

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

Chapter 6: Transportation Goal

Goals

- 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
- 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

Current Conditions

1 Inventory of Existing State, County, and Local Roads

A ⇄ Roads

STATE ROADS

I-70, Baltimore National Pike, travels east and west between the Frederick and Howard County lines and is the only portion of an Interstate Highway situated in Carroll County. The roadway is a six-lane divided highway with 12-foot travel lanes and 4 to 10-foot shoulders along the 1.04-mile segment that falls within the Carroll County limits. The posted speed limit is 65 miles per hour, and the Average Daily Trips taken in 2003 measured 62,175 vehicles east of the MD 27 overpass. The State classifies this roadway segment as an interstate.

MD 27, Ridge Road, Westminster-Manchester Road, Manchester Road, travels north and south through Carroll County from the Frederick County border to MD 30 (Hanover Pike). Within the study area, this highway segment runs from the Frederick County line northeast to the study area limit just south of MD 26. Within the study area, the roadway is undivided and consists of two marked 12-foot wide travel lanes with 7 to 13-foot wide shoulders. The highway segment is 3.92 miles in length, and the posted speed limit is 50 mph. The intersection at Watersville Road and MD 808/Leishear Road are signalized, and the level of service rating for the road segment is D. ADT's taken in 2003 measured 18,275 at the Frederick County line, 26,150 at Baltimore National Pike, 20,050 at East Ridgeville Boulevard, 16,950 at North Main Street (MD 808), and 13,750 just north of the study area boundary at Roop Road. The State classifies the road as a rural minor arterial throughout the study area.

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

While outside the study area of this Plan, it is important to note that a segment of MD 27 is located within the corporate limits of the Town of Mount Airy. This roadway segment is a divided highway with four marked lanes. Constructed in the early 1970's, it was planned to function as a "bypass" east of the Town to relieve congestion on Main Street (which became MD 808). Four intersections (Park Avenue/Twin Arch Road, East Ridgeville Boulevard, Center Street, and MD 808 at the south end of Town) are located within this stretch of the highway; all but the intersection at Center Street are signalized. In addition to serving regional (i.e., external) traffic, this portion of MD 27 also provides access to the Town's main commercial center, which borders the highway corridor.

MD 144, Frederick Road, is a two-lane undivided highway traveling parallel to I-70 between the Frederick and Howard County lines. Only a 1.90-mile segment of this road falls within Carroll County. Two marked 12-foot wide travel lanes with 10 to 12-foot wide shoulders are provided. The posted speed limit is 50 miles per hour. ADT's taken in 2003 measured 3,875 vehicles at both the Frederick and Howard County lines. The State classifies this roadway as an urban local road.

MD 808, South Main Street/North Main Street, partially straddles the Frederick County/Carroll County border and travels north from MD 27 through the Mount Airy corporate limits intersecting with MD 27 opposite Leishear Road. The roadway is primarily a two-lane, undivided highway with 11-foot travel lanes and shoulders ranging from 2 to 7 feet. Within the corporate limits, the pavement widens up to 36 feet along certain segments to accommodate on-street parking. The length of the roadway segment is 2.63 miles, with posted speed limits of 25-30 miles per hour. ADT's taken in 2003 recorded 10,175 vehicles at Hood Street. The State classifies this segment of road as a urban minor arterial.

What does Functional Classification Mean?

Roads in Carroll County are classified based on the objective to develop a functional classification system that is tailored to Carroll County's road networks, comprehensive in nature, and compatible with the MD State Highway Administration's (SHA) arterial matrix and Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) guidelines.

Carroll County's Rural Functional Classification Criteria consists of the following six functional classes: principal arterials, intermediate arterials, minor arterials, major collectors, minor collectors, and local roads.

Principal Arterial – A principal arterial links large population or employment centers. Principal arterials can range from expressways to two-lane roadways. They are inter-county or interstate oriented and indicative of long travel lengths.

Intermediate Arterial – An intermediate arterial supplements the principal arterial system. Intermediate arterials provide service to trips of a moderate length while distributing travel to smaller geographic areas than those served by principal arterials.

Minor Arterial – Minor arterial roadways provide a lower level of mobility while placing more of an emphasis on land access than the other arterial classifications. These roadways typically provide a link to the collector roadway system and connect small population centers to the overall arterial system.

Major Collector – A major collector provides service for both land access and movement within residential, commercial, industrial, or agricultural areas. They are the links from the land uses to the arterials. Major collector roads provide service to areas not on an arterial route and to other important traffic generators such as schools, parks, etc.

Minor Collector – Minor collectors provide service to the remaining traffic generators and are spaced at intervals consistent with population densities. They bring all developed areas to major collectors or arterials.

Local System – Local roads or streets provide for direct access to individual land uses. They discourage through traffic and are typically low in traffic volumes and speed.

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

MAJOR COUNTY & LOCAL ROADS

Cabbage Spring Road is a two-lane, undivided road running north and south from MD 27 (Ridge Road) to Gillis Falls Road. Two marked 10-foot wide travel lanes are provided with no shoulders. The length of the roadway is 1.82 miles, and the posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour. ADT's taken in 1998 measured 1,452 vehicles east of MD 27, and ADT's taken in 2000 recorded 835 vehicles north of Gillis Falls Road. The County classifies this segment of road as a minor collector.

