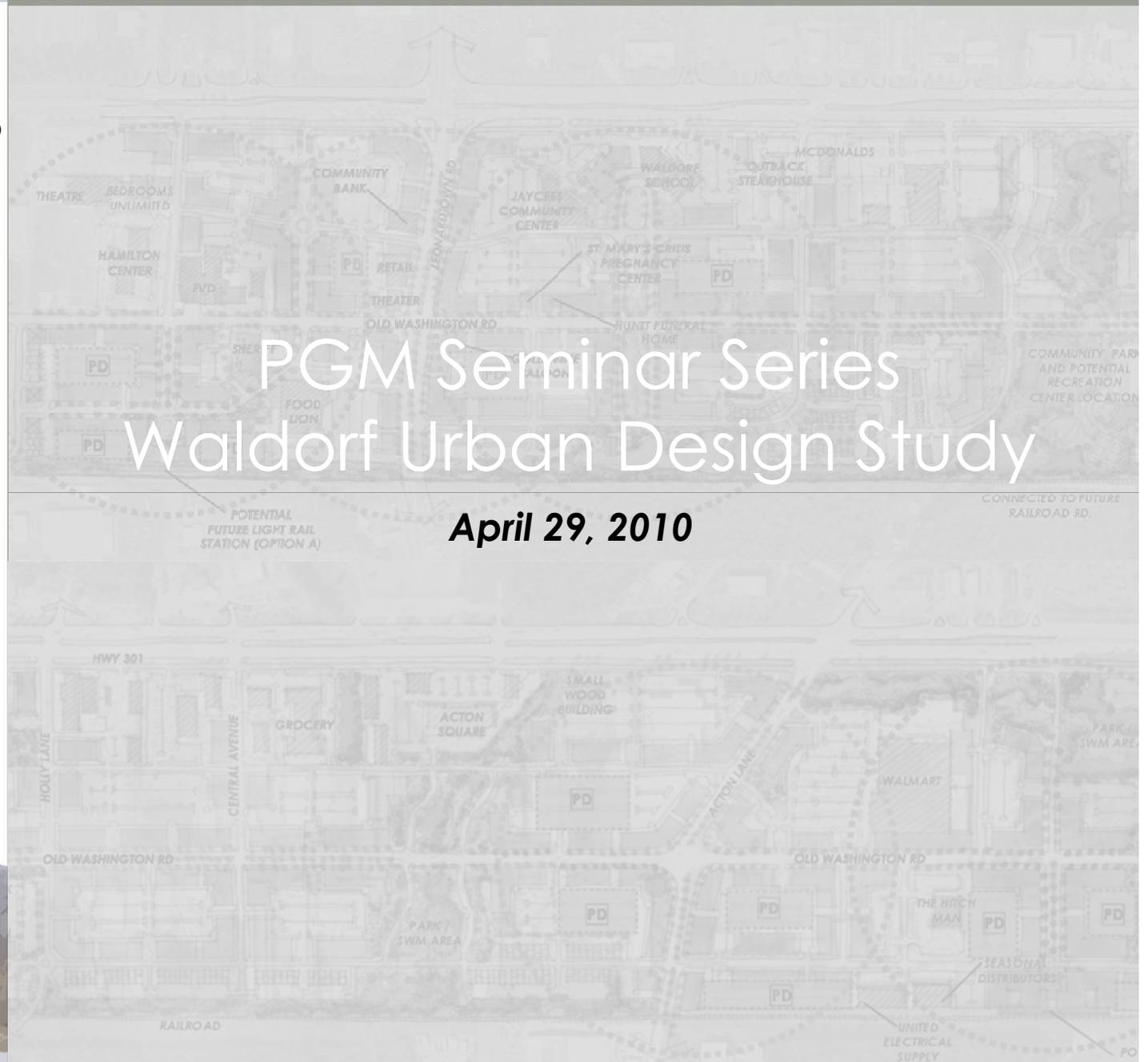


# WALDORF URBAN DESIGN STUDY

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
AND GROWTH MANAGEMENT,  
CHARLES COUNTY, MARYLAND

## PGM Seminar Series Waldorf Urban Design Study

**April 29, 2010**





## *Major Project Goals*

### **1. Create a vibrant, attractive urban center for Waldorf**

*A mix of uses, services, and public amenities in a higher-density, walkable downtown with a unique sense of place*

