City of Westminster

2009

Comprehensive Plan

ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 28, 2009

City of Westminster

Comprehensive Plan

Adopted September 28, 2009

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The information contained in this Plan is current as of the date of Plan adoption and approval. As the programs, policies, and procedures described herein are subject to change, the City of Westminster makes no guarantee regarding the accuracy or timeliness of the information presented.

City of Westminster

Comprehensive Plan

Adopted September 28, 2009

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2009 Comprehensive Plan

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2009 Comprehensive Plan

Executive Summary

The staff of the City of Westminster Planning, Zoning and Development Department has worked hard to make the 2009 Comprehensive Plan a document that will become an everyday tool for the City of Westminster administration. The planning staff set a goal of ensuring that the public, local officials and City staff are able to refer to the 2009 Comprehensive Plan to not only better understand the community vision for the future but to also understand how planning can facilitate creating that vision. Incorporated throughout the plan are principles and concepts, adopted by various national organizations, which will be used to educate the public, local officials and City staff on how to implement the goals, objectives and actions of the plan.

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan embraces the principles of Smart Growth, and the State of Maryland's 12 new State planning visions, to serve as guidelines for future growth and development while protecting the City's limited resources and land. The two new elements, Water Resources Element and the Municipal Growth Element, set the pace for future development in Westminster. This plan also works to give recognition to Westminster's community partners in State, County and local organizations and agencies. As a small city, Westminster depends on these partnerships to build a sustainable and vibrant community.

A new addition to the Comprehensive Plan is the Public Participation and Neighborhood Planning Element. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan update started with the coordination of the first Westminster resident survey in the summer of 2008. The survey was a success and triggered new initiatives within the City to improve residents' access to information and enhance communication between local officials and residents. The survey was followed by a series of community workshops in the fall of 2008 that offered residents the opportunity to voice their ideas and concerns about the future of their community. In the winter of 2009, the planning staff combined the results of the survey and the feedback from the workshops, to create the 2008 Community Vision Report. This report served as the base of the comprehensive plan update process. Each element in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan begins with a description from the 2008 Community Vision Report that relates to the element and an outline on how the element promotes a principle of Smart Growth and/or a State planning vision.

The City will use the Public Participation and Neighborhood Planning Element as a guide to create neighborhood-specific plans. The citywide vision and policies describe an overall preferred growth strategy for Westminster, while neighborhood planning establishes a specific vision and strategy for each neighborhood area

2009 Comprehensive Plan

Foreword

The City of Westminster initiated the 2009 Comprehensive Plan ("Plan") update in October 2007, long before our country found itself in the midst of a significant economic recession. The approved Plan provides the means and methods to build a strong foundation for the future, and its goals, objectives and implementation plan create the roadmap to promote the orderly growth and development of the Westminster community.

Due to the economic slowdown from 2007 to 2009, development slowed to a crawl and tax revenues became flat. Unforeseen and unprecedented State budget cuts, with the possibility of significant additional County budget cuts, will likely cause the Mayor and Common Council to reconsider the timing of implementation of various elements of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. We fully anticipate the goals and objectives of the approved Plan will remain the same; however, the timeframes involved and who is responsible for implementation will likely change as City officials deal with the new financial reality.

The Mayor and Common Council look forward to the challenge of working to build a future of sustainability and self-sufficiency, albeit with limited resources. The Mayor and Common Council have come to believe that Westminster should strive to become self-reliant and not depend so heavily on State and County funding. The body is working on a financial plan that will outline how to continue providing high-quality municipal services with fewer resources and may also suggest the curtailment of services. Many recommendations in the approved Plan will further the goal of self-reliance and may be quickly implemented; other recommendations may have to wait until better times return to Westminster.

The City's staff intends to provide a status report on the implementation of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan at yearly intervals. This will provide the Mayor and Common Council and community with information on the status of Plan implementation vis-à-vis the financial situation. In the end, the Mayor and Common Council and staff believe that the realistic implementation of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan is one of the best tools available to guide decisions on difficult choices, so that Westminster remains positioned for economic growth and recovery when the current financial crisis ends.

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Introduction

2009

THE CITY OF WESTMINSTER

Part 1: The City of Westminster

Chapter 1

Part 1: The City of Westminster

Part 2: History of the Comprehensive Plan

Part 3: What is the Comprehensive Plan?

Part 4: 2009 Comprehensive Plan

Part 5: Smart Growth

Part 6: Visions

Beautiful countryside, clean air, abundant water, healthy climate, quality schools, industrious work force, and easy accessibility to Baltimore: these are some of the reasons that people were attracted to the City of Westminster as a place for conducting business, establishing a residence, and vacationing in 1887. Although the City of Westminster is no longer the resort it was in the late 1800s, people are still drawn to Westminster for many of the same reasons today.

The first lots in Westminster were laid out by William Winchester in 1764. There was no particular reason for locating a town where East Main Street and North Church Street intersect today. There were no major, pre-existing crossroads in the area and no navigable waters, often important factors in the founding and growth of a city. Winchester simply created and sold the lots along the road to Baltimore, a pattern that was repeated on present day Main Street by other landowners.

With no real driving force for growth in Westminster, the population increased slowly. Scotch-Irish and Palatinate Germans and Swiss moved to the area from Pennsylvania, and English and Scotch-Irish came from the Maryland tidewater areas to the south. These residents soon took an active role in the growth of Westminster.

The first major instance of growth in Westminster resulted from the Baltimore and Reisterstown Turnpike, built through Carroll County in 1807 to facilitate trading between Baltimore and Pittsburgh. This turnpike was built through Westminster only after considerable lobbying by Westminster residents.

Westminster quickly developed into a transportation center as a result of the turnpike. Conestoga wagons and mule drivers constantly passed through the town, and a horse drawn bus line provided passenger service between Westminster and nearby towns. Numerous businesses opened along Main Street to serve the travelers and the town's increasing population.

The creation of Carroll County and the designation of Westminster as the county seat also helped to spur growth. This occurrence was once again the result of the lobbying efforts of the residents in Westminster and the surrounding areas. Westminster was originally located near the boundary separating Frederick and Baltimore Counties, and residents were forced to travel long distances to carry out any legal business. As a result, area residents repeatedly petitioned the Maryland General Assembly

to create a new county centered on Westminster. A number of these petitions failed until Carroll County was finally created in 1837. The biggest champion of the creation of this new county was John Longwell, who established the *Carrolltonian*, a newspaper devoted to supporting of the creation of Carroll County.

The designation of Westminster as County Seat resulted in the construction of a number of public and civic buildings. The County Jail was constructed in 1837 and the Court House was completed in 1838. In addition, religious denominations began to construct churches, and in 1846 Ascension Episcopal Church became the first English church built in Westminster. The Order of Odd Fellows took part as well by constructing an Opera House for the entertainment of residents and visitors in Westminster.

Shortly after the creation of Carroll County, Westminster was incorporated as a town by Chapter 418 of the Acts of 1838, under the name of The Burgess and Commissioners of Westminster. That charter was amended by Chapter 335 of the Acts of 1856, which characterized the municipality as a city by changing the name to "The Mayor and Common Council of Westminster." Westminster became the county seat of Carroll County and remained a part of that county, but, as a municipal corporation, it was given certain special, separate, and distinct powers. The City Charter was repealed and reenacted by Chapter 341 of the Acts of 1910.

The citizens of Westminster were conscious of the link between transportation and growth in the town, and as early as 1847, committees began to meet to study the possibility of constructing a rail line through Westminster. Discussions with the Baltimore and Susquehanna Railroad and the strong support of local residents eventually yielded results, and the Western Maryland Railroad was constructed through Westminster in 1861. The expected growth followed, as the railroad increased the ease of passenger travel and transport of goods to Baltimore.

The most recent transportation corridor constructed in the Westminster area was Maryland Route 140, built in 1952 as a bypass for Main Street. As with the previously constructed turnpike and the Western Maryland Railroad, the Maryland Route 140 bypass greatly increased the ease of travel between Westminster and Baltimore and provided the opportunity for significant commercial growth along the Westminster section of Maryland Route 140. This accessibility increased even more with the completion of Interstate Route 795 in 1987 between the Baltimore beltway and Maryland Route 140, north of Reisterstown. As with the construction of Maryland Route 140 in the 1950s, the opening of Interstate 795 allowed residents of Westminster, as well residents to the north, to travel more quickly to employment in the Baltimore area, thus resulting in new pressure for additional residential and retail growth in the Westminster area.

Part 2: History of the Comprehensive Plan

The first Comprehensive Development Plan for Westminster and Vicinity was written in 1971 as a joint effort by the City of Westminster, Carroll County, and a consulting firm. The preparation of the plan was partially funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The 1971 plan was primarily a land use plan, and the future land use plan was based on existing land uses, existing and proposed roads, water and sewer facilities, and stream conservation. The appendix of the plan included information on the housing situation in Carroll County, as well as goals for achieving adequate housing for all County residents.

The only update of the 1971 plan took place in 1985. The Comprehensive Plan for Westminster and Environs was developed by the City of Westminster and Carroll County, and addressed a considerable amount of land outside of the Westminster corporate limits. This plan also focused on land use issues, but included expanded sections that discussed environmental issues, water and sewer facilities, and public services. It also contained a chapter that provided general guidelines for the implementation of the plan.

The 1998 City of Westminster Comprehensive Plan was developed by City staff with assistance from an Advisory Committee and certain City Boards and Commissions. Relevant chapters were developed with input from Carroll County staff. The 1998 Plan was developed to address land that is located within the corporate limits of Westminster. Subsequently, the City adopted its most recent comprehensive plan on June 14, 2004.

The Carroll County 2007 Westminster and Environs Comprehensive Plan includes the examination of those areas outside of the City boundaries that were previously included in Westminster planning studies.

Part 3: What is a Comprehensive Plan?

Section 1: Define Comprehensive Plan

The Comprehensive Plan is the basic foundation for local planning and is required under Article 66 of the Annotated Code of Maryland. It lays out the community vision and priorities and describes, where, how, and in some cases, when development will occur. The plan is approved by the City's Planning and Zoning Commission and adopted by The Mayor and Common Council. It provides flexible guidelines for policymakers, land managers, and citizens about how to conserve, rehabilitate, or develop an area while addressing land use, transportation, infrastructure, urban design, and the other "building blocks" that make up a city. The plan is forecasted for twenty years and is usually updated every five to six years. A comprehensive plan is needed to ensure orderly growth and protect the public's best interests. It acts as a guide for the future.

Section 2: What are the steps of the Comprehensive Planning Process?

The steps of the Westminster Comprehensive Plan process:

1. Identifying the strengths, problems and opportunities
2. Collecting information on the problems and opportunities
3. Developing recommendations
4. Considering possible alternatives
5. Agreeing , through consensus, on a plan
6. Putting the plan to work
7. Monitoring the plan's progress

Section 3: Westminster's 12 Principles of a Comprehensive Plan

An important goal of the City of Westminster Comprehensive Plan is to be truly comprehensive. This plan expands on the issues of environmental resources, population, land use, transportation, water and sewer, and community facilities. Plan elements also address housing, economic development, tourism, neighborhood revitalization and historic resources, growth management, and interjurisdictional coordination. In addition, specific goals and objectives are provided to guide City officials and staff in decision-making and in prioritizing work activities. The City of Westminster Comprehensive Plan will be reviewed and updated every six years, in accordance with Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland, to assure that the visions for Westminster are achieved and that the changing needs of the community can be met. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update promotes the following principles in order to educate the public on the purpose of a Comprehensive Plan:

1. Expresses a community's vision of itself –what the community would like to become- The community's hopes and dreams

2. Establishes an organized public process to identify community values and goals

3. Examines community needs and identifies solutions

4. Creates a framework for decision-making regarding the future of the city and guides the investment of public funds and services

5. Provides a policy framework to ensure consistency with other planning efforts, land use decisions, and capital improvement projects

6. Offers a budgeting tool by targeting the need and timing for investment in public facilities and infrastructure

7. Ensures consistency and compatibility with the plans of nearby cities and the county

8. Indicates what is needed to support planned growth, striking a balance between the land use and its capital improvement needs

9. Offers a tool to coordinate the provision of city programs and services

10. Expands eligibility for grants and other funding sources needed to bring projects to fruition

11. Insures the development of public and private property in appropriate relationships and consistent with the City Plan

    Is to be updated periodically to address emerging technologies, change in the population and economy, or other relevant factors

Part 4: 2009 Comprehensive Plan

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan is an update of the vision and goals set forth in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. The City of Westminster has faced several major changes over the past six years, and as a result the 2009 Comprehensive Plan's vision of growth has changed since the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. After adopting the 2004 Comprehensive Plan, the City encountered a new challenge that reshaped Westminster's outlook on its future. In September 2006, after reviewing the City's final Water Capacity Management Plan, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) directed the Carroll County Environmental Health Department to no longer approve building permits that would result in a net increase in water demand on the City's water system. The water dilemma has placed a strain on the growth of Westminster. Since 2006, the City has received limited development pressure due the limited water supply available to allocate to new developments. Future growth cannot occur in Westminster without the water in place to supply the new developments.

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan update presented another obstacle to the future growth of Westminster: land. After conducting the Development Capacity Analysis for residential land within the City limits, it was determined that the City has 106 acres of remaining vacant residential land. At the projected rate of growth for the next 20 years, Westminster could be built-out by 2024.

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan includes three new elements, Water Resources, Municipal Growth, and Public Participation & Neighborhood Planning. State law requires the Water Resources Element and the Municipal Growth Element to be adopted by October 1, 2009. The Public Participation & Neighborhood Planning Element is a new element that was created under the direction of the Mayor and Common Council to promote public participation in the local decision-making of Westminster.

Part 5: Smart Growth

In order to meet the challenges of a City with a limited amount of water and a limited amount of land, the 2009 Comprehensive Plan promotes a vision of Westminster that will adopt the principles of Smart Growth in order to achieve recognition as a sustainable city by 2030.

The following principles of Smart Growth provide guidance for new development, infill development, and redevelopment:

1. Mix Land Uses
2. Take advantage of compact building design
3. Create housing opportunities and choices
4. Create walkable communities
5. Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
6. Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas
7. Strengthen and direct development toward existing communities
8. Provide a variety of transportation choices
9. Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective
10. Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration

Part 6: Visions

Section 1: City of Westminster Vision Statement

In order to provide for the overall direction of the *City of Westminster Comprehensive Plan*, the City developed the following Vision Statement in 1998 and reaffirmed it in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan. That vision statement still applies today:

”The residents of Westminster will experience a high quality of life through the adequate provision of public facilities; well maintained and adequate housing, business facilities, infrastructure and public spaces; a high level of safety throughout the community; and a diversity of jobs, housing, population, and services and commodities. This high quality of life will contribute to an enhanced level of community pride and involvement, resulting in a strong sense of place with respect to the City of Westminster and its citizenry.”

This Vision will be accomplished by:

1. Maintaining and improving existing development, in part through historic preservation;

2. Supporting the revitalization of Downtown Westminster;

3. Demonstrating a high quality of design in new development;

4. Providing better pedestrian access, thus making residents less dependent on motor vehicles;

5. Providing adequate recreation opportunities for residents of all ages;

6. Providing an adequate transportation system that also addresses alternative means of travel;

7. Welcoming new residents and visitors, so that these people share an appreciation for Westminster’s heritage;

8. Preserving and restoring natural resources; and

9. Encouraging diversity in population, housing types, employment opportunities, services and commodities, and community organizations, thus providing opportunities for residents to live, work, conduct business, shop, and participate in social activities in their own community.

Section 2: State of Maryland Planning Visions

The Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992 requires the City of Westminster to adopt eight Visions as part of the Comprehensive Plan. These visions, originally prepared in the wake of the 1987 Chesapeake Bay Agreement, address the impacts of rapid population growth and development on our natural resources, call for a culture of environmental stewardship, and promote economic development. Both State and local funding decisions on public construction projects must adhere to the visions.

As part of the Maryland 2009 Smart, Green, and Growing Legislation, the State adopted the following 12 Planning Visions to serve as *"Maryland's Land Use Policy."* The Planning Visions bill replaces the State's 8 existing planning visions with 12 new visions. These new planning visions are the State's land use policy, and local jurisdictions are required to include the visions in their local comprehensive plan and implement them through zoning ordinances and regulations.

The City of Westminster has incorporated the following 12 Planning Visions into the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Update:

1. **Quality of Life and Sustainability** - A high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water, and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment.

2. **Public Participation** - Citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are sensitive to their responsibilities in achieving community goals.

3. **Growth Areas** - Growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to those centers, or strategically selected new centers.

4. **Community Design** - Compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources and preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas, and historical, cultural, and archeological resources.

5. **Infrastructure** - Growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sound manner.

6. **Transportation** - A well-maintained, multimodal transportation system facilitates the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods and services within and between population and business centers.

7. **Housing** - A range of housing densities, types, and sizes provide residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes.

8. **Economic Development** - Economic development and natural resource based businesses that promotes employment opportunities for all income levels within the capacity of the State's natural resources, public services, and public facilities is encouraged.

9. **Environmental Protection** - Land and water resources, including the Chesapeake and coastal bays, are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems and living resources.

10. **Resource Conservation** - Waterways, open space, natural systems, scenic areas, forests, and agricultural areas are conserved.

11. **Stewardship** - Government, business entities, and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection.

12. **Implementation** - Strategies, policies, programs and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, State, and interstate levels to achieve these visions.

The Smart Growth Areas Act of 1997 designated 'Priority Funding Areas' around the State as a regulatory mechanism designed to support the visions listed above. The Act directs State investment in development such as highways, sewer and water construction, economic development assistance, and State leases or construction of new office facilities to areas most suitable for growth. The City of Westminster is designated as a Priority Funding Area under the Act, and the goals, objectives, and recommended actions contained in the Plan have been drafted within this context.

The chapters that follow address all of the key issues in Westminster today, including environmental resources, population, housing, economic development, tourism, neighborhood revitalization and historic resources, land use, transportation, water and sewer, community facilities, growth management, and interjurisdictional coordination. Each chapter includes a description of the existing conditions in the City of Westminster, identifies the areas of concern, and lists a set of goals, objectives, and recommended actions that are guided by the existing conditions and the local and state Visions listed above.

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Public Participation & Neighborhood Planning

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

What is the Public Participation & Neighborhood Planning Element?

The 1997 General Assembly passed five pieces of legislation and budget initiatives known collectively as "Smart Growth." Maryland has adopted the principles of Smart Growth to be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan. The following Smart Growth principle relates to the Public Participation & Neighborhood Planning Element

Principle: Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration

- To respond to a community's own sense of how and where it wants to grow
- To lead to creative and speedy resolution of development issues
- To build a greater community understanding of the importance of good planning and investment
- To involve the community early and often in the planning process in order to improve public support and create innovative strategies

State Planning Visions found in this Element

Public Participation - Citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are sensitive to their responsibilities in achieving community goals

Stewardship - Government, business entities and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection

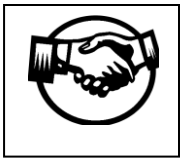
Community Vision for Public Participation

According to the 2008 Community Survey, residents would like the City administration to promote more public involvement in local decision-making. There is a feeling some residents who feel disconnected from what is "going on" in the City, and they would like to feel more included.

From upcoming City events to changes in City services, there is a constant flow of City news that residents may want to be made aware of but may be unable to find the information. The local newspaper and City brochures are residents' two main sources of information. While the Mayor and Council meetings could be a better source of information for residents, many are unaware they can attend the meetings.

The City website is another source of information that has been underutilized by residents. Many residents are unaware of the City website or do not own a computer. Those residents who had visited the website said that the City could improve it by making it more friendly and inviting as well as more updated, accurate, and relevant.

The desirability of effective communications with the public is another aspect of public participation. Residents want open doors of communication with City staff and City officials.



Part 1: Purpose of Public Participation

Chapter 2

Part 1: Purpose of Public Participation
Part 2: Engaging the Public
Part 3: Communication & Information
Part 4: Neighborhood Planning Goals and Objectives

Section 1: Introduction

Successful public participation results in higher quality decisions because it taps the energies, knowledge, special insights, and resources of residents in addition to reflecting their needs, values, and concerns. Public participation goes beyond public information. The purpose of public participation is to inform the public as well as to solicit input and responses on public needs, values, and evaluation of proposed actions.

The City of Westminster encourages citizen input through the broad dissemination of proposals and alternatives, public meetings after effective notice, opportunities for written comments, communication programs, information services, provisions for open discussion, and consideration of public comments. The City of Westminster works to achieve an interactive dialogue between local decision makers, its staff, County staff, and its residents.

Section 2: Core Values for the Practice of Public Participation

The International Association of Public Participation has developed the “Core Values for Public Participation" for use in the development and implementation of public participation processes. The purpose of these core values is to help make better decisions which reflect the interests and concerns of potentially affected people and entities. The core values of public participation are as follows:

1. Ensure those who are affected by a decision are welcome in the decision-making process
2. Promote the public's contribution to influence sustainable decisions
3. Recognize the needs and interests of all participants, including the decision makers
4. Encourage the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision
5. Seek input from participants in designing how they participate
6. Provide participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way
7. Communicate to participants how their input affected the decision

Section 3: Public Meetings

Westminster holds public meetings to allow for open discussion of relevant issues at hand and that public hearings allow for appropriate testimony. When public meetings or hearings are conducted, Westminster makes every effort to ensure participants have the opportunity to assist in planning efforts where their opinions are heard. All persons attending the meeting or hearing who desire to participate should be allowed to do so. However, specific circumstances, such as the meeting or hearing purposes, number in attendance, time considerations, or future opportunities to participate may require appropriate constraints be applied. These constraints are clearly outlined by the facilitator or chair if the need arises.

Public Meeting Actions:

- An agenda will be established that clearly defines the purpose of the public meeting or hearing, the items to be discussed, and any actions that may be taken.
- The scheduled date, time, and place will be convenient to encourage maximum participation by residents.
- A clearly identifiable facilitator or chair will conduct the meeting or hearing in an orderly fashion to ensure that all attendees have an opportunity to offer comments, discuss issues, or provide testimony.
- The facilitator or chair will provide opening remarks that clearly outline the purpose of the meeting or hearing, describe procedures attendees should use during the meeting or hearing when offering input, and describe how the public input will be used.
- As appropriate, an overview of documents or proposals to be considered will be discussed.

Part 2: Engaging the Public

Section 1: Boards, Commissions & Committees

Citizens of Westminster provide valuable leadership to the City through participation on Boards, Commissions and Committees. Members participate in advisory, regulatory, governance and oversight activities pertaining to a wide variety of subjects. The Mayor and Common Council are committed to appointing citizens who have diverse qualifications and viewpoints that represent all segments of the community. The job of Board, Commission or committee members is crucial to the success of the City of Westminster. By sharing their experience, expertise, and time, residents provide valuable insight to the operations of the city and city administration's decision-making process. Boards, commissions and committees review new and existing projects and proposals in specific areas and suggest an appropriate course of action to the Mayor and Common Council.

Section 2: Purpose of Community Surveys

The City of Westminster encourages active participation in city government. As part of these efforts, Westminster plans to conduct community surveys periodically to assess the opinions of residents on the quality of city services, the quality of life in the City, and attitudes toward immediate issues currently before the City government. The first community survey was conducted to gather input from the community to be used in the update of the Comprehensive Plan.

Section 3: 2008 Community Survey

In February 2008, City staff and officials worked together to develop a community survey that would be conducted to gather input from residents for the 2009 Comprehensive Plan update.

In June 2008, the Department of Planning, Zoning and Development mailed out the 2008 community survey to over 6,000 households in the City of Westminster. This was the first time a survey had been administered to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the City of Westminster as place to live, work and visit. Of the 6,000 households that received the survey, 1,320 completed surveys were returned, providing a 22% response rate.

The areas of focus for the "2008 City of Westminster Citizen Survey" included:

- City Services
- City Streets
- Utility and Environmental Services
- Transportation
- Public Safety
- Recreation & Parks
- Economic & Community Development
- Downtown Westminster
- City Communication & Information
- Budget Priorities

Section 4: 2008 Community Survey Results

The results of the survey offered two main types of data for City administration to review. First, survey respondents were asked to rank city services and amenities. This provided the City administration with demographic preferences to analyze the quality of city services as well as the quality of life for residents in Westminster. Second, survey respondents were asked eight open-ended questions where they had the opportunity to write comments or suggestions for each question. These comments and suggestions offered City administration a closer look at what residents want and care about beyond numbers through specific and personal responses.

Staff calculated the rankings of the quality of city services and the quality of life into a statistical analysis that represents the overall resident satisfaction/dissatisfaction. The last question of the survey asked respondents to identify where they live in Westminster based on neighborhood planning areas.
The neighborhood planning areas allow City Administration to study the City, not only as a whole, but also by individual areas. Staff calculated these figures into a statistical analysis. The analysis allowed city administration to compare and contrast specific survey responses to prioritize major issues of concern for the City Budget, the Capital Improvement Program and the 2009 Comprehensive Plan.

Section 5: Neighborhood Vision Workshops

Neighborhood Vision Workshops allow City staff and officials to meet residents on a one-on-one basis, and in groups, at small community meetings. The workshops are organized in an interactive format that provide residents opportunities to brainstorm, discuss, debate and voice their ideas, concerns and issues with City representatives. Topics cover a variety of general issues depending on the purpose of the meeting.

Section 6: 2008 Community Vision Workshops

In the fall of 2008, the City of Westminster hosted a series of workshops inviting all residents to participate and share their vision of the future of Westminster. These workshops were called "Community Vision Workshops" and were designed to be larger versions of a Neighborhood Vision Workshop. The workshops were held on three different dates at three separate schools in order to provide several opportunities for residents to participate.

About 400 survey respondents provided their home addresses and gave permission to allow City Staff to contact them for more information. These 400 residents were mailed postcards to invite them to the workshops. The three workshops had a total of forty attendees, including members of citizen boards and commissions.

Each workshop was organized using the same format. The attendees were broken into smaller groups and then asked a series of questions in which they were requested to brainstorm and discuss the questions within their group before submitting their answers. The workshop featured three categories:

- Identity & Vision
- Economic & Community Development
- Future Growth & Development

Staff reviewed the answers that workshop attendees provided and organized the various comments and suggestions into categories. The answers expressed ideas that help define how residents view the future of Westminster.

Section 7: Vision Report

The results of the 2008 Community Survey and the 2008 Community Vision Workshops were combined to develop the 2008 Community Vision Report that served as the basis for the 2009 Comprehensive Plan update.

When the City holds future Neighborhood Vision Workshops, staff will use the format of the 2008 Community Vision Report to develop individual Neighborhood Planning Area reports to present to the Mayor and Common Council. Each Neighborhood Planning Area has different housing stock, distinctive amenities, such as parks or schools and a diverse set of concerns and issues (Map 2.1). Combining community survey results, and resident input gathered at workshops, will allow individual neighborhood strategies to be developed and implemented.

Part 3: Communication & Information

Section 1: City Newsletter

In response to feedback from the 2008 Community Survey, the City now provides a City Newsletter for all residents. The newsletter contains information about programs and projects the City is working on, and information about City events. Each month an updated newsletter is available on the City Website as well as within the City utility bill. The newsletter is based on a partnership with City Departments and local community organizations to present all of the upcoming local events to residents. It benefits local organizations because the newsletter offers opportunities for increased attendance due to increased community awareness. The City Newsletter has opened the doors of communication with residents and has improved the availability of information to residents about City news and events.

Section 2: City Website

The 2008 Community Survey allowed residents to make constructive comments and quality suggestions on ways to improve the City Website. The Mayor and Common Council decided to use this feedback to create a new City of Westminster Website was launched in July 2009. The new website created a user-friendly experience that allows residents and visitors to find information about their local government, upcoming events and activities, communicate with City Staff and stay informed about the issues before Boards and Commissions. It also promotes public participation through advertising public meetings and volunteer opportunities. Rather than static, the site is now geared toward e-commerce and e-marketing for the future of City communication. Numerous personnel are being trained to update and improve the site to using feedback provided from online customer visits. This enables staff to better serve its constituency through interactive handling of ideas.

Part 4: Neighborhood Planning

Section 1: Neighborhoods, USA

Neighborhoods, USA is a national non-profit organization committed to building and strengthening neighborhood organizations. Created in 1975 to share information and experiences toward building stronger communities, NUSA continues to encourage networking and information sharing to facilitate the development of partnerships between neighborhood organizations, government and the private sector.

The Neighborhoods, USA organization encourages municipal governments to create partnerships with their neighborhoods. NUSA's primary goal is to help create vibrant communities in which all residents benefit. It is the intent of NUSA**,** in promoting these collaborations, to achieve greater understanding of the premise that neighborhoods are truly the building blocks for overall community well-being. It is important that municipal officials recognize the opinions and suggestions of neighborhoods as expressions of the quality of life issues with which they are concerned. NUSA affirms its role as advocate for neighborhoods by providing information and alternatives to help coordinate efforts for creating long term solutions to the unique problems faced by municipalities and neighborhoods across the nation.

The City of Westminster is committed to creating an environment that is conducive to neighborhood involvement and participation in making the city a better place to live, work and visit. In recognition of the City's efforts to improve the quality of life of all neighborhoods, Westminster was accepted as a member of Neighborhoods, USA (NUSA) on June 20, 2008.

Section 2: Charrettes & Taskforces

Charrettes

A charrette is an intensive creative session in which a team concentrates on specific design problems with residents and presents solutions. A Charrette allows for people to be involved in a design or master plan project and provide input to City Staff. This process fosters public participation and the community's direct involvement in the decision-making process. In the future, City staff will promote the use of a charrette to gather ideas and input on major development projects or master plans.

Taskforces

A taskforce is an appointed group of residents and community stakeholders who meet on a regular basis to develop a series of recommendations to City Administration about a specific community issue, project or proposal. In the past, the City has depended on the valuable input and support of taskforces for developing successful projects that have improved the quality of life for all residents of the City of Westminster.

Section 3: Neighborhood Planning

By addressing neighborhood problems and drawing on the desirable attributes of neighborhoods, neighborhood planning works to enhance Westminster's quality of life.

The citywide vision and policies describe an overall preferred growth strategy for Westminster, while neighborhood planning establishes a specific vision and strategy for each neighborhood area. Fulfilling each neighborhood vision will collectively achieve the Community Vision of the City of Westminster. Neighborhood planning has the following benefits:

- Ability to develop and respond to a comprehensive inventory of neighborhood specific issues and concerns
- Retain or strengthen a sense of place; that is, a combination of character, setting, land uses, and environment that makes a neighborhood unique
- Collectively address neighborhood concerns and goals with those who live, work or own property in the neighborhood planning area
- Cooperation to create a stronger community
- Improve two-way communication among the neighborhood, and the City so that information and ideas may be shared between the groups
- Identify and address opportunities and barriers to implementing citywide policies and to enhance the effectiveness of citywide planning

Westminster's future growth will continue to increase the complexity of opportunities and issues that the City will encounter from limited land to limited resources. While many of these opportunities and issues can be effectively addressed at a citywide level, others need more specific solutions on a neighborhood level. Westminster's neighborhood areas are shown on the Neighborhood Planning Areas Map (Map 2.1). These areas form the boundaries for the neighborhood plans, based on geography, the transportation network, and land use; they are utilized for planning purposes only. Westminster's neighborhoods are unique and each neighborhood plan will address a different set of issues and opportunities.

Public Participation & Neighborhood Planning Element

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan promotes the value of public participation in the development and implementation of City plans and projects. The City of Westminster strives to share information and involve the community and key stakeholders in the process of making decisions. The Public Participation Element's purpose is to outline how the City of Westminster proactively communicates with residents in an effort to share information, how to educate and engage the public, and how promote opportunities to volunteer or participate for City programs, services, or committees.

Goals & Objectives

Goal P1: Provide a variety of forums and formats that ensure quality public participation by residents and business owners

Objective 1: Conduct community surveys of City residents to assess the community's attitudes and opinions on the issues affecting Westminster's quality of life and future

a. Work with City Staff and community representatives to create a survey format

b. Develop a "Community Survey Participation Plan" to outline how the survey will be distributed, collected and tracked

c. Create a "Survey Data Entry Program" database and process to ensure accurate interpretation of surveys

d. Provide the results of surveys to residents, community representatives, City Staff as well as the Mayor and Common Council

Objective 2: Hold Neighborhood Vision Workshops in each of the eight neighborhood planning areas

a. Work with City Staff and community representatives to prepare the agendas for the Neighborhood Vision Workshops

b. Develop a Workshop Participation Plan to outline how workshops will be advertised, how to invite residents, and how to incorporate City representatives as facilitators

c. Choose locations to hold the Neighborhood Vision Workshops to encourage attendance by local residents

d. Present the results of the Neighborhood Vision Workshops to residents, community representatives, City Staff, as well as the Mayor and Common Council

Goal P2: Provide open and effective communication with the public

Objective 1: Develop productive channels of communication with public entities and private partnerships

a. Identify and prioritize issues in conjunction with public and private partnerships

b. Encourage public entities and private partnerships to participate in meetings

Objective 2: Cooperate with all levels of government to communicate and provide for the needs of Westminster residents

a. Assist the Mayor and Common Council in relaying issues, solutions, and messages to Westminster residents

b. Leverage up-to-date technology for improved and standardized internal communications and external service delivery

c. Promote Boards and Commissions as effective and objective forums for discussing issues that allow residents to become involved and to be effective in participating of community decisions

Objective 3: Provide citizens with complete, accurate, and timely information enabling them to make informed judgments

a. Utilize and improve quality and effectiveness of the City Newsletter to continue to provide residents with information about current City news and upcoming local events

b. Maintain a City website that is easy to update and navigate and is a comprehensive information portal to residents, visitors and businesses

c. Develop press releases and other public information pieces regularly to facilitate widespread awareness and education of events and news

d. Continue to develop media presentations and informational videos to be placed on the City Website and other locations that are accessible to residents and visitors

Goal P3: Collaborate with neighborhoods to prepare or update neighborhood area comprehensive plans that study the infrastructure and community facilities of the neighborhood planning areas

Objective 1: Address neighborhood-specific issues and opportunities in preparing neighborhood area plans

a. Implement goals and objectives in the Westminster Comprehensive Plan that relate to each neighborhood planning area

b. Ensure all neighborhood residents, businesses, and property owners have the opportunity to be involved in the preparation and review of neighborhood area plans

c. Identify and report issues and opportunities raised by neighborhood residents, businesses, property owners, and other interested groups and individuals

Objective 2: Bridge the interests and issues reflected by City staff and elected officials, and neighborhood representatives and residents

a. Design presentations of the initial identification of issues and opportunities regarding the neighborhood

b. Identify short-term immediate issues for resolution by the appropriate department or agency

c. Develop a neighborhood vision which includes long range ideas and concerns for the neighborhood

Objective 3: Utilize all reasonable measures of communication with the neighborhood during the neighborhood planning process

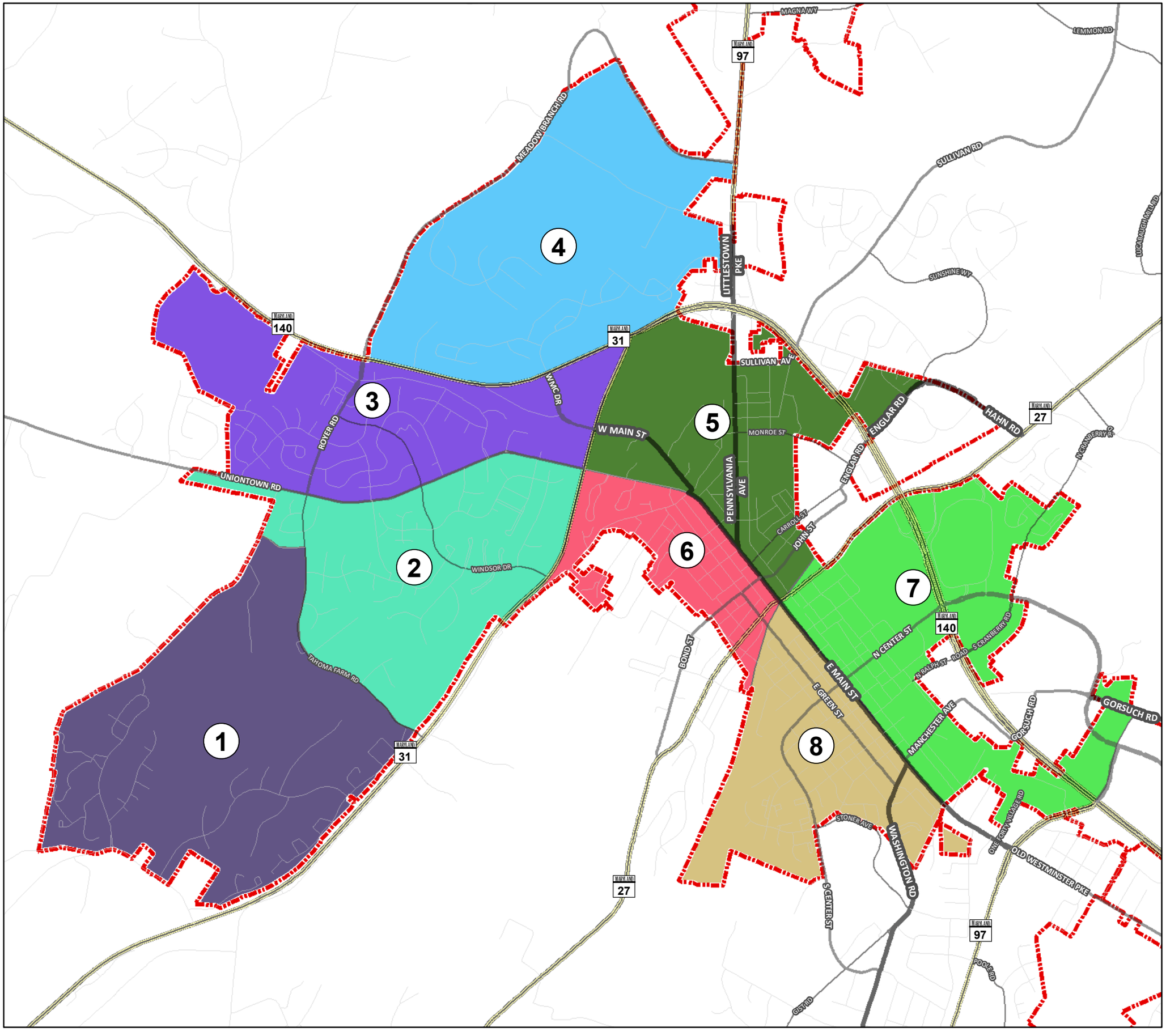
a. Require a formal announcement of the neighborhood planning and update process, and recruitment of neighborhood representatives

b. Discuss the current issues and feedback regarding neighborhood planning with representative neighborhood groups

c. Coordinate with departmental City staff for the purpose of providing support throughout the plan creation

d. Identify and recruit neighborhood representatives and organizational contacts to provide feedback to City staff and officials, and to remain informed of City projects

Neighborhood Planning Areas



Map Not to Scale

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Population & Demographics

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

Part 1: Population Trends

CHAPTER 3

Part 1: Population Trends
Part 2: Population Projections

The total population of the City of Westminster in 2000 was 16,731 people. Of this total, 46.8% were male and 53.2% were female. Since 1990, the City has grown at an average annual growth rate of 2.8% (Table 3.1); slightly higher than the average annual increase for Carroll County of 2.3% during the same time period. The primary reason for the disparity in these two percentages was the comparatively higher number of homes constructed within the Westminster corporate limits during the 1990's. The average annual increase for the past ten years is significantly lower than the City's average annual increase of 4.8% during the 1980's and represents a slower rate of new construction during the most recent decade.

Table 3.1 City of Westminster Population Change, 1970 – 2000

Age	1970	1980	70 - 80 Percent Change	1990	80 - 90 Percent Change	2000	70 - 00 Percent Change	80 - 00 Percent Change	90 - 00 Percent Change
Under 5	523	529	1.15	1,070	102.27	1,127	115.49	113.04	5.33
5 - 9	479	481	0.42	757	57.38	1,256	162.21	161.12	65.92
10 - 14	429	483	12.59	696	44.1	1,107	158.04	129.19	59.05
15 - 19	996	1064	6.83	1,073	0.85	1,382	38.76	29.89	28.8
20 - 24	1057	1484	40.4	1,660	11.86	1,585	49.95	6.81	-4.52
25 - 34	849	1473	73.5	2,699	83.23	2,538	198.94	72.3	-5.97
35 - 44	505	751	48.71	1,750	133.02	2,719	438.42	262.05	55.37
45 - 54	706	573	-18.84	825	43.98	1,771	150.85	209.08	114.67
55 - 64	726	738	1.65	711	-3.66	1,043	43.66	41.33	46.69
65 - 74	577	703	21.84	878	24.89	884	53.21	25.75	0.68
75 +	360	529	46.94	949	79.4	1,319	266.39	149.34	38.99
Total	7,207	8,808	22.21	13,068	48.37	16,731	132.15	89.95	28.03

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000.

Section 1: Age & Race

The age groups with the highest percentage of the population in the City of Westminster were the 20 – 24 and 35 – 39 age groups (Table 3-2). Each of these age groups included slightly less than 10% of the City's total population. The high percentage in the 20 – 24 age group was due in part to the U.S. Census being conducted in April when McDaniel College is in session. While the 20 – 24 age group remained the largest group, the actual population of that group dropped 4.5% over the past ten years. In addition, the 25 – 29 age group lost 417 people, dropping 35% since 1990. These losses were countered by large gains in the age groups comprising ages 35 – 54. Collectively, these age groups increased in population by an average of 85%. These notable swings in the age group populations indicate an aging population in the City of Westminster.

Table 3.2 City of Westminster Population by Age and Sex, 2000

Age	Total	Male	Female
Under 5	1,127	554	573
5 - 9	1,256	634	622
10 - 14	1,107	581	526
15 - 19	1,382	663	719
20 - 24	1,585	787	798
25 - 29	1,197	569	628
30 - 34	1,341	673	668
35 - 39	1,486	733	753
40 - 44	1,233	624	609
45 -49	924	450	474
50 - 54	847	395	452
55 - 59	590	270	320
60 - 64	453	198	255
65 - 69	420	169	251
70 - 74	464	174	290
75 - 79	435	140	295
80 - 84	431	116	315
85 - 89	289	60	229
90 +	164	34	130
Total	16,731	7,824	8,907

Source: U.S. Census, 2000.

The minority populations in Westminster accounted for only a small percentage of the total (Table 3.3). In 2000, blacks represented 5.5% of the population with a total of 919. Native Americans, Asian and Pacific Islanders, and other races comprised 3.2% of the City's population. Just fewer than 300 people identified themselves as Hispanic or Latino, representing 1.8% of the City's population. 91.3% of the City's population identified themselves as white – just less than a 2% drop from 1990. Asians and Pacific Islanders accounted for the largest gain in population for a race group from 1990 to 2000; quadrupling from 55 people in 1990 to 207 in 2000.

Figure 3.1 City of Westminster Population Pyramid, 2000

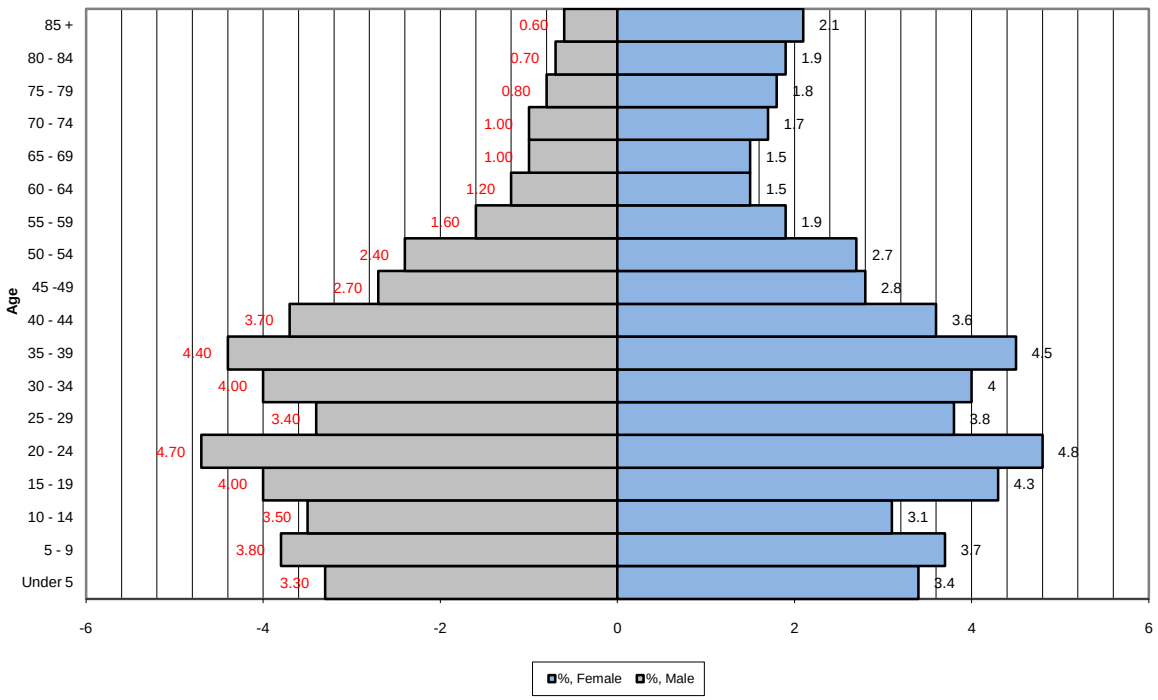


Figure 3.2 City of Westminster Population Pyramid (Projected), 2025

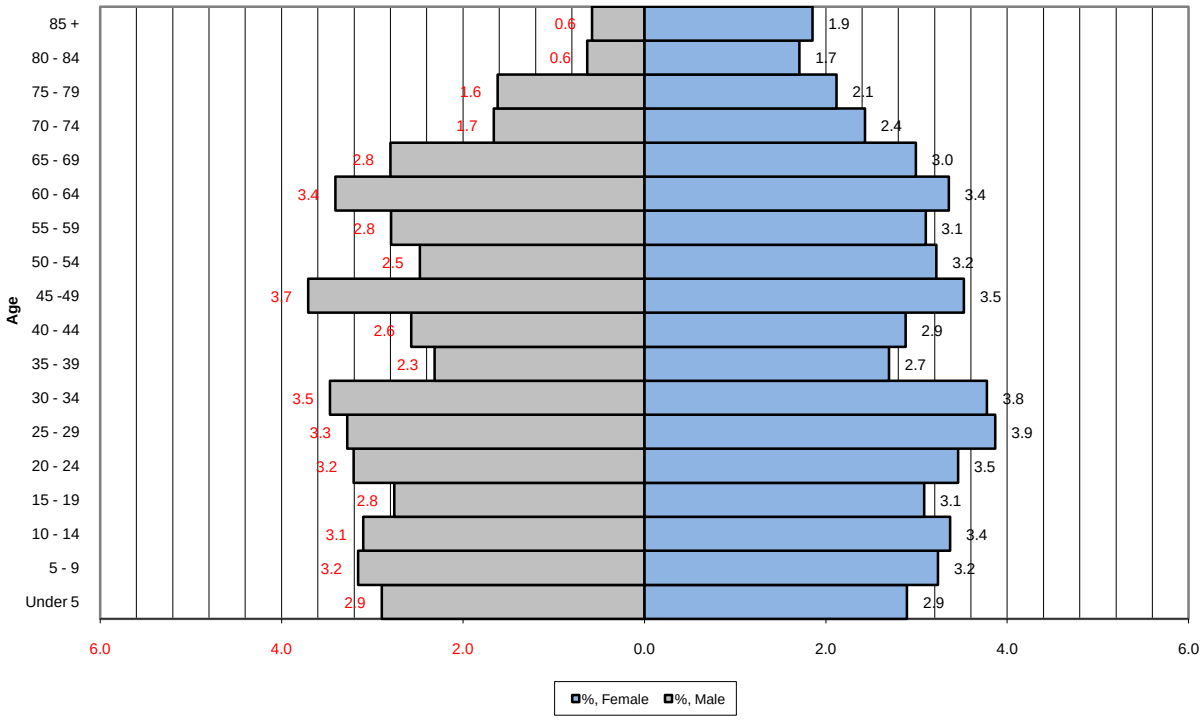


Table 3.3 City of Westminster Population by Age and Race, 2000

Age	All Races	White	Black	Amer. Ind., Eskimo, & Aleut	Asian & Pacific Islander	Other Race	Two or More Races
0 - 4	1,127	1,007	60	1	12	12	35
5 - 17	2,906	2,565	199	8	47	27	60
18 - 24	2,424	2,204	130	5	39	18	28
25 - 44	5,257	4,807	281	12	82	40	35
45 - 64	2,814	2,582	177	11	19	8	17
65+	2,203	2,107	72	1	8	4	11
Total	**16731**	**15272**	**919**	**38**	**207**	**109**	**186**
% of Total	**100.0%**	**91.3%**	**5.5%**	**0.2%**	**1.2%**	**0.7%**	**1.1%**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000.

Section 3: Births & Deaths

Crude birth and death rates are available for Carroll County as a whole; information for individual municipalities such as Westminster has not been tracked. For the years 1995 through 2000, the County's average annual birth rate was 12.6 per 1,000 population (Table 3.4). During this time period, the lowest birth rate was recorded in 1999 at 12.0 births per 1,000 population, and the highest rate occurred in 1996 at 13.3 births per 1,000 population. A smaller second peak occurred in 1998 with a birth rate of 12.8.

Table 3.4 Birth and Death Rates, Carroll County, MD 1995 – 2000

Year	Birth Rate			Death Rate		
	Total	White	Other Races	Total	White	Other Races
1995	12.9	13.1	8.6	7.2	7.3	5.4
1996	13.3	13.4	11.7	7.2	7.4	3.8
1997	12.4	12.5	9.8	6.9	7.0	4.3
1998	12.8	12.9	12.5	7.0	7.0	5.0
1999	12.0	12.1	7.1	6.6	6.8	5.0
2000	12.6	12.6	7.6	7.6	7.7	6.2
6 Year Average	**12.7**	**12.7**	**9.6**	**7.1**	**7.2**	**5.0**

Source: Carroll County Demographics & Data Manual, 2003.

Death rates for the County also fluctuated between 1995 and 2000. The average annual death rate for these years was 7.1 per 1,000 population, with a low of 6.6 in 1999 and a high of 7.6 in 2000. Some of the variations in yearly birth and death rates for Carroll County can be attributed to the relatively small population of the County. For example, an increase in the number of deaths in the County by only 1.5% would result in a one-tenth increase in the death rate.

Infant mortality rates are also available only on a county-by-county basis. Infant mortality rates, recorded as the number of infant deaths per 1,000 live births, was 4.8 for all races in Carroll County in 2001 (Table 3.6). This was the second lowest rate recorded for the Baltimore Metropolitan Region, which also encompasses Baltimore City and Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Harford, and Howard Counties.

Table 3.6 Infant Mortality in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area, 2001

Jurisdiction	All Races		White		Black		Hispanic	
	Deaths	Rate	Deaths	Rate	Deaths	Rate	Deaths	Rate
Anne Arundel	44	6.4	30	5.4	14	14	4	---
Baltimore City	108	11.9	10	4.3	97	14.8	1	---
Baltimore County	75	8.3	36	6	36	14.2	4	---
Carroll	9	4.8	8	4.4	1	---	0	---
Harford	8	2.8	4	---	4	---	0	---
Howard	20	5.6	13	5.1	5	8.5	2	---
Metro Area	264	7.9	101	4.9	157	14.2	11	11.2

Source: Carroll County Demographics & Data Manual, 2003.

Infant mortality rates are generally not calculated in instances where four or fewer deaths have occurred, as the sample size is too small to provide a reliable measure of infant mortality. Since the total number of people of minority races is so small in the County, a low number of deaths result in a deceptively high percentage. Therefore, no rate is given for races other than white in the County.

Section 4: Marital Status and Children

The U.S. Census calculates marital status figures based on the population of persons aged 15 and older. Of this group of 12,937 persons in 2000, 28% had never married and 45% were married with the spouse present (Table 3.7). Other categories included: spouse absent – separated (3%), spouse absent – other (5%), widowed (8%), and divorced (11%). A breakdown of the data by sex reveals that 13% more males than females have never been married. Additionally, there are approximately 9 widowed females for every widowed male in the City. This figure is indicative of the higher life expectancy for females nationwide.

Table 3.7 City of Westminster Marital Status by Sex, Persons 15 Years & Older, 2000

	Never Married	Married - Spouse Present	Married - Spouse Absent	Spouse Absent - Separated	Widowed	Divorced
Male	1,924	2,853	424	145	131	606
Female	1,705	2,855	646	265	943	850
Total	*3,629*	*5,708*	*1,070*	*410*	*1,074*	*1,456*
Percent	*28%*	*45%*	*8%*	*3%*	*8%*	*11%*

Source: U.S. Census, 2000.

Based on marital status and the presence of children, the 6,415 households present in the City of Westminster in 2000 could be divided into married couple households (42.4%), other family households (16.2%), and non-family households (41.4%). "Other family households" included those families in which one spouse was absent. A comparison of household types by race revealed several contrasts (Table 3.8). The recorded races with the highest percentage of married couple households were Asian & Pacific Islander and White with 66.1% and 43.1% respectively. The percentage of female householders with children and no husband present was 17.5% for black households, down from 25.9% in 1990. For Hispanic and Latino households, the percentage of female householders with children and no husband present was 20.1% (the 2000 Census was the first count to include a "Hispanic" option for race, so no 1990 data are available). Whites were the group with the largest percentage of non-family households with 42.1%.

Table 3.8 City of Westminster Household Types by Race, 2000

Household Type	All Races	White	Black	Amer. Ind., Eskimo, & Aleut	Asian & Pacific Islander	Hispanic	Other Race
Family Households	3,760	3,435	198	8	44	55	20
Married Couple Family	2,722	2,555	90	1	37	28	11
With Own Children	1,413	1,315	45	1	28	16	8
No Own Children	1,309	1,240	45	0	9	12	3
Other Family	1,038	880	108	7	7	27	9
Female Householder,							
No husband present	811	694	86	6	3	17	5
With Own Children	536	454	53	5	2	17	5
No Own Children	275	240	33	1	1	0	0
Male Householder,							
No wife present	227	186	22	1	4	10	4
With Own Children	140	114	14	1	2	5	4
No Own Children	87	72	8	0	2	5	0
Nonfamily Households	2,655	2,500	104	3	12	29	7
Total Households	***6,415***	***5,935***	***302***	***11***	***56***	***84***	***27***

Source: U.S. Census, 2000.

Section 5: Place of Birth and Ancestry

Over 67% of the residents living in the City of Westminster in 2000 were born in the State of Maryland, and of the 28% of residents born in other states within the United States, half were born in a northeastern state (Table 3.9). 3.2% of the population was foreign-born, up from 1.6% in 1990.

Table 3.9 Birthplace of City of Westminster Residents, 2000

Place of Birth	Number of Persons	Percent
Born in the U.S.		
Born in State of Residence	11125	67.7
Born in other state in U.S.		
Northeast	2300	14
Midwest	666	4.1
South	1482	9
West	215	1.3
Born outside the U.S., Native		
Puerto Rico	42	0.3
U.S. Island Areas	0	0
Born abroad of American parent(s)	80	0.5
Foreign Born	533	3.2
Total	**16443**	**100**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000.

The ancestry of Westminster residents in 2000 was largely German, with other frequently reported ancestries being Irish, English, and Hispanic. Other categories that received a significant number of responses included Dutch, Italian, Polish, and United States or American.

These ancestries were reflected somewhat by the language spoken at home by persons 5 years of age and older (Table 3.10). The majority of people spoke only English at home; however, 2% spoke Spanish and the sum of all other Indo-European languages totaled 3.2%.

Table 3.10. Language Spoken at Home by Persons 5 Years and Older, 2000

Language	Number of Persons	Percent of Total	Percent of Non-English
English	14359	94	---
Spanish	305	2	33.2
Other Indo-European	484	3.2	52.7
Asian & Pacific Island	48	0.3	5.2
Total	**15277**	**100**	**---**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000.

Section 6: Recent Migration

According to the U.S. Census, 50.3% of City residents in 2000 have moved since 1995 (Table 3.11). Of those who have moved since 1995, half have relocated from other residences within Carroll County. Combined, 75% of City residents in 2000 lived in Westminster or Carroll County in 1995. Significant sources of in-migration include other counties in the State of Maryland (15.0%), other states in the northeast (4.4%), and other states in the south (4.0%).

The lower portion of Table 3.11 reveals that a vast majority of in-state in-migration to Westminster is occurring from suburban counties in the Baltimore area. Only 7% of those who moved to Westminster from another home within the Baltimore MSA moved from Baltimore City. This figure reflects a national trend for communities located on the suburban fringe of metropolitan areas.

Table 3.11 Place of Residence in 1995 for Residents of Westminster, 2000

Location	Total	Percent
Same House	7344	48.1
Different House in U.S.	7689	50.3
Same County	3923	25.7
Different County	3766	24.7
Same State	2285	15.0
Different State	1481	9.7
Northeast	669	4.4
Midwest	154	1.0
South	605	4.0
West	53	0.3
Elsewhere	244	1.6
Total	**15277**	**100.0**
Same MSA	5589	
Central City	392	7.0
Not Central City	5197	93.0

The Baltimore Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) includes Harford, Baltimore, Carroll, Howard, and Anne Arundel Counties, and Baltimore City.

Source: U.S. Census, 2000.

Section 7: Education

The 2000 Census also reported the level of educational attainment for all persons 25 years of age and older (Table 3.12) in the City of Westminster. More than 82% of residents in the City had received a high school diploma, and 24.4% of the population had completed the requirements for a college or professional degree. A comparison between 1990 and 2000 reveals that the actual number of persons age 25 and over without a high school diploma dropped significantly during the 1990s.

Table 3.12 Educational Attainment of Persons 25 Years and Older, 2000

Highest Level of Education	1990		2000	
	Number of Persons	Percent	Number of Persons	Percent
Less than 9th Grade	743	9.5	690	6.8
9th to 12th Grade, No Diploma	1196	15.3	1128	11.1
High School Graduate	2438	31.2	3198	31.5
Some College, No Degree	1358	17.4	2084	20.5
Associate's Degree	364	4.7	577	5.7
Bachelor's Degree	1001	12.8	1569	15.5
Graduate or Professional Degree	712	9.1	906	8.9
Total	7812	100	10152	100

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Between 2000 and 2003, the graduation rate for Carroll County varied between 88.6% and 91.9% (Table 3.13). With the exception of Howard County, which had an average rate of 92.2%, the graduation rate for Carroll County was the highest in the Baltimore Metropolitan Region.

Table 3.14 shows the graduation rates for all public Carroll County high schools from 2000 – 2003. The City of Westminster is served by Westminster High School and Winters Mill High School. Westminster High School had an average graduation rate of 89.2% over the past four years.

Table 3.13 Graduation Rates in the Baltimore Metropolitan Region, 2000 – 2003

Jurisdiction	2000	2001	2002	2003
Anne Arundel County	80.9%	79.9%	81.4%	83.7%
Baltimore City	50.6%	58.7%	58.5%	54.2%
Baltimore County	89.5%	88.2%	88.0%	88.2%
Carroll County	90.0%	88.6%	90.5%	91.9%
Harford County	84.1%	84.1%	83.0%	85.2%
Howard County	91.3%	92.5%	91.9%	93.0%
Maryland	***81.8%***	***83.1%***	***83.8%***	***84.7%***

Source: Maryland Department of Education, "2003 Performance Report."

Table 3.14 Graduation Rates for Carroll County Public High Schools, 2000–2003

High School	2000	2001	2002	2003
Francis Scott Key	84.9%	86.9%	85.8%	91.8%
North Carroll	91.8%	89.1%	93.2%	92.7%
Winters Mill	--	--	--	--
Westminster	89.6%	87.4%	88.0%	92.0%
Century	--	--	--	--
Liberty	94.8%	93.3%	96.1%	94.5%
South Carroll	93.8%	92.6%	93.1%	92.6%
Maryland	***81.8%***	***83.1%***	***83.8%***	***84.7%***

Source: Maryland Department of Education, "2003 Performance Report."

Table 3.15. City of Westminster Population Projections, 2000-2030

Age	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	% Change 2000 - 2030
Under 5	1,070	1,127	1,021	1,006	1,131	1,213	1,256	1,317	23%
9-May	757	1,256	1,318	1,309	1,185	1,332	1,398	1,459	93%
14-Oct	696	1,107	1,346	1,374	1,386	1,257	1,415	1,476	112%
15 - 19	1,073	1,382	1,125	1,357	1,379	1,373	1,268	1,329	24%
20 - 24	1,660	1,585	1,477	1,131	1,439	1,484	1,461	1,522	-8%
25 - 29	1,614	1,197	1,681	1,483	1,215	1,545	1,573	1,634	1%
30 - 34	1,085	1,341	1,258	1,741	1,529	1,239	1,597	1,658	53%
35 - 39	953	1,486	1,182	1,263	1,566	1,253	1,072	1,133	19%
40 - 44	797	1,233	1,415	1,179	1,180	1,531	1,176	1,237	55%
45 -49	418	924	1,305	1,422	1,238	1,249	1,593	1,654	296%
50 - 54	407	847	923	1,207	1,397	1,200	1,233	1,294	218%
55 - 59	302	590	942	928	1,281	1,490	1,280	1,341	344%
60 - 64	409	453	644	913	947	1,298	1,484	1,545	278%
65 - 69	383	420	468	607	877	918	1,257	1,318	244%
70 - 74	495	464	440	406	580	831	858	919	86%
75 - 79	428	435	481	389	406	572	778	839	96%
80 - 84	286	431	390	376	314	321	449	515	80%
85 +	235	453	559	529	520	462	469	530	126%
Total	***13,068***	***16,731***	***17,974***	***18,620***	***19,570***	***20,568***	***21,617***	***22,720***	***74%***

Source: City of Westminster Department of Planning, Zoning & Development, 2009.

Part 2: Population Projections

Population Projections by age group are shown for the City of Westminster in Table 3.15 for five-year increments through the year 2030. The total population for the City is projected to reach 22,720 by the

year 2030, with the greatest increase occurring in the older age groups. This change in the distribution of age in Westminster's population follows a national trend and is particularly apparent in the population pyramids found in Figures 3-1 and 3-2.

The population predictions were developed using a cohort-component method, which involved applying separate birth, death, and migration rates to each male or female age group. Low, medium and high rates were determined based on previous trends and rates calculated form data provided by the Maryland Department of Health Statistics and the U.S. Census Bureau. The low, medium and high rates were then applied to base year data for 2000, the most recent year in which the Census of Population was taken. The resulting figures were compared to population estimates completed by the Carroll County Department of Planning, current development trends, and the amount of land available for future development within the City of Westminster corporate limits. It was determined that it would be most appropriate to use medium birth and death rates to project population through 2030.

To calculate population increases and decreases due to migration, a medium rate was applied to the model for the 2020 and 2025 projections to represent the expected reduction in in-migration as the amount of land available for development in the City of Westminster decreases. The low rate was used for certain age groups for all projected years to correlate with County projections and correct for bias due to the presence of McDaniel College. The 2008 Water Supply Capacity Management Plan calculated a similar population projection and dwelling unit increase for Westminster from 2010 to 2030 based on water capacity (Table 3.16). Westminster's population projection will be revised after the 2010 Census is complete in 2011.

Section 1: Population Trends 2000 to 2010

The total population of the City of Westminster in 2010 was 18,620 people. From 2000 to 2010 the population of the City increased by 1,889 residents. In comparison, the 2004 Comprehensive Plan projected that the population of City was going to increase by 3,493 from 2000 to 2010. It was projected that the City was going to continue to grow at the rate it experienced in the 1990's, an average 2.8% a year, and then slow down to 1% in 2015. However, the City instead experienced a "slow-down" in growth sooner than expected. Since 2005, the City has grown at an average annual growth rate of 1% a year.

Section 2: Population Trends 2010 to 2030

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan calculated population increases and decreases due to migration and used a high rate for most age groups through 2015. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan used a medium rate for most age groups starting at 2010 because the projected reduction in migration as the result of not only a limited land but a limited water for development in the City of Westminster. If the City of Westminster continues to grow at an average annual growth rate of 1% a year for the next 20 years, the population of Westminster will increase by 4,284 people by 2030, for a total population of 22,720.

Table 3.16 Dwelling Unit Increase 2010 to 2030

Year	Total Population	Population Increase	1% Growth Unit Estimate	Water Capacity Unit Estimate*
2010	18,620	184	78	25
2011	18,807	186	79	25
2012	18,994	188	80	25
2013	19,184	190	81	25
2014	19,376	192	82	25
2015	19,570	194	82	25
2016	19,766	196	83	110
2017	19,963	198	84	110
2018	20,163	200	85	110
2019	20,364	202	86	110
2020	20,568	204	87	110
2021	20,774	206	88	110
2022	20,981	208	88	110
2023	21,191	210	89	110
2024	21,403	212	90	110
2025	21,617	214	91	110
2026	21,833	216	92	110
2027	22,051	218	93	110
2028	22,272	221	94	110
2029	22,495	223	95	110
2030	22,720	225	96	110
Total Unit Increase		4284	1823	1800

Source: City of Westminster Department of Planning, Zoning and Development

*2008 Water Supply Capacity Management Plan

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Municipal Growth

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

What is the Municipal Growth Element?

HB 1141, entitled "Land Use-Local Government Planning," was passed in the 2006 session of the Maryland General Assembly. HB 1141 amends Article 66B. It includes the following requirements for the Municipal Growth Element:

- To create a more detailed and quantitative analysis of the municipality's anticipated growth than has been required in the past.
- To study past growth trends and patterns.
- To project future growth in population and resulting land needs based on a capacity analysis of areas selected for future municipal annexation and growth.
- To examine of the effects of growth on infrastructure and natural features both within and adjacent to the present municipality and on future growth areas that may be annexed
- To evaluate more deeply into the dynamics of the City's growth and development

This detailed analysis of population growth, land development and infrastructure impacts gives local elected officials and planners the advance knowledge needed to adequately prepare for future development and its effects.

State Planning Visions found in this Element

Growth Areas: Growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to those centers, or strategically selected new centers

Community Design: Compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character

Infrastructure: Growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sound manner

Community Vision for Growth

Residents would like to see Westminster follow the "Smart Growth" principles as the City plans for the future. As new developments and businesses become interested in building in Westminster, residents want to make sure that the city's infrastructure can support the new growth. From utilities to water, schools to roads, residents are concerned that the City not 'overload' itself. One resident suggested that a goal for the City should be to maintain infrastructure that preserves the simplicity of life but plans for necessary growth. Historic preservation is important to residents, which is why they want the design and appearance of businesses in Westminster to be compatible with the historic and rural setting that they appreciate today. Residents suggest that the City focus on infill projects and vacant buildings first before considering any new construction projects in the future. The protection of open space and farmland are essential to residents of Westminster. In order to preserve the rural image of Westminster, there is desire to slow down development and consider the creation of smaller green communities that won't damage the environment or take away from the overall quality of life. There is a consensus among residents that the small town atmosphere and rural environment is what attracted them to move to Westminster originally.

Part 1: Past Growth Patterns

The purpose of the Municipal Growth Element is to present analyses of land consumption and facilities impacts that can be expected as a result of the projected growth of the City's population from 18,466 residents in 2009 to 22,720 residents by the year 2030.

CHAPTER 4

Part 1: Past Growth Patterns
Part 2: Population Projections & Future Land Use
Part 3: Westminster's Housing Capacity
Part 4: Growth Outside of City Boundary
Part 5: Impact of Growth on Public Services & Facilities
Part 6: Growth Management
Part 7: Resource Lands
Part 8: Burdens on Services & Infrastructure
Part 9: Protection of Sensitive Areas
Part 10: Future Vision of Development
Part 11: Financing of Infrastructure Expansions
Goals and Objectives

Section 1: Population Change

Population Trends 1970 to 2000

The total population of Westminster in 2000 was 16,731 people. Since 1990, the City has grown at an average annual growth rate of 2.8%. The average annual increase for the 1990's was significantly lower than the City's average annual increase of 4.8% during the 1980's, due to a slower rate of new construction (Table 4.1)

Table 4.1 City of Westminster Population Growth 1970 – 2000

Year	1970	1980	Percent Change	1990	Percent Change	2000	1970 to 2000 Percent Change	1980 to 2000 Percent Change	1990 to 2000 Percent Change
Total	**7,207**	**8,808**	**22.21%**	**13,068**	**48.37%**	**16,731**	**132.15%**	**89.95%**	**28.03%**

Source: U.S. Census, 1970, 1980, 1990, and 2000

Population Trends 2000 to 2010

The total population of the City of Westminster in September 2009 was 18,456 people. From 2000 to 2009 the population of the City increased by 1,735 residents. In comparison, the 2004 Comprehensive Plan projected that the population of the City was going to increase by 3,493 from 2000 to 2010. It was projected that the City was going to continue to grow at the rate it experienced in the 1990's, an average of 2.8% a year, and then slow down to 1% in 2015. However, the City instead experienced a

"slow-down" in growth sooner than expected. Since 2006, the City has grown at an average annual growth rate of 1% a year.

Population Trends 2010 to 2030

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan calculated population increases and decreases due to migration and used a high rate for most age groups through 2015. A medium rate was applied to the model for the 2020 and 2025 projections to represent the expected reduction in in-migration as the amount of land available for development in the City of Westminster decreases. Today, the City recognizes that not only will there be a reduction in in-migration as the result of limited land but also limited water for development. If the City of Westminster continues to grow at an average annual growth rate of 1% a year for the next 20 years, the population in 2030 will be 22,720 (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 City of Westminster Population Growth 1990 to 2030

Year	1990	2000	2005	2010	2015	2020	2025	2030	Percent 2010 to 2030	Percent 2000 to 2030
2004 Comp Plan	13,068	16,731	17,974	20,224	21,418	22,232	23,415	25,756	27%	54%
2009 Comp Plan	13,068	16,731	17,974	18,620	19,566	20,565	21,614	22,720	21%	35%

Source: City of Westminster Planning, Zoning and Development Department

Section 2: Historical Trends & Issues

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan projected that after 2015 that population growth would slow down because the amount of land available for development in the City of Westminster would decrease. However, the limited amount of water available for development caused development to slow down in 2006, sooner than 2015 and as a result population growth went from the predicted 2% a year to about 1% a year.

Water and the Decrease in Growth Pressure

During the drought of 2002, the City exceeded a condition of one of its water appropriation permits requiring the City to cease withdrawals at certain locations when stream flow is below minimum levels. As a result of the water supply inadequacy, there was a moratorium on the issuance of new building permits and approval of subdivision plats for properties that would be served by the City's water systems.

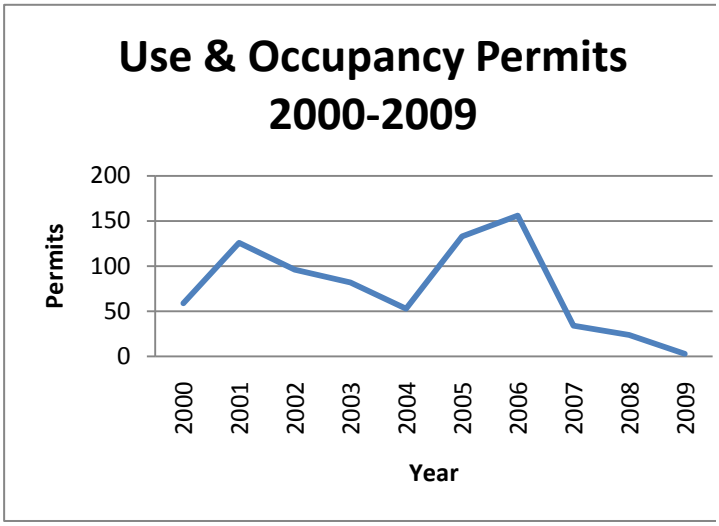


Figure 1: Decrease in Use & Occupancy Permits 2000-2009

In July 2006, the Carroll County Bureau of Environmental Health (County) stopped signing recorded plats as the City had not demonstrated that its water system would be adequate to serve additional connections.

In September 2006, after reviewing the City's final Water Supply Capacity Management Plan, the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) directed the County to no longer approve building permits that would result in a net increase in water demand on the City's water system.

In April 2007, the City and MDE entered into a Consent Order, which has resulted in the City improving water system capacity. The Consent Order required the City to adopt an Interim Water Allocation Policy for the City to regulate the allocation of water to residential and commercial development. As a condition of the Consent Order, MDE would determine the amount of water that the City would be allowed to allocate. The City adopted an Interim Water Allocation Policy on April 9, 2007.

The 2007 Interim Water Allocation Policy enabled the City to create a water allocation request process to provide water connections to only residential and non-residential development projects that had been approved prior to April 1, 2007. The City required applicants to meet certain standards and requirements in order to be considered for the allocation of the limited supply of water.

On January 28, 2008 the City adopted an Amended Water Allocation Policy for the issuance of water connections. In May 2008, the City completed the Updated Water Capacity Management Plan. The Amended Water Allocation Policy and the Updated Water Capacity Management Plan were the two main requirements that Westminster had to complete in order for MDE to allow an additional allocation of water in 2008.

During the five year period that the City has worked to manage the water capacity issue, the City has adopted several policies to help control the requests for the allocation of water. For example, the City created a policy limiting the number of building permits issued for any project in one year from 50 permits to 40 permits. Also a deferral on annexation and good cause waivers while the City is in Code Red drought status has been adopted.

The limited water supply has placed a strain on the growth of Westminster. Since 2006, the City has experienced a decrease in development pressure due to the limited water supply to allocate to new developments. The lower than average number of use and occupancy permits is an indicator of the decreasing growth for the City. In 2006, 156 permits were issued, in 2007, 34 permits were issued, followed by 2008 when only 24 use and occupancy permits were issued in the City. Westminster's water limitations, and the current economy of the country, have caused the growth of Westminster to slow down significantly (Figure 1).

Part 2: Population Projections & Future Land Use

Section 1: Introduction

The City of Westminster uses the requests for water allocation as a method to analyze proposed developments and plan for the future growth of the City. As of 2010, the City will not be able to allocate future water connections until the City acquires new sources of water. The City is preparing for two growth phases. Phase One will take place when the City acquires a new source of water to meet the needs of the current list of projects that have made requests for water allocation before January 2010. Phase Two will take place when the City acquires a second source of water to meet the needs of future projects that will make requests for water allocation after January 2010.

Section 2: Land Needed to Satisfy Future Demand

Using the growth rate scenario of 1% a year for the next 20 years the population of Westminster would increase by 4,284 people by 2030. In Westminster households have an average of 2.35 people. Using that ratio, the 2009 Comprehensive Plan projects that 1,823 households or dwelling units would be required to sustain a population increase of 4,284 people.

Table 4.3 Vacant Buildable Residential Land in the City of Westminster, 2009					
Vacant Buildable Land	**Acreage**	**Zoning**	**# of Units**	**Persons per Unit**	**Population Capacity**
Humbert Property	1.8	R-7,500	7	2.35	16.45
Alt Property	0.4	R-7,500	1	2.35	2.35
Langdon Property	5	R-7,500	26	2.35	61.1
Horosko Property	6.8	R-7,500	32	2.35	75.2
Koontz Property	7.5	R-10,000	30	2.35	70.5
Rinehart Property	1.8	R-10,000	1	2.35	2.35
Tennant Property	2.1	R-10,000	8	2.35	18.8
Windsor Overlook	1.3	R-10,000	2	2.35	4.7
Scott Property	1.2	R-10,000	3	2.35	7.05
Riley Property	1.5	R-10,000	6	2.35	14.1
Poole Property	1.1	R-20,000	2	2.35	4.7
Bair Property	6.4	R-20,000	12	2.35	28.2
Roth Property	1.8	R-20,000	2	2.35	4.7
Griswold Property	12.1	R-20,000	19	2.35	44.65
Riley Property	0.9	R-20,000	1	2.35	2.35
Hart Property	1.2	R-20,000	2	2.35	4.7
Bodnar Property	0.6	R-20,000	1	2.35	2.35
Leister Property	0.8	R-10,000	3	2.35	7.05
Colonial Heights	1.06	R-7,500	4	2.35	9.4
Kremer Property	1.3	R-10,000	5	2.35	11.75
WMC Development Corp.	1.4	R-10,000	5	2.35	11.75
DASY Property	3.2	R-7,500	14	2.35	32.9
Shaw Property	3.7	R-20,000	7	2.35	16.45
Booth Property	15	R-7,500	15	2.35	35.25
Cornias Property	20	R-20,000	39	2.35	91.65
Other lots	6.1	n/a	21	2.35	49.35

Total Vacant Buildable Land	**106.06 Acres**
Total Potential Dwelling Units	**268 Units**
Total Potential Population	**630 Residents**

*Unit yield calculated using current zoning classifications

Source: City of Westminster Planning, Zoning and Development, 2009

Part 3: Westminster's Housing Capacity

Section1: Development Capacity

Table 4.3 shows the total vacant buildable residential land within the City of Westminster. Vacant buildable land means there are no site plans or subdivisions recorded for the property. Using the current zoning designation for each property, Staff calculated an estimate of the total projected population capacity of the total vacant buildable land. (The estimates took into account environmental constraints). There are a total 106.6 acres of vacant buildable residential land (Map 4.1).At the current zoning, the available vacant buildable land can accommodate an additional 268 dwelling units or 630 residents.

Table 4.4 represents the planned developments to be built in the next five years to ten years. Planned developments are projects that have received site plan approval. The table calculates the number of dwelling units that are expected when the developments are complete. Based on these calculations, the planned developments can accommodate an additional 775 dwelling units or 2,327 residents.

Table 4.4 Unbuilt Planned Developments in the City of Westminster 2009

Planned Development	Acreage	Zoning	Units per Acre	# of Units	Persons per Unit	Population Capacity
Arnold Property	8	R-10,000	2.8	15*	2.35	38
Bolton Hill	118	R-20,000	1.4	189*	2.35	472
Carroll Lutheran Village	52.8	R-20,000	1.4	73	1.5	110
Fenby Farm	20	R-20,000	1.4	28	2.35	70
Furnace Hills Section 2	2.6	PD-4	n/a	30*	2.35	60
Jandy Property	4.5	R-10,000	2.8	12	2.35	30
Naganna Property	147	R-10,000	1.53	225	2.35	529
Ridge Terrace	10	R-10,000	2.8	17*	2.5	43
RJ Maring Property	1.7	R-10,000	2.8	4*	2.35	10
Roop Mill	89.6	R-10,000	2.8	190*	2.35	475
Royer Terrace	2.6	R-10,000	2.8	4*	2.35	10
Village of Meadow Creek	119.5	R-10,000	2.8	188*	2.5	470
Westminster Housing Inc	1.1	R-7,500	4.2	4	2.5	10

** Number of Units Proposed by Developer*

Total Unbuilt Planned Land	**577.4 acres**
Total Dwelling Units	**775 units**
Total Population Capacity	**2327 residents**

Source: City of Westminster Planning, Zoning and Development, 2009

Table 4.5: Total Residential Capacity in Westminster 2009

Buildable Residential Land	Acres	Units	Population Capacity
Vacant Buildable Residential Land	106.6	268	630
Planned Developments	577.4	775	2327
Total Buildable Residential Land	**684**	**1043**	**2957**

Summary

Total Unbuilt Planned Land	577.4 acres
Total Dwelling Units	775 units
Total Population Capacity	2327 residents

Total Vacant Buildable Land	106.06 Acres
Total Potential Dwelling Units	268 Units
Total Potential Population	630 Residents

Source: City of Westminster Planning, Zoning and Development Department, 2009

Table 4.5 calculates the total number of dwelling units that can be accommodated within the City at build-out, given the current zoning and based on the approved site plans for planned developments. Based on these calculations, Westminster can accommodate a total of 1,043 dwelling units or 2,957 residents at build-out.

Section 2: Population Projections & Development Capacity

Summary

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan projected a population increase of 4,284 people by 2030. In order to accommodate the projected population growth, the City of Westminster needs to plan for at least 1,823 dwelling units, beyond the current housing stock.

The 2009 Development Capacity Analysis shows that the City of Westminster has about 684 acres of available buildable residential land. Of the 684 acres of available buildable residential land, 577.4 acres are planned developments with a total capacity of 775 dwelling units. The remaining 106.06 acres, under current zoning, has a total capacity of 268 dwelling units. In total, the 684 acres of available buildable residential land in the City of Westminster has a total capacity of 1,043 dwelling units or 2,957 residents.

Table 4.6 Projected Population & Housing Capacity, Westminster 2010-2030

	Residents	Dwelling Units
Projected Population Growth	4,284	1,823
Projected Housing Capacity	2,957	1,043
Projected Housing Shortage	**1,327**	**565**

Source: City of Westminster Planning, Zoning and Development Department, 2009

While the City can accommodate 2,957 residents at its current zoning and development scenario, there is a remaining 1,327 potential residents that will be unaccounted for dwelling units (Table 4.6). At the projected population growth and the current land capacity, the City will have to plan to accommodate 565 more dwelling units or about 1,327 more residents. In summary, at the current land capacity, Westminster is unable to accommodate the projected population growth. With the current zoning, and at the projected population growth rate, by 2024 the City of Westminster could have no remaining buildable lots of residential land.

To prevent Westminster from 'building out' by 2024, plans must be made to increase dwelling unit capacity. This will require a combination of strategies from expanding the land area of the City to conducting redevelopment and up-zoning to increase dwelling unit capacity. Westminster's goal for 2030 is to ensure that future development makes efficient use of the remaining developable acreage and limited resources.

