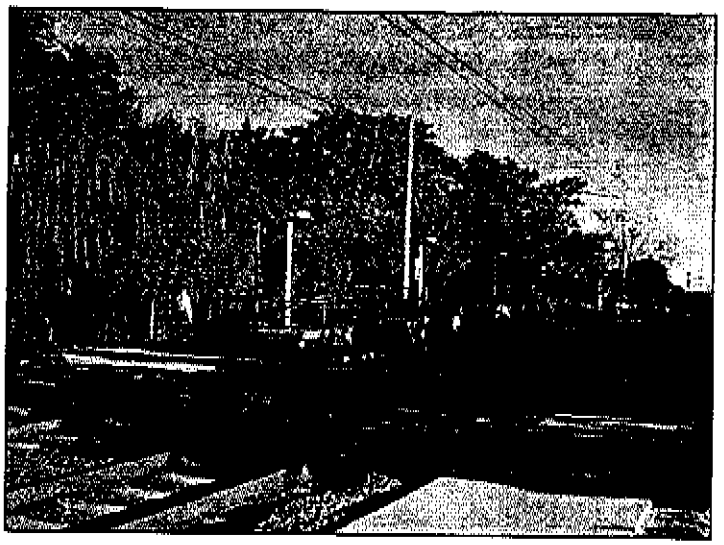
Section II:
The Hunt Valley / Timonium Area



Background

The HV/T area includes the Hunt Valley/Timonium Employment Center, as designated on the County's Land Management Map, plus the adjacent York Road corridor. These areas combined represent a major employment and commercial center. The HV/T Plan Area map (Map 1) shows the combined employment and commercial areas as the "focus area." It is also recognized that impacts on the surrounding business and residential communities must be understood and reflect the County's broadened commitment to conserving its existing communities. This area is labeled "impact area" on the map.

The employment area of Hunt Valley/Timonium, together with Loveton Business Center and the Highlands Office Park, is one of the most important in the County, employing over 40,000 people. It is home to a wide variety of industries and businesses, including corporate headquarters for such companies as MBNA America Bank, McCormick and Company, Fila USA, and Integrated Health Services; manufacturing operations such as Procter and Gamble; and research and development operations such as Becton Dickinson. It has been a desirable location for new employment-generating development over the past 30 years.

The HV/T employment center can be characterized as mature and nearly fully developed. Relatively few vacant parcels remain within the area. The next stage of land development within the employment area of HV/T is likely to consist of redevelopment of existing lower value employment uses, modernization of now "middle-aged" office and industrial buildings, and development of the area's remaining vacant parcels of land.

Adjacent to the employment area of HV/T is the York Road corridor, which is a major retail corridor. Because of its length (five miles within the HV/T area alone), its diversity of "specialty" retail uses, and its central location within the County, the York Road corridor serves not only the adjacent residential neighborhoods, but also a broader area, extending in all directions to encompass Towson to the south, portions of east and west Baltimore County, and the rural areas to the north. It is one of the most desirable locations for retail development in the County. Like the employment area, it is nearly fully developed, with limited vacant land available for expansion. Additionally, the number of existing businesses, along with numerous access/egress points along York Road, is creating traffic congestion and safety problems. The transportation improvements which are nearly complete will alleviate some of these traffic concerns. The County should maximize its investment in these improvements by promoting redevelopment in a manner which will optimize, but not overburden their use, enhancing the economic development potential of this 4,000-acre area. Further, through redevelopment,

the area's natural environment and visual quality can be improved, and measures which will protect the adjacent residential communities can be implemented.

EVENTS SINCE 1993

Over the five years since the Planning Board adopted the original Hunt Valley/ Timonium plan, there have been a number of events that have bearing on this plan.

1. Rezoning Requests

The 1992 Comprehensive Zoning Map Process (CZMP) considered 15 rezoning issues in the Hunt Valley/Timonium corridor, most of them involving conversion of manufacturing zoning to business zoning. Only two of these requests were granted.

Through the 1992-1996 Cycle Zoning Process, five rezoning petitions were filed. All of these involved conversion of manufacturing zoning to business zoning. None of these petitions was fully adjudicated.

The 1996 CZMP considered 32 zoning issues in the Hunt Valley/Timonium corridor. Twenty-two of these issues involved converting manufacturing zoning to business zoning. The County Council granted seven of these requests. In addition, six other requests for converting residential or office zoning to retail zoning were granted. In all, these rezonings resulted in an increase of approximately 75 acres of retail-zoned land.

(See the Appendix for maps of zoning issues from 1984 through 1996.)

2. PUD-C Adopted

On May 2, 1994, the Council adopted Bill 47-94, Commercial Planned Unit Development (PUD-C), which permits the development of mixed uses -- retail, office, industrial and/or residential -- within designated opportunity areas, when it can be demonstrated that the proposal will provide a substantial public benefit, and any negative impacts are mitigated. All of the manufacturing and business zoned land of the Hunt Valley/Timonium area is designated as a PUD-C Opportunity area. There have been two PUD-C proposals in HV/T: 1830 York Road, a MIE-owned building formerly leased by Comcast Cablevision and now, through the PUD-C process, a retail shopping center; and the former Saco Supply property, for which a Price Club was proposed, but denied by the Planning Board. Retail zoning for the second property was granted in 1996; construction of a shopping center is currently underway. In 1997, amendments to the PUD-C legislation were adopted which include:

- Refinement of the review process.
- Designation of "Prime Employment Centers" and "Growth Area Corporate Centers" within the PUD-C Opportunity Area.
- Guidelines for determining appropriate land uses and public benefits.

