

Element 1: From Freedom's Past to Freedom's Future

Geographical Location

The Freedom Planning Area is defined by the boundaries of its Designated Growth Area (DGA). (Note: Discussion of the boundaries of the Designated Growth Area in relation to the Freedom Planning Area boundaries is ongoing). The Freedom DGA is located in southeastern Carroll County, and is comprised of approximately 28, 745.76 acres, or 44.9 square miles. It is the County's largest DGA and includes the Town of Sykesville. Morgan Run, a branch of the Liberty Reservoir, forms the northern boundary; the Liberty Reservoir and Baltimore County line delineate the eastern boundary; the South Branch of the Patapsco River and Howard County line demarcate the southern boundary; and MD 97 defines the western boundary. The unincorporated community of Eldersburg, located at the crossroads of MD 32 and MD 26, is the geographic center of the Freedom DGA. Freedom lies within Election District (#5) and Election District (#14). The locational map, EL1_Figure 1 on page 3, shows Freedom's proximate location within the region and also within Carroll County.

Below are key recommendations from the 2016 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan. Following these key recommendations is a discussion on history and governance, and changes since the 1990 and 2000 censuses, as well as since the 2001 Freedom Community Planning Area Comprehensive Plan, including the 2010 census. Note: The name of the document that updates the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan will be referred to as the 2016 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan and will be referred to as such hereinafter.

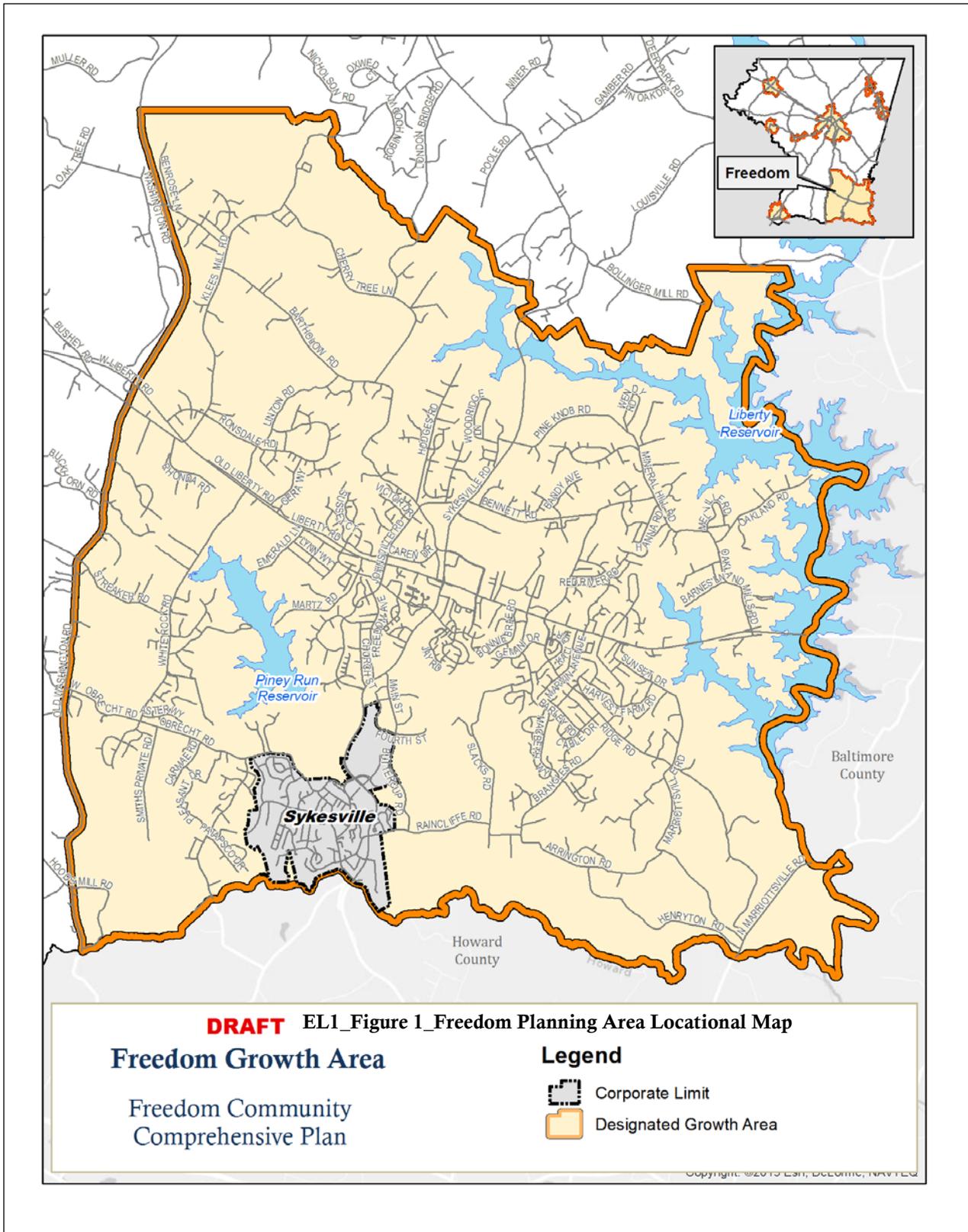
Recommendations of the Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan

- Encourage a variety of housing types.
- Encourage housing development that attracts/retains the aging population.
- Encourage housing development that attracts families with young children.
- Encourage land use policies that support the concept of lifelong communities with multi-generational housing opportunities and a multi-modal transportation network. (Note: the recommendations regarding housing will be discussed further and refined following discussion of Element 5: Housing).

Note: Footnotes will be renumbered when document is complete.

- Develop several small-scale, pedestrian friendly, destination oriented places through the development of vacant parcels such as those off of Londontown Boulevard, and through redevelopment, such as the Warfield Complex.
- Connect local roads that are included in the County's Major Street Plan by forward funding extensions through the allocation of County funds and/or through the development review process.
- TBD as Elements are written and finalized

DRAFT



History of Freedom

Around 1750, the “Village of Eldersburg” was founded by John Elders, who was given a land grant from the King of England for as much land as Elder could stake out in twenty-four hours. John Elders staked an eight hundred-acre farm named “Perseverance” on what is now known as Liberty Road. That road had been established ten years earlier as the stagecoach route between Baltimore and Frederick. Shortly after Elder staked out his land, the intersection which is known as MD 32 and MD 26 became a center of commerce containing two taverns, a blacksmith shop, and two general stores. Down the road at the intersection of MD 26 and Ridge Road were a trading post, a court house, and a turkey roost.

After the Revolutionary War, the Village of Elders was re-named to Freedom and was settled by a Mr. O’Donald. Freedom was named after the method by which lots were sold. For each lot purchased, the buyer was given an adjoining free lot. By the early 1800’s, the largest property in the County was the 3,000-acre Springfield, which was laid out for William Patterson, a prosperous Baltimore merchant. Patterson was one of the original directors of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad. Patterson insisted that the railroad line go near his summer home in Springfield. It was from this home that his daughter Elizabeth, better known as Betsy, eloped to marry Jerome, prince brother of Napoleon Bonaparte. When her father learned of her plans, he locked her in her room. With the assistance of her mother and a family slave, she climbed down a ladder from the upper story, mounted her hidden horse, and galloped down the old Liberty Road to meet her intended. Although Betsy did marry Jerome, Napoleon later had the marriage annulled.

In 1825, James Sykes bought 1,000 acres of land and rebuilt an existing saw and grist mill, and later built a cotton factory. During this time, Sykesville and the Freedom area saw tremendous growth and development. The landscape was dotted by barns, farm houses, mills, churches, and taverns. With all the growth and commerce, in 1837, Carroll County was established.

During the Civil War, the Freedom area was generally pro-south. However, the war caused a split among residents. South Carroll saw the presence of both Union and Confederate soldiers during the war, with troops traveling on Liberty and Linton Roads.

After the Civil War, the area continued to change economically and in population. Perhaps the most notable change was that of the Springfield Estate. In 1894, John Hubner, State Senator from Baltimore County, led a committee which was concerned about the more than 1,000 mentally ill persons in the jails and almshouses throughout the state. The Senator introduced a bill to establish a “second hospital for the insane of Maryland,” which was passed by the General Assembly. A sum of \$100,000 was appropriated to acquire land for the project. Using this money, a total of 728 acres was purchased from the Patterson-Brown

Estate, and in 1896 patients were first received at the new Springfield Hospital. Springfield had gone from housing the rich and famous to housing the mentally ill. Over time, Springfield became one of the largest employers in the County.

