

Land Use & Zoning Analysis for Subregion 5

This analysis explores existing land use patterns, future land use policy, zoning, and recent development activity in Subregion 5. The purpose of the analysis is to inform the Subregion 5 Minor Plan Amendment and any related Sectional Map Amendment (SMA) considerations. This document is intended to be a technical and policy guide for decision-makers and planners to determine and apply the most appropriate zoning classifications needed to implement the updated vision for the 2013 *Approved Subregion 5 Master Plan*. This document is also intended to be informative and accessible to the wide range of stakeholders within the Subregion 5 community. The primary data source is from the Prince George's County Geographic Information System and development project permitting datasets.

1. Background and Context

The Prince George's County Planning Department is preparing an amendment to the 2013 *Approved Subregion 5 Master Plan (Master Plan)*. This minor plan amendment will create a forward-looking, market-viable framework to guide investment and economic development, while enhancing the quality of life for residents and workers in the area.

Guided by the 2014 *Approved Plan Prince George's 2035 General Plan (Plan 2035)*, the minor plan amendment will combine public participation, real estate market analysis, land use and zoning review, and regional best practices to shape updated planning recommendations. The recommendations will be grouped into plan elements such as land use, open space, economic development, housing, and transportation. The aim is for the plan amendment to align growth, development patterns, and infrastructure planning with current conditions and community priorities.

Subregion 5 covers approximately 74 square miles, including suburban areas and some rural/agricultural areas that are outside the *Plan 2035* growth boundary. But the minor plan amendment will update only selected areas of Subregion 5, especially existing commercial, mixed-use and agricultural areas with economic development potential.

This land use and zoning analysis examines the land use pattern in Subregion 5 and the relevant County plans and regulations in order to understand (1) the types of development that are taking place today, and (2) the ability of the planning and regulatory framework to accommodate future development that aligns with the vision for Subregion 5, as set forth in the Master Plan. Where there are gaps and/or mismatches between the vision and the plans/regulations, future land use map and/or zoning map changes are highlighted for consideration and possible inclusion in a Sectional Map Amendment.

2. Existing Land Use

Land use categories provide high-level guidance on the intensity, character, and location of land uses within a community. Existing land use in Subregion 5, summarized in Table 1 below, generally aligns with the *Plan 2035* vision, which focuses new development within mixed-use centers, while preserving natural resources and agricultural land in rural areas. In terms of the distinction between suburban land use in the northern part of the planning area and rural/agricultural land uses in the southern and western parts, the existing land use also aligns with the vision set forth in the Master Plan. Recent growth has taken place in and around the Brandywine Local Center, where infrastructure capacity can accommodate it, this is in alignment with the intended mixed-use future land use for this area. The amount of encroachment of residential subdivisions in rural areas has been limited. However, the development of mixed-use walkable nodes along Indian Head Highway has not taken place as anticipated in the future land use map.

In Subregion 5 today, one-third of the land is either vacant rural land, agriculture and forest land, or open space. Another third of the subregion is single-family residential, some of it with large land plots and some

with smaller, more typically suburban parcel sizes. Stream valley systems such as Piscataway Creek and Tinkers Creek account for a large share of the open space and conservation lands. Low-density residential areas transition to farmland and forested areas (including land classified as “Vacant” in the table) in southern portions of the subregion near Charles County.

Nonresidential land uses are limited. Commercial development is located mostly along corridors such as US 301 (Robert Crain Highway) and MD 210 (Indian Head Highway). Brandywine is the only *Plan 2035*-designated local center in Subregion 5 and much of the commercial, mixed-use, and industrial uses of the subregion are found there. Most industrial uses are also located in Brandywine. Mixed-use acreage is currently negligible (roughly 2 acres), underscoring the opportunity to focus intentional change and redevelopment within mixed-use centers rather than diffuse parcel-by-parcel redevelopment scenarios.

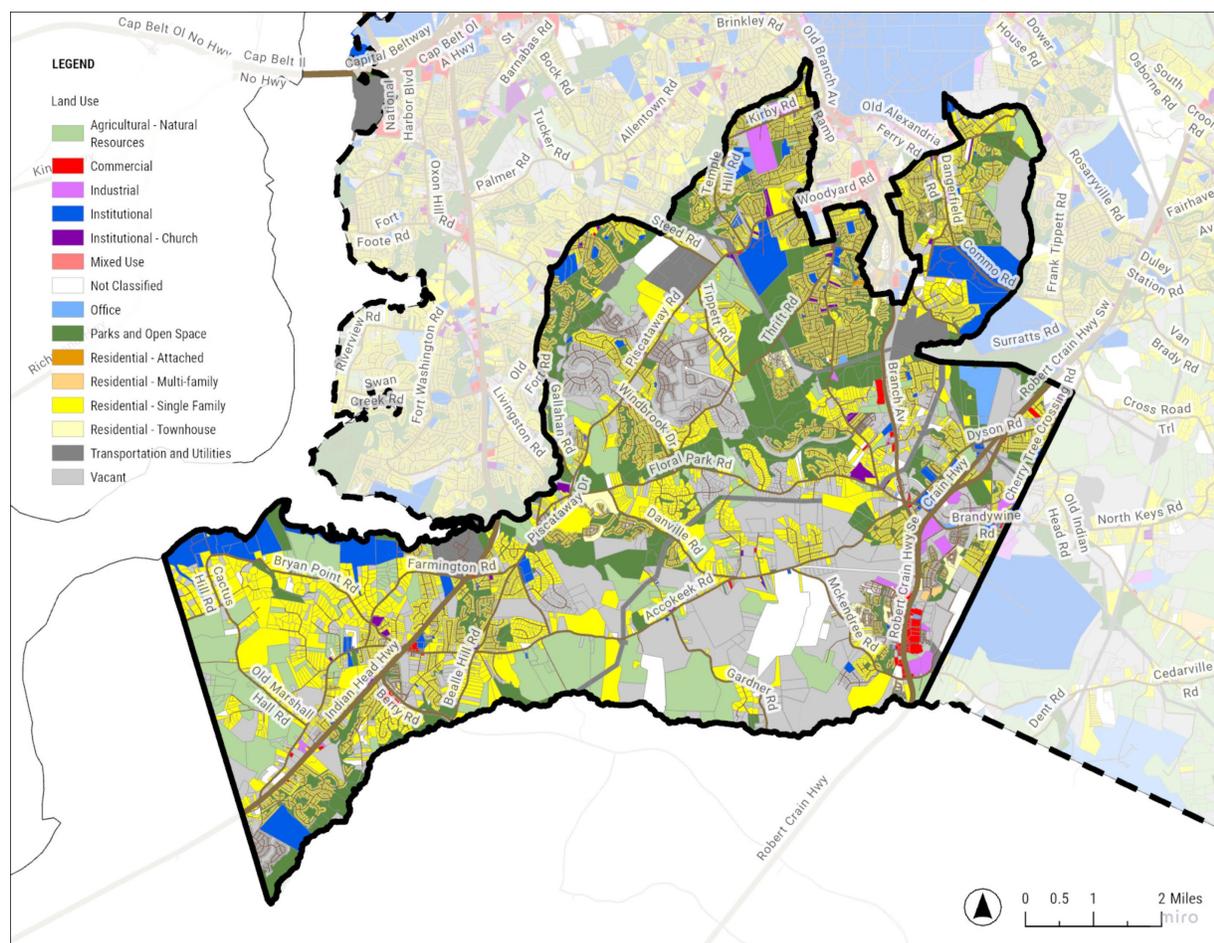
Table 1. Existing Land Use in Subregion 5 by Land Area

