

## Chapter 3 Transportation

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### Overview

The movement of people and goods is an important concern to the Town of North East, making the Transportation element especially significant. Providing a safe and efficient transportation network with minimal disruption can sometimes be difficult to achieve. The Transportation element must be closely coordinated with other elements of the Plan to ensure that transportation plans and policies complement and promote those of other sections.

The North East Municipal Growth Element identifies suitable areas for municipal expansion and establishes priority for growth and development, updated since the 2012 Comprehensive Plan.

The Growth Area surrounding the Town of North East Corporate boundary was determined in 2019 between the Town of North East and Artesian Water Company Inc. in cooperation with Cecil County. The Growth Area had been developed to complete the Town of North East Water Master Plan and is intended to reflect where public water is supplied by the Town and sewer by the County and areas which may be subject to annexation. Little to no change in the Growth Area is anticipated within the period of the Town's Water System Master Plan (2040).

Those priority areas and the uses identified for those tracts combine to determine where additional study and evaluation of existing and future transportation capacity should be focused.

The goals and objectives listed below provide guidance regarding the Town's desire to enhance the safety, convenience, and functionality of existing facilities and future system expansions and improvements. Building upon the goals and policies in Maryland's Smart Growth and growth management laws, they address priorities for public investments in infrastructure; linking infrastructure capacity to priorities for targeted future growth; and expanded planning visions that address quality of life, sustainability, public participation and community design. A package of Bills, collectively known as the Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009, strengthened required consistency between Plan content and implementation ordinances. The 2009 Act requires documentation about local efforts to address Plan goals and implementation of the twelve Planning Visions through revised annual reporting to the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) on a uniform set of smart growth measures and indicators.

## Goals

- ◆ Improve the safety and security of the Town's transportation infrastructure by actively working to improve transportation conditions through means such as enhancing roadway design, increasing visibility through better lighting, implementing traffic-calming measures, and integrating advanced monitoring systems to ensure a safer environment for all users.
  - ❖ *Objective: Coordinate with the Maryland Department of Transportation/State Highway Administration (MDOT/SHA) and Cecil County Public Works Department to identify high rate accident locations by mode and time of day to determine potential system safety improvements within North East and the North East growth area.*
  - ❖ *Objective: Track accident locations over time to evaluate the success of traffic system improvements and the Strategic Highway Safety Plan for reducing accidents at high rate accident locations.*
  - ❖ *Objective: Analyze and increase, where needed pedestrian-scale lighting in high foot traffic locations [like the CBD/GCD and within and near high density residential areas, including municipal parking lots] to consider increased lighting to improve safety and convenience and promote walking in the evening and after sunset.*
  - ❖ *Objective: Coordinate with SHA, Cecil County, and Town officials to add pedestrian lighting at transit shelters to increase safety and convenience for transit users in the evening residential and commercial areas, as well as other high volume foot traffic locations.*
  - ❖ *Objective: Provide a number of pedestrian and multi-modal crossings across US Route 40 to link the northern and southern parts of North East in safe, convenient, and logical ways to enhance overall transportation safety and multi-modal access for all residents and visitors.*
  - ❖ *Objective: Maintain and update the emergency response plan that coordinates municipal staff with County and State agency first responders.*
  
- ◆ Provide a functional road and street system for the safe, convenient and efficient movement of people, goods and services among places of residence, employment, shopping and recreation and provide a circulation system which is compatible with and promotes the logical and rational development and connectivity to and from other areas of the Town of North East and other areas within Cecil County.
  - ❖ Work with SHA and Cecil County Government to ensure the traffic-carrying capacity of the three major routes serving the Town (US Route 40, MD Route 272 and MD Route 7) are protected in the event of future development.
  - ❖ Provide a street and highway network integrating the Town, County, and State roads into an efficient transportation system that expands system capacity in support of adequate public facilities necessary to accommodate future growth at a minimum expense to the Town.
  - ❖ Maximize the capacity, safety, and efficiency of the existing street and highway system.

- ❖ Coordinate land use and transportation planning to better promote smart growth patterns.
  - ❖ Improve access to parking areas within the CBD/GCD inclusive of wayfinding planning and implementation.
  - ❖ Actively mitigate the adverse impacts of vehicular traffic on local residential streets by implementing measures and thorough evaluations during the review of new developments in the vicinity.
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- ◆ Maximize the desired use of transportation systems while minimizing possible negative effects upon the neighborhoods, the environment, and the general public.
    - ❖ *Objective: Maximize the capacity, safety, and efficiency of the existing street and highway system.*
    - ❖ *Objective: Expand the Town's system of sidewalks and pedestrian paths and create linkages with regional pedestrian ways.*
    - ❖ *Objective: Link existing and planned pedestrian improvements to the system of pedestrian trails that exist in the vicinity of North East, with priority on connecting to the Elk Neck Trail and on connecting to the multiple trails that go through Elk Neck State Forest and providing connectivity and linkage to the Town Parks.*
    - ❖ *Objective: Support transportation initiatives that further the Town's commitments to enhanced environmental quality and regional connectivity.*
    - ❖ *Objective: Use Maryland Program Open Space funds to and other available funding sources to design and construct desired pedestrian and multi-modal routes, paths and trails .*
  
  - ◆ Expand transportation options.
    - ❖ *Objective: Increase the number of bus transit stops, transit shelters, and directional signage throughout existing neighborhoods in Town and the North East growth area where necessary.*
    - ❖ *Objective: Beautify the public transit stops, shelters, and refuse cans and other Town infrastructure to deter vandalism.*
    - ❖ *Objective: Pursue a rail service station and evaluate a potential location throughout town that align with community goals.*
  
  - ◆ Provide for micro-mobility travel (includes e-bikes, electric scooters, electric skateboards, shared bicycles, motorized bicycles, bicycles, personal electric vehicles (PEVs)) within and through Town Develop, promote, and expand tourism activities and industry.
    - ❖ *Objective: Coordinate with relevant agencies concerning the implementation of the 2024/2025 Route 272 Highway Improvement Study to accommodate future growth along the Route 272 Corridor.*
  
  - ◆ *Improve multi-modal access of pedestrians and multi-modal users and bicyclists in the Town without adding to congestion, creating unsafe conditions, or requiring*

- construction of major alternative routes.*
- ❖ *Objective: Coordinate with Wilmington Area Planning Council), Cecil County, and surrounding communities to create a regionally interconnected network of pedestrian and multi-modal bicycle routes that also serves the needs of residents and visitors within North East.*
  - ❖ *Objective: Coordinate with SHA and County officials to construct new, ADA compliant sidewalks within Town that are under others' jurisdictional ownership.*
  - ❖ *Objective: Provide directional wayfinding signs to assist bicyclists, scooters, motorized bicyclists and pedestrians navigate to trails, pathways, and roadways safely*
  - ❖ *Objective: Prepare and update a Sidewalk ADA compliant transition plan to identify where sidewalks in town are not ADA compliant which outlines a plan of action for bringing sidewalks into compliance with ADA standards and/or the expansion of sidewalks where needed to provide a safe comfortable walking environment.*
- ◆ Expand opportunities for multi-modal access and use of public transit services by pedestrians and bicyclists through multi-modal services such as shared bicycles, accommodation of scooters and motorized bikes, transient bus pick up and drop offs and safe access to the transit stops.
    - ❖ *Objective: Enhance and continue efforts to improve wayfinding throughout town by way of branded signage such as Kiosk(s), street banners, vehicular directions, and entry signs showing the parks, pedestrian and multi-modal routes, and other nearby attractors.*
  - ◆ Develop a safe and attractive transportation system that thoughtfully integrates with the land and developed areas while enhancing connections between water-borne travel modes and land-based options.
    - ❖ *Objective: Develop and enhance waterfront infrastructure, such as docks, piers, and ferry terminals, to support increased accessibility for water-based transportation.*
    - ❖ *Objective: Create links from commercial areas to recreational areas.*
    - ❖ *Objective: Install a pedestrian bridge which links to the trail systems throughout town.*
  - ◆ Incorporate an environmental stewardship ethic into transportation planning activities within North East and the North East Growth Area.
    - ❖ *Objective: When Cecil County subdivisions are being considered within the growth area south of Town, be proactive regarding the review of the changes to the transportation patterns imposed by the subdivision and coordinate with applicable agencies.*
    - ❖ *Objective: Coordinate land use and transportation planning to better promote smart growth patterns.*

- ◆ Use creative funding opportunities to implement transportation goals and objectives.
  - ❖ *Objective: Utilize State and Federal transportation funds to address the transportation needs of North East.*
  
- ◆ Explore options to provide additional on and off-street parking areas in and around downtown North East. Consider parking studies of downtown and maximize existing available parking and promote a park-once-and-walk environment in the downtown area.
  - ❖ *Objective: Study the feasibility of a parking garage in strategic locations in town to reduce and relieve structured parking areas.*
  
- ◆ Prioritize infrastructure projects that support vehicles, emergency services, and pedestrian and cyclist connectivity to neighborhoods, commercial areas, and greater Cecil County.
  - ❖ *Objective: Work with Cecil County to replace the Rolling Mill Road Bridge (previously under County ownership).*
  
- ◆ Establish, expand and enhance beautification corridors to establish a welcoming, recognizable and unified streetscape that reflects the character of the community and elevates the overall visitor and resident experience at the intersections of Route 40 and MD 272 corridors, along Main Street to the southern portion of the Town, including the Town Park; from North East Isles Drive, along West and East Cecil Avenue to Mechanics Valley Road.
  - ❖ *Objective: Consistent Signage Design: Develop and apply a unified signage style to strengthen the community's visual entity.*
  - ❖ *Objective: Uniform Wayfinding Signage: Integrate cohesive directional signage throughout the Corporate Limit to aid navigation and reinforce place identity.*
  - ❖ *Objective: Enhance Lighting: Install attractive, well placed lighting that improves visibility, safety, and nighttime ambiance.*
  - ❖ *Objective: Pedestrian-Scale Landscaping: Incorporate plantings, streetscape elements, and design features that engage pedestrians and enhance walkability.*
  - ❖ *Objective: Aesthetic Appeal: Use materials, colors and textures that reflect the community's character and elevate the visual experience.*
  - ❖ *Objective: Pedestrian Landscape: Street trees to provide aesthetic appeal.*
  
- ◆ Support the future development of a Corridor Master Plan focused on key transportation routes such as MD 272 to improve mobility and land use coordination across North East: this recommended initiative supports the Town's long-range planning goals by promoting multi-modal transportation options, improving transit-oriented development opportunities, and fostering safe, accessible travel for all users—whether pedestrians or by car, multi-modal travel, or public transit. As part of a broader strategy to guide sustainable growth, the plan

will help align infrastructure investments with land use priorities, improve access to key destinations, and strengthen connections between residential, commercial, and civic areas. Close coordination with regional planning agencies, stakeholders, and partners will be essential to ensure successful development and implementation and to advance shared transportation and land-use objectives for North East.

## Existing Transportation Facilities

### *Highways*

North East's location is conveniently accessible to users, by US Route 40, MD Route 272, and MD Route 7 all running through the Town's boundaries. Interstate 95 is also located adjacent to the Town's northern boundary at the Northeast Commerce Center. Traffic counts at permanent locations are collected by MDOT/SHA.

### *Trucking Routes*

Major trucking routes that pass through North East and vicinity include Interstate 95, US Route 40, and MD Route 272. Interstate 95 and US Route 40 are the two major truck routes that impact North East. However, the section of MD 272 that links Interstate 95 to US Route 40 is subject to significant truck traffic. Trucks account for approximately 25 percent of the average daily traffic (ADT) volume on Interstate 95, a little over 5 percent of the ADT on US Route 40, and a little over 23 percent on MD Route 272 (between I-95 and US Route 40). It is anticipated that the recently constructed exit ramps at Perryville onto Belvedere Road will alleviate traffic onto Route 272. (Source: MDOT/SHA)

### *Rail Services*

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) operates commuter rail service between Perryville and Penn Station in Baltimore City. The MARC rail service runs from Perryville to the MARC and Virginia Railway Express (VRE) systems via Union Station in Washington, D.C., on existing Amtrak rail lines. North bound passenger rail service accessing the Northeast Corridor begins in Newark, DE. Efforts are underway to construct a new passenger station in Elkton consistent with the recommendations of the Track A Feasibility Study, Phase I recommendations. In 2022, the Maryland Regional Rail Transportation Act called for MTA to plan infill stops on the Penn Line at Elkton<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Legislation introduced via Maryland Regional Rail Transportation Act, Chapter 54/HB 778 in 2022  
[https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2022rs/Chapters\\_noln/CH\\_54\\_hb0778t.pdf](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/2022rs/Chapters_noln/CH_54_hb0778t.pdf)

Freight service is available via Conrail, Amtrak and CSX rail lines in Newark, Delaware, approximately thirteen miles east of North East. Amtrak passenger service is available in Perryville, about seven miles to the west of North East, in Newark, Delaware, and in Wilmington, Delaware, some 27 miles east of North East.

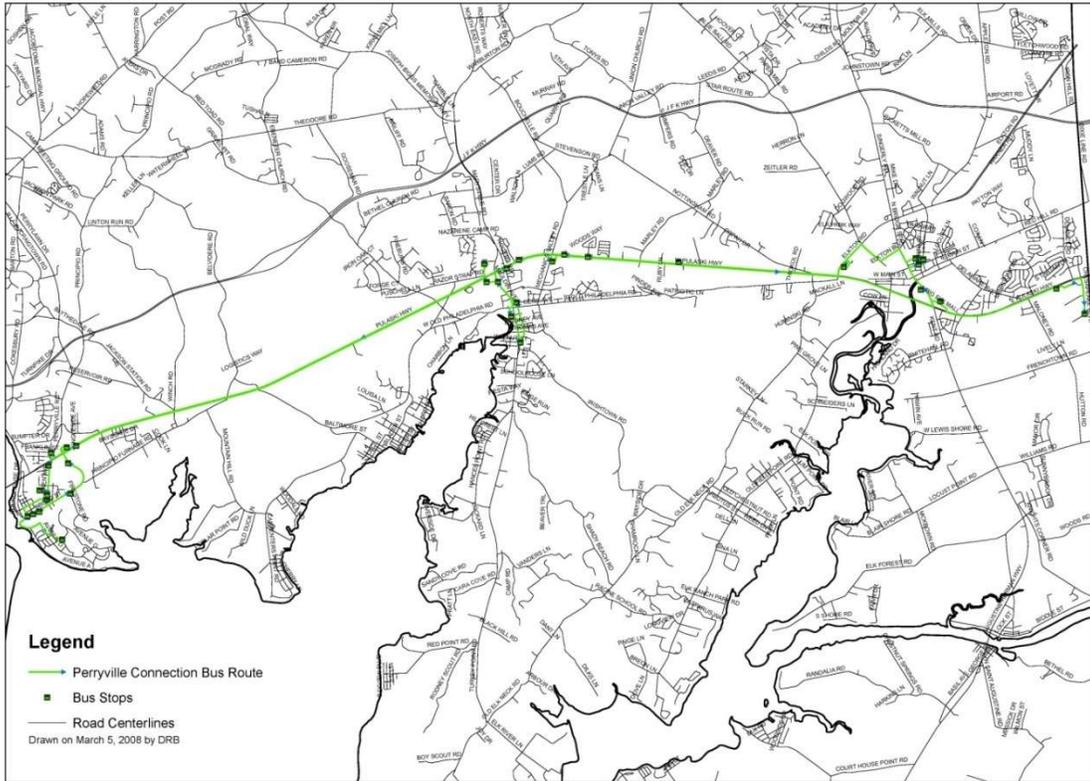
### *Transit Services*

In 2021, Cecil County performed a study to determine the area for the future location of future County-wide Transit Bus Service should be located. Reviewed was an area which abuts U.S. Route 40. The area provides enough land to house the administrative offices, provides ample parking areas for the Transit Bus Fleet and provides enough land to construct a Transit Bus maintenance facility.

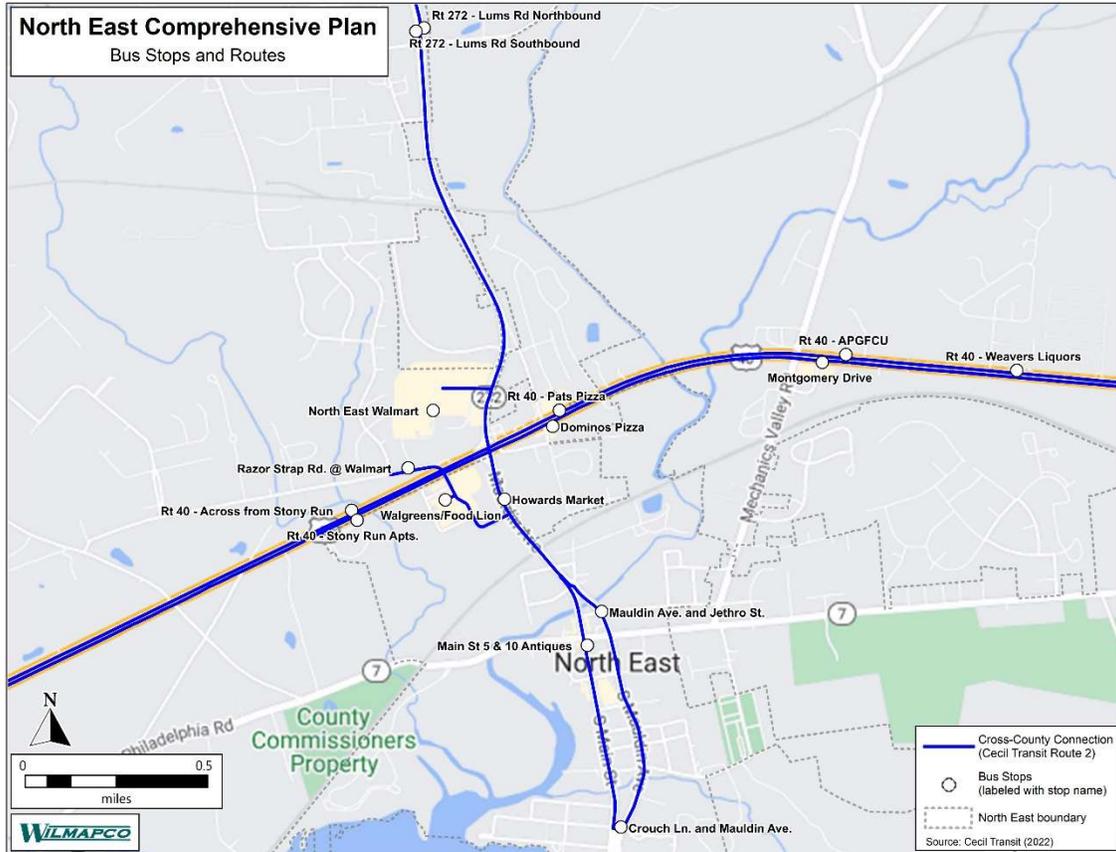
Cecil Transit Bus ([www.ceciltransit.com](http://www.ceciltransit.com)) provides bus service between Elkton, North East, Perryville, Port Deposit, Aberdeen, Havre de Grace and Harford County in both directions. The Perryville Connection is a fixed route public bus transit system in Elkton for all ages that begins at 6:00 a.m. and ends at 6:30 p.m. This connection travels between Elkton, North East, Perryville, the MARC Train and Perry Point V.A. Deviations may be made up to 3/4 mile for functionally disabled individuals with a C.T. Mobility Pass. To obtain a pass, individuals must make an appointment to be certified. All deviations must be scheduled in advance thru the Transit office. The C.T. Cruiser may be used in lieu of "The Bus."

