

HarfordNEXT At-a-Glance



HarfordNEXT is a departure from previous plans, uniting various elements into one cohesive and streamlined document centered around six overarching themes. A plan of plans, HarfordNEXT utilizes a forward thinking approach to address planning related issues across many sectors; including transportation, the environment, parks and recreation, water and sewer, historic and agricultural preservation, healthy communities, and economic development. Principles, goals and implementation strategies are organized around the six themes to provide a high-level and strategic planning document. The six themes include Grow with Purpose; Economic Vitality; Environmental Stewardship; Preserving Our Heritage; Mobility and Connectivity; Promoting Healthy Communities.

Chapter 1: Introduction

- Overview of the document.
- Relationship to municipalities.
- Plan Objectives.
- The Big Ideas.
- Plan Organization.
- Public Participation.
- State Planning Visions.

Chapter 2: Grow With Purpose

Overview: HarfordNEXT is grounded in a sustainable approach to land use planning that supports and promotes healthy, vibrant communities. As the County continues to mature, it will be increasingly important for the land use plan to support the ideals that will maintain a high quality of life for current and future residents. The Grow With Purpose theme outlines a framework of policies and implementations that are organized through the development of five principles: Livable Communities, Public Facilities and Infrastructure, Strengthening Communities, Housing, and Government Accountability.

- Replaces the Land Use Element Plan.
- Considers lighting standards and dark sky initiatives.
- Proposes creation of Quality of Life indicators.
- Promotes Transit Oriented Development (TOD) at all train stations.

- Considers implementing Planned Unit Development (PUD) zoning.
- Considers creating a development design manual, incorporating form based codes and pedestrian design elements.
- Considers creating a tiered incentives structure for developers who make development decisions which improve our economy and communities.
- Focuses on working closely with Community Advisory Boards to strengthen communities by updating community plans and giving communities their own identity.
- Emphasizes helping residents to age in place.
- Evaluates allowing Accessory Dwelling Units and Live-Work Units.
- Recommends incorporating strategic plans and funding to ensure implementations are completed.
- Modifies Development Envelope Boundary to include three additional areas.
- Proposes a Study Area adjacent to the easternmost boundary of the Development Envelope.
- The Water Resources Element (WRE) will be included in the Appendix to HarfordNEXT and referenced in Grow With Purpose.

Chapter 3: Economic Vitality

Overview: The County's location, diverse industry sectors, excellent quality of life, and business friendly environment offer the ultimate setting for growing businesses and families. Harford County is Maryland's New Center of Opportunity. The Economic Vitality theme outlines a framework of policies and implementations that are organized around three key principles: Grow Economic Opportunity, Revitalize Existing Communities, and Ensure a Skilled Workforce.

- Focuses on emerging technologies and industry.
- Promotes education and workforce development.
- Focuses on reviewing regulatory processes that benefit businesses and communities.
- Emphasis on helping startups succeed and creating incubators.
- Considers land banking for future development.
- Promotes food hub concept.
- Promotes redevelopment of existing commercial corridors.
- Considers neighborhood grants to improve communities.

Chapter 4: Environmental Stewardship

Overview: The Environmental Stewardship theme outlines a framework of policies and implementations that preserve natural habitats, protect and enhance areas of high ecological value, and effectively manage environmental resources with limited funds. This framework is organized through the development of five principles: Protect and Restore Environmentally Sensitive Areas, Preserve Water Resources, Stormwater Management, Outreach and Education, and Natural Resource Management.

- Replaces the Natural Resource Element Plan.
- Proposes the preparation of a new study of the Broad Creek watershed.
- Encourages development of a Green Infrastructure Plan to identify an interconnected system of ecologically valuable land county-wide.
- Promotes a County program to assist property owners in planting stream buffers.
- Proposes a goal to increase County tree canopy by 2% over the next 10 years.
- Proposes a review and update to the County's Water Source Protection District (WSPD) regulations.

