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December 1990

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# Cecil County Comprehensive Plan

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*Cecil County Board of County Commissioners*

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Clair E. Carrick, Sr., Member  
Merritt B. Dean, Member

*Cecil County Planning Commission*

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RESOLUTION  
OF ADOPTION

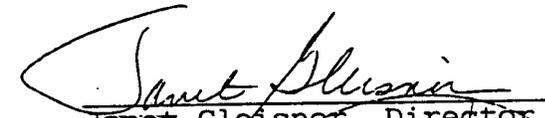
WHEREAS, pursuant to Article 66B of the Code of Public General Laws of Maryland, the Planning Department of Cecil County, Maryland has prepared a Comprehensive Plan for the County; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission held public hearings for the Comprehensive Plan on June 25, 1990 and June 27, 1990, and thereafter approved the Comprehensive Plan for Cecil County, Maryland which is hereby submitted for adoption by the Commissioners,

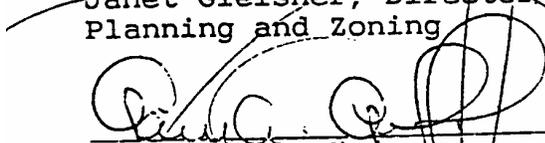
NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the County Commissioners of Cecil County, Maryland, on October 16, 1990, that the Comprehensive Plan for Cecil County submitted with the approval of the Planning Commission be and the same is hereby adopted as the Comprehensive Plan for Cecil County, to become effective December 1, 1990.

ATTEST:

BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND

  
Janet Gleisner, Director  
Planning and Zoning

  
Clifton L. Buckworth  
President

  
Gary Griffith, Chairman  
Cecil Co. Planning Commission

  
Clair E. Carrick, Sr.

  
Merritt B. Dean

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## Acknowledgements

*The Cecil County Board of County Commissioners thanks the members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee for their service to the community in the preparation of the 1990 Cecil County Comprehensive Plan.*

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*The preparation of this plan was financed in part through a comprehensive planning grant from the Maryland Office of Planning.*

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## INTRODUCTION

Section 3.05 of Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland requires the Cecil County Planning Commission "...to make and approve a plan to guide public and private decisions to insure that development of public and private property in appropriate relationships..." Article 66B requires that the Plan contain, as a minimum, the following elements:

- a statement of goals and objectives;
- a land use plan;
- a transportation plan;
- a community facilities plan;
- a mineral resources plan; and
- a fisheries plan

This Comprehensive Plan has been created and adopted in response to these requirements of State law. The Comprehensive Plan contains the required sections as well as a housing plan and a plan for business and industry.

The Comprehensive Plan for Cecil County is made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing the coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the County, and best promoting health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and general welfare.

The Comprehensive Plan was prepared with the guidance of a thirty-member Comprehensive Plan Committee appointed by the County Commissioners. Members represented each of the Election Districts and various groups with special interest in the future of the County's land and its citizens. The committee met many times in 1988-90. Its deliberations and review played a central role in the formation of plan goals and recommended policies. The planning process proceeded in several phases:

**Phase 1. Identification of Issues.** Issues of concern to the Comprehensive Plan were identified at public and committee meetings. In addition, a survey of newspaper readers elicited responses from many citizens on issues of concern to the planning process.

**Phase 2. Preparation of Draft Goals and Objectives.** The Committee reviewed goals and objectives from the previous Comprehensive Plan and modified these by additions, changes, and deletions.

**Phase 3. Collection and Analysis of Data.** Based on the identified issues and the draft goals and

objectives, basic information about the County was assembled and analyzed. This information is summarized in a series of Background Papers, each dealing with a different aspect of the natural or built environment in the County. These papers were presented and reviewed by the Committee. The background papers are on file in the Cecil County Office of Planning and Zoning.

**Phase 4. Determination of Plan Implementation Policies.** The Committee reviewed and advised the County on a series of plan implementation tools and policies for land use and resource protection in the County. The policies considered are discussed in a series of papers dealing with growth management, agriculture, mineral extraction, transportation, and natural resource protection. The Committee endorsed the application of certain implementation tools in the Comprehensive Plan. The policy implementation papers and the Committee's policy decisions are on file in the Cecil County Office of Planning and Zoning.

**Phase 5. Draft Plan Review.** The draft Comprehensive Plan was assembled from materials developed in the previous phases and presented to the Committee for review and comment. The Committee then recommended the draft Plan to the Planning Commission.

**Phase 6. Planning Commission Review.** The Cecil County Planning Commission reviewed the draft Comprehensive Plan, received the public comment on it at a public hearing, and after appropriate revisions, recommended to the County Commissioners that the Plan be adopted.

**Phase 7. County Commissioners Review.** The Cecil County Board of County Commissioners received the draft Plan from the Planning Commission, held public hearings on plan adoption, and on October 16, 1990, voted to adopt the Plan to guide public and private development decisions in the County. This Comprehensive Plan goes into effect on December 1, 1990.

## MAJOR PLAN FEATURES

The Land Use Plan divides the County into seven types of districts. The land uses in each district and their intensities are determined by their location with respect to sewer, water and road infrastructure, and by the value placed on their natural resources. Future growth is directed to the Development, Town, Suburban Districts, and, to a limited extent, the Village District. Most of these districts are located in or near the I-95 and U.S. Route 40 corridor.

Over the 20-year planning horizon to which this Plan is directed, the County is forecasted to grow from its present 78,000 residents to approximately 99,300. The distribution of new development will depend to a large extent on the County's ability to provide a public water supply and a sewer system to the Development, Town, and Suburban Districts recommended in this Plan. Development in these districts is currently limited by insufficient water supply and sewerage infrastructure. The County is studying the feasibility of a major water supply line along the I-95 and U.S. Route 40 corridor from an intake in the Susquehanna River. Until the water supply is available and sewerage collection and treatment facilities are constructed, a significant amount of the growth in the County will occur at low densities in the Rural Conservation and Resource Protection Districts. When the districts recommended for more intense development have the necessary infrastructure, the County should implement measures to attract development into these districts and discourage development in the Rural Conservation and Resource Protection Districts.

The Plan recommends that developers in the Development, Town, Suburban, and Village Districts be encouraged to reserve portions of development sites for future development when public sewer and water become available. This development reserve is intended to make better use of publicly financed infrastructure by anticipating a more compact development form.

In the rural areas of the County, the Plan does not encourage development unrelated to agricultural and forestry resources, and recommends against the provision of public infrastructure or urban services. The Plan, however, does permit low density residential development and encourages such development to cluster structures on a small part of the site so that the rest may be retained permanently as open space for farming or forestry use.

The Land Use Plan presents guidelines for development in the various districts created by the Plan. The implementation section of the Plan recommends that these guidelines be incorporated as performance standards in the County's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations.

Maps displaying the land use and other natural and manmade features of the County are assembled at the end of the Plan. The Land Use Plan map is included in this series.

The goals and objectives of the Cecil County Comprehensive Plan seek to implement the visions of the Governor's 2020 Panel Report on growth within the Chesapeake Bay Watershed.

## GOALS

The following goals present Cecil County's vision for the future. They describe desired future characteristics of the County, and address land use, economic development, the physical environment, the social environment and managing the County government and facilities. Measurable standards, criteria and recommendations for implementing the goals are provided in the Land Use Plan, Transportation Plan, Housing Plan, Plan for Business and Industry, and sections on Community Facilities and Public Services, and Fisheries.

Goals were developed by the Comprehensive Plan Committee at the beginning of the planning process, and refined during the development of the Comprehensive Plan. Initially, goals were developed by reviewing goals and objectives from the previous comprehensive plan, and revising those goals based on an identification and understanding of issues (Phases 1 and 2). Later, as land use and resource protection policies were formulated, additional goals were developed, or existing goals modified to express policy decisions made by the Committee in Phase 4. Finally, as the draft Comprehensive Plan was assembled, plan elements were reviewed to ensure that goals were consistently and adequately addressed by the Plan (Phase 5).

## LAND USE

1. Achieve quality growth of the County by maintaining desirable, existing community characteristics in new development, recognizing existing settlement patterns in rural areas, and providing for appropriate expansion.
2. Provide flexible, enforceable development controls.
3. Maintain agricultural uses by resisting encroachment of development into prime agricultural lands, and physically separating other land uses from agricultural activities.
4. Concentrate high density development in carefully designated areas contiguous to existing population centers and public facilities.
5. Restrict strip development.
6. Provide areas for orderly suburban growth at densities consistent with the ability of the County to provide adequate infrastructure.

7. Reduce trip length and number of trips by encouraging compatible mixed use development.
8. Reduce conflicts between incompatible uses.
9. Plan for the efficient location of schools, libraries, health and medical facilities, and other public service.

### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

1. Capitalize on the availability of Bainbridge as an economic asset to the County
2. Attract suitable commerce and industry to Cecil County.
3. Encourage cooperation between public and private interests to promote agricultural enterprises in the County.
4. Encourage the training and development of a labor force to fulfill the needs of local industry.
5. Encourage a balance of residential development and employment opportunities in the County so that tax revenues are retained within the County.
6. Permit the development of agriculture and forestry support enterprises in the Rural Conservation District and Resource Protection District, including farm implement sales and servicing, seed and fertilizer dealers, and industries that process agricultural and forestry products grown in the County.
7. Encourage the economic viability of farm operations by permitting agriculture-related retailing on farms.
8. Maintain the equity value of agricultural land.
9. Protect mineral resources for future extraction and provide for reclamation of extracted land for other appropriate uses.
10. Accommodate commercial harvesting of finfish and shellfish by preserving commercial fishing interests and access to the waterways.

### **PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

1. Protect and preserve the agricultural character of the landscape.

2. Adopt a regional concept for sewage and wastewater treatment to eliminate proliferation of wastewater treatment plant point discharges.
3. Plan and encourage a water supply under the control of the County government for the needs of development within the County.
4. Assure that proper storm water management and sediment and erosion controls are enforced.
5. Promote the use of sound agricultural practices to reduce erosion and runoff.
6. Develop close cooperation with all government agencies in protecting shorelines, wetlands and waters of Cecil County.
7. Strictly control development in and adjacent to sensitive and critical resource areas to protect natural resources.
8. Maintain the rural character of the County by planning for the preservation of prime agricultural land, open space and forests.
9. Devote additional local resources to agricultural preservation activities.
10. Encourage the protection of prime agricultural land and resist encroachment of development into them.

### **SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT**

1. Maintain an adequately funded educational program to insure competent academic and vocational training at the secondary and community college level.
2. Provide adult education programs to offer training for new employment opportunities and personal enrichment, as well as special programs for the handicapped.
3. Plan for efficient location of schools, libraries, health and medical facilities and other public services.
4. Acquire land and develop appropriate recreation facilities for all major user groups.
5. Accommodate residential growth by providing for a range of housing types to meet identified needs.

6. Identify housing needs of the economically disadvantaged and the homeless within Cecil County.
7. Provide a public transportation program that meets the needs of citizens and commerce for safety, mobility and convenient access to everyday destinations.
8. Encourage the identification, preservation and restoration of sites and structures having historic significance, and control development in their vicinity to protect their visual character.

## MANAGEMENT

1. Assure that the standards derived from plan goals are measurable, that they are incorporated into land use regulations and programs, and resources are provided for their enforcement.
2. Assure that public facilities and institutions are maintained in an efficient manner.
3. Keep existing ordinances and procedures up to date.
4. Provide and promote public access to governmental processes.
5. Encourage members of the public to assume an active role in the exercise of the governmental function.
6. Establish and maintain close coordination between County and Towns to plan for future annexation by the Towns.

## LAND USE PLAN

Cecil County maintains a rural character through out most of its area. Agricultural use and forests comprise over 90 percent of the County's area outside the incorporated Towns. Agricultural uses predominate in the costal plain, south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, and in the Piedmont in the north central section of the County. Large forested areas cover the east bank of the Susquehanna, the area south of Theodore Road between Port Deposit and North East, and on the Elk Neck peninsula.

The location and form or recent growth in the County is determined by growth pressure

originating in the Wilmington-Newark area, and to a lesser extent, from Baltimore. Access to job opportunities in these urban areas is provided by Interstate 95 and US Route 40. There is also growth pressure being felt south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal that originates from southern New Castle County, Delaware. Although the towns and adjacent areas in the I-95 corridor with public water and sewer service have absorbed some of the growth, most residential development has been in the form of moderate to low density subdivisions along rural roads in the Piedmont farming area north of I-95. This development is either served by small privately owned central water supply and sewage treatment facilities or has onsite wells and septic systems. Although the County is predominantly rural, it appears more developed than it is, due to the concentration of development along roads.

The land use plan for Cecil County defines seven land use districts and an overlay zone for the Critical Area. These districts recognize existing land use patterns and are responsive to the Goals and Objectives for the Comprehensive Plan. Each district emphasizes a particular intensity of land use or resource and allows a specific mix of development consistent with the principal goal of the district. The seven districts and the guidelines attached to them are intended to serve as a guide to the comprehensive rezoning of the County. The main characteristics of the land use districts are summarized below:

**Development District.** The Development District is located in or near the I-95/Route 40 corridor. Due to their location for ready access to transportation networks, current level of development, and actual or planned infrastructure, these areas are determined to be the most suitable for the most intense development in the County. The Development District surrounds the Towns of Elkton and North East, Perryville, and Port Deposit.

**Town District.** Town Districts surround the Towns of Rising Sun, Chesapeake City, and Cecilton and accommodate expansion consistent with their essential characters.

**Village District.** Designation of Village District seeks to protect the character of a number of rural crossroad and waterfront villages by separating them with a boundary from the surrounding rural or developed areas. The Plan identifies villages in the Village District and recommends a process for their delineation on the Zoning Maps.

**Suburban District.** These areas have experienced significant development of a suburban nature: isolated, low density subdivisions served by highway commercial areas. They are characterized by clusters of housing and views of fields and woods, much of it found in open space set aside on developed sites.

**Rural Conservation District.** The Rural Conservation District covers most of the Elk Neck peninsula and the more rural parts of the County north of the I-95 and Route 40 corridor. This district recognizes the open space qualities of the forests and farmland and seeks to protect the rural character of these areas.

**Resource Protection District.** The Resource Protection District lies south of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. The District is created to protect agricultural resources.

**Mineral Extraction District.** The Mineral Extraction District protects mineral deposits of economic importance from preemption by development, until the deposits have been mined. After mineral extraction is complete, a special study and possible plan amendment will determine the future use of the land, taking into account the type and intensity of adjacent land uses and the availability of infrastructure and services.

The Land Use Plan for each of the districts is presented in the sections that follow, in the order listed above. Each district is described in terms of its purpose and location. The principal and supporting comprehensive plan goals are presented and interpreted for each district. Next, recommended policies for road, water supply and sewage treatment are presented, followed by recommended guidelines for land uses and their development. In areas not served by public water and sewer, clustering of residential units is encouraged through density bonuses. In rural districts this achieves the preservation of open space, and in districts recommended for growth, clustering allows land to be reserved for development when public sewer and water become available.

The location of the seven districts of the Land Use Plan is presented in the Land Use Plan Map located in a pocket at the end of this plan. The designation of the various districts is intended to encourage development in areas where development has already occurred, and where road,

sewer, and water supply infrastructure exists or is planned. Planning is currently underway for a major water supply line running eastward across the County for an intake point in the Susquehanna River. The final location of this water line should establish the pattern for public road and sewer investment in the Development District.

The zoning map should be revised to reflect the Land Use Plan Map. The revised zoning map should provide maximum flexibility to allow functionally related land uses, such as homes, employment centers, and shopping, to be located close to one another in districts served with public water and sewer. Such flexibility will reduce the number and length of vehicular trips and thus make the best use of road capacities. Flexibility in the revised zoning map must be supported by standards that assure compatibility of functionally related uses.

The Town District presents an opportunity and challenge to County and Town officials and to the development community. The Plan presents recommendations in the Town District section concerning coordination of land use and infrastructure planning and annexation of land by the Towns.

### **CHESAPEAKE BAY CRITICAL AREA PROGRAM**

Prior to 1986, there was significant residential growth along the shores of the Chesapeake Bay and the tidal reaches of its major tributaries as more and more people sought waterfront properties. The tidal shore area is now regulated by the County's recently adopted Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program in order to achieve the following goals:

- To minimize adverse impacts on water quality that result from high nutrient loadings in runoff from surrounding lands or from pollutants that are discharge from structures;
- To conserve fish, wildlife, and plant habitats;
- To establish land use policies for development locating within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area that accommodates growth and also address the fact that even if pollution is controlled, the number, movement and activities of persons in the area can create environmental impacts.

The Critical Area includes tidal waters and all land within 1,000 feet of tidal waters or tidal wetlands. The County's Critical Area Program, guided by state regulations, delineates the Critical Area and breaks it down into three land use management areas, based primarily on 1985 land use and supporting infrastructure:

**Intensely Developed Areas** are areas where residential, commercial, institutional, and/or industrial developed land uses predominate and where relatively little natural habitat occurs.

**Limited Development Areas** are areas that are currently developed in low or moderate intensity uses. They also contain areas of natural plant and animal habitats.

**Resource Conservation Areas** are areas characterized by nature dominated environments (eg. wetlands, forests, abandoned fields) and resource utilization activities (eg. agriculture, forestry, and fisheries activities.)

Development in the Critical Area is directed primarily to the Intensely Developed and Limited Development Areas. Standards and procedures in the Critical Area Program assure that development in the Critical Area is sensitive to water quality and habitat concerns.

The Land Use Plan directs development within the Critical Area toward Intensely Developed and Limited Development Areas. This assignment achieves spatial consistency between the Critical Area Program and the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan embraces the Critical Area Program and implementation of the Comprehensive Plan shall be consistent with the Critical Area Program.

## **DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT**

### **PURPOSE OF THE DISTRICT**

The purpose of the Development District is to encourage intense residential, commercial and industrial development in and around the Towns of Elkton, North East, Perryville and Port Deposit. Development is encouraged in this district because it can be most effectively served by public investment in roads, water supply, and sewers. In general the Development District is well served by regional highways and rail, it is already partially developed, and major parts of it are served by public sewer, water or both. Development of vacant land in the development district, which is contiguous to existing development, should be encouraged by the provision of public water and sewer service and road improvements. By recommending better development opportunities in the Development District, the land use plan intends to reduce development pressure in the Rural Conservation District and the Resource Protection District.

Concentrated development is encouraged in the Development District. Concentrated development

lowers per capita cost of infrastructure, land conversion, and environmental damage. This development form is achieved by locating job opportunities and commercial areas within short distances of residential areas. This can reduce the number of vehicular trips needed and the average trip length. These factors combine to reduce the traffic impacts of development and the cost to build, improve, and maintain roads.

Special opportunity for intense mixed use development exists around the I-95 interchanges with routes 279 (Elkton exit), 272 (North East exit), and 275 (Perryville/Port Deposit exit) due to the immediate access to the interstate highway system these areas have for commerce and commuters.

### **DISTRICT LOCATION**

The Development District includes developed areas and areas committed to development near Elkton, North East, Perryville, and Port Deposit, including the former Bainbridge Naval Training Center.

### **GOALS FOR THE DISTRICT**

#### **Goal Emphasis**

*Concentrate high density development in carefully designated areas contiguous to existing population centers and public facilities.*

High intensity development is recommended for areas served now and in the future by public sewer and water facilities and transportation networks. High intensity development makes the most cost-effective use of public infrastructure. Public investment in new infrastructure should improve and extend existing infrastructure to contiguous areas in order to accommodate most of the projected growth in the County. The County should support high intensity, mixed use development in areas around Interstate 95 interchanges. The County should also support high intensity redevelopment at the Bainbridge Naval facility for industrial, commercial and/or residential use. Projects proposed should be preceded with detailed planning studies that assure the most effective use of these key locations and the best fit to surrounding land uses.

#### **Other Goals for the District**

*Reduce trip length and number of trips by encouraging compatible mixed use development.*

The Development District, with the higher land use intensities that can be achieved, offers the best opportunity to reduce the number and lengths of motor vehicle trips. This goal can be expressed in new planned development and in infill development of areas that are missing complementary land uses.

*Encourage a balance of residential development and employment opportunities in the County so that tax revenues are retained within the County.*

The Development District should provide ample opportunity for location of new industrial and office uses in a range of sizes to increase employment opportunities in the County. Indirect benefits accrue to the County through cooperative efforts with the Towns to locate smaller commercial and light industrial uses in the Towns.

Land around the Interstate 95 interchanges and the former Bainbridge Naval Training Center offers excellent opportunities for new mixed use development.

*Accommodate residential growth by providing for a range of housing types to meet identified needs.*

Meeting diverse housing needs means allowing a diversity of housing densities and types, principally in the Development Districts. Housing for special user groups, such as the elderly and handicapped, should be provided throughout the Development District.

*Provide a public transportation program that meets the needs of citizens and commerce for safety, mobility and convenient access to everyday destinations.*

A safe road system is essential to the overall goals of the Development District. A safe road system is well designed and maintained, provides intersection controls, maintains acceptable levels of service, and accommodates pedestrian traffic. The Transportation Plan should establish appropriate levels of service for the Development District.

*Reduce conflicts between incompatible uses.*

Conflicts between land uses are caused primarily from invasive impacts such as noise, dust, and vibration. Invasive impacts should first be regulated by controls placed on the impacting uses and then by separation of conflicting uses by

distance and/or barriers. Visual perceptions also lead to conflict. Perceptual impacts can be eliminated or reduced through site design and appearance codes. Conflicts between residential, retail, office and light industrial uses can usually be resolved in this way.

*Restrict strip development.*

Undifferentiated development along highways creates the impression of sprawl developments and does not create a sense of place. Development nodes in the Development District should be created to recognize existing development patterns and to reinforce them. Undeveloped stretches along roads should be protected to create a contrast with the nodes by requiring a buffer between the road and future development. The depth of the buffer should be related to the quality of vegetative screening required.

*Strictly control development in sensitive and critical resource areas to protect natural resources; and*

*Encourage that identification, preservation, and restoration of sites and structures having historical significance and control development in their vicinity to protect their visual character.*

Although development in the Development District should be the most intense in the County, development should respect all sensitive and critical resources, including wetlands, stream valleys, steep slopes, and special plant and wildlife habitats. Many structures in the Development District are part of the cultural and visual heritage of the County. These structures and their historic context are fragile to development that is insensitive to their history, scale, and architecture. Historic buildings should be protected through historic building registration. Review of the proposed appearance and arrangement of new buildings on a site can assure that new development within the District is functional and relates well to nearby development.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Roads and Access**

County investment in highway improvements should be directed to the Development District, except to correct highway safety problems outside the district. Land use designations in the Development District should take the following factors into account:

- Increased traffic on Route 40 and its collector routes in and around Elkton will require improvements in road capacity.
- Increased local and through traffic on I-95 will require additional capacity.

- Increased north/south travel demand between I-95 and Route 40 may require provision of increased north/south arterial capacity and additional interchanges on I-95. Maryland Route 272 south of I-95 is already congested.
- Highway improvement projects will be increasingly funded from state and local sources.
- Pedestrian routes between adjacent residential and commercial areas can help to reduce vehicular trip generation.
- Internal street connections between adjacent developed and developing sites can diffuse traffic impacts on collector and arterial roads.
- Internal street construction standards adequate for anticipated traffic volumes can reduce construction, operating, and maintenance costs.
- Mixed-use development, particularly near the I-95 interchanges, can reduce the length and number of vehicular trips resulting in lower new resident per capita demand on road infrastructure.

Alleys can be used in the Development District to provide for collection of trash, placement of utility pipes and lines, access to off-street parking, and loading and unloading of materials. Where used, alleys should run along the rear or side property line of lots.

### **Sewer and Water Supply**

The Development District is served by public sewer and water (S-1 and W-1) or is slated for sewer and water service by 1992 (S-2 and W-2) as designated in the Cecil County Ten-Year Water and Sewerage Plan. Other areas are included in the Development District to allow for future development. These areas should be included in sewer and water planning areas if provision of sewer service to them is feasible. Housing development on parcels not yet served by public sewer should be clustered and community septic fields used to allow the remainder of the site not designated as open space to be developed in the future when public sewer is provided.

Due to past industrial practices in some areas of the Development District a full site assessment study should be required before development takes place.

## **LAND USES IN THE DISTRICT**

### **Residential**

#### *Guidelines for housing types*

Housing types appropriate to the Development District are single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, townhouses, and apartments. Where properly zoned, residential use may also be permitted on upper floors of structures with first floor commercial.

#### *Guidelines for residential development without public water and sewer*

**Density:** One dwelling unit per acre or two dwelling units per acre if dwelling units are clustered, community systems are used and the entire site is designated for future development when public sewer and water are provided.

**Development reserve:** The development reserve is land remaining after the site design meets the minimum requirements for open space, house lots, roads, storm water management and buffers. The development reserve may be set aside for future development with public sewer and water, provided the whole site is designed initially for sewered densities. Development reserve areas can be used for community septic systems.

#### *Guidelines for residential development with public water and sewer*

**Density:** Up to four dwelling units per acre for single family homes, up to twelve dwelling units per acre for townhouses, and up to sixteen dwelling units per acre for apartments.

#### *Guidelines for all residential development*

**Open Space:** 15 percent of the site should be set aside as permanent open space. The Planning Commission should be allowed to accept payment in lieu of open space, in whole or in part.

**Setback from State and County road rights-of-way:** 50 feet.

**Setback from internal street rights-of-way:** 25 feet for new development and consistency with nearby developed lots for infill develop-

ment. Internal streets are those specifically built to serve individual lots in a subdivision.

**Setback from agricultural use:** 50 feet if forested; 100 feet if not forested

**Street buffer along State and County roads (may be included in setback):** row of street trees with species native to Cecil County.

**Street buffer along internal streets serving individual lots (may be included in setback):** row of street trees with species native to Cecil County.

**Landscaping:** 20 percent of the gross site should be landscaped with plant species native to Cecil County; street tree planting is required; specimen trees should be saved where possible and count toward landscaping requirement; all plantings should be bonded. No trees should be planted in road rights-of-way. A forest stand delineation study should be completed to identify specimen trees.

## Nonresidential Uses

Commercial uses in the Development District include wholesale and retail sales, personal and business services, office space, and recreation. All commercial uses in the Development District should be served with public sewer and water.

Areas around the I-95 interchanges should be planned for intense mixed use development: office and industrial uses should predominate, with supporting housing and commercial uses for workers included.

Large shopping centers should be located near the I-95 interchanges or on major arterials to allow convenient and safe access for large volumes of traffic traveling longer distances.

Neighborhood commercial centers serve the everyday shopping and personal service needs of the residents and nearby workers. The County favors neighborhood commercial centers within short distances of residential areas and employment centers. Commercial uses located in the neighborhood are more convenient to residents and workers and place less demand on highway capacity.

Light and heavy industrial uses are encouraged to locate in the Development District, in areas appropriate to their intensity and infrastructure requirements. Light industrial uses, including warehouse and transshipment centers, should be permitted in areas of the Development District with good access to I-95 and major arterials. Heavy industry should be located in select areas in the Development District with good highway and rail access. All industrial uses should be served with public water and sewer.

### *Guidelines for nonresidential uses*

**Parking:** Parking for commercial and industrial uses should be placed behind the principal structure to the extent possible. Truck unloading areas have priority over parking behind commercial and industrial buildings. Setbacks from frontage roads should be minimized to accommodate parking to the rear of principal structures. All parking areas should be landscaped and connect adjacent commercial properties where possible. Pervious surfaces should be used for parking areas that accommodate vehicles during infrequent peak demand periods.

**Outdoor storage:** Outdoor storage, except that associated with agricultural activities, should be screened from public ways and adjacent residential uses by vegetation or walls.

**Buffers:** Nonresidential uses fronting on arterials and collector road segments should have a 50-foot wide buffer adjacent to the road right-of-way planted with trees, shrubs, or understory vegetation native to Cecil County. Commercial uses on other road segments and local streets should have at least a row of street trees at the edge of the right-of-way.

**Landscaping:** Nonresidential uses should be required to landscape at least 30 percent of the site with plant species native to Cecil County. The landscaping requirement should be relaxed if all parking is placed to the rear of the principal structure.

## TOWN DISTRICT

### PURPOSE OF THE DISTRICT

The purpose of the Town District is to recognize and protect the essential land use and aesthetic character of the Towns and the values they foster. Protection will require close cooperation between the County and the Towns concerning land use planning, review of development proposals, extension of services, and annexation. Protection of Town character will be achieved by defining their

boundaries with surrounding farm and forested land and allowing balanced development of mutually supporting land uses within them consistent with their essential land use and aesthetic character. Towns are served by public sewer and water, although service may not be available everywhere in the district. Town Districts occur at the periphery of incorporated towns; they are established to assure orderly development, to encourage the most efficient use of public services, and to prevent strip commercial development along highways leading to Towns.

## **DISTRICT LOCATION**

The Town District is located in the County adjacent to, but outside, the municipalities of Rising Sun, Chesapeake City, and Cecilton. Town Districts include developed areas, adjacent undeveloped areas for future growth, adjacent areas already committed to development, and areas where public water and sewer are available or are planned for the immediate future. There is no Town District adjacent to Elkton, Port Deposit, Perryville, North East, or Charlestown, since these municipalities are primarily surrounded by Development or Suburban Districts.

## **GOALS FOR THE DISTRICT**

### **Goal Emphasis**

*Achieve quality growth of the County by maintaining desirable, existing community characteristics in new development, recognizing existing settlement patterns in rural areas and providing for appropriate expansion.*

Towns are larger and more intensely settled than villages. The Town District recognizes the town settlement patterns. The Town District boundary seeks a compact developed form by separating development in the County near the Towns and rural areas beyond, while including some undeveloped land for future Town growth. In conjunction with land use in the municipalities, the Town District encourages a balance of uses on a scale that can reduce the number and length of automobile trips.

## **Other Goals for the District**

### *Restrict strip development.*

The traditional character of the Towns should be respected by new development occurring on their edges in the Town District, by preventing strip development along roads leading to the Towns and adherence to an appearance code. Strip commercial development at the entrances to Towns tends to create traffic conflicts that reduce road capacity and is often unsightly. The Town District can accommodate commercial uses in a way that does not result in strip development by having a district boundary and by providing incentives for new commercial uses to locate near the Town center. If commercial uses are permitted along town entrance roads, they should be well set back from the road, with a planted buffer between structures and the road. Adjacent commercial properties should have a common entrance from the road and provide internal vehicular circulation between them to decrease traffic congestion on the road.

### *Reduce conflicts between incompatible uses.*

Conflicts between residential and farm or forestry operations are reduced when development is directed to Town Districts. Potential conflicts between land uses in the Town District should be reduced or eliminated by site design and appearance code standards. The County should coordinate land use assignments in the Town District with each Town at their common boundaries.

### *Strictly control development in sensitive and critical resource areas to protect natural resources; and*

### *Maintain the rural character of the County by planning for the preservation of prime agricultural land, open space, and forests.*

By concentrating growth in more densely settled areas such as Town Districts, sensitive and critical resource areas can be preserved and the character of both the towns and the surrounding countryside can be protected. Natural resource areas that occur in the Town District should be afforded the same protection as in other districts.

The boundary between Town Districts and surrounding rural districts also helps to confine developed areas and thereby preserve the rural character of the County near Towns. Protection of sensitive and critical resource areas is achieved through performance standards recommended in this Plan.

*Encourage the identification, preservation, and restoration of sites and structures having historic significance, and control development in their vicinity to protect their visual character.*

Towns, and many of the individual structures that form them, are part of the cultural and visual heritage of the County. The essential character of Town Districts at the edge of towns is fragile to development that is insensitive to their history, scale and architecture. The historic character of the Towns and their setting in a rural landscape should be protected through historic building registration. Regulation of the way new buildings and other structures appear and are arranged on the site can assure that new development within the District will achieve a satisfactory visual appearance and functional relationships with adjacent land uses.

*Reduce trip length and number of trips by encouraging compatible mixed use development.*

New development in the Town District should contain a mixture of mutually supporting residential and commercial uses. Existing residential areas should be examined for opportunities to place supporting and compatible commercial uses, where none now exist, in order to encourage walking and decrease trip length between residential and commercial uses.

*Establish and maintain close coordination between the County and Towns to plan for future annexation by the Towns.*

Annexation of land in Cecil County by the Towns should support the County's goals concerning environmental protection, community character, trip generation, strip development, and the cost effective extension of sewer and water infrastructure.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Roads and Access**

New internal streets in the Town District should be on a grid pattern wherever possible and connect to streets on adjacent developed areas. New internal streets should connect to arterials and collector roads at fairly regular intervals within the Town District. Alleys can be used in Town districts to provide for collection of trash, placement of utility pipes and lines, access to off-

street parking, and loading and unloading materials. Where used, alleys should run along the rear or side property line of lots. To reduce the need to enter public roads, parking areas on adjacent commercial uses should connect where physically feasible.

### **Sewer and Water Supply**

Town Districts are either served by public sewer and water (S-1 and W-1 sewer and water service areas) or are planned for service by 1992 (S-2 and W-2) as designated in the Cecil County Ten-Year Water and Sewer Plan. To obtain a compact town form, areas outside S-1 or S-2 areas are included in the Town District. It is recommended that these areas be provided with water and sewer service if feasible. Housing development on parcels not yet served by public sewer should be clustered and community septic fields used. Areas otherwise suitable for development should be released for development when public sewer is provided.

## **LAND USES IN THE DISTRICT**

### **Residential**

#### *Guidelines for housing types*

Housing types appropriate to the Town District are single-family dwellings, two-family dwellings, townhouses, and apartments. Where properly zoned, residential use may also be permitted on the upper floors of structures with first floor commercial.

#### *Guidelines for residential development without public water and sewer*

**Density:** One dwelling per acre or up to two dwelling units per acre if dwelling units are clustered, community septic systems are used, and the entire site is designed for future development when public sewer and water are provided.

**Development reserve:** The development reserve in land remaining after the site design meets the minimum requirements for open space, house lots, roads, storm water management and buffers. The development reserve may be set aside for future development with public sewer and water, provided the whole site is designed initially for sewered densities. Development reserve areas can be used for community septic systems.

*Guidelines for residential development with public water and sewer*

**Density:** Up to four dwelling units per acre for single family homes, and up to ten dwelling units per acre for townhouses or apartments.

*Guidelines for all residential development*

**Open space:** 15 percent of the site should be set aside as permanent open space. The Planning Commission should be allowed to accept payment in lieu of open space, in whole or in part.

**Setback from State and County road rights-of-way:** established by Town convention.

**Setback from internal street rights-of-way (serving individual lots):** established by Town convention.

**Setback from agricultural use:** 50 feet if forested; 100 feet if not forested.

**Town Greenbelt:** 75-foot forested buffer at edge of Town District; which counts toward open space requirement.

**Street buffer along State and County roads (may be included in setback):** row of street trees with species native to Cecil County.

**Street buffer along internal streets serving individual lots (may be included in setback):** row of street trees with species native to Cecil County.

**Landscaping:** 20 percent of gross site should be landscaped with species native to Cecil County; street tree planting is required; specimen tree planting is required; specimen trees should be saved where possible and count toward landscaping requirement; all plantings should be bonded. No trees should be planted in road rights-of-way. A forest stand delineation study should be completed to identify specimen trees.

**Nonresidential Uses**

Commercial uses that primarily serve the everyday needs of Town residents, residents of

adjacent rural areas of the County, employees of Town businesses, agricultural and forestry needs in rural areas, and traveler needs are permitted in the Town District.

Commercial uses are typically found near the town center. The County should discourage strip commercial development along entrance roads to the Town. The county should encourage commercial uses to locate in the town center and to make new commercial uses in the Town District conform to setback, mass, and scale typically found in the Town. Residential units should be allowed above ground floor commercial uses.

Light industrial uses should be allowed in the Town District provided they are consistent with the height and bulk of structures of similar use generally experienced in the Town.

