

**ALLEGANY COUNTY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
2002 UPDATE**

SECTION I PLAN CONCEPT

PURPOSE OF COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING IN ALLEGANY COUNTY

Comprehensive planning is preparation for future rational and equitable use of an area's physical resources through the public decision making process. To be effective, comprehensive planning must coordinate governmental and private actions. Its primary purpose is to achieve the goals of the people of the County, while avoiding waste, inefficiency, and duplication of effort. As such, planning must be a continuing effort and must also be flexible enough to adjust to changing circumstances.

Further, it is the function of the Comprehensive Plan to serve as a guide to public and private actions and decisions to ensure the appropriate development of public and private property. It should be noted that the implementation of local government plans requires some regulation of development to protect the general public health, safety, and welfare. In general, however, planning is intended to be used as a tool to channel development where it can be most effective for the community. Also, planning can mean better, more effective use of tax revenues. It can also mean wiser use of land, water, and other resources. As such, the Comprehensive Plan and its elements are designed to be used as a tool to guide County elected officials and government agencies in the decision making process. It can also guide municipal and state officials, local service organizations, industrial leaders, large land holders, home builders, and other citizens to plan in concert with overall county goals.

METHODOLOGY FOR DEVELOPING THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN FOR ALLEGANY COUNTY

The method used by the Planning Commission in developing this plan is summarized as follows:

First, the Planning Commission has collected and updated available data relating to the County's population, natural character, community facilities, land use pattern and other data. This information has been analyzed and summarized in a series of reports as part of the planning process.

Second, the Planning Commission has solicited citizen views on how the county should develop and has wed these views to the conclusions derived from the data analysis. A summary of Citizens comments and the results of a citizen survey are included in Appendix A.

Third, the Planning Commission has developed a set of visions and goals to guide the future development of the county.

Fourth, The Planning Commission is translating these goals into specific policies, objectives, and recommendations to fit the specific needs of the County.

Fifth, the Planning Commission and its staff are continually working with County officials to develop and refine programs for implementing the policies, objectives, and recommendations in the above framework.

It must be recognized that some of these recommendations can only be implemented by citizens or citizen groups, or by municipal, state or federal agencies. In other words, the County cannot carry out every proposal in the plan without help from citizens, or other government agencies. Nevertheless, the policies and recommendations set a course for future development in the County, and should be an aid for citizens and other governments to cooperate with the County in the planning program.

It should be emphasized that any plan can only be implemented if it is realistic in terms of design and available resources; and only if it conveys the attitudes of the citizens living in the area. In that regard, this plan is designed to be used by the citizens of Allegany County in aiding the County's future development, and it attempts to reflect those characteristics unique to the County and its citizens. Furthermore, the plan will only be as successful in promoting the orderly future development of the County as its citizens and their chosen representatives desire.

Finally, the plan does not intend to set policies and standards for all aspects of planning and related activities, but is designed to be flexible in accommodating modifications, additions, and revisions as more data become available and as the County's needs change over time.

PLAN ELEMENTS

The Allegany County Comprehensive Plan contains the following elements:

1. A statement of Visions, Goals, and Objectives which are intended to serve as a guide for the future development of Allegany County.
2. A Transportation Plan Element which shows proposals for the most appropriate methods and routes for transporting people and goods within Allegany County and between Allegany County and other locations to the year 2020. These methods include, but are not limited to, a highway and street system, railways, airways, mass transit, pipelines, transmission lines, communications, as well as terminal facilities.
3. A Community Facilities Plan Element which shows proposals for the most appropriate locations for institutional uses such as schools, libraries, fire and police stations, government buildings, and recreation facilities. This element also shows proposals for the expansion of public water and sewer facilities to the year 2020.
4. A Mineral Resources Element which identifies the general location of mineral resources involving coal, sandstone, limestone and natural gas within Allegany County. This element also identifies methods whereby these resources can be protected from urban type uses and recommends ways to balance mineral resources extraction with urban type uses.
5. A Sensitive Areas Element which contains detailed recommendations to protect sensitive areas from the adverse effects of development. These sensitive areas include:
 - a. Streams and their buffers
 - b. 100 year floodplains
 - c. Habitat of threatened and endangered species
 - d. Steep slopes
6. A Land Use Plan Element which shows proposals for the most appropriate pattern for the general location, character, and extent of Land Use in Allegany County to the Year 2020. This element includes proposed urban land uses such as residential, commercial, industrial, and institutional

uses, as well as non-urban uses such as agriculture, forestry, mineral development and open space.

7. A Streamlining and Flexibility Element which contains the Planning Commission's recommendations for regulating land development to implement the plan. This element contains suggestions for streamlining the review of permit applications and subdivision plats, as well as providing for flexible development regulation. The element also provides for the use of innovative techniques in providing for economic development in areas designated for urban growth.

SECTION II BACKGROUND REPORT SUMMARY

LOCATION AND GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF ALLEGANY COUNTY

As noted on Plate 1, Allegany County lies in Western Maryland, and is bounded on the west by Garrett County, Maryland; on the east by Washington County, Maryland; on the north by Somerset, Bedford, and Fulton Counties, Pennsylvania; and on the south by Mineral, Hampshire, and Morgan Counties, West Virginia.

The County's boundaries are the Chisholm line on the west, the Mason and Dixon line on the north, Sideling Hill Creek on the east, and the Potomac River on the south. The County is about 40 miles long from east to west and varies from 5 to 20 miles wide from north to south, comprising an area of 426 square miles or 272,460 acres. As noted in the Natural Setting Report, the County lies in the Appalachian Mountains, partly in the Ridge and Valley Physiographic Province, and partly in the Allegheny Mountains Physiographic Province. The County also lies entirely within the Potomac River Basin and the Chesapeake Bay Drainage area.

The County is approximately 120 miles southeast of Pittsburgh, PA; 140 miles northwest of Baltimore, MD, and Washington, DC; and 320 miles southwest of New York City. Allegany County was officially established in 1789 from land that was part of Washington County. Until 1872, present day Garrett County was a part of Allegany County.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF ALLEGANY COUNTY

The historical background for Allegany County can be explained fairly well by looking at various eras or time periods.

Pre-European Settlement

The first era involves native Americans, who probably traveled into or through this area as long as 10,000 to 12,000 years ago. Until the 18th century, they used this area as a place of residence, and sustained himself by hunting, fishing, and rudimentary agriculture. During this era, Native Americans developed a

system of trails throughout the Appalachian ridges and valleys linking other areas both north and south with what is now Allegany County.

Early European Settlement

The second era, beginning in the mid-18th century, involved the early settlement of the County by European settlers. The settlers were drawn to the area because the Potomac River Valley afforded fairly easy communications and travel through the Appalachian Mountains into the Ohio Valley to the west. During this time, hunting, trapping, and subsistence agriculture, along with exploration and surveying of lands were the major pursuits.

Transportation Development

The third era, also beginning in the mid-18th century, involved the development of a transportation network through Allegany County from the eastern seaboard to the Ohio Valley.

Beginning with the French and Indian War, trails, then roads, then railroads, crossed the region. A canal, though never completed to the Ohio valley, was built into Allegany County from Washington, D.C. This transportation network provided one of the major routes for the movement of settlers and their supplies across the Appalachians to the developing Midwest, and in turn provided for the movement of agricultural goods and natural resource products to the Eastern Seaboard from the Appalachians and the Midwest.

Coal Mining Era

The fourth era, beginning in the mid-19th century, involved mineral development, particularly intensive coal mining in the western portion of Allegany County in the Georges Creek Coal Basin. At the same time, the rail network was expanded to accommodate this extractive industry. The population of the County also doubled between 1880 and 1930 from approximately 40,000 to 80,000 people as the demand for labor increased both in the mining industry and the transportation industry.

Industrial Era

The fifth era, starting around 1920, signaled the close of a century of growth related to the extraction of minerals and other resources, and the movement of goods and the rise of an industrial economy. Several large factories were built in the County to utilize the labor supply made available as the momentum of the mining and transportation industries declined. By 1940, as evidenced by a slowing of population growth, a period of near stabilization of the county's economy had begun as the factories provided stable employment which essentially replaced the mining and transportation jobs in a gradual manner. This era lasted through the 1970's, as the factories aged and became less competitive in a market that favored new technology and lower production costs. By the mid-1980's, nearly all of the large-scale factories in the County had either closed or were working with a much reduced workforce.

Post Industrial Era

Today, after more than 50 years as an industrial center, Allegany County stands at a unique crossroads, both in time and place. Increased energy demands nationwide have brought new promise to the use of the coal deposits in Allegany County and the surrounding area. With a revitalized transportation network becoming a reality, with water and sewer services being available throughout most of the urban part of the County, and with several large-scale employment centers in the works, Allegany County is beginning to re-assert itself as a major focal point for commercial, industrial and service activities in the Central Appalachians. It is up to the citizens of Allegany County to decide how this new era will be managed. The Comprehensive Plan is presented as a starting point.

THE REGIONAL SETTING

Allegany County is nearly equidistant between the metropolitan areas of Baltimore-Washington and Pittsburgh. The County is also nearly centered between the Megalopolis complex on the eastern seaboard, and the Mid-West Industrial Complex centered on the southern Great Lakes.

These two metropolitan complexes have been developing through time as numerous smaller population centers and their service areas within the two regions have grown and merged with one another.

Megalopolis, for example, extends from north of Boston, Massachusetts, to south of Washington, DC, and is projected to eventually extend to Richmond and Norfolk, Virginia, as shown on Plate 2. Eventually, Chambersburg, Pa., Hagerstown, MD, Martinsburg, WV., and Winchester, VA may all become part of this large complex. The Mid-West Industrial Complex, on the other hand, while not as densely settled as Megalopolis, is projected to extend from near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, through Chicago, along the Great Lakes to Detroit, Cleveland, Buffalo and Pittsburgh. Eventually, the small centers of Uniontown, Morgantown, Fairmont, and Clarksburg may be included in this industrial complex.

It is very important to note that these developing metropolitan complexes are separated from one another by the Appalachian Mountains; and because of this topographic barrier, these two regions will probably remain separate in terms of land development and population density for the foreseeable future.

The Cumberland - Allegany County Urban Service Area

Because of the development of the two metropolitan complexes named above, and because of the topographic barriers which the Appalachians present, Allegany County and Cumberland are in a rather unique position. Of all the moderate-sized cities in the Central Appalachian area of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Northern West Virginia, and Northern Virginia, only Williamsport, State College, Altoona, and Johnstown, Pennsylvania, Harrisonburg, Virginia, and Cumberland are currently outside the direct influence of the two large metropolitan regions. Depending on how these small cities react to their relatively isolated situations, they may either expand their service areas by becoming more attractive and offering more services, or they may see their service areas contract by allowing the two larger regions on either side attract both people and services away from their smaller urban areas. In addition, these small cities may also compete with each other for these same services along their northern and southern boundaries.

The service area for Allegany County, as defined by the Planning Commission, is shown on Plate 3. Note that the focal point for the service area is centered in the Cumberland - LaVale Corridor where most goods and services are available.

The Allegany County Service Area was determined by considering topographic barriers and the travel distance between Cumberland and the adjacent cities of Uniontown, Johnstown, Altoona, Chambersburg, Hagerstown, Martinsburg, Winchester, Harrisonburg, Clarksburg, and Morgantown. The major ridges and streams were considered where they are natural barriers to travel. The resulting service area shape is elongated to the north and south and narrower to the east and west, conforming to the general orientation of the Appalachian ridges.

Major Transportation Routes in the Allegany County Service Area

Transportation is a key item in developing the concept of the Allegany County Service Area. At the present time, the Allegany County area is served by the CSX Railway System, the U.S. Air commuter service, and a number of all-weather highways, including Route I-68 which connects Cumberland to both Morgantown and Hagerstown.

The CSX System includes a number of rail lines currently in use in the Allegany County area. While most of these lines are designed for freight service between the mid-west and the eastern seaboard, they do have the local effect of centering rail-yard activity in Cumberland.

Plate 4 shows the major highways in the vicinity of the Allegany County Service Area. In this case, major north-south and east-west highways which pass through or near Cumberland intersect at or near Hagerstown, Morgantown, Winchester, Altoona, Johnstown, and also at smaller towns such as Romney, Somerset, and Bedford.

Plate 5 shows a schematic of traffic volume in the tri-state area in the early 1990's. Highest east-west traffic counts were on the Pennsylvania Turnpike near Bedford and on I-70 near Hagerstown. Highest north-south counts were on U. S. 119 near Uniontown and on I-81 near Winchester. The completion of I-68 between Hancock and Morgantown, has resulted in higher traffic counts along that corridor in Allegany County. However, much of this traffic is the "through" variety and will not reflect the true nature of the services available or the attractiveness of any particular center. For example, Bedford, Pennsylvania, and Hancock, Maryland, both are on high volume through highways, but neither of them are regional centers of the same magnitude as Cumberland, or Altoona, Pennsylvania. Both of these cities are on highways

having less through traffic, but offer a larger variety of employment, commerce, and service opportunities, because they are larger urban centers.

Population in the Allegany County Service Area

In 2000, the population of Allegany County was 74,930 persons. At the same time, the population of the entire county service area was approximately 194,000 people as shown on Plate 6. More than 50% of the population is found in the area within 5 miles of Cumberland (approximately 70,000 persons) and in the Frostburg-Georges Creek-Keyser area (nearly 40,000 people). The remaining persons are scattered throughout small towns and outlying agricultural and mining areas in the region. However, population growth is greatest in the outlying areas, with nearly 6000 additional people being added to the regional population since 1990.

Population density outside of west-central Allegany County is less than 6 persons/square mile in most of the service area. Because of this relatively light density, many people in the outlying parts of the area must travel long distances for services. Therefore, the urban center which provides better opportunities or services will attract these people, rather than the one which is closest.

In the case of the Allegany County service region, people in the outlying parts of the region may choose to travel to Hagerstown, Winchester, Harrisonburg, Altoona, Johnstown, Uniontown, or Morgantown, if the Allegany County area does not appear as attractive in providing opportunities or services.

Reviving the Concept of Allegany County-Cumberland as a Regional Focal Point

Allegany County and Cumberland have served as a regional focal point since the establishment of settlements in the Appalachians over 200 years ago. In fact, prior to the development of the Interstate Highway System and the decline in rail service in the early 1960's, the County had developed a strong image as the major center for a large part of its service area.

With the initial development of the Interstate Highway System and with the decline of rail systems in the area, Allegany County became less important as a destination for those people, goods, and services moving through the area. It thus became increasingly easier for people to travel to centers outside the

Allegheny County region, rather than travel to Allegheny County for various goods and services. However, with the construction of the Appalachian Highway System, including I-68 and new U.S. 220. Allegheny County can begin to more easily attract people both inside and outside the region.

Because of the unusual shape of the western part of the State of Maryland, the Allegheny County Service Area cuts across state boundaries and includes several counties in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. However, most Federal and State grant programs which have come into being since the early 1960's, including the Appalachian Regional Commission Development Program, follow state boundaries. Thus, for many grant programs, Allegheny County is included with Washington and Garrett Counties or with other Maryland Counties further east. Although much of Garrett County is a part of Allegheny County's service area, Washington County has its own focal point in Hagerstown. In addition, parts of Somerset and Bedford Counties are in the Allegheny County Service Area, but are included with Altoona and Johnstown for grant programs. In West Virginia, those parts of Mineral, Hampshire, Grant and Hardy Counties which are in the Allegheny County Service Area are in yet another region for many grant programs.

While there has been general acceptance of this administrative arrangement for Federal and State grant programs, Allegheny County must make every effort to revive and enhance its importance as a focal point for goods, services, and opportunities, for a broad region of Western Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia. Both State and Federal planning and development efforts should be made more flexible to allow centers such as the Allegheny County Service Area to be considered as a more cohesive unit.

THE COUNTY SETTING

The location of Allegheny County in the Appalachian mountains has affected the development of the County since the first pioneer set foot here over 200 years ago. The existence of the Potomac Valley as a gateway across the eastern ridges to the Allegheny Mountains probably had more to do with the site selection for the location of Cumberland than other factors.

Georges Creek Coal Basin

The discovery of coal in the Georges Creek Coal Basin was another important natural factor in determining why the area developed as it has. The settlement of the City of Frostburg and the siting of the

towns in the Georges Creek and Jennings Run Valleys were all influenced by their proximity to coal, iron ore or related natural resources.

Although a declining industry after the end of World War II, coal has become more important to the County and region since 1970, and is one key to the future economic health of the area, as an energy source not only for Allegany County, but for other areas as well.

In Allegany County, marketable coal is located only in the Georges Creek Coal Basin, west of Dan's Mountain, Piney Mountain, and Little Allegheny Mountain. As documented by the U.S. Bureau of Mines, there are 14 major coal seams in the Georges Creek Coal Basin containing, in total, over 350,000,000 tons of recoverable coal. This amount is greater than all the coal mined in the preceding 200 years in the County.

Topography - Steep Slopes

Aside from the location of coal in the Georges Creek Basin, and the Potomac Valley transportation corridor, the other major natural feature which continues to influence the County's development is the topography of the County. Over 50%, or approximately 150,000 acres of the County's land area is on slopes of greater than 25% grade. Of the remaining land, over 68,000 acres have slopes between 8 and 25% grade, while only 55,000 acres have a slope of less than 8% grade. To date, nearly all of the urban development in the County has occurred on slopes between 0 and 8% grade. Additionally, some of the best agricultural soils in the County are found on these lands. Further, nearly every major stream valley and alluvial flood plain also occurs on these lands. Thus, urban land uses, agricultural land uses, and stream flood plains all occur and compete for approximately 20% of the County's land surface. The remaining land, occurring on slopes steeper than 8% grade, has been used for agriculture, mining, forestry, wildlife habitat, watershed protection areas, orchards, and grazing lands, and some limited urban uses.

Soils

Another natural feature closely related to topography is soil type and condition. Nearly all of the soils best suited for urban or agricultural use (Natural Soil Groups B and C, according to Natural Resources

Conservation Service guidelines) occur on slopes of less than 8% grade and are well-drained and fertile. These Group B and C soils (not including flood plain soils) are concentrated in the following places in the County: The Potomac Valley between McCoole and Mexico Farms; the Piney Plains area, the Flintstone-Twiggtown area, the LaVale-Ellerslie area, and the uplands surrounding Mt. Savage, Frostburg, and Midland. To date, most of the prime soils in the Frostburg area, LaVale, and parts of the Potomac Valley areas have been converted to urban use. The remaining prime soils are still being used mostly for agricultural purposes or are in brush or forest cover.

Public Water Supply

A final natural feature, in terms of future development in Allegany County, is the location of public water supplies. The County currently has 3 major sources of public water supply. (Plate 7). Oddly enough, all three source areas are outside the County's boundaries. The Cumberland supply, on Evitts Creek, is located in Bedford County, Pennsylvania, while the Frostburg and Westernport supplies are located in Garrett County. Frostburg's source of water is Piney Creek, while Westernport is supplied from Savage River. All three of these supplies involve impoundments, dependent to a large extent on surface runoff. Several other sources of community surface water supply are located in the western part of the County while a number of smaller water supply basins are located in Garrett County.

Most rural residents outside the service areas of public water supplies depend on wells and springs for a water supply. While the rock units in the County do not yield large amounts of water, most wells and springs provide adequate supplies for scattered use but do not appear sufficient for large scale community use.

However, Blue Spring near North Branch, and Murley Branch spring near Flintstone appear to have adequate flows (as indicated in State Water Resource records) for community use or as supplements to existing supplies. Additionally, wells drilled into several rock formations in the Georges Creek Basin have been utilized to supplement the Frostburg system and several smaller Georges Creek systems.

