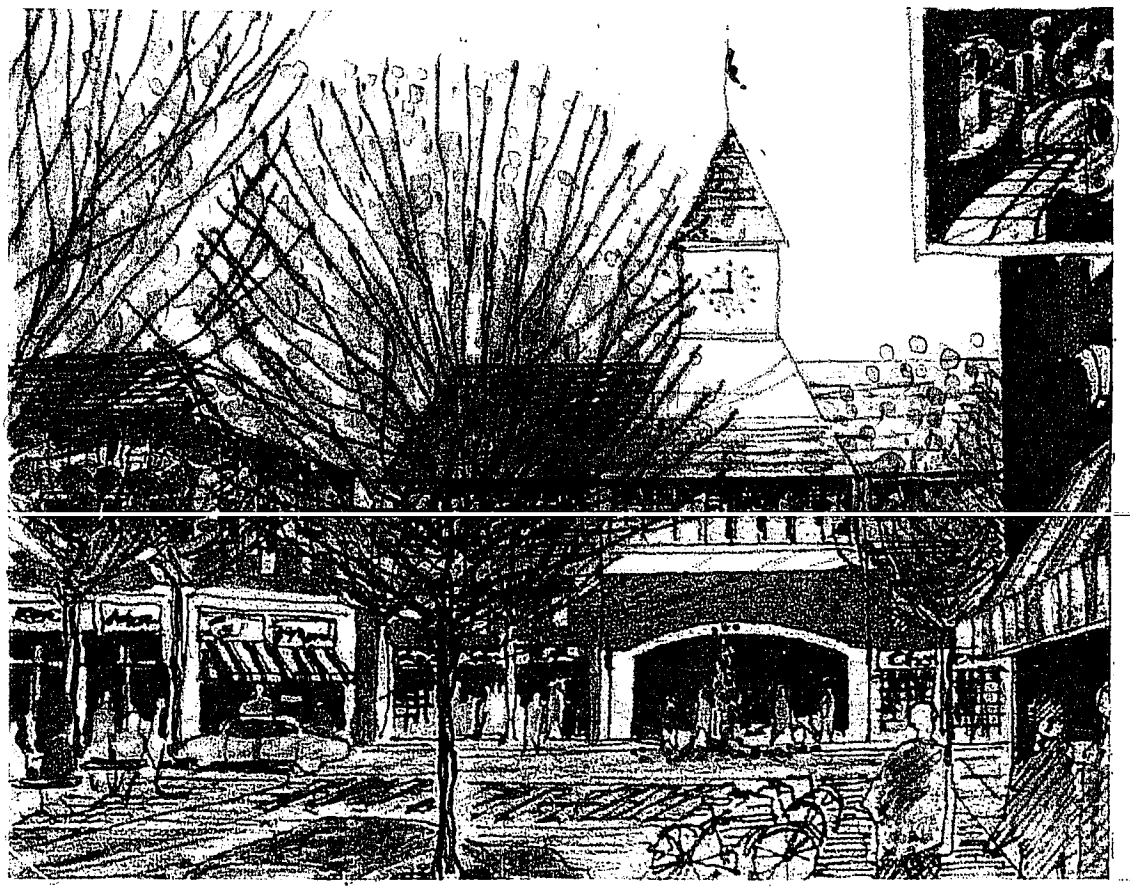
THE PLAN FOR THE FUTURE OF DOWNTOWN LA PLATA

A Design for a New Downtown



An Initial Step in Implementing the 2000 Vision Plan

Prepared by the Town of La Plata, Maryland
in cooperation with
officials of Charles County and the State of Maryland

March 15, 2001

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Cover Illustration by Charles Lamb
View of the New Town Hall in the proposed Town Center Area

The Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata

March 15, 2001

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The Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata

March 15, 2001

Overview of the Plan

KEY FEATURES

This is a plan for a *New Downtown* for La Plata. It builds upon the historic features of the town and defines an exciting future, including:

- A new street network for vehicular access as well as pedestrian use
- Pedestrian-oriented streetscapes
- Expanded and upgraded parking
- Improved land use pattern with an updated mix of uses
- Expanded open space network
- Improved physical and economic vitality of the downtown area, and
- Specific immediate and long-range actions to implement the plan.

TIME HORIZON

This plan is both short and long term. The plan contains elements to be done immediately, as well as elements that are not expected until well into the future (20+ years).

This Plan gives special attention to opportunities for:

- Expanding local government and civic facilities as the anchors of downtown
- Creating new street connections in and around downtown to enhance mobility
- Re-building streetscapes and sidewalks to enhance pedestrian convenience
- Creating site-development opportunities for new office, retail and residential development within the downtown, and
- Providing adequate parking (on-street, surface lots, and parking structures)

This plan also focuses on implementation.
It identifies:

- Preliminary cost estimates for major infrastructure improvements
- Key land parcels that are critical to the success of the plan, and
- Action priorities to implement the plan

ROOTS OF THE PLAN

This plan for the future of the historic downtown area of La Plata was the first step in implementing the Vision Plan for Greater La Plata, which was completed by citizens in March, 2000. That Vision Plan included several recommendations for immediate action, one of the most important of which was a detailed design for the downtown area.

This plan for the new downtown was prepared during the autumn and winter of 2000-01 by the Citizens Task Force, working with the consulting team.

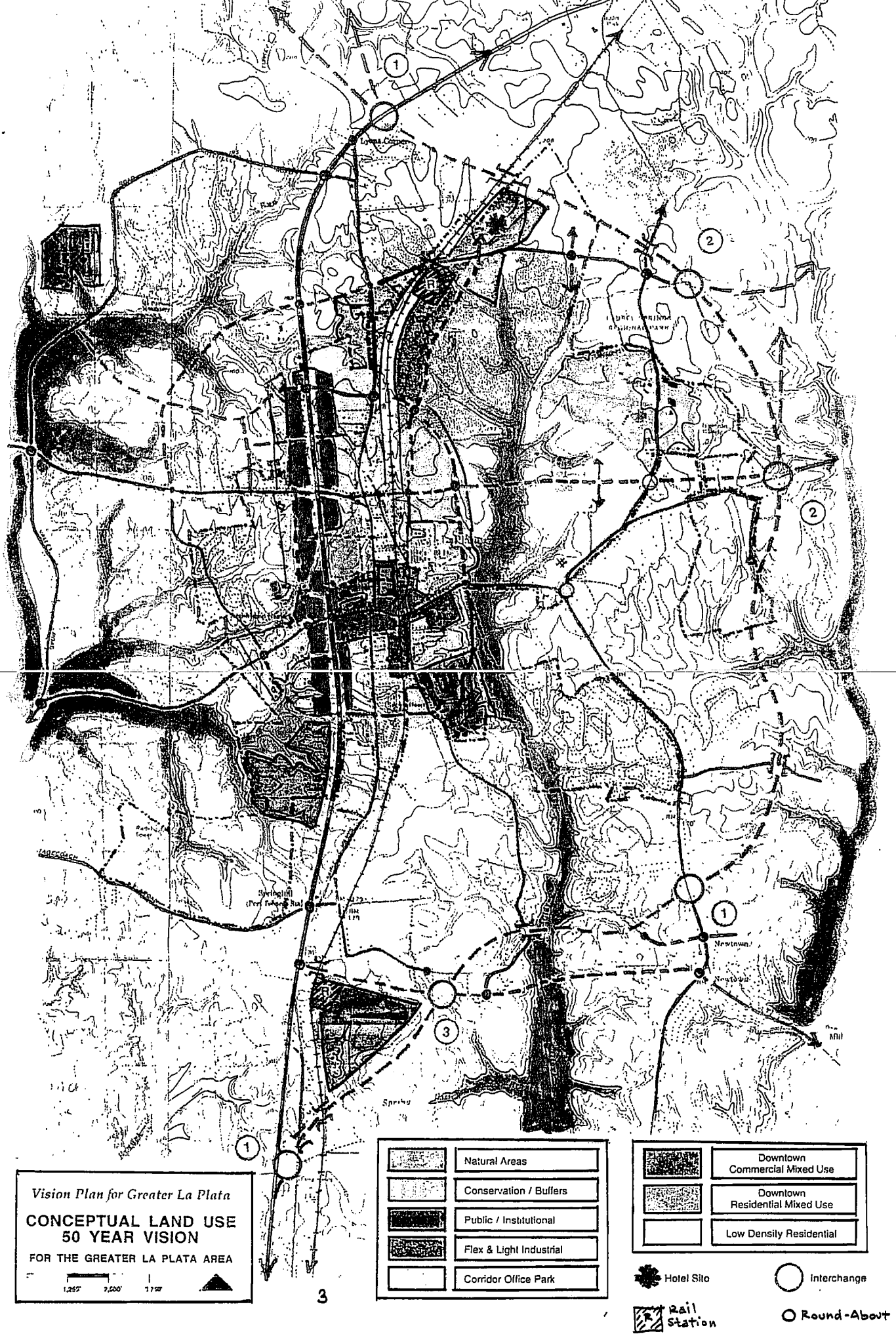
The geographic focus of this downtown plan is the area immediately surrounding the County Court House and Government Center, generally defined by:

- US Route 301 to the west (including the uses along that portion of the corridor)
- Hospital and County Library to the east (Willow Lane as the outer eastern edge)
- Old tobacco warehouse area to the south (Glen Albin Road as the southern edge)
- Hermitage property and the Washington Avenue neighborhood to the north (Hawthorne Drive as the northern edge)

The outer edges of the area described above are approximately a five-minute walk from the center in all directions (a ten minute walk across).

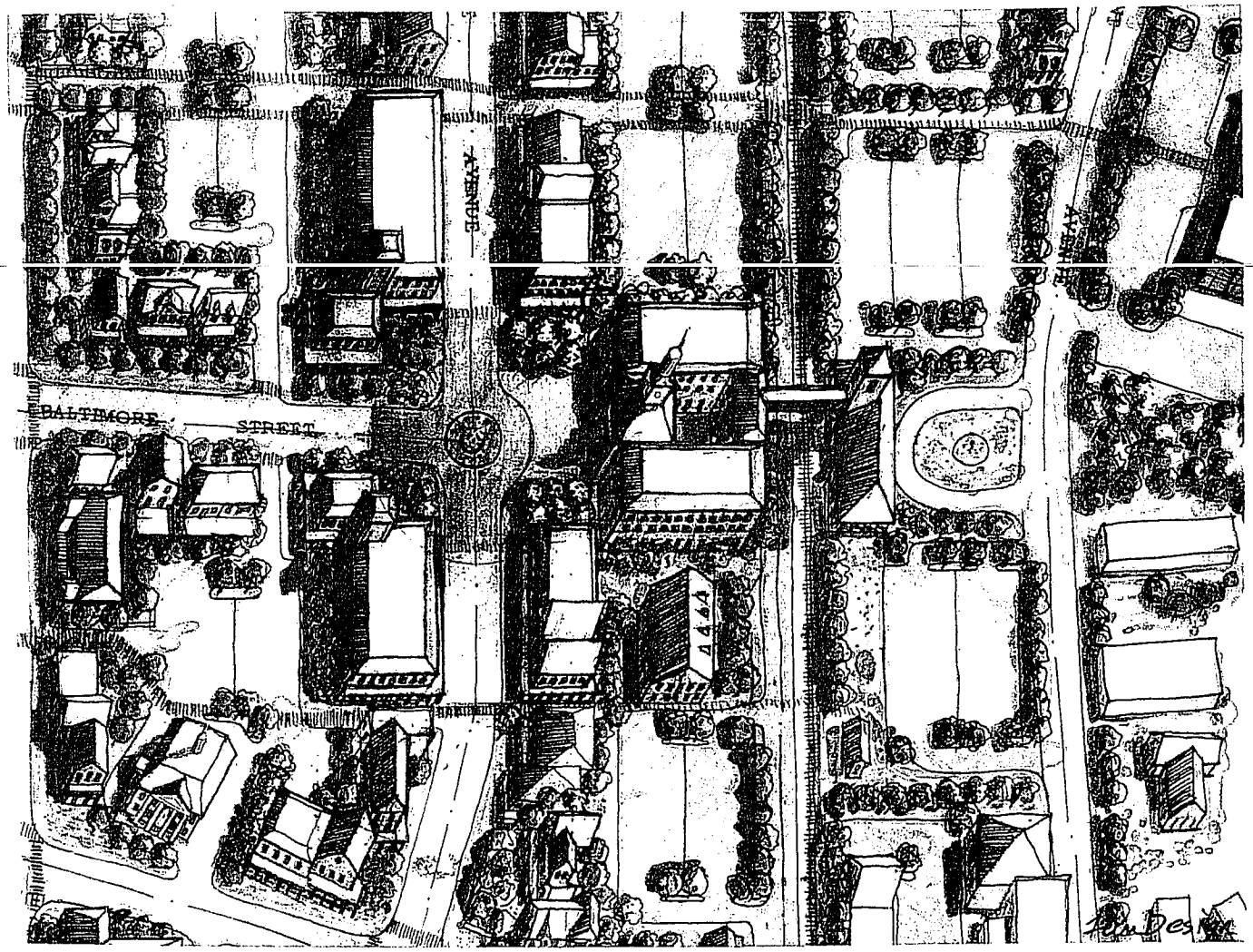
The substantive focus of this plan is on the key infrastructure and land use elements that need to be established or changed in order to improve the economic vitality of the downtown, while preserving and enhancing the historic character of the area.

The plan provides a conceptual layout for the physical development of the downtown. It is more detailed than the general concept created for downtown during the Vision Plan process, but it is still general enough in nature to allow the flexibility that will be needed to achieve the plan during the coming decades.

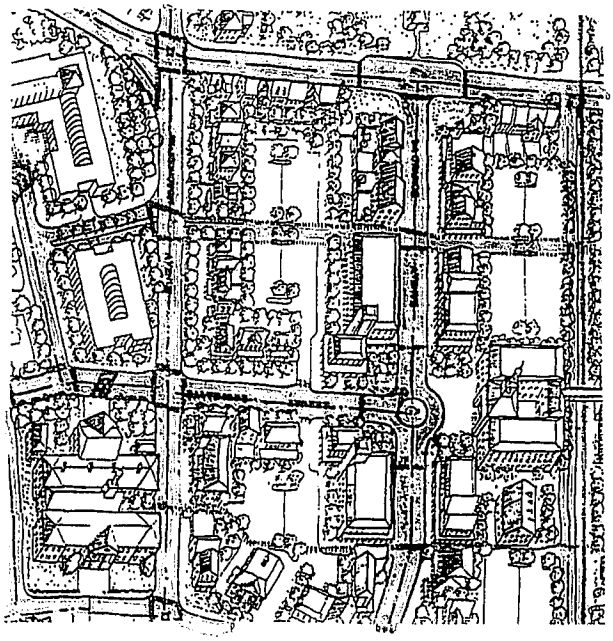

Vision Plan for Greater La Plata
CONCEPTUAL LAND USE
50 YEAR VISION
FOR THE GREATER LA PLATA AREA
Natural Areas
Conservation / Buffers
Public / Institutional
Flex & Light Industrial
Corridor Office Park
Downtown Commercial Mixed Use
Downtown Residential Mixed Use
Low Density Residential
Hotel Site
Interchange
Rail Station
Round-About

The Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata:

What Will It Look Like?



What Will the Future Downtown Look Like?



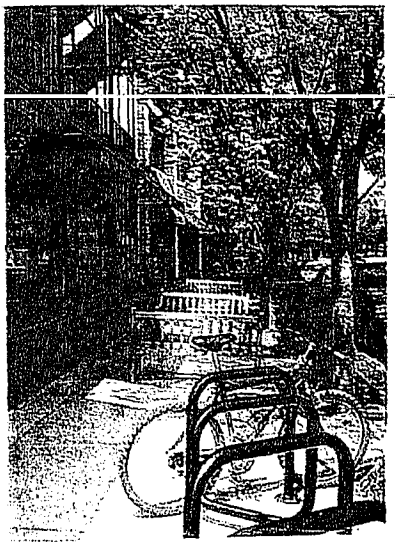
MAJOR FEATURES OF THE DOWNTOWN PLAN

This plan will lead to the creation of a *New Downtown* for La Plata - a downtown that preserves and builds upon the historic fabric of the Town, but also adds new uses and civic amenities that will make the Town the true "heart" of Charles County.

The major features of the future downtown include:

1. ***New street connections***

   The street network will be improved and expanded for greater vehicular and pedestrian mobility within and around the downtown area



2. ***New and improved streetscapes***

   The streetscapes within downtown will be designed to provide amenities for pedestrians, including such elements as:

   - Wide sidewalks
   - landscaping
   - street furniture
   - human-scale building facades, and
   - on-street parking

   These features will make the downtown an enjoyable place for people to walk, sit, window-shop and relax.

3. ***More civic and government facilities***

   The County and Town government facilities within downtown will be expanded as needed, and coordinated with each other.

4. ***More retail, office and housing uses***

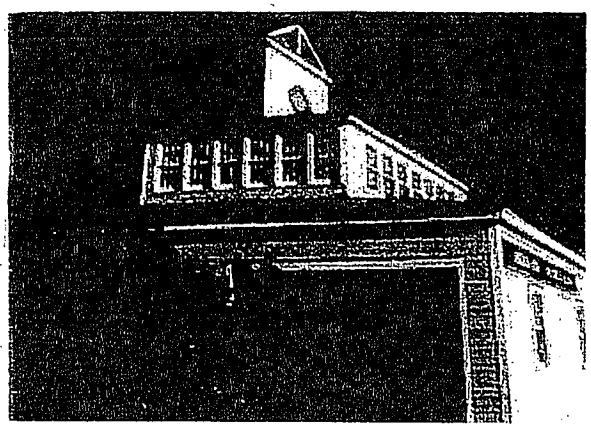
   Additional retail, office and housing will be developed in a mixed-use pattern within and around downtown to increase the overall economic and social vitality of the area.