*Guidelines for nonresidential uses.*

**Parking:** Parking for commercial and industrial uses should be placed behind the principal structure to the extent possible. Truck unloading areas have priority over parking behind commercial and industrial buildings. Setbacks from frontage roads should be minimized to accommodate parking to the rear of principal structures. All parking areas should be landscaped and connect adjacent commercial properties wherever possible. Pervious surfaces should be used for parking areas that accommodate vehicles during infrequent peak demand periods.

**Outdoor Storage:** Outdoor storage, except that associated with agricultural activities, should be screened from public ways and adjacent residential uses by vegetation or walls.

**Buffers:** Nonresidential uses should have at least a row of trees, native to Cecil County, at the edge of the right-of-way.

**Landscaping:** Nonresidential uses should be required to landscape at least 30 percent of the site with plant species native to Cecil County. The landscaping requirement should be relaxed if all parking is placed to the rear of the principal structure.

**VILLAGE DISTRICT****PURPOSE OF THE DISTRICT**

The purpose of the Village District is to recognize and protect the essential land use and aesthetic character of the traditional crossroad and waterfront villages and the values they foster. The creation of the Village Districts is primarily to provide for their

protection and secondarily to allow for limited development within their boundaries, consistent with their essential character. Protection will be achieved by defining village boundaries and by allowing balanced development of mutually supporting land uses that are consistent with their essential land use, historic, and aesthetic character.

Villages should be given special treatment in the zoning ordinance to assure the protection of their essential character by controlling any future development of land within their boundaries or on adjacent areas. This applies to villages regardless of the District surrounding them.

**DISTRICT LOCATION**

Villages in Cecil County’s Village District are either located at rural crossroads or along the tidal waterfront of the Chesapeake Bay. Crossroad villages are located at the intersections of existing or historic main thoroughfares. Crossroad villages are characterized by a cluster of structures and settlement patterns that share unique characteristics. These characteristics could include historic structures, architectural elements, community focal points, historic employment centers and commercial establishments. They may be located near a rail line or stream valley. Crossroad Village boundaries should be drawn to include developed uses near village centers and sufficient adjacent undeveloped land to allow for future growth. A green belt should be established to separate village land uses from those on adjacent districts and to provide a distinct village edge. Waterfront Villages are located along the shorelines of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The dwellings in these villages were originally built to provide seasonal occupancy for recreational purposes. Today the majority of these once seasonal dwellings are occupied year-round by permanent residents of Cecil County. This trend toward permanent occupancy is continuing. The characteristics of Waterfront Villages include cottage-type housing on small narrow lots, grid street systems, water-dependant facilities and water oriented development patterns. Due to the restrictions of the County’s Critical Area Program, the boundaries of Waterfront Villages are at the edges of developed land. These elements of Crossroad and Waterfront Villages create physical, cultural and social

characteristics that form a sense of place indigenous to Cecil County.

Village boundaries, as determined by a Village District study, should be delineated on the Zoning Map. Village District boundaries that allow for more than a doubling of their developed area are likely to be inconsistent with the purpose of the District. Village boundary placement should be guided by a consideration of a convenient walking distance to the village center. Additional boundary considerations should include the following: the availability of land for moderate expansion of the village and its perimeter buffer; limitations and opportunities created by roads, streams, rivers, and wetlands; and achievement of a compact form. Villages should extend equally along both sides of through roads, and compatible uses should face each other across roads. Boundaries of Waterfront Villages are usually defined by the edge of existing small lot subdivisions. The following places are designated as possible Village Districts in categories, Crossroad Villages and Waterfront Villages:

**Crossroad Villages:**

- |                             |                   |
|-----------------------------|-------------------|
| Bay View                    | Elk Mills         |
| Calvert                     | Fair Hill         |
| Cherry Hill                 | Farmington        |
| Childs                      | Leslie/Marysville |
| Colora                      | Warwick           |
| Conowingo/<br>Kilbys Corner | Zion              |
| Earleville                  |                   |

**Waterfront Villages:**

- Crystal Beach
- Fredericktown
- Hacks Point
- Locust Point
- Port Herman/Hollywood Beach
- Red Point

**GOALS FOR THE DISTRICT**

**Goal Emphasis**

*Achieve quality growth of the County by maintaining desirable existing community character in new development, recognizing existing settlement patterns in rural areas, and providing for appropriate expansion.*

Settlement patterns in rural areas are characterized by villages. Historically, villages are usually located at crossroads and were the focus of rural commercial and social life. The Village District recognizes rural settlement patterns, limits their expansion, and seeks to protect their essential character.

### **Other Goals for the District**

#### *Reduce conflicts between incompatible uses.*

By concentrating growth in more densely settled areas such as Village Districts, conflicts between residential uses and farm and/or forestry operations are reduced. Commercial uses in villages should be encouraged to the extent they serve village residents' needs and the needs of nearby rural residents. Conflicts between commercial and residential uses can be reduced in part by an appearance code and limitations on the size and intensity of commercial uses.

#### *Restrict strip development.*

Unlimited strip development along rural county roads tends to create traffic conflicts, reduces road capacity, and often destroys rural scenic value. The Village District creates a boundary to mark the end of roadside development and the beginning of rural countryside. Roadside development in the Village District is appropriate because it signals the change of land use that the village represents. New commercial uses should be concentrated near the village center, with common access to off-street parking required where possible. Curb cuts should be minimized from properties along arterial and collector roads.

#### *Strictly control development in sensitive and critical resource areas to protect natural resources; and*

#### *Maintain the rural character of the County by planning for the preservation of prime agricultural land, open space and forests.*

By concentrating growth in more densely settled areas such as Village Districts, sensitive and critical resource areas can be preserved and the rural character of both the villages and the surrounding countryside can be protected. Resource areas that do occur in the Village District should be afforded the same protection as in other districts.

#### *Encourage the identification, preservation, and restoration of sites and structures having historic significance, and control development in their vicinity to protect their visual character.*

Villages, and many of the individual structures that form them, are part of the cultural and visual heritage of the County. The essential character of Village Districts is fragile to development that is insensitive to their history, scale, and architecture.

The historic character of the villages and their setting in a rural landscape should be protected through historic building registration. Regulation of the way new buildings and other structures appear and are arranged on the site can assure that new development within Village Districts will achieve a satisfactory visual appearance and functional relationships with adjacent land uses.

#### *Reduce trip length and number of trips by encouraging compatible mixed use development.*

The Village District provides an opportunity for a mutually supporting mix of residential and commercial uses to occur in a small area. This concentration of uses allows for a reduction in the number and length of resident shopping trips made by motor vehicle.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Roads and Access**

Within Village Districts, speed limits on arterial or collector roads should be low enough to allow safe turning movements into internal village streets at access points along arterial or collector roads. There should be no on-street parking on arterials or collector roads. On-street parking should be allowed on internal village streets. Signage, signalization, and turning lanes should be required to provide for safety. Improvements to arterial and collector roads in Village Districts should respect historical and scenic values.

Pedestrian access between land uses in the village should be at least as convenient as that provided for motor vehicles and should be independent of the road network if possible.

Internal village streets should connect between adjacent developments to avoid concentrating traffic.

### **Sewer and Water Supply**

Village Districts will depend on onsite sewage disposal and groundwater. Shared facilities are encouraged to provide for efficient development patterns throughout the District and preserve open space at district boundaries. Public sewer and water should only be provided to Village Districts if there is a threat to public health by continuation of onsite disposal or if public service can be readily extended from adjacent areas. Other strategies to correct failing septic systems, such as spray irrigation or effluent on open space near the village, should be explored.

Prior to public sewer and water connections, a subarea plan should be prepared, which specifies a

grid street system, focal points of major squares, and gateway treatment at the entrance to the Village District. Where public sewer does not serve a village, higher densities of housing and intensities of commercial use should be allowed.

## LAND USES IN THE DISTRICT

Land uses in the Village District are primarily residential with a small amount of commercial uses to serve the shopping and service needs of village and nearby rural residents. The commercial uses should be of such type, intensity, and scale that there is minimum conflict with residential uses. Industrial uses that depend on local agricultural or forestry products should be permitted.

### Residential

#### *Guidelines for housing types*

Housing types appropriate to Village Districts are single- and two- family dwellings, with height and bulk consistent with houses in the village. Where properly zoned, residential use may also be permitted on upper floors of structures with first floor commercial.

#### *Guidelines for residential development without public water and sewer.*

**Density:** One dwelling unit per acre or up to two dwelling units per acre if clustering, community septic system, and the entire site is designed for future development when public sewer and water are provided.

**Development reserve:** The development reserve is land remaining after the site design meets the minimum requirements for open space, house lots, roads, stormwater management and buffers. The development reserve may be set aside for future development with public sewer and water, provided the whole site is designed initially for sewered densities. Development reserve areas can be used for community septic systems.

#### *Guidelines for residential development with public water and sewer*

**Density:** Up to four dwelling units per acre.

#### *Guidelines for all residential development*

**Open space:** 15 percent of the site should be set aside as permanent open space. The Planning Commission should be allowed to accept payment in lieu of open space, in whole or in part.

**Setback from State and County road rights-of-way:** established by village convention.

**Setback from internal street rights-of-way (serving individual lots):** established by village convention.

**Setback from agricultural use:** 50 feet if forested; 100 feet if not forested.

**Street buffer along State and County roads (may be included in setback):** row of street trees with species native to Cecil County.

**Street buffer along internal streets serving individual lots (may be included in setback):** row of street trees with species native to Cecil County.

**Parking:** Where possible on-street parking should be provided on local access streets or behind principal structures. Parking areas on adjacent commercial properties should connect.

**Village Greenbelt:** 150-foot forested buffer at edge of Village District; counts toward open space requirement.

**Landscaping:** 20 percent of gross site should be landscaped with plant species native to Cecil County; street tree planting is required; specimen trees should be saved where possible and count toward landscaping requirement; all plantings should be bonded. No trees should be planted in road rights-of-way. A forest stand delineation study should be completed to identify specimen trees.

**Outdoor storage:** Outdoor storage areas, except those associated with agricultural activities, should be screened from public ways and adjacent uses by vegetation or a wall.

### Nonresidential Uses

Commercial uses that serve the everyday needs of residents of the village, and agriculture and forestry needs of the surrounding rural area, should be permitted in the Village District.

Commercial uses in the Village District should consist of one structure per lot, with first floor commercial use per structure not exceeding 3,000 square feet and total commercial use per structure not exceeding 5,000 square feet. Commercial

structures should be in scale with existing adjacent structures. Additional structures on the lot, or structures with greater floor area than 5,000 square feet, may be permitted if village scale criteria are met. These criteria should include limitations on building mass and height.

Industrial uses which serve the agricultural needs of the surrounding rural area or process agricultural or forestry products are permitted in the Village District. Such industrial uses should be compatible in kind and scale with existing village uses. Industrial uses are only permitted where they have access to collector or arterial roads.

#### *Guidelines for nonresidential uses*

Open space, forest cover, setbacks, parking, street buffers, greenbelt and landscaping guidelines for nonresidential uses should be the same as for residential uses.

## **SUBURBAN DISTRICT**

### **PURPOSE OF THE DISTRICT**

The Suburban District was created to provide development opportunities in appropriate areas outside of the Development District and thereby reduce development pressures on the rural areas of the County. As a transitional area between urban and rural areas the character of the Suburban District will include some aspects of both rural and urban environments. Where development occurs at the higher densities envisioned in the Suburban District, community character will be defined by the buildings and the way they shape open space.

Community design in the Suburban District should provide views across open landscape from clusters of development and should not have to resort to protective enclosures for privacy. Suburban communities should have sufficient open space between, or within the development to provide the needed contrast and balance to buildings. As some of the District's open space will be provided by farm lands which will be lost as the District builds-out, provisions requiring permanent open space should be included in development regulations.

The actual timing and location of higher intensity development will be directly related to availability of public sewer and water within the District, and development should be encouraged at appropriate locations contiguous to existing development. Residential development types will likely include estate development on larger lots at the lower end of the density spectrum where community sewer and water systems are not available. Where these community facilities exist, true suburban development at higher densities should be possible.

Cluster and planned development should be encouraged in the Suburban District as a means of maximizing common open space and minimizing disturbance of the natural resources. To the maximum extent possible, existing forest cover should be retained. Where development occurs on cleared land substantial landscaping should be required to insure that new development presents a pleasing garden quality.

### **DISTRICT LOCATION**

The Suburban District is generally located in areas where the existing development pattern is already evidencing a suburbanizing pattern. It includes areas northeast of Port Deposit along Rock Run Road and Jacob Tome Highway, and an area east and south of Port Deposit to I-95 and the Principio Road area. Further east, the Suburban District includes an area along I-95 between the Route 272 interchange and Route 316/Appleton Road, an area north of Elk Mills primarily to the east of Appleton Road, and an area on the Elk Neck Peninsula east of Old Elk Neck Road from Elkton to Oldfield Point. It also includes an area east of Carpenters Point Road to Charlestown and an area north of Charlestown to I-95 between Stoney Run and Cool Springs Road.

### **GOALS OF THE DISTRICT**

*Provide areas for orderly suburban growth at densities consistent with the ability of the County to provide adequate infrastructure.*

Growth patterns in the Suburban District will vary depending on the availability of infrastructure, including road, public sewer, and public water capacity. Portions of the District with limited infrastructure capacity will not support a substantial amount of new development and thus development will be constrained. Other portions of the District that have or are planned to have excess capacity in key public facilities will be able to support true suburban development. In consideration of this, permitted residential densities should

be keyed to infrastructure capacity. Where adequate infrastructure capacity does not exist, or is not planned in the immediate future, the County should either limit development to low intensity uses or require that those facilities with deficient capacity be upgraded to a level that insures adequate service, consistent with the demands of proposed new development.

### **Other Goals for the District**

*Accommodate residential growth by providing for a range of housing densities to meet the identified needs.*

The Suburban District is intended to be a growth area with permitted housing densities that are higher than those permitted in the rural districts but lower than those permitted in the Development District. To the extent possible, the County should encourage development densities consistent with public sewer and water service. Where appropriate, low density development projects served by septic tanks and wells may hold-out reserved land for in-fill development when public sewer and water are available. Where community sewer and/or water currently exist or is imminent, development at the higher suburban densities should be permitted.

*Reduce conflicts between incompatible uses.*

Planted and/or bermed buffers yards should be required between different zones, e.g., between residential and commercial and between commercial and industrial zones to reduce potential conflicts.

*Restrict strip development.*

What is a local access road today may have to be upgraded to a major highway in the future. It can be expected that some roads in the Suburban District will need to be upgraded as development takes place and traffic increases. It is important that planning for the road system in the Suburban District not be based on the District's maximum development potential. The County should limit access points to the minimum required and new development should be setback far enough from right-of-ways to permit future road widening without loss of property and property values.

*Strictly control development in sensitive and critical resource areas to protect natural resources.*

Preserving natural vegetation in stream valleys, on steep slopes, on sensitive soils and in nontidal wetlands will help protect water quality and maintain wildlife habitats. Protection standards should be established for these sensitive natural areas in the Suburban District.

*Protect and preserve the agricultural character of the landscape.*

A portion of every development site should be set aside as an open space area. Agriculture and Silva culture uses should be encouraged on open space or reservation areas where appropriate.

*Encourage the identification, preservation, and restoration of sites and structures having historic significance, and control development in their vicinity to protect their visual character.*

Historic places, buildings, and structures that comprise the visual heritage of the County should be systematically identified and preserved. Where appropriate, the County should designate historic districts and sites for protection and special treatment in the development process so that even as change occurs on or near these sites it does not result in a loss of the best examples of the County's history.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Roads and Access**

Road policy in the Suburban District should reflect the changes that will occur in the District as it transitions from a rural to a suburban character. Level of Service policy in the District should be consistent with suburban traffic loadings. The County should monitor changing traffic patterns as growth takes place to anticipate needed improvements and insure that adequate right-of-way is acquired in the development process.

Direct access to residences, commercial and industrial establishment from State and County roads should be discouraged. Instead, access should be taken from internal access roads. This policy should apply to all development, including minor subdivisions. Internal streets should connect between adjacent developments to avoid concentrating traffic.

### **Water and Sewer**

It is anticipated that most development in the Suburban District will continue to use on-site well and septic systems or shared community facilities dur-

ing much of the planning period. Public water and/or sewer service should be planned for appropriate portions of the District, particularly those portions which are contiguous to existing development. Where on-site well and septic systems are required, the County should permit shared sewer facilities which may be located on common open space areas.

## LAND USES IN THE DISTRICT

Permitted land uses in the Suburban District should include agriculture, silvaculture, residential, low intensity industrial uses, clubs, athletic fields. In addition, appropriate areas should be provided for office, light industrial, neighborhood commercial, business and business service uses.

Light industrial and office uses should be located in well-planned parks on sites with good access to major highways. Carefully chosen sites of a size and at locations meeting these criteria should be zoned for mixed use light industrial and office parks by the County. Performance standards that insure that developments of such parks are compatible with surrounding suburban residential uses should be included in development regulations. These standards should include provisions addressing maximum site coverage, minimum landscaping, lighting, signage, and road buffers. Performance standards that establish minimum quality of development standards including minimum open space requirements, landscaping, and bufferyard standards should be included in development regulations for all types of development. In general these standards should provide for a visual quality of residential and non-residential development that is consistent with the suburban character of the District. Bufferyard standards should provide for screening of residential and non-residential uses along State and County roads. Vegetated buffers should also be required where there is a disparity in intensity of use, for example between commercial and residential uses. The amount of buffer planting should be increased as the disparity between zones increases.

Performance standards that address environmental concerns should also be included in Zoning and Subdivision regulations. These standards should establish minimum protection levels for sensitive environments including wetlands, forest, other wildlife habitats, steep slopes, erodible lands, and stream valleys. The objective of

these standards is to protect water quality and to conserve natural features and vegetation.

## Residential

### *Guidelines for housing types*

Permitted residential development types should vary depending on the availability of public sewer and/or water facilities. Development in areas not served by public water and sewer should be detached single family dwellings at low densities. Design standards to insure a quality suburban living environment should include minimum requirements for permanent open space, landscaping, and protection of sensitive natural features. In areas served by public sewer and water more flexibility in the type of housing and minimum lot sizes should be permitted when the development exceeds the minimum design standards. Incentives should be provided for cluster development and planned residential communities that may include a mix of detached single family and attached housing, such as duplexes, townhouses and garden apartments.

Clustering residential development and providing for permanent open space areas, preferably to be left in a natural state, provides the maximum opportunity to achieve the goals of the Suburban District. Density and other incentives for cluster development should be established in the Zoning Ordinance.

### *Guidelines for residential development without public water and sewer.*

**Density:** One dwelling unit per acre.

**Open Space:** At least 15 percent of the site should be set aside as permanent open space. Up to 30 percent of sites should be set aside as permanent open space in cluster developments that do not include a development reserve. The Planning Commission should be allowed to accept payment in-lieu of open space, in whole or in part.

**Development Reserve:** The development reserve is land remaining after the site design meets the minimum requirements for open space, house lot, roads, stormwater management and buffers. The development reserve may be set aside for future development with public sewer and water, provided the whole site is designed initially for sewered densities and the County approves a master site development plan. Development reserve areas can be used for community septic systems.

*Guidelines for residential development with public water and sewer.*

Densities in excess of three dwelling units per acre should only be permitted as incentive for development of high quality clustered and planned residential communities that exceed the minimum design standards for the District.

**Density:** Up to three dwelling units per acre for conventional subdivisions. Up to three and a half dwelling units per acre for cluster development on single family lots. Up to four dwelling units per acre for planned residential communities with some attached housing included.

**Open Space:** At least 15 percent of the site should be set aside as permanent open space. The Planning Commission should be allowed to accept payment in-lieu of open space, in whole or in part. Planned and cluster communities should be required to set aside at least 30 percent of the site in permanent open space.

*Guidelines for all residential development*

**Setback from State and County road right-of-way:** 50 feet.

**Setback from internal streets serving individual lots:** 20 to 50 feet depending on the type of housing.

**Setback from agriculture use:** 50 feet if forested; 100 feet if unforested.

**Street buffer along State and County roads (may be included in the setback):** 20-foot planted buffer.

**Street buffer along internal streets serving individual lots (may be included in setback):** row of street trees.

**Landscaping:** At least 20 percent of the site should be landscaped with species native to Cecil County. Street tree planting is required and specimen trees should be saved where possible; all planting should be bonded. No trees should be planted in road right-of-way. A

forest stand delineation study should be completed to identify specimen trees.

## Nonresidential Uses

*Guidelines for nonresidential uses.*

Commercial and business service uses that serve local residents should be permitted at appropriate locations along major roads in the Suburban District. In addition, larger, suburban scale shopping centers may also be permitted at appropriate locations along major arterial roads.

Nonresidential developments should be done in a manner that is consistent with the suburban character of the District. Commercial centers and industrial sites should present a pleasing visual image when viewed from the road. Nonresidential zones should be deep sites with minimal road frontage. The number of highway access points should be limited and internal circulation roads required. Landscaping, open space, lighting, and signage should be controlled to insure a suburban character. Street buffers should also be required.

**Parking:** Parking for commercial and industrial uses should be placed behind the principal structure to the extent possible. Truck unloading areas have priority over parking for the area behind commercial and industrial buildings. Setbacks from frontage roads should be minimized to accommodate parking at the rear of the principal structures. All parking areas should be landscaped and connect between adjacent commercial properties where possible. Pervious surfaces should be used for parking areas that accommodate vehicles during infrequent peak demand periods.

**Outdoor Storage:** Outdoor storage, except that associated with agricultural activities, should be screened from public ways and adjacent residential uses by vegetation or walls.

**Buffers:** Nonresidential uses fronting on arterial and collector road segments should have a 50-foot wide buffer adjacent to the road right-of-way planted with trees, shrubs, or understory vegetation. Commercial uses on other road segments and local streets should have at least a row of street trees at the edge of the right-of-way.

**Landscaping:** Nonresidential uses should be required to landscape at least 25 percent of the site with species native to Cecil County in addition to required buffers. The landscaping requirements can be relaxed if all parking is placed to the rear of the principal structure. A forest stand delineation study should be completed to identify specimen trees.

## **RURAL CONSERVATION DISTRICT**

### **PURPOSE OF THE DISTRICT**

The primary purpose of the Rural Conservation District is to maintain the existing rural character of the County by encouraging the continuation of agricultural and forestry uses and by requiring that the essential elements of rural character are maintained in development. North of the U. S. 40 and I-95 corridors, where this district occurs, the elements of rural character include large rolling farm fields, tree lined stream valleys, and views from the roads of open space in natural vegetation. In the Elk Neck area, the predominance of forest cover is a major contributor to the District's rural character.

### **DISTRICT LOCATION**

The Rural Conservation District generally encompasses existing agricultural areas north of the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. It includes much of the Elk Neck area south of the Town of North East and west of Elkton. North of the I-95 and U.S. 40 corridor, the Rural Conservation District extends to the Pennsylvania State Line and includes sparsely developed areas between suburban developments and the Town and Village Centers.

### **GOALS FOR THE DISTRICT**

#### **Goal Emphasis**

*Maintain the rural character of the County by planning for the preservation of prime agriculture land, open space, and forests.*

The close proximity of large urban population and employment centers to the Rural Conservation District distinguishes its farming areas from those of the Resource Protection District. As a consequence farmland in the Rural Conservation District is steadily being converted to residential and other non-agricultural uses. Development pressure on remaining farmland is reflected in current land values and ownership patterns in the District.

Despite the fact that development activity is more obvious in these areas, agriculture and forestry continue to be the dominant land uses

in the District and are major community character determinants. Agricultural land uses and forest cover dominate the landscape in the Rural Conservation District and give it an essentially rural character. The preservation of agriculture, forest cover, and large expanses of open space is essential to maintaining this existing rural character. The County should make special provisions for the continuation of agriculture and forestry activities in the Rural Conservation District by affording them protection as development occurs and by minimizing the loss of productive lands and natural vegetation to the extent possible.

Under the right economic circumstances, agriculture can co-exist in a suburbanizing area. By taking advantage of the market opportunities for high value agricultural products presented in nearby urban centers can continue in suburban areas provided there is adequate land to farm. Where the development pattern consists of dispersed, low density development that spreads residences, retail stores, and industrial and office parks across a broad area and preserves open space areas in between, farming may continue. To accomplish this pattern of development the County should encourage cluster development forms that result in preservation of contiguous permanent open space areas on which farming can take place.

Some farmland in the County has already been placed under protective easements through the Maryland Agriculture Preservation Program. Farms formed into agriculture districts under this program are eligible to sell development rights to the State, thereby allowing the farm owners to continue in farming while at the same time realizing some of the development value of the land. State funding for purchase of development rights under this Program is limited and many farmers feel that the per acre purchase price being offered by the State is below the true value of the easements. To increase the effectiveness of the Maryland program, the County could elect to supplement State purchase prices, when deemed appropriate, thereby increasing the appeal of this program to Cecil County farm owners.

#### **Other Goals for the District**

*Reduce conflicts between incompatible uses.*

Land conversion from forestry and agricultural uses to non-agriculture uses will likely continue in the Rural Conservation District increasing the potential for conflict between agriculture, forestry and residential land uses. For these uses to co-exist special efforts must be taken to minimize these conflicts. The County should adopt "right to farm" and "right to forest" legislation that protects existing farms and forestry activities and uses from

nuisance complaints that arise as a result as changed conditions in the surrounding area.

*Restrict strip development.*

Strip development along rural County roads tends to create traffic conflicts, especially between slower moving agriculture vehicles and other traffic. Strip development also reduces road capacity. To minimize conflicts and maintain capacity, new development should be served by an internal access street thereby minimizing curb cuts along State and County roads.

Views of woodlands and rolling fields provided at numerous open areas along rural roads help define the essential rural character of the District. In addition, open space areas between settlements set them apart and thereby lend a sense of order to the countryside. Continuous strip development along the roads consumes land adjacent to the road and blocks or alters vistas. Although woodlands and rolling fields may be just beyond the roadside development they can not be seen.

The County should encourage compact development forms that retain open space areas along the roads between settlements and retain views out across fields and hills. A sense of continuity of open space should be maintained by requiring development be set back away from the road and screened from view by vegetative buffers.

*Maintain agricultural uses by resisting encroachment of development into prime agricultural lands, and physically separating other land uses from agricultural activities.*

Due to the proximity of the Rural Conservation District to major urban populations, more so than anywhere else in the County, maintaining agricultural uses will be a challenge. Where agriculture abuts non-agriculture uses, the potential for conflicts will be heightened. Standards for development occurring adjacent to agriculture should include requirements for substantial setback and vegetated buffers at property lines.

*Encourage the economic viability of farm operations by permitting agriculture-related retail on agricultural land.*

Farm owners and operators should be provided maximum flexibility to develop new products and improve marketing of agriculture products currently grown or produced in the County.

*Encourage development of local markets for locally grown foods.*

Farming at the urban fringe needs to adapt to the higher land values and urban pressures by changing the crops and livestock produced. More emphasis should be placed on developing a diverse product mix that is oriented toward local markets and can be directly marketed to urban consumers. Production of high value crops such as vegetables, fruit, and nursery crops, as well as dairy products, and specialty livestock (horses, rabbits, fur-bearing animals, bees, worms, and laboratory animals) are some of the farm products that have found successful markets in nearby urban areas.

The proximity of the Rural Conservation District to major urban populations provides an opportunity to develop strong markets for local products such as vegetables and fruits. Today's urban consumer stresses freshness and flavor in their food. Their preference for freshness and flavor often prompts them to buy product grown locally and sold at premium prices through gourmet grocery shops, or at bargain prices direct from the grower in farmer's markets, roadside stands, or "U-pick" farms.

To help farmers capitalize on urban consumer preferences, the County should encourage direct retailing of farm products on farms in the Rural Conservation District where appropriate. Zoning controls should be flexible, permitting roadside stands and small retail agri-commercial establishments where safe ingress and egress can be provided. Such commercial activities should be strictly limited to the sale of farm products. Although these activities will be commercial in nature, once permitted, the use should not be considered as a basis for granting a change to permanent commercial zoning. The County should consider issuing annual permits for these activities.

*Maintain the equity value of agricultural land.*

The continues financial health of farms in the urban fringe, such as occur in the Rural Conservation District, is tied to maintenance of land values created by the competition for farm land by non-farm uses. The competition for farm land supports higher land values and farmer equity than can be sustained by agricultural demand alone. This higher equity value can be part of the basis for investment in new agriculture enterprises adapted to changing urban markets. To the extent possible, the County should provide for the continuation of farming in the Rural conservation District, but as the same time provide for a residential development option, albeit at a low density.

*Strictly control development in sensitive and critical resource areas to protect natural resources.*

Many of the sensitive natural resources in the County, such as aquatic and wetland environments and upland wildlife habitats, occur in the Rural Conservation District. Preserving natural vegetation in stream valleys, on steep slopes, on sensitive soils, and in nontidal wetlands will help protect water quality and maintain wildlife habitats in the County. The quality and survivability of these sensitive natural areas is dependent on good land management practices, whether in conjunction with agriculture or development. These areas should be protected wherever they occur, but especially in the Rural Conservation District where the mass is extensive.

*Encourage the identification, preservation, and restoration of sites and structures having historic significance, and control development in their vicinity to protect their visual character.*

Much of the rich history of Cecil County is found in rural areas. These historic places, along with the buildings, and structures that have been erected on them, contribute to the visual heritage and unique character of the County. Historically significant and unique sites, buildings, and structures in the County's rural areas should be systematically identified and conserved where possible. Where appropriate, the County should designate historic districts and sites for special treatment in the development process so that even as change occurs on and near these sites it does not result in an irretrievable loss of important historic places.

*Permit the development of agriculture and forestry support enterprises in the Rural Conservation District, including farm implement sales and servicing, seed fertilizer dealers, and industries that process agricultural and forestry products.*

The viability of the County's agricultural economy depends on more than just farms and farmland. Farmers must have access to the types of goods and services required to effectively conduct farming operations. These goods and services should be readily available and located in close proximity to farming areas. Thus, agricultural support enterprises should be permitted in the Rural Conservation District.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Roads and Access**

County roads should be of sufficient design to serve rural populations and agriculture. For planning and evaluation purposes, level of service (LOS) policy for the most of the County road system in the Rural Conservation District should be set at a level consistent with rural/agriculture traffic conditions. Except where safety issues mandate road improvements, the County should not need to plan major capital expenditures on County roads in the Rural Conservation District.

Direct access to State and County roads from residential lots should be discouraged. Access to residential and non-residential developments should be provided by an internal road system. Any subdivision of land for residential development purposes, including minor subdivisions, should not be permitted without adequate consideration of access. Design standards established in the County's Subdivision Regulations should require all lots be served by an internal system of roads and that entrances should be appropriately spaced. By minimizing the number of curb cuts permitted on County roads and requiring substantial vegetated buffers between development and roads, the County will conserve road capacity and at the same time help maintain rural character.

### **Sewer and Water Supply**

The County should not program construction of public sewer and or water systems in the Rural Conservation District except in cases where a threat to public health exists as a result of existing conditions. Residential and other non-agriculture development should be served by on-site sewer and water facilities. The use of shared sewer facilities provides more opportunity to preserve open space areas. The County should work with the local Health Department to establish procedures for permitting shared sewer facilities.

### **LAND USES IN THE DISTRICT**

The predominant land uses in the Rural Conservation District are agriculture and agriculture related uses, residential, and limited local convenience commercial. Industrial uses that depend on local agriculture or forestry products are also appropriate in the District. Light industrial uses that can be blended into the rural countryside may be permitted in appropriate locations provided environmental and community impacts are strictly controlled.

"Right to farm" and "right to forest" provisions that protect existing farms and forestry activities and uses from nuisance complaints that arise as a result of changed conditions in the surrounding area should be adopted for the Rural Conservation District.

Clustering residential development and providing for large common open space areas, preferably to be left in a natural state, provides the maximum opportunity to achieve the goals of the Rural Conservation District. Density and other incentives for clustering development should be established in the Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Commission may also develop programs, other than clustering, to achieve the goals of the district. Agriculture should be encouraged in open space areas.

Commercial uses should be of a neighborhood convenience and business service nature. Commercial buildings, other than agri-businesses should be limited in size to no more than 5,000 square feet on the first floor. Commercial site design standards should either limit site coverage or set minimum open space requirements. Landscaping and screening of parking areas should also be required.

Commercial recreation uses may also be allowed in the District, under appropriate conditions, including golf courses, campgrounds, and other such facilities.

Provisions should be made to permit agri-industry and agri-business uses of a more intense nature in the District. Extraction uses may also be permitted in the District in appropriate locations and with adequate safeguards for adjacent properties.

Light industrial uses that can be blended into the rural countryside may be permitted in appropriate locations provided they do not adversely impact the environment and rural character of the surrounding area. Generally, light, clean industrial establishments that are completely enclosed within buildings would be appropriate. Design standards for these uses should limit total site coverage and require substantial setbacks from roads and adjoining properties. Views of buildings and parking areas from roads and adjacent properties should be screened. Proximity to major highways should be one of the key considerations for all industrial uses. Principal entrances to these light industrial sites should be located on controlled access highways, i.e., U.S. Routes 1, 40, 222 north of Route 1, and State Routes 213, 273, or on the following other major highways: State Routes 272, 274, 276, 279, 282 and 316 south of Fletchwood Road.

Performance provisions should be included in the Zoning Ordinance that establish minimum development standards including minimum open space requirements, landscaping, and bufferyard standards. In general these standards should provide for a visual quality of residential and non-residential development that is consistent with the rural agricultural character of the District.

Bufferyard standards should provide for screening of residential and non-residential along State and County roads as well as provide for vegetated buffers between agriculture and non-agriculture uses and activities.

Performance standards that address environmental concerns should also be included in Zoning and Subdivision regulations. These standards should establish minimum protection levels for sensitive environments including wetlands, forest, other wildlife habitats, steep slopes, erodible lands, and stream valleys. The objective of these standards is to protect water quality and to conserve those natural features that make a significant contribution to the character of the District.

## **Residential**

### *Guidelines for housing types*

Housing types appropriate to the Rural Conservation District are detached single family dwellings. Residential uses may also be permitted on the upper floor of structures with first floor commercial where properly zoned. Low residential densities should be standard in the Rural Conservation District. Large lot residential, i.e., lots that are essentially the same size as the permitted density, should be discouraged.

**Density:** One dwelling unit per ten acres.

**Open Space:** At least 15 percent of the site should be set aside as permanent open space and up to 60 percent for cluster developments.

**Setback from State and County road right-of-way:** 100 feet.

**Setback from internal streets serving individual lots:** at least 50 feet.

**Setback from agriculture use:** 50 feet if forested; 100 feet if unforested; and up to 300 feet between agricultural activities and development if bonus density is utilized. “Agriculture activities” in this context is defined as, “the tilling of soil, the raising of crops, horticulture, forestry and gardening including the keeping and raising of fowl.” It should be noted that certain agricultural activities, such as large scale hog and chicken raising operations will have to meet additional standards to address potential environmental impacts that would not apply to all agricultural activities.

**Street buffer along State and County roads (may be included in the setback):** 40-foot planted buffer.

**Street buffer along internal streets serving individual lots (may be included in setback):** row of street trees.

**Nonresidential Uses**

*Guidelines for nonresidential uses*

In general, new commercial and business buildings in the District should be of a size and scale that is consistent with the rural architecture of the District.

**Parking:** Parking for commercial and industrial uses should be placed behind the principal structure to the extent possible. Truck unloading areas have priority over parking for the area behind commercial and industrial buildings. Setbacks from frontage roads should be minimized to accommodate parking at the rear of the principal structures. All parking areas should be landscaped and connect between adjacent properties wherever possible. Pervious structures should be used for parking areas that accommodate vehicles during infrequent peak and demand periods.

