



Executive Summary

Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

Introduction

The *Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan* is a guidance tool which serves many purposes in helping local decision-makers shape the area's future and is intended to complement the *Town of Mount Airy Master Plan* adopted in 2004. It is a source of basic information regarding current and anticipated conditions in the community. The environs plan identifies where and how the community will grow, what mechanisms might be used to manage that growth, and how the community will go about achieving its desired future.

Vision for the Community

While the community comprehensive plans within Carroll County support and implement the County Master Plan, it is also recognized that each individual community holds values and cherishes characteristics unique to that community. Each community has its own strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges.

The following vision statement represents what the participants in the various forms of community involvement (for this community plan update) felt to be the future

that they preferred for their community. 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.”

Concepts & Intentions

The *Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan* presents a set of goals that address the issues of growth management and land use, transportation, community facilities, natural resources, economic development and activity, historic/cultural resources, community involvement, interjurisdictional coordination and communication, and housing and community design. The chapters around which these issues are organized each share common components. They all discuss current conditions, an analysis of

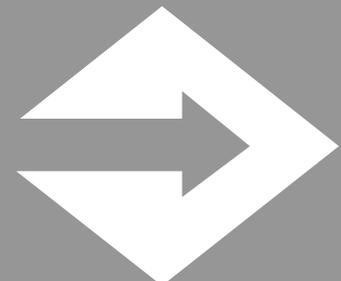
community needs, recommended policies and actions, fiscal implications, and anticipated Community Investment Plan (CIP) projects.

The plan affirms the Town's Growth Area Boundary (GAB) as set forth in the *2004 Town of Mount Airy Master Plan*. It also confirms a limit to which more intense land uses or development will extend, through use of less intense zoning districts and other means available. Areas within the GAB but not within the Town

(Continued on Last Page)

Inside...

- Demographics & Projections Summary
- Goals
- Recommended Actions
- Comprehensive Plan Map
- Community Participation



Demographics & Projections Summary

- ◆ During the decade of 1990 - 2000, the Mount Airy Election District grew by 27 percent from 5,575 people in 1990 to 7,064 people in 2000.
- ◆ The 7,064 election district residents lived in 2,420 households.
- ◆ The average number of persons per household was 2.92 in 2000.
- ◆ The 25-34 age group decreased the most from 19.0 percent of the total population in 1990 to 13.0 percent in 2000, while the age group 45-54 grew the most, from 10.8 to 14.8 as a percentage of the total population.

- ◆ The 2000 Census describes the Election District as mostly Caucasian, with minorities accounting for slightly less than 5 percent of the total population.
- ◆ The 2000 Census shows that a majority of households (59.9 percent) had an income ranging between \$50,000 and \$149,999, with the distribution weighted toward the lower end of the range.
- ◆ Over half of the people in the Hampstead Election District (58.8 percent) had either a high school diploma or some college but no

- degree.
- ◆ The estimated 2003 population for Mount Airy and its environs was 4,466.
- ◆ Based on the Buildable Land Inventory (BLI) analysis, the potential population from approved developments inside the GAB is 1,253.
- ◆ The potential additional population from undeveloped land inside the GAB is 4,785.
- ◆ The total potential population for the Carroll County portion of Mount Airy and its environs is 10,504.

Growth Management & Land Use

Goals:

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

Recommended Actions:

- Comply with the requirements of the 1992 Planning Act and the 1997 Smart Growth Legislation for Priority Funding Areas.
- Take a leading role in discussions with all four counties regarding growth management in the Mount Airy region. Adhere to the principles of the State mandated “Smart Growth” legislation.
- Advocate support for County policies that concentrate growth around existing centers, and therefore, plan for growth.

- Maintain the current Growth Area Boundary and ultimate water and sewer service areas as approved in the 1994 *Water and Sewerage Master Plan* with adjustments made for recent annexations.
- Continue to assign transitional zoning categories between residential uses and more intensive commercial and industrial classifications.
- Continue to require buffer areas between residential uses and more intensive commercial and industrial uses.
- Work with Mount Airy and Frederick County to establish a Growth Area Boundary and ultimate population growth limits for the town that are beneficial to the town and match future infrastructure improvements.
- Continue to require 10 percent open space dedications on useable ground as part of the subdivision ap-

- proval process.
- Plan for additional commercial growth only where planned or existing infrastructure can support it.
- Provide comprehensive adequate public facilities analysis at the concept plan stage in order to completely evaluate new development proposals for residential, commercial, or industrial development.
- Encourage the “master planning” of large parcels of ground at the development stage to ensure maximum efficiency of land density, open space, and adequate infrastructure improvements.
- Identify appropriate locations for future employment campus use.
- Implement subdivision and site design guidelines that promote a more compact style of development, give greater emphasis to preserving open spaces, and environmental and agricultural resources.

