

# SUBREGION ANALYSIS

The 2002 General Plan and 2003 Biennial Growth Policy Plan established countywide goals, principles, and priorities that provide a foundation for all future planning and development activities in the county.

The goals that guided the development of this plan are to:

- Encourage quality economic development.
- Make efficient use of existing and proposed county infrastructure and investment.
- Enhance quality and character of communities and neighborhoods.
- Preserve rural, agricultural, and scenic areas.
- Protect environmentally sensitive lands.

Since the approval of these goals, guiding principles, and priorities worldwide attention to the idea of sustainability has continued to grow. Although many have defined and redefined this expansive concept over the years, it is perhaps still best understood through the statement that sustainable development is development that “meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”<sup>1</sup> Conceptually, it is a useful organizing principle for discussing how to approach the implementation of the county’s social, economic, and environmental goals as expressed in the General Plan. As researchers and practitioners have tried to determine how to best achieve sustainable development, they have identified three factors which must be considered in every policy decision: the *environment*, the *economy*, and social *equity* (sometimes referred to as the “three Es”). The General Plan also notes a fourth: *efficiency*—efficient use of energy and resources with little or no waste.

Prince George’s County and its citizens desire equal opportunities for all, a healthy environment for current and future generations, and opportunities for economic advancement. A central goal of the

## A SUSTAINABLE SUBREGION 6



*This vista, showing agricultural fields and farm buildings in Baden, is typical of the rural landscape in Subregion 6*

<sup>1</sup> As defined by the 1987 Brundtland Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development and recognized in the 2002 *Prince George’s County Approved General Plan*.

Subregion 6 master plan is to create sustainable communities supportive of a high quality of life for residents. Recognizing that the subregion plays a unique and pivotal role in maintaining the county's diverse economic, social, and environmental landscapes, sustainability principles are built into the policies and recommended strategies within each plan element. For example, in the Environment chapter one of the strategies to protect, preserve, and restore green infrastructure network gaps is to protect priority areas that will meet multiple protection objectives.

Countywide resources should be used efficiently by recognizing the interconnections among community well-being, land use, building, transportation, housing, food systems, and the natural environment and by adopting a holistic long-term view of our investments that includes social and environmental costs. The county should develop a design and sustainability guidelines and standards document as part of educational outreach to educate citizens on the principles of sustainable communities throughout the county. Rehabilitating/restoring older buildings conserves resources, reduces waste, spares landfills, reuses embodied energy, eases energy-consumptive transportation and manufacturing processes (which almost always produce toxic by-products). Most historic buildings were designed for maximum heating, cooling, light, and ventilation. Building community awareness, responsibility, involvement, and education as key elements of successful policies and programs are key to a preservation program.

## PLANNING AREA PROFILE



This section contains a detailed demographic profile comparing the subregion to the county as a whole. Table 2 details projected growth, based on existing zoning, for both the subregion and the county. The population of the subregion is projected to increase by 24 percent by 2030, while Prince George's County is projected to grow by only 16 percent.

The population of Subregion 6 comprises approximately 49.8 percent males and 50.2 percent females. In terms of age breakdown, the largest segment of the subregion's population (35.4 percent) falls within the 25- to 44-year range. The next largest segment, those aged between 45 and 64, constitutes 22 percent of the population. These figures are roughly equivalent to the entire county where 265,541 people, or 33.3 percent, of the county's population, are between the ages of 25 and 44. A further 176,342 people, or 22.0 percent of the county's population, are between the ages of 45 and 64. (See Table 3.)

Table 4 provides some basic information on educational attainment in Subregion 6 and Prince George's County. Approximately one-half of the subregion's population over the age of 25 has a high school diploma or has completed some college. Almost 30 percent of the subregion's population over the age of 25 either has a bachelor's or master's degree. These percentages

**TABLE 2: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE**

	2000	2008 <sup>1</sup>	2030	Change 2008-2030	
				Number	%
<b>Population</b>					
Prince George's County	808,060	852,884	992,868	139,984	16
Subregion 6	60,181	63,155	78,115	14,960	24
Rural Tier in Subregion 6	8,908	9,443	10,615	1,172	12
Developing Tier in Subregion 6	51,273	53,712	67,500	13,788	26
<b>Dwelling Units</b>					
Prince George's County	306,190	328,928	392,490	63,562	19
Subregion 6	19,699	21,096	28,000	6,904	33
Rural Tier in Subregion 6	3,191	3,325	3,900	575	17
Developing Tier in Subregion 6	16,508	17,771	24,100	6,329	36
<b>Employment</b>					
Prince George's County	338,296	347,886	518,386	170,500	49
Subregion 6	24,478	25,366	32,368	7,002	28

Notes:

<sup>1</sup> Population and Dwelling Units are for 2008, Employment data are for 2005.

Sources: 2000 from Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Round 7.0; 2008, 2030 and Buildout from M-NCPPC Community Planning Division

**TABLE 3: AGE RANGE**

Age Range:	Subregion 6		Prince George's County	
	Total	Percent	Total	Percent
Under 5 Years	5,021	7.5	57,664	7.2
5-17 Years	13,516	20.3	156,858	19.6
18-24 Years	5,471	8.2	83,295	10.4
25-44 Years	23,596	35.4	265,541	33.3
45-64 Years	14,677	22.0	176,342	22.0
65 and over	4,392	6.6	61,815	7.7

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

**TABLE 4: EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT (PERSONS AGE 25 AND OVER)**

Education Level:	Subregion 6:		Prince George's County	
	Total:	Percent:	Total:	Percent:
No High School Diploma	4,915	11.5	76,141	15.1
High School Graduate	11,463	26.9	137,265	27.3
Some College	11,465	26.9	126,033	25.0
Associate Degree	2,846	6.7	27,471	5.5
Bachelor Degree	7,580	17.8	85,325	16.9
Graduate Degree	4,396	10.3	51,463	10.2
Grand Totals:	42,665	100.0	503,698	100.0