Part 4: Growth Outside of City Boundary

Section 1: Factors for Future Municipal Growth Areas

In calculating the land area required for the future growth of Westminster, this Municipal Growth Element of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan is based on the following assumptions:

- 80% percent of the buildable residential land within the present municipal boundaries will be consumed, leaving a housing shortage of 565 dwelling units.
- Low-density sprawl could be avoided with all residential development occurring at roughly a Priority Funding Area density of 3.5 dwelling units, or higher, per acre. Currently 30% of the buildable residential lots are zoned R-20,000 with a density of 2 dwelling units per acre.
- Based on current zoning, 85% percent of future development within the present boundaries of Westminster will be in single-family detached homes on residential lots zoned R-10,000 or R-20,000.
- If development occurs beyond the boundaries of the City, such land will require higher density than the current zoning allows. It is currently zoned for single-family residential lots but there needs to be an increase in lots zoned for multi-family units.
- There is not currently enough buildable land contiguous to the City to accommodate the projected 565 units of growth (at the current zoning).
- Any annexed land will need to be zoned in the R-7,500 residential zone, which provides a density of about 6 dwelling units per acre in order to accommodate the projected population growth (or at a higher density).

In accordance with these assumptions, the Westminster Comprehensive Plan's Municipal Growth Element establishes two components of future residential growth, along with the land demand and population that can be expected for each. One component involves land within the City and the other involves land which will one day be annexed into it.

The above assumptions represent the current view of the Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission and the Westminster Growth and Annexation Committee as well as others in the Westminster area development community. Future residential growth on land within Westminster, and on land which will one day be annexed, will require an increase in development of multi-family dwelling units and mixed-use projects that have a Priority Funding density of at least 3.5 units per acre or higher. Map 4.2 shows parcels that have potential for additional development. These parcels will be studied in the future for opportunities for increased density. The City of Westminster should follow a development pattern which efficiently uses land and lends the most protection to natural features and its historic fabric.

Section 2: Development Beyond Present City Limits

Land Needs

69% of the projected 2030 population increase of 4,284 people can be accommodated within the present corporate limits of the City of Westminster. 54% of the future residents will settle on properties zoned R-10,000. City can accommodate 2,957 residents at its current zoning and development scenario;

however, there is a remaining 1,327 potential residents that will be in unaccounted for dwelling units. The City will need to evaluate the current zoning within the City and study the land that could be annexed in the future in order to find ways to accommodate the remaining population growth.

Anticipated Capacity & Zoning of Future Annexation Areas

The City of Westminster collaborated with Carroll County to adopt the 2007 Westminster Environs Community Comprehensive Plan (Westminster Environs Plan). The Board of County Commissioners of Carroll County adopted the Westminster Environs Plan on November 29, 2007. The Westminster Environs Plan includes the approved 2007 Land Use Designation and Growth Area Boundary Map for the Westminster Environs. The City used this Map to consider development beyond present City corporate limits (Map 4.3). This Map shows the growth areas lying to the southeast of the City of Westminster.

The area within the Growth Area Boundary (GAB), but outside of the City boundary, totals roughly 1,280 acres. City Planning Staff conducted a study of the 1,280 acres to determine priority annexable acres. Staff developed a set of criteria to determine acres that could be annexed within the next 20 years to accommodate future population growth. The criteria required the priority annexable acres to 1) exist within the GAB, 2) listed as unplanned buildable land, 3) have a residential land use designation 4) not have a Conservation land use designation and 5) found contiguous to the City boundary. Following this criteria, Staff determined 160 acres of priority annexable acres that fit the criteria of buildable residential land contiguous to the City boundary (Map 4.4).

Using the current zoning and development scenario, the priority annexable acres are not sufficient enough to accommodate the anticipated growth. The 160 priority annexable acres of buildable residential land, at the current County zoning designation, could provide 311 units of the 565 dwelling units needed to accommodate the remaining 1,327 residents. The benefit of annexing the 160 acres would be the limited relief of development pressure within the City, by reducing the potential housing shortage to 254 units. The disadvantage of annexing the 160 acres would be that the City would have to expand the water service area to provide water in order to develop residential properties in the Westminster Growth Area. In addition to providing water service, the City would have to expand City infrastructure, facilities and services to accommodate the additional acres.

The City of Westminster is unable to consider annexable land as a viable solution to the future City housing shortage, because there are no guarantees that the City will be able to annex all, or any, of the 160 acres within the next 20 years without adding additional water supplies. Westminster needs to look within the City boundaries first to plan for implementing the goals outlined in this Municipal Growth Element to accommodate future population growth in an efficient and orderly manner.

Looking at the County Zoning, Map 4.5, there are some target properties within the Growth Area Boundary that could be re-zoned to allow for residential units. When the County conducts the 2013 Westminster Environs Plan Update in the next couple of years, it should include a study of the land

within the GAB that is not zoned residential but could be re-zoned to meet the needs of future population growth for the Westminster area.

Part 5: Impact of Growth on Public Services and Facilities

This section projects the impacts that the roughly 4,284-person increase will have on public services and facilities in and around the City of Westminster. Important related material also appears in other elements of this comprehensive plan, and that the entire document must be reviewed in order to obtain a clear and complete picture.

Performance-Based Growth Management Standards

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan uses performance-based growth management to prepare for the future growth of the City of Westminster. Performance-based growth management coordinates land use policies, capital improvements, funding mechanisms and monitoring devices to achieve specific environmental and public facility performance standards. Performance-based standards allows for careful analysis by the City of its required public services and infrastructure in relation to future demand.

Section 1: Public Schools

Facility Analysis

The City of Westminster is served by Carroll County Public Schools. Westminster falls in the districts for six elementary schools, two middle schools and two high schools. In addition, there are two private "Kindergarten through 8th Grade" institutions and one private "Kindergarten through 12th Grade" institution available to Westminster residents.

Performance Objective

Ensure that new schools will be in locations accessible to school age children and will provide sufficient facilities for education, as well as extra-curricular activities.

Performance Standard

Require new development to provide the appropriate funding for the Westminster area school system as determined by Carroll County Schools and applicable State law. According to Carroll County Code for Adequate Public Facilities, an elementary school serving a proposed project is inadequate when projected enrollment is equal to or greater than 120% of the state-rated capacity. A middle school serving a proposed project is inadequate when projected enrollment is equal to or greater than 120% of the functional capacity. A high school serving a proposed project is inadequate when projected enrollment is equal to or greater than 120% of the state-rated capacity. Carroll County Public Schools

Facilities Master Plan provides an in depth look at the performance standards of all schools in Carroll County.

Relationship to Future Demand

Based on the system wide breakdown of the projected 2018 total enrollment (12,460 elementary, 6,380 middle, and 8,685 high) and the future school capacities (13,377 elementary, 6,845 middle, and 10,612 high) there is not a countywide need for additional school capacity at any level.

As the population of the Westminster area grows in the future, Charles Carroll Elementary is projected to reach 110% capacity in 2014 and William Winchester Elementary is projected to reach 110% capacity in 2011. The contributing factor to the increase in elementary school attendance is a new State requirement that all elementary schools must provide Full Day Kindergarten. The Carroll County Public Schools Facilities Master Plan is phasing in new kindergarten additions, over the next 10 years, to all elementary schools in order to accommodate the increased kindergarten enrollment. Westminster East Middle School is projected to reach 110% capacity by 2016. The remaining Westminster area middle schools and high schools are projected to remain under capacity through 2017.

Section 2: Library Services

Facility Analysis

The Westminster Brach of the Carroll County Library system is located in Downtown Westminster. The library facility measures 22,000 square feet in size. The service population is 43,635 people in the City of Westminster and the surrounding area. The library facility provides 1,000 square feet of library space for every 1,983 residents in the Westminster area. It contains a circulation of 114,780 volumes with about 41 volumes per square foot or about 2.63 volumes per resident.

The Westminster Branch provides 109 programs a year to the public that are attended by a total of 2,797 residents on average. One of the more popular library services is access to public computers. The library facility provides 17 computers for Internet use, 7 computers for regular use and 2 computers for games. In FY2006 the Westminster Branch had 130,000-computer log-ins and in FY2008 usage had increased to 250,000-computer log-ins. The Westminster Branch employees the equivalent of 22.46 full time employees, which provides 1 employee per 1,943 residents of the Westminster area.

Performance Objective

The City encourages the Westminster Branch to maintain library services that provide informational and recreational reading and research materials in a variety of formats for all ages, and ensure that services and materials for children and adults are available in order to support their needs.

Performance Standard

The City supports the Westminster Branch's effort: to maintain the American Library Association standard of at least 1,000 square feet of library space for each 10,000 increase in population; to provide about 2.5 volumes per resident and 1 computer per 1,500 residents; to support the staffing standard of one additional full-time employee per additional 2,000 residents, a standard based on the current population and staffing levels.

Relationship to Future Demand

The projected population growth of 4,284 people over the next 20 years, in the City of Westminster, would not require an increase in library space. The Westminster Branch of the Carroll County Library System would remain under capacity. The projected population increase would require the Westminster Branch to hire 1.5 new employees to maintain the staffing standard. In addition, the Westminster Branch would need to ensure residents access to 5,017 more volumes to maintain the volume standard. In order to maintain the standard for access to computers, the Westminster Branch would have to purchase at least 6 more computers.

Section 3: Public Safety & Police Services

Facility Analysis

The City of Westminster Police Department consists of 45 sworn officers that maintain an approximate service ratio of 2.43 officers per 1,000 residents. The Westminster Police Department has received an average of 16,748 calls for police service a year over the past 8 years. Since 2000, the police officers encounter an average 843 Part 1 crimes a year and have made an average 1,423 arrests per year for the past 4 years. Part 1 crimes are serious crimes including murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, theft and auto theft. Due to the hard work and successful efforts of the City of Westminster Police Department, Part 1 crime in Westminster has declined by 8.8% in 2008; down from 856 crimes in 2007 to 781 crimes in 2008.

Performance Objective

Maintain comprehensive police services and timely emergency response in all parts of the City of Westminster. Provide a level of police protection that can serve the projected growth in population and business activity.

Performance Standard

Retain the appropriate number of staff to continue efficient operations of the Administrative Bureau, Criminal Investigations Bureau and the Field Services Bureau. Maintain the current standard of 2.43 officers per 1,000 residents. According to the Unified Crime Reports (UCR) of the FBI's Department of Justice, law enforcement officers are individuals who ordinarily carry a firearm and a badge, have full

arrest powers, and are paid from governmental funds set aside specifically for sworn law enforcement representatives. The UCR determined by population group, there were 2.3 sworn officers for each 1,000 resident population in the Nation's cities collectively in 2004. A national standard used by the International Association of Chiefs of Police and other agencies when calculating needs for police is 2.6 police officers for every 1,000 persons of population. The City of Westminster strives to meet the average of these two standards.

Relationship to Future Demand

In order to accommodate the projected population growth of 4,284 people, the City of Westminster will need a total of 55 police officers, or an additional 10 officers by 2030. The Police Department considers its current office space to be at capacity as of 2009. An additional 10 officers will push the Department over capacity and require the Police Department to expand its offices or relocate to a larger facility.

Section 4: Fire & Emergency Services

Facility Analysis

The Westminster Volunteer Fire Company provides fire protection and suppression services for the Westminster area. For fire services, the Company currently staffs 40 responding volunteer firefighters and no full-time firefighters. For basic emergency medical services, the Company currently staffs an Emergency Medical Technician Basic (EMT Basic) unit of 60 individuals of which 48 are volunteer, 8 are full-time and 12 are part-time. For intense emergency medical services, the Company currently staffs an Emergency Medical Technician Paramedic (EMT Paramedic) unit of 22 individuals of which 4 are volunteer, 8 are full-time and 10 are part-time. The Company has 3 engines (of which one is a tower engine), 3 ambulances, 1 special unit and 4 vehicles to transport firefighters. On average, the Westminster Volunteer Fire Company receives 1,439 calls for fire service a year and 3,567 calls for emergency medical service a year. As the population of the City of Westminster grows, the calls for services increase. Over the past 9 years calls for fire service increased on average 3.63% a year and calls for emergency medical service increased on average 3.88% a year.

Performance Objective

Maintain competent and efficient fire and emergency medical services with first responder medical and ambulance elements, to minimize the risks to lives and property due to fire hazards and emergency medical conditions in all parts of the Westminster area.

Performance Standard

Maintain a physical environment, including adequate supply of fire hydrants and fire vehicle accessible roads, which will allow for quick response time for the majority of emergency calls. Carroll County Fire Services standard requires minimum 4 personnel should go out on every emergency call. The Insurance

Services Office (ISO) developed a standard that projects the number of in-service fire engines that would be required to properly serve a given area. The standard is based on the following formula: Number of Engines = 0.85 + [0.12 x (Population x .001).

Relationship to Future Demand

The provision of emergency services must keep pace with an expanding and growing community. As the population of Westminster grows over the next 20 years, the fire department shall maintain minimum staffing requirements to ensure that a sufficient number of members are available to operate safely and effectively. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) has established standards for responding to fire emergencies volunteer departments. The fire department shall have the capability to deploy an initial full alarm assignment within a 9-minute response time to 90 percent of the incidents. Following the ISO standard, to serve the population increase of 4,284 people, the Westminster Fire Company will need to purchase one more engine to increase their total to 4 fire engines.

Section 5: Parks & Recreation

Facility Analysis

The City of Westminster's inventory of parks consists of 14 parks, and a 2.5 mile long walking trail, with a total of 136.5 acres in the parks system. The City also provides residents and visitors with 3 specialized recreation facilities, which include a family recreation center, a skateboard park and a municipal swimming pool. Other parks include four multi-purpose fields, four basketball courts, seven tennis courts, climbing boulders, six pavilions and two plazas. In addition, residents have access to 79 acres of County-owned recreation land within the City and almost 135 acres of County-owned recreation land adjacent to the City within the County. The total amount local jurisdiction park and recreation land is over 350 acres. The City of Westminster also benefits from over 447 acres of private recreation and open space land within the City limits.

Performance Objective

Provide quality active parks and recreation facilities that are accessible to all residents of the City of Westminster.

Performance Standard

The State of Maryland uses a standard of 30 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, with a minimum of 15 of the 30 acres to be owned by the City of Westminster or Carroll County. The City of Westminster uses this ratio with the goal to have park and recreation facilities within one-half mile of all residences.

Relationship to Future Demand

In order to meet the State of Maryland standard, the City of Westminster needs 681 acres of parkland to accommodate future population growth of 4,284 residents (total 22,720 residents). According to the City Standard, of the 681 acres, 340 acres should be owned by the local jurisdiction. Currently, residents have access to 350 acres of parkland owned by the City of Westminster or Carroll County plus 447 acres of private recreation and open space land, providing residents with 797 acres of recreation or open space land.

Section 6: Water Facilities

Facility Analysis

A detailed inventory of the existing water facilities and available drinking water supply sources, plus various other descriptive materials and information pertaining to each, is contained in the Carroll County Water and Sewerage Plan and this Comprehensive Plan's Water Resources Element.

The City of Westminster water distribution system has over 161 miles of water lines, ranging in size from ¾" to 24". The system also contains 438 fire hydrants as well as four elevated storage tanks, one finished water reservoir with a floating cover, and two water booster stations. In addition, the City maintains a 122 million-gallon reservoir and two concrete dams. The City of Westminster is responsible for the operation of four filter plants, three of which incorporate wells as source water. The City of Westminster owns and operates two community water systems serving the City and areas beyond the corporate limits. The existing and planned service area is located in central Carroll County and covers approximately 8,097 acres.

Performance Objective

Ensure an adequate water capacity system to serve existing and future residents.

Performance Standard

Prior to project approval, the City of Westminster must verify that adequate water quality, quantity, and distribution will be available to serve the project.

Relationship to Future Demand

The City of Westminster is the primary water service area for the Westminster area. The uncertainty of Westminster's water supply suggests that both water needs and service will remain crucial factors in the City's growth. At the time of this plan, the City has received requests for water allocations under its Allocation Plan totaling over 228,000 gpd. Additionally, it is estimated that this demand could increase by approximately 50,000 gpd each year until build-out. It is anticipated that a portion of these requests

may be fulfilled in the next three to four years by development of the Gesell Property well. Additional sources to fulfill the remaining requests are projected for development after 2015.

Section 7: Sewerage Facilities

Facility Analysis

A detailed inventory of the existing sewerage facilities plus various other descriptive materials and information, is contained in the Carroll County Water and Sewerage Plan and this Comprehensive Plan's Water Resources Element.

The City of Westminster sewer collection system is made up of over 160 miles of sewers, ranging in size from 6" to 48". The system contains 12 Sewer Pump Stations and over 2200 manholes. The Wastewater Treatment Plant is responsible for the operation and maintenance of an advanced level treatment system utilizing Biological Nutrient Removal technology.

Performance Objective

Ensure an adequate water capacity system to serve existing and future residents.

Performance Standard

Prior to project approval, the City of Westminster must verify that adequate water quality, quantity, and distribution will be available to serve the project.

Relationship to Future Demand

The Westminster Wastewater Treatment plant is designed to handle 5.0 MGD. The average wastewater flow into the plant is 4.43 MGD. The existing Infiltration and Inflow amount for the system is 1.7MGD. The projected build-out demand according to calculations by Malcolm Pirnie, Carroll County's WRE consultant, is 5.706 MGD. The City plans to start engineering on upgrades to the plant to include additional treatment capacity and Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) technology. This project is consistent with the Chesapeake Bay Agreement initiatives. Following the ENR upgrade, the City expects to expand the plant capacity to a flow of 6.5 MGD, while meeting the treatment requirements required by state and federal law.

Section 8: Stormwater Management Facilities

Facility Analysis

This Comprehensive Plan's Water Resources Element, as well as the Environmental Resources and Protection Element, address overall policies and recommendations pertaining to water quality and stormwater management.

Performance Objective

Ensure an adequate stormwater capacity system to serve existing and future residents.

Performance Standard

Prior to project approval, the City of Westminster must verify that adequate stormwater facility quality, quantity, and distribution will be available to serve the project.

Relationship to Future Demand

Each major development presents challenges to the protection of water quality in and around Westminster. As a major growth area in the County, land in the City is used with more intensity than in outlying areas. Refer to the Water Resources Element for the approximate acreage in the City by land use category, along with the impervious rate associated with that use.

Part 6: Growth Management

Section 1: Introduction to Growth Management

Growth management involves the location, timing, and rate of growth or development. Municipalities often utilize land use and zoning maps to designate the location and density of development, but these maps do not address the timing of development or the rate at which it occurs. Timing growth to coordinate with the availability of public facilities such as roads, water and sewer, or schools, decreases the likelihood that these facilities will become significantly overburdened or underutilized. Over or underused roads, schools, and pipes reduce efficiency and may eventually decrease the quality of life for those who are served by the facility.

Consideration of the rate of growth is therefore critical to ensure the continued provision of optimal levels of facility service. The intent of growth management is to maintain equilibrium over time between development and the public facilities necessary to support growth. Without growth rate projections, the possibility exists that facilities will be built to address short-term inadequacies resulting from 'booms' in development. However, in several years the extra capacity might become excessive as the previously high rate of growth slows.

Section 2: Existing Growth Mechanisms

In prior City and County comprehensive plans, the City has been designated as a 'growth pole', or a place where development should be concentrated. As a result, it has used a variety of mechanisms to designate the density of development permitted in the City and to coordinate the timing of development with the availability of public facilities.

Carroll County Master Plan for Water and Sewerage

The Carroll County Master Plan for Water and Sewerage was originally developed and is periodically updated by Carroll County in coordination with the municipalities that operate public water or sewer facilities. The City owns and operates the Westminster water and sewer utilities and is the only municipality in Carroll County that has historically extended public water and sewer beyond its corporate boundaries. As a result, both the City and the County update the Master Plan for Water and Sewerage, and the plan addresses the entire City, as well as areas located within the unincorporated lands on the immediate outskirts of the City.

The Carroll County Master Plan for Water and Sewerage divides the Westminster area into four categories for water and sewer service: Existing and Final Planning Service Area, Priority Planning (0 – 6 Year Service Area), Future Planning (7 to 10 Year Service Area), and No Planned Service. These designations address both the location and the timing for the provision of public water and sewer, and in effect create a ten-year growth limit in and around the City of Westminster. In the past, this boundary has been weakened because of the Carroll County Zoning Ordinance and Map, which allowed residential and commercial development outside of the planned public water and sewer area. This action prompted requests by developers to expand the service boundaries, who contended that they should be able to achieve the densities envisioned by the zoning.

Good Cause Waiver

The Mayor and Common Council of Westminster adopted Good Cause Waiver legislation on August 12, 2002 in response to the negative impacts created by this scenario. The legislation promotes the orderly development of properties at appropriate densities by requiring owners of properties that are to be served with water and/or sewer service to file a petition to annex into the corporate limits of the City of Westminster. If a property is unable to annex into the City, the property owners may file for a 'Good Cause Waiver' of the annexation requirement. Upon approval by the City, the property owners are required to sign an agreement stating that they will file a petition to annex when annexation becomes legally possible. The agreement is recorded in the Land Records of Carroll County and runs with the property. Only properties located in the Existing/Final Planning and Priority Planning Service Areas may file for a Good Cause Waiver. Through this process the legislation clarifies development expectations while maintaining the integrity and service level of the water and sewer system for current users.

Capital Improvements Program

Another vital mechanism that addresses growth management in the City of Westminster is the Capital Improvements Program (CIP). The *Capital Improvements Program* describes those projects to be funded over the next six fiscal years and is updated every year as part of the annual budget. The first year of the CIP is the budget year. Projects scheduled for the budget year are funded by the adoption of the City's annual budget. The CIP describes the capital projects and facilities to be built, repaired, replaced, or purchased; the locations of the projects; and the schedule for completing the projects. The type, scale, timing, rate, and location of new development will affect the public costs of providing these facilities and associated services. The *Capital Improvements Program* reduces City expenditures by coordinating capital projects with forecasted development. The City can budget funds for land acquisition years in advance of an existing facility reaching inadequacy. In addition, the City Code requires that private developers financially assist the City with needed capital projects planned for their property by the CIP.

Land Use and Development Ordinance

The *Land Use and Development Ordinance* is the City's Zoning Ordinance and impacts future growth. The Zoning Ordinance consists of text and a map. The text provides a description of each zoning district and indicates the density of development permitted by establishing requirements for lot sizes and building setbacks and height. The zoning text also designates the types of uses permitted in each zoning district. The zoning map shows the geographic location of each of the zoning districts described in the zoning text. All properties located in the City are shown on the Zoning Map.

Building Permits

The codified method for managing the growth rate of approved residential projects in the City of Westminster involves a restriction on the number of building permits that may be issued for a subdivision in a given year. Section 164-199 (F) of the City's Code limits the number of building permits issued to 40 per calendar year for any residential development plat. This requirement must appear as a written notation on the final plat as a condition of approval to ensure recordation of the restriction in the Land Records of Carroll County.

Negotiations

The City has employed a variety of other strategies to manage growth. Negotiations for public improvements with developers for roads, public utilities, and recreational facilities begin early in the development review process to clarify requirements and better incorporate such improvements in final plans. The City has also negotiated phasing plans with developers to address the rate at which new homes are built. The date of occupancy can be used to allow construction progress in a development, if that construction would coincide with the completion of a public improvement project. In cases of a known facility inadequacy preliminary approvals can be granted to allow the development process to

continue, with the developer aware that further design is at their own risk. If a relief project is scheduled in the CIP, the developer has an idea of when the development would be granted construction approvals. Final approval will not be granted by the City until the inadequacy is resolved.

Section 3: Adequate Public Facilities and Public Services

Consideration of the adequacy of public facilities throughout the development review process is another tool to manage the rate of growth in the City. The Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission (WPZC) make an official determination of adequacy through the review and approval process for preliminary plans, site plans, and final plats. Site Plans also require approval from the Director of Planning, Zoning and Development. The WPZC may deny a plan or require the developer to make improvements based upon a finding of inadequacy. The facilities currently considered for adequacy by municipalities in Maryland include schools, roads, water and sewer systems, stormwater management, emergency response and police protection, and solid waste disposal. The City has not independently developed guidelines or thresholds for the adequacy of public facilities. As a result, the WPZC considers adequacy reports submitted by the various agencies responsible for providing the service. Some facilities, such as schools, are provided exclusively by Carroll County government. Coordination between the City and the County in the development of some adequate facilities guidelines is necessary.

Part 7: Resource Lands

Section 1: Rural Buffers & Transition Areas

The City of Westminster has few features to combine to form a rural buffer extending around its municipal boundary. However, there are several properties that can act as “rural guide-points.” Rural guide-points are properties zoned Conservation within the County and contiguous to the City boundary. These properties could also serve as groundwater recharge areas or future parkland. In addition, there are also several large neighborhoods that have built-up in the County along the City boundary.

Land outside the City boundary falls under one of three categories: built-out large neighborhoods, conservation/agricultural land or vacant buildable land. The vacant land is a precious resource to Westminster, because it is needed to accommodate future population growth. Westminster has only 106 acres of vacant unplanned residential land within the City limits, which means in the next five to ten years, the City will have to consider annexing the vacant buildable land to increase housing capacity. As a result of the built-out neighborhoods and the potential annexable land, the remaining Conservation land serves the City of Westminster with rural guide-points not a rural buffer.

Section 2: Growth Area Boundary

The City of Westminster has other tools to control sprawl and protect the rural character of the community. The City of Westminster uses its Growth Area Boundary as the line between urban Westminster and rural Carroll County. The Growth Area Boundary is shown on the approved Carroll County 2007 Land Use Designation and Growth Area Boundary for the Westminster Environs. Carroll County has been actively working to preserve agricultural land since the Maryland State Agricultural Land Preservation Program was developed in 1979. Since 1998, Carroll County has had a goal of preserving 100,000 acres of productive farmland. This number represents nearly 70 percent of the total land in the County that is currently used for agriculture. This goal is targeted specifically at maintaining the long-term viability of farming in the County, including the businesses that support that sector of the economy. In order to meet this goal, the County will be directing growth toward or within the City of Westminster Growth Area Boundary and other local municipalities.

Part 8: Burdens on Services & Infrastructure

The City of Westminster water and sewer service area extends beyond the Growth Area Boundary and into the County. Future development and growth outside of the City boundary, as well as the Growth Area Boundary will place a burden on the City water supply and sewer treatment capacity. The City of Westminster worked with the Carroll County Planning Department to develop the 2009 Westminster Water Resources Element. The County is working with Westminster to develop strategies to promote water conservation and methods to improve the management of stormwater runoff.

Over the past several years; tree plantings, stormwater management pond retrofits, and watershed restoration projects have been the building blocks laid to establish the foundation for the Carroll County Watershed Action Team - Environmental Restoration (WATER). WATER is being organized to help establish a joint effort between Carroll County Government, the City of Westminster, other governmental agencies, non-profit organizations, and the citizens of Carroll County. The Carroll County Bureau of Utilities has developed a series of educational materials promoting the benefits of water conservation techniques and has made the materials available to Carroll County and the City of Westminster residents.

Carroll County encourages residents of Carroll County and the City of Westminster to volunteer to help with stream buffer plantings, stream clean-up, stream assessments, adopt a stormwater facility project, and educational outreach. Carroll County is faced with many new challenges relating to protection of the environment; the renewal of our National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit in 2010, Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) establishment in watersheds throughout the County, and the pending Chesapeake Bay TMDL. Each of these regulations specifies requirements needed to reach goals established by EPA and the Maryland Department of the Environment; as well as deadlines to reach these goals. Carroll County recognizes that the County staff and officials can't accomplish these goals alone. The County advocates that each and every citizen of the County is affected by the outcome of

these water resource challenges. In order to address the water challenges that face the future of Westminster, the County educates residents how to plant stream buffers on County and privately owned properties, to clean up streams through stream walks, to assess existing watershed conditions, and to monitor streams.

Part 9: Protection of Sensitive Areas

The City of Westminster recognizes that the natural environment is a vital element of the City and plays a key role in the long-term sustainability of the community. To protect the environment of Westminster and the surrounding areas means identifying and protecting significant natural features, developing land in ways that respects ecosystems, and adapting the ways in which residents live, work, and play to be more environmentally responsible.

The Environmental Resources and Protection Element provides an inventory of the sensitive area sites of the City of Westminster. Throughout the entire 2009 Comprehensive Plan, there are goals and recommended actions that promote the protection of natural resources, the environment and the sensitive areas of Westminster. The protection of these areas is primarily addressed in this comprehensive plan's Environmental Resources and Protection Element, as well as the Water Resources Element. In order to protect these resources, the City and County should both adhere to the recommendations as discussed in those parts of this plan, as well as to other applicable planning and development-related ordinances.

Part 10: Future Vision of Development

In order to reduce the impact of the growth of the City of Westminster, the City will follow the visions, principles and standards set forth by the community, State and region for all future development. These visions, principles and standards have been incorporated throughout the 2009 Comprehensive Plan.

Section 1: Land Use Goals

The long-term development policy for the City of Westminster strongly embraces the 12 Visions that comprise the State's Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Policy.

- **a.** Quality of Life and Sustainability
- **b.** Public Participation
- **c.** Growth Areas
- **d.** Community Design
- **e.** Infrastructure
- **f.** Transportation
- **g.** Housing
- **h.** Economic Development
- **i.** Environmental Protection
- **j.** Resource Conservation
- **k.** Stewardship
- **l.** Implementation

Section 2: Development Goals

Future development will be in accordance with the Principles of Smart Growth.

- **a.** Provide a variety of housing choices and opportunities
- **b.** Design staged growth in urban fringes with compact development patterns
- **c.** Promote Mixed Land Use
- **d.** Revitalize existing urban and rural neighborhoods into safe and livable communities
- **e.** Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place
- **f.** Improve environmental quality by conserving open space, farmland, and sensitive land areas
- **g.** Direct urban development to areas where land is already served by existing infrastructure to avoid costly duplication of services
- **h.** Facilitate an adequate mix of transportation choices
- **i.** Ensure an equitable and predictable process in land development decisions
- **j.** Promote stakeholder collaboration and community participation

Section 3: Standards for Development

Residential development expected in the future should be consistent with the density requirements of the State's Priority Funding Areas and the principles of Smart Growth in general. This development will be planned in a manner that makes efficient use of the land using green building standards. Runoff and other negative impacts to the environment will be minimized using low impact development standards.

Section 4: Protecting the Character of Westminster

The 2008 Community Survey found that residents of Westminster enjoy the small town character and rural charm of the City. Residents are concerned that future growth will destroy the community character of Westminster. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan addressed these concerns with the creation of the Community Character and Design Element, which outlines the City of Westminster's goals for protecting the character of Westminster as new development and redevelopment occurs in the future.

Section 5: Accommodating Future Growth

Before the 2009 Comprehensive Plan update, the City of Westminster had previously approved over 300 acres of low density housing for the next five years that will provide less than a 1,000 housing units. The approved housing units have not been built due to the limited amount of water that the City can allocate from 2009 to 2011. The remaining 106 acres do not have approved planned developments and will be developed according to the 2009 Comprehensive Plan's vision for future growth and development. Westminster's vision, in coming decades, is that future development must be consistent

with at least the density criteria for Priority Funding Areas of 3.5 units per acre. The increase in density is necessary to reduce sprawl, to ensure the City has sufficient infrastructure available to accommodate growth, to protect the environment and to provide a desirable quality of life for residents of the town. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan outlines the types and scale of infrastructure and other impacts that can be expected from the 4,284 persons projected to move into Westminster over the next 20 years. This Municipal Growth Element provides the background against which recommendations for the future development of the City are generated.

Part 11: Financing of Infrastructure Expansions

Section 1: Background

The future growth of the City of Westminster will require significant infrastructure enhancements and improvements. The City utilizes its Capital Improvements Program (CIP) to link the budgetary and planning processes. The City coordinates the CIP with the Comprehensive Plan and development regulations, such as zoning and subdivision rules. This process also insures that projects that require Federal and State funding are consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

The type, scale, timing and location of new development will affect the public costs of providing facilities and services. To the greatest extent possible, the City has sought to maximize outside financial resources and minimize debt financing. When debt financing was required, the City sought low-interest loans from State agencies including the Department of the Environment and the Department of Housing and Community Development. This approach has allowed the City to take advantage of much lower interest rates than the City could obtain on its own credit rating. The City will continue to utilize these outside funding sources in the future since they are the most cost effective for the community.

Water and sewer projects will be the major focus on the City's infrastructure improvements. The City recently completed two major water projects including the Medford Quarry Emergency Pipeline and the Cranberry Water Treatment Plant. Both projects utilized low-interest loans from the Maryland Department of the Environment. The Roop's Mill Well was also completed with local funding. Future projects include the Gesell Well, Big Pipe Creek Pipeline and Wellfield and the Little Pipe Creek Intake/Hyde's Quarry Pipeline. These three projects are particularly essential to the orderly growth and development of Westminster.

The City has also begun engineering work on the upgrade and expansion of its Wastewater Treatment Plant. This upgrade portion of the project will provide enhanced nutrient removal processes that will ultimately benefit the Chesapeake Bay. The expansion portion of the project will provide additional capacity. State Bay Restoration funds, commonly called the "flush tax," will pay for a portion of the costs of the upgrade.

A significant amount of funding is required to repair and upgrade City streets that were rated levels 3 to 5, with level 1 being a "like new" street. The cost to complete this work was estimated at approximately $3.5 million, well beyond the City's ability to fund as "pay-as-you-go." Debt financing will be required to fund this work, which is not immediately anticipated.

In the area of parks and open space, the City will undertake an improved process to obtain quality open space as part of the development process. Due to the high cost of land in the Westminster community, the City will focus its funds on park updates and improvements. With declining Program Open Space funds, it is anticipated that local funds will be the major funding source for recreational needs.

Section 2: Financing Responsibilities

The City will utilize a variety of sources of funding to support infrastructure improvements and expansions. The City collects from developers a one-time payment at the building permit stage when new or expanded buildings are constructed. These three separate payments, called benefit assessment fees, are paid into the water, sewer and general funds. The money is used to support the development and expansion of infrastructure. These fees were updated effective January 1, 2009 and may be increased in the future, if the need arises.

The City also anticipates receipt of funds from the State Bay Restoration fund to support the upgrade of our Wastewater Treatment Plant. This source of funding should pay for a significant portion of the upgrade project. However, local funding from the sewer benefit assessment account will be utilized for the expansion project. For its water projects, the City anticipates a variety of Federal, State, local and private sources of funds. The City has targeted Federal funds to pay for the Big Pipe Creek Pipeline and Well-field Development Project, anticipated at approximately $6.5 million. The remainder of funding for water projects will likely come from loans from the Maryland Department of the Environment, Carroll County Government and the City's water benefit assessment account. Additionally, the City also anticipates direct private contributions in the amount of approximately $2 million dollars solely for water source development.

The use of City general funds is also an intended source of funding for non-utility projects. This source of funds will pay for park improvements, roadway enhancements and upgrades and other general funds projects. Additionally, it is also possible the City will utilize infrastructure financing from the State Department of Housing and Community Development in the event a decision is made to utilize debt financing. Finally, the City will utilize a robust development review process to identify critical infrastructure improvements and enhancements that can be logically linked to the development process. This includes developer dedications for open space, roadway upgrades and related improvements. The City anticipates possible expansion of the use of such contributions as it makes and implements changes to its zoning and subdivision rules.

Municipal Growth Element

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan presents how Westminster can achieve sustainability in order to meet the needs of the present without compromising the future. The City of Westminster encourages the use of growth management programs to determine and regulate the types, locations, and phasing of land uses in order to coordinate community facility and public service improvements with new development and population growth. The Municipal Growth Element is a detailed analysis of population growth, land development, and infrastructure impacts that give local elected officials and planners the advance knowledge needed to adequately prepare for future development and its effects.

Goals and Objectives

Goal M1: Accommodate growth without diminishing the quality of public services, community facilities, and quality of life for current residents

Objective 1: Growth should not outpace infrastructure, services or capacity of resources

a. Conduct, maintain and update City infrastructure and resource inventories

b. Establish optimal levels of service for the provision of infrastructure throughout the City

c. Develop a "Community Facility and Public Services Plan" to accommodate future growth responsibly

Objective 2: Development projects must comply with all City goals and standards regarding the quality of public services, community facilities and resources

a. Require that new development does not take place unless the infrastructure is available to support it

b. Provide clear guidance to developers on when and where development will be allowed based on the availability of resources

c. Adopt community facility performance standards that represent the City's commitment to providing quality and sustainable community facilities

d. Identify and assess development impacts during the development review process to ensure that adopted community facility performance standards are met and maintained

Objective 3: Future growth should pay for itself

a. Review and revise ordinances to ensure that development contributes adequately to the infrastructure and amenities of the community

b. Consider site specific needs related to each development or annexation application and ensure the collection of fees, development of infrastructure, or other exactions appropriate to those needs

c. Continue to utilize the Capital Improvement Program to track and monitor the construction and implementation of the City's infrastructure improvements and to ensure funding sources

Objective 4: Monitor the development and growth of the City of Westminster

a. Continue to limit the total number of residential building permits that can be issued on a per project basis

b. Create an accounting system to keep track of available buildable land and potential dwelling units in relation to community needs and population growth

c. Establish an active monitoring system to assure that community facility and public service performance standards are being met

Goal M2: Design communities in a way that permits a more efficient use of land and resources

Objective 1: Support infill development and other redevelopment options on underutilized residential or commercial lots

a. Identify priority redevelopment areas in order to encourage redevelopment within established areas of the City

b. Conduct a study of underutilized properties within the City for infill or redevelopment opportunities

c. Promote the infill of the existing Central Business District and Downtown Business District with business and high density residential uses

d. Develop and utilize neighborhood compatibility and designs standards to guide infill development and other redevelopment options

Objective 2: Plan for increased density to provide high quality projects that will balance the need for accommodating growth and maintaining small town character

a. Encourage buildings to grow vertically rather than horizontally, and to incorporate structured rather than surface parking, in order to reduce the footprint for new construction

b. Review and revise the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations for the promotion of development with a mix of uses and densities

c. Consider density bonuses or other incentives for projects within the City core to achieve desired densities

d. Develop appropriate standards and guidelines for higher density projects

Objective 3: Acquire or secure use of lands for parks, open space and trails, in conjunction with public and private sector development projects

a. Prioritize existing park needs so that acquisition and development begins in areas of the City with the greatest deficiencies

b. The City should encourage the dedication of public parkland through land donations, cash contributions or other compensations

c. Require pathways in developing areas that will connect with other neighborhoods, public spaces or retail areas

Goal M3: While recognizing infill development is the preferred method of growth, plan for the expansion of City boundaries to accommodate growth in the future

Objective 1: Develop master plans or studies for key properties within the "Growth Area" in order to prepare for future development that meets the vision and needs of the community

a. Prioritize identified key properties within the "Growth Area" for potential new residential, commercial and industrial development

b. Coordinate with County Planning Staff and the representatives from the community to create a unified vision for the priority key properties

c. Review areas for future expansion outside of the City on an annual basis

Objective 2: Annexations and extension of full City infrastructure should occur only as infrastructure and city services can be feasibly provided

a. Carefully analyze for general compliance with this Comprehensive Plan all applications for the expansion of city boundaries

b. Evaluate the fiscal impact of all proposed annexations

Objective 3: Coordinate with the County to implement the Westminster Environs Plan and the Carroll County Comprehensive Plan

a. Cooperate with Carroll County to establish and implement uniform standards for development within the "Growth Area"

Goal M4: Guide and direct growth to maintain open space and to preserve identified historic, cultural and other sites of importance

Objective 1: Coordinate efforts to manage and protect open space

a. Cooperate with Carroll County and other jurisdictions, agencies and organizations to implement open space conservation methods

b. Explore options including incentives for maintaining open space within and surrounding the City

c. Require open space within residential developments, and consider similar requirements for future commercial and industrial developments

Objective 2: Create interesting, unique development projects which reflect the values and cultures of the people who reside in Westminster

a. Craft a vision and establish standards for development and construction which respond to community values of architectural beauty and distinctiveness

b. Promote and protect historic, architectural or other special cultural characteristics of Westminster

c. Review all development proposals for human scale elements, decreased dependency on automobiles, historic design, and other elements that help to maintain the small town character of Westminster

Goal M5: Coordinate the integrated and sustainable development of the Business and Industrial Districts

Objective 1: Promote economic growth by providing an adequate supply of sites for commercial and industrial uses

a. Encourage the use of the existing Central Business District and Downtown Business District prior to expanding the Business or Industrial Districts

b. Initiate an "Industrial and Commercial Land Use Study" to describe the nature and magnitude of demand for industrial and commercial land that should be anticipated and planned for over the next decade

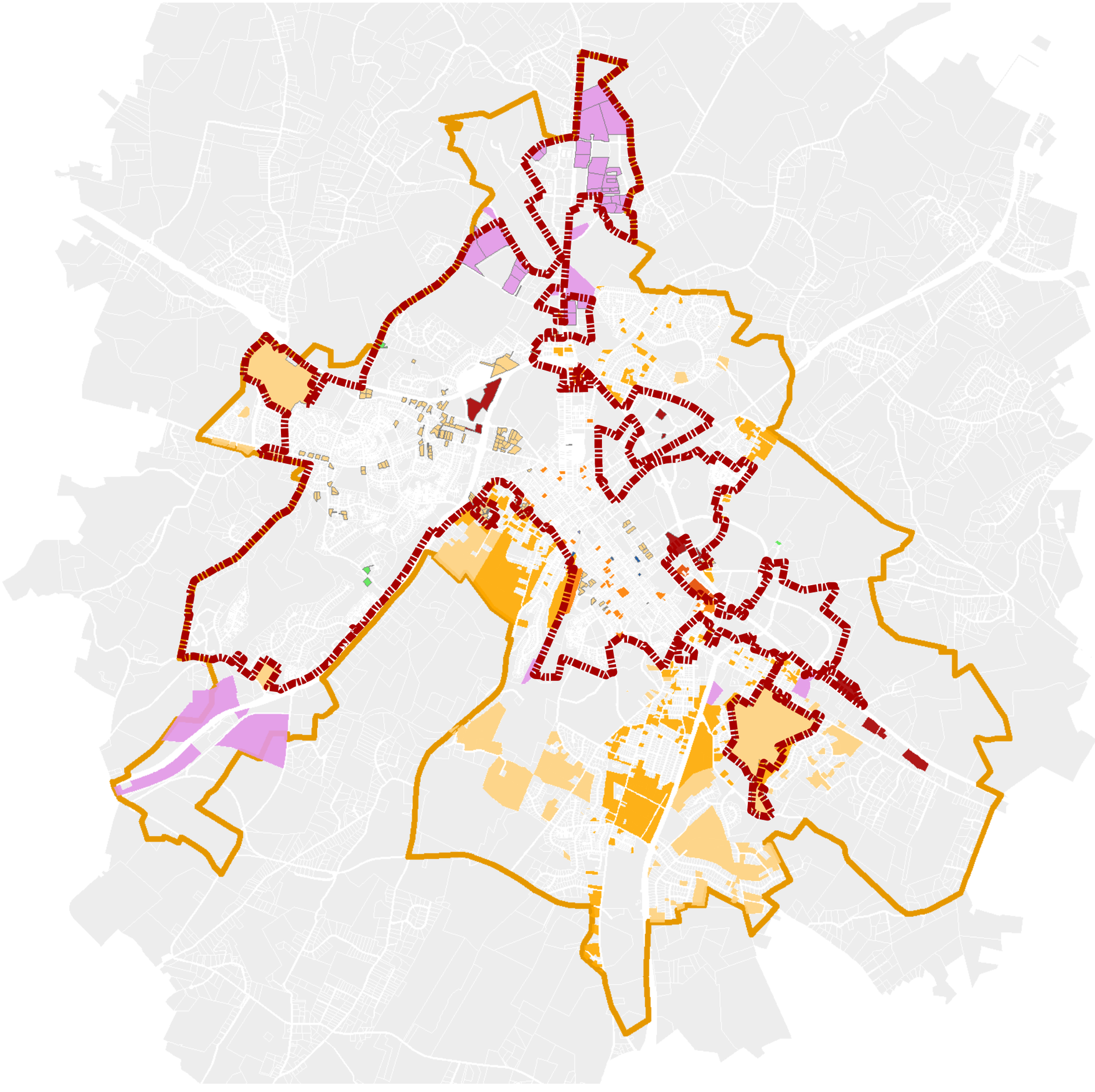
Objective 2: Ensure that commercial and industrial activity is consistent with maintaining a high quality built and natural environment

a. Encourage industrial and commercial development that meets the community's vision for quality of environment and compatibility with Westminster land uses

b. Evolve from "strip commercial" linear Business Districts to business areas characterized by enhanced site planning, improved landscaping, efficient parking lot design, coordinated access, amenities and a "Boulevard" treatment

c. Develop design standards and guidelines for commercial and industrial development projects

Buildable Land



Legend

- CITY BOUNDARY
- Growth Area Boundary

LAND USE DESIGNATION

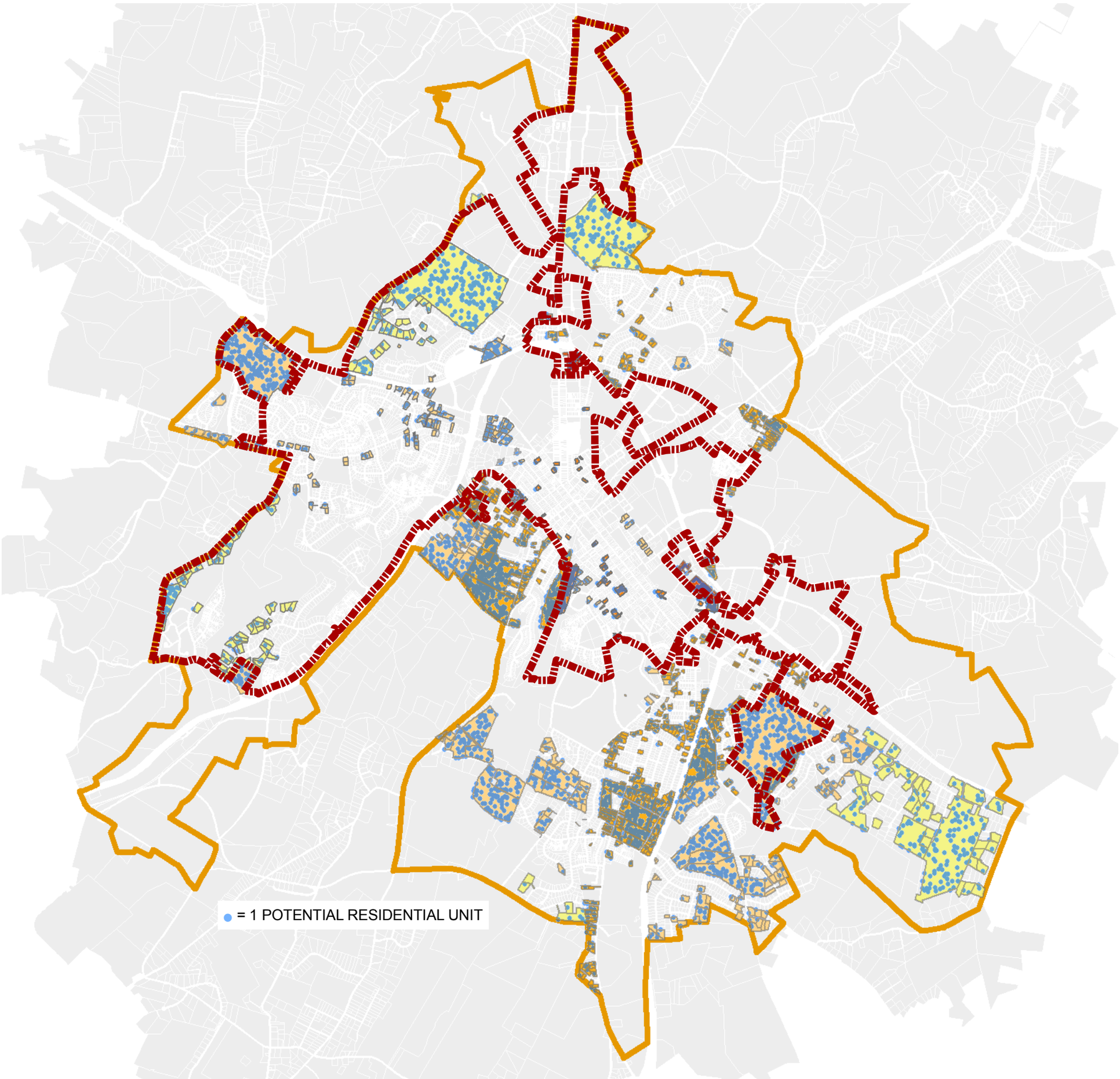
- DOWNTOWN BUSINESS
- CENTRAL BUSINESS
- NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- CONSERVATION
- HOUSING FOR OLDER PERSONS
- INDUSTRIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESI*
- SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL
- URBAN RESIDENTIAL
- PLANNED/RESIDENTIAL

* Parcels shown on this map may have the potential for additional development.

CORPORATION OF WESTMINSTER 1838

Map Not to Scale

Potential Lot Yield on Buildable Land



Legend

- CITY BOUNDARY

LAND USE DESIGNATION

- DOWNTOWN BUSINESS
- CENTRAL BUSINESS
- NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- CONSERVATION
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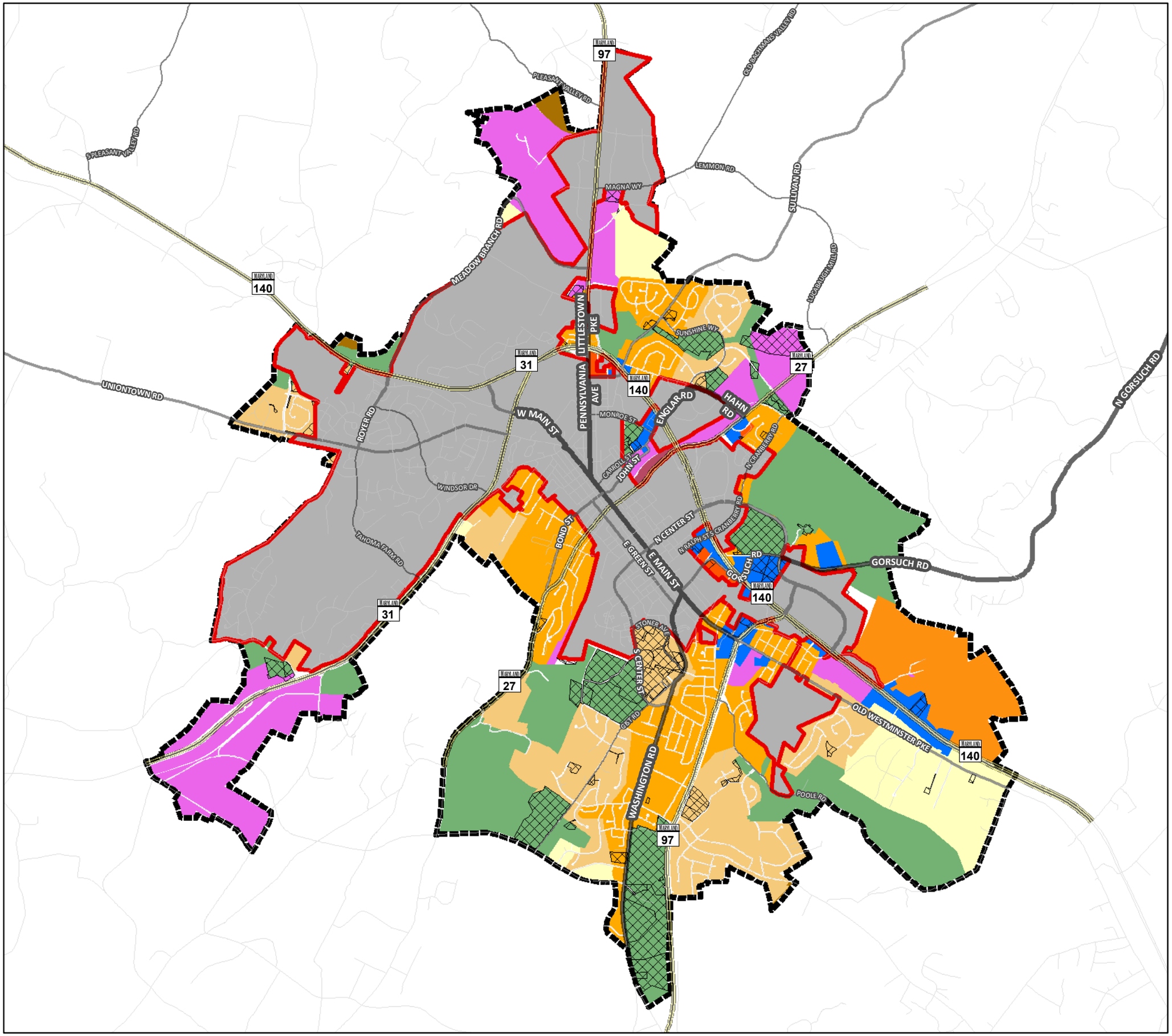
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESI*
- SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL
- URBAN RESIDENTIAL
- PLANNED/RESIDENTIAL
- Growth Area Boundary

* Parcels shown on this map may have the potential for additional development.

CORPORATION OF WESTMINSTER 1838

Map Not to Scale

Designated Land Use in Growth Area Boundary



Legend

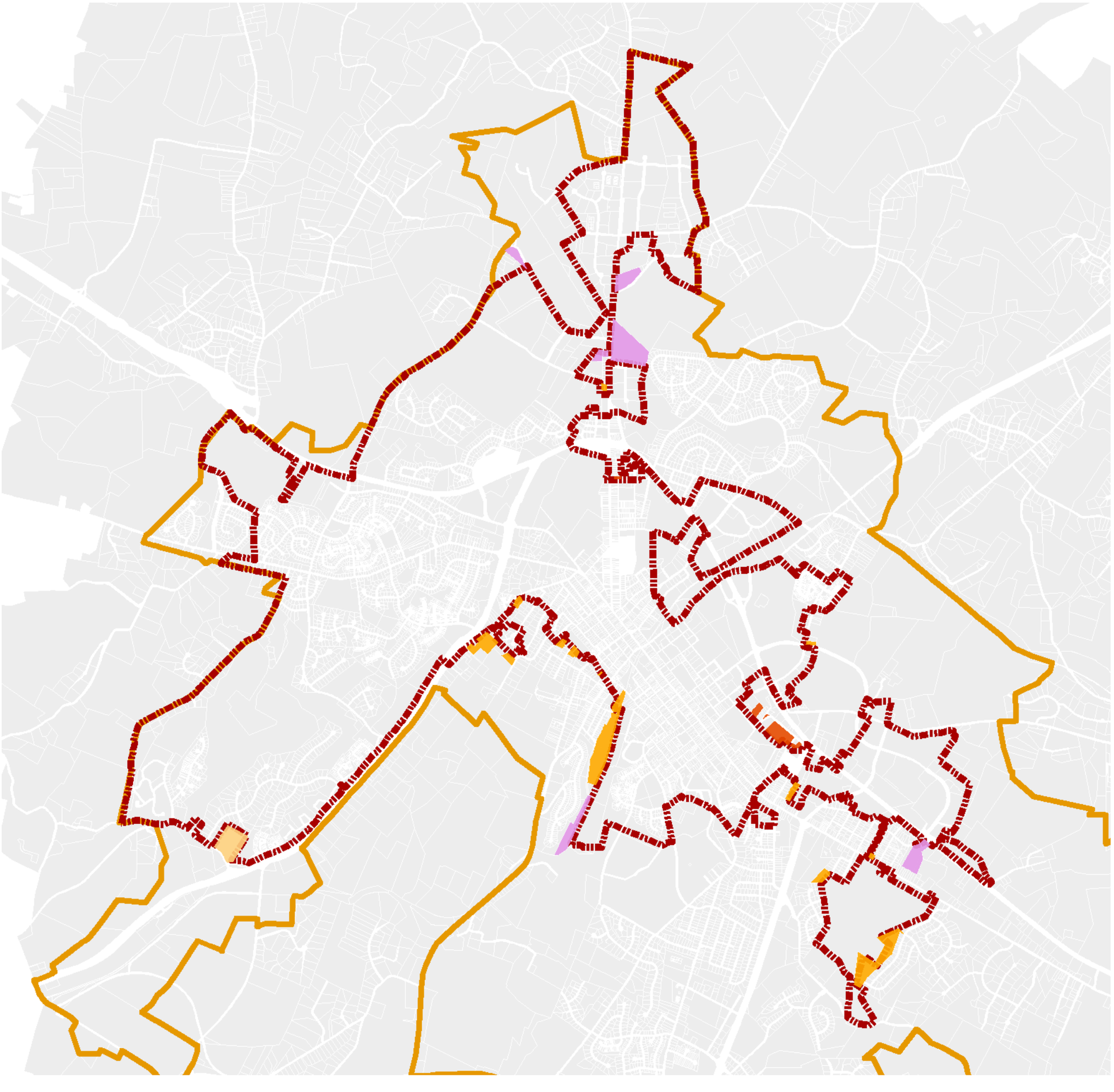
- City Boundary
- Growth Area Boundary
- Public Lands

Designated Land Use

- Agricultural
- Commercial
- Conservation
- Employment Campus
- Industrial
- Mixed Use Infill
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- Suburban Residential
- Urban Residential

Map Not to Scale

Annexable Land with Development Potential



Legend

LAND USE DESIGNATION

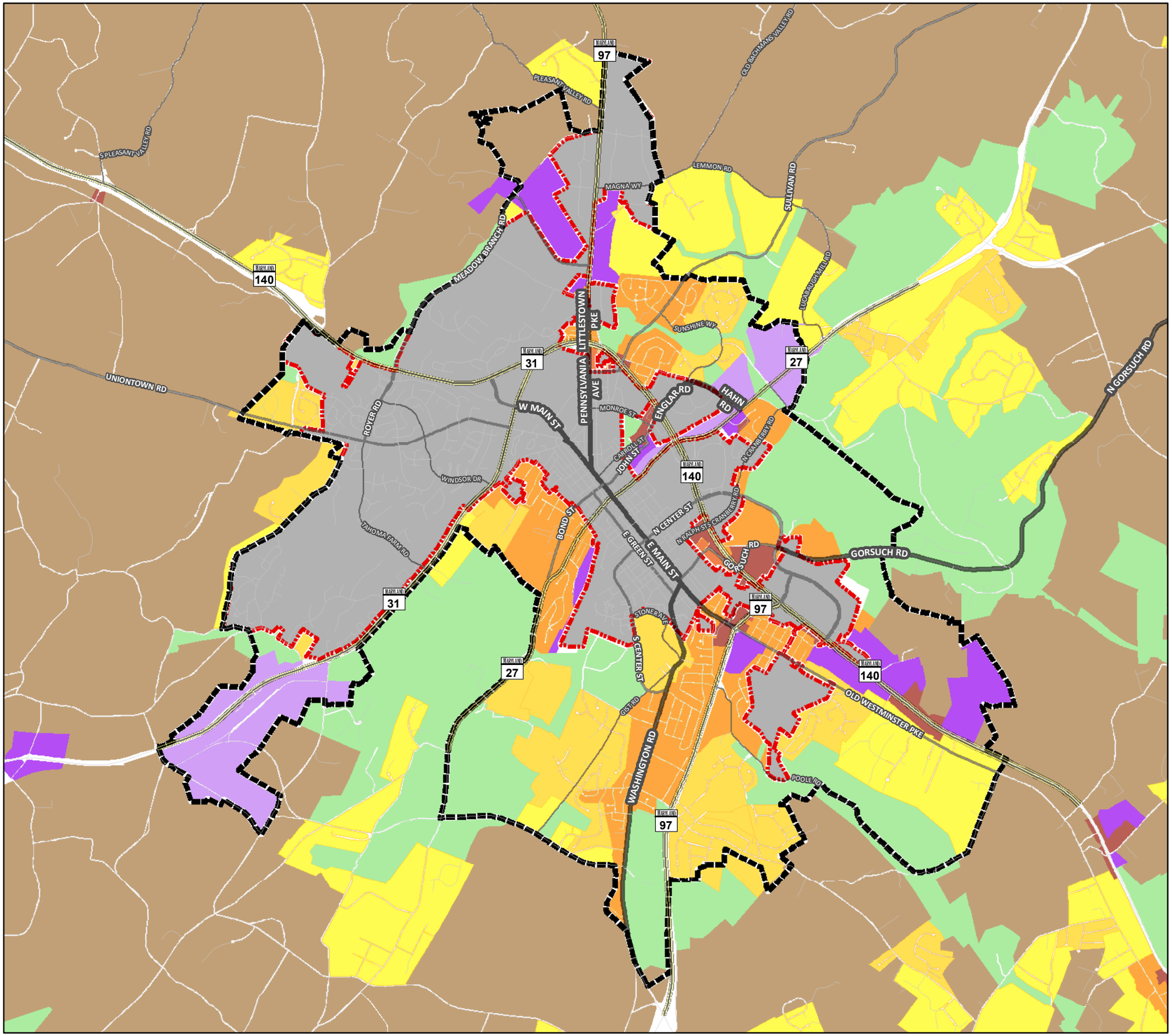
- DOWNTOWN BUSINESS
- CENTRAL BUSINESS
- NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- CONSERVATION
- HOUSING FOR OLDER PERSONS
- INDUSTRIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- MEDIUM DENSITY RESI*
- SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL
- URBAN RESIDENTIAL
- PLANNED/RESIDENTIAL
- CITY BOUNDARY
- Growth Area Boundary

* Parcels shown on this map may have the potential for additional development.

CORPORATION OF WESTMINSTER 1838

Map Not to Scale

Carroll County Zoning



Legend

- Growth Area Boundary
- City Boundary

County Zoning

ZONING

- R-7500 Residential
- R-10000 Residential
- R-20000 Residential
- R-40000 Residential
- IR Restricted Industrial
- IG General Industrial
- Heritage
- Conservation
- BL Local Business
- BG General Business
- AG Acriculture

CORPORATION OF WESTMINSTER 1838

Map Not to Scale

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Land Use

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

What is the Land Use Element?

At its 1997 Session, the General Assembly passed five pieces of legislation and budget initiatives known collectively as "Smart Growth." Maryland has adopted the principles of Smart Growth to be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

The following Smart Growth principle relates to the Land Use Element:

Promote Mixed Land Use

- To put uses in close proximity to one another, create alternatives to driving, such as walking or biking
- To provide a more diverse and sizable population and commercial base
- To make neighborhoods attractive to workers who increasingly balance quality of life criteria with salary to determine where they will settle

Purpose of Land Use Element

The Land Use Element is a key part of a comprehensive plan because it addresses the physical development of the entire jurisdiction.

It traditionally presents a picture of the municipality's land use patterns and makeup, both prior to and after anticipated growth has occurred.

It also is a policy document that contains goals, objectives and implementation recommendations that will guide the land use and intensity of development. The Land Use Element defines current land use and what it will look like when build-out occurs.

The current land use map depicts all land falling within the municipal boundaries, while the growth area land use map illustrates land uses for both current town and any municipal growth areas.

Community Vision for Land Use

Environment & Land Use

There are several major changes that residents want to see occur in the future to protect the environment of Westminster. They would like to see less construction of new housing developments or commercial developments. If any new homes are built in the future, residents would like the homes to be small, energy efficient and be able to conserve water. Residents want Westminster to become a "green city" where all residents work to reduce their carbon footprint.

Smart Growth & Land Use

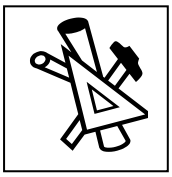
While residents would like to have more quality businesses, they want the addition of businesses that will follow the "smart growth" principles. As new developments and businesses become interested in building in Westminster, residents want to make sure that the city's infrastructure can support the new growth.

Character & Land Use

Residents describe the small town charm of Westminster as an attraction for both future residents and visitors. Residents express a desire to maintain the friendly, open and inviting atmosphere of Westminster and to expand upon it in order to make it one of the city's greatest assets.

Transportation & Land Use

Many residents choose walking or biking to get around the city. The second most frequent comment made by survey respondents was the need for improved pedestrian or bike accessibility. Residents would like to see a more inter-connected community that allowed for easy access to retail and recreation facilities from their neighborhoods.



Part 1: Existing Development of Westminster

Chapter 5

Part 1: Existing Development of Westminster
Part 2: 2004 Land Use Plan
Part 3: Future Population
Part 4: Areas of Concern
Part 5: 2009 Land Use Map
Part 6: Land Use Designations
Goals and Objectives

The City of Westminster features two distinct types of land use within its corporate limits: the traditional, relatively dense development found in the older parts of Westminster, and the suburban, less dense development located on the outskirts of the downtown area. Both types of development feature residential and commercial uses. Industrial uses are primarily located along the MD Route 27 and MD Route 97 corridors.

Section 1: Traditional Development

The older development in Westminster is centered on the intersection of Main Street and MD Route 27 (Railroad Avenue & Liberty Street), extending primarily east and west along Main Street. The streets in this area were developed years ago in a grid pattern, and buildings were constructed with smaller front and side yard setbacks than in the more recently developed areas. Residential and commercial uses are often located in close proximity, encouraging pedestrian travel. Residential uses range from single family detached housing to apartments located above businesses. Several small apartment buildings are located in this area, as well as single family dwellings converted to apartment units. Commercial uses include restaurants, retail, and professional services of limited intensity. These commercial uses are focused on Main Street with smaller concentrations located on Pennsylvania Avenue and East Green Street. The dense, mixed-use pattern characteristic of downtown prevailed in the City until the 1950s, when MD Route 140 was completed as a bypass for Main Street.

Section 2: Suburban Development

The construction of MD Route 140 made feasible the development on lands surrounding the existing City. Residential uses are separated from commercial and industrial uses in most areas. With the exception of some residential areas, this more recent development is characterized by wide, curvilinear streets and larger setbacks between buildings. The first major residential development of this type occurred west of MD Route 31 in the 1960s. Single-family detached homes comprise the majority of dwelling units in the more recently developed parts of Westminster, although some townhouses, apartments, and condominiums have also been constructed. Commercial uses in the MD Route 140 corridor include a shopping mall, large retail stores primarily located in 'strip mall' developments, and franchise restaurants. Many of the structures built on the City's prime industrial land, located north of

the City along MD Route 97, have been designed as 'flex-space.' This concept has encouraged a mix of commercial and industrial uses to develop along the MD Route 97 corridor.

Section 3: Open Space

The majority of open space in the City of Westminster is public land. Pocket parks provide small areas of open space throughout the City and offer opportunities for active recreation. Open space lands created in new residential subdivisions through the City's Cluster Subdivision ordinance supply additional acreage for outdoor recreation. Residents and visitors may also utilize the open space created by public school grounds. Several County-maintained parks and the Carroll County Farm Museum provide open space areas on the periphery of Westminster. Additional information on parks and recreation can be found in Chapter 11, Community Facilities & Public Services.

A number of farms in Carroll County have been permanently preserved from development through agricultural easements; however, there are no active farms located within the City's corporate limits. There are no significant conservation easements or forested lands in the City. However, two properties adjacent to the city limits do contain agricultural preservation easements, and a third property located just outside the Westminster Community Planning Area is also subject to a preservation easement. The majority of land in Westminster has been developed, subdivided for development, or placed under public open space protection for recreational purposes.

Part 2: 2004 Land Use Plan

Current land use patterns in the City of Westminster generally correspond with the original Comprehensive Land Use Plan adopted in 1985 by the City and Carroll County, partially because a large portion of the land within the City's corporate limits was already developed when the 1985 Land Use Plan was adopted. A comparison of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map with the Zoning Map, in place in December 2008, indicates that the zoning districts closely follow the land use categories designated in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. The Westminster Planning Staff will organize the 2010 Comprehensive Re-Zoning of Westminster using the 2009 Comprehensive Plan and 2009 Land Use Map. The re-zoning process will allow for implementing the recommended land uses, shown on the 2009 Land Use Map, by correlating land uses with the Westminster Zoning Map and Ordinance. In preparation for the re-zoning, the Westminster Planning Staff will also have to conduct a study of key properties within the City that should be re-zoned to meet the goals and objectives of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan.

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan provides updated land uses only for those areas within the City's corporate limits. Carroll County adopted the 2007 Westminster Environs Community Comprehensive Plan in November 2007, which included the approved 2007 Land Use Designation and Growth Area Boundary Map for the Westminster Environs. This map shows the land use designations for land within

the Growth Area Boundary, but outside of the City limits. The Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission collaborated with Carroll County to adopt the 2007 Westminster Environs Community Comprehensive Plan and approve of the land use designations adopted on the 2007 Land Use Designation and Growth Area Boundary Map.

Part 3: Future Population

In order to determine the City's ability to accommodate the projected future population, City staff reviewed vacant residential land, additional land that has not been designated for residential uses, approved residential units that have not yet been constructed, and existing vacant units. This information regarding available acreage and approved units allowed staff to calculate the population capacity of Westminster (Table 5.1 and 5.2) As shown in the population capacity table, (Table 5.3) the current available residential land and housing units in Westminster provide the capacity for an additional 2,957 people; however, the population projections show an increase of 4,284 people by the year 2030. Westminster faces a projected housing shortage of 565 housing units or housing for 1,327 future residents. The Municipal Growth Element (Chapter 4) addresses the housing shortage in detail.

Section 1: Meeting Demand for Land

An additional 94 acres of Urban Residential land (6 units per acre) would be required to accommodate the anticipated increase in Westminster's population. This figure also equates to 141 acres of Suburban Residential land (4 units per acre) or 283 acres of Low Density Residential land (2 units per acre). The need for additional industrial and commercial land to expand the City's employment base (see Chapter 9, Economic Development) is not included in these projected acreage totals. In 2010, the City of Westminster will conduct an Industrial and Commercial Land Use Study to determine the need for additional industrial and commercial land.

Once the City provides enough land to accommodate the projected in-migration, additional residential annexations should only proceed after a careful review of the City's infrastructure, growth policies, and adjusted population projections. The City should consider annexing land that is appropriate for dense residential development in order to accommodate the remainder of the projected population increase.

The City has followed a conservative approach to annexing land because of the City's limited supply of water to allocate new development projects. In order to conserve the City's limited amount of water, the City has created a water allocation policy that prioritizes development projects in order to decide what projects receive water allocation priority. Westminster is looking towards an alternative to additional annexations that include the revision of the Zoning Ordinance to allow for the consideration of single-family attached and multi-family housing. Commercial and industrial annexations require a separate set of considerations based upon the specific services demanded by these uses.

Table 5.1 Vacant Buildable Residential Land in Westminster, 2009

Vacant Buildable Land	Acreage	Zoning	Units	Persons per Unit	Population Capacity
Humbert Property	1.8	R-7,500	7	2.35	16.45
Alt Property	0.4	R-7,500	1	2.35	2.35
Langdon Property	5	R-7,500	26	2.35	61.1
Horosko Property	6.8	R-7,500	32	2.35	75.2
Koontz Property	7.5	R-10,000	30	2.35	70.5
Rinehart Property	1.8	R-10,000	1	2.35	2.35
Tennant Property	2.1	R-10,000	8	2.35	18.8
Windsor Overlook	1.3	R-10,000	2	2.35	4.7
Scott Property	1.2	R-10,000	3	2.35	7.05
Riley Property	1.5	R-10,000	6	2.35	14.1
Poole Property	1.1	R-20,000	2	2.35	4.7
Bair Property	6.4	R-20,000	12	2.35	28.2
Roth Property	1.8	R-20,000	2	2.35	4.7
Griswold Property	12.1	R-20,000	19	2.35	44.65
Riley Property	0.9	R-20,000	1	2.35	2.35
Hart Property	1.2	R-20,000	2	2.35	4.7
Bodnar Property	0.6	R-20,000	1	2.35	2.35
Leister Property	0.8	R-10,000	3	2.35	7.05
Colonial Heights	1.06	R-7,500	4	2.35	9.4
Kremer Property	1.3	R-10,000	5	2.35	11.75
WMC Development Corp.	1.4	R-10,000	5	2.35	11.75
DASY Property	3.2	R-7,500	14	2.35	32.9
Shaw Property	3.7	R-20,000	7	2.35	16.45
Booth Property	15	R-7,500	15	2.35	35.25
Cornias Property	20	R-20,000	39	2.35	91.65
Other lots	6.1	n/a	21	2.35	49.35

Total Vacant Buildable Land	**106.06 Acres**
Total Potential Dwelling Units	**268 Units**
Total Potential Population	**630 Residents**

Source: City of Westminster Planning, Zoning and Development Department, 2009

Table 5.2 Unbuilt Planned Developments in the City of Westminster, 2009

Planned Development	Acreage	Zoning	Units per Acre	# of Units	Persons per Unit	Population Capacity
Arnold Property	8	R-10,000	2.8	15*	2.35	38
Bolton Hill	118	R-20,000	1.4	189*	2.35	472
Carroll Lutheran Village	52.8	R-20,000	1.4	73	1.5	110
Fenby Farm	20	R-20,000	1.4	28	2.35	70
Furnace Hills Section 2^	2.6	PD-4	n/a	30*	2.35	60
Jandy Property	4.5	R-10,000	2.8	12	2.35	30
Naganna Property	147	R-10,000	1.53	225	2.35	529
Ridge Terrace	10	R-10,000	2.8	17*	2.5	43
RJ Maring Property	1.7	R-10,000	2.8	4*	2.35	10
Roop Mill	89.6	R-10,000	2.8	190*	2.35	475
Royer Terrace	2.6	R-10,000	2.8	4*	2.35	10
Village of Meadow Creek	119.5	R-10,000	2.8	188*	2.5	470
Westminster Housing Inc	1.1	R-7,500	4.2	4	2.5	10

** Number of Units Proposed by Developer*

Table 5.3: Total Residential Capacity in Westminster, 2009

Buildable Land	Acres	Units	Population Capacity
Vacant Buildable Residential Land	106.6	268	630
Planned Developments	577.4	775	2327
Total Buildable Land	**684**	**1043**	**2957**

Source: City of Westminster Planning, Zoning and Development Department, 2009

Part 4: Areas of Concern

Recent development in Westminster has generally conformed to the goals of the Land Use Plan and Map adopted as part of the City of Westminster Comprehensive Plan in June of 2004. The changing character of Carroll County and the continued growth experienced by the City has illuminated additional concerns not addressed in the 2004 plan. The appropriate redevelopment of underutilized parcels in the City's downtown area and the availability of various affordable housing options stand out as two land use issues facing the City in 2009.

The 2009 City of Westminster Development Capacity Analysis determined that under the current zoning and development scenario, the City has a limited housing unit capacity of 1,043 dwelling units. In order to accommodate the projected population growth for the next 20 years, Westminster will need to increase the housing unit capacity of the City by at least 648 dwelling units. As of 2009, the City of Westminster had 106 acres of vacant residential land. The current water crisis has limited the City's ability to expand the municipal boundaries beyond its water service capacity for about five years. This will require the City of Westminster to look inside its boundaries for opportunities to develop housing units, making vacant land a precious resource (See Chapter 4: Municipal Growth).

As the amount of vacant land continues to decrease and the need for housing units increases, promoting creative mixed-use, infill or redevelopment of unconventional parcels becomes a priority. A significant number of parcels in the downtown area of Westminster have the capacity to absorb a portion of this increased demand. The Maryland Route 27 Corridor Study, completed in the Fall of 2002 under a grant from the Maryland Department of Transportation, identified key sites for redevelopment within the downtown area. These parcels are located along the MD Route 27 and Main Street corridors and are shown in Map 8.1.

Section 1: MD 27 & Main Street Redevelopment Plan

The City of Westminster has a vision for the development of the parcels of land along MD 27 and Main Street that is appropriate to the character of the existing downtown. Many of these parcels front the main thoroughfares of the City. Development on these parcels would impact the identity and experience of old-town Westminster. Land uses that are compatible with the character of the district will reinforce the existing historic and pedestrian-friendly patterns of development. Compatible uses would replicate the mixed-use nature of downtown and capitalize on building and population density. Intrusion of suburban-style development would disrupt this pattern and introduce low-density auto-oriented uses that would fail to maximize the utility of the land. Land use regulations should require development along the MD 27 Corridor to complement and enhance the existing character of the downtown area.

Section 2: Workforce & Affordable Housing

In Chapter 7, Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization, the issue of the scarcity of moderately priced, affordable housing in Westminster is addressed. The lack of quality rental housing and a shortage of single-family attached dwellings and condominiums are primary causes of affordable housing issues in the City. Homogenous proliferation of single-family detached units can price a significant number of prospective homebuyers out of the local housing market, forcing those who work in the City to live in other communities some distance away.

The preservation of residential land for single-family detached units, without the provision for alternative housing types in proportion to market demand, encourages the conversion of existing homes into apartment units. The creation of a zoning district specifically for multi-family units such as townhouses, condominiums, and apartments would encourage new construction of a diversity of housing types. Such a district would preserve parcels most suited for these more intense residential uses. In addition, the aggregate quality of affordable housing would improve as new structures take advantage of advancements in construction materials and practices.

Part 5: 2009 Land Use Map

The City of Westminster 2009 Comprehensive Land Use Map (Map 5.1) reflects the planned and existing land uses located within the corporate limits (Map 5.2). The updated Map largely retained the land uses designated in the 2004 Land Use Plan; however, the expansion of the corporate boundaries since 2004 requires appropriate designations of additional land not examined in the 2004 Comprehensive Plan.

After studying the 2004 Comprehensive Land Use Map (Map 5.3), the 2008 City Zoning Map (Map 5.4) and looking at existing development and land use patterns within the City, Staff has concluded that several land use changes should be proposed for the 2009 Comprehensive Land Use Map. All of the proposed changes in Land Use are reflected in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. Most of Westminster's land uses will remain the same as implementation of the Comprehensive Plan proceeds, but there will be some important changes in land use as the City pursues its future.

It is the intent of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan to encourage densities in certain areas of Westminster to gradually begin to increase to levels that are more appropriate for an urban area and steer away from the past suburban area developments that currently exist in the City. The increase in density will be greatest in and around Downtown, and in certain areas close to the transit corridors and arterials such as Main Street. The restoration of density should be helpful if it can stimulate a sustainable supply of housing that can meet the needs of the community for the next 20 years. The key changes in land use are described below and reflect the goals of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan.

The following sections present the land use changes found within the 2009 Land Use Map:

Section 1: Annexed Land

The most significant change in the 2009 Land Use Plan, in comparison to the 2004 Land Use Plan, is the inclusion of recently annexed lands and their land use designations into the plan. In some cases, the land use designations of these properties remain unchanged from the 1985 Land Use Map. In other cases, the properties received a waiver of zoning from the County Commissioners upon annexation. The land use designations of recently annexed properties reflect the City's intention for the land to develop in accordance with the zoning adopted at the time of annexation. Since the adoption of the 2004 Land Use Map, the City of Westminster has annexed the following properties.

- Naganna Property
- Stoler Property
- Westminster Ridge Property
- Dasy Property

The City has not annexed any properties since April 2006 based on the Mayor and Common Council deferral on new annexations. In addition, the limited development that has occurred in the past six years has been concentrated to the West of MD 31.

Section 2: Neighborhood Commercial

The Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission (WPZC) recommended that the WMC Development Corporation property receive a land use change from Commercial to Neighborhood Commercial. This property is made up of four lots surrounding the College Square Shopping Center, on MD 31. The Neighborhood Commercial Land Use designation will provide a method for the orderly grouping and spacing of limited commercial development on properties outside, of the City's downtown, with quality design. The site is suitable for Neighborhood Commercial because it is intended to allow for appropriate commercial development in a convenient location, without adversely affecting the physical development pattern of nearby residential areas.

The WMC Development Corporation property borders two neighborhoods, as well as the McDaniel College campus, and is located across the street from another Neighborhood Commercial property, Shoppes at Meadow Creek. Of the total 34.2 acres, about 19.77 acres are currently developed or improved with a shopping center, a hotel and a stormwater management pond. The remaining 16.7 acres are vacant. Vacant land is a precious commodity within Westminster; as a result the WPZC will hold this property to a higher standard than most commercial properties, in order to achieve an attractive property that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhoods. The 2009 Comprehensive Land Use Map has re-designated the land use of the 34.2 acre parcel from Commercial to Neighborhood Commercial.

Section 3: Mixed Use Infill

The 2004 Comprehensive Plan targeted the center of Downtown, along MD 27, as a prime opportunity for the use of the Mixed Use Infill zone. The Mixed Use Infill zone expands upon the goals of the two downtown zones by requiring a vertical mix of uses, establishing design guidelines, and providing for shared parking among uses. The Mixed Use Infill zone also responds to the workforce and affordable housing shortage in the City. This zone allows for multi-family housing at a density of up to 25 dwelling units per acre as a principal permitted use in combination with a retail or office use on the first floor. The construction of multi-family dwellings in the downtown area would provide increased housing choices for residents and a more active 18-hour environment in the heart of the City. The 2009 Comprehensive Land Use Map has re-designated the land use of the MD 27 Gateway Corridor, also known as the center of Downtown Westminster, from Central Business to Mixed Use Infill. This change of land use reflects the vision of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan for the future of Downtown Westminster and meets the need of increasing workforce housing in the City of Westminster.

Section 4: Employment Campus

The City of Westminster has seen an increase in special exceptions requests to the Board of Zoning Appeals for office space in the Air Business Center over the past couple of years. The current zoning of this area is Restricted Industrial (IR). In March 2009, the Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission (WPZC) assigned staff to conduct an existing land use study of the Air Business Center to determine if the IR land use represents the current use of land. The study showed that the majority of existing land uses in the Air Business Center are office or mixed-use commercial. The significant increases in special exceptions for office space, and the findings of the existing land use study, indicate that there is a need for a change in land use to meet the demands of the local economy.

