



ELKTON

Transit-Oriented Development Plan



Prepared for
WILMAPCO
& the TOWN OF ELKTON

Prepared by
DESIGN COLLECTIVE
In collaboration with
RUMMEL, KLEPPER & KAHL, LLP

January 2011

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	5
Project Overview	5
Study Area	8
Previous Studies	10
Planning Process.....	11
Stakeholder Outreach	11
Visioning Session	12
Public Workshop.....	15
Surveys	16
Transportation Summary	19
Zoning Regulations Summary	23
Proposed Plan.....	29
“Train to Main”	30
Plan Details	31
Perspectives.....	37
Plan Diagrams.....	38
Transformations	40
Next Steps.....	43

*Adopted by the Elkton Mayor and Commissioners on December 15, 2010
Endorsed by the WILMAPCO Council on January 13, 2011*

Executive Summary

Rail service is a critical component of Elkton's plans to further economic development and provide greater travel choices to this rapidly growing area. Currently, the only gap in public rail service in the Northeast Corridor (NEC) is the 20-mile stretch between Perryville, MD and Newark, DE. To fill this gap and make Elkton transit-ready, the Town of Elkton and WILMAPCO worked with local leadership, land owners, major employers, residents and other interested stakeholders to develop a Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Plan. TOD is a mixed use residential and commercial area designed to make transit successful, walking and bicycling convenient and safe, and provide for a vibrant, livable community.

Goals of the Elkton TOD Plan are to:

- Promote future reintroduction of rail service to Elkton
- Enhance community character in the downtown
- Improve regional access and local walking, bicycling and transit services
- Support local and state Smart Growth policies and economic development initiatives
- Embrace Elkton's history while preparing for its future



Transportation

The Elkton Train Station, located a 5-10 minute walk to key downtown destinations, is considered the missing link in region's commuter rail service. The 2040 Regional Transportation Plan calls for the reintroduction of train service to Elkton by 2020, while local, state and federal officials seek funds to expedite this. Linking commuter rail is key to providing needed access to regional economic development including BRAC and the redevelopment Chrysler site. A new station must meet all Amtrak design standards and should include provisions a ticket office, restrooms, a covered passenger waiting area, information kiosks, bicycle racks, bus staging area, and passenger drop-off. The Plan also suggests expanded walking and bicycling routes, new connector streets to foster infill development, and conversion of surface parking lots to garages.



Zoning Regulations Summary

With the goal of achieving appropriate development near the rail station, the Plan evaluates the existing Zoning Ordinance and suggests revisions to support a vibrant, mixed-use environment with the desired town center character in mind. Revised regulations will serve to align local Zoning with the Maryland's Smart, Green & Growing principles for TOD. To encourage the envisioned character, the barriers to achieving mixed-use, shared parking, smaller front setbacks, and the redevelopment of small, "non-conforming" lots within the town center should be removed within zoning districts within a 10-minute walk from the planned train station. While the current Zoning Ordinance allows for flexible administration, the revised regulations should set a goal to establish predictability and remove barriers and the uncertainties for transit-friendly development.

Proposed Plan

A central idea of the Elkton TOD plan is to create a route from “Train to Main” that is engaging and safe for walking and bicycling, and encourages transit riders to shop and dine on Main Street. In order to support Main Street businesses, the amount of retail at the train station should be limited, primarily serving the commuting needs of riders (e.g., coffee shop, bakery, newsstand, dry cleaner, and similar), rather than duplicating the restaurants and shops on Main Street. As shown in the plan, the “Train to Main” route has four main segments:

1. Beginning at the train station, the route passes down the new tree-lined Bow Street. The proposal suggests a new station slightly west of the historic station. The new station area would be designed with an indoor waiting and ticketing area, a covered passenger waiting area on the platform, information kiosks, bicycle racks, a bus drop-off/drop-off and a plaza in front. Near the station, preferred development would be ground-floor office space and a limited amount of retail, primarily serving transit riders, with rental residential units above.
2. A realigned Bow Street can be enhanced landscaping to highlight the Armory green.
3. Turning at Railroad Avenue, an expanded Town Hall can serve as an iconic gateway.
4. Extending the Main Street streetscape between North and Main Streets will complete the link to Main. Infill development along North should take the form of restaurants and galleries nearing Main, drawing people to Main. Evening hours, sidewalk table seating, and compelling, lit storefronts are critical to the success of new development as well as existing shops and restaurants.

Illustrative Master Plan



Introduction

Project Overview

Rail service is a critical component of Elkton's plans to further economic development and provide greater travel choices to this rapidly growing area. Currently, the only gap in public rail service in the Northeast Corridor (NEC), the nation's busiest passenger rail corridor, is the 20-mile stretch between Perryville, MD and Newark, DE. In order to fill this gap and make Elkton transit-ready, the Town of Elkton requested that WILMAPCO work with local and state stakeholders to develop a Transit Oriented Development Plan. Transit oriented development (TOD) is a mixed use residential and commercial area designed to make public transit successful, walking and bicycling convenient and safe, and provide for a vibrant, livable community. Goals of the Elkton TOD Plan are to:

- Promote future reintroduction of rail service to Elkton
- Enhance community character in the downtown
- Improve regional access and local walking, bicycling and transit services
- Support local and state Smart Growth policies and economic development initiatives
- Embrace Elkton's history while preparing for its future

As the county seat, several institutions and government offices call Elkton home including Union Hospital, Cecil College, and the Cecil County Board of Education. For these institutions and offices as well as local businesses, re-establishing rail service is seen as vital to economic growth and professional recruitment. A new, intermodal transit center near the site of the existing Amtrak station located downtown on Bow Street would serve all modes of transportation including rail, bus, cycling, and walking. A new transit center would be the civic hub, the activity center for adjacent mixed-use development.

Planning efforts involved engaging the community through participatory meetings and workshops discussing Smart Growth and TOD principles and benefits; balancing traffic, transit, parking, and intermodal functional needs with mixed-use, development possibilities; addressing pedestrian, bus, kiss-n-ride, and vehicular circulation safety and conflicts; and addressing varied property owner considerations.

With the goal of balancing new growth and mobility with the sustainment and promotion of Main Street businesses, creating a link from "Train to Main" was essential. Plan recommendations include some retail at the station, mainly focused on serving riders, along with office and residential rental units; streetscape improvements to establish a pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly environment; and infill restaurants, galleries, and other evening retail uses along the route to draw people to Main Street, a short walk from the station.



Main Street

TOD Characteristics

Transit-oriented development targets the area within a 15-minute walk of a transit station, or up to a half-mile away. TOD varies in look and feel depending on its location. In a downtown business district, the development will be denser and more office-oriented than in a suburban neighborhood, where you'll see more shops, restaurants, and maybe a movie theater.

Common features frequently found at TOD sites include:

TOD is **pedestrian-friendly**. The development often sits within a connected grid of streets that are easy to navigate. Pedestrians are made to feel safe with wide sidewalks, well-marked crosswalks, good lighting and narrow streets to slow car traffic. The street scene is made inviting with landscaping, attractive public spaces and interesting architecture.

The **tallest buildings** are clustered immediately **around the transit station**, with the density of development tapering off as you get farther out.

Parking should be carefully managed. The goal is to limit the number of parking spaces and encourage shared parking between different land uses that need it at different times of day or at different times of the week. Offices, for example, typically need parking during weekdays, while retail and entertainment venues more likely need it evenings or on weekends.

Transit-oriented development should have **high-quality transit service** that includes, wherever possible, access to buses and rail. Many Maryland neighborhoods in the Washington metro area, for example, link residents to Metro stations with Ride-On buses.

There is no one-size-fits-all mold, and TOD will look different depending on where you find it. The mix of development, its density and how it is designed will differ based on location.

Project Team

This plan was developed by the WILMAPCO, in partnership with the Town of Elkton, Cecil County and the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT). Throughout the planning process, we coordinated with local leadership, land owners, major employers, residents and other interested stakeholders. Partnering with the Town of Elkton, WILMAPCO engaged the team of Design Collective, Inc. and Rummel, Klepper & Kahl, LLP (RK&K) to assist in developing an Elkton TOD Plan that supports both state and local Smart Growth and transportation policies.



15 minute walk area

Maryland's TOD Strategy

Maryland has built extensive transit infrastructure, which continues to expand. The State is promoting transit-oriented development to increase the number of riders and get a better return on this public investment. The goal is to surround stations with vibrant neighborhoods where people can live, work and shop or eat out, all within a safe and pleasant walk to trains, subways and buses.

TOD is not just good fiscal policy. It also helps relieve road congestion by making it easier for people to leave their cars at home. Putting a variety of land uses around transit stations can improve quality of life and access to jobs, stimulate community reinvestment and boost property values.

