

# Chapter 1 Planning Context for the Sub-Area Plan

## Introduction

This Bryans Road-Indian Head Sub-Area Plan (the Plan) has been developed to guide future land use and development in the Bryans Road-Indian Head area of Charles County, Maryland. The Plan addresses land use and development, transportation, environment, open space, and public facilities such as water and sewer, parks, and schools. The Plan also establishes a “vision” for the area; an overall image of what the Bryans Road-Indian Head communities want to be and how they should look in the future.

Located on the Potomac River, 25 miles from Washington D.C., the Bryans Road-Indian Head Sub-Area covers approximately 17.5 square miles, a little under four percent of Charles County’s land area of 458 square miles (Figures 1 and 2). As of 2000, the Sub-Area was home to approximately 10,800 people, nearly nine percent of the County’s population. The Naval Surface Warfare Center, Indian Head Division, one of the largest employers in the County with over 3,800 jobs, is located adjacent to the Sub-Area. Important economic assets located in the Sub-Area include the County’s only airport, and the Bryans Road and Indian Head business areas that serve much of western Charles County. The Bryans Road-Indian Head Sub-Area contains valuable environmental features including portions of the Mattawoman Creek Natural Environment Area and Chapmans Landing<sup>1</sup>, a 2,175-acre, mostly forested tract purchased by the State of Maryland in 1998.

## The Sub-Area Within Charles County

The Bryans Road-Indian Head Sub-Area is part of Charles County’s “Development District”. Located in the north and northwest part of the County, and covering approximately 83 square miles, the Development District has been designated by the County as its principal center of population, services, and employment. The Development District is planned to accommodate 75 percent of the county’s future population growth.

In 1997 the County adopted a Comprehensive Plan that addresses land use, growth management, and development for the whole county. The Comprehensive Plan noted that detailed plans were needed for parts of the county experiencing rapid growth or facing special issues. These detailed “Sub-Area Plans” would offer an opportunity to examine issues and explore opportunities in greater detail than was possible in the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan divided the Development District into three sub-areas: Waldorf, Central, and Bryans Road-Indian Head.