The C.T. Cruiser service is part of the Cecil Transit system and offers curb-to-curb service available on a first-come first-served basis and is available to the general public, seniors and persons with functional disabilities. For appointments, the County appreciates a two week notice, if possible. It may be necessary, at times, to reschedule appointments or have a layover to accommodate various routes. Hours of operation are from 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. Personal Care Attendants (PCA's) are required for any passenger needing assistance to board and disembark the bus or passengers who are in a wheelchair. Cecil Transit does not provide PCA's.

## Senior Services & Community Transit - Perryville Connection



- Route 40-Across from Stony: 2537 Pulaski Hwy, North East, MD 21901
- Run Route 40-Stony Run Apartments: 200 Stony Run Cir., North East, MD 21901
- Road Razor Strap Rd. at Walmart: 0 Lakeside Dr, North East, MD 21901
- Walgreens/Food Lion: 2500 Pulaski Hwy, North East, MD 21901
- Howards Market: 480 N. Mauldin Ave, North East, MD 21901
- Mauldin Ave. and Jethro St.
- Main St. 5 and 10 Antiques: 115 S. Main St., North East, MD 21901
- Crouch Ln. and Mauldin Ave.: In median between Walnut St. and Mauldin Ave.
- North East Walmart: 75 N. East Plz., North East, MD 21901
- Rt 40-Pats Pizza: 2305 Pulaski Hwy., North East, MD 21901
- Dominos Pizza: 2328 Pulaski Hwy., North East, MD 21901
- Rt 40-APGFCU: 2011 W. Pulaski Hwy, Elkton, MD 21921
- Montgomery Drive: 10 Montgomery Dr., North East, MD 21901
- Rt 40-Weavers Liquors: 1747 W. Pulaski Hwy., Elkton, MD 21921



Bus Shelters are located on US Route 40 at Stony Run Apartments, the North East Walmart, Gateway Drive, and at the south end of Town at Mauldin Avenue & Walnut Street.

Other Specialized Transit Services within Cecil County are provided by the following providers:

- Cecil County Activity Center
- Cecil County Health Department
- Cecil College
- Chesapeake Care Resources
- Department of Social Services
- Maryland Rural Development Corp.
- Union Hospital Medical Adult Day Care Center
- VA Medical Center

*Inter-regional Greyhound Service*

Greyhound buses stop at Elkton, North East and Perryville as part of a company program aimed at linking rural communities between Baltimore and Wilmington, Delaware. The buses, which also pick up passengers in Baltimore, White Marsh, Edgewood, Aberdeen, Newark and Wilmington, stop once daily in each direction at 1 E. Cecil Avenue by the Stop and Go.

### *Commuter Lots*

The North East “Park and Ride” commuter lot is located to the west of Route 272, south of Peninsula Drive. This lot is well utilized.

### *Sidewalks*

There are approximately 11.93 miles of sidewalk within the Town of North East. An additional 4.9 miles of selected sidewalk additions have been proposed to fill in missing links and promote a more connected and cohesive pedestrian environment. A series of concept graphics (numbered 1 through 16) are included at the end of this Chapter that provides additional details.

### *Crosswalks*

Stamped crosswalks are located on Main Street and are intended to provide traffic calming safety benefits. Other crosswalks throughout Town are currently thermoplastic over asphalt. Review and approval of stamped crosswalks or improvements that involve alternative materials to the normal thermoplastic used throughout most areas of Town require the review and approval by Mayor and Commissioners at the recommendation of the Planning Commission.

### *Pedestrian Trails and Greenways*

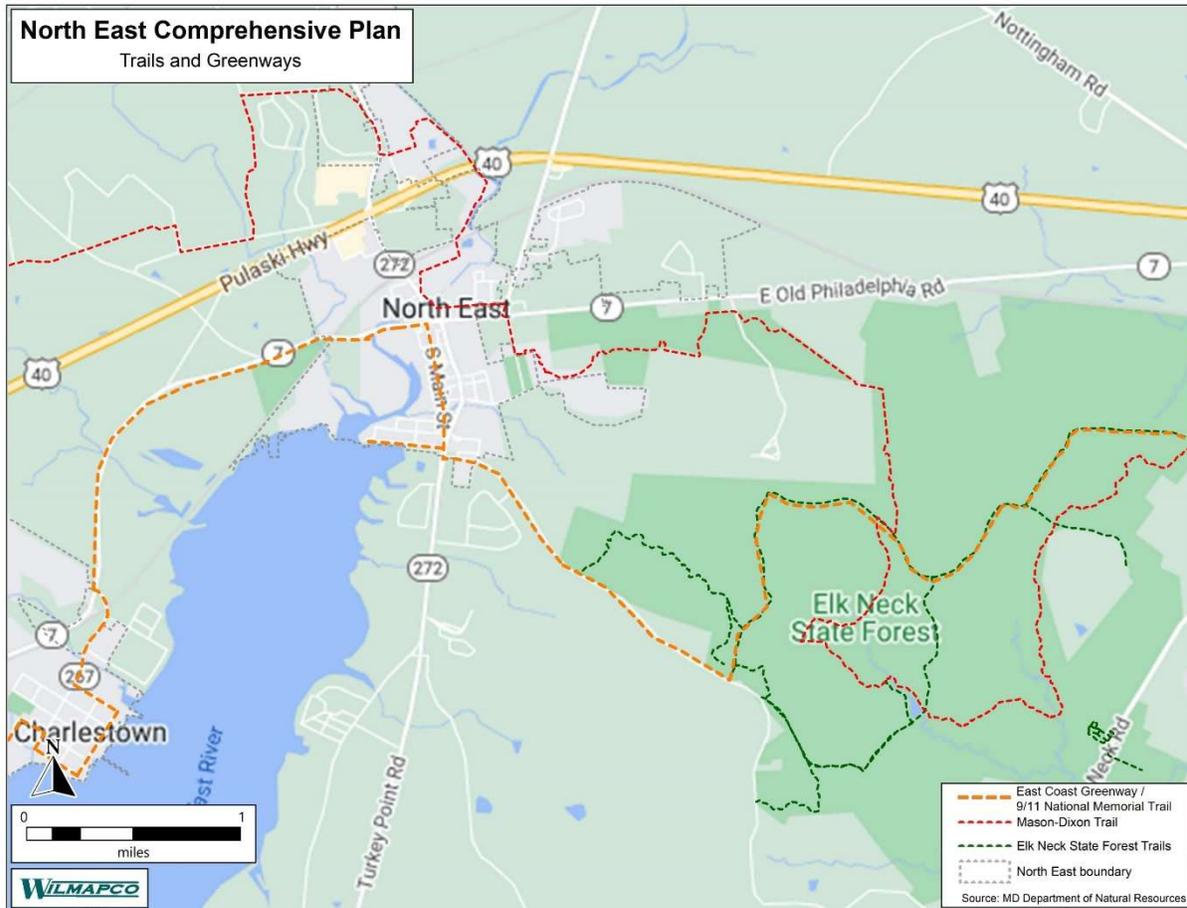
A number of trails and related “green infrastructure” exist within the North East planning area and nearby locations that provide various degrees of connectivity to regional trails and greenways, both existing and planned. The most significant of these include a part of the East Coast Greenway and a length of the Mason-Dixon Trail System that follow designated sections of MD 7 from Charlestown eastward to the intersection with MD 272, south along Main Street, then southeast on Irishtown Road before temporarily diverging. The Mason-Dixon trail continues along until it intersects with Old Elk Neck Road whereupon the route curves northeastward following the eastern boundary of Elk Neck State Forest before continuing on to Elkton. The East Coast Greenway follows existing trails through Elk Neck State Forest before exiting the Forest in its northeast corner and reconnecting with the Mason-Dixon Trail on Old Elk Neck Road. Overall, both routes include about ten miles of trail.

Pedestrian trails have not been formally designated within Town limits. However, planning is underway to connect existing pedestrian routes and sidewalks to various trail systems in the area, and a connection between Cecil Avenue in the vicinity of Mechanics Valley Road and the Town’s waterfront park should be considered and subject to more detailed study.

### *Trails*

A number of trails and related “green infrastructure” exist within the Town of North East, the Town’s planning area, and nearby locations that provide various degrees of connectivity to regional trails and greenways, both existing and planned. The most significant of these include a

part of the East Coast Greenway and a length of the Mason-Dixon Trail System that follow designated sections of MD 7 from Charlestown eastward to the intersection with MD 272, south along Main Street, then southeast on Irishtown Road before temporarily diverging. The Mason-Dixon trail continues along Irishtown Road until it intersects with Old Elk Neck Road whereupon the route curves northeastward following the eastern boundary of Elk Neck State Forest before continuing on to Elkton. The East Coast Greenway follows existing trails through Elk Neck State Forest before exiting the Forest in its northeast corner and reconnecting with the Mason-Dixon Trail on Old Elk Neck Road. Overall, both routes include about ten miles of trail.



Elk Neck State Forest is approximately 3300 acres situated in central Cecil County consisting of four separate tracts of land. Elk Neck State Forest is open to the public for hunting, hiking, horseback riding and mountain biking. Approximate trail locations are shown as green dashed lines above.

### Mason-Dixon Trail

The Mason Dixon Trail connects the Appalachian Trail with the Brandywine Trail. This 193 mile long trail starts at Whiskey Springs on the Appalachian Trail, in Cumberland County, PA and

heads east towards the Susquehanna River, passing through Pinchot State Park en route. The trail then follows the west bank of the Susquehanna south to Havre de Grace, Maryland. Across the river in Perryville, the Mason-Dixon Trail continues east on MD 7, passes through North East to Irishtown Road, on through Elk Neck State Forest, then on to Iron Hill Park in Delaware, north along the Christina River and White Clay Creek to the White Clay Creek Preserve. The trail then heads northeast to its eastern terminus at Chadds Ford, PA on the banks of the Brandywine River.

### Elk Neck State Park Trails

Elk Neck State Park is located on MD 272 at the end of the Elk Neck Peninsula approximately ten miles south of the Town of North East. Five hiking trail loops are located within Elk Neck State Park as well as a number of camping areas. Detailed maps for Elk Neck State Forest and Elk Neck State Park (including trail locations, points of access and related parking areas) are available from the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. [Elkneck.statepark@maryland.gov](mailto:Elkneck.statepark@maryland.gov)

<b>Elk Neck State Park Hiking Trails</b>		
<b>Trail Section</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Degree of Difficulty</b>
<b>Blue Trail</b>	2.0 miles	easy
<b>Green Trail</b>	1.0 miles	moderate
<b>Orange Trail</b>	4.0 miles	difficult
<b>Red Trail</b>	1.5 miles	difficult
<b>White Trail</b>	0.75 miles	moderate

### *Water Trails*

Through partnerships with local governments, citizen associations, and nonprofit organizations the Maryland Department of Natural Resources is working to build a statewide network of water trails. To date, Maryland has over 600 miles of designated water trails. A water trail generally consists of interaction with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, follows a waterway, has an educational component involved with it and is typically maintained by a specific entity or entities such as a municipal, county, state or federal agency, to ensure user safety, legal access and compliance with state rules, regulations and goals.

The Town of North East supports the creation of a water trail originating at the Town Park located at the foot of Walnut Street. Connections to Elk Neck State Park and other destinations, such as Charlestown and Perry Point are envisioned.

### *Greenways*

#### East Coast Greenway

The East Coast Greenway, or ECG, is a project to create a nearly 3,000-mile urban path linking the major cities of the Atlantic coast of the United States, from Calais, Maine to Key West, Florida, for non-motorized human transportation. Maryland has been actively participating in this initiative

since 1996. Thirty-two percent of Maryland's 166-mile route is complete as off-road trail, and another fourteen percent is in development. Most of the identified future trail is either in development or planning, so goals in Maryland revolve primarily around finding routing options in gap areas and creating linkages to other greenways and trail systems.

#### Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway

The Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway (LSHG) is a non-profit organization whose mission is to stimulate local economic activity by developing a linkage between our natural, historic and cultural resources. This linkage is a series of land and water recreational trails that weave the past into the future while promoting an understanding and appreciation for the character of this region. As part of a statewide system of Heritage Areas, the LSHG is responsible for implementing a local management plan targeting the area's waterfront communities. The Greenway includes designated trails and public lands along both banks of the Susquehanna River. Potential exists to create pedestrian and bicycle connections between North East and Perryville and the other parts of the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway. <https://www.upperbaytrails.com/>

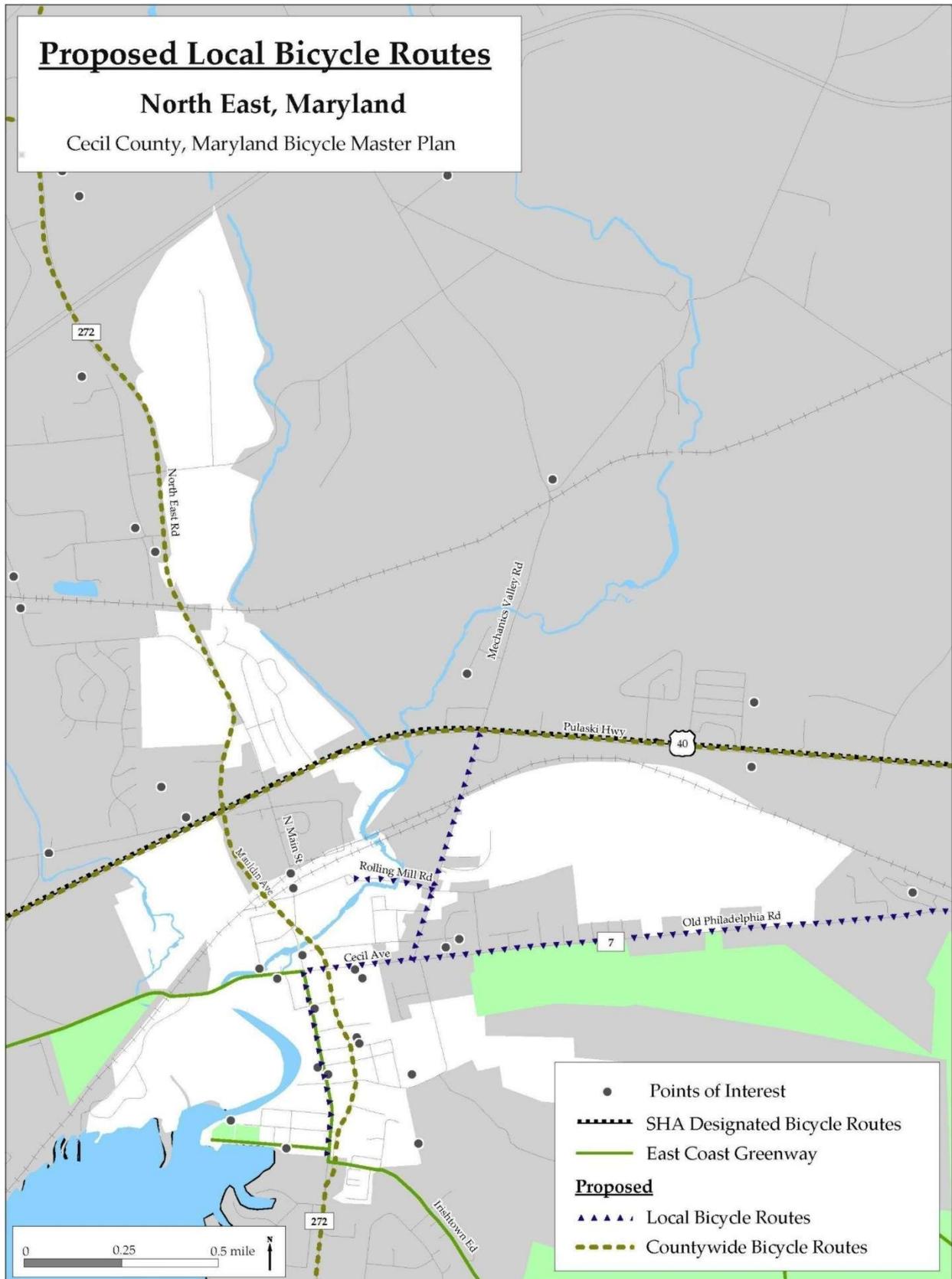
#### *Bike Trails*

The Town of North East has adopted a standard for bike trails, which can be found in the Road Code Standard Specifications and Details. Bike trails shall be a minimum of 6' - 6" with a two foot grass shoulder. The Planning Commission shall approve the location of all bike trails in the Town of North East.

#### *Bicycle Routes*

In 2012, WILMAPCO completed the Cecil County Bicycle Plan which designated future routes through North East. These routes include SHA designated routes along US 40, Countywide bikeways on Mauldin Avenue (MD 272), and local routes on Cecil Avenue, Mechanics Valley Road, and Rolling Mill Road. The table below summarizes these segments and treatments from the plan.

