

# MOUNT AIRY

MARYLAND

## COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN

**2023 - 2033**



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# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Commission on Aging and Livability  
Board of Recreation and Parks  
Recycling and Sanitation Commission  
Economic Development Commission

## SPECIAL THANKS

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Department of Public Works  
Town Administrative Staff  
The Citizens of Mount Airy and  
nearby County Communities

**MOUNT AIRY**

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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This Town of Mount Airy Comprehensive Master Plan conforms to Maryland requirements for municipality Master Plans, and continues our efforts to wisely manage all growth, development, land use, and public services in a manner that protects and enhances our resident’s high quality of life and community identity.

### Our TOWN VISION for 2033

This plan is written with the intent of Mount Airy remaining a “small town” throughout the next decade, where our environment, safety and health are protected, where limited growth does not create congestion in our schools or on our roads, where adequate (or even surplus) water and sewer capacity exists, and where a revenue stream supports the necessary increases in public services and amenities (e.g. public works, parks / recreation, library, and community center). All of these characteristics of the 2033 Town of Mount Airy will reflect our unwavering determination to maintain a high quality of living, and to have every resident conclude that they are a part of a close-knit and caring community.

### REGIONAL SETTING

Mount Airy is a suburban town which is astride two counties; Frederick and Carroll. It is a bedroom community located approximately 1 hour outside of the Washington and Baltimore metropolitan job markets. Mount Airy is also located in the center of a four-county area, making it accessible to several local job markets. Because of our proximity to interstate I-70, many residents will continue commuting to all these job markets. This plan sees Mount Airy as both a unique community and as a vital member of these four counties. In that regard, the Plan seeks to help the Town excel at implementing both its own strategic goals for growth and as a contributor to the four-county region. In particular, the Town will strive to coordinate with Frederick and Carroll counties on proposed land uses adjacent to the Town.

### LAND USE, HOUSING AND ZONING

The Town of Mount Airy slowed its overall growth during the previous Plan period. Reasons for that limited growth include the inadequacy of critical public facilities, the COVID/post-COVID slowdown of residential building, and most significantly, a general desire of the residents to keep the Town small. In this Plan, the theme of limited growth continues with the recognition that our seven critical public facilities will be among the most important factors in making decisions concerning growth. Where growth may occur, the Plan does advocate for the infill of vacant

parcels within our Downtown Zone (DTZ), infill within all other zoning districts and appropriate re-zoning and re-development of selected properties.

Regarding housing, the Plan acknowledges the need to consider a range of housing types that are responsive to the community's needs, to include first-time home buyers and senior-appropriate housing to meet this increasing demographic. The Plan's proposed annexations aim is to allow low density residential growth, create rural buffering, and add to our town's open space and water resources. For example, annexations could support wise growth, offering potential improvement to the waste water treatment facility, additional water sources, and much needed open space to address our sizable open space deficit. Conversely, adjacent, county zoned parcels are subject to development under county authority and regulation, and the impacts of such adjacent development may be felt within the town's border while offering no offset to these impacts. The choices on whether or not to annex adjacent properties will require careful consideration of their opportunities, challenges, and impacts to our town.

## TRANSPORTATION NETWORK

The transportation network within Town includes two major State roads: MD 27 and MD 808. The first road functions as an eastern bypass to the historic downtown. MD 27 also bisects much of the Town and has become a significant challenge in providing safe pedestrian crossings. MD 808 is our historic downtown Main Street and intersects with MD 27 on the north side of the Town. There is significant traffic on both of these roads and therefore this Plan includes recommendations to achieve safer pedestrian crossings and sidewalks. The Plan provides recommendations for town-wide road system safety improvements to address existing and future congestion levels that includes widening MD 27 as prioritized by Carroll County, creating opportunities for increased connectivity, and developing design guidelines for complete streets that provide safe and accessible travel options for every roadway user.

## WATER AND SEWER INFRASTRUCTURE

Water availability and sewer capacity will continue to be among the most significant limiting factors for any new proposed growth. The Town's water system depends upon a group of wells whose water appropriation is mandated by the Maryland Department of the Environment. There is one waste water treatment facility. Although several upgrade efforts have been made to advance its technologies and to reduce non-waste infiltration, this single facility is approaching its State-allowed capacity. Therefore, any water and sewer improvements and expansion for new development will be borne by the property owner and/or developer.

## COMMUNITY FACILITIES

The Town will seek to improve and expand its existing community facilities such as parks, recreation facilities, library, and community center. Although the Town depends on Frederick and

Carroll Counties for our schools, library, and community center, we have a strong influence on how these public facilities are improved, renovated, or rebuilt. The Town established a new Commission on Aging and Livability whose mission includes advocating for county improvements of our library and Senior/Community Center. The high demand for more athletic facilities continues and the Town's Recreation and Parks Board will continue to advocate for the completion of our Rails-To-Trails and additional park projects. Proposed annexations may offer solutions to our need for more recreational and open spaces.

### CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

The amount of citizen participation from Town residents is remarkable. The Town has 13 commissions, boards, committees, and task forces -- all run by volunteers. Their dedicated efforts contribute significantly to the planning and development of infrastructure needs and amenities. Town residents' participation in the 2020 Town Survey and previous surveys provided very clear direction as to the residents' desires and how they feel the town government should proceed. Their views were considered in creating this Plan and their participation in Public Hearings will always be encouraged and valued as part of Council and Mayoral decisions.

### A COMMITMENT TO GROW WISELY

This Plan has clearly stated Vision and defined Goals to enable the creation of a Mount Airy of 2033 that we can all admire. This Plan goes further to create specific Objectives and Implementing Tasks to help us achieve our Goals. Therefore, we believe this Plan is indeed "actionable" and periodic audits of our Objectives' progress will ensure this Plan stays in-motion and is not ignored or forgotten. In closing, our Commitments on this Plan are:

- We will only grow or develop where, and when, adequate public facilities and community services can be provided, and our quality of life and community identity are protected and enhanced.
- We will always aim towards a Town in 2033 that is safe, vibrant, well-designed, and attractive to live, work, play, and raise a family.
- We will ALWAYS solicit and listen to our residents on all matters of growth or development. The resident is our most important stakeholder in our future.

We would like to express extreme gratitude to the Planning Commission and Zoning Administrator for assembling this Comprehensive Master Plan and presenting such a solid document for the Council's consideration and acceptance. This effort required many meetings with commissions and stakeholders, multiple workshops, public comment throughout and finally a public hearing. It is a reflection of our entire community as we enter the year 2025. And we have extreme confidence

that in 2033, Mount Airy will be a safe, vibrant, and financially strong community that people will always desire as a place for their families to reside.

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Larry G. Hushour, Mayor

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Tim Washabaugh, Council President

## INTRODUCTION: MT. AIRY'S VISION FOR 2033

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*“If you don’t know where you are going, any road will take you there.”*

What exactly is Vision? The Merriam-Webster Dictionary tells us that Vision can be defined as, “a thought, concept, or object formed by the imagination.”

You are at the beginning of understanding the 2023-2033 Mt. Airy Master Plan. And before any Plan can be appreciated, the first question which begs an answer is, “Where are we going?”

Therefore, our Town Vision establishes a desired end state in 2033. It’s an aiming point for the Town; a point that defines what we want this Town to become in 10 years. As such, it gives direction. It informs us sufficiently to plan for the journey; to setup supporting Goals and enabling Objectives to get us there. Those Goals and Objectives will then guide the everyday management of our Town and enable the Town to answer such questions as:

- Does our annual budget support our shared Vision?
- Are our Priorities and capital expenditures aligned with our Vision?
- Is *Project X* going to help us achieve the Mt. Airy we desire in the next 10 years?

In short, in order to build a Plan, we must know what we want at the end of our efforts.

### THE TOWN OF MT. AIRY'S VISION

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**VISION STATEMENT:** Mt. Airy will be a high-quality environment for living, working, learning, and playing with more-than-adequate public facilities; where land use policies have protected our environment, safety and health, and strengthened our heritage of being a close community with small town charm.

### STRATEGIC GOALS

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With this Vision as our destination, we can craft the Town’s Master Plan to make the journey. In order to ensure we stay on the correct path towards our Vision, we next need to set critical interim Goals. These five Strategic Goals become the high-level milestones that are key to growing our Town via the Master Plan. In the following chapters 3 through 8, these Goals will be aligned to more detailed Objectives and Implementing Strategies.

### THE TOWN'S FIVE STRATEGIC GOALS

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**A. Adequate Public and Community Facilities:** Improve the capacity and quality of all areas of our Public and Community Facilities so that we provide, at the minimum, an adequate Quality

of Life for all residents.

**B. Responsible Growth:** Pursue growth through infill development, redevelopment and annexations while eliminating our Open Space deficit, protecting our environment, safety and health, and preserving our cultural/historical resources and community identity.

**C. Residential Development and Housing Diversity:** Pursue a range of housing options that are responsive to the community's needs.

**D. Commercial Development:** Pursue our commercial economic development along Center Street (in concert with Goal B) and the South Main Street corridors while exploring suitable sites for 1) a new police station; 2) medical services; and 3) small businesses.

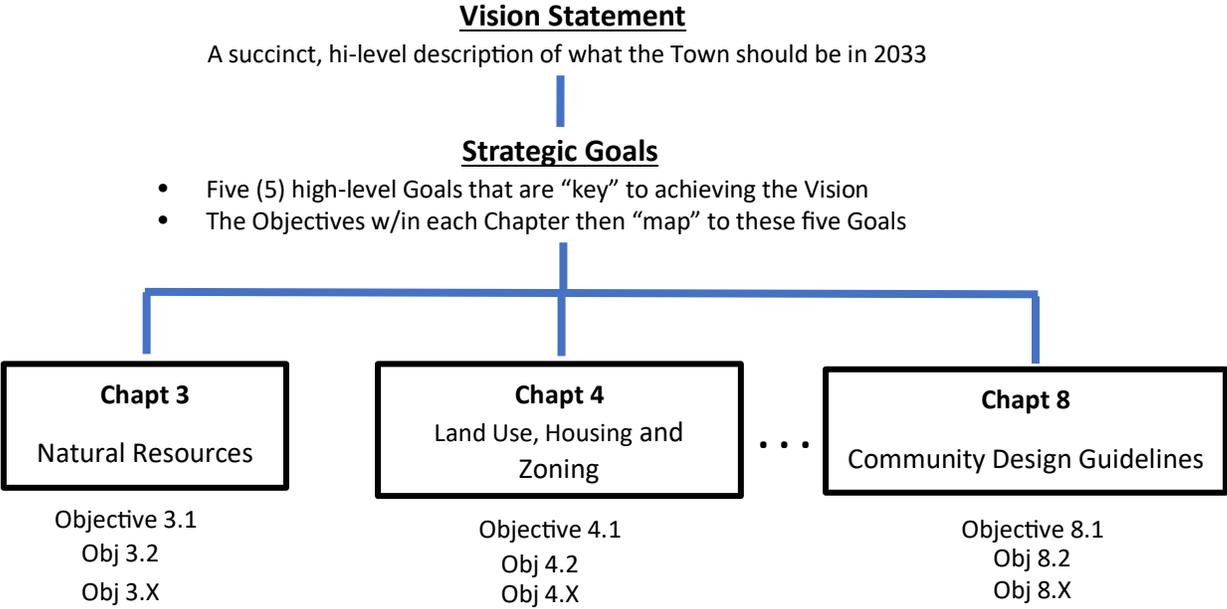
**E. Industrial Development:** Grow our industrial districts while protecting our environment, safety and health while preserving our cultural/historical resources and community identity.

## The Hierarchy Of Our Vision – Goals - Objectives

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- ***Vision*** – What do we want Mt. Airy to be, and look like, in 2033?
- ***Goals*** are defined as “ultimate desirable ends toward which public programs and actions are directed” and which achieve our Vision.
- ***Objectives*** are to be found among Chapters 3 through 8 and are defined as “the more specific and immediate needs toward which public programs and actions are directed.” Objectives are more explicit than Goals and, wherever possible, are stated in terms of obtainable and measurable accomplishment(s).

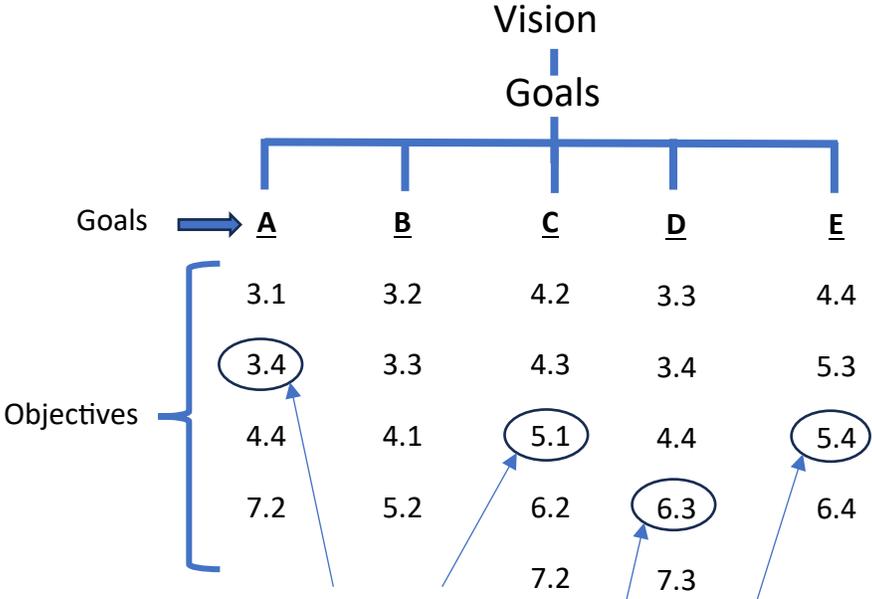
We now have a hierarchy within our Plan to guide us in land use decisions and resource allocations; and to use in periodic audits of our efforts (“How well are we actually following our Master Plan?”).



**HOW CAN THIS HIERARCHY GUIDE OUR INVESTMENT DECISIONS?**

Altogether, this hierarchy of “What do we want?” and “What are the interim steps to get there?” will enable our Town Leadership to use this as guidance – a “lens” to analyze any project, program or development. The next illustration provides a sense of such analysis:

**Question: “Does a Town Project Support Our Vision?”**



**Answer: “The Project helps achieve these Goals and Objectives to reach our Vision of the Town in 2033.”**

## HOW WILL WE IMPLEMENT THIS MASTER PLAN?

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Master Plan Implementation Work Plan: The Town of Mount Airy will begin developing a Work Plan after Town Council approval of the Plan. The work plan will outline how the objectives, goals and vision of the Master Plan will be periodically audited for progress. Such a work plan may include:

- ❖ Setting Objective priorities,
- ❖ Ratifying Objective Leads and other stakeholders for accomplishing each Objective, and
- ❖ Establishing dates, location, participants and facilitator(s) for periodic progress review meetings where Objective Leads report their progress, challenges and successes. Such meetings will also allow discussions for any recommended changes to the Plan's Objectives or Goals (again, for approval of such amendments by the Town Council).

Lastly, the Work Plan may also consider selecting the date(s) for any proposed Town Survey(s) in order to gain public feedback on the Plan's objectives and progress.

In summary, the 2023-2033 Comprehensive Town Master Plan serves these purposes:

- ✓ It is an analysis of the current state of the Town and provides a "Vision" of where the Town desires to be in the next ten years.
- ✓ The Plan is an internal policy document to be used as a guide in our local decision-making on issues involving municipal growth, land use, housing, natural resources, transportation and community facilities.
- ✓ The Plan focuses our Vision into five Strategic Goals which enable us in reaching that Vision. Then, each Strategic Goal is further achieved via Objectives/Implementation Strategies found in each chapter. We reach our Vision by completing those Objectives and attaining our Strategic Goals.

# CHAPTER ONE: COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN PURPOSE AND PROCESS

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The Town of Mount Airy has participated in the Comprehensive Planning Process for over sixty years. During this period, the Town has experienced tremendous growth with annexations of surrounding properties, residential expansion with new neighborhoods, retail growth in our Downtown Zone, and continued business expansion within our two major Industrial Parks. Accordingly, the services provided to the community have grown; albeit with challenges. Among the greatest challenges facing the Town is ensuring the smart development of large privately-owned tracts that will either enhance our Quality of Life, or exacerbate our challenges with an erosion of our small-town sense of Community.

Therefore, this 2023 Master Plan –

- acknowledges a Town Vision that focuses on safeguarding and enhancing our citizens' quality of life and maintaining a genuine sense of Community;
- reflects upon our challenges above to provide appropriate Land Use guidance for the next 10 years to meet our Vision;
- leverages past Master Plans, Studies, and Surveys to align our guidance with our residents;
- aligns with Carroll County and Frederick County future planning, and
- conforms to Maryland requirements for municipality Master Plans.

## MASTER PLAN PURPOSE AND PROCESS

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**What is a Comprehensive Master Plan?:** A comprehensive plan is a document, officially adopted by the Town Council, which provides a guide to Town decisions that will produce desired outcomes (goals) over the next ten years. Although it is not a legally binding document, the plan has legal significance in that zoning, the provisioning of public facilities (e.g., water and sewer), and other local actions must be consistent with its recommendations. It proposes future land use while preserving and protecting our natural resources. It contains objectives for protecting environmental features along with recommendations for development. Among those objectives, it challenges the Town to take measures which will ensure residents have a robust reserve of clean water. It also explains how anticipated growth will impact community facilities and the environment, and identifies areas where growth will likely occur.

The Master Plan guides land-use decisions made by the Planning Commission and Town Council for the next 10 years (2023 – 2033). This long-range plan addresses physical growth and is comprehensive.

It also takes into consideration the rate of community growth, demographic trends, community

services, and community character.

Citizen involvement and participation are critical elements in the interactive plan update process. It is essential that the past Master Plan, Town Staff and Commissions' input, resident surveys, adjacent County Master Plans, and any local studies formed the basis for the first draft of the Plan. As the process unfolded, the Planning Commission sought further refinement by posting draft Chapters for Public access / review, Council Members' reviews / comments, and both Frederick and Carroll County reviews. The process then proceeded to a Public Review of the full, final draft; after which a final Plan was submitted for review by the Town Council.

Upon the Town Council's adoption of the Plan, The Town will begin implementation, utilizing tools designed for that purpose, such as periodic Objectives' reviews, subdivision regulations, zoning ordinances, landscape ordinances, and the Town Budget. The Planning Commission will examine these implementation tools on a regular basis to measure whether the Master Plan is being successfully implemented. As part of the periodic review, the Planning Commission shall comply with the State requirement<sup>1</sup> that the Planning Commission provides the Town Council a Report on the Master Plan's Implementation at least once within the 5-year period after the Town Council's adoption of the Master Plan.

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## WHAT IS REQUIRED IN A COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN?

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### PROCEDURAL REQUIREMENTS

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Maryland's Land Use Article states that the Planning Commission has the function and duty to prepare a Master Plan for the Town, and to present this plan to the local legislative or governing body (i.e., the Town Council) for its consideration and adoption. The Master Plan must serve as a guide to public / private actions and decisions to ensure the development of public and private property in appropriate relationships. The Town must review and update its Master Plan every ten years.

Public interest and understanding of the Master Plan helps to establish public trust and support for the Plan, and ultimately makes implementation of the Plan easier. Therefore, the Planning Commission has the power to promote public interest in, and understanding of, the Town's Master Plan.

### COMPREHENSIVE MASTER PLAN ELEMENTS

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Within the *Content Requirements* of the Land Use Article there is a framework for the required content in the Master Plan. Brief descriptions of these elements are given below.

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<sup>1</sup> HB 409, September 2013

**Vision and Goals:** In the Introduction, the Town’s Vision Statement is found along with the five (5) Strategic Goals which will focus the Town’s priorities, efforts and budgeting to reach that Vision.

**Objectives:** Each Chapter’s focus will end with feasible and measurable Objective(s) that underpin the appropriate Strategic Goal. And each Objective then has Implementing Strategies (or tasks) that will guide the necessary action to attain the Objective. Chapter 9 summarizes all Goals and Objectives and that chapter can be utilized to periodically assess the performance of the Master Plan.

**Land Use:** The land use element, found within Chapter 4, outlines the most appropriate and desirable patterns of growth and development. Maps are included in this section and show areas targeted for different types of development; revitalization; and proposed annexation areas.

**Housing:** The housing element, also found in Chapter 4, addresses housing affordability for workforce and low-income households. Affordability levels are based upon the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development’s Area Median Income (AMI).

**Transportation:** The transportation element, found in Chapter 6, describes and presents transportation patterns and includes the entire spectrum of transportation facilities (e.g. transit, roads, bicycle and pedestrian amenities, and any transit-oriented development). It is required by the State that this element must address bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

**Community Facilities:** This element, found in Chapter 7, identifies the location, character and extent of public and semi-public buildings, lands, and facilities.

**Mineral Resources:** The mineral resources element, found within Chapter 3, Natural Resources, section entitled “Geology.”

**Development Regulations:** The development regulations section identifies development tools that are the best available mechanisms to implement the Master Plan, including streamlined review for development in designated growth areas. The development tools for the Town are found in Chapter 4 for infill and redevelopment efforts.

**Areas of Critical State Concern:** This element is addressed on the next page. The Planning Commission, per Maryland Land Use Code §3-109, has identified two areas of critical state concern.

**Sensitive Areas:** The sensitive areas element is found within Chapter 3, Natural Resources. The Maryland Land Use Article requires the Town to protect streams and their buffers; the 100-year floodplain; habitats of threatened and endangered species; and steep slopes, wetlands and agricultural and forest lands intended for resource protection or conservation.

**Priority Preservation Areas:** This element came out of the 2006 Legislative Session (HB 2) and

is required for counties with certified agricultural land preservation programs. Priority Preservation Areas may designate several connected or unconnected parcels of land with the goal of creating larger contiguous blocks of parcels for agricultural preservation. Mount Airy does not have any Priority Preservation Areas, nor does this Plan propose any such future areas in proposed annexations.

**Development Capacity Analysis:** This is sometimes referred to as a “build-out analysis” or “buildable lot inventory.” It is an estimate of the total amount of development that may be built in an area under a certain set of assumptions, including applicable land use laws and policies (e.g., zoning), environmental constraints, etc. This Master Plan addresses this element in Chapter 4.

**Municipal Growth Element:** This element is found in Chapter 5 and requires municipalities to identify areas for future growth consistent with its long-range vision. The element is developed based on population projections and identifies needs for land and infrastructure. This element requires coordination and recommends the use of joint planning agreements between the Town and our two Counties (i.e. Carroll and Frederick Counties). Assisting the Planning Commission in drafting this element is the Maryland Department of Planning’s Municipal Growth Element section from their Models and Guidelines. The 2006 Maryland Legislative session produced this additional required element (HB 1141 and HB 2).

**Water Resources Element:** This element, found within Chapter 3 on Natural Resources, identifies drinking water supplies needed by the Town’s projected population. It also identifies suitable receiving waters for wastewater and stormwater management to meet needs presented by development as proposed in the land use element. In other words, this element addresses the relationship between water and wastewater capacities with planned growth. The three components of this element include drinking water supply, wastewater treatment and disposal, and non-point source and stormwater management. The 2006 Maryland Legislative session produced this additional required element (HB 1141 and HB 2).

## OPTIONAL ELEMENTS

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Recognizing local jurisdictions’ individuality, the Maryland Land Use Article gives the Planning Commission the authority to put additional elements in the Master Plan. These optional elements may include, but are not limited to, Community Renewal; Workforce Housing; Flood Control; Pollution Control; Conservation; Natural Resources; Public Utilities; and Transit- and Pedestrian-Oriented Development. This Plan does include an optional Chapter 3 on Natural Resources and does address Community Renewal in a section on property redevelopment in Chapter 5.

## IMPLEMENTATION AND UPDATES

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This Master Plan will be implemented by periodic assessment of the various Objectives’ successes and obstacles. After its approval by the Town Council, the Town Staff and Planning Commission

will coordinate with the Council, Town Staff and appropriate Commissions to establish a periodic review of the accomplishment of the enclosed Objectives.

When events, opportunities and/or new Goals/Objectives dictate a revision(s) to this plan, then the Planning Commission and Town Director of Planning will initiate those revisions and refine them through a collaborative effort with the applicable Commission(s), Town Staff and the Public prior to submitting the revised/updated Master Plan to the Town Council for approval.

## AREAS OF CRITICAL STATE CONCERN

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As mentioned in the Introduction, the Maryland Land Use Code, §3-109, requires that the Town Planning Commission make recommendations for “the determination, identification, and designation of areas within the local jurisdiction that are of critical State concern.” To assist us, the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) has identified candidate areas of critical state concern that local jurisdictions may consider in their master planning and implementation of those plans. MDP’s purpose for having a list of these areas is to offer local governments a focus on significant areas when planning for the future. The MDP areas’ list is not exclusive and local governments may propose additional areas of concern for inclusion in their master plans.

The MDP-developed candidate areas of concern are:

- Arts and Entertainment Districts
- Certified Heritage Areas
- Certified Land Preservation Programs
- Certified Local Governments
- Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays Critical Areas
- Coastal Community Flood Risk Areas
- Enterprise Zones
- Maryland Main Streets
- National Register/State Designation Historic Buildings/Sites
- Opportunity Zones
- RISE Zones
- Rural Legacy Areas
- Sustainable Communities
- Targeted Ecological Areas

NOTE: An explanation of each of these candidate areas is available via:

<https://abetter.maryland.gov/plan/Pages/areas-of-critical-state-concern.aspx>

Within this Master Plan, the Town Planning Commission has identified these two areas from the above MDP list:

Maryland Main Streets -- The Main Street Maryland Program began in 1998, and serves as the state coordinating program for the National Main Street Center, a subsidiary of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. The Town of Main Airy is one of many communities within this program. Main Street is a key program for community development and revitalization of our historic downtown. It strengthens the economic potential of Maryland’s traditional main streets and neighborhoods. As a participant, Mt. Airy has made a commitment to improve the economy,

appearance and image of our downtown business district.

**Sustainable Communities** -- The Sustainable Communities Act of 2010 established a shared geographic designation to promote efficient use of scarce State resources based on local sustainability and revitalization strategies. The Sustainable Communities program consolidated geographically targeted resources for historic preservation, housing and economic development under a single designation. The designation places special emphasis on infrastructure improvements, multimodal transportation and development that strengthens communities. The Town of Mt. Airy is among the state-designated Sustainable Communities and is, therefore, a place where public and private investments and partnerships achieve:

- Development of a healthy local economy;
- Protection and appreciation of historical and cultural resources;
- A mix of land uses;
- Affordable and sustainable housing, and employment options;
- Growth and development practices that protect the environment and conserve air, water and energy resources, encourage walkability and recreational opportunities, and where available, create access to transit.

As a member of Sustainable Communities, the Town can take advantage of the “tool box” of many state programs to achieve the goals listed above.

**NOTE:** That “tool box” of programs is found at:

<https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Communities/Documents/dn/Benefits-3-2.pdf>

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## STATE ENABLING LEGISLATION

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### LAND USE ARTICLE

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Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland was added to the Maryland Code in 1927. It delegates basic planning and land use regulatory powers to all of the municipalities within the State of Maryland. Today it is known as the Land Use Article.

Specifically, the Land Use Article, Section 3-101, explicitly states that “it shall be the function and duty of the [Planning] Commission to make and approve a plan which shall be recommended to the local legislative body for adoption and which shall serve as a guide to public and private actions and decisions to ensure the development of public and private property inappropriate relationships and which shall include any areas outside of its boundaries which, in the commission’s judgment, bear relation to the planning responsibilities of the commission.”

“In preparation of the plan, the commission shall make careful and comprehensive surveys and studies of present conditions and future growth of the jurisdiction, and with due regard to its

relation to neighboring territory. The plan shall be made with the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing the coordinated, adjusted, and harmonious development of the jurisdiction and its environs which will, in accordance with present and future needs, ...including, among other things, adequate provisions for traffic, the promotion of public safety, adequate provision for light and air, conservation of natural resources, the prevention of environmental pollution, the promotion of healthful and convenient distribution of population, the promotion of good civic design and arrangement, wise and efficient expenditure of public funds, and the adequate provision of public utilities and other public improvements.”

#### 1991 FOREST CONSERVATION ACT

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The Forest Conservation Act of 1991 (Natural Resources Article, § 5-1601, et. seq.) was enacted to protect the forests of Maryland by making forest conditions and character an integral part of the site planning process. It is regulated by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources but implemented and administered by local governments. The Forest Conservation Act seeks to maximize the benefits of forests and slow the loss of forest land in Maryland while allowing development to take place.

#### 1992 ECONOMIC GROWTH, RESOURCE PROTECTION AND PLANNING ACT

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The State Planning Act of 1992 took effect in October of that year and is a general planning policy within the State Annotated Code. The Planning Act updates the Land Use Article and advocates growth in and around existing infrastructure, which specifically indicates established or designated growth areas, municipalities, and other areas with development dense enough to support infrastructure systems, such as major Planned Unit Developments and rehabilitation of existing urban communities.

Smart Growth Areas, designated by the State as Priority Funding Areas (PFAs), reflect the State of Maryland’s intention to support the revitalization of existing communities. The Town of Mt. Airy is within a Priority Funding Area. This act capitalized on the influence of State expenditures on economic growth and development. The “Priority Funding Areas” are existing communities and other locally designated growth areas consistent with the original seven “visions” of the 1992 Planning Act. It is by adhering to these visions that the State plans to achieve sound growth and planning practices. The intention to focus State spending in these areas will hopefully provide the most efficient and effective use of tax dollars and reduce the pressure for sprawl into agricultural and other natural resource areas.

The direct benefit from guiding growth within the areas served by infrastructure improvements is far-reaching. The Planning Act encourages responsible development design and overall preservation of environmental resources and other sensitive areas, along with the limitation of sprawling development patterns. The State’s concern for the overall health of the Chesapeake Bay Watershed formed the basis of this legislation and has been considered a proactive and progressive

move in the field of long-range planning at the State level.

## PRIORITY FUNDING AREAS

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Priority Funding Areas (PFA) define geographical areas within each county where the State wants to target its programmatic efforts and infrastructure funding to support economic development and new growth. Existing or new developments outside a State certified PFA would not be eligible for state funding for infrastructure improvements such as roads, water, or sewer. Generally, the PFA criteria require a property to be within a designated growth area, have appropriate zoning, and be classified in a 10-year water/sewer service area.

## MARYLAND'S PLANNING VISIONS

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In 2009, Maryland created 12 Visions which reflect the State's ongoing aspiration to develop and implement sound growth and development policy. The visions address: quality of life and sustainability; public participation; growth areas; community design; infrastructure; transportation; housing; economic development; environmental protection; resource conservation; stewardship; and implementation approaches. Please see the descriptions of these Visions below.

Local jurisdictions, such as the Town of Mt. Airy, are required to include these Visions in our Master Plan and implement them through zoning ordinances and regulations.

1. **QUALITY OF LIFE AND SUSTAINABILITY:** A high quality of life is achieved through universal stewardship of the land, water, and air resulting in sustainable communities and protection of the environment.
  - This Master Plan's first Goal addresses the Town's Quality of Life through the "lens" of the seven public facilities comprising our Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) and adequate Community Facilities. This Plan addresses stewardship of our precious groundwater supply (Chapter 3) and stewardship of land via its focus on infill and redevelopment where it will benefit the Town. Additionally, a focus on Quality of Life via adequate Community Facilities can be seen in Chapter 7 with thorough discussions of our parks, library and Senior and Community Center.
2. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** Citizens are active partners in the planning and implementation of community initiatives and are serious about achieving community goals.
  - Aside from the 15-month public process to develop this Plan (including workshops, Planning Commission meetings, virtual meetings and a Public Hearing), the public will continue to be invited to the progress reviews and implementation assessments to determine if the enclosed Objectives are being met.

3. **GROWTH AREAS:** Growth is concentrated in existing population and business centers, growth areas adjacent to these centers, or strategically selected new centers.
  - Chapter 5 addresses Municipal Growth.
4. **COMMUNITY DESIGN:** Compact, mixed–use, walkable design consistent with existing community character and located near available or planned transit options is encouraged to ensure efficient use of land and transportation resources and preservation and enhancement of natural systems, open spaces, recreational areas, and historical, cultural, and archeological resources.
  - This Plan specifically addresses the important task to revised and update the Town’s Design Guidelines (Chapter 8).
5. **INFRASTRUCTURE:** Growth areas have the water resources and infrastructure to accommodate population and business expansion in an orderly, efficient, and environmentally sustainable manner;
  - Chapter 3 on Natural Resources addresses this state vision.
6. **TRANSPORTATION:** A well–maintained, multimodal transportation system facilitates the safe, convenient, affordable, and efficient movement of people, goods, and services within and between population and business centers;
  - Chapter 6 addresses our transportation issues, challenges (e.g. safe pedestrian crossing of MD 27) and objectives.
7. **HOUSING:** A range of housing densities, types, and sizes provides residential options for citizens of all ages and incomes;
  - Chapter 4 discusses Housing and residential zoning.
8. **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Economic development and natural resource–based businesses that promote employment opportunities for all income levels within the capacity of the State’s natural resources, public services, and public facilities are encouraged;
  - In support of our Plan's Strategic Objective D, Commercial Development: Chapter 5 on Municipal Growth includes approaches for continuing to grow our economy in a manner that draws upon our rich history and community identity.
9. **ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION:** Land and water resources, including the Chesapeake and coastal bays, are carefully managed to restore and maintain healthy air and water, natural systems, and living resources;

- Chapter 3 on Natural Resources addresses this state vision.
10. **RESOURCE CONSERVATION:** Waterways, forests, agricultural areas, open space, natural systems, and scenic areas are conserved;
- Chapter 3 on Natural Resources addresses this state vision.
11. **STEWARDSHIP:** Government, business entities, and residents are responsible for the creation of sustainable communities by collaborating to balance efficient growth with resource protection; and
- Through the public engagement during the implementation of this Plan, the Town will ensure the good stewardship of all the Town’s resources to achieve the Town’s Goals and Vision.
12. **IMPLEMENTATION:** Strategies, policies, programs, and funding for growth and development, resource conservation, infrastructure, and transportation are integrated across the local, regional, state, and interstate levels to achieve these Visions.
- Both our Introduction and Chapter 1 address the implementation of this Plan through periodic assessments of Objective’s’ success or challenges.

#### THE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH AND AGRICULTURAL PRESERVATION ACT OF 2012 (SB236)

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Senate Bill 236 (SB236), the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012, was passed by the General Assembly on April 9, 2012, and signed by the Governor on May 2, 2012. The purpose of the legislation is to decrease future nutrient pollution to the Chesapeake Bay and other water resources and to reduce the amount of forest and agricultural land developed by large lot developments. It does this by limiting major residential subdivisions served by on-site septic systems.

**Tier I** areas are currently served by sewerage systems.

**Tier II** areas are planned to be served by sewerage systems.

**Tier III** areas are not planned to be served by sewerage systems. These are areas where growth in septic systems can occur.

**Tier IV** areas are planned for preservation and conservation and prohibit major residential subdivisions.

The Town has not officially adopted a tier with either Carroll or Fredrick County, but by default, the Town is in **Tier II**. Unless required otherwise by the State of Maryland, any new development

outside of the planned sewer service area would not be approved.

#### “A BETTER MARYLAND PLAN”

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The State Legislature passed the Smart and Sustainable Growth Act of 2009 to protect Maryland’s environment and natural resources and promote sustainable growth in Maryland.

The Plan, which is the State’s adopted Master Plan for the State, requires close coordination of State Planning through the municipal, county, and regional levels. The State’s “growth” goal is to concentrate on development and redevelopment in towns, cities, and rural centers where there is existing and/or planned infrastructure. The preservation goal is to preserve and protect environmentally sensitive and rural lands and resources from the impacts of development. Lastly, the sustainability goal is intended to ensure a desirable quality of life in our communities and rural areas while preserving the significant natural and cultural resources that define the State.

The Plan’s executive summary explains that the Plan’s framework lays out policies to guide State agencies towards smart growth. It establishes defined geographic areas where growth and preservation are the highest priorities. It is meant to provide predictability and direction for local jurisdictions by identifying state areas for growth and preservation. Local jurisdictions will be asked to review and consider the Plan Maryland geographies when updating their own plans. They will be given the opportunity to designate local areas that are consistent with State planning areas.

The Plan Map includes a portion of the Town as a Targeted Growth and Revitalization area. The area includes the main commercial areas of the Town, west of the MD 27 corridor. It encompasses several parkland areas and a major school complex residing within the Carroll/Frederick County boundaries.

Additionally, the Town has received several significant program designations. The Town is designated a Priority Funding Area (PFA) in 1997, Main Street Community (2004), Community Legacy Area, and received a Sustainable Community Designation (2012). The Town also has a State and Federally recognized Historic District, established in 1984, encompassing the downtown area.

## ANALYSIS OF SURROUNDING COUNTY GROWTH POLICIES

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In order to get a clear picture of the regional growth influences that Mount Airy has experienced over the last thirty years, it is important to summarize the Master Plan directions of the four counties that abut the Town.

Among these four Counties, the inter-jurisdictional coordination of the Town with Carroll and Frederick Counties is most vital in planning and monitoring the growth within the Town and the surrounding area. It allows the Town to evaluate residential, commercial, and industrial development directly outside its boundaries. The Town will continue to closely monitor all development in adjoining counties to assess the long-term impacts on the community.

**CARROLL COUNTY PLAN:** The 2014 Carroll County Master Plan was initially adopted in February, 2015. A 5-year review in 2019 resulted in amendments that were adopted in January, 2020. This amended plan guides the Carroll County growth and land use through 2024.

The Amended 2014 Carroll County Master Plan targets the County's Designated Growth Areas (DGAs) to receive the majority of development, while continuing to preserve productive farmland through the nationally recognized Carroll County Agricultural Land Preservation Program.

The Town of Mt. Airy is one of Carroll County's DGAs – where the majority of the County's planned growth will occur. The County Plan also recognizes the land surrounding Mt. Airy for potential future annexation by the Town to accommodate and serve our planned growth. The physical boundary which Mt. Airy plans to consider future annexations is regarded as the Growth Area Boundary (GAB).

The southwestern part of Carroll County is also referred to as the "Mount Airy Municipal Growth Area" and includes the incorporated limits of the Town of Mount Airy. The Town will work in close coordination with Carroll County to accommodate growth areas planned in the counties adjacent to our town boundaries.

**FREDERICK COUNTY PLAN:** The Livable Frederick Master Plan (LFMP) was adopted in September, 2019 and guides Frederick County growth to 2030. It embodies a focus on policy and

general growth strategy in order to articulate a clear direction for Frederick County in the face of future change.

The LFMP is regarded as a policy-focused, as opposed to a capacity-focused, document. In addition, the LFMP describes approaches to communicating and structuring comprehensive planning in Frederick County that are unlike its past planning efforts.

**Residential Growth:** The LFMP references a “residential development pipeline.” This is a new planning concept that references the number of houses, apartments, or condominiums that have some type of formal approval from Frederick County through approved subdivision or site plans, planned unit development approvals, or developer rights and responsibilities agreements (DRRAs). As of the first quarter of 2024, there are 32,323 county-wide approved new housing units and 15,762 available dwelling units. This data has resulted in Frederick County determining that the pipeline growth does not sufficiently reflect the County’s Vision. The county has determined that the prevailing development patterns reflected in this pipeline follow a lower density, single-family, suburban residential model. The county has concluded that the growth will not match the community’s residential aspirations as articulated in the County Vision, nor will this growth meet changing trends or market preferences. This pipeline growth could also present challenges to Frederick County as it works to provide needed infrastructure - including schools, roads, and parks - to serve both new and existing neighborhoods.

**More Housing Choices:** As housing affordability continues to be a strain for Frederick County citizens, the location and diversity of housing options should also reflect a consideration of creating and maintaining different housing price points – including housing options that remain affordable for as many citizens as possible. Where, and how, people want to live is changing. Different types of households, and people at various stages in their lives, have different needs and desires for the kind of place they want to call home. Per their Plan, as the demographics of the Frederick County community continues to change, so too should Frederick County’s housing options. And their Plan advocates for housing located in walkable, transit accessible locations – which can reduce household transportation costs and reduce the overall housing cost burden on County families. This is often referred to as “Transit-Oriented Development” or TOD.

**Comprehensive Plan Map:** The Comprehensive Plan Map depicts the officially adopted pattern of land uses, growth area boundaries, transportation networks, and community facilities. One component of the Frederick County Plan Map is Municipal Community Growth Areas, which includes Mt. Airy and New Market to our west. Community facilities include schools, parks, libraries, fire stations, police stations, and other similar facilities. These facilities are to be located in Municipal Community Growth Areas.

The general intent of the recently updated Frederick County Comprehensive Plan is to encourage

growth in and around existing municipalities, but also in designated “growth areas” such as the Urbana Planned Unit Development (PUD) located directly southwest of Mount Airy. The Urbana PUD is generating a sizeable population base that affects our area. It is slated for 3,500 housing units or approximately 10,000 persons; exactly the size of Mount Airy. The New Market Region is west of Mount Airy. The future growth of this area is guided by Frederick County’s New Market Region land-use plan. The New Market Region Plan also designates land areas to be included as part of Mount Airy’s future growth. These land areas are defined as Frederick County’s Mt. Airy Community Growth Area (CGA). Since its adoption in 2006, both the plan and CGA have undergone several revisions. The County’s 2006 New Market Region Plan included the following properties within the County’s Mt. Airy CGA with the following designations: Zeltman, Kraft, Royston, Rigler parcels (Low-Density Residential); 84 Lumber area (Highway Service, Limited Industrial, Resource Conservation); Day/Vosloh properties north of I-70 (Office/Research/Industrial). A subsequent revision to the 2006 New Market Region Plan was made in 2008 and eliminated the Kraft, Zeltman, and Royston properties from the Mt. Airy GCA and removed their Comprehensive Plan designations to Low-Density Residential. In 2010, a Countywide Comprehensive Plan update was completed and adopted by the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC), which retained the 2008 changes around Mt. Airy described above. The 2010 County Comprehensive Plan removed a 16-acre parcel, zoned Resource Conservation, adjacent to the 84-Lumber site, from the Mt. Airy GCA. Lastly, in September 2012, the BOCC adopted amendments to the Comprehensive Plan, adding a Low-Density land use designation to the Zeltman parcel. Additionally, the original plan restricted the majority of development activity to the area immediately surrounding the Town of New Market. The new plan, currently under revision by the Frederick County Commissioners, indicates many more residential re-zonings in the regional area that borders the eastern portion of Frederick County between the Town of New Market and the Town of Mount Airy. The Mount Airy Town Government is closely monitoring this issue as it affects our water recharge areas and adds significant population growth outside the boundaries of the two municipalities.

**HOWARD COUNTY GENERAL PLAN:** The area of Howard County that lies directly southeast of the Town boundaries and Interstate 70 is considered to be the “rural west” area of that County. The current plan describes this area as outside of the Priority Funding Area, not served by public water and sewer, and includes both Low-Density Development and Rural Resource designated place types. The current Adequate Public Facilities chart includes 150 “Rural West” housing allocations per year. The 2000 Howard County General Plan update is referred to as “Plan Howard 2030.” The plan proposes to decrease the annual allocation number to 100, slowing future development in the western portion of Howard County through 2030. The “Community Design Chapter” of Plan Howard 2030 speaks towards the need to identify ways to preserve the existing character of established neighborhoods while accommodating some continuing growth. Howard County has maintained a policy of preservation for the western half of the county and has applied the Rural-Conservation Zoning District to this area. This designation requires a clustering

provision to preserve the maximum amount of undeveloped land possible. Much of the land in this section of Howard County has had the development rights purchased through the Howard County Agricultural Preservation Program. Mount Airy will continue to serve the basic commercial needs of Northern Howard County.

**MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLAN:** Montgomery County remains in line with the basic policies adopted in their 1964 Wedges and Corridors Plan for the metropolitan region. The plan calls for the development of regional centers along planned transportation corridors and the preservation of agricultural land that fills the remaining “wedges.” The Mount Airy region falls within one of these outer-lying wedges. The land between Damascus to our south and Mount Airy is zoned agricultural. Frederick County has approved an extensive amount of residential development up to the Montgomery County line, which has resulted in increased development pressure along MD 27.

