

CHAPTER 11: HISTORIC/CULTURAL RESOURCES

Goals

- Protect important historic resources located within the community
- Support activities and facilities that provide cultural resources

Current Conditions

1 Historic Context

Westminster is a small Piedmont town in central Carroll County, Maryland, that grew out of a wagon route, now known as Main Street (MD 32). In 1754, William Winchester purchased approximately one hundred acres in Frederick County from John White. The area he purchased was then known as "White's Level". Ten years later, Winchester laid out 45 lots from a portion of the land with a central street and a network of service alleys and the town of Winchester was born.¹

However, by act of the Maryland General Assembly in 1768, the name was changed to Westminster. This was done to avoid any confusion between Winchester in then Frederick County, Maryland and Winchester in Frederick County, Virginia. William Winchester was granted the honor of renaming the area Westminster, after his birthplace in England. The name of the central street in the downtown area was also eventually renamed from King Street to Main Street.²

In 1837, following the ratification of a four-year-old General Assembly bill, Carroll County was created from portions of both Baltimore and Frederick Counties. Westminster, positioned squarely in the middle of the newly created County, became the County Seat.

The area remained small in population for an extended period of time. Despite its significant lack of a major transportation or trade feature, such as a harbor, major crossroads or trade route, fort, or governmental seat, commerce in the area eventually began to grow. In its youth, farming provided the foundation for the settlement, just as any other rural community in the area. The first ventures into commerce began with iron and pork products, most notably bacon. However, one of Westminster's most well-known trades was that of tanning. Merchants in the area made everything from saddles to clothing accessories and many in the town claimed that Westminster was the sight of the finest leather in the entire state.

The diversity of trades in the Westminster area during the first fifty-years was one of the reasons that Westminster eventually began to prosper. Those trades included anything from "potters to shoe makers, physicians, cabinet makers, innkeepers, surveyors, dyers, blacksmiths, coopers, tailors, stage drivers, school teachers, carriage makers, silversmiths, saddle makers,

¹ Weeks: *The Building of Westminster in Maryland*, p 141.

² Weeks: *The Building of Westminster in Maryland*, pp. 11,15.

confectioners, hucksters, tanners, butchers, hatters, and clock makers.”³

Improvements to transportation facilities over the years also have had a marked impact on the area. In 1861, the advent of the railroad system through Westminster was a defining moment in the continued growth of the town. Generally running northeast and southwest, the tracks passed through Westminster, connecting Baltimore with markets in Pennsylvania. Another significant happening, a full century later, was the creation of MD 140, or Baltimore Boulevard. In 1959, construction was completed for this major roadway running through Carroll County, connecting Baltimore County and Frederick County. The creation of this road helped to further induce growth in the area’s population, commerce, and industry at a time when many Americans were continuing to leave urban areas for suburban and rural surroundings.⁴

2 *Inventory of Identified Historic Structures, Sites, and Districts*

The map at the end of this chapter identifies the historic structures, sites, and districts that have been inventoried in Election District 7. Some of these also are listed on the National Register of Historic Places as individual sites or as part of a historic district. A complete listing of the sites found in the study area, excluding the City of Westminster, can be found in the appendix.

3 *Description of Historic Architectural Styles*

No original settlement structures are known to stand in the Westminster area today. However, it is plausible that many of the original or “folk” style structures in the town bore a resemblance to the native architecture of the settlers’ various cultural backgrounds, which included German, English, Scottish, and Irish. The influence of Swedish and Finnish architectural styles permeated early log construction in the region.⁵

Most of the historic structures that survive in the region today are a product of what historians call vernacular style architecture. “Vernacular architecture is the term used to describe buildings that were constructed and built outside of the high style architectural traditions. In other words, they were not designed by an architect and generally followed local traditions in material, size, scale, and use of interior spaces, instead of following the elite or high style practices of the period. Vernacular buildings are closely related to the folk traditions of a region. The mixture of ethnic backgrounds in this region’s settlement virtually created a melting pot of vernacular architectural tradition.”⁶

Log construction was the predominant building material in the area from the early settlement period into the late nineteenth century. An example of this can be drawn from a 1798 Federal Tax List of the Westminster and Pipe Creek areas of then Frederick County, which inventoried both the number and the type of housing structures in the area at that time.