Historic Economic and Population Growth in Allegany County

As noted in the Visions Element of the Comprehensive Plan, the economic growth of the County and region was historically tied to transportation, mining, and trade within the County service area prior to 1920. During the period 1880 and 1920, the population of the County grew from approximately 38,000 to nearly 70,000 people, as both the transportation and mining industries experienced rapid growth. In fact, in 1910, employment in the mining industry alone totaled over 5,000 persons in the Georges Creek Basin.

The decades prior to 1920 represented a high point in coal production and mining and transportation employment in the County. By 1930, less than 2,500 miners were employed, and by 1940, the total dropped to nearly 1,600. Both the 1950's and 1960's saw employment below 500 miners. Today, although production of coal has increased modestly since 1970, mining employment remains near the same level as the past several decades, as new mining methods and mechanization have replaced the army of miners of years gone by. Increased demand for coal as an energy source for projects like the AES power plant at Mexico Farms may spark increased mining activity in the county in the future, but mining technology improvements will probably eliminate the need for vast increases in mining employment.

Coinciding with the decline of the mining and transportation industries, several large manufacturing plants located in the County in the 1920's to take advantage of the existing work force. The establishment of the Celanese and Kelly Springfield plants in the Cumberland area and the expansion of the West Virginia Pulp & Paper Mill at Luke enabled the population and the economy to continue to grow until 1950 when the population of the county peaked at nearly 90,000 persons and the work force grew to over 32,000 people. (See Plate 8) Manufacturing accounted for over 32% of the County work force at that time.

Since 1950, the population of the County has declined to 74,930 persons while the work force has stabilized near 32,000 people. However, the make-up of the work force has changed to a service oriented economy with a more than 50% decline in manufacturing and transportation employment, coupled with a doubling of the number of workers in the professional and service industries. At the same time, the

number of women in the work force has increased dramatically by over 6,500 workers, while the number of men employed has declined by nearly the same number of workers.

Plate 9 shows population trends by regions of the County since 1930. It is interesting to note the shift in population away from the older settled areas, particularly between 1950 and 1980. This trend corresponds with the pattern of suburban land development in the County since 1950. Both LaVale and the Cresaptown-Rawlings area (Middle Potomac) grew in population at the expense of Cumberland and the Georges Creek communities prior to 1980. Although a number of suburban areas lost population during the 1980's, the trend away from the older settled areas has continued. With the extension of County roads, water and sewer lines, and the relocation of commercial land uses to suburban areas, this trend shows no sign of reversing itself in the near future, unless both private and public actions are coordinated to this end.

While some of Allegany County's population has also shifted to Mineral County, West Virginia, this shift is not reflected in the current census statistics because of out-migration from Mineral County. Nevertheless, residential development in and around Ridgeley, Short Gap, Fort Ashby, and Keyser is attributable to the influence of Cumberland and Allegany County, and will probably continue so long as real estate taxes remain lower in Mineral County than in Allegany County.

Historic Urban Development in Allegany County

Plate 10 shows the extent of urban development in the County, circa 1900. The map shows that growth was primarily concentrated in the urban center of Cumberland, and in the smaller communities of Frostburg, Lonaconing, Westernport, Barton, Midland, Eckhart, and Mt. Savage. In fact, the communities in the Georges Creek Basin, with the exception of Frostburg, had nearly developed to their current size by 1900. Urban development throughout the County in 1900 was tied very closely to the mining industry and to the rail transportation system (both freight and passenger service) with Cumberland and the Georges Creek Communities linked by the C & P Railroad and other remaining railways. The communities of LaVale, Cresaptown, Potomac Park and Rawlings were very small rural centers in 1900.

By 1950, much urban growth had occurred in the southern and eastern sides of Cumberland, and in LaVale, Potomac Park, Cresaptown, Bedford Road and Bowman's Addition (Plate 11). This growth was generally associated with the location of the Celanese Plant near Cresaptown and the Kelly-Springfield plant in Cumberland. In addition, the advent of the automobile allowed people to live farther from their place of employment. The large amount of growth in LaVale during this period was directly related to this new travel factor. At the same time, the decline of the coal industry and the removal of much of the rail transit system led to decline in the rate of urban growth in the Georges Creek communities.

Plate 12 shows the extent of urban development in 1990 in the County. New urban growth after 1950 has been tied to the shifting of the population rather than to population increase. The population declined to approximately 75,000 by 1990, a drop of nearly 15,000 from the 1950 total. Despite this population loss, urban growth continued at a level near that of preceding years as families grew smaller, housing lots grew larger, and many commercial and light industrial businesses, as well as government facilities moved from the centers of the established towns to suburban areas in LaVale and Cresaptown, and into other new suburbs near Cumberland, Frostburg, and Westernport. Major residential growth between 1950 and 1990 occurred on Haystack Mountain, (annexed into Cumberland), LaVale, Winchester Road, Bel Air (near Cresaptown), Rawlings, Rt. 51 east of Cumberland, and at several sites near Frostburg and Westernport. Most new commercial activities were centered in western LaVale, South Cumberland, Naves Crossroads, and east Frostburg, all sites of major highway intersections. New industrial growth occurred at North Branch/Mexico Farms, and at Bowling Green.

The trend away from mass transportation carriers to the private car continued from 1950 and culminated in the early 1970's as the last remaining private transit company fell into financial difficulty and was purchased and operated by the County government. The location of nearly all new residential, commercial, and industrial land uses in suburban areas of the County during this time followed the lead of other urban areas around the United States and was directly tied to the increasing use of the automobile.

After 1950, a new growth factor entered the picture, the location and availability of water and sewer service. Much new growth in the County since that date has been directly related to the provision or extension of water and sewer lines in the Cumberland, LaVale, Frostburg, and Cresaptown areas. In fact,

because of State public health laws and policies with respect to private wells and septic systems, it appears probable that future urban growth in the County will be even more closely tied to the availability of public water and sewage service, than it has in the past. Thus, the County and municipal governments must carefully coordinate the extension of these services so that new growth is not accomplished at the expense of existing communities. Conversely, orderly development beyond municipal boundaries should not be stymied or held up by the service providers.

SECTION III VISIONS – GOALS – OBJECTIVES

PLAN VISIONS

In its 1992 session, the General Assembly passed the Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992. One of the key provisions of this Act is the implementation of 7 Visions for future development in the State of Maryland. These Visions relate not only to new urban development, but also to conservation of resources, protection of sensitive areas, and stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and its drainage basin. In 1997, the General Assembly passed the Smart Growth Act which added an Eighth Vision and set forth the guidelines for determining Priority Funding Areas in each county. Vision #7 is the vision which was added to the program.

This Visions, Goals, Objectives, and Policy framework shall be the County's principal source of Land Use, environmental, and growth policy, and all other County plans shall be consistent with and supportive of that framework.

This Plan and any future updates will include the following Visions.

1. Development is concentrated in suitable areas;

The intent of this Vision is that investments for roads, water and sewerage facilities, schools, transportation, and other facilities will support new growth in existing communities or in areas specifically designated for growth.

2. Sensitive areas are protected;

The intent of this Vision is that certain designated sensitive areas (including steep slopes, habitat for threatened and endangered species, streams and their buffers, 100-year floodplains) are to be protected from the adverse impacts of development

3. In rural areas, growth is directed to existing population centers and resource areas are protected;

This Vision works hand in hand with Vision 1, by encouraging the concentration of growth in existing urban centers. Its basic premise is that State and local governments should look to existing communities

as a focus of development activity, thus protecting the land resources of the State, keeping in mind the existing historical and cultural characteristics of those communities.

4. Stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and the land is a universal ethic;

The focus of this Vision is to change the way government and the citizens of Allegany County think and act in their daily lives. Environmental degradation and inefficient use of land and resources in the Chesapeake Bay Region is a cumulative result of individual lifestyle choices over the last half century.

5. Conservation of resources, including a reduction in resource consumption, is practiced;

Conservation of resources and the efficient use of land are intricately intertwined. Conservation of energy, water, soil, air, and other resources is necessary in a consumer-driven economy. Within the context of economic growth, resource protection, and growth management, conservation policies must be developed which work in concert with land development and land preservation programs.

6. To assure the achievement of paragraphs (1) through (5) of this subsection, economic growth is encouraged and regulatory mechanisms are streamlined;

Many of the problems associated with existing land development practices are aggravated by the cumulative effect of existing regulations at the Federal, State and local level. Practices must be reviewed to assure that they support the economic development of planned growth areas while continuing to protect sensitive resources within those areas.

7. Adequate public facilities and infrastructure under the control of the County or a municipal corporation are available or planned in areas where growth is to occur.

The intent of this vision is to assure that public water and sewer facilities are either in place or proposed in conjunction with new development in compliance with the County's Priority Funding Area Map.

8. Funding mechanisms are addressed to achieve these visions.

Long-term financial benefits to the County government can be achieved through a logical and efficient development pattern. In the short term, existing infrastructure construction, maintenance, and related service needs must be met to make the achievement of those efficient development patterns a reality. Existing and innovative mechanisms to provide adequate funds must be explored.

COUNTY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In addition to the 8 Visions established by the State of Maryland, Allegany County has a number of goals and objectives which it has been working toward since the adoption of the 1978 Comprehensive Plan. These Goals continue to be a County priority as we move toward the Year 2020. This set of goals and objectives are part of the framework for the Comprehensive Plan, and are designed to fit the character of the County and its service area.

Goal 1

Develop a sound, balanced, diversified economy

Objectives for Goal 1

- Promote Allegany County and its planned service area as a focal point for urban services, activities, and opportunities in the Central Appalachian Mountain area.
- Provide an ample supply of physically suitable and effectively located industrial and related employment sites, which are served by adequate transportation, water and sewerage, and other necessary facilities, and which are near existing population centers.
- Encourage the location of new industries, particularly those related to markets which capitalize on energy production related to the coal industry, and new industries which are related to emerging markets and new technologies.
- Encourage the growth of local, small scale manufacturing and service industries, particularly as they relate to new technologies.
- Promote economic development by encouraging wholesale and retail trade, services, and tourism, particularly as related to historic and recreational sites, and cultural events.

Goal 2

Provide for the wise use and management of the County's natural resources and for the protection of Sensitive Areas.

Objectives for Goal 2

- Ensure compatibility between man-made development and the natural environment.
- Protect Sensitive Areas and conserve air, water, vegetation, land, and historic resources.
- Provide for the proper development and use of the County's mineral reserves, prime agricultural soils, and prime forest lands and protect these lands from urban and other incompatible land uses.

Goal 3

Provide a quality living environment for the citizens of the County.

Objectives for Goal 3

- Provide and maintain the necessary utilities and community facilities and services to existing communities, as well as to newly developing communities.
- Provide a transportation network composed of an adequate road system, and bus, railroad, and air service to move people and goods with maximum efficiency between residential areas, employment centers, and other facilities.
- Encourage the provision of a broad range of affordable, quality, housing choices for all citizens.

Goal 4

Ensure well-coordinated, efficient local Governments

Objectives for Goal 4

- Encourage intergovernmental cooperation in research and planning and Land Use decision-making.
- Develop a Capital Improvement Plan and Program for major government improvement projects and ensure the consistency of those projects with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Ensure intergovernmental cooperation and coordination among the various levels of government in the provision, operation, and maintenance of services.

POLICY FRAMEWORK

Each plan element presents guidelines and recommendations which show how the County can best meet the Visions, Goals and Objectives which have been stated above and lists the guiding policies which are to serve as a framework for planning in the County as it moves into the next Century. In addition, the policies recognize the historical pattern of urban settlement in the County and attempt to keep these urban areas compact, while providing for flexibility in permitting new urban development and providing the public services, transportation facilities, and utilities required for that development. The policies also recognize the importance of protecting sensitive areas and mineral resources for future generations.

Each plan element also includes standards and procedures for meeting the policy requirements. Many of these standards will appear in regulatory form in the County's Land Development Regulations.

SECTION IV TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

The Transportation Element is part of the Allegany County Comprehensive Plan. It is intended to serve as a guide for transportation services to local and state elected officials, local transportation agencies and the Maryland Department of Transportation.

TEA21 PROGRAM

Additionally, the Plan attempts to meet the overall goals of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) and the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA21), by integrating land use planning and transportation planning and by viewing the various transportation modes as a network, rather than as separate entities.

As noted under Goal 3, in the Visions, Goals & Objectives Element, one of the County's stated objectives is to "provide a transportation network composed of an adequate road system, bus, railroad and air service to move people and goods with maximum efficiency between residential areas, employment centers, and other facilities." In essence this statement focuses the County's transportation goals in the same manner as the stated purpose of the ISTEA program. All modes of transportation are to be viewed as a network connecting with one another and with various destination points.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN SECTIONS

The Highway Plan Section contains a number of goals which chart a course for highway and local street development between now and the year 2020. The plan also notes a number of needed improvements both to County and State highways. In addition, the Highway Plan sets forth basic design standards for new highways or streets that are to become a part of the County Roads System. A separate document, the Highway Classification System, provides an index to Major Highways and Streets within the County. Copies of that document are available for review in the County Planning Department.

The Rail System Section illustrates the existing rail lines that serve Allegany County and briefly describes the flow of freight and passenger traffic through the County. Industrial rail spurs and tourist based service

such as the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad are also described. Abandoned rail lines are also shown in their historic perspective.

The Air Travel Section briefly describes the current Airport Master Plan for the Greater Cumberland Regional Airport and looks at passenger travel between Cumberland and nearby airports where connections can be made to other cities.

The Mass Transit Section reviews the current Mass Transit Plan and describes both the fixed route system served by a full-size bus fleet, as well as the para transit demand/response system served by van size equipment. This section also briefly describes opportunities for local rail service in the future. A separate document provides a detailed description and plan for Mass Transit Service in the County.

The Trails Section describes the Trail Plan which appears in the County Open Space Plan. This plan suggests creation of a network of trails connecting existing open space in State & Federal parks and forests with abandoned rail lines, power lines, greenways and other rights-of-way.

TRANSPORTATION POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

Policies

- Develop and maintain an integrated transportation system utilizing rail, air, and highway systems using both mass transit and personal transportation modes to meet the overall goal of the ISTEA Program.
- Encourage the use and development of transportation facilities which will minimize growth in automobile use.
- Encourage implementation and use of transportation alternatives to decrease the growth of automobile use.
- Promote the design and development of energy efficient communities and travel patterns.
- Plan for, develop, and encourage the use of alternatives to single-occupant automobiles.

- Promote the use of Mass Transit, including bus, van, car pooling, rail, air, and related modes of transportation through a public awareness campaign.
- Promote walking, hiking, biking and other human powered transport by supporting walkways, paths and trails to tie existing urban areas together through a system of Greenways and Trails.

Standards And Procedures

- The County will require setbacks for building from Arterial and other streets and highways as set forth in the Land Development Regulations.
- The County will require spacing of 500 feet for entrances for urban uses on Arterial Highways in the State maintained system.
- The County will require a minimum right-of-way width of 50 feet for newly dedicated County roads and streets and may require additional right-of-way for bridges or other structures.
- Roads and bridges which are constructed to be taken into the County System will at a minimum, meet the standards set forth in the Land Development Regulations.
- The County will require billboards and signs to meet State Highway Administration Standards on Arterial Highways.
- The County will regulate the use and height of structures in Airport Runway Approach zones in the Land Development Regulations and will coordinate land use policy with Mineral County to assure protection of the runway approach zones in West Virginia.
- The County will require setbacks from railroads in the Land Development Regulations.

MAJOR TRANSPORTATION ROUTES

A modern transportation network is a key item in developing and promoting the concept of the Allegany County Service Area. At the present time, the Allegany County Area is served by the CSX Railway System, AMTRAK, and a number of highways, including Route I-68 which connects Cumberland to both Morgantown and Hagerstown via I-79 and 1-70 respectively.

Plate 13 shows the rail lines currently in use in the Allegany County Area. While most of these lines are designed for freight service between the mid-west and the eastern seaboard, they do have the local effect of centering rail-yard activity in Cumberland. In addition, as noted above, AMTRAK schedules one passenger train per day in each direction between Washington and Chicago, via the CSX System with stops in Cumberland.

At the present time, Cumberland has passenger air service to Hagerstown and BWI, with connections to other cities from these points. Regional airports in or near the county Service Area are shown on Plate 14. Several of these airports have regularly scheduled service with connections to larger cities.

As noted in the Plan Concept Element, Plate 4 shows the major highways in the Allegany County Area. In this case, major north-south and east-west highways which pass through or near Cumberland, intersect at or near Hagerstown, Morgantown, Winchester, Altoona, Johnstown, and also at smaller towns such as Romney, Somerset, and Bedford.

THE HIGHWAY SYSTEM

The first transportation policy states that the County should "develop and maintain an integrated transportation system utilizing rail, air, and highway systems, using both mass transit and personal transportation modes."

Another policy in the Land Use Element states that the County should "encourage new urban development to locate adjacent to existing built-up areas and serve this new development with new streets and extensions of public water and sewerage systems as capacity allows."

These policies sum up the County's needs in terms of highway development. Namely, that highways are an integral part of the overall transportation system; that the County must be tied to other urban centers by improved all-weather highways; that the County itself must have adequate streets and highways serving and connecting local residential, commercial, and industrial areas; that future highway and street development must be accomplished within the established framework of urban development in the

County; and that the highways and streets taken into the County system be adequately constructed and maintained.

The Highway Classification System

Because of the varied nature of the highway system in Allegany County, and the increasingly different functions which certain highways perform, it is necessary that a system be utilized for classifying the County's highways and streets.

Under this system, which is based on the Federal Functional Highway Classification System, existing highways and streets are grouped according to the function which they perform, not the system they are in, nor their present width, surface type, or condition. Future highways and streets are to be built and maintained according to their function regardless of system, present construction or condition. The County Classification System is similar to the Maryland State Highway Administration Classification System and includes the following categories:

- Principal Arterials

- Major Arterials

- Minor Arterials

- Connector Streets

- Collector Streets

Note that all County and State highways and streets are not included in the classification system. All highways, roads, and streets which perform a purely local function for access to individual properties are classified as local streets and are not listed individually.

The classification system is outlined in a separate document entitled "The Highway Classification System" which is available in the County Planning Department.

The Current Highway System

The highway system of Allegany County contains a small number of Arterial Highways and a large number of connecting and collecting roads and streets. Most of the Arterial Highways are in the State Highway Administration System, while the connector and collector roads and streets are primarily in the County System. As shown on Plate 15, the Arterial system includes two Principal Arterial Highways; I-68 connecting the County with urban centers to the east and west; and Rt. 220 connecting the County with points to the north and south.

The highway system also contains a number of Major Arterial Highways which connect the County with adjacent counties and form the basic inter-County network. These highways include: Rt. 36 between Westernport, Frostburg and LaVale; Route 51, which leads to Winchester, Va.; Route 135 between McCoolle, Westernport and Southern Garrett County; Route 47, which leads to Somerset, Pennsylvania; Route 35, which leads to Hyndman, Pa.; and Route 53 between I-68 in LaVale and Rt. 220 at Cresaptown. Recent traffic count trends for these Arterial Highways are shown on Plate 16.

Other State highways and major County roads are Minor Arterial Highways which basically serve intra-county travel. These Minor Arterial Roads include Alt. Route 40 between Frostburg and Cumberland, Midlothian Road at Frostburg, Willowbrook-Williams Road-Messick Road at Cumberland and Bear Hill-Town Creek Road between Oldtown and Flintstone.

Other roads and streets which connect more remote areas of the county with urban centers (Connectors) or which are generally designed to serve residential suburban travel (Collectors) are for the most part in the County Road System.

