

CITY OF ABERDEEN ♦ COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE

HOMEWORK #1: VERBATIM COMMENT COMPILATION

In November/December 2021, we distributed the enclosed questions to select City boards/commissions and staff and asked for responses to be completed individually. We received comments from 2 City Council members, 7 Planning Commission members, 3 Economic Development Commission members, and 5 City Staff members. We compiled all results into verbatim and summary documents. These comments will be used to develop the Comprehensive Plan Update and to help determine key issues and priorities for the City to consider over the next 10-year planning period.

QUESTION 1

THE CITY'S CURRENT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN WAS ADOPTED IN 2011. HOW HAS ABERDEEN CHANGED SINCE THAT TIME?

- Since 2011, Aberdeen's rate of growth has increased significantly. We have seen the completion of the Rock Glen and Eagle's Rest developments and initial phase of the Summerlin development. In addition, multiple annexations and proposed residential developments have occurred or are actively moving through the formal approval and engineering phases on the west side of I-95. Infill, for both commercial and residential, has occurred or ongoing with the extension of Middleton Rd and the Stadium Town Center along Rt 22. Lastly, redevelopment for a variety of commercial uses has occurred both in our downtown, light industrial areas along Rt. 40, and the former Merritt Property on Rt. 22 into Upper Chesapeake's new freestanding medical facility.
- Things started happening due to aggressive private capital input toward growth; less concentration on government (BRAC).
- Many new businesses have been built.
- New residential areas including housing developments and apartments have been built.
- Growth continues through both development and annexation.
- The decision to locate the University of Maryland Medical Center campus in the City will have a significant impact on the future of Aberdeen.
- The Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) impacts at adjacent Aberdeen Proving Ground have been realized.
- The City's population has increased. More people from out of state, as a result of BRAC, have moved into the City.
- A more diverse population: younger and more ethnically diverse.
- Increase in higher-end rental units.
- Increase in civilian jobs in and just outside the City.
- An increase in retail business moving into the City.
- Upper Chesapeake Medical Center moving into Aberdeen.
- Converting some Class A office space that has sat vacant for many years into viable businesses.
- Developers from outside the "area" have shown an interest and are building in the City.
- The City has had significant growth west of I-95 (multiple annexations, residential and commercial

developments, such as Stadium Town Center, Eagles Rest, etc.) ALL IBD. Additionally, the Fields at Rock Glen was developed as R-2. Also Summerlin Apartments were completed, and The Edge at Middleton Apartments are under construction.

- I began living here in 2012. I have not noticed many changes other than more HOA communities and fast-food restaurants.
- BRAC has changed the mission at APG to include a technical/professional workforce. Logistics has increased the number of warehouses to Aberdeen with another group added to our workforce. The annexation on the West side and proposed housing for that area.
- I have only been in the City of Aberdeen since 2018 and new to the Commission. I have seen some changes in my short time here.
- The last 10 years have shown a growth. There are many exciting projects on the table. The increase in housing developments will bring with it demands for retail, restaurants, and activities.
- Downtown Aberdeen continues to decline from where it once was as a vibrant walkable mix of businesses.
- The west end growing too fast to accommodate traffic, police protection, water & sewer needs.
- The City became a designated Main Street community in 2020 and began hosting new events in the Main Street.
- New incentives were passed to encourage businesses and redevelopment opportunities in the TOD and Main Street area.
- Multimodal transportation was improved by the addition of bus shelters at bus stops throughout the City and a \$700,000 grant through MDOT SHA for ADA and beautification improvements at the Aberdeen MARC/Amtrak station.

QUESTION 2

WHAT ARE YOUR TOP PRIORITIES OR AREAS OF CONCERN THAT YOU HOPE TO SEE ADDRESSED IN THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN UPDATE?