In the early 1900's, growth continued in the Freedom area. Liberty Road was a paved road, ten-feet wide and intersected with MD 32. In 1921, George Ruck bought all the materials from Western Electric Company to put electricity into parts of the Freedom area. Churches continued to be built. The area seemed prosperous until the depression hit, causing land prices to slide to \$22 per acre in some parts of the district. Some aspects of the past continue to the present. The intersection of MD 32 and MD 26 remains at the center of commerce, even as it did in colonial times. The Liberty Road corridor continues to be used as the major east-west route through the area, just like it was traveled by soldiers during the Civil War. The use of the Springfield property continues to be a topic of discussion, as it was during the late 1890's.

Changes in the Freedom Community since 1990

- Below is a highlight of changes that have occurred in Freedom since 1990, and also since the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan. For a more detailed discussion regarding the changes, see “Changes in the Freedom Planning Area: Past to Present” located on the Carroll County Department of Planning, Bureau of Comprehensive Planning’s webpage, as well as Element 4 of this document.

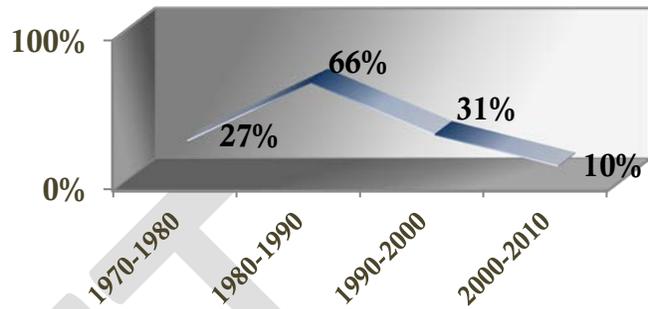
Selected Census Characteristics 1970 - 1990

- Population Growth:**¹ Between 1970 and 1980 the population grew 27%, from 10,076 people to 12,777 people; and between 1980 and 1990, the population grew 66%, from 12,777 people to 21,174 people.
- Gender**² The male/female ratio remained an approximate fifty/fifty split between 1970 and 1990.

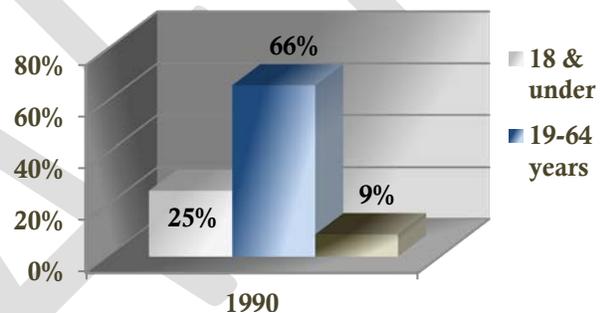
1990 - 2010

- Population Growth** Between 1990 and 2000, the population grew 31%, from 21,174 people to 27,741 people; and between 2000 and 2010, the

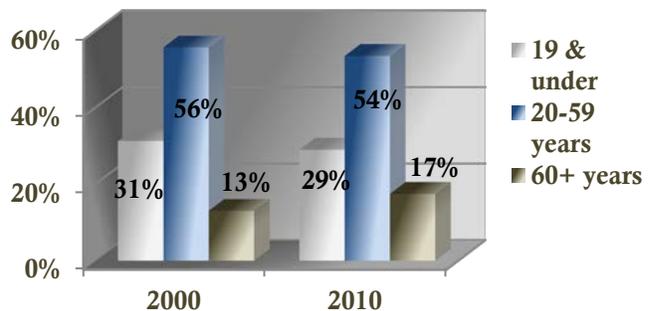
Freedom Designated Growth Area
Percent Change in Population
1970-2010 Census



Freedom Designated Growth Area
Age Distribution
1990 Census



Freedom Designated Growth Area
Age Distribution
2000 & 2010 Census



¹ Draft update of the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, CH4_Table 1: Freedom DGA Population Trends 1970 – 2010 Census Data/American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates ‘08-’12. Excludes the Town of Sykesville.

² 1990 census data: 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, Table: Freedom Population by Gender 1970 to 1990, p. 19. 2000 census data: Draft update of the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, Table: CH4_Table 2: Persons by Gender 2000 Census, 2010 Census & American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates ‘08-’12. Includes the Town of Sykesville.

population grew 10%, from 27, 741 people to 30,531 people. From 1970 to 2010, the population grew 203%, from 10,076 people to 30,531 people.

- **Race:**³ In 1990, the non-white population accounted for 5.6% of Freedom’s population. In 2000, it decreased slightly to 5.4%, and in 2010, increased again to 7.6% of the population.
- **Age:**⁴ Population shifts indicate younger adults are moving out of Freedom and Carroll County, while older people are staying and/or relocating to Freedom. The age-segment 18 years and younger represented 25.4% of the population in 1990. The same age-segment represented 31% in 2000 and 29% in 2010⁵. In 1990, the age-segment 19-64 years represented 65.8% of Freedom’s population. The similar age-segment, ages 20-59, represented 56% in 2000 and 54% in 2010. In 1990, the age-segment 65 years+ represented 8.7% of Freedom’s population. The age-segment 60 years+ represented 13% in 2000 and 17.5% in 2010. Between 2000 and 2010, the 30-39 years population segment decreased while all others increased.
- **Gender:** The male/female ratio is approximately a fifty/fifty split from 1990 to 2010.
- **Housing Growth:** The number of housing units grew 21.0% between 1990 and 2000, from 7,754⁶ housing units to 9,382⁷ housing units; and 15.6% between 2000 and 2010, from 9,382 housing units to 10,844⁸ housing units.
- **Household Size:**⁹ The average household size in 1990 is unavailable. In 2000, the average household size was 2.92 persons per household, and by 2010, it had decreased to 2.85 persons per household.
- **Vacancy Rates:** While modest compared to surrounding jurisdictions, housing vacancy rates increased from 1¹⁰% in 1990 to 2.6%¹¹ in 2000 to 2.7%¹¹ in 2010.

³ 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, Table: Freedom Race Characteristics 1970 – 1990, p. 17. 1990 race census data is broken out into the following groups: “White,” “Black,” and “Other.” 2000 race census data is broken out into additional groups. To make comparisons, 2000 race census data is aggregated into the same groups as 1990 race census data. Excludes the Town of Sykesville.

⁴ 1990 census data: 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, Table: Freedom Area Population – Age Characteristics 1970 to 1990, p. 18. 2000 census data: Draft update of the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, Table CH4_Table 5: Age Breakdown of Population. 1990 age census data is unavailable in age brackets comparable to 2000 age census data. To make comparisons, 2000 census data is aggregated into similar age brackets as the 1990 age census data: 18 years of age and under, 19 to 64 years of age and 65+ years of age. 2000 Census data was aggregated into the following age brackets: 19 years of age and under; 20 to 59 years of age; and 60+ years of age. Excludes the Town of Sykesville.

⁵ Note: Between 1990 census and 2000 census, age-segments were changed. In 1990, census data was aggregated 18 years and under; in 2000, it was aggregated 19 years and under. In 1990, 65 years+ was one age-segment; in 2000, the age segment became 60 years+. For comparison purposes, this data was compiled to best represent the age-segments from both the 1990 and 2000 census data sets.

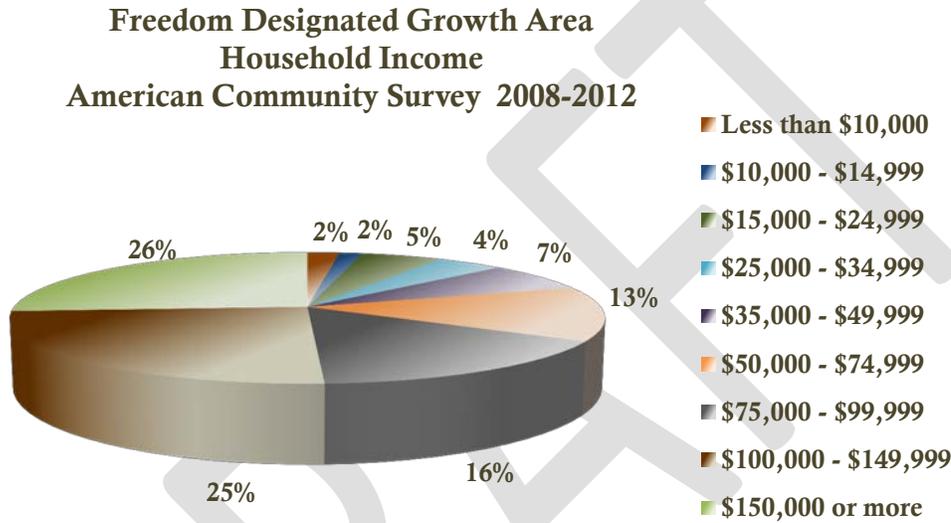
⁶ 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, Table: Housing by Type of Units Freedom 1990, p. 20. Excludes the Town of Sykesville.