**Outdoor Storage:** Outdoor storage, except that associated with agricultural activities, should be screened from public ways and adjacent residential uses by vegetation or walls.

**Buffers:** Nonresidential uses fronting on arterials or collector road segments should have a 50-foot wide buffer adjacent to the road right-of-way planted with trees, shrubs, or understory vegetation. Commercial uses on other road segments and local streets should have at least a row of trees at the edge of the right-of-way.

**Landscaping:** Nonresidential uses should be required to landscape at least 25 percent of the site with plant species native to Cecil County. The landscaping requirements can be relaxed if all parking is placed to the rear of the principal structure.

**RESOURCE PROTECTION DISTRICT**

**PURPOSE OF THE DISTRICT**

The County’s productive agricultural soils are a natural resource which should be retained in farm use wherever possible. The Resource Protection District encompasses an area where protection of agricultural land resources is considered most feasible and of the highest priority. The primary purpose of the Resource Protection District is to encourage retention of agricultural land and agriculture related activities and to support the agriculture economy of the County. Although residential development is permitted, the primary objective for the Resource Protection District is maintenance of the land base necessary to support agricultural industry.

**DISTRICT LOCATION**

The Resource Protection District, the largest single land use district in the County, encompasses all areas south of Chesapeake City which have not been included in other Planning Districts. The areas designated on the Plan Map as Resource Protection District most closely correspond to those areas where farming continues to be the dominant land use.

**GOALS FOR THE DISTRICT****Goal Emphasis**

*Encourage the protection of prime agricultural land and resist encroachment of development into them.*

Protecting prime farmland is critical to ensuring that this traditional County industry survives into the future. Conversion of prime farmland to non-farm uses is an irreversible process. For all practical purposes, land lost to development can only be reclaimed for agriculture at great cost.

Protecting prime agricultural land requires a land resource base and a strong agricultural economy. As more of the County's farmland is converted to non-agricultural uses, the viability of the agricultural industry is further constrained. A healthy agricultural industry requires a "critical mass" or minimum amount of neighboring farms and farmland to support the necessary suppliers, dealers, and organizations required to provide farmers with goods and services.

The type of discordant development that often places farms leaves rural citizens with a sense that they have lost control over the traditional character of their communities. In addition, resisting encroachment of development into farming areas helps prevent the loss of the rural aesthetic benefits that the County cherishes as a landscape heritage. It also helps to control the high urban service costs that result from scattered, leapfrog development that ultimately effects taxes.

**Other Goals for the District**

*Reduce conflicts between incompatible uses.*

By controlling the location and intensity of new development permitted in the Resource Protection District, the County can help minimize conflicts between agricultural and non-agricultural uses. This is particularly true in those areas where farms have been formed into an Agricultural Preservation District under the Maryland Agriculture Preservation Program or have donated easements to the Maryland Environmental Trust. Expansion of these districts to encompass adjacent farm areas may help ensure that the "critical mass" needed for farms is achieved.

At the same time the County should adopt "right to farm" and "right to forest" legislation that protects existing farms and forestry activities and uses from nuisance complaints that arise as a result of changed conditions in the surrounding area.

*Permit the development of agriculture and forestry support enterprises in the Resource Protection District, including farm implement sales and servicing, seed and fertilizer dealers, and industries that process agricultural and forestry products.*

The viability of the County's agricultural economy depends on more than just farms and farmland. Farmers must have access to the types of goods and services required to effectively conduct farming operations. These goods and services should be readily available and located in close proximity to farming areas. Thus, agricultural support enterprises should be permitted in the Resource Protection District.

*Maintain agricultural and forestry uses by setting strict limits on development and physically separating other land uses from agricultural activities.*

With the exception of agri-industry and agri-business uses, permitted land uses in the Resource Protection District should be of a low intensity nature. Site location and design standards should address potential conflicts between residential and agricultural uses. Substantial setback and buffer requirements should be established in recognition of the inherent industrial nature of agricultural practices and the conflicts with residential uses that may arise.

*Protect and preserve the agricultural character of the landscape.*

The agricultural landscape in Cecil County is dominated by open expanses consisting of fields, pasture, and woodlands. Non-agricultural uses or activities should be of low intensity and not be readily visible from the road.

*Encourage the economic viability of farm operations by permitting agriculture-related retailing on farms.*

The County should cooperate with farmers to strengthen the County's agriculture economy. Farm owners and operators should be encouraged to develop new products and improve marketing of local agricultural products. Where appropriate, the County should permit direct retailing of farm products on farms in the Resource Protection District. Zoning controls should be flexible, permitting roadside stands and small retail agri-commercial establishments on farms where safe access can be provided. Such commercial activities should be strictly limited to the sale of farm products from Cecil County. Although these activities will be commercial in nature, once permitted, the use

should not be considered as a basis for granting a change to permanent commercial zoning. The County should consider issuing temporary annual permits, for these activities.

*Encourage development of local markets for locally grown foods.*

Because Cecil County's Resource Protection District is close to major urban populations, opportunities exist to develop strong markets for locally grown farm products. The County should cooperate with farmers and farm organizations to improve marketing of Cecil County's agricultural products.

*Maintain the equity value of agricultural land.*

The value of farm land is represented by both the resource and commodity values of land. The resource, or agriculture value, is determined by the land's production capacity which, along with market factors, determines its ability to capitalize debt. The commodity, or development value, is the land's value for non-agricultural uses. In areas experiencing growth, the development value of land is typically higher than the agricultural value. The difference between these two components of value is affected by the market value of agricultural products and the speculative development value of land in the market place. Development value is affected by the types and intensity of land use permitted on the land. For most agricultural areas, land value is a function of the residential densities permitted under County zoning.

Maintaining equity value implies permitting some residential use options for agricultural land. To accomplish this goal the County must establish residential densities that are a compromise between the resource and commodity values of agricultural land in Cecil County.

Some farmland in the County has already been placed under protective easements through the Maryland Agriculture Preservation Program. Farms formed into agricultural districts under this program are eligible to sell their development rights to the State, thereby allowing the farm owners to continue in farming while at the same time realizing some of the development value of the land. State funding for purchase of development rights under this Program are limited and many farmers feel that the per acre purchase price being offered by the State is below the true value of the easements. To increase the effectiveness of the Maryland program, the County could elect to supplement State purchase prices, when deemed appropriate, thereby increasing the appeal of this program to Cecil County farm owners.

*Strictly control development in sensitive and critical resource areas to protect natural resources.*

Many of the sensitive natural resources in the County, such as aquatic and wetland environments and upland environments and upland wildlife habitats, occur in the Resource Protection District. Preserving natural vegetation in stream valleys, on steep slopes, on sensitive soils and in nontidal wetlands will help protect water quality and maintain wildlife habitats in the County. The quality and survivability of these sensitive natural areas is dependent on good land management practices, whether in conjunction with agriculture or development. These areas should be protected wherever they occur, but especially in the Resource Protection District where the mass is most extensive.

*Maintain the rural character of the County by planning for the preservation of prime agricultural land, open space and forests.*

Cecil County's rural character is largely attributable to the abundance of uninterrupted open space, long uncluttered vistas, and natural dense vegetation. The County should encourage the preservation of large open space areas and natural vegetation in a manner that maintains a rural sense of place.

*Encourage the identification, preservation, and restoration of sites and structures having historic significance, and control development in their vicinity to protect their visual character.*

Much of the rich history of Cecil County is found in the rural agricultural areas of the County. The places, buildings, and structures that comprise the visual heritage of the County should be systematically identified and conserved. Where appropriate, the County should designate historic districts and sites for special treatment in the development process so that even as change occurs on and near these sites it does not result in a degradation or loss of the County's history.

*Restrict strip development.*

Strip development along rural County roads tends to create traffic conflicts, reduce road capacity, and conflict with the rural character goals for the District. New development should be required to provide internal access streets thereby minimizing curb cuts along State and County roads.

Views of woodlands and rolling fields provided at numerous open areas along rural roads helps define the essential rural character of the District. In addition, open space areas between settlements set them apart and thereby lend a sense of order to the countryside. Continuous strip development along

the roads consumes land adjacent to the road and blocks or alters vistas. Although woodlands and rolling fields may be just beyond the roadside development they can not be seen.

The County should encourage compact development forms that retain open space areas along the roads between settlements and retain views out across fields and hills. A sense of continuity of open space should be maintained by requiring development to be set back away from the road and to be screened from view by vegetative buffers.

## **INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **Roads and Access**

Except where safety issues mandate improvements, the County should not need to plan major capital investments in the rural road systems in the Resource Protection District. County roads in the District need to be sufficient to provide safe access for the rural population and agricultural activities planned for the area. For planning and evaluation purposes, capital improvement programming for these roads should be made on the basis of accommodating low traffic loadings.

Direct access to residences, commercial and industrial establishments along State and County roads should be discouraged. Instead, access should be taken from a system of internal access roads. This policy should apply to all development, including minor subdivisions.

### **Sewer and Water Supply**

The County should not plan for the provision of public sewer and or water service in the Resource Protection District except in cases where a threat to public health exists as a result of existing conditions. Where permitted, residential and other non-agricultural development should be served by on-site sewer and water facilities. Shared sewer facilities that permit greater opportunity to preserve open space should also be encouraged. The County should adopt ordinances to permit shared sewage facilities where appropriate.

## **LAND USES IN THE DISTRICT**

The primary land uses envisioned for the Resource Protection District are agriculture, forestry and related activities. Standard agricultural practices

and timber harvesting should be permitted uses by right in this district. Intense agricultural uses should also be permitted, but only after the County has been assured that appropriate management practices and safeguards will be instituted to protect the environment.

Low density residential development may also be permitted in this district but should not be allowed to create undue conflicts with the agricultural and forestry uses. "Right to farm" and "right to forest" provisions that protect existing farms and forestry activities and uses from nuisance complaints that arise as a result of changed conditions in the surrounding area should be adopted for the Resource Protection District.

Clustering residential development and providing for large common open space areas, preferably to be left in a natural state, provides the maximum opportunity to achieve the goals of the Resource Protection District. Density and other incentives for clustering development should be established in the Zoning Ordinance. The Planning Commission may also develop programs, other than clustering, to achieve the goals of the district. A density of one dwelling unit per five acres should be permitted when up to 60 percent of the site is dedicated to common open space with appropriate setbacks and buffers or if the development proposal is consistent with other programs developed by the Planning Commission to achieve the goals of the district.

Nonresidential development, other than agriculture and related uses, should be of limited intensity. Limited non-agricultural commercial uses of a local convenience nature, small service businesses and recreational uses may be permitted in appropriate locations in the District. Commercial uses of a neighborhood convenience and business service nature should be housed in buildings of a size and scale that are compatible with the rural architecture of the area. Commercial buildings, other than agri-businesses, should be limited in size. Commercial site design standards should limit site coverage, set minimum open space requirements, require road buffers, and establish minimum landscaping standards.

Appropriate industrial uses for the Resource Protection District are those that serve agriculture or process agricultural or forestry products. Light industrial uses that blend into the rural countryside may also be permitted in appropriate locations provided they do not adversely impact the environment and rural character of the surrounding area. Generally, light, clean industrial establishments that are completely enclosed within buildings would be appropriate. Design standards for these uses should limit total site coverage and require substantial setbacks from roads and adjoining

properties. Views of buildings and parking areas from roads and adjacent properties should be screened. Proximity to major highways should be one of the key considerations for all industrial uses. Principal entrances to these light industrial sites should be located on controlled access highways, i.e., U.S. 301, and MD 213.

Performance standards that establish minimum development standards including minimum open space requirements, landscaping, and bufferyard standards should be included in the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. These standards should provide for a visual quality of residential and non-residential development that is consistent with the rural agricultural character of the District. Bufferyard standards should provide for screening of residential and non-residential uses along State and County roads and at zoning district boundaries. Buffer screening should also be required between agriculture and non-agriculture uses and activities.

Environmental performance standards should also be included in Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. These standards should establish minimum protection levels for sensitive environments including wetlands, forest, other wildlife habitats, steep slopes, erodible lands, and stream valleys. The objective of these standards is to protect water quality and to conserve those natural features that contribute to the character of the District.

## Residential

### *Guidelines for housing types*

Housing types appropriate to the Resource Protection District are detached single family dwellings. Residential uses may also be permitted on the upper floor of structures with first floor commercial where properly zoned. Low residential densities should be the standard in the Resource Protection District.

**Density:** One dwelling unit per twenty acres.

**Open Space:** At least 15 percent of the site should be set aside as permanent open space and up to 60 percent for cluster developments.

**Setback from State and County road right-of-way:** 100 feet.

**Setback from internal streets serving individual lots:** at least 50 feet.

**Setback from agriculture use:** 50 feet if forested; 100 feet if unforested; and up to 300 feet between agricultural activities and

development. "Agriculture activities" in this context is defined as, "the tilling of soil, the raising of crops, horticulture, forestry, and gardening including the keeping and raising of animals and fowl." It should be noted that certain agricultural activities, such as large scale hog and chicken raising operations will have to meet additional standards to address potential environmental impacts that would not necessarily apply to all agricultural activities.

**Street buffer along State and County roads (may be included in the setback):** 40-foot planted buffer.

**Street buffer along internal streets serving individual lots (may be included in setback):** row of street trees.

## Nonresidential Uses

### *Guidelines for nonresidential uses*

**Parking:** Parking for commercial and industrial uses should be placed behind the principal structure to the extent possible. Truck unloading areas have priority over parking for the area behind commercial and industrial buildings. Setbacks from frontage roads should be minimized to accommodate parking at the rear of the principal structures. All parking areas should be landscaped and connect between adjacent commercial properties wherever possible. Pervious structures should be used for parking areas that accommodate vehicles during infrequent peak demand periods.

**Outdoor Storage:** Outdoor storage, except that associated with agricultural activities, should be screened from public ways and adjacent residential uses by vegetation or walls.

**Buffers:** Nonresidential uses fronting on arterials and collector road segments should have a 50-foot wide buffer adjacent to the road right-of-way planted with trees, shrubs, or understory vegetation. Commercial uses on other road segments and local streets should have at least

a row of street trees at the edge of the right-of-way.

**Landscaping:** Nonresidential uses should be required to landscape at least 25 percent of the site with plant species native to Cecil County. The landscaping requirements can be relaxed if all parking is placed to the rear of the principal structure.

## **MINERAL EXTRACTION DISTRICT**

### **PURPOSE OF THE DISTRICT**

The Mineral Extraction District serves several functions: to protect economically important mineral resources of the County for current and future use; to prevent incompatible development that may directly or indirectly preclude access to the mineral resources until such time that the mineral resource has been removed; and to protect existing land uses adjacent to potential mineral lands from undue harm that might result from mineral extraction activity. In addition, the purpose of the Mineral Extraction District is to provide for the restoration of mineral extraction sites for uses compatible with those in surrounding areas.

The designation of an area as a Mineral Extraction District is an interim designation. The ultimate use of an area after extraction has occurred, or the mineral is demonstrated to be economically unrecoverable, will be decided in the context of the comprehensive plan in effect at that time. A plan amendment may also be used to determine the final land designation. Such an amendment should be based on a special study that takes into account the type and intensity of surrounding land uses and the availability of infrastructure and services. It is the intent of the Land Use Plan that mining activities occur only in the Mineral Extraction District.

### **DISTRICT LOCATION**

Mineral Extraction Districts consist of land areas with known mineral deposits primarily owned or otherwise controlled by members of the mineral extraction industry.

### **GOALS FOR THE DISTRICT**

#### **Goal Emphasis**

*Protect mineral resources for future extraction and provide for reclamation of extracted land for other appropriate uses.*

Aggregates such as sand, gravel, stone, and clay are vital to a healthy economy. Roads, residences, commercial buildings, public utilities, and industrial facilities require the use of these minerals during construction as well as maintenance. Cecil County has been blessed with large deposits of these minerals thereby providing the County with a relatively inexpensive source of building material as well as a source of jobs and income as aggregates have been exported to neighboring jurisdictions. The economic well being of Cecil County and of nearby counties and towns, which provide employment to residents of Cecil County, requires that at least some of the valuable deposits in the County be reserved for mining purposes. Reservation of these resources should be made before competing land uses, such as premature urbanization, make mining not feasible.

#### **Other Goals for the District**

*Reduce conflicts between incompatible uses.*

It is in the interest of the County that economically recoverable mineral resources be protected from encroachment by incompatible land uses until the minerals are extracted and that the excavated land be stabilized and reclaimed for productive use. The interests of the mining industry must be balanced against the interests of individuals living or working on land adjacent to areas that may be excavated in the future.

Housing and commercial development is generally incompatible with mineral extraction activities. The Mineral Extraction District is established to reduce conflict that could interfere with the orderly and timely development of mineral resources by allowing other development of a type and intensity that is compatible with nearby mining activities until the mineral resources are removed.

*Strictly control development in sensitive and critical resource areas to protect natural resources.*

The Mineral Extraction District recognizes the economic resource value of sand, gravel, and hard rock deposits by protecting them from encroaching incompatible uses. Mineral extraction activities must

respect stream valleys, their natural vegetation, and other special habitats.

*Maintain the rural character of the County by planning for the preservation of prime agricultural land, open space and forests.*

The Mineral Extraction District protects land as open space until such time that it is excavated and reclaimed. Its post-excavation uses should be determined by a future comprehensive plan or special interim study.

## INFRASTRUCTURE

### Roads and Access

In cooperation with the mining industry, the County should initiate efforts to upgrade transportation routes where mineral resource traffic occurs now and is expected to occur in the future. Road improvements needed should be made before truck traffic from mining operations overloads substandard or undersized roadways.

### Sewer and Water Supply

Service to the Mineral Extraction Districts should only be provided to correct existing problems with septic systems and groundwater resources or, if the area is assigned to another district, requiring these services based on a future comprehensive plan or interim study. In the interim, regional sewer and water lines may cross the Mineral Extraction District.

## LAND USES IN THE DISTRICT

Because mining operations occur over many years, future land uses in Mineral Extraction Districts should be determined after mining and reclamation are complete. This final determination should be part of a periodic or special revision to the comprehensive plan. Mining operators should be required to submit a complete post-reclamation site inventory to be used in making future land use decisions.

### Residential

*Guidelines for housing types*

Housing types appropriate to Mineral Extraction Districts are single family houses,

and manufactured houses used in support of extraction activities.

*Guidelines for residential development*

**Density:** Residential uses are permitted in Mineral Extraction Zones at a density not to exceed one dwelling unit per 50 acres.

**Setback from State and County road rights-of-way:** 50 feet if forested; 100 feet if not forested.

### Nonresidential Development

Commercial uses should not be permitted in the Mineral Extraction District.

The Mineral Extraction District should be separated into two subdistricts, A and B.

Mineral Extraction District A consists of areas with few or no incompatible land uses in the district or adjacent to it. In Mineral Extraction District A, mineral extraction should be permitted by right.

Mineral Extraction District B consists of areas with a substantial potential for conflict between normal extraction activities and adjacent land uses due to truck traffic and insufficient screening of noise and views of the mining operations from the sensitive uses. Mining activities in Mineral Extraction District B should require a special exception.

The zoning ordinance amendments that implement the Plan recommendations for the Mineral Extraction District B should include explicit standards, concerning traffic, hours of operation, noise, entrance treatment, setbacks, and sight lines, to be met by applicants for a special exception. The applicant should be granted a special exception if the standards are met. Conditions attached to the approval implementing the standards as they affect operations or buffers on the applicant's property can be recommended to the State for inclusions in the State surface mining permit. County concerns on groundwater drawdown due to site dewatering and discharge of water from the site should be transmitted to the State for technical review of the surface mining permit application. These activities may require a water appropriations permit or a NPDES permit from the State.

Agriculture and forestry uses are permitted in Mineral Extraction Districts A and B.

#### *Guidelines for nonresidential uses*

**Parking:** Parking should be placed behind the principal structure to the extent possible and screened from road view with vegetation.

**Outdoor storage:** Outdoor storage, except that associated with agricultural activities, should be screened from public ways and adjacent residential uses by vegetation or walls.

**Forest cover:** Clearing of forest vegetation should be limited to areas needed for excavation, structures, unloading areas, access roads, and paved parking areas.

**Setback from State and County road rights-of-way:** State requirements or 100 feet, whichever is less, but in no case less than 50 feet. The setback distance should be left in forest cover.

## **PERFORMANCE STANDARD GUIDELINES FOR ALL DEVELOPMENT**

This section of the Plan recommends performance standards that implement three important goals of the Comprehensive Plan dealing with protection of natural resources, management of storm water quality, and avoiding conflicts between adjacent land uses. Unless otherwise noted, these performance standards shall apply to all new development in the county.

Additional performance standards should be required for new development adjacent to publicly-owned sensitive natural resource areas and private conservation areas.

### **SENSITIVE RESOURCE AREAS**

#### **Goal Statement**

*Limit development in floodplains, steep slopes, and other sensitive natural areas to protect natural resources.*

Throughout the County there are areas, which if disturbed by development activities, will result in water pollution or loss of plant or animal habitat. Performance standards that protect sensitive resource areas should be included in the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations. These standards should establish minimum protection levels for stream valleys, wetlands, forests, wildlife habitats, and sensitive soils. The objective of these standards is to protect water quality and wildlife habitat and to conserve those natural features that make a significant contribution to the character of each district.

#### **Guidelines**

**Perennial streams:** A 110-foot minimum setback from all perennial streams, as shown on U.S.G.S. 7.5 minute quadrangle maps, shall be required for any disturbance except road crossing and recreational access to the stream. This standard can be waived in the Development District if the developer can demonstrate that the design, construction, and use of the site will provide the same or better protection of water quality as the 110-foot minimum setback.

**Ephemeral streams:** A 25-foot minimum setback from all ephemeral streams as identified on the USGS 7.5 minute quadrangle maps is recommended for any disturbance except road crossing.

**Sensitive soil setback:** There should be no disturbance of sensitive soils adjacent to the 110-foot perennial stream setback to a maximum distance of 160 feet, except as specified by the floodplain ordinance. Sensitive areas should include: hydric soils, floodplains, steep slopes, highly erodible soils, and highly permeable soils. This standard can be waived in the Development District if the developer can demonstrate that the design, construction, and use of the site will provide the same or better protection of water quality as the sensitive soil setback.

**Nontidal wetlands:** There shall be at least a 25-foot setback from nontidal wetlands; no direct or indirect disturbance to nontidal wetlands should be permitted except as allowed by State and Federal nontidal wetland regulations.

**Vegetated buffer in stream and nontidal wetland setbacks:** Vegetation in the perennial stream and nontidal wetland setbacks shall be preserved and maintained in a natural state, or if not present, created through planting of native species appropriate to the site.

**Steep slopes outside stream valley:** There shall be no structures or impervious surfaces placed on slopes greater than 25 percent. On slopes between 15 and 25 percent, good engineering practices should be used for sediment and erosion control during construction, and slopes should be stabilized as soon after disturbance as possible.

**Habitats of rare, threatened, and endangered species:** Rare, threatened, and endangered species and their habitats should be protected as prescribed by Maryland DNR, Natural Heritage Program.

**Habitat enhancement:** Where an appropriate situation presents itself for passive recreation, the Planning Commission may require that open space on an applicant site, or on another site purchased with open space payment-in-lieu funds, be afforested to improve wildlife habitat to provide passive recreational opportunities.

**Forest cover protection:** All land development shall limit clearing of natural vegetation and retain specimen trees to the extent possible, as determined by a forest stand delineation study. A Forest Management Plan shall be prepared by a professional forester and approved by the County Forestry Board for any commercial timber harvest activity that involves clearing more than one acre of forest in a year. Forestry Board guidelines should indicate protection of forest continuity between properties and selective cutting in forested bufferyards. Sites that have been clear cut should only be eligible for bonus density options if they have been cut according to a Forest Management Plan and have been reforested for at least three years.

## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

### Goal Statement

*Assure that proper storm water management and sediment and erosion controls are enforced.*

### Guidelines

**Creation of impervious surfaces:** All land development should be encouraged to minimize impervious surfaces through good site design, use of pervious surfaces where use

by people or vehicle is infrequent, and full utilization of height limits on structures.

## BUFFERYARDS

### Goal Statement

*Reduce conflicts between incompatible uses.*

Bufferyards are meant to minimize the negative impacts of adjacent incompatible uses. Buffering can be achieved by a combination of setbacks and vegetative plantings.

### Guidelines

Bufferyards should be required along property boundaries between all zones of disparate intensities. They should also be required for new development along County and State roads in the Suburban, Resource Protection, and Rural Conservation Districts to help maintain rural character, and for all highway commercial and industrial uses outside of the Village, Town, and Development Districts. Road buffer should be wide enough to screen residential areas from the road, and to maintain the visual quality of the road. Road buffers should be wider along roads with more traffic. Finally, bufferyards should be required along property boundaries between agricultural and residential uses in the Resource Protection District and the Rural Conservation District. Street trees along the road satisfy bufferyard guidelines along State and County roads in Development, Town, and Village Districts, and along internal roads in all districts.

## TRANSPORTATION PLAN

### Introduction

Effective transportation planning and facility programming is an integral part of growth management. The quality of access to land and activities affects the form, intensity, and location of all land uses. This is especially true for intense land uses such as industrial, commercial, and high density residential, as well as for less intense activities such as rural residential and agricultural land uses. Intense uses tend to locate where accessibility is the highest. Conversely, where access is limited, de-

velopment is naturally limited to low traffic generators such as agriculture and rural residences.

Cecil County's transportation system will continue to be heavily dependent on automobile use throughout the planning period. The existing system of roads and streets will serve as the primary means of access to present and future land uses. Therefore, making efficient use of existing highways will be critical if the County hopes to maintain an adequate level of transportation service.

Theoretically, highway systems and the land uses served are constantly in a state of change approaching equilibrium. As land use intensifies it generates more vehicle trips. When the number of vehicle trips exceeds the capacity of the system, traffic operations begin to breakdown, congestion increases, and safety becomes an overriding concern. As highway lanes and/or transit service are added to the system in response to increased traffic it often results in an excess of capacity that makes additional development possible. By controlling this cycle, public investment in new transportation facilities and services can influence development patterns.

Equally important, without an effective means of growth management the county cannot accurately predict where increased traffic will result in a need for road improvements. Because highway funds are limited, the County and State must rely on strategic investments in the highway system in order to reach their transportation objectives. In the context of growth management such investments should be made in areas where the County wants growth and economic development to occur.

The Comprehensive Plan attempts to balance public concern for efficiency, mobility, and safety with economic development and growth management objectives in the Transportation Plan. With population and employment growth, increases in travel will also likely increase congestion on some roads. Where congestion results, improvements will have to be made to insure that public concerns are addressed.

The implementation recommendations of the Transportation Plan are the public policy and long range planning dimensions that guides short-term capital programming and engineering solutions implemented at the operations level.

As alternative solutions to existing and future traffic problems are considered, the following should be the criteria used by the County for evaluating each alternative:

- Does the alternative solve the traffic problem?
- Does the alternative promote the Land Use Plan?
- Does the alternative help accomplish the goals and objectives of the Transportation Plan?

## EXISTING SYSTEM

Cecil County's transportation system includes highways and streets, waterways, railroads, and airports. The County's highways are traveled by autos, trucks, and farm equipment. Its waterways provide for recreational building and commerce. Its rail lines carry passengers and goods. Airports facilities in the region cater to private planes and offer freight, charter, and regular passenger service.

The highway system consists of a freeway, an expressway and secondary highways with interconnecting County and feeder roads. The major east/west highways in Cecil County include I-95, U.S. 40, MD 279 and MD 273. The major north/south routes serving the northern portions of the County include MD 213, MD 272, and MD 275. These three minor arterials constitute the major north/south routes. In addition, MD 213 is the primary arterial providing through access to Kent County, Maryland and destinations south. U.S. 301 cuts across the southeastern corner of the County and is the primary arterial link between Delaware and points south through southern Maryland. U.S. 301 serves as a primary commerce route for heavy trucks. MD 213, MD 272, and MD 275 intersect, at-grade, with U.S. 40. MD 272 in the center of the County, MD 222 and MD 279 in the eastern part of the County intersects with I-95.

Philadelphia Airport and Baltimore-Washington International Airport (BWI), major airport facilities that offer passenger and freight service, are located within 50 miles of Cecil County. In addition, New Castle County Airport, located in neighboring New Castle County, provides freight service. Two small airports in Cecil County, the Cecil County Airport located near the MD 279 and I-95 Interchange, and the Farmington Airport, offer charter service. Summit Airport, located in New Castle County, Delaware, also offers charter service.

Conrail, Amtrak, and the Chessie rail systems pass east and west through the County. Freight service is provided all along these lines. The Columbia branch of Conrail runs along the Susquehanna River and provides freight service. Passenger service is available some 20 miles east of the County line out of Wilmington, Delaware Amtrak station.

Major trucking routes pass through the County, including I-95, U.S. 40, U.S. 1, and U.S. 301. Four large truck terminals are situated near or on U.S. 40 and several others are located close to I-95.

Greyhound and Continental Trailways operate in the County offering daily scheduled stops. Excellent bus connections can be made from Elkton, Rising Sun, North East, and Perryville. Public bus service is provided in New Castle County by the Delaware Authority for Region Transit (DART).

The County has many private marinas located on the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. The main commercial water transportation route in Cecil County is the Chesapeake and Delaware (C&D) Canal. The C&D Canal is a major link in the inland water route and connects the Chesapeake Bay to the Delaware River, and the Atlantic Ocean. Ocean-going vessels travel through the Elk River and Back Creek enroute to and from the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal daily.

**Highway Functional Classification**

The function of a highway facility is related to the type and magnitude of trips accommodated on a facility, e.g., through versus local trips. The definitions of functional highway classifications are as follows:

Principal Arterial -- Carries a high volume of traffic for interstate and intra-state travel. Flow is usually uninterrupted from origin to destination.

Intermediate Arterial -- Carries a high volume of traffic for inter-county and inter-city travel. Traffic on this type of road normally has the right-of-way except in areas of high hazard, then traffic controls are used.

Minor Arterial -- Carries a high volume of traffic for intra-county and inter-community travel. These roads normally serve the higher classification roads providing access to and from the arterials.

Major Collector -- Serves intra-county and inter-community travel, but at a lower volume and usually connects to an arterial to provide access to the surrounding land. Access is normally not taken directly from this road but from a sub-road connected to the collector. They may also serve large community shopping areas, schools, parks and cluster developments.

Minor Collector -- Serves intra-community travel at a volume below the major collector.

Provides access to the land using lower order roads and sometimes direct access from itself.

Local -- Provides direct access to the land.

Cul-de-sac -- Is a special form of a local road and may connect to a local or a Minor Collector. It provides direct access to the land.

Commercial Street -- Is a special form of a minor arterial to serve commercial establishments.

Cecil County is served by 775 miles of highways (see Table 1). Of this total, 701 road miles are classified as “rural highways” and 74 miles are classified as “urban highways.” The County highway system is composed of 121 miles of arterial highways, 153 miles of collector highways. The balance of the highway system is composed of local roads, most of which are in the County roads system.

**Table 1. Cecil County Highway Functional Classification System**

Road type	Urban System Mileage	Rural System Mileage	County System Total Mileage
Interstate	1.35	17.21	18.56
Freeway/Expressway	3.85	--	3.85
Principal Arterial	6.88	27.67	34.55
Minor Arterial	7.15	75.67	82.82
Collector	8.25	153.20	161.45
Locals	<u>46.74</u>	<u>427.43</u>	<u>474.17</u>
Total	74.22	701.18	775.40

A portion of the road system in Cecil County (74 miles) is classified as part of the urban system that serves the Wilmington metropolitan area. The balance (701 miles) is classified as rural system. Cecil County maintains approximately 537 miles of the road system and the balance, 238 miles, is maintained by the Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration.

**FUTURE TRAVEL DEMAND**

**Programmed Highway Improvements**

No projects which would significantly add capacity to the existing highway network are currently scheduled.

Many of the projects currently programmed include traffic engineering-type improvements, i.e., traffic signalization, channelization, signal coordination, and resurfacing. These projects emphasize maximum use of the existing facility with an objective of making them safer, more efficient, and cost-effective.

Another major category of improvements includes bridge rehabilitation projects. Being situated at the headwaters of the Elk River, and bisected by the nation's Northeast Corridor Railroad, much of Elkton's highway infrastructure is connected by bridge.

There are currently three bridge-related projects programmed in the Elkton area. Construction has begun on replacing the MD 213 Bridge over AMTRAK, and two projects are slated for study to determine the extent of repair. Studies are programmed for the U.S. 40 Bridge over AMTRAK and the MD 7 Bridge over Big Elk Creek. MD DOT recently completed the construction of a new bridge (MD 268) over AMTRAK at the cost just over \$4 million.

### **Travel Demand Model**

The Maryland Department of Transportation is currently working with the County to establish a basic highway travel demand model. With the Quick Response System (QRS) in place, the County will be able to model the general impact of the Land Use Plan on the major highway systems. In this manner, the County can establish where major improvements will be needed to the highway system in the planning period and prepare a long range transportation plan.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Goal Emphasis**

*Provide a public transportation program that meets the needs of the population for safety, mobility and access to facilities and opportunities.*

### **Other Goals**

*Maintain and enhance the quality of the existing road system.*

*Plan improvements to the County road network to correspond to and support the overall Land Use Plan.*

*Coordinate transportation planning and programming with all appropriate state and regional agencies.*

*Establish a travel demand model for Cecil County in cooperation with MDDOT and WILMAPCO to evaluate long range impacts of growth in the County on the road network.*

*Set level of service policies that reflect the community character objectives for the planning district.*

*Using the travel demand model develop a Long Range Transportation Plan for the County that reflects growth management goals and the levels of service policies for each planning district.*

*Use the Long Range Transportation Plan as the basis from which to derive annual road capital improvement projects for the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and County Capital Improvements Program (CIP).*

*Encourage use of existing and planned transit and other ride-sharing services to reduce travel on the highway system.*

*Focus transportation investments on defined growth areas. Limit investment outside these growth areas to those that address State-wide needs or health and safety considerations.*

*Permit developers located in designated growth areas to take credit for road improvements programmed for construction in the five year transportation improvement programs of the State and County.*

*Permit development outside designated growth areas only on a proportional road capacity share basis.*

*Limit transportation improvements in the Resource Protection and Rural Conservation Districts to maintenance and upgrading on non-standard roads and under capacity bridges.*

*Require land developers to pay for any alterations, improvements or additions to public roads and other transportation facilities that will be needed to support the proposed development and will not be provided through normal County capital improvement programming, including but not limited to roads, entrances, deceleration and turning lanes, and "park and ride" lots.*

*Establish a more defined transportation systems management (TSM) effort to ensure that transportation planning and traffic operations are coordinated to enable the overall County transportation*

*system (State, County, and Municipal) to function efficiently and effectively.*

*Upgrade County roads, particularly those roads that have weight restricted bridges, roads that are not paved, or roads that are of inadequate width for fire equipment to safely traverse at higher speeds, to a condition that permits adequate emergency response times.*

*Establish additional funding mechanisms and sources for road improvements, e.g., impact fees, special taxing districts, etc.*

*Give special consideration to the protection of the inherent nature of the “scenic highways” as designated by the State Highway Administration program.*

## **IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Highway Improvements**

Existing conditions indicate that portions of the MD 213, U.S. 40, MD 272, U.S. 222 and U.S. 1 road corridors are currently operating at or below an acceptable level of service. In addition, traffic trends indicate that I-95, U.S. 301, MD 213 in the Elkton area, MD 273, MD 279, MD 272 south of MD 273, and U.S. 222 north of U.S. 1 are experiencing substantial growth in traffic. Results of the U.S. 40 Corridor (Elkton) Study prepared by WILMAPCO for the Town of Elkton indicate that rapid growth in traffic can also be expected to occur through much of the urban portion of U.S. 40. The MDDOT should evaluate each of these road corridors and identify long range improvements to address existing and/or future capacity and operational issues.