- I don't believe in one singular issue being my top priority, but I believe there are several key things that need to be addressed.
 - As we experience significant growth, we need to be able to provide certain amenities or quality of life features for our residents. This would include pedestrian interconnectivity (sidewalks or passive nature trails) throughout our developments and to commercial districts as much as possible.
 - Open space, primarily pocket parks and a fully functioning swimming pool and activity center are in the works but should be included.
 - Additionally, the continued revitalization of our downtown (TOD District) needs to be addressed. We need to encourage our residents and visitors to stay downtown after 5pm and that is only done by incentivizing new businesses like restaurants, bakeries, and boutique shops to migrate to the area. This hopefully creates a pedestrian active downtown.
 - All this being said, we need a strong focus on all public facilities (including water, sewer and roads) to manage and prepare for the expected growth long term.
- Less talk and more doing; invest more in the people who are willing to create growth from within rather than from governmental promises; promote capital

- Quality of life
- Community design
- Continue to make Aberdeen a great place to live for its current and future residents
- Concentrate on transit orient district (Route 40 area)
- Concern: overcrowded roads
- I would like to see our continued emphasis on higher-end apartments.
- I am concerned that the Main Street area of Bel Air Ave has vacant shops and businesses that do not fit into the scope of the TOD.
- Code enforcement addressed for both residential and commercial property.
- I would like to see the City's current Planning Areas addressed/updated. They should be more realistic (eliminate current Area 2 and Area 17); adjust boundaries of other 15 areas accordingly
- Add all proposed development at, and around the train station.
- I'd like to see a big-box store complex, fewer fast-food restaurants, and more mom-and-pop stores and restaurants.
- A long-range water/sewer plan along with a road and connectivity plan to join the new areas together for the West end expansion.
- A plan to revitalize the downtown area "Main Street."
- Develop a marketing plan of what Aberdeen has to offer to attract what we want to join our city rather than always playing defense and accept whatever walks in the door.
- Add additional areas outside the current annexation requests to include other sides of roads on West side since it appears the city will own and maintain the entire road (i.e., Gilbert, Aldino-Stepney).
- Continue to bring in adequate housing to support employment opportunities that will bring in a salary so a family can live comfortably.
- The renewal of the downtown area
- Water and sewer
- Rec center
- Maintain employees
- Hospital
- Revitalization of downtown Aberdeen to include variety of businesses, updated façade, made implementation of a HOA type guidelines for businesses.
- Address traffic issues on City roadways and be sure developers are responsible for upgrade roadways/sidewalks to accommodate the increase of vehicle and foot traffic.
- The City's top priorities and areas of concern should be addressing the public water and sewer needs for existing residents, addressing the fire suppression and water tower needed on the west side of Aberdeen to accommodate the increased growth, and finding solutions to future traffic and transportation needs. We have been discussing an additional water system for fire suppression for 10-15 years, so we need to move forward on this issue. Transportation is also a major concern for the west side, specifically with areas recently annexed on Gilbert Road and Aldino-Stepney Road.
- Another area of concern is Main Street and attracting small businesses, breweries, restaurants, and retail stores. We offer a few business incentives, but they are not enough to change the character

of the Main Street. We also have a TOD district that has not reached its potential since its inception in 2010. The TOD and Main Street are connected and should be a top priority for the City. Promotion and marketing of the multi-modal transportation hub, Main Street, Enterprise Zone, and proximity to Aberdeen Proving Ground is lacking. I would like to see recommendations in the 2022 Comp Plan regarding “how to reach our potential” for the Main Street and TOD areas.

- Looking at the projected growth in Planning Area 10 and potential growth in Planning Area 9 and 11 and working on several issues-transportation, water and sewer, future traffic, and best land use/zoning to attract a mix of commercial and residential uses. If the City does continue to annex in land, connectivity to other areas of Aberdeen needs to be addressed.
- Sustainability and environmental protection. I would like to see the plan crafted through a sustainability planning lens that focuses on people, prosperity, and planet. Sustainability is becoming so prevalent in our day-to-day lives and a good mixture of social, economic, and environmental sustainability initiatives would make for a well-rounded comprehensive plan for Aberdeen.

QUESTION 3

WHAT DO YOU LIKE MOST ABOUT THE CURRENT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

- I do like that there are defined goals with multiple planning objectives, and I do like the detailed breakdown and individualized focus of each Planning Area in Chapter 3 – Municipal Growth Element
- I like how in-depth it is and it covers a wide area of topics
- The Plan contains a lot of information
- The current CP lists our zoning districts and defines them with a map showing where those districts lie. Goals and objectives for general categories are laid out and explained.
- Housing: R-1, R-2 R-3S
- I might add sub-categories to the 9 general categories, e.g.: Transportation: City roads and State and Federal Roads.
- I believe the goal of walkable leisurely areas is a good one. We need more work there.
- The plan was a broad look at the future, I don't know how much effort has been put forth for the infrastructure needed to support what is proposed for the next 3-4 years 2021-2025.
- I like the IBD plan best.
- What I like most about the existing Comp Plan are the future growth (Planning Areas) area maps and recommendations; I would like to see needed capital improvements linked with the specific future growth areas. We used to prepare rudimentary maps showing the upgrades required for specific growth areas (i.e., road extensions, highway improvements, water booster stations, pumping stations, etc.).
- I like that the plan does list needed improvements in each growth area to accommodate growth. I think there are good recommendations in the transportation.
- What I like the most about the current plan is the in-depth description of the growth areas, the recommended land uses, and the maps provided for visual aid.