Land Use Category	Total Acres	% of Land Area
Residential - Single Family	13,724	32.3%
Vacant*	10,556	24.9%
Parks and Open Space	5,906	13.9%
Agricultural - Natural Resources	5,270	12.4%
Institutional	2,338	5.5%
Transportation and Utilities	1,542	3.6%
Not Classified	1,493	3.5%
Residential - Townhouse	440	1%
Industrial	435	1%
Office	251	0.6%
Commercial	240	0.6%
Institutional – Church	214	0.5%
Residential – Multifamily	22	0.1%
Residential – Attached	13	0%
Mixed Use	2	0%
Total	42,445	100.0%

*Many parcels categorized as vacant are forested.

SOURCE: Prince George’s Planning Department GIS, 2023

Figure 1. Map of Existing Land Use, 2024



SOURCE: Prince George’s Planning Department, GIS Open Data Portal, 2024, <https://gisdata.pgplanning.org/opendata/>.

IMPLICATIONS OF EXISTING LAND USE ANALYSIS FOR PLAN AMENDMENT

- **Future Land Use and Mobility:** Future growth could be directed to a few key areas, instead of being spread around the whole subregion. Brandywine is one strong candidate for future growth. To make these places more connected, future transportation planning should support walking, biking, and transit, in addition to cars.

3. Future Land Use

Future land use categories provide a long-term vision for how land should develop over time and serve to guide decision making about growth, community planning, and infrastructure. The goals of the 2013 *Approved Subregion 5 Master Plan* are to achieve quality suburban development in developing areas, promote compatible new development in established communities, and preserve existing rural areas and cultural landscapes. To support these goals, the *Master Plan’s* future land use categories and map (Figure 2) include a mix of high to low residential density, agricultural and rural, and parks and open space designations to maintain the subregion’s existing rural character. They also introduce mixed-use and industrial/employment designations to support new development and employment opportunities in established activity nodes and along major corridors. Table 2 contains a description of the future land use categories for Subregion 5.

More specifically, the *Master Plan* calls for commercial and mixed-use development in Brandywine and in select locations along Indian Head Highway. It limits “strip-style” commercial development outside of those designated areas to prevent sprawl.

Table 2. Future Land Use Categories

Designation	Description	Density (Dwelling Units Per Acre)
Mixed-Use	Areas of various residential, commercial, employment, and institutional uses. Residential uses may include a range of unit types. Mixed-use areas may vary with respect to their dominant land uses, i.e., commercial uses may dominate in one mixed-use area, whereas residential uses may dominate in another. Large-scale mixed-use development should be limited to designated Centers and other areas where it currently exists.	Based on Center
Neighborhood Mixed-Use	Traditional retail/shopping areas that are transitioning to a mix of residential, shopping, eating, and drinking, and other neighborhood-serving amenities. Neighborhood Mixed-Use areas are located outside of designated Centers, often along arterial roadways and at key intersections and interchanges.	(</=48)
Commercial	Retail and business areas, including employment uses, such as office and services. A range of services are provided at the neighborhood to regional level. New commercial areas have access to multimodal transportation options. These areas are intended to remain predominantly or entirely commercial.	N/A
Industrial/Employment	Manufacturing and industrial parks, warehouses, and distribution. May include other employment, such as office and services.	N/A
Institutional	Uses such as military installations, hospitals, sewage treatment plants, and schools.	N/A
Residential High	Residential areas exceeding 20 dwelling units per acre. Mix of dwelling unit types, including apartments	(>20)
Residential Medium-High	Residential areas between eight and 20 dwelling units per acre. Mix of dwelling unit types, including apartments.	(> 8 and </= 20)
Residential Medium	Residential areas between 3.5 and 8 dwelling units per acre. Primarily single-family dwellings (detached and attached).	(> 3.5 and </= 8)
Residential Low	Residential areas up to 3.5 dwelling units per acre. Primarily single-family detached dwellings.	(> 0.5 and </= 3.5)

Designation	Description	Density (Dwelling Units Per Acre)
Rural and Agricultural	Low-density residential uses with areas of agricultural and forestry production. Agricultural land (cropland, pasture, farm fields), forest, and very low-density residential.	(≤ 0.5)
Parks and Open Space	Parks and recreation areas, publicly owned open space (federal, state, county, municipal, and M-NCPPC), and privately owned open space.	N/A

The *Master Plan*'s future land use vision generally aligns with *Plan 2035*, approved just one year later, which also calls for concentrating development in designated centers and along priority corridors to support walkability, transit access, environmental preservation, and fiscal responsibility. *Plan 2035* designates Brandywine as the only Local Center in Subregion 5.