Maryland's TOD strategy is built around several goals:

- To ensure that station areas are “market ready” for development;
- To build state agencies' and local jurisdictions' understanding of TOD and their ability to carry out TOD projects;
- To strengthen public support for TOD throughout the Baltimore and Washington metropolitan areas; and
- To enhance the potential for federal funding to expand transit in the Baltimore area by showing that development patterns can support transit.

MDOT analyzes the “market readiness” of station areas to identify those with the greatest TOD potential. It evaluates existing land uses and physical characteristics, the perspective of surrounding communities, regulations, market strength and other issues.

At the same time, the State is building relationships with local jurisdictions, developers and others with a stake in TOD. In its work with local governments, Maryland hopes to develop work plans tailored to individual communities and station areas.

The State of Maryland is nationally recognized for its leadership in policies and programs that link transportation and land use to economic development, community revitalization and increased mobility and transportation options for the citizens of the State. MDOT has been proactive in its commitment to develop transportation investments and facilities and support for transit-oriented, joint and transit-adjacent development that support economic growth and neighborhood revitalization in close proximity to transit facilities.

Maryland has great TOD potential, with more than 75 rail, light rail and subway stations, and dozens more proposed in the next 20 years. The State will support its investment in transit by attracting new homes and businesses to the station areas.

Improving transit and TOD are key strategies for the state's Smart, Green & Growing (SGG) initiative, which brings together state agencies and other organization to “strengthen our economy, protect our environment, and improve our quality of life”.

For more information about Maryland TOD policies, visit:

- www.mdot-realestate.org/tod.asp
- www.green.maryland.gov/transit.html

Study Area

Elkton is located in Cecil County, Maryland midway between Baltimore, MD and Philadelphia, PA. Directly to the north is the I-95 corridor and to the south is Route 40/Pulaski Highway. The primary study area for this project is a 5-minute walking radius centered on Elkton's existing train station. The secondary study area expands to a 10-minute walking radius encompassing most of downtown Elkton and stretching from Route 279/Newark Avenue to Howard Street. Within the study areas, the primary focus of the TOD plan is the area directly south of the rail tracks stretching south towards Main Street.



Locator Map





Town of Elkton existing context

Previous Studies

Four studies for the Elkton area have been completed since 2002, focusing on the downtown area, extending train service, and track extensions. Useful knowledge was obtained regarding similar issues and opportunities between the previous studies and the current planning project.

SEPTA Service Extension to Elkton

A 2003 feasibility study was produced which investigated the potential for extending SEPTA service to the Elkton train station, focusing on ridership forecasting and operational analysis. As part of the process, a rider origin and destination survey was conducted and the results were geocoded for analysis and forecasting. Conceptual cost estimates were developed for track engineering, station platform/pedestrian access, and Elkton station renovation. A public workshop was held to solicit comments from the community. The process involved coordination with Cecil County Department of Planning, WILMAPCO, MDOT and DelDOT.

Track A Extension Study Phase II

A 2005 track extension study focused on investigating the estimate ridership demand and providing operational analysis for the potential service between Perryville and Elkton, Newark, DE or Wilmington, DE. The study identified engineering needs and potential major environmental issues associated with plan alternatives.

MARC Growth and Investment Plan

This 2007 plan developed by the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) call for increasing passenger-carrying capacity by threefold and increasing the share of trips by MARC during peak travel periods. While currently unfunded, the plan called for a new Elkton Station and associated track improvements by 2015.

Downtown Master Plan

In September 2002, LDR/HNTB were hired by the Elkton Alliance to create a 15-20 year downtown revitalization master plan. Master plan elements included: maintain a community image, economic development, wayfinding and signage, public realm improvements, access and circulation, new development, open space and linkages, and parking.



Planning Process

The Elkton TOD planning process began with background research and existing condition investigation. Previous studies were reviewed and design team meetings were held. Base maps were created and the potential sites were photographed as well as existing buildings to document the Town's character. The next phase involved a public process which comprised of: stakeholder meetings, surveys, a visioning session, and public workshops. Public involvement is essential to the planning process; it ensures all issues are heard and builds consensus through plan development review. The final phase of the planning process included final revisions to the master plan based on the stakeholders input received and the creation of the final report.

Stakeholder Outreach

Community input was a key part of the planning process, so that the Plan could reflect local priorities and interests. Community outreach included:

- Elkton Fall Fest Display and Survey : September 19, 2009
- Interviews and Focus Groups: September – October 2009– Focus Groups and interviews which included residents and business owners, Cecil College, Union Hospital, rail providers, Elkton Alliance, Cecil County Community Transit; Cecil County Arts Council; MD Department. of Planning, Maryland Delegates, Upper Bay Counseling and Support Services, and the Elkton Police Department.
- Public Visioning Workshop: October 29, 2009
- Advisory Committee Focus Group and Open House/Public Presentation: April 20, 2010
- Elkton Mayor and Commissioners: December 15, 2010
- WILMAPCO Council: January 13, 2011
- Web site comments: Ongoing
- Mailings: Project flyers/newsletters



Elkton Fall Fest



Meeting with officials about station

Visioning Session

The Visioning Session Workshop was held on October 29, 2009 in the Elkton Municipal Building. Residents, property and business owners, Town officials, and transportation agency staff were invited to attend this public, interactive workshop to learn about the goals of the project and the characteristics which make transit-oriented communities successful.

Following introductions and a project overview, participants broke into groups of approximately 8 to 10 people, each with a facilitator from Design Collective, RK&K, or WILMAPCO. The small groups allowed participants to openly discuss issues, concerns, and objectives regarding the future of Elkton and review precedent images. Notes, concept plans, and selected precedent images were recorded and generated by each group. The event concluded with each group presenting their thoughts and ideas to all participants.



Visioning Session Presentation

The following topics were discussed with participants and given to the group facilitators to stimulate conversation and elicit feedback.

Visioning Topics:

- What are the five most important issues/ideas for Transit-Oriented Development in Elkton?
- What are Elkton's assets and opportunities?
- What types of uses are needed in Elkton?
- What type of housing is needed in Elkton?
- What types of services are needed in Elkton?
- What types of amenities are needed in Elkton?
- What form of development is most appropriate near the Train Station?
- What form of development is most appropriate between Train and Main? Elsewhere?
- Discuss parking: location, type, need, etc.
- Discuss streets: connections, multi-modal, sidewalks, condition, etc.
- Discuss gateways & important intersections

The following comments are recorded below as written by the participants of the Visioning Session (excepting as required for clarity) and are organized by the table groups as presented at the conclusion of the Visioning Session.



Visioning Session - Group 1



Visioning Session - Group 2



Visioning Session - Group 3

Group 1:

- Opportunity – What do we want to get out of this? Jobs, Events, etc.
- History must stay
- Concern – decline of Elkton – County buildings [are being located outside Elkton]
- Day and Evening activity
- Economic development
- Cultural development
- Foot traffic
- Keeping opportunities for kids to stay in Cecil County
- Fixed route – access to education
- Residential
- People moving to area [are] looking for services and activities
- Surface lots [are] not green; build with infill
- Parking in Perryville
- Change parking requirements
- Hospital traffic calming

Group 2:

- Historical Character Preserved
- Adaptive Reuse (ex. Holly Hall)
- Town Square
- Neighborhood Services (Market, etc.)
 - 5&10 Variety Retail, Coffee Shop
 - Newsstand, Bookstore
 - Movie Theater
 - Nice Restaurants
 - Clothing (Women)
 - Antiques
- Condo Units
- Nature Trail
- Pedestrian Bridge over Tracks
- Historical Trail
- 3- to 4-story building height
- Dog Park
- Fill in gaps along streets
- Work Force Housing

Group 3:

- Easier access to jobs: D.C., Baltimore, Philadelphia
- Safer/Sense of community
- Pedestrian access especially at night
- Mixed-use
- Safety
- Branch out amenities – not just [on] Main. St and North St.
- Bike/connector paths

Group 4:

- Train station with structured parking, shared between uses with ground-floor retail space
- Encourage infill development
- Adaptive re-use of existing buildings
- Bike and pedestrian access with bike lockers
- Preserve existing open space, adding a dog park (Preserve residential buffers/trees)
- Plazas and squares to promote social activity
- Retail and service such as newsstand, restaurants, shops, [and] dry cleaner
- Limit building[s] to 3- or 4-stories
- Change marriage laws back to no waiting period and bring business back to Main Street

Group 5:

- Get the train to stop
- More Restaurants
- Outdoor cafés
- Public art/murals
- Uses around the station to increase ridership
- Address parking – Shared use
- Increase heights of building : 4-story mixed-use
- Downtown trolley
- Better bus transportation
- Promote and develop bike facilities
- Encourage ridership: College and Hospital
- Enhance North and Bow Streets
- Newsstand and coffee shop near station; Grocery store
- Pocket park
- More green roof buildings
- Additional parking garage Downtown
- Expansion of Hospital on parking lots on Railroad Avenue including garage and retail
- Enhance green area behind school board and create pedestrian walkway
- More retail with extended hours



Visioning Session - Group 4



Visioning Session - Group 5

Public Workshop



Public Workshop



Concept Plan A



Concept Plan B



Concept Plan C

A public workshop was held on April 20, 2010 in order to receive feedback on potential Transit Oriented Development (TOD) plan recommendations for Elkton. A gallery open house was held in the evening followed by a presentation at the Elkton Municipal Building. Various Concept Plans were discussed and input from stakeholders was received.