³ Weeks: *The Building of Westminster in Maryland*, pp. 36-37.

⁴ Warner: *Carroll County, Maryland*, p. 210.

⁵ Getty: *Carroll’s Heritage*, p. 59.

⁶ Getty: *Carroll’s Heritage*, p. 2.

Types of Structures, 1798				
Building Material	Log	Stone	Brick	Frame
Number Recorded	257	15	10	2

Source: Getty, *Carroll's Heritage*, p. 42.

At the time of the 1798 Federal Tax List, most original log “cabins” built by the settlers of the area already had been replaced by more sophisticated second generation log houses. As was typical for the area, floor plans for these structures remained simplistic and functional in nature. However, many of these surviving second-generation structures, and their various additions over time, remain excellent illustrations of the area’s architectural progression. This progress can be shown either in cosmetic enhancement/replacement to existing materials or in later additions to already existing structure.⁷

The emergence of the popular “T” and “L” plan houses became common in the area from the late 18th century into the 19th century. These common floor plans were examples of “national” trends that the Piedmont region was sometimes slow to incorporate into its architecture.⁸

The completion of the railroad through the Westminster area in 1861 had a significant impact on the direction of future architectural design. In addition to affecting the business climate of the area, the railroad created greater access to building materials and architectural information from outside of the immediate region. As a result, the latter half of the 19th century presented greater options and opportunities for adopting the more ornate “Victorian” style as opposed to the functional architectural traditions of the past. This influence not only was seen in urban areas, but in rural as well.⁹

The changing times also were noticeable in non-residential structures. Nearly all of the barns in early farm settlements were of log construction. With the industrial revolution in the mid-nineteenth century, better equipment, materials, and designs became available. As a result of this, much larger structures with brick, stone, and frame end construction became more prevalent. The most common style of barn in the County was the bank barn, which had its origins with the Pennsylvania German settlers in the area. Bank barns were built into the side of a hill to provide ground level access to the main floor of the barn. Single pen and double pen configurations were common in both the earlier log structures and in later construction.¹⁰

4 Description of Historic Preservation Resources

Many tools exist for the property owner interested in historic building or landscape preservation. Organizations and programs dedicated to providing technical and financial assistance for historic preservation exist at both the state and local level, in the public and private sector. Organizations

⁷ Getty: *Carroll's Heritage*, pp. 45,47.

⁸ Getty: *Carroll's Heritage*, p. 97.

⁹ Weeks: *The Building of Westminster in Maryland*, p. 62.

¹⁰ Getty: *Carroll's Heritage*, p. 79.

and programs that can assist property owners in Carroll County are listed below.