Gillis Falls Road is a two-lane, undivided road running east and west from MD 27 (Ridge Road) to Woodbine Road for a total length of 4.37 miles. Within the study area, two marked 11-foot wide travel lanes are provided with minimal to no shoulders. The posted speed limit is 40 miles per hour, and ADT's taken in 2000 measured 1,883 east of MD 27, 1,343 east of Cabbage Spring Road, and 1,614 west of Cabbage Spring Road. The County classifies this segment of road as a minor collector.

Harrisville Road is a two-lane, undivided highway traveling east and west from Buffalo Road at the Frederick County line to MD 27 (Ridge Road). Two marked 11-foot wide travel lanes are provided with no shoulders. The overall length of the roadway is 1.32 miles, and the posted speed limit is 35 miles per hour. ADT's taken in 2000 measured 954 vehicles east of Buffalo Road and 1,272 west of MD 27. The County classifies this segment of road as a minor collector.

Twin Arch Road is a two-lane, undivided road running east and west from MD 27 (Ridge Road) to the Howard County line. Within the study area, two marked 10-foot wide travel lanes are provided with no shoulders. The roadway segment is 0.77 mile long and has a posted speed limit of 30 miles per hour. ADT's taken in 2000 measured 3,157 vehicles at the Mount Airy corporate limits and 2,994 at the Howard County line. The County classifies this segment of road as a minor collector.

Watersville Road is a two-lane, undivided road running north and south from Gillis Falls Road to the Howard County line. Two marked 10-foot wide travel lanes are provided with no shoulders. The roadway extends 2.81 miles and has a posted speed limit of 25 miles per hour south, and 40 miles per hour north, of the intersection at Watersville Road West. ADT's taken in 2000 recorded 966 vehicles west of Flag Marsh Road, 529 south of Flag Marsh Road, 593 south of Gillis Falls Road, 1,037 north of Watersville Road West, 775 south of Watersville Road West, and 545 at the Howard County line. The County classifies this roadway as a minor collector.

Watersville Road West is a two-lane, undivided road running east and west from MD 27 (Ridge Road) to Watersville Road. Within the study area, two marked 10-foot wide travel lanes are provided with no shoulders. The length of the segment of roadway is 1.87 miles, and the posted speed limit is 40 miles per hour. ADT's taken in 2000 measured 3,272 vehicles east of MD 27, 2,682 east of Boteler Road, 1,474 east of Runkles Road, 1,514 west of Runkles Road, and 1,208 west of Watersville Road. The County classifies this segment of road as a minor collector.

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

OTHER ROADWAYS

The following chart provides characteristics of selected County roads located wholly or partially within the study area. Where the roadway extends beyond the study area, the ADT data are averaged for the roadway segment located within the study area. All data presented in the following table were collected in 2000 except for Buffalo Road, which was collected in 2001. Generally, these roads have 22-foot cross-sections providing two marked travel lanes with posted speed limits of 35 to 45 mph. Typically, no stabilized shoulders or sidewalks are present on these roadways. The County classifies the following roads as local.

Road Name	Road Limits	ADT
Bennett Branch Road	MD 144 to Howard County Line	278
Boteler Road	Watersville Road West to Runkles Road	678
Buffalo Road	MD 27 to Sams Creek Road	970
Flag Marsh Road	Watersville Road West to Howard County Line	762
Runkles Road	Watersville Road West to Gillis Falls Road	234

B ⇄ Level of Service

SIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS

There are several signalized intersections along MD 27 in the Mount Airy area. The Watersville Road, Twin Arch Road, Ridge Avenue, Ridgeville Boulevard, and MD 808 (South Main Street) intersections are all fully signalized. Only one of these intersections (Watersville Road) falls within the study area. The MD 808 (North Main Street), Gillis Falls Road, and Harrisville Road intersections are currently served by a flashing signal.

State Highway Administration records indicate that the Level of Service (LOS) for most of the signalized intersections along the MD 27 corridor function at LOS B or higher during both morning and evening peak hours of operation. However, MD 27 experiences LOS F at the MD 808 (South Main Street) intersection during evening peak hours.

UNSIGNALIZED INTERSECTIONS

There are numerous unsignalized intersections throughout the study area. The Center Street, Windsong Way, Windermere Way, Falling Green Way, Mount Airy Drive, West Falls Road, and Old Ridge Road intersections are all un-signalized intersections along the MD 27 corridor within the study area. State Highway Administration records indicate that the Level of Service for most of the un-signalized intersections along the MD 27 corridor function at LOS B or higher during peak hours of operation. However, the roads that intersect MD 27 can experience delays during peak hours due to the number of vehicles traveling on the mainline. Left-turning vehicles generally experience the greatest delay entering the mainline due to the minimal gaps in traffic traveling in both directions.

