# Chapter 3: Balanced Growth and Sustainability

# Balancing Land Use, Growth and Fiscal Policies

## *Current Land Use Pattern*

A key objective of comprehensive planning is to promote the appropriate amount and type of growth that will result in attractive and vibrant communities, a strong local economy, and stable fiscal conditions, as well as to achieve the best possible balance between growth and land preservation. The County has worked toward this objective since the adoption of its first comprehensive plan in 1968 and particularly since passage of the Smart Growth legislation in the 1990s.

Table 3-1 and Figure 3-1 below present the 2004 Land Use Plan (shown in Figure 3-2) by acreage and land use category with typical residential densities in dwelling units per acre (du/ac). Currently, over half of the County's land area (52%) is planned for rural or low density residential uses. When combined with land designated as Natural Features (open space and environmental preservation areas), the percentage increases to nearly 70% of the total land area. Low-medium to high density residential uses account for 13% of the land area on the 2004 Plan, and areas planned for commercial and industrial uses combined account for only 6% of the land area. The mixed use and town center categories combined account for less than 2%. Government and institutional areas account for another 6% of the land area, and the remaining 4% is used or planned for transportation and utility uses.

This 2004 Plan illustrates to some extent the challenges of implementing Smart Growth policies in a suburban jurisdiction. While the Land Use Plan allocates a large proportion of acreage for lower density residential land use (one half acre to five acre lots), which is often considered by planners to promote "sprawl" and not "smart growth", it must be recognized that this land use pattern reflects to a large extent the community vision that has existed in the County over the past decades and that still exists today. In most of these established communities, residents feel strongly that they want to preserve their community's character.

Therefore, the County has taken steps to concentrate new growth in defined areas since the 1980s. At that time, the allowable development densities in the County's Rural areas were lowered to one lot per 20 acres with the intention of maintaining the rural character. During the same period, Parole, Odenton, and Glen Burnie were designated as town centers to serve as major activity hubs. In the 1990s, the County designated Priority Funding Areas in which to concentrate new growth, and later designated mixed use areas where higher density land uses could be concentrated. The 2009 GDP follows in that trend by continuing to concentrate new growth in specific target areas, and maintaining the rural areas intact. Specific development policies for targeted growth areas, managed growth areas, and rural areas are presented in Chapter 7.

*Table 3–1 2004 Land Use Plan Categories by Acres*

| Land Use Plan Category | Number of Acres | Land Use Plan Category | Number of Acres |
|---|---|---|---|
| Residential Categories | | Mixed Use Categories | |
| Rural (1 du/5 ac – 1 du/20 ac) | 88,958 | Residential Mixed Use | 507 |
| Low Density (1-2 du/ac) | 47,770 | Commercial Mixed Use | 178 |
| Low-Medium Density (2-5 du/ac) | 20,430 | Employment Mixed Use | 245 |
| Medium Density (5-10 du/ac) | 10,967 | Transit Mixed Use | 140 |
| High Density (>15 du/ac) | 2,704 | Town Center | 2,515 |
| Commercial Categories | | Other Categories | |
| Commercial | 5,023 | Natural Features | 44,951 |
| Small Business | 60 | Government/Institutional | 16,104 |
| Industrial | 10,525 | Transportation/Utility | 9,699 |
| Maritime | 464 | City of Annapolis | 4,534 |