⁷ 2000 Census Data. Excludes the Town of Sykesville.

⁸ Draft update of the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, CH5_Table 1:2010 Census. Excludes the Town of Sykesville.

⁹ Draft update of the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, Table CH4_Table 9: Household by Relationship Type. Excludes the Town of Sykesville.

- **Education:** Almost 24% of the population had bachelor degrees or higher in 1990; in 2000, the percentage jumped to 32.9%¹² (Freedom and Sykesville); and in 2011 (2010 census data was unavailable), the percentage rose further to 42%¹³.
- **Income:** In 1990, 6%¹⁴ of the households earned more than \$100,000; in 2000, 24.9%¹⁵ of Freedom's households earned more than \$100,000 and in 2012 51% of the households earned more than \$100,000.



¹⁰ 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, Table: Housing by Occupancy Type Freedom, 1990, p. 20. Includes the Town of Sykesville.

¹¹ Draft update of the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, Table: CH4_Table 10: Vacancy Rate 2000 Census, 2010 Census . Includes the Town of Sykesville.

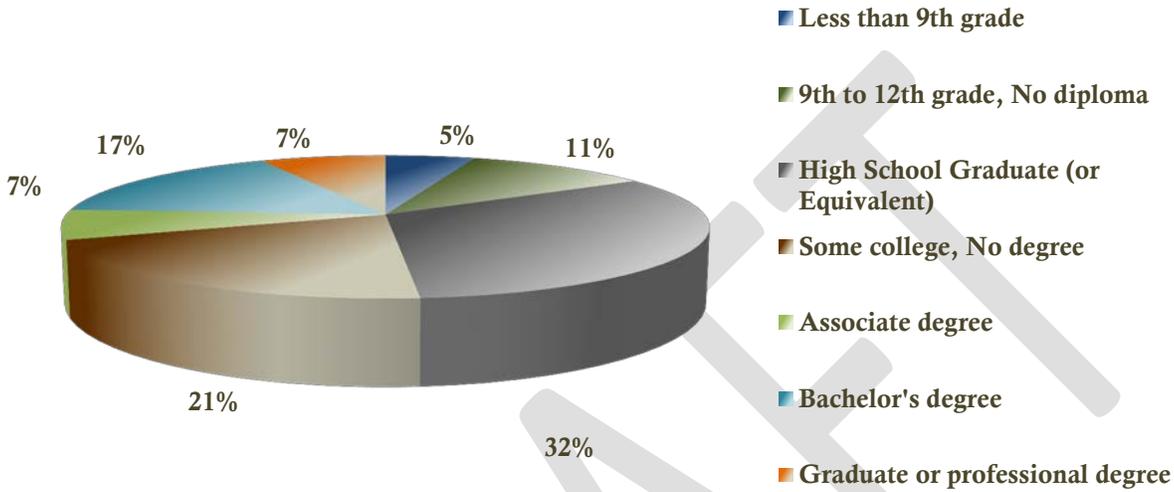
¹² 2000 census data. Includes the Town of Sykesville.

¹³ Draft update of the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, CH4_Table 13: Education Attainment of Persons 25 Years of Age or Over American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates '07-'11. Includes the Town of Sykesville.

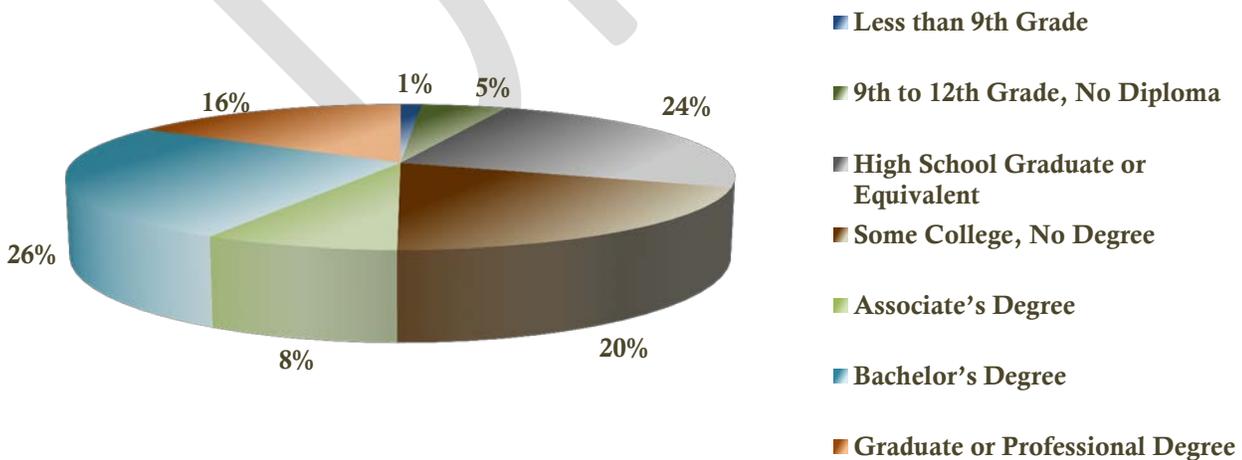
¹⁴ 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan Table: Freedom, Table: Value of Owner Occupied Housing Units, 1990, p. 21. Includes the Town of Sykesville.

¹⁵ Draft update of the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, Table: CH4_Table 11: Housing Value - Owner Occupied Units Census 2000 & American Community Survey 5-Year Estimate '08-'12. Includes the Town of Sykesville.

**Freedom Designated Growth Area
Education Attainment of Population Age 25+
1990 Census**



**Freedom Designated Growth Area
Education Attainment of Population Age 25+
American Community Survey 2007-2011**



Since the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan

Land Use Related Changes

- Rezoning of several parcels adjacent to or near the Central Maryland Distribution Center off of MD 26 at MD 97 to Restricted Industrial to encourage business uses.
- Rezoning of several parcels within the MD 26 corridor, which is the commercial area in the heart of Freedom.
- The redevelopment of the Liberty Exchange from a golf center to a ten building 225,000 square foot mixed use business community located one and one-half miles west of the intersection of MD 26 and MD 32.
- Ongoing concurrency management efforts via the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance to keep pace with school facility needs, water capacity demands, and the need for development-related road projects.
- Annexation of two parcels (70 acres) in the Warfield Complex into the Town of Sykesville.
- The development of a Municipal Growth Element for the Town of Sykesville identifying potential/future annexations and the demands those annexed lands will place on infrastructure and services.
- A potential of an estimated additional 2,800 jobs from the Base Realignment and Closures nationally to come to Carroll County that has not materialized.
- The redevelopment of Carrolltowne Mall.

Transportation Changes

- Capacity improvements to the MD 26 and MD 32 intersection.
- Dualization of MD 32 from Route 70 to north of MD 99 (Old Frederick Road) and from Piney Ridge Parkway to MD 26.
- Construction of Dickenson Road between Hemlock and Oklahoma Roads.
- Intersection improvements at MD 26 and Klee Mill Road; and Raincliffe and Sandosky Roads at MD 32.
- Widening of MD 26 west of Emerald Lane to west of Linton Road.
- Bridge repair/renovations on MD 26 at MD 97, MD 97 at Morgan Run, and MD 32 at Liberty Reservoir; MD 26 at Liberty Reservoir; Piney Run Bridge to the east of Springfield property; and reconstruction of bridge over MD 97.
- Traffic light installation on MD 32 at Piney Ridge Parkway; and on MD 32 at Freedom Avenue.
- Pedestrian crossings/improvements on MD 32 at Piney Ridge Parkway; and Springfield Avenue and MD 32.
- Sidewalk installation on the east side of MD 32 between Londontown Boulevard and Progress Way.
- Bicycle lanes incorporated at MD 26 and Klee Mill Road and geometrical improvements at Klee Mill Road.
- Intersection improvements at Springfield Avenue and MD 32.
- Paving of Slacks Road.

- Expansion of walking trails in the Town of Sykesville and the Warfield Complex.
- Access improvements made on Raincliffe Road at the entrance to Freedom Regional Park.
- Improvements made to MD 26 between Emerald Lane and White Rock Road.
- Left turn signal phasing at W. Hemlock Drive.