MD 272/Main St. (southbound) between MD 7 (Cecil Ave.) and Irishtown Rd	Install sharrow markings and bicycle signage
MD 272/Main St. between MD 7 (Cecil Ave.) and US 40	Maintain paved shoulders. Install Share the Road signage. When reconstructed, provide bicycle lanes
MD 272/Main St. (northbound) between Irishtown Rd. and MD 7 (Cecil Ave) on 3-12.)	Paint bicycle markings within shoulder and install signage. Provide spot treatment shoulder paving for uninterrupted ride, where necessary.
MD 7/ Cecil Ave. (on-road improvements)	Install Share the Road signage
MD 7 from Mechanics Valley Rd., east to Elkton	Install bicycle signage and wayfinding signs with distance to Elkton.
Rolling Mill Rd. from Mechanics Valley Rd. to proposed shared use trail (Elk Neck)	When Rolling Mill Bridge is reconstructed, provide separated accommodations for bicyclists. Install way finding signage that directs users to nearby trail system. Right-of-way will need to be obtained.
US 40, entrance/exit to Timberbrook Subdivision	Reconfigure right-in, right-out channelization to allow uninterrupted use of shoulder by bicyclists.
Mechanics Valley Road between US 40 and MD 7	Install Share the Road or Bike May Use Full Lane signage. When reconstructed, provide at least 4-ft of paved shoulder, if feasible. Constraints along this roadway may preclude widening.
MD 272/S. Mauldin Ave. and MD/7 Cecil Rd: Elk Neck Trails access points	Improve access and provide wayfinding signage to Elk Neck State Park and Trails. Enhance the existing and proposed trail system to facilitate bicycle usage.



In 2022 MDOT completed a roadway evaluation of bicycle level of traffic stress (LTS), a measure of cyclist comfort based on a number of factors including the type of facility present and its separation from traffic. The LTS of a roadway is illustrated by a rating of 1 – 5, defined in the table below.

LTS	Target Audience	Bicycle Facility Types
0	All ages and abilities	Rail-trails, shared-use path
1	Almost everyone	Protected bikeways, sidepaths
2	Interested but concerned	Bike lanes, bike boulevards
3	Enthusied and confident	Bike lanes, shared lanes, shoulders
4	Strong and fearless	No bike facility or bike lane on a major roadway
5	Bicycle Access Prohibited	Bicycle access is prohibited by managing roadway agency

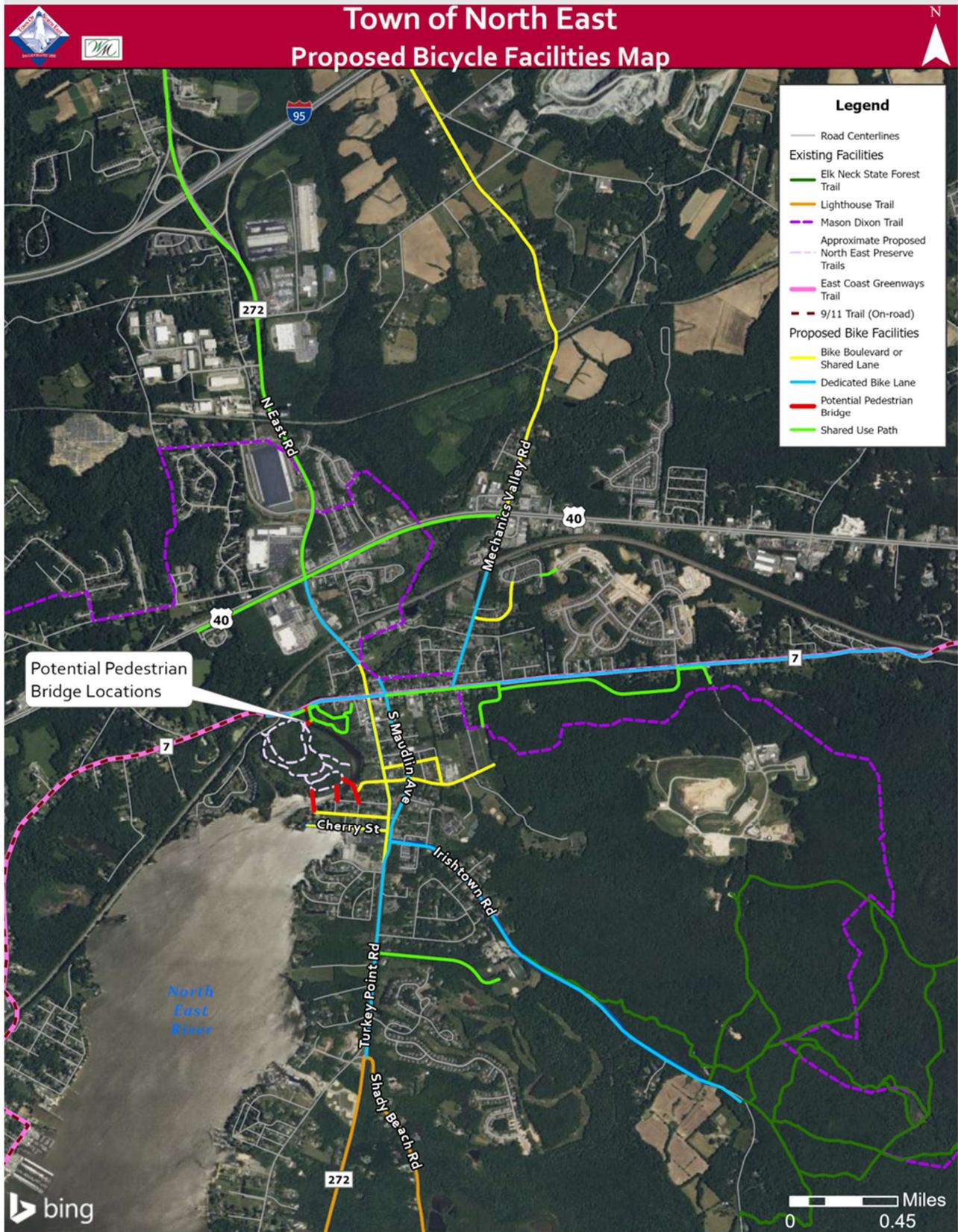
The majority of neighborhood streets, trails, and low volume local streets in North East are rated as LTS 1. Higher volume streets such as MD 272, Mechanics Valley Road (Cecil County Owned), and MD 7 are rated as less comfortable at LTS 3 – 4.

In 2024, the Town of North East received a grant from the Maryland Department of Transportation’s, Kim Lamphier Bikeways Network Program. This program funds diverse bicycle network development activities to enhance access, bridge network gaps, and strengthen last-mile connections to destinations like workplaces, schools, shopping areas, and transit.

The grant provided the Town of North East the funding to conduct a feasibility study aimed at connecting essential community points—such as North East Creek, local parks, businesses, schools, regional trails, water access points, and government facilities—through innovative designs that go beyond conventional bike lanes. The project goal, to enrich biking opportunities for residents and visitors by creating unique, aesthetically integrated pathways that harmonize with both natural and built surroundings. A feasibility study assesses the practicality and potential impact of proposed routes, providing insights into costs, design options, and environmental considerations.

Enhanced Bicycle connectivity in the MD 272 Corridor is an important part of this feasibility study to explore options for creating safer and more efficient bicycle connections between our downtown shopping and dining areas, community parks, municipal buildings, and residential neighborhoods.

Please see the Town of North East Proposed Bicycle Facilities Map below. The Town envisions the next step of this process will be to pursue collaborative partnerships and strategies to secure construction funding.



### *Water Transportation*

There is a municipal pier at the Town Park that provides access both to and from boats. The Park also contains a canoe and kayak launching ramp. The Park serves as a connecting link between the US Waterways, which are marked using the federal channel marking system, and the land transportation networks and provides access and connectivity to the CBD/GCD as well as other areas in Town. The pier is commercial in nature, providing opportunities to expand commerce and water-oriented operations including ferry service.

### *Streets and Highways - Functional Classification System*

The basis of a long-range street improvement program is a system of classification of the function or level of service the streets and highways are designed to serve. The development of a functional classification system allows for the logical coordination of the system of the State highways and local streets in and around North East. The following identifies major road classifications applicable to North East (see Existing Transportation Facilities map/graphic).

*Arterial Highway.* Arterial highways are the highest level of highway service and carry large volumes of regional and interstate traffic. The primary purpose of the arterial highway is to provide continuous and efficient routes for the movement of high volume traffic between towns or major traffic generators, particularly those of intra-state or inter-state nature. Direct access to adjoining land should not be provided, except at certain key points. Arterial highways are designed to maintain homogeneous neighborhoods and to serve as boundaries between various neighborhoods. On-street parking should be prohibited on principal arterial highways. In the North East area, US Rte 40 is considered to be the principal arterial and MD Route 272 (and Main Street) a minor arterial. In 2022, the average daily traffic on US Route 40 was 26,971 vehicles per day west of MD Route 272 and 30,224 vehicles per day east of MD Route 272. MD Route 272 had an average daily traffic of approximately **21,733** vehicles per day between US Route 40 and Interstate I-95 and 7,528 vehicles per day near the Town limits on the south end of Town. The planning study of MD 272 recently completed, includes recommendations for more detailed review that may likely impact these traffic counts in the future. A detailed summary of average annual traffic counts in the North East area for 2022 are shown on the Existing Traffic Volumes Graphic/Map below. Counts are collected and reported from permanent traffic count stations at selected locations by the Maryland State Highway Administration.

*Collectors.* Both major and minor collectors serve a similar function, though they vary in volume and intensity of use. The primary purpose of the collector system is to collect traffic from local residential streets and provide for the direct movement of traffic to commercial and industrial areas and the arterial highways.

*Major collectors* connect areas of relatively dense settlement and often provide access to major uses--industrial, commercial, and residential. These streets are intended for inter-neighborhood and thru traffic. MD Route 7 is a major collector in North East that connects major residential

areas and the arterials. In 2022, MD Route 7 had an average daily traffic average of 3,086 vehicles per day.

*Minor collectors* link local function roads to higher order roads, provide direct access to abutting properties, intercept minor streets, and connect with community facilities to serve neighborhood traffic. In North East, Mechanic's Valley Road and Irishtown Road fall under this category. In 2022, Mechanics Valley Road in the North East area had an average daily traffic of approximately 6,585 vehicles..

The Thomas Avenue and Cemetery Road connection between South Main Street and Cecil Avenue/MD Route 7 also serves as a minor collector route, but no traffic counts are available from the Cecil County Department of Public Works.

There currently exist approximately 4.4 miles of State highway within the Town of North East.

*Local Streets.* Local streets, including cul-de-sacs, are intended primarily to provide access to abutting residential property and are designed to discourage their use by thru traffic. Such streets assume light traffic flow. All Town-owned streets fall into this category, except Lums Road and Gateway Drive.

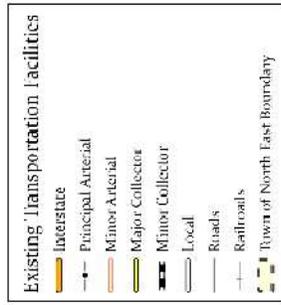
There currently exist approximately 14.85 miles of local streets within the Town of North East.

*Alleys.* The Town permits alleys in new developments. Alleys can provide numerous benefits when properly laid out, landscaped and maintained. They often provide useful access and support in commercial areas for loading and unloading and provide an additional point of lot access, as well as useful locations for utility corridors and refuse collection. When used in conjunction with rear loading garages, alleys reduce curb cuts on the streetscape, increase opportunities for on-street parking, and enhance the visibility of the streetscape.

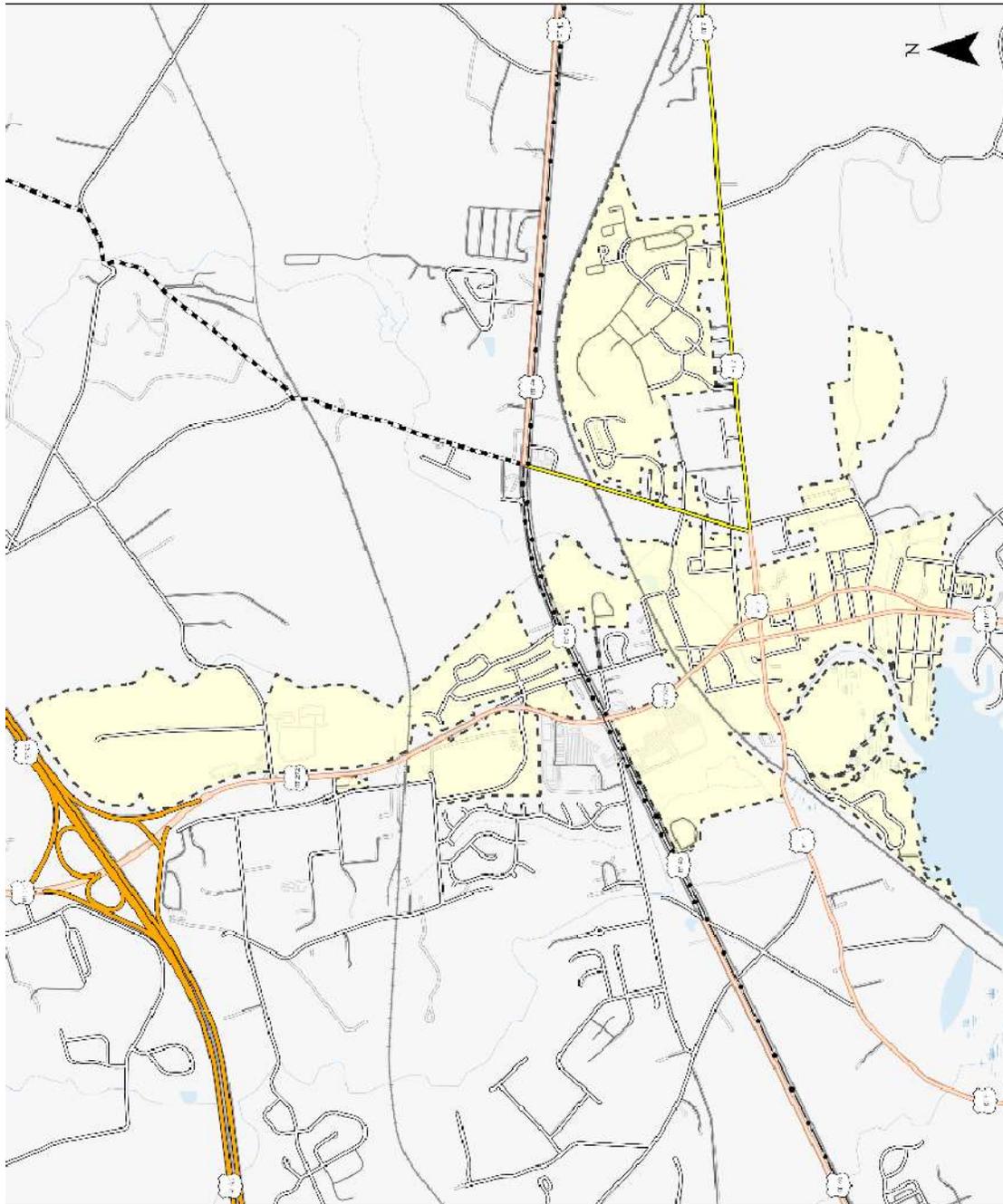
Streets and Highways facility types are shown on the graphic/map immediately below and Major Transportation Facilities are shown on Map 4.

# Town of North East Comprehensive Plan

## Functional Classification

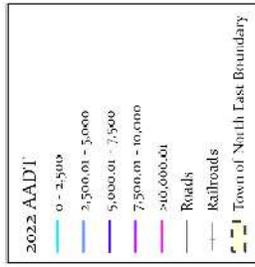


Source:  
MDOT-SHA/WILMAPCO

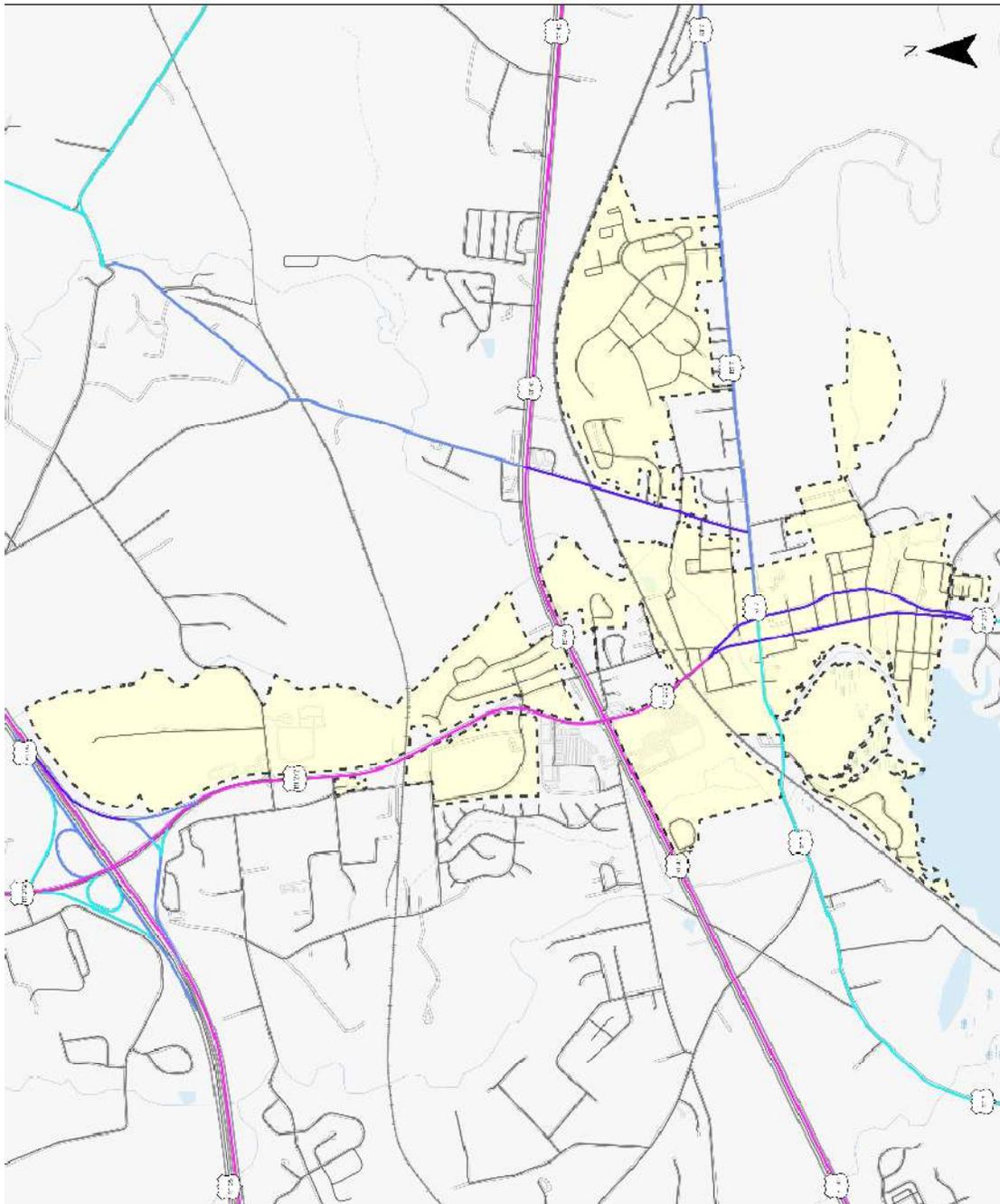
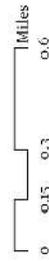