Community Involvement

Goals:

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

Recommended Actions:

- Propose public or semi-public functions within new developments to impart a sense of community activity and involvement.
- Create a link from the County website that will allow citizens to check on issues relevant to their community, such as items to be discussed at County and Town Planning Commission meetings, Board of Zoning Ap-

- peals hearings, etc.
- Involve existing community organizations in addressing key issues faced by the community.
- Ensure local media is aware of upcoming meetings and events.



Transportation

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**

Recommended Actions:

- 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 round-

abouts 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.

- 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.
- Create a link between the town and the Gillis Falls Regional Park.
- Construct the Mount Airy portion of the bicycle/pedestrian trail known as the Patapsco Regional Trail.
- Work with SHA and the Town of Mount Airy to limit future access points along MD 27.
- Identify locations where existing access points along MD 27 could be redirected to interconnected driveways between existing uses or to new parallel service roads.
- Connect Century Drive to Watersville Road.
- 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.
- Require developers to construct pedestrian/recreational amenities during the first phase of construction.
- Explore potential for area telecommuting facility.

Community Facilities

Goals:

- ▶ 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

Recommended Actions:

- Add to the water system well #9 (Town Well) and #10 (Flickinger Property) as recommended by the Hyder Associates Water Study, 2000.
- Construct and complete the new water storage tank to supplement the Town storage reserve of water.
- Continue to require well site development as part of the annexation process for new residential land development.
- Institute water conservation policies when necessary during drought conditions.
- Continuously monitor the WWTP flow according to current MDE standards.
- Reach agreements between the Town and the County regarding the phasing of growth so that both jurisdic-

tions work in cooperation to effect orderly growth policies and the provision for adequate facilities and services.

- Continue to work with the Carroll County Board of Education to identify appropriate and feasible school improvements and new construction to serve the resident school population.
- Actively require land dedication for future school sites as part of the approval process of new subdivisions.
- [The Town will] expedite the Town development review process for any school-related projects.
- Promote the coordination of the Town and Board of Education to share school athletic facilities.
- Create policies that require developers to provide parking facilities with the parkland requirements for residential subdivisions.
- Determine a location for an additional 40 to 50-acre regional park in close proximity to Watkins Regional Park. This would be developed as a Town “regional facility” where multiple recreational facilities could be built to serve the town and surrounding population.
- Continue to provide pedestrian ways and bikeways within subdivisions to dedicated open space areas.
- Do not allow any dedication of “unusable” open space to fulfill the

Town of Mount Airy parkland dedication requirements.

- Work with the fire companies and their association in both counties to determine a logical dispatch location to make the response time to alarms the most expedient.
- Require that all private nursing home and assisted-living facilities have private ambulance and EMT services on site at all times.
- Continue to consider the needs of the Fire Department when reviewing commercial and industrial site plan layouts and residential subdivisions.
- Evaluate the criteria that determine the number of resident troopers that is adequate to serve the resident population. Ensure that the proper ratio of officers to population is maintained at all times.
- Continue to educate the public about the advantages of recycling.
- [The Town will] make biannual bulk trash pickup financially feasible for the town.
- [The Town will] enforce fines for illegal yard waste dumping throughout town.
- [The Town will] find improved ways to deliver trash and recycling services to town residents.
- Develop an infrastructure balance sheet to determine deficiencies in public infrastructure prior to approving new development.

Interjurisdictional Coordination & Communication

Goals:

- ▶ To increase communication between the County and Town on development plans and community facilities 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 stakeholder within the region

Recommended Actions:

- Continue to coordinate interjurisdictionally to efficiently monitor current and projected town residential growth.
- Hold regular joint meetings between the Town and the County Planning Commissions and/or County and Town staff to discuss issues of mutual interest, convey

demographics, and inform the public as to what projects are in the pipeline and solicit input.

- Continue participation in the Council of Governments to achieve greater coordination and interjurisdictional planning between the Town of Mount Airy and the County.
- Work together to identify and exchange data necessary for the concurrency management database and for certification of adequacy for public facilities.

Natural Resources

Goals:

- ▶ To protect environmentally sensitive areas and preserve open spaces
- ▶ To preserve the scenic views and natural landscape 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

Recommended Actions:

- Consider adoption of stream buffer standards based on the Carroll County Water Resource Management Standards and other available

resources.

- Facilitate goals of the Forest Conservation Act by identifying priority forestation areas in the town and making available appropriate additional public property for offsite forestation.
- Consider adoption of the Water Resource Management Standards developed by Carroll County or other legislation to better protect groundwater resources.
- Support Carroll County efforts to develop the Gillis Falls Reservoir.
- Follow the guidelines for the State NPDES program and track the sources of local illicit discharge points.
- Require additional well exploration and development for any future expansion of the Town boundaries because the current well system is obli-



gated to existing planned development.