ROADWAY SEGMENTS

Level of Service data compiled by the State Highway Administration tends to be intersection intensive unless data is collected for a specific purpose or project. LOS data is

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

generally not available for roadway segments. The County has not actively maintained LOS data for county roadways since 1998.

What is Level of Service (LOS)?

A principal objective of capacity analysis is the estimation of the maximum number of people or vehicles that can be accommodated by a given facility in reasonable safety within a specified time period. However, because facilities generally operate poorly at or near capacity, they are rarely planned to operate in this range.

The capacity of a facility is defined as the maximum hourly rate at which persons or vehicles can reasonably be expected to traverse a point or uniform section of a lane or roadway during a given time period under prevailing roadway, traffic, and control conditions.

Vehicle capacity represents the maximum number of vehicles that can pass a given point during a specified-period under prevailing roadway, traffic, and control conditions. This definition assumes no influence of downstream traffic operation, such as backing up of traffic into the analysis point.

Capacity is defined for prevailing roadway, traffic, and control conditions, which should be reasonably uniform for any section of facility analyzed. Capacity refers to the rate of vehicular or person flow during a specified period as defined on the basis of 'reasonable expectancy.' That is, a stated capacity for a given facility is a rate of flow that can be repeatedly achieved during peak periods for which sufficient demand exists and that can be achieved on facilities with similar characteristics throughout North America. Capacity is defined in terms of vehicles per hour.

The concept of levels of service uses qualitative measures that characterize operational conditions within a traffic stream and their perception by motorists and passengers. The descriptions of individual levels of service characterize these conditions in terms of such factors as speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, and comfort and convenience.

Six levels of service are defined for each type of facility for which analysis procedures are available. They are given letter designations, from A to F, with level of service (LOS) A representing the best operating conditions and LOS F the worst. Each level of service represents a range of operating conditions.

LOS A Free Flow. Individual users are virtually unaffected by the presence of others in the traffic stream. Freedom to select desired speeds and to maneuver within the traffic stream is extremely high. The general level of comfort and convenience provided to the motorist, passenger, or pedestrian is excellent. Turning movements are easily made.

LOS B Upper range of stable operation, but the presence of other users in the traffic stream begins to be noticeable. Freedom to select desired speeds is relatively unaffected, but there is a slight decline in the freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream from LOS A. The level of comfort and convenience provided is somewhat less than at LOS A, because the presence of others in the traffic stream begins to affect individual behavior.

LOS C Mid range of stable flow, but is the beginning of the range of flow in which the operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by interactions with others in the traffic stream, but not objectionably so. The selection of speed is now affected by the presence of others, and maneuvering within the traffic stream requires substantial vigilance on the part of the user. Back-ups may develop behind turning vehicles. The general level of comfort and convenience declines noticeably at this level.

LOS D High density, but stable flow. Speed and freedom to maneuver are severely restricted, and the driver or pedestrian experiences a generally poor level of comfort and convenience. Small increases in traffic flow will generally cause operational problems at this level. Delays to approaching vehicles may be substantial during peak hours.

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

What is Level of Service (LOS) cont...

LOS E Unacceptable, operations near capacity. All speeds are reduced to a low, but relatively uniform value. Freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream is extremely difficult, and it is generally accomplished by forcing a vehicle or pedestrian to "give way" to accommodate such maneuvers. Comfort and convenience levels are extremely poor, and driver or pedestrian frustration is generally high. Operations at this level are usually unstable, because small increase in flow or minor disorder within the traffic stream will cause breakdown.

LOS F Unacceptable, forced or breakdown flow, representing jammed conditions. The amount of traffic approaching cannot be accommodated adequately.

Level of Service for Signalized and Unsignalized Intersections

SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION		UNSIGNALIZED INTERSECTION	
Level of Service	Avg. Total Delay (sec/veh.)	Level of Service	Avg. Total Delay (sec/veh.)

2 Inventory of Pedestrian and Bikeway Facilities and Greenways

Sidewalk facilities are not available in any subdivision outside the corporate limits of the Town of Mount Airy. Town policy requires sidewalks on both sides of the street for developments within the corporate limits. There are no bikeway or greenway facilities available within the Mount Airy environs area.

3 Inventory of Public Transportation Facilities and Services

The following is a list of other transportation facilities and services available to residents even though many are located outside the boundaries of the study area:

A ⇄ Railways

CSX Transportation, a Jacksonville (Florida) based company owns the right-of-way for the railway that traverses the study area paralleling I-70. This rail line, known as the "Old Main Line", was the original mainline of the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad and connects Baltimore to the Ohio River. Between Mount Airy and Baltimore, the rail line follows the path of the Patapsco River, taking advantage of the gentle grades. However, the meandering river creates numerous curves in the railroad right-of-way that restricts train speeds. Most time-sensitive trains between Baltimore and the Midwest use the more circuitous but faster route through Washington, D.C.

Approximately 10 trains use this line on a daily basis, the majority being unit coal trains serving local power plants. Other products moving on this line include building aggregates, auto parts, finished automobiles and tractors, containers, etc. Local rail service is provided daily on the Old Main Line, including service to the Mount Airy Cold Storage Company, which is located on the Mount Airy Branch.