### MOUNT AIRY’S MASTER PLAN HISTORY

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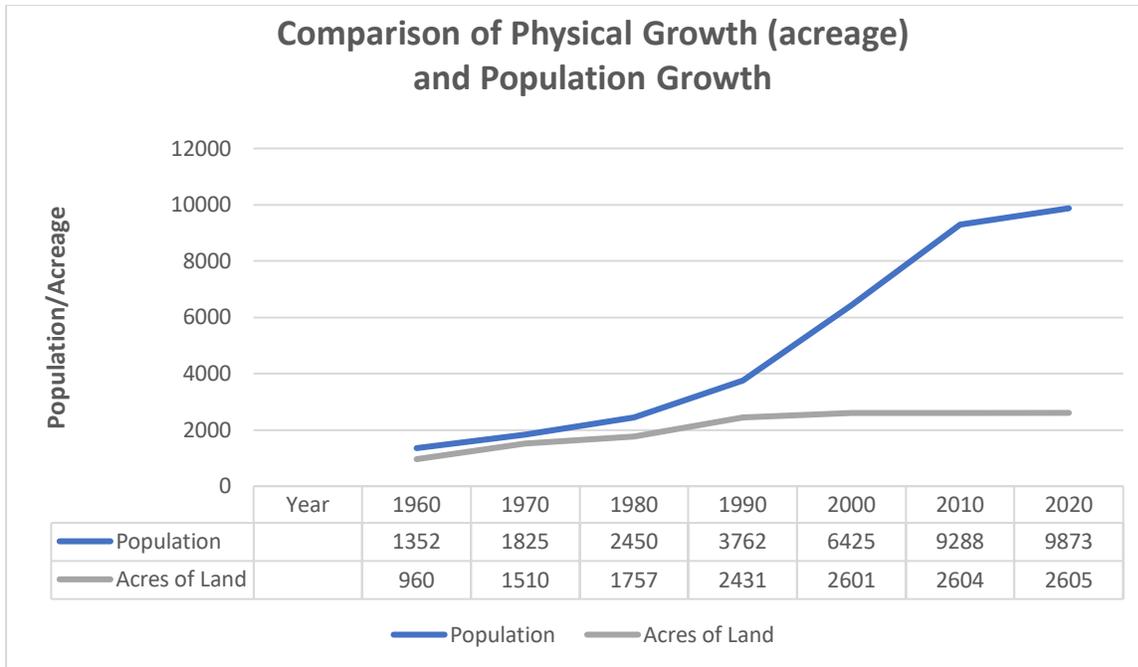
Mount Airy’s first Master Plan was adopted in 1970 and was revised in 1973 to address the annexations of over 480 acres that increased the Town’s physical size by 50% during that period. In 1978, the Town Planning Commission realized that the rate and magnitude of growth, both within and outside the Town boundaries, was far outpacing the projections contained in the revised 1973 Master Plan. With the support and encouragement of a newly created Mt. Airy Civic Association, the Planning Commission completed an update of the 1973 Town Master Plan in 1980, which the Town Council adopted in 1982.

During the 1980s, the Town again experienced rapid development and approved several large annexations that significantly impacted natural resources and infrastructure. Accordingly, the 1994 Plan sought to guide development in a way that was beneficial to the Town’s citizens and respectful of the environment.

The following chart shows the population of the Town of Mount Airy from 1970 to 2020; and the comparison of physical growth (i.e. acres of land) with population growth over the same period. Between 2010 and 2020, the population leveled-out with a little over 5% average growth per year.

The goal of the 2023 Master Plan is to build upon the 2013 Master Plan and ultimately guide our policies, decisions and actions to attain the Mount Airy Vision. This 2023 Master Plan seeks to balance qualitative issues, such as streetscapes and neighborhood character, and quantitative issues, such as population growth, zoning, and adequate public facilities.

Lastly, the 2023-2033 Comprehensive Master Plan update recognizes that development in Mount Airy is challenging the Town’s ability to support growth in the foreseeable future without major infrastructure improvements (e.g. more groundwater sources, expanded waste water treatment, and road/intersection improvements).



## DEVELOPMENTS SINCE THE 2013 MASTER PLAN

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### PIVOTAL EVENTS REGARDING OUR WATER SUPPLY

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There have been several key events since the 2013 Comprehensive Master Plan that require the Town to take a more cautious approach to our growth. Specifically, in 2004 the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), as a result of the record drought in that year, significantly reduced the Town’s water appropriations from our existing wells. MDE’s action created a water deficit which disrupted the completion of approved building projects. Eventually, MDE and the Town entered into a consent order that enabled some building construction to proceed as long as a new water source was brought online to meet the demand for the new development at the 2004 appropriations levels. The Town considered adding surface water sources (e.g. reservoirs) to its exclusive groundwater supply, and in 2006 the Town Council approved a land annexation deal on the Zeltman farm to the north of the Town that would have added 275 houses to the Town’s building pipeline. The annexation, however, was overwhelmingly rejected by voters in a referendum later that same year.

In 2006, a new Town Council instituted a number of growth control measures and sought more modest solutions to meet the Town’s water needs. A stricter Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) was also introduced into the Town Code and was approved by the Town Council in the summer of 2006.

In addition, during this 2006-2007 period, severe limits were placed on the annual number of houses constructed in residential developments. The Town also ended its consideration of any

surface water options and instead sought additional groundwater sources through increased exploration. Water savings were also achieved through new water metering devices and conservation practices.

A new well – the eleventh well for the Town - was brought online in 2011. As a result, the demands of the consent order previously placed on the Town by MDE in 2004 were met.

The availability of water for additional growth continues to be a challenge and dictates the direction of this new Master Plan. Any new growth must be weighed against existing well allocations and capacity (e.g. gallons per day). New developments must provide their own additional water sources (e.g. additional wells) to be provided by the developers.

Lastly, a major feature of this Master Plan is the cross-Commission effort by the Planning Commission. Additionally, there were numerous public work sessions, a consideration of the results of the 2020 Town Survey, and the holding of a public hearing on the draft Master Plan in September, 2024.

#### PAST MASTER PLAN ACCOMPLISHMENTS WHICH INFORM THIS PLAN

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The following are efforts that have led to the implementation of policies, practices, public participation, and interagency cooperation that will serve as the foundation to accomplish the Goals and Objectives in this Master Plan:

- a) The acquisition of the CSX property West of Hill Street as part of the ever-expanding Rails to Trails project within the Town of Mount Airy.
- b) The Town continues hosting annual joint meetings with the Frederick and Carroll County Commissioners.
- c) The Mt. Airy Main Street Association (MAMSA) and the Town of Mount Airy remain strong partners in Downtown Revitalization and work closely together on Downtown initiatives.
- d) The Growth & Development Task Force was reinstated in 2020 and accomplished a Town-Wide Survey in 2020-2021.
- e) The Sustainable Mount Airy Commission came into existence in 2017 to deep-dive into the sustainability of the Town within a range of areas.
- f) The Town partnered with Design Collective, Duggal Real Estate Advisors, and Sabra & Associates to develop a Downtown Mount Airy Vision Plan in February, 2019, to assist with short and long-term goal planning.

- g) In 2017, Mount Airy worked to renew our Sustainable Communities Designated Area map and plan with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development.
- h) The redevelopment of the iconic bank building located at the corner of Main Street and Prospect Road. The new (2023) brewery in that unused building is completed and “Open for Business.” It is a great addition to the downtown area.
- i) The Town continues to participate in an annual Town/County Agreement with Carroll County pertaining to the sharing of funds and participation in planning and other governmental functions.

## CHAPTER TWO: TOWN HISTORY AND CURRENT REGIONAL SETTING

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### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF THE TOWN OF MOUNT AIRY

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The western expansion of the B & O Railroad and its proximity to the National Pike gave identity and significance to the Town of Mount Airy. The area's hilly topography is responsible for the name of the Town. When a railroad foreman commented, "This is an airish mountain," he christened it with its name. The name of the Town became Mount Airy and remained so from that point forward. When Carroll County defined its permanent boundaries in 1837, Mount Airy was divided between Carroll and Frederick counties; the Town has remained in two counties since then. About one mile south of the Town is the junction of Carroll, Frederick, Howard, and Montgomery Counties (Four County Farms Pond is where the cornerstone lies)



*HISTORIC TWIN ARCH RAILROAD BRIDGE*

The Town was originally settled in the early 1830s by a core group of six families. Dorsey, Davis, and Bussard were the most prominent names in that first settlement. The settlement was closely followed by the construction of the B & O railroad line in 1831. Because Mount Airy sits at an elevation of 830 feet, a series of four inclined planes were constructed in order for the trains to climb the steep hills.

Locomotives and train cars were "lifted" (pulled) to each plane with the assistance of horses and steam powered winches. When traveling westward, the passengers had to disembark, board horse-drawn carriages and meet the train at the end of the planes. The highest Plane #4, located west of the Town at the intersection of Woodville Road and MD Route 144, is still a recognized location today.

In 1839 the planes were abandoned, and the new line was constructed north of Mount Airy. This was a result of more powerful locomotives that had been constructed, and heavier loads were being hauled. In 1901, the tunnel was constructed on the south side of town, and the existing line into town became a spur line through what is now the Town of Mount Airy.



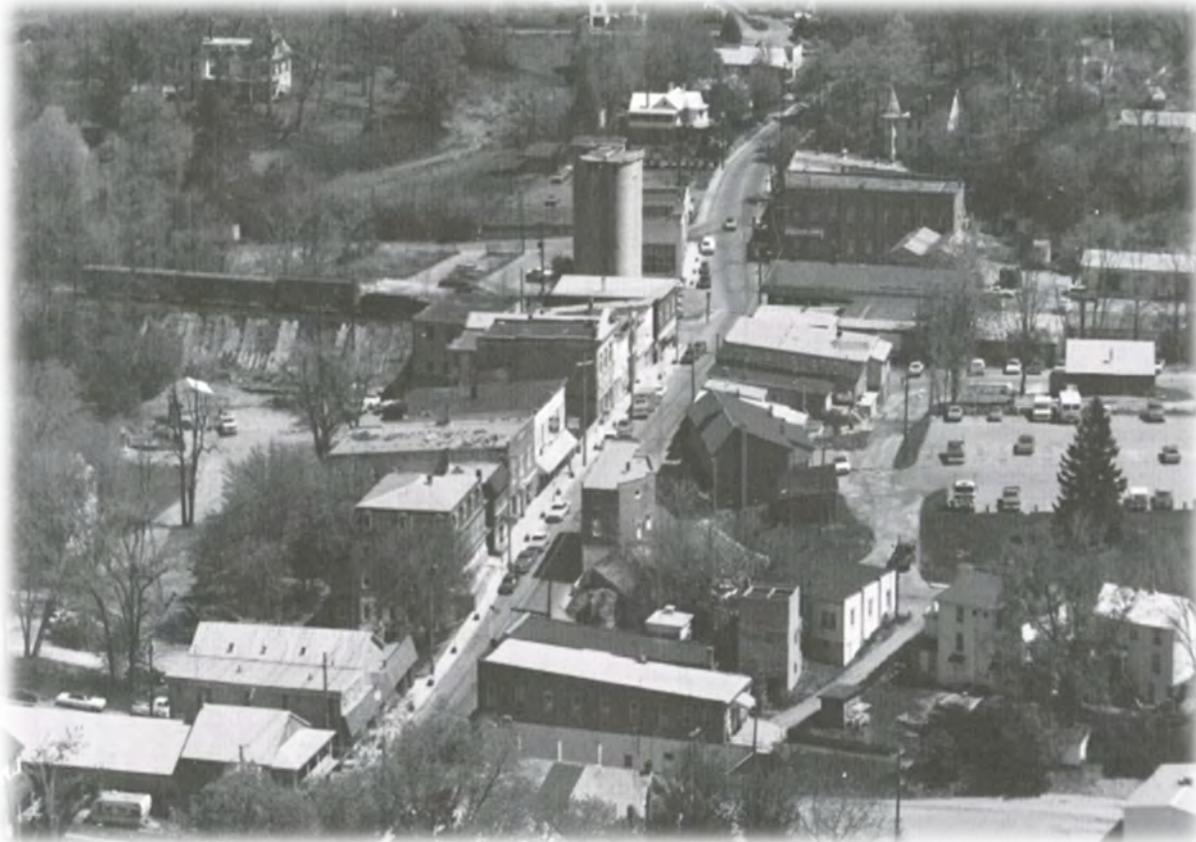
*MAIN STREET IN 1902 -- LOOKING NORTH FROM PARK AVE*

The town named the first resident, Henry Bussard, as the station agent for the new train station. Mr. Bussard was also the first major landowner in Mount Airy. By 1846, the Town was sparsely settled with several houses, a Town store, a barber shop, and a shoemaker shop. Pine Grove Chapel, circa 1846, now a historical monument, was constructed to fill the need for a community church. From the time it was constructed, the chapel basement functioned as a private school.

In the 1860's, there were Union soldier encampments near Pine Grove Chapel. The school and church were closed briefly because of soldier activity around the school. After the war ended, the church reopened in 1867 after undergoing renovation. Because of the Town's Civil War history and our location within both Carroll and Frederick counties, the town is included within the *Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area* (HCWHA). The Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area Inc.,

headquartered in nearby Frederick, Maryland, manages the Maryland-certified Heritage Area -- a region including portions of Carroll, Frederick, and Washington counties. The HCWHA works closely with the area's nonprofits and government entities, to support work that stimulates the economy through heritage tourism. Twenty-seven municipalities—ranging from cities to small towns such as Mt. Airy—are included. Additionally, the HCWHA coordinates with the three county governments, numerous local, state, and national parks, and a host of institutions that focus on our region's archaeological, historical, cultural, and natural resources.

In 1893, the Carroll County Board of Education funded the construction of a three-room schoolhouse that was completed in September, 1894. That building, approximately 1,700 sq. ft. in size, was located on the east side of Main Street, 1/4 of a mile south of the railroad tracks. It is now part of the Calvary United Methodist Church property. The school operated from 9:00 am to 4:00 p.m., much like today's schools. The chapel remained open during the early part of the Civil War despite the Union soldier activity.



*AERIAL VIEW OF MOUNT AIRY  
EARLY 1970'S LOOKING NORTH*

With the incorporation of the Town in 1894 came the establishment of the Town's government structure, which included the Town Mayor and Town Council.

The first Mount Airy Mayor was Byron S. Dorsey, who served ten years in that office between

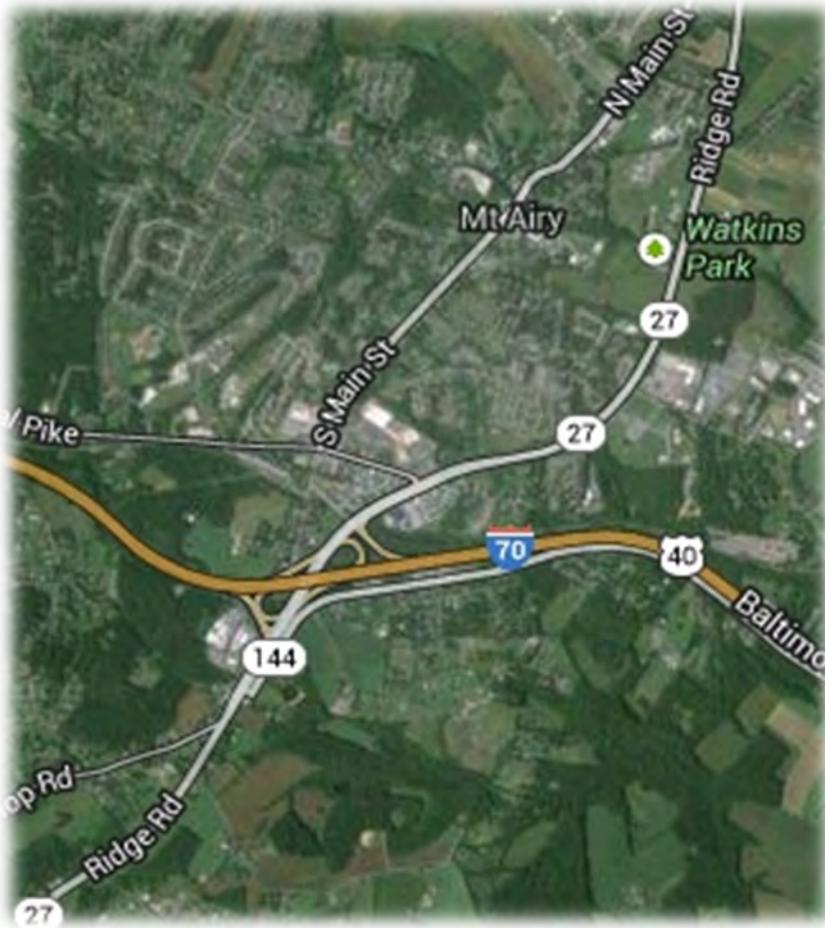
1894 and 1904.

In 1900, the Town's population had grown to 332 residents. By 1910, the Town's population was 428, and it was determined that the Town had enough student population to justify a State accredited high school. A high school with classes was organized, but an official high school building to house all eleven grades was not built at that time.

The Town of Mount Airy endured four disastrous fires during the first quarter of the 20th Century. The first fire occurred in 1902 and destroyed the business section of the southern side of the downtown area. The second fire was in 1914 and consumed the north side of the downtown business section. The third fire took place in 1925 and the northern side of the downtown business district was again destroyed. As a result of the 1925 fire, the Mount Airy Volunteer Fire Company was organized in 1926. The fourth fire was in 1982, which destroyed multiple buildings along

South Main Street adjacent to Town Hall. The redevelopment allowed for a large outdoor plaza to be installed as part of that project.

During the late 1920s and early 1930's, the Town continued to flourish despite the onset of the Great Depression. The 1930 U.S. Census tallied the Town's population at 845 persons, an increase of 91 people since 1920. The railroad company largely contributed to the growth of the population and the Town's economy. As a result, expanded Town services included necessary public utilities such as electric service when Potomac Edison was established in Mount Airy. The thriving economy supported the initiation of several large



*THE ROADS SURROUNDING THE TOWN*

businesses in the 1930s, such as a poultry operation, two automobile garages, an ice factory, and the creation of the Mount Airy Canning Company, which provided about 250 jobs for Town residents. In 1932, the first motion picture theater opened in Mount Airy, establishing a core business district. During that time, the Town also saw the purchase of land for a Town Park, the

opening of a grocery store and a lumber yard, and the dedication of Pine Grove Chapel for use as a nonsectarian chapel.

## REGIONAL SETTING AND GROWTH PATTERNS

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The Washington-Baltimore job market has had a profound influence on Mount Airy as well as a far-reaching impact on its surrounding areas. The outer suburban development area of the Washington-Baltimore Region now extends well into central/western Maryland, Northern Virginia, the southeastern portion of Pennsylvania, and even the eastern region of West Virginia. Mount Airy is located at the junction of MD 27 and I-70 and is affected by the pattern and pace of development along both traffic corridors. Many families have relocated to Mount Airy to attain a high quality of life and convenient commuting to Baltimore, Washington, D.C., or Frederick job markets. As noted in the 2020 Town Survey, the top five most-liked attributes of living in Mount Airy were, in rank order: small Town environment; sense of safety; family oriented; quiet community; and location. In this regard, the Town continues to function as a “bedroom community” while providing its residents with many services and commercial enterprises.

The regional and Town population growth during the last several decades has been significant. Mount Airy grew 33% each decade from 1940 to 1970. Then from 1970 to 1980, the growth rate increased by 34%, and from 1980 to 1990 it surpassed 59%. According to the State of Maryland, Mount Airy was the fastest-growing municipality in the State from 1990 to 1997. Mount Airy’s location at a meeting point of the boundaries of four counties



*DOWNTOWN MOUNT AIRY – SUMMER 2023*

and its convenient commuting distance to the major regional employment centers set the stage for tremendous growth pressure from 1980 to 2000.

That trend continued at the beginning of 2000, but slowed in 2005 due to water capacity constraints and the overall downturn in the economic climate, along with the community’s desire to slow the pace of growth.

Most of the future growth is expected to take place in the commercially zoned corridors that frame and define Mount Airy’s downtown area, thus encouraging downtown development and

revitalization. This plan suggests a reduction of residential development capacity for future annexation areas. For this 2023 Master Plan cycle, this reduction is predicated upon severe limitations on water supply and wastewater treatment capacity, along with the premise that these limitations will be difficult to overcome within the next ten years.

The chart below, based upon data from the Maryland Department of Planning as of December, 2022, provides an understanding of the historical and projected population growth (in percent) for the State, Carroll County and our adjoining Counties.

**STATE and COUNTY  
ANNUALIZED HISTORICAL AND PROJECTED GROWTH RATES (%)**

<b>State and Counties</b>	<b>1980-1990</b>	<b>1990-2000</b>	<b>2000-2010</b>	<b>2010-2020</b>	<b>2020-2025</b>	<b>2025-2030</b>	<b>2030-2035</b>
<i><b>Maryland</b></i>	<b>1.26</b>	<b>1.03</b>	<b>0.87</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0.68</b>	<b>0.58</b>	<b>0.54</b>
Carroll	2.50	2.03	1.03	0.34	0.40	0.31	0.27
Frederick	2.73	2.66	1.80	1.53	1.53	1.02	1.03
Montgomery	2.72	1.44	1.07	0.89	0.66	0.68	0.55
Howard	4.68	2.84	1.48	1.47	1.02	0.80	0.87

**Note:** Projections above are from both the Baltimore Metropolitan Council of Government's Cooperative Forecasting Committee and the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's Cooperative Forecasting Committee.

The last three columns above show that Carroll County is projected to have the lowest growth rate compared to Frederick, Montgomery and Howard Counties. Frederick County is projected to be the leader among these four counties in annualized growth. That higher projected growth in Frederick County is validated by current (2023) planning within that County to allow significant residential and commercial growth in and around our nearby communities of New Market, Linganore and Urbana. In particular, the planned growth to our west around New Market and Lake Linganore will definitely require the Town's Planning Commission to continue to work closely with the Commission's liaison from Frederick County.

**ANALYSIS OF THE TOWN'S POPULATION**

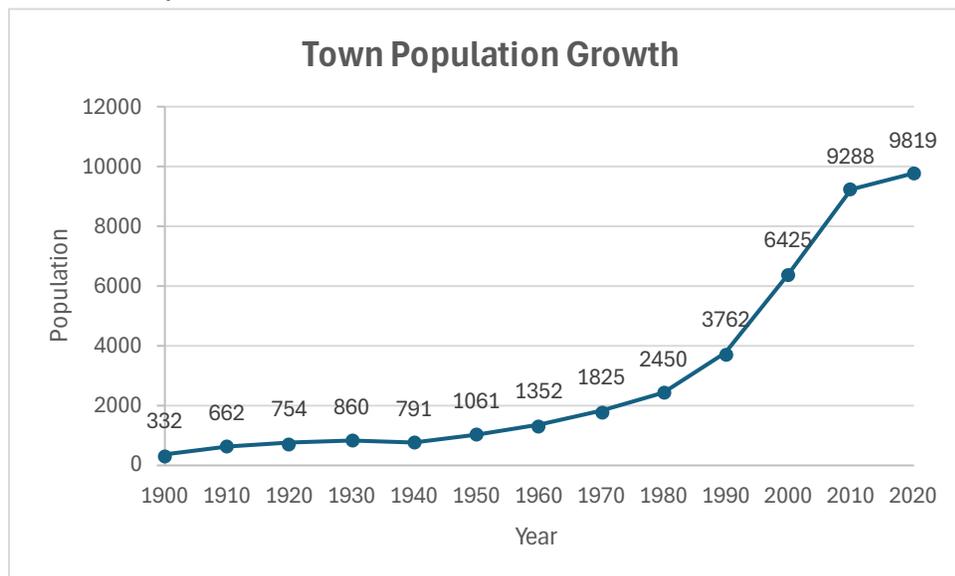
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Focusing now on the Town's historic population trends, the next chart below provides insights to the Town's growth relative to its two counties.

Census Year	Mount Airy	Avg % Growth Rate per Year	Frederick County	Avg % Growth Rate per Year	Carroll County	Avg % Growth Rate per Year
1970	1,825		84,927		69,006	
1980	2,450	+ 3.4%	114,792	+3.5%	96,356	+3.9%
1990	3,892	+5.9%	150,208	+3.1%	123,372	+2.8%
2000	6,425	+6.5%	195,277	+3.0%	151,454	+2.2%
2010	9,288	+4.5%	233,385	+1.9%	167,230	+1.1%
2020	9,654	+3.6%	271,717	+3.83%	169,092	+1.1%

Within the above 2020 Census population, there is a high Town resident homeownership percentage of 90.2%. In 2020, approximately 9% of the total Town housing inventory was multi-unit dwellings. The persons-per-household in 2020 was 2.95; very similar to 2000, which was about 3.0 persons-per-household. The per capita income in 2022 dollars was \$54,557, with a median household income level of \$148,779. Only 3.7% of the Town’s households were below the poverty level.

The significant increase in population during 1990-2010 contributed to a rise in residential building (e.g. Summit Ridge, Sterling Glen and Nottingham) along with an increase in general business activity of the Town for service and retail businesses, such as grocery store chains, restaurants, convenience stores, daycare facilities, medical services, special craft stores and gift shops. The steady increase in population growth during this period attracted new businesses growth within commercially zoned areas of the Town.



Then, from 2010-2020, population growth slowed. Factors which caused this downturn include the nation-wide economic slowdown and general immobility of the workforce due to the pandemic, Town compliance with the 2004 MDE Consent Order to limit building permits (due to water shortages), and a clear focus in the 2013 Master Plan to encourage more commercial growth versus residential growth (e.g., the Downtown Vision Plan).

Looking ahead for 2023-2033:

- All projected growth opportunities (residential, commercial, etc.) will continue to be limited by adequate public facilities such as Water, Schools, Waste Water Treatment and Transportation infrastructure. The analysis and certifications of these critical facilities must follow a thorough and consistent process by the Planning Commission at the concept plan stage to ensure any growth can be allowed while sustaining adequate public facilities.
- With the 2019-2020 creation of a new Mixed-Use District zoning code being applied to two large tracts within the Town limits (e.g. Greentree Village and the Beck Property), it is likely that the most significant residential and commercial growth opportunity (barring any additional annexed properties) lies within these two parcels. Although these two mixed-use parcels' development could provide increased financial stability to our Town in the outyears, we must ensure that any development within them is smart, sustainable (i.e., APFO-certified) and, most importantly, enhances our Town's overall quality of life.
- Commercial-zoned and Industrial-zoned opportunities during 2023-2033 will likely be found in the Downtown Zone, within any Neighborhood Professional rezoning, and within the continued buildout of the Twin Arch Business Park.
- Strictly residential-zoned opportunities during 2023-2033 should focus on the development of the old Cold Storage tract, the Dennis Property off Main St. and the recently annexed tract near the Summit Ridge neighborhood off Buffalo Road.

Regarding residential growth in the next 10 years, the Town devised a low, middle, and high scenario of population growth based upon the number of construction permits allowed per year. These scenarios are shown below. These population projections were made based upon a historical analysis of the Town's average number of building permits over the period 2010-2020. Due to the economic downturn in 2022-2023, and severe restrictions on groundwater appropriations, the building permit projections in this 2023 Master Plan have been revised downward from previous years. The low scenario below (with only twelve residential unit permits per year) is deemed to be the most likely scenario to occur, on a yearly average, over the next ten years.

<b>Projection Year</b>	<b>Low Scenario (12 units/yr)</b>	<b>Mid Scenario (24 units/yr)</b>	<b>High Scenario (36 units/yr)</b>
<b>2024</b>	9,786	9,918	10,050
<b>2025</b>	9,819	9,984	10,149
<b>2026</b>	9,852	10,050	10,248
<b>2027</b>	9,885	10,116	10,347
<b>2028</b>	9,918	10,182	10,446
<b>2029</b>	9,951	10,248	10,545
<b>2030</b>	9,984	10,314	10,644
<b>2031</b>	10,017	10,380	10,743
<b>2032</b>	10,050	10,446	10,842

For this 2023 Master Plan cycle, any growth within any zoning district is predicated upon the limitations and adequacy of our water supply and wastewater treatment capacity.

At the conclusion of this plan’s update (Fall, 2024) our local housing market (and consequently our population growth) has suffered a 2-year slowdown due to high interest rates, high rental rates, and reduced inventories of both rental and homeowner properties.

In summary, the recent economic downturn, coupled with residents’ preference for limited growth, suggests that housing and population estimates for Mount Airy for the next 10 years will follow the Low Scenario for population growth. Our limited availability of water and sewer infrastructure, inflationary economic conditions driving up construction costs, higher interest rates for home loans, and expected new State Government housing policies (e.g. HB538 and guidance on Accessory Dwelling Units), will affect home building activity and our overall inventory of affordable housing.

## TOWN EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

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The Town will continue to create opportunities for service-related businesses but does not have the size or economic base to become a “regional employment center” that provides a range of professional and technical job opportunities for the resident population.

The Maryland Data Center prepared the chart below which projects employment trends for the surrounding counties:

<b>Employed Residents by Jurisdiction</b>				
	<b>2010</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>2040</b>
<b>Frederick Co.</b>	129,184	148,600	160,300	170,400
<b>Carroll Co.</b>	82,229	93,400	99,900	105,300
<b>Howard Co.</b>	190,553	237,770	259,400	281,100
<b>Montgomery Co.</b>	647,652	729,700	761,900	791,300

The majority of the workforce living in the Town of Mount Airy is employed at locations outside of Carroll and Frederick Counties. Many residents have long commutes to the southern and eastern job markets.

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE LOCAL ECONOMY

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The local economy is primarily service-oriented, with a steady influx of entrepreneurs locating or expanding small businesses within the Town's boundaries. Yet, a rise in general business activity also encompasses commercial industries such as grocery stores, restaurants, convenience stores, medical and hospital-related services, car washes, and daycare facilities. Based on data from the North American Industry Classification System, the 2020 Census reflects a total of 741 business establishments within the Mount Airy zip code.

### LIMITATIONS OF TOWN INFRASTRUCTURE ON LOCAL BUSINESS GROWTH

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The State of Maryland has mandated strict controls on water appropriations requiring the Town to restrict and prioritize development. Accordingly, in 2013 the Town repealed and reenacted Town Code provisions that govern the allocation of available water and sewer capacity. The Town will continue its downtown revitalization (e.g. Downtown Zone infill and redevelopment) as well as the development of a major corridor leading into the downtown (e.g., Center Street).

Applications for mixed-use developments, which were advocated in the previous Master Plan, will appear during this Master Plan cycle. Their unique combination of residential units with commercial businesses should provide opportunities for additional local employment. But again, limited public facilities, such as water and sewer capacities, will set the pace of such development.

When water allocations are assigned to any new business or development, the Town must monitor and enforce compliance with that allocation. If the business or development continues to exceed their water allocation, then the Town must reduce the business' hours of operation, impose mandatory water restrictions, impose severe monetary penalties during the time(s) when allocations are exceeded, and/or issue a stop-work in order to force the business to meet its agreed allocation. These measures are necessary because if businesses routinely exceed their allocation, then that behavior restricts or even prevents new business growth due to the unavailability of water.

## SUMMARY

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The Town of Mount Airy and the surrounding region will continue to grow at a slow pace. The close proximity of the Town to major highways will continue to make it desirable as a locale for businesses, although the adequacy (or not) of all seven areas of the Town's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) will drive the pace of any proposed development.

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## CHAPTER THREE: NATURAL RESOURCES

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### FEDERAL AND STATE OBJECTIVES

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Protection of the Town's natural and environmental resources is absolutely essential to maintaining the quality of life that Mount Airy currently enjoys. Research is under way to identify how development activity is affecting the natural ecosystem. In Maryland, this research has been pursued diligently to understand how we may improve the conditions of the Chesapeake Bay. While Mount Airy is over 60 miles from the shores of the Chesapeake Bay, stream tributaries that begin in Mount Airy eventually terminate in the bay.

To coordinate environmental efforts across the State, and ultimately improve the condition of the Chesapeake Bay, the State has adopted several regulations requiring local governments to address specific environmental issues. These laws, the *Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992 (as amended)*, and *1991 Forest Conservation Act*, and *Federal Clean Water Act*, including storm water management, NPDES permit requirements and wetland protection laws, along with the *Smart Growth Legislation of 1997 and Land Use-Local Government Planning of 2006 (HB 1141)*. The latter legislation addressed land use, development and water resources and requires that local comprehensive plans contain a Water Resources Element and a Municipal Growth Element. In addition to these State regulatory measures, the Town has independently addressed protection of steep slopes, floodplains and town well watershed areas. This chapter reviews these regulations, and explores the relationships between natural resource protection and land-use planning. The *Priority Preservation Area Element* was also approved during the 2006 Legislative Session as part of HB 2 and is now required to be part of the County Comprehensive Plan.

### GENERAL CLIMATE

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Mount Airy sits astride Parris Ridge, and has a humid, temperate climate with four rather well-defined seasons. The general atmospheric flow is from west to east but alternate surges of cold air from the north and of warm humid air from the south occurs in the area, causing highly variable weather. Nearness to the Atlantic Coast allows coastal storms to make up any deficiency of precipitation resulting from the passage of weather systems over the mountains to the west.

The average annual temperature is approximately 54 degrees, with January generally the coldest month and July the warmest. Temperatures exceed 90 degrees Fahrenheit an average of 35 days a year. The Town of Mount Airy is within the USDA Plant Hardiness Zones 7A and 7B for an annual

extreme minimum temperature of 0 to 10 degrees Fahrenheit.

The average annual precipitation totals about 48 inches, with February the driest and September the wettest month. During the growing season, which averages about 177 days from April through September, the last part of July through the first part of August is the driest. The average seasonal snowfall is 21 inches.<sup>2</sup> The monthly precipitation is about even all year compared to climates elsewhere. The wettest month is a result from storm events which tend to be spotty and quick. Conversely, precipitation in spring is more even with many small events.

## TOPOGRAPHY

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Topography, the shape and lay of the land, is a major factor in controlling and guiding the density, type and direction development is to take place in any area. Severely sloping terrain (i.e., greater than 25-degrees), if not retained and protected in an undeveloped state, is suitable only for low-density residential use or forestation, while land, which is moderately sloped or rolling, can be appropriate for low, medium, and high-density residential development. In addition, it is the level areas, which are most easily adaptable for industrial and commercial land use.

Mount Airy's Main Street, for the most part, runs atop Parrs Ridge in a northeast-southwest direction with elevations ranging between 800-850+ feet, which descend in two directions roughly perpendicular to the ridge's spine. Numerous valleys that extend outward toward the east and west from this ridge cause the unusually hilly topography. The present downtown area is located in one of the more pronounced of these valleys and this funnel-like location causes many challenges with regard to development and road network. Although this rough, sloping terrain adds character and creates diversity throughout the Town, the most severe slopes are avoided in order to reduce hazard and eliminate risk in future development.

Mount Airy straddles the division of two major drainage basins. Within the Frederick County portion of the Town are the headwaters of Woodville Branch and Ben's Branch which are parts of the Linganore Watershed, as well as the headwaters of Bush Creek, another Frederick County Watershed. The Linganore Watershed drains into Lake Linganore, a secondary source of public water for Frederick County. Both the Linganore and Bush Creek Watersheds are nested in the Lower Monocacy River Watershed, with eventual drainage to the Potomac River. The east side drains into the Chesapeake Bay via tributaries of Middle Run and the South Branch of the Patapsco Rivers.

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<sup>2</sup> Data and climatology analysis taken from the National Weather Service, NOAA, 1991-2020.

## GEOLOGY

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Geologic formations that underlie an area can be vital to the type of future development the land may sustain. The quality, quantity, and accessibility of ground water are directly linked to the type of rock formation or aquifer involved. The depth of bedrock and the presence of rock outcroppings both have an effect on certain land uses and developmental patterns.

Ijamsville Formation and Marburg Schist are found throughout the Mount Airy area. The Marburg Schist is mainly a bluish gray to green, fine-grained muscovite-chlorite schist, containing a considerable amount of quartzite. Ijamsville Formation is blue, green, or purple phyllite and phyllitic slate, with interbedded metasiltstone and metagraywacke.

## SOILS<sup>3</sup>

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Soils data are useful in helping to determine areas most suitable for future development. By using soil studies, sound estimates can be made about where people will be living, working and playing.

This general soil survey and analysis takes into consideration the limitations, restrictions, and hazards involved in the development of various soils areas in Mount Airy. By selecting an unsuitable use for a specific soil, the risk of loss to the developer and to the Town can be very high. The soils of our region which includes Mount Airy can be grouped into four major series classifications as follow: a) Chester, b) Glenville, c) Mount Airy and d) Manor. Each has characteristics that should be taken into consideration by those who propose to develop and use the land.

**CHESTER** – The Chester series consists of deep, well-drained soils that are usually found on hilltops and the upper part of slopes. Hard rock is generally at a depth of more than five feet but quartzite fragments are common throughout the soil. Chester soils are strongly acidic and have a high available moisture capacity. These soils are found south of Route 40 in the Montgomery County area and any dense development should be avoided or compensated for on slopes greater than 15%.

**GLENVILLE** – The Glenville series consists of moderately well drained, very strongly acid soils that occur primarily on flats and at the foot of slopes. The depth to bedrock is generally more than 5 feet; the soils are only moderately productive; and they have a limited capacity to store moisture. The Glenville soils are in limited areas found in the southern section of the Town vicinity and dense development should be avoided or compensated for because of a high-water table.

**MOUNT AIRY** – The Mount Airy series consists of moderately deep, very strongly acid soils that

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<sup>3</sup> The Soil Conservation Service (USDA) in cooperation with the Maryland Agricultural Experiment Station develops Soil Survey material for Carroll, Howard, Frederick, and Montgomery Counties

are somewhat excessively drained. The depth to bedrock in this soil is usually about 30 inches; they have a low to moderate available moisture capacity, and if well managed are moderately productive. These soils are found in the Carroll, Montgomery, and Howard County sections that surround the Town. Furthermore, the shallow depth to bedrock will cause inconvenience in relation to any subsurface excavation.

MANOR – The Manor series consists of shallow, excessively drained and immature soils that are not especially fertile or productive. These soils have a high available moisture capacity and are strongly acid. Although very susceptible to erosion they are suitable for a variety of uses. These soils are primarily found to the west of Mount Airy.

#### HYDROLOGIC SOIL GROUPS<sup>4</sup>

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Soils are classified by the Natural Resource Conservation Service into four Hydrologic Soil Groups (HSGs) based on the soil's runoff potential. The four Hydrologic Soil Groups are A, B, C and D. Where A's generally have the smallest runoff potential and D's have the greatest.

**Group A** is sand, loamy sand, or sandy loam types of soils. It has low runoff potential and high infiltration rates even when thoroughly wetted. They consist chiefly of deep, well-drained to excessively-drained sands or gravels and have a high rate of water transmission.

**Group B** is silt loam or loam. It has a moderate infiltration rate when thoroughly wetted and consists chiefly of moderately deep to deep, moderately well-drained to well-drained soils with moderately fine to moderately coarse textures.

**Group C** soils are sandy clay loam. They have low infiltration rates when thoroughly wetted and consist chiefly of soils with a layer that impedes downward movement of water and soils with moderately fine to fine structure.

**Group D** soils are clay loam, silty clay loam, sandy clay, silty clay or clay. This HSG has the highest runoff potential. They have very low infiltration rates when thoroughly wetted and consist chiefly of clay soils with a high swelling potential, soils with a permanent high-water table, soils with a clay pan or clay layer at or near the surface, and shallow soils over nearly impervious material.

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<sup>4</sup> Details of this classification can be found in 'Urban Hydrology for Small Watersheds' published by the Engineering Division of the Natural Resource Conservation Service, US Department of Agriculture, and Technical Release-55.

## FLOODPLAIN SOILS

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For the most part, areas of floodplain and slopes greater than 25% are considered to be unsuitable for development. The floodplain is not a widespread factor in Mount Airy, but where it occurs (via soil analysis); it should remain undeveloped because of its role in quickly absorbing and containing excess water flow. Sloped areas greater than 25% should be used for natural and primitive recreation areas, such as trail, walking paths, and drainage ways. If properly protected, they can give a community an attractive and livable environment while shaping and ensuring safe, less costly development.

## SENSITIVE AREAS

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The 1992 Planning Act defines sensitive areas as streams and stream buffers, 100-year floodplain, endangered species habitat, and steep slopes. An evaluation of Mt. Airy's topography helps to describe the sensitive areas in the Town.

The Town of Mount Airy developed along Main Street which generally follows the peaks of Parr's Ridge. Parr's Ridge runs in a northeast-southwest direction and several minor ridges extend to the east and west. Between these minor ridges are small valleys in which the many branch streams

surrounding the Town begin. Most land slopes at 8 -10% and areas where slopes exceed 15% are common. Land areas within the 100-year floodplain are minimal; located mostly along low-lying streambeds. Similarly, few wetlands have been identified outside the stream valleys. Less than a quarter mile south of Mount Airy the South Branch of the Patapsco River begins at Parr's Spring. The Town limits extend east to the South Branch of the Patapsco River, which meets the Carroll and Howard County boundaries.

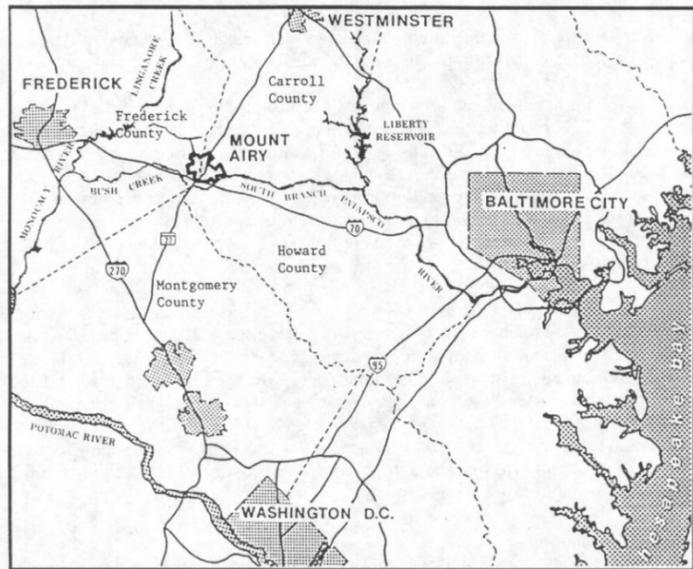
## WATER

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The following discussion addresses the groundwater and surface sources of Mount Airy, and their importance to the future development of the community.

### *Groundwater*

The quality and quantity of groundwater is particularly important to the Town, which relies entirely on groundwater for its water supply. The unconfined fractured rock aquifer within the Ijamsville Formation and Marburg Schist is the source of groundwater supply for the Town. At the end of 2023, the Town's water supply system depended upon eleven (11) wells to obtain its drinking water. Except for limited areas along the crest of Parr's Ridge in the Ridgeville area, adequate supplies of ground water can be obtained from wells nearly anywhere within the schist area.



According to the 2010 Carroll County Water Resources Element (WRE), prepared by Malcolm Pirnie, Inc., consultant for Carroll County Government, the water supply is susceptible to contamination by nitrates, Volatile Organic Compound (VOC) [except well #8], Synthetic Organic Compounds (SOC), per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), and radionuclides. But the supply is not susceptible to protozoans. Further, wells #2 and #7 are susceptible to bacteria and viruses. As the Town is “sitting” on its own water supply, the groundwater has the risk of undesirable contaminants in the form of road salts applied during the winter, fertilizer applications, or an unintentional leaky sanitary sewer. Carroll County will update the WRE in 2024.

Springheads are generally common in this schist formation, but are not a major source of water in the Mount Airy area. There is a small spring in Summit Ridge at Main Street and Prospect Rd. The pond at the Four County Farm just south of the Town is also spring fed.

Development affects groundwater quality in numerous ways: the introduction of impervious

surfaces, grading (which removes existing vegetation), concentration of pollutants into single high-volume drainage areas (stormwater management ponds), and the potential application or spill of chemicals that are not naturally absorbed or filtered. Common sources of contamination include salt from road de-icing, excessive fertilizer and pesticide application, a leaking sanitary sewer system, leaking underground storage tanks, and other “non-point source” pollution.

### *Surface Water*

Because of its unique location at the perimeter of two major watersheds it is not surprising that Mount Airy does not have a large supply of surface water. The most important watershed is the South Branch of the Patapsco River that is located directly southeast of the Town limits. Other minor streams that affect Mount Airy are Ben’s Branch, several unnamed tributaries of Bush Creek, Woodville Branch, and Middle Run.

## **STREAMS AND STREAM BUFFERS**

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The protection of streams requires undisturbed, vegetated stream buffers. Vegetated buffers can slow the flow of stormwater which reduces the erosion of stream banks. Vegetation also absorbs water and acts as a "filter" for pollutants and nutrients. By slowing the flow of rainwater, buffers also allow the water temperature to moderate before entering streams, reducing shock to aquatic species. Stream buffers provide other benefits as well, including improved wildlife habitat and scenic value in developed areas.

