IMPLEMENTATION

Baltimore County maintains its commitment to its neighborhoods by engaging multiple agencies to address issues, and continues to partner with the community to form working relationships that can achieve solutions.

Baltimore County's envisioned future is expressed through Master Plan 2020. Prior master plans have addressed countywide trends and critical concerns in proactive and progressive ways that have shaped this county into an outstanding place to live, work and play. Although it is the express purpose of such plans to project 10 years into the planning horizon they are necessarily limited by the context and capabilities of the times in which they are produced.

Community plans are adopted under previous master plans to deliver specific responses to issues unique to the many distinct communities that define our county. The Baltimore County Office of Planning has identified and gained understanding of these communities through collaborative efforts engaging all facets within the commu-

nity. These efforts resulted in 39 Community and Local Area Plans being prepared since 1988. The plans address goals and provide guidance in a responsive and detailed fashion that augments the broader goals of the Master Plan. Both the urban and rural areas benefit from the direction and structure provided by community and local area plans. To the extent there are no conflicts with this Master Plan, existing community plans will be carried forward in Master Plan 2020.

Community plans are not static. The County and community periodically evaluate these plans to assess their effectiveness, accomplishments, and also to ensure that they remain appropriate to the goals that are important to the communities they serve. Because of the knowledge and experience gained through the creation of community plans and by the application of innovative approaches to community design, the County now has the ability to respond to challenges within communities with an even greater level of detail and expertise.

Baltimore County maintains its commitment to its neighborhoods by engaging multiple agencies to address issues, and continues to partner with the community to form working relationships that can achieve solutions. The County employs advanced community design processes including the Renaissance Redevelopment Pilot Program, UDATs, charrettes and community-visioning workshops to achieve project-based design. These collaborative approaches to redevelopment and revitalization make specific design recommendations, explain the community vision and provide knowledge to the citizenry to facilitate the realization of their plans.

Planned Unit Development

The Planned Unit Development (PUD) represents an alternative development approval process that increases and specifies benefits to the immediate community that the PUD will impact, in exchange for an enhanced plan. It is available to qualified sites inside the URDL. Under the PUD process, redevelopment can occur in forms not permitted by the standard application of the zoning and development regulations. The PUD process can streamline the review process for projects

that utilize a site efficiently, are compatible within the community and demonstrate a high degree of design, quality, materials and finish. The flexibility provided by the PUD process makes it an important tool to react to the changing market needs and conditions in the County, and this vital function should be maintained.

The Charrette Process

A Charrette is a comprehensive, community-driven approach to planning and revitalization. It is designed to revitalize existing communities or envision new ones with a sense of place; a well conceived architectural fabric, and a sense of identity. Five to seven days of on-site work are a prerequisite for a public workshop to be defined as a Charrette. The Community Design Team's Charrettes are usually six days long. During this time, residents, staff, elected officials, and participating agencies work with the Community Design Team to produce a well-illustrated plan for the revitalization and growth of their community. Working on-site in the community and allowing public access for hours each day encourages public participation and the community's direct involvement in the decision-

making process. This on-site work allows easy access to agencies, stakeholders, and information. Preparation for a Charrette begins months before the Charrette date.

Zoning and Development Regulations

The Baltimore County Zoning Regulations (BCZR) and Baltimore County Code (BCC) are the ordinances by which land use and development are implemented. The Comprehensive Manual of Development Policies (CMDP), Zoning Commissioners Policy Manual (ZCPM) clarify and support the BCZR and BCC. Development is also subject to the requirements of the Local Open Space Manual, Landscape Manual, Public Works Design Manual and Environmental Standards and Requirements Manual.

The use of any given parcel of ground within the County is generally determined by its zoning classification. Zoning classifications correspond to specific regulations within the BCZR that set uses, intensities, areas and setbacks. Through the Comprehensive Zoning Map Process, the Cycle Zoning Process and the Out of Cycle Zoning Process zoning classifications on individual properties are reassessed and either reclassified or left to stand. The Proposed Land Use Map provides general recommendations for future land use within the context of the goals of the Master Plan and aids in rezoning considerations required by the various aforementioned zoning processes.