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

are roughly even with the county's educational attainment. The biggest difference between Subregion 6 and the county is that about 15 percent of the county's population over the age of 25 has no high school diploma, while 11.5 percent of the subregion's population does not have a high school diploma.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the per capita income in Subregion 6 is \$26,548, which compares favorably to the countywide per capita income of \$23,349. The average family income in the subregion is \$75,244, which is also higher than the county's average family income, which is \$62,063. As of the 2000 census, there were 383 families living in poverty within the subregion and 10,641 families living in poverty in the county; this means that only 3.6 percent of all families living in poverty in Prince George's County live within Subregion 6. Likewise, a similar percentage of *individuals* living in poverty reside in the subregion as compared to the county. Of the 60,196 people living in poverty in the county, only 2,287 (3.8 percent) live within Subregion 6.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the racial composition of the subregion compared to the county for African-Americans was 38,176, or 57 percent, in the subregion; countywide is 501,431, or 63 percent. The white population countywide is 216,774 or 23 percent, while in the subregion it is 24,689 or 37 percent. Other populations such as Asian account for four percent countywide and only two percent in the subregion, while other groups make up the rest of the populations.

## EXISTING CONDITIONS



Prince George's County is one of Maryland's largest and most diverse counties. Located in the southeastern portion of the county, the subregion is a transition area between the heavily developed Washington, D.C., area and the rural landscapes of Southern Maryland (Map 4). Reflecting this transitional identity, the subregion is home to a range of communities in the Developing and Rural Tiers.

## Communities

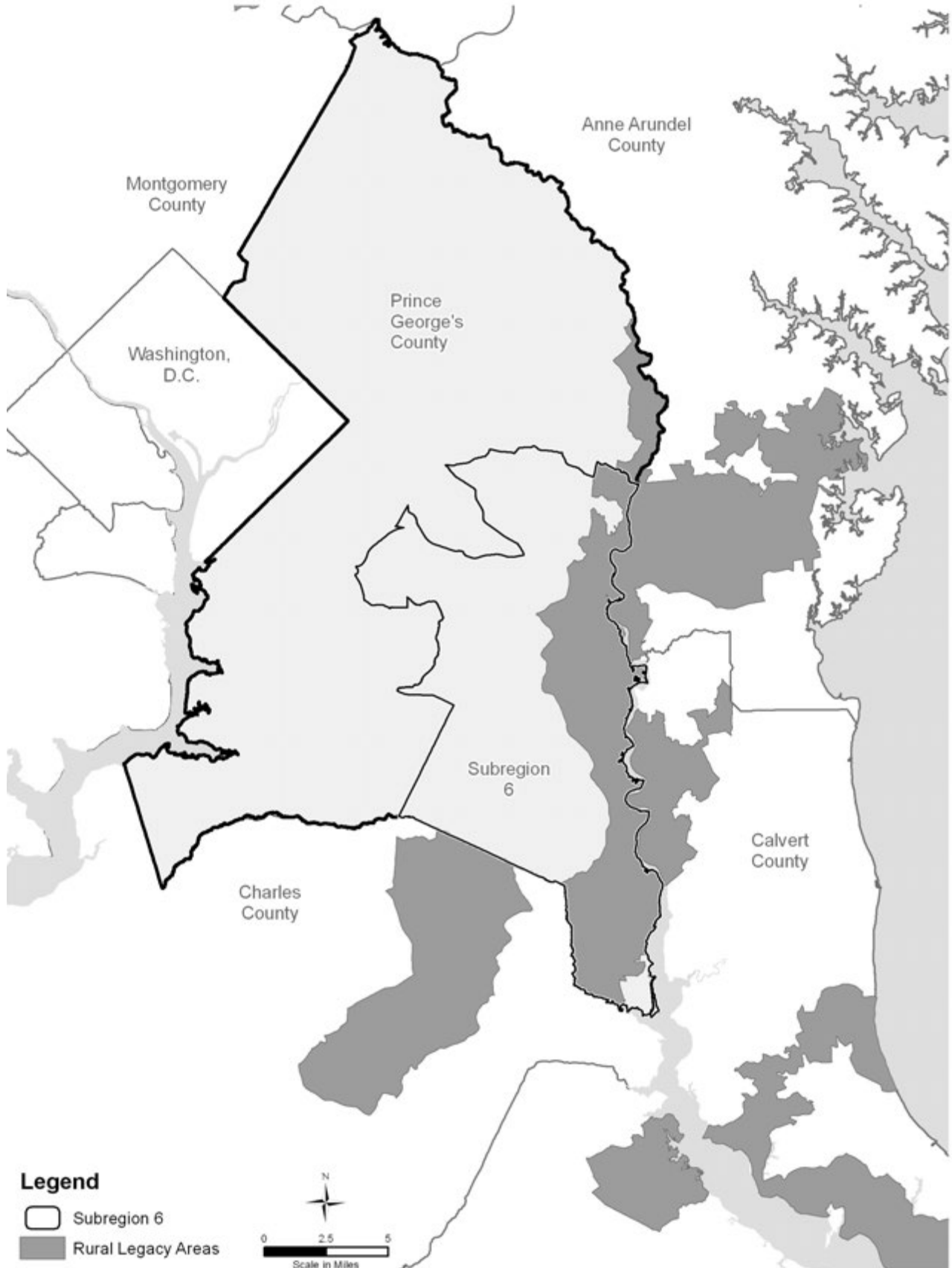


The Developing Tier, for analysis purposes, in the subregion is divided into five communities, all of which are discussed in greater detail in subsequent sections of the plan. Generally, low density residential development that is suburban in character, along with a variety of institutional uses, predominate in the Developing Tier communities. The Rural Tier has several historic centers of varying sizes, which mostly have small clusters of houses, commercial establishments and public or community facilities.