The Town of Mount Airy, through its adoption of the Carroll County Water Resources Management Manual (updated in August, 2022), restricts development along streams. The stream buffer is an undisturbed zone extending from the banks of a stream. Stream buffers will be applied County-wide, regardless of whether they are located within another Water Resource Management Area (e.g., Surface Watershed Area). Stream buffers should remain undisturbed unless an existing permanent improvement is within the delineated variable-width stream buffer. Existing permanent improvements (e.g., driveways, bridges, sheds, etc.) and an appropriate area around them should be excluded from the delineated variable-width stream buffer to allow for maintenance and access. All stream buffers shall be a minimum of 50 feet wide from each stream bank. Each site’s conditions will determine the final stream buffer width.

Several "models" exist by which an appropriate stream buffer could be established. Rather than establish a uniform buffer width for all streams, most models recommend that a buffer width be established to accomplish specific goals. A review of studies conducted nationwide finds that to significantly reduce the level of phosphorous entering streams, a 300-foot buffer on each side of the stream is necessary. However, if the goal is a reduction of sedimentation of the stream, a 100-foot buffer may suffice. Frederick County adopted strong stream protection regulations in 2008, which includes a variable width buffer based on degree and extent of slope, plus extra setbacks from streams in the Linganore Watershed to help reduce sediment in Lake Linganore. These buffer regulations were amended by the Frederick County BOCC on October 31, 2013 and reduced the

required setback distances.

In summary, the effectiveness of a buffer is determined by many factors, including the steepness and length of slope within the buffer, the type of vegetative cover, the soil erodibility, and the presence of impervious surfaces (such as pavement or rooftops). A 100-foot buffer around a water supply is required. However, in calculating the buffer, impervious surface area and slopes exceeding 25% do not count towards the buffer width requirement in order to give environmentally sensitive areas maximum protection.

#### 100-YEAR FLOODPLAIN

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In 2006, the Town Council enacted Chapter 61 of the Town of Mount Airy Code whereby the Town adopted the Carroll County Floodplain Management Ordinance codified in Chapter 114 of the Carroll County Code. In January 2012, the Town Council formally designated Carroll County, under the National Flood Insurance Program, as the government entity responsible for floodplain administration within the Town. Mount Airy does not permit development within the 100-year floodplain.<sup>5</sup>

#### ENDANGERED SPECIES HABITATS

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In an effort to preserve habitat, 300-foot-wide forested buffers should be encouraged where practical and beneficial to wildlife. Land-use policies, parks planning, and forestation resulting from the Forest Conservation Act should contribute to enhancement of these corridors. Several species of plants and animals are listed as rare, threatened, or endangered in Frederick County and Carroll County.<sup>6</sup>

#### STEEP SLOPES

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Mount Airy does not permit development on slopes equal to or greater than 25%, and are not considered as part of any minimum lot area. The State Forest Conservation Act defines steep slopes as greater than 25%, or slopes greater than 15% with a K-value (soil erodibility) greater than 0.35. It is difficult to develop on slopes in excess of 15% without significant grading.

#### STATE FOREST CONSERVATION ACT

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In 1991, the State of Maryland adopted the first edition of the Forest Conservation Act, which provides that forest retention, reforestation, and/or afforestation be required of new land development. Subsequent reviews of statutory and regulatory requirements of the Forest Conservation Act resulted in the release of second and third editions of the manual, in 1995 and 1997, respectively. This legislation allows local governments to develop their own programs, provided they meet the intent of the State Law. The Town of Mount Airy worked closely in conjunction with Carroll County to develop a program that could be implemented in the Town.

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<sup>5</sup> Town Code §112-10, *Structures and Land Development in Floodplain*

<sup>6</sup> Maryland Department of Natural Resources

The program has been administered successfully since 1993.

The current program implemented for Carroll County stresses retention of existing forest area as the primary objective in order to fulfill the requirements of the ordinance. For every square acre of forest removed, the same amount will have to be replaced (reforested) on-site or somewhere within the same county managing the forestation bank. Afforestation, which is establishing a forest where there is none, is also required to meet the State objective of increasing forest cover in the State. Any residential development on property that has less than 20% of its land in forest cover must provide a 20% threshold of afforestation. Industrial and commercial lands are permitted slightly lesser criteria, requiring a minimum of 15% of the post-development land to be forested. To guide forestation decisions, priority retention areas and priority forestation areas are defined. These areas include stream buffers, steep slopes, wildlife corridors, and similarly valued natural areas. The requirements of the Forest Conservation Act have contributed to the preservation and aesthetic retention of natural and conservation areas within the Town limits. Although the Town has allowed developers to utilize certain dedicated "open space" and other natural drainage areas or steep slope areas within established subdivisions, lack of suitable land quickly has become a dilemma. The Town has subsequently allowed developers of commercial and industrial projects to fulfill their forestation requirements through Carroll County-approved "Forestation Banks." These banks are located in various areas throughout the county but have a set number of acres that can be purchased by developers to fill their requirements. The banking has worked well in Carroll County because the land used for these banks is located in strategic areas along streambeds, steep slopes, or other officially designated environmentally sensitive areas. Through the successful partnership between the Town and Carroll County, there now exists the opportunity to allow additional landscape plantings within developments that could meet forestation requirements. This proposed flexibility in the Forestation Ordinance requirements would encourage more on-site plantings instead of being forced to use off-site forestation banks.

#### CARROLL COUNTY WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT CODE AND THE WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT MANUAL

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In April 2004, the Carroll County Commissioners adopted Ordinance No. 04-08, which created Chapter 154, *Water Resource Management* within the County Code. This new chapter formalized and strengthened the ability to manage and protect water resources within the county. The chapter provides for the delineation of management areas, and the ability to perform a water resource impact review on all proposed development projects within the county. Mt. Airy is among the several municipalities which have also adopted Chapter 154 (Town Code §110-1, *Adoption of County Provisions*).

Updated in 2022, the Water Resource Management Manual has the overall goal to allow development to proceed in a manner that will minimize adverse impacts on the water supply. Some of Carroll County's geology and land use are unique and standards were developed to address local

needs.

## 2023 TRIENNIAL UPDATE TO THE CARROLL COUNTY WATER AND SEWER MASTER PLAN

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Adopted in June, 2023, this updated plan implements the Carroll County Master Plan and guides the municipalities' Master Plans. The County's Water & Sewer Master Plan has the following three goals:

**Goal 1:** Establish cost-effective public water and wastewater facilities that are consistent with the type and timing of planned development.

**Goal 2:** Identify and plan for specific water and wastewater facilities that will accomplish Water Resource Element goals and strategies.

**Goal 3:** Provide information about private water and wastewater users to inform planning-related analysis and decision-making.

This Water and Sewer Master Plan and Chapter 154 of the County Code identify our county's public water supply sources as the following Water Resource Management Areas:

**Carbonate Rock Area:** Presently, Mt. Airy has no Carbonate Rock Area beneath its boundaries.

**Wellhead Protection Area:** This area represents those regions that contribute groundwater to the indicated sources. These areas are based on "capture areas" as estimated from available field-testing data, hydrologic flow equations, and groundwater availability estimates, in combination with the hydrogeological characteristics of the subject aquifers. The Town has a wellhead protection ordinance to protect the well recharge areas around all of its current eleven (11) wells.

**Aquifer Protection Area:** This area encompasses regions within 2,000 feet of each Designated Growth Area (DGA) boundary, as well as any watershed-draining tributary to the Aquifer Protection Area (APA). The groundwater recharge available is assumed to be that which could be captured by gravity drainage into each of these areas. These areas, therefore, constitute the potential groundwater resource available to serve DGAs into the future. Mt. Airy is among the County's DGAs.

**Surface Watershed Area:** This area encompasses the drainage basins of all existing and proposed surface water reservoirs in Carroll County. The delineation of these areas is based on topography and gravity drainage to the reservoirs.

The triennial update also emphasizes that the conservation of water is a fundamental aspect of resource protection and management. This component of Carroll County's Water Resource Management Program consists of three elements: educate the public, update the plumbing code for new construction, and retrofit plumbing in existing construction. The Town complies with the

County mandates for water conservation devices in new construction and requires that certain new plumbing fixtures meet specified flow rates.

## WATER CONTAMINATION

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Under the Federal Clean Water Act of 1972, the State is required to identify “impaired” water bodies or those water bodies that do not meet their designated water quality standards. Impairments can come from nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorus, sediment, pathogens, mercury, and other components (e.g. Per- and Polyfluorinated Substances commonly known as PFAS, lead, and copper). Once a water body is deemed “impaired,” a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) is developed by the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). A TDML is the maximum amount of a pollutant that the water body can assimilate and still meet water quality standards. To reduce pollutants of the receiving waters and address identified impairments, watershed implementation plans are required to be developed at both the State and Local level.

In 2021, the Lead and Copper Rule Revisions (LCRR) required the Town to develop a service line inventory and lead service line replacement plan by October 16, 2024. In 2025, the Town will begin financial coordination with the state to design and install State-accepted lead mitigation to remove all lead and galvanized lines from our water system.

In 2023, the Town began routine well testing for PFAS contamination based upon EPA and MDE limits. Due to the 2024 contamination levels at some test sites, the Town began the financial coordination with the State to design and install State-accepted PFAS mitigation equipment to be located at specific water pumping stations.

## WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT STANDARDS AND THE MASTER PLAN

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The Carroll County Water Resource Management Standards / Master Plan Compatibility Study prepared by Horsley Witten and Hegemann, Inc. reviewed the relationship between the proposed standards and their conflict or consistency with planning and zoning policies. If planning policies and regulations were not respectful of water resource issues, the success of water resource standards would be limited. The following recommendations apply to Mount Airy:

**A. *General Land Use Recommendations*** - While contamination is a potential threat regardless of the land use, industrial uses are more likely to cause groundwater contamination from hazardous material accidents. However, increased nutrient loads and reduced groundwater recharge can result from intense development of any land use within a community’s well watershed. Water quality problems include PFAS contamination, excessive nitrate levels from residential and agricultural fertilizers and business wastewater, and phosphorus that is a result of surface run-off from residential, commercial, and agricultural uses.

**B. *Industrial Development*** - The threat of groundwater contamination from industrial leaks and

spills can be significant. The study recommends that existing and future industrial areas are subject to water resource management standards, and that future planning locate industrial activity outside potential community well watersheds.

Currently, the Town has two wells whose watersheds include industrial land -- production well #6 and production well #7. Production well #6 is located 1500 feet from current industrial land uses and is at Watkins Regional Park. Production well #7 is located within the industrial park of the Twin Ridge Professional Center. The Town will continue to monitor all of our wells and remain vigilant for any activities that may adversely affect our wells.

## WELLHEAD PROTECTION AREAS

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Carroll County's Water Resource Management Manual (updated in August 2022) requires a 100-foot undisturbed buffer around community wells. The purpose of a buffer area is to ensure adequate time delay before contaminants could reach a well. The Horsley, Witten and Hegemann study explains that the buffer area should be sized according to the potential draw of the well, and most wells draw from an area larger than 100 feet. A well pumped at higher volumes will draw from a larger area over the same period of time than a lesser pumped well. Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) has mapped recharge areas, but no studies have actually documented subsurface water flow under the Town.

## MOUNT AIRY WELLHEAD PROTECTION ORDINANCE

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In 1998, the Town of Mount Airy updated and adopted a Wellhead Protection Ordinance (Town Code §109, Article V, *Wellhead Protection*). The Ordinance designates a large portion of the Town boundary as the Wellhead Protection Area and, therefore, regulates the review and provides a venue for analysis of all land uses within the Town boundaries. The Ordinance lists specific permitted uses, conditional uses, and prohibited uses.

All of the conditional uses must come under an additional layer of review from the Town to ensure that the public groundwater supply will not be threatened by a particular use. The ordinance also specifies the documentation required by the landowner to ensure the prevention of any immediate or long-term hazard to the wellhead protection area of the Town. Conditional uses apply to fuel storage, dry cleaning businesses, and heavy manufacturing uses. An example of prohibited uses may be junkyards, storage of hazardous materials, landfills, and open burning or dumpsites.

## MINIMUM WELL PRODUCTION ORDINANCE

In October, 2023, the Town Council passed Ordinance 2023-40 to ensure a minimum flow of water from any new test well before it is accepted by the Town (Town Code §109-4, *Wells*). That minimum flow is at least a net yield of 75,000 gallons per day (gpd) after deductions based upon limiting factors including, but not limited to:

- (1) The MDE annual average appropriation from the well,
- (2) The ability of the well to maintain production of at least 75,000 gpd during periods of drought.,  
and
- (3) The availability of treatment facilities to treat the water from the well.

The Ordinance does allow for acceptance of wells producing less than 75,000 gpd, but only when it is recommended by the Town Engineer and under such circumstances as:

- (a) The well is one of multiple wells to be simultaneously dedicated to the Town that collectively produce a net yield of at least 150,000 gpd after deduction of limiting factors.
- (b) The individual well produces at least a net yield of 50,000 gpd after deduction of limiting factors.

## RESPONSIBILITY OF DEVELOPERS TO PROVIDE NEW WATER SOURCES

In 1989, the Town adopted Ordinance No. 1989-2 that requires developers to find a significant well within their project area or pay a well exploration fee. Following adoption of this ordinance, several good wells have been found. However, the new wells may be located within the development regardless of the proposed density or permitted land use. As a requirement for most major residential annexations, the development of a well is a necessity. Growth of the Town over the last ten years has created the need for new wells from a major development to offset the added draw on the existing water system.

## WATER RESOURCE COORDINATION COUNCIL (WRCC)

Mt. Airy is among a group of 8 municipalities within Carroll County committed to working together to address water, wastewater and stormwater management issues. Their routine sharing of best-practices has proven to be an effective and efficient water management body.

The Water Resource Coordination Council (WRCC) was formed in March 2007 by a non-binding joint resolution between the County, municipalities, and Carroll County Health Department. The body provides a mechanism for cooperative problem solving of critical water resource management issues facing the County and municipalities. The body fosters discussion between jurisdictions in order to develop regional (watershed) or county-wide approaches to policies, procedures, and solutions regarding water resource development and protection. Most importantly, it provides a forum for the dissemination of ideas, solutions, and cost-saving approaches to water resource development and protection within Carroll County.

## STORMWATER MANAGEMENT

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Stormwater management facilities are an attempt to replace the natural network for rainwater travel and filtering in developed areas. Stormwater runoff is conveyed to a stormwater management facility via sheet flow, storm drain system or another method of conveyance. Once the runoff reaches the facility, its release rate and quality can be managed.

There are various types of stormwater management facilities designed primarily to control the increased volume or rate of runoff and/or eliminate pollutants that result from rainfall on developed areas. Stormwater management structures help prevent the sudden flow of stormwater into streams, and thereby reduce the risk of erosion and sediment deposit. Stormwater management facilities also help prevent large volumes of runoff from damaging downstream properties. Another primary function of many stormwater management facilities is pollutant removal. In addition, stormwater management facilities often facilitate infiltration of surface water to replenish Mount Airy's groundwater (drinking water) supply.

Although stormwater management facilities provide many benefits, some problems related to these facilities persist. Because facility design concentrates runoff in one location, there may be an increased loading of pollutants or nutrients at that location. The best way to minimize this loading is to provide as much natural vegetated surface area as possible throughout each new development. Vegetation will help treat pollutant-laden runoff. Stormwater management facilities also require substantial maintenance, which is typically provided by the Town at taxpayer expense within low-density residential developments.

In 2007, House Bill 786 ((HB), known as the Stormwater Management Act, was passed. This legislation requires stormwater management practices to mimic natural water runoff and minimize land development impact on water resources. The stricter standard reduces pollution runoff to the Bay from impervious surfaces such as pavement, roofs, and structures.

Long range planning is the primary tool to address the stormwater challenges of the future. Such planning includes a multi-year program of stormwater upgrades to meet future needs. The impact of climate change on the current stormwater infrastructure shall be closely monitored moving forward and addressed in the design of new facilities. This will result in funding increases to support more robust stormwater management infrastructure. All major stormwater management projects will be coordinated with the aforementioned Water Resource Coordination Council (WRCC).

## MARYLAND AND THE NATIONAL POLLUTANT DISCHARGE ELIMINATION SYSTEM

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The State of Maryland created, and is an ongoing participant in, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) for stormwater management. This program is designed to monitor

stormwater flow for pollutants; some of which are considered “non-point source” or being generated some distance away from the storm drain system, but ultimately accessing the municipal storm drain system. These off-site pollutants make their way into the system and could potentially create a negative effect on the groundwater supply for the town.

A NPDES Phase II permit is required from the State for all counties and municipalities to continuously monitor their stormwater flow for contaminants. This permitting process is required from the EPA as part of the Federal Clean Water Act. Under this permit, Best Management Practices are promoted and the implementation of the following six measures is encouraged:

- Public education and outreach
- Public participation and involvement
- Illicit discharge detection and elimination
- Construction site runoff control
- Post -construction runoff control
- Pollution prevention/good housekeeping

This permit exists at Carroll County and includes the Town. In order for the County to meet the requirements of the permit, the storm drain system for the County and all of the municipalities participating will need to be put into a mapping program. The County has the staff to log-in all new storm drain system information and make the necessary reporting requirements to the State.

## GILLIS FALLS RESERVOIR

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In 1988, the Carroll County Bureau of Water Resources released a study including estimates of water supply and demand in southern Carroll County. That water resource study concluded that water demand would exceed supply by the year 2015. In order to plan for the future water usage, Carroll County began planning for a surface water source, the Gillis Falls Reservoir, located 2 miles northeast of Mt. Airy. As of 2023, the County has purchased about 91% of the total 1,200 acres needed to establish the reservoir. The land of the reservoir watershed is primarily in conservation-zoning; thereby protecting the water quality of a possible future reservoir.

Of note, the Carroll County 2023 Water and Sewer Master Plan includes the Gillis Falls Reservoir as one of the Town’s potential long-term (10+ years) options for a new surface water source. That Master Plan recommendation also:

- estimates a safe yield of 0.85 mgd from the reservoir,
- encourages the Town and County to develop an intake pipeline for the reservoir on Carroll County-owned property, and
- for the Town and County to establish a 100-120 mg off-stream storage impoundment.

## HARRISON / LEISHEAR PROPERTY

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An additional long-range recommendation from Carroll County for future groundwater exploration is the potential new water supply options within the nearby Carroll County-owned Harrison/Leishear property that is located just north of the current Town boundary. In the recent past, the Town worked with Carroll County and MDE for water appropriations from four wells on this property. That effort was being driven by discussions between the County and the Town to possibly annex that property into the Town. Based upon the Town's testing during those annexation negotiations, the four wells have an anticipated (combined) appropriation amount of 152,000 gpd. That amount would significantly mitigate the 2023 projected water shortfall of 165,000 gpd to meet the Town's future water demand needs. Unfortunately, the annexation discussions were paused indefinitely and will need to be restarted in order to continue the addition of this much-needed nearby groundwater source for the Town's future growth. The fact that the 2023 Carroll County Water and Sewer Master Plan includes this option for the Town gives optimism to renewing those negotiations.

## WATER RESOURCE ELEMENT

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The Water Resource Element (WRE) is a statutory requirement for jurisdictions to ensure that municipalities have comprehensive plans to meet current and future water and sewer demands. It sets out in detail the current status along with future plans for the town's water and sewer capacity given the limitations and constraints of our water resources. The WRE is an integral part of the Master Plan.

The Town of Mount Airy is a part of Carroll County and the Town's WRE is incorporated into the County's WRE. The Town's portion of the Carroll County WRE is currently being updated (by the Town Engineer and the Water & Sewer Commission) and will replace the 2010 WRE.

Noteworthy is the addition of climate change considerations as they may impact possible flooding into the town's water system, our Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP), and stormwater facilities. The town also monitors PFAS levels at all 11 wells. Quarterly test results are a key factor in our ongoing remediation program and those results are available on the Town's website.

## WATER / WASTE WATER

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### WATER SUPPLY

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The Town of Mount Airy is not only located in two counties, but also divided into five different watersheds. From 2005 to 2011, the Town was under a Consent Order with the Maryland Department of the Environment to find additional source water for the Town's increasing water supply demands. The Town operates strictly off of groundwater supply. In recent years the Town replaced more than 15,000 Linear Feet of pipe for the water main, increasing to a 12" main between

all three elevated storage tanks.

The unconfined fractured rock aquifer is the source of water supply for the Town. The system uses 11 wells to provide a municipal water supply for over 9,600 residents. The Town’s existing water supply system consists of these eleven wells, transmission and feeder mains, and five water treatment/booster pumping stations. The Town also operates three elevated tanks capable of holding over 1,700,000 gallons in reserve. The wells’ locations within our aquifers can be seen on the enclosed Water Resources Map.

The main well field is located in Frederick County and consists of wells #1-4.

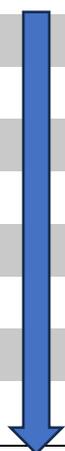
Wells #5 and #6 are located in Carroll County west of MD 27.

Wells #7 (Twin Ridge Subdivision) and #8 (Summit Ridge Subdivision) were brought on line as a result of those two subdivisions.

Well #9 was on Town-owned property and subsequently developed.

Well #10 was brought on due to development activity (Sterling Glen Subdivision).

Well #11 is located on South Main Street. It is located on Town-owned property and was put into service to fulfill the requirements of MDE to satisfy the water allocation of existing approved developments.

<b>Well Number</b>	<b>MDE Approved Allocations based on Yearly Average</b>	<b>Current Demand</b>	
Wells 1-4	255,000 gpd		
Well 5	43,000 gpd		
Well 6	149,000 gpd		
Well 7	99,000 gpd		
Well 8	150,000 gpd		
Well 9	79,000 gpd		
Well 10	77,000 gpd		
Well 11	75,000 gpd		
<b>Total Gallons Per Day Allocation</b>	<b>927,000 gpd</b>		<b>704,000 gpd</b>

The Maryland Department of the Environment has allocated and permitted the Town for a total of 927,000 gallons per day to be extracted from all eleven wells currently on line. The Town has three (3) water storage tanks (i.e. water towers). The most recent third water storage tank is capable of holding 1,000,000 gallons of water in reserve.

## WATER SUPPLY LIMITATIONS

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The Town of Mount Airy has historically utilized groundwater wells for its water supply. The emphasis on groundwater supply has served the Town well over the last forty years and the Town has been fortunate to find, purchase and drill several large production wells, the majority within our municipal boundaries.

The Town would like to continue this trend of reliance on groundwater resources within the municipal boundaries. The Town also understands that a long-term water solution may not be limited to groundwater. Most importantly, the aggregate of all water supply sources must not exceed the design capacity of our Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP), which is currently permitted at a processing capacity of 1.2 million gallons per day (mgd).

## WASTE WATER

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The Town of Mount Airy currently has 11 waste water pump stations that move waste water over the various ridges throughout the Town which all feed into a single waste water treatment plant. The plant treats the waste water and discharges the flow into the South Branch of the Patapsco River.

Sewer system camera inspections in 2007 identified three major infiltration leaks which were immediately corrected. This effort was followed by 4,000 linear feet of fold and form repairs in 2010. Manhole inspections and repairs then occurred over the next several years. In the last five years, nighttime inspections identified an additional six miles of infiltrating pipes which were repaired with cured-in-place pipe linings (CIPP) utilizing American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding. The average flow into the WWTP has steadily increased through the years from an average of 515,000 gpd in 1998 to 737,000 gpd in 2013. The net difference between waste water flow and supply water flow became extreme and suggested that a growing source of rainwater was inflowing and/or infiltrating (I&I) the collection system. The Town therefore ramped-up its I&I reduction program.

The waste water treatment process consists of the following: a bar screen, grit removal, Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) aeration, clarification, Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) filtration, ultraviolet light and post aeration, solids removal processing, sludge holding, and a belt filter press with lime stabilization.

This plant was built with the original sewer system in 1972 and has undergone 3 major upgrades. The first upgrade was around 1989 and expanded the plant to meet the capacity of numerous developments occurring in the Town.

In 1999, the plant was expanded again to its current design capacity, but also improved with Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) technology which includes the installation of aerobic and anoxic zones. The biological processes involve the use of micro-organisms and oxidation to reduce both total nitrogen (TN) and total phosphorous (TP) from the water. During nitrification the

ammonia is oxidized to nitrite and then to nitrate in the presence of oxygen under aerobic conditions. This is followed by the denitrification of nitrates which biologically reduces to nitric oxide, nitrous oxide and nitrogen gas in the absence of oxygen under anoxic conditions. Total phosphorous in waste water is a combination of soluble and particulate phosphate. The solids, or particulates, are easily removed through the solids removal process. During aerobic conditions the soluble phosphorus is solidified by aerobic heterotrophs and then broken down under anaerobic conditions to the release of phosphorus. This process is repeated with the return sludge system.

In 2010, the wastewater plant was upgraded again to Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) technology. The TETRA Denite system combines the denitrifications and filtration process to further reduce TN and TP below the stringent 3mg/liter and 0.3mg/liter discharge limitations, respectively. This effective removal process is undertaken by introducing methanol as a carbon source. It has proven to be very effective in meeting the State's requirements.

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### WASTE WATER LIMITATIONS

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The Town needs to keep our long-term wastewater treatment options open, but with serious consideration of what the long-term financial limitations are for a smaller municipality. Because of these potential financial limitations, the Town may not be able to seriously consider all possible options. It is the Town's intention to only pursue long-term planning, development and a rate of growth that is responsive to and in balance with both the (known or demonstrated) capacity of the Town's water resources and the future growth preferences of the Town's residents.

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### NATURAL RESOURCES POLICY SUMMARY

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Increased awareness of the effects of development on the environment has led to additional environmental legislation at the State and local levels. The *1992 Maryland Economic Growth Resource Protection and Planning Act*, the *1991 Forest Conservation Act* and the *1997 Smart Growth Legislation* will significantly affect the planning policies of the Town. Mount Airy's reliance on groundwater for the Town's water system will require comprehensive groundwater management as the Town grows.

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## NATURAL RESOURCES OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

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**STRATEGIC GOAL A - Adequate Public and Community Facilities:** Improve the capacity and quality of all areas of our Public and Community Facilities so that we provide, at the minimum, an adequate Quality of Life for all residents.

**Objective A.3.1:** Increase the Town's well water reserve.

**Objective Leader:** Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Search for additional drinking water sources via well drilling or Brinkley Bill application of existing wells where source capacity already exists.
- Require large developments to provide ample water capacity with their development to support the Town's calculation of proposed demand and drought reserve (Category 11).

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**STRATEGIC GOAL B - Responsible Growth:** Pursue growth through infill development, redevelopment and annexations while eliminating our Open Space deficit, protecting our environment, safety and health, and preserving our cultural/historical resources and community identity.

**Objective B.3.1:** As technology becomes available, continuously improve water testing technology.

**Objective Leader:** Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Implement the installation of better PFAS monitoring technology, as it becomes available, at all of the Town's Water Treatment Plants.
- Replace existing equipment with newer monitoring technology for all known contaminants.

**Objective B.3.2:** Document and enforce stormwater runoff within the Town.

**Objective Leader:** Town Engineer, in coordination with the Public Works Director

**Implementation:**

- Continue to work with Carroll County to meet the State mandated NPDES and stormwater management improvements and mapping on existing land development.

- Ensure all new development is thoroughly reviewed by Carroll County’s stormwater management office to meet the requirements of the State and Town code.
- Establish new metrics to measure and monitor the impact of climate change on the current stormwater infrastructure. Apply those results towards increased funding of more robust and/or improved stormwater management infrastructure.

**Objective B.3.3:** Increase forested land within and adjacent to the Town.

**Objective Leader:** Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Ensure all new development is thoroughly reviewed to determine compliance with the 20% forested (residential) and 15% forested (industrial) requirements for the minimum amount of forested land in those districts.
- In cooperation with both Counties, review the current Forestation Banks Program with the objective to encourage any developer who cannot meet the above requirements to:
  - provide forestation plantings on equal acreage on in-Town parcels; or
  - require any outside-Town Forestation Bank purchase by a developer to be provided on available land adjacent to the Town’s boundaries.
- In cooperation with the appropriate Town Commission and /or Board, assess those Town-owned areas where additional forestation or shrubbery can benefit residents. Then, use that list:
  - in the implementation efforts above, and
  - in cooperation with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Frederick County and /or Carroll County, seek a cooperative agreement on a reforestation project to fulfill those prioritized Town forestation/shrubbery needs. If necessary, use the 2008 effort in Watkins Park as a model and precedence case.

## CHAPTER FOUR: LAND USE, HOUSING AND ZONING

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Land use planning constitutes the “fabric” that makes a Town viable and unique. Development patterns established early-on in a Town can be a strong determination of future growth patterns. Land use during the previous Master Plan (2013-2023) can be generally characterized as slow-growth in the Residential, Commercial and Industrial districts, while also moving through the application process for two significant new developments in the newly created Mixed-Use districts. Today, the Town must continue to assess any growth against the limited water supply and our near-capacity waste water treatment facility. Because of this reality, this 2023 Town Master Plan will promote a conservative land use and development pace while advocating for capacity increases in those two critical Public Facilities. This chapter considers the results of the 2020 Town Survey, public comments expressed during 2022-2023 public hearings held on two mixed-use developments, public comments offered on a recent residential-to-commercial rezoning application, and the generally positive public sentiment towards Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) as an option to create additional housing for both our senior and dependent residents. In summary, this Chapter aims to guide Land Use for the next 10 years while continuing to protect and improve the area’s natural resources and quality of life for the Town’s residents.

*According to the U.S. Census Bureau, The Town of Mount Airy experienced a population increase of 44% between 2010 and 2020.*

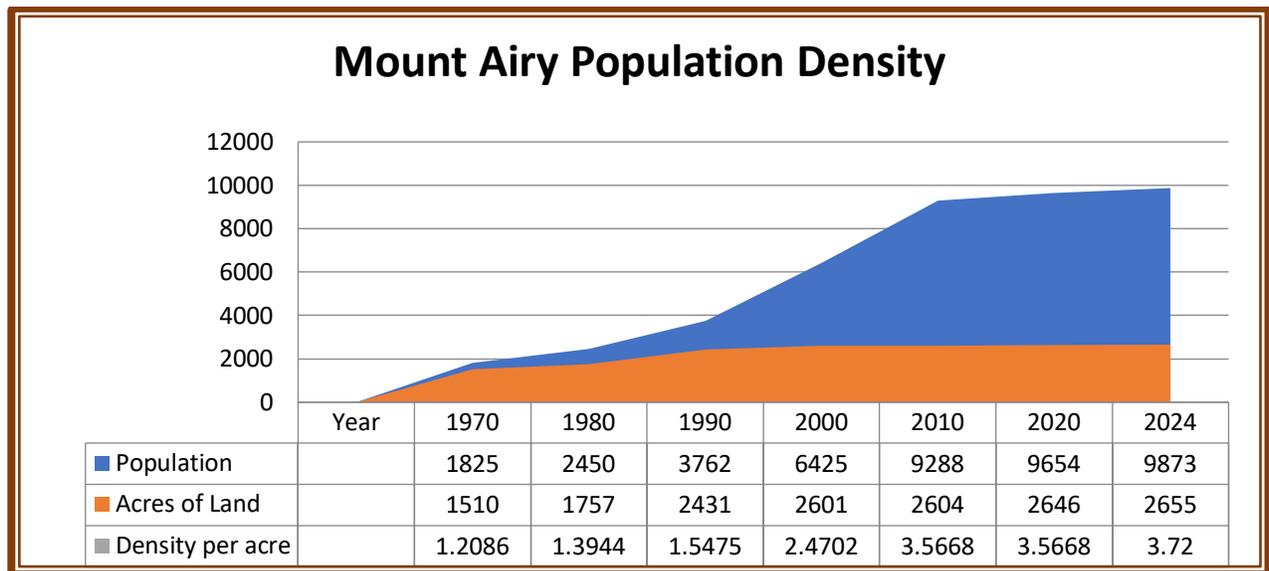
In the Housing Element section, the Town affirms its state-required commitment towards furthering fair housing by assessing housing development trends, assessing urban development, advocating urban renewal towards candidate redevelopment properties (Chapter 5) and by addressing potential housing code amendments which may result from new or pending state legislation. It will then proceed to recommend specific property rezoning.

Zoning ordinances and codes are essential in guiding future development and growth by regulating land use and shaping the appearance and functionality of new developments. They set standards for site design and manage the interaction between new and existing developments. Existing zoning ordinances, particularly those affecting commercial and industrial development, significantly impact the Town’s economic base. Similarly, residential zoning, including mixed-use, influences the overall character and community cohesion; affecting factors like density, housing affordability, diversity of dwelling types, and impacts on public facilities.

REVIEW OF 2003-2023 LAND USE AND ZONING

The Town of Mount Airy has experienced a significant amount of residential land development in the past two decades. During these twenty years, the majority of the development activity occurred within the Carroll County portion of the Town. Between 2013 to 2023, there were two annexations which occurred in 2016 -- the Full Property (8.336 acres) and 4010 Twin Arch Road (0.4677 acres). The increase of residential land inventory and subsequent development contributed to substantial population growth in the past 10 years. According to the 2020 Census data, the Town’s population grew by 366 citizens during 2010-2020.

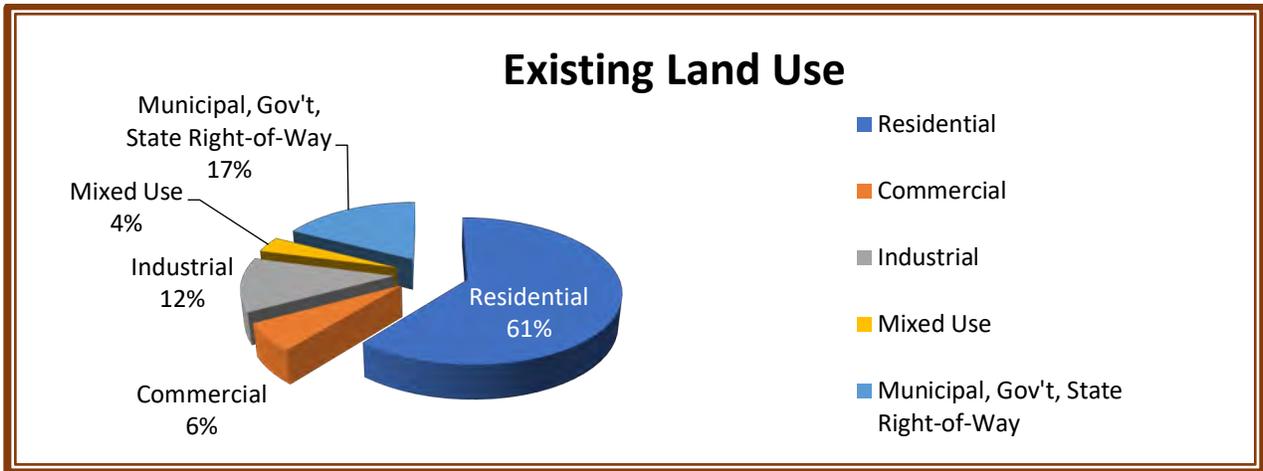
As the tables below will show, the Town’s population density has risen steadily over the period 1990-2010. The growth rate plateaued from 2010 to 2023 with only an increase of 77 new dwelling units between 2020 and 2024 -- with comparatively low increases in land inventory.



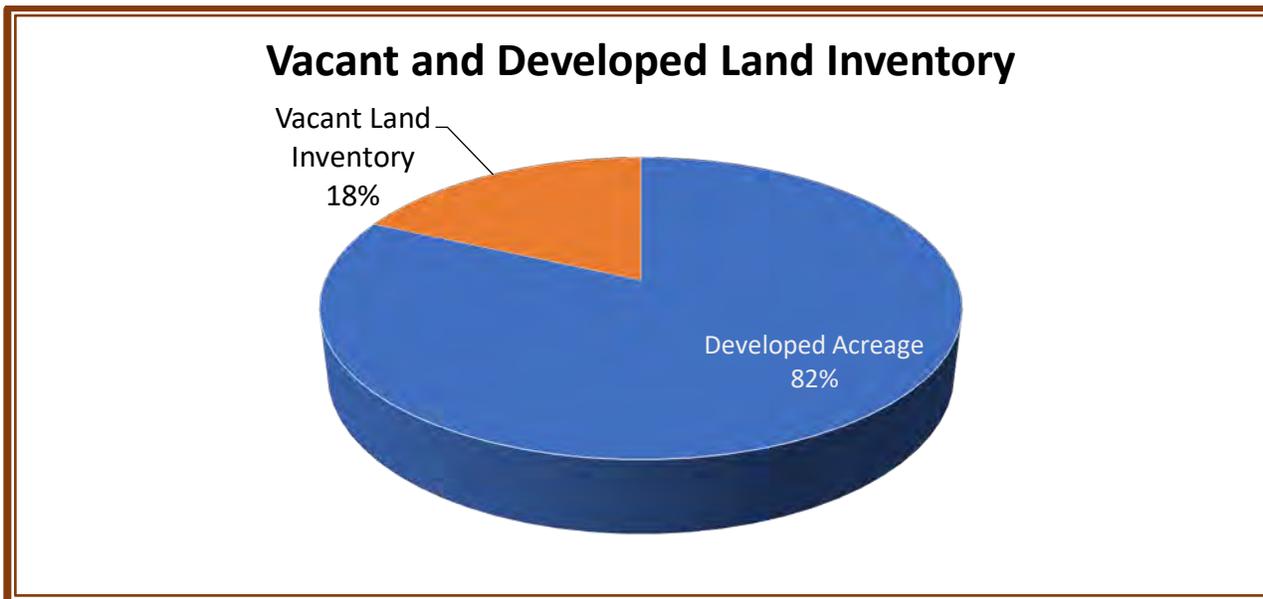
During 2000-2020, the Town developed more than half of the vacant land inventory that was present in 1994 (i.e. infill development).

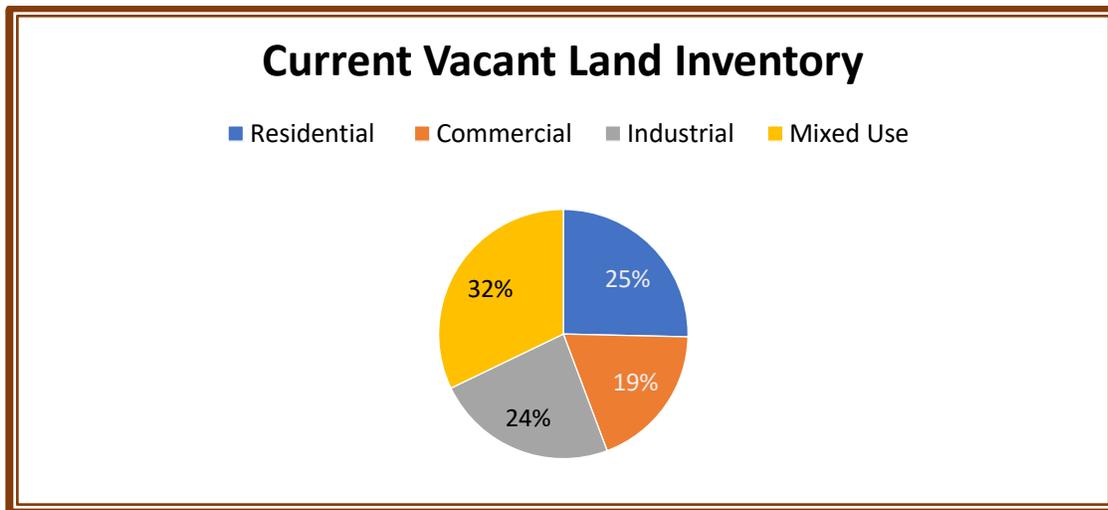
As depicted in the following chart, Residential is our largest land use category with 61% of the total 2,651 acres within the Town’s current boundary.

- Municipal, government and road rights-of-way represent about 17%.
- Industrial land use totals about 12%.
- Commercial use totals approximately 6%.
- Mixed-use is approximately 4%.
- Public uses (e.g. the library, community center, post office, etc.) constitute less than 1% of the Town’s total land uses.



Currently, only 18% of the zoned land inside the Town boundary is undeveloped. Of this inventory (as depicted in the chart on the next page), 24% is located within industrial zoning, 25% is in residential zoning, 32% is mixed-use, and 19% is in commercial zoning. Taken as a whole, only a small percentage of the Town’s vacant land has an approved development plan, and 90% of all land use, including residential, mirrors the zoning category and comprehensive plan designation presented on the Mount Airy Existing Land Use Map. The large percentage of land use devoted to residential development is not unusual in a “bedroom community” such as Mount Airy, where a significant number of the local residents continue to commute to work locations outside of the Town.





For the past ten years, the majority of the Town’s commercial activity and larger retail establishments have been located near the interchange of I-70 and Maryland Route 27 (MD 27), and then extend north along MD 27 on predominantly the east side (e.g. Twin Arch Shopping Center) of that busy corridor. However, during this period there has also been some commercial development along Main Street (e.g. Liquidity Aleworks, Cle Doree Bakery Shop, and Concetta’s Bistro) and Center Street (e.g. LabCorp and Glamour Overhead Doors). Most of these new downtown commercial startups have consisted of redevelopment of long-vacant buildings or available floorspace within existing commercial buildings. The Town’s “flex space” use inventory has expanded in the industrially-zoned districts throughout the Town’s borders. While the supply of large parcels of commercially-zoned land is currently limited to a portion of our two large mixed-use districts (created during the previous Master Plan period), opportunities for commercial growth as infill development and redevelopment projects do still exist. Modification of existing classifications and the rezoning of property serve as possible tools to maximize the potential of existing vacant land inventory. Among our redevelopment tools, the Town Council’s new authority for urban renewal may be a viable tool to increase our commercial opportunities.

Other examples of redevelopment tools:

- The Town created new Mixed-Use districts for two large parcels; thereby increasing the potential inventory of commercial property to develop for the Town’s economic health. These two parcels now extend the commercial land opportunities to the north end of Main Street and to both sides of MD 27 near Watkins Park and the Twin Arch Shopping Center.
- During the previous Master Plan, one large residential property along the MD 27 corridor was rezoned to commercial.

- During the previous Master Plan, a residential property on the east side of MD 27 was rezoned to Neighborhood Professional (NP) and an optician business will soon reside there.

The 2023 Town of Mount Airy Comprehensive Master Plan will focus on the continued redevelopment of existing commercial areas, the possible commercial development within two mixed-use districts, and the continued development of infill areas.

#### PAST RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITY

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Since 2000, seven major residential subdivisions have been constructed, resulting in a large number of residential construction permits during 2000-2003. Six of the subdivisions; Summit Ridge, Fields of Nottingham, Woodlands of Nottingham, Sterling Glen, Twin Arch Crossing, and Brittany Manor are single-family or multi-family developments. One subdivision, Wildwood Park, is strictly senior (age-restricted) housing. The last major subdivision plan approved by the Town was Brittany Manor (2019-2022).

#### PROPOSED RESIDENTIAL ACTIVITY

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Mount Airy’s Municipal Growth Element (MGE) identifies land areas available for future residential development within the existing Town boundaries. These properties listed below have the potential to provide 73 additional dwelling units (DUs) to the Town’s residential inventory based on their current zoning. As of the Fall of 2023, only one residential parcel (i.e. Dennis Subdivision with 5 DUs) has received approval and one mixed-use (MXU-CC) parcel (e.g. Greentree Village with 60 DUs) has proceeded to concept plan / pattern book review. The projected yield of 65 new dwelling units from these two developments is reflected in the currently approved pipeline development.

Subdivision Name	Total Proposed Residential Lots	Total Number of Residential Permits Issued as of Nov 2024	Remaining permits to be issued
<b>Dennis Subdivision</b> (Residential)	5	0	5
<b>Greentree Subdivision</b> (Mixed Use – MXU-CC)	60	0	60
<b>Full Property, Buffalo Rd. Subdivision</b> (Residential)	8	0	8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>73</b>

## HOUSING

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### AFFIRMATIVELY FURTHERING FAIR HOUSING

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As of January 1, 2023, HB 90 (2021) requires all housing elements for municipalities and non-charter counties to “affirmatively further fair housing.”

HB 90 defines affirmatively furthering fair housing as, “taking meaningful actions...” to:

- Overcome patterns of segregation;
- Foster inclusive communities free from barriers that restrict access to housing and opportunity based on protected characteristics;
- Address significant disparities in housing needs and access to opportunity;
- Replace segregated living patterns with truly integrated and balanced living patterns; and
- Foster and maintain compliance with civil rights and fair housing laws.

The bill intentionally refrains from specifying the actions which jurisdictions must implement. Rather, the Town can develop our own approach for furthering fair housing, given that our chosen approach includes meaningful actions to address the issues listed above.

Specifically, HB 90 added the following text to §3-114 of the Land Use Article:

- (1) Local jurisdictions have a duty to affirmatively further fair housing through their housing and urban development programs.
- (2) The housing element of a comprehensive plan that is enacted or amended on or after January 1, 2023, shall include an assessment of fair housing to ensure that the local jurisdiction is affirmatively furthering fair housing.
- (3) On request of a local jurisdiction, the Maryland Department of Planning, in consultation with the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, shall provide technical assistance for the purpose of developing the housing element of a comprehensive plan.

