

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 4: **Plan Foundation**

As discussed in Chapter 1, the 1992 Planning Act is based on eight visions. County and municipal plans are required to be amended so that the plans implement an established set of policies, which should be based on the Visions. Chapter 1 describes how this community comprehensive plan meets and is consistent with these Eight Visions.

Maryland's Eight Visions

As discussed in Chapter 1, the 1992 Planning Act is based on eight visions. County and municipal plans are required to be amended so that the plans implement an established set of policies, which should be based on the Visions. Chapter 1 describes how this community comprehensive plan meets and is consistent with these Eight Visions. Again, these visions are stated in the Act as follows:

- Vision 1: Development is concentrated in suitable areas
- Vision 2: Sensitive areas are protected
- Vision 3: In rural areas, growth is directed to existing population centers and resource areas are protected
- Vision 4: Stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and the land is a universal ethic
- Vision 5: Conservation of resources, including a reduction in resource consumption, is practiced
- Vision 6: Economic growth is encouraged and regulatory mechanisms are streamlined
- Vision 7: Adequate public facilities and infrastructure under the control of the county or municipal corporation are available or planned in areas where growth is to occur
- Vision 8: Funding mechanisms are addressed to achieve these visions

Carroll County's Vision

Through the process of developing a County Master Plan, the work teams, representing each municipality and many other diverse interests, supported the following vision statement for the county.

Carroll County offers a safe environment in which all its citizens may reside, work, shop, learn, and play. The rural character of our county is preserved through measures that protect our natural and cultural resources, minimize residential sprawl, and save farmland. Carroll County is enriched by sustainable agriculture and agribusiness as well as retention and recruitment of responsible, productive business and industry that offer family-wage jobs and employ the existing skilled workforce in the county. Adequate public facilities will be provided as Capital Improvement Program funding is available and concurrent with timed and phased development demand.

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Carroll County's Goals

The goals developed to help achieve the county vision address multiple aspects of the countywide community. They are broad enough to be applicable countywide. All of the functional and small area (detailed) plans developed within the county strive to achieve and to be consistent with these overall goals.

Goal 1 ☞ Direct new development to the designated growth areas to protect and conserve agricultural and environmental resource areas, preserve open space, and provide public facilities and services efficiently and cost effectively.

Goal 2 ☞ Preserve agricultural land for the production of agricultural products and promotion of related agribusiness.

Goal 3 ☞ 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.

Goal 4 ☞ Promote a healthy economy and additional employment opportunities by 1) supporting the retention and expansion of existing businesses including agribusiness through sensible land use policies and 2) providing land appropriately located and zoned for a variety of types and intensities of new economic development activities.

Goal 5 ☞ Phase and time development at a rate consistent with the county's ability to fund and expand community services and facilities through public and private resources.

Goal 6 ☞ Ensure adequate and appropriate Capital Improvement Program and operating budgets to implement the Master Plan and provide public facilities and services.

Goal 7 ☞ Provide a safe and functional transportation system which implements the land use plan while promoting access and mobility for people and goods through a network of roads, rail, transit, and non-motorized opportunities.

Goal 8 ☞ Promote development design that is in harmony with the surrounding built and natural environments, encourages community interaction, and, in rural areas, preserves the county's rural character.

Goal 9 ☞ Preserve the county's historic, cultural, scenic, and architectural heritage.

Goal 10 ☞ Provide for a wide range of housing types, density, and affordability that is well maintained and will meet the needs of the entire community.

Goal 11 ☞ Provide a coordinated and comprehensive system of public and private parks, recreational facilities and programs, and open space that will meet the active and passive recreational needs of all citizens of the county and enhance community design, identity, and vitality.

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Goal 12 ☞ Provide community educational opportunities, facilities, and resources, particularly libraries and schools, to meet the needs of a diverse population.

Goal 13 ☞ Ensure communication and coordination between the county and the municipalities on projects and issues of mutual concern. Promote interjurisdictional cooperation in planning and land use decisions.

Goal 14 ☞ Involve the community in implementing the Master Plan.

Mount Airy Environs Community's Vision

While the community comprehensive plans within Carroll County support and implement the County Master Plan, it is also recognized that each individual community holds different values and cherishes characteristics unique to that community. Each community has its own strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges. While these characteristics may also be found in other Carroll communities, each area may choose to address these issues in its own way and within its own set of priorities. Therefore, each community also develops its own vision statement.

The following vision statement was derived from the *Town of Mount Airy Master Plan* adopted in April 2004. Future decisions and activities of the community will be consistent with this vision. Members of the community will strive to bring about the changes that will make this vision attainable.

