lieu are also collected to mitigate for future development related traffic impacts.
- D. The annual budget and five-year capital improvements program (CIP) is directed at implementing the Comprehensive Plan.
- E. Economic Impact Fees are collected.

## **2.2 REMAINING CHALLENGES**

In creating a plan for the future it is necessary to evaluate progress toward the achievement of these eight visions. Despite progress in meeting objectives under the 2002 plan, there are changes needed that can improve effectiveness in meeting County goals. In the following paragraphs, each vision will be analyzed to identify needs to be addressed by this comprehensive plan.

Vision 1. Development is concentrated in suitable areas.

- A. The County must maintain a land use plan which accommodates compatible uses while guiding future growth into efficiently serviceable areas. The plan cannot be static, but must be periodically redesigned after evaluating development versus preservation needs in conjunction with the necessity to provide essential services which are concert with the character of the County.
- B. An important principle of this land use plan is the need to focus new development in designated growth areas. This can only be accomplished if supported by the necessary infrastructure. The continuing maintenance of the rural character of the County and protection of sensitive areas and natural resources must also be a priority. The goal of this element of the Plan is to ensure future land use patterns respond appropriately to growth opportunities with an eye toward respecting historic and environmental resources, neighborhood fabric, and the existing pattern of settlement. Specific needs to be addressed if this vision is to be realized include the following:
  - 1. Maintain the strong sense of community that exists in the County by providing facilities for and promotion of community activities.
  - 2. Encourage the development of commercial entertainment that will attract residents of all ages.
  - 3. To improve the appearance of development and its impact on the visual character of a community, and the economic health and viability of businesses, the County should consider creating design standards. A landscape ordinance, architectural design standards, and improved sign standards would also improve visual character.
  - 4. Ensure capacity of the Charlotte Hall Town Center to accommodate expected growth in the northern part of the County. Prepare a town center master plan to evaluate needs and to guide provision of safe and adequate infrastructure, (notably sewer service and traffic circulation) and land use patterns, recognizing the increasingly regional importance of Charlotte Hall as situated between Lexington Park, Prince Frederick, Waldorf and



La Plata. A possible outcome of this master planning could be upgrading this growth area to a development district, although town center status should be adequate in the short run (six to ten years). The master plan would be mindful of the historic and cultural nature of the area and would continue efforts to strictly protect environmentally sensitive areas. The master plan is also to include reference to the Board of County Commissioners approved plan for senior housing and recreation amenities on the County-owned property behind the Northern Senior Activity Center (approved February 20, 2007). Design standards should be prescribed and implemented to encourage concentrated development that creates attractive, safe communities with green space and preserved areas for community gatherings.

5. Incentives must be provided to redevelop older or blighted areas to efficiently use existing infrastructure. By increasing the allowable density in the Lexington Park Development District, with a corresponding decrease in open space requirements, infrastructure and land may be more efficiently used.
6. Enforcement of the Annual Growth Policy must be continued to further direct residential development to growth areas. This in turn would relieve development pressure in rural areas. The need to discourage “strip” commercial development along major transportation corridors outside growth areas has been identified to preserve rural character and further direct such development to more suitable areas.

Vision 2. In rural areas, growth is directed to existing population centers and resource areas are protected.

- A. Preserving the rural character of Saint Mary’s County is a continuing goal and new approaches must be found to achieve it. Focus must be kept on targeting 60,000 acres for agricultural preservation, and progress towards meeting this goal must be continually evaluated and new strategies must be explored and implemented. The County must continue to monitor its efforts to direct new growth. There is a need to enhance the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation program and the use of transferred development rights (TDRs). Development in existing neighborhoods outside of growth areas needs to be encouraged to take advantage of existing infrastructure, provide an affordable alternative to those unwilling to live in more urbanized development districts, and ease development pressures in the RPD.
- B. The creation of farmstead subdivisions (lots of 15 acres or larger) that cannot be further subdivided should be encouraged. This may be accomplished by reducing farmstead subdivision requirements or offering incentives to encourage the subdivision of land in this manner.
- C. A continuing effort must be the on-going evaluation of the Annual Growth Policy (AGP). The annual percentage of new dwelling units in the RPD must be evaluated and adjusted as needed to discourage further development of rural areas.
- D. The implementation of new strategies for the preservation of the local farm industry must be one of the highest priorities. Farms are developed because it is financially advantageous to do so. If agricultural lands can be allowed to generate a greater financial return than development, this will discourage its conversion

and serve to preserve the County's heritage, support the continuation of family farms, and preserve rural character. Significant new initiatives, such as grape production and wineries, must be sought to replace the tobacco buy-out through alternative crop production. Additional local outlets for the sale of agricultural products are also needed. Greenhouse production must be sustained and expanded to facilitate year round income. Farm related commercial and industrial activities and agri-tourism to diversify income must be encouraged.

- E. Protection of environmentally sensitive areas remains a critical concern. Efforts need to be made to acquire these properties that could then be used for passive recreational activities. County owned properties constrained by sensitive areas may be carefully developed to provide for public use (including much needed water access), handicapped access, and for passive recreational activities.

Vision 3. Sensitive areas are protected.

- A. The County must continue to identify and protect the following sensitive areas and resources: streams and their buffers; 100-year floodplains; habitats of threatened and endangered species; and steep slopes and other areas in need of special protection including tidal wetlands, submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV), waterfowl areas, colonial bird nesting sites, shorelines, tidal and nontidal floodplains, nontidal wetlands and their buffers, anadromous fish spawning areas, groundwater and mineral resources, and wildlife corridors. As required by the state legislature in 2006, agricultural land (green infrastructure gaps, buffers, open space, forest conservation mitigation) and forest lands (green infrastructure and forest interior dwelling species habitat) intended for resource protection and conservation must also be protected.
- B. Encourage consideration of hazard mitigation in the early stages of development. Balance development goals with avoidance of known high risk areas such as: floodplains, coastal erosion zones, and areas of known high risk due to natural hazards.

Vision 4. Stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and the land is a universal ethic.

- A. The County must continue to use a suite of regulatory programs (Critical Area Program, forest conservation regulations, stormwater regulations, requirements for open space conservation and clustering etc.), tax and funding incentive programs (Agricultural Districts, Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation Easements, a transfer of development rights program, installment purchase agreements, etc), and planning programs (Wicomico Scenic River Management Plan, Tributary Strategies for the Patuxent and Lower Potomac Rivers, Breton Bay and St. Mary's Watershed Restoration Action Strategy) to require when necessary and promote when possible the stewardship of Bay, its tributaries, and the land and watershed resources. There must be an increased understanding of the watershed resources, and the impacts on those resources that result from the activities of those who live, work and recreate in the watershed.

Vision 5. Conservation of resources, including a reduction in resource consumption, is practiced.

- A. The County must continue its established objectives, policies, and actions based primarily on avoiding loss, minimizing unavoidable loss and mitigating to offset the impacts associated with the loss. The County must also continue to develop ordinances and programs to effectively protect sensitive areas, to set and measure

progress in meeting goals for preservation, to set limits on the allowable loss of resources, and to assure that mitigation for unavoidable impacts is the responsibility and duty of those who benefit from the impact. There is a need to conserve energy and water, and to increase the amount of solid waste that is recycled.

Vision 6. Economic growth is encouraged and regulatory mechanisms are streamlined.

- A. An economic development strategy is a major component of the comprehensive plan. Economic growth is needed to support basic infrastructure which in turn fosters further economic growth. A balance between commercial, industrial, and residential development is also needed to foster job creation and economic diversity which are keys to long term economic prosperity. Economic diversity in turn generates the need for a variety of housing types (including work force housing), expanded infrastructure, recreation and entertainment facilities, and the availability of essential goods and services.
- B. Efforts must continue to protect, enhance and diversify the County's economic base. Recognizing that Patuxent River Naval Air Station and Webster Field are the economic engines that drive the economy, this plan must continue to protect these valuable assets from encroachment. There is a need to more clearly define and strengthen existing air buffering regulations for both the Naval Air Station and its annex at Webster Field.
- C. While acknowledging the Navy's contribution to the local and regional economy, the County must encourage the diversification of its economic base. Of principal importance are expanding employment opportunities and reducing the salary gap between Department of Defense (DOD) and the private sector workforce. Expansion of industrial zoned areas to accommodate new business types continues to be a need. Incentives must be provided to facilitate the establishment of light industrial business.
- D. Procedures should be implemented that will reduce the turn-around time for commercial site plan approval. Emphasis should be given to streamlining the review process. Development decisions need more scrutiny initially to assure that design and planning achieve plan goals for achieving vibrant, attractive, safe, environmentally sensitive and sustainable development. Once these design and quality of life issues are adequately addressed, administrative streamlining may be appropriate. Individual property rights must be a consideration in evaluating all development proposals.
- E. In order to maintain a competitive advantage in attracting leading edge technology businesses to the County, the upgrade of the electronic infrastructure, including broadband and fiber optics remain among the highest of priorities, and educational facilities must be helped to keep pace with employer requirements.
- F. There is a need to protect and grow traditional industries, such as seafood, agricultural, and tourism. At the same time, the vacation and resort industry must be invigorated. This can be facilitated by giving emphasis to the County's water based recreational opportunities and historic resources. There must also be emphasis on the expansion of artistic and cultural opportunities beyond those provided by local educational institutions. The development of venues to accommodate such opportunities continues to be a need.

Vision 7. Adequate public facilities and infrastructure are available or planned in areas

where growth is to occur.

- A. The provision of facilities and infrastructure to support growth in designated growth areas must be a major component of the County's strategy for the future. Two major issues affect the provision of public facilities and infrastructure (PFI). First, existing needs created by the rapid growth of the past few years must be more effectively accommodated. Secondly growth or redevelopment should be permitted only if adequate PFI is available. Adequacy will be more readily available with the redevelopment of existing and perhaps obsolete or dilapidated development. This revitalization would be a most cost effective and efficient utilization of PFI. Such efforts would also direct growth away from rural areas.
- B. The goal of the Adequate Public Facilities and Infrastructure element is to provide public facilities in a manner that is not only consistent with this plan, but is manageable with regard to capital outlay. The County's Annual Growth Policy (AGP) will permit growth to occur at a managed rate and allow infrastructure to keep pace. The AGP must remain a component of the residential site plan and subdivision approval process. A finding of adequate public facilities must continue to be made prior to any major site plan or major subdivision approval.
- C. Public sewerage service is a strong director and facilitator of growth. As such, it is imperative that these facilities be limited to designated growth areas except to serve areas with failing septic systems where there is no feasible alternative. To prevent the over commitment of capacity, the County will continue to maintain the sewer allocation policies of the Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan. These policies ensure that the capacity of sewer systems supports development only to the extent that it can be fully served. In order to insure that capacity keeps pace with anticipated growth, a facilities plan must be followed. Expanded facilities should be both privately and publicly funded when they will accommodate growth or redevelopment within growth areas.
- D. Of principal importance is adaptation or creation of community facilities with the ability to serve multiple public uses. When constructing new facilities, such as schools and libraries, priority must be given to multi-use functionality of the facility. It is essential that the same multi-use functionality be applied to the land as well. For example, co-locating school or library facilities with public parks or playgrounds would be an efficient use of land, parking and utilities.
- E. The transportation system must remain a priority, including maintenance and enhancement of the road network to assure an acceptable level of service throughout. There is a need to achieve peak period capacities at acceptable levels along all arterials through the careful application of access management and the development of a separate supporting network for local traffic. In areas of existing or anticipated congestion, a circulation system must be maintained that encourages the separation of through and local traffic. This needs to be done while planning for adequate capacity to serve new development in planned growth areas. Planned improvements to the transportation network must correspond with and support the overall land use plan. Focusing development in growth areas can help manage the spread of traffic congestion and support alternate modes of transportation. In support of a better circulation system, land use and transportation policies and capital investment strategies need to be directed at reducing the number of individual vehicle trips. This can be accomplished by implementing transportation demand reduction policies such as the 4-day work

week and telecommuting as well as increasing the use of public and alternative transportation. The alternative transportation component needs to include a bicycle and pedestrian network that provides safe and functional connections between residential, employment, recreational, shopping and transit centers. In keeping with the land use plan to discourage development in rural areas, there is a need to limit transportation improvements outside of growth areas to essential capacity improvements as well as the upgrading of substandard roads and bridges. There is a need to implement traffic calming strategies and engineered retrofit projects to reduce vehicular speed and enhance the safety of pedestrians, bicyclists, and those relying on horse-driven transportation. Identified transportation corridors need to be reserved, dedicated and/or mapped in accordance with Article 66B in order to ensure safety and the availability of right-of-ways for the planned transportation network.

- F. Communications systems throughout the County need to be upgraded. In today's world of internet based education, telecommuting, and internet based commerce, countywide access to high speed internet and cellular service is a must.
- G. Other needs that have been identified include additional library and indoor recreational facilities, including an arts center. The need for after-hours express medical care in Lexington Park has also been identified.
- H. Support the Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative Reliability Project.

Vision 8. Funding is available to achieve these Visions.

- A. To assure the availability of funds to achieve these visions, public spending must first be prioritized in a manner that is consistent with the eight visions of this plan. Expenditures for public facilities should be directed to existing developed areas with existing infrastructure. Through the capital improvements program, investments should be made in areas where growth is planned to occur while limiting expenditures in those areas where we wish to discourage development. Provision of facilities and services in the rural areas must be limited as they cannot be cost efficiently provided and would encourage undesirable growth.
- B. Existing facilities must be maintained, expanded or upgraded wherever practical. Adaptive re-use of existing facilities must be evaluated before the provision of new facilities. Where practical, public facilities must serve multiple functions. Within growth areas, Priority Funding Areas must be established to qualify capital improvement projects for state funding.
- C. Developers must be required to pay for or provide the additional facilities and infrastructure needed to support their development, especially outside growth areas. The County should consider providing facilities and infrastructure within growth areas to direct growth and encourage rehabilitation. The residential impact fee must be evaluated and adjusted if it is not truly offsetting the impact of new residential development on roads schools and parks.
- D. A broad range of traditional and non-traditional funding mechanisms must be pursued to address this plan's objectives. The County needs to continue using grant funding wherever possible. Fees in lieu must be efficiently used for their intended purpose. Funds collected today can be expected to have diminished purchase power in the future. Installment purchase agreements should be used to acquire or preserve additional land.

### **2.3 CONCLUSIONS**

In general, St. Mary's County must strive to preserve and enhance its present character and improve the quality of life for its citizens while maintaining a pace of growth and development that is well managed. Development is to be of a controlled nature, directed to the most appropriate areas and discouraged in other areas. Such a philosophy is necessary to cost-effectively provide levels of public services and facilities that will be required to support present and future residents.

The State's 2009 Smart, Green, and Growing Legislation replaced the existing eight planning visions with 12 new visions that address quality of life and sustainability, public participation, growth areas, community design, infrastructure, transportation, housing, economic development, environmental protection, resource conservation, stewardship, and implementation approaches. These new planning visions are the basis for this Comprehensive Plan which provides guidance for public decisions concerning how development will be managed and where capital improvements and public services should be provided to support it. The Plan serves as notice to all of the County's intent regarding its future and identifies controls, management measures, financial investments, and incentives necessary to achieve County objectives. The Board of County Commissioners is committed to addressing identified needs through adoption of this plan, zoning regulations, subdivision regulations, and capital improvements programs along with other tax and finance policies and initiatives.

# THE ST. MARY’S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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### **Chapter 3: A GROWTH MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Any successful plan will include sensible growth management strategies that will protect private property rights. During two years of plan preparation, the citizens of St. Mary's County, the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners have consistently recognized the benefits that occur in a setting that provides for a full range of growth options. Strategies must necessarily include regulations, but can be coupled with incentives to encourage compliance. Decisions to invest in public facilities and services need to be made to support shared objectives. Organized pursuant to the visions that grew out of Maryland's "Smart, Green, and Growing" legislation, the County's community vision represents its desired future as an expression of policy made by all who participated in its preparation.

#### *COMMUNITY VISION:*

***PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE QUALITY OF LIFE, BY RECOGNIZING AND PROTECTING THE UNIQUE CHARACTER OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY AS A CHESAPEAKE BAY PENINSULA.***

***FOSTER ECONOMIC GROWTH AND CREATE AN ATMOSPHERE OF EXCELLENCE BY FOCUSING AND MANAGING GROWTH TO CREATE VIBRANT, ATTRACTIVE COMMUNITIES; BY PROTECTING THE RURAL CHARACTER AND ECONOMY OF THE COUNTRYSIDE BY NURTURING THE SHORELINE AND ADJACENT WATERS; AND BY PRESERVING AND CAPITALIZING ON THE NATURAL RESOURCES AND HISTORICAL QUALITY OF THE COUNTY.***

- Vision 1. Quality of life and sustainability: a high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water, and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment.
- A. New development is clustered to preserve rural lands and open space land uses.
  - B. Infrastructure is planned to provide for controlled concentrated growth. The County responsibly assesses the impacts of all projects and proposals against environmental or infrastructure capacities. Excessively paved roads and expansive, under utilized parking lots are no longer allowed. Water dependent and related enterprises infuse the history and cultural heritage of the County and the health of the Chesapeake Bay is vital to the continued viability of these industries.
  - C. Ecosystems are protected, preserved, and enhanced by independent actions of individual citizens.
  - D. The County receives support, praise, and encouragement from outside of the community as a result of successful public education and outreach efforts and citizen participation campaigns that incorporate the community's values.
- Vision 2. Public participation: citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are sensitive to their responsibilities in achieving community goals.

- A. The County's primary higher educational institutions work as partners with County Government to increase citizen participation in the planning process through research and community outreach. Local higher educational resources are tapped for educational forums and as a community resource.
- Vision 3. Growth areas: growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to these centers, or strategically selected new centers;
- A. The amount of new residential growth that has occurred in the rural planning area has been substantially reduced.
  - B. Growth boundaries are determined through balanced analysis of sensitive areas, build out potential of available lands, population and employment demands, and efficient utilization of public services and resources.
- Vision 4. Community design: compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near available or planned transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources and preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas, and historical, cultural, and archeological resources.
- A. New residential and employment growth is internally and externally integrated, creating neighborhoods and communities rather than a predominant land use pattern of scattered subdivisions and strip retail or office plazas.
  - B. Attention to architectural standards and urban design compatibility is accommodated as expected by the community. Open space requirements in the Development Districts are reviewed and revised as needed.
  - C. Historic and cultural landmarks are preserved, enhanced and made accessible.
  - D. Existing communities are revitalized. New businesses are encouraged to reuse existing structures, or construct new infill buildings in order to utilize existing infrastructure, and bring new activity into declining areas. Owners of existing structures are encouraged to maintain and retrofit the buildings and grounds to be made attractive and energy efficient. Dilapidated or unsafe buildings are renovated for adaptive reuse and made safe and secure or removed. Illegal junkyards and other blighting influences are removed or brought into compliance with applicable regulations and ordinances.
  - E. Infill development on existing developed tracts is encouraged. Preservation and protection of remaining environmental features on sites is rewarded through regulatory streamlining, which supports goals for focused growth, economic development and reduction of consumption of resources through revitalizing existing developed areas.
  - F. All capital improvements for buildings of at least 10,000 gross square feet and structural modifications of more than 50% of a building's gross floor area that are publicly funded demonstrate sustainable design standards and achieve LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) Silver or an equivalent standard.
- Vision 5. Infrastructure: growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and

environmentally sustainable manner.

- A. School, water and sewer facility service areas are drawn to implement the comprehensive plan growth area concept.
  - B. The capital improvement program and capital budget assign spending priority to growth and priority funding areas over other expenditures.
- Vision 6. Transportation: a well-maintained, multimodal transportation system facilitates the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods, and services within and between population and business centers.
- A. Individual property access is denied on major thoroughfares, especially Three Notch Road (MD 5/235) and Point Lookout Road (MD 5), where access is limited to roadways with a functional classification of collector road.
  - B. Collector roads are interconnected for safety, reduction of congestion during peak periods, and for additional business access.
  - C. Road improvement priorities have resulted in new and improved road links to the growth centers.
- Vision 7. Housing: a range of housing densities, types, and sizes provides residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes and addresses issues of homelessness, blight removal and community revitalization.
- Vision 8. Economic development: economic development and natural resource-based businesses that promote employment opportunities for all income levels within the capacity of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities are encouraged.
- A. Tourism development and broadened economic opportunity are closely linked to historic, cultural and environmental resources.
  - B. A business friendly regulatory environment fosters a diverse and growing economy.
  - C. Existing facilities at NAS Patuxent River and Webster Field are protected from encroachment by development.
  - D. Diversification is supported.
  - E. Land use policies are applied to promote new industry and to encourage use of Department of Defense technology by private industries.
- Vision 9. Environmental protection: land and water resources, including the Chesapeake and coastal bays, are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems, and living resources.
- A. Land and natural features important to maintaining the environmental health of the county, which present constraints for development, and which are critical to reducing damage to the Chesapeake Bay, are preserved from disturbance and enhanced to increase the effectiveness of their benefits for erosion control, filtering of sediments and nutrients and provision of essential habitat for wildlife. In return, citizens receive benefits of reduced construction costs, minimization of erosion and flood events, improved water quality for drinking and recreation, and

increased property values from a more scenic living environment.

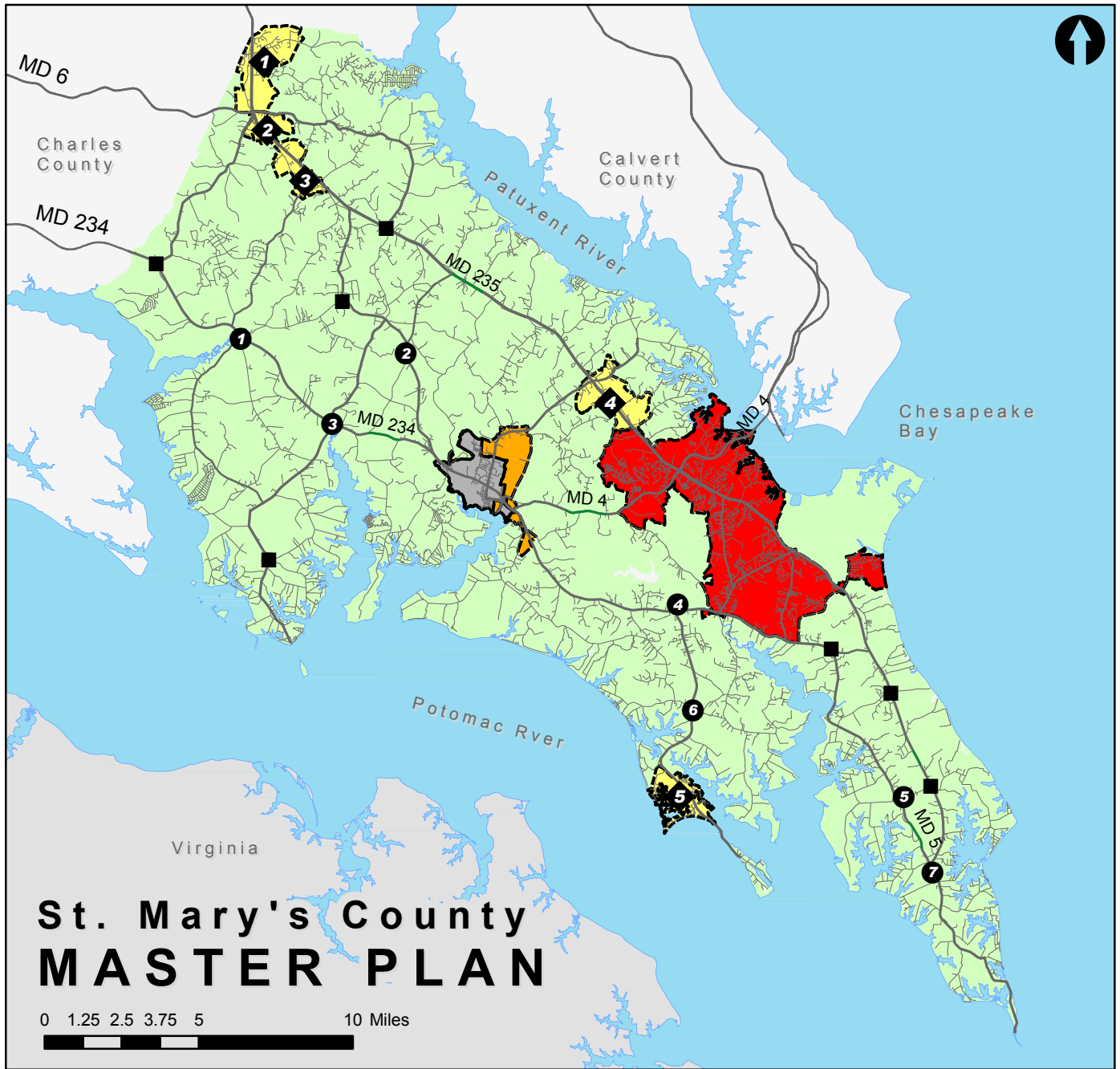
- Vision 10. Resource conservation: waterways, forests, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems, and scenic areas are conserved.
- A. Farms and forest resources are preserved from urban or suburban encroachment and the rural character and attributes of the county are maintained and enhanced. Landowner equity and property values have been enhanced by an active program of purchase and transfer of development rights.
  - B. Protection of the rural countryside and traditional economies and activities -- fishing, farming, forestry -- are recognized as important components of the community and rural character. This rural character is worth maintaining not only for its scenic beauty, but because of its attraction as a setting for technology and service industries which are logically concentrated near the Patuxent River Naval Air Station.
  - C. A coordinated cross-county network of greenways and scenic easements is established and waterfront access is enhanced to provide for passive and active recreation and an enhanced natural environment.
  - D. Large contiguous tracts of sensitive areas are outside of designated growth areas and zoned for rural or resource protection. Specifically, the McIntosh Run natural heritage area is excluded from the Leonardtown development district, and the St. Mary's watershed natural area and lands westward thereof are excluded from the Lexington Park development district.
- Vision 11. Stewardship: government, business entities, and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection.
- A. Businesses, industries and individuals reduce consumption, and recycle or reuse materials. Demand for recycled products is encouraged by establishing goals for utilizing recycled products in the public sector. Schools are encouraged to educate youth about the benefits of recycling.
- Vision 12. Implementation: strategies, policies, programs, and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, state, and interstate levels to achieve these visions.
- A. Building codes and ordinances require energy and resource efficient construction materials and methods. The use of low flow plumbing fixtures, energy efficient insulation, windows, heating, air conditioning and appliances for renovation and new construction is required.
  - B. Permits and inspections are required only where necessary to uphold local zoning and building codes. Regulations are adopted only when required to implement valid public policy. Overly restrictive, inflexible, and redundant regulation has been eliminated.
  - C. Public facilities and infrastructure are funded and constructed to keep pace with growth.
  - D. Revenue enhancements are charged most equitably to the direct beneficiaries of

public services and facilities. County resources are matched with other revenue sources to build the capacity to resolve local needs through innovative project and program development.

- E. Resources to revitalize existing neighborhoods and communities are obtained and focused.
- F. Central geographic information systems (GIS) are utilized to maximize efficiency in planning and provision of government facilities. Utilization of the County's GIS data by the private sector helps to defray costs of planning and facilitating growth.
- G. The private sector is provided economic incentives when required to participate in funding major infrastructure upgrades.

## Land Use Plan Concept

GROWTH AREAS	<p>1) DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS. Primary growth centers are Lexington Park and Leonardtown: urban in pattern and form, designated for intensive residential, commercial and industrial development supported by a priority for provision of community facilities, services, and amenities. (Receiving areas for transferred development rights or TDR)</p> <p>2) TOWN CENTERS. Secondary growth centers are Charlotte Hall, New Market, Mechanicsville, Hollywood, Piney Point: urban in pattern and form, designated for moderately intense residential, commercial and industrial development supported by provision of community facilities and services. (Receiving areas for transferred development rights)</p> <p>3) VILLAGE CENTERS. Third order growth centers are Callaway, Chaptico, Clements, Loveville, Ridge, St. Inigoes, Valley Lee: intended to serve as the focus for rural community facilities, services and activities. (Receiving areas for transferred development rights)</p>
RURAL AREAS	<p>4) RURAL PRESERVATION DISTRICT (RPD). Prime farm land, timber land and mineral resource lands, agriculturally related industries and limited nonfarm cottage industries, and low density nonfarm residential developments characteristic of the county's rural character which are to be preserved for a wide range of economic and aesthetic purposes. Acknowledges continued nonconforming commercial and residential activities on existing parcels throughout the district, but limits their expansion or creation. ( Sending area for transferred development rights)</p> <p>5) RURAL SERVICE CENTERS. Crossroads commercial, retail and business development at Avenue, Budds Creek, Dameron, Helen, Oraville, Park Hall, and St. James that has traditionally provided very localized services for the surrounding rural and agricultural area; designated and intended to offer limited opportunity for infill development to provide focused commercial nodes in the rural areas.</p> <p>6) RURAL COMMERCIAL LIMITED. Established areas of commercial use along county or state roadways that existed in the RPD at time of passage of this plan. Provide for continuation of commercial uses and for the commercial development of certain vacant properties where the use and commercial zoning classifications predates this comprehensive plan, and where commercial use or development would generally not alter the historic character of these areas that are located outside of a development district or town center delineated by this comprehensive plan, but which have commercial status under the 1990 zoning ordinance.</p>
PROTECTED AREAS	<p>7) RESOURCE PROTECTION AREAS. Sensitive areas (steep slopes, floodplains, wetlands, stream corridors, hydric soils, critical natural habitats) where development is hazardous or detrimental; significant natural, cultural and historic resource areas subject to loss or harm as a result destruction, significant alteration, or inadequate protection from impacts of off-site development; Chesapeake Bay critical areas. (Sending area for transferred development rights)</p> <p>8) NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICTS. Established areas, predominately residential, where the existing development patterns and neighborhood character are to be maintained; includes communities with concentrations of structures with historic designation; limited infill development is allowed consistent with the existing patterns and character within its respective district.</p>



# St. Mary's County MASTER PLAN

0 1.25 2.5 3.75 5 10 Miles

## Planning Areas

- |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |                                                                                                                                                            |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #90EE90; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Rural Areas                                             | <b>①</b> Choptico Village                                                                                                                                  |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FF0000; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Lexington Park Development District                     | <b>②</b> Loveville Village                                                                                                                                 |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFA500; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Leonardtown Development District                        | <b>③</b> Clements Village                                                                                                                                  |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #FFFF00; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Town centers                                            | <b>④</b> Callaway Village                                                                                                                                  |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #000000; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> <b>①</b> Charlotte Hall Town Center | <b>⑤</b> St. Inigoes Village                                                                                                                               |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #000000; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> <b>②</b> New Market Town Center     | <b>⑥</b> Valley Lee Village                                                                                                                                |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #000000; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> <b>③</b> Mechanicsville Town Center | <b>⑦</b> Ridge Village                                                                                                                                     |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #000000; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> <b>④</b> Hollywood Town Center      | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #000000; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Rural Service Centers                |
| <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #000000; border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; margin-right: 5px;"></span> <b>⑤</b> Piney Point Town Center    | <span style="display: inline-block; width: 15px; height: 15px; background-color: #808080; border: 1px solid black; margin-right: 5px;"></span> Leonardtown |

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THE ST. MARY’S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## **Chapter 4: LAND USE AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT ELEMENT**

Maintaining quality of life in a growing county depends on smart growth, and on consistent and equitable management of that growth, which is the purpose of the goals, objectives and policies of this plan element. Smart growth equates to implementation of the twelve visions stated in Chapter III that will result in compact, environmentally sensitive development patterns that are less vehicle dominated.

The overall concept incorporates ten principles of smart growth:

- Mix land uses,
- Take advantage of compact building design,
- Create housing opportunities and choices,
- Create walkable communities,
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place,
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas,
- Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities,
- Provide a variety of transportation choices,
- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective,
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions.

To achieve smart growth, infrastructure must be built and maintained in existing communities. The basics: water, sewer, schools and roads are absolute prerequisites for denser and walkable communities. Libraries, parks, cultural and recreational and other similar facilities and amenities enrich local communities. These amenities are important for achieving improved smart growth performance as they attract people to more urban communities. These basics are the subject of chapters 10 and 11, but the framework for their implementation is the land use concept.

The need for infrastructure far outstrips funding on the federal, state and local level. In the past, federal and state grants and loans were generous. Increasingly, local governments and users must shoulder most of the burden. If smart growth is to become a reality, new and expanded infrastructure funding is required.

The overall concept of this comprehensive plan is to divide the County into growth areas and preservation areas for the purpose of concentrating growth in suitable areas while preserving resources and rural character elsewhere. Growth areas include development districts, town centers and village centers, which are adequately sized to accommodate the needs of a predominant share of the projected population. Development to serve a smaller percentage of the projected population is expected to locate outside of designated growth areas, but is also expected to maintain rural character, to preserve resources and to protect sensitive areas.

### **4.1 GROWTH AREAS CONCEPT**

Areas planned for growth are targeted to receive a majority of residential, commercial and industrial development. These areas are served or proposed to be served with public water and sewer and other infrastructure to meet the needs of current and future residents. Residential densities are anticipated to be up to 5 units per acre in town and village centers and greater in

development districts. Infill development is encouraged, as are compatible design criteria and efficient transportation networks to ensure efficient use of land in all growth areas.

Within the Lexington Park development district, the plan delineates and encourages development of a central core with mixed uses surrounded by larger inter-mixed blocks of residential, commercial, industrial and business uses. It promotes creative and carefully designed commercial areas, avoiding the inefficiencies and negative visual, land use and traffic impacts of strip commercial development. It calls for limiting the number of outlets to major roads. Visual and functional qualities of development will result from adherence to site standards for landscaping, architectural design, on site and off-site advertising, access, lot coverage and open space, and buffering from adjacent developments and transportation corridors. Adequate buffers will help to avoid conflicts between different land use types and to provide visual screening.

This plan aligns development district boundaries using watershed planning to protect large contiguous sensitive areas that have significant environmental and recreational features worth preserving, constraints on infrastructure provision, and regulatory constraints for development. Specifically, the Lexington Park development district is aligned to avoid intrusion into the sensitive areas of the St. Mary's River watershed. The Leonardtown development district is aligned to protect the watershed of McIntosh Run. A pocket of development along Point Lookout Road (MD 5) north and west of Leonardtown is recognized for its history and its contribution to the local economy, but is not intended to expand or intensify or to be integrated into the development district. A sewer force main was installed to connect the Banneker and Loveville Schools with the Leonardtown wastewater treatment system, and passes through this pocket of development, but is a "denied access" facility intended to promote public health and not development. If the septic systems serving the various activities within this pocket were to fail, it would be consistent with this plan to correct the failures by connecting to the sewer facility.

Town centers are located at Charlotte Hall, New Market, Mechanicsville, Hollywood and Piney Point. They are designated as growth areas that are secondary to development districts, where infrastructure should be provided to support densities of up to 5 units per acre, and where mixed use development should be encouraged. Master plans should be generated for each of the town centers to ensure that visual and functional qualities of development adheres to standards for landscaping, architectural design, on-site and off-site advertising, access, lot coverage and open space, and buffering from adjacent developments and transportation corridors. Allow for and provide adequate buffers to avoid conflicts between different land use types and to provide visual screening. Discourage strip development, and restrict direct access onto Three Notch Road (MD 5/235) in Charlotte Hall, New Market, Mechanicsville, and Hollywood.

As master plans are prepared for the individual growth areas, the service areas of public facilities should be added in order to create safe and convenient neighborhoods or communities. Most public services (fire, schools, convenience centers, libraries, etc.) have a radial (miles) service area. Mapping these service areas will assist in establishing growth patterns and identifying needs.

Moderate growth may be directed to village centers such as Ridge, Callaway and Chaptico. Infrastructure that supports densities of up to 5 dwelling units per acre should be provided in village centers. Traditional village development patterns and design should be fostered. Master plans for each village center should be prepared. Encourage compact development patterns by clustering septic easements to create open space. Require infill development and redevelopment to provide pedestrian connections to adjacent properties. Promote use of development rights transferred from rural preservation districts. Expansion of rural services should be encouraged in village centers.

New commercial, industrial and office uses should be concentrated in the development districts and town centers. New commercial uses must not be scattered along the County's rural roads, but promoted as infill development in and around traditional rural service centers, such as Budd's Creek, Oraville, Helen, Avenue, St. James, Dameron and Park Hall. Development goals should be balanced with environmental protection and enhancement of the value of the waterfront as a resource for recreation and water dependent facilities.

The Plan seeks to concentrate future residential and commercial development in the development districts, town centers and village centers. Over time, these centers will become significantly denser than they are today. Dense communities must be especially well designed in order to remain attractive and functional for the people who live and work there. The County will encourage design excellence in its growth areas, including attractive architecture, mixed use development, public open space, good connectivity, pedestrian and bicycle amenities, and green features that soften and humanize the built environment.

4.1.1 **Goal:** Concentrate development in suitable areas.

- A. **Objective:** Designate growth areas sized to accommodate the needs of the projected 2030 population of the County. Target a majority of new residential development in development districts, town centers and village centers.
- i. *Policy:* Concentrate development activity in areas served or proposed to be served with public water and sewer, primarily the Lexington Park, and Leonardtown development districts and secondarily in the town centers of Charlotte Hall, New Market, Mechanicsville, Hollywood and Piney Point.
  - ii. *Policy:* Concentrate commercial uses primarily in Leonardtown and Lexington Park, and secondarily in the town and village centers.
  - iii. *Policy:* Prohibit a scattering of new commercial uses along rural roads.
  - iv. *Policy:* Promote development of designated traditional rural service centers, such as Budd's Creek, Oraville, Helen, Avenue, St. James, Dameron and Park Hall.
  - v. *Policy:* Locate industrial and office uses in and near the Lexington Park and Leonardtown areas, near the airport and in the town centers.
  - vi. *Policy:* Concentrate community services and facilities in Lexington Park and Leonardtown.
  - vii. *Policy:* Balance development goals with environmental protection and enhancement of the value of the waterfront as a resource for recreation and water dependent facilities.
  - viii. *Policy:* Encourage infill development and apply standards to assure efficient transportation networks that are compatible with design criteria and efficient use of land in all growth areas.
  - ix. *Policy:* Promote building well connected local roadway networks to support planned growth in the Development Districts so as to help to preserve state highway capacity mainly for regional and through traffic.
  - x. *Policy:* Work with the Maryland State Highway Administration to manage state road access points for existing and planned development.

- B. **Objective:** Concentrate the majority of growth in development districts.
- i. *Policy:* Provide infrastructure that supports medium and high density residential use in development districts.
  - ii. *Policy:* Foster urban development patterns and design, including preparation of master plans for each development district.
  - iii. *Policy:* Delineate and encourage development of a central core with mixed uses surrounded by larger inter-mixed blocks of residential, commercial, industrial and business uses.
  - iv. *Policy:* Maintain visual and functional qualities of development through adherence to site standards for landscaping, architectural design, on site and off-site advertising, access, lot coverage and open space, and buffering from adjacent developments and transportation corridors.
  - v. *Policy:* Allow for and provide adequate buffers to avoid conflicts between different land use types and to provide visual screening.
  - vi. *Policy:* Promote use of development rights transferred from rural preservation districts.
  - vii. *Policy:* Minimize the number of outlets to major roads.
  - viii. *Policy:* Prepare and implement highway access policies for St. Andrew's Church Road (MD 4), Point Lookout Road (MD 5), Three Notch Road (MD 5/235), and Budd's Creek Road (MD 234).
  - ix. *Policy:* Encourage creative and carefully designed commercial areas, avoiding the inefficiencies and negative visual, land use and traffic impacts of strip commercial development.
  - x. *Policy:* Update planning for Three Notch Road and FDR Boulevard in the Lexington Park development district.
  - xi. *Policy:* Prevent strip development from lining County zoned land fronting upon the approaches to Leonardtown in order to allow the town to promote economic growth in the downtown core, and to apply the principles of smart growth in providing necessary public services, and to maintain a defined County Development District.
  - xii. *Policy:* Create zoning districts and standards to effectively concentrate growth.
- C. **Objective:** Focus development in town centers.
- i. *Policy:* Prepare master plans for each town center to foster town development patterns and design.
  - ii. *Policy:* Provide infrastructure that supports densities of 5 units per acre.
  - iii. *Policy:* Encourage mixed use development.
  - iv. *Policy:* Maintain visual and functional qualities of development through adherence to standards for landscaping, architectural design, on site and off-site advertising, access, lot coverage and open space,

and buffering from adjacent developments and transportation corridors.

- v. *Policy:* Allow for and provide adequate buffers to avoid conflicts between different land use types and to provide visual screening.
- vi. *Policy:* Discourage strip development.
- vii. *Policy:* Limit points of direct access to major highways.
- viii. *Policy:* Work with state to prepare and implement highway access policies for Three Notch Road (MD 5/235) in Charlotte Hall, New Market, Mechanicsville, and Hollywood, and provide for sufficient streets to minimize local traffic on Three Notch Road.
- ix. *Policy:* Promote use of development rights transferred from rural preservation districts to boost density of residences or intensity of businesses in town centers.
- x. *Policy:* Encourage installation of underground services to minimize visual impacts of overhead utility lines.

D. **Objective:** Encourage location and expansion of rural services and moderate residential growth in village centers: Callaway, Chaptico, Clements, Loveville, Ridge, Valley Lee and St. Inigoes.

- i. *Policy:* Prepare master plans for each village center to foster village development patterns and design.

4.1.2 **Goal:** Achieve efficient use of land throughout the County through development and redevelopment of existing parcels and structures.

A. **Objective:** Promote and encourage utilization and redevelopment of existing lots and adaptive reuse of existing structures.

- i. *Policy:* Encourage infill development rather than new subdivision and development of large undeveloped parcels through incentives applied to projects in the designated growth areas.
- ii. *Policy:* Discourage scattered new development through the use of disincentives (e.g. lower FAR and density allowances).
- iii. *Policy:* Expand redevelopment, rehabilitation and adaptive reuse incentives.
- iv. *Policy:* Encourage development on existing platted lots within neighborhood conservation areas consistent with current patterns of development (bulk, density, and design) and with enhanced resource protection. Prohibit outward expansion of neighborhood conservation areas.
- v. *Policy:* Provide opportunities for economic return on existing legally recorded lots that are unbuildable due to current environmental or dimensional (setback) constraints. Permit transfer of development rights from such lots to ensure preservation of open space.
- vi. *Policy:* Encourage consolidation and reconfiguration of blocks of small lots to meet resource protection standards. Following reconfiguration, encourage sale of unused development rights for use in growth areas.

- B. **Objective:** Foster and enhance sense of community and remedy negative conditions in existing developed areas.
    - i. *Policy:* Prepare and implement standards to promote quality design and compatibility with existing development, and to improve environmental and cultural aspects of existing neighborhoods, including:
      - a. Landscape provisions for redevelopment and new development.
      - b. Architectural design guidelines for non- single family redevelopment and development.
      - c. Uniform sign provisions for new and replacement signs, including provisions for amortization.
- 4.1.3 **Goal:** Apply excellent community design principles to the built environment, especially in the development districts, town centers and village centers.
- A. **Objective:** Encourage attractive buildings.
    - i. *Policy:* Encourage building facades that employ brick, tile, native stone, wood, stucco or synthetic equivalents.
    - ii. *Policy:* Encourage attractive architectural features on buildings, such as pitched roofs, cornices, parapets, awnings, balconies and fenestration.
    - iii. *Policy:* Encourage architecture that is consistent with the County’s status as a rural Chesapeake Bay peninsula.
    - iv. *Policy:* Encourage adequate windows and doors and discourage lengthy expanses of blank wall.
  - B. **Objective:** Ensure adequacy and compatibility of public spaces and amenities.
    - i. *Policy:* Encourage the inclusion of seating areas, walking paths, public art, public gardens, plazas, water features and other public use space in private and public sector projects. For projects of significant size, require some of these amenities.
    - ii. *Policy:* Locate public projects such as parks, libraries and community centers in places where they will complement and enhance private development.
  - C. **Objective:** Ensure pedestrian and bicycle-friendly environments.
    - i. *Policy:* Require adequate sidewalks and well-marked crosswalks.
    - ii. *Policy:* Encourage bicycle paths and bicycle racks. For projects of significant size, require these amenities.
  - D. **Objective:** Ensure mixed use development that co-locates residential, office, retail and public uses.
    - i. *Policy:* Encourage mixed use projects that allow people to walk easily between and among residential, office and retail spaces.
    - ii. *Policy:* Encourage residential development above first-floor retail space.



- iii. *Policy:* Encourage live-work units.
  - iv. *Policy:* Encourage outdoor restaurant seating where feasible.
  - v. *Policy:* Locate public projects such as parks, libraries and community centers in mixed use centers.
  - vi. *Policy:* Encourage building heights that will make mixed use projects economically feasible, except where AICUZ and AE zoning dictates lower heights.
- E. **Objective:** Maximize green features in the built environment.
- i. *Policy:* Require all projects to include adequate landscaping, including trees, shrubs and ground cover, especially in parking areas. Do not allow large expanses of paved area without adequate green space.
  - ii. *Policy:* Create pocket parks throughout the development districts and town centers.
  - iii. *Policy:* Encourage green roofs and other green building techniques.
  - iv. *Policy:* Encourage LEED certification for significant buildings.
- F. **Objective:** Site design that maximizes attractiveness and connectivity.
- i. *Policy:* Where feasible locate vehicle parking behind buildings rather than in front.
  - ii. *Policy:* Orient buildings to each other in order to create a visual interconnection that encourages pedestrian traffic between the buildings.
  - iii. *Policy:* Wherever possible, establish a visual center for shopping centers, residential projects, office complexes and mixed use projects. Discourage stand alone structures and pad sites that are isolated from neighboring buildings or uses.
  - iv. *Policy:* Encourage vehicle, bicycle and pedestrian connections between adjacent developments. Do not allow site design that requires vehicles to return to major roads in order to move from one project to an adjacent project, unless environmental constraints make connection impossible.
  - v. *Policy:* Where appropriate encourage private and public roads that slow traffic speeds and reinforce a pedestrian realm, by using narrower rights of way, necking, speed humps, traffic circles and similar features.
  - vi. *Policy:* Discourage excessive signage that clutters the visual environment. Coordinate and maintain a standard of excellence in design for all public and private signage.
  - vii. *Policy:* Encourage attractive lighting and outdoor amenities such as street furniture.
- G. **Objective:** Create the tools necessary to implement the above design objectives and policies.
- i. *Policy:* Adopt a best practices guide for excellence in community

design.

- ii. *Policy*: Promulgate community design guidelines for the development districts.

#### **4.2 PRESERVATION AREAS CONCEPT**

Outside of growth areas development is limited to preserve open space and to protect and promote agriculture and forestry. It is imperative to protect the land and water resource base that is necessary to maintain and support the preferred land uses of agriculture, forestry, fisheries activities and aquaculture, and to preserve natural environments (wetlands, forests, abandoned fields, beaches and shorelines). Within designated rural areas agricultural activities are the preferred land use, including those that may produce agriculturally related noise and odors at any time. The sale of farm products from the land where they are produced should be supported. The use of best management practices should be promoted for resource-based activities to minimize contamination of surface and groundwater and adverse effects on plants, fish and wildlife resources and other environmentally sensitive areas.

The plan seeks to preserve rural character through encouraging farmstead subdivisions while preventing proliferation of major subdivision development in agricultural and rural preservation areas. It recognizes that limited amounts of major residential development may be compatible with preservation of rural and community character through preserving open space and limiting impacts to environmentally sensitive areas. It calls for establishing and enforcing performance standards for design and approval of rural residential subdivisions. It promotes transferring development rights from rural preservation areas to growth areas. The transfer of development rights (TDR) may also be used to provide opportunities for economic return on existing legally recorded lots that are unbuildable due to current environmental or dimensional (setback) constraints.

The plan recognizes and supports continuation of existing small scale commercial uses outside of growth areas serving a localized market. In some cases the market served by remotely located commercial uses is more regional in scope. The intensity of such a use could be inconsistent with the character of the rural setting. However, where such commercial uses have long existed outside of growth areas, are in scale compatible with the character of the rural area, and are devoted to a local market, their continued operation and opportunity for reasonable expansion is consistent with this plan's principles of rural preservation.

This plan recognizes crossroads commercial areas that should be designated for continued commerce as rural service centers (RSC). Creation of new commercial uses outside of growth areas is generally limited to properties at these designated crossroads. The plan calls for compliance with standards for proximity to the intersection, access, parking, lighting and design of buildings and signs that conform to rural character.

This plan also provides for continuation of certain other commercial uses and for the commercial development of certain vacant properties that were zoned "C-General Commercial" per Board of County Commissioners Ordinance Z90-11, where such uses and commercial zoning classifications predate this comprehensive plan. These commercial uses generally do not alter the historic character of their respective vicinities, which may be described as 1) north and west of Leonardtown along Point Lookout Road (MD 5) and 2) immediately south of Mechanicsville along Three Notch Road (MD 5).

#### **4.3 NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION AREAS**

Throughout the County there are established neighborhoods where the existing development patterns and overall character are to be maintained. In growth areas such

neighborhoods are typically lower in density than may be realized on adjoining properties. Outside of growth areas such neighborhoods are typically higher in density than may be realized in rural areas. This plan supports allowing limited infill development that is consistent with the existing patterns of lot size and housing type within the respective neighborhoods, thereby conserving the character of the neighborhood. Such neighborhoods in growth areas would be protected against the pressures of higher densities that are allowable elsewhere within the growth area, and such neighborhoods outside of growth areas would be afforded the opportunity for infill notwithstanding the lower densities allowable throughout rural areas.

#### **4.4 RURAL PRESERVATION GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

4.4.1 **Goal:** Direct growth in rural areas to existing population centers and protect resource areas.

- A. **Objective:** Limit growth in rural areas to preserve open space and to protect and promote agriculture and forestry.
- i. *Policy:* Limit the form, type and extent of development outside of growth areas.
  - ii. *Policy:* Conserve the land and water resource base that is necessary to maintain and support the preferred land uses of agriculture, forestry, fisheries activities and aquaculture, and to preserve natural environments (wetlands, forests, abandoned fields, beaches and shorelines).
  - iii. *Policy:* Encourage and prefer any farm use of land and agricultural activities including those that may produce agriculturally related noise and odors at any time.
  - iv. *Policy:* Allow supplemental income productive activities at a scale or intensity that will not unduly change the character of the area; establish performance standards that will prevent negative impacts on surrounding properties.
  - v. *Policy:* Encourage farm products to be sold from the farm where they are produced.
  - vi. *Policy:* Promote use of best management practices in resource-based activities to minimize contamination of surface and groundwater and adverse effects on plants, fish and wildlife resources, and other environmentally sensitive areas.
  - vii. *Policy:* Prevent proliferation of major subdivision development in agricultural and rural preservation areas.
  - viii. *Policy:* Encourage preservation of rural character through use of farmstead subdivisions.
  - ix. *Policy:* Limit transportation improvements outside of designated growth areas to essential capacity improvements as well as the upgrading of substandard roads and bridges.
- B. **Objective:** limit non-farm residential development outside of growth areas to be in scale and consistent with the rural character of the surrounding area.
- i. *Policy:* Establish standards for major and minor residential subdivision development outside of growth areas to ensure compatibility with

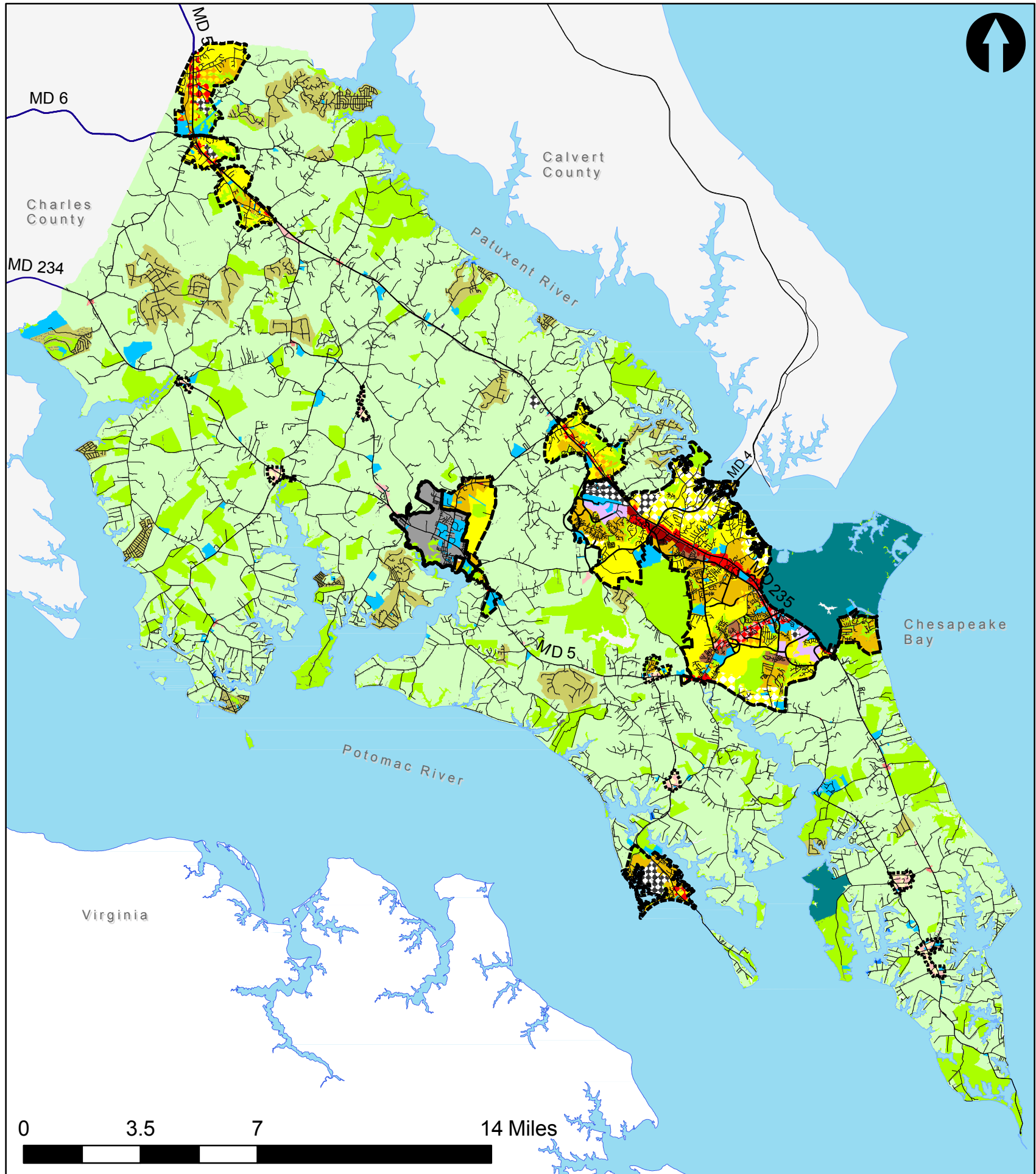
surrounding rural and community character.

- ii. *Policy:* Preserve open space and limit impacts to environmentally sensitive areas.
- iii. *Policy:* Offer tax incentives to establish passive parks, community or public open space on sensitive environmental lands as a means of preserving them.

C. **Objective:** Respect the unique community and historic character of commercial uses outside of growth areas that have traditionally served the needs of local residents.