Additionally, HB 1045 was passed by the Maryland General Assembly during the 2019 legislative session. It also required a master plan housing element to address low-income and workforce housing, and to assess various housing needs in the area.

Accordingly, this Master Plan affirmatively furthers fair housing and provides the following required assessments.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> As of January 1, 2023, HB 90 (2021) requires all housing elements for municipalities and non-charter counties to “affirmatively further fair housing.” This adds to the requirements to plan for affordable housing that HB 1045 (2019) initiated in June 2020.

## FAIR HOUSING ASSESSMENT & ANALYSIS -- HOUSING HURDLES

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The Town of Mount Airy is a little different from other municipalities. The town's corporate limits are divided into two counties in Maryland (Carroll and Fredrick Counties). Moreover, the zip code for Mount Airy includes portions of four different counties (Carroll, Fredrick, Howard, and Montgomery Counties). On top of that, we are divided by two different Area Median Incomes (AMIs) within Maryland:

- 2024 AMI-Carroll (Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD) and
- 2024 AMI-Fredrick (Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MF HUD Metro).

The Maryland Department of Planning dashboard<sup>8</sup> indicates the area for 2024 AMI-Carroll (Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD) has a Housing Income level related to HB 1045, ranging from \$73,320 to \$146,640, with an average of \$122,200.

The Maryland Department of Planning dashboard indicates the area for 2024 AMI-Fredrick (Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MF HUD Metro) has a Housing Income level related to HB 1045, ranging from \$92,820 to \$185,640, with an average area median income of \$154,700.

If you take the AMI from both areas, 2024 AMI-Carroll (Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD) with an average of \$122,200 and 2024 AMI-Fredrick (Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA-MF HUD Metro) with an average of \$154,700. The average from the two areas will yield an overall average of the two separate AMIs of \$138,450. Therefore, in order to limit any resident's monthly housing costs (i.e. rental, or mortgage plus home insurance and taxes) to no more than 30% of this average AMI<sup>9</sup>, the upper limit (30%) would be \$3,461.25.

The Town has a mix of large, medium, and small single-family homes; large, medium, and small attached duplexes; and cluster townhomes throughout the town. We have a very small number of apartments and condo-type housing structures.

The Maryland Department of Planning dashboard indicates that the town has 90.2% owner-occupied housing. The 2023 Census update to the 2020 Census reveals that Mount Airy has approximately 3,249 households. The Town of Mount Airy is a bedroom community near Washington DC, Baltimore City, and Frederick City. The median value of owner-occupied housing units, according to the 2023 Census update, is \$459,500.

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<sup>8</sup> This dashboard is located at: <https://planning.maryland.gov/Pages/OurWork/housing-element-mg/housing-planning.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> The Maryland Department of Planning uses the "less than 30% of household income" as their metric to determine what is affordable housing.

## FAIR HOUSING ANALYSIS -- HOUSING BENEFITS

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The Town of Mount Airy has a small-town charm, even with a population of nearly 10,000. The community benefits from high-quality school facilities in both Frederick County and Carroll County. Most people who live here make more than 60% AMI.<sup>10</sup> There are residential projects in the town under current (2024) review that will offer a mixed type of housing units, ranging from larger single-family homes and villa single-family homes to clustered townhomes. There will also be a non-residential part of one subdivision project that might provide an area for public or private services for the community.

The town benefits from higher wages earned, higher property values, and lower crime. But there is a limited affordable housing inventory.

The town collects income tax from those who reside within the town and property taxes from those who own real property. This revenue pays for such public services as the Police Department, Town administrative services, public works, water/sewer services, trash and recycling services.

Mount Airy has grown at a slow but steady pace over the last 10 or so years, with roughly 24 new homes per year. The Town code currently restricts any single development project to 24 building permits within a 12-month period. That being said, the Town Council can adjust that restriction if it finds that all seven critical facilities (i.e. the APFO) are, and will remain, adequate.

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<sup>10</sup> The “60% of AMI” metric comes from the Maryland Department of Planning definition for “low income” workers. As background, HB 1045 (2019) requires that housing elements within Master Plans use the U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development’s (HUD) Area Median Income (AMI) calculations when planning for workforce and low-income housing. AMI is the commonly used housing industry term reflecting annual calculations of Median Family Income (MFI) for each metropolitan area and non-metropolitan county, called Income Limit Areas. Simply stated, approximately 50% of families have an annual income above the AMI/MFI level, and 50% below. HUD bases its annual calculations for MFI on the “American Community Survey (ACS) table B19113 - Median Family Income in the Past 12 Months”. Because AMI is calculated at the metropolitan area level, many Maryland communities share an AMI with their neighbors. For example, municipalities in Carroll County share an AMI with Anne Arundel County, and both are included in the larger Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD Income Limit Area. Non-metropolitan counties, such as Caroline, have their own Income Limit Area and, therefore, their own AMI. The AMIs for Maryland’s communities vary significantly, but by using AMI as a measure for planning affordable housing, a community with an AMI of \$120,000 must plan for affordability, as does a community with an AMI of \$75,000. While the strategies between the two will likely differ, they both still have housing needs at the 60% AMI (low-income) and 60-120% (workforce) levels. To learn more about the Maryland Department of Housing Community Development’s Income Limits, visit the department’s research page at: <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Pages/Research.aspx>

## FAIR HOUSING ANALYSIS -- HOUSING TOOLS

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The Town may implement tools to provide affordable housing relief while not undermining Mount Airy residents' desire to limit growth. Zoning and development incentives may create more affordable housing opportunities in several ways. The town's ability to develop is most directly impacted by the availability of water resources to support proposed development projects. This does not allow the Town to incentivize more affordable housing effectively using higher density zoning. On a small scale, the town could achieve some success through accessory dwelling units (ADUs). ADUs allow a property owner to construct an independent accessory structure on their property for use as a rental unit or a dwelling unit for a family member who would not be able to afford housing in the rental market. This could afford property owners the opportunity to earn additional rental income while providing a more affordable housing option for others. This is possible without a large-scale impact on the available water resources of the Town. These units are typically smaller in scale and could be limited by the Town to a specific size.

The Town of Mount Airy has a process within the Town code to allow ADU-type units through a special exception family apartment<sup>11</sup> or an accessory apartment.<sup>12</sup> The town may also implement development agreements or incentives to ensure that new developments include more affordable options or styles typically not found in newer single-family detached residential subdivision projects. The Town may also use annexation agreements to require developers to build a specific number of different types of housing units, such as townhouses, duplex units, or multifamily dwelling units. For instance, the Greentree subdivision will provide a mix of three different style homes as part of that plan. One option is to discuss with the developer such lower-pricing options as offering a lower (less costly) interior finish for a small percentage of all the Townhouse to allow for an entry-level starter home for some homebuyers.

Using these tools, the Town can provide opportunities for more affordable housing options and encourage more diverse communities that may otherwise be segregated along socioeconomic boundaries. The Town will continue to work with Federal, State, and County agencies to improve opportunities for more affordable housing within the Town of Mount Airy while maintaining the strong housing market that currently exists.

## FAIR HOUSING ANALYSIS -- MISSING MIDDLE HOUSING

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Future residential site plans and redevelopment may provide more Middle Housing. Per the Maryland Department of Planning (<https://planning.maryland.gov/Pages/OurWork/housing->

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<sup>11</sup> Town Code §112-62.F.17.

<sup>12</sup> Town Code §112-62.F.22.

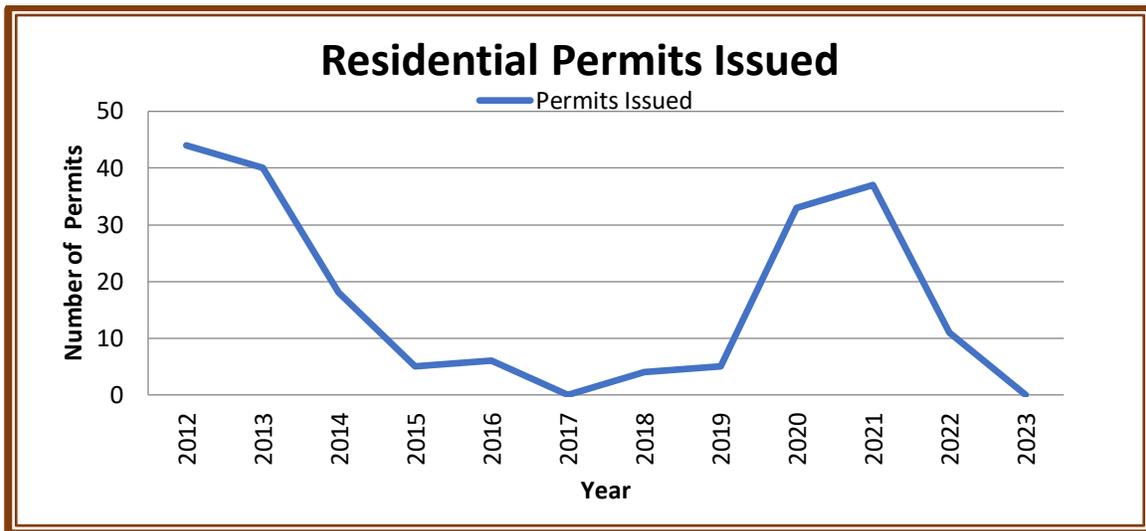
element-mg/common-practices.aspx ), “Missing middle housing” is a newly coined term referring to multi-family dwelling units within a structure, generally between two to four, that fit into the form and context of an established single-family neighborhood. The idea is that this type of housing can benefit populations such as singles, couples, and the elderly.

## RESIDENTIAL PERMIT ACTIVITY

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In the late 1980’s, in order to control the amount of new housing construction in any one calendar year, Mount Airy passed an ordinance limiting each development to 40 residential permits per year. This worked well in allowing adequate facilities to keep pace with development ... until the late 1990’s. It was at that time that three to five residential subdivisions were being built simultaneously; causing a sharp increase in the issued permits for new residential construction. Consequently, in 2006, the Town passed a subsequent ordinance and the annual limit on issued residential permits was further reduced from 40 down to 24 permits per project per year.

As illustrated below, this control measure was necessary during the significant residential growth in the earliest part of the decade. The steady and strong continued residential growth that the Town experienced during the late 1990’s motivated the reduction in annual allowed permits per project.



## ZONING

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### REVIEW OF EXISTING ZONING CATEGORIES

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Residential zoning classifications have been established for Mount Airy with the intent of controlling dwelling density, traffic congestion, ensuring public safety, promoting health and general welfare, providing adequate light and air, promoting the conservation of our natural

resources, preventing environmental pollution, conserving historic buildings that continue to bring (or have the potential to provide) great value, encouraging the orderly development and the most appropriate use of land throughout the town, promote compatibility of site configuration and design with surrounding areas and to promote protection of the architectural character of neighborhoods and business districts within the community. The continued updating of zoning classifications is necessary to meet all the intent stated above.

As of 2023, the Town's current zoning districts are:

*RE-Residential Existing*: This zone provides a minimum lot size of 14,000 square feet, with an average of 18,000 square feet. The zone is designated in the core areas of Town along Main Street, North Main Street, Park Ave and Ridge Ave. It also includes the western portion of Mount Airy including Twin Ridge, Village Gate, Mount Airy Village East/West, and the Westridge Subdivision.

*R1-Low Density Residential*: This zone provides a minimum area of 18,000 square feet with an average of 24,000 square feet. It allows for low-density development with concentration on good land management and harmony with the physical environment. This classification has not yet been assigned to any land areas within the municipal limits, but may be used alone or in conjunction with other residential densities on larger tracts of land. It may also be assigned to newly annexed land where new residential use is to be located.

*R2-Low Density Residential*: This zone provides for a minimum lot size of 11,000 square feet, with an average of 14,000 square feet. The East Ridgeville Boulevard area, Summit Ridge, Twin Ridge III and the residential zoning along the eastern portion of Watersville Road all fall within this zoning designation. The majority of new low-density residential development is assigned an R-2 classification.

*R3-Medium Density Residential*: This zoning designation represents smaller single-family lot sizes of 6,000 - 10,000 square feet and is centered in a rather limited area. The primary area of R-3 residential zoning is located between Park Avenue and Ridge Avenue before entering the downtown area. The designation is also currently being used for the senior housing community (Wildwood) and the residential areas north of Park Avenue.

*R5-Medium Density Residential*: This zone provides for a minimum lot size of 6,000 square feet, with an average of 6,000 to 8,000 square feet. The zone was created in the 1998 Master Plan update in an effort to create "Neighborhood Centers" and it targets specific areas of Town. The zone allows for medium density detached and attached housing units, encouraging flexibility of design to engender a variety of uses. The zone was intended to accommodate "community-based uses" compatible with residential development, such as daycare centers, recreational centers, and non-profit organizational centers or churches. One such neighborhood center houses a nursing

home/assisted living facility, while the other is dedicated to a recreational use; such as a community pool nestled among single-family homes.

*R7-High Density Residential:* This zone provides maximum flexibility to design high-density residential neighborhoods in a safe, attractive and environmentally responsible manner. There are five areas of existing high-density housing located in the Town. Three of these areas reflect existing townhouse developments and the other two are vacant and undeveloped parcels. Otherwise, there is an intermingling of townhouses in small amounts in other scattered areas around the Town.

*CD-Conservation Zone:* This zoning designation provides a minimum lot size of 24,000 square feet with an average of 40,000 square feet. It was adopted to allow for a very low-density district (minimum of 3 acres per home site overall) and strictly limited in use to certain environmentally sensitive areas. This zone is meant to provide maximum protection to the outlying residential areas surrounding the Town. It will not be used as a “stand alone” zone except where recommended to address specific environmental concerns.

*LC -Limited Commercial District:* This zone is intended to provide areas for a limited number of retail and service establishments in close proximity to the residential areas around them. This district is also intended to be a transitional zone while protecting less intensive residential areas and the lower-level neighborhood professional office areas.

*NP-Neighborhood Professional District:* The district encourages a transition in-between existing residences and more intensive commercial zoning. It allows the redevelopment of existing homes and structures for professional offices while protecting the lower intensity residential uses that adjoin the district. In the future, this zoning will likely be used in peripheral commercial areas around Town.

*CC-Community Commercial District:* This zone allows a wide variety of commercial uses, including shopping centers and special uses within the commercial zone such as gas stations, hospitals, institutions and nursing home facilities. This zone is concentrated along MD 27 and on Ridgeville Boulevard. There are several areas of commercial zoning which abut existing residential development and cause conflicts as well as basic compatibility problems. This zone does not prevent the construction of big box retail if they have adequate land area. However, retail and commercial uses over 65,000 square feet require special exception approval.

*I-Industrial:* The Town has one industrial classification that accommodates a wide variety of industrial uses. The main areas of industrial zoning are located in the five designated industrial parks located within the Town limits. Four of these parks are situated in the eastern portion of the Town in Carroll County and one is located in the Frederick County portion of Mount Airy. Commercial zoning is in short supply and some of the industrial parks have attracted commercial

retail business. There have been some professional offices and "flex-space" type of buildings established in these parks that are compatible with other allowable uses within the zone.

*DTZ – Downtown Zone:* Adopted in 2003, the Downtown Zone is intended to promote preservation and appreciation of the historic Town center, to strengthen the local economy and to enhance and preserve an atmosphere of small-town charm while combining business and residential uses. This zone encourages a pedestrian-oriented environment. Unlike other commercial zoning categories within the Town, this zone only permits uses that have been specifically enumerated.

*MXD - Mixed-Use District:* The purpose of the Mixed-Use District (MXD) is to facilitate the integrated and orderly development of residential uses and nonresidential uses where high-quality mixed-use developments can occur in harmony with surrounding land uses. Among the objectives of this zoning is to create a mixture of office, retail, cultural, art, recreational, and residential uses, along with restaurants, eateries and cafes, where all related structures, parking, and open spaces are designed to establish and maintain a cohesive community while protecting the character of surrounding neighborhoods and the overall natural environment.

*MXU-CC – Mixed-Use Development in Community Commercial (CC) District (special exception):* Like MXD, the purpose of the MXU-CC is to facilitate the integrated and orderly development of residential uses and nonresidential uses where high-quality mixed-use developments can occur in harmony with surrounding land uses. However, this district is a special exception because the MXU-CC district shall combine one or more of the uses listed in §112-39.1 of the Town Code.

*OPE – Office Park Employment District:* This zone provides for advanced employment opportunities related to professional business, education, health, and science-oriented applications, which may include associated light fabrication and assembly operations, in addition to professional or business offices. The combined opportunities shall be available within a planned employment center environment and generally arranged in a business park, office park, or campus-style setting.

## FUTURE ZONING CODES

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For the next ten years, the Town does not foresee any need to add new zoning districts.

However, during the 2023 session, the Maryland General Assembly passed legislation establishing the Accessory Dwelling Unit Policy Task Force with the purpose to study the placement of accessory dwelling units (ADUs) on land zoned for single-family residential use and to survey and document the variety of ordinances, laws, codes, and policies regarding accessory dwelling units at the state and local level. The goal of the group is to develop legislative, policy, and local code recommendations. As discussed earlier in this chapter, the Town of Mount Airy has a process

currently within our Town code to allow ADU-type units through a special exception family apartment<sup>13</sup> or an accessory apartment.<sup>14</sup> Therefore, depending upon what recommendations are legislated, the Town may have to consider residential zoning changes with regard to ADUs.

Similarly, the Maryland General Assembly passed the Housing Expansion and Affordability Act of 2024 (HB538). It will become effective Jan 1, 2025. This legislation will establish regulatory incentives to increase the affordable housing supply and address housing costs.

Specifically, the Housing Expansion and Affordability Act will:

- Create Regulatory Incentives and Density Bonuses - This first component of the Act targets the most suitable locations to increase housing density, where the state feels it won't change the character of the surrounding area. These density bonuses, which allow increased residential density beyond the current local code, are limited to specific locations:
  - within a three-quarter mile of a passenger rail station,<sup>15</sup> and
  - properties owned by a 501(c)(3) organization or formerly state-owned properties.<sup>16</sup>
- Modernize Code for Manufactured and Modular Homes - The second component of the Act focuses on construction costs. The state reasons that it can lower the cost-barriers by allowing cheaper pre-fabricated homes to be constructed in single-family zoned areas where traditional construction has been site-built (also known as "stick-built"). The state's rationale is that this will reduce costs, reduce the lengthy time frame of typical site-built construction, and open the pathway to homeownership for many Marylanders; especially for first-time homeowners who can't afford a down payment on a traditionally site-built home.

Regarding the Act's possible effect upon the Town's current residential zoning codes, the Town's Director of Planning and the Planning Commission will first look to what zoning amendments may occur within Carroll County and Frederick County. Those possible county-level amendments will guide any potential Town code amendments stemming from this Act.

## COMPREHENSIVE LAND USE PLAN

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These categories of comprehensive land use will remain the same in the continued effort to establish desirable land use activity. The classifications are as follows:

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<sup>13</sup> Town Code §112-62.F.17.

<sup>14</sup> Town Code §112-62.F.22.

<sup>15</sup> The state's focus on increased residential growth around existing transportation hubs, such as commuter rail stations, is often referred to as Transit Oriented Development, or TOD. And the state's determination of a reasonable distance for these residents to walk to such a transportation hub is three-quarters of a mile.

<sup>16</sup> An example of a "formerly state-owned property" is the old Springfield Hospital located in nearby Sykesville, MD.

Conservation: This category protects sensitive environmental areas and provides a possible limited low density residential area on our boundary where the maximum permitted density is one dwelling unit per 3 acres. For this master plan, Conservation has been proposed in future annexation areas (see Chapt 5). Some of these proposed areas don't strictly meet the intent of a Conservation designation with regard to its environmental features (e.g., wetlands). In these cases, these land areas are desired in order to retain the "rural feel" that the Town residents seek.

Open Space and Public Use: This category is applied to land currently used for open space and public use, but includes school grounds and Town parks. Where land is identified as Open Space or Public Use but not currently developed, the dedication can be achieved through application of the residential zones in place.

Low-Density Residential: This category corresponds to the RE-Residential Existing, R-1, or the R-2 zone. There are approximately 30 acres of this category.

Medium-Density Residential: This category corresponds to our R-3 and R-5 neighborhood zoning. However, only 1 parcel of approximately 5 acres of R-3 is currently available. It can yield approximately 25 homes if it received a special exception use for age-restricted housing.

High-Density Residential: This category corresponds to the existing R-7 zone. Only one site is vacant and has no current development plans. The remaining R-7 zoning classifications reflect existing developments or high-density subdivisions under development. The amount of R-7 zoning still represents a small amount of the total housing inventory in Town.

Community Commercial: This category corresponds to the existing Community Commercial Zone where more land intensive commercial operations are permitted. These existing areas exist along the corridor of Route 27 and intersecting collector roads such as Ridgeville Boulevard and Ridgeside Drive. General Commercial land use designations should be assigned to land areas that can appropriately minimize external effects or negative impact to adjoining land uses.

Transitional Commercial (LC and NP): This category corresponds to parcels of land that abut more intense land uses meeting the zoning requirements of both the Limited Commercial (LC) and Neighborhood Professional (NP) zoning categories. Transitional Commercial land uses are intended to provide a level of flexibility to those properties in close proximity to more intense land uses in such a manner not to disrupt surrounding residential areas.

Office Park/Employment: The Office Park/Employment (OPE) zoning is for comprehensively planned employment centers combining limited commercial uses, research and development, offices, and other uses governed by the zoning regulations. This designation intends to provide higher standards of development and a more flexible approach to design. Pedestrian compatibility and open space are highly desired. Areas with direct access to major corridors are preferred.

Light Industry/Research and Development: This category corresponds to the existing Industrial-zoned areas of the Town. The vast majority of the Industrial land uses in the Town operate as Industrial Parks with flex space opportunities for office, medical, skilled trade services, and other uses. Heavier commercial uses not appropriate for commercial corridors are also seen in the Town’s Industrial-zoned areas. Areas designated for Light Industry/Research and Development should be located away from residential land uses whenever possible. If this land use is adjacent to non-industrial areas, then abundant screening and/or raised border-berms should be required. The Twin Arch Business Park is an example of this land use category.

**BUILDABLE LAND AND POTENTIAL POPULATION INCREASE**

Category	Zoning	Approx Vacant Land (Acres)	Allowable Density	Density Yield (Allowable Density x 0.75 x acreage)	Potential Population Based on 2.75 Persons Per Household
Conservation	CD	88*	1 du/3 acres	0*	0
Low Density Residential	RE	0	1.75 du/acre	0	0
	R-1	0	1 du/acre	0	0
	R-2	83	2 du/acre	62	172
Med. Density Residential	R-3	5	3 du/acre	11	31
	R-5	0	5 du/acre	0	0
High Density Residential	R-7	0	7 du/acre	0	0
Mixed-use [Commercial + Residential]	MXD / MXU-CC	108	7 du/acre	567	1,559
<b>Totals:</b>		<b>284 acres</b>		<b>640 du’s</b>	<b>1,762 pers</b>

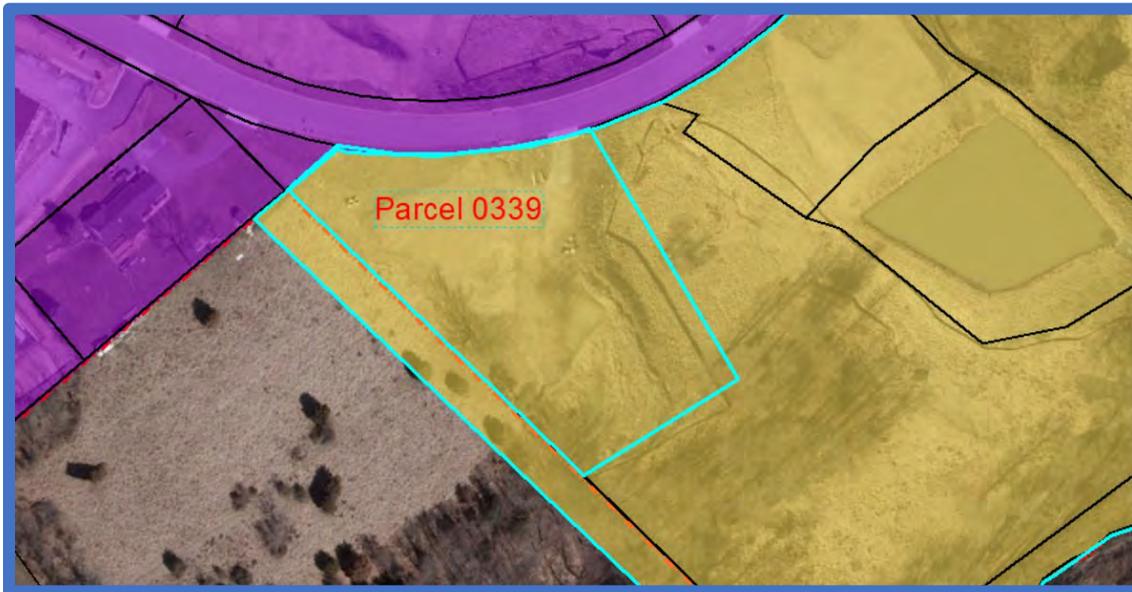
\* These 88 acres comprise Windy Ridge Park which is assumed to have no residential capacity.

**du** – Dwelling Unit

**REZONING RECCOMENDATIONS**

Growth patterns were evaluated by the Director of Planning, the current Planning Commission,

and earlier Planning Commissions. These 27 proposed rezonings are their result:



1. TWIN ARCH BUSINESS PARK

Description	Parcel	Address	Acreage	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning
Full Property	0339	Lot 73 Back Acre Circle	2.3865 ac.	R2 – Residential	I- Industrial



2. SOUTH MAIN STREET

Description	Parcel	Address	Acreage	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning
<b>1308 S. Main St. LLC Property (Veterinarian)</b>	1422	1308 S. Main Street	0.05 ac.	NP – Neighborhood Professional	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>Baker Property</b>	1423	1306 S. Main Street	0.71 ac.	NP – Neighborhood Professional	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>CAPTAY LLC Property</b>	1428	1304 S. Main Street	0.55 ac.	NP – Neighborhood Professional	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>Hatley Property</b>	1429	1302 S. Main Street	0.85 ac.	RE – Residential Existing	NP – Neighborhood Professional

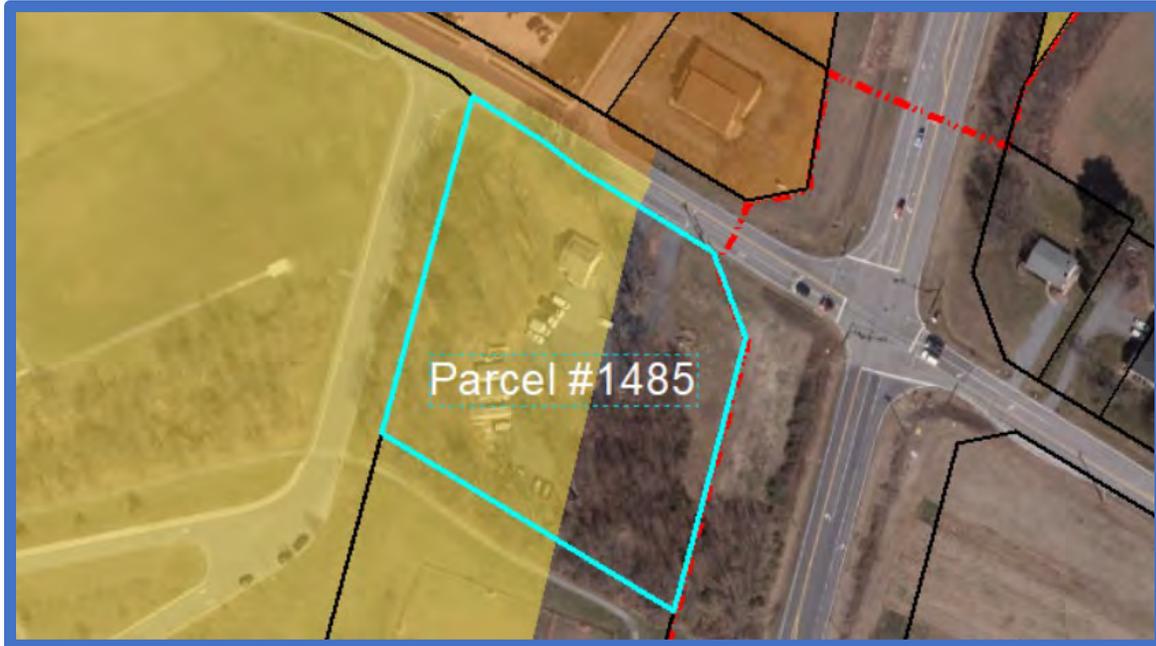


3. SOUTH MAIN STREET EXTENDED PROPERTIES

Description	Parcel	Address	Acreage	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning
<b>#1 Vosloh Property</b>	1116	1801 South Main Street	5.2796 ac.	RE – Residential Existing	CC – Community Commercial

<b>#2 Bartgis Property</b>	1121	1701 Street	South Main	1.22 ac.	RE – Residential Existing	CC - Community Commercial
<b>#3 Lessin Property</b>	1118-2	1703 Street	South Main	21780 sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	CC - Community Commercial
<b>#4 Brown Property</b>	1119	1705 Street	South Main	25927 sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	CC - Community Commercial
<b>#5 Illiano Property</b>	1118-1	1707 Street	South Main	21780 sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	CC - Community Commercial
<b>#6 Capital Partners Property</b>	1117	1709 Street	South Main	35372 sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	CC - Community Commercial
<b>#7 Town Property</b>	0301	1709 Street	South Main	35372 sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	CC - Community Commercial
<b>#8 Reed Property</b>	1395	1702 Street	South Main	39,204 sq. ft.	RE – Res Existing	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>#9 Lowman Property</b>	1393	1704 Street	South Main	29,713sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>#10 Morton Property</b>	1392	1706 Street	South Main	21,730 sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>#11 Konczal Property</b>	1391	1708 Street	South Main	21,730 sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>#12 Davis - Archer Property</b>	1390	1710 Street	South Main	22,500 sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>#13 Mohler - Sallale Property</b>	1389	1802 Street	South Main	22,500 sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	LC – Limited Commercial

<b>#14 Torres - Perez Property</b>	1388	1804 South Main Street	.59 ac.	RE – Residential Existing	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>#15 Lyddane Property</b>	1387	1806 South Main Street	59 ac.	RE – Residential Existing	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>#16 Haigwood Property</b>	1386	1808 South Main Street	59 ac.	RE – Residential Existing	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>#17 Haigwood Property</b>	1385	1902 South Main Street	59 ac.	RE – Residential Existing	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>#18 Benicase Property</b>	1384	1904 South Main Street	25,000 sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>#19 Keith Property</b>	1383	1906 South Main Street	12,500 sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	LC – Limited Commercial
<b>#20 SHA Property</b>	1381	Day Ave.	25,000 sq. ft.	RE – Residential Existing	LC – Limited Commercial



4. WATERSVILLE ROAD

Description	Parcel	Address	Acreage	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning
<b>HRL Enterprise</b>	1485	302 Watersville Rd.	2.43 ac.	R2 – Low Density Residential	NP – Neighborhood Professional



5. EAST RIDGEVILLE BLVD. (TWIN ARCH BUSINESS PARK)

Description	Parcel	Address	Acreage	Existing Zoning	Recommended Zoning
MCD Real Estate	1109	1011 East Ridgeville Blvd.	27,395 sq. ft.	R2 – Low Density Residential	NP Neighborhood Professional “Map Amendment”

## LAND USE, HOUSING AND ZONING OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

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**STRATEGIC GOAL A - Adequate Public and Community Facilities:** Improve the capacity and quality of all areas of our Public and Community Facilities so that we provide, at the minimum, an adequate Quality of Life for all residents.

**Objective A.4.1:** Reduce our Open Space deficit.

**Objective Lead:** Town Director of Planning and Zoning Administrator, in coordination with the Town Engineer.

**Implementation:**

- Update the amount of Open Space acreage needed to remove the Town's deficit.
- Work with appropriate Commissions to prioritize the list of Future Annexation properties which can reduce or remove the deficit.
- Assess how smaller types of open-space options could be encouraged within communities.
- Develop an outreach/communications strategy for Town engagements with the County and/or property owners; then gain Town Council and Mayoral approval and guidance for implementing those engagements.

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**STRATEGIC GOAL B - Responsible Growth:** Pursue growth through infill development, redevelopment and annexations while eliminating our Open Space deficit, protecting our environment, safety and health, and preserving our cultural/historical resources and community identity.

**Objective B.4.1:** Pursue recommended rezoning of selected Town properties.

**Objective Lead:** Town Director of Planning and Zoning Administrator

**Implementation:**

- Establish a priority of properties (listed in this chapter) to be rezoned with rationale.
- Develop an outreach/communications strategy for Town engagements with the County and/or property owners; then gain Town Council and Mayoral approval and guidance for implementing those engagements to pursue rezoning.

**Objective B.4.2:** Complete the rezoning deliberations and process of those recommended properties depicted within this Master Plan.

**Objective Lead:** Town Director of Planning and Zoning Administrator, in coordination with the Planning Commission, Town Council, and applicable property owners.

**Implementation:**

- Gain Town Council approval to proceed with recommended rezonings within this Master Plan.
- For approved rezonings, make any necessary Land Use changes and advise the applicable County of those new Land Use designations.
- In preparation for possible annexations, discuss with the applicable county the determination of an appropriate land use designation and zoning classification for those Conservation areas which may have very low-density clustered residential developments in order to retain the agricultural character of the Town’s physical boundary and the “rural feel” that the Town seeks.
- Proceed, per the code, to initiate the rezoning process of Council-approved properties.

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**STRATEGIC GOAL C - Residential Development and Housing Diversity:** Pursue a range of housing options that are responsive to the community’s needs.

**Objective C.4.1:** Fully understand the potential residential infill development in order to gauge the potential demands upon critical public facilities.

**Objective Lead:** Town Director of Planning and Zoning Administrator, in coordination with the Town Engineer.

**Implementation:**

- Update the Town’s potential capacity of vacant residential-zoned parcels (including MXD and DTZ).
- Using 2.75 persons-per-potential dwelling unit, maintain the calculations of future growth demands upon water, sewer, and police services.

## CHAPTER FIVE: MUNICIPAL GROWTH ELEMENT

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### INTRODUCTION

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Legislation passed in 2006 under HB 1141 requires that all municipal comprehensive plans include a Municipal Growth Element (MGE). This planning element requires an examination of past growth trends and patterns, a projection of future growth in population, the resulting land needs (based upon an analysis of the effects of growth on our infrastructure and our natural features -- both within and adjacent to the Town). This chapter also includes the proposed Future Annexation Areas along with the proposed land use designation for each of those parcels. The accompanying maps and charts provided in the MGE reflect the land use designations described in the previous chapter on Land Use and Zoning.

The Town's coordination with Carroll and Frederick Counties is also an important component in monitoring the growth and development directly outside our Town's boundaries. The review of adjacent land development proposals and adjoining County comprehensive plans is essential to the Town's ability to evaluate whether such changes will affect the Town's existing infrastructure such as roads, parks, emergency services and other public facilities. The Town will also continue to monitor any development in the two other nearby counties (i.e., Howard and Montgomery) to assess their potential impacts on Mount Airy.

This chapter analyzes land use and facilities' impacts that can be expected in the Town as a result of an increase in population growth over the next twenty years (2023 – 2043).

Lastly, this chapter also analyzes the existing zoning and current land-use patterns. These evaluations lead to proposed changes to allowable uses in existing zoning districts and the proposed rezoning of some current properties.

### MUNICIPAL GROWTH

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#### PAST GROWTH PATTERNS OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION

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The regional and town population growth during the last several decades has been significant. Mount Airy grew 44% each decade from 1940 to 1970. From 1970 to 1980, the growth rate increased 39%. From 1980 to 1990 the growth rate surpassed 50%. From 1990 to 2010, the growth rate was 149%. And, finally, from 2010 to 2020 the growth rate was 5.4%. According to the State of Maryland, Mount Airy was the fastest growing municipality in the State from 1990 to 1997. Mount Airy's location at a meeting point of the boundaries of four counties and its desirable commuting distance to the major employment centers of Baltimore and Wash DC set the stage for

tremendous growth from 1980 to 2000. That trend has slowed down significantly in the past 5 years due to a downturn in the economy (during the COVID and post-COVID periods), reduced inventories of diverse affordable housing, reduced groundwater supply, and a clear community desire to slow the pace of the Town’s growth (reference the Town’s 2020 Survey).

The Washington-Baltimore job market impacts suburban areas, including Mount Airy. The Town of Mount Airy is a desirable place to live. Many families relocate to Mount Airy seeking a high quality of life and a convenient commuting distance to the Washington-Baltimore region. Mount Airy, while providing respectable services and commercial enterprises for its residents, continues to function for the most part as a “bedroom community” with low, controlled growth for the foreseeable future.

#### THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT POLICY TO A VISION OF THE MUNICIPAL CORPORATION’S FUTURE CHARACTER.

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It is projected that the next decade’s (2023-2033) growth will concentrate on:

- Infill development within the Downtown Zone (focusing along Main and Center Streets);
- Infill development outside the Downtown Zone (including residential, mixed-use, commercial and industrial districts with undeveloped, vacant parcels); and
- redevelopment opportunities focused on stagnant and/or blighted properties.

All of the above growth will be tempered by the adequacy of public facilities, the economic climate for developers, and the continued active role of the residents and Town Leadership (e.g., Mayor, Council, Commissions and Boards) to ensure any growth does, in fact, enhance our quality of life.

The immediate future (2023-2028) is viewed as an opportunity for the Town to grow, but only if we carefully balance the increased demands that growth brings upon our already-stressed public facilities (particularly our Town’s water, sewer, schools and roads). It is unrealistic to presume that any of these specific public facilities will significantly expand in their capacity by the Town, County or State within this initial 5-year period. So, although some growth is welcomed, the risk is very real that too much growth will rapidly deteriorate our general quality of life.

In future submissions of residential development plans, the Town will focus upon open space and amenity design as much as our traditional review of the structures’ design and placement. Any open space amenities should have a development designed around it. Including well planned traffic safety and walkability in the beginning of planned developments will ensure future success for residents of the town.

The Town embraces its small-town character while providing excellent opportunities for small local businesses to flourish. To this end, the majority of the future commercial growth is slated to take place in the commercial-zoned corridors. The Town continues to encourage downtown infill

development and redevelopment, along with the redevelopment of existing commercial corridors.

**PROPERTIES AVAILABLE FOR INFILL DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE TOWN**

This is an inventory of current (2024) buildable lots where no development has ever occurred:

<b>AVAILABLE LAND FOR INFILL DEVELOPMENT (Note: 1)</b>					
<b>Property</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Current Zoning</b>	<b>Proposed Zoning</b>	<b>Dwelling Unit Yield</b>	<b>Proj Water Use gals/day (gpd)</b>
<b>Harrison-Leishear</b>	6.5	R-2	R-2	13	3,250
<b>Berman Property</b>	5.25	R-3	R-3	15	3,750
<b>Runkles Property</b>	14.9	R-2	R-2	29	7,250
<b>Yonetz</b>	2.2	R-2	R-2	3	750
<b>Yonetz</b>	1.0	R-2	R-2	2	500
<b>Yonetz</b>	9.7	R-2	R-2	18	4,500
<b>Rimbey</b>	2.5	R-2	R-2	4	1,000
<b>Rimbey</b>	7.3	R-2	R-2	13	3,250
<b>Royston</b>	5.0	R-2	R-2	10	2,500
<b>Royston</b>	0.7	R-2	R-2	1	250
<b>Kraft</b>	16.4	R-2	R-2	32	8,000
<b>Eaves</b>	0.08	R-2	R-2	1	250
<b>Wagner</b>	1.9	R-2	R-2	4	1,000
<b>Nell</b>	6.9	R-2	R-2	13	3,250
<b>Buffalo Rd.</b>	8.0	R-2	R-2	8	2,000
<b>MAVFC Fairgrounds</b>	36.7	R-2	CC	0	9,300
<b>Beck (Note 2)</b>	90.0	MXD	MXD	TBD	TBD
<b>Pank</b>	40.00	I	I	0	10,000
<b>Pank</b>	10.00	I	I	0	2,500

**Notes:** 1. Data source – Town of Mt. Airy Water & Sewer APFO Document, December, 2023.

2. "TBD" entered because development of MXD can be a "mix" of residential and commercial in 25/75 % mix.

## FURTHER INFORMATION ON SELECTED INFILL OPPORTUNITIES

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Harrison-Leishear: This is a 6.5-acre parcel already within the Town’s boundaries and is not to be confused with the much larger County-owned parcels also referred to as Harrison-Leishear. This relatively small parcel is located on the east side of MD 27 just north of Watersville Rd.

Berman Property (Wildwood Park Section VII): This 5.25-acre property is slated to be the last section of senior housing for the existing Wildwood Park Development. Zoning will remain as R-3 residential.

Mt. Airy Volunteer Fire Company (MAVFC) Fairgrounds: This 36.7-acre parcel is south of Twin Arch Rd. and east of MD 27. It is owned by the MAVFC and is zoned Community Commercial (CC). The parcel has a large building which serves the community as a reception/meeting hall, carnival grounds, community yard sales, fund-raising breakfasts and dinners, and as a general event venue. The parcel also has several baseball/softball diamonds which support many recreational teams.

Beck Property: This 90-acre property is owned by the Beck Family and is divided by MD 27 with almost equal acreage on the east and west sides of MD 27. The entire property was rezoned in 2021 to the new Mixed-Use District (MXD) zone within the Town of Mount Airy.

Pank Land LLC (2 parcels within the chart): Comprised of both a 40-acre parcel and a 10-acre parcel, they are located directly east of the MAVFC Fairgrounds. These two parcels are currently zoned Industrial (I).

**PROPOSED PROPERTIES FOR REDEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE TOWN**

The next chart represents an inventory of current (2024) properties that are in need of redevelopment. Such properties were developed at some past time, but are now in need of revitalization and redevelopment.

<b>PROPOSED PROPERTIES FOR REDEVELOPMENT</b>		
<b>Property</b>	<b>Acres or Sq-Ft</b>	<b>Current Zoning</b>
<b>Cold Storage</b> (Hill St. and Prospect Ave.)	6.8 ac	DTZ
<b>Railyard Property (Gallagher)</b> (N. Main St.)	2.13 ac	DTZ
<b>Railyard Property (Scranton)</b> (N. Main St.)	39,369 sq-ft	DTZ
<b>Brewery (Scranton)</b> (8 N. Main St.)	1.3 ac	DTZ
<b>Center Street Properties LLC</b> (102 Center St.) (aka "Shops of Yesteryear")	1.5896 ac	DTZ
<b>Southern States - 1</b> (101 Center St.)	34,650 sq-ft	CC
<b>Southern States - 2</b> (201 Center St.)	0.58 ac	CC
<b>Fleming Furniture</b> (103 E. Ridgeville Blvd.)	0.70 ac	CC
<b>Flat Iron Bldg.</b> (2 Park Ave.) [Town-Owned]	1,502 sq-ft	DTZ
<b>Municipal Parking Lot</b> [Town-Owned]	1.3 ac	DTZ

DTZ = Downtown Zone  
 CC = Community Commercial

**FURTHER INFORMATION ON POTENTIAL REDEVELOPMENT PROPERTIES**

**Cold Storage Property:** This property is currently zoned Downtown Zone (DTZ) and adjoins the Main Street downtown corridor to the west (Frederick County side). It is located at the corner of Hill St. and Prospect Ave. The old railroad right-of-way is also a part of this property and it is key to the Town’s completion of its overall rails-to-trails program. Mount Airy Cold Storage was a

refrigerated warehouse and distribution center along the old rail line through the Town. In 2007, the owners (MHW Group based in Owings Mills MD) closed the operation and began razing the building. Today, all that remains are a large concrete building foundation, a tall retaining wall (on the east side of the old foundation) and a large parking lot off Hill St. adjacent to the old foundation. Aside from removing the significant amount of old concrete foundation, another challenge in redeveloping this property is resolving the suspected toxic chemical residue from its years of operation. The Town and the landowner could apply for State financial assistance towards the assessment of the toxic residue through the Maryland Brownfield Redevelopment Assistance Program.

In late 2023, the owner and a developer applied for Town consideration of an age-restricted residential townhouse community. It was not approved.

Today, the property is possibly the Town's greatest challenge to redevelopment within the Downtown Zone. But it also represents the greatest opportunity for providing new business and/or residential growth into the Downtown Zone while also enabling the highly-desired completion of the Town's rails-to-trails project (i.e., Phase-2, West)

**Railyard-Gallager:** This parcel has a unique shape. The current property owner is proposing a multi-story building with retail space on the lower level and apartments on the upper two floors.