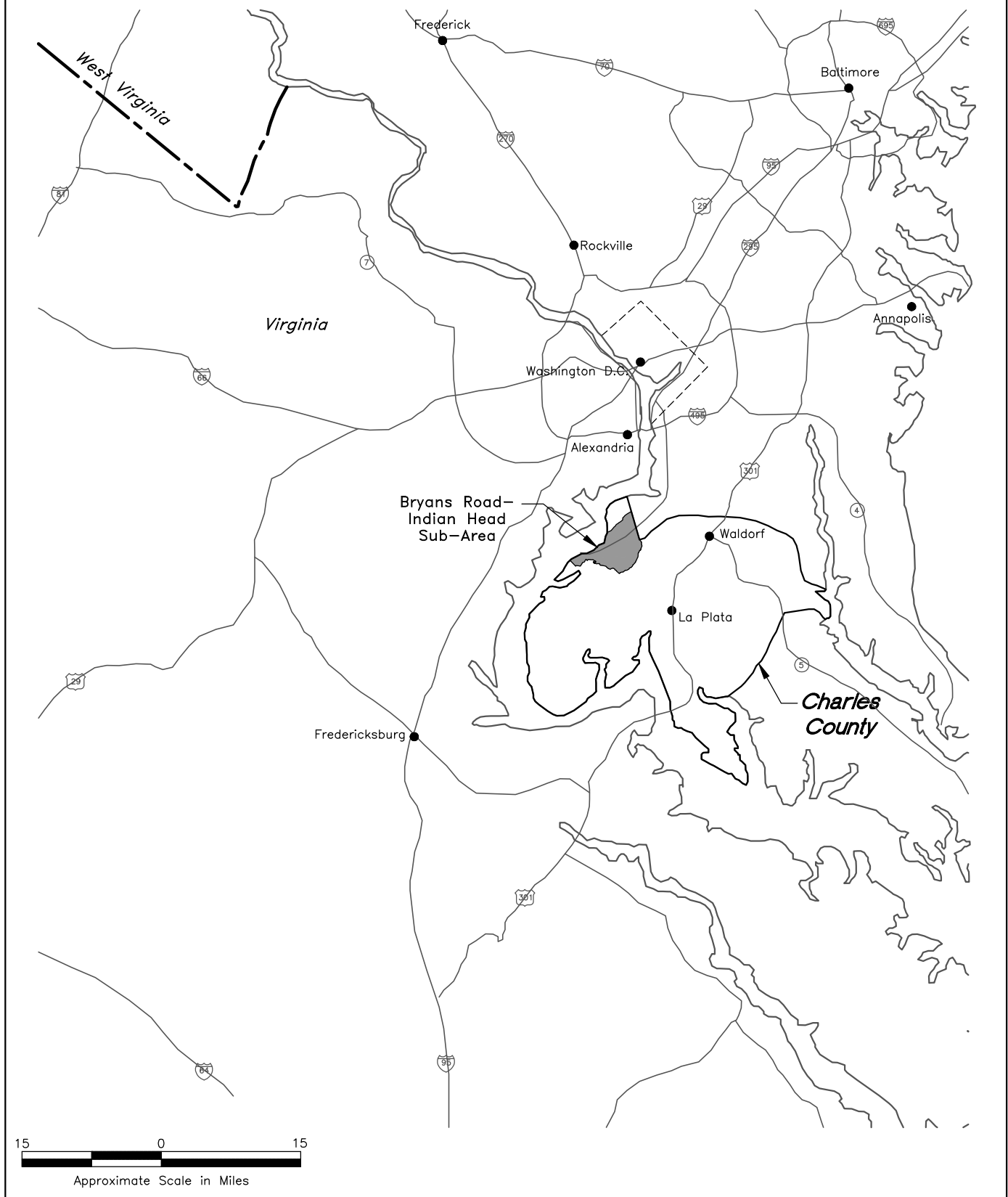
The Sub-Area Plan is prepared within the context of Charles County’s growth management program which includes the Comprehensive Plan, Water and Sewerage Master Plan, Land Preservation and Recreation Plan, and Zoning and Subdivision Regulations.

The incorporated Town of Indian Head is integral to the Sub-Area and participated fully in the development of the Sub-Area Plan. Because the Town has planning authority within the town boundaries, the Plan makes no specific recommendations for land in the Town and the Plan has no legal authority within the Town. Nevertheless, efforts were made to ensure that the Sub-Area Plan’s recommendations were compatible with and supportive of the Town of Indian Head.

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<sup>1</sup> This property is also referred to as Chapman’s Forest. The property will receive an “official” name at the conclusion of a state planning process anticipated in 2001. Pending that decision, this Plan refers to the property as Chapman’s Landing.