The Land Use designation Employment Campus is better suited for the Air Business Center. The purpose of the Employment Campus District is to provide an implementation process that will encourage creative, well planned, mixed industrial and commercial development in a campus-like setting, including: consistent and uniform site layouts; architecture designed to attract business and light industry; employers that provide primarily higher paying jobs requiring highly skilled workers; and, businesses that are willing to construct buildings on campuses that are aesthetically pleasing and contribute significantly to the County's tax base. The 2009 buildable land study showed there are 22 acres of vacant buildable land in the Air Business Center. These remaining 22 acres should meet the Employment Campus standards with well planned, mixed industrial and commercial development compatible to the existing businesses that will promote new jobs to boost the local economy. The 2009 Comprehensive Land Use Map has re-designated the land use of the Air Business Center from Industrial to Employment Campus.

Section 5: Planned Development

Hollow Rock Farm and its environs is an area rich in history and marked by diverse natural beauty. An underground stream in the cave, feeds a large pond on the property that is filled with native aquatic life. A tributary of Little Pipe Creek runs through the property; the current owner planted hundreds of willow stakes to hold the banks along the creek from the ravages of storm water running from city streets. The Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the Maryland Department of the Environment, the Army Corps of Engineers, Maryland Midland Railway, and the County's Office of Storm Water Management combined resources (including a $50,000 grant from the State) to install check dams in the dry bed running through the property. A 100 foot stream buffer is now firmly established and will help protect the tributary from the effects of development. The owner also worked with the State Department of Natural Resources to plant a field of warm season grasses to create habitat for local wildlife and to reduce the area of land requiring mowing.

This land, totaling roughly 25 acres, is situated in walking distance of Downtown Westminster. It is a perfect candidate for careful development of a workforce housing community that offers significant recreational opportunities. It is located in an environment that has been carefully attended to by the current owner in order to create habitat for local wildlife and to preserve stream health. The current land use of the property is Urban Residential. However, the property owner met with the Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission (WPZC) to voice her desire to develop the property in a more environmentally-friendly manner while increasing the current density. The WPZC determined that changing the land use to Planned Development would better represent the vision of the property owner. This vision coincides with the goals of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan such as increasing workforce housing and creating quality green building projects.

If development of this property is approached properly, it could be extended to include other plats of land that adjoin Carroll County's cultural center: the Farm Museum. The County's Department of Parks and Recreation is planning a trail system through the area. This area has the potential to be a model development that utilizes existing green building and landscaping approaches and creates a vibrant community for the people who serve the Westminster community including teachers, firefighters, police and nurses. The 2009 Comprehensive Land Use Map has re-designated the land use of the 25 acre parcel from Urban Residential to Planned Development.

Section 6: Conservation

The 1978 Development Plan for the Wakefield Valley restricted the development of housing within the parcel where Wakefield Valley Golf Course and Conference Center exists today. However, the current land use is Low Density Residential even though the development plan will not allow any residential homes to be built in this area. The WPZC recommended a land use change from Low Density Residential to Conservation to reflect the development plan and the existing land use. The existing land use for this parcel is the Wakefield Valley Golf Course and Conference Center surrounded by forest land and natural

landscapes as well as a stream that runs from the southwest corner to the eastern portion of the parcel. This change reflects how the land is currently used; however, this change does not change the approved Development Plan for Wakefield Valley. The 2009 Comprehensive Land Use Map has re-designated the land use of this 240 acre parcel from Low Density Residential to Conservation.

Section 7: Commercial

St. John's of Westminster, Roman Catholic Church owns the 29.54 acre parcel at 43-45 Monroe Street in Westminster. The Parish made a request to the Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission (WPZC) for a change of land use for a small portion of the property that is located in the northwest corner at the intersection of the Wimert Avenue and MD Route 140. This is a heavily trafficked intersection and is ideally suited for a retail or commercial use. The proposed plan would be to subdivide off a three to five acre parcel of this area, and then lease it for 15 to 20 years to a relatively low-impact commercial user such as a bank, drug store or lifestyle restaurant. The WPZC determined that this use would be compatible with similar commercial uses that currently exist at the Wimert Avenue and MD Route 140 intersection. The 2009 Comprehensive Land Use Map has re-designated the land use of the 5 acre parcel from Urban Residential to Commercial.

The owners of the Tenant Property also made a request to the WPZC for a change of land use from Low Density Residential to Commercial. The entire Tenant Property is 3.71 acres; of that, a 0.44 acre parcel is already developed by a car repair shop at Cranberry Rd/MD 140. The remaining 3.16 acres are undeveloped. The property is surrounded by commercial uses. The 2004 Land Use Map designated the remaining 3.16 acres low-density residential; however, the 2008 Zoning Map shows 1.6 acres of the total 3.71 acres to be zoned Business. The Tenant Family made a request to the WPZC for a change of land use of the 3.16 acres to correspond with the zoning of the rest of the Tenant Property and the existing use of land for the surrounding properties. The WPZC determined that the current zoning and the compatibility of neighboring properties provides justification for a change of land use. The 2009 Comprehensive Land Use Map has re-designated the land use of the 3.16 acre parcel from Low Density Residential to Commercial.

Section 8: Industrial

Thomas, Bennett and Hunter, Inc. (TBH) is a ready-mixed concrete supplier for central Maryland and the Eastern Panhandle of West Virginia. TBH is located on 70 John Street in Downtown Westminster. The property is zoned Restricted Industrial (I-R) except for a small part of the property that is zoned Residential and totals 0.7122 acres. TBH made a request to the Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission (WPZC) for a change of land use of the 0.7122 acres to correspond with the land use designation of the rest of the TBH property and that the change of land use is compatible with the existing industrial use of the land. The WPZC determined that the existing use of land provides justification for a change of land use. The 2009 Comprehensive Land Use Map has re-designated the land use of the 0.7122 acre parcel from Urban Residential to Industrial.

Part 6: Land Use Designations

Central Business

Central Business is located in the downtown commercial district of Westminster, focused along Main Street. This land use allows for a broad mix of commercial uses that are compatible with denser development and nearby residential neighborhoods abutting downtown Westminster. Dimensional requirements allow new development of a similar layout to existing buildings, enhance the pedestrian orientation of downtown, and provide for convenient customer and client parking.

Downtown Business

Downtown Business consists of those commercial areas within Westminster's downtown that are located outside of the Central Business District. The retail and service uses must be compatible with the quiet nature of the residential and office uses. Dimensional requirements enhance the pedestrian orientation of downtown, provide for convenient customer and client parking, and establish building heights that are compatible with the residential uses found in the Downtown Business and surrounding Zoning Districts.

Neighborhood Commercial

Neighborhood Commercial areas are generally located in the more recently developed portions of Westminster, primarily along the Maryland Route 31 corridor where commercial space is limited. The intent of this designation is to provide convenient retail and service uses to residents in close proximity to the site. The design of proposed developments in the Neighborhood Commercial designation must accommodate motor vehicles while also accounting for safe travel for pedestrians and bicyclists. Emphasis is also placed on minimizing the number of vehicular access points and the visual appearance of development.

Mixed Use Infill

The Mixed Use Infill Land Use promotes a more attractive and varied commercial, office, and residential environment than would be possible through the strict application of Euclidean zonal district requirements. The goal of this land use is to encourage developers to use a more creative approach in the development of land and to provide suitable sites for the development of integrated commercial, office, and residential facilities.

Commercial

Commercial areas are located primarily along Maryland Route 140. Uses are retail and service oriented, and design criteria for this district accommodates automobile access and high traffic volumes.

Industrial

Industrial areas are found on the outskirts of downtown Westminster and in several industrial parks along the Maryland Route 97 (N) corridor. This land use allows for a variety of industrial and accessory uses. Regulations ensure that industrial users do not become a nuisance to surrounding properties.

Planned Residential Development

A planned development allows for greater variety and flexibility in the design of residential developments and a more diversified mix of housing types. Applicants may request a rezoning to a Planned Development zone in the Urban and Suburban Residential areas. Specific requirements for this type of use are listed in the Zoning Ordinance.

Urban Residential

The majority of land designated for Urban Residential development is located within the older developed sections of the City. This is a high density residential classification which allows for five to six units per acre and a mixture of housing types.

Suburban Residential

Suburban Residential areas are located primarily in the Uniontown Road Corridor, North of Maryland Route 140, and along South Center Street. This designation allows for four dwelling units per acre and a variety of housing types.

Low Density Residential

Land designated for Low Density Residential is found in the Wakefield Valley area and north of Maryland Route 140 in the western portion of the City. Two units per acre are permitted on land designated as Low Density Residential, and single-family detached housing is the only permitted type in these areas.

Housing for Older Persons

Land within the Housing for Older Persons designation is generally located in existing neighborhoods where there is adequate vacant land available for high-density senior housing. This type of development will afford older persons the opportunity to live in a convenience-driven community that provides larger housing units and preserves personal independence in the home environment.

Conservation

Areas designated as Conservation are scattered throughout Westminster on recreation space, parkland, stream valleys, areas of steep slopes and soil limitations, and areas where very low-density development is necessary to protect natural resources. Development on Conservation land is not anticipated.

Public Use

The Public Use designation is an overlay designation that indicates properties that are publicly owned, exclusive of park areas. If a public use were eliminated, the underlying land use would guide future development.

Employment Campus

The Employment Campus designation encourages creative, well planned, mixed industrial and commercial development in a campus-like setting. It will require consistent and uniform site layouts; architecture designed to attract business and light industry and employers that provide primarily higher paying jobs requiring highly skilled workers.

Growth Tiers

On December 7, 2012, the City of Westminster administratively adopted a Growth Tier Map, pursuant to Title 1, Subtitle 5, of the Land Use Article of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The addition of this Growth Tier Map in the *2009 Comprehensive Plan* was recommended by the Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission on December 14, 2017, as part of its Mid-Cycle Review in 2017. Per the Growth Tier Map, only Tiers I, II, and IIA are in the City of Westminster. The adopted map on the following page includes the new lands annexed into the City, since 2012, with the corresponding tiers applied to the new lands accordingly.

Growth Tier Map - City of Westminster

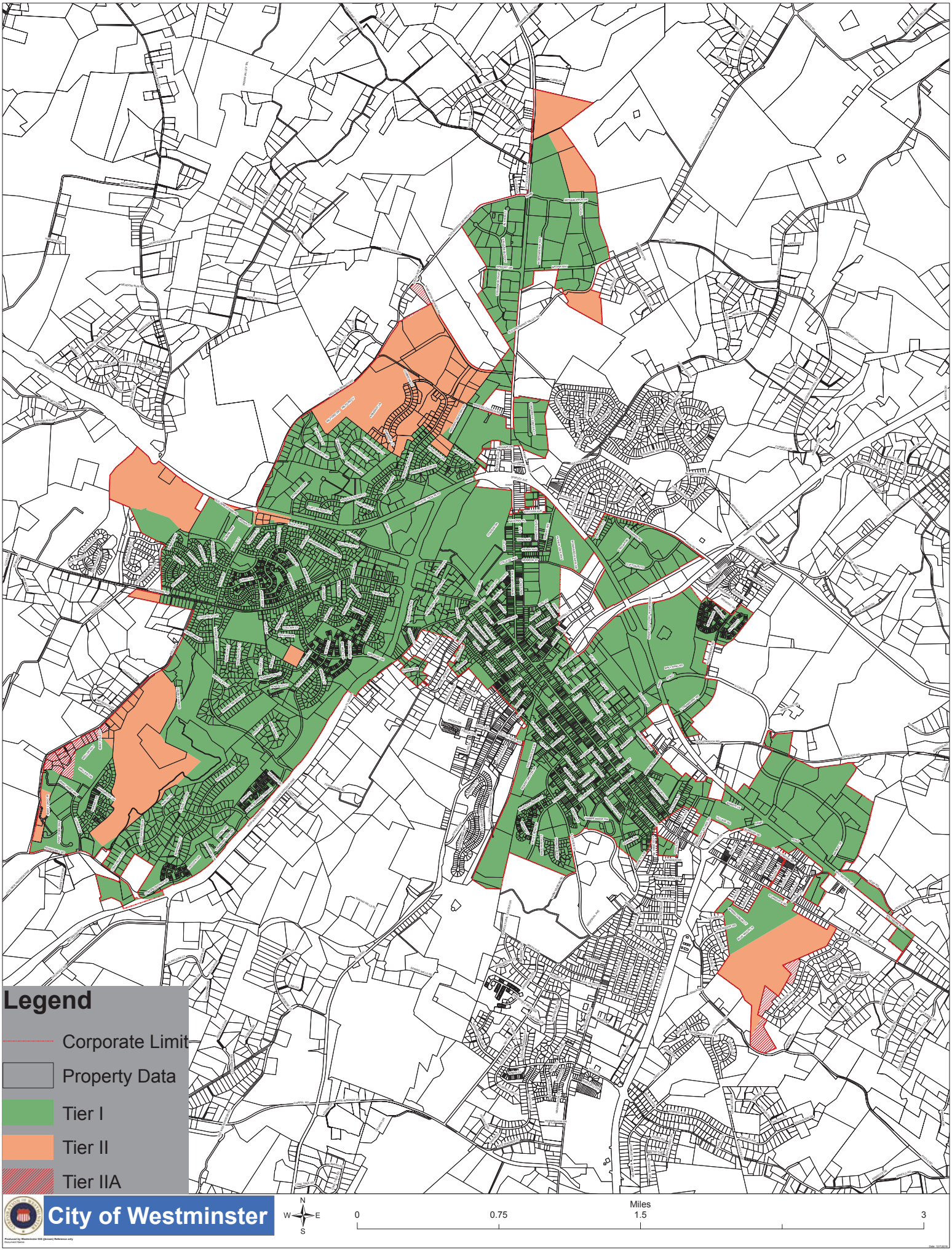


Table 5.4 Land Use Designations, 2009 Land Use Map

Land Use Designation	Zoning Equivalent	Acreage	% of Total
Central Business	C-B, C-C	18	0.43%
Downtown Business	D-B	93	2.22%
Neighborhood Commercial	N-C	94	2.25%
Commercial	B, PRSC	458	10.94%
Industrial	P-I, I-R, I-G	392	9.36%
Planned Residential Development	PD-4, PD-9	264	6.31%
Urban Residential	R-7,500	382	9.13%
Suburban Residential	R-10,000	1,164	27.81%
Low Density Residential	R-20,000	683	16.32%
Conservation	C	472	11.28%
Employment Campus	E-C	108	2.58%
Mixed-Use Infill	M-U	38	0.91%
TOTAL		**4,186**	**100**

** The land use designation and the zoning of a property may conflict in certain cases.*

Source: City of Westminster Department Planning, Zoning and Development, 2009

Land Use Element

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan outlines strategies to protect public investment and assets by encouraging the efficient use of community infrastructure and natural resources. In the future, the City of Westminster will work to assure the orderly, efficient growth of the City by encouraging development in those areas which are best served by infrastructure and community services. The City of Westminster is committed to encouraging growth in a manner that enhances the value and character of existing business and community investments. Land uses will continue to protect the quality of life of the community and to enhance the physical environment of Westminster. Land Use goals and recommendations are located throughout the 2009 Comprehensive Plan under each Element.

Goals and Objectives

Goal L1: Ensure new development is compatible with the community vision for the future of Westminster

Objective 1: Address compatibility between land uses

a. Require conformance of commercial development near residential areas with the Westminster Design Guidelines

b. Continue efforts in Downtown Westminster that address the appearance of this commercial area and improve access for pedestrians from nearby neighborhoods

c. Ensure sufficient buffers between commercial or industrial uses and adjacent residential areas

Objective 2: Infill development along MD Route 27 and Main Street should be coincide with downtown redevelopment efforts and plans

a. Rezone appropriate parcels to the Mixed Use Infill Zone

b. Ensure consistent and contiguous pedestrian accessibility along MD Route 27

c. Consider the addition of on-street parking along MD Route 27

d. Relocate overhead utilities to the rear of properties where possible

e. Work with developers to determine and construct improvements to MD 27 that would be needed to accommodate infill development

Goal L2: Allow for a full range of residential uses to promote diversity in the housing stock while increasing the housing unit capacity, as outlined in the Municipal Growth Element

Objective 1: Allow a mix of residential unit types in Westminster neighborhoods

a. Review regulations, development review processes, and staff procedures to determine whether it is appropriate to streamline the process for approval of Planned Development applications

b. Support and encourage development offering a mix of housing types, including mixed-use development that provides easy access to downtown amenities

c. Provide opportunities for the construction of compatible infill within the older parts of Westminster and the development of "neo-traditional" type neighborhoods

d. Refine language in the residential zoning districts that specifically address accessory apartments and the conversion of accessory buildings to dwelling units

e. Encourage use of the Cluster Subdivision Ordinance

Objective 2: Ensure the availability of quality single-family attached and multi-family housing units to accommodate future population growth

a. Consider the creation of a zone exclusively for townhouse or multi-family development

b. Identify appropriate sites to zone for single-family attached and multi-family development to increase housing unit capacity

c. Consider the adoption of design guidelines for multi-family housing developments

Goal L3: Provide a sustainable balance of new commercial, industrial, and residential land to meet existing and future demand

Objective 1: Expand the corporate limits where appropriate to accommodate projected residential growth and provide needed jobs and services in the City

a. Coordinate with the County to identify parcels that are appropriate for annexation as industrial or commercial land

b. Extend water and sewer service to annexed lands when appropriate

Objective 2: Ensure that expansions of the corporate boundary do not impose an undue burden on the City's public facilities and infrastructure

a. Review potential annexations for adequate public facilities and roads

b. Ensure that annexation occurs according to the need projected by future demand

Goal L4: While recognizing infill development is the preferred method of growth, plan for the expansion of city boundaries to accommodate growth in the future

Objective 1: Develop master plans or studies for key properties within the "Growth Area" in order to prepare for future development that meets the vision and needs of the community

a. Prioritize identified key properties within the "Growth Area" for potential new residential, commercial and industrial development

b. Coordinate with County Planning Staff and the representatives from the community to create a unified vision for the priority key properties

c. Review areas for future expansion outside of the City on an annual basis

Objective 2: Annexations and extension of full City infrastructure should occur only as infrastructure and city services can be feasibly provided.

a. Carefully analyze for general compliance with this Comprehensive Plan all applications for the expansion of city boundaries

b. Evaluate the fiscal impact of all proposed annexations

Objective 3: Coordinate with the County to implement the Westminster Environs Plan and the Carroll County Comprehensive Plan

a. Cooperate with Carroll County to establish and implement uniform standards for development within the "Growth Area"

Goal L5: Design communities in a way that permits more efficient use of land and resources

Objective 1: Support infill development and other redevelopment options on underutilized residential or commercial lots

a. Identify priority redevelopment areas in order to encourage redevelopment within established areas of the City

b. Promote the infill of the existing Central Business District and Downtown Business District with business and high density residential uses

c. Develop and utilize neighborhood compatibility and designs standards to guide infill development and other redevelopment options

Objective 2: Plan for increased density to provide high quality projects that will balance the need for accommodating growth and maintaining small town character

a. Encourage buildings to grow vertically rather than horizontally, and to incorporate structured rather than surface parking, in order to reduce the footprint for new construction

b. Review and revise the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations for the promotion of development with a mix of uses and densities

c. Consider density bonuses or other incentive for projects within the City core to achieve desired densities

d. Develop appropriate standards and guidelines for higher density projects

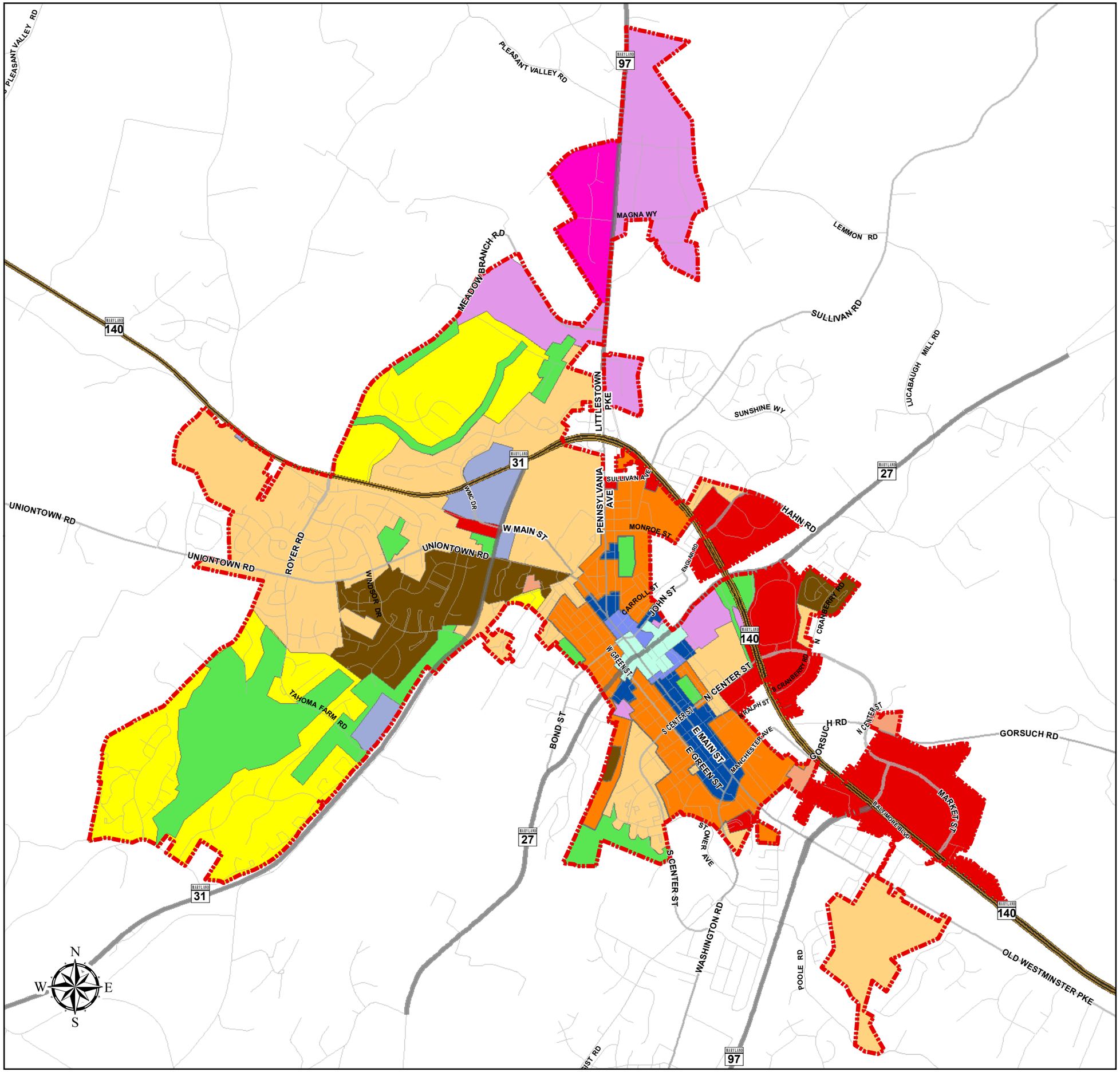
Objective 3: Acquire or secure use of lands for parks, open space and trails, in conjunction with public and private sector development projects

a. Prioritize existing park needs so that acquisition and development begins in areas of the City with the greatest deficiencies

b. The City should encourage the dedication of public parkland through land donations, cash contributions or other compensations

c. Require pathways in developing areas that will connect with other neighborhoods, public spaces or retail areas

Land Use Plan 2009



Legend

City Boundary

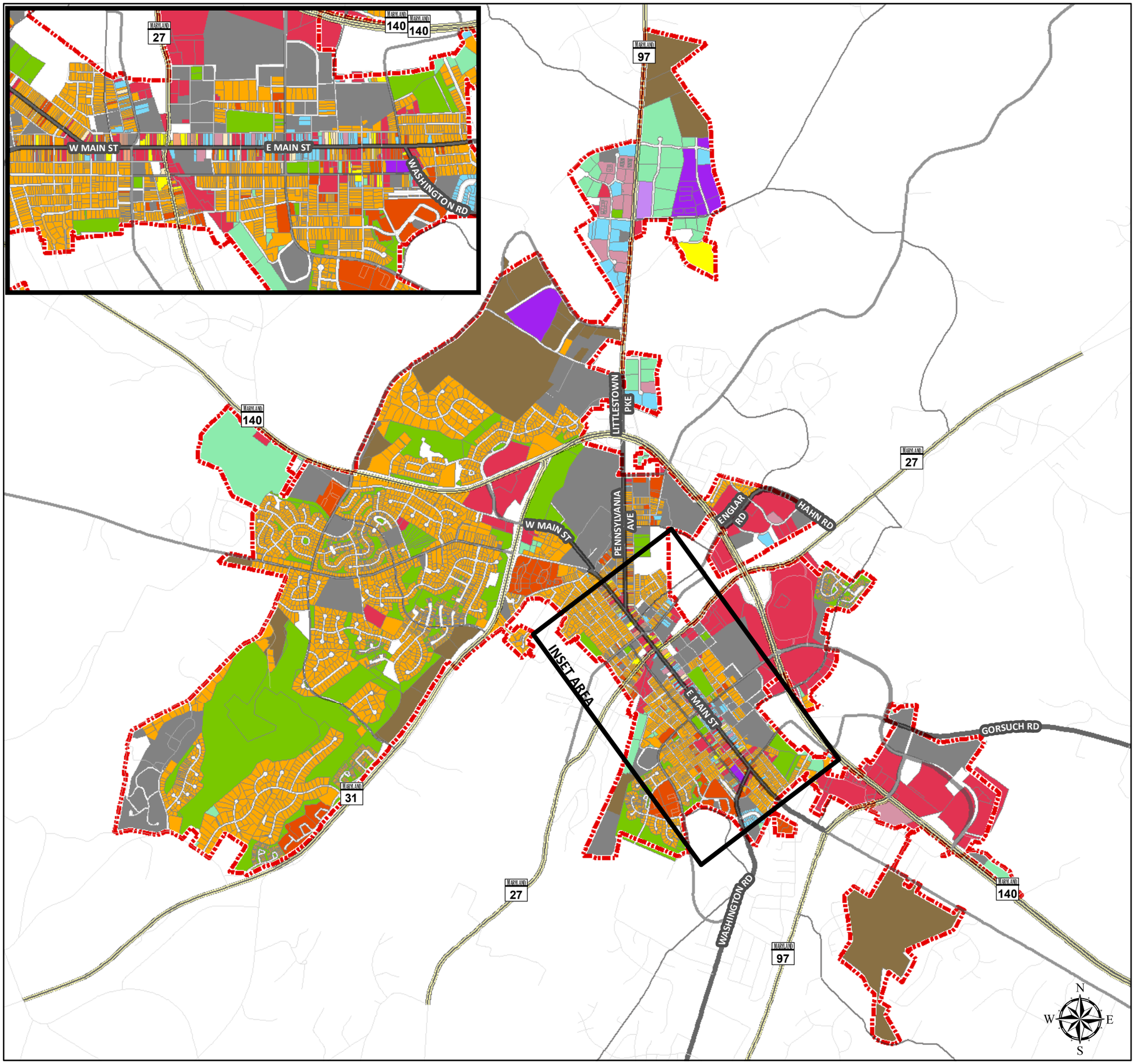
LAND USE DESIGNATION

- COMMERCIAL
- DOWNTOWN BUSINESS
- CENTRAL BUSINESS
- MIXED USE INFILL
- EMPLOYMENT CAMPUS
- NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
- CONSERVATION
- HOUSING FOR OLDER PERSONS
- INDUSTRIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL
- URBAN RESIDENTIAL
- PLANNED/RESIDENTIAL

CORPORATION OF WESTMINSTER 1838

Map Not to Scale

Existing Use of Land



Legend

- City Boundary

Existing Use of Land

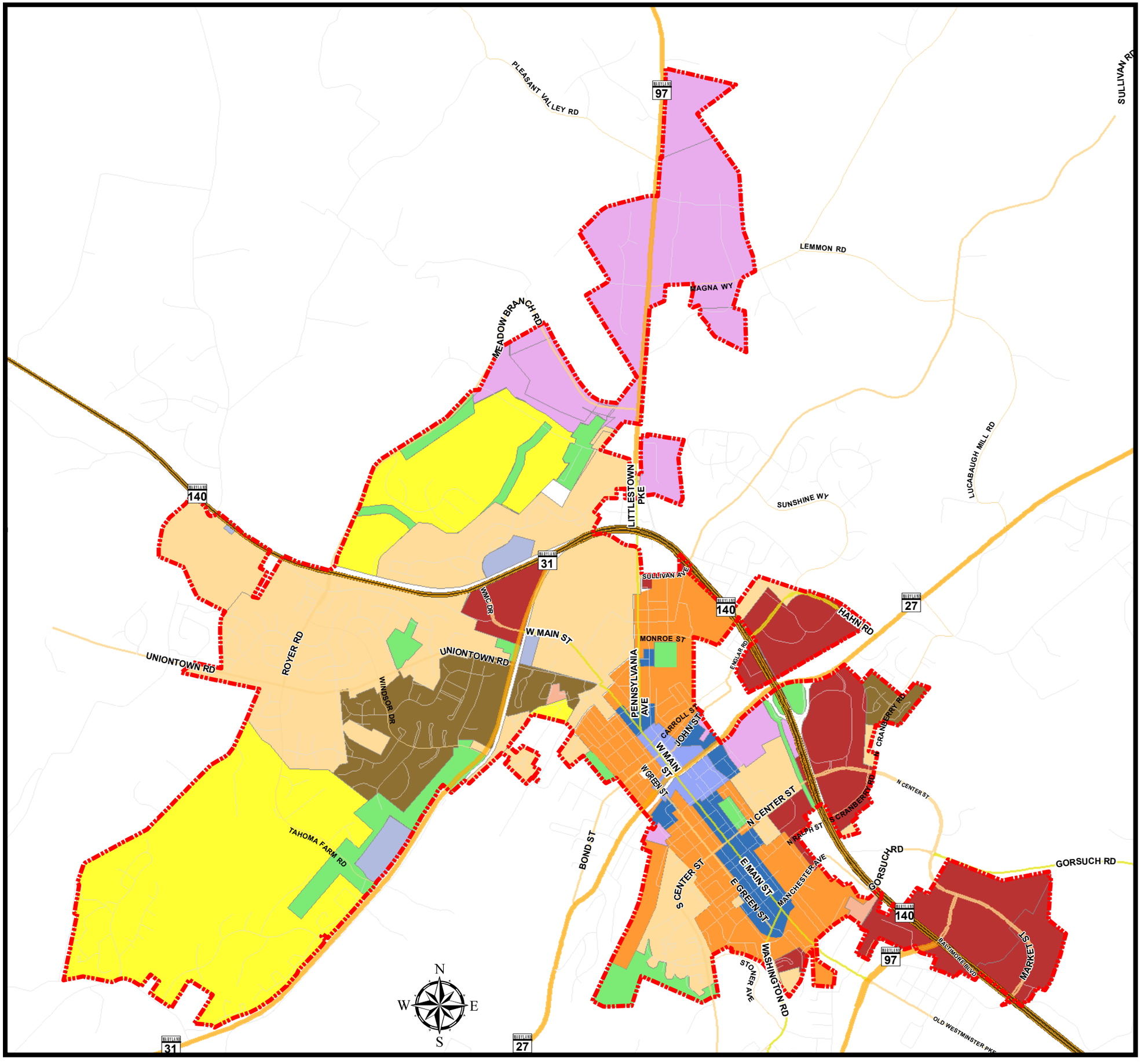
- Agriculture/Resource
- Commercial Uses
- Office
- Mixed Office and Commercial
- Warehouse/Flex
- Industrial/Manufacturing
- Mixed Office and Residential
- Mixed Office, Residential, and Commercial
- Mixed Residential and Commercial
- Multi-Family Residences
- One- and Two-Family Residences
- Open Space and Recreation
- Public Facilities and Institutions
- Vacant Land

CORPORATION OF WESTMINSTER 1838

Map Not to Scale

Land Use Plan

Approved 2004



Legend

- City Boundary (2004)

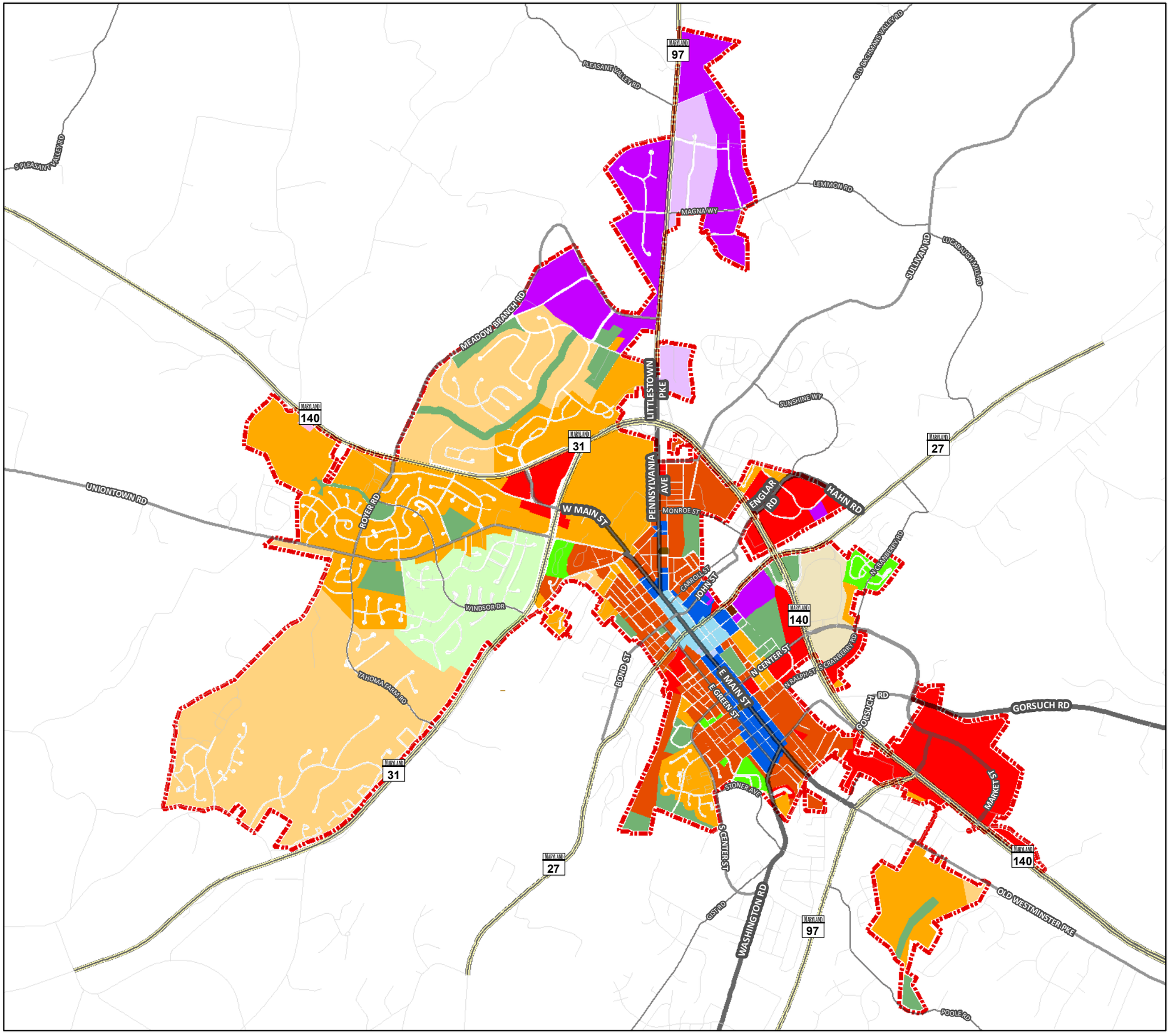
LAND USE DESIGNATION

- DOWNTOWN BUSINESS
- CENTRAL BUSINESS
- NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- CONSERVATION
- HOUSING FOR OLDER PERSONS
- INDUSTRIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL
- URBAN RESIDENTIAL
- PLANNED/RESIDENTIAL

Map Not to Scale

CORPORATION OF WESTMINSTER 1838

City of Westminster Zoning



Legend

- City Boundary

ZONING

- Historic District overlay
- AG Agriculture
- B Business
- C Conservation
- C-C Central Commerce
- C-B Central Business
- D-B Downtown Business
- C-N Compatible Neighborhood overlay
- I-G General Industrial
- P-I Planned Industrial
- I-R Restricted Industrial
- N-C Neighborhood Commercial
- P-RSC Planned Regional Shopping
- PD-4 Planned Residential Development
- PD-9 Planned Residential Development
- R-7,500 Residential
- R-10,000 Residential
- R-20,000 Residential

CORPORATION OF WESTMINSTER 1838

Map Not to Scale

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Environmental Resources & Protection

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

What is the Environmental Resources & Protection Element?

Section 3.05 of Article 66B requires that the plan include a sensitive areas element that contains goals, objectives, principles, policies, and standards designed to protect, from the adverse effects of development, sensitive areas, including streams and their buffers, 100-year floodplains, habitats of threatened and endangered species, and steep slopes.

The Environmental Resources & Protection Element will describe how the City of Westminster will protect the following sensitive areas from adverse impacts of development:

- streams and their buffers
- 100-year floodplains
- endangered or threatened species habitat
- steep slopes
- wetlands and their buffers
- wellhead buffers
- carbonate rock areas
- reservoir watersheds
- trees and native plant species
- agricultural and forest lands intended for resource protection or conservation

State Planning Visions found in this Element

Environmental Protection - Land and water resources are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems and living resources.

Resource Conservation - Waterways, open space, natural systems, scenic areas, forests, and agricultural areas are conserved.

Quality of Life and Sustainability - A high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water, and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment.

Community Vision for the Environment

Carroll County is known for its beautiful green landscapes and vast stretches of open farmland. Residents want to keep the rural image of Westminster by preserving green space and creating open space. However, some residents are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the City's efforts to preserve green space and to create open space. Residents enjoy open spaces, especially in the form of parks, walking trails and biking trails.

Residents want to protect the environment for recreational purposes but they also want to protect the environment for future residents. There is a consensus among residents that there should more effort by the City to improve the environmental health of Westminster. This includes efforts to ensure clean water resources, good air quality, land conservation, smart growth and an attractive community.

There are several changes that residents want to see occur in the future to protect the environment of Westminster. They would like to see less construction of new housing developments or commercial developments. If any new homes are built in the future, residents would like the homes to be small, energy efficient and be able to conserve water. Residents want Westminster to become a "green city" where all residents and businesses work to reduce their environmental footprint.

Part 1: History

CHAPTER 6

Part 1: History
Part 2: Climate
Part 3: Topography & Soils
Part 4: Water Resources
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Goals & Objectives

Carroll County and the incorporated municipalities worked in a collaborative effort through an Interjurisdictional Steering Committee and adopted an Environmental Resources Element of the Comprehensive Plan. This element satisfies the State requirement to develop and adopt a "sensitive areas" element to the Plan. In that regard, City staff worked collaboratively with County staff in 1998 to incorporate elements of the ERE into the City of Westminster Comprehensive Plan.

The 2009 City of Westminster Comprehensive includes actions taken by the City to further enhance the protection of natural resources. Since 2004, protecting the environment and its resources has become an issue at the forefront of municipal decisions for not only the City of Westminster but throughout the world. For that reason the City of Westminster has renamed this chapter "Environmental Resources & Protection Element."

Section 1: Planning Act of 1992

On October 1, 1992, the Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992 took effect. The Act was adopted because of recognition within the State that changes in land use within the State have resulted in a decline in the quality of the State's environmental resources and, therefore, a related decline in the quality of life for the citizens of the State. As development has expanded throughout the State, the impacts on our local environmental resources have increased. Studies have demonstrated that the cumulative effect of these changes on a local level have caused a decline in the Chesapeake Bay, as well as other environmental resources.

The premise the Planning Act of 1992 is that the local comprehensive planning process undertaken by counties and towns is the most effective and suitable method to establish priorities for growth and resource conservation, and that once those priorities are established at the local level, it is the State's responsibility to support and uphold them. County and municipal comprehensive plans are being amended to address an established set of policies, called "visions." The visions were prepared as part of the 1987 Chesapeake Bay Agreement between Maryland, Virginia, the District of Columbia, and Pennsylvania and are reiterated by the Maryland legislature in the 1992 Planning Act.

Article 66B, Section 3.06, requires that all local comprehensive plans address these visions. Furthermore, Section 3.05 of Article 66B requires that the plan include a sensitive areas element that contains goals, objectives, principles, policies, and standards designed to protect, from the adverse effects of development, sensitive areas, including streams and their buffers, 100-year floodplains, habitats of threatened and endangered species, steep slopes, wetlands and their buffers, and agricultural and forest lands intended for resource protection or conservation (Map 6.1). The sensitive areas element can also include other areas in need of special protection, as determined in the local plan. This chapter serves as the sensitive areas element of the *City of Westminster Comprehensive Plan* and fulfills these requirements of Article 66B.

Part 2: Climate

In general, the City of Westminster has a humid, continental climate with four well-defined seasons. The mean temperature in Westminster is approximately 53 degrees Fahrenheit, with wide variations in temperature between different times of the year. The hottest part of the year is the last part of July and the beginning of August, and the coldest time of year is the latter part of January and the early part of February. A temperature of 90 degrees Fahrenheit or more can be expected on an average of 22 days per year. During winter, the temperature falls below 32 degrees Fahrenheit frequently.

The annual average precipitation in Westminster is approximately 42 inches. In general, precipitation is fairly evenly distributed throughout the year. There are normally 3 to 4 inches of precipitation per month for most of the year, with slightly higher recordings in July and August. Droughts are possible at any time of year; however, a serious drought is most likely during the summer. The average annual snowfall in Westminster is 33.5 inches; however, the annual total snowfall varies greatly from year to year. There are typically 7 to 8.5 inches of snow per month between December and March, with the heaviest snowfall occurring toward the end of the winter in February and March.

The prevailing wind in the Westminster area is from the west-northwest or northwest, except from June through September, when the prevailing wind is southerly. The average wind velocity is 8 to 10 miles per hour, but winds of 50 to 60 miles per hour sometimes accompany hurricanes, severe thunderstorms during the summer, or general storms during the winter. Tornadoes have also been known to touch down in the Westminster area.

Part 3: Topography & Soils

Section 1: Topography

The topography in the Westminster area is rolling, with elevations that range from 540 feet above sea level at the Wastewater Treatment Plant to 900 feet above sea level at the southeast end of the City. Two irregular ridges cross the Westminster Community Planning Area (CPA) from north-northeast to south-southwest. A northeastern extension of Parr's Ridge connects Mount Airy with Westminster, and

a northeastern extension of Dug Hill Ridge connects the northern areas of Westminster, around the Air Business Center, with Manchester.

Areas containing steep slopes predominate in three general locations within the Westminster CPA. In the southwest portion of the CPA, steep slopes occur in the area along Little Pipe Creek and the Western Maryland Railroad, and in the area southeast of Stone Chapel Road and Old New Windsor Pike. In the northeast portion of the CPA, steep slopes occur in areas along the West Branch and its tributaries and the Western Maryland Railroad.

Section 2: Soils

There are two general soil types in the City of Westminster. A majority of the Westminster Community Planning Area is comprised of the Glenelg-Manor-Mt. Airy association. This type of soil is defined as well-drained and somewhat excessively drained, mainly hilly soils that are deep and moderately deep over schist. Since many areas are too steep for regular cultivation, proportionately more of the land within the City is wooded than land in the unincorporated portion of Carroll County. The Mount Airy soils are only 2 to 3 feet deep to bedrock, and therefore, have severe limitations that restrict the use of septic systems. The Glenelg and Manor soils have less severe limitations on the use of septic systems.

Two areas of the Westminster CPA are located in the Mt. Airy-Glenelg association. A small finger of this association extends to the northwest part of the CPA in an area west of Maryland Route 97 in the vicinity of the Air Business Center. Another area is located in the southwest portion of the CPA. Situated generally south of Main Street and Uniontown Road, it extends from east of Maryland Route 27 (midway between Maryland 27 and Maryland 32) westerly to beyond the CPA boundary. This association is dominantly somewhat excessively drained, rolling to very steep, and contains channery soils that are moderately deep and deep over schist. The soils of this association are more strongly sloping, and the slopes are more broken than the soils in other parts of Carroll County. Sizable areas are still woodland and those areas within floodplains should remain wooded. Some of the steeper cleared areas that are eroded are prime candidates for reforestation, either naturally or by planting. A cover of trees in floodplains or on steep slopes would protect the watershed and reduce damage by floodwater and transported soil material in other areas. The majority of soils in the Mt. Airy-Glenelg association are generally too shallow or too steep for the use of septic systems.

The *Soil Survey of Carroll County, Maryland* classifies soil types into eight categories. Class I, II, and III soils are considered to be prime agricultural soils, as well as prime development soils. Class IV soils are generally considered to be productive, but not prime. The Class V through VIII soils are also productive, but are not considered to be prime because of slopes in excess of 8 percent or other characteristics. Although there are no active agricultural areas within the City of Westminster, this information is also useful for development, as mentioned above. Approximately 63 percent of the land area within the Westminster corporate limits contains Class I, II, or III soils, and another 22 percent of the soils are Class

IV. Only 15 percent of Westminster is characterized by Class V through VIII soils, which may require special development techniques to minimize environmental impacts.

Part 4: Water Resources

Section 1: Surface Hydrology

The Westminster Community Planning Area is located on a watershed divide. The southeastern portion of the Westminster CPA drains into the Patapsco River basin, and the northwestern segment drains into the Middle Potomac River basin (which includes the Monocacy River) via Big and Little Pipe Creeks. Since Westminster is located on a watershed divide, the headwaters of most of the streams that flow through the CPA are located within the CPA. Additionally, due to the area's complex topography, numerous small sub-watersheds are located throughout the Westminster CPA

The Westminster CPA contains a relative abundance of major streams and tributaries. The portion of the CPA to the southeast of Parr's Ridge and Dug Hill Ridge drains to the North Branch of the Patapsco River, which in turn drains to Liberty Reservoir located downstream of Westminster. Streams which traverse the CPA within this watershed include West Branch (also known as Hull Creek; traversing 4.5 miles within the CPA), Cranberry Branch (which drains to Cranberry Reservoir, a major component of the City of Westminster's community water supply system; 2.3 miles), Beaver Run (2.7 miles), Middle Run (0.8 mile), and Little Morgan Run (1.5 miles).

The area northwest of Parr's Ridge and Dug Hill Ridges includes two major watersheds which drain to the Monocacy River: Big Pipe Creek (northwest of Dug Hill Ridge) and Little Pipe Creek (northwest of Parr's Ridge). Little Pipe Creek (4.2 miles) and Copps Branch (2.7 miles) are the two major streams within the Little Pipe Creek drainage area which traverse the Westminster CPA. Meadow Branch of Big Pipe Creek (1.9 miles) is the sole major stream within the Big Pipe Creek watershed, which traverses the CPA.

The streams and tributaries of the Little Morgan Run, Beaver Run, and Middle Run, generally located in the southeast portion of the Westminster CPA, are classified as Use III-P streams (natural trout streams which also drain to public water supplies). These three streams comprise a portion of the North Branch of the Patapsco River drainage area, which flows to Liberty Reservoir. The other streams in the Westminster area are Class IV-P (recreational trout streams which also drain to public water supplies).

The numerous streams that traverse the Westminster CPA generally have steeply sloping banks. Consequently, the corresponding flood plain areas are relatively steep and narrow. Non-tidal wetlands are sparsely dispersed in the Middle Potomac River basin, but are more abundant in the Patapsco River basin.

Section 2: Geology and Subsurface Hydrology

The Westminster Community Planning Area is underlain by a variety of rock types. Schist, phyllite, metavolcanic rocks, and carbonate rocks trend in north-northeast to south-southwest bands across the area. Ridges are primarily formed by relatively resistant areas of Marburg phyllite. Marburg schist underlies areas to the southeast of Westminster and forms hilly terrain with narrow, steep-sided valleys. Low rolling hills and some valley areas (Bachman Valley) are generally underlain by metavolcanic rocks (schist and basalt) of the Bachman Valley and Sam's Creek formations. Low-lying areas of the Westminster area are frequently underlain by lenses of Wakefield Marble carbonate rocks. These underlie the Wakefield Valley and occur in central portions of the Westminster area as very narrow and elongated bands. Carbonate rocks are often closely associated with the metavolcanic rocks of the area.

Phyllite, which underlies a significant portion of the Westminster area, is resistant to weathering and forms a relatively thin saprolite. Groundwater development potential is limited as a source for public water supply in this hydrogeologic unit. A large area covering the southeastern portion of the city is underlain by the schist saprolite-type aquifer. The weathered zone locally extends to depths of greater than 100 feet and has good groundwater development potential where sufficient permeability and saturated thickness exists. Metavolcanic rocks, which occur in bands through the Westminster area, will have locally weathered zone thicknesses of well over 100 feet and very good groundwater development potential. Carbonate rock lenses are found primarily in the areas to the west of the City. These occur as northeast-to-southwest trending bands and have excellent groundwater development potential. The lenses are bounded by less permeable rocks such as phyllite and schist, which limit both areal drawdown and groundwater availability. The lenses, or bands, of carbonate rock are susceptible to contamination. Sinkholes have been associated with groundwater withdrawals in the Wakefield Valley.

Section 3: Community Water Supply

The City of Westminster owns and operates the community water system serving the municipality and a large amount of the Community Planning Area. The system relies on the Cranberry Reservoir and groundwater supplies to provide sufficient supply to it. Eleven wells currently provide groundwater to the water system, and several of these wells are located within the carbonate rock. The City continually searches for additional groundwater supplies, typically through the development of newly annexed lands. Carbonate rock formations are prolific in providing larger quantities of water than many other types of hydrogeologic formations, but they are also more susceptible to contamination.

Part 5: Forested Areas

Forested areas are dispersed throughout the Westminster Community Planning Area and tend to concentrate along steep-sloped areas, including the steep slopes bordering stream valleys. Sizable

forested areas are located on the southeast side of Maryland Route 31 and Avondale Road and along the West Branch stream valley, and function as connected wildlife corridors.

Part 6: Sensitive Areas

The sensitive areas required for study by the Planning Act of 1992, as well as the additional natural resources identified as sensitive by Westminster and Carroll County are described in detail below. Protection measures for these natural resources will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis through the development review process and in accordance with the goals, objectives, and recommended actions in the Plan Implementation chapter of this document.

Section 1: "Sensitive Areas" Definitions

The Planning Act of 1992 does not specify the extent or degree of protection to be accorded to each environmental resource. Therefore, the definitions developed for each environmental resource identify the level of protection. This chapter includes definitions both for the "sensitive areas" required to be protected under the Planning Act as well as the additional environmental resources identified as “sensitive” by the City.

The environmental resources, which are required to be protected under the Planning Act, are streams, stream buffers, steep slopes, 100-year floodplains, and habitats of threatened and endangered species. They are defined as follows:

1. "Stream" means part of a watercourse, either naturally or artificially created, that contains intermittent or perennial base flow of groundwater origin. Ditches that convey surface runoff exclusively from storm events are not included in this definition.

2. "Stream buffers" are areas that extend a minimum of 100 feet from the top of each stream bank along both sides of a stream unless modified by the Planning Commission.

3. "Steep slopes" are defined as areas with slopes greater than 25 percent.

4. The "100-year floodplain" is that land typically adjacent to a body of water with ground surface elevations that are inundated by the base flood, which is the 100-year frequency flood event as indicated in the Flood Insurance Study, as amended, the elevation of which is used for regulatory purposes.

5. "Habitats of threatened and endangered species" are areas which, due to their physical or biological features, provide important elements for the maintenance, expansion, and long-term survival of threatened and endangered species listed in COMAR 08.03.08. This area may include breeding, feeding, resting, migratory, or overwintering areas.

Physical or biological features include, but are not limited to, structure and composition of the vegetation; faunal community; soils, water chemistry and quality; and geologic, hydrologic, and microclimatic factors.

Section 2: Additional Environmental Resources

The County and municipalities have identified additional environmental resource areas that they feel are worthy of protection under the Environmental Resources & Protection Element as well. These resources include wetlands, wellhead buffers, carbonate rock areas, reservoir watersheds, and Use III waters.

1. "Wetlands" (defined under COMAR, Title 08.05.04.01) are generally areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances does support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions, commonly known as hydrophytic vegetation.

2. "Wellhead buffers" are areas which extend a minimum of 100 feet around any existing or proposed community water supply well or well site, unless modified by the Planning Commission, as may be designated on the adopted Water and Sewer Master Plan or the County Comprehensive Plan, or identified during the development process.

3. "Carbonate rock areas" are areas that are currently known or suspected to be underlain by carbonate rock. This includes the Wakefield Marble and Silver Run Limestone geologic units, as well as unnamed calcareous zones within schist and phyllite areas.

4. "Reservoir watersheds" are areas which drain into an existing or proposed water supply reservoir.

5. "Use III waters" (defined under COMAR, Title 26.08.02) are protected for the propagation of natural trout populations. These waters are governed by more stringent dissolved oxygen, chlorine, and temperature standards than other waters.

Section 3: Streams

Carroll County is located in the Piedmont region of north-central Maryland. Parr's Ridge, which runs through the City of Westminster, diagonally divides the County into two major drainage basins. Streams to the north and west drain into the Monocacy River and eventually the Potomac River. Streams to the south and east flow into the Patapsco and Gunpowder Rivers towards the Chesapeake Bay. These two major drainage basins contain many miles of streams in Carroll County. Their uses range from recreational uses, such as fishing and canoeing, to agricultural uses. Every stream in the County eventually feeds into the Chesapeake Bay and contributes to its water quality and ecological health.

Overall surface water quality in Carroll County is generally good; however, incidence of fecal coliform bacteria from animals and human sources occur quite frequently. Large dairy and livestock farms have a high potential for contributing pollutants into surface waters if Best Management Practices are not followed. However, failing septic systems are the primary source of high fecal coliform levels in some areas of the county.

Healthy streams contain a diversity of characteristics, including slow-moving runs, deep pools, gravel riffles, bends, and vegetative cover. These features have a direct effect on the stream's response to rainfall and the level and consistency of flows. These features are also essential to the overall water quality of a stream. Stream water needs to contain sufficient dissolved oxygen and provide suitable temperatures in order to serve as a habitat for plants and animals. Stream acidity and alkalinity should be balanced, the water should be clear of sediment and pollutants, and dissolved minerals should be in natural proportions. Changes in natural ground cover and the intensity of use of the land have the greatest effect on the quality of streams. Increase in the amount of impervious surfaces and a decrease in vegetation result in altered and inconsistent levels of flow. High flows may cause flooding, and subsequently, the banks along the streams to cave in. High flows may also cause stream beds to widen as mud and sand deposits fill the channel as the bank erodes away. Low flows may cause parts of stream beds to dry up for periods of time. Low flows also carry higher concentrations of pollutants.

Section 4: Stream Buffers

Stream buffers are the areas on either side of a stream which create a corridor of natural vegetation along a stream's course and which contribute to stream water quality. Buffers often include areas of the floodplain, wetlands, and/or forest. These corridors are considered buffers because they help to buffer the streams from erosion and sedimentation and filter out pollutants. Many of Carroll County's streams are part of the watershed areas for existing and proposed reservoirs. Therefore, maintaining and/or improving the quality of this water is critical. The riparian vegetation and other features of natural buffers have been eliminated from many of the streams in Carroll County. Property owners often remove vegetation, add fill dirt, and plant and mow grass up to the stream's edge. Many streams that run through pastures have had their riparian vegetation damaged or destroyed by livestock.

Stream buffers protect the biologic and hydrologic integrity of the stream basin. They minimize runoff and groundwater pollution by filtering pollutants through the soil and root zone. Undisturbed buffers protect wetland and upland plants and provide a corridor for food and cover to a variety of animals. Wetlands and floodplains within a stream buffer slow storm flows and dissipate flood water energy, allowing more of the water to percolate into the ground. The result is decreased flood damage and replenished groundwater aquifers. Without naturally vegetated buffers, more runoff and pollutants reach the stream carrying greater levels of sediment. Riparian vegetation increases soil stability and provides shade that cools stream waters. Interception of rainfall by trees and shrubs helps to maintain more consistent stream flows by reducing the amount of stormwater runoff before it begins.

Wooded areas in stream buffers are ideal for many reasons. They protect watersheds from the siltation and erosion resulting from heavy runoff or wind. The forest floor filters water percolating into groundwater reservoirs, while leaves on the trees also absorb air pollutants. Trees and shrubs prevent some of the adverse impacts to sensitive areas caused by rainfall by intercepting some of the rainfall before it reaches the ground. Evapotranspiration allows some of this intercepted water to evaporate while the trees utilize some of the water during photosynthesis. These woodlands also serve to provide visual and noise buffers between various land uses. Woodlands also provide habitat for wildlife. For these reasons, natural vegetation within stream buffers should not be disturbed unless necessary, such as allowing disturbances for utilities and road crossings, and where appropriate, allowing the development of stormwater management facilities, particularly outfalls and water quality ponds.

Section 5: 100-Year Floodplains

Land designated within a 100-Year Floodplain carries a 1% chance in any one year that flood levels could reach or exceed the base flood elevation. Floods of this magnitude could be experienced more than once in the same year or possibly only a few times in a century. Many of these floodplains can be identified for protection through use of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) and Flood Insurance Study (FIS) maps. These maps often identify the 10-, 25-, and 50- year floodplains as well. The 100-Year Floodplain has not yet been mapped for all streams in the City.

Historically, floodplains have been protected to guard against injury to people and to prevent destruction of property. However, protection of floodplains brings other benefits too. Floodplains moderate and store floodwaters, absorb wave energies, and reduce erosion and sedimentation. Risks to adjoining and downstream communities are also minimized. They also contribute to the improvement of water quality and quantity, which may have a positive effect on drinking water supplies. Any type of development or filling in floodplains may cause the natural level of floodwaters to rise, impacting additional local areas as well as areas downstream. Interference with the natural fringe of the floodplain also results in the destruction of habitat for hydrophytic vegetation.

As a result, it is appropriate to protect floodplains by not permitting new buildings or site improvements, such as parking lots, to be located in the floodplain. In planning for new development on land that is impacted by the 100-year floodplain, the layout and size of new lots needs to assure that sufficient area on the parcel is available for development outside of the floodplain. The lot itself may be platted within the floodplain, provided that the floodplain area would remain unimproved. Furthermore, it would be inappropriate to enlarge existing structures or site improvements located within floodplains. Any existing buildings or structures that are currently located within the floodplain should be relocated outside of the floodplain when feasible.

Section 6: Habitat of Threatened and Endangered Species

In Maryland, over 200 plant and animal species have been extirpated over the past 350 years. Habitat destruction and degradation threatens to extirpate at least another 413 native Maryland species. The key to protecting threatened and endangered species is protecting the habitat in which they occur. Westminster currently has no identified threatened or endangered species, as identified by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Heritage and Biodiversity Conservation Programs. In the event that threatened or endangered species or related habitat areas are identified in the future, the City will need to prepare a plan for protection and mitigation for such species and habitat areas.

There are many reasons for protecting this habitat. We now know that plant chemicals have major pharmaceutical uses. Agriculture depends on the development of new varieties of crops that fend off pests and diseases. In addition, it is the responsibility of the present generation to preserve species for the benefit of future generations. Every plant and animal species plays a special role in the effective and efficient function of the biota in which it lives, as well as the ecosystem as a whole. Loss of one species will result in loss of additional species that depend on each other for survival, and upset the balance of the food chain. This imbalance may also cause proliferation of less desirable species.

Section 7: Steep Slopes

Westminster's rolling terrain presents occurrences of steep slopes. These slopes contribute to the beauty that makes Westminster and surrounding Carroll County especially scenic. However, steep slopes also present a challenge to developers in designing buildings and subdivisions, as well as in protecting the immediate and adjacent areas during construction.

Slopes provide a medium for the movement of soil and pollutants when land disturbance occurs. Therefore, there are multiple reasons for protecting steep slopes. Preservation of slopes adjacent to waterways is especially important due to the potential impact on water quality and aquatic habitat.

The City development regulations require topographic and soils information to be shown on plans submitted for development approval. The location of steep slopes and erodible soils is considered during the development plan review and approval process conducted by staff and the Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission. Development on slopes in excess of 25 percent, or 15 percent with highly erodible soils, should be avoided unless it can be demonstrated that the stability of the slope will be improved or that adverse impacts will be mitigated.

Clearing, grading, and the development of land results in increased stormwater runoff, which accelerates erosion and results in the runoff transporting more sediment to streams. Increased sediment in streams may create channel bars, contributing to erosion of stream banks, as well as making the channel wider and shallower. Increased runoff and sedimentation also results in decreased water quality. Nutrients in the soil sediments are carried downstream. Upslope soils are impoverished, while

turbidity, sedimentation, and aggravated eutrophication are occurring in the receiving waterways. Sediment also contains heavy metals, pesticides, and other pollutants. Aquatic vegetation is destroyed by scour, burial, and turbidity caused by increased sediments. The destruction of vegetation decreases photosynthetic activity, thereby reducing oxygen levels for aquatic life. Trout are also sensitive to impacts from sedimentation. Trout eggs suffocate from siltation, and the inhalation of silt particles results in gill membrane inflammation and then death. In addition to the increased potential for erosion, steep slopes that are altered contain less efficient organisms and less efficient vegetation.

Section 8: Wetlands

Wetlands are often associated geographically and biologically with streams and floodplains. There are many non-tidal wetland areas found in the County, as well as in the corporate limits of Westminster. These wetlands and their function are threatened by the adverse impacts of development.

Wetlands serve an important function in maintaining quality and quantity of water supplies. In wetlands, inorganic nutrients are converted to organic materials and stored in the hydrophytic vegetation. Stems, leaves, and roots slow the flow of runoff entering the wetland area thereby allowing sediment to settle out and be deposited in the wetlands prior to the runoff reaching stream waters. Wetlands also have a positive impact on the quantity of water, functioning as natural stormwater management facilities. They absorb and retain water, slowly discharging it into the streams. Therefore, stream flows are maintained at a more consistent level during dry periods, as well as during periods of flooding. Water collected and stored in wetlands also filters down through the soil to recharge groundwater supplies. Wetland areas provide essential habitats to a wide variety of flora and fauna, including migrating waterfowl and certain hydrophytic plants found only in wetland areas.

Destruction of wetlands results in higher, faster, and dirtier runoff flows into streams when development occurs too close to a wetland. The wetland is unable to absorb the increased level of pollution coming from the development site. Stream eutrophication occurs at an accelerated rate when the wetland becomes overloaded with nutrients and pollutants, often resulting in a settling basin of polluted water with unpleasant odors. Since water is stored in wetlands, filling these areas not only causes stream flows to be higher than normal but may also cause water to collect in new areas. Wetlands also serve to reduce turbidity. Increased stream turbidity, defined as particles suspended in water, reduces the amount of sunlight reaching aquatic plants. Therefore, when the function of wetlands is impaired, or they are destroyed, aquatic plants in the stream are adversely impacted.

Section 9: Wellhead Buffers

The availability of potable water is a major concern for the City of Westminster and throughout Carroll County. The quality of water supplies is dependent upon the land use activities that occur within the watershed and aquifer recharge areas. With the contamination of several wells in Taneytown, Westminster, and Hampstead in recent years, it became apparent that the areas around the municipal wellheads were in need of protection. The County is highly dependent on the abundant supply of

groundwater found in many parts of the County. Municipal water supplies, serving a large percentage of the population, rely on and are drawn from these groundwater aquifers.

A wellhead protection area is the surface and subsurface area surrounding a water well or well field, supplying a public water system, through which contaminants are reasonably likely to move toward and reach such water well or well field. The wellhead provides direct access to the groundwater aquifer from which water is drawn, potentially conveying contaminants to the groundwater quicker and in higher concentrations and then withdrawing the water at the same site. Groundwater can become contaminated by many hazardous materials, such as pesticides, fertilizers, organic chemicals, and human wastes. The degree of contamination depends on soil characteristics, contaminant characteristics, groundwater flow, and other factors. Once contaminated, aquifers are difficult and expensive to clean up. Drilling new wells may not be feasible as many aquifers are large in size or interconnected, thereby spreading the contamination to a large area. Protection of wellheads is essential to maintaining water quality for human consumption and environmental health.

Section 10: Carbonate Rock Areas

The carbonate rock areas of Carroll County include the Wakefield Marble and Silver Run Limestone geologic units, as well as calcareous zones found in schist, phyllite, and metavolcanic rock areas, as shown in the Phase II Report, *Carroll County Water Resources Study* (Volume 1, R.E. Wright Associates, Inc, May 1988). Carbonate rocks constitute the primary supply aquifers for the Towns of Union Bridge and New Windsor, as well as the Westminster Wakefield Valley satellite system. Carbonate rocks form the most productive and environmentally-sensitive aquifers in Carroll County. The carbonate minerals in this type of aquifer are readily soluble in groundwater, and joints and fractures may be greatly enlarged to form cavities. Carbonate rocks are frequently bounded by, and imbedded with, schist, phyllite, or metavolcanic rocks. Aquifer transmissivity and storativity in the carbonate rock aquifers is generally fairly high in this area. The variable transmissivity, the presence of plugged and open solution channels, frequent boundary conditions, and complex geologic structure make the hydrology of carbonate rocks extremely complex and frequently unpredictable. The carbonate rock aquifer is very susceptible to contamination, since the presence of voids in the subsurface does not allow adequate filtering of contaminants. In addition, the high transmissivity allows the rapid spread of contaminants throughout the highly conductive flow paths in these types of aquifers.

According to an R. E. Wright report, due to the solution-prone nature of the aquifer materials, sinkholes are a common feature of this terrain and provide a direct conduit into the groundwater system through which contaminants may travel. Sinkholes have and will occur naturally, although studies have shown that the majority of sinkholes formed today are triggered as a result of human activities, such as groundwater withdrawals. Sinkhole development is exacerbated by water table fluctuations, concentrated infiltration, and/or vibration. Sinkhole development begins deep in the subsurface in solution channels and fractures in the carbonate aquifer. As these channels are enlarged by dissolution and the remaining insoluble materials are compacted or flushed out, small voids are created. This may

begin a "stopping" effect in the soils in the dissolved areas above, as soil particles continuously move downward. Temporary soil bridges are formed in the solutioned areas between unweathered rock pinnacles, and collapse as the void area moves upward. Depending upon the rate of downward soil movement, this may be evident on the surface as a slow subsidence or sudden collapse.

Section 11: Reservoir Watersheds

A watershed includes all areas from which water drains into a body of water--in this case, a reservoir. Wooded areas and other types of vegetation in these watersheds directly affect water quality and need to be protected as well. A major source of water for the City of Westminster is the Cranberry Branch, a tributary to the West Branch of the Patapsco River. The City's raw reservoir is located north of Lucabaugh Mill Road, and a 30-inch transmission line runs along Cranberry Branch from the reservoir to the water treatment plant in Cranberry. In the same vicinity, the City also extracts surface water from Hull Creek, another tributary to the West Branch of the Patapsco. The City's surface water resources are adversely affected by upstream agricultural uses that increase nutrients in the stream due to stormwater runoff carrying fertilizers and other nutrients. Furthermore, runoff from the County's Lucabaugh Mill Road directly enters Hull Creek without any stormwater quality control.

In addition to the City's reservoir, Carroll County currently has two other existing reservoirs, which are Piney Run and Liberty reservoirs. The County has also identified two additional reservoir sites to accommodate the water supply needs of County residents in the future. These sites are Gillis Falls and Union Mills Reservoirs. Liberty Reservoir is a 3,106-acre water supply reservoir on the North Branch of the Patapsco River that serves the Baltimore Metropolitan area and Carroll County's Freedom Community Planning Area. Liberty Reservoir Watershed encompasses 11,393 acres in the County and is 8.25 miles long. Portions of eastern Carroll County also fall into the reservoir watershed of two reservoirs located in Baltimore County--Pretty Boy and Loch Raven Reservoirs.

Although the water has been identified as threatened by nutrient enrichment, water quality is otherwise generally good. Many of Carroll County's streams are components of these watersheds which directly affect the quality of the water supply.

Section 12: Use III Waters

Carroll County has several waterways which have been identified as Use III waters. These streams, which are protected for the natural propagation of trout, include all or part of the following streams and all of their tributaries: Gunpowder Falls, Morgan Run, Beaver Run, Snowdens Run, Stillwater Creek, East Branch Patapsco River, Carroll Highlands Run, Autumn Run, Piney Run, Gillis Falls, Aspen Run, and South Branch Patapsco River (above the confluence with Gillis Falls). The first nine of these streams are further classified as III-P, which means that they flow into a public water supply. As a result, Use III-P streams are regulated even more strictly on toxics than other Use III waters. The remaining streams in the County are Use IV (Recreational Trout Waters) or Use I (Water Contact Recreation and Protection of

Aquatic Life). Fishing is an important recreational use of these streams. The presence and health of fish can be an important indicator of water quality.

Part 7: Environmental Stewardship Programs

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Innovation Action Council (IAC) has articulated a vision and definition of environmental stewardship to guide the EPA's Strategic Plan. EPA's vision of environmental stewardship is that all parts of society actively take responsibility to improve environmental quality and to achieve sustainable outcomes.

The definition of **e**nvironmental stewardship is the responsibility for environmental quality shared by all those whose actions affect the environment, reflected as both a value and a practice by individuals, companies, communities, and government organizations. Positive stewardship behavior demonstrates acceptance of this responsibility through the continuous improvement of environmental performance to achieve measurable results and sustainable outcomes.

The City of Westminster develops local environmental programs and promotes partnerships with local and state environmental organizations to implement environmental stewardship programs in the Westminster community.

Section 1: Environmental Partnerships

This Environmental Resources and Protection Element is focused on reducing any additional adverse impacts on the environment as the County and municipal land use plans are implemented. There are several other programs, either ongoing or under development, which function to reduce problems created by current land use practices. These programs include the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Soil Conservation District (SCD), and Extension Services working with farmers to institute Best Management Practices (BMP) to reduce pollution, design the local water resources programs to protect local public water supplies, and the State's Tributary Strategies.

Section 2: Westminster Energy Efficiency Plan

Following recent trends dictated by rising energy costs, the City has begun to evaluate energy consumption in all areas of operation. Committees have been formed to research and develop recommendations regarding fuel and electricity consumption. The City is also seeking grant funding and low-interest loans to implement these recommendations. In the coming years, the plans are to continue to research and, where feasible, implement the best available practices in energy conservation.

Past Initiatives

In 2006, Westminster purchased two hybrid Ford Escape SUVs to replace one vehicle in the Public Works Department and one in the Police Department whose useful service lives had long ago expired. Each

vehicle is currently getting approximately twice the gas mileage of the vehicle it replaced. In 2009, Westminster made modifications to the wastewater treatment process, eliminating the need to run certain high-consumption equipment. The wastewater treatment plant now consumes 30% less electricity than it previously used.

Future Initiatives

To plan future energy efficiency programs, the City organized an Energy Committee to study the City's use of vehicles and energy consumption. The committee's first recommendation was to conduct an energy audit. As a result, during the summer of 2009 the City hired a consultant to perform energy audits for all City-owned buildings. The result of the audit will be to formulate a plan for upgrades to these buildings, prioritized based on return on investment and amount of energy conserved. Zero-interest loan funding has been obtained to begin implementation of the Westminster Energy Efficiency Plan. Grant funding for additional Energy Efficiency Plan implementation and further conservation measures will be sought on an ongoing basis. Westminster is working on a policy that requires the City to replace City vehicles, following the pre-determined replacement schedule, with the most efficient vehicle available, taking into account cost and daily use factors.

As the City grows in the future, Westminster will encourage all new construction to be as efficient as is technologically and practically possible. When City owned-buildings have to be improved, expanded upon, or rebuilt in the future, Westminster will require that the construction coincides with energy efficiency upgrades. Westminster will also promote energy efficiency to the community by providing educational materials to homeowners and businesses regarding Best Practices for energy efficiency in their respective applications.

Section 3: Urban Canopy

The City of Westminster Tree Commission (WTC) is charged with overseeing the City's urban forestry program. This commission consists of five appointed members and two City staff (City Arborist and Natural Resources Planner). The benefits of maintaining an urban canopy are numerous, and include increased property values, increased commercial activity, reduced impact on the storm water system, wildlife habitat, and reduced cooling costs in shaded buildings. Through the Street Department's operating budget, the City allocates money annually to pay for contractual services to maintain the urban canopy. Going forward, the City plans to utilize the expertise of the Tree Commission and its staff to reinforce and improve this program.

Westminster Tree Commission

The WTC has successfully conducted sixteen annual Urban and Community Forestry workshops, which have provided training and education to tree care professionals from across the State of Maryland. The City of Westminster adopted an ordinance prohibiting the topping of any tree within the corporate limits based on recommendations from the WTC. The WTC is well known for its Arbor Day activities that it has implemented each of the last 20 years. This program has resulted in trees being planted on every

school property and park in the City. Throughout the year, WTC works with residents through cooperative planting projects with neighborhoods throughout the City, focusing on efforts to replace or install street trees. WTC is honored to have supported the City of Westminster to maintain Tree City USA certification since 1988, and to earn the Tree City USA Growth Award 12 of those years. The Tree City USA Growth Award is provided by The Arbor Day Foundation, in cooperation with the National Association of State Foresters and the USDA Forest Service, to recognize environmental improvement and encourage higher levels of tree care throughout America.

Future Initiatives

In the future, Westminster plans to perform a complete update of its 1992 inventory of trees on public property and right-of-ways. The Tree Commission will partner with City Staff to draft and implement a comprehensive Urban Canopy Management Plan to promote the importance of the urban canopy of Westminster and how the public may contribute to the "Maryland 1 Million Tree Initiative." The Westminster Landscape Manual will be revised to include the current best management practices in urban canopy management, arboriculture, integrated pest management, water conservation, and aesthetics.

Section 4: Open Space & Natural Landscapes Conservation

The City of Westminster owns 136 acres of parkland and over 400 acres of open space are owned by local Home Owners Associations (HOAs) or are designated private open space land. Of the 136 acres of City parkland, 82 acres are public open space. This open space is land that has been set aside by developers or that the City has acquired for resource or sensitive area protection. Roughly half of this land is in turf grass, while portions are forested. In order to reduce mowing requirements, better protect natural resources, and provide wildlife habitat, Westminster encourages turf areas to be reforested or converted to wildflowers and native grasses wherever possible (Map 6.2).

Native Plantings & Natural Landscapes

As an example to developers and other property owners, the City plans to incorporate native plant species into all landscapes on City properties. Since native species have evolved in the conditions present in the Piedmont region of Maryland, they are best suited for the seasonal extremes in this area. Landscapes consisting of native species require less watering and soil amendment, survive harsh winters and droughts, and are resistant to regional pests and diseases. In June 2009, Westminster created its first Xeriscape Model Garden on Main Street to educate residents on the benefits and beauty of drought-resistant and native plant species.

Community Gardens

The City of Westminster is proud of its established community gardens that are located on public open space. Each spring, the Public Works staff prepares the garden plots for the planting season. Spaces in

the garden are offered to residents for free, on a first-come, first-served basis. Most years, all plots are claimed by the time the growing season begins, with gardeners cultivating everything from tomatoes and peppers to sweet corn and herbs. In coming years, City staff plan to improve the program by adding educational programs for gardeners and working with the local Master Gardeners Club to promote the benefits of gardening to the community. In 2010, the City will conduct a study examining City parkland and open space for opportunities to add new community garden plots.

Section 5: Recycling Programs

In order to encourage recycling, the City of Westminster has worked to create opportunities that make recycling easier and more convenient. For example, as of July 1, 2008, the City of Westminster improved residential recycling collection services by switching from dual-stream collection to single-stream. This change allows residents to mix all recyclable items (glass, cardboard, aluminum, paper) into one bin instead of having to sort each material into separate containers. The most recent Westminster recycling initiative is the creation of an electronics recycling program. In June 2009, the City of Westminster received a grant from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) under the Statewide Electronics Recycling Program, to help fund the start-up of this important program.

In August 2009, Westminster established a mobile electronics waste recycling center known as the Westminster Initiative to Recycle E-waste Drop-off Center (W.I.R.E.D. Center). The W.I.R.E.D. center is used as a mobile electronics waste recycling center for the residents of Westminster. Providing residents with a location to drop off electronics waste allows the City to separate the collection of computers, video display devices, and other forms of electronic waste from the regular bulk trash, which will reduce the amount of trash entering the landfill. The W.I.R.E.D. center also provides the City the opportunity to properly recycle or dispose of the electronic waste. In order to promote this new program and to encourage residents to participate, City Staff plan to work to make the drop-off day into an event to attract positive attention and publicity. Staff would seek the support from local organizations to provide volunteers who would be able to participate in the “W.I.R.E.D.” program.

Section 6: Sustainable Westminster & Green Building Standards

The International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD) champions sustainable development around the world through innovation, partnerships, research, and communications. The IISD defines sustainable development as environmental, economic, and social well-being for today and tomorrow. Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan encourages sustainable construction, energy efficient design, and the orderly development of the future of Westminster. The City of Westminster has a limited supply of water resources and, as a result, has been promoting water conservation techniques since 2002. In order to meet future water needs and to create a more sustainable City, Westminster is developing a set of “green” building standards.

The Westminster Green Building Standards will be guidelines to facilitate "green" buildings without forcing excessive costs on developers, owners, or occupants. The standards will be part of an overall "green" building program and that promotes energy efficiency, conservation of water, indoor air quality and recycling of waste in all residential buildings and structures in Westminster. The City envisions a future where new construction incorporates "green" building principles and practices into the design, construction, and operation of new buildings and neighborhoods. The Westminster Green Building Standards will serve to not only meet the City's overall objective to conserve water, but it will also help educate the public about the State of Maryland's environmental goals and initiatives.

Part 8: State Environmental Programs

The City of Westminster will continue to promote State and local environmental stewardship programs and partnerships in order to create a more sustainable environment for future generations.

Section 1: Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act of 2009

The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act of 2009 requires the State to achieve a 25 percent reduction in statewide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from 2006 levels by 2020. It also requires the Department of Environment to develop a proposed Statewide GHG reduction plan by 2011, to solicit public comment on the proposed plan from interested stakeholders and the public, and to adopt a final plan by 2012. The bill also requires the State to demonstrate that the 25 percent reduction can be achieved in a way that has a positive impact on Maryland's economy, protects existing manufacturing jobs and creates significant new "green" jobs in Maryland. Transitioning to a low-carbon economy is expected to have a positive net economic benefit to the State, valued at approximately $2 billion by 2020 as the result of savings from energy efficiency and conservation programs and new "green" job opportunities in the energy, carbon technology, and related sectors of the economy. The City of Westminster will review the completed plan and incorporate it into the Westminster Energy Efficiency Plan.

Section 2: One Million Tree Initiative

The State of Maryland recognizes that forests are a strategically important natural resource for all communities. Trees protect water quality, clean our air and provide wildlife habitat. One large tree can eliminate 5,000 gallons of stormwater runoff each year, and well-placed trees can help reduce energy costs by 15 to 35 percent. Trees also enhance our quality of life, beautify neighborhoods and highways, provide sound barriers and shade, and help increase property values. The State of Maryland is partnering with businesses, communities, and citizens to help fund and plant new tree cover throughout the State. State agencies are working to plant 1 million new trees by 2011, and private citizens have been charged with joining the State's efforts by planting 50,000 trees by 2010.

Environmental Resources & Protection Element

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan promotes efforts to protect, maintain, enhance, and, where appropriate, restore its natural environment. Westminster plans to implement more sustainable practices, including "green" building technologies in order to ensure a more sustainable future. The Environmental Resources and Protection Element presents ideas how Westminster can balance growth with protecting the environment, how to resist threats to its overall quality, and, most importantly, how to act, maintain, and enhance its positive features in the interest of residents, workers, and visitors.