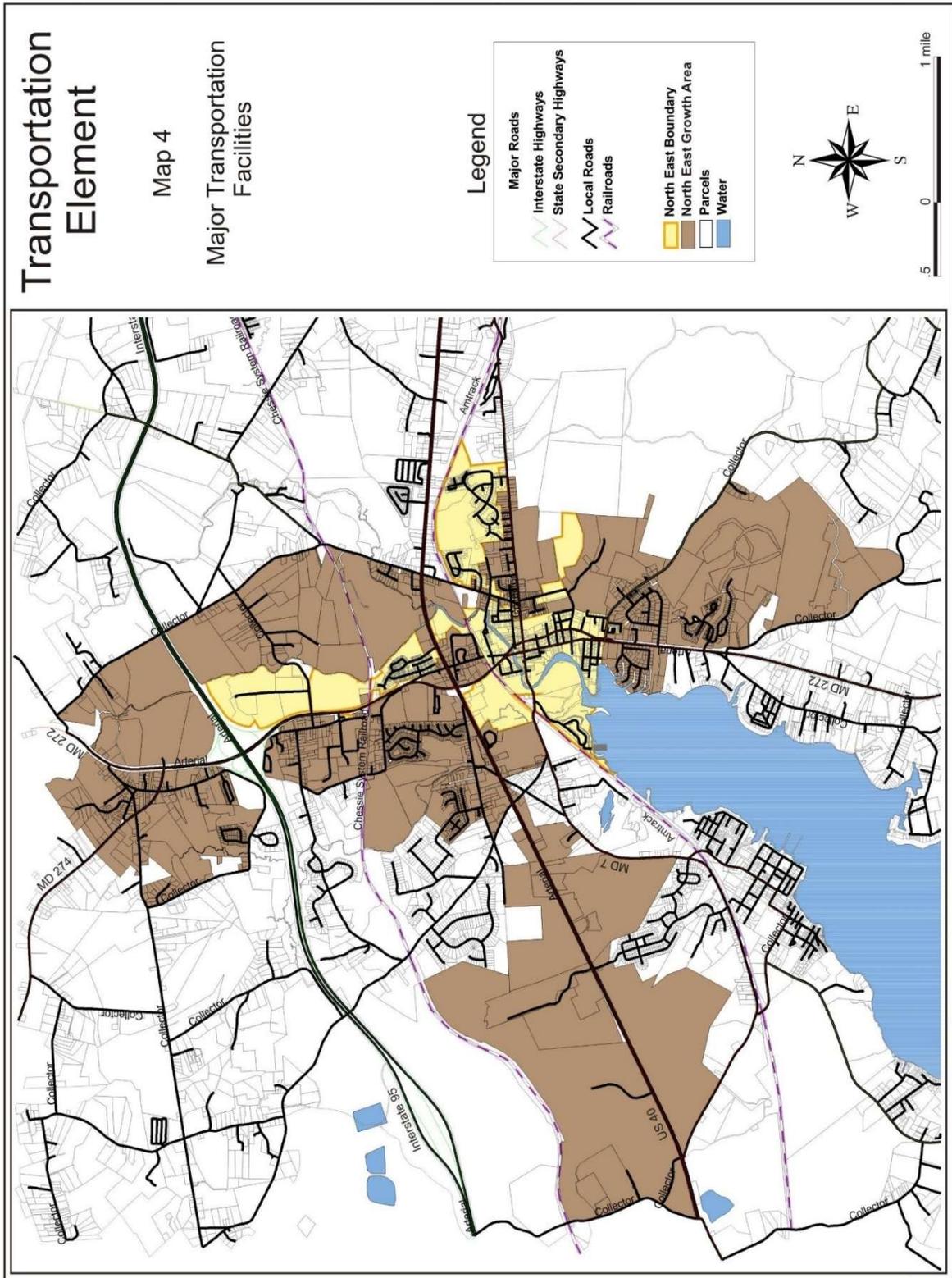
# Town of North East Comprehensive Plan

AAADT (2022)



Source:  
MDOT-SHA/WI/MAPCO





## *Safety*

The Town is committed to improving travel safety for all members of the traveling public by conducting a comprehensive analysis of crash patterns across all transportation modes within its boundaries. This effort includes identifying high-risk locations, understanding contributing factors, and implementing targeted safety improvements. Given that crashes and safety concerns frequently occur on both Town-owned streets and those managed by Cecil County and the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), a collaborative approach is essential.

To address these challenges effectively, the Town will work closely with state and county agencies to assess and implement safety enhancements on their roadways. This includes leveraging available crash data, traffic studies, and community feedback to identify priority areas. Special attention will be given to intersections, pedestrian crossings, and corridors with high crash frequencies.

The Town will prioritize infrastructure investments in these high-risk areas, dedicating funding toward engineering improvements such as enhanced signage, improved lighting, traffic calming measures, and intersection redesigns. Additionally, the Town will pursue state and federal grant opportunities to support safety projects, ensuring that financial resources are maximized for long-term improvements.

### *Level of Service (LOS)*

The ability of a roadway system to carry traffic is qualitatively measured as Level of Service (LOS). LOS can be determined at any given intersection or on any given segment of road and is based on the ratio of volume to capacity. Levels of service are often utilized as a measure of system performance and to define public policy concerning highway performance. They are also used in traffic impact analysis to determine local traffic impacts of proposed developments. Highway LOS reflects driver satisfaction with a number of factors that influence the degree of congestion, including speed and travel time, traffic interruptions, freedom to maneuver, safety, driving comfort and convenience, and delays. Six levels of service are used to describe highway flow conditions (road segments and intersections).

Commonly accepted definitions for each category are:

*LOS A* represents a free flow where individual users are virtually unaffected by others in the traffic stream.

*LOS B* is in the range of stable flow, but the presence of other users in the traffic stream begins to be noticeable.

*LOS C* is also in the range of stable flows, but marks the beginning of the range of flow in which the operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by interactions with others in the traffic stream.

*LOS D* represents high density but stable flow.

*LOS E* represents operating conditions at or near the capacity level.

*LOS F* is used to define forced or breakdown flow.

For planning purposes, LOS “C” or better is acceptable on most roadways and at intersections. In urban areas LOS “D” is acceptable during the peak hours of use. According to information published by WILMAPCO, current and future “level of service” issues have been identified on MD 272 between MD 7 and I-95. The Town aims to coordinate to establish consistent written criteria for LOS and adhere to such criteria through a memorandum of understanding with Cecil County and SHA.

#### Cecil County and relationship to the Town of North East

There is a compelling need to improve planning for transportation system improvements in the North East planning area. Cecil County’s planned growth area overlaps with that of North East, and it is critical that development [and supporting infrastructure improvements] be coordinated to ensure efficient and effective implementation of overall comprehensive planning and growth management. The scope of current traffic impact analyses required should include the consideration of all potential impacts upon Town streets, abutting roadway systems, and the cumulative incremental impacts of increased traffic as a result of the County and Town Growth. Coordination of the County and Town to evaluate the transportation system improvements is imperative to support the build-out of the planning area and to develop coordinated strategies to address future mobility needs.

In 2024 Cecil County received a grant from WILMAPCO: Maryland Route 272 Corridor Plan”. The Town was invited to participate with the meetings as the majority of this area has an impact on the transportation system through North East. Existing conditions, improvement needs, enhancing connectivity, safety and accessibility were reviewed between Maryland Route 274 southbound to Shady Beach Road.

Coordinated reviews of major site plans and subdivision proposals within the North East planning area and adjacent County growth areas should include a formalized notification process so that concerns, including mutual input by staff in the review of traffic impact analyses and related discussions of infrastructure impacts generally, can be efficiently conducted. Such coordination would be a logical extension of the cooperation between the County and Town on road standards and stormwater management issues.

#### WILMAPCO and Relationship to the Town of North East

WILMAPCO is the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Cecil County, Maryland and New Castle County, Delaware. WILMAPCO is charged with planning and coordinating transportation investments for this region. WILMAPCO’s mission is to create the best long-range transportation plan, one that meets all requirements of the Federal Clean Air Act and its Amendments and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users.

WILMAPCO's decision-making body is its nine-member Council, consisting of representatives from:

- Delaware and Maryland Departments of Transportation/State Highway Administration
- Delaware Transit Corporation
- Cecil and New Castle Counties
- Appointee of the Delaware Governor
- Cecil and New Castle County Municipalities

A Public Advisory Committee and a Technical Advisory Committee advise the Council on key decisions. The Technical Advisory Committee is, in turn, assisted by specialty subcommittees around these topics: air quality, data and demographics, congestion and non-motorized transportation.

Four documents comprise the backbone of WILMAPCO's planning efforts: the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and the Congestion Management Process (CMP). Numerous other regional and sub-regional studies, planning support to local planning agencies, and extensive public outreach processes work to inform and implement these documents.

WILMAPCO's 2050 RTP has three goals, each with associated objectives. Actions are also identified to carry out the objectives. The goals and objectives of the 2050 RTP are:

#### Improve Quality of Life

- Protect the public health, safety and welfare
- Preserve our natural, historic, and cultural resources
- Support existing municipalities and communities
- Provide transportation opportunities

#### Efficiently Transport People

- Improve transportation system performance
- Promote accessibility, mobility, and transportation alternatives

#### Support Economic Growth, Activity and Goods Movement

- Ensure a predictable and adequate public investment program to guide private sector investment decisions
- Plan and invest to promote the attractiveness of the region

The TIP is a four-year listing of all federally-funded transportation projects in the region. It is updated annually. The UPWP is the annual work program for WILMAPCO, listing the funding set aside for projects. The CMP tracks congested highway corridors in the region, and offers a specific matrix of alternatives to relieve congestion in each corridor.

Specific to North East, key financially-reasonable transportation projects listed in the 2050 RTP include: North East Transit Hub and Trail station, TOD pedestrian improvements, MD 272 and

North Main Street intersection improvements, and Rolling Mill Road Bridge (2-lanes with sidewalks).

In 2012, Cecil County completed the *Cecil County Chesapeake Connector and Passenger Rail Benefits Study*. The study narrowed alternatives to two options.

Option A: Addition of a third main track and crossing of the North East Corridor (NEC) tracks 2 and 3 via grade separation at a cost of \$349.5 million.

Option B: Addition of a third main track that crosses the NEC at grade at a cost of \$162.2 million.

If implemented, this project would eliminate a gap in commuter rail service and a bottleneck in freight rail service along the Northeast Corridor between Perryville and Newark, Delaware. It would support North East's objective to re-establish commuter rail service in the town. The Chesapeake Connector project has also been included in the MARC Growth & Investment Plan.

WILMAPCO partnered with the Town of North East in 2011 to perform a Transit Oriented Development Plan which, among other modes of transportation, identified potential location(s) for a future train station and development scenarios for the station area to support the planned train station.

WILMAPCO's FY 2025 UPWP includes some of this work. Further, the 2012 Cecil County Bicycle Plan addressed the need to plan for bicycle facilities in North East, as well as in other incorporated and unincorporated communities across the county; coordination on implementation of the Bicycle Plan is ongoing.

The Town of North East is committed to continued close coordination between the Town, WILMAPCO, MDOT/SHA and Cecil County and the towns of Perryville, Charlestown, and Elkton as pedestrian, bicycle, and rail planning moves forward in expectation of a fully integrated multi-modal transportation system that links North East with destinations throughout Cecil County's growth corridor, as well as locations in Delaware and Maryland, south and west of the Susquehanna River.

## Transportation Planning and Programming

The primary agency responsible for implementing major transportation improvements in the North East area is MDOT/SHA. MDOT meets with local officials each year to review capital project priorities in Cecil County. These projects are then programmed in the MDOT's six-year Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP).

As part of the coordination that occurs between MDOT, Cecil County and the Town of North East, State officials, including the Transportation Secretary, meet annually with local officials in what has become known as “the annual tour.” The purpose of the tour is to facilitate face-to-face interaction between the State and local officials to help ensure understanding and agreement about the projects that will be included in the annual update of the CTP. It also affords an opportunity for local officials to directly comment on aspects of the proposed projects and also advocate for projects and priorities that are of local concern. While interjurisdictional coordination is ongoing at the staff level, this formalized tour structure helps ensure that elected officials have the opportunity to communicate directly with the senior officials at MDOT on an annual basis.

### State Priorities for Local Improvements

#### *Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP)*

MDOT/SHA develops the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) to detail the ongoing and new capital programs to be implemented over a six year period. Projects are categorized by modal, such as highways, transit, aviation, etc. Each project approved by MDOT progresses through five funding stages: planning, design, right-of-way acquisition, utilities and construction.

#### *Highway Needs Inventory (HNI)*

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) identifies long-term projects in the Highway Needs Inventory (HNI). The HNI is not fiscally constrained and contains projects that are beyond the CTP's six year period. The Town of North East pro-actively sends a letter to the Maryland Department of Transportation annually which list the Town's specific priority projects.

The 2020 HNI outlined projects that could impact future development in North East: US ROUTE 40 from MD 272 to MD 279 as needing reconstruction. The total length of the project, both inside and outside of town, is 5.1 miles of roadway. The boundaries within North East are minimal, but the project overall would impact regional travel in to and out of town. MD 272 is also listed as a reconstructed HNI project from US 40 to Seahawk Drive (2.4 miles). This project coincides with the existing planning study on MD 272. MD 7 (Philadelphia Road to Cecil Avenue) is listed as a 2-lane reconstruction for 0.57 miles within town boundaries, east of MD 272.

### *Complete Streets*

SHA adopted a Complete Streets policy in 2012. The Complete Streets approach includes planning and designing our roads to safely accommodate all users including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders, emergency vehicles, people with disabilities, and the elderly. The policy also strives to achieve a roadway section that includes space to accommodate not only the physical roadway, but stormwater management features that meet the Maryland Department of the Environment regulations, bus stops, utility easements, and other features identified in site plans along the roadway frontage. These features are incorporated using a context-sensitive planning and design approach that involves members of the community as projects are developed. The result will be a transportation network that balances safety, accessibility, community cohesion, effectiveness and reliability for all users and has the support of residents and officials.

### *Level of Service Policy*

A Level of Service policy establishes a basis for evaluating proposed development plans and projects against the LOS that the SHA, Town and County seek to achieve or maintain as growth occurs. These criteria are used to evaluate the transportation system impacts of proposed development and the Municipal Growth Element (as described in Chapter 9), to evaluate alternative transportation plans, and to determine capital requirements.

The recommended minimum LOS for developments in North East and the County's adjacent growth areas is LOS C for off-peak periods and LOS D during peak hour conditions. Potential LOS deficiencies below those standards on major roadways would prohibit future development adjacent to these roadways. However, new development in such areas could be approved where those adverse effects are mitigated by the developer. If development is outside of the Corporate Limit and the developer is not able to mitigate traffic effects, development should be prohibited.

The Planning Commission should consider adopting minimum acceptable LOS standards that would be made part of the development approval process. Additional tools that could be evaluated from time to time include threshold criteria for requiring Traffic Impact Studies (TIS), an Adequate Public Facilities requirement for roadways that incorporate LOS standards, or direct incorporation of the LOS standards into Zoning and/or Subdivision ordinances. The Town should coordinate its approach (and development review process) with the State Highway Administration and with Cecil County. This would enable the Town and County to consistently require traffic studies and to require improvements if post-development impacts on a transportation facility (roadway or intersection) will exceed the minimum LOS standards, or to amend development proposals that would exceed LOS standards regardless of mitigation.

A coordinated approach would help ensure that major traffic generating projects reviewed by the Town would receive County input in a timely manner and vice versa. To ensure acceptable Level of Service on regional arterials and to improve connectivity, road system upgrades and expansions should focus on the following key objectives:

- Improving north-south connections on MD 272 between US ROUTE 40 and I-95.
- Increasing connectivity within the North East Growth Area to provide alternate route options and minimize congestion. This could include site specific long-range planning for the employment areas within the western portions of the Growth Area.
- Working with the State Highway Administration and the MDOT/SHA, Cecil County and WILMAPCO to incorporate bicycle, pedestrian and transit improvements to promote and maximize alternative means of transportation to reduce congestion and improve air quality.
- Incorporate the conclusions and recommendations of the Chesapeake Connector Study, the WILMAPCO Cecil County Bicycle Plan and Town and County Transit Development Plans into an Action Plan that can be used to leverage future funding opportunities.

### WILMAPCO

Priorities for upgrades to Cecil County's Road network are also influenced by regional planning conducted by WILMAPCO. WILMAPCO used Maryland's Upper Eastern Shore regional travel demand model to evaluate anticipated traffic impacts based on assumptions in the Cecil County's Future Land Use Plan. The model assumed that WILMAPCO's Regional Transportation Plan improvements would be in place by 2030, as would the County's 2007 Roadway Improvement Strategic Plan improvements. Based on these improvements and projected population, household, and housing units, the model determined future peak hour<sup>2</sup> LOS for major roads in Cecil County.<sup>3</sup>

Results of this modeling suggest that MD 272 from US 40 south through Town will approach or equal LOS F as will MD 7 from MD 272 east to Mechanics Valley Road. This LOS issue is ongoing.

Maryland 272 is presently programmed in the WILMAPCO long range plan for improvements. This is consistent with the future travel demand for the facility. The roadway is anticipated to fail by the design year (2050), carrying approximately 30,000 vehicles per day. In order to meet the future demand, the roadway should be widened to four lanes from I-95 to US ROUTE 40 or to the beginning of Main Street. The State Highway Administration has recommended that the widening of MD 272 should terminate at the US ROUTE 40 intersection to avoid widening through the downtown of North East. The MD 272 corridor study, recently completed, will implement a renewed vision of this roadway that aligns with the Town goals and objectives herein.