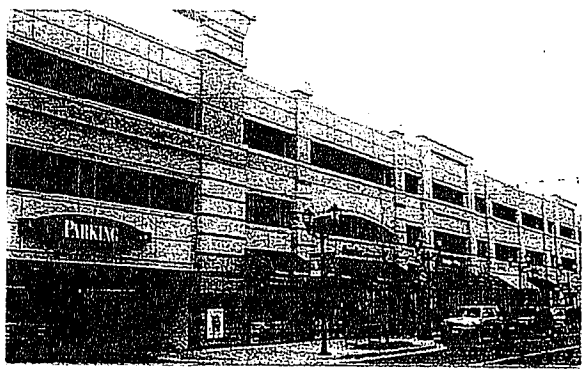
KEY CONCEPT OF THE PLAN

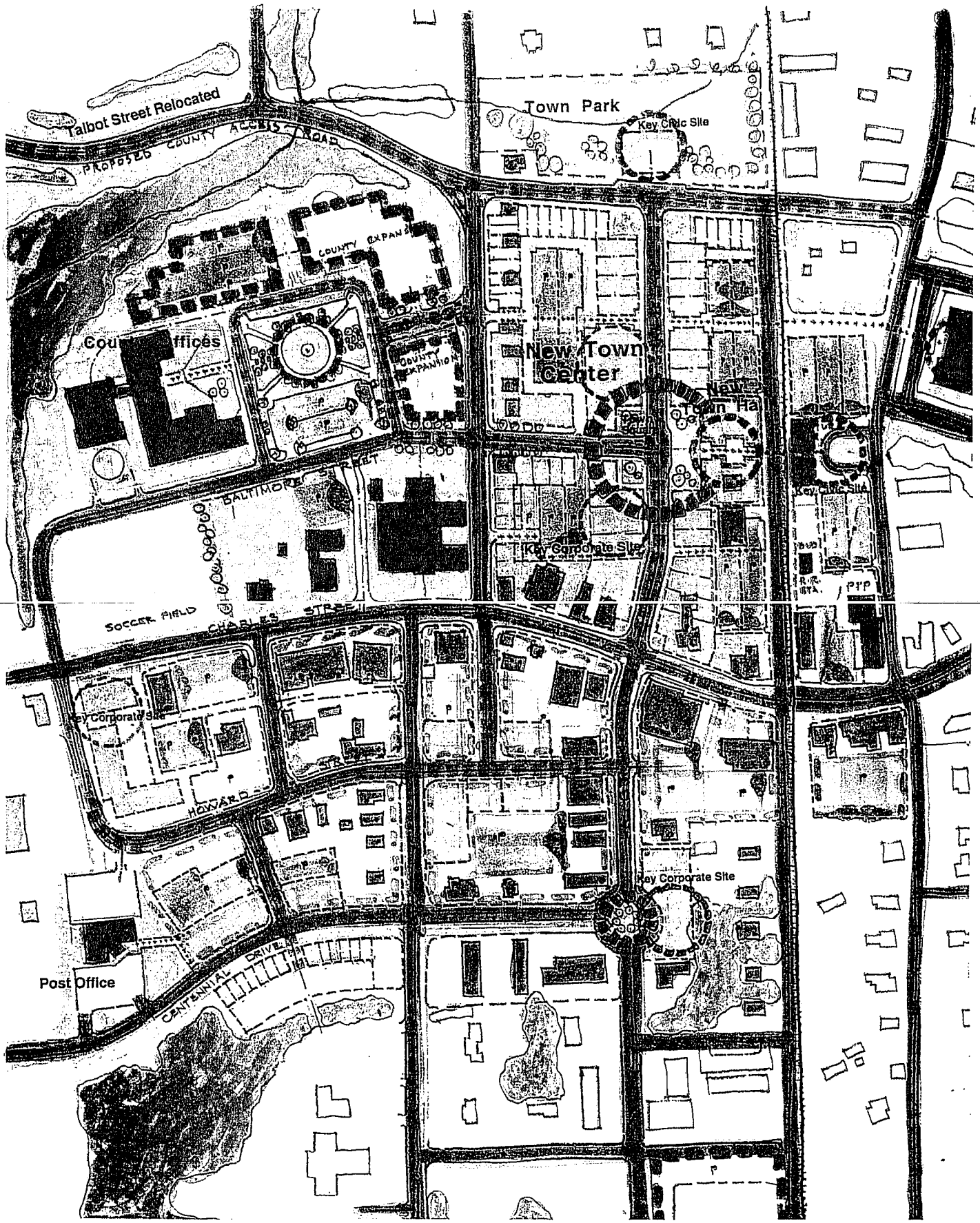
The plan's key concept is to develop a new "town center" area on and around the sites of the Coca-Cola Plant and Southern Maryland Oil north of Charles Street. This new town center area will include:

- a re-located Town Hall, "anchoring" the downtown on the east side near the railroad
- a new Town Park "anchoring" the downtown on the north side
- expanded County Government Center "anchoring" the downtown on the west side
- a new road connecting the new town center area to US 301 to the west and to the future Heritage Green Parkway and Route 6 to the east (called "Talbot Street Re-located")
- private corporate offices
- street-level retail uses
- residential uses and offices above the street level
- additional parking (on street, in surface lots, and parking structures)
- an expanded grid of local streets designed to accommodate pedestrian as well as auto traffic
- extension of La Grange Avenue north of Charles Street into this area to provide a strong north-south axis.

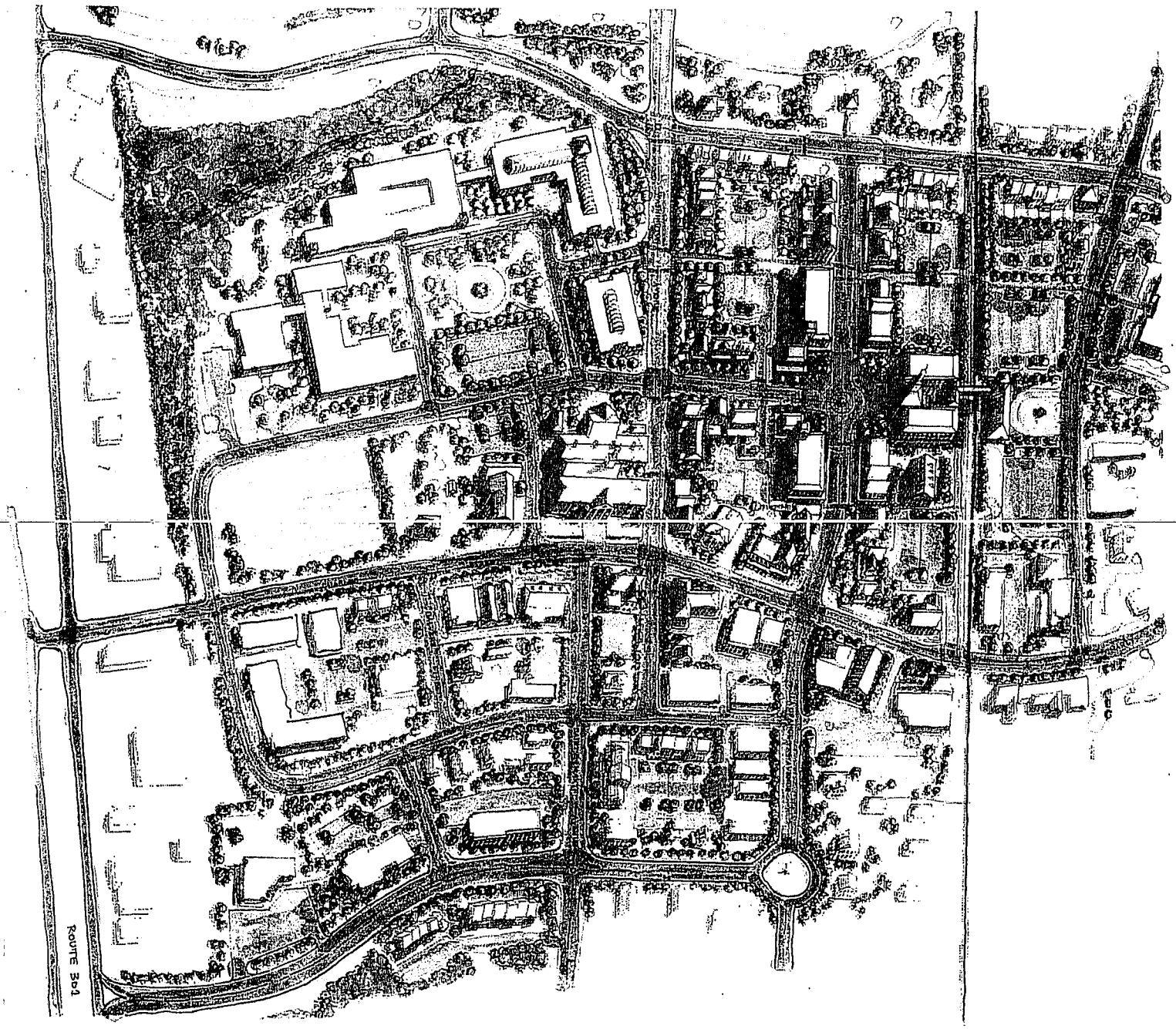
This concept is further described and illustrated on the following pages






Talbot Street Relocated
PROPOSED COUNTY ACCESS ROAD
Town Park
Key Civic Site
COUNTY EXPANSION
Offices
COUNTY EXPANSION
New Town Center
New Town Ha
BALTIMORE STREET
Key Civic Site
Key Corporate Site
SOCCER FIELD
CHARLES STREET
Key Corporate Site
HOWARD
Key Corporate Site
Post Office
CENTENNIAL DRIVE

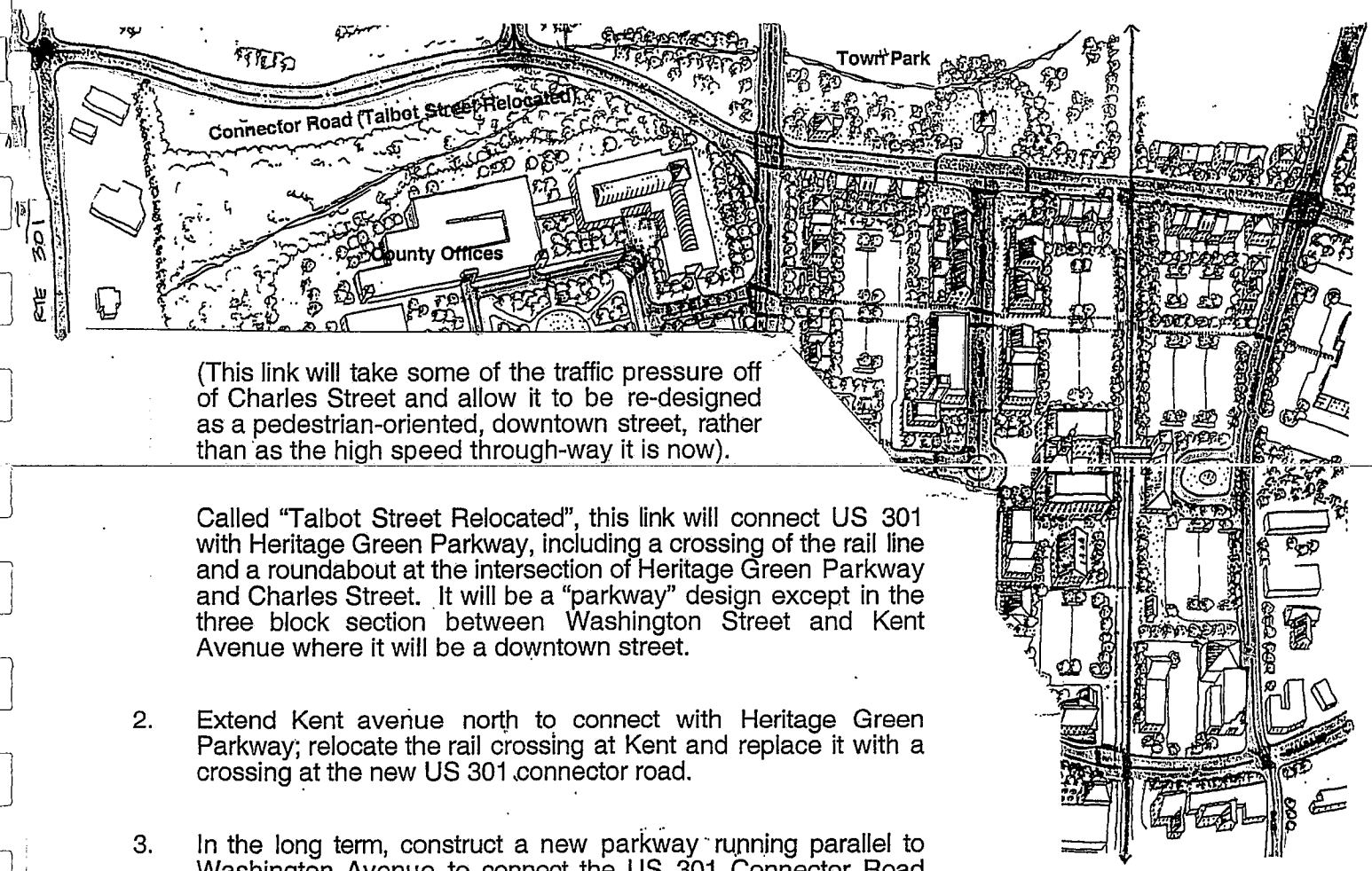
Axonometric Drawing of the Overall Downtown Plan



NEW AND IMPROVED STREET CONNECTIONS

Enhance External Road Links to Connect the Downtown to Surrounding Areas

1. A new road link from downtown to US 301 in order to relieve through-traffic on Charles Street and to provide better vehicular access to the County Government Center and the Downtown area.



(This link will take some of the traffic pressure off of Charles Street and allow it to be re-designed as a pedestrian-oriented, downtown street, rather than as the high speed through-way it is now).

Called "Talbot Street Relocated", this link will connect US 301 with Heritage Green Parkway, including a crossing of the rail line and a roundabout at the intersection of Heritage Green Parkway and Charles Street. It will be a "parkway" design except in the three block section between Washington Street and Kent Avenue where it will be a downtown street.

2. Extend Kent avenue north to connect with Heritage Green Parkway; relocate the rail crossing at Kent and replace it with a crossing at the new US 301 connector road.

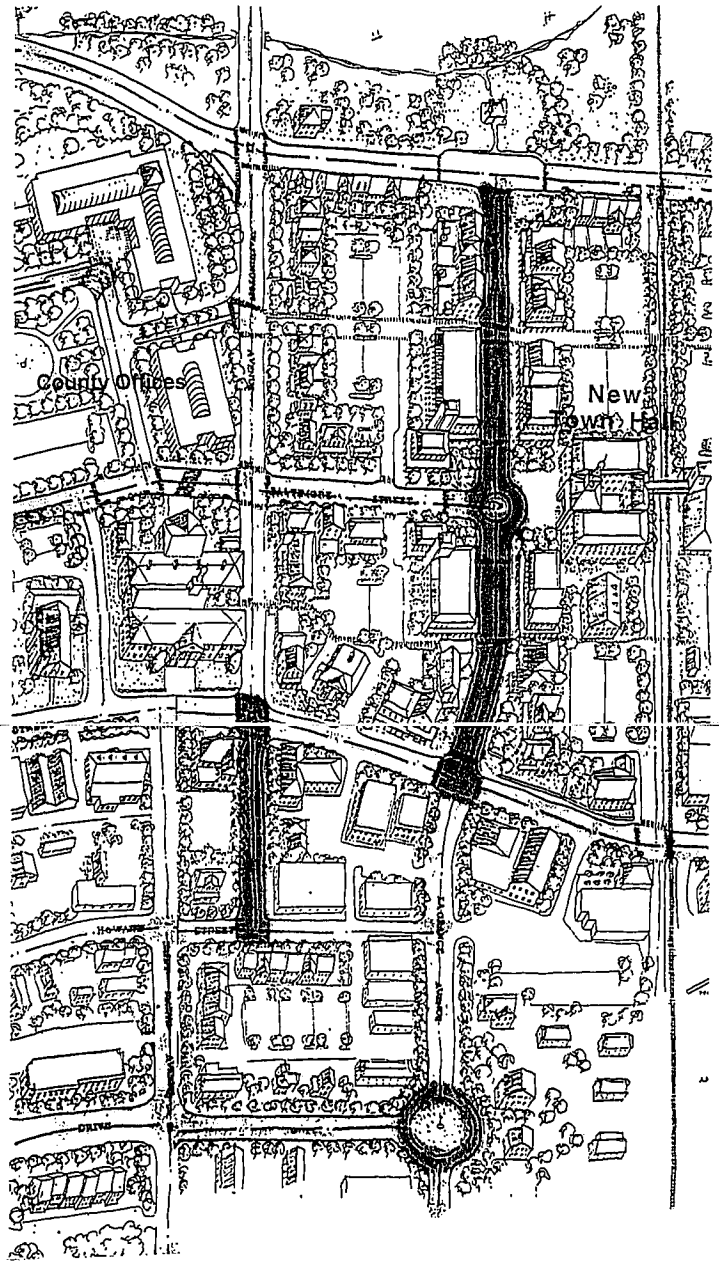
3. In the long term, construct a new parkway running parallel to Washington Avenue to connect the US 301 Connector Road with Hawthorne Drive and protect the historic residential neighborhood along Washington Avenue. This parkway will open portions of the Hermitage site for sensitive and compatible development to enhance the downtown (e.g., a conference center) while retaining the historic, pastoral setting of the site.