In 2001, the county maintained system included over 800 road segments totaling more than 550 miles and 100 bridges. Approximately 200 miles of County System roadways are unpaved. The county system includes roads which perform several functions. Several of the roads serve as Arterial Highways connecting communities or Arterial state highways. Examples include: Midlothian Road between the National Freeway and Frostburg; Williams Road east of Cumberland; and Cash Valley Road between

LaVale and Corriganville. Other roads connect non-urban areas with Arterial Highways or with urban centers. Nearly all the County roads east of Cumberland are in this connector category.

Finally, many of the smaller county road segments serve as collecting roads in residential areas in the suburbs of LaVale, Cresaptown, Bowling Green Potomac Park, and in the older residential communities such as Mt. Savage, Eckhart, and the incorporated areas of Georges Creek.

Proposed Major Highway Improvements

Rt. 220

The major State Highway System need in the County is the completion of new Rt. 220 (see Plate 17) from Pennsylvania to West Virginia (with connections to Cresaptown and Rt. 956). This project is seriously needed to tie Cumberland and Allegany County with Bedford County and Altoona, Pennsylvania, and with the West Virginia counties in the southern part of the county's service area (see Plate 18). Two lanes of the northern segment of this highway were recently completed between I-68 and the Pennsylvania border east of Cumberland. The southern section of the proposed highway traverses the major growth area of the County in the Potomac Valley and is needed to provide improved access to this growth area and to provide a by-pass around the congested Cresaptown area. Planned extensions of water and sewer service in this growth area should coincide with the construction of the highway.

New Route 220 north from Cumberland by-passes a growing residential and commercial area which extends to the Pennsylvania border. As noted on Plate 16, traffic counts in the area north of Cumberland have increased steadily since 1983 from 6,650 vehicles per day to more than 10,925 vehicles per day in 2000. Construction of the first two lanes of the Maryland portion of Rt. 220 north was completed in 2000. The segment of Rt. 220 between the Pennsylvania line and Bedford still needs to be upgraded. The entire stretch of Rt. 220 between I-68 and Bedford should be built as a four-lane limited access highway as traffic increases in this corridor.

Rt. 220 South

The Route 220 Corridor south of Cumberland includes both existing Route 220 and Rt. 53 (Winchester Road). The Traffic Volume Map on Plate 5 illustrates the current traffic on Rt. 220 between Cumberland and Keyser and further south to Rt. 50. Traffic counts on Rt. 220 South ranged up to 14,500 and 15,750 on Rt. 53 in 2000. These highways pass through the residential areas of Winchester Road, Bowling Green, Potomac Park, Cresaptown, Bel Air and Rawlings. These highways currently serve the Country Club Mall and other shopping areas in LaVale as well as the Upper Potomac Industrial Park at Bowling Green, the County Fairgrounds, the Career Center, the Maryland Correctional Facility, the County Detention Center and the Allegany Ballistics Laboratory on Rt. 956 near Pinto. As shown on Plate 16, traffic counts on both Rt. 220S and Rt. 53 have increased steadily since 1983 to more than 14,000 vehicles per day.

This corridor is also a growing residential area with some strip commercial development. Many vacant buildable lots exist in the corridor that could also be developed for residential use. Finally, the long-range development of currently vacant land west of existing Route 220 between Bel Air and Rawlings is dependent on the relocation of Rt. 220 to separate local traffic from through traffic. Proposed industrial development near Rt. 956 is also dependent on this new highway. The traffic volume on Route 220 at Bel Air (over 14,000 vehicles per day in 2000) certainly justifies a new limited access highway to Rawlings at the very least. To ease the current conflict between local and through traffic, and permit further efficient development, the State must be encouraged to construct a new Route 220 as a four-lane limited access highway that will connect Cumberland with Corridor H south of Keyser. Construction of Rt. 220 South is currently listed in the State Highway Administration Highway Needs Inventory.

Rt. 36

The next major State Highway system need is the completion of Route 36 from Piedmont, West Virginia to Alternate Rt. 40 in the Narrows. A high priority should be given to dualizing Route 36 between I-68 and Alternate Rt. 40 at Frostburg as this is the major growth corridor for commercial and industrial development in the Frostburg Area.

Upgrading of the section of Rt. 36 between Midland and the section of new highway south of Lonaconing is in the Consolidated Transportation Program. Daily traffic counts along Rt. 36 vary from 8,200 vehicles per day near Lonaconing to 2,875 near Mt. Savage. However, needed improvements to this road are more related to geometrics and sight distance than to traffic volume.

Canal Parkway

A new road connecting Rt. 51 with Wiley Ford has recently been constructed as the Canal Parkway and will provide improved access to the Cumberland Airport and West Virginia Route 28. This project was built in conjunction with the Canal Place project at the former C & O Canal Basin in downtown Cumberland.

Long Term I-68 Improvements

Although this project is not currently on the State's Capital Improvement Program or Needs listing, long-term state planning needs to address improvements to I-68 through Cumberland. In the event such improvements are not feasible, the State needs to consider other alternatives to accommodate through traffic and to serve expected growth in the Potomac Valley and in nearby West Virginia.

Other State Highway Needs

Another State highway need is a new Route 51 between Spring Gap and Oldtown. This road should ultimately be relocated throughout its length to tie in with Rt. 522 north of Winchester, Virginia. An additional State Highway need is a reconstructed Route 35 from Corriganville into Pennsylvania with an Ellerslie bypass. This bypass is necessary to handle expected residential growth in that area. Recent water and sewer extensions along existing Rt. 35 are going to focus new development between LaVale and Ellerslie along this highway. Finally, Rt. 47 between Rt. 36 at Barrellville and Wellersburg, Pennsylvania needs to be upgraded to improve this connection to the Pennsylvania Turnpike at Somerset, Pennsylvania.

Other State highways which need to be upgraded include Alt. Rt. 40 between Campground Road and Rt. 36 in LaVale, Rt. 936 between Alt. Rt. 40 in Frostburg and Rt. 36 at Midland, and existing Rt. 220 in McCoolle to provide an improved tie-in with the State of West Virginia in Keyser.

Finally, Alternate Rt. 40 and Rt. 144, which are, in part, on the alignment of the National Road are being studied for inclusion in a system of historic highways. Land Use and Zoning along the right of way of these highways may need to be modified to accomplish the goals of this study.

COUNTY AND MUNICIPAL HIGHWAY NEEDS

Major improvements also need to be made to certain County and municipal roads, namely widening, straightening and resurfacing (Plate 19). These include Christie-Neal Roads, Williams-Murley Branch Roads, Cash Valley Road and Pleasant Valley Road near Rocky Gap State Park, as well as connections between local streets in a number of suburban areas. These connections include: Gramlich Road-Weires Avenue - Alt. Rt. 40 in LaVale; Barton Boulevard - No. Bel Air Drive in Bel Air; Sixth Avenue - Darrows Lane in Cresaptown; and another connecting link between Sunset View and the Bishop Walsh Area in Cumberland. Finally, the extension of Midlothian Road within the City of Frostburg should be reconstructed to Alt. Route 40, as it serves as one of the main connecting routes between Frostburg State University and downtown Frostburg.

In addition, many County and municipal bridges will need to be updated or replaced in the near future. These bridge projects are normally very expensive and require federal and state funding assistance. A complete list of proposed bridge projects and bridge status reports are available in the County Public Works Department.

Further, nearly all County roads in the Georges Creek Coal Basin region need extra maintenance and heavily traveled coal haul roads should be reconstructed to handle heavy coal truck traffic.

So far as other County roads are concerned, an inordinately large percentage of connecting routes in the County Road System is in the eastern area of the county. On a per capita and per mile basis, much more money is spent on county roads in this area than in the central and western areas where population is

concentrated. Major county roads in this area are Williams Road, Murley Branch Road, Town Creek-Bear Hill Road and Orleans-Oldtown Road. The latter road needs re-alignment and hard surfacing to improve connections between I-68 and with the C & O Canal National Park at Paw Paw. This road could be constructed by the State as a Scenic Parkway with access to nearby scenic overlooks, while limiting access to adjacent property.

County Road Standards

The set of standards referred to in this document are contained in the County Land Use Regulations and are designed to pertain only to roads which are to be built for inclusion in the County Maintained System, or to existing County roads which are to be improved. The standards do not apply to the State Highway system, nor to local roads outside the County system. However, all newly dedicated rights-of-way are to be at least 50 feet in width even when the road is not to be included in the County system. This set of standards is to be utilized with the County Subdivision Regulations with respect to new land development in the County.

When OP (other public) roads are added to the County maintained system, such roads are to be built to County Road Standards and may be constructed through the Revolving Road Fund Account procedure.

County Road, Street and Bridge Maintenance and Paving Program

While the road standards mentioned above are primarily related to new roads and streets being constructed for the County Maintained System, it is imperative that existing County maintained roads, streets and bridges be maintained and upgraded to satisfy their function.

As part of the ISTEA Program, the County Roads Division of the Public Works Department is developing management systems to address highway paving, bridges, highway safety and traffic congestion. These programs are in addition to the other ISTEA Program Elements addressed earlier in the Transportation Element.

The following items address these needs through the County Public Works Department, Roads Division, and are updated annually. These items are funded jointly through the use of Federal, State and local

programs including coal haul road taxes. The current County share is approximately 20% of total funding for the annual Roads Division budget. With proposed funding changes at the federal level, it is anticipated that a higher percentage of local funding will be required in the future to maintain the existing system. The County Roads Division Program is as follows:

- 1 . An ongoing paving and overlay program which lists every County maintained road or street and its maintenance-paving needs. Those roads and streets in commercial and residential areas are prioritized higher than those in rural areas serving fewer people.
2. New road construction projects for existing County roads, streets, and bridges are being prioritized in a 5 year capital program similar to the State Highway Administration construction program.
3. Safety projects, drainage improvements, and bridge repairs are also prioritized in a 5 year capital program. Bridges are inspected on a regular basis and are programmed for repairs and reconstruction based on these inspections.

In addition, the total County road, street and bridge maintenance program is updated annually by the Public Works Department with input from various County agencies and citizens, and approved by the County Commissioners.

PARK AND RIDE FACILITIES

Although traffic congestion in Allegany County has not reached the levels documented in larger urbanized areas, efforts have been made to accommodate ride-sharing through the construction of Park and Ride facilities near major routes. To date, most of these facilities have been built on excess SHA land near I-68 interchanges. Currently, Park and Ride lots include the following locations:

- Rt. 36 south of Frostburg
- Rt. 220 south of Cumberland
- Christie Road at Rt. 144 north of Cumberland

- Naves Crossroads at I-68 north of Cumberland
- Rt. 144 at Flintstone

Other areas where Park & Ride lots could be constructed include:

- SHA District Headquarters in LaVale near I-68
- Orleans Interchange at I-68
- Rt. 36 near Westernport
- Rt. 220 near McCoole
- Rt. 220 near Rt. 956
- Rt. 220 near Cresaptown
- Rt. 51 near Mexico Farms

THE RAIL SYSTEM

Prior to 1940, the rail system in Allegany County and the surrounding area was much more extensive than it is today. The older systems, including the B & O, Western Maryland, C & P and other less well known rail lines competed to serve the coal industry in the western part of Allegany County and as a by product of that service, also provided an excellent passenger system between Cumberland, Frostburg and Westernport.

In addition the B & O and Western Maryland served as freight and passenger carriers between Cumberland, Pittsburgh, Baltimore and Washington. At its greatest extent rail service was available to Bedford and Altoona via the Pennsylvania Railroad, to Johnstown via Somerset; to Grafton, Elkins and many other West Virginia towns via the Western Maryland and B & O and to Petersburg and Moorefield via the B & O's South Branch line. Passenger service was available on most of these lines as well. Within Allegany County the C & P Railroad and the Georges Creek and Cumberland Railroad connected nearly every community in the Georges Creek and Jennings Run Valleys with Cumberland and Frostburg.

These lines also had connections with the B & O and Western Maryland lines and for many years with the C & O Canal in Cumberland.

Following World War II as coal mining declined, many of the shorter lines in the Georges Creek area were abandoned or consolidated into the B & O or Western Maryland systems which eventually became part of the CSX System. By the early 1970's most of the Western Maryland main line was abandoned through the County when the CSX Corporation was formed, and the link to the Pennsylvania Railroad at Bedford was also abandoned.

Rail service as it exists today in the area, is shown on Plate 13. In addition to the main CSX lines to Pittsburgh and Washington, the CSX Corporation retains the other main western line to the West Virginia coal fields, and several pieces of the old system in the Georges Creek Valley west of Cumberland. These include a part of the old C & P System from Westernport to Shaft along Rt. 36, a line along the North Branch of the Potomac west of McCoole, MD, and several related coal spur lines in West Virginia. The old South Branch line of the B & O is now operated by the State of West Virginia between Green Spring and Petersburg WV.

In addition, the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad operates a Tourist related passenger train on a seasonal basis on a section of the old Western Maryland and C & P roadbed between Cumberland and Frostburg.

CSX Freight Movement

Rail activity is centered at the CSX yards in South Cumberland where trains are made up for travel both east and west of Cumberland. Composition of freight trains includes general freight, trailer trains, and special coal trains. While a small percentage of this coal is mined and loaded in Allegany County, the majority is loaded in Garrett County and West Virginia.

Industrial Park/ Rail Siding Use

While the County has very little impact on CSX rail traffic through the area, one facet of rail service that impacts land use planning is the location of rail sidings. Currently most County Industrial parks and Industrially-zoned areas are adjacent to CSX System rail lines. Sidings are currently in place at the Mexico Farms site, former Kelly Springfield Plant site, and the Westvaco site in Luke. CSX System tracks

pass by the Upper Potomac Industrial Park, the Pinto site, the Black Oak site and the Westernport site. These industrial parks and Industrially-zoned areas are situated adjacent to tracks where sidings could be constructed to serve industrial customers.

Sidings are also in place at several coal loading and washing facilities in the Georges Creek Basin. According to the County's Economic Development Department, the availability of sidings is an important factor of industrial location, particularly for uses where larger amounts of raw materials are being moved. Thus, the development of new Industrial Parks needs to include plans for rail sidings at those sites adjacent or near the CSX system.

Amtrak Passenger Service

Currently one train per day passes through Cumberland in each direction between Washington D.C., Pittsburgh, and Chicago. Connections can be made in those cities to other Amtrak lines serving the East Coast and the Western States.

Western Maryland Scenic Railroad

In the late 1980's, the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad began operations as the Allegany Central Railroad between the former Western Maryland Station in Cumberland and the former C & P Railroad Depot at Frostburg. Following a number of changes in management, the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad added a steam powered locomotive in the summer of 1993.

Current plans call for development of the Western Maryland Station and the C & O Canal Terminus into a tourist destination center in Cumberland under the auspices of the Canal Place Development Commission. A transportation museum in the former County Office building on Pershing Street is currently under development. Both the City of Cumberland and the City of Frostburg are encouraged to provide zoning regulations to ensure the desired land uses at each terminal. Much of the Scenic Railroad line itself lies within the unincorporated area of the County and is planned primarily for agriculture, forestry and conservation zoning to protect the scenic route of the line.

Other scenic rail tours in the area are offered annually on the CSX system during the Autumn of the year and on the South Branch Valley Railroad on weekends and during the Fall season. Plans for the development of several other scenic railroads in the area have been discussed but not formalized. A network of scenic railroads, wherein the traveler could spend a number of days in the area riding over several different routes would be an attractive way to serve the touring public.

Rail Service Summation

Unlike publicly operated modes of transportation, County government has little if any influence on the level of rail service or traffic. However, the County can address several factors related to rail service in a positive manner.

These include:

- Encouraging the CSX system to continue to modernize and upgrade the rail system, particularly the rail yard and related components of the system.
- Encouraging the CSX system to cooperate with the City of Cumberland to develop railroad property that is suitable for industrial use.
- Promoting the use of rail service, particularly with respect to coal traffic that originates in or near the area.
- Promoting a network of scenic railroads in the area as part of the growing tourism industry.
- Encouraging industrial site development in conjunction with rail sidings.

AIR TRAVEL

As noted earlier, an updated Master Plan for the Greater Cumberland Regional Airport details a program for making a number of improvements to the airport facility. As further noted in that plan the airport property is owned and operated by the Potomac Highlands Airport Authority through a lease agreement. The current version of the Airport Plan is adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

As defined by the Maryland Department of Transportation, the Greater Cumberland Regional Airport is one of four primary airports which serve Western Maryland, with the others being Garrett Co. Airport, Hagerstown Regional Airport and Frederick Municipal Airport. The Greater Cumberland Regional Airport is further defined as a short haul commercial airport (less than 1,500 mile radius for commercial service).

From an historic perspective, the Cumberland Airport was conceived as a public works project in the late 1930's and was constructed during the early 1940's to replace the Mexico Farms Airfield. The Mexico Farms facility dates to the World War I era and was an early stop for air mail service. The Mexico Farms Airfield continues in use today as a privately owned, public use airfield.

The original Cumberland Airport layout included a 4,300 foot x 150 foot paved runway (known as runway 6-24) and several landing areas. The original paved runway was extended to 5,790 feet and two other runways (11-29 and 1-19) were paved during the 1950's. In 1977 a new 5,050 foot x 150 foot runway (known as runway 5-23) was constructed on a new alignment and the former main runway (6-24) and one secondary runway (1-19) were converted to taxiways. This configuration (see Plate 20) continues in service today.

Runway 11-29 is a visual approach runway, while runway 5-23 is a non-precision instrument runway. Future plans call for runway 5-23 to be a precision instrument runway.

Commercial Air Travel

During the late 1940's and early 1950's, Cumberland was served by Allegheny Airlines with connecting flights to Pittsburgh and other neighboring cities. During the 1960's, 1970's, and 1980's commuter flights to Baltimore, Washington, Pittsburgh, Latrobe, Pa., and Ocean City, Md., were provided by Nicholson Air Service and Cumberland Airlines. Nicholson also handled air mail service, air cargo, charter flights, flight instruction and related activities at the Airport.

Following the establishment of the Potomac Highlands Airport Authority, U. S. Air began regularly scheduled flights between Cumberland and Pittsburgh with connections to other cities from the Greater

Pittsburgh Airport. This service has been replaced by Pan Am Clipper Service provided by Boston Marine Airways which connects Cumberland to Hagerstown and the BWI Airport near Baltimore.

Other Airport Uses

In addition to commercial air service, a number of locally owned and operated aircraft use the Greater Cumberland Regional Airport as the base of operations. According to the Airport Master Plan, the number of aircraft based at the airport has fluctuated between 65-93 over the past 20 years. Most of these craft are single engine airplanes (70-80%) used for private purposes. In addition, a number of local firms have planes based at the airport and make regular business flights from the Airport. In recent years, a state police Medivac Helicopter has also been stationed at the airport.

Runway Approaches, Runway Protection Zones and Imaginary Surfaces

The Airport Master Plan also addresses protection zones and imaginary surfaces related to each runway. These features have an impact on Land Use in Allegany County and need to be addressed in the upcoming revision to the County's Land Use Regulations. Allegany County plans to limit the height of structures within the Horizontal Surface area and runway approach surfaces and require Board of Appeals review of proposed structures which penetrate those surfaces.

As shown on Plate 21, the runway protection zones which have been established for the Greater Cumberland Regional Airport in the Master Plan primarily impact land use in Mineral County, WV. In fact, the airport runways are elevated more than 100 feet above the Potomac River where the runway protection zones extend into Maryland. A small portion of the CSX Rail yard in South Cumberland lies within the protection zone of runway 5-23, but this area is approximately 50' below the runway elevation. Both Mineral County and the City of Cumberland are encouraged to develop runway protection zones within their respective jurisdictions.

