

St. Leonard Town Center Master Plan Update

Oct. 6, 2025 Public Input Meeting

Questions & Answers

From July 23 to Aug. 25, 2025, the Department of Planning & Zoning (P&Z) made an online survey available to the public in preparation for the St. Leonard Town Center Master Plan Update. Respondents were asked whether the town center should remain designated town center or be designated rural commercial.

In October 2025, P&Z held a public input meeting on the survey results.

In November 2025, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and the Planning Commission directed P&Z to explore the options of designating the St. Leonard Town Center a “major” or “minor” town center through the town center master plan update process. The designation of Rural Commercial is no longer being considered to avoid creating nonconforming uses. P&Z anticipates initiating the St. Leonard Town Center Master Plan update in late 2027/early 2028.

Below are answers to residents’ questions, asked during the public input meeting in October 2025.

Process & Timeframe

What is the process and timeframe for updating the Town Center Master Plan?

Updating the Town Center Master Plan is a multi-step process that typically takes 18 months or longer and may extend to two years or more. The timeframe depends on:

- The number and type of public meetings and workshops.
- Guidance needed from the Planning Commission.
- Briefings and direction from the BOCC.

Phase I: Identify Issues

- P&Z conducts public surveys, informational meetings and workshops.
- P&Z conducts Planning Commission briefings.

Phase II: Plan Preparation

- The Planning Commission directs P&Z to develop the draft plan.
- P&Z conducts information meetings on the plan development.
- P&Z conducts Planning Commission briefings.

Phase III: Plan Adoption

- The Planning Commission directs P&Z to solicit comments from the public (60-day comment period), required by the Land Use Article.
- P&Z recommends incorporating public comments into the draft plan for the Planning Commission’s consideration.

- The Planning Commission may request additional information prior to directing P&Z staff to schedule a public hearing.
- The Planning Commission holds a public hearing to consider public comments and determine consistency with the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan.
- P&Z presents the draft plan to the BOCC.
- The BOCC may request additional information prior to directing P&Z to schedule a public hearing.
- The BOCC holds a public hearing and considers public comments. If the BOCC determines the draft plan supports the public health, safety and welfare of county residents, it adopts the draft plan.

How and when is public input considered?

Public input is solicited through online surveys, informational meetings and workshops, as well as a state-required 60-day comment period. Comments may be submitted before and during public hearings with the Planning Commission and the BOCC, and at any time during the update process via TownCenterUpdate@calvertcountymd.gov or by contacting the department of Planning & Zoning.

Designation & Zoning

If the town center designation is changed, what is the process?

Changing the town center designation would require several coordinated actions:

- Amend the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan
- Update the Master Plan of Town Centers, St. Leonard Town Center Master Plan chapter
- Update the Town Center Zoning Ordinance
- Amend the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance
- Amend the Calvert County Zoning Map

When was the St. Leonard Town Center established, and who developed the vision?

- 1983 – The Calvert County Comprehensive Plan established town centers throughout the county.
- 1984 – The St. Leonard Town Center boundary was established.
- 1995 – The St. Leonard Town Center Master Plan and Town Center Zoning Ordinance were adopted.
- 2013 – The Town Center Master Plan was updated.
- 2013 to present – The Town Center Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance have been amended multiple times.

P&Z developed the town center's vision through a series of public information meetings and workshops and by soliciting public comments during a state-required 60-day comment period and for Planning Commission and BOCC public hearings.

What is the difference between a “major” and “minor” town center?

The difference between a “major” and a “minor” town center is the area each serves. The Prince Frederick Town Center is a major town center because it serves the entire county as a government hub, while the St. Leonard Town Center primarily serves the surrounding community with fewer businesses that attract visitors from outside the area.

If the town center is designated a minor town center, will existing uses be grandfathered?

Existing permitted uses in the town center will remain permitted if it is designated a minor town center, unless public input during the master plan update results in a revised vision that identifies certain uses as no longer desirable. Uses that become prohibited will be considered nonconforming and may continue as long as they remain in operation. If a nonconforming use ceases for more than one year, it will lose its nonconforming status.