WHAT DO YOU LIKE LEAST ABOUT THE CURRENT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN?

- I don't really have anything negative to say about the current plan; a lot just needs updating to reflect changes over the last 10 years.

- Sounds like bureaucratic nonsense; not enough forward planning for growth
- The Plan lacks an Executive Summary which summarizes Aberdeen’s long-range vision and plan for the City.
- Possibly eliminate the “Past Growth Patterns”
- Lack of direction following the plan
- Why worry about land use – the Council has the right to change the use at any given time to suit the needs of whoever brings them a plan. I feel we accept whatever is brought to the table without thinking about the long-term effect on the City whether it be roadways, water & sewer, or quality of life.
- What I like least is in Chapter 3 – Municipal Growth Element. This Chapter needs to address the State’s 12 Visions, for example one of the statements made is, “the future planned development will be in a manner that makes efficient use of the land and public infrastructure.” This Plan update should assess whether the City has the public services and infrastructure required to accommodate growth within the City and in the future growth areas. Additionally, an Implementation Schedule and Plan as to how we fund and construct the required public services and infrastructure.
- The Implementation Plan, Chapter 11 is also weak and does not offer any matrix or timelines for accomplishing the goals and objectives, areas of concern, etc.
- I think the current Comprehensive Plan is severely lacking any insight into recommendations on economic development and land use patterns within the city limits. The plan focuses on growth areas and future land use recommendations but does not mention how growth areas should be incorporated into the existing city limits. As a result, much of the growth in Planning Area 10 is disconnected to the surrounding communities.
- The plan also does not discuss undeveloped land within each zoning district/growth area and specific opportunities for growth/development of the land.
- Transportation element does not list roadways outside of the city limits in targeted growth areas.
- Visually, the plan is not very appealing. It is text heavy, which may discourage people outside of the planning world from looking at it. A more attention-grabbing strategy for presenting information would help engage the reader while also delivering all the necessary information.

QUESTION 4

IS THERE ANYTHING IN THE CURRENT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN THAT IS A “MUST KEEP?”

- While most of the plan focus on all the key areas that should be in a comprehensive plan, there a few areas I think a lot of focus should be on: Chapter 3 – Municipal Growth Element subject to updates based off the last 10 years. Chapters 4 and 5, Transportation Element and Community Facilities Element are “must keep sections” that also need updating.
- I don’t know, I couldn’t get past page 3.
- The “Transportation Element”
- The current Chapter 1 (Introduction) and Chapter 2 (Land Use Element) are “must keeps” for the revised Comprehensive Plan.
- Keep the definition of the CP
- Keep the descriptions of existing Zoning Districts.
- Keep the Current Land Use Map

- Keep a current table of approved residential and commercial projects over the last 10 years for trend information.
- Most of the elements should remain, but be updated to include current conditions (Rte. 22 improvements, etc.)
- The IBD is a good concept that's flexible as the market reveals what is needed, possibly it could be used in other areas.
- Everything is up for review
- Chapter 2 page 2-15 Quality of life, Recreation and Open Space
- Chapter 2 page 2-18 Architectural and Street Design – Specific downtown Aberdeen.
- Chapter 4 page 4-7 Opportunities “currently no congestion issues in Aberdeen” (Old Philadelphia Rd, Perryman Rd., Long Drive and Beards Hill Rd)
- I think a must keep are the specific Planning Area maps with land use recommendations for potential annexations. Illustrations for proposed housing types, retail, commercial development would also be useful.
- There are goals and objectives in the 2011 Comprehensive Plan that are still true to this day. Under 1. Land Use, Goal A and Goal B are still accurate. All objectives under infill and redevelopment are still objectives the city should be working toward. Objectives 3-6 under Land Development are pertinent. All information under 2. Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance should remain, but the current city APFO should be revised to include infrastructure (road and connectivity) improvements. Under transportation, goal A, B, C, E, and F should remain. All of the goal and objectives under housing. All of the goals and objections under quality of life, recreation, and open space. Under economic development, goal B should remain, but not the second objective under that goal. Goal C and all objectives should remain. All goals and objectives under 7, Environment. All goals and objectives under 8, Architectural and Streetscape Design. All goals under 10, Implementation.