*Figure 3–1 2004 Land Use Plan Category by Acreage Share*

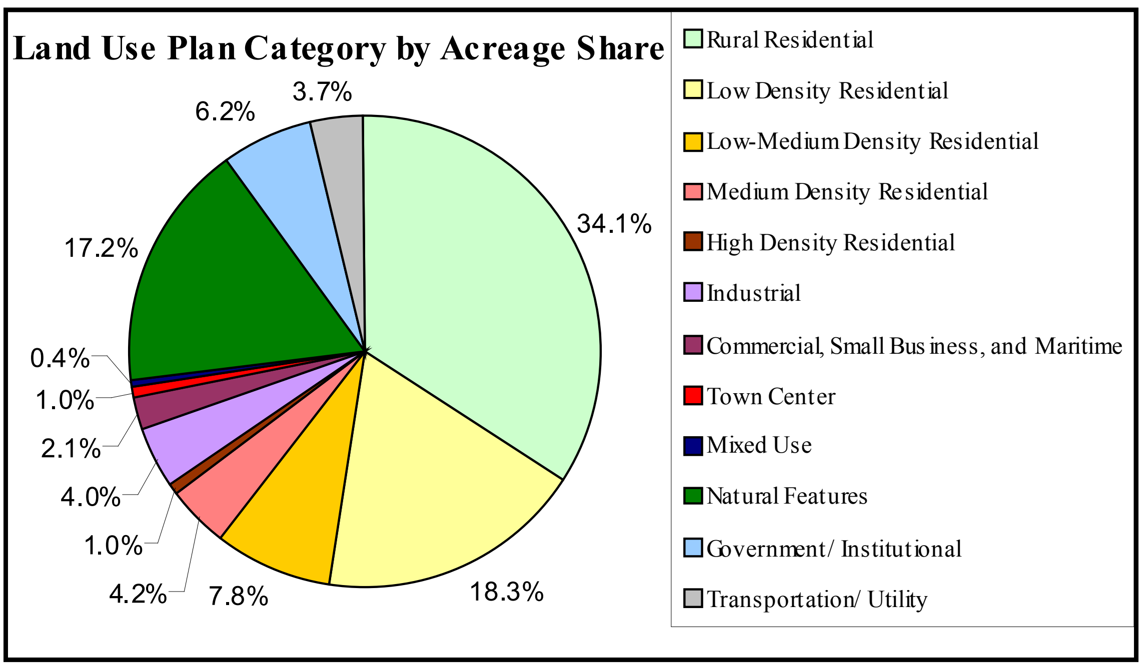
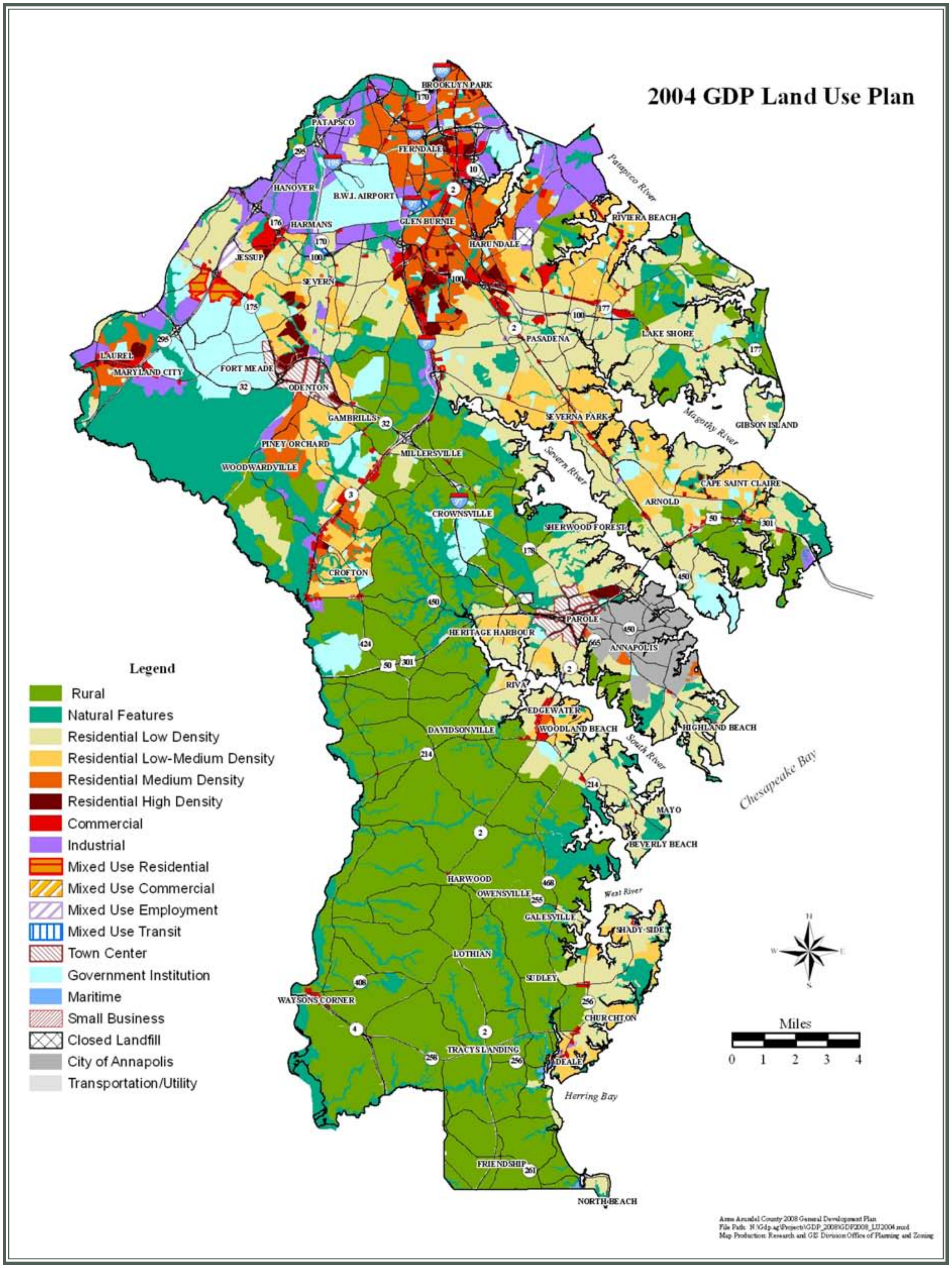


*Figure 3–2  2004 GDP Land Use Plan*



## Development Holding Capacity

The land use policies that maintain the County's rural land base and concentrate new growth in specific areas have consequences in terms of the long range ability to absorb new growth, and these policies place limits on future development capacity. This is not a negative consequence in itself, but is reflective of the fact that these land use policies incorporate local community visions and desires. However, decisions to hold to these land use policies and to allow development capacity to reach its limits also have implications for the County's long term fiscal stability and require the appropriate fiscal policies that will work in conjunction with established land use policies.