### *Developing Tier*

Most of the subregion west of US 301 is in the Developing Tier (Map 2). It contains considerable amounts of developable land which includes woodlands, residential subdivisions, several large institutional uses, and some scattered business and commercial

# MAP 4: RURAL LEGACY





*This suburban home is typical of many houses in the Developing Tier portions of Subregion 6.*

uses. Since the 1950s, the Developing Tier has predominantly become a bedroom community for the region's major employment centers, particularly Washington, D.C. Most of these communities were subdivided in the second half of the twentieth century, with the newer, comprehensively designed communities such as Beechtree and Perrywood being built in the last quarter and into the twenty-first century.

### *Town of Upper Marlboro and Vicinity*

The Town of Upper Marlboro is the heart of this community, which also encompasses the Villages of Marlborough residential area west of town and the rural communities to the east along US 301 from MD 4 north to Swanson Road.

The town is regionally significant as the county seat, home to the county government and courts, as well as the Prince George's County Board of Education administrative offices and service functions, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, Prince George's County Planning Department, and the Prince George's County Equestrian Center. It also has a number of shopping centers and provides other retail services, particularly auto related. Hidden behind the main roads are also a number of large and small private employment uses.

The Show Place Arena/Equestrian Center is a world-class venue for equestrian events, including the Capital Challenge Horse Show and Grand Prix, as well as other non-equestrian public events. This facility is on the historic Marlboro Race Track and celebrates the long history of the equine community in Prince George's County.



*The Upper Marlboro branch of the Prince George's County public library system is located on Main Street in downtown Upper Marlboro. This building was originally built in 1936 to serve as the local post office. Its conversion to a library protected a historic building and retained an important Main Street civic function.*

### *Northern Subregion 6*

The area north of MD 4 (excluding the Town of Upper Marlboro and vicinity) contains a mix of older and newer subdivisions, interspersed with large institutional uses and woodlands. Within this community are three residential areas:

- East of US 301 is the Marlboro Meadows subdivision, originally built with a private water/sewer system, but has been incorporated into the WSSC system.
- West of US 301 and east of MD 202, a collection of newer developments such as Beechtree, a comprehensively designed planned community which has a mix of housing types and commercial component which is to serve the local residents and Brock Hall.
- Further west between MD 202 and Ritchie-Marlboro Road, also known as Eastern Westphalia, is the location of older





*A new residential subdivision in the Developing Tier.*



*Marlboro Meadows is a neighborhood with mature trees that form an attractive canopy over the street and houses.*

subdivisions, such as Perrywood, Brock Hall Gardens, and Ramblewood, interspersed with institutional uses such as the Brown Station Road Landfill and the University of Maryland's Central Maryland Research and Education Center.

### *Joint Base Andrews Naval Air Facility Washington (JBA)/Melwood and Vicinity*

This community encompasses all of JBA and the nearby employment areas, made up of mostly light industrial uses, to the north and east. It also covers residential communities along MD 223 (Woodyard Road) and other areas of the Developing Tier north of Rosaryville State Park.

JBA is a nationally significant military facility and one of the county's and Washington, D.C., region's major employers. Its impact is expected to grow in the future due to employment gains resulting from the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure



*A comfortable suburban home in Marlton.*

Commission's recommendations as well as realignment within the Washington Military Region.

### *Marlton*

The Marlton community is generally bounded by US 301 (west), Croom Road (north and east), and Duley Station Road (south). The largest single land use is the master-planned mixed residential community of Marlton that started developing in the 1960s. There is a variety of housing types in the community including single-family detached, townhouses, and multifamily buildings. Though Marlton is entirely east of US 301, it

was placed in the Developing Tier because it is served with water and sewer.

### *Rosaryville*

This community is generally bounded by US 301 to the east and the subregion boundary to the west. It incorporates the residential communities to the south and west of Rosaryville State Park, as well as the park itself and the Cheltenham institutional cluster. It is primarily developed with single-family detached houses, some of which have recently been built.

### *Rural Tier*

Most of the subregion east of US 301 falls within the 2002 General Plan's Rural Tier (Map 2). Like much of the land bordering Subregion 6 in southern Anne Arundel, northern

Charles and Calvert Counties, the Rural Tier is also sparsely developed and rural in character. This area forms a significant part of the large block of forest, agriculture, and open space areas that surrounds the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area to the east and south, a portion of which falls under the state's Rural Legacy Program in Prince George's County and the aforementioned jurisdictions. This program, administered through the State of Maryland's Department of Natural Resources, is intended to protect large, contiguous tracts of land rich in natural and cultural resources in areas selected by local interests. State and local land conservation efforts are focused in these areas. In the subregion, the area

east of Croom Road, the CSX railroad tracks, and US 301 is Prince George's County's Rural Legacy area (Map 4).



*A scenic view looking over the Patuxent River.*

This area forms a significant part of the large block of forest, agriculture, and open space areas that surround the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area to the east and south. The portion of the Patuxent Rural Legacy Area (Prince George's County) within the subregion (Map 4) is a contiguous block of O-S (low-density) zoned properties located between Croom Road and the western shore of the Patuxent River, which was designated by the state in 1998



based on an application and plan submitted by the county. The original legacy area proposed included almost 35,000 contiguous acres located within the Rural Living Areas delineated in the 1993 Subregion 6 Master Plan. The Rural Legacy Program, administered by the state, provides annual granting opportunities for protection of lands within designated Rural Legacy Areas on a competitive basis to local jurisdictions. The local sponsor of the Rural Legacy Area is M-NCPPC, and the program is administered by the Prince George's County Soil Conservation District.

The Patuxent River and its tributaries are important environmental resources in the Subregion 6 Rural Tier. It is the largest river whose watershed is entirely in Maryland and is tidal in Subregion 6 and therefore subject to Chesapeake Bay Critical Area requirements. The river has been a focus of state and regional water quality improvement efforts since the 1980s.