To provide a future for Mount Airy that builds on the features of the community and guides development in a way that is beneficial to the Town's citizens and respectful to the environment.

Mount Airy Environs Community's Comprehensive Plan Goals

In addition to developing a unique vision statement within the community, a set of goals are also developed that are distinct to the needs of that community and that are more specific than the county-wide goals. The participants in this planning process identified the following priorities for the Mount Airy environs community. These goals are presented by topic or category.

Growth Management & Land Use...

- ☞ To concentrate development in and around the existing town
- ☞ To promote a more compact development design in all new subdivision and site plans

Transportation...

- ☞ To improve the safety and efficiency of the MD 27 corridor
- ☞ To utilize and improve the existing road network to help alleviate congestion along the MD 27 corridor

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- ☞ To provide pedestrian/bicycle facilities to link neighborhoods to the town as an alternative to automobiles
- ☞ To provide a bicycle/pedestrian link from Watkins Park to the Gillis Falls Reservoir recreation area
- ☞ To provide commuter service between the Mount Airy community and the Washington metro area

Community Facilities...

- ☞ To secure land for the future provision of additional recreational facilities within the community
- ☞ To ensure an adequate public water supply for the region
- ☞ To provide appropriate recreational opportunities at the Gillis Falls Reservoir site
- ☞ To ensure that growth does not outpace the community's ability to provide facilities and services

Natural Resources...

- ☞ To protect environmentally sensitive areas and preserve open spaces
- ☞ To preserve the scenic views and natural landscapes of the area
- ☞ To preserve agricultural land around the community to provide distinction between the built environment and the rural landscape
- ☞ To foster alternative agricultural uses to help insure sustainability of agriculture within the area

Economic Development...

- ☞ To explore opportunities that are available with the close proximity of the I-70 corridor
- ☞ To attract industrial and/or business development that enhances the character of the community and provides living wage local employment opportunities
- ☞ To create a better balance between the residential, commercial, and industrial tax base

Historic/Cultural Resources...

- ☞ To protect historical sites and resources located within the community
- ☞ To promote activities and events that symbolize the atmosphere of the community and are unique to the area
- ☞ To protect the historic character of the community through adaptive reuse
- ☞ To support infill development that blends with and respects the surrounding built environment

Community Involvement...

- ☞ To increase citizen awareness of, and participation in planning issues, processes, and development decisions
- ☞ To increase public participation in government processes

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Interjurisdictional Coordination...

- ☞ To increase communication between the County and Town on development plans and community facility issues
- ☞ To foster greater coordination between Carroll County and Frederick County regarding the concerns of the Mount Airy community
- ☞ To build rapport with surrounding counties and State government as a legitimate stakeholders within the region

Housing & Community Design...

- ☞ To encourage residential growth that meets the needs of those in all income levels
- ☞ To promote new development design that conveys a sense of place
- ☞ To provide connected paths/trails/greenways throughout the community which offer recreational opportunities

Plan Structure

To better identify how these goals may be accomplished, this plan has used each of these topics, or categories, as a separate element (chapter) of the plan, each with its own individual recommendations for implementation. These topics correspond nicely with the traditional and required elements of a comprehensive plan. These same topics and chapters can be found in each community comprehensive plan developed after 1999. Therefore, the types of information and the format are consistent and predictable among community plans.

Major Concepts

This plan establishes a Growth Area Boundary (GAB) for the Mount Airy environs community in support of the previously adopted *2004 Town of Mount Airy Master Plan*. This GAB identifies properties which the Town intends to annex at some point in the future. It also creates a limit to which more intense land uses or development will extend, reinforced by the promotion of efforts to preserve land outside of that GAB through the use of less intense zoning districts, and other means available. Areas that fall within the GAB but not within the town limits will be supported for zoning changes that match the land use designation shown on the map when the property is annexed rather than with the adoption of this plan. The Community Planning Area (CPA) is the area within the GAB.

Transportation issues are addressed through the support of the implementation of the major street plan and additional improvements to existing roadways and intersections, which together are intended to provide traffic congestion relief and increase traffic circulation options. The plan promotes the connection of neighborhoods with each other, the downtown, and other major features, with roads as well as trails and pathways.

The plan also seeks to identify ways to maximize the economic development potential of the I-70 corridor and the access to the Baltimore and Washington DC metropolitan areas that it provides. Employment Campus zoning is introduced as a means for the development of living wage employment opportunities within the community.

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Major improvements are planned for a regional park that would not only serve the Mount Airy community, but southwest Carroll County and the surrounding area as well. This park would be located on the Gillis Falls Reservoir site and is intended to be connected to surrounding neighborhoods and the downtown area by bicycle and pedestrian trails and walkways.