A land use analysis was recently completed estimating the remaining development capacity in the County as of April 2008. The methodology and assumptions used are discussed in the GDP Background Report on Land Use (June 2008). It should be noted that for the purposes of this analysis, active development projects (projects under review) and projects in the pipeline (approved and platted, but not yet constructed) were considered as developed land and did not count towards available development capacity. The results of the analysis should be considered conservative as assumptions were made based on previous development trends in the County. As land becomes more scarce, development becomes more efficient, utilizing available capacity to its limits. The results shown in Table 3-2 indicate the County has capacity for approximately 26,000 additional residential units under the current zoning. Most of this additional capacity exists in the low to medium density residential zones (R2 and R5, and to a lesser extent R1). In addition, most of the available capacity can be attributed to vacant parcels or lots, although there is a significant amount of redevelopment capacity in the residential zones, particularly in the R5 zone. Much of the development capacity in the R5 zone is located in Brooklyn Park, Glen Burnie, Pasadena, and Arnold, while much of the capacity in the R2 zone is located in Severn and Pasadena.

*Table 3–2 Residential Development Capacity (Units)*

| Zoning Category | Potential Residential Units Available from | | | Total Units |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Vacant Lots | Antiquated Lots | Redevelopment | |
| RA | 1,480 | 110 | 360 | 1,950 |
| RLD | 440 | 170 | 160 | 770 |
| R1 | 1,860 | 350 | 1,710 | 3,920 |
| R2 | 2,300 | 1,690 | 2,480 | 6,470 |
| R5 | 3,140 | 1,590 | 4,710 | 9,440 |
| R10 | 940 | 0 | 0 | 940 |
| R15 | 1,160 | 10 | 0 | 1,170 |
| Additional Potential Units* | N/A | 1,730 | N/A | 1,730 |
| Totals | 11,320 | 5,650 | 9,420 | 26,390 |

** Development potential could not be estimated for all antiquated lot records due to incomplete database fields. Development potential was estimated for a sample of 28% of the incomplete records and was extrapolated to the entire set of records.*

The development capacity analysis also estimated commercial and industrial development capacity. There are approximately 18,600 acres of land in recorded properties within the commercial and industrial zoning categories, and over 12,400 acres or 67% are developed or undevelopable. The total amount available for either development or redevelopment is roughly 6,200 acres, of which approximately 3,400 acres are vacant and developable and 2,800 acres are underdeveloped.

The industrial districts have the most available capacity, primarily in the W1 district located around the BWI Airport, in Hanover, Glen Burnie, and near Fort Meade. The majority of available commercial land is in the C3 and C4 zoning districts, which allow large-scale commercial uses. However, most of the land consists of relatively small properties that are less than 2 acres in size. There is potential for consolidation of some of these properties to facilitate commercial development that serves a broader market.

Approximately 55% of the land in the Odenton Growth Management Area is developed. The remaining 45% is available for development and is one of the County's priority target areas for new growth given its public transit opportunities and its proximity to Fort Meade. The mixed use, maritime, and town center districts have very little land available for new development.

When the development capacity results are evaluated with the forecasts developed by the County, it provides a look at when the County might approach the limits of its ability to absorb new growth under current policies. Based on recent estimates of future growth in households and jobs, the County may see an increase in households of approximately 25,000 over the next 12 to 15 years, and an increase of 80,000 jobs as well. Based on these assumptions, the development capacity results indicate that by 2020 to 2025 the

County could reach maturity in terms of new growth and may need to consider the need for additional capacity, as well as to prepare for this shift from a growing population to a relatively stable one.

Many important factors must be taken into consideration when making these decisions, including infrastructure constraints (e.g. wastewater treatment plants, school capacities), environmental constraints (e.g. pollutant loads and impacts on natural resources), the ability to provide public services (e.g. fire protection, recreation), potential impacts on community character, fiscal impacts, and changes in development patterns. Due to the limiting nature of these constraints and the fact that some of them have State mandates for compliance, it is uncertain if the County will be able to upzone a significant amount of land area in the future to create more capacity. The implications physically and fiscally to the County are complex and require detailed analysis and discussion by the policy makers.

## *Fiscal Impact of Growth*

To help answer some of these questions, the County undertook a comprehensive Fiscal Impact Analysis completed by an outside consultant in 2008. There were two key questions to be answered by this study: 1) under the current revenue structure, is new growth generating net surpluses or deficits; and 2) how does the fiscal picture look when the demands of serving new growth are combined with those of serving the existing population and employment base? Therefore the study was conducted in two phases. The first phase analyzed both operating and capital costs and revenues generated by new growth only (growth projected to occur in the future based on current trends). The second phase combined the fiscal impacts of new growth with the costs to serve the existing population and employment base.

*Fiscal policies must be consistent with land use policies.*

The results of Phase I indicate that, under the County's current revenue structure, and using the new impact fee rate schedule adopted in 2008, new growth in population and employment generates net surpluses to the County. In other words, the net revenues generated by new growth outweigh the costs that the County incurs in providing public services to serve it. This is due to the County's very aggressive revenue structure. Like most counties in Maryland, Anne Arundel County receives property tax, income tax, franchise fees, transfer and recordation taxes, and impact fees from new growth. By comparison, in most states local governments typically rely on property tax only.

Nevertheless, the analysis of new growth alone does not paint the entire picture. Under Phase II of the study, when the net surpluses from new growth were layered onto the impacts of serving the existing population and employment base, the annual net fiscal results fluctuate between deficits and surpluses over the study horizon (2007-2025), with net deficits generated over the first half of the projection period and net surpluses generally toward the end. The conclusion reached is that under the current revenue structure and assuming current levels of service, the County is in a sense treading water, with annual revenues insufficient to cover the estimated costs of providing public facilities and infrastructure on a consistent yearly basis.