Imaginary surfaces associated with the airport would extend well into Allegany County. These surfaces, which have not been formally established for the airport, include a horizontal surface which has a radius of 10,000 feet around the primary runway at an elevation 150 feet above the airport runway and a conical

surface which extends outward 4,000 feet from the horizontal surface at a slope of 20:1. Several of the higher hills in Cumberland as well as a portion of Irons Mountain extend into these imaginary surfaces.

Runway approach surfaces also extend into Maryland, primarily in association with runway 5-23, over the Evitts Creek Valley. At present, this runway has a non-precision instrument approach which extends outward 10,000 feet from the runway itself at a slope of 34: 1. Conversion of this runway to a precision instrument approach could lengthen the approach to 50,000 feet at a slope of 50:1 for the first 10,000 feet and 40:1 for an additional 40,000 feet.

Formal adoption of these imaginary surfaces into the Airport Master Plan would require more intensive monitoring of land use changes, particularly in the Evitts Creek Valley approach. Although the Mexico Farms landing field is not addressed in the Airport Master Plan, the same type of runway protection zones and imaginary surfaces need to be addressed for that facility. While this airfield does not have the level of activity as the Greater Cumberland Regional Airport, land use within these surface areas needs to be monitored to assure minimum impact on the landing field approaches.

Air Travel Summation:

As noted at the beginning of the Air Travel Section, a separate Airport Master Plan which is periodically updated, details a number of proposed improvements to the facility. These improvements are currently detailed in a Capital Improvement Program that is updated on an annual basis. Primary funding for these improvements is provided by the Federal government through the FAA. The States of Maryland and West Virginia also share in the cost of these improvements. Major improvements scheduled for the next several years include:

- Repairing taxiways
- Repairing runways
- Replacing light towers
- Improved fuel storage area

In addition, Runway Protection Zones and Imaginary Surfaces need to be formalized so that land use within these areas can be regulated through setback and height restrictions. Both the Greater Cumberland Regional Airport and the Mexico Farms Landing Field need to be protected from encroachments within these zones and imaginary surfaces. The County Zoning and Subdivision Regulations need to be modified to address these features.

MASS TRANSIT

Allegheny County at one time had a very extensive "Rail Transit" System which was developed in conjunction with the railroad network that served the coal mining industry. In addition to the C & P Railroad which connected Cumberland with Westernport via the Jennings Run and Georges Creek Valleys, an electric trolley line connected Cumberland with Frostburg and Westernport via LaVale and Eckhart along Old Rt. 40 and Old Rt. 36. Other local service was provided by both the Western Maryland Railway and the B & O Railroad by providing stops at numerous communities along their main lines. Most of these rail and trolley lines were out of operation, in terms of local passenger service by the end of World War II.

The decline of local rail transit was accompanied by the development of passenger bus systems which grew during the 1920's and 1930's and connected many of the same communities that for years had relied on trains for passenger service. The opening of the Kelly Tire Plant in Cumberland and the Celanese Fibers Plant at Amcelle created a tremendous demand for bus service. Bus systems developed not only in Cumberland, but in Frostburg, Mt. Savage, Keyser, W.Va., Hyndman, Pa. and other communities where workers lived and commuted to these large manufacturing concerns.

However, as the use of the automobile increased and suburban growth spread after World War II with more people living farther from transit lines, many of these bus systems fell by the wayside. By the late 1960's, the Queen City Bus Lines in Cumberland was the only surviving local transit company. As this line's equipment fell into disrepair in the early 1970's, the County purchased the remaining buses and other equipment with state and federal funding assistance to keep the operation alive.

Since that time, the Transit System has been subsidized by local, state, and federal funding in order to maintain service. While many metropolitan areas in Maryland have turned to Transit as an option to reduce single occupant travel, Allegany County has not as yet defined single occupant travel as a major transportation problem. However, the core of the transit systems routes do cover the highest traffic areas and do offer an option for drivers to use.

Fixed Route System

In 1975, when Allegany County began running the bus system under the guidance of an appointed Transit Authority, the operation consisted of an aging bus fleet, a dilapidated garage and a small staff of employees, some of whom had been part owners of the old system.

Over the next several years, the County purchased a new fleet of buses, replaced the garage with a new facility, adjusted the routes and schedules, and brought the employees into the overall County System.

Since 1980, the fixed route system has seen a number of improvements with replacement buses that are handicapped accessible, air conditioned and exhibit the modern RTS design. Routes have been modified to provide additional service to high use areas outside Cumberland, such as the Country Club Mall in LaVale and the Upper Potomac Industrial Park in Bowling Green. At the same time, some holdover routes from the Queen City System which experienced declining ridership have been eliminated.

In addition to the City of Cumberland, LaVale and Frostburg, the system serves other suburban residential communities including Cresaptown, Bowling Green, Bel Air, Bedford Road and Mt. Savage. (See Plate 22) The current version of the Transit Development Plan is adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

Demand/Response System (Paratransit)

During the mid-1980's, the County initiated a modified Demand/Response System through the Human Resources Development Commission as a program for the elderly and handicapped called ALL-TRANS. This system was Federally funded and provided for a van system with handicapped accessible vehicles.

A medical transport system called MED-TRANS was also initiated under HRDC using State funding during the same time period. Both programs specify eligibility requirements for users of the system.

Additionally, a number of local groups and agencies provide transportation services for eligible citizens. These groups are also eligible for federal funding for vehicle purchases.

Following reorganization, the HRDC Paratransit systems were merged with the fixed route system at the Transit facility for administrative purposes. This reorganization has provided improved service to both elderly and handicapped users of the system. Dispatching is now done at one central location for both fixed route and paratransit.

Inter-City Service

As mentioned in the Rail Plan Section, AMTRAK currently serves Allegany County with one eastbound and one westbound train per day connecting Cumberland with Washington and Chicago. In addition, Greyhound Bus Lines also provide service to the County with stops in Cumberland and Frostburg. These buses pass through the County in an east-west direction between Washington/Baltimore and Pittsburgh.

TRAIL SYSTEM PLAN

The Maryland Greenway Atlas prepared by the Maryland Greenway Commission outlines a number of existing and potential hiking/biking trails and other greenways in Allegany County. The Allegany County Open Space Plan includes these and other trails as shown on Plate 23. These trails include the existing C & O Canal towpath and a number of abandoned rail lines.

Abandoned rail lines include the following:

1. The former Western Maryland Railway between Cumberland and Connellsville, Pa.
2. The former Western Maryland Railway between North Branch near Cumberland and Sideling Creek paralleling the C & O Canal.
3. The former Western Maryland Railway between Cumberland and McCoole.
4. The former C & P Railroad between Corriganville and Shaft near Frostburg

5. The former Pennsylvania Railroad between the Narrows and Bedford, PA.
6. The former C & P Railroad between the Narrows and Eckhart
7. The former Georges Creek and Cumberland Railroad between the Narrows and Lonaconing

Allegheny Highlands Trail

The proposed Allegheny Highlands Trail that would connect the C & O Canal with the Youghiogheny River Trail in Ohio, Pennsylvania is designed to use the abandoned Western Maryland Railway right-of-way between Cumberland and Connellsville, PA. Part of the proposed route parallels the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad east of Frostburg. An off-shoot from this trail will connect the Frostburg Depot of the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad to the main trail at New Hope Road. Other sections of the trail between Cumberland and Pennsylvania will be constructed during the next several years. A separate plan for the 21 mile Maryland portion of this trail was prepared by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources in 1993.

Other Potential Trails

Other potential trails in Allegany County are essentially connecting trails that would tie the C & O Canal and Allegheny Highland Trails to public lands in other counties and states. These connecting links include a trail following the Western Maryland Railway along the North Branch of the Potomac through Garrett Co. to the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia; a connecting link through Dan's Mountain Wildlife Management Area to the Big Savage hiking trail in Garrett County; a connecting link on the abandoned Pennsylvania Railroad right-of-way to Hyndman and a trail on Wills Mountain to connect with Pennsylvania State Game Lands (these trails can connect in Pennsylvania); a connecting trail between Rocky Gap State Park and the Buchanan State Forest in Pennsylvania; and a connecting link between the Green Ridge Trail and the Buchanan State Forest in Pennsylvania. This trail could connect with the Mid-State Trail in Pennsylvania and eventually extend to State College, Pennsylvania. Should the Western Maryland Railway through the Georges Creek Valley be abandoned, it would make an ideal greenway connecting the towns along the mainstream of Georges Creek.

Other short trails are feasible on existing state and local parks. This includes the County Fairgrounds property, the Narrows property, the LaVale District Park and the South End Recreation area in Cumberland. Ultimately, the creation of trails will allow Allegany County to meet one of its Open Space goals by creating a network of trails connecting urban areas with open space lands. This trail network connecting urban areas to open space would increase recreational opportunities for residents and also be an additional inducement for increasing tourism in the County.

Bicycling/Pedestrian Modes of Travel

Although Allegany County has embarked on the creation of a recreational trail system for hiking, biking and horseback riding, there is no sustained effort to provide an adequate system for bicyclists or pedestrians to use these modes of travel for day to day commuting, shopping, etc. Most of the incorporated communities have a network of sidewalks connecting residential and downtown areas, but most suburban communities lack these facilities. Future efforts to enhance these modes of travel in suburban areas could be tied to the State Highway Administration's various enhancement programs. Sidewalk and trail construction should be encouraged in new subdivisions.

SECTION V COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT

The Community Facilities Element is a part of the County Comprehensive Plan. This Plan identifies many of the government and quasi-public facilities located within the County, and is to be used as a guide in determining future needs for various facilities in the County. The Plan includes a list of policies which are tied to the Plan Visions, Goals, & Objectives recited in that Element.

The community facilities considered in this report are as follows: Education, Medical Facilities, Fire and Rescue, Police and Corrections, Library, County Offices, Water and Sewer, Solid Waste and Recycling. A number of these facilities have specific Plans prepared and adopted by County government or by quasi-public agencies. This document identifies a number of those plans and in some cases includes a brief synopsis of the major points of those plans. The document also notes the location where the official version of any Plan can be viewed by the public.

Additionally, the Element refers to a separate publication which includes a partial listing of County and other government agencies and services by facility. Finally, the Plan refers to another publication which includes the County's proposed Capital Improvement Projects. Both of these publications are available in the County Planning Department and are updated periodically.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES POLICIES

- Upgrade community facilities and services including schools, health centers, libraries, and recreational centers in existing communities and build new facilities in phase with future urban development.
- Locate institutional facilities in existing communities with attention to employment needs and the location of available housing and transportation facilities.
- Promote the development of institutional uses within existing urban areas or growth areas through the provision of public utilities and roads.

- Encourage the use of innovative and alternative technologies to supply water and sewer service in existing small communities.
- Continue to actively seek grants and other funding sources to provide adequate public water and sewer service to existing urban areas and proposed growth areas, and provide interconnections between water systems when feasible.
- Limit reliance on wells and septic systems outside the urban growth area through lot size and other subdivision requirements. Work with state and federal agencies to study ground water availability outside public water service areas.
- Require minimum pipe size and materials requirements for water and sewer lines through the county's Utilities Division.
- Continue public and private waste recycling initiatives, use products made from recycled materials, encourage regional approaches for recycling markets, and reduce the volume of consumer product packaging.
- Continue to develop a balanced waste management program for the entire county including recycling, resource recovery, and the development of adequate and safe landfills and promote pollution prevention practices to reduce the volume of waste generated.
- Set priorities for the use of County funding for the construction of water, sewerage, transportation, schools, other capital facilities, and related support services through the development of a Capital Improvement Program which will include consideration of long-term cost implications.
- Develop and maintain a County-wide Geographic Informational System to digitally manage data related to the county's mapping system. This system includes digital base maps, a geo coded house numbering system, road and street centerlines, geo coded utility information and related digital data.

- Analyze agency funding requests for impacts on growth and development during established annual Capital Improvement submittals and reviews.
- Provide economic incentives to encourage logical and efficient development patterns.

EDUCATION SYSTEM

Public Schools

The public school system of Allegany County is administered by the County Superintendent of Schools and his support staff, located in the main office of the Board of Education on Washington Street in Cumberland. The Board of Education consists of five elected members whose responsibility is to determine basic policy for the school system.

Planning for the school system is an on-going effort coordinated by the Board of Education Staff annually with input from the county Planning Department, the Maryland Office of Planning and the Maryland Interagency Committee on School Construction. In addition, the Board of Education prepares a Capital Improvements Program annually which reflects the goals of the School Plan and which is subject to approval by the County Commissioners and the Interagency Committee on School Construction. The Annual School Plan Update and the Annual Capital Improvement Program may be viewed at the Board of Education Building at 108 Washington Street in Cumberland.

Allegany County's public school system currently consists of 14 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, 4 senior high schools, and 1 career center as shown on Plate 24. Generalized High School attendance areas are also shown on Plate 24. Enrollment for 2000-01 is compared to school capacity on Plate 25.

Since enrollment is below capacity in most schools, the current Board of Education School Plan calls for the remodeling of existing schools, rather than construction of new facilities.

Private Schools

The County also contains a number of private schools which do not fall under the jurisdiction of the County Board of Education. According to the Maryland Department of Education, Bishop Walsh High School and Calvary Christian Academy are the only private high schools in Allegany County. Elementary schools being operated by church organizations include: St. Michaels Elementary in Frostburg, St. Peters

Elementary in Westernport, St. John Neuman in Cumberland, Calvary Christian Academy in Cresaptown, the Penn Avenue Christian School in Cumberland, Willowbrook Seventh Day Adventist School on Williams Road, and the Wesleyan Church School in Cresaptown.

Higher Education

Allegany County is fortunate in the fact that there are two institutions of higher learning within its boundaries. Frostburg State University is a four-year college and Allegany College on Willow Brook Road is a junior college, both of which offer a broad range of study to those persons seeking a higher education. Enrollment at these two institutions has grown at a rather smooth rate over the last several decades to the point where Frostburg had 4,500 full-time students and Allegany College had 1,811 full-time students in 2000-01. Enrollment at both institutions is projected to continue to increase as an ever-increasing share of the college age population plans to attain higher education.

In line with these enrollment projections, both of these institutions have long-range Capital Improvement Plans which call for the expansion of their physical facilities. The Community College's Capital Improvement Program may be viewed at the Allegany College administrative offices on Willowbrook Road. Frostburg State University Capital Improvements are funded through the State of Maryland and do not appear in the County program.

HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Hospitals

Allegany County is currently served by the Western Maryland Health System with two primary locations, one at the former Memorial Hospital in Cumberland with 173 beds and a second at the former Sacred Heart Hospital in Cumberland with 161 beds. Locations of these hospitals are shown on Plate 26.

One potential health care problem in Allegany County is that most facilities are concentrated in the Cumberland-Frostburg area of the County. So long as low-cost transportation to the facilities in this area is available, most people in the rest of the County can travel to these facilities for health care. However, should personal transportation become a problem, some of the smaller communities would have few

Health facilities at their command. The further development of community health clinics through the County Health Department or by the established hospitals is one way to meet this need in the future.

Nursing Homes

There are currently more than 1036 Nursing Home beds available in Allegany County. These facilities include the Allegany County Nursing Home in Cumberland, the Cumberland Nursing Home, the Devlin Manor Nursing Home on Christie Road, the Egle Nursing Home in Lonaconing, the Frostburg Village Nursing Home, the Moran Manor in Westernport, and the Lions Manor Nursing Home in Cumberland. Plate 26 also shows the location of these nursing homes. A number of these facilities are associated with residential facilities that offer more independence for residents who no longer want the burden of home ownership, but are able to care for themselves with limited assistance. In spite of the relatively recent expansion in Nursing Home and related residential facilities, the County still has a need for additional care because of its growing elderly population. With a continued increase in life expectancy through the Year 2020, additional Nursing Home facilities will be needed in the area. These needs could best be met by private or quasi-public facilities, rather than direct County operation.

Mental Health

In the area of mental health, there are presently two locations for in-patient care, the State operated Finan Center on Willow Brook Road in Cumberland and the Psychiatric Unit of the Western Maryland Health System at Sacred Heart Campus in Cumberland. Adult out-patient care is provided by the Mental Health Center of the County Health Department at its facility on Willow Brook Road in Cumberland also shown on Plate 26.

Public Health

The Allegany County Health Department operates under the guidance of the County's Public Health Officer. This department is actually part of the State Department of Health and Mental Hygiene which shares funding for the Department's operation with the County.

The Health Center Building on Willowbrook Road presently houses the Allegany County Health Department and a number of health related divisions and related agencies. A complete listing of the services available at the Health Center can be obtained through their administrative offices.

In conjunction with daily health services, periodic clinics are scheduled at the Health Center under the supervision of physicians. The clinics provide medical care on a regular basis to those persons with special needs. In addition to the clinics scheduled at the Health Center, there are additional Health Department Clinics operated in a number of communities on a regular basis.

Finally, recent expansion of the Health Center Building should allow the Health Department to carry out its mission into the next century. However, public health needs are constantly changing and growing, particularly with an aging population. With that thought in mind, the County needs to be prepared to meet additional health related responsibilities before the Year 2020.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Emergency Management Department operates the 911 Emergency Communications System which notifies each fire or rescue company or police department of the type and location of any fire or emergency situation within a particular company or department's jurisdiction. The control center for the communications network is located in the Emergency Management Center near Constitution Park in Cumberland and is manned on a 24-hour basis. The Emergency Management Department also maintains and updates the County's Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan on a regular basis. This Plan may be viewed at the Emergency Management Center. This plan includes segments dealing with communications, disaster alerts, incident command, evacuation, disaster relief, and hazardous materials. The preparation of the Emergency and Disaster Preparedness Plan is also coordinated with various County, Municipal and State agencies and is periodically tested through drills and exercises. Another new plan which is related to the Emergency Management Plan is the County's Hazard Mitigation Plan. This is also part of the Comprehensive Planning Program and includes mitigation methods for dealing with potential natural disasters as well as man-caused events. This Plan also impacts land use decisions by suggesting reduced development in hazardous areas, particularly in designated Flood Plains or on steep slopes.

House Numbering

In connection with the 911 Emergency Communications System, the County has developed a House Numbering System to assure that all occupied buildings have access to rapid emergency response by fire, rescue and other emergency services. The House Numbering System is updated through the County building permit system.

Fire & Rescue

Allegheny County is well equipped to provide fire protection for its population with existing fire companies and rescue squads within the County, as shown on Plate 27. Fire companies, which provide rescue services, are also noted on this plate. All companies provide 24-hour coverage to the citizens within their service area.

All of the municipal and non-municipal fire companies and rescue squads, with the exception of Cumberland are manned by volunteers. In order that the financial needs of the volunteer companies are met, special taxing areas have been established in various communities. Additionally, annual allocations of funds to each fire and rescue company from the County are administered by the County Fire Board.

The County has also formed a Hazardous Materials Response Team to assist local Fire and Rescue personnel when chemical or other hazardous materials are involved with an accident or spill.

POLICE AND CORRECTIONS

The County Sheriff's Department, currently housed on Furnace Street in Cumberland, handles law enforcement in the County and serves the local court system. In addition, the Sheriff has responsibility for corrections in the County.

Other agencies providing police protection to their particular jurisdiction are: the Maryland State Police located in LaVale, the Department of Natural Resources Police, the Cumberland City Police Department, the Frostburg City Police Department, the Town of Lonaconing Police Department, the Town of Westernport Police Department, and the Town of Luke Police Department.

The Maryland State Police also operate a helicopter at the Cumberland Airport. This helicopter serves both for police search and rescue work and as a Medevac Helicopter in conjunction with local and regional fire and rescue companies.