- i. *Policy:* Support continued operation of small scale commercial uses serving a localized market. In some cases the market served by such remotely located commercial uses is more regional in scope, and the intensity of the use could be inconsistent with the character of the rural setting. Where such commercial uses have long existed outside of growth areas, are in scale compatible with the character of the rural area, and are devoted to a local market, their continued operation and opportunity for reasonable expansion is consistent with the principle of rural preservation.
- ii. *Policy:* Generally limit establishment of new commercial uses outside of growth areas to those crossroads that have existing service activities. Create standard criteria for locating new commercial uses in terms of proximity to the intersection, access, parking, lighting and design of buildings and signs to conform to rural and agricultural community character.
- iii. *Policy:* Provide for continuation of development allowances for the vacant properties located north and west of Leonardtown along Point Lookout Road (MD 5) and immediately south of Mechanicsville along Three Notch Road (MD 5). Commercial use of these areas predates this comprehensive plan, and will generally not alter the historic character of these locations.

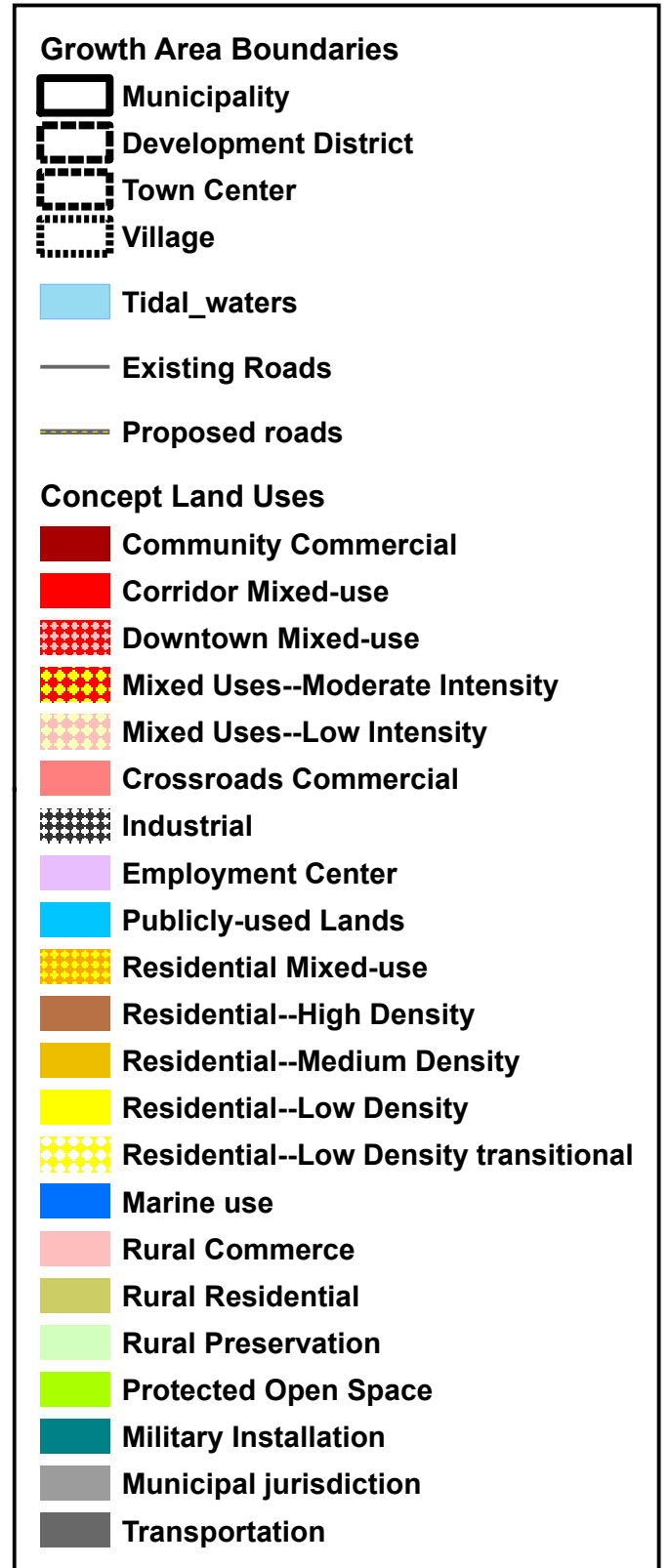
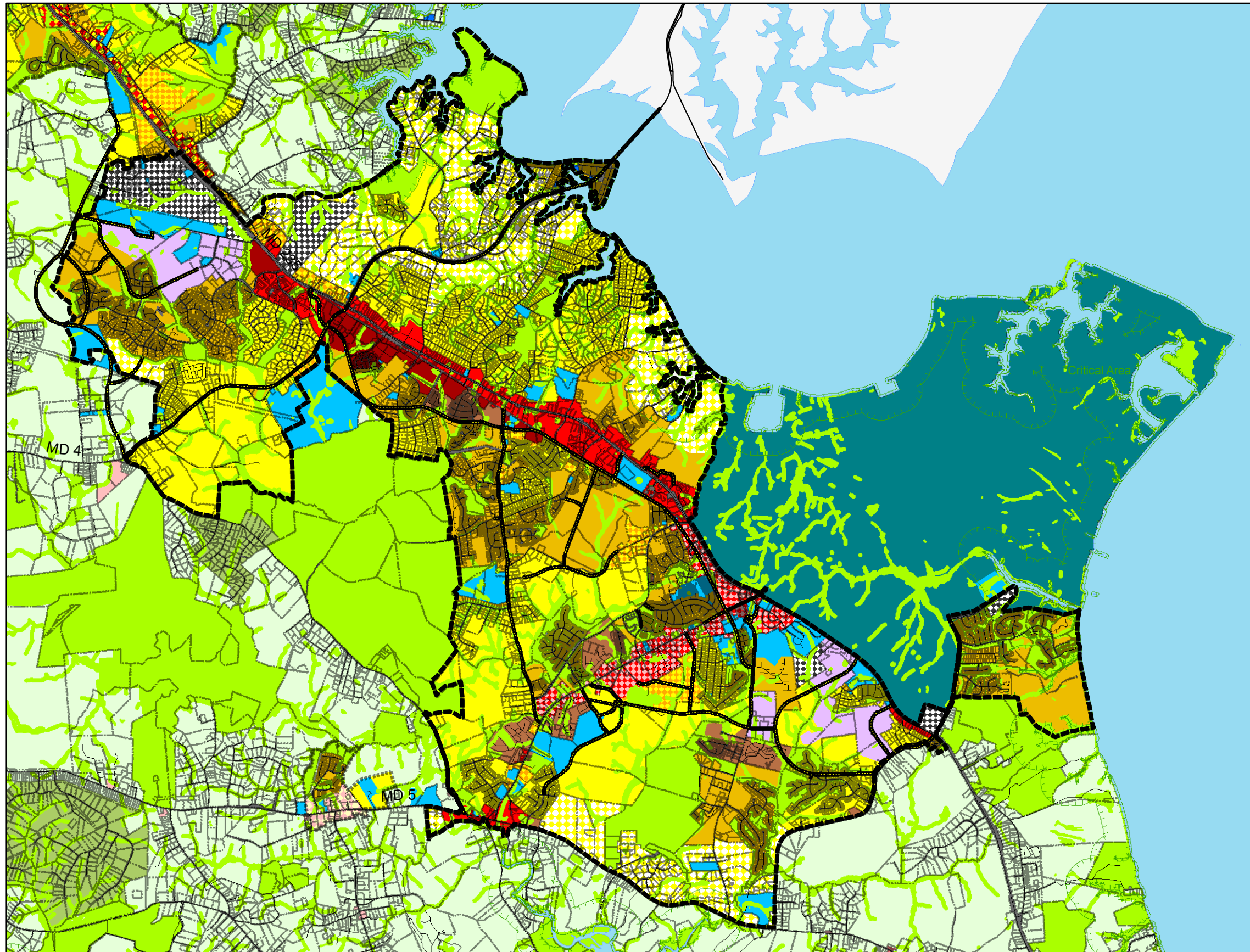
# St. Mary's County 2030 LAND USE CONCEPT PLAN



**Legend**

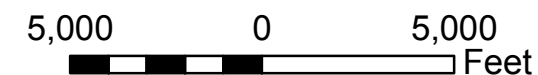
Growth Area Boundaries		Concept Land Uses	
	Municipality		Community Commercial
	Development District		Corridor Mixed-use
	Town Center		Downtown Mixed-use
	Village		Mixed Uses--Moderate Intensity
	Tidal_waters		Mixed Uses--Low Intensity
	Existing Roads		Crossroads Commercial
	Proposed Roads		Industrial
			Employment Center
			Publicly-used Lands
			Residential Mixed-use
			Residential--High Density
			Residential--Medium Density
			Residential--Low Density
			Residential--Low Density transitional
			Marine use
			Rural Commerce
			Rural Residential
			Rural Preservation
			Protected Open Space
			Military Installation
			Municipal jurisdiction
			Transportation

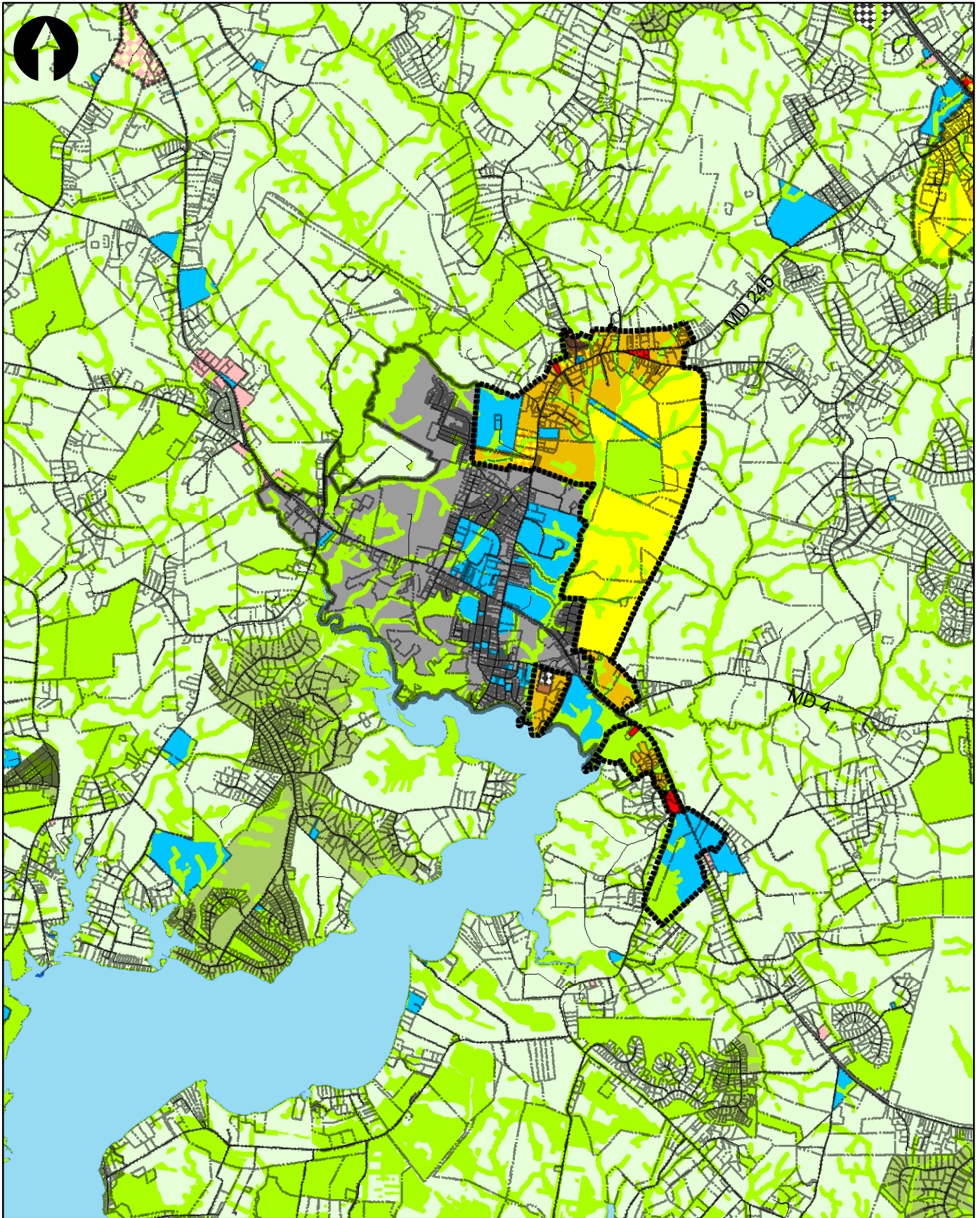
# DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS



**LEXINGTON PARK**

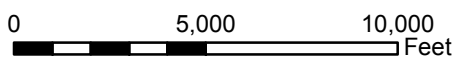
**CONCEPT LAND USE PLAN**



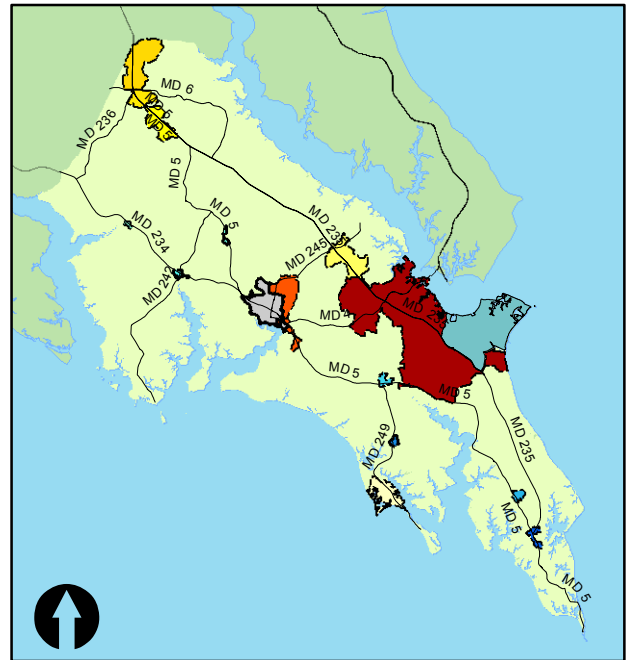
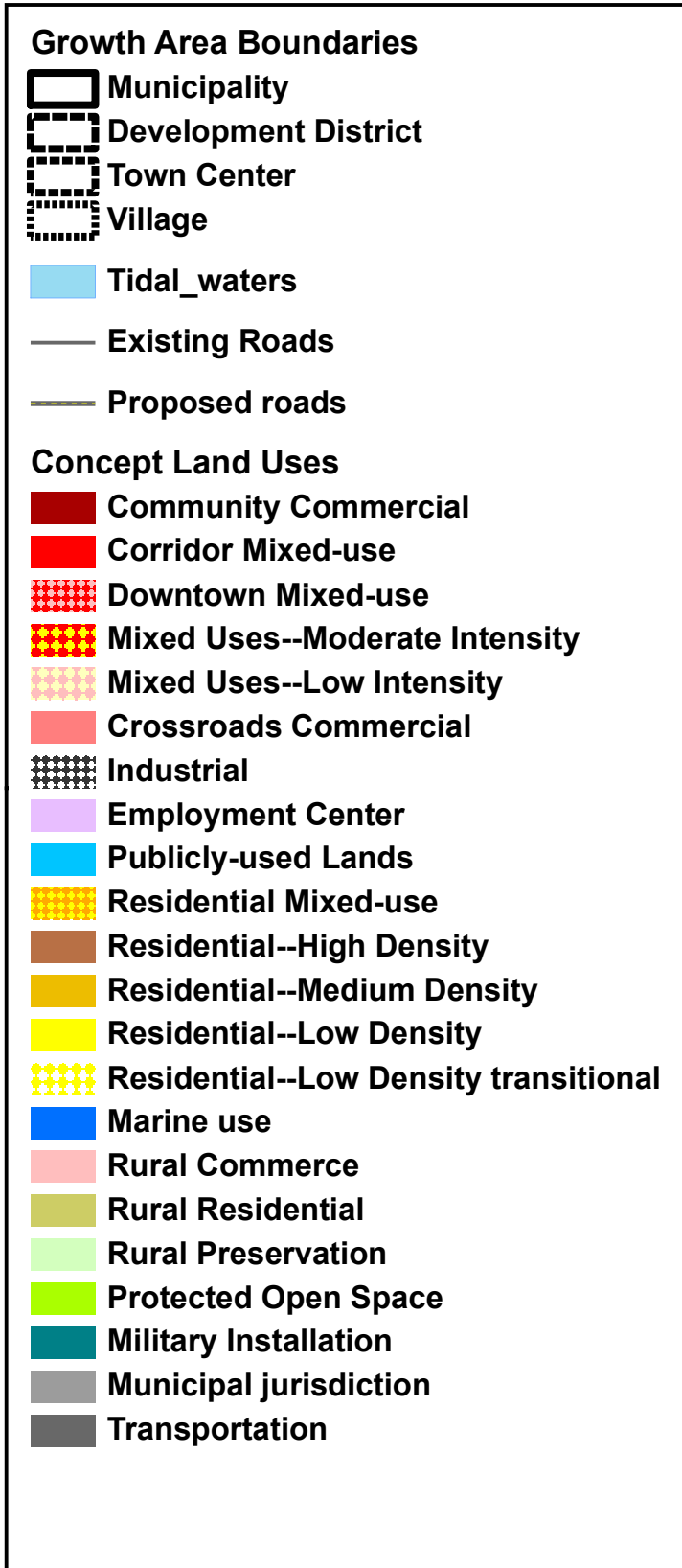


# LEONARDTOWN

## CONCEPT LAND USE PLAN



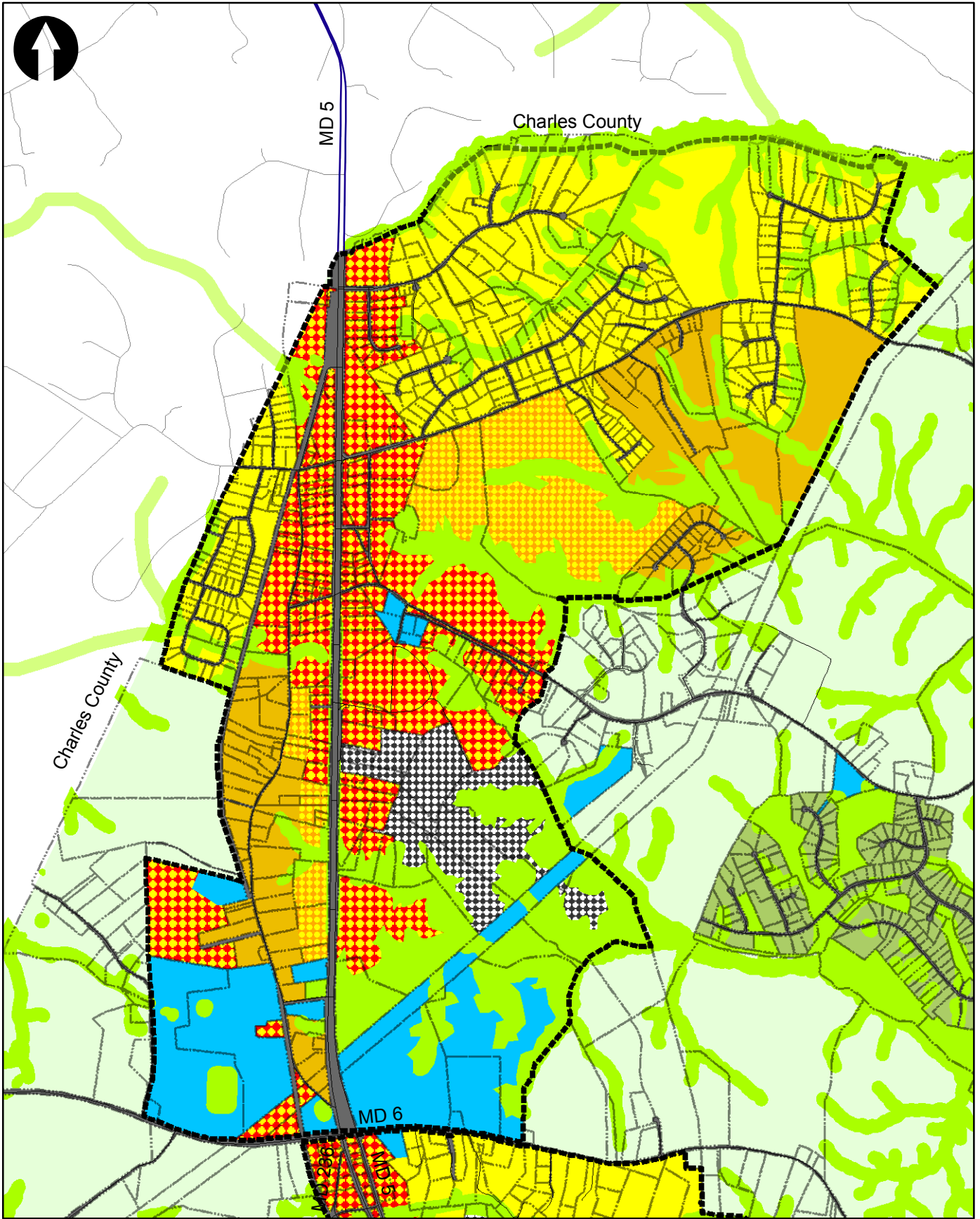
# TOWN CENTERS



## CONCEPT LAND USE PLANS

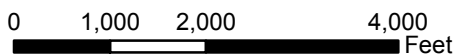


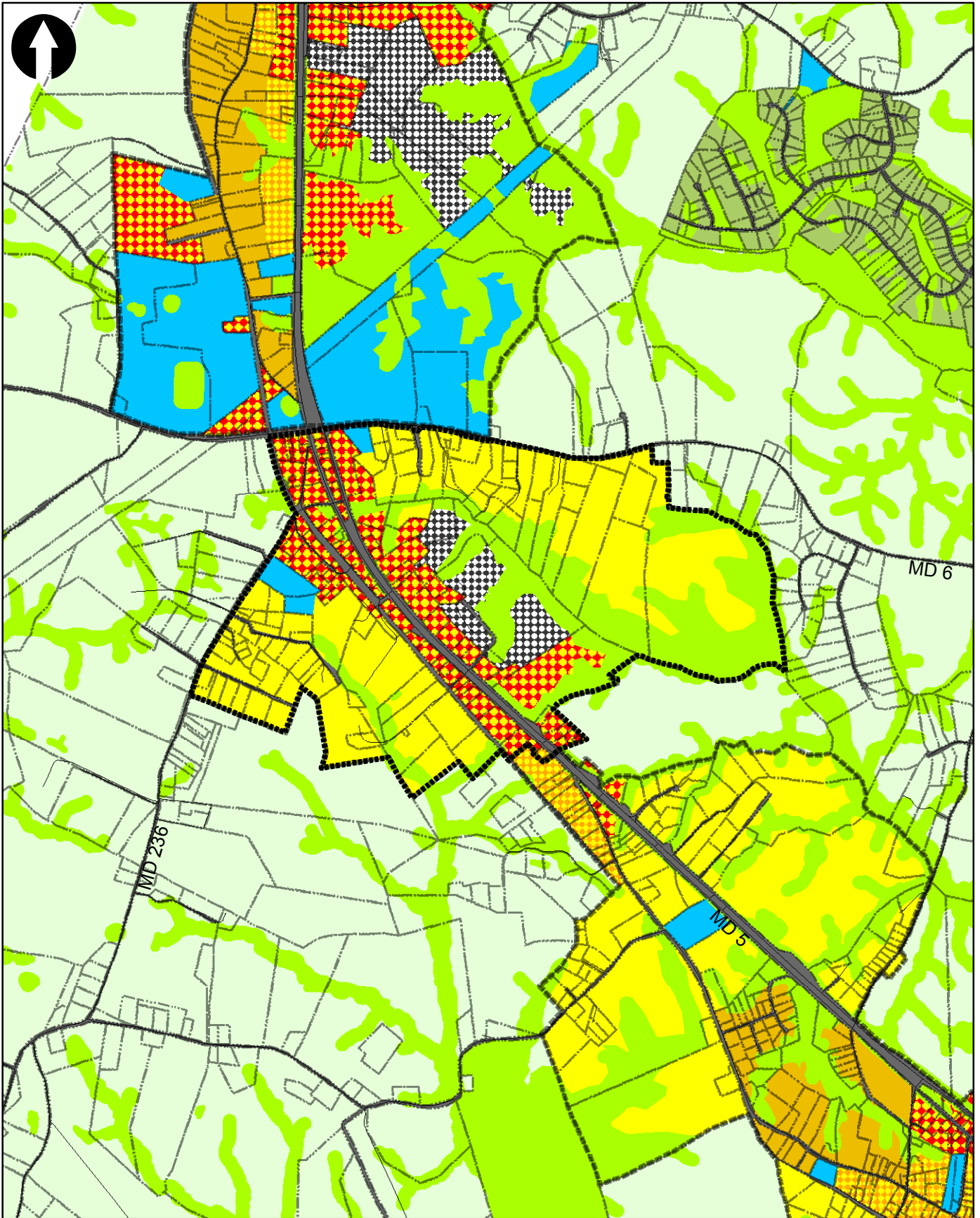




# CHARLOTTE HALL

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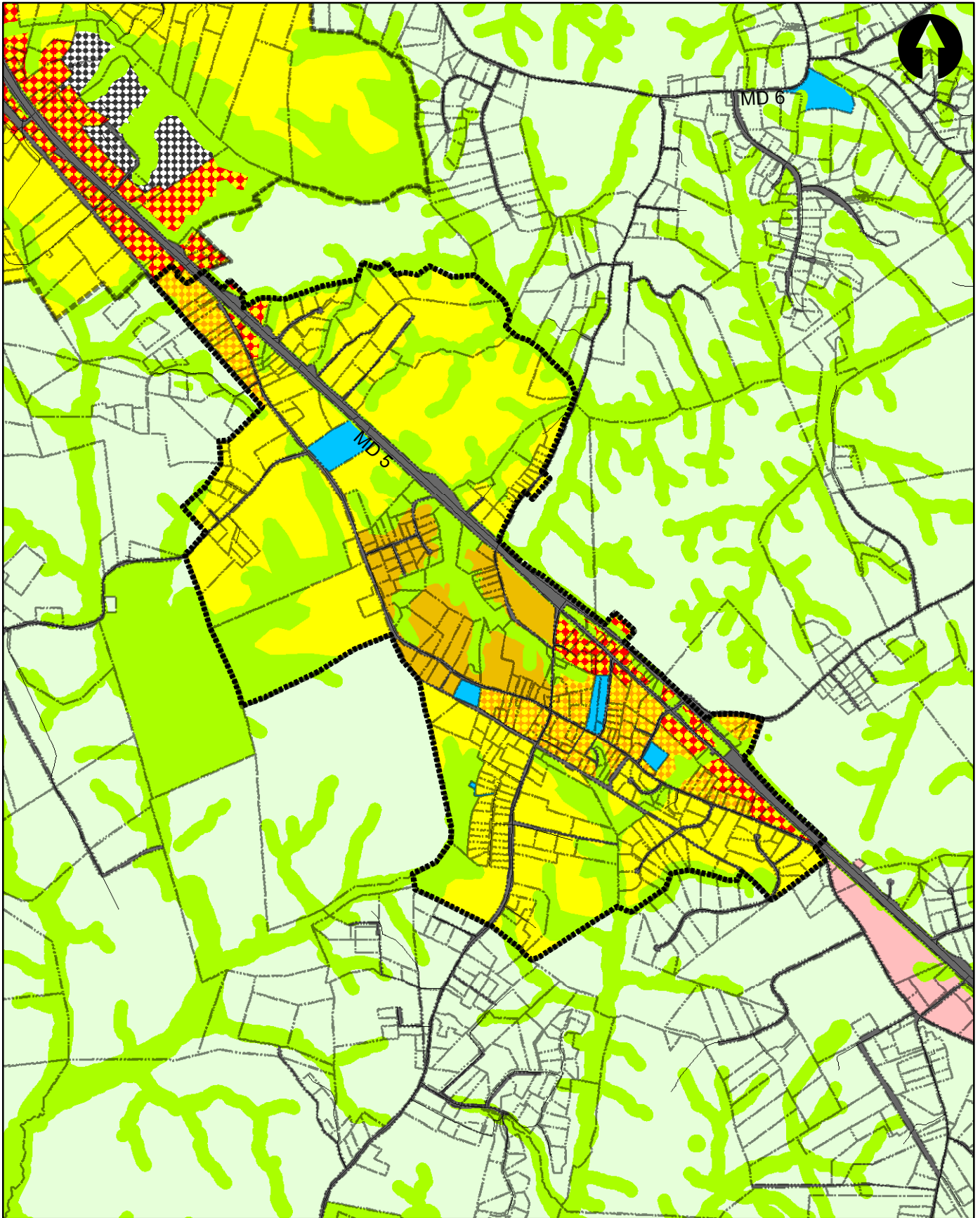




## NEW MARKET

## CONCEPT LAND USE PLAN

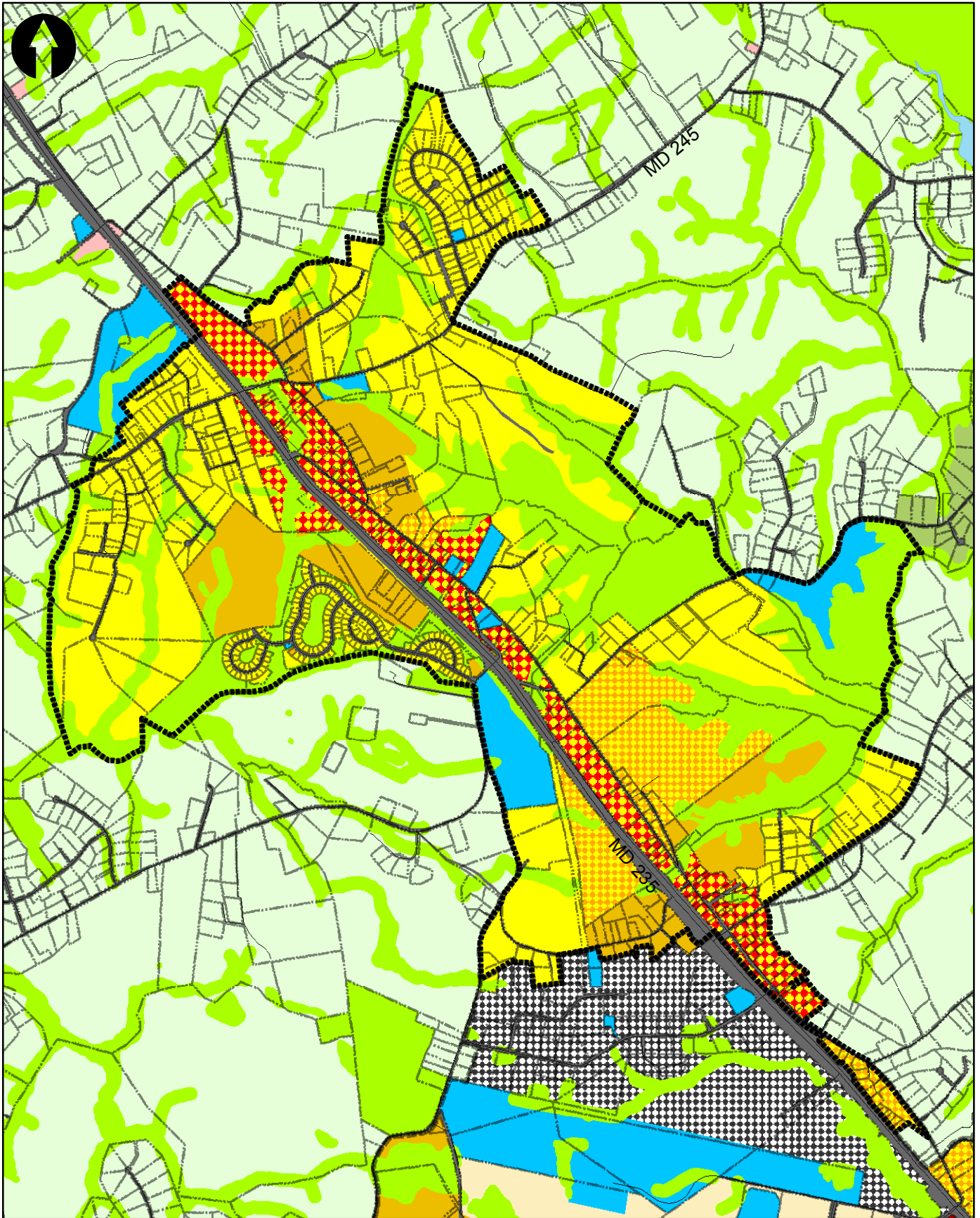
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# MECHANICSVILLE

# CONCEPT LAND USE PLAN

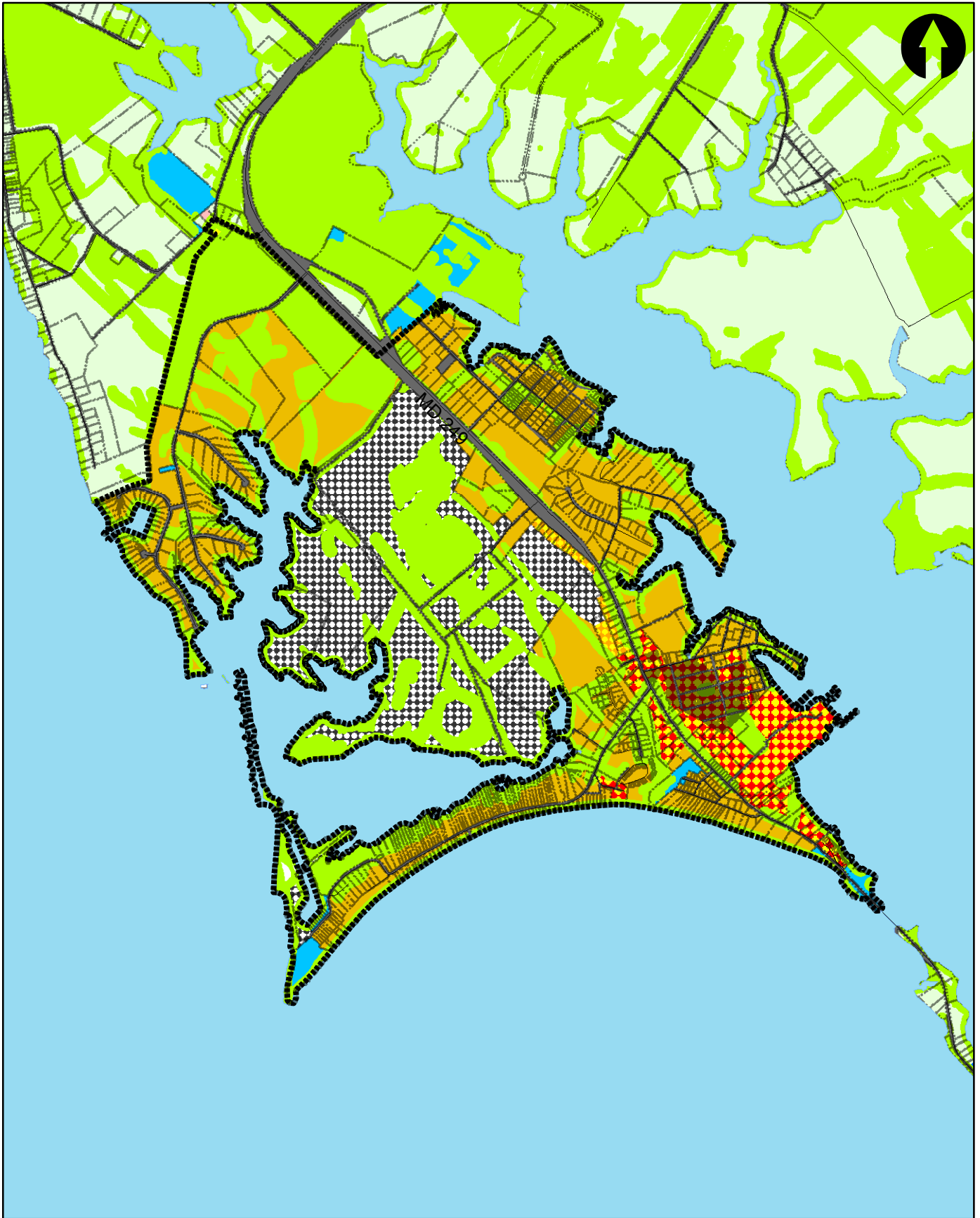




# HOLLYWOOD

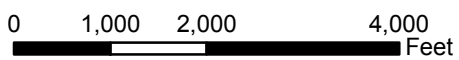
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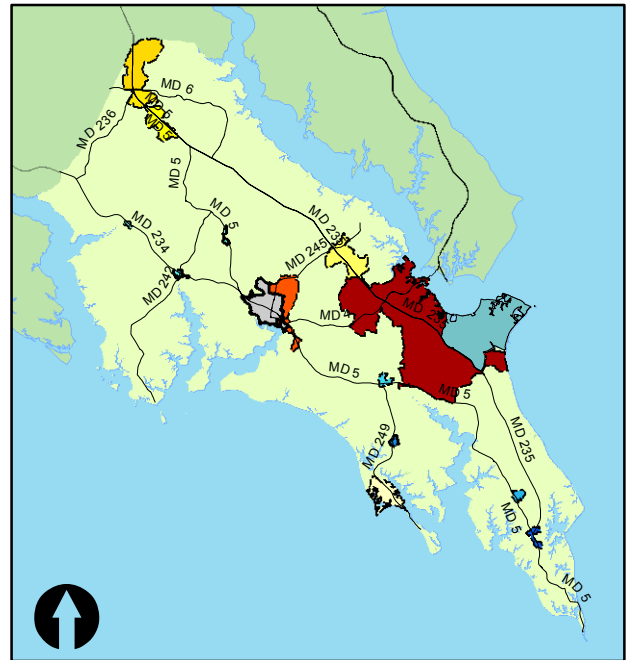
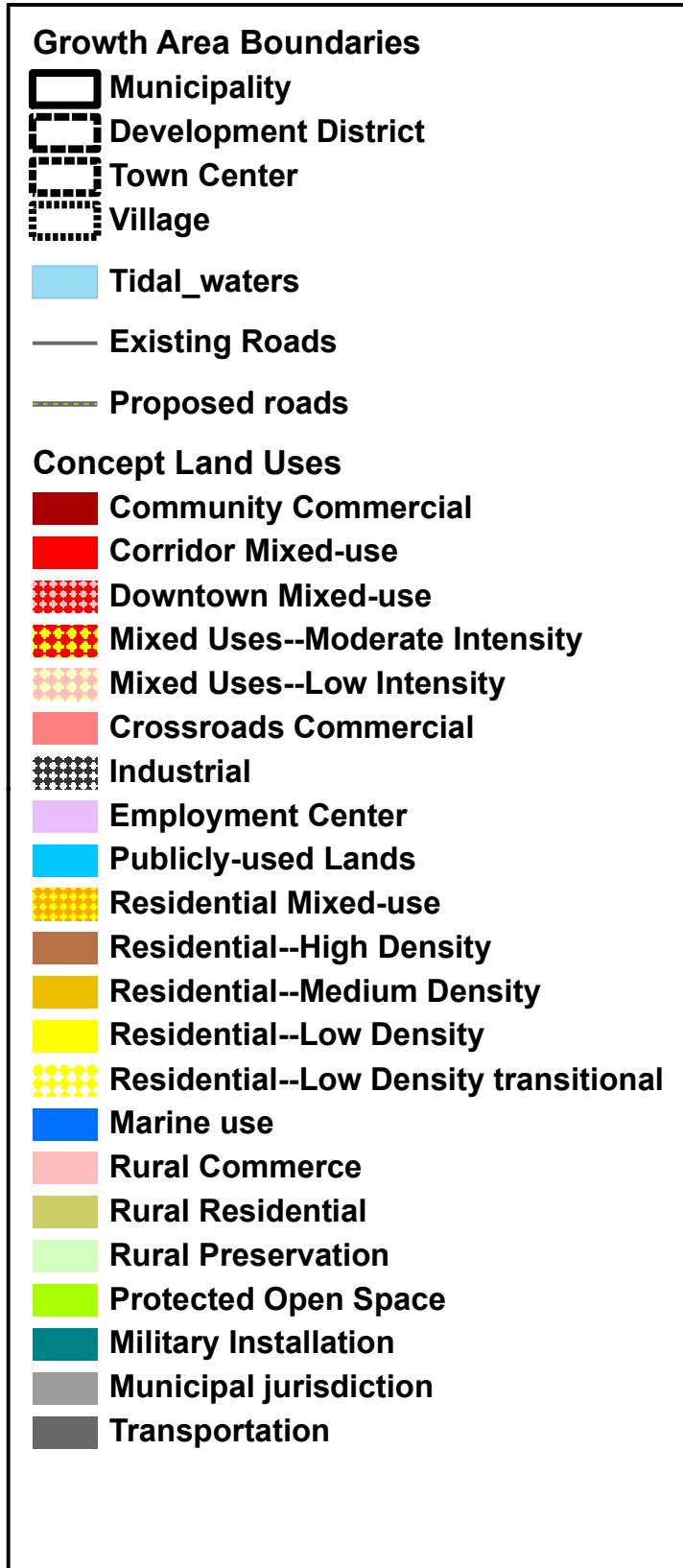


## PINEY POINT

## CONCEPT LAND USE PLAN

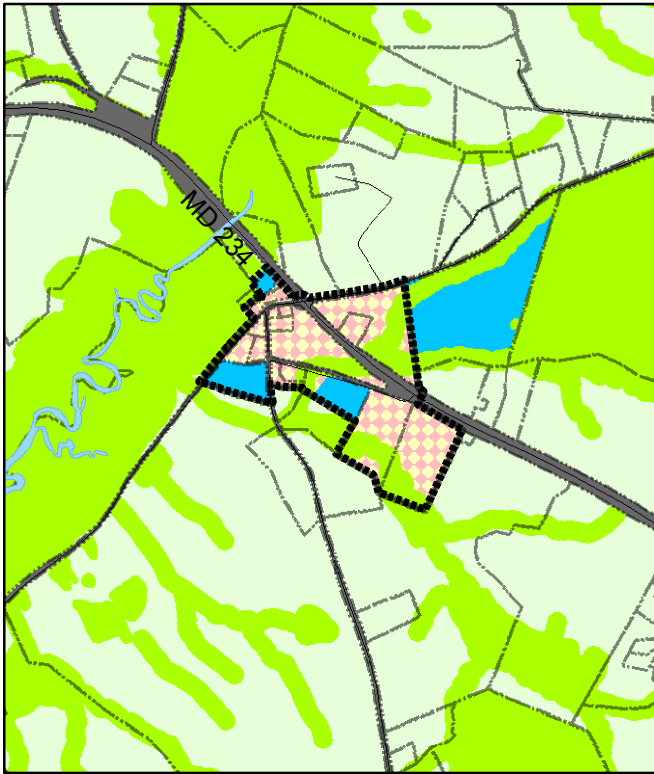


# VILLAGE CENTERS

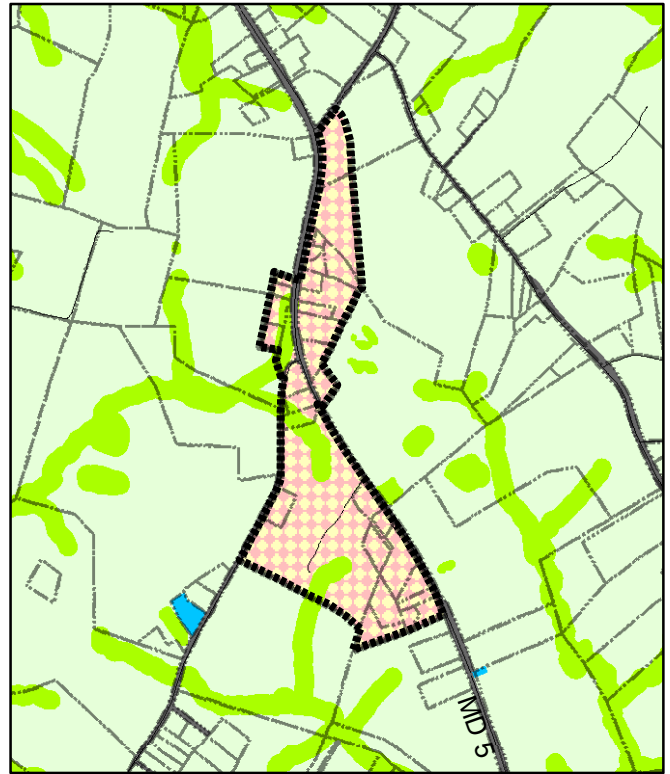


## CONCEPT LAND USE PLANS

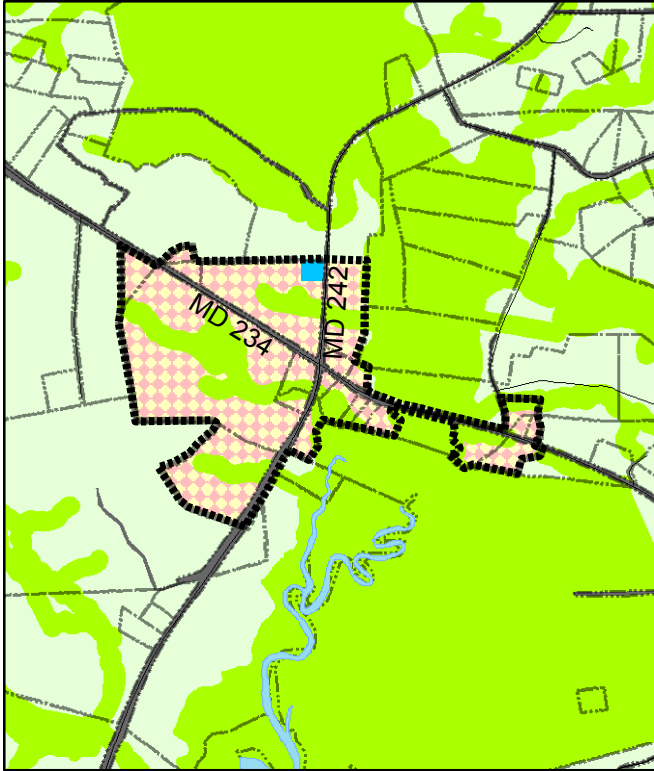




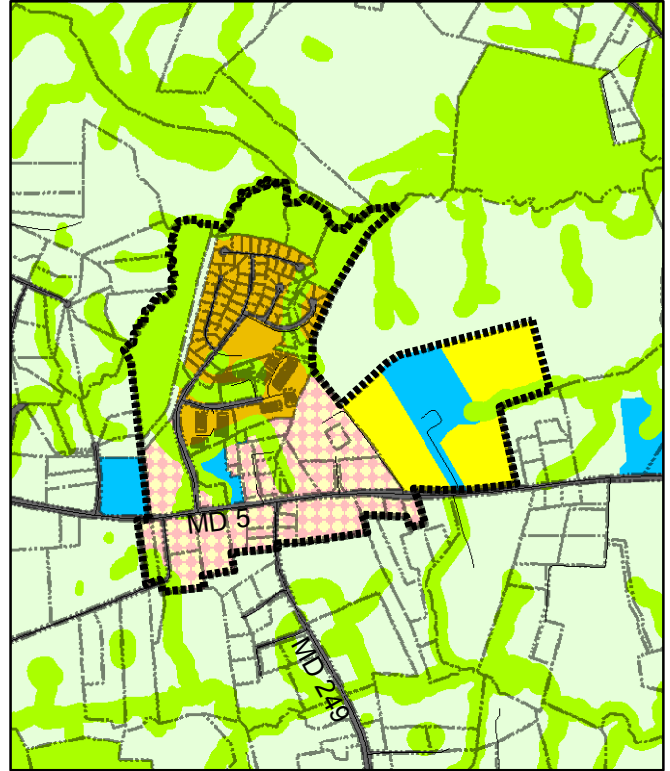
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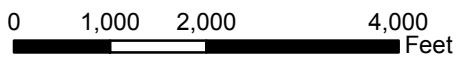
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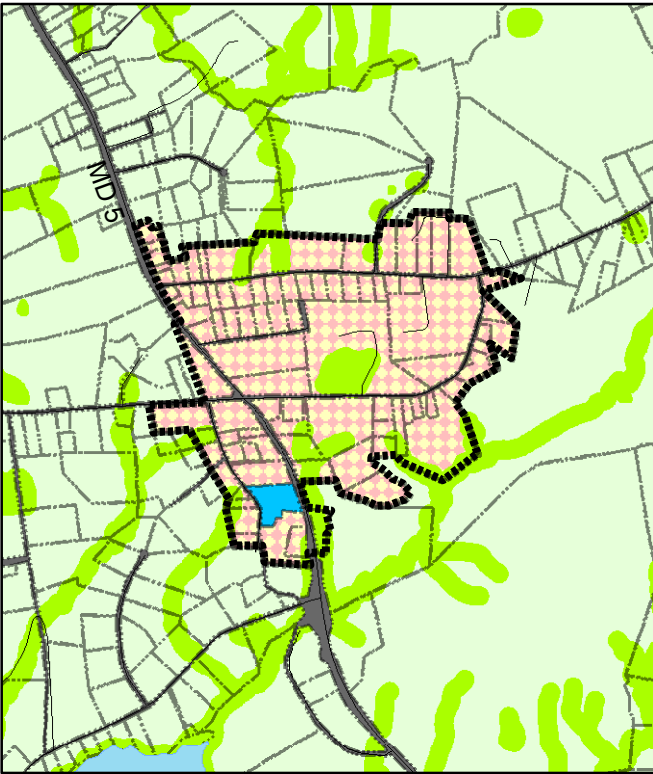
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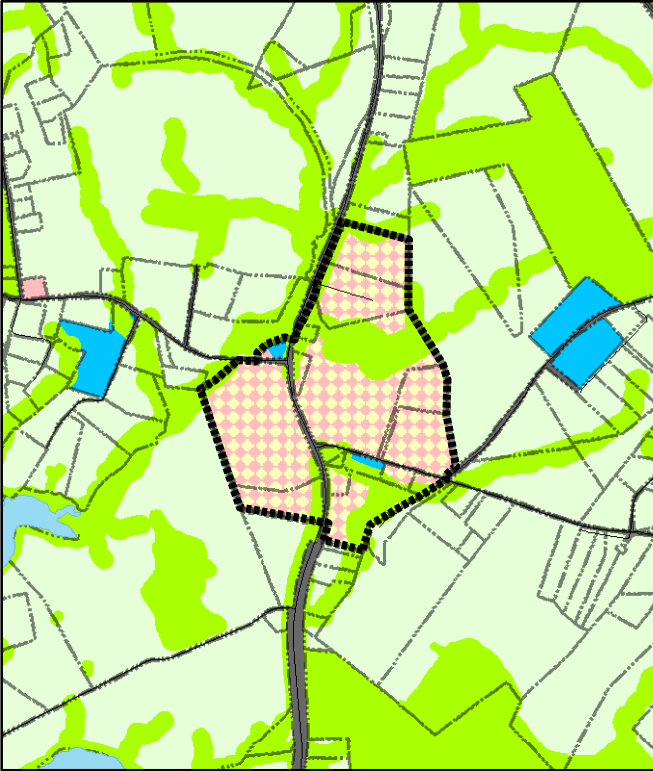
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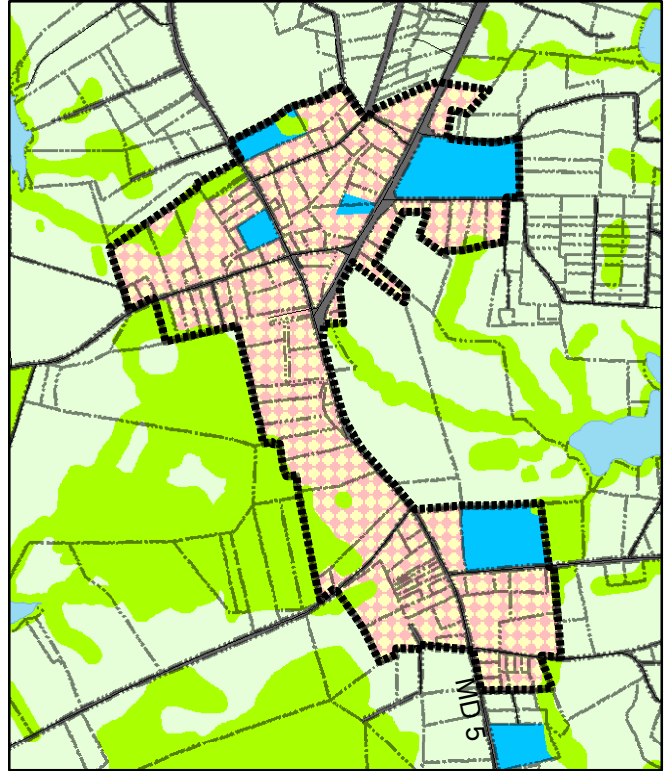
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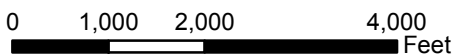
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**RIDGE**



**CONCEPT LAND USE PLANS**



## 4.5 DEVELOPMENT GUIDELINES

### 4.5.1 Growth Area Land Use Concepts.

#### A. Residential Areas

- i. Low Density – Transitional: Development in this planning category may consist of low density residences with substantial accommodation for preservation of open space or forest retention. Base density would be 1 dwelling unit per acre. This density may not increase for lands within the Critical Area. Outside of the Critical Area density may increase up to 3 dwellings per acre with the use of transferred development rights (TDRs). A minimum of 50% open spaces should be retained, and 100% of predefined sensitive areas should be preserved. Minimum lot size would be 2 acres in the Critical Area and clustering would not be mandatory; outside of the Critical Area no minimum lot size would be required.
- ii. Low Density: Development in this planning category may consist of low density residences in clustered configurations with preservation of open space or forest retention maximized. Base density would be 1 dwelling unit per acre to five units per acre; this density may increase to 5 units per acre with the use of TDRs. There would be no minimum open space required; however, 100% of predefined sensitive areas must be preserved. There would be no minimum lot size.
- iii. Medium Density: Development in this planning category may consist of medium density residences with accommodation for preservation of open space or forest retention. Acceptable density would range from 5 to 10 dwelling units per acre.
- iv. High Density: Development in this planning category may consist of high density residences in with reasonable preservation of open space or forest retention. Acceptable density would range from 10 to 20 dwelling units per acre.

#### B. Commercial Areas

- i. Community Commercial: Development in this planning category may consist of large-scale and clustered commercial and residential uses with reasonable preservation of open space or forest retention.

#### C. Mixed Use Areas

- i. Residential Mixed Use: Development in this planning category may consist of residential and office uses and personal and business services with standards ensuring compatibility with adjoining residential uses. Acceptable density would range from 1 dwelling unit per acre to five units per acre. This Plan recommends continued evaluation of the range of uses that may be allowed within this category.
- ii. Corridor Mixed Use: Development in this category may include a broad range of uses adjacent to principal transportation corridors with ample connectivity for vehicles and pedestrians. Standards are

intended to accommodate automobile-oriented uses but also to create a viable, visually attractive environment. The desired form is more urban than suburban or strip (linear). Acceptable residential density would range from five (5) dwelling unit per acre to fifteen (15) units per acre. Consider a zoning ordinance text amendment that would permit a density of five (5) to fifteen (15) dwelling units per acre.