Subregion 6 has an undulating topography varying in elevation from 0 feet mean sea level (msl) to approximately 300 feet msl. The lowest elevations are found along the Patuxent River. Higher elevations are primarily confined to the northwestern quadrant of the subregion in and around JBA although a ridgeline generally follows US 301. This topography causes steep slopes which are generally found along the banks of the smaller streams that feed the subregion's major stream systems. Steep slopes are inherently unstable land forms that, when disturbed, become susceptible to soil erosion. The adverse effects of steep slope disturbance are more pronounced when the slope is adjacent to a stream or other water body, where erosion can lead to decreased water quality and negative impacts on riparian plant and animal species.

The effects can be seen in the water quality of all the county's watersheds reported in the 2005 Green Infrastructure Plan (Map 5) in which water quality in the subregion was generally poor. The subregion lies within the Patuxent River and Potomac River Basins with approximately 82 percent of the subregion draining to the Patuxent River and 18 percent to the Potomac River Basin (Map 6). The Patuxent River is fed by several major stream systems including Western Branch, Collington Branch, Charles Branch, Mataponi Creek, and Swanson Creek. The subregion also contains the headwaters of several ecologically important tributaries that drain to the Potomac River. These include Piscataway Creek, which contains a reach of Tier II water<sup>2</sup>; Mattawoman Creek, which supports an important bass fishery; and Zekiah Swamp Creek, which contains a state-designated Rural Legacy Area in Charles



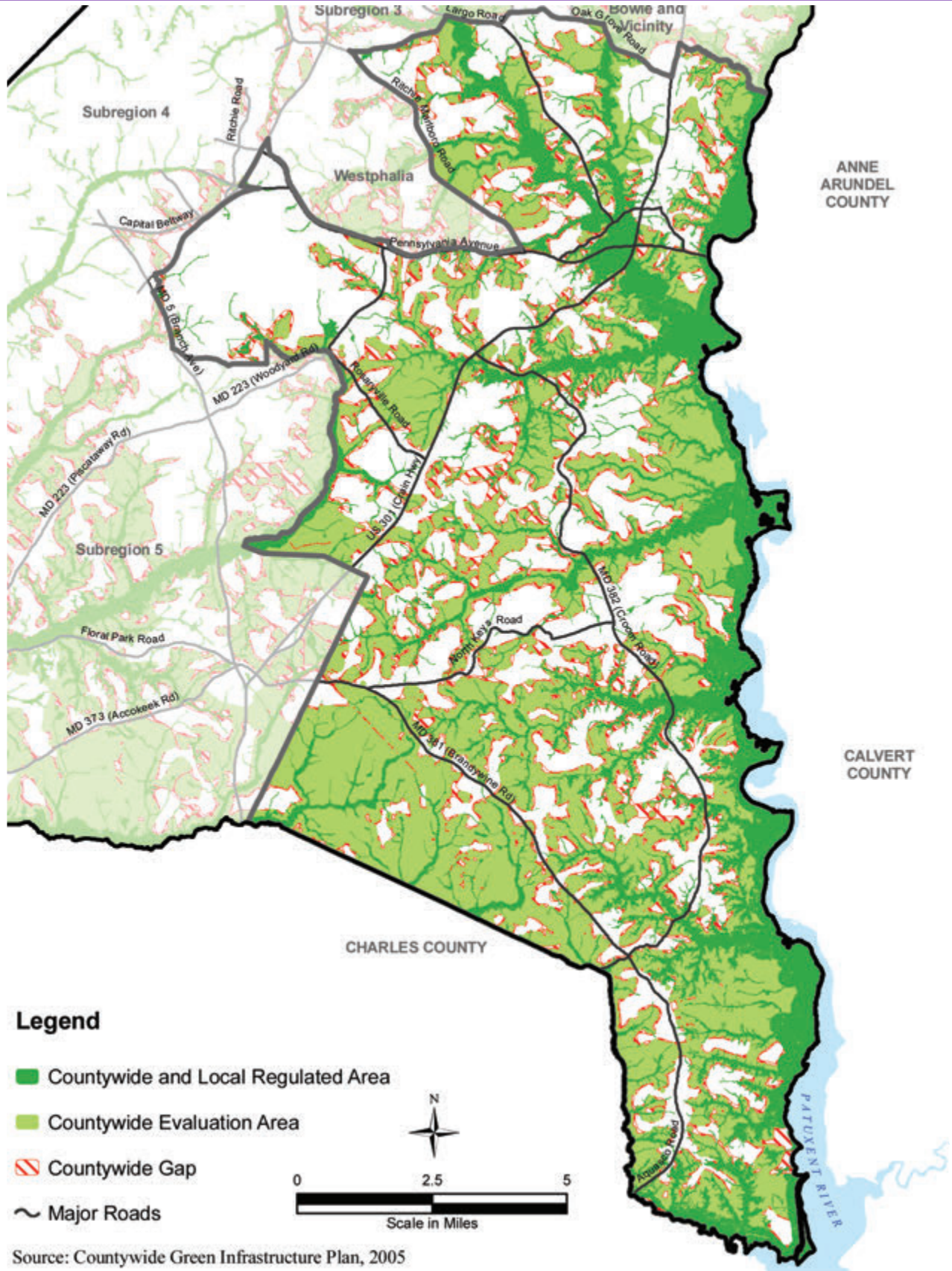
*Much of Subregion 6 is covered by woodlands, which provide a unique habitat for local wildlife.*