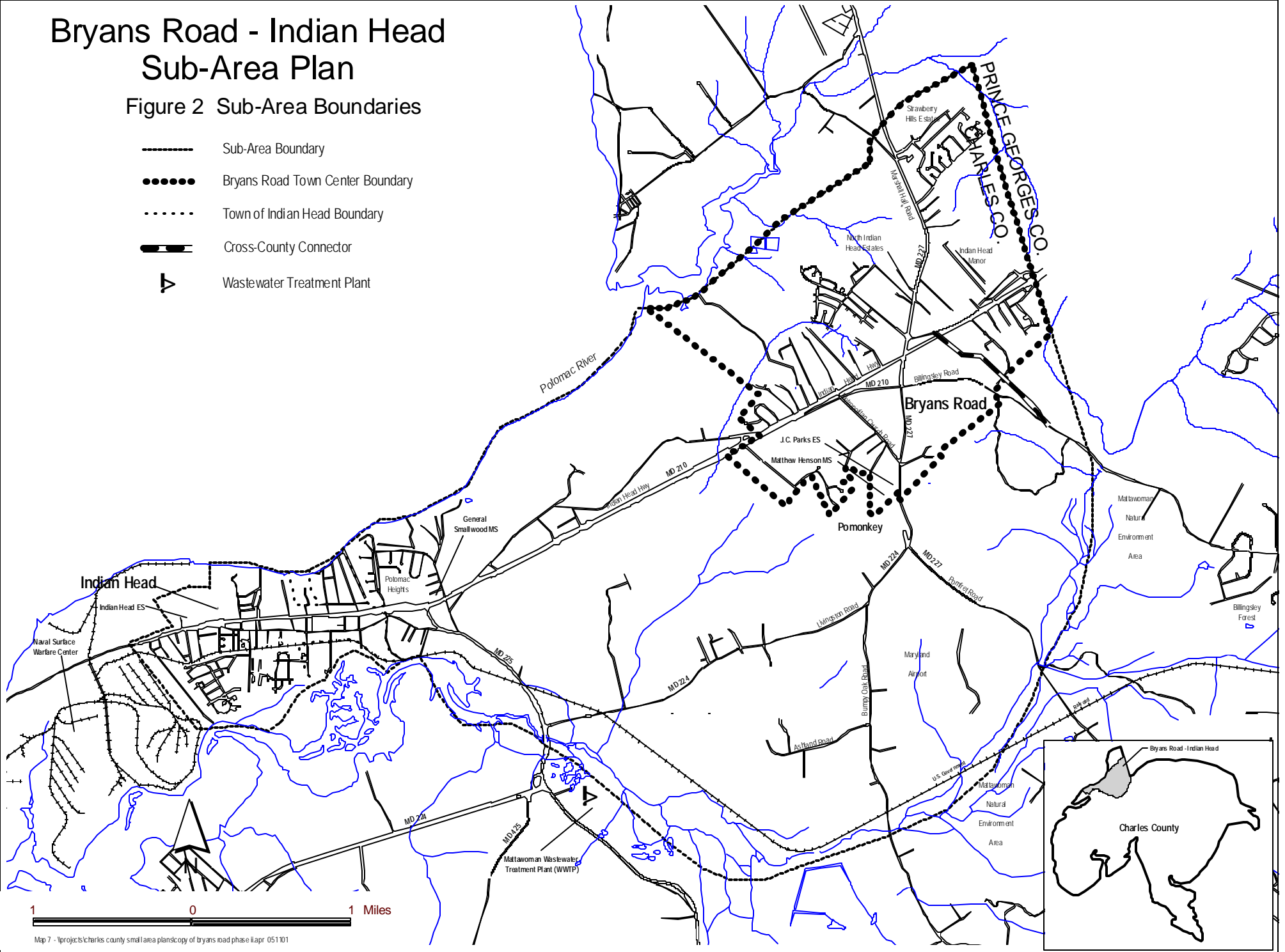
**Figure 1**  
**Bryans Road-Indian Head Sub-Area Location**  
**Charles County, Maryland**



# Bryans Road - Indian Head Sub-Area Plan

Figure 2 Sub-Area Boundaries

-  Sub-Area Boundary
-  Bryans Road Town Center Boundary
-  Town of Indian Head Boundary
-  Cross-County Connector
-  Wastewater Treatment Plant



1 0 1 Miles

## Surrounding Areas

The Bryans Road-Indian Head Sub-Area anchors the western side of Charles County's Development District. East of the Bryans Road-Indian Head Sub-Area lies the central portion of the Development District, which is planned for mostly residential development.

South of the Sub-Area is the Deferred Development District, an area ultimately envisioned for development on public water and sewer, but where higher density development is not planned to occur until there is economic need or lack of developable land elsewhere in the Development District.

North of the Sub-Area within Charles County is the Marshall Hall area. This area is outside the county's planned water and sewer service area and is designated Rural Conservation in the Comprehensive Plan.

Northeast of the Sub-Area are the Accokeek and Moyaone/West Accokeek areas of Prince George's County. In Prince George's County's Subregion V Planning Area Master Plan, Accokeek is envisioned as a "Corridor Suburban Village" with approximately 5,100 dwelling units and 6,000 jobs at full development. The MD 210/MD 228 corridor is envisioned as a major mixed-use area, and it has seen considerable retail development in recent years. The Moyaone/West Accokeek area is envisioned as a low density "Rural Living Area".