Water Supply

- Negotiated with Baltimore City for increase of Liberty Reservoir withdrawal allocations at a negotiated price structure. Funding is underway to replace all membrane filters at the WTP in FY19.
- Completed upgrades that more than doubled design capacity of the County's Liberty Reservoir water treatment plant.
- Increase of water supply by bringing the new Fairhaven and Raincliffe wells on-line.
- Development of additional and lower cost water capacity through County-owned reservoir and wells in the vicinity of Springfield property and Freedom Park for future use.
- Funding is underway to perform a comprehensive study of the Freedom water distribution system to identify and plan to correct hydraulic differences in the system.
- Addition of a new asset management system has been implemented to identify and schedule future capital projects to repair, rehabilitate and replace assets.

Sewer Service

- Continue to fund capital projects to meet current and future flow demands.
- Addition of an asset management system has been implemented to identify and schedule projects to rehabilitate the Freedom sewer service area's (SSA) 3,000 sanitary sewer manholes where necessary. The funding for this project will address 25 to 40 manholes annually.
- Emergency line replacements and line stabilization have occurred within the Town of Sykesville. Sewer assets are expected to be replaced on MD 851 (Main Street and Springfield Avenue) as part of the upcoming MD SHA streetscape project. Design started in FY16.
- Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) upgrades are underway to the Freedom wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) to meet new bay nutrient effluent limits, and are expected to be completed by the first quarter of FY18.
- A study of the Freedom sewer collection system to identify needed technology, efficiency and/or capacity improvements, and identification of infiltration and inflow issues has been funded for completion in FY16.
- Construction is underway to line sanitary sewer mains for the purposes of increasing the life of the sewer mains by sealing the joints and cracks with a continuous liner to stop tree roots and infiltration and inflow from damaging the system. Construction commenced in FY12 and will continue for years to come. More lines will be identified as video inspection work is completed.

- Funding is underway for engineering plans to replace the Town of Sykesville's current cast iron water mains and clay sanitary sewer lines. Engineering is expected to start in FY17; construction is expected to begin in FY19 and continue through FY26.

Public Facilities and Services (other than water supply and sewer service)

- The South Carroll Senior and Community Center opened in November 2009.
- The Eldersburg Branch Library was renovated in 2004.
- Freedom's five elementary schools (Carrolltowne, Eldersburg, Freedom, Linton Springs and Piney Ridge) have undergone additions/renovations since 2006.
- Sykesville Middle School was expanded in 2000.
- Century High School was constructed in 2000 and opened in 2001.
- Piney Run Park was improved with a new auxiliary classroom, and the gatehouse and boathouse were renovated.
- Freedom Park facilities have been expanded and improved to create an additional multipurpose field, climbing wall and enhanced picnic facilities.
- Old Liberty Road Park was opened in 2002.
- The 130-acre Krimgold Park property was purchased in 2002, which will increase the service level to Freedom residents once developed.
- Obrecht Road Park was designated as a County park in 2004.
- Beginning in 2001, the Sheriff's Department and MD State Police in the Law Enforcement Office co-located in the Eldersburg Branch of the Carroll County Public Library. Local and regional patrols are coordinated from this location.
- Between 2001 and 2003, the Sheriff's office maintained a community policing presence in a small storefront space within the Carrolltowne Mall. The office closed during preparations for site redevelopment.
- A new South Carroll satellite Sheriff's office opened on Liberty Road in 2014.
- Reconstruction of the Sykesville-Freedom fire station occurred following the 2010 roof collapse and fire.
- The replacement of the 800 MHz radio analog system to a new digital system that serves the dispatch and two-way wireless communications needs of police, fire, ambulance, and other government agencies.
- The 2007 goals regarding the Carroll County Public Network (CCPN) high-speed, fiber-optic network have been completed to service 131 government facilities throughout the County.
- Provision of technology infrastructure, a fiber-optic network to support employment uses and redevelopment.

Water and Other Natural Resources

- As required by the County's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES), Phase I Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit, watershed assessments were completed for the watersheds within the Liberty and Piney Run Reservoir watersheds. These assessments assist with identifying and prioritizing

locations for project implementation to be included in watershed restoration plans to achieve pollutant reductions for TMDLs associated with local stream segments.

- The County's well monitoring program, which provides well level data, has been expanded.
- Between 2007 and September, 2015, the County has retrofitted 28 stormwater management facilities and added 6 new facilities in the Liberty Reservoir and South Branch Patapsco watersheds. A total of 11.83 acres have been planted in the Liberty Reservoir watershed, and 10.96 acres have been planted in the South Branch Patapsco watershed.
- In 2004, seven County Code chapters were updated to incorporate changes to State laws and regulations and to modernize requirements based on current accepted practices.
- The Piney Run Watershed Management Plan was completed.
- The State Highway Administration completed reforestation projects near the upper reaches of Morgan Run along MD 26 and MD 97 to improve infiltration of roadway runoff.
- The Water Resource Coordination Council (WRCC) was formed in 2007 to provide a mechanism for cooperative problem solving regarding critical water resource management issues facing the County and municipalities.
- A Water Resources Element (WRE) was adopted in 2010, applicable to both Freedom and the Town of Sykesville, which provides valuable information regarding water supply availability and wastewater capacity.
- The Bay and several local Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) were completed, impacting the extent and location of additional growth and densities.

Government Structure and Finances

Governance & Finances

Currently, five County Commissioners elected by district to four-year terms govern all of the unincorporated portions of Carroll County. With authority and responsibilities authorized by state enabling legislation, the Board of Carroll County Commissioners serves as both an executive and legislative body. Several Commissioner-appointed boards carry out a variety of the County's government functions. These bodies include the County Planning and Zoning Commission, the County Economic Development Commission, the Environmental Advisory Council, and the County Parks Board. By fulfilling their designated duties, all of these groups have some influence over the growth and development of the Freedom area. The separately incorporated Town of Sykesville also lies within Freedom's geographic boundaries. An elected Mayor and Town Council govern the Town with powers and duties derived through its municipal charter. Those powers include land use and zoning authority and require development and adoption of a separate master or comprehensive plan. Accordingly, the portion of Freedom included in the Town of Sykesville's corporate boundaries is not included in this Plan. As of the drafting of this Plan, Sykesville adopted

its current Master Plan in early 2011, and updated it in 2014. It includes a Municipal Growth Element (MGE) addressing planned future growth beyond its current boundaries to include land surrounding the Fairhaven Retirement Community; lands adjacent to the Piney Run Park in hopes of gaining access for a future trail connection into the Park; the current FEMA Headquarters property on Johnsville Road and MD 32; the Verizon telecommunications service station at Macbeth Way/MD 32; the Humphries Property adjacent to the Town's Raincliffe Subdivision; and the State Police training grounds.¹⁶ Since the Town of Sykesville's Master Plan update adoption, the Town has acquired the Martin Gross Area of the Warfield Complex, which comprises twelve vacant buildings on the Warfield Complex site and several adjacent parcels.

Following the 2010 Census and the decennial redistricting in 2011, Freedom area citizens elect state representatives from Legislative Sub-District 9B and federal representatives from the 8th Congressional District. The community is represented by one Senator and one Delegate in the State Legislature in Annapolis and in Congress by two Senators and one member of the House of Representatives.

Carroll County's General Fund receives revenues from over 120 sources including taxes, permit fees, state aid, user fees and investment income. Over several annual budget cycles, approximately 85.7% of revenue comes from Real Property and Income Taxes. Collectively, ordinary business taxes, property recordation taxes, utility and railroad taxes, contribute between 6 to 7% in an average year to the available General Fund balance.