It is noted that there are inherent limitations with this type of fiscal analysis, and the results must be interpreted accordingly. The fiscal model does not factor in externalities such as social or environmental costs related to additional growth, and it assumes existing levels of service for each category of public services, regardless of whether that level of service is considered to be adequate by the users. In addition, costs that are more indirectly related to new growth, such as costs to meet future water quality regulations through improvements to stormwater management facilities, cannot be easily quantified with this type of fiscal model and must be accounted for separately.

The Phase II study also looked at the extent to which surpluses from new growth can help to reduce existing backlogs in the County's capital budget. Over the years, due to rising construction costs and other factors, the County has struggled to keep pace with the ongoing demand for maintenance, renovation and rehabilitation, and replacement of existing infrastructure and facilities that have been in place to serve the existing population and employment base. Therefore, the County is experiencing some significant budgetary backlogs related to these public facility and infrastructure costs. This phenomenon is not unique to Anne Arundel County and indeed has become a nationwide cause of concern. Futhermore, the current economic downturn was not predicted in the Fiscal Impact Analysis. The ability of the County to generate new revenue sources to address the deficit and surplus imbalance identified in Phase II of the study will be dependent on the recovery from the current recession.

The study analyzed the estimated costs to correct the budget backlog in infrastructure needs (including schools, parks, roads, community college, libraries, senior centers, health centers, police and fire facilities, and detention centers) and combined this with the previous results. The backlog costs are significant, totaling over $2 billion for the 18-year study period. The net surplus generated by growth is projected at almost $500 million over the same period, which is only about 20% of the backlog costs. In other words, under current growth trends and existing fiscal policies, the County will continue to carry these backlogs in infrastructure needs well beyond the 2025 timeframe.

The solutions to these issues will not be simple ones. One conclusion that can be drawn is that long term fiscal stability cannot be created by relying on new growth and cannot be achieved by making changes to the adopted Land Use Plan. While the anticipated growth that can be accommodated within the remaining development capacity will help the fiscal situation to some extent by providing some revenue surplus, it will not address the existing infrastructure backlogs. In addition, growth rates in the County are declining over the long term. Even if growth rates were to rise again, the County may not be able to accommodate much new growth beyond the 2030 timeframe due to limits on infrastructure capacity as well as development holding capacity.

Likewise, slowing growth to a halt will not create long term fiscal stability either, without a shift in current fiscal policies. Long term stability can more realistically be addressed through improved concurrency management, which ensures that available capacity of public facilities and services will be in place over the planning horizon, and through new or revised revenue strategies. Both of these will be discussed further in Chapter 11.

The following goals, policies and actions will help the County to achieve balanced growth and sustainability.

## Goal: Establish and maintain a Land Use Plan that achieves Smart Growth goals, balances growth and preservation, and provides a high quality of life.

***Policy 1: Direct development and redevelopment to the County's targeted growth areas: Town Centers, commercial revitalization districts, and Mixed Use Districts.***

**Actions:**

- Use incentives, such as financing tools and / or an expedited development review process, to encourage new growth to locate in targeted growth areas.
- Strengthen marketing programs to attract developers and businesses to targeted areas by preparing a comprehensive inventory of available sites, incentives, and amenities.
- Prioritize the Capital Program to promote adequate public facilities and infrastructure necessary to support development in targeted growth areas.
- Add to the legal and financial tools that enable private-public partnerships that provide future development guarantees in return for substantial investments in necessary infrastructure where the County's Capital Program is insufficient to support new development. Examples include tax increment financing, special tax districts, and developer agreements.
- Consider the use of Special Tax Districts for targeted growth areas, as applicable, so that infrastructure needs could be advanced through a special fund and a dedicated revenue source would be available for amenities such as transit improvements.

***Policy 2: Encourage infill development inside the County's Priority Funding Areas (PFAs) where appropriate, as opposed to expanding the PFA.***

**Actions:**

- Identify key infill opportunity sites and assess their feasibility for appropriate land uses.
- Use strategies such as tax incentives, financing tools, or revisions to development regulations to encourage the most compatible type of infill development in these areas.

***Policy 3: Encourage mixed use development with jobs, housing, shopping, transportation and other services within walking distance. Mixed use sites should be planned to meet the key objectives of improving "live near your work" opportunities, increasing use of public transit, and/or increasing the supply of workforce housing. Mixed use sites should not be planned for the sole purpose of increasing allowable development densities.***

**Actions:**

- Identify additional mixed use opportunity areas and work with property owners and developers to develop mixed use concept plans that are consistent with overall community visions.
- Assess the potential to shift some of the existing industrial land base west and north of BWI Airport to mixed use categories, to provide additional housing opportunities, commercial services, and transit-oriented development near major employment areas. Constraints due to the airport noise zone and approach zones must be considered.

***Policy 4: Promote redevelopment of brownfields sites.***

**Actions:**

- Maintain an inventory of brownfield sites and provide financial incentives through Maryland Department of the Environment to leverage private sector investment. Actively market sites as redevelopment opportunities.
- Monitor the status of the U.S. Army Depot site, the DC Children's Center site, the David Taylor Naval Research Center site, and the Crownsville Hospital site, and work with State and/or Federal officials to identify suitable redevelopment opportunities if the sites become available.