The Town has identified its gateways and anticipates participating with WILMAPCO and the Maryland Department of Transportation to develop and implement updated design standards. In addition, the Town envisions projects that will enhance public signage, landscaping, pedestrian lighting and pedestrian enhancements. Pedestrian and bicycle improvements in gateway projects may be funded through several programs including the Transportation Alternatives Program, Congestion Management Air Quality Improvement Program, as well as several MD specific bike walk program funding options, like the State Highway Administration sidewalk accessibility programs such as Fund 33, Fund 79, and Fund 88. These funds address pedestrian and bicyclist

safety, connectivity between destinations, and serve the increasing demand for sidewalks and pedestrian paths as noted on MDOT Bike Walk program on this webpage: <https://www.mdot.maryland.gov/tso/pages/Index.aspx?PageID=24>. Special planting projects could be included in an Urban Forestry Plan and finance through forest conservation, critical area and other appropriate fee in-lieu payments.

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<sup>2</sup> Peak hour refers to the hour or hours of maximum traffic volume. In Cecil County, this occurs during the evening commute period.

<sup>3</sup> For more details on the transportation model, methodology, and findings, please see: Transportation Modeling Methodology in the 2010 Cecil County Comprehensive Plan Appendix.

DRAFT

*Transit Oriented Development Plan (TOD Plan)*

A 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. TOD encourages a diversity of mutually supporting land uses and circulating systems with a train station or transit center serving as the focal point. Efficient compact, higher density development supports an easily walkable environment when a mix of uses which are located within ¼ to ½ mile of the station, or approximately a 5–10-minute walk.

WILMAPCO developed the Town of North East Transit Oriented Development Plan in 2013-2014, in partnership with the Town of North East, Cecil County, Maryland Department of Planning, MDOT/SHA and KSK Architects Planners Historians, Inc. Throughout the planning process, there was coordination with local leadership, land owners, major employers, residents and other interested stakeholders. A Steering/Advisory Committee was formulated who conducted meetings, surveys, open houses and workshops.

The purpose of the study:

- Study the opportunities and land areas within North East to form recommendations for future land uses around existing and future transit locations;
- Identify potential location(s) for a future train station/transit hub location;
- Identify multimodal transportation needs related to existing and planned transit, including vehicular access, bicycle and pedestrian circulation, parking and amenities;
- Assess the feasibility of opening a North East Train Station to commuter rail service and prepare a master vision plan for a new station and the surrounding area;
- Develop a concept for TOD investments within the business district and the neighborhoods surrounding the station that will support residential and economic growth; and
- Include recommendations for: 1) land use master planning; 2) zoning and urban design to support new development that will be sensitive to the existing character and desired development patterns, and; 3) an implementation strategy that will include a series of actions that will advance the Town's transit and TOD goals in accordance with federal and private funding options.

The Committee initially reviewed three potential “Focused Design Areas” located south of the existing railroad tracks: The desired location for the TOD is proposed to be located directly on axis with North Main Street Extended, and directly visible when traveling to the station from Town. The station is envisioned with an indoor waiting and ticketing area, a covered passenger waiting area on the platform, information kiosks, bicycle racks and a nearby auto and bus drop-off plaza near the station. The TOD creates a strong visible connection and route from the train station/transit hub to the Central Business District/General Commercial District (CBD/GCD) on

Main Street that encourages safe walking and bicycling, and encourages transit riders to come into Town and shop and dine on Main Street.

This site is envisioned to support Main Street businesses and not create a negative competitive influence. The amount of retail at the train station would be limited, primarily serving the commuting needs of the riders, such as a coffee shop, bakery, newsstand, dry cleaner and similar, rather than duplicating the restaurants and shops on Main Street. The vision for residential units shows 77 new three bedroom townhouses and one 15-unit apartment building.

### *Chesapeake Connector*

The Chesapeake Connector is a WILMAPCO project which will address the benefits of added track capacity on Amtrak's Northeast Corridor (NEC) on the segment between Prince and Bacon Interlockings in Cecil County, Md. for a distance of approximately 6.3 miles. This section of the NEC is currently a two-track section in a corridor that is generally a three track railroad. Although this section of track is located in Cecil County, MD, it is one of Delaware's priority rail projects; and it is anticipated to provide both public and private benefits. In Amtrak's NEC Master Plan, existing two or three track railroad segments south of Claymont, DE, would be expanded to three or four tracks to enable intercity and commuter rail expansion in Delaware and Maryland; the Chesapeake Connector is cited by name as a priority project. The Chesapeake Connector project has also been included in the MARC Growth & Investment Plan.

The 2014 Chesapeake Connector Economic Benefits Study identified two design alternatives to add a third main track. The study determined that the greatest beneficiaries of the project would be shippers in the region, followed by the railroad. The public sector would receive a diverse set of smaller benefits related to better scheduling and potentially shorter shipping times. The study concluded that construction of the Chesapeake Connector would ease operations in the corridor would not generate large economic benefits relative to its cost.

### Town of North East Transportation Projects

The Town of North East has its most direct control over new local roads, parking areas and the location and construction of new pedestrian improvements. New local roads are reviewed and approved through the site planning and subdivision processes under the oversight and administration of the Planning Commission and Town staff. New pedestrian improvements are created through the private development of lands and through the planning and capital programming of publicly funded expansions within the existing public rights-of-way.

### *US Rte. 40 Corridor Intersection Improvements*

- Gateway into Town

North East envisions a corridor streetscape that creates a visually distinctive and inviting sense of place. Shade-providing trees should be strategically planted to enhance comfort

and aesthetics. Serving as the gateway into town, this corridor will help establish the desired physical character of the Town's streets and roadways. Lighting should be thoughtfully designed and positioned to reflect the community's character while ensuring safety. Clearly defined sidewalks will foster connectivity between areas north of US Route 40 and neighborhoods and key destinations to the south, promoting pedestrian activity. Funding opportunities may be available for beautification efforts, with potential integration into signage and wayfinding initiatives.

The creation of distinct parkway or suburban boulevard segments along US Route 40 through Town plus the establishment of special "gateways" at the entrances into North East will help identify and reinforce the land use and development pattern transitions along the North East portion of US Route 40.

### *Rail and Transit*

- Rail Service: Identify the transportation impacts of rail service to the town in relationship to the State Highway systems.
- Add North East as one of the stops for the extension of the existing MARC Penn Line commuter rail service.
- Prepare and Implement a Passenger Rail Station feasibility study.
- Add Transit Oriented Design (TOD) concepts and priorities to North East's transportation planning principles and practices.
- Create appropriate design guidelines and standards to implement TOD principles and practices.
- Review impacts of rail service to State Highway systems in North East.

### *State Roads*

- Continued implementation of the I-95 interchange at Belvidere Road.
- Widen Route 7 (West Cecil Avenue), west of Route 272 (South Main Street/North Main Street) and Route 7 intersection. Elevate and widen the State Highway Bridge over the North East Creek on Route 7. Install pedestrian sidewalk, bicycle lane and pedestrian lighting between North East Isles Drive and Catherine Street.
- Interim Plan: Installation of a pedestrian activated signal on both sides of the North East Creek Bridge on Route 7 which pedestrians would press when they desire to walk across

the bridge. The signal would stop eastbound and westbound vehicles on Route 7 while pedestrians travel over the bridge.

- Add a pedestrian walkway on Route 7. This walkway is requested from Ridgely Forest on Route 7, North East, to connect to existing sidewalk on Route 7, North East.
- Route 7, East Cecil Avenue adjacent to the previous location of North East Middle School: Installation of two traffic reduction devices with intermitting signaling lights, with timers for school opening and dismissal. To be positioned on Route 7, approximately 50 yards before the North East Middle School from both east and west directions.
- For the purpose of providing uninterrupted walkability, install sidewalk on Route 272 between Jethro Street and the south/east corner of the bridge over North East Creek.
- Installation of sidewalk from the existing sidewalk on Route 7 (East Cecil Avenue) to Mechanics Valley Road.
- Installation of bicycle/walking/share the road pavement markings along Route 7 from Ridgely Forest Drive to Mechanics Valley Road.
- The MD 272 Corridor, particularly south of Route 40 along S. Main Street, Mauldin Avenue, Cecil Avenue, Irishtown Road, NE Isles Drive, and Walnut Street is an area in need of improved bicycle connectivity. The completion of a feasibility study is important to explore options for creating safer and more efficient bicycle connections between our downtown shopping and dining areas, community parks, municipal buildings, and residential neighborhoods.

### *Local Streets*

The Town performs an annual assessment of the condition of its streets and sidewalks and includes planned improvements in the Annual Capital Budget. Projects included in the Town's Annual Capital Budget are selected from a priority list maintained by the Town Maintenance Department.

### *Parking and Coordination*

Providing adequate parking in the appropriate locations is an important planning objective, especially in the **CBD/GCD**. Public parking facilities have been provided at two locations in this district (**see Map 4**) totaling approximately one hundred (100) spaces. An additional 100 spaces are available at the Park and Ride lot located at Peninsula Drive and MD Route 272, and public parking is provided at the North East Community Park at the foot of Walnut Street. The Town of North East recognizes the necessity for additional parking in the CBD/GCD and in the Village

Commercial District and shall continue to explore additional enhancements for existing parking along Mauldin Avenue and side streets. To accommodate an immediate need for additional parking, in 2025, the Town installed a parking area in Turner Park (adjacent to North Bound Mauldin Ave/MD 272 North), which is within close proximity to downtown North East, providing sufficient parking for downtown events.

The Town reminds all affected agencies that at such time as preliminary discussions occur between State, County and/or regional agencies regarding any of the above matters of mutual interest, that the Town of North East should be notified in a timely manner so that the Town's concerns and priorities will be included and efficiently addressed.

### *Pedestrian Improvements*

The Town of North East is committed to a "pedestrian friendly" environment throughout Town. Existing sidewalks should be maintained and a list of projects ranked in priority order should be developed to address missing links in the system and extensions from the downtown core to new residential neighborhoods, parks and major concentrations of commercial and retail commercial land uses fronting State highways within Town.

As a precursor to more detailed study and evaluation of opportunities and constraints, safety, and cost concerns, the Town has identified existing sidewalks and cross-walks and included graphics at the end of this chapter that identify preliminary priorities for pedestrian system extensions and enhancements.

In addition to new sidewalks, it is important to provide residents and visitors with safe and convenient access to regional pedestrian trails. A new link between MD Route 7 at Mechanics Valley Road to the Elk Neck State Forest and Park trail are envisioned (see Map/Graphic G/10 at the end of this Chapter/Element. This new pedestrian linkage between the Town and the regional walking trail will provide both recreational and mobility improvements to the Town's residents and serve as a tourism enhancement and economic development tool.

## Recommendations

### *General*

- Promote alternatives to driving alone and encourage the County and State to inform citizens of the public and private monetary and environmental costs of continued dependence on autos.
- Advance projects that enhance transportation safety when traveling locally and regionally, particularly for vulnerable users walking, riding a bike, or using a mobility device.
- The Town should support pedestrians and multi-modal users by providing safe, convenient, and inviting routes and walkways between activity centers.
- In the CBD/GCD, priority shall be given to making streets more pedestrian friendly. This pedestrian orientation will create an environment where people will want to get out of their cars and onto the sidewalks and bike routes. This, along with appropriate zoning and other Town efforts, will encourage development and redevelopment.
- Connections to the Lower Susquehanna Heritage Greenway should be considered.
- The Town should accommodate the safe and efficient movement of goods and people, acknowledging the importance of both functions to the long-term economic vitality and livability of the Town of North East.
- The Town should reevaluate the signs throughout town to avoid sign clutter and to include way-finding signs to the downtown area, parks, trails and other areas of interest.
- Pedestrian crosswalks across Mauldin Avenue linking to existing sidewalks to the downtown should be considered. Consideration should be given to “bump-outs” and street art along Mauldin Avenue to provide traffic calming in conjunction with the crosswalks.
- The Town should consider High-Intensity Activated Crosswalks (HAWK) and/or Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons providing high visibility crosswalks on Mauldin Avenue and Thomas Avenue and other busy streets to assist people with safe crossing.
- To assist with traffic calming from Route 272, south of Town to Mauldin Avenue, a Round-about should be considered as the traffic moves from one lane to two lanes.
- Beautification of pedestrian routes to and from the Town should be considered as these are highly visible areas.
- The Town should establish street designs for new development that will contribute to reaching the transportation and land use goals of the area, provide safe and efficient mobility for all people, and contribute to the quality of life.

- New collector and local streets will be built by developers according to the developer's site plan and Town specifications.
- The Town should require that the layout of new street connections in undeveloped areas assure connectivity to the overall Town street system.
- All developments should have adequate access and circulation for public service vehicles, but actual paved street sections should be as narrow as possible to maintain pedestrian family neighborhoods.
- The Town should work with the State and County to coordinate the land use and transportation elements of the Comprehensive Plan with adjacent jurisdictions.
- The Town should amend the zoning ordinance to require new large scale commercial, business and industrial developments to provide reserved parking spaces for carpools, vanpools, multi-modal transportation and bicycle racks at commercial and industrial sites to encourage shared rides and to encourage support of bicycle commuting and travel.
- Encourage the State, County, WILMAPCO and Amtrak to re-establish railroad service to the Town, along with continued bus transit service.
- Recognizing that the Town has many visitors coming through North East each year, wayfinding signs are desired to direct visitors to points of interest. The Town has a limited number of directional signs around town, however, in an effort to provide consistent, attractive guidance for visitors, a master plan for wayfinding signs should be considered. The plan should outline one or two design styles to choose from, locations for installations of the signs, the design of the signs, the sign posts and installation instructions. The master sign plan would be planned for either one or two phases. For example, Phase One could include North Main Street; South Main Street and Mauldin Avenue. Another phase could include wayfinding signs for Route 7, and a few of the side streets such as Lums Road or Thomas Avenue.

### *Commercial Streets*

New local streets serving commercial land uses should provide safe and convenient access to the parcels they serve and be designed to preserve or improve existing access to parcels that may be impacted by the new street(s).

Strategies and enhancements for improved development design and aesthetic appeal of infill and redevelopment projects are especially important along highway corridors (e.g., US Rte. 40), in the CBD/GCD and Highway Commercial Districts and at the future Town gateways. In the case of highway corridors, North East has adopted a special highway corridor overlay zone. The purpose of this overlay district is to protect and enhance the aesthetic and visual character of the Town and to provide for and promote orderly growth. The Highway Corridor Overlay District (HCO)D

regulations supplement the regulations of the underlying zoning districts and help provide harmony and compatibility of development along the major highway corridors that serve as gateways to the community. The HCOD includes all lands within 500 feet of each side of the center line of the following rights-of-way: US Route 40, I-95, and MD Route 272 north of North East Creek.

Pedestrian and multi-modal improvements within the HCOD will be guided by the design guidelines contained within Appendix A – Guidelines for Pedestrian Crossing Treatments in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices published by the national Cooperative Highway Research Program, Federal Highway Administration. The second principal source of design guidelines in use within North East will be the Maryland State Highway Administration – Office of Traffic and Safety (OOTS) document, “Accessible Pedestrian Signals-Design Guidelines.” The Town of North East will also coordinate with the Assistant District Engineer for Traffic.

### *Residential Streets*

New residential streets serving residential neighborhoods should be designed to ensure that the Streets provide:

- safe and convenient access for motorists, pedestrians, cyclists, and emergency vehicles
- maintain the integrity of the land uses and streetscapes they are serving;
- provide access within new neighborhoods and to adjacent neighborhoods, shopping areas, and schools;
- promote land use policies that minimize required local travel distances (e.g., between residences and work, schools, shopping and recreation); and
- reduce the land area devoted to local roadways to the minimum required for safety and efficiency, while providing for emergency and delivery vehicles.
- avoid difficult driveway approaches;
- promote safe, convenient pedestrian and multi-modal travel;

*Large-scale development projects*

- An interconnected street and sidewalk system which is based on a modified grid system;
- Sidewalks, street trees, and substantial on-street parking, providing distinct separation or buffer between pedestrians and traffic;
- Streets and sidewalks that are spatially defined by buildings in a regular pattern;
- The Town should amend the zoning ordinance to require new large scale commercial, business and industrial developments to provide reserved parking spaces for carpools, vanpools; add bicycle racks at office and industrial sites to accommodate and encourage high occupancy vehicle (HOV) commuting and to support multi-modal commuting and travel.
- The Town should separate truck traffic from shoppers and employees where possible: and
- The Town should control truck loading and unloading that occurs on-street during morning and evening peak traffic periods.
- Turning radius should be determined by the types of vehicles proposed for using the road.
- The Town should require down lighting which is designed for safe walking and signage which has a pedestrian orientation; down-lit lighting or night sky preservation lighting shall be considered for all street lighting.
- The Town should work with the State and County to coordinate the land use and transportation elements of the Comprehensive Plan with adjacent jurisdictions, and encourage the State, County, WILMAPCO and Amtrak to establish railroad service to the Town, with bus transit provided in the interim.
- A system of land subdivision and development which links one neighborhood or commercial site to another and can be logically extended by interconnected circulation, roads, and walkways.

*Pedestrian and Multi-Modal Improvements*

Promote alternatives to driving alone and encourage the County and State to inform citizens of the public and private monetary and environmental costs of continued dependence on autos.

- The Town should support pedestrians and multi-modal users by incorporating safe, convenient and inviting routes and walkways along all State highways and between activity centers as an integral part of any roadway upgrade or reconstruction.

- In the MD 272 Corridor area, North East should continue to explore planning and design partnership options and leverage various funding mechanisms for design and construction projects after completion of the feasibility study for enhanced bicycle connectivity.
- In the CBD/GCD, priority shall be given to maintaining pedestrian friendly streets. This pedestrian orientation will continue to promote an environment where people will want to get out of their cars and onto the sidewalks and bike routes. This, along with appropriate zoning and other Town efforts, will encourage infill development and redevelopment.
- In designing street improvements, the Town should accommodate the safe and efficient movement of goods and people, acknowledging the importance of both functions to the long-term economic vitality and livability of the Town of North East. This may require the physical separation of motor vehicles and pedestrian and multi-modal routes, especially in high traffic volume locations.
- The Town should establish street designs for new development that will contribute to reaching the transportation and land use goals of the area, provide safe and efficient mobility for all people, and contribute to the Town's quality of life.
- New streets should promote land use policies that minimize required local travel distances (e.g., between residences and work, schools, shopping and recreation); and reduce the land area devoted to local roadways to the minimum required for safety and efficiency.
- New collector and local streets will be built by developers according to this Comprehensive Plan, the developer's approved site plan and Town specifications.
- In commercial areas, new streets will be designed to separate truck traffic from shoppers and employees where possible, and control truck loading and unloading that occurs on-street [during morning and evening peak traffic periods].
- The Town will require that the layout of new street connections in undeveloped areas assure logical connectivity to the overall street and sidewalk system.
- Identify, provide and design and build alternate routes for low stress and multi-modal transportation.
- Identify locations where multi-modal transportation would be in conflict and deemed unsafe for the pedestrians utilizing the sidewalks.
- Way-finding signs to assist pedestrians and multi-modal users in and around Town.
- All developments should have adequate access and circulation for public service vehicles, delivery vehicles and emergency vehicles, but actual paved street sections should be as narrow as possible to maintain a human scale.