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

B ⇔ Park and Ride Lots

Park and ride lots are intended for commuters who transfer from their own vehicles to alternative means of getting to work: carpools, vanpools, etc. There are seven park and ride lots located in Carroll County: Manchester (MD 27 at MD 30); Sandymount (near MD 140 at Green Mill Road); Fenby (MD 97 at MD 32); Dorsey Crossroads (MD 97 at MD 26); Eldersburg (MD 32 at Circle Drive); Sykesville (MD 851 at MD 32); and Mount Airy (MD 27 at Ridgeville Boulevard). All of these facilities are State owned with the exception of Sandymount, which is County owned.

A park and ride study, performed by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council in 2002, found 45 vehicles parked at the area park and ride facility located on MD 27 north of Ridgeville Boulevard. License plates were recorded and surveys were distributed. Approximately 22% of the surveys were returned with 67% indicating a destination within the Washington DC metro area. The lot has a total of 118 spaces and is used mostly by persons from the southern and central portions of the county.

C ⇔ Ridesharing Opportunities

The Maryland Mass Transit Administration (MTA) has developed a free ride-matching service. This program has been designed to assist residents and employees with their commute to and from work by offering alternatives to driving alone. Currently, the primary focus is placed on carpooling and vanpooling.

Through an “on-line” computer service, applicants can be placed into a database and matched with commuters having the same criteria. The MTA shares information about Carroll County with other counties through the Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments’ Commuter Connections network. This cooperative effort increases a person’s chances of finding a successful match. As of the end of 2003, there were 98 Carroll County residents registered in the Commuter Connections database. This is less than half the number (i.e., 225) registered at the end of 1998.

The benefits of ridesharing are numerous. Not only does it help alleviate traffic congestion, it translates into both an economical and environmental savings, making us good stewards of our time, money, and resources.

D ⇔ Local Paratransit Opportunities

The *Carroll Transit System* began in 1972 as the *Carroll County Senior Overland Service* and was started by the Carroll County Bureau of Aging. In 1988 Carroll Transit became a private, non-profit corporation with a primary mission of providing available, efficient, safe, and demand-responsive transportation to older adults, persons with disabilities, emotionally disadvantaged, and transportation disadvantaged citizens of Carroll County.

The system operates Monday through Friday from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday service is provided in the Westminster area on a limited basis for individuals needing transportation to churches in the Westminster area. Persons requiring transportation are requested to call 24 hours

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

in advance to schedule their rides. Riders will normally share a vehicle with other passengers coming from the same general area, going in the same direction. Every attempt is made to accommodate passengers calling for same-day pick-up.

In January of 2003, the trade name was changed to *Carroll Area Transit System* (CATS). The change was made to improve vehicle recognition, improve public awareness, and for greater marketing opportunities. The public response has far exceeded expectations, with many positive comments and an increase in businesses purchasing advertising space on fleet vehicles.

CATS currently has a fleet of 30 vehicles. On many days all 30 vehicles are scheduled to serve a growing user population. Eighteen of these vehicles (60%) are lift equipped providing 37 wheelchair positions. The service currently transports an average of over 12,453 one-way trips per month. In 2002, CATS made 149,438 one-way trips, an increase of 31% from the previous year. Based on the population growth in Carroll County these numbers are expected to continue to grow. The vehicles range in size from 7-passenger minivans to small buses with 23 seats.

Transportation is provided to all five Carroll County Senior Centers and the Westminster Supper Club. The demand-response transportation is available to seniors and our disabled population on a primary-service basis and to the general population on a space-available basis. Demand-response service provides door-to-door service for all passengers. This agency provides coordinated service to and for 13 service agencies and 12 service providers in Carroll County.

CATS provides transportation to medical appointments for nursing home residents and serves two dialysis clinics, one in Carroll County and one in Baltimore County. The fare for individuals going to a dialysis center is reduced. At least one vehicle goes into Baltimore City everyday, transporting passengers to hospitals and medical facilities. Transportation is also provided for the impaired to physical therapy and counseling facilities such as the YMCA, Health Department and various clinics, and educational and training facilities such as McDaniel College and Carroll Community College. Business Employment Resource Center (BERC), clients are picked up at their home, transported to daycare facilities (if necessary) and then to the training or job site; at the end of the day this process is reversed. CATS transports many individuals to and from their place of employment allowing them to become productive citizens of Carroll County.

E ⇨ Taxi Services

Headquartered in Westminster, *County-wide Taxi and Transportation Service* operates seven vehicles six days a week between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. They will also make individual runs on Sundays. They provide service throughout Carroll County and the immediate surrounding area.

F ⇨ Charter Buses

Located in Manchester, *Bill Rohrbaugh's Bus Service, Inc.* operates 19 coaches, 1 van, and 30 school buses for charter trips and tours, which are available to a variety of destinations.

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

Trips to BWI, Dulles, and Washington National airports are provided on a "demand" basis, which requires 24-hour advance notice. The company also offers daily service to Atlantic City with tour buses originating in Manchester.