***Policy 5: Encourage the best use of unused or underutilized properties in the County's surplus property inventory. When surplus properties designated as "Government" on the adopted Land Use Plan are sold for private development, no change in zoning of the property will be adopted without first amending the Land Use Plan to reflect the future planned land use.***

**Actions:**

- Continue to review all County and Board of Education surplus properties in accordance with the General Development Plan, Small Area Plans, and other adopted Plans, to determine whether there is a current or long range need to retain the property for public use.
- Convert surplus property to preserved open space or recreational space where appropriate.
- Keep local land trusts informed of surplus properties in environmentally sensitive areas.

## Goal: Establish cohesive land use policies and fiscal policies that collectively will achieve sustainable communities, efficient use of public facilities, and fiscal stability.

***Policy 1: Future increases in development capacity should be consistent with adopted land use policies.***

**Actions:**

- Track development holding capacity regularly and update the holding capacity inventory at appropriate intervals.
- Plan for adjustments in fiscal policies and revenue strategies that will be needed as the County matures and approaches the limits of its development capacity.

***Policy 2: Plan for the provision of public facilities, infrastructure, and services so that the County will be able to maintain a high level of service to serve the existing population as well as new growth.***

- Develop an ongoing methodology to better integrate strategic and facilities planning done by each County agency or service provider with the County's long range land use planning and capital programs.
- Develop a comprehensive concurrency management program in order to track the impact of new growth on public facilities and infrastructure and to ensure adequate facilities will be in place to serve new growth as well as the existing population base.
- Evaluate all potential new revenue strategies to address existing budget backlogs in public facility maintenance and improvements.

# Balancing Economic Development Opportunities

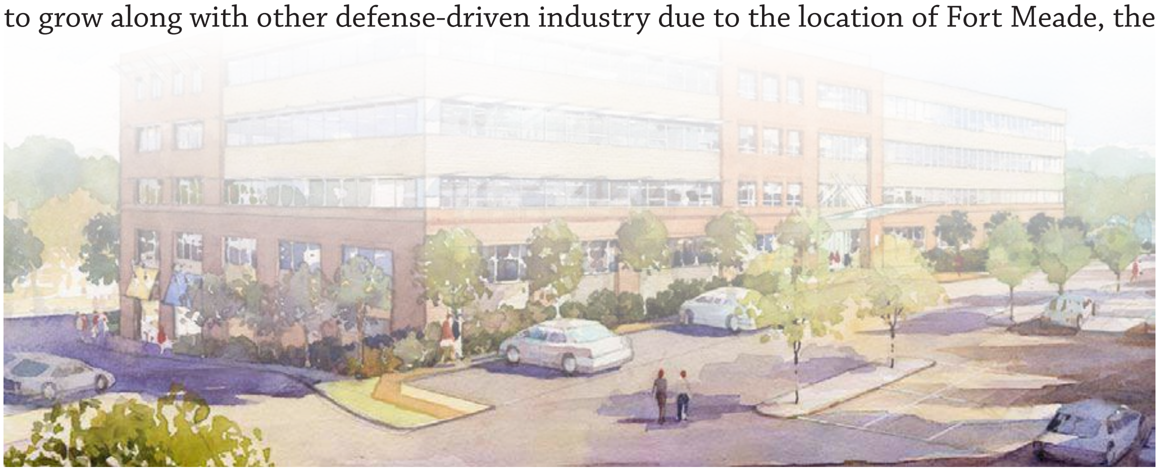
Anne Arundel County's economy is one of the strongest in Maryland. This vibrant economy is driven by the following combination of elements:

- A diverse, world class business community with strong emphasis on technology that interacts with regional, national, and global markets;
- Excellent transportation connections to regional, national, and global markets;
- A world class workforce of highly educated and highly skilled people; and
- The Chesapeake Bay shoreline, Historic Annapolis, the Naval Academy and many scenic waterfront areas that make Anne Arundel County an attractive location for residents and visitors alike.

The County's strong economy is evidenced by its continued strong job growth. The County has consistently been gaining an average of 5,000 new jobs per year. Between 1990 and 2000, employment in the County grew by 18% from approximately 252,000 jobs to nearly 298,000 jobs; representing one of the strongest job growth rates in the Baltimore region. The County gained an additional 21,000 jobs between 2000 and 2005, and job growth is expected to continue over the next two decades, with 22,000 new jobs expected to locate in the County by 2015 as a direct result of BRAC.

Of course, the current downturn in the national economy will potentially impact job growth in the greater Baltimore-Washington area including Anne Arundel County. Currently the impact in the central Maryland region has not been as significant as in other parts of the country, though short term effects are difficult to predict. For the purposes of long range planning, it is assumed that the economy will stabilize over the next few years and that economic growth will continue over the long term.

Current employment in Anne Arundel County is distributed over a wide range of industrial sectors. Sectors such as aerospace and defense, science and technology, health care, manufacturing, wholesale trade, support services and construction have led business growth in the County since the year 2000. The technology sector, for example, grew by 11% between 2000 and 2005 and employs over 18,000 people. This sector will continue to grow along with other defense-driven industry due to the location of Fort Meade, the



National Security Agency (NSA), the U.S. Naval Academy, and the many defense contractors located in the County. Recent and planned expansions of the Anne Arundel Medical Center in Parole and the Baltimore Washington Medical Center in Glen Burnie will promote continued growth in the health care industry as well.

