

The Route 277 Triangle and Urban Center Land Use Plan.

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The Route 277 Triangle and Urban Center Land Use Plan.

The Route 277 Study effort has identified opportunities to create new communities, integrate land use and transportation choices, address community infrastructure needs, and expand the County's goals for economic development.

A series of maps have been prepared which identify Future Land Use, Transportation, Community Facilities, and Historical, Natural and Recreational Resources within the study area.

The Route 277 Triangle and Urban Center Land Use Study promotes five main areas of new land use focus; the Route 277 Urban Center, the Route 277 Triangle; Center of Economy, Interstate Commercial @ 307, Neighborhood Commercial @ White Oak Woods, and Tasker Woods.

The above areas combine to frame the southern boundary of the County's urban areas.

Land Use.

The Route 277 Urban Center

The Route 277 Urban Center is envisioned to be an intensive, walkable urban area that is well integrated with the surrounding community. The urban center should be based on the principles of New Urbanism or Traditional Neighborhood Design promoted in the Comprehensive Plan. It shall contain a large commercial core, generally higher residential densities with a mix of housing types, an interconnected street system, and public open space around which the urban center is designed. Community facilities shall also provide a focal point for the urban center and surrounding community. Presently, Sherando High School and Sherando Park provide this function. In the future, these resources shall be complemented by a new Elementary School which shall serve the existing and future population and be located within the urban center. Public spaces in the form of pocket parks, plazas, or greens shall be further integrated into the design of the Route 277 Urban Center.

The Route 277 Urban Center is centrally located to the community and is in the short term, respectful to the Agricultural District. The commercial and residential mix of land uses shall have a strong street presence and shall relate to existing Route 277, Warrior Drive and Double Church Road. The mix of commercial, residential, employment, and community uses shall be linked to the surrounding community with inter modal transportation choices and public open spaces.

Route 277 Triangle; Centers of Economy

Route 277 Triangle; Centers of Economy is designed to be a significant area of commercial and industrial opportunity that is fully supportive of the County Economic Development Commission's targeted goals and strategies. The intent of the mixed use designation is to further enhance the County's commercial and industrial areas and to provide focus to the County's future regional employment centers. In specific areas a

mix of flexible uses, with office uses in prominent locations is encouraged. Such areas are supported by substantial areas of industrial and commercial opportunity, and provide for areas that are well designed with high quality architecture and site design. It is the intent of such areas to promote a strong positive community image. Residential land uses are not permitted.

Interstate Commercial @ 307

Located at a highly visible location on a prominent interstate interchange, this area of land use shall be designed specifically to accommodate and promote highway commercial land uses. Particular effort must be made to ensure that access management for the supporting transportation network is a key priority as the function of the interstate and primary road network is of paramount importance. Access to the areas of interstate commercial land uses shall be carefully designed. The building and site layout and design of the projects shall be of a high quality. In addition, an enhanced buffer and landscaping area shall be provided adjacent to the Interstate 81 right-of-way, its ramps, and the new arterial road, the South Frederick Parkway, and adjacent to Route 11.

Neighborhood Village Commercial @ White Oak Woods

A Neighborhood Village Commercial area is proposed at White Oak Road and Route 277 which is sensitive to the existing character and scale of the location, adjacent to Sherando Park and the White Oak Campground. The orientation of this neighborhood commercial shall be to the park and adjoining street network. A new Fire and Rescue Facility and Community Facility shall provide an additional focal point to this area. This facility and the commercial land uses shall be of a general scale and context similar to projects such as Creekside. High quality building and site design is a priority. Accessory residential uses are only permitted as second story or above residential units.

A second smaller area of Neighborhood Village Commercial is identified on the south side of Route 277 in the general vicinity of the future entrance of Shenandoah and the existing Sandy's Mobile Home Park.

Tasker Woods

The Tasker Woods Land Use Plan was approved in 2005. The Route 277 Study has provided the opportunity to complement the original plan and complete the whole picture by providing guidance on the future land use for all of the land area between Route 522, Tasker Road, and White Oak Road. An area of Neighborhood Village Commercial is proposed between the originally proposed residential areas and Route 522, serving the Tasker Woods area. An internal access road serving this area has been provided with the Tasker Woods project. Therefore, no new commercial entrances shall be permitted on Route 522. Access Management is a priority along the Route 522 corridor. A significant corridor appearance buffer is proposed along Route 522 similar to that established for Route 50 West corridor in the Round Hill Land Use Plan which consisted of a 50' buffer area, landscaping, and bike path. Accessory residential uses are only permitted as second story or above residential units.