Rill's Bus Service operates 5 motor coaches and 20 school buses for its charter, tour, and shuttle services. One of the motor coaches and two of the school buses are handicapped accessible. The company is located east of Westminster on Dutrow Road.

G ⇄ Airports

There are a total of eight airports in Carroll County. One is a regional airport, two are small local airports, while the remaining five are small private airfields.

The ***Carroll County Regional Airport*** is a reliever airport for BWI. In 1994, the airport was upgraded by the construction of a 5,100-foot runway. The old runway was extended and now functions as a parallel taxiway. The terminal area consists of a 100' x 100' maintenance hangar with an adjoining operations center and classroom area. The facility has a VOR instrument and a GPS non-precision approach fix. A county operated fuel farm began operation in 1998 with Jet "A" fuel as well as 100-octane Avgas. The airport boasts some 82 hangars and 7 corporate hangars.

Begun originally as the Westminster Airport with two turf landing strips, the Carroll County Regional Airport is located on the north side of the City of Westminster off of MD 97 (north). The initial owner and operator was the Shriver Packing Company. By 1969, there were about 22-based aircraft and approximately 7,500 annual operations according to the FAA.

In 1976 the County acquired the airport. Three parcels of land were purchased in 1977 for future use. A 2,930-foot by 40-foot paved runway was constructed in the fall of 1977. The following year the main hangar/administration building and the first T-hangar were constructed (without federal or state funds). Also in 1978, runway lighting was installed. A parallel taxiway was paved and the runway was extended 300 feet in the fall of 1979. The runway and the taxiway were widened in the early 1980's.

Located about eight miles south of Westminster, ***Clearview Airpark*** has a 2,100-foot-long paved runway. Services and facilities include major maintenance, A & P mechanic during the daytime, rotating beacon, runway lighting on request, attendance on weekends during daylight, and aircraft storage and tie-downs.

Greer Airport is a private turf field that is situated about two miles southeast of Taneytown off of MD 140.

Located about four miles southwest of Taneytown adjacent to MD 194, ***Keymar Airport*** is a private turf field. Several planes are based there.

Mayberry Run Airport is a private turf field located about five miles northeast of Taneytown between MD Routes 194 and 97.

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

Reservoir Airport is situated about one mile southeast of Finksburg. This private airport has a turf field and is located off of Murray Road.

Wolf Airport is a privately owned, public-access airport located near Eldersburg on Oklahoma Road, north of MD 26 (Liberty Road). It has a turf field, but primarily serves as a heliport.

Located about five miles east-northeast of Mount Airy on John Pickett Road (off of Gillis Falls Road), **Woodbine Airfield** is a privately owned turf field airport.

4 Membership and Participation in the Baltimore Metropolitan Council

Carroll County is a member jurisdiction of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council (BMC). The BMC, which is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Baltimore Region, is an organization of the region's elective officials that serves as a forum for identifying regional interests and developing collaborative strategies, plans, and programs that will improve the quality of life and economic vitality throughout the region. The Council's Board of Directors consists of the Mayor of Baltimore, the elected executives of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Harford, and Howard Counties, Annapolis, and a Carroll County Commissioner.

What is an MPO?

In 1975, MPO's were created by federal regulations to firmly place in one single agency the responsibility for preparing a comprehensive transportation plan for both highway and transit modes. MPO responsibilities include three areas: coordinating the planning efforts of transportation and land-use agencies in the region; conducting certain types of planning studies; and making decisions about highway and transit resource allocation when there are conflicts among agencies or when funds are not sufficient to cover all projects.

The Council's mission is to provide a forum for cooperative regional planning; provide an opportunity to discuss differences among its members in attaining regional goals; collect, analyze, and disseminate regional data; cooperate and communicate with neighboring regions; ensure cost-effective delivery of services through cooperation with all levels of government; and participate with citizens and others interested in solving regional problems.

To achieve these objectives, the BMC provides the following activities or programs: long-range transportation planning; development of demographic, economic, and geographic data; cooperative purchasing to provide cost-saving opportunities to member jurisdictions; assistance in environmental programs such as air and water quality; computerized mapping services; and acts as a regional information center.

Through its involvement in the Baltimore Metropolitan Council, the County is able to participate in regional planning efforts and ensure that the other member jurisdictions take into consideration issues that are important to Carroll County and its towns. The County can also gain important information and services provided by the Council and share more fully in the benefits that accrue to the Baltimore region as a whole.

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

Analysis of Community Needs

MD 27 is the primary route for commuter and external vehicular traffic through the Mount Airy area. This state highway also serves as the main north-south travel route in the study area. Several major intersections along the MD 27 corridor are not fully signalized; a blinking light serves the MD 808, Gillis Falls Road, and Harrisville Road intersections, and stop signs serve the intersections at West Falls Road and Center Street, among others. Significant traffic volumes occur during peak-hour periods and average daily traffic (ADT) volumes are particularly high within the segment that traverses the Town of Mount Airy. ADT's taken in 2000 measured 20,700 at I-70 and 11,600 just north of the study area boundary at Roop Road. ADT's taken at these same locations in 2003 measured 26,150 at I-70 and 13,750 at Roop Road, representing a 21% increase in traffic volume at I-70 and a 16% increase at Roop Road within the last three years alone. Slightly more than half (53%) of the trips generated on this portion of MD 27 are external in nature, indicating that a significant amount of local traffic continues to use the highway.