The Master Plan uses the future land use map as a tool to maintain and protect existing agricultural, rural, and vacant lands. It achieves this by placing areas between Floral Park Road and the southern County boundary, and land between MD 210 and the Potomac River in the Rural and Agricultural category.

IMPLICATIONS OF FUTURE LAND USE ANALYSIS FOR PLAN AMENDMENT

- Zoning and Conservation:** Some areas shown for future growth may need zoning updates to allow more mixed uses. In rural and farming areas, protecting open space should remain the priority, but small businesses related to agritourism and local food production could offer new opportunities without changing the area's rural character.
- Housing Variety:** Different housing types should fit naturally within each area. Dense housing and townhomes make sense near shopping and transit, while larger single-family homes are more appropriate farther away from centers and key corridors. Aligning housing choices with location and infrastructure will help balance growth with livability. Potential changes to the Future Land Use map that support higher intensity housing along US 301, MD 5, and MD 210 may be necessary.

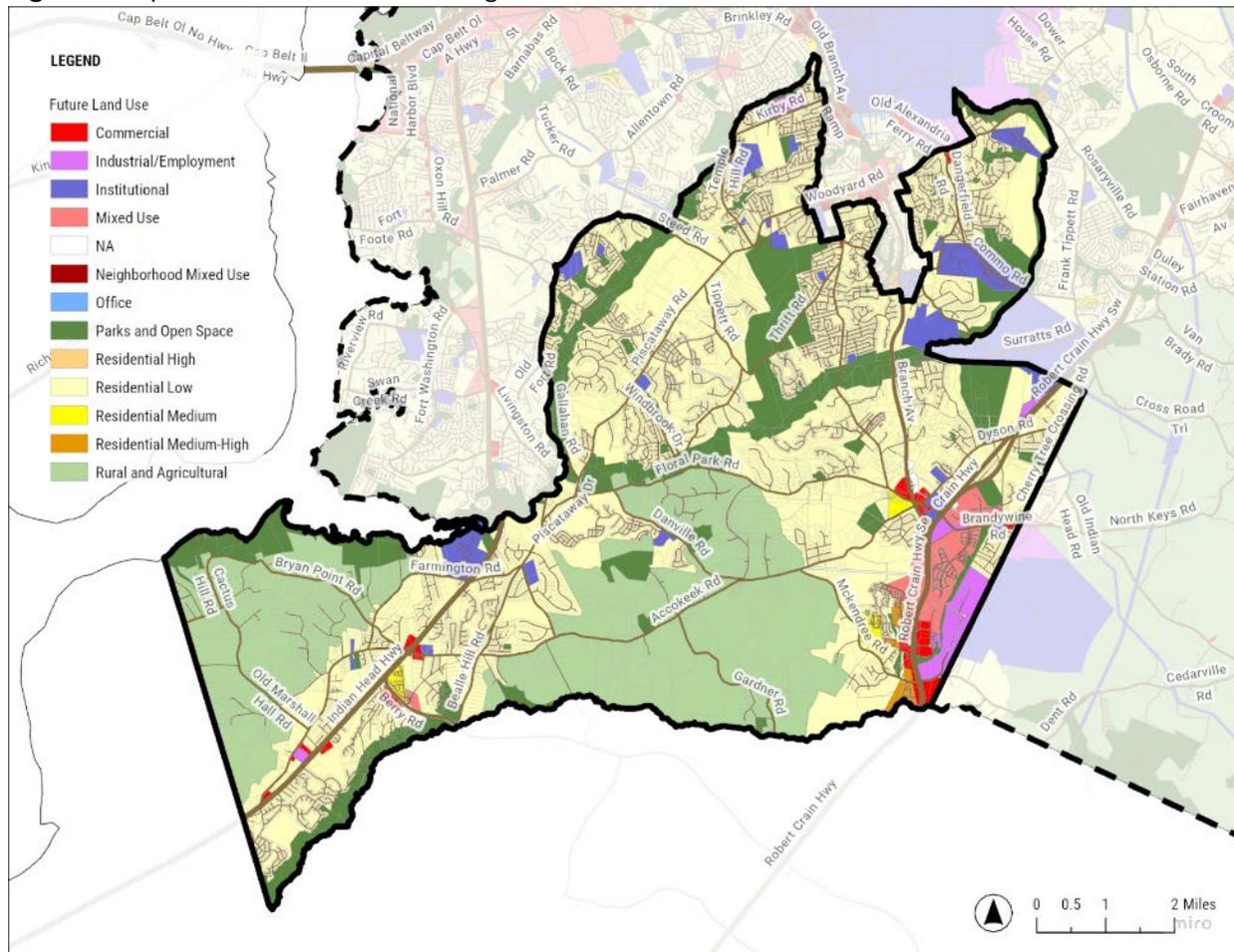
Micro-housing should also be considered as a new use to introduce in Subregion 5. Micro-housing and cottage clusters can provide density on a footprint that conserves green space. Barriers to micro-housing currently exist for myriad reasons in Prince George's County. This use is not clearly defined as a principal use category in the Zoning Ordinance currently, as a result of this, micro-houses are often processed in the same manner as mobile homes. Additionally, the minimum lot size in most single-family detached zones (RSF-65 and RSF-95) is too high (6,500 and 9,500 square feet respectively) to have effective clustering of micro-housing. Changes to the Zoning Ordinance should be explored to allow this missing housing type here.

- Mixed-Use Development:** Along Indian Head Highway, the mixed-use nodes shown on the future land use map need to be expanded in order to develop enough multifamily housing to support the retail amenities identified by Subregion 5 residents during the engagement process.