Enhance Internal Road Links to Improve Mobility and Development Capacity

1. Extend La Grange Avenue north across Charles Street to serve the new Town Center development area. This street will be designed as a primary downtown street, with a strong "urban" character and pedestrian orientation with sidewalks, street trees and on-street parking. It will connect to Talbot Street Re-located described above, and will provide the main entry way to a new Town Hall located on the west side of the rail line.

2. Extend Washington Avenue south across Charles Street to connect with an extended Howard Street, which is also extended behind the new Post Office to connect back to Charles Street across from the soccer field. (see map on page 8)

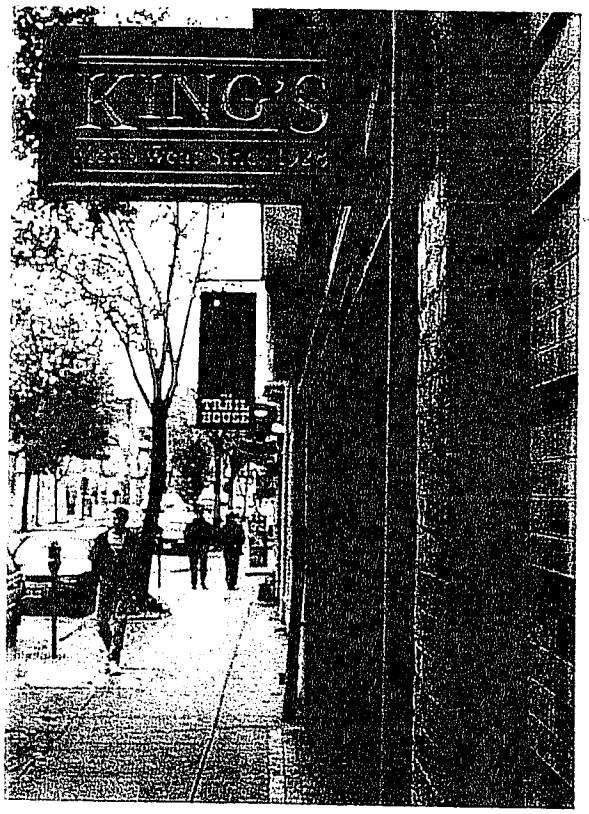
3. Construct a round-about at the intersection of Centennial Drive and La Grange Avenue, creating a prominent business development site at the terminus of the roundabout and allowing La Grange to be upgraded and extended south to the tobacco barn area which can be redeveloped with housing and recreation facilities.



NEW AND IMPROVED STREETSCAPES

All of the new and/or enhanced streets shown on the Plan map (page 7) and described herein, are planned to be strongly oriented to pedestrian use, through the use of important features, including:

- wide sidewalks (15 feet wherever feasible in the core area of downtown)
- street trees and furniture (benches, trash bins, kiosks, etc.)
- parallel on-street parking (where right-of-way is adequate), including cross-walk paving treatments and small curve radii at street corners
- human-scaled street lights (with fully shielded light fixtures)
- coordinated signage
- continuity of building facades; "infill" construction and re-development



An important characteristic of development on the downtown streets, as shown on the plan, is the gradual "infilling" of open spaces in the streetscape facades, as well as the redevelopment of some existing building sites.

This will create somewhat greater intensity of activity in the downtown as well as visual continuity along the streets, so that pedestrians have a sense of spatial "enclosure" and an experience of constant visual interest as they walk along the street, without having to cross large expanses of parking or other paved areas.

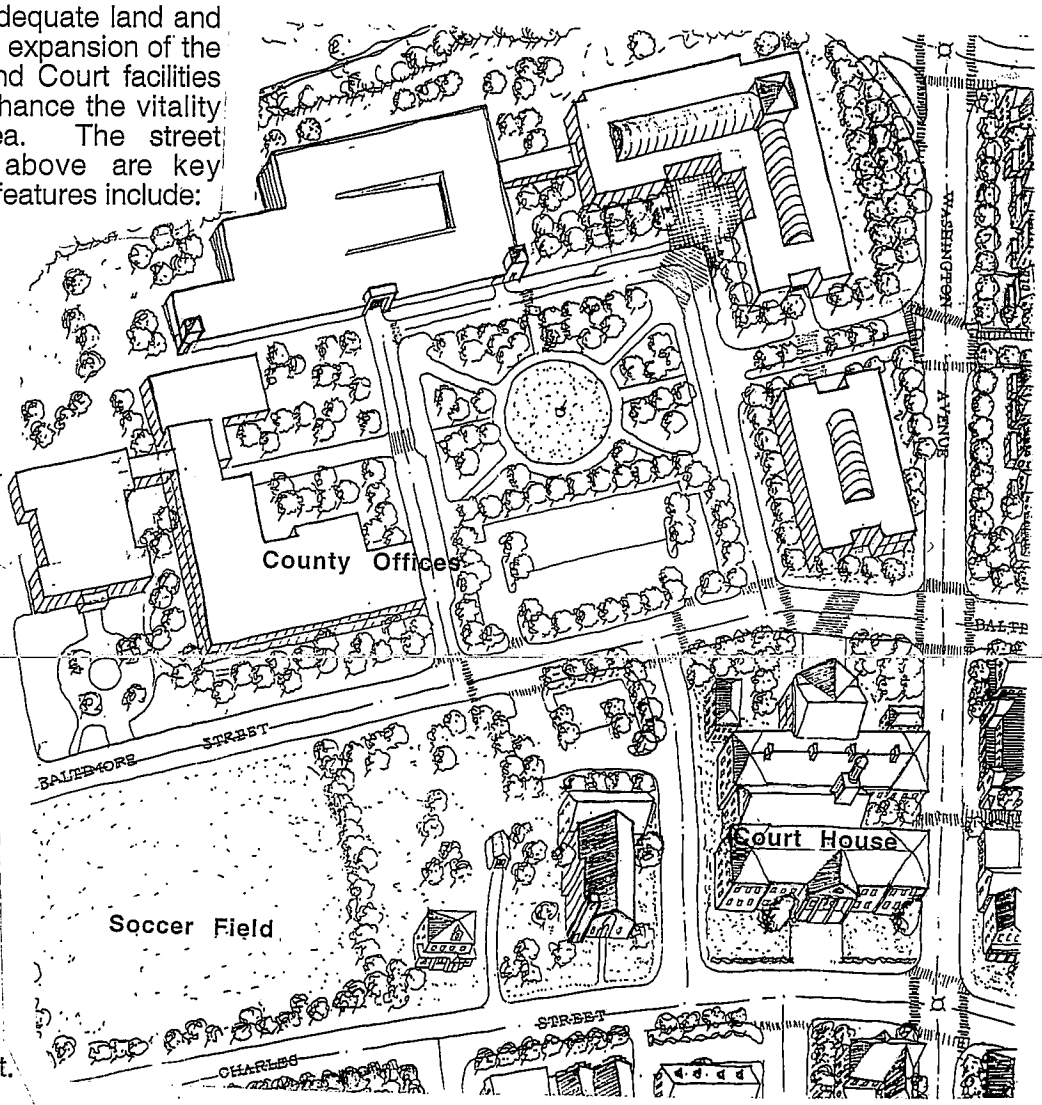
Over the course of time, parking will be relocated to the rear of buildings, in expanded on-street spaces, and in the parking structures called for in the plan.

MORE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND CIVIC FACILITIES

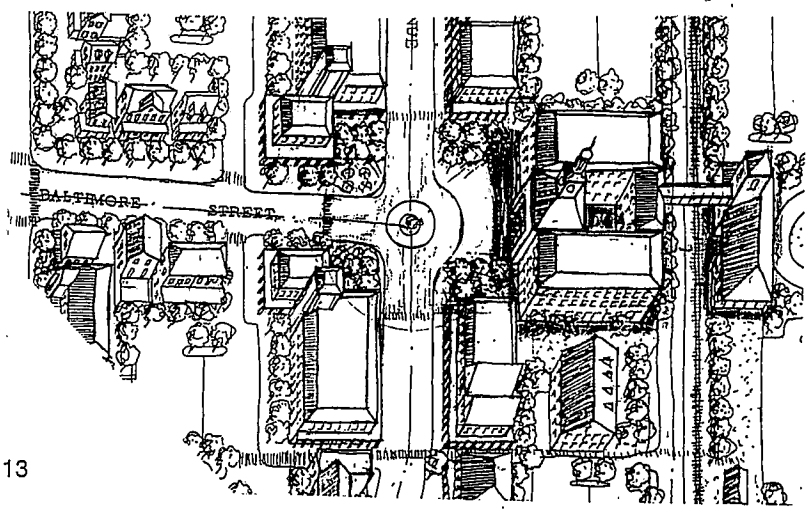
Civic Elements

1. *Charles County Government Facilities.* The plan provides for adequate land and access for the long-term expansion of the County Government and Court facilities in such a way as to enhance the vitality of the downtown area. The street connections described above are key elements. Other critical features include:

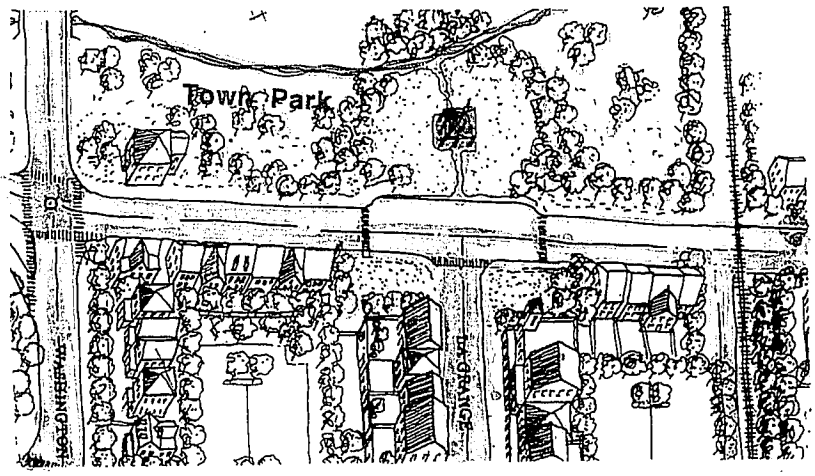
   - construction of a parking structure to serve the County facilities and adjacent areas,
   - a courtyard element within the configuration of County buildings that provides a strong identity to the County facility as well as a pleasant public open space element, and
   - street improvements that provide comfortable pedestrian connections to the County Government Center from adjacent areas of downtown, including a strong visual and physical axis with the new Town Hall to the east.



2. *New Town Hall.* The plan shows the La Plata Town Hall relocated and expanded on the east end of the Town Center area, on the west side of the rail line, a block north of Charles Street. The new Town Hall would be a government and community focal point, a facility that would include most Town government administrative functions and possibly other functions such as community meeting space, visitors center, leasable space, etc.



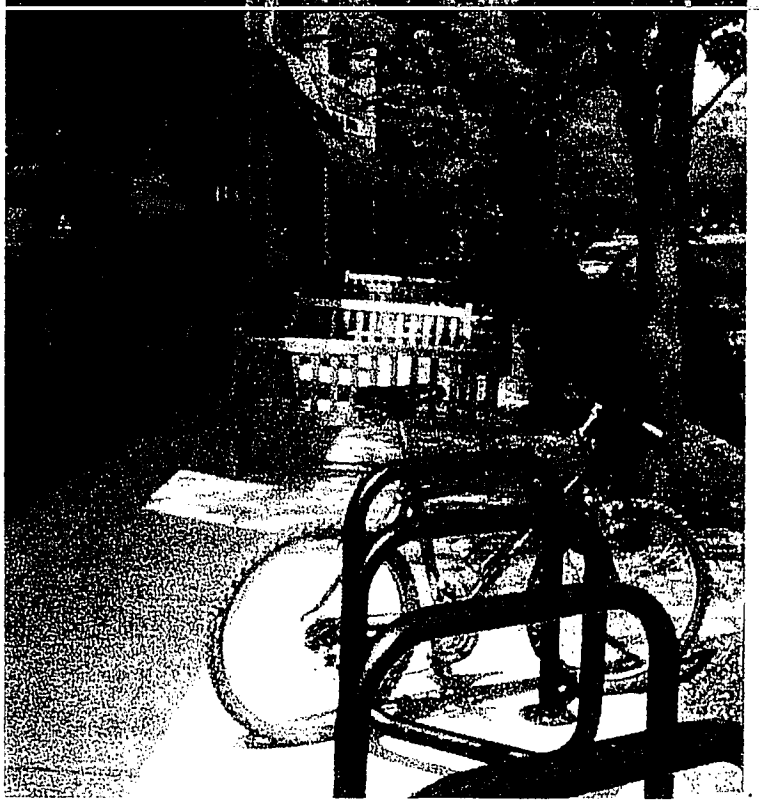
3. *New Town Park.* The plan shows a three-acre site for a New Town Park located on the north side of the new "301 Connector" road. This could also be an alternative site for the Town Hall. The site is a strategic location since any building in the central portion of the site provides a visual terminus to the new La Grange Avenue extended, and thus will be a prominent visual landmark for the Town Center area of downtown.



4. *Hospital Expansion.* By moving the Town Hall into the Town Center area, additional land can be provided for the Medical Center to expand at its present location. In the long term, a parking structure on or adjacent to the hospital site will allow maximum use of the site for medical facilities, as well as supplement the parking needs of other uses in the downtown.

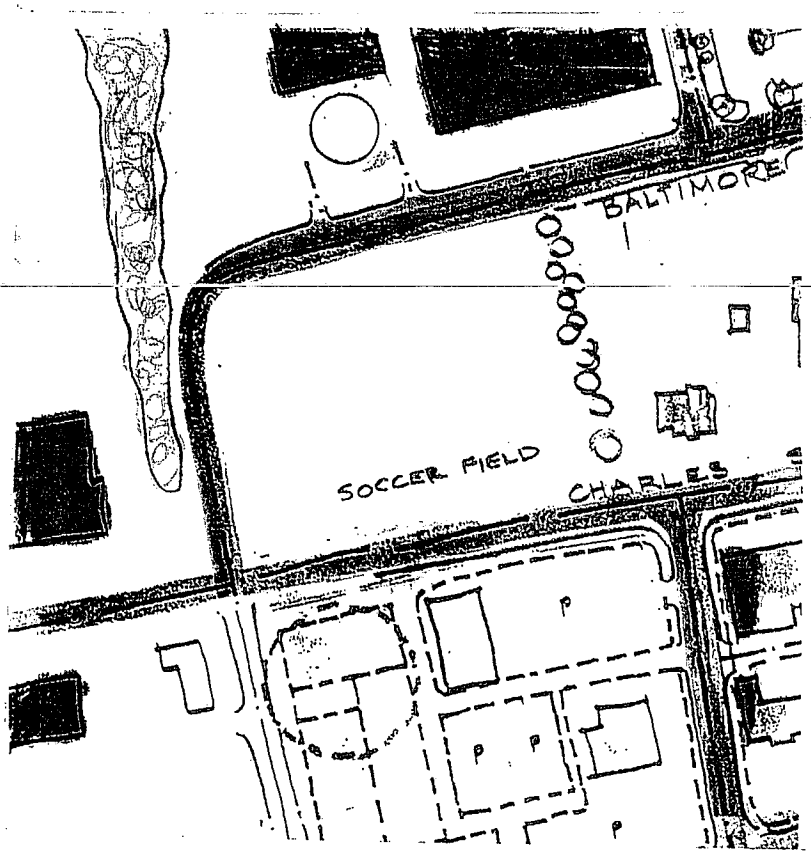
5. *Library Expansion/Re-location.* Ideally, the library would be relocated in the Town Center area to reinforce the civic vitality of the downtown core. It could be located within or adjacent to the County Government Center complex or the new Town Hall.

6. *Sidewalks and Trails.* Sidewalks are planned for all major streets and all new streets throughout the downtown, with trails along the natural drainage swales that connect the downtown to surrounding areas. Sidewalks on the main streets in the town center area are planned to be 15 feet in width to comfortably accommodate significant pedestrian use.



7. *Rail Station.* For the long term, a site for a commuter rail station is shown across the tracks from the Town Hall site. The rail bed could be graded so that pedestrians can easily move from one side to the other. A connecting walkway from the Town Hall building to the station could be constructed. Space for surface parking is shown next to the station. In the longer term, structured parking could be provided on this site.
(see map on page 8)

8. *Soccer field site.* The community is rightly proud of the soccer field on the north side of Charles Street at the entrance to the downtown. The community wishes to preserve this open space element. The plan also shows new recreation fields near the old tobacco warehouses. In the long term, this site could also be developed as a soccer field and allow the community to use the current soccer field site in a different way - still as an open space element and "gateway" to the downtown, but possibly with additional uses, as well.