### **Increased Coordination of the Land Use/Transportation Planning Process**

The State and County should work very closely together to evaluate the transportation system implications of the County’s new growth plans. Elected officials should be major participants in the process.

More emphasis should be placed on coordination between the County, the Maryland State Highway Administration, and WILMAPCO staff on matters related to

planning and programming improvements and transportation systems management.

Coordinated State and County transportation management policy should recognize the need to expand upon the current level of commuter ridesharing to aid in the reduction of single-occupant vehicles. This is particularly important at the intersection of major collector highways serving commuters and I-95 and U.S. 40.

WILMAPCO and the State Highway Administration should be requested to assist the County in preparing a transportation systems management (TSM) program to ensure that transportation planning and traffic operations are coordinated to enable the overall road system to function efficiently and effectively. A TSM program should include a County roads inventory and assessment, site traffic impact analysis, road planning, construction and maintenance, as well as traffic signs, signal coordination, and pavement marking.

### **Preplanned Expansion**

The County should plan for the expansion of the road system in designated development areas. In contrast to capital programming, preplanned expansion is based on the assumption that road facilities should be built to stay even with the need to guide growth. This strategy will require financial mechanisms to insure its goals are met.

A preplanned system would operate as follows: the County would be divided up into traffic zones of varying size which are bounded by collectors or arterial roads. The planned land use in the traffic zone is specified in the land use plan, and then traffic loadings that are generated by the proposed land use are modeled. Major improvements needed to ensure adequate highway capacity are identified, costs assessed, and priorities established in a capital programming process. In addition, right-of-way exactions can be determined prior to development occurring.

Preplanned expansion will require that the County know where road improvements will be required in advance. This may be accomplished through the use of a travel demand model. Using a travel demand model, the County should evaluate the transportation impacts of the Land Use Plan and prepare a Long Range Transportation Plan that reflects its growth management goals for each planning district.

**Land Use Integration**

Integration of land uses in one area will help reduce the need to travel by integrating housing into overall design of large scale employment centers. The closer workers live to the work place, the shorter the average commuting distance and thus the fewer miles traveled on roadways. Homes built within or immediately adjacent to the workplace not only reduce vehicles miles of travel, but also present opportunities for workers to walk or bike to work. To minimize noontime travel, retail and customer service activities, eateries, convenience retail, financial services, gas stations, photocopy centers and consumer merchandise should be permitted in a mixed use project. Large scale, mixed use development opportunities should be provided at interchange locations along I-95, U.S. 40 and at Bainbridge.

**Quality of Service**

The County’s Level of Service (LOS) policies establish a recognizable basis for evaluating alternative plans and/or policies. With establishment of LOS policies, the County makes a clear statement to developers of the quality of highway service the public expects to achieve or maintain as growth occurs. Once set, these criteria are used to evaluate the transportation system impacts of the proposed land use plan. LOS policies provide the basis and criteria on which to evaluate alternative transportation plans and to determine capital requirements. Level of Service C is generally acceptable for use in the developing areas of Cecil County. In rural farm areas of the County a totally different treatment is needed. The recommended minimum level of service (LOS) for developments in each Planning District in Cecil County are as follows:

	<u>Off Peak</u>	<u>Peak Hr.</u>
Development District	LOS C	LOS D
Suburban District	LOS C	LOS D
Town Centers and Village Centers	LOS C	LOS D
Rural Conservation	LOS B	LOS C
Resource Protection	LOS B	LOS C

Current LOS deficiencies on roadways should not necessarily stop future development adjacent to these roadways. However, when the proposed new development reduces the LOS below the roadway’s current level, the development should not be approved until such time as the development’s adverse effects are mitigated by the developer. The legal mechanism for implementing this policy could

be either Adequate Public Facilities provisions or an Impact Fee Ordinance.

**Access Management**

An access management program prepared in conjunction with the Department of Public Works should be created and initiated, supported by appropriate ordinances to ensure that access is not unnecessarily violated along key road links or near major intersections in the Transportation Plan. Service roads, reverse frontage and commercial park concepts should be applied by the County as part of all future nonresidential development. These techniques will help prevent the proliferation of driveways and individual access points which would intensify traffic hazards and adversely affect the function of arterial highways.

In the case of new commercial and other nonresidential developments, the County should protect the capacity of the intersections of major roads (arterials and collectors) by requiring a minimum setback for access drives. In general the County should encourage major commercial and industrial developments to locate in planned parks of large enough size to be served with a minimum of curb cuts and where traffic management can be internalized. This approach will help minimize strip commercial development. New development should be subject to the overall transportation plan for the area, with each new subdivision required to lay out its major circulation in accord with the circulation plan for that area. The same sort of practice should be extended to commercial development. The careful design of circulation so as to afford adequate access and yet maintain smooth traffic flows is one of the few things that can positively address the conflict between access and traffic flow.

The following type of techniques should be considered to manage access to principal corridor roadways.

- Limit the number of conflict points, by installing physical barriers, modifying driveways, installing signals at driveways to intense land uses, etc.
- Separate basic conflict areas, by regulating the minimum spacing of driveways or optimizing driveway spacing in the permit authorization stage, consolidating access for adjacent properties, buying abutting properties, or requiring access via collector streets, service roads, etc.
- Remove turning volumes or queues from sections of through lanes, by pavement marking alterations, geometric design modifications and right-of way acquisition to include such tech-

niques as constructing a service road or bypass road or require adequate internal site circulation.

- Adopt guidelines for access type and minimum spacing of intersections, such as those shown in Table 2.

**Table 2. Recommended Minimum Intersection Spacing**

<u>Streets Intersection With Streets Classification</u>	<u>Minimum Intersection Spacing (Centerline to Centerline)</u>
Principal Arterial	In accordance with Maryland State Highway Administration Standards and specifications.
Intermediate Arterial Divided and Undivided	750 feet
Minor Arterial Divided and Undivided	750 feet
Major Collector	750 feet
Minor Collector	500 feet
Minor Road	450 feet
Local Road	150 feet

Zoning and Subdivision provisions should require development project design to minimize left turn movements or conflicts on the site and in the street. Driveways should be designed to achieve clear sight lines based on design speeds as outlined in Table 3. Site access and circulation should conform to the following standards:

**Table 3. Recommended Stopping Sight Distance**

<u>Design Speed (mph)</u>	<u>Distance (feet)</u>
30	200
40	275
50	400
55	450
60	525

- Where reasonable access is available, the vehicular access to commercial and/or industrial sites should be arranged to avoid traffic use of local residential streets where possible.
- The road giving access to the site should have sufficient traffic carrying capacity and be suitably improved to accommodate the amount and type of traffic generated by the proposed development.

- Where necessary to safeguard against hazards to traffic and pedestrians and/or to avoid traffic congestion, the County should require that provisions are made for turning lanes, traffic directional islands, frontage/service roads, driveways and traffic controls within the road.
- Access driveways should be designed to sufficient capacity to avoid queuing of entering vehicles on any road or street.
- Driveways into sites should have proper grades and alignments, as well as transition grades and sight distances, for safe, convenient and efficient access and should meet the road right-of-way and travelways of the road in such a manner as to conform to the standard cross section for the road or street as specified by the County Road Ordinance.
- Where feasible, provision should be made for connecting driveways between adjoining land uses of a similar nature when such driveway connections will facilitate fire protection services or will enable the public to travel between such uses without reentering onto the highway system.
- There should be no more than one driveway connection from any site or lot to any street, except where separate entrances and exit driveways may be necessary to safeguard against hazards and to avoid congestion. Additional driveways should also be considered for large tracts and uses of extensive scope, if traffic flow on adjacent roads will be facilitated by the additional connections.
- In order to provide for suitable access or for extension or construction of planned highway system improvements, provisions should be made for appropriate continuation of such streets and roads terminating on a site.

**Commercial Parks**

Shallow, linear development should be discouraged and commercial and other non-residential uses encouraged to develop in planned parks where access control is efficient and where interior roads rather than arterial or collector system provide access to each use. Only where lots are shallow and unsuitable for residential use should strip commercial or other uses be permitted. The intensity of use in the strip areas should be reduced to insure a relatively low traffic generation rate.

## Highway Corridor Overlay Zoning

The zoning technique is useful in addressing traffic congestion problems. This strategy is recommended to control the form of new development in the U.S. 40 corridor. The Highway Corridor Overlay Zone recognizes that the County is heterogeneous by permitting County officials to address the needs of the U.S. 40 area without unnecessarily affecting other areas. Overlay zoning brings to the area additional requirements and standards while leaving all the requirements of the underlying zone intact. Special transportation-related improvements should include the following:

- Transportation Impact Report which would apply primarily to traffic-oriented, high turnover uses such as fast food restaurants, service stations, convenience food and liquor stores, and drive-in banks.
- Access Controls which would include uniform standards for minimum distances between curb cuts, and intersection design guidelines.

The depth of the road corridor could vary, to respond to the changing character of the roadside. Within the built-up portions of U.S. 40, the corridor could extend 500 feet inward from either side of the right-of-way. Along the undeveloped portion of the roadway, the corridor district could extend up to 1,000 feet from the road, to enable full design oversight where much deeper lots and undeveloped frontage exist.

## Transit Planning

As an alternative to increasing transportation system capacity through a substantial investment in the construction and improvement of highways, the State and County land use and transportation policies and capital investment strategies can encourage an increase in the share of trips handled by transit. As growth occurs, particularly in the development district, Town Centers, and in the incorporated towns, the County should explore opportunities for extensions of existing or planned regional bus and/or rail transit services into the County.

Bus routes down U.S. 40 and Old Baltimore Pike to provide service to the Elkton area should be explored in conjunction with providing park and ride and van pool services in the Elkton area.

## Local and Minor Street Standards

The County should review its Road Ordinance to permit narrower residential streets in certain circumstances. The standards for road width and right-of-way should be revised to relate to safety and convenience factors.

Over-building of residential roads can detract from community character and constrain design unnecessarily. Public street standards specified for various levels and types of residential roads should make distinctions based on the number and type of dwelling units to be served and traffic volumes. Specifically, residential street width requirements should be flexible depending on the following variables:

- Traffic Volume- lower volumes means narrower streets
- Design Speed- lower design speeds mean narrower streets
- Parking- if off-street parking is inadequate for some reason, extra lanes are required for on-street parking.
- Lot Width- wider lots require less on-street parking
- Meeting- chances of two cars meeting where only a single traffic lane exists.
- Pedestrian Traffic- Potential pedestrian crossings.

A new set of residential street standards should be developed that take these variables into consideration and legal measures instituted to insure the desired results, including plat statements, deed statements, surety measures, and social improvement taxing provisions.

## Exactions

Exactions are cash and/or land donations made to the County and deposited into special accounts to pay for needed improvements. The donation may be cash, land or a combination thereof.

In terms of highways, exactions that are most commonly required include dedication of right-of-way to widen existing highways. Exactions in the form of mandatory dedications of land for new road, road extensions and road widening may also be used. These dedications should be made at the time developments are platted or when building permits are issued.

A clear connection must be made between the value exacted from the landowner applying for a development permit and the impact on the system. Thus the County should determine where additional

right-of-way will be required, or new corridors will be located and then exact right-of-way or cash during the development process and earmark the exaction for that portion of the road.

### **Impact Analysis**

As part of the Zoning process and implementation of the Level of Service Policy, the County should require a traffic impact analysis of all major new projects to determine if the post development traffic levels and patterns will be consistent with the County's Transportation Plan and highway policies and will minimize potential safety and congestion problems. At a minimum the traffic analyses should include a description of past and present roadway conditions, existing roadway capacity, traffic accidents, existing and projected traffic volumes (Average Daily Traffic, and peak A.M. and P.M. traffic), existing and projected levels of service, existing and proposed sight lines based on facts and reasonable generation factors for the site and immediately affected road networks and intersections. Where planned improvements are scheduled in the short term, the County may permit the development to include such improvements in the traffic impact analysis.

### **Proportional Share Capacity**

Where it is projected that the additional traffic that will result from the project will reduce the level of service to below the policy standards recommended by this Plan, the County should not approve the project unless and until provisions have been made for the improvements that will address the problems associated with the proposed development. As part of this process the County should view excess highway capacity as something that all property owners have a share in regardless of when they decide to develop their land. The County should employ this philosophy when considering applications for new development. A proportional capacity share basis should be used for determining the maximum intensity of development that may be permitted.

The typical capacity analysis measures whether there is any capacity left in the road based on the applicable level of service policy. If there is, then the development may be approved. The "first come, first served" approach is not equitable to remaining landowners to develop. Since there is

usually excess capacity available on the roads to handle the first developments, they are not required to contribute towards improvements that will be required later. Take for example a road that has an excess capacity of 3,000 vehicles per day at Level of Service C and serves a traffic shed of 1,000 undeveloped acres. If 300 acres were proposed for development at one dwelling unit per acre, the development would generate approximately 3,000 trips per day using up the excess road capacity. When the remaining 700 acres are proposed for development the cost of adding capacity to the road would fall to the remaining property owners.

The proportional approach provides that a land-owner can only use that share of the capacity which his land ownership within a traffic shed warrants. This is a more equitable situation and properly focuses attention on the ability of the road network to sustain development, when the first development is proposed. It requires all landowners to live within the limits of the road capacity or pay to improve the system. The County should only permit a density that is supportable by the road network, unless the developer is willing to offset the unplanned expense of additional capacity needs that result from the development.

### **Capital Programming**

Capital programming of road improvements has been recognized as a proactive way of avoiding future transportation capacity problems. In addition to the State's Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) and WILMAPCO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the County's annual Capital Investments Budget should include funds for the design of proposed road improvements so that adequate right-of-way can be reserved. This will also permit the coordinated completion of the improvement if undertaken by different entities such as private developers.

To insure that opportunities for preplanned expansion are not missed, the County should require the annual revision to the County's Capital Improvements Program to be coordinated with the Long Range Transportation Plan. It is the responsibility of the Department of Planning and Zoning to monitor changing growth and development trends in the County and advise the County Public Works Department and State Highway Administration accordingly. An annual process involving the Department of Planning and Zoning and the Department of Public Works as well as the State Highway Department should be instituted to evaluate the relationship between the County's available capacities and the demands upon the County's road systems created by proposed land uses and land use trends. This process can be facilitated

through the use of a travel demand model being prepared by the MDDOT for Cecil County.

### **Impact Fees and Impact Fee Ordinances**

Impact fee ordinances require the developer to pay for area wide transportation improvements based on the estimated amount of traffic their project will generate. The major advantage of impact fee ordinances is its basis in the accepted principal of welfare economics, i.e. those who impose the cost of increased congestion, air pollution, and other disbenefits on the community should pay for those public improvements required to correct them. The County should evaluate adoption of an impact fee ordinance that requires the developer to pay for area wide transportation improvements based on the estimated amount of traffic their project will generate.

### **Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance**

Adequate public facilities ordinances provide that development approval is conditioned upon showing that sufficient infrastructure is present or will be provided when needed so that an adequate level of service is provided. These provisions can ensure that land development coincides with the location and timing of highway capital improvements. The County should consider adopting an adequate public facilities ordinance that includes provisions requiring adequate road capacity.

### **Bond Issue**

Under certain circumstances the County may decide to issue County-wide bonds for highway improvements. For example, bonds may be issued for special road improvement projects associated with industrial development projects that would result in a increased employment opportunities for County residents and substantial tax base to the County. The proceeds of a bond issue may be used to improve County roads, or to help fund state improvements.

### **Special Service Districts**

The special service district is an outgrowth of the old concept of assessing property owners for street or other improvements in front of their house. The special service area permits

bonds to be issued and requires the landowner to pay a tax each year for the improvements.

Special taxing districts may be used in the Development District, or other targeted growth areas. Road improvements that would normally be delayed in the State or County capital investments process could be accelerated with these special funds.

This approach can also be used as a financing mechanism when the County is asked to takeover maintenance of private roads or streets due to the failure of the homeowners association. If the County decides that it is in the best interests of the public to take over private roads or streets and bring them up to current standards then the costs of these improvements can be shared over time by those benefiting.

## **HOUSING PLAN**

### **GOALS FOR HOUSING**

*Concentrate high density development in carefully designated areas contiguous to existing population centers and public facilities.*

Public monies are used to support development through the construction of infrastructure and facilities, through their operation and maintenance, and by providing a range of services. These monies are most effectively spent on new higher density development located near already developed areas.

The Land Use Plan encourages concentration of new development in districts that are most effectively supported by public expenditures in infrastructure and services. Moderate to high housing densities and various house types are recommended in the Land Use Plan for areas served by public water and sewer in the Development, Town, Suburban, and Village Districts. Concentrating development is also more convenient for new residents as everyday destinations, such as schools, shopping, recreation facilities, and jobs are closer to home.

For areas with sewer and water, the housing densities recommended in the plan are:

Development District:

- Up to 4 dwelling units per acre for single family homes
- Up to 12 dwelling units per acre for townhouses
- Up to 16 dwelling units per acre for apartments

Town District:

- Up to 4 dwelling units per acre for single family homes
- Up to 10 dwelling units per acre for townhouses or apartments

Suburban District:

- Up to 3 dwelling units per acre for conventional subdivisions
- Up to 3.5 dwelling units per acre for cluster development
- Up to 4 dwelling units per acre for planned residential communities

In areas without public water and sewer, the Land Use Plan recommends lower densities, but encourages developers to plan for development at higher densities when public water and sewer become available.

Lower densities are recommended in the Land Use Plan for rural areas. This policy complements the goal for housing and protects rural resources from higher density development. Bonus densities would be awarded in Rural Conservation and Resource Protection Districts for cluster developments that preserve open space and sensitive lands.

Recommended residential densities are:

Rural Conservation

- 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres to 1 dwelling unit per 3 acres

Resource Protection

- 1 dwelling unit per 8 acres to 1 dwelling unit per 5 acres

*Accommodate residential growth by providing for a range of housing types to meet identified needs.*

Housing needs in a community vary among groups such as single adults, families with children, retired residents and the economically disadvantaged. Proximity to place of work, availability of community services, aesthetics, neighborhood and affordability are among the many issues considered when selecting a place of residence. In Cecil County single family dwelling units characterized the housing stock inventoried for the 1980 census and have continued to characterize new housing construction (Table 4). Emphasis on single family housing, however, may not

accommodate residential growth and the needs of the County. Housing costs have continued to increase, while average household size has decreased. This suggests a need for smaller and less expensive dwelling units.

**Table 4. Construction Authorizations in Cecil County**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Single Family Units</u>	<u>Multi Family Units</u>	<u>Manu- factured Homes</u>	<u>Total Units Authorized</u>
1980	224	2	ND	226
1981	281	10	ND	291
1982	186	0	4	190
1983	322	2	76	400
1984	400	62	50	512
1985	424	58	116	598
1986	606	54	112	772
1987	759	131	72	962
1988	716	81	28	825
1989	<u>771</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>826</u>
Total	4,689	455	458	5,602

Source: Cecil County Office of Planning & Zoning, 1989.

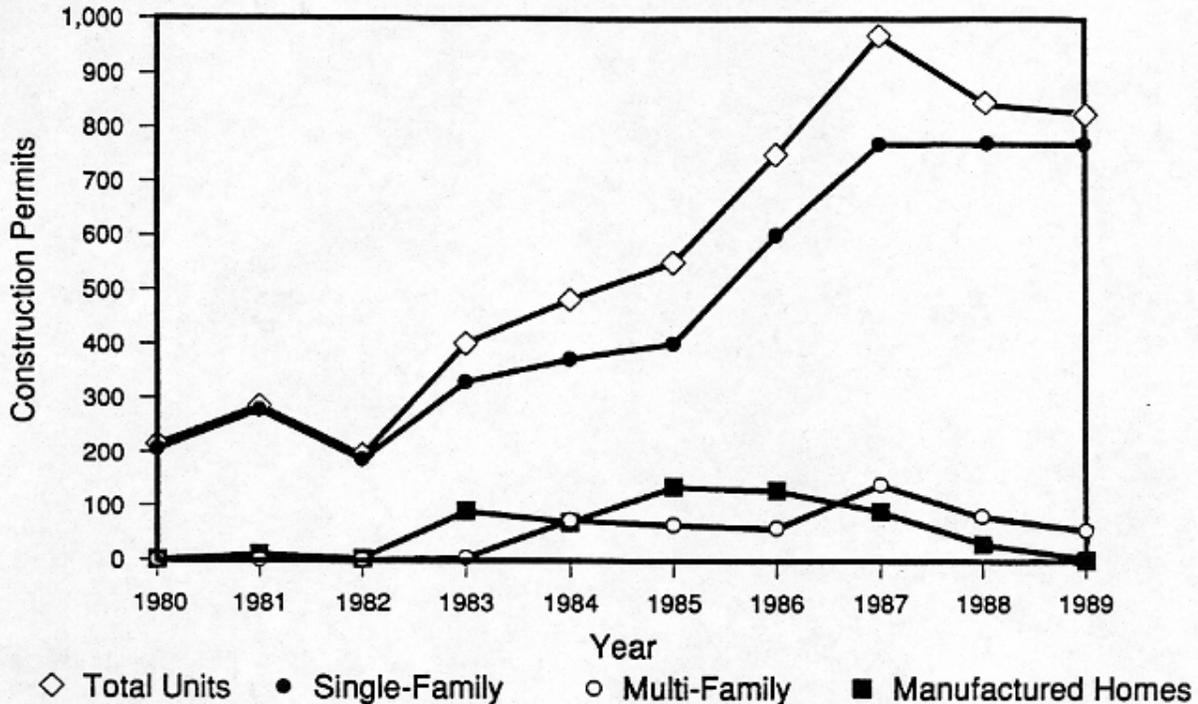
ND: No Data  
Town of Elkton - Excluded

A total of 4,776 new residential dwelling units authorized for construction from 1980 through 1988 represents a 23 percent increase over the total of 21,224 year-round housing units that existed in the County in 1980. Single-family dwelling units represented 82 percent of all new residential units developed since 1980. Most recently, in 1988, single-family housing units represented 87 percent of all residential units developed for that year.

Providing employees of local businesses and industries in Cecil County with attractive affordable housing would increase economic benefits to the County while reducing commuting time for workers. Development of affordable housing, such as duplexes, townhouses and multi-family units for lower and medium salaried employees is also important to new businesses and industries concerned over housing for their employees. The number of multi-family homes developed during the period from 1980 through 1988 however, is 8 percent of the total number of homes developed in Cecil County (Figure 1).

Manufactured homes represented 10 percent of the total of new homes developed for the same period. These homes are an attractive housing option to low-income households.. Manufactured home

Figure 1. Housing Units Authorized in Cecil County, 1980-1989



communities should be required to meet the design and environmental standards established for other types of residential housing. A frequent concern regarding manufactured housing, especially of manufactured home communities, is that the homes are taxed as personal rather than real property. These taxes do not go to local government, which is still burdened with providing infrastructure and services. When manufactured homes are placed on individual lots, however, such properties are taxed as real property in Maryland.

*Identify housing needs of the economically disadvantaged and the homeless within Cecil County.*

Land values, interest rates, tax rates, material and labor costs, and changing social values, have all contributed to higher housing costs and the exclusion of many from the current housing market. Changes in the dimensions of houses built and amenities added has contributed significantly to rising housing costs. Economically disadvantaged populations may include the elderly, those with

physical or mental disabilities, the unemployed, underemployed and single-parent families.

Housing for the elderly will become an increasingly acute housing need as the population of the elderly, those 65 and older, increases nationally as well as locally. In Cecil County the number of people 65 and older represented 7.4 percent of the population in 1970 and 9.2 percent of the population in 1980. By the year 1990 that age group is expected to represent 11.6 percent of County population and 15.2 percent by the year 2010.

*Provide flexible, enforceable development controls.*

The range of density and housing types recommended in the Land Use Plan, for areas where infrastructure exists or is planned, provides the opportunity for flexible, enforceable development controls.

*Encourage the identification, preservation, and restoration of sites and structures having historical*

*significance, and control development in their vicinity to protect their visual character.*

Strengthening County responsibility for historical resources would help preserve County heritage. To provide local help in historic preservation local governments can provide property tax relief to privately or commercially maintained historic sites. County designation of historical districts and sites can provide community control over facades. The County should use historic structures for public purposes including housing and should work with private interests in the rehabilitation of such structures.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Promote County and individual participation in state programs that can increase the diversity of housing.*

Maryland's Community Development Administration administers a number of diverse and innovative programs that are designed to provide homeownership and to construct and rehabilitate single- and multi-family housing. Many of these programs benefit low and moderate income families. CDA programs are funded by proceeds from tax-exempt revenue bonds, state general obligation bonds, state general funds, and federal subsidies. Programs administered by the Community Development Administration include the following:

- The Maryland Mortgage Program provides income-qualified households with below market mortgage financing for the purchase of existing or newly constructed homes.
- The Maryland Home Financing Program also provides below-market mortgage financing but differs from the Maryland Mortgage Program in that the program offers a lower preferred interest rate which is targeted to first-time homebuyers with incomes below the area-wide median
- The Homeowners Emergency Mortgage Assistance Program assists involuntary unemployed homeowners in paying their delinquent mortgage loans.
- The Homeownership Incentive Program stimulates the production and rehabilitation of owner-occupied single-family housing by providing below market loans targeted to households earning less than an established income threshold.
- The Settlement Expense Loan Program was designed to provide financial assistance for settlement expenses to eligible low- and moderate-income Maryland homebuyers who do not have sufficient resources to purchase an affordable personal residence.
- The Tax-Exempt Rental Housing Program provides tax-exempt bond financing to developers of rental housing with five or more rental dwelling units.
- The Rental Housing Production Program is intended to increase the supply of affordable housing units by providing private developers, nonprofit organizations and local governments with low interest, deferred loans to acquire, construct, rehabilitate or reduce the operating costs of rental housing.
- The Nonprofit Rehabilitation Program provides reduced interest rate loans to rehabilitate eligible residential properties which are owned by nonprofit organizations or local governments.
- The Construction Loan Program provides below-market interest rate construction loans to nonprofit organizations and local governments to build or acquire and rehabilitate multi-family rental and single-family housing.
- The Home and Energy Loan Program was initiated to finance rehabilitation and energy conservation of existing multi-family and single-family properties.
- The Maryland Housing Rehabilitation Program preserves and improves existing multi-family and single-family housing and nonresidential properties through loans made to property managers or owners of residential rental complexes of five or more units and/or nonresidential properties that meet program eligibility standards.
- The Energy Bank Program provides funds to prepay the interest on basic energy conservation improvement loans.
- The Livability Code Rehabilitation Program provides low interest and deferred payment loans to low-income homeowners and landlords renting to low income households for the rehabilitation of residential properties to bring them into compliance with local or stateside housing codes.
- The Indoor Plumbing Program provides low interest and deferred payment loans to provide safe and sanitary water supply and sewage disposal systems.
- The Infrastructure Program provides financial assistance to local governments for infrastructure needs, such as sewers and utilities.

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development also administer the federally funded Section 8 Program.

Additional information on specific housing programs is available from the following agencies and organizations: Cecil County Office of Housing, financial institutions in Cecil County, and Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.

*Work with the Towns, to identify opportunities for affordable, high density housing in the Town Districts and Towns.*

Focusing higher density residential development in the Towns of Cecilton, Charlestown, Chesapeake City, Elkton, North East, Perryville, Port Deposit, and Rising Sun would maximize the use of existing community facilities and infrastructures while preserving the traditional roles of these Towns as community centers.

The County should work closely with these Towns to identify parcels with high development potential for residential uses. This effort should be coordinated with economic development goals to assure that affordable housing for lower-to-medium salaried employees is considered when evaluating Cecil County's ability to attract new businesses and retain existing firms.

*Establish a Design Commission and adopt an Appearance Code.*

The establishment of an Appearance Code and a Design Commission offers the opportunity to guide new construction so that it fits well with recognized historic structures nearby. In communities where guidelines have been established, old and new buildings in central business districts have been harmoniously developed. Residential development also should be reviewed in terms of an Appearance Code to preserve the aesthetic character of Cecil County.

*Establish a Historic Commission for identification, preservation and restoration of sites, structures and districts of historic significance.*

Cecil County should participate in the Maryland Historical Trust, a unit of the Department of Housing and Community Development, which encourages applications from local governments. Certified Local Governments are responsible for the review of sites within their jurisdiction nominated for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, and are eligible to apply to the State Historic Preservation Office for matching funds. In order to

become certified, a local government must have enacted a historic preservation ordinance and appointed a qualified historic preservation commission along with other requirements. Approved certified local governments are eligible to apply for a share of matching federal survey and planning grant-in-aid funds through the Maryland Historical Trust.

*Promote private sector participation in the provision of affordable housing for the elderly and economically disadvantaged through various incentive programs.*

Cecil County should encourage affordable housing in developments with the use of incentives. These incentives could include bonus densities, "fast-tracking" of development review and assistance in the attainment of Federal and State grants. Not only would affordable housing in new developments fulfill a need, but it could also promote social and cultural integration. Single Room Occupancy Units (SRO's) should be encouraged in the Development, Town, and Village Districts.

*Promote County and individual participation in affordable housing programs for the elderly and the economically disadvantaged.*

Cecil County should anticipate the needs of the economically disadvantaged; especially the elderly which are expected to represent a larger segment of the population in the next two decades. Numerous programs at the state level can assist the development of housing for the elderly and those with special housing needs.

Housing assistance and subsidies are available in the form of public housing, loans at below market interest rates, direct payments, and special mortgage insurance. The Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) administers the following programs through the Community Development Administration (CDA), which provides assistance for the elderly, handicapped, income eligible and others with special housing needs:

- The Group Home Acquisition Program (GHAP) provides reduced interest loans to nonprofit organizations to purchase and modify homes to serve as group homes. GHAP loans may finance the purchase price of the home, the cost of modifications and closing costs.
- The Elderly Rental Housing Program was established to increase the supply of rental housing for low-income elderly families in Maryland. The program provides loans for capital assistance to cover the costs of construction, rehabilitation, acquisition or related development costs of elderly rental housing through interest rate write-downs or rent subsidies.

- A Reverse Equity Mortgage Program is intended to enable older Maryland homeowners to access the accumulated equity in their homes without having to sell or move. Uses of loan funds are limited to paying for minor home repairs, ongoing housing expenses, and health and long-term care costs that would enable the homeowner to continue to live at home.
- The Partnership Rental Housing Program was authorized by the General Assembly in March 1988 as a two year pilot program designed to expand the supply of affordable housing for the working poor. The locality provides the finished site, including roads, water, sewer and other infrastructure, while the State finances construction.
- The Accessory, Shared, and Sheltered Housing Program offers low-interest and deferred payment loans for improvements, modifications, or additions to existing owner-occupied single-family homes to create accessory dwelling units or modify housing to provide space for home-sharing or sheltered care.

## PLAN FOR BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

### GOALS FOR BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

*Attract suitable commerce and industry to Cecil County.*

Cecil County's primary economic development objective should be to achieve "balanced" economic growth. The term "balanced" has several dimensions which are briefly described below.

First, the County needs to capture a larger share of the economic growth occurring within the Baltimore-Wilmington region. Between 1978 and 1987 employment in Cecil County grew by 8.8 percent, significantly less than the increase in Maryland of 22.3 percent. In comparison to adjacent counties, Cecil County has had a relatively higher proportion of its employment concentrated in economic sectors with below-average rates of growth over the last 10 years. This has limited the County's ability to capture its full share of new employment.

Second, Cecil County needs to increase its rate of economic growth in order to provide an economic base capable of providing employment

opportunities and tax revenues to fund the services required by its residents. Recent economic growth in Cecil County has been lagging behind its population growth and behind the economic growth occurring in surrounding areas. This growth differential has meant that the demand for local government services required by new residents, which usually impose a net fiscal cost, has grown faster than the County's ability to pay for these increased services. An increase in the revenue base would provide a net fiscal benefit to balance out the net fiscal costs imposed by new residential development.

Third, Cecil County needs to increase to proportion of its employed residents who work at jobs located in the County. At present, close to half of the County's employed residents commute to jobs located in adjacent counties. By providing more jobs for its residents, the County would capture a larger share of the disposable income expenditures which currently accrue to other counties. The County's economic development strategy should be directed at reversing this out-commuting flow.

Fourth, the County's economic development needs to be balanced across economic sectors and directed at attracting faster growing economic sectors that would benefit from its competitive advantages. As noted above, the County has had a high proportion of its employment concentrated in slowly growing economic sectors. Cecil County should direct its industrial recruitment efforts at economic sectors requiring proximity to markets such as warehousing, wholesale goods, final assembly of manufactured components, and bulky, low value-added, manufactured goods (e.g. paper products, fabricated metals).

The County's major competitive advantages are location and accessibility to major markets. The New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Washington, D.C. metropolitan areas all lie within three hours driving time. The County has excellent inter-regional transportation access by a number of different transportation modes. The Northeast rail corridor, I-95, and Route 40 form a major corridor passing through the center of the County. The ports of Philadelphia, Wilmington, and Baltimore are all located within a 1.5 hour drive.

Cecil County has other competitive advantages such as lower wages in certain sectors, lower land assembly costs, lower cost of living including lower housing costs, and a quality of life that make it desirable to live. These attributes make the County a desirable location for labor-intensive manufacturing assembly operations, and for land area-intensive industries such as warehousing and wholesaling. A potential dilemma for Cecil County, as for any rural, agricultural area experiencing development pressures from nearby metropolitan areas, is that the characteristics that make it

attractive to potential residents and industries may be threatened by the economic development the County is attempting to attract.

*Capitalize on the availability of Bainbridge as an economic asset to the County.*

The former Bainbridge Naval Training Center presents a potentially significant economic development opportunity for Cecil County. This facility consists of a 1,200 acre site located approximately one mile from the interchange of U.S. Route 222 and I-95. The proximity of such a large contiguous parcel under one owner (i.e. land assembly has already occurred) located so close to I-95 presents the opportunity for a large, mixed use center containing residential, commercial, retail, warehousing, and light industrial uses. The Center contains buildings and other on-site facilities and systems that may be efficiently adapted to accommodate new uses. Portions of the Center may also be well suited for residential development, particularly if on-site utilities are present and useable.

*Encourage cooperation between public and private interests to promote agricultural enterprises in the County.*

Cecil County continues to have a sizable and economically viable agricultural industry. The continuing movement of development toward the County is bringing the market toward the County's farmers, as well as generating substantial development pressure, on agricultural lands. This has created the possible need and an economic incentive to shift from the cultivation of field crops to higher value crops such as vegetables to serve the consumer market. The County should work with local farmers to identify crops that will maximize their economic return. Farmers in other counties facing the same development pressures as Cecil County have found that it was economically advantageous to grow higher-value-added, specialty crops such as vegetables and fruits. Local government efforts also should provide marketing and wholesaling support for farmers. This could include County sponsorship of a wholesale market where buyers and sellers come together, and the use of County economic development personnel to identify potential purchasers of the County's crops.

*Devote additional local resources to agricultural preservation activities.*

The continuing viability of Cecil County's agricultural industry will depend on maintaining a sufficiently sized, contiguous acreage of agricultural land that allows crops to be cultivated at a scale and cost that is competitive in the regional market. Development pressures are threatening agricultural land as it has high development potential for a range

of non-agricultural uses. As a result, the most profitable use of agricultural land with good accessibility is increasingly becoming non-agricultural, creating an incentive for farmland to be sold and subdivided.

Residential, commercial, and light industrial uses when seeking highly developable locations in agricultural areas may bring potentially incompatible development into these areas. The functional efficiency of such large contiguous agricultural areas will decrease as they are interspersed by scattered new development. The County should divert development pressures out of agricultural areas by establishing Development Districts in appropriate locations. This will encourage the preservation of agricultural land by removing the economic incentive to convert it to other uses.