Historic Preservation Resources			
Resource Type	Name	Description	
Organizations	National Park Service (NPS)	Chief administrator of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 in concert with the states. Keeper of the National Register of Historic Places and lead agency for Section 106 review. Oversees National Historic Landmark program. Provides some funding to state preservation offices for operating expenses, some of which is passed on to local governments through the Certified Local Government program.	
	National Trust for Historic Preservation	National, private non-profit organization. Sponsors the National Main Street Center and a Heritage Tourism program, provides loan and grant programs for historic preservation efforts, and co-sponsors the Barn Again! program to encourage the preservation of barns.	
	Maryland Historical Trust (MHT)	Branch of the Division of Historical and Cultural Programs in the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. Acts as the State Historic Preservation Office by: conducting historic and archaeological resource surveys and acting as the central repository for these records for all counties in the state; nominating properties to the National Register; carrying out Section 106 review; administering Federal and State preservation grants; reviewing Federal and State tax incentive projects; and, assisting with preservation planning statewide.	
	Maryland Environmental Trust (MET)	Organization created by the Maryland General Assembly to conserve and protect the state's open space and natural environment. Core program is the conservation easement program. Also administers the Local Land Trust Assistance Program, the "Keep Maryland Beautiful" program, and Rural Historic Village Protection Program.	
	Preservation Maryland	Private, non-profit preservation organization that works statewide to preserve historic buildings, districts, and archaeological sites. Provides grants and loans for preservation projects.	
	Maryland Historical Society	Private, non-profit organization dedicated to collecting, preserving, and interpreting the state's history. Houses a library and research center as well as permanent and rotating exhibits.	
	Historical Society of Carroll County	Private, non-profit organization dedicated to preserving and interpreting the county's past.	
	Advisory Council on Historic Preservation	Independent Federal agency that advises the President and Congress on historic preservation matters, particularly Federal or Federally-assisted projects that impact National Register properties.	
	Programs	National Register of Historic Places	A listing of properties and districts significant in American history and culture. Significance is determined by a set of eligibility criteria. Nominations are made through the completion of a standard form submitted to MHT then NPS. Listing is voluntary and non-regulatory, and enables property owners to apply for Federal and State tax benefits, loans and grants for certain preservation work.
		National Historic Landmarks	Program administered by the NPS that designates structures of national historical significance. Landmarks are subject to Section 106 Review and may be preserved through Congressional legislation if threatened. Landmarks are automatically entered on the National Register as well.
Local Historic Districts		One local historic district exists in Carroll County: Uniontown. An Historical Preservation Commission has been established by the County government to establish and enforce design guidelines for this and any future local historic districts in the county so that the historical and architectural qualities of the district are preserved. Standards apply to alterations or demolitions that affect the exterior of the property.	
Section 106 Review		Section of the National Historic Preservation Act that requires Federal agencies to take into consideration the impact of Federal projects on historic properties and to allow the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation the opportunity to review the projects as well.	
Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit		Allows owners of income-producing property to receive a Federal tax credit equal to 20% of the costs of rehabilitation if it is certified as complying with the Secretary of the Interior's <i>Standards for Rehabilitation</i> . Administered by MHT and NPS.	
Maryland Rehabilitation Tax Credit		Provides tax credits equal to 20% of capital costs for the rehabilitation of owner-occupied or income-producing properties. Work must conform with the Secretary of the Interior's <i>Standards for Rehabilitation</i> and must be certified by MHT, which administers the program.	
Easements		A mechanism by which limitations are placed on development potential or structural alterations through a legal document that remains with the property regardless of ownership. Easements can be held by Federal, state, and local government agencies, and private organizations that are tax-exempt, charitable, educational non-profits. The value of the donated easement is tax deductible and some tax benefits also may be realized through a reduced property value due to development restrictions.	
Rural Historic Village Protection Program		A program of the MET. Seeks to protect the historic context of rural villages through the preservation of surrounding landscapes. Utilizes a combination of conservation easement, historic preservation easements, state agricultural easements, and county agricultural districts.	

Historic Preservation Resources		
Resource Type	Name	Description
	Certified Local Government	Provides competitive grants for historic sites survey, preservation planning, and heritage education to local governments that have legislation in place to designate and protect historic properties. Certified Local Governments also must have a qualified historic preservation review commission, must create and update an inventory of historic properties, and must allow public participation in local preservation programs.
	Maryland Heritage Preservation and Tourism Areas Program	Provides matching grants and loans and tax credits to historic or contributing non-historic properties within a Certified Heritage Area. Certification is obtained through MHT and the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority. Parts of the Maryland Civil War Heritage Area lie within Carroll County.
	Rural Legacy	Land preservation program administered by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources that seeks to preserve areas rich in agricultural, natural, and cultural resources that will promote resource-based economies, protect green belts and greenways, and maintain the fabric of rural life.
	Main Street Program	Downtown revitalization program administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. Competitively selected communities receive assistance in improving the economy, appearance and image of their traditional downtown business districts. Based upon the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street Approach, which applies a four-point approach to revitalization: organization, promotion, design, and economic restructuring.

The Maryland Rehabilitation Tax Credit program is perhaps the most lucrative in terms of providing significant financial benefits for historic preservation projects. Between 1995 and 2004, 39 projects with total project cost estimates of \$10,121,569 were submitted to the Maryland Historical Trust for tax credit review. As of April 2004, \$964,238 worth of final project costs had been submitted for final approval for these projects, worth a total of \$213,922 in tax credits (\$105,371 at the old 25 percent credit rate and \$108,551 at the new 20 percent rate). The vast majority of the projects were located in Westminster (20), while five property owners in Sykesville and five in Uniontown submitted applications as well. Additional applications were received from property owners in Union Bridge (2), Millers (2), Detour (1), Hampstead (1), Mt. Airy (1), New Windsor (1), and Taneytown (1). The single largest application was received from the Town of Hampstead for the renovation of the elementary school into senior housing; that application was submitted in 2003 and had a projected cost of \$7,820,000. With the exception of that project, the average cost of projects in Carroll County submitted for review is \$60,568, which would yield an average tax credit of \$12,114 per project.