Concept Plan A

- Realign Bow Street to terminate on new Train Station
- In-fill along Bow and North Street
- Housing In-fill east of North Street
- Mixed-Use development around new train station
- New town hall
- Keeps historic train station along with new station

Concept Plan B

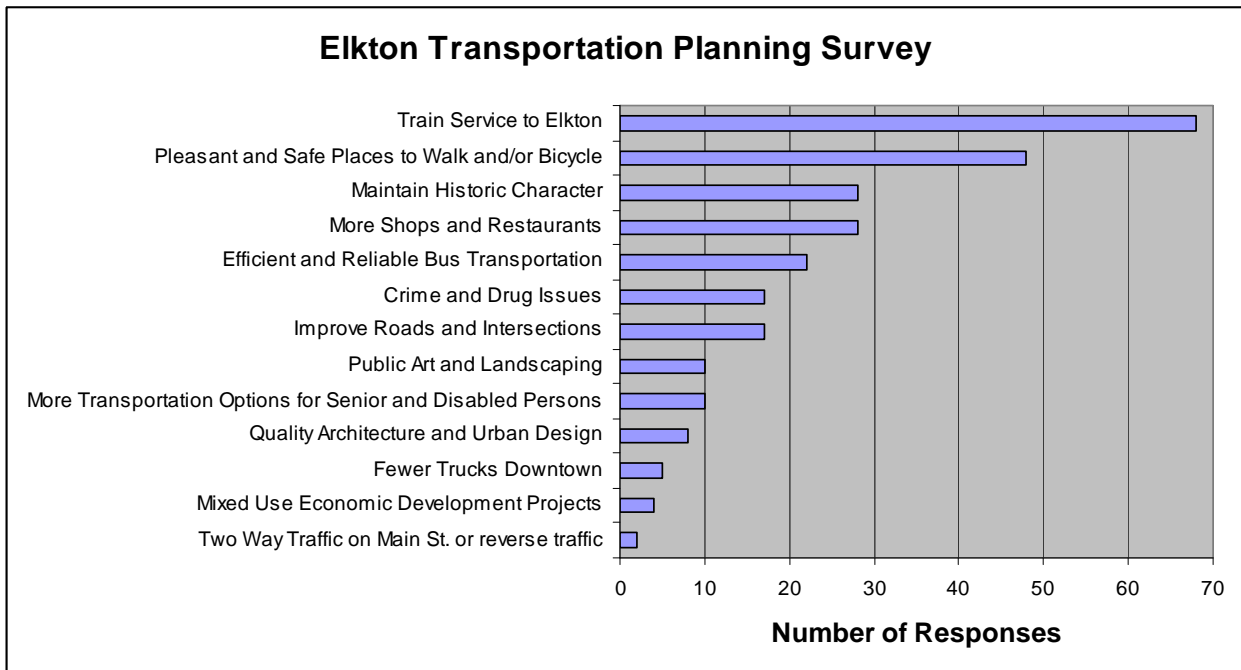
- Keeps historic train station with a new addition
- Maintains Bow Street's current alignment

Concept Plan C

- New train station with alternative open space design.
- Alternative housing in-fill and street network east of North street

Surveys

Input was solicited throughout the planning process via surveys. A survey board, in addition to individual survey questionnaires, were displayed and distributed at the Elkton Fall Festival. The following chart summarizes the input received.



As illustrated in the summary, there was broad support for restoring train service to Elkton as well as to creating a safer, welcoming environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Maintaining Elkton's historic character and expanding shopping and dining choices downtown were also priorities.

In addition, surveys were distributed during the Visioning Session as well as the Public Workshop. Finally, stakeholders were welcomed to access the surveys online to facilitate the transfer of comments and encourage input.



Elkton Fall Festival



Survey Board at Festival

Response Sheet Elkton Planning Survey

WILMAPCO

PURPOSE: We are seeking your thoughts on transportation and land use in your area. Elkton and the Wilmington Area Planning Council would like your help in identifying transportation problems and needed improvements in Elkton.

TRANSPORTATION ISSUES

1. What are your greatest transportation concerns for the downtown/downtown area?

2. Please list what transportation facilities and services are needed in Elkton (i.e. roads, sidewalks, transit, commercial, street lights, greenway connections, parking, intersection improvements)?

3. How would you rate the following transportation issues and facilities in Elkton?

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Circulation	1	2	3	4	5	6
Bike paths and lanes	1	2	3	4	5	6
Bus service	1	2	3	4	5	6
Traffic signals	1	2	3	4	5	6
Parking	1	2	3	4	5	6
Truck traffic	1	2	3	4	5	6
Traffic congestion	1	2	3	4	5	6

4. Do you support expanding (non-local) heavy truck restrictions in downtown Elkton? Yes No

PUBLIC TRANSIT ISSUES

5. To what destinations, if any, would you like to see public bus service?

What would be the purpose of your trip?

Work Shopping To school For leisure activities
Other (please specify)

TRANSIT-ORIENTED DEVELOPMENT ISSUES

6. How would you rate the following transit-oriented development issues for transit-oriented development?

	1	2	3	4	5
Mixed-use development with ground floor businesses and residential	1	2	3	4	5
Preserve existing historic buildings and use for new development	1	2	3	4	5
Have variety of housing types (i.e. apartments, condos, single family)	1	2	3	4	5
Provide for quality and form new designs for new downtown developments	1	2	3	4	5
Increase retail and services	1	2	3	4	5
Infill development	1	2	3	4	5

SURVEY CONTINUES ON OTHER SIDE

BICYCLE INFO ISSUES

7. Describe how often you currently travel by bicycle?

Daily 1-6x per week 1-2x per month Very rarely Never

8. Describe your bicycle trip purpose. (Check all that apply)

Work School Shopping Recreation/Exercise Other

9. Rank the reason(s) you don't bicycle or bicycle more often. (Mark 1 as most important, 2...)

Too far Lack of bicycle storage/parking Concerns about personal safety (from assaults)
Concerns about weather Lack of bike lanes Weather conditions Need accessories
Other

OTHER COMMENTS

10. What is Elkton's single greatest need?

11. What do you like best about Elkton?

12. Please provide us with any comments that will assist us in Elkton transportation and transit-oriented development planning.

Contact Information

Keep me involved:

Sign me up for Elkton Bicycle Plan citizen advisory committee

Add me to the quarterly Newsletter mailing list

Add me to the monthly e-mail news mailing list

Keep me informed about public meetings for the Transit-Oriented Development Plan

Name _____ Street Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP Code _____
Phone Number _____ E-mail _____

Thank you for your participation!

Please fax to 202/ 737-4084 or mail to WILMAPCO, 800 Library Ave., Suite 100 Newark, DE 19702. Call 202-737-4225 ext. 118 or toll free from Cecil County at 800-668-7066 if you have any questions or visit www.wilmapco.org Elkton

Elkton planning survey was handed out during Elkton Fall Festival, Visioning Sessions, and Public Workshop.

Transportation Summary

The Elkton Train Station, located in town at the end of Bow Street and along the Northeast Corridor (NEC) is considered the missing link in commuter rail service for the region. Currently, MARC commuter rail service terminates at Perryville, MD located fifteen miles south of Elkton near the Susquehanna River. The MARC commuter rail Penn Line extends south from Perryville to Baltimore and Washington, D.C. In the 2007 MARC Growth and Investment Plan, it was recommended that commuter rail service be re-established in Elkton by 2015. However, recent budgetary constraints have curtailed these expansion plans until 2020. In addition, previous studies were also conducted to investigate the feasibility of extending SEPTA (Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority) commuter rail services south to Elkton from the existing terminus in Newark, DE. Currently, SEPTA provides commuter rail service from the Newark, DE station north to Philadelphia. Studies are underway to expand the Newark Train Station at its current location in concert with the University of Delaware's recent purchase of the Chrysler Assembly Plant site, however, SEPTA does not have any pending plans to extend service further south. When future funds are secured and demand warrants, either joint or separate MARC and SEPTA service could eliminate the gap in commuter rail service that presently exists along the NEC and once again establish rail service to Elkton.