**Railyard - Scranton:** This parcel includes the Patapsco Bicycles shop and Blossom and Basket Florist. The property owner has presented a possible redevelopment of this parcel with two new three-story buildings with retail on the first floor and two floors of apartments above.

**Brewery - Scranton:** This parcel is the current location of Liquidity Aleworks, a new business in the old savings and loan bank building. This Bank building sat empty for over ten years before this brewing company came in and redeveloped this parcel into a cornerstone in the downtown area of Mount Airy.

The Property owner has a possible plan for continued redevelopment of this parcel, creating an additional structure that will have retail on the first floor and apartments on the upper two floors.

This possible building would be located toward Main Street. Still, it would have a plaza in front of the proposed building, creating an area that would allow for public use for the business and also showcase the town's caboose named Mackenzie from all directions traveling along Main Street.

**Center St. Properties (aka "Shops of Yesteryear"):** This is an existing building located at the northeast rear of the municipal parking lot. The parcel is flanked on three sides by town-maintained roads; Lookout Street to the east, Cross Street to the west, and Center Street to the north. The building did contain an Antique Mall business, but is now the home to a wrestling

group located in a portion of the building. The lower level is rented-out space for businesses within the Town for material storage.

The owner of the property has ideas for redevelopment of the property, including storefronts facing the municipal parking lot and Cross Street, with the possibility of apartments on the upper floor.

**Southern States (1 & 2):** These two parcels sit astride Center Street. The parcel on the north side (201 Center St.) is the former Southern States truck parking area with a long garage that is run-down. The southern parcel (101 Center St.) is the original Southern States store and loading dock. It currently houses a small business.

**Fleming Furniture:** This property is currently unused and is located at a prime thoroughfare location with great potential for a new business.

**Flat Iron Building:** See Chapter 7 for a description of this Town-owned building.

**Municipal Parking Lot:** In the future, the town might look to create an elevated parking area to expand the downtown area with additional parking for both businesses and additional overflow for events downtown and to support the increase in workers and patrons. These might need a metered or permitted parking area to help offset the cost of construction and continued maintenance.

## AUTHORITY TO PURSUE REDEVELOPMENT OR URBAN RENEWAL

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In July 2024, the Town Council granted itself the authority for urban renewal.<sup>17</sup> This authority followed the 2023 State legislation (HB 561). This new authority allows the Town Council to focus on “blighted areas” or “slum areas.”

## TOWN POPULATION PROJECTIONS VIA SCENARIOS

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A low, middle, and high scenario of population growth was devised for the Town. These population projections were done based on the average number of building permits issued by the Town over the last 10 years. The Town’s current (2023) self-imposed limit for issuing new residential building permits is 24 building permits per project per year. An increase in this limit is possible within the Town Code through a waiver process initiated by a developer and considered by the Town’s Planning Commission and Director of Planning (Town Staff).

With a baseline of 9,654 residents in 2020 (per the Census) and using an average of 2.75 persons per future dwelling unit, we can make projections for Town growth using low, mid and high growth scenarios with 12 units/year, 24 units per year, and 36 units per year, respectively. For example,

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<sup>17</sup> Charter Amendment Resolution 2024-02.

the Low Scenario of only permitting 12 new dwelling units/year would add 33 residents per year.

<b>Projection Year</b>	<b>Low Scenario Population (12 units/yr)</b>	<b>Mid Scenario Population (24 units/yr)</b>	<b>High Scenario Population (36 units/yr)</b>
<b>2024</b>	9,786	9,918	10,050
<b>2025</b>	9,819	9,984	10,149
<b>2026</b>	9,852	10,050	10,248
<b>2027</b>	9,885	10,116	10,347
<b>2028</b>	9,918	10,182	10,446
<b>2029</b>	9,951	10,248	10,545
<b>2030</b>	9,984	10,314	10,644
<b>2031</b>	10,017	10,380	10,743
<b>2032</b>	10,050	10,446	10,842

The Low Scenario population growth is projected for the next 10 years in this Master Plan.

The projected population for the Town at buildout (2032) under the Low Scenario will be approximately 10,050 residents. The future allocation of available water and sewer capacity yield for residential growth will be a predominant factor in the future pace of residential growth for the 10-year scope of this master plan cycle. Therefore, the Town will approve no more than 12 housing unit permits per development per year, and a strict cap of no more than 24 housing units per development per year to promote deliberate, managed growth that does not outpace or threaten degradation of adequate public facilities.

A good deal of the future growth of the Town, within its current 2023 boundaries (i.e. no annexations), will be oriented towards infill/redevelopment of the historic downtown area, infill/redevelopment of other districts outside of the Downtown Zone, and possibly mixed-use development (residential and commercial within the Beck Properties).

#### FUTURE ANNEXATION AREAS<sup>18</sup>

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The list of proposed future annexation areas has changed from the previous Master Plan. The vision for many of these County areas is to allow low density residential growth, create rural buffering, and add to our Town’s open space. A pull-out page labeled “Future Annexation Areas”

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<sup>18</sup> Per Town Code § 112-3.A regarding the Zoning of annexed areas: “All territory which may hereafter be annexed to the Town shall from time of annexation be considered as being in the R-1 District until changed by ordinance, unless the resolution of annexation by the Town Council provides for other district classification or classifications.”

is offered in the map section to help with understanding the size and location of these areas around our current Town boundary.

The proposed outer growth boundary towards the east will include three separate parcels known as the Doubs Property, Springwood Property, and the Spicer Property; totaling 203 acres. Annexation of one or more of these parcels would allow for low density residential development pursuant to the Town's Conservation Zoning. The Mount Airy Water Service Area Map will categorize all potential annexation areas as future planned service areas.

The following charts list the potential annexation properties. The charts show projected water yield under the proposed land use designation. Although there is no additional water or sewer capacity being planned for these future annexation areas, they could be considered as additional groundwater recharge areas for the Town within our watershed. Following these charts are more detailed descriptions of the properties and explanations as to the proposed land use and projected density.

Chapt 5: Municipal Growth Element  
 Adopted February 3, 2025

<b>CARROLL COUNTY – FUTURE ANNEXATION AREAS</b>							
<b>Map Area</b>	<b>Property</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Current County Zoning</b> <small>Note: 1</small>	<b>Comprehensive Land Use Plan Designations</b>	<b>Projection of Dwelling Units</b>		<b>Proposed Water Yield (gpd)</b>
				<b>Proposed Town</b> <small>Note: 2</small>	<b>Current</b> <small>Note: 3</small>	<b>Proposed</b> <small>Note: 4</small>	
<b>A</b>	Knill Property	189	R-40,000	Conservation	200	63	25,000
<b>B</b>	Leishear Farm (Note: 5)	162	R-40,000	Low Density Residential and Conservation (See map)	160	TBD	TBD
	Harrison Farm (Note: 5)	83			300		
<b>C</b>	Myers Property	0.46	R-40,000	Low Density Residential	n/a	0	0
<b>D</b>	Harne Property	6	R-40,000	Low Density Residential	12	6	1,500
<b>E</b>	Wagner Property	1.9	R-40,000	Low Density Residential	8	8	2,000
<b>F</b>	Dorsettown	13	R-40,000	Low Density Residential	14	14	3,500
<b>G</b>	Doubs Property	123	Ag/Conser- vation	Conservation	n/a	41	10,250
<b>H</b>	Springwood	52	Agriculture	Conservation	n/a	17	4,250
<b>I</b>	Spicer Property	28	Agriculture	Conservation	n/a	9	2,250
<b>J</b>	Nell Property	6.9	R-40,000	Low Density Residential	0	12	3,000

Chapt 5: Municipal Growth Element  
Adopted February 3, 2025

<b>CARROLL COUNTY – FUTURE ANNEXATION AREAS (Cont'd)</b>							
<b>Map Area</b>	<b>Property</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Current County Zoning</b> <small>Note 1</small>	<b>Comprehensive Land Use Plan Designations</b>	<b>Projection of Dwelling Units</b>		<b>Proposed Water Yield (gpd)</b>
				<b>Proposed Town</b> <small>Note: 2</small>	<b>Current</b> <small>Note: 3</small>	<b>Proposed</b> <small>Note: 4</small>	
<b>K</b>	Warfield Property	51	R-40,000	R1	n/a	50	12,500
<b>L</b>	Pank Property	1.2	R-40,000	Industrial	n/a	0	250

**NOTES:**

1. Carroll County Zoning Map - 2014
2. Bureau of Comprehensive Planning – 2006 Mount Airy Environs Community Comprehensive Plan. Proposed Land Use
3. Town of Mount Airy – 2003 Master Plan, Chapter 4.
4. Town of Mount Airy – 2013 DRAFT Comprehensive Master Plan Update. Chapter Five. Municipal Growth Element
5. Potential total water allocation for all parcels comprising Leishear and Harrison Properties combined that will be zoned OPE District, or equivalent, to be allocated in amounts and at times pursuant to any annexation and water sharing agreements entered into with developer and/or as allocated by the Planning Commission pursuant to Town's water allocation ordinance. Additional allocations may be made for any park land dedicated to the Town and/or for the Harrison-Leishear properties if applied for and allocated under the Town's water allocation ordinance.

Population Density can be calculated by multiplying the Dwelling Unit numbers above by 2.75 persons per dwelling unit.

Chapt 5: Municipal Growth Element  
 Adopted February 3, 2025

<b>FREDERICK COUNTY – FUTURE ANNEXATION AREAS</b>							
<b>Map Area</b>	<b>Property</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Current County Zoning</b> Note: A	<b>Comprehensive Land Use Plan Designations</b>	<b>Projection of Dwelling Units</b>		<b>Proposed Water Yield (gpd)</b>
				<b>Proposed Town</b> Note: B	<b>Current</b> Note: C	<b>Proposed</b> Note: D	
<b>M</b>	S. Main St. Properties	130	Agriculture	Office Park / Employment	0	0	18,000
<b>N</b>	Rigler Property	25	Agriculture	Low Density Residential	24	24	6,000
<b>O</b>	Kraft Property	128	Agriculture	Conservation	42	26	6,500

**NOTES:**

- A. Frederick County Government. Community Development Division, 2012 Comprehensive Plan & Zoning Review - New Market Region Plan. September 13, 2012
- B. Frederick County Government. Community Development Division, 2012 Comprehensive Plan & Zoning Review - New Market Region Plan. September 13, 2012.  
[http://www.frederickcountymd.gov/documents/7/1092/NewMarketCompMap\\_201209141428035325.pdf](http://www.frederickcountymd.gov/documents/7/1092/NewMarketCompMap_201209141428035325.pdf)
- C. Town of Mount Airy – 2003 Master Plan, Chapter 4.
- D. Town of Mount Airy – 2013 Master Plan, Chapter 5.

Population Density can be calculated by multiplying the Dwelling Unit numbers above by 2.75 persons per dwelling unit.

## CARROLL AND FREDERICK COUNTY FUTURE ANNEXATION AREAS

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(PLEASE REFERENCE THE PULL-OUT ANNEXATION MAP AT THE BACK)

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- A. Knill Property: The property totals 189 acres and is currently in Agricultural use within the County. The existing use of the property as a farm market is compatible with the proposed Conservation designation similar to other future annexation areas. The Knill Property is a desirable location for the incorporation of pedestrian and bike friendly paths.
- B. Leishear and Harrison Properties: This total parcel contains 245 acres within Carroll County bordering MD 27. In this plan update, the proposed land use is Low Density Residential (R1) which would provide “low-density development potential with concentration on good land management, harmony with the physical environment and a variety of housing options. It is also intended to encourage conservation of open land and assure both the continuing beauty and agricultural potential of areas located at the periphery of the community.” Any development would allow single-family dwellings (which would be in harmony with existing residents on Jacks Court and Boteler Rd.) and parks (which would reduce our Open Space deficit). By special exception, a development could also include a much-needed new community center and/or library, a possible new fire or police station, and/or professional office(s) which could include medical services. Regardless of whether Annexation occurs, the County should set aside a portion of this parcel for building a new Community Center. It is noted that the County has designated this property with an “Employment Campus” Land Use Designation in its 2014 Carroll County Master Plan. The prior 2013 Master Plan proposed OP/E for this parcel. The Harrison (southern) portion of this total property contains 4 potential well sites with one having a significant production yield. If annexed, those wells may benefit the Town and are key to any development on this large site.
- C. Myers Property: This parcel, located on the northeast corner of Watersville Road and MD 27, contains 0.46 acres of land. The Town has identified the land use designation of this property as Office/Park Employment.
- D. Harne Property: This 6-acre property is currently developed with one single-family residence. The topography of the land is very rolling and steep. Potential redevelopment for the parcel could support a maximum of six houses. The land use designation identified in this master plan cycle for this property is Low Density Residential.
- E. Wagner Property: This is a 1.9 +/- acre parcel located on the east side of North Main Street with no road frontage onto North Main Street. This parcel does have road frontage on MD

27 and the Maryland Department of Transportation is the authority to grant or deny its access to MD 27. This parcel is currently zoned for R-40,000 in Carroll County. If this parcel is annexed into the Town, it should come in with an R-1 zoning.

- F. Dorseytown: This is approximately 13 acres of a cluster of 14 residential dwellings located at the north end of Town along North Main Street and Ellis Road. There are three larger parcels that have the potential to be subdivided. These properties are situated between Town limits and the Mount Airy Baptist Church, which is within the Town boundary. Also, there is a row of 4 houses situated on the east side of Main Street directly across from the Mount Airy Baptist Church. This area has been identified for possible annexation into Town limits since the 2003 Master Plan. The recommended land use designation for this annexation area is Low Density Residential.
  
- G. Doubs Property: This 123-acre parcel abuts the eastern portion of the Woodlands Subdivision. Currently undeveloped, this parcel is zoned Agricultural and Conservation in Carroll County. The Doubs Property has approximately one mile of frontage along the South Branch of the Patapsco River. Along this one-mile stretch lies the original “B&O Old-Line Spur;” branching from the main line and heading into downtown Mount Airy. The land is mostly wooded with a rolling topography containing a stream which extends north-to-south; bisecting the property. This property has the strong potential to provide additional passive parkland and is an important component in the Town’s vision for trail connectivity. The Doubs Property has been depicted as a future recreation area in both the 1994 and 2003 Master Plans. Due to the physical features of the property and the environmentally sensitive areas along the river, the proposed land use designation is Conservation.
  
- H. Springwood Property: This 52-acre parcel lies north of the Doubs Farm. Currently under Agricultural Use, the property is surrounded by the Doubs Property to the south and west. The western boundary of this property is bordered by a 50’ fee simple strip owned by the Doubs Property. The Springwood Property has the potential to expand the Town’s trail network and passive recreation areas. This property is not contiguous to the Town limits and would therefore only be eligible for annexation if the Doubs Property is annexed. A land use designation of Conservation has been applied to this future annexation parcel.
  
- I. Spicer Property: This 28-acre parcel lies east of the Springwood Property and north of the Doubs Property. This parcel is currently being farmed under Agricultural Zoning in the County and has the potential to serve as an agricultural buffer between the Town and County jurisdictional border. A land use designation of Conservation has been applied to this parcel. There is no contiguity between this parcel and the existing Town limits. This

property would only be eligible for future annexation if the Doubs Property and Springwood Property are annexed.

- J. Nell Property: This parcel is located between North Main Street and MD 27. This parcel does not have direct access to either North Main Street or MD 27. This parcel does have road frontage to MD 27 and MDOT has the authority to grant or deny access. This parcel is 6.9 +/- acres and is currently zoned for R-40,000 in Carroll County. If this parcel is annexed into the Town, it should come in with an R-2 zoning.
- K. Warfield Property: TBD – Pending discussions with property owner and Council.
- L. Pank Property: This parcel is a 1.2 +/- acre parcel with access to Twin Arch Road. This parcel is currently (Sep, 2024) working toward Annexation with the Town Council. This parcel is adjacent to a 10-acre and 40-acre parcel owned by the same company. The request is to bring this into the Town as an Industrial zoned parcel.
- M. South Main Street Area: This area contains multiple parcels that total approximately 130 acres of development opportunity. Currently the parcels are zoned Agricultural and lie between MD 144 and Interstate 70. The proposed zoning is Office Park/Employment (OP/E).
- N. Kraft Properties: This parcel is 128 acres. It has also been considered for annexation in previous Master Plans as Conservation/open space usage. These land use designations would serve the same purpose as referenced above with the Zeltman property, as a buffer to Frederick County development and serve as an additional water recharge area. In addition, this parcel also adjoins the Town-owned Windy Ridge Park; a parcel of 88 acres that is currently being master planned by Frederick County into a regional park complex. There may be a future opportunity to provide access to Windy Ridge Park through this property.

#### OPPORTUNITIES AND CONSTRAINTS OF FUTURE ANNEXATION AREAS

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The Town recognizes that our future growth area is significant. Certain parcels serve as a water recharge area for existing Town wells and have been retained in the outer growth area for this purpose. To ensure the most efficient use of land, future development of these areas should, at minimum, cluster any future residential units, generate open space, and create a “physical rural edge” of the community.

There is no obligation on the part of the Town to annex additional property. If a decision to annex additional land were made, it would be a decision by the Town Council to permit additional

development, increase park or open space inventory, and/or gain infrastructure within our corporate boundaries.

The accompanying map entitled “Future Annexation Areas” breaks down these future potential annexations into parcels.

## CONTROLLING GROWTH

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Three major tools are implemented by the Town to control the timing and pace of all growth.

Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO): As the first tool, and used for residential and mixed-use growth, the Town instituted an APFO in 1989. In 2003, 2006, and again in 2023, detailed standards were added that required Planning Commission certifications of “adequacy” for seven critical public facilities; water, sewer, schools, roads/traffic control devices, fire/EMS, parks/open space, and police services. In 2023, additional guidance was provided, via a code amendment, to the Planning Commission’s task in that body deciding any open space waiver to a development.

Each development, whether it is zoned residential, mixed-use, commercial or industrial, must be thoroughly evaluated to see if water allocation units can be assigned. The Town will continue to track water allocations given for each approved development. The remaining six APFO areas are reviewed and evaluated at the concept plan stage of development so there is clear direction early on the adequacy of all seven public facilities.

Because our schools and roads/traffic devices involve both Counties and the State, the Town must work closely with those two entities when assessing their adequacy.

Limits on the Issuance of Building Permits: The second tool available to set the pace and limit growth is the limited issuance of building permits per project per year. As discussed earlier, that limit will continue from the previous Master Plan cycle and is 24 permits per project per year. This limit aligns with the projected Low Growth Scenario (only 12 permits per project per year) and lowers the risk of exceeding our bi-annual water appropriations from our well-heads. It also “paces” growth to prevent an undesired surge in development which could also quickly exceed the capacity of our roads, schools, fire/EMS, open spaces/parks and police services.

Capital Improvements Program (CIP): The third tool available for the Town to plan for future infrastructure improvements is the Capital Improvements Program. The yearly update of the CIP occurs in the annual budget process. It allows the Town to consider capital infrastructure projects for Town-owned streets and roads, water and sewer, parks and recreation, and public works projects. These public improvements are funded primarily through water and sewer revenues, general fund revenues and any fee-in-lieu funds provided by developers when land is not dedicated

towards their open space requirement. Other capital facilities such as schools and libraries are planned and funded by both Frederick and Carroll counties and serve the Town of Mount Airy.

**COMMUNITY FACILITIES ELEMENT**

**PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Both Carroll and Frederick County school systems serve Mount Airy. In Frederick County, we have Twin Ridge Elementary, Windsor Knolls Middle and Linganore High School. In Carroll County, we have Parr’s Ridge primary school, Mount Airy Elementary, Mount Airy Middle, and South Carroll High School. Resident children are divided between these two school systems. Most municipalities the size of Mount Airy have their own high schools. Mount Airy has not had a high school within its Town boundary since 1967.

<b>2023 Enrollment - Percent of State Rated Capacity</b>				
<b>Elementary Schools</b>	<b>County School System</b>	<b>State Rated Capacity</b>	<b>2023 Enrollment</b>	<b>Percent Of State Capacity</b>
<b>Parr’s Ridge Elementary (pre K-2)</b>	<b>Carroll</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>431</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>Mount Airy Elementary (3-5)</b>	<b>Carroll</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>70%</b>
<b>Twin Ridge Elementary (pre K-5)</b>	<b>Frederick</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Middle Schools</b>				
<b>Mount Airy Middle (6-8)</b>	<b>Carroll</b>	<b>850</b>	<b>754</b>	<b>88%</b>
<b>Windsor Knolls Middle (6-8)</b>	<b>Frederick</b>	<b>978</b>	<b>748</b>	<b>76%</b>
<b>High Schools</b>				
<b>South Carroll High (9-12)</b>	<b>Carroll</b>	<b>1339</b>	<b>935</b>	<b>57%</b>
<b>Linganore High (9-12)</b>	<b>Frederick</b>	<b>1642</b>	<b>1598</b>	<b>97%</b>

Projected Enrollments (Percent of State Rated Capacity)						
	2024	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029
<b>Elementary Schools</b>						
Parr’s Ridge Elementary (pre K-2)	425 (70%)	443 (73%)	443 (73%)	451 (74%)	451 (74%)	451 (74%)
Mount Airy Elementary (3-5)	458 (77%)	435 (73%)	451 (75%)	429 (72%)	442 (74%)	437 (73%)
Twin Ridge Elementary (preK-5)	704 (103%)	715 (105%)	730 (107%)	727 (107%)	715 (105%)	710 (104%)
<b>Middle Schools</b>						
Mount Airy Middle (6-8)	770 (91%)	810 (95%)	771 (91%)	821 (97%)	801 (94%)	831 (98%)
Windsor Knolls Middle (6-8)	829 (85%)	920 (94%)	964 (99%)	1,043 (107%)	1,099 (112%)	1,148 (117%)
<b>High Schools</b>						
South Carroll High (9-12)	940 (70%)	957 (71%)	1,004 (75%)	1,007 (75%)	1,040 (78%)	1,049 (78%)
Linganore (9-12)	1,612 (98%)	1,609 (98%)	1,686 (103%)	1,760 (107%)	1,828 (111%)	1,846 (112%)

Source(s): FCPS. Facilities Services Division. 2023 Enrollment Report.  
 CCPS. Enrollment Projections. Actual and Projected Enrollments – Educational Facilities Master Plan

- = Carroll County Schools
- = Frederick County Schools

As can be seen in the table above, all Frederick County schools supporting our Frederick County residents are in trouble. Applying a typical APFO standard that a 100-110% capacity is “Approaching Inadequate,” then the Frederick County elementary and middle schools for Mt. Airy are “Approaching Inadequate.” If the typical APFO threshold for “Inadequate” is above 110% capacity, then the Windsor Knolls Middle School is projected to be “Inadequate” in 2028 (at **112%** capacity) and the Linganore High School will be “Inadequate” in 2028 (at **111%** capacity).

The Town’s Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance does not allow any residential subdivision to move forward if any of the schools in the Town are above 100% of State Rated Capacity.

#### WATER AND SEWERAGE FACILITIES

The Town has historically used groundwater wells for its primary water supply. The primary procurement of these wells has been through the residential development process. The Town currently controls 11 production wells. Four wells are in the Carroll County side of Mount Airy

and seven are within the Frederick County side of Mount Airy.

The Town was under a consent order for public water supply from 2006 to 2013. This consent order was a requirement from MDE to reach certain milestones in water capacity supply and new water sources in order to meet current and future demand on the Town water system. The total future water demand assumes that everything within the growth area boundary builds out according to the adopted land use plan. If this were to occur, the total future water supply demand for our system would be 1,189,000 gpd. With the addition of well #11 and re-appropriations for wells #5 and #6, the Town's new total appropriations are 927,000 gpd based on a daily average and 1,386,500 gpd based on a month of maximum use.

The Town will continue to rely upon groundwater resources within the municipal boundaries. Most importantly, the ultimate water supply side must not exceed the design capacity of our WWTP, permitted at 1.2 million gallons per day processing.

The Town's only wastewater treatment facility discharges to the South Branch of the Patapsco River. Environmental and physical limitations preclude the plant from further expansion beyond the current 1.2 mgd capacity. There are no plans for expansion or a second facility.

The total future wastewater capacity assumes that everything within the growth area boundary builds out according to the adopted land use plan. If this were to occur, the total future wastewater capacity, based on annual average use, for the Mount Airy WWTP would be 1,064,000 gpd anticipated demand plus 120,000 gpd Inflow and Infiltration (I&I), or a total use of 1,184,000 gpd.

#### **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS**

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The Town follows the State of Maryland guidelines for stormwater management that is implemented in the Town by the Carroll County Office of Stormwater Management. The State of Maryland revised their stormwater management regulations in 2009 and started implementation in 2010. Carroll County also updated their regulations to follow the State and they have been enforced for the past ten years. Any updated regulations are automatically adopted by the Town and enforced by the County.

The revised Stormwater Management Chapter of the County Code increased the area subject to stormwater management compliance, expressed a preference for non-structural stormwater management practices, and addressed review, inspection and maintenance issues. Simultaneously, a Water Resource Management chapter was created that designated water resource management areas and led to the creation of a Water Resource Management Manual. Water resource impacts now are reviewed as part of the development review process. Carroll County also instituted a floodplain management program to review all activities within and affecting any designated floodplains within the Town's boundaries. Other revised and updated County Ordinances include grading, erosion and sediment control.

The Town-County Agreement provides a review and implementation process for Town projects through County Offices for both Stormwater Management, and Grading/Sediment Control.

**FIVE-YEAR CAPITAL BUDGET**

Along with the annual budget process, the Town of Mount Airy approves a five-year capital budget. Capital expenditures are broken into three categories; General Fund, Water, and Sewer projects. Within the General Fund, capital projects involve parks and recreation, road projects, storm sewer improvements, storm water management facilities, building improvements, and equipment replacement. Water and Sewer projects include capital expenditures for upgrades or major replacements within those systems. Capital projects for extending water and sewer infrastructure may also involve a new water source for the Town. Any extensions of infrastructure shall be financed via developer fees. The budget areas within the CIP are shown below:

<b>Fund</b>	<b>Category Description</b>
<b>Water</b>	Water Treatment / Booster Pump Stations Wells and Wellhouses Elevated Tanks Distribution System Equipment
<b>Sewer</b>	Wastewater Treatment Plant Lift Stations Collection System Equipment
<b>General</b>	Buildings Parks Storm Sewers and Stormwater Management Equipment Paving

Any new water and sewer infrastructure costs, as it relates to subdivision development and any necessary new water source infrastructure to serve the new development, are borne by the developer. The same is true of commercial development, where the developer of the property is responsible for the extension of all utilities into the site, consistent with approved Planning Commission guidelines and Water and Sewer Commission recommendations.

## SERVICES AND INFRASTRUCTURE FOR DEVELOPMENT OUTSIDE THE MUNICIPAL GROWTH AREA

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The Town of Mount Airy does not provide water and sewer services beyond the municipal limits, unless specifically approved by Maryland Department of the Environment in the case of a public health and safety exception. Other municipal services that are provided by the State, County and other volunteer organizations transcend the municipal boundaries and serve the four-county area surrounding the Town. Fire, EMS and police service the four-county area, and the school boards in Frederick and Carroll Counties serve the municipal student population.

### OPEN SPACE

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Open space is more than a legal requirement; it is a vital component of community welfare and quality of life. By thoughtfully integrating natural resources with community needs, we can mitigate the environmental impact of development.

Therefore, open space should be an integral part of future designs, not merely an afterthought. Incorporating well-designed open spaces into planning demonstrates foresight and enhances overall community benefit. Rather than leaving areas as blank spaces on a concept plan, a strategic approach to their use will provide lasting advantages for the town.

### RURAL BUFFERS AND TRANSITIONAL AREAS.

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The Town has been very diligent in following their comprehensive plan for development, open space, and infrastructure to support the Town's residential and commercial growth over time. Because the Town resides in two counties and is actually bounded by four counties, defining the Town boundaries and future growth areas has become increasingly important.

This 2023 Comprehensive Master Plan Update includes future annexation areas around our current borders in order to create physical borders and green space to serve as a rural buffer between the municipal growth limits and the Counties. Implementation of this annexation plan is vitally important. The Town has a conservation zone in their zoning ordinance that can provide adequate protections to annexed land areas on the periphery of the Town. Some of these parcels that lend themselves to conservation and open space type of zoning classifications are suitable to create a buffer type of area.

These new buffer areas also create an opportunity to serve as additional water recharge areas for our municipal well system. Passive (e.g. parks) and active recreational opportunities (e.g. sports fields) would also be well served on those conservation-zoned properties.

In terms of transitional areas of development, the Town has created three transitional types of commercial zoning to protect residential areas that are adjacent to existing commercial zones. The Towns three transitional zones are the downtown zone (DTZ), which allows a mixture of

commercial retail development along with the opportunity for housing in the downtown area; limited commercial (LC) which is a lower-level commercial zone used between the heavier commercial zones and Main Street, and the last is neighborhood professional (NP) which is much more restrictive and fundamentally protects long-standing residential areas in close proximity to major commercial corridors.

#### PROTECTION OF SENSITIVE AREAS THAT COULD BE IMPACTED BY DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE PROPOSED MUNICIPAL GROWTH AREA.

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The Natural Resources chapter of this Master Plan addresses the location and protection of sensitive areas within the Town limits. These areas include well-head protection areas and floodplains. The Town's development application review process ensures the identification and protection of environmentally sensitive areas on a parcel-by-parcel basis. Carroll County implements the protection of any affected floodplain areas during the site development review process.

#### FUTURE MUNICIPAL GROWTH AREAS OUTSIDE THE MUNICIPAL LIMITS

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This 2023 Comprehensive Master Plan update includes changes to the future growth boundary. But the proposed land use designations of those future annexations will continue to push for conservation land use and maximize open space in other land use designations, where possible. This emphasis is due to two factors. The first is the limitation on public water supply (due to our dependence upon groundwater sources) and wastewater processing capacity due to standards set by MDE. Secondly, there is a clear, strong desire to reduce our open space deficit and to create new recreational opportunities. The Town will continue to promote the most efficient use of land for all land use designations in accordance with of the State of Maryland's Smart Growth Principles.

## MUNICIPAL GROWTH OBJECTIVE AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

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**STRATEGIC GOAL D - Commercial Development:** Pursue our commercial economic development along Center Street (in concert with Goal B) and the South Main Street corridors while exploring suitable sites for 1) a new police station; 2) medical services; and 3) small businesses.

**Objective D.5.1:** Begin the urban renewal (aka “redevelopment”) of properties considered as “blighted areas” or “slum areas.”

**Objective Lead:** Town Council or Council-designated committee acting under the Council’s authority for urban renewal

**Implementation:**

- Using the chapter’s proposed table of properties needing redevelopment as a start-point, determine what properties require urban renewal or redevelopment. In this assessment, use approved criteria for what constitutes “blighted” or “slum.”
- Prioritize the final assessment results to begin the Town’s engagement with property owners to begin urban renewal or redevelopment. Property prioritization is to be based upon criteria set by the Town Council or by its designated committee.
- Establish a new process (to become approved Town Code) for property-owner engagement to begin urban renewal/redevelopment, and gain Town Council and Town Attorney approval before its use.
- With Town Council approval, begin the approved process for urban renewal.

**Objective D.5.2:** Drive commercial districts’ infill development.

**Objective Lead:** Town Director of Planning and Zoning Administrator, in coordination with the Economic Development Commission (EDC), and Planning Commission

**Implementation:**

- Update the Town’s inventory of vacant commercially-zoned parcels and develop (with assistance from the Economic Development Commission) outreach strategies to vacant parcel owners to encourage commercial development.
- The EDC develops a marketing strategy to commercial developers (with an emphasis on new medical services’ facilities) to invite commercial development within the Town. Implementation of the marketing strategy to be recommended by the EDC and approved by the Town Council.

**Objective D.5.3:** Identify Approaches for Continuing to Grow the Town's Economy

**Objective Lead:** The Economic Development Commission, in partnership with the town's Director of Community Development, and in coordination with the Mount Airy Main Street Association, the Greater Mount Airy Chamber of Commerce, and others

**Implementation:**

- Identify approaches to further encourage economic development within the town by promoting historical tourism that draws upon our town's unique heritage and its rails to trails paths.
- Identify approaches to further encourage economic development within the town by supporting small business growth, to include a focus on continuing to revitalize our historic downtown zone.

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**STRATEGIC GOAL E - Industrial Development:** Grow our industrial districts while protecting our environment, safety and health while preserving our cultural/historical resources and community identity.

**Objective E.5.1:** Drive industrial districts' infill development.

**Objective Lead:** Town Director of Planning and Zoning Administrator in coordination with the Economic Development Commission and Planning Commission

**Implementation:**

- Update the Town's inventory of vacant industrial-zoned parcels and develop (with assistance from the Economic Development Commission) outreach strategies to vacant parcel owners to encourage industrial development.

## **CHAPTER SIX: TRANSPORTATION**

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### **INTRODUCTION - LAND USE AND TRANSPORTATION**

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The relationship between transportation and land use provides the foundation for all of the principals of transportation planning. Daily lifestyle and commuting to work travel patterns influence the use and need for primary and secondary roadways. In the Town of Mount Airy, the established patterns of travel to and from home and work, and the heavy use of major routes (e.g., I-70) to regional employment centers outside of the Town boundary continue to burden our primary and secondary roadways.

Economic development across the four-county community and the regional development and growth of the Washington-Baltimore corridor have continued to make Mt. Airy an attractive home to many residents. The road network in Mount Airy not only services the Town residents, but also accommodates many commuters traveling from points north of the Town into southern employment centers. Therefore, the land uses along these traffic corridors must provide alternative modes of transportation to accommodate non-work travel for our residents simply trying to do local shopping, utilizing parks and recreation, and safe busing to schools. Therefore, the transportation challenge is to design and expand adequate north-south corridors (e.g. MD 27) for a transiting workforce while also designing and building a community-focused road network with safe pedestrian and bicycle access across the Town.

A complete understanding of the current (2024) condition of the transportation network in the Town is important in predicting the future impact of land use decisions on traffic in the Town. These predictions can lead to better planning of future development projects and capital projects funded through collaborative county, municipality, and development partnerships that ensure interconnectivity, multimodal transportation opportunities and adequate road and intersection capacity that ensure interconnectivity of neighborhoods to major thoroughfares, multimodal transportation opportunities (e.g., pedestrian, biking and vehicular) and adequate road and intersection capacity.

### **TOWN ROAD SYSTEM DESCRIPTION**

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The Mount Airy Town road system is approximately 126 state and local roads on the Carroll County side and 62 roads on the Frederick side.

## ROADWAY FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATIONS

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The Functional Classification is a general guide for roadway design and access control. In addition, it is used to analyze capacity with respect to function. The Town utilizes the 2017 Carroll County criteria for functional road classifications. While typical roadway design is based upon traffic volumes, speed and other engineering factors, not all roadways designated with the same classification will have the same design. A roadway's classification is also based upon its daily traffic volumes and purpose. Thus, its classification may change over time.

### Functional Classification Categories

1. Interstate Principal Arterial/Freeway & Expressway – Link large population or employment centers. Can range from expressways to two-lane roadways. They are inter-county or inter-state oriented and indicative of long travel lengths with limited access points to local roads.
2. Other Principal Arterial – Supplements the principal arterial system. They provide service to trips of a moderate length while distributing travel to smaller geographic areas than those served by principal arterials with limited access points to local roads.
3. Minor Arterial – Provide a lower level of mobility while placing more of an emphasis on land access than the other arterial classifications. These roadways typically provide a link to the collector roadway system and connect small population centers to the overall arterial system.
4. Major Collector – A major collector provides for both land access and movement within residential, commercial, industrial or agricultural areas. They are the links from the land uses to the arterials. Major collector roads provide service to areas not to an arterial route and to other important traffic generators such as schools, parks, etc.
5. Minor Collector – Minor collectors provide service to the remaining traffic generators and are spaced at intervals consistent with population densities. They bring all developed areas to major collectors or arterials.
6. Local Roadways – Local roads or streets provide for direct access to individual land uses. They discourage through traffic and are typically low in traffic volumes.

As explained above, roadways are classified into six categories: Interstate Principal Arterial/Freeway and Expressway, Other Principal Arterial, Minor Arterial, Major Collector, Minor Collector, and Local Roadways.

Below are descriptions of each major and minor roadway of the primary and secondary road network of the Town of Mount Airy. Each description includes the functional classification assigned to that roadway.

*Interstate 70: Classified as a Principal Arterial/Freeway* – This interstate highway provides the primary east-west route throughout the State. Our location adjacent to the interstate provides significant opportunities for direct access to job centers to the east (Baltimore) and west (Frederick City). This location also attracts businesses which flourish around the interchange of I-70 and MD 27. The highway proximity also results in development pressure due to the excellent access. Mount Airy sits at the convergence of four counties and the road network facilitates commuter traffic flow through and around the Town. The challenge continues to be how to handle the development pressure, while still enjoying access to larger job centers and commercial markets.

*MD 27: Classified as an Minor Arterial-* This State Road was constructed in the early 1970’s and was originally intended to function as a “bypass” east of the Town and provide volume relief from the use of MD 808 (e.g., Main Street) going through our downtown zone. MD 27 has become a major transportation corridor for many north-south commuters.

As the population has grown, the volume of traffic utilizing MD 27 has become increasingly congested within the Town limits. The road is functioning in two primary ways: to move people daily between work and home and to provide access to the main commercial center businesses in town.

The last major study of this critical artery was the *MD 27 Corridor Study – Future Conditions Report, April, 2017*.

*MD 808/Main Street: Classified as a Major Collector* – Historically, Main Street functioned as the main route through town for all local traffic and north/southbound commuter traffic. Presently it serves more as an access to the downtown zone, Mount Airy Elementary and Middle Schools, and centrally located homes and subdivisions. It is also a “relief route” for peak-hour commuter traffic. There is a lack of sidewalks along North Main Street and South Main Street requires sidewalk improvements; including the removal of redundant mailboxes. The right-of-way and paving width for Main Street is very narrow and pedestrian accessibility and safety must be addressed. Especially in the downtown business zone, pedestrian accessibility and safety, traffic roadway safety, and hazards posed by existing parking spaces and along the narrow roadway must be addressed.

## EXISTING SECONDARY ROAD NETWORK

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The secondary road network feeds the needs of local traffic and in addition provides collective routes to the primary road system that is meant to facilitate through traffic and move commuters from work to home. Most of the secondary road system in Mount Airy has been in existence for a long period of time and received minimal upgrades to the existing infrastructure. Most of these roads lead from Carroll and Frederick County into the primary road network. The following is an evaluation of these roads.

Ridgeville Boulevard: *Classified as a minor arterial.* This road connects both Carroll County and Frederick County residents with MD 27 and MD 808 (Main Street). Ridgeville Boulevard (the original Maryland Route 144) is not only a historic and scenic by-way, but is also one that serves the region's residents for essential commercial services and major shopping areas. It will continue to function as a collector connecting residents to Main Street and MD 27. There are sidewalks along portions of the north side and portions of the south side of this road.

Twin Arch Road: *Classified as a minor arterial.* This road serves a variety of commercial, industrial and residential uses. It is the only access for the Twin Arch Shopping Center, Mount Airy Carnival Grounds, multiple industrial parks, the Twin Arch Crossing townhouses, and Brittany Manor. There are no sidewalks on the south side of the road going eastbound. Several annual events at the Mt. Airy Volunteer Fire Company (MAVFC) Fairgrounds highlight the need for these safety improvements:

- a) improved east-west pedestrian crossing of MD 27 from/to Park Ave. and Twin Arch Rd.,
- b) better pedestrian access along the south side of Twin Arch Rd. between MD 27 and the entrance to the MAVFC Fairgrounds, and
- c) a new north-south pedestrian crossing the 4 lanes of traffic to the south side of Twin Arch Rd.

Watersville Road: *Classified as a major collector.* Watersville Road is a collector for Carroll County residents and services the Nottingham Community. It also serves the Knill property (a large parcel that is considered a possible future annexation area of the Town). On the west side of MD 27, Watersville Road provides access from MD 27 to three of Mt. Airy's schools, MD 808 (Main Street), the Mt. Airy Volunteer Fire Company, and the Summit Ridge subdivision.

Park Avenue: *Classified as a major collector.* Park Avenue assists in transporting residents from the western portions of Mount Airy and downtown traffic east towards MD 27. It also provides western movement from MD 27 to the downtown area and MD 808. This road also provides access to Lorien Life Center Nursing Home and Assisted Living Facility, Wildwood Park, Wildwood Senior Community, and the Mount Airy Post Office. The road section varies in width between its connection with MD 27 and South Main Street on the western end.

Ridge Avenue: *Classified as a minor collector.* Ridge Avenue assists in transporting residents from

the western portions of Mount Airy and downtown traffic east towards MD 27. This road also provides access to Lorien Life Center Nursing Home and Assisted Living Facility as well as access to the Public Library.

Merridale Blvd: *Classified as a minor collector.* Merridale Boulevard is a collector for Carroll County and allows a connection from Park Avenue to Ridge Avenue for residents who live along Merridale Boulevard. This road also provides access to Lorien Life Center Nursing Home and Assisted Living Facility as well as the Public Library.

Prospect Road: *Classified as a major collector.* This road connects the western part of the Town and Frederick County into the downtown area and terminates at South Main Street. It allows access to Rising Ridge Road, which provides a western bypass alternative to Main Street.

Buffalo Road: *Classified as a minor collector.* This road is maintained by the Town in the section closest to Main Street. Frederick County maintains the middle section and Carroll County maintains the northern section that intersects with MD 26 near the community of Taylorsville. Buffalo Road provides access primarily for Frederick County residents coming into our downtown or into our western residential subdivisions (e.g., Sterling Glen and Summit Ridge). Projected growth in eastern Frederick County will likely make this road a major collector.

Rising Ridge Road: *Classified as a major collector.* Rising Ridge Road provides access to the Twin Ridge Elementary School and our western-most subdivisions within the Town limits.

Century Drive: *Classified as a minor collector.* Century Drive is an established collector road that services an existing industrial/commercial corridor and residential developments. The road is shown on the master plan to retain its collector standard with a possible extension to Center St. (contingent upon Council approval of the pre-concept plan for Mt. Airy Crossing).

Ridgeside Drive: *Classified as a minor collector.* Ridgeside Drive is a local road built to an in-town closed section standard of 40 ft. It connects South Main Street with East Ridgeville Boulevard. It has multiple entrances providing access to major commercial/retail areas of town. It is constructed to its final standard, with no additional right-of-way available.

Candice Drive: *Classified as a minor collector.* Ownership of this road is split between Carroll County and the Town. Candice Drive connects Buffalo Road and North Main Street. This allows traffic to flow from residential areas both inside and outside of the Town limits.

Aaron Lane: *Classified of a minor collector.* Aaron Lane serves as an access and exit point for a commercial/industrial area within the Town. This could also be used as an alternative route for the

adjacent residential area, providing access to the Twin Arch shopping center and MD 27.

## ASSESSING EXISTING ROAD NETWORK PERFORMANCE

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The cumulative effects of increasing traffic flow on the main highway system and secondary roads within the Town are taking its toll in several ways. The most visible effect are traffic congestion problems during morning and evening rush-hours. As the outer suburban areas of Mount Airy continue to develop residentially and commercially, the MD 808, MD 144, and MD 27 routes have become increasingly overloaded with pass-through traffic. Due to growth within and surrounding the Town boundary, traffic congestion will continue to occur and driving conditions are expected to deteriorate. A comprehensive, long-term road system improvement plan is much needed.

An inventory and analysis of the existing capacity and condition of the Town's area roadway system are important steps towards projecting future roadway system needs and developing a long-term transportation management plan. To analyze the existing roadway network capacity and efficiency, and in order to develop an improvement plan, this process includes:

- 1) assessing the capacity and performance of the existing roadway system; and
- 2) identification of opportunities for capacity-increasing improvements using a number of alternatives.

Two performance measures are used to demonstrate how well the roadway system is functioning to meet the goals and expectations of the roadway network. These performance measures include:

- 1) an assessment of signalized intersection capacity, and
- 2) an assessment of exiting road system capacity.

Measuring performance can help determine whether the efficiency of the roadway system is currently adequate and whether this efficiency will get better or worse over time.

## ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING SIGNALIZED INTERSECTION CAPACITY

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In order to plan for immediate and long-term system-wide improvements, the Town continuously assesses the existing capacity of the road system and its major signalized intersections. Intersection capacity is characterized by the Level of Service (LOS), or delay time, required for a vehicle to pass through the intersection. Essentially, the more traffic that passes through a signalized intersection, the longer the delay for a vehicle. While delay issues can often be corrected through optimization of signal timing, other improvements, such as additional turning lanes and through lanes, are required to improve the level of service. The next table provides the delay characteristics

experienced by a driver passing through a signalized intersection under different Level of Service

<b>Level of Service Characteristics</b>				
<b>Level of Service (LOS)</b>	<b>Stopped Delay per Vehicle (sec)</b>	<b>Expected Delay to Minor Street</b>	<b>Stopped Delay per Vehicle (sec)</b>	<b>Expected Problems to Intersection</b>
<b>A</b>	Less than 5.0	Little or no delay	Less than 5.0	Low delay
<b>B</b>	5.1 - 10.0	Short delays	5.1 to 15.5	Short delay
<b>C</b>	10.1 - 20.0	Average delays	15.6 to 25.0	# of cars stopping is significant
<b>D</b>	20.1 - 30.1	Long delays	25.1 to 40.0	Influence of congestion becomes more noticeable
<b>E</b>	30.1 - 45.0	Very long delays	40.1 to 60.0	Limits of acceptable delay
<b>F</b>	Greater than 45.1	Extreme delays. Usually warrants intersection improvement	Greater than 60.1	Oversaturated and unacceptable

A: Traffic flow is unimpeded and volume continues to move constantly.  
 B: Traffic flows steadily, but slightly impeded with temporary delays.  
 C: Traffic flows with a stable flow, cannot maneuver through lanes well.  
 D: Traffic volume is high and vehicles move slow, but still move at a steady pace.  
 E: Traffic volume is near capacity, and has an unstable flow.

(LOS) conditions.

For new developments, Traffic Impact Studies are analyzed by Town staff and traffic engineers to determine if the signalized intersections and the road system are functioning adequately. The Town of Mount Airy collects intersection capacity analysis data from Traffic Impact Studies required as part of the new development proposals per the Town’s Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO). In addition, the Maryland State Highway Administration (MSHA) maintains traffic volume counts for its road network. For the state roads within the Town boundary, the MSHA traffic counts are updated on an annual basis.

The following table provides information from recent traffic studies and SHA traffic counts for heavily used intersections involving the Town’s primary highway system. Most of the heavily used signalized intersections around Mount Airy operate in the morning peak hour at an “C” level of service, meaning there is a delay of up to 35 seconds. However, the in-town roads experience more traffic in the evening rush hour, often starting at 3:30 p.m. Town intersections are all rated lower

during the PM rush hour, with South Main Street at Ridgeville Blvd. receiving an “E” and both Main St. at Prospect Rd. and MD 27 at Park Ave./Twin Arch Rd. both receiving “D” (per the *MD 27 Corridor Study – Future Conditions Report, April, 2017*).

Critical Lane Volumes – Mount Airy Road Network		
Intersection	Critical Lane Volume	Level of Service P.M. Peak Hour
MD 27 n/s of Ridgeville Blvd.	unknown	unknown
MD 27 at MD 808	unknown	unknown
MD 808 at Ridgeville Blvd.	1390 <sup>3</sup>	D
Ridgeville Blvd. at Ridgeside Dr.	944 <sup>3</sup>	A
MD 27 at Park Avenue	unknown	unknown
MD 27 at Watersville Road	unknown	unknown
MD 27 at Leishear Road	unknown	unknown
Twin Arch Rd/Park Ave at MD 27	1313 <sup>2</sup>	D
Twin Arch Road at Century Dr.	782 <sup>2</sup>	A
Twin Arch Road at Aaron Lane	572 <sup>2</sup>	A
MD 808 at Rising Ridge Rd.	885 <sup>3</sup>	A
MD 808 at Center St	980 <sup>1</sup>	A
MD 808 at Prospect Rd	1260 <sup>1</sup>	C
MD 27, north of I-70	unknown	unknown

1. Traffic Impact Study, Center Street Professional Center, July 2007
2. Traffic Impact Study, The Goddard School, January 2013
3. Traffic Impact Analysis, Illiano Main Street (Plaza), September 2007

## ASSESSMENT OF EXISTING ROAD SYSTEM CAPACITY

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Determining the existing and future capacity of the road system and predicting when road improvements should be made to increase capacity are also key facets of any transportation planning effort. The existing capacity of a road system is based on the road classification and the existing level of traffic on the road. Using data on the existing number of travel lanes and existing

traffic volumes, the service volume capacity can be determined. A comparison of the service volume capacity to the measured Average Daily Traffic (ADT) can be used to identify road systems over capacity and needing widening.

The next table provides the standard service volume for roads with two, four and six travel lanes.

<b>Service Volume Capacity Per Travel Lanes</b>	
<b>No. of Travel Lanes</b>	<b>Service Volume (ADT)<sup>1</sup></b>
2	≤11,999
4	≥12,000 and ≤25,999
6	≥26,000

<sup>1</sup> Transportation Research Board (TRB), 2000. ADT = Avg Daily Traffic

The next table provides Average Daily Traffic (ADT) values and the corresponding number of travel lanes required for adequate service capacity for a number of road systems in the Town.

<b>Intersection</b>	<b>Daily Lane Volume (ADT)</b>	<b>No. of Existing Travel Lanes</b>	<b>No. Lanes required for adequate service capacity</b>
MD 27 n/s of Ridgeville Blvd.	24,730	4	4
MD 27 at MD 808	16,000	4	4
MD 808 at Ridgeville Blvd.	8,842	2	2
Ridgeville Blvd. at Ridgeside Dr.	unknown	2	NA
MD 27 at Twin Arch Road	18,210	4	4
MD 27 at Park Avenue	18,210	4	4
MD 27 at Watersville Road	unknown	2	NA
MD 27 at Leishear Road	16,000	2	4
Twin Arch Road at MD 27	unknown	3	NA
Twin Arch Road at Century Dr.	unknown	2	NA
Twin Arch Road at Aaron Lane	unknown	2	NA
MD 808 at Rising Ridge Rd.	unknown	2	NA
MD 27, north of I-70	24,221	4	4

As illustrated in the previous table, the majority of the primary and secondary road systems in the

Town that have recently been assessed for daily volume counts (ADTs) are meeting the minimum service volume capacity for their current design. However, MD 27 at Leishear Road is currently not meeting an adequate service capacity. In addition, traffic conditions on MD 27 north of I-70 and near the intersections of Ridgeville Blvd and MD 808 (N. Main St.) are at a critical point where widening (as requested by Carroll County in 2024) is necessary. During peak rush hours, both morning and evening, when commuting traffic is the heaviest and competition for resident access to the commercial opportunities is the greatest, congestion on MD 27 poses the greatest problem. Some drivers divert, utilizing MD 808 (N. Main Street) to travel north or south. But conflict with peak hour commuting traffic is inevitable if the commercial sectors are to be accessed. Over the last ten years, increasing residential development north of Mount Airy has caused the volume of traffic traveling MD 27 and MD 808 to increase dramatically. In addition, although there is no reported ADT data available to perform the volume capacity analysis, the Town staff concludes that Twin Arch Road is currently built below standard for the volume of traffic it is handling.

With the limited data available a complete picture of the existing traffic conditions in the Town is not obtainable. Some primary and secondary signalized intersections and road systems do not have current Traffic Impact Studies completed. It is recommended that these studies be completed and that the Town invest in the development of a model of the Town’s transportation network. A transportation network model and the 2017 corridor analysis can be used to assess long-range impacts using growth trends and anticipated development projects. A model is useful for comparing the impacts of various growth assumptions and for evaluating alternative transportation improvement programs.

**RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ROAD SYSTEM IMPROVEMENT**

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Recommendations for future road system improvement can be developed to address existing and future congestion levels and create opportunities for increased connectivity. Capacity can be improved through increase in volume capacity (e.g., widening) and through creation of new roads to foster interconnectivity.

**IMPROVING CAPACITY – PROPOSED FUTURE ROAD WIDENING**

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The following are recommendations for future road widening based on analysis performed to date:

***MD 27:*** The Town will continue to work with MD SHA to communicate any volume or signalization issues affecting rush hour traffic. The traffic flows in this area of the Town are very significant and should continue to be monitored. In particular this will become necessary as full build-out conditions are reached along the MD 27 corridor.

In 2024, Carroll County submitted to the State a prioritized list of much-needed county road

improvements. Number 5 priority among the 5 roads on that submission is the widening of MD 27 to a consistent four lanes from the southern-most limit of the County to the intersection of Leishear Road. If funded, this widening will provide some relief to the congestion along that corridor within the limits of the Town. Additional improvements are targeted, including dedicated turn lanes, signalized traffic control, boulevard separation of lanes, and controlled intersections to allow pedestrian crossings. However, real relief will occur when MD 27 is widened all the way north to the intersection with MD 26.

Twin Arch Road: As previously indicated, Twin Arch Road currently does not meet the Town design standards to accommodate the current volume of traffic nor does this road provide safe pedestrian access. On the east side of MD 27 and the south side of Twin Arch Rd. there's an urgent need for:

- New sidewalks between the southeast corner of the MD 27/Twin Arch Rd. intersection and the MAVFC Fairgrounds' entrance,
- a new, safe pedestrian crossing between the northeast corner of the intersection and the southeast corner, and
- the widening of Twin Arch Rd. eastward past the Twin Arch Industrial Park entrance.

Buffalo Road: Sectional improvements for widening and upgrading this road to in-town standards will occur along with the development for the proposed Full Property. It is recommended the Town continue to work toward widening and upgrading this road as development continues within eastern Frederick County and within the current Town boundaries, and as annexations occur along this road.

South Main Street Traffic Circle: This project, scheduled to begin in 2024, aims to provide a new roundabout connecting S. Main St. and Rising Ridge Rd. in a manner that will allow faster and easier access to MD 27 and the I-70 interchange from the busy Ridgeside Drive and Ridgeside Court.

#### IMPROVING CONNECTIVITY – PROPOSED FUTURE ROAD CONNECTIONS

As growth continues within and beyond the Town limits, traffic conditions will warrant the necessity of providing additional road connections. Future connections and the way they are executed should be evaluated for their positive and potentially negative impacts to existing primary and secondary road systems and overall quality of life. These connections will become essential to reducing the burden of increased traffic volume on the primary road systems. Future connections and the way they are executed should be evaluated for their positive and potentially negative impacts to existing primary and secondary road systems, and overall quality of life for existing and new developments.

Center Street Extended: The extension of Center Street from Main Street to MD 27 has been in the

Mount Airy Master Plans for many years. It is still considered to be a critical connection for the Town as it will serve as the last commercial corridor entering the downtown area from MD 27. This connection also affords downtown area residents a direct road to Watkins Park. The road is envisioned as functioning as a boulevard type of entrance into Main Street.

*Rising Ridge Road extension northward to Buffalo Road:* The northern extension of Rising Ridge Road is planned to be the last section of the “Western bypass” for Mount Airy. This roadway needs to be carefully designed to deal with any environmental areas that may affect the road alignment or design. The roadway connection is slated to traverse in a northern direction and connect with Buffalo Road near Old Bohn Road.

*Rising Ridge Road extension south to Main Street:* Consideration should be made to provide a south end connection to Main Street and MD 27. This connection would provide the first section of the “Western bypass”.

*Century Drive Extended:* This road is planned to extend through the remaining industrial park for the Twin Arch Industrial Park. The road exists as a collector from Twin Arch Road, there is a leg of the road unconstructed that will connect to MD 27 on the eastern side of the Town. This last piece of roadway is considered a valuable connection to access two industrial parks and a major residential townhouse community. Design considerations should be considered for this road alignment to accommodate a future “Rails to Trails” pathway that would parallel the road for a short distance.

*Beck Drive Extension into Center Street:* This short road extension is expected to take place when the residentially zoned portion of the Beck Property to the west of MD 27 is developed. This road extension will provide an access point from the new residential development to the Center Street corridor. A pathway is recommended to allow pedestrian access from Park Avenue and Beck Drive to Center Street.

*MD 27 Corridor Analysis:* The development of the vacant land situated on the east side of Route 27 has the potential to create a substantial increase in traffic (and congestion) given the current limitations of the road infrastructure network in this area. Again, as stated earlier, the April 2017 MD 27 Corridor Study<sup>19</sup> is outdated and any road system improvement plan will require a more contemporary corridor analysis.

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<sup>19</sup> MD 27 Corridor Study – Future Conditions Report, Sabra, Wang & Associates, Inc., April, 2017.

## IMPROVING ROAD SYSTEM DESIGN FOR SAFETY

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### “COMPLETE STREETS”

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The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is implementing Complete Streets statewide. Complete streets ensure that a range of safe options for multimodal transportation, including active transportation, are prioritized throughout all phases of project development. Active transportation refers to human-powered means of travel like walking and bicycling, using mobility aids, and other human-scaled or low-powered micromobility, such as e-bikes and e-scooters. The Model Complete Streets Initiative is an opportunity to apply a multi-pronged approach to delivering safe and accessible travel options for every roadway user. The Complete Streets methodology is a deliberate approach to planning, designing, and constructing streets to be as safe as possible for as many types of travelers as possible. It requires the development of an objective. That objective must include performance targets that indicate how well the project could serve and protect people walking, biking, rolling, or using low-powered mobility devices like e-scooters. All development plans, regardless of zoning district, must comply with this initiative. Maryland’s “Complete Streets” is focused on encouraging pedestrian and bicycle safety using designs which ensure improved safety for drivers, pedestrians, and bicycle users. Complete Streets recognize that crossing the street, walking to shops, and cycling to work or for recreation are equally important to driving.

### “GREEN STREETS”

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In our Town, as it is across almost all municipalities, a large percentage of land is covered by impervious roadways, alleys, driveways, sidewalks and surface parking lots. Stormwater runoff from these areas can produce significant runoff volumes and carry pollutant loads that negatively impact the water quality of surface waterbodies and reduce groundwater recharge because of the loss of soil infiltrative capacity. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides a Green Streets Handbook which provides a process to begin reducing the impervious surface footprint of the public right-of-ways and associated off-street surface parking areas. Green streets can provide many environmental, social and economic benefits. In addition to the stormwater runoff reduction and water quality improvement benefits, green streets can be designed to calm traffic, provide safer pedestrian and bicycle paths, mitigate urban heat island effects, improve community aesthetics, promote a sense of place and stimulate community investments. These enhancements can help to make a “green and complete street” that is safe and accessible for all users while also being friendlier to the environment and beneficial for the community at large. The Town should use this handbook to select, design and implement site design strategies and green infrastructure practices for roads, alleys and parking lots.

## TRAFFIC CALMING AND ROAD MAINTENANCE

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The primary purpose in the design of a road is to ensure safe transit. Design standards are in place to ensure adequate roadway width, curvature, and sight distance exist and to provide safe for pedestrians crossing and traveling along the road. The Town utilizes the design standards of Carroll County for all new roads constructed within the Town boundaries. State-owned and maintained roads are designed with Maryland State Highway Administration (MSHA) standards. The Town ensures all road design standards are met in the land development approval process.

### TRAFFIC CALMING

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The Town of Mount Airy should consider incorporating traffic calming into its road design standards for Minor Collector streets and Local Roadways. Traffic calming designs are recommended to reduce speeds at intersections or along roadways. The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) provide insights as to how to properly implement traffic calming tactics.

### ROAD MAINTENANCE

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An inventory of existing physical conditions of the primary in-town roads is kept by the Town of Mount Airy and updated regularly. The Town of Mount Airy performs capital improvements yearly to keep the Town's roads in good condition. An annual paving contract involves different stretches of roads each year. It includes patching the road where there may be cracks or shifting of asphalt and resurfacing the section of road that is patched. This annual task allows the roads to be repaired properly and typically includes approximately two of the roughly fifty miles of the Town's roadway network to be upgraded annually. Transportation maintenance also requires continued maintenance and improvement of the storm drainage systems to remove runoff water and to prevent flooding of the Town streets. Lastly, road surface maintenance also should be coordinated with other projects such as pipeline repairs or installations, upgrading or installing sidewalks, repairing or adding curbs, and storm drain gutter replacement for every stretch of road that goes through its annual paving. This helps the Town keep the roadway network maintained as well as enhance the safety of cyclists and pedestrians.

### IMPROVING MULTI-MODAL TRANSPORTATION OPPORTUNITIES

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To implement the Town's goal of a more walkable community, it is important to incorporate other modes of transportation into the Town's overall transportation network planning in order to have a diverse and balanced system. In addition to the road system, the Town must plan to integrate for other bicycle and pedestrian access. Improvements should be made to help increase pedestrian and bicycle safety throughout the town.

The Town has concentrated on increasing the opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle paths through the design of good subdivision layouts that provide for pedestrian and bicycle non-motorized interconnections between neighborhoods. It is equally important in the development of the Town's park system, the downtown area, and any commercial development that alternatives for pedestrian and non-vehicle access are seriously considered in the site design process. This also is a vital component in promoting interconnectivity for newly revitalized areas and redevelopment corridors.

Town-wide Pedestrian Pathways (*also reference Chapter 7 for the section on Parks*): The first Central section of "Rails to Trails" has been completed and it connects Watkins Park to Main Street at the Railyard. The West section is partially completed with a connection from the Twin Ridge neighborhood (Rambling Sunset Circle) to Hill Street. The West section will be completed when the section through the Cold Storage property is done. The East section from Watkins Park eastward faces challenges; including the safe crossing of MD 27 and the Town's access along Waste Water Treatment Rd. The East section will eventually connect the Eastern-most residential developments (e.g. Nottingham) with the Downtown and our Western-most developments. In addition, the Town should continue connecting neighborhoods with walkways to enable a more walkable community. These connections allow pedestrians and bicycles to avoid traffic and major highways. The Sterling Glen pathway connection to Summit Ridge and the East Ridgeville Boulevard sidewalk installation from Conestoga Court connecting to the commercial area near MD 27 are two locations in which these improvements are being considered.

Pedestrian Tunnel Walkway: It is imperative that for any infill development on the east and west sides of MD 27 in the vicinity of Center Street, and the extension of Center Street from Main Street to MD 27, there be a safe means for pedestrians to cross MD 27. Given the traffic volumes (e.g., estimated at 24,000 vehicles per day as of 2016), accident history, and intersections with marginal level of service ratings in this vicinity of MD 27, traditional pedestrian signal and crosswalk technologies will not suffice. Discussions between the town, Carroll County, and State Highway Administration have taken place that identified the preference for an underground, or tunnel, crossing. Pedestrian tunnels improve safety, access, and connectivity to a community. They enhance mobility and promote pedestrian safety by minimizing the risk of accidents and collisions. They also evoke an emotional response from users due to enhanced security and aesthetic appeal. A pedestrian tunnel would also afford the safe connection of the town's rails to trails pedestrian and bicycle recreational amenity which is strategically important for the current and future recreational and economic vitality of the town.

Carroll County has also placed emphasis on a safe pedestrian crossing of MD 27 at Center Street.

In its March, 2024 letter<sup>20</sup> to the Maryland Department of Transportation the Board of County Commissioners stated, “It is imperative that there be a safe means for pedestrians to cross MD 27 in this vicinity (of Center St.)”

Sidewalk Improvements: General sidewalk improvements along roadways are another enhancement for pedestrian travel. The Town continues to work with the MSHA to provide Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-related sidewalk improvements in the Downtown Zone along Main Street. These improvements will give pedestrians a safe, adequate walking space and provide a more welcoming travel path. The narrowing of road intersections, due to wider sidewalks, is another way to help pedestrians. It makes drivers more cautious of their surroundings and pressures them to drive slower, which creates a safer neighborhood road and lets pedestrians cross streets safely. These options help create safe travel for pedestrians as well as encourage walking. Lastly, with cluster mailboxes installed along S. Main St., the redundant original mailboxes should be removed.

Pedestrian Crossing Signals: A pair of yellow flashing lights, which are push button-activated, are installed near the intersection of Main Street and Park Avenue. When activated, these provide an additional warning to drivers that a pedestrian is about to enter the designated pedestrian walkway. The Town may install similar signals at other locations where pedestrian traffic or children walking to/from school may need to cross safely. One potential candidate location is the intersection of Main Street and Cottonwood Road for children crossing N. Main Street to get to the three schools on the east side of N. Main Street.

Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations: Level-2 EV charging stations are located:

- in the Municipal Parking Lot adjacent to Park Ave,
- at our Public Library,
- within Watkins Park, and
- on the east side of MD 27, at E. Ridgeville Blvd. and Ridge Court.

As EV use increases, the Town should increase the number of charging stations.

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<sup>20</sup> Board of Carroll County Commissioners letter dated March 14, 2024 to the Maryland Department of Transportation, Subject: Re: FY 2025-2030 Consolidated Transportation Program – Carroll County, Maryland, pg. 5.

## TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

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**STRATEGIC GOAL A - Adequate Public and Community Facilities:** Improve the capacity and quality of all areas of our Public and Community Facilities so that we provide, at the minimum, an adequate Quality of Life for all residents.

**Objective A.6.1:** Pedestrian focus -- Increase the Town's safe walkability by adding sidewalks and pedestrian crossing zones along highly-traveled roadways and/or between residential areas and popular venues.

**Objective Lead:** Streets & Roads Commission

**Implementation:**

- Add sidewalks along the south side of Twin Arch Rd. between the MD 27 intersection and the entrance to the MAVFC Fairgrounds.
- Add a pedestrian crossing across Twin Arch Rd. at the intersection with MD 27.
- Add sidewalks on the west side of N. Main St. between the Watersville Rd. intersection and Greentree subdivision limits.
- Improve the current pedestrian crossings along Main Street.
- Add a pedestrian crossing on N. Main Street adjacent to Liquidity Aleworks.

**Objective A.6.2:** Advocate and assist in the design, solution development, and construction of a pedestrian crossing under MD 27 to connect the rails-to trails pathway to the east.

**Objective Lead:** Streets & Roads Commission, in coordination with Recreation & Parks Commission and the Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Task organize a committee integrating members of the Streets & Roads and Parks & Recreation Commissions with the Town Engineer and other needed engineering and traffic safety expertise to establish optimal location, design criterion, and possible solutions.
- Partner with Carroll County, the State Highway Administration, developers, and other stakeholders to deliver shared solutions for funding and implementing a pedestrian tunnel crossing.

**Objective A.6.3:** Assist in the design and solution development for improvements to Twin Arch Road congestion.

**Objective Lead:** Streets & Roads, in coordination with the Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Task organize a committee integrating members of the Streets & Roads with the Town Engineer to establish design criterion, and possible solutions to that criterion, for mitigating the congestion on Twin Arch Rd.
- Communicate your ideas to appropriate Carroll County and MDOT authorities to encourage solution adoption and funding for the improvement(s).

**Objective A.6.4:** Create a transportation network model for Town and pertinent surrounding County roads/streets.

**Objective Lead:** Streets & Roads, in coordination with the Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Task organize a committee integrating members of the Streets & Roads with the Town Engineer to survey off-the-shelf transportation network models/modeling,
- Educated by current model options, establish criteria for this Town's needs from a model.
- With Town-specific modeling criterion/expectations established, determine which current models meet our needs.
- Determine which of the available and qualified models is the optimal/cost-effective model for our needs, and make the argument for funding and acquisition with the Town Council.

## CHAPTER SEVEN: COMMUNITY FACILITIES & PUBLIC SERVICES

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One of the goals of long-range planning is to also identify, coordinate and plan the growth of vital community infrastructure and public services. Community infrastructure which supports an array of public services is essential to the Town. Our continued efforts to provide and improve upon necessary public services for Mount Airy residents are critical to attaining our Town's 2033 Vision<sup>21</sup>. As such, these services must be thoroughly considered when planning for any growth and infrastructure improvements.

Small municipalities, such as Mt. Airy, face a challenge when it comes to matching public facility growth with residential, mixed-use, commercial, and industrial growth. It's fair to state that the growth of community facilities and public services in small towns such as ours typically lags the growth of residents and businesses. As a consequence, we face the reality of an aging community with lagging services, infrastructure, and delayed financial support from the County and State. Certainly, community services need to be provided to support any new development, but it is the long-term maintenance and incremental growth/expansion of that infrastructure that becomes a financial challenge to a small local government. For these reasons, long-term community services infrastructure planning is essential to anticipate growth, build a plan and seek funding solutions. Two traditional tools by which public services are scheduled to keep pace with new land development are the Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO) and the Capital Improvements Program (CIP).

The APFO intends to work in conjunction with the CIP, by providing specific timing of essential infrastructure which is based on a level of service currently observed by the jurisdiction.

The Capital Improvements Program is a long-range planning implementation tool by which needed public improvements are placed into a specific time frame for funding, design, engineering, and construction. The CIP is an adopted document that delineates a schedule of the improvements for public facilities such as water and sewer, roads and traffic devices, parks and open space, fire and emergency medical services (EMS), local police, and schools. The typical time frame for a capital improvements program is five years, with a yearly update to reprioritize needed facilities and associated funding within the municipal fiscal budget for the listed projects.

The continuous effort to schedule needed infrastructure construction and maintenance allows the Town to maintain a high quality of life. The Town of Mt. Airy continues to adjust to changing infrastructure needs as the community demands certain public services.

The Community Facilities and Public Services to be discussed in this chapter and which are

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<sup>21</sup> The Vision for the Town of Mt. Airy is found in the *Introduction*.

necessary to serve the Town’s residents are listed below:

- Parks and Recreation
- Public Schools
- Public Safety
- Emergency Services
- Town Government Facilities
- Libraries and Senior Centers
- Water, Sewer, and Wastewater
- Solid Waste and Recycling

## PARKS AND RECREATION

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The Town of Mount Airy provides for various active and passive recreational opportunities at several locations from many sources. The Town currently (2023) owns and maintains 13 active parks. Several private organizations own recreational fields, and both Carroll and Frederick County Boards of Recreation own recreational fields within the Town boundaries. As a result of the population increase over the past decades, the Town of Mount Airy has the greatest need for ed fields and courts to support baseball, softball, pickleball, soccer, and football.

The Town’s Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance requires 3 acres of open space/park land for every 100 citizens. Currently (April, 2024) the Town has an open space deficit of 74.7 acres. Two of the largest undeveloped parcels within the Town are zoned mixed-use (MXU-CC and MXD) are presently the greatest potential contributors towards reducing this deficit. Other than these remaining undeveloped parcels, the open space/park land deficit will have to be addressed via future annexations.



While open space has been required for new residential developments, neither commercial development and industrial subdivisions have been required to provide open space. As the Town implements its vision for pedestrian accessibility and connectivity through trail networks throughout the Town, there is an opportunity to extend this requirement to non-residential development.

TOWN OF MOUNT AIRY PARK AND RECREATION FACILITIES

<b>Park</b>	<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Amenities</b>	
<i>East/West Park</i>	20.77 acres	baseball field playground equipment	multi-use trail basketball court parking area
<i>Watkins Regional Park</i>	21 acres	Gazebo 2 large pavilions 3 covered picnic tables 2 tennis courts (lighted) 1 basketball court (lighted) walking trail 1 soccer field 1 softball field parking area	exercise stations traditional and inclusive playgrounds skate park gaga ball pit (coming soon) dog park trail connection sand volleyball court modern restroom facilities
<i>Summit Ridge Park</i>	8 acres	2 baseball fields large pavilion	playground equipment parking area
<i>Summit Ridge Soccer Field</i>	3 acres	soccer field	parking area
<i>Community Garden</i>	2.58 acres	gardens	
<i>Village Gate Park</i>	17.7 acres	2 tennis courts 1 soccer field walking path	playground trail connection parking area
<i>Prospect Park</i>	10 acres	pickleball / roller hockey court playground large pavilion	basketball court fishing pond parking area
<i>Vest Pocket Park</i>	½ acre	Gazebo	benches and gardens
<i>Twin Ridge Park</i>	5 acres	1 soccer field	1 baseball field (lighted)
<i>Windy Ridge Park</i>	91.85 acres	multi-use trail system	
<i>Wildwood Park</i>	3 acres	Gardens Gazebo walking path	fountain playground parking area
<i>Twin Arch Park</i> (serving Twin Arch Crossing and Brittany Manor)	6 acres	2 soccer fields basketball court parking area	
<i>Rails-To-Trails</i> (Central – Phase 1)	1 acre	completed portion of a 3-phase linear park parking walking path	
<i>Partial Rails-To Trails</i> (West – Ph 2)	8 acres avail now w/partial completion	walking path	

There are also a number of Carroll and Frederick County facilities, both public and private, that are available to Mount Airy residents. This includes Old National Pike District Park and Russell Windsor Field; two facilities located just 3 miles west of town. The Old National Pike District Park has baseball and soccer fields with future plans for other recreational additions.

Local sports leagues, to include the Mount Airy Youth Athletic Association (MAYAA) and the Four County Little League (FCLL), make use of baseball and soccer fields at schools located within the Town. Schools outside the Town's boundaries are generally too distant to be of much use to the leagues serving the community.



Another private set of fields at the MAVFC Fairgrounds has been used primarily by MAYAA over the years. These fields are privately owned by the Mount Airy Volunteer Fire Company. There are four baseball fields at this complex and during the winter months, two of the fields are used for football. If any development of this privately-owned land were to occur, the community could lose the sports fields located there. The Town should therefore actively pursue an alternative location to replace those fields as well as create additional fields to meet current shortfalls caused by increased demand in recent years.



While there is still an emphasis on ensuring adequate playing fields to accommodate sports related events, there is an increased focus to coordinate community-oriented events in the Town's Park facilities. The past decade has revealed a strong desire to take part in local events that build a community connection. Well-attended events include Camp Night, Movie Nights, benefit races and walks, as well as concerts and performances by local artists.

#### NEED FOR A MOUNT AIRY SPORTS COMPLEX

The Town has long suffered from a shortage of athletic fields, and a Mount Airy Athletic Field Assessment, completed in 2006, revealed an overall shortage of between 8-11 fields. In response to the 2007 Town Survey, and 2012 Community Needs Assessment, an active search was started to acquire the additional land specifically for a regional sports complex to make up the shortfall. The results of the 2020 Town Survey (as the second-most desired recreational amenity) continue to underscore this need.

In the meantime, the Town has been getting by with community and school parks spread all around the Town, causing parents of young athletes to consistently complain about the need to travel back and forth to fields in different locations. This situation presents a particular hardship for families with multiple children involved with sports. Clearly, the best long-term solution to these needs is a single sports complex of sufficient size to accommodate multiple games at the same location. Such a complex could also offer the opportunity to bring the community together and enable the

hosting of playoffs and tournaments in various sports.

The vision is that regional sports complex off of a major artery would be the perfect complement to existing natural open space parks, neighborhood facilities, and the multi-purpose recreational area at Watkins Park.

The 2007 property search ended in 2011 with the optimism that such a complex could be developed as part of the Town’s negotiations with Carroll County on the annexation of the nearby Harrison-Leishear property. Unfortunately, in February of 2021 those negotiations were terminated and the possibility of a sports complex (among other items) on that property ended. That property is still proposed as a future annexation in this Master Plan (ref: Chapter 4 and Master Plan Proposed Annexation Map). If negotiations reopen on the annexation of Harrison-Leishear, then fresh conversations on a much-needed sports complex and Community Center should be restarted.

### PLANS FOR FUTURE PARK FACILITIES

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Parks and recreational facilities are important to the perception of the Town’s character. Attractive and accessible facilities encourage use and are symbols of civic pride. Town parks should be visible, inviting and accessible from public roads. The landscaping and furnishing of park facilities should be done with quality and care. There are always a variety of park types available within a certain community and demand for certain types of recreation is greater in some locations than others. In 2020, a town survey provided feedback on the “most needed” recreational facilities. The 1,710 responses were:

Facility Type	#1 Desire	#2 Desire	#3 Desire
Nature Trails Walking/Biking Paths	61.6%	27.7%	10.7%
Ball Fields	43%	32.2%	24.9%
Wooded Areas Open Space	33%	45.3%	21.7%
Playground Equipment	27.4%	33.5%	39.2%
Basketball+Tennis Courts	24.8%	43.9%	31.3%
Skatepark	23.6%	39.7%	36.7%
Picnic Facilities	13.8%	31%	55.2%

Ref: 2020 Town Survey, Question #8

Approximately 62% of the survey responses indicated their top desired was for Nature Trails and Walking/Biking Paths. Consequently, the Town redoubled its efforts to design and construct the

three-phase Rails-To-Trails Project.

The second desired recreational amenity was more Wooded Areas and Open Space (45%). In response, the Town has focused on closing its Open Space deficit and increased the Open Space acreage requirement for the newest zoning district, Mixed-Use (MXD).

Lastly, the 2020 Survey also asked residents what were the Top-4 “likes” about living in the Town. Only 4 out of 1,740 responses placed our recreational facilities as their #1 response. Clearly, our Town and its Board of Recreation & Parks are motivated to address all of these survey responses.

**Guidelines for Parkland Acquisition and Categories:** There are general guidelines for creation of park facilities for a municipal population sizes. Listed below are some general standards for providing parkland. A municipality should generally comply with these standards and monitor their acquisition of parkland over time to see if it meets the standard criteria.

**Neighborhood Parks** – 5 Acres/ 1,000 pers. Avg size = 1-10 acres with ½ mile service area.

**Community Parks** – 10 Acres/1,000 pers. Avg size = 20-75 acres with 2+ miles of service area.

**District Parks** – 10 Acres/1,000 pers. Avg size = 100+ acres in a Regional Location.

There are also more specialized Regional/Resource types of parks, which may traverse several counties and provide hiking, biking or camping opportunities. Two examples of this type of park would be the Gillis Falls Watershed area located northeast of the Town and the Carroll County Rails-to-Trails Greenway that continues to be designated on their current Master Plan. These greenways are not developed, but both have been included in long-range planning at the County level.

**NEW NEIGHBORHOOD PARK: BACK ACRE CIRCLE (TO BE NAMED)**

As a result of the Brittany Manor subdivision, and separate from the playfield at Twin arch Park, a parcel of 1.15 acres located along Back Acre Circle was deeded to the town and can be developed into a Town Park. A Town-owned trail, also as a result of this development, connects this Back Acre parcel to the Rails- to-Trails Project east of the Waste Water Treatment Plant.

**NEW NEIGHBORHOOD PARK: RAILS-TO-TRAILS (WEST AND EAST PHASES)**

The Rails-to-Trails pathway runs along the right-of-way of the old B&O railroad. The entire trail will be designated as a hiking and biking path and will link up most of the residential developments in the town along the way to make Mount Airy a walking/biking community interconnected to the downtown and to most of the town parks along water and sewer easements. The Town’s development of this linear park is a three-phase effort:

- Rails-To-Trails (Central – Phase 1) was completed in 2023. It is an approximately 1/3-mile path which extends from the Downtown “Rail Yard” and historic train depot eastward to Watkins Park. It includes an elevated boardwalk and concrete ramp providing accessibility over a creek.
- Rails-To-Trails (West – Phase 2) is more than half completed. It extends westward from our Downtown “Rail Yard” to Tempest Lane. The section which connects Hill Street to Main Street runs through the Cold Storage lot which is not owned by the Town and therefore not completed. The Frederick County Bikeways and Trails Plan shows an on-street bikeway along MD 144.
- Rails-To-Trails (East – Phase 3) is not completed. It extends eastward from Watkins Park across MD 27 and along the Waste Water Treatment Facility access and runs one more mile to the main rail line traveling east to Baltimore. This is shown in the Carroll County Comprehensive Plan to continue to Sykesville.



A GROUP OF VOLUNTEERS CLEANING UP THE CENTRAL  
- PHASE 1, RAILS-TO-TRAILS

## PUBLIC SCHOOLS

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Both the Carroll and Frederick County school systems serve Mount Airy.

Elementary school offerings: In Carroll County, the students are served by Parr’s Ridge Elementary and Mount Airy Elementary schools. In Frederick County, the Town’s students are served by Twin Ridge Elementary.

Middle school offerings: In Carroll County, the middle school students are served by Mount Airy Middle School. In Frederick County, the middle school students are served by Windsor Knolls Middle School.

High school offerings: In Carroll County, the Town’s high school-aged students are served by South Carroll High School. In Frederick County, these students are served by Linganore High School. Both of these high schools are some distance from the Town.

## PUBLIC SAFETY

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### POLICE PROTECTION

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In 2015 The Town established its own Police Department to provide police services for the Town. The staffing level of the department (as set by the Town Code) is 1.1 officers per 1,000 residents. The Town's population in 2023 is 9,873 residents. The Mount Airy Police Department (MAPD) is currently budgeted for 12 Sworn Officers (including the Chief) and 2 civilian staff. When necessary, the MAPD is supplemented by the Carroll County Sheriff's Office, Frederick County Sheriff's Office, and Maryland State Police via Mutual Aid Agreements.

The Mount Airy Police Department is currently (2023) located in a rented commercial office space at 205 Center Street. This is a commercial office building with a mixture of medical and vacant suites. The rented space is inadequate for all the required functions of the Police Department including Administrative Offices and functions, Evidence/Property Storage, Patrol Squad Room, Conference/Training Room, Fleet Parking and Storage, and Prisoner Holding Facilities. The space also accommodates the Town's Code Enforcement employee. The location provides good access to the downtown area and our Main Street corridor. This location does not provide direct access to the MD 27 corridor sections of the Town, nor does the current facility adequately support the functions of a full-service police agency. Space is limited and the facility does not meet accepted standards. A new police station must be budgeted, designed, and constructed within this Master Plan cycle to assure the Mount Airy Police Department can continue to meet the Town's public safety needs and comply with all acceptable standards for municipal police facilities.

### FIRE AND RESCUE EMERGENCY SERVICES

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Emergency Medical, Fire, and Rescue Services are provided by the Mount Airy Volunteer Fire Company Inc. (MAVFC). The fire company personnel include approximately 25-30 volunteer responders, numerous volunteer support personnel (non-responders) and 32 career personnel assigned by the Carroll County Department of Fire and EMS (DFEMS). These personnel work a 24 hour on/72 hour off rotating shift. The station is staffed 365 days a year, 24 hours a day by the DFEMS career personnel. There is currently a minimum of 6 personnel assigned each day, two to staff each of our two paramedic units, and 2 to staff the first large unit out. There are two paramedics, one shift Lieutenant, one apparatus driver (FADO), and two firefighter/EMT's assigned each day. This number of personnel will increase as DFEMS grows. Volunteers supplement the contingent of career personnel at various levels. Currently, the primary focus of DFEMS is to provide full time EMS service at the paramedic level. This sometimes cannot be maintained due to numerous calls at a given time or temporary lack of paramedic trained personnel. These personnel may also be used to staff their apparatus if necessary.

The current fire station was constructed in 1991-1992 and was occupied in late 1992. The station is

located at 702 North Main Street.

The “first due” service area, or area where the MAVFC is expected to respond first, extends well beyond the Town limits into Carroll and Frederick counties and a small portion of Howard County. In addition, the MAVFC responds outside the first due response area to assist departments in any of the four surrounding counties, and occasionally to other Maryland counties and surrounding states on “mutual aid” calls. Call totals have been into the 2,000’s over the past several years. The incident total for 2023 is 2,397. The number of alerts was 2,765. These numbers are expected to continue to increase. Approximately 65.5% of the incidents were in Carroll County, 27% in Frederick County, 4.5% in Howard County, and 2.5% in Montgomery County. There was 1 call in Baltimore County. The average response time to calls in the first due area from dispatch to arrival on the scene is between 5 and 10 minutes. Monitoring of response times is done frequently and updated when necessary.

## GOVERNMENT FACILITIES

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### MOUNT AIRY TOWN HALL

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Situated in the heart of the downtown area, the Mount Airy Town Hall is located at 110 South Main Street. At this location, the administrative offices for the Mayor, Water and Sewer, Finance, Engineering, and Community Planning are accessible to the public. Last renovated in 2007, the Town Hall was expanded slightly to accommodate adequate office and meeting room space. Regularly scheduled Town Council meetings are held at this location. The Town Council Room also serves as the primary venue for various Town Commission and Board Meetings, and many Public Hearings. In addition, the Town Hall also serves as the location for an Operations Center when the need arises for the coordination of emergency management services for the Town.



## FLAT IRON BUILDING

Built by William E.T. Smith in 1903, the Smith Building (commonly known as the Flat Iron building) has stood at the heart of downtown, Main Street, Mount Airy, for over 120 years. The town maintains ownership and stewardship of the building and property. The building served prominent businessmen in the early years and was the first meeting place of the American Legion following WWII. It has also served as Town Hall, the local police station, a military museum, and the home of the town's Historical Society. The building's design is unique, adds to the historic streetscape of Main Street, and contributes to the town's listing on the National Register of Historic Places as designated by the National Park Service. Accordingly, the building's history, location and condition warrant preservation and rehabilitation. The town, in cooperation with other organizations, intends to draw from a wide variety of funding sources including grants, bonds, nonprofit fundraising, and municipal funds to pursue a path to preserve the building and the property in a manner which facilitates pedestrian access, promotes historical tourism and enhances economic development for Main Street businesses. Due to the strategic location of the building being situated in the heart of the Downtown, the future uses must be carefully considered to the best benefit to Mt. Airy, its businesses, and residents.



## MOUNT AIRY MAINTENANCE FACILITY

The Mount Airy Maintenance Facility is located just west of Prospect Park. This facility serves as the central operations location for the Department of Public Works. This facility is regarded as a public facility in that it also offers residents the opportunity for used motor oil drop-off and recycling. The current facility sits on 2.5 acres with another four-acre parcel owned by the Town connected to its northwest corner for future expansion.

## CABOOSE VISITOR CENTER

The C-2095 Caboose, lovingly nicknamed Mackenzie, serves as the Mount Airy Visitor Center and has information on many of the local businesses and amenities. Retired from service in 1978, Mackenzie was sent to the B&O Railroad Museum for restoration in 2014 and was returned to Mount Airy in 2016. It serves as a showpiece of the Town's railroad history and is often the hub of many downtown events.



## MOUNT AIRY BRANCH LIBRARY

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The Carroll County Public Library (CCPL)/ Mt. Airy branch provides numerous services and community programs. Activities include youth programs, book clubs, and history programs specific to our home state of Maryland. In addition to three study rooms, the library offers two meeting rooms available by reservation for civic, hobbyist, crafts and other group meetings.

In the 30+ years since the current library was opened, the Town's growth and increased demand for library services has exceeded the size and services currently provided. In addition, the demand on the current library is further increased by its location adjacent to three adjoining counties (i.e., Frederick, Montgomery and Howard). As a result, as of early 2024, CCPL reports that Mt. Airy is the second busiest library in Carroll County in number of items checked out and it leads CCPL in the level of patron use of meeting and study rooms.



Aside from the 2014 renovations, the current library has not received any major funding to expand within its current location or to explore a larger replacement building to accommodate the Town's growth and steady increase in regional use. The Town recognizes there is limited State and County funding for libraries. But the metrics on Town patrons and regional use underscore the reality that the current library underserves our Town and region. The Town and the surrounding county library systems need to initiate a partnership to find a solution during this Master Planning cycle to provide a library facility which better meets our current community and four-county regional needs.

## MOUNT AIRY SENIOR AND COMMUNITY CENTER

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Currently located on the same site and same building with the Mount Airy Branch Library, but operating as a separate facility, is the Mount Airy Senior and Community Center. Supported by the Carroll County Bureau of Aging and Disabilities, a variety of programs such as nutrition, recreation, education, health and socialization are offered Monday through Friday. The center is centrally located and also adjacent to the Wildwood senior housing community.

In addition, our listening sessions in recent years with Mount Airy residents and others who utilize the services provided by the Library and Senior Center increasingly indicate that our local citizens want to see multi-generational activities offered (e.g., a stage and a gym, as well as space for more classes and various forms of recreation). The more versatile and capable the services provided by a

Mount Airy facility that incorporates a public library, senior center, and community center, the better.

The Town currently lacks this type of facility and past Town surveys and Community Needs Assessments have produced a clear signal that it is needed. The 2007 Town Survey and a subsequent 2012 Town Needs Assessment advocated for a center which offers after-school and weekend programs for both children and adults. Our residents look to adjoining counties' community/recreation centers and the positive impact it brings to the sense of "community." the various programs that can become available during the winter months (when outside recreation opportunities diminish), the place for art exhibitions from our residents, and a general indoor "gathering place" for clubs and social groups. The harsh reality is that the inventory of existing buildings within the Town limits to provide a center is discouraging and any discussion of county-funded construction of a new dedicated building is very difficult in the current tight budget environment (which exists at all levels -- State, County and Town). Nonetheless, going beyond a survey and into more detailed criteria for such a center is wise so that the Town can be poised to move forward if the opportunity arises and funding issues are less onerous. Optimistically, perhaps a future annexation may provide part of the solution (e.g., Harrison-Leishear), or a developer's agreement to construct such a center (within a proposed project as infill development) could be another solution.

## SOLID WASTE AND RECYCLING

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Solid Waste disposal is considered a critical public service. The Recycling and Sanitation Commission was created in 1990 to address State legislation requiring mandatory recycling. This commission, of up to nine members, has directed the collection and disposal of solid waste and monitored the ever-changing landscape of recyclables over the past 23 years. Town Code requires mandatory recycling within the Town. Curbside recycling has been in operation since 1992. All paper, glass, plastic and cardboard continue to be collected once weekly for town residents located in Carroll County and on a bi-weekly basis for town residents located in Frederick County. The "single-stream" curbside method used allows all recyclables to be "commingled" in the same recycling container. In 2008, the Town participated in a pilot program with Frederick County that provided 65-gallon bins with lids and wheels; more than tripling the container size. Recycling efforts dramatically increased, resulting in a decrease in landfill tipping fees. The Town extended the pilot program to the Carroll County side of Town



SINGLE STREAM BLUE RECYCLING BINS  
LINE TOWN STREETS ON RECYCLING DAY

in the spring of 2009, experiencing the same degree of success. This method is still in place today.