Traffic volumes will continue to increase with additional residential and commercial development in the northern and central parts of the County and areas within and around the Town of Mount Airy. In the absence of improvements to and expansion of the transportation network, congestion will increase and the Level of Service (LOS) will decline on MD 27 and its intersecting roadways. The safety and efficiency of the MD 27 corridor will deteriorate, which could adversely affect the Town's commercial center.

Several factors contribute to traffic congestion on MD 27. Local trips comprise a large proportion of total traffic on the highway, particularly in the area around Mount Airy. There is an absence of bicycle/pedestrian facilities to accommodate and promote non-motorized modes of travel. There are very limited commuter transit alternatives available to reduce the number of vehicles on the highway. In addition, signalized and non-signalized intersections interrupt and slow down traffic flow on the highway.

Local countywide transit (Carroll Area Transit System) is the only transit system used in the area. Mass transit is available to Washington, D.C. by rail from the Shady Grove Metro Station located north of Rockville in Montgomery County. A large portion of peak-hour traffic is commuter traffic traveling through the study area and Mount Airy. While transit options are currently limited in this area, discussions of bringing commuter service between the Mount Airy area and Washington, D.C. region have not received support from the community.

Within the town, Mount Airy has developed an extensive sidewalk network by requiring pedestrian facilities when processing and approving subdivision and site development plans. In contrast, pedestrian facilities are virtually non-existent in the study area, even in suburban developments along the edge of town. These amenities have usually not been required by the County at the time of development.

Recommended Actions

Based on Town Plan recommendations with additional County recommendations in bold.

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

- Plan for current and increased traffic on the Town's street system, and to use the street system to foster and retain community character. The Town should continue to pursue the construction of an interconnected street system.
- Continue to explore and implement alternative modes of transportation. These alternatives may include, but are not limited to, carpool/vanpool or mass transit and coordination of bicycle/pedestrian paths proposed as an element of the *1998 Carroll County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* to serve as a safe transportation option within town.
- [The Town will] continue to monitor the level of service on all secondary roads within the town and implement improvements to those roads to maintain a level of service of "C" or higher.
- [The Town will] encourage the use of "traffic calming techniques" in new subdivision design and retrofit of older sections of town. Techniques such as landscaping improvements, pavement design, and roundabouts should be suggested.
- Continue to require sidewalks in all new projects, but emphasis should also be placed in providing safe pedestrian access in older areas of town and filling in sidewalk locations where they currently do not exist. All sidewalk installations shall provide for adequate separation distance from the road travel way.
- [The Town will] continue to work with the Maryland State Highway Administration to monitor the traffic conditions of MD 27 and work closely with the State on future improvements to that road to help maintain an acceptable level of service.
- [The Town will] continue to update a complete inventory of roads for the Town (as mandated by GASB-36), which would include physical condition, paving width, storm drainage characteristics, sidewalk locations and width, mileage, and needed improvements to those roads. This information should be compiled and updated by the Town Streets and Roads Department to assist in the yearly improvements done to the town street system.
- [The Town will] encourage the incorporation of safe pedestrian and bikeways in the design of new roads and the upgrading of existing roads.
- Delineate future proposed road alignments in the outer growth areas of town to ensure the reservation of the right-of-way areas and to minimize the impact on environmentally sensitive areas.
- Support efforts to pursue State or Federal funding for non-highway transportation improvements.
- [The Town will] evaluate primary intersections within town on a regular basis to effect changes to signal phasing in order to maintain an acceptable level of service at those intersections.
- Work to establish the "Rails to Trails" path from the downtown to Watkins Regional Park.

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

- Provide coordination between the County and Town to develop a connecting rail-trail south to the Twin Arch Bridge. A trail should be developed alongside the South Branch of the Patapsco River. This trail should also be coordinated with Howard County and the State of Maryland to reflect the “Greenways” corridor for the regional area.
- Encourage a pedestrian route interconnecting the west and east sides of town south of Prospect Road. This route should utilize sidewalks within existing road rights-of-way. If sidewalks along this route are not adequate, they should become priority projects when the Town considers such improvements.
- Require major subdivisions to have multiple access points to the Town of Mount Airy network.
- **Implement the 1999 Carroll County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan recommendations in the Mount Airy environs.**

Sidewalks, pathways, and proposed greenways are designated to link residential neighborhoods with commercial areas, schools, community facilities, and recreational areas. Many recreational areas are currently only (or most conveniently) accessible by car. The County has recently reassessed impact fees and is currently budgeting the revenues for both revitalization and expansion of park facilities and trails. The Town and County should also require developers to construct greenways/trails as a part of the development process wherever possible.