QUESTION 5

WHAT AREAS DOES THE CURRENT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN NOT ADDRESS THAT IT SHOULD?

- I believe the current plan addresses nearly all necessary areas, but a greater emphasis on certain areas has already been addressed in a previous answer. I may have missed it, but there should be a focus on the emergency services element (particularly fire and EMS) when planning new roads and access points to all new development. The work from 2011 established a solid comprehensive plan.
- It should be more specific to the achievement of specific goals; less “blah blah”
- I feel like it does a good job addressing a variety of things
- Recommend including a brief statement on how Aberdeen fits into Harford County (what it needs and gives to the County, interdependencies).
- Code enforcement of businesses and residential properties, if indeed that falls under a CP.
- Table 4-1: add “Middelton Road” as a major roadway (Collector?)
- I'd like to see more designated bike lanes
- No parks in town outside of near city hall is silly.
- Little entertainment options other than a very small movie theater that does not have the capability to show 3D, Dolby Atmos, or IMAX movies.

- A detailed long-range plan for roads and infrastructure improvements so that we would make the area more attractive to potential new residents or businesses to locate here.
- East side of Aberdeen
- Chapter 8 is not detailed and provides no direction for protecting sensitive areas, addressing existing flood prone areas, or preserving stream channels, etc. The City has adopted a Floodplain Ordinance, however that is the beginning steps.
- Chapter 9 is not detailed and does not offer any descriptions of existing housing conditions or blighted living conditions that exist in Aberdeen. Both Chapters need to be updated and provide a thorough explanation, guidance, and implementation for improving the existing environmental and living conditions. Recommendations on redevelopment opportunities, grants to fund environmental improvements, etc.
- Chapter 11 – Implementation does not provide direction or assign responsibility for tasks that need to be accomplished for necessary improvements to infrastructure, roads, schools, facilities, etc.
- The plan does not address economic development opportunities or revitalization strategies at all. There is no list of targeted infill sites or redevelopment sites. The growth areas do not discuss opportunities for undeveloped parcels.
- The housing element focuses a lot on affordable housing and does not provide any specifics as to the current housing typologies in the City or future housing needs. There should be recommendations on housing as far as the future needs and potential incentives to renovate older housing stock. Affordable housing is clustered on the east side of Aberdeen and there should be a focus of creating mixed-income and mixed-typologies of housing throughout the City.
- I would love to see a larger emphasis on sustainability. Not just environmental sustainability, but social and economic sustainability. Chapter 5 and Chapter 8 both refer to all the elements of sustainability, but do not provide a plan or roadmap of where Aberdeen should go from here.

QUESTION 6

WHAT ORGANIZATIONS SHOULD THE PLANNING TEAM SEEK INPUT FROM?

- Aberdeen Chamber of Commerce
- Aberdeen Citizens
- Aberdeen Historical Museum (Aberdeen Room)
- Aberdeen Lions Club (2)
- Aberdeen Police Department
- Aberdeen Rotary Clubs
- Aberdeen Proving Ground
- Aberdeen Volunteer Fire Department (2)
- AMTRAK
- Area Churches
- Boys and Girls Club of Aberdeen
- Boys and Girls Club of Aberdeen - this will help explore areas for the youth
- CSX
- Department of Defense
- Federal Highway Administration
- Golden Age Club of Aberdeen
- Harford County Association of Realtors for the purpose of capturing wealth
- Harford County Chamber of Commerce
- Harford County Govt.
- Harford County Public Schools
- Harford County Sheriff's Office
- Historical Society of Harford County
- Local civil engineers
- Local developers
- Maryland Department of the Environment
- Maryland Transportation Authority

- Mayor and Council
- Phyllis Grover
- Planning Commission
- Residents representing various neighborhoods
- Some businesses in the various zoning districts

SWOT ANALYSIS

STRENGTHS: INTERNAL ELEMENTS THAT GIVE THE CITY AN EDGE OR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE. THESE CAN BE UNIQUE ASSETS, SKILLS, OR RESOURCES THAT ABERDEEN CAN USE TO ITS BENEFIT.