At Brandywine, the mixed-use area is sufficiently large to allow the emergence of the walkable, compact district that is envisioned for this area in the approved 2013 Master Plan. That vision was reinforced through the listening sessions held in November 2025. On the west side of MD 5 south of the mixed-use area, however, there is a patchwork of use uses including Commercial, Residential Medium-High, and Mixed Use. To allow larger-scale, integrated development of a parallel grid of streets on the west side of US 301, it may be desirable to consolidate the land uses into Mixed Use on both sides of the road.

- Open Space and Edges: Natural features like stream valleys and forests should guide where growth stops and open space begins. These green corridors can double as recreation trails and stormwater buffers, helping explain why development density tapers off near environmental areas.
- Community Facilities: As new growth concentrates in Brandywine and other activity nodes, schools, parks, and community spaces should be planned close to where people live and work. This approach will make daily life more convenient, reduce driving distances, and strengthen each center as a complete, livable place.

Figure 2. Map of Future Land Use in Subregion 5



SOURCE: Prince George’s Planning Department, GIS Open Data Portal, 2024, <https://gisdata.pgplanning.org/opendata/>.

4. Zoning

Zoning is a regulatory tool that local governments use to guide how land can be developed and used. It regulates what types of land use activities are allowed where and includes requirements for building size, density, parking, and open space, among other factors. In practice, zoning can be used to limit some types of development while promoting others. Zoning is a key mechanism for helping to advance community land use and development goals. Prince George’s County amended its zoning ordinance, effective April 1, 2022, to modernize its regulations and better align them with its current and future development goals.

The zoning districts in Subregion 5 are for the most part in alignment with the plan’s future land use map: they allow for higher intensity and mixed-use development in existing centers and preserve the character of the region’s rural and agricultural areas. The rural and agricultural zoning districts cover the greatest land area in the subregion and correspond to the designated rural and open space areas in the future land use map.

Most of the residential zones focus on single-family housing, such as the Residential, Rural (RR), Residential, Single-Family-95 (RSF-95), and Residential, Single-Family-65 (RSF-65) Zones. Some residential districts also allow townhouses, two-family dwellings, and three-family dwellings by right, including Residential, Single-Family-Attached (RSF-A). Two multifamily residential districts in the zoning ordinance allow up to 20 dwelling units per acre (Residential, Multifamily-20 (RMF-20)) and 48 dwelling units per acre (Residential, Multifamily-48 (RMF-48)) by right, respectively. These are used sparingly in Subregion 5.

Table 3. Existing Zoning in Subregion 5 by Land Area

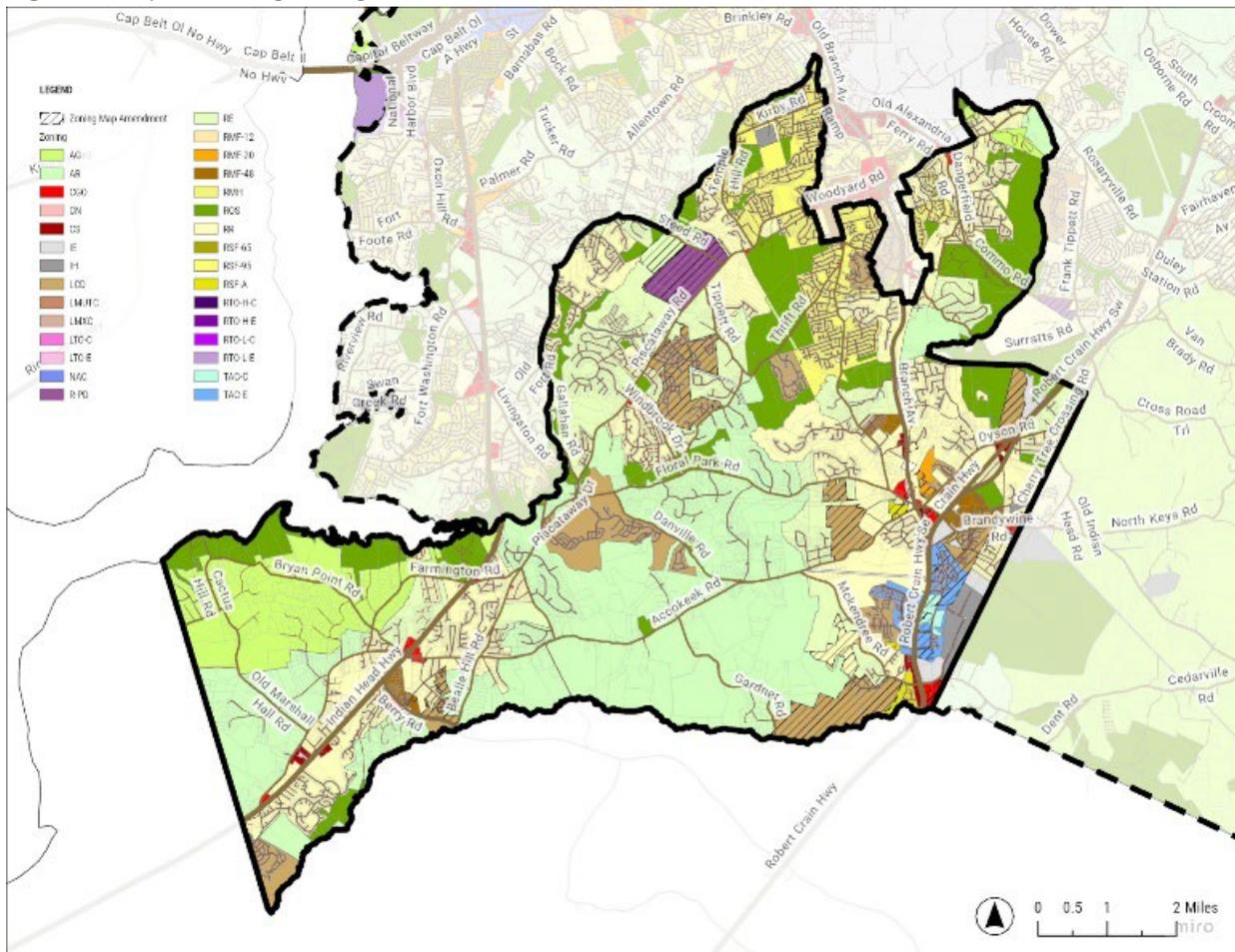
Zoning Category	% of Land Area
Agriculture and Preservation (AG)	7.26%
Agricultural-Residential (AR)	28.22%
Commercial, General and Office (CGO)	0.42%
Commercial, Neighborhood (CN)	0.06%
Commercial, Service (CS)	0.36%
Industrial, Employment (IE)	0.71%
Industrial, Heavy (IH)	0.73%
Legacy Comprehensive Design (LCD)	7.73%
Residential Planned Development (R-PD)	1.01%
Residential Estate (RE)	10.33%
Residential, Multifamily-20 (RMF-20)	0.18%
Residential, Multifamily-48 (RMF-48)	0.73%
Reserved Open Space (ROS)	11.90%
Residential, Rural (RR)	23.02%
Residential, Single-Family-95 (RSF-95)	5.64%
Residential, Single-Family-Attached (RSF-A)	0.37%
Town Activity Center-Core (TAC-C)	0.19%
Town Activity Center-Edge (TAC-E)	1.15%
Total	100.0%