### **2. Envisioned to serve as a hub for future regional transit – light rail - in Waldorf**

### **3. Attractive and functional streets, public parks and open spaces, pedestrian and bicycle friendly**



# WALDORF URBAN DESIGN STUDY

WALDORF AND ACTON ACTIVITY CENTERS

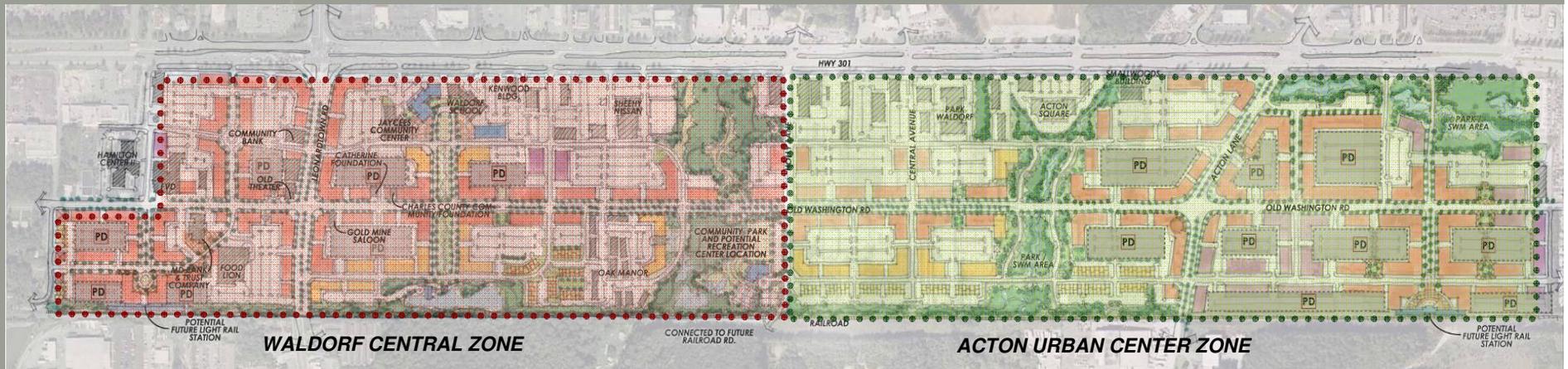
## Downtown Waldorf Study Area





# Six Key Components of Study Legislation

- *Downtown Waldorf Vision Plan and Design Guidelines*
- *Zoning Text Amendment for Two New Zoning Districts:*
  - *Waldorf Central (WC)*
  - *Acton Urban Center (AUC)*
- *Zoning Map Amendment for WC and AUC Zones*
- *Subdivision Regulation Amendment for WC and AUC Zones*
- *Zoning Text Amendment for Revisions to CRR and CER Zones*
- *Zoning Text Amendment for Revisions to the Planned Development Zones process (Development Guidance System)*





# Vision Plan and Design Guidelines

## DOWNTOWN WALDORF

### VISION PLAN and DESIGN GUIDELINES

July 2009



Department of Planning and Growth Management,  
Charles County, MD





## ***Vision Plan and Design Guidelines:***

- ***Downtown Waldorf Vision Plan and Design Guidelines promote consistent design quality within the districts. They provide:***
  - ***Plans and description establishing a Vision Plan for the Downtown Waldorf Area.***
  - ***Proposed grid street network, development blocks, major open space areas, and locations for regional stormwater management.***
  - ***Locations for transit***
  - ***Road classifications and sections – Waldorf Urban Roads***
  - ***Detailed standards for architectural design, materials, landscaping, streetscape improvements, sidewalks, lighting and signs.***