- **Create a link between the town and the Gillis Falls Regional Park.**

When completed, the trail system for the Gillis Falls Regional Park will utilize a large portion of the County owned land for the proposed future reservoir. Additional campsites, pavilions, and hiker/biker trails will be added to the existing equestrian trail and center to provide the area with a unique recreational amenity. When implemented the proposed Town trail system will extend beyond Watersville Road and near Candice Drive north of Town. The Town and County should work together to proposed a trail or series of trails to link these two networks together.

- **Construct the Mount Airy portion of the bicycle/pedestrian trail known as the Patapsco Regional Trail.**

Support State efforts to construct a linear trail designed to run along the south branch of the Patapsco River along the Carroll/Howard County boarder linking the Mount Airy area to Patapsco State Park located around Sykesville in the southeaster part of the County.

- **Work with SHA and the Town of Mount Airy to limit future access points along MD 27.**

Construction of service roads, which provide access to multiple business and industry locations and then focus access to major roadways into a few points, where appropriate, would help to reduce congestion on MD 27. The reduction in access points and better

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

control of incoming traffic would result in less slowing and stopping of traffic and would create a safer driving situation as well. This approach would be most appropriate along the dualized section of MD 27 between the County line north to the Twin Arch Road intersection.

- **Identify locations where existing access points along MD 27 could be redirected to interconnected driveways between existing uses or to new parallel service roads.**

MD 27 was originally constructed as a bypass route around downtown Mount Airy. As has been the case throughout the state, many bypass routes built during the mid 20th Century, without some sort of access control, went on to foster new centers for commerce with multiple access points and intersections. Now State and County governments are trying to find ways to alleviate congestion on many of these bypass routes. Limiting additional access to parallel service roads or existing intersections would help MD 27 function at the highest possible level for the greatest length of time.

- **Connect Century Drive to Watersville Road.**

Only one access point (Twin Arch Road) currently exists for the commercial development along Century Drive. Connecting to Watersville Road would give existing businesses an additional access point. The proposed employment campus area and undeveloped sites would be provided with potential roadway frontage. The Carroll County Delegation, at the behest of the Board of County Commissioners, submitted legislation during the 2004 legislative session to allow the County to “forward fund” planned major streets. Passage of the bill made it possible for the County to construct a roadway(s) prior to development and be compensated by future developers as part of the approval process. The legislation was signed into law by the Governor and adopted by the Board of Commissioners as “Title 10, Roads, Subtitle 4, Road Segment Designation, Construction, and Repayment”, of *Carroll County’s Code of Public Local Laws and Ordinances*, in 2004. The Century Drive extension and its residual benefits would certainly merit this course of action.

- **Promote sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities wherever possible and identify both developed and undeveloped areas outside of town where sidewalks are absent and plan for the construction of these segments.**

Many developed areas outside of Town limits are not connected by sidewalks. Sidewalks connecting large residential areas to commercial areas and downtown are especially important. Areas where sidewalks could be constructed to help provide access for pedestrians to these locations should be identified. Construction of sidewalks would also help to reduce traffic congestion. While it may be difficult to go back and install sidewalks in some of the large subdivisions that have already developed, consideration should be given to revising the County’s subdivision regulations to require sidewalks in residential subdivisions. While sidewalks may be difficult coupled with rural “open section” road construction, Low Impact Design techniques could be considered for new

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

sidewalks to encourage pervious pedestrian walkways and a more natural way for stormwater to be managed.

- **Require developers to construct pedestrian/recreational amenities during the first phase of construction.**

Developers in the County have often waited until the final sections of a residential subdivision to construct trails or other amenities. At that point, opposition may arise to amenities such as trails and tot lots by residents directly adjacent to these sites. The County has also found it difficult to compel developers to comply with approved subdivision requirements if most or all of the units have been constructed. Requiring the construction of these amenities in the earlier stages of development would give the County the ability, for example, to hold permits in order to ensure the amenities are constructed.

- **Explore potential for area telecommuting facility.**

With advancements in technology, it is possible for many to do a great deal of work out of the workplace either via internet or through e-mail. The possibility should be explored for the creation of a telecommuting facility in order to provide a quiet office environment outside of the home, which can sometimes be distracting, and without having to commute to work

Fiscal Implications

The recommendations contained in this plan may be policy-oriented or action-oriented, and their implications may be the responsibility of the County, other public agencies, private landowners and developers, or a combination of these. This section is designed to identify the potential fiscal impacts to the County of each of the recommendations. There could be “No Fiscal Impact” meaning the County would not incur direct or predictable expenses as a result of implementing the recommendation, an “Undetermined Impact”. Meaning there likely would be a cost associated with implementing the recommendations, but that cost can not be determined at this time for various reasons, or a “Fiscal Impact,” which likely would be incurred by the County if the recommendation were implemented. For recommendations that have an identified fiscal impact, the cost of implementing that recommendation is estimated to the best degree possible.

- Plan for current and increased traffic on the Town’s street system, and to use the street system to foster and retain community character. The Town should continue to pursue the construction of an interconnected street system.