Infrastructure and public services provided in Freedom include roadway improvements, water and sewer services, schools, police and fire protection, snow removal, libraries, street lighting, park services, maintenance, and general government. Several of these services and facilities are funded through individual proprietary funds to enable capital costs to be recovered through user service charges or fees. Systems and services which are provided by the existing proprietary enterprise funds include:

- Wastewater treatment operating funds through the Septage Enterprise Fund
- Provision of water and sewerage systems are funded through the Bureau of Utilities Fund
- The Solid Waste Enterprise Fund provides operating funds for the County-managed landfill and solid waste disposal systems
- The development and operation funding of the inter-county fiber optic "backbone" network infrastructure has been provided by the Fiber Network Enterprise Funds

Other operation and service costs are furnished through other Funds including a Capital Project Fund to cover other types of major facilities or construction; Special Revenue Funds where monies generated are dedicated to specific purposes via grants, development impact

¹⁶ Town of Sykesville Master Plan 2011, pp. 8-6 - 8-7.

fees, agricultural transfer taxes, or the Hotel Rental Tax which funds promotion and tourism outreach. Current budget information and detailed background information is available via: <http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg/budget/>

Town of Sykesville

Sykesville's 1904 incorporation followed almost 80 years of growth and evolution as a local center of commerce and trade. The community's siting along the nation's first railroad, the Baltimore & Ohio Railroads' "Old Main Line," as well as the milling and industrial opportunities afforded along the South Branch of the Patapsco prompted significant investments and resulting growth. Sykesville's economy and stature further elevated in the early 1890's by selection of the adjacent lands as the site for Springfield State Hospital, prompting the need for powers conveyed to an organized municipality. The Town's charter directs its governance; executive and enabled legislative duties are executed by a Mayor and Council elected to serve four-year terms. A professional Town Manager, hired by the Mayor and Council, implements Sykesville's policies, codes, and oversees daily operations. The Town's structure includes a Police Department, a Public Works Department, the Old Main Line Visitor's Center and Post Office, the Historic Colored Schoolhouse (a living history site), the Gatehouse Museum and the Town House Administration. Administrative positions, in addition to the Town Manager, include the Town Clerk, Town Treasurer, Administrative Assistant, and Economic Development/Main Street Manager. Citizen volunteers serve Sykesville in several key appointed capacities and in a wide variety of advisory roles. Residents may seek appointments to serve on the Planning and Zoning, Historic District, and Ethics Commissions, as well as the Economic Development and the Parks and Recreation Committees, and, as needed, on the Boards of Zoning Appeals, and Elections. The appointed members of the Sykesville Main Street Association Board, as well as its four standing volunteer committees, advise and assist with Main Street project implementation.

Sykesville's downtown is a vibrant historic town center offering a variety of retail, office, restaurant, and service businesses as both a destination and a community center. The Town is an officially designated National Main Street and Maryland Main Street Community. In July 2012, it received state Sustainable Community designation. This designation allows for various infrastructure investments and support for economic development activities. The Sykesville Main Street organization and the Sykesville Business Association represent the business community.

Between 1990 and 2000, Town population grew more than 80%¹⁷; during the decade from 2000 to 2010, that rate slowed to just below 6%. As of April 2010, the U.S. Census Bureau recorded the Town's population at 4,436 residents. Sykesville's residents enjoy a unique diversity of housing stock in comparison to both Freedom and Carroll County. Residential opportunities include a broad range of sizes and costs for apartments, townhouses, and

¹⁷ 1990 Census population of 2,342 people and 2000 Census population 4,197.

historic homes as well as contemporary single-family homes. Sykesville's senior housing also offers a range of choices for senior living. Current options include the age restricted Village House, opened in 2001; Fairhaven Life Care Retirement Community, opened in 1980; and Copper Ridge, a facility for persons with Alzheimer's disease, opened in 1994. Other Town amenities include South Branch Park, Centennial Park, The Little Sykes Railway Park, Millard Cooper Park and pedestrian tunnel linking to the Warfield Complex and its trail network, a linear park with a walk/bike trail, several open space areas, and tot lots with play equipment all in recently-developed neighborhoods. The Town also has redeveloped and expanded its Police station, constructed the Old Main Line Visitor Center & Post Office and operates two historic public properties: the Sykesville Gatehouse Museum and the Historic Colored Schoolhouse.

While the Town of Sykesville does fall within the boundaries of the Freedom DGA, it is an autonomous jurisdiction. Therefore, this plan does not apply to the Town; the Town has its own adopted comprehensive plan for the area within the Town limits. The Town Sykesville Master Plan update may be found at <http://sykesville.net/minutes/MasterPlan.pdf>.

Element 2: Plan Purpose & Legislative Authority

Plan Definition & Purpose

The purpose of this community comprehensive plan is to provide a framework that guides the growth and development of the Freedom Designated Growth Area (DGA). Designated Growth Areas are smaller geographic portions of the County where significant development and redevelopment is planned to occur. This is consistent with the Carroll County Master Plan (adopted in February of 2015), which calls for the majority of the County's new development to be located in areas such as DGAs that have the infrastructure to support these types of activities.

Community comprehensive plans are prepared so that land use planning is evaluated at the DGA defined local scale. The Freedom DGA is unique compared to most of the County's DGAs in that the County's eight municipalities lie at the heart and comprise the majority of the County's DGAs. However, the Freedom DGA is comprised mostly of unincorporated lands, with the incorporated Town of Sykesville located along its southern edge. Additional land surrounding most of the municipalities is identified and planned for future annexation, referred to as Municipal Growth Areas (MGAs) (formerly referred to as Growth Area Boundaries or GABs). Within the MGAs and DGAs are Priority Funding Areas (PFAs). Priority Funding Areas are areas that meet state criteria for density and provision of public sewer service, for targeting state resources, as deemed through state land management policy and legislation.

Maryland Planning Enabling Legislation & Authority¹⁸

Provided below is a summary of state enabling and planning-related legislation with which localities need to comply for comprehensive planning. For a detailed discussion of the legislation, refer to the 2014 Carroll County Master Plan found on the Carroll County Department of Planning's webpage.

Enabling Legislation

Land Use Annotated Code of Maryland (Land Use Article) - Delegates planning and land use regulatory powers to the state's municipalities, Baltimore City, and non-charter counties.

Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992 - Encourages economic growth, concentrates development in suitable areas, and protects natural resources through

¹⁸ 2014 Carroll County Master Plan, pp. 5-15.

the establishment of eight visions. These visions were expanded to twelve visions in 2009 as part of the Smart, Green, and Growing Legislation (see below).

Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Act of 1997 - Consists of several programs that formed the Smart Growth Initiatives:

- ***PRIORITY FUNDING AREAS*** - targeted areas to receive state funds for infrastructure based on availability of existing and/or planned water and sewer services, a permitted residential density of 3.5 dwelling units per acre, and designation as a growth area – residential or economic development – in a master plan.
- ***RURAL LEGACY AREAS*** – targeted areas to receive state and local funds to purchase easements in areas designated by the County or local land trust.
- ***JOB CREATION TAX CREDIT*** – an incentive based tax credit used to promote community revitalization and job creation. Eligible industries include:
 - Manufacturing
 - Transportation or communications
 - Agriculture
 - Forestry
 - Fishing or mining
 - A public utility
 - Warehousing; research
 - Development or testing
 - Biotechnology
 - Computer programming
 - Data processing or other computer related services
 - Central financial, real estate or insurance services
 - Operation of central administrative offices or a company headquarters
 - Business services firms (only located in a PFA)

State Legislation Since 2001

Numerous laws affecting planning and local government have been passed since 2001. Provided below is a summary of state legislation since 2001. For a detailed discussion of the legislation, refer to the 2014 Carroll County Master Plan found on the Carroll County Department of Planning's webpage.

House Bill 1141 – Land Use – Local Government Planning; House Bill 2 – Agricultural Stewardship Act of 2006; and House Bill 1160 – Workforce Housing Grant Program – Establishment - requires four new plan elements, though some may only apply to the County and others may only apply to municipalities. These elements are:

- A Water Resource Element (WRE)
- A Municipal Growth Element (MGE), requiring:
 - Annexations accompanied by a strategy for services and public facilities which is reviewed by the County and the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) prior to a public hearing; and if the annexation proposed zoning is denser than the current County zoning by 50% or more, the municipality must wait five years before rezoning the area unless it seeks a waiver of zoning from the County.
 - Priority Funding Area (PFA) boundaries must be based upon the capacity of available land to accommodate growth, infill, or redevelopment at densities consistent with the master plan.
- A Priority Preservation Area Element (PPA).
- Workforce Housing Element (WHE). This is not required, and Carroll County is not pursuing participation in the Workforce Housing Grant Program; therefore, a WHE is not contained in the County's most recent Master Plan update or this Freedom Area Community Comprehensive Plan.

