

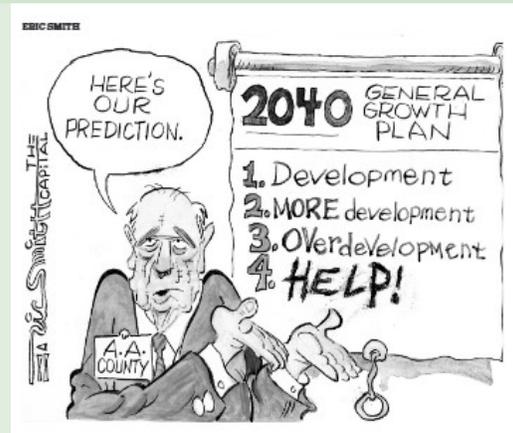


ALLIANCE

FOR LIVABLE COMMUNITIES

Perfect Growth Storm Forming for West County

Three growth fronts are
moving toward collision



A Perfect Growth Storm for West County

Western Anne Arundel County will soon be at the confluence of three major growth drivers: (1) a manpower ramp-up at Ft. Meade, (2) the “Smart Growth” emphasis in Plan2040, and (3) the transit-oriented development project promoted by Greater Washington Partners (GWP). The collision of these could result in a “perfect storm” of growth. Current residents are advised to seek shelter.

Hiring at Ft. Meade

The continuing ramp up of the cyber and defense industries in the Ft. Meade area is projected to add 10,000 new jobs in the next decade. Some of this work may be nearby at contracting companies and some may be on base. In either event demand for 10,000 new housing units within reasonable commuting distance is likely to be generated, and locations nearby will probably be preferred. Demand increases of nearby office space should also be expected.

Smart Growth in Plan2040

In addition to redevelopment, the “smart growth” orientation of Plan2040 targets new development in town centers, such as Odenton, and transit-oriented areas, of which there are three near Ft Meade. Projected market demand for housing in the County is 29,000 units by 2035, and Plan2040 calls for most of the associated development and redevelopment to go to the smart growth areas in the western and northern portions of the County.

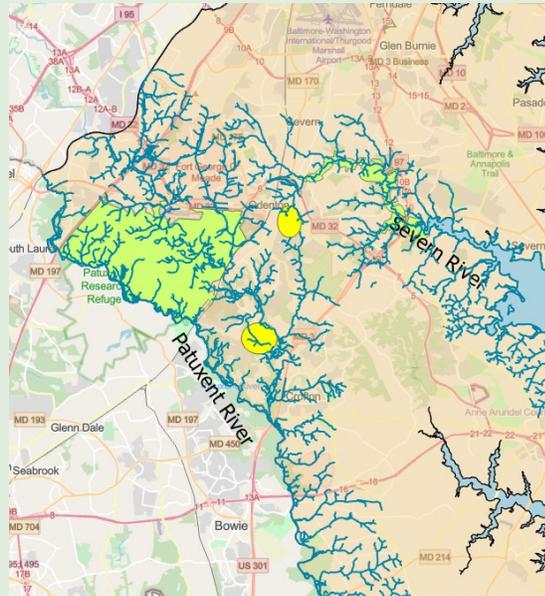
Regional Transit-oriented development (TOD)

The Greater Washington Partnership which may be best described as a regional Chamber of Commerce comprising many of the large corporations in the Baltimore-Washington area, has funded a [study of transit-oriented development in Anne Arundel County](#), that has a strong focus on dense development in Odenton, although it also touches on the Laurel Race Track neighborhood and Glen Burnie. Based on statements of CE Pittman

and CAO Matt Power, the AACo Administration seems solidly supportive of their proposals. Strong advocacy by the GWP group is expected to continue.

What about environmental impacts?

The targeted growth areas around Odenton and Ft. Meade are in the headwaters of the Patuxent River, and, to a lesser extent, the Severn River (see green areas on the map). They are immediately upstream of the of the 8500-acre, environmentally sensitive, Patuxent Environmental Science Center and some are near the Severn Run Natural Environment Area to the east. A substantial portion of the land in the area is designated Greenway.



During the past year flooding of areas in Odenton and the 2000-unit Two Rivers subdivision to the south (see yellow regions on the map) has demonstrated the significant amount of storm water runoff that is already produced by development in the area. Additional residential and commercial development will not only exacerbate flooding problems, but also increase pollution of the Patuxent and Severn rivers by storm water runoff from many new acres of impervious surfaces.

A bedroom community for Ft. Meade, Washington and Baltimore?

Real estate agents are fond of saying that location is everything, and TOD in the Odenton area would provide convenient housing for employees of Ft. Meade as well as commuters to Washington and Baltimore.

It's reasonable to ask why Anne Arundel County would want to use taxpayer dollars to promote and subsidize this bedroom community for out-of-County workers. Add to the dollar costs the likely decline in quality of life for the current residents of the area and the predictable environmental impacts discussed above, and the investment is substantial. However, payback on these investments could be disappointing. The proximity of PG and Howard counties assures that only a fraction of any associated affordable housing and support jobs will go to current AACo residents, so that even this fringe benefit could be diluted.

Anne Arundel County should be wary of this brewing perfect storm of growth, study it carefully, and take appropriate action as needed.

About the Alliance

The Anne Arundel Alliance for Livable Communities is a non-partisan coalition of 25 local and state organizations advocating for sustainable growth and environmental protections to safeguard and enhance residents' quality of life.

Anne Arundel Alliance for Livable Communities



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