5 *Heritage Tourism*

The term heritage tourism refers to tourist activity that is oriented around the visitation of historic and cultural attractions, natural resources, and local dining and lodging establishments that impart a unique, regional experience not duplicated anywhere else. Heritage tourists are in search of the “real” and “authentic” qualities of a place. The heritage tourism market is a lucrative one to pursue since studies have shown that tourists who fit the heritage tourist profile often are more highly educated, older, and wealthier and, as a result, tend to spend more per trip than the average tourist. However, to attract the heritage tourist, a locality must be able to offer them the type of unique and authentic experience they seek. Carroll County is fortunate to have many of the requisite qualities for heritage tourism – quaint and attractive downtowns that have been preserved to a large extent, an array of unique local dining and shopping opportunities, a calendar of events that reflect the region, and beautiful rural scenery. But in order to capitalize upon the potential that exists, a conscious effort must be put forth to retain and attract unique businesses and cultural facilities, preserve the historic fabric of the towns, and protect the rural countryside and way of life.

One major boost to local efforts is the recent designation of Maryland’s “Heart of the

Civil War Heritage Area.” The “Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area” (HCWHA), along with its management plan, was certified by the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority in July 2006 as the eleventh heritage area in the state certified through Maryland's Heritage Preservation and Tourism Areas Program. The heritage area includes significant portions of Carroll, Frederick, and Washington counties that contain Civil War battlefields and other sites related to the conflict. In Carroll County, these sites primarily relate to supply efforts and troop movements through the area prior to and after the Battle of Gettysburg. The County's portion of the heritage area includes the corridors (defined as 500 feet from the centerline) of most of the major roadways. All of the incorporated municipalities contain at least one of these routes and, therefore, lie partially within the heritage area.

Certification enables Carroll County businesses and organizations to use State grants, loans, and tax incentives to undertake projects that support the heritage area's goals and capitalize on the area's significant Civil War-related history. Additionally, Target Investment Zones (TIZs) have been identified as part of this process. TIZs are areas towards which substantial amounts of funding are to be directed as a result of their having concentrations of heritage resources and visitor services. In Carroll County, three activated and/or potential TIZs have been identified: Taneytown, Westminster, and Sykesville. Properties within activated TIZs are eligible for additional grants and loans for capital projects and economic development projects, as well as state income tax credits for the rehabilitation of certified heritage structures. Other jurisdictions may be deemed eligible if they choose to apply for TIZ certification.

Nearly all of the jurisdictions in the county have completed the needed documentation that will make them eligible to apply for funding or other program designations. On September 25, 2006, the Mayor and Council of Westminster passed a resolution amending the comprehensive plan to incorporate those portions of the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area Management Plan that apply to the City of Westminster. That plan is incorporated by reference into this update of the comprehensive plan as well.

A similar national effort, underway beginning in the fall of 2006, may designate portions of Carroll County as part of the “Journey Through Hallowed Ground National Heritage Area”. In its initial proposal this effort will tie broader themes including historical, cultural, social and political events that are core to our national identity into a geographically connected corridor. While the effort is in its relatively early stages, it will undoubtedly offer similar and perhaps more significant benefits to areas included within its jurisdiction.

Preservation and marketing efforts such as this need the additional promotional opportunities afforded by a visitor's center or other information center. The current visitor's center for Carroll County is located on Main Street in Westminster at the Carroll County Historical Society. While this venue fits well with the theme of heritage tourism and does double-duty in terms of alerting visitors already at the historical society to the many attractions in the county, it is somewhat removed from the main travel arteries and is difficult to find. Signage for the visitor's center on MD 140 and other main roads is difficult to see and difficult to follow. The County Bureau of Tourism has indicated that a site somewhere on MD 140 or on Main Street closer to MD 27 would be a more ideal location for a visitor's center. While such a location would have the advantages of being both closer to the primary travel routes of visitors and easier to direct people towards, on the other hand, the Historical Society location provides a great deal of ambience and character that is uniquely Carroll County.