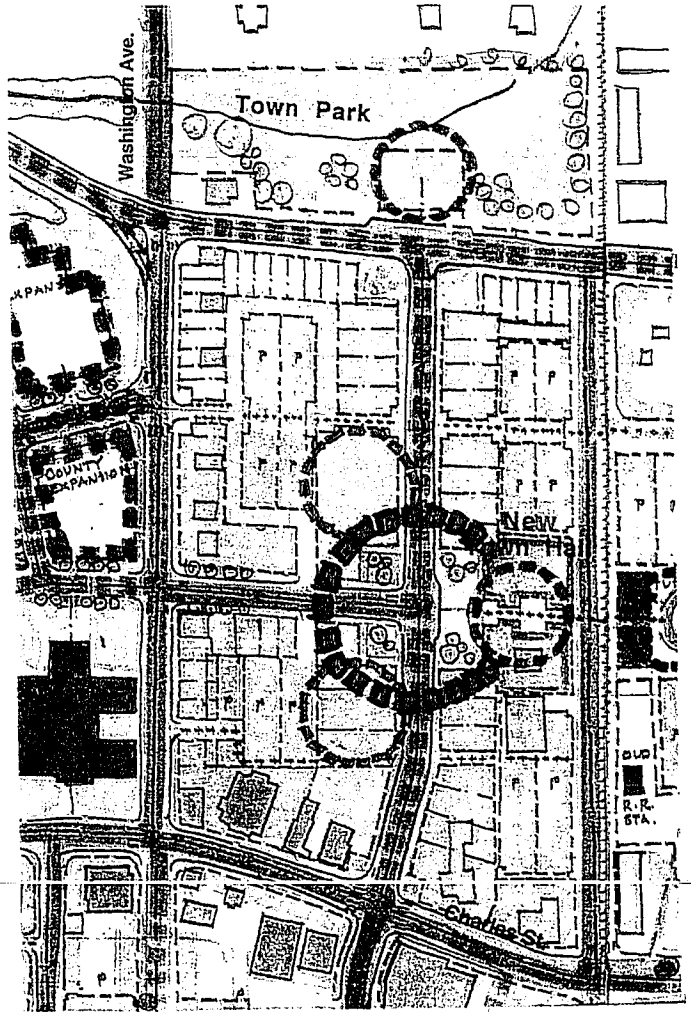


MORE RETAIL, OFFICE AND HOUSING USES

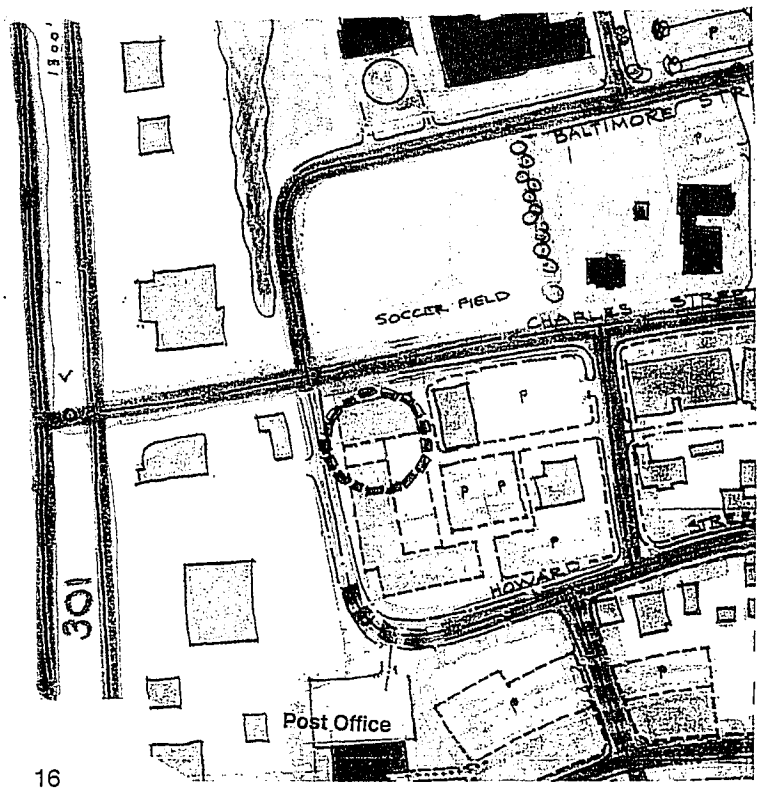
Key Development Sites

1. *Four block area on Coca Cola Plant and SMO sites.* This is the key development site in the heart of the Town Center area, on the land now occupied by the Coke and SMO facilities. This entire area will be redeveloped, mainly as a privately owned, mixed-use area, with retail uses on the ground levels, offices and apartments on the second or third floors, and parking on-street and within the interior of the blocks. Buildings would generally not exceed three stories in height.

   Several particularly prominent sites in this area offer excellent opportunities for private development, including sites that front the County Government Center, sites across from the Town Park and sites across from the new Town Hall location. Note that over the course of time, the dimensions of the street grid will allow additional parking structures to replace the surface parking lots located internal to the blocks.

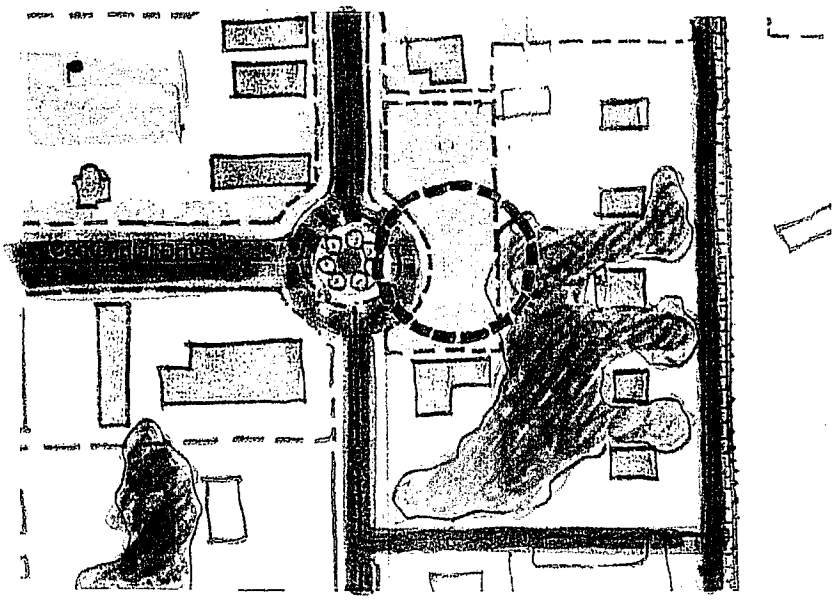


2. *Site across from soccer field on Charles Street.* The site across from the soccer field offers a real "gateway" opportunity for commercial, office and/or mixed-use development.



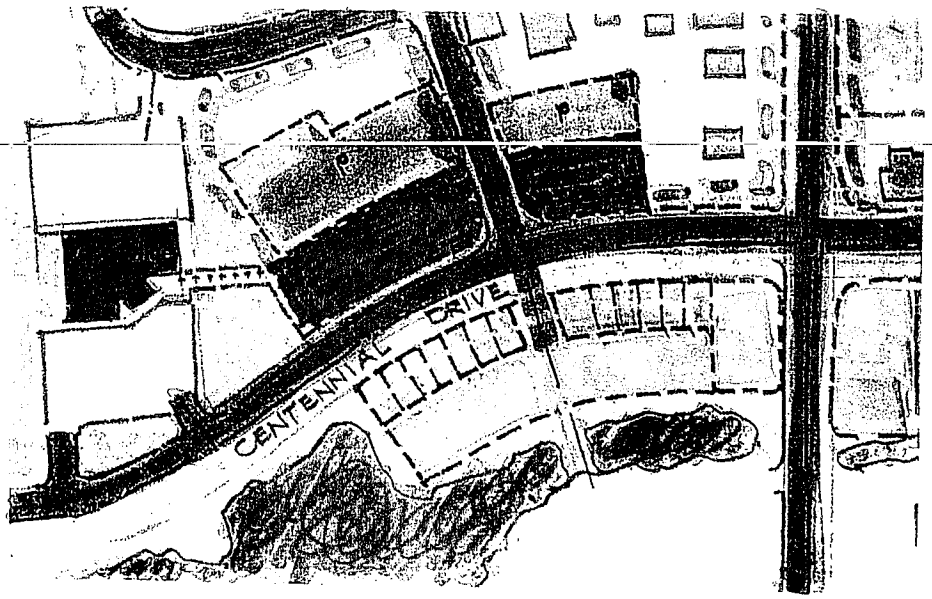
3. *Site on the round-about at intersection of Centennial Drive and La Grange.*

   The proposed roundabout creates a strong visual terminus for this entry to the downtown. It would be an excellent site for offices, retail or even mixed residential uses.



4. *Site across from new Post Office Block.*

   This plan makes Centennial Drive an even more important element of the downtown, and the land across from the Post Office becomes an excellent opportunity for corporate offices, or a mixed-use project.



5. *Old Tobacco Warehouse Area.* This area would be suitable for redevelopment as housing and/or specialty retail, with good access to the downtown core, but without large volumes of through traffic.

6. *Hermitage Property.* This historic tract has the opportunity to provide a site for a dignified and low intensity conference facility to serve the business and government functions in the downtown. The historic, open space character of the site should be preserved.

Residential Development

This plan identifies several opportunities for new housing in the downtown:

1. Mixed-Use with Residential – in the Town Center area, apartments above retail and office uses, and small single family units

2. Residential Redevelopment – additional development in lower density areas

3. Residential Infill – development of vacant parcels with compatible single or multi-family structures

4. Neighborhood Revitalization - rehabilitation and revitalization of older existing residential areas

5. Neighborhood Conservation – preservation and maintenance of the general character of historic areas, with minor infill but no major redevelopment or intensification

The plan calls for a significant component of residential infill development within and around the downtown core, in order to enhance the vitality and livability of the downtown.

A mix of unit types is expected, with apartment units located above retail and office uses on the main streets, and attached and small detached single family units as infill and/or re-development on larger, under-developed lots on side streets and in areas adjacent to the downtown core, as shown on the plan maps. Residential uses should be designed with street front entrances and parking on-street or at the rear of the building.

Small apartment structures may be appropriate for some sites on the side streets or adjacent to the core, if designed to appear as traditional large houses that enhance the streetscape and relate sensitively to the scale of adjacent buildings and properties.

Redevelopment and infill residential would be appropriate on sites within walking distance of the future rail station, which is also near the proposed site for the relocated Town Hall.

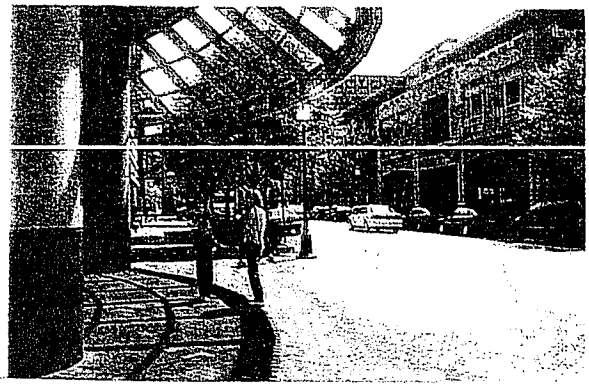
Retail Uses

The main streets of the downtown (Charles, La Grange, Talbot relocated, Washington Avenue north, St. Mary's, Baltimore, Centennial and Oak) are primarily planned for retail uses on the ground levels, with main entrances at the street front.

Some of these buildings will be offices, but office uses will be encouraged to locate on the second stories on the main streets or in buildings on side streets (existing Howard, extended Howard, Washington extended south, La Grange at south end, and the new connecting road between Centennial and Howard).

Office Uses

Office uses are planned mainly for second floors of buildings on the main streets, or ground and upper stories of buildings off the main streets. As with retail, parking will be primarily at the rear of the buildings, on-street, and ultimately in parking structures.

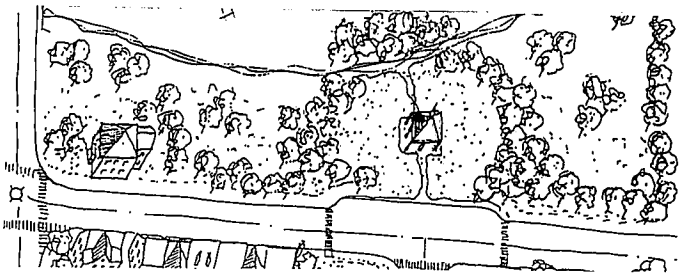


Industrial Uses

The existing industrial uses (manufacturing, oil, lumber, etc.) are planned to be relocated outside of the core downtown area, but to remain within the La Plata corporate limits. Viable sites for these uses need to be identified.

Civic Uses

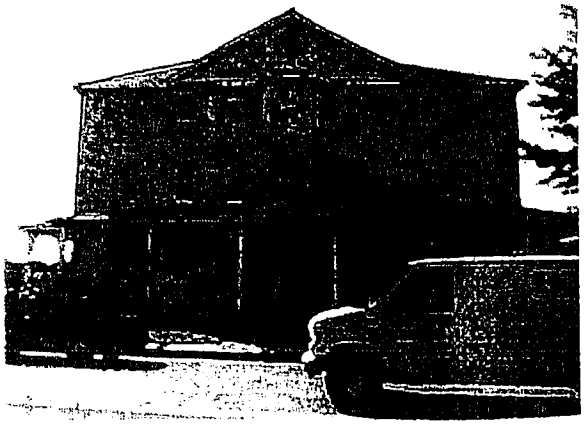
In addition to the County and Town government sites, key civic sites include community recreation areas, including a new Town Park on the north side of the Town Center area.



Historic Structures

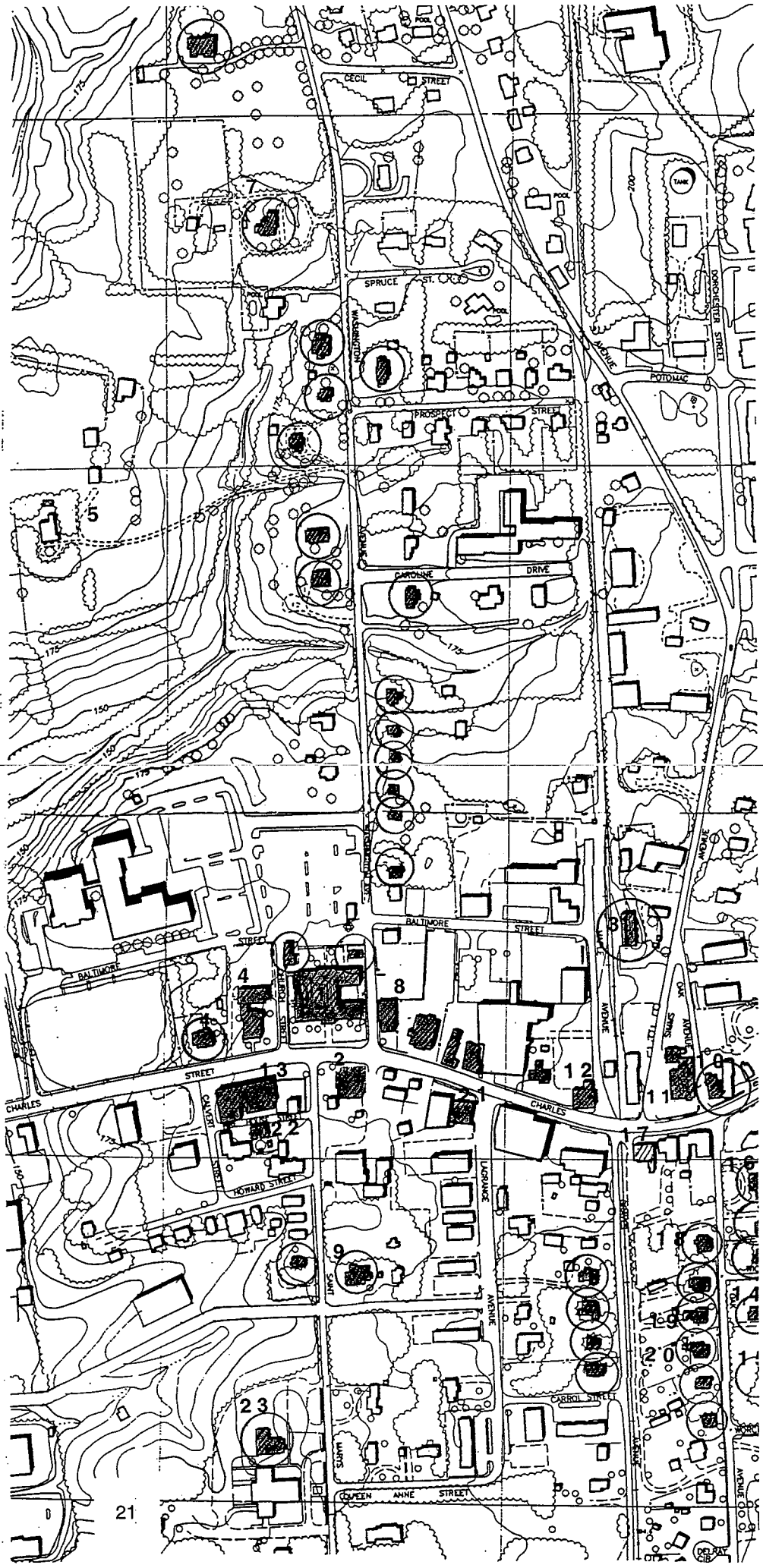
To the greatest extent possible, the Town will encourage owners of historic buildings to preserve and rehabilitate such buildings and re-use them for purposes that will allow their continued economic viability.

Key historic buildings that should be preserved as the plan moves forward are shown on the following page.