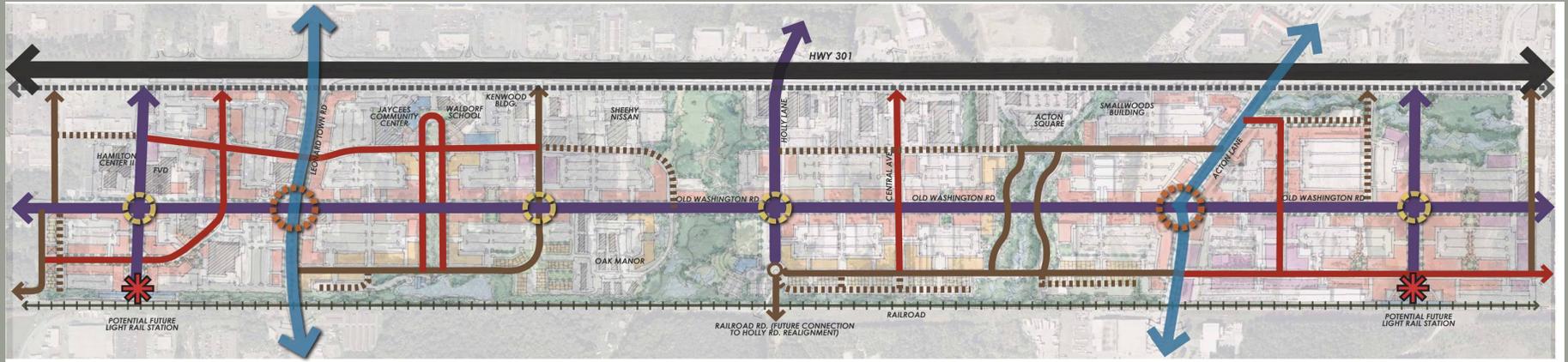


## *Vision Plan Implementation:*

- *Public Sector Investment (infrastructure, open space)*
- *Private Sector Incentives (development projects)*
- *Organization and Management Team*
- *Multi-modal Transportation Planning Team (Local, State, Federal)*



# Street Hierarchy



**STREET HIERARCHY LEGEND:**

- principal arterial
- potential 301 service road
- railroad
- Waldorf urban major collector
- Waldorf urban major collector
- Waldorf urban minor collector
- Waldorf urban local road
- private/service street/alley
- primary intersection
- secondary intersection
- designated site access points
- potential future light rail station



## Design Guidelines

### *Intended to be:*

- *Sensitive to market considerations.*
- *Functional, flexible, responsive to varying owner requirements*

### *Guidelines are classified as:*

- *Mandatory: key guidelines. Follow unless there is strong justification*
- *Recommended:– most, alternatives can be suggested, or*
- *Optional: Suggested enhancements.*