- The City of Aberdeen is fortunate to have a dedicated and experienced team working daily within City Hall that will make executing any plan more manageable and executed to best extent possible.
- Aberdeen benefits from our strategic location along the Rt. 40 and I-95 corridors with nearly equal distances of time to both Baltimore and Wilmington (35 min) along with DC and Philadelphia (about an hour).
- We have Aberdeen Proving Ground as our neighbor and partner
- We have one of the most active stops along the Amtrak/MARC line between DC and New York.
- Aberdeen also benefits from our ability to grow both internally through recent annexations and infill and externally by expanding our borders thanks to long-term investment in our infrastructure to support increased capacity.
- We also will become a major hub for healthcare in the years ahead as Upper Chesapeake's 2nd medical campus on Rt. 22 expands and becomes fully operational (first phase) by 2023.
- We also own the largest single attraction site in Harford County, Ripken Stadium. The stadium is home to the Aberdeen Ironbirds, a minor league long season affiliate of the Baltimore Orioles.
- Cohesive City Council and Mayor
- How close the city is to APG and I-95
- Transportation - Aberdeen is located near I-95 and has an AMTRAK rail station.
- Ripken Stadium and possible uses of the Stadium for other events.
- From a geographic perspective: Proximity to US Rt 40, Amtrak, and MARC.
- Proximity to major cities: Baltimore, Wilmington, Philadelphia, Washington DC.
- Proximity to entertainment: Baltimore, MD and DE beaches, casinos, concert venues, boating, hiking, and most manners of outdoor sports.
- Proximity to major sports venues: Aberdeen, Baltimore, Philadelphia, Washington DC, College Park, Wilmington, Lancaster.
- Highly rated public and nearby private schools. HCC with TSU and MSU campuses on site.
- A centralized Govt. with a dedicated Community Development & Public Works Department.
- A dedicated Aberdeen work force.
- A cadre of volunteer organizations and individuals.
- Our own wastewater treatment plant.
- Partnership with HDG on potable water.
- A mix of affordable shopping including retail and grocery shopping.

- APG, the “economic engine” of Harford County.
- Riken Stadium should be used for many other things in addition to baseball. Things like concerts, expos, etc.
- Although it’s already begun, Aberdeen could become a hotbed for healthcare. Upper Chesapeake is currently under construction, Nova Vascular just opened (with plenty of additional space for other practices)
- Location to APG.
- Location on I-95 corridor.
- Heavy STEM expertise.
- Low traffic.
- Lower cost of living compared to Bel Air and HdG.
- Business friendly.
- The new hospital is an opportunity for growth but will bring traffic
- Areas to expand to create the product potential new business require.
- The available lots for residential in Harford County are a small number so we have that available.
- I like the fact that when we are looking at new “development” that everyone is involved starting with the Dept. of Public Works, to the Fire Dept.
- We need to be cautious of what is allowed to be built in Aberdeen. Perfect example BRAC – everyone thought this was going to be huge for Aberdeen, road construction was done, which disrupted businesses for months, homes were sold, people had to relocate, and nothing ever came of this. We put too much emphasis on military when they do not contribute to our community like that did in years past. We have businesses that have been here for decades that we don’t show respect to like we do the military base and their personnel, and these are the people that work and LIVE here.
- Demographics – diversity/racial composition
- Proximity to Aberdeen Proving Ground (APG) employing 21,000; communication, research and development, and technology
- Highly educated and skilled workforce at APG
- University of Maryland Upper Chesapeake Medical Campus
- Sports Tourism and Tourism Industry
- TOD area and multi-modal hub
- New housing opportunities on the west side of Aberdeen

WEAKNESSES: INTERNAL ELEMENTS THAT HINDER THE CITY’S ABILITY TO REACH OPTIMAL PERFORMANCE AND PREVENTS ABERDEEN FROM REACHING ITS GOALS. THE ULTIMATE GOAL IS TO MAKE IMPROVEMENTS TO THESE.

- Aberdeen is tapered by our downtown area that, while making progress, still hasn’t reached the active main street and steady foot traffic we all want to see. Commercial, both retail and restaurants, are missing and therefore we don’t attract a lot of visitors or residents to the area after 5pm or on the weekends. Having our main street on a state road also limits our availability to shut the street down for community events and therefore prevents the First Friday style events that take place in Havre de Grace and Bel Air.