The City of Westminster and its environs contain the majority of cultural resources in the county. This is due primarily to its central location and its position as the county seat.

One of the single-most popular facilities in the environs is the Carroll County Farm Museum. This nineteenth century farmhouse and outbuildings attract thousands of visitors each year who come to tour the museum, take part in classes, or attend one of the many special events held annually. Among its events are Traditional Arts Week, a Civil War Encampment, Blacksmith Days, the Fiddler's Convention, a 4th of July Celebration, Steam Show Days, and Fall Harvest Days. Two of its biggest events, the Maryland Wine Festival and Common Ground on the Hill's American Music & Arts Festival, attract tens of thousands of visitors each year.

Additional cultural facilities exist within the City of Westminster. These include the Carroll County Historical Society, which operates a research library and exhibits, as well as the Sherman-Fisher-Shellman House museum. The Historical Society's campus of buildings on Main Street also houses the County's visitor center.

The Carroll County Arts Council recently moved into its new home, the Carroll Arts Center in the restored Carroll Theater in downtown Westminster. The Arts Center offers rotating art exhibits, film screenings, and musical performances. Additional gallery space exists at the Carroll Community College's Scott Gallery and Great Hall & Langdon Family Gallery and at McDaniel College's Esther Prangle Rice Gallery. Another venue for local artists to showcase their talents is the annual Art in the Park event on the grounds of City Hall.

McDaniel College is host to Theater on the Hill, a summer stock theater that presents musicals, comedies, and children's classics.

Analysis of Community Needs

1 Historic Preservation

A number of local historians have identified past uses of properties and various historic structures throughout the study area. The general consensus from the community is to preserve these structures through appropriate re-use and preservation. However, specific resources and community preservation activities outside of the immediate downtown area have not been established. Also, there are a number of historic homes, buildings, and areas that can be found either in and around designated Rural Villages or throughout the countryside. These structures have little protection or encouragement for the preservation of the history and heritage they represent. Even though many of these structures and sites are documented, they may continue to disappear without preservation efforts. Presently, the County has a limited contract with a historic preservationist to survey a handful of specific properties in the county. The contract, however, does not provide for a broader approach to historic preservation throughout the County to be developed, nor does it allow for a staff person that would be available to county residents seeking technical or professional expertise and advice on individual historic preservation issues.

2 Heritage Tourism

Heritage tourism is a perfect fit with Carroll County. The county's charming and vibrant

Main Street towns, along with its relatively unspoiled rural areas, make it a natural destination for tourists seeking the “authentic” small-town America experience. The County’s participation in the HCWHA is a good opportunity to begin building a heritage tourism effort, and presents a gateway to tap into the additional funding sources and cooperative marketing and development opportunities that heritage tourism can offer. However, the resources needed to truly promote the county and to develop quality visitor services and cultural attractions currently are not directed to this effort.

The State provides tax credits for the renovation and restoration of designated historic structures (listed on the National Register of Historic Places, identified as a contributing structure in a National Register Historic District, or identified locally as an historic structure). Certified heritage structures located within a Certified Heritage Area, as part of the Maryland Heritage Preservation and Tourism Areas program, also are eligible for tax credits. These tax credits have been a major incentive for developers to preserve and reuse historic structures while at the same time enhancing the local economy. Statewide in recent years, \$20-30 million in tax credits have been claimed annually through this popular program. The State Legislature passed a bill limiting tax credits for commercial rehabilitation projects to \$23 million for FY 2003 and \$15 million for FY 2004. This program remains in jeopardy, though support for it is strong. Yet despite its popularity statewide, few Carroll County property owners have taken advantage of the significant tax benefits they might receive through the program. Given the sheer number of properties that potentially would be eligible in the county (2,434 buildings, 6 structures, and 1 object based on National Register of Historic Properties listings alone), coupled with an average tax credit worth more than \$12,000, it is unfortunate that only 39 property owners have filed for tax credits in Carroll County.