- iii. Downtown Mixed Use: Within the core area surrounding Gate 2 of the Naval Air Station and southwesterly along either side of Great Mills Road, development shall be consistent with the mixed-use character of the area. Standards are intended to create an urban character and to make the core area safe, pedestrian friendly and visually attractive. Acceptable residential density would range from 1 dwelling unit per acre to thirty (30) units per acre. Consider a zoning ordinance text amendment that would permit a density of thirty (30) dwelling units per acre.
- iv. Mixed Uses – Moderate Intensity: Development in this category may include a broad range of uses adjacent to principal transportation corridors with ample connectivity for vehicles and pedestrians. Standards are intended to accommodate automobile-oriented uses but also to create a viable, visually attractive environment. The desired form is more urban than suburban or strip (linear). Acceptable residential density would range from five (5) dwelling unit per acre to fifteen (15) units per acre.
- v. Mixed Uses – Low Intensity: Development in this category may include a limited range of uses adjacent to principal transportation corridors with ample connectivity for vehicles and pedestrians. Standards are intended to accommodate automobile-oriented uses but also to create a viable, visually attractive environment. Acceptable residential density would range from two (2) dwelling unit per acre to five (5) units per acre.

- D. Employment Centers (including office and business parks): Development in this planning category may consist of offices in a campus setting with associated or supporting limited retail integrated into and subordinate to principal office uses. Limited warehousing and self-storage uses may also be integrated into an office and business park.
- E. Industrial Areas: Development in this planning category may consist of industrial and office uses with reasonable preservation of open space or forest retention.

#### 4.5.2 Rural Area Land Use Concepts

- A. Rural Preservation: Outside of growth areas development should be limited to preserve open space, and to protect the land and water resource base that is necessary to maintain and support the preferred land uses of agriculture, forestry, fisheries activities and aquaculture. Growth should also be limited to preserve natural environments, including wetlands, forests, abandoned fields, beaches and shorelines. Within designated rural areas, agricultural activities are the preferred land use, including those that may produce agriculturally related noise and odors at any time. The sale of farm products from the land where they are produced should be supported. The use of best management practices should be promoted

for resource-based activities to minimize contamination of surface and groundwater and adverse effects on plants, fish and wildlife resources and other environmentally sensitive areas. Transferring development rights from rural preservation areas to growth areas is encouraged. The transfer of development rights (TDR) may also be used to provide opportunities for economic return on existing legally recorded lots that are unbuildable due to current environmental or dimensional (setback) constraints.

- B. Rural Residential: Development in this land use category includes limited amounts of appropriately designed residential uses that are compatible with rural and community character through preserving open space and limiting impacts to environmentally sensitive areas.
- C. Rural Commerce: Development in this land use category includes small scale commercial uses outside of growth areas serving a localized market. In some cases the market served by such remotely located commercial uses is more regional in scope. The intensity of the use could be inconsistent with the character of the rural setting. Where such commercial uses have long existed outside of growth areas, are compatible with the character of the rural area, and are devoted to a local market, their continued operation and opportunity for reasonable expansion is consistent with the principle of the rural preservation district.
- D. Crossroads Commercial: This plan designates crossroads commercial areas as rural service centers (RSC) for continued commerce. Creation of new commercial uses outside of growth areas is generally limited to properties at these designated crossroads. The plan calls for compliance with standards for proximity to the intersection, access, parking, lighting and design of buildings and signs that conform to rural character.

#### 4.5.3 General Land Use Concepts – may apply to either rural or growth areas.

- A. Publicly Used Lands: Development in this planning category consists of federal, state or local governmental facilities such as parks and schools, and semi-public uses such as places of worship.
- B. Military Installation: While the County has no jurisdiction over either the Patuxent River Naval Air Station or its Webster Field auxiliary, these facilities are included in this plan for their importance in the make up of the community.
- C. Marine Use: Development in this land use category includes a full range of marine sales and services, including marinas, dry boat storage, boat-yards, boat and equipment sales and rentals, marine-related retail sales, yacht clubs, visitor accommodations (including hotels), food and beverage sales and eating and drinking establishments. Residential uses should be accessory to the marine use of the property.

#### 4.5.4 Lexington Park Planning and Design Recommendations

The Lexington Park Development District (LPDD) Master Plan is incorporated by reference into this Comprehensive Plan. The Master Plan directs and encourages orderly growth and development. It addresses the following questions:

- How can the Lexington Park - California - Great Mills area become a better place to live, work, and play?
- Which areas are most suitable for growth? Which areas may be unsuitable?

- How should the LPDD relate physically and economically to other parts of the County?
- How should the different parts of the LPDD relate physically to each other?
- What public facilities such as schools, roads, and parks as well as transportation and public safety services are needed to serve the area?
- How should environmentally sensitive areas be best protected?

The Master Plan focuses on themes intended to improve how the Development District functions, support economic development, maximize use of available capacity in roads and schools, protect the environment, and enhance neighborhoods.

It provides specific guidance for planning areas defined by subwatersheds:

- Upper St. Mary's River – expand Wildewood to accommodate school and transportation improvements.
- Jarboesville Run – mix of residences and offices; cross-county transportation connections.
- Patuxent River – Gate 1 vicinity: enhance this emerging employment center with respect to traffic, complimentary uses, and pedestrian and bicycle connections. Prescribe residential use of those unimproved lands to the northeast of this center.
- Hilton Run. – expand downtown mixed use capacity, support with interconnected street system, and ensure protection of sensitive areas.
- Pembroke Run – Willows Road corridor: guide and encourage opportunities for mixed residential and office use, with supporting transportation connections.

A. The Plan specifically recommends the following objectives.

- i. Revitalize Downtown Lexington Park. Continue the cooperative efforts of government and businesses following the County's adoption of the Lexington Park – Tulagi Master Plan.
- ii. Build a supportive transportation network. The Plan addresses phasing development to preserve road capacity, building pedestrian and bicycle facilities along with road improvements, and increasing transit service to reduce reliance on private automobiles.
- iii. Protect stream conditions, water quality and the health of the biological communities. Support green infrastructure.

B. The Master Plan's major recommendations are to:

- i. Direct development to existing developed areas.
- ii. Implement watershed management plans.
- iii. Retrofit areas in need of improved storm water management.
- iv. Expand wooded buffers along major streams to protect important forested floodplains from development.
- v. In advising creation of a diverse housing stock, the Master Plan identifies several options to facilitate an increased supply of affordable housing and recommends three areas for high residential density: headwaters of Jarboesville Run area, south side of Great Mills Road

- area, and southern portion of Willows Road.
- vi. Ensure adequate parks and recreation areas. Support heritage tourism. Continued development in the LPDD will create additional demand for recreation land and programs. The Plan recommends the following:
    - a. Acquire land for four new neighborhood parks.
    - b. Connect neighborhoods, employment centers, shopping areas and public open spaces with hiking and biking trails including the Three Notch Trail.
    - c. Provide natural greenways and trail connections in the Hilton Run and the Jarboesville Run watersheds.
    - d. Enhance existing neighborhoods. Because the LPDD is large and contains large undeveloped areas, few residents relate to it as a single place. It is, rather, a collection of developments and small places with no single defined center. Over time, as the LPDD continues to grow, these collections of developments will likely coalesce into neighborhoods with their own concerns, needs and interests. The Plan identifies potential neighborhood groupings, related to community features such as schools and shopping areas, which over time can be enhanced with physical improvements.
    - e. Create transitional residential areas with reduced base (or by-right) density to direct growth to the core of the Development District.
  - vii. The plan calls for support of the priorities of the Board of County Commissioners “Consolidated Priorities for Community Support of the Navy” The Board updated these priorities July 2009 as follows:
    - a. **Education.** Provide programs and technology for life-long learning by supporting a continuum of educational excellence from pre-kindergarten through graduate level higher education.
      - i) Support the Science and Technology Academy partnership and Navy Science Technology Engineering Math (STEM) initiatives.
      - ii) Support “Star Base Atlantis” programs.
      - iii) Support partnering initiatives between the Navy, University of Maryland and College of Southern Maryland to offer undergraduate engineering programs.
      - iv) Support education partnerships and new programs that enhance workforce capability and quality of life.
      - v) Expand programs at College of Southern Maryland, St. Mary’s College of Maryland, and the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center to broaden life-long learning.
    - b. **Transportation.** Support continuous improvement of transportation infrastructure within the County and regionally for access to the Patuxent River Naval Air Station and effective cross-county travel for residents.

- i) Design and construct a road along the FDR right-of-way to provide alternative access to commercial and residential destinations within the development district.
  - ii) Continue to seek funding for Route 5 corridor improvements.
  - iii) Continue to seek funding for improvements to MD Route 235/4 intersection.
  - iv) Support continuing efforts to address long-range replacement or reconstruction of the Thomas Johnson Bridge.
  - v) Support alternative transportation including pedestrian and bicycle use of County-owned right-of-way and long-term options for passenger rail.
  - vi) Consider widening of MD Route 712 from Gate 3 to MD Route 235 for access to Navy and Maryland National Guard facilities.
- c. **Housing.** Continue to ensure an adequate supply of housing for all ranges of affordability that will serve new employees associated with emerging Navy programs and the existing County workforce. Support increased homeownership opportunities.
- i) Extend authorization for impact fee waiver and deferral program.
  - ii) Develop public/private partnerships to increase the supply and affordability of workforce housing.
  - iii) Develop funding sources to extend water and sewer service to enable development within development districts. Streamline the development approval processes.
  - iv) Adopt the current St. Mary's Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan as a part of the St Mary's Comprehensive Plan.
  - v) Extend or upgrade water and sewer service to encourage more intense development within the development districts.
  - vi) Support increased multifamily rental and homeownership opportunities for households with low to modest incomes.
- d. **Lexington Park Revitalization.** Revitalize the physical and economic infrastructure of Lexington Park.
- i) Complete the Lexington Manor Redevelopment projects.
  - ii) Proceed with Patuxent River Naval Air Museum.
  - iii) Continue to implement the adopted Lexington Park Plan. Update the Plan immediately following the update of the Comprehensive Plan.
  - iv) Support the application of Lexington Park and adjoining communities for inclusion in Southern Maryland Heritage

Trails.

- v) Support Lexington Park as a potential BRAC Zone
- e. **Quality of Life.** Employ local government regulations and investment to preserve rural character, enhance development districts, increase cultural opportunities and support economic growth and diversification.
  - i) Support Leonardtown Priority Places activities and related development. Support the application of Leonardtown as an Arts and Entertainment District.
  - ii) Implement the goals and objectives of the County's Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan.
  - iii) Support projects and initiatives developed under the Southern Maryland Heritage Tourism Management Plan whose objective is to preserve heritage resources while increasing the economic impact of tourism.
  - iv) Develop plans to maintain and enhance levels of service for public safety.
  - v) Update the Comprehensive Solid Waste and Recycling Plan for resubmission to the State to address long-term solid waste needs.
  - vi) Support efforts to expand the availability of broadband throughout the County.
- f. **Encroachment Partnering.** Work with the Navy to identify and mitigate all forms of encroachment that may potentially impact base operations.
  - i) Support semi-annual encroachment partnering meetings between the Navy and St. Mary's County Board of County Commissioners.
  - ii) Incorporate AICUZ studies into Land Use and Planning ordinances.
  - iii) Incorporate Range AICUZ studies into Land Use and Planning ordinances.
  - iv) Support Joint Land Use Studies (JLUS).
  - v) Support the purchase of property or easements to protect the missions of NAS Patuxent River and Webster Field.

#### 4.5.5 Leonardtown Development District planning and design recommendations

##### A. General Criteria

- i. Work closely with Leonardtown officials to improve business and economic development.
- ii. Organize commercial entrances and parking lots from Point Lookout Road (MD 5). Combine parking areas in side and rear yards. All parking lots should be edged in curb and gutter and paved in a hard

surface.

- iii. For Fenwick Street outside of town limits prepare design guidelines that ensure that new development and redevelopment is compatible with existing town character.
- iv. Provide sidewalks along Fenwick Street outside of town limits to encourage pedestrian circulation.
- v. Require all service and storage areas to be screened from public right of ways.
- vi. Provide for community recreation areas as residential growth occurs. Local playgrounds, ball fields, practice areas and picnic areas are recommended.
- vii. Protect sensitive areas of streams, nontidal wetlands, steep slopes and hydric soils as open space.
- viii. Residential subdivisions should require sidewalks on one side of the road and/or pedestrian connecting trail through natural areas.
- ix. Encourage site planning that allows for reverse frontage on proposed local collector road. Discourage additional access on Point lookout Road (MD 5) except at crossovers.
- x. Limit free standing signs on each property. Develop design standards for signage and lighting.
- xi. Establish a landscape requirement for setbacks and parking. Landscape codes should encourage a pattern of shade trees and low shrubs on existing perimeter medians adjacent to Point Lookout Road (MD 5). Plantings will help to define road edge, buffer parking areas and enhance town center without blocking store frontage or impacting road safety.

B. New Residential Areas

- i. Provide sidewalks along roads and/or consider pedestrian trails through natural areas.
- ii. Provide community and neighborhood recreation areas such as playground and ball fields.
- iii. Protect streams, steep slopes and wetlands as open space and natural buffers from adjacent land uses.

C. Other Planning Considerations

- i. Improvement of new growth within the development district should compliment the town's comprehensive plan. Particular attention should be given to the extent to which new development supports or compliments the town's medical, educational, governmental, and recreational functions and potentials.
- ii. Pursue timely expansion of the Leonardtown wastewater treatment plant and renegotiation of the interjurisdictional agreement governing the County's plant access to ensure availability and adequacy of sewerage to support planned improvement of new growth areas both



within the development district and the town.

- iii. Establish and maintain a network of greenways along Town Run. Connections to the Governmental Center, the library, the waterfront and elsewhere within Leonardtown should be supported. Use of such greenways as bicycle trails should be pursued.
- iv. Nonresidential development within new growth areas must be limited in type and scope to serve only the immediate neighborhood in which it is located. Regional scale retail new development must be located inside the town pursuant to the town's comprehensive plan.
- v. New housing development must be carefully designed and balanced to maintain and enhance the character of Leonardtown. Housing types and price ranges should be carefully guided to avoid an excess of any one type of housing within this development district.
- vi. Pursue opportunities to reinforce Leonardtown's plans and potential for waterfront activities and improvements.

#### 4.5.6 Town Center Guidelines

##### A. General Criteria

- i. Combine parking areas in side and rear yards. All parking lots should be edged in curb and gutter and paved in a hard surface. Encourage site planning that allows for reverse frontage on any proposed local collector roads that parallel major arterial roads. Discourage additional access on major arterial roads except at crossovers.
- ii. Develop design guidelines for each town center that ensure that new development and/or redevelopment are compatible with existing town character.
- iii. Provide sidewalks along major collector roads to encourage pedestrian circulation.
- iv. Require all service and storage areas to be screened from public roads.
- v. Provide for community recreation areas as residential growth occurs. Local playgrounds, ball fields and picnic areas are recommended.
- vi. Protect sensitive areas of streams, nontidal wetlands, steep slopes and hydric soils as open space.
- vii. Limit free standing signs on each property. Develop design standards for signage and lighting.
- viii. Establish a landscape requirement for setbacks and parking. Landscape codes should encourage a pattern of shade trees and low shrubs on existing perimeter medians adjacent to major arterial roads. Plantings will help to define road edge, buffer parking areas and enhance the town center without blocking store frontage or impacting road safety.
- ix. Provide for future water and sewer services where feasible.

##### B. New Residential Areas

- i. Provide sidewalks along roads and/or consider pedestrian trails through natural areas.
- ii. Provide community and neighborhood recreation areas such as playground and ball fields.
- iii. Protect streams, steep slopes and wetlands as open space and natural buffers from adjacent land uses.

C. Core Area

- i. Provide entry signage and planting to enhance town image and to articulate the visual town limits.
- ii. Consolidate and organize parking between buildings and in the rear and side yards. Encourage shared parking for compatible uses. Provide sidewalks for pedestrian circulation. Landscaping and/or screening should be considered for all parking areas. Parking lots should be surfaced in a hard material and edged with curbs and gutters.
- iii. Require service areas and storage uses be located to the rear of buildings and screened from public roads.
- iv. Encourage site planning that provides reverse frontage for any proposed local collector roads.
- v. Protect streams, steep slopes and wetland as open space and natural buffers from adjacent land uses.

4.5.7 Village Center Guidelines

A. General Criteria

- i. Community character should be preserved or improved as properties within a village are developed or redeveloped.
- ii. Height, bulk, setbacks and density of new structures must be consistent with prevailing design of the village.
- iii. Buildings should face public roads.
- iv. Useable open space should be provided in the form of small parks.
- v. Sidewalks and trails should be incorporated into new developments.
- vi. Community water and sewer service should be provided whenever feasible.

B. New Residential Areas

- i. Type and density of dwellings should be compatible with the character of the village.
- ii. Useable open space should be provided for all residences.
- iii. Rears of residential structures should not face public roads or streets.

C. Core Area

- i. Mixed land use is encouraged, but should be compatible with the scale and overall function of the village.
- ii. Parking areas should be located to the side or rear of buildings.

# THE ST. MARY’S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## **Chapter 5: SENSITIVE AREAS PROTECTION ELEMENT**

### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

The sensitive areas in St. Mary's County are largely defined by the intersections between the land and water. Waters flowing through the upland into stream buffers, streams, wetlands and floodplain converge to form the County's five primary tidal tributaries—the Patuxent River to the northeast and the Wicomico River, St. Clements Bay, Breton Bay, and the St. Mary's River which flow into the Potomac River to the southwest or flow directly via small streams into the Chesapeake Bay. Water that infiltrates into the ground recharges shallow aquifers and in areas where the water table is at and near the surface provides the base flow for springs, more than 19,800 acres of nontidal wetlands and approximately 2,000 miles of intermittent and perennial streams. Water that runs off the land scours erodible soils creating deeply incised stream valleys and side slopes, concentrates in the valleys, and periodically overflows into nontidal floodplains where the sediments settle out to form rich bottomland forests and wetlands. Vegetated riparian buffers and tidal wetlands capture sediments and pollution, slow, soften or resist the impact of waves, and provide important and diverse habitats. At the head of tide, fresh water mixes with salt water of the tidal tributaries and the Chesapeake Bay, creating diverse habitats for plants and animals. The coastline of the County is diverse, ranging from steep bluffs to low eroding banks, from fringe marshes to wide sandy beaches and dunes, from wide tidal flats and winding tidal guts through marshes and estuaries. As the Bay's waters ebb and flood with the tides and waves formed by wind and storms, the 490 miles of shoreline is being continually worn down, moved, and rebuilt. Because much of the unique character of St. Mary's County is defined by her natural resources, protection of those resources for their value in defining the community's character and quality of life as we accommodate the needs of the people who live, work, and play here is a critical goal of this plan.

Farming the land, harvesting mature forests and allowing them to regenerate to harvest again, mining sand and gravel deposited over thousands of years, and fishing the creeks and bays within the County are economic activities derived from St. Mary's County's natural landscape. Natural resources--farm, forest, sand and gravel deposits, and living resources--have provided an economic base for residents which, although diminished from historical levels, remain important components of the economy to be accommodated within goals for protection of sensitive areas. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) agricultural census for 1997 indicates that 71,920 acres of land was used for agricultural production and for 2002 that the land in farm production had decreased to 68,153 acres. The 2007 land use analysis from the MDP shows approximately 54,800 acres of agriculture (including agricultural lands on large residential lots). Due in large part to the long history of the County as a farm dominated community, forest resources occupy areas that were too wet or too steep to plow. The 2007 land use analysis from Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) shows approximately 121,400 acres of forest (including forest on large residential lots). After the Second World War, as most residents shifted away from farming as a principal economic activity, many fields that had been left fallow converted to second or third growth forest cover. Steep slopes, floodplains, forest, and farms that had remained largely undisturbed have been impacted and fragmented by the demand for residential development that escalated in the 1980s and that continues to put development pressure on important resource lands and resource based industries. Managing the development pressure and the actions and activities associated with development that negatively impact continuation and viability of these resource based industries is an important goal of this plan element.

Sensitive areas provide ecosystem and economically valuable environmental services which cannot be inexpensively or effectively replaced. They also provide a diverse and attractive landscape which contributes to the citizen and visitors positive perceptions of the County and its quality of life. Streams and their buffers provide the primary transport system for stormwater and, if managed poorly, they become primary conduits to transport pollution – heavy metals, oils, chemicals, trash from urbanized areas, nutrients, bacteria, pesticides and herbicides from farms and lawns – into the Bay. When managed well, streams and their buffers capture, reduce, and process pollutants, provide water supply functions, and provide spawning areas for recreational and commercial fish stock. Interconnected stream corridors provide diverse habitats that allow for migration of wildlife to maintain healthy animal populations, and opportunities for outdoor recreation. Wetlands protect water quality, infiltrate, slow and filter runoff, help control and reduce pollution and erosion. Floodplains and wetlands are important in the maintenance of groundwater supplies and water purification. Nontidal wetlands and estuarine resources provide vital habitat and maintain water quality for the fish, shell fish and crustaceans which are also critical components of the County’s character, culture, history and identity. Marshes, fringe wetlands and submerged grass beds stabilize sediments and dampen impacts from storms to reduce loss of upland property, and maintain water clarity. Large forest blocks, riparian forest corridors, nontidal and tidal floodplains and nontidal and tidal wetlands provide habitat for terrestrial plants, birds and animals. These foster opportunities for recreation and discovery for the public, and provide aesthetics that increase property values and are important factors in perceptions of the rural character and quality of life in the County. Forest conservation is important for protecting water supply, aiding recharge of aquifers, and infiltrating stormwater runoff. Assuring the continued viability of sensitive areas to provide their ecosystem and environmental service functions and for their contributions to the beauty and diversity of the landscape is also an important goal of this plan.

Protection of many sensitive areas, maintenance and improvement of water quality and restoration of degraded sensitive resources is mandated by State and Federal laws because of the benefits the resources provide to the community as a whole. The costs for restoration of resources typically far exceed the costs for protection and enhancement of resources. Some sensitive resources, particularly habitats of rare, threatened and endangered species, are irreplaceable if lost. It is fiscally responsible for the County to adequately protect resources, to avoid the public and private financial burden that restoration would impose, and to avoid the legal consequences of failing to meet State and Federal mandates. To the extent possible, this plan element assumes a doctrine that development activity should strive to achieve “No Adverse Impact” by addressing conservation of resources; protecting water quality and groundwater recharge; managing stormwater impacts; protecting wetlands and riparian zones; avoiding adverse effects or impacts due to increased flood volume, duration and velocities; preventing increased erosion and sedimentation; using environmentally neutral methods to manage and halt existing erosion; and by avoiding loss of habitats necessary for survival of vulnerable species. It is a goal of this plan to assure that protection of resources occurs in accordance with State and Federal laws, to assure that the regulations are fairly and equally applied to all lands and landowners, to assure that future loss and degradation of resources is avoided, to assure that costs for mitigation and restoration are fairly assessed to those responsible for and benefiting from the loss or degradation and to ensure that the action of any property owner, public or private, does not adversely impact the property, the rights, and the quality of life of others.

Finally, this plan element also recognizes a number of recommendations of the 2008 Climate Action Plan developed by the State of Maryland. While there may be no clear consensus about the causes of risks posed, it is clear that climate variability has measurably increased over the past 50 years. This region has experienced changes in average seasonal high and low temperatures, changes in seasonal precipitation averages, changes in the duration, frequency and

intensity of storm events, and observed one foot of sea level rise over the past 100 years. It is also clear that there are environmental risks associated with life and development in a coastal area. Conservation of resources can preserve options for future citizens to adapt and respond to future risks if sea levels continue to rise and storm frequency and intensity increases as predicted. Shifts in species composition of natural areas have occurred. USDA plant zone boundaries have shifted north. There has been increased presence of species of insects, fish and birds from warmer climates, and infestations have been observed of species of insects normally controlled by cold winter temperatures. Conservation of sensitive areas and concentration of development in the least vulnerable and least sensitive areas will maintain the ability for natural resources to adapt and to migrate inland while maintaining the ability of the County to focus its efforts (funds and resources) on protection, adaptation and response to hazards.

## **5.2 MEASURES OF SUCCESS FOR CONSERVATION OF SENSITIVE AREAS**

St. Mary's County's sensitive areas conservation and land conservation methods are closely linked. The specific ordinance requirements for sensitive areas preservation were enacted in response to the goals and policies of the adopted 2002 Comprehensive Plan. The County maintains Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data layers that show the extent of the resources required to be protected under current regulations. That data was used to estimate the number of acres of these resources as noted below:

- 100 foot buffer for all perennial streams and for intermittent streams in the Critical Area (50,220 acres).
- Preservation of all nontidal wetlands mapped by DNR (19,800 acres) and a surrounding 25' buffer (5,600 acres).
- Conservation of 100-year floodplains and a surrounding 50 foot buffer (21,130 acres).
- Conservation of the 100 foot Critical Area Buffer (7,250 acres).
- Highly erodible soils (49, 221 acres total, of which only the areas within 300 feet of water features and wetlands are required by this plan to have mandatory protection for a net protected area of 35,262 acres).
- Hydric soils and soils with hydric inclusions (59, 423 acres, of which only the areas within 300 feet of water features and wetlands are proposed by this plan to have mandatory protection for a net protected area of 6,283 acres).
- Habitat protection areas and their buffers in accordance with DNR recommendations. (34,000 acres).

Because many of the features noted above overlap, the land area protected by the ordinance provisions is estimated to be 91,600 acres (approximately 40% of the land area in the County). The expansion of stream buffers and Critical Area buffers for steep slopes will protect additional acres.

In addition, significant forest retention and replacement is required by County ordinances adopted pursuant to State law. Retention of no less than 70% of existing forest (including developed woodland on small lots) is required in the Limited Development Area and Resource Conservation Area overlays within the Critical Area (estimated as 14,000 acres of large forest blocks). Retention outside of the Critical Area of no less than 50% of existing forest in the RPD and no less than 20% of forest in the RL (other zones of 40,000 acres or more require conservation but the amount was not analyzed). The clearing limits combined with the existing Critical Area requirement for mitigation to assure no-net-loss of forest and the anticipated no net loss policies that will be required by the State for all forests based on 2009 legislation will result in stabilizing forest coverage in the County.

Figure 5.2.a is a composite map that overlays tidal wetlands and the Critical Area buffer, wetlands, wetland buffers, streams, stream buffers, floodplains, floodplain buffers, hydric soils, highly erodible soils, areas of steep slopes and designated habitat protection areas. Figure 5.2.b. shows significant natural habitats including riparian corridors (streams, wetlands, and adjacent buffers) and green infrastructure. Conservation of these natural habitats will be accomplished by the ordinance provisions that establish development standards to eliminate disturbances to the extent possible and minimize and mitigate unavoidable impacts to the resources.

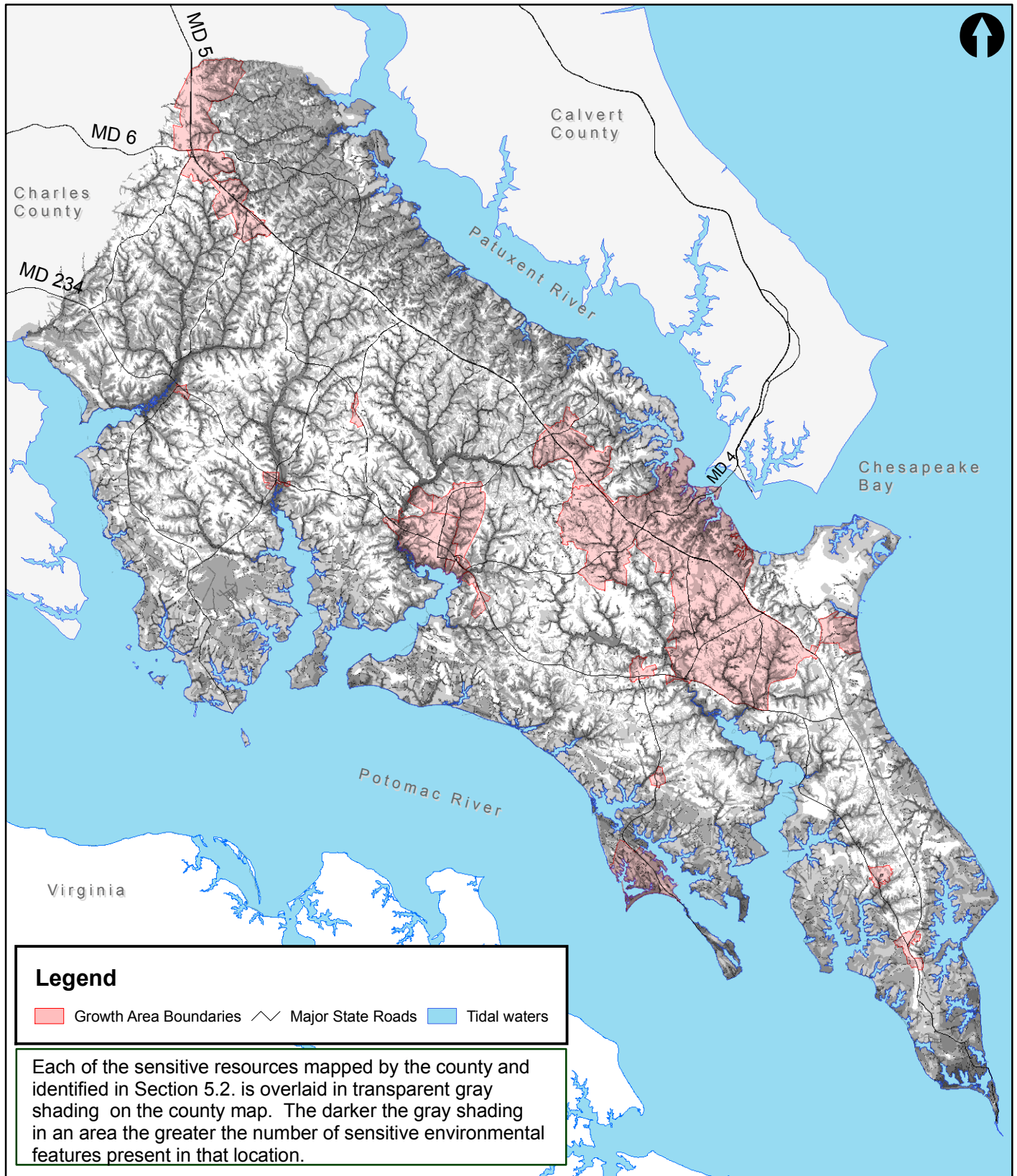
In addition to the land protection offered by the Ordinance's resource protection standards, since 2002 the Rural Preservation District (RPD) and the Residential-Low Density (RL) zones have required conservation of 50% of the land area on sites developed with a major subdivision. Since the adoption of this regulation the County has found that, in the growth areas, the requirement to preserve such a large percentage of each parcel prevents the efficient use of land, undermines efforts to provide efficient infrastructure, undermines the ability for developers to achieve "Smart Growth" densities of 3.5 dwelling per acre and generally results in sprawl within the growth areas where compact development is desired. As a result this plan recommends that alternative regulations be developed for conservation of open space in the RL, RH, and RMX zones. These regulations need to assure that 1) important habitats and greenway corridors in growth areas are mapped and protected on each site; 2) that sufficient active and passive open areas are provided to accommodate required recreational amenities and green spaces per design guidelines; and 3) that the mandatory percentage requirement for open space preservation be reduced in exchange for affordable housing, workforce housing, contributions toward meeting adequate public facilities (beyond the minimums required for approval), construction of mapped greenway and bike trails, or for contributions of appropriately located land, facilities, or funds that meet identified County needs.

In 2008 the County's Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) program was revised. The program requires the lifting or use of on-site rights for any development in the RPD, effectively reducing the 1:5 density to approximately 1:9.8 for new lots in the rural area. The TDR program also allows increased density on individual RPD sites whose land characteristics can support the more intense development) to achieve up to 1 dwelling per three acres with the additional lots requiring double or triple the number of TDRs, effectively changing the density for these development to approximately 1:11. At the same time for any development creating more than 5 lots the lots must be clustered on 50% of the subdivided RPD land with a result that at 1:5 density each new lot results in an average 2.5 acres of development and 7.33 acres of permanently protected land, at 1:4 density each new lot results in an average 2.0 acres of development and 8.0 acres of permanently protected land, and at 1:3 density each new lot results in an average 1.5 acres of development and 9.9 acres of permanently protected land. Clustering on lands suitable for development accommodates conservation of rural land and resources.

GIS analysis of subdivision potential for parcels in the County shows that there are approximately 1,450 unprotected parcels in the RPD and RL zones which could be divided into more than 5 lots. The potential for new development in the RPD is 9,211 new lots. Under current regulations those major subdivisions would trigger clustering requirements resulting in protection of at least 51,000 acres. The mandatory clustering provisions and TDR requirements for RPD development show that, at full build out, all rural new lots can occupy only 31,400 acres (17% of the Rural Preservation District). Use of TDRs within growth areas and development of rural subdivisions that achieve less than the allowed density will further reduce impacts of rural development on agricultural land, forests and other sensitive rural resources.



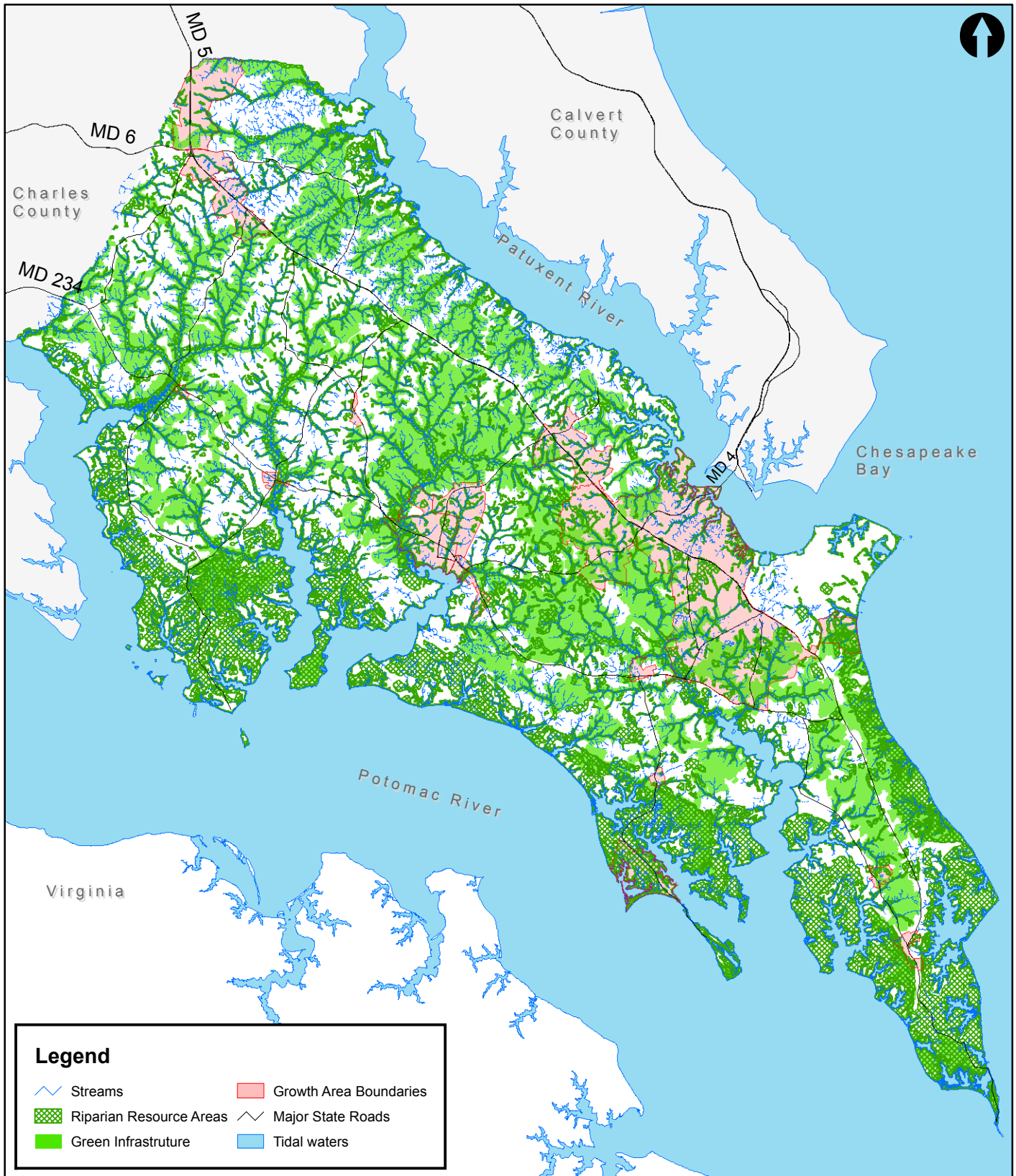
Figure 5.2.a.



# St. Mary's County Composite overlay of sensitive environmental features



Figure 5.2.b.



# St. Mary's County Significant Natural Habitats

0 1 2 3 4 8 Miles

### **5.3 ADHERENCE TO THE VISIONS OF THE PLANNING ACT**

This Sensitive Areas Element outlines the County's adherence to the "Smart, Green and Growing" visions of State statutes. The element identifies areas to be protected and contains goals, objectives, principles, and standards designed to protect these areas from the adverse effects of development.

5.3.1 *Resource conservation: waterways, forests, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems, and scenic areas are conserved.*

The County has established objectives, policies, and actions to assure identification and protection of the following sensitive areas and resources: streams and their buffers; 100-year floodplains; habitats of threatened and endangered species; and steep slopes and other areas in need of special protection including tidal wetlands, Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV), waterfowl areas, colonial bird nesting sites, shorelines, tidal and nontidal floodplains, nontidal wetlands and their buffers, anadromous fish spawning areas, groundwater and mineral resources, and wildlife corridors. As required by the State legislature in 2006, agricultural land (green infrastructure gaps, buffers, open space, forest conservation mitigation) and forest lands (green infrastructure and forest interior dwelling species habitat) intended for resource protection and conservation are now specifically included in this element. (See the Priority Preservation Area Element for agricultural and forest lands that are to intended to be used for production).

5.3.2 *Environmental protection: land and water resources, including the Chesapeake and coastal bays, are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems, and living resources.*

The County will continue to use regulatory programs (such as the Critical Area Program, Forest Conservation regulations, Stormwater regulations, requirements for open space conservation and clustering etc.), tax and funding incentive programs (such as Agricultural Districts, Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation Easements, a transfer of development rights program, Installment Purchase Agreements), and planning programs (such as the Wicomico Scenic River Management Plan, Tributary Strategies for the Patuxent and Lower Potomac Rivers, Breton Bay and St. Mary's Watershed Restoration Action Strategies), to promote stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay.

5.3.3 *Stewardship: government, business entities, and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection.*

The County has established objectives, policies, and actions based primarily on avoiding loss, minimizing unavoidable loss and mitigating to offset the impacts associated with the loss. Based on this the County has and will continue to develop ordinances and programs to effectively protect sensitive areas, to set and measure progress in meeting goals for preservation, to set limits on the allowable loss of resources, and to assure that mitigation for unavoidable impacts is the responsibility and duty of those who benefit from the impact.

5.3.4 *Implementation: strategies, policies, programs, and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, State, and interstate levels to achieve these visions.*

Sensitive areas are inherently valuable to the entire community for the ecosystem functions they provide (mitigation of flooding, filtering for improvement of water quality, for their economic value (farm, fishery, forest, mineral products, recreational use) and for the reduction in service costs (reduced stormwater management, water supply). The County's

primary mechanism to maintain these values is via regulations that require environmentally sensitive designs and place the responsibility for protection, conservation and stewardship, and mitigation for losses predominately on the landowner in exchange for the value added from development. The County also participates in available State and Federal programs and has developed local programs funded primarily through taxes and fees associated with development to provide compensation to landowners so that conservation and stewardship of resource lands is a financially viable alternative to the development of resource lands in targeted areas.

5.3.5 *Quality of life and sustainability: a high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water, and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment.*

Maintaining, enhancing and avoiding disruption of the natural functions of wetlands, forests, and floodplains, and preventing development impacts that overwhelming the service capacity provided by natural systems are necessary to providing sustainable communities that maintain a high quality of life enriched by the benefits of the environment and as free as possible from the disruptions associated with losses and damages which increase risks of environmental hazards and man-made disasters. To assure that St. Mary's County develops in a sustainable manner that balances growth and resource protection, it is necessary to assure that hazard avoidance and mitigation is integrated into the planning and development process. Protection of and avoidance of development in sensitive areas is one important component of hazard avoidance. Another component is assuring that development is located to reduce exposure to risk associated with identified hazards, is constructed to minimize damage and disruptions from unavoidable risks and that development occurs in a manner that will not result in creating or increasing community exposure to hazards and adverse impacts. Of the twelve hazards identified as posing significant risks to the County, the highest risks are associated with 1) coastal/shoreline erosion, 2) extreme weather due to severe winter storms, 3) flood, 4) high wind due to hurricanes, 5) high wind due to tornado, 6) thunderstorm and lightning, and 7) wildfire. Also of concern are moderate risks associated with 8) hailstorms, 9) extreme summer heat and 10) drought. Risk of 11) earthquakes is considered to be low but the localized risk of 12) land failure of the steep slopes and cliffs, particularly in the Patuxent watershed is of increasing concern.

#### 5.4 SENSITIVE AREAS - GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS

5.4.1 **Goal:** Identify and protect sensitive areas from the adverse impacts of development and human activity.

A. **Objective:** Map natural landscape features and resources including streams, tidal and nontidal wetlands, hydric soils, steep slopes, erodible soils, floodplains, important forest habitats and significant natural habitats.

i. **Policy:** Identify sensitive areas based on best available data from Federal, State, local sources. Identify State designated natural heritage areas, locally significant habitat areas, important natural areas, and fish, wildlife, and plant habitats, especially those of rare, threatened and endangered species. Utilize maps of these areas to evaluate development proposals and to target land conservation or habitat preservation and restoration efforts.

a. *Actions:*

- i) Utilize and maintain existing GIS data mapping locations for landscape features and resources, and routinely update the mapping as new information becomes available.
- ii) Consistent with State agency guidelines for release of

habitat and species location information, publish sensitive area mapping via an online tool for use by citizens, consultants, and staff to assist them in determining onsite resources, streamline design and review of projects and to assure identification and protection of mapped resources prior to design and approval of development plans. Because some resources and species with legal protection may be harmed as a result of general release of species specific location information, the County will:

- a) Maintain general “special project review area” information for internal review purposes.
- b) Require that all development projects seek site specific evaluation for presence or absence of significant habitats and species prior to acceptance of development proposals for review.

ii. **Objective:** Conserve fish, wildlife, and plant habitats through implementation of Federal, State and local resource protection policies which integrate resource protection measures into development activities. Figure 7.1.b. in Chapter 7 shows resource areas and habitats specifically identified for additional regulatory review by State and Federal agencies to assure protection of the resources.

a. **Policy:** Protect land, water and living resources.

i) *Actions:*

- a) For rural areas generally, and within all areas of green infrastructure mapped by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, develop guidance maps to identify and regulations to conserve the land and water resource base that is necessary to maintain and support agriculture, forestry, fisheries activities and aquaculture, and to preserve nature-dominated environments (wetlands, forests, abandoned fields, stream valleys, floodplains, and habitat protection areas).
- b) Map habitat protection areas and establish regulations to conserve, protect, and enhance the overall ecological values, biological productivity and diversity of fish, wildlife, and plant habitats.
- c) Enforce regulations to protect breeding, feeding, and wintering habitats of wildlife species that require the Chesapeake Bay, its tributaries, or coastal habitats in order to sustain their populations.
- d) In areas planned for development, identify and map important networks of green infrastructure to be conserved as open space; coordinate passive recreation enhancements with open space conservation requirements; establish development standards that will enhance developed woodlands

and forests for their water quality benefits and utilize stormwater facilities as amenities to enhance developments.

- b. **Policy:** Implement the latest Maryland Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program (including the criteria contained in COMAR sections 14.15.01 - 14.15.11) by establishing controls that minimize adverse development and land use while recognizing that, even if pollution is controlled, the number, movement, and activities of persons in the Critical Area can create adverse environmental impacts.
- c. **Policy:** Continue to implement Maryland's 1991 Forest Conservation Act (Natural Resources Article 5-1609 and amendments to date).
- d. **Policy:** Implement Lower Potomac and Patuxent River Tributaries Strategies to achieve the cap of nutrient pollution in the Chesapeake Bay at 40% of the 1985 nutrient loads:
  - i) *Actions:*
    - a) Establish zoning regulations that permit development of the type and intensity allowed by the comprehensive plan while assuring that water quality is not impaired.
    - b) In accordance with State regulations, require that developments utilize environmental site design to maximize conservation of natural plant and animal habitats to retain their natural capacity to intercept, infiltrate and filter runoff and where installation of stormwater control measures is unavoidable utilize regenerative stormwater systems or other innovative systems that reduce or eliminate runoff leaving the site and reduce or eliminate long term operation and maintenance of the facilities.
    - c) Set permit limits to minimize land disturbance and prohibit disturbance prior to approval of final development plans. Require use of the most appropriate best management practices to control and minimize soil erosion and runoff from development sites during construction.
    - d) Require that new and replacement developments adhere to measures that control their impacts.
    - e) Implement a program to reduce impacts by installing or retrofitting infrastructure to correct existing stormwater management and water quality problems.
- e. **Policy:** Coordinate with Federal and State regulatory agencies to verify compliance with environmental regulations, to streamline reviews and obtain approvals and implement projects which

protect water quality and habitats.

i) *Actions:*

a) Assure coordination and enforcement of restrictions and protections for wetlands, streams and their buffers with all agencies responsible for development review.

iii. **Objective:** Establish and implement regulations and promote actions that are adequate to protect and enhance natural landscape features and resources.

a. **Policy:** Provide appropriate buffers to protect the natural functions of identified resources. Generally prohibit disturbances and alterations to the resources or their buffers unless the disturbances are unavoidable and significant justification exists for their disturbance. Require that substantial and significant mitigation is provided both as a deterrent to disturbances and to assure that mitigation is sufficient to offset the impacts of the disturbance or alteration. Improve the functions of riparian wildlife habitats through programs to establish or enhance buffers via planting.

5.4.2 **Goal:** Develop specific goals, objectives, policies and actions for the identified sensitive areas and the natural, recreational, historical and cultural resources for the County.

## **5.5 RIPARIAN RESOURCE AREAS--RIVERBANKS, STREAMS, AND THEIR BUFFERS (INCLUDING THE CRITICAL AREA BUFFER)**

### **- GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS**

5.5.1 **Goal:** Protect riverbanks, streams and their buffers from the adverse impacts of development and human activity. Figure 5.2.b. shows the extent of riparian resource areas which include streams, tidal and nontidal wetlands and their regulatory buffers.

A. **Objective:** Preserve, protect and restore the natural ecosystems and functions of rivers, streams, and their buffers and adjacent hydric and erodible soils.

i. **Policy:** Maintain and enhance the natural environment of rivers and streams. When land is subdivided or otherwise developed, establish native forest or other naturally vegetated shoreline buffers along the Bay, tributary rivers and streams and associated tidal and nontidal wetlands wherever vegetated buffers are currently absent.

ii. **Policy:** Maintain natural riparian habitat, maintain runoff patterns and manage stormwater flows to maintain the natural ecology and hydrology of streams.

a. *Actions:*

i) For all river banks, perennial streams, and intermittent streams within the Critical Area, continue to provide riparian buffers per State regulations that are at least 100 feet wide measured from the top of each bank and expanded for adjacent wetlands, steep slopes and erodible soils.

ii) For intermittent streams outside the Critical Area provide

riparian buffers at least 50 feet wide measured from the top of each bank and expanded for adjacent wetlands, steep slopes and erodible soils.

- iii) Establish and maintain appropriate natural vegetation within riparian buffers to provide continuous riparian wildlife corridors, to protect the streams' natural functions, to stabilize banks, provide shading, reduce pollutants and produce leaf litter that supports organisms and processes that form the base of the healthy stream food chain.
  - iv) Where stream reaches and adjacent riparian buffers are already degraded, require development that contributes runoff to the degraded reach to utilize regenerative stormwater designs for in channel restoration that manages anticipated upstream stormwater runoff and return the stream reach and its buffers to their natural function and hydrology.
  - v) Use funds available from fee-in lieu of planting projects to conduct riparian buffer planting projects within stream buffers on public lands, within identified green infrastructure "gaps," and on private lands when a conservation easement is proffered by the landowner.
- iii. **Policy:** Maintain or improve water quality in streams.
- a. *Actions:*
    - i) Provide incentives to establish buffers and implement soil conservation and water quality plans for development, agricultural and forestry activities;
    - ii) Cluster development activities to decrease areas of disturbance and limit amount of impervious surface in stream watersheds;
    - iii) Provide both quality and quantity improvements in new stormwater management structures;
    - iv) Use retrofit measures to address stormwater management problems;
    - v) Avoid use of streams and their buffers for stormwater management;
    - vi) Plant forested buffers; and
    - vii) Utilize sustainable alternative methods to provide water to livestock.

## **5.6 TIDAL WETLANDS, NONTIDAL WETLANDS AND THEIR BUFFERS** **- GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS**

5.6.1 **Goal:** Protect tidal wetlands, nontidal wetlands, wetland buffers, and the Critical Area Buffer from the adverse impacts of development and human activity. Figure 5.7. shows the extents of tidal and nontidal wetlands.

A. **Objective:** Protect tidal and nontidal wetlands resources, because of their



importance for plant habitat, fish and wildlife habitat, and overall water quality.

- i. **Policy:** When land is subdivided or otherwise developed, establish native forest and shoreline buffers adjacent to tidal and nontidal waters and wetlands wherever vegetated buffers are currently absent.
- ii. **Policy:** Maintain and enhance the natural environment of wetlands.
  - a. **Actions:**
    - i) Prohibit alteration of wetlands including mowing, placement of fill in wetlands, ditching, or significant alteration of natural runoff patterns.
    - ii) Maintain areas of transitional habitat between aquatic and upland communities.
    - iii) Protect hydric soils adjacent to wetlands by including those soils in an expanded wetland buffer that will help maintain wetland hydrology.
    - iv) Increase wetland habitat by assuring use of “living shoreline” designs for shore erosion control wherever such designs are feasible.
- iii. **Policy:** Direct intense development activity away from areas which are in proximity to water courses and wetlands. Require development to establish permanent protection measures for wetlands and lands in close proximity to wetlands.
  - a. **Actions:**
    - i) Establish tidal and nontidal wetlands buffers according to State and Federal law and require a setback from these buffers to limit disturbance in the buffers during construction.
    - ii) Assure coordination and enforcement of restrictions and protection for wetlands and their buffers with all agencies responsible for development review.
- iv. **Policy:** Employ best management practices to minimize potential associated water quality impacts when development activity takes place adjacent to stream banks.
- v. **Policy:** Discourage alteration of, obstruction of and construction in existing wetlands or wetland buffers and of alteration of the natural drainage patterns, unless adequate measures to mitigate potential adverse impacts are included in the development.
  - a. **Actions:**
    - i) Address design and placement of storm water management, roads, limits of grading and clearing, installation of public and private utilities in the zoning, subdivision, road and stormwater management ordinances and regulations.
- vi. **Policy:** Maintain or improve water quality in wetlands.

- a. *Actions:*
  - i) Provide incentives to establish buffers and implement soil conservation and water quality plans for development, agricultural and forestry activities.
  - ii) Utilize environmental site design to reduce site impacts and to effect both stormwater quality and quantity improvements.
  - iii) Prohibit use of existing wetlands and their buffers for installation of structural stormwater management practices, but facilitate the approval and permitting of regenerative stormwater management designs that utilize and enhance wetlands to increase infiltration of stormwater into the groundwater table.
  - iv) Assist landowners in seeking funding to install fencing to keep livestock out of wetlands.

**5.7 TIDAL FLOODPLAINS, NONTIDAL FLOODPLAINS AND THE FLOODWAY**  
**- GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS**

5.7.1 **Goal:** Protect tidal and nontidal floodplain and the floodway from the adverse impacts of development and human activity. Figure 5.7 shows the extents of tidal floodplains, nontidal floodplains and floodways.

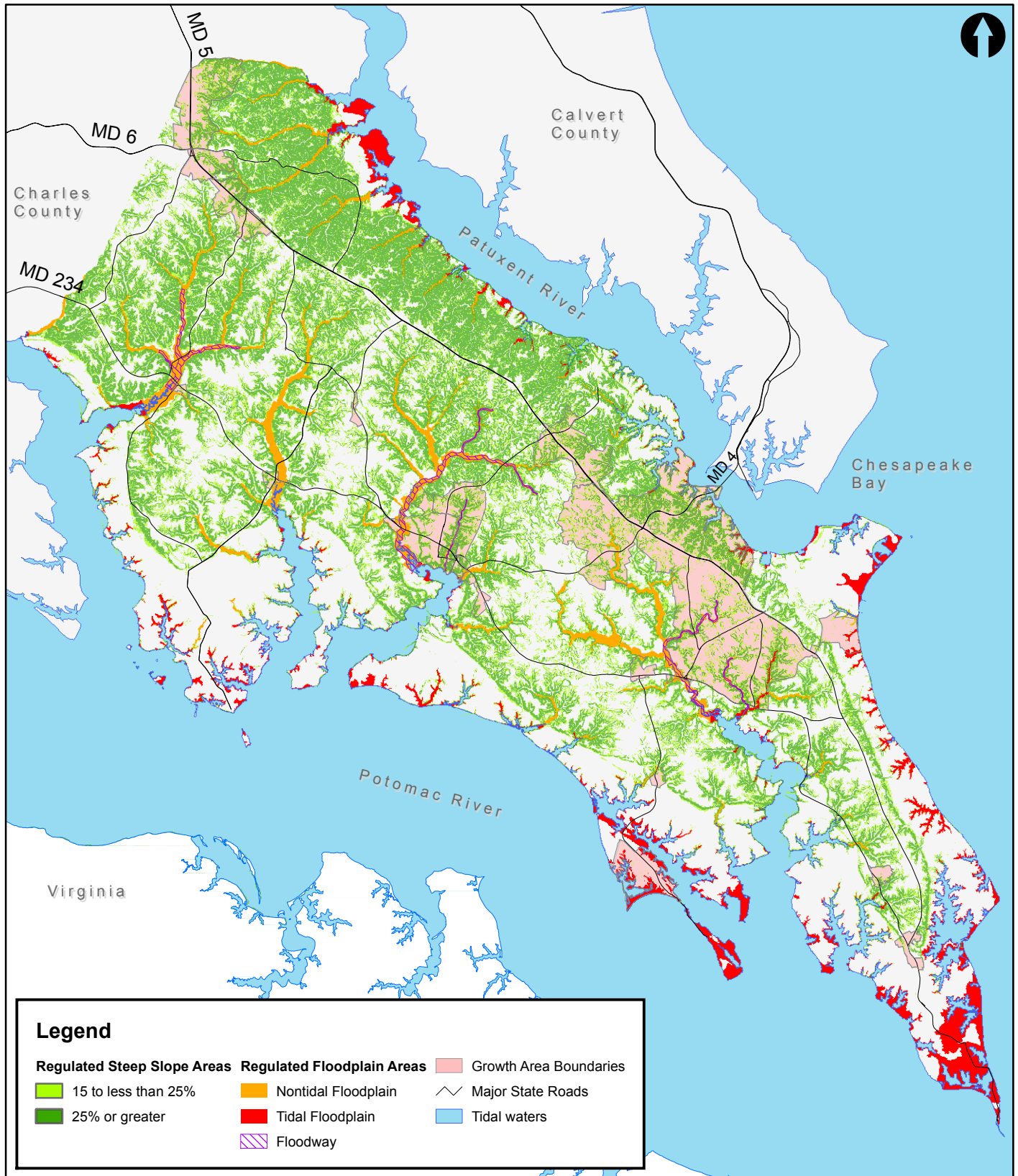
A. **Objective:** Preserve, protect, and restore the natural environment and beneficial functions of floodplains.

i. **Policy:** Limit and manage development activity in the 100-year flood plain to reduce vulnerability and flood hazards.