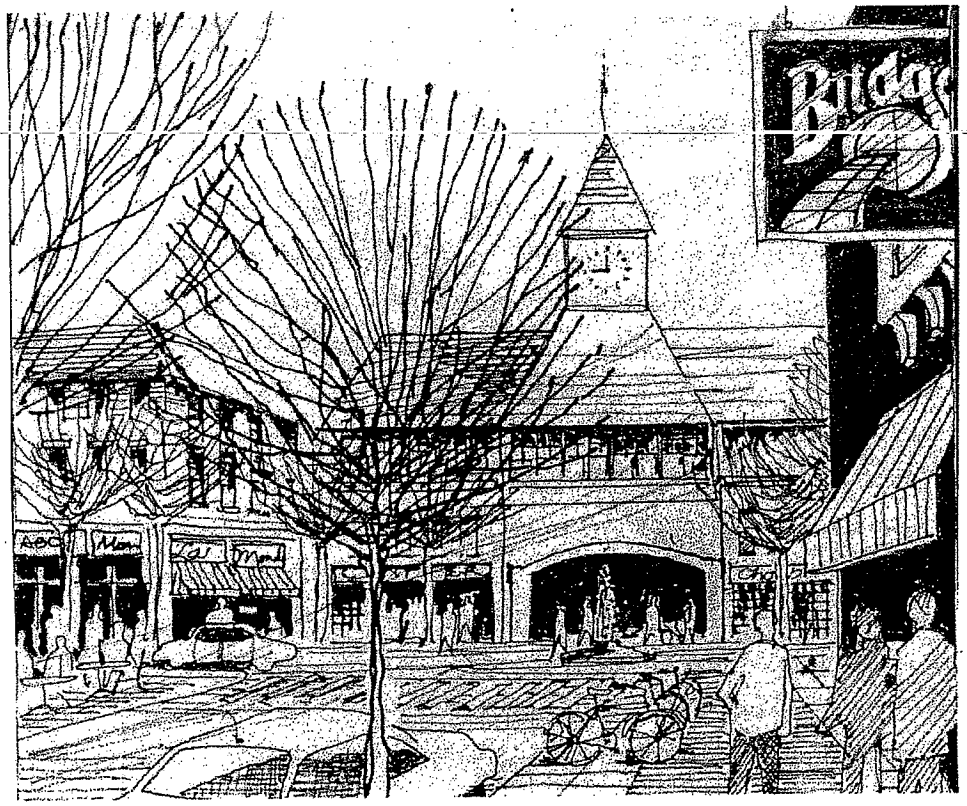
Key Historic Sites
(shown as shaded)

1. Charles County Courthouse
2. Carrico Buildings
3. La Plata Train Station
4. Christ Episcopal Church
5. The Hermitage
6. La Grange (not on map)
7. Chillum
8. Old Bank of Southern Maryland
9. Sidney Mudd House
10. D'Angelos Building
11. Movie Theater
12. Farrell House and Store
13. Mitchell Motor Company
14. Old Rectory
15. Owen House
16. Judge Henry Robinson House
17. Bowie's Lunch Room
18. Robert Horney House
19. Heber Boswell House
20. Smoot-Cravat House
21. Steffens Building
22. Old Firehouse
23. Sacred Heart Rectory



The Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata:

How Will We Achieve It?



How Will We Achieve the Downtown Plan?

SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION ELEMENTS

This plan identifies a variety of initiatives that will be necessary to bring the Downtown Plan to life. It also identifies a Phasing Plan and critical priorities. (Note that major issues and options for organizing, managing and funding the implementation of the Plan as outlined below are detailed in the memorandum from Thomas Point Associates, contained in the Appendix to this report).

A partnership between Town, County and State officials is critical to the success and implementation of this plan. It is important to note, however, that a renaissance of La Plata's downtown:

- is consistent with Charles County's plans and expectations for La Plata
- would support the State of Maryland's smart growth initiatives

Major Development and Infrastructure Projects to Implement the Plan

Real Estate Development. Major projects include key property purchases, relocation of the Coca Cola Plant and the Southern Maryland Oil (SMO) facilities, and development of the core Town Center area on and around those two key sites.

Potential funding sources: Maryland Smart Growth Initiative; Maryland Industrial Development Finance Authority (MIDFA); federal money

Streetscape Improvements. Major tasks include design and construction of specific streetscape improvements. For the newly developed properties cited above, this effort would be part of the overall development project. For existing streets and buildings, however, the process is more complex and needs to have active involvement of the property owners and business operators.

Potential funding sources: Maryland State Highway Administration; Community Development Block Grants; Department of Housing and Community Development; Tax Increment Financing (TIF) (Town); federal money

Parking System Improvements. Major projects include development of additional off-street surface parking lots, and development of a parking garage to serve the Medical Center and adjacent areas, which will include site/location analysis, land acquisition, design and development.

Potential funding sources: County, Town, private land developers; federal money

Municipal Building Development. Major tasks include needs analysis, building program development, land acquisition, design/construction of public buildings.

Potential funding sources: Town

Road/Intersection Improvements. Immediate priorities include extension of Oak Avenue and construction of traffic signal at Oak and Charles. Also of critical immediate importance is the acquisition of necessary rights-of-way for all Phase One road links, as well as identification and protection of rights-of-way for longer term road improvements.

Potential funding sources: Maryland State Highway Administration; Community Development Block Grants; Department of Housing and Community Development; federal money

Utility Improvements. Major initial projects include expansion of the Willow Lane pump station and extension of sewer and water lines to the proposed employment center on Rosewick Road. Fiber optic cable connections from the Town Center area to the state's 301 fiber optic line are needed.

Potential funding sources: Community Development Block Grants; Town; private land developers; federal money

Major Economic Development Programs to Implement the Plan

Business Recruitment. Most successful downtown business programs follow some of the same general steps as commercial brokers follow in leasing conventional retail space in a mall, including:

Recruitment planning - inventory of available space and development of fact sheets on space, lease terms, availability, contact. Meet with commercial brokers in the region to identify and discuss opportunities.

Development of leasing plan - technical analysis of existing and potential retail strengths, addressing complementary and competitive store clusters, nature of market, physical issues (most notably parking).

Creation and distribution of leasing brochure - development of packaged materials depicting opportunities and distribution to targeted businesses, targeted at selected retailers in southern Maryland who have expansion potential and meet the leasing plan objectives. Identify opportunities on web site.

Marketing and coordination - responding to interested parties. Showing properties and other broker activities.

Program Management. Several other major tasks need to be done in addition to business recruitment, including:

Retail promotion - planning, marketing and negotiating retail attraction strategy.

Real estate acquisition and development - negotiation, sale, lease and other real estate actions needed to develop projects.

Construction management - planning and management of infrastructure construction.

Parking management/development - development and implementation of multi-property parking solutions.

Financial management - management of funds, grants, loans, other financial assets and programs.

Planning management - continuing management of planning, design, grant writing, legislation, inter-governmental coordination, public involvement.

Tourism Promotion. Among the immediate implementation efforts for tourism enhancement that can be done in concert with the initial streetscape improvements to Charles Street are:

Design a downtown walking tour for tourists.

Create a program for promoting and/or awarding plaques for historic structures.

Continue and strengthen the historic commission for the Town - a private advocacy organization for historic preservation.

Create additional annual promotional events (e.g., "Christmas in La Plata" and seasonal promotions such as Crafts Fairs).

PHASING PLAN AND CRITICAL PRIORITIES

Immediate Action Priorities (within 90 days of completion of the Plan)

Information, Coordination and Policy Actions

- Adopt the Plan for Downtown La Plata as part of the Town's and County's Comprehensive Plans
- Complete Base Map Data and right-of-way information for the downtown area - Maryland Office of Planning (MOP)
- Obtain State help in making the Downtown Plan web-accessible
- Re-convene La Plata Business Association to provide oversight, input and assistance in coordinating/involving key business owners

Streetscape Improvements

- Prepare detailed streetscape plan for key sections of Charles Street - Maryland Office of Planning (MOP)
  - begin with Maple Avenue to Oak Avenue
  - state is re-doing sidewalk from RR to Oak - need to coordinate this activity with the Downtown Plan
  - From Railroad to Court House is state-designated Downtown Revitalization District

Road Improvements

- Review County's engineering studies of road link to 301 ("Talbot Street Relocated")
- Begin the process of acquiring necessary right-of-way for Talbot Street Relocated
- Obtain County Agreement (and funding commitment) for Talbot Street Relocated north of County Offices- on new alignment as identified in draft downtown plan
- Obtain State commitment for design and funding assistance to complete entire Talbot Street Relocated to complete the Rt. 6 connector function, including State Highway Administration approval for intersection improvements.

Land Development Activities

- Begin relocation planning for Coca Cola Plant and Southern Maryland Oil - establish key contact representatives and procedural protocols, identify timetable requirements, identify alternative sites within Town, define critical path for actions

Phase One (First Two Years - through 2002)

1-1. Make streetscape improvements along Charles Street from US 301 to Oak Avenue

a. Make streetscape improvements to Charles Street from Oak to Washington Ave: sidewalks, streetlights, landscaping, incentives for rehab, etc.
b. Make streetscape improvements to Charles Street from US 301 to Washington Ave: sidewalks, street lights, landscaping, incentives for rehab, etc.

1-2. Make improvements to Kent, Oak and Charles

a. Construct signal at intersection of Kent/Charles
b. Construct 50' street extension in 80' right-of-way with signal at Oak/Charles (re-align Kent with Oak south of Charles)

1-3. Make basic transportation and infrastructure improvements for the expanded downtown

a. Construct new Talbot Street Re-located, from US 301 to Kent Avenue with access to County Complex ("301 Connector")
b. Construct section of Heritage Green Parkway ("Rt. 6 Connector") from Charles Street to Caroline Drive
c. Expand Willow Lane pump station and extend water and sewer lines, including new force main, along new streets
d. Extend water and sewer lines to proposed employment center on Rosewick Road

1-4. Construct parking structure in conjunction with new Court House with parking for both the County Complex and adjacent downtown area

1-5. Connect Rosewick Road to St. Charles Parkway

~~1-6. Develop Marketing Plan for the Downtown~~

Phase Two (First Five Years - through 2005)

2-1. Relocate Coca-Cola Plant - purchase site, remove structures, build site infrastructure

2-2. Construct remainder of Rt. 6 Connector/Heritage Green Parkway to US 301

2-3. Connect Rosewick Road to Heritage Green Parkway (4-lane divided)

2-4. Extend La Grange Avenue north from Charles Street

a. Extend La Grange north to newly constructed/relocated Talbot Street ("301 Connector")
b. Upgrade entire street with sidewalks, new street lights, and landscaping

2-5. Extend Queen Anne Street to Maple Avenue

2-6. Extend Shining Willow Way from Washington Avenue to US 301 (2-lane road)

2-7. Construct round-about at Centennial Drive and La Grange Avenue

Phase Three (First Ten Years - through 2010)

3-1. Construct Town Center and Develop Area between Charles Street and Talbot Street

3-2. Construct Washington Avenue Reliever (parkway) from new Talbot Street to Hawthorne Drive when needed (2-lane parkway)

3-3. Extend Cecil Street to the Washington Avenue Reliever and US 301

3-4. Construct parking structure to serve Civista Medical Center and adjacent area

3-5. Build loop road parkway to east of Town and make connections to Town's road network

SUMMARY OF PRELIMINARY IMPLEMENTATION COST ESTIMATES

Phase One (to be completed by 12/31/02)

Item	Cost Estimate*	Funding Sources
1-1. Make streetscape improvements along Charles St. from US 301 to Oak Avenue		
a. Make streetscape improvements to Charles St. from Oak to Washington Ave: sidewalks, streetlights, landscaping, incentives for rehab, etc. (1,000')	$400,000	Town/State
b. Make streetscape improvements to Charles Street from US 301 to Washington Ave: sidewalks, lights, landscaping, incentives for rehab, etc. (1,350')	540,000	Town/State
1-2. Make improvements to Kent, Oak and Charles		
a. Construct signal at intersection of Kent/Charles	75,000	Town/State
b. Re-align Kent with Oak south of Charles	50,000	Town/State
1-3. Make basic transportation and infrastructure improvements for the expanded downtown		
a. Construct new Talbot Street Relocated from US 301 to Washington Avenue with access to County Complex ("301 Connector") (1,600')	1,800,000	County/ Town/State
b. Construct new Talbot Street Relocated from Washington Avenue to Kent Avenue (1,000')	1,000,000	County/ Town/State
c. Construct section of Heritage Green Prkwy ("Rt. 6 Connector") from Charles St. to Caroline Dr. (1,100')	750,000	Town/State
d. Expand Willow Lane pump station and extend water and sewer lines, including new force main, along new streets	700,000	Town
e. Extend water and sewer lines to proposed employment center on Rosewick Road	350,000	Town
1-4. Construct 400- space parking structure along with new Court House with additional parking for County Complex and adjacent downtown area	4,500,000	County
1-5. Connect Rosewick Rd. to St. Charles Parkway (10,000')	TBD	County/State
1-6. Develop Marketing Plan for Downtown	25,000	County/ Town/State
Phase One Total	**$10,190,000**	

* All costs are preliminary estimates based on current average cost data; rounded to nearest 10,000; itemized lists of components of each cost item shown here are contained in the appendix.

Sources: Town of La Plata; ATCS for items 1.a and 1.b; Herd Planning & Design

Phase Two (to be completed by 12/31/05)

Item	Cost Estimate*	Funding Sources
2-1. Relocate the Coca-Cola Plant, SMO Plant to other locations in Town - acquire existing sites, remove structures, provide and build new site	$8,000,000	Town/State/Private
2-2. Construct remainder of Rt. 6 Connector/Heritage Green Prkwy to US 301 (1,900')	1,900,000	Town/State/Private
2-3. Connect Rosewick Rd. to Heritage Green Prkwy (2,700', 4-lane divided)	2,700,000	State/Private
2-4. Extend La Grange Ave. north from Charles St.		
a. Extend La Grange north to newly constructed Talbot Street Relocated (50' street in 80' row, 1000')	1,000,000	Town/State/Private
b. Upgrade entire street with sidewalks, new street lights, and landscaping	400,000	Town/State/Private
2-5. Extend Queen Anne Street to Maple Avenue	1,000,000	Town/State
2-6. Extend Shining Willow Way from Washington Ave to US 301 (1,600', 2-lane road)	1,300,000	Town/State
2-7. Construct Round-about at Centennial and La Grange	200,000	Town/State
Phase Two Total	**$16,500,000**	

* All costs are preliminary estimates based on current average cost data; rounded to nearest 10,000; itemized lists of components of each cost item shown here are contained in the appendix.

Sources: Town of La Plata; ATCS; Herd Planning & Design

Phase Three (to be completed by 12/31/10)

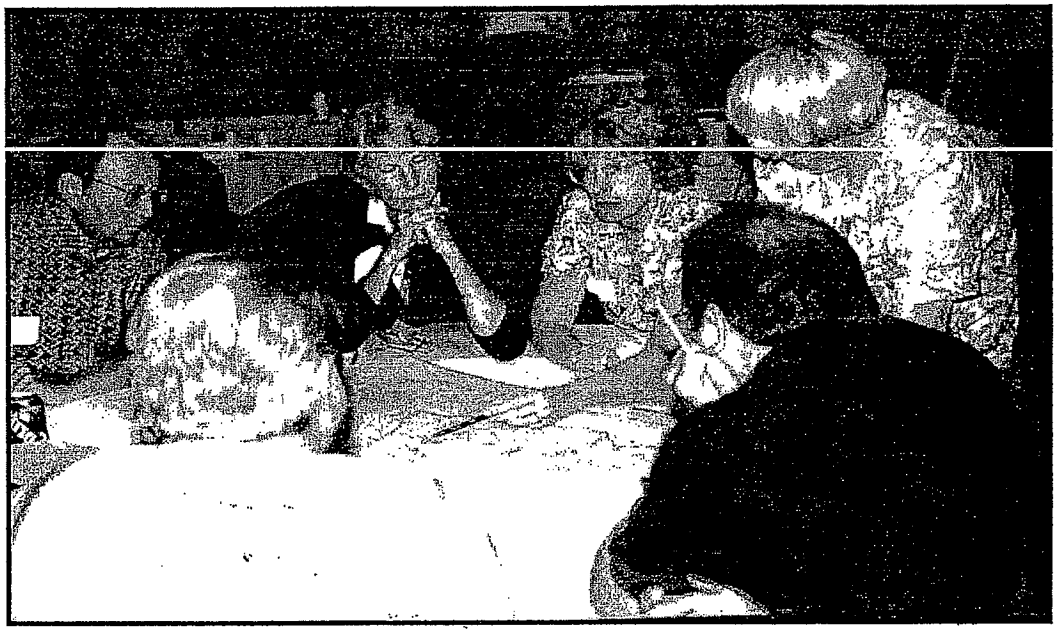
Item	Cost Estimate*	Funding Sources
3-1. Construct Town Center and Develop Area between Charles Street and Talbot Street	TBD	
(The full Town Center program would be a combination of public and private investment, but is not included in the totals of this table because a significant portion the program would be private investment)		
3-2. Construct Washington Ave. Reliever (parkway) from new Talbot Street to Hawthorne Dr. when needed (2-lane parkway, 3,200')	$1,300,000	Town/State/ Private
3-3. Extend Cecil St. to Washington Ave Reliever and US 301 (1,500', 2-lane road)	1,200,000	Town/State/ Private
3-4. Construct parking structure to serve Civista Medical Center and adjacent downtown area (250 spaces)	2,500,000	Town/State/ Private
3-5. Build loop road parkway to east of Town and make connections to Town's road network (additional design data needed to estimate cost)	TBD	State/Federal
Phase Three Total	**$5,000,000**	
TOTAL (for three phases)	**$31,690,000**	

* All costs are preliminary estimates based on current average cost data; rounded to nearest 10,000; itemized lists of components of each cost item shown here are contained in the appendix.

Sources: Town of La Plata; ATCS; Herd Planning & Design

The Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata:

How Was the Plan Created?



How was the Plan for Downtown Created?

PARTICIPANTS

After the Vision Plan was completed in March, 2000, the Town immediately initiated the downtown planning effort. It also immediately started several other implementation steps arising from the Vision Plan, including amendments to key provisions of the Town zoning regulations.

The Downtown Urban Design Plan, being an outgrowth and continuation of the original Vision Plan process, was centered on local citizen participation, as well as collaboration with the State and County governments.

The Town appointed a citizen Task Force to oversee the Downtown Urban Design Plan. Members were drawn from the original citizen Vision Team, as well as other prominent citizens.

The Town also engaged the original consulting team, led by Herd Planning & Design, Ltd., as an extension of its work on the Vision Plan. Throughout the process, contact was maintained between the Town, County and State regarding issues that concerned those parties.

SUMMARY OF THE PROCESS

The process was built around a series of Task Force meetings, supported by the consulting team, beginning in July of 2000.