The existing Elkton Train Station as well as the adjacent NEC right-of-way are owned by Amtrak. The station structure is currently occupied by Amtrak personnel for use as a track survey crew office. Although Amtrak has not expressed interest in re-establishing service at the Elkton Station, any service expansion or redevelopment within the right-of-way would require Amtrak approval. In addition, all design specifications would need to meet Amtrak standards.

As part of the initial site planning efforts, the project team met with Amtrak officials to discuss the feasibility of rail service in Elkton and to solicit input on design requirements, issues, and concerns. Although Amtrak has no plans to re-open the station or to stop in Elkton, Amtrak officials did indicate that if future demand or ridership warrants service, Amtrak would consider a stop at this location. Until that time, as mentioned above, either MARC or SEPTA could provide service to the Elkton Station abiding by Amtrak design requirements. Accordingly, MARC and/or SEPTA would need to meet the following requirements per discussions with Amtrak officials:

1. All design features shall follow Amtrak Design Specifications and Guidelines (available at <http://www.greatamericanstations.com/>) and shall be approved by Amtrak.
2. Should the existing station structure remain or a new station be built, accommodations shall be provided for existing Amtrak personnel to maintain an office location at this site.
3. Under any station plan scenario, Amtrak maintenance road access shall be maintained.
4. A new platform shall be built to the following length specifications (based on service provider train set lengths):
 - a. SEPTA: 600 ft
 - b. MARC: 800 ft
 - c. Amtrak: 950 ft
5. Under Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regulations, all new station platforms along the Northeast Corridor shall be the high-level platform type.
6. All station features shall meet the ADA Standards for Accessible Design.
7. A fourth track shall be required in order to maintain service levels along existing Tracks 1, 2, and 3. The fourth track could be a siding approximately 1500 ft in length, allowing space for a commuter train to pull off while Amtrak trains as well as Norfolk Southern (NS) freight trains pass.

Through the Elkton TOD stakeholder meetings, Visioning Workshop, and discussions with the project team, the most viable location considered for the additional fourth track siding was on the south side of the corridor between Track 1 and the existing station structure. Clearances between Track 1 and the existing station and between the two street overpasses at Bridge Street and North Street appear adequate for the siding requirements. If an additional platform were to be provided on the north side of the tracks, another siding track would need to be provided. The proposed plan suggests that pedestrian and cyclist access across the tracks, to and from the north, would be provided by a crossover bridge integrated with the rail station. As an alternative to a new crossover bridge, the existing North Street overpass could potentially be retrofitted to provide pedestrian and cyclist access to the north. However, the distance to the overpass from the station could be a deterrent. Any crossover option would require an elevator or switchback ramps to provide accessibility.

The new or expanded station should include provisions, at a minimum, for a ticket office, restrooms, a covered passenger waiting area on the platform, information kiosks, bicycle racks, bus staging area, and passenger drop-off (Kiss-n-Ride). The station ingress/egress movements should minimize vehicular, transit, cyclist, and pedestrian conflicts. The proposed plan suggests a one-way circulation route in front of the station to streamline movements. Buses would circulate under the North Street overpass with a curb lane drop-off area prior to and separated from the passenger drop-off (Kiss-n-Ride) area. Additional access points to parking are proposed to minimize conflicts and eliminate unnecessary traffic in front of the station. Bus service to the station would include the existing Cecil County route ("The Bus") and DART First State's Route 65.



Multi-modal Transit Stop



Pedestrian



Trolley



Bike



2003 Extend SEPTA Commuter Rail Service Study - Rummel, Klepper, & Kahl, LLP

Zoning Regulations Summary

With the goal of achieving appropriate development near the rail station, the existing Zoning Ordinance should be evaluated and revised to support a vibrant, mixed-use environment with the desired town center character in mind. The revised regulations should be in place to align with the State's Smart, Green & Growing principles for Transit-Oriented Development (TOD). Several impediments exist within the current zoning regulations preventing or hampering the revitalization of areas near the rail station. Changes to permissible uses, bulk regulations (such as setbacks, frontage, and height requirements), and parking requirements are required to facilitate desired development.

In order to encourage the envisioned character, the barriers to achieving mixed-use, shared parking, smaller front setbacks, and the redevelopment of small, "non-conforming" lots within the town center should be removed. And, while the current criteria allow for some mixed-use and some shared parking, such development plans require further review and may be delayed by process, rather than encouraged with incentives. Re-evaluating the Zoning Ordinance in terms of enabling the desired outcome will aid in attracting private development.

The modifications to the regulations can be limited to the following zoning districts which fall within the 10-minute walk radius centered on the rail station (see the outer radius on the Zoning Map below): C-1, the Central Business District; R-O, the Residential-Office District; and R-3, the Urban Residential District.



Zoning

Alternatively, a TOD overlay zone (sometimes referred to as a Transit Overlay Zone (TOZ)) could be set up to apply independent criteria to guide development near the rail station. However, this alternative scenario has an inherent drawback. The Town already has several overlapping overlay zones roughly in the same vicinity (including the Central Business District, the Historic District, and the proposed Arts & Entertainment District, see map below). In either scenario, changes to the C-1, R-O, and R-3 districts or the application of an overlay district should be a part of a broader effort by the Town to fully update the Zoning Ordinance in line with the recently adopted *2010 Town of Elkton Comprehensive Plan*.



Special Districts

As mentioned above, the modifications to the Ordinance should be global; however, there are four Articles within the Zoning Ordinance which contain the main determinants of form:

- Article X - Permissible Uses;
- Article XII - Supplementary Use Regulations;
- Article XIII - Density & Dimensional Regulations; and
- Article XVII - Parking.

Article X - Permissible Uses

In Article X - Permissible Uses, there are several uses which are either prohibited or require a special exception permit which should be allowed as a matter of right and encouraged in the area near the train station. For example, libraries, museums, art galleries, art centers, and similar uses (Use 5.300) require a special exception

permit within the C-1 and R-O districts. Requiring a special exception permit from the Board of Zoning Appeals seems at cross purposes to the proposed Arts & Entertainment District which reaches east and west along Main Street, travels up along North Street, and extends north of the tracks. The proposed Arts & Entertainment district boundary falls largely within the 10-minute walk radius of the rail station and would reinforce the goal of providing an evening presence along the route from “Train to Main,” drawing transit riders to Main Street with gallery shows and events. The Permissible Uses should align better with the goals of the TOD and the Arts & Entertainment District by allowing such cultural uses. Whereas, drive-in/fast food restaurants (Use 8.500) are currently listed as a special exception use, but should be fully prohibited in C-1, the Central Business District, as a use type that erodes the urban fabric.

Beyond revising the regulations to include certain uses, Elkton will need to determine if zoning based primarily on use rather than on form will provide the best mechanism for achieving its goals moving forward.

Article XII - Supplementary Use Regulations

In Article XII - Supplementary Use Regulations, currently, some of the criteria are based on suburban land planning models, rather than supportive of a mixed-use, town center environment. The following sections are illustrative of the issues.

Section 1. Accessory Apartments (Use 1.210): Rather than listing as a special exception use, accessory apartments should be permissible in the C-1, R-O, and R-3 districts to encourage additional dwelling units near the station. Accessory apartments should be supported as they provide ideal rental housing units directly monitored and maintained by the homeowner.

Section 12. Boarding Houses, Bed and Breakfasts, and Country Inns (Use 1.510): This use is listed as a special exception that must meet several conditions to obtain approval from the Board of Appeals. The first requirement which states that the use must be “temporary, for a period of not more than three years, subject to renewal” could clearly be a deterrent for those interested in pursuing a viable business plan (i.e., a loan for renovations and start-up business expenses based on a three-year plan would be nearly impossible to obtain). Placing such conditions on uses which are desirable in town centers should be reconsidered.

Section 20. Funeral Parlors, Undertaking Establishments, or Mortuaries (Use 20.100): The regulations state that this use is permitted in the C-1 district as well as other districts, but, must meet several conditions for approval. One of the requirements is a minimum front yard setback of seventy five (75) feet. Such a large front setback in the C-1 district would be wholly out of character with the town center and raises a fundamental concern regarding setbacks. Setbacks should be evaluated per district, rather than per use. A funeral parlor located in a town center should have a maximum setback of fifteen (15) feet. In downtown areas, many uses can co-exist; it is the character of the urban form that is paramount, not the use. The uses will change over time, but the form remains relatively constant. Towards the town center, building setbacks are reduced, while towards the rural edge, setbacks can be much larger. Maintaining the streetscape in the downtown is critical and front setbacks should be minimal and fairly consistent. Setbacks should increase gradually and may be more varied transitioning to the rural edge. The same reasoning should apply to minimum acreage and frontage requirements.