Solid waste removal within the entire incorporated boundaries of Mount Airy, as well as recycling collection on the Carroll County side of Town, is contracted to a commercial hauler on a tri-annual basis. The Frederick County Division of Solid Waste Management provides recycling collection to those residents on the Frederick County side of the Town.

Mount Airy also provides yard waste pick-up approximately every other week, April until December. Every year, right after the New Year holiday, Christmas trees are collected and recycled.

A yearly large item bulk pick-up is normally scheduled in the Spring for larger items such as lawn mowers, grills, and items that aren't allowed to be collected on a weekly basis.

The Town maintains a Downtown Trash and Recycling Center to help with the logistics of solid waste and recycling collection in the downtown environment. The combination of residential and commercial collections in the historic downtown zone led to this innovative solution to solve the problems of the different needs of these two entities. Our commercial hauler collects the one trash dumpster and two comingled recycling dumpsters three times each week. These dumpsters are contained in a locked-fence area with access to only those authorized individuals and commercial enterprises that have been issued a key.

Mount Airy is committed to state-of-the-art recycling and sanitation programs in the future. Open relationships with the Frederick County and Carroll County Divisions of Public Works will allow Mount Airy to collaborate in efforts to take advantage of the potential savings of increased recycling percentages and decreased solid waste disposal. As new technologies are implemented, Mount Airy's award winning Recycling and Sanitation programs will be ready to lead into the future.

Short term goals for recycling in Mount Airy involve informing the residents as more types of waste become recyclable. Plastic shopping bags, dry cleaning bags and plastic clothing bags are currently recycled separately. As new processes are developed to handle more recyclables, information will be distributed.

A large portion of the costs associated with the solid waste and recycling collection process are the per ton tipping fees paid by the Town. Reducing the tipping fees paid at the landfill or transfer station will save money for the Town and its residents. The Town should explore the viability of implementing a composting program for biodegradable wastes with a commercial company as part of the waste collection program. A second option the town should explore is a program where residents pay a fee based on the amount of waste they dispose of on a weekly basis (pay as you throw). Such a program may encourage more residents to recycle items since they would pay a higher fee for waste disposal.

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## COMMUNITY FACILITIES & PUBLIC SERVICES OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

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**STRATEGIC GOAL A - Adequate Public and Community Facilities:** Improve the capacity and quality of all areas of our Public and Community Facilities so that we provide, at the minimum, an adequate Quality of Life for all residents.

**Objective A.7.1:** Complete the Rails-to-Trails project.

**Objective Leader:** Board of Recreation & Parks in coordination with Town Staff.

**Implementation:**

- Document the remaining work necessary for completion of all phases.
- Establish a program (of specific work and schedule) to complete the work.

**Objective A.7.2:** Complete the planned new park at Back Acre Circle.

**Objective Leader:** Recreation & Parks Commission, in coordination with Town Staff.

**Implementation:**

- Coordinate with the Town Staff to document the current status of effort towards that new park.
- Provide recommendations for park design, amenities, pathways and parking to the construction plan.
- Establish a program (including specific work and scheduling) for completion of the new park.

**Objective A.7.3:** Continuously redevelop and improve existing parks.

**Objective Leader:** Recreation & Parks Commission, in coordination with Town Staff.

**Implementation:**

- Update the documentation of all parks regarding size, amenities, parking, maintenance required and annualized costs.
- Provide prioritized recommendations for improvements for each park. Annotate any safety-related recommendations and urgency to remedy that issue.

- Coordinate through Council Liaison these recommendations for inclusion in the Capital Improvement Program/Budget.

**Objective A.7.4:** Establish the need and design criteria for a new Regional Sports Complex.

**Objective Leader:** Recreation & Parks Commission (in coordination with Town Council and Town Staff)

**Implementation:**

- Gain Town resident input (e.g., survey, Commission meetings, etc.) on a regional Sports Complex and what such a complex would include (e.g., ball fields, parking, pathways, field lighting, other amenities, etc.).
- Based upon input, develop and provide a Proposal for this complex to the Town Council for their guidance. Include in that Proposal the prospective locations for the complex.

**Objective A.7.5:** Improve the Mount Airy Senior and Community Center.

**Objective Leader:** Commission On Aging & Livability (COAL).

**Implementation:**

- COAL will establish quarterly communications with both county's Departments of Citizen Services.
- Collectively develop a shared solution strategy to improve services, the building and parking lot. This strategy should include a comprehensive Town Survey targeting the Center's 60+ yr old patrons as well as the Town's 60+ yr old residents. The purpose of these surveys is to reveal the preferences and desires as well as the similarities and differences of the two groups. The strategy should also include coordination with both Carroll County and Frederick County to better understand the complete array of available Senior Citizen and Community Center services that are being offered in other communities, and to ensure that all of these services are included within the survey in order to determine those most desired by the Town's 60+ residents as well as the general community.

**Objective A.7.6:** Improve the Town’s current Carroll County Branch Library.

**Objective Leader:** Town Staff

**Implementation:**

- In coordination with the Branch Librarian Staff, document the current library’s amenities, programs and offerings. (i.e. Services Inventory) along with any metrics on library use and patronage.
- Gain resident input on the success of current library offerings (e.g., programs, study rooms, material availability, meeting rooms, etc.) along with residents’ desires for additional programs. Also gather patron feedback on any issues with the current facility (e.g., location, parking, lighting, etc.).
- Provide a Proposal to the Town Council for library improvements and receive Council guidance regarding next-steps. Include in the Proposal the inventories of both available and desired new services, the usage metrics, and any options for enlarging the current library or constructing a new library.

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**STRATEGIC GOAL D - Commercial Development:** Pursue our commercial economic development along Center Street (in concert with Goal B) and the South Main Street corridors while exploring suitable sites for 1) a new police station; 2) medical services; and 3) small businesses.

**Objective D.7.1:** Relocate the Mount Airy Police Department (MAPD) from its current leased building to an acceptable, permanent building at an optimal location for best response throughout the Town.

**Objective Leader:** Town Council, in coordination with the Chief, MAPD and Town Staff.

**Implementation:**

- Document the nationally-accepted standards required for a municipal police station.
- Town Staff identify prospective buildings within Town limits to meet those standards. If none are available, shift the effort towards the design of a new building and prospective Town infill locations to build it.

## CHAPTER EIGHT: COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDELINES

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A person's perception of his or her community comes from experiences that are in part shaped by the structure and elements of the public realm. A tree-lined street provides peaceful setting for evening walks. Main Street, the Rail Yard, Park Avenue and the Fairgrounds host festive community events. The mere presence of religious and historic civic buildings can bring both comfort and inspiration. Preserved historic sites help us recall the roots of our past and instill pride in “our hometown.” All of these elements serve a purpose greater than the bricks, mortar, or landscaping from which they are made. It is this ability of the man-made environment to evoke emotional responses that obligates us to manage the public realm in a responsible and thoughtful manner. Lastly, a small-town environment is more of a culture than a physical number of buildings and people. It has similar values, welcoming, engaging, people know each other, and shared events and experiences.

The public realm is the network of places, spaces, and buildings which tie our residents to their sense of a community. It is not enough for new development solely to provide good roads, expand water and sewer systems, or meet building codes. New development should respect the qualities and character of the town. Any new features, facades and elevations must be compatible with the old and contribute to citizens’ pride in their community. Design guidelines help assure this outcome.

The Master Plan can play an important role in providing design guidelines which preserve and enhance the Town’s character and encourage environmentally responsible designs, building construction, and landscapes.

### DESIGNING FOR THE SHARED VISION OF THE COMMUNITY

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In response to the policy recommendations set forth in the 2003 Comprehensive Master Plan, The Town adopted two separate Design Guidelines in 2010:

- **The Design Guidelines:** *Additions and New Construction for the Town of Mount Airy, Maryland, and*
- **Design Guidelines:** *Rehabilitation of Historic Properties*

These Design Guidelines reflected the residents’ desires during the 2008-2010 period for new construction architecture. The primary objective of these guidelines was to encourage aesthetic

compatibility in building design and to work in concert with the Subdivision and Zoning Regulations to maximize high-quality results in both form and function.

## IMPROVED DESIGN GUIDELINES

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Preceding the submission of this Master Plan for Town Council review / approval, the Director of Planning and the Planning Commission has reviewed many site plans, pre-concept plans, concept plans, and site plan amendments. In all of these reviews, building design, building facades and streetscape design are examined against the questions of:

- ✓ “Is that proposed building’s exterior design and materials appropriate for the surrounding area?”; and
- ✓ “Can the proposed design be improved to enhance walkability, open space for the residents, and traffic routing?”

These questions, and others like them that are focused on achieving an optimal design with developers, could be addressed and codified via updated Town Design Guidelines. The new guidelines would include considering such concepts as “Complete Streets” (briefly discussed in Chapter 6), the deliberate focus on Open Space at the forefront of a subdivision’s layout (rather than “seeing what space is left over and declaring it as open space”), and other contemporary community design concepts to ensure the Town’s overall function and form are appealing.

Therefore, the following Objective is necessary to improve our future proposed development designs, concepts, and plans.

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## COMMUNITY DESIGN GUIDELINES OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES

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**STRATEGIC GOAL B - Responsible Growth:** Pursue growth through infill development, redevelopment and annexations while eliminating our Open Space deficit, protecting our environment, safety and health, and preserving our cultural/historical resources and community identity.

**Objective B.8.1:** Review/Revise the 2010 Design Guidelines.

**Objective Leader:** Planning Commission in coordination with the Town Director of Planning and Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- With approval from the Mayor, Town Council and the Town Administrator – the Town Planning Commission establishes a separate, temporary *Design Guidelines’ Review Committee* comprised of two (2) Commission members, one (1) Town resident (appointed by the Mayor and approved by the Council), the Town Zoning Administrator, and the Town Engineer.
- The Committee establishes a 6-month workplan to review all existing Town Design Guidelines and provide update(s) for the Planning Commission’s review/approval. In their review, the committee will survey other existing design guidelines such as:
  - *Md Dept of Planning, Models and Guidelines for Infill Development (Oct, 2001);*
  - any Carroll County design guidelines;
  - the *Frederick County Design Guidelines (Updated Jan, 2010);*
  - the *Frederick Town Historic District Design Guidelines (2019);*
  - the Frederick County Form-Based Code (<https://www.cityoffrederickmd.gov/1584/Form-Based-Code>)
  - Sykesville Historic District Design Guidelines (February 2024), <https://townofsykesville.org/DocumentCenter/View/367/Downtown-Historic-District-Commission-Guidelines-PDF>
  - any environmentally responsible designs, building construction, and landscapes; and
  - Complete Streets concept and designs.
  - Green Streets concepts and designs.
- Upon Planning Commission approval, the revised draft Design Guidelines are delivered to the Town Council for their review/approval.

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## CHAPTER NINE: SUMMARY OF MASTER PLAN OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

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The purpose of this chapter is to summarize the preceding chapters' Objectives and Implementing Strategies.

### THE TOWN OF MT. AIRY'S VISION

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**VISION STATEMENT:** Mt. Airy will be a high-quality environment for living, working, learning, and playing with more-than-adequate public facilities; where land use policies have protected our environment, safety and health, and strengthened our heritage of being a close community with small town charm.

### STRATEGIC GOALS

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The Town's five (5) Strategic Goals are:

**A. Adequate Public and Community Facilities:** Improve the capacity and quality of all areas of our Public and Community Facilities so that we provide, at the minimum, an adequate Quality of Life for all residents.

**B. Responsible Growth:** Pursue growth through infill development, redevelopment and annexations while eliminating our Open Space deficit, protecting our environment, safety and health, and preserving our cultural/historical resources and community identity.

**C. Residential Development and Housing Diversity:** Pursue a range of housing options that are responsive to the community's needs.

**D. Commercial Development:** Pursue our commercial economic development along Center Street (in concert with Goal B) and the South Main Street corridors while exploring suitable sites for 1) a new police station; 2) medical services; and 3) small businesses.

**E. Industrial Development:** Grow our industrial districts while protecting our environment, safety and health while preserving our cultural/historical resources and community identity.

## **GOAL A SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES**

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**Adequate Public and Community Facilities:** Improve the capacity and quality of all areas of our Public and Community Facilities so that we provide, at the minimum, an adequate Quality of Life for all residents.

**Objective A.3.1:** Increase the Town's well water reserve.

**Objective Leader:** Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Search for additional drinking water sources via well drilling or Brinkley Bill application of existing wells where source capacity already exists.
- Require large developments to provide ample water capacity with their development to support the Town's calculation of proposed demand and drought reserve (Category 11).

**Objective A.4.1:** Reduce our Open Space deficit.

**Objective Lead:** Town Director of Planning and Zoning Administrator, in coordination with the Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Update the amount of Open Space acreage needed to remove the Town's deficit.
- Work with appropriate Commissions to prioritize the list of Future Annexation properties which can reduce or remove the deficit.
- Assess how smaller types of open-space options could be encouraged within communities.
- Develop an outreach/communications strategy for Town engagements with the County and/or property owners; then gain Town Council and Mayoral approval and guidance for implementing those engagements.

**Objective A.6.1:** Pedestrian focus -- Increase the Town's safe walkability by adding sidewalks and pedestrian crossing zones along highly-traveled roadways and/or between residential areas and popular venues.

**Objective Lead:** Streets & Roads Commission

**Implementation:**

- Add sidewalks along the south side of Twin Arch Rd. between the MD 27 intersection and the entrance to the MAVFC Fairgrounds.
- Add a pedestrian crossing across Twin Arch Rd. at the intersection with MD 27.
- Add sidewalks on the west side of N. Main St. between the Watersville Rd. intersection and Greentree subdivision limits.
- Improve the current pedestrian crossings along Main Street.
- Add a pedestrian crossing on N. Main Street adjacent to Liquidity Aleworks.

**Objective A.6.2:** Advocate and assist in the design, solution development, and construction of a pedestrian crossing under MD 27 to connect the rails-to trails pathway to the east.

**Objective Lead:** Streets & Roads Commission, in coordination with Recreation & Parks Commission and the Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Task organize a committee integrating members of the Streets & Roads and Parks & Recreation Commissions with the Town Engineer and other needed engineering and traffic safety expertise to establish optimal location, design criterion, and possible solutions.
- Partner with Carroll County, the State Highway Administration, developers, and other stakeholders to deliver shared solutions for funding and implementing a pedestrian tunnel crossing.

**Objective A.6.3:** Assist in the design and solution development for improvements to Twin Arch Road congestion.

**Objective Lead:** Streets & Roads, in coordination with the Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Task organize a committee integrating members of the Streets & Roads with the Town Engineer to establish design criterion, and possible solutions to that criterion, for mitigating the congestion on Twin Arch Rd.
- Communicate your ideas to appropriate Carroll County and MDOT authorities to encourage solution adoption and funding for the improvement(s).

**Objective A.6.4:** Create a transportation network model for Town and pertinent surrounding County roads/streets.

**Objective Lead:** Streets & Roads, in coordination with the Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Task organize a committee integrating members of the Streets & Roads with the Town Engineer to survey off-the-shelf transportation network models/modeling,
- Educated by current model options, establish criteria for this Town's needs from a model.
- With Town-specific modeling criterion/expectations established, determine which current models meet our needs.
- Determine which of the available and qualified models is the optimal/cost-effective model for our needs, and make the argument for funding and acquisition with the Town Council.

**Objective A.7.1:** Complete the Rails-to-Trails project.

**Objective Leader:** Recreation & Parks Commission

**Implementation:**

- Document the remaining work necessary for completion of all phases.
- Establish a program (of specific work and schedule) to complete the work.

**Objective A.7.2:** Complete the planned new park at Back Acre Circle.

**Objective Leader:** Recreation & Parks Commission, in coordination with Town Staff

**Implementation:**

- Coordinate with the Town Staff to document the current status of effort towards that new park.
- Provide recommendations for park design, amenities, pathways and parking to the construction plan.
- Establish a program (including specific work and scheduling) for completion of the new park.

**Objective A.7.3:** Continuously redevelop and improve existing parks.

**Objective Leader:** Recreation & Parks Commission, in coordination with Town Staff

**Implementation:**

- Update the documentation of all parks regarding size, amenities, parking, maintenance required and annualized costs.
- Provide prioritized recommendations for improvements for each park. Annotate any safety-related recommendations and urgency to remedy that issue.
- Coordinate through Council Liaison these recommendations for inclusion in the Capital Improvement Program/Budget.

**Objective A.7.4:** Establish the need and design criteria for a new Regional Sports Complex.

**Objective Leader:** Recreation & Parks Commission (in coordination with Town Council and Town Staff)

**Implementation:**

- Gain Town resident input (e.g., survey, Commission meetings, etc.) on a regional Sports Complex and what such a complex would include (e.g., ball fields, parking, pathways, field lighting, other amenities, etc.).
- Based upon input, develop and provide a Proposal for this complex to the Town Council for their guidance. Include in that Proposal the prospective locations for the complex.

**Objective A.7.5:** Improve the Mount Airy Senior and Community Center.

**Objective Leader:** Commission On Aging & Livability (COAL)

**Implementation:**

- COAL will establish quarterly communications with both county's Departments of Citizen Services.
- Collectively develop a shared solution strategy to improve services, the building and parking lot. This strategy should include a comprehensive Town Survey targeting the Center's 60+ yr old patrons as well as the Town's 60+ yr old residents. The purpose of these surveys is to reveal the preferences and desires as well as the similarities and differences of the two groups. The strategy should also include coordination with both Carroll County and

Frederick County to better understand the complete array of available Senior Citizen and Community Center services that are being offered in other communities, and to ensure that all of these services are included within the survey in order to determine those most desired by the Town's 60+ residents as well as the general community.

**Objective A.7.6:** Improve the Town's current Carroll County Branch Library.

**Objective Leader:** Town Staff

**Implementation:**

- In coordination with the Branch Librarian Staff, document the current library's amenities, programs and offerings. (i.e. Services Inventory) along with any metrics on library use and patronage.
- Gain resident input on the success of current library offerings (e.g., programs, study rooms, material availability, meeting rooms, etc.) along with residents' desires for additional programs. Also gather patron feedback on any issues with the current facility (e.g., location, parking, lighting, etc.).
- Provide a Proposal to the Town Council for library improvements and receive Council guidance regarding next-steps. Include in the Proposal the inventories of both available and desired new services, the usage metrics, and any options for enlarging the current library or constructing a new library.

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## **GOAL B SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES**

**Responsible Growth:** Pursue growth through infill development, redevelopment and annexations while eliminating our Open Space deficit, protecting our environment, safety and health, and preserving our cultural/historical resources and community identity.

**Objective B.3.1:** As technology becomes available, continuously improve water testing technology.

**Objective Leader:** Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Implement the installation of better PFAS monitoring technology, as it becomes available, at all of the Town's Water Treatment Plants.
- Replace existing equipment with newer monitoring technology for all known contaminants.

**Objective B.3.2:** Document and enforce stormwater runoff within the Town.

**Objective Leader:** Town Engineer, in coordination with the Public Works Director

**Implementation:**

- Continue to work with Carroll County to meet the State-mandated NPDES and stormwater management improvements and mapping on existing land development.
- Ensure all new development is thoroughly reviewed by Carroll County’s stormwater management office to meet the requirements of the State and Town code.
- Establish new metrics to measure and monitor the impact of climate change on the current stormwater infrastructure. Apply those results towards increased funding of more robust and/or improved stormwater management infrastructure.

**Objective B.3.3:** Increase forested land within and adjacent to the Town.

**Objective Leader:** Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Ensure all new development is thoroughly reviewed to determine compliance with the 20% forested (residential) and 15% forested (industrial) requirements for the minimum amount of forested land in those districts.
- In cooperation with both Counties, review the current Forestation Banks Program with the objective to encourage any developer who cannot meet the above requirements to:
  - provide forestation plantings on equal acreage on in-Town parcels; or
  - require any outside-Town Forestation Bank purchase by a developer to be provided on available land adjacent to the Town’s boundaries.
- In cooperation with the appropriate Town Commission and /or Board, assess those Town-owned areas where additional forestation or shrubbery can benefit residents. Then, use that list:
  - in the implementation efforts above, and
  - in cooperation with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Frederick County and /or Carroll County, seek a cooperative agreement on a reforestation project to fulfill those prioritized Town forestation/shrubbery needs. If necessary, use the 2008 effort in Watkins Park as a model and precedence case.

**Objective B.4.1:** Pursue recommended rezoning of selected Town properties.

**Objective Lead:** Town Director of Planning and Zoning Administrator

**Implementation:**

- Establish a priority of properties (listed in Chapter 4) to be rezoned with rationale.
- Develop an outreach/communications strategy for Town engagements with the County and/or property owners; then gain Town Council and Mayoral approval and guidance for implementing those engagements to pursue rezoning.

**Objective B.4.2:** Complete the rezoning deliberations and process of those recommended properties depicted within this Master Plan.

**Objective Lead:** Town Director of Planning and Zoning Administrator, in coordination with the Planning Commission, Town Council, and applicable property owners.

**Implementation:**

- Gain Town Council approval to proceed with recommended rezonings within this Master Plan.
- For approved rezonings, make any necessary Land Use changes and advise the applicable County of those new Land Use designations.
- In preparation for possible annexations, discuss with the applicable county the determination of an appropriate land use designation and zoning classification for those Conservation areas which may have very low-density clustered residential developments in order to retain the agricultural character of the Town’s physical boundary and the “rural feel” that the Town seeks.
- Proceed, per the code, to initiate the rezoning process of Council-approved properties.

**Objective B.8.1:** Review/Revise the 2010 Design Guidelines in coordination with the Town Director of Planning and Town Engineer.

**Objective Leader:** Planning Commission

**Implementation:**

- With approval from the Mayor, Town Council and the Town Administrator – the Town Planning Commission establishes a separate, temporary *Design Guidelines’ Review Committee* comprised of two (2) Commission members, one (1) Town resident (appointed

by the Mayor and approved by the Council), the Town Zoning Administrator, and the Town Engineer.

- The Committee establishes a 6-month workplan to review all existing Town Design Guidelines and provide update(s) for the Planning Commission’s review/approval. In their review, the committee will survey other existing design guidelines such as:
  - *Md Dept of Planning, Models and Guidelines for Infill Development (Oct, 2001)*;
  - any Carroll County design guidelines;
  - the *Frederick County Design Guidelines (Updated Jan, 2010)*;
  - the *Frederick Town Historic District Design Guidelines (2019)*;
  - the Frederick County Form-Based Code (<https://www.cityoffrederickmd.gov/1584/Form-Based-Code>)
  - Sykesville Historic District Design Guidelines (February 2024), <https://townofsykesville.org/DocumentCenter/View/367/Downtown-Historic-District-Commission-Guidelines-PDF>
  - any environmentally responsible designs, building construction, and landscapes; and
  - Complete Streets concept and designs.
- Upon Planning Commission approval, the revised draft Design Guidelines are delivered to the Town Council for their review/approval.

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## **GOAL C SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES**

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**Residential Development and Housing Diversity:** Pursue a range of housing options that are responsive to the community’s needs.

**Objective C.4.1:** Fully understand the potential residential infill development in order to gauge the potential demands upon critical public facilities.

**Objective Lead:** Town Director of Planning and Zoning Administrator, in coordination with the Town Engineer

**Implementation:**

- Update the Town’s potential capacity of vacant residential-zoned parcels (including MXD and DTZ).
- Using 2.75 persons-per-potential dwelling unit, maintain the calculations of future growth demands upon water, sewer, and police services.

## **GOAL D SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES**

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**Commercial Development:** Pursue our commercial economic development along Center Street (in concert with Goal B) and the South Main Street corridors while exploring suitable sites for 1) a new police station; 2) medical services; and 3) small businesses.

**Objective D.5.1:** Begin the urban renewal (aka “redevelopment”) of properties considered as “blighted areas” or “slum areas.”

**Objective Lead:** Town Council or Council-designated committee acting under the Council’s authority for urban renewal

**Implementation:**

- Using the chapter’s proposed table of properties needing redevelopment as a start-point, determine what properties require urban renewal or redevelopment. In this assessment, use approved criteria for what constitutes “blighted” or “slum.”
- Prioritize the final assessment results to begin the Town’s engagement with property owners to begin urban renewal or redevelopment. Property prioritization is to be based upon criteria set by the Town Council or by its designated committee.
- Establish a new process (to become approved Town Code) for property-owner engagement to begin urban renewal/redevelopment, and gain Town Council and Town Attorney approval before its use.
- With Town Council approval, begin the approved process for urban renewal.

**Objective D.5.2:** Drive commercial districts’ infill development.

**Objective Lead:** Town Director of Planning and Zoning Administrator, in coordination with the Economic Development Commission (EDC), and Planning Commission

**Implementation:**

- Update the Town’s inventory of vacant commercially-zoned parcels and develop (with assistance from the Economic Development Commission) outreach strategies to vacant parcel owners to encourage commercial development.
- The EDC develops a marketing strategy to commercial developers (with an emphasis on new medical services’ facilities) to invite commercial development within the Town. Implementation of the marketing strategy to be recommended by the EDC and approved by the Town Council.

**Objective D.5.3:** Identify Approaches for Continuing to Grow the Town's Economy

**Objective Lead:** The Economic Development Commission, in partnership with the town's Director of Community Development, and in coordination with the Mount Airy Main Street Association, the Greater Mount Airy Chamber of Commerce, and others

**Implementation:**

- Identify approaches to further encourage economic development within the town by promoting historical tourism that draws upon our town's unique heritage and its rails to trails paths.
- Identify approaches to further encourage economic development within the town by supporting small business growth, to include a focus on continuing to revitalize our historic downtown zone.

**Objective D.7.1:** Relocate the Mount Airy Police Department (MAPD) from its current leased building to an acceptable, permanent building at an optimal location for best response throughout the Town.

**Objective Leader:** Town Council, in coordination with the Chief, MAPD and Town Staff.

**Implementation:**

- Document the nationally-accepted standards required for a municipal police station.
- Town Staff identify prospective buildings within Town limits to meet those standards. If none are available, shift the effort towards the design of a new building and prospective Town infill locations to build it.

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## **GOAL E SUPPORTING OBJECTIVES AND IMPLEMENTING STRATEGIES**

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**Industrial Development:** Grow our industrial districts while protecting our environment, safety and health while preserving our cultural/historical resources and community identity.

**Objective E.5.1:** Drive industrial districts' infill development.

**Objective Lead:** Town Director of Planning and Zoning Administrator, in coordination with the Economic Development Commission and Planning Commission

**Implementation:**

- Update the Town's inventory of vacant industrial-zoned parcels and develop (with assistance from the Economic Development Commission) outreach strategies to vacant parcel owners to encourage industrial development.

## APPENDIX – MAPS

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Zoning Map – Town of Mt. Airy	R

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# MOUNT AIRY

MARYLAND

MASTER

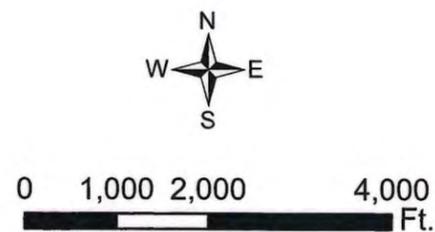
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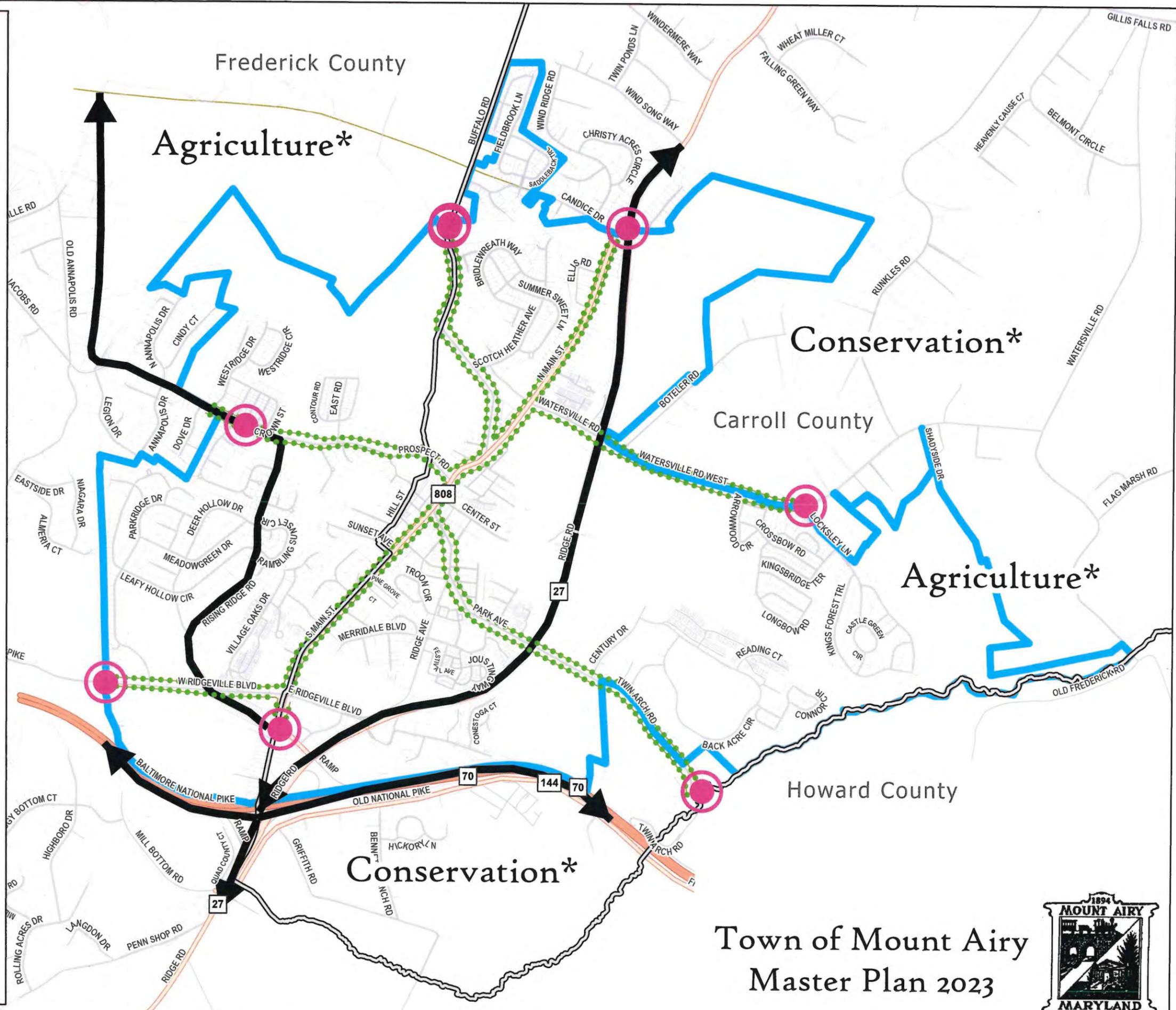
# Regionalism Policies

-  Existing Gateways
-  Existing Regional Traffic Arteries
-  Proposed Landscape Enhancements
-  Ultimate Town Boundary
-  County Border

\* Encouraged County Land-use Policies



All data are approximate and are for planning purposes only. Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and Land Management. 2023 (kc)



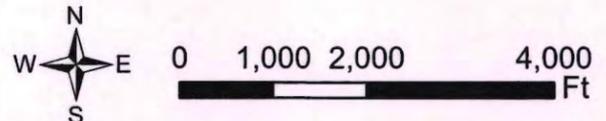
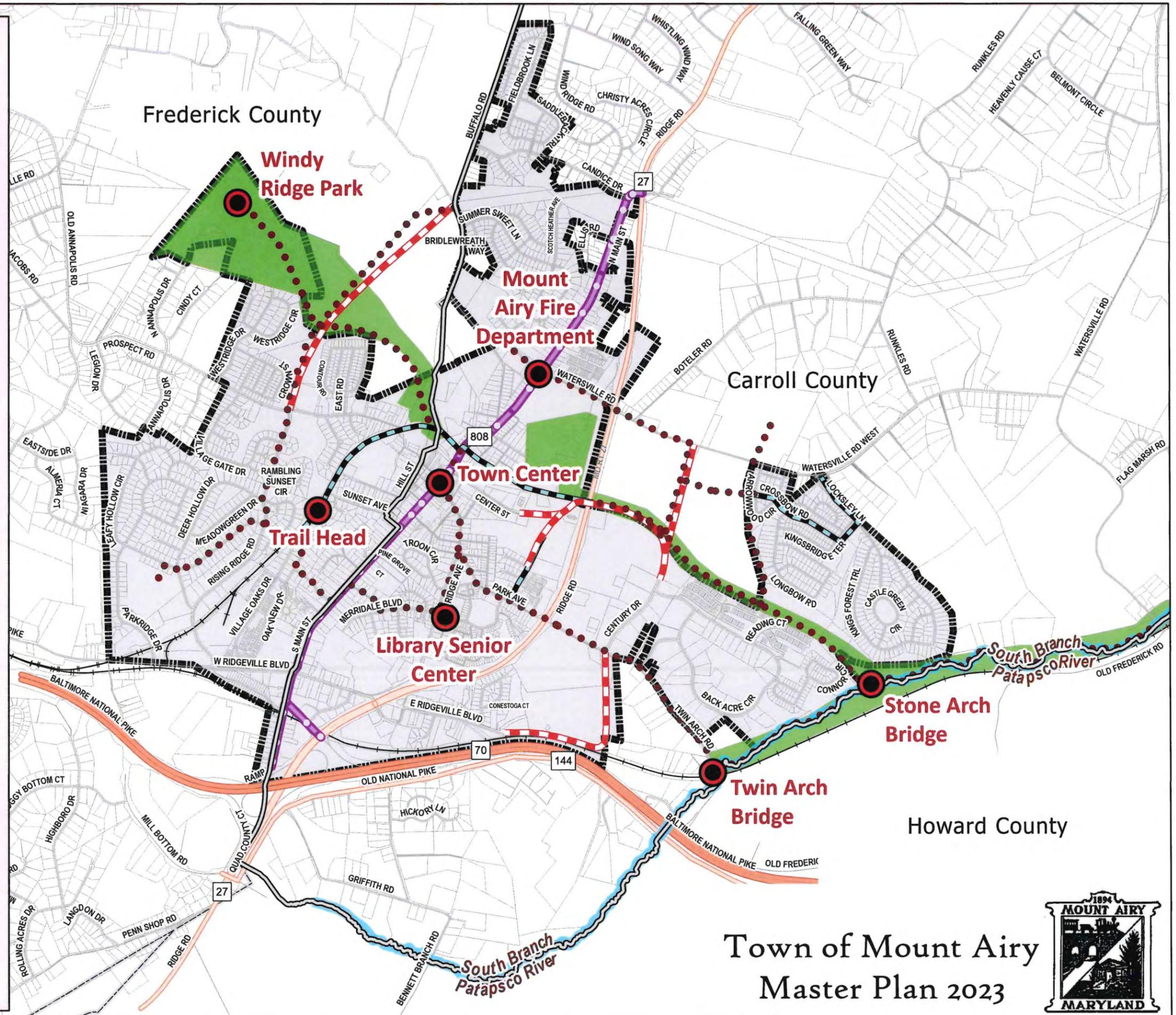
Town of Mount Airy  
Master Plan 2023



# Community Framework

## Legend

-  Community Destination Point
-  Main Street
-  Proposed Interconnected Street
-  Proposed Trail
-  Pedestrian Path
-  Linear Park
-  Incorporated Area
-  County Border



All data are approximate and are for planning purposes only. Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and Land Management, 2024 (kc)

Town of Mount Airy  
Master Plan 2023



# Topography

## Legend

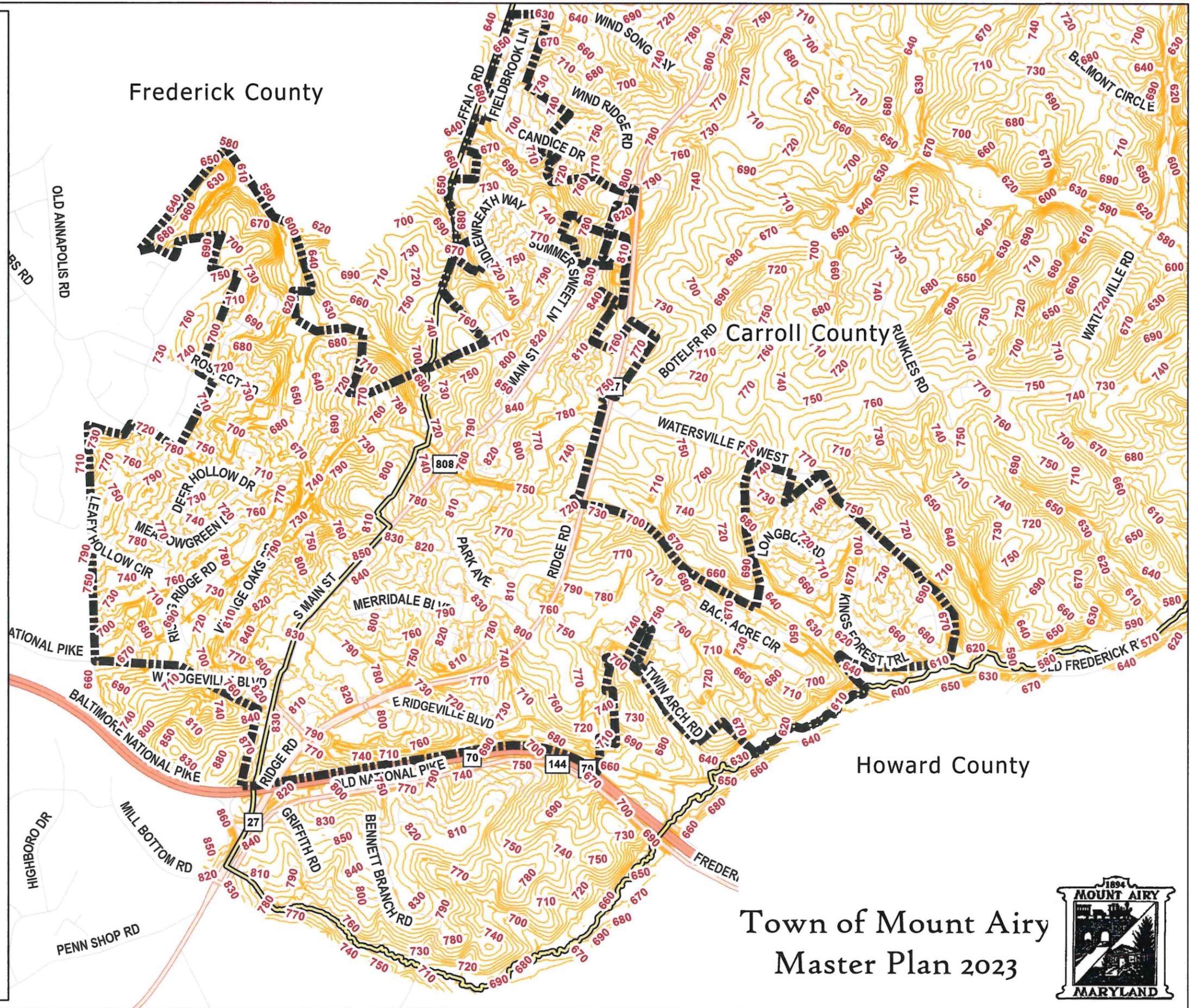
Contours 2014 & 2015

-  Elevations
-  Incorporated Area
-  County Border



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All data are approximate and are for planning purposes only.  
Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and  
Land Management. 2023 (kc)



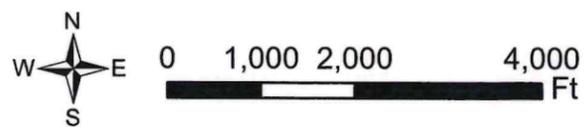
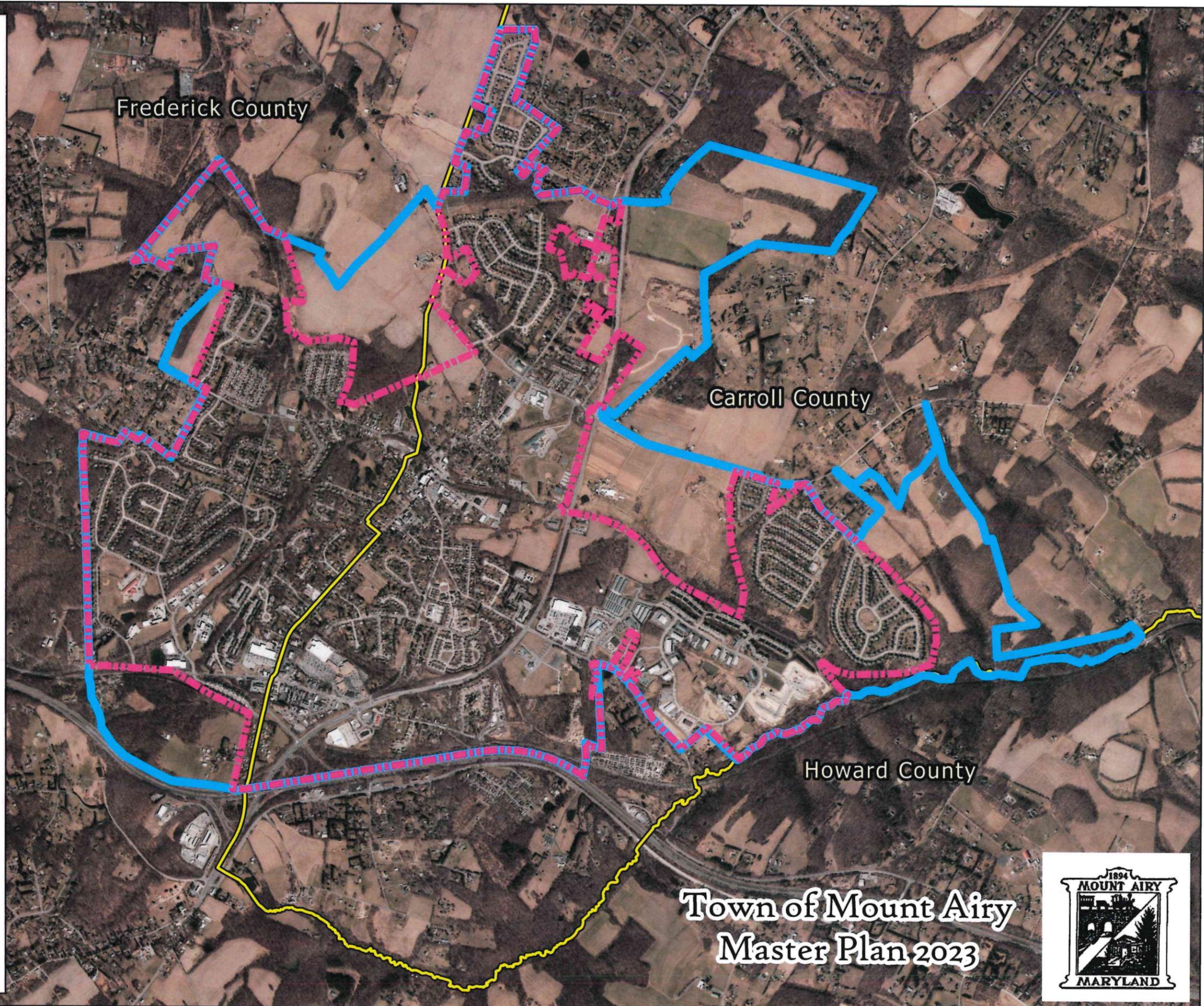
Town of Mount Airy  
Master Plan 2023



# Mount Airy Orthophoto

## Legend

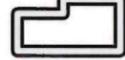
-  Incorporated Area
-  Ultimate Town Boundary
-  County Border