## Environmental Profile

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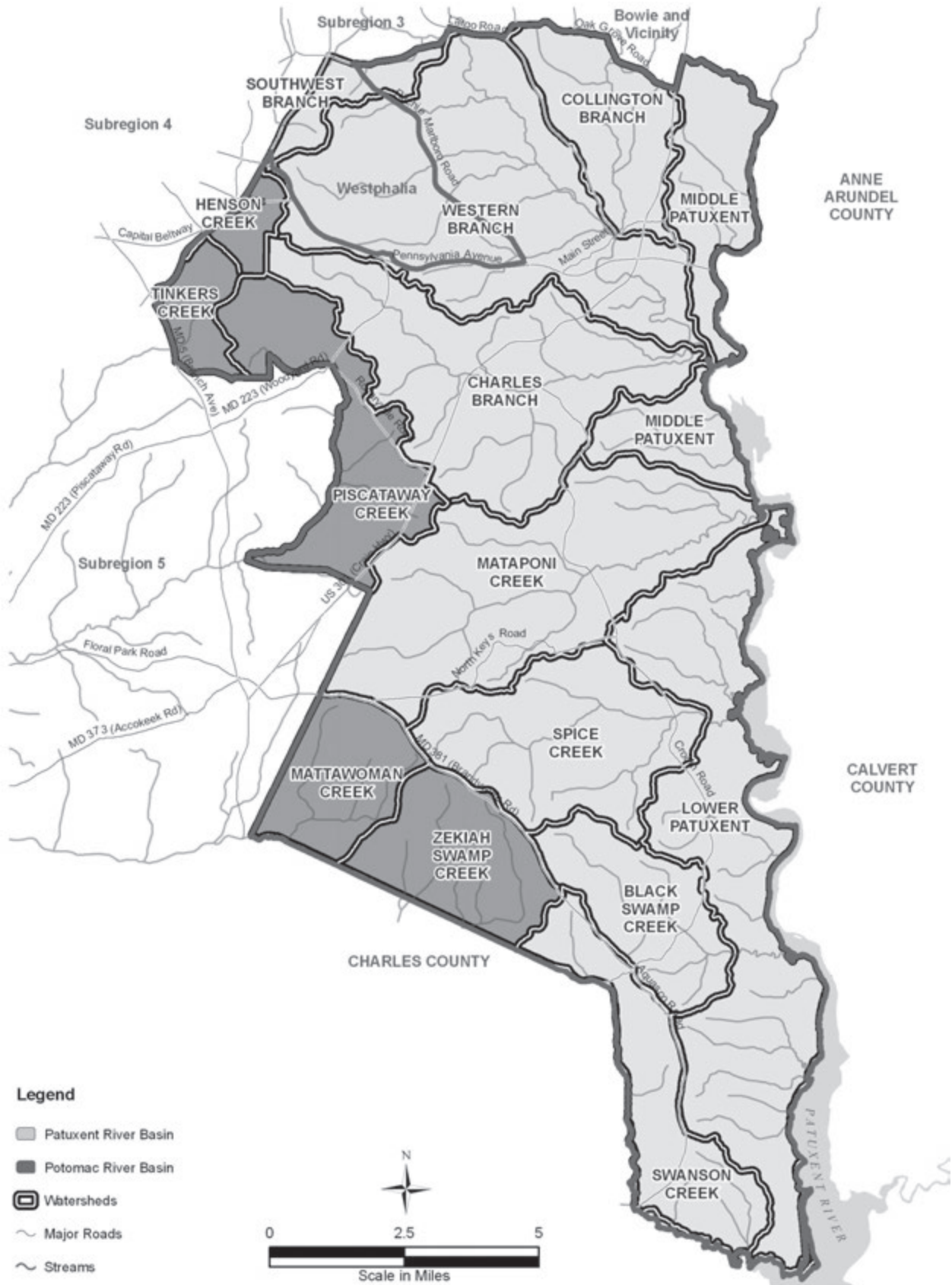
<sup>2</sup> Tier II waterways exceed the minimum water quality thresholds and are subject to Maryland's Antidegradation Review Policy, which regulates new amendments to water/sewer plans or discharge permits to ensure maintenance of the water quality within these waterbodies.

# MAP 5: GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE





# MAP 6: WATERSHEDS



County. Water quality in the subregion is discussed in further detail in the Environment chapter of the plan.

The Patuxent River is also subject to several regional planning initiatives. The Patuxent River Policy Plan, overseen by the Patuxent River Commission, is a multicounty, multiagency effort to protect the river through land management and pollution control practices. All land within 1,000 feet of the Patuxent River, including the lower 2.5 miles of Swanson Creek (approximately), is part of the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area (CBCA), and subject to protection regulations. Outside of the CBCA, the Prince George's County Patuxent River Primary Management Area Preservation Area establishes a protective buffer which includes perennial streams, wetlands, floodplains, steep slopes, highly erodible soils, and sensitive wildlife species within the portions of the Patuxent River watershed.

A feature of waterways are their floodplains, which are relatively low, flat areas adjoining rivers, streams, and other bodies of water. They are usually naturally formed and subject to partial or complete flooding on a periodic basis. Floodplains are important because they store and moderate the speed and impact of floodwaters and, in conjunction with wetlands and stream buffers, also help to maintain water quality and recharge groundwater. Approximately 8,750 acres of floodplains occur within the subregion, 90 percent of which are associated with the Patuxent River system.

The subregion also supports large tracts of woodlands and both tidal and nontidal wetlands. Woodlands cover a little over half the subregion and include approximately one-third of the 108 Champion trees<sup>3</sup> in the county. Woodlands benefit the subregion by reducing runoff and erosion, providing for aquifer recharge, reducing the effects of air pollution, and sequestering carbon dioxide, one of the major contributors to climate change. Woodlands also provide wildlife habitat and act as visual and noise buffers in developed areas. Cedarville State Forest, located at the headwaters of the Zekiah Swamp, is a largely undisturbed river and wetland complex flowing south through Charles County. The complex supports diverse plant and animal populations including many rare, threatened, or endangered species. Wetlands are valuable natural resources that provide habitat for plants, fish, and wildlife, maintain water quality (by slowing and collecting sediment and pollutants), act as ground water recharge areas, and control flooding and erosion. The Patuxent River and its tributaries support the majority of tidal and nontidal wetlands within the subregion. The Jug Bay Complex, which includes the Jug Bay Natural Area and Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary, is one of the largest

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<sup>3</sup> Champion trees are the largest identified trees (based on diameter at breast height [dbh]) in the County. [http://www.pgparcs.com/info/park\\_rangers.html#champ](http://www.pgparcs.com/info/park_rangers.html#champ)

wetland systems on Maryland’s western shore. Other large wetland areas occur along Piscataway Creek, Mattawoman Creek, and their tributaries. Small, isolated wetland pockets can also be found throughout the subregion.

