

Part II: Vision and Recommendations

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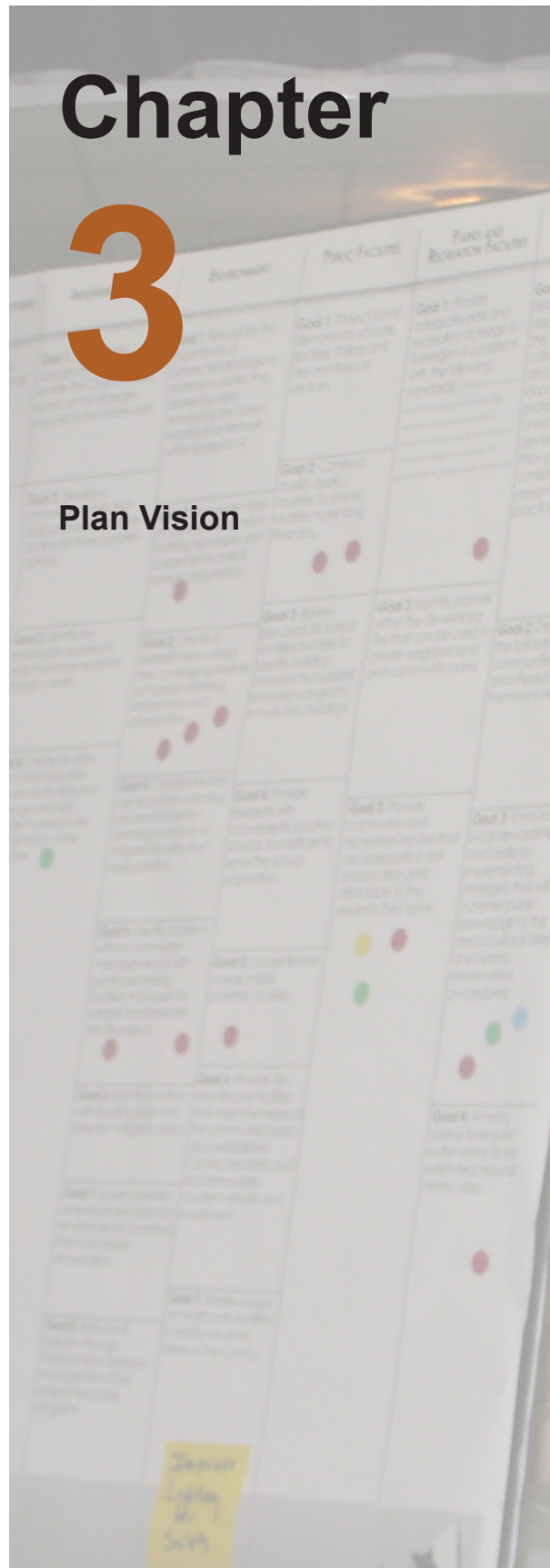
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Chapter 3

Plan Vision

Introduction

The vision of the Subregion 4 Master Plan is the result of numerous collaborative meetings and workshops with area stakeholders. The ideas, priorities and concerns documented throughout this public engagement process were critical to the development of the plan vision. The recommendations that emerged were strengthened and refined through meetings with the implementing agencies and key property owners. The plan vision reflects what Subregion 4 can become by capitalizing on its location, existing infrastructure, historic resources, industrial sector, and large employment base while committing to realizing the land use plan and protecting the environment.



Subregion

4

Master Plan

Vision Statement

Subregion 4 thrives as the “Heart of Prince George’s County,” featuring a large percentage of the county’s residents and employment base. As described in the 2002 Approved General Plan vision for the Developed Tier, the subregion is a unique location where new and older suburban neighborhoods are balanced by development that is more urban in character. A network of sustainable, medium-to-high density, transit-supporting, mixed-use, pedestrian-oriented neighborhoods located at the centers and corridor nodes connects to the residential enclaves by a multimodal transportation network. Smaller, urban-scale residential communities, neighborhood commercial centers, and older “main streets” also exist to meet residents’ needs. Additional employment centers exist in the many industrial and business parks along the subregion’s boundaries. The industrial areas are improved and buffered to minimize their visual and environmental impacts. This plan envisions balancing new development that optimizes existing infrastructure with maintaining and revitalizing existing neighborhoods and commercial areas through redevelopment, adaptive reuse, preservation, and conservation.



The environmental envelope is enhanced and protected to provide for a series of interconnected open spaces designed to improve stormwater management, conserve natural resources, and to act as an amenity for the community. Together these elements will help to reinforce Subregion 4 as the heart of Prince George’s County.

Vision Elements

Revitalized Neighborhoods

Today, Subregion 4 neighborhoods are challenged by aging housing stock, high foreclosure rates, and an increasing number of single-family homes serving as rental properties. The plan envisions living areas with unique characteristics, including neighborhoods within municipalities, well-maintained residential blocks and the quiet culs-de-sac and townhouse communities all served by local retail.

- The living areas retain their mature suburban character, transitioning to the centers and industrial areas in a seamless manner.
- There is an emphasis on the maintenance and revitalization of housing, as evidenced by programs and services available for homeowners, especially in the established communities.
- A variety of homeownership options is available for residents from a range of income levels.
- Neighborhood serving retail is concentrated at market-supportable locations. The commercial corridors are redeveloped to include a mix of uses, encourage pedestrian activity, and provide a sense of identity for the communities that they serve. Many of the former strip commercial centers are replaced with high-quality urban housing appropriate for the location.
- A key element in maintaining the suburban character of the established communities is to focus new development at the centers.
- New construction respects and reinforces community character by being consistent in scale and character with neighboring buildings.