SOURCE: Prince George’s Planning Department GIS, 2023

The Subregion 5 zoning map includes some Legacy Comprehensive Design (LCD) zones. These areas are regulated by zoning rules from the old Prince George's County zoning ordinance, which predates the effective date of the current zoning ordinance in April 1, 2022. LCD zones are used to provide continuity to landowners that secured their permits under the previous zoning ordinance. There is an opportunity to rezone these properties to a modern zone representative of their current and future land use.

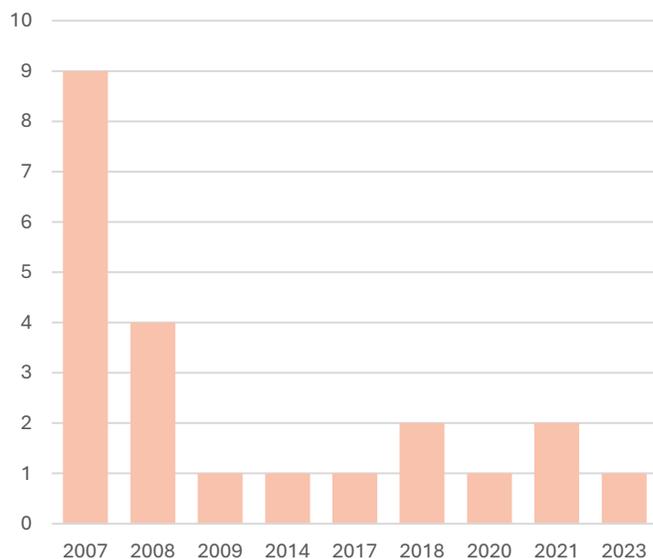
The center of Brandywine is zoned Town Activity Center (TAC). This 570 acre zoning district designates a neighborhood node and provides for mixed-use development that is more walkable and compact than the surrounding areas it serves. This zoning is consistent with Brandywine's function as a Local Center in *Plan 2035*. While the industrial zones that surround the TAC are fairly aligned with the future land use map, they may require some updating to better reflect the "Industrial/employment" use on that map.

Figure 3. Map of Existing Zoning



SOURCE: Prince George's Planning Department, GIS Open Data Portal, 2024, <https://gisdata.pgplanning.org/opendata/>.

Figure 4. Number of Approved Zoning Map Amendments in Subregion 5, 2007-2023



SOURCE: Prince George’s Planning Department, 2025

Note: There were no ZMAs in interim years not shown in the figure

IMPLICATIONS OF ZONING FOR PLAN AMENDMENT

- Agriculture/Open Space Zones:** Zoning agrees with and supports the existing plan's future land use map. However, community and market guidance will help understand the balance between preservation of open space and potential for careful and intentional development, especially the opportunity to provide agriculture-supportive services and commercial in proximity to farming.
- Commercial/Mixed Use Zones:** Expansion of these zones may be possible at existing nodes including Accokeek and Brandywine. Existing zoning at Accokeek impedes the realization of the vision as set out in the approved 2013 master plan in a few ways. First, the geographic area of the Commercial, General and Office (CGO) zone is too small in relation to the vision, which calls for mixed use development along the south side of Livingston Road east of MD 210. The CGO portion here is only 8.6 acre, comparable attractive retail nodes are typically double that size. To remedy this, the existing CGO node could be extended eastwards. The vision here is for an “attractive village scale commercial shopping” area. Recommending more shallow setbacks from the street in this area can aid in the realization of this vision due to the streetscape this concept could create.

Another challenge with developing mixed-use commercial in this location and nearby along Berry Road east of MD 210 is that most of the land around these two commercial nodes is zoned Residential, Rural (RR), which does not permit multifamily, townhomes, triplexes, duplexes, or micro-housing. The development of a diversity of housing, particularly more dense housing, is necessary to increase the attractiveness of this area to commercial retailers, as residential density is a key criteria retailers consider when deciding to locate to an area. Without the development of a significant amount of housing within walking distance (<0.5 mile), new high-quality retail development in this area is not likely to be viable. The market study concluded that only with more housing clustered near these nodes could the retail supply be expanded. Otherwise, there would not be enough customers to make the retail establishments viable over the medium to long term.

At the listening sessions for Subregion 5 conducted as part of the ongoing project, many people expressed their desire for greater retail choice, however there was not notable support for significant multifamily housing along this corridor. Attendees did generally seem in favor of supporting an expansion

of housing choice (including more different types of housing that would be affordable to a wider range of households).