A number of these biodiverse and fragile habitats across the subregion have been designated as special conservation areas (SCA) through the Countywide Green Infrastructure Plan. SCAs are preservation areas in need of special attention. The largest SCA is the Patuxent River Corridor (PRC), which extends along the entire eastern side of the subregion. The PRC, along with the other SCAs—Jug Bay Complex, the Cedarville State Forest, and the Mattawoman Creek Stream Valley—are discussed in greater detail in the Environment chapter of the plan.

Subregion 6 is diverse with a broad range of employment including government, industrial, agricultural, and mining jobs. Employment in the subregion has remained steady in recent years. In 2005 there were approximately 25,780 jobs in the subregion, an increase of approximately 640 jobs since 2000.

Two main employment clusters account for approximately 75 percent of the employment in the subregion. The largest cluster is Joint Base Andrews Naval Air Facility Washington (JBA) and nearby industrial and mixed commercial uses, accounting for 57 percent (approximately 14,800 jobs) of the jobs in the subregion. JBA is the predominant employer in the cluster and the county with approximately 9,800 jobs<sup>4</sup>. Industrial employment in the cluster is primarily in the Penn-Belt South Industrial Center north of JBA.

The second employment cluster is located in and around the Town of Upper Marlboro, with approximately 19 percent (4,850 jobs) of the employment in the subregion. As the county seat, Upper Marlboro is home to the county’s judicial and administrative functions. The majority of the employment in Upper Marlboro is government-related. Other employment is associated with convenience goods and personal service establishments along US 301 and MD 725 (Marlboro Pike).

In addition to the two main employment clusters, there are three smaller retail and commercial centers in the subregion. Marlboro Crossroads and Marlboro Square shopping centers at the intersection of MD 4 and US 301 each include a grocery store, other convenience stores, restaurants, and a bank. Osborne Shopping Center is a neighborhood center with a grocery store, bank, and other convenience stores located at the intersection of

## Economic Profile



*R & D Cross is a local family-owned business that provides a wide variety of lawn and garden, farming, construction, and other goods and services to area residents.*

<sup>4</sup> Economic Impact Report, FY06, Andrews Air Force Base.



South Osborne Road and US 301. The third center, Marlton Plaza, is located on US 301 south of Marlton, and includes a grocery store, bank, and other convenience shopping.

Agriculture is a geographically expansive and culturally important economic activity in the subregion. According to the 2002 U.S. Census of Agriculture, the subregion supported approximately 210 farms generating approximately \$5.7 million in production value and approximately 525 jobs. Farms in the subregion are still feeling the effects of the 1999 Tobacco Buyout that impacted both the structure and profitability of the industry (see the Economic Development chapter). The effects of the buyout are easily seen in the declining farm income, predominantly driven by crop losses due to decreasing tobacco production, which has the average farm losing nearly \$3,500 per year according the Census of Agriculture.

Agriculture in the subregion serves as the anchor for the rest of the county by accounting for nearly 50 percent of all agricultural economic activity.<sup>5</sup> The subregion also supports a small cadre of agricultural support businesses, such as veterinarians and crop service companies that provide an additional 22 jobs and \$1.3 million in agriculturally related output. A small number of output businesses such as food manufacturing, food distribution, and nurseries create a demand for local agricultural production.

Forestry is an equally important economic activity in the subregion. Forest cover accounts for approximately 49,700 acres, of which 30,765 acres are in deciduous tree stands, 1,204 acres are in evergreen stands, and 16,630 acres are in mixed forest types.<sup>6</sup> Much of this forest cover is under public management yet still supports a small but vibrant industry employing approximately 40 persons and generating \$4.2 million in annual output. Primary forest products activity includes

the selective harvest of hard wood species for dimension lumber such as oak, cherry, and yellow poplar, for which Prince George's County is known nationally, as well as the harvest of pulpwood. With only one sawmill in the subregion, further manufacturing of wood products generally occurs outside of the area.

Mineral extraction is a historically important industry in the subregion and county based on the presence of large sand and gravel deposits affiliated with the Brandywine formation (see



*Historically, the equine industry was one of the county's major agricultural activities. Today, the county's landscape and cultural events show the influence of horse racing and breeding.*

<sup>5</sup> I-Market Fourth Quarter 2007. All current economic data in this section comes from this source.

<sup>6</sup> 2002 Maryland Department of Planning, Land Use/Land Cover database.

the Economic Development chapter). Regionally, this industry is undergoing significant change as small mine operations are transitioning out of the industry and being replaced with larger, more consolidated operations. Within the subregion, there are currently five mine operators, generating approximately 60 jobs, which represent approximately 14 percent of the total state output in the mining industry sector. Given the presence of large outside operators, whose income and employment may be reported in other jurisdictions, the job and wealth creation fostered by the mining industry may be larger than reported in currently available data. The mining industry also employs other independent businesses in the region, predominately in the trucking industry, generating significant spin-offs to the local economy. Output activities in the industry, such as washing and processing, generally occur outside of the subregion though some do exist here.

### *Land Use*

Approximately three quarters of the land in the subregion today is in agriculture and forest (see Table 5). Forest alone makes up more than half of the subregion, with county parks and several institutional uses accounting for a number of major forest tracts. Development lands comprise less than one quarter of the subregion. Low density residential is the most common type of developed land use.

### *Developing Tier*

The Developing Tier portions of the subregion are characterized by an evolving mix of residential subdivisions and scattered pockets of commercial, industrial, and employment uses, interspersed with farms, wooded areas, and large institutional uses. Farms and forest areas cover more than half of the Developing Tier, but are fragmented by developed land uses.

Residential areas in the Developing Tier are generally developed at low to medium densities and are suburban in character. The Town of Upper Marlboro and its environs, along with the community of Marlton, have the most diverse and dense residential development, with some concentrations of multifamily units and townhouses at densities upwards of seven units per acre.