- a. *Actions:*
  - i) For all 100 year floodplain areas, continue to enforce existing regulations that require buffers at least 50 foot wide measured from the edge of the floodplain (determined by elevation).
  - ii) Avoid disturbances to floodplains and their buffers to the maximum extent possible:
    - a) Continue to require that a floodplain easement be platted over the floodplain and its buffer for developments requiring subdivision or site plan approval and prohibit any new development activities with the floodplain easement.
    - b) Continue existing prohibition on development in the floodplain when alternative locations exist on a development site.
    - c) Continue to prohibit creation of new development lots within the floodplain.
    - d) Continue to prohibit placement of fill within the floodplain.

- e) Establish regulations to prohibit the placement of stormwater detention ponds and structures within the regulated floodplain or the floodplain buffer.
- ii. **Policy:** Minimize the disturbance of vegetation in the 100-year flood plain.
- a. *Actions:*
- i) Strengthen regulations for maintenance and establishment of natural vegetation within floodplains to enhance natural floodplain functions for safely conveying water, for providing wildlife habitat, for capturing, filtering and naturally removing sediments and pollutants, and to retain important components of the County’s “green infrastructure.”
    - a) Prohibit clearing of existing natural vegetation in the floodplain easement.
    - b) Require development that contributes runoff to a floodplain that has sparse or no forest vegetation to establish the floodplain buffer in a continuous canopy of diverse natural forest cover.
  - ii) Maintain community eligibility for participation in the National Floodplain Insurance Program (NFIP) by assuring that development activities are conducted and structures are constructed or expanded in a manner that fully complies with (NFIP) criteria. Regulate construction and use of permitted structures to minimize damage according to State and Federal policy.
  - iii) Seek to lower flood insurance rates through participation in the Community Rating System (CRS) which is a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) program that decreases flood insurance rates for residents in communities with effective hazard mitigation strategies.
  - iv) Develop a comprehensive “No Adverse Impact” program for floodplain management. Such a program would help:
    - a) reduce flood hazards and foster disaster resilience,
    - b) reduce damage to public and private property and loss of life,
    - c) minimize adverse impacts on surrounding properties, communities, and the coastal environment,
    - d) provide better planned and designed development and infrastructure that are less likely to cause and suffer damage,
    - e) reduce the impacts of intensive development on sensitive coastal areas, degradation of the coastal environment,

Figure 5-7



# St. Mary's County Steep Slopes and Floodplains

0 1 2 3 4 8 Miles

- f) minimize loss of life, damage to property, and
  - g) anticipate and account for increased storm frequency, intensity and projected impacts from sea level rise.
  - v) Revise floodplain ordinances to increase the freeboard requirement by 2 feet for new and substantially improved construction.
  - vi) Given the multi-generational duration of most development, consider increasing elevation criteria and minimum construction standards for development in areas that are most vulnerable to impacts from storm surge, coastal flooding and erosion, and increasing risk anticipated due to the 2 to 4 feet of sea level rise anticipated over the next 50 to 100 years.
- B. **Objective:** Plan for and accommodate land use changes and impacts that are anticipated due to climate variability and projections for sea level rise.
- i. **Policy:** Map vulnerable lands, infrastructure and facilities.
  - ii. **Policy:** Strengthen building codes and require use of appropriate construction and management techniques for new infrastructure and structures in vulnerable areas focusing particularly on elevation of buildings, foundation design, use of materials that can withstand periodic flooding, resistance to debris impact, resistance to wind and wave action, establish standards for abandonment and removal of impacted structures.
  - iii. **Policy:** Maintain risk assessment mapping for public review and consider mandatory disclosure of projected risk as part of real estate transactions.
  - iv. **Policy:** Include risk assessment and vulnerability when making public investments in infrastructure investments to incorporate responses to threats into placement decisions and designs for new facilities and for upgrade and replacement of threatened facilities. Also include in land conservation to reduce threats and preserve options for retreat of natural resources.

## 5.8 STEEP SLOPES, HIGHLY ERODIBLE SOILS, AND HYDRIC SOILS - GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS

- 5.8.1 **Goal:** Protect steep slopes and highly erodible soils from the adverse impacts of development and human activity to prevent erosion which threatens structures and infrastructure, to reduce sediment pollution and to manage the adverse impacts of silt and sediment in streams, rivers, ponds, tidal creeks and bays. Figure 5.7 shows the extent of steep slopes.
- A. **Objective:** Protect steep slopes from disturbances to protect water quality and aquatic habitat; to minimize hazards of flooding, landslides, erosion, and pollution; and to maintain areas of high biodiversity.
- i. **Policy:** Preserve slopes that have a 25% gradient or greater from disturbance or development.
  - ii. **Policy:** Discourage development activities on slopes of 15% up to 25% to avoid the potential associated water quality impacts from the development

of steep slopes unless there is no viable alternative.

iii. **Policy:** Minimize disturbance to highly erodible soils.

B. **Objective:** Limit alteration of highly erodible soils on steep slopes or that are in close proximity to shorelines, streams, and wetlands to limit risk to structures and infrastructure and to reduce sediment impacts to water quality and aquatic habitat; to minimize hazards of landslides, erosion, and pollution.

i. **Policy:** Preserve up to a 300 foot buffer of erodible soils adjacent to streams, wetlands and shorelines.

ii. **Policy:** Prohibit disturbance to highly erodible soils on slopes exceeding 25% gradient.

iii. **Policy:** For sites with erodible soils down slope from the planned development, require engineered erosion and sediment control plans and construction grading plans, and require use of appropriate stormwater management specifically designed to address the presence of erodible soils.

iv. **Policy:** Minimize disturbance to highly erodible soils on steep slopes. Utilize environmental site design to retain existing forest vegetation on erodible soils and to maintain predevelopment runoff patterns to the extent possible and to avoid concentrating runoff flowing toward erodible soils. Where concentration of flow is required, utilize designs for best management practices to infiltrate surface runoff and stormwater management measures that release runoff at non-erosive rates or that convey runoff safely to stable stream receiving channels downhill of the areas of erodible soils.

5.8.2 **Goal:** Protect hydric soils associated with streams, floodplains, wetlands and their buffers from the adverse impacts of development and human activity in order to maintain natural functions of the sensitive resources and to facilitate natural movement, inland migration, and allow the natural expansion of wetlands as a means to offset historic wetland losses and changes expected due to sea level changes.

A. **Objective:** Minimize disturbance to hydric soils that area associated with wetlands and streams in order to maintain natural patterns of surface and underground hydrology.

i. **Policy:** Apply buffer expansion criteria for streams, tidal wetlands and nontidal wetlands to protect areas of hydric soils adjacent to these resources and their minimum buffers. Delineate these expanded buffers on subdivision plats and site plans.

ii. **Policy:** Facilitate areas of hydric soils within expanded buffers to naturally convert to tidal or nontidal wetlands.

## 5.9 SHORELINE PROTECTION, ACCESS AND DEVELOPMENT

### - GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS

5.9.1 **Goal:** Facilitate and manage installation of shoreline erosion control measures and development in near-shore areas in a manner that provides for protection and enjoyment of property, provides private and public access to the water for County residents, restores, protects and enhances shoreline habitats, and prevents adverse impacts of development and human activity.

- A. **Objective:** Allow long term protection of shoreline property in a manner that does not adversely impact nearby properties and, does provide, protect, and enhance adjacent near shore or in-water habitats.
- i. **Policy:** Outside of those areas that have been mapped by the Maryland Department of the Environment as appropriate for structural shoreline stabilization measures, improvements to protect a property against erosion shall consist of nonstructural shoreline stabilization measures that preserve the natural environment, such as marsh creation; however, in areas where it can be demonstrated to the satisfaction of the Department of the Environment that these measures are not feasible, such as areas of excessive erosion, areas subject to heavy tides, and areas too narrow for effective use of nonstructural shoreline stabilization measures, then alternative measures may be considered.
  - ii. Shore erosion control measures shall be designed in a manner that provides long term protection without increasing the rates of erosion on nearby properties and that provides the least impact on habitat, the Buffer and on shoreline resources. Cost of installation shall not be considered in a determination of the type of measure to be allowed. All measures must be permitted by Federal, State and local agencies and the installation shall be in accordance with the permit issued.
    - a. *Actions:*
      - i) Establish guidelines for issuing permits for shoreline work that give equal weight to preservation of near shore and in water habitat and natural resource and property protection.
    - b. **Policy:** Provide public water-dependent recreational and water access facilities and facilitate enhancement and improvements of commercial facilities.
      - i) *Actions:*
        - a) Limit development activities in the 100 foot Buffer to those that are specifically water-dependent. Revise non-conforming use standards to allow site improvements that reduce Buffer impacts and provide improvement of water quality.
        - b) Encourage marina services to meet the water dependent commercial and recreational needs and developmental goals.
        - c) Pursue revision/update of the zoning ordinance general standards for Marine Uses and approve zoning map revisions to provide conforming use status to existing marinas that do not currently have Commercial Marine zoning to facilitate continuation, and enhancement of viable marina activities on existing sites. Approve Buffer Management Overlay status for developed areas in the Critical Area Buffers on existing marina sites.

- d) Minimize individual and cumulative impact of activities associated with water-dependent facilities on water quality and fish, wildlife and plant habitat by updating performance standards for facilities and activities.
- e) Acquire lands that can provide public water access to the Patuxent River.
- c. **Policy:** Support fisheries and aquaculture activities to enhance fish stock and markets for local watermen.
  - i) **Actions:**
    - a) Seek new investment in aquaculture, maintenance of existing aquaculture activities, and restoration of overworked areas.

**5.10 HABITAT PROTECTION AREAS**  
**- GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS**

These policies and actions are intended to conserve wildlife habitats, including those that tend to be least abundant or which may become so in the future if current land use trends continue. St. Mary's County is located along the Atlantic flyway, which every year channels the annual seasonal flights of millions of migratory birds. The region has always been a favored winter residence or stopover for many species of waterfowl on their way south from their summer breeding grounds.

5.10.1 **Goal:** Protect sensitive habitats and wildlife from the impacts of development and human activity.

- A. **Objective:** Facilitate protection of resources by working with State and Federal agencies to identify critical habitat areas to be protected and provide for adequate review and direction on measures necessary to conserve the habitats.
  - i. **Policy:** Identify and protect species in need of conservation, rare, threatened and endangered species and their habitats.
    - a. **Actions:**
      - i) To streamline the review and approval process, assure that, prior to acceptance of a development proposal for review, the applicant has provided evidence of review by the State of Maryland DNR for the presence or absence of critical habitats, that any habitats identified for the site are mapped on the sensitive areas plan, and that any habitat protection recommendations issued by DNR are incorporated into the plan design.
    - ii. **Policy:** Identify and protect areas of existing submerged aquatic vegetation (SAV) and support restoration efforts in barren areas which historically had SAV beds.
      - a. **Actions:**
        - i) Coordinate with Federal and State natural resource and permitting agencies to identify and protect shallow water habitat and SAV areas.



- ii) Coordinate water quality protection program efforts and nutrient pollution reduction efforts (see Tributary Strategy Program in Chapter 7) to maintain or improve water quality and light penetration needed for SAV recruitment and survival.
    - iii) Sponsor and participate in local, State and Federal SAV restoration efforts. Promote training for and participation by local watermen in restoration projects.
  - iii. **Policy:** Identify and protect waterfowl areas and colonial bird nesting sites.
    - a. *Actions:*
      - i) Coordinate with Federal and State natural resource permitting agencies to identify and protect waterfowl habitat areas including staging areas, concentration areas, breeding areas, and feeding areas.
      - ii) Enforce the requirement to provide State or Federally mandated buffers and time of year restriction on development and other activities around breeding and nesting sites.
      - iii) Promote awareness and conservation efforts by promoting the recreational, aesthetic and economic benefits of tourism related to waterfowl.
      - iv) Promote conservation of habitats through cooperative agreements with landowners, use of conservation easements, and other tax incentive programs.
  - iv. **Policy:** Identify and protect anadromous fish spawning areas.
    - a. *Actions:*
      - i) Protect nontidal wetlands of importance to plant, fish and wildlife, and water quality.
      - ii) Protect the in-stream and stream-bank habitat of anadromous fish propagation waters.
  - v. **Policy:** Identify and protect forest interior dwelling species (FIDS) habitat
    - a. *Actions:*
      - i) Using GIS analysis of existing forest stands develop and publish a county wide map of likely FIDS habitat.
      - ii) Continue to implement regulations requiring identification and conservation of FIDS habitat, requirements for development designs which avoid fragmentation of existing forest blocks meeting the definition as FIDS habitat and minimize creation of edge habitat.

**5.11 GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE, WILDLIFE CORRIDORS AND OPEN SPACE  
- GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS**

- 5.11.1 **Goal:** Maintain a county wide network of open space including large blocks of forest and wetlands connected by riparian corridors necessary to reduce impacts from habitat

fragmentation by providing for movement of wildlife and connection between important habitats. Utilize the infrastructure and corridors to maintain environmental services for stormwater management, flood control, and natural filters to protect water quality. Make use of the greenways and open spaces for passive outdoor recreation and pedestrian connections to enhance quality of life in growth areas.

5.11.2 **Goal:** Protect green infrastructure, wildlife corridors from the impacts of development and human activity.

5.11.3 **Goal:**

A. **Objective:** Utilize “Green Infrastructure” mapping provided by DNR and detailed GIS data to identify and map important forest and wetland “hubs” and connections between them and implement regulations and incentives that target the protection and enhancement of these areas. Figure 5.2.b shows the extent of Green Infrastructure mapped for St. Mary’s County.

i. **Policy:** Establish required subdivision open space, natural preserves, public parks and education areas that include riparian corridors as a means to protect the corridors for their water quality and habitat values and for the recreational and educational opportunities such lands can provide.

a. *Actions:*

i) Use green infrastructure maps and the sensitive areas data layers to develop a Countywide Greenway Plan for a developing network of protected open space for the County. Portions of the network should be developed for passive recreation and the balance conserved as wildlife habitat and corridor system. This network should provide pedestrian connections between major developments and be linked via public paths and walkways to existing parks and recreational open space areas.

ii) As new development is proposed, the County ordinance and transportation plans should assure that sensitive areas are protected within open space parcels in major subdivisions. These open spaces will contribute to the conservation of a continuous network of wildlife corridors and should be enhanced by development of a greenway or trail network in accordance with the Countywide Greenway Plan. Bricks and mortar construction of the greenway system shall be designed and located to avoid and minimize impact on the habitat and ecological service values of the sensitive areas.

## 5.12 MINERAL RESOURCES

### - GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS

Mineral resource extraction, principally mining of sand and gravel, is recognized as an important economic activity and regulations shall encourage utilization of these resources.

5.12.1 **Goal:** Preserve the natural, recreational, historical and cultural heritage in conjunction with economic and social well-being to maintain and enhance the quality of life.

A. **Objective:** Minimize or avoid impacts while accommodating extracting of mineral resources.

- i. **Policy:** Avoid loss of access to potential resources, and mining activities.
- ii. **Policy:** Avoid and minimize adverse impacts to surrounding habitat and water resources and adjacent uses.
  - a. *Actions:*
    - i) Hold all mining activity subject to minimum standards and conditional use approval.
    - ii) Establish regulations for mining activities to assure that the negative physical impacts, water quality and negative visual impacts to adjoining properties are avoided or mitigated.
    - iii) Identify large undeveloped tracts with potential mineral resources and seek to retain these tracts in an undeveloped State to avoid loss of mineral resources.
    - iv) Identify and require protection of habitat protection areas that are unsuitable for future mining operations.
    - v) Minimize potential water quality impacts of activities associated with resource extraction, including the removal of vegetation, soil disturbance and grading.

5.12.2 **Goal:** Protect sensitive areas from the adverse impacts of mining activities by requiring implementation of onsite measures and BMP's designed to protect and maintain downstream water quality and habitat.

**5.13 CONSERVATION AND UTILIZATION OF NATURAL, HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES - GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS**

5.13.1 **Goal:** Preserve the natural, historical and cultural heritage of the County in conjunction with economic and social well-being to maintain and enhance the quality of life.

A. **Objective:** Promote balanced heritage activities and programs that capitalize on the natural, recreational, historical and cultural resources of the County and the region.

- i. **Policy:** Develop and maintain an inventory of natural, recreational, historical, and cultural resources in the County (noting the physical, biological and cultural connections between public and private sites) as a resource for tourism and recreation; education and research; preservation and conservation; and economic development.
  - a. *Actions:*
    - i) Continue to identify historically significant properties for inclusion in the Maryland Inventory of Historic sites.
    - ii) Require the identification of cemeteries, burial grounds, and archeological sites on a property prior to any disturbance of the site.
    - iii) Ensure protection or preservation of historic or prehistoric archaeological materials:
      - a) Adequately inventory resources throughout the County;

- b) Devise and enforce protective requirements for all development, considering among other things: buffers, plat notes, bonding and inspections;
  - c) Identify known resources on all development plans; and
  - d) Document resources discovered during development.
- iv) Amend development review process to include review of all development proposals for potential adverse impacts on historic resources by the Historic Preservation Commission.
  - v) Review and document the historic and architectural significance of all structures slated for demolition that are fifty years or older. Inform landowners of the resources available for conservation and adaptive reuse of significant historic structures
  - vi) Encourage compatible development in designated historic districts. Establish performance standards to prevent negative impacts on surrounding properties.
  - vii) Document local cultural traditions through the Historical Society.
  - viii) Promote the designation of historic sites and districts.
  - ix) Promote adaptive reuse of historic structures. Consider establishing a nonconforming use provision that allows long vacant structures which are documented and designated as having both historic and architectural significance to be renovated in a manner consistent with maintaining historic and architectural integrity and to be occupied with uses that are compatible with their historic purpose and use.
- ii. **Policy:** Promote historic resources for economic opportunity.
    - a. *Actions:*
      - i) In cooperation with the other Southern Maryland counties, and State and Federal partners, implement the Southern Maryland Heritage Plan.
        - a) Continue to participate in the Chesapeake Gateways network and to utilize network resources to develop and interpret existing sites (Sotterley Mansion, Leonardtown Historic District, the Naval Air Station Museum, Greenwell State Park, Myrtle Point Park, Point Lookout State Park, Historic St. Mary's City, Piney Point Lighthouse Museum, and St. Clements Island Potomac River Museum).
        - b) Seek designation of water access points for the Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic

Trail and expand interpretation to include the trail at appropriate sites.

- ii) Encourage and assist the public and private sectors to evaluate opportunities to implement techniques to protect, enhance and utilize the natural, historical and cultural resources of Southern Maryland.
  - iii) Provide local tax incentives for the preservation of important and significant historical and cultural resources.
  - iv) Adopt design guidelines/appearance code to be applicable to all locally designated historic sites and districts.
  - v) Promote recognition of and financial investment in heritage resources to increase economic opportunity and revenues for all segments of the economy.
- iii. **Policy:** Encourage participation in natural, historic and cultural preservation through education and public awareness.
- a. *Actions:*
    - i) Develop signage to promote, link and interpret the Southern Maryland heritage area.
    - ii) Demonstrate the economic value of heritage tourism, travel and recreation; develop and promote heritage tourism and thematic tours of the Southern Maryland heritage area.
    - iii) Expand and promote heritage education, using natural and cultural resources of the Southern Maryland heritage area to communicate the importance of the resources to the quality of life; educate about threats to these resources and everyday opportunities for action.
    - iv) Publicly acknowledge additional sites included in the Maryland inventory, and present the property owners with a copy of all research materials.
    - v) Expand environmental education curriculum in public schools.
- iv. **Policy:** Maintain heritage resources: seek and support increased opportunities for conservation, preservation, and maintenance of heritage resources through official State and Federal recognition of County sites and of Southern Maryland as a "Heritage Area."
- a. *Actions:*
    - i) Implement recommendations of adopted plans and programs such as:
      - a) Southern Maryland Heritage Area Plan.
      - b) Religious Freedom Byway Corridor Management Plan.
    - ii) Support new and ongoing planning efforts to maximize the

public benefits of :

- a) Chesapeake Gateways Network.
  - b) Captain John Smith Chesapeake National Historic Trail.
  - c) Newtown Neck property acquired by the State in 2009.
  - d) Kitt's Point property acquired by the State in 2009.
  - iii) Support local, regional, State and Federal heritage program efforts, such as the national register of historic places and Maryland historical trust grants programs, which provide incentives to foster the preservation or restoration of significant structures.
  - iv) Support public and private community preservation efforts.
  - v) Maintain certified local government status through the Maryland Historic Trust.
- v. **Policy:** Preserve, maintain and enhance the character defining qualities of scenic and historic roadway corridors.
- a. *Actions:*
    - i) Implement recommendations of the Historic Roads Survey Phase I to seek recognition and historic district status for eligible roads and their vicinities (based on the detailed surveys completed in the Historic Roads Survey Phase II). At a minimum, add these roads corridors to the list of scenic road corridors designated for protection in the Zoning Ordinance.
    - ii) Ensure implementation of ordinance requirements for protection of designated scenic and historic corridors, including historic bridges.
    - iii) Implement the Religious Freedom Byway Corridor Management Plan to:
      - a) Designate the Byway routes and protect the integrity of the resources along the route to maintain their value for heritage tourism.
      - b) Develop directional and interpretive signage.
      - c) Develop heritage tourism resources.

#### **5.14 AGRICULTURAL LANDS**

##### **- GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS**

- 5.14.1 **Goal:** Preserve available agricultural and rural resource areas, agricultural uses and activities throughout the County for their importance as components of both an important local industry and of rural character by implementing the goals, policies and objectives of Chapter 6: Priority Preservation Area Element of this plan. The extent of agricultural lands mapped as of 2007 is shown in Figure 5.14.

- A. **Objective:** Maintain a large percentage of rural land in farm and forest use by targeting the Priority Preservation Areas for conservation and by implementing other County's agricultural land preservation and economic programs to broadly protect agricultural and forest land and operations countywide.

5.14.2 **Goal:** Work with State and Federal agencies and farmers to develop and fund programs and policies for monitoring and managing runoff from lands in agricultural production.

- A. **Objective:** Promote implementation of practices and measures that prevent, reduce and/or mitigate adverse impacts on water quality and habitat caused by nutrients, chemicals and sediments in agricultural runoff.

## **5.15 FORESTED LANDS**

### **- GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS**

5.15.1 **Goal:** Preserve and restore forest resources, uses and activities throughout the County for their importance as components of both an important local industry and of rural character and for the water quality and habitat benefits and environmental services forests provide. The extent of forested lands mapped as of 2007 is shown in Figure 5.14.

- A. **Objective:** Maintain and enhance forest cover to maintain biological productivity and habitat values throughout the County by enhancing and restoring riparian forest ecosystems, minimizing the impacts of forestry activities on water quality, and providing for a net increase in forest vegetation in the Critical Area.

- i. **Policy:** Manage forest and woodland to maintain maximum values for wildlife, water quality, timber, recreation and other resources recognizing that in some cases these uses may be mutually exclusive.

- ii. **Policy:** Pursue increased forest acreage and managed woodlands, particularly in the Critical Area.

- iii. **Policy:** Minimize the removal of trees associated with development activities and mitigate the impacts of tree removal within development envelopes.

- a. *Actions:*

- i) Develop an urban tree program for the Leonardtown and Lexington Park Development Districts and for the Charlotte Hall Town Center.

- ii) Develop a targeting tool and maps to prioritize forest protection and enforce regulations and provide incentives for protection of priority areas (See Chapter 6: Priority Preservation Area Element).

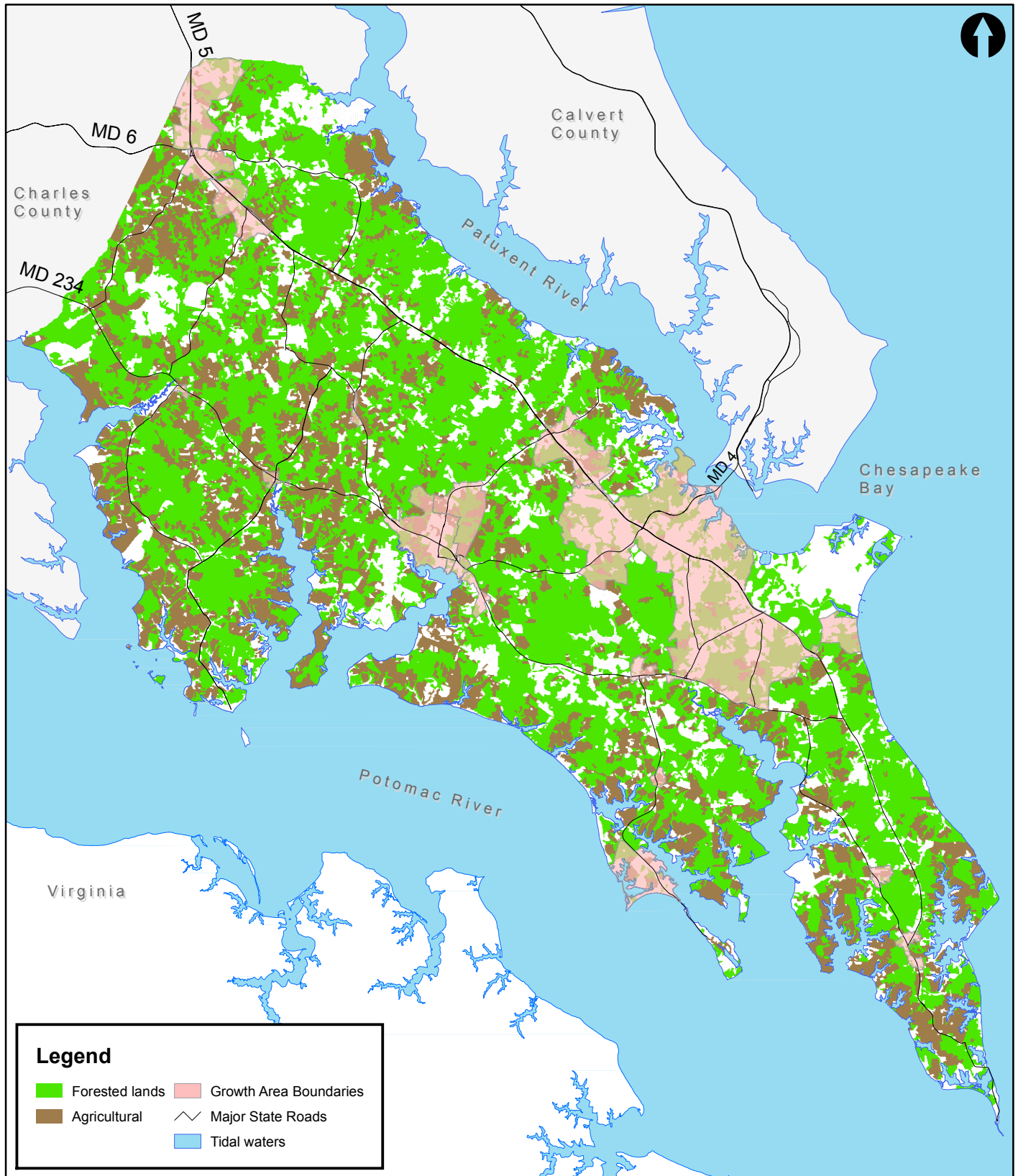
- a) MD Biological Stream Survey has identified Stronghold Watersheds with exceptional water quality that could be core targeting areas. Figure 5.7 maps the extent of Stronghold watersheds mapped as of 2007.

- b) Headwater forests should be an important component.

- c) Stream/water body buffers should be an element, but not to the extent that it dominates the targeting.

- d) Map FIDS habitat.

Figure 5-14



# St. Mary's County Forested or Agricultural Lands





**5.16 COMPLIANCE WITH STATE AND FEDERAL PROGRAMS**  
**- GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS**

5.16.1 **Goal:** Adopt and implement programs in compliance with State and Federal programs necessary to meet State mandated goals and to maintain eligibility for and participation in State or Federal funding and programs.

A. **Objective:** Continue to implement Maryland's Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program in accordance with "the criteria" (COMAR section 14.15.01 - 14.15.11), adopted State regulations, and amendments to date. Figure 7.1.b in Chapter 7 shows the extent of the Critical Area mapped in the County, Leonardtown and on State and Federal properties.

i. **Policy:** Establish development and land use controls that minimize adverse impacts on water quality that result from pollutants that are discharged from structures or conveyances or that have run off from surrounding lands; accommodate growth in the Critical Area and also address the fact that, even if pollution is controlled, the number, movement, and activities of persons in the Critical Area can create adverse environmental impacts.

a. *Actions:*

i) Update the County's Critical Area program to assure compliance with the law and adopted State regulations to facilitate uniform application and enforcement of the regulations while streamlining the review and approval of applications.

ii) Establish an online GIS mapping tool and additional data layers to assist landowners determining how regulations impact their sites and to streamline review.

ii. **Policy:** When land is subdivided or otherwise developed, establish (via planting and management for natural regeneration) native forest and shoreline buffers along the Bay, tributary streams and tidal and nontidal marshes wherever vegetated buffers are currently absent.

B. **Objective:** Identify and maintain systems of interconnected open space throughout the County including scenic roadway corridors, greenways, trails, and conserved "green infrastructure." The open space should include, and function to provide, buffers for rivers, streams, tidal shorelines, wetlands, and roadside development; wildlife corridors; recreation areas; public and private natural areas; intermodal transportation links, and utility corridors.

i. **Policy:** Develop greenway and open space systems for the Potomac, Patuxent and Chesapeake watersheds in the County to provide opportunities for recreation, public access, habitat protection and water quality improvement and to link and interpret Southern Maryland heritage area sites.

a. *Actions:*

i) Manage natural lands in the County recreation and parks system to provide resource protection benefits.

- ii) As new lands are sought for or accepted into the system, seek lands that meet the needs for active recreation and are also or can be physically connected to the greenway and open space system.
  - iii) Demonstrate and utilize implementation techniques and natural resources protection objectives on publicly managed lands to educate citizens and businesses about the benefits of a healthy environment.
  - iv) Require compliance with resource protection policies by county agencies and departments in the review for approval of projects.
- ii. **Policy:** Conduct a viewshed analysis to identify viewsheds that have significant historic, cultural, economic, or aesthetic value and develop specific guidance and/or regulations for protection of the significant viewsheds identified in the study.

# THE ST. MARY’S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## **Chapter 6: PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREAS ELEMENT**

### **6.1 INTRODUCTION**

A Priority Preservation Area is an area where agriculture will be the focus of long-term efforts and investment by the County to ensure the ongoing retention of agricultural land uses and profitability of agricultural activities. Beginning in fiscal year 2009, counties that wish to have certified agricultural land preservation programs were required by the Agricultural Stewardship Act of 2006 (HB 2) to adopt a Priority Preservation Areas Element certified by the Maryland Department of Planning and the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation. Approval of the PPA Element allows St. Mary's County to seek recertification of its agricultural land preservation programs every three years and to retain eligibility for maximum state funding for county agricultural preservation programs.

This Plan Element identifies a Priority Preservation Area (PPA) within the County capable of supporting profitable agricultural activities, governed by local policies to stabilize the land base to limit development, and large enough to support the kind of agricultural enterprises that the County is seeking to preserve. A PPA may consist of one or more contiguous or noncontiguous parcels of land and may include designated Rural Legacy Areas. The County's acreage goal for preservation in the PPA must be at least 80% of the remaining undeveloped land in the PPA as calculated at the time of application for recertification.

The PPA includes 97,660 acres of rural land which consists of all undeveloped and unprotected rural parcels that are 25 acres or larger. The parcels are dispersed throughout the Rural Preservation District and the County has determined that designation of these parcels will offer rural landowners the widest range of opportunity for participation in land preservation programs. To address concerns about gaps and fragmentation of agricultural lands, the County will also encourage protection of smaller parcels (15 to less than 25 acres) which are adjacent to lands in the PPA.

The 80% preservation goal requires protection of 78,128 acres of this land within the PPA. Current regulations, including TDR and clustering requirements are capable of protecting up to 76,175 acres of this land and an additional 11,700 acres of land in parcels smaller than 25 acres.

### **6.2 AGRICULTURE'S AND FORESTRY'S ROLE IN ST. MARY'S COUNTY**

In 2007 the Census of Agriculture counted 68,648 acres of land in farms in St. Mary's County, which was a slight increase from 68,153 acres in 2002 but which was still down from 71,920 acres in 1997. The number of farms declined during the period from 1997 (658 farms) to 2002 (577 farms), but that trend had reversed by 2007 with an increase to 621 farms. St. Mary's County's loss of farmland from 1997 to 2002 was slightly more than the statewide percentage loss and somewhat less than the regional rate. From 2002 to 2007 the County saw a 6% increase in the number of farms (+5% statewide), and a 1 percent gain in the amount of land in farms (-1% statewide), but had a 6 percent decrease in the size of farms (-6% statewide). Statewide there was a decline in the value of agricultural products between 1997 and 2002. The decline in value from 1997 to 2002 in St. Mary's County and Southern Maryland generally was significantly greater than the loss of agricultural value in the rest of the State and was likely due to the Tobacco Buyout process. Given that the Buyout Program results were permanent, the loss in value appeared to represent a major regional industry readjustment. Traditional cash crops have lost ground to specialty crops and goods. It also appears that the "Buy Local" marketing campaign for Southern Maryland farm products funded via the Tobacco Buyout program increased demand for local produce and value added products.

Forestry is a component of the agricultural economy. According to the United States

Department of Agriculture (USDA), 47% of St. Mary's County was forested in 1999. Forested lands in the County face the same problems identified for the state as a whole in "MARYLAND'S STRATEGIC FOREST LANDS ASSESSMENT" published in October 2003 by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources ([http://www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/download/sfla\\_report.pdf](http://www.dnr.state.md.us/forests/download/sfla_report.pdf)). "The state faces significant loss of the ecological, social and economic benefits of forests due to this rapid urban development. A compounding problem is that remaining forests are being fragmented from large, contiguous blocks of forest into many smaller, isolated patches. Smaller patches are less effective as wildlife habitat. They are more difficult to manage to protect soil, air and water quality. They are also less likely to support ... the forestry and wood products industry, the fifth largest industry in the State." In order to preserve rural character and stave off impacts of development, preservation efforts must be increased.

The Strategic Plan made the following findings about the County: The majority of forested lands are privately owned. There are a significant number of forested blocks exceeding 100 acres in the County. It is important to manage growth and development to preserve large blocks of forest. The majority of County forests are of low economic value relative to forests in the state as a whole (This is based on variety of factors including access to processing sawmills, slope and soil constraints for timbering, fragmentation of ownership, type and size of stock). The forest industry currently accounts for less than 1.7% of the County's industry output. Despite the relatively minimal statewide economic value of county forests, the industry remains an important rural economic component and forests provide significant environmental service benefits in the County:

- One acre of forest absorbs six tons of carbon dioxide and produces four tons of oxygen. This is enough to meet the annual needs of eighteen people. *USDA Forest Service.*
- 15 trees can offset the CO<sub>2</sub> production of a vehicle that gets 20 mpg driven 10,000 miles.
- Tree loss has a financial cost. Tree loss in the Baltimore-Washington region since 1973 has resulted in a 19% increase in storm water runoff (540 million cubic feet) at a cost of \$1.08 billion. *American Forests.*

The Strategic Forest Lands Assessment shows that the Breton Bay, St. Mary's River, and Patuxent River watersheds are experiencing the greatest percentages of forest loss—1% to 5% of forest per year.

### **6.3 ST. MARY'S COUNTY PRESERVATION EFFORTS**

In 1995 St. Mary's County set a goal of 60,000 acres of farmland in permanent protection and began participation in the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation (MALPF) program. A number of landowners have placed their lands in Maryland Environmental Trust (MET) and Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) easement programs. As of January 1, 2009, a total of 13,911 acres of land in farms have been permanently protected by easements; 8,665 acres through MALPF, 2,860 acres through the Rural Legacy Program, 2,083 through MET, and 303 acres through MHT. An additional 3,330 acres have been protected through the County's Transferable Development Rights (TDR) Program for a total of 17,241 acres of preserved land.

In 1998 the County established the 5,800 acre Huntersville Rural Legacy Area (HRLA) which was expanded in 2004 by 3,150 acres due to the success of the HRLA and interest among larger landowners in preventing sprawl from Mechanicsville. The County has a partnership with the Patuxent Tide Water Land Trust to place easements on properties in the Rural Legacy Areas. By the end of 2009, ten properties in the HRLA encompassing over 2,600 acres in the Patuxent River watershed have been protected through the Rural Legacy program. An additional 603 acres in the HRLA are protected by MALPF, MET and the TDR program, bringing the total land preserved in the 8,360 acre HRLA to approximately 3,200 acres. This represents 65% of the

original RLA, and 40% of the expanded RLA.

In 2006, the Mattapany Rural Legacy Area (MRLA) encompassing 13,703 acres was established with the aim to protect a total of 6,500 acres with Rural Legacy funds and an additional 2,000 acres by other means, for a total of 8,500 acres (62% of the MRLA). The Board of County Commissioners purchased the first property preserved in this Rural Legacy Area, referred to as the Fenwick Property. Thirty-one development rights (TDRs) have been lifted from the property, preserving 155 acres, and 5 lots have been donated to Habitat for Humanity. Two farmsteads have been created – one will be utilized for the creation of a year round farmers market. Since 2009 easements purchases have protected three additional properties south of the Fenwick Property, totaling more than 304 acres. A total of 2,536 acres in the MRLA had been protected by the end of 2009.

The vast majority of the acreage outside of the development districts and the priority funding areas in St. Mary's County is zoned Rural Preservation District (RPD). Regulations affecting the Rural Preservation District (RPD) are intended to protect the land base necessary to support and foster agriculture, forestry, mineral resource extraction, and aquaculture. On July 24, 2007, a zoning amendment took effect to enhance the transfer of development rights (TDR) program. The RPD zone permits one dwelling by right on a lot or parcel of land and requires use of TDRs or payment of a fee-in-lieu of TDRs to construct additional dwellings. Residential density is set at one dwelling unit per five acres (1:5) in the RPD zone with provisions to increase density up to 1 dwelling per 3 acre with use of TDRs. However, an increase of density above 1 dwelling per 5 acres is not permitted for RPD land located within a Rural Legacy Area.

The revised TDR program results in an effective RPD density of 1 dwelling per 10.8 acres<sup>1</sup>. All developments of more than one dwelling must cluster the new lots on 50% or less of the original tract. The RPD district is subject to performance standards that maintain the rural character of the district in recognition of the fact that a full range of public facilities is not provided or planned.

The Resource Conservation Area (RCA) Critical Area Overlay allows 1 dwelling to be constructed for each 20 acres of land in the parcel. Properties in the RCA with less than 20 acres that predated the Critical Area regulations are allowed 1 dwelling by right. The overall density constructed on a parcel cannot exceed the density of the base zoning district.

Establishment of an Installment Purchase Agreement (IPA) land preservation program is a goal of this Comprehensive Plan. IPA programs are successful in other counties because they offer landowners capital gains tax deferral, tax-exempt interest payments, charitable contributions, and flexibility for estate planning.

#### **6.4 ANALYSIS OF PRIOR LAND CONSERVATION STRATEGIES**

While the PPA program will enhance efforts, it is not envisioned by the County as the means to achieve all land conservation goals. St. Mary's County's overall preservation strategy must contain a number of elements to be effective in securing a land base for the agricultural industry. The success of each program or policy is highly dependent on the support of each of the other components. Program elements are discussed below.

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<sup>1</sup> Buildout analysis shows that while density varies slightly by project, based on specific parcel sizes the effective density at buildout is not more than 10.8 du/acre. The RPD zone allows low-density residential development of one dwelling by right and requires use of TDR's or payment of a fee-in-lieu to construct additional units. To achieve the allowed density a landowner can have 1 lot by right plus additional lots with purchase of TDRs from 5 acres of off site vacant RPD land or from vacant lots. The landowner may utilize TDR's from his own land which results in a density of approximately 1 dwelling per 9.8 acres.

#### 6.4.1 **FUNDING**

Local sources of revenue for agricultural land preservation have increased in recent years but the totals are far from the amount needed to meet County goals for farmland preservation. The 2005 Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan noted significant challenges to meeting the County's farmland preservation goal. In response, the County strengthened its TDR program, instituted an Annual Growth Policy that discourages growth in the Rural Preservation District, created Rural Legacy areas, and established a portion of the recording tax as a dedicated funding source. Still, there is a need to identify more state and County funding to purchase land and easements.

#### **OVERVIEW OF EXISTING PROGRAMS**

Countywide there are nearly 34,000 acres of land protected via Federal, State, and locally funded easement acquisition and voluntary efforts. Continuation of ongoing programs, such as land conservation in the two Rural Legacy Areas, MALPF easement acquisition efforts, and the implementation of additional programs, such as an Installment Purchase Agreement Program or creation of zoning incentives for conservation within an Agricultural Focus Area and a Natural Resources Focus Area, will allow the County to achieve protection in excess of 80% of the undeveloped RPD land. Supplementing land conservation via TDR and clustering provisions is the application of resource protection criteria (discussed in Chapter 5) which will protect an estimated 91,000 acres of land countywide.

#### 6.4.2 **MALPF PARTICIPATION**

While there has been a lot of interest from landowners in the MALPF program, State changes to the program since adoption of the 2002 Comprehensive Plan had a dampening effect. The County hopes to work with the MALPF Board to recognize and address the impact that changes to the MALPF program may have on current and future participation in the program.

The Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan identified rate and cost factors of land conservation and recommended that St. Mary's County's strategy for agricultural land preservation should include the following:

1. Adopt a realistic, achievable goal for farmland in permanent protection.
2. Designate a true agricultural preservation area, perhaps as an overlay zone, and take steps to preserve agriculture and the farmland base in this area.
3. Seek increased State funding for the MALPF program and encourage revisions to the State program to remove disincentives to participation.
4. Identify new and supplement existing funding sources.
5. Allow for auxiliary commercial enterprises on farms that can assist the industry's transition from tobacco.

#### 6.4.3 **COUNTY TDR PROGRAM AND MANDATORY CLUSTERING**

The primary means to achieve the 80% protection in the PPA and on other rural lands will be implementation of the TDR program and the clustering requirements of the ordinance. The 2007 revision of the County TDR program was designed to address identified problems associated with land conservation by relocating the burden of conservation from the public sector to the private sector and from a purely voluntary to a mandatory program by 1) making land conservation a required component of all major rural development projects, 2) by allowing payment of fees-in-lieu as a means to bolster funding for targeted conservation by the County, 3) by reducing the effective rural density without an across the board down-zoning of all rural lands, and 4) by increasing the cost for rural development to achieve greater parity with cost of



development in growth areas. The 2007 TDR program has achieved a major change in land development patterns and, in combination with mandatory clustering provisions implemented in 2002, has greatly enhanced land preservation in the County.

The TDR program recognizes that the desire to live in the countryside historically has outpaced the desire to live in an urban/suburban setting. This desire for rural home sites was a reason the County’s first TDR program had not worked to shift development from rural lands into the planned growth areas. The revised TDR program uses the on-going desire for rural lots as a primary driver for rural land protection. In addition, the program retains opportunities for landowners to create small affordable lots for children to keep families on farms, and also retains opportunities for sale of small lots as source of income for farmers who are attempting to continue farming in uncertain economic times. GIS analysis show the effectiveness of current ordinance requirements by determining the development potential and land conservation that could result from build-out on 106,872 acres<sup>2</sup> in the 1,944 unprotected parcels in the RPD under the County’s 1-dwelling-per-5-acre rural zoning. For comparison, analysis was also performed for the buildout under the State recommended 1-dwelling-per-20-acre rural zoning

The following table shows the development potential and land protection achieved for the two scenarios

	Total dwellings allowed on unprotected lands (A)	New dwellings allowed (B =A minus 1,944 existing lots/parcels)	Acres of land protected by easements (C)	Percentage of unprotected rural land (106,872 acres) protected by easements	Percentage of all rural land (202,569 acres) protected by easements
SMCo existing 1:5 RPD zoning w/ clustering for major subdivisions	11,439	9,500	84,114	78.70%	41.52%
MDP suggested 1:20 zoning w/ clustering for major subdivisions	4,794	2,850	33,795	31.60%	16.68%

Implementation of County regulations will achieve land conservation at a rate that outpaces the conservation that could be achieved under the State’s recommended 1-dwelling-per-20-acre zoning. The County’s current regulations allow creation of more than 3 times as many new rural lots. but the increase does not result in increased land area being developed. Instead, it results in more than 75% of the rural land being placed in permanent land protection easements. The County TDR and clustering programs applied to the State’s recommended 1-per-20 density would result in fewer new rural lots and significantly less permanently protected land.

Maximum new development on rural lands—all parcels 15 acres or larger—will not exceed 9,500 new lots. As TDRs are used for development in growth areas the number of new rural lots will decrease. The overall number also decreases as developers of rural subdivisions utilize program provisions that allow RPD density to increase (up to 1 dwelling per three acres) on individual parcels in exchange for significantly increased land protection. This provision encourages clustering of smaller lots on land best suited for development within the same footprint that would be used for lesser density development. The Annual Growth Policy caps the number of rural lots created each year—set at 241 per year for 2010, which means the County has nearly a 40 year supply of new lots under the current program. The potential new lots under the suggested 20 acre zoning would be exhausted in less than 12 years.

<sup>2</sup> Total Rural land (202,569 acres) minus Rural Land in parcels smaller than 15 acres (61,713 acres) minus Rural Land in protected parcels : (33,984 acres) equals Unprotected Land in parcels greater than 15 acres (106,872 acres)

Running out of rural lots in 12 years would create pressure to rezone; and without permanent land protection in place, rezoning and new development would likely occur. The existing TDR, clustering and 1:5 rural density provisions permanently protect land while also meeting the demand for affordable homes in the Rural Planning Areas and retaining broader economic options for landowners to continue farm and forestry uses on their lands.

County ordinances achieve permanent land protection without a need for the County to expend significant funds and at the same time discourage creation of large, unaffordable estate lots on rural land. A disadvantage of the County program is that the conservation via a private TDR market is not targeted toward protection of the most important or critical lands. This disadvantage is offset to some extent by the fees-in-lieu provisions of the program that provide an additional dedicated source for funds that the County can leverage and use as matching funds to achieve targeted local, State and Federal conservation goals. This plan encourages refinement of the program to configure rural subdivisions so they maximize protection of critical agricultural resources

When the TDR program was revised in 2007 there was consensus that conservation of large blocks of RPD land, primarily held in large RPD parcels, is a priority for the County and a priority was placed on developing a land preservation program that offers hope of protecting rural land *county-wide* as well as strategically located specific parcels. Finally given the variability in funding levels, the rural land protection program developed does not depend on Federal, State, or County for funding and creates a source of funds for targeted land protection when deemed necessary.

The TDR and clustering provisions serve to meet the countywide rural preservation goals and can achieve protection of 78.7% of the land in unprotected RPD lots and parcels that are 15 acres or larger in size. These parcels include the largest and most productive farms county-wide as well as large tracts of forest and include 32,970 acres of prime agricultural soils and 12,745 acres of prime forest soils. For all undeveloped rural parcels in the County, the TDR program comes very close to meeting the 80% land preservation goal of the Priority Preservation Area (PPA) legislation.

#### 6.4.4 ADDITIONAL LAND CONSERVATION MEASURES

In response to local and State concerns about the impact of rural residential development on continued farming and forestry activities, the County should implement ordinance provisions to effectively buffer farms from development, to increase protection for the most productive farm soils, and to develop rural subdivision standards that are conducive to continuation of farming on preserved land the subdivided parcel and on neighboring properties.

To facilitate pursuit of available federal or state funds targeted for specific purposes, this plan identifies core areas that have a strong existing agricultural heritage and eligible soils, and cultural, natural or historic heritage and that are consistent with the adopted Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan. Figure 6.4.5 designates specific target areas in which to pursue specific land preservation goals:

- 1) Agricultural Focus Area centered around a concentration of existing MALPF easements and of lands in “Plain Sect” ownership (see discussion in 6.5.2 below);
- 2) Two Rural Legacy Areas (Huntersville and Mattapany) to protect large, contiguous tracts of land and strategic areas from sprawl development and to enhance natural resource, agricultural, forestry and environmental protection; and
- 3) A Natural Resource Focus Area for targeting funds available specifically for protection of habitats of rare, threatened and endangered species and to provide a

broad wildlife corridor that connects the Potomac and Patuxent watersheds via core areas of green infrastructure of high ecological value. These target areas are delineated in Figure 6.4.3.

Within these areas, efforts will be made to facilitate appropriate rural economic activities while conserving lands having important agricultural, natural, cultural, and historical resources. Funds designated under the Agricultural Stewardship Act of 2006, Rural Legacy program funds, federal and state funds for habitat conservation, County TDR fees-in-lieu, and other dedicated funding sources will be utilized in addition to existing preservation programs to preserve lands in these target areas.

## **6.5 DEFINING THE PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREA**

### **6.5.1 GENERAL CONSIDERATIONS**

The parcels identified have the characteristics noted in the Agricultural Stewardship Act necessary for designation as a Priority Preservation Area in that they: contain productive agricultural or forest soils, or are capable of supporting profitable agricultural and forestry enterprises where productive soils are lacking; are large enough to support the kind of agricultural operations that the County seeks to preserve, as represented in the comprehensive plan; and, as described below, will be subject to local policies and regulations that stabilize the agricultural and forest land base so that development does not convert or compromise agricultural or forest resources.

The broad distribution of the PPA across the RPD using parcel size and protection status is viewed as a means to eliminate any potential disincentives for achieving countywide land conservation, and to address the uncertainty about future State legislation and PPA regulation becoming too restrictive. To address both local constituents' concerns about eligibility for smaller farmsteads and parcels for funding, and State agency concerns that the PPA's land preservation pattern was more fragmented than was desirable for maintaining agricultural operations, this plan also designates, unprotected rural parcels 15 acres to less than 25 acres as "other lands targeted for conservation." While not formally part of the PPA, these latter parcels should be protected to the extent possible.

### **6.5.2 ESTABLISHING PPA BOUNDARIES**

The parcel-based PPA (illustrated in Figure 6.5) includes all unprotected lands 25 acres or larger located in the Rural Preservation District, and encompasses 97,660 acres of land. Also shown on Figure 6.5 are other lands targeted for conservation which include parcels 15 acres or less than 25 acres in size, encompassing an additional 14,990 acres. Meeting the goal of protecting 80% of the undeveloped land in the PPA means the County must protect a total of 78,130 acres. The TDR and clustering regulations should result in permanent protection of 76,175 acres in the PPA. Maximum rural development area in the PPA will be 21,480 acres. Within the "targeted lands" there will be 11,500 acres of protection provided by ordinance provisions. Currently approximately 33,984 acres is in permanent agricultural and open space protection outside the PPA. The acreage of planned and existing land preservation in the rural planning districts is 121,660 acres which is 60% of the total rural area in the County.

The Priority Preservation Area was selected because the parcels have an existing concentration of profitable agricultural and forestry enterprises or have the capacity for reestablishing these activities. The PPA and the parcels targeted for conservation are large enough to support commodity crops (predominately corn, wheat, soybeans), fodder and feed operations, small to medium scale livestock operations, equine operations, and specialty farm operations (including organic farming). The selected parcels include "Plain Sect" (Amish and Mennonite) lands and surrounding large parcels. Preservation of these surrounding lands is

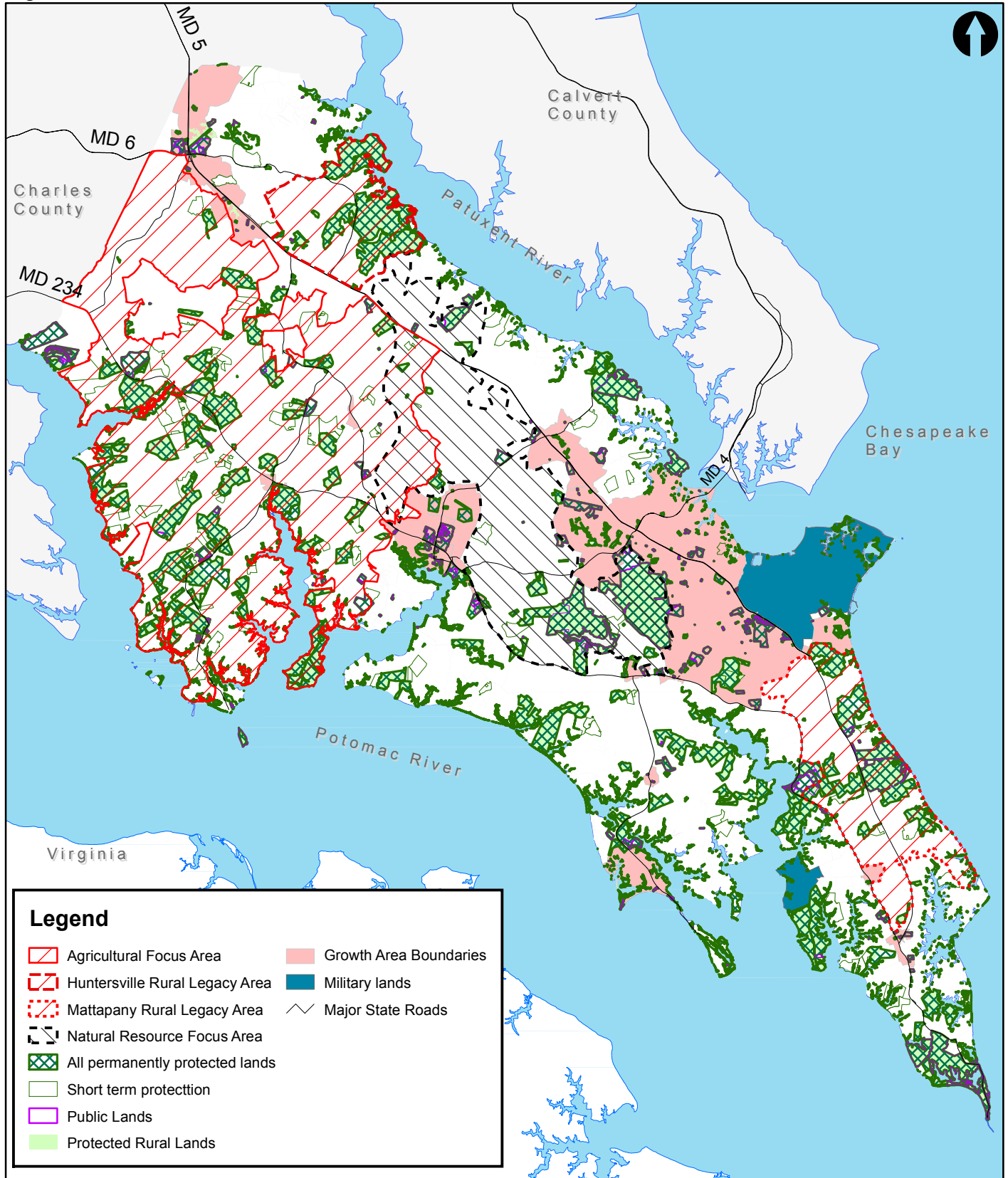
anticipated to help stabilize the continued presence of the “Plain Sect” communities, farm operations and activities as important components of County heritage and rural character. Since “Plain Sect” landowners rarely participate in government easement programs, creating an environment favorable to retaining the approximately 9,300 acres of land in “Plain Sect” ownership has potential to contribute to the overall conservation of farm and forest land in the PPA without a need to expend added county or state funds. The selected parcels also surround existing concentrations of MALPF and Rural Legacy easements and include many parcels currently enrolled in 5-year Agricultural Land Preservation Districts.