Goals and Objectives

Goal R1: Protect and maintain the environmental resources in the City of Westminster

Objective 1: Maintain and enhance water quality in streams, groundwater, wetlands, and reservoirs

a. Require buffer plantings where no vegetation exists around streams, wellheads, wetlands, and reservoirs to protect water from development

b. Discourage disturbance to natural vegetation within stream buffers including tree removal, shrub removal, clearing, burning, or grubbing

c. Require new development to incorporate stormwater management facilities that reduce heavy runoff, minimize pollutants entering local streams, and are consistent with protection of the designated water use as defined in COMAR 26.08.02

d. Analyze the nutrient loadings and quality of streams to determine the need for stream restoration

e. Adopt a water resources management ordinance

Objective 2: Maintain and enhance water quantity in groundwater aquifers and reservoirs

a. Require wellhead buffers and reservoir buffers to protect water supplies from development

b. Continue monitoring of the public water supply, utilizing new technology as it becomes available

c. Require water conservation through implementation of February 2008 recommendations by Water Resources Coordinating Council (WRCC)

Objective 3: Preserve where possible and improve wildlife corridors, identified habitats of threatened and endangered species, and contiguous forested areas

a. Preserve existing forested areas as much as practical

b. Require reforestation or afforestation that will most benefit natural habitats

c. Work with Carroll County Bureau of Resources Management to identify areas suitable for afforestation in watersheds affected by City development

d. Require submission of a written Environmental Assessment for any development proposal within or adjacent to identified threatened or endangered species habitat or water resources

e. Coordinate the protection of identified threatened and endangered species habitat with the Maryland Wildlife and Heritage Service of the Department of Natural Resources

Objective 4: Identify the location of environmental resource areas in order to improve their protection

a. Utilize the City's GIS as a source for environmental resource mapping

b. Continue to identify and map resources as the City annexes land and develops

c. Coordinate with County Staff and the Department of Natural Resources to utilize existing mapping to reduce cost and provide more accurate information to each jurisdiction

Goal R2: Reduce the adverse effects of development on environmental resources

Objective 1: Adopt and implement creative, flexible, and streamlined development regulations that protect the natural environment

a. Identify locations where a Planned Development and its associated open space could be used to protect environmental resources

b. Streamline the rezoning process for Planned and clustered Developments

c. Review the Planned Development Zoning to determine whether there is sufficient flexibility in the area and setback requirements for the zoning district

Objective 2: Integrate Best Management practices and appropriate mitigation measures where sensitive environmental areas cannot be avoided during the land planning and development process

a. Revise Subdivision and Site Plan Regulations as needed to include Best Management practices and mitigation measures

b. Encourage the use of innovative mitigation measures when sensitive environmental areas cannot be avoided

c. Review the manual for construction of roads to consider if changes should be made to better protect environmental resources

Objective 3: Protect streams and their buffers, minimize flood hazards, provide open space, and provide protection for other environmental resource areas through creative site design

a. Develop design guidelines that will achieve this objective

b. Protect the City water resources and encourage the use of the City's Planned Development Zone

Objective 4: Adopt and implement innovative environmental resource design guidelines

a. Research existing environmental resource design guidelines used by other communities before developing draft guidelines

b. Consider the environmental resources that are located in the Growth Area Boundary on sites with annexation potential so that protection measures are considered during review of any annexation petitions

Objective 5: Assure the quality and quantity of community groundwater supplies through wellhead protection measures.

a. Complete the actions that address the protection of water resources

b. Extend protection measures to planned wellheads

c. Implement recommendations in the Water Resources Element

Goal R3: Coordinate efforts with Westminster environmental partners and local organizations to protect environmental resources

Objective 1: Develop and implement a coordinated natural resource protection strategy

a. Participate in initiatives that would achieve this objective

b. Coordinate with the County when considering the adoption of environmental resource regulations or guidelines

Objective 2: Standardize protective measures between the jurisdictions to ensure uniform protection.

a. Participate in initiatives that would achieve this objective

b. Coordinate with the County when considering the adoption of environmental resource regulations or guidelines

Objective 3: Develop a uniform regulatory and streamlined review process

a. Participate in initiatives that would achieve this objective

b. Coordinate with the County when considering the adoption of environmental resource regulations or guidelines

Goal R4: Protect and improve the environment by promoting forest preservation, urban and community forestry, and tree planting throughout the City of Westminster

Objective 1: Develop and adopt a Westminster Urban Forestry Plan that promotes a healthy and thriving urban canopy and other desirable forms of vegetation

a. Inventory all street trees in Westminster and keep the inventory up-to-date through an annual update

b. Work with the Westminster Tree Commission to determine the priority areas for tree planting projects and to develop tree preservation and planting standards for the Urban Forestry Plan

c. Develop a “Westminster Street Tree Plan” and program for each residential, commercial, and industrial neighborhood in the City to be included into the Urban Forestry Plan

d. Require street trees in all residential, commercial, and industrial development and redevelopment be subject to the Westminster Street Tree Plan and program

Objective 2: Promote the National Arbor Day Foundation's vision of a community where trees and forests are abundant, healthy, and sustainable, and highly valued by all people

a. Support the Tree Commission as an organization of dedicated members who lead the way, and help individual citizens plant and care for trees to enrich the environment

b. Provide opportunities for public education on the value of trees, including their environmental, aesthetic, and visual qualities and benefits

c. Expand the awareness of the need for tree planting and care by increasing publicity about Arbor Day and the Westminster's celebration of Arbor Week

d. Ensure City street tree standards conform to Westminster Tree Commission and National Arbor Foundation's recommendations for an officially designated Tree City

Objective 3: Encourage trees and native vegetation as necessary components in the aesthetic and environmental quality of residential, industrial, and commercial areas

a. Require developments to retain existing significant trees and vegetation, where feasible, through regulations in the Westminster Zoning Ordinance and Landscape Manual

b. Utilize trees and landscaping to mitigate environmental degradation and to buffer surrounding land uses impacted by residential, industrial, and commercial activities

Goal R5: Create a healthy, reliable, and sustainable future by continually increasing the effectiveness of how the City of Westminster utilizes and manages energy and water resources

Objective 1: Lead and coordinate integrated energy resource planning

a. Develop a long-term sustainable Westminster strategy and implementation plan

b. Develop capability to respond to energy emergencies and short-term disruptions

c. Implement the "Water Conservation Plan" adopted by the WRCC to conserve limited water resources, minimize wastewater, and reduce stormwater runoff

d. Update city operations and structures to incorporate energy efficiency and water conservation strategies

e. Cooperate with Carroll County to incorporate water conservation requirements requiring the Best Practices in building code

Objective 2: Use less energy and water per capita than cities comparable in size to Westminster

a. Follow environmentally-sensitive City maintenance and operation practices

b. Increase awareness of conservation, efficiency, and renewable energy opportunities

c. Garner positive media and public recognition for environmental stewardship

d. Provide educational opportunities to promote sustainable practices

e. Require energy and water efficiency for the growth of commercial and residential uses

f. Participate in local, State, and regional water and energy conservation programs

Objective 3: Ensure City Park and recreational facilities are environmentally responsible, where natural resources and open space within these sites are promoted and protected

a. Enhance the natural areas and habitats within City Parks

b. Support and encourage nature-based programs and park improvements

c. Create environmental education and volunteer opportunities in City Parks

d. Expand the Westminster Community Gardens Program

Objective 4: Enhance and market Westminster's commitment to a sustainable and environmentally responsible future

a. Encourage sustainable building practices to potential developers who specialize in "green" developments

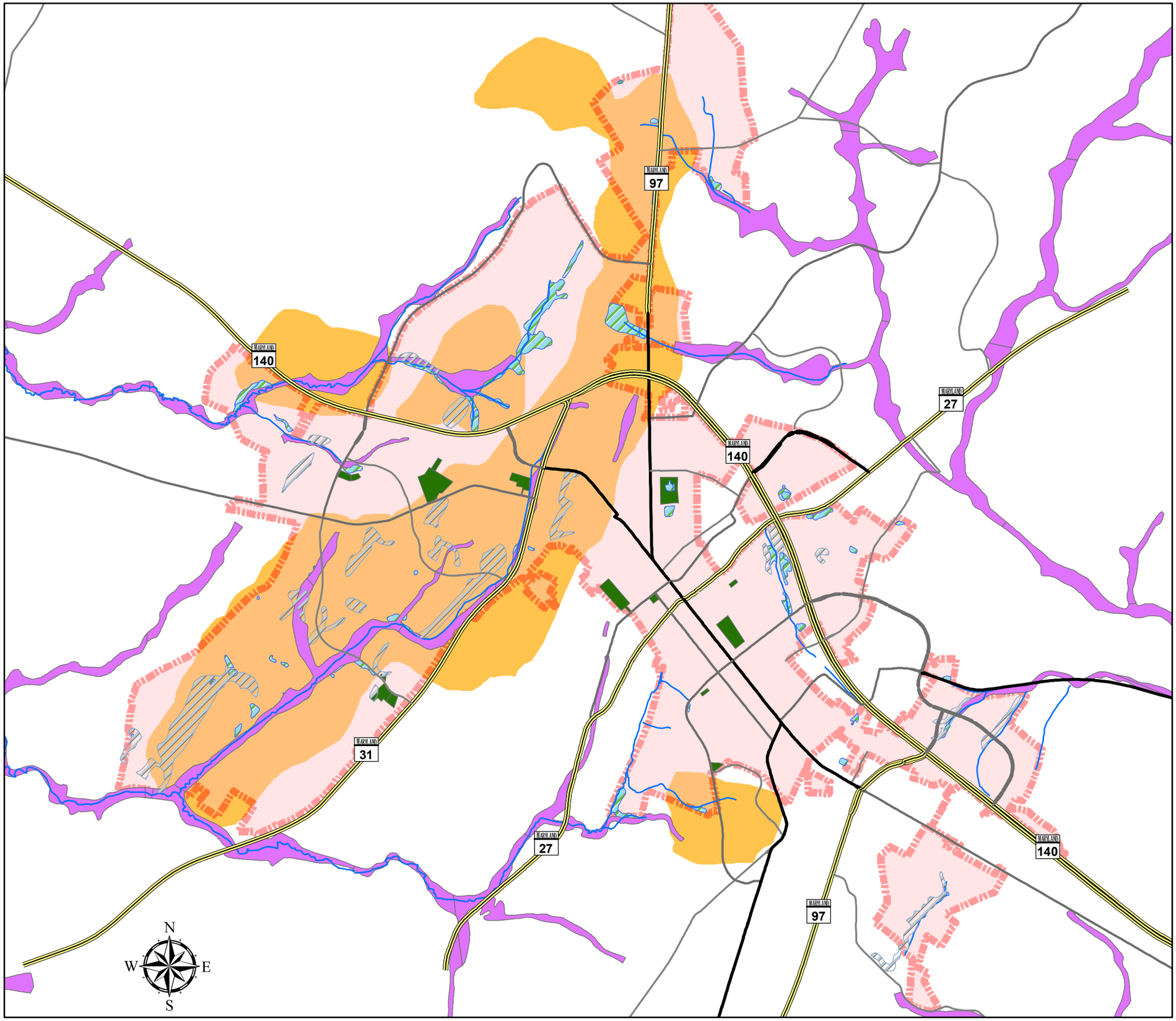
b. Inform decision makers and stakeholders of environmental policy, regulatory, and market changes that are likely to impact the region

c. Attract businesses to Westminster to be a regional leader in innovation and commercialization of sustainable technologies

d. Support the creation of the City of Westminster Environmental Advisory Board to develop a sustainable strategic plan and recommend sustainable policies and practices

e. Implement policies and practices that position Westminster as a leader in sustainability

Protected Environmental Features

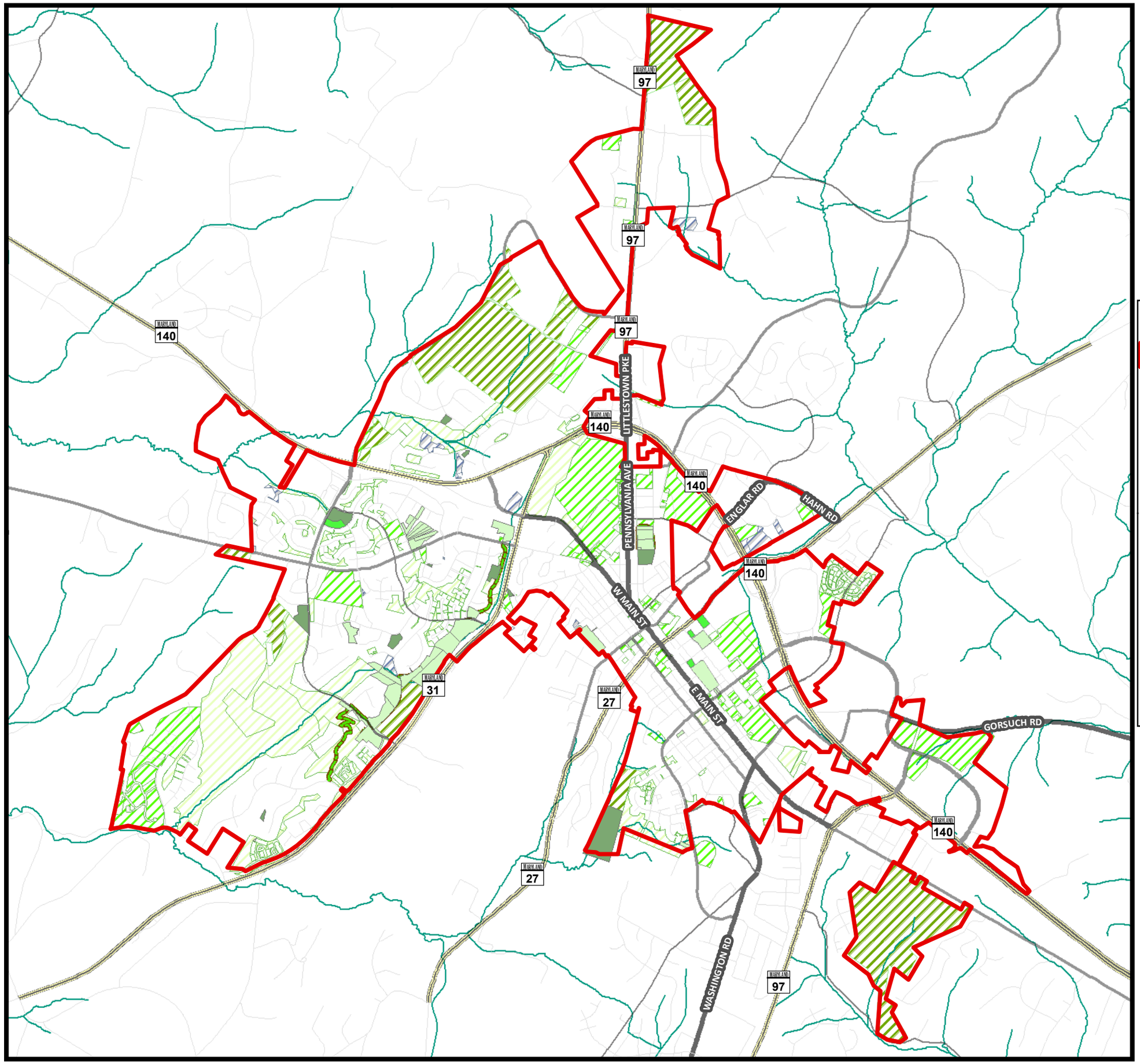


Legend

- Steep Slopes
- Streams
- 100 Yr. Floodplain
- Wetlands
- Parks
- City Boundary
- Wellhead Protection Area

Map Not to Scale

Open Space



Legend

City Boundary

Trails

City-owned OpenSpace

Agriculture/Resource

Open Space and Recreation

Public Facilities and Institutions

Utility

Private Open Space

Agriculture/Resource

Open Space and Recreation

Public Facilities and Institutions

Utility

CORPORATION OF WESTMINSTER 1838

Map Not to Scale

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Housing & Neighborhood Revitalization

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

What is the Housing Element?

During its 1997 session, the General Assembly passed five pieces of legislation and budget initiatives known collectively as "Smart Growth." Maryland has adopted the principles of Smart Growth to be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

The following Smart Growth principles relate to the Housing Element:

Principle: Create housing opportunities and choices

- To create a wider range of housing choices
- To allow communities to use their infrastructure resources more efficiently
- To ensure a better jobs-housing balance
- To generate a strong foundation of support for neighborhoods and commercial centers

Principle: Take advantage of compact building design

- To make it affordable on a per-unit basis, to provide and maintain utility services in more compact neighborhoods than in dispersed communities
- To mix land uses and build compactly, thus reducing trips and make walking a more viable alternative
- To approach growth to be more cost-effective, and improves the quality of life for its residents

State Planning Vision found in this Element

Housing - A range of housing densities, types, and sizes provide residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes.

Community Vision for Living in Westminster

How do residents feel about living in Westminster? Majority of residents find Westminster to be an excellent or good place to live. Several respondents took the time to describe why they love living in Westminster and how they want to see Westminster protected from changing in the future. For many residents who enjoy living in Westminster, to live here means a lifelong commitment to the community and a willingness to “set roots” in Westminster to raise a family. Over 70% of residents rated Westminster a good place to raise children.

Why will people move to Westminster in the future? Prospective residents could view Westminster as the ideal community to settle down to raise a family or as a city where people come to retire. Others could view it is a place of transition where people do not choose to stay for more than a couple of years and then move to another city. What image does Westminster want to portray?

One has to consider several factors when deciding where to live, but the main factor of consideration for many current and future residents of Westminster is the cost of housing. Can people find affordable housing in Westminster? Over 27% of residents rank the availability of affordable housing to be below average or poor. This could mean that there are residents who may not stay in Westminster in the future if they can’t afford to buy or rent a home. Along with the risk of losing current residents, this statistic could also shed light on future problems with attracting new residents who may want to move to Westminster.

Part 1: Housing & Density

Chapter 7

Part 1: Housing & Density

Part 2: Meeting Housing Needs

Part 3: Transitional Housing & Homeless Prevention

Part 4: Neighborhood Revitalization

Part 5: State Neighborhood Revitalization Programs

Part 6: Local Neighborhood Revitalization Projects

Part 7: Vision of Housing in Westminster

Goals & Objectives

According to data from the 2000 U.S. Census, the types of housing available in the City of Westminster ranged from single-family detached houses to buildings containing 50 or more housing units (Table 7.1). The highest percentage (29.74%) of unit types by category was the one unit detached category or single family houses. This category was followed by one unit attached units at 28.18%, which includes both duplexes (2 attached single family units) and townhouses or row houses (3 or more attached single family units).The remaining 42.08%, are multi-family housing dwelling units in the City of Westminster.

A marked difference is revealed by comparing the newer developed housing with older housing in the City. The more recent suburban style housing developments, located on the outskirts of Westminster and particularly in the area west of MD Route 31, have densities generally ranging from 2 to 8 units per acre, but consist primarily of single family dwellings and townhouses. In addition, there are several multi-family buildings in the more recently developed areas of the City with considerably higher densities. Another key aspect of newer residential development in Westminster is that few non-residential uses are located adjacent or in close proximity to the housing.

Housing located in the older parts of Westminster varies significantly from the newly developed housing in terms of density and the type of housing available. In general, housing in the traditional portion of the City is more dense overall, at 6 units per acre and greater. Additionally, a wide range of housing types are interspersed throughout and adjacent to each other in the older sections of Westminster, including single family houses, duplexes, townhouses, and multi-family dwellings. The multi-family dwellings category encompasses everything from apartment buildings to accessory apartments in owner-occupied dwellings. Throughout the older parts of Westminster and along Main Street in particular, there is a mix of residential and nonresidential uses. In many instances, individual buildings have mixed uses, often with a commercial establishment on the ground floor and apartments located on the upper floors. Residents in this more densely developed portion of Westminster have more opportunities to walk to shops, services, and other activities. Given the projected population and the limited amount of land available for development in Westminster, consideration needs to be given to providing opportunities for housing densities more similar to the densities existing in downtown Westminster (Map 7.1).

Table 7.1 Housing Units by Tenure in the City of Westminster, 2000

				---Occupied Units---		
Units in Structure	Total Units	Percent	Vacant Units	Total	Owner	Renter
1, detached	1,994	29.74%	33	1,961	1,737	224
1, attached	1,889	28.18%	50	1,839	1,325	514
2	420	6.26%	92	328	69	259
3 or 4	407	6.07%	16	391	15	376
5 to 9	315	4.70%	32	283	27	256
10 to 19	941	14.04%	73	868	147	721
20 to 49	275	4.10%	0	275	35	240
50 or more	453	6.76%	29	424	69	355
Mobile home	10	0.15%	0	10	0	10
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0
Total	**6,704**	**100.00%**	**325**	**6,379**	**3,424**	**2,955**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Section 1: Tenure of Housing

The 2000 U.S. Census reported 6,379 occupied housing units in Westminster. Owner occupied units accounted for 53.7% of the units, while renter occupied units equaled 46.3%. These percentages represent a shift in the numbers recorded in 1990 when approximately 56% of the housing units were renter occupied, and 44% of the units were owner occupied. The increase in the percentage of owner occupied housing units can be accounted for by the continued development of the land west of Maryland Route 31.

Information was available for the type of housing as well. The majority of owner occupied dwellings were either one unit detached or one unit attached dwellings. The highest percentage (24.4%) of renter occupied units was in structures containing 10 to 19 units, followed by 17.4% of renters living in one unit attached dwellings.

Comparisons of tenure by the number of persons per housing unit (Table 7.2) and the age of the householder (Table 7.3) were also included in the 2000 U.S. Census. In general, renter occupied housing units tend to have fewer persons per unit and a younger householder than owner occupied units. This information reflects the smaller size of most renter occupied units compared to owner occupied units, and the fact that many young people rent before buying their own homes. There are also a high percentage of householders of 75 years and up who reside in renter occupied units. The projected increase in the population for young adults and senior citizens indicates a future need for additional rental housing.

In response to that growing segment of Westminster's population, The Mayor and Common Council adopted Housing for Older Persons legislation which permits the construction of age restricted apartment units in the City's Business and R-7,500 Residential Zones as special exception uses. The Mayor and Common Council determined that by creating these opportunities, additional homeownership opportunities may be provided to younger families that require more space than older persons. To date, the City has approved one of these developments.

Table 7.2 Persons per Housing Unit in the City of Westminster, 2000

	Owner occupied	Renter occupied	All Units
1 person	785	1,342	2,127
2 person	1,144	812	1,956
3 person	606	348	954
4 person	582	276	858
5 person	257	85	342
6 person	36	71	107
7+ person	14	21	35
Total	**3,424**	**2,955**	**6,379**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 7.3 Tenure by Age of Householder in the City of Westminster, 2000

	Owner occupied	Renter occupied	All Units
15-24	36	321	357
25-34	670	573	1,243
35-44	909	601	1,510
45-54	651	528	1,179
55-59	231	138	369
60-64	154	124	278
65-74	353	221	574
75-84	308	291	599
85+	112	158	270
Total	**3,424**	**2,955**	**6,379**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Section 2: Condition of Housing

The 2000 U.S. Census surveyed several housing characteristics that were related to the condition and quality of housing. The first characteristic was the year in which a residential structure was built (Table 7.4). Over 45% of residential structures in the City of Westminster were built in 1980 or later, and nearly 65% were built since 1970. The majority of these newer structures should be in good condition if normal maintenance has been provided.

Of the remaining structures, over 18% were built between 1940 and 1969, and 18.85% were constructed before 1940. Many of these houses could also be in good condition if maintained properly over the years. However, substandard housing could exist, particularly in the older structures. It should be noted that some of these older buildings have historical value, an issue discussed in detail in *Chapter Eight, Community Design and Character.*

Table 7.4 Year Residential Structure Built in the City of Westminster, 2000

				---Occupied Units---		
Year Built	Total Units	Percent	Vacant	Total	Owner	Renter
Built 1999 to March 2000	63	0.94%	26	37	30	7
Built 1995 to 1998	476	7.10%	26	450	348	102
Built 1990 to 1994	1,001	14.93%	19	982	758	224
Built 1980 to 1989	1,712	25.54%	63	1,649	1,033	616
Built 1970 to 1979	940	14.02%	9	931	308	623
Built 1960 to 1969	403	6.01%	17	386	108	278
Built 1950 to 1959	457	6.82%	15	442	214	228
Built 1940 to 1949	388	5.79%	0	388	137	251
Built 1939 or earlier	1,264	18.85%	150	1,114	488	626
Total	**6,704**	**100.00%**	**325**	**6,379**	**3,424**	**2,955**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Data from 2000 also indicates that all housing units have complete plumbing facilities and all housing units are heated. The availability of complete plumbing facilities in all housing units was a change from data provided in previous Census reports. The 1970 U.S. Census reported 127 (5.1%) housing units lacking complete plumbing facilities, a figure that decreased to 89 (2.5%) housing units lacking complete plumbing facilities in 1980. In regard to the heating of housing units (Table 7.5), over 50% of units were heated with electricity in 1990. Nearly 30% of units were heated with utility gas, and another 12.65% of units used fuel oil, kerosene, or a similar fuel for heat.

Table 7.5 Heating Fuel for Occupied Housing Units in Westminster, 2000

Type of Fuel	Total Units	Percent
Utility gas	1,869	29.30%
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	100	1.57%
Electricity	3,525	55.26%
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc.	807	12.65%
Coal or coke	0	0.00%
Wood	38	0.60%
Solar energy	0	0.00%
Other fuel	40	0.63%
No fuel used	0	0.00%
Total	**6,379**	**100.00%**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Section 3: Cost of Housing

The value of housing in the City of Westminster also indicates, to a certain extent, the condition of housing. In 2000, the U.S. Census reported the mean value of all owner occupied housing units as $146,000. Nearly 30% of all owner-occupied housing units were in the $100,000-$124,999 category, and another 42% of owner occupied housing was valued at $125,000 and above (Table 7.6). The value of all housing has risen over the past ten years. In that regard, there is still some substandard housing in Westminster. However, there has been additional reinvestment in the older properties in Westminster due to the increasing price of housing and the availability of attractive interest rates. Information describing opportunities, such as tax credit programs, for the rehabilitation of historic housing stock is included in *Chapter Eight, Community Design and Character.*

Also of interest is a 1999 tabulation of selected monthly homeowner costs as a percentage of household income (Table 7.7). In forty percent (40%) of the owner occupied dwellings in Westminster, less than 20% of household income was spent on housing costs. Another thirty percent (30%) of the City's homeowners spend 20-29% of their household incomes on housing costs. An established guideline is to spend no more than 30% of income on housing. Nonetheless, in thirty percent (30%) of the owner occupied dwellings, 30% or more of household income was being spent on housing. This situation is particularly the case in the $20,000 to $49,999 income bracket. The somewhat high percentage of homeowners spending 30% or more of income on housing costs seems to indicate a shortage of affordable housing in the City.

Table 7.6 Value of Owner Occupied Housing Units in Westminster, 2000

Value	Units	Percent
$50,000 to $59,999	9	0.30%
$60,000 to $69,999	29	0.97%
$70,000 to $79,999	55	1.84%
$80,000 to $89,999	182	6.09%
$90,000 to $99,999	548	18.33%
$100,000 to $124,999	853	28.54%
$125,000 to $149,999	451	15.09%
$150,000 to $174,999	327	10.94%
$175,000 to $199,999	139	4.65%
$200,000 to $249,999	242	8.10%
$250,000 to $299,999	104	3.48%
$300,000 to $399,999	24	0.80%
$400,000 to $499,999	26	0.87%
Total	**2,989**	**100.00%**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000.

Table 7.7 Selected Monthly Homeownership Costs as a Percentage of Household Income in Westminster, 1999

Household Income	0-19%	20-24%	25-29%	30-34%	35%+	Total
Less than $10,000	8	0	3	0	25	36
$10,000-$19,999	46	35	17	18	103	219
$20,000-$34,999	118	17	54	48	248	485
$35,000-$49,000	114	57	106	125	131	533
$50,000-$74,999	286	267	172	64	51	840
$75,000-$99,000	288	43	51	35	22	439
$100,000-$149,999	282	57	18	0	0	357
$150,000+	65	8	0	0	0	73
Total	**1,207**	**484**	**421**	**290**	**580**	**2,982**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Similar data is available for renter occupied housing units. In 2000, the median gross rent of renter occupied units was reported as $601 per month, with over 49% of renters paying between over $600 per month in rent (Table 7.8). As with owner occupied units, there is a small percentage of renter occupied units available for a very low cost. The percentage of units available for less than $200 per month was 5.5%. Although it is difficult to relate the cost of rental housing to the condition of rental

housing due to disparities in unit size and the services included as part of the rental cost, it is possible that renters in these low cost units may be living in substandard housing.

A 1999 comparison of gross rent to household income revealed a polarized situation in the City (Table 7.9). One-third of renters spent less than 20% of household income on rent, while another thirty percent (30%) of renters spent 35% or more of household income on rent. The high ratio of gross rent to income is particularly prevalent in households with incomes under $20,000. This data is another indication that affordable housing for lower income households is in short supply. In addition, the high cost of rents in Westminster prevents some residents from saving sufficient funds to use as a down payment for the purchase of a house.

Table 7.8 Gross Rent of Renter Occupied Housing Units in Westminster, 2000

Rent	Units	Percent
Less than $100	49	1.66%
$100 to $149	68	2.31%
$150 to $199	48	1.63%
$200 to $249	93	3.15%
$250 to $299	95	3.22%
$300 to $349	61	2.07%
$350 to $399	107	3.63%
$400 to $449	145	4.92%
$450 to $499	183	6.21%
$500 to $549	320	10.85%
$550 to $599	277	9.40%
$600 to $649	345	11.70%
$650 to $699	226	7.67%
$700 to $749	190	6.45%
$750 to $799	84	2.85%
$800 to $899	164	5.56%
$900 to $999	134	4.55%
$1,000 to $1,249	257	8.72%
$1,250 to $1,499	39	1.32%
$1,500 to $1,999	27	0.92%
$2,000 or more	0	0.00%
No cash rent	36	1.22%
Total	**2,948**	**100.00%**
Median Gross Rent	**$601**	

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 7.9 Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in the City of Westminster, 1999

Household Income	0-19%	20-24%	25-29%	30-34%	35%+	Total
Less than $10,000	55	0	65	26	238	384
$10,000-$19,999	47	35	80	60	423	645
$20,000-$34,999	91	164	163	138	185	741
$35,000-$49,000	247	117	75	51	0	490
$50,000-$74,999	309	42	17	7	10	385
$75,000-$99,000	116	0	0	10	0	126
$100,000-$149,999	109	0	0	0	0	109
Total	**974**	**358**	**400**	**292**	**856**	**2,880**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000.

Part 2: Meeting Housing Needs

Section 1: Office of Housing Services

The City of Westminster Office of Housing Services administers the Section 8 Housing Assistance Payments Program to address affordable housing. The program is supported by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

The program for which the City receives funding under Section 8 is the Housing Choice Voucher Program. The Housing Choice Voucher Program sets no limit on the rental cost of a unit. The participating person chooses a property to rent and if the cost is greater than 30% of their net income, the participant pays the cost differential up to 40% of their net income. The City currently administers 255 Housing Choice Vouchers.

Section 2: Apartment Rehabilitation Incentives

A majority of the lower rent apartments in Westminster are in older buildings. Rents are often kept low by deferring routine maintenance. Other units are substandard because the owner cannot afford repairs. Rehabilitation loan and grant programs exist on the State level but these programs have been inadequately funded and promoted locally. In addition, processing time is often too slow for responding to urgent needs such as leaking roofs and faulty furnaces. Beginning in January 2003, the City adopted a "Property Maintenance Code". The Code permits City involvement with the securing, improving, or demolition of uninhabitable abandoned structures. The enforcement of this code has had a desirable impact in older neighborhoods in the City. Few tenants are aware of the Code's standards or feel they can even complain without retribution. To help alleviate these problems, an informational program will be started to spread the word about the availability of State rehabilitation funds.

The City is studying model rental license programs in other cities, of comparable size to Westminster, in order to develop a program to meet the needs of residents living in rental units in the local community. The City will be hosting a series of meetings with the Westminster Rental License Taskforce in the near future to present the findings of the Westminster Rental License Program Study.

Section 3: Maintenance Standards & Programs

There is a need for general maintenance standards of all residential buildings, regardless of the type of housing, or whether an owner or a tenant occupies the building. Maintenance is intended to cover a broad range of issues from routine maintenance and general appearance of residential structures and properties to the correction of potential safety problems. To address this issue, the Department of Planning, Zoning and Development will work with the Code Enforcement Division to support the Property Maintenance Code requirements. The Planning, Zoning and Development office will seek funding for repairs under the various Special Loans Programs that it administers at the local level.

Section 4: Home Ownership

Homeownership has traditionally been a way for families to move ahead and secure their future. This has become increasingly difficult for middle income families and virtually impossible for limited income and low income families. Partnerships between builders/developers, government, and nonprofit organizations will be key to the production of new for-sale units for low and moderate income families. The City will strive to be an active part of any such partnerships.

In 2008, the City of Westminster formed a partnership with Episcopal Housing Corporation, a nonprofit organization that is committed to strengthening neighborhoods through housing and community development activities. The partnership has lead to the development of the Union Crossing homeownership project. Union Crossing will offer nine affordably priced town homes, located on Union Street and 39th Street, near the intersection of Pennsylvania Avenue and Union Street. These to-be-constructed homes will feature three bedrooms with one full bathroom and one powder room, plus a full, ready-to-finish basement.

Section 5: Compatible Neighborhood Zone

In addition to the housing needs identified in the 2006 Community Development Plan, an additional need has been identified; the need for greater diversity in housing types throughout the City. Housing diversity would involve a mix of housing types, such as single family attached and detached houses and multifamily dwellings, as well as a mix of renter occupied and owner occupied dwellings. T he City of Westminster developed the Compatible Neighborhood Overlay Zone in order to encourage developers to build homes that are compatible to the site layout, density, and design of existing neighborhoods. This zone promotes quality infill development projects. Episcopal Housing took advantage of this overlay zone in order to increase the density of the Union Crossing workforce housing project from 4 units per acre to 9 units.

Part 3: Transitional Housing & Homeless Prevention

Section 1: Introduction

Carroll County, Maryland, is among the wealthiest counties in Maryland, which is one of the wealthiest states in the country. Yet, on any given night more than one hundred people are homeless. Over 1,028 unduplicated individuals have been homeless since July 2004. There have been 112 chronically homeless individuals, indicating that access to the shelter system is not addressing the root cause of their homelessness. By definition, the chronic homeless are alone, disabled and have been homeless multiple times. In FY 2007 more than 350 unduplicated persons were homeless. In that same period 356 households containing 1,015 people, (585 adults and 430 children) received services that prevented them from becoming homeless. In the same year, there were also 727 households, containing 671 children who received utility assistance that prevented their utilities (water, heat or electricity) from being cut off. Loss of utilities can potentially result in eviction.

Section 2: Carroll County Circle of Caring Board

The Carroll County Circle of Caring Board (Circle of Caring) called upon a diverse group of consumers, non-profits, government agencies, and the faith community to create and implement a plan to reduce and eventually eliminate homelessness by 2019. "The Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness" incorporates best practice solutions to prevent and reduce homelessness in Carroll County.

The National Alliance to End Homelessness (NAEH) is leading a groundbreaking and ambitious campaign to engage all sectors of society in a revitalized effort to confront and overcome homelessness in America. NAEH welcomed the Circle of Caring to join over 180 cities across the country that have completed local plans to end homelessness, which cumulatively can address the issue nationally. The NAEH and the Circle of Caring agree that preventing homelessness is far more effective and less expensive than sheltering programs. At the same time, helping the homeless and those at-risk of homelessness to establish and maintain housing stability, is more humane and less destructive to individuals, families and communities.

Section 3: Carroll County Services & Strategies

County Department of Citizen Services

The Department of Citizen Services is the coordinating agency for all human service functions within Carroll County. The Department assists in the guidance of human service agencies with the goal of providing a variety of services to fulfill the basic needs of children, youth, older adults, and the disabled who live in the community.

Human Services Programs of Carroll County, Inc.

Human Services Programs of Carroll County (HSP) is Carroll County's Community Action Agency. HSP's

mission is to improve the quality of life and self-sufficiency of at-risk and low-income Carroll County residents by providing assistance with basic needs, advocacy, linkages to resources and opportunities to enhance life skills.

Strategies

The Department of Citizen Services, Human Service Programs of Carroll County, and the Circle of Caring Board developed a set of strategies to reduce, and, over time, eliminate homelessness:

- Increase public awareness about homelessness and housing needs
- Increase prevention services for those in unstable housing and supportive services for the homeless
- Increase the supply of decent, safe rental housing for low income households, especially for those on fixed incomes and for those who need supportive housing
- Open the door to housing and housing stability
- Support and increase collaboration of community organizations that are working to meet housing and supportive service needs

Section 4: Transitional Housing & Shelters

The City's homeless problem is less obvious to a casual visitor than it might appear in larger cities, but is a very real and growing problem. People often move from one friend to another friend's house unable to find or afford a home, or they may use one of the local shelters. While the current shelters do not turn away large numbers of people, they work at capacity. Construction or rehabilitation of further facilities for temporary shelter may be necessary in the near future. Shelters are a beginning from which a resident is expected to find a permanent home. However, even with professional staff assistance many single people and families find it nearly impossible to find permanent housing during a brief shelter stay. Transitional housing needs to be created to fill that gap. No transitional housing exists in the City at this time. Once developed, it would ease the burden on some of the people in need.

Part 4: Neighborhood Revitalization

Section 1: Benefits of Neighborhood Revitalization

Neighborhood revitalization is important to the City of Westminster because neighborhood revitalization efforts strengthen pride in a community by improving the image and identity of the neighborhood. Identity refers to how the residents view or feel about their own neighborhood. The City of Westminster wants the residents of Westminster to be proud of their community. Pride means residents plan to stay, invest in their properties and become more engaged in community activities.

Neighborhood revitalization can improve the look and feel of the neighborhood instilling a sense of pride by the residents. Image refers to how the neighborhood is viewed by non-residents. Non-residents could be visitors to Westminster, students at the local colleges, or prospective residents looking to buy a new home. Improving the neighborhood's image will positively impact the desirability of the homes in the neighborhood and the level of investment in the area, which, over time, makes residents proud of their neighborhood because it is a desirable place for people to live.

Section 2: Westminster Neighborhood Revitalization History

Since 2001, the City of Westminster has implemented a comprehensive approach to improving neighborhoods. The City of Westminster has used Community Legacy funds and alternative funding sources, including City RALF, the Special Loans Program, and Small Cities Community Development Block Grants to redevelop the historic neighborhoods of Westminster. The initiatives the City have successfully implemented include: providing affordable housing for income qualified buyers, safety and restoration measures through the installation of gas, street lights for the Pennsylvania Avenue corridor, and the planning and construction of a new Community Center on Union Street. Westminster developed Community Legacy homeownership projects to attract buyers' attention.

Part 5: State Neighborhood Revitalization Programs

Section 1: Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development

The Division of Neighborhood Revitalization (NR) within the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development is committed to empowering communities through its programs for loans, grants, technical assistance and tax credits. Assistance through the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization is designed to serve as a tool for communities, business and organizations to leverage additional funding from investors, foundations and local governments. State funding for projects in Maryland municipalities, other existing communities, industrial areas, and planned growth areas designated by counties will receive priority funding over other projects. Priority Funding Areas are locations where the State and local governments want to target their efforts to encourage and support economic development and new growth (Map 7.2).

Section 2: Community Development Block Grant

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds help strengthen Maryland's communities by expanding affordable housing opportunities, creating jobs, stabilizing neighborhoods and improving the overall quality of life.

CDBG funded projects must meet one of three national objectives:

1. Principally benefits persons of low- and moderate-income
2. Eliminates slum and blight
3. Meets an urgent need of recent origin that threatens public health and safety

Eligible projects generally fall into three categories:

1. Housing
2. Public facilities
3. Economic development projects

The City is eligible to compete for federal funding under the State of Maryland's Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program. The City has participated for over 15 years in the CDBG Program. Funding is available for housing, infrastructure, economic development, and related activities. The specific area addressed by the City varies for each grant application.

In October 2009, the City of Westminster was awarded $800,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds, through the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, for a City and non-profit venture to build affordable townhomes on Union Street. The non-profit, Episcopal Housing Corporation, worked closely with the City since January 2008 to make this project possible. The homeownership project is called Union Crossing and will provide nine townhomes to individuals who earn 80 percent (80%) or below of area median income levels.

Section 3: Community Legacy

Community Legacy (CL) provides funding for local economic development activities that stimulate reinvestment and strengthen neighborhoods throughout Maryland. Community Legacy provides local governments and community organizations with funding for essential projects aimed at strengthening communities. Projects capitalize on the strengths of a community and are a part of the larger strategy to revitalize a declining area. Projects/activities typically include, but are not limited to:

- Mixed-use development consisting of residential, commercial and/or open space
- Business retention, expansion and attraction initiatives
- Streetscape improvements
- Increasing homeownership and home rehabilitation among residents
- Residential and commercial façade improvement programs
- Real estate acquisition, including land banking, and strategic demolition

In 2008, the City of Westminster received a Community Legacy Grant of $175,000 to revitalize and rebuild the intersection of Union Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. In 2009, the City received a Community Legacy Grant of $100,000 to revitalize and rebuild the intersection of West Main Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. The City's 2008 and 2009 Community Legacy projects combined to form the Tri-Street Neighborhood Streetscape Project. The Tri-Street Neighborhood Area Streetscape Project is the final phase of the streetscape improvements recommended in the 2005 Lower Pennsylvania Avenue Streetscape Study. When this phase is completed the Tri-Street Neighborhood will have an attractive background to build the future of their community. The proposed streetscape improvements will help define the neighborhood. Residents want the physical elements and features that unify their neighborhood into an image that visitors will recognize and respect.

Part 6: Local Neighborhood Revitalization Projects

Section 1: Rehabilitation Assistance Loan Fund

The Rehabilitation Assistance Loan Fund, which provides loans for improvements in Downtown Westminster. While normally used for facade improvements on downtown commercial buildings, particularly along Main Street, the revolving loan fund is also available for rental housing rehabilitation and the creation of additional housing units for low-income people.

Section 2: Commercial Façade Improvement Program

Westminster's designation as a Main Street Maryland Community makes available a variety of technical assistance from private and State agencies. The City offers a Façade Improvement Program that provides grants for exterior renovations of buildings in Downtown Westminster.

Section 3: Residential Improvement Program

In 2008, the Maple Street Committee of Westminster designed a new grant program to help property owners within the Maple Street Area improve their home's appearance. The "Paint-Up, Fix-Up" Grant Program will provide matching funds to homeowners who want to complete exterior beautification projects or exterior home improvement projects. The "Paint-Up, Fix-Up" Grant Program was designed to increase "pride of ownership" within Westminster, as well as to promote overall beautification of the neighborhoods in the Maple Street Area.

Section 4: Westminster Community Center

Tri-Street Neighborhood Area

The Westminster Community Center is in the center of the Tri-Street Neighborhood Area, on the west side of Westminster. The Tri-Street Neighborhood Area was designated by the City as an area in need of revitalization. In June 2002, the City of Westminster launched an ambitious effort called the Lower Pennsylvania Avenue Task Force. This advisory body was formed to address the short- and long-term needs of the west end of town because the area had seen a significant spike in the number of crimes. The Task Force suggested numerous actions taken by the City, encompassing crime prevention and enforcement activities including foot patrols, new regulations on rental housing, funding for home repairs, programs for homeownership, and programs with McDaniel College, new streetlights; as well as the creation of the Westminster Community Center.

Community Initiative

Westminster Community of Shalom formed a partnership with the City of Westminster and conducted a door-to-door survey of household size and income characteristics. The study showed that 85% of the area's residents are low- and moderate-income, with most of the low-income families being very low

income. The findings concluded that there was an overwhelming need to build a community center in the neighborhood. The Union Street United Methodist Church responded to the needs of their community and purchased a badly-deteriorated house across the street from the church. The church then turned the property over to a nonprofit organization, the Westminster Community of Shalom (WCS). The City assisted the WCS to apply for and receive $450,000 in CDBG funding and $100,000 in Community Legacy funding, which was used with other donations, to build the Westminster Community Center in 2005. Today, the Center is enjoyed by children throughout the Tri-Street Neighborhood Area.

Part 7: Vision of Housing in Westminster

Section 1: Maryland's Workforce Housing Crisis

Maryland has recently begun to experience significant gaps in housing that is affordable for many in the State's public and private sector workforce, particularly teachers, nurses, police, firefighters, and other public service employees. According to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, about 33% of all households statewide cannot afford the median rent in their county of residence, while about 41% of all urban households do not meet the rental housing affordability threshold.

A growing number of private and public sector employees are faced with very long commutes to homes outside the jurisdiction where they work, and even outside the State because they cannot afford homes in the same jurisdiction as their place of employment. This causes more congestion on roads and more pollution in the environment, and jeopardizes the quality of the public safety and other services that a jurisdiction can provide. Many private and public sector employers are losing valuable prospective employees because those applicants cannot afford to live in the same jurisdiction as their prospective place of employment. The City of Westminster's 2009 Comprehensive Plan has provided several strategies on how to alleviate this growing workforce housing crisis.

Section 2: Building Successful Communities

The Urban Land Institute (ULI) is a §501(c)(3) nonprofit research and education organization with a mission to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. The members of the Urban Land Institute are community builders: the people who develop and redevelop neighborhoods, business districts and communities across the United States and around the world. ULI developed five principles that cities can use as guides for future growth to maximize the benefits which density offers.

The City of Westminster will use the ULI principles to guide the development of the Westminster "20-Year Housing Strategy and Plan" that will be used to accommodate the future population growth of Westminster. At the current development scenario for the next 20 years, the City can only accommodate 2,957 potential residents out of the 4,284 residents projected to need housing in the next 20 years. In other words, the City will be "short" about 780 units. (See Chapter 4: Municipal Growth).

Urban Land Institute's Principles for Successful Communities

Principle 1: Make Room for Tomorrow

In order to provide enough housing units to accommodate population growth for the next 20 years and beyond, the City of Westminster has to encourage mixed-use, higher-density development, which can provide housing for new residents by reusing existing structures and reclaiming blighted and underused areas.

Principle 2: Build for New Choices

The City of Westminster recognizes that America's housing choices have changed and as a result the City promotes building for the new choices. For generations, married couples with children dominated housing markets and led to an exodus to the suburbs. But today those households make up less than 25 percent of American households, and they will be less than 20 percent by 2020. In their place are young professionals, couples without children, empty nesters and single parents who are in search of apartments, condos, and townhouses in fun, walkable neighborhoods. According to the 2004 American Community Survey, given a choice between a large-lot neighborhood where families depend entirely on cars to get around and a more compact neighborhood with schools, shops, and restaurants nearby: six in ten prospective homebuyers chose the compact neighborhood.

Principle 3: Make the Most of What We Have

The third principle is that the City of Westminster ensures that the City is making the best use of limited resources. Sprawl is expensive. It is expensive to extend water, sewer, electricity, highway, police, and fire protection farther and farther away. Concentrating development where the City already has infrastructure can save the City money and precious resources. such as water and land.

Principle 4: Attract the Best

Westminster is competing with other cities in the region for young knowledge workers, affluent professionals and the "creative class – entrepreneurs and artists." These groups tend to prefer high quality urban living. In addition to attracting higher-income households, Westminster can also use higher-density housing to recruit vital service workers such as fire fighters, teachers and police officers. Increasingly, these people cannot afford to live where they work. If the City can offer affordable homeownership opportunities, through less expensive higher-density building, then the City can attract these workers to the local community and raise the quality of life for all residents.

Knowledge Worker

The term "Knowledge Worker" describes someone who adds value by processing existing information to create new information which could be used to define and solve problems. Examples of knowledge workers include lawyers, doctors, marketers, software developers, managers and bankers, etc.

Creative Class

The term "Creative Class" describes residents of a community whose economic function is to create new ideas, new technology, and new creative content. In general, this group shares common characteristics, such as creativity, individuality, diversity, and merit. This group has an estimated 38 million members, constitutes more than 30 percent of the U.S. workforce, and profoundly influences work and lifestyle issues. It includes artists and designers, scientists and engineers, creative professionals, managers, and technicians in many fields.

Principle 5: Jumpstart the Economy

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan directs the City of Westminster's future growth plans to fuel the local economy efficiently and effectively. The City recognizes that more and more cities are starting to understand the connection between jobs and housing. When towns or cities don't have enough housing for the workers that businesses need, the businesses leave. In the past, workers followed the jobs. However, recent trends show that jobs follow workers. If Westminster wants to recruit a strong workforce, it needs to create walkable, lively neighborhoods. Once the workers are here, companies will take notice. Increasing the amount of Downtown Westminster housing, and thus Downtown consumers, will also attract more Downtown retail businesses, which generates additional sales tax revenue.

Housing & Neighborhood Revitalization Element

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan outlines how the increase in density and a careful use of land could stimulate a sustainable supply of housing to meet the needs of the community for the next 20 years. The residents of Westminster desire to maintain the quality of life of their community, while progressively planning for the future population growth. As the population of Westminster continues to grow, the City will have to think in creative ways to accommodate the growth, such as higher density, mixed-use developments. The Housing and Neighborhood Revitalization Element encourages the development of housing in a way which conserves open space, promotes "green" building, and provides a variety of housing choices for residents.

Goals and Objectives

Goal H1: Create and maintain a "20-Year Housing Strategy and Plan" to prepare and accommodate for future population growth according to the Municipal Growth Element

Objective 1: Develop a strategy that will increase the housing unit capacity of Westminster

a. Analyze current economic conditions and housing trends to create an accurate image of the demand for housing in the next 20 years

b. Collaborate with staff from State, County and local community development agencies to identify specific housing projects and development opportunities

c. Create alternate future development scenarios for increasing the housing unit capacity of Westminster while protecting the character of the City

d. Choose a future development scenario that City Staff, elected officials and the local community can agree to pursue

e. Meet with regional housing developers to market Westminster's preferred future development scenario and to seek input as well as support

Objective 2: Promote infill development and other redevelopment options on underutilized residential or commercial lots

a. Identify priority redevelopment areas in order to encourage redevelopment within established areas of the City

b. Promote the infill of the existing Central Business District and Downtown Business District with business and high density residential uses

c. Incorporate neighborhood compatibility and designs standards to guide infill development and redevelopment into the "20-Year Housing Strategy and Plan"

Objective 3: Plan for increased density to provide high quality projects that will balance the need for accommodating growth and maintaining small town character

a. Encourage buildings to grow vertically rather than horizontally, and to incorporate structured rather than surface parking, in order to reduce the footprint for new construction

b. Review and revise the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations for the promotion of development with a mix of uses and densities

c. Consider density bonuses or other incentives for projects within the City core to achieve desired densities

d. Incorporate appropriate standards and guidelines for higher density projects into the "20-Year Housing Strategy and Plan"

Objective 4: Create interesting, unique development projects which reflect the values and cultures of the people who reside in Westminster

a. Incorporate standards for development and construction which respond to community values into the "20-Year Housing Strategy and Plan"

b. Promote and protect the historic, architectural or other special cultural characteristics of Westminster

c. Review all development proposals for human scale elements, historic design, and other elements that help to maintain the small town character of Westminster

Goal H2: Encourage and support a diversity of affordable housing choices

Objective 1: Promote the creation of workforce housing stock

a. Educate the public on the importance of workforce housing to the economic vitality of Westminster

b. Allow density increases in identified areas for the provision of workforce housing

c. Provide additional incentives for the construction of workforce housing

Objective 2: Encourage new multi-family housing with affordable rents

a. Guide developers to devote 20 to 50 percent of rental units for use by low to moderate income persons

b. Allow density bonuses for providing lower income units

c. Create a multi-family zoning district in the zoning text

Objective 3: Seek opportunities for homeownership among low and moderate income households

a. Use grant funding for write down of land or infrastructure cost for developments

b. Allow density bonuses for providing lower income units

c. Provide homeownership training for low and moderate income households

Objective 4: Partner with regional housing developers to provide affordable housing that meets the needs of the low and moderate income residents of Westminster

a. Streamline the process for the approval of Planned Development applications for developments offering a mix of residential uses and a variety of housing types

b. Promote the Compatible Neighborhood Overlay Zone

Goal H3: Require that all residential buildings and properties in Westminster are properly maintained

Objective 1: Inform property owners about the availability of local, state, and federal programs for the improvement of property

a. Develop informational materials about property improvement programs, and distribute materials directly to residential property owners

b. Sponsor information sessions regarding programs for the improvement of property

Objective 2: Promote tax incentives programs for the rehabilitation of historic properties

a. Develop informational materials about Federal, State and Local tax incentive programs and distribute materials directly to historic property owners

b. Sponsor information sessions regarding tax incentive programs

Objective 3: Maintain a Nuisance Abatement Ordinance to ensure problem houses are in compliance with City Codes

a. Cooperate with local law enforcement agencies to identify “Nuisance” Properties

b. Encourage owners of “Nuisance” properties to abate further problems

Objective 4: Use the City’s ability to protect uninhabitable abandoned structures with significant historic value, rather than allowing these structures to be demolished

a. Monitor the condition and occupancy of at risk buildings with significant historic value

b. Develop public-private partnerships as appropriate to preserve important structures

Goal H4: Promote quality housing for all residents of Westminster

Objective 1: Provide a sufficient quantity of safe, sanitary, adequate, and affordable housing

a. Educate the public on the City property maintenance codes

b. Promote the Code Enforcement Office as a vital partner in monitoring the quality of housing

c. Study Property Maintenance and Rental Licensing strategies in cities of comparable size to Westminster

Objective 2: Support the Fair Housing Act, in which race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or handicap should prevent someone from the sale or rental of housing

a. Strictly enforce the Fair Housing Act

b. Educate tenants regarding the applicability of the Fair Housing Act

Goal H5: Coordinate community resources and local partnerships to provide adequate housing for the low-income, special needs population and the homeless of the Westminster area

Objective 1: Partner with local agencies to increase residents' ability to obtain and remain in affordable units

a. Promote the Carroll County Bureau of Housing and Community Development's mission to assure eligible families with improved, affordable living conditions

b. Support Human Service Programs of Carroll County's mission is to improve the quality of life and self-sufficiency of at-risk and low-income Carroll County residents

Objective 2: Continue to collaborate with the Carroll County Circle of Caring Homeless Board to develop and implement the "Carroll County 10-year Plan to End Homelessness"

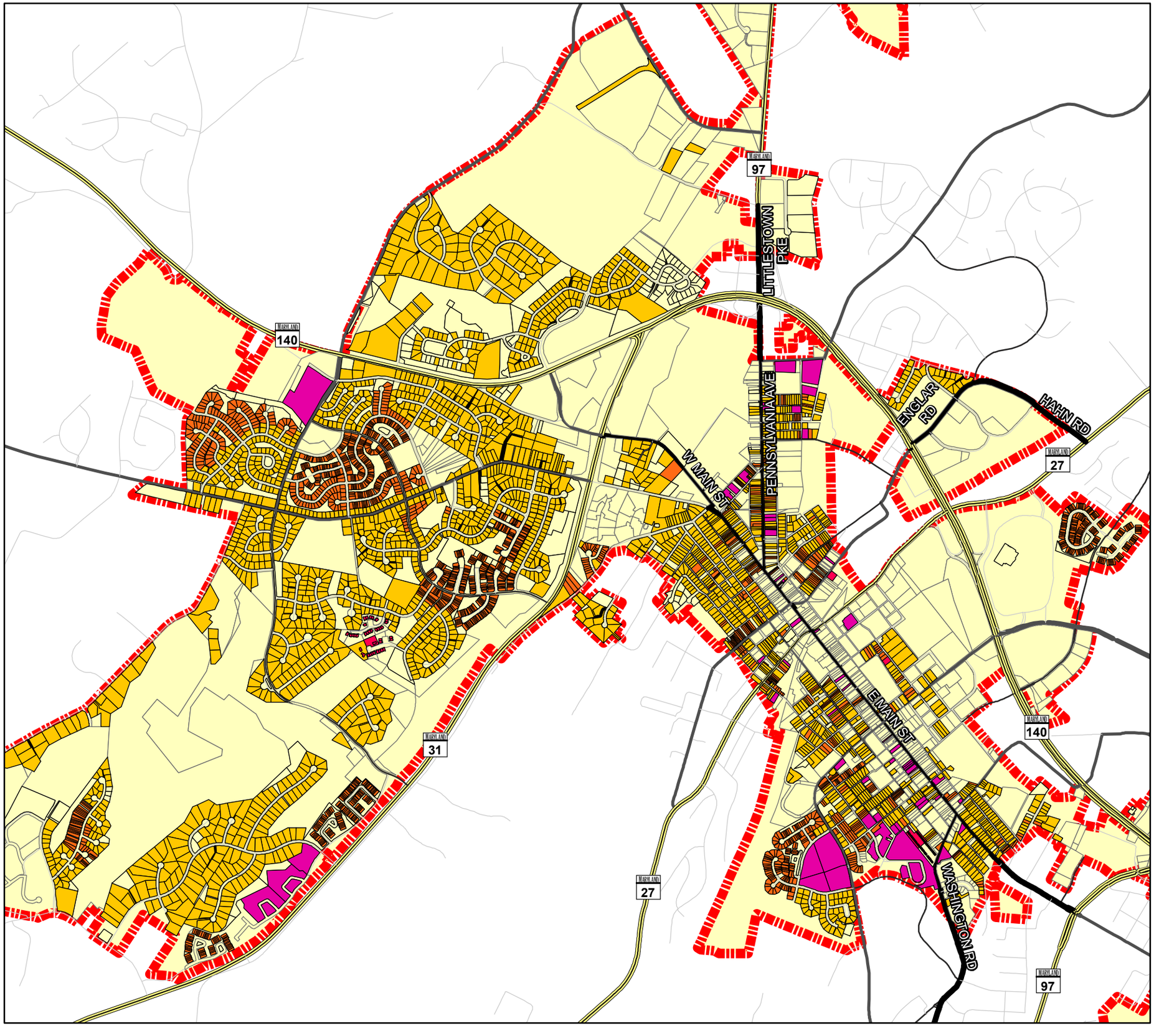
a. Set annual housing and supportive service production goals for affordable housing and homelessness

b. Ensure transitional housing for populations who require an intensive, supportive living environment to maintain housing stability

c. Target a specific number of permanent supportive housing units for acquisition or development

d. Coordinate with local non-profit agencies to provide adequate shelter for the City's homeless population

Housing Types in Residential Areas of Westminster



Legend

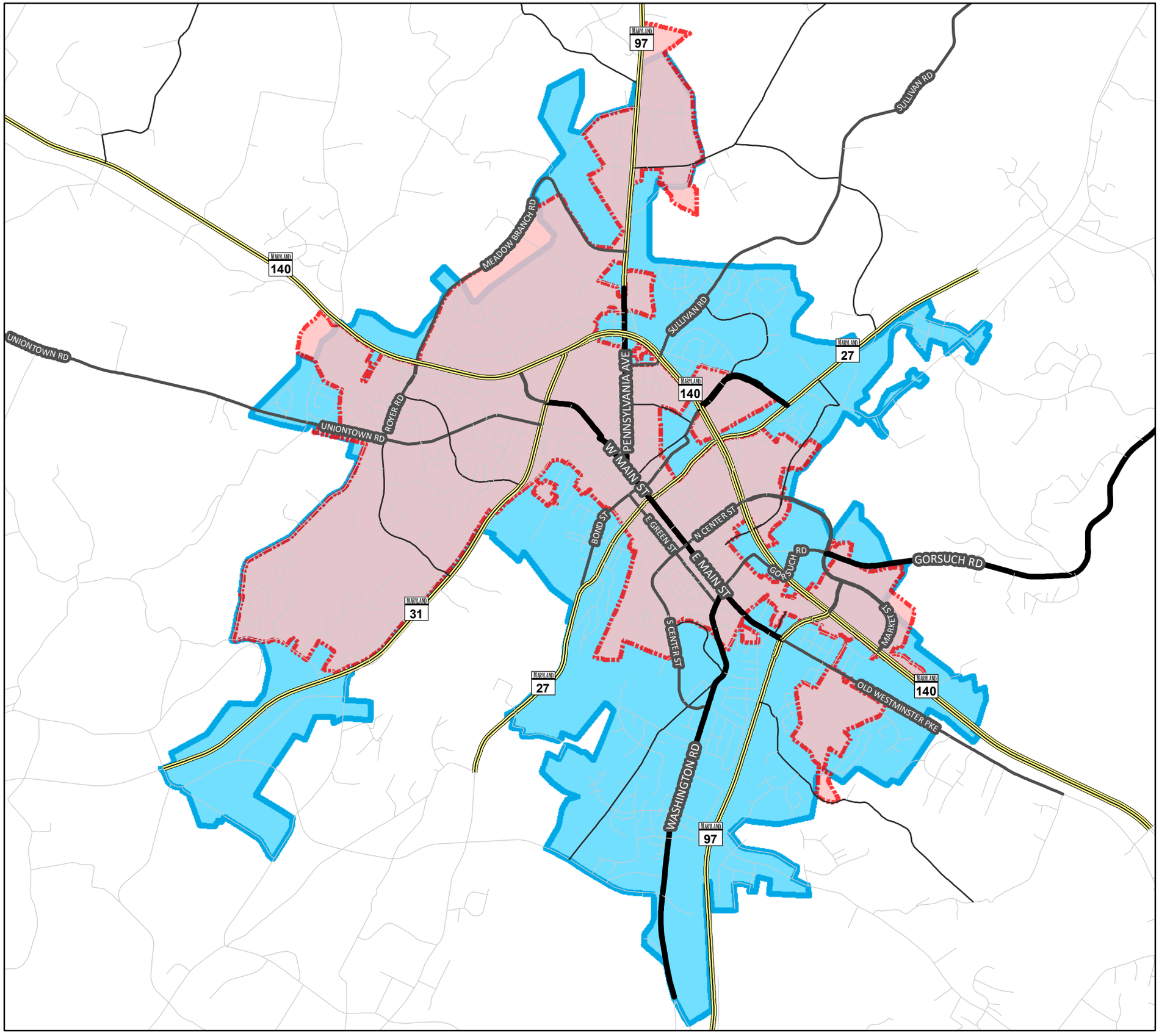
Housing Type

- Single Family
- Townhouse
- Condominum
- Apartment

Westminster City Boundary

Map Not to Scale

Westminster Priority Funding Area



Legend

City Boundary

Priority Funding Area

Map Not to Scale

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Community Character & Design

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

What is the Community Character & Design Element?

During its 1997 session, the General Assembly passed five pieces of legislation and budget initiatives known collectively as "Smart Growth." Maryland has adopted the principles of Smart Growth to be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

The following Smart Growth principle relates to the Community Character & Design Element:

Principle: Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place

- To craft a vision and set standards for development and construction which respond to community values of architectural beauty and distinctiveness,
- To create interesting, unique communities which reflect the values and cultures of the people who reside there,
- To foster the types of physical environments which support a more cohesive community fabric
- To construct and preserve buildings which prove to be assets to a community because of the unique contribution to the look and feel of a city

Community Vision for Community Character

Residents describe the small town charm of Westminster as an attraction for both future residents and visitors. Residents express a desire to maintain the friendly, open and inviting atmosphere of Westminster and to expand upon it in order to make it one of the City's greatest assets.

There is a need for residents to take pride in their community from such gestures as maintaining the appearance of their homes to being respectful to their neighbors. One neighbor should not be overlooked. That is 'McDaniel College'. Some residents suggest developing a working relationship with McDaniel College to take advantage of the opportunities available, such as the "Theatre on the Hill" or professors and students patronizing Downtown businesses. The image of a welcoming, small college town could become the centerpiece of creating a tourist attraction here in Westminster that residents requested to see in the future.

State Planning Vision found in this Element

Community Design - Compact, mixed-use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near transit options. Ensure efficient preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas, and historical, cultural, and archeological resources.

Issues & Opportunities

- Community Character
- Compatible Design
- Image & Identity of Westminster
- Historic Preservation

Part 1: Community Character & Design

CHAPTER 8

Part 1: Community Character & Design
Part 2: Built Environment
Part 3: Vision for Future Development
Part 4: Westminster Historic Preservation
Part 5: Historic Preservation Programs
Part 6: Historic Preservation Partners
Part 6: Protection of Historic Resources
Goals and Objectives

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of a positive community image and quality community design to assist the City in instilling a sense of pride and well-being in the community, assuring quality employment, and improving tourism. A quality built environment contributes to the overall economic, environmental, and social well-being of Westminster.

The Community Character and Design Element is a combination of the preservation of the physical setting and the historic character of the City. The City recognizes the importance of protecting Westminster's natural and built environments. Balancing development and environmental values is necessary to maintain Westminster's quality of life and community livability into the future. Livable and sustainable developments promote long-range strategies that bring together environmental, economic, and social values.

Section 1: Community Design

Community design is more than landscaping, building design, and parks. It involves the city's physical layout, the natural setting, and the visual relationships among the individual features that make up the community. Good community design results in a town that functions well, has a pleasant environment, and has visual identity. As the Westminster region's population grows, local community design issues will continue to be of major importance in order to preserve the identity of the City. New development will be integrated with the natural and built environments. For example, flexible design options, such as clustered development, will maximize opportunities for retention of open space and vegetation.

The appearance of a city reflects a great deal about the community and the people who live in it; whether or not the community is perceived as a progressive and active environment, and thus appearance plays a strong role in the economics of the area. A city that is well planned and attractive will draw shoppers, visitors, businesses, and residents.

Section 2: Community Character

Westminster's identity is based on a rich heritage and cultural diversity. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan promotes a community awareness of the importance of a positive image for Westminster for attracting new employment and increasing tourism. In addition, a positive identity will instill a sense of pride and well-being for current residents and emphasize an attractive community appearance. The small town

character and historic charm of the City is found in Westminster's historic buildings, neighborhoods and streetscapes. In order to protect Westminster's quality of life, community character and city identity, efforts need to be taken preserve the historical, cultural and natural resources of Westminster.

Part 2: Built Environment

Section 1: Types of Development

Two general types of development characterize the City of Westminster. In the older parts of the City, development is denser, offering a mixture of residential, commercial, and civic uses. On the outskirts of the City, development is less dense and is typified by the segregation of land uses characteristic of suburban communities, so that residential and commercial uses are geographically separated.

Section 2: Street Patterns

The streets in the older part of Westminster generally follow a traditional grid pattern with a combination of primary streets and secondary service alleys. Buildings have been constructed close together and at the edge of the sidewalk, particularly in the downtown business district of Westminster. This arrangement encourages pedestrian activity because businesses are easily reached by walking, and the narrow appearance of the streetscape encourages vehicles to travel more slowly.

Section 3: Neighborhood Design

Within the residential neighborhoods that border the historic core, more space has been provided between individual buildings. These older suburban neighborhoods fit in well with the historic fabric of the downtown because in most cases, these areas feature small front yards, narrow streets, sidewalks, and service alleys. Many of these residential neighborhoods are within walking distance to the retail shops and services available in Downtown Westminster. Some of these neighborhoods have gained historic value in their own right as examples of early suburban development patterns and their adaptation to local vernacular influences.

Section 4: Architecture Styles

Architecture in Westminster often reflects a combination of vernacular and national styles. In many cases, the form of a building is based on the vernacular farmhouse with detailing that represents certain elements of high style architecture. At times, a well-to-do farmer would construct very similar houses on both his agricultural land and in town. Particularly in the oldest parts of Westminster, there was a considerable time lag between styles that were popular nationally and the styles being constructed locally.

Part 3: Vision for Future Development

Introduction

One of the core principles of Smart Growth is the creation or preservation of a "sense of place." A "sense of place" results when design and development are able to protect and incorporate the distinctive character of the particular place in which it is located. Geography, natural features, climate, culture, historical resources, and ecology each contribute to the distinctive character of a region. The City of Westminster has adopted this principle as the City's vision that future development will preserve the image and identity of the community. The following community design concepts will serve as a guide to City staff, residents and developers on how Westminster will implement this vision and promote a "sense of place."

The Westminster Planning, Zoning and Development Staff will review all future development plans for the following community design concepts to meet the goals and objectives of this Element:

Section 1: Community Character

The most recognizable aspect of community character is the physical appearance of buildings and their relationship to each other and to the streets. Many components compromise community character, including:

- Road network
- Land use
- Building orientation
- Setbacks
- Lot sizes and shapes
- Façade widths
- Distances between buildings
- Roof shapes and pitches
- Colors and texture
- Lot widths and depths
- Porches
- Building heights
- Building materials
- Doors and window arrangement

Section 2: Traditional Neighborhood Design

Traditional Neighborhood Design (or Traditional Neighborhood Development) creates village-like neighborhoods with housing for diverse populations, a mix of nonresidential land uses, walkable streets, public space, integrated civic uses and commercial centers and accessible open space. Traditional neighborhoods are compact communities that provide destinations that are close to home and work, with sidewalk and trail environments for walking and biking. Elements of Traditional Neighborhood Design include:

- Limited size
- Mixed uses
- Street network
- Sidewalks and pedestrian paths
- Public square or center
- Porches
- Open space
- Shallow setbacks
- Edges and gateways
- Compatible building types

Section 3: Urban Design

Westminster promotes quality urban design. Urban design is the process of giving form, shape and character to the arrangement of various parts of the urban environment: from buildings to whole neighborhoods, with an emphasis on compact mixed-use development with good pedestrian and public transportation access. Urban design blends architecture, landscaping and city planning concepts together to make an urban area accessible, attractive and functional.

Section 4: Pedestrian-Oriented Design

Westminster encourages the use of pedestrian-oriented design. Pedestrian-oriented design describes land use activities that are designed and arranged in a way that emphasizes travel by foot rather than by car. Elements include compact, mixed-use development patterns with facilities and design that enhance the environment for pedestrians in terms of safety, walking distances, comfort and the visual appeal of the surroundings. Pedestrian-friendly environments can be created by locating buildings close to the sidewalk, by lining the street with trees, and by buffering the sidewalk with planting strips or parked cars, small shops, street-level lighting or signs, and public art or displays.

Section 5: Principles of Public Places & Spaces

Project for Public Spaces (PPS) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to helping people create and sustain public spaces that build stronger communities. Today, PPS has become an internationally recognized center for best-practices, information, and resources about "Placemaking." PPS developed a set of principles for "What Makes a Successful Place?" In evaluating thousands of public spaces around the world, PPS has found that successful ones have four key qualities: they are accessible; people are engaged in activities there; the space is comfortable and has a good image; and finally, it is a sociable place: one where people meet each other and take people when they come to visit.

Quality 1: Access & Linkages

A visitor can judge the accessibility of a place by its connections to its surroundings, both visual and physical. A successful public space is easy to get to and get through; it is visible both from a distance and up close. The edges of a space are important as well: for instance, a row of shops along a street is more interesting and generally safer to walk by than a blank wall or empty lot.

Quality 2: Comfort & Image

Whether a space is comfortable and presents itself well - has a good image - is key to its success. Comfort includes perceptions about safety, cleanliness, and the availability of places to sit - the importance of giving people the choice to sit where they want is generally underestimated.

Quality 3: Uses & Activities

Activities are the basic building blocks of a place. Having something to do gives people a reason to come to a place - and return. When there is nothing to do, a space will be empty and that

generally means that something is wrong. The more activities that are going and that people have an opportunity to participate in, the better. Cities should create places where people of different ages can use the space so that the space is used throughout the day.

Quality 4: Sociability

This is a difficult quality for a place to achieve, but once attained it becomes an unmistakable feature. When people see friends, meet and greet their neighbors, and feel comfortable interacting with strangers, they tend to feel a stronger sense of place or attachment to their community - and to the place that fosters these types of social activities.

Section 6: Character & Design Compatible with the Region

The City of Westminster has been working with the Carroll County Planning Staff to coordinate implementing the "Carroll County Design Expectations," which serve as a manual to educate the public on the County's expectations for new development architecture and design. The Carroll County Planning Staff have a similar vision as the City Planning Staff to preserve the historic character of the region. The 2010 Carroll County Comprehensive Plan Draft developed the following goals under the County Community Design Element and will be used as a reference for the City of Westminster until the City completes the "Westminster Design Guidelines and Manual."

Carroll County Community Design Element

1. Incorporate standards that promote a traditional layout and design for new communities and neighborhoods
2. Create walkability in new and existing communities
3. Protect visual resources to ensure that Carroll County's traditional landscape remains a valuable civic and economic resource
4. Expand the opportunities for residents in urban and suburban areas of the county to participate in agricultural activities and/or create their own garden plots
5. Minimize the visual, environmental, and economic impacts of parking facilities
6. Develop design standards and/or guidelines to apply to different types and locations of development to ensure a minimum level of quality design is achieved
7. Recognize, utilize, and preserve our community heritage resources that express the character and form of our existing communities as a touchstone to help guide and shape our future communities
8. Cluster development into new rural hamlets in areas designated for protection as an agricultural resource
9. Establish a set of minimum standards that are shared by the County and towns and implement those items uniformly across jurisdictional boundaries
10. Mitigate the streetscape and traffic impacts of current and future commercial strip corridors

Part 4: Westminster Historic Preservation

Section 1: National Register District

The Westminster National Register District, created in 1980, encompasses much of the older part of town and includes buildings that were constructed from the late 1700s and onward. The oldest structures in Westminster are generally located in the eastern portion of the City, where the original land parcels were platted. The town gradually expanded westward along the present day Main Street, with latter residential neighborhoods built on the outskirts. Over time, many of the older neighborhoods have experienced new construction on infill parcels that is not always compatible with the historic character of the town.

According to the inventory form completed for nomination to the National Register, at least 89% of the structures located within the Westminster National Register District were considered to be historically contributing to the District in 1980. This percentage has likely decreased due to alterations and demolitions in the 25 years since the establishment of the District. A resurvey of the District would provide an accurate assessment of the current condition of the City's National Register District. The Historic District Commission (HDC) has made resurveying the 1980 National Register District its priority project in order to add structures that have acquired historic significance since 1980 and to include structures that may have been overlooked. The HDC plans to complete the resurvey by 2011.

A second National Register District found within the Westminster corporate limits is located on the McDaniel College campus. This National Register District incorporates several of the oldest buildings on the southeast portion of the campus.

Section 2: Local Historic District

In addition to the National Register Districts located in Westminster, there is also a Local Historic District (Map 8.1). The primary distinction between the national and local districts is that the National Register District is primarily an honorary recognition and only provides protection to buildings if a project involves federal funding. The local district is part of the City's Zoning Ordinance and establishes a set of design guidelines that must be followed for any exterior renovations or additions that are made to a property located within the local district. These design guidelines are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Properties are designated for inclusion in the Local Historic District on a voluntary basis. At this time only two properties are located within the Local Historic District. As a result, almost all of Westminster's historic resources are not protected by government regulation. The Historic District Commission has developed strategies to expand and improve the Local Historic District over the next five years.

Section 3: Historic District Commission

The Westminster Historic District Commission administers the Local Historic District. The Commission is a group of citizens who have a background or special interest in preservation issues. The Historic District

Commission has focused its efforts on educational programs through the sponsoring of workshops and historic house tours, as well as encouraging historically sensitive rehabilitation through the administration of two rehabilitation tax credits.

Section 4: Maintenance & Preservation

In historic neighborhoods, maintenance of buildings is often an issue. Aging structures usually require a higher level of maintenance than new buildings. While many neighborhoods in Westminster are in good condition, there are some general areas and specific properties that have not been properly maintained. This lack of maintenance degrades the integrity of the structure, reduces property values, and can give the impression that an overall neighborhood is in decline. The Mayor and Common Council of Westminster extended the provisions of the City's Property Maintenance Code to the exteriors of owner occupied properties in an effort to eliminate these negative impacts. In addition, the City offers a variety of programs to encourage the maintenance and rehabilitation of the City's historic structures. Proper maintenance and rehabilitation of historic structures could increase the property values of the structure, as well as the surrounding neighborhood.

Part 5: Historic Preservation Programs

Section1: Standards for Renovations

Architectural design guidelines, known as 'Standards for Renovations,' were initially adopted in 1978 and currently apply to the portion of Main Street zoned Central Business, generally located between Anchor Street and Longwell Avenue. The purpose of the guidelines is to maintain the historic appearance of downtown Westminster, which is a significant draw for both regular customers and visitors to the area. Projects are currently reviewed for compliance with the design guidelines by staff. During 1997, a committee reviewed and recommended changes to update this uniform set of standards to which developers and property owners must comply when constructing or renovating buildings in this portion of Downtown Westminster. This committee will need to reconvene in the near future to implement these changes and to develop design guidelines for all new construction within Westminster.

Section 2: Local Historic Tax Credit

On April 24, 2000, The Mayor and Common Council of Westminster authorized a Local Historic Tax Credit Program for historically valuable, architecturally valuable or architecturally compatible structures. The purpose of the program is to encourage historically sensitive rehabilitation and construction on qualified properties within the corporate limits. Since 2000, the Westminster Historic District Commission (HDC) has approved 35 projects, totaling over $107,000 in local tax credits. With support from the HDC, many of these projects went on to also receive state tax credits.

A property is eligible for local historic tax credits if it is located within the City's Local Historic District Zone, or listed individually in the National Register of Historic Places, or identified as a contributing property located within the City's National Register District. The City of Westminster real property tax

credit returns 10% of the qualified expenses for the restoration and preservation of an eligible historic property, applied to the local real property tax liability of the property. It also establishes a tax credit of 5% of the qualified expenses for the construction of an architecturally compatible new structure on an eligible historic property. A second tax credit deals with increases in assessed value resulting from rehabilitation or renovation of historic properties. Often, the value of the 10% tax credit exceeds the five-year tax liability of the property owner.

The HDC is currently evaluating various improvements to the City's local historic tax credit program to increase its utilization. Possible changes include extension of the credit payment period beyond five years, an increased credit for properties located in the Local Historic District and a streamlined process for the "assessment freeze credit."

Section 3: State Historic Tax Credit

The State Income Tax Credit program began on January 1, 1997, and is available to owner-occupied residential properties and income producing properties located in a National Register District or a Local Historic District. Under the program, the property owner can receive an income tax credit equal to 20% of the cost of rehabilitation work. Expenditures for rehabilitation work over a 24-month period must be at least $5,000 for owner-occupied residences. For income producing properties the minimum is the adjusted basis of the structure or $5,000, whichever is greater. If the amount of the tax credit is greater than the total income tax owed during the first year in which the credit is claimed, the excess credit is transferred to the owner as a tax rebate in the year the project is completed. The application process for the State Income Tax Credit program includes two steps. First, a structure must be designated as a Certified Heritage Structure. Second, the rehabilitation project(s) must be approved by the Maryland Historical Trust, which requires conformance with the Trust's guidelines.

Section 4: Federal Historic Tax Credit

The Federal Income Tax Incentive consists of a 20% tax credit. This credit is available only to income producing properties that are part of a National Register District and for which renovations conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. The tax credit can be carried back for one tax year and carried forward for up to 20 years. Expenditures for rehabilitation work over a 24-month period must at least match the adjusted basis of a structure or $5,000, whichever is greater. In order to expedite the processing of applications, property owners who are applying for both State and Federal Income Tax Credits are required to submit only the federal application forms and the cover sheets of the state application.

Section 5: Certified Local Government Program

According to the US Department of the Interior, the Certified Local Government Program is a preservation partnership between local, state and national governments focused on promoting historic preservation at the grass roots level. The program is jointly administered by the National Park Service (NPS) and the Maryland Historical Trust. Westminster is currently working through the certification

process to become recognized as a Certified Local Government (CLG). As a CLG, the City would be an active partner in the Federal Historic Preservation Program and be able to participate in the opportunities that the program provides.

The key reason the City of Westminster has set the goal to become a CLG, is the access certification provides to the expert technical advice of the State Offices as well as the NPS. Partnerships with the National Alliance of Preservation Commissions, Preserve America, the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and the National Main Street Center are also networks that CLGs have an opportunity to tap into. Access to Federal funding is another benefit, making certified communities able to access the portion of Federal funds set aside by each the State Historic Preservation Offices (SHPOs) for just CLGs annually. If Westminster becomes a CLG, it will show the community's commitment to keeping what is significant from the past for future generations. As a certified city, it becomes easy to demonstrate a readiness to take on a preservation project and be successful.

Section 6: Preserve America Initiative

Preserve America is a federal initiative that encourages and supports community efforts to preserve and enjoy the nation's priceless cultural and natural heritage. The goals of the program include a greater shared knowledge about the nation's past, strengthened regional identities and local pride, increased local participation in preserving the country's cultural and natural heritage assets, and support for the economic vitality of local communities. The City of Westminster is currently looking to apply for the Preserve America Communities program by 2011.

Preserve America Communities

"Preserve America Communities" is a program that recognizes and designates communities, which protect and celebrate their heritage; use their historic assets for economic development and community revitalization; and encourage people to experience and appreciate local historic resources through education and heritage tourism programs. Benefits of designation include such benefits as White House recognition; eligibility to apply for Preserve America Grants; a certificate of recognition; a Preserve America Community road sign; inclusion in national and regional press releases; official notification of designation to state tourism offices and visitor bureaus; and enhanced community visibility and pride. Preserve America Communities are also featured in National Register Travel Itineraries and in "Teaching with Historic Places" curricular material created by the National Park Service.

Preserve America Grants

Preserve America has awarded more than $17 million in matching grants, to 228 projects through the country since 2006, to support community efforts that demonstrate sustainable uses of their historic and cultural sites, focusing on economic and educational opportunities related to heritage tourism. This program complements the "Save America's Treasures" grant program, which funds "bricks-and-mortar" projects, by helping local communities develop sustainable resource management strategies and sound business practices for the continued preservation and use of heritage assets.

Part 6: Historic Preservation Partners

Section 1: Maryland Historic Trust

The Maryland Historical Trust (Trust) is a State agency dedicated to preserving and interpreting the legacy of Maryland's past. Through research, conservation and education, the Trust assists the people of Maryland understand their historical and cultural heritage. The Trust is an agency of the Maryland Department of Planning and serves as Maryland's State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) pursuant to the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966.

Section 2: Maryland Historical Society

The Maryland Historical Society (Society) serves the people of Maryland, and those interested in Maryland history, through stewardship of comprehensive library and museum collections that are central to the State's history. Since its founding in 1844, the Society has been committed to publishing new scholarship on the State's history and material culture. The Society sponsors a dynamic schedule of educational programs and special events to make Maryland's history come alive for visitors of all ages.

Section 3: Carroll County Historic Preservation Commission

The Carroll County Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) seeks to foster and safeguard the heritage of the County by preserving the sites, structures and districts of historical, archeological, social, or architectural significance within Carroll County. The HPC hears applications for work permits within the Carroll County Historic District Overlay prior to the construction, alteration, reconstruction, repair, moving or demolition of any property within the Overlay that involves exterior changes which would affect the historic, archaeological, or architectural significance of the property, such as repairs, additions, new construction, fencing, and removal of trees.