- New local streets serving commercial land uses should provide safe and convenient access to the parcels they serve and be designed to preserve or improve existing access to parcels that may be impacted by the new street(s). Special needs and requirements may apply in the US Rte. 40 and MD 272 corridors.
- New residential streets serving residential neighborhoods should be designed to ensure that the streets provide safe and convenient access for motorists, micro mobility, pedestrians, ~~eyelists~~, and emergency vehicles and maintain the integrity of the land uses and streetscapes they are serving.
- New residential streets should provide access within new neighborhoods and to adjacent neighborhoods, nearby shopping areas, and schools;
- New residential streets should be arranged to provide optimum solar alignment for residences when possible.
- With the rehabilitation of Turner Park on the east side of Mauldin Avenue along with an outlined goal for additional parking along Mauldin Avenue, mid-block crosswalks may need to be installed on Mauldin Avenue. Creative crosswalk designs are outlined as options, which would need to be carefully coordinated for long term planning purposes to provide for re-painting or rehabilitation. Creative crosswalk designs provide traffic calming by alerting the public that the road ahead is changing and that their speed should be reflective of that.

### *Enhancing Walkability*

Enhancing walkability, ADA Compliance and expanding pedestrian linkages between the Town's residential neighborhoods and the commercial districts remains a priority of the Town of North East. Factors currently affecting walkability within Town include the absence of buffers from traffic, the width of the existing sidewalks, location of sign posts, the absence of existing sidewalks, lack of way finding signs and the lack of right of way. The Town remains proactive to provide a walkable community that includes specific similarities such as:

- Short block lengths – no longer than 500 feet with few exceptions.
- Frequent crossing opportunities – at least every 300 feet near pedestrian trip generators such as schools, parks, libraries, shopping centers, and hospitals.
- A variety of land uses within walking distance of one another including neighborhoods within ¼-½ mile of a transit stop, shopping centers, restaurants, public facilities, parks and employment centers.

- General enhancements of pedestrian amenities include street trees, pedestrian lighting, pedestrian oriented building facades, way finding signage, benches and trash receptacles. Consistency in design and placement is encouraged in both residential and commercial areas.
- Wide sidewalks with buffer zones – sidewalks at least five-six feet wide with a buffer and micro mobility lane may be appropriate especially if future intensification of commercial and mixed uses occurs along MD 272 on the south end of Town. Buffers include planting strips, bicycle lanes and on-street parking.
- Compact intersections – with short crossing distances and longer time cycle lengths for pedestrians where pedestrian signalization is in place.

#### *Pedestrian Capital Improvement Program (CIP)*

A capital improvement program will organize, set project priorities, and provide preliminary cost estimates and identify potential funding sources for implementing the pedestrian plan. It is the Town's intent to develop a capital improvement program for pedestrian improvements.

#### Elements:

- Set priority or phasing for the implementation of each improvement
- Estimated cost of each project
- Anticipated source(s) of funding for each project

Each project listed in the pedestrian CIP should be assigned an implementation phase or a priority. This enables those implementing the plan in the future to select projects that will provide communities with maximum benefits in an equitable way within funding constraints. The pedestrian CIP should be as specific as possible, listing the total cost by year, for the first five years of the plan, and outlining the funding source. However, the CIP should also be a flexible and dynamic document, and it may prove useful to estimate the total costs for later project phases that extend beyond the typical five year time frame of a CIP to help guide long range budgeting.

When selecting a prioritization methodology, consideration should be given to the time and resources available for oversight and project management by available Town staff. If time or resources are scarce and/or there are a small number of proposed improvements, a more simple qualitative methodology can prioritize the improvements.

## Transportation Guidelines for Site Plan and Subdivision review

### *Transportation Impact Analyses*

Transportation impact studies, whether as stand-alone documents or chapters in an environmental document, are intended to disclose information to assist decision makers and the public in the project review process. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Federal law governing environmental analysis, and the Maryland Environmental Policy Act (MEPA)<sup>4</sup> have many differences, such as the level of specificity of alternatives analysis, but both require a full disclosure of transportation impacts, not just vehicular traffic impacts. The term “transportation” captures a wide range of potential impacts and modes. The North East Planning Commission should require all major residential development and all new commercial development proposals to provide a complete transportation analysis that considers all modes of transportation for on-site circulation as well as impacts on the surrounding parcels and the general vicinity. The criteria below represent a minimum standard for assessing a broad set of transportation impacts. They are generally organized around the themes of identifying impacts that disrupt existing operations, interfere with plans for the future, conflict with adopted policies, and/or create new demand.

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<sup>4</sup>Guidelines for Implementation of the Maryland Environmental Policy Act are found in COMAR under Title 34 Department of Planning, Subtitle 01, Chapter 02 Authority: Natural Resources Article, §§1-303 and 1-304, Annotated Code of Maryland; Environmental Policy Act Guidelines of the Secretary of Natural Resources.

*Site Plan and Subdivision Review Criteria*

North East will consider the following topics during site plan and subdivision reviews to improve the linkage between land use and transportation planning:

1. Identify the components of the Town's existing transportation systems (e.g. highways, streets, sidewalks, paths, transit routes, etc.) and how they are impacted by the proposal.
2. Examine capacity of the existing transportation system and the projected demands from various existing land uses in the community (e.g. residential subdivisions, commercial shopping, employment centers, public buildings and places, and recreation areas).
3. Identify future land uses that may be served by the Town's transportation systems (e.g. undeveloped parcels in the community or areas of the county adjacent to the Town).
4. Discuss ways that the Town's transportation systems can be improved to better existing and proposed land uses (e.g. increase mobility, connectivity and maintain and/or enhance community character).
5. Ensure that new project approvals include pedestrian linkage into Town, pedestrian and bicycle improvements identified on pedestrian system improvement concept graphics #1 through #16 [found at the end of this Chapter].
6. Consider the utility and desirability of transit stops and/or transit shelters at all major new commercial and employment centers, in Master Planned Communities, and within high density residential projects even if not specifically identified on concept graphics #1 through #16 identified above.
7. Consider requiring electrical services [or service line stubs for future utilization] at all transit shelters and major parking lots to support future use as “charging stations” by electrically powered bicycles and other vehicles.
8. Consider future space requirements for secure bicycle storage adjacent to, or otherwise conveniently located near, public facilities, transit shelters, the future passenger rail station, and commercial and employment centers and include adequate space to provide such storage facilities at the time of project construction.
9. Consider existing pedestrian facilities. This can include adding new vehicular, pedestrian or bicycle traffic to an area experiencing pedestrian safety concerns such as a nearby crosswalk or school.
10. Consider whether the project supports and implements planned pedestrian facilities.

Site plan and major subdivision proposed off-site improvements, including mitigation, should be reviewed for consistency with local codes and design standards, including parking requirements, the Town's road code, and other adopted guidelines that may be developed and adopted from time to

time. Site plans and major subdivisions will be coordinated with the MDOT/SHA and with the Cecil County Planning Department to ensure that potential congestion, safety concerns and general growth management topics can be addressed in a cooperative and interjurisdictional manner. The Town of North East also desires to participate and provide timely comment on State and County projects that may have impacts on transportation infrastructure within the Town of North East.

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## **Pedestrian Design Elements**

The North East Zoning Ordinance, the North East Subdivision Regulations, and the North East Road Code are the three most important parts of the Town Code that govern the design, review and approval of local roads and pedestrian improvements. However, this Transportation Chapter addresses the Town's policy regarding the local pedestrian system of sidewalks, paths and trails. This clarification should be used to guide developers and inform residents regarding the Town's desires and intent regarding pedestrian convenience, safety, and the Town's general commitment to enhancing transportation options and opportunities in support of a healthy and sustainable community life for all Town residents and visitors.

### *Purpose*

This section is intended to identify and communicate the design elements important to improving pedestrian safety and walkability within the Town of North East. This section provides *design elements* to inform designers, planners, and policymakers on available design treatments and best practices for pedestrians. When implementing these elements, engineering judgment will determine the specific locations and features of each design. Other important considerations include the requirements contained in the American Disabilities Act and revised Stormwater Management requirements promulgated by the Maryland Department of the Environment and incorporated in the Cecil County Stormwater Management Regulations. The challenges will be to manage urban drainage issues with the stormwater management requirements within the available space of the Town's existing infrastructure.

### *Scope and application*

Most streets should be targeted to have "basic" facilities such as curbs, gutters, sidewalks and well-delineated cross walks. In locations where pedestrian demand is higher, more intense improvements should be implemented. More intensive improvements could include traffic calming devices, wider sidewalks, use of pedestrian scale lighting and pedestrian scale signage, landscaping and higher quality pedestrian crossing treatments. These improvements are targeted for commercial streets with medium to high levels of automobile traffic or within a high density residential development.

### **Sidewalk/Walkway Guidelines**

North East currently requires a minimum 48" wide sidewalk with a 36" thru passage for new development. This means that sidewalks must maintain a minimum of 36" of unimpeded room for the passage of wheel chairs and similar aids for handicapped mobility. These dimensions conform to sidewalk requirements found in the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) which are minimum widths for passage.

The Institute for Transportation Engineers recommends planning sidewalks that are a minimum 60" wide with a planting strip of 24" on local streets and in residential and commercial areas. Sidewalks consist of the through passage zone and the utility zone. The through passage zone is the paved part of the sidewalk that pedestrians use. This zone should be wide enough to accommodate different walking speeds and shared use by people with mobility aids. It should also be proportionate to street size and pedestrian volumes.

All streets require a utility zone to accommodate above ground public infrastructure including street furniture, lampposts, street trees, and signs. Locating this infrastructure in the utility zone prevents it from encroaching on the thru passage zone. The utility zone also creates an important buffer between pedestrians and motor vehicles by providing a horizontal separation and a vertical buffer. Vertical elements like utility poles, signs, street lights and street trees improve pedestrian safety and comfort by buffering the sidewalk from travel lanes. This buffering effect is similar to that provided by curbside motor vehicle parking. Walkways and trails do not have utility zones but still require a minimum through passage zone.

The proposed guidelines would apply to sidewalks accompanying new development.

<b>Proposed Sidewalk Guidelines</b>			
<b>Street Type</b>	<b>Through Passage Zone</b>	<b>Utility Zone</b>	<b>Total Width</b>
<b>Arterial (Regional)</b>	<b>8'</b>	<b>4'</b>	<b>12'</b>
<b>Collector (North East)</b>	<b>6'</b>	<b>4'</b>	<b>10'</b>
<b>Local (Neighborhood)</b>	<b>5'</b>	<b>4'</b>	<b>9'</b>
<b>Walkway</b>	<b>4'</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>4'</b>
<b>Trail (Shared Use or Natural surface)</b>	<b>8-10'</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6'</b>

### *Sidewalk Materials*

Paving materials should be consistent, durable, accessible to people using mobility aids, and smooth enough for passage (but not slippery). Concrete paving is recommended for arterial, collector, and local sidewalks. The concrete should be textured for safety and scored to match existing patterns. In all cases, ADAAG requirements shall be applicable and followed. Standards address curbs, sidewalks, paths and trails whose primary focus is on pedestrian mobility.

In pedestrian activity areas, painted curbs should be textured to ensure traction. To support pedestrians, cyclists, and joggers, trails may be constructed of asphalt, crushed granite, or bark mulch; however, concrete is the preferred paving material. Special paving may occur at neighborhood commercial areas, schools, and parks to give them a distinctive identity.

The Town of North East has adopted a standard for stamped and patterned public sidewalks which link either commercial or residential development into the CBD/GCD. The Planning Commission and the Mayor and Commissioners shall approve the location, color, material and design of all public sidewalks which are not the standard concrete.

### *Walkway Materials*

Walkway materials are usually made of concrete, wood, or stone. The construction of new walkways and the reconstruction of existing walkways should avoid wood to minimize long-term maintenance costs. Where wood is used, the construction should be of species that contain natural preservative characteristics such as Cedar and Redwood. Pressure treated Douglas Fir may be practical when initial cost is a consideration. Continuous handrails of wood on wood stairs and metal on concrete stairs are required on both sides. Stairs should have closed risers, treads with non-slip surfacing, and sufficient clearance from surrounding vegetation.

Stair flights should be 12 feet in length or less. Where slope or grade issues may require longer runs, individual sections of stair flights should be separated by 5 feet landings with concrete footings. Landings are good locations for benches and pedestrian light fixtures.

### *Lighting*

Pedestrian-scale lighting improves accessibility by illuminating sidewalks, crosswalks, curbs, curb ramps, and signs, as well as barriers and potential hazards. Lampposts should be staggered on opposite sides of the street and be placed at crosswalks, bus stops, and corners. All commercial developments should provide appropriately designed lighting which will assist pedestrians on sidewalks and parking lots and ensure safe and convenient well lit transit stops and bus shelters. Pedestrian-scale lighting and motor vehicle-scale lighting each should be provided as a complement to the other to ensure that both sidewalks and travel lanes are effectively illuminated. The proposed location of the streetlights shall be coordinated with the proposed street trees and landscape. It is recommended that the street lights be located a minimum of 10 feet from the full growth canopy of adjacent trees.

Public lighting shall include poles and fixtures chosen from existing models identified by the Town. Shields or hoods should also be utilized to avoid light pollution and direct lighting onto the sidewalks. The installation of new lighting shall take into account potential light spillover that may adversely affect adjacent residents. The proposed lighting guidelines provide specific guidance in establishing adequate pedestrian scale lighting for a range of rights-of-way. The implementation of pedestrian-scale lighting should occur as part of pedestrian-oriented street projects.

### *Signage*

Signage is encouraged to assist pedestrians in wayfinding. The signs will consist of a distinctive logo and directional guidance to neighborhood destinations or destination points of interest in North East. For example, destinations like the Town Park are often invisible from adjacent streets like Main Street and would benefit from additional pedestrian-scale signage. Pedestrian signage will comply with the criteria for character, proportion, height, and contrast specified by the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines and shall be compatible with the character of the Town. Signage shall also comply with the *Maryland* Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MdMUTCD), when possible. The

implementation of these signs should occur as part of a proposed development, or within an existing pedestrian-oriented improvement projects to enhance the pedestrian network in and around the Town of North East, or through the sponsorship of a business.

### *Plantings*

Trees are a dramatic street improvement that create an attractive visual and psychological separation for pedestrians between the sidewalk and the roadway. Trees may also encourage drivers to move through an area more slowly and should be installed to allow for proper sight distance for both vehicles and pedestrians. They can be located in the utility zone to provide sidewalk shading or placed between on-street parking spaces in tree bump-outs where sidewalks are narrow. (See the explanation in the *Bump-Outs* section below.) The North East Zoning Ordinance contains specific “buffer yard” tree and shrub planting requirements.

### *Street Furniture*

Street furniture includes benches, mailboxes, trash and recycling receptacles, bike racks, newspaper boxes, drinking fountains, information boards, kiosks, artwork, public phones, signs, bus shelters, and other items used by pedestrians. These features humanize the scale of a street and encourage pedestrian activity.

Street furniture should be placed in the utility zone to maintain thru passage zones for pedestrians and to bump-outs are recommended for providing additional space. (See the explanation in the *Bump-Outs* section below.) Bus shelters should also have clearly displayed bus schedules and Town maps for way-finding.

Placement of street furniture along building edges is acceptable if the through passage zone is preserved. Buildings with lower floor windows, canopies for rain protection, tables, umbrellas, signs, planters, benches, and other street furniture contribute to street life and enhance the pedestrian environment.

### *Driveways*

Driveway entrances can be both dangerous and inconvenient for pedestrians. Driveway curbcut aprons that extend into the through passage zone may cause people on foot or in wheelchairs to fall. Driveways also reduce the available space for street trees, lighting, street furniture, and parallel parking. Wherever possible, entrances should be consolidated such that multiple users share a common curbcut for motor vehicle access. The ramp portion of a drive entrance should be located within the utility zone where possible. Design requirements are contained in the North East Road Code.

### *Crosswalks*

Crosswalks assist pedestrians in getting from one side of the road to the other and provide continuity to sidewalks. Crossing treatments are classified as either passive or active treatments. Passive treatments are physical improvements like crosswalks or curb ramps that do not change in time.

Active treatments like traffic signals and audible pedestrian signals have multiple states that are triggered by automated detection or activated by pedestrians. Both types of treatments may be combined to create a comprehensive crossing system. With all treatments, engineering judgment is necessary to determine the specific locations and features of each project.

### *Crosswalk Materials*

Crosswalks can be marked with white paint, reflective tape, signs, and/or lighting. The typical crosswalk in North East is a white painted thermoplastic treatment. High-visibility white ladder striping should be considered in school zones and selected high traffic volume locations.

While striping of all four legs of an intersection is recommended, engineering judgment should be used in all cases. High contrast crosswalk striping also helps people with visual impairments to cross streets. Striping should correspond to the width and location of sidewalks.

The Town of North East has adopted a standard for stamped and patterned public crosswalks which link either commercial or residential development into the CBD/GCD. After recommendation from the Planning Commission, the Mayor and Commissioners shall approve the location, color, material and design of all public crosswalks which are not the standard concrete. Where a proposed subdivision does not link in with the CBD/GCD, a Developer may opt to utilize the stamped, colored, patterned public crosswalks. This option shall require a recommendation from the Planning Commission and approval from the Mayor and Commissioners. Stamped concrete or asphalt along a state road will require the approval of the State Highway Administration.

Leading Pedestrian Interval Timing improves the visibility of pedestrians by allowing them to enter an intersection before vehicles with conflicting movements.

Countdown Signals let pedestrians know the exact amount of time remaining in the walk phase. This type of signal has been installed at the intersection of US Route 40 and MD Route 272.