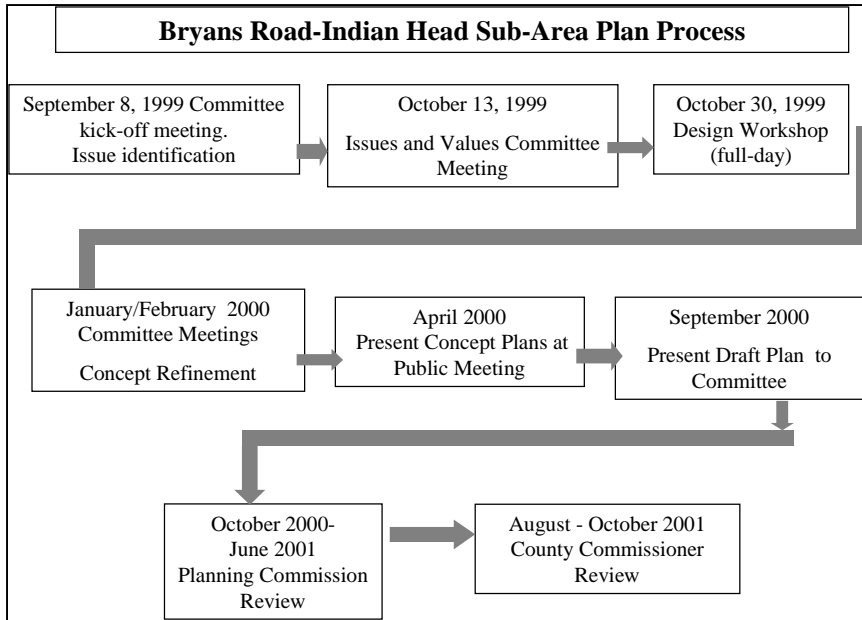
## The Planning Process

The Sub-Area Plan was developed over an approximately ten month process (Figure 3). The County Commissioners appointed a Citizens' Work Group to represent interest groups and affected parties, and assist in developing the plan. The County's Department of Planning and Growth Management, with the assistance of a team of consultants, prepared the plan. Two public workshops were held on October 30, 1999 and April 12, 2000. The Citizens' Work Group forwarded the plan to the Planning Commission on September 13, 2000.

The Planning Commission held a public hearing on the Plan on January 22, 2001 holding open the record until February 5, 2001. The Planning Commission reviewed and discussed public testimony at two work sessions on April 23 and May 7, 2001, and forwarded the Plan to the County Commissioners on June 18, 2001. The County Commissioners held a public hearing on August 27, 2001 and, following a work session, approved the Plan on October 23, 2001.



**Figure 3 Sub-Area Plan Planning Process**



**Issues**

The Sub-Area Plan is “issue driven”, in the sense that it focuses most attention on the issues participants in the planning process identified as being important. The Citizens’ Work Group and participants at the October 30, 1999 workshop ranked these issues in order of importance. The top ranked issues were as follows (see Table 1 for the full results and description of the exercises):

	First Exercise: All Issues Ranked		Second Exercise: Top Five Issues Selected	
Issue Rank	Issue #		Issue#	
<b>Top</b>	1	Traffic	1	Traffic
<b>Second</b>	23	Ensuring the interests of the US Naval Surface Warfare Center (NSWC) are protected.	4	Environment. Need to protect Mattawoman Creek and associated natural resources.
<b>Third</b>	5	Avoiding creation of a commercial strip along MD 210	6	Schools. Need for additional school capacity; overcrowding at elementary and high school.
<b>Fourth</b>	17	Long term protection for the area’s water supply.	17	Long term protection for the area’s water supply.
<b>Fifth</b>	16	Improving residential and commercial development design standards, including density considerations.	3	Bryans Road Town Center. Need to create a livable, and well designed town center in a good location.