The County has targeted five primary growth areas for future economic development:

- The BWI Airport Business District and vicinity,
- The Baltimore Washington Parkway corridor and Fort Meade,
- Odenton Town Center,
- Parole Town Center, and
- Glen Burnie Town Center.

A variety of programs focus on attracting not only major industry targets such as defense and technology, but also the smaller economy sectors. These smaller sectors also contribute to the County's vitality as well as its heritage, including tourism, agriculture, the maritime industry, and arts and entertainment. These programs include business financing assistance, workforce development, small business development, technology development, and other strategies.

Ensuring that Anne Arundel County's strong business climate continues and that the County remains a leader in all respects is a priority. The following goals, policies and actions will serve this objective.

**Goal: Maintain a favorable climate to attract and retain diverse business and industry to provide jobs, income and tax base, to achieve sustained and diversified growth, and to allow the County to meet the needs of its citizens.**

***Policy 1: Actively promote retention and expansion of existing businesses through financial assistance, employee training and other incentives.***

**Actions:**

- Implement a proactive business development plan to encourage the location of new companies in the County.
- Partner with Anne Arundel Workforce Development Corporation and Anne Arundel Community College as well as State and regional partners to address the workforce development needs of the existing business community and to provide training programs in the field of science, technology, aerospace/defense and other areas to address global market needs.

- Work with local employers to provide job training and readiness programs as well as support services such as child care and transportation to ensure local residents can take advantage of employment opportunities in the County.
- Continue to provide business financing assistance through the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation, State Department of Business and Economic Development, and Department of Housing and Community Development.
- Expand and support industrial and business growth by combining public and private resources.

***Policy 2: Focus economic development and business attraction efforts in Town Centers, Mixed Use Districts, and Commercial Revitalization Districts as well as in areas with existing or planned transit access.***

**Actions:**

- Focus economic development efforts toward development of the Odenton Town Center as a premier transit-oriented center in accordance with the goals and vision of the OTC Master Plan.
- Assist private developers in attracting high quality businesses to new and developing mixed use centers in the County.

***Policy 3: Maintain an adequate supply of land for industrial and commercial office uses to meet current employment projections including new BRAC-related job growth, and to maintain a balanced tax base.***

**Actions:**

- Identify opportunities for additional industrial sites, particularly for new defense industry and research facilities, located in proximity to major roadways and other multi-modal transportation assets.

***Policy 4: Increase opportunities for business innovation entrepreneurship.***

**Actions:**

- Provide services and support, such as assistance with preparing business plans, to the entrepreneurial, small, and minority business community.
- Continue to promote and support the business incubator concept.

***Policy 5: Further develop the agricultural economic development and marketing program within the Anne Arundel Economic Development Corporation.***

**Actions:**

- Expand the program to promote rural economy land uses such as horse breeding and training, vineyards, community gardens, agritourism, heritage tourism, and crafts in designated rural areas.

**Goal: Protect the future growth potential of BWI Airport.**

***Policy 1: Promote development in the vicinity of BWI Airport that is compatible with an airport environs and that will not restrict the future growth potential of the airport.***

**Actions:**

- Work cooperatively with Maryland Aviation Administration to study the feasibility and applicability of an Airport Environs Overlay Zoning District to promote compatible land use development in proximity to BWI Airport.

# Balancing Housing Opportunities

## *Housing Overview*

The strong economic growth experienced during the 1990s translated into a strong housing market in Anne Arundel County. While the recent economic downturn will have an effect on the housing market in the near term, it is expected that growth in households will continue, although at a slower rate, to 2025. This includes a projected 4,500 households that will locate in the County over the next several years as a direct result of BRAC. A range of housing opportunities will be needed to meet these demands.

According to the 2006 American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau), there are approximately 201,000 housing units in the County. The mix of housing of types is shown below. The dominance of the single-family detached home is reflective of the suburban nature of Anne Arundel County.

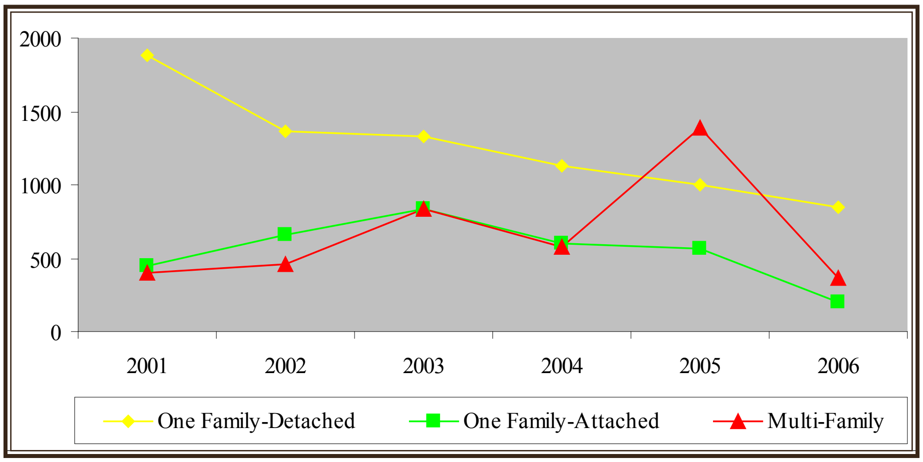
- 62% are single family detaches homes,
- 18% are townhomes or duplexes,
- 17% are condominiums or apartments,
- 3% are mobile homes, recreational vehicles or houseboats.