- DPW
- Not enough activities for the youth
- Failing parks and rec program
- Some areas need revitalization (run down)
- Again, lackluster code enforcement for residential and commercial property. This should be addressed in the new CP.
- Enticing new business and residential development hinges on current properties being maintained and following current codes and requirements.
- Ability to work with many factions that impact the City, but we aren't in control. e.g. State and Federal Highways, CSX & Amtrak. A recognition of these entities and how better to work with them in the future.
- Downtown business district (West Bel Air Ave and Pulaski Highway); needs better parking, more variety of business, less "commercial churches," bench seat relocation, more trees with uplighting (like HdG), etc.
- Too many fast-food places, not enough mom-and-pop locations.
- No big box retailers.
- Few family-owned shops.
- Good location next to APG but few actual ties and joint events with the base.
- APG is a food desert and all of Aberdeen's Beard's Hill restaurants are too far away to be useful.
- Overloading the importance and build up along Long Drive.
- BAD ROAD CONDITIONS. Especially Aldino Stepney.
- Potentially deadly lack of traffic control between 22 and side roads, especially Aldino Stepney.
- Lack of long-term infrastructure plan for growth, vision, or repair of existing facilities.
- Perception that Aberdeen schools are subpar.
- General overall appearance of the Route 40 area.
- I have been told that Aberdeen never transitioned from APG having a large group of enlisted soldiers who took advantage of the service type businesses they use (i.e., auto repair parts, auto repair, used tire stores) to seeking new business that the technical/ professional type folks require and would cause them to locate here or at least patronize a local business.
- Need to create a "sense of community" to bring all expanded areas and older areas of the city together to enhance the quality of life for all citizens.
- Develop a solid relationship with the County to monitor how the city and its citizens can understand how to recoup the most of our tax money we send to the county or at least have a detailed honest accounting of those numbers and advocate and hold the council members accountable to ensure Aberdeen is getting the attention it deserves especially with the added revenue it will generate with the expansion underway.
- I genuinely feel that the city needs to be more in the trenches of its community. They have until recently forgotten that the eastern side of Aberdeen exists. This was very evident at a recent community meeting. It's the side that is most "rundown." I am personally taking them under my wing.
- Lack of recreation fields
- Possible lack of water

- Mayor and Council have no vision of where or what the City should look like in 5-10 years. Projects or initiatives are done for now/today.
- Lack of communication between City officials/staff/community/businesses/non-profits.
- Lack of promotional/public information when it comes to events and issues that involve matters of the City.
- The “Center for Warehouse distribution” facilities in Harford County; too many warehouses, large footprints for warehouse buildings, demands for additional workforce, and increased traffic issues
- The “Center for medical services, methadone clinics, transient population, and peer counseling facilities”
- Lack of opportunities to attract small businesses such as retail, pubs, restaurants, coffee shops, breweries, etc. Rents are not realistic for the properties being marketed many properties need major improvements and upgrades.
- Owners do not want to take on the responsibility of maintaining their properties in the downtown and U.S. Route 40. Wait and see approach.
- Lack of pride in some neighborhoods and lack of community engagement
- A concentration of low-income areas on the east side of Aberdeen, perceptions of being unsafe.
- Large concentration of Maryland-licensed and funded (Medicaid) programs such as Opioid Addiction and Treatment facilities, mental/behavioral health facilities, substance abuse counseling, etc.

OPPORTUNITIES: EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES AND POTENTIAL SITUATIONS THAT CAN BE USED OR EXPLOITED TO BENEFIT ABERDEEN. THEY ARE BEYOND THE CITY’S CONTROL, BUT ABERDEEN CAN MAKE THE MOST OF THEM.