# Examples of the Vision for Downtown Waldorf



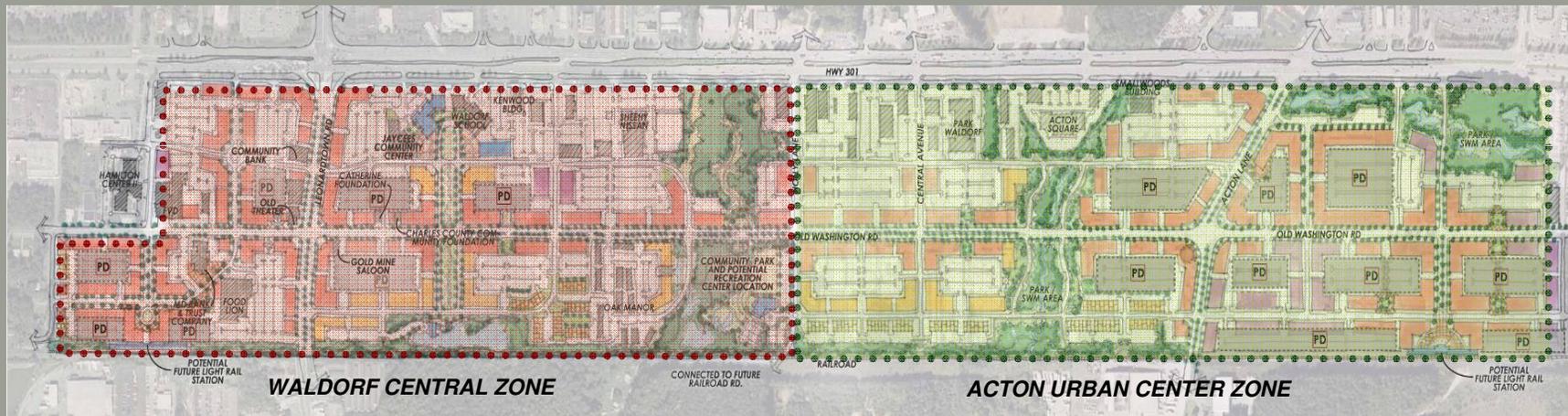


# Waldorf Activity Center Zones:

## Waldorf Central (WC) Acton Urban Center (AUC)



# Downtown Waldorf: Two new zoning districts





## Two New Zones

### **Waldorf Central Zone (WC Zone):**

- *Southern half of the study area.*
- *2 to 5 story buildings*
- *Traditional materials and architectural themes*
- *Mix of permitted uses*

### **Acton Urban Center Zone (AUC Zone):**

- *Northern half of the study area*
- *3 to 10 story buildings (2 stories permitted for townhouses)*
- *Modern architectural themes*
- *Mix of permitted uses includes larger employment uses*



## Permitted Uses - WC and AUC Zones

- **Mix of permitted uses – those which support a walkable downtown and rail transit**
- **Mixed use buildings defined as a new use category**
- **Mixed use buildings are encouraged**
- **Residential uses in mixed use buildings must be above ground floor**
- **Mixed use and/or commercial uses required on major collectors and arterials**
- **Drive-through windows not permitted for new uses, except for banks**



## Required Density - WC and AUC Zones

- **Townhouses:**
  - Minimum 12 DUs/acre
  - Maximum 36 DUs/acre
- **Apartment/Multifamily:**
  - Minimum 15 DUs/acre
  - No maximum (FAR and height requirements determine scale and intensity)
- **No minimum or maximum density for apartments in mixed-use buildings**



## Required TDRs - WC and AUC Zones

- No TDRs required for first 12 units/acre
- Higher densities allowed with TDRs:
  - Townhouses: 1 TDR per dwelling unit
  - Residential-only multifamily: 1 TDR per 2 dwelling units
  - Apartments in mixed-use buildings: 1 TDR per 3 dwelling units



# Parking

- Reduced requirements for off-street parking
- Maximum off-street parking requirements
- Encouragement of shared parking
- On-street parking allowed
- Parking structures permitted
- Parking to be located to side or rear of buildings; should not dominate streetscape
- On-site bicycle parking required for certain uses



## Streetscape and Open Space Requirements

- Requirements for installation of streetscape amenities - sidewalks, street trees, streetlights, landscaping, etc.
- Front setback area to be used for sidewalks, landscaping, seating areas, etc.
- Sign and lighting requirements
- Required open space may be provided on-site or off-site
- Parks, plazas, community gathering spaces



# Waldorf Activity Center Zones: Subdivision Regulation Revisions



## Subdivision Regulation Revisions

- Ensure consistency with Downtown Waldorf Vision Plan and new zoning regulations for WC and AUC:
  - Shade tree spacing requirements consistent with new Waldorf zones
  - Roads shall be classified as indicated in Downtown Waldorf Vision Plan
  - Traffic volumes for Waldorf Urban Roads shall be as stated in Vision Plan