*Encourage the training and development of a labor force to fulfill the needs of local industry.*

The presence of a skilled local labor force can be one of the major competitive advantages that attract desirable new industry into an area. More importantly, since most economic development occurs from the expansion of existing businesses, a local labor force that has the necessary skills would enable local businesses to expand when market conditions dictate. Another advantage of a highly skilled labor force is that better-paying jobs in more capital intensive industries can be attracted into an area, thereby producing local economic benefits such as a higher tax base, and higher local incomes.

In some sectors, average labor costs in Cecil County are lower than those in surrounding counties. This cost advantage, when combined with a skilled labor force, would attract new business and industry into the County. This new development, in turn, would bring new jobs into the County and decrease the proportion of the resident labor force that must commute to other areas for work. The County should coordinate efforts between local business and educational institutions to ensure that Cecil County residents receive the necessary training to compete for the new jobs. Curricula in high schools and at the Cecil Community College can be designed, in part, around the needs of local business and industry. Often these needs are simply for good basic language and math skills, and a positive work attitude.

Cecil County should realize that while it is a desirable location for manufacturing assembly, warehousing, wholesaling, product distribution, and service industries, focusing industrial recruitment efforts in only these areas has three implications. First, jobs in these sectors tend to be lower paying due to their lower skill requirements. Second, these industries are not capital-intensive, and will

not produce as large an increase in the local tax base as manufacturing plants. Third, these sectors are space-intensive and not labor-intensive, so they would result in a lower increase in employment than other types of economic development.

**ECONOMIC PROFILE**

The 1987 distribution of place of work employment by major economic sector in Cecil County is presented below. These numbers represent “covered” employment, or those persons covered by Maryland’s unemployment compensation program.

	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Contract Construction	1,466	9.0
Manufacturing	2,760	16.9
Transportation, Commu- cation and Utilities	790	4.8
Wholesale Trade	632	3.9
Retail Trade	3,661	22.5
Finance, Insurance and Real Estate	465	2.8
Services	2,940	18.0
Federal Government	1,492	9.1
Local Government	<u>2,119</u>	<u>13.0</u>
Totals	16,325	100.0

The Agricultural and Commercial Fishing industries are not major contributors to the County’s economy in terms of employment. Those sectors have declined in relative economic importance as growth has occurred in other economic sectors. The 1980 Census indicated that 3.9 percent of the County’s employed residents worked in Agriculture, and a total of 4.5 percent worked in the combined category of Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing. Similarly, County Business Patterns data showed that Agriculture, Forestry & Fishing accounted for 2.7 percent of the County’s total employment in 1978 and 2.5 percent in 1985.

Comparable place of work employment data for the mining industry are unavailable for 1987 because of disclosure problems. However, in 1986, 114 persons were employed in the mining industry in Cecil County.

These are the number of persons working in Cecil County regardless of their place of residence (i.e. many persons working in Cecil County reside in adjacent counties). In comparison to the State of Maryland, Cecil County has a substantially lower proportion of its employment in the Services; and the Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate sectors. Conversely, it has a higher proportion of its

employment in the Manufacturing, Contract Construction, and Government sectors.

Between 1978 and 1987 Cecil County place of work employment grew at an annual compound rate of 0.9 percent compared to 2.5 percent for the State of Maryland. The fastest growing sectors were Contract Construction, Retail Trade, and Services. Manufacturing employment declined in absolute terms, while the other sectors identified above had modest growth. As a point of reference, Cecil County’s population grew at an annual compound rate of approximately 1.9 percent over this period.

A substantial proportion of the employed residents of Cecil County commute out of the County to work. In 1980, 48.7 percent of the employed residents worked out of the County. This is up substantially from 27 percent in 1960 and 34.5 percent in 1970. The most recent employment and labor force data for Cecil County indicates that approximately 50 percent of its employed residents continue to commute out of the County to work. This is because population growth in the County over the last 20 years has been greater than job growth. Many people have moved into the County because it is a desirable place to live while at the same time retaining their jobs in other counties. Another reason for the continuation of out-commuting is that there has been a relative scarcity of in-county employment opportunities for the residents, requiring many of them to travel to other areas for work.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Direct economic development and recruitment efforts at manufacturing firms responsible for final assembly of manufactured components.*

Inter-regional transportation accessibility is Cecil County’s major competitive advantage. Manufactured consumer goods require final assembly before distribution to metropolitan areas with large numbers of retail outlets and a large population with high disposable income. This includes electronic goods such as computers, cameras, televisions, and VCRs; sewing machines; lawn mowers; camping vehicles; and appliances. A location in Cecil County satisfies both criteria. The County is also a desirable location for the assembly of manufactured goods which are sold to organizations engaged in research and development activities, and to those providing business services. Examples include photocopiers, computers, medical equipment, and instruments.

*Direct economic development and recruitment efforts at the wholesale trade sector, particularly*

*those handling bulky, low-value added goods that require proximity to market.*

Cecil County's accessibility, and resulting low transportation costs incurred in getting goods to market, would be very beneficial to the wholesale trade sector which requires proximity to the market. Wholesale goods being distributed to retail outlets throughout the Middle-Atlantic and Northeast regions of the United States would benefit from the County's proximity to five large metropolitan areas. Distributors handling bulky, low-value added products such as paper and paper products, lumber and wood products, and office supplies should also be targeted. Because of the nature of these products (i.e. low value to weight ratio), transportation costs can be a very high proportion of the delivered costs if they have to be transported far. As a result, proximity to market and the final point of sale is particularly significant for business manufacturing and distributing these types of products.

The County should also attempt to attract regional distribution centers for retail and service companies having a large number of stores located in states throughout the Middle Atlantic area. Examples would include department stores, grocery stores, and apparel stores. While the County's accessibility would clearly be attractive to such companies, its lower land and labor costs would also be attractive to firms needing warehouses covering a large area.

*Provide public sanitary sewer, water supply, and transportation infrastructure in the corridor defined by Route 40, I-95, and the Northeast Rail corridor to accommodate new, more intense economic development.*

Sites within this corridor, particularly around interchanges with I-95, are those that maximize the County's locational advantages. Suitable locations include I-95 interchanges with Route 279 (Elkton), Route 272 (North East), and Route 275 (Perryville/Port Deposit). The County should encourage high-intensity light industrial, commercial office, research parks, and warehousing uses in these areas. These uses should be permitted as planned mixed-use developments that take maximum advantage of the location. Mixed use developments will reduce the need for residents to travel to places of employment. Detailed plans for providing these areas with proper sanitary sewer, water supply, and local transportation infrastructure should be developed by the County as such infrastructure is a prerequisite to maximizing their development potential. They should also be planned with buffering and with access controls so traffic does not back up and compromise interchange function. Promoting additional economic development within this corridor will be a

major step toward achieving other development goals.

*Promote an increase in the County's non-residential tax base, thereby increasing the County's net fiscal benefit from these land uses.*

Non-residential land uses usually provide a net fiscal benefit to local governments as the revenues they generate exceed the costs of the locally provided government services they require. Cecil County's high population growth rate since 1980, coupled with its relatively low growth in employment, has led to an unbalanced tax base where non-residential uses, particularly commercial and industrial, comprise a low proportion of the tax base. This has limited the County's ability to expand its revenue base and provide a higher level of local services. The lack of a commercial and industrial tax base constrains the County's debt limit and also its ability to raise revenues needed to retire bonds used to finance infrastructure.

*Permit new economic development outside the Development District only when it would have minimal adverse impacts, would be consistent with the goals and objectives of such areas, and would not result in net, negative fiscal impacts.*

Rural areas are attractive to certain types of activities, particularly those desiring an attractive nature or rural setting. The proliferation of such development in outlying areas would inevitably begin to diminish the rural quality of life which Cecil County residents have indicated they wish to maintain. Such sprawl development will ultimately increase the cost of providing local government services and infrastructure to these activities.

The County should develop a set of strict criteria for determining whether to grant a special exception allowing a commercial or industrial business to locate in a Rural Conservation District or Resource Protection District. Criteria should include:

- Proximity to major highways
- Imminency of potential non-agricultural development of the site area
- Proximity to other transportation modes
- Availability of public sanitary sewer and water supply infrastructure
- Compatibility with, and impact on, agricultural activities and scenic highways
- Site plan elements, including ground coverage, amount of impermeable surface, size and number of structures, storm water control structures, buffers, and preservation of open space
- Characteristics of proposed use, including type of on-site activities; nature and type of equipment required; material processed, stored, or produced; and number of employees

- Site development impacts, including loss of habitat, loss of woodlands, terrestrial and aquatic animal species, wetlands, water quality, aesthetics, and lighting
- Dependence of proposed uses economic viability on the proposed location (i.e. does it really *have* to be located in an agricultural area)
- Potential for attracting additional development into the area

Business desiring to locate in agricultural areas should be required to adhere to all applicable environmental performance standards and site design requirements.

*Businesses requesting a special exception to locate in a Rural Conservation District or a Resource Protection District must obtain an advisory opinion from the Cecil County Economic Development Commission. The process for obtaining the opinion should require the Commission to hold a public meeting on the application.*

The Commission would be required to apply a set of evaluative criteria (see the above policy) to apply for a special exception in a Resource Protection District or a Rural Conservation District. The purpose of the advisory opinion is to obtain the Commission's judgment on whether there is significant economic justification to allow development to occur in an agricultural area in spite of the County's goals to concentrate new development in designated areas of the Development District, to protect agriculture, and to maintain their rural quality of life. The opinion would not be binding on the Planning Commission.

*Encourage the long-term consolidation of economic activities into Development District, particularly most types of home businesses that have outgrown their origins.*

The consolidation of commercial, retail, and service activities into Development Districts would enable them to be more efficiently served by utilities, transportation, and other local governmental services. The growth opportunities for establishments would be greater in these areas due to better service levels, exposure to higher traffic flows, and improved access and parking. Encouraging such a shift would also avoid conflicts that arise when home-based business in residential areas desire to expand. This can irreversibly decrease the residential character of a neighborhood.

*Allow new economic development occurring in Development Districts flexibility in showing that site plans will achieve compliance with the environmental standards.*

The challenge to Cecil County is to balance its need and desire for new economic development with the desire of residents to maintain the existing rural character and quality of the natural environment. Environmental performance requirements such as buffer distances from wetlands or stream banks that are more stringent than those in adjacent counties could result in higher site development costs, and thus divert new development into other areas. Given the high importance Cecil County residents place on maintaining their quality of life and protecting the natural environment, new uses in Development Districts should be granted the flexibility of showing through site design or mitigation measures that they will meet the environmental performance standards.

*The location of new economic development, as indicated by the delineation of Development Districts and guided by the provision of infrastructure, should be directed toward, and planned in accordance with, the large Towns in Cecil County.*

Towns such as Elkton, North East, Perryville, and Port Deposit have long served as the market, employment, and government centers of the County, and have contained concentrations of high density residential and commercial development, along with the necessary infrastructure. The traditional role of the Towns should be preserved and reinforced by concentrating new commercial, retail, and service development in and immediately adjacent to them when such development is compatible and would not adversely affect their character. The County should work closely with the Towns in identifying parcels with high development potential, scheduling the provision of infrastructure, and determining suitable uses for parcels. This policy would provide for efficiency and economies of scale in providing infrastructure and reduce the spread of development into outlying rural districts. Finally, focusing of development into and around these historic centers would create a potential market that would attract other business.

*A feasibility study should be undertaken of the Bainbridge Naval Training Center to determine potentially feasible adaptive reuses.*

The State and County should fund a comprehensive assessment of the Center to determine its potential for being adapted for new mixed use development. This study should evaluate the condition of buildings, identify the preferred adaptive reuses of the buildings, determine the feasibility for upgrading and using the on and off-site utilities and transportation facilities, and estimate the overall costs of preparing the facility for development. This document would serve as a guide for economic development recruitment efforts, and for obtaining the necessary funds to renovate the center.

*Continue the partnership of local businesses, the County school system, and the Economic Development Commission in ensuring that Cecil County students receive the vocational training necessary to meet the needs of current and prospective.*

A supply of skilled labor would enable the County to attract more capital-intensive manufacturing industries that require highly skilled workers, as well as enable existing businesses to expand their operations. Educators, business leaders, and the Economic Development Commission should work cooperatively to ensure that vocational training is provided that is usable by local employers. This training can be provided either by the Vo-Tech schools, or by local industries through cooperative arrangements with the Board of Education. The Cecil County Community College is an institutional resource that should be fully utilized to match the needs of business for skilled workers and of Cecil County youth for jobs in the County. The key emphasis should be in providing residents with skills that will be needed in the future, and with training that enables them to learn and adapt to new technologies.

*Sponsor a targeting study to identify the specific types of industries that should be attracted to Cecil County.*

The targeting study should identify specific industry types (by four digit SIC code) that would find Cecil County an economically attractive location. This study should identify and assess in detail the specific competitive advantages and disadvantages Cecil County offers. Once these have been examined, the study should next identify those industries whose locational, labor, and raw material needs most closely match those offered by Cecil County.

Once the target industrial sectors have been delineated, recruitment strategies should be developed and implemented for each target group. These should include economic incentives, an inventory of suitable sites, labor supply information, cost factors such as labor and land, transportation linkages and costs, proximity to and size of nearby markets, and provision of infrastructure. The 1985 study prepared for the Susquehanna Region Private Industry Council serves as a model which can

be expanded upon to meet the County's needs. Financially, consideration should be given to the most suitable locations, and required infrastructure needs of the target industries in planning for roads, sewer lines, and water lines.

## **COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND PUBLIC SERVICES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Community facilities and public services are those minimum facilities and services the County, or in some cases the developer, provides for the common good. Generally, public facilities include land, buildings, equipment and whole systems of activity provided on the behalf of the public. Some facilities, such as clean drinking water and adequate sewerage disposal are necessities; while others, such as theaters and parks, are highly desirable for cultural and educational enrichment. The quality of public facilities contributes to the quality of life in the County.

### **EXISTING COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES**

#### **Emergency Services**

##### **Fire and Rescue Service**

There are nine volunteer and two paid fire companies operating in Cecil County (see Public Facilities Map for locations). Volunteer fire companies operate at Cecilton, Chesapeake City, Elkton (Singerly), North East, Charlestown, Perryville, Port Deposit (Water Witch), Rising Sun (Community Fire Company), and Hacks Point. Paid companies operate at Perry Point and Chesapeake Job Corps Facility at Bainbridge.

Three paid medic transport capable units and one medic capable, non-transport unit consisting of eight full-time, 10 part-time Cardiac Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR) personnel, and an Emergency Medical Services (EMS) coordinator supplement the emergency and rescue services otherwise provided by the volunteer companies during the weekday hours.

##### **Police Protection**

The County maintains a Sheriff's Department in Elkton which serves the entire County. In addition to the Sheriff there are 25 Deputies with back-up personnel. The Sheriff's Department is augmented by a trained force of four Special Duty Sheriffs. The Department provides personnel for the Courts, the Cecil County Detention Center, engages in

crime prevention patrols, and handles criminal investigations.

Local municipal police units are maintained by the towns of Elkton, Perryville, Rising Sun, Port Deposit, North East and Chesapeake City. There is also a Maryland State Trooper barracks located north of the Town of North East at the intersection of Routes 40 and 272 and another one north of Perryville adjacent to I-95. At present, there are eight state troopers enrolled in the Resident Trooper Program in Cecil County. The presence of these troopers provides additional manpower to the law-enforcement needs of the County. They also furnish specialized law-enforcement needs such as safety and educational programs and anti-drug campaigns.

#### **Adult and Juvenile Justice Services**

The Division of Parole and Probation supervises persons on parole or probation, handles pre-sentence investigations, pre-parole investigations, etc., for the courts and the Parole Board.

The local office of the Maryland Department of Juvenile Services screens referred individuals for court action, counseling, services of other agencies, and possible detention until court action. There is also provision to locate and finance residential and community services for adjudicated children up through age 18.

#### **Detention**

The Cecil County Detention Center is located in Elkton. The facility has a current capacity for 152 inmates with proposals for additions to accommodate 40 more inmates. There are 46 corrections officers at the facility.

#### **Community Adult Rehabilitation Center**

Since 1984, the CARC program has been housing and rehabilitating individuals who have been convicted of crimes, but who in the judgment of courts and appropriate correctional personnel will not present a substantial danger to the community. The CARC Unit falls under the jurisdiction of the Sheriff of Cecil County. Work Release is a privilege and inmates are required to pay for room and board. This payback arrangement generates in excess of half a million dollars annually and substantially helps to offset operational costs. In addition,

the CARC Unit was constructed with 100% State funding at no cost to Cecil County.

#### **Public Health**

There are two hospitals in Cecil County: Union Hospital of Cecil County which is located in Elkton and the Veterans Administration Hospital which is located at Perry Point. The Cecil-Kent Medical Center located in Cecilton provides doctor services for the two County regions. There are 19 general medicine, private practice physicians in the County, including five pediatricians and three obstetricians.

The Cecil County Health Department operates out of four office and clinic locations in Elkton and periodic clinics held in five donated-space satellite locations. In addition, public health services are provided through one private physician's office and in client's homes. A new Health Department Facility, now under construction in Elkton, will consolidate the Elkton offices and programs into one central location. The County Health Department delivers services through five major divisions including administrative services, community health services, environmental health services, mental health services, and addiction control services.

The Cecil County Health Department currently has programs in place which address; community health services, community health education, child health, school health, children's medical services, epidemiology and communicable diseases, tuberculosis control, sexually transmitted diseases, adult health, home health, colposcopy, developmental disabilities, early and periodic screening diagnosis and treatment, adolescent pregnancy, improved pregnancy outcome, and high risk infant care, geriatric evaluation services, family planning, environmental health, community mental health, community rehabilitation (SHARE), community residence (SunRise), alcoholism, drug abuse, and medical adult day care.

#### **Public Schools**

Cecil County has 16 elementary schools, four middle schools, one vocational-technical center and five high schools, two of which are junior and senior high schools (Table 5). Total County enrollment in 1988 was 12, 587 students, with approximately one-half of that total in elementary schools.

Special education services offered to Level V and multiple handicapped students are centralized at Gilpin Manor and Perryville Elementary Schools. In 1988-1989, 137 students were enrolled. Special education services are available for Level I

**Table 5. Cecil County Public Schools and 1989-1990 Enrollments**

<u>Kindergarten and Elementary Schools</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>
Bainbridge	409
Bay View	486
Calvert	377
Cecil Manor	313
Cecilton	317
Charlestown	214
Chesapeake City	416
Conowingo	378
Gilpin Manor	350
Holly Hall	282
Kenmore	354
Leeds	348
North East	585
Perryville	457
Rising Sun	606
Thomson Estates	<u>678</u>
TOTAL	6,572
<u>Middle Schools</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>
Cherry Hill	517
Elkton	479
North East	605
Perryville	<u>379</u>
TOTAL	1,980
<u>High Schools</u>	<u>Enrollment</u>
Bohemia Manor Junior and Senior	510
Elkton	1,067
North East	899
Perryville	494
Rising Sun Junior and Senior	<u>1,045</u>
TOTAL	4,015
TOTAL ENROLMENT	12,587

through Level IV students at all schools. Approximately 12 percent of the students in Cecil County Public Schools receive special education services.

The Cecil County Board of Education has projected enrollments through 1998 for each existing and additional facility. The County projects that total enrollment will increase from 12, 574 in 1988-1989 to 15,200 in 1999, an increase of 21 percent. Elementary enrollments are anticipated to increase by five percent to nine percent and secondary enrollments by 39 percent.

Cecil County plans at least 19 construction projects from 1988 through 1995 (See Background Report for details). As a result of construction projects undertaken since 1975 the Perryville Junior-Senior High School was converted to a middle school, a new Perryville High School opened, and new elementary schools were built in the Kenmore area and in the Calvert area to replace older buildings. A new high school is under construction in the north-central section of the County and a new elementary school is under construction in the south-central section of the County.

As new residents move into Cecil County, schools which are at or over capacity will need additional classroom space, or if rapid development occurs in a localized area, additional schools may need to be constructed. In recent years re-locatable classroom buildings have been placed at some schools with overcrowded conditions including Elkton High School, North East Elementary School, Rising Sun Elementary School, Bayview Elementary, Chesapeake City Elementary, Conowingo Elementary, Charlestown Elementary, Calvert Elementary, Cecil Manor Elementary, and Bainbridge Elementary Schools. Additions and renovations are planned for Rising Sun Elementary, Conowingo Elementary, North East Elementary, Cecil Manor Elementary, Elkton High, Bohemia Manor High, Bayview and Bainbridge Elementary Schools between 1990 and 1995.

**Community College**

The Cecil Community College enrolls over 1,600 students in college credit programs and another 3,000 students in noncredit courses, seminars, and training programs each year. The College is a joint State/County project with its campus near Bay View. The State provides two-thirds of its funding and the County one-third. Besides the campus at Bay View, classes are also held in other public school facilities in the County. Construction of a community arts center and library is nearing completion, a community aquatics center is planned, and the need for a technical building to accommodate increasing enrollment in technical programs is forecast for the 1990-1995 period. The Cecil Community College offers a wide variety of courses useful to people seeking employment in business and industry in the County; it is an important link between jobs seekers in the County and the special needs of business and industry looking for qualified workers in an ever-changing job market.

## **Public Library**

The Cecil County Public Library provides book and information services to County residents through its headquarters in Elkton and six branch libraries in Cecilton, Chesapeake City, North East, Perryville, Port Deposit, and Rising Sun. Branches in Cecilton and North East are being expanded to meet the needs of a growing county population and a new library is planned for the Rising Sun area. The Cecil County Public Library Branch Facility Study completed the Maryland Office of Planning indicates the need for improved facilities for Chesapeake City, Port Deposit and Perryville. The study recommends that this need be addressed by 1995. The report also indicates a need for additional facilities to serve the Fair Hill and Conowingo areas by the year 2000.

## **Solid Waste**

The present Central/Hog Hill Solid Waste Refuse Landfill, located off of MD 7 near North East is 418 acres in size. Only half the site, established in 1978, is presently designed as a landfill and the remaining land may be developed as additional landfill area in the future. The Landfill is constructed as a standard trench and fill sanitary operation. The Landfill has the capacity to dispose of asbestos materials under strict guidelines for packaging, handling and disposal. Cecil County is presently required by the State Department of the Environment to build landfill cells which are lined with an impervious material and to provide for a collection system to catch leachate (contaminants from the landfill) and to dispose of these contaminants in a safe manner.

The County owns and operates two (2) solid waste transfer stations. The Stemmers Run Transfer Station serves the southern portion of the County and the Woodlawn Transfer Station serves the northwestern part of the County. Each of the Transfer Stations is designed to receive any waste which can be buried at the Landfill. Refuse is deposited in a receiving hopper on the top floor of a two-story building; stationary compactors compress the refuse into 50 cubic yard containers which are transported to the Landfill by a tractor trailer. The Transfer Stations are open to all County residents and

no charge is assessed to individual households for dumping privileges.

## **Sewer and Water**

### **Groundwater Characteristics and Supply**

Groundwater is utilized in public water systems and private on-lot wells. Approximately 75 percent of County residents receive their water supply from wells. Nearly sixty percent of County residents use individual on-lot wells. Approximately 15 percent of County residents, or 10,000 persons, use water from a private or public water supply systems. Ground water appropriation permits for these systems total 2.3 million gallons per day (MGD). Industrial groundwater appropriation permits total 0.4 MGD. The volume of groundwater used for agricultural purposes is difficult to estimate due to seasonal variations. Information on agricultural groundwater usage is not available because agricultural users are exempt from the State's appropriation permit process.

The quality of groundwater in Cecil County is generally acceptable for all of the uses which it serves. Groundwater well yields vary geographically over the County according to the underlying geology and hydrology. Yields are generally higher in the southern half of the County. Declining groundwater levels and problems of well interference are causing concern for water supplies for the Elkton area. In the Piedmont well location is very critical in obtaining maximum yield because the groundwater is only found in fractures and openings in the bedrock. Large groundwater withdrawals in these areas from aquifers with limited recharge capability are causing concern on the part of the State and County. The Maryland Water Resources Administration has recommended that the County pursue possible solutions to this problem, including decreased volume of permitted pumping, rapid completion and utilization of Elkton's new surface water treatment plant, and water supply planning, with use of new wells south of Elkton and a water pipeline to the Susquehanna River.

### **Surface Water Characteristics and Supply**

Approximately 25 percent of the residents of the County, or 16,000 people receive their water from a public water supply system which utilizes surface water. Higher elevation, fast flowing, non-tidal streams are utilized by Elkton, Perryville, Port Deposit, and North East for their water supplies.

### **Water Supply Inventory**

There are approximately 50 existing community well systems (public and private) located throughout the County (see Background Report for Inven-

tory and Location). Most larger systems operate two or more wells. The above figure includes municipal systems at Cecilton, Chesapeake City, Elkton, North East, Perryville, and Rising Sun. Cecil County Department of Public Works operates three (3) water systems in the County: Meadowview, Pine Hills, and Highlands which are private utilities that have been taken over by the County.

### **The Susquehanna Pipeline**

Because of the questionable groundwater reserves in the Piedmont portions of the County and the limited surface water reserves in the Elk River to satisfy the demands of the growing Elkton service area Cecil County has undertaken a study to determine the feasibility of drawing water from the Susquehanna River. The study scope includes consideration of a water treatment plant on the Susquehanna River and a main water distribution line that would run along Route 40 from the river to the Elkton area. The study will also consider the feasibility of consolidating the Perryville and Cecil County water treatment facilities on the Susquehanna.

### **Sewerage Systems Inventory**

Approximately 40 percent of the County population is served by municipal or private treatment plants. The remaining 60 percent utilizes subsurface (septic) disposal.

There are approximately 30 municipal and community wastewater treatment plants in the County. Municipal sewerage systems serve the incorporated municipalities of Cecilton, Chesapeake City, Elkton, Perryville, Port Deposit, and Rising Sun. Cecil County Department of Public Works operates sewerage treatment facilities to serve Cherry Hill, Highlands, and Meadowview. The County's Seneca Point sewerage treatment plant serves the North East and Charlestown areas.

Receiving streams for effluent from public sewage treatment plants include the Susquehanna, North East and Elk Rivers. Treatment plants serving Union 76 Truckstop and Meadowview discharge effluent into the Christiana River. The Chesapeake City Plants and the Army Corps of Engineers System discharges into the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal. The Cecilton System discharges into a tributary of the Bohemia River. Highlands has

the only operating land disposal system in the County.

The primary capital planning document for community sewer and water facilities is the *Cecil County, Maryland 1988 Ten-Year Water and Sewer Plan*. According to state law, all proposed public and private sewer and water improvements contained in this plan must be consistent with the County's Land Use Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

Major improvements to sewer and water systems should also appear in the County's Capital Improvements Program. This will be especially true if the County adopts an adequate facilities ordinance which requires that all new development have adequate sewer and water systems in place or proposed prior to development approval. Proposed sewer and water improvements not appearing in the *Ten-Year Water and Sewer Plan* or the County Capital Improvements Program should not be funded at public expense unless the County decides that the benefits far outweigh costs.

## **GOALS AND OBJECTIVES**

### **Goal Emphasis**

*Provide a system of community facilities, public services and utilities which is responsive to residents' needs, and which encourages a form of development consistent with the Land Use Plan.*

### **Other Goals**

*Limit high density development to areas served by existing or imminent collection and treatment facilities.*

*Adopt a regional concept for waste water treatment to eliminate proliferation of point discharges in County waters.*

*Plan and encourage a water supply under the control of the County government for the needs of development within the County.*

*Plan for the efficient location of schools, libraries, health and medical facilities, and other public services.*

*Acquire land and develop appropriate recreation facilities for all major user groups.*

*Assure that public facilities and institutions are maintained in an efficient manner.*

### **Objectives**

*Where possible, increase public services as additions to existing systems.*

*Consider establishing special taxing districts to financially support facilities or services when the location of growth or existing development is inconsistent with the County's ability to provide appropriate public services.*

*Plan capital improvements consistent with a realistic rate of growth in County areas where development is encouraged to locate (e.g., the Development District, Town Centers, Village Centers, and Suburban District).*

*Limit the provision of facilities and services in rural County areas.*

*Meet the public facilities needs of existing development as a first priority.*

*Require developers to pay for or provide the added public facilities necessary to support their developments when normal County facilities programming will not result in the timely provision of the services that will support the proposed development, including, but not limited to, schools, parks, roads, and sewer/water facilities.*

*Establish provisions that require that no plan for subdivision or development be approved unless the Planning Commission first determines that adequate facilities are available to support and service the proposed development.*

## **IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Emergency Response Management**

The County should work closely with the fire and rescue services to improve the provision of these services. Based on the operating experience and after-action debriefs from the emergency response services the County should work with appropriate officials to identify and coordinate the implementation of specific measures designed to facilitate response times and service provision. Examples of techniques the County may incorporate into ordinances and County programs are:

- Including dry hydrant hook-ups at available water supply sources for fire fighting as subdivision and site plan requirements;
- Encouraging creation of water impoundments in development as water sources for fire fighting; and
- Targeting as priorities for funding those bridges with weight limits that impede fire and rescue service.

### **Recycling Solid Wastes**

The State of Maryland has mandated that Cecil County reduce through recycling as least 15 percent of the County's solid waste stream by 1994.

"Recycling" means any process in which materials that would otherwise become solid waste are collected, separated, or processed and returned to the marketplace in the form of raw materials or products. The recycling of reusable waste materials will substantially reduce the required capacity of proposed refuse disposal systems thereby resulting in significant cost savings in their operation. Recycling relieves pressures on landfill capacity, conserves energy and natural resources and can even stimulate local economic development and job creation. The following components of the solid waste stream are those that can be successfully recycled with a high degree of commercial acceptance:

**Aluminum-** By far the most valuable recycled product by weight (\$400 to \$600 per ton), even though it accounts for less than two percent of the solid waste stream.

**Glass-** Can either be reused to make new glass bottles or as a raw material in the production of fiberglass and construction materials.

**Ferrous metal-** Tin and bimetal cans are used in steel manufacturing and in the de-tinning industry while "white goods" (household appliances such as refrigerators and air conditioners) can be recycled as low grade scrap metal.

**Paper-** Represents the largest percentage of the solid waste stream. Newspapers can be made into insulation, packing and roofing materials. High grade paper can be remade into bond paper, printing paper, tissue or wrapping paper. Corrugated cardboard can be made into corrugated and cardboard boxes.

**Plastic bottles-** Have recently received publicity as a growing environmental problem, but they can be reused as raw material feedstock, fiberfill, carpet construction, furniture, flooring, and other products, but not for beverage containers.

**Yard debris-** Can be used to produce a compost which might be used by the County.

### **Shared Facilities**

Requirements for individual sewage disposal systems and wells for residences tend to increase the minimum lot size permitted in developments and reduce the ability of the developer to provide open space areas. In order to give developers maximum

flexibility in meeting the County's objective of preserving large open space areas the County should permit shared or community water and sewer facilities. To implement this recommendation will require that the County adopt a Shared Facilities Ordinance. The County Office of Planning and Zoning and the Department of Public Works should be directed to prepare a Shared Facilities Ordinance for adoption by the County Commissioners.

### **Capital Improvements Programming**

Capital Improvements Programming is the multi-year scheduling of public physical improvements. Generally included are plans for roads, water and sewer facilities, parks, libraries, museums, police headquarters, and any other capital expenditures to be funded from public tax support or dedicated revenue funds.

The County must be able to reliably anticipate when it will be necessary to expand existing, or construct new facilities. The relationship between the Comprehensive Plan and the Capital Improvements Program is multidimensional. First, the Comprehensive Plan establishes the framework within which functional plans (e.g. School Facility Plan, Water and Sewerage Plan, etc.) are formulated. These functional plans may be quite specific as to needed improvements, often going so far as to make broader cost estimates. The relationship must go further by carefully relating the Comprehensive Plan to the Capital Improvements Program and the Capital Improvements Program to zoning and subdivision regulation. In this situation permits for development are based on whether or not the necessary community facilities are either in place or programmed in the Capital Improvements Program.

### **Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance**

An Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance would allow approval of a plan for a subdivision or development only when it is found to be consistent with the Land Use Plan element of the Comprehensive Plan and only when adequate public or community facilities are available or will be available when required to support and service the proposed development. It would also define adequate facilities by setting standards and providing criteria which would establish a

consistent methodology for identifying the impacts of proposed developments.

Adequate Public Facilities Ordinances control the development process by conditioning approval upon showing that sufficient infrastructure and services are present or will be required. These provisions help ensure that land development coincides with the location and timing of capital facilities. After setting service standards for water, waste treatment, transportation, educational facilities, and other public facilities and services to guide the development review process, the ordinance makes development approval contingent on the County's or private sector's ability to provide or maintain these service levels.

An adequate public facilities ordinance assumes that adequate public facilities are or will be in-place at the time they are required. These public facilities should either be in-place or be programmed for construction at the time they are needed. The primary capital programming documents are the Comprehensive Water and Sewer Plan and the Capital Improvements Program (which may also cite programmed state capital improvements, e.g. highways). Public improvements not included in these documents should either be paid for by the developer or the development should be denied based on inadequate facilities. Capital programming is meant to manage growth by bringing predictability to infrastructure expansion and development. However, there may be situations, such as the opportunity to capture a major employer that provides tax and employment benefits to the County that would justify a deviation from the adopted capital program. Even such a change should be accompanied by program amendments.

The Office of Planning and Zoning should be required to prepare an annual report of inadequate facilities. Simultaneously, the County's Capital Improvement Program should be adjusted to address the timely improvement of the inadequate facilities.

### **Exactions and Impact Fees**

When combined with an overall growth management plan, impact fees and development exactions are effective in providing a means for local government to finance the capital improvements associated with new development. New development will not have a negative impact on the existing community residents if the infrastructure has sufficient capacity to handle the increased demand associated with the new development.

Exactions and impact fees provide a direct means of obtaining the funds needed for capital improvements to service new developments. Both are based on the principal that new growth areas should be required to pay a pro rata share of the costs to

the community for providing new public facilities and services.

The County should study the need for increased exactions and impact fees as a growth management tool in Cecil County. Such a study should be undertaken in the context of long range capital program planning and take into account existing revenue sources and revenue projections. The study should also consider the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

### **Financial Techniques**

None of the techniques for providing public facilities will work unless a method is found to finance the provision. The following financing techniques are among the range of possibilities:

**Pay-As-You-Go-** The financing of capital projects from annual appropriations through the Capital Improvements Program.

**Reserve Fund Financing-** Is a variation of the pay-as-you-go method whereby payment is made in advance by deposits in a capital reserve fund until the amount required has been accumulated.

**Borrowing-** Counties can issue long-term debt through the sale of tax-exempt obligations, or revenue bonds to finance a revenue producing enterprise. A general obligation bond can be sold to finance permanent types of improvements, and it obligates the County to pay interest and return the debt of the issue.

**Grants-In-Aid-** Source for these include the Farmers Home Administration, United States Environmental Protection Agency, United States Department of Commerce and United States Department of Housing and Urban Development.

**Lease-Purchase-** With this technique local governments prepare specifications for a needed public works project that is constructed by a private company or authority through lease back to the jurisdiction.

**Authorities and Special Districts-** These may be created, usually to provide a single service, e.g. a sanitary district for provision of sewer and/or water service. They may be financed through revenue bonds retired by user charges

or in some cases by taxes if the authority has that power.

**Tax Increment Financing-** This method may be used to provide front end funds in an area where large scale redevelopment is feasible. A district is created around the proposed development. The tax base of this district is equivalent to the values of all the property within the area. The tax revenues paid to taxing units are computed on the initially established tax base during the redevelopment period, which is usually the expected life of the project. The area is then redeveloped. This redevelopment is financed with funds from the sale of tax increment bonds which are sold by the government or special taxing district. When the property is redeveloped, the values rise, thus generating more tax revenue. This tax "increment" above the initially established level goes into a fund to retire the bonds.

Cecil County's public facilities cannot rely on only one technique. Rather, a combination of methods should be employed pursuant to appropriate ordinances being adopted by the County Commissioners.