At Brandywine, the extensive existing retail facilities are auto-oriented. The zoning called for a large Town Activity Center with a core area and an edge area. The location of the core area in relation to the surrounding development is logical and would complement any new compact development that may arise as the southern half of the existing strip shopping center redevelops. But if that redevelopment of existing commercial parcels does not take place, then no compact, walkable town center will emerge, under current zoning.

The vision for Brandywine in the approved 2013 Master Plan is a “large mixed-use community” with walkable “transit-oriented neighborhoods,” “a variety of housing choices,” and “many opportunities to shop, dine, and be entertained.” It also calls for a “well-planned road network [that] allows local traffic to circulate throughout the community without relying on the regional highway network.” The circulation and walkability aspects of the vision require a network of streets and blocks parallel to MD 5 (“parallel grid”), either on the east or west side of the arterial highway. The existing zoning is focused on enabling that kind of development to take place mostly on the east side, at the northern end of the shopping center plus some adjacent parcels. The west side of US 301 largely has the necessary TAC zoning in place necessary for mixed-use, walkable development here. There are opportunities to expand commercial zoning on the west side of 301 across from Timothy Branch.

- Residential Zones: Primarily single-family and low-density, there may be opportunities to explore providing different housing types in proximity to key corridors, Brandywine Center, and the proposed SMRT stops.
- Legacy Comprehensive Design Zones: LCD zones may be in need of modernization to re-align with the current zoning ordinance.
- Industrial Zones: Brandywine’s zoning supports the type of industrial growth expected there, but careful attention is needed where residential and industrial areas are adjacent. Design and operations in alignment with the guidance of Sec. 27-61200 Neighborhood Compatibility Standards of the Zoning Ordinance can reduce conflicts. Additional policy recommendations in the Plan Amendment such as the addition of landscaped buffers, orienting buildings away from nearby houses, limiting truck traffic to certain routes or hours, and ensuring clear separation between driveways and loading areas can improve the transition between industrial and residential uses. These strategies can help industrial zones function efficiently while keeping surrounding neighborhoods safe and comfortable.
- Industrial Evolution: In addition to improving transitions, zoning updates should support the modernization of older industrial sites. Allowing flexible building layouts, shared access, and new types of light-industrial, or innovation-oriented businesses can help attract investment and create jobs, while maintaining compatibility with nearby residential and commercial areas. The existing small commercial node between MD 210 and Livingston Road at Pine Drive, where Beretta USA is located, could be a suitable location for agricultural processing and other agritech businesses. But the node is currently zoned for Commercial, Service (CS), so a rezoning of some parcels in this cluster or in adjacent areas to a suitable industrial zone would be required.
- If any zoning changes affect multiple properties or are time-sensitive, they should be included in the upcoming Sectional Map Amendment. Other potential changes can be listed as longer-term recommendations for future updates.

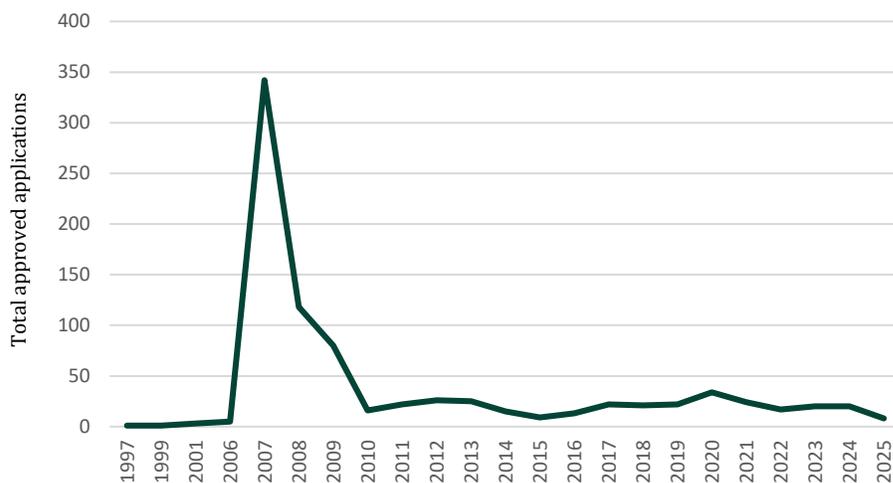
5. Development Activity

Total development activity in Subregion 5 peaked in 2007–2008 before declining sharply during the Great Recession. The level of development activity has stabilized since 2012, albeit at lower volumes. Over the past

decade, most development approvals have been for residential projects, with relatively few mixed-use entitlements.

Detached single-family homes and townhouses (both single-family and two-family) have comprised the majority of approved residential development since 1997. Only three multifamily projects and one senior living facility were approved.

Figure 5. Approved Development Activity* in Subregion 5, 1997-present



SOURCE: Prince George’s Planning Department, 2025

*Includes all development application types.