- July 7 and September 7 - the Task Force identified and refined the scope and schedule of the project, the specific issues and opportunities for the downtown area, and the major historic resources and buildings in and around the downtown.
- November 7 - the Task Force reviewed and refined the objectives of the design charrette.
- November 11 (Saturday) - the team conducted a design charrette with the Task Force. (After the charrette, the team refined the plan map created at the charrette)
- December 12 - the Task Force reviewed the plan map for further refinement and affirmation.

On January 3, 2001, the consulting team and Town Officials presented the Urban Design Plan map to the State Delegation, in conjunction with discussions about potential state assistance with implementation efforts. The Plan was very well received by the Delegation.

On January 16, the consulting team and Town Officials presented the Plan map to the County Commissioners, who also expressed strong support for the major concepts shown on the plan.

GUIDANCE FROM THE VISION PLAN FOR GREATER LA PLATA

Initial Ideas for the Downtown Area

The hopes for the future that underpinned the original Vision Plan that was completed in March, 2000, included the following ideas:

- Preserving the Town's distinctive small town charm and its own identity and sense of place
- Revitalizing the downtown area to become a pedestrian friendly area of small stores and restaurants as well as government offices
- Maintaining US Route 301 as a vital business street with managed access, and reducing congestion through the downtown area

Key Priorities for Downtown
(from the Vision Plan, March 2000)

The key priorities for downtown that emerged from the Vision Plan process included:

- Create detailed urban design plan for core area of downtown - streetscapes, road connections, parking, etc.
- Create detailed design plan for sidewalks, bikeways and trails linking downtown to the surrounding natural areas and to outlying residential areas
- Create architectural standards and review procedures

- Coordinate with County regarding land use and access on US Rt. 301
- Convert Coca Cola Plant Site and S. M. O. site to a new Town Center - work with owners of Coca Cola Plant site and adjacent lands to relocate Coca Cola Plant and acquire land for a new Town Center - coordinate with Hospital to acquire existing Town Hall site
- Build Route 6 Connector - evaluate alternative projects to provide alternative to Route 6 in downtown; select preferred alternative and seek funds to design and construct
- Coordinate with County Land Use and Access Management on new and extended roads
- Create new development regulations for mixed-use infill development in downtown
- Perform a Traffic Calming Study on Route 6; and adopt Implementation Plan
- Perform conceptual access management plan to account for transformation of existing US 301 to a Business Boulevard (urban boulevard)

<u>Specific Policy Guidance for the Downtown (from the Vision Plan, March 2000)</u>

Vehicular and transit mobility

- Upgrade US 301 to an "urban boulevard" design; develop detailed access plan for entire corridor
- Connect streets where feasible
- Promote long term passenger service with stations downtown, north and south

Pedestrian mobility

- Concentrate pedestrian-oriented and specialty retail commercial uses in downtown core; redevelop tobacco barn area
- Establish sidewalks and street lighting on all downtown streets; establish system of sidewalks and trails; make downtown a "pedestrian-friendly" place; establish system of trails (greenways) along natural drainage ways

Architecture and Urban Design Character

- Preserve and enhance unique buildings and institutions, such as a conference center, college, county buildings, courthouse, library, retail businesses, and inns
- Building entrances front the street
- Parallel parking on the streets; parking lots behind buildings
- Architectural harmony (guidelines and review process)
- Street trees and furniture
- Sign standards/coordination

Economic Vitality and Land Use Activities

- Enhance the downtown core with business services, small shops, a park-like environment, trees, clean streets, sidewalks, and urban "greens" at key sites to make a pleasing and vibrant place
- Permit higher density housing as infill in and around downtown core, designed to improve the pedestrian-oriented nature of the streetscape, and as a transition between commercial & lower density residential uses along US 301

Civic Elements

- Create a Town Center area with recreation, shops, a cultural arts center and other cultural and social opportunities
- Create a central public green at new Town Center site

- Establish a large Town Park, with bandstand, swimming pool, picnic areas, tennis courts
- Develop conference center at edge of downtown - potentially on historic site north of County offices
- Relocate Town Hall to a new Town Center Square on the Coke Plant and Southern Maryland Oil (S.M.O.) sites and adjacent land; add parking
- Maintain County Offices and Court at current site; re-orient entrance to Charles Street or US 301; expand County Office site to north and west

Charlie Lamb and Lock Wills at work

The Plan for the Future of Downtown La Plata:

APPENDIX

Appendix 1

MARKET OVERVIEW

La Plata is centrally located in Charles County at the intersection of two regional highways, MD Routes 301 and 6. It lies south (along MD 301) of the regional shopping areas of Waldorf and east of the town of Indian Head, the location of the U.S. Naval Surface Warfare Center. The Charles County government's administrative and judicial functions are located in downtown La Plata.

For the purposes of this analysis, we have examined demographic and economic data for three areas: a three-mile radius of the intersection of Charles Street and Washington Avenue; a five-mile radius of the same intersection, and Charles County. The three-mile area is the primary market area and will be the basis for projecting retail space requirements.

Retail Market Area Demographics

Exhibit 1 compares historic and projected (2004) population, households, and average household size by market area.

- In 1999, the close-in market areas contained about 10 percent of the County population and households and about 60 percent of the population and households in the five-mile area.

- The close-in market area experienced significantly larger population growth during the 1980's than the five-mile area and Charles County, with population increasing by 43 percent between 1980 and 1990. The area grew at a rate for more comparable with the other areas throughout the 1990's.

- The close-in market area may be expected to grow by nearly 5 percent between 1999 and 2004 from 11,716 residents to 12,272. This is a reasonable and fairly conservative projection of short-term population growth. With the approval of 50 residential building permits per year within the La Plata municipal limits alone, the population may be expected to increase by at least 130 each year or to about 12,400 by 2004. Residential development outside of the corporate limits is severely constrained by the availability of school capacity.

Exhibit 2 compares household income and wealth for each of the three areas in 1999.

- In 1999, the median household income for the close-in market area was $57,333, which is somewhat lower than that of the five-mile area ($60,738) and Charles County (58,723).

Exhibit 1

Comparison of Market Area Population: Three- and Five-Mile Rings and Charles County

		3 Miles	5 Miles	Charles County
Population:	2004 Total	12,272	20,496	125,775
	1999 Total	11,716	19,669	119,622
	1990 Total	10,042	17,116	101,154
	1980 Total	7,008	13,280	72,750
	% Change 90-99	16.7	14.9	18.3
	% Change 80-90	43.3	28.9	39.0
Households:	2004 Total	4,450	7,257	43,947
	1999 Total	4,134	6,788	40,874
	1990 Total	3,261	5,507	32,950
	1980 Total	2,118	3,910	21,379
	% Change 90-99	26.8	23.3	24.0
	% Change 80-90	54.0	40.8	54.1
Ave. HH Size:	2004	2.64	2.75	2.83
	1999	2.71	2.82	2.90
	1990	2.92	3.01	3.03

Source: Claritas, Inc. 1999; Thomas Point Associates, Inc.

Exhibit 2

Comparison of Household Wealth and Income: Three- and Five-Mile Rings and Charles County, 1999

	3-Mile		5-Mile		Charles County	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Households by Household Income	4,134	100.0	6,788	100.0	40,874	100.0
Under $10,000	338	8.2	471	6.9	2,201	5.4
$10,000 to $ 19,999	350	8.5	493	7.3	2,557	6.3
$20,000 to $ 24,999	237	5.7	354	5.2	1,882	4.6
$25,000 to $ 29,999	124	3.0	214	3.2	1,666	4.1
$30,000 to $ 34,999	206	5.0	322	4.7	1,816	4.4
$35,000 to $ 49,999	553	13.4	845	12.4	6,393	15.6
$50,000 to $ 74,999	847	20.5	1,503	22.1	10,981	26.9
$75,000 to $ 99,999	776	18.8	1,286	18.9	7,182	17.6
$100,000 to $149,999	461	11.2	863	12.7	4,487	11.0
$150,000 and Over	232	5.6	429	6.3	1,709	4.2
Median Household Income	$57,333		$60,738		$58,723	
Average Household Wealth	$189,166		$204,344		$177,749	
Median Household Wealth	$97,061		$116,477		$95,326	

Source: Claritas, Inc. 1999; Thomas Point Associates, Inc.

- The close-in market area has a larger concentration of households in the lowest household income categories—that is under $20,000. About 17 percent of households within three miles of downtown have incomes below $20,000; compared to 14 percent in the five-mile area and 12 percent through Charles County.

- The close-in market area also has a large concentration of households in the highest income categories relative to the five-mile area and the County as a whole. About 17 percent of households located within three miles of downtown have incomes over 100,000; compared to 19 percent in the five-mile area and 15 percent in the County.

- In terms of average household wealth, the close-in population with an average household wealth of $189,166 exceeds the County population ($177,749) but lags behind the five-mile population ($204,344). It is important to note that households within five miles of downtown have significantly higher levels of wealth on average than those within the greater Charles County.

Exhibits 3 and 4 show expenditures by product categories and store categories, respectively, for each of three areas. The "U.S. Index" in the tables shows the relationship between spending by residents of the local areas (although not necessarily within the local area) and that of the U.S. population as a whole.

- The data confirm the general comparability between household incomes in the three areas, with the five-mile area spending somewhat more, relative to the United State total, than the close-in and County population in all product and store categories.

- For the close-in market area, the highest expenditures relative to the U.S. population as a whole were in the following expenditure categories: Men's Apparel, Lawn/Garden Supplies, Floor Coverings, Entertainment Equipment and Services (excluding TV, radio and sound equipment), Transportation, and Domestic Services.

- In addition to the aforementioned product categories, the five-mile area also scored high, relative to the U.S. in Women's Apparel, Household Textiles, Furniture, and Small Appliances & Houseware.

Exhibit 3

Expenditure by Selected Product: Three- and Five-Mile Rings and Charles County, 1999

Prodect Categories	3-Mile		5-Mile		Charles County	
	Exp. ($000)	US Index	Exp. ($000)	US Index	Exp. ($000)	US Index
Food at Home	$17,315	103	$29,428	107	$177,399	107
Food away from Home	$13,251	119	$22,470	123	$134,184	122
Alcoholic Beverages at Home	$1,196	114	$1,992	116	$11,994	116
Alcoholic Beverages away from Home	$792	108	$1,308	109	$7,906	109
Personal Care Products	$1,863	116	$3,152	119	$18,993	119
Personal Care Services	$1,524	118	$2,597	123	$15,325	120
Nonprescription Drugs	$668	108	$1,123	111	$6,655	109
Women's Apparel	$4,250	121	$7,274	126	$42,263	121
Men's Apparel	$2,516	125	$4,322	131	$25,660	129
Girl's Apparel	$393	107	$684	114	$4,430	122
Boy's Apparel	$518	110	$895	116	$5,727	123
Infant's Apparel	$398	107	$674	111	$4,185	114
Footwear (excl. infants)	$1,762	116	$3,009	120	$18,265	121
Housekeeping Supplies	$2,399	113	$4,096	118	$24,451	117
Lawn/Garden Supplies (incl. Plants)	$452	128	$773	133	$4,457	128
Domestic Services	$3,053	139	$5,199	144	$30,472	141
Household Textiles	$786	123	$1,350	129	$7,867	125
Furniture	$2,781	122	$4,727	126	$28,513	127
Floor Coverings	$812	129	$1,430	139	$8,064	130
Major Appliances	$1,038	113	$1,770	118	$10,550	116
Small Appliances & Houseware	$710	122	$1,220	127	$7,182	125
TV, Radio & Sound Equipment	$3,613	118	$6,120	122	$37,347	123
Other Entertainment Equip./Services	$4,448	132	$7,666	138	$45,731	137
Transportation	$40,550	132	$69,541	138	$406,941	134

Source: Claritas, Inc. 1999; Thomas Point Associates, Inc.

Exhibit 4

Expenditure by Selected Store: Three- and Five-Mile Rings and Charles County, 1999

Store Category	3-Mile		5-Mile		Charles County	
	Exp. ($000)	US Index	Exp. ($000)	US Index	Exp. ($000)	US Index
Building Materials & Supply Stores	$2,045	118	$3,528	124	$20,990	122
Hardware Stores	$296	120	$509	126	$2,998	123
Retail Nursery/Lawn/Garden Supply	$445	126	$762	131	$4,415	126
Auto Supply Stores	$2,164	128	$3,699	134	$21,685	130
Gasoline/Service Stations	$9,479	124	$16,164	129	$96,261	127
Grocery Stores	$19,051	105	$32,352	109	$194,669	109
Drug and Proprietary Stores	$3,419	110	$5,838	115	$34,481	112
Eating Places	$13,153	119	$22,296	123	$132,996	122
Drinking Places	$614	115	$1,030	118	$6,133	117
Department Stores (Exc. Leased)	$9,594	121	$16,440	126	$97,829	124
Apparel Stores	$4,029	121	$6,907	126	$40,822	124
Shoe Stores	$1,061	116	$1,813	121	$10,983	122
Furniture	$2,531	123	$4,309	127	$25,841	127
Home Furnishing Stores	$1,418	128	$2,459	136	$14,118	129
Household Appliance Stores	$592	119	$1,012	124	$5,987	122
Radio/TV/Computer/Music Stores	$2,211	124	$3,769	129	$22,513	128

Source: Claritas Inc.; Thomas Point Associates, Inc.

Existing Retail Market

Retail activity in La Plata is distributed along MD Route 301 and in five centers:

- Downtown
- La Plata Shopping Center
- Hawthorne Shopping Center
- Potomac Shopping Center
- La Plata Village Shopping Center

Exhibit 5 shows the types of retail stores and services located in each of the five centers. Highway oriented retail activity including fast food restaurants, gasoline stations, automobile parts and repair shops, hotel/motels, convenience marts, and liquor stores, are located along MD Route 301 between the various shopping centers. These comprise a considerable share of total retail space in the three-mile market area.

In terms of the number of businesses, downtown La Plata has the largest amount of retail and retail service activity among the five centers. It has particularly high concentration of commercial service businesses, with a total of 31 separate service businesses. Every local population serving finance/insurance office is located in downtown as are five of the market area's 11 salons. It also has a broad array of retail activity, ranging from specialized retail activities such as stained glass repair and antique sales to hardware, automotive parts, and farm supply sales.

In terms of new development, retail activity appears to be moving north along MD 301 away from downtown. The oldest shopping center, La Plata Shopping Center is located near downtown but on the west side of MD 310. The Hawthorn and Potomac Square Shopping Centers are located about 0.8 of a mile north of downtown also along MD 301.

The newest shopping center, La Plata Village Shopping Center, is still under development and is located along MD 301 about 1.3 miles north of downtown. It alone contains nearly 100,000 square feet and will build out at between 230,000 to 270,000 square feet of retail, including a Wal-Mart store.

There are clear reasons for the movement of new retail activity along MD Route 301. Perhaps most important is the traffic volume. According to the Maryland State Highway Administration, in 1999, MD Route 310 between La Plata and White Plains carried between 32,000 and 39,000 vehicles per day. South of La Plata, MD Route 301 carried about 22,500 vehicles per day. The availability of large and readily developable parcels allowing significant parking and roadside visibility also contribute to recent development of retail along the highway outside of downtown.

It is important to note that MD Route 6 (Charles Street) through downtown La Plata also carries significant traffic--19,600 vehicles per day in 1999. This is indicative of the area-wide development pattern that has seen the emergence of residential subdivisions along MD Route 6 and MD 488 (La Plata Road) southeast of downtown.

Exhibit 5

Types of Retail and Service Establishments By Shopping Center in La Plata

			Location in Primary Market Area: Shopping Center				
			1	2	3	4	5
Restaurants							
	"Fine" Dining		☒				
	Quick Service Restaurants (QSR)						
		Bagel Shop					
		Chinese		☒			☒
		Coffee Shop					
		Deli	☒				
		Diner					
		Ice Cream Shop					
		Pizza	2		☒	☒	☒
		Other		☒			
	Kiosks/Carts						
	Pub / Tavern						
Food/Groceries							
	Bakery						
	Bagels						
	Coffee						
	Grocery		☒	☒			☒
	Convenience		2	☒			
	Ethnic Market						
	Grocery/Supermarket						
	Liquor		☒	☒			
	Natural Foods						
	Outdoor Market/Bazaar						
	Tobacco						
	Wines and Cheeses						
Retail Stores							
	Antiques/Collectibles		☒				
	Appliances				☒		
	Art Gallery		☒				
	Apparel (Incl. Shoes)				☒		
	Accessories						
	Automotive		☒				☒
	Books, Papers (incl. Comics)						
	Cosmetics, Specialty Beauty Products						
	CD's and LP's---Recycled						
	Crafts						
	Drug		☒	☒			
	Electronics		☒				
	General Merch.						
	Entertainment/Arcade						
	Fabrics						
	Flowers		☒	☒	☒		
	Garden/Farm Supply		☒				

General Merch.					
Gifts, Cards	☒	☒			
Hardware	☒				
Home Furnishings	3				
Home Furnishings (incl. Blinds, carpets)					☒
Jewelry					
Medical Supplies	2				
Music Instruments					
Nature Store					
New Age Books and Products					
Nutrition					☒
Office Supplies					
Pet Supplies					
Post/Packaging/Office Support					
Sporting Goods, Clothes: Specialized			☒		☒
Thrift Store			☒		
Toys					
Variety					
Video sales, rental		☒			
Vintage Clothing					

Services: Retail and Office

Banking	5	☒	☒	☒	
Business Service: computer, other	2				
Daycare	☒				
Eye Care: Optometry, Lens Crafting	☒				
Film Processing					
Finance Companies/Insurance	8				
Fitness/Karate/Dance Studio				☒	3
Laundry/ Dry Cleaning	☒	☒	☒		☒
Legal Services					
Medical Clinics	2		☒		
Photo Studio					
Real Estate	4	☒		☒	
Repairs: Consumer products	2				
Salons: Hair, nails	5	☒	2	☒	2
Shoe Repairs					
Tailoring					
Tax Preparation					☒
Travel Agent/Store					
Veterinary Clinic					

*Center Name

1	Downtown	4	Potomac Shop Ctr
2	La Plata Shop Ctr	5	La Plata Village Shop Ctr.
3	Hawthrone Shop Ctr		

Source: Thomas Point Associates, Inc.