Section 26. Home Occupations (Use 1.600): As the work environment continues to evolve, home occupations will likely increase. Self-employment is expanding, remote access is improving, and commuting in a private vehicle is becoming more expensive and time-consuming. A few of the criteria for this use are not in keeping with these changes. Limiting home occupation space to less than two hundred (200) square feet and not allowing the space within an accessory structure (such as a detached garage converted to an artist’s studio) are confining and perhaps unnecessary restrictions. The criteria already limit the maximum square feet to no more

than twenty-five (25) percent of the dwelling area. In addition, a home occupation should be a permissible use with conditions in all residential zones, rather than a special exception in the R-O and R-3 districts. These use types which place more people in proximity to the rail station throughout the day and allow for adaptive reuse of structures should be encouraged rather than encumbered.

Section 36. Residential Structures – Single-Family Attached and Multiple Units (Uses 1.200 and 1.300): The criteria state that, for townhouses, a minimum of twenty (20) percent and, for multi-family units, a minimum of thirty (30) percent of the site shall be maintained in common open space exclusive of front, side, or rear yards. However, lot coverage maximums are in place and further open space requirements are not needed in the C-1, R-O, and R-3 districts where public open space occurs within walking distance. Also, in these districts, setbacks between structures should be a minimum of ten (10) feet for townhouses, rather than twenty five (25) feet. Requiring additional open space on lots and larger distances between units precludes small, infill townhouse and apartment building development downtown. Further, for multi-family apartments, the required setback is universally listed as fifty (50) feet from all lot lines. Once again, setbacks should be evaluated per district, rather than per use, and should be tested through lot diagrams to ensure that the character of the town center is respected and the transitions to the rural edge are properly conceived.

Section 37. Retail Establishments in a Group of Multi-family Dwellings (Use 2.130): Currently, this use is only allowed in R-3 and PUD districts, but should be encouraged in C-1 and R-O to support the goal of mixed-use development near the rail station. Additionally, the criteria require that the retail should primarily serve residents of the building; however, in the town center, the retail tenants should provide for and welcome both residents of their building as well as others. Similar comments apply to Section 38. Retail Establishments in an Office Building (Use 2.140).

Article XIII - Density & Dimensional Regulations

In Article XIII - Density & Dimensional Regulations, many of the minimum lot size, setback, and frontage criteria require evaluation and revision to promote the principles of Transit-Oriented Development and to reflect the town center character of Elkton. The following sections, focusing on the C-1, R-O, and R-3 districts within a 10-minute walk radius of the station, are illustrative of the suggested modifications.

Section 4. Building Setback Requirements and Section 9. Schedule of Zone Regulations: Generally, from C-1 to R-3, there is a reduction in front yard setbacks indicated from edge to center in the regulations. Per the Schedule, commercial in C-1 requires a five (5) foot setback, most uses in R-O require a fifteen (15) foot setback, and residential uses in R-3 require a fifteen (15) or twenty (20) foot setback. However, while the general transition is correct with smaller setbacks indicated in the CBD and larger setbacks indicated moving outward from the town center, there are several uses that are omitted from the Schedule or that deviate from this standard progression. For example, apartments/condos are listed in the Schedule as requiring, regardless of district, a fifty (50) foot front setback. As noted above, another example would be the required seventy-five (75) foot front setback for funeral parlors. While funeral parlors may not be a use that is critical in order to activate a TOD, a comprehensive analysis of the existing Zoning Ordinance should seek to address the anomalies in the bulk regulation criteria. Requiring apartment buildings in the TOD area to have a fifty (50) foot setback would certainly limit development opportunities and would create the wrong streetscape character. In the town center, regardless of use in most cases, buildings should create a more uniform street edge.

Additionally, modifications should ensure that detached residential garages can be placed in the rear yard properly when served by an alley (generally three (3) feet off the alley right-of-way). On center or mid-block townhouse lots, the side setback for garages should be zero (0) feet. On end or corner townhouse lots, the side setbacks for garages should be three (3) feet.

Two suggested edits within the Projections portion would improve the details of the built environment. First, the depth of encroachment should be increased to thirty-six (36) inches from twenty-four (24) inches. Increasing the depth to which certain elements may extend into any required yard will allow for more substantial architectural details in chimneys, cornices, bays, and similar. Second, porches and stoops should be allowed to encroach into a required front yard to within twelve (12) inches of any right-of-way line.

Building heights will need to be increased to allow for four full stories (allowing for up to a twenty (20) foot commercial ground floor) in the C-1 and R-O districts and three full stories in the R-3 district. Redefining building height, from grade to the highest point of a structure, to a measurement from grade to eave should be considered. This modification would allow for properly sloped pitched roofs whereas the current definition promotes lower slopes.

Article XVII – Parking

In Article XVII – Parking, the regulations should shift in stance to support or, further, to incentivize good urban form and Transit-Oriented Development. Modifying the parking regulations for areas within a 10-minute walk of the rail station is a clear way to credit development near transit and increase the feasibility of desirable development. Several measures can be implemented to reduce the parking burden, such as:

- Allowing on-street parking directly abutting development parcels to be counted;
- Allowing a certain percentage of the required parking to be compact spaces (generally, eight feet by six inches (8'-6") in width and sixteen (16) feet in depth) and/or to be designated for motorcycles or scooters;
- Discounting the required parking by a certain percentage (e.g., by 5%) for installing electric vehicle charging stations;
- Discounting the required parking by a certain percentage for providing covered bike spaces as securable racks or lockers (e.g., a 5% reduction for providing racks for 25% of the total of number of employees and residential units and a 10% reduction for providing racks for 50% of the total of number of employees and residential units);
- Discounting the required parking by a certain percentage for providing employees and residents transit passes; and
- For retail commercial uses, discounting the required parking for proximity to residential (e.g., subtract one required space for each residential unit within a ¼ mile radius of the main entrance).

These reductions can be capped at a certain percentage, but they should be listed in the regulations as a known factor. In addition, a shared parking matrix should be included in the revised regulations and, generally, the parking space requirements for residential, retail, and assembly should be reduced. Walkable, park-once environments require less parking. Currently, Article XVII states that, "...the Table of Parking Requirements is only intended to establish a presumption and should be flexibly administered..." and "Alternative off-street parking standards may be accepted if the applicant can demonstrate that such standards better reflect local conditions and needs." Although these statements may be helpful in addressing unique scenarios and may allow for shared parking strategies, they create uncertainty. Clearly defining the expectations will help developers test site potentials and will help reviewers administer the regulations.

Revisions to the Zoning Ordinance should seek to remove contradictions, permit and possibly incentivize uses in the town center that would enhance the built environment, and define regulations that will create the desired form of Transit-Oriented Development while respecting the Elkton's existing character. The outcomes of the regulations should be tested through lot diagrams (and preferably on selected, likely redevelopment parcels as test fits). While the current Zoning Ordinance allows for flexible administration, the revised regulations should set a goal to establish predictability. Remove the barriers and the uncertainties; desired development should not be penalized with additional time for needed for reviews and special exception approvals.

Additional information and resources:

- S. Mark White, "The Zoning and Real Estate Implications of Transit-Oriented Development", *Legal Research Digest*, January 1999, Number 12, available online: http://onlinepubs.trb.org/Onlinepubs/tcrp/tcrp_lrd_12.pdf
- *Transit-Friendly Development: Newsletter of Transit-Oriented Development and Land Use in New Jersey*, April 2007, Volume 3, Number 1, available online: <http://policy.rutgers.edu/vtc/tod/newsletter/vol3-num1/TODParking.html>
- *Reforming Parking Policies to Support Smart Growth: Toolbox/Handbook: Parking Best Practices & Strategies for Supporting Transit Oriented Development in the San Francisco Bay Area*, Metropolitan Transportation Commission, June 2007, available online: <http://www.mtc.ca.gov/library/pub.php>
- Donald Shoup, *The High Cost of Free Parking*, American Planning Association, 2005
- "Shared Parking: Sharing Parking Facilities Among Multiple Users", TDM Encyclopedia, Victoria Transport Policy Institute, October 2009, available online: <http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm89.htm>
- David Fields, "TOD Planning for Smaller Urban Communities: Who Said T = Trains?", Nelson\Nygaard, 2006, available online: http://www.nelsonnygaard.com/Documents/Presentations/TOD_Planning_without_Trains.pdf



Land Use Plan

Proposed Plan



Illustrative Master Plan

Plan Description Overview:

With the goal of balancing new growth and mobility with the sustainment and promotion of Main Street businesses, creating a link from “Train to Main” was essential. Plan recommendations include minimal retail at the station to serve riders along with office space and residential rental units; downtown streetscape improvements to establish a pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly environment; and infill restaurants, galleries, and other evening retail uses along the route to draw people to Main Street, a short walk from the station. Along with mixed-use development, additional infill homes and open space are indicated.