Section 4: Historical Society of Carroll County

Founded in 1939, the Historical Society of Carroll County (HSCC) is dedicated to the research of piedmont Maryland's cultural heritage and the preservation and interpretation of objects significant to Carroll County history. The HSCC sponsors educational programs, research projects, exhibitions, publications, and community outreach programs to provide broad public access to this region's cultural heritage. Members and volunteers of the HSCC support the preservation of Carroll County history and rich cultural heritage. HSCC collects a wide range of objects, from the eighteenth century to the present, which County residents have used and made in order to document everyday life. Objects collected include household furnishings, fine arts, clothing and household textiles, domestic and craft tools, and the library collection, which includes manuscripts, newspapers, maps, books, and photographs. The HSCC uses these collections for exploring themes of daily life from the settlement of Carroll County to the present through exhibitions, public programs, and publications.

Section 5: Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area

The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area promotes the stewardship of historic, cultural, and natural Civil War resources, encourages superior visitor experiences, and stimulates tourism, economic prosperity, and educational development, thereby improving the quality of life of the local community for the benefit of both residents and visitors. It is guided by an Advisory board comprised of representatives of local government units, State and national parks, and private organizations from all three heritage area counties: Carroll, Frederick, and Washington.

Section 6: Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership

The Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership (Partnership) is a non-profit organization dedicated to raising national awareness of the unparalleled history in the region, which generally follows the Old Carolina Road (Route 15/231) from Gettysburg, through Maryland, to Monticello in Albemarle County, Virginia. From its communities, farms, businesses and heritage sites, the Partnership has an opportunity to celebrate and preserve this vital fabric of America which stands today in the historic, scenic and natural beauty of this region. The Partnership is dedicated to encouraging both Americans and world visitors to appreciate, respect, and experience the local cultural landscape. Working in partnership with local, State and national leaders and residents, the Partnership plans to create and support a National Scenic Byway and a National Heritage Area to sustain and strengthen the local economy, heritage and quality of life in this region.

Part 7: Protection of Historic Resources

Section 1: City Projects

The most recent City Capital Improvement Project, which served to preserve and enhance Westminster's historic neighborhoods, was the compatible reconstruction of the State highways which pass through the National Register District. When East Main Street was reconstructed in 1994, the original plans were changed radically to avoid widening the street and to protect the traditional character of Main Street. In addition, brick sidewalks and crosswalks were added, trees and planting beds installed, and on-street parking maintained. This project resulted in preservation of the historic layout and appearance of the street. The East Main Street reconstruction project was recognized by two federal agencies during 1997. First, the project was included as a model in the National Trust publication *Smart States, Better Communities*. In addition, the project received an Environmental Excellence Award for Excellence in Historic and Archeological Preservation from the Federal Highway Administration. The reconstructions of West Main Street and Pennsylvania Avenue were modeled after the East Main Street project due to its success. Moreover, the public improvements made to East Main Street have encouraged private investment in the adjoining properties.

Section 2: Development Regulations

Current subdivision regulations do not provide any specific protection to historic resources in Westminster. In many cases historic homes are now surrounded by new residential development. Although these structures have been preserved, they have lost integrity due to the close proximity of the new development. Subdivision regulations could be amended to ensure the protection of historic structures when a development occurs. Careful consideration would need to be given to maintaining the integrity of historic properties by providing an adequately sized lot. This would allow a portion of the surrounding landscape to be retained and protect the historic structure from visual intrusions of new development.

In the event that a historically valuable structure is scheduled to be demolished in the National Register District, the property owner is required to meet with City staff and the Historic District Commission to discuss alternative uses and site design that could save the structure. If the owner elects to proceed with demolition, he or she is required to submit an archiving report. The report contains a written component describing the historic value, history, and notable features of the structure, as well as a graphic component that includes floor plan drawings and photographs.

Community Character & Design Element

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan recognizes the importance of a positive community image and quality community design to assist the City of Westminster in instilling a sense of pride and well-being in the City, assuring quality employment, and improving tourism. The City supports the public commitment to preserve existing neighborhoods and recognizes the importance of developing new neighborhoods in a way that is compatible with the historic character of Westminster. The Community Character and Design Element is a combination of the preservation of the physical setting, natural resources, and the historic character of the City.

Goals and Objectives

Goal D1: Support the Westminster Historic District Commission's efforts to encourage the preservation of historic resources throughout the Westminster area

Objective 1: Partner with local, regional and State historic preservation organizations and agencies to promote historic preservation

a. Collaborate with the Carroll County Historic Preservation Commission to foster and safeguard the heritage of the County by preserving the sites and structures of historical, archeological, social, or architectural significance

b. Work with the Historic Society of Carroll County to advocate Westminster's history and culture through interpretive and educational programs

c. Assist the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area to promote the stewardship of local historic, cultural, and natural Civil War resources

d. Coordinate with the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Partnership to conserve and enhance the scenic, historic and cultural characteristics of the region

Objective 2: Maintain an accurate assessment of the condition of Westminster's historic fabric

a. Re-survey the City's National Register District and State-listed properties, noting alterations, demolitions to historic properties not presently included in the District

b. Submit applications for historically valuable properties not presently in the National Register District for consideration of inclusion in both state and federal registries

c. Develop a "Preservation Plan" for Westminster that would focus on the interpretation and preservation of the historic fabric within the City

Objective 3: Educate property owners regarding the architectural and historical significance of their properties

a. Organize public information workshops on the history and architecture of Westminster

b. Create a program to allow for owners of properties, located in the Local Historic District, to receive a historical plaque and to be included in a walking tour

c. Evaluate and revise the existing local historic tax credit program to increase utilization

d. Inform property owners on the benefits of historic tax credits to improve and revitalize historic properties

e. Market the benefits of the Local Historic District to property owners

Objective 4: Increase public awareness and appreciation of the benefits of historic preservation through outreach and educational programs

a. Host the Westminster Historic House Tour as a part of cultural heritage tourism efforts and of a campaign to educate the public on the historic assets of their community

b. Coordinate the Annual Historic Scavenger Hunt for the community to encourage residents to appreciate the historic character and design of Westminster

c. Celebrate Historic Preservation Month as an opportunity to increase awareness of the importance of historic preservation using marketing projects and educational programs

d. Promote the Community Media Center's Carroll County History Project as an ongoing program to preserve the history of the Carroll County and the memories of its residents

Goal D2: Maintain the image and identity of a visually cohesive community to residents and visitors

Objective 1: Use the historical character of Westminster as a tool to unify the community

a. Market the history of Westminster as a source of community pride

b. Promote the use of compatible interpretive signs, roadside markers and informational materials to connect the historical assets of the City

c. Support the coordination of regular historical house and business walking tours

Objective 2: Develop pedestrian-friendly environments in Westminster that interconnect neighborhoods to community facilities while creating a pleasant walking experience

a. Create human scale pedestrian amenities in Westminster

b. Require appropriate design standards, as well as other techniques and methods in the development of pedestrian-oriented areas

c. Encourage safe and convenient pedestrian traffic in the design of streets

d. Plan and promote pedestrian/bicycle connections to and through residential neighborhoods

Objective 3: Market the arts as a vital contributor to community design and identity

a. Include a variety of artwork and arts activities in public places, such as parks, public buildings and plazas

b. Support efforts to expand arts resources in the community, such as arts and crafts learning opportunities, art exhibits, shows, and competitions

c. Require private developments to consider incorporating artwork into the design of their projects or sites

Objective 4: Promote the preservation of neighborhood identity and visual character

a. Educate neighborhoods on how to receive a Local Historic District designation

b. Support infill and redevelopment projects that reflect sensitivity to site and neighborhood conditions

c. Encourage the Historic District Commission to work with neighborhoods to record, publicize, and disseminate to the City Planning Department the list of features characterizing their area

d. Provide signage that identifies sites of historical or environmental significance in Westminster neighborhoods

Goal D3: Promote Westminster's diverse architectural heritage by preserving and promoting an array of architectural periods, building types, and design styles in all new development

Objective 1: Develop a "Design Guidelines and Manual" for residential and commercial development

a. Coordinate with the County Planning Staff to incorporate the "Carroll County's Design Expectations" into the "Design Guidelines and Manual"

b. Study the history, architecture and overall character of Westminster when developing the "Design Guidelines and Manual" to ensure compatibility with existing development

c. Include in the "Design Guidelines and Manual" specific direction on all commercial, industrial, multi-family and tourism development in Westminster

d. Address specific community design issues such as site planning, pedestrian access, vehicular access and parking, building design, landscape and site design

e. Ensure a consistent pattern of development by using the "Design Guidelines and Manual" with the Community Character and Design Element

Objective 2: Promote quality design that preserves and enhances the character of Westminster

a. Encourage developments to focus on quality and distinction by blending the natural and built environments

b. Guide development to reflect Westminster's heritage and to foster a sense of community pride

c. Integrate new development with the existing character of the surrounding area when the existing development already conforms to this Element

d. Include the Historic District Commission in the development review process for new construction or renovation projects within the National Register District

Objective 3: Protect historic resources during development and renovation projects

a. Evaluate the protection of historic resources during the development review process

b. Require that the architectural style of new development take into consideration the architecture of the surrounding neighborhood in style, scale, and choice of materials

c. Ensure that historically valuable structures scheduled to be demolished are archived in accordance with the standards prescribed by the City

Goal D4: Recognize the importance of community facilities, public spaces and gateways as opportunities to promote a sense of place and welcoming environment for residents and visitors

Objective 1: Develop and preserve public and civic buildings that enhance the identity of an area as well reinforce connections with the historic character and surrounding neighborhoods

a. Place buildings in central locations as highly visible focal points

b. Face buildings toward public streets or public common areas

c. Promote architecture to elevate the prominence, permanence, and civic importance of the structure through enhanced height, mass, and materials

d. Include historic City-owned buildings in the Local Historic District to demonstrate a commitment to historic preservation and to protect these valuable buildings

Objective 2: Encourage the use of both community character and pedestrian scale elements to design public spaces and facilities

a. Use lighting in public spaces that promotes safety and discourages crime, creates an inviting nighttime atmosphere, and does not intrude upon neighboring properties

b. Increase the use of public space and facilities through careful attention to the design and appearance of the streetscape, walkways and paths

c. Promote public art projects that build on local talent to create unique landmarks along streets and parks, at civic gathering places, and within neighborhoods

Objective 3: Partner with local businesses, residents and developers to design the gateway corridors of the community that will become attractive entrances into the City of Westminster

a. Implement the short term goals o f the MD 27 Gateway Corridor Plan to create a welcoming gateway for residents and visitors entering Downtown Westminster

b. Create a strategic action plan to implement the long term goals of the MD 27 Gateway Corridor Plan and market it to potential developers and the Main Street community

c. Study the MD 140 Gateway Corridor to determine opportunities to revitalize the area from a cluttered highway to an attractive boulevard to welcome residents and visitors

d. Develop a MD 140 Gateway Corridor Plan to promote enhanced site planning, improved landscaping, efficient parking lot design, coordinated access, amenities and signage

Goal D5: Require that all buildings and properties in Westminster are properly maintained according to applicable standards

Objective 1: Inform property owners about the availability of local, state, and federal programs for the improvement of property

a. Develop informational materials about property improvement programs, and distribute materials directly to property owners

b. Sponsor information sessions and workshops regarding programs for the improvement of property

Objective 2: Promote tax incentives programs for the rehabilitation of historic properties

a. Continue to offer and refine local incentive programs for rehabilitation projects

b. Continue to distribute information about the tax credits to new owners of historic properties in Westminster

c. Sponsor information sessions regarding tax incentive programs

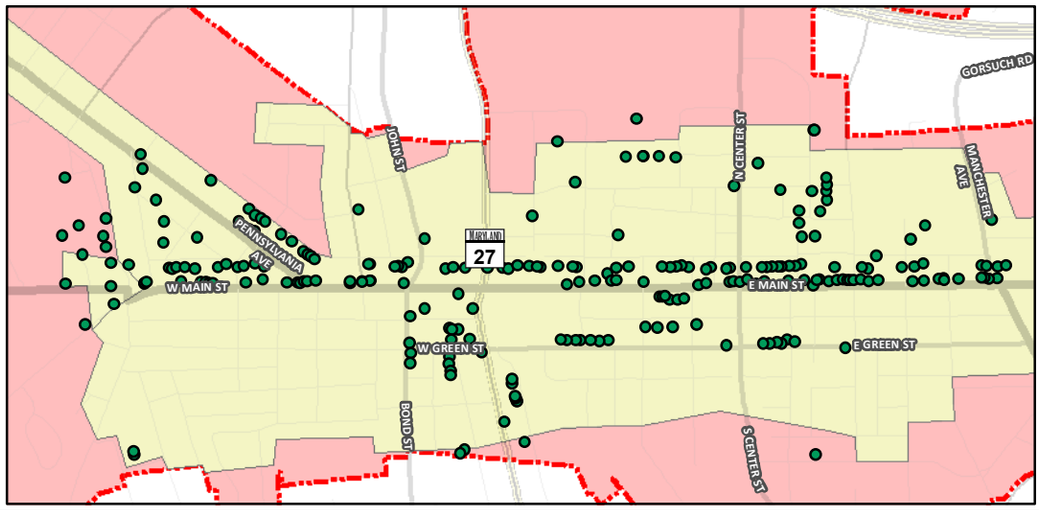
d. Study the feasibility of extending the tax credit to County tax liability

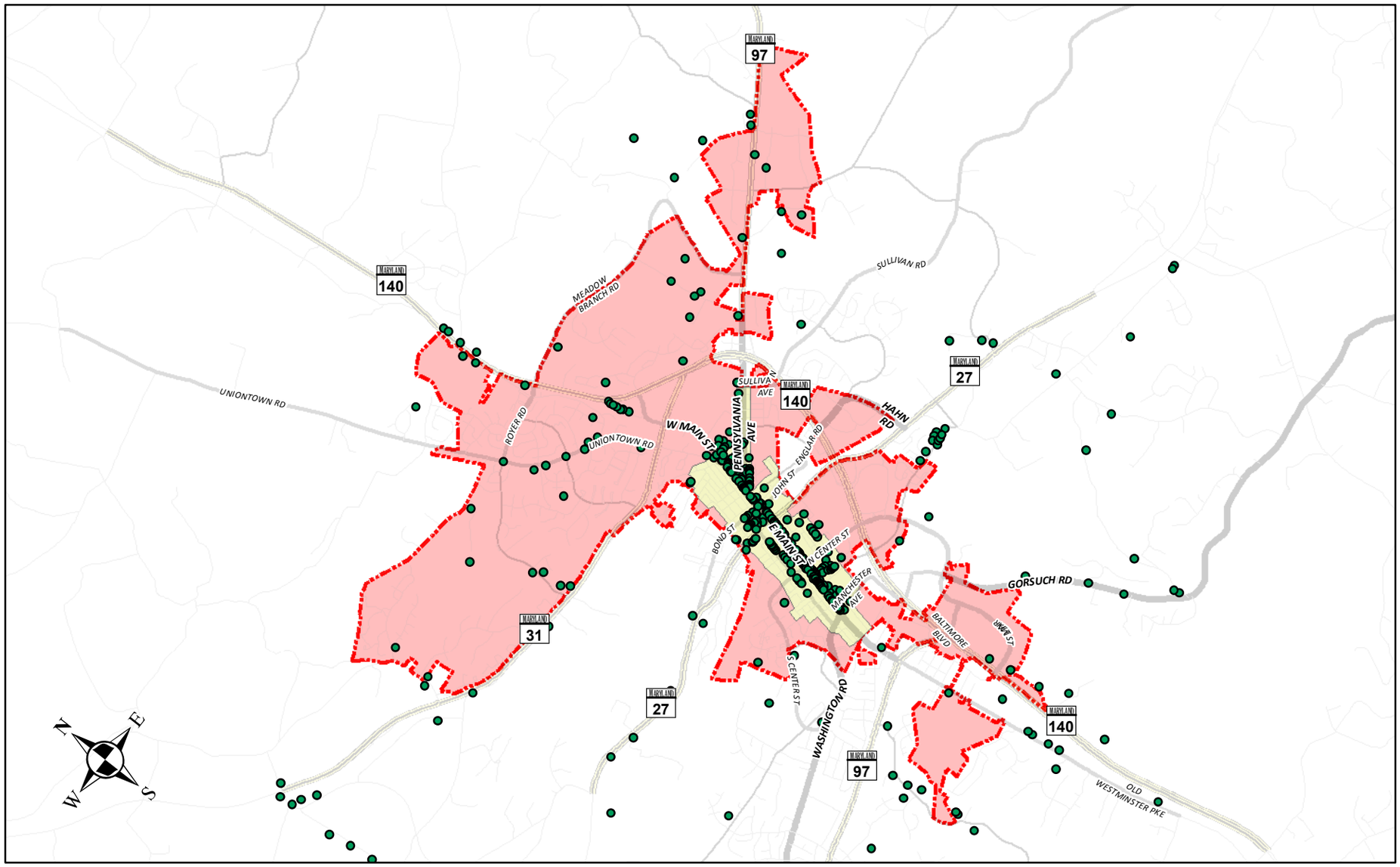
Objective 3: Consider use of the City's ability to secure or improve uninhabitable abandoned structures with significant historic value, rather than allowing these structures to be demolished

a. Monitor the condition and occupancy of "at-risk" buildings with significant historic value

b. Develop public-private partnerships as appropriate in order to preserve important structures

Westminster Historic Districts and Sites





Legend

- Historic District
- Historic Sites
- City Boundary

The Historic Sites shown on this map are those identified and recorded in the Maryland Historical Trust site inventory.

Map Not to Scale

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Economic Development

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

What is the Economic Development Element?

At the 1997 session, the General Assembly passed five pieces of legislation and budget initiatives known collectively as "Smart Growth." Maryland has adopted the principles of Smart Growth to be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

The following Smart Growth principle relates to the Economic Development Element:

Principle: Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost-effective

- To make infrastructure decisions that will result in fair, predictable, and cost-effective growth
- To create a fertile environment for innovative, pedestrian-oriented, mixed-use projects that the private sector can support
- To educate the private sector on the benefits of Smart Growth

Community Vision for Economic Development

According to the 2008 Community Survey, Downtown Westminster is viewed as one of the greatest assets to the economic vitality of the City. Developing a Main Street where residents and visitors feel welcome during the day and at night, during the week and the weekend, is part of enhancing the overall image and identity of Downtown Westminster. Residents would like to see Downtown Westminster have a more active, vibrant, and inviting atmosphere.

Residents appreciate the City's efforts to revitalize Downtown Westminster and look forward to future enhancements. Residents would also like to see the City put more energy into supporting small businesses in Westminster. They recognize the importance of decreasing the turnover rate and increasing the success rate of current businesses.

There is a consensus among residents to increase the economic development efforts that encourage new businesses to open in Westminster, and the outreach to retain existing businesses

State Planning Vision found in this Element

Economic Development - Economic development that promotes employment opportunities for all income levels within the capacity of the State's natural resources, public services, and public facilities is encouraged

Issues & Opportunities

- Job Creation
- Attracting Businesses
- Retaining Existing Businesses
- Downtown Westminster
- Westminster Economy

Part 1: Business Patterns

CHAPTER 9

Part 1: Business Patterns
Part 2: Existing Economic Trends
Part 3: Westminster Labor Force
Part 4: Current Economic Activities
Part 5: Economic Development Partners
Part 6: Economic Development Strategies
Goals and Objectives

The City of Westminster has three distinct business areas within its corporate limits. These areas are Downtown Westminster, Maryland Route 140 (MD 140), and the Maryland Route 97 Technology Corridor (Map 9.1).

Section 1: Downtown Westminster

Downtown Westminster is a traditional downtown setting that is built at a pedestrian scale. The majority of the business in Downtown Westminster occurs during daytime hours when employees who work in and around downtown are most likely to be present. The evening hours are generally restaurant and cultural activities.

The City of Westminster opened two new parking garages in September 2003, with a combined capacity of approximately 475 spaces. These garages provide parking in and around Downtown Westminster. The Longwell Avenue Parking Garage is located at the intersection of Longwell Avenue and Distillery Drive. The Westminster Square Municipal Parking Garage is located at the intersection of Maryland Route 27 (MD Route 27) and Green Street.

During the summer of 2002, in cooperation with the Governor's Office of Smart Growth, and the Maryland Departments of Transportation and Planning, the City identified the MD Route 27 Corridor as the primary "Gateway" to Downtown Westminster. The City has committed to redeveloping the MD Route 27 Corridor into an active, pedestrian-friendly, 18-hour community with an appropriate mixture of commercial/retail and residential uses. In 2004, The Mayor and Common Council adopted the Mixed Use Infill Zone that is designed to encourage the development and redevelopment of key parcels in the MD Route 27 Corridor and its immediate environs.

Section 2: Maryland Route 140

The Maryland Route 140 (MD 140) corridor contains one regional enclosed shopping mall, a number of large big-box retail stores, in-line or strip retail shopping centers, fast food and chain restaurants, and offices. This area experiences significant commercial activity during both day and evening hours, including the weekends. MD 140 is a divided, multi-lane highway with good vehicular access. However, there are some traffic congestion problems during peak hours due to numerous access points along the highway and traffic signals at the major intersections.

Section 3: Maryland Route 97

The Maryland Route 97 (MD 97) Technology Corridor contains five industrial and manufacturing centers. These centers include: Carroll County Commerce Center, Westminster Technology Park, West Branch Trade Center, Air Business Center and Meadow Branch Industrial Park. This area experiences significant commercial activity during the weekdays because most of the businesses are companies open Monday through Friday from 8 am to 5 pm. There are few service-oriented or retail- related businesses open for residents on the evenings or weekends. MD 97 is a two-lane road with poor vehicular access during peak travel hours.

Westminster has seen an increase in special exceptions requests to the Board of Zoning Appeals for office space in the Air Business Center. The Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission have assigned staff to conduct an industrial and commercial land use study to be completed by June 2010. The purpose of the study, in coordination with the development of an Economic Development Master Plan, is to determine the future key industries for Westminster and if Westminster will have the land capacity to accommodate these industries. The study would include an in-depth look at the economy of Westminster, as well as the local workforce. The City of Westminster may have to re-evaluate what industries are best suited for the future of Westminster. The City has a limited amount of water and a limited amount of vacant land, which means that businesses that use a minimum amount of land and/or water are attractive to the Westminster economy.

Section 4: Types of Industries

U.S. Census data for the type of industries present in the Westminster area was organized by Zip code for 2000 and 2001 by the United States Bureau of the Census. A large part of the 21157 and 21158 Zip code areas extend beyond the City of Westminster's corporate limits. Some businesses are located outside of the City's boundary and do not contribute to the tax base. However, these businesses do serve to enhance the economy of the general Westminster area. All of the major industries in the 21157 and 21158 Zip code areas were represented during 2000 and 2001. Construction contained the largest number of businesses with approximately eighteen percent (18%) of all businesses. This industry was followed by retail trade with approximately fifteen percent (15%) of all businesses. (Table 5.1) summarizes the number of businesses by category within the 21157 and 21158 Zip code areas.

Table 5.1. Westminster Area Business Patterns				
(21157 & 21158 Zip Codes), 2000 – 2001 Comparison				
Industry	--- Number of Businesses ---			
11---- Forestry, fishing, hunting & agriculture	1	1	0	0.06%
21---- Mining	1	1	0	0.06%
22---- Utilities	1	1	0	0.06%
23---- Construction	304	299	-5	18.38%
31---- Manufacturing	52	54	2	3.32%
42---- Wholesale trade	62	59	-3	3.63%
44---- Retail trade	261	246	-15	15.12%
48---- Transportation & warehousing	49	42	-7	2.58%
51---- Information	18	19	1	1.17%
52---- Finance & insurance	80	78	-2	4.79%
53---- Real estate & rental & leasing	52	47	-5	2.89%
54---- Professional, scientific & technical services	163	164	1	10.08%
55---- Management of companies & enterprises	5	7	2	0.43%
56---- Admin, support, waste mgt, remediation serv.	85	96	11	5.90%
61---- Educational services	16	21	5	1.29%
62---- Health care and social assistance	191	191	0	11.74%
71---- Arts, entertainment & recreation	21	17	-4	1.04%
72---- Accommodation & food services	90	96	6	5.90%
81---- Other services	175	179	4	11.00%
95---- Auxiliaries	2	2	0	0.12%
99---- Unclassified establishments	16	7	-9	0.43%
Total	**1,645**	**1,627**	**-18**	**100.00%**

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census

Section 5: Major Employers

The major employers in Westminster in 2009 included the Carroll County Government, McDaniel College, Marada Industries, Carroll Lutheran Village, Landmark Community Newspapers, and General Dynamics Robotic Systems (Table 5.2). In addition, other major employers in Carroll County that have some facilities located within Westminster are the Carroll County Board of Education, BB&T, S.H. Tevis and Son, Inc., and PNC Bank. Random House, Carroll Hospital Center, English American Tailoring, and Knorr Brake are located on the outskirts of the City.

Table 9.2 Major Employers in Carroll County, 2009			
Company Name	**Product/Service Type**	**Total**	**RFT**
Carroll County Public Schools	Education (K-12)	3,769	#
Carroll Hospital Center	Health Care	1,804	1,031
Springfield Hospital Center	Mental Health Services	833	810
Random House	Book Warehousing & Distribution	800	800
EMA/Fairhaven	Retirement / Assisted Living	700	#
Carroll County Commissioners	Local Government	656	#
McDaniel College	Higher Education (Private)	623	412
Jos. A. Bank Clothiers	Corporate HQ / Distribution	576	552
Carroll Community College	Higher Education (Public)	509	214
General Dynamics Robotic Systems	Technology Manufacturing	490	490
Carroll Lutheran Village	Retirement / Assisted Living	437	231
Northrop Grumman	Electronic Manufacturing / Testing	400	400
English American Tailoring	Clothing Manufacturer	385	#
EVAPCO	Cooling Equipment Manufacturer	377	377
Marada Industries	Automotive Component Manufacturer	270	150
C.J. Miller, LLC	Paving & Excavating Contractor	245	245
S.H. Tevis / Modern Comfort	Oil / Fuel, Heating & A/C	230	145
PFG / Carroll County Foods	Wholesale / Distribution	210	210
Knorr Brake	Railroad Brake Manufacturer	200	200
Landmark Community Newspapers	Publishing	185	165
BB&T	Banking Services	174	139
PNC Bank	Banking Services	171	143
Flowserve Corporation	Industrial Pumping Equipment	169	169
Long View Nursing Home	Nursing / Assisted Living	166	133
Lehigh Cement	Portland Cement Manufacturer	165	165
Solo Cup Corporation	Warehousing & Distribution	150	#
Black & Decker	Warehousing & Distribution	130	130
Van Sant Plumbing & Heating	Plumbing / HVAC Contractor	110	#
Taney Corporation	Wood Products Manufacturer	100	100

Source: Carroll County Economic Development Department 2009

Part 2: Existing Economic Development Trends

2009 has presented a challenging environment for retail development throughout the country. Many developers are either not getting interest from retailers, many of whom are shrinking their store base instead of expanding it, or are struggling to get financing for projects in light of the credit market lockdown. Unfortunately, smaller suburban residential towns, and outlying larger cities such as Westminster, are less able to withstand the loss of vital retail revenue and new job growth. It is uncertain if the current economy will continue to limit the amount of new development in the commercial districts of the City. The combination of limited demand for new development due to the current economy, and Westminster's limited amount of water to allocate for new development could result in slow growth for commercial development over the next several years.

The City of Westminster is taking advantage of the decrease in development pressure to plan appropriately for the future of quality development in Westminster. For example, the City is working on plans for making the community sustainable by developing "green" building standards and initiatives to promote conservation. In order to improve the design and character of the community, the City is creating a "Westminster Design Guidelines and Manual" for all new development. Finally, the City is following recent trends in commercial projects, such as destination centers, pedestrian-friendly developments, and mixed-use neighborhoods, in order to promote a more efficient use of the limited commercial land that remains in Westminster.

Section 1: Downtown Westminster

Main Street Maryland Community

On April 30, 1999, the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development designated the City of Westminster as a Main Street Maryland community. As a Main Street Maryland community, the City is committed to following the 5-Point Main Street Approach to downtown revitalization established by the National Main Street Center, a division of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The 5-Point Approach is a comprehensive downtown revitalization strategy based on 1) Design, 2) Economic Restructuring, 3) Organization, 4) Promotion, and 5) Clean, Safe and Green activities with efforts being implemented in unison. The State of Maryland, for its part, committed to provide technical assistance and training, along with a small Main Street Improvement Program grant annually, to assist Westminster in achieving success under the Main Street Approach.

Over the past 10 years, from May 1999 to June 2009, the Westminster Main Street Program has assisted in the opening of 69 new businesses and 10 business expansions. This undertaking has created a total of 255 new full-time and 41 new part-time jobs, with an additional $13 million invested by the private sector and more than $7 million by the public sector. Over 10,000 hours of volunteer work have been dedicated to the Main Street Program and its initiatives.

Downtown Revitalization

One of the most important responsibilities of the Main Street Program is promoting Downtown revitalization. In 2002, the Mayor and Common Council, the Westminster Town Center Corporation, and the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development initiated a façade improvement program to provide assistance to property owners. The Façade Improvement Program (FIP) is a dollar for dollar matching fund program to enhance individual commercial façades in the Westminster Main Street Program Area while creating a unique overall appearance Downtown. Designed as a five-year forgiveness loan, the FIP may provide up to $15,000 for mid-block and $20,000 for corner buildings for eligible façade improvement project costs on qualified properties. Items that can be funded include: exterior building renovation, exterior painting, signs, awning/canopies, exterior building lighting, door or window replacement, and masonry pointing. The FIP is funded, in part, through a State of Maryland Neighborhood Business Works grant.

Since its inception, 28 projects have been completed under the Downtown Westminster Façade Improvement Program, with two other projects still in progress. During the same time, an additional 36 "privately funded" façade renovations occurred. To date, the City has seen more than five dollars of private investment for every one dollar received through the FIP.

Section 2: Maryland Route 140

The condition of commercial buildings varies widely throughout Westminster. Many of the structures located in the Maryland Route 140 (MD 140) corridor have been built in the last 15 to 20 years and are in good condition, although some of the shopping centers have a dated appearance. Westminster is developing design guidelines to promote improved design and architecture on all new development and redevelopment throughout the City, but specifically on MD 140. The design and architecture of MD 140 is important to the local economy because it is one of the main gateways into Westminster, and the City wants a good "first impression" that represents Westminster, not "Anytown, USA," to welcome visitors.

There are many opportunities for redevelopment and infill along MD 140. Infill development, in its simplest form, is the development or redevelopment of land that has been bypassed, remains vacant, and/or is underutilized as a result of the continuing development process. Large scale parking lots are a perfect example of underutilized land along MD 140. In 2010, Westminster will develop a MD 140 Gateway Redevelopment and Infill Master Plan.

Section 3: Maryland Route 97

In addition to the above referenced commercial areas, the City has a large industrial corridor located along Maryland Route 97(N). This corridor has a mixture of light manufacturing and office space.

Transportation Infrastructure

In 1999, the Maryland Department of Transportation removed the proposed Westminster by-pass from its Consolidated Transportation Plan. As a result, improvements must be made to MD Route 97 to ensure that land remains viable for industrial development in the future. The City is working with private developers and the State Highway Administration to improve MD Route 97. These improvements will consolidate access points, while also providing mainline widening where MD Route 97 is only a single lane. This aggressive plan also requires inter-parcel connections among the various industrial developments to better ensure that traffic along MD Route 97 flows in a safe and efficient manner.

Westminster Technology Park

Carroll County's newest business park, the Westminster Technology Park, opened in 2008. The Westminster Technology Park is the product of the Carroll County Industrial Development Authority (IDA). The IDA purchased the 63-acre tract of land in 2001 to ensure the tract would be preserved for quality industrial development. The IDA formed a joint partnership with the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development to purchase the property. In 2006, the IDA became the sole owners of the property. The first building to locate in the Westminster Technology Park is a 40,000-square-foot facility for General Dynamics Robotic Systems.

Part 3: Westminster Labor Force

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, there were 8,128 Westminster residents 16 years of age or older who were employed in the civilian labor force (Table 5.3). An additional 24 persons were in the armed forces. The number of unemployed persons in the civilian labor force was 458 for an unemployment rate of 3.60%. A breakdown of the statistics by gender revealed that the unemployment rate is somewhat higher for males (2.27%) than for females (1.33%). This discrepancy is partially the result of fewer females who were actively seeking employment in 2000.

Table 9.3 Employment Status for Persons 16 Years and Older in Westminster, 2000

Civilian Labor Force					
	In Armed Forces	**Employed**	**Unemployed**	**Unemployment Rate**	**Not in Labor Force**
Male	24	4,070	289	2.27%	1,741
Female	0	4,058	169	1.33%	2,847
Total	24	8,128	458	3.60%	4,588

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

An overwhelming majority (79.5%) of workers in the City of Westminster were classified as private wage and salary workers (Table 5.4). The next highest category is government workers (16.9%). Only 3.5% of the workers within the City of Westminster's labor force were self-employed. Also available from the 2000 U.S. Census was data regarding the percentage of the labor force employed by each industry. Table 5.5 indicates that the largest percentage (24.0%) of persons worked within the Educational, Health and Social Services Industry, with 14.3% of the labor force in Retail Trade.

Table 9.4 Class of Worker for Persons 16 Years and Older in Westminster, 2000

Classification	Number Employed	Percent
Private Wage and Salary Workers	6,082	79.50%
Government Workers	1,289	16.90%
Self-Employed Workers	266	3.50%
Unpaid Family Workers	9	0.10%
Total	**7,646**	**100.00%**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 9.5 Employed Persons 16 Years and Older by Industry in Westminster, 2000

Industry	Number Employed	Percent
Ag., Forestry, Fishing & Hunting and Mining	23	0.3%
Construction	628	8.2%
Manufacturing	698	9.1%
Wholesale Trade	331	4.3%
Retail Trade	1,091	14.3%
Transportation and Warehousing and Utilities	160	2.1%
Information	364	4.8%
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Rental and Leasing	616	8.1%
Professional, Scientific, Mgt, Admin., and Waste Mgt. Services	576	7.5%
Educational, Health and Social Services	1,836	24.0%
Arts, Entertainment, Rec., Accommodation and Food Services	389	5.1%
Other Services (except Public Administration)	478	6.3%
Public Administration	456	6.0%

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Carroll County has a relatively high rate of commuters holding jobs in other jurisdictions within the region. The US Census Bureau, 2007 American Community Survey, estimated that 55% of Carroll County residents commute out of County for work. Only 45% of employed County residents work in the County, compared to 58% in Frederick County, 52% in both Baltimore and Harford Counties, and the state-wide average of 54%. In comparison, with a job per resident ratio of 0.47, Carroll County is well below the regional of 0.59 and state ratio of 0.62 (Source: Maryland Department of Planning, October 2005).

Section 1: Community Income Levels

The median household income in the City of Westminster in 2000 was $40,477 overall and $50,879 for family households. The discrepancy between the median household income and the median household income for families is likely due to having two wage earners in a family household. In that regard, family households were concentrated in some of the higher income ranges, while non-family households displayed more concentration in the lower income ranges. Block group data from the 2000 U.S. Census (Table 5.6) indicates that poverty rates are greater in certain areas of Westminster. These areas include the parts of the City located between Main Street and Maryland Route 140, as well as the area between Liberty Street and Old Washington Road; over 10% of the population was below the poverty level.

Table 9.6 City of Westminster Household Income, 2000

Income Range	All Households	Family Households	Non-family Households
Less than $10,000	441	133	308
$10,000 to $14,4999	457	179	278
$15,000 to $24,999	1,041	477	564
$25,000 to $34,999	796	375	421
$35,000 to $49,999	1,194	753	441
$50,000 to $74,999	1,286	1,018	268
$75,000 to $99,999	594	508	86
$100,000 to $149,999	455	396	59
$150,000 to $199,999	58	58	0
$200,000 or more	67	34	33

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Section 2: Community Vision of Jobs in Westminster

Over half of Westminster residents commute to jobs in other cities such as Frederick, Columbia, or Baltimore. What attracts residents to work outside of Westminster? The 2008 Westminster Community Survey found over 15% of residents rank Westminster as a below average or poor place to work. The availability of job opportunities was ranked below average or poor by almost 30% of survey respondents.

Residents would like to see more jobs beyond retail or restaurant establishments. There is a need for more high-paying jobs that require highly educated and/or experienced workers. Some residents would like to see more “high-tech” and professional white-collar jobs, while others want more skilled and career-driven blue-collar jobs. A lack of job opportunities threatens the future of Westminster for several reasons. Residents who currently live in Westminster may move away in the future to be closer to their jobs. Also, residents who are considering moving to Westminster may change their minds if they are unable to find a quality job in the City.

The availability of quality job opportunities shapes the overall economy of Westminster. Attracting the businesses, companies, and industries needed to bring more job opportunities will benefit Westminster's economy and stimulate the future successes of Westminster as a major city in Maryland. An increase in quality job opportunities would increase the opportunities for current residents and, in the future, attract new, highly educated, and skilled residents to Westminster. Maryland is home to some of the best colleges in the country. Westminster needs to find a way to draw from the pool of local and regional college graduates who enter the workforce every year. Westminster's first source of fresh young talent comes from McDaniel College and Carroll Community College. These college graduates need a reason to live and work in Westminster and continue to add to the value of the City. The question is what comes first, the potential employees or the potential jobs? Westminster needs to work from both sides to attract quality employers and quality employees.

Part 4: Current Economic Activities

Section 1: Westminster Office of Economic Development

The City of Westminster recognizes that the benefits of successful Economic Development efforts include increased revenues to offset the tax burden on residents, increased revenues to help fund community improvements such as parks or libraries and new businesses who pay more taxes than the services they require in return, unlike residential development. To coordinate and unify economic development activities, the City established the Office of Economic Development in 2002.

The responsibilities of the Office of Economic Development are:

- Serve as the City's point-of-contact for development and "Smart Growth" activities
- Support the Westminster Town Center Corporation (WTCC)
- Promote, implement and manage economic development grants, loans and incentive programs
- Serve as the City's liaison to business and property owners
- To manage the Downtown Westminster 's Main Street Program

The on-going activities in the Office of Economic Development are:

- Provide demographic and technical assistance to both potential and existing businesses
- Develop and maintain an inventory of commercial and industrial property
- Promote the City's economic assets by targeted outreach and marketing efforts

Section 2: Downtown Parking Advisory Task Force

During 2002, The Mayor and Common Council formed a Downtown Parking Advisory Task Force to assess the parking situation at that time. This committee met regularly to discuss the level of parking that was available to each distinct section of Main Street. Ultimately, it was determined that the best way to ensure long-term parking patrons were using less desirable parking spaces was to offer financial incentives for the less desirable permit parking lots. As a result of this committee, The Mayor and Common Council also purchased new, digital parking meters and related enforcement equipment to better serve the short-term parking needs of all businesses in Downtown Westminster. The City staff plans to conduct a new parking study within the next year to determine the future of parking Downtown and consider opportunities for infill development on underutilized parking lots.

Section 3: Sister City Program

Sister Cities International (SCI) is a nonprofit citizen diplomacy network that creates and strengthens partnerships between U.S. and international communities. SCI strives to build global cooperation at the municipal level, promote cultural understanding and stimulate economic development. SCI motivates and empowers private citizens, municipal officials and business leaders to conduct long-term sister city programs. Sister city programs should mutually benefit partnering communities.

The goals of Sister Cities International are to:

- **Develop** - municipal partnerships between U.S. cities, counties, and states and similar jurisdictions in other nations

- **Provide** - opportunities for city officials and citizens to experience and explore other cultures through long-term community partnerships

- **Create** - an atmosphere in which economic and community development can be implemented and strengthened

- **Stimulate** - environments through which communities will creatively solve problems together through cultural, educational, municipal, professional and technical exchanges and projects

- **Collaborate** - with organizations in the U.S. and other countries which share similar goals

In September 2002, former Westminster Mayor Kevin E. Dayhoff and Mayor Tõnis Kõiv of Paide, Estonia established a Sister City Program under the guidance of the Maryland Army National Guard. This partnership provides economic development opportunities for each municipality, as there are provisions within the declaration of understanding that outlines the exchange of goods and services by each municipality.

In 2004, Westminster and Paide, Estonia held a business leaders exchange. Five key business sectors represented Westminster and Carroll County to explore economic exchange possibilities with the Town of Paide, Estonia. The City also sponsors a business "swap" program that sends an individual business owner to similar businesses in Paide to trade industry ideas that could benefit the individual business in Westminster and Paide.

Cultural Connection

Paide shares with the Westminster area an economy with a heavy emphasis on agriculture, a comparable population size, and a limestone-rich geography. In 2003, the partnership sponsored a benefit concert of the Estonian Television Girls Choir in Westminster. In return, Ms. Audrey Cimino and the Eric Byrd Trio traveled to Estonia to perform in the Paide Shanty Festival and the Haapsalu Sea Music Festival. In 2004, Carroll Community College received its first exchange student from Estonia. The Community Foundation of Carroll County also helped Paide set up a charitable community fund for its own county. In addition, Random House has provided a number of children's books and other books that were sent over to the sister city. The Children's Chorus of Carroll County hosted *Sirjelind*, the Paide Girls' Choir, in 2005. Both choirs traveled and performed together in Baltimore, Annapolis, Ocean City, and Westminster. The cultural exchanges still continue.

Section 4: Westminster Town Center Plan

In February of 2003, after a six month public planning process sponsored by the City of Westminster, MD Department of Transportation, MD Department of Planning, and the Governor's Office of Smart Growth, the Westminster Town Center Plan was presented to The Mayor and Common Council. The Plan provided the City with an urban design and physical planning strategy to guide development initiatives of the private and public sectors within a three- to four-block radius of the intersection of Main Street and MD Route 27, primarily along the Main Street and Railroad Avenue/Liberty Street corridors. Through the use of seven major strategies, the goal of the plan is to provide Westminster residents, workers, and visitors with additional goods and services, attractions, visual appeal, and capacity to generate and maintain an increased level of infill and redevelopment activity in the Town Center, rather than at its periphery.

Part 5: Economic Development Partners

Section 1: Carroll County Department of Economic Development

The Carroll County Department of Economic Development provides business services such as site selection assistance, marketing, resident industry outreach, development of business and education partnership networks and facilitation among agencies and municipalities. The County also supports a number of economic development efforts in the City, including Small Business Development, Business

and Employment Resource Center, Carroll County Office of Tourism, Carroll County Manufacturing Consortium, and agricultural development support.

Small Business Development Center

The Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is housed in the offices of the Carroll County Department of Economic Development. The SBDC is dedicated to helping prospective business owners establish businesses in Carroll County and current business owners to expand their businesses. The Center's confidential, no-cost, business consulting services and training programs help to develop and refine business plans, solve problems, find sources of capital, and develop strategies to support growth and profitability. The SBDC service areas are diverse and include marketing, management, finance, and business assistance. Assistance can be anything from problem-solving to loan packaging to business plan development.

Business & Employment Resource Center

The Carroll County Business & Employment Resource Center (BERC) is a one-stop workforce development center dedicated to meeting the workforce needs of community residents and businesses in Carroll County. The BERC administers the Workforce Investment Act in Carroll County, and is dedicated to employment, training, and workforce development. The mission of the BREC is to develop a highly-effective workforce for new and existing businesses, to assist individuals in achieving employment, and to encourage lifelong learning. The BREC follows the vision to be the leading source of professional and responsive workforce development services to businesses and job seekers. Some of the key services of the BREC are to assist job seekers in finding access to current job listings, provide professional career counseling, and individual skill development. Workforce development is a vital element in successful economic development efforts in the City of Westminster.

Carroll County Office of Tourism

The Carroll County Office of Tourism is a part of the Department of Economic Development. It provides marketing and promotional support to the City's tourist sites and special events, along with distribution assistance of City brochures to visitor centers throughout the State of Maryland. The Office of Tourism also staffs the Carroll County Visitor Center at 210 East Main Street in Downtown Westminster.

Carroll County Manufacturing Consortium

The Carroll County Manufacturing Consortium (CCMC) was formed in May 2007 to address common industry and workforce challenges. Consortium members assist each other in collaborative training efforts, workforce development programs, and manufacturing business and marketing opportunities. The CCMC is supported by the Carroll County Department of Economic Development and Carroll Community College, as well as State and regional organizations including the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development, the TIME Center, Community College of Baltimore County, the

Maryland Technology Extension Service, and Carroll County Public Schools. Manufacturing is a diverse and growing industry, and Westminster depends on collaborative efforts, such as the CCMC, to plan future economic development efforts to improve the City's manufacturing base.

Home Grown in Carroll County

Carroll County Department of Economic Development offers Agricultural Development services to enable consumers and producers of farm goods to easily locate agricultural products, and to assist producers in marketing home grown products and explore new markets and opportunities. The economy of the Westminster area benefits from local successful farms that provide numerous agricultural products available in Carroll County. Residents and visitors are able to locate fresh fruits, vegetables, eggs, meat, and horticultural operations. Potential and current agribusinesses are able to find outstanding livestock, horses, dairy cattle, grains, and forage products in Carroll County.

Section 2: Carroll County Chamber of Commerce

The mission of the Carroll County Chamber of Commerce (Chamber) is to promote a sound economic environment in which the local business community can prosper. Founded in 1924, the Chamber has a current membership of over 500 member businesses. It is the oldest and largest business advocacy organization in Carroll County. The Chamber's legislative work, networking opportunities, training, and promotion of member businesses contribute to the economic health of the City of Westminster. The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce and Carroll Community College co-sponsor Leadership Carroll. Since its debut in 1990, Leadership Carroll has been the premier leadership development program in Carroll County. The purpose of Leadership Carroll is to provide existing and emerging leaders with a combination of leadership training and detailed knowledge of the community, including a description of the problems, opportunities, and issues facing our community.

Section 3: Industrial Development Authority

The Carroll County Industrial Development Authority (IDA) was created in 1980 by the Carroll County Commissioners for the purpose of promoting and fostering economic development, encouraging industrial expansion, assisting in the retention of existing industry, and creating and sustaining employment. Current IDA projects include: the development of the Westminster Technology Park (63 acres); North Carroll Business Park (60 acres); Hampstead Industrial Park (10 acres), and investment in and State of Maryland loan administration of the Warfield Corporate Center in Sykesville.

Section 4: Local Non-Profit Economic Development Organizations

As part of the economic development coordination and unification efforts, local non-profit economic development organizations consolidated into two entities in 2002: The Greater Westminster Development Corporation and The Westminster Town Center Corporation.

Greater Westminster Development Corporation

Greater Westminster Development Corporation (GWDC) is a non-profit business development organization that focuses on business retention and recruitment as well as economic development activities within the greater Westminster business community. This organization is guided by a board of directors from the private sector. Special services include an inventory of downtown commercial buildings and development activities. The GWDC also serves as an economic development policy board to the City and as an advisory organization for the Downtown Westminster Main Street Program. The City Administrator of Economic Development sits on the GWDC Board.

Westminster Town Center Corporation

The Westminster Town Center Corporation (WTCC) serves as the "bricks and mortar" community economic development corporation and promotes a real estate focus in Downtown Westminster. The City Administrator of Economic Development serves as the WTCC's non-paid Executive Director.

Part 6: Economic Development Strategies

The American Planning Association and the Economic Development Administration of U.S. Department of Commerce have partnered to offer critical and timely economic development tools and techniques to local and state governments. The following describe potential strategies the City of Westminster can use, either alone or with other institutions, to carry out the Westminster economic development vision:

- Coordinate economic development programs and support services
- Development incentives and financing
- Business attraction and retention
- Workforce education and training
- Land supply analysis for business growth
- Infrastructure investment
- Investment in quality of life factors conducive to business innovation
- Streamline the permit process

Strategy 1: Coordination of Programs and Support Services

Intra-regional Coordination, which works at the very broadest level of coordination, is the effort to avoid competition among communities within a region. One component of intraregional coordination would be pooling resources to attract companies to the region. The motivating factor for this coordination is the recognition that job creation and retention have economic effects that spill over city boundaries. If a company comes to a city, for example, workers from nearby suburbs can benefit by commuting to those jobs. Businesses in the entire region would benefit from all workers spending some of their money in their home city or nearby, and from the new business making some of its purchases within the

region. The City of Westminster will continue to work with its local economic development partners, especially the Carroll County Department of Economic Development, to coordinate efforts to improve the local economy of Westminster.

Strategy 2: Business Development

Business Skills and Management Training for Small Businesses

Small business assistance centers provide accessible management training, counseling, consulting, and research services for small firms. Programs respond to the needs that individual businesses identify in the areas of technology transfer, management, financing, marketing, and workforce training. Another component is an annual or semi-annual business start-up fair where prospective entrepreneurs can meet with those who have experience launching a business or who can offer other useful support services. Westminster has benefited from the programs for small businesses and local residents that Carroll County has developed to support the Westminster local economy.

Business Incubator

In this strategy, a public entity, or non-profit, acquires or constructs a building and provides, or arranges provision of, low-cost space and support services for start-up businesses in targeted industries, with graduation criteria. The goal of an incubator is not simply to provide low-cost space, but to provide shared support services smaller companies might not be able to afford on their own. Business incubators foster synergy through the communication and proximity of incubator tenants. The City of Westminster is studying incubator strategies from cities of comparable size to Westminster, to determine how a Westminster incubator program could be developed in the next five to ten years through community partnerships.

Strategy 3: Business Attraction & Retention

In the future, Westminster will continue to employ a variety of business attraction and retention techniques:

Marketing to Attract Businesses

Many marketing strategies employ the technique of targeting; identifying a group of firms the development organization wants to reach. Targeting usually focuses on sectors with growth potential, linkages to existing businesses in the area, and reasons to be attracted to the particular region or local government setting because of particular competitive factors. The direct marketing techniques employed as part of a business attraction strategy can take many forms:

- Brochures about the local government's attractions to business and industry
- Advertising in trade publications or generalized advertising supplements

- Maintenance of a publicly accessible database of available commercial and industrial property
- Direct mail to specific industries or consultants
- Participation in industry trade shows
- Seminars for prospective businesses

The Westminster Office of Economic Development currently coordinates direct marketing and will add new strategies during the development of the Westminster Economic Development Master Plan.

Business Retention

Local governments can help retain businesses by reducing development or operation costs with financial incentives, waivers of fees or taxes, or in-kind services. Common techniques include:

- Surveys of local businesses to determine attitudes or plans for changes and expansions
- Periodic business roundtables or breakfasts
- Regular personal visits by local government officials to businesses
- Creation of teams of top local government managers to expedite responses to problems identified by local businesses
- Publication of newsletters to local businesses
- Active involvement by local government officials in business groups or organizations

The City of Westminster Office of Economic Development has a close working relationship with the Main Street business community. The Office of Economic Development will collaborate with its community partners to expand business retention strategies to the entire Westminster area.

Strategy 4: Workforce Education & Training

Workforce training programs include customized instructional approaches based on firms' requirements. Local employment programs can provide training and personal skills development programs to help disadvantaged social groups gain employment or acquire necessary skills. Westminster is looking into providing an online system to supply job seekers with information about potential employers and public programs for skill development.

The Carroll County Public School system is a key player in the workforce education strategy by being responsible for primary and secondary education in the city. Other groups in the Westminster area can also play important roles, particularly for workforce training. The local community college system, local businesses, nonprofit workforce training groups, and economic development agencies can all use their resources to address workforce-training issues. A well-trained and well-educated workforce provides an incentive for industries or companies to locate in Westminster.

Economic Development Element

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan presents strategies to encourage and direct the economic growth of Westminster to achieve a diversified and stable economy. The City of Westminster envisions a future where economic development will aid in creating jobs and income in the community and it will also help create an overall better quality of life for residents. The Economic Development Element promotes the economic success of residents and businesses in the Westminster area by encouraging the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services that are compatible with the small town character of Westminster

Goals and Objectives

Goal E1: Create and maintain an "Economic Development Master Plan" to assist existing local businesses and to attract industrial and commercial development

Objective 1: Prepare background information that will provide an accurate picture of the current economic climate of the Westminster area

a. Conduct a "Strengths and Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats" analysis of the Westminster business environment

b. Study economic development strategies of cities comparable in size to Westminster

c. Identify missed opportunities and potential 'best use' of commercial properties, as well as selected public properties

Objective 2: Develop an "Economic Development Master Plan" that will contribute to the City's quality of life and local economy

a. Establish actions for supporting, promoting, and enhancing existing businesses

b. Develop recommendations for attracting future investment into the City

c. Formulate a sustainable strategy that contributes positively to the City's tax base

Goal E2: Support a diversified and stable economic environment that will enhance the standard of living of all citizens, and be compatible with the Municipal Growth Element

Objective 1: Ensure that commercial and industrial activity is consistent with maintaining a high-quality built and a natural environment

a. Direct expansion of existing businesses and/or development of new businesses in appropriate locations, in order to maximize the use of existing public services and infrastructure

b. Encourage clustering of major commercial and industrial activities in locations that will minimize impacts to the natural environment and adjacent land uses while maintaining a walkable community

c. Require that new development does not take place unless infrastructure is available to support it

d. Develop incentives for businesses to use green building standards to limit their impact on the City's infrastructure and limited resources

Objective 2: Ensure the accessibility and availability of services and commodities that accommodate the needs and wants of Westminster residents

a. Conduct a survey of residents to collect input on what goods and services are "missing" or need an increased presence in Westminster

b. Prepare a "Needs-Based Analysis" of goods and services that remains current with the changing economic climate

c. Create a list of desired businesses to submit to regional entrepreneurs and potential business owners on an annual basis

d. Continue to support the creation of neighborhood commercial districts that are designed to serve residents within one mile or less

Objective 3: Support the retention and expansion of existing businesses, while exploring opportunities for new business development

a. Create an environment which encourages entrepreneurs to engage in business and industrial activities

b. Attract businesses that can be competitive in the Westminster area and will strengthen the economy by providing good wages and benefits

c. Promote economic diversification to mitigate the impact of any significant economic downturns of existing business and industry

Objective 4: Partner with the Greater Westminster Development Corporation (GWDC), and other local organizations, to focus on business retention and recruitment, as well as economic development activities within the greater Westminster area

a. Promote the GWDC as the lead organization for issues related to the Westminster area business community

b. Support GWDC as a liaison between the City government and the Westminster area business owners

c. Assist GWDC in providing an organizational framework to develop a shared economic vision, and to address appearance and marketing issues for Westminster area business owners

Goal E3: Periodically review and update economic development strategies, policies, investments, and programs to respond to changing economic conditions and opportunities

Objective 1: Identify issues and opportunities facing industry groups, key to the economic health of the area

a. Survey local business owners annually to identify issues and opportunities

b. Monitor trends, issues, and opportunities involving key industries in Westminster

c. Support existing industry groups in order to retain businesses and increase employment

Objective 2: Study the economic conditions of Westminster to create a list of "Target Industries" that could be sustainable and successful within the City

a. Maintain a "Targeted Industries List" and make it available to the public on the City Website and in the City Economic Development Office

b. Market Westminster to the "Target Industries" through promotional materials and annual Economic Development meetings

c. Review and update the list of targeted industry types annually

Goal E4: Support the expansion and enhancement of retail, entertainment, and mixed-use development in Downtown Westminster

Objective 1: Foster the economic revitalization of Downtown Westminster

a. Rezone properties that are designated within the Mixed Use Infill Zone

b. Provide Downtown business owners with copies of the Community Vision Report that includes residents' comments and suggestions about improving Downtown

c. Offer financial incentives to existing and/or new businesses to expand or renovate existing structures

Objective 2: Promote a mix of high-quality housing and business types necessary for an active, 18-hour Downtown Westminster

a. Rezone key parcels to encourage greater mixed-use development opportunities

a. Retain and attract major Downtown employers to serve as "anchor tenants" to bring in workers to Downtown during the traditional work week

b. Retain and attract entertainment, civic, recreational, and cultural resources to serve as "anchor tenants" to bring area residents and visitors to Downtown during the evening and weekend hours

c. Seek to attract higher-density housing Downtown to strengthen economic activity and market demand in the Downtown area during the evening and weekend hours

Objective 3: Encourage redevelopment of blighted and underused properties with strong potential for reuse as business development sites in Downtown Westminster

a. Create an inventory of underutilized and vacant properties in Westminster

b. Develop Infill and Redevelopment Design Guidelines

c. Facilitate redevelopment involving larger or more complex projects by preparing an "Infill and Redevelopment Master Plan" for underutilized properties

d. Meet with regional infill and redevelopment developers to present the "Infill and Redevelopment Master Plan" in order to stimulate interest and generate support for the implementation of the plan

Objective 4: Partner with the Main Street Committee to further enhance the economic vitality of Downtown Westminster

a. Promote the Main Street Committee as representatives of the stakeholders and professionals that work to create and further the appeal of the Main Street community

b. Support the Main Street Committee as the primary group to recommend strategies and goals for the revitalization of Downtown Westminster

c. Work with the Main Street Committee to plan and promote community events which are to take place in Downtown Westminster

Goal E5: Foster the competitive workforce needed for the future of Westminster's economy

Objective 1: Expand employment opportunities and income-earning potential for residents by ensuring that employment opportunities are available

a. Provide support services to recruit and serve major employers

b. Direct the location of business and industry that will utilize the existing labor force and provide competitive salaries

c. Encourage the development of employment opportunities that will maintain a qualified and competitively-compensated workforce

d. Monitor underemployment and assist in reducing underemployment through recruitment of targeted industries that will utilize and train the local labor force

Objective 2: Retain and attract local college students as potential employees for local and future businesses

a. Support linkages between McDaniel College and Carroll Community College with area employers that feature quality employment opportunities to retain students and program graduates

b. Welcome and integrate students and faculty into the community and area businesses

Objective 3: Coordinate educational, vocational, and trade association technical training opportunities with the needs of new and existing employers

a. Promote workforce development resources to train or retrain workers of specific employers or industry groups

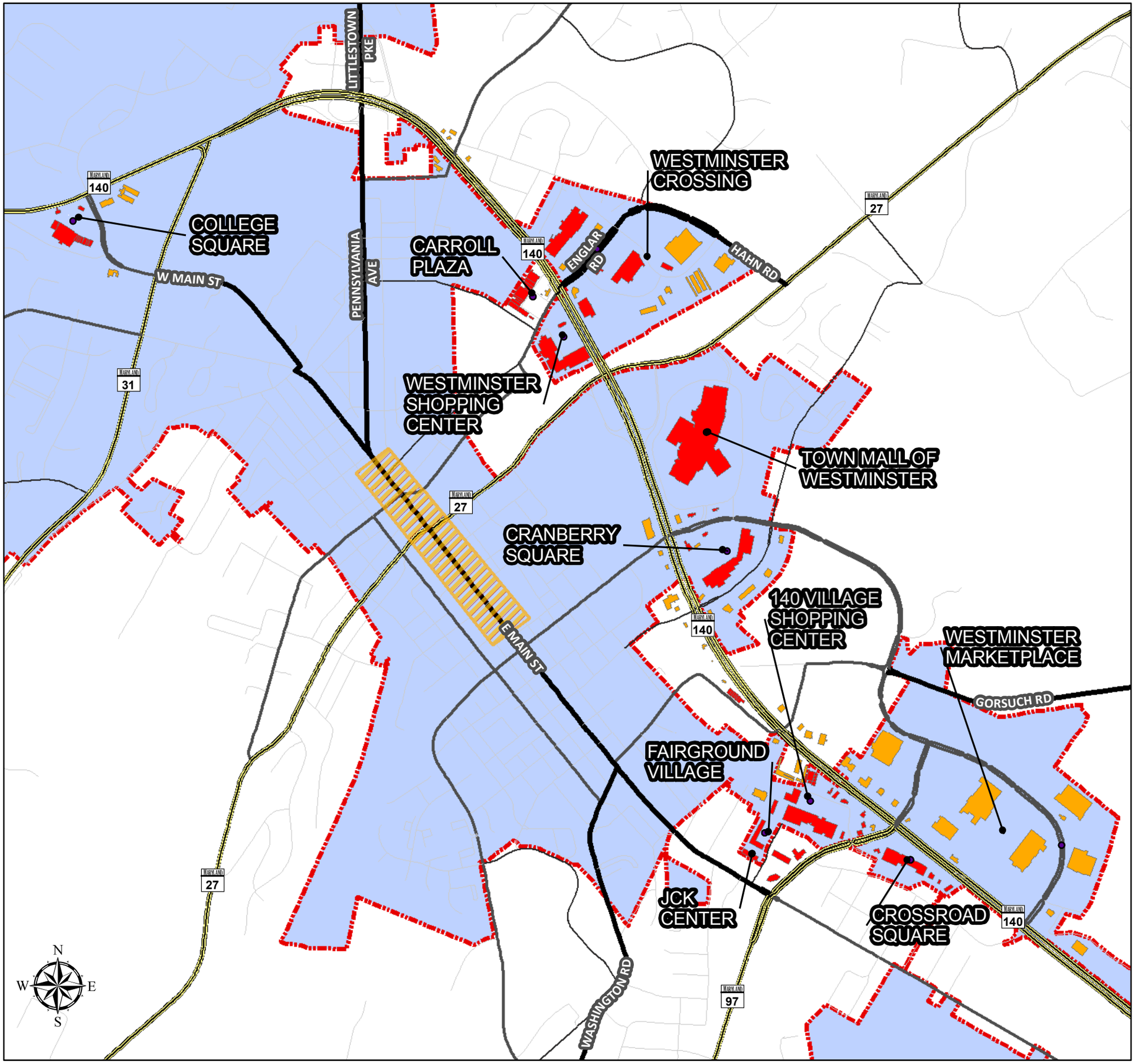
b. Work with the local colleges to continue to provide support and training networks for key industries in Westminster and Carroll County

Objective 4: Enhance and promote a high quality of life to attract potential businesses and employees to locate to Westminster

a. Support investments in cultural amenities, quality neighborhoods, and community features important to attracting and retaining the diverse, skilled workforce

b. Market Westminster throughout the region as an attractive city in which to live and work

Major Shopping Centers



Legend

- City Boundary
- Downtown Shopping
- Stand Alone Sites
- Inline/Pad Sites

Map Not to Scale

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Tourism & Culture

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

What is the Tourism & Culture Element?

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan incorporates the Principles of Geotourism, by the National Geographic Center for Sustainable Destinations, as guidelines for the Tourism and Culture Element.

Geotourism is defined as tourism that sustains or enhances the character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents.

The Principles of Geotourism define sustainable tourism as the following:

- It involves the community
- It informs both visitors and hosts
- It benefits residents economically
- It supports integrity of place
- It means great trips for visitors

Five Principles for Successful & Sustainable Cultural Heritage Tourism

- **Collaborate -** More can be accomplished by working together than by working alone
- **Find the Fit -** Travelers are seeking out experiences that are distinctive
- **Make Sites & Programs Come Alive -** The human drama of history is what visitors want to discover, not just names and dates
- **Focus on Quality & Authenticity -** Our area is unique, and its special charm is what will draw visitors
- **Preserve & Protect -** It is essential to protect historic and cultural assets for the long term

Community Vision for Tourism

Shopping, dining and entertainment opportunities that attract visitors to a city also attract future residents. When someone considers moving to Westminster, they not only look at housing and job opportunities, but they also look at the quality of overall choices in entertainment and recreation. Potential residents want to move to diverse communities that offer a variety of options to occupy their leisure time, such as ice skating, bowling, dinner theatres, art galleries, and dog parks. Also, potential companies prefer to locate in an area where there is a good quality of life to offer to their employees.

Local businesses suffer when residents choose to leave Westminster to find the shopping or dining experiences that they enjoy patronizing but cannot find here. How do we attract the quality shopping, dining and entertainment opportunities to keep residents in the city? Some residents suggested that the City could develop its own "branding" or identity that could be used for marketing and promotional purposes.

A unique image, brand, or identity for Westminster could set the pace for attracting the quality shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities that residents want here in their hometown, as well as to attract tourists and future residents. Some residents described a future where Westminster is known as a "cultural city," with a focus on the arts and education.

Part 1: Tourism Patterns

Chapter 10

Part 1: Tourism Patterns
Part 2: Historic Westminster
Part 3: Main Street Community
Part 4: Department of Recreation & Parks Events
Part 5: Tourism & Culture Programs
Part 6: Tourism & Culture Partners
Part 7: Tourism & Culture Strategies Goals and Objectives

Tourism plays a significant role in the economy of Westminster and Carroll County. According to an economic impact study prepared by the Travel Industry Association of America, tourism is a $57 million a year industry in Carroll County. In 2006, the Carroll County tourism industry employed almost 710 people, generating more than $18.1 million a year in payroll. The Carroll County Office of Tourism reported in the County's 2008 Economic Development Annual Report that the County's 20 signature events drew nearly 228,245 attendees. The office also reported that tourism interest in Carroll County continues to rise, as shown by a 25% increase in unique visitors the Tourism Office's website.

Statewide statistics in 2006 indicate that the average visitor to Maryland travels with at least one other person from their household, stays 1.4 nights and spends $305 during their visit. A motor vehicle is the primary mode of transportation for 88% of the travelers to Maryland, while 8% travel by air. 71% of Maryland visitors travel for pleasure and another 29% journey to the state for business purposes. The number one activity for Maryland visitors is dining, followed by shopping, visiting beaches, visiting historic sites and museums, participating in outdoor activities, and attending cultural events or festivals.

A key ingredient to a visitor's experience is the quality and availability of lodging. Three hotels and motels operate within Westminster and two inns provide unique lodging opportunities. While availability of lodging appears to be adequate overall, times of potential shortages exist, such as when the Baltimore Ravens utilize one hotel during their summer training camp or on weekends of large events at McDaniel College.

Part 2: Historic Westminster

Section 1: Historic Downtown Westminster

Downtown Westminster provides a unique shopping, dining and cultural experience within an historic, small town setting. Main Street is pedestrian-friendly, with wide sidewalks and mature street trees, providing residents and visitors with a relaxed atmosphere to embark on a shopping excursion. With a broad mix of local retail and personal service establishments, including several regionally recognized specialty shops, Downtown Westminster is a vital tourist attraction. There is an assortment of art galleries, boutiques for women, gift shops, "Do It Yourself" stores for crafters and hobbyists, bookstores

for the bookworm, including a comic book and religious book store, and many other shops for visitors and residents to explore. Numerous locally-owned restaurants and eateries not only feature fine regional cuisine but also great ethnic food. Many of our downtown sit-down restaurants offer seasonal outdoor dining opportunities in the forms of patios, porches and decks. With two parking decks and numerous surface lots, Downtown Westminster has ample parking for residents and visitors alike. Perhaps, all of this helps explain why Downtown Westminster is a nationally accredited Main Street Program.

Section 2: Civil War History

The Civil War historical sites and reenactments draw many visitors to Westminster. Both Union and Confederate troops passed through the City on route to the Gettysburg battlefield and the Big Pipe Creek area, where a battle was planned but never occurred. This area is unique for historians because there were both Union and Confederate sympathizers in Westminster, and this division among families and neighbors provides a perspective on the issues prevalent in the Border States during the Civil War. The railroad in the center of town was a major supply line for Union forces, the old Union church was used as a hospital for soldiers, and Fairground Hill served as a prison camp.

Corbit's Charge was a small but important cavalry skirmish that took place in Westminster on June 29, 1863 that is remembered as a significant factor in slowing down J.E.B. Stuart's march to Gettysburg. Historians have wondered whether the results of the battle of Gettysburg might have been different if Stuart arrived before July 2, 1863. In recognition of the importance of Corbit's Charge, the City of Westminster began an annual commemoration of the event in 2003. The event has grown in popularity every year, with over 1500 in attendance in 2009.

The Carroll County Office of Tourism has developed self-guided walking and driving tour brochures that describe Westminster's role in the Gettysburg campaign. In addition, the State of Maryland established a Maryland Civil War Trail in 2003. As part of the trail, four sites in and around Westminster have been designated with Civil War Trail markers and educational signs. A map showing the entire Gettysburg Campaign, and a sign describing Corbit's Charge, is displayed at the Historical Society campus at 206 East Main Street. Other signs are posted at the Old Courthouse, at the intersection of East Main and Liberty Streets, and at the Farm Museum.

Section 3: Heritage Tourism

With heritage tourism benefiting the Maryland economy second only to water-related tourism, the Maryland Heritage Preservation and Tourism Areas Program was established in 1996 to build on the existing heritage tourism industry in Maryland. Heritage tourism focuses on historic preservation and areas of natural beauty with economic development as the primary goal.

The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area participates in the Maryland Heritage Areas Program, which encourages a region's residents, businesses, governments and nonprofit organizations to join together

in broad-based, public-private partnerships to preserve, enhance, promote and celebrate their historic, cultural and natural resources. Operating under the auspices of the Tourism Council of Frederick County, Inc., a not-for-profit organization, the Heart of the Civil War is guided by a 21-member Advisory board comprised of representatives of local government units, state and national parks, and private organizations from all three heritage area counties: Carroll, Frederick, and Washington.

Management and marketing of the heritage area is overseen by the three-county partnership with staff housed at the Tourism Council of Frederick County, Inc. Nonprofits and local governments through creative partnerships undertake development and enhancement of heritage tourism products in the Heart of the Civil War, guided by the heritage area Management Plan, and often with grant funding made possible through the Maryland Heritage Area Authority. Westminster adopted the Management Plan in 2006 allowing the County to be eligible for Maryland Heritage Area Authority project grants and Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area mini-grants. All proposed projects should align with the goals and priorities described in the Management Plan.

The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area promotes the stewardship of historic, cultural, and natural Civil War resources, encourages superior visitor experiences, and stimulates tourism, economic prosperity, and educational development, thereby improving the quality of life of our community for the benefit of both residents and visitors.

Part 3: Main Street Community

Main Street Maryland is a comprehensive downtown revitalization program created in 1998 by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. Westminster was designated a Main Street Maryland Community in 1999 and since then has been a driving force in the tourism industry of Westminster.

Section 1: Main Street Approach & Principles

The Main Street Maryland approach emphasizes the importance of working simultaneously in the following areas:

> ***Design:*** Enhancing the physical appearance of the commercial district by rehabilitating historic buildings, encouraging compatible new construction and long-term planning
>
> ***Organization:*** Building consensus and cooperation among the many groups and individuals who have a role in the revitalization process
>
> ***Promotion:*** Marketing the traditional commercial district's assets to customers, potential investors, new businesses, local citizens and visitors

Economic Restructuring: Strengthening the district's existing economic base while finding ways to expand it to meet new opportunities and challenges from outlying development

***Clean, Safe, And Green*:** Enhancing the perception of a neighborhood through the principles of Smart Growth and sustainability

Section 2: Main Street Promotions & Events

As part of the Longwell Parking Deck/ Locust Lane Renovation Project, the City constructed an information kiosk at the Longwell Parking Deck and a bulletin board under the Locust Lane sign at the East Main Street entrance. Downtown events are posted monthly, along with downtown maps, providing the location of public lots, and other pertinent information. Downtown event calendars are included in the Downtown Westminster brochures available at all Maryland Welcome Centers, Westminster City Hall, and various locations in the downtown area.

Main Street Events that attract visitors and residents to Downtown Westminster:

- ***Lunch on the Lane*** – June Concert Series
- ***Songs at Six*** – July Concert Series
- ***Midnight Madness*** – Downtown Stores Open to Midnight
- ***Downtown Holiday Parade*** – Winter Festival
- ***Starlight Shopping*** – Holiday Parade
- ***Santa's House*** – Christmas

Part 4: Department of Recreation & Parks Events

Public parks and recreation facilities are often the "engines" that drives tourism in many communities. The Westminster Department of Recreation and Parks organizes over 30 events and programs a year, some events in partnership with local organizations, with all events benefiting the tourism industry of Westminster. Many of the events are located in parks, while some parks are themselves attractions; other events are located along Main Street. The Department of Recreation and Parks supports the following City Events that attract 1,000 or more attendees:

Westminster Flower and Jazz Festival

Time of Year: Annually the Saturday before Mother's Day
Estimated # of Participants: 6,000-8,000

Description: The Flower and Jazz Festival has been held in Historic Downtown Westminster every May, since 1988. Since its beginnings, the street festival has been geared toward celebrating moms and spring, with both local and out-of-state vendors featuring not only plants and flowers, but jewelry and crafts, too. There are also over 100 craft vendors displaying a wide of variety of unique items.

Art in the Park

Time of Year: June
Estimated # of Participants: 1,000

Description: Westminster's Art in the Park has always been held on the grounds surrounding City Hall since it began in the mid-1980s. It is a juried venue that provides local and regional artists and artisans a chance to exhibit and sell their work in a relaxed, festive atmosphere. In 2009, the event featured more than 80 talented artists. It is a festival of visual and performing arts featuring dozens of the region's most talented painters, photographers, and fine craft artists.

Commemoration of the Anniversary of Corbit's Charge

Time of Year: June
Estimated # of Participants: 1,500

Description: Organized by the Corbit's Charge Commemoration Committee and the Pipe Creek Civil War Round Table, the Corbit's Charge Commemorative Weekend occurs the last full weekend in June. The event provides a quality educational experience for visitors of all ages through a Civil War encampment; performances of period music; participation of authentic Civil War living historians and traditional artisans; guided tours and the presentations of published authors, speakers and museum displays.

Month of Sundays Concert Series

Time of Year: Every Sunday in July
Estimated # of Participants: 12,000

Description: The "Month of Sundays" Concert Series has been held every year in July, since 1994. This popular event brings great entertainment to the public at Westminster City Park. The concert series is presented in joint cooperation with the City of Westminster Recreation and Parks Department, Carroll County Department of Recreation and Parks, and the Human Services Programs of Carroll County, Inc.

Westminster Fallfest

Time of Year: September
Estimated # of Participants: 40,000

Description: The City of Westminster's signature event is the annual Westminster Fallfest It is also Carroll County's largest community charity event. Each September, Fallfest draws over 40,000 people to Historic Downtown Westminster. Families enjoy the festival midway and rides, while others come for the great food, unique shopping, and heart-stopping entertainment. The event begins with a parade, followed by four days of non-stop fun.

Part 5: Tourism & Culture Programs

Section 1: The Carroll County Farm Museum

The Carroll County Farm Museum, located at the edge of the City on South Center Street, attracts large numbers of visitors to the Westminster area. Activities at the Farm Museum typically include tours of a 19th Century farmhouse with period furnishings, demonstrations by crafts people such as blacksmiths and spinners, and exhibits of farm machinery. The Farm Museum has also hosted a significant number of special events, including the Maryland Wine Festival (over 23,000 in attendance in 2008), Annual Spring Muster and Antique Fire Equipment Event, Civil War Living History Encampment, July 4th Celebration, American Music & Arts Festival, Blacksmith Days, and Fall Harvest Days. Adjacent to the Farm Museum is the Carroll County Agricultural Center, which is home to a number of events including classes and the Carroll County 4-H Fair.

Section 2: Local Farms & Farmers' Markets

Tourist-related agricultural activities include farmers markets and "pick-your-own" produce farms. The Westminster's Farmers' Market is open from 8:00 a.m. to Noon on Saturdays, from the last Saturday in May until the Saturday before Thanksgiving. Local farmers and bakers sell fresh seasonal vegetables and fruits, potted flowers, herbs, raw and hand-spun wool, eggs, and baked goods with more goods and crafts added every year. A second farmers' market in the Westminster area is the Carroll County Farmers' Market held on Saturdays at the Agricultural Center. This market includes a mix of fresh produce, prepared foods, and crafts. People who prefer to pick their own fruits and vegetables can visit Baugher's Orchards, just off MD Route 140 to the north of Westminster.

The City of Westminster will continue to promote the Westminster Farmers' Market as not only an asset to the tourism industry but to the local economy as well. The popularity of farmers' markets is increasingly becoming a key driver of local economic development. Activities such as visits to farms and farmers' markets, fruit picking and agricultural farm accommodations may provide important supplemental activities to rural areas or small towns. Some of the benefits of farmers' markets include opportunities to:

- Showcase local produce and local products
- Encourage visitors from other areas to visit Westminster
- Promote local and regional areas for tourism and business
- Incorporate other Westminster community events
- Provide small businesses a place for distribution and visibility
- Contribution to local economy by keeping money local

Section 3: Arts & Culture Neighborhood

Nationally, as well as in Maryland, the arts attract audiences, spur business development, support jobs and generate government revenue. In 2007, Americans for the Arts, the nation's leading nonprofit organization for advancing the arts, released its third national report on the nonprofit arts industry in the United States. "Arts & Economic Prosperity III: The Economic Impact of Nonprofit Arts and Culture Organizations and Their Audiences" documents the economic impact of the nonprofit art and culture sector in 156 communities nationally. The study demonstrated that this growing industry is a cornerstone of a thriving tourism economy and that the nonprofit arts industry generated $166.2 billion in economic activity for 2005.

Westminster benefits from local arts and culture organizations that add value to the tourism economy. The Carroll Arts Center is operated by the Carroll County Arts Council, a local nonprofit organization. The Center is a multi-purpose community arts facility that features a theatre and the Tevis Art Gallery. McDaniel College, a local private institution, has degree programs in Art and Art History, as well as a degree program in Theatre Arts. WMC Alumni Hall Theater and the Esther Prangley Rice Art Gallery are located at McDaniel College. The Carroll Arts Center and McDaniel College provide wonderful arts and culture facilities that serve as critical anchors for the Tri-Street Neighborhood.

The Tri-Street Area Advisory Committee was established by the Mayor and Common Council on August 25, 2008 to address neighborhood issues and concerns in the area of Pennsylvania Avenue, Union Street and West Main Street, with the objective of creating an action plan for improvement. Under the goal of building economic vitality, the Tri-Street Advisory Committee recommended the creation of a task force called the "Arts and Culture Task Force," to develop an "Arts, Culture and Small Business Overlay Zone" for the Tri-Street Neighborhood.

The "Arts and Culture Task Force" was appointed by Mayor Kevin Utz in October 2009. The task force will convene its first meeting in November 2009. The focus for this group is to develop and promote the Westminster Arts and Culture Neighborhood, along with the Arts, Culture and Small Business Overlay Zone, to enhance the economic vitality and quality of life for residents of the Tri-Street Neighborhood.

Author Tom Borrup describes 10 economic and social capital development strategies in his book, "The Creative Community Builder's Handbook: How to Transform Communities Using Local Assets, Arts, and Culture." The Westminster Arts and Culture Neighborhood will be developed and promoted using Borrup's following strategies as guidelines:

1. **Create Jobs**: Nurture artists and small cultural organizations as businesses and microenterprises to increase employment

2. **Stimulate Trade through Cultural Tourism:** Create the right conditions for, and engage in, cultural tourism to bring new resources to the community

3. **Attract Investment by Creating Live/Work Zones for Artists:** Support artists and artist live/work spaces as anchors around which to build local economies

4. **Diversify the Local Economy:** Cluster arts organizations as retail anchors and activity generators to attract and support other enterprises

5. **Improve Property and Enhance Value:** Leverage the proximity of cultural amenities and the artists' touch to improve property and increase its value

6. **Promote Interaction in Public Space:** Engage people in public spaces through public art and collective cultural experience

7. **Increase Civic Participation through Cultural Celebrations:** Strengthen connections between neighbors through cultural celebrations and festivals

8. **Engage Youth:** Include young people in civic affairs and enterprises through meaningful work and activity

9. **Promote Stewardship of Place:** Develop civic pride and responsibility through good "place making" and design practices

Part 6: Tourism & Culture Partners

Section 1: Carroll County Office of Tourism & Visitor Center

The Carroll County Visitor Center is located in Downtown Westminster, at 210 East Main Street. Staff members are available to answer questions and send requested information to potential visitors. The mission of the Visitor Center is to provide information to visitors of Carroll County in order to increase their appreciation and knowledge of the County, including the Westminster area. The Visitor Center has knowledgeable staff that will assist visitors to plan a full-day or multiple-day trip. The Visitor Center offers brochures and maps for many sites in the County, along with brochures for other counties in Maryland.

Section 2: Tourism Council of Carroll County

The Tourism Council of Carroll County, Inc. is a non-profit membership organization dedicated to promoting and developing tourism in Carroll County. The membership is made up of a diverse group of business people and non-profit organizations from the communications, marketing, lodging, restaurant, and retail industries along with professionals from many other fields. These business people, through their common goal of promoting tourism, have enhanced their opportunities to increase business. The Tourism Council's primary mission is to promote Carroll County as a travel destination, in full partnership

with the Carroll County Office of Tourism. This includes press releases, radio and TV spots, newspaper articles and paid advertisements.

The Tourism Council, with the assistance of the Carroll County Office of Tourism, publishes the County's official visitor's guide, “Visit Carroll County.” In 2008, the Council had 140,000 copies of this publication printed for distribution throughout the State via the Maryland Welcome Centers and the Westminster Visitor Center. This guide provides information on the accommodations, restaurants and attractions in the County. In attracting tourists to Carroll County, the Tourism Council helps bring revenue to the Westminster area. According to the Maryland Office of Tourism, the Carroll County tourism industry generates approximately $57 million each year, making it one of the County’s leading industries.

Section 3: Carroll County Arts Council

The Carroll County Arts Council is located in the magnificently renovated Carroll Arts Center, formerly the Carroll Theatre in downtown Westminster. The art deco building now houses a 263-seat theatre, the Tevis Gallery, two art classrooms and offices. The purpose of the Carroll County Arts Council is to serve citizens and visitors by acting as a link between the arts community and education, business, government, the media, and the private sector.

As an advocate for the arts and culture tourism industry of Westminster, the CCAC produces public programs, grants and scholarships and serves as a primary source for cultural information in Carroll County. The Carroll Arts Center is located in the heart of the arts and culture community of Main Street. The Center hosts dozens of events throughout the year that attract residents and visitors to spend time in Downtown Westminster. Held annually, the Festival of Wreaths in December and the Peep Show in April, are the Carroll Arts Center’s most popular events. These events support the importance of art in the community by encouraging all residents to share their artistic talents.