- The influx of Federal investment in infrastructure, particularly transportation gives us the opportunity to lobby for much needed funded to completely renovate the Aberdeen Amtrak/MARC station located downtown in our TOD. This work has already begun, but it is still a long way off from happening. This huge undertaking would transform the gateway into the City for visitors using the rail service while simultaneously, connecting the eastern region of the City to the rest of our community (long needed). The plans for this project are on hand with the City.
- Land and lots of it
- APG
- The stagnant growth of neighboring cities can help drive people to Aberdeen
- Be ahead of the others in adapting to lifestyle changes. Monitor trends and implement projects that improve quality of life.
- APG should ALWAYS be used to our benefit in terms of housing for APG workers, shopping, and entertainment for said workers along with the citizens of Aberdeen.
- Touting the benefits of the Amtrak & MARC for commuters.
- Affordable housing is an opportunity along with unique and market-trend housing design.
- Ripken Stadium can be better and more utilized, drawing outsiders into the City and getting them to want to live and work here.
- Aberdeen can be a “hub” for many types of businesses because of its strategic location between D.C., Baltimore, and Philadelphia. It’s a relatively short drive from these major cities.
- Location next to APG. Welcome more APG startups similar to how HDG is.

- The lack of available real estate available in the county for residential and commercial expansion along I-95.
- The Amtrak train station.
- Ripken experiences and the number of visitors it brings to the city March to November that look for other activities to participate in.
- The new hospital complex and the future expansion it could bring the city with support type services.
- APG, largest employer in the city has been a challenge to integrate the base with the city of businesses and activities.
- Recreation Center
- Hospital
- We have downtown property available for new business, keep the incentives, streamline the permit process so business feel that we are working with them, and keep them informed on the status of their application

THREATS: EXTERNAL CIRCUMSTANCES THAT POSE A THREAT TO ABERDEEN'S CURRENT OR FUTURE ABILITY TO ACHIEVE WHAT IT WANTS TO. THE CITY SHOULD MITIGATE OR AVOID THESE POTENTIALLY DAMAGING EFFECTS.

- Currently, Harford County Government has been a challenge to work with on resolving outstanding matters relating to the City's ability to grow. While the fault does not squarely belong with the County, the ongoing back and forth by both governmental entities along with threats to hold up progress is matter we have to deal with. This has been ongoing when it comes to zoning waivers after annexations, responsibility of road improvements, and construction of an activity center that, while funded, remains in limbo.
- A closure of Aberdeen Proving Ground (Harford County's largest employer) and/or economic downturn that would hit the housing market would dramatically stifle our growth and the local economy as a whole.
- State Highway
- County Government
- APG
- Big box retailers not willing to locate here
- One-sided development (e.g. housing) in the Integrated Business District may not allow Aberdeen to realize the intent of the District as an area being suitable for a blend of live/work/play.
- Covid, of course was an external threat that took a toll on the City in terms of business and housing.
- Other threats could be a spike in lending rates.
- Keeping a balanced mix of housing, based on market predictions and trends is important as is commercial development.
- Crime and grime always pose a threat to a city. I believe grime is a bigger threat to the City than crime.
- If APG was to be closed by the Federal Government, the economic effect would be devastating
- Harford County Government (Administration and Council) have (in recent years) been a huge impediment to the autonomy of our City. Hopefully this will change with the election of a new County Executive next November.

- Trash pickup.
- Water costs.
- State legislation guided by Baltimore politics over other statewide issues.
- Poor support from the county.
- Overall low rating of the schools compared to nearby towns.
- Severe lack of a vision from elected officials that would form the path that staff and others could use to promote the city to help attract what “we” want to see from the city not what some outsider tells us we “need.”
- Promote a program to overall clean up our city especially the gateways Route 22 and Route 40, if the State Highway is only going to give minimal effort to cut the grass and maintain them, the city is going to have to step up and take care of it. Potential new businesses and/or residents don’t see the state they see it’s a City of Aberdeen issue that becomes their first and lasting impression.
- Interact with the schools to see if there is a problem with the quality or just a perception, either way work to resolve it. Schools are of major concern to parents or new business concerned for their employees.
- Any movement by Aberdeen Proving Ground. The last time the military had a base realignment it was misjudged. Buildings were planned (and built) and only now being utilized. We need to maintain close ties to the base. What were the reasons that people did or did not chose to move to Aberdeen during the base realignment?
- Over development
- Becoming the central location for warehouse distribution facilities and adjacent to Perryman which has created traffic issues, additional workforce demands, and availability of land for other types of industrial development
- Perception of being unsafe, concentration of low-income areas, and blighted housing conditions
- No political support on issues that affect the City
- Traffic issues facing the City that are compounded by new residential and commercial growth on the west side
- The loss of employees visiting our retail establishments that are now teleworking for Aberdeen Proving Ground; we have seen the reduction in workforce since COVID-19 began.
- The closure of retail and commercial businesses due to workforce needs.