

# Owings Town Center Master Plan Update

## Oct. 20, 2025 Public Input Meeting

### Questions & Answers

From July 23 to Aug. 25, 2025, the Department of Planning & Zoning (P&Z) conducted an online survey as part of the Owings Town Center Master Plan Update.

Residents were asked whether the area should remain a town center or be redesignated as rural commercial. The key takeaway was that 60% of respondents supported removing the town center designation to:

- Maintain Owings' rural character
- Attract businesses to vacant buildings
- Improve traffic safety along MD 260
- Address stormwater runoff and Hall Creek pollution

In October, P&Z hosted a public meeting to discuss these results. In November, the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) and the Planning Commission directed staff to explore rezoning.

Additional public input opportunities are expected in 2026.

### Process & Timeframe

#### **What is the process and timeframe for rezoning the Owings Town Center?**

Rezoning requires several public meetings, reviews and typically takes 6-12 months.

#### **Steps include:**

- Draft zoning options
- Public meetings and workshops
- Planning Commission review and hearing
- BOCC review and hearing
- Updates to the Comprehensive Plan and zoning maps

#### **Meetings and Workshops**

- P&Z presents proposed zoning for the Owings Town Center area to the BOCC and the Planning Commission to solicit feedback and guidance.
- P&Z presents the proposed zoning to the public to solicit feedback.
- P&Z briefs the BOCC and the Planning Commission on public input, recommends changes to the proposed zoning, if appropriate and seeks guidance.
- If substantive changes warrant another public meeting, P&Z presents the revised proposed zoning to the public for feedback.
- If another public meeting is held, P&Z briefs the BOCC and the Planning Commission on public input, recommends the proposed zoning, if appropriate and

seeks the Planning Commission's guidance on amending the Calvert County Comprehensive Plan.

### **Calvert County Comprehensive Plan Amendment**

- P&Z presents the amended Calvert County Comprehensive Plan to the Planning Commission and seeks guidance to solicit public comments during the required 60-day comment period under the Land Use Article.
- P&Z recommends incorporating public comments into the Comprehensive Plan, if appropriate, for the Planning Commission's consideration.
- The Planning Commission may request additional information before directing P&Z staff to schedule a public hearing.
- The Planning Commission holds a public hearing to consider public comments.
- P&Z presents the amended Comprehensive Plan to the BOCC.
- The BOCC may request additional information before directing P&Z to schedule a public hearing.
- The BOCC holds a public hearing and considers public comments. If the BOCC determines the proposed amendments support the public health, safety and welfare of county residents, it adopts the amended Calvert County Comprehensive Plan.

### **Amend the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map**

- Once the BOCC adopts the amended Calvert County Comprehensive Plan, the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map are amended to ensure consistency with the Comprehensive Plan.
- The amendment process for the Calvert County Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map follows the same process as a Calvert County Comprehensive Plan amendment.

### **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 BOCC, and at any time during the update process via [TownCenterUpdate@calvertcountymd.gov](mailto:TownCenterUpdate@calvertcountymd.gov) or by contacting the department of Planning & Zoning.

## **Designation, Zoning & Land Uses**

### **When was the Owings Town Center established, and who developed the vision?**

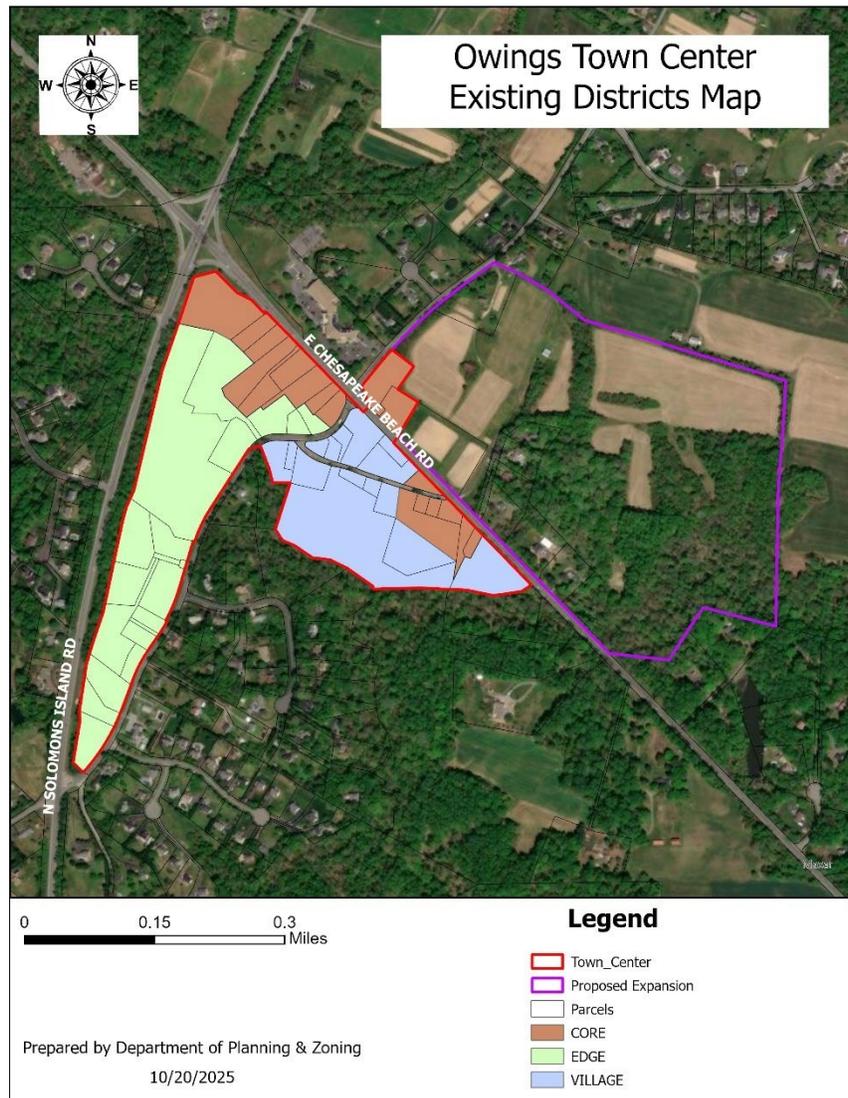
- 1983 – The Calvert County Comprehensive Plan established town centers countywide.
- 1984 – The Owings Town Center boundary was established.
- 1995 – The Owings Town Center Master Plan and Town Center Zoning Ordinance were adopted.
- 2000 – The Town Center Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance were updated.