Section 4: Maryland State Arts Council

The Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) is an agency of the State of Maryland, under the authority of the Department of Business and Economic Development, Division of Tourism, Film and the Arts. Since it was established in 1967, the purpose of the Council has been "to create a nurturing climate for the arts in the State" as stated in its founding legislation. The Council is an appointed body of seventeen citizens.

MSAC awards grants to not-for-profit, tax-exempt organizations for ongoing arts programming and arts projects. MSAC awards grants to individual artists, and provides technical and advisory assistance to individuals and groups. The Council also carries out programs of its own to enhance the cultural life of the residents of Maryland.

The MSAC is dedicated to cultivating a vibrant cultural community where the arts thrive. In 2007, non-profit arts organizations and arts programs that received operating support from the MSAC contributed more than $1.2 billion to the State’s economy and provided 15,000 jobs to Maryland residents.

The mission of MSAC is to encourage and invest in the advancement of the arts for the people of our State. The goals of the Council are to support artists and arts organizations in their pursuit of artistic excellence, to ensure the accessibility of the arts to all citizens, and to promote statewide awareness of arts resources and opportunities.

Imagine Maryland

In 2008, the Maryland State Arts Council (MSAC) launched a broad-based and inclusive strategic planning process to help guide its work titled, "Imagine Maryland: A Strategic Plan for the Arts 2009-2013." The purpose of "Imagine Maryland" is to acknowledge current concerns, embrace future dreams and solicit practical ideas from a diverse cross section of individuals and organizations affiliated directly and indirectly with the arts and culture sectors of Maryland.

Recognized as having one of the most robust and supportive environments for the arts in the country, Maryland's creative sector has grown in both nature and number during the past decade. The dynamic growth of arts institutions, emerging artist collaboratives, and thriving "Arts & Entertainment" Districts have made Maryland a focal point for artists, art enthusiasts and a host of creative enterprises.

"Imagine Maryland" is a strategic plan to promote the arts, in Maryland, as essential to maintaining and strengthening the connections between citizens and communities, to enhancing education, and to the building the economic viability and physical attributes of communities.

Section 5: Historical Society of Carroll County

Founded in 1939, Historical Society of Carroll County (HSCC) has been an active partner in the heritage tourism industry of Westminster. HSCC is dedicated to the research of piedmont Maryland's cultural heritage and the preservation and interpretation of objects significant to Carroll County history. The mission of HSCC is to sponsor educational programs, research projects, exhibitions, publications, and community outreach programs to provide broad public access to this region's cultural heritage.

HSCC's tourist attractions are historical properties maintained by the Historical Society, including the Sherman-Fisher-Shellman House, the Kimmey House and Cockey's Tavern. The Sherman-Fisher-Shellman House (1807) was renovated to display the daily activities of a family of Pennsylvanian Germans, a significant community in Carroll County in the early nineteenth century. The Kimmey House serves as HSCC's administrative facility and houses the HSCC research library and the Shriver-Weybright Exhibition Gallery. Cockey's Tavern opened to the public in 2009 and houses the expanded museum shop, as well as extra public programming space for the HSCC.

Section 6: McDaniel College

McDaniel College, formerly known as Western Maryland College and founded in 1867, is a private liberal-arts college located along the western end of Main Street. The college enrolls 1,600 full-time

undergraduates and close to 5,000 graduate students. New or potential undergraduate students are often accompanied by their families when traveling to the college, providing an established group of visitors to Westminster. The campus also hosts events that attract non-student visitors. These events include concerts, theatrical productions, conferences, sporting events, and summer sports camps for middle-school and high-school aged students.

Since 1994, attracting a variety of artists from around the world, McDaniel College's Common Ground on the Hill has been an asset to the arts and culture tourism industry of the City of Westminster. Common Ground on the Hill is seen as a multicultural community of musicians, artists, writers, lecturers, actors, and dancers from around the world, who come together every summer to share skills with students of all ages and with one another. The mission of Common Ground is to improve communities and the world, by sharing and celebrating art and cultures on "common ground."

McDaniel College also serves as the summer home of the Baltimore Ravens. The National Football League team holds its annual summer training camp on the McDaniel College campus from late July to mid-August. Attendance at the Ravens' training camp was over 80,000 in 2008; which significantly contributed to the sports tourism industry of the City of Westminster.

Section 7: Carroll Community College

Carroll Community College (CCC) supports the arts and culture tourism industry of the City of Westminster. CCC hosts art exhibitions in a variety of media and styles by students and regional and nationally celebrated visual artists. The college holds these exhibitions in three venues. The Gallery in the Robert A. and Phyllis B. Scott Center for the Fine and Performing Arts is dedicated to the exhibition of exciting contemporary works by artists of regional as well as national renown. Exhibits in the Great Hall Gallery generally focus on local groups and highlight the diverse nature of their work. The Langdon Family Gallery is an intimate space devoted to the work of individual artists.

Carroll Community College also offers many opportunities for residents or visitors to enjoy music and theatre performances. Most of the performances are held in the 425-seat theater of the Robert Annis and Phyllis Barrett Scott Center for the Fine and Performing Arts that opened in 2002. Other performances are held outside at the Rotary Amphitheater that was completed in 1998 and started the college on its way to fulfilling its goal of becoming a cultural center for the performing arts.

Part 7: Tourism & Culture Strategies

Section 1: Cultural Heritage Tourism

The National Trust for Historic Preservation has developed five basic principles for successful and sustainable cultural heritage tourism:

Principle 1: Collaborate

More can be accomplished by working together than by working alone. Successful cultural heritage tourism programs bring together partners who may not have worked together in the past.

Principle 2: Find the Fit

Travelers are seeking out experiences that are distinctive, not homogenized. They want to get the feel of a very particular place or time. Westminster can supply that experience, and benefit in the process—but only if the City cultural heritage tourism program is firmly grounded in local circumstances.

Principle 3: Make Sites & Programs Come Alive

Interpreting sites is important, and so is making the message creative and exciting. Westminster should find ways to engage the five senses of visitors, as the more visitors are involved, the more they will retain.

On average, visitors will remember:

- 10% of what they HEAR
- 30% of what they READ
- 50% of what they SEE
- 90% of what they DO

Principle 4: Focus on Quality & Authenticity

The true story of the City of Westminster is the one worth telling. The story of the authentic contributions previous generations have made to the history and culture of Westminster will interest visitors, because that is what distinguishes the City from other places. The authenticity of the community adds real value and appeal. The Westminster area is unique, and its special charm is what draws visitors.

Principle 5: Preserve & Protect

When historic and cultural assets are at the heart of plans to develop tourism, it is essential to protect them for the long term. Prevent irreplaceable structures from being destroyed or damaged beyond repair, but instead make sure that they are preserved and protected as they deserve. By protecting the buildings, landscape or special places and qualities that attract visitors, Westminster can safeguard its future.

Section 2: Geotourism

Geotourism is defined as tourism that sustains or enhances the geographical character of a place—its environment, culture, aesthetics, heritage, and the well-being of its residents. Geotourism adds to sustainability principles by building on a destination's geographical character, its "sense of place," to emphasize the distinctiveness of its locale and benefit to visitors and residents.

The National Geographic Center for Sustainable Destination has developed the following six principles to of geotourism or sustainable tourism:

1. **Become synergistic:** All the elements of geographical character work together to create a tourist experience that is richer than the sum of its parts, appealing to visitors with diverse interests.

2. **Involve the community:** Local businesses and civic groups join to provide a distinctive, authentic visitor experience.

3. **Inform both visitors and hosts:** Residents discover their own heritage by learning that local assets they take for granted may be interesting to outsiders. As local people develop pride and skill in showing off their locale, tourists get more out of their visit.

4. **Benefit residents economically:** Travel businesses hire local workers, and use local services, products, and supplies. When community members understand the benefits of geotourism, they take responsibility for destination stewardship.

5. **Support integrity of place:** Destination-savvy travelers seek out businesses that emphasize the character of the locale. In return, local stakeholders who receive economic benefits appreciate and protect the value of those assets.

6. **Create great trips:** Enthusiastic visitors bring home new knowledge. Their stories encourage friends and relatives to experience the same thing, which brings continuing business for the destination.

Section 3: Public Art Tourism

The City of Westminster is will be working with the Carroll Arts Council to develop a Public Art campaign that promotes public art projects throughout the community. Public art, broadly defined, encompasses artwork placed in a public context such as on the street, in a park, on the exterior of a building or within the common spaces of a public building. Quality public art projects can help unify neighborhoods and build community identity.

Planning for public art projects includes a diverse group of residents whose concerns and knowledge will be invaluable for producing public art projects, such as:

- artists
- architects and planners
- arts and cultural organizations (staff, board, volunteers, users)
- neighborhood associations
- business groups
- community activists
- educational institutions
- elected officials and their representatives

In addition to conducting interviews and meetings to gather information and test ideas, the public art projects require information gathered from existing documents, which might include:

- a cultural plan
- neighborhood plans
- design guidelines
- tourism and visitor bureau reports
- economic development plans
- redevelopment plans

Section 4: Sports Tourism

The City of Westminster Recreation and Parks Department is partnering with the Carroll County Recreation and Parks Department to develop a Sports Tourism Strategy to include in the Westminster Recreation and Parks Master Plan. The overall vision of the Sports Tourism Strategy is to host tournaments, camps and clinics that would bring visitors and revenue to Westminster.

In addition to the economic benefits for direct service businesses, such as service stations, eating establishments and hotels - building a sports' tourism industry for the Westminster area will have numerous positive impacts for the City. These positive impacts include increased community spirit, the development of a highly skilled volunteer base, and increased positive exposure for Westminster and Carroll County.

Section 5: Geocache Tourism

The City of Westminster participates in the Maryland Municipal League (MML) Geocache Trail. On January 1, 2009, the MML became the first state league in the country to launch a statewide city/town geocache trail. MML is using this innovative approach to promote awareness of, and visits to, Maryland's cities and towns, with the goal of helping to stimulate economic development in Maryland's municipalities. This effort taps into the rapidly growing high-tech tourist trade which is not limited to

any particular age group. Discovering a geocache, is very much like going on a treasure hunt using a hand-held GPS (Global Positioning System) to plot map coordinates to locate the treasure or "cache."

A geocache trail is a series of geocaches tied together by a common theme. The theme of the Maryland Municipal League Geocache Trail is “Celebrating Maryland's Cities and Towns.” The trail is comprised of 78 city/town caches located in the 11 MML Districts throughout the State. In addition to the MML Geocache Trail, there are more than 25 other geocaches within two miles of the intersection of Main Street and Railroad Avenue. The City of Westminster plans to include geocache tourism in future promotions.

Section 6: Town Gown Tourism

The City of Westminster recognizes McDaniel College and Carroll Community College as valuable assets to the tourism and culture identity of Westminster. The concept of Town Gown Planning is based on collaborative community planning processes that improve the well being of all residents living in communities that surround higher educational institutions. In addition, the purpose of Town Gown Planning is to develop a successful partnership between the City and the College as well as promote the benefits that the City provides to the College and the value the College brings to the City.

Office of University Partnerships

In 1994, HUD established the Office of University Partnerships (OUP) in an effort to encourage and expand the growing number of partnerships formed between colleges and universities and their communities. OUP recognizes the crucial role these collaborations and partnerships play in addressing local problems and revitalizing our nation's communities.

The Office of University Partnerships strives to support and increase these collaborative efforts through grants, interactive conferences, and research that help achieve the Office's three primary goals:

1. Provide funding opportunities to colleges and universities to implement community activities, revitalize neighborhoods, address economic development and housing issues, and encourage partnerships

2. Create a dialogue between colleges and universities and communities to gain knowledge and support of partnership activities and opportunities as well as connect them to other potential partners and resources

3. Assist in producing the next generation of urban scholars and professionals who are focused on housing and community development issues

Benefits of a College Town for Local Tourism Industry

College towns provide a higher quality of life by promoting and supporting activities that ensure cohesive communities that are safe, healthy and enjoyable. The benefits of a college town for the local economy and tourism industry include:

- College towns are attractive places for real estate investments
- The steady stream of students and visiting professors ensure a good rental market
- Job markets are helped along by the well educated populations
- Many people retire to college towns, drawn by the cultural and sporting events, etc.
- Development opportunities abound in college towns
- Growth potential, property values, cost of living, atmosphere, intangibles and overall investment potential

Tourism & Culture Element

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan promotes tourism as a key component of economic development for the City of Westminster. The same qualities of life that attract tourists to an area also attract new businesses and jobs, as well as provide a thriving community for current residents. Tourism can sustain or enhance the character of a place. The character of Westminster is built on the culture of the community, which includes the environment, aesthetics, heritage, and well-being of Westminster residents. The Tourism and Culture Element presents ideas on how tourism can help market the natural assets, culture, and history of Westminster, which is good for attracting new businesses and for increasing community amenities.

Goals & Objectives

Goal C1: Promote a "Destination Westminster Strategy and Plan" to ensure a quality visitor and resident experience

Objective 1: Evaluate the current tourism industry of the Westminster area

a. Conduct an assessment of visitor trends and impacts in the Westminster area

b. Perform an analysis of factors that now dissuade visitors from extending their stay in the Westminster area

c. Identify all of the activities that are occurring within the community to improve the visitor experience, and identify missing components

d. Determine opportunities to support, coordinate, and facilitate efforts of the existing tourism industry

e. Meet with representatives of local recreation and cultural attractions that contribute to the economic vitality of Westminster to identify issues and opportunities

Objective 2: Develop a "Destination Westminster Strategy and Plan" that is understood and accepted by the community

a. Create tourism development goals that build on Westminster's natural and cultural resources.

b. Incorporate the principles of Geotourism and Culture Heritage Tourism into the "Destination Westminster Strategy and Plan"

c. Monitor the success of the "Destination Westminster Strategy and Plan" and then communicate the results of its efforts to the community

Goal C2: Partner with the Carroll County Tourism Office to enhance the image and identity of Westminster as an attractive destination in the travel marketplace

Objective 1: Encourage cooperation among the key assets and businesses that provide recreational and cultural attractions for local residents, as well as visitors

a. Identify Westminster's key assets and local retail, recreation and cultural businesses that support the tourism and entertainment economy of Westminster

b. Host an annual meeting of representatives of the key assets and businesses to provide opportunities for coordination of local attractions and events

a. Develop a strategy and a commitment to preserve and enhance key assets

b. Nationally and regionally market Westminster's key assets

Objective 2: Increase length of stay and spending of visitors to the Westminster area.

a. Initiate a reporting process for the average length of stay at local hotels

b. Develop a method to study the impact of local events on local Westminster businesses

c. Prepare an annual report on how local events in the Westminster area effected the local economy in order to address issues and opportunities

Goal C 3: Promote cooperative efforts between public agencies and private organizations to present a unified image of Westminster

Objective 1: Partner with the local colleges to market Westminster as appealing to visitors and residents, as well as to students and college faculty

a. Collaborate with local colleges and community representatives to develop a "Town-Gown Plan"

b. Orient McDaniel College and Carroll Community College students to the resources, attractions, and amenities of Westminster, as well as to upcoming events

c. Market McDaniel College and Carroll Community College's attractions and events to the residents and visitors of Westminster

Objective 2: Cooperate with the Carroll County Historical Society to enhance Cultural Heritage Tourism in Westminster

a. Work with the Carroll County Historical Society to educate the public on the importance of preservation and protection of historic buildings for tourism

b. Promote the Carroll County Historical Society's events and activities that enhance the historic image of Westminster and that attract visitors

c. Partner with Carroll County Historical Society to market Westminster as part of the Civil War Heritage Area

Goal C4: Create an environment for tourists that is welcoming, friendly, and easy to navigate for visitors and new residents

Objective 1: Ensure that informational material and maps are current and easy to obtain

a. Continue to provide brochures and rack cards to advertise events.

b. Provide welcome packets to new Westminster residents, which could include maps, a business directory, and other information

c. Ensure that the City's web page is updated frequently with events and other pertinent information

Objective 2: Ensure easy access to a traveler's destination, including vehicular and pedestrian access and the availability of parking and transit

a. Provide good signage to attractions, events, and parking

b. Assign additional police officers, as necessary, to monitor traffic control and safety during special events

c. Provide shuttles to remote parking areas when necessary

d. Support the development of alternative transit modes in the downtown area

Objective 3: Partner with local businesses to provide a welcoming environment to visitors

a. Create an educational program for retail and service employees to increase awareness of the importance of providing positive interactions and quality services to visitors

b. Provide information regarding upcoming events or projects to local businesses, so that business managers can plan accordingly to welcome visitors

Objective 4: Continue to explore opportunities for increasing the advertisement and availability of tourist information

a. Maintain the section of the City of Westminster's website that announces attractions and upcoming events

b. Update the information kiosks downtown and explore new kiosk locations

c. Support and encourage the development and publication of brochures and other materials necessary to effectively market Westminster

Goal C5: Promote the arts and culture community as an asset to the Westminster tourism industry and to the quality of life for residents

Objective 1: Cooperate with local representatives of the arts and culture community to provide opportunities for education and participation in arts and culture activities

a. Educate the public on the benefits of arts and culture for individual growth, community identity, and local economic strength

b. Partner with the Carroll Arts Council to develop and implement strategies to promote an arts and culture community

c. Coordinate with McDaniel College and Carroll Community College art and theatre departments to incorporate their efforts into the community

d. Initiate regular meetings with local artists and supporters of arts and culture activities to identify issues and opportunities

e. Enhance and expand the "Art in the Park" event as a regional visual and performing arts festival

Objective 2: Consider public spaces and community facilities as opportunities for public participation and support in the arts and culture environment

a. Use arts and culture to develop a "sense of place" in such features as gateways, community areas and City rights-of-way

b. Involve local artists and urban designers in the design process for public spaces and community facilities

c. Incorporate arts and culture in efforts to revitalize neighborhoods by providing artistic improvements to the neighborhood or art-related retail and employment opportunities

d. Advocate for adequate community-based facilities to provide office, meeting, rehearsal, exhibition and performance spaces for the local arts and culture community

Objective 3: Integrate the arts and culture community into Westminster's overall strategy for economic development and tourism

a. Use the arts and cultural identity as a way to promote Westminster's character and sense of place

b. Develop opportunities for affordable live-work spaces for artists in Downtown Westminster to enhance Downtown's economic vitality

c. Educate local businesses on the role of the arts and culture community in the revitalization of Downtown Westminster

d. Increase the involvement of the arts and culture community in the design and planning of new development and redevelopment projects

e. Adopt strategies that support and strengthen the local arts and culture industry

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Water Resources

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

What is the Water Resources Element?

During its 2008 General Session, the Maryland General Assembly, as part of section 1.03 (iii) of Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland, mandated that all Maryland counties and municipalities exercising planning and zoning authority prepare and adopt a Water Resources Element in their Comprehensive Plans.

Requirements:

- Identify drinking water and other water resources that will be adequate for the needs of existing and future development
- Identify suitable receiving waters and land areas to meet the storm water management and wastewater treatment and disposal needs of existing and future development

Purpose:

- To ensure the Comprehensive Plan integrates water resources issues and potential solutions
- To outline how management of water, wastewater and stormwater will support planned growth, given water resource limitations

Community Vision for Water

The City's ability to provide water to residents and businesses has become an issue of great importance in recent years. According to the 2008 Community Survey, 65% of residents are satisfied with the quality of water in Westminster, while others were concerned with the quality of their water service.

Residents would like to improved water service in terms of improved communication. For example, residents would like the City give proper notification when performing sewer or water system repairs, as those repairs affect water pressure or the color of water.

Residents also suggested that the City create incentives for residents to conserve water in order to ensure reliable water service can continue into the future.

State Planning Visions found in this Element:

Infrastructure: Growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sound manner.

Environmental Protection: Land and water resources are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems, and living resources.

Resource Conservation: Waterways, open space, natural systems, scenic areas, forests, and agricultural areas are conserved.

Water Resources Priorities:

- Water supply availability
- Reclaimed water use
- Groundwater use
- Groundwater recharge
- Water quality
- Water conservation

Chapter 11

Part 1: Vision & History of Water Resources

Part 2: Existing Water Resources

Part 3: Water Resources Demand

Part 4: Water Supply

Part 5: Water Supply Solutions

Part 6: Wastewater Service & Demand Capacity Analysis

Part 7: Stormwater Management Analysis

Part 8: Water Conservation Programs

Part 9: Summary & Conclusions

Goals and Objectives

Part 1: Vision & History of Water Resources

With the adoption of HB 1141 in the 2008 Maryland General Assembly, the City is now required to prepare a Water Resources Element in our Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of this element is to evaluate and plan for a sustainable impact on local water resources. These resources include ground- and surface-water supplies, as well as streams and rivers that are tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay.

Section 1: Vision

Since April 2007, the City of Westminster has been under a consent agreement with MDE, limiting growth until the City can bring enough new water supplies online to address a projected drought of record deficit of approximately 797,000 gallons per day (gpd). Due to this projected shortfall, it has become imperative that the City implement measures to ensure a more sustainable growth pattern, starting with the adoption of this plan.

Section 2: Physical Overview

The City of Westminster is located in the piedmont region of central Maryland. The City is positioned centrally in Carroll County and has no major water bodies or rivers within its boundaries. Named streams within the incorporated area are: Copp's Branch, Meadow Branch, and West Branch. Nearby major streams are Little Pipe Creek and Big Pipe Creek. The City is split, by Parr's Ridge, into two watersheds. Eastern portions of the City flow into the Liberty reservoir watershed, part of the Patapsco River watershed, and the Potomac/Back River Tributary Strategy Area. Western portions of the City fall into the Double Pipe Creek watershed, sub-watershed of the Middle Potomac, and part of the Upper Potomac Tributary Strategy Area.

As the largest incorporated area in the county, Westminster has always been an area planned for concentrated growth. This Smart Growth strategy has been recently reaffirmed in the 2009 Carroll County Pathways Plan. The City's water and sewer systems extend well beyond the corporate limits, serving almost as many customers outside as inside the City.

Section 3: Consent Agreement

Upon signing a consent agreement on April 3, 2007, MDE authorized the City to allocate 60,000 gallons per day (gpd) of the 139,000 gpd available in accordance with an Interim Allocation Policy. MDE has since authorized the City to release an additional 40,000 gpd of the 139,000 gpd available, leaving a current balance of 39,000 gpd available for release.

The release of water beyond the initial 60,000 gpd was based on the City completing certain tasks. For example, the City was required to complete the Medford Quarry Pipeline and the Roop's Mill Well projects. Additionally, the City was also required to implement a water loss reduction plan and a water conservation plan, in addition to planning for water hauling, if needed. Concurrently with the signing of the consent agreement with MDE, the City adopted an Interim Allocation Policy that governed the allocation of water to new projects. The Interim Allocation Policy was amended and readopted in early 2008 as a permanent Allocation Policy that created priority categories for projects and made other stipulations.

Since 2006, all of the City water resource management strategies have been focused on eliminating the 797,000 gpd drought of record deficit referenced above. The first 655,000 gpd of the drought of record deficit was eliminated when the Medford Quarry Pipeline became operational in July 2009. The City will reduce the drought of record by an additional 20,000 gpd when the Roop's Mill Well becomes operational in September 2009. The City will not receive credit for the full amount of the Roop's Mill Well permit of 135,000 gpd, since 115,000 gpd of the permitted amount was previously calculated into the drought of record.

Part 2: Existing Water Resources

Section 1: Watersheds

The City is divided into two watersheds by the Northeast-to-Southwest running Parr's Ridge (Map 11.1). The western portion of the City falls into the double Pipe Creek watershed, part of the Middle Potomac, and the Upper Potomac Tributary Strategy area. The City's Wakefield Valley water system is located in this watershed. Also in this watershed are nine of the City's supply wells, the Medford Quarry emergency Water supply, and the Wastewater Treatment Plant that discharges into Little Pipe Creek. Future projects in this watershed include the Gesell Property well, Greenvale Mews observation well, and the combined CPC Intake with back up by Hydes Quarry or a future Surface Water Impoundment Facility. The towns of New Windsor and Union Bridge also withdraw from and discharge into this watershed.

The eastern part of the City falls into the Liberty Reservoir watershed, in the Patapsco River watershed and the Patapsco/Back River Tributary basin. The City withdraws water from surface intakes on Cranberry Branch and Hull Creek in this watershed. Both creeks are tributaries of the West Branch of the

Potomac. Water withdrawn from Cranberry Branch is stored in the raw water reservoir North of Lucabaugh Mill Road. Also in this watershed are three supply wells and one streamflow augmentation well. Portions of the Hampstead and Freedom water and sewer systems are in this watershed. The City's surface water resources are adversely affected by upstream agricultural uses that increase nutrients in the stream due to stormwater runoff carrying fertilizers and other nutrients. Furthermore, runoff from the County's Lucabaugh Mill Road directly enters Cranberry Creek without any stormwater quality control.

Part 3: Water Resources Demand

Section 1: Buildable Land

Combining data from the Buildable Land Inventory (BLI) conducted by the Carroll County Department of Planning in 2005, with the City's data on buildable land used for the Municipal Growth chapter of this plan, future water demand was forecasted for the City's growth area boundary. This forecast accounts for complete build-out of all buildable land within the growth boundary, based on current land use designations. No changes to these designations are proposed in this plan (Map 11.2). The demand factors used were 235 gpd/residential unit, and 800 gpd/ acre of commercial or industrial land. This analysis yields a population projection for the buildable land within the growth boundary of 7,886 people (Table 11.1).

Table 11.1 Westminster Future Water Supply Demand (Gallons per Day)

Community	Current Demand[1]	Planned Future Demand[2]		Other Potential Demand[3]	Total Demand
		Infill Demand (W-1/3)	Future Demand(W-5)		
Westminster	2,960,000	775,090	325,480	340,890	4,401,460
Community	**Current Demand[1]**	**Additional Demand by Land Use**			**Total Demand**
		Residential	**Commercial/ Industrial**		
Westminster	2,960,000	788,660	652,800		4,401,460

[1] These data are the greatest annual average daily demand for the five-year period from 2003 through 2007.
[2] Data in this section represents the demand associated with the yield calculated by land use designation on buildable parcels in each of the water service categories identified.
[3] This data represents demand calculated from land in the Growth Area Boundary that is not included in a planned water service category.

Source: City of Westminster WSCMP, 2008

Section 2: Water Usage & Allocation

The average water usage per residential connection was calculated to be 235 gallons per day (gpd) per connection, based on the existing connections and associated water usage. To project the number of units for residential development outside the City, land use designation assigned for the 2007 Westminster Environs Community Comprehensive Plan was utilized. For that plan, City staff worked with county planning staff to adjust the Growth Area Boundary to reflect the most realistic scenario for development in the area. For commercial and industrial uses, the usage is estimated at a rate of 800 gpd/acre. These water usage rates were calculated for use in the 2008 Water Supply Capacity Management Plan.

In order to satisfy the MDE consent order, development in the City has been regulated by an allocation policy, creating a prioritized "waiting list" of projects requesting available water supplies. Due to the use of the allocation policy, the City is not proposing changes to the Land Use Plan, service areas, or Growth Area Boundary. The City is continuing to evaluate options for more efficient use of existing resources, as well as development of new water sources to accommodate projected growth.

Until new sources are developed to balance the drought deficit and provide resources for growth, development will be tightly managed, on a project-by-project basis by the allocation policy. Once development of resources to support growth begins, the City will coordinate with the County planning staff regarding land use, growth boundary, and service area modification to best accommodate the development projected for the Westminster growth area. It is projected that until approximately 2015, growth will be relatively low and focused within the City limits due to a hold on annexations and Good Cause Waiver applications.

At the time of this plan, the City has received requests for water allocations under its Allocation Plan totaling over 228,000 gpd. Additionally, it is estimated that this demand could increase by approximately 50,000 gpd each year until build-out. It is anticipated that a portion of these requests may be fulfilled in the next three to four years by development of the Gesell Property well. Additional sources to fulfill the remaining requests are projected for development after 2015. Potential future sources have been identified, but not all have been fully evaluated.

Table 11.2 Withdrawal from Water Sources

Water Source	Annual Avg. Permitted Withdrawal (MGD)	Reliable Annual Avg. Withdrawal*
Wakefield Wells Nos. 1&2	.197	.216
Wells Nos. 3-10	1.144	.848
Surface intakes on Cranberry system	1.838	1.87
Koontz Creamery**	.500	.209
Medford Quarry***	.655	-----

*Calculated in the WSCMP using a Flow Mass Analysis and historical production records
**Water pumped from Koontz Creamery well is not delivered to the system due to water quality concerns
***Emergency supply only

Source: City of Westminster Public Works Department, 2009

Part 4: Water Supply

Section 1: Location of Water Supplies

The City relies on both ground and surface water for its potable supply. The unconfined fractured rock aquifer within the Wakefield Marble, Sam's Creek Formation, Marburg Formation, Ijamsville Phyllite, and Wissahickon Formation provides the source for 11 groundwater wells. Four of these wells are located in the Wakefield Marble Formation. The remaining seven are located in crystalline rock formations. Table 11.2 shows the annual average permitted withdrawal from Westminster Water Sources.

Section 2: Inventory of Current Facilities

The City of Westminster serves the residents of the City and portions of Carroll County residences, as well as commercial and industrial connections both inside and outside the City. The City maintains two (2) separate water systems: Cranberry system and Wakefield Valley system. The two (2) systems are interconnected and can be integrated; however, normally they are operated as separate systems. Table 3 provides an inventory of Westminster's water system components.

In summary, the City is permitted to withdraw 1.341 MGD from groundwater sources and 1.838 MGD from its surface water sources for drinking water. There is storage for 115 MG of untreated water. There is currently permitted 3.25 MGD of treatment capacity for the surface water and water from well No.7. Up to 6.0 MG of treated water can be stored in the system. Since the Cranberry Water Treatment Plant can be upgraded to treat 5.0 MGD of water, neither permitted or actual treatment capacity represents a constraint to growth.

Table 11.3 Westminster Water Facilities Inventory	
Water Facility	**Westminster Inventory**
Surface Intakes	Hull Creek and Cranberry Run (tributaries of the Patapsco River)
Raw Water Storage	115 MG - Cranberry Reservoir
Finished Water Storage #1	0.9 MG - Clear Water reservoir
Finished Water Storage #2	6.0 MG - 4 above ground tanks
Emergency Source	0.655 MGD - Medford Quarry (pumped to Cranberry Reservoir)
Sources Under Development	0.135 MGD (permit) - Roop's Mill well (No.11)
Water Treatment #1	2.75 MGD (upgradable to 5 MGD) - Cranberry Water Treatment Plant
Water Treatment #2	0.5 MGD Carfaro Water Treatment Plant (well No. 7)
Water Augmentation Well	1 ground water augmentation well (No. 5 - Koontz Creamery)
Pump Station	2 booster pump stations
Emergency Pump Station	1 emergency back - up pump (West Branch Patapsco River)

Source: City of Westminster Public Works Department, 2009

Section 3: Services to Areas Outside City Boundaries

The City's service area currently extends outside the corporate limits to serve approximately 3,500 of the total 9,200 connections (Map 11.3). In other words, 38% of the City's treated water serves properties in the County. In August 2002, The Mayor and Common Council adopted Good Cause Waiver criteria for the extension of public water and sewage beyond the corporate limits of Westminster. That legislation requires new or redevelopment projects to be in compliance with the Town/County Agreement, which stipulates that if the property is contiguous to the corporate limits, the project must initiate annexation into the City of Westminster if it is to be served with public water and sewer. If the property does not meet the legal test for annexation, its owner must file a Good Cause Waiver with The Mayor and Common Council. If approved, the applicant must execute an "Intent to Annex" agreement with the City of Westminster which is recorded in the Carroll County Land Records. This procedure provides control over the extension of City utilities outside of the corporate limits. Projects that would require a Good Cause Waiver are considered lower priority under the allocation policy than projects inside the City.

Section 4: Private Wells

The City does not maintain an inventory of private wells located within City limits or within its water service area. It is anticipated that very few, if any remain in operation within the City, since there are no city residences or businesses without access to a public water supply. Since the City did not operate a public water system prior to 1964, service extension to development outside the City prior to that date was at the discretion of the private entity operating the system. Consequently, there are residences and businesses in the water service area on private wells. It has been the policy of the city to work cooperatively with the Carroll County Health Department and the property owners to extend water service to these sites upon failure or contamination of the private supplies. This happens infrequently, and is not anticipated to have an adverse effect on the City's water system. The protection of these private water sources is under the jurisdiction of the Carroll County Health Department, which has implemented measures to require testing for all known contaminants in this area. The City does not plan to require connection to its system.

Section 5: Drinking Water Supply Assessment

One goal of the Maryland Department of the Environment's (MDE's) is to ensure that the water quality and quantity at all public water systems meets the needs of the public and is in compliance with Federal and State regulations. The City of Westminster will adhere to the guidelines of its allocation policy for the foreseeable future. Currently, the City is developing additional sources to meet the requirements of the drought of record demand. Once these requirements have been met, the City will develop identified sources to provide water to fulfill the 228,000 gpd of known requests plus the projected build-out demand of 4.33MGD.

Section 6: Drought Management

During the summer of 2002, the State of Maryland experienced a severe drought that required the City to take extensive emergency measures to ensure adequate water was in the system to serve the entire service area. In response to the drought, The Mayor and Common Council adopted a "Drought Management Plan" which provides for a series of water restrictions once drought conditions have been met. This plan also authorizes all police personnel and Westminster Code Officials to issue citations against any person who violates water restrictions. As a result of the drought, the Mayor and Common Council made it a priority to find alternative sources of water. In addition, the City has developed an emergency water supply, utilizing water from Medford Quarry to supplement the Cranberry system during drought emergency conditions.

Part 5: Water Supply Solutions

Section 1: Water Resources Alternatives Evaluation

The City of Westminster has joined with Carroll County, and the other seven municipal governments in the Water Resources Coordinating Council, to develop strategies for the developing an expanded water supply to meet future needs. The County hired a consultant, Malcolm Pirnie, to provide technical assistance with several of the background assessments that were needed to make well-informed decisions about water supply solutions. Malcolm Pirnie provided a County-wide assessment of water and wastewater options to assist with the development of Carroll County Comprehensive Plan's Water Resources Element. The City of Westminster has also been an active participant in the development of this County-wide Water Resources Element.

According to the Malcolm Pirnie 2009 Draft Report, Carroll County Water Resources Alternatives Evaluation, the following principles have guided the development of expanded water supply solutions and were used in the evaluation of various future options.

Principle 1: County-wide Planning

Much of the water supply planning that has been conducted historically within Carroll County has been somewhat incremental in that the needs of the individual towns have often been considered without a view toward a more County-wide perspective. The County-wide perspective used in the Alternatives Evaluation Report fostered development of several alternatives where the needs of multiple communities could be met by a single large project, thereby offering potential economies of scale. Another consideration is that large projects such as a reservoir, or large interconnections with other water systems, could have the added benefit of helping to avoid the sprawl that may otherwise occur. Sprawl could mean new development that is based on individual large lots dependent upon groundwater wells and septic systems.

Principle 2: Demand Management

Jurisdictions and associated utilities should be encouraging water conservation and efficiency to reduce long-term system costs and produce additional societal benefits. As part of moving forward with development of new water supply alternatives that require significant regulatory approvals, it is important to continue to document demand management practices that are currently being followed in Carroll County. It is recommended that water use tracking methods be established that will allow the County and towns to better quantify the effect of demand management efforts already being taken.

Principle 3: Diversification of Water Supplies

One of the most important recent trends in sustainable water supply planning is a move toward diversified water supply development, often referred to as integrated water resources planning, where

the system does not rely on groundwater supplies only. This ensures that options still exist to meet water supply needs even if the continued use of one water source becomes severely constrained.

Principle 4: Future Scenario Planning

The importance of diversifying the County's water supply becomes even clearer when considering the uncertainties that exist when trying to plan for multiple possible future scenarios.

Summary

Using these principles, the following water supply solutions were identified for the City of Westminster:

Section 2: Recommended Solutions

Below is a list of the recommended short and long-term solutions based on the collaborative work of the City and County Staff as well as recommendations from the 2008 Water Supply Capacity Management Plan and the Malcolm Pirnie 2009 Draft Report, Carroll County Water Resources Alternatives Evaluation: These solutions will be relevant to the entire service area.

Short-term Water Supply Solutions:

- Roop's Mill well - yield 0.135 MGD, project completed in September 2009
- Gesell Property well - in permitting phase
- Continue to reduce unaccounted for water - continue ongoing efforts to detect and repair leaks, resolve accounting errors, and reduce unaccounted for water to an acceptable range of 10-15%
- Continue to implement and refine the Allocation Plan - this plan ensures the adequacy of water supplies for each project
- Promote conservation - provide incentives, education, and enforcement of conservation practices to reduce overall demand
- Groundwater development at Union Mills - Big Pipe Creek has a large, relatively un-tapped watershed, and could potentially produce 0.5 MGD. Due to the cost, testing, and permitting involved, this source would not likely be developed until 2015 or later

Long-term Water Supply Solutions:

- Surface water intake on Little Pipe Creek - CPC Intake with back up by Hydes Quarry or a future Surface Water Impoundment Facility could potentially yield 0.150 MGD.

- Surface water intake at Union Mills – with offline storage impoundment facility
- Reservoir at Union Mills (in cooperation with the County)
- Finished water purchase from City of Baltimore
- Finished water purchase from Pennsylvania private water system

Section 3: Westminster Major Water Supply Projects & Plan

The City staff carefully studied the various alternatives listed above and presented the Mayor and Common Council with a plan to provide additional water supply over the next 20 years. The water plan was endorsed by the Mayor and Common Council in the summer of 2009 and included the following five major projects:

1. Roop's Mill Well – this project is completed and operational, providing 20,000 gpd of additional water to the City as of September 2009
2. Roop's Mill Well Recharge – the City is working in conjunction with the County to obtain water rights on a property adjacent to the City boundary that will provide 46,000 gpd of new water to the City in 2010
3. Gesell Well – the City is working with the County on this estimated $1.2 million project that will yield approximately 350,000 gpd in new water supply to the City in 2012
4. Big Pipe Creek Well Development – the City is working with the County on this estimated $6.5 million project that will provide 500,000 in new groundwater to the City in 2015 from the Union Mills area
5. Little Pipe Creek Intake/Hyde's Quarry – the City is working with the County on this estimate $4.5 million project that will provide 150,000 gpd in new water in 2017

It is likely that the City will receive authorization from MDE to allocate the remaining 39,000 gpd from the Consent Agreement by late 2009/early 2010. The City has allocation requests totaling 228,000 gpd beyond the 139,000 gpd total from the Consent Agreement. While the Gesell Well will allow the City to fulfill some of the backlogged requests in 2012, the completion of Big Pipe Creek Well Development project in 2015 will satisfy the drought of record deficit and move the City to a positive position.
As part of the City staff's analysis, much attention was given to the Big Pipe Creek area. In fact, the City originally planned to complete the Little Pipe Creek Intake/Hyde's Quarry project prior to any project at Big Pipe Creek. However, after considering a variety of factors, the City determined that the Big Pipe Creek Well Development project should be implemented first. The justifications for this decision include:

1. Improved return on investment – there would be more "new" water supply created per dollar spent with the Big Pipe Creek Well Development project verses Little Pipe Creek Intake/Hyde's Quarry Project

2. Elimination of backlog – the completion of the Big Pipe Creek Well Development project by 2015 will allow the City to eliminate most or all of the current or backlogged water allocation requests

3. Ease of development – development of groundwater resources is a more efficient use of limited technical and financial resources verses surface water development

4. Backbone infrastructure – the completion of the Big Pipe Creek Well Development project provides the "backbone" infrastructure for the future development of surface water sources at Big Pipe Creek (i.e. phase 2 – stream intake/inline reservoir and phase 3 – construction of an impoundment dam to create a regional reservoir)

5. Low impact development standards – the City has time to implement low impact development standards that can have positive long-term benefits such as extending "new" source life

6. Federal funds – the Big Pipe Creek Well Development is a model project for Federal funds due to its economic development significance to the Westminster community

The City has not lost sight of its future beyond the water supply solutions outlined in the May 2008 Water Supply Capacity Management Plan and those solutions referenced above. Even considering the Big Pipe Creek Well Development project as phase 1, there still needs to be cooperation amongst County and Regional planning agencies for the phases 2 and 3 of Big Pipe Creek. Cooperative, comprehensive regional solutions will be critical to insuring a positive water future for Westminster and the surrounding area.

Finally, Carroll County is also developing a Water Resource Element to add to its comprehensive plan. It is our intention to include the County's Water Resources Element by reference to the 2009 Westminster Comprehensive Plan. There may be some changes and additions to the County's Water Resources Element in the coming months because they have requested an extension of time. The City will also request Carroll County to include the Westminster Water Resource Element by reference in the County Comprehensive Plan.

Part 6: Wastewater Service &Demand Capacity Analysis

Section 1: Wastewater Assessment

The Westminster Wastewater Treatment plant is designed to handle 5.0 MGD. The average wastewater flow into the plant is 4.43 MGD (Map 11.4). The existing Infiltration and Inflow amount for the system is

1.7MGD. The projected build-out demand according to calculations by Malcolm Pirnie, Carroll County's WRE consultant, is 5.706 MGD. The City plans to start engineering on upgrades to the plant to include additional treatment capacity and Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) technology. With these upgrades, the plant will be capable of treating a flow of 6.5 MGD to the standards required by state and federal law. These capacities will be provided to the Carroll County Department of Planning for the next scheduled update of the Water Sewer Master Plan for Westminster.

Effluent from the plant discharges into Little Pipe Creek, in the Double Pipe Creek watershed. At this time there is no TMDL for nutrients in the Double Pipe Creek watershed, so a complete discussion on nutrient loading as a constraint is not possible. The plant does not currently exceed any of the loading limits imposed by its NPDES permit. After the planned upgrade to ENR at the Wastewater Treatment Plant, capacity will be limited, by available technology, to 6.5 MGD. However, this limit exceeds the projected demand, so it will not present a constraint. The upgraded plant is projected to be able to achieve the same loading rates as the current plant, while treating more flow (Table 11.4).

Should the loading rates approach the permitted limits prior to completion of the planned upgrades, the City will evaluate options for spray irrigation and onsite treatment/reclamation of industrial effluent to divert flow from the WWTP.

Table 11.4 Westminster Future Wastewater Demand (in Gallons per Day)

Community	Current Demand[1]	Planned Future Demand[2]		Other Potential Demand[3]	Total Demand
		Infill Demand	Future Demand		
Westminster	4,440,000	387,295	204,770	673,840	5,705,905

[1] These data represent, in general, the annual average daily demand over the three-year period 2005-2007, and include I&I.
[2] These data relate to areas located within the designated planned sewer service area. Infill demand is calculated for areas classified in the "Existing/Final Planning" service category; Future demand is calculated for the combined area classified in the "Priority" or "Future" service category.
[3] These data relate to areas designated in the "No Planned Sewer Service Area" but located within the Community Growth Area Boundary.

Source: Carroll County Department of Planning, December 2008

Part 7: Stormwater Management Analysis

Section 1: Point and Nonpoint Source Loading Status and Remediation

As discussed in previous sections, development activities in the City fall into two 8- digit watersheds. Both the Double Pipe Creek and Liberty Reservoir watersheds contain category 5 303(d) listed water bodies. Impairments to the Double Pipe Creek watershed include total phosphorus, biological assessments, fecal coliform, suspended solids, and PCBs in fish tissue. This watershed has an approved TMDL for sediments/siltation, and a pending TMDL for fecal coliform. The Liberty Reservoir watershed is listed as impaired by fecal coliform, and biological assessments. There is a pending TMDL for fecal coliform in this watershed. The Liberty Reservoir watershed also contains several Tier 2 water bodies, which require strict review of any proposed discharge applications. Water bodies in both of these watersheds are impacted heavily by agricultural run-off downstream of the City. As a major growth area in the County, land in the City is used with more intensity than in outlying areas. Table 11.5 shows the approximate acreage in the City by land use category, along with the impervious rate associated with the land use.

Table 11.5 Impervious Surface by Land Use in Westminster

Land Use	Area (Ac)	Impervious Rate	Area of impervious (Ac)
Low Density Residential	872	0.14	122.08
Medium Density Residential	1261	0.28	353.08
High Density Residential	348	0.41	142.68
Commercial	632	0.72	455.04
Industrial	448	0.53	237.44
Open Urban Land	451	0.09	40.59
Totals	4012	n/a	1350.91

Source: Land Use categories from MDP, Impervious Rates from Center for Watershed Protection: *Urban Cover and Land Use in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed*, (2001), Cappiella and Brown

Data Source: City of Westminster Planning, Zoning & Development Department, 2009

The acreages shown in the above table were calculated using existing use of land GIS data from the Carroll County Bureau of Comprehensive Planning. This basic assessment illustrates that in order for the City to continue to be a major center for growth in Carroll County; minimizing impervious surfaces in future development will have to be part of the strategy to reduce the City's overall non-point source contribution. Critical to this effort will be increased densities for residential development, yielding more

dwelling units per acre of impervious surface. In addition, the City will work with county officials to prescribe better site design practices for commercial and industrial development.

Due to the scale at which current techniques are available to forecast non-point source nutrient loading rates, City staff have yielded to the County for this analysis. The watershed and county-level analyses and recommendations addressed in the Carroll County Water Resource Element are adopted as part of this plan by reference.

Part 8: Water Conservation Programs

Section 1: Nurseries & Garden Centers Educational Program

Xeriscaping promotes creative approaches to landscaping through the use of techniques and plants that reduce the need for water, maintenance and other resources. Residents that adopt principles of xeriscaping can reduce landscape water use by 60% or more. Efficient water use means reducing water waste, such as improper irrigation, and finding ways to achieve attractive, comfortable landscapes without excess water use.

In March 2008, the Westminster Department of Planning developed a program to partner with local nurseries and garden centers to develop xeriscaping educational materials and projects. The goal of the program was to provide practical information to those commercially raising and selling plants in Carroll County in order to reduce operational water demand and increase the use of drought-tolerant plant species. City Staff recognized that the use of xeriscaping among local residents could benefit the community water supply. Throughout the spring of 2008, all local nurseries and garden centers had the opportunity to meet with City Staff to discuss water conservation strategies and were also provided with informational materials about xeriscaping to offer their customers.

Section 2: Affordable Rain Barrel Program

The Maryland Green Building Program facilitates change in the way land development occurs throughout the State by increasing the awareness and use of environmentally responsible building practices, materials and site designs that provide comfortable, affordable and healthier buildings. The Maryland Green Building Program promotes the use of rain barrels.

A rain barrel is a system that collects and stores rain water from a roof that would otherwise be lost to runoff and diverted to storm drains, streams and the Chesapeake Bay. It is relatively simple and inexpensive to construct and can sit conveniently under any residential gutter down spout. Lawn and garden watering make up nearly 40% of total household water use during the summer. A rain barrel collects water and stores it providing an ample supply of free 'soft water' to homeowners, containing no chlorine, lime or calcium making it ideal for gardens, flower pots, and car and window washing. A rain barrel will save most homeowners about 1,300 gallons of water during the peak summer months.

In April 2009, Westminster partnered with the Woman's Club of Westminster and the Bear Branch Nature Center to host an informational workshop for residents about methods of landscaping that can conserve water. In preparation for the workshop, the Public Works and Planning Staff worked together to plan and construct rain barrels from reclaimed barrels from a local company in order to provide residents affordable rain barrels. The rain barrels were promoted at the workshop and the City was successfully able to provide over 65 rain barrels at an affordable price to residents.

Section 3: High Efficiency Toilet Rebate Program

Water Sense, a partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, makes it easy for Americans to save water and protect the environment. Older, inefficient toilets are responsible for most of the water wasted in American homes. Replacing these toilets with Water Sense labeled toilets could save nearly 2 billion gallons per day across the country.

In July 2009, the City of Westminster developed a High Efficiency Toilet Rebate Program to replace toilets which are inefficient. Older toilets consume 3.5 to seven gallons per flush (gpf) while the new water-efficient units consume 1.6 gallons per flush or even less, depending on the manufacturer. Ordinance 806 provided the authority for this program which was approved by the Mayor and Common Council on July 27, 2009.

The program began in August 2009 and was supported by the City of Westminster Water Conservation Fund. The rebates were subject to a pre-approval inspection to certify that the toilet to be replaced uses more than 3.5 gallons per flush. All users of the Westminster system with inefficient, tank type units were encouraged to participate. The rebate amount was intended to offset the cost of purchasing and installing high-efficiency units to conserve water, which relates to a dollar savings for the City resident. When each installation was completed, a post inspection was conducted and the old toilet was be removed by the City. The High Efficiency Toilet Rebate Program was a success and the City of Westminster awarded 50 households the opportunity to receive a rebate.

Part 9: Summary & Conclusions

Based on the information presented in the preceding sections, the City has determined it is not necessary, at this time, to contract the Growth Area Boundary or water and sewer service areas, or to reduce the intensity of planned land uses within corporate limits. Efforts will be ongoing to develop the identified water sources to serve planned growth, while measures will be enacted to enforce and encourage water conservation. Once the ENR upgrade is complete at the Waste Water Treatment Plant, it will be possible to treat the necessary quantity of flow to the required quality to accommodate the planned growth. In addition, the City will collaborate with Carroll County officials to implement the State's Environmental Site Design practices to achieve a reduction in loading rates from new development, while developing programs to prescribe best practice retrofits to existing development.

Water Resources Element

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan studied how Westminster's future depends on adequate and dependable supplies of clean water for many uses. The City of Westminster recognizes that water is a finite resource and that it is critical to the physical and economic health of the community as well as the natural environment. The Water Resources Element identifies the strategies for Westminster to define and move toward a sustainable water future.

Goals and Objectives

Goal W1: Practice adaptive management strategies to incorporate new information, changes in capacity or respond to new threats to water resources as they become known

Objective 1: Update the 2008 Water Supply Management Plan as needed to keep the information relevant and to ensure accuracy

a. Revise recommendations and projections after changes in the water allocation policy or the creation of new sources of water supply

b. Reevaluate water demand projection using demographic trends and historic water use

c. Review existing water supplies and decide if existing supplies do not meet the City's forecasted needs, to seek additional water supplies

Objective 2: Use the 2008 Water Supply Management Plan as a guide to study water supply reliability

a. Monitor the probability that a water supply shortage or drought could occur

b. Inform residents, business owner and City staff what should be done in the short term to reduce water demand during a water shortage or drought

c. Evaluate and enforce the Westminster Drought Management Plan to require reductions water use during times of water supply shortage or drought

Objective 3: Coordinate with State and County agencies to develop long-term water resource strategies

a. Monitor the proposed 2009 water supply project list and update as Westminster acquires new sources of water supply

b. Determine how to best use the limited supply of water Westminster currently provides within the Water Service Area, including supplies that the City will have access to in the future

c. Study strategies and solutions to ensure Westminster becomes more water efficient, in order to reduce the number of gallons used per day by residents and business owners

Objective 4: Conduct quality water resource planning to develop and implement sustainable strategies

a. Establish coordinated, cost effective programs for monitoring water quality and water quantity so that changes can be identified and protection programs modified as necessary

b. Maintain a local water resource management program to review new water uses and changes of use

c. Utilize locally developed policies and water resource analysis in decision-making and project proposals

d. Explore and use alternative and supplemental water resources and programs to conserve and replace the use of traditional potable water supplies

Goal W2: Secure and maintain adequate and sustainable water supplies to serve current and projected growth of Westminster

Objective 1: Implement priority water supply projects as they become financially feasible

a. Develop Gesell property well

b. Develop additional recharge area adjacent to the Roop's Mill Well

c. Develop available groundwater in the Big Pipe Creek/Union Mills area

d. Develop Little Pipe Creek and storage alternatives

Objective 2: Use available research and techniques to locate new water supplies

a. Continue to evaluate and develop surface water sources

b. Continue to develop known groundwater sources where feasible

c. Evaluate and implement measures to ensure adequate recharge for each water source, such as through easements, preservation programs, or purchase

Objective 3: Provide safe drinking water for current and projected development

a. Develop adequate treatment capacity to ensure quality drinking water

b. Monitor the treatment capacity of newly constructed Cranberry Water Treatment

c. Phase upgrades to the newly constructed Cranberry Water Treatment Plant to coincide with projected demand

Objective 4: Develop a partnership with State and County agencies to provide support to protect and manage of water resources in the Westminster water service area

a. Collaborate with State and County agencies, as well as other County municipalities to develop a long-term program to ensure equitable water allocation

b. Incorporate water quality and conservation efforts among City and County agencies with authority over development, water resources, public works and the environment

c. Partner with Carroll County to develop nearby water sources that are outside City limits

d. Coordinate with Carroll County government to obtain recharge credits to maximize withdrawal from current and planned sources

a. Work with the County Health Department to evaluate and adopt policies allowing the use of greywater for non-potable uses such as in toilets and for irrigation

Goal W3: Develop a strategic plan to ensure Westminster has an adequate supply of potable water to meet the needs of residents and the demands of new development

Objective 1: Review and revise City water allocation policy, the Zoning Ordinance and development requirements to sustain or increase the available water to allocate

a. Adopt land use policies that promote higher densities and clustering

b. Limit annexation and Good Cause Waiver issuances until water supply is developed to fulfill currently known demand, or for 5 years, whichever is sooner

c. Limit the extension of new water services to development in existing or priority water service areas, except on an emergency or special needs basis

d. Require each new development project to provide a written analysis of methods to be employed to minimize impacts on groundwater, surface water, and wastewater quality

Objective 2: Develop water conservation standards and requirements to prioritize water allocation requests and minimize number of gallons of water used per day

a. Study incentives and programs that encourage new development to meet green building and water conservation standards

b. Develop a City of Westminster Green Building Principles Guide that ranks building and site design water management strategies as essential in all new development

c. Revise the water allocation policy to incorporate the City of Westminster Green Building Principles as a tool to prioritize water allocation requests

Objective 3: Monitor water allocation requests and future demand for all known and potential development projects

a. Continue to systematically track water allocation requests and the remaining gallons of water available to allocate

b. Develop a standard notice to inform potential developers, as well as current residents and business owners, about the City of Westminster's limited ability to allocate water

c. Analyze and track buildable vacant land and underutilized land to project future requests

d. Ensure that Westminster has enough water supplies online to meet the required amount of gallons of water needed to address projected drought of record

e. Revise the allocation plan to include allocation of wastewater capacity

Objective 4: Update the City of Westminster Landscape Manual to reflect the goals and objectives of the Water Resources Element

a. Limit the amount of water intensive landscaping that can be installed in a development, and also limits the use of potable water for landscaping purposes

b. Support the use of native and drought tolerant plant materials, where appropriate, to conserve energy and water in public parks, right-of-ways, and HOA common areas

c. Promote the retention of healthy native soils, vegetation and forest cover, and reduce the conversion of land to lawn, structures, roads, and other impervious areas

Goal W4: Encourage community water conservation and efficiency strategies to ensure the sustainability of the City's limited water supply

Objective 1: Promote water conservation best practices, techniques, and technologies that improve the efficiency of water use

a. Implement measures outlined in the Water Conservation Plan approved in 2007 by the Water Resource Coordinating Council

b. Review and recommend policies requiring high-efficiency plumbing fixtures in all new construction

c. Support the use of rainwater collection and reuse systems, such as rain barrels and cisterns

d. Endorse greywater in industrial applications, boiler systems, cooling towers and fire suppression systems

Objective 2: Educate and motivate residents, as well as business owners, to reduce their everyday water consumption

a. Provide programs to educate water customers about the benefits of water conservation and the appropriate use of available water supplies

b. Ensure residents are up-to-date information on water resource issues

c. Work with Carroll County Public Schools to develop a program to introduce water conservation to students

d. Utilize the City of Westminster Website and the Carroll County Media Center to inform residents on techniques and technologies to reduce water consumption

e. Expand existing programs that provide incentives for businesses and homeowners to retrofit existing structures using high-efficiency fixtures, such as the toilet rebate program

Goal W5: Restore and protect water quality, and contribute towards meeting the regulatory requirements for water bodies impacted by activities within the City and its environs

Objective 1: Evaluate and adopt land use controls to reduce impervious land area in new development

a. Promote development in areas not environmentally sensitive, and locations with appropriate infrastructure

b. Limit development in sensitive areas such as stream and wetland buffers, floodplains, areas underlain by carbonate rock, and steep slopes

c. Implement recommendations from the December 2004 Source Water Assessment and Wellhead Protection report, prepared by Advanced Land and Water, Inc

d. Continue collaboration with Carroll County planning staff to provide the most accurate land use/land cover data available for our jurisdiction

Objective 2: Promote the use of recharge areas as water-resource-protection areas designated as having the best potential for groundwater recharge

a. Study and document the functions of natural ground water recharge areas, natural drainage features, and surface water bodies

b. Develop regulations to protect recharge areas in order to ensure a healthy aquifer and a sustainable quality water supply

c. Support land conservation programs designed to acquire property with particular value for protecting water quality, quantity and recharge

Objective 3: Reduce the amount of runoff from new development

a. Evaluate and adopt amendments to parking requirements, imposing limits on the surface area of a site devoted to parking

b. Develop a maximum standard for impervious surfaces for all new development

c. Reduce the required width of streets and sidewalks in new development

d. Limit the amount of stormwater permitted to enter public storm water systems, or otherwise leave the site

Objective 4: Provide a stormwater management system which promotes preservation of natural resources and improves the quality of surface water run-off

a. Develop projects to improve the quality of stormwater discharging into water bodies to achieve compliance with regulatory requirements

b. Require onsite infiltration of storm water through use of bio-retention areas

c. Ensure adequate buffering of all water bodies

d. Implement measures to increase the urban tree canopy, increasing interception of rainfall, and protection of water bodies

Objective 5: Ensure adequacy of wastewater treatment operations in terms of quantity and quality, while maintaining compliance with regulatory requirements

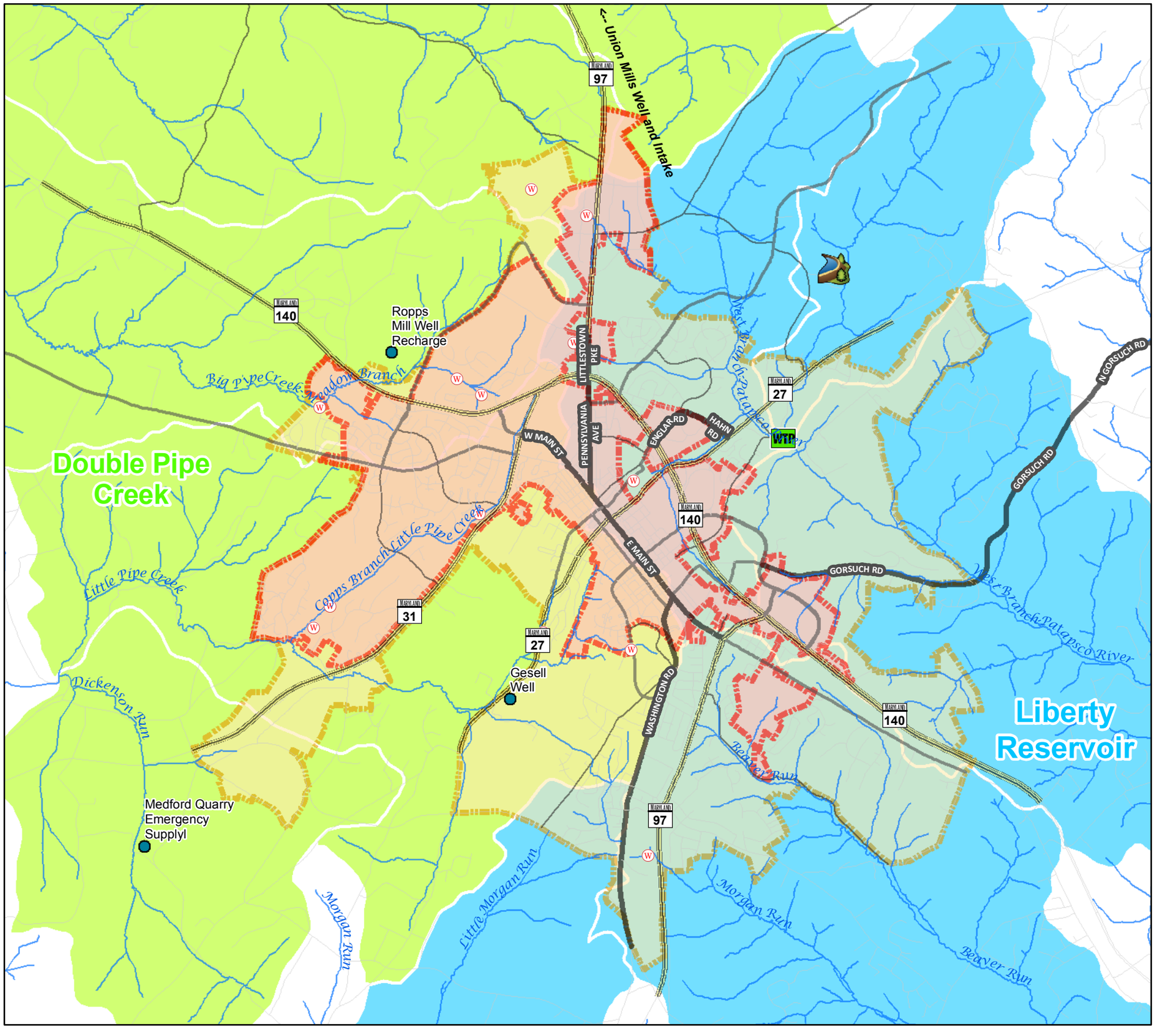
a. Continue efforts for planned ENR upgrade, enabling the current facility to operate at the limits of technology in terms of nitrogen and phosphorus removal

b. Evaluate methods of wastewater reclamation to divert and treat water suitable for industrial reuse

c. Study the possible use and locations for spray irrigation

d. Implement policies requiring water conservation from all users, to promote more efficient use of available treatment capacity

Westminster Watersheds



Legend

- City Boundary
- Proposed Growth Area Boundary

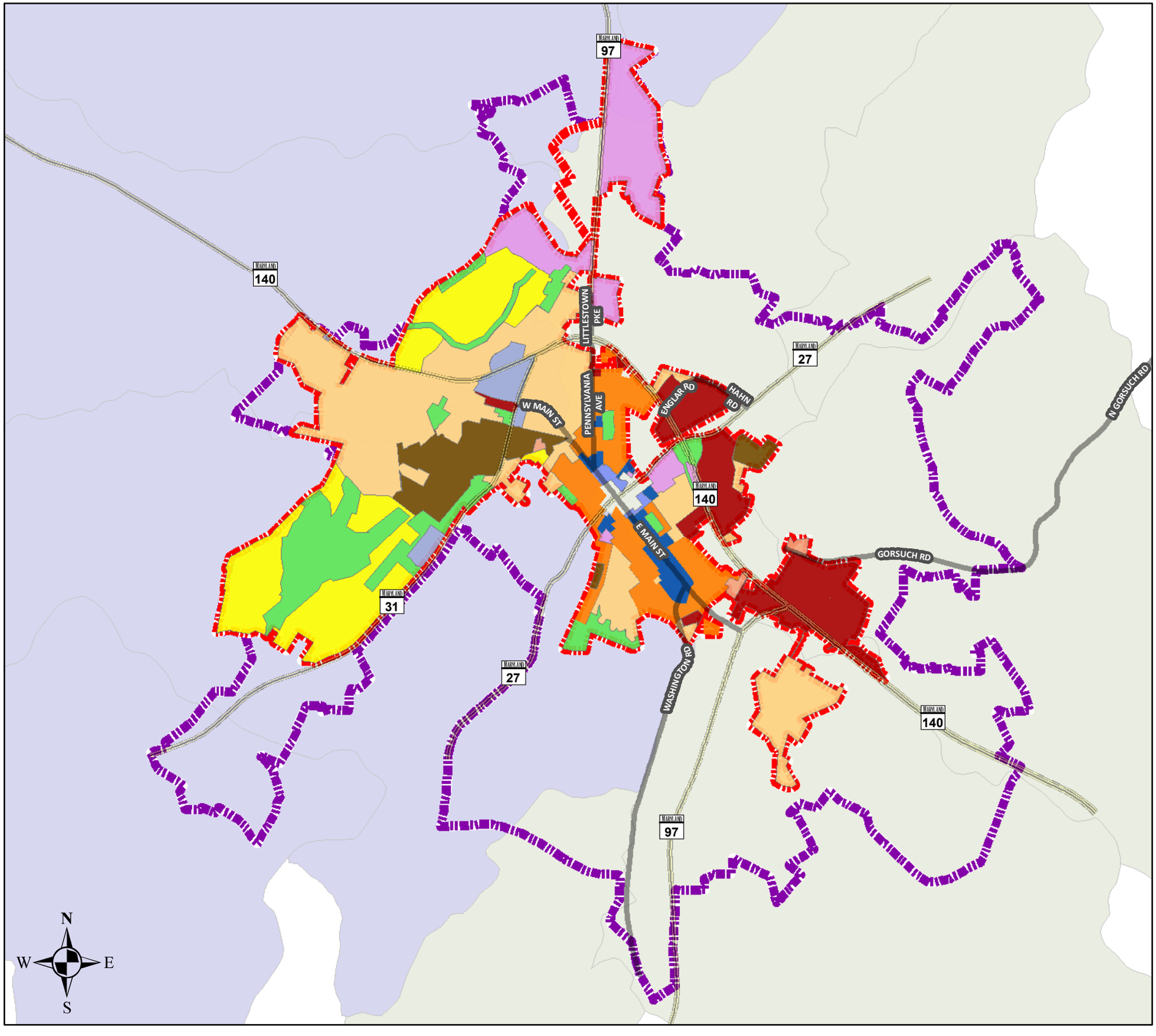
Watersheds

8-Digit Name

- Double Pipe Creek
- Liberty Reservoir
- Water Treatment Plant
- Reservoir
- City Wells
- Future Projects
- Streams

Map Not to Scale

Land Use Plan By Watershed



Legend

- City Boundary
- Proposed Growth Area Boundary

Land Use Designation

- DOWNTOWN BUSINESS
- CENTRAL BUSINESS
- NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
- COMMERCIAL
- CONSERVATION
- HOUSING FOR OLDER PERSONS
- INDUSTRIAL
- LOW DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- SUBURBAN RESIDENTIAL
- URBAN RESIDENTIAL
- PLANNED/RESIDENTIAL

Watersheds

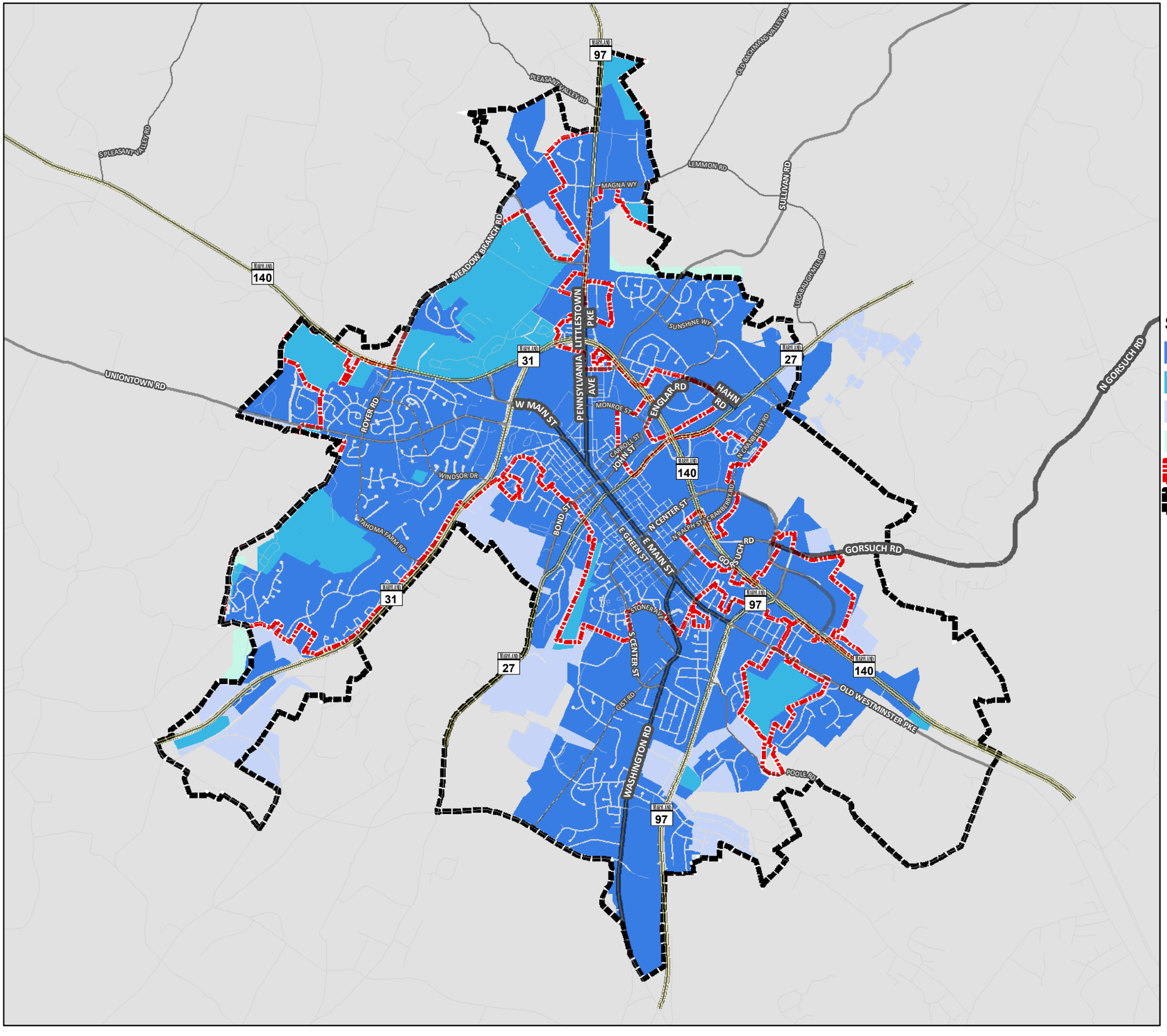
- MIDDLE POTOMAC RIVER
- PATAPSCO RIVER

CORPORATION OF WESTMINSTER 1838

Map Not to Scale

Water Service Area

As shown in the 2007 Carroll County Water and Sewer Master Plan

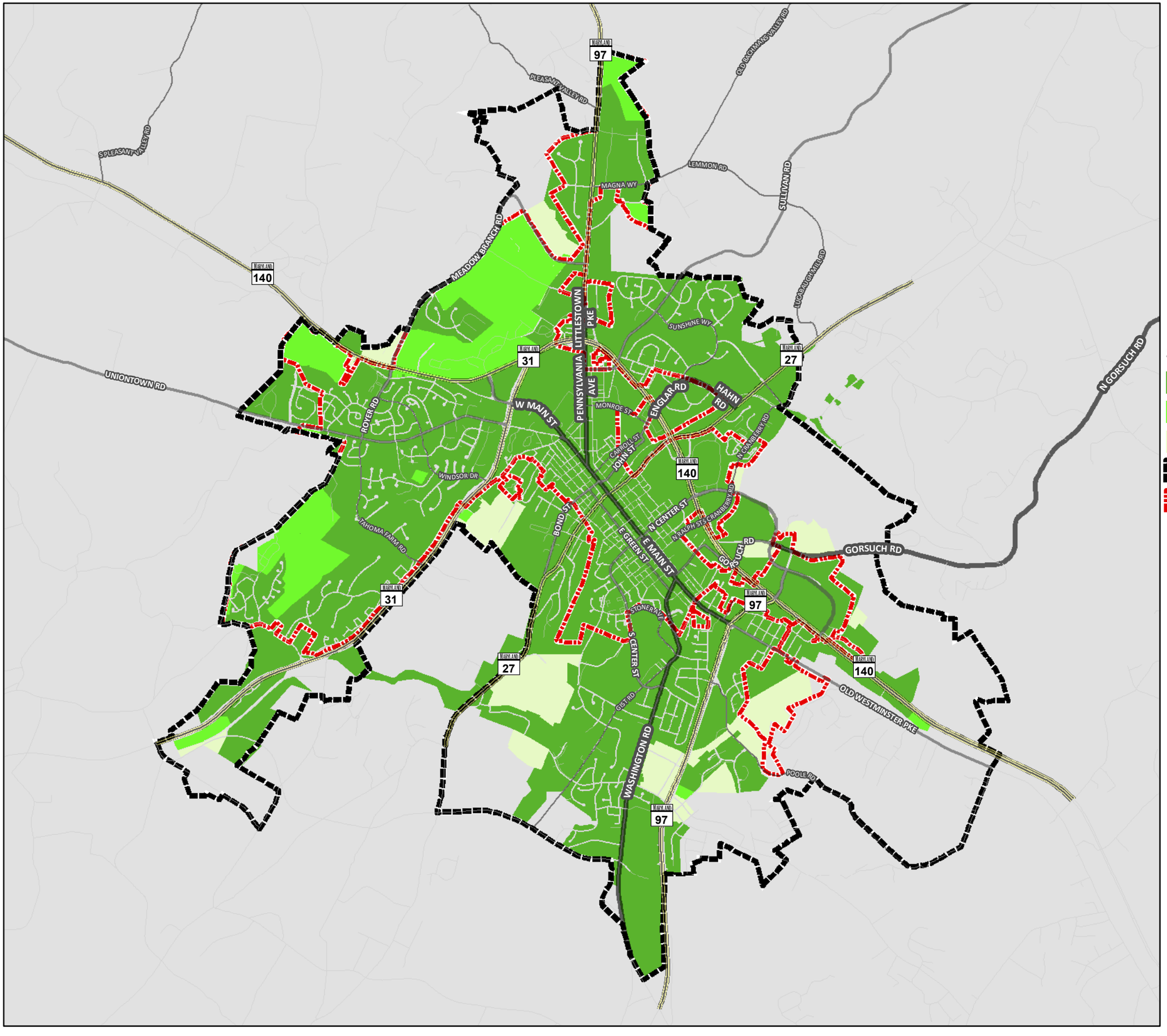


Legend

Service Category

- W1 Existing/Final Planning
- W3 Priority
- W5 Future
- No Planned Service
- City Boundary
- Growth Area Boundary

Map Not to Scale



Sewer Service Area

As shown in the 2007 Carroll County Water and Sewer Master Plan

Legend

Service Category

- S1 Existing/Final Planning
- S3 Priority
- S5 Future
- Growth Area Boundary
- City Boundary

Map Not to Scale

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Transportation

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

What is the Transportation Element?

At the 1997 session, the General Assembly passed five pieces of legislation and budget initiatives known collectively as "Smart Growth." Maryland has adopted the principles of Smart Growth to be incorporated into the Comprehensive Plan.

The following Smart Growth principle relates to the Transportation Element:

Facilitate an adequate mix of transportation modes

- To reduce traffic congestion throughout the City
- To coordinate land use and transportation
- To create resiliency, and connectivity within the City road networks
- To ensure connectivity between pedestrian, bike, transit, and road facilities

Revitalize existing neighborhoods into safe, walkable, and livable communities

- To mix land uses and build compactly, thus reducing trips and make walking a more viable alternative
- To create a streetscape that better serves a range of users (pedestrians, bicyclists, and automobiles)
- To balance streets and sidewalks in order to encourage walkability

State Planning Vision found in this Element

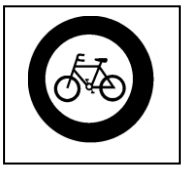
Transportation - A well-maintained, multimodal transportation system facilitates the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods and services

Community Vision for Transportation

According to the 2008 Community Survey, Westminster drivers are concerned with the difficulties they encounter turning on and off roads due to issues with visibility or merging. Some residents suggested that the City should consider the addition of lanes, roundabouts, or left turn signals. A second challenge with driving in Westminster is the high volume of traffic. Residents describe traffic to be an issue on Route 140 during commuting times in the early morning or early evening because of the high number of commuters that leave Westminster everyday to work outside of Carroll County.

From the timing to the synchronization, residents listed challenges with traffic lights throughout Westminster. In some cases, it is not the use of a traffic light, but rather the lack of a traffic light that most concerned residents. Residents would like to see the addition of traffic lights at certain difficult intersections.

Driving is not the only form of travel for residents of Westminster. Many residents choose walking or biking to get around the City. About 14% of residents are dissatisfied with the ease of pedestrian travel, and almost 17% are dissatisfied with the ease of traveling by bicycle. Residents would like improvements to sidewalks, the addition of walking/biking trails, and the enforcement of crosswalks in order to improve pedestrian or bike accessibility.



Part 1: Transportation Infrastructure

Transportation is increasingly the most complex issue faced by State and local governments. The movement of people, goods and services is crucial to the economic and social vitality of any community. The transportation network in and around Westminster provides access for people and products to small local markets, as well as large metropolitan areas. The Westminster transportation system affords its residents the opportunity to work in the larger employment centers, while residing in a community that has an established high quality of life. As Westminster and Carroll County continue to grow, the pressures on the transportation network will continue to increase, and these increasing pressures will need to be addressed by the State, County and local governments.

Chapter 12

Part 1: Transportation Infrastructure

Part 2: Traffic Volumes & Capacity

Part 3: Pedestrian & Bicycle Accessibility

Part 4: Transit Alternatives

Part 5: Commuting Patterns

Part 6: Corridor Studies

Part 7: Proposed Major Streets

Part 8: Transportation Planning

Goals and Objectives

Section 1: Summary of the Existing Transportation Network

The Westminster area features a variety of modes of transportation. These include the road network, which encompasses State highway facilities, collector roads, and the local street system; pedestrian and bicycle facilities; railroads; the Carroll County Regional Airport; and transit and ridesharing opportunities. All of these facilities are described in detail below. In addition, information is provided regarding the traffic volumes and capacity of area roadways, as well as the level of service and functional classification.

Section 2: Functional Classification

Functional classification is the assignment of streets and roadways into classes or systems, according to the type of service they are intended to provide based on its daily traffic volumes as well as its purpose, characteristics and location (Map 9.1). Individual streets do not function independently. Rather, travel involves movement through a network of roadway systems. The functional classification defines the role that any particular street should fulfill in order to facilitate logical and efficient travel patterns. Basically, local roadway classifications represent an emphasis on access to property, arterials represent a high level of mobility, and collectors represent a compromise between property access and mobility. (Source: Carroll County Functional Classification Criteria and Assignment, October 1995 (Revised in accordance with current SHA classification system, June 2004).

Roadway segments are designated as rural or urban based on context and roadway characteristics. The roadway segments of the Westminster area are then further classified into one of the following categories:

Principal Arterial

Links large population or employment centers; can range from expressways to two-lane roadways; inter-county or interstate oriented and indicative of long travel lengths; high in traffic volume and speeds; access should be limited to intersections with public streets and controlled by establishing distances between points of access, provision of service or parallel roads, connections between adjacent developments, prevention of private/individual driveway connections, as well as the reduction in the number of existing access points.

Minor Arterial

Provide a lower level of mobility while placing more of an emphasis on land access than the other arterial classifications; typically provide a link to the collector roadway system and connect small population centers to the overall arterial system; access should be controlled by establishing distances between points of access, connections between adjacent developments; and prevention of private/individual driveway connections.

Collector

Provide for both land access and movement within residential, commercial, industrial or agricultural areas; links from the land uses to the arterials; provide service to areas not on an arterial route and to other important traffic generators; access should be controlled by establishing distances between points of access, connections between adjacent developments; and prevention of private/individual driveway connections.

Local System

Provide for direct access to individual land uses; discourage through traffic and are typically low in traffic volumes and speed.

Section 3: State Highway Facilities

The City of Westminster and the surrounding area are served by seven Maryland State Highways: MD 140 (Baltimore Boulevard and a segment of MD 97), MD 97 North (Littlestown Pike), MD 97 South (Washington Road), MD 27 (Westminster/Manchester Road, Railroad Avenue/Liberty Street and Ridge Road), MD 32 (Sykesville Road), MD 31 (New Windsor Road), Route 832 (Old Taneytown Road), Route 852 North (Old Manchester Road), and Route 852 south (Old New Windsor Road). Each of these facilities is briefly described below, beginning with the principal arterials and working down to the state highways, which are classified as local roads (Map 12.2).

Maryland MD 140

Maryland MD 140 is classified as a principal arterial under the State Highway Administration (SHA) system of functional classification. Eastbound MD 140 provides access from Westminster to Interstate 795, which joins the Baltimore Beltway (I-695); to the west, MD 140 intersects with U.S. Route 15 in Emmitsburg. This route serves commercial and commuter traffic between Carroll County, Pennsylvania, and the Baltimore area via I-795 and I-695. East of the Westminster corporate limits, MD 140 is a four lane, divided highway, with twelve-foot wide travel lanes and ten to twelve foot shoulders. The posted speed limit is 55 miles per hour to the east of the City.

Within the Westminster area, the speed limit decreases to 45 miles per hour, while the roadway width increases to provide for right and left turn lanes at intersections. West of MD 31, the width of MD 140 decreases to between forty-four and forty-eight feet, providing two twelve foot travel lanes with ten to twelve foot paved shoulders. The speed limit increases to 55 miles per hour in this area. Signalized intersections include Market Street, Malcolm Drive/MD 97, Gorsuch Road, Ralph Street, Center Street, Englar Road, Sullivan Road, MD 31 (partial), and WMC Drive. Interchanges with on- and off-ramps exist where MD Routes 27 and 97 North travel under MD 140.