Chapter 5: Preserving Our Heritage

Overview: The Preserving Our Heritage theme outlines strategies to help ensure that local resources endure to tell the story of Harford's past. This framework is organized around the development of four principles: Protect Historical and Cultural Resources, Protect Agricultural and Natural Resources, Build Capacity For Preservation, and Educate and Connect With A Broader Audience.

- Replaces the Priority Preservation Area Element (Plan) and Historic Preservation Element Plan.
- Promotes designation as a Certified Local Government (CLG).
- Considers increasing the historic tax credit percentage to strengthen historic preservation opportunities.
- Considers a Demolition-by-Neglect provision for protection of local Landmarks.
- Explores the development of mobile applications to aid in onsite monitoring and survey work of properties.
- Proposes that new development be compatible with the pattern, scale, and character of a historic district, Main Street, or rural village.

- Proposes increasing our preservation acreage goal to 75,000 acres.
- Proposes expansion of Priority Preservation Area (PPA) to include the Manor Legacy Area and the entire Broad Creek watershed area.
- The PPA Element Plan is now included in the Appendix.
- The Tier Map required by HB 236 – The Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 is included in the Appendix.
- Recommends limiting non-agricultural uses in the agricultural zoned areas that would negatively impact the viability of farming and the environment.

Chapter 6: Mobility and Connectivity

Overview: HarfordNEXT emphasizes accessibility to alternate modes of transportation, such as walking, bicycling, and transit, as a means of managing traffic on our roadways while improving air quality and promoting healthy lifestyles. The framework of Mobility and Connectivity is organized around the development of six principles: Taking A Universal Approach To Transportation Planning, Integrating Transportation and Land Use Planning, Establishing A Safe, Robust Network Of Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities Accommodating Users Of All Levels, Improving Transit Service Offered, Finding Alternative Ways To Manage Congestion, and Expanding Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Programs.

- Replaces the Transportation Element Plan.
- Recommends a holistic approach to transportation planning.
- Encourages the implementation of a right-of-way preservation program.
- Proposes researching and planning infrastructure and capacity for connected and automated vehicles.
- Proposes the establishment of a Transportation for Livable Communities program.
- Encourages improved and increased access to County and State Parks and an expansion of waterfront access.
- Explores the establishment of development standards that incorporate multimodal options and connectivity into new project.
- Considers incorporating “road diets” to achieve systemic improvements by reducing the number of travel lanes and/or width of roadways.
- Proposes development of a pilot program to establish temporary car-free zones and bicycle boulevards.
- Explores implementing an APG shuttle service with routes serving the Aberdeen and Edgewood Train Stations and the Edgewood Arsenal.

- Recommends providing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes at APG MD 22 gate.
- Functional Classification map and table located in the Appendix.

Chapter 7: Promoting Healthy Communities

Overview: HarfordNEXT proposes unique initiatives and strategies that support strong and vibrant communities that foster the health of its citizens. The Promoting Healthy Communities theme outlines policies and implementations emphasizing healthy and active lifestyles, access to healthy food choices, efficient delivery of health and social services, and ensuring the safety and preparedness of our communities. This framework is organized through the development of four principles: Foster Healthy Lifestyles and Active Living For All Harford County Residents, Provide Safe Communities, Provide Access To Healthy Food Choices For All Harford County Residents, Support Efficient and Effective Delivery Of Health and Social Services Throughout Harford County.

- Healthy communities planning is a new concept that was not present in previous master plans.
- Fosters healthy lifestyles and active living for all Harford County residents.
- Promotes safe communities throughout Harford County.
- Encourages access to healthy food choices for all Harford County residents.
- Supports efficient and effective delivery of health and social services through Harford County.

Chapter 8: Community Planning Areas

- The Community Planning Councils have been renamed Community Planning Areas.
- There are a total of seven Community Planning Areas.
- Some of the previous Community Planning Council areas have been consolidated.
- Each Community Planning Area has a section recommending relevant implementation strategies evolving from the six themes.