The popularity of "adult" developments has grown in recent years as well. The County defines "adult independent living" units as independent dwelling units for persons 55 years of age or older without minor children. Within the past five years, nearly 1,200 additional age-restricted units were either approved for construction or are waiting development plan approval. In addition to age-restricted units, there are approximately 86 State licensed assisted living facilities.

## Residential Building Trends

Between 2001 and 2006, the County issued nearly 14,900 residential building permits. As seen in Figure 3-3 below, approximately half (7,500) were issued for single family units. Permits for multifamily and one-family attached units were issued at almost equal pace during the same period with the exception of 2005, when nearly 1,400 multifamily units were issued. The spike in 2005 was primarily due to the new Arundel Preserve development and new sections of the Seven Oaks development. Data indicate that the number of permits issued annually for single-family detached units has declined steadily from approximately 1,880 in 2001 to approximately 850 in 2006, reflecting in part the maturing nature of the County.

*Figure 3–3 Residential Building Trends in Anne Arundel County, 2001 - 2006*




The current downturn in the housing market will certainly have an impact on home building and construction over the short term. According to Metropolitan Regional Information Systems (MRIS) data, the 6,500 units sold in the County in 2007 represent a decrease of 17% from the prior year, and it is expected that homes sales for 2008 will also decrease. Such declines are occurring not only in Anne Arundel County, but nationwide. However, it is assumed there will be a market correction followed by continued growth in the County and the Baltimore-Washington region over the long term.

## Housing Affordability

In the decade prior to 2007, housing prices escalated as developers constructed more expensive single-family homes to meet the demands of a more prosperous economy. In 1995, the median sales price of a home was $141,016. By 2007, the median sales price had increased to $340,000. In contrast, the median income did not increase at the same pace, presenting a challenge for persons who wished to purchase a home within their affordable range. According to the 2006 American Community Survey, the median household income was $79,160 and, an estimated 29% of total County households earned less than $50,000 annually.

This has resulted in a growing affordability gap between household income and the availability of housing at moderate prices. The inventory of homes available at prices that would be considered affordable for workforce households has been on the decline over this period and is now recognized to be seriously inadequate to serve the workforce population.

The rental housing market has experienced many of the same trends as the homeowner housing market. The average rental rates shown in a 2007 Apartments Study for Anne Arundel County range from about $800 for a one bedroom to $1,300 for a three-bedroom apartment, but can be higher in specific locations. This likewise presents a challenge for workforce households.

### Addressing Workforce Housing Needs

The State of Maryland has provided the following definitions for workforce housing:

> "Affordable" means that housing costs do not exceed 30% of household income.
>
> "Workforce housing" means:
>
> **Rental housing** that is affordable for a household with an aggregate annual income between 50% and 100% of area median income.
>
> **Homeownership housing** is affordable to a household with an aggregate annual income between 60% and 120% of area median income or in target areas recognized by the State. For the purposes of the MD Mortgage Program, it is affordable to a household with an aggregate annual income between 60% and 150% of the area median income.

In recognition of the statewide shortage of working housing opportunities, the State of Maryland enacted legislation in 2006 establishing a Workforce Housing Grant Program. Local jurisdictions may qualify for participation in the program if they have a five-year Consolidated Plan approved by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), or if they include a workforce housing element in their adopted comprehensive plan. The Anne Arundel County Consolidated Plan: FY 2006 –FY 2010 was adopted by the County Council in 2005 and serves as the County's HUD-approved Consolidated Plan. The County will therefore be eligible to participate in the State's Workforce Housing Grant Program as grant monies become available.

To address housing and community development needs and implement strategies of the Consolidated Plan, Anne Arundel County partners with Arundel Community Development Services, Inc. (ACDS), the Housing Commission of Anne Arundel County, and others to administer programs to address both workforce housing as well as low income housing needs. These include acquisition/rehabilitation programs, homeowner rehabilitation programs, innovative homeownership programs, rental housing production programs, and housing vouchers. ACDS is responsible for

planning, administration and implementation of the State, local and Federally funded housing and community development programs, and seeks to preserve and increase the supply of affordable housing, revitalize declining neighborhoods, promote homeownership and ensure housing for those with special needs.

The State's Department of Housing and Community Development, working with ACDS, also offers several programs to support homeownership in the County. These programs provide low interest mortgage and down payment assistance for qualifying buyers.

There have also been several Task Force initiatives to address the issue of workforce housing. The Annapolis and Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce undertook the latest task force initiative in July 2006. The effort was guided by the vision that "in order to be a vibrant, attractive and economically prosperous community, Anne Arundel County must strive to create and maintain a diverse community of workers." This necessitates the creation and preservation of a housing market with a broad range of housing options for all income levels.

To supplement these existing programs, several goals, policies and actions are listed below.