If there are no changes to the designation, are shops, restaurants, apartments, townhomes, parks, trails and similar uses allowed?

Yes. Under the existing town center designation, these uses are permitted.

Is there a guarantee that townhouses and apartments will not be permitted in the town center to avoid development trends, such as those in Prince Frederick?

The Calvert County Zoning Ordinance does not permit townhouses in the residential or employment districts; however, townhouses are permitted by special exception in the village district and duplexes are permitted with conditions in the residential and village districts. Multifamily units are not permitted in the town center.

Would a designation change to a minor town center better serve the people of St. Leonard?

Public input will help determine whether a minor town center designation better serves the residents of St. Leonard, along with a determination of consistency with the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan by the Planning Commission and approval by the BOCC.

Current Capital Projects

Why was a sidewalk installed from SPOThriftshop to the residential court that leads to nowhere?

The Calvert County Zoning Ordinance requires sidewalk installation when a property is developed. The property north of SPOThriftshop is undeveloped and until it is developed, the gap in the sidewalk will remain.

What is the purpose of the parking lot in the middle of St. Leonard?

The parking lot at 4885 St. Leonard Road is a public parking lot and was constructed to serve the Dowell House, located at 4889 Calvert Drive. The [Dowell House](#) is a community center operated by the department of Parks & Recreation.

Water & Sewer

What is the capacity of the sewer systems in the county? Is the town center going to be served by public sewer and in what timeframe?

Information on countywide sewer capacity is available in the Calvert County Water and Sewerage Plan. (Calvert County Department of Public Works, [Water and Sewer Resources](#))

The St. Leonard Town Center is currently served by a public water system. A new well and water tower along MD Route 765 near Collette's Way has been completed to ensure proper distribution system pressure, provide for adequate fire suppression reserves and balance the system supply in coordination with the existing St. Leonard water storage tank.

Public sewer service is not currently planned in the town center, and no timeframe has been established. However, community sewer systems are permitted in all town centers when needed to support environmental health/or support county identified economic development goals, when and if cost effective and economically feasible, and when consistent with the town center master plans.

Public opinion on sewer service is mixed. Some community members are concerned that public sewer could encourage higher residential density. Others believe the lack of public sewer may limit business establishment due to the cost of private sewer systems and acknowledge that an onsite disposal system or a community septic system may be necessary for sustainability.

If public input supports sewer infrastructure, it would be recommended as part of the Town Center Master Plan update. Planning for sewer infrastructure is a lengthy process that must address the type of system (such as an onsite disposal system or a community septic system), the land needed for the facility and effluent land application, and potential funding sources (such as taxes, bond issues, state and federal grants and loans, and user connections and fees).

Survey & Population

Do respondents need to be Calvert County residents to answer the survey?

No. The survey was open to the general public.

Participants were asked to provide a ZIP code if they live outside the town center. Of the 488 participants, 26 people (5%) lived outside the St. Leonard ZIP code.

How many people live in the St. Leonard Town Center?

An estimated 450 people live within the St. Leonard Town Center.

Is the survey indicative of what people really want?

The survey reflects feedback from 488 respondents and serves as an initial tool for gathering public input on the Town Center Master Plan update.

Public input guides decisions about the town center's designation and vision.

Public Outreach & Mailings

How were mailings sent to Long Beach and/or Calvert Beach?

To promote the survey and update process:

- Postcards were mailed to the St. Leonard ZIP code using the U.S. Postal Service Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) service.
- A total of 2,800 postcards were distributed to addresses along the postal route.

Several property owners reported not receiving a postcard. In response, P&Z is:

- Exploring the use of the county's tax bill mailing process for future mailings
- Investigating additional outreach methods such as:
 - Civic association webpages
 - Facebook pages
 - Email distribution lists

The public is encouraged to follow the Town Center Master Plan update and submit comments through the following:

- [Master Plan of Town Centers Webpage](#)
- [Notify Me](#)
- [Planning Perspective Quarterly Newsletter](#)
- [Calvert County Mobile App](#)
- Email Comments / Mailing List Requests
(TownCenterUpdate@calvertcountymd.gov)