The area of natural resources connecting Tasker Woods with Route 522, including the existing pond shall continue to be recognized in this plan. An extension of the neighborhood commercial land uses may be appropriate on the east and west sides of the

existing pond if a balance is achieved between protecting the environmental features and allowing compatible neighborhood commercial uses, which may also include commercial recreational uses.

In addition to the Neighborhood Village Commercial land uses, an area of commercial land use is proposed generally north of Tasker Road. This is an extension of the previously planned commercial area on Tasker Road. Two areas have been identified as recreational and natural resources and have been connected together in an effort to protect the existing natural resources and provide additional recreational opportunities for the Tasker Woods area.

Defined Rural Areas.

The Route 277 Study has sought to further define the boundary between the Rural and Urban Areas of the community. As noted, the above areas of proposed land use combine to frame the southern boundary of the County's urban areas. The plan provides enhanced recognition of Double Church Agricultural District. This recognition and the location and boundaries of the proposed land uses further promote a clean separation between the County's rural and urban areas.

A summary of the new future land use designations promoted in the Route 277 Study is provided as Appendix A of this plan.

Transportation.

In support of the new areas of land use, a transportation network has been proposed which relates to the location and context of the areas of land use, promotes multi-modal transportation choices and walkability, and furthers the efforts of the Win-Fred MPO. In this study there is a direct nexus between transportation and land use.

The relocation of Interstate 81, Exit 307, provides a new orientation for the County's primary road system and provides new opportunities to create a transportation network which supports the future growth of the community in the right locations.

A new arterial road is proposed, Route 277 relocated, which connects the relocated Interstate Exit 307 with existing Route 277 west of Double Tollgate. This is in the vicinity of the proposed entrance to Shenandoah. The context of this road is a limited access parkway whose function is to move large volumes of traffic through and around the community. The concept of a South Frederick Parkway was envisioned through the study. Access to this new parkway would be limited to Town Run Lane, Double Church Road, Warrior Drive, Hudson Hollow Road, and existing Route 277 business at its new intersection with the parkway. With regards to access to Town Run Lane, the Exit 307 Interchange Justification Study should evaluate the possibility of an alternative access east of its current location to ensure a viable long term approach to access management in this area in a manner that accommodates the anticipated highway commercial land uses.

Access Management is a significant consideration of this study and is a key element of the potential South Frederick Parkway. This concept is supportive of providing for key

connections to the south. The use of frontage roads, minor collector roads, and inter parcel connections to bring traffic to access points is promoted. Access management is also a key consideration on other roads within the study area, however, within a different context.

The study also proposes a new and extended major collector network supplemented by interconnected minor collector street network in support of a significant urban center and new areas of economic growth. Existing Route 277 and Town Run Lane, Double Church Road, Warrior Drive, Hudson Hollow Road, and White Oak Road are all identified for enhancement. A particular emphasis shall be placed on ensuring that improvements to existing Route 277 remain a short term transportation priority for the study area.

An extension of existing Route 277 is proposed to provide a new parallel road connection from Route 277 to Route 522 in support of this area of economic growth and to better distribute the vehicle movements to Route 522.

Roundabouts should be considered as a priority preference for intersection design. Roundabouts are particularly effective when used in series, such as along the Parkway, and when used where intersection spacing may be an issue such as where Warrior Drive and Double Church Road intersect with the Parkway.

The context of the collector road network is proposed to be significantly different however than that of the Parkway with the focus being placed on a more walkable and complete street thoroughfare design. The change in context is based upon classification of road and to ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses and community goals. Particular attention should be paid to street network within the Urban Center. The surrounding land use, site design, and building design are features that will help create context and promote the creation of new communities, places, and focal points. Attention should also be provided to the context of the street in the immediate vicinity of Sherando High School, Sherando Park, and the Neighborhood Village Commercial Areas to ensure that these prominent locations are safe and accessible to all modes of transportation. Bicycle and pedestrian accommodations should be fully integrated to achieve complete streets. Appropriately designed intersection accommodations should include pedestrian refuge islands and pedestrian actualized signals.