No Fiscal Impact

- Continue to explore and implement alternative modes of transportation. These alternatives may include, but are not limited to, carpool/vanpool or mass transit and coordination of bicycle/pedestrian paths proposed as an element of the *1998 Carroll County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan* to serve as a safe transportation option within town.

No Fiscal Impact

- [The Town will] continue to monitor the level of service on all secondary roads within the town and implement improvements to those roads to maintain a level of service of “C” or higher.

No Fiscal Impact

- [The Town will] encourage the use of “traffic calming techniques” in new subdivision design and retrofit of older sections of town. Techniques such as landscaping improvements, pavement

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

design, and roundabouts should be suggested.

No Fiscal Impact

- Continue to require sidewalks in all new projects, but emphasis should also be placed in providing safe pedestrian access in older areas of town and filling in sidewalk locations where they currently do not exist. All sidewalk installations shall provide for adequate separation distance from the road travel way.

No Fiscal Impact

- [The Town will] continue to work with the Maryland State Highway Administration to monitor the traffic conditions of MD 27 and work closely with the State on future improvements to that road to help maintain an acceptable level of service.

No Fiscal Impact

- [The Town will] continue to update a complete inventory of roads for the Town (as mandated by GASB-36), which would include physical condition, paving width, storm drainage characteristics, sidewalk locations and width, mileage, and needed improvements to those roads. This information should be compiled and updated by the Town Streets and Roads Department to assist in the yearly improvements done to the town street system.

No Fiscal Impact

- [The Town will] encourage the incorporation of safe pedestrian and bikeways in the design of new roads and the upgrading of existing roads.

No Fiscal Impact

- Delineate future proposed road alignments in the outer growth areas of town to ensure the reservation of the right-of-way areas and to minimize the impact on environmentally sensitive areas.

No Fiscal Impact

- Support efforts to pursue State or Federal funding for non-highway transportation improvements.

No Fiscal Impact

- [The Town will] evaluate primary intersections within town on a regular basis to effect changes to signal phasing in order to maintain an acceptable level of service at those intersections.

No Fiscal Impact

- Work to establish the “Rails to Trails” path from the downtown to Watkins Regional Park.

No Fiscal Impact

- Provide coordination between the County and Town to develop a connecting rail-trail south to the Twin Arch Bridge. A trail should be developed alongside the South Branch of the Patapsco River. This trail should also be coordinated with Howard County and the State of Maryland to reflect the “Greenways” corridor for the regional area.

Fiscal Impact: The Twin Arch trail would be approximately 8,500 feet in length. At an average land acquisition and construction cost of \$100,000 to \$500,000 per mile (dependant on trail width and surface), the cost could range between \$138,000 and \$690,000. No Fiscal Impact for the County associated with a trail along the South Branch of the Patapsco River.

- Encourage a pedestrian route interconnecting the west and east sides of town south of Prospect Road. This route should utilize sidewalks within existing road rights-of-way. If sidewalks along this route are not adequate, they should become priority projects when the Town considers such improvements.

No Fiscal Impact

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

- Require major subdivisions to have multiple access points to the Town of Mount Airy network.
No Fiscal Impact
- **Implement the 1999 Carroll County Land Preservation, Parks, and Recreation Plan recommendations in the Mount Airy environs.**
No Fiscal Impact
- **Create a link between the town and the Gillis Falls Regional Park.**
Fiscal Impact: A link to the Gillis Falls Regional Park from either the Twin Arch Trail or the Railroad Trails would be approximately 12,000 feet in length. At an average land acquisition and construction cost of \$100,000 to \$500,000 per mile (dependant on trail width and surface), the cost could range between \$227,000 and \$1,135,000.
- **Construct the Mount Airy portion of the bicycle/pedestrian trail known as the Patapsco Regional Trail.**
Undetermined Impact: While there likely would be a cost associated with the implementation of this recommendation, the project needs more development before a reasonable cost estimate can be determined.
- **Work with SHA and the Town of Mount Airy to limit future access points along MD 27.**
No Fiscal Impact
- **Identify locations where existing access points along MD 27 could be redirected to interconnected driveways between existing uses or to new parallel service roads.**
Undetermined Fiscal Impact
- **Connect Century Drive to Watersville Road.**
No Fiscal Impact. This connection would likely be funded by future private residential development, commercial development, or a combination of both.
- **Promote sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities wherever possible and identify both developed and undeveloped areas outside of town where sidewalks are absent and plan for the construction of these segments.**
Undetermined Fiscal Impact.
- **Require developers to construct pedestrian/recreational amenities during the first phase of construction.**
No Fiscal Impact.
- **Explore potential for area telecommuting facility.**
Undetermined Fiscal Impact.

Anticipated CIP Projects

Anticipated CIP Projects Related to Transportation Improvements
Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan
2005

Project	Description	Cost Estimate	Anticipated Funding Source
Twin Arch Road Bridge	Replacement of bridge structure	\$150,000	Carroll County Government
John Pickett Road	Pave gravel portion of roadway, install stormwater facilities	\$2,454,560	Carroll County Government

Maps

Proposed Transportation Improvements