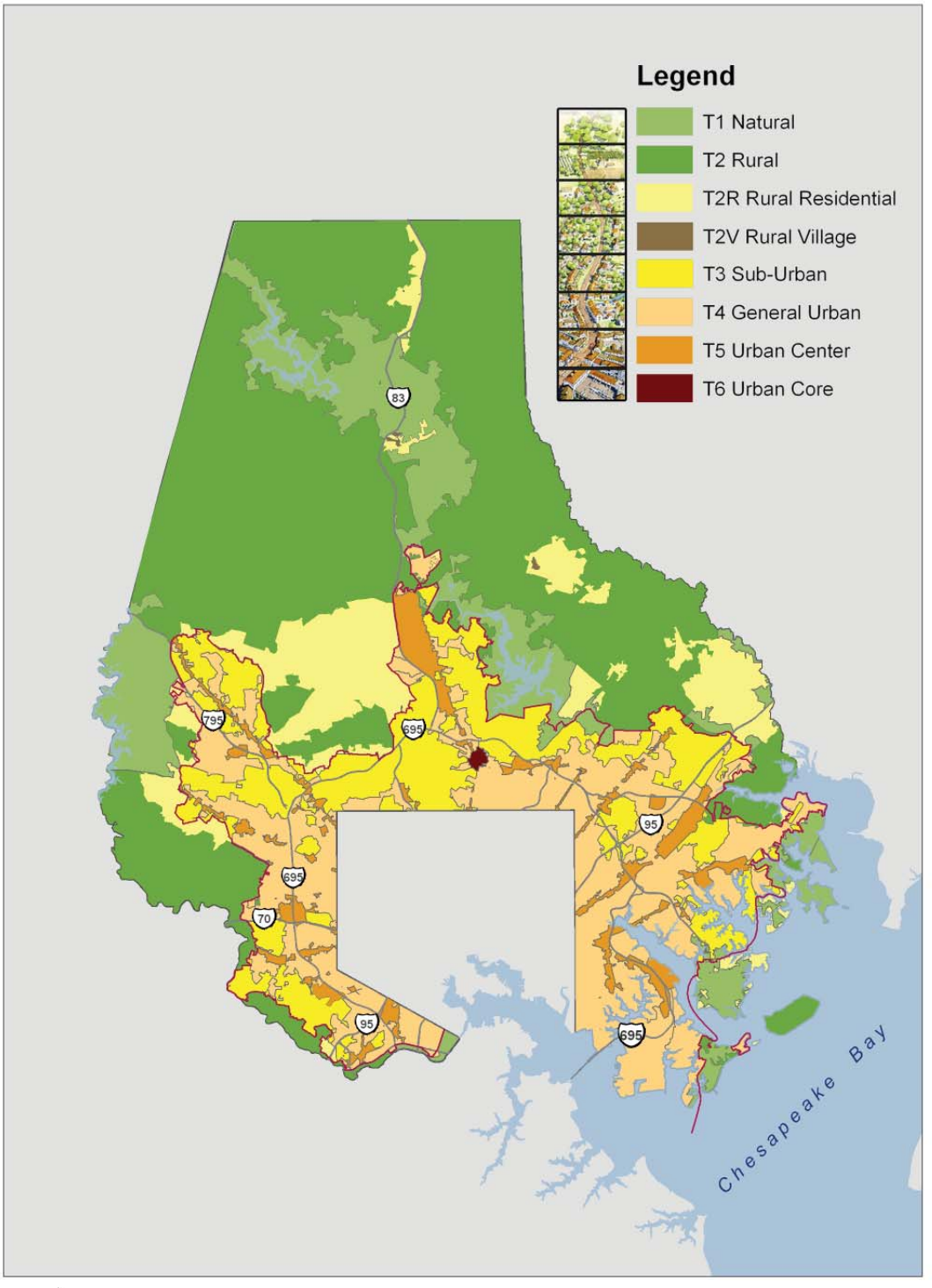
Baltimore County's annual budget is established through two major funding sources, the General Operating Budget and the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The costs of providing public services such as education and public safety are identified within the General Operating Budget, which is funded primarily through county property tax and income tax revenue. Expenditures for capital projects fall to the CIP. These funding requirements are generated by the construction and maintenance of the county's physical facilities and public infrastructure to include water and sewer lines, roads, storm drains, bridges, solid waste disposal, government buildings, park facilities and schools. Monies funding the CIP are primarily raised through county bond revenue.