The County Jail is located at Prospect Square at the rear of the County Court House. The County is completing construction of a modern Correctional Facility to house up to 300 inmates on property adjacent to the State Prison at the former Celanese site near Cresaptown. This County facility will incorporate both a state-of-the art physical plant, as well as the most recent thinking in terms of correctional procedures. This facility should serve the County well into the next century.

In addition to the new County Correctional Facility and the Western Correctional Institute, the Federal Bureau of Prisons has completed a Federal Correctional Institution at Mexico Farms east of Cumberland. Additional modules planned for the State prison should nearly double its capacity over the next decade. The State and Federal facilities currently house more than 3000 inmates.

Animal Control

Allegany County currently maintains an Animal Shelter on Furnace Street near the County Nursing Home. This facility is expandable and should accommodate the needs of the County for years to come.

COUNTY OFFICES

The County Commissioners and a number of local government agencies and departments occupy space in the County Office Complex at 701 Kelly Road in Cumberland. The County Roads Division, which formerly had separate quarters, is also headquartered at the Kelly Road Complex.

A number of other State and Local offices are located in the former County Office Building on Pershing Street and at the Court House/Jail Complex on Prospect Square. Other County agencies which are headquartered in the Cumberland area include the Human Resources Development in the former Cumberland Police Headquarters on Bedford Street; Social Services on Paca Street; and Allegany County Transit on Lafayette Avenue in South End. For a more complete listing of agencies and

accompanying descriptions of services, the reader is referred to a 1993 publication prepared by the League of Women Voters of Allegany County entitled "Know Your Allegany County."

Library Service

The facilities of the Allegany County Public Library consist of several structures located throughout the County. The Main Library is located on Washington Street in Cumberland where the administrative offices of the Library System are operated under the guidance of the Library Director. Branch libraries are located in South Cumberland, LaVale, Frostburg, Lonaconing and Westernport, with Bookmobile service available at locations throughout the County. The Bookmobile currently services the entire County over a 2 week period of time. Historically, the County has relied on community involvement for sharing the cost of building new facilities.

Total circulation for the Library System in 2000 was 384,000. The County Library also has a close working relationship with the Western Maryland Public Library in Hagerstown and is able to obtain materials from that source or from other libraries on request. In addition, the library facilities at Frostburg State University and Allegany College are available to the public. These libraries also are able to obtain materials from other facilities.

WATER, SEWER, AND SOLID WASTE/RECYCLING

(Refer to the Land Use Element for population projections by County Region)

In October 1970, the Allegany County Commissioners adopted the first Master Plan for Water and Sewerage for the County. This document has been revised and updated a number of times since then and is now on a schedule that results in triennial updates to the Plan. The most recent update to the Water & Sewer Plan is available for viewing at the Public Works Department in the County Office Complex on Kelly Road.

The Water and Sewerage Plan is an all-inclusive document that requires County, Municipal and privately operated water and sewer systems to be addressed by the Plan. As noted in the Land Use Element,

Allegany County now has broad based water and sewerage service in the western part of the County and has one of the highest percentages of public water and sewer users in the State of Maryland. This is an accomplishment which the County and its Public Works Department have worked diligently to achieve over the years since the first Water & Sewer Plan was adopted.

Areas currently served with public water are shown on Plate 28, while public sewer service areas are shown on Plate 29. By the year 2020, expansion of the existing systems along with several new service areas should cover the areas also shown on Plates 28 and 29. The County's Capital Improvement Program includes a number of water and sewer projects from the Water and Sewerage Plan that will expand existing service in a number of communities.

Water Supply - Current

Public water supply currently poses no serious constraint to development in the Cumberland area. The Cumberland water system, with a safe yield of 12.6 mgd currently serves nearly 50,000 people in Cumberland, LaVale, Bowmans Addition, Bedford Road, Bowling Green-Potomac Park, Cresaptown, Ellerslie, Corriganville, and other suburban areas.

South of Cresaptown, the Bel Air area is served by Maryland Water Service Inc., which has taken over operation of the former Pinto Utilities system. This area is now served with water from the Cumberland System through a tie-in at Cresaptown.

Frostburg and several of its satellite communities are served by the Piney Reservoir which is located west of Big Savage Mountain in Garrett County. This reservoir provides a safe yield of more than 2 mgd, through the treatment plant west of Frostburg and serves more than 11,500 people.

Mt. Savage and other communities north of Frostburg currently use in excess of 90,000 gpd, mostly from wells, springs, and small surface reservoirs. Communities directly south of Frostburg, including Midlothian, and Klondike, use more than a total of 40,000 gpd from small reservoirs. All of these communities could be served by the Frostburg System through extensions from existing service lines.

The Communities of Midland, Lonaconing, Barton and nearby areas use more than 350,000 gpd from three surface water impoundments. A connection with Frostburg allows for emergency use of the Piney System. Westernport and the Tri-Towns area use approximately 500,000 gpd from the Savage River Reservoir. While the amount of water available is more than adequate (2.0 mgd), the water line from Savage River Reservoir to Westernport is in need of replacement. McCoole is currently served by water from the Keyser, West Virginia System.

The communities of Oldtown and Flintstone currently are served by individual wells as is much of eastern Allegany County. Small water treatment plants serve Rocky Gap State Park and the Little Orleans Campground in the eastern part of the County.

Proposed Water Improvements (See Plate 28)

Expansion of water service throughout the Potomac Valley between Cresaptown/Bel Air, Rawlings, and McCoole is feasible by 2020. Ultimately, a water line from the Savage River reservoir could be connected with the Cumberland system near Rawlings to accommodate projected growth in that region beyond the year 2020. This could create in effect a "double loop" through the area west of Cumberland, with water service provided by the Cumberland System between Eilerslie and Rawlings, the Piney System between Barrellville and Midland, the Georges Creek reservoirs between Midland and Barton, and the Savage River System south of Barton to Rawlings.

By the year 2020, when the population of the area west of Dan's Mountain is projected to be approximately 25,000, water use should be approximately 2,500,000 gpd assuming an average use of 100 gpd per person. Of this total, the Piney System will need to provide approximately 1,550,000 gpd in the area north of Midland for the projected population of 15,500 in that area. This includes Zilhman, Mt. Savage and Barrellville.

By 2020 the Midland/Lonaconing/Barton Systems will need to provide approximately 350,000 gpd to the Central Georges Creek Area and Savage River will need to provide between 750,000-1,000,000 gpd to serve Westernport, Franklin, McCoole, and the Potomac Valley.

In contrast, as mentioned earlier, the Cumberland Water System is already capable of handling the needs of at least 100,000 people at current usage rates. Much of the Middle Potomac area south of Cresaptown could be accommodated by this system if service lines were extended through Bel Air to Pinto and Rawlings. In addition, the system can handle expansion east of Cumberland to the Baltimore Pike area.

In fact, an extension of the system to the Mexico Farms/North Branch area has recently been installed. However, existing water lines need to be replaced or rehabilitated in some sections of the Cumberland system, such as Bedford Road.

Finally, new small scale water systems which are proposed in Oldtown and Flintstone in the Water & Sewer Plan should be adequate to accommodate most new growth in the eastern part of the County through the year 2020.

Public Sewerage - Current

Most of the communities in the western area of the County are now served by adequate public sewer service. Currently the communities north and west of Cumberland have sewerage service through the Cumberland treatment plant. Frostburg, Eckhart and Grahamtown sewerage flows through the Braddock Run System to LaVale and Cumberland, while Mt. Savage, Barrellville, Ellerslie and Corriganville are part of the Wills Creek-Jennings Run System which ties into the Cumberland System at the Narrows in LaVale.

The Cumberland Sewage plant, with a capacity of 15 mgd, currently serves more than 50,000 people with a demand of 8.5 mgd. The plant, now including secondary treatment, is capable of treating sewage generated by 100,000 people, provided storm-water is removed from the system. In addition to Cumberland, Frostburg, LaVale, Mt. Savage, Ellerslie, and Corriganville, the system serves Bedford Road, Bowmans Addition, Baltimore Pike, the Evitts Creek area and Mexico Farms/Rt. 51. The Georges Creek treatment plant near Barton serves the communities south of Frostburg including Midland, Lonaconing and Barton. Westernport's sewage now goes to the Upper Potomac treatment plant which also serves the Westvaco Paper Mill at Luke. McCoole relies on the Keyser plant for treatment.

The Bowling Green-Potomac Park, Cresaptown and Winchester Road communities, are served by the former Celanese Treatment Plant. This plant is being upgraded to a capacity of 2.0 mgd to accommodate expansion at the State Correctional facility at the Amcelle site. Bel Air and Rawlings are both served by small, privately operated sewage lagoons (0.45 mgd at Bel Air, 0.08 mgd at Rawlings.)

In the eastern part of the County, the Communities of Oldtown and Flintstone are served by small treatment plants, (.040 mgd at Oldtown and .045 mgd at Flintstone), while the Rocky Gap State Park, Little Orleans Campground, Green Ridge Boys Camp and Maple Run Boys Camp have their own small sewage systems.

Proposed Sewer Improvements (See Plate 29)

Because of the location of the State Prison near Cresaptown, additional capacity is being developed for the Celanese Treatment Plant which serves Cresaptown, Bowling Green and Winchester Road.

Those communities in the western part of the County that still need sewer service include Zihlman-Morantown and parts of Barrellville in the Jennings Run-Wills Creek system and Vale Summit in the Braddock Run System. Extension of the Jennings Run system to Wellersburg, Pennsylvania is also needed in the long term. As new growth occurs south of Cresaptown, an additional treatment plant will be needed in the Potomac Valley, possibly near Pinto or Rawlings. This plant could also serve the Danville area.

Finally, those sewer system expansions at Oldtown and Flintstone which are proposed in the Water & Sewer Plan should be adequate to accommodate most new growth in the eastern part of the County through the Year 2020. Overall, these improvements will result in virtual identical coverage for water and sewer service in the urbanized part of the County.

Solid Waste/Recycling

Early versions of the Allegany County Solid Waste Plan were included as a section of the Water and Sewer Plan through the 1980's. At that time, the County was involved in the operation of the County Landfill. A new Solid Waste Management Plan was adopted by the County in 1992 which emphasized

recycling and collection of solid waste to a greater degree than in the past. This Plan is also updated on a three year cycle. The latest version of the Plan includes recommendations for Solid Waste Transfer and Processing facilities in addition to the previously mentioned recycling efforts. The Solid Waste Plan is available for viewing at the Public Works Department offices on Kelly Road.

As technology changed and environmental controls became more stringent over the past 2 decades, the County moved to privatize the landfill operation. This was accomplished in 1992 when construction and operation of a new state of the art landfill was begun by the Chambers Development Company near Vale Summit. This landfill should meet the County's needs well into the decade of 2020 at the present rate of waste disposal. The County is also expecting private interests to develop a solid waste processing/transfer station to collect and possibly transfer solid waste to disposal facilities outside the County.

Since privatizing the landfill operation, the County has been concentrating its efforts on recycling materials in addition to providing improved waste collection facilities in the more rural eastern part of the County. Municipal and suburban areas are served by numerous recycling "boxes", and have curbside collection of household refuse materials by private haulers.

Open Space And Recreation

As noted in the 1998 version of the Local Land Preservation & Recreation Plan, Allegany County has more than 61,700 acres of land devoted to Open Space and outdoor recreation. Of this total, more than 3,000 acres are part of the C & O Canal National Park and more than 58,700 acres are contained in State Parks, Forests and Wildlife Management Areas.

At the local level, more than 1,650 acres of land are devoted to neighborhood, community and regional parks in municipalities and various suburban communities. The County Fairgrounds near Potomac Park, which is the County's primary regional park, has in recent years hosted many county-wide events and is projected to have even wider use in coming years as improvements are made to that facility.

The County continues to utilize the state sponsored Program Open Space and has purchased and developed parks containing more than 850 acres in 17 communities within the County. Future plans call

for continued use of P.O.S. funds in county communities as well as development of the County owned Fairgrounds facility.

The latest version of the Recreation Plan also includes a section on trail development. The primary trail being developed is the Allegheny Highlands Trail which would link the C & O Canal with Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, along the route of the Western Maryland Railroad. This trail would parallel the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad to near Frostburg and proceed to Pennsylvania along the east flank of Big Savage Mountain.

The current Local Land Preservation and Recreation Plan is adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan.

GEOGRAPHIC INFORMATION SYSTEM

A new tool which the county is starting to use to manage data related to Community Facilities is its Geographic Information System which is in the early stages of development. This system utilizes digital orthophoto maps as a base for collecting and analyzing data. Information related to house numbering, 911 emergency calls, road centerlines, tax map data, utility data and related information will be included in the system. All County Departments will ultimately be able to utilize the system as well as the general public through the Internet. When fully operational, the GIS will also allow for improved decision making with respect to land use development as well as protection of resource areas.

SECTION VI MINERAL RESOURCES ELEMENT

This Plan Element refers to the Natural Setting Report which contains a set of tables and maps spelling out where certain resources are located, their character and amount when appropriate. The element itself is primarily a set of goals and policies for guiding the future use and/or development of Mineral Resources. These policies are stated within the overall framework of the County Land Use Policies set forth in the Visions, Goals, Objectives, & Policies Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

The primary resources extracted in Allegany County are coal, sandstone, and limestone. In the Georges Creek Basin, as shown on Plate 30, the coal bearing structures outside existing urban or planned urban development should be protected for future extraction by limiting urban development until the coal is removed. In a similar fashion, land where sandstone and limestone outcrops in favorable locations should be protected from extensive urban development. (See Plates 31 and 32) Many of these outcrops are on steep slopes that are not prime candidates for urban uses, but in the Flintstone/Murley Branch area, the limestone formations are exposed in a valley setting. Continuing to utilize these lands in the Flintstone area for agricultural purposes will help preclude their use for urban purposes. Other mineral resources such as clay, shale, chert and similar materials are found either in conjunction with other minerals (i.e. clay with coal) or are so widespread that it is probably impractical to attempt to protect them separately. However, existing borrow areas or pits could be subject to protection from urban development.

MINERAL RESOURCE POLICIES & PROCEDURES

General Mineral Resource Policy

Where feasible, competition for the use of Mineral Resource lands should be minimized. Thus, existing urban lands, sensitive areas, historic sites, and public water supply basins in the County (See Plate 33 for a map of these basins) should be provided safeguards to assure minimum disruption from mineral resource development, while prime mineral producing areas outside these areas should be protected from urbanization until the mineral is removed.

Coal Resource Policies

- Prime coal bearing lands not already urbanized should be protected from urban development, particularly residential, single family development.
- Existing urban lands, historic sites, sensitive areas, and prime developable lands adjacent to urban areas should be provided safeguards to assure minimum disruption from mineral development.
- Public water supply basins within the coal producing area should be protected from new mining activity unless the new activity will reclaim previously mined lands within the water supply basin.
- The County's present zoning of mineral bearing lands should be modified to provide for mining or quarrying by right where no residences, historic sites, or public water supply exist within 500 feet of the proposed mining area outside of urban zoning districts.
- The County should promote the local use of coal mined locally for:
 - electric power generation
 - industrial use
 - conversion to other fuels or synthetic fuels
- The County should aid in assuring that locally mined coal meets air quality standards by promoting:
 - cleaning and washing plants
 - air pollution control devices
 - new technology aimed at improving air quality

- The County should pursue the retrieval of part of its investment in promoting the coal industry by levying a surcharge on coal which is mined in the County and removed for use elsewhere. This investment retrieval should be utilized in repairing roads, improving housing in mining areas, in funding new technology for using coal, in providing loans for air pollution abatement, and in subsidizing new industrial development in the coal region of the County.

Rock, sand, and gravel resources policies

- The County will assure that adequate amounts of sandstone, limestone, and other similar materials are set aside and protected for future use.
- The County will assure that existing urban development, historic sites, and sensitive areas are provided safeguards to assure minimum disruption from mineral development.
- In areas having characteristics of karst topography (areas having caverns, sinkholes and underground drainage), the County will assure that existing water resources and endangered species habitat are protected from disruption by mineral development by referring mining proposals to the appropriate State agency for review.
- The County will promote the restoration of existing, newly developing, and abandoned quarry sites within the County. Reclamation plans and appropriate bonding for sand, gravel, limestone and shale should be in place with the State prior to mining.

Gas and oil resource policies

- Although gas and oil in large commercial quantities has not yet been discovered in Allegany County, efforts to explore for gas and oil deposits should be encouraged.
- Storage of gas or oil in appropriate rock formations and structures should be encouraged.

- The County will promote the conversion of coal to natural gas and other synthetic fuels for use locally or for export to other areas.

Procedures for Protecting Mineral Resource Areas

- The County will maintain maps and permit data showing existing or potential mineral recovery areas. The County will refer proposals for mineral development to the appropriate State agency for review.
- The County will zone mineral reserve areas for non-urban land uses and will limit residential development in those areas through minimum lot size and setback requirements and utility requirements.

SECTION VII SENSITIVE AREAS ELEMENT

The Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992, requires each county to adopt a Sensitive Areas Element in addition to previously adopted plan elements. This new element is to address the protection of the following sensitive areas:

- 100 Year Floodplains
- Streams and their buffers
- Habitat of threatened and endangered species
- Steep Slopes

In addition, counties may choose to include additional types of land in the plan element. Allegany County is including the following lands in the Sensitive Areas Element because of their extent and importance to the County.

- Prime Agricultural Land
- Forest Land
- Open Space Land
- Greenways
- Poor Soil Condition areas
- Public Water Supply basins
- Aquifer Recharge areas
- Scenic Overlooks
- Caverns
- Wetlands

- Historical/Archeological Sites

A detailed description of the Sensitive Areas documented in Allegany County is included in the "Natural Setting Report" which is available for review in the County Planning Department. A separate publication, entitled "An Inventory of Sensitive Areas in Allegany County" is adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan and is also available for review in the County Planning Department.

JUSTIFICATION FOR PROTECTION OF SENSITIVE AREAS

Since the passage of the Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act of 1992, the Maryland Office of Planning and the Department of Natural Resources have been working to develop standards and policies to protect Sensitive Areas. This effort includes the preparation of a rationale for the protection of each of the 4 types of state mandated Sensitive Areas. Applicable parts of this rationale are included in Allegany County's plan element for each of the 4 types of mandated Sensitive Areas. The material in italics is copied directly from the Maryland Office of Planning rationale.

Steep Slopes (See Plate 34)

Slopes provide an environment for movement of soil and pollutants when land disturbance occurs. While soils have varying degrees of readability, all soils are nonetheless subject to movement, and increasingly so as the slope of the land increases. Control of that erosion potential is usually achieved in the context of slope regulation, where environmental protection is focused on those areas where soil movement is most likely to be a problem - on "steep slopes. "

There are multiple reasons for protecting steep slopes. Preservation of steep slopes adjacent to watercourses is especially important because of the potential harm to water quality and aquatic habitat. Communities must pay the economic costs associated with loss of water quality, as well as hazards such as flooding and landslides and other problems caused by disturbances to steep slopes. The identification and protection of steep slopes within a community helps to protect the community, and downstream communities, from these hazards. Protection also provides aesthetically pleasing open space and maintains local biodiversity found on the slopes.

Because of the extensive nature of steep slopes in Allegany County, it is important to limit urban development in these areas to minimize erosion and flooding and for watershed and habitat protection. The current subdivision requirement that each developable lot contain a buildable area with a slope less than 25% in grade should be maintained and subdividers should be encouraged to set aside steep slope areas to public use for Greenway purposes.

100 Year Floodplains (See Plate 35)

The historical reasons for floodplain protection have been to guard against injury to people and to prevent the destruction of property. In the context of sensitive areas protection under the Planning Act, relatively undisturbed floodplains serve a variety of additional functions having important purposes and benefits.