Smart, Green and Growing Legislation: SB 273/HB 294 – The Planning Visions; SB 280/HB 297 – The Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009; and SB 276/HB 295 – Smart Growth Goals, Measures, and Indicators and Implementation of Planning Visions - includes three significant planning bills designed to update existing planning legislation and further enhance State and local implementation, as summarized below:

- The Planning Visions Bill (SB 273/HB 294) replaced the eight visions established in the 1992 Planning Act with twelve new visions: (See page 21)
 - Quality of life and sustainability
 - Public participation
 - Growth areas
 - Community design
 - Infrastructure
 - Transportation
 - Housing
 - Economic development
 - Environmental protection
 - Resource conservation
 - Stewardship
 - Implementation of the visions
- The Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009 (SB 280/HB 297) defines actions that are “consistent with” or have “consistency with” a master plan as those actions that further, and are not contrary to, the plan with respect to:
 - Policies
 - Timing of implementation of the plan
 - Timing of development

- Timing of rezoning
 - Development patterns
 - Land uses
 - Densities or intensities
- The Smart Growth Goals, Measures, and Indicators and Implementation of Planning Visions Bill (SB 276/HB 295) identifies a statewide land use goal to increase the percentage of growth within PFAs and decrease the percentage of growth outside PFAs. Localities must provide an annual report disclosing required measures and indicators for assisting in achieving the statewide goal, including a triennial update of a jurisdiction's development capacity, and if there is a significant change in zoning or land.
 - The Sustainable Growth & Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012 (SB 236), also known as the Septics Bill, requires counties to designate "tiers" that determine the amount and location of septic systems, which dictates the location of residential major and minor subdivisions, and the type of sewerage system that will serve them. Without an adopted tier map, a local jurisdiction may not authorize a major residential subdivision served by on-site septic systems, community systems or shared systems. The four tiers are as follows:
 - Tier I areas: Currently served by sewerage systems
 - Tier II areas: Planned to be served by sewerage systems
 - Tier III areas: Planned to be served by septic systems
 - Tier IV areas: Planned for conservation, prohibiting residential major subdivisions

Due to the timing of the most recent Master Plan Update, the County has not addressed the incorporation of septic tiers; however, the Town of Sykesville has mapped out its tier areas. At a minimum, until the tiers are adopted, the County must track all major and minor residential subdivisions to determine grandfathering. This will require the County to evaluate the development review process and ensure all new subdivisions are in conformance with SB 236. The County's intent is to continue analyzing the efforts of implementing tiers and incorporate the municipalities' tier areas in the future. Until tiers are established, the County is limited to only approving septic on up to seven lot subdivisions.

- The Planning Cycle – In 2013, SB 671/HB 409 increased the time period of a local government's master (also referred to as comprehensive) planning and zoning cycle from six years to ten years to coincide with the U.S. census data; and required a five-year update, submitted with the annual measures and indicators report, to the planning commission on the implementation of the master/comprehensive plan.

Adoption and Amendment of Comprehensive Plans – Adopted in 2015, HB 919/SB 551 amended the authority of a local legislative body for a non-charter county or municipality to amend a comprehensive plan submitted by its planning commission. Specifically, the bill authorizes the legislative body to adopt, modify, remand, or disapprove all or part of a comprehensive plan submitted by its planning commission, but requires the legislative body to hold a public hearing before adopting or modifying the plan. It also authorizes the body to hold a public hearing before remanding or disapproving the plan. If remanded or disapproved, the planning commission is required to hold a public hearing before submitting a new recommended plan to the legislative body. Also, the legislative body is required to take action on the plan within 90 days after receipt, with up to 60 additional days if there are exigent circumstances preventing the body from acting on the plan within 90 days.

The 12 State Planning Visions

1. Quality of life and sustainability: a high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water, and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment;
2. Public participation: citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are sensitive to their responsibilities in achieving community goals;
3. Growth areas: growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to these centers, or strategically selected new centers;
4. Community design: compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near available or planned transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources and preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas, and historical, cultural, and archeological resources;
5. Infrastructure: growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sustainable manner;
6. Transportation: a well-maintained, multimodal transportation system facilitates the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods, and services within and between population and business centers;
7. Housing: a range of housing densities, types, and sizes provides residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes;
8. Economic development: economic development and natural resource-based businesses that promote employment opportunities for all income levels within the capacity of the state's natural resources, public services, and public facilities are encouraged;
9. Environmental protection: land and water resources, including the Chesapeake and coastal bays, are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems, and living resources
10. Resource conservation: waterways, forests, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems, and scenic areas are conserved;
11. Stewardship: government, business entities, and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection; and
12. Implementation: strategies, policies, programs, and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, state, and interstate levels to achieve these Visions.

Meeting the Twelve State Visions

As discussed above and listed on the previous page, The 1992 Planning Act visions were replaced with twelve new visions in 2009 as part of the Smart, Green, and Growing Act. Below is a discussion of how the County's Master Plan addresses the twelve visions, and how the Freedom Comprehensive Plan also addresses the twelve visions (underlined).

The 2014 Carroll County Master Plan implements the vision for **quality of life** and **sustainability** by striking a balance between directing growth to DGAs; conserving the County's rural working landscape; and prescribing a process to provide facilities and infrastructure necessary to accommodate development. The Freedom DGA is the largest area in the County to which development is directed. (will be expanded upon)

A variety of options for enhancing **public participation** are laid out in the Master Plan's Community Involvement Chapter. The County recognizes the importance of public input in Master Plan and community comprehensive plan updates, as well as the public's involvement in implementation of these documents. In addition, Town/County Agreements and state agency guidance provide effective methods for ensuring that communication continues throughout the life of the Master Plan. Several "listening sessions" were held in 2012 and 2013 to solicit public input for this Freedom DGA Comprehensive Plan. Additional opportunities for public participation are laid out in Element 2 of this Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan.

Carroll County's **Designated Growth Areas** have been identified as the most suitable areas to accommodate development since public water and sewer services are generally provided in these areas along with other essential services such as, but not limited to police, fire, emergency, libraries and schools. The Freedom DGA is the largest area in the County to which development is directed. The Freedom Comprehensive Plan encourages the maintenance of existing development patterns within the DGA, allowing for a mix of housing types located adjacent to and surrounding non-residential development. Non-residential development consists of commercial, retail, industrial, employment uses, and mixed uses along the major transportation routes of MD 26 (Liberty Road) and MD 32 (Sykesville Road). Cluster development is also encouraged to help protect sensitive environmental features in residential zoning districts and to promote affordability and maximize the efficient use of available lands.

Preserving and enhancing places like the County's cities and towns helps achieve the vision for **community design**. (still to be developed)

Ensuring that adequate water and wastewater **infrastructure** exists to support projected needs within the County's DGAs is addressed in the WRE. The WRE analyzes the sustainability of land use policies compared to the ability to provide adequate water/wastewater systems and to restore and maintain water quality. The County's

Concurrency Management requires the preparation of an annual Concurrency Management Report that analyzes the residential development activity of the past year, assesses the available capacity of public facilities and services, and recommends ways to better achieve the stated purpose of Concurrency Management. *The WRE and the County's Concurrency Management apply to land within the Freedom DGA boundaries and the Town of Sykesville, as well as throughout the County, ensuring public infrastructure and services keep pace with development within the County's jurisdiction.*

The Master Plan's chapter (referred to as elements in this comprehensive plan) on **transportation** contains recommendations for initiatives that will improve or maintain the viability and efficiency of the County's transportation network. Much of the plan is grounded in fiscal responsibility and the need to focus on system preservation and connectivity. *Transportation recommendations in the Freedom DGA attempt to address connectivity issues among residential transportation networks, which forces traffic onto the main traffic routes of MD 32 and MD 26, resulting in increased traffic congestion along segments of these roadways. Addressing these challenges is likely to improve the Freedom DGA's transportation viability and efficiency, and enhance economic development appeal.*

The need to provide adequate and varied **housing** for the residents of Carroll County is expressed in the Plan in several ways. By directing the majority of development to the County's DGAs, the likelihood of creating housing diversity is increased as a function of market responses. It is in the DGAs that public facilities are available, and, therefore, greater flexibility in design and density can be realized. Additionally, the Master Plan contains recommendations for enhancing housing options through various incentives, the creation of accessory dwelling units, and opportunities to create mixed-use developments. *(Will be developed with Element 5).*

Economic development is vital to Carroll's economy and tax base. Therefore, the Master Plan also addresses measures to ensure that economic development consistent with the state's visions is encouraged. The Plan goal is for commercial and industrial uses to increase from 12% to a minimum of 15% of the tax base as new development occurs. A more balanced tax base will help the County provide needed services. An increased economic development base will also bring jobs to the County without placing an undue share of the tax burden on County residents. *(Will be developed with Element 7).*

The vision to safeguard and manage natural resources through **environmental protection** and **resource conservation** is expressed in the Master Plan in several ways. The practice of directing growth to DGAs may reduce land consumption in rural areas and help to protect sensitive environmental features by limiting the geographic extent of the impacts of development. The Plan also defines and addresses sensitive areas required by the Land Use Article and as modified by 2006 legislation. In addition, the WRE explores ways to achieve a sustainable balance between planned growth and the ability to provide drinking water,

identifies wastewater limitations and measures to offset those limitations, and addresses water quality issues through strategies to address nonpoint sources. *Directing development to the Freedom DGA affords greater protection to environmental resources by shifting growth pressures away from these resources and into areas designated for higher density development. Within the DGA, wellhead protection areas provide protection for wellheads and the groundwater that feeds them, and surface watershed areas provide protection to Piney Run and Liberty Reservoirs, and thus to drinking water quality. Additionally, the process to develop the WRE also identified the nutrient cap and design capacity as limitations of the wastewater system to providing service at build-out of the Freedom DGA.*

The longstanding commitment of the County and the eight municipalities to provide **stewardship** of land and resources is evidenced through directing growth to the municipalities and their surrounding growth areas while maintaining the rural landscape beyond these areas. The combined recommendations related to land use, environmental protection, resource management, concurrency management, and public facilities result in a balanced and efficient plan for the County's future. *(Still to be developed)*

The Master Plan addresses the vision for **implementation** in a multifaceted way in which all property owners and citizens may be involved. Numerous recommendations aim at improving the policies, programs, and funding necessary for the Master Plan to be implemented as envisioned. *(Still to be developed)*

The Planning Process (Information regarding public meetings, hearings, etc. will be added when complete).