In addition to tax credits, other incentives and economic development assistance are imperative to attracting and retaining small businesses on Main Street and encouraging them to rehabilitate historic buildings. Additionally, a civic and residential presence needs to exist alongside these businesses in order to keep Main Street viable. There is no greater threat to historic structures than abandonment and neglect due to a lack of use, and conversely there is no greater benefit to historic preservation efforts than a lively, vibrant community.

3 Cultural Resources

Carroll County’s cultural resources are somewhat limited and tend to be focused around Westminster. However, its principal cultural events and facilities, including the Carroll County Farm Museum, the Maryland Wine Festival, Theater on the Hill, and the Carroll Arts Center, are big attractions and attract people from throughout the region. The Historical Society of Carroll County continues to restore its collection of buildings on Main Street and offers tourists an introduction to the County not just through its collections, but also through its collocation with the County Visitor’s Center. Although this relationship is a good way to link the County’s past with its attraction for contemporary visitors, the location is somewhat out-of-the-way and not very well marked. Numbers indicate that visitation at the site has been dropping recently, which may be due in part to reduced signage coupled with a somewhat remote location. Additionally, parking for the site is extremely limited and distant from the main downtown parking area adjacent to City Hall.

Recommended Actions

- *Hire a staff historic preservationist to continue the work of surveying the county's historic properties, represent the County's interest in matters of historic preservation, and provide technical assistance to the citizenry*

At one time, the County had on staff a historic preservationist whose job it was to survey the county's historic properties and provide technical assistance to county residents on matters of historic preservation. This position was eliminated several years ago. The effect of this action has been that very few new properties have been surveyed and citizens have very little in way technical assistance available to them from the county when it comes to the preservation of historic properties. With only an estimated ½ of all historic structures surveyed in the county, this does not bode well for the preservation of the county's architectural heritage. Westminster and its environs in particular, because of its size and sheer number of historic resources, could benefit from a staff person dedicated to furthering the cause of historic preservation.

- *Identify key historic sites in the Westminster environs that remain to be surveyed at the permission of their owners*

Surveys done for the County Inventory of Historic Sites are done solely with the permission of the property owner. These surveys are the most detailed, and often the only, information the County has on its historic properties. Although the County no longer has a staff historic preservationist, some additional survey work continues to be done on a limited, contractual basis. Identifying those key historic sites that should be priorities for surveying if the opportunity arises to do so will help continue the process of recording the county's built history and heritage.

- *Define the area of significance for historic sites so that they will be protected in the event of development or alteration of the environment*

Historic sites are not comprised of just the buildings. The context in which these buildings sit is almost as important as the buildings themselves. The context reveals much about the reasons why and the ways in which historic properties developed. When the area surrounding a historic property is developed or otherwise altered, this important historical context often is lost or obscured. By defining the area of significance, or context, for historic sites, development could occur in a way more conducive to retaining the most significant contextual elements surrounding historic buildings.

- *Suggest potential ways to reuse key historic sites in the Westminster environs*

One of the greatest challenges to the preservation of historic sites is the fact that they are configured spatially or sited in such a way that they are not easily adapted to the spatial or locational needs of businesses or uses that might reuse the sites for contemporary uses. While it is not as easy to reuse a historic building for modern uses as it is to build a new structure, a little creativity often can yield surprisingly effective solutions for doing just that. Key historic sites in the Westminster environs could be identified and potential ways to reuse them suggested ahead of time to open new possibilities for reuse and help facilitate adaptation.

- *Develop educational materials for citizens on how to apply for rehabilitation tax credits and conduct historic renovation projects*

Because no County staff position exists that would provide the technical assistance many homeowners need to conduct historic preservation projects and take advantage of the state rehabilitation tax credits that may be available to them, it would be helpful to have education materials prepared to educate the county's citizens on the basics and guide them to other sources where they might find assistance.

- *Encourage the City of Westminster to retain the mixed-use of Main Street through zoning and other mechanisms*

One of the best qualities about Main Street in Westminster, as well as Main streets in many other Carroll County towns, is the diversity of uses that are represented along it. The mixed-use nature of these historic commercial areas has been retained throughout their history but is threatened by an increasingly established pattern of segregating uses from each other, particularly in newer developments. The diversity and quality of architecture and uses found on Westminster's Main Street attracts people not only to the City itself but to the environs and Carroll County in general. Working with the City to retain the character of its Main Street will help to bolster tourism well beyond the corporate limits.