The Priority Preservation Area encompasses significant lands that are not currently in agricultural production, including forested and fallow lands with a potential for future production by the soil survey. GIS analysis of the 2009 USDA Soils Survey shows that within the PPA there are 41,622 acres of productive agricultural and/or forest soils--27,699 acres of prime farm soils and 13,923 acres of prime forest soils. Analysis of the Maryland Department of Planning 2007 Land Use and Land Cover mapping indicates that there are 30,104 acres currently in agricultural uses and 55,665 acres currently in forest uses within the PPA. Outside the PPA, “targeted lands” include 4,384 acres of prime agricultural soils and 2,509 acres of prime forestry soils and per the 2007 land use data, encompass 4,197 acres in agricultural use and 9,577 acres in forest use.

The goals and objectives of this Plan element are established to reinforce the County’s existing policies and regulations, to guide updates and changes to those policies and regulations necessary to enhance the program and to implement the following goals of the MALPF Program for agricultural land:

- Permanently preserve agricultural land and soils capable of supporting a reasonable diversity of agricultural products.
- Protect natural, forest, and historic resources and the rural area character of the landscape associated with Maryland’s farmland. Concentrate preserved land in large, relatively contiguous blocks to effectively support long-term protection of resources and resource based industries.
- Limit the intrusion of development and its impacts on rural resources and resource-based industries through use of local land use management authority to protect public investment in preservation by managing development in rural preservation areas.
- Preserve approximately 60,000 acres of productive agricultural land by 2020.
- Ensure good return on public investment by concentrating State agricultural land preservation funds in areas where the investment is reasonably well supported by both local investment and land use management programs.
- Develop a shared understanding of goals and the strategy to achieve them among rural landowners, the public at large, and State and local government officials.
- Protect the equity interests of rural landowners in preservation areas by ensuring sufficient public commitment and investment in preservation through easement acquisition and incentive programs.
- Establish effective measures to support profitable agriculture, including assistance in production, marketing, and the practice of stewardship, so that farming remains a desirable way of life for both the farmer and the public-at-large.

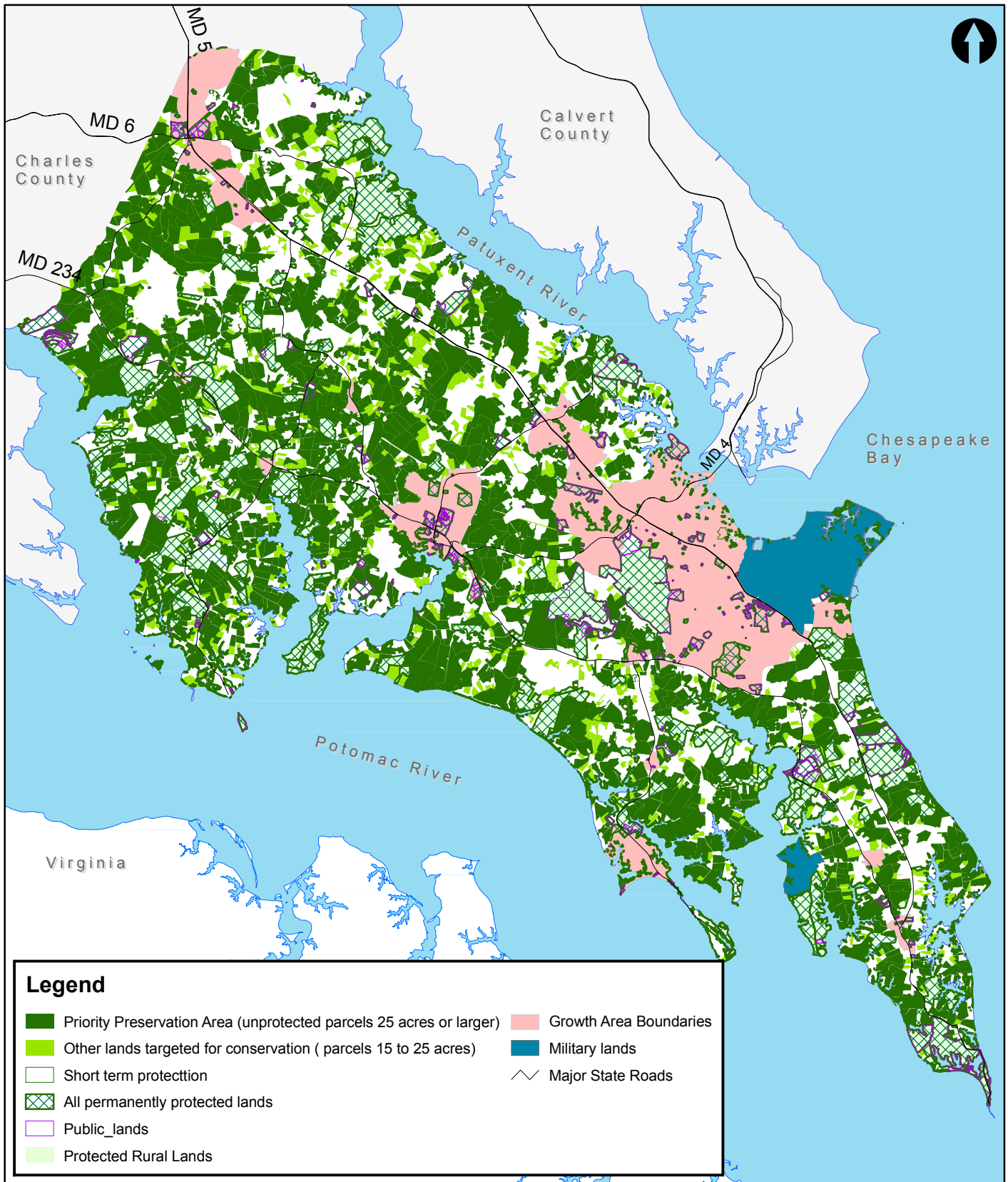
Figure 6.4.5.



# St. Mary's County Focus areas for land preservation programs



Figure 6.5.



# St. Mary's County Priority Preservation Areas and other lands targeted for conservation

2 1 0 2 4 Miles

In addition, the County will explore establishment of an Agricultural Overlay floating zone which landowners can voluntarily place upon their land to enhance economic options for agricultural and forestry uses. In exchange for the benefits of the floating zone, land would become subject to residential density reductions and/or more stringent development standards (such as increasing zoning setbacks from the currently required 15-foot side or 20-foot rear setbacks). Other incentives may include bonus TDRs which the landowner could sell, the right to conduct agri-tourism, value added farm and forest product processing, cottage industries and businesses that capitalize on (and do not conflict with) agricultural and forestry operations.

## **6.6 PRIORITY PRESERVATION AREA GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

6.6.1 **Goal:** Preserve at least 60,000 acres of farmland countywide by 2020 and at least 80% of the undeveloped land in the approved Priority Preservation Area (PPA).

A. **Objective:** Implement an agricultural land preservation program to preserve 60,000 acres of land including both tracts that are in active agricultural production and those that have prime agricultural soils suitable for future production.

i. **Policy:** Seek state and federal funding, matched with county funds to implement preservation efforts to achieve preservation of 80% of eligible lands within the PPA.

ii. **Policy:** Continue to develop and implement local incentives, zoning designations and taxing policies to preserve farmland countywide.

a. **Action:** Require developers of major subdivisions to identify prime agricultural and woodland soils and to place non-farm development in a manner that preserves 50% or more of those soils on the site.

b. **Action:** Use funds collected from the existing TDR fee-in lieu program for protection of agricultural land primarily in areas targeted for agricultural preservation.

c. **Action:** The County should consider implementing an installment purchase agreement agriculture land preservation program.

d. **Action:** Encourage the lifting of development rights from agricultural parcels via transfer of rights in the private market, the use of easements purchased or donated to public entities, and land trusts and/or reduction of base density through the voluntary placement of land in an agricultural overlay in exchange for enhanced economic incentives that promote farm and forestry operation on the land.

e. **Action:** Explore an Agricultural Overlay floating zone with zoning density reductions and development standards, in exchange for incentives such as transferable development right density bonuses and an expanded list of permitted uses allowed on a tract to supplement farm income.

f. **Action:** Establish a Critical Farms program.

iii. **Policy:** Continue and strengthen the Right to Farm provisions of the zoning ordinance to recognize agricultural land uses as a preferred land uses for rural areas, to discourage encroachment of non-agricultural uses into rural areas and minimize adverse impacts of non-agricultural uses and

activities on agricultural operations.

- a. *Action:* Increase buffering and setback requirements for non-agricultural uses that are adjacent to agricultural operations.
  - b. *Action:* Continue the limitation on use of TDRs to increase density in the Rural Legacy Areas.
  - c. *Action:* Where possible preserve good agricultural soils within development parcels for continued farming.
- iv. **Policy:** Utilize available federal, state and local funding to implement the local preservation program.
- a. *Action:* Fully utilize the agricultural transfer tax for land conservation programs.
  - b. *Action:* Facilitate landowner participation in the Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Fund.
  - c. *Action:* Facilitate landowner participation in the Maryland Rural Legacy Program.
  - d. *Action:* The County should continue, when possible, to fund and promote landowner participation in the County 5-Year Agricultural District program.
  - e. *Action:* Continue using the dedicated portion of the recording tax for property transfers as a source of revenue to be used for land conservation.

6.6.2 **Goal:** Maintain and protect forested lands and developed woodland.

- A. **Objectives:** Maintain and enhance forest cover to protect biological productivity and habitat values throughout the County by enhancing and restoring riparian forest ecosystems, minimizing the impacts of forest harvesting activities on water quality, reducing forest fragmentation by minimizing permanent loss of woody vegetation on developed lots and parcels and providing for a net increase in forest vegetation in the County.
- i. **Policy:** Consider implementing local regulations to achieve “no net loss” of forest in accordance with future Maryland laws and regulations.
  - ii. **Policy:** Manage forest and woodland to maintain maximum values for wildlife, water quality, timber, recreation and other resources, recognizing that in some cases these uses may be mutually exclusive.
  - iii. **Policy:** Pursue increased acreage of forest and managed woodlands, particularly in the Critical Area.
  - iv. **Policy:** Establish ordinance provisions to preserve and enhance existing roadside forests. Provide woodland buffers in a manner that protects viewsheds of designated historic roads, and that maintains the rural and scenic character of the County visible to those traveling existing roads in rural areas and roads bounding the edges of growth areas. Preserve existing woodland and utilize urban forestry and street trees to buffer and screen new developments from principal roads passing through town centers and villages.



- v. ***Policy:*** Minimize the removal of trees associated with development activities, mitigate the environmental impacts of tree removal within development envelopes, and minimize and mitigate the visual impacts of loss of forest cover from county roads.
- vi. ***Policy:*** Develop an urban tree program for the Leonardtown and Lexington Park Development Districts and for the Town Centers.

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# THE ST. MARY’S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## **Chapter 7: WATER RESOURCES ELEMENT**

### **7.1 INTRODUCTION**

This Water Resources element identifies and directs the County response to the opportunities and limitations presented by local and regional water resources. The goals of the element are to protect State land and water resources, to protect the public health, safety and welfare, to comply with State plans, policies and regulations and to ensure that water resources will be adequate and managed in a manner that meets smart growth goals while meeting local economic, environmental and land use goals.

**Watersheds.** St. Mary's County is divided into three principal watersheds. The current Three Notch Road (Maryland Route 5 through Charlotte Hall and Mechanicsville, and Maryland Route 235 from Mechanicsville to Ridge) roughly follows the path of the Three Notch Road that was established around 1692 that ran along the ridge between the eastern and western watersheds from Point Lookout to the northern boundary of St. Mary's County. The area east of Three Notch Road and north of Cedar Point at the mouth of the Patuxent River drains northeast to the Patuxent River. The area east of Three Notch Road and south of Cedar Point drains east to the main stem of the Chesapeake Bay. The area west of Three Notch Road drains southwest either directly or via four principal river systems into the Potomac River.

The Patuxent River watershed is characterized generally by steep slopes and highly erodible soils and high shoreline bluffs, which make farming and water access for transportation difficult. As a consequence, much of the Patuxent River watershed remained forested and sparsely developed until the 1950's. The development of the Patuxent River Naval Air Station on Cedar Point during World War II, the construction of the Thomas Johnson Bridge across the Patuxent River at Solomons in the 1970s, outsourcing base functions to contractors beginning in the 1980s, and extension of sewer up Three Notch Road to serve Wildewood brought significant development to the Lexington Park vicinity, which had grown up outside the naval base and expanded north along Three Notch Road to include the Hollywood Town Center. At the northern end of Three Notch Road, development concentrated around the site of "Ye Coole Springs" (purported to have healing powers, it was later the site of Charlotte Hall School) and the end of the train line in Mechanicsville 2 miles south. The Charlotte Hall, New Market and Mechanicsville Town Centers are designated as the principal growth areas in the northern end of the County.

In the Chesapeake Bay watershed the land south of Cedar Point east of Three Notch Road drops steeply from the ridgeline to a wide relatively flat coastal plain that is characterized by agricultural fields, forested wetlands, and several shallow pond/wetland and creek systems. This area remains sparsely developed except in Ridge, which developed adjacent to St. Jerome Creek that offered the only protected harbor on the western shore of the Chesapeake Bay north of Reedville, Virginia and south of Solomons Harbor in Calvert County.

The Potomac River watershed is characterized by relatively gentle slope from the ridge to the river, but it has four incised tidal creek and tributary stream systems (Wicomico River, St. Clements Bay, Breton Bay, and the St. Mary's River). The direct drainage to the Potomac River has similar topography to the Chesapeake Bay direct drainage – the gently sloped topography drops in a short distance to a wide flat coastal plain. The entire watershed has generally less steep topography than the Patuxent River watershed. Broad tidal bays and creeks offer protected harbors and ready access to the water, and soils are suitable for farming. Therefore, much of the development and agriculture located in this watershed and historic settlements grew up around the creeks and at the heads of tide in this watershed. Vacation communities developed as an escape from oppressive pre-air conditioned summers in Washington, D. C. As sediments from

agriculture filled up the bays, navigation into the headwater towns ceased, and, with the exception of Leonardtown, the County seat, these settlements faded to the remnant villages present today.

**Land use and water resource planning.** A primary goal of this Plan is to concentrate development in appropriate places and to support that concentration with infrastructure and services that have adequate capacity to provide an acceptable level of service for existing and proposed land uses. In turn the concentration of development makes the construction of infrastructure and the provision of services more economically feasible.

The development districts encompassing Lexington Park and the incorporated Town of Leonardtown (with adjacent lands outside of the town included in the development district) are and will continue to be the principal growth areas within the County. This Comprehensive Plan incorporates the Lexington Park Development District Master Plan that was adopted in 2005. These areas have the majority of existing water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure and are eligible for State funding as “priority funding areas” (PFAs). Future expansion of infrastructure and service are planned for these areas. The County’s 2008 Annual Growth Policy dictates that 70 percent of development should occur in designated growth areas. Given limitations for provision of sewer or septic in some town and village centers, it is contemplated that a majority of this growth will occur in Lexington Park and Leonardtown. These development districts pose the greatest challenges for managing stormwater and impacts of urban pollution, providing stormwater retrofits for older communities, and managing and improving the tributary streams and receiving tidal waters of Breton Bay and the St. Mary’s River. This Plan expands each development district to include school and publicly used recreation sites to enable public funding for facility expansion and provision of sewer or water if these become necessary in the future.

The Town of Leonardtown has its own master plan that is independent from, but coordinated with, the plan for the Leonardtown Development District within County jurisdiction. There is insufficient capacity in the Leonardtown treatment plant to accommodate the growth contemplated within the incorporated town or potential minor infill development in the adjacent development district northeast of the corporate limits along Hollywood Road (MD 245). The State has restricted effluent discharged from the plant into Breton Bay. Within the years since the adoption of the 2002 Comprehensive Plan there has been no significant demand for development east of Leonardtown, an area that is separated from the town boundary by the significant and degraded Town Run stream system. These lands may accommodate a spray irrigation system necessary to expand capacity of the Leonardtown treatment facility to accommodate growth within or beyond the town.

The County Plan has recognized a number of historic unincorporated towns and villages as population and economic centers, and has designated them as growth areas since 1978. However, based on analysis of the limitations resulting from the lack of sewer and of adequate soils to support land application for sewage disposal, or to support concentrations of septic systems, and significant sensitive area constraints, this Plan recognizes that no significant growth will be possible in a number of these towns and villages unless or until sewer service is provided. Sewer service is not currently contemplated for these areas.

Minor adjustments of the boundaries of some villages and towns were made in recognition of lands that were wholly unbuildable due to wetland and floodplain constraints (Clements and Chaptico) and to accurately follow parcel boundaries (all growth areas). These changes had no effect on development potential of the individual parcels or the towns and villages as a whole.

The Hollywood Town Center offers a relatively narrow corridor for growth along Three Notch Road immediately north of the Lexington Park Development District. The town center has limited water and sewer access, but has a reasonable extent of unconstrained land area available for infill and expanded development and is a logical northern terminus for extension of sewer and

water systems from the Lexington Park Area. A minor expansion of the town center is contemplated to bring school and parks and recreation sites into the growth areas boundary which will facilitate public funding for facility expansion and provision of sewer or water if these become necessary in the future

Of the three town centers defined in the 2002 Comprehensive Plan at the northern end of the County, only Charlotte Hall has any existing sewer service (via two private systems with limited capacity to serve additional customers). While Charlotte Hall has undeveloped unconstrained land for expansion, there appears to be limited ability to provide sewage treatment due to soil and slopes limitations and the prevalence of protected sensitive areas, therefore development will be largely dependent on onsite septic disposal systems. A minor expansion of the town center is contemplated to bring school and parks and recreation sites into the growth areas boundary which will facilitate public funding for facility expansion and provision of sewer or water if these become necessary in the future.

New Market has minimal land area west of Three Notch Road (MD 5) that is undeveloped, and the majority of the land east of Three Notch Road has significant sensitive area constraints imposed by stream valleys and steep erodible soils that are unsuitable for sewage or septic disposal.

In the Mechanicsville Town Center, the majority of the undeveloped land east of Three Notch Road (MD 235) has severe slope, soil and sensitive area constraints and the areas west of Mechanicsville Road that parallels Three Notch Road is predominately developed with 2 plus acre lots and has only moderate infill potential where soils are appropriate for on-site septic disposal. For portions of the Mechanicsville Town Center this Plan supports downzoning due to environmental constraints imposed by soils and topography, efforts to maintain rural character along MD 5 and willingness of landowners to accede to the rezoning. The “down zoning” will allow transfer of development rights from these lands. This Plan also proposes the addition of these lands into the Huntersville Rural Legacy Area.

Despite the development limitation imposed by sewer and water and by sensitive area constraints, this Plan retains the boundaries of the Hollywood Town Center (with expansion to include the school and recreation properties to the east and certain office buildings to the south) and of the New Market Town Center, but specifically identifies areas that are considered unsuitable for development purposes and intended for open space preservation. The density available within these lands can be utilized on the developable portions of the properties.

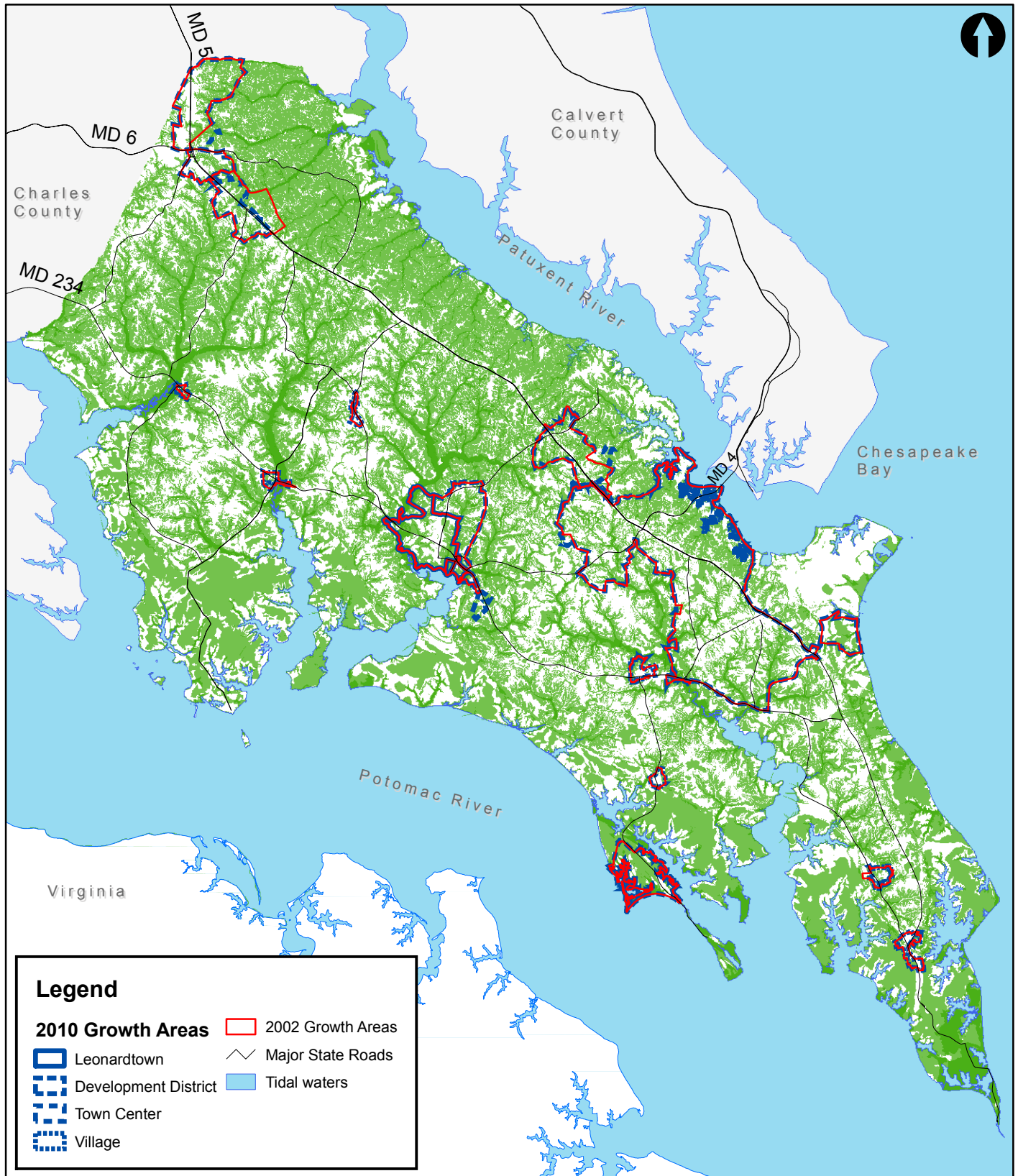
Figure 7.1.a. shows the changes to growth area boundaries. The red lines show the 2002 growth areas boundaries and the dashed blue lines show the revised growth area boundaries adopted under this Plan.

**Non-point source pollution and water resource planning.** St. Mary’s County is a predominately rural county. Many areas of concentrated development, particularly in the former vacation communities along the shorelines and within Lexington Park and Leonardtown, were developed prior to adoption and implementation of stormwater management regulations in Maryland. After adoption of these regulations by the State in 1983, much of the major residential development that occurred was placed on relatively large lots (exceeding 2 acres in size), and development on lots of this size was exempted by the regulations from providing stormwater management. In 2002, following the State’s adoption of new stormwater management regulations and of the 2000 Stormwater Design Manual, and largely in recognition that stormwater exemption criteria were promoting sprawl and discouraging clustering of development, the County adopted ordinances to require that stormwater quantity and quality controls be provided for development in major subdivisions (more than 5 lots) regardless of the size of the lots and for the road systems in minor subdivisions (5 lots or less).

As discussed in Chapters 5 and 6, St. Mary's County is actively seeking to retain forestry and agriculture as a viable economic base in the County. Forestry provides one of the least polluting land uses and conversion of open land to forest is a viable practice to manage and reduce pollution. Agricultural land uses are preferred rural land uses and maintaining viable agricultural land and operations is a goal of the County and State. The preference for maintaining agricultural activities and lands as important social, cultural, economic and aesthetic components of a rural landscape pose significant challenges for maintaining and improving water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and the many streams and rivers feeding into the Bay. The greatest quantities of sediment and pollutant loadings entering the Chesapeake Bay are generated on agricultural land. The large extent of agriculture land area places the burden and expense of maintaining and improving water quality on the relatively small population of farmers that is required to implement sediment and erosion control plans and nutrient management plans and to install extensive best management practices necessary to reduce soil erosion, control animal wastes and other pollutant discharges to water bodies.



Figure 7.1.a.



# St. Mary's County Growth Area Boundary Changes: 2002 Plan to 2010 Plan



**Land utilization projections based on 2030 build out.** The County is projected to add an additional 19,300 dwellings between 2010 and 2030. Based on its Annual Growth Policy (AGP), which will direct no less than 70% of new residential development to growth areas, the County can expect to add at least 675 new dwellings per year in the growth areas and no more than 260 dwellings per year in the rural areas. (Note that the limits of the AGP are reviewed annually by the County Commissioners, and are subject to change. The percentages listed here are for illustrative purposes.)

Discounting infill on vacant platted lots, the maximum area necessary to accommodate the projected 13,510 growth area dwellings, if developed at the planned PFA density of 3.5 dwellings per acre, is 3,700 acres. The projected 5,790 rural area dwellings would use approximately 56,750 acres of RPD density acreage (average 9.8 acres per dwelling based on mandatory clustering and TDR programs) while occupying no more than 14,200 acres (approximately 75% of the density acres are protected via TDRs and clustering).

Using the maximum figures of 3,700 acres of development in growth area zones and 14,200 acres of growth in the rural zones, the County developed Scenario 1 for sewer capacity, water supply and non-point source pollution that are found in Appendix A (incorporated by reference). Scenario 2 assumes increased rural clustering for 50% of the lots and very large lot development for the balance of rural lots.

**Watershed Planning.** Watershed plans in various forms exist for a majority of the 8-digit watersheds<sup>1</sup> in the County including:

1. The Patuxent River Policy Plan completed in 1984, and the 1997 Addendum to the Policy Plan.
2. The Wicomico Scenic River Management Plan (covering the Wicomico River watershed in Charles and St. Mary's Counties), completed in 1994.
3. Number of existing planning studies for the Breton Bay Watershed, including:
  - Breton Bay Watershed Restoration Action Strategy (BBWRAS) completed in 2002.
  - An analysis of sensitive areas, wetland and forest restoration opportunities for the St. Mary's and McIntosh Run watersheds (KCI, 1996).
4. Number of existing planning studies for the St. Mary's River including:
  - an analysis of sensitive areas, wetland and forest restoration opportunities for the St. Mary's River (KCI, 1996);
  - Hilton Run Watershed Management Plan (a 12-digit subwatershed within the St. Mary's River watershed), 2004; and
  - an Army Corps of Engineers' Feasibility Study (December 2008).

In addition, a Watershed Restoration Action Strategy for the St. Mary's River (SMRWRAS) was in preparation as this Plan was being written. All of these plans (except the

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<sup>1</sup> All U.S. watersheds have a proper name and a corresponding number called a Hydrologic Unit Code (HUC) for identification. Maryland (MD) performs analysis at the "MD 8-digit watershed level". MD 8-digit watersheds drain about 90 square miles, although they may be considerably larger or smaller depending on the configuration of the streams and the elevation of the land. There are 127 Maryland 8-digit watersheds. Watershed groups often work at the MD 12-digit watershed level. Several 12-digit watersheds may be within each 8-digit watershed since the 12-digit watersheds in Maryland average about 11 square miles. There are plans developed for watersheds at both the 8-digit and 12-digit watershed levels.

SMRWRAS) were developed prior to release of the 2008 criteria for development of watershed plans published by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency as guidelines for States' implementation of nonpoint source management programs under Section 319 of the Clean Water Act, and are necessary for the award of "Section 319" grants to States to implement those programs. Because 319 grants are an important source of funding for implementation of local projects in partnership with the State of Maryland, updates of the plans will be needed as the County develops its NPDES program to improve project eligibility for funding.

In addition to these general characterizations, the Maryland Departments of Natural Resources and the Environment have mapped particular segments of watersheds as important, particularly valuable, and in need of protection. These areas, shown in Figure 7.1.b, include:

1. Green infrastructure, mapped by DNR, includes two area types. The first, called "hubs" are unfragmented areas (primarily forests and wetlands), hundreds or thousands of acres in size, that are vital to maintaining the State's ecological health. They provide habitat for native plants and animals, protect water quality and soils, regulate climate, and perform other critical functions. The second areas mapped connect the hubs with "corridors" - linear remnants of natural land such as stream valleys and floodplains that allow animals, seeds, and pollen to move from one area to another. They also protect the health of streams and wetlands by maintaining adjacent vegetation. Preserving linkages between the remaining blocks of habitat will ensure the long-term survival and continued diversity of plants, wildlife, and environment.
2. Protected Sensitive Areas include streams, stream buffers, stream valleys (including adjacent steep slopes), wetlands and their buffers, floodplains, highly erodible soils, and adjacent hydric soils that are protected by County zoning regulations as required by State law (Article 66B).
3. Stronghold watersheds are those watersheds in the State that are most important for the protection of Maryland's aquatic biodiversity. Stronghold watersheds are the places where rare, threatened, or endangered freshwater fish, amphibians, reptiles, or mussel species have the highest numbers (abundance and number of occurrences). Special protection of these watersheds is necessary to ensure the survival of these imperiled fauna.
4. Tier II streams are stream segments that are better than necessary to support Clean Water Act §101(a)(2) "fishable/swimmable" uses. Their catchment areas (the land draining to the segment) and the streams are regulated under an antidegradation requirement by MDE and EPA. Any applicant for development activity in the watershed must demonstrate that a) the activity will not impact the biological integrity as assessed by MDE, or b) the activity will diminish assimilative capacity (25%) and applicant explains how use of assimilative capacity was minimized, or c) if use of more than 25% assimilative capacity is projected, a social and economic justification for the activity provides an adequate economic justification approved by EPA for the activity, environmental site design and innovative practices have been used to the full extent possible and Clean Water Act regulatory requirements are met
5. Sensitive Species Project Review Areas are areas that primarily contain habitat for rare, threatened, and endangered species and rare natural community types including such regulated areas as Natural Heritage Areas, Wetlands of Special State Concern, Colonial Waterbird Colonies, Habitat Protection Areas, and Waterfowl Concentration and Staging Areas. These DNR mapped areas provide information to local jurisdictions and State agencies to assist with assessing environmental impacts and reviewing potential development projects or land use changes.

The need to develop specific programs to protect existing and pending Tier II streams and their watersheds, Stronghold Watersheds and Sensitive Species habitat areas is recognized, and this Plan currently proposes implementation of the objectives, policies, and actions identified in Chapters 5 and 6. Development of the NPDES program will provide additional stream protection requirements as well as more formal plans and processes for project review to assure that land development minimizes generation of pollutants and maintains stream water quality and existing natural hydrology.

**Planning For Water Supply and Water Quality Protection.** The Annotated Code of Maryland establishes State policies to improve, conserve, and manage the quality of waters of the State and protect, maintain, and improve the domestic, agricultural, industrial, recreational, and other beneficial uses. State policy provides for the legitimate, beneficial uses of this State's waters, and to provide for prevention, abatement, and control of new or existing water pollution. This Plan element establishes the following principles for water supply and water quality protection (which includes managing waste water disposal) within the County:

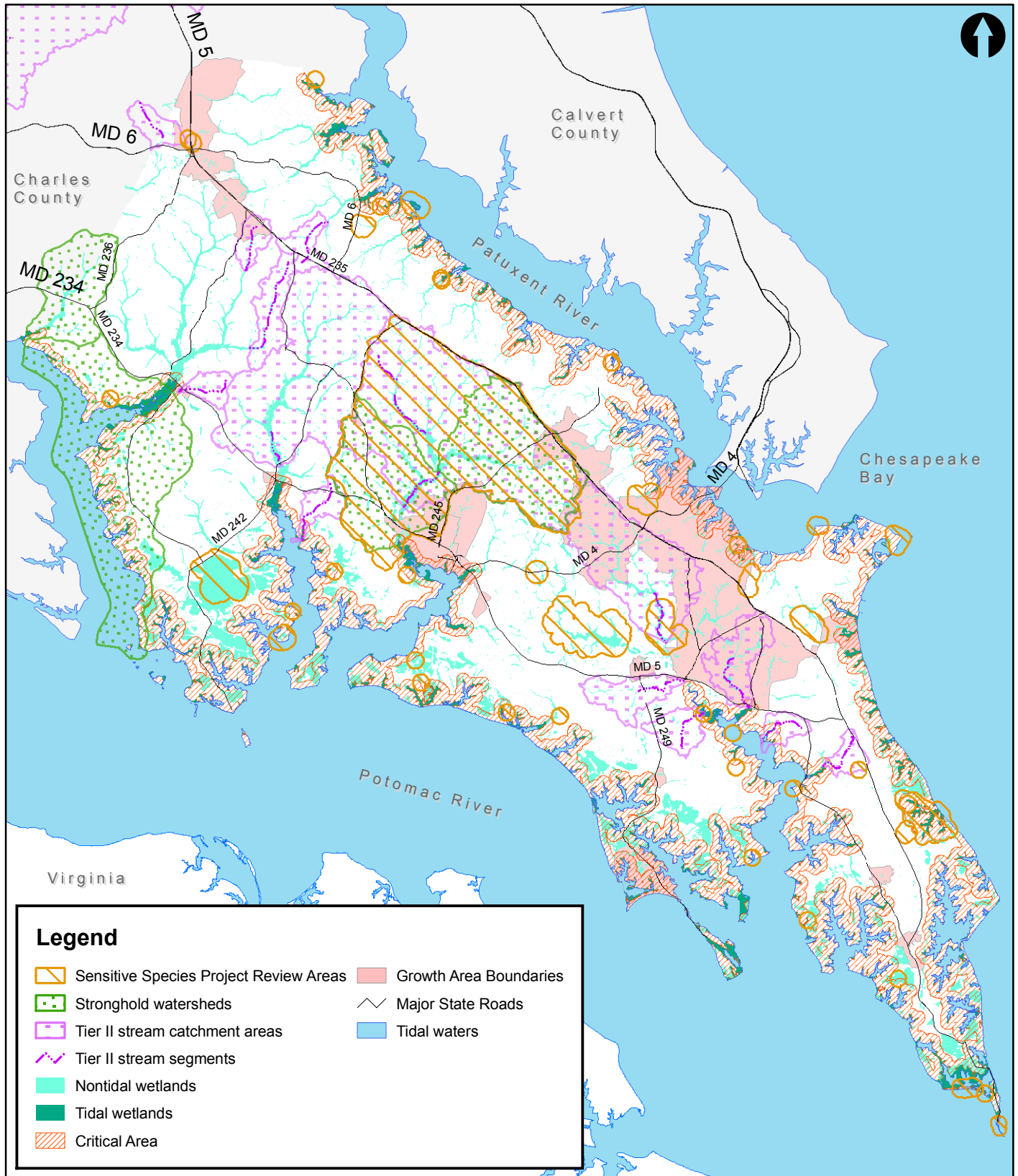
- 1) Improve the water quality of streams by meeting assigned effluent discharge requirements and by identifying and seeking to reduce other sources of pollution.
- 2) Coordinate with State and Federal agencies and to work cooperatively in improving the quality of waters of the State.
- 3) Encourage the wise use of groundwater, and coordinate with State agencies and surrounding jurisdictions on water use issues.
- 4) Assure a dependable supply of water for residential, institutional, commercial, and industrial uses, as well as irrigation, fire suppression, and stream assimilation for present and future generations.
- 5) Correct sanitary and water supply problems in existing problem areas through coordinated planning with County, State, and Federal agencies.

The following general policies will be used to accomplish the stated objectives, and to implement the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan:

- 1) The use of groundwater over other drinking water sources during the planning period will be encouraged; alternative sources may be considered, particularly in areas experiencing groundwater availability and supply problems.
- 2) Land application of wastewater effluent and/or advanced wastewater treatment, where practical and environmentally safe, will be encouraged over traditional point-source treatment and discharge into waters of the County or State.
- 3) Significant stream bodies will be protected by prohibiting future point-source points of sewage effluent into natural drainage basins.
- 4) Conservation of potable water sources will be encouraged through the implementation of water conservation techniques and programs.
- 5) River basin coordination with adjoining jurisdictions and State and Federal agencies will be encouraged.

The reuse of effluent, where practical and environmentally safe, as a method of reducing effluent volume and permitted discharge amounts into waters of the State, will be encouraged to the extent that it is available.

Figure 7.1.b.



# St. Mary's County Areas and Habitats subject to State or Federal regulatory review

0 1 2 3 4 8 Miles

## 7.2 ANALYSIS OF WATER SUPPLY AND SEWER/SEPTIC CAPACITY NEEDS

In 2007, St. Mary's County and the Metropolitan Commission contracted for the services of CH2M-Hill, Inc. to provide a facilities plan and needs assessment for sewer and water capacity in the County. Domestic water supply relies on groundwater withdrawn by both private individual wells and public water systems. Domestic wastewater disposal is via both private Onsite Sewage Disposal System (OSDS) and public sewerage collection and treatment systems. The following table (Figure 7.2) summarizes the water supply and sewer/septic capacity needs through the planning period based on population projections and standards used to project water use per person and effluent generated per household.

**Figure 7.2: Estimates of County population, households, water demand and wastewater generation.**

Estimates	Census 1970	Census 1980	Census 1990	Census 2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030
Population	47,388	59,895	75,974	86,211	96,450	105,400	118,200	130,100	141,150	151,500
Households	12,100	18,791	25,500	30,642	35,050	38,875	44,450	49,350	53,950	58,175
Population Per Household	3.68	3.10	2.87	2.72	2.66	2.62	2.57	2.55	2.53	2.51
Average Household Population	44,537	58,245	73,297	83,429	93,225	101,822	114,363	125,909	136,451	146,220
Millions of Gallons per day (MGD) of domestic water demand @75 gallons per person	3.554	4.492	5.698	6.465	7.234	7.905	8.865	9.758	10.586	11.362
MGD of domestic wastewater @ 250 gallons per household	3.025	4.698	6.375	7.661	8.762	9.719	11.113	12.338	13.488	14.544

Source: CH2M-Hill flow analysis and tables, 2007

## 7.3 WATER SUPPLY ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

For water supply, St. Mary's County is entirely dependent on water withdrawal from aquifers shared by surrounding jurisdictions. The County is served by five aquifers: the Patapsco (Upper and Lower), Aquia, Piney Point, and Magothy. Only the Aquia is available to serve the entire County, whereas the Patapsco, Piney Point, and Magothy are found in limited areas.

Although surface water has not been seriously discussed as an option for the County since the early 1970s, and the 1982 Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan (CWSP) identified potential reservoir sites on McIntosh Run, the St. Mary's River, Killpeck Creek, and Persimmon Creek, no significant measures were put in place until the 2002 Comprehensive Plan removed portions of St. Mary's Lake watershed from the Lexington Park development district. The environmental constraints, and nature of coastal plain soils makes development of additional reservoirs for water supply extremely unlikely and groundwater resources have been and are expected to continue to be the primary source of water for the County for the foreseeable future.

Given the Southern Maryland region's dependence on aquifers for water supply and evidence of significant drawdowns affecting pumping in the more intensely developed areas in Southern Maryland, a study of the aquifers supplying water for the counties in Southern Maryland was conducted from 2002 through 2005 by the Maryland Department of Natural Resource's Resource Assessment Service of the Maryland Geological Survey in cooperation with the Boards of County Commissioners of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties and the United States Department of Interior Geological Survey. In the resulting administrative report, *Water-Supply Potential of the Coastal Plain Aquifers in Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties, Maryland*, with emphasis on the Upper Patapsco and Lower Patapsco Aquifers by David D. Drummond (Drummond Report) the information below excerpted from the report describes the aquifers, the reason for the study and the study conclusions:

The water needs of Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties (referred to in this report as Southern Maryland) are predominantly supplied by five major aquifers. From shallow to deep, these are the Piney Point, Aquia, Magothy, Upper Patapsco, and Lower Patapsco aquifers. Declining water levels and water-quality issues in the Aquia aquifer have prompted water-supply managers to shift a portion of ground-water withdrawals from the Aquia aquifer to the deeper Upper Patapsco and Lower Patapsco aquifers. As of 2002, cones-of-depression have formed in the Aquia aquifer centered at Lexington Park (200 feet below sea level), the Magothy aquifer at Waldorf (90 ft below sea level), the Upper Patapsco aquifer at La Plata (136 ft below sea level), and the Lower Patapsco aquifer at La Plata (200 ft below sea level). Because of these concerns, a study was undertaken to assess the water-supply potential of these aquifers, and to provide water managers with information necessary for long-term planning.

A ground-water flow model was developed that simulates water levels in the five major aquifers in Southern Maryland. The flow model was calibrated using historical pumpage and water levels, and was then used to estimate future water levels through 2030 based on future pumpage scenarios compiled in conjunction with County planning departments.

Projected water demand in Calvert and St. Mary's Counties through 2030 could be met by increased pumpage in the Aquia aquifer (without shifting withdrawals to deeper aquifers) without reducing water levels below the 80-percent management level. Shifting a portion of public-supply withdrawals from the Aquia aquifer to the Upper Patapsco aquifer would result in an increase in available drawdown in the Aquia aquifer in many areas of the counties, with minimal effects on drawdowns in the outcrop area in Charles County.

In St. Mary's County, projected ground-water demand could be met without shifting withdrawals to deeper aquifers (Scenario 1). In this scenario, the deepest simulated head for 2030 is about 248 ft below sea level in the Aquia aquifer at Lexington Park, and the lowest remaining available drawdown is 71 ft at Charlotte Hall. A 20-percent increase in ground-water withdrawals (Scenario 2b) does not cause drawdowns to exceed management levels. Shifting 25 percent of public-supply withdrawals from the Aquia aquifer to the Upper Patapsco aquifer (Scenario 5a) increases remaining available

drawdown at Charlotte Hall to 83 ft, and shifting 50 percent (Scenario 5b) increases remaining available drawdown at Charlotte Hall to 96 ft. Increased withdrawals in the Upper Patapsco aquifer in St. Mary's County in Scenarios 5a and 5b contribute minimally to drawdowns near the outcrop area in Charles County.

The 2005 MGS study utilized the 2002 County Comprehensive Plan in its model as a basis for forecasting future pumpage scenarios and included both residential and non-residential demand. Based on the analysis and the conclusions drawn in the Drummond Report, the County agrees water supply will be sufficient to serve the needs of a growing population through the 2030 planning period. That conclusion is reinforced because this Plan recommends increased water efficiency and system maintenance to eliminate water loss in the system; it also recommends metering of wells to assist in identifying inefficiencies and to drive use reductions. However, based on investigation by the County Water Policy Task Force, the County Commissioners forwarded concerns, observations and requests for action (summarized in priority order below) to the State Water Resources Management Advisory Committee for its consideration and response in order to address concerns about long term water supply for the County and region:

1. Use of the Patapsco Aquifer. The County Commissioners believe that St. Mary's County will reach management levels in the Aquia and Piney Point aquifers not long after the 2030 time frame in the Lexington Park, Leonardtown and Charlotte Hall areas unless the Patapsco aquifer is more extensively used. Heavier reliance on the Patapsco by all municipal and all other major users can provide private well users with more available water from the Aquia and Piney Point; and will halt and may perhaps reverse the water level declines in both that have occurred over the past 60 years. In the Lexington Park area, the St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission started in 2000 to use the Patapsco to relieve stress on the Aquia and to conform to the new allowable Federal arsenic drinking water standards. The leveling of the decline in potentiometric surfaces in test wells and improved water quality indicates the change is having the desired effect.

Accordingly since 2006 the County has required that new or replacement wells be drilled into the Patapsco wherever it is feasible from an engineering standpoint to do so. This requirement applies to all wells installed by the water and sewer authority, the Metropolitan Commission; to all major users; and to new rural subdivisions with 25 units or more that are served by a public water system. Some requests for water appropriation permits can come directly to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) without passing through the County's governmental planning process. Directing an applicant to use a specific aquifer is a State prerogative; but heavier use of the Patapsco is a sound, proactive approach to managing the County's water supplies. The County requested the State Water Resources Management Advisory Committee to confirm support for this proposed requirement, and, where major user appropriations permits come directly to MDE, and to confirm that the County will be afforded an opportunity to comment on the aquifer to be used before the permit is issued.

[Note: The town of Leonardtown shifted its water supply withdrawals from the Aquia to the Upper Patapsco in November 2007. Several new Upper Patapsco wells have been drilled in the Lexington Park area. Water levels in some USGS monitoring wells in the area have shown a small rebound.]

2. Recycled Water and Other Conservation Measures. St. Mary's County needs to do more to conserve water in available aquifers that provide all drinking water, but are also used to water lawns, golf courses, athletic fields, commercial landscaping and to meet industrial operational needs. Use of recycled grey water could significantly reduce the use of valuable potable drinking water for uses for which non-potable water is adequate. Because



new waste water treatment techniques now result in effluent more pure and contaminant-free than many public water sources, the State should consider potential for filtration and reuse of effluent to meet both potable and non-potable water needs. The County is in a position to encourage or require other conservation steps. Consequently, the St. Mary's County Commission on the Environment has been directed to investigate the full range of other water conservation methods and report back on those that offer high payback potential either with or without use of incentives. The County requested the State Water Resources Management Advisory Committee to address restrictions that limit water conservation and reuse options by identifying State and local regulatory changes needed and by initiating legislation necessary to make grey water systems and recycled wastewater both legal and encouraged in Maryland. In keeping with this recommendation, the County will identify areas county-wide where water recirculation and reuse projects may be feasible ( i.e. golf courses, nonpotable domestic, commercial, and industrial uses) to help extend existing water resources.

3. Aquifer Recharge Areas. In all the studies referenced above, little is said about the Aquifer outcrop areas that re-supply the Aquia, Piney Point and Patapsco. It is important to know whether actions and land use changes initiated by neighbors to the north and west are likely to damage, interrupt or pollute the water that flows from there. It could be that other's actions of which the County is unaware could mitigate or invalidate the proactive actions it is proposing here. The State Water Resources Management Advisory Committee was asked to place a priority on investigation of this aspect of the County's water resources and initiate appropriate action if negative impacts appear likely.
4. Management Levels. The State of Maryland needs to clearly define the policy and action that will occur regarding permits and continued withdrawal from aquifers when Management Levels are reached at a withdrawal point in an aquifer. It is currently unclear whether all well drilling permits will cease or whether only those permits for major users extracting greater than 10,000 gallons per day will end. Additionally, the geographic extent where permits will be denied needs to be clearly spelled out, so that the area where drilling is no longer to be permitted is clearly defined. This is needed not only for the benefit of individual owners/developers sewer and water but also for County comprehensive service planning purposes. The State Water Resources Management Advisory Committee was asked to ensure that such clarification is accomplished as soon as possible.
5. Alternate Drinking Water Sources. Despite expanded water conservation and recycling efforts, eventually, the County will be confronted with exploring other sources of water. Desalinization may be a feasible option for the concentrated areas of development found in Lexington Park and Leonardtown. Additionally, the Patuxent Aquifer may offer potential, but has never been investigated. Because local and regional jurisdictions do not have the resources or technical expertise to examine the feasibility of either of these possibilities, the State Water Resources Management Advisory Committee was asked to place a high priority on studying potential for use of desalinization plants and the Patuxent Aquifer in Southern Maryland.
6. Private Well Usage Data. In this County, private domestic wells account for an estimated 30-50 percent of all the water consumed. Currently, there is no definitive data on daily consumption from these wells, yet assumptions about consumption were included in the studies that predict adequate water supply for the region through 2030. The County strongly believes statistically valid analysis of water withdrawal rates from private domestic wells is needed. A private well usage initiative should be undertaken so that hard data is accumulated and available. The County has committed an initial funding

amount \$30,000 to initiate such a study, but needs participation by the Maryland Geological Service to perform the work. The State Water Resources Management Advisory Committee was asked to support a study of water withdrawal rates from private domestic wells and, if significant differences between the findings and the assumptions used in the water supply reports exist, that appropriate reevaluation of the water supply reports be initiated.

7. Observation Well Monitoring. Well monitoring provides essential data for use in future forecasting. Monitoring, in the spring and fall as a minimum, is essential and funding must be provided to continue the monitoring. The County requested the State Water Resources Management Advisory Committee to pursue adequate funding so that this crucial data collection effort is not jeopardized.

There are relatively few problems with water quality in the County. Three areas, Fenwick Manor and Holland Forest developments and portions of Hollywood, had natural arsenic levels in excess of 10 parts per billion. These problem areas have been addressed by plans to connect affected properties and future development to new deep wells or to the Lexington Park water system.

Problems for individual properties associated with loss of water due to the cone of depression in the vicinity of high concentrations of wells or wells with high withdrawal rates and the inability to lower pumps in older wells have been addressed both by shifting to deeper aquifers for larger water withdrawals and individuals drilling new wells meeting current standards to reach the water.

This Comprehensive Plan shows changes to the Mechanicsville Town Center from its configuration in the 2002 Comprehensive Plan. It removes undeveloped, significantly constrained and sensitive areas. It also recognizes that many of the village centers in addition to the New Market and Mechanicsville Town Centers have significant environmental constraints that limit development potential, and that their small sizes limit the economic feasibility of providing efficient water and sewer infrastructure. Growth in these areas will be dependent on private or community wells and private or shared septic systems. The presence of constraints means that development density will be far less than allowed by zoning, which will result in less overall demand for water supply and reduce the need for construction of water supply infrastructure, particularly in the northern end of the County where an extensive water supply network is currently unavailable. In addition, because of concerns over the long term water supply beyond the 2030 planning horizon, the County has included expanded goals and objectives to further reduce demand via increased water conservation, to shift toward water treatment and supply toward increased reuse of treated effluent, and to promote utilization of residential grey water for nonpotable water uses.

#### **7.4 WATER QUALITY AND SUPPLY GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES, ACTIONS AND MEASURES FOR SUCCESS**

7.4.1 **Goal:** Assure an adequate, safe, and efficient water supply.

A. **Objective:** Protect and manage ground water supplies.

i. **Policy:** Protect and manage groundwater resources to maintain a safe and adequate water supply.

a. **Action:** Establish and enforce land use controls, site development standards, development regulations, stormwater management regulations, and erosion and sediment control regulations that control both the quantity and quality of runoff from developed areas

to maintain or improve the quality of runoff and groundwater entering the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries.

- b. *Action:* Work with State and regional agencies to protect aquifer recharge areas.
- c. *Action:* Support Statewide policies that protect groundwater recharge areas from contamination and from increases in imperviousness that might limit replenishment of the supply.
- d. *Action:* Establish requirements for abandonment of wells that are not being used.

**B. Objective:** Manage groundwater withdrawals.

- i. *Policy:* Require that new wells be directed to aquifers in a manner that meets the needs and protects existing development from adverse impacts of significant increases in withdrawal amounts and rates.
  - a. *Action:* Monitor groundwater withdrawal rates and aquifer depth to assure adequate levels of service for both public and private systems and wells.
  - b. *Action:* Continue to enforce requirement that community water systems be provided for developments of more than 25 units to avoid negative impacts of concentrating individual wells in rural areas, expressed as number of dwelling units or businesses located within a certain distance of each other.
  - c. *Action:* Evaluate and implement recommendations of the County's Water Policy Task Force for programs to encourage and facilitate water conservation, reclamation and recycling as means to reduce groundwater withdrawal rates, to protect private wells located in the upper aquifers from cones of depression caused by large public well withdrawals, to provide water supply for non-potable water uses to reclaimed water sources.

7.4.2 **Goal:** Provide infrastructure to meet the service needs in growth areas to ensure adequate capacity to provide an acceptable level of service for existing and proposed land uses, and to address adequate facilities and services outside the growth areas.

**A. Objective:** Provide planned water service.

- i. *Policy:* Provide phased distribution system matched to growth in the County.
  - a. *Action:* Provide central water supply systems in the development districts and town centers. Within the service area, require connection of all structures with plumbing that are located 200 feet or less from any distribution line.
  - b. *Action:* Upgrade community water systems as needed to meet appropriate standards (including fire protection) and to keep pace with increasing capacity needs.
- ii. *Policy:* Provide central water systems to serve expanding populations in existing village centers, neighborhood conservation districts, and areas meeting development thresholds.

- a. *Action:* Provide central water systems to areas with failing wells in village centers, neighborhood conservation districts, and areas meeting development thresholds.
- iii. *Policy:* Require shared wells as defined in the CWSP to be supervised or operated by the St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission (MetCom). Require dedication of all new central water systems to MetCom for ownership, operation, and maintenance in accordance with MetCom standards and specifications.

## **7.5 GROUNDWATER CONSERVATION AND ALTERNATIVE WATER SOURCES**

7.5.1 **Goal:** Meet long term water supply needs.

A. **Objective:** Protect the water supply.

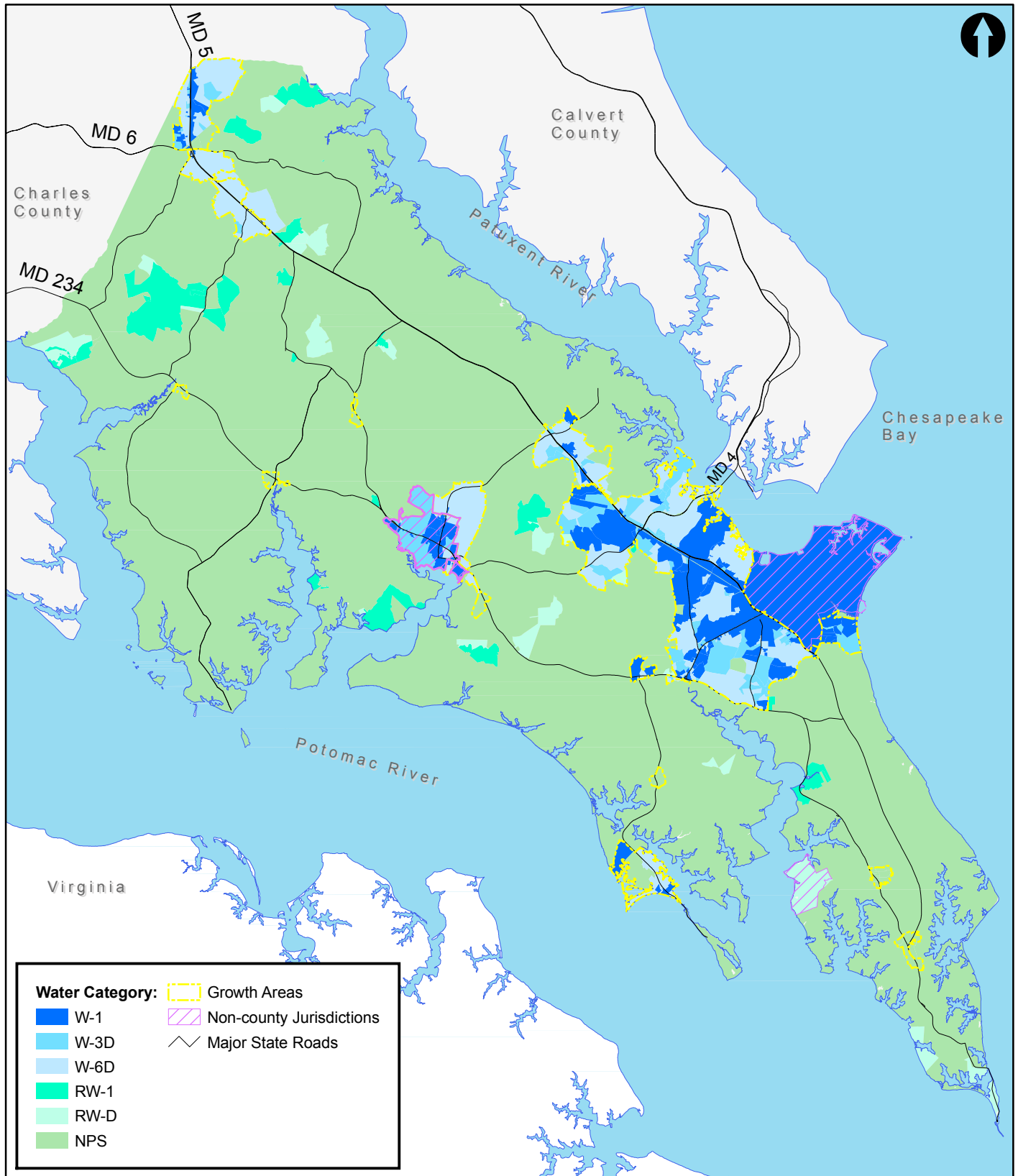
- i. *Policy:* Participate with Tri-County Council to study aquifers in the region.
- ii. *Policy:* The County continues efforts to significantly reduce development in rural areas.
- iii. *Policy:* Maintain an aggressive water conservation program.
- iv. *Policy:* Require abandoned wells to be capped.
- v. *Policy:* Monitor and address water quality issues related to naturally occurring arsenic in the Piney Point and Aquia aquifers, contamination from polluted sites, and implement measures necessary to meet current arsenic standards.
- vi. *Policy:* Do not extend or provide public water service into areas mapped for No Planned Service.