Audible Signals indicate to persons who are blind or have low vision the direction in which it is safe to cross. They should be installed at intersections with new traffic signals, actuated signal timings, complex traffic patterns, or irregular traffic volumes. Traffic signals should be retrofitted wherever there is a request from persons with visual impairments.

Pedestrian call buttons and kickplates allow pedestrians to request a signal phase for safe crossing. Audible call buttons should be installed in conjunction with audible pedestrian signals.

They should be conveniently located and clearly marked to indicate the crossing directions they trigger. Tactile symbols may also be installed alongside call buttons to provide crossing information on lane configurations for persons with visual impairments.

### *Curb Ramps*

The Town of North East requires curb ramp installation in all proposed street intersections. Where resurfacing, sidewalk improvements, crosswalks, utility upgrades or alteration projects are proposed within the public right of way, improvements shall be designed to comply with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines.

### *Corner Radius*

A corner's turning radius determines how fast a driver can comfortably make a turn. A tighter turn or shorter radius forces drivers to slow down allowing them to see pedestrians better and stop more quickly. Slow corners with short turning radii increase safety for pedestrians at intersections by creating more sidewalk space and less road space.

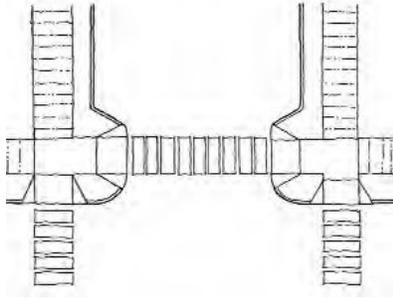
A decreased curb radius also allows for the placement of curb ramps that are aligned parallel to crosswalks. A 10' turning radius is recommended for streets with curbside parking. For streets without curbside parking, a 20' turning radius is recommended. Streets with significant volumes of truck traffic may also have larger corner radii.

### *Bump-outs*

Bump-Outs are extensions of the curb line at intersections that reduce the road way cross-section for a limited distance back from the corner. These "captured" sections of the road, if of sufficient size, may be landscaped and act as "gateways" to the block.

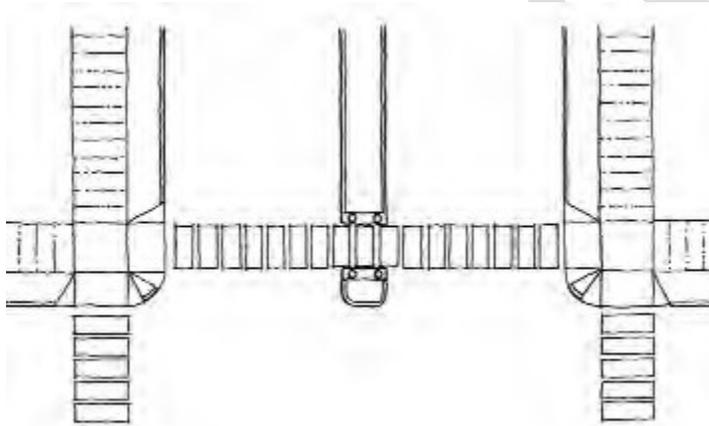
Bump-Outs reduce the crossing distance for pedestrians, increase visibility for motorists and pedestrians, prevent illegal parking at corners, and provide additional room for people waiting to cross the street. The added space may also be used for street furniture like benches, bike racks, and street trees.

Bump-Outs are also important for accessibility because they provide space for curb ramps, crossing buttons, and a safe waiting area. Bus-bump-outs provide space for bus shelters and increase the pick up and drop off efficiency of transit. Wherever possible, a bump-out located at a bus stop should be designed as a bus bump-out. If a bus bump-out is not possible, the bulb-out should be designed with special care, so as not to interfere with bus movements. Tree bulb-outs can be used where sidewalks would otherwise be too narrow for plantings. bump-outs can be used at mid-block crossings and are beneficial when combined with pedestrian refuges. All-bump-outs should extend into the street no further than the edge of the travel or bike lane. Bump-outs and accompanying street furniture will require additional maintenance.



### *Refuge Islands*

Refuge islands are located at crosswalks in the middle of streets to provide a safe waiting area for pedestrians. They may include curbs and bollards to ensure the safety of waiting pedestrians. A refuge island may be part of a median or a stand-alone feature. By allowing pedestrians to cross only half of the street and then wait, the refuge island increases the number of gaps in traffic that are safe for crossing. While increasing the visibility of pedestrian crossings, refuge islands decrease the percentage of pedestrian collisions by reducing pedestrian/vehicle conflicts, motor vehicle speeds, and exposure time for pedestrians. The waiting area in refuge islands should be in line with the crosswalk and as wide as the crosswalk, such that persons with disabilities are able to pass through without obstruction.



### *Traffic Calming*

Traffic calming modifies the physical arrangement of a street to deflect the path of motor vehicles and thereby slows traffic. It provides a cost-effective alternative to traffic signals for reducing motor vehicle speeds and improving pedestrian safety. Two types of deflection are discussed in this section, vertical deflection, which slows traffic by making motor vehicles drive over traffic calming devices, and horizontal deflection which slows motor vehicles by changing the street width or course of travel.

### *Vertical Deflection Speed Tables*

Road humps are broad and gently sloping mounds of asphalt added across the width of a street to slow traffic. They are like speed bumps except they tend to be wider such that the slope of the bump is more gradual. The Mayor and Commissioners of the Town of North East have determined that there may be situations which are conducive to the installation of road hump(s), for the purpose of calming traffic. Specific design standards and criteria are included in the “Town of North East Neighborhood Traffic Management Road Hump Program.” The Road Speed Hump Detail can be found in the Road Code Standard Specifications and Details

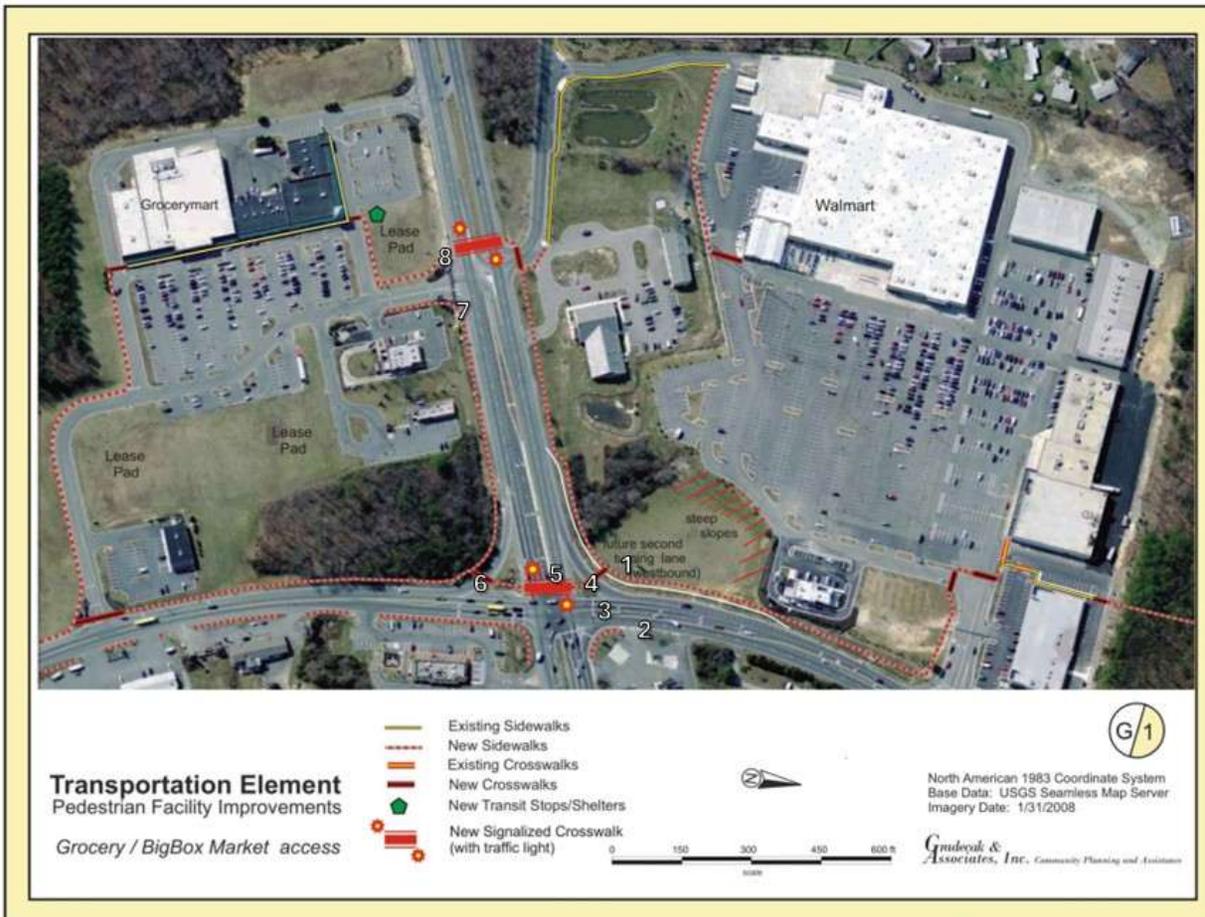
### *Medians and Access Control*

Medians increase safety by separating oncoming motor vehicle traffic and minimizing turning conflicts. They may be constructed with curbs or painted stripes, landscaping, or combined with pedestrian refuge islands. Medians also increase the safety of marked crosswalks at uncontrolled intersections. Medians with landscaping will beautify wide streets by breaking up large expanses of pavement and making the street feel smaller. Medians also often cause natural traffic calming. Median upgrades are recommended for all areas proposed for US Rte. 40 bicycle and pedestrian crossings and other locations, such as MD 272 at the south end of Town. Intense median landscaping can also serve to create an “urban parkway” feel that can help reduce oncoming traffic headlight glare at night and a sense of increased pedestrian safety during the day.

## Maps and Graphics

The following pages provide graphic and spatial detail regarding specific Transportation planning concerns and improvements the Town would like to pursue with ongoing input from citizens, businesses, and State and regional planning partners.

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1. Crossing has been constructed.
2. Recommending a crossing here.
3. Recommend to add crossing to all legs of intersection to support a connected sidewalk network
4. Crossing has been constructed
5. Crossing has been constructed
6. Sidewalk has been constructed up to crosswalk at rt. 40.
7. Sidewalk has been constructed
8. Crosswalk has been constructed



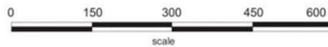
1. See map G1 for 2025 updates to this corridor
2. Sidewalk has been constructed
3. See map G1 for 2025 updates to this corridor



**Transportation Element**  
Pedestrian Facility Improvements

Rolling Mill Road

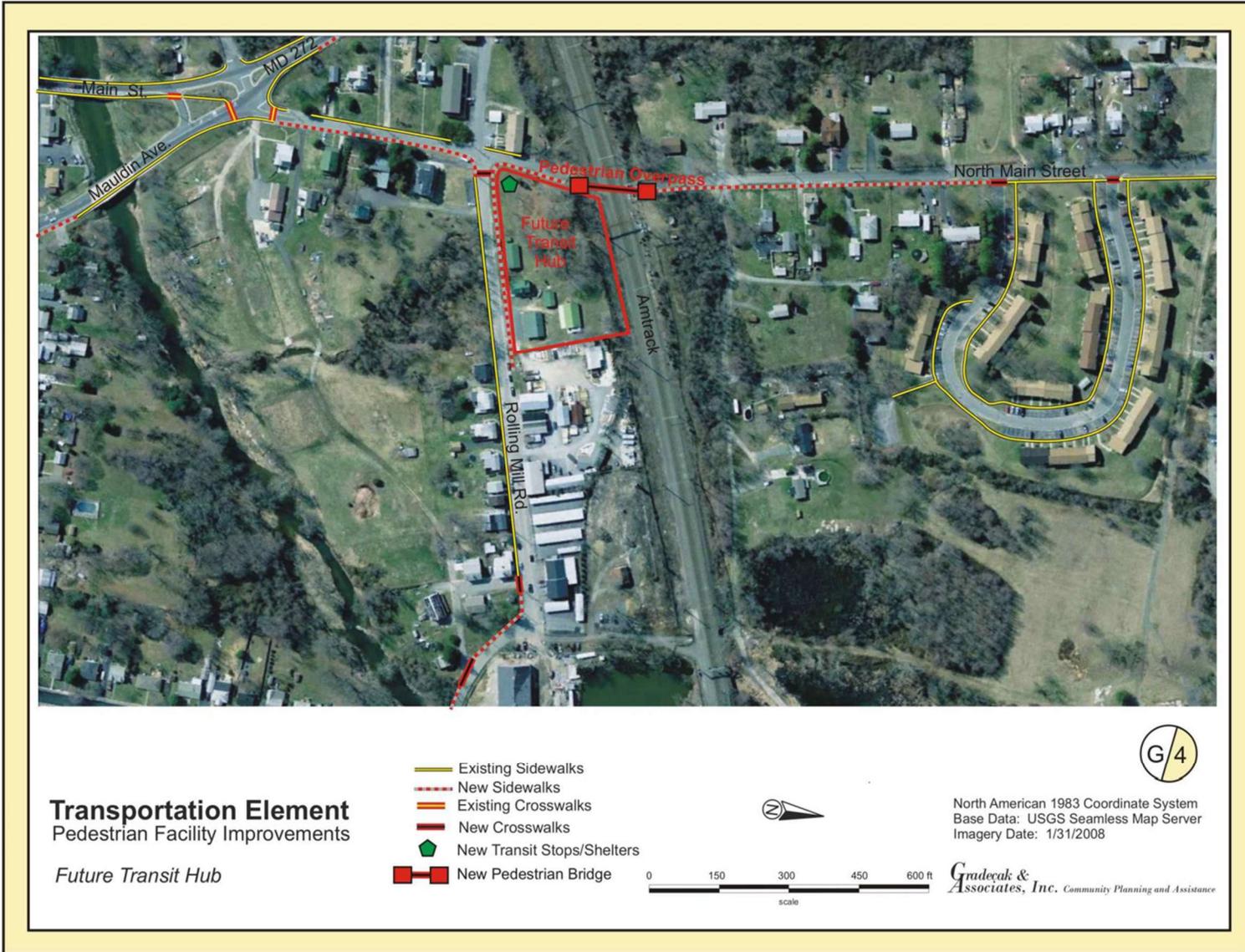
-  Existing Sidewalks
-  New Sidewalks
-  New Crosswalks
-  New Transit Stops/Shelters
-  New/Replacement Bridge

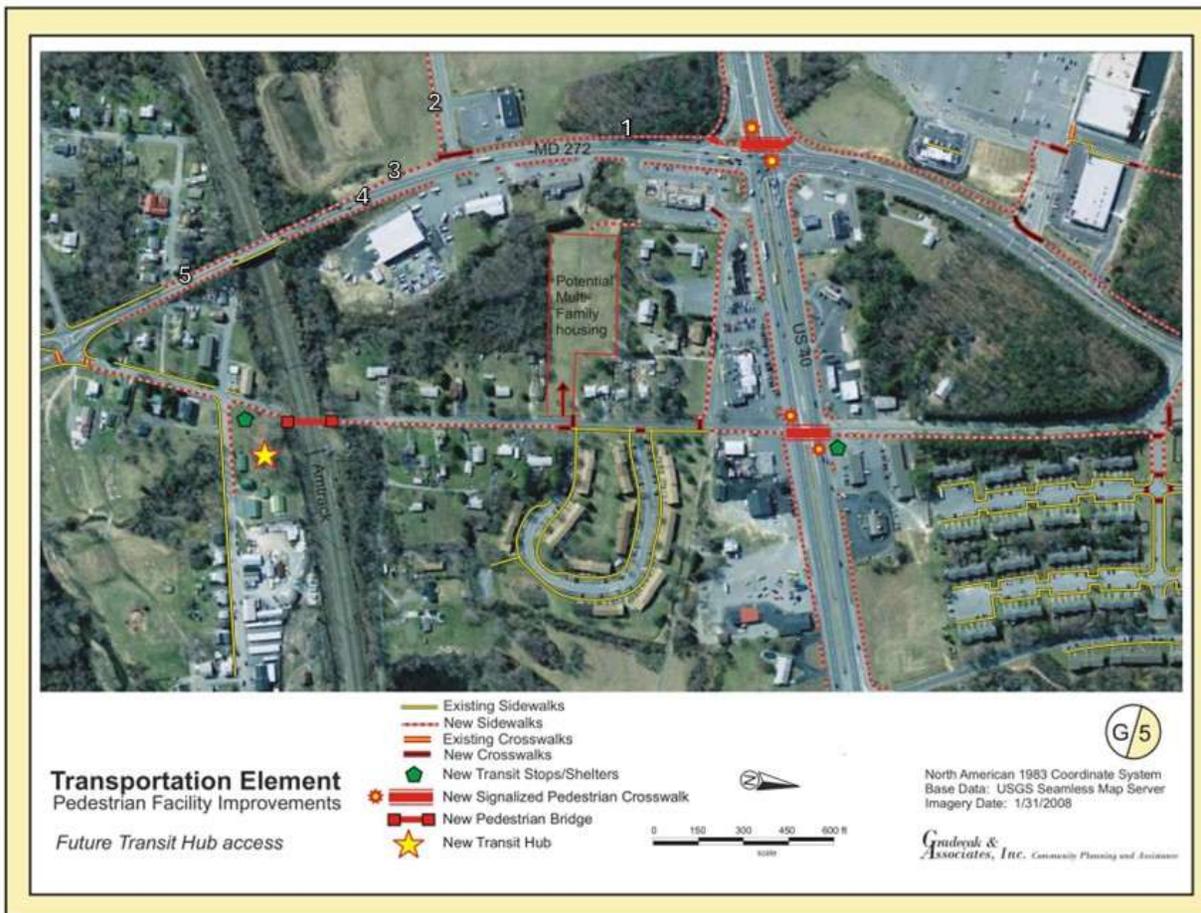


North American 1983 Coordinate System  
Base Data: USGS Seamless Map Server  
Imagery Date: 1/31/2008