## **FISHERIES**

Counties on tidal waters are required by State law to designate areas for commercial fishing and support facilities in their comprehensive plans. The facilities included in this requirement are for loading and unloading of finfish and shellfish; processing finfish and shellfish; and docking and mooring of commercial fishing boats and vessels. In Cecil County the two main issues confronting the local fishing industry are access, i.e. the availability of docking and launching facilities, and river channel depth.

### **COMMERCIAL FISHING IN CECIL COUNTY**

Commercial harvesting of finfish and shellfish from the Chesapeake Bay represents a traditional livelihood that has been threatened in recent years by declines in the population of commercial species and from competing land use interests for waterfront development. In 1962, commercial fishing activities supported seventy families in Cecil County. The number declined to six families in 1989. Formerly, three processing houses were located in Cecil County. Of the three only one remains; one has been converted to an apartment house and the other to a museum.

In Perryville, crabs, perch, and catfish are unloaded at Owens Seafood, a marina located on River Road in Perryville. Fish are unloaded daily during the summer, and approximately five times a week dur-

ing the winter. Commercial harvests are packed in ice for transport to markets outside of the County. Currently, this is the only site where any form of commercial processing of finfish or shellfish occurs in Cecil County. Boats that unload fish at Owens Seafood do not dock at this site. These boats dock either on the North East River or in other counties on the Chesapeake Bay. Commercial harvests are also unloaded at a public boat ramp located at Carpenters Point. Commercial boats using this site are moored nearby.

In the Town of North East, a dock on Church Point Road at the mouth of the North East Creek is currently leased by commercial fishermen. Harvests include catfish, eels, carp, and crabs. Commercial harvests are sold and transported out-of-state for processing and marketing. North East Creek was dredged five years ago by the Army Corps of Engineers. Dredging is expected to be required again to accommodate commercial vessels.

In Fredericktown, where commercial fishing activities once supported fifteen families, two commercial fishermen remain. Harvests consist of catfish, white perch and yellow perch from the Sassafras River. Commercial harvests are taken either to local fish markets or are shipped out-of-state live in tanker trucks. There are no processing facilities in Fredericktown.

Five commercial fishing boats are currently using the facilities of a private marina in Fredericktown.

A County-owned boat ramp and pier at Fredericktown are also used by commercial fishermen; however, use by commercial fishing boats is limited during low tides. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources has recommended an addition to the ramp's length and has offered to assist the County in dredging a channel to the main channel of the Sassafras River.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

*Identify actions that the County can take to ensure the viability of commercial fisheries in Cecil County.*

Commercial fishing interests on the North East and Sassafras Rivers have identified a need for dredging channels to accommodate their boats. The County

should work with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to improve access to these rivers by commercial fishing boats. Privately-owned marinas have primarily served the interests of recreational boaters, occasionally at the expense of commercial fishermen. Publicly-owned ramps and piers provide an alternative option to privately-owned marinas; however, public facilities also are heavily used by recreational boaters. The County should monitor use at County-owned facilities to ensure adequate access by commercial fishing interests.

Vocational training programs should include a fisheries management program to provide a new generation with contemporary skills necessary to sustain a commercial fishing industry in Cecil County.

*Review all proposed waterfront development for its impact on existing commercial fisheries.*

Cecil County has experienced a steady decline in its commercial fishing activities over the past several decades. Although most of this decline is due to water quality conditions of the Bay, elimination of commercial fishing access points to the Bay is also a pressure felt by the industry. Waterfront development proposals should be reviewed to determine the effect of development on commercial fishing access to the Bay.

*Allow commercial fishermen docking and processing facilities in appropriate waterfront locations provided that conflicts with surrounding land use are minimized and water quality/habitat impacts are acceptable.*

Commercial fishing and associated processing facilities provide an economic benefit to Cecil County by providing jobs and generating a tax base. Since these facilities require locations at or near the shoreline, however, they have the potential to degrade water quality and natural habitats. Docks and facilities should be sited and designed in a way that minimizes water quality and habitat degradation.

## **IMPLEMENTATION OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

The recommendations found in the Cecil County Comprehensive Plan should be implemented by the Board of County Commissioners, and by its agencies, boards, and commission. The plan is implemented through changes to County ordinances, new ordinances, reorientation of certain County agency programs, and through cooperation with Town and State government.

Implementation of the Comprehensive Plan through the recommendations of this section is critical to the health, welfare, and safety of the

citizens and to the success of commerce of Cecil County. Successful implementation of the recommendations of the plan requires that each of the actions called for be given the proper resources. Adequate staff in County offices must be retained to established new programs and revise existing ones. County staff should be available to monitor and enforce the programs and ordinances called for in the Plan. This requires that the County budget financial resources for staff activities or charge development fees to offset monitoring and enforcement costs.

Continuity in implementation is important to assure that the recommendation of the Plan receives the proper interpretation as ordinances and regulations are drafted and programs created. It is recommended that representative members of the Comprehensive Plan Committee provide this continuity for the benefit of County staff charged with the Plan's implementation.

This section of the Comprehensive Plan describes the devices that should be used to implement the Plan's recommendations.

### **LAND USE PLAN AND MAP**

The Land Use Plan and the Land Use Plan Map in this Comprehensive Plan express the policy of the County concerning land uses that are appropriate in different areas of the County. The Land Use Plan and Map describe seven land use districts:

- Development District
- Town District
- Village District
- Suburban District
- Rural Conservation District
- Resource Protection District
- Mineral Extraction District

The Land Use Plan Map shows the location of the seven districts. The Land Use Plan Map is implemented through the Zoning Map. The Land Use Plan sets forth guidelines for residential and nonresidential uses permitted in the various districts as well as guidelines for performance standards which apply to all districts. The guidelines in the Land Use Plan are implemented through the Zoning Ordinance and the Subdivision Regulations.

### **ZONING MAP**

The Zoning Map is the legal device that implements the spatial recommendations of the Land Use Plan Map. It is recommended that the Zoning Map be revised to reflect the location of the districts shown on the Land Use Plan Map and the purpose of the district set forth in the Land Use Plan. The land uses assigned to each of the various districts should follow the guidelines in the corresponding sections of the Land Use Plan.

### **VILLAGE DISTRICT STUDY**

The Land Use Plan for the Village District recommends that crossroad and waterfront villages be delineated on the Zoning Map. A Village District Study of crossroad villages should be undertaken. The study should be based on a definition of crossroad villages, a field and records inventory of village history and important features, and a delineation process which applies the definition and inventory to establish village boundaries. Recommendations under District Location in the Land Use Plan for the Village District should guide the definition and inventory.

The Village District Study should result in a report that describes the setting and history of each village, identifies important historic structures, and shows the village boundaries and opportunities for expansion on a map. The study should recommend the location of the Village District boundary for the Zoning Map revisions and for the protection of the village's essential historic and architectural character. The report should include photographs of each village and notes taken during field visits and interviews. The County should develop its Village District program in conjunction with Maryland Environmental Trust's Rural Historic Village Protection Program.

### **ZONING ORDINANCE**

The Zoning Ordinance establishes standards for the use of land and the structures on it, and for the intensities of permitted uses. It assigns incompatible uses to different zones to avoid the undesirable side effects of development. In addition to classifying different types of land uses, the zoning ordinances establishes standards for individual uses and describes conditions which proposed land uses must meet. It also establishes more detailed regulations concerning the area of a lot that may be developed (setbacks and separation of structures), the density of development (minimum lot sizes, etc.), and the height and bulk of buildings and other structures.

It is recommended that the Zoning Ordinance be revised to create land use zones that reflect the

intended goals of the land-use districts, and provide for meaningful density incentive credits when the development proposal implements goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan in addition to those specified in the Land-Use portion of the Plan.

In order to further the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, the Zoning Ordinance should be revised to include an enforcement element which provides timely and effective methods of addressing zoning violations. The Zoning Ordinance should also be revised to discourage the continuance of non-conforming uses and to reduce the opportunities for special exceptions within the various zones.

### **SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS**

Subdivision regulations complement the Zoning Ordinance by controlling the land development process. Subdivision regulations establish requirements for grading, lot access to streets, roads, and highways, and requirements and standards for public improvements such as streets, drainage pipes, and sewer outlets; they include engineering and physical design criteria.

Subdivision regulations should control the sequence and timing of development by ensuring that subdivision approval and development do not occur until adequate facilities are present or provided.

Subdivision regulations also should specify that land, or money in lieu of land, be dedicated during the development process to provide for public needs generated by the subdivision. Payment in lieu of land provides flexibility in situations where the development site does not include a suitable park site. In that situation, the County can use the cash contribution to purchase a nearby park site for the neighborhood.

Performance standards in subdivision regulations focus on how development is carried out rather than on what development is taking place. In Cecil County, performance standards should be designated to ensure that the character of each land use district is preserved.

Certain performance standards, such as those designed to protect environmental resources,

are general and generally should apply across each of the seven districts. For example, perennial streams should be protected by standard setbacks and vegetated buffers throughout the County. Performance requirements are identified for other sensitive areas, such as wetlands, sensitive soils adjacent to perennial streams, steep slopes, habitats of threatened and endangered species, and forests.

Other performance standards should be designed to encourage and perpetuate desired community characteristics. These performance standards should be specific to individual districts or groups of districts.

It is recommended that the County's Subdivision Ordinance be amended to incorporate the guidelines expressed as performance standards in the Land Use Plan pertaining to the land development process from both the individual District Plans and the Performance Standard guidelines, as appropriate.

### **RIGHT TO FARM**

The County should adopt a Right-to-Farm Ordinance that exempts legitimate agricultural uses from nuisance suits that arise when residential uses extend into agricultural areas.

On appropriate subdivisions, as determined by the Planning Commission, a "Right-to-Farm" clause should become part of the standard language shown on recorded plats to ensure that future property owners are aware of surrounding agricultural operations.

### **DEVELOPMENT RESERVE**

Often land in areas designated for growth is developed at low densities due to a lack of public water and sewer. The low density does not make the most efficient use of land or of infrastructure that may eventually be built.

In order to overcome the problem of premature low density development in the Development, Town, Village, and Suburban Districts, this Plan recommends a mechanism to reserve part of a site for future development at densities allowed with public sewer and water. The land set aside for future development is called the development reserve. Part or all of the development reserve can be used for shared facilities. If shared facilities are used and the whole site is designed for densities allowed with public water and sewer, the Plan recommends that densities up to two dwelling units per acre be permitted. Thus, over time, the development reserve, shared facilities and clustering work together to produce a more compact urban form in areas where development is recommended.

It is recommended that the Zoning Ordinance be amended to allow a development reserve on sites in the Development, Town, Suburban, and Village Districts.

**TRANSFER OF DEVELOPMENT RIGHTS**

Resource protection can be achieved by permitting land uses at intensities that are consistent with the resource. Achieving consistency often means reducing the intensity of housing and nonresidential development. More intense development in appropriate areas can be encouraged by public investment in infrastructure and services. The political difficulty with this strategy for resource protection is that rural landowners resist the downzoning usually necessary to achieve the resource protection goals. Downzoning reduces the development potential of their land. Landowners in areas designated for growth reap unearned benefits from public investment in infrastructure.

Transferable development rights (TDR) is a growth management technique whose purpose is to level these windfalls and wipeouts in land value. It allows rural landowners in the resource protection areas (called the TDR sending areas) to participate in the development market by selling the right to develop their lands to developers or landowners in designated growth areas (called TDR receiving areas). After purchase of development rights, developers are allowed housing densities greater than would otherwise be allowed. Thus, transferable development rights enables resource protection, concentrates development for more efficient use of infrastructure, and fairly distributes financial gain from public investment in land development between rural and growth area landowners.

TDR programs, when properly designed and implemented, can do much to overcome the political opposition to downzoning inspired by resource protection goals. Its most notable application in Maryland is in Montgomery County, where it has been successfully applied to the preservation of farmland.

Successful growth management programs based on transferable development rights and the jurisdiction they serve have the following characteristics in common:

- There must be a resource whose protection is a community goal.
- There must be a demand for housing.
- There must be infrastructure available to accommodate TDR densities in the TDR receiving area.

- There should be strict standards to ensure receiving area capability with nearby land uses.
- The method of transfer should be simple and grounded in existing procedures.
- There should be more opportunities to use TDRs in the receiving area than the number of TDRs allocated to sending area landowners.
- TDRs allocated to sending area landowners should reflect reasonable development expectations.
- Purchase of TDRs must be the only way to obtain densities higher than zoned.
- There should be a strong education program to acquaint the public with TDRs.
- There must be a strong commitment by local officials to resource protection and the more efficient delivery of government infrastructure and services that TDR densities allow.

State law allows Cecil County to implement a transferable development rights program. The County’s farmland and forests are resources whose protection is stated in Plan goals. However, there is insufficient infrastructure capacity, primarily in public water supply and sewage collection to foster the higher densities of development upon which successful TDR programs are built. The proposed water supply line from the Susquehanna River across the County is a first step in creating the opportunity for a TDR program.

It is recommended that a TDR program be implemented to protect agricultural and forest land of the County where it can be demonstrated that the use of these resources for farming and forestry is feasible over the long term. This recommendation should be implemented when new sewers and roads are programmed for water service areas. Furthermore, it is recommended that a public education program on transferable development rights be designed and implemented by the County to illustrate its potential use in achieving the goals of the Comprehensive Plan and to prepare the County for the implementation of a TDR program.

**TRADITIONAL NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT**

The more intense development that can occur with adequate public water supply, sewer lines, and

roads also allows the County to explore alternative settlement patterns that provide convivial and convenient places for its residents to live, work, shop, and play. One alternative settlement pattern that achieves this goal is called Traditional Neighborhood Development. The following description of traditional neighborhoods is based on the Model Traditional Neighborhood Development Ordinance, Section 1 (Intent), prepared by the Foundation for Traditional Neighborhoods, Inc. (Box 440 Ossipee, NH 03864).

In Traditional Neighborhoods, houses, shops, and workplaces are located much closer to one another than in conventional suburban development where land uses are intentionally separated. Under the Traditional Neighborhood development form, buildings are modest in size, and front on streets in a disciplined manner, uninterrupted by parking lots. Streets and blocks are arranged in geometric patterns to provide comprehensive and interesting routes of travel for pedestrians and motorists alike. Narrower streets serve a balanced mix of pedestrians and automobiles, while other streets are wider, to carry greater levels of traffic and serve as major ceremonial avenues, boulevards, or commercial main streets.

Well-configured public squares, greens, gardens, and parks are woven into street and block patterns. These public spaces are dedicated to collective social activity, recreation, and visual enjoyment. Civic buildings for assembly, education, worship, and other civic purposes are sited to act as visual landmarks and symbols of identity within the community.

Traditional Neighborhoods have a recognizable, functionally diverse, and visually unified neighborhood or town center, often focused on a major civic space, such as a village green or square. The center contains most of the commercial activity of the community and is linked to an important crossroad or mass transit stop.

Traditional Neighborhoods are designed and developed to have these characteristics, in order to achieve a wide range of benefits to the people who live and work in them, to local government and commerce, and to the developers who create them. These benefits include:

- Reduction in the number and length of automobile trips and, consequently, traffic

congestion, air and water pollution, and capital costs of road infrastructure;

- Increased pedestrian travel which increases interaction, neighborliness, community bonding, and citizen security;
- Physical and social integration of citizens who are diverse in age, life-style, and economic status;
- Diversity in types of housing, shopping, commercial trade, civic facilities, recreation, and employment; and
- Orderly patterns of streets and blocks, subdivisions lots, open space, automobile parking, pedestrian pathways, building mass, height, and lot coverage, based partly on natural site conditions as well as existing adjacent development.

It is recommended that the County develop and implement a Traditional Neighborhood Development ordinance to be applied either as a floating zone or in specially designated areas fully served by public water and sewer in Development, Town, Village, and Suburban Districts. Furthermore, it is recommended that new Traditional Neighborhood Developments be designated as receiving areas for transferable development rights at housing densities higher than would otherwise be allowed in the district for which they are planned. To achieve broad public acceptance of the traditional neighborhood development concept, it is recommended that a public education program be designed and implemented. This program should be implemented in conjunction with the public education program on TDR so that there is better understanding of the relationship between alternative development forms and the tools to achieve them.

### **INDUSTRIAL TARGETING STUDY**

An industrial targeting study is the first step in identifying types of industries that would find Cecil County an economically attractive place to locate. The study should identify industries whose locational, labor, and raw material needs most closely match those offered by Cecil County. Once target industries have been identified, recruitment strategies should be developed which consider economic incentives, inventory of suitable sites, labor supply information, cost factors such as transportation costs and linkages, and proximity and size of nearby markets.

It is recommended that Cecil County conduct an industrial targeting study and use the study as a basis for industrial development. Study recommendations should be incorporated into infrastructure planning.

## APPEARANCE CODE

The purpose of an appearance code should be to achieve development with a satisfactory visual appearance, preserve taxable values, and promote the public health, safety, and welfare. An appearance code is important throughout the County. Without an appearance code, the essential character of Village Districts may be lost if development is intensive to building architecture, scale, and site layout.

The appearance code should be implemented by a Design Commission which reviews proposed development to ensure that standards specified in the appearance code are met. An appearance code should specify performance standards and a desired end result, rather than specific requirements. For example, an appearance code may specify that trees be provided to enhance architectural features, provide shade, or separate roadways from developed areas, rather than required in certain types or numbers.

The Appearance Code should include performance standards for:

- Building design
- Relationship of building(s) to the site
- Relationship of proposed development to adjoining sites
- Landscape and site treatment
- Parking lot design, including landscaping
- Signs
- Lighting
- Street hardware
- Miscellaneous structures
- Maintenance
- Outdoor storage

It is recommended that an Appearance Code be adopted and a Design Commission be established to review proposed development for its conformity to the standards of individual districts. Interested architects, landscape architects, and the Cecil County Historical Society should be involved in implementation of this recommendation.

## HISTORIC DISTRICT DESIGNATION

Article 66B of Maryland's Annotated Code empowers local jurisdictions to establish historic area zoning as part of their regular

zoning ordinance and to appoint a historic district commission of community citizens. The Historic Commission should include a member from the Planning Commission. Candidates for appointment to the Commission should be recommended by the Cecil County Historical Trust and the Historical Society of Cecil County. Many of the crossroad villages in the Village District could be afforded the protection of historic district zoning.

It is recommended that a Cecil County Historic District Commission be appointed and given the authority to establish criteria for the designation of crossroad villages as Historic Villages, recommend historic districts for designation, and review proposed development in local historic districts to protect their historic character. The County should review the Commission's recommendations and establish a program of Local Historic Districts, including a process to review development proposed within the districts.

## DEFINITIONS

The ordinances and regulations needed to implement this Plan will depend on the definition of many terms. It is recommended that the authors of this Plan's implementing documents prepare definitions that are consistent and accurately convey the meaning and context of terms used in this Plan.

## HIGHWAY CORRIDOR OVERLAY ZONING

In the Transportation Plan, highway corridor overlay zoning is recommended as a means to control the form of development and to address traffic congestion problems in the U.S. Route 40 corridor. Development proposed in an overlay zone must meet all of the requirements of the underlying zoning district, plus additional requirements specified by the overlay zone. These requirements should include access controls establishing intersection design guidelines and minimum distances between curb cuts, and a transportation impact evaluation for traffic-oriented, high turnover uses.

It is recommended that a highway corridor overlay zone be implemented in the U.S. Route 40 corridor and that traffic management standards be developed and applied in the zone.

## LEVEL OF SERVICE POLICIES

Level of Service (LOS) policies establish minimum standards for an acceptable quality of highway service. Level of Service policies can be used to evaluate alternative transportation plans, determine capital requirements to maintain a specified LOS, and assess the effect of new development. If proposed development leads to LOS deficiencies,

development should not be approved until the adverse effects are mitigated by the developer.

In the Development and Suburban Districts, and Town and Village Centers, the minimum off-peak LOS should be C and the minimum peak-hour LOS should be D. In the Rural Conservation and Resource Protection Districts, the minimum off-peak LOS should be B and the minimum peak-hour LOS should be C.

It is recommended that the County adopt the Levels of Service indicated above.

## **ROAD CODE**

Roadway design standards ensure that safety and a specified level of service and convenience are maintained. Road standards are typically implemented through subdivision regulations and the road code. Road standards should specify access from internal streets to arterials and collectors, street alignment, street widths, curb radii, signage, and levels of service. Access controls, for example, should be designed to minimize the number of road cuts to roads that will become arterials or collectors at some point in the future. Access controls could also be extended to commercial development so that adequate access is maintained without disrupting the smooth traffic flow.

These standards are not only important in providing safe roads, but also are an essential element in creating a sense of place. For example, internal street connections between adjacent developments could avoid concentrating automotive traffic on a few roads and will encourage pedestrian routes between adjacent residential and commercial areas. Internal street connections should be encouraged in the Development, Town, Suburban, and Village Districts.

Over-designed residential roads also detract from community character and unnecessarily constrains design. To prevent over design, street standards should be based on the number and type of dwelling units to be served. They should also be based on parking needs, pedestrian traffic lot width. Narrower streets should be allowed where traffic volumes and design speeds are lower.

It is recommended that the County revise road standards to provide safety and convenience, and maintain community character. Narrower residential streets should be permitted in specified circumstances. It is also recommended that Cecil County seek legislation to enable it to require that purchasers of property on private roads formally acknowledge that these roads are private and that the County is not responsible for their maintenance.

## **TRAFFIC IMPACT ANALYSIS**

The purpose of a traffic impact analysis is to evaluate and plan for changes in traffic levels and patterns brought about by major development projects. A traffic impact analysis should evaluate new projects for consistency with the County's transportation plan and highway policies, and should minimize potential safety and congestion problems. Once level-of-service standards are established, they should be used to evaluate traffic impacts of proposed developments.

The traffic impact analysis is tied to the development approval process; only projects which address impacts and make provisions for traffic improvements are approved. In Cecil County, the impact analysis should be conducted with the assumption that each landowner possesses a share of excess highway capacity to be used when the land is developed. Any traffic generated beyond that share would be offset by road improvements paid for by the developer. This system would ensure that the first developers are not rewarded with lower road improvement costs than later developers.

It is recommended that standards for a traffic impact analysis be developed, and a traffic impact analysis required for significant proposed development. Furthermore, it is recommended that the results of the analysis be used as the basis to require road improvements by prospective developers.

## **EXACTIONS AND IMPACT FEES**

When combined with an overall growth management plan, impact fees and development exactions are effective in providing a means for local government to finance the capital improvements associated with new development. New development will not have a negative impact on the existing community residents if the infrastructure has sufficient capacity to handle the increased demand associated with the new development.

Exactions and impact fees provide a direct means of obtaining the funds needed for capital improvements to service new developments. Both are based on the principal that new growth areas should be required to pay a pro rata share of the costs to the community for providing new public facilities and services.

The County should study the need for increased exactions and impact fees as a growth management tool in Cecil County. Such a study should be undertaken in the context of long range capital program planning and take into account existing service levels and deficiencies, existing revenue sources and revenue projections. The study should also consider the goals of the Comprehensive Plan.

## **WATER AND SEWERAGE PLAN**

The County Water and Sewer Plan evaluates water supply and sewage treatment needs on the basis of projected population growth and industrial demand. When existing water supplies and sewage treatment capacity are inadequate to handle projected growth, capital improvements are programmed.

Areas within the County are classified into one of four categories for water supply and wastewater treatment:

- Areas with systems which are existing or under construction, including areas in condominium ownership using shared facilities;
- Areas with systems in the final planning stages which are planned within the next five years;
- Areas with systems planned within the five to ten year period; and
- Areas with individual systems serving a single lot.

The Land Use Plan Map recognizes areas with systems which are existing or under construction and areas where systems will be available within the next five years, by assigning these areas to land use districts where development is encouraged. When the alignment of the proposed water supply line from the Susquehanna River is determined, it is recommended that the Water and Sewerage Plan be amended accordingly, and that un-sewered areas in the water service area be considered for sewerage.

The level of public water supply and sewer service in the past has not been sufficient to accommodate much of the new housing development in the County, resulting in a dispersed development pattern that depends on septic systems for sewage disposal and on-site wells for water supply. The dispersed form of development, particularly north of the I-95 and

U.S. Route 40 corridors, has affected the use of rural land for agriculture and forestry.

The Comprehensive Plan goal to protect natural resources, as well as farming and forestry industries that these resources support, can be achieved only if most development occurs in the Development, Town, and Suburban Districts. Provision of adequate public water supply and sewage collection and treatment capacity in these districts is essential to reduce the development pressure in the Rural Conservation and Resource Protection Districts. Adequate water and sewer infrastructure is also essential to implement comprehensive growth management techniques such as transferable development rights, to support new development forms such as traditional neighborhood development, and to take full advantage of the development potential of the I-95 interchanges.

It is recommended that the County provide the sewer and water infrastructure needed to accommodate the 20-year growth projection forecasted in this plan, to implement growth management techniques that encourage the use of this infrastructure in the Development, Town, and Suburban Districts, and to allow development patterns and intensities that most effectively use the water and sewer infrastructure as well as public schools, roads and other services.

## **CAPITAL PROGRAMMING**

Capital improvement programming is a tool for guiding growth to a desired location by setting infrastructure funding priorities. A well-designed capital improvement plan provides for the orderly extension of sewer and water service at a rate needed to accommodate anticipated growth, and for the design and construction of road improvements that maintain desired levels of service. Road improvements should be scheduled to encourage long term consolidation of economic activities into the Development District.

It is recommended that the County prepare a Capital Improvements Program and revise it annually to achieve the goals of this plan and to ensure the timely expansion of infrastructure in districts where growth is recommended.

## **SHARED FACILITIES ORDINANCE**

Large lots for residential development are required in areas not served by a central water supply or by sewage collection and treatment. Large areas on residential lots are needed for septic drainage fields. In the Piedmont, several acres may be needed to maintain the yield of domestic water from on-site wells. The goals of this Plan favor clustering houses on smaller lots in order to preserve farmland and open space, to create more compact development, and to make water and

sewer infrastructure more cost effective. For these reasons, it is recommended that community septic drainage fields and well fields, or “shared facilities,” be allowed.

The term “shared facilities” refers to water or sewerage systems which serve more than one lot or more than one user on a single lot of land, where the system is located on individual lots or on parcels owned in common (COMAR 26.04.05). The system may be owned by users or a controlling authority.

A shared facilities ordinance is needed before shared facilities can be used in the County. The ordinance would designate a governmental body to provide for management, operation and maintenance of shared facilities. This governmental body may own, operate, construct, and enter into contractual agreements with federal, state, or municipal government, or individuals providing services for a shared facility.

It is recommended that a shared facilities ordinance be enacted by Cecil County to apply to community water supply or community septic systems. In the ordinance, the County should establish criteria for the effective location of community well and sewage disposal facilities, and requirements for their operation and maintenance.

In Rural Conservation, and Resource Protection Districts, the undeveloped portions of a site proposed for cluster development to be used for community septic systems and well fields should be dedicated as open space in perpetuity, in order to promote the agricultural, forest, and open space goals and values of these Districts. In Suburban, Village, Town, and Development Districts, the undeveloped portions of a proposed development site to be used for community septic systems and well fields can be reserved for future development, if and when public water and sewerage are provided. Prior to the enactment of a shared facilities ordinance, it is recommended that award of maximum densities in the Rural Conservation District and the Resource Protection District be conditioned on maximum clustering of dwelling units to the extent allowed by soil characteristics.

## **ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES**

Adequate public facilities ordinances control the development process by conditioning development approval on proof that sufficient infrastructure and services are present, or will be provided, to support the proposed development. These provisions can ensure that land development coincides with the location and timing of capital facilities. The ordinance may be written to make approval contingent on the County’s ability to provide services, or may require assurances that adequate infrastructure will serve the development.

It is recommended that the County adopt an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance. This ordinance should apply throughout the County to all new development. In the Mineral Extraction District, this ordinance will ensure that needed road improvements occur before truck traffic from mining operations overloads substandard or undersized roads.

## **COUNTY AND TOWN COORDINATION OF LAND USE**

The Land Use Plan and Map of this Comprehensive Plan recommends the establishment of a Town District around the Towns of Cecilton, Chesapeake City, and Rising Sun. The Plan’s Development District includes land immediately adjacent to the Towns of Elkton, North East, Charlestown, Perryville, and Port Deposit. It is in the interest of the County and these Towns to coordinate land use decisions at their common boundaries.

It is recommended that the County and the Towns establish a joint study committee charged with making recommendations and drafting memos of understanding concerning the annexation review process, targeting development to the Towns, rate-ables, moderate income housing, and the compatibility of zoning districts at common boundaries. The committee should also be charged with developing recommendations for a permanent forum, such as a regional council of governments, in which the County and Towns can discuss, decide, and implement policies on issues of mutual concern.

## **COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE AND REVIEW**

The Comprehensive Plan is to be a living document. Maintenance of the Plan is crucial to ensure that the goals and objectives of the plan are kept current and address growth in the County. At a minimum, the plan should be reviewed every 5 years and revised if necessary. As part of the Office of Planning and Zoning’s Annual Report, Implementation and compliance with the Comprehensive Plan should be addressed.

**CECIL COUNTY**  
**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**  
**MAPS**

Maps of natural, physical, and cultural features of Cecil County were made during the preparation of the Comprehensive Plan. Report scale versions of certain maps are presented on the following pages. A map of general land use and the adopted Land Use Plan are included in this document as fold-out maps in a pocket at the end of this volume.

A list of all the overlay maps prepared for the Comprehensive Plan at a scale of 1 inch=3,520 feet is presented after the report scale maps in Table 6. These maps are on file with the Cecil County Office of Planning and Zoning.

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MAPS SECTION OF THE  
CECIL COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

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1. General Land Use (in pocket at end of plan)
2. Watersheds, Water Supply, and Steep Slopes
3. Wetlands
4. Sensitive Habitats
5. Commercial Fisheries
6. Public Facilities
7. Recreational Facilities
8. Existing and Planned Water Service
9. Existing and Planned Sewerage Service
10. Transportation Corridors
11. Land Use Plan (in pocket at end of plan)

**Table 6. Cecil County Comprehensive Plan Maps**

*The maps listed in this table are drafted on mylar at a scale of 1 inch = 3,520 feet. The maps are held by the Cecil County Office of Planning and Zoning.*

**Land Use**

1. General Land Use

**Water Resource**

2. Major Watersheds
3. Water Supply Watersheds
4. Aquifers
5. Contaminated Water Resources
6. Septic System Failure Areas
7. Potential for Contamination of Water Resources
8. NPDES Permitted Facilities

**Geology**

9. Highly Erodible Soils
10. Soils Limiting Development
11. Bedrock with Severe Slopes
12. Steep Slopes

**Sensitive Habitats**

13. Non tidal Wetlands
14. Tidal Wetlands
15. Fin Fish: Anadromous Species
16. Fin Fish: Ocean Spawning Species
17. Fin Fish: Fresh Water Species
18. Upland Natural Areas
19. Scenic Areas
20. Natural Heritage Areas
21. Conservation Areas
22. 100-Year Floodplains
23. Critical Area Designations

**Infrastructure**

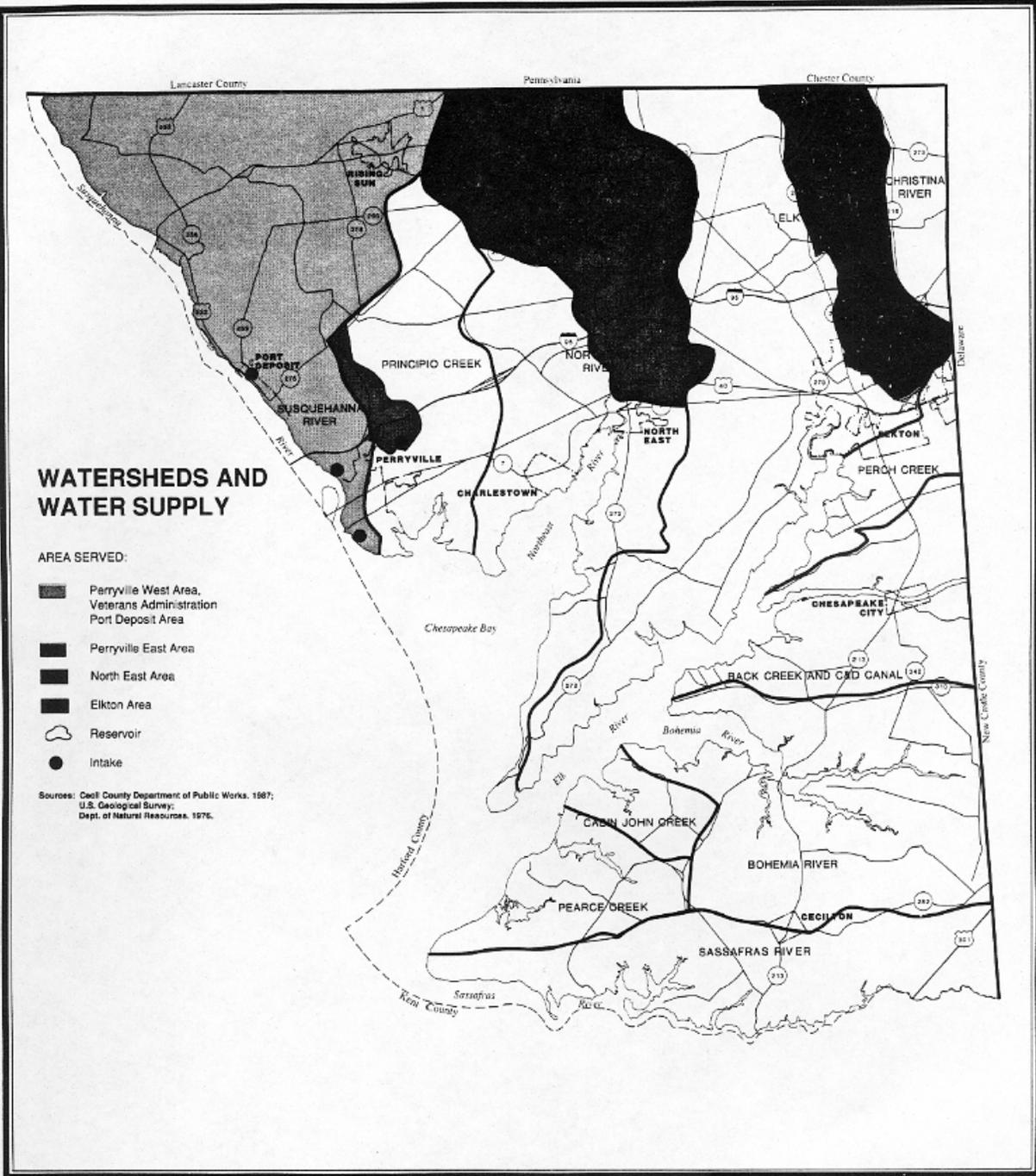
24. Water Service Areas
25. Planned Water Service Areas
26. Sewerage Service Areas
27. Planned Sewerage Service Areas
28. Highway Functional Classifications

**Utilities**

29. Major Electric Transmission Lines
30. Gas Pipe Lines

**Miscellaneous Maps**

31. Mineral Extraction Districts
32. Historical Features
33. Conservation Easements
34. Agriculturally Suitable Soils
35. Commercial Fisheries
36. Public Facilities
37. Recreational Facilities
38. Solid and Hazardous Waste Facilities
39. Noise Sources
40. Settlements (Incorporated Municipalities, Towns, Villages)



### WATERSHEDS AND WATER SUPPLY

**AREA SERVED:**

-  Perryville West Area, Veterans Administration, Port Deposit Area
-  Perryville East Area
-  North East Area
-  Elkton Area
-  Reservoir
-  Intake

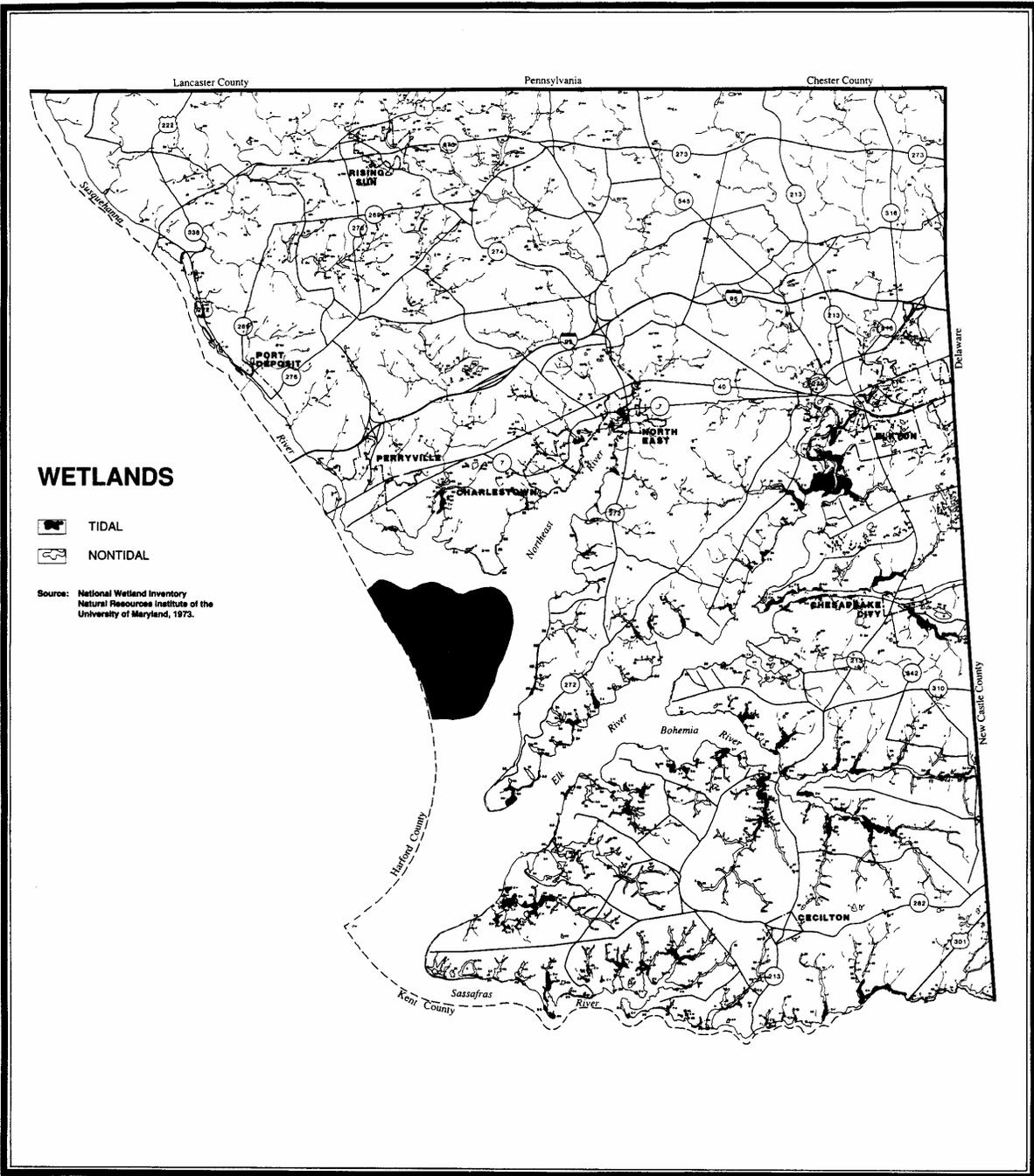
Sources: Cecil County Department of Public Works, 1987;  
 U.S. Geological Survey;  
 Dept. of Natural Resources, 1976.