B. **Objective:** Conserve groundwater and identify alternatives to groundwater sources.

- i. *Policy:* Develop a detailed water conservation plan for the County to be incorporated into the next update of the Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan.
- ii. *Policy:* Develop and encourage alternative use of groundwater withdrawal to meet long term water supply needs. Although current groundwater supplies appear adequate, and current environmental regulatory restrictions make development of new surface water supplies unlikely, it is in the long range interest of the County to protect areas identified as potential surface water impoundment areas in the CWSP.
  - a. Establish and enforce land use policies to protect potential impoundment sites from adverse impacts of development on water quality and on the ability to construct the impoundment area.
  - b. Protect existing surface waters from contamination by toxic chemicals, heavy metals, pesticides, and human and animal waste. Implement clean up programs where necessary.
- iii. *Policy:* Support public educational programs on water conservation practices.
- iv. *Policy:* Expand water reuse and recycling in the County.

- a. Continue and expand use of treated effluent for irrigation and industrial uses and work with MDE to limit permits for withdrawal of potable water for industrial uses and for irrigation.
  - b. Adopt plumbing code provisions for installation of residential and commercial grey water systems and develop a training program for plumbers on system design and installation.
  - c. Work with community developers to provide residential grey water systems for flushing toilets and irrigation.
  - d. Promote use of rain barrels and cisterns as a water source to meet water needs for residential and commercial landscaping.
  - v. **Policy:** Conduct a pilot project to investigate use of treated effluent for drinking water supply.
  - vi. **Policy:** In partnership with the other Southern Maryland counties, investigate the potential for use of desalinization technology using the waste energy from the Calvert Cliffs Nuclear Power plant.
- C. **Objective:** Facilitate proactive management of permits and review of water appropriations to ensure that permitted allocations are adequate to meet water demands.
- i. **Policy:** Develop and implement Water Supply Capacity Management Plans for each water system.

Figure 7.4 Water Service Area Map

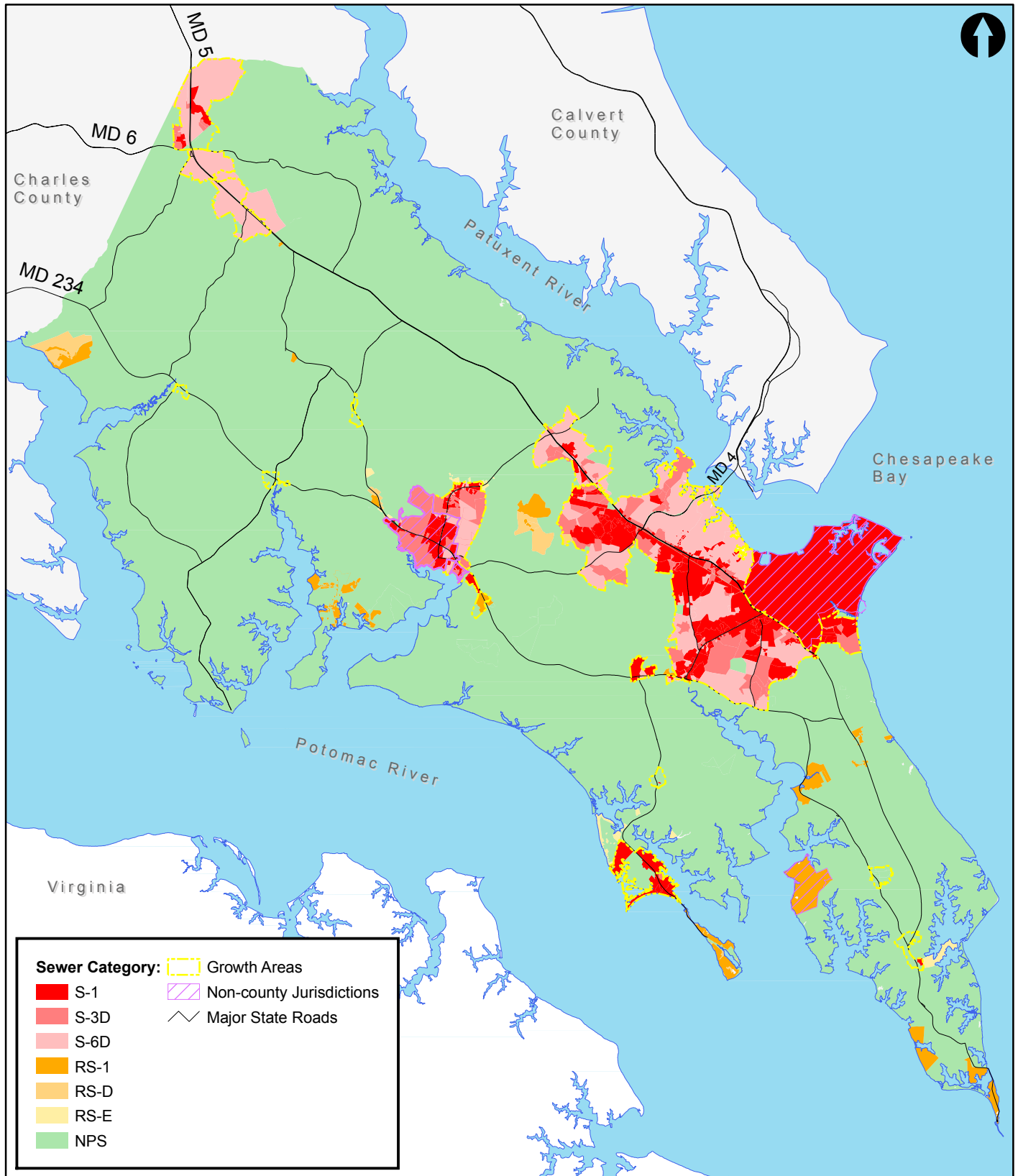


# St. Mary's County Water Service Areas

Note:  
An update of the CWSP will be necessary to coordinate planned service areas with the approved Comprehensive Plan Growth Area Boundaries

0 1 2 3 4 8 Miles

Figure 7.5 Sewer Service Area Map



# St. Mary's County Sewer Service Areas

Note:  
An update of the CWSP will be necessary to coordinate planned service areas with the approved Comprehensive Plan Growth Area Boundaries



## **7.6 WASTEWATER ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING**

There are four principal public wastewater treatment plants in the County: 1) the Leonardtown wastewater treatment plant that serves the Leonardtown Development District and the Town of Leonardtown that discharges into Breton Bay; 2) the Marlay-Taylor water reclamation facility that serves the Lexington Park Development District, the Piney Point Town Center, St. George's Island, St. Mary' College, the Hollywood Town Center and certain areas of failed septic systems, and that discharges into Pine Hill Run, a small tidal tributary that discharges directly into the Chesapeake Bay; 3) St. Clement's Shores and 4) Wicomico Shores that serve these neighborhood conservation districts and discharge effluent land application within the Breton Bay and Wicomico River watersheds respectively. There are several small package plants, including one operated by Maryland Environmental Services at Point Lookout State Park, discharging into Lake Canoy at tidal embayment or that discharges directly into the Potomac River. Another example is the plant serving the navy and coast guard stations at Webster Field, which discharges into the St. Mary's River.

In 1980 St. Mary's County and the Town of Leonardtown entered into an interjurisdictional agreement for sharing the capacity of the Leonardtown WWTP, but the threshold for sharing has been exceeded, which means there is no plant capacity available to serve growth within the Leonardtown Development District. As a result, growth in the development district must rely on septic systems. The County and Town are working cooperatively to identify the quantity of additional capacity needed and the plant upgrades that would be necessary to maintain the nitrogen and phosphorous loads entering Breton Bay. It is anticipated that any future upgrade of the plant will need to utilize land application for disposal of the additional effluent resulting from increases in plant capacity.

To achieve Maryland's water quality standards for the Chesapeake Bay, the State of Maryland has developed a strategy for point sources as part of the Tributary Strategy Statewide Implementation Plan (a.k.a., "Point Source Strategy"). The Point Source Strategy is a two-part plan to: (1) upgrade significant wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs) to state of the art enhanced nutrient removal (ENR) technology to meet permit loading limits based on concentrations of 4.0 mg/l or less total nitrogen and 0.3 mg/l or less total phosphorus and (2) maintain the nutrient load caps for all point sources. New dischargers and existing dischargers of any size that want to grow beyond their Tributary Strategy nutrient loading caps can do so through several mechanisms: optimizing treatment options; acquiring equivalent point source discharge credits from other dischargers; upgrading minor facilities to Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) or ENR levels; retiring an existing minor WWTP after connecting its flow to BNR or ENR facility; retiring existing OSDs by connecting them to ENR facility or other facility that will provide a net nutrient reduction; land application of wastewater with pre-treatment and nutrient management controls; and acquiring nonpoint source discharge credits. Rules governing the creation and exchange of credits for nonpoint sources will be developed in Phase II of Maryland's cap management approach.

In rural areas onsite septic disposal systems (OSDS) are the principal means of sewage disposal. Septic systems have numerous benefits including ground water recharge, eliminating point discharges, they require less infrastructure, maintenance, and provide for a long term solution for rural sewage disposal that protects citizen health as long as there are adequate back up fields. They also have significant disadvantages including the need for maintenance (often neglected by owners), significant cost to owners for replacing a failed traditional system (\$5,000 to \$15,000, often without warning) and most significantly for environmental purposes they don't prevent nitrogen from reaching ground water—producing about 9.5 lbs of nitrogen per person per



year. Alternative systems that reduce nitrogen in the effluent can overcome these disadvantages but are not widely used and although there is funding to assist in the installation systems few residents have availed themselves of the program — at the close of 2009 fewer than 20 had been installed in the County. The requirements for attaining approval for a septic disposal area have provided a significant check on rural development, as well as for towns and villages that have no public sewer provided.

7.6.1 **Goal:** Provide infrastructure to meet service needs in growth areas, ensure adequate capacity to accommodate concentrated development in growth areas and to address adequate facilities and services outside the growth areas.

- A. **Objective:** Implement a comprehensive program for sewerage disposal that supports the land use concept for the County.
- i. **Policy:** Ensure the safe and environmentally sound collection and disposal of wastewater and polluted stormwater generated in St. Mary’s County.
  - ii. **Policy:** Protect ground water and surface water resources from pollution associated with sewage treatment facilities and septic systems.
    - a. **Action:** Reduce nutrient pollution through installation of Enhanced Nutrient Pollution technologies at waste water treatment facilities.
    - b. **Action:** Identify and require correction of malfunctioning septic systems.
    - c. **Action:** Require use of Best Management Practices and innovative technologies to intercept and filter pollutants from stormwater and to discharge the cleaned water principally via structures designed to infiltrate the effluent into groundwater in order to maintain natural flow and hydrology of nearby streams and wetlands.
- B. **Objective:** Properly dispose of wastewater and take actions to reduce the pollutants in waste water.
- i. **Policy:** Implement the CWSP through preparation and adoption of such ordinances, rules and regulations as may be necessary.
    - a. **Action:** Assure public ownership of all community water and sewerage systems.
    - b. **Action:** Require all sewage collection systems be designed and constructed to St. Mary's County Standard Specification for Water and Sewerage Construction.
    - c. **Action:** Evaluate a balance between assigned equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs) and actual effluent quantities (flow).
  - ii. **Policy:** Reduce existing and potential pollution, and achieve State water quality standards.
    - a. **Action:** Conduct watershed studies to verify water quality, to identify sources of pollution and causes for water quality problems and determine actions necessary to correct identified problems.
      - i) Inform citizens about pollution problems and solicit advice and cooperation from the public to address the problems.

- ii) Identify funding resources to correct existing problems. Fairly assess costs for correcting problems to parties responsible for causing water quality problems.
  - b. *Action:* Assure that water resources are carefully managed by responsible agencies.
  - c. *Action:* Discharge treated effluent only through outfalls in the Chesapeake Bay or Potomac River or through approved methods for land application. Prohibit long term discharges into other water bodies.
  - d. *Action:* Assure that County government programs conform to the goals of the CWSP.
- iii. ***Policy:*** Guide development to areas where water and sewerage systems exist or may be installed both economically and in conformance with the Land Use Plan.
  - a. *Action:* Provide planned sewerage service and extend new sewerage service in a deliberate and orderly manner to planned growth areas. Provide central sewage collection systems in the development districts. As collection systems are extended into service areas, require connection of all structures with plumbing within the service area when the structure is located within 200 feet of any collection line. Properties that abut or are crossed by a collection line or by a sewer service easement shall be assessed a benefit service charge whether or not the structures on the property are required to connect to the collection line.
  - b. *Action:* Direct sewerage service as needed to remedy the failure of existing septic systems where no feasible alternative exists. Avoid discharge of treated wastewater into local waters. Do not extend new sewerage service to rural areas unless it corrects an existing health hazard or environmental threat.
    - i) Public sewerage service extended to correct an existing health hazard or environmental threat shall not be used to intensify development in rural areas or neighborhood conservation districts outside growth areas.
    - ii) Small local land-treatment systems are the preferred means of providing sewerage service to such areas.
  - c. *Action:* Ensure that all interceptors are sized to meet the needs of the planned growth of the drainage area or sanitary district in which the projects are located.
  - d. *Action:* Consider recommendations of the Metropolitan Commission Task Force that was appointed in 2009.
- iv. ***Policy:*** Adhere to the nutrient cap established for County wastewater treatment facilities so that the total amount of nitrogen and phosphorous pollution that is permitted to be discharged in wastewater effluent by treatment plants and land application plants is not exceeded regardless of the increases in numbers of gallons per day discharged and of the number of persons served by wastewater treatment systems in the County.

- a. *Action:* Upgrade wastewater treatment plants to enhanced nutrient removal technology to achieve 3 mg/l discharge rates for all plants, and cap new allocations for discharge to facilities as necessary hold the total discharge to the cap set in the Maryland Tributary Strategy for Point Sources.
  - b. *Action:* Identify and pursue implementation of innovative technologies and methods that can allow increased sewer allocations without exceeding Nutrient Cap for treatment facilities. Considerations for meeting the Cap should include reuse of effluent for potable supply, direct recharge of aquifer or storage in surface impoundment, bioremediation of effluent via grey water use for landscape and industrial needs.
- C. **Objective:** Limit impacts of onsite septic disposal systems (OSDS).
- i. **Policy:** Encourage use of land application community sewer systems, where feasible (i.e., spray irrigation, drip underground irrigation, etc.).
  - ii. **Policy:** For all new septic systems, requiring two back-up fields. Limit or prevent expansion of structures served by an OSDS that cannot meet this requirement.
  - iii. **Policy:** Develop a program to educate OSDS owners about necessary system maintenance, including routine pump out, of septic systems and provide incentives and/or requirements to perform maintenance.
  - iv. **Policy:** Promote use of approved alternative septic system technologies to: retrofit existing systems to reduce risk of failure; to correct system failures where connection to central collection systems are not feasible; to allow expansion of existing structures where use of a conventional septic system is not feasible; and to minimize environmental impacts wherever conventional systems are currently feasible.
    - a. *Action:* In minor subdivisions developments within the RPD where shared septic easement use is proposed, require clustering when such clustering may improve system performance, reduce impacts from clearing and land disturbing activities and allow more efficient use of the land.
    - b. *Action:* In targeted areas, require all new and replacement septic systems to be nitrogen removing septic systems.
    - c. *Action:* Require retrofits to correct failing septic systems to be nitrogen removing septic systems.
    - d. *Action:* Assist and direct citizen to make use of the State grants available for installation of nitrogen removing septic systems.
- D. **Objective:** Ensure that marine pump-out facilities are available at all existing and future marinas.

## 7.7 STORMWATER ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING

Pollutants in stormwater discharges from many sources are largely uncontrolled. The *National Water Quality Inventory, 1990 Report* to Congress provides a general assessment of water quality based on biennial reports submitted by the States under Section 305(b) of the CWA. This report indicates that roughly 30% of identified cases of water quality impairment are

attributable to stormwater discharges. During rain events that produce runoff, numerous pollutants including sediment, nutrients, bacteria, oil, metals, and pesticides are washed into storm sewer systems from diffuse sources such as construction sites, residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, parking lots, roads, and industrial facilities. Additionally, illegal dumping, sanitary sewer system leaks, and illicit connections to storm sewer systems can be significant sources of pollutants. Some of the more serious effects to receiving waters are the contamination of drinking water supplies, restrictions on water contact recreation, loss of wildlife habitat, decreases in the number and variety of aquatic organisms, and fish kills.

**Suitability of Receiving Waters.** The St. Mary's River, Breton Bay and the Patuxent River (via smaller creeks) are the primary receiving waters for runoff from the two development districts and Hollywood and Piney Point Town centers. All of these water bodies have identified impairments associated excess nutrients and sediment. It appears anecdotally that many of the individual catchment areas have impairments associated with erosion of legacy sediments and periodically from failures of erosion and sediment control or stormwater structures within individual development sites. Retrofit sites have been identified for a number of unmanaged or inadequately managed sites in the development districts.

In order to reduce, and ultimately to eliminate impairments associated with poor water quality and excess quantity entering receiving waters, management of runoff from new development will need to achieve full control and/or provide mitigation for sediment and erosion control during construction and stormwater runoff from completed developments. At the same time the County will need to step up monitoring and enforcement to improve stormwater quality and reduce quantities leaving existing development sites with stormwater management facilities, improve land management practices in some cases implement retrofit projects. Where existing development is without stormwater management implementation of regional retrofits may be necessary in addition to improving land management practices.

**Construction Site Stormwater Runoff Control.** The Maryland Environment Article, Title 4, Subtitle 1, Annotated Code of Maryland establishes a statewide erosion and sediment control program to control construction site stormwater runoff. This statute, coupled with the Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR), specifies the requirements for any construction activity that disturbs five thousand (5,000) square feet or more of earth. Because Maryland has an erosion and sediment control program in place that regulates more earth disturbing activities than by the NPDES stormwater program, MDE considers compliance with the State statute to be compliance with this minimum control measure, this general permit, and CFR.

COMAR contains procedures for approving proposed construction drawings and erosion and sediment control plans prior to the start of any development or local permit issuance. State regulations also define erosion and sediment control plan review and enforcement responsibilities. Typically, erosion and sediment control plans are reviewed and approved by local Soil Conservation Districts (SCD) for private projects and by MDE for State and Federal construction projects. Enforcement of approved erosion and sediment control plans statewide is MDE's responsibility unless MDE has delegated its enforcement authority to a County or municipality. St. Mary's County does not have "delegated" authority for inspection and enforcement of stormwater management and for sediment and erosion control and relies on Maryland Department of the Environment for inspection and enforcement of these regulations.

According to COMAR, to be delegated erosion and sediment control enforcement authority, a locality must have an ordinance or set of regulations in place approved by MDE, inspection and enforcement procedures to ensure proper erosion and sediment control implementation and maintenance, and sufficient field staff to inspect active construction projects. MDE reviews the field performance of erosion and sediment control field staff to help judge

whether enforcement authority should be delegated. This erosion and sediment control program review occurs when a County or municipality applies for delegation of enforcement authority. Additionally, the maximum length of delegation is two years.

Permittees shall comply with all State and local laws, regulations, ordinances, and procedures relating to erosion and sediment control. Additionally, permittees may seek delegation of enforcement authority from MDE, rely on another delegated authority provided that entity accepts responsibility, or have MDE enforce erosion and sediment control requirements within their jurisdictional boundaries. Permittees shall clearly state how this minimum control measure will be implemented in the NOI submitted to MDE according to PART II of the general permit.

7.7.1 **GOAL:** Maintain after development, as nearly as possible, the predevelopment runoff characteristics in order to reduce stream channel erosion, pollution, siltation and sedimentation, and local flooding.

A. **Objective:** Implement environmental site design (ESD) to the maximum extent practicable using appropriate structural best management practices only when necessary.

- i. **Policy:** Require all new development sites to utilize environmental site design (ESD) to minimize landscape alteration that uses small-scale stormwater management practices, nonstructural techniques, and better site planning to mimic natural hydrologic runoff characteristics and minimize the impact of land development on water resources.
- ii. **Policy:** As the principal means of managing stormwater generated onsite, require plans for new development to include a comprehensive stormwater management system with natural areas, ESD approved by MDE and other elements designed to reduce impacts. Structural conveyance systems and impoundments to collect stormwater and surface discharge of stormwater to locations off site shall be minimized.
  - a. **Action:** Adopt and implement regulations to assure that new and redeveloped sites are developed in accordance with ESD principles and State stormwater management regulations.
  - b. **Action:** Seek and provide training for consultants, builders, applicants and review staff to facilitate design, review and approval and implementation of ESD in development projects.

B. **Objective:** Assure compliance with and implementation of approved plans for sediment and erosion control during development.

- i. **Policy:** Assure that the cost of inspection and enforcement are borne by the applicant and when violations occur assure that the violation and corrective actions are performed and that the full cost of bringing violations into compliance including restoration and clean up is assessed to the violator.

C. **Objective:** Establish a storm water utility as part of the NPDES program to provide funding for corrective actions necessary to address needed stormwater retrofits in areas where stormwater management is currently absent.

## 7.8 DISCUSSION, POLICIES AND ACTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TRIBUTARY STRATEGIES FOR THE LOWER POTOMAC AND THE PATUXENT WATERSHEDS

**Background.** The Chesapeake 2000 Agreement outlines 93 commitments detailing protection and restoration goals critical to the health of the Bay watershed. The agreement

addresses goals in five major categories: living resources; vital habitats; water quality; sound land use; and stewardship and community engagement. The agreement calls for water quality goals based on scientifically determined requirements to restore the Bay's living resources, and lays out a framework for restoration efforts to be reached by 2010, and then maintained. The Chesapeake Bay Program, EPA and the States, used a computer model to create the pollution budget for the entire Bay Watershed. The budgeted pollution was assigned to States and subdivided to watersheds. This allowable amount is called the nutrient allocation. The nutrient allocation for the Bay is compared to the TMDL to meet local water quality standards. The more stringent of the two is then applied. The Tributary Strategies are implementation plans to meet the more stringent allocation determined for the Bay, as well as the pollution budget for both the Bay and local waters. If the local TMDL is more stringent, then additional best management practices will apply to that watershed.

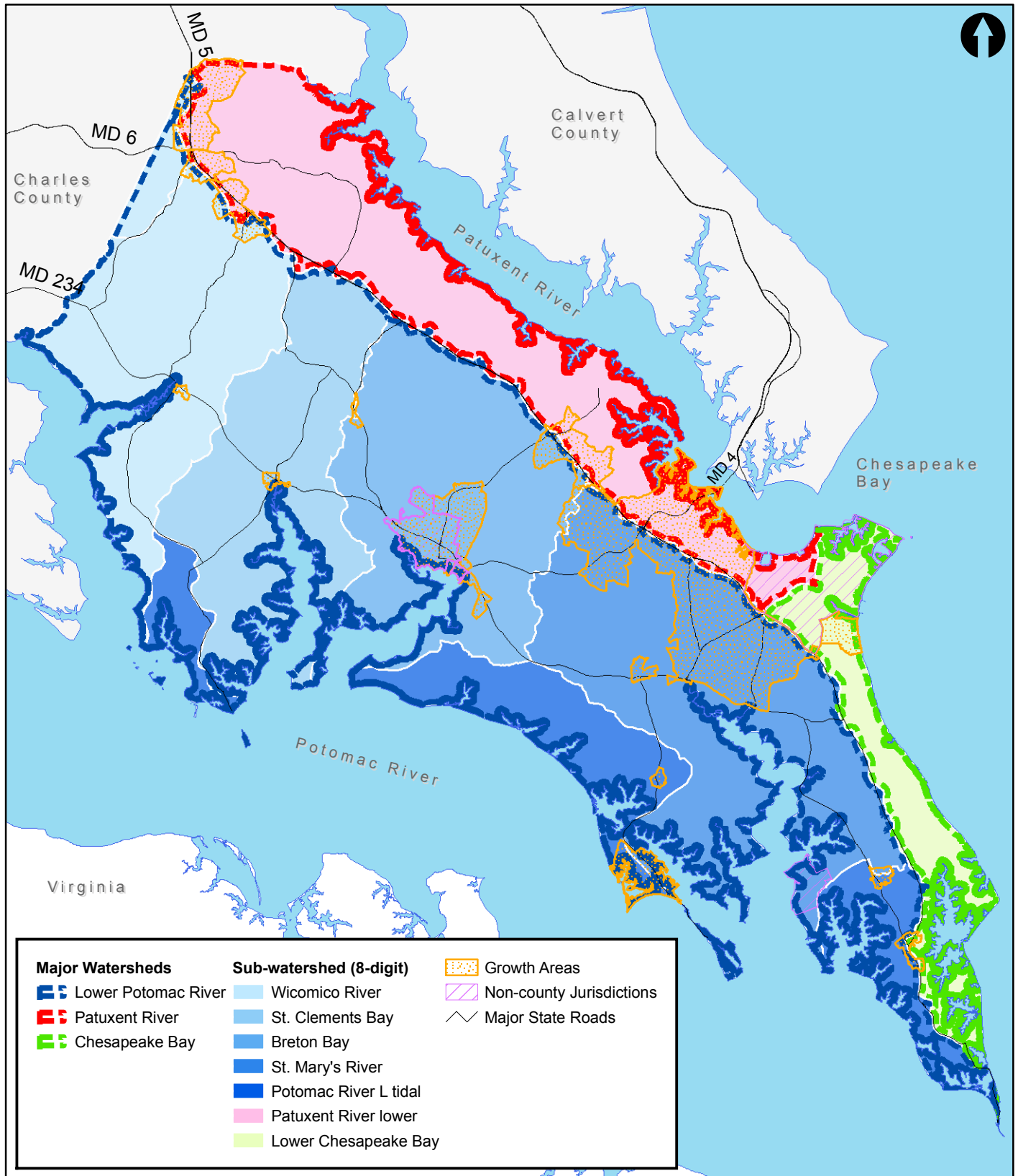
The Bay-wide annual nutrient loading goals are 175 million pounds of nitrogen and 12.8 million pounds of phosphorous. Maryland's portion is 37.25 million lbs for nitrogen and 2.92 million lbs for phosphorous. Achieving these goals will require more than a 50% reduction of 1985 harmful nutrient run-off levels from all sources. Specific sediment reduction goals were not set at that time; however significant reductions in sediment laden run-off will be achieved as the strategy is implemented.

The state-wide Tributary Strategy is intended to achieve and maintain Maryland's nutrient reduction goals. These goals are also caps, meaning once Maryland and other States achieve the necessary reductions, they must maintain that level in order to sustain improved water quality in the Bay.

Based on the loads assigned to each of 10 tributary basins, a specific strategy for each tributary segment was developed with extensive input from the Tributary Teams, local governments, scientists, and various stakeholder and citizen groups. Each strategy is tailored to the individual needs and characteristics of each local tributary.

The process used to develop the strategies provided the opportunity to comprehensively identify actions needed to achieve the nutrient reduction goals. As a result of this comprehensive process and in consideration of other commitments in the Chesapeake 2000 Agreement, the strategy also addresses such important issues such as habitat restoration, erosion control, growth management, agricultural land preservation and the protection of public water supply. Each strategy was developed via an extensive public process to identify options to be included and the strategy implementation process. The strategy was then refined based on public input, scientific data, and local and State policies, laws and implementation issues. The resulting final strategies call for actions above and beyond many existing local and State policies, laws and budgets. The Strategies identify an incredible magnitude of actions needed to bring the Bay back into balance and recognizes that ultimate success relies on everyone in the watershed showing the collective social and political will to put these plans into practice and do what is needed to bring back the Bay.

Figure 7.8. County Watersheds



# St. Mary's County Watershed boundaries



**Developing a Local Tributary Strategy.** St. Mary's County is responsible for a portion of the loads assigned to the Lower Potomac Tributary Basin and to the Patuxent River Tributary Basin. The basin specific Tributary Strategies detail the magnitude of the problem, attributes the pollution to its various sources and identifies the best management practices needed to remove the Bay from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) list of impaired waters. Basin wide strategies must be further refined for implementation appropriate in this County. Refining the local strategy will require the County, in cooperation with the Tributary Strategy Teams, to identify specific actions or practices to achieve measurable reductions in nutrients and sediment entering local waterways feeding to the Bay. This includes some established practices currently being implemented, as well as emerging practices with reduction efficiencies based on preliminary scientific study. Local progress must be evaluated regularly and new programmatic, policy and fiscal measures suggested, to ensure that the County contributes to Maryland's progress toward removing the Bay and the Tributaries from the impaired waters lists.

The Statewide Tributary Strategy identify State actions and also note the "gap" in meeting the Bay water quality and habitat goals that will have to be addressed at the local level. The State strategy recognizes that each jurisdiction will need to tackle nutrient and sediment pollution in the most efficient way possible for that part of the Bay watershed and that there is no "one-size-fits-all" strategy for the entire Bay watershed. Each tributary-specific strategy (and each jurisdiction's local strategy within the basin strategy) must be designed to address the unique land-use characteristics of that watershed. Pollution reduction actions needed in rural watersheds, for example, vary greatly from those needed in more urban areas. Regardless of the type of watershed, however, every strategy is based on a specific nitrogen, phosphorus and sediment allocation.

Many rural Tributary Strategies rely heavily on working with farmers to reduce the amount of nutrients and sediment flowing from cropland and pasture. Bay wide, about 42 percent of annual nitrogen loads comes from agriculture. Many strategies reduce pollutant loads by relying on a few key "best management practices" (BMPs) that may include:

1. Cover Crops reduce erosion and the leaching of nutrients to groundwater by maintaining a vegetative cover on cropland. This practice involves seeding cereal crops into recently harvested cropland with little disturbance of the surface soil. As they grow, the new crops capture or "trap" nitrogen and prevent it from reaching local streams and the Bay.
2. Enhanced Nutrient Management or "Yield Reserve" is a reduction in nitrogen applied to cropland beyond the nutrient management recommendation. Based on research, the nutrient management rates of nitrogen application are set approximately 35 percent higher than what a crop needs to ensure nitrogen availability under optimal growing conditions. In a yield reserve program, the farmer would reduce the nitrogen application by 15 percent. An incentive or crop insurance is used to cover the farmer's risk of yield loss.
3. Conservation Tillage involves planting and growing crops with minimal disturbance of the surface soil. This practice reduces nutrient and sediment runoff by leaving residue from the previous crop on the land and minimizing erosion.
4. Forest or Riparian Buffers are wooded areas along rivers, streams and shorelines that help filter nutrients, sediments and other pollutants from runoff. In some areas of the Bay watershed, buffers can reduce nutrient and sediment pollution by 70 percent.

Reducing pollution from urban areas is equally critical to restoring the Bay. Tributary Strategies will call on many municipalities to upgrade sewage treatment plants to reduce the amount of nitrogen reaching local waters. Bay wide, sewage treatment plants contribute 19



percent of the total nitrogen flowing into the Bay each year. Additionally, urban areas that contain a large amount of impervious land – where water cannot be naturally filtered by penetrating into the ground – storm water management techniques will aim to reduce pollutants carried by storm drains into local streams. Urban management practices can include:

1. Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) uses new technologies to further reduce the amount of nutrients flowing from sewage treatment plants, which can result in rapid improvements in local water quality.
2. Low-impact Development Practices (LID) include a variety of techniques including rain gardens, rain barrels, roof gardens and down spout (gutter) disconnects. These practices improve water quality in local streams and the Bay by filtering pollutants into natural areas and minimizing erosion and storm water flow.
3. Erosion and Sediment Control Practices, such as silt fences, protect local streams from sediment pollution and increases in runoff associated with land development activities. By retaining soil on-site, sediment and attached nutrients are prevented from leaving disturbed areas and polluting streams.
4. Septic System Upgrades will reduce the amount of nitrogen flowing into the Bay. By retrofitting or replacing traditional septic systems with more advanced denitrification systems – or connecting existing septic systems to a wastewater treatment plant – annual nitrogen loads to the Bay can be decreased.

**Development of the Local Strategies.** This Comprehensive Plan directs active participation by the County in the development of the basin specific strategies using the established State program and process. As that process moves forward in 2009 and 2010, the strategies developed for St Mary’s County are proposed to be developed on a 12- digit subwatershed basin level to facilitate coordination with the NPDES permit. The local strategies will be a mix of both urban and rural strategies depending on the mix and character of the land uses within those subwatersheds. Key priorities for the County in development and implementation of local strategies will be long term protection of water quality with minimal maintenance of practices, fair assignment of the costs for implementation to those responsible for the pollution, and assuring that public funds expended achieve not only the nutrient and sediment goals but other comprehensive Plan goals for habitat protection and restoration, land conservation, and meeting community needs. Finally the strategies need to detail what funding initiatives are needed, what policies must be implemented and what technologies need to be developed to expedite Bay restoration and the Plan must be flexible so that as technology improves, new innovations can be incorporated into the existing plans, allowing Bay Program partners to find new ways to reduce collective impact on the Bay.

7.8.1 **Goal:** Achieve the nutrient and sediment reductions goals and the water quality and habitat restoration goals established for the Chesapeake Bay, Patuxent and Potomac River basins in the Statewide Tributary Plan necessary to remove the Bay and its tributaries from EPA’s 303(d) list of impaired waters.

A. **Objective:** Develop and implement a local Tributary Strategy Action Plan specific to the County portions of the Lower Potomac and of the Lower Potomac watershed.

i. **Policy:** Coordinate the strategy development and implementation with existing Federal, State, local, and volunteer programs to address the goals of the statewide strategy as well as goals of this Comprehensive Plan.

- ii. **Policy:** Encourage, support and participate on Tributary teams made up of local, State and Federal agency representatives, business, industry and environmental interest group representatives and interested citizens to develop the local Tributary Strategy Action plan.
  - a. *Action:* Assure that County activities, programs and projects support implementation of the Tributary Strategy Action Plan developed.
  - b. *Action:* Monitor and report on implementation actions to assure that progress on implementation is achieved and documented.
  - c. *Action:* Utilize State tracking and analysis of water quality, water clarity, and habitat improvements or declines to adjust the implementation plan as needed to meet strategy milestones.
  - d. *Action:* Implement regulatory controls needed to assure implementation if non-regulatory efforts do not or cannot achieve water quality goals of the strategy.

## 7.9 DISCUSSION, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES AND ACTIONS FOR NPDES PERMITTING.

Section 402 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) prohibits the discharge of any pollutant to waters of the United States from a point source, unless that discharge is authorized by a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Under the provisions of the NPDES regulations, stormwater discharges from municipal separate storm sewer systems are considered point sources that require an NPDES permit.

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has been granted authority by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to issue NPDES permits in accordance with statutory requirements promulgated by the CWA. The Environment Article, Title 9, Subtitle 3, Part IV, Annotated Code of Maryland requires a discharge permit for any activity that could cause or increase the discharge of pollutants into waters of the State. Additionally, Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 26.08.04 requires MDE to administer the NPDES program as part of the State's own discharge permit system. These regulations also define municipal separate storm sewer systems as point sources of pollution subject to NPDES permit requirements.

Section 402(p) of the CWA, as amended by the Water Quality Act of 1987, requires NPDES permits for stormwater discharges from medium municipal separate storm sewer system. A medium municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) is defined in the CWA as serving a population of greater than 100,000 and less than 250,000. In 2008 St. Mary's County reached the 100,000 population threshold and following the United States Department of Commerce's 2010 Census, will be designated as a medium municipality. As a result, the County will be required to seek approval for an NPDES permit application.

7.9.1 **Goal.** Comply with Clean Water Act mandates for developing a program that addresses non-point source pollution in the County.

- A. **Objective:** Develop a plan and process to coordinate the various water resource programs to streamline management and implementation of the State and Federally mandated programs.
  - i. **Policy:** Develop a comprehensive water quality protection framework that coordinates the development of an MS4 nonpoint pollution program with existing NPDES permits for point sources, with the TMDL program, with Tributary strategies implementation plans, with the implementation and updates to the CWSP and with resource protection programs.

- ii. **Policy:** Develop a National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program for a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit to address non-point source pollution.
  - a. *Action:* Develop a program to reduce pollutants in stormwater runoff for construction sites disturbing one or more acres. This primarily includes developing: an ordinance, requirements to implement erosion and sediment control BMPs, requirements to control other waste at the construction site, procedures for reviewing construction site plans, procedures to receive and consider information submitted by the public, and procedures for inspections and enforcement of stormwater requirements at construction sites.
  - b. *Action:* Develop a program to address post-construction stormwater runoff from new development and redevelopments that disturb one or more acres. This primarily includes developing: strategies to implement a combination of structural and non-structural BMPs, an ordinance to address post-construction runoff, and a program to ensure adequate long-term operation and maintenance of BMPs.
  - c. *Action:* Develop a program to detect and eliminate illicit discharges. This primarily includes developing: a storm sewer system map, an ordinance prohibiting illicit discharges, a plan to detect and address these illicit discharges, and an education program on the hazards associated with illicit discharges.
  - d. *Action:* Develop a program to educate the community on the pollution potential of common activities, and increase awareness of the direct links between land activities, rainfall-runoff, storm drains, and their local water resources and give the public clear guidance on steps and specific actions that they can take to reduce their stormwater pollution-potential.
  - e. *Action:* Offer opportunities to the public to participate in stormwater program development and implementation by offering positions on a local stormwater management panel, facilitating opportunities for direct action, educational, and volunteer programs such as riparian planting days, volunteer monitoring programs, storm drain marking, or stream-clean up programs, by partnering with groups who want to participate in promoting environmental causes to offer opportunities to participate in the stormwater management program.
  - f. *Action:* Train staff on ways to protect stormwater, particularly when maintaining infrastructure and performing daily municipal activities, such as park and open space maintenance, fleet and building maintenance, new construction and land disturbances, and stormwater system maintenance. This primarily includes: developing inspection and maintenance procedures and schedules for stormwater BMPs, implementing BMPs to treat pollutants from transportation infrastructure, maintenance areas, storage yards, sand and salt storage areas, and waste transfer stations, establishing procedures for properly disposing of pollutants removed, and

identifying ways to incorporate water quality controls into new and existing flood management projects. Conduct activities that can pose a threat to water quality using practices and procedures to prevent pollutants from entering the MS4 including winter road maintenance, minor road repairs and other infrastructure work, automobile fleet maintenance, landscaping and park maintenance, and building maintenance, parking lot and street sweeping and storm drain system cleaning, contain spills, manage trash, and handle non-stormwater discharges.

## 7.10 DISCUSSION, POLICIES AND ACTIONS FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF THE TMDL

Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) allow Maryland to set pollution budgets for each tributary contributing to Maryland's waters. Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) technicians, using science and modeling, establish the maximum amount of pollutants that various segments of a water body can handle and still meet water quality standards. TMDLs are based on the relationship between pollution sources and in-stream water quality conditions. TMDLs are developed for a single pollutant or stressor for each water body. TMDLs are used on a smaller scale than the Maryland's Tributary Strategies to address local water quality problems.

Using TMDLs as a tool to guide pollutant reductions is key to protecting water quality. Maryland's Draft Statewide Tributary Strategy Implementation Plan identifies programs and policies currently underway and new initiatives to reduce nutrients to meet that budget. Water quality standards in streams and the Maryland portion of the Chesapeake Bay watershed set the goal for the budget Maryland's current list of water bodies identifies 134 impaired watersheds. Various combinations of water bodies and pollutants result in over 655 potential TMDLs statewide.

7.10.1 **Goal:** Bring impaired waterbodies into compliance with the TMDL limits established by MDE, and maintain water quality in order to remove them from the lists of impaired waters of the State.

- A. **Objective:** Adopt a comprehensive approach to management of pollution (point and nonpoint sources) to minimize adverse impacts on water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries that result from 1) the pollutant discharges from point sources and 2) high nutrient, sediment, chemical pollutants carried by runoff.
- i. **Policy:** Limit and mitigate the impacts on water quality that result from pollutants that are discharged from both point and non point sources including:
    - a. **Action:** Implement planned upgrades to major waste water treatment plants (Leonardtwn WWTP and Marlay Taylor WRF) to reduce nitrogen and phosphorus in the wastewater down to 3 mg/l total nitrogen and 0.3 mg/l total phosphorus.
    - b. **Action:** Encourage individual landowners on septic systems to upgrade to nitrogen removing systems and to utilize Bay Restoration Funding available form MDE.
    - c. **Action:** Continue to identify areas of failed or failing systems and require connection to public sewerage systems in growth areas, and facilitate connection to rural systems developed to reduce environmental impacts of multiple new septic systems and to eliminate failing septic systems.

- d. *Action:* Require agricultural best management practices and development and implementation of Nutrient Management Plans and Sediment and Erosion Control Farm Plans for agricultural fields, pastures, and animal confinement areas to reduce loss of top soil and to minimize the impacts of agriculture activities on water quality by reducing nutrient, sediment and chemical pollution in runoff and groundwater.
- e. *Action:* Publicize and promote landowner participation in State and Federal funding programs for planting cover crops, retiring vulnerable land, fencing programs, manure management and others practices that capture runoff, and minimize erosion and loss of soils, maintain and enhance productivity of prime agricultural lands, prevent loss of property, and enhance and protect the quality of water resources and sensitive habitats.

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# THE ST. MARY'S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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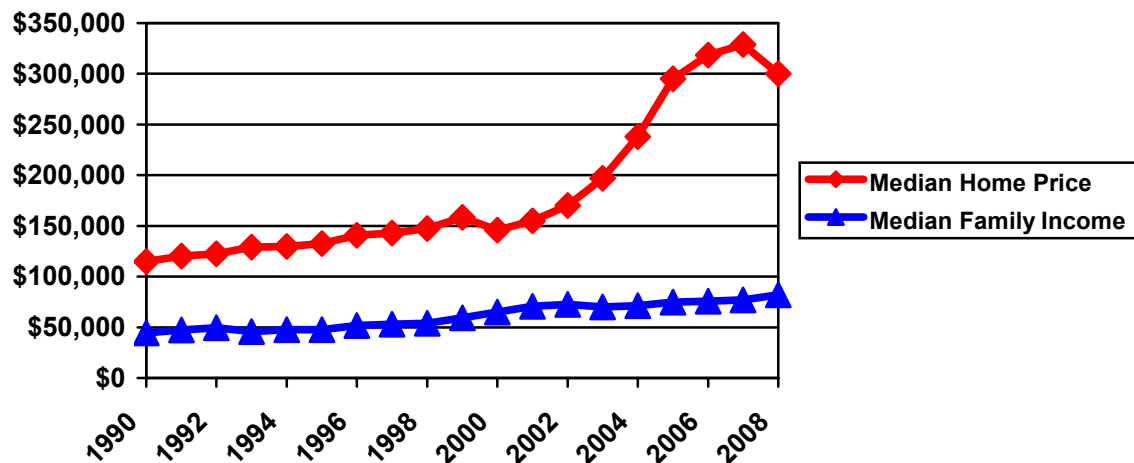
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## Chapter 8: HOUSING

### 8.1 INTRODUCTION

With an economy that was generally healthy through the first decade of the new millennium and one that consistently enjoyed job growth, especially related to the technology and defense industry, the County continues to expect prosperity. From 1999 to 2008 median household income grew at the second fastest rate of all counties in Maryland (Howard was first). Over the same time period the median home price increased 125%, far exceeding the increase in median household incomes (see chart below). This created acute challenges to meet the needs of a growing workforce.



Source: Department of Economic and Community Development 2009

Increasing housing prices through the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, plus a lack of available housing types, coupled with increasing transportation costs, have made it difficult for many residents to live and work within their community. This plan identifies various approaches to meeting housing needs by focusing on factors such as types of housing, community trends, development incentives, and promoting home ownership for families of various income levels. Furthermore, this plan defines workforce and affordable housing to facilitate a deeper understanding of the variety of housing needed to sustain the County's economy and support the growing population.

Workforce housing is defined as housing that is affordable to families earning 45% to 110% of the County's median household income whereas low income housing is defined as affordable to families earning below 45% of the County's median household income. The following chart shows the salary/hourly wage that must be earned to meet the workforce versus low-income housing definition in 2008.

**Chart of Wages that must be earned to meet the Workforce  
versus Low-Income Housing Definition**

Annual Salary	% of Median HH Income	Hourly Wage
\$36,945	45%	\$17.76
\$61,575	75%	\$29.60
\$82,100	100%	\$39.47
\$90,310	110%	\$43.42

Source: Department of Economic and Community Development 2009

In 2001, the Board of County Commissioners appointed a Fair and Affordable Housing Committee to study and report on existing conditions. That committee submitted a report early in 2002, making a number of recommendations on affordable housing in general, as well as addressing the special issues of the Lexington Manor Task Force. The committee also recommended that a housing needs assessment be done to confirm need for more affordable and low income housing. The Board of County Commissioners contracted with the Danter Company to do a study on housing.

In 2003 a county-wide housing needs assessment was conducted by the Danter Company, which compiled data from various sources, including properties surveyed, local records, interviews with local officials, real estate agents, major employers, as well as secondary demographic materials. The study examined the extent to which housing is not affordable for a significant portion of the population and household base. One consequence of the lack of affordable housing is that one out of every four members of the workforce has to reside outside of St. Mary's County. Danter recommended providing more quality rental housing, specifically for low to moderate income households, and locating such housing particularly in the Lexington Park area. This assessment should be updated to provide current and projected data on the amount and percentage of housing needed to support low and moderate income families based on the anticipated population growth and the existing trends in family income.

In May of 2007 the Community Work Force Housing Task Force, a group of individuals and representatives of organizations from the private and public sectors, reported to the County Commissioners. After explaining the need for adequate housing as a component of a policy to maintain and expand the County's workforce, the group recommended four strategies:

- Preserve the traditional and older neighborhoods of St. Mary's County to maintain the current availability of workforce housing;
- Create incentives for developers to encourage the construction of new supplies of workforce and affordable housing;
- Educate businesses and the community at large about existing State and federal housing assistance programs such as "House Keys 4 Employees" and More House for Less; and
- Promote a rich diversity of housing types and sizes to ensure home ownership opportunities within a broad range of income levels.

Affordable independent living units for seniors are also needed in St. Mary's County, especially in the northern part of the County. An issue that impedes the provision of housing in

the north is the lack of sufficient water and sewer service.

Having verified that there is a lack of housing choices for many County residents, this chapter identifies the housing issues to be addressed and states the objectives, policies and strategies targeted to respond to these issues and concerns. It will be necessary to draw from a variety of available implementation techniques to address such a pervasive and long standing concern.

## **8.2 HOUSING PLAN**

8.2.1 **Goal:** Promote a safe, affordable, variety of housing located in livable communities.

- A. **Objective:** Encourage a variety of developments and housing types to meet the needs of citizens based on employment, demographic and economic characteristics of the population.
- i. **Policy:** A variety of housing stock, both new and existing, owner-occupied or rental should include: single-family homes (custom-built or modular), multi-family homes (town houses, duplexes, apartments), multi-story high density complexes, consistent with fire protection standards, manufactured housing built to U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development code independent and assisted care residential facilities, and accessory apartments.
  - ii. **Policy:** Determine the optimum mix of housing types or range of costs to support the County's existing and future needs based on an evaluation of the demographic and economic characteristics of the population.
  - iii. **Policy:** Monitor the variety of the County's housing stock to ensure choices are being provided for all income levels and routinely adjust permitting and/or enhance incentives to maintain an appropriate balance of housing types. Bridge the gap between supply and the need for affordable and workforce housing.
  - iv. **Policy:** Promote the development of housing options for the elderly including independent living facilities, assisted living accommodations and nursing care facilities.
  - v. **Policy:** Permit manufactured housing, including mobile homes, in appropriate locations subject to standards required for other single-family dwelling development.
  - vi. **Policy:** Encourage inclusion of accessory apartments where parking is adequate and in accordance with standards that restrict external structural alterations so that the visual character of the neighborhood will not be adversely altered.
  - vii. **Policy:** Encourage construction and renovation of housing units to enhance and respect existing patterns of community development.
  - viii. **Policy:** Support incentive programs for rehabilitation or replacement of deteriorating housing stock.
  - ix. **Policy:** Support programs which encourage home ownership.
- B. **Objective:** Encourage the provision workforce and affordable housing.
- i. **Policy:** Award bonus density in exchange for the provision of workforce and affordable housing in the growth areas.

- ii. **Policy:** Encourage efficient design which reduces the costs and impacts of development.
  - a. Cluster to reduce land and development costs.
  - b. Encourage the construction of new housing for a variety of income levels, reduce the per project percentage of land retained for open space in the Development District from 50 percent as low as 20 percent in exchange for the construction of workforce or affordable housing.
  - c. Maximize public and private agency efficiency in providing infrastructure to the home sites.
- iii. **Policy:** Require housing developers to meet adequate public and community facilities and services requirements and to account for the costs of residential development.

C. **Objective:** Promote safe housing in livable communities.

- i. **Policy:** Emphasize quality of life in developing a variety of new community types. Prepare guidelines such as the following:
  - a. Maintain picturesque landscapes when locating housing.
  - b. Improve degraded areas by providing landscape amenities.
  - c. Enhance open space.
  - d. Create a sense of identity and place for residents.
  - e. Encourage development plans which have clear organizational patterns.
  - f. Coordinate architectural standards.
  - g. Provide a variety of housing types.
  - h. Promote and enhance open space-oriented site designs with emphasis on recreational amenities and the provision of public and private community services and facilities.
- ii. **Policy:** Assure a safe and adequate housing stock for residents.
  - a. Improve substandard housing conditions.
    - i) Undertake and regularly review the County's livability code to gauge the relevance and adequacy of the ordinance.
    - ii) Enhance enforcement of the County's livability code.
    - iii) Support housing improvement and home ownership programs.
    - iv) Require owners to demolish or adequately provide protections from the hazards of unsafe structures and abandoned uses.
    - v) Enhance regulations to enforce the elimination of slums and blight.
  - b. Enforce existing regulations that assure adequate privacy and comfort, safety from fire, flood and other hazards, and protection

from health threats.

- iii. **Policy:** Provide a mix of private and public amenities and opportunities for passive and active recreation.
- iv. **Policy:** Reduce the need for automobile travel. Increase the sense of community and neighborhood by developing mixed use communities which integrate housing, transportation, shopping, recreation and educational facilities.
- v. **Policy:** Formally promote, recognize and reward good design.
  - a. Provide increased bonus densities for enhanced design of neighborhoods located within the Development Districts
  - b. Planning commission recognition for innovative and effective community design.
  - c. Chesapeake Bay Community recognition of "Bay Friendly" environmental design.
  - d. Support green building design for energy efficiency and long-term affordability of the housing.
- vi. **Policy:** Locate residential developments so as to avoid environmentally sensitive areas and increase access to public transportation.
- vii. **Policy:** Outside of the designated growth areas, encourage development at a density and in configurations which will preserve at least 50 percent open space.
- viii. **Policy:** In designated growth areas, promote and encourage clustering of lots and infrastructure on the least environmentally sensitive lands.
- ix. **Policy:** Permit home occupations in the rural preservation district and in residential zoning districts.
  - a. Establish performance standards which will prevent negative impacts on surrounding properties.
  - b. Limit impacts to surrounding properties through guidelines for permissible uses, size of the area utilized within the home, the number of non-family employees, exterior appearance, on-premise advertising, sales and production inventory limits, access, traffic generation, vehicle and materials storage and restrictions to prevent public nuisance impacts of noise, vibration, odors and pollution.

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# THE ST. MARY’S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## CHAPTER 9: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT.....1

### 9.1 ... GOAL: ASSURE A STRONG, DIVERSE ECONOMY THAT PROVIDES A WIDE RANGE OF EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

#### FOR ALL SEGMENTS OF THE POPULATION AND A BROAD TAX BASE. ....5

#### TECHNOLOGY AND SERVICE INDUSTRIES.....5

#### SMALL BUSINESS .....7

#### AGRICULTURE.....7

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#### RECREATION.....10

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#### GOVERNMENT SERVICES .....10

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## Chapter 9: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ELEMENT

The economic base of St. Mary's County remains healthy through the first decade of the new century. Population, jobs and income levels all grew steadily, each outpacing growth rates in Maryland and the U.S. In terms of population growth, St. Mary's County recorded the 2nd fastest growth rate in the state in 2008. The County's population also grew the 2nd fastest so far this decade (2000-2008). Only Calvert County grew at a faster rate. Charles County ranked 3rd in state growth rate. Thus, Southern Maryland continued to lead the state in regional population growth rate as shown in Figure 9-1.

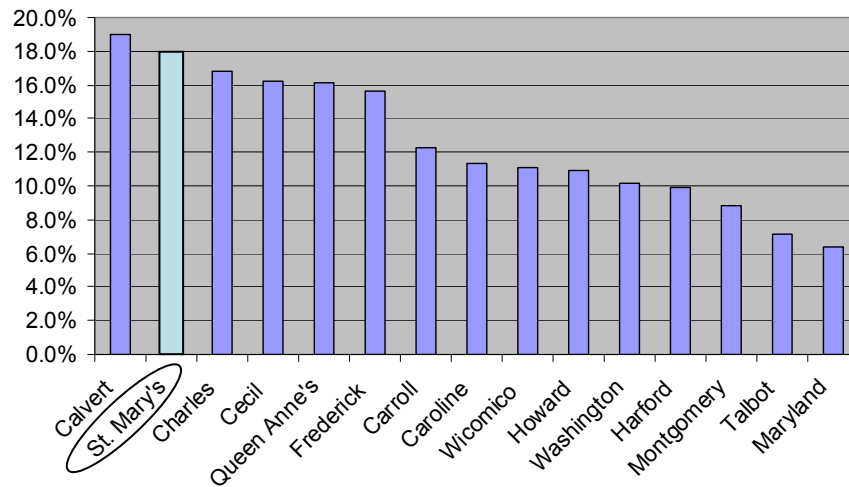


Figure 9-1  
Population Growth of Maryland Counties Exceeding State Average 2000-2008  
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey

Two major factors contribute to this trend. The first is exurban growth. People are moving farther out than the traditional population centers in the Washington, DC and Baltimore urban and suburban corridors. The search for a relatively lower cost of living along with less traffic, congestion, and a better overall quality of life is a major consideration. Twelve of the fourteen counties shown in the chart above are exurban. Figure 9-2 shows the relative cost of living of Maryland counties. St. Mary's County's rating of 107.7 ranks lowest among Maryland suburban counties.