Other residential areas south of MD 4 and in the vicinity of Rosaryville State Park consist primarily of single-family attached and detached units at densities of three to eight units per acre. The remainder of the developed portions of the Developing Tier in the subregion is low- to moderate-density residential, typically two or fewer units per acre.

JBA is the largest institutional use in the subregion. Other major blocks of institutional land in the Developing Tier include Rosaryville State Park, the Cheltenham institutional cluster

## Land Use and Transportation Summary

described in the Regional Facilities section, the Brown Station Road landfill (closing by 2011), the Prince George’s County Corrections Center, and the University of Maryland’s agricultural research center on Largo Road.

### *Rural Tier*

Land use in the Rural Tier is dominated by large, contiguous areas of active farms and woodland, interspersed with large-lot subdivisions and a few active and reclaimed surface mineral extraction sites. As shown in Table 5, forest accounts for more than half of the land in the Rural Tier, while agriculture accounts for another quarter. Of the approximately 21,240 acres of agriculture, approximately 16,900 acres are utilized for crops, 3,900 acres for pastureland, and the balance in other agricultural activities such as orchards, vineyards, and minor crop uses.<sup>7</sup>

TABLE 5: LAND USE/LAND COVER IN SUBREGION 6

Land Use/Land Cover (2002)	Developing Tier		Rural Tier		Total	
	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent	Acres	Percent
<b>Resource Lands</b>						
Agriculture	3,785	12.7	17,454	26.1	21,238	22
Forest	12,651	42.6	37,038	55.5	49,689	52
Extractive/Barren	338	1.1	916	1.4	1,255	1
Water, Wetlands	176	0.6	2,926	4.4	3,102	3
<b>Development Lands <sup>1</sup></b>						
Residential	6,636	22.3	7,104	10.6	13,741	14
Non-residential	6,144	20.7	1,318	2.0	7,462	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>29,730</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>66,756</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>96,486</b>	<b>100</b>

<sup>1</sup> Residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, extractive, urban open space, and transportation

Source: Maryland Department of Planning, 2002 Land Use/Land Cover database.

The Rural Tier in the subregion also contains several small rural communities: Aquasco, Brandywine, Baden, Croom, and the Town of Eagle Harbor. With the exception of Eagle Harbor, they have centers which generally contain commercial establishments and public or community facilities, surrounded by a small number of homes. Baden, at the intersection of Aquasco Road and Baden-Westwood Road, has a convenience store, a fire station, an elementary school, a health center, and several churches.

Along the Patuxent River major parks and other publicly owned lands preserve much of the forest land, habitats, and sensitive environmental resources. Other major blocks of publicly owned land are the 1,600-acre United States Air Force’s Globecom site, more than 920 acres of the 3,500-acre Cedarville State Forest (the remainder is in Charles County). The Chalk Point power generating station occupies more than 1,100 acres (much

<sup>7</sup> 2002 Maryland Department of Planning, Land Use/Land Cover database.

of it forested) at the extreme southeastern tip of the county.

## Transportation

US 301 and MD 4 are the subregion's major transportation routes, primarily serving long-distance traffic. As a primary route to Washington, D.C. and the Capital Beltway, MD 4 (Pennsylvania Avenue) is largely a commuter route from the subregion and southern Anne Arundel, Calvert, and St. Mary's Counties. It carries heavy traffic volumes through the subregion and is often congested during peak hours (typically, during the morning and evening commute).

US 301 (Robert Crain Highway) is a major regional thoroughfare that links Baltimore (via I-97 and MD 3) with Richmond, Virginia (via Charles County). US 301 passes through Bowie, Upper Marlboro, and Brandywine, linking the subregion and the entire eastern half of Prince George's County to the broader region. Like MD 4, overall traffic volume on US 301 is also heavy, but its role as a regional truck route and lack of connectivity to I-95 result in lower peak-hour and average daily traffic, compared to MD 4. MD 4 intersects with US 301 in Upper Marlboro.

Other major roads in Subregion 6 are:

- MD 202 (Largo Road) connects Upper Marlboro with Largo, Landover, and I-95.
- MD 223 (Woodyard Road) links MD 4 to MD 5 (Branch Avenue) in Subregion 5.
- MD 382 (Croom Road) is the primary road serving the Rural Tier, running from US 301 north of Marlton to MD 381 Brandywine/Aquasco Road.
- MD 381 (Brandywine Road/Aquasco Road) links the Brandywine area in Subregion 5 to the southern end of Croom Road and northeastern Charles County.

In keeping with the relatively low-intensity land use pattern, the transportation network in the subregion is built around only a few major facilities. Table 6 shows the Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT) on the major roadways in Subregion 6.

There is no rail transit service in the subregion, but stations on WMATA's Metrorail system are nearby Largo Town Center and Branch Avenue, both near the Beltway, 9 and 10.5 miles, respectively, from Upper Marlboro. Transit service in the subregion is largely dependent upon bus service. The Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation's "The Bus" system operates routes connecting Upper Marlboro to Metrorail stations. The Maryland Transit Administration operates several



*The local grocery store is a key focal point in the hamlet of Aquasco.*

TABLE 6: 2007 AADT ON MAJOR ROADWAYS, SUBREGION 6

Location	AADT 2007
US 301 (0.2 miles north of MD 725)	42,590
MD 4 (0.3 miles north of US 301)	48,090
MD 202 (0.2 miles north of MD 725)	18,190
MD 223 (0.2 miles north of Rosaryville Road)	18,500
MD 381 (0.2 miles south of MD 382)	5,910
MD 382 (0.1 miles north of MD 381)	1,631
I-495, south of MD 4 <sup>1</sup>	183,921

<sup>1</sup> AADT on the segment of I-95 in the vicinity of MD 4 is included for reference, although I-95 itself is not in Subregion 6

Source: Maryland State Highway Administration.

commuter bus routes from Southern Maryland to Washington, D.C. One had stopped in Upper Marlboro; however, this park and ride was required to be relocated due to its negative impact on employee and event parking.