- Complete land acquisition for and preserve the Gillis Falls Reservoir site as a potential future water supply.
- Work with the Town on adoption of the environmental ordinances and associated manuals adopted in the Spring of 2004 by the Board of County Commissioners and identify enforcement responsibilities.

Historic & Cultural Resources

Goals:

- ▶ To protect historical sites and resources 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

Recommended Actions:

- Employ all available tools to

protect and enhance the Town's cultural and historic resources and structures.

- Incorporate existing farmhouses, barns, and other significant structures into future development wherever possible.
- Consider additional social/cultural events within the immediate area.

Housing & Community Design

Goals:

- ▶ 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

Recommended Actions:

- Reinforce the primary importance of Main Street to the Town by creating "gateways" to Main Street, en-

couraging streetscape improvements, and researching downtown preservation and revitalization opportunities.

- Develop a linear park along an east-west route to interconnect new development, existing Town parks, the historic B&O Railroad right-of-way, and the South Branch of the Patapsco River.
- Pattern new development after desirable qualities of established subdivisions.
- Look for opportunities to enhance significant Town features during the site and design and development process.

- Improve the quality of new development through greater attention to site development, enhanced streetscapes, and lot designs.
- Develop specific criteria for individual lighting standards for residential, commercial, and industrial zones in town.
- Require developers to design open space areas that connect greenways, trails, and other passive amenities.
- Incorporate landscaping and buffering requirements into future industrial and commercial areas to protect surrounding areas and community character.

Economic Development

Goals:

- ▶ To attract industrial and/or business development that enhances the character of the community and provides living wage local employment opportunities
- ▶ To explore opportunities that are available with the close proximity

of the I-70 corridor

- ▶ To create a better balance between the residential, commercial, and industrial tax base

Recommended Actions:

- Continue to attract commercial and industrial development to provide a

tax base necessary for balanced growth as a regional center.

- Prioritize extension of water and sewer to industrial or commercial areas and/or investigate the possibility of on-site well and septic systems in developable areas that the Town doesn't intend to serve.

(...Continued from Page 1)

limits will be rezoned to match the land use designation on the comprehensive plan map when the property is annexed rather than with the adoption of this plan. The Community Planning area (CPA) is the area within the Growth Area Boundary.

The plan examines the effects the region's rapid growth has had on the small town atmosphere and community character of the area. Given that both residential and commercial development pressure is likely to continue, the plan discusses ways that the local community can help mitigate the impacts of new development.

Given current traffic patterns and conditions, improvements to MD 27 and other local roads in addition to the construction of planned roadways is supported to provide traffic congestion relief and increase traffic circulation options. The plan also stresses the importance of a multi-modal transportation network that includes bicycle lanes and pedestrian accommodations.

A park facility is planned for the Gillis Falls Reservoir site, in addition to the existing trails and camping facilities, that would serve the Mount Airy community, southwest Carroll County, and the surrounding region. The plan

supports the proposed trail network called for in both the *2004 Town of Mount Airy Master Plan* and the *1999 Land Preservation and Recreation Plan* that would connect the downtown area with surrounding neighborhoods and ultimately with the amenities on the reservoir site.

With the fragile nature of private wells during times of severe drought conditions, the plan also explores the possibility of moving forward with plans to utilize the Gillis Falls Reservoir site as a regional surface water source for the Town, County, and surrounding area. ☆

Community Participation

The *Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan* update process was designed to provide intensive citizen participation opportunities. Numerous opportunities allowed the community to play a major role in each aspect of the process:

- ◆ **Newsletters** were created and sent to all property owners within the study area during the environs plan update process. The first described the process and gave information on community meetings. The second provided the draft vision statement

and goals. The third newsletter identified potential recommendations to consider. The fourth discussed the major concepts of the plan and provided a draft of the proposed Comprehensive Plan Map.

- ◆ A **survey** related to issues associated with the plan was mailed to all property owners providing critical feedback and information.
- ◆ Two sets of **community workshops** were held. The first addressed the vision statement and goals for the community. Participants at the second set of

workshops were asked to prioritize and comment on the recommendations.

- ◆ A **60-day review period** allowed the state, neighboring jurisdictions, and citizens to comment on the plan.
- ◆ Two **community information meetings** were held so citizens could ask questions that would provide a better understanding of the plan and allow them to give more informed comments at the public hearing.
- ◆ As required by law, the planning commissions held a **public hearing** on April 19, 2005.

For more information on this plan, you may contact the Carroll County Planning Department at 225 North Center Street, Room 204, Westminster MD 21157, (410) 386-2145. ccplanning@ccg.carr.org (e-mail). <http://ccgovernment.carr.org/ccg/complan/complan.asp> (website).