- 2000 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 at Planning Commission and BOCC public hearings.

**If the Town Center is rezoned, will existing uses be grandfathered?**

Existing uses may continue as long as they remain in operation. If they close for more than one year, they may lose that status.



**What zoning is being considered for the Owings Town Center?**

The edge district (shown in green) is envisioned to be zoned as a residential neighborhood district (RND) because it closely matches the types of neighborhoods that already exist in this area.

The RND zoning allows for more homes to be built if developers purchase Transferable Development Rights (TDRs). Homes may be built on smaller lots, and developments do not have to be clustered together. To help prevent added traffic on rural commercial roads, commercial uses are limited.

Most of the village (shown in blue) and core (shown in brown) areas are envisioned to be rezoned

into a new zoning district that has not yet been defined. This new district would likely allow a limited number of nonresidential uses (such as small businesses) and may also allow limited residential uses.

The proposed expansion area would likely be zoned either RND or rural community district (RCD).

The RCD zoning is intended to preserve the rural character of an area by maintaining a mix of farms, forests and homes, protecting historic and scenic areas and safeguarding natural resources like watersheds and wildlife. For large properties (30 acres or more), new development must be clustered so that at least 60% of the land is permanently preserved as open space. This zoning allows very low residential density and only limited use of TDRs. Commercial uses are also limited to reduce traffic on rural roads.

P&Z anticipates asking the Planning Commission for guidance on the proposed zoning in spring 2026. Because these discussions are still in the early stages, the proposed zoning may change. No decisions have been made yet. Feedback from the Planning Commission, the public and other county departments will be considered before any decisions are reached, prior to Planning Commission and BOCC public hearings. Public meetings to gather community input are expected to begin in summer 2026.

### **What businesses are currently located in the Owings Town Center?**

Businesses currently located in the Owings Town Center include:

- Becky King Home Towne Real Estate
- Bright Beginning Children Center
- Caliber Collision
- Chesapeake Animal Clinic
- Dash In
- Rolling Wrenches

### **If Owings is not designated a Town Center, will state funding be jeopardized?**

State funding will continue to be a viable option even if the Owings Town Center is rezoned and is no longer officially classified as a town center as it would still be considered a growth area. Surrounding residential neighborhoods would also continue to be identified as residential growth areas because they would allow higher housing density—at least 3.5 homes per acre—through the use of TDRs.

These classifications would be clearly reflected through updates to the Calvert County Tier Map and other county planning documents, including the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance, Transportation Plan, Water and Sewerage Plan and related plans.

## **Issues Identified by the Public**

### **Traffic**

- Speeding through the town center
- Intersection safety concerns
- Request for increased police enforcement
- Unsafe access to businesses
- Use of Thomas Avenue as a shortcut
- Dangerous conditions caused by traffic backups

## **Stormwater Runoff and Hall Creek Pollution**

- Runoff creating deep roadside ditches
- Hall Creek pollution and wetlands impacts

## **Land Use**

- Noise from nonresidential uses
- Vacant building maintenance
- Desire to attract small local businesses

## **Public Outreach & Notifications**

To promote the survey and update process:

- 3,500 postcards mailed to the Owings ZIP code using the Every Door Direct Mail (EDDM) service.
- 214 people completed the entire survey, of which nearly 6% lived outside of the Owings zip code.

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:
  - County newsletters and webpages
  - Social media and civic groups
  - Email distribution lists

The public is encouraged to follow the potential Owings Town Center rezoning 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](mailto:TownCenterUpdate@calvertcountymd.gov))