The 1977 Freedom Community Planning Area Comprehensive "Mini" Plan was updated in 2001. In 2013, the Bureau of Comprehensive Planning started the update process by developing an outreach strategy. In July of 2014, the update of the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan commenced with staff updating various aspects of the Plan in preparation for public outreach and community involvement. In _____ of 2015 and 2016, the Bureau of Comprehensive Planning conducted ___ public meetings. Insert summary of meetings: date, location, number of people attending, etc. From _____ 2014 to _____ 2016, the Bureau of Comprehensive Planning continued to prepare the draft 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan. The draft 2016 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan was vetted through the State Clearinghouse 60-day review process, including reviews made by the adjoining jurisdiction of Howard County and the County's municipalities. The 60-day review period occurred from ___ of _____, 2016 to ___ of _____, 2016. The Bureau of Comprehensive Planning incorporated revisions and presented the draft plan to the Planning Commission on ___ of _____, 2016. The Planning Commission provided revisions which were incorporated into the draft plan update. The Planning Commission held a public meeting on ___ of _____, 2016. _____ residents participated in the public meeting, providing comments. Revisions were made to the draft plan update. The draft Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan was presented to the Planning

Commission for a second time on [redacted] of 2016 at a public meeting. [redacted] residents participated in the public meeting, providing comments. The Planning Commission approved the draft Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan and forwarded it to the Board of County Commissioners. On [redacted] of 2016, the Bureau of Comprehensive Planning presented the draft Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan to Board of County Commissioners at a public meeting. [redacted] residents participated in the public meeting, providing comments. Revisions were made to the draft plan. The draft Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan was presented to the Board of County Commissioners for a second time on [redacted] of 2016 at a public meeting. [redacted] residents participated in the public meeting, providing comments. The Board of County Commissioners adopted the draft Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan on [redacted] of 2016.

DRAFT

Element 3: Public Input & Plan Vision, Goals & Structure

Public Input

The ideas, priorities, and input from the residents, property owners and stakeholders of the community are essential to establishing agreed upon community goals. The Department of Planning provided several public participation opportunities described below. In addition, solicitation of public input has been ongoing throughout the process.

- Between September 2012 and June 2013, “listening sessions” or community meetings were held on separate occasions. Surveys were administered and collected at these meetings. Surveys focused on:
 - The features & qualities of the community that are valued most highly are...
 - Things in the community that could use the most improvement are...
 - The most important questions that need to be answered about Freedom’s future are...
- Self-directed “Meeting-2-Go” kits for stakeholders unable to attend the listening sessions were made available.
- Separate public meetings were also held to gather input regarding pedestrian and bicycle connectivity and facilities across Freedom in preparation of the *Freedom Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan & Assessment* (<http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg/compplan/freedom/freedomplan/docs/bikepedplan.pdf>). Discussions focused on:
 - The places in Freedom I'd MOST like to walk or bike to are...
 - I'll be starting my trip from...
 - I think the highest priorities to improve walking & biking in Freedom are...
 - Today, the GREATEST challenge I have in walking or biking is...

In addition, the Town of Sykesville developed and adopted a new Master Plan including a newly-required Municipal Growth Element (MGE), which provides details for the Town’s future expansion and development over the long-term planning horizon. The MGE objectives and goals are supported in the Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan.

Assets & Constraints

For the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, stakeholders identified assets and constraints as shown in Table EL3_Table 1 below.

**EL3_Table 1: 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan
Stakeholder Identified Assets and Constraints**

Assets	Constraints
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Rural atmosphere and open space, farmland ● Quality of schools and teachers is excellent ● Low density development/single-family homes ● Close to Baltimore/Washington with easy access to work destinations ● The citizens in the area are caring and supportive of each other ● Many civic organizations ● Low crime rate - area is safe 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Traffic congestion ● Too much development and growth happening too fast ● Schools not adequate for growth ● Billboards and signs - too many and do not enhance area ● Lack of tax base/economic development ● Need more fire and police support ● Zoning regulations

Comparing 2001 stakeholder input to 2012-2013 stakeholder input, “assets” and “constraints” have remained relatively constant. Progress has been made towards some constraints, while other constraints remain unaddressed. See EL3_Table 2 for recent stakeholder identified assets and constraints.

**EL3_Table 2: 2016 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan
Stakeholder Identified Assets and Constraints**

Highly Valued Features & Qualities	Improvements Needed in the Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Relative sense of safety and security in the community ● Close and supportive neighbors & the high quality relationships between community members ● Scenic and open spaces are in proximity to residences and central business corridors ● High quality of schools and community institutions ● Easy access to community facilities and services and a general appreciation of the quality of the services available and the quality of delivery of those services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Need to reach destinations by foot & by bicycle for daily travel, recreation and health ● Too few employment and economic development opportunities ● Traffic flow, congestion points, safety, volumes and road connectivity ● Need to provide broader housing alternatives: age in place, mixed use, density options beyond single-family ● Concerns over lost heritage, history and historic sites ● Lack of visual character and community “center”

Vision Statement

The Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan supports the County Master Plan, and simultaneously recognizes values and characteristics unique to Freedom. The following is the vision statement for Freedom for a planning time horizon to 2038. Upcoming decisions and activities of the community, its stakeholders, property owners, leaders, and advocates should be consistent with this vision.

A “Vision Statement” defines a community’s preferred future in a broad and somewhat idealistic, but attainable vision.

Freedom’s Vision Statement – circa 2038

To Be Developed

Carroll County’s Vision Statement

Carroll County is a great place to live, work, and play. The County conserves and promotes its unique rural agricultural heritage, protects its environmental resources, and promotes a balanced approach to new development and economic opportunities consistent with the fabric of its communities. Carroll County values, and citizens’ unalienable rights of life, liberty, and property, are respected, protected, and sustained.

Noteworthy about Freedom’s vision statement is the reference to “...community identity, sense of place...” An ongoing challenge for Freedom, according to the 2001 plan update and during this current plan update is the need to create a sense of place along the MD 26 and MD 32 corridors - the heart of Freedom. Contributing to this challenge is the quantity of commercial development that has occurred in areas originally designated for industrial development, creating traffic volumes and patterns different from that associated with industrial development. Traffic generated by commercial development, and especially at the magnitude of commercial development that occurs at the Eldersburg Crossroads, has created a volume of “shoppers” traffic that, when mixed with the through traffic of MD 32 and MD 26, creates increased traffic congestion and volumes not originally anticipated for Freedom. The result not only is increased traffic congestion but also decreased public safety.

In addition, the County’s policy to make road connections amongst subdivisions through the development process has resulted in a disconnected road system. Road networks are often never completed, forcing residents to travel long distances on major transportation routes to reach destinations, as opposed to being able to travel through residential developments to get to their destinations. This places an unnecessary burden on MD Routes

26 and 32. Further exacerbating the lack of connectivity amongst residential transportation networks is the notion that connecting residential transportation networks will create too much traffic congestion within the neighborhoods. The desire for fewer local street connections necessarily contributes to unacceptable traffic congestion levels along MD 26 and MD 32. The challenge for residents and local officials is therefore how to address opposing transportation network agendas.

In addition, in the 2001 Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan, a Boulevard District was designated along the commercial and industrial existing development and zoned lands abutting MD 26 at the MD 26 and MD 32 crossroads. In the 2001 Plan, the recommendation to create architectural guidelines for development within the Boulevard District was made. However, the recommendation was never implemented, partially due to the fact that the MD 26 corridor was already developed. Implementing design guidelines would need to occur through redevelopment. Additionally, there was concern about placing additional development requirements on property owners. Therefore, the sense of place that exists today is a product of land use policies ruled largely by market forces and zoning regulations. One measure to advance the notion of “sense of place” is to address traffic congestion and ensure local road connections are made through development, through the allocation of County funds, or both.