The CIP is an essential program by which to achieve the goals of the Master Plan 2020. How CIP resources are committed impacts significantly on redevelopment strategies committed to sustainable mixed-use communities. The capacity of the infrastructure is critical to accommodating redevelopment. CIP funding is largely targeted within the URDL/PFA.

Advanced technology permits detailed observation of the environment of this region that increases comprehensive understanding of the impacts of human activity on our natural resources. Guidance on the federal level was provided by President Obama in May of 2009. "Executive Order 13508 Chesapeake Bay Protection and Restoration" commits the broad authorities of the Federal Government toward restoring the Bay. In 2009, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) established an accountability framework to ensure the restoration of the Bay as required by Executive Order 13508. This accountability framework compels jurisdictions to develop and implement appropriate Watershed Implementation Plans, attain two-year milestones of progress and provide timely and complete information to an effective accountability system for monitoring pollutant reductions. The EPA framework contains potential federal actions in the event that a jurisdiction fails to meet expectations. In response, the State of Maryland has now brought into law measures that oblige Baltimore County to assess how development is allowed to proceed. The Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 66B as amended, sets forth twelve visions for land use. The County specifically responds to these visions in this Master Plan and must be diligent in making them a reality. More so than any preceding

Map 5 Proposed Land Use

Proposed Land Use
Baltimore County Smart Coded



plan, the principal of sustainability is the foundation upon which the Master Plan 2020 is laid.

The challenges and opportunities presented to the County by this vital environmental renewal effort will require all stakeholders to approach how development is done in Baltimore County with a willingness to learn new concepts and techniques, jettison obsolete ordinances and coordinate across agencies, regulatory and jurisdictional lines to make real the visions and implement the goals. The combined effort of individuals and organizations ranging across the broad spectrum of public, business, institutional, state and local government is essential to the success of the Master Plan and the attainment of safe and sustainable communities.

Policy: Implement the goals of Master Plan 2020 to create compact, sustainable, socially attractive, vibrant, walkable, mixed-use communities.

Actions:

(1) Assemble a Master Plan Implementation Committee (MPIC) comprised of representatives of all agencies having involvement in development policy and process in Baltimore County. The MPIC is to develop strategies to carry out the policies and actions of the plan through interagency projects, public/private partnerships, etc., and provide to the Office of Planning a yearly Master Plan Implementation Status Report to be incorporated into the Baltimore County Annual Report to the Maryland Department of Planning. (Note: Refer to the location of the 12 visions and the county goals elsewhere in the plan.)

(2) Require each county agency having involvement in development policy and processes perform a thorough review of all regulations, policies and procedures under their purview. These regulations and guidelines should be amended in ways that would facilitate the goals of Master Plan 2020 and realize the twelve visions in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 66B.

(3) Evaluate potential revisions to the Baltimore County Zoning Regulations (BCZR) and the Baltimore County Code (BCC) to promote sustainable development within the CEAs, including consideration of new methods of encouraging such development within these areas.

(4) Revise the BCZR and the BCC to include new methods of encouraging development in the CEAs, specifically including the sustainability goals for development outlined in Master Plan 2020.

(5) Study the application of "mixed-use" zoning overlays within the CEAs to promote types of development consistent with the aims of Master Plan 2020.