Aerial Rendering

“Train to Main”



“Train to Main” Aerial

A central idea of the Elton TOD plan is to create a route from “Train to Main” that is engaging and safe for pedestrians and cyclists and encourages transit riders to venture down to shop and dine on Main Street. In order to support and not compete with Main Street businesses, the amount of retail at the train station should be limited, primarily serving the commuting needs of riders (e.g., coffee shop, bakery, newsstand, dry cleaner, and similar), rather than duplicating the restaurants and shops on Main Street. As shown in the plan, the “Train to Main” route has four segments. The first segment begins from the rail station and passes down the new tree-lined Bow Street. The second travels along the new Armory green. The third turns at Railroad Avenue pass the Town Hall/Municipal Building plaza to North Street. The final segment arrives at Main Street near the Elton Alliance building. It is important that the iconic Armory building and the Town Hall serve jointly as civic markers as the route pivots from Bow to North streets. North Street is the logical connection to Main Street compared to lower Bow Street which is lined with blank walls and rears of buildings. With its significant historic architecture, North Street has great potential character to support appropriate infill to activate the route approaching Main. The infill development along North should take the form of restaurants and galleries nearing Main, drawing people to Main. Building off the streetscape improvements completed on Main Street, North Street should similarly be revitalized with brick-lined paving, trees, banners, and street furniture. Evening hours, sidewalk table seating, and compelling, lit storefronts are critical to the success of new development as well as existing shops and restaurants.



Area 1: Rail Station

Area 1: Rail Station

The proposed plan suggests a new rail station adjacent to and west of the existing station. The new station would meet the ADA Standards for Accessible Design and, as required by Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) regulations for the Northeast Corridor, would provide a high-level platform to facilitate boarding and detraining. Additionally, the new station area would be designed with an indoor waiting and ticketing area, restrooms, a covered passenger waiting area on the platform, information kiosks, bicycle racks, a bus drop-off, and passenger drop-off (Kiss-n-Ride). The existing station would be restored as a museum for Elkton, highlighting the history of transportation in town. Photographs would be displayed of the station and from the heyday of Elkton in the 1920s and 1930s when the town was "the elopement capital of the East Coast" and thousands of marriages were performed each year.

Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) near the station would consist of ground-floor office space and a limited amount of retail, primarily serving transit riders, with rental residential units above. Per discussions with stakeholders, the height of the buildings should not exceed four-stories. Parking would be relegated to the rear of the buildings with a possible location for structured parking tucked against the North Street overpass.

The proposed plan suggests a one-way circulation route in front of the station to streamline movements and minimize conflicts. The route would be a tree-lined, pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly street with crosswalks and sidewalk cafes. Buses would circulate under the North Street overpass with a curb lane drop-off area prior to and separated from the passenger drop-off (Kiss-n-Ride) area west of the station. Additional access points to parking are proposed to minimize conflicts and eliminate unnecessary traffic in front of the station.

Area 2: Town Hall/Municipal Building

The current site of the Municipal Building on Railroad Avenue is a core component of the circulation route from “Train to Main”. It also serves as a gateway marker when arriving downtown traveling south along North Street and descending from the overpass. As such, the site could be redeveloped with a civic-scaled Town Hall by replacing the existing building and front parking lot (or, alternatively, adding a new front on to the existing building). A plaza in front of the Town Hall would provide an appropriate civic gesture, a multi-purpose hardscape space as a counterpoint to the green of the National Guard Armory.



Area 2: Town Hall/Municipal Building

Area 3: Bow Street from Railroad Avenue to Main Street

Currently, the portion of Bow Street between Railroad Avenue and Main Street does not have an active streetscape. Blank expanses of wall, rears of buildings, and drive-thru lanes line the street. The inconsistent sidewalks vary in width, material, texture, and maintenance. Fronting the street with new development, rebuilding sidewalks in a consistent fashion, implementing shared lanes for motorists and cyclists, and adding street trees would transform the street into a more welcoming environment. Although the bank drive-thrus on the east side of the street present a challenge to infilling new buildings, there is potential to insert some without interrupting the drive-thru movements. On the west side of Bow Street and along Railroad Avenue, the Union Hospital parking structure is set back from the streets far enough to allow a residential liner to wrap the parking structure. New apartments or stacked townhouses would face the street and improve the streetscape with plantings, hardscape, and benches. Inserting new uses, activating the streetscape, and improving the sidewalk accessibility and interest would create an improved Bow Street.



Area 3: Bow Street from Railroad Avenue to Main



Area 4: East of North Street, north of High Street



Area 5: East of North Street, south of High Street

Area 4: Area east of North Street between Railroad Avenue and High Street

Currently, the area east of North Street between Railroad Avenue and High Street is part of a large block that is out of scale with the downtown grid, bounded broadly by North, Booth, and High Streets. Inserting a new street continuing east from Railroad and connecting north to Stockton Street and south to High Street would provide better movement through the area. Inserting these streets would not displace any historic buildings or new construction but would allow for more street frontage and more walkable blocks.

New buildings are suggested at the intersection of Railroad and North Street to frame the entry into town from the North Street overpass along with the new or expanded Town Hall building. Additional, small infill buildings could be added at the corner of North and High streets to complete the block.

Area 5: Area east of North Street between High Street and Main Street

Just south of Area 4, this area presents a good opportunity for new structured parking. Internal to the block and proximate to the businesses and Courthouse on Main Street, a new deck in this location has been recommended as a viable location for structured parking in previous studies as well. The block has adequate room at the center for a three-bay deck as well as access drives to the rears of existing and proposed buildings. The existing buildings along with additional liner buildings would screen the deck from street views. Currently, this area is entirely paved, however, greens screens (vegetated building screens), deck solar shades, or a green roof could be investigated to mitigate the amount of storm water run-off and reduce solar heat gain.

Area 6: Area west of the new Rail Station

In the proposed plan, the area west of the new rail station and the Cecil Community College building accommodates a street continuing from the rail station and connecting to Railroad Avenue. The street would be lined on both sides with buildings, mainly office buildings affiliated with Union Hospital or the College. In keeping with the area context, buildings three to four stories in height are envisioned. Flat roofs are likely given the office use and building type and, as such, could be designed to support green (vegetated) roofs to provide an amenity and contribute to storm water management and reducing the heat island effect. Tucked between the buildings on the west side of the street and the Bridge Street overpass is another possible location for structured parking to support the intended development.



Area 6: West of the new Rail Station

Area 7: Gateway intersection at Bridge Street and Railroad Avenue

Traveling south on Bridge Street and descending from the overpass into downtown presents a gateway opportunity at the intersection of Bridge Street and Railroad Avenue. Infill buildings or redevelopment of underused parcels at this location, both east and west of Bridge Street, would help to announce the Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) and signify arrival to downtown Elkton. Currently, when driving or walking south across the Bridge Street overpass, under-utilized or abandoned industrial and small-scale, intermittent office buildings do not present a cohesive whole or adequately portray the downtown. Solidifying the gateway arrival image at this location would compel area visitors to explore Elkton further.



Area 7: Gateway at Bridge Street and Railroad Ave



Area 8: Vacant land near Board of Education

Area 8: Vacant land near the Cecil County Board of Education Buildings

The vacant land to the west and south of the Cecil County Board of Education buildings is imbedded in the large block bounded broadly by North, Booth, and High Streets. As mentioned previously, this block is out of character with the scale of the town's urban fabric. As such, this open space becomes buried within, creating a "no-man's" land lacking street frontage. A solution presented in the proposed plan inserts a street network into the area, connecting Stockton Street to Booth and High Streets and providing a development opportunity for townhouses, small cottages, and a useable green.



Area 8: Ball field alternative

Area 8: Ball Field Alternative

As an alternative to the infill development suggested above, this open space area could provide needed active recreation space including a practice baseball/softball field and an overlapping practice football field.