Floodplains, the products of natural floods, moderate and store floodwaters, absorb wave energies, and reduce erosion and sedimentation. Wetlands found within floodplains help maintain water quality, recharge groundwater, protect fisheries, and provide habitat and natural corridors for wildlife. Stream buffers found within floodplains also help to maintain water quality.

Safeguarding the many natural functions performed by floodplains benefits adjoining and downstream communities by minimizing the risks (and costs) associated with the loss of life and property; by contributing to the maintenance of water quality and quantity which may directly affect drinking water supplies and recreational opportunities; and in many cases, by helping to restore the health of the Chesapeake Bay - a goal which will benefit the entire public. Although much existing urban development in Allegany County is on mapped floodplain areas, the County should discourage new floodplain development, particularly in areas outside urban services. The existing Floodplain Ordinance is considered adequate for that task.

Streams and Their Buffers (See Plate 36)

Streams and their buffers are valuable to people and vital to our natural resources. Streams provide drinking water for local communities, and cropsaving irrigation for farmers during droughts. Streams support recreational fishing and serve as spawning areas for commercial fish stock; and streams attract many outdoor enthusiasts such as hunters, bird-watchers, and nature photographers. Without adequate

and sustained cooling water in streams and rivers, industries and power plants would pass higher costs on to consumers. Development near stream areas subject to flooding could result in the loss of life and property.

Streams and their buffers are home to countless species of animals and plants; and streams themselves serve as lifelines to the Bay, transporting valuable nutrients, minerals, and vitamins to the Chesapeake. The floodplains, wetlands, and wooded slopes along streams are very important parts of the stream ecosystem, and in many ways determine the diversity and health of a stream.

As development activity becomes more intense and consumes larger amounts of land, forests and natural vegetation along streams are diminished. The cumulative loss of large amounts of open space and natural land reduces the ability of remaining land along streams to buffer the effects of such intrusions as high stream flow and pollution. Many of Maryland's streams have lost part of their "immune system" and are now more vulnerable to harsh conditions and pollution stress than ever before.

Buffers are a crucial "best management technique" that reduce sediment, nitrogen, phosphorous, and other runoff pollutants by acting as a filter, thus minimizing damage to streams. The effectiveness of buffers depends on their width (which should take into account such factors as contiguous or nearby steep slopes, soil erodibility, and wetlands), the type of vegetation within the buffer (some plants are more effective at nutrient uptake than others), and maintenance of the buffer (natural, unmowed vegetation is preferable).

Streams that are not mapped for floodplain purposes have a buffer requirement of either 25' or 50' from centerline depending on the size of the basin.

Habitat of Threatened and Endangered Species

A recent Council on Environmental Quality report stated that some 500 plants and animals have disappeared from North America since Columbus landed. The Federal endangered species list numbers 600 plants and animals; another 4,000 await consideration. A recent survey suggests that up to 9,000 U.S. species may be at risk of extinction.

The materials and chemicals produced by plants and animals are a largely unresearched storehouse for products beneficial to people. More than half of all medicines in use today can be traced to wild organisms. Plant chemicals are the sole or major ingredient in 25% of prescriptions written in the United States each year. And only about 5% of the world's plants have been investigated to pharmaceutical use. Agriculture depends on the development of new varieties of crops to fend off pests and diseases. Many of these strains are created by crossbreeding with wild relatives of crop species. The new technology of biological engineering may create the ability to improve crops by transferring genes from wild strains, allowing the development of drought resistant crops or crops with built-in pesticides.

There are also ethical and cultural reasons for stemming the loss of species. When a species is driven to extinction by the current generation of humans, all future generations must bear the cost. The well-being of future generations is the social responsibility of the present generation. Support is growing for an ethic that recognizes that every form of life warrants respect regardless of its worth to humans. This ethic has been adopted by the United Nations in the World Charter for Nature as a part of its principle for conserving biological diversity. Finally, the plants and animals that make up "nature" have considerable abstract value, playing significant roles in art and many religions.

PROTECTION OF OTHER LAND TYPES

Prime Agriculture Land (See Plate 37)

As noted in the Natural Setting Report, most prime agricultural land in the County is also well suited for urban development, particularly where water and sewer service exists or can be extended. Thus, the County attempts to limit large lot urban development on these lands through its zoning and subdivision regulations to preserve as much of this land as possible for agricultural production. The County is including Right to Farm Legislation in its Zoning Ordinance rather than creating a separate Ordinance as has been done in neighboring counties in Maryland.

Forest Land

As noted in the Natural Setting Report, most of the land within the County which is located on steep slopes (Plate 34) is best left in a forested condition to minimize erosion and protect watersheds of small stream basins. Even the heavily urbanized part of the County has a high proportion of steep slope land that is best suited to forestry. The County's policies related to steep slope protection should assure that much of this land remains in a forested condition.

Non-Urban Open Space

This category of land in the County includes publicly owned land such as Dans Mountain Wildlife Management Area, Rocky Gap State Park, Warrior Mountain Wildlife Management Area and Green Ridge State Forest. Other non urban Open Space is shown on Plate 38. In addition, the C & O Canal National Park preserves a greenway of floodplain land along the Potomac River between Cumberland and the eastern boundary of the County. The County can help protect these Open Space lands from urban encroachment through subdivision regulation and protection of sensitive areas adjacent to these public lands.

Greenways

A new type of Open Space, where lands on steep slopes or in floodplain and stream buffer areas are purchased would allow for the creation of trails under the State Greenways Program. As noted on Plate 23, a number of existing and proposed trails have been outlined for inclusion in this program within the County.

Poor Soil Condition Areas

Because septic system failure occurs frequently on poor soil condition areas, it is important to limit intense urban development to those areas having public sewerage service. Current Subdivision Regulations address this problem, in part, but older, preexisting lots need to have public sewerage available prior to their development.

Public Water Supply/Aquifer/Springs

Current County Zoning Regulations limit intensive urban development in Public Water Supply Basins. Recharge areas for wells and springs are not as easily definable as surface water basins, but known recharge areas could be made subject to lower density requirements than the current standard. The County could also join with state and federal agencies in the study of water availability in these recharge areas.

Scenic Overlooks

Where overlooks currently exist, they are usually on State maintained rights of way or property (See Plate 39). New overlooks should also be developed on public property that has good access to nearby roads. While the potential for tourism development with respect to overlooks is limited, they do provide an excellent place for rest stops or information for the traveling public and enhance the overall experience in traveling through the County.

Wetlands/Caves

As noted in the Natural Setting Report, these areas are not shown on maps in that document because of their very sensitive nature. However, where possible, the State should purchase those sites which it wishes to preserve. This would relieve private property holders of the responsibility for protecting a feature that benefits the entire populace.

Historic/Archeological Sites

As noted in the Natural Setting Report under Land Suitability, these sites deserve special consideration when modern day development is planned at or near a site. Additionally, purchase and restoration of the most important sites should be considered to ensure their survival for the benefit of future generations.

SENSITIVE AREAS POLICIES

- Design Major urban development projects to avoid floodplains, stream buffer areas, those areas having steep slopes, those areas serving as public water supply basins, those areas containing

marketable mineral resources, and those areas which serve as habitat for threatened and endangered species.

- Encourage participation in the State Agricultural Land Preservation program in those areas outside the year 2020 urban development envelope.
- Encourage Conservation Easements or purchase for steep slope, floodplain lands, wetlands, and stream buffer areas which are outside the 2020 urban development envelope and which do not serve merely to block transportation or similar projects.
- Encourage the protection of small stream basins by retaining forestlands on slopes steeper than 25% grade.
- Design and construct highways, water, sewerage, and institutional facilities to minimize their impact on designated sensitive areas.
- Take the protection of sensitive areas into account in the designation of areas suitable for growth; and in designated growth areas, provide an appropriate level of protection for sensitive areas.
- Protect sensitive areas through the acquisition of parks, open space, development rights, and easements.
- Create Greenways with a specific focus on creating a network linking urban areas to parks and other open space.
- Identify, designate, and map sensitive areas that relate to the protection of natural systems, including steep slopes, floodplain areas, stream channels and endangered species habitat.
- Encourage the protection of other sensitive areas such as aquifer recharge areas, public water supply basins, prime and productive agricultural land, large forested tracts, and historic properties.
- Protect, retain, and conserve productive agricultural and forest land.
- Promote the use of renewable resources and the efficient use of non-renewable energy resources.

- Encourage the conservation of ground and surface water supplies.
- Encourage the use of low input agricultural practices, conservation tillage, integrated pest management, and other agricultural and land use best management practices.
- Encourage the rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of historic structures and older commercial buildings.
- Encourage preservation and restoration of environmental resources to enhance quality of life.

Regulatory Procedures for Protection of Sensitive Areas

This section presents specific standards and procedures for meeting the policies set forth above. Many of these standards appear in Regulatory form in the County's Land Development Regulations.

Land Development Standards

Floodplain Management Standards

- No new residential development should be permitted within mapped 100 year floodplain areas.
- New commercial or industrial development within mapped 100 year floodplain areas must meet FEMA guidelines.
- Any new buildings or additions or reconstruction of existing houses in the mapped 100 year floodplain must have a first floor elevation of at least 1 foot above the 100 year flood elevation.
- No new building structures should be permitted within mapped floodway boundaries.

Sediment Control/Stormwater Management Procedures

- All new urban development should be done in accordance with State Sediment Control Regulations and the booklet, "Standards & Specifications for Soil Erosion & Sediment Control" published by the Department of the Environment.

- All new urban development should be done in accordance with the State Stormwater Management Regulations and the following publications: "Standards & Specifications for Infiltration Practices" published by the Department of the Environment, "Urban Hydrology for Small Watersheds," published by Soil Conservation service, and "Stormwater Management Pond Design Manual", published by the Maryland Association of Soil Conservation Districts. Stormwater Management includes measures to maintain water quality as well as to regulate water quantity.

Steep Slopes Standards

- All new buildings are to be constructed on a site having a slope of less than 25% in grade prior to grading.
- New road cuts for urban, forestry or mineral development should not disturb slopes steeper than 25% grade.
- New road grades should be less than 10% maximum finished slopes, Side slopes should be no greater than 2:1 horizontal to vertical.
- Slopes steeper than 25% should remain in vegetative cover. In new subdivisions or planned developments, steep slope areas greater than 25% in grade should be set aside to maintain vegetative cover and to provide "Greenways" along steep slope areas to connect urban areas with open space lands.

Stream Buffer Area Standards

- No new buildings should be built within 100 feet of the bank of any stream having a mapped floodplain except where the setback extends beyond the floodplain. The setback is 50 feet from the stream bank in that event.
- No new buildings should be built within 50 feet of the bank of any other stream having a basin larger than 400 acres, or within 25 feet of the centerline of any other stream channel, drainage way or wet weather stream.

- The setback/buffer area is to be maintained in grass or other natural vegetation. In new subdivisions or planned developments, areas within the stream buffer setback should be set aside to maintain vegetative cover and to provide "Greenways" along streams to connect urban areas with open space lands.

Other Procedures for Protection of Sensitive Areas

Procedure for Protecting Wetlands and Habitat of Endangered Species

- The County will maintain the State Inventory of Threatened or Endangered Species, and a listing of wetland areas and other habitat areas for threatened and endangered species and will refer any development proposal to the appropriate State agency for review when it appears that the proposal could impact a wetland or other habitat of threatened or endangered species. A separate document showing the State listing of threatened and endangered species in Allegany County is available in the County Planning Department.

Procedure for Protecting Historic/Archeological Sites

- The County will maintain an inventory of National Register Eligible Historic Sites and will refer any development proposal to the Maryland Historical Trust for review when it appears that the proposal will impact a National Register Eligible Site.
- The County will consider the establishment of a Historic District Commission to review proposals for development within a National Register Eligible Site. The County will also consider the establishment of Historic District Zoning in those National Register Eligible Districts where a majority of residents and landowners request the establishment of such a district.

Procedure for Protecting Agricultural/Forest Lands

- The County will maintain maps and permit data showing existing agriculture and forest lands. The County will work with the Soil Conservation District, the Extension Service and other State agencies to promote the retention of agriculture and forest lands.

- The County will promote the Agricultural Land Preservation program, the Conservation District program and other related programs to retain agriculture and forest lands.
- The County will cooperate with the State through the use of Program Open Space to purchase land and/or easements to the development rights to Sensitive Areas for Greenway purposes.
- The County will consider adopting Right to Farm Legislation, which, in conjunction with Zoning enables agricultural lands to remain productive in the face of urban development pressure.

CONSERVATION PROGRAMS

The County intends to use a number of methods to conserve and protect various land types including Sensitive Areas. These methods include promotion of the Agricultural Land Preservation Program; the use of easement programs for protecting steep slopes, floodplains and stream buffer areas; and purchase of extremely sensitive areas for the use of future generations.

The County also intends to use subdivision and related regulations to ensure setbacks from stream channels and to protect resource areas from intensive urban development.

Agricultural Land Preservation

Allegany County contains several areas where farming has historically been the primary land use. This includes an area north of Mt. Savage, several areas south of Frostburg, the Evitts Creek Valley, the Potomac River Valley, the Murleys Branch Valley, the Town Creek Valley, the Orleans area and the Oldtown and Flintstone areas as shown on Plate 37.

Although the County has had little private interest shown in the voluntary State Agricultural District Program because of low development appraisals for farmland, a number of farms in these areas of the County would be eligible for the program. At present, the County has only 3 farms in Agricultural Districts participating in the program. The County should encourage participation in the program through the Agricultural Land Preservation Board and the Soil Conservation District with emphasis on those areas outside the year 2020 urban development envelope. The County should also work closely with the State

Agricultural Land Preservation Program administrator to assure that fair land development values are determined for those landowners wishing to participate in the program.

Conservation Easements/Nature Conservancy

Allegany County currently contains 2 properties which have Conservation Easements with the State through the Environmental Trust. Since this is also a voluntary program, the County has little control of the location of these easements. Additionally, there are currently 4 properties owned by the Nature Conservancy in Allegany County. The County should encourage this type of voluntary protection for steep slope, floodplain lands, and wetlands which are outside the 2020 urban development envelope and which do not serve merely to block transportation or similar projects.

Sensitive Area Protection/Greenways Program

The County should work closely with the State to develop an easement program for protecting forest lands, steep slope areas, floodplains, wetlands, and stream buffer areas. Finally, the State should be encouraged to purchase outright certain lands that need to be preserved in perpetuity because of their extremely sensitive nature.

Other Programs

The County recognizes that additional conservation programs are being developed by both private groups and government agencies. These programs include stream basin planning efforts in the Evitts Creek, Town Creek and Sideling Creek watersheds. The County generally supports efforts to improve water quality through stream basin planning and related projects.

SECTION VIII LAND USE ELEMENT

The Land Use Plan is an element of the Allegany County Comprehensive Plan. It is intended to serve as a guide to local officials, landowners, developers and builders when decisions are being made with respect to the use of land.

The Land Use Plan begins with a section concerning land suitability for urban and non-urban uses, land use policies and phased land development. The second section of the Land Use Plan provides projections on population and industrial growth, and provides some insight into where water, sewer, and transportation improvements are likely to occur by the year 2020. Finally, the Plan concludes with a projection of land use to the year 2020 and Comprehensive Plan Maps for both urban land and non-urban land.

Relationship to Other Plans and Plan Elements

By its very nature, the Land Use Plan cannot stand alone separate from the other Plan Elements. The Transportation Plan, the Community Facilities Plan, the Mineral Resources Plan and the Sensitive Areas Plan all impact the Land Use Plan. Further, much of the Background Information which appears in the Natural Setting Report, the Population Report, the National Freeway Corridor Study and the Rt. 220 Corridor Study is related to land use. Finally, other County planning documents, including the Water & Sewer Plan, the Solid Waste and Recycling Plan, the School Plan, the Housing Plan, and the Open Space Plan have direct influence on the Land Use Plan.

In addition, regional plans, such as the Appalachian Development Plan and the Economic Development Administration Plan influence the Land Use Plan. Further, State plans for transportation, recreation, corrections, pollution control, health programs, and economic development proposals impact land use at the local level.

LAND USE SURVEY

A separate document, available for review in the Planning Department, contains the most recent Land Use Survey Report which was completed in 1991. This document also includes data from the 1973

Survey and a brief recap of the 1961 survey. It also shows overall land development in Allegany County since 1900 on a series of maps. Many of the recommendations for future land use in the County are based on this historic information as well as the data found in the related Background Information Reports.

LAND SUITABILITY FOR URBAN DEVELOPMENT

Although no large-scale land use studies of the County were carried out prior to the Comprehensive Planning Program in the early 1960's, it can safely be said that much of the urban development in Allegany County prior to that time occurred on less than prime land. Because of topographical constraints, much of the older development occurred in floodplain areas along Wills Creek, Georges Creek, and their tributaries. Soil conditions, particularly for sewage septic areas and drainage were poor in most of the urban part of the County. With the installation of public water and sewer in much of the County from Cumberland west, soil suitability is less a factor than it once was. However, steep slopes, poorly drained soils and floodplains remain a major hindrance to urban development as noted in the Natural Setting Report.

Land in the County which is outside steep slope areas and floodplains and has ready access to public water and sewer and good road access from local streets and roads is shown as the shaded area on Plate 40 which projects urban development to the Year 2020. This plate also shows existing developed areas in the County as of 1990 in black.

Other lands suitable for urban development in the County which are outside proposed water and sewer service areas are also shown as shaded areas on Plate 40. Although not served by public water or sewer, these areas have soils that can support some limited urban development.

LAND SUITABILITY FOR NON-URBAN USES

Agriculture:

Unfortunately, the same soil and slope characteristics that are essential for good agricultural production encourage urban development, particularly in an area where flat land and good soils are of limited extent. Some of the best soils for agriculture in the County have long since been converted to urban uses in Cumberland, LaVale and Frostburg. The remaining areas with high agricultural potential in the County are

in the area south of Frostburg, the Mt. Savage area, the Evitts Creek Valley, the Potomac Valley south of Cresaptown, the Flintstone/Town Creek area, the Oldtown area, and in the Orleans area.

Forestry:

As noted earlier, most of the undeveloped steep areas in Allegany County are currently forested. While this may be considered a relatively unproductive use of land by some, it is possibly the best use of steep slope land over the long term, when soil erosion, stormwater runoff, flooding and other undesirable side effects of intensive steep slope development are considered. When watershed protections, hunting, fishing, and other outdoor recreational activities are considered along with scenic beauty, this is probably the best current use of these lands.

Mineral Resources Production:

Given proper development and oversight, particularly in sensitive areas and historic districts, mineral production, especially in the Georges Creek Coal Basin, may be one of the most economic and productive use of land outside the present limit of urban services. Once reclaimed, mined land can be returned to grass and eventually forestry use. If properly designed, formerly mined areas can be put to urban uses where public water and sewer is available.

In the Corriganville, LaVale, Cresaptown, and Flintstone areas some commercial development of sandstone and limestone formations has occurred in the past and will be necessary for continued urban construction projects. Because of the geologic structure of these formations, most outcrops that have economic value are on ridges having generally steep slopes. Once again, proper development and reclamation can make these extractive areas suitable for some other land use after mining is completed. Additional mineral use includes shale borrow pits for road construction and related uses. While shale outcrops occur frequently in the eastern part of the County, their development as borrow areas are normally not extensive. Once again, proper development and reclamation can make these areas useful for other purposes. Finally, a number of rock structures in the County may lend themselves to natural gas production or storage. Development of this resource does not require massive land development and can be accommodated on small sites set back from urban development.