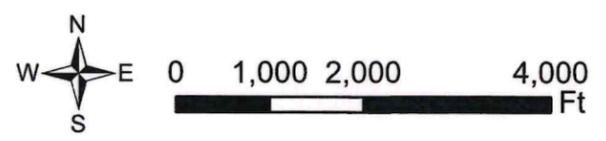


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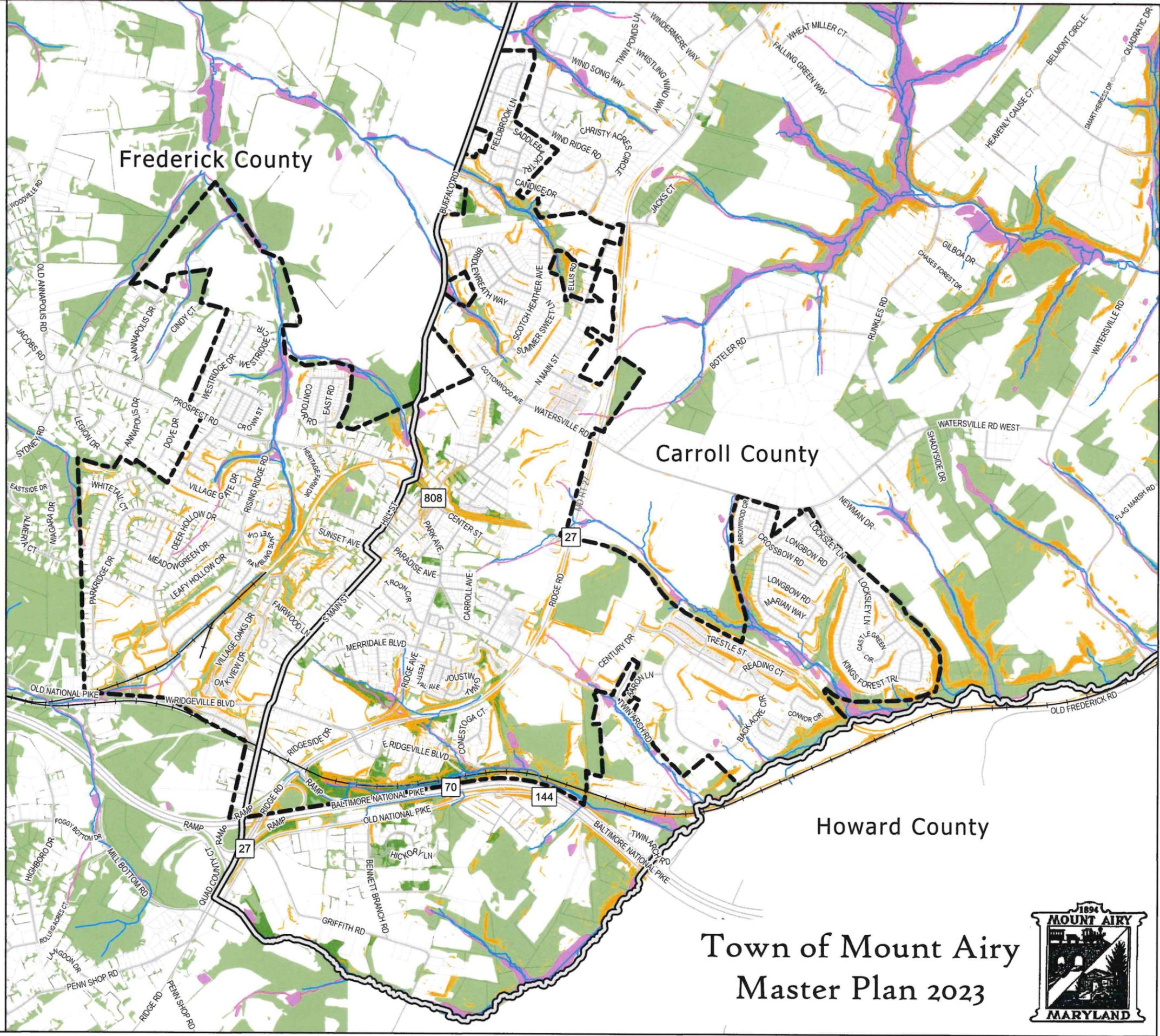


# Natural Features

-  Stream
-  Wetland
-  Steep Slope (over 25%)
-  Forest Cover
-  Incorporated Area
-  County Border



All data are approximate and are for planning purposes only. Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and Land Management. 2024 (kc)

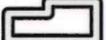


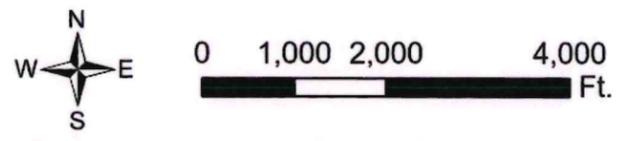
## Town of Mount Airy Master Plan 2023



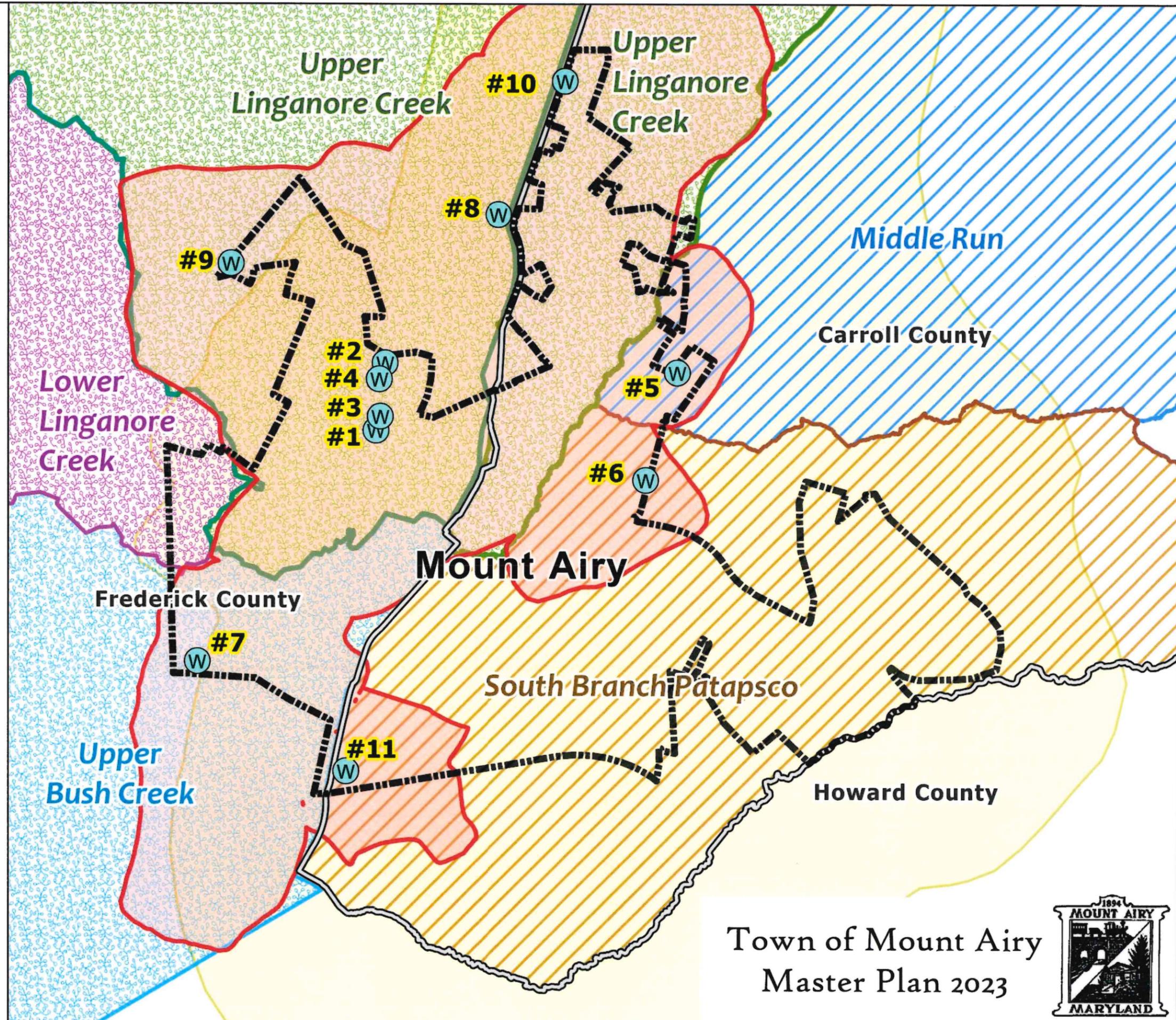
# Water Resource Management Areas

## Legend

-  Production Wells
-  Middle Run (Car.) (021309081029)
-  South Branch Patapsco (Car.) (021309081028)
-  Upper Linganore Creek (Car./Fred.) (021403020235)
-  Lower Linganore Creek (Fred.) (021403020234)
-  Upper Bush Creek (Fred.) (021403020228)
-  Wellhead Protection Area
-  Aquifer Recharge Area
-  Incorporated Area
-  County Border



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 Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and Land Management. 2024 (kc)



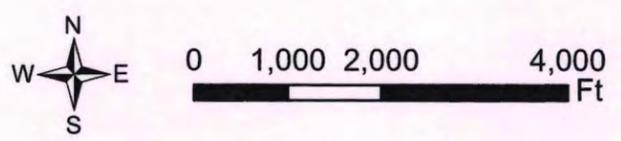
Town of Mount Airy  
 Master Plan 2023



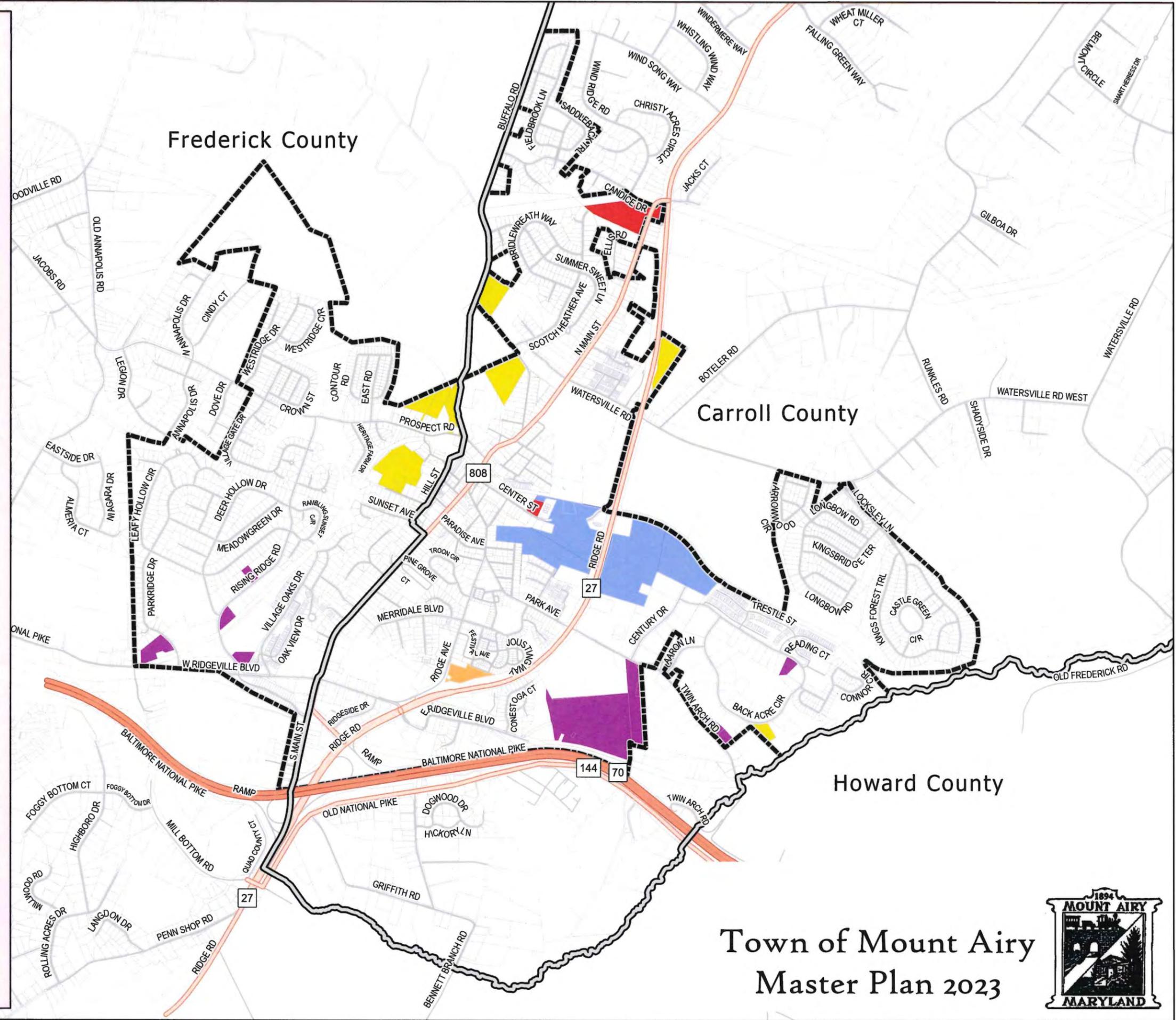
# Vacant Land Inventory

## Zoning

-  RE ~ Residential Existing
-  R2 ~ Low Density Residential
-  R3 ~ Medium Density Residential
-  R5 ~ Medium Density Residential
-  R7 ~ High Density Residential
-  DTZ
-  CC ~ Community Commercial
-  LC ~ Limited Commercial
-  NP ~ Neighborhood Professional
-  I ~ Industrial
-  MXD
-  County Border
-  Incorporated Area



All data are approximate and are for planning purposes only. Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and Land Management. 2024 (kc)



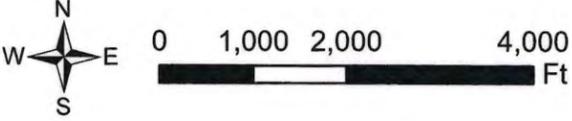
Town of Mount Airy  
Master Plan 2023



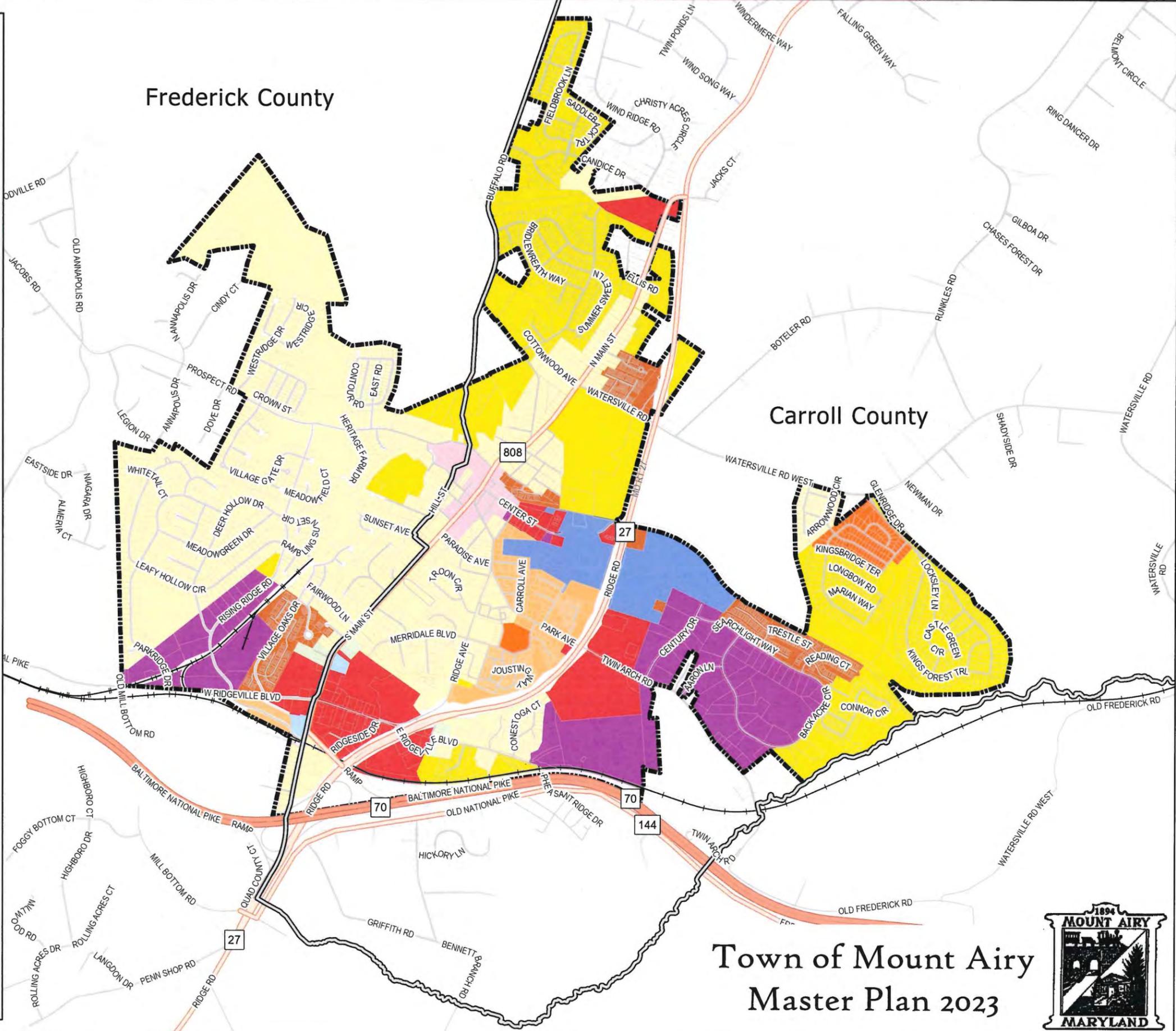
# Existing Zoning

## Legend

- RE ~ Residential Existing
- R2 ~ Low Density Residential
- R3 ~ Medium Density Residential
- R5 ~ Medium Density Residential
- R7 ~ High Density Residential
- DTZ
- CC ~ Community Commercial
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Town of Mount Airy  
Master Plan 2023

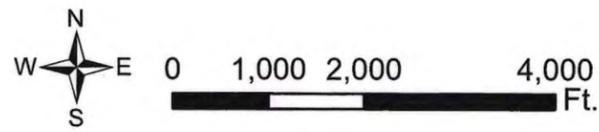


# Existing Use of Land

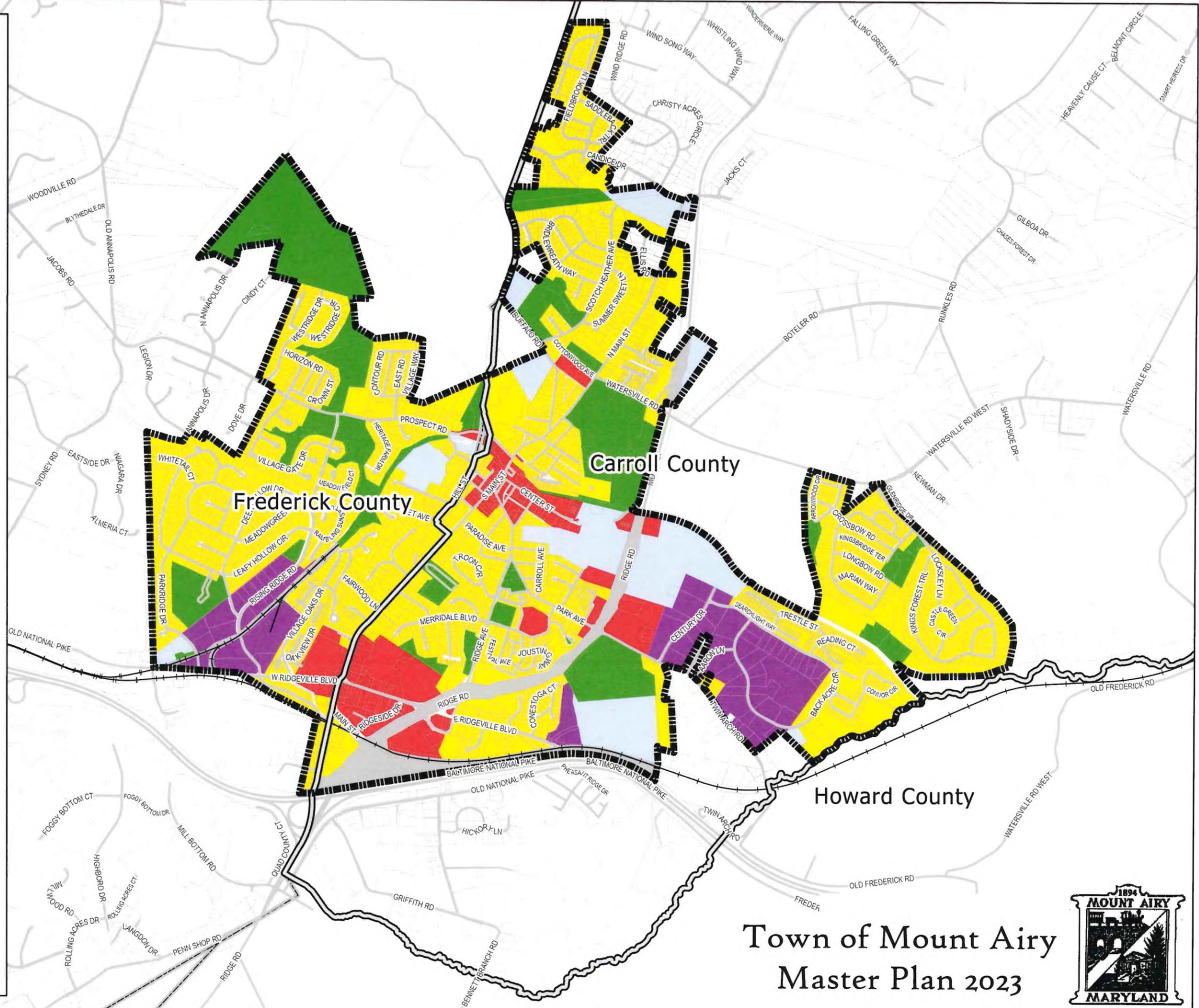
## Legend

-  Residential
-  Commercial
-  Industrial
-  Vacant
-  Open Space
-  Transportation
-  Incorporated Area
-  County Border

Non-Residential Special Exceptions are considered commercial land use.



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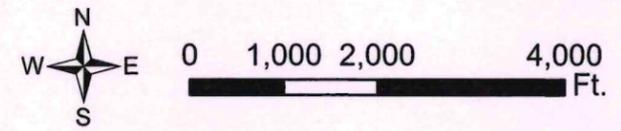
# Town of Mount Airy Master Plan 2023



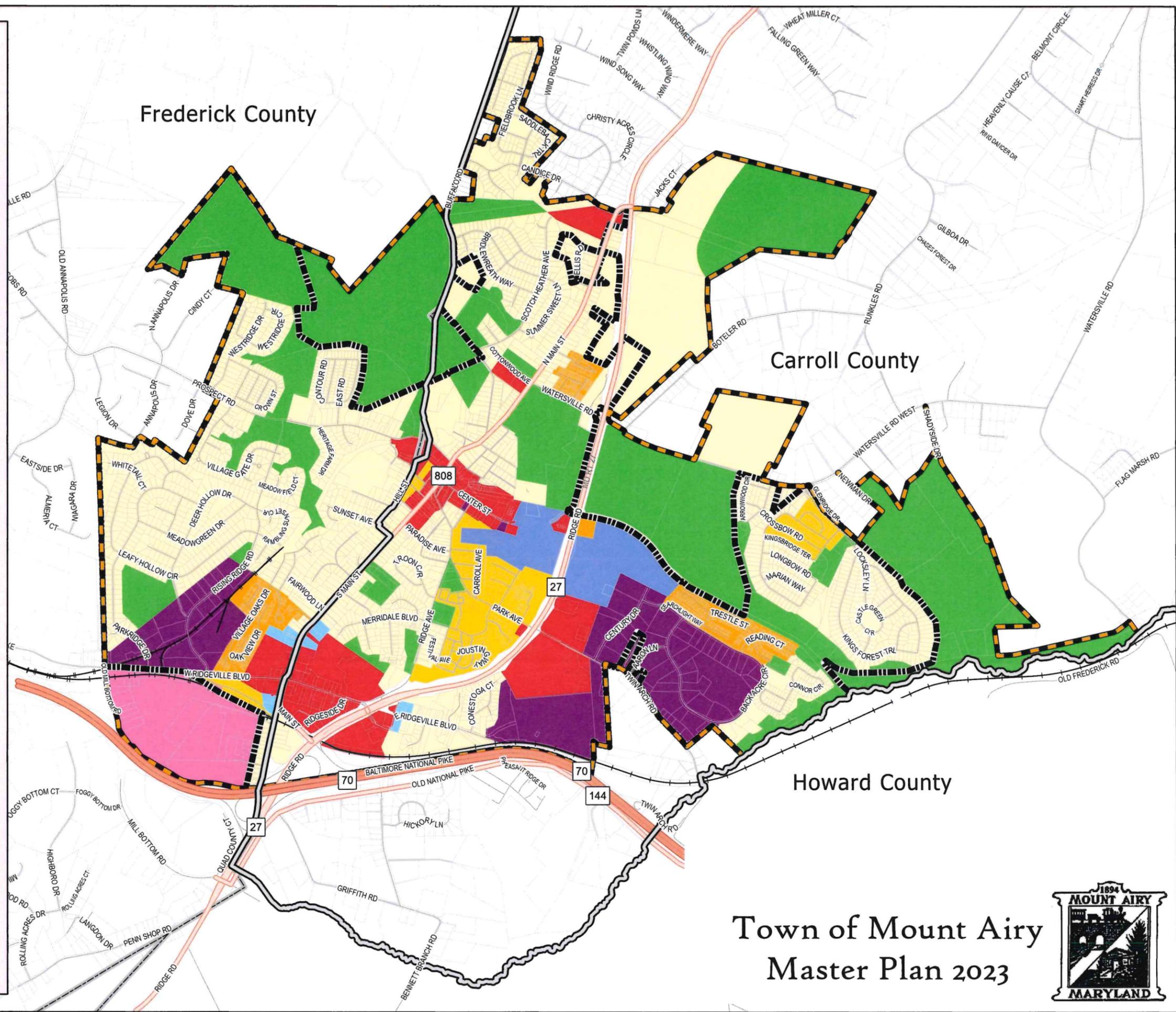
# Designated Comprehensive Land Use

## Legend

-  Low Density Residential
-  Medium Density Residential
-  High Density Residential
-  Conservation
-  General Commercial
-  Transitional Commercial
-  Office Park Employment
-  Industrial
-  MXD
-  Incorporated Area
-  Growth Area
-  County Border



All data are approximate and are for planning purposes only. Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and Land Management. 2024 (kc)



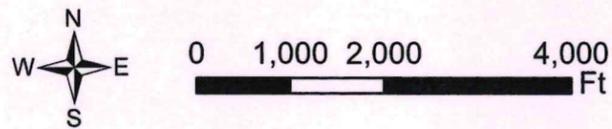
Town of Mount Airy  
Master Plan 2023



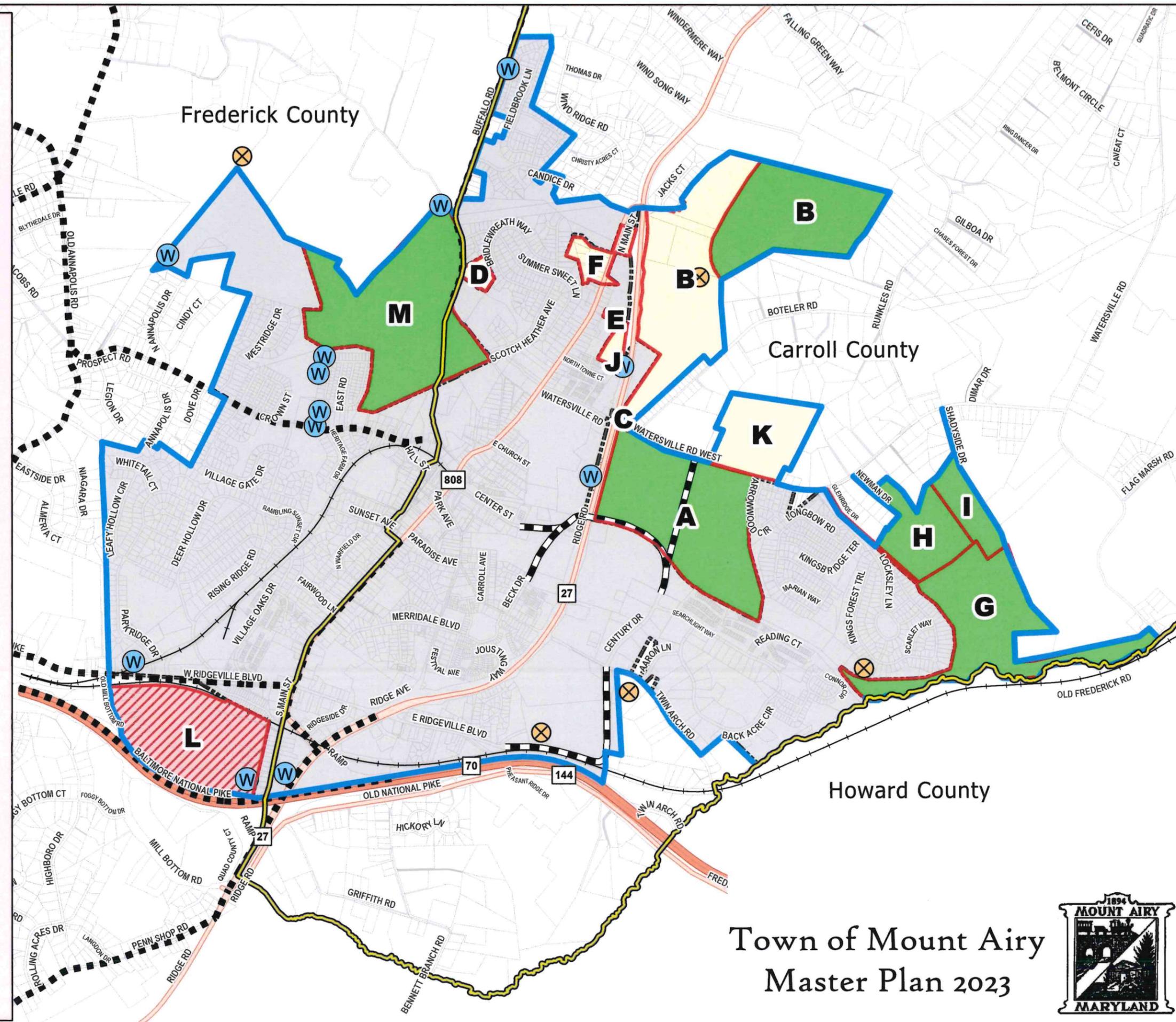
# Future Annexation Areas

-  Potential Annexation Areas
-  Incorporated Area
-  Conservation
-  Low Density
-  Office Park Employment
-  Ultimate Town Boundary
-  County Border
-  Planned Road Improvements
-  Proposed Road (Fred)
-  Production Well
-  Potential Well

- A. Knill Property
- B. Leishear/Harrison Properties
- C. Myers Property
- D. Hame Property
- E. Wagner Property
- F. Dorseytown
- G. Doubs Property
- H. Springwood Property
- I. Spicer Property
- J. Nell Property
- K. Warfield Property
- L. South Main Street Area
- M. Kraft / Royston



All data are approximate and are for planning purposes only.  
 Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and  
 Land Management, 2024 (kc)



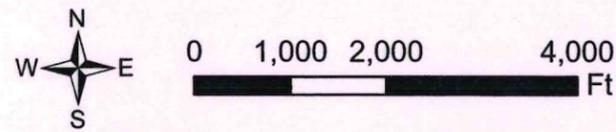
Town of Mount Airy  
 Master Plan 2023



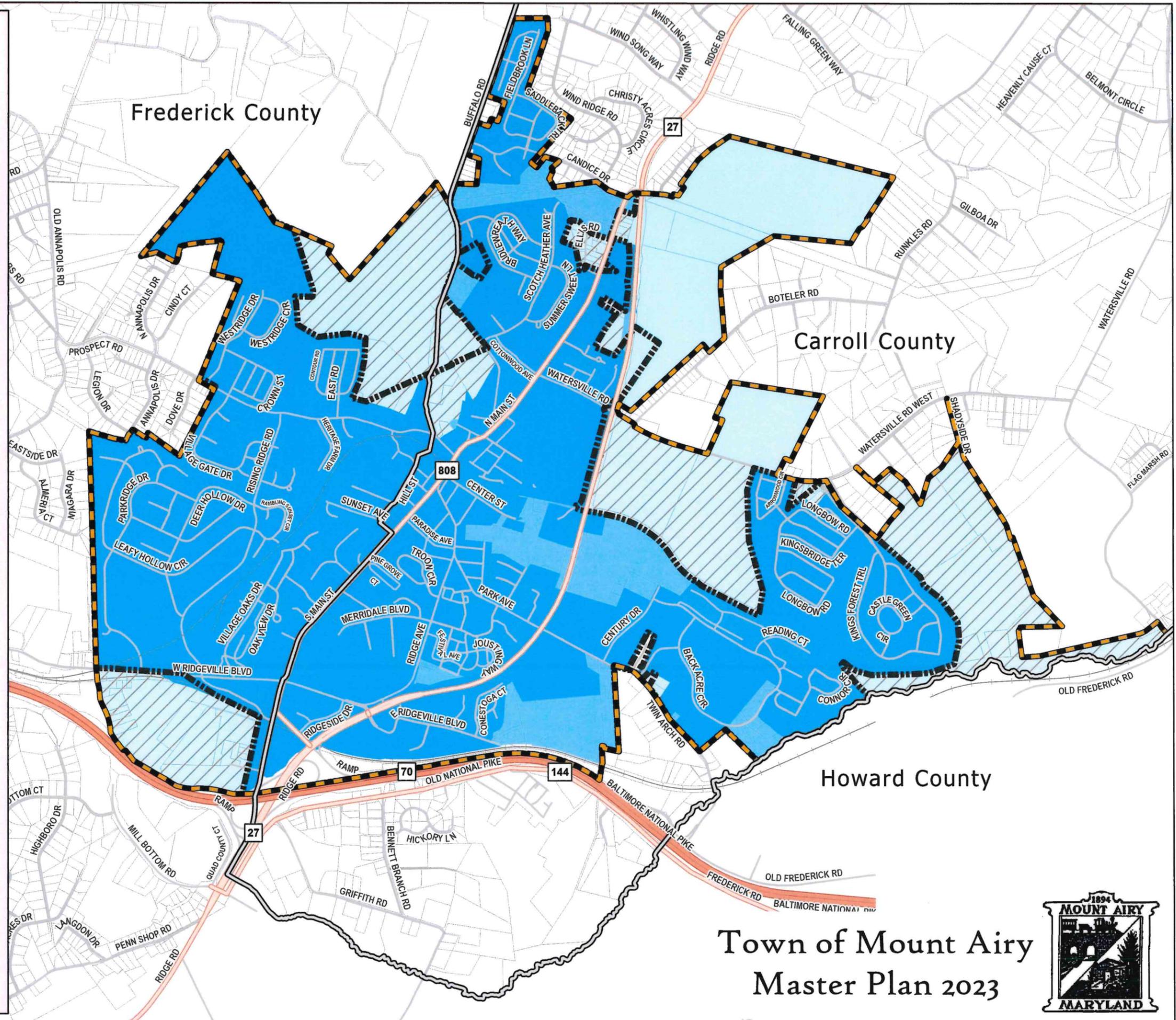
# Mount Airy

## Water Service Areas

- W-1 Existing
- W-3 Priority
- W-5 Future
- W-6 Long Range
- Incorporated Area
- Growth Area
- County Border
- Parcels
- Roads
- Railroads



Water Service Areas are proposed and require approval from MDE. All data are approximate and are for planning purposes only. Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and Land Management. 2024 (kc)



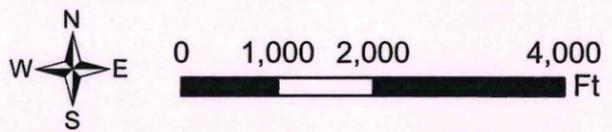
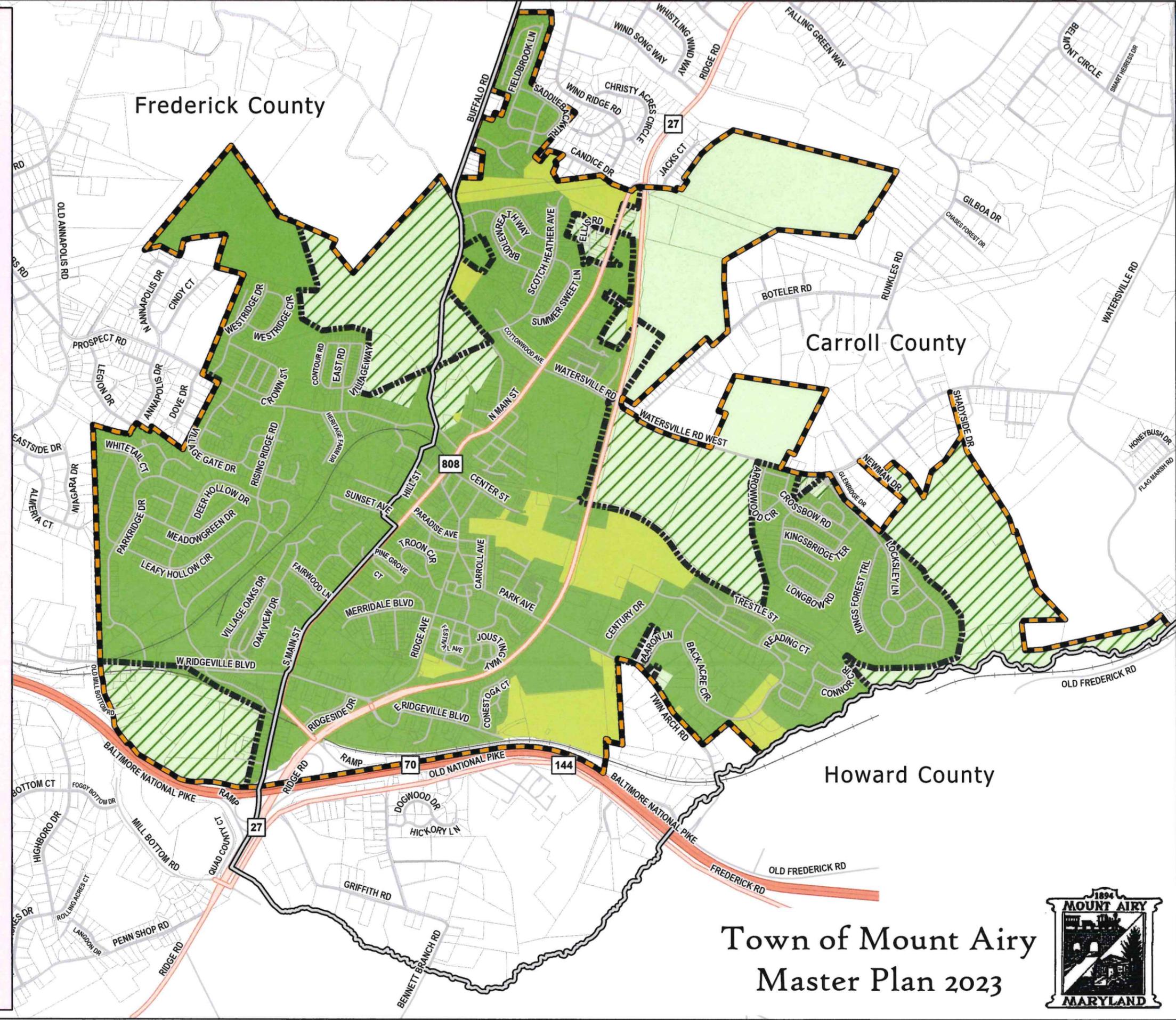
Town of Mount Airy  
Master Plan 2023



# Mount Airy

## Sewer Service Areas

-  S-1 S1: Existing
-  S-3 S3: Priority
-  S-5 S5: Future
-  S-6 S6: Long Range Future
-  Incorporated Area
-  Growth Area
-  County Border
-  Parcels
-  Roads
-  Railroads



Sewer Service Areas are proposed and require approval from MDE. All data are approximate and are for planning purposes only. Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and Land Management. 2024 (kc)

Town of Mount Airy  
Master Plan 2023



# Proposed Street System

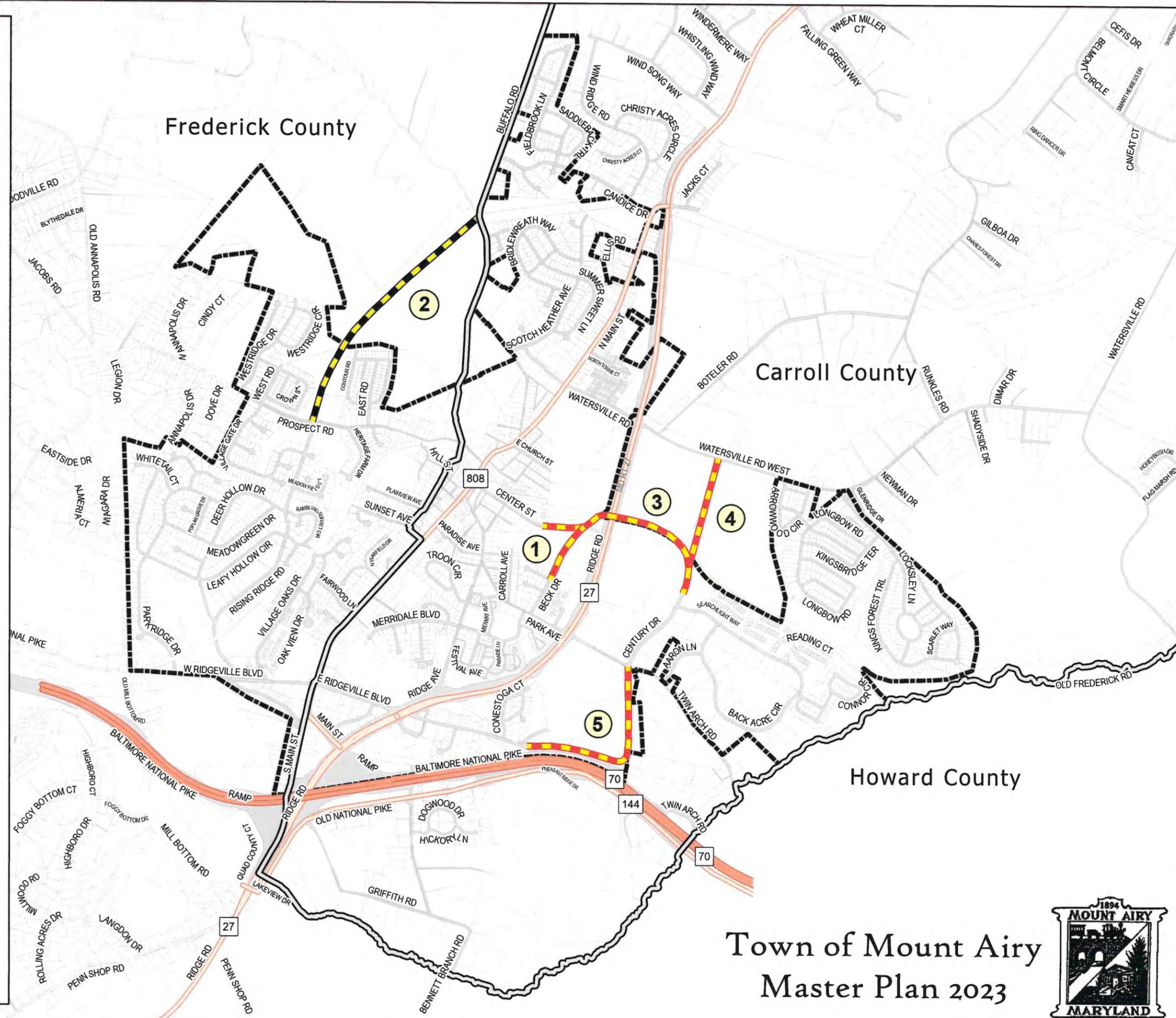
-  Planned Roads (Carr Co.)
-  Proposed Road (Fred. Co)
-  Incorporated Area
-  County Border

- 1 - Center Street connection to MD 27 with local connection to Beck Drive to the extended Center St.
- 2 - Extend Rising Ridge Road north to Buffalo Road.
- 3 - Extend Century Drive north to a new intersection on the extended Center St. from MD 27.
- 4 - Extend Century Drive North from a future intersection of Center Street extended and Century Drive, to connect to Watersville Road.
- 5 - Connection from Twin Arch Road to East Ridgeville Blvd.



0 1,000 2,000 4,000 Ft.

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Town of Mount Airy  
Master Plan 2023



# Recreation and Parks

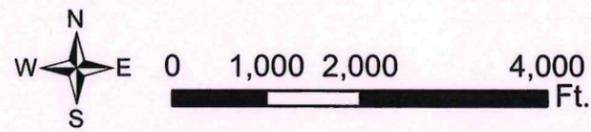
- ..... Trails - Designated (Future)
- Bikeway - Designated (Future)
- Stream
- Park Land
- Incorporated Area
- County Border

## EXISTING FACILITIES