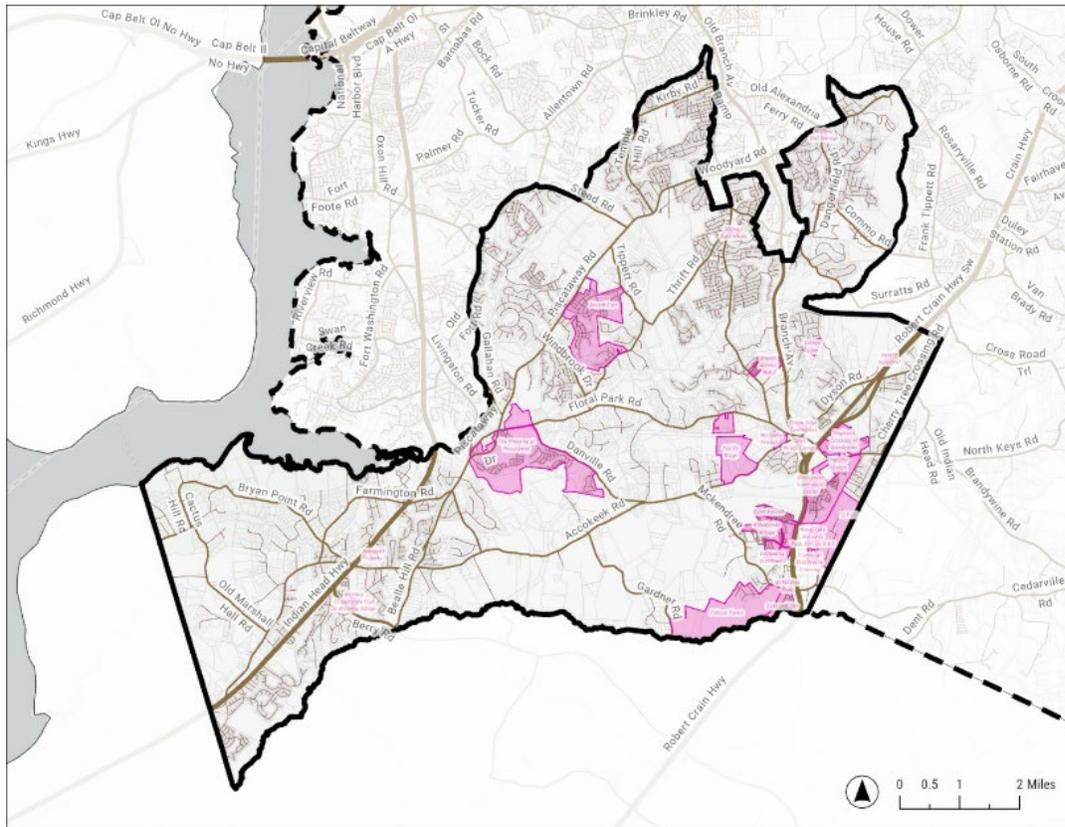
RECENT DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

A total of 43 conceptual and detailed site plans for new development have been approved since 2015. Most approvals have been for single family, townhouse, and larger multifamily residential developments. Approved commercial projects consist primarily of storage facilities, gas stations, and food and beverage businesses. Six mixed-use developments were proposed and approved as Conceptual Development Plans between 2017 and 2024, but none have been approved in the last year.

Approximately 6,423 housing units have been approved in conceptual and detailed site plans. Most are for proposed single-family attached townhouses and units in multifamily developments that stand alone or are a part of a mixed-use development project.

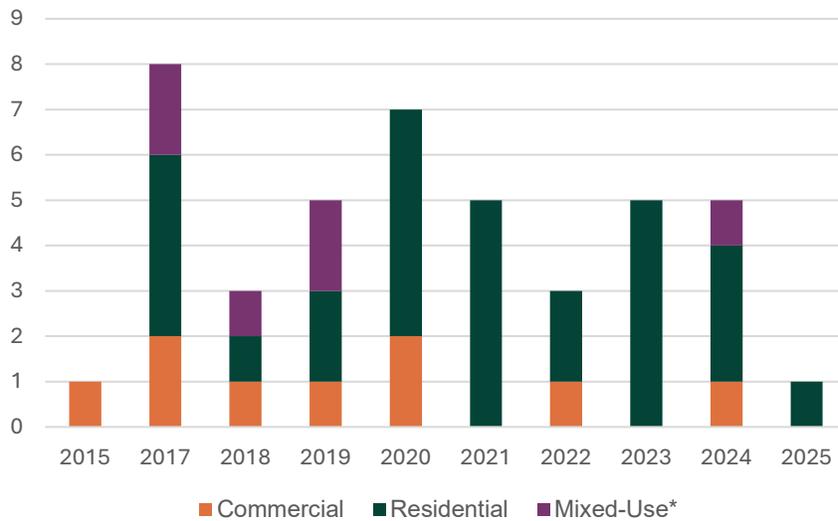
In Subregion 5, projects that are active in the development pipeline are concentrated in and around Brandywine Center and between Piscataway Road and Route 5, in Rural Residential (RR) and Legacy Comprehensive Design (LCD) Zones.

Figure 6. Map of Active Pipeline Development, 2024



SOURCE: Prince George's Planning Department, GIS Open Data Portal, 2024, <https://gisdata.pgplanning.org/opendata/>.

Figure 7. Approved Development by Use in Subregion 5, 2015-present



SOURCE: Prince George's Planning Department, 2025

Note: Include Conceptual Development Plans and Detailed Site Plans; there were no approved applications in interim years not shown in the figure

Table 4. Total Proposed Residential Units by Unit Type in Approved CSPs & DSPs, 2015-2025 (partial)

Year	Single family-detached	Townhome -single family	Townhome - two family	Multifamily	Mixed use	Senior/elderly	Total Housing Units
2015							0
2016							0
2017	95		218	312	369		994
2018					880		880
2019	2				950		952
2020	96	585				195	876
2021		550		488			1,038
2022		431	116				547
2023	1	180		221		198	600
2024		81			300		381
2025		155					155
Total	194	1,982	334	1,021	2,499	393	6,423

SOURCE: Prince George's Planning Department, 2025

Table 5. Total Commercial Development by Square Feet Proposed in Approved in CSPs & DSPs

Year	Office	Retail	Other/not specified*	Total
2015		4,946		4,946
2017		36,185	57,220	93,405
2018		6,449	60,000	66,449
2019	2,340	40,000		42,340
2020		3,484	152,175	155,659
2021				0
2022			198,606	198,606
2023				0
2024		15,523		15,523
2025				0
Total	2,340	106,587	468,001	576,928

SOURCE: Prince George's Planning Department, 2025

* Includes general commercial or storage facility

From a 10-year perspective, the number of housing units in approved Conceptual Site Plans (CSP) and Detailed Site Plans (DSP) plateaued at about 900 per year over the period 2017-2020. It rose initially during the pandemic, exceeding 1,000 in 2021 before tailing off in 2024 and 2025 (partial). Before the pandemic, a higher volume of commercial development projects, primarily retail, were also approved, including a 36,000 square foot grocery store and two convenience stores. In more recent years, commercial development has slowed and has only included large-scale self-storage facilities and general-purpose commercial retail spaces.