## Goal: Provide a variety of housing opportunities to serve the full range of housing needs in the County.

***Policy 1: Maintain a suitable range of housing densities and types including single family homes, townhomes, condominiums and apartments, to meets the needs of the local population.***

**Actions:**

- Identify and evaluate areas that may be suitable to target for Mixed Use development in order to provide more workforce housing while allowing residents to live near employment opportunities. Any such shifts should be confined to Priority Funding Areas to the extent possible.

- After the 2010 Census data is available, prepare updated population and household forecasts by age cohorts. Use this information to assess the supply and demand of age-restricted and senior housing opportunities.

***Policy 2: Increase the supply of workforce housing units in the County.***

**Actions:**

- Adopt the State's definition of workforce housing for use in establishing local policies and for consistency with State and regional policies related to workforce housing.
- Evaluate alternative forms of inclusionary housing programs that can be adopted and incorporated into the County's development codes.
- Develop additional financial incentives for the provision of workforce housing, such as streamlined regulatory processes, tax credits, density bonuses, or public/private partnerships.
- Create a Housing Trust Fund with a dedicated funding source to provide financing to improve the aging workforce housing stock and preserve and increase workforce housing.
- Promote greater use of Commercial Revitalization Tax Credits and flexible uses in Revitalization Districts to allow for inclusion of workforce housing where appropriate in these districts.
- Continue to utilize existing programs and develop new incentives to encourage rehabilitation of existing housing.
- Extend existing transit service and provide multiple transit options to support workforce housing concentrations.
- Continue to develop opportunities to partner with the State and private lenders to create new financing tools to assist with first time homeownership.

***Policy 3: Promote adaptive reuse of existing structures for workforce housing.***

**Actions:**

- Determine the feasibility of adaptive reuse of commercial buildings, such as motels and former retail centers, for workforce housing.
- Explore opportunities for use of surplus BOE properties for adaptive reuse as workforce housing.
- Target County owned surplus properties, where appropriate, for workforce housing development. Use developer agreements and/or incentives to encourage workforce housing. If deemed unsuitable for workforce housing, land could be sold and a portion of the proceeds donated to a Housing Trust Fund for workforce housing.

## Balancing Land Preservation

Keeping track of remaining development capacity and targeting growth to the appropriate areas are essential steps in sound land use planning. It is equally important, however, to promote and plan for an adequate level of land preservation and to have strong policies in place to protect preservation areas from development pressures that will increase as the available development capacity is drawn down.

According to analysis completed in 2006 for the County's updated *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan*, there were 61,673 acres of protected land in the County, as summarized in Table 3-3. Protected land includes State, County and Municipal recreation land; land in agricultural easements and managed forest land; and natural resources land that is protected under public ownership, under State land trust easements, or under Open Space zoning regulations. This total represents approximately 23% of the total land area in the County. In actuality, the number is somewhat higher because land under forest conservation easements was not included in the analysis. The County does not have a complete inventory of all forest conservation easements at this time.

*Table 3–3 Protected Land Summary*

| Category | Acres |
|---|---|
| Park Land | |
| Local | 7,985 |
| State | 862 |
| Total | 8,847 |
| Agricultural Land | 11,475 |
| Natural Resources Land | 41,352 |
| Total Protected Land | 61,673 |
| *Source: Anne Arundel County 2006 Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan* | |

The Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan established a goal of acquiring an additional 2,850 acres of recreation, open space, and natural resource land and an additional 8,500 acres of land under agricultural easements over the 15-year planning horizon (2005 – 2020). Based on recent land preservation accomplishments, the 2009 GDP increases the recreation, open space, and natural resource land preservation goal from 2,850 to 4,000 acres, of which 850 acres would be planned for active recreation and 3,150 acres for open space and natural resource protection. If this goal is achieved, the total amount of protected land in the County will increase to 74,173 acres, or 28% of total land area. This would be a significant achievement for a jurisdiction located between two major metropolitan areas in one of the fastest growing regions in the nation. It is also an achievement that, to be realized, will likely require stronger land preservation policies be established, stronger incentives be developed for private property owners to preserve land, and new funding sources or revenue strategies be created to allow additional land acquisition for preservation.

The County currently has mechanisms in place to help prioritize where these preservation efforts should be targeted. The *Greenways Master Plan* proposes a network of protected corridors of woodland and open space, and to date approximately 49% of the proposed network is not yet permanently protected. In addition, the County's Rural Legacy Area as well as the proposed Priority Preservation Area (see Chapter 8) are targeted areas for preservation.

This GDP includes strategies to increase and enhance preservation efforts in these areas in order to achieve the "28% protected land" goal. Goals, policies and actions to accomplish this are listed below as well as in Chapter 5 (Environmental Stewardship).

## Goal: Increase the amount of protected land in the County in order to preserve open space and rural areas and protect natural resources.

***Policy 1: Acquire approximately 3,150 additional acres of land for open space and natural resource land protection by year 2020***

**Actions:**

- In accordance with the 2006 *Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan*, pursue the acquisition of additional land for preservation. Target properties in the Greenways network, the Rural Legacy Area, in subwatersheds identified as high priority for preservation in a Watershed Management Plan, and in other areas suitable for passive recreation or natural resource protection.
- Offset future land use and zoning intensifications by acquiring or otherwise retaining additional land for preservation where feasible.
- Partner with local land trusts to increase promotion and marketing of preservation mechanisms such as conservation easements.