Commuters from these communities travel through downtown on route to MD Route 301 and points north. Provided that the traffic is managed effectively, which currently is not the case, it may become a positive market attribute of downtown.

Representatives interviewed for this study have consistently identified water and sewer connection fees as a major impediment to development in La Plata, both within downtown and outside of downtown. National and franchise high-volume retailers that are locating along MD 301 have a greater capacity to absorb upfront costs than smaller operations that may which to locate in downtown. The high connection fees especially hurt restaurants, pubs, and other relatively heavy water users.

We estimate that exiting retail space ranges from about 325,000 to 400,000 square feet, with nearly 15,000 square feet of existing space being vacant. The impending opening of Wal-Mart will add another 140,000 square feet and may be expected to attract upwards of 90,000 to 130,000 square feet of additional retail space at the La Plata Village Shopping Center as national retailers cluster near the store on the remaining pad sites proposed. Within 2 years, we would expected total retail space within the three-mile market area of La Plata to range from 555,000 to 670,000 square feet.

As will be discussed later, we believe that this is more space than can be supported by the three-mile market area population alone. The excess space is in part due to traffic generated retail demand along MD 301, strong household income in the five-mile market area, and our assessment based on field review, interviews, and previous experience that nearly one-quarter of existing retail space is being used relatively unproductively—that is, at below average rates of sales per square foot.

Estimated and Projected Retail Demand

The major force for new retail development in La Plata is growth in household income. The demographic figures presented earlier for the three-mile area from the center of downtown provide the basis for estimating demand in the market area.

Exhibit 6 shows the year 1999 and projected year 2004 retail expenditures by category based on U. S. Department of Labor consumer expenditure surveys. The categories shown comprise the types of shopping typically done in neighborhood, community, or specialized centers, not in large regional shopping centers such as that found in Waldorf.

The figures in Exhibit 6 indicate a retail expenditure potential (1999) of $80.9 million for the retail categories shown. This may be anticipated to increase by almost 8 percent to $87.1 million over five years given the projected increase in total household income in the market area. These are limited estimates in that they do not take into account the potential impact of shoppers from outside three miles of downtown, including shoppers and tourists from elsewhere within the region, who could represent a significant component of demand for dining and specialty goods and to some extent highway oriented convenience products.

Exhibit 6

Retail Expenditure Potential Estimates and Forecasts:
Three-Mile Market Area Population

Category	Percent of HHI	Sales By Year 1999	Sales By Year 2004
Convenience Goods /1			
Food	8.5%	$ 17,728,694	$ 19,083,862
Other	4.6%	$ 9,594,352	$ 10,327,737
Services /2	11.1%	$ 23,151,588	$ 24,921,279
Eating/Drinking	4.9%	$ 10,220,071	$ 11,001,285
Shoppers Goods			
Apparel	4.8%	$ 10,011,498	$ 10,776,769
Furniture/Home	4.9%	$ 10,220,071	$ 11,001,285
Total	38.8%	$ 80,926,273	$ 87,112,219

Notes
1 Includes hh. supplies,. alcohol, misc. goods.
2 Includes entertainment, educational/medical services.

Source: Thomas Point Associates, Inc.

As shown in Exhibit 7, household demand within the three-mile market area equates to an existing need for approximately 258,700 square feet of retail space and a projected 2004 need for about 278,500 square feet, within the categories shown. It is important to note that this projection assumes an average level of retail productivity by product type ($300 of sales per square foot for retail services, for instance) that we believe does not currently exist throughout the La Plata market area. This in part explains why there appears now to be more retail square footage in some of categories than we would project for 2004.

Retail productively aside, we believe, the local market demand for these types of retail categories is satisfied by the stores within the exiting and developing shopping centers along MD Route 301 and in downtown, with the notable exceptions of eating/drinking places and specialty retail. With respect to eating/drinking places, the data suggest a significant leakage of local expenditure out of the La Plata market area. The estimated $10.2 million annual expenditure for eating/drinking is far from being fully captured by the limited supply of such establishments in the immediate market area.

The Retail Mix

Exhibit 8 lists the types of stores that we believe have the greatest potential for downtown La Plata, immediately and over a five-year period. It was drawn primarily from the aforementioned market demand considerations and secondarily from our assessment of the retail inventory by type and location.

Our assessment of the inventory found that while some retail activities are found in adequate supply throughout the market area, these activities may economically benefit from a downtown location and may in turn support downtown revitalization (fitness/karate/dance studio). The inventory also suggested that certain retail activities seem to have the potential to emerge as strong retail sectors in downtown (home furnishings/design, local finance/insurance). And as it would be desirable to downtown retail revitalization to consider such activities when programming a vibrant cluster of businesses, they are added to the list. Thus, the list has a strong normative component.

Downtown retailing may benefit from a number of factors. These include a relatively affluent and growing nearby residential community; a large and growing mix of professionals working in downtown, especially in the fields of law and medicine; a close proximity to MD 301 and regional accessibility; and an attractive urban setting that is unique in Charles County. Therefore, the primary orientation for the new stores would be towards convenience for:

- professionals employed in downtown,
- residents in the surrounding neighborhoods, and
- specialized purchases and dining/entertainment for the larger market area.

Exhibit 7

Retail Expenditure Potential Estimates and Forecasts:
Three-Mile Market Area Population

Category	Percent of HHI	Sales By Year 1999	Sales By Year 2004
Convenience Goods /1			
Food	8.5%	$ 17,728,694	$ 19,083,862
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Services /2	11.1%	$ 23,151,588	$ 24,921,279
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Shoppers Goods			
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Total	38.8%	$ 80,926,273	$ 87,112,219

Notes
1 Includes hh. supplies,. alcohol, misc. goods.
2 Includes entertainment, educational/medical services.

Source: Thomas Point Associates, Inc.

Exhibit 8

Types of Establishments With Strongest Potential By Market Sector, Downtown La Plata

Type of Establishment		Market Sector: Immediate	Market Sector: Long-Term (5 -10 Years)
Restaurants			
Fine Dining		☒	☒
Quick Service Restaurants (QSR)			
	Coffee	☒	☒
	Deli	☒	
Pub/Tavern		☒	☒
Specialty Food/Groceries			
Bakery		☒	
Coffee		☒	
Convenience		☒	
Health Foods		☒	
Outdoor Market/Bazaar			☒
Wines and Cheeses		☒	
Retail Stores			
Antiques		☒	☒
Art Gallery			☒
Books, Papers, Gifts, Cards			☒
Clothing, Specialized		☒	
Cosmetics, Specialty Beauty Products			☒
CD's and LP's---Recycled		☒	
Crafts			☒
Gifts, Cards			☒
Home Furnishings / Design			☒
New Age Books and Products			☒
Retail Services			
Business/Office Support Serv.		☒	
Dance Studio		☒	
Daycare			☒
Finance/Insurance Companies		☒	☒
Photo Shop		☒	
Salons			☒
Tax Preparation			☒
Real Estate			☒

Source: Thomas Point Associates, Inc.

Market demand suggests that the three-mile market population alone could support up to 34,000 square feet of eating/drinking places. There are very few sit-down restaurants in the three-mile market area, and only one in downtown. The vast majority of eating/drinking space is devoted to fast food and franchise pizza restaurants along MD 301. Eating/drinking places are severely limited in the market area. Given that fine dining restaurants, like the single existing Casey Jones restaurant, and entertainment uses have a much larger market area, more eating/drinking places may be expected to be supportable.

Our assessment suggests that a downtown retail strategy in the La Plata market should include the following:

- Eating/Drinking: Fine dining or sit-down restaurants, pub/tavern, café, take-home prepared foods;
- Specialty food products: coffee, baked products, fine wines, health food;
- Retail stores: antiques, crafts, art gallery, specialized clothing, home furnishing/design; and
- Retail services: finance/insurance, salon, dance studio, business/office support, photo studio, tax preparation.

Office Market

Downtown La Plata is primarily a location for population serving and professional offices. As previously mentioned, downtown contains the bulk of the retail-service office space in the market area including banking, real estate, and finance/insurance offices.

Downtown also contains over 20 law offices, about 20 medical offices (excluding the hospital), and about 14 other local professional offices. It is home to the County government administrative offices and courthouse and the hospital.

The State Department of Social Services is consolidating operations into a new privately owned building, which is under construction and anticipated to be available in January 2001. It is moving from the building it currently occupies at the Southern Maryland Trade Center, which is located just south of downtown along the southbound side of MD 310. The Department will also completely vacate a 4,300 square foot building at 7 Kent Avenue in downtown. The new building will contain 80,000 square feet of office space. The Department of Social Services will initially occupy, with a long-term lease, about 60,000 square feet.

General downtown office space seems split between renovated residential structures and older and modest office buildings, some of which were previously in a retail use. Such space rents in the range of $8 to $12 per square foot with terms of three to five years. Rents achievable appear somewhat lower in La Plata than in Waldorf, where the market rate is $10 to $16 per square foot.

Recent trends suggest a market for more upscale office space in downtown. The recently constructed Mitchell Building, located on Centennial Street is now about 75 percent occupied. The P. F. Bowen Building on Charles Street is an example of a restoration of on older building into good office space. Restoration work is nearly completed and the structure appears to be about 50 percent occupied. Plans for new privately financed Class A office space have been considered recently by property owners in downtown, though the size and scale of that cannot be determined.

Two office structures, located at the intersection of Baltimore Street and Maple Avenue, are currently vacant, though one appears to be undergoing renovations for a planned change of use.

Exhibit 9 shows the supply of office space downtown, excluding the County and Town office space and any space directly affiliated with the hospital. As shown, it appears that law and medical offices comprise nearly 52,000 square feet of office space. Other professional office space comprises about 12,600 square feet of space.

For the purpose of this assessment, we have assumed the consolidation of Department of Social Services operations into the new building on Kent Avenue. Upon construction of the new building, we anticipate that about 30,000 square feet will be vacant in downtown, including the 20,000 square feet in the new building not occupied by the Department of Social Services.

Exhibit 9 also shows that full absorption of available and currently vacant space would take six to nine years assuming absorption rates of 2.5 percent and 4 percent, respectfully. This is not meant to suggest that no new office space will be constructed over the next five years. Indeed, as much of downtown office space is located in what were formally retail or residential structures, there may in fact be a more immediate demand for quality office space. The progress experienced with the new Mitchell Building and the newly renovated P.F Bowen building will help indicate how strong the local demand is for better quality space.

Housing Market

The general consensus of local real estate and development professionals is that the housing market in the La Plata area is strong. Information on new and planned residential projects would seem to bear this out. About 50 residential permits per year are being approved in the Town of La Plata alone and there are many lots in the pipeline—that is, at some stage of development review and approval. As previously discussed, we conservatively project that by 2004 there will be about 4,500 dwelling units within a three-mile radius of downtown.

Exhibit 9

Supply and Absorption of Office Space In Downtown La Plata: 2000

Occupied Space		
Law		20,000
Medical		32,000
Other Prof.		12,600
New Social Serv. Bld.		60,000
	subtotal	124,600
Vacant Space		
Existing		10,000
New Social Serv. Bld.		20,000
	subtotal	30,000
Total Space		154,600
% Occupied		80.6%
Excess Space		30,000
Absorption of Excess Space		
@ 2.5 % / year		6 years
@ 4.0 % / year		9 years

Source: Thomas Point Associates, Inc.

About 30 single-family lots remain to be developed in the Hickory Ridge subdivision, which is located just east of downtown along MD 6. About 90 units are to be added to the recently completed Kings Grant subdivision, which is located farther east of downtown along MD 488 (still within the municipal limits of La Plata). Agricopia–a residential development with a total of 580 planned units is under development on lands also situated within three-miles of downtown to the east along MD 488. Half of the units Agricopia will be townhouses and half will be single-family units.

According to local real estate professionals, new single-family homes in these subdivisions have sold in the ranges of $230,000 to 240,000 and $350,000 to $375,000, depending on size and location. New single-family homes in Acricopia subdivision are anticipated to sell for $230,000; duplex units, for $200,000; and townhouses for $150,000. At Hickory Ridge, new townhouses, of about 2,000 square feet in size, are selling for $200,000. The average resale price in existing subdivisions for single-family homes, less than 10 years old, falls within the range of $200,000 to $250,000. The resale price of existing older townhouses within or immediately adjacent to downtown approximates $110,000 to $130,000.

The Maples Foundation, is developing an assisted living / retirement community just west of downtown on the west side of MD 301. It will consist of 18 villas sold fee simple and 80 condominium apartments. The villas are expected to sell at about $130,000.

An age restricted residential community is under development on lands north of downtown along Washington Avenue. Selling prices for the units planned there are expected to range between $140,000 and $177,000. A few of the planned 81 units have sold.

One-bedroom apartments rent for about $650 per month in La Plata.

Downtown Housing Potential

Our sense is that there is a market for downtown housing (condominium, rental and fee simple – town homes), but not an immediate market. There may be some market worth investigating for high-end retirement housing in downtown. The reasons for a downtown housing potential include:

- A relatively large employment base in downtown: Hospital and professional offices could provide ready tenants for market rate housing (rental) and sale.

- Opinion of residential developers and real estate professionals that senior housing and assisted living present real opportunities in this market place. There appears to be some evidence of that now with Washington Square and Maples Foundation projects.

- New homes sales (single family) are strong and priced over what young professionals may be expected to afford.

- Downtown La Plata still provides excellent access to MD 310 for commuting purposes and is a unique setting.

First, we believe it is critical to establish an identity of place to support eventual downtown housing. Downtown La Plata is already a unique place in Charles County, with historic buildings, the County courthouse, and mix of office, retail, and residential structures. Establishing an identity would involve among other things the following.

- The development of new complementary retail (and possibly office) uses such as those mentioned previously.
- The provision of downtown amenities such as sidewalks, open space, street trees, lighting, landscaping, and improved traffic circulation.

- Curb appeal will be essential. The units must be distinguished from others in the market place not simply by the location in downtown but by very good design.

- New townhouses would likely have to have individual garages or creative off-street parking arrangements

We would envision a residential development program consisting of at least two phases. The first phase would consist of 15 to 20 units. The second phase would add about 20 more units.

Summary

This market overview has focused on retail, office, and housing markets and the potential for these activities in downtown La Plata. We believe that over the long term downtown has the greatest potential for retail and office success of the various commercial centers within the three- and five-mile market areas.

Downtown already has a strong mix of retail uses, the most diverse in the marketplace, and is the main center for office in the market. The consolidation of Department of Social Services staff in a new downtown location further strengthens the potential for long-term success. Downtown housing has potential, though not immediate potential and will largely hinge on the ability to create a supportive identify of place.

Exhibit 10 shows a program-driven projection of retail, office, and housing units in downtown La Plata. It shows a high and low range of space (units) in each category. The exhibit is provided in order to give context to the efforts of the steering committee and design team at this stage of infrastructure and land use planning and urban design.

Exhibit 10

Program-Driven Development Projections
Downtown La Plata

Retail

Years	*Space S/F (000's)*
1 though 5	15 to 20
6 through 10	20 to 30
Total	35 to 50

Components of Development	*% Total Space*
Eating / Drinking	25-30%
Specialty Food Products	10-15%
Retail Stores	30-40%
Retail Services	20-35%

Office

Years	*Space S/F (000's)*
1 though 5	5 to 15
6 through 10	10 to 20
Total	15 to 35

Housing

Years	*Units*
1 though 5	15 - 30
6 through 10	20 - 60
Total	35 - 90

Source: Thomas Point Associates, Inc.

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

La Plata Downtown

The following summarize interviews conducted by Thomas Point Associates, Inc. on October 18, 2000 in La Plata.

Commercial Real Estate Market

Rents and Terms

- Rents in La Plata: $ 8 - $12 / sf
- Rents in Waldorf: $10 - $16 / sf

- In general within downtown, the closer to the courthouse, the higher are rents. Rents on Centennial and Howard Streets are somewhat lower than rents nearer to the courthouse. Space in the newly renovated P.F. Bowen Building rents somewhat higher than average. The new building on St. Mary's Street, across from Mitchell's Supply gets better than average rents as well.

- More properties in downtown La Plata are owner-occupied than rental occupied.

- All bank buildings in downtown are owner-occupied except for the MD Bank & Trust which rents for $20/sf.

- Terms: Mostly short term leases in downtown. Longest leases in downtown are 3–5 years.

- Terms north of downtown La Plata along MD 301 (near Wal-Mart) are 5-year minimum.

- Rents north of downtown along MD 301 (near Wal-Mart site) on newly developed retail projects: $10/sf plus $1.5/sf on CAM. Terms: 5 years.

- Shared-space arrangements may work in downtown. They are now working is Waldorf.

New Projects/Proposals/Planned Developments

- Class A office space is proposed on the site now occupied by the Posey Food Store. running from Charles Street to Howard Street. It appears now that Posey may not agree to sell.

- The Chamber of Commerce would like to move from its current location on MD 301 to downtown La Plata. It would need space to accommodate five full time and one part time employees, five offices plus a reception area and large boardroom, parking. (The old Post Office may be a good site.)

- Social Services Department building is under construction. When completed it will result in vacancies in downtown.

- New building on St. Mary's street is getting higher rents. It is located across from Mitchell's Supply store and is about 25% vacant.