## CECIL COUNTY MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1990

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND ZONING

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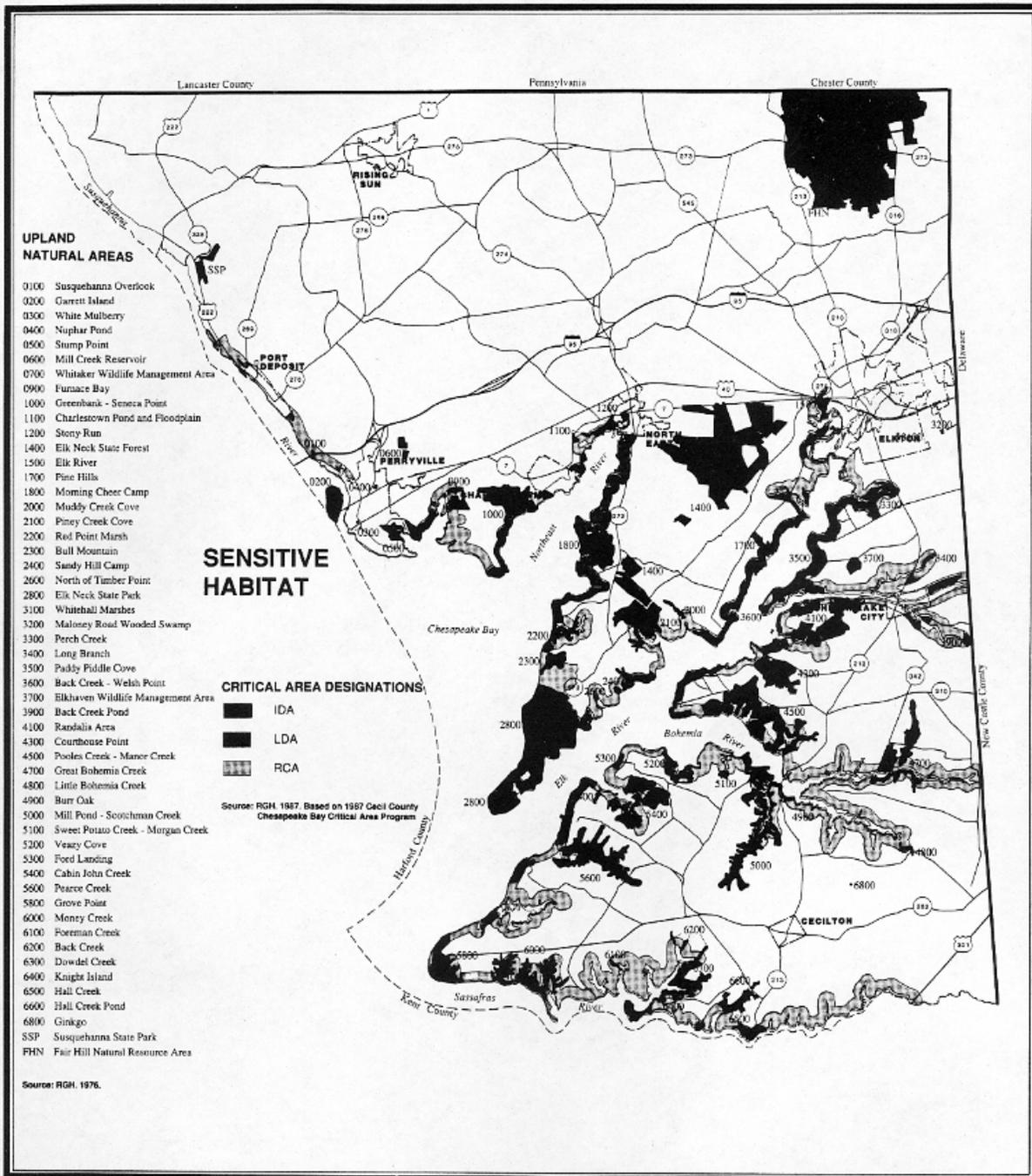




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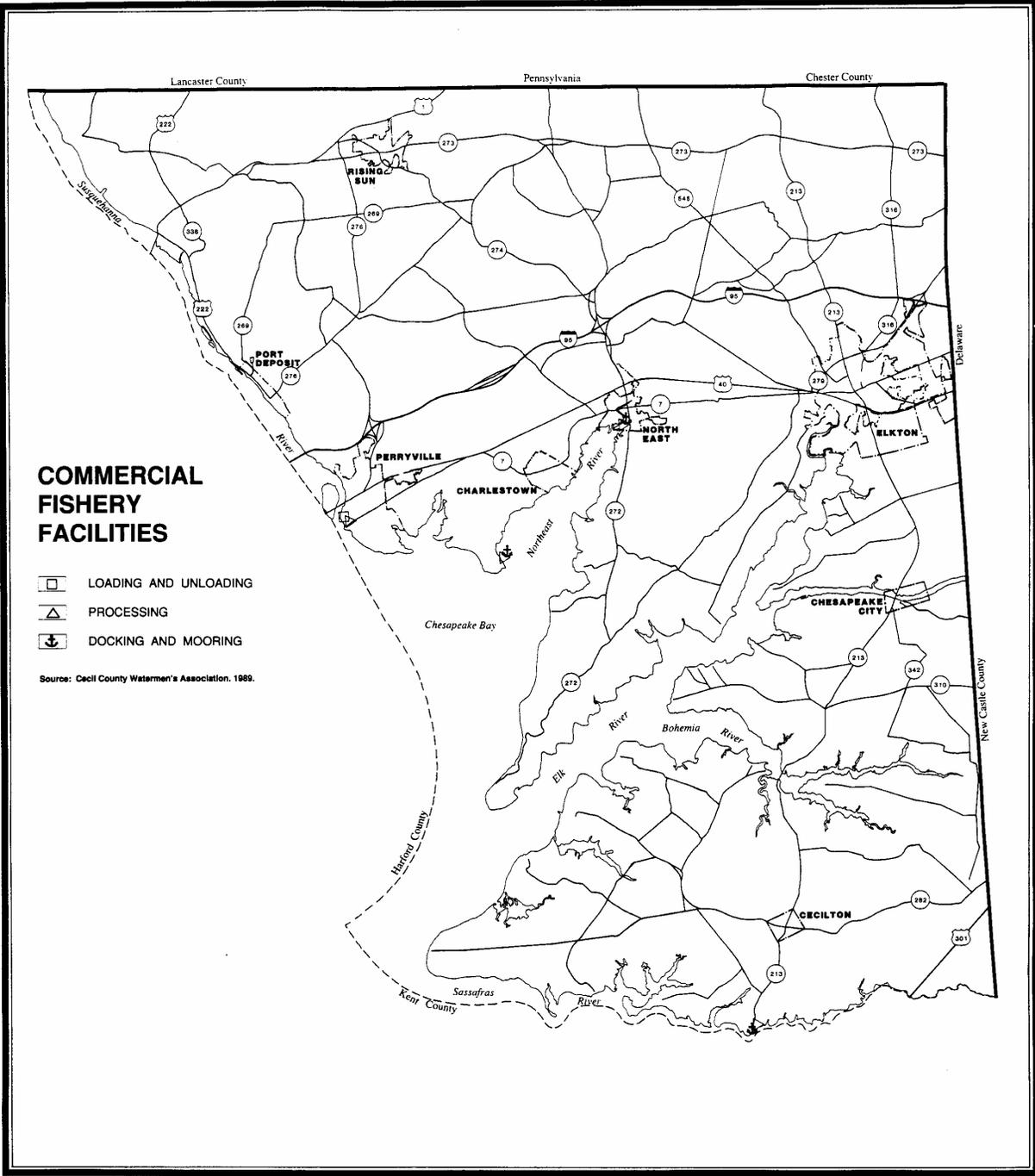


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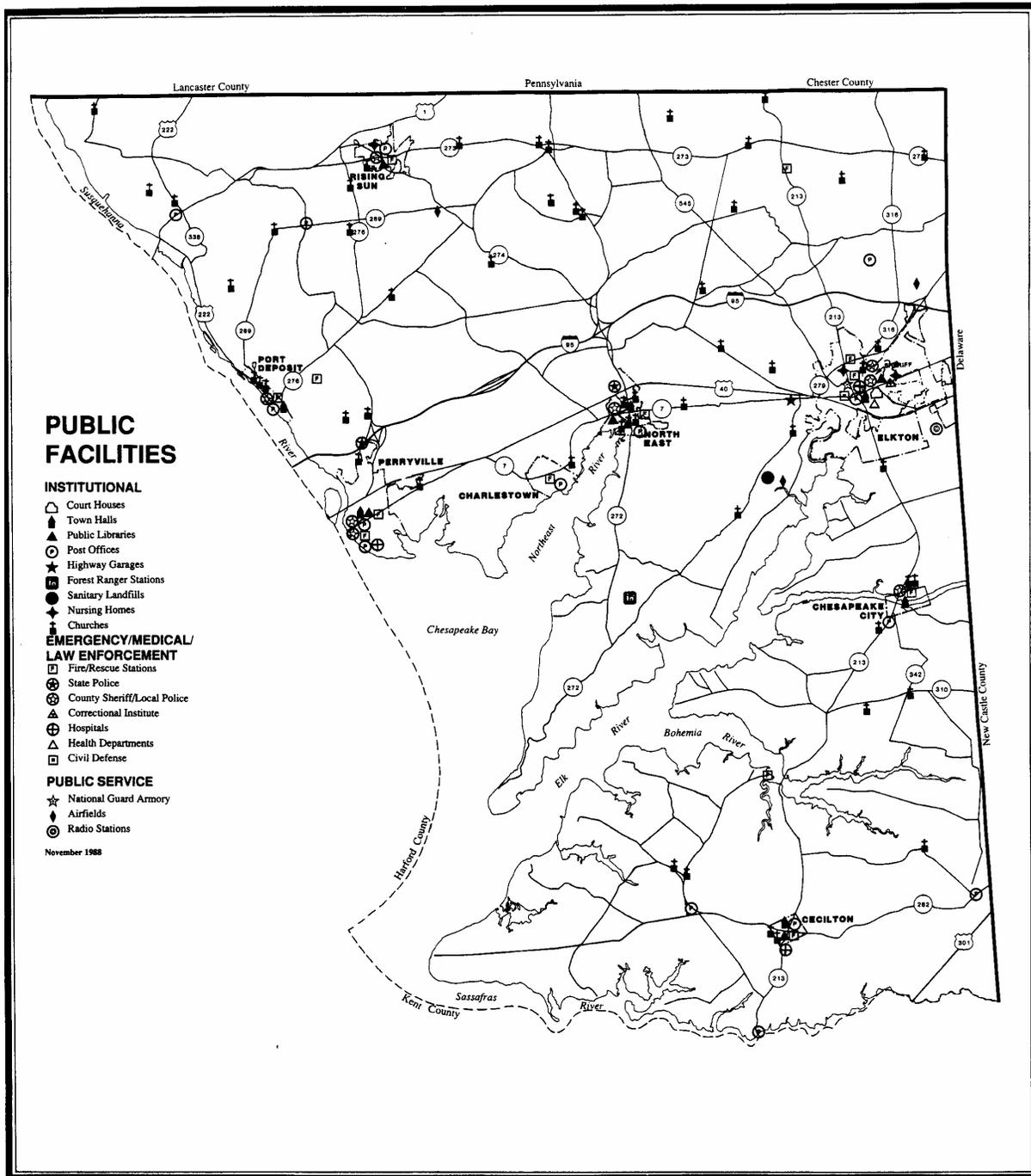




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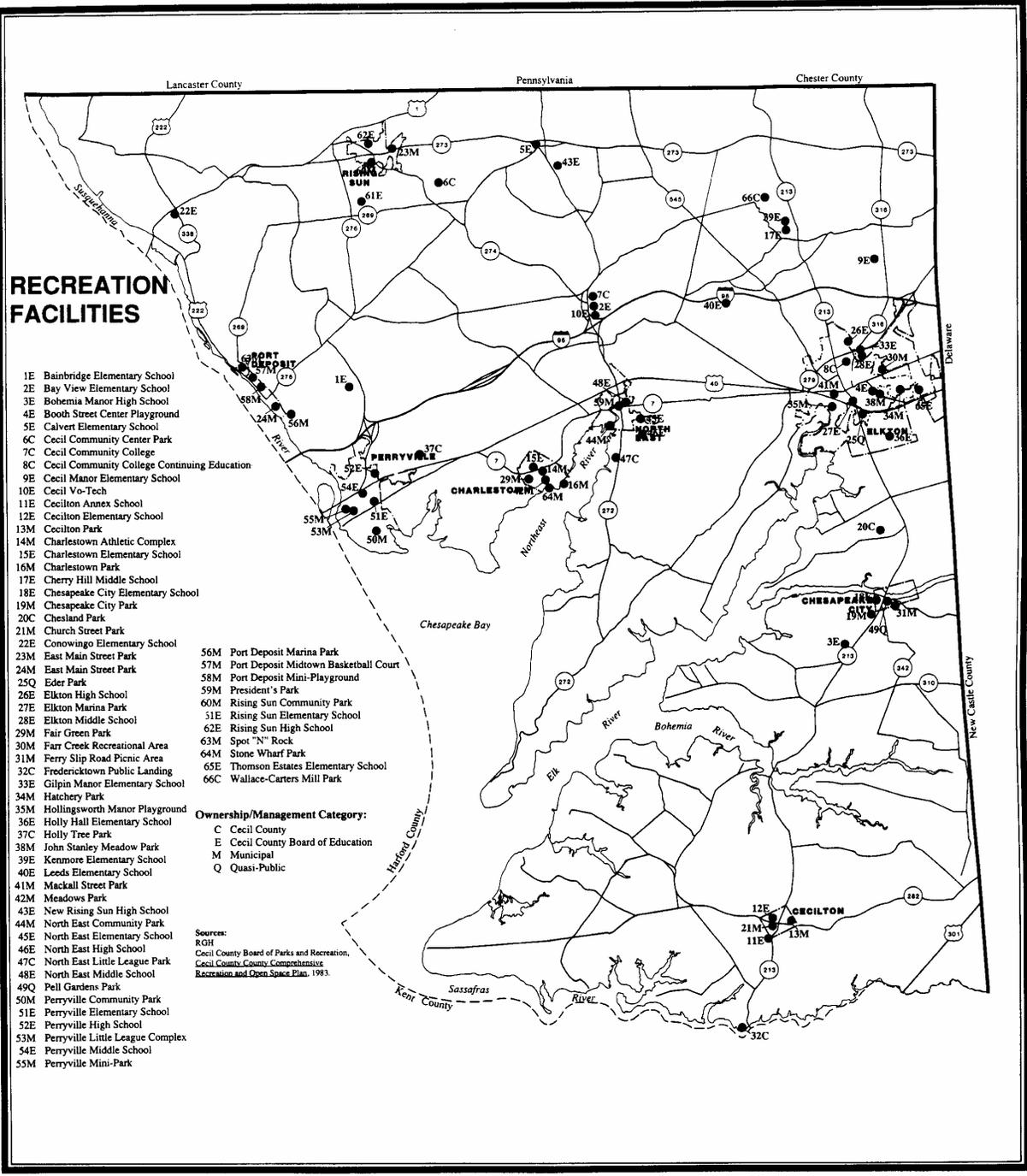


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# RECREATION FACILITIES

- 1E Bainbridge Elementary School
- 2E Bay View Elementary School
- 3E Bohemia Manor High School
- 4E Booth Street Center Playground
- 5E Calvert Elementary School
- 6C Cecil Community Center Park
- 7C Cecil Community College
- 8C Cecil Community College Continuing Education
- 9E Cecil Manor Elementary School
- 10E Cecil Vo-Tech
- 11E Cecilton Annex School
- 12E Cecilton Elementary School
- 13M Cecilton Park
- 14M Charlestown Athletic Complex
- 15E Charlestown Elementary School
- 16M Charlestown Park
- 17E Cherry Hill Middle School
- 18E Chesapeake City Elementary School
- 19M Chesapeake City Park
- 20C Chesland Park
- 21M Church Street Park
- 22E Conowingo Elementary School
- 23M East Main Street Park
- 24M East Main Street Park
- 25Q Eder Park
- 26E Elkton High School
- 27E Elkton Marina Park
- 28E Elkton Middle School
- 29M Fair Green Park
- 30M Farr Creek Recreational Area
- 31M Ferry Slip Road Picnic Area
- 32C Fredericktown Public Landing
- 33E Gilpin Manor Elementary School
- 34M Hatchery Park
- 35M Hollingsworth Manor Playground
- 36E Holly Hall Elementary School
- 37C Holly Tree Park
- 38M John Stanley Meadow Park
- 39E Kenmore Elementary School
- 40E Leeds Elementary School
- 41M Mackall Street Park
- 42M Meadows Park
- 43E New Rising Sun High School
- 44M North East Community Park
- 45E North East Elementary School
- 46E North East High School
- 47C North East Little League Park
- 48E North East Middle School
- 49Q Pell Gardens Park
- 50M Perryville Community Park
- 51E Perryville Elementary School
- 52E Perryville High School
- 53M Perryville Little League Complex
- 54E Perryville Middle School
- 55M Perryville Mini-Park
- 56M Port Deposit Marina Park
- 57M Port Deposit Midtown Basketball Court
- 58M Port Deposit Mini-Playground
- 59M President's Park
- 60M Rising Sun Community Park
- 31E Rising Sun Elementary School
- 62E Rising Sun High School
- 63M Spot "N" Rock
- 64M Stone Wharf Park
- 65E Thomson Estates Elementary School
- 66C Wallace-Carters Mill Park

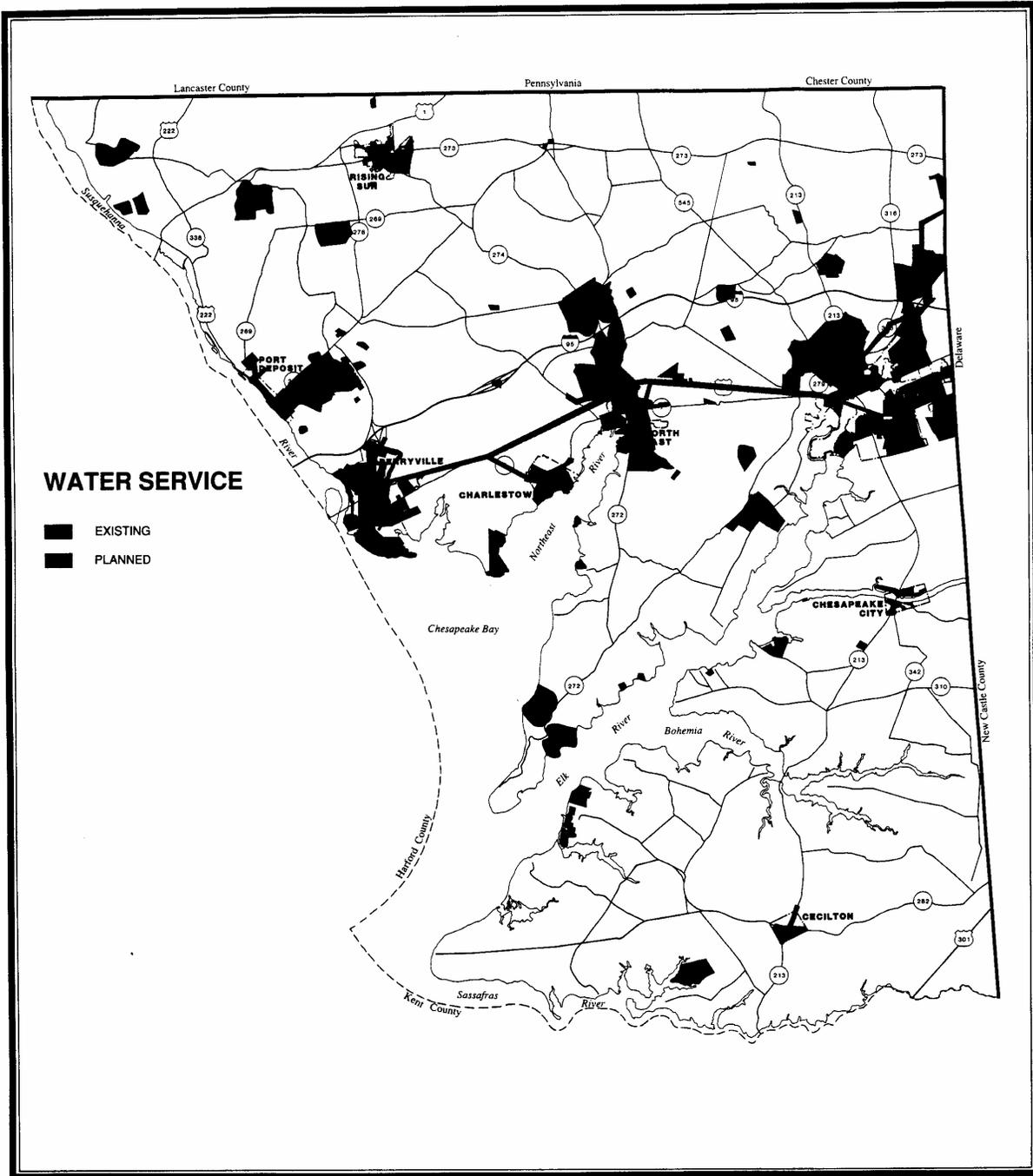
**Ownership/Management Category:**  
 C Cecil County  
 E Cecil County Board of Education  
 M Municipal  
 Q Quasi-Public

**Sources:**  
 RGH  
 Cecil County Board of Parks and Recreation,  
 Cecil County County Comprehensive  
 Recreation and Open Space Plan, 1983.

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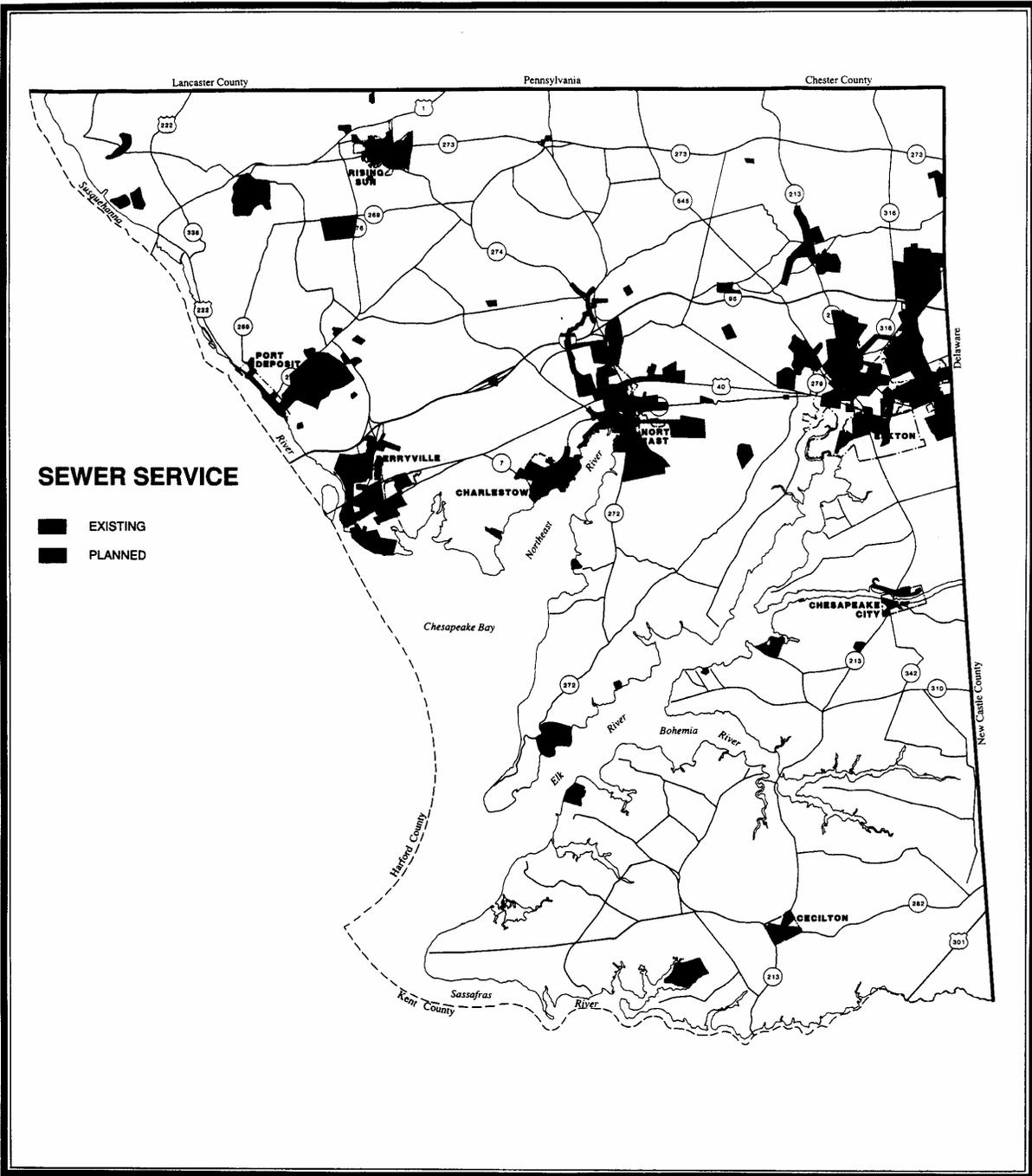
**WATER SERVICE**

- EXISTING
- PLANNED

**CECIL COUNTY MARYLAND  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1990**

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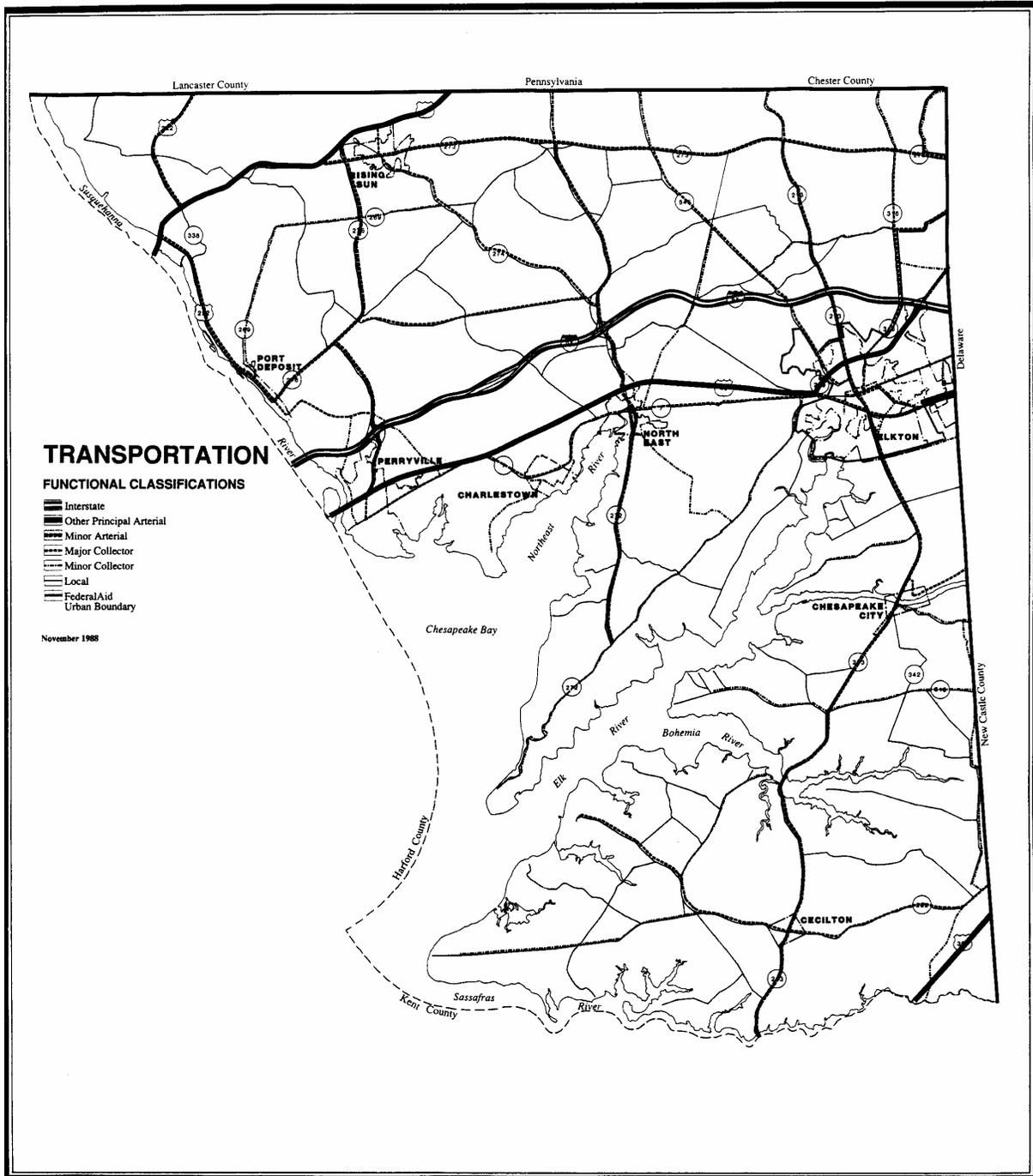




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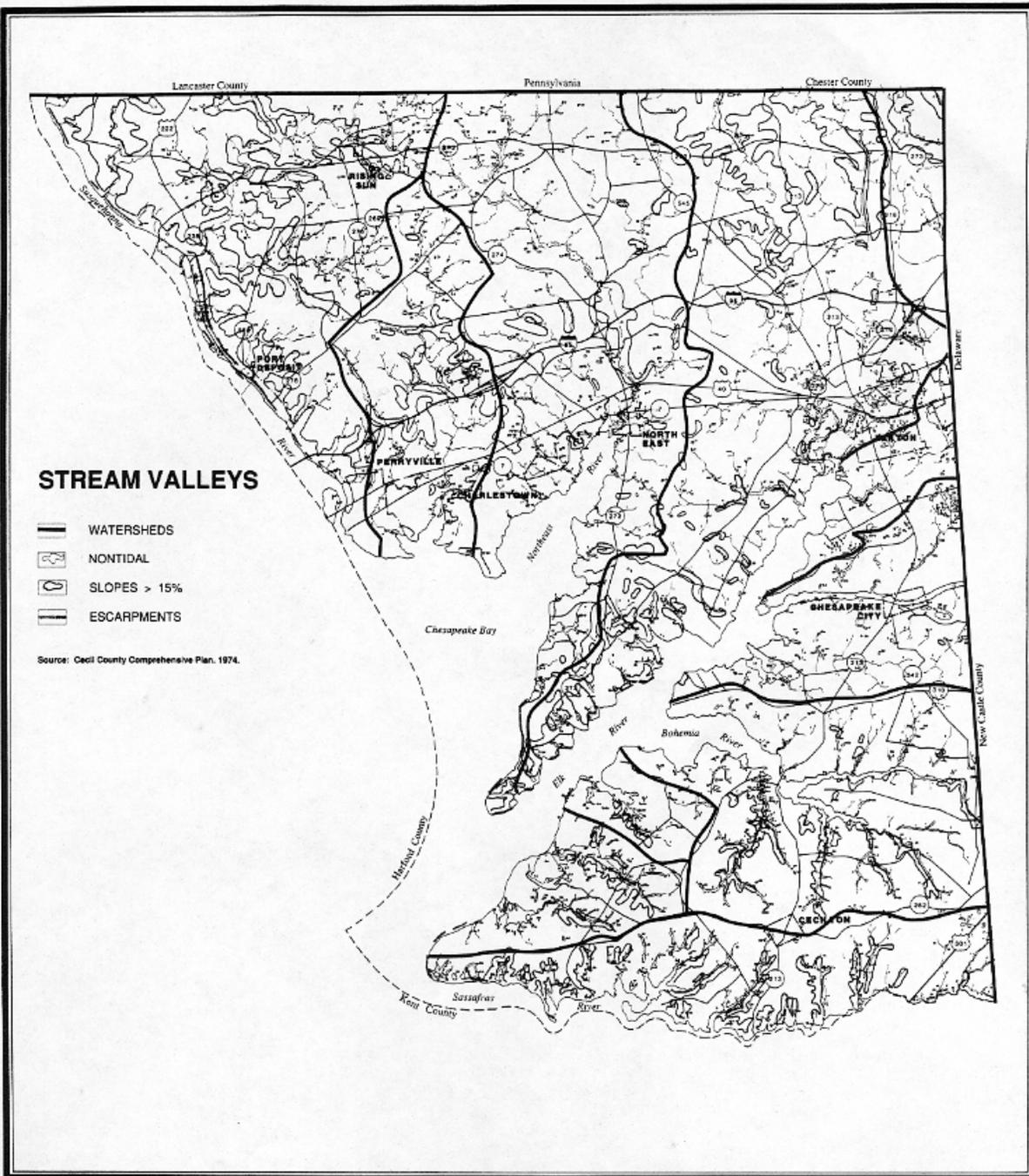