Only two issues, traffic and water supply, were in the top five for both exercises. Also, many of the other issues were not ranked significantly lower than the top five. The results suggest a wide diversity of opinion within the Sub-Area regarding issues of concern.

**Table 1 Issue Ranking Results from October 30, 1999 Bryans Road-Indian Head Sub-Area Plan Work Group Meeting (39 participants)**

Issue #		Score (all issues scored) (1)	Average Score Max =5	Rank	Score (top 5 issues) (2)	Rank
1	<b>Traffic.</b> Access management on MD 210, public transportation, heavy traffic on rural roads such as Bumpy Oak Rd, Billingsley Road, improve pedestrian circulation.	163	4.2	1	74	1
4	<b>Environment.</b> Need to protect Mattawoman Creek and associated natural resources.	141	3.6	6	50	2
6	<b>Schools.</b> Need for additional school capacity; overcrowding at elementary and high school.	133	3.4	11	44	3
17	<b>Aquifer protection.</b> Need long term protection for the area's water supply.	144	3.7	4	40	4
3	<b>Bryans Road Town Center.</b> Need to create a livable, well located and designed town center. Identify improvements, services, facilities needed to help Bryans Road succeed as a Town Center.	132	3.4	13	39	5
9	<b>Quality of life services.</b> Need for recreation facilities, restaurants, attractive places to go (movie theater), identify opportunities to provide waterfront access for recreation.	141	3.6	6	38	6
15	<b>Lack of public water and sewer.</b> Limits economic development potential. Need extensions and a regional system.	139	3.6	9	36	7
22	<b>Maryland Airport/Industrial Park.</b> Identify how to best tie these areas into overall development of the area.	141	3.6	6	30	8
5	<b>MD 210.</b> Need to avoid creating commercial strip along the highway.	147	3.8	3	25	9
18	<b>Employment Center.</b> Need for an employment center, allowing people to work in the area.	121	3.1	18	24	10
24	<b>Chapmans Landing.</b> Role in sub-area. Need to make recommendations on future use	133	3.4	11	24	10
23	<b>US Naval Surface Warfare Center.</b> Ensure the base's interests are protected.	149	3.8	2	22	12
8	<b>Appearance/Image of the area,</b> particularly along MD 210.	138	3.5	10	18	13
21	<b>MD 210/Cross County Connector intersection.</b> How should this area develop?	128	3.3	15	17	14
13	<b>Relationship between Bryans Road and Indian Head.</b> What is the effect of Town Center designation? Potential for joint marketing, need for improved business relations between Indian Head and Bryan's Road.	117	3.0	20	16	15
16	<b>Development Design.</b> Identify need for improved residential and commercial development design standards, including density considerations.	143	3.7	5	16	15
20	<b>Bryans Road Commercial Core.</b> How should it develop/redevelop in the future? How should residential development be integrated in and around this area.	130	3.3	14	16	15
10	<b>Tourism.</b> Need to improve facilities/services for tourists, make better use of waterfront.	127	3.3	16	14	18
2	<b>Public Safety.</b> Provision of adequate fire, sheriff, and emergency management services (EMS)	126	3.2	17	12	19
19	<b>Alternative transportation options.</b> Need to take advantage of opportunities such as River Jet Service to D.C.	116	3.0	22	8	20
14	<b>Housing and services for seniors.</b> Need for senior housing, services for seniors, and consideration for seniors' needs in development design e.g. walkability.	118	3.0	19	7	21
11	<b>Crime,</b> such as from increased development in and around the airport.	117	3.0	20	1	23
12	<b>Civic buildings.</b> Need for such buildings/uses such as an arts center, cultural activities	106	2.7	23	1	23
7	<b>Handicapped access.</b> Need to provide better access to public and commercial facilities	99	2.5	24	0	24
(1) Respondents ranked importance of each issue on a scale of 1 to 5. 5=very important, 1=not important						
(2) Respondents picked top 5 issues. Top issue scored as 5, next as 4, next as 3 etc.						