Among the areas targeted for potential mixed-use development in the minor plan amendment process are Brandywine and MD 210. Brandywine Crossing, a large shopping center on US 301, opened in 2008 and has grown to 800,000 square feet of commercial space. Brandywine Crossing is the nucleus around which this *Plan 2035*-designated Local Center is growing. Residential development has followed, first as a number of smaller subdivisions west of US 301 and then at Ryan Homes at Timothy Branch, northeast of the shopping center.

Satellite imagery analysis reveals that there has been very little non-residential development in Brandywine over the past 10 years. The only recent and significant non-residential development at Brandywine in recent years is the Elion Logistics Park, a 283-acre master-planned industrial park that will have eight warehouse buildings at full build-out. One has been constructed to date.

The logistics park is located across Timothy Branch from the Ryan Homes subdivision and the shopping center. To the extent that the large warehouse buildings will be highly visible from the residential community and may generate substantial truck traffic, there are compatibility issues here. But the logistics park location is appropriate in that it takes advantage of being adjacent to the CSX freight railway and within easy truck access to US 301. The logistics park is consistent with existing zoning.

As concerns the Indian Head Highway corridor in the western part of the subregion, there has been no major commercial development since 2015. The intersection of MD 210 and Livingston Road, one of the nodes to be analyzed under this minor plan amendment, has seen no new commercial investment projects. Nearby at Berry Road and MD 210, there has been no new commercial development, but some single-family housing and townhouses have been built across the street from the Giant supermarket. There has been no new development at MD 210 and Pine Drive/Beretta Drive.

IMPLICATIONS OF DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITY AND TRENDS FOR PLAN AMENDMENT

- **Land Use:** Recent housing approvals show that townhomes and apartments are realistic short-term options near major nodes. Mixed-use projects may take off once there is a stronger market and better access. Commercial growth has mostly consisted of storage facilities and smaller retail, suggesting a need to improve how commercial areas look, connect, and attract visitors.
- **Mobility and Safety:** As new homes and businesses are built near major roads, transportation improvements should make it easier and safer to walk, bike, and drive. Better crossings, sidewalks, and connected local streets can reduce congestion and make commercial centers feel more like neighborhoods than highway corridors.
- **Public Spaces:** As new development occurs, open spaces should serve both ecological and social functions. Stream corridors can become green trails, while central plazas and parks in growth nodes can host events and community gatherings.

6. Conclusions and Next Steps

One of the overarching goals of the minor plan amendment is to promote investment and economic development in Subregion 5, including walkable, mixed-use communities. Development trends discussed in this analysis suggest that residential and industrial development could contribute to future growth in the subregion. Recent housing approvals show that townhomes and apartments are realistic short-term options, especially near a local center like Brandywine. Light industrial development also has potential in major transportation corridors, both road and rail.

Future growth could intentionally target a few key areas, instead of being spread evenly around the subregion. Once these areas develop a stronger market and better access, mixed-use projects may become more viable. The real estate market analysis will shed light on the potential for mixed-use development now and in the future.

Different housing types should fit naturally within different parts of the subregion. Compact housing and townhomes make sense near shopping and transit, while single-family homes are more appropriate farther out. Aligning housing choices with location and infrastructure will help balance growth with livability.

At Brandywine, the current land use and zoning framework is appropriate for facilitating the emergence of the walkable, mixed-use development envisioned in the approved 2013 Master Plan: the future land use specified for much of this local center is “Mixed Use,” and the Town Activity Center zoning is appropriate for

facilitating compact mixed-use development. The main reasons that only “horizontal mixed-use development” (shopping centers next to housing subdivisions near industrial parks) has taken place so far are not related to the land use or zoning framework; they stem from market realities and the perceived high price of “vertical mixed use” (housing over ground-floor retail), which is more expensive and not justified in all cases by the rental and sale prices obtaining in the market today and in the near future.

Nevertheless, there are shortcomings in the regulatory framework. There is a patchwork of uses and zones on the west side of MD 5 that could be consolidated to promote the development of a parallel grid of streets west of the highway. This is necessary to achieve the compactness and walkability that is central to the vision.

In Accokeek, the future land uses and the zoning is targeting the right areas along MD 210, but the nodes are too small to allow the substantial amount of new housing that is necessary to make viable the expanded retail that the community wants. Also, the surrounding areas are zoned Residential, Rural (RR), which does not permit a variety of housing types or significant densities (that typically are needed to attract retailers). The geographic extent of the mixed-use commercial nodes needs to be expanded along Livingston Road and Berry Road, and the adjacent residential areas need to be zoned for a variety of housing options (especially multifamily).

In rural and agricultural areas, protecting open space should remain the priority, but small businesses related to agritourism and local food production could offer new opportunities without changing the area’s rural character.

As new homes and businesses are built near major roads, transportation improvements should make it easier and safer to walk, bike, and drive.

As concerns next steps, the findings of this land use and zoning analysis will be combined with other inputs to generate the draft recommendations for the minor plan amendment. The other inputs will include feedback from the community and other stakeholders at the listening sessions in November, the findings of the market study, and feedback from key public sector entities at Agency Meeting #1. Based on these factors, local knowledge of the Planning Department staff and the consultant team, and industry best practices, we will formulate recommendations for Subregion 5 in December 2025. Following review of and discussion around those recommendations with the Department and other stakeholders, Stantec will analyze the ability of the existing planning and regulatory frameworks to accommodate the types of development that are anticipated in Subregion 5. To the extent that the regulatory framework is not appropriate, we will propose changes to the future land use map and to the zoning ordinance, in the form of a Sectional Map Amendment.