LAND USE POLICIES

- Place primary emphasis on in-fill development of vacant, buildable land within existing communities already having adequate local streets, water, and sewer service, or in growth areas where these services can be reasonably provided.
- Give high priority to redevelopment and growth in the older urban areas compatible with their existing and historic character. The County could consider some form of tax incentive for re-development, particularly in areas designated for one of the state's re-development programs.
- Encourage new urban development in growth areas and serve this new development with new streets and extensions of public water and sewerage systems as capacity allows.
- Provide increased protection for residential areas by developing a new Zoning District Classification System and by developing improved Standards for Land Development. The County should provide an improved regulatory mechanism to deal with junk or abandoned vehicles.
- Set aside an adequate amount of land reserved solely for commercial, industrial, and mineral extraction for projected future needs.
- Encourage industrial and business development in urban centers and designated growth areas and encourage the location of such development so that it is accessible to labor.
- Plan and design infrastructure facilities in urban growth centers to support their function as destinations and focal points of commercial activity, consistent with the scale and character of the community as defined by the Comprehensive Plan.
- Develop access control practices to discourage strip commercial and residential development along State and County arterial highways.
- Encourage clustering of residential development consistent with overall density standards.

- Encourage forestry and agricultural service industries to sustain forestry and agriculture as primary industries in Allegany County.
- Utilize a site plan review process for all new urban development which addresses setbacks, access, water and sewer provision, sediment control and stormwater management.

POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The updated population projections for Allegany County shown on Plate 41 were prepared by utilizing information developed from the 2000 Census. Allegany County has broken these projections down by Region through the year 2020.

These projections reflect a commitment to economic growth in the County which will necessitate the creation of over 2,500 new jobs in the County by the year 2020. This employment projection assumes that an ever-increasing percentage of people in the population will hold or seek jobs. The percentage of jobholders in the year 2020 has been projected to increase to more than 40% of the population as compared to 31% in 1950.

Projections by Region

Between 2000 and 2020, moderate population growth should occur in the suburban areas around Frostburg, Cumberland, LaVale and Ellerslie where services now exist or are planned. Any major new population growth and associated urban development should be concentrated in the Middle Potomac region south of Cresaptown, as community services are extended to that area. Population is expected to be slightly higher in 2020 than it was in 2000 in the Greater Frostburg Region. A good deal of urban growth is projected to occur in the area, particularly north of I-68 in the Frostburg region where the population is expected to increase by more than 1,000 persons. The major impetus for this growth will be the continued development of employment opportunities at Frostburg State University; in the industrial commercial complex at the east edge of town; and in mining and energy development throughout the Georges Creek Basin. In contrast, the Georges Creek and Upper Potomac regions are projected to continue to lose population until the year 2020. Little growth in the Georges Creek Region is foreseen, because of a severe shortage of suitable building sites outside the floodplain of the major streams. However, the extension of sewer service into the area north of Midland makes this area more suitable for

urban growth in the future. The extension of public water from the Frostburg System into this area holds the key to urban growth south of I-68.

In the Upper Potomac region, while some suitable land is available for development near McCoole, major growth in that area is dependent on the provision of water and sewer service. Sewer and water service is currently available in McCoole proper, but the extension of those systems north of McCoole is the key item to more urban development in that Region.

Between 1990 and 2020, the population of the Central part of the County is expected to grow slightly with a small population gain in the Greater Cumberland Region, and a modest increase in LaVale. The remainder of new population growth should be in the Middle Potomac Region between Cresaptown and Rawlings. The major impetus for growth in these regions will be related to commercial and service industries including health care, nursing home care, correctional facilities and tourism development.

Population in the Oldtown and Flintstone regions has remained nearly constant over the last fifty years and is expected to grow by several hundred people per decade through the year 2020, particularly in the Orleans area.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Introduction

Allegany County has maintained an aggressive program of economic development for nearly a quarter of a century. The County has made substantial progress in diversifying the economy and investing in infrastructure to support new business sectors. However, like with any aspect of the business cycle, the County's program is changing to meet new challenges and take advantage of new opportunities. The County has developed a new emphasis on those industry sectors, companies and jobs that pay higher salaries/wages, but require higher skills. Low skill, low wage employment, regardless of the number of jobs, does not provide the financial resources for families or for the community.

Mission Statement

To set the tone for the County's development programs, a Mission Statement has been created.

That Mission Statement is:

“The promotion of Allegany County, Maryland, as a location of economic opportunity for quality business that create and maintain quality jobs. To successfully reach the community's goals, Allegany County must develop and market the physical infrastructure, educated and committed work force, progressive tax structure and quality of life necessary to attract and retain quality businesses with the competitive world economy.”

The Mission Statement places new emphasis on the quality of the companies and jobs to be sought after by the County. The definition of a “quality company” involves the following:

- Is a part of an Industry Sector that has demonstrated growth in sales, number of firms and number of public companies
- Has had company growth in Sales and Profits during the last five (5) years
- Have multiply active sources of capital
- Has an active Work Force Training Program
- Is advancing all aspects of the company through technology

The definition of a “quality job” involves:

- Regular opportunities for advancement tied to training programs
- Pays wages/salaries at or above the industry average
- Offers comprehensive benefits for the employee and their family
- Requires higher skills for all levels, including entry level positions

Retention and Expansion

All basic data of traditional economic development indicates that paying attention to a community's current businesses is by far more economical than investing in marketing and incentives for new firms. Recognizing this fact, Allegany County continues to reach out to the exiting businesses to offer services to them that would encourage their retention or facilitate their expansion.

A part of this effort is met through the County's active involvement with private sector organizations. The most notable is the unique partnership the County has with the Greater Allegany Business Foundation. It is also done through participation in the committees of the Allegany County Chamber of Commerce. By working closely with these active business organizations, the County maintains direct communications

with the business community and offers multiple opportunities for firms to contact the County in times of need or opportunity.

While it is not always possible to utilize the same programs offered to new businesses to aid an existing firm, the County does work intensely with the Regional Office of the Maryland Department of Business and Economic Development to bring all appropriate resources to a project. Those resources may also include the valuable staffs of the Small Business Development Center or the Tri-County Council for Western Maryland.

Target Industry Sectors

Like nearly every community in the nation, Allegany County has focused the economic development program towards those industry sectors that have the best chance of creating quality investments and jobs. For the 21st century, those industry sectors that will be successful will be far different from the later half of the last century. The County's 21st century targets are:

- **Advanced Manufacturing** – The marriage between manufacturing, information technology, design and engineering to produce technology-advanced end products. The creation of custom-tailored solutions that meet the needs of client customers. A complex combination of innovation, information communication design, engineering and creativity all applied to the manufacturing process. Advanced manufacturing is having a substantial impact on automotive components, defense/aerospace industry, composite materials and electronics.
- **University-Based Technology Firms** – Taking advantage of the resources of Frostburg State University and Allegany College, the sectors of biotechnology, biomedical, bioinformatics, computer science/IT, environmental science and web-based educational products. These industries have had the highest growth rates during the last decade.
- **Telecomm/Customer Service Centers** – Building on successes from the 1980s and 1990s, but with a higher expectation of services provided, work force skills and wages.
- **Traditional Industries** – Maintaining a link to the successes of the past, building on the industries tied to the region or resources. Provides opportunities for entry level positions, services other industries and diversifies the economy.

- Entrepreneurial Development – Supports the potential of local talent, emerging technologies and independent wealth building.
- Upscale Tourism – Provides economic diversity, takes advantage of natural, cultural and historic resources and enhances local recreational opportunities.

Infrastructure Investments

Allegany County can only be successful if it has made the necessary investments in economic development infrastructure. This is a minimum requirement to compete against other communities that are also investing. The County has had a proud and successful history of traditional industrial park development since the early 1970s. The investments for the 21st century will draw on that experience, but with the needs of new age business in mind.

- Allegany Business Center at Frostburg State University – This unique project places a County developed business park on land owned by the University. The Center is a business park that offers all of the resources of Frostburg State and the University of Maryland System to companies involved in the newest of technology business sectors. The industry targets are biotechnology, information technology/computer science, environmental science and technology based or web based educational products. The first phase of the Center was open for occupancy in September 2001, and offered three sites for development.

Marketing for the Business Center has focused on the biotech industry using the BIO International Exhibition held each year in June and the information technology industry of the DC metro area using the Maryland Technology Showcase held each December. The County has developed a 21st century “e-commerce” mini CD instead of a paper brochure to market the Business Centers resources and assets.

- Barton Business Park for Advanced Manufacturing – This project represents the next generation of industrial parks in that it will be focused on projects involving “advanced manufacturing”. That term is detailed elsewhere in this plan, but basically means that projects are more dependent upon technology and automation, which will require larger investments in that technology. Such projects also generate fewer jobs versus traditional light manufacturing or assembly, require greater skills of the employees that are hired, but

offer those employees higher wages/salaries and benefits. As more and more traditional manufacturing moves off shore or to Mexico, advanced manufacturing is the element of that industry sector that appears poised to grow within the continental United States. The Barton Business Park is expected to be completed and ready for occupancy in late 2003 or early 2004.

A marketing program to be initiated in 2002 is being developed for the Park that will include a 21st century “e-commerce” mini CD that replaces the paper brochures. The Park will be the centerpiece of the County’s efforts to attract suppliers and vendors of the adjacent ATK Tactical Systems plant as well as similar defense related contractors. Partnering with Maryland officials, efforts will be made to attract sub contractors on major new weapon systems and new web-based security systems.

- Traditional Industrial Facilities Renovation and Reuse – With a 150-year heritage of traditional industries, Allegany County continues to have sites and facilities that are well suited for those projects that still require their location within the region. Thus, the County has embarked on the redevelopment and reuse of former production plants, offering sites and facilities for heavy manufacturing in the North Branch Industrial Complex and sites for development in the Riverside Industrial Park.
- Telecommunications Network – The next generation of business parks in the 21st century may be virtual rather than land and buildings. Thus, the growing importance of the telecom network. Allegany County has sufficient capacity for today’s needs, but requires additional high speed, wide bandwidth capacity with redundancy. In addition, the added charges and fees placed on long distance transmissions by an outdated Federal regulatory system will need to be legislatively changed to allow a more business friendly environment.

With all of these needs and gaps, Allegany County is earnestly working with the State of Maryland, Verizon, Allegheny Communications and Allconet to develop alternative methods to obtain the capacity and pricing necessary for the County to be competitive. This “information super highway” is deemed just as important as the interstate highway was in the last century.

Strategic Partnerships

A community like Allegany County, with its relatively small size and distance from the metro area, needs to reach out to other entities to create strategic partnerships in order to be successful. This effort is just as critical as any new business park or tax incentive. This is especially true in the areas of marketing, where Allegany County cannot match the dollars spent by other larger jurisdictions and in the area of work force development for the technological economy of the 21st century. The County will continue to seek to build such partnerships in order to achieve development goals far beyond the reach of the County on its own. Some of the strategic partnerships already underway include:

- State of Maryland – Department of Business and Economic Development, Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Housing and Community Development
- Greater Allegany Business Foundation – This has been the County's private sector partner since 1964. The Foundation acts as a private sector advisor to the County, owns the Frostburg Business Park and sponsors the annual Annapolis PACE Reception.
- Frostburg State University and Allegany College – The resources of FSU, the University of Maryland System and Allegany College are the most critical part of the County's potential for success in the new business sectors of the 21st century.
- Allegany County Chamber of Commerce and The Greater Cumberland Committee – These entities provide a growing connection to the existing business community and provide vital support for new projects.
- Others – There are numerous agencies and organizations that work to promote the County, prepare the work force and provide connections to the private sector that form an irreplaceable part of the County's development programs.

URBAN LAND PLAN - PRIORITY FUNDING AREA

The 1995 County Comprehensive Plan suggested that two broad types of land use should be recognized – Urban and Non Urban. The County Zoning Ordinance, as adopted in 1996, reflected this breakdown of land types and further subdivided urban land into categories for commercial, Industrial, Residential and General Urban development. This Urban Plan follows that same guideline and promotes new urban growth in urban areas in the county's Priority Funding Area, either as re-development or as in-filling vacant lands in existing communities or designated Rural Village.

Due to the nature of Allegany County's terrain, most urban development is concentrated in a figure eight pattern between Cumberland, LaVale, Mt. Savage, Frostburg, Georges Creek Communities, Westernport, McCoole, Danville, Rawlings, Cresaptown and Bowling Green. This development pattern tends to follow the Potomac Valley, the Georges Creek Valley, the Braddock Run Valley and the Jennings Run/Wills Creek Valley in a circular pattern around Dans Mountain and Wills Mountain. Projected growth in the future should be directed to fill in vacant lands within this general pattern.

Redevelopment

Redevelopment or revitalization within the county Priority Funding Area is the county's primary Land Development planning tool. The County has a large proportion of older housing (approximately 38% of all housing was built prior to 1940.) Redevelopment should occur in Mount Savage, Barrellville, Eckhart, Frostburg, Grahamtown, Midland, Lonaconing, Barton, and other Georges Creek Communities, and in Westernport, Luke and McCoole. (See Plate 42) These communities have also experienced population loss since 1950. In addition, these communities have a high rate of vacant houses or houses having one or two elderly occupants.

Redevelopment should also occur in Cumberland, central Cresaptown and Ellerslie. The City also has some buildable vacant land available, and the potential for housing rehabilitation and neighborhood renewal is great. The City probably will increase in attractiveness to single persons and small family households as the need for smaller, more efficient dwelling units increases. Cresaptown and Potomac

Park are prime sites for redevelopment for residential use, small commercial enterprises and professional offices.

One tool for encouraging redevelopment is the State's recently established Community Legacy Program. Detailed local plans for each community will be necessary under this Program to delineate neighborhoods which need housing rehabilitation, street and safety improvements, and community facility and service provision. Through redevelopment, acquisition, rehabilitation and blight elimination, homes and neighborhoods can be made more desirable, vacant lots can be put to better use, and commercial businesses can be encouraged to upgrade their appearance. Tax incentives could also be considered as a tool to utilize in this and similar state re-development programs. The goal of redevelopment is to make older urban areas more attractive places in which to live.

Allegany County's Priority Funding Area (See Plate 43) includes all of the communities and neighborhoods named above. These communities have common needs and could be considered as one all-inclusive community based on their age and level of services for the purposes of the Community Legacy Program.

In addition to general redevelopment of older neighborhoods, several municipalities have designated specific areas for commercial redevelopment. These areas include the Downtown Cumberland Special Taxing District, the Virginia Avenue Revitalization Area, the Frostburg Main Street Business District, the Westernport Downtown Revitalization Area, the Cresaptown Revitalization Area and the Lonaconing Central Business District. These areas should be targeted for the Community Legacy Program as funding becomes available.

A further inducement to redevelopment is the creation and expansion of Enterprise Zones. Such zones have been created in the Cumberland area and in Frostburg. Other older communities could benefit from this program which provides incentives for commercial and industrial expansion.

In-Filling Vacant Land

The next priority, in terms of general urban development in the County is filling-in vacant land within the Priority Funding Area in already built-up areas where adequate roads, water, and sewer service exist, are

planned, or could be extended at a reasonable cost (See Plate 44.) In the western part of the County, these areas include Barrellville, Mount Savage, Slabtown, Morantown and Zihlman; the area near Frostburg and its satellite communities, including Vale Summit, Eckhart, Parkersburg Road, Alternate Rt. 40 West, Braddock Estates, Grahamtown, Midlothian, Carlos, Klondike, Woodland, Ocean and Shaft; Seaber-Robertson Addition near Barton; and on Horse Rock Hill near Westernport.

Filling-in vacant land is also a top priority in existing developed areas near Cumberland. Many good building sites have been passed over in the Valley Road, Bedford Road, and Baltimore Pike areas, along Route 51 toward North Branch; in the LaVale, Cash Valley, and Corriganville-Ellerslie areas; along Winchester Road, in Cresaptown, Potomac Park, Bel Air, Rawlings, Danville, Dawson and McCoole. Much of this vacant land is now served by public sewer and water service.

New Development

As additional land for development is required, new residential development should occur adjacent to built-up areas, in or adjacent to the Priority Funding Area, thus minimizing expenses for roads, water, sewerage, and other services. Lands meeting these criteria, and which meet the natural features criteria of avoiding floodplains and steep slopes, are shown in a light shade on Plate 45. These areas should not all be zoned for development immediately, but should be phased over the next several decades as public services are made available.

Large tracts of buildable land outside existing built-up areas is scarce other than in the Rt. 220 Corridor south of Cresaptown and in the area south of Frostburg. The bulk of other prime residential land (avoiding floodplains and steep slopes) is located along Cash Valley Road, Winchester Road, and along Route 35 between Ellerslie and Corriganville.

Vacant buildable land also exists in and around Oldtown and Flintstone. It also appears feasible that small public water systems could be established as the population density increases in both area. Flintstone could be served by a public water system supplied from surface and groundwater in the Murley Branch or Flintstone Creek Valleys. Oldtown could be served by surface water from the Seven Spring

Run drainage basin for a public water supply system. The suitability of these sources for public use would have to be determined through a study of both water quality and yield.

However, as noted earlier, vacant land scattered throughout the built-up areas and served by public water and/or sewer should be developed first. To accomplish this goal, zoning for new development should be phased over the next several decades as community facilities, particularly expanded sewage service is provided.

PHASED DEVELOPMENT

The Land Use trends set since 1900 should continue, with urban growth continuing outward from Cumberland through LaVale and Cresaptown toward Rawlings, and with the Frostburg area developing satellites to the north and south. This urban development conforms with the policy guidelines outlined previously by avoiding the sensitive natural areas and staying either within existing built-up areas or adjacent to them.

Phase 1

The first phase of new development should occur in the following areas: Frostburg and its satellite communities; the Wills Creek Valley between Corriganville and Eilerslie; the vicinity of Cash Valley Road; the Winchester Road area, Bedford Road; Baltimore Pike; Valley Road; and the Rt. 51/Mexico Farms area. Much of this development would be in areas having existing water and sewer service or adjacent to these areas. Redevelopment should occur in Cumberland, Frostburg, Mt. Savage, the Georges Creek communities, and in Cresaptown.

Phase 2

The second phase of new development should occur in the Potomac Valley between Bel Air and Rawlings as water and sewer service is extended in this area. A modest amount of new development should also occur in the Flintstone and Oldtown areas as water and sewer improvements are made in those communities. At the same time, redevelopment efforts should continue in the older communities.

Phase 3

The third phase of new development should occur in the triangle between Frostburg, Clarysville and Midland as water and sewer service is extended and improved in this area.

RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

Zoning Districts and Densities

The Allegany County Zoning Ordinance creates a number of Zoning Districts which permit residential uses. Rather than establishing traditional density requirements by Zoning District, allowable density is related to the type of water and sewer services which is available at a particular site. These density requirements are shown in tabular form in the Zoning Ordinance and are modified from time to time as conditions warrant.

Subdivision Requirements

The Allegany County Subdivision Regulations specify the manner in which new lots are to be created. Allegany County allows both major (more than 5 lots) and minor (5 lots or less) subdivisions with varying requirements for each type of subdivision. Generally, major subdivisions require public water, public sewer and publicly maintained roads, while minor subdivisions usually will permit wells, septic systems and frontage on a publicly dedicated right of way. Density requirements in new subdivisions are the same as those spelled out in the Zoning Ordinance.