Current Commercial Operations

- Posey Market employs 2 checkout people and 2-3 meat/deli people. They do a big lunchtime business.

- Casey Jones is the only restaurant in town. It has done very well, with a regional reputation.

- The County First Bank plans to stay downtown. May need more space in five years Main office is at 202 Centennial Street. Operations center is located in the long building next to the hardware store (Wilson Building). Bank employs 16 people at its main office and 11 at its operations center.

- Chef Jeff's is a new carryout. Appears to be doing well. Located on Charles Street.

- Kramer & Gorny Attorneys are located in the newly renovated P. F. Bowen Building.

- Post Office relocated and is now adjacent to MD 301. Old Post Office building is for sale.

- Hospital plans to move administrative staff to the building next to Town Hall, the old hospital building. The Hospital (Civista Health) just re-leased its building for 30 years. The hospital employs 500 – 600 people.

- Balbus Real Estate located at MD 301 and Charles Street.

Broad Level Comments

- The Charles County Economic Development Commission (EDC) has just started a commercial real estate task force. As part of this, EDC is surveying business within certain industry categories. Recently completed a survey of the health care sector and the printing industry. Now undertaking a survey of the high tech sector.

- The EDC will begin to identify available commercial property throughout the County. There is over 1 million square feet of commercial space in the pipeline in Charles County; this will double the square footage in the County.

- County First Bank emphasizes "main street part of its mission"—that is, helping to finance good projects in downtown to help with revitalization and rehabilitation of existing buildings. The Bank has financed the P.F. Bowen office building renovation, the revitalization of the rescue squad building, the Hickory Ridge Subdivision, the Kings Grant Subdivision, the townhouses on St. Mary's Avenue, and the Maple Foundation Senior Housing.

- Columbia Energy (acquired by Orion) is moving to St. Charles Industry Park on Billingsly Road near the Cross-County Connector. County EDC hopes to attract technology companies to the County, especially those related to Indian Head base or the Pax River Naval Air Station.

Commercial Space in La Plata Outside of Downtown

- Recent and development under way
  - 140,000 sf - Wal-Mart
  - 100,000 sf in shopping center: (40,000 sf for Food Lion and 60,000 sf includes Auto Zone, Family $)
  - 40,000 sf proposed under construction
  - 4 more sites available: 2 are sold at 10,000 sf each to Community Bank and Southland Gas Station.
  - 2 more sites undeveloped

Residential Real Estate Market

- Average of 50 residential building permits per year.
- ~~Existing townhouses are selling for $110,000 to $130,000.~~
- Hickory Ridge community. Only 30 lots left to build. There are 220 total lots (including 30 still undeveloped). At Hickory Ridge, the townhouses (at 1,900 – 2,000 sf) are selling for $200,000 on lots of 45' wide x 110' deep.
- Apartment rents: $650/month for a one-bedroom. (Two-bedrooms in Waldorf are renting for $850/month.)
- Hickory Ridge/Washington Square. This is an age-restricted community. Selling prices start at $140,00 and go up to $177,000.
- One developer believes that the age-restricted housing is not doing too well. Only 2 or 3 units are sold. Thought is that they are too expensive.
- There are 32 units of assisted living near Washington Square – Colonial Manner.
- Kings Grant subdivision is recently completed. In total, 252 lots are already sold. An additional 90 units are planned to be added onto Kings Grant.
- Raw land sells for about $8,000/acre.
- Re-sells: $200,000 - $250,000 average price in existing subdivisions for homes less than 10 years old.

New Projects/Proposals/Planned Developments

- Giant has six acres along MD 301 north of downtown under contract now (near Food Lion).

- The Wal-Mart has been a key factor in attracting other national retailers to locate in its proximity, along MD 301. The property that abuts the land that Giant has a contract on is five acres in size and will develop with big box retailers.

- Maples Foundation senior housing/ retirement community. Located on the corner of Routes 6 and 301. Development program:18 villas (fee simple) selling at $130,000 and 80 condominium apartments.

- Agricopia: Located east of downtown off of MD Route 488. Currently under development with a 15 year planning schedule to build-out.. 290 SF plus 290 MF units are planned. No homes built yet, though 110 lots are already platted. Anticipated selling prices: $230,000 for SF, $150,000 for townhouse, and $200,000 for each unit in a duplex.

- Age restricted community (55 years and older), known as Washington Square, is under development on Washington Avenue, north of downtown. Selling prices start at $140,000 and go up to $177,000. There are 81 units planned, only 2 or 3 units have been sold. The property abuts the active railroad.

Issues in Downtown and Surrounding Area

- Water and sewer connection fees in La Plata are high, making development of certain projects cost-prohibitive. Pubs or restaurants and other water consuming business can't afford the fees both in downtown and outside of downtown, along MD 301.

- Residential impact fees are high: $5,500 for school impact fee.

- Residential tap fee: $5,000 per unit

- Town sewer plant is being upgraded.

- Fire Department is moving to Washington Ave. The old building is for sale.

- Limit on new residential development of 25 units/year/development.

- There was a moratorium for the last nine months on townhouses while new regulations were crafted.

- Parking throughout downtown is considered to be a problem. The no-parking restrictions on MD 6 through town are considered hindrance to businesses. Strict enforcement of the Town's parking regulations have had the effect of requiring that

Chef Jeff's rent parking elsewhere in downtown to meet Town's the minimum number of spaces standards.

- Charles County has a law that states that a liquor license cannot be issued if the [redacted]

Based on the plan I identified specific capital requirements and then tried to relate them to the previously identified funding sources (Exhibit 2). There are some potentially appropriate sources and numerous unclear areas that need further evaluation.

Exhibit 2	
Projects and Programs: Budget Requirements with Major Activities*	
Project or Activity	**Funding Source** (See Exhibit 1 for abbreviations)
Real Estate Development	Smart Growth Initiative; MIDFA
Property purchase.	
Relocation of Coca Cola plant and SMO activities.	
Streetscape improvements.	CDBG; SHA; DHCD; TIF
Design	
Construction	
Parking system improvements	County (?)
Development of off-street parking	
Development of parking garage to serve Medical Center and downtown.	
Site/location analysis	
Design/development.	
Municipal building development	City general revenue
Analysis of need.	
Land acquisition	
Design/construction of public building.	
Road/intersection improvements:	SHA; CDBG; DHCD
Elimination of Kent Ave./Charles St. bottleneck	
Improvement of Oak Ave.---extended.	
Construction of traffic light at Oak Ave.	
Infrastructure improvements	CDBG
Expansion of Willow Lane pump station.	
Extension of water/sewer to proposed employment center.	
Other	TIF
*List includes major projects and programs; other more specific items need to be defined and included in budget.	
Source: Vision Plan Implementation Schedule, January, 2001	

Business Recruitment

It is not easy for local governments to attract businesses to downtowns. There is so much competitive retail space with established traffic available in malls and strip centers. However, retail attraction efforts have evolved in programs such as the National Main Street Program and in other locally driven activities, and some have had success.

Most successful programs treat the downtown as if it were a mall, and try to follow the same general steps as commercial brokers follow in leasing mall space---acting on behalf of brokers and in other ways, depending on the circumstances. They include the following types of activities:

- Recruitment planning: inventory of available space and development of fact sheets on space, lease terms, availability, contact.
- Development of leasing plan: technical analysis of existing and potential retail strengths, addressing complementary and competitive store clusters, nature of market, physical issues, most notably parking.

- Creation and distribution of leasing brochure: development of packaged materials on the opportunity and distribution to targeted businesses, probably meaning in this case selected retailers in southern Maryland who have expansion potential and meet the leasing plan objective.
- Marketing and coordination: responding to interested parties, showing properties and other broker activities.

In some cases local governments devise leasing incentive programs tailored to the situation and the objectives. Such programs could include abatement on taxes for start-up investments, direct loans and grants from a fund created for this purpose, loans at subsidized interest rates created by local financial institutions, reduced tap fees for new businesses starting up in targeted areas and other types of incentives. Charles County has a web site and might be able to assist in limited ways, distributing information.

Program Management

Retail recruitment is just one aspect of the overall downtown management process that La Plata is about to commence. There are several other major tasks, as the town managers no doubt already understand. They include the following:

Exhibit 3

Management of Implementation: What Needs To Be Done?

Issue	Comment
Retail promotion	Planning, marketing and negotiating retail attraction strategy.
Real estate acquisition and development	Negotiation, sale, lease and other real estate actions needed to development projects.
Construction Management	Planning and management of construction of infrastructure.
Parking Management/Dev.	Development and implementation of multi-property parking solutions.
Financial Management	Management of funds; grants, loans, other financial assets and programs.
Planning Management	Continuing Management of planning, design, grant writing.

Source: Thomas Point Associates, Inc.

Conclusions

There are potential funding sources that need further discussion and evaluation. There are some options for attracting businesses that require thinking about the downtown in the same way that a mall manager would approach the leasing of mall space. Next steps would include analysis of the TIF mechanism and the level of investment that development presented in our plan could support, and other, more specific analysis of funding sources in relation to specific costs.

Appendix 3

DOWNTOWN REVITALIZATION

PROPOSED SCHEDULE

VISION PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

Time is of the essence in the implementation of this plan. Many of the businesses in the downtown have been lost, and others are in jeopardy. The Town's vision for its future includes an expanded central business district to provide for the needs of the people and maintain a sense of community. It will be very difficult to attract the businesses that are needed to accomplish this if we are unable to provide the support that existing businesses need to remain viable.

The revitalization and expansion of the central business district is at the heart of this plan, but its vitality depends to a large extent on some of the improvements and changes that need to be made along Rt 301 and in the proposed employment area along Rosewick Road. All of these involve infrastructure improvements and these will have to be made before any of the other goals and objectives can be accomplished. Many portions of the plan depend on the prior completion of other sections. A schedule for implementation needs to be adopted that will set priorities and establish a realistic time frame for each item in the plan.

This proposal envisions dividing the downtown revitalization into three phases. The first phase should be accomplished within two years. The second phase would require an additional three years, and the third phase would follow.

PHASE 1 – To be completed by 12-31-2002

1. The highest priority is to preserve the existing businesses in the Central Business District. The first step will be to develop a plan for improvements to Charles Street between St. Mary's and Oak Avenues. A streetscape design, with architectural controls on new construction and renovations signage and lighting standards, should be adopted and off street parking developed in an attractive, well marked setting to encourage people to park and walk to local businesses. This will include reconstructing sidewalks and providing various amenities that will make the general area more attractive. Efforts will be made to aid pedestrian accessibility and improve corridor ambiance.

STREETSCAPE IMPROVEMENTS – CHARLES STREET			
WORK ITEM	YEAR	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Develop a design	2001	0	
Adopt Architectural Controls	2002	3,000	Town
Reconstruct sidewalks	2001	15,000	SHA
Install landscaping, lighting and signs	2002	30,000	
Subtotal for Construction		45,000	
15% Contingency		6,750	
Total Cost		54,750	
Cost Phase 1A	2001	3,000	
Cost Phase 2A	2002	51,750	

2. The bottleneck at Kent Avenue and Charles Street needs to be eliminated. The planned improvements of Oak Avenue-extended between Charles Street and Kent Avenue and relocation of Kent Avenue contained in the plan should be made including a traffic light at Oak Avenue.

KENT AVENUE RELOCATION			
WORK ITEM	YEAR	ESTIMATED COST	FUNDING SOURCE
Obtain ROW	2001	7,000	
Improve existing roadway including curb, gutter and sidewalks	2001	20,200	
Improve intersection with Charles Street	2001	3,000	SHA
Install traffic light at Charles St.	2002	75,000	SHA
Subtotal		98,200	
15% Contingency		14,750	
Total Cost		119,930	
Cost Phase 1A	2001	7,000	
Cost Phase 2A	2002	112,930	

3. Basic transportation and Infra-structure improvements for the expanded downtown need to be completed. These include:

    1. Construction of the new Talbot Street relocated from Rt 301 to Kent Avenue with access to the County Complex.

CONSTRUCTION OF TALBOT STREET- RT 301 / WASHINGTON AVE			
WORK ITEM	YEAR	COST	SOURCE
Legal and Engineering	2001	70,000	
Land Acquisition	2001	655,000	
Construction 1600' Road	2002	650,000	
Subtotal		1,375,000	
15% Contingency	2002	206,250	
Total Cost		1,581,250	
Cost Phase 1A	2001	725,000	
Cost Phase 1B	2002	856,250	

CONSTRUCTION OF TALBOT STREET- KENT AVENUE / WASHINGTON AVE			
WORK ITEM	YEAR	COST	SOURCE
Legal and Engineering	2001	57,500	
Land Acquisition	2001	355,000	
Construction 1000' Road	2002	375,000	
Railroad Crossing	2002	100,000	
Subtotal		887,500	
15% Contingency	2002	133,125	
Total Cost		1,020,625	
Cost Phase 1A	2001	412,500	
Cost Phase 1B	2002	608,125	

2. Construction of the section of Heritage Green Parkway (Rt 6 Connector) from Charles Street to Caroline Drive.

CONSTRUCTION OF HERITAGE GREEN PARKWAY – RT 6 TO CAROLINE DRIVE			
WORK ITEM	YEAR	COST	SOURCE
Legal and Engineering	2001	61,750	
Land Acquisition	2001	68,000	
Construction 1150' Road	2002	517,500	
Subtotal		647,250	
15% Contingency	2002	97,087	
Total Cost		744,337	
Cost Phase 1A	2001	129,750	
Cost Phase 1B	2002	614,587	

3. An expanded Willow Lane pumping station and extension of water and sewer lines, including a new force main from the pumping station, along the new streets.

EXPAND WILLOW LAND PUMPING STATION AND INSTALL FORCE MAIN			
WORK ITEM	YEAR	COST	SOURCE
Engineering and Legal	2001	100,000	
Construction of Pump Station	2002	415,000	
Install 300' Force Main	2002	90,000	
Bore under Charles Street	2002	10,000	
Subtotal		575,000	
15% Contingency		72,250	
Total		692,250	
Cost Phase 1A	2001	100,000	
Cost Phase 1B	2002	592,250	

4. Extension of water and sewer lines to the proposed employment center on Rosewick Road.

EXTENSION OF WATER AND SEWER LINES TO ROSEWICK ROAD			
WORK ITEM	YEAR	COST	SOURCE
Legal and Engineering	2001	27,750	
2300' water and sewer line	2002	187,500	
Pumping Station	2002	80,000	
Railroad Crossing	2002	10,000	
Subtotal		304,250	
15% Contingency	2002	45,637	
Total		349,887	
Cost Phase 1A	2001	27,750	
Cost Phase 1B	2002	322,137	

4. A parking structure along with the new courthouse to include additional parking for the County Complex and to serve the revitalized downtown. Ideally the parking structure would be located at the intersection of Talbot Street relocated and Washington Avenue.

CONSTRUCTION OF PARKING STRUCTURE ON WASHINGTON AVENUE			
WORK ITEM	YEAR	COST	SOURCE
Legal and Engineering	2001	288,000	
Construction 400 space parking structure	2002	3,600,000	
Subtotal		3,888,000	
15% Contingency	2002	583,200	
Total Cost		4,471,200	
Cost Phase 1A	2001	288,000	
Cost Phase 1B	2002	4,183,200	

5. Connect Rosewick Road to the St. Charles Parkway and Rt 301 to reduce through traffic on State Route 6.

6. Commence a search for private investors and developers for the expanded Central Business District. Pursue resources within the Charles County EDC and the State Department for Economic and Business Development. Refer inquiries and preliminary project reviews from the private sector to the Director of Community Development. Develop a marketing program to promote business location in the newly-revitalized Central Business District.

DEVELOP A MARKETING PROGRAM			
WORK ITEM	**YEAR**	**COST**	**SOURCE**
Marketing Plan	2001	25,000	

SUMMARY OF COSTS PHASE 1

SUMMARY OF IMPLEMENTATION COSTS – PHASE ONE OF VISION PLAN			
WORK ITEM	**PHASE 1A 2001**	**PHASE 1B 2002**	**TOTAL COST**
1. Streetscape, Charles Street	3,000	51,750	54,570
2. Kent Avenue Relocation	7,000	112,930	119,930
3.1 Talbot Street Washington Ave to 301	725,000	856,250	1,581,250
Talbot Street Washington to Kent	412,500	608,125	1,020,625
3.2 Heritage Green Rt6 to Caroline Dr.	129,750	614,587	744,337
3.3 Willow Lane Pumping Station	100,000	592,250	692,250
3.4 Extension of water and sewer lines	27,750	322,137	349,887
4 Parking Structure for County Complex	288,000	4,183,200	4,471,200
6. Develop marketing plan	25,000		25,000
Total Cost	1,718,000	7,341,229	9,059,229

PHASE 2 – To be completed by 12-31-2005

1. Relocate Coca Cola Company, Southern Maryland Oil Bulk Plant and other industrial uses in the CBD to the employment center on Rosewick Road or other locations within the Town.

2. Complete construction of Rt 6 Connector/Heritage Green Parkway to Rt 301.

3. Connect from Rosewick Road to Heritage Green Parkway.

4. Extend LaGrange Avenue from Charles Street to the newly constructed Talbot Street and upgrade entire street with sidewalks, new street lights and landscaping.

5. Extend Queen Anne St. to Maple Avenue.

6. Extend Shining Willow Way from Washington Avenue to Rt 301 and Heritage Green Parkway.

PHASE 3 – To be completed by 12-31-2010

1. Construct Town Center and develop the area between Charles Street and Talbot Street.

2. Washington Avenue Reliever from Talbot St to Hawthorne Drive.

3. Extend Cecil Street to the Washington Avenue Reliever and Rt 301.

4. A parking structure to serve Civista Medical Center and the eastern end of the Central Business District.

5. Build loop road or Parkway to the east of Town and make connections to Town's road network.