*Sidewalks and street trees are useful and attractive pedestrian amenities that should be provided in all suburban residential areas of the subregion.*

Sidewalks and pedestrian/bicycle trails are present in some neighborhoods, although a subregion-wide network is not yet developed. Sidewalks in many of the area's older subdivisions are either lacking or in need of major repair. Some off-road pedestrian/bicycle and equestrian trails exist in Rosaryville State Park, Patuxent River Park/Merkle Wildlife Sanctuary, the Town of Upper Marlboro, and the Villages of Marlborough neighborhood, but connections are generally lacking.

CSX operates a freight rail line that generally parallels US 301 from Bowie to southern Charles County, via Upper Marlboro and Brandywine. There has been interest in giving more consideration to utilizing this rail right-of-way for much needed commuter transit service. A spur of this rail line runs along the northern boundary of the USAF Globecom site en route to the Chalk Point facility.

There are no public airports in the subregion, although JBA is a major source of military and diplomatic flight operations.

During preparation of the plan, at the listening sessions, public workshops, and community meetings, participants raised a large number and broad range of issues and concerns related to the future of the subregion. Although all the issues and concerns raised are considered in the plan, the following have been identified as the key issues:

1. **PRESERVING AGRICULTURE THROUGH A PERIOD OF TRANSITION.** Subregion 6 contains most of the farmland in Prince George's County. The number of farms and amount of farm income generated

## KEY PLANNING ISSUES



have been declining as a result of the Maryland tobacco buyout program. Despite the challenges experienced by farm operations during this period of transition, they still benefit from productive soils, the capacity to support a wide range of agricultural operations, and proximity to the large urban markets such as Washington, D.C., Baltimore, and Annapolis. Strategies to ensure the future of agriculture in Subregion 6 are discussed in the Development Pattern/Land Use and Economic Development chapters.

2. **CONSERVING NATURAL RESOURCE LANDS.** Subregion 6 has extensive natural resource lands including farmland and forests, some of which are underlain with extensive mineral resources. Recent state legislation<sup>8</sup> requires counties to consider Priority Preservation Areas to protect the agricultural and forest land base so that development does not convert or compromise these critical resources. This issue is discussed in the Development Pattern/Land Use chapter.
3. **INCORPORATING SEWER CAPACITY CONSIDERATIONS INTO FUTURE PLANNING.** Western Branch serves most of the Developing Tier in Subregion 6 as well as areas as far as Bowie. In the past wastewater treatment plant expansions to accommodate growth were generally routine. However, expanding plants is likely to be more difficult and take more time in the future because of nutrient discharge caps associated with improving water quality in the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries. Therefore, future growth must be carefully planned in light of potential wastewater treatment capacity limitations. This issue is discussed in the Development Pattern/Land Use and Public Facilities chapters.
4. **MODIFICATIONS TO THE RURAL TIER/DEVELOPING TIER BOUNDARIES.** During the plan process some property owners requested their land be removed from the Rural Tier and be placed in the Developing Tier. Such modifications could have significant impacts on portions of the Rural and the Developing Tiers. This issue is addressed in the Development Pattern/Land Use chapter.
5. **ASSURING THE ADEQUACY OF PUBLIC FACILITIES.** A number of questions were raised at public meetings about public facilities, especially roads. A number of participants raised concerns that new communities were being approved prior to the provision of adequate public facilities (APF) needed to support this development. This issue is discussed in the Public Facilities chapter.
6. **PROMOTING HISTORIC, CULTURAL, AND RECREATIONAL ASSETS.** Subregion 6 has a rich heritage of historic, cultural, and scenic sites, areas, and resources, as well as environmental assets, and parks and recreational facilities. Integrating these resources

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<sup>8</sup> HB 1141, 2006

into a cohesive, interrelated program can promote community awareness, pride, and a sense of place, and can attract visitors, and increase economic development opportunities. This issue is discussed in the Historic and Cultural Resources chapter.

7. **CHARTING A NEW FUTURE FOR THE TOWN OF UPPER MARLBORO AND THE SURROUNDING AREA.** Growth is occurring around this small, historic town that serves as the county seat and its center of government. Managing this growth, promoting revitalization within the town, and improving gateways to the town, all while protecting the small town character, are significant challenges. These issues are discussed in the Living Areas and Community Character chapter.
8. **ADDRESSING IMMEDIATE CONCERNS VERSUS LONG-TERM PLANNING.** Somewhat related to the APF issue is the concern that the master plan address immediate concerns, such as problem intersections and neighborhood maintenance, while also focusing on planning issues that might not be realized for 20 years or more. This issue is addressed throughout the plan.
9. **DEFINING AND PLANNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY IN SUBURBAN AND RURAL COMMUNITIES.** The low-density development pattern in the Developing and Rural Tiers, as well as the county's overall jobs/housing balance, requires that most citizens use their cars to get to work and to meet their daily needs, or that they use their cars to access mass transit options for getting to work or shopping. Recognizing the unique environmental, social, and economic benefits that the subregion provides, the plan should address ways to support carpooling, trip chaining, and other conservation behaviors related to personal vehicle use to reduce green house gas (GHG) emissions from this source. At the same time, the preservation of rural lands offers an important mechanism for offsetting the impact of GHGs in the subregion and the rest of the county. In addition, these rural lands, close in to major urban centers, offer an unparalleled opportunity to supply local agricultural products to these markets, potentially reducing the GHGs and fuel costs associated with the transport of food from farm to table.

Other considerations for promoting sustainability include revitalizing and enhancing existing commercial and office spaces in the subregion as a priority over greenfield development.

Minimizing the impact of future development on critical land and water resources is a central component of this plan. The plan also addresses ways to support and incentivize lifestyle changes that conserve resources, such as retrofitting homes and neighborhoods with new, energy-saving technologies and promoting on-site stormwater management opportunities, among others.