3. Changes to Zoning Regulations

A number of new uses are now permitted in manufacturing zones. Child care legislation was modified by Bill 200-90 and Bill 51-91 to allow child care as a permitted use in most of the manufacturing and business zones. Commercial recreational facilities are now permitted in certain manufacturing zones (Bill 21-96). Churches, synagogues and other houses of worship are also permitted in manufacturing zones (Bill 117-92).

A revision of the zoning districts by Bill 172-93 included the deletion of language that prohibited auxiliary retail and service uses in ML zones from having access onto an arterial road. As a result, retail uses such as fast food restaurants, banks and beauty shops can now be developed in ML-IM (Manufacturing Light-Industrial Major) zones with direct access to streets with an arterial designation, such as Padonia Road. Further, this action eliminates the County's ability to apply this restriction to the

McCormick - Beaver Dam Road corridor, as recommended by the 1993 HV/T Plan.

4. Growth Management Plan

The 1996 Growth Management Report designated HV/T as an "Employment Center" rather than an "Urban Center" to emphasize its primary function within the County as an area which provides significant employment opportunities.

5. Transportation Improvements

Several major transportation improvements have been completed:

- The Warren Road interchange which connects to I-83 and York Road was completed in October 1993. This has resulted in improved intersection rating at York and Padonia Roads (now a level of service "D").
- The light rail extension to Hunt Valley Mall was completed in September 1997.
- The Beaver Dam Road extension was completed in January 1998.

Transportation projects for the area which are still programmed include:

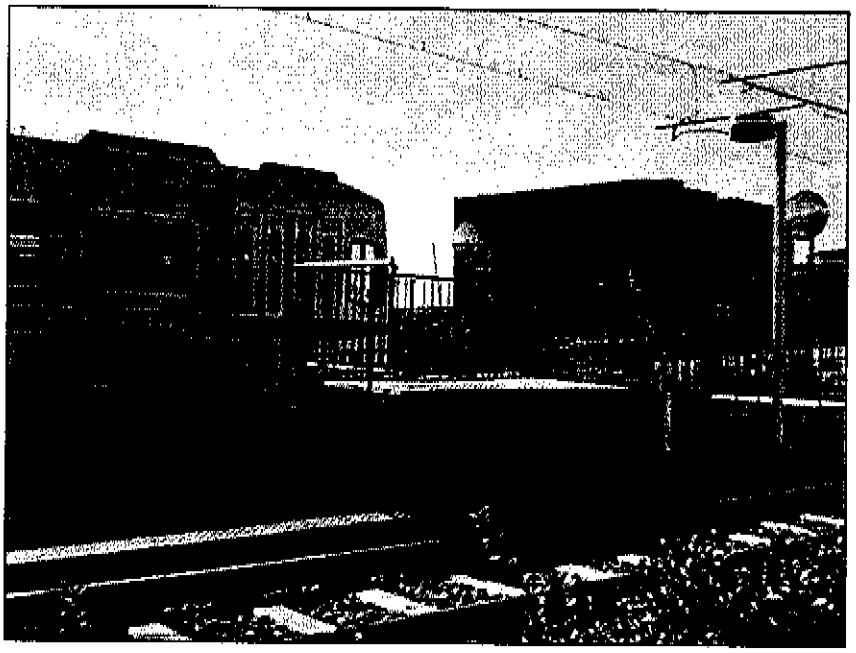
- Relocation of Paper Mill Road from Hunter Run Drive to York Road at Shawan Road.
- Widening of Warren Road from York Road to Bosley Road.
- Widening of Padonia Road from York Road to Deereco Road.

Nonprogrammed transportation projects include interchange improvements at Padonia Road and I-83.

In addition, Baltimore County will be receiving a $850,000 grant from the state to provide pedestrian improvements in Hunt Valley Business Park. Working with the local business community, several locations have been identified and prioritized to receive these improvements, scheduled to begin in 1999.

6. Bikeway Feasibility Study

In the spring of 1994, Planning staff met with representatives of DEPRM and the state Mass



The light rail stop at Hunt Valley Mall.

Transit Administration to determine if a bike route following the light rail extension right-of-way would be feasible, as recommended by the Master Plan, and the 1993 HV/T Plan. The study team found, that while there were opportunities to combine the two uses in several locations, there were instances where providing an adjacent bike path would be extremely cost prohibitive, if not physically impossible.

7. Economic Climate

The original HV/T Plan was drafted during the recession of the early 1990s. At that time, cuts in defense spending and nationwide corporate restructuring did much to change the overall character and tenant base of the Hunt Valley/Timonium area. Westinghouse in particular vacated a large amount of office and single-story industrial space in Hunt Valley. Distribution users such as Sherwin-Williams opted for new warehouse space offering higher ceilings and larger floor-plates in less expensive, more rural markets. At one point, the office and industrial real estate market vacancy rate in the HV/T area was over 20%.