(6) Implement ways to streamline the concept to permit approval process for preferable types of development in keeping with Master Plan 2020.

Policy: Enhance community planning and refine community plans through the application of innovative collaborative processes that involve all members and interests within the community.

Actions:

(1) Employ the use of Charrettes and Community Visioning Workshops to address issues in the community and produce design guidelines offering specific solutions.

(2) Study the feasibility of zoning overlays that recognize the unique characters of geography, pattern and history of older established communities and would allow regulatory relief without the onerous variance petitioning process.

Policy: Utilize the Capital Improvement Program as an effective tool for the implementation of the Master Plan 2020.

Action:

(1) Perform a thorough review of the CIP to ascertain that funding is in line with the goals set forth in Master Plan 2020.

(2) Support TIFs and other innovative funding opportunities in CEA designated areas to stimulate mixed use, walkable, transit oriented development.

Policy: Implementation of the Master Plan must be tracked and its progress measured to provide feedback to governments and citizens, as well as accurate information for the annual report on the progress of the county in putting the plan into practice.

Action:

(1) Establish planning office procedures of community indicators and performance measures that track agency actions and results in implementing the goals and policies of Master Plan 2020.

(2) The Office of Planning and the Master Plan Implementation Committee will hold semi-annual stakeholder forums to review actions and results of plan implementation and suggest ways of advancing the plan.

Quality-of-life benefits from living in walkable communities, coupled with impending environmental mandates to improve water quality, will mutually reinforce the need for Baltimore County to accommodate most of its future growth in higher-density, mixed-use areas. A number of important issues will affect the amount and quality of higher-density, mixed-use development in Community Enhancement Areas (CEAs) in Baltimore County:

Zoning

In many ways this is the easiest element to achieve because it can be done now through PUDs. However, the existing PUD law's Countywide eligibility and lack of specific public benefit requirements diminishes its usefulness for fostering concentrated mixed-use in defined areas. Consideration should be given to other methods of creating incentives for development of high-density, mixed-use projects.

Critical Mass

There needs to be enough of a critical mass of development in an area to create a truly walkable node; isolated projects that combine one or two uses (such as an office or apartment building with retail on the first floor, surrounded by auto-related uses) may be worthwhile and technically qualify as "mixed-use," but are not sufficient to create a pedestrian-oriented concentration of activity. Achieving critical mass is likely to occur if incentives, infrastructure and policy combine to produce clusters of mixed-use projects in relatively concentrated areas. If too large an area is targeted for receptivity to mixed-use, the result may be a few discreet "mixed-use" projects, but not a pedestrian-oriented focal area.

Assembled parcels of land

In greenfield areas, a small number of property owners typically control large pieces of land. In the White Marsh Growth Area, in fact, one entity controlled almost the entire core area. In CEAs, often even a small area will have numerous owners. For example, the 4-acre site for the proposed Towson Circle III project required the developer to assemble several properties from numerous owners.

Infrastructure Capacity

Infrastructure – particularly sewer capacity – is a critical determinant of where and how much compact development can occur in Baltimore County. Levels of sewer deficiency exist throughout the county. Given the time required to plan, permit, design and construct significant additional sewer capacity, it may not be practical to wait until a developer comes forward with

a proposed project to start the process. The County's current policy of requiring a developer to incrementally add sewer capacity when his specific project will exceed available limits is not conducive to achieving high-quality concentrations of mixed-use development. It is also inefficient from a financial standpoint because it fails to take advantage of economies of scale.

Structured Parking

In all but the highest density, most transit accessible locations throughout the U.S., retailers, apartment and condo owners, and office tenants still demand on-site parking. Excellent transit access reduces the need, but adequate parking is still required. Structured parking consumes much less land area than surface parking, creates less impervious surface, and is much more conducive to a cohesive, walkable downtown experience. However, the cost of structured parking is significantly higher.