Maryland MD 97 North

Maryland MD 97 North also classified by SHA as a principal arterial from MD 140 to Old Meadow Branch Road, connects MD 140 to Pennsylvania MD 97, serving Littlestown and Gettysburg and providing a connection to U.S. Route 15. The width of MD 97 North is forty feet, which offers two twelve foot travel lanes with ten foot left turn and acceleration/deceleration lanes at major intersections. There are no shoulders along most of the road, except in the section just north of the MD 140 interchange, where eight foot wide shoulders are available along the west side of the road.

Signalized intersections include Commerce Center Drive and Airport Drive/Magna Way. The City's most significant industrial parks, as well as the Carroll County Airport, are located on MD 97 North. Considerable commuter and commercial traffic use this route to reach both local and regional employment and market centers. Recently, SHA is constructed a new bridge at the intersection with MD 97(N) and MD 140. This replacement bridge did not add capacity. However, it functions more efficiently as the ramps were slightly realigned for smoother transition of merging traffic.

Maryland MD 97 South

Maryland MD 97 South, between MD 140 and MD 32, is classified as a principal arterial. This road continues south through Carroll County and into Howard and Montgomery Counties, intersecting with the Washington, D.C. beltway (I-495) and continuing into Washington, D.C. In Westminster, at its intersection with MD 140, the width of MD 97 South is approximately fifty feet. Northbound traffic is provided with two left turn lanes, a shared left and through lane, and one twelve foot, free flow right turn lane separated by an island. A four foot raised median separates north and south bound traffic,

and curb and gutter is provided on both the east and west sides of the highway. The southbound direction has two twelve foot lanes with a free-flow right turn lane from eastbound MD 140. Between MD 140 and Main Street, MD 97 South has three twelve foot lanes in each direction separated by a four foot wide concrete median. To the south of Main Street, MD 97 is forty-four feet wide, providing two twelve foot travel lanes with ten foot paved shoulders.

Maryland MD 27

Maryland MD 27 classified as a principal arterial by SHA (Bond Street to Hahn Road), runs diagonally across the County, from Manchester to Mount Airy, where there is an interchange at I-70. This route then continues through Howard and Montgomery Counties to terminate at I-270. Maryland MD 27, both north and south of the Westminster corporate limits, is an undivided highway with two twelve foot travel lanes and stabilized shoulders that vary from zero to ten feet along the length of the road.

In the City of Westminster and to the south of Green Street, MD 27 has two twelve foot travel lanes with parking permitted on the east side of the road. Between Green Street and South Alley, parking is permitted on the west side of the street, and from South Alley to Main Street; parking is restricted to provide turn lanes at the Main Street intersection. Signalized intersections include Green Street, Main Street, and Mall Ring Road. An interchange exists where MD 27 crosses under MD 140. Recently, the State Highway Administration reconstructed the bridge at MD 27 and MD 140. This project added additional lane capacity to MD 140. The MD 27 Corridor has also been identified by the City of Westminster as the primary “Gateway” into downtown Westminster. Plans have been developed to provide mixed-use development opportunities along MD 27 near downtown.

Maryland MD 32

Maryland MD 32 is classified by SHA as a minor arterial. This road offers a connection from Westminster to the Sykesville/Eldersburg area, and continues into Howard and Anne Arundel Counties, terminating at I-97. MD 32 provides access to U.S. 29, M.D. 100, I-70, U.S. 1, U.S. 50, U.S. 301, and I-97. Within the Westminster corporate limits, MD 32 is also known as Main Street (Washington Road south of the intersection with Manchester Avenue). Various segments of Main Street have been reconstructed by the State Highway Administration (SHA) and then turned over to the City.

To date, the SHA has reconstructed and deeded to the City the section of MD 32 from the southern corporate limits on Washington Road through the downtown area as far as McDaniel College. The City now owns and maintains Main Street from MD 140 to Colonial Avenue. Main Street has two twelve foot travel lanes with parking permitted on both sides in most areas. Signalized intersections include Manchester Avenue, Center Street, Longwell Avenue, MD 27, John/Bond Street, Pennsylvania Avenue, and MD 31. Left turn lanes are provided at MD 27 and Manchester Avenue/Washington Road. South of Westminster, MD 32 has a thirty-two foot width, except where turn lanes are provided, resulting in two twelve foot travel lanes with a four foot shoulder area on each side.

Maryland MD 31

Maryland MD 31 is classified by SHA as a principal arterial, connects Westminster to New Windsor and continues west to terminate at Route 26 near Libertytown in Frederick County. In the Westminster area, MD 31 is a two lane, undivided roadway. The forty-four foot width provides two twelve foot travel lanes with ten foot stabilized shoulders.

Maryland Route 832

Maryland Route 832 (Old Taneytown Road) runs just south of and parallel to MD 140, providing an alternate route between Westminster and Taneytown. The thirty-two foot width provides two eleven-foot travel lanes with approximately five-foot shoulders. It will be necessary to make upgrades to this road with the eventual development of the Roop's Mill property.

Maryland Route 852 North

Maryland Route 852 North, also known as Old Manchester Road, offers a connection between Cranberry Road and MD 27. Maryland 852 continues north, parallel to MD 27, to a point north of Maryland Route 482. This route has two twelve foot travel lanes with approximately ten-foot shoulders.

Maryland Route 852 South

Maryland Route 852 South, also known as Old New Windsor Road, provides a connection between the Main Street/Uniontown Road intersection and the Wakefield Valley area. This road, which parallels Maryland MD 31, provides an alternate route to residents in the western portion of the City who have destinations in the downtown.

Section 4: Local System

Collector roads are those roads that facilitate traffic flow between arterial highways, and local roads, such as subdivision streets. Collector roads are classified as major or minor in rural areas and are characterized by moderate speeds. The State Highway Administration makes no distinction between major and minor collectors in urban areas. Roads bearing some or all of the characteristics of a collector in the Westminster area include the Main Street portion of Maryland MD 32, Uniontown Road, Sullivan Road, Gorsuch Road, parts of Green Street, John/Bond Streets and Englar Road, Center Street, Market Street, Kate Wagner Road, part of Hook Road, and Old Westminster Pike. The portion of Center Street north of MD 140, and all of Market Street are four-lane roadways divided by a concrete median. Once complete, the reconstructed Meadow Branch Road will be a significant collector road between MD 97(N) and MD 140. This critical road will serve as a primary through movement for the MD 97 Industrial Corridor as well as the residential development occurring in the area.

Other roads designed and/or functioning similar to collectors in the Westminster area are Carroll Street, Monroe Street, Hahn Road, Sunshine Way, Meadow Branch Road, Old Bachman Valley Road, Lemon

Road, Lucabaugh Mill Road, Royer Road, Stoner Avenue, 140 Village Road, Leidy Road, Gist Road, Poole Road, and the eastern part of Hook Road. In general, these roads link residential areas with large commercial areas and provide travel routes to the other municipalities within the County. With the exception of Englar Road, which becomes a four-lane, divided highway for a short section to the north of MD 140, the collectors are two-lane, undivided roadways. Within the City limits, on-street parking is sometimes permitted along collector roads.

The remaining streets in the City of Westminster are classified as local roads. This type of road provides direct access to individual parcels of land and is characterized by low speed limits, low traffic volumes, and the discouragement of through traffic. Most local roads have two lanes, are undivided, and frequently allow on-street parking; however, some local roads in Westminster, particularly those in the downtown area, provide only one-way traffic flow.

Pennsylvania Avenue

Pennsylvania Avenue is City owned and maintained. The road connects West Main Street to MD 97 North at its juncture with MD 140. Pennsylvania Avenue has two twelve foot wide travel lanes with parking permitted on both sides of the street. The City received a Community Legacy Grant from the State of Maryland in 2008 and in 2009, to implement the Pennsylvania Avenue Streetscape Project. This project began construction in October 2009 to install traffic calming devices and to revitalize two intersections in order to create a pedestrian friendly environment through this primarily residential neighborhood.

Table 12.1 Changes in Average Daily Traffic, 1999-2008 Significant State & City Routes in the Westminster Area

Location	1999 ADT	2003 ADT	2008 ADT	% Change
Municipal Routes				
Main Street (.10 Miles N of Manchester Ave.)	12875	12475	10562	-17.97%
Main Street (.20 Miles N of MD-27)	14125	15775	n/a	11.68%
Center Street (.10 Miles W of MD-140)	9675	8525	7591	-27.45%
John Street (.10 Miles N of W. Main St.)	8375	5825	6161	-26.44%
Monroe Street (.20 Miles E of Winters Alley)	2625	2525	n/a	-3.81%
Pennsylvania Avenue (.40 Miles S of MD-140)	8775	11025	7821	-10.87%
Royer Road (.20 Miles S of MD-140)	7875	5925	6161	-21.77%
WMC Drive (.10 Miles N of MD-31)	3775	7075	6502	72.24%
MD-27 (Liberty Street-.20 Miles S of Main St.)	10875	9650	n/a	-11.26%
State Routes				
MD-27 (Railroad Avenue-.30 Miles S of MD-140)	14775	13850	12680	-16.52%
MD-27 (Railroad Avenue-.10 Miles N of MD-140)	17475	22050	23740	26.39%
MD-31 (New Windsor Road-.70 Miles E of Medford Rd.)	5075	8050	n/a	58.62%
MD-31 (New Windsor Road-.30 Miles S of MD-140)	11175	12350	n/a	10.51%
MD-97 (Malcolm Drive-.10 Miles N of Old Westminster Pike)	23975	30475	n/a	27.11%

Source: Maryland State Highway Administration, 2009

Part 2: Traffic Volumes & Capacity

Average daily traffic (ADT) figures are presented in Tables 12.1. Table 12.1 includes counts for significant State and City routes from 1999 and 2008. Table 12.1 also shows the percent change in ADT over those years.

Two distinct trends emerge from the average daily traffic data. Traffic levels in the older sections of Westminster generally remained constant or dropped from 1999 to 2008. A notable exception is Pennsylvania Avenue, which experienced a 25% increase in traffic in 2003 but dropped 29 % again in 2008. The overall lack of a substantial increase in traffic volumes of these older City roadways suggests that this portion of the road network will require few large-scale capacity improvements in the near future. Significant infill development, particularly in the downtown area, would likely increase the ADT figures for downtown and may warrant capacity improvements.

Traffic levels on roads serving the more recently developed portions of Westminster increased at varying rates. MD 31, MD 27, and MD 97 all show increases over the four-year span. In addition, traffic volumes on MD 140, the City's primary arterial, increased at rates between 10% and 17% depending on the location. These increases underscore the need to plan for greater capacity on existing roadways as well as the construction of new roadways in the developing portions of Westminster.

Section 1: Capacity Analysis

The average daily traffic figures presented in Table 12.1 define trends in traffic patterns, but provide little information about the impacts on the operation of the highway network. Capacity analysis is a procedure that can estimate the number of vehicles per hour that can use a particular road section or pass through an intersection before congestion is experienced and/or safety problems result.

The capacity analysis procedure takes into consideration the number of lanes, lane width, topography, and, if applicable, the amount of green-signal time allocated to each approach vector. This procedure was used to measure the current operation of intersections on Maryland MD 140, as the route carries the largest volume of traffic in and through Westminster. Road segments may also be studied; however, conditions at intersections usually deteriorate prior to road segments.

Capacity analysis is then used to determine the level of service (LOS) of a roadway. Level of service defines and describes the level of congestion experienced by motorists. LOS is a qualitative measure expressed as a grade letter. The designations range from 'A' to 'F,' with 'A' representing the least restricted flow and 'F' representing failure of the intersection. Once identified, intersections operating at low levels of service may be targeted for improvements or new roadways may be planned to relieve congestion in the area. Brief descriptions of the typical conditions associated with each level appear below.

Section 2: Level of Service Descriptions (LOS)

LOS 'A'	Traffic flows freely. 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 in 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 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. Levels of service of 'C' or higher are preferred within the City limits.
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. This level is the minimum degree of service acceptable in the City limits.
LOS 'E'	Unacceptable, operations are at 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 as small increases in flow or minor disruptions within the traffic stream will cause breakdown. The service at this level and below is inadequate.
LOS 'F'	Unacceptable, forced or breakdown of flow; represents jammed conditions because capacity is exceeded. The amount of traffic approaching cannot be accommodated. This level of service is 'failing.'

A majority of the intersections along MD 140 currently operate at Levels of Service 'A' through 'D' during the peak hours of demand. The MD 140 / Market Street intersection operates at a LOS 'E' during PM peak hours. The section of this chapter entitled 'Corridor Studies' examines the impact of the existing levels of service on current and future development of the Westminster area, and discusses alternatives to mitigate projected future demand on the corridor.

Part 3: Pedestrian & Bicycle Accessibility

Westminster has set a goal to develop a Westminster Pedestrian Master Plan and Bicycle Accessibility Strategy that would outline the future of the City's bicycle, sidewalk and pathways system by 2012. The development of safe, attractive, efficient and accessible bicycle facilities and sidewalks will reduce vehicular use, increase pedestrian use and help to improve air quality as well as the overall health of Westminster residents and visitors. The development of these types of facilities would also aid in the connectivity of the overall transportation network for pedestrians. Sidewalks are critical transportation routes for communities as they allow pedestrians to travel from one place to another, stimulate business districts by encouraging leisure shopping, and keep communities safe by providing more activity on the street.

Section 1: Sidewalks

An extensive pedestrian system in Westminster gives residents and employees the opportunity to walk to businesses, civic functions, and cultural events instead of driving. Most City streets are lined with sidewalks, and the City's recreational parks often include pedestrian walkways as well (Map 12.3).

Even with the extensive sidewalk system within the City, there are several intersections that are difficult for pedestrians to navigate. The intersection of East Main Street and Washington Road is an example of these intersections that are characterized by fairly fast moving traffic, wider than usual crossings due to a skewed approach of the intersecting streets, a lack of pedestrian signals, and insufficient or nonexistent crosswalks. The City is working with the County and the State to improve the priority intersections. The City received a Community Legacy Grant from the State of Maryland in 2008 to improve the intersection of Union Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. In 2009, the City received another Community Legacy Grant from the State, to improve the intersection of West Main Street and Pennsylvania Avenue. These two projects will be completed by early 2010 and should improve the safety and accessibility for pedestrians in Downtown Westminster.

Another problem with the pedestrian system is a lack of sidewalks or other pedestrian facilities on the outside edge of the City limits, as well as connections to major activity centers such as the Town Mall of Westminster, the County's regional mall. Sidewalk links are needed along many Carroll County roads that become City streets once they enter the corporate limits, such as Bond Street and the South Center Street and Gist Road area. Sidewalks are also needed along some of the Maryland State Highway Administration facilities, such as Liberty Street/Railroad Avenue (Maryland MD 27).

The Maryland State Highway Administration offers matching funds for installation of sidewalks along existing state highways where there is significant pedestrian use. A project in the Westminster area identified for possible sidewalk funding is along MD 27 from the termination of the existing sidewalk at the Westminster City limits north to connect to the Hahn Road and Cranberry Mall. Since this project is located outside of the City in the unincorporated area of the County, the decision to construct the

sidewalk and provide matching funds belongs to Carroll County. Within the City limits, newly constructed roads are required by regulation to contain sidewalks.

Along with the high number of vehicles, pedestrians are also present along Maryland MD 140. The provision of sidewalks along this highway needs to be assessed. Speeds along MD 140 are not conducive to creating a pedestrian environment, and sidewalks offer the impression of a safe haven for pedestrians, which may not be the case along this highway. However, this factor must be weighed against the need for pedestrian access. Regardless of whether sidewalks are installed, current pedestrian use clearly indicates the need for pedestrian crossings at the major intersections, particularly at Englar Road and Center Street. The future provision of sidewalks along the highway is under study in connection with the MD 140 Improvements Study. The overall project is being designed and implemented to increase the capacity and efficiency of the existing road because the Westminster By-pass was eliminated from the State of Maryland Consolidated Transportation Plan in 1999. The City will continue to seek engineering assistance from SHA to determine the need for additional traffic control devices for pedestrians at these locations.

Section 2: Bicycle Travel

The ease and safety of bicycling varies throughout the City of Westminster. In general, the streets with low traffic volumes are typically narrow with little or no shoulder area, creating a greater potential for bicycle and vehicular conflicts. The roads that do have wide shoulders are characterized by heavy volumes of high-speed traffic that increase the danger to bicyclists. In addition, there are no designated bicycle lanes along any of the roads in the Westminster area. The Westminster Pedestrian Master Plan and Bicycle Accessibility Strategy (Pedestrian Plan) will include recommendations for adding bicycle lanes in the Westminster area. Westminster will include the following Maryland State Highway Administration definitions for bicycle and pedestrian improvements in the Pedestrian Plan:

- **Bicycle Facilities:** General term denoting improvements and provisions made by public agencies to accommodate or encourage bicycling, including parking and storage facilities and bikeways.

- **Bikeway:** Bicycle Lanes, shared lanes, paved shoulders, wide curb lanes, and shared use paths. These facilities may or may not be marked for preferential or exclusive use for bikers.

- **Bike Lane**: A portion of a roadway which has been designated by pavement markings for the preferential or exclusive use of bikers. Bike lanes may be supplemented with signage.

- **Bike Route**: A system of bikeways designated with “way finding” signage, pavement markings, maps or other means.

The Carroll County Office of Tourism has published a set of maps depicting recreational bicycle tours in the County, two of which pass through Westminster. The first bicycle route makes a 27-mile loop to the

north of the City and travels along Pennsylvania Avenue and West Main Street to end at Westminster Elementary School. The second, 15-mile tour begins and ends at Westminster High School and involves biking on East Main Street and South Center Street past the Carroll County Farm Museum.
The State Highway Administration has designated a regional bike loop connecting Westminster, Taneytown, and Frederick. Within the City, the route follows MD 27 north, turns west on Main Street, continues along WMC Drive, and exits the City Limits on MD 140 west towards Taneytown. Signs directing cyclists along the route were installed at intersections during the summer of 2004.

Section 3: Greenways & Trails

Maryland's Greenways Program

Greenways are natural corridors set aside to connect larger areas of open space and to provide for the conservation of natural resources, protection of habitat, movement of plants and animals, and to offer opportunities for linear recreation, alternative transportation, and nature study.

"The Carroll County Greenways, Bicycle, and Pedestrian Facilities Technical Report," was prepared by Carroll County in 1994. The report outlines a recommendation for creating a countywide trail system. The trails system, if implemented, would facilitate better access to existing and future recreation facilities while concurrently decreasing the impact on the local roadway network. The study identified potential greenways locations, recommended greenways corridor design criteria, established a greenways classification system, and proposed a method of determining priority projects to help focus the County's efforts in implementing the plan.

Union Mills to Westminster Greenway

The Union Mills to Westminster Greenway is a potential greenways corridor that could be designated along stream valleys between the proposed reservoir site at Union Mills and the city of Westminster. This greenway could provide connections to Hashawha Environmental Center, the Carroll County Sports Complex, and local parks in Westminster.

Trails

The Wakefield Valley Community Trail, the first trail in Westminster, begins at Old New Windsor Road and travels northeast to Uniontown Road, roughly paralleling Maryland MD 31. The approximately three mile trail provides Wakefield Valley residents with pedestrian and bicycle access to the Avondale Run Community Center in the Ridgeview Chase Apartment complex, the Fenby Farm Quarry and Lime Kiln Park, a bird and wildlife observation area, a basketball court, the Uniontown Road Athletic Field, and a commercial area planned at the intersection of Maryland MD 31 and Tahoma Farm Road.

The Wakefield Valley Community Trail is being built in three phases. The City is currently working on building Phase II that begins at Long Valley Road and travel northeast to Windsor Drive, as shown on the

Comprehensive Land Use Plan map. Phase I will connect Long Valley Road to Congressional Drive, traversing the open space land between Sawgrass Court and South Burning Tree Drive in the Avondale Run Community. Phase III was constructed when the property at the corner of Uniontown Road and Maryland MD 31 was developed. Phase III is the link between Windsor Drive and the Uniontown Road Athletic Field.

When completed, the trail will be dedicated as the Terrence Burk Memorial Trail, in memory of a local businessman and community leader who was fatally injured while jogging on Maryland MD 97. In the transportation element of the Westminster and Environs Comprehensive Plan, Carroll County has designated certain areas for the construction of greenway trails. In that regard, this trail system will tie together existing pedestrian areas and provide an opportunity for greater pedestrian access in and around Westminster.

Section 4: Maryland Scenic Byways Program

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) established the Maryland Byways Program to enhance the quality of life for Maryland's citizens, engender pride, and improve visitor appeal of the state's most scenic, cultural and historic roads. Byways help residents express their values of place, contribute to the state's economy through tourism development, and provide unique experiences for all. SHA seeks to identify, designate, promote, and encourage stewardship of the State's byways and their surrounding resources while providing safe routes for travel. SHA has designated 19 byways that encompass 1,595 miles. In order to obtain the State designation, the byway must be "scenic" with added weight given to byways with historical, cultural, natural, and/or recreational qualities that promote Maryland's unique heritage. Westminster is part of the State designated Old Main Streets Byway.

Old Main Streets Byway

Westminster is part of the Old Main Streets Byway. The Old Main Streets Byway is described as a quiet drive along white picket fences, tree-lined streets and historic homes with rocking chairs on the front porch; sights associated with small-towns that visitors can step back in time to enjoy when driving along this charming byway. The tour is separated into an Upper and Lower loop and can include leisurely drives past wide open fields, window-shopping for antiques, dining with "locals" at the eatery on the corner, and then drifting off to sleep on a four-post bed inside a quaint country inn.

Part 4: Transit Alternatives

Section 1: Maryland Midland Railroad

Based in Union Bridge, the Maryland Midland Railway provides freight rail service to central Carroll County. This line heads northwest to Thurmont and into Hagerstown where it connects with CSX Railroad in Pennsylvania. From Keymar in Carroll County, the track runs northeast through Taneytown,

southwest into Walkersville in Frederick County, and east through New Windsor and Westminster. The rail then heads southeast through Finksburg, and continues through Baltimore County into Baltimore City, rejoining CSX near South Baltimore's harbor and ports. Westminster hosts one of two intermodal transfer stations operated by the rail line. According to Maryland Midland Railway, the company currently services for commercial clients in Westminster.

Section 2: Carroll County Regional Airport

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 Maryland MD 97. 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. The County acquired the airport in 1976. 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, which presently contains the administrative offices, and the first T-hangar were constructed with local funds. Runway lighting was installed in 1978. A parallel taxiway was paved and the runway was extended 300 feet in the fall of 1979. Both were widened in the early 1980s.

Now known as the Carroll County Regional Airport, the facility is designated as a General Utility-State II Airport, which means it serves aircraft with approach speeds of less than 121 knots and wingspans of less than 79 feet, essentially the size of small planes and corporate jets. The airport has been upgraded through the construction of a 5,100 foot runway. The old runway was extended and functions as a parallel taxiway. The terminal area consists of a maintenance hangar, operations center, classroom area, and seven 10,000 square foot corporate hangars with adjoining office space. The facility has an instrument approach with a final approach fix. Jet "A" fuel is currently available, as well as 100 Octane LL. There are currently 128 aircraft based at the airport, including thirteen multi-engine planes and three jets.

Section 3: Park and Ride Lots

Park and ride lots are intended for commuters who transfer from their own vehicles to alternative means of transportation, such as carpools or vanpools. There are seven park and ride lots located in Carroll County, with one in the Westminster area located at the intersection of MD Routes 97 and 32. This lot offers parking for 101 automobiles with approximately 15% of the spaces occupied on average. Handicapped parking is provided along with lighting and a telephone. All of Carroll County's park and ride facilities are state owned, with the exception of the Sandymount lot, which is owned by the County. Table 12.2 lists the locations of the Park and Ride lots serving Carroll County.

Table 12.2 Park and Ride Lots in Carroll County

Location	Adjacent Roadways
Manchester	MD 27 & MD Route 30
Sandymount	Old Westminster Pike & Green Mill Road
Westminster	MD 97 & MD 32
Dorsey Crossroads	MD 97 & MD Route 26
Eldersburg	MD 32 & MD Route 26
Sykesville	MD 32 & MD Route 851
Mt. Airy	MD 27, North of Interstate 70

Source: Carroll County Government

Section 4: 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 online computer service, applicants are 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 (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 by reducing the accumulation of miles traveled on an individual's car and reducing pollution.

Section 5: Carroll Transit System

Carroll Area Transit System

Carroll Area Transit System (CATS) is a private non-profit organization that provides public transportation services throughout Carroll County. CATS provides two types of transit services. The first service is an advanced reservation service, where people can schedule trips up to seven days in advance. The second service consists of four Deviated Fixed Route Carroll Transit Shuttles; buses with specific stops at designated times that can go off fixed routes for deviation. The four shuttle routes are the Taneytown Shuttle, Westminster to Eldersburg Shuttle, South Carroll Shuttle and the Westminster

Shuttle (Map 12.4). CATS currently has a fleet of 30 vehicles that serve a growing user population. Eighteen of these vehicles (60%) are lift equipped providing 37 wheelchair positions. The service currently transports an average of 12,453 one-way trips per month.

Carroll County Transportation Advisory Group

The Transportation Advisory Group is a 15-member group designed to provide input, ideas and consultation to the management of Carroll Area Transit System. The Group focuses on finding ways to improve existing services, to enhance and expand services and to coordinate with other community agencies providing transportation or with transportation needs.

Carroll Area Transit System Strategic Plan

In the fall of 2007, the Carroll Area Transit System (CATS) hosted a Carroll County Transportation Summit to gather ideas and input from local businesses, community organizations and service providers for the creation of a strategic plan. In January 2008, CATS presented the County Commissioners with a Strategic Plan to make operational and marketing changes to improve service, increase ridership and meet more of the needs that were identified at the Transportation Summit.

Over the next three years, CATS will implement the CATS Strategic Plan to connect the shuttle routes and add an additional shuttle route. CATS is also focused on the goal to expand their service by adding extended hours and adding Saturdays to their schedule. This change in service will help local residents who need to use the shuttle in the evenings for errands or have work hours that don't coincide with the current schedule. Overall, the CATS has set a benchmark for their service to increase ridership by 20% by 2011. The success of Carroll Area Transit System and the future of transportation for the County will rely on the continued cooperative effort and open communication between the County and CATS.

Part 5: Commuting Patterns

According to the 2000 U.S. Census, over 30% of the residents in Westminster spent less than 15 minutes traveling to work, while 28% of City residents spent 45 minutes or more in travel time to work (Table 12.3). This latter percentage represents an 8% increase from 1990, and is reflective of a regional trend of lengthening commutes. Travel time to work for residents in the County as a whole shows a similar pattern, with 31.5% of the County labor force commuting for 45 minutes or more each day (Table 12.4). The number of people working at home rose from 1.4% to 2.1% from 1990 to 2000, and is expected to continue to gradually increase due to technological advances in telecommunications.

The majority of persons commuting to work in 2000 traveled in cars, trucks, or vans (Table 12.5). Nearly 80% of the City's labor force drove alone to work, while 11% carpooled. These figures represent a shift of 4% from carpools to driving alone from 1990 to 2000. The next highest category for transportation mode to work was 'walked' with 5.1% of the labor force, down from 6.8% in 1990. Only 1.7% of the 2000 labor force in Westminster used some sort of public transportation to travel to work.

Table 12.3 Travel Time to Work for City of Westminster Residents, Workers, 2000

Travel Time to Work	Number of Workers	Percent
Did not work at home	7,375	97.9
Less than 5 minutes	267	3.5
5 to 9 minutes	1,041	13.8
10 to 14 minutes	1,140	15.1
15 to 19 minutes	785	10.4
20 to 24 minutes	574	7.6
25 to 29 minutes	302	4.0
30 to 34 minutes	560	7.4
35 to 39 minutes	116	1.5
40 to 44 minutes	448	5.9
45 to 59 minutes	1,065	14.1
60 to 89 minutes	867	11.5
90 or more minutes	210	2.8
Worked at home	158	2.1
TOTAL	**7,533**	**100.0**

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 12.4 Travel Time to Work for Carroll County Residents, 2000

Travel Time to Work	Number of Workers	Percent
Did not work at home	74,595	96.1
Less than 5 minutes	1,871	2.4
5 to 9 minutes	5,039	6.5
10 to 14 minutes	7,114	9.2
15 to 19 minutes	7,675	9.9
20 to 24 minutes	7,478	9.6
25 to 29 minutes	3,647	4.7
30 to 34 minutes	8,669	11.2
35 to 39 minutes	3,731	4.8
40 to 44 minutes	4,975	6.4
45 to 59 minutes	12,480	16.1
60 to 89 minutes	9,377	12.1
90 or more minutes	2,539	3.3
Worked at home	2,997	3.9
TOTAL	77,592	100.0

Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 12.5 Means of Transportation to Work for City of Westminster Residents, 2000

Mode of Transportation	Number of Workers	Percent
Car, truck, or van:	6,804	90.3
Drove alone	5,977	79.3
Carpooled	827	11.0
Public transportation:	125	1.7
Bus or trolley bus	45	0.6
Streetcar or trolley car	0	0.0
Subway or elevated train	55	0.7
Railroad	0	0.0
Ferryboat	14	0.2
Taxicab	11	0.1
Motorcycle	25	0.3
Bicycle	13	0.2
Walked	387	5.1
Other means	21	0.3
Worked at home	158	2.1
TOTAL	**7,533**	**100.0**

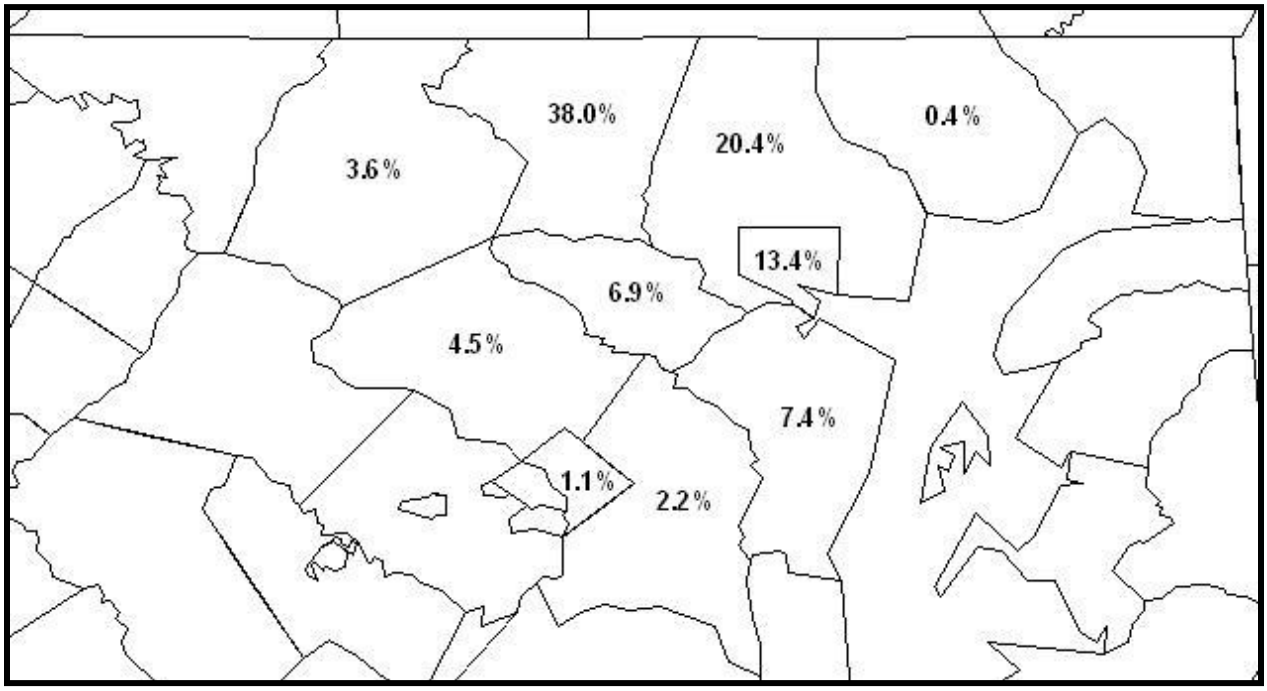
Source: U.S. Census, 2000

Table 12.6 County of Employment for Carroll County Residents, 2002

County of Employment	Number of Commuters	Percent
Maryland	706	96.8
Anne Arundel	54	7.4
Baltimore City	98	13.4
Baltimore County	149	20.4
Carroll	277	38.0
Frederick	26	3.6
Harford	3	0.4
Howard	50	6.9
Montgomery	33	4.5
Prince George's	16	2.2
Pennsylvania	8	1.1
Virginia	7	1.0
Washington, D.C.	8	1.1
TOTAL	**729**	**100.0**

Source: Carroll County Commuter Survey, 2002

Map 12.4 County of Employment for Carroll County Residents, 2002



Source: Carroll County Commuter Survey - Carroll County Department of Economic Development, 2000

Chart 12.1 Destination of Workers Commuting Within Carroll County, 2002

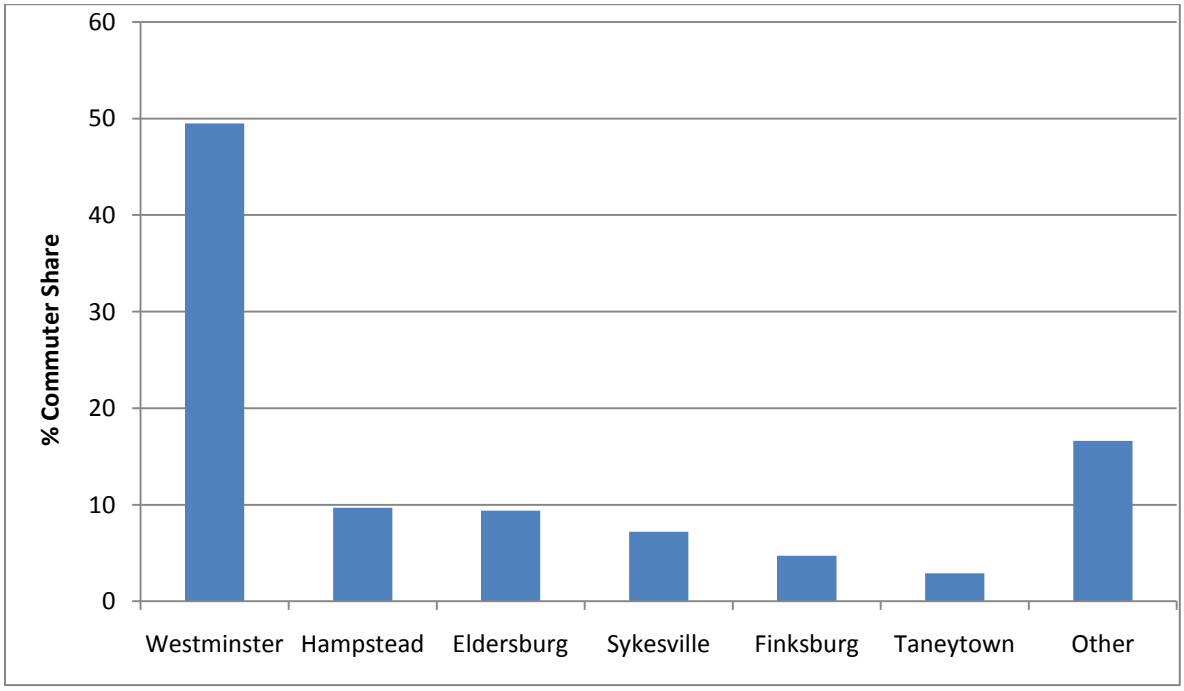


Table 12.7 Destination of Workers Commuting Within Carroll County, 2002

Location of Employment	Percentage of Commuters
Westminster	49.5
Hampstead	9.7
Eldersburg	9.4
Sykesville	7.2
Finksburg	4.7
Taneytown	2.9
Other	16.6

Source: Carroll County Commuter Survey, Carroll County Department of Economic Development, 2002

The increasing proportion of workers driving and driving alone, in combination with population increases countywide, has contributed to the poor levels of service on major arterial roadways identified in this chapter. Table 12.6 reveals that a majority of workers living in Carroll County work outside of the County, further contributing to peak hour congestion. Map 12.4 graphically illustrates the distribution of Carroll County residents who work outside of the County.

Of those who live and commute to a job in Carroll County, just less than half work in the Westminster area (Table 12.7). The high proportion of County employers in and around the City, while a positive indicator for economic development efforts, complicate peak hour travel patterns with a significant number of commuters entering the corporate limits at the same time as many City residents are leaving for other jurisdictions. The increases in average daily traffic on the state routes serving Westminster's employment centers have quantified this challenge.

As the number of commuters working and living in separate jurisdictions continues to increase, the provision of increased vehicular capacity and alternative means of transportation will need to be addressed. Commuting patterns indicate that the state routes in and around Westminster are particularly at risk for further congestion and decreased levels of service. Interjurisdictional coordination will be essential to the success of planning efforts to mitigate future impacts of increased capacity demand on the transportation system in the Westminster area.

Part 6: Corridor Studies

Section 1: MD 140

The City of Westminster and the surrounding area are served by two primary east-west corridors: Maryland MD 140 (Baltimore Boulevard and Taneytown Pike) and Maryland MD 32 (Main Street). These

two corridors were studied in depth because of their significance with respect to commercial activity, as well as the flow of goods, materials, and people into, out of, and through the Westminster area.

The Westminster portion of MD 140 functions in many ways as the core business area for much of Carroll County. Included in the MD 140 corridor are numerous shopping, dining, and entertainment opportunities. The highest concentration of goods and services available to Carroll County residents is also located along this highway.

In addition to its commercial character, the MD 140 corridor provides access to the Baltimore regional markets via connections to I-795 and I-695. Goods and materials shipped from Pennsylvania and Baltimore, as well as commuters traveling to places of employment, uses this important transportation link.

Another issue in the Maryland MD 140 corridor is access control. The State Highway Administration manages access control for MD 140. Access management has been partially addressed within the Westminster corporate limits, in part by the construction of Market Street for use as a parallel collector road to commercial properties. The Westminster and Environs Transportation Element further enhances this effort, as it will provide alternative local roads to be used as alternatives to State roads.

In the future, the City of Westminster will have to manage land development along the MD 140 corridor to develop a well planned local roadway network with frontage or road service roads to alleviate MD 140 traffic pressure. The City also will work to develop a strategy to consolidate or limit driveway access points onto MD 140. Currently, the priority project for the MD 140 corridor is to accomplish the goals of the MD 140 Improvement Study in order to improve the traffic operation and safety, as well as increase accessibility for bicyclists and pedestrians.

MD 140 Improvement Study

The Maryland Department of Transportation and the State Highway Administration have proposed a four-phase approach to increasing capacity along MD 140. During the 1998 Comprehensive Plan, the State of Maryland was prepared to construct the Westminster By-pass which would alleviate much of the pressure on MD Routes140 and 97. However, in 1999, the State of Maryland removed the proposed Westminster By-pass from the Consolidated Transportation Plan because its construction was not in compliance with the principles of Smart Growth.

As a result of that action, the State of Maryland initiated project planning for MD 140 from Market Street to Sullivan Road to provide extensive capacity improvements to it. In October 2004, SHA conducted a Location/Design Public Hearing at the Henry C. Evans Armory where five alternatives, including the No-Build Alternative, were presented. The build alternatives focused on three critical intersections: Englar Road, Center Street, and Malcolm Drive, and ranged from minor upgrades to the construction of interchanges. Following the hearing, the project team evaluated all comments received from the public, regulatory agencies, and local officials and performed additional work to determine

whether a combination of alternatives would work best along the corridor. As a result, Combination Option 4 with Gorsuch Road Option B was chosen as the selected alternative.

Combination Option 4

Combination Option 4 would provide major intersection improvements at Center Street and Englar Road through what is known as a Continuous-Flow Intersection (CFI). A CFI separates left-turning vehicles from the main intersection, which significantly increases the number of vehicles the intersection can handle. At Malcolm Drive, a Single-Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) would be constructed. The SPUI is compact and efficient; a single traffic signal above the overpass would allow vehicles approaching the intersection from opposite directions to turn left at the same time. Between Malcolm Drive and Center Street, one-way service roads with interchange ramps would provide access to properties along both sides of MD 140. Other intersections along the study area corridor would receive minor improvements.

Gorsuch Road Option B

Gorsuch Road Option B would provide right-in/right-out access onto Old Gorsuch Road from northbound MD 140, avoiding several businesses identified as community landmarks by the City of Westminster.

Additional Features

Throughout the project limits, MD 140 would have 16-foot-wide outside lanes to accommodate on-road bicyclists. Pedestrians would benefit from five-foot-wide sidewalks and improved crossings. A new pedestrian bridge at Gorsuch Road would provide safe access to businesses and services on both sides of MD 140.

Final Approvals

In May 2009, SHA announced that federal and state approvals were in place for a package of improvements along MD 140 from Market Street to Sullivan Road in Westminster. The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) has completed a project planning study that examined ways to improve future traffic flow, relieve congestion, and upgrade pedestrian travel along the 2.5-mile study area corridor. Location and design approvals make the project eligible for detailed engineering activities when funding becomes available.

Section 2: Main Street

The Main Street corridor provides a totally different character. Whereas Maryland MD 140 is oriented for individual motorized vehicles, the historic Main Street of downtown Westminster is less automobile oriented and more focused toward pedestrians. Many of the historic buildings contain shops, offices, and services. The tree-lined street and wide sidewalks encourage pedestrian movement.

Parking in the Main Street area is of particular concern to both merchants and potential customers. On-street parking is available in many locations, and public parking lots are located at major intersections and to the rear of the commercial buildings along the first block of East Main Street. The City has established consistent rates at all of its parking meters. In addition, there is no charge to park at a meter on weekends, holidays, and after 5:00 p.m. on weekdays. To further address parking concerns, the City constructed two parking garages which were opened in September 2003. The Longwell Avenue Municipal Parking Garage, located at the intersection of Longwell Avenue and Distillery Drive, is a 296 space parking garage which is open to monthly permit holders, as well as hourly users. The Westminster Square Municipal Parking Garage, located on Green Street near its intersection with MD 27, is a 160 space parking garage that is also open to monthly permit holders, as well as hourly users.

Main Street experiences serious congestion problems during the afternoon period. Vehicles stopped at the traffic signals along Main Street back-up past the side street intersections and limit access to Main Street. This results in congestion characteristic of and approaching gridlock. A significant number of trucks were noted turning left from northbound MD 27 to westbound Main Street. The entire block along MD 27 between Main Street and Green Street was frequently filled with vehicles, causing traffic to back up on Green Street, as well as Liberty Street as far as George Street. Traffic queued from the Main Street/MD 27 signal also backs up through the Longwell Avenue intersection, restricting opportunities for traffic to enter Main Street from Longwell Avenue when Longwell has the green signal phase.

Section 3: MD 27

There is not a significant section of MD 27 within the corporate limits of Westminster. However, it does provide a primary access to Downtown Westminster from Maryland MD 140, as well as serving as the primary access to the Washington D.C. Metropolitan Area.

During the summer of 2002, the City partnered with the State of Maryland to develop the MD 27 Corridor Study. The primary objective of that plan was to redevelop the MD Route 27 Corridor into the primary “Gateway” to downtown Westminster.

Section 4: MD 97 (N)

The Maryland MD 97 (N) corridor immediately to the north of Maryland MD 140 is the site of prime industrial land in Westminster. The Carroll County Regional Airport is located in this area, as well as six industrial parks which have experienced moderate levels of development over the past several years.

Maryland MD 97 (N) also serves as a primary commuter route, connecting residents of northern Carroll County and southern Pennsylvania with employment destinations in Westminster and points to the south and east. During morning and evening rush hours, the volume of pass-through commuter traffic chokes the roadway, making it difficult for employees and clients of the industrial parks to safely make turning movements. This situation results in long queuing of vehicles at the signalized intersections. A

study completed in 1994 by Whitney, Bailey, Cox & Magnani (WBCM) for the Carroll County Industrial Development Authority indicated that traffic along Maryland MD 97 (N) is expected to increase dramatically by the year 2020. These increases will be the result of both additional through traffic and the generation of a greater number of trips from the industrial parks as they continue to develop, indicating a need for multiple lane additions along MD 97 (N).

As a result of the increasing needs along MD 97, City staff, in cooperation with SHA and Carroll County, will require three developers to be responsible for immediate mainline widening on MD 97(N). As future developments approach the City for development opportunity, they will also be required to make additional improvements to MD 97. The City will also make arrangements to consolidate the number of access points onto MD 97. To date, the planned closing of the Kriders Church Road will be complete once Meadow Branch Road is reconstructed. While impossible to eliminate all single source access points to MD 97(N), it is a priority to eventually eliminate as many as possible. Because the Westminster By-pass was eliminated from the Consolidated Transportation Plan in 1999, mainline widening improvements to MD 97(N) are now even more critical as areas beyond Westminster continue to develop at a pace that further exacerbates the problems on the existing roadway. The City will be in discussion with SHA to move this project along in a timely manner to meet the current needs of MD 97(N) to improve the safety and increase the capacity of this vital road for not only the residents but the economy of Westminster.

Part 7: Proposed Major Streets

The planned major streets for the City of Westminster are included on the Comprehensive Land Use Plan Map. The alignments of these proposed streets were evaluated with assistance from County Planning staff. Major street alignments that are located beyond, but in the vicinity of the City's corporate limits, are shown on the map for informational purposes. The proposed major streets, as well as streets deleted from the 1985 *Comprehensive Plan for Westminster and Environs*, are described below:

Crossbridge Drive will be extended to Tahoma Farm Road. Continuation of Crossbridge Drive was incorporated into the City's Major Street Plan with adoption of the 1985 *Comprehensive Plan for Westminster and Environs*. The Crossbridge Drive Bridge over Copp's Branch has been completed, and construction of the final segment will be accomplished in connection with the development of the adjacent commercial site.

Wyndtryst Drive is proposed to be extended to Maryland MD 140. This planned street between MD 97 and Meadow Branch Road was included in the adoption of the 1985 *Comprehensive Plan for Westminster and Environs*. The current proposed alignment reflects a modification to the 1985 alignment, so that the primary through movement is from MD 97 to MD 140 at the WMC Drive intersection, rather than the direct Wyndtryst-Thornbury-Meadow Branch Road connection shown on

the 1985 plan. This change from the 1985 alignment reduces the number of stream crossings and environmental impacts.

Meadow Branch Road will serve as a major collector street for the connection between MD 97(N) and MD 140. Once reconstructed, the alignment will be shifted and vehicular traffic will move more efficiently as the radius of the turn towards MD 97 will be more gradual. This primary road will have very few direct connections to it from the Meadow Branch Industrial Park. The Bolton Hill development will have only a single access point which is the main entrance to the development. There will be no individual residential access points to Meadow Branch Road.

Business Parkway North is proposed to be extended to Old Meadow Branch Road. As the Air Business Center has developed, it has become apparent that an alternate means of access is necessary. Extension of Business Parkway North to Old Meadow Branch road will not affect any existing site development. This route will become a secondary means of ingress and egress for the industrial park to MD 97 at Old Meadow Branch Road. The installation of a traffic signal is ultimately anticipated at this intersection.

Tuc Road Realigned the MD 27 Corridor Study recommended that Tuc Road be realigned near East Middle School to provide a safer environment for the school to eliminate traffic traveling directly in front of the school. If approved, the potential development of City owned land in and around the area could provide the necessary funding to complete this project. Tuc Road could be realigned so the road would no longer separate the parking lot from the school building.

Part 8: Transportation Planning

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan has adopted the Smart Growth Principle of creating a balanced, multi-modal transportation system that plans for increased transportation choice**.** In Westminster, land use and transportation planning must be integrated to accommodate automobiles and to provide increased transportation choices, such as mass transit, bicycles, and walking. The Westminster transportation system in the future must be reliable, efficient, and user-friendly, allowing full access by all segments of the population to housing, employment, education, and human and community services.

Section 1: Complete Streets

Background

In June of 2005, at its 73rd Annual Meeting, the U. S. Conference of Mayors, led by Seattle Mayor Greg Nickels and Des Moines Mayor Frank Crownie, adopted a resolution that urged Congress and the current Administration to require local and regional transportation departments and metropolitan planning organizations to adopt Complete Streets policies.

Complete Streets are designed and operated to enable safe access for all users. The National Complete Streets Coalition seeks to fundamentally transform the look, feel, and function of the roads and streets in a community, by changing the way most roads are planned, designed, and constructed. Complete Streets policies direct transportation planners and engineers to consistently design with all users in mind. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan encourages Complete Streets in order to create a seamless network of on-street bicycling and walking facilities, trails, and transit connecting homes, jobs, schools, shops, families, and friends. The City of Westminster will integrate the elements of the Complete Streets policies in future transportation projects and the Complete Streets concepts in the development of the Westminster Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan.

Elements of an Ideal Complete Streets Policy:

1. Includes a vision for how and why the community wants to complete its streets
2. Specifies that 'all users' includes pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit passengers of all ages and abilities, as well as trucks, buses, and automobiles
3. Encourages street connectivity and aims to create a comprehensive, integrated, connected network for all modes of transportation
4. Is adoptable by all agencies, to cover all roads
5. Applies to both new and retrofit projects, including design, planning, maintenance, and operations, for the entire right of way
6. Makes any exceptions specific and sets a clear procedure that requires high-level approval of any exceptions to the policy
7. Directs the use of the latest and best design standards, while recognizing the need for flexibility in balancing user needs
8. Directs that Complete Streets solutions will complement the context of the community
9. Establishes performance standards with measurable outcomes
10. Includes specific next steps for implementation of the policy

Section 2: Maryland 20-Year Bicycle & Pedestrian Access Master Plan

The Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (MBPAC) advises State government agencies on issues directly related to bicycling and pedestrian activity including funding, public awareness, safety, and education.

On October 1, 2002, the Maryland Department of Transportation completed its 20-Year Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Master Plan with input from MBPAC. The Plan includes five goals ensuring

the creation of a transportation system designed to encourage walking and bicycling, as well as provide a seamless, balanced, and barrier-free network for all. The City of Westminster will work with MBPAC to implement the goals and action items in the plan that support Westminster's efforts to become a more pedestrian- and bicycle-friendly community.

Maryland 20-Year Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Master Plan Goals

> ***State Goal 1:*** Integrate and expand the State's bicycle and pedestrian facilities, creating a connected network of on-road, off-road, and transit-related accommodations that will encourage and facilitate increased levels of bicycling and walking and improve access for individuals with disabilities
>
> ***State Goal 2:*** Preserve, protect, and maintain the State's existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities and rights-of-way including bike lanes, roadway shoulders, sidewalks, crosswalks, trails, and side paths
>
> ***State Goal 3:*** Provide safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian accommodations for every type of trip, and for all levels of ability
>
> ***State Goal 4:*** Develop education and promotional programs that will increase bicycling and walking and foster a pro-bicycle and pro-pedestrian awareness in individuals, private sector organizations, and all levels of government
>
> ***State Goal 5:*** Work with local communities to increase their understanding of how land use, transportation, and other policies and planning processes need to be modified to achieve increased levels of bicycling and walking, especially in Priority Funding Areas

Section 3: Pedestrian-Oriented Design

Pedestrian Oriented Design is a method where land use activities are designed and arranged in a way that emphasizes travel by foot, rather than by car. Elements include compact, mixed-use development patterns with facilities and design that enhance the environment for pedestrians in terms of safety, walking distances, comfort, and the visual appeal of the surroundings. Pedestrian-friendly environments can be created by locating buildings close to the sidewalk, by lining the street with trees, and by buffering the sidewalk with planting strips or parked cars, small shops, street-level lighting and signs, and public art or displays.

Section 4: Transit-Oriented Development

The Center for Transit-Oriented Development is the only national nonprofit effort dedicated to providing best practices, research, and tools to support market-based, transit-oriented development. Transit-oriented development is about creating attractive, walkable, and sustainable communities that allow

residents to have housing and transportation choices, in order to live convenient, affordable, pleasant lives.

Transit-oriented development is often defined as higher-density, mixed-use development within walking distance – or a half mile – of transit stations. The Center for Transit-Oriented Development uses a performance-based definition that projects should:

- Increase "location efficiency" so people can walk and bike
- Boost transit ridership and minimize traffic
- Provide a rich mix of housing, shopping, and transportation choices
- Create a sense of place

Carroll Area Transit System (CATS) serves the City of Westminster's public transportation needs. In the future, CATS will continue to expand its operations and service capacity. The City will be working with CATS to support its efforts to improve the transit system of Westminster. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan also focuses on the other aspects of transit-oriented development that require high-density and mixed-use developments that encourage walking and the use of bicycles. The City of Westminster promotes transit-oriented development to generate a new wave of development that could improve housing affordability and choice as well as revitalize Downtown Westminster and neighborhoods.

Section 5: Context Sensitive Solutions

The Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) has been a national leader in implementing Context Sensitive Solutions (CSS) for transportation development. Context Sensitive Solutions result from a collaborative, interdisciplinary approach to developing and implementing transportation projects, involving all stakeholders to ensure that transportation projects are in harmony with communities and preserve and enhance environmental, scenic, aesthetic, and historic resources while enhancing safety and mobility. While the CSS approach applies to all of SHA's projects, Maryland's Byways, designated for their acknowledged scenic, cultural and historic qualities, merit additional care in decision-making to preserve and enhance their special qualities.

Elements that Affect the Character of a Byway

- Safety
- Alignment and Geometry
- Roadside Barriers
- Grading and Drainage
- Traffic Control Devices
- Utilities
- Landscape
- Bridges and Small Structures
- Signs
- Lighting
- Access
- Roadside Enhancements
- Bicycles
- Maintenance
- Management of Publicly Owned Land

Transportation Element

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan promotes an appropriate network of arterial, collector, and local streets to safely and efficiently serve the anticipated travel demand generated by the existing and proposed land uses. Proposed transportation improvements should relieve growing traffic congestion while improving pedestrian and bicycle accessibility. An efficient transportation system is essential to the sound social, as well as economic, development of the City. The Transportation Element seeks to improve the City's transportation system to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people and goods, and provide a variety of mode choices, while enhancing neighborhood livability and resident quality of life.

Goals and Objectives

Goal T1: Coordinate the provision and improvement of the Westminster area transportation infrastructure for compact and directed growth, as defined in the Municipal Growth Element

Objective 1: Develop an efficient road system that supports safe and efficient traffic circulation

a. Maintain a data collection system, including traffic counts and accidents to support studies, operational changes, and designs

b. Establish a high accident location identification and analysis system to ensure efforts are concentrated at the most critical locations

c. Develop priorities for improvements to the transportation system based on safety considerations and existing deficiencies, as well as physical, economic, and policy constraints

Objective 2: Review and monitor the transportation system to provide adequate service to existing and future land uses

a. Prepare an annual travel forecast to identify needed transportation improvements

b. Study changes in personal travel behavior and feasibility of mode choices

c. Monitor growth in population and employment as needed to ensure that planned transportation improvements will address the potential impacts of growth

d. Ensure that transportation improvements or strategies are constructed or financed concurrently with development

Objective 3: Provide an integrated street network of different classes of streets designed to facilitate different types of traffic flows and access needs

a. Ensure that transportation system improvements are compatible with adjacent land uses and will minimize potential conflicts

b. Consider the multiple purposes of streets to accommodate transit and commercial vehicles

c. Review and revise design standards for all classifications of Westminster streets

Objective 4: Partner with Carroll County to implement appropriate transportation demand management strategies

a. Coordinate with Carroll Area Transit System to sustain and improve the local bus transit system to serve both transit-dependent and discretionary riders

b. Encourage activities that aim at changing travel behaviors by getting people to utilize more efficient means of transportation alternatives

c. Promote carpooling, flexible work times, telecommuting, and similar outcomes to increase peak-hour efficiency of the existing transportation infrastructure and services

Objective 5: Develop a "Transportation Strategy and Design Guidelines" for new developments and improvements to existing transportation systems in Westminster

a. Require new transportation systems to consider the principles of Pedestrian-Oriented Design and Transit-Oriented Development

b. Study Complete Streets policies in other cities of comparable size to Westminster

c. Create a Westminster Complete Streets policy

d. Refer to the goals of the Maryland's Bicycle and Pedestrian Access Master Plan during the development review process of new developments and future streetscape projects

e. Integrate the Transportation Strategy and Design Guidelines into the Westminster Design Guidelines and Manual according to the Community Character & Design Element

Goal T2: Provide a continuous and seamless pedestrian and bicycle system, and enhance the pedestrian environment to create a more walkable community

Objective 1: Develop a Pedestrian Master Plan that identifies and ranks, in order of priority, sidewalk and pedestrian needs

a. Create a sidewalk and pedestrian trail network linking neighborhoods, Downtown, and key community destinations

b. Prioritize sidewalk improvements on arterials and local roads

c. Complete the arterial sidewalk system according to a priority system

d. Require development to provide additional sidewalks along local streets to complete missing links, increase pedestrian safety, and provide linkages to key destinations

Objective 2: Promote an appropriate mix of land uses and densities, the quality and design of the built environment, pedestrian scale streetscapes, and pedestrian comfort

a. Create pedestrian-oriented environments between buildings in auto-oriented commercial areas

b. Require sidewalks or pedestrian areas to provide connections between buildings within developments

c. Encourage pedestrian amenities such as trees, planters, street furniture, and awnings

Objective 3: Build a connected bicycle route that is viable, convenient, and safe and will encourage both utilitarian and recreational riding

a. Develop a plan that designates an interconnected bicycle route system throughout the City that forms a transportation network linking major activity center

b. Incorporate a Bicycle Accessibility Strategy into the Pedestrian Master Plan

c. Expand the City's system of off-road bicycling trail facilities

Goal T3: Encourage parking strategies that minimize redundant access and maximize public space

Objective 1: Require only the amount of parking necessary to avoid problems, maintain viable businesses, and meet the needs of Downtown Westminster

a. Develop an inventory and usage survey of all parking facilities, both private and public

b. Use the inventory and survey to identify surface lots with the potential for future development

c. Seek to provide an appropriate balance in on-street parking by providing resident parking and overflow commercial and employee parking in residential areas

d. Consider strategies for addressing residential area on-street parking that allow flexibility for neighborhood-specific situations

Objective 2: Increase flexibility with minimum parking requirements to reflect typical daily demand and allow innovative parking provisions

a. Require no more parking than reasonably necessary to optimize land use density and minimize the amount of impervious surface

b. Promote locating parking to the side or behind buildings or new developments to provide pedestrian accessibility of building entrances and walkways to the street

c. Encourage commercial uses on contiguous parcels to have connecting or shared parking areas

Goal T4: Provide a safe and convenient access system that respects community needs and values

Objective 1: Ensure adequate and safe access to property

a. Encourage the preparation of comprehensive access plans, and consolidation of access points in commercial and residential areas

b. Require new development to minimize and consolidate access points along all principal and minor arterials

c. Design and construction standards should result in consistent street types, adequate lane widths, maintenance standards, and compatible subdivision patterns

Objective 2: Promote the continuity of the street pattern and design when considering subdivision, street vacation, or street extension proposals.

a. Encourage the connection of streets when considering subdivision or street improvement proposals

b. Limit the use of cul-de-sacs, dead-end streets, loops, and other designs that form barriers in the community

c. Recognize that increasing connections can reduce traffic congestion and increase neighborhood unity

d. Consider street design consistency when reviewing street extensions such as right-of-way width, curb style, landscape width, and sidewalk material and width

Objective 3: Develop through-routes and access to main roads while protecting local neighborhood circulation

a. Seek to minimize impacts of through traffic within residential neighborhoods by employing neighborhood traffic management strategies

b. Consider neighborhood traffic management strategies such as traffic control signs, speed limit education, enforcement, narrow streets, curves, or traffic circles

Objective 4: Mitigate traffic congestion when and where necessary to maintain traffic flow and minimize travel delays with a balanced approach

a. Consider alternatives that do not include adding lanes when evaluating future capacity solutions

b. Use transportation system management strategies on arterial roads to improve traffic flow, maximize capacity, and increase overall system efficiency and safety

c. Design new local streets to provide for traffic movement while ensuring a safe and attractive pedestrian and bicycle-friendly neighborhood environments

Goal T5: Evaluate and mitigate the impacts of development on the Westminster area transportation system

Objective 1: Work with Carroll County to ensure that new development outside of the City does not negatively affect Westminster transportation systems

a. Coordinate with Carroll County to implement the Transportation Chapter of the 2007 Westminster Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

b. Continue to work with the Carroll County Traffic Team to stay informed on transportation issues and projects

Objective 2: Promote responsible funding of needed transportation system improvements with public and private sector participation

a. Prioritize circulation system improvements needed to address safety, maintenance, congestion relief, multi-modal projects, transit, and growth

b. Ensure adequate maintenance of existing facilities throughout the City

c. Allocate resources in the City's transportation capital investment program in conjunction with the community's priorities

d. Require new development to contribute its fair share towards transportation improvements and services required due to the development

e. Enforce a shared responsibility of mitigating development impacts between the public and private sector

Objective 3: Encourage the use of telecommunications to reduce commuter traffic.

a. Work with the Baltimore Metropolitan Council and the Carroll County Department of Economic Development to establish a telecommuting center in Westminster

b. Clarify language in the Zoning Ordinance to address the home offices of telecommuters

Goal T6: Develop a transportation system that recognizes regional traffic needs, while allowing the Westminster area to meet economic development goals

Objective 1: Cooperate with local, regional, state, and federal agencies in the development and operation of the Westminster area transportation system

a. Support and complement the transportation functions of the Carroll Area Transit System to meet Westminster transportation needs.

b. Coordinate planning, construction, and operation of transportation facilities and programs with Carroll County and the State Highway Administration

c. Make transportation decisions consistent with Transportation Chapter of the 2007 Westminster Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

d. Support the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board to implement the Baltimore Region Long-Range Transportation Plan "Transportation Outlook 2035"

Objective 2: Establish and maintain a level of service consistent with local and regional circulation needs

a. Coordinate with Carroll Area Transit in establishing appropriate levels of service for the community

b. Support additional transit levels of service for the Downtown Westminster based upon existing and future population and employment densities

c. Integrate management and operations strategies that improve the performance and reliability of existing transportation infrastructure to relieve congestion and reduce delay

Objective 3: Attract and retain business enterprises to Westminster by managing traffic growth

a. Design the system to allow for safe, efficient access to commercial and mixed-use areas

b. Encourage public/private partnerships for financing transportation projects that foster economic growth in Westminster

c. Promote multi-modal improvements such as local transit improvements or carpool programs

Objective 4: Cooperate with Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to make the necessary improvements to State roads in the Westminster area

a. Support SHA to complete the MD 140 Improvement Project according to enhance traffic circulation on MD 140 from Market Street to Sullivan Road

b. Coordinate with SHA to study and implement the MD 97 (N) Improvement Project to increase safety and traffic capacity for regional traffic on MD 97 (N)

Goal T7: Maintain the availability of safe air travel services in Westminster

Objective 1: Support the continued operation of the Carroll County Regional Airport to provide private air transportation services to the region and community

a. Recognize the Carroll County Regional Airport as a business that is economically and historically significant to the community

b. Ensure planning and zoning regulations address the needs and issues of the Carroll County Regional Airport

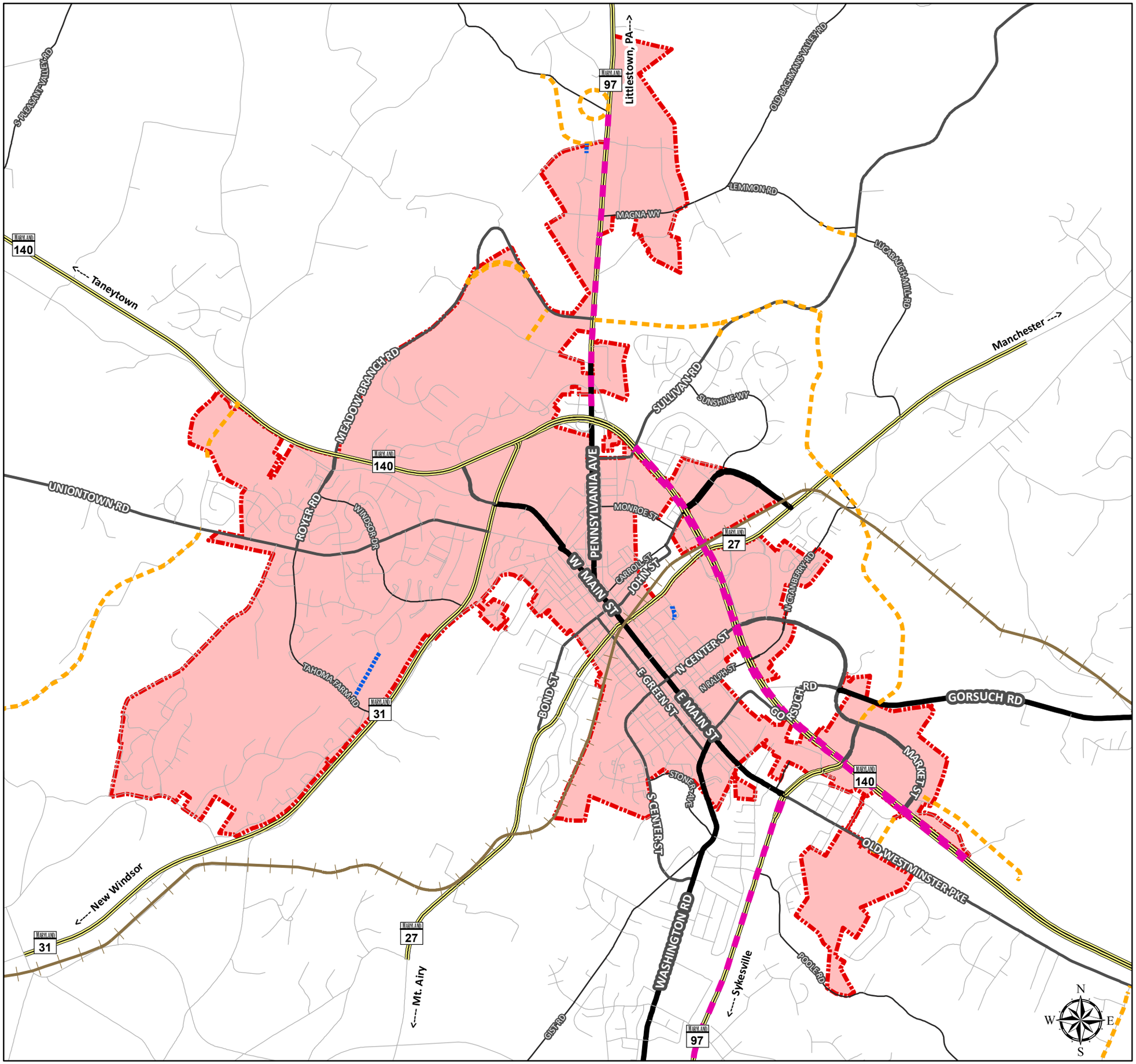
Objective 2: Plan for appropriate uses and activities in the vicinity to minimize impacts to and from the Carroll County Regional Airport

a. Comply with State laws requiring plans and regulations that discourage incompatible uses adjacent to the Carroll County Regional Airport

b. Ensure plans and regulations address height hazards, safety, and noise issues that can affect the long-term viability of the Carroll County Regional Airport

c. Allow compatible uses, buildings, or land or water activities in the vicinity that do not present safety problems to Airport operations, or that would not be sensitive to noise from the Airport operations

Roads and Highways



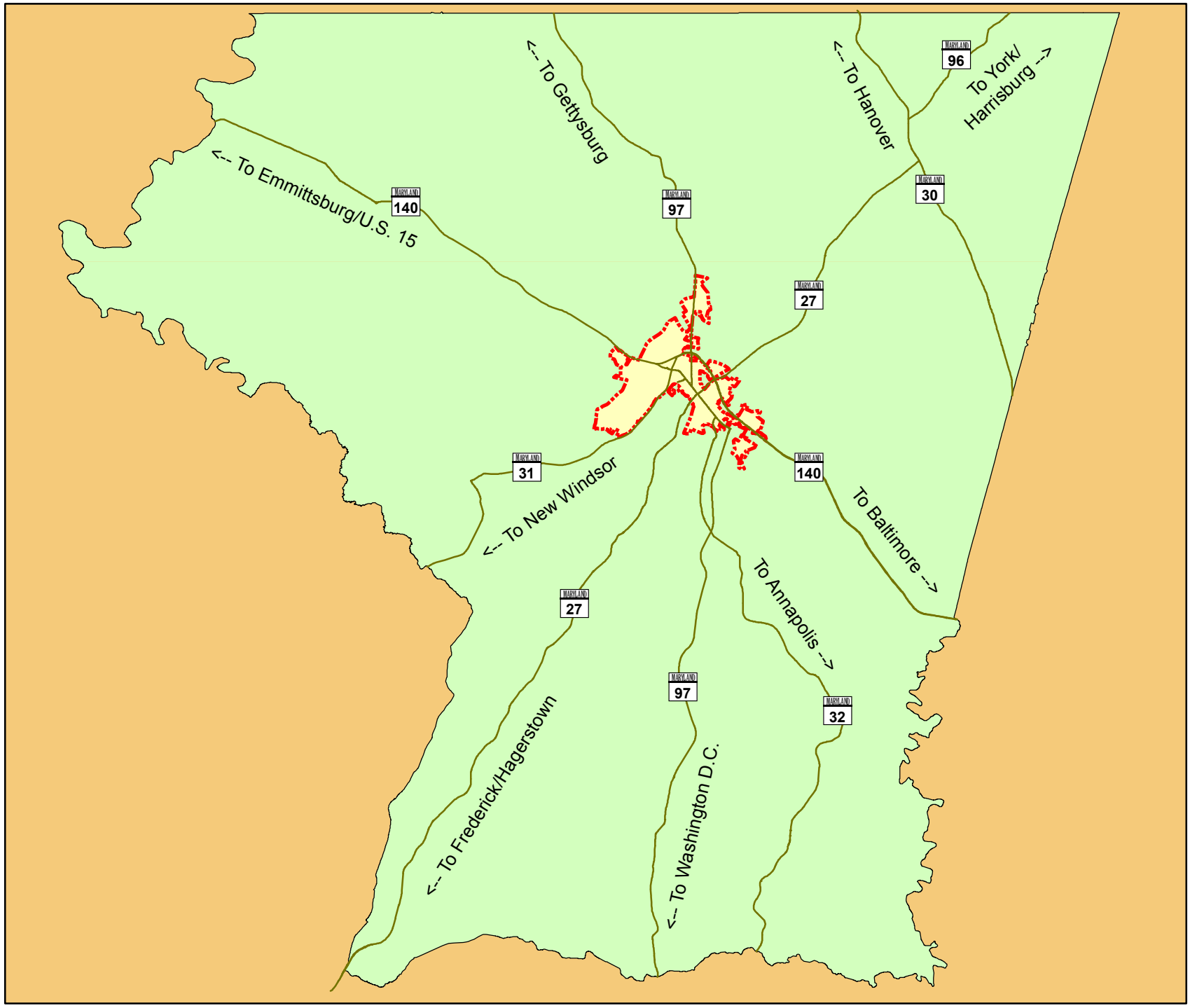
Legend

- Railroad
- LOCAL ROADWAY
- MINOR COLLECTOR
- MAJOR COLLECTOR
- MINOR ARTERIAL
- OTHER PRINCIPAL ARTERIAL
- Planned County Improvements
- Planned City Improvements
- Planned State Highway Improvements
- City Boundary

CORPORATION OF WESTMINSTER 1838

Map Not to Scale

Westminster Major Road Systems

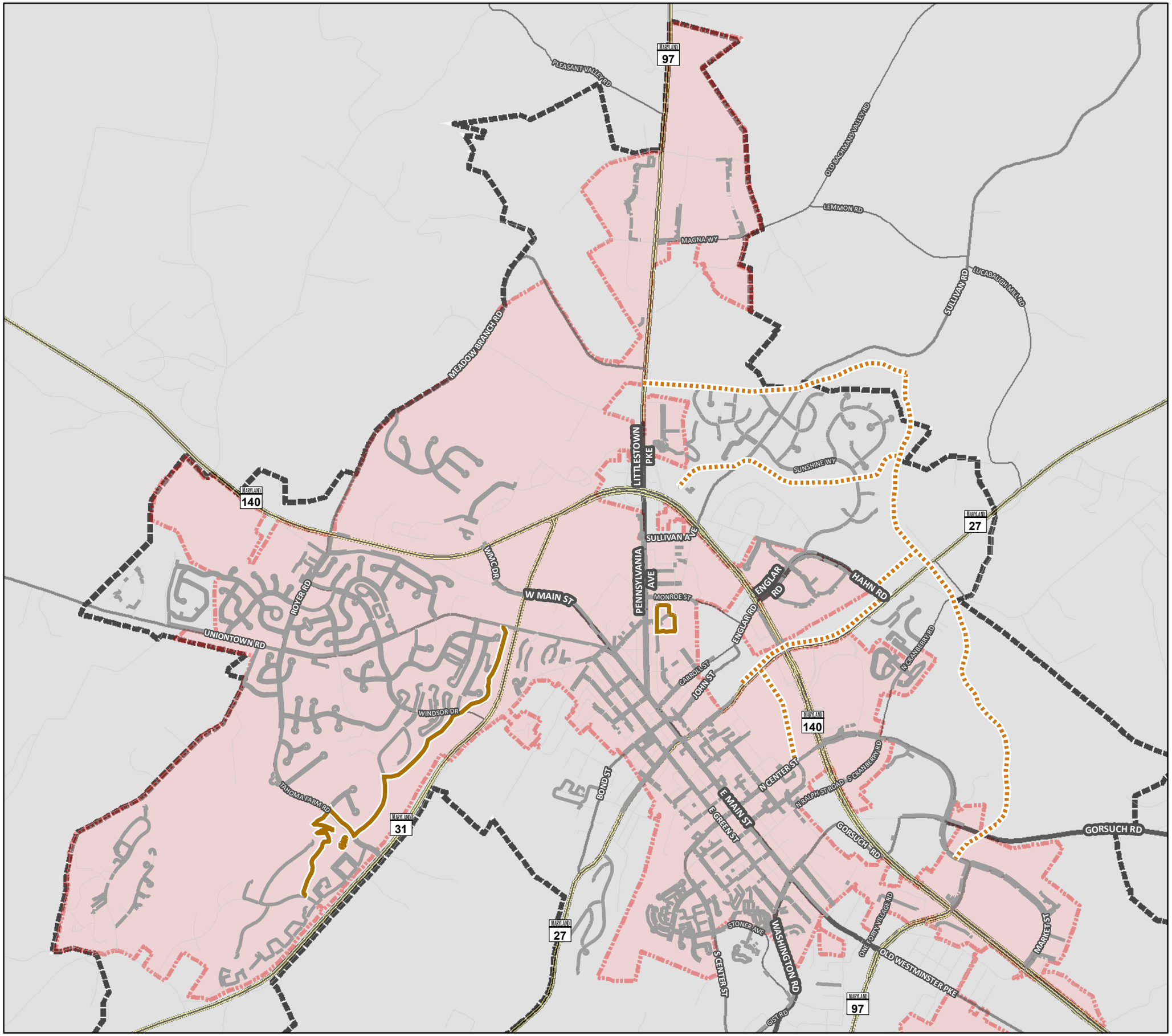


Legend

- Westminster City Boundary
- Carroll County

Map Not to Scale

Pedestrian Accomodations



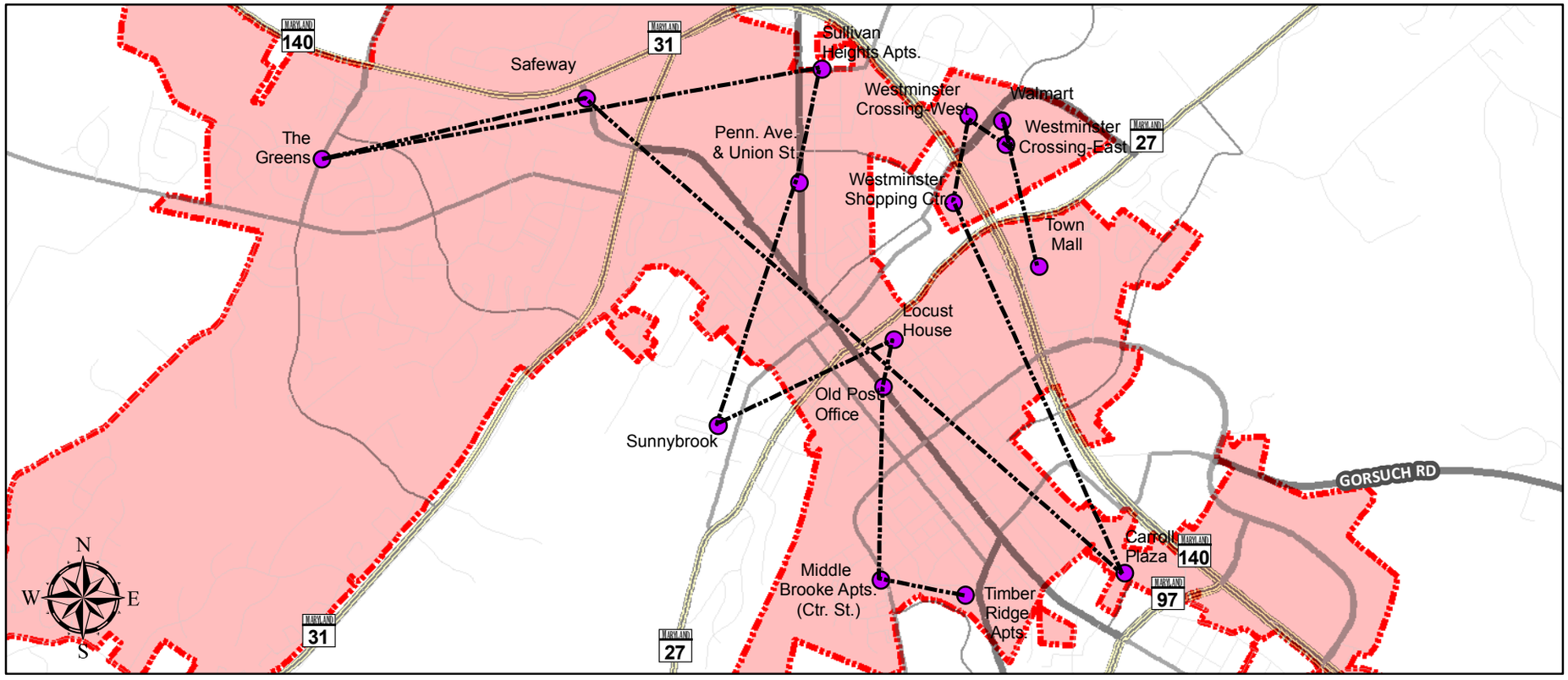
Legend

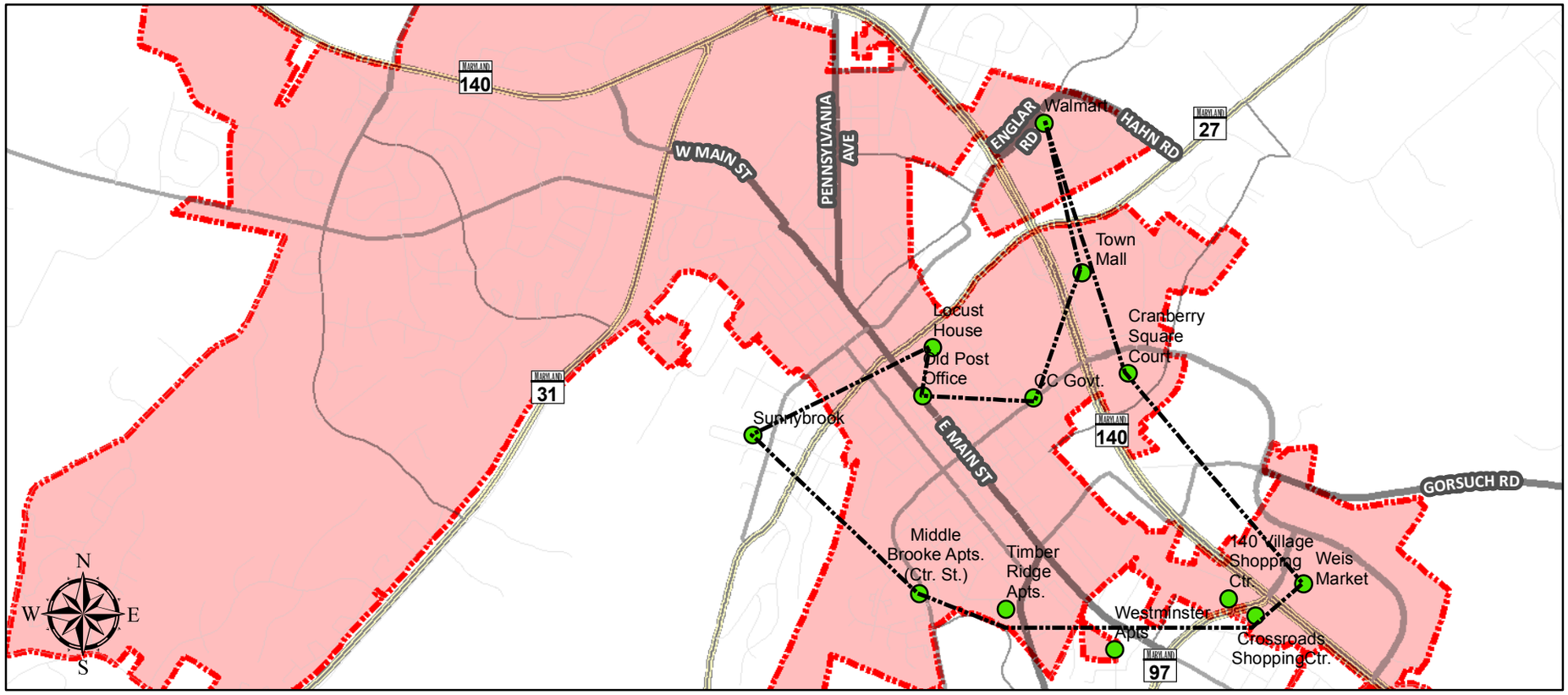
- Trails
- Planned Trail
- Sidewalks
- City Boundary
- Growth Area Boundary

CORPORATION OF WESTMINSTER 1838

Map Not to Scale

Carroll Area Transit System Shuttle Routes





Legend

- Shuttle Loop 1
- Shuttle Loop 2
- City Boundary

Maps Not to Scale

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Community Facilities & Public Services

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

What is the Community Facilities & Public Services Element?