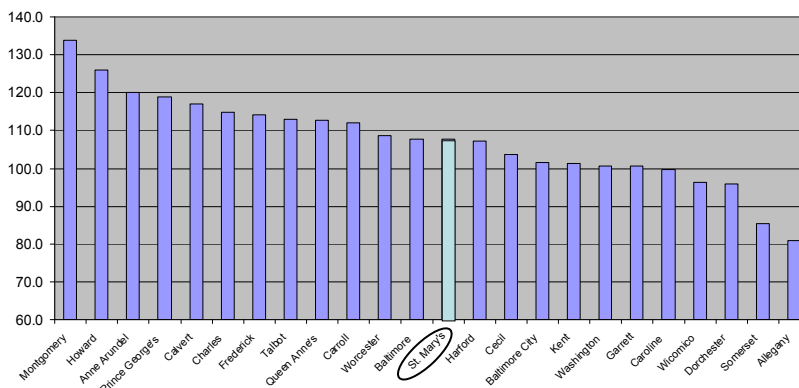


Figure 9-2  
Cost of Living Index of Maryland Counties, 2005  
National Average = 100  
Source: Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development

The second and more important factor that affects population growth in Southern Maryland and St. Mary's County in particular is employment opportunities. St. Mary's is alone as the only exurban Maryland County with a large regional employer in NAS Patuxent River where 22,500 work. Coupled with other major regional employers in Department of Defense, energy, health care, and education, Southern Maryland as a region, and St. Mary's as a county both lead the state in projected job growth. Figure 9-3 shows many of the same counties as in Figure 9-1.

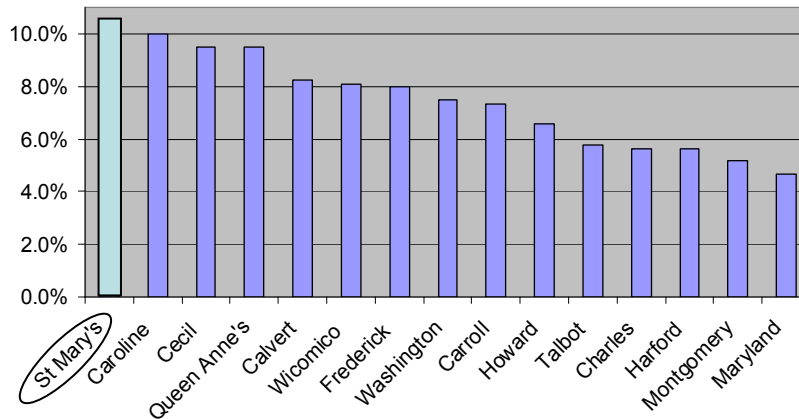


Figure 9-3  
 Projected Labor Force Growth of Maryland Counties Exceeding State Average 2005-2010  
 Source: Maryland Department of Planning, February 2009

The high quality of jobs has had a significant impact on incomes. Median household incomes in St. Mary's County grew at the 2nd fastest rate in the state between 1999 and 2007. The County ranked 4th (effectively tied for 3rd) overall in 2008 average weekly wages as shown in Figure 9-4a. In the all-important total government, federal government, and professional business services categories representing the defense contractor firms, St. Mary's ranks in the top 3 in the state. Neighboring Calvert and Charles Counties, typically not among the top counties, have been included for comparative purposes.

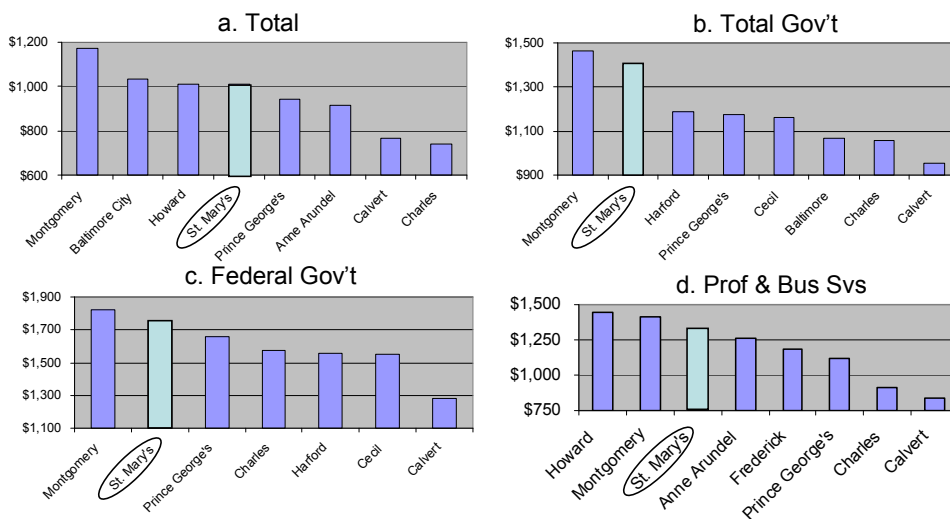


Figure 9-4 a-d  
 2008 Average Weekly Wages of Select Maryland Counties  
 Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

The high salaries of the approximately 8,000 NAS Patuxent River civilian employees are

the key reason. The average salary of these workers was almost \$88,000 in 2007. For NAVAIR and Program Executive Office employees, the average salary was just below \$100,000. (Source: NAS Patuxent River, December 2007.)

The mix of labor in the County is heavily weighted to the federal defense sector. In 2008 St. Mary's led the state with the highest rate of federal government employment at 18.1%. Cecil ranked 2nd at 11.6%, and Harford and Montgomery follow at 9.4% and 9.1% respectively. In terms of total government employment (federal, state, local) St. Mary's at 29.4% was 2nd only to Somerset County (41.6%) where a large state prison makes up a large portion of their economy. In terms of the two categories that represent the federal defense sector, federal government and professional and business services, combined represented a total of 41% of all jobs in the County. But in terms of wages, these two categories combined represented 61.6% of all county wages, up from 58.4% in 2002. The consumer spending effect for this large sector is also greater than the County average.

	<u>2008 % All County Wages</u>	<u>2008 Avg Annual Wage</u>	<u>2002 Avg Annual Wage</u>	<u>% Chg 02-08 Annual Wage</u>
Federal Government	31.5%	91,156	68,484	33.1%
Professional and Business Services	30.1%	69,160	50,284	37.5%
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities (incl. Retail)	10.6%	32,552	27,820	17.0%
Education and Health Services	7.8%	39,936	30,680	30.2%
Local Government	7.7%	43,680	35,048	24.6%
All Other (8 categories)	12.3%	28,842	24,715	16.7%
Total County	100.0%	52,520	40,612	29.3%

Table 9-1  
2008 vs. 2002 Average Weekly Wages of Top 5 Sectors and All Other  
Source: Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation

In terms of wage growth, the top 5 industries are shown in Table 9-1. The two federal defense categories not only represent the largest share of wages, they also represent the highest growing wage rates in the County.

In terms of unemployment, following a long period of steady and low unemployment (3%), unemployment has been rising steadily since the economic recession began in early 2008 and is now over 6% as shown in Figure 9-5. While unemployment is on the rise, the amount of increase has been comparatively less than the state and nation. This is due in large part to the strong presence of the defense sector in the local economy. St. Mary's unemployment rate increase has also been relatively less than all other Maryland counties and the City of Baltimore since the recession began in 2008. During the first half of 2009, St. Mary's unemployment rate ranked 3rd lowest in the state behind Howard and Montgomery Counties. This is an improvement from a ranking of 9th lowest in 2006.

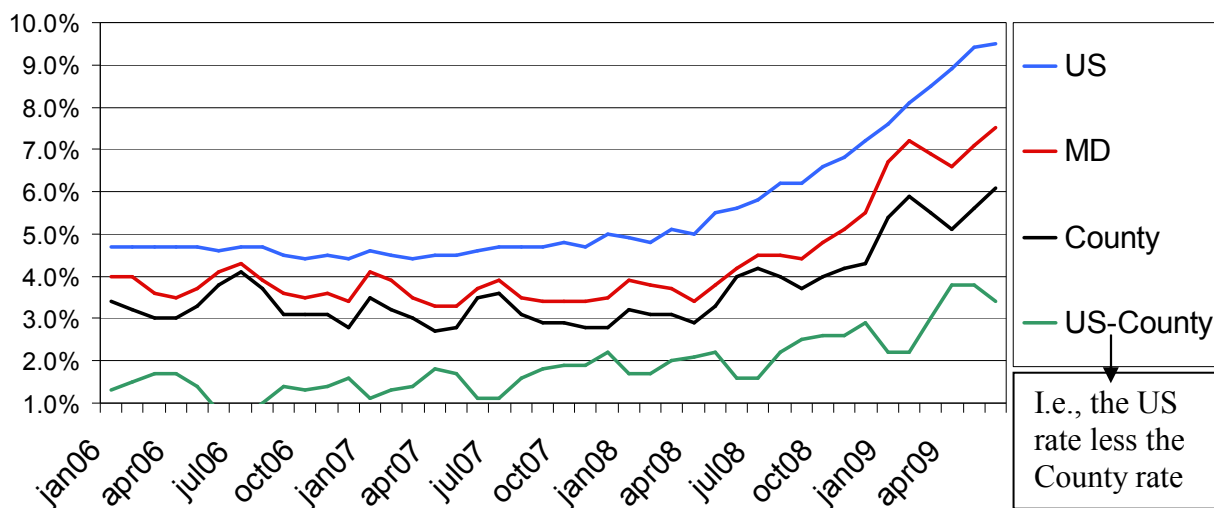


Figure 9-5  
 Unemployment Rates U.S., Maryland, St. Mary's County  
 January 2006 - June 2009

Source: Maryland Department of Labor, License and Regulation, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Public investments in roads, parks, schools and other facilities and infrastructure have been supportive of growth. While the pace of growth will vary as has been the case recently with the slowing economy, this plan builds on the County's inherent strengths of its major employers and unique industries combined with a great quality of life that will enable continued growth into the future.

In terms of land use, economic development has and must continue to adhere to principles of concentrating in appropriate areas, avoiding conflicts with surrounding land uses and effectively generating improvements to supporting infrastructure and facilities. Implementation strategies from the comprehensive plan should continue to reinforce such adherence to principles. To support the continued function and contributions of the largest employer in the County, NAS Patuxent River, the County Commissioners have committed to minimizing encroachment, improving schools, ensuring adequate housing, improving transportation, revitalizing Lexington Park, promoting international marketing, encouraging technology transfer and other forms of economic diversification, and providing a range of lodging and conference facilities. See "St. Mary's County Consolidated Priorities for Community Support of the Navy" in Chapter 4. Such commitments will lead the way in fostering economic development throughout the County.

The overall economic development strategy for the County is to focus on core industries while encouraging business diversity. The goal is to enable business and employment opportunities for all segments of the population. The first priority is to continue to support the strong defense economy that supports NAS Patuxent River. Workforce expansion is vital to this. This involves attraction, recruitment and retention as well as preparation and revitalization of the future workforce. One particular demographic of interest is the young professionals in the age range of 20s and 30s who are typically new members of the community as interns or new employees in the defense sector. They represent the future workforce and it is vital that proactive efforts are pursued to attract and retain these new workers. Close interaction with the school system through STEM and other programs, Educational Partnership Agreements with higher education institutions, and stronger relationships with Jobs Connection/WIA programs all play an important role in workforce creation. Business attraction for additional contractor services to support expanded programs at Pax River, coupled with targeted complementary work of light

manufacturing, fabrication, and assembly. One strong possibility to pursue is UAV manufacturing. A Research and Technology Park tied to SMHEC and other research partners could provide a platform for technology transfer and commercialization of new innovations.

A second priority is support of the growing small business community. Small businesses populate all geographies and sectors of the County. They are the backbone to the non-defense economy and provide the essential goods and services to support a growing community. Increasingly small businesses are represented in the defense economy. About one-third of the defense contractors are home-grown small businesses. But this sector is challenged more by economic swings than large employers. Assisting in the creation, retention, and expansion of small businesses means streamlining regulations that are too costly and cumbersome. In keeping with business diversity, we need to incentivize expansion of diverse industries that build off of traditional economies. The County's first industries of agriculture and seafood are facing significant challenges. New ventures in agritourism, wineries, organic farming, and other uses of farmland for cottage industries provide opportunity to continue a rural way of life essential to the community. The Amish and Mennonite communities provide a model for the variety of uses possible in the rural preservation district. Commercial marine, boating, and fishing enterprises represent additional opportunities. The hospitality and tourism industry has expanded as St. Mary's has become more of a destination. Higher fuel prices have increased local travel and visitation. The County's rich history and heritage will continue to be a major driver for visitation. Special emphasis from the Maryland 375 campaign in 2009 has brought more attention to the County. A new Naval Air Museum, available in 2011, should bring more interest to St. Mary's. The expansion of resort lodging in the southern part of the County and along the water will help showcase the County's greatest treasure as a peninsula. The trend for more health and fitness in lifestyles, especially among the younger age group, will bring more sport and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Complementary industries such as construction and retail, while slowed by the current economic situation, represent significant small business opportunities in a growing community. Green design of facilities and sites that dramatically reduces resource use will be very important. A heightened need for the arts, entertainment, and cultural amenities for all age groups will require new venues such as a performing arts center.

A final priority is the attraction of businesses and industries seeking knowledge. The workforce in St. Mary's is a concentration of talent that's among the most highly-skilled and -educated in Maryland. The specialized expertise applied mostly to the defense sector can be transferred to conduct research, design, and engineering in other fields such as information assurance and security. This will require new approaches and incentives to attract these types of businesses and organizations to the County and the region.

**9.1 Goal:** Assure a strong, diverse economy that provides a wide range of employment opportunities for all segments of the population and a broad tax base.

**9.1.1 Objective:** Attract a variety of strong technology and service industries with diversified customer bases.

- A. **Policy:** Accommodate building of new and expansion of existing technology businesses. Support both defense and non-defense related business ventures.
  - i. Collaborate with the Navy in a partnership to achieve full utilization of research, development, test and evaluation facilities at Patuxent River Naval Air Station and Webster Field.
  - ii. To the extent possible, minimize or avoid the impacts of development around Webster Field that might threaten its continued operation.

- a. Action: Study alternatives and, as appropriate, initiate the creation of a zoning overlay, possibly an Air Installations Compatible Use Zone, around Webster Field
  - iii. Support advanced work force educational opportunities to ensure job employment skills are available to meet existing and new technology requirements.
  - iv. Ensure availability of property with the proper zoning in growth areas and priority funding areas for office, business and technology parks; industrial and research labs; warehouses; production; flex space; and the local labor force.
  - v. Provide adequate physical and technology infrastructure and facilities to support defense- and non-defense-related business growth. Provide incentives to encourage privately built water and sewer infrastructure in the developments districts. (Critical Area Overlays shall comply with State legislation for nitrogen reduction.)
  - vi. Streamline the development approval processes to significantly reduce the time between application and permitting.
  - vii. Provide incentives, training, and other tools to encourage business growth and diversification. Encourage established technology firms to increase non-defense work.
  - viii. Adopt Green Building/Subdivision design and site layout including LEED certification. Encourage mixed-use office, retail and other commercial services, with residential and possibly lodging. Encourage use and create incentives for using programs such as the National Association of Home Builder's Green Building Guidelines in critical areas of the County.
- B. **Policy**: Attract quality businesses through marketing and recruitment of enterprises with high asset and high wage levels.
- i. Encourage technology business growth closer to Webster Field.
  - ii. Target industry sectors and enterprises with particular emphasis on business diversity to include green design and construction; international marketing; research and technology organizations seeking a highly-skilled and educated workforce; and companies with an express interest in commercializing technologies used in defense and/or government-only applications.
  - iii. Encourage energy development in green, renewable areas. Also, seek clean, non-renewable energy development.
  - iv. Promote the County and region as emerging employment center of highly educated/skilled workforce.
  - v. Foster expanded availability of high speed Internet service.
- C. **Policy**: Attract particular businesses offering products, services, and other amenities with high local consumer and community demand.
- i. Target specialized retailers and other businesses such as a movie theater, book store, and outdoor recreation experiences.
  - ii. Increase offerings to attract and retain young professionals and families

who represent an increasing portion of the local workforce.

- D. **Policy:** Revitalize established business and commercial centers in designated growth areas that takes advantage of existing infrastructure and available public services.
  - i. Focus business attraction, retention, and expansion into the older parts of Lexington Park and Leonardtown as well as Charlotte Hall, Ridge, St. Inigoes, Callaway, Clements, Chaptico, and other designated growth areas.

9.1.2 **Objective:** Improve opportunities for small business.

- A. **Policy:** Recognize contribution of small businesses to both quality of life and economic development when revitalizing existing communities.
  - i. In revitalization projects, encourage mixed-use development that first considers existing small business or attracts locally-owned businesses as a part of the revitalized community.
- B. **Policy:** Encourage use of the traditional economy and the historic character of an area as a tourism asset and as an appropriate location for small businesses.
  - i. As a peninsula, location is challenging for development. Most historic sites and attractions are located along the coastlines where Critical Areas and other regulations limit use. Seek creative ways to foster business development at historic sites and important county crossroads such as Ridge, Clements, Chaptico, and others.
- C. **Policy:** Foster business clusters and associations where revitalization and/or new markets are a priority, e.g., St. Mary's Square, South County, Town of Leonardtown, and North County as regional center.
- D. **Policy:** Provide expanded opportunity for rural industrial and entrepreneurial activities.
  - i. Recognize the value of rural settings to such small-scale cottage industries as cabinet making or welding shops that are becoming increasingly important for supplementing farm incomes but that are inappropriate in more built up areas. Re-examine the zoning ordinance to develop a list of allowable uses to encourage appropriate small business ventures.
  - ii. Allow supplemental income productive activities at a scale or intensity which will not unduly change the character of the area; where these other activities are allowed there shall be performance standards which will prevent negative impacts on adjoining properties.
  - iii. Minimize restrictions for businesses on farms.

9.1.3 **Objective:** Promote the vigor and diversity of agriculture, aquaculture, fishery, and forestry industries.

- A. **Policy:** Pursue alternative crops and markets.
  - i. Increase education about and production of specialty crops for urban, regional and niche markets with emphasis on locally grown and raised. Examples include grapes and other fruits for wine; flowers; herbs, ornamentals and other nursery plants; organic produce and high value vegetables and fruits. These are often called truck farms and are well suited to the small fields of 10 to 30 acres.

- ii. Develop and market "recreation farms" and "pick your own" produce outlets.
  - iii. Aggressively pursue agritourism activities including development of wineries, corn and hay mazes, farm life demonstrations, community fairs and the like.
- B. **Policy:** Reestablish a robust agriculture program that preserves open spaces and strengthens traditional farming. Encourage agricultural development such as agritourism. Re-examine new uses of preserved agricultural land for profitability in a post tobacco production era.
- i. Provide governmental incentives and policies that encourage continued major acreage in traditional and alternative crops.
  - ii. Provide economic incentives and land planning to stabilize the presence of the Amish and Mennonite farming community.
  - iii. Provide increased marketing opportunities for locally grown products.
  - iv. Support local slaughterhouse capability to encourage local processing of livestock. Promote alternate livestock.
  - v. Increase fisheries and aquaculture initiatives.
  - vi. Support regional and local efforts to restore fish and shell fish populations and habitats.
  - vii. Provide infrastructure for more robust fishing industry, including landings, docks, and processing facilities.
  - viii. Support state efforts with surrounding states to share equitable laws to regulate fishing, crabbing, and oystering, and to effectively manage commercial harvesting for continued productivity.
  - ix. Expand recreational fishing opportunities.
  - x. Increase aquaculture production in both saltwater and freshwater with processing facilities available locally.
  - xi. Encourage fee paying fresh water fishing ponds and lakes.
- C. **Policy:** Support forestry programs that sustain private forests as valued resources for forest products, as components of rural open space, and as essential contributors to maintaining habitat and water quality.
- i. Encourage landowner and county participation in state and federal programs that enhance and protect forests and woodlands, support silviculture activities, and provide financial incentives for retaining forest including cost share programs, tax incentive programs for conservation, and management, education and technical assistance programs.
  - ii. Encourage management of forests to produce lumber and wood products.

9.1.4 **Objective:** Encourage tourist oriented businesses.

- A. **Policy:** promote retailing of antiques, local artifacts, and restaurants serving local fare.
- B. **Policy:** Promote a variety of lodging types, but especially those which capitalize on area assets.



- i. Bed and breakfasts on farms, in historic houses and areas, on waterfront properties.
  - ii. Hotels, motels and campgrounds with access to natural areas and the water.
- C. **Policy:** Increase attractiveness of St. Mary's County as a tourism destination by exploring and embracing innovative green building technologies that conserve resources and protect the environment while fostering growth. Green designs should incorporate:
  - i. Gray water usage.
  - ii. Non traditional/new technology waste disposal and groundwater drainage systems.
  - iii. Development of waterfront amenities and attractions based on cutting edge green building and environmental technologies and to be accomplished through state/federal/local partnerships to include technology transfer from NAS Pax River contracting community and SMC-based educational institutions.
- D. **Policy:** Foster and protect communities that enjoy a strong sense of history and place to include:
  - i. Activation of a local historic districts program with local regulatory protection.
  - ii. Designating the 18th century village section of Charlotte Hall as the County's first local historic district.
- E. **Policy:** Affirm the impact that architecture and architectural design has on the growth of areas as tourism destinations as well as on quality of life.
  - i. Incorporate this charge into the historic preservation commission with activities to include issuing of awards for good new design similar to awards given for preservation of older structures.
  - ii. Make exterior and interior design aesthetics a priority in creation of the new Patuxent River Naval Air Museum recognizing the building's power to serve as a flagship anchor for tourism in Lexington Park as well as a symbol of the military/technology-driven nature of the County.
  - iii. Support Leonardtown in encouraging owners and developers of single story buildings in the town core to add upper stories for mixed use.
- F. **Policy:** Protect the County's natural and rural viewsheds.
  - i. Support programs that preserve those viewsheds.
- G. **Policy:** Revise the Southern Maryland Heritage Area boundary to include a greater portion of Lexington Park and support designation of the redrawn cluster as a Target Investment Zone.
- H. **Policy:** Strengthen and enforce sign codes throughout the County.
  - i. Ensure statewide and national sign programs are coordinated at the local and regional levels.
  - ii. Revise regulations to limit temporary event and real estate signs and then enforce the regulations.

- I. **Policy:** Support the designation of Leonardtown as a state Arts and Entertainment District.
- 9.1.5 **Objective:** Encourage recreation-oriented businesses. Emphasize historic sites, water recreation, waterfront commercial areas, and outdoor activities.
- A. **Policy:** Support outdoor recreation goods and service providers for activities such as hiking, biking, sailing, boating tours for birding, fishing, touring of historical and Civil War sites, kayaking and canoeing, etc.
  - B. **Policy:** Promote and expand museums and historic sites.
    - i. Support the master development plan for St. Mary's City.
    - ii. Support the Heritage Partnership's "Southern Maryland Heritage Plan".
    - iii. Support St. Clements Island Museum, Sotterley Plantation and the Piney Point Lighthouse.
  - C. **Policy:** Promote expanded recreational and eco-tourism opportunities that take advantage of the County's unique rural character and peninsular setting.
  - D. **Policy:** Promote development of resort and conference facilities.
  - E. **Policy:** Encourage new motor sports facilities and enhance current facilities.
  - F. **Policy:** Promote and expand marina and charter boat fleet activity and facilities.
  - G. **Policy:** Support the establishment of sailing centers.
- 9.1.6 **Objective:** Promote the integration of the Arts as a vital element of all aspects of life in St. Mary's County for the benefit of the health, welfare and economic development of its citizens and visitors.
- A. **Policy:** Support and encourage the development of the Arts and Arts enterprises in enriching the quality of life important to attracting and retaining a highly skilled/educated workforce.
  - B. **Policy:** Encourage planning for infrastructure to support arts programs accessible to residents and visitors alike.
  - C. **Policy:** Encourage participation in State and National programs to develop Arts and Cultural Heritage focal areas in appropriate sectors of the County including the Development Districts, such as Myrtle Point Park.
  - D. **Policy:** Support the incorporation of public art and art spaces where appropriate.
- 9.1.7 **Objective:** Balance local community and government services with private sector services in order to enhance quality of life for citizens through economic development programs.
- A. **Policy:** Focus government activities to fill gaps in goods and services the private sector will not or cannot provide and to reduce competition with private sector.
  - B. **Policy:** Utilize government to address legally mandated programs.

# THE ST. MARY’S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## **Chapter 10: PUBLIC FACILITIES ELEMENT**

### **10.1 OVERVIEW**

A major factor influencing the location and intensity of development is the presence of public and community facilities and services. Development will be fostered where facilities exist or are planned. St. Mary's County must not only provide services and facilities where currently required, but anticipate their need in the future. It must also be mindful that the provision of facilities will guide growth where it should occur, and the lack of facilities and services will discourage growth in areas to be preserved. Planning for the provision of community facilities and public services is necessary to effectively and efficiently manage growth.

### **10.2 THE PLAN FOR PUBLIC FACILITIES**

10.2.1 **Goal:** Support concentration of development through investment in and provision of public facilities.

10.2.2 **Goal:** Concentrate development in suitable areas.

- A. **Objective:** Provide the infrastructure to ensure adequate capacity to accommodate concentrated development in growth areas and address adequate facilities and services outside the growth areas.
- i. **Policy:** Implement a comprehensive water and sewerage system that supports the land use concept for the County and that is in accordance with the policies and actions described above in Chapter 7: Water Resources Element.
  - ii. **Policy:** Accommodate efficient and equitable distribution of energy and communication utility services to meet the needs of the population and support the land use, design, and environmental concepts of this plan.
  - iii. **Policy:** Provide a full range of utility services to all areas of the County and establish requirements to assure fair access to these services.
  - iv. **Policy:** Minimize negative environmental and aesthetic impacts of new and existing utility distribution systems:
    - a. Require the use of shared easements within road right-of-ways when feasible.
    - b. Minimize clearing associated with installation and maintenance of lines.
    - c. Require underground distribution systems for utilities and services for new development and whenever service lines are upgraded.
    - d. Cooperate with Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO) to bury electric lines in designated corridors and town centers.
  - v. **Policy:** Meet increasing demand for solid waste management through use of traditional and innovative methods.
    - a. Encourage participation and expand programs in waste reduction, composting, re-use and recycling through public educational efforts and coordination with the school systems.
    - b. Minimize negative environmental impacts of new solid waste transfer, collection, processing and disposal facilities by considering permeability of soils, proximity to groundwater

aquifers and recharge areas, location of potential surface water impoundments, and environmental sensitivity.

- c. Implement goals and objectives of the Solid Waste Management and Recycling Plan.
  - i) To serve the solid waste disposal needs of a growing population, this plan calls for a county permitted transfer station. Such a facility will utilize the productive capacity of private enterprise for the collection, disposal, and disposition of solid waste and will assure the public is served by an efficient, effective, economical, and well managed solid waste disposal program.
- vi. **Policy:** Meet increasing health and public safety needs of the population per national standards.
  - a. Law Enforcement:
    - i) Achieve and maintain adequate staffing levels to provide a level of service of officers per the *International Association of Chiefs of Police Standards*.
    - ii) Achieve and maintain an average response time of 4 minutes.
    - iii) Provide adequate satellite office space in growth areas for the efficient operation of the department as necessary to accommodate the current and future public safety needs.
    - iv) Encourage and support neighborhood watch programs.
  - b. Health Care: ensure adequate facilities and services to meet the immediate and future needs of a growing population and encourage quality medical facilities to attract and retain physicians.
  - c. Rescue and Emergency Preparedness:
    - i) Maintain an adequate level of staffing and appropriate equipment to fully respond to emergency calls.
    - ii) Achieve and maintain an average response time of 6 minutes.
    - iii) Assure that remote areas of the County have adequate coverage.
    - iv) Assure availability of fire and rescue companies to report to multiple or high value alarms.
  - d. Fire Protection and Prevention:
    - i) Provide adequate and fairly financed fire protection.
      - a) Require adequate fire suppression for approval of major subdivisions and major site plans.
      - b) Require contributions from developers for firehouses, firefighting equipment, etc. when the development can be directly linked to the need for additional capital improvements.

- ii) Ensure adequacy of water supplies to provide fire protection.
      - a) Ensure that adequate water supplies are available to support fire protection.
      - b) Use central supply systems in growth areas.
      - c) In rural areas where water service is from small central systems or individual wells, provide stand pipes or other infrastructure to draw on existing water impoundment areas such as lakes and farm ponds.
  - e. Animal Control:
    - i) Support adequate facilities and services to collect, house, and care for stray, abandoned, abused and/or nuisance animals.
    - ii) Encourage programs for animal adoption, spaying and neutering to control population growth, and the humane disposal of injured and unwanted animals.
  - f. Hazard Mitigation:
    - i) The adopted Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan is hereby incorporated by reference.
- B. **Objective:** Meet the existing and future demands of the population for community and social services.
  - i. **Policy:** Maintain and support organizations, services and facilities which provide outreach, education and support services designed to assist the citizens of the County in areas related to aging, agriculture, alcoholism and substance abuse treatment and prevention, arts, crafts, theater, history, civics, community planning, information and referral, legal, medical, and media services.
  - ii. **Policy:** Support and administer federal and state financial programs necessary to assist citizens of the County in areas related to income assistance, welfare programs, medical assistance, adult services, child support, child welfare, and daycare assistance.
  - iii. **Policy:** Support organizations, services and facilities which provide temporary or transitional housing for families in the event of an emergency or family crisis.
- C. **Objective:** Meet the existing and future demands for public education and information in concert with the overall quality of life and growth management purposes of this plan.
  - i. **Policy:** Ensure adequate availability and adequacy of schools and educational resources.
    - a. Guide the annual preparation of a 6 year educational facilities master plan based on enrollment projections.
    - b. Foster a full spectrum educational system recognized statewide, as a positive attribute of St. Mary's County.

- i) Maintain a comprehensive educational program for students.
  - ii) Measure success of program effectiveness and student performance.
  - iii) Offer a variety of credit and noncredit courses, student services and specialized educational programs through the Community College system for all high school graduates and other qualifying adults.
  - iv) Support curricula and programs which further the economic development goals, including technical training and continuing education for adults.
    - a) Respond to the demand for graduate and upper level undergraduate programs and courses in technical and non-technical areas.
    - b) Support the Southern Maryland Higher Education Center. Foster the continued support from multiple universities and colleges to provide a wide variety of graduate and undergraduate degree programs.
  - v) Support investment in facilities and programs at St. Mary's College. Increase community/university interaction and seek opportunities to create partnerships which capitalize on educational and cultural resources.
  - vi) Develop a performing arts center with multiple uses.
  - vii) Require adequate capacity in public school seats to be demonstrated prior to approval of subdivisions or site plans that would create dwellings.
  - viii) Encourage the Board of Education to adopt standards that limit the number of students per classroom.
- ii. **Policy:** Follow the recommendations in the 2007 report, *St. Mary's County Library Comprehensive and Integrated System Analysis & Recommendations*:
- a. Build a new facility for the Leonardtown Library and the system's administrative offices.
  - b. Enlarge the 10,000 square foot Charlotte Hall Library to 24,000 square feet.
  - c. Build a 30,000 square foot facility in the California - Hollywood area.
- iii. **Policy:** Provide information centers and signage.
- a. Encourage tourism by promoting the tri-county region's historical and natural assets.
  - b. Ensure continued operation of the welcome center in Charlotte Hall. Explore opportunities for an additional welcome center the St. Mary's County side of the Thomas Johnson Bridge.



- c. Promote overall economic development by coordinating and maintaining a standard of excellence in design for all public and private signage.
- D. **Objective:** Recreation and Parks – Create new and enhanced parks and recreation facilities that link existing parks and communities to provide expanded recreational opportunities while preserving environmental, aesthetic, and cultural quality. The St. Mary's County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan, The Master Plan for the County-owned Charlotte Hall property, The Myrtle Point Park Master Plan, The Elms Property Master Plan, and the Carver Heights Community Park Concept Plan are hereby incorporated by reference.
- i. **Policy:** Guide the periodic preparation of a land preservation, parks and recreation plan.
    - a. Establish a county-wide system of recreational community facilities (including boat landings, waterfront parks, regional parks, neighborhood parks, and, in high-density areas, children's play lots), which meet year-round recreation desires. Provide additional public open space and recreation lands, particularly active parks, in and near development districts.
    - b. Provide additional baseball/softball diamonds, multipurpose fields for team sports (football, soccer, lacrosse, field hockey), indoor facilities for "court sports", and pedestrian/bicycle trails.
    - c. Accommodate and promote fishing, boating, sailing and other water- oriented recreational activities. Provide adequate public access to the waterfront, rivers and bays through the purchase and maintenance of public landings as well as developed and natural waterfront parks. Of particular need is additional public access to the Patuxent River. Ensure the availability of appropriately zoned waterfront land for private marinas and landings.
    - d. Provide additional water access facilities/boat ramps and fishing areas.
    - e. Consider using Myrtle Point Park for public access to the Patuxent River.
    - f. Acquire additional land to accommodate future facilities. Of particular note is the need for additional parkland in the Leonardtown area.
  - ii. **Policy:** Meet the existing and future demands for recreation and parks through state, local, and privately managed facilities that are consistent with the purposes of this plan.
    - a. Focus new recreational facilities in population centers.
    - b. Promote quality public events for community enjoyment and tourism.

10.2.3 **Goal:** Direct financial burden to those most benefited by new public and community facilities.

- A. **Objective:** Maintain priority for community facility investments in the growth areas: development districts, town centers, and village centers.

- i. **Policy:** Maintain priority for future public and community facilities investments in the designated growth areas.
  - ii. **Policy:** Restrict major investment in facility improvements outside these growth areas to statewide needs or health and safety considerations.
- B. **Objective:** Developer Responsibility – Require developer responsibility for extending central water, sewer service, roads, and parks to serve proposed development.
- i. **Policy:** Assure these services meet standards for acceptance into the County operated/maintained systems.
  - ii. **Policy:** Require developers to fund or provide the added public facilities necessary to support their developments.
  - iii. **Policy:** Assure that the provision of adequate public facilities, including schools and park/recreation areas, is made part of any approved development proposal.
  - iv. **Policy:** Ensure that all trunk lines or transmission mains and roads networks installed by developers are adequately sized to meet the projected needs of the district in which the projects are located, with the County funding that portion of the cost associated with increasing such facilities over the size required by those projects individually.
  - v. **Policy:** Taxing Districts – In targeted areas, consider special taxing districts to fund needed facilities and services. Work with developers and land owners to develop a phased capital improvement program that meets the facility needs of projected development.
- C. **Objective:** Outside of Growth Areas – when public funding is inadequate to provide or maintain designated levels of service, funding of improvements shall be the responsibility of those benefiting from the improvements.
- i. **Policy:** For purposes of determining benefit, all property owners, regardless of when they decide to develop their land, shall be deemed to share in the benefit of any improvements.
- D. **Objective:** Maintain and improve levels of efficiency to meet population needs.
- i. **Policy:** Carefully monitor population increase in relation to user levels of all facilities.
    - a. Stage construction of new facilities in growth areas to keep pace with increasing needs.
    - b. Expand service areas only when populations are projected to be large enough to support the costs of the expansion.
    - c. Use the Annual Growth Policy and caps to direct residential development to growth areas.
    - d. Use zoning capacity analysis to determine infrastructure and facility needs.
- E. **Objective:** Maximize the effectiveness of the impact fee program to address the costs associated with new development.
- i. **Policy:** The impact fee will continue to be an important source of revenue

to fund infrastructure and facilities.

- a. Reevaluate the amount of the fee to bring it in line with the true cost of new development.

10.2.4 **Goal:** Promote conservation of resources, including a reduction in the consumption of resources.

A. **Objective:** Establish and maintain public policies to encourage resource and energy conservation and to meet the public health, safety, and welfare needs of residents in an efficient and cost effective manner.

- i. **Policy:** Promote conservation of land resources through education and land use and growth management objectives and policies.
- ii. **Policy:** Promote conservation of energy and resources.
  - a. Provide efficient and well maintained delivery and collection systems for utilities and services. Ensure efficient location and sufficient quantities of service providers.
  - b. Encourage educational programs for the public which promote energy conservation and use reduction.
  - c. Promote the efficient utilization and reduced consumption of energy resources by requiring energy efficient construction and equipment in all county facilities and supporting the use of same in private development.
  - d. Develop resource and energy utilization reduction goals for residential, commercial, institutional, and municipal uses.
  - e. The County will take the forefront in demonstrating/testing alternative sources and energy use reduction strategies.
  - f. Require minimum LEED certification and offer developer incentives for alternative energy use and/or for achieving a LEED - Silver or higher equivalent rating.
  - g. Prioritize capital expenditures based on their resultant reduction in energy consumption.
  - h. Foster the work from home concept by accommodating home based business uses.
  - i. Prioritize mass/alternative transportation spending over the expansion/improvement of existing transportation routes.
  - j. Offer developer incentives for mixed residential/office (within the same building) construction.
- iii. **Policy:** Encourage a telecommuting component in all development proposals and assure that infrastructure to support telecommuting is provided and enhanced.

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## **Chapter 11: TRANSPORTATION**

### **11.1 INTRODUCTION**

St. Mary's County has experienced rapid growth in population and employment over the last fifteen years. This growth has impacted the transportation system throughout the County. Quiet, pastoral two lane country roads have become commuter routes bustling with morning and evening commuters which need to share the roadway with other users such as buggies, bicyclists, and walkers. Congestion has developed at intersections where minimal delays have historically occurred. An unprecedented expansion of military and high technology activity has created a demand for commuter air service. An increase in the non-driving population has expanded the need for alternate transportation options throughout the County. An influx of residents from more developed areas has increased expectancy for quality transportation services and recreational opportunities. Congestion in other areas of the region has increased the need for and feasibility of ferry service. In order to meet present and future transportation needs, a well-maintained, multimodal transportation system that facilitates the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods, and services within and between population and business centers is required. Failure to adequately plan for the future will result in higher future transportation operational and improvement costs, reduced traffic safety, increased air pollution, reduced economic viability, and a lower quality of life for all residents.

### **11.2 ACTIONS TAKEN SINCE THE 2002 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

#### **11.2.1 ST. MARY'S COUNTY TRANSPORTATION PLAN AUGUST 29, 2006**

The firm of Johnson, Mirmiran and Thompson was contracted by the Department of Public Works and Transportation to perform a study to evaluate proposed transportation improvements and to develop additional improvement projects based on the needs such as Level of Service and safety concerns identified in the Existing Conditions report and through analyzing year 2025 travel demand forecasts.

The development of the Transportation Plan is a collaborative effort of the following groups; Board of County Commissioners, Transportation Task Force, Departments of Public Works and Transportation, Recreation and Parks, Planning Commission, Land Use and Growth Management, Economic and Community Development, Town of Leonardtown, Tri-County Council, Maryland Department of Transportation and its agencies and various community representatives. It provides an integrated multi-modal transportation system with safe, efficient, economical, and sustainable alternatives including motor vehicles, mass transportation, horse and buggy, bicycles, pedestrians, waterways, and air transportation in support of the land use concept of this plan.

### **11.3 VEHICULAR TRANSPORTATION**

#### **11.3.1 ROADWAYS**

The major linkage between home, work, shopping and schools in St. Mary's County is through the roadway network. Residents, commuters, and visitors utilize the various roadways to travel to and from their destinations. Virtually all commerce utilizes trucks to deliver goods to distributors and consumers. The use of mass transit has greatly increased over the past five years and will continue to experience growth in ridership, but the automobile is still the primary means of transportation. In order for the County to be able to move people and goods, an analysis of the future roadway system was required.

11.3.2 **Goal:** Provide an integrated, safe, and efficient roadway system.

- A. **Objective:** Provide safe, efficient, economical roads which support community revitalization, economic development, and environmental stewardship.

- i. **Policy:** Identify which locations will experience congestion in the future, and which roadway improvements will be required to ensure efficient travel through those areas.
  - a. *Action:* For all roadways with limited capacity, unsatisfactory levels of service, failing intersections and/or failing un-signalized intersection approaches, a detailed traffic study should be conducted to develop alternatives and identify appropriate improvements based on a detailed analysis.
  - b. *Action:* Utilize traffic and levels of service projections in the APF evaluation of proposed development projects.
  - c. *Action:* AASHTO recommends a minimum roadway width of 18 feet for all roadways, and a minimum width of 20 feet for roadways with traffic volumes over 400 vehicles per day. Not all substandard roadways need to be substandard narrow roadways less than 18 feet wide in St. Mary's County. If sufficient right-of-way exists and traffic volumes are greater than 400 vehicles per day, plans should be developed to widen these roadways.
  - d. *Action:* In growth areas, create local traffic roads parallel to but well back from arterial routes to combat strip development patterns by providing visible and accessible commercial and residential frontage, and to reduce local traffic impact on peak traffic flow on arterial roads.
  - e. *Action:* Pursue the acquisition and/or reservation of planned roadway corridors and right-of-ways as described in the approved Countywide Transportation Plan in accordance with the Annotated Code of Maryland Article 66B.
- ii. **Policy:** Require joint use access driveways for ingress/egress to contiguous properties. Require access driveway consolidation to reduce the existing number of ingress and egress points.
  - a. *Action:* Manage demand for direct access to major roads. Designate St. Andrews Church Road (MD 4) Point Lookout Road (MD 5) Budd's Creek Road (MD 234) and Three Notch Road (MD 235) as restricted access traffic arteries.
  - b. *Action:* Require safe and adequate shoulders. Shoulders should be provided for safety on all roadways in accordance with the appropriate design standard for their classification. In some cases, grass or gravel shoulders are required; in others, an improved (paved) shoulder is needed.
- iii. **Policy:** To develop and implement transportation plans and standards that support and promote resource protection, environmental stewardship, community revitalization, economic development, rural character, corridor preservation, and cost containment goals.
  - a. *Action:* Facilitate Transportation (or Transit) Oriented Development and mixed use/compact land use patterns that promote walking, biking, and taking transit. Require these alternative transportation modes to be components evaluated in all



major development proposals.

- b. *Action:* Require street tree plantings and furniture; reduce stormwater runoff and improve water quality resulting from new roadway construction.
- c. *Action:* In residential and rural areas reduce pavement and rights-of-way width requirements through the implementation of traffic calming measures.
- d. *Action:* Advocate the upgrade of vehicle fleets by implementing green fleet initiatives and purchasing cleaner, more energy efficient, reduced emission and/or alternative fueled vehicles.
- e. *Action:* Identified intersections will need minor improvements and obstruction removal. These improvements are needed either from a safety or capacity standpoint. The improvements would involve adding turn lanes or an additional lane on an approach. These improvements, in some cases, can be addressed through mitigation and adequate public facilities determinations in relation to proposed developments.
- f. *Action:* Be consistent in the implementation and support of roadway improvement priorities established for the County roadway system by project (Short 0-10 years, Medium 10-20 years, Long 20 or more). Below is an excerpt from the 2006 Transportation Plan.

Project	Priority
Widen MD 237 from Pegg Road to MD 235 to four lanes.	Short
Extend Pacific Drive to Pegg Road.	Short
Extend Lei Drive to the Shangri-la Drive/Willows Road intersection and Extend Tulagi Place from South Coral Drive to the Lei Drive extension.	Short
Provide for a divided highway or five lane sections along MD 5 in Leonardtown, between MD 245 and MD 243.	Short
Realign Strickland Road connection to MD 237 (Horsehead Road) to the south and extend to Pegg Lane.	Short
Widen MD 712 from MD 235 to PNAS to four lanes.	Long
Construct an urban diamond interchange at the MD 235 – MD 4 intersection.	Medium
Construct FDR Blvd. from MD 4 to Willows Road. Include a linkage between MD 4 and MD 235 north of the intersection. (Short term)	Medium
Construct a second span on the Thomas Johnson Bridge.	Medium

Project	Priority
Widen MD 4 from MD 5 to the Thomas Johnson Bridge to four lanes.	Medium
Extend Saint John's Road/Lawrence Hayden Road to MD 4 as a major collector road, intersecting MD 4 at the Indian Bridge Road intersection.	Medium
Implement the access management plan for the MD 235/MD 5 corridor, from MD 4 to the Charles County line.	Short
Widen MD 5 from MD 245 to MD 249 to four lanes.	Medium
Construct a parallel service road along MD 5 between New Market and Mohawk Drive.	Long
Extend Pacific Drive to proposed Bradley Boulevard/Bay Ridge Road.	Long
Construct Bradley Boulevard from Pacific Drive extended to MD 235 and Hermanville Road.	Long
Extend Bay Ridge Road to Pacific Drive extended.	Long
Extend Carver School Boulevard to Bay Ridge Road.	Long

### 11.3.3 FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

St. Mary's County classifies its roadways to function in a manner that meets the needs of its users. This system identifies arterials as the highest classification followed by collectors (major/minor) and finally local roadways. The higher the classification, the more the roadway acts as connecting other roadways and serving higher volumes. The classification designation dictates design and improvement strategies.

- A. **Goal:** Classify County roadways based on vehicular volume, speed, and geometric conditions.
  - i. **Objective:** Ensure adequate capacity and safety for the traveling public, and the appropriate level of access:
    - a. **Policy:** Develop a list of recommended upgrades and downgrades in the classification of St. Mary's County to assure that development and road improvement projects are planned in accordance with the transportation needs for the foreseeable future.
      - i) **Action:** To require infrastructure improvements, roadway upgrades and right-of-way dedication and adequate facilities findings based on the approved Countywide Transportation Plan.

### 11.3.4 AMISH AND MENNONITE ROUTES

Due to the difference in travel speeds, the mix of horse and buggy traffic and motor vehicle traffic can result in conflicts.

- A. **Goal:** Integrate the unique agriculture and culture of the Amish and Mennonite communities.
  - i. **Objective:** Identify conflicts between horse and buggy traffic and motorized vehicles by evaluating County roadways based on vehicular volume, speed, and geometric conditions.
    - a. **Policy:** Initiate improvements that improve safety and reduce the number of conflict locations, especially on roadways with insufficient passing opportunities, and where there are moderate to high motor vehicle volumes.
      - i) **Action:** Ensure road improvements do not adversely impact cultural, historical and environmental features and character of an area.
      - ii) **Action:** Continue to develop the Three Notch Trail where feasible, but not to accommodate motor vehicles.
      - iii) **Action:** Preserve network of private roadways established by the Amish through private properties. Improve and expand St. Mary's County Transit service.

## 11.4 MASS TRANSIT

### 11.4.1 COMMUTER TRANSIT

The firm of RLS and Associates in conjunction with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) was contracted to conduct an assessment and peer review of the St. Mary's Transit System. The result was the Transportation Development Plan of August 2007.

- A. **Goal:** Improve mobility and public transportation programs and service to the citizens of St. Mary's County.
  - i. **Objective:** Maintain a needs assessment and an evaluation of options, fare structure and supplemental funding sources for system improvement.
    - a. **Policy:** Meet or exceed the MTA performance standards developed for all transit systems in the State of Maryland.
    - b. **Policy:** Develop ridership and fare structures that limit the level of general fund subsidy.
      - i) **Action:** Implement the short and long-term service improvements, restructure and re-align routes as proposed in the adopted Transportation Development Plan.
      - ii) **Action:** Facilitate mobility coordination between public and private service providers to better serve the growing needs of the community.
  - ii. **Objective:** Incorporate Transportation Demand Management to address policies and actions which support telecommuting / telework, building park-and-ride lots for transit or car-pooling, ridesharing programs, parking and land use management measures, and incentive policies.

### 11.4.2 ST. MARY'S TRANSIT SYSTEM (STS)

The St. Mary's County Transit System is a rural transit service that makes stops on demand by passengers, transports the elderly and persons with disabilities, and provides

transportation to medical adult day service providers, senior centers, libraries and nutrition sites. The STS also has deviated demand response routes for handicap customers, evening and weekend service. The system has seen rapid growth in service over the last few years. Ridership, exclusive of ADA passengers, has increased from 57,000 passengers in 1998 to over 320,000 passengers in 2008. The Transportation Development Plan provided the basis for route and fare restructuring to improve overall service efficiency.

- A. **Goal:** Meet the rapidly growing transit demand to and from St. Mary's County by expanding routes and service opportunities.
  - i. **Objective:** Encourage use of transit in order to minimize trips, help reduce emissions, increase economic opportunities for persons without motor vehicles, and provide service to the elderly and those with medical needs.
    - a. **Policy:** Promote and advocate public transit systems and connections through local and regional cooperation and coordination.
      - i) *Action:* Develop employer outreach programs to increase the public awareness and benefits of traveling by non-single occupancy vehicles through educating the major employers in the region and other marketing campaign efforts.
      - ii) *Action:* Leverage Federal and State resources for capital and operational improvements to the local STS transit system.
      - iii) *Action:* Continue improving the STS connectivity with Charles County's Van-Go and the Calvert County public transportation service.
      - iv) *Action:* Provide an additional route to meet the demand for service of the western portion of the County.
      - v) *Action:* Evaluate efficiency of STS routes and passenger fare structures to meet Maryland Transit Administration performance measures.
      - vi) *Action:* Provide bus shelters and stop markers at STS bus stops.

#### 11.4.3 **LIGHT RAIL / BUS RAPID TRANSIT**

The results of three State-sponsored studies have identified the MD 5 / US 301 corridor between White Plains and the Branch Avenue Metro station as a major light rail or rapid transit corridor for Southern Maryland. *The Transportation Action Plan* of the "Southern Maryland Regional Strategy" has recommended taking immediate actions necessary to meet the State and federal requirements to prepare for eventual implementation of light rail transit service in that corridor. This light rail transit service will benefit St. Mary's County commuters, and the general public that visits the Washington D.C. Metropolitan area. Bus rapid transit would be an alternative to light rail in this corridor.

- A. **Goal:** Identify which locations will experience congestion in the future, and which transit improvements will be required to ensure efficient travel through those areas.
  - i. **Objective:** Expand bus service to regional and metropolitan destinations and protect the old railroad right-of-way for possible future light rail use.

- a. **Policy:** Preserve the old railroad right-of-way for future light rail or rapid transit usage and for park and ride lots to support these facilities. The property should be protected for eventual implementation 50 or more years from the date of this Comprehensive Plan in support of the Maryland Department of Transportation’s report to the General Assembly, entitled “Hughesville to Lexington Park Right-of-Way Preservation Study”. In the interim, the Three Notch Trail is being constructed in the right-of-way.
- b. When feasible, have developers construct portions of the Three Notch Trail or pay a fee in lieu.

#### 11.4.4 AIR FACILITIES

According to the St. Mary’s County Regional Airport Economic Impact Study, April 2007, the County is served by the St. Mary’s County Regional Airport located in California, Maryland. This airport provides important services to residents of St. Mary’s County as detailed in the “Economic Impact Study” prepared by the Maryland Aviation Administration. Some of the key points from the study include the following:

- Regional economic impacts including 105 jobs, \$6M in personal income, \$5.7M in business revenues, and \$618,000 in State and local taxes related to the airport and its tenants.
- Non-monetary impacts such as transportation benefits, stimulation of business, aero medical evacuation, and recreation.

To determine needed improvements at the St. Mary’s County Regional Airport, airport master plans have been developed. The current Master Plan was adopted by the Board of County Commissioners, and approved by the Maryland Aviation Administration and the Federal Aviation Administration.

- A. **Goal:** Encourage regional economic activities that support the airport, such as tourism, socioeconomic trends, industrial developments, and the Patuxent River Naval Air Station.
  - i. **Objective:** Continue to support the Federal Airport Capital Improvement Program (ACIP) and funding allocations for the continued expansion of the airport as a Category II (large) general aviation facility.
    - a. **Policy:** Ensure that construction and the design of towers do not impede or adversely affect the approach minimums to the St. Mary’s County Regional Airport.
    - b. **Policy:** Implement AICUZ and other zoning restrictions in support of non-encroachment policies relative to the Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) decisions.
    - c. **Policy:** Revisit the current Letter of Authorization (LoA) between the County and the Naval Air Station regarding authorization to operate aircraft in Restricted Airspace.
    - d. **Policy:** Ensure that the established Airport Environs are utilized for zoning and the permitting of construction activities that does not create obstructions or incompatibility with adjacent development(s).
      - i) **Action:** Determine the needed additional infrastructure to

accommodate future commuter and commercial air service and other general aviation use.

- ii) *Action:* Recommend and develop a land acquisition program for the airport to accommodate general aviation and commuter air service development for the 20-year planning period.
- iii) *Action:* Define areas for additional general aviation apron and hangar (both T-hangar, conventional and corporate) development.
- iv) *Action:* Implement distance measuring equipment (DME), a localizer antenna, an Instrument Landing System (ILS), GPS, and / or other precision all-weather approaches and navigation aid systems to improve safety.
- v) *Action:* Lengthen runway 11-29 to 5,350 feet and strengthen in preparation for modest private commuter and corporate jet capacity and other general aviation use.

## **11.5 BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ACCOMMODATIONS**

### **11.5.1 BICYCLES**

The scenic landscapes of the surrounding waterways, the area's relatively flat terrain, and the historic villages that mark the countryside are among the attributes that make St. Mary's County attractive to cycling enthusiasts. Over the last two decades, Southern Maryland has become one of the fastest growing regions in the State. The rapid increase in growth has created dramatic changes in land use and transportation.

The proposed bicycle plan network includes routes designed to showcase St. Mary's County attractions by following the most attractive routes while providing a safe and accessible transportation facility. The Maryland State Bicycle Map, Southern Maryland Bicycle Map, Southern Maryland Regional Trail and Bikeway System (SMRTABS), Three Notch Trail, Potomac Trail Council, Maryland Scenic Byways, Star Spangled Banner National Historic Trail Study and Southern Maryland Bicycle Routes ("To the Point Route", "Rolling Hills and Tall Timbers Route", "The Historic Seventh Route", and "Hollywood on the Patuxent Route") were compiled to provide a network of roads that were used as a foundation for the St. Mary's Bicycle Plan.

- A. **Goal:** Create and maintain an extensive network of bikeways that will enhance access to cultural resources throughout the County including residential, recreational, educational, institutional and commercial areas within St. Mary's County.
- B. **Goal:** Provide support for people and their bicycles once they reach their destinations.
  - i. **Objective:** To promote a safe, comfortable and bicycle friendly environment which encourages people to use bicycle facilities both for transportation and leisure purposes.
  - ii. **Objective:** To enhance public awareness of the bicycle so that it is considered a viable and safe mode of transportation.
    - a. **Policy:** Adopt design standards for bicycle facilities, off-street and multi-use trails. These should be included as part of the County's

Road Ordinance and the County's Manual of Design and Construction Standards.

- b. **Policy:** Coordinate with the St. Mary's Transit System to make provisions for bicycle accommodations on transit vehicles. Bicycling and public transit both provide transportation alternatives to the private automobile.
- c. **Policy:** Provide secure and convenient bicycle parking and storage facilities at all cycling destinations (such as schools, and recreation facilities) as well as at public facilities such as County parks, post offices, public libraries, health care facilities, visitor information centers and museums to encourage and support the use of a bicycle.
- d. **Policy:** Maintain continuity and consistency over County borders by coordinating with adjacent counties to include the proposed bicycle facilities in their master plans.
- e. **Policy:** Consider land use features such as parks, park and ride lots, off road trails, water access areas, schools, points of interests (farmers markets, historical landmarks/churches, museums) and County designated growth areas along County and State roadways to identify future trail locations.
  - i) **Action:** Research and develop demonstration projects for enhanced bicycle parking facilities.
  - ii) **Action:** Implement recommendations for bike to work alternates for workers.
  - iii) **Action:** Utilize a Bicycle Level of Comfort (BLOC) Model to assess County roads. Utilize a grading system the BLOC model reflects a perception of compatibility associated with road width, shoulder width, traffic volume, pavement surface condition, motor vehicle speed and type, and presence or absence of on-street parking. The BLOC model provides a grading system for rating bicycle riding conditions.
  - iv) **Action:** Implement bicycle lanes by: 1.) narrowing existing travel lanes; 2.) removing a travel lane; 3.) removing parking; 4.) shoulder widening and; 5.) including bike lanes in new construction. Bicycle lanes are recommended for roads that have high traffic volumes and speeds where it is necessary to provide the cyclist with the maximum amount of separation between the motor vehicle.
  - v) **Action:** Bicycle lane configuration for on road with no on-street parking – can be used for both rural roads and urban streets.
  - vi) **Action:** Multi-use trails are designed and designated to accommodate several different users at the same time.
  - vii) **Action:** Bicycle lane configuration on road with on-street parking. The minimum bike lane width should be 5 feet.