Today, the vacancy rate is a healthy 9%, due to the expansion of existing HV/T-based companies, the attraction of new corporate tenants, and the growth of small manufacturers and technology-oriented companies. These users have established or expanded headquarters and back-office operations, as well as manufacturing and research and development facilities, and accounted for the purchase or lease of more than 2 million square feet of space and the creation or retention of more than 4,000 new jobs. To accommodate these users, older generation office and industrial space was improved to suit the more employment intensive uses. The Rouse Company, for example, has renovated space once occupied by Westinghouse and made it available for lease to single- and multi-tenant users.

Overall, the increased demand for space has bolstered real estate values, attracted private and institutional investors, and fueled new development in HV/T. Since 1996, MBNA America Bank, Integrated Health Services, Dunbar Armored and Millennium Chemicals have established new headquarters operation in the Hunt Valley area, joining the ranks of McCormick, Becton Dickinson, Procter and Gamble, and Fila USA. Together, MBNA and Integrated Health plan to spend more than $120 million in new construction. The new Hunt Valley Mall manager, Faison, Incorporated, will spend $45 million over the next two years to redevelop the mall--adding restaurants, large space "value" retailers, and a 12-screen movie theater. Loyola College will spend more than $12 million in redeveloping a former BGE maintenance facility in Timonium. The site will become Loyola's new graduate studies campus, offering its Executive MBA program and professional education programs to employers and residents throughout the region. Ultimately, such projects will increase the level and quality of amenities and services available to employees and residents.

As of March 1998, the status of the HV/T commercial real estate market was as follows:

Office space	7.4 million square feet	93% occupied
Flex space	3.0 million square feet	92% occupied
Industrial space	3.3 million square feet	85% occupied

(Source: Realty Information Group CoStar '98)

8. Retail Development Activity

As indicated by the number of rezoning requests that were made during the 1996 CZMP and preceding Cycle Zoning Process, demand for retail development has been constant. The desire of "big box" retailers to locate within the area is a new phenomenon. In general, big box retailers seek to sell a high volume of merchandise with low profit margins. To keep costs down, they locate on less expensive sites. Because they are "destination land uses," they don't always depend on convenient access or high visibility. The building is generally a large one-story structure (hence the term "big box") with a large parking lot. Big box retailers which offer a wide selection of merchandise to the public include the "membership warehouse" retailers, and the "value-retailers," such as Wal-Mart. Big box retailers who, on the other hand, offer a wide selection of a single type of merchandise, such as sporting goods (Dick's), office products

Demand by developers for "big box" retail in HV/T is evidenced by a number of rezoning requests over the past several years. Shown here is a typical "power center" recently developed in White Marsh.

(Staples), or home improvement products (Home Depot) are known as "category killers." A newer phenomenon is the grouping of several big box retailers in one location, known as a "power center."

In HV/T, there are several opportunities to locate these larger uses within existing business-zoned land. There is still a need, however, to enact measures that will preserve industrial sites from redevelopment as big box retail.

Another retail trend occurring in the HV/T area is an increase in the number of restaurants being developed, reflecting the changing lifestyles of two-income households. While all of these new restaurants are being located on major commercial roads (York, Shawan and Padonia), some are occurring on land zoned ML-IM (Manufacturing Light-Industrial Major) as auxiliary uses permitted by right. These kinds of developments are further diminishing the supply of land available for employment uses, and contributing to traffic congestion.

THE MISSION, GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The mission of this plan for the HV/T area is "to protect and enhance the HV/T area as an important employment and retail area of Baltimore County, without producing adverse impacts on neighboring residential communities, and improving the area's quality of life and environment."

The following goals are provided in order to achieve this broad mission:

- Encourage development and redevelopment consistent with the goals and objectives.
- Balance infrastructure improvements, such as transportation and stormwater management, with controlled growth.
- Balance employment with retail and residential uses.
- Minimize the impact of redevelopment on existing manufacturing uses.
- Encourage land uses that utilize light rail.
- Provide form and structure to the York Road corridor to improve its visual quality.
- Establish design and amenity guidelines for development.
- Establish community conservation strategies.

- Restore and protect environmental quality.

- Utilize the existing roadway system to enhance the land use structure, i.e., York Road is the primary transportation route serving retail/ commercial needs, and the McCormick Road/ Beaver Dam Road/Deereco Road/Greenspring Drive corridor is the primary vehicular transportation route serving the employment area.

- Strengthen access to the light rail from the surrounding employment, commercial and residential areas.

- Provide and improve opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle access throughout the HV/T area.

- Provide and improve opportunities for, and access to, parks and receational facilities.

These goals provide the framework for identifying specific issues and recommending actions related to the topics of Economic Development, Transportation, Natural Enviroment, Recreation and Parks, Development/Redevelopment Opportunities, Design Quality and Community Conservation. Guidelines to be used in zoning and development design review processes are also provided to support the goals for the HV/T area.