Area 9: Small Lots east and west of Booth Street

Southeast of the Cecil County Board of Education Buildings are many small, vacant lots. These lots, as well as several others downtown, are challenged by their limited acreage and constrained by the current zoning regulations. They are virtually unbuildable given the minimum lot square foot and setback requirements. Suggested modifications to the zoning regulations include reduction of the minimum lot size and setback requirements to allow these vacant lots to be developed with small cottages, i.e. homes consistent in size and character with many of the detached single-family houses in Elkton. These cottage homes could provide needed workforce housing in town. To make use of the lots along Collins Street, the street right-of-way could be shifted west slightly, increasing the lot depths to the east. This right-of-way shift would also have the benefit of aligning Collins Street with South Street, providing better street network connectivity. Based on field observations, it appears that shifting the Collins Street right-of-way as well as extending Stockton Street would not conflict with existing grave sites in the area, however, further investigation would be required.

At the intersection of Booth and High Streets is a large attached green. This green is under-utilized and under-programmed. Furthermore, many of the surrounding houses do not face the green, creating an uninviting open space. The proposed plan suggests developing the northern side of the green with either small cottages, townhouses, or a multifamily building. Building the units could finance the renovation of the green, improving the open space by adding amenities such as lighting, paths, benches, and additional landscape. Fronting the green with homes, especially with front porches and balconies, would activate the open space and create a welcoming presence.



Area 9: Small Lots east and west of Booth Street



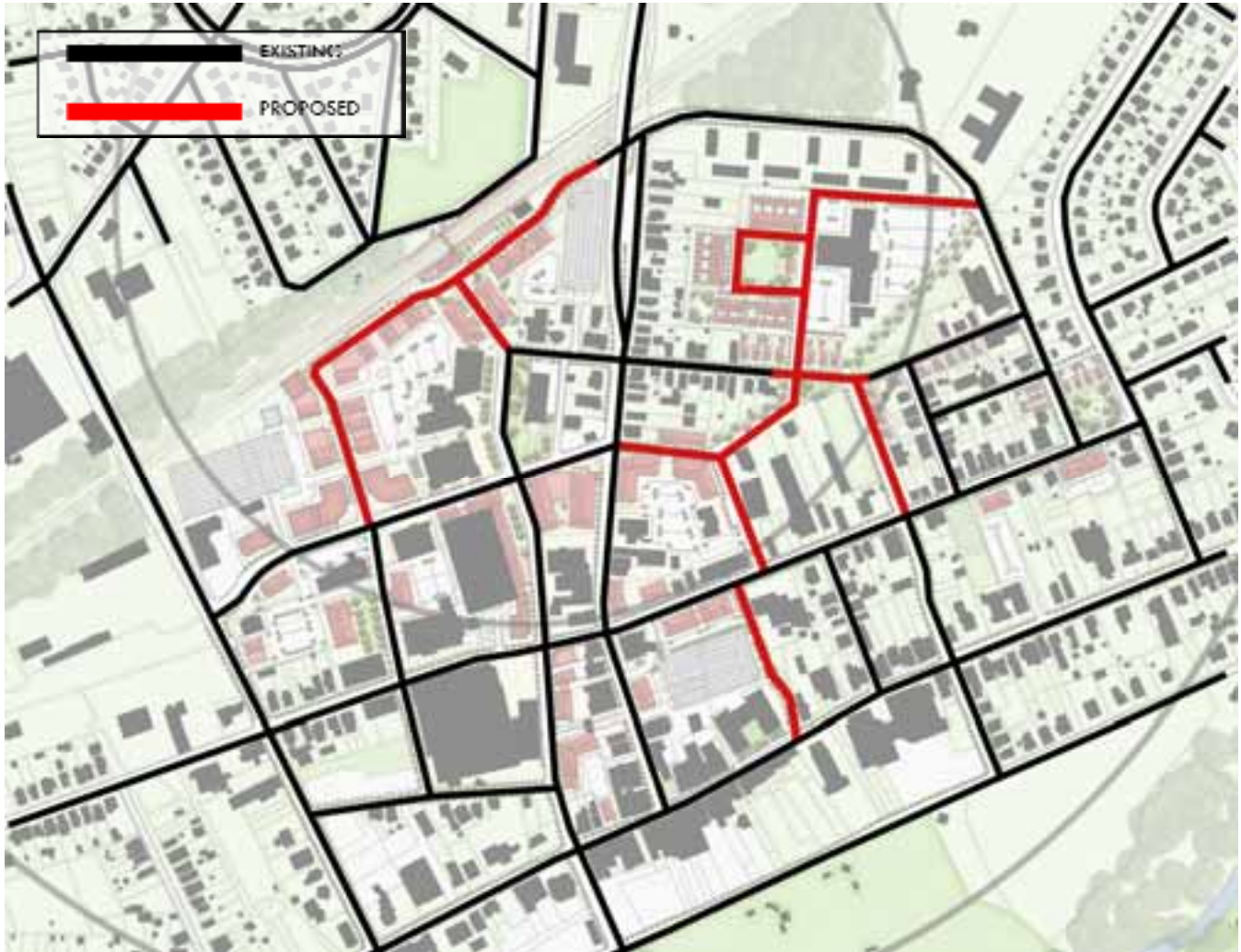
Perspective Rendering of New Transit Plaza



Perspective Locator Plan

Proposed Transit Plaza

The new train station and surrounding mixed use buildings come together at the end of the realigned Bow Street to create the transit plaza. The space provides some relief from the street and acts as a welcoming gate way into Elkton. Change it paving material act as a traffic calming device and helps to define the pedestrian oriented space. The rendering shows the character of the space and the surrounding architecture that buildings on the character of Elkton. The retail at the ground level activates the plaza and enhance the pedestrian experience. Kiss-n-Rides and bus drop-offs happen on either side of the transit plaza to minimize the pedestrian vehicular interaction. The view shows a green space and bus drop-off in the foreground that link the new station with the historic Elkton train station.



Street Network Diagram

The existing streets, shown in black on the diagram, show a fairly well-connected grid south of the rail line responding to the train tracks as well as natural features. The exceptions to connectivity are the large blocks east and west of North Street. The first block that is out of scale with the downtown grid is the area east of North Street, bounded roughly by Booth Street and East High Street. The second void in the grid occurs west of North Street, between the tracks and Railroad Avenue and spanning from Bow Street west to North Bridge Street. The proposed new streets would provide better connections and a more walkable environment. Care has been taken in planning to insert new streets while respecting historic buildings and new construction.



Trolley & Bike Lane Diagram

A rubber-tire trolley (i.e. a bus trolley) route was investigated during planning and a figure-8 loop was proposed. This loop allows for a start and finish, as well as a mid-point stop, at the rail station. The loop would extend south to Main Street and north to the schools and library along Route 279/Newark Avenue. Although it is unlikely that a permanent trolley route would be required due to the walkable distances and limited demand, the trolley route could be implemented for special events or modified for festivals to promote attendance and relieve congestion downtown.

A bike lane loop was also proposed to promote safe cycling and to connect with existing paths and recreation areas as well as with the new rail station and track crossover. The track crossover would allow both pedestrian and cyclist movement across the barrier of the rail line without relying on the Bridge Street and North Street overpasses, noted in stakeholder meetings to be unfriendly to cyclists and unsafe especially for younger riders. Marked bike lanes promote the idea of multi-modal streets (i.e. streets should be shared by pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists). A shared-lane marking or “sharrow” may be an alternative to a separate bike lane and may be essential where streets are narrow. Shared lanes are a viable solution especially in downtowns where cyclist and motorist speeds are roughly equal. Sharrows alert drivers to the presence of cyclists on the streets, promote safe passing of cyclists, and reduce “wrong-way” cycling. The *Elkton Bicycle Plan* further investigates cycling options downtown. For more information, visit www.wilmapco.org/bikeelkton.

Transformations

View looking south down North Street from the intersection of North Street and Railroad Avenue. At the corner is Elkton's Municipal Building.



Locator Plan



North Street - Existing



North Street - Transformation

The proposed transformation starts with infrastructure improvements: realigning the intersection, and burying utility lines. Streetscape improvements include more street trees, light poles and paving material similar to Main Street. Next is the demolition of the old Municipal Building and the creation of a new larger building and gateway plaza, which replaces the parking lot. On the other side of North Street, is a proposed 3-4 story office mixed-use building with a gateway element at the corner. With new streetscape improvements and retail activated sidewalks, this transformation helps to enhance the pedestrian connection from the train station to Main Street.



North Street - Existing

View looking south down North Street from the intersection of North Street and Railroad Avenue. At the corner is Elkton's Municipal Building.



Locator Plan



North Street – Transformation Alternative

An alternative transformation maintains the existing municipal building, but still implements infrastructure and streetscape improvements, as well as 3-4 story office mixed use building along with additional infill buildings along North Street.

View looking north along Bow Street. Standing on the west side of National Guard Armory, you can see the Cecil County Health Building and the Shelter Building in the background. The fence surrounds the Armory parking lot that wraps the west and north side of the building.