The Community Facilities & Public Services Element details the types and general location of all public infrastructure and services needed to implement the Westminster Comprehensive Plan. As such, the element analyzes and summarizes facility needs in a manner that is consistent with the needs identified in other elements of the plan. The Community Facilities Element should also identify any obstacles to providing these services and facilities. This Element provides a guide to capital programming decisions.

The Community Facilities and Public Services Element includes the following facilities and services:

- Public Safety
- Emergency Services
- Schools & Colleges
- Child Care
- Libraries
- Senior Citizens
- Technology & Communications
- Government Facilities
- Recreation & Parks
- Cultural Facilities
- Solid Waste Disposal

Relationship to the Municipal Growth Element:

The Community Facilities & Public Services Element presents the complete picture for the entire jurisdiction, while the Municipal Growth Element looks only at those facilities affected or necessitated by future growth.

The Municipal Growth Element describes the public services and infrastructure needed to accommodate growth within the proposed Municipal Growth Area.

Community Vision of Community Facilities & Public Services

Public Safety

According to the 2008 Community Vision Report, 73.26% of residents feel safe living in the City of Westminster: Focusing on neighborhoods alone, over 90% of residents feel safe walking in their community. Residents appreciate the visibility of the police in their neighborhoods and like to see police officers on foot or bike patrol.

While police presence is important, residents also feel it is their own responsibility to help improve the safety and quality of their neighborhoods. Residents enjoy a working relationship with the police through community outreach and crime prevention efforts. Neighborhoods can provide the police an insider's view about what is going on in a community.

Parks & Recreation

There is a consensus among the community that there is a need for more programs for residents of all ages: from children to teenagers, and young adults to seniors. Specifically, there is a need for more family recreation or entertainment options on the weekends. As another source of entertainment, residents enjoy the festivals and events currently offered by the City of Westminster and they would like to see more in the future.

The current trails in Westminster are popular among residents and visitors. The City could build on this popularity and create more walking or biking trails. There is also a desire among residents to have more places where they can walk their dogs, such as dog parks.

Introduction

In addition to the transportation system and the water and sewer service discussed in previous chapters, a wide range of public and private community facilities and services are available in the City of Westminster. These facilities include schools, child care, a public library, facilities for senior citizens, public safety and emergency services, communications facilities, government facilities, parks, and cultural facilities. Community facilities are provided by the City, Carroll County, the State of Maryland, the federal government, and private organizations (Map 13.1).

Chapter 13

Part 1: Schools & Colleges

Part 2: Child Care Services & Facilities

Part 3: Westminster Area Libraries

Part 4: Facilities for Senior Citizens

Part 5: Public Safety Services

Part 6: Fire & Emergency Services

Part 7: Technology & Communications Facilities

Part 8: Government Facilities

Part 9: Recreation & Parks Facilities

Part 10: Cultural Facilities

Part 11: Solid Waste Disposal Service

Goals and Objectives

Part 1: Schools & Colleges

Section 1: Carroll County Public School System

The public school system is managed by the Carroll County Board of Education, and funded by the County and the State of Maryland. As a result, Westminster residents are served by schools located both within the corporate limits and outside of the City.

Performance

The Carroll County Public School System is ranked as the 9th largest school system in the State of Maryland. The system is governed by the Board of Education of Carroll County, which is made up of five elected members and a student representative. The Carroll County Public School System is ranked as one of the top-performing school systems in the State of Maryland, according to the Maryland School Performance Program Report that is released annually by the Maryland State Department of Education. Instructional staff are continually recognized at the State and national levels for their performance with numerous awards.

The educational programs developed in the Carroll County Public School System (CCPS) are also recognized statewide and nationally for their high standards and innovative approaches. For example, the CCPS elementary science program has been adopted in hundreds of school systems across the United States and in many other countries around the world. The CCPS Career and Technology Center's Computer Technology Program has been recognized as the most outstanding Career and Technology Program in the State by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Community

The Carroll County Public School System plays a foundational role in the success of the community. Through a network of resources and supports, students participate in learning guided by rigorous, stimulating curricula which are augmented through a variety of educational opportunities for extended learning and success. The community views students as its greatest resource, and welcomes them as productive, caring, respectful, and responsible citizens. The mission of Carroll County Public Schools is to ensure that every student can thrive as a responsible citizen in a changing world by providing engaging and challenging curriculum in partnership with quality staff, caring families, and supportive community members.

Master Plans

Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) follows the goal to align all school and system actions with the objectives and indicators of the CCPS 2008 Comprehensive Master Plan. The CCPS 2008 Comprehensive Master Plan provides a detailed analysis of student performance data and progress toward meeting federal, state, and local goals for student achievement. It also provides an analysis of the overall change in Carroll County Public Schools' budget. The Master Plan provides further financial and spending reports for various federal and State grants. One of the most important changes in the 2008 Comprehensive Master Plan is related to the implementation of full-day kindergarten. Carroll County's 2008-2009 Strategic Action Plan serves as the centerpiece of the overall Master Plan. The Strategic Action Plan details the specific actions Carroll County Public Schools will take during the year to support improved student achievement, and to meet State and local goals for the coming school year.

In addition, CCPS uses the 2009-2018 Educational Facilities Master Plan as a tool to analyze and identify school systems' projected facility needs. These needs include: the need to provide capacity for projected student enrollments, the need to maintain and repair existing school buildings, and the need to provide a learning environment which meets the current instructional program of the school system. The Board of Education develops the Educational Facilities Master Plan, and it is reviewed and revised annually based on enrollment projections, budget realities, and other factors. The construction schedule of new schools is not within the control of the Board of Education, but relies on funding from the Board of Carroll County Commissioners and the State.

Elementary Schools

Districts for the Westminster area elementary schools for kindergarten through grade five include Charles Carroll, Friendship Valley, Robert Moton, Westminster, Cranberry Station and William Winchester. Pre-kindergarten programs are available at Charles Carroll, Robert Moton and William Winchester Elementary Schools. The elementary schools range in capacity from 320 to 570 students, for a total elementary capacity of 3,055 students.

Most of the Westminster area elementary schools are currently under capacity. However, beginning with the 2007-2008 school year, all public schools were required to provide full-day programs for all kindergarten students. In order to meet this new requirement several Westminster area elementary schools are building additions to accommodate full-day kindergarten. The William Winchester Elementary Kindergarten Addition will be completed in August 2010, and the Robert Morton Elementary Kindergarten Addition will be completed in August 2011. The City will be tracking the kindergarten expansions closely to ensure the projects receive a priority for water allocation. Westminster Elementary will be approaching inadequate beginning in 2009, and inadequate in 2018. William Winchester Elementary will be inadequate beginning in 2009, and remain inadequate even with the additional capacity created by the Kindergarten Addition scheduled to open in 2010.

Middle Schools

East Middle and West Middle are the two middle schools serving the Westminster area, and both of these schools provide special education programs. Enrollment projections indicate that West Middle school is expected to remain below capacity over the next ten years. However, East Middle is projected to be over capacity beginning in 2012.

High Schools

Winters Mill High School, with a capacity of 1,240 students, was at 96.2% of capacity (47 students under) in 2008. Winters Mill is projected to continue to be under capacity until 2016.

Westminster High School has a capacity of 1,879 students. It is projected that Westminster High School will be under the State Rated Capacity during the 2009/10 school year and beyond. Close coordination between the City of Westminster and Board of Education will be necessary to ensure that Westminster's growing population is adequately served by the public school system.

Carroll County high school students also have the option to attend the Career and Technology Center located adjacent to Westminster High School. Students learn the skills necessary to obtain employment after graduating from high school. Carroll County Public Schools (CCPS) is planning to open a new 192,000 square foot facility for the Career and Technology Center adjacent to Friendship Valley Elementary.

The opening of the new Career and Technology Center is dependent upon receiving County Funds for the project. CCPS received State Planning Approval to begin designing the project in FY 2010, but the County did not include any funding in the adopted FY 2010 - 2015 Carroll County Capital Improvement Plan (CIP). The Board of Education Approved FY 2011 - 2016 CIP Request uses the targeted date for opening the new Career and Technology Center as August 2013, but the actual schedule will be dependent upon receipt of funding.

Table 13.1 City of Westminster Public Schools

Name of School	State Rated Capacity	2008 Enrollment	Percent of State Capacity
Charles Carroll Elementary	320	311	97.2%
Friendship Valley Elementary	527	459	87.1%
Robert Moton Elementary	544	449	82.5%
Westminster Elementary	570	568	99.6%
Cranberry Station Elementary	570	468	82.1%
William Winchester Elementary	524	539	102.9%
East Middle	869	734	84.5%
West Middle	1189	1007	87.9%
Westminster High School	1879	1795	95.5%
Winters Mill High School	1240	1193	96.2%

Source: Carroll County Public Schools, 2009

Section 2: Private Schools & Local Colleges

Local K-12 Private Schools

In addition to the public schools described above, there are several private schools in the Westminster area. These include the Carroll Christian Schools, Community Baptist Church School, Crest Lane Seventh Day Adventist Church School, Montessori School of Westminster, and St. John's Catholic Elementary.

Carroll Community College

Carroll Community College is located south of Westminster on Maryland Route 32, and is fully accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The College offers classes year-round to both students seeking Associates Degree and students continuing their education. The total credit and noncredit students in attendance at Carroll Community College, during the 2008 school year, totaled 13,658 students.

Carroll Community College (CCC) is an innovative center of learning. The college focuses on the intellectual and personal development needs of the Westminster area, and embraces an increasingly diverse and changing world. CCC provides a premier learning community for convenient, affordable, state-of-the-market postsecondary training, baccalaureate preparation, and lifelong education.

CCC also offers specialized training to individual businesses in Westminster and Carroll County. CCC offers a program that designs individualized training programs and guides local employees through that program. This critical function ensures that local businesses are afforded the opportunity to employ "Best Practices" when conducting its business.

As a result of the aging population in Westminster and Carroll County, there is a critical shortage of qualified nurses in Westminster, as well as Carroll County. In response to this shortage, Carroll Community College, through funding from the State of Maryland, opened the Nursing and Allied Health Facility in 2004 on its campus on Washington Road. The center provides much needed relief to the health care providers in the area that currently are not able to fill its nursing needs due to the shortage.

McDaniel College

Located along West Main Street and Pennsylvania Avenue, McDaniel College is a private, four-year College of the liberal arts and sciences, and was founded in 1867 as Western Maryland College. In 2002, the Board of Trustees changed the name of the college from Western Maryland College to McDaniel College. McDaniel College consists of 40 buildings on the beautiful, 160-acre campus. Students come from all over the country and most of the world's continents to attend McDaniel College. The population of over 1,700 students, (from 34 states and 11 countries), 5,000 graduate students, and 115 full-time professors, has created a vibrant community and an amazing resource "next door" to Downtown Westminster. McDaniel College has created many partnerships within the neighborhoods that surround the campus, from volunteer work to community development efforts, which have reinforced that the College is a wonderful asset to the City of Westminster.

McDaniel College offers 18 graduate programs, with a focus on education and human service. The Center for Leadership in Global Enterprise was established at McDaniel College in 2008 to promote activities and assist organizations to improve leadership decision making in the global enterprise. The program is devoted to the preparation of top executives and government leaders to lead more effectively in a constantly changing global marketplace.

In 2008, McDaniel College opened the Center for Community Outreach and Service to connect student volunteers with community needs, and professors with service-learning opportunities. McDaniel students have always reached out to the local community, but the refocused effort is bound to see community outreach grow in the future. Three different programs help support the center's mission. The programs – AmeriCorps VISTA, the Bringing Theory to Practice (BTtoP) project, and the Campus Compact – share some common goals.

AmeriCorps VISTA promotes community outreach and service as a means of fighting poverty. The BTtoP project encourages experiential learning through service within the local community. The third program, the Campus Compact, is an agreement among 10 Maryland colleges, which aims at teaching students to be active citizens of their local and global communities. The students are the beneficiaries of this partnership among programs. Collaboration among McDaniel students, faculty, and the local community gives students "real world" experience and reinforces classroom learning. Service learning fosters community involvement that often stays with students long after they receive their diplomas.

Part 2: Child Care Services & Facilities

Location

Daily child care is provided by private individuals and organizations throughout Westminster. The Carroll County Government Employees Child Care Center is a day care facility available to County employees. In addition to daily child care, before and after-school child care programs are available. Three of the Westminster area elementary schools have before and after-school programs: Friendship Valley, Robert Moton, and Westminster Elementary Schools. These programs are organized by private day care providers, which lease space in the schools from the Board of Education. In addition, the City of Westminster Recreation Department sponsors an after-school program for middle school students. Facilities are located on Longwell Avenue and include a gymnasium, game rooms, and a study area.

Carroll County Child Care Association

The Carroll County Child Care Association provides approved seminars, workshops and training on child development, activities, record keeping, health issues, child care issues, and related topics to all its members. These classes are accepted for credit toward receiving and/or maintaining a child care license, and are offered free or at a reduced cost. The Association works closely with the Maryland State Family Child Care Association, Maryland Child Care Administration, Human Services Programs of Carroll County, and Carroll County Department of Citizen Services to keep current with changes or proposed changes in laws and policies, and to inform providers of same information. The Association also offers a referral service to the public which regionally matches parents looking for child care to providers with vacancies.

Local Economy

While child care represents a vital service for Westminster area families and the development of their children; child care is also an important building block of the local economy. Westminster's child-care industry supports businesses and workers, and contributes to economic activity. A high-quality child-care system, just like roads and bridges, is part of the infrastructure for economic development. In 2004, the City amended the Westminster Zoning Ordinance to allow for daycare facilities in private individuals' homes for up to six children, as well as the ability for the Board of Zoning Appeals to grant a special exception to allow for up to eight children.

Part 3: Westminster Area Libraries

Westminster Branch Library

The Westminster Branch of the Carroll County Public Library system is located on 50 East Main Street. The library houses a large collection of popular reading and reference materials for children, young adults, and adults. In addition, the library offers extensive programs for children of all ages.

Bookmobile van service is also available on an outreach basis for the residents of Westminster and Carroll County.

History of Westminster Branch Library

2008 marked the 50th anniversary of the Carroll County library system. The Westminster Public Library was still a one-room library in the 1940s, but in 1958, a County library system was established. After ten years of lobbying for a modern library facility, Carroll County's first modern library, the Westminster Branch Library, opened in March 1980. Today, Carroll County Public Library is one of the busiest library systems in Maryland, holding the highest circulation per capita since 1994. Carroll County Public Library ranks 11th out of 8,946 libraries nationally. The mission of the Carroll County Public Library has been to promote and foster a love of reading and to meet the lifelong learning needs of Carroll County residents.

Future Initiatives of Westminster Branch Library

According to the 2008 Westminster Community Vision Report, the Westminster Branch of the Carroll County Library is one of Westminster residents' favorite attractions in Downtown Westminster. Located in the heart of Main Street, the Westminster Branch offers timely access to the materials and resources residents want, and library programs that relate to residents' current needs.

The Board of Library Trustees has a long-term plan to expand the Westminster Branch facility to enlarge and enhance service to residents. In 2009, the Westminster Branch underwent the first phase of the expansion plan, made possible through the State Library Capital Grant funding program and with a local match from the Carroll County Commissioners, along with support from the Carroll County Bureau of Facilities staff. The 2009 renovation included a new layout, expanded children's section and an increased public computer area. Following the renovations, in 2010, the Westminster Branch has plans to make significant renovations in the Mary Lou Dewey Park to make it a more appealing, accessible, and flexible space.

Historical Society Library

Resources on local history are also available at the Historical Society of Carroll County (HSCC) Library located at 210 East Main Street. Members of the HSCC may use the library free of charge and non-members are charged a nominal fee for the use of the library. Since the organization of the Historical Society in 1939, generous donors have helped the HSCC gather and preserve many records, documents, pamphlets, clippings, pictures, and books relating to the history of Carroll County. The purpose of this collection is to promote the research and study of Carroll County history. Unique collections such as the Dr. Arthur Tracey Papers (which includes drawings, surveyors' books, maps, and file cards for eighteenth century Western Maryland land tracts and families) and the Basil papers (which chronicle Taneytown history) can aid researchers interested in the history of their Carroll ancestors.

McDaniel College Hoover Library

The most extensive research library in Westminster is located at McDaniel College. The Hoover Library is open to the public, but its primary mission is to support the students and faculty of McDaniel College. Faculty and students may check out materials with their McDaniel College ID card. Members of the McDaniel College community who do not have a card must obtain one from the McDaniel Dining and ID Office. The Library does provide limited courtesy services to members of the general public. Non-campus borrowing privileges are available at no charge to Alumni and trustees of McDaniel College, faculty and students at MICUA institutions, registered students at Carroll Community College, and registered patrons of the Carroll County Public Library, who must be residents of Carroll County.

Part 4: Facilities for Senior Citizens

Carroll County Bureau of Aging

The Carroll County Bureau of Aging is dedicated to providing the highest quality of services, programs, and assistance to promote choice, dignity, and independence for older adults and those who care for them. The Bureau is responsible for a wide range of programs and services for older adults, ages 60 and over. Combined federal, State, and County funding support essential services for Carroll County's older citizens. The Bureau of Aging also operates five senior activity centers in Carroll County. Each center is a community focal point where older adults can receive services and participate in social, recreational, educational, fitness, health, nutritional, and informational activities. The centers are located in Westminster, South Carroll, North Carroll, Taneytown, and Mt. Airy.

Westminster Senior and Community Center

Just outside the City's limits is the Westminster Senior and Community Center. It is located on Stoner Avenue, near the Carroll Hospital Center. At the Center, seniors can obtain services through the County's Bureau of Aging, including financial advice, legal aid, and health insurance counseling. Other activities and events for senior citizens are offered at the Senior Center as well, and the building is available for public and community meetings. Adult day care for the developmentally disabled is also available.

West End Place

The City renovated the West End School, located on Schoolhouse Avenue, for use as the West End Place Adult Day Services, an agency of Family and Children's Services of Central Maryland. The center opened during the summer of 1998. The mission of the West End Places is to provide adults age 50 and over with structured daytime activities, socialization, nursing supervision and fun in a pleasant comfortable atmosphere. West End Place offers a support group for those caring for senior adults. In addition, the facility provides day care for physically challenged and mentally impaired adults. The West End

Apartments are a part of West End Place and provide efficiency apartments for seniors, age 55 and older, which live on a minimal fixed income and need a little help to live independently. The final function of West End Place is to provide in-home aide and care giving services such as personalized attentive care and assistance with many activities at home.

Private Senior Living Facilities

There are a number of private senior living facilities located in and around the City of Westminster, such as Carroll Lutheran Village, Locust House, Timber Ridge, and Tremont Place. Many other facilities are currently being planned in the Westminster Area, as there is a growing need for these services. The City of Westminster has adopted the "Housing for Older Persons" Ordinance to address the growing number of persons over the age of 55 that do not need age-related services, but desire to move to a condominium community that has age restrictions.

Part 5: Westminster Public Safety Services

Section 1: City of Westminster Police Department

The Westminster Police Department (WPD) is a full-service municipal police agency that provides community-oriented law enforcement services to the City of Westminster. In operation 24 hours a day, seven days a week, WPD is in partnership with the community, striving to preserve peace and provide a safe environment by preventing crime, protecting life, liberty, and property. The WPD enforces laws in a fair, impartial, and complete manner, and while detecting crime and apprehending criminals.

The City is served by 45 sworn police officers, which provide patrol, traffic control, K-9 patrol, bike patrol, educational programs, and criminal and narcotic investigations. The Communications Division and support staff is made up of 11 non-sworn members and is dedicated to outstanding public service. Through mutual respect, education, leadership, and supervision, the WPD brings into focus moral and ethical standards, including integrity, fairness, and service.

History

Since Westminster's beginning, law enforcement and public safety activities have been integral to its community. "Borough Constable" was the title given to law enforcement officials during the early period of Westminster's incorporation in 1838. The Westminster Police Department was established in 1850, when the first "City Bailiff" was hired by the "City Burgess and Commissioners" to keep order in the business district. In 1980, the Police Department moved from their City Hall location to the Longwell Municipal Center, which had been originally used by the National Guard as their armory. In November 1993, the WPD moved from its Longwell Municipal Center location to 36 Locust Street in Westminster, where the Department currently operates.

Bureaus

The Field Services Bureau provides uniformed patrol service to all areas of the City 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. In addition to their patrol duties, officers also conduct foot and bike patrols, handle special events occurring throughout the year, conduct traffic and pedestrian safety programs, and provide police canine services. The Criminal Investigations Bureau is responsible for the service of arrest warrants, the investigation of major crimes, and the investigation of drug violations occurring in the City. Additionally, two members of the Bureau are assigned to countywide multi-jurisdictional task forces that handle drug and child abuse/sex crime investigations around Carroll County. The Administrative Bureau handles a diverse group of responsibilities critical to the efficient operation of the Police Department to include the City 911 Dispatch Center, crime prevention and community education programs, fleet and facilities management, staff training and development, and police records functions.

Public Safety Education & Community Initiatives

The Westminster Police Department leads several Public Safety Education and Community programs. The Community Education Section teaches the D.A.R.E. Program curriculum to all 6th grade students at the four middle schools in the greater-Westminster area. The program is nine lessons in length, during which the students are taught how to make good choices and stay away from dangerous drugs.

The WPD leads school safety programs related to drug safety, personal safety, and seatbelt safety that are presented to the 2nd and 4th graders at the six elementary schools in the greater-Westminster area. Additionally, the 8th graders at East Middle and West Middle schools are taught about prescription drugs, alcohol and tobacco, and illegal drugs. During the 2009 school year, these programs were presented to more than 1,200 students.

Every year, the WPD facilitates the annual “National Night Out” observances in Westminster. In 2008, a total of four communities partnered with the Police Department on this national event to highlight community involvement in crime prevention activities.

Police Protection

There are three levels of police protection provided in the City of Westminster. The first level is the City of Westminster Police Department. As currently staffed, there is approximately one City police officer for every 411 Westminster residents, a level of protection that should be maintained as the City of Westminster population grows. Secondary police protection is provided by the Carroll County Sheriff’s Department, and the third level of police protection is provided by the Maryland State Troopers.

Section 2: Carroll County Detention Center

Facility

The original Carroll County Detention Center facility was built in 1985, and had a capacity of 125 beds. The jail addition was completed in 1999, and expanded the capacity to 287 beds. The expansion provided for an 82-bed work release and trustee housing unit, 16 maximum security beds, and 32 general population beds. Inmates are housed in "pods," which typically consist of two inmates per cell, with 8 cells per pod. In addition, some inmates are housed in dormitories. The detention center also provides special housing for inmates requiring medical, mental health, and disciplinary segregation. Total square footage of the entire facility is 24,780 square feet.

Operations

The Carroll County Detention Center is a full-service correctional facility. Sentenced offenders are incarcerated for a maximum of 18 months; offenders with sentences greater than that are transferred to the Maryland Department of Public Safety/Division of Corrections. Alternatives to incarceration are offered and include Pretrial Services, Home Detention, Treatment Diversion Programs, and Work Release.

The mission of the Carroll County Detention Center is to protect the citizens of Carroll County by providing a secure facility for persons legally confined. The Carroll County Detention Center provides a safe and secure facility for all inmates within an environment that promotes rehabilitation by providing a variety of treatment programs and protective activities.

Part 6: Westminster Fire & Emergency Services

Section 1: Westminster Fire Engine and Hose Co. 1

The Westminster Fire Engine and Hose Co. 1 (WFD), is dedicated to providing quality Emergency Services to the Westminster area community. The combined efforts of fire company members, local government organizations, and the community enhances the ability of the WFD to protect life, property, and the environment. The Westminster Fire Engine and Hose Company No. 1 is a non-profit organization that receives some funding from the City of Westminster and Carroll County, as well as through private donations and fundraisers.

Main Street is home to the 1896 Westminster Station 3 Engine House. It was constructed at 66 East Main Street. This historic building includes a clock tower that has now become a widely recognized symbol for Historic Downtown Westminster. On October 24, 1998, the Westminster Fire Engine and Hose Company No. 1 relocated to 28 John Street. At the time of the opening, the station was the second largest volunteer station in Maryland, at a total of 35,280 square feet.

History

Westminster Fire Engine & Hose Co. 1 supports the cultural heritage of Westminster. The station features a museum that educates the public on the history of the Westminster Fire Engine & Hose Co. 1 that dates back to 1823. Inside the museum, there are antique motorized pieces, hose carts, and assorted photos and documents, as well as other historical memorabilia. The museum is designed to look like a station of the late 1800s and early 1900s.

Public Fire Prevention and Life Safety Education

The Westminster Fire Engine & Hose Co. 1 believes that fire and life safety events can be avoided by following safe practices. With that in mind, the WFD formed the Fire Prevention and Life Safety Committee with the goal to furnish the community with information to help prevent life-threatening emergencies. The Committee is responsible for such community programs as Recalled Product Awareness, Car Seat Safety, House Numbers for Emergencies, and Meeting Place Education.

John Street Quarters Facility

The John Street Quarters Facility provides a wonderful space for the community, from meetings to special events; it welcomes residents to Downtown Westminster. The suggested attendance limit is 150 guests. The facility is attached to the Westminster Fire Engine & Hose Co. 1 Station, but has separate parking and entrances. Proceeds from John Street Quarters Facility go toward funding Emergency Services for the City of Westminster and surrounding area.

Section 2: Carroll Hospital Center

The Carroll Hospital Center is located on Memorial Avenue, near South Center Street and Gist Road. As a non-profit, 218-bed hospital, the Carroll Hospital Center is governed by a community board of directors whose primary goal is to provide high-quality comprehensive medical services in Carroll County. The hospital has more than 400 physicians on its medical staff, representing over 38 medical specialties. In total, the Carroll Hospital Center employs 1,850 individuals, making it the second largest employer in Carroll County. It annually experiences more than 315,000 patient encounters for inpatient and outpatient medical care and community programs.

Emergency Services

Ambulance service is provided by the Westminster Volunteer Fire Company, and a fully staffed emergency room is located at the Carroll Hospital Center. Carroll Hospital Center's Emergency Department (ED) is committed to quality service and patient care. At 30,000 square feet, the ED boasts 42 different treatment areas with private rooms to increase both patients and family members comfort and security during their stay in the ED. Carroll Hospital Center has a 6-bay emergency vehicle port, in order to allow patients to be treated in an efficient and timely manner.

Part 7: Technology & Communications Facilities

Section 1: Technology Infrastructure

Location

Carroll County is located in the Baltimore-Washington region, a recognized technology hub for the nation. Nearby research and development institutions offer Carroll County companies access to a wealth of intellectual capital, technology commercialization, and federal procurement opportunities. The Milken Institute ranks Maryland second overall nationally for its rich technology and science assets including research and development, risk capital and infrastructure, human capital investment, technology and science work force, and technology concentration as a part of total business.

Technology Training

Carroll County Public School's award-winning career and technology educational programs are among the best in the state. Technology education programs include Computer Technology; Media and Communication Technology; Technical Support and Networking; Microsoft, CISCO, and A+ Certifications; and Project Lead the Way, a pre-engineering program. The Career and Technology Center's Computer Technology Program has been recognized as the most outstanding Career and Technology Program in the state by the Maryland State Department of Education.

Carroll Community College Business and Training Services offer an extensive curriculum of technology, business, and professional development courses from internationally renowned training organizations that can be customized to meet specific training needs. The campus is networked with IBM computer labs, seminar rooms, interactive video training rooms, and lab space for all levels of technical training. Customized on-site technology training is also available to Carroll businesses.

Physical Infrastructure

Carroll County is focusing technology infrastructure investments in the Westminster area with the development of the Westminster Technology Park, a 63-acre park near the Carroll County Regional Airport. This technology park has competitive land and building sites that are ready for development by high-tech companies. In addition, Carroll County is serviced by Baltimore Gas & Electric, Allegheny Power, Verizon, Comcast Communications, and other local providers that offer service on proprietary and leased infrastructure.

Section 2: Technology Resources

Carroll Technology Council

The Carroll Technology Council (CTC) provides leadership, information, and resources to educate, attract, and influence technology in Carroll County. The CTC operates several programs including CompuKids, a program that provides computers to qualified children of the Carroll County Public School District; the Technology Advisory Committee, which functions as a catalyst for sharing information on existing and emerging technologies to business and government; and also produces Technically Correct, a television program aired on Community Media Center Channel 19, that educates and informs the community about current technology topics, products and organizations.

Greater Baltimore Technology Council

The Greater Baltimore Technology Council (GBTC) is devoted to growing the region's technology community. Through innovative programs, based on information provided by local technology businesses, the GBTC provides resources to help technology businesses grow. The GBTC creates forums where organizations can meet, learn, and do business.

Section 3: Carroll County Public Network

Mission

The mission of the Carroll County Public Network is to provide the access needed in an information-based world and to close the digital divide for Carroll County citizens through the cooperation of public agencies. The four main public agencies that come together to support the Carroll County Public Network include the Carroll County Government, Carroll County Public Libraries, Carroll County Public Schools, and Carroll Community College (known as the Partners).

The vision of Carroll County Public Network (CCPN) is to bring opportunities, inherent in both the technology and resources, to Carroll County so that the Partners may better communicate with citizens, attract economic development to the region, improve the services and general quality of life, and prepare students and the community for success. The CCPN objectives are: to enhance Carroll County's telecommunications opportunities through the implementation of innovative technologies; to eliminate duplication of effort; to reduce the overall financial expense of operation and maintenance through consolidation and economies of scale; and to serve as a contact point on data communications and infrastructure for officials, managers, and technicians among the partnership.

County Partners

The Carroll County community determined that the interests and welfare of the residents of Carroll County will best be served by a public, non-profit, data communications network using innovative

technology to deliver high speed data and bandwidth. The Partners of the Carroll County Public Network have informally cooperated with each other to assess the feasibility, design, development, and management of a high-speed fiber optic data communications network. The Partners of the Carroll County Public Network have engaged in mutually beneficial relationships regarding technology in the past, and have realized cost savings and other tangible and intangible benefits.

Section 4: Community Media Center

Mission

The Community Media Center is a Public, Education, and Government Access Center with a mission to provide the facilities, equipment, and technical support necessary to allow residents to "Make Television Matter" in their local community. The Community Media Center (CMC) is a non-profit § 501 (c) (3) organization. The CMC sees television as a tool to encourage residents to participate in their community. Television is a tool can be used to educate, inform, entertain, and document.

History

Channel 19, Carroll's public access channel started in 1989 first in a small studio in a bank building on Main Street. In 2003, the CMC incorporated as a non-profit organization and came out from under the County. The founding governing board raised the funds to build the new 6,000 square foot media center. In 2004, the CMC completed their new facility on Washington Road, across from the Carroll County Career and Technology Center (C&T). The media center partners with C&T in job-shadowing and community project internship programs. The Community Media Center will continue to ensure not just the continued viability of local community connections, but for innovative ways to provide for robust programming content across multiple delivery systems, such as the internet.

Part 8: Government Facilities

Location

City of Westminster government offices are located in five separate buildings in Downtown Westminster. City Hall houses the Mayor's Office, the Housing Department, the Human Resources Department, and the Information Technology Department. The Police Department is located on Locust Street. The Longwell Municipal Center, also known as the "Old Armory," is home to the Recreation and Parks Department. The Street Department is located in the City Maintenance Shop, on Railroad Avenue. The City rents office space in the Winchester West Building for the Planning, Zoning and Development Department, the Public Works Department, the City Clerk's Office, and the Finance Department, as well as the City Administrator's Office. Additional City government facilities are described elsewhere in the Comprehensive Plan. In all, the City owns six non-utility based properties (Table 13.2).

Table 13.2 City of Westminster Non-Utility Based Properties

Facility or Property	Location
City Hall	1838 Emerald Hill Lane
Police Department	36 Locust Street
Recreation and Parks Department (Armory)	11 Longwell Avenue
Streets Department	105 Railroad Avenue
Carroll Arts Center	91 West Main Street
West End School	7 Schoolhouse Avenue

Source: City of Westminster Department of Planning, 2009

Future Use

The City of Westminster's historic non-utility buildings are in need of major investment for rehabilitation. It will be a significant financial undertaking to rehabilitate these buildings. Therefore, it is prudent to perform a comprehensive needs-based analysis of all City buildings and facilities. A detailed analysis will include a complete inventory of facilities, assessment of current conditions, and investment requirements to prepare a realistic, long-range facilities plan for Westminster. Also, looking at City Hall and the Old Armory, one must ask if these buildings are adequate for the City's future needs, and if other alternative uses would be more appropriate to preserve their historic value and attract the investment required to properly maintain the structures.

Other City-Owned Buildings

The City owns the buildings which house the Carroll Arts Center and the West End School, with various levels of responsibility for insuring and maintaining the property and structures. The City leases the Clock Tower at 66 East Main Street, and is responsible for the maintenance of the clock mechanism. This clock serves as the unofficial symbol of Downtown Westminster, and a citizen committee is currently raising the funds required to renovate that mechanism.

Parking Lots & Garages

In September 2003, the City of Westminster opened two parking garages for use by the general public. The Longwell Avenue Municipal Garage has 296 parking spaces that can be used by monthly permit or on an hourly basis. This parking facility is located at the intersection of Longwell Avenue and Distillery Drive. The Westminster Square Parking Garage is a 160-space parking garage that is located on West Green Street, near the intersection with MD Route 27.

Carroll County Government

Carroll County government offices are located in an office complex located on North Center Street and Court Street, comprising three office buildings. Other County office buildings are located on South Center Street near South Court Street. The County government provides the community with services related to permitting, planning, development review, economic development, health services, County road maintenance, and a County landfill. Other County facilities include the Carroll County Maintenance Center on Meadow Branch Road to the north of Westminster, the Agricultural Center on Smith Avenue, and parks and recreation facilities located around Westminster and throughout the County. The County Court House and Court House Annex are located on Court Street. In addition to the County judicial branch, the Court House also houses the land records, licensing, Register of Wills, and Law Library.

State Government

A branch of the State Assessment office is located in downtown Westminster in the Winchester Exchange building on East Main Street, while local State unemployment services are provided at an office in the Air Business Center on Maryland Route 97. Also at the Air Business Center, there is a State vehicular emission testing station. On the outskirts of Westminster, along Maryland Route 140, are facilities for the Maryland State Police and a full service Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) facility.

Federal Government

Federal government facilities in the Westminster area are minimal. They include the Post Office located on Woodward Road, and the Social Security Office on East Green Street.

Part 9: Recreation & Parks Facilities

There are a number of recreation facilities in the City of Westminster. Recreation opportunities are available at City parks, the Westminster Municipal Pool, the Family Recreation Center, and local school grounds. In addition, there are a number of recreation areas located in the parks and school grounds on the outskirts of the City.

Section 1: Recreation & Parks Department

Mission

Westminster City Recreation and Parks Department is dedicated to providing citizens with safe and enjoyable activities, events, and park services. It is committed to organizing and promoting a variety of recreational activities and events designed to encourage family interaction and personal enjoyment. It also partners with a number of community organizations in an effort to promote the health and well-being of local citizens.

Events & Programs

The Westminster Recreation and Parks Department is responsible for organizing year-round recreation activities for both children and adults, as well as offering year-round programs for the entire family. The Flower and Jazz Festival, Corbit's Charge Ball, and Fallfest are just a few of the many successful events that the Recreation and Parks Department provides the community every year. In addition to community events, the Recreation and Parks Department hosts several seasonal camps that provide a safe and enjoyable environment for children to participate in a variety of activities, games, sports, crafts, and trips. The Recreation and Parks Department's main goal is to help children have fun while learning fair play.

Section 2: Recreation Facilities

Westminster Area Recreation Facilities

Recreation facilities are also available to the residents of Westminster through the Carroll County Recreation and Parks as well as local schools and the Carroll County YMCA. Most of the school grounds in the vicinity of Westminster contain several playing fields, as well as ball diamonds and basketball courts. Playgrounds are located at area elementary schools, while tracks can be found at East Middle School, Winters Mill High School, and Westminster High School. In addition, all of the public schools contain gyms or multi-purpose rooms, and the high school has several auditoriums. Public school facilities are available for public use during non-school hours.

Recreation facilities are also available for public use at McDaniel College, when the facilities are not being used for college-related activities. Facilities at McDaniel College include tennis courts, playing fields, racquetball courts, a track, golf course, swimming pool, and ball diamond. The College also has conference facilities that are available for general use.

Municipal Swimming Pool

The City's Municipal Swimming Pool is located on Royer Road in The Greens. The swimming area is open from Memorial Day to Labor Day, and features an Olympic-size pool, wading pool, pavilion, tot lot, and sand volleyball court. Swimming lessons are offered at the Municipal Pool, and participation on the City swim team is available as well.

Family Fitness Center

The Family Fitness Center is housed in the historic Armory along with the Department of Recreation and Parks administrative offices. This full-service health and wellness center for all ages has selectorized and free weight equipment, a cardiovascular center, and a group fitness classes. The Family Fitness Center provides a comfortable environment for visitors by providing child supervision, game rooms, and locker rooms. The Longwell Center has a gym and space for classes.

City Parks

The City owns 14 parks totaling almost 50 acres (Table 13.3). Nine parks have play equipment for pre-kindergarten through school-age children. Other resources in the parks include four multi-purpose fields, four basketball courts, seven tennis courts, climbing boulders, six pavilions, two plazas, and a skate park (Map 13.1). The city also has a walking trail that runs from Uniontown Road to Long Valley Road, which is approximately two miles long.

Table 13.3 City of Westminster Parks & Recreation Facilities

Park or Recreation Facility	Location
Avondale Run Ball Fields	Tahoma Farm Road & Burning Tree Drive
Belle Grove Square	Green Street & Bond Street
Bishop's Garth	Center Street & Bishops Street
Charles Street	Charles Street & Center Street
Community Building at the Westminster Municipal Pool	325 Royer Road
Dutterer Family Park & Fields	Winters Alley & Monroe Street
Family Fitness Center	11 Longwell Avenue
Greens Tot Lot	325 Royer Road
Jaycee Park	Johan Drive and Uniontown Road
King Park	Chase Street
Lime Kiln Interpretative Park	Tahoma Farm Road
Locust Lane	43 East Main Street
Tahoma Farm Boulder Park	Tahoma Farm Road
Uniontown Road Athletic Fields	MD Route 31 & Union Town Road
Westminster City Park Playground & Fields	11 Longwell Avenue
Westminster Skate Park	Tuc Road & Locust Street
Whispering Meadows Community Park	Whispering Meadows Drive

Source: City of Westminster Department of Parks and Recreation, 2009

Section 3: New Projects

Skateboarding & BMX Bike Riding Facility

Originally installed in May 1999, the skateboard park was so popular with skateboarders, and so heavily utilized, that it soon needed renovation. In 2007, the City applied for and received grant funding in the amount of $130,000 from Project Open Space from the State of Maryland to create a new and expanded skateboard park. An enthusiastic group of parents and local skateboarders led the project, in partnership with the Carroll County Career and Technology Center, to design and build a first-class skateboard park for the community. The new skateboarding and BMX bike riding facility opened on June

12, 2009. The City of Westminster received an award from the Maryland Municipal League for the park's construction and design.

Wakefield Valley Trail

The Wakefield Valley Trail features a 2.1 mile, paved walking trail from Long Valley Road to Uniontown Road. This scenic trail snakes through the pristine Carroll County countryside, offering the chance to view the abundant wildlife and scenic overlooks of Westminster City. There is parking available at Tahoma Farm Boulder Park.

The Wakefield Valley Trail Extension will break ground in the spring of 2010, and extend the trail from Uniontown Road to West Main Street. This extension project will connect the Trail from Long Valley Road all the way to Downtown Westminster.

King Park Re-Opening

In 1980, Grace K. Gher, Helen K. Hively, Elsie K. Bair, J. Phillip King, and Carl E. King signed over land to the City of Westminster that was to become King Park. In 2008, residents in the King Park community suggested that diverse Park improvements, including playgrounds and sports areas, would help satisfy the community recreation needs. In 2009, the Department of Recreation and Parks re-opened King Park with the addition of ADA accessible playground equipment. The ADA compliant play structure is the first of its kind in Westminster. This project was made possible by Project Open Space Funding, matching funds from the City and Carroll County, as well as a donation from Robin Ford Builders.

David S. Babylon Community Building

The City Park Concession Stand was built in 1979 and was demolished in October 2009. The 30 year old structure had become outdated and could no longer meet the growing needs of the Department of Recreation and Parks. It was replaced with a new two-story, multipurpose structure that not only serves as a concession stand but also provides meeting and storage space for local non-profits such as the Westminster Optimists, Westminster Lions Club and Westminster Fallfest. The majority of the project was funded by two chief sources: fundraising by Fallfest, which included a $50,000 donation from the family of David S. Babylon Jr., and a Program Open Space grant of $59,470. The new building is called the David S. Babylon Community Building; Babylon was a longtime activist of the community, who served on the City Council for 25 years.

Future Recreation & Open Space

As the remaining land in Westminster becomes developed to accommodate the projected population growth, consideration must be given to reserving additional lands for recreational use. The City has adopted a cluster subdivision ordinance, which provides a density bonus to developers that preserve

sensitive areas, as well as providing active recreation space within the development. The Department of Planning will work with the Department of Recreation and Parks to develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan by 2011. One of the goals of this plan is to develop a strategy to encourage new residential and commercial developments to include open space, recreation space or pedestrian-friendly amenities.

Part 10: Cultural Facilities

The Carroll Arts Center

The Carroll County Arts Council, in partnership with the City of Westminster, transformed this 1937 art deco Carroll Theatre into a multi-purpose community arts center. Opened in April of 2003, the renovated facility includes a 263-seat theatre, two well-equipped art classrooms, and two large art galleries. The Tevis Gallery and the Community Gallery feature group shows by regional visual artists, in a variety of mediums and styles. The Carroll Arts Center offers a wealth of cultural opportunities including musical concerts, lectures, films, dramatic productions, art exhibits, classes, and camps. The facility is available for rent by local organizations and performers for arts-related activities. The Carroll Arts Center serves as the anchor for the arts and culture community that has formed in the City of Westminster.

McDaniel College

McDaniel College has several cultural facilities that attract regional and national attention. The College puts on various productions throughout the school year, with directors ranging from faculty and visiting artists, to students at the theatre in WMC Alumni Hall. Peterson Hall houses the Esther Prangley Rice Gallery, which features exhibits that include paintings, mixed media, sculpture, and photography. The gallery also includes the Albert and Eva Blum Collection of Art from Five Continents, which is on continuous display. Another McDaniel College cultural facility is the combination of McDaniel's athletic fields and facilities, which has led to a partnership between the College and the Baltimore Ravens to bring the NFL team to campus for training camp every summer. The Ravens training camp attracts visitors from across the region to Westminster to watch the Ravens practice at McDaniel College.

Carroll Community College

Carroll Community College (CCC) offers theatre experiences to the Westminster area from plays to musicals at the Scott Center Theatre. The Gallery in the Scott Center for the Fine and Performing Arts is a new, beautifully designed space dedicated to the exhibition of exciting contemporary works by artists of regional and national renown. Carroll Community College is also home to the Great Hall Gallery. The cathedral ceiling of the Great Hall Gallery provides the natural and diffused light that artists love. Exhibits generally focus on county and state groups, and highlight the diverse nature of their work. The Langdon Family Gallery is an intimate space devoted to the work of individual artists. The sky-lit gallery, with an upper tier, provides an ambiance that enhances multimedia displays.

Part 11: Solid Waste Disposal Service

Residential solid waste disposal service is provided to all City residents, with the exception of those living in multi-family complexes. Owners of multi-family housing with more than three units must arrange for private solid waste disposal service for their buildings. The City has a five year contract with Ecology Services for regular pick-up of trash and recyclables that expires on June 30, 2013.

Ecology Services provides once per week service to City residents. Westminster residents are able to recycle paper and cardboard, glass, aluminum, and some types of plastics, thus reducing the amount of solid waste sent to the landfill. The City of Westminster recycling is taken to the Carroll County Northern Landfill. Northern Landfill uses the single stream recycling process i.e. all recyclables can go into the same container.

In addition to the services provided by Ecology Services, the City of Westminster provides curbside pick-up of yard waste once a week from April through November. City crews also remove bulk trash items, such as worn-out appliances, from residential areas on an appointment basis. Yard waste recycling, in combination with curbside pick-up of recyclable materials, has reduced Westminster's solid waste stream by approximately 35%.

Community Facilities & Public Services Element

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan promotes a system of cost-effective public utilities, community facilities, communication networks, and municipal services that supports a compact, well-balanced, and manageable form of development at a standard desired by residents. Community facilities include the land, buildings, or services and systems which are provided in the interest of the residents of the community. The facilities and services are offered as a necessity within the urban environment and are therefore a major contribution to the quality and safety of urban living. The Community Facilities & Public Services Element details the types and general location of all public infrastructure and services needed to implement the municipality's comprehensive plan.

Goals and Objectives

Goal F1: Partner with Carroll County Public Schools to ensure that all Westminster area students are provided a safe and orderly learning environment where they can succeed as responsible citizens

Objective 1: Coordinate with various County agencies to plan for adequate school facilities and appropriate school locations

a. Support Carroll County Public Schools' implementation of the School Facilities Master Plan and provide input during the update of the Plan

b. Maintain a physical environment that supports the needs of instructional programs, staff, students, and visitors who use Westminster area school facilities and grounds

c. Phase development plan approvals and the issuance of building permits with school availability

d. Maintain communications with Board of Education staff about the status of development projects and population growth projections

e. Attend planning meetings of the Board of Education and provide input regarding the needs of the Westminster area

Objective 2: Provide opportunities for students seeking to fulfill their community service hour requirements

a. Consider development of a program to match Westminster government projects with interested students

b. Promote available volunteer opportunities in the Westminster community for students as well as residents

Goal F2: Encourage the provision of quality child care services in locations that are convenient to Westminster residents and employees

Objective 1: Study the current capacity of child care service providers in the Westminster area

a. Conduct a child care needs-based analysis of the residents and employees of Westminster

b. Collect data about the capacity of existing child care providers

Objective 2: Develop a strategic plan to increase child care services to meet the needs of the community

a. Provide additional opportunities for child care facilities near residential areas

b. Encourage child care facilities in employment centers

c. Recognize the importance of quality child care services for the economic vitality of the Westminster area

Objective 3: Partner with the Carroll County Family Child Care Association to promote quality child care services in the Westminster area

a. Promote seminars, workshops, and training on child development, business development, and child care issues

b. Encourage collaboration with Human Services Programs of Carroll County and Carroll County Department of Citizen Services to stay informed of state laws and policies

c. Provide support, information resources, and education for new and seasoned child care providers

d. Endorse the County referral service to the public which regionally matches parents looking for child care to providers with vacancies

Goal F3: Partner with the Carroll County Library to provide high quality library services and to meet the lifelong learning needs of residents

Objective 1: Use library facilities to enhance communications with Westminster residents

a. Make the Comprehensive Plan and other City planning documents available for public review at the Westminster Branch of the Carroll County Library

b. Provide the library with brochures and other information regarding City events

c. Promote the use of the library meeting rooms for community meetings and workshops

Objective 2: Coordinate with the Carroll County Library to provide access to information technology and the assistance residents need to use technology effectively

a. Provide user instruction and technology instruction programs

b. Increase access to public computers for residents of all ages

c. Recommend the use of the City of Westminster's Website as a tool for residents to stay informed and connected to their community

Objective 3: Partner with the Carroll County Library to enhance the arts and cultural identity of Westminster

a. Market the Westminster Branch of the Carroll County Library as an attraction to residents and visitors in Downtown Westminster

b. Support the development of the Library Garden as an outdoor arts and culture community gathering space that features local public art

c. Encourage appreciation of Westminster history and an increase in cultural awareness, though access to materials, resources, and programs at the library

Goal F4: Support the City of Westminster Police Department's efforts to create a safe and secure environment for all residents

Objective 1: Provide residents with an adequate level of public safety and police protection services that can accommodate and sustain future population growth

a. Maintain police protection in accordance with national standards of service to ensure the Westminster area is well-equipped to meet public safety needs

b. Cooperate with the Carroll County Sheriff's Office and the Maryland State Police to coordinate cost-effective delivery of police protection services to the community

c. Consider public safety in the design of all new development

d. Provide public access to information relating to police activity and public safety

Objective 2: Support the Police Department's community initiatives to develop partnerships with the community and to educate residents on public safety issues

a. Encourage the development and operation of crime prevention measures such as neighborhood watches, crime prevention surveys, and community liaison programs

b. Facilitate the annual "National Night Out" observances in Westminster to highlight community involvement in crime prevention activities

c. Provide school safety programs to educate Westminster area elementary schools on drug safety, personal safety, and seatbelt safety

d. Administer the D.A.R.E. Program curriculum to Westminster area middle schools

Objective 3: Increase operational efficiency and community safety through the implementation of a data-driven model of policing

a. Coordinate with the Carroll County Sheriff's Office to undertake the purchase and implementation of a consolidated police records management system

b. Develop a formal crime analysis process utilizing data from the Computer Aided Dispatch System and the CrimeReports.Com web-based crime analysis service

c. Collaborate with City Code Enforcement and GIS staff to better utilize the Geographic Information System to proactively identify emerging problem locations within the City

Objective 4: Enhance traffic safety in the City through the use of new and innovative traffic enforcement strategies

a. Implement the Automated Red Light Enforcement Program at identified high-accident intersections within the City

b. Maintain a Sobriety Checkpoint Program to better identify and arrest drivers operating under the influence of alcohol and drugs

Goal F5: Partner with the Westminster Volunteer Fire Company to provide the community with adequate fire and emergency medical services

Objective 1: Ensure the maintenance and enhancement of a fire and emergency services infrastructure that can accommodate and sustain future population growth

a. Consider fire protection in the design of all new development, in particular, ensure that adequate access for emergency vehicles is provided to all structures

b. Conduct a study the fire hydrant system within the City and include the fire hydrant data in the GIS system for maintenance and upgrade purposes

c. Monitor the inventory of fire engine and ambulances, as well as personnel, to ensure the Westminster area is well-equipped to meet its emergency needs

d. Coordinate a discussion between the Westminster Volunteer Fire Company and the Carroll County Regional Airport about emergency planning

Objective 2: Promote community education and sufficient planning to reduce the number of calls for fire and emergency service

a. Continue to collaborate with the Westminster Volunteer Fire Company on emergency and disaster planning

b. Coordinate cost-effective delivery of fire prevention and suppression services to the community

c. Support the Westminster Fire Prevention and Life Safety Committee to furnish the community with information to help prevent life-threatening emergencies

d. Develop and promote educational programs about the measures that individuals can take to reduce fire risk in their homes and businesses

Goal F6: Encourage the provision of state-of-the-art technology and communication facilities to deliver effective and innovative solutions that meet business, resident, and government needs

Objective 1: Foster the types of telecommunications systems that best promote community objectives and the electronic delivery of government services

a. Study opportunities to improve Westminster's technology and communication facilities infrastructure that enable the City to operate on a daily basis

b. Enhance the City's internal operations by using information technologies for quality customer service and information delivery

c. Maintain the City of Westminster website as a tool to maximize City productivity and to strengthen public services

d. Support efforts to install a fiber optic network in the Westminster area to provide the bandwidth necessary for quality service delivery

e. Develop provisions and guidelines for telecommunications facilities

Objective 2: Partner with local technology and communication organizations to provide a quality technology and communication infrastructure for the Westminster area

a. Collaborate with Carroll County Public Network to enhance local telecommunications opportunities through the implementation of innovative technologies

b. Promote the Carroll County Technology Council as the lead organization to provide leadership and resources, to educate, attract, and influence technology in Carroll County

c. Support the Carroll County Technology Advisory Committee as a resource to research and share "best practices" and information on present and emerging technologies

d. Coordinate with the Community Media Center to create and distribute content that bolsters community involvement, and educates and informs residents

Objective 3: Use telecommunications to prepare for the changing information technology environment and the workforce shifts in the local economy

a. Promote a virtual workforce as an asset to the business community that allows increased productivity and flexibility of employees

b. Encourage the use of telecommunications to reduce commuter traffic for residents and the amount of office space required for local businesses

c. Study and consider the creation of a telecommuting center in Westminster

d. Clarify language in the Zoning Ordinance for a telecommunications home office

Goal F7: Maintain and enhance Westminster government facilities as necessary to adequately provide public services to City residents

Objective 1: Develop a long-range Facilities Master Plan that outlines strategies for future maintenance, rehabilitation, and improvements to Westminster government facilities

a. Perform a comprehensive needs-based analysis of all City buildings and facilities

b. Evaluate current department locations and their proximity to other departments and City functions, future staffing, and growth expectations for the next 10 to 20 years

c. Analyze the physical location of all City-owned facilities with regard to their current and potential best use

d. Study several alternatives for providing adequate space for the City's future needs

Objective 2: Promote energy efficiency in all Westminster government facilities

a. Monitor the energy costs required to run Westminster government facilities

b. Conduct an energy audit of Westminster government facilities

c. Develop a strategic plan to implement the energy audit's recommendations for improving energy efficiency

Goal F8: Provide for Parks and Recreation facilities and services to enhance residents' quality of life

Objective 1: Develop a Parks and Recreation Master Plan to plan for high-quality parks and recreation facilities and services that benefit all residents

a. Assess the needs and demands for recreation programs and facilities

b. Maintain an inventory of parks and recreation facilities to monitor required maintenance and upgrades

c. Promote the City Parks Board as the lead organization in the development and implementation of the Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Objective 2: Link Westminster area parks and open space with a system of trails, pedestrian pathways, and bicycle routes

a. Explore opportunities to extend the City's Community Trail System

b. Coordinate with Carroll County Parks and Recreation to connect the Westminster Trail System to future County trails

c. Ensure that the trails are designed and constructed to provide safe and convenient access for pedestrians and bicyclists through the community

Objective 3: Ensure that recreational facilities are available for public use in a manner that is multi-generational and accessible to all residents

a. Implement the Westminster Handicapped Accessibility Improvement Program

b. Develop recreation facilities and programs that will target Westminster's senior population

c. Create and promote recreation facilities and programs for the needs of the teenager and young adult populations

Objective 4: Improve the Department of Recreation and Parks service efficiencies in partnership with public and private entities

a. Coordinate resources with other recreational service providers within City limits

b. Partner with Carroll County Parks and Recreation to provide additional programs and activities

c. Explore efforts to collaborate on programs and activities with the Carroll County YMCA

d. Continue to use cooperative agreements with the local school district to share the use of parks, recreation, and open space lands

Goal F9: Manage the City of Westminster's solid waste in a cost-efficient and environmentally responsible manner that will reduce Westminster's reliance on landfills

Objective 1: Partner with Carroll County Solid Waste Operations to implement the County 10-Year Solid Waste Management Plan

a. Develop a long-term strategic plan to reduce Westminster's solid waste stream

b. Promote voluntary curbside single-stream recycling from households

c. Study the local business community's recycling efforts

d. Implement an electronic waste recycling program

e. Maintain alternative disposal methods for yard and bulk waste

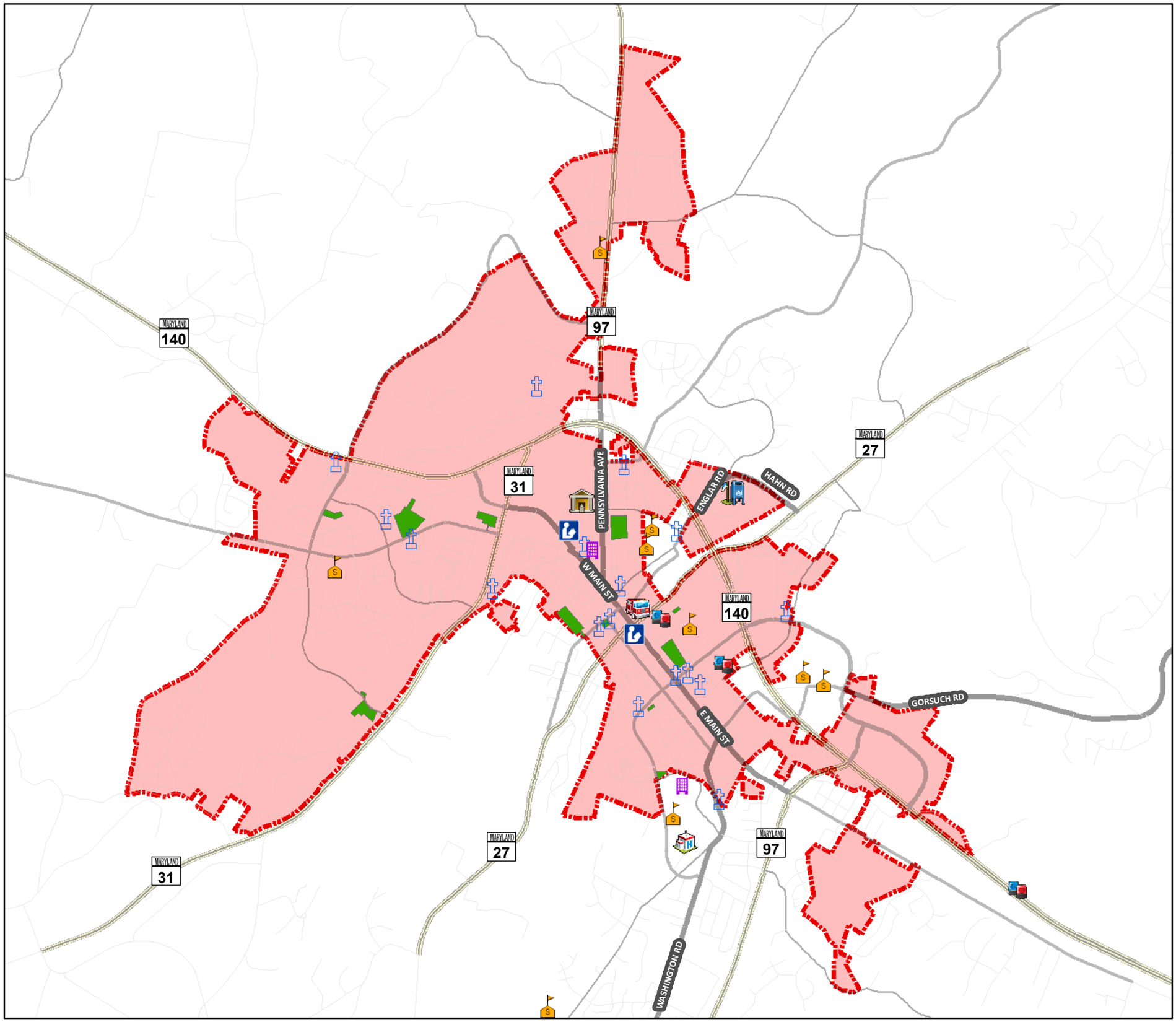
Objective 2: Promote efforts to inform and educate the public using programs designed to eliminate littering and increase recycling

a. Educate the public regarding the problems, health hazards, and additional costs that result from littering and illegal dumping

b. Maintain the proper number and/or size of trash receptacles and increase the opportunities to recycle on City-owned properties

c. Continue to develop volunteer clean-up programs and support major clean-up projects where feasible and appropriate.

d. Increase public awareness about the benefits of recycling through educational campaigns directed at the public and business sections of Westminster



City of Westminster Community Facilities

Legend

- Hospitals
- Libraries
- Post Offices
- Senior Centers
- Parks
- Police Stations
- Fire Stations
- Schools
- Colleges
- Places of Worship
- City Boundary

Map Not to Scale

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Interjurisdictional Coordination

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

Part 1: Existing Coordination

Chapter 14

Part 1: Existing Coordination

Part 2: Carroll County Master Plan

Part 3: Future of Interjurisdictional Coordination

Part 4: Town/County Agreement

Goals and Objectives

The primary formal agreement for interjurisdictional coordination between the City of Westminster and Carroll County is the City/County Agreement (also known as the Town/County Agreement). This agreement provides for coordinated participation in planning and joint review of subdivisions, development proposals, master plans, and annexations. Plats, plans, and other materials are exchanged between the City and the County for informational purposes and to provide staff members and elected officials the opportunity to comment. Certain County agencies review plans for conformance with City regulations and ordinances such as stormwater management and forest conservation. City and County staff also attend one another's Planning and Zoning Commission meetings in order to stay appraised of planning related activities in the other jurisdiction. In addition, the agreement clarifies the types of County services that are available to the City of Westminster, such as planning and zoning services, building permits and inspection, and data processing services for tax and utility billing.

Section 1: History of Interjurisdictional Coordination

In the past, comprehensive planning activities for the City of Westminster addressed the entire Westminster Community Planning Area and involved extensive participation by Carroll County Department of Planning staff. The 2004 update of the City of Westminster Comprehensive Plan had more limited involvement of County staff in part due the nature of the updates required for the 2004 plan, and in part due to changing work priorities at the County level. For the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, County staff has been kept informed of the Comprehensive Plan update through the City's liaison planner at the County.

Section 2: Westminster Community Planning Area

Three elements of the *City of Westminster Comprehensive Plan* have involved a coordinated effort between City and County staff: Environmental Resources, Transportation, and Water & Sewer. These elements in particular exhibit an inherent functional connection to the Westminster Community Planning Area as a whole.

Environmental Resources and Protection Element

The Environmental Resources element that appeared in the 1998 Comprehensive Plan was developed for all of Carroll County by County staff and an Interjurisdictional Steering Committee. The

Interjurisdictional Steering Committee consisted of representatives from the County and each of its municipalities. The Environmental Resources chapter includes those sections of the County Environmental Resources Plan that apply to the City of Westminster. Certain sections of the 2004 Environmental Resources Element have been updated by City staff for the 2009 Comprehensive Plan to reflect current conditions and practices and the element is now called the Environmental Resources and Protection Element to reflect the City's new environmental protection programs.

Transportation Element

The Transportation Element of this plan was developed in 2004 for the City of Westminster in a coordinated effort between City and County planning staff. County staff provided a significant source of traffic data through a consultant's study commissioned for the County's update of the Transportation element of the *Westminster Environs Community Comprehensive Plan*. The concurrent update of both plans has encouraged significant cooperation between City and County leadership regarding a vision for the transportation system serving the Westminster area over the next 20 years. Aspects of this vision are reflected and further developed in the Transportation Element. The 2009 Comprehensive Plan stresses the interjurisdictional coordination of the implementation of the plan with the County more than the updating process.

Water Resources Element

The final area in which there has been coordination between the City of Westminster and Carroll County is the Water Resources Element. The *Carroll County Master Plan for Water and Sewerage* was originally developed and is updated periodically through the joint cooperation of Carroll County and the municipalities that own and operate community water and sewer systems. Although not included in this document in its entirety, the *Carroll County Master Plan for Water and Sewerage* is included as part of Westminster's Comprehensive Plan by reference. Since 2007, the City of Westminster and Carroll County have worked together on developing the 2009 Westminster Water Resources Element, a new requirement by the State of Maryland, which has increased the mandatory components and details about how the City manages water resources than in past Water and Sewer Elements.

Part 2: Carroll County Master Plan

The current draft of the Master Plan for Carroll County is titled the "Pathways Plan." Carroll County Planning Staff presented a draft of the proposed Pathways Plan to the Carroll County Planning Commission on April 28, 2009. On May 4, 2009, the Planning Commission released the plan for public review and comment. The public review period lasted 60 days, starting May 11, 2009, and ending on July 10, 2009. The Commission held a public hearing following the 60-day review period, at which verbal comments and additional written comments were collected. The Commission is currently reviewing all of the collected comments on the draft and working on revisions to the draft of the Pathways Plan. The final draft of the Carroll County Master Plan will be published in 2010.

The Pathways are the key issues and topics discussed and addressed in the Pathways Plan. They do not include all topics typically addressed in a comprehensive plan. The Pathways are items viewed to be the most pressing for the future of Carroll County:

Pathway 1: Directing & Designing Growth

Address such questions as where future development should go and what it should look like

Pathway 2: Taking Care of Business

Looks at the needs for commercial and employment uses and where they should be located

Pathway 3: Networking Transportation

Analyzes the future transportation network that will improve efficiency and provide alternatives

Pathway 4: Connecting with Heritage

Considers the County's heritage from historic architecture to agricultural lifestyles

Pathway 5: Housing the Workforce

Focuses on creating opportunities for additional housing for moderate-income families

Pathway 6: Sustaining our Natural Systems

Studies environmental resources, mineral resources and water resources

Participation by the municipalities and planning councils in Carroll County is essential to the success of the Carroll County Master Plan. The municipalities have an important role to play in implementing the outcome. Each member of the Carroll County Council of Governments (COG) act as a liaison and coordinator with the town or planning council he or she represents to provide input from the members of the COG.

The Carroll County Master Plan outlines County goals and objectives for interjurisdictional coordination with the eight municipalities in Carroll County. These goals and objectives affirm the commitment of the County to coordinate planning and land use decisions with the municipalities.

Part 3: Future of Interjurisdictional Coordination

The level of interjurisdictional coordination between the City of Westminster and Carroll County has improved in recent years, although significant challenges remain. The rapid transition of Carroll County from a rural to exurban and suburban community has highlighted inefficiencies and differing methodologies between the two jurisdictions, particularly in the areas of growth and site development.

Concurrency Management Ordinance

The County's recent revision of the Concurrency Management ordinance presented an opportunity for the City and County to engage in dialogue regarding the pace of residential development in the County, and the impact on public facilities in the Westminster area.

County Growth Task Force

The Growth Task Force, consisting of County and municipal staff, developers, citizens groups, and quasi-governmental agencies, forwarded a report on the proposed changes to the Board of County Commissioners in January of 2004.

Council of Governments for Carroll County

The City has also participated in the formation of a Council of Governments for Carroll County. The Council of Governments will provide a forum for municipal and County leadership to discuss growth and development issues facing the County. The City envisions future participation in similar efforts to improve communication between the two jurisdictions.

Smart Growth

The City, County, and State, through the State Smart Growth legislation, recognize Westminster as an appropriate location to accommodate a portion of the projected future growth of the County. Continual efforts to improve communication and coordination are essential with respect to projects, plans, and policies that have impacts beyond jurisdictional boundaries.

Part 4: Town/County Agreement

Annexation procedures highlight the importance of efficient interjurisdictional coordination between the City of Westminster and Carroll County. In accordance with the provisions of the Town/County Agreement, the City and the County have agreed that the public health, safety, and welfare will best be served if the City and County coordinate responsibility for the annexation of appropriate properties into the corporate limits of the City of Westminster. The City and County have established the following policies to achieve continuity of municipal services and preserve the effectiveness of planning functions. These policies do not restrict the legislative powers of either the City or the County, and are subject to annual review and renewal through the renewal of the Town/County Agreement.

Policy 1: Future Corporate Limit Line

The City and County have agreed that future growth and development to be served by public facilities in the Westminster area should take place within the future corporate limits. The City and County will jointly agree upon and designate a future corporate limit line to clarify

expectations regarding the annexation of properties into the City. The line will be designated during the update to the County's Westminster Environs Plan.

Policy 2: Development of Property within Future Corporate Limits

When land is proposed for development within the future corporate limits, the County will require that land to be annexed to the City. The City will agree to accept the annexation of land within the future corporate limits. If annexation is not possible, the property owner will file an Irrevocable Declaration of Intent to Request Annexation with the City.

Policy 3: Development Procedures

Where land is proposed for development within the future corporate limits, the developer shall first obtain from the County a determination of whether the development process will be under the County regulations and procedures, with annexation to follow development, or under the City regulations and procedures, with annexation to occur prior to or concurrently with development. After seeking the recommendation of the City, the County will make this determination and communicate it to the developer and to the City. The County agrees that it will not approve development unless provision is made for annexation to the City, and the City agrees that it will not approve an annexation unless development has been completed under the County's jurisdiction or the county has determined that development will take place under the City's regulations and procedures. The City and County will seek comment and guidance of each other throughout the course of the development process.

Policy 4: Land with Existing Development

The City and County concur that land with existing development located within the designated future corporate limits should annex into the City.

Interjurisdictional Coordination Element

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan recognizes that although the basis for coordination with other jurisdictions and organizations is in place, the working relationships with many of these entities could be improved. The Interjurisdictional Coordination Element has been developed to facilitate increased cooperation and coordination among these groups.

Goals and Objectives

Goal J1:Enhance interjurisdictional coordination with Carroll County.

Objective 1: Develop and implement strategies and methods to improve the areas of coordination outlined by the Town/County Agreement, particularly in the areas of growth and development due to the City's status as a Priority Funding Area

a. Review the Town/County Agreement in coordination with the other municipalities in the County, and update the agreement as necessary

b. Implement the strategies outlined in the Municipal Growth Element about the growth and development within the City Growth Boundary

Objective 2: Continue coordination of activities with the Carroll County Department of Planning

a. Coordinate with Carroll County through the joint liaison planner as the County prepares and completes the Westminster Environs Community Comprehensive Plan

b. Continue to cooperate with the County in regard to updates of the Carroll County Master Plan for Water and Sewerage

c. Enlist the support of the Carroll County Bureau of Water Resource Management to identify water resources for increased water capacity in the Westminster area

d. Jointly revise development review procedures in collaboration with the Carroll County Bureau of Planning and Development Review

e. Support the County in the development and implementation of a County Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance

Objective 3: Enhance or establish working relationships with other Carroll County governmental agencies, including Transportation, Economic Development, School Facilities, Geographic Information Systems, and the Health Department

a. Establish contacts with key agencies and maintain close communications with these staff in regard to Westminster area projects or policies

Goal J2: Enhance interjurisdictional coordination with the State and local government agencies

Objective 1: Continue and enhance the working relationship with the State Department of Transportation in regard to road improvements, road access, and alternative modes of transportation.

a. Improve communications in regard to decision-making that could impact both the state and local jurisdiction

b. Explore opportunities to provide transit service to Westminster area residents

c. Continue joint planning for reconstruction of State highways in the Westminster area

d. Continue and enhance the working relationship with the Department of Housing and Community Development to improve housing options, rehabilitate older sections of the City, and preserve the City's historic resources

e. Work closely with State government staff so that local grant applications and projects correspond to the goals of the State Department of Housing and Community Development

f. Participate in training sessions offered by the State Department of Housing and Community Development

Objective 2: Continue and enhance the working relationship with the Maryland Office of Planning in regard to planning practices and data.

a. Stay familiar with Maryland Office of Planning Publications and provide feedback on the content and utility of such publications

b. Maintain a current version of Maryland Property View and report errors to the appropriate agencies

Objective 3: Identify opportunities to involve other State agencies in projects and initiatives that will meet existing and future needs of City residents.

a. Keep informed of new State initiatives and funding sources relevant to the City's needs

Goal J3: Enhance coordination with other public and private entities

Objective 1: Enhance coordination with other municipalities in Maryland.

a. Continue participation in the Maryland Municipal League

b. Promote sharing of information between municipalities to avoid duplication of effort

Objective 2: Coordinate with McDaniel College in regard to the development of the College's campus and the surrounding area.

a. Maintain communications with College officials, so that both the City and the College are aware of the other's projects and plans

b. Work closely with the College when development plans for College facilities are under review

2009 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Implementation

2009

CITY OF WESTMINSTER

What is the Implementation Element?

State of Maryland Article 66B states the planning commission has the function and duty to prepare a comprehensive plan for its jurisdiction, and to present this plan to the local legislative body for its consideration and adoption.

The comprehensive plan must serve as a guide to public and private actions and decisions to ensure the development of public and private property in appropriate relationships.

Recognizing the importance of designing land development regulations that implement the Plan, the Implementation Element is supposed to:

Address recommendations for land development regulations, encourage streamlined review of applications for development in areas designated for growth, the use of flexible development regulations to promote innovative and cost-saving site design, protect the environment, target economic development in areas designated for growth.

State Planning Vision found in this Element

Implementation - Strategies, policies, programs and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, State, and interstate levels to achieve these visions.

City of Westminster Purpose of the Implementation Element

The purpose of this chapter is to reiterate strategies for the implementation of the various goals, objectives, and policies set forth in the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. An implementation strategy is necessary to ensure that the Comprehensive Plan is used by community leaders as a guide to decision-making.

This Element follows the Smart Growth principle:

Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration

- To respond to a community's own sense of how and where it wants to grow
- To lead to creative and speedy resolution of development issues
- To build a greater community understanding of the importance of good planning and investment
- To involve the community early and often in the planning process in order to improve public support and create innovative strategies that fit the unique needs of each community
- To address the needs of the community which are best defined by the people who live and work there

Part 1: Overview of Implementation Strategy

Chapter 15

Part 1: Overview of Implementation Strategy

Part 2: Current Regulations

Part 3: Issues & Concerns with Zoning Ordinance

It is the intent that this chapter can be separately copied as a "policy plan" component. Minimum planning standards for local plans require the development of an implementation strategy which consists of several key components including the community programs and projects needed to meet the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan. Furthermore, the strategy will ensure that there are adequate public facilities to meet the standard of living desired by the community for existing residents and for the projected population for 10 to 20 years into the future.

This Implementation Element includes a general description of any land development regulations expected to be adopted or amended to help achieve the goals and objectives of the Comprehensive Plan in the next five years. The implementation strategy and work plan program should be revised every five years, with annual updates encouraged.

Section 1: Interagency Approach

The effort to develop the 2009 Comprehensive Plan has been an open and collaborative process involving federal and state agencies, local governments and public participation. This inter-agency, inter-disciplinary process ensured that the Plan evolved from a healthy diversity of backgrounds, interests, and agency missions. The flexibility and openness of this process will continue during implementation to allow for continual dialogue and improvements to the Plan. (See Chapter 14: Interjurisdictional Coordination).

Section 2: Involve Stakeholders & the Public

Outreach and public involvement have been an integral part of the development of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. The City of Westminster will continue to seek this input during the implementation of the Comprehensive Plan. Neighborhood Vision Workshops and Community Surveys will help promote public participation in the implementation of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan. (See Chapter 2: Public Participation).

Section 3: Flexibility

The 2009 Comprehensive Plan is a living document and its flexibility allows for further improvements as the City of Westminster refines individual projects and obtains new information. The Plan does not provide all the answers, it does, however, contain an aggressive and adaptive strategy that includes staff

review and a process for identifying and resolving conflicts of interest. This approach provides an efficient way to allow implementation to move forward now and for the agencies to make necessary mid-course corrections. Periodic updates of both the Comprehensive Plan and the Implementation Plan will allow the Mayor and Common Council to achieve the visions and goals of the community.

Section 4: Annual Review

In the past the Westminster Comprehensive Plan was reviewed every five to six years. The new approach for the 2009 Comprehensive Plan is to keep it an "active document." Once an implementation strategy is in place, the Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission will present an Annual Comprehensive Plan Status Report to the Mayor and Common Council. This report will describe the 2009 Comprehensive Plan recommended actions that have been completed in the previous year and address what recommended actions are to be implemented in the upcoming year.

Section 5: Comprehensive Plan Implementation Strategy & Work Plan

The City of Westminster will begin developing an Implementation Strategy and Work Plan during the winter of 2009. City Administration will hold a series of meetings with City staff, local officials and community organizations to review the adopted 2009 Comprehensive Plan, and to develop an Implementation Strategy and Work Plan, that outlines how the 2009 Comprehensive Plan will be implemented over the next six years. This gives those parties mentioned in the Plan an opportunity to evaluate their role in the future of the City of Westminster.

Part 2: Current Regulations

The City of Westminster has established various regulations to guide development in the City. These regulations determine the permitted land uses and densities of development, the process for development approval, management of stormwater runoff, design of water and sewer utility extensions, subdivision design, parking requirements, and landscaping requirements, all of which are applicable to development activity throughout Westminster. In addition, there are architectural design guidelines for the historic Central Business Zone in Downtown Westminster. Descriptions of each of these regulations and their level of effectiveness follow.

Section 1: Zoning Ordinance

The Land Use and Development Code of Westminster, Maryland is the Zoning Ordinance for the City and is codified as Chapter 164 of the City Code. The Zoning Ordinance regulates the uses permitted on a parcel, as well as the size and setbacks required for a parcel and the height of structures permitted. The purpose of these regulations is to guide land uses to appropriate areas of the City and to provide for a development density that is compatible with adjoining land uses and the carrying capacity of the land.

The commercial and industrial zoning districts are Business, Central Business, Central Commerce, Downtown Business, Restricted Industrial, General Industrial, and Planned Industrial.

Section 2: Subdivision Regulations

The Subdivision Regulations and Site Plan Review procedures are included as part of the Zoning Ordinance. Subdivision of land must be completed as described in the Subdivision Regulations. Information provided by the applicants includes the location of proposed lots and streets; land to be reserved for public facilities; soil removal and grading; stormwater management; and existing streams and floodplains. Subdivision plats are reviewed by staff for conformance with applicable regulations and are then presented to the Westminster Planning and Zoning Commission for a decision.

Section 3: Site Plan Review

Site Plan Review provides an opportunity for the City to review development proposed on individual parcels of land. The purpose of this review is to ensure that the proposed development meets design standards and complies with any applicable regulations. The applicant must provide information on existing and proposed streets, buildings, and topography/grading; setbacks and heights of buildings; signs; fencing and landscaping; off-street parking, loading, and walkways; and drainage. Site Plans are reviewed by staff and forwarded to the Planning and Zoning Commission and the Director of Planning, Zoning and Development for a decision.

Section 4: Landscaping Requirements

Landscape reviews are completed in accordance with the City of Westminster Landscape Manual. The Landscape Manual is intended to provide for an enhanced physical environment and visual appearance through the planting of trees and other vegetation. The Landscape Plan must include information regarding the location and species of existing and proposed plants, measures for protecting existing plants, and the number of plants required and provided. Landscape Plans are included with subdivision plats and drawings and with site plans.

Section 5: Architectural Design Standards & Standards for Renovation

Architectural design guidelines, known as Standards for Renovations, were initially adopted in 1978 and currently apply to the portion of Main Street zoned Central Business, generally located between Anchor Street and Longwell Avenue. The purpose of the guidelines is to maintain the historic appearance of downtown Westminster, which is a significant draw for both regular customers and visitors to the area. Projects are currently reviewed for compliance with the design guidelines by staff, and a design guidelines committee makes a decision on each project.

Part 3: Issues & Concerns with Zoning Ordinance

There are several minor issues with respect to the effectiveness of land use, dimensional requirements, and the extent of the zoning districts in the Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Ordinance generally provides for the separation of incompatible land uses; however, certain residential uses are permitted in the Business Zone and the Planned Regional Shopping Center Zone. These two zoning districts are often characterized by heavy and fast-moving automobile traffic. Residential uses may not be appropriate within this environment. In addition, residential uses may not represent the highest and best use of land zoned Business or Planned Regional Shopping Center zones, leading to commercial uses intruding upon other zoning classifications, such as industrial zones, to meet market demand.

The dimensional requirements of some zones may not achieve the intended design and intensity of development. For example, the R-7,500 zone is located primarily in the older sections of Westminster where houses were constructed with setbacks and lot sizes much smaller than is permitted by the ordinance. As a result, redevelopment or subdivision of these lots, while in keeping with the neighborhood, may require a property owner to seek relief in the form of an administrative adjustment. Alternatively, the owner may disrupt the existing character of the neighborhood in an attempt to follow the regulations. Providing dimensional requirements for development that would result in a layout similar to existing buildings would in turn provide a continuous building line that is appropriate to the neighborhood and attractive to pedestrians.

An issue regarding land use is the lack of a zone specifically reserving land for townhouse and multi-family development. An insufficient amount of land available for these residential uses may lead to a shortage of affordable housing, the conversion of single-family homes to apartments, and an increased burden on the transportation network as the overall density of the City drops. The creation of a zoning district specifically for townhouses, condominiums, and apartments would address these issues and preserve parcels most suited for these more intense residential uses. In addition, the aggregate quality of affordable housing would improve as new structures take advantage of advancements in construction materials and practices.

There are three zoning districts in which the effectiveness of regulation is impacted by the geographic extent of the zone. The Mixed Use Infill Zone, recently added to the Zoning Ordinance, is not yet represented on the Zoning Map. Parcels suitable for rezoning to the MUI Zone have been identified and are shown on Figure 8.2 in the Land Use chapter. Development of these properties under the provisions of the MUI Zone would involve a vertical mix of uses, utilize design elements compatible with existing development, and provide additional multi-family residential opportunities. The reclassification of these properties to the MUI Zone should be studied further to determine the optimal timing of redevelopment along the MD Route 27 corridor.

The Historic District Zone is an overlay zone that provides for the preservation of important architectural features. Inclusion in the Historic District Zone is voluntary, and thus far only two properties are subject

to the provisions of the zone. Designation of a contiguous and more comprehensive Historic District Zone would provide more effective protection of historic architecture.

Although the regulations for the Agricultural-Residential Zone are included in the zoning text, there is no Agricultural-Residential Zone shown on the Zoning Map. Furthermore, the entire city is planned to be served by public water and sewer, which is not typically extended to lots of the required five acres in size. A determination should be made as to the appropriateness of this zone in the City of Westminster corporate limits, and consideration should be given to the continued inclusion or elimination of the Agricultural-Residential Zone in the Zoning Ordinance