Because Baltimore County residents are generally accustomed to free surface parking, their willingness to pay even part of the true cost of structured parking (whether directly through parking fees or indirectly through higher residential or office rents) will need to be tested. One way to cover costs not paid for by users would be through public subsidy. In the major pedestrian-oriented mixed-used projects pursued in the County, public subsidy for structured parking has been a central part of the deal. For example, the Metro Center at Owings Mills project includes County and State contributions toward the cost of two large garages. The Towson Circle III project includes public subsidy for the 700-space garage to be constructed there.

Developer Financial Feasibility

According to the National Association of Industrial and Office Park Research Foundation, mixed-use development poses some challenges for the private developer:

Equity requirements can be higher for the mixed-use project than for a single use development of equal size. The mixed-use development may require a longer development period with phasing over longer periods. This may make it more difficult to finance a mixed-use development than a single use development of equal size. Investors providing initial equity understand mixed-use development as an investment opportunity. Initial planning costs can be larger for a mixed-use development than for a single-use project of equivalent size. Sites for mixed-use development require the ability to serve different property markets. In light of these issues, developers in Baltimore County may be wary of taking on significant mixed-use projects, if they are also expected to bear the full cost of sewer extensions and structured parking.

Transportation Access

Transportation access (both roads and public transit) must be sufficient to enable all uses within the development to function properly. Connectivity to adjacent neighborhoods is important to those communities and to the CEA.

Environmental Impacts and Permits

Environmental permits and approvals need to be obtainable in a reasonable period of time. Costs and approvals for redeveloping "brownfields" properties may need to be considered as well.

Institutional Capacity

Successful higher density mixed-use redevelopment often requires a larger and more sustained involvement on the part of local government than does traditional, single-use greenfield development. There is a need for close coordination between and among multiple professional disciplines (planning, transportation, public works, budget, economic development, law, PDM) within County government on developing and reviewing plans, negotiating public-private agreements, and presenting a unified County position. Coordination with state and federal government agencies, public and private investments, identification and coordination of resources from different levels of government, utilization of incentives and tools such as tax increment financing that require expertise, and sustained involvement over months is essential for successful redevelopment. As the experience doing this kind of

development increases for all parties, projects will be accomplished more quickly. Strategies for incorporating community involvement may be broader and more sustained than the one or two formal Community Input Meetings currently required under the Development Review process.

Coordination of participation by multiple property owners often requires a designated staff project manager with responsibility for moving the project forward and coordinating County involvement.

Policy: To bring about quality, higher-density, mixed-use development that is truly walkable, the County should take proactive steps in targeted areas to "set the table" for such development.

Actions:

(1) Investigate how PUD legislation can be utilized to make it a more effective tool to promote high-quality, higher-density, mixed-use development.

(2) Consider working with communities to identify activity centers that have potential for walkable, higher-density development. Then implement land use, infrastructure and financing plans to attract the type of development envisioned.

(3) Identify the major capacity improvements that have a strategic importance to an entire CEA and put the planning, approval and construction process in motion. Just as was done with the Growth Areas 25 years ago, CEAs may need to "set the table" for development by providing the basic water and sewer capacity in strategically-targeted corridors or nodes. The added complexity of retrofitting sewer in the types of already-developed areas targeted for CEA (as opposed to extending a line to a greenfields area such as Owings Mills or White Marsh) underscores the need for strategic planning of sewer capacity.

(4) Successful pedestrian-oriented develop ment in the CEAs will require a strategy for achieving the optimal amount of structured parking. Review zoning regulations for parking in order to create "Park Once Zones" where people park and then walk to shop, work or live at multiple destinations.

(5) Given the cross-disciplinary nature of transit-oriented development, government agencies and departments are encouraged to work together to assure TOD implementation.

(6) Study the feasibility of establishing a Baltimore County Redevelopment Authority charged with the oversight of all redevelopment projects and ensuring that the sustainability goals of the Master Plan 2020 are achieved in a collaborative and fiducially responsible way.