Focus New Development At Centers

A key priority of the 2002 Prince George's County Approved General Plan is to direct future growth in the Developed Tier to the designated centers. Currently, the eight centers in Subregion 4 (Addison Road/Seat Pleasant, Capitol Heights, Cheverly, Landover Metro, Landover Gateway, Morgan Boulevard, New Carrollton, and Suitland) are underutilized, underdeveloped, and have not captured the quality retail that is desired by the residents and offered at locations with comparable transit access. The Subregion 4 Master Plan realizes this opportunity and presents a set of strategies to minimize competing development interests among the eight centers and between the centers and the neighborhood commercial areas. The plan envisions new, mixed-use development featuring medium- to high-density residential, office, and retail at the eight General Plan centers located within the subregion.

- Centers are places for commerce, public services, and transit. They fulfill a growing demand for additional housing stock. The higher densities envisioned and influx of transit riders to a single location also help incentivize public amenities and attract high-quality retailers.
- Seven of the centers are located around Metro stations, conveniently connecting pedestrians to the wider transit network.
- There is a strong emphasis on transit-oriented, pedestrian-friendly environments for users to live, work, and play. Development of the mixed-use areas will position the subregion to better serve the retail needs of its residents and capture a portion of the retail market for the area.
- The centers are supported by an overall transportation network that emphasizes transit and pedestrian access and provides connections to the surrounding neighborhoods.



- A range of housing types are available, including modern, attractive rental housing and condominiums at locations with access to transit and other vital community services.
- As identified by the market analysis the Addison Road/Seat Pleasant Metro area and the Morgan Boulevard Metro area develop early in response to their development potential and market viability.

Reinforce Subregion 4 as an Industrial and Employment Center for the Region

Although the industrial and employment centers in Subregion 4 supply an important tax base to the county and meet regional demand for high-intensity uses, there is a concern about their impact on the overall quality of life in the area and their long-term viability. Application of appropriate zoning tools, development standards, and guidelines direct development to meet the plan vision for viable, attractive, and healthy industrial and employment centers.

- The subregion serves as a key economic engine for the central part of the county with varied employment and commercial opportunities for consumers and providers.
- Industrial areas are preserved, but buffered from other compatible uses to protect



residents while maintaining the jobs and tax base that support residents of the subregion.

- Urban design standards and guidelines ensure development is at the appropriate scale and character for the surrounding area and buffers are constructed to improve transitions between land uses.
- Existing regulations are enforced by the appropriate agencies.

Improved Mobility For Walking, Biking, Transit And Driving

Today, the subregion is largely auto-oriented with no fewer than eight major highways or thoroughfares traveling through or adjacent to it. Pedestrian safety and the need for improved connections for local users are major concerns for the area's stakeholders.

The plan envisions a fully integrated multimodal system of vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle, bus, and metro transit included within a network of thoroughfares and open space. Improvements are aimed at ensuring safe and efficient transit connections.

- New sidewalk and trail connections are identified throughout the subregion, emphasizing sidewalk corridors connecting schools, community centers, and Metro stations.
- Development at the centers and nodes is oriented to pedestrians and cyclists. New developments will include enhanced transit stops, wide sidewalks, bicycle lanes, and pedestrian-oriented buildings with ground floor retail and on-street parking.
- Bus service is improved to provide coordinated connections to the Metro stations and other key areas in the subregion, reduce leadtimes, and simplify the user experience through clearly identified destinations, routes, and schedules.

Improved Community Character and Sense of Place

Currently divergent land uses, numerous jurisdictions, and inconsistency of the quality of development lend to a lack of community character for the subregion as a whole. The rich history of the area and the variety of development patterns that exist present an opportunity for Subregion 4 to develop into a series of communities and landscapes, each with a unique character and appearance. The master plan envisions a display of community character and the creation of a stronger sense of place by building upon the area's resources.

- Throughout the master plan area, an enhanced open space network connects parks to surrounding neighborhoods and provides for increased stormwater capacity. The open space network includes the creation of new park spaces, additions to the trail network, the introduction of stormwater management facilities, and improvements to existing parks.
- Significant historic properties are appreciated and valued as important elements of the area's cultural heritage.
- New development and revitalization plans are sensitive to issues of energy efficiency, recycling and conservation of materials and resources, waste reduction, and environmentally sensitive design.
- Urban Design Standards inform the development of new, community-serving, mixed-use centers at key locations in the subregion. The standards address the use of appropriate scale, form, and building massing to provide for a quality pedestrian experience.
- Development of neighborhood-serving retail specific to a community's needs is encouraged at designated locations in the living areas to enhance the sense of place.



Build Upon Shared Needs and Improve Connections

Communities in the subregion share a number of concerns and interests including access to goods and services, public safety, and overall quality of life.

The Subregion 4 Master Plan envisions an improved network of communities in which shared goals are achieved through improved planning, funding, and communication.

- The overall development pattern for the subregion protects the living and industrial areas, allowing them to prosper and thrive while minimizing the impacts they have on each other.
- Public facilities are planned to support, protect, and educate the current and future residents of the subregion.
- A community development corporation (CDC) is created for Subregion 4 to meet the housing, community development, and economic development needs of the area.
- A comprehensive implementation strategy is in place for the county, state, municipalities, CDCs, and private developers to follow.