Locator Plan



Bow Street - Existing



Bow Street - Transformation

The proposed view shows the realignment of Bow Street at the intersection of Bow and Stockton Street. The new portion of Bow Street terminates on the proposed train station. 4-5 story mixed use buildings flank each side of the new street, which provides a vertical urban edge that defines the connection between the new station and the Armory. Retail at the ground level of each building helps to activate the street and create a more vibrant pedestrian environment. The consolidation of the Armory parking lot to the north and east side of the building, allows for an enlarged green space west of the Armory. Landscape improvements along this new green space help to create a better pedestrian connection to the Town Hall and Main Street.

Next Steps

This plan is meant to serve as a guide for the Town of Elkton to work with Maryland state and federal agencies to pursue implementation funding for the recommended land use and transportation improvements while having flexibility to work with local stakeholders, property owners and developers to fit TOD into the existing small town character. This Transit Oriented Development Plan and future supportive zoning changes will enhance Elkton's ability to apply for special funding program for implementation of recommended improvements as well as future transit and commuter rail improvements.

Financial resources and agency assistance is available through:

Heritage Structure Rehabilitation Tax Credits: Support for community revitalization through the rehabilitation of historic properties. mht.maryland.gov/taxcredits.html

Smart Sites: Capital projects where State and local partners work together to coordinate and align investment in innovative ways that catalyze smart growth. www.green.maryland.gov/smartsites.html

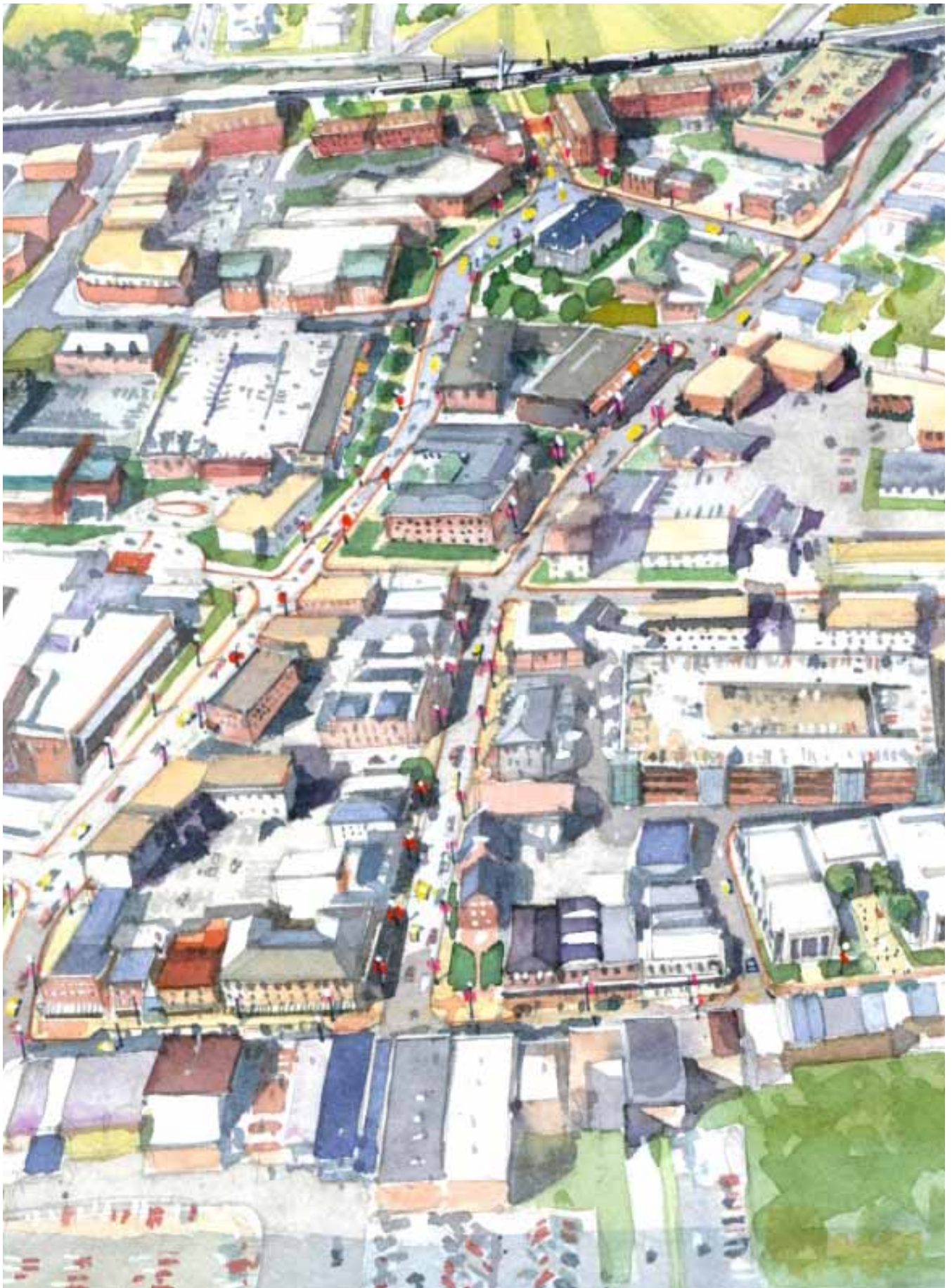
Community Legacy: Funds local economic development activities that stimulate reinvestment and strengthen neighborhoods. www.neighborhoodrevitalization.org

Neighborhood BusinessWorks: Provides below market loans to small business that locate or expand in target revitalization areas, bringing new services, jobs and vitality to their surrounding communities. www.neighborhoodrevitalization.org

Community Development Block Grants: Funds to expanding affordable housing opportunities, creating jobs, stabilizing neighborhoods and improving overall quality of life. www.dhcd.state.md.us

Transportation Enhancement Program (TEP): Federal funding assistance for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and landscape improvements along roads like plantings, street furniture, specialized paving, or minor lighting. www.roads.maryland.gov/Index.aspx?PageId=144

Maryland Transit Orient Development Designation: Explore designation by the Maryland Department of Transportation www.mdot.maryland.gov/Planning/TOD/TOD_Designation.html



Acknowledgement

WILMAPCO

Tigist Zegeye, Executive Director
Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner
Dave Gula, Senior Planner

Town of Elkton

Mayor Joseph L. Fisona
Commissioner Mary Jo Jablonski
Jeanne Minner, Planning Director
Terri Thomas, Elkton Planning
William Ryan, Elkton Chief of Police

Design Team:

Cecily Bedwell	Design Collective
Matt D'Amico	Design Collective
Stewart White	Design Collective
Will Story	Design Collective
Keith Sullivan	Design Collective
Earl Leach	Rummel, Klepper & Kahl, LLP
Steve McCarthy	Rummel, Klepper & Kahl, LLP
Jon Schneider	Rummel, Klepper & Kahl, LLP

Advisory Committee and Focus Group Attendees:

Richard Bayer	Upper Bay Counseling and Support Services
John Bender	AMTRAK
Ed Cairns	Cecil County Land Use Alliance
Peter Conrad	Maryland Department of Planning
Joe Constantine	Norfolk Southern Corp.
Tony Di Giacomo	Cecil County Planning and Zoning
James Dooley	MDOT, State Highway Administration
Vernon Duckett	Resident
Lib Fetting	Cecil County Senior Services and Community Transit
Patricia Folk	Resident and WILMAPCO Public Advisory Committee
Leslie Gorak	Cecil County Senior Services and Community Transit
Annmarie Hamilton	Cecil County Arts Council, Program & Office Manager
Amrita Hill	AMTRAK
Nicole Katsikides	Maryland Department of Transportation
Shawn Kiernan	MD Dept. of Planning
Jim Klaiber	Norfolk Southern Corp.
Kenneth Lewis	Union Hospital of Cecil County
Albert Loyola	DTC
Heather Morrissey	Cecil County Arts Council
Scott Muir	Norfolk Southern Corp.
Jim Mullin	Cecil County Commissioner
Dr. Stephen Pannill	Cecil College President
Harry Romano	Maryland Transit Administration
Christine Valuckas	Cecil College

For more information regarding the Elkton TOD Plan, contact:

Heather Dunigan, Principal Planner
WILMAPCO
850 Library Ave., Suite 100
Newark, DE 19711
302/737-6205 ext. 1-18
hdunigan@wilmapco.org
www.wilmapco.org

Or, visit the project website:
www.wilmapco.org/elkton

WILMAPCO

TOWN OF ELKTON

DESIGNCOLLECTIVE

601 EAST PRATT STREET, SUITE 300
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND 21202
OFFICES IN BALTIMORE & DURHAM
WWW.DESIGNCOLLECTIVE.COM