More specific transportation considerations for Sherando Park include taking a proactive approach in creating safe interconnected routes to the park from the adjacent areas. Traffic calming across the entire frontage of Sherando Park is warranted with special attention placed on providing a safe and efficient main entrance to the park.

Consistent application of Comprehensive Plan goals to achieve an acceptable level of service on area roads and overall transportation network, level of service C or better, should be promoted. Further, efforts should be made to ensure that additional degradation of the transportation beyond an acceptable level of service shall be avoided. Consideration of future development applications within the study area should only occur when an acceptable level of service has been achieved and key elements and connections identified in this plan have been provided.

Community Facilities, Natural, Historical and Recreational Resources

Community Facilities. The Route 277 study effort included an evaluation of current and future community facility needs and a collaborative discussion with community facility providers including Frederick County Public Schools, School Transportation, Parks and Recreation, Fire and Rescue, and Public Works who provided input regarding their long range plans. Representatives of the Handley Regional Library also provided input.

As a result of this effort, the Route 277 Study addresses community facility needs and identifies new opportunities for collaboration. Fire and Rescue expressed a preference for a smaller facility in this area to support existing operations and identified the optimum location for such a facility in the general vicinity of the intersection of White Oak/Hudson Hollow Road and Route 277. In conjunction with this need, Parks and Recreation and Fire and Rescue identified a particular location that could jointly accommodate their future needs. This example may also provide an opportunity to accommodate an additional longstanding community need; to provide satellite meeting space for the Sheriff's Office and the Treasurer/Commissioner of Revenue's Office in this area of the County. The Route 277 Study seeks to provide for such a facility generally in the White Oak Woods area.

Anticipated growth in the County school and park systems is recognized by providing for additional areas of expansion adjacent to the existing Sherando High School and Sherando Park. It is important that the County is proactive in obtaining any additional land resources that are necessary to support their future operations. A new Elementary School has been identified as necessary in the future. Every effort should be made to locate this future elementary school as a component and focal point of the Route 277 Urban Center.

Natural and Recreational Resources. The natural and cultural features of an area provide an opportunity to incorporate the unique features of an area into a planning effort that promotes the character of the community, furthering the community's sense of place. In addition to the recognition of the County's Rural Areas and Agricultural Districts, the Route 277 Study and future land use maps recognize the areas green infrastructure. Of particular note is the Wrights Run area which provides a great opportunity for a future Greenway through the center of the study area. In addition, several other environmental stream corridors provide important connectivity throughout the study area. Other features of note include the mature woodlands located throughout the study area but especially in the vicinity of the White Oak Woods area and at the intersection of Route 277 and Warrior Drive.

Historic Resources. Several structures were recognized by the HRAB as having significance to the Route 277 Study Area. The identified structures should be buffered and preserved whenever possible. Three historical churches located in the study area are in good condition, have historic cemeteries, and should be preserved during any development or land use planning of the 277 corridor. To that end the two churches along Double Church Road have been recognized and the general area surrounding these churches being designated as a rural area. Macedonia Church is located just north of the Tasker Woods area and should continue to be preserved. All of the above churches are

active and provide a great resource for the community.

The Melvin Sandy house is located immediately adjacent to Sherando Park and would be ideal for use as an element of the Park. In the event that it cannot be included as part of the park, it would be appropriate for the use on the property to develop as something which would encourage the protection of the structure and provide a use which encourages park users to utilize the property. Similarly, the White Oak Campground has significant historic presence in the area and should also be included into uses associated with Sherando Park. The HRAB felt that increasing the trail network throughout the 277 corridor would increase the preservation and rehabilitation of the historic structures listed above but especially between the Melvin Sandy house and the White Oak campground into Sherando Park.

Implementation

UDA & SWSA Boundaries

The UDA & SWSA boundaries shall not be modified at the time of the approval of this land use plan. In the future, the UDA & SWSA boundaries may be modified consistent with the land use designations of the Study, and ultimately up to the potential locations of the UDA and SWSA identified by the study, only with the approval of the Board of Supervisors, and only when it has been demonstrated that the necessary sewer and water infrastructure is available.

Infrastructure and Community Facilities

It is essential to ensure that the infrastructure, in particular transportation infrastructure, and the necessary community facilities are provided in a timely and coordinated manner in order to enable the successful implementation of the land use plan.