- viii) *Action:* Facilitate the marking of bikeways/lanes.

### 11.5.2 SIDEWALKS

Sidewalks are mainly located in the Lexington Park and Leonardtown areas.

- A. **Goal:** Evaluate and identify locations for sidewalks where new sidewalk connections should be constructed.
  - i. **Objective:** Construct sidewalk networks between neighborhoods, schools, parks and other activity nodes/centers.
  - ii. **Objective:** Require vehicular and pedestrian interconnection between adjacent parking lots and subdivisions to reduce the need to travel on primary and collector roads.
    - a. **Policy:** Continue improving ADA compatibility and mobility enhancement projects, and maintain sidewalk obstruction and repair programs.
    - b. **Policy:** All new residential developments zoned at less than 1 acre lots, all commercial developments, and all areas where curb and gutter is proposed and the main access of all residential subdivisions should include sidewalks.
    - c. **Policy:** Require pedestrian connections between adjacent parking areas at the time of infill or redevelopment activities.
      - i) *Action:* Consider reducing sidewalk requirements to one side of the roadway to help reduce increased impervious runoff to meet Maryland Department of the Environment stormwater management regulations.
      - ii) *Action:* Take advantage of Sidewalk Retrofit Funding for the construction of new sidewalks and reconstruction of existing sidewalks along State Highways in locations identified by the County.
      - iii) *Action:* High priority connectivity projects have been recommended in the adopted countywide transportation plan.
      - iv) *Action:* Sidewalk networks should also be constructed between neighborhoods, schools, parks, and other activity nodes/centers. There are several neighborhood streets with sidewalks but no connection to adjacent collector roadways.

### 11.5.3 TRAILS

The development and interconnectivity of a trail network provides many benefits. Approximately half of the St. Mary's County public schools have trails, with more trails planned within the upcoming planning period. Various State and County parks within the County have established a network of trails with various uses and purposes. Presently over nine parks have a trail system with additional parks proposing trails.

- A. **Goal:** Provide expanded pedestrian and bicycle recreational and transportation opportunities.



- i. **Objective:** Provide an alternative to driving without creating congestion and emissions.
- ii. **Objective:** Provide connections to neighborhoods, schools, and other activity centers to facilitate safe alternative access.
  - a. **Policy:** Leverage the use of County (County bonds, local transfer tax and impact fees), State POS development funds and Federal (TEA-21 National Recreation Trails Program) for trail system development.
  - b. **Policy:** Incorporate trails into the development of all new parks and community development projects with applicable design standards such as that shown below.
    - i) **Action:** Continue development of the proposed Three Notch Trail, which is approximately 28 miles long and runs from the Charles County line to Lexington Park.
    - ii) **Action:** Expand upon a trail network in St. Mary’s City that would incorporate St. Mary’s College and the historical sites.
    - iii) **Action:** Expand trails within St. Mary’s River State Park.
    - iv) **Action:** Provide for a trail along Mattapany Road if archeological/historical review allows for the improvement.
    - v) **Action:** Provide for a trail through Mill Field in St. Mary’s City.

## **11.6 WATER ACCESS POINTS**

### **11.6.1 PUBLIC LANDINGS**

One of the many assets of St. Mary’s County is its proximity to water. Residents can utilize one of the twenty-two public access points or numerous private locations to reach the Patuxent River, Wicomico River, Potomac River or Chesapeake Bay. Facilities range at the public access points from boat ramps to trailer parking to piers and beaches.

- A. **Goal:** Improve the number and condition of facilities at public access points which range from boat ramps to trailer parking to piers and beaches.
  - i. **Objective:** In addition to projects in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP), provide various longer term improvements throughout the County to improve public access to the water, especially along the Patuxent River.
    - a. **Policy:** Continue parkland, park development and waterfront park/public landing acquisition projects through the leveraging of Maryland Department of Natural Resources and Program Open Space funds.
      - i) **Action:** Provide additional public landings. Public landings are nonexistent in the central to north portion of St. Mary’s County along the Patuxent River and are needed.
      - ii) **Action:** The Cape St. Mary’s Landing is open for public use, but the lease agreement for this usage expires in 2019, an alternative location for a public landing on the Patuxent

River in the central part of the County should be acquired in the next ten years.

- iii) *Action:* A public landing for motorized boats is needed on the lower Patuxent River. Enhancements of facilities at Clarke's Landing Public landing would help address this need. A private/public partnership should be developed with the owner of Clarke's Landing Restaurant for additional parking.
- iv) *Action:* Provide additional and/or formalize long term parking at several wharfs and landings to accommodate additional public access.
- v) *Action:* Consider developing a boat ramp and parking area at Myrtle Point Park for public access to the Patuxent River.

#### 11.6.2 **FERRY SERVICE**

At this time, there is no ferry service within the County. According to the Maryland Archives, ferries were the first form of transport covered by law. An Act of 1638 provided for a ferry service across St. George's River to enable folks to attend provincial assemblies in St. Mary's City; the toll was set at one pound of tobacco.

- A. **Goal:** Determine locations and deep water ports in St. Mary's County that may be suitable for ferry service.
  - i. **Objective:** Solicit proposals offered by private entrepreneur(s) to establish a ferry service in St. Mary's County.
    - a. **Policy:** Revisit House Bill 1376 from the 2002 Legislative Session (not enacted) that proposed a ferry franchise service between St. Mary's County and Somerset County. The State's Department of Transportation studied the feasibility of ferry service throughout the bay area in 2002.
      - i) *Action:* Consider public/private partnerships through requests for proposals and the identification for existing facilities that could be upgraded such as Abell's Wharf in St. Mary's County (Potomac Crossing) and the Solomon's Recreation Facility in Calvert County (Patuxent Crossing).

#### 11.7 **HAZARD MITIGATION**

The firm of Greenhorne and O'Mara, Inc. was contracted to help develop a plan to mitigate natural hazards (i.e., coastal/shoreline erosion, drought, earthquakes, extreme weather, flooding, high winds, land failure and wild fire) and recommend measures that will reduce losses to life and property affected by the natural hazards that face the County. The result was issuance of the Multi-Jurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan of April 11, 2006.

##### 11.7.1 **HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN**

- A. **Goal:** Minimize damage to County maintained roadways caused by flooding and shoreline erosion.
- B. **Goal:** Reduce or eliminate long-term risks to people and their property from the effects of natural hazards.

- i. **Objective:** Ensure adequate land management measures in shoreline erosion hazard areas.
- ii. **Objective:** Minimize damage to repetitive loss properties through proactive mitigation efforts.
  - a. **Policy:** Reduce the inventory of flooded conditions and number of roadway closures on County maintained roadways.
  - b. **Policy:** Utilize the prior Shoreline Conditions Assessment to evaluate areas requiring higher levels of protection.
  - c. **Policy:** Address existing storm conveyance systems and bridge structures that are inadequate to handle the runoff, which results in localized flooding, roadway closures, pavement failures and other potential safety concerns.
    - i) **Action:** Develop capital improvement programs that leverage local, State and federal funds to construct shoreline protection systems (bulkheads, revetments, jetties, etc.) to protect County maintained roadway.
    - ii) **Action:** Fund the appropriate mitigation measures, systematically replace, repair and / or upgrade them to handle the 10-year and 25-year storm events and safely pass the 100-year storm.
- iii. **Objective:** Ensure that building codes and standards follow FEMA's basic guidelines and are properly implemented and enforced.

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# THE ST. MARY’S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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## **Chapter 12: HUMAN SERVICES**

### **12.1 PURPOSE**

The Board of County Commissioners established the Human Services Council on March 11, 2008. The mission of the Council is to make a measurable positive impact on the health, safety, and self sufficiency of the County’s children, their families, and adults, persons with disabilities, and older adults through collaboration and integration of dollars and services available through public, private and business partners.

Also on March 11, 2008 the Department of Human Services was established by the Board of County Commissioners. The department’s mission is to provide recommendations to the Commissioners and to oversee collaborative efforts among the Department of Human Services and other human services agencies.

### **12.2 SYSTEM OF CARE**

The “System of Care” model encompasses available County-wide services such as behavioral and physical health and social services organized into a coordinated network to meet the needs of the citizens.

The core values of the System of Care are:

- The service delivery system is driven by the needs of the client;
- The services are community based and are delivered in the least restrictive environment;
- The delivery of services is culturally competent.

This System of Care is used especially for vulnerable populations, such as persons with physical and mental disabilities, seniors, and low-income individuals and families.

The Department of Human Service seeks to examine disparities between various populations and to ensure equal access to a broad array of services and supports that are organized into a coordinated network. This empowers the clients to seek healthier and more environmentally viable options. Successful outcomes will then improve their quality of life of individuals and improve the community as a whole.

### **12.3 VULNERABLE POPULATIONS**

*Individuals with disabilities:* Numbers for St. Mary’s County, between 2005 and 2007, available from the American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau), indicate that 11,275 individuals above the age of 5 are living with at least one disability (about 14% of the population). Of County residents, 6% are living with two or more types of disabilities such as physical health and mobility limitations, mental health conditions, and behavioral illnesses. For these individuals there is significant risk of income disparity. One fifth of individuals with a disability in this County, ages 5 years and up, are living below the poverty level.

**Disabilities by Age Group**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>% of Population</b>
5 – 15 years of age group	1, 135	7.0%
16-64 years of age group	6,584	10.9%
> 64 years of age group	2,338	29.1%
Total	10,057	11.9%

**Types of Disabilities 5 years and older**

Type	Number
Sensory	2,340
Physical	4,855
Mental	2,963
Self-Care	1,522
Employment	4,969
65+ years	3,876
TOTAL	11,724

**Emerging Issues in Health and Human Services for St. Mary’s County, 2007**

*Seniors:* Seniors (persons age 65 and up) comprise 9% of the population. A recent study suggests that this age group will triple between 2005 and 2030, an increase to 20% of the population. Income disparity can strongly impact this population of typically fixed income individuals. Census data from the 2005-2007 American Community Survey show that poverty is impacting over 10% of all seniors in St. Mary's County.

*Low Income Individuals and Families:* 8% of County residents live in poverty, and 8% of children live below the poverty level. 5% of all families live in poverty with female headed households at 20% below the poverty level. Homeless persons represent 0.61% of the population (Annual Report on Homelessness Services in Maryland, 2005).

Poverty statistics shed only partial light on the extent of the economic struggle. Families with incomes of \$42,800 (50% of median income for a 4-person household) can be in financial distress. 28 out of 100 households with incomes up to the area 50% median cannot find affordable and available housing in St. Mary's County (National Low Income Housing Coalition, 2009). Median income for African-Americans households and for female householders is significantly below the overall median income level for this County.

> 64 years	% of population	% of male	% of female	% live alone	% of disability	% of poverty
8,045	8.6%	47%	53%	25.3%	29.1%	8.6%

**12.4 AREAS OF ACTION**

*Access to Care:* According to 2005 census statistics for St. Mary’s County, an estimated 13.4 percent of individuals under age 65 are uninsured. More than 12,000 veterans live in St. Mary's County. While these populations are of particular concern, disparities in access to care face the entire County due to documented shortages in healthcare professionals. St. Mary’s County currently has federal designation as a Maryland Health Professional Shortage Area for dental care and mental health. The Maryland Physician Workforce Study (2008) documents a statewide shortage of physicians and indicates that Southern Maryland rural regions are among



those facing the greatest shortages. Southern Maryland showed critical shortages in 25 of 30 categories. These shortages translate to an 86% shortage in physicians to serve the population, as compared to the rest of the state.

*Transportation:* While general ridership of St. Mary's Transit System (STS) has been increasing, the demand for para-transit services has seen a dramatically sharp increase of 68% in FY 2009. The 2008-2009 Regional Work Plan released by the Tri-County Council for Southern Maryland seeks to address the needs of a growing population of individuals with disabilities, seniors, and low income persons. The plan calls for government agencies, private providers and non-profits to work together to resolve gaps in the system.

Addressing gaps in the transportation system's capacity will counterbalance the non-profit community's decreased ability to provide transportation to the special populations served by agencies. Recent cuts in programs and funding for programs have led to a shortage of available transportation assistance from private agencies, centering the responsibility for transportation services on the County.

*Housing:* Disparities in affordable housing are significant in St. Mary's County communities, both for renters and home-owners. Foreclosure rates in the County increased by 272% in the first quarter of 2009 as compared to the first quarter of 2008; the state saw a decrease of 19% during the same time period. Only a few other counties in Maryland experienced an increase. St. Mary's County has three HUD (United States Department of Housing and Urban Development) and State documented foreclosure hot spots, with two located in Lexington Park and one in Chaptico. These foreclosure hot spots include prosperous neighborhoods as well as those in which affordable housing was historically available.

For economic stability, households should spend no more than 30% of income on housing costs. Recent U.S. Census data shows that 42% of renters in the County are spending 30% or more of their income on housing. Shortages have been identified in affordable housing most strongly for vulnerable population groups, to include low income individuals and families and/or persons with disabilities. Trends documented in 2008 included a 20% increase in requests for direct financial rental assistance and a 22% increase in requests for other types of housing assistance reported by DSS (Maryland State Department of Social Services). The use of housing services for homeless individuals and families also increased at area emergency and transitional housing programs, with a 13% increase in admissions for men and a 50% increase in admissions for families.

*Employment:* Of particular concern in St. Mary's County is the lack of depth in employment opportunities in the County. Disparities in educational attainment contribute to this issue for many facing disparities in employment opportunities. St. Mary's County has the highest high school drop-out rate in the Tri-County area, minimizing employment opportunities at a living or housing wage in a high-tech, military base-dependent environment. The County has also seen a 21.7% increase in its drop-out rate between 2003-2008. Unemployment is highest (at 7.8%) for individuals with less than a high school graduation than all other educational levels. With only 25.8% of individuals in the County holding a bachelor's degree or higher, the majority of residents are not in a strong position to compete for new technology jobs.

In general, the County lacks diversity in employment. For example, the number of individuals working for the government is disproportionately high at 24.7% of workers; the national average is 14.5%. Conversely, the percent of the County's industry devoted to manufacturing is at only 2.1%; the national average is at 11.3%. The Human Service Council strongly believes that the County is dangerously dependent on military base and contract work and considers this dependence to be a contributing factor to the lack of employment opportunities with upward mobility for individuals unprepared for the high-tech government or government-

support sector jobs. The result has been a relegation of a significant number of citizens to lower-paying jobs in the service sector without opportunities for real income advancement; this situation perpetuates income disparities in St. Mary's County.

Lastly, disparities in employment available to vulnerable populations are a serious concern, as evidenced by:

- 48% unemployment for individuals with disabilities ages 16-64 years of age,
- 90% unemployment for persons with mental illness, and
- 50% unemployment for those being treated for substance abuse.

*Behavioral Health Issues:* Current substance abuse outpatient treatment programs are reaching only 25% of the approximately 4,000 adults in St. Mary's County estimated to be in need of substance abuse services. A similar discrepancy between need and individuals served is seen in mental health treatment. Roughly 6% of the population is estimated to have a serious mental illness and national studies (National Institute of Mental Health, 1990-1992) indicate that 30% of Americans complain of mental health disorder symptoms. Current data shows that individuals with mental health and/or substance abuse issues are strongly impacted by unmet access to care, healthcare, transportation, employment and housing needs. Data also indicates that roughly half of all persons with a mental illness have a co-occurring addiction. A large number of these individuals are indigent and/or uninsured. The St. Mary's County Detention Center has seen a 300% increase of individuals admitted to substance abuse treatment at the center in the past year, with consistent re-entry and pre-trial programs for this population (especially incarcerated women) going under-funded. Providers also report limited access to case management, transportation and employment opportunities for those impacted by mental illness, addiction and/or disabilities, along with increased demand for affordable housing, sober housing, assisted living facilities, nursing homes and youth/adolescent group homes.

Lack of access to care as discussed above poses strong challenges to St. Mary's County and its most vulnerable residents. Five of nine community groups contributing feedback community evaluation efforts named healthcare as a major concern, particularly in terms of lack of access to behavioral care and healthcare for the uninsured and working poor.

Deficits in health impact an unacceptable number of children, the County's most vulnerable residents of all. St. Mary's County's infant and child mortality rates are higher than those of Maryland and higher than the national standard, Healthy People 2010:

- The 2007 infant mortality rate for the County is 10.9 per 1,000 live births, with the Maryland rate at 8.0 and Healthy People 2010 objective at 4.5.
- The 2007 mortality rate for children aged 1 to 4 is 41.2 per 100,000 children, with the Maryland rate at 25.9 and the Healthy People 2010 objective at 18.6.

## **12.5 SYSTEMS OF CARE – GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES**

12.5.1 **Goal:** Assure integrity of health, behavioral health and human service systems of care, within the scope of its authority and responsibility.

A. **Objective:** Development - the County will collaborate with other services and agencies for system development, through the Human Services Council and the Department of Human Services to:

- i. Identify the systems of care for a local health system.
- ii. Delineate core services.
- iii. Assess the gaps in the systems relative to core services.

- B. **Objective:** Delivery – Localize health and human services and help to promote effective delivery of services:
  - i. Develop an action plan appropriate to the County’s responsibilities and authority.
  - ii. Allocate funds and prioritize areas of greatest need and gaps in service.
  - iii. Sustainability – Advocate for sustainable systems of care and funding to accomplish this.
  - iv. Advise the County annually regarding system of care issues.
  - v. Assist the County to identify funding to address gaps in core services, and maximize the use of funds.

**12.6 HUMAN SERVICES – GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES**

12.6.1 **Goal:** Foster a seamless delivery system of care for human services that enhances the citizens’ quality of life and promotes cohesive communities.

- A. **Objective – Access to Care:** Assure access to healthcare for all citizens of the County across their life span.
  - i. Provide technical assistance to veterans in gaining medical benefits.
  - ii. Encourage collaboration of all stakeholders to guarantee services for underserved and vulnerable populations.
  - iii. Devise strategies to address the shortage of healthcare providers.
  - iv. Develop programs to reduce infant and child mortality.
- B. **Objective – Transportation:** Support and promote increased public transportation options that will address deficits for targeted populations.
  - i. Encourage the County to create and fund a position for mobile management.
  - ii. Encourage implementation of recommendations of transportation consultants contributing to the County and the tri-County area.
  - iii. Identify evolving needs of public rider ship and expand rider ship by outreach and education programs.
  - iv. Seek funding to improve transportation for vulnerable populations and improve quality and access to service.
  - v. Develop a plan for public and private stakeholders to improve transportation options.
- C. **Objective Housing –** Assist the County to meet the fundamental housing needs of individuals and families in our communities.
  - i. Provide quality housing and housing services to meet client needs with respect to accessibility, affordability, location, and diversity of cost.
  - ii. Ensure service to clients of limited resources.
  - iii. Include stakeholder input in planning process for new housing.
  - iv. Provide capacity to offer emergency and transitional housing to clients.
  - v. Plan for new housing and encourage “green” practices, energy

conservation, as well as weatherization for redevelopment.

- vi. Assure that comprehensive County planning includes plans for preservation and development of affordable and accessible housing.
- vii. Prompt the County to conduct regular assessments of housing needs and trends to ensure availability of workforce and affordable housing.

D. **Objective** – Employment: Promote a continuum of employment opportunities with emphasis on vulnerable populations.

- i. Help the County provide economic and business incentives for companies to locate in St. Mary’s County, especially those that would offer employment for vulnerable populations.
- ii. Provide support for vulnerable populations seeking higher education and training opportunities for job placement with appropriate agencies.
- iii. Develop partnerships with local business and employment groups to foster and support employment opportunities for vulnerable populations.
- iv. Establish standards and accountability with outcome metrics for employment programs and providers funded by the County.
- v. Work toward a seamless transition of the education system, service providers and local employers to assist youth and adults toward employment opportunities.

## **12.7 BEHAVIORAL HEALTH – GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES**

12.7.1 **Goal:** Support behavioral health through a system providing recovery-oriented services for prevention of recurring problems through treatment.

A. **Objective** – Core Sources: For core services establish funding of core behavioral health treatment to assure health, safety and quality of life for citizens.

- i. Collaborate with community partners to fund core behavioral health, treatment and prevention services; serving veterans, disabled persons and seniors.
- ii. Make recommendations annually from the Department of Human Services to the County Commissioners concerning behavioral health.

B. **Objective** – Available Core Services: Periodically assess the availability of core behavioral health services.

- i. Assess core treatment services as defined by SAMHSA.
- ii. Prompt the Department of Human Services to collaborate with other entities to see that the needs of veterans and special populations are addressed.

C. **Objective** – System Management: Promote the attributes of system care for behavioral health clients.

- i. The Department of Human Services will coordinate the County’s participation in a comprehensive, integrated system of care.
- ii. The Department will collaborate with behavioral fund sources to achieve uniformity and standardization of outcomes.
- iii. Support and foster the integration of behavioral and physical health

services by focusing on care coordination across the whole system of care.

- iv. Provide a forum for collaboration to develop the best possible behavioral care system.

D. **Objective** – Prevention and Early Intervention: Support prevention and early intervention efforts by community partners and other stakeholders.

- i. The Department of Human Services will collaborate with other partners to define prevention and early intervention activities.
- ii. The Department will identify youth in need and make appropriate referrals with the help of the school system, law enforcement, and other providers of services.

## **12.8 LOCAL HEALTH SYSTEM – GOALS, OBJECTIVES, POLICIES**

12.8.1 **Goal:** Using the local health system, promote, protect, maintain and improve the health and safety of residents and visitors.

A. **Objective** – Core Services: Promote core services with collaboration of the local Health Department, St. Mary’s Hospital, and the Department of Human Services.

- i. Ensure that Human Services, St. Mary’s Hospital and the Health Department plan, monitor and provide effective care for improved outcomes for clients.
- ii. Focus support with respect to prevention and intervention to protect health and safety.
- iii. Work with the local health system to fund, support and train and retain healthcare workers and safety workers.
- iv. Assist and support the local health system by promoting disaster and emergency plans.
- v. Help clients affected by the criminal justice system through the system of care to maintain and improve their place in the community.

B. **Objective** – Recognize and encourage community design that adheres to principles for promoting safe physical activity.

- i. Collaborate with other appropriate agencies, such as Recreation and Parks, to promote healthful and safe physical activities, and to enhance the health of citizens by physical activity.

## **12.9 IMPLEMENTATION**

12.9.1 **Goal:** Promote and implement an integrated human service system in St. Mary’s County. Implementation will be consistent with directives from the Board of County Commissioners. This integrated system will come about through the collaborative partnership with all members of the community.

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# THE ST. MARY'S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

## GLOSSARY

AASHTO	American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials
ACIP	Federal Airport Capital Improvement Program
ADA	American with Disabilities Act
AE	Airport Environs
AGP	Annual Growth Policy
APF	Adequate Public Facilities
APZ	Accident Potential Zone
APZ1	Accident Potential Zone – glide zone
APZ2	Accident Potential Zone – rendezvous dispersion zone
AICUZ	Air Installation Compatible Use Zone
ALPD	Agricultural Land Preservation District
BBWRAS	Breton Bay Watershed Restoration Action Strategy
BFE	Base Flood Elevation
BLAP	Boundary Line Adjustment Plat
BLOC	Bicycle Level of Comfort
BMP	Best Management Practices
BNR	Biological Nutrient Removal
BOCC or BCC	St. Mary's County Board of County Commissioners
BRAC	Base Realignment and Closure
CAP	Nutrient Discharge Cap
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CH2M-Hill	Consulting firm that prepared the 2008 Marlay- Taylor Water Reclamation Facility plan for the St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission.
CIP	Capital Improvement Program
CLF	Civilian Labor Force
CLG	Certified Local Government
COA	Certificate of Appropriateness
CNEL	Community Noise Equivalent Level
COMAR	Code of Maryland Regulations
CRS	Community Rating System
CSM	College of Southern Maryland
CWA	Clean Water Act
CWSP	Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan
CZ	Clear Zone
DBED	Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development
DC	District of Columbia – Washington, DC
DOD	Department of Defense
DOI	Declaration of Intent

DLUGM	St. Mary's County Department of Land Use and Growth Management
DME	Distance Measuring Equipment
DNR	Maryland Department of Natural Resources
DPWT	St. Mary's County Department of Public Works and Transportation
EDU	Equivalent Dwelling Unit
ENR	Enhanced Nutrient Removal
EPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
ESD	Environmental Site Design
FAR	Floor Area Ratio
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FIDS	Forest Interior Dwelling Species
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Map
FONSI	Finding of No Significant Impact
FPE	Flood Protection Elevation
GIS	Geographic Information Systems
GPS	Global Positioning System
HB	House Bill
HD	Historic District
HH	Household
HPC	St. Mary's County Historic Preservation Commission
HRLA	Huntersville Rural Legacy Area
HUC	Hydraulic Unit Code
IDA	Intensely Developed Area
ILS	Instrument Landing System
IPA	Installment Purchase Agreement
JLUS	Joint Land use Study
KCI	KCI, Inc. – consulting firm
LDA	Limited Development Area
Ldn	Day-Night Average Sound Level
LEED	Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design
LID	Low-impact Development Practices
LoA	Letter of Authorization
LOS	Level of Service
LPDD	Lexington Park Development District
LPPRP	Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan
LUGM	St. Mary's County Department of Land Use and Growth Management
MALPF	Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation
MD	Maryland
MDNR	Maryland Department of Natural Resources
MDP	Maryland Department of Planning
MDE	Maryland Department of the Environment
MGD	Million Gallons per Day
MG/L	Milligrams per liter
MGS	Maryland Geological Survey



MET	Maryland Environmental Trust
METCOM	St. Mary's County Metropolitan Commission
MHT	Maryland Historic Trust
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRLA	Mattapany Rural Legacy Area
MS4	Medium Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
MTA	Maryland Transit Administration
NAS	Naval Air Station or Patuxent River Naval Air Station
NAVAIR	Naval Air Systems Command
NCU	Non-Conforming Use
NFIP	National Flood Insurance Program
NGVD	National Geodetic Vertical Datum
NOI	Notice of Intent
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NPS	No Planned Service
OS	Open Space
OSDS	Onsite Sewage Disposal System
PAX	Patuxent River Naval Air Station
PFA	Priority Funding Area
PFI	Public Facilities Infrastructure
POR	Parcel of Record
POS	Point of Service (Transportation) Point of Source (Environmental)
	Program Open Space (Land Use)
PPA	Priority Preservation Area
PPF	Priority Preservation Funding
PUD	Planned Unit Development
RCA	Resource Conservation Area
RCL	Rural Limited Commercial
RH	Residential, High Density
RL	Residential, Low Density
RLA	Rural Legacy Area
RLS	Consulting firm that assessed St. Mary's Transit System resulting in the Transportation Development Plan of 2007
RMX	Residential, Mixed Use
RPD	Rural Preservation District
RSC	Rural Service Centers
SAMHSA	Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration
SAV	Submerged Aquatic Vegetation
SB	Senate Bill
SCD	St. Mary's County Soil Conservation District
SF	Square Foot
SHA	State Highway Administration
SMC	St. Mary's County
SMECO	Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative
SMHEC	Southern Maryland Higher Education Center
SMRTABS	Southern Maryland Regional Trail and Bikeway System

SMRWRAS	St. Mary's River Watershed Restoration Action Strategy
STEM	Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics
STS	St. Mary's Transit System
TCC	Tri County Council for Southern Maryland
TEA-21	Transportation Equity Act for the 21 <sup>st</sup> Century
TEC	Technical Evaluation Committee
TDP	Transportation Development Plan
TDR	Transferable Development Right
TMDL	Total Maximum Daily Load
TOD	Transit Oriented Development
UAV	Unmanned Aerial Vehicle
U&O	Use and Occupancy or Certificate of Occupancy
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USGS	United States Geological Services
VFD	Volunteer Fire Department
VR	Vested Right
WIA	Workforce Investment Act
WRAS	Watershed Restoration Action Strategy
WWTP	Wastewater Treatment Plant

**THE ST. MARY’S COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

**APPENDIX**

**APPENDIX 1: PLANNING COMMISSION RESOLUTION NO. 09-05 .....3**  
**APPENDIX 2A: PATUXENT RIVER NAS AICUZ BOUNDARY (EXISTING) .....5**  
**APPENDIX 2B: CONCEPT ACCIDENT POTENTIAL ZONES FOR WEBSTER FIELD .....6**  
**APPENDIX 3: LIST OF PLANS INCORPORATED BY REFERENCE .....7**  
**APPENDIX 4: WATER RSOURCES ELEMENT APPENDIX .....8**

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Appendix 1: Planning Commission Resolution No. 09-05

**RESOLUTION**

**WHEREAS**, in response to the requirements of the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 66B, Section 3.05(b)(2), which requires that at least once every 6 years, each Planning Commission shall review and, if necessary, revise or amend the local plan; and

**WHEREAS**, said Article 66B, Section 3.05(a)(4)(vi) requires a Planning Commission to make and approve a plan that the commission shall recommend to the local legislative body for adoption and that said plan shall contain a water resources plan element; and

**WHEREAS**, pursuant to said Article 66B, Section 3.05(a)(8), and with Section 2-518 of the Agriculture Article, a Priority Preservation Areas element has been prepared and included to further advance the purposes of the plan; and

**WHEREAS**, in April 2008 the Board of County Commissioners directed the Planning Commission and the Department of Land Use and Growth Management (hereinafter DLUGM) to proceed with the review of the 2002 Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, interagency and community meetings were conducted in June and July of 2008 for the purpose of gathering input from citizens for the review of the Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, a Public Hearing Draft Comprehensive Plan was assembled and dated April 13, 2009 (hereinafter called the Draft Plan) by DLUGM with direction from the Planning Commission; and

**WHEREAS**, at least 60 days prior to a public hearing, the Planning Commission did provide copies of the Draft Plan to all adjoining planning jurisdictions and to all State and local jurisdictions that have responsibility for financing or constructing public improvements necessary to implement the plan, as required by Section 3.07(c) of said Article 66B; and

**WHEREAS**, in May 2009 letters were sent to the owners of properties potentially affected by proposals within the Draft Plan to reduce the size and status of growth areas defined by the 2002 Comprehensive Plan; and

**WHEREAS**, public hearings on the Draft Plan were duly advertised and conducted by the Planning Commission on June 22, 2009, July 13, 2009 and July 27, 2009; and

**WHEREAS**, the public record was closed on August 3, 2009; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission conducted work sessions in August and September 2009 during meetings that were duly announced and open to the public for the purpose of evaluating the public record; and

**WHEREAS**, instructions were given to DLUGM staff to prepare revised plan for review and acceptance by the Planning Commission at its regular meeting of September 28, 2009; and

**WHEREAS**, at said September 28, 2009 meeting DLUGM staff explained that an appendix that is required to accompany the Water Resource Element was still being completed but would be included in the Planning Commission's recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners; and

**WHEREAS**, at said meeting of September 28 the Planning Commission gave final instruction to DLUGM staff for preparing a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners.

PC Resolution No. 09-05

Subject: Comprehensive Plan 6-Year Review  
Recommendation to Board of County Commissioners

Page 2 of 2

**NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** by the St. Mary's County Planning Commission that the Comprehensive Plan as drafted and presented on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of September 2009 and revised pursuant to specific instruction from the Planning Commission at its regular meeting on that date, is hereby approved and is recommended to the Board of County Commissioners for adoption.

Date of Adoption: September 28, 2009

Ayes: 6 Nays: 1 Abstain: 0

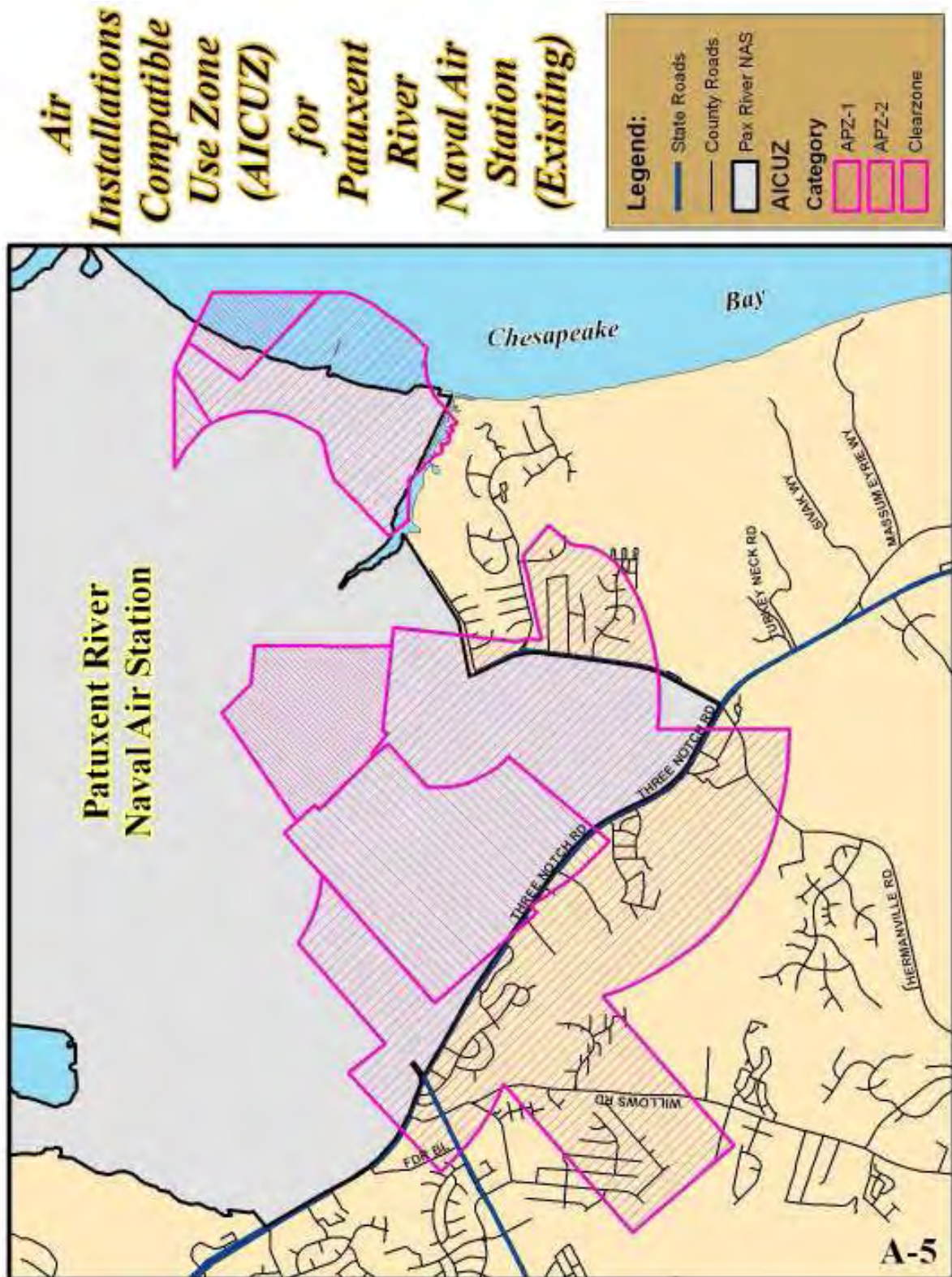
**ST. MARY'S COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION**

  
Stephen T. Reeves, Chairman

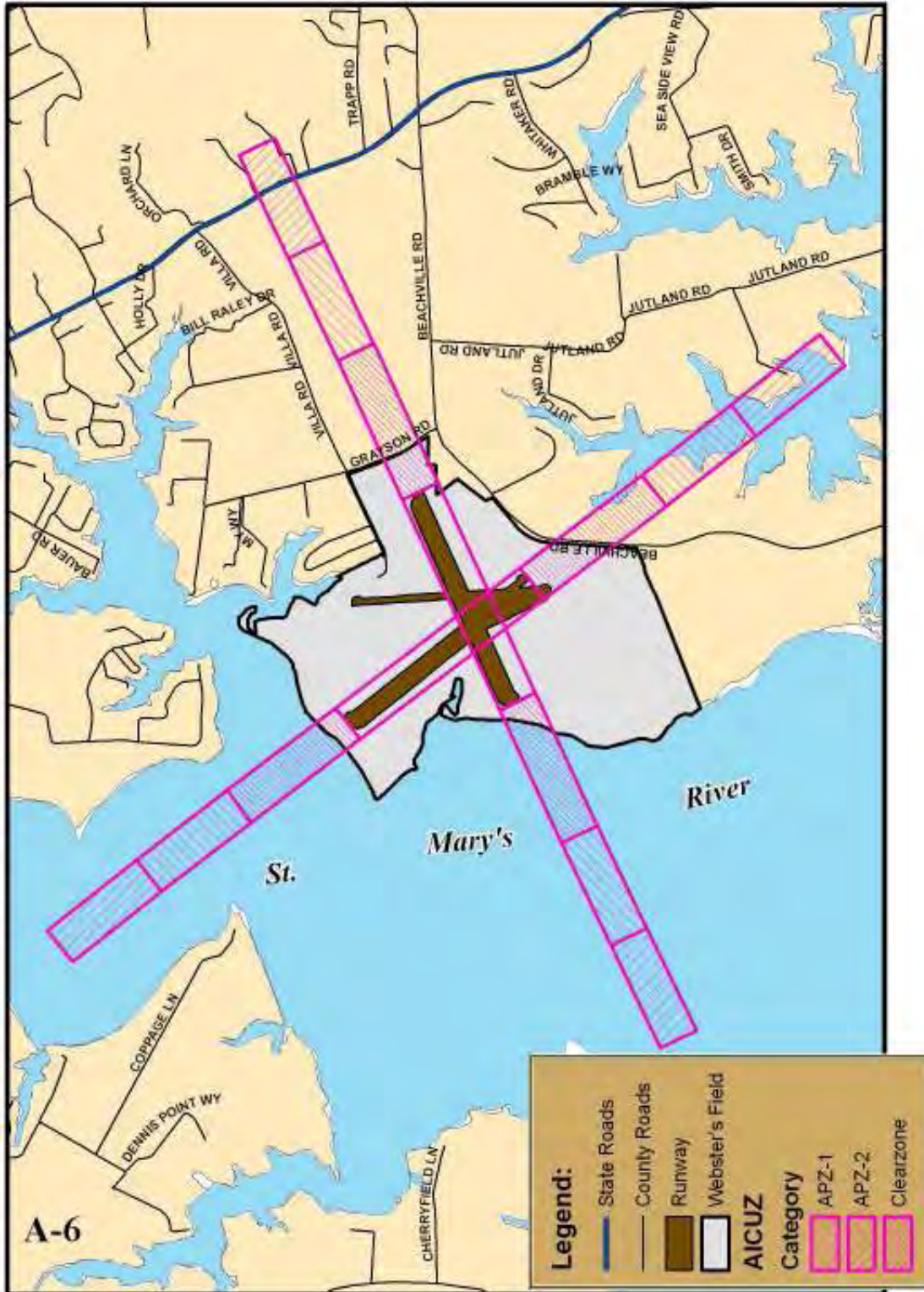
Attest:

  
Derick Berlage, Director  
Department of Land Use and Growth Management

Appendix 2A: Patuxent River NAS AICUZ Boundary (existing)



**Concept Accident Potential Zones for Webster Field**



A-6



Appendix 3: List of Plans Incorporated by Reference

1. The St. Mary's County Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan
2. The St. Mary's County Solid Waste Management Plan
3. The St. Mary's County Transportation Plan
4. The St. Mary's County Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan
5. The Critical Area Program as included in the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance
6. The Southern Maryland Heritage Areas Plan
7. The Huntersville Rural Legacy Plan
8. The Mattapany Rural Legacy Plan
9. The Lexington Park Development District Master Plan
10. The Forest Conservation Plan as included in the St. Mary's County Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance
11. Painting a Self Portrait – A Historic Preservation Plan for St. Mary's County
12. The Religious Freedom Scenic Byway Management Plan
13. The Elms Property Master Plan
14. Educational Facilities Master Plan for St. Mary's County Public Schools
15. Carver Heights Community Park Concept Plan
16. Myrtle Point Park Master Plan
17. Master Plan for County Owned Charlotte Hall Property
1. OTHER SUPPORTING DOCUMENTSSt. Mary's County Library Comprehensive and Integrated System Analysis and Recommendations, 2007
2. St. Mary's County Emergency Operations Plan

## **Water Resources Element APPENDIX**

As of June 2009 there were 10,250 residential sewer customers totaling 13,832 Equivalent Dwelling Units (EDUs) and 710 commercial customers totaling 2,227 EDUs. Analysis of the balance of parcels in the County based on 2009 Maryland PropertyView and Metropolitan Commission (MetCom) data indicates that there are an estimated 19,398 septic systems. There are \_\_\_ private wells and \_\_\_ water system customers.

Through 2030 the total proposed number of new residential dwellings is 19,300 dwellings. Of these the estimated 5790 rural dwellings will be located on individual septic systems (OSDS) with up to 25% of the new systems required to be denitrifying systems. An estimated 40% of the new rural dwellings will be in developments of greater than 25 lots and required be on community water systems, with the balance (60%) served by private wells. In the Growth Areas, approximately 75% of the estimated 13,510 new dwelling units will be in Lexington Park, Hollywood Growth Areas, and the Leonardtown municipality, and will be required per County regulations to be connected to public sewer and water. As the sewer network is expanded, adjacent Growth Area development currently served by septic systems will be required to connect. The balance of the development is anticipated to occur in Growth areas not currently served by sewer or water. All major subdivisions of 26 lots or more in these areas will be connected to community wells and whenever feasible to community septic systems. The County will continue to address failed septic systems in areas where failures cannot be addressed by replacement OSDS through connection to a sewage treatment plant. Where replacement OSDS can be provided the County contemplates requiring an upgrade to denitrifying systems.

The County intends to pursue future waste water treatment systems for the Growth Areas designated in this Plan that are not currently served (or currently planned to be served) through use of land application plants similar to the St. Clements Shores and the Wicomico Shores plants. Changes to State regulations and policies to remove impediments to the placement of these land intensive treatment facilities in areas outside of (but adjacent to) currently un-served Growth Areas will be necessary to pursue this intent.

The County has established a goal to develop Water Supply Capacity Management Plans for each water system. This will facilitate proactive management of new permits and the review of existing water appropriation and use permits to ensure that the permitted allocations are adequate to meet water demands.

In 2008 the Metropolitan Commission updated the facilities plan for the Marlay Taylor Water Reclamation Facility to addresses plant expansion and nutrient management upgrades. An upgrade to be completed in 2010 is a cogeneration facility that will utilize methane to generate electricity for plant operations and for transmission of excess energy into the County's electrical grid. Methane recovery is anticipated to provide a net nutrient reduction.

The Comprehensive Plan requires that TMDLs developed for impaired water bodies be considered in the implementation of the plan and in land use and development planning. County policies require new development use Environmental Site Design and enhanced storm water management to achieve minimal increases in stormwater flow and maximum water quality improvements. Retrofits to address development that occurred prior to implementation of

## Appendix 4: Water Resources Element Background Data and Summary

regulations requiring stormwater quantity and quality controls are needed. The Army Corps of Engineers' (ACOE) Feasibility Study for the St. Mary's River basin identified 28 sites in need of storm water quantity and quality retrofits which will manage runoff from approximately 280 acres of existing unmanaged or inadequately managed development in Lexington Park (predominately within the Lower Potomac River Basin). A prior ACOE identified 3 sites in the Patuxent Watershed in Lexington Park. Watershed Restoration Action Strategies developed for Breton Bay (in the Lower Potomac Watershed) and in progress for the St. Mary's River will be implemented to address County watershed protection and restoration goals as well as provide background as the County develops its NPDES program. The NPDES program will address the following TMDLs established for the County's waterways.

- TMDLs of Fecal Coliform for Restricted Shellfish Harvesting Areas in Solomons Island Harbor, Washington and Persimmon Creeks, and Cuckold Creek of the Patuxent River Lower Basin in Calvert and St. Mary's Counties, Maryland, Sept. 27, 2005
- TMDLs of Fecal Coliform for Restricted Shellfish Harvesting Areas in the St. Mary's River Basin in St. Mary's County, MD, June 7, 2005
- TMDLs of Mercury for St. Mary's Lake, St. Mary's County, Maryland, Feb. 23, 2004
- TMDLs of Nitrogen, Phosphorus and Biochemical Oxygen Demand for Breton Bay in St. Mary's County, Maryland, Dec. 19, 2005.  
Note: Implementation of the Breton Bay WRAS recommendations for expanded homeowner education for behavior modification, increased implementation of BMPs to manage agricultural sources of runoff, stream channel stabilization and restoration, and upgrades of the wastewater treatment plant are identified in the WRAS and will be necessary to address the TMDLs.
- TMDLs and Water Quality Analysis of Fecal Coliform for Restricted Shellfish Harvesting Areas in the Lower Choptank River Basin in Talbot and Dorchester Counties, Maryland June 7, 2005
- TMDLs of Fecal Coliform for Restricted Shellfish Harvesting Areas in the St. Clements Bay in St. Mary's County, Maryland, June 7, 2005
- TMDLs of Fecal Coliform for Restricted Shellfish Harvesting Areas in the Wicomico River Watershed Basin (Charleston Creek and Chaptico Bay) in Charles and St. Mary's Counties, Maryland, May 25, 2005
- TMDLs for Island Creek, Town Creek, Trent Hall Creek, St. Thomas Creek, Harper and Pearson Creeks, Goose Creek and Indian Creek and a Water Quality Analysis for Battle Creek of Fecal Coliform for Restricted Shellfish Harvesting Areas in the Lower Patuxent River Basin in Calvert, Charles, and St. Mary's Counties, Maryland, May 25, 2005
- TMDLs of Fecal Coliform for Restricted Shellfish Harvesting Areas in the St. Mary's River Basin in St. Mary's County, Maryland, May 25, 2005
- TMDLs of Fecal Coliform for Restricted Shellfish Harvesting Areas in the Potomac River Lower Tidal Basin in St. Mary's County, Maryland, May 25, 2005

A principal goal of the County water resources planning is to prevent increased stream and water quality degradation rather than allowing degradation which will need expensive future restoration and retrofits.

#### Appendix 4: Water Resources Element Background Data and Summary

- County regulations are anticipated to provide the maximum possible protection for streams including segments that have or are might be pending Tier II designation. The majority of existing Tier II water segments are located within priority preservation and natural resource focus areas proposed for minimal future development and maximum future land conservation in the County. County regulations generally place a high priority on protection of the County's extensive stream and wetland systems, and floodplains. Stream, wetland, and floodplain buffers (100 feet from top of bank expanded for adjacent steep slopes and erodible soils, 25 feet from wetlands expanded for hydric soils and 50 foot floodplain buffers) encompass 38% of the Lower Potomac Basin and 29% of the Patuxent Basin. In the Rural Planning Area, the County requires open space protection for all major developments (defined as subdivision having 6 lots or more) and mandatory land protection, including use of TDRs; it is estimated that approximately 54% of all existing rural lands in the County will be permanently preserved for farm, forest and natural resource uses as a result of these protections.
- All new development will be required to comply with Environmental Site Design and to provide stormwater quality and quantity management. The County is currently completing a contract (final product due by 2010) to map all impervious surfaces and forest coverage per 2007 aerials and intends to use the information to perform detailed subwatershed analysis. These watershed studies will be used to inform development of the NPDES for the County. If indicated by the studies, the County will consider establishing impervious surface limits based on land use including provisions for open space and stormwater offsets to compensate for exceeding the limits when a small parcel cannot accommodate permitted uses. The County will also consider whether establishing a stormwater utility is needed to provide funding for currently identified and future stormwater retrofit and stream restoration projects.

St. Mary's County estimates that the percentage of new growth to be served by public water and sewer will be 70% (page 7-2) and that this percentage is sufficient to achieve the statewide land use goal.

- There are an estimated 27,000 parcels and lots in the rural County that are less than 15 acres in size. County regulations include provisions to reduce development on these parcels and lots when they cannot meet zoning requirements. The regulations require consolidation of adjacent lots in common ownership that fail to meet current density requirements. The County allowed and has seen significant transfer of development rights from such lots, especially from those that are environmentally constrained. In 2009 staff prepared an ordinance revision that will allow development rights to be lifted from environmentally constrained lots in any other zoning district provided the TDR is utilized only in designated Growth Areas.
- An analysis of parcels and lots 15 acres or larger that can be subdivided under the current 1:5 density and TDR regulations finds that only 9,500 total new rural lots would be permitted. When rural density is allowed to increase up to 1 dwelling

## Appendix 4: Water Resources Element Background Data and Summary

per 3 acres, the TDR requirement protects additional acreage and reduces the 9,500 lot potential build out. Once the maximum density is achieved (estimated to take approximately 40 years given the annual growth policy), 100 percent of development on newly created lots will occur in the designated Growth Areas.

- The Growth Areas occupy 11.85% of the County area (27,228 acres). A goal within Growth Areas is to limit sprawling single family developments in the Lexington Park Development District (17,000 acres), the Town of Leonardtown (2,075 acres) and in the Hollywood Town Center (1,200 acres), which make up approximately 75% of the Growth Areas, and which have access to public sewer and water. If sewer and water service become generally available in Charlotte Hall, or if the planned expansion of the Leonardtown wastewater treatment plant results in available capacity to accommodate growth in the Leonardtown Development District, a more densely urban pattern of development will be encouraged in these areas as well. For the remaining Town Centers, expected development will consist of single family homes and town houses, which are more compatible with the relatively rural setting of these centers. Development patterns in the Village Centers, which have limited or no current access to public sewer and water, will consist predominately of single family dwellings.
- Concentration of development is anticipated to provide opportunities for vertical development, structured parking, and combined storm water management facilities to manage water quantity and quality when warranted. The limitations on rural expansion are intended to provide pressure for infill and redevelopment in areas currently developed with low density and sprawling development. Redevelopment will necessitate improvements in stormwater management providing both water quality and quantity controls which will reduce nutrient, sediment and other pollutants entering the receiving streams in the St. Mary's River, Breton Bay, and Patuxent River watersheds.

Analysis from the Maryland Geological Survey indicates that the water supply will continue to be sufficient for the foreseeable future, based on the 2002 land use plan and need projections. Although, countywide, water use will increase, the County must continue efforts to upgrade the central water supply system to reduce losses due to leaks; it must implement outreach and provide education about and implement requirements for water conservation; and it must pursue increased water reuse, initially for industrial and nonpotable needs and eventually for grey water systems in dwellings. These efforts are anticipated to reduce per capita water usage and assure that water demand is less than projected in the MGS study for the projected period.

In order to facilitate calculation of overall demand, the CH2MHill study calculated water demand and wastewater flows for all areas studied, regardless of whether they are on public water and sewer service. The Water and Sewer Facilities Plan for Pine Hill Run Sanitary District #8 and Piney Point provides a detailed demand analysis for water supply in the Lexington Park Development District and the Hollywood and Piney Point Town Centers. The County will need to provide a forecast of the 2030 water demand (residential and non-residential) expected in each of the other Growth Areas using the study parameters used by CH2MHill for the referenced study. A detailed description of the existing water service districts is provided in the CWSP

## Appendix 4: Water Resources Element Background Data and Summary

Chapter 3 section 3.8. and the CH2MHill study identifies the demands for Pine Hull Run (District 8) and for Piney Point (District 5).

The 2008 CH2MHill Facilities Plan and Needs Assessment (Chapter 7) identifies the needs for expansions, upgrades and projecting demand for the areas served by the Marlay Taylor Water Reclamation Facility, which serves the Lexington Park Development District and the Hollywood, and Piney Point Town Centers. The sewer and water authority (MetCom) has decided that this facility should be upgraded for enhanced nutrient removal (ENR) at the current plant capacity of 6 mgd, with a phased expansion to 7.5 mgd deferred to a later date. The Metropolitan Commission has adopted CH2MHill's high-end projections for the purposes of planning future water and sewer conveyance facilities. The time frames reflected in these projections should be taken as general guidance and implementation of new facilities should only begin when actual flows reach preset flow triggers, which is typically 80 to 90 percent of current facility capacity. The Master Planning growth analysis initially resulted in the conclusion that 9 mgd capacity would be required to meet 2030 flow projections. This was later revised to 7.5 mgd expansion, deferred to sometime after ENR upgrade by 2012 with the current 6 mgd capacity. The planned facilities upgrades are expected to accommodate the growth anticipated within the Lexington Park Development District and the Hollywood, and Piney Point Town Centers per the County goal of directing 70% of future growth into designated Growth Areas.

The Plan proposes to designate as Rural Area several areas previously designated as Growth Areas and has made minor amendments to bring schools and other public facilities into nearby Growth Areas. This change will reduce overall development area in New Market, Mechanicsville, and Hollywood Town Centers. There are also changes proposed to the build-out potential of the Lexington Park Development District (LPDD) due to planned implantation of a Low density residential Transition area (included in the LPDD master plan but as yet not implemented in the zoning ordinance). These changes are anticipated to reduce loss of forested habitat and reduce overall imperviousness in these areas, which will result in reduced. For Lexington Park and Hollywood the reductions in these areas will provide added capacity to serve increased concentrations of development on sewer and water in higher density areas. Outside sewer service areas the changes will reduce the number of septic tanks, reduce runoff directed toward erodible soils and identified sensitive steep stream valleys in the Patuxent River watershed.

Significant portions of the Priority Funding Area (PFA) "Comment Areas" designated by the State have been removed from the Planned Growth areas. Additional changes in concept uses are intended to eliminate the proposed RL-T areas from the PFAs. The County intends to realign the PFAs to eliminate "Comment Areas." By adding schools and public facilities into Growth Areas, the County intends to facilitate the planning and funding of necessary infrastructure for areas that are accommodated by and in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan and PFA designations.

### **OUTSTANDING ISSUES**

Note that this September 28, 2009 draft does not yet include a point and nonpoint source pollution forecast or discuss whether the streams are suitable receiving waters for expected land use impacts. This analysis is in process and will be added to a later edition of this appendix. The later edition will provide Nonpoint Source Loading Analysis, which will include the land use of Leonardtown. If it becomes available, the later edition will be informed by the town's Municipal

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Growth Element (MGE) as well. In the absence of a completed MGE, assumptions will be made regarding future municipal growth. TMDL implementation and NPDES development will be coordinated to assure that pollution forecast is accurate for receiving waters and that the collective impact of land use change on receiving waters is addressed.

The plan must include a discussion on whether the streams are suitable receiving waters for expected land use impacts. The combined point and non-point source pollution impacts, as well as impervious surface impacts, upon receiving waters should be discussed in this context. If the County can reduce future impacts by adjusting its land use plan, then the plan should discuss recommendations for doing so. More than one land use plan scenario should be analyzed.

The nutrient caps for the Lower Potomac River basin are 1.65 million pounds of nitrogen and .10 million pounds of phosphorus. The revised caps for the Patuxent River basin are 2.46 million pounds of nitrogen and .21 million pounds of phosphorus. The St Mary's County portion of these nutrient caps are identified in the Tributary Strategy point source caps for both major and minor systems. These are to be provided in the later edition of this appendix and compared to future point source discharges.