Goals

Goals are generalized statements established to support a community’s vision statement. Goals provide guidance for local government officials and staff to develop policies that advance the achievement of a community’s vision.

A “goal” is a statement that supports obtaining the community’s vision.

Freedom Designated Growth Area Goals (to be revised during consideration of future elements)

GOAL 1

Promote appropriately timed and scaled development which supports, enhances, and reinforces the identity and character of the Freedom Designated Growth Area. **Under Development and Refinement**

GOAL 2

Provide a variety of housing opportunities that reflect market demand and serve residents at any stage of life and age. **Under Development and Refinement**

GOAL 3

Provide a safe, well-connected transportation system, including sidewalks and trails, enabling all community members to efficiently travel by any mode appropriate, including by automobile, foot, bicycle, and shared transportation service, to reach their desired destinations inside and beyond the Freedom Designated Growth Area. **Under Development and Refinement**

GOAL 4

Pursue policies that facilitate development in appropriate areas within the Freedom Designated Growth Area, thereby (a) protecting environmental resource areas; (b) preserving open space; and (c) providing public facilities and services efficiently and cost effectively. **Under Development and Refinement**

GOAL 5

Protect and enhance the Freedom Designated Growth Area's environmental resources to ensure that the area's unique natural systems are maintained as functioning assets. **Under Development and Refinement**

GOAL 6

Enhance the Freedom Designated Growth Area's character, and promote a cohesive sense of place to unify Freedom's neighborhoods and central business core. **Under Development and Refinement**

GOAL 7

Encourage community, stakeholder, and multi-jurisdictional participation and coordination in the development, consistent implementation, and on-going monitoring of the Freedom Designated Growth Area's Comprehensive Plan and subsequent updates. **Under Development and Refinement**

GOAL 8

Promote a healthy economy and additional employment opportunities by: (a) supporting the retention and expansion of existing businesses; (b) focusing on development and redevelopment of existing vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial properties; (c) providing land appropriately located and zoned for a variety of types and intensities of new economic development activities; and (d) maintaining a desirable balance between economic development and residential development. **Under Development and Refinement**

GOAL 9

Promote expanding economic development opportunities that support the local skilled workforce, entrepreneurs, and which leverage the Freedom Designated Growth Area's natural, cultural and heritage assets. **Under Development and Refinement**

GOAL 10

Support the County's agricultural vision as articulated in the Master Plan by encouraging agricultural activities and appropriate agricultural preservation within the Priority Preservation Area and the Rural Legacy Area, and direct agricultural preservation away from the Freedom Designated Growth Area. **Under Development and Refinement**

2014 Carroll County Master Plan Goals

To promote the public health, safety and welfare, Carroll County will achieve its vision through the following goals (in no particular order of priority):

GOAL 1

Promote communication and coordination between and among the County, the municipalities, and State and regional jurisdictions on projects and issues of mutual concern. Encourage the involvement of the community in developing, amending, and implementing the Master Plan.

GOAL 2

Ensure respect for unalienable individual rights; encourage community involvement in planning in an open two-way communication process; encourage the involvement of the community in planning and implementing the Carroll County Master Plan; provide participants with a balanced perspective on planning goals versus the need to respect private property rights; and accurately advise participants of the tradeoffs between various forms of development based on real-world effects.

GOAL 3

Protect and enhance the water quality of Carroll County's rivers, streams, reservoirs, and aquifers; comply with applicable state and federal requirements related to water quality and quantity; and maintain and protect adequate water supplies to serve current and planned development.

GOAL 4

To the extent feasible, provide adequate and appropriate Community Investment Plan funds to support public facilities and services. Provide an affordable, coordinated, and comprehensive system of community educational opportunities, facilities, and resources, including schools and libraries, which enhance our communities.

GOAL 5

Provide a safe and functional intra-County transportation system that promotes access and mobility for people and goods through a variety of transportation modes.

GOAL 6

Encourage a range of housing types, density, and affordability.

GOAL 7

Preserve at least 100,000 acres of agricultural land to support the production of agricultural products and promotion of related agribusiness.

GOAL 8

Preserve 80 percent of undeveloped land in the Priority Preservation Area, as adopted by the Board of County Commissioners.

GOAL 9

Provide an affordable, coordinated and comprehensive system of public and private parks, recreational facilities and programs, and open space that will enhance our communities.

GOAL 10

Preserve the County's historic, cultural, scenic, and architectural heritage.

GOAL 11

Protect, maintain, and restore, where practical, the environmental resources and natural ecosystems in the County by promoting land use practices that are in balance with, and minimize the effects on the natural environment, subject to appropriate cost/benefit analysis.

GOAL 12

Protect certain mineral resources of current and future economic importance with preemptive land uses and to ensure availability for recovery in a manner that minimizes impacts to surrounding areas; and for reclamation purposes, assure recovery to an environmentally sensitive, aesthetically pleasing condition.

GOAL 13

Promote a healthy economy and additional employment opportunities by: (a) supporting the retention and expansion of existing businesses including agribusiness through sensible land use policies; (b) focusing on development and redevelopment of existing vacant and underutilized commercial and industrial properties; (c) providing land appropriately located and zoned for a variety of types and intensities of new economic development activities; and (d) by maintaining a desirable balance between economic development and residential development.

GOAL 14

Facilitate a development pattern that remains (a) consistent with the fabric of our communities; (b) is in harmony with the surrounding built and natural environments; (c)

encourages community interaction; and (4) in rural areas, preserves the County’s rural character.

GOAL 15

Pursue policies that facilitate growth in appropriate areas, including the Designated Growth Areas, thereby (a) conserving agricultural and environmental resource areas; (b) preserving open space; and (c) providing public facilities and services efficiently and cost effectively.

Freedom’s Goals in Support of Carroll County’s Goals

The Freedom Designated Growth Area goals support and reinforce the County Master Plan goals in the following ways:

- Maintain and strengthen a sense of place and high quality of life.
- Encourage a range of housing types, density, and affordability.
- Provide a well-connected, safe transportation network.
- Expand, improve and adapt public infrastructure and services concurrently with new development.
- Promote economic development by leveraging existing resources and assets.
- Preserve and enhance environmental and heritage resources.
- Continue to engage in interjurisdictional coordination amongst the County and the Town of Sykesville.

Policies

Community comprehensive plan and master plan policy statements are established as guidance tools for decision-makers regarding planning and development related decisions, including provision of County services. The policy statement supports the Plan goals, and should remain sensitive to the rights of all property owners and citizens. The

Freedom Designated Growth Area’s Comprehensive Plan will contain policies that support the goals for Freedom, and will remain consistent with Carroll County goals and policies.

A “policy” identifies the course of action to be taken when presented with a decision to be made on a given issue.

Recommendations

Recommendations are planning, land use, and general government-related activities that, if realized, may facilitate the achievement of Freedom and Carroll County goals. The presence

A “recommendation” is an optional course of action which assists in the achievement of a goal.

of a recommendation shall in no way be construed as a mandate, requirement, or otherwise be considered an indicator that action to the contrary of any recommendation is prohibited. The update to the 2001 Freedom Community Planning Area Comprehensive Plan will discuss recommendations that could support the goals for Freedom where appropriate, and which remain consistent and supportive of Carroll County recommendations, goals and policies.

The Plan Layout

The Plan consists of 14 elements, of which the first three elements include the following information: (1) Element 1: *From Freedom's Past to Freedom's Future*, which describes the Freedom Designated Growth Area's location, history and government structure; (2) Element 2: *Plan Purpose & Legislative Authority*, which includes the Plan's purpose, Maryland's enabling authority, meeting Maryland's twelve growth management visions, and the planning process; and (3) Element 3: *Public Input & Vision, Goals and Structure*, which includes the public input process and public information, the community's assets and constraints, the Freedom Designated Growth Area's vision statement, goals (and how the Freedom Designated Growth Area supports the County's goals), policies and the Plan's layout. The remainder of this Plan is based upon thematic topics including:

- Demographic trends
- Housing
- Land use
- Economic development
- Transportation
- Public facilities and services
- Cultural historical, recreational and ecotourism amenities
- Water resources
- State designated sensitive areas
- County designated natural resources
- Implementation mechanisms

Appendices and other supplemental information as needed to provide comprehensive information.