The land use designations that will form the basis for future zoning amendments were designed in coordination with the infrastructure, in particular transportation infrastructure, and the necessary community facilities. Therefore, future development applications shall address the impacts of the project and shall further the implementation of the infrastructure and community facility transportation improvements identified in the Comprehensive Policy Plan. This may include the design and construction of key segments of the proposed South Frederick Parkway and major collector roads identified in the Route 277 Plan. Consideration of future development applications within the study area should only occur when an acceptable level of service has been achieved and key elements and connections identified in this plan have been provided.

The plan proposes a balanced approach to the proposed transportation improvements and the Agricultural and Forestal district to ensure the future function of both important elements. The transportation needs of the broader community and the function and context of the Agricultural and Forestal District shall continue to be recognized in the implementation of this plan.

Zoning Amendments to implement the plan

Zoning Amendments to implement the Route 277 Plan shall be proactive in implementing key components of this land use plan. It is expected that all new projects shall be consistent with the Comprehensive Policy Plan, fully mitigate any impacts associated with requests, and implement the elements of the Route 277 Study. Particular attention shall be paid to the land uses, infrastructure and community facilities.

Two New Zoning Districts are proposed in implementation of this land use study:

Office-Manufacturing (OM) Park District.

The intent of this district is to implement the mixed use industrial/office land use classification of the Comprehensive Policy Plan. The OM Park District is designed to provide areas for research and development centers, office parks, and minimal impact industrial uses. This district shall be located in a campus like atmosphere near major transportation facilities.

New Urbanist/Traditional Neighborhood Zoning Classification.

This flexible zoning classification is intended to enable Neighborhood and Urban Village Centers, or a part thereof, to be developed. The Neighborhood Villages and Urban Centers are to be designed to implement the planning principles promoted for the urban areas of the County. This flexible new urbanist classification shall implement traditional neighborhood design and fully enable new urbanism. This Planned Community approach would be similar to that of the R-4, Residential Planned Community; however it would be applicable to smaller properties located within those areas designated as Neighborhood Villages and Urban Centers. Such an approach should be promoted throughout the UDA. However, particular emphasis should be placed on the designated Neighborhood Villages and Urban Centers, including the Route 277 Urban Center. This zoning classification, along with the proposed Business Overlay District, shall be the classifications used with the Route 277 Urban Center.

Appendix A

The Route 277 Triangle and Urban Center future land use designations.

The County's Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance currently provide for commercial and industrial land uses. To further enhance the commercial and industrial opportunities and to provide a focus for this future regional employment center, two new mixed use land use designations are promoted by the study. The mixed use land use designations envisioned for the study area are described further in the following narrative.

Urban Center

The Urban Center is larger than the Neighborhood Village Commercial and is envisioned to be a more intensive, walkable urban area with a larger commercial core, higher residential densities, and be designed around some form of public space or focal point and an interconnected street system. Urban Centers should be located in close proximity to major transportation infrastructure.

Minimum 50 percent of area shall be non residential.

Accessory residential bonus for second story and above residential units

Neighborhood Village Commercial

Neighborhood Village Commercial areas are envisioned to be compact commercial centers that focus and complement the surrounding neighborhoods, are walkable and designed at a human scale, and which are supported by existing and planned road networks.

Accessory residential uses are only permitted as second story and above residential units

Centers of Economy - Promoting the County's Economic Development efforts.

The intent of the mixed use designation is to provide focus to the County's future regional employment centers, to encourage a mix of flexible uses which are consistent with the EDC's targeted industries and are supported by substantial areas of industrial and commercial opportunity, and to provide for areas that are well designed with high quality architecture and site design, and which will promote a strong positive community image. Residential land uses are not permitted.

Mixed Use Office Commercial

Employment center with low to mid rise offices transitioning and mixing with commercial land uses. Located at, and supported by, key transportation elements and intersections.

Minimum 25 percent of area shall be office

Mixed Use Office Industrial

Employment center with mid to higher rise office buildings on individual sites or within campus style parks transitioning and mixing with industrial land uses. Office land uses shall have a prominent visual location in relation to surrounding community and street network. Located at, and supported by, key transportation elements and intersections.

Minimum 25 percent of area shall be office