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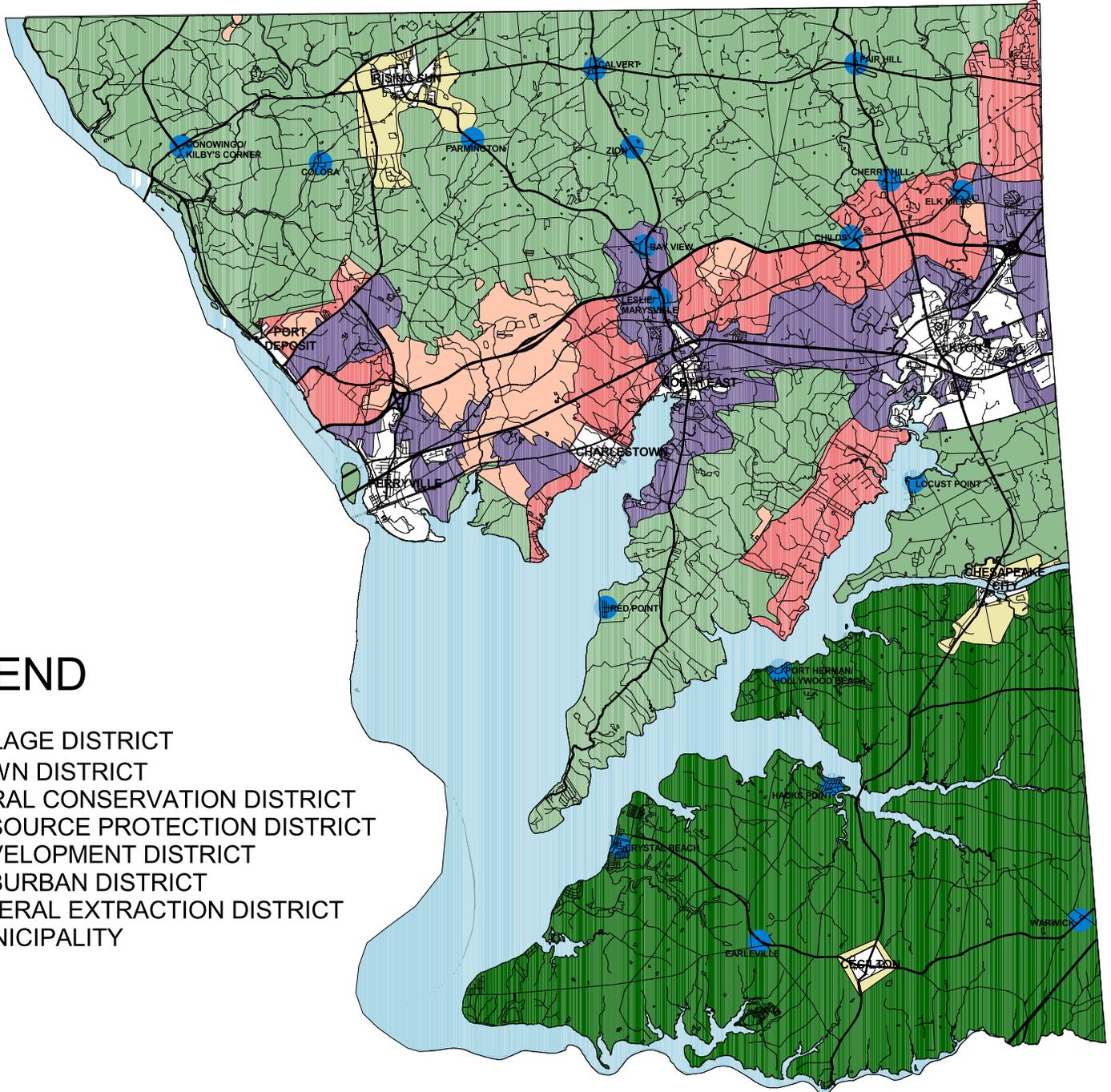
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# CECIL COUNTY LAND USE PLAN



## LEGEND

- VILLAGE DISTRICT
- TOWN DISTRICT
- RURAL CONSERVATION DISTRICT
- RESOURCE PROTECTION DISTRICT
- DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT
- SUBURBAN DISTRICT
- MINERAL EXTRACTION DISTRICT
- MUNICIPALITY



## CECIL COUNTY MARYLAND COMPREHENSIVE PLAN 1990

Cecil County Office of Planning and Zoning, Updated March 2004



**CECIL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

**AMENDMENT TO CECIL COUNTY**

**COMPREHENSIVE PLAN**

WHEREAS, Article 66B, Annotated Code of Maryland, empowers the County to enact a Comprehensive Plan and to provide for the administration and amendment of the same, and

WHEREAS, the Office of Planning & Zoning has recommended an Amendment to Cecil County Comprehensive Plan to bring said Comprehensive Plan into compliance with the Economic Growth, Resource Protection & Planning Act of 1992, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing regarding said proposed Amendment was held before the Planning Commission on Monday, December 16, 1996, and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission recommended approval with conditions of said Amendment to the Board of County Commissioners, and

WHEREAS, a public hearing regarding said proposed Amendment was held before the Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, January 7, 1997, and

WHEREAS, all requirements of Article 66B, Annotated Code of Maryland, with regard to the Amendment of the Cecil County Comprehensive Plan have been met;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED, by the People of the County of Cecil, State of Maryland, that the Comprehensive Plan is hereby amended to include the following language:

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN REGARDING CONSISTENCY WITH ECONOMIC  
GROWTH, RESOURCE PROTECTION AND PLANNING ACT OF 1992**

**VISION: DEVELOPMENT IS CONCENTRATED IN SUITABLE AREAS**

This plan establishes the Development District to encourage commercial and industrial development and is located in the Route 40 and I-95 corridor. This area is served by an extensive transportation network including the aforementioned Route 40 and I-95, Route 7, CSX Rail and Amtrak. The Development District also surrounds the Town of Elkton, North East and Perryville whose water and sewer systems also have the potential to serve commercial and industrial development. The Comprehensive Rezoning of 1993 specifically implemented the Land Use recommendations of this Comprehensive Plan regarding District location, densities and open space. The Comprehensive rezoning also concentrated the vast majority of the high density residential, commercial and industrially zoned acreage into the Development District. Whereas the soils are generally not conducive to farming, only isolated pockets of agriculture exist to farming, only isolated pockets of agriculture exist within this corridor. It should be noted that other growth management tools such as farmland preservation, infrastructure planning and capital improvement programming, must also be continued and/or pursued to further concentrate growth in suitable areas.

**VISION: SENSITIVE AREAS ARE PROTECTED**

This Plan establishes a 110-foot Perennial Stream Buffer and a twenty-five (25) foot intermittent stream buffer; a prohibition on impervious surfaces on slopes greater than twenty-five (25) percent with a statement that good engineering practices should be used for construction on slopes between 15 and 25 percent; protection of habitats of rare and threatened and endangered species with a statement that open space and afforestation in new subdivisions be oriented to protect and enhance such habitats. This plan provides for an expansion of the perennial stream buffer to a distance of 160 feet to include contiguous sensitive areas such as steep slopes and sensitive soils. Other programs and regulations, such as the Critical Area Program, Forest Conservation Regulations and Floodplain Ordinance further protect other important environmental resource areas such as tidal wetlands, forest habitat and floodplains. The environmental performance guidelines contained in this plan have been implemented into the Cecil County Zoning Ordinance and must be addressed for all new subdivisions and new commercial and industrial development.

**VISION: IN RURAL AREAS, GROWTH IS DIRECTED TO EXISTING POPULATION CENTERS AND RESOURCE AREAS ARE PROTECTED**

This Plan establishes two land use districts outside of the growth areas where it is intended to direct development by virtue of the higher densities in these areas that the surrounding Rural Conservation and Resource Protection Districts. These two districts are the Town District and the Village District. The purpose of the Town District, which is located adjacent to the Towns of Rising Sun, Chesapeake City and Cecilton, is to promote development consistent with the essential land-use character of the towns. This is accomplished through close coordination of plan review between the Town and the County for developments proposed in this district. The purpose of the Village District is to recognize and protect the unique characteristics of the crossroad and waterfront villages of the county. The goal of the Village District is not only to protect the villages' character but to allow limited development within the villages that is compatible with the land use pattern of the villages. The recommendations in this plan regarding Town-County coordination in the Town District and land use compatibility in the Village District have been codified in the 1993 Zoning Ordinance

Agricultural resources are protected in the Rural Conservation District and the Resource Protection District through clustering incentives. Higher densities may be granted in these two districts if 60% open space is provided. Mineral resources are protected from preemptive development by establishing a one unit per fifty acre density in areas of known mineral deposits.

**VISION: STEWARDSHIP OF THE CHESAPEAKE BAY AND THE LAND IS A UNIVERSAL ETHIC**

Although community character and service efficiency are vital considerations in the formulation of a comprehensive plan and land use regulations, a common thread that joins many of the land use and environmental performance guidelines in the plan is the protection and/or enhancement of the water quality entering the Chesapeake Bay. The State of Maryland and the Counties have realized that the health of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries is inextricably linked to the overall vitality of the community at large. Concentrated development, clustering, stream buffers, resource protection, storm water management and infrastructure planning, which are the basic underpinnings of this plan and the Critical Area Program, are directly linked to the health of the Chesapeake Bay and the well-being of all Marylanders.

**VISION: CONSERVATION OF RESOURCES, INCLUDING A REDUCTION IN RESOURCE CONSUMPTION, IS PRACTICED**

Agricultural resources are protected in the rural areas of the County through clustering incentives and by attempting to direct new development, through higher densities and infrastructure provisions, away from the areas of productive farmland. Regulations and programs regarding forest retention, wildlife corridors, stream buffers, erosion and sediment control and farmland preservation all provide a practical and legal framework for resource conservation with the Comprehensive Plan acting as the foundation.

**VISION: TO ASSURE THE ACHIEVEMENT OF VISIONS 1 THROUGH 5, ECONOMIC GROWTH IS ENCOURAGED AND REGULATORY MECHANISMS ARE STREAMLINED**

An equally important reason, aside from the resource protection benefits, for the focusing of growth into the Development District is to achieve a stronger economic base through the promotion of commercial and industrial development. Cecil County has relied for too long on the residential sector to provide a disproportionate amount of the tax revenue needed to provide necessary services. This plan provides for intense commercial and industrial development within the Development District, which is served by a transportation system of major arterial highways with excess capacity and railroads capable of accommodating spurs.

The Cecil County Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance provide for many innovative streamlining techniques, such as a lesser standard stream buffer if water quality goals are met in the Development District, mineral extraction as a permitted use with conditions in certain areas, automatic growth allocation for commercial and industrial uses within the Development District. The Comprehensive Plan provides the foundation for a philosophy for assuring that every reasonable effort will be made to streamline regulatory mechanisms to promote development where it is encouraged while protecting community character and natural resources.

**VISION: FUNDING MECHANISMS ARE ADDRESSED TO ACHIEVE THESE VISIONS**

Funding is an obvious and major impediment to providing the necessary infrastructure (water and sewer) within the Development District to promote the commercial and industrial development allowed for in the Comprehensive Plan and subsequent Comprehensive Rezoning. To address this, the County has embarked on an intense fiscal analysis of capital programming and long-term debt affordability to determine the extent and nature of a realistic infrastructure plan. The Water & Wastewater Feasibility & Rate Study, Phase II, by Whitman, Requardt & Associates, October, 1996, has shown that the capital debt realized to provide the infrastructure can be retired by user fees generated by the infrastructure and that other capital facilities, such as schools, can still be provided to meet community needs.

PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE CECIL COUNTY, MD  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN, TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Greenways

Greenways are protected corridors of open space, maintained in a largely natural state for a variety of purposes, including water quality protection, wildlife habitat enhancement, aesthetic relief, recreation, non-motorized transportation and environmental education. All greenways serve at least one of these primary functions, and most offer some combination. Greenways are often associated with a linear natural feature like a stream, a coast or the ridge of a mountain. Ideally, they incorporate or link large open spaces.

The county recognizes the benefit and importance of Greenways and hereby adopts the Greenways shown on the attached Map as the official Greenways map of Cecil County. Where Greenways are located along streams, the County should investigate the implications of public dedication of the 110-foot perennial stream buffer during the subdivision process. Over time, this type of County wide open space system would provide for recreational opportunities near the areas of highest population (existing and projected), such as the Big Elk Creek and the North East Creek emanating outward from Elkton and North East respectively and the Susquehanna River Greenway between Perryville and Port Deposit. If it is determined that fee-simple dedication to the County is not in the best interest of the County, public access easements should be investigated as an alternative. At a minimum, to provide water quality benefits and wildlife corridor preservation, the 110-foot perennial stream buffers should be targeted as common open space areas during the subdivision process. Where the perennial stream buffer is set aside as common open spaces for subdivisions, the County should promote the use of cross-use easements for contiguous subdivisions for use of the residents within those subdivisions. The cross-use easements could be provided along the Greenways shown on the Official Greenway Map or along tributaries that feed the Greenway system streams to provide access to the larger system. Where the Greenways do not follow an easily recognizable physical feature, such as the Elk Neck Peninsula Greenway, potential alignments should be designated before public dedication or public access easements are provided.

Adequate Public Facilities (Replaces Paragraph entitled “Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance” found on page 41, column 1, Cecil County Comprehensive Plan.)

The Planning Commission should review each proposed subdivision to determine whether it is served by state or county access roads and intersections with sufficient excess capacity to accommodate the additional traffic that will be generated by the proposed subdivision and continue to provide a level of service consistent with the level of service policies of the Comprehensive Plan.

To be more effective, the County should consider preparing and adopting an adequate public facilities (APF) ordinance. As part of an APF ordinance, the County will have to determine what constitutes adequacy of county roads. The Highway Capacity Manual’s Two-Lane Highway Capacity analysis is used to evaluate delays to motorists desiring to travel at speeds of 50 mph or

greater. It is not typically applied to shorter routes with posted speeds less than 50 mph. Many of the county roads are shorter sections and have posted or unposted speeds of 35 mph or less. Determining maximum capacity, level of service and adequacy of these roads will require establishment of alternative criteria that take into account planned right-of-way widths, safety, roadway function, desired speed, and other relevant factors.

Parking, Access and Connectivity

The County should consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to allow for a reduction in the number of parking spaces for non-residential developments based on the availability of bicycle spaces. The applicant requesting such a reduction must prove that the site is to be utilized by patrons on bicycles.

The Zoning Ordinance should be amended to encourage the use of reserved parking spaces for carpools and vanpools to accommodate and encourage high occupancy vehicles (HOV'S) commuting.

Where appropriate, the design of major subdivisions and commercial and industrial site plans should support bicyclists and pedestrians by providing safe, convenient and inviting routes and walkways between activity centers and in areas where the use of alternatives to driving alone for commuting is encouraged. The design of streets should maximize connectivity between properties within the interiors of the blocks created by the existing County roads system in order to minimize the need for multiple lanes, provide alternative ways of reaching destinations, help ensure adequate pedestrian mobility and to promote linkages throughout the Development District. Local access streets should include access within new neighborhoods and to adjacent neighborhoods, shopping areas, and schools, provide multiple streets to and from residential developments for purposes of safety and avoid creating disconnected "pods" of residential development.

ADOPTED: January 28, 1997

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Oakley A. Sumpter, Jr.  
President

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William C. Manlove  
Commissioner

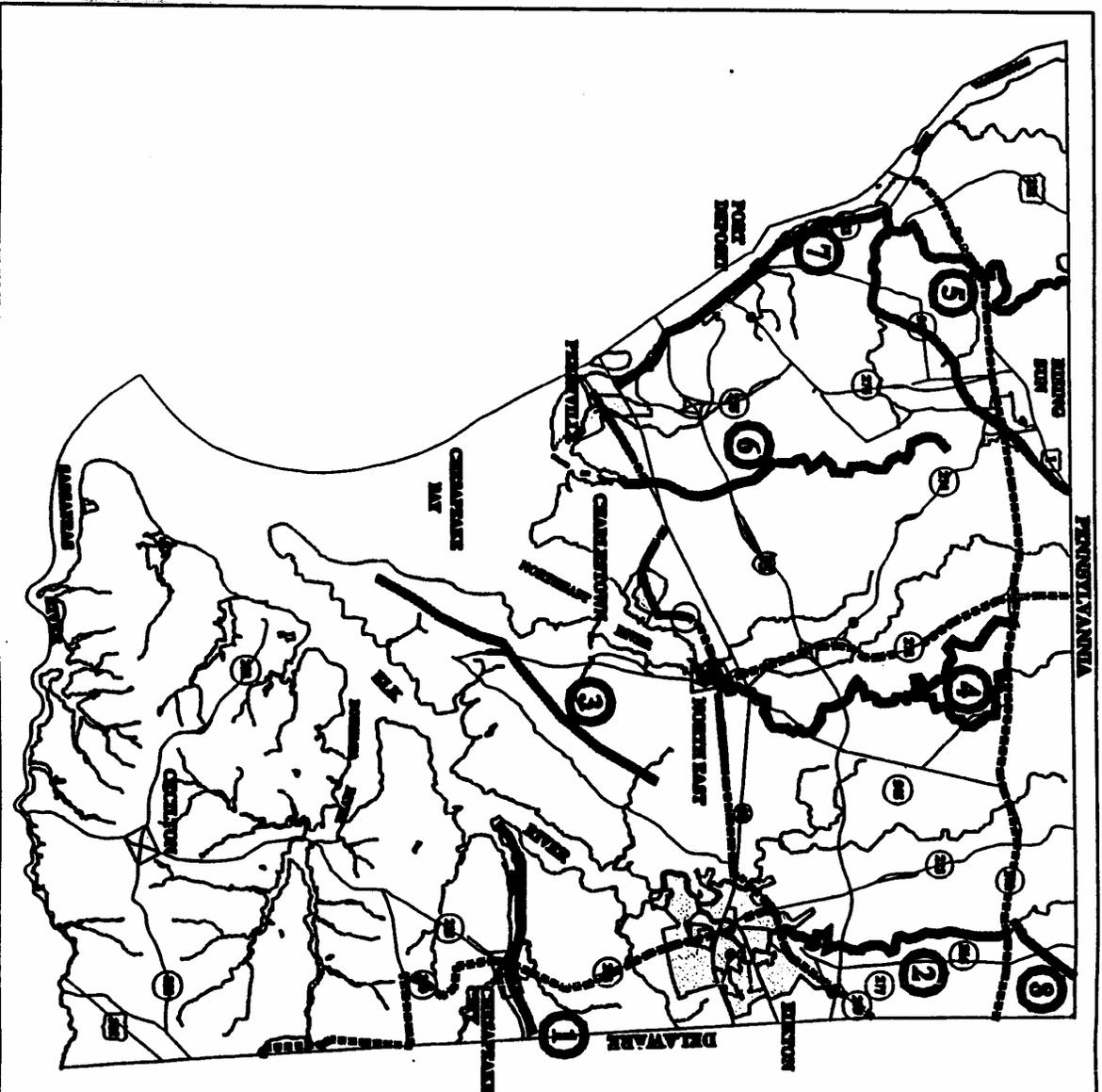
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Larry L. Truslow, Jr.  
Commissioner

ATTEST:

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David M. Culver  
County Administrator



**MAP 3  
GREENWAYS AND  
UNOFFICIAL BIKEWAYS**

**BIKEWAYS (CLASS D) •** —————

**GREENWAYS ••** —————

- 1 - C&D Canal Greenway
- 2 - Elk Creek Greenway
- 3 - Elk Neck Peninsula Greenway
- 4 - Northeast Creek Greenway
- 5 - Octoraro Creek Greenway
- 6 - Principio Creek Greenway
- 7 - Susquehanna River Greenway
- 8 - Tri-State Greenway

• Source: Maryland Association of Bicycle  
Organizations (MABO)  
•• Maryland Greenways Atlas

North 

**TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
CECIL COUNTY, MARYLAND  
September 1986**



Cecil County Commissioners

AMENDMENT TO THE CECIL COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**WHEREAS**, Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland empowers the County to enact a Comprehensive Plan and to provide for the administration and amendment of same, and

**WHEREAS**, The Office of Planning & Zoning has recommended an amendment to the Cecil County Comprehensive Plan to incorporate the Lower Susquehanna Greenway Management Plan, and

**WHEREAS**, a public hearing regarding said amendment was held before the Planning Commission on 17 September 2001, and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission recommended approval to the Board of County Commissioners, and

**WHEREAS**, a public hearing regarding said amendment was held before the Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, 18 September 2001, and

**WHEREAS**, all requirements of Article 66B with regard to the amendment of the Cecil County Comprehensive Plan have been met;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED**, by the Board of County Commissioners of Cecil County, State of Maryland, that the following amendment be and is hereby enacted:

[Addition]  
{Deletion}

TRANSPORTATION PLAN

GREENWAYS

**Greenways are protected corridors of open space, maintained in a largely natural state for a variety of purposes, including water quality protection, wildlife habitat enhancement, aesthetic relief, recreation, non-motorized transportation and environmental education. All greenways serve at least one of these primary functions, and most offer some combination. Greenways are often associated with a linear natural feature like a stream, a coast or the ridge of a mountain. Ideally, they incorporate or link large open spaces.**

**The County recognizes the benefit and importance of greenways and hereby adopts the greenways shown on the attached map as the official Greenways Map of Cecil County. Where greenways are located along streams, the County should investigate the implications of public dedication of the 110-foot perennial stream buffer during the subdivision process. Over time, this type of County wide open space system would provide for recreational opportunities near the areas of highest population (existing and projected), such as the Big Elk Creek and North East Creek emanating outward from Elkton and North East respectively and the Susquehanna Greenway between Perryville and Port Deposit. [The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway Management Plan is incorporated herein by reference for those portions of the Management Plan that apply to Cecil County.] If it is determined that fee simple acquisition is not in the best interest of the County, public access easements should be investigated as an alternative. At a minimum, to provide water quality benefits and wildlife corridor preservation, the 110-foot perennial stream buffers should be targeted as common open space areas during the subdivision process. Where the perennial stream buffer is set aside for subdivisions, the County should promote the use of cross easements for contiguous subdivisions. The cross use easements could be provided along the greenways shown on the Official Greenway Map or along tributaries that feed the greenway system streams to provide access to a larger system. Where greenways do not follow an easily recognizable physical feature, such as the Elk Neck Peninsula Greenway, potential alignments should be designated before public dedication or public access easements are provided.**

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ADOPTED

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**Nelson K. Bolender**  
**President**

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**Harry A. Hepbron**  
**Commissioner**

ATTEST:

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**Alfred C. Wein, Jr.**  
**County Administrator**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**Phyllis Kilby**  
**Commissioner**

AMENDMENT TO THE CECIL COUNTY  
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

**WHEREAS**, Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland empowers the County to enact a Comprehensive Plan and to provide for the administration and amendment of same; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission has recommended an amendment to the Cecil County Comprehensive Plan to add a vision regarding adequate public facilities and infrastructure, to add elements regarding groundwater resources, appearance standards, watershed protection, tourism, smart codes, rural legacy areas, agricultural preservation, urban growth boundary plan, greenways, and historic districts; and

**WHEREAS**, a public hearing regarding said amendment was held before the Planning Commission on Monday, 15 November 2004; and

**WHEREAS**, the Planning Commission recommended approval to the Board of County Commissioners; and

**WHEREAS**, a public hearing regarding said amendments was held before the Board of County Commissioners on Tuesday, 16 November 2004; and

**WHEREAS**, all requirements of Article 66B with regard to the amendment of the Comprehensive Plan have been met;

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ENACTED**, by the Board of County Commissioners of Cecil County, State of Maryland, that the following amendments be and are hereby enacted:

## **ADD ELEMENT REGARDING RURAL LEGACY AREAS**

The County's comprehensive plan calls for the maintenance of the County's agricultural uses by resisting encroachment of development into prime agricultural lands, and physically separating other land uses from agricultural activities. The economic vitality of farm operations should be encouraged. The Rural Legacy Program is an initiative designed to discourage sprawl development, encourage the revitalization of older towns and cities, preserve farms, forests and other open space.

The Rural Legacy Program is a unique approach to land conservation created to protect the remaining landscapes and natural areas. The program seeks to conserve greenbelts and greenways dominated by farms and forests through the voluntary purchase of conservation easements or fee simple acquisition.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

Cecil County should continue to encourage land trusts to work with landowners to achieve the goals of the program. This partnership between private land owners, land trusts and local government can proactively further the goals of the program and can act as an additional method to properly implement the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. The County should also incorporate the approved Rural Legacy application maps in the County's Comprehensive Plan.

## **ADD ELEMENT REGARDING GROUNDWATER RESOURCES**

The Cecil County Comprehensive Plan recognizes that a significant portion of the County's population utilizes groundwater as its primary water source, whether this is from private on site wells or public and private systems using wells as their source of water.

The quality of groundwater in the County is generally acceptable for all uses which it serves. Groundwater well yields vary geographically over the County according to the underlying geology and hydrology. Yields are generally higher in the southern half of the County. Declining groundwater levels and problems of well interference are causing concern for water supplies in some areas. In the Piedmont well location is critical in obtaining maximum yield because the groundwater is only found in fractures and openings in the bedrock. Large groundwater withdrawals from aquifers with limited recharge capability is a concern.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

Cecil County should move expeditiously to implement the Urban Growth Boundary Plan to provide the necessary water and sewer availability in the designated growth area. The establishment of this infrastructure will permit the majority of residential growth to occur in a geographically constrained area that can be most effectively served with public utilities. A fully functional growth area will reduce development pressure on the rural areas of the County which in turn will reduce the reliance on individual on-site wells. Additionally, the County should consider a hydrogeologic study to evaluate Cecil County's groundwater situation and make recommendations on how best to preserve, protect and safeguard an adequate quantity of groundwater.

## **ADD ELEMENT REGARDING APPEARANCE STANDARDS**

The establishment of appearance codes is an integral part of achieving development that has a satisfactory visual appearance, preserves taxable values, and promotes the public health, safety and welfare. An appearance code can ensure that the essential character of an area is not lost due to architecture, scale, and site layout that is not sensitive to the surrounding vicinity. While an appearance code can have value through out the County, it can be especially important in the Business Local zoning district as that zone is often found in or within one of the County's crossroad or waterfront villages.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

The County should adopt an appearance code for the Business Local zoning district that establishes performance standards such as building design, relationship to other buildings on site, relationship to adjoining sites, landscaping and site treatment, parking lot design, signage, lighting, street hardware, miscellaneous structures, maintenance and outdoor storage. These standards can be reviewed on an individual basis to ensure conformity to area impacted by the development.

## **ADD ELEMENT REGARDING WATERSHED PROTECTION**

Cecil County recognizes the importance of watershed areas to protect, sustain, and enhance the quality and quantity of all water resources to insure the health, safety and welfare of the citizens, and to preserve the diverse natural resources and aesthetic and recreational assets of the County. Essential elements of watershed protection include minimizing the volume of stormwater runoff, protecting infiltration and groundwater recharge, protecting water quality by removing pollutants prior to discharge into streams, protecting stream channels and geomorphologic conditions, reducing impacts of development to flood flow, establish forested riparian buffers, protecting floodplains and wetlands, and requiring a no net loss of forests. The County presently has forest protection standards in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area and in the Forest Conservation Regulations.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS**

The County should continue to enforce the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Regulations and the Cecil County Forest Conservation Regulations in an effort to minimize impacts to wooded areas and to preserve stream buffers and tidal areas. The County should also develop a Watershed Protection Plan that builds on the regulations presently in existence to ensure that the water quality of our streams is not compromised by development activity.

## **ADD ELEMENT REGARDING TOURISM**

The Cecil County Comprehensive Plan recognizes that the County needs to achieve balanced economic growth and attract suitable commerce and industry. The Plan acknowledges that the County can benefit from economic advantages relative to its location and accessibility to the major markets of Washington D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia, and New York. The County's rural characteristics, quaint small towns, water-oriented sports, equine sports, and availability of its five rivers make it attractive to potential tourist related activities and economic enterprises geared toward the aforementioned markets. Promoting these activities would help the County in its efforts to achieve the desired balance in its economic growth.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

Cecil County should continue to move aggressively to promote tourist activities in the County that will build upon the ambience created by our small towns, our rural agricultural enterprises, our historic structures and sites, our water and equine related recreational opportunities, and the County and State parks located here. A proactive partnership of the State, County, Municipalities, and private enterprise should be promoted to attract tourists from the major population centers nearby.

## **ADD ELEMENT REGARDING SMART CODES**

Cecil County has developed a Smart Code Report that recognizes the importance of relatively self contained new communities with a compact mix of residential, commercial, employment/office, and civic land uses and range of housing choices with a design that fosters pedestrian and bicycle activity, public safety, environmental protection, long term investment, efficient use of infrastructure, and efficient provision of public services. These standards can be applied to redevelopment sites or infill of Greenfield sites. Smart growth projects should include elements such as mixed land uses, compact building design, housing choices, walkable communities, a strong sense of place, preservation of open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas, direction of development toward existing communities and a variety of transportation choices.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

Cecil County should adopt a Smart Code Ordinance that provides for the establishment of well planned, mixed use communities and neighborhoods in our priority funding areas that include a mix of uses, range of housing types, compact design, interconnection of streets and inclusion of sidewalks, open space integral to the community, and location adjacent to and extending the fabric of existing development. The design standards and density should be flexible to encourage innovation in the design of these communities.

## **ADD VISION REGARDING ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE**

**VISION: ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES AND INFRASTRUCTURE UNDER THE CONTROL OF THE COUNTY ARE AVAILABLE OR PLANNED IN AREAS WHERE GROWTH IS TO OCCUR.**

This plan establishes a designated growth area to encourage commercial, industrial and residential development in the U. S. Route 40/I-95 corridor. This area is served by an extensive transportation network including the aforementioned U. S. Route 40 and I-95, the CSX and Northeast Corridor railroads, and Maryland Route 7. The designated areas adjacent to the Towns of Elkton, North East, Charlestown, Perryville and Port Deposit whose water and sewer systems have the potential to serve growth in the unincorporated portion of the County. The County should follow through with the recommendations of the implementation element of the plan to ensure that this vision is carried out. The County is presently implementing these recommendations through the Capital Improvement Program, the Master Water & Sewer Plan, and County/Town cooperation of infrastructure provision. Additional implementation measures recommended in the plan to ensure adequate public facilities and infrastructure are a traffic impact analysis, the establishment of level of service policies for traffic, and an adequate public facilities ordinance. The inclusion of these recommendations in the zoning ordinance and subdivision regulations will be sufficient to address the requirements of this section.

## **ADD ELEMENT REGARDING URBAN GROWTH BOUNDARY PLAN**

The provision of a long-term wastewater and water supply and distribution system into the I-95/Route 40 corridor is the central tenet of the Comprehensive Plan. Not only would stable water and wastewater infrastructure provide one of the primary components needed to attract business and industry, but such infrastructure would also allow the County to focus new growth away from the northern and southern agricultural areas. The lack of providing a long-term water supply and wastewater collection system has been an obstacle to a more complete implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

The County adopted an Urban Growth Boundary Plan in 2000 that created geographically constrained areas around each municipality, whereby the provision of water and sewer infrastructure would be closely coordinated between the County and the respective Towns. The Comprehensive Plan looks at the extension of town services outside incorporated boundaries to serve the designated growth area. The County and Towns should continue to build on the recommendations of the Urban Growth Boundary Plan to more fully implement the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. The County and Towns, through their cooperative efforts on the water and sewer implementation council, should continue to work toward the establishment of a long-term dependable water supply and wastewater collection system within the designated areas.

## **ADD ELEMENT REGARDING HISTORIC DISTRICT**

Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland empowers local jurisdictions to develop historic area zoning as part of their zoning ordinances and to appoint a historic district commission of community citizens. The historic area powers delegated by Section 8 of Article 66B establishes the criteria for historic district commission membership and establish the powers of the commission. Among the powers established for local jurisdictions are those to designate districts, establish easements, approve exterior changes to structures, adopt guidelines for rehabilitation and new construction in designated areas, limits of authority, standards for strictness of judgment, standards for structures of unusual importance, circumstances for approval despite findings, historic district commission rules, certificate approving plan, routine maintenance and grandfathering and remedies and appeals.

Preservation of the County's historical heritage is of paramount importance. It is realized that there are many significant historic resources in the County and that once they are removed, they can never be replaced.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

The County adopted a historic district ordinance in 2000 as a method to implement the recommendation of the Comprehensive Plan and to incorporate the requirements of Article 66B. The County should continue to designate properties voluntarily nominated by the landowner. The Historic District Commission should continue to educate the public on the need for preservation of historic resources, and should encourage the designation of historic sites and districts so that the historical heritage of the County can remain for future generations. The County should also encourage increased coordination between the Historic District Commission and the Technical Advisory Committee.

## **ADD ELEMENT REGARDING GREENWAYS**

Effective transportation planning and facility programming is an integral part of growth management. Accessibility to land and activities effects the form, intensity and location of all land uses. Greenways can be an important component in an effective transportation system in the County.

Greenways are protected corridors of open space, maintained in a largely natural state for a variety of purposes, including water quality protection, wildlife habitat enhancement, aesthetic relief, recreation, non-motorized transportation, and environmental education. Greenways are often associated with a linear natural feature like a stream. Ideally, they link or incorporate large open spaces.

## **POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

The County has adopted an official greenway map in 1997, has incorporated the Lower Susquehanna Greenway Management Pan by reference into the Comprehensive Plan in 2001, and adopted a zoning ordinance text amendment to require either fee simple dedication of greenway alignments as shown on the official map in 2000, or an easement whichever is more appropriate. The County should continue to recognize the benefits and importance of greenways and should strive to implement the dedication of greenways.

**ADD ELEMENT REGARDING AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION**

The County’s Comprehensive Plan calls for the maintenance of the County’s agricultural uses by resisting encroachment of development into prime agricultural lands, and physically separating other land uses from agricultural activities. The plan also recommends that agricultural and forestry support enterprises, including farm implement sales and services, seed and fertilizer dealers, and industries that process agricultural and forestry products be encouraged to support the agricultural economy. The economic viability of farm operations should be encouraged by permitting agricultural related retailing on the farm and maintaining the equity value of agricultural land.

**POLICY RECOMMENDATION**

The County should continue to explore innovative preservation tools, such as the right to farm ordinance adopted in 2000, a transfer of development rights ordinance, a county funded purchase of development rights ordinance with payment in lieu of open space, density evaluation or other forms of funding and donation of easements. Additionally, the County should continue to encourage land owner involvement with the MALPF program and Rural Legacy program and should move aggressively to realize the County’s preservation goal of 55,000 acres.

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ADOPTED

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**Nelson K. Bolender**  
**President**

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**Mark H. Guns**  
**Commissioner**

ATTEST:

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**Alfred C. Wein, Jr.**  
**County Administrator**

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**Harry A. Hepbron**  
**Commissioner**

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**Phyllis Kilby**  
**Commissioner**

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**William C. Manlove**  
**Commissioner**