Residential - Greater Frostburg Region

The 1995 Comprehensive Plan suggested new residential development at Frostburg in the Midlothian Road area adjacent to Braddock Estates and in the vicinity of Old Rt. 36 near Grahamtown as shown on Plate 45. With the extension of water and sewer service, the communities south of I-68, including Midlothian, Shaft, and Carlos could see some residential expansion. The Georges Creek Valley from Midland south to Westernport has been highly urbanized for many years and has little room left for residential expansion. The provision of public sewer throughout the Valley and improvements to the Lonaconing-Midland water systems should enhance opportunities for redevelopment and in filling of

vacant lots through the Valley. Some new residential development is possible at Dogwood Flats south of Barton and on Horse Rock Hill east of Westernport. North of Frostburg some residential development is possible between Zihlman and Morantown with the recent installation of public water. The same possibility exists between Mt. Savage and Barrellville, but public water improvements are a necessity for this area to have residential expansion.

Residential - LaVale Region

In the LaVale Region (See Plate 45) little land for residential development is still available outside of Cash Valley, the Winchester Road and the Corriganville/Ellerslie Corridor along Rt. 35. Most of the remaining land near the Winchester-Vocke Road Triangle at I-68 should be utilized for commercial purposes. Some residential land still remains to be infilled on both sides of Alternate Rt. 40 and on Haystack Mountain north of I-68.

Residential - Greater Cumberland Region

In the Cumberland area, a similar situation exists. Most of the easily developed residential land is already occupied. As noted on Plate 45, some additional residential growth could be accommodated on the hilltops near Valley Road, Shades Lane, Hillcrest Drive and Christie Road, but there are no large tracts of easily developed land remaining which have water and sewer service available.

Residential - Other Regions

The 1995 Comprehensive Plan suggested new residential development South of Cresaptown at the Mason Farm and South of Bel Air on the west side of existing Route 220. With the extension of public water and sewer, the entire area west of existing Route 220 to the foot of Dans Mountain and South to Rawlings could be developed for residential purposes. South of Rawlings, more intensive residential development could be accommodated in the Danville/ Dawson area with the extension of public water and sewer. At McCoole, additional residential development could also occur since public water and sewer is currently available.

East of Cumberland, there is potential for residential development in the Evitts Creek Valley, but much of this land is also suited for agricultural use and should remain so for the immediate future. The Baltimore Pike area, Flintstone, Oldtown and Orleans area also have potential for limited residential growth, but do not have public water, nor does the Orleans area have public sewer. The extension of these services east of Cumberland to Rocky Gap could allow for limited development in areas along Rt. 144 and adjacent County roads. The recent extension of water and sewer service in the Mexico Farms/Rt. 51 area should allow for a modest amount of residential development in that area as well.

Second Home Development

Second home subdivisions, which have gained recent popularity in the eastern part of the County, should meet strict development standards so that they are in harmony with the natural setting and do not create a demand for services which the County is unable to provide. In general, second home developments must conform to all planning policies and standards as other development, since the homes will probably be used as year-round residences sometime in the future.

COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT

Commercial - LaVale Region

Most of the existing and potential commercial land within the County is within the Cumberland, LaVale, Cresaptown and Frostburg areas as shown on Plate 46. The Winchester Road, Vocke Road, Alt. Rt. 40 triangle continues to have potential for increased commercial activity in LaVale. In fact, the major regional shopping Mall located near I-68 in LaVale has become the center for retail business for the County Service Area.

Commercial - Greater Cumberland Region

In the Cumberland Region, the downtown area has potential for redevelopment, while the Willowbrook Road, Naves Crossroads, and Industrial Boulevard areas have potential for new and increased commercial activity. Most new major commercial development in the Cumberland area since 1960 has

been located outside the Central Business District of Cumberland in the White Oaks Area, the Motor City area, western LaVale, and Nave's Crossroads.

Commercial – Greater Frostburg Region

The area south of Frostburg along Rt. 36 and at Midlothian Road has the best potential for future commercial development in that region. In the Georges Creek communities, redevelopment is the best opportunity for new commercial activity although some expansion of existing commercial uses at the Tri-Towns Plaza east of Westernport is possible.

Commercial - Other Regions

To the South, the Potomac Valley has several places where commercial activity could be concentrated. The Cresaptown and Bel Air area currently has a good deal of commercial land along existing Route 220 and Winchester Road. Increased commercial development is anticipated south of Cresaptown and near the proposed junction of Rt. 956 and new Route 220. Other commercial lands should be developed near Rawlings and Danville when those areas are served by public water and sewer. At the south end of the Valley, McCoole has already seen some new commercial development along Rt. 135 west of McCoole and along Route 220 north of McCoole as well as in the older core area of McCoole.

East of Cumberland, the Rocky Gap interchange, the Rt. 144 corridor east of Naves Crossroads to the top of Martins Mountain and the Flintstone community have potential for small scale highway service commercial activity as do the I-68 interchanges at Fifteen Mile Creek, M.V. Smith Road, Orleans Road and Belle Grove. In fact, the Orleans interchange area has a relatively large flat area available for commercial use. Southeast of Cumberland, potential commercial land exists along new Rt. 51 near North Branch and along the existing road near Oldtown.

Neighborhood Commercial

In addition, smaller scale commercial activities will continue in the old downtown area of Frostburg, Westernport, Lonaconing, Midland, Barton, Mt. Savage, Eckhart and McCoole. New neighborhood

commercial areas are necessary either within or near the residential areas surrounding Frostburg and in Barrellville, Zihlman-Morantown, Grahamtown, Midlothian, and the Georges Creek Communities.

The need also exists for expanded local commercial development at LaVale, Cresaptown, Bowling Green, Rawlings, the Rt. 51 area, Baltimore Pike, the Bedford Road area, Ellerslie-Corriganville and in Oldtown and Flintstone.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT

The 1995 Comprehensive Plan suggested Industrial Development in the Cumberland area at the Upper Potomac Industrial Park at Bowling Green and the Allegany County Industrial Park at Mexico Farms (See Plate 47). These Industrial Parks are now very nearly developed to capacity, but some industrially zoned vacant land still exists near the downtown area at the CSX Railroad property. The former Kelly Springfield plant site in Cumberland has recently been cleared and is ready for redevelopment for Industrial use, while portions of the PPG plant site at Mexico Farms are being cleared for redevelopment for industrial use.

Other potential industrial sites include land in the Rt. 220 Corridor north of I-68, and the former quarry area near Motor City. In LaVale, no industrially zoned land is available, but given the less clear dividing line between commercial and industrial uses, some small scale, high tech industrial/office use could be located here. The 1995 Comprehensive Plan also suggested new large scale industrial development along Rt. 220 south of the Pinto Road toward Rawlings as shown on Plate 47. The planning phase of development at this site is underway and includes the provision of water and sewer service along with road access. Another potential industrial site east of Rt. 220 is at Black Oak Bottom south of Rawlings. The extension of water and sewer service into these areas is the key to their development as industrial sites.

In the western part of the County, the prime site for large scale industrial development is along I-68 at the Rt. 36 interchange near Frostburg. With the extension of public water to the Vale Summit area, this site has improved potential for industrial use. The new business center being developed adjacent to Frostburg State University gives the County a site for high tech Industrial development with ready access to the

University. Finally, the existing Industrial Park in Frostburg continues to have land available for future growth. Smaller parcels of industrial land at Mt. Savage, Zihlman, Shaft have potential for redevelopment or for small sized Industrial plants.

Other potential industrial sites in the western part of the County include the Westernport Industrial Park near the Westvaco warehouse on Rt. 135 and land north of Rt. 135 near the McCoolle Volunteer Fire Company site. Additional land north of McCoolle near Rt. 220 could be utilized for industrial purposes with the provision of public water and sewer service.

East of Cumberland, there is no land currently zoned for Industrial use, but the County's Commerce Center at Nave's Crossroads has potential for more office/high tech development and the land east of Hazen Road near Rt. 220 could be used for similar development provided water and sewer service are extended to the site.

Otherwise, there is currently a lack of services and adequate land for industrial purposes east of the Naves Crossroads area. The quarry area on Martins Mountain could offer industrial land if an adequate water supply and sewage treatment were made available. The Orleans Road interchange area could potentially provide a large relatively flat area for industrial use, but there are no current plans to provide public water and sewer in this area.

Finally, the rolling terrain north and west of Oldtown may have long-term potential for industrial use, but there are no current plans for large-scale water or sewer service to this area.

INSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As noted on Plate 48, institutional type uses make up an increasing share of total urban type land uses throughout the County. This trend is in line with employment data which indicate an ever-increasing share of total employment in service type industries related to institutions such as health care, education and corrections.

Although Cumberland has long been the location of major institutions, including City, County and State Government buildings, Allegany College, the Western Maryland Health System buildings, the Finan Center and several nursing homes indicate the increasing importance of these types of facilities and their impact on Land Use in the surrounding area. The Federal, State and County correctional facilities in the Cumberland Area are having a large impact in terms of new employment opportunities.

The primary institution in the western part of the County is Frostburg State University. This facility is projected to grow moderately over the next several decades. Since 1960, when the former State Teachers College began to increase in enrollment, the town of Frostburg's future has been tied to the University. New growth at the University is translated directly into growth in the community. Many public schools, hospitals and smaller government and non-government service uses are also included in this land use category. Most of these uses are concentrated in the Frostburg, LaVale and Cumberland and Cresaptown areas of the County.

GENERAL URBAN LAND

Although the Comprehensive Plan Maps do not differentiate General Urban land from Residential land, the 1996 Zoning Ordinance has two separate categories for land that is not dominated by one type of land use. General Urban land is found throughout the County, but the category is particularly prevalent in the Georges Creek area and east of Nave's Crossroads. Most proposed urban land in the eastern part of the County currently falls into that category, particularly at I-68 interchanges where some commercial activity is possible.

URBAN OPEN SPACE

(See the County's Open Space Plan in the Planning Department for a detailed account of urban parks and recreation areas.)

As with institutional uses, most of the Urban Open Space is located in the Frostburg, Cumberland, LaVale and Cresaptown areas. While Constitution Park is the largest of these Urban Parks, there are many smaller parks and school recreation areas in Cumberland and Frostburg. In addition, the Georges Creek

communities and most suburban areas have parks or recreation areas which have been purchased through the state Program Open Space. In the eastern part of the County, Flintstone, Oldtown and Orleans have publicly owned ball fields, while the Board of Education has additional recreation facilities at the Flintstone School.

New urban type parks are still needed in several communities including McCooles, Bedford Road, Baltimore Pike, Bowman's Addition, and Winchester Road.

NON URBAN LAND PLAN

Much of the written material related to Non-Urban Land is contained in the County's Open Space Plan and in the Mineral Resources Element and the Sensitive Areas Element of the Plan. The information presented here is in summary form from these documents.

Public Water Supply Basins

Those sources of public water supplies inside the Georges Creek Basin which serve Midland, Lonaconing, and Barton and other communities need protection as coal mining continues in the Basin. The County and State governments should carefully monitor and regulate coal mining in the public water supply watersheds and aquifer recharge areas (some extend into neighboring Garrett County) to ensure the quality of the supplies. Other land uses in these stream basins should also be carefully regulated through zoning and subdivision procedures.

At present, there are two small public water supplies within the central part of the County; one serving Bel Air and one serving Rawlings. So long as these two basins are being used for water supply, they also need to be protected from encroachment by other uses through zoning and subdivision procedures.

Mining and Energy Development

The Georges Creek Coal Basin is the only County area containing marketable coal deposits. As such, the Planning Commission places special emphasis on the development of this resource with appropriate safeguards to protect the other land uses already existing in this area, and to limit conflicts between mining and other uses. While the market for coal is controlled by forces beyond the County's jurisdiction,

the following general policy concerning land use in the coal region outlines the County's concern for balancing the removal and use of mineral resources while protecting existing urban uses.

In addition to this general policy, a number of more specific policies concerning resource use appear in the Mineral Resources Element of the Plan. Where feasible, competition for the use of Mineral Resource lands should be minimized. Thus, existing urban lands, sensitive areas, historic sites, and public water supply basins in the County should be provided safeguards to assure minimum disruption from mineral resource development, while prime mineral producing areas outside existing urban areas should be protected from urbanization until the mineral is removed.

AGRICULTURE AND FOREST LANDS

Western Area of the County

The Georges Creek Coal Basin and Dans, Piney, and Little Allegheny Mountains contain vast tracts of forest land and some agricultural lands. The best of these agricultural lands are located between Mt. Savage and Wellersburg, Pennsylvania and between Frostburg and Midland. If mined, these prime agricultural lands should be restored to their full agricultural capability. They should also be protected from large scale urban development. The State's Agricultural Land Preservation Program has two farms in the Mt. Savage area currently in the program, and several other farms in the vicinity are eligible for the program.

Forest lands, which currently cover approximately 75% of the land surface in the Western Area, should be maintained or restored for watershed protection and forest products. This also includes reclaimed surface mined land (approximately 3,000 acres since 1973) and land on steep slopes which are nearly 100% forest covered.

The Western Area also includes a large amount of state owned Open Space land in the Dan's Mountain Wildlife Management Area, Dan's Mountain State Park and Savage River State Forest. These lands also offer watershed protection and outdoor recreation opportunities.

Central Area of the County

Much of the original agricultural land in the Central Area has been urbanized since the turn of the century. The remaining prime agriculture land is located in the Potomac Valley between Rawlings and North Branch and in the Evitts Creek Valley. It is imperative that some of those prime lands remain in agricultural use. Nearly all of these soils are floodprone and would be expensive to develop and maintain as urban uses. In addition, the orchard lands on Irons, Collier, and Martins Mountains should be maintained in their current use. Much of this land occurs on steep slopes where air drainage prevents frost damage in most growing seasons.

A large percentage of the Central Area is now in woodland. Since much of this woodland is located on very steep slopes, urban development here would be very expensive and could lead to very high storm water management costs and produce increased flooding in downslope areas. Many of the ridges here (Dan's Mountain, Will's Mountain, Evitts, Irons, Collier, and Martins Mountains) create much of the scenic beauty of the area and are quite an inducement to the tourists passing through the area. Much of the forest area should be maintained for watershed protection, wildlife habitat and outdoor recreation. Dan's Mountain Wildlife Management Area and Rocky Gap State Park form the nucleus of the publicly owned forested area, while privately owned forest land makes up the bulk of total acreage.

Eastern Area of the County

The major land uses in the Eastern Area should remain agriculture, forestry, and recreation. Prime agricultural land in the Flintstone Creek Valley, Murley Branch Valley, Town Creek Valley, and Piney Plains should be preserved from major urban development. Agricultural lands now inside state forest boundaries and inside the C & O Canal National Park should continue to be maintained as agricultural land and leased to farmers on a long term basis.

Although all three County areas are heavily forested, the Eastern Area's outstanding feature is its forested ridges, including Martins Mountain, Warrior Mountain, Polish Mountain, Green Ridge, and Town Hill. The Green Ridge State Forest is a major state scenic attraction and offers much needed recreational pleasure to hunters, fisherman, tourists and others seeking outdoor activities. Additionally, the forest is a

source of timber products and serves as a vast wildlife habitat, in addition to being a watershed area for Town Creek, Fifteen Mile Creek, Sideling Hill Creek, and the Potomac River.

Because a great deal of the land in this area is State or Federally owned, (Green Ridge State Forest, Warrior Mountain Wildlife Area, and the C & O Canal National Park) the County gains little revenue from the land. It is recommended that payments in lieu of taxes to the County and State aid for road maintenance be increased to offset this revenue loss. Additionally, new State maintained camping areas and cabins strategically located within the forest could generate substantial tourist activity that would spill over to the other County areas. Finally, hiking and biking trails should be developed and maintained in selected parts of the State forest land. The abandoned Western Maryland right-of-way along the Potomac River east of Spring Gap offers great potential for a biking trail to parallel the C & O Canal towpath and to connect with an existing biking trail on the old Western Maryland right of way in Washington County.

SECTION IX STREAMLINING AND FLEXIBILITY ELEMENT

Purpose

The Streamlining And Flexibility Element is the final section of the Allegany County Comprehensive Plan. The Plan Element includes specific recommendations for streamlining review, providing flexible regulations and encouraging economic development in designated growth areas.

The Plan Element is intended to be a guide to encourage streamlined review of applications for development, including both permit review and subdivision plat review within areas designated for growth in the Plan. The Element is also intended to encourage the use of flexible development regulations to promote innovative and cost saving site design to protect the environment. Finally, the Element is designed to encourage economic development in areas designated for growth in the plan through the use of innovative land planning techniques.

Policies for Streamlining the Regulatory Process

1. Maintain a computerized permit system to simplify permit review procedures and issue local permits in a timely manner. This includes development of a network of computer systems between the Permits Division and other agencies including:

- Health Department
- Public Works
- Roads Division
- Utilities Division
- Soil Conservation District

2. Maintain a consolidated permit review procedure with various County and Municipal agencies through a one-stop permit application and inspection procedure and develop a one stop fee payment schedule.

3. Improve bonding requirements to include one overall bond for major projects.

4. Study the creation of financial incentives to encourage residential subdivision development in or near existing or new population centers by assisting with the provision of utilities and road construction in new subdivisions.
5. Schedule and coordinate joint review sessions with other agencies on major development projects and Major Subdivision Plats.
6. Create an abbreviated review procedure for permits for lots in approved subdivisions.
7. Build and maintain a data base showing the location of historic sites, sensitive areas, easements, wetlands, and mineral resource areas to inform the public of potential problems associated with development in these areas.
8. Monitor Land Use Permits and Subdivision Plats on a monthly basis and include permit and subdivision data in the Annual Report. This information will be used with other data to justify future modifications to the Comprehensive Plan and Land Use Regulations.
9. Encourage industrial and business development in appropriate areas through financial assistance for the provision of public utilities and roads.

Streamlined Review Procedure for Subdivision Plats in Priority Funding Areas

1. Schedule joint subdivision review with other agencies on Major Subdivisions.
2. Improve Subdivision Agreement forms to allow for the following:
 - Bonding for improvements
 - Subdividers' fund for improvements
3. Create an abbreviated review process for subdivisions in Commercial or Industrial Parks where utilities and roads are installed by the County.
4. Study the provision of financial assistance for the installation of improvements in Major Subdivisions within designated growth areas.

Flexible Development Regulations in Priority Funding Areas

1. Phase urban development with the provision of water and sewer service in conjunction with recommendations in the County Master Plan for Water & Sewer.
2. Provide for Planned Developments which allow mixed uses.
3. Provide for the transfer of development rights from sensitive areas and mineral resource areas to growth areas.
4. Create more flexible setback and density requirements.
 - Allow some variances to be approved at the staff level.
 - Allow increased density by clustering development where public water, sewer and other services are available.
5. Provide for greater flexibility for minor commercial uses in General Urban and Residentially zoned areas.
 - Provide for multi-employee home occupations.
 - Permit larger sized accessory structures on residential lots.
 - Require parking, noise and other standards be met when commercial uses are allowed in these districts.

Economic Development in Designated Priority Funding Areas

1. Zone appropriate lands for exclusive Commercial and Industrial Development.
2. Continue to purchase and develop appropriate lands for Industrial Park/Commercial Center Development.
3. Encourage Institutional uses that provide employment opportunities to locate in designated Growth Areas.

4. Modify the Subdivision Regulations to provide for an abbreviated review procedure for the creation of lots within exclusively zoned commercial and industrial sites.

5. Assist with financing for the provision of roads, public water and sewer service to Industrial, Commercial, and Institutional lands in designated Growth Areas.

6. Develop a Capital Improvement Program to coordinate the provision of services to these sites.

Design Review Board

1 . Create a Design Review Board to review development proposals, particularly within the I-68 and Rt. 220 Corridors.

- This board would review development plans for Land Use proposals at Freeway Interchanges and within the scenic corridor of I-68 and Rt. 220.
- The Board would also be available to review other major development proposals as requested by the County.
- The Board would be advisory in nature, but would work through the County Plan Review and Permits Section to assure that design standards are met.