## Related Zoning Initiatives for areas surrounding Downtown Waldorf

- **Planned Development Zones  
(Floating zones)**
- **Core Mixed-Use Zones**



# Revisions to Core Mixed Use Zones: Core Retail Residential (CRR) and Core Employment Residential (CER)



## Core Mixed Use Zones - Key Initiatives

- Existing mixed-use zones for possible application to commercial areas near Downtown Waldorf
- Revisions to these zones to make them more compatible with Downtown Waldorf



## Core Mixed Use Zones - Revisions

- Revisions to lot, setback and other dimensional requirements to allow more traditional neighborhood development pattern consistent with Downtown Waldorf
- New streetscape requirements similar to those for new Waldorf zones
- More detailed open space requirements:
  - Provide parks, greens, plazas and other public amenities
  - Each use has a minimum required % of open space



## Core Mixed Use Zones - Revisions

- Clarify that 2 units/acre is minimum density
- Personal services use now permitted with conditions in CER
- More flexibility in minimum standards for townhouses



# Revisions to Planned Development Zones



## Planned Development Zones – Summary of Major Revisions

- Revisions to the Planned Development Zones to make them more compatible with the two new Waldorf zones
- Removal of the Development Guidance System (DGS) and replacement with a more streamlined review process and Superior Design Criteria
- Provides a one-step master plan approval process, versus the current requirement for two approvals



## Planned Development Zones – Key New Provisions

- More streamlined process: One-step Master Plan approval; elimination of Step 2 (GDP)
- Elimination of Development Guidance System (DGS). Now, projects evaluated using:
  - Superior Design Criteria
  - Generalized impact mitigation report
- Applicant uses existing Residential Density table (Figure V-1) to determine residential density
- Applicant proposes total commercial square footage in application



## Planned Development Zones – Key New Provisions

- Can submit alternate Design and Development Code in lieu of using Schedule of Zone Regulations
- Public hearings – Planning Commission, County Commissioners
- County Commissioners approve new Planned Development Zone, associated Master Plan and any conditions, and final permitted density or intensity
- Requirement to submit updates of approved Planned Development Zone's progress with each preliminary plans/site plan application



## Superior Design Criteria

### *Definition:*

A design of residential or mixed use developments that contain a residential component that is designed and constructed to demonstrate optimal land planning with greater efficiency, environmental sensitivity, resource conservation, convenience and amenity than required under the base zone regulations (Article VI), or cluster development (Article XIV) regulations, whichever is applicable.

Appendix I sets forth the specific criteria for superior design



## Superior Design Criteria - *Rural Development* *Project Criteria*

- Open space
- Forest conservation design
- Agricultural use lots
- Shared pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Trail system
- Limited use of flag-shaped lots and clearing
- Homes have views of open space
- Environmental stewardship
- Preservation of scenic views
- Protection of historic viewshed features
- Street tree caliper larger than required
- Vehicle or pedestrian inter-parcel connections
- Loop roads are provided
- Minimize use of cul-de-sacs



# Superior Design Criteria - *Development District* *Project Criteria*

- Open space
- Forest conservation design
- Mix of housing types
- Diverse architectural design types
- Community gathering facilities
- Shared pedestrian and bicycle facilities
- Covered bus stops
- Trail system
- Environmental stewardship
- Street tree caliper larger than required/relocation of existing trees
- Sidewalks (at least 5 feet) on both sides of street
- Vehicle or pedestrian inter-parcel connections
- Grid street network
- Additional guest parking exceeding requirement



## Planned Development Zones: Other Key Provisions

- **MX and TOD: minimum 10 acres**
- **PRD: minimum 20 acres**
- **Revised open space requirements in MX and TOD**
  - **Usable open space required**
- **TOD must be located inside or within 1/4 mile of Urban Core**
- **Changes to required percentage mix of uses in MX and TOD**
- **Changes in which zones PDZs may be located**
- **Duplex, townhouses and multifamily (garden apt, mid-rise) now permitted with conditions in RH and RM**



**For more information, contact:**

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**Final copies of legislation will be posted to website at**  
**[www.charlescounty.org/pgm](http://www.charlescounty.org/pgm)**