- *Work with institutions and organizations that create a civic presence on Main Street to retain their presence there, especially during consideration of relocation*

Main Street traditionally has been the place where civic institutions and services are found, and this has added to the mixed-use, diverse character of the area. As these uses grow to serve a growing population, however, they are forced to choose between the size constraints of a Main Street location and the relative flexibility and space afforded by a location outside of Main Street, sometimes outside of the City itself. When civic institutions are weighing their options for expansion or relocation, the County should work with the City to find solutions that will keep these uses on Main Street to one degree or another.

- *Identify a site for a County Visitor's Center that is more visible and/or enhance the existing site to be more visible and visitor-friendly*

Carroll County has an intriguing heritage that is rich in agricultural and regional history. The Carroll County Visitor's Center facility should be a prominent component of the community, providing visitors with a clear impression of its significance. Improving the functionality and visibility of the existing site will help to bolster county tourism appeal. The County should also consider acquiring any potential sites that may become available within close proximity to a Main Street Gateway for the eventual location of a new Visitor's Center.

- *Encourage local groups to develop programs and activities to promote awareness of the area's history, the importance of preservation, and ways residents can participate*

Promoting stewardship of the historic resources of the area is an essential component of historic preservation and heritage tourism efforts. Much of what is accomplished in terms of preserving the integrity of our historic resources is done privately and without much public recognition. The County can help private homeowners and business people better appreciate the area's historic significance and the need to protect and preserve its heritage resources by partnering with and supporting local organizations such as the Carroll County Historical

Society, Carroll County Historic Preservation Commission, and other local historic preservation organizations to develop programs and activities that will reach out to community members and draw them into preservation effort. Already the Carroll County Historic Preservation Commission is sponsoring a tour of historic homes in the Westminster vicinity and a conference on historic preservation issues and techniques as a way to promote awareness of the area’s historic significance, preserve its historic resources, and discover ways in which the average citizen can participate in the effort to protect our heritage.

Fiscal Implications & Anticipated Capital Improvements Projects

The recommendations contained in this plan may be policy-oriented or action-oriented, and their implementation 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 recommendation 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.

- Hire a staff historic preservationist to continue the work of surveying the County’s historic properties, represent the County’s interest in matters of historic preservation, and provide technical assistance to the citizenry
Fiscal Impact: The cost to hire a full-time historic preservationist at a grade of C12 would cost the County approximately \$57,630 annually.
- Identify key historic sites in the Westminster environs that remain to be surveyed at the permission of their owners
No Fiscal Impact
- Define the area of significance for historic sites so that they will be protected in the event of development or alteration of the environment
No Fiscal Impact
- Suggest potential ways to reuse key historic sites in the Westminster environs
No Fiscal Impact
- Develop educational materials for citizens on how to apply for rehabilitation tax credits and conduct historic renovation projects
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
- Encourage the City of Westminster to retain the mixed-use of Main Street through zoning and other mechanisms
No Fiscal Impact
- Work with institutions and organizations that create a civic presence on Main Street to retain their presence there, especially during consideration of relocation
No Fiscal Impact
- Identify a site for a County Visitor’s Center that is more visible and/or enhance the existing site and directional signage to be more visible and visitor-friendly
Fiscal Impact: Because no specific site has been determined for this project, it is difficult to provide an accurate cost estimate for it. Site acquisition costs would vary, depending upon whether land was donated, leased, or purchase in-fee. A newly constructed visitor center would probably require a minimum of 2-3 acres

at a cost of \$200,000 per acre for Commercial zoned land. Construction could amount to about \$500,000 to \$1 million for a well-equipped small facility that offers interpretive exhibits, a visitor information desk, restrooms, and possibly a gift shop, as well as the necessary parking and perhaps an outdoor picnic area/garden.

- Encourage local groups to develop programs and activities to promote awareness of the area's history, the importance of preservation, and ways residents can participate
No Fiscal Impact

Maps

1 Historic Sites