*Gradeak & Associates, Inc.* Community Planning and Assistance



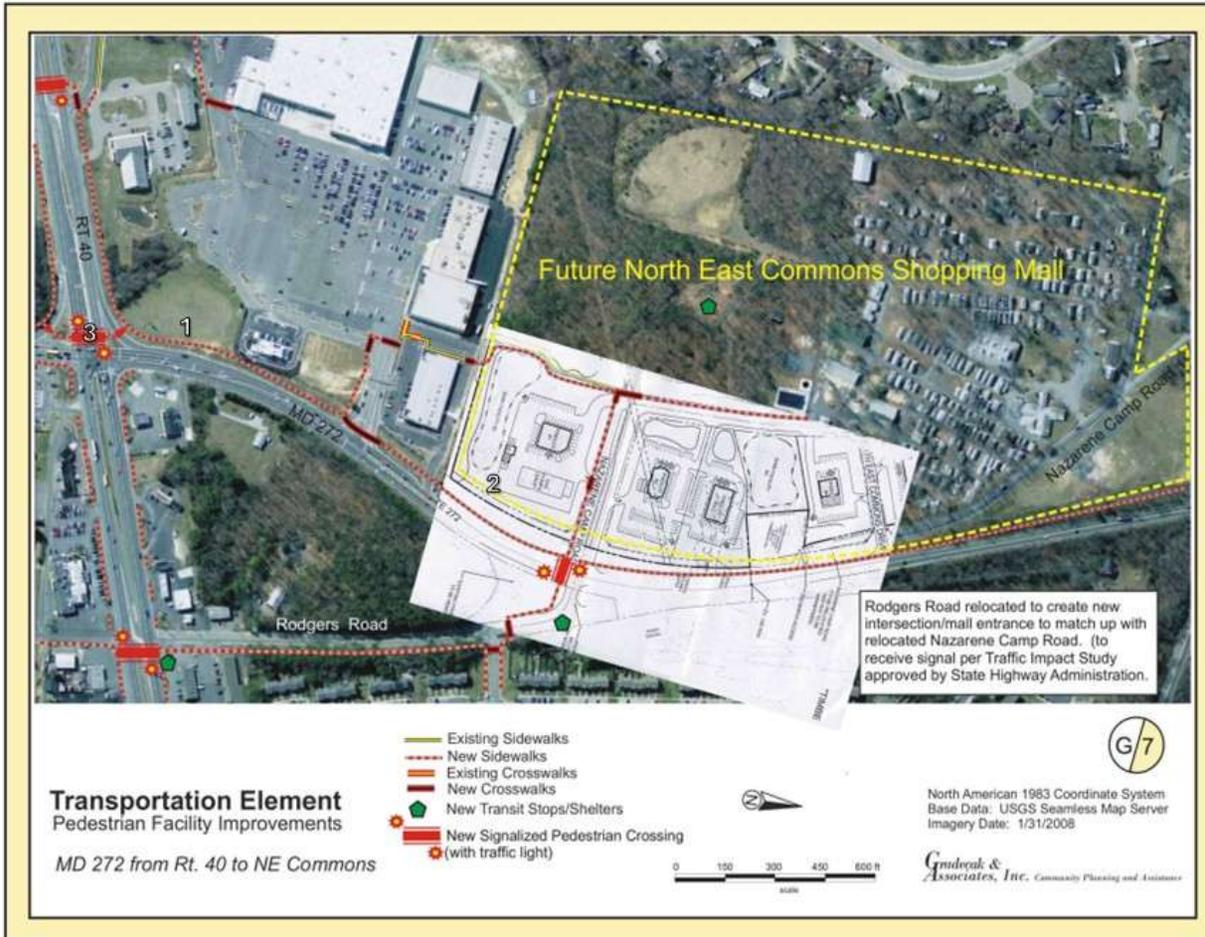




1. Sidewalk constructed
2. Sidewalk constructed
3. Sidewalk constructed
4. Sidewalk constructed
5. Sidewalk constructed



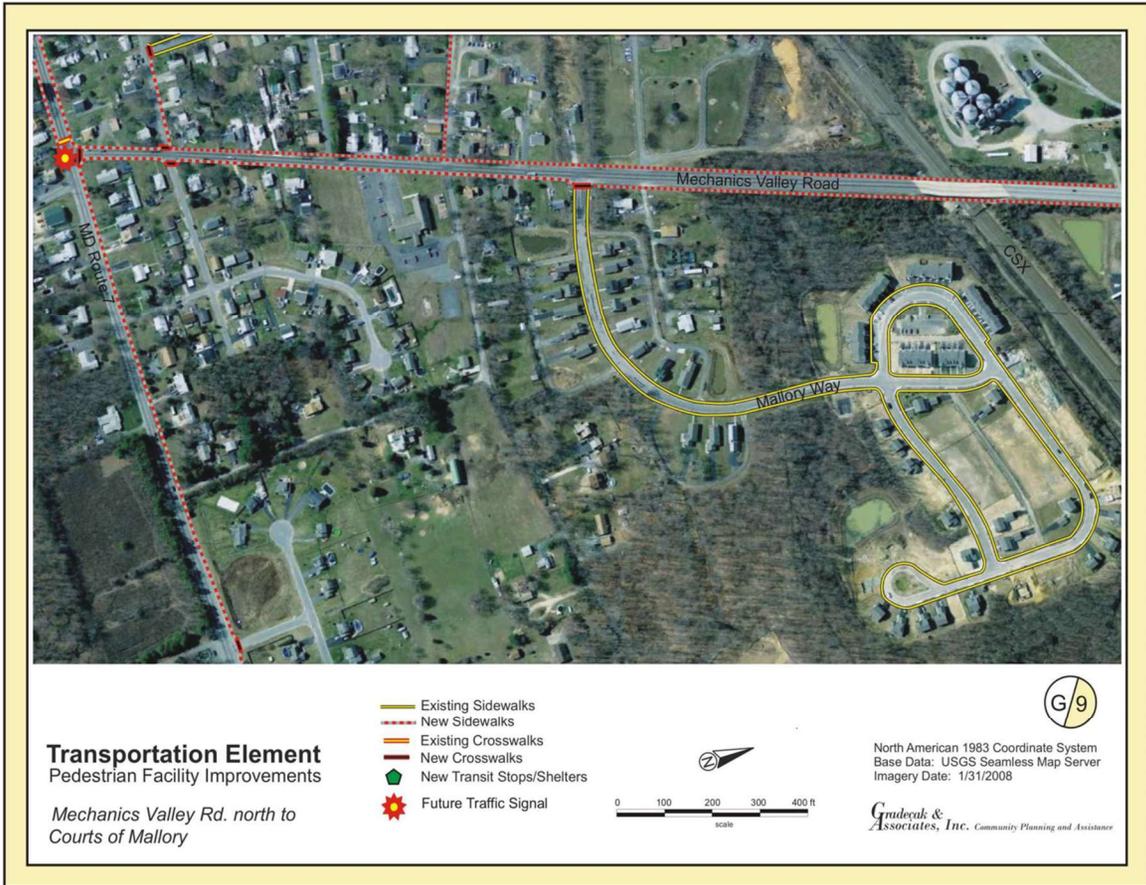
1. Sidewalk has been constructed



1. A portion of this sidewalk has been constructed
2. A portion of this sidewalk has been constructed
3. Review Map G1 for consistency



1. Shelter has been completed
2. Subdivision has been fully constructed



A new link between MD Route 7 at Mechanics Valley Road to the Elk Neck State Forest and Park trail is envisioned as noted in both Trails and Greenways and the Pedestrian improvements in the Transportation Planning and Programming portion of the Chapter/Element.

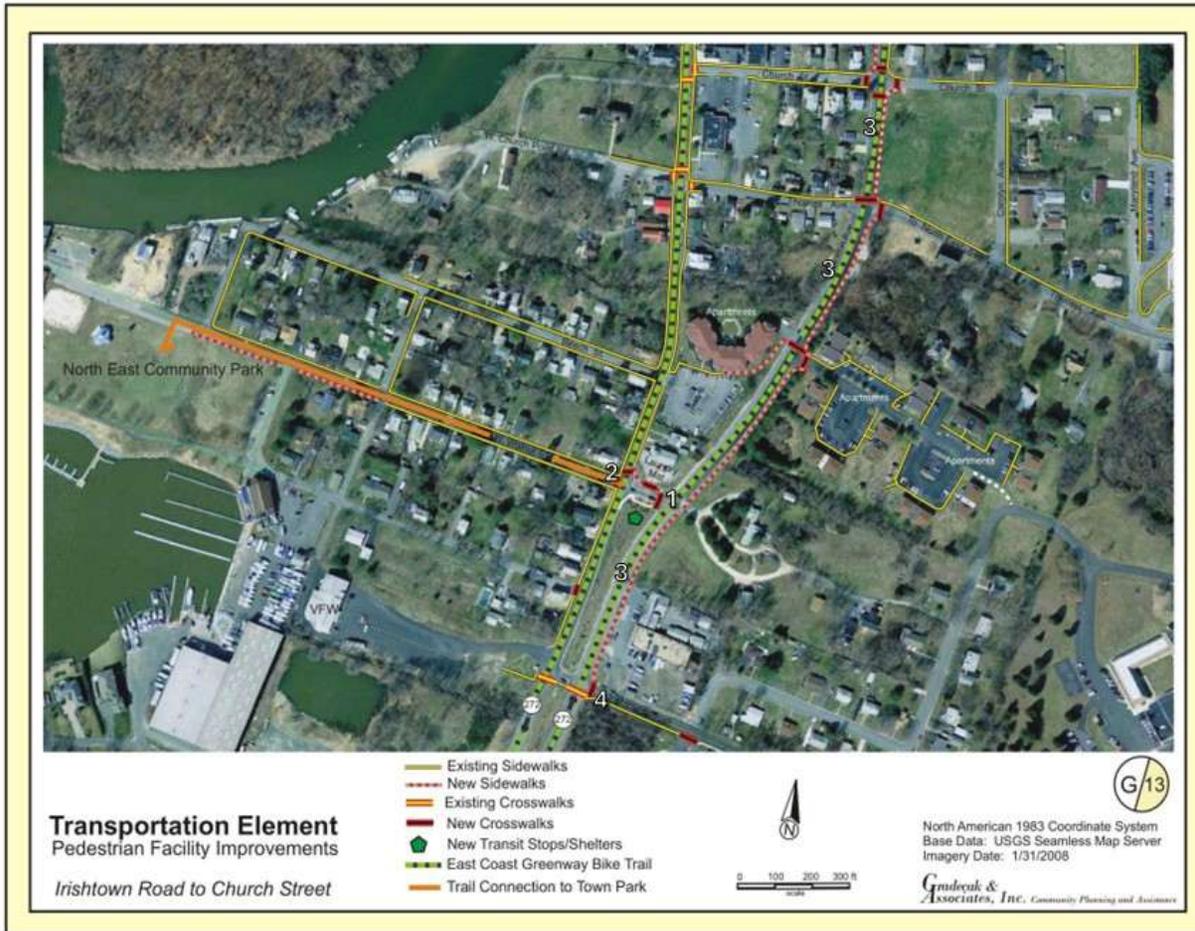


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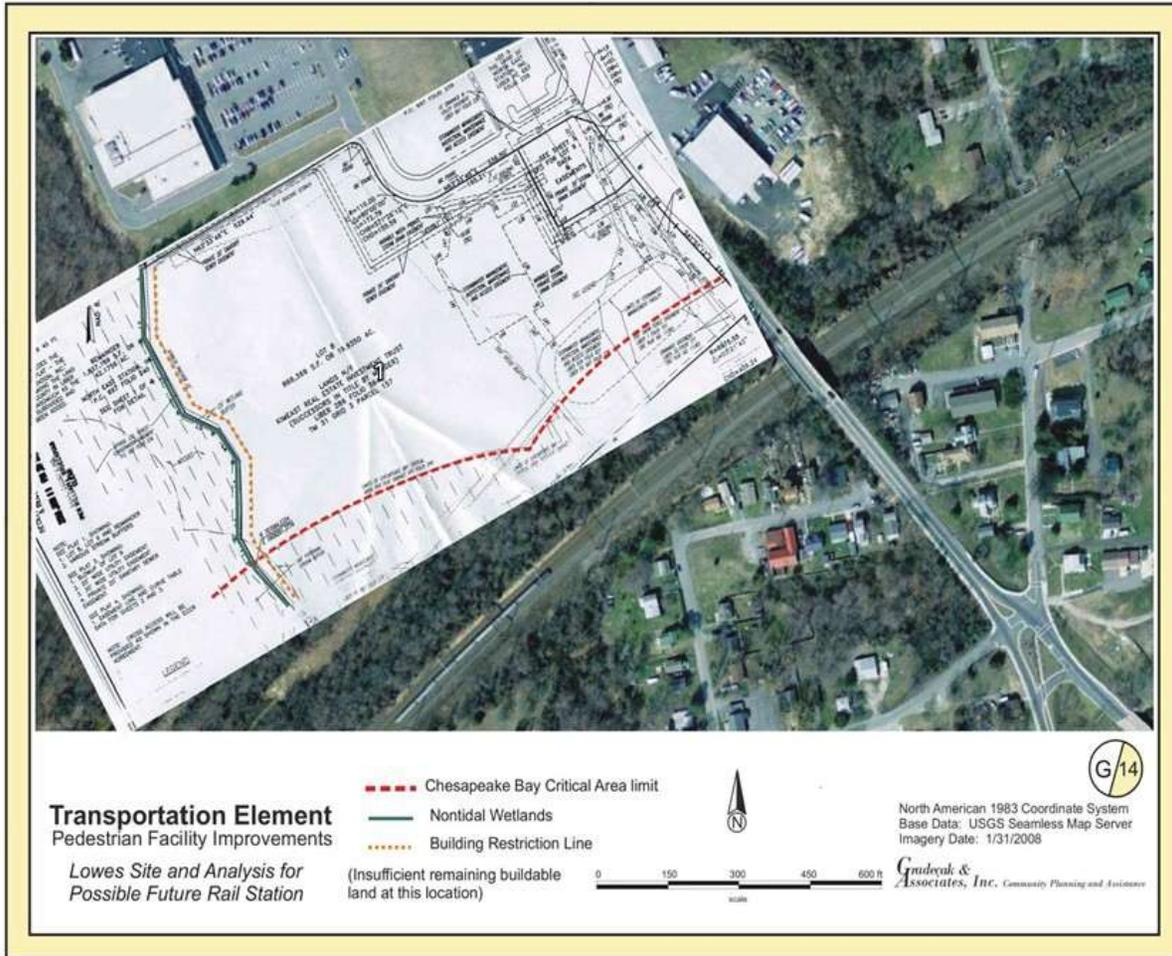




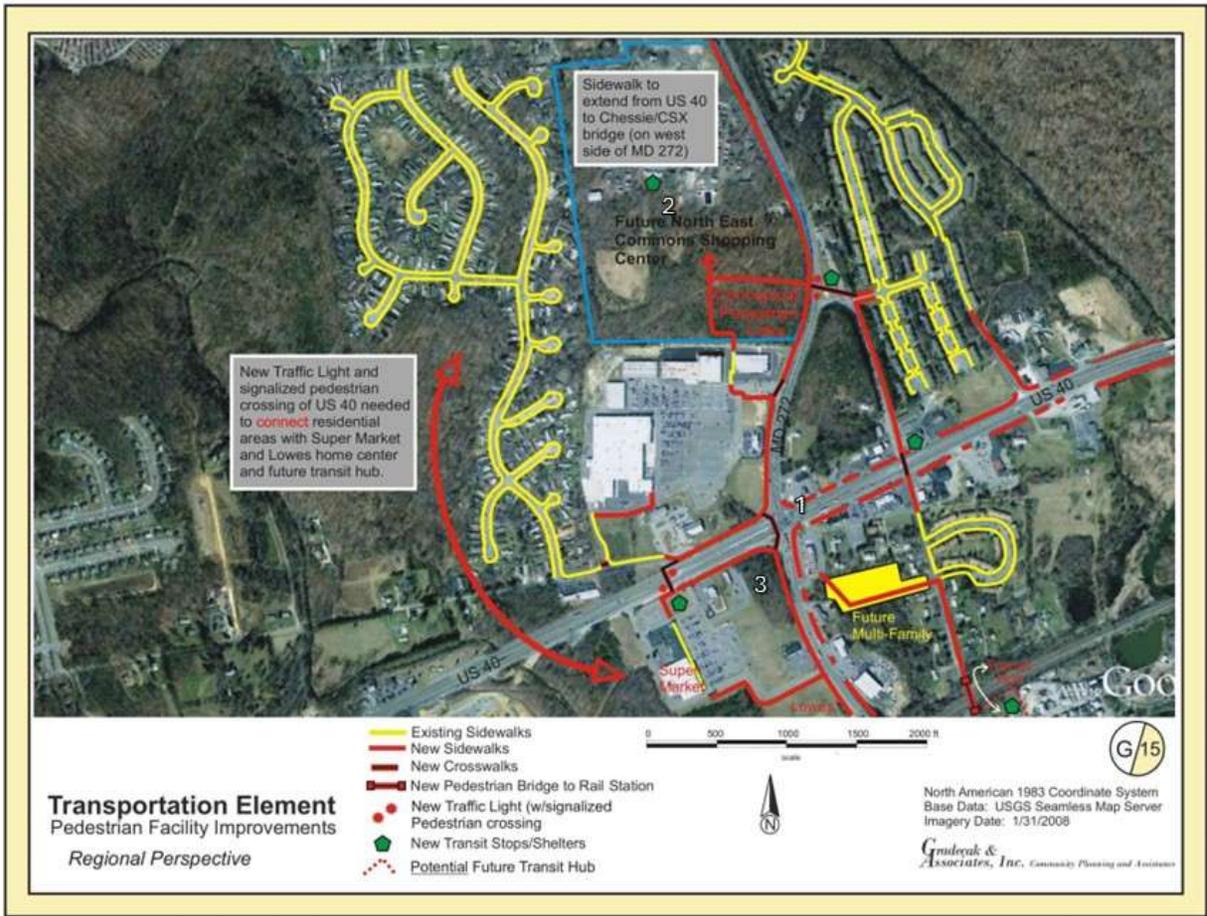
1. This property is now owned by the Town of North East. It will be developed as the North East Preserve.



1. Crosswalk Constructed
2. Crosswalk Constructed
3. Sidewalk Constructed
4. Crosswalk Constructed



1. Lowe's Home Center has been constructed



1. Crosswalk and Pedestrian signal at US Route 40 and 272 have been constructed.

2. Property is North East Gateway. Road and sidewalk improvements have been constructed. A traffic signal has been constructed at intersection of Route 272 and Gateway Drive. A sidewalk leading to North East Plaza has been constructed.

3. Sidewalk on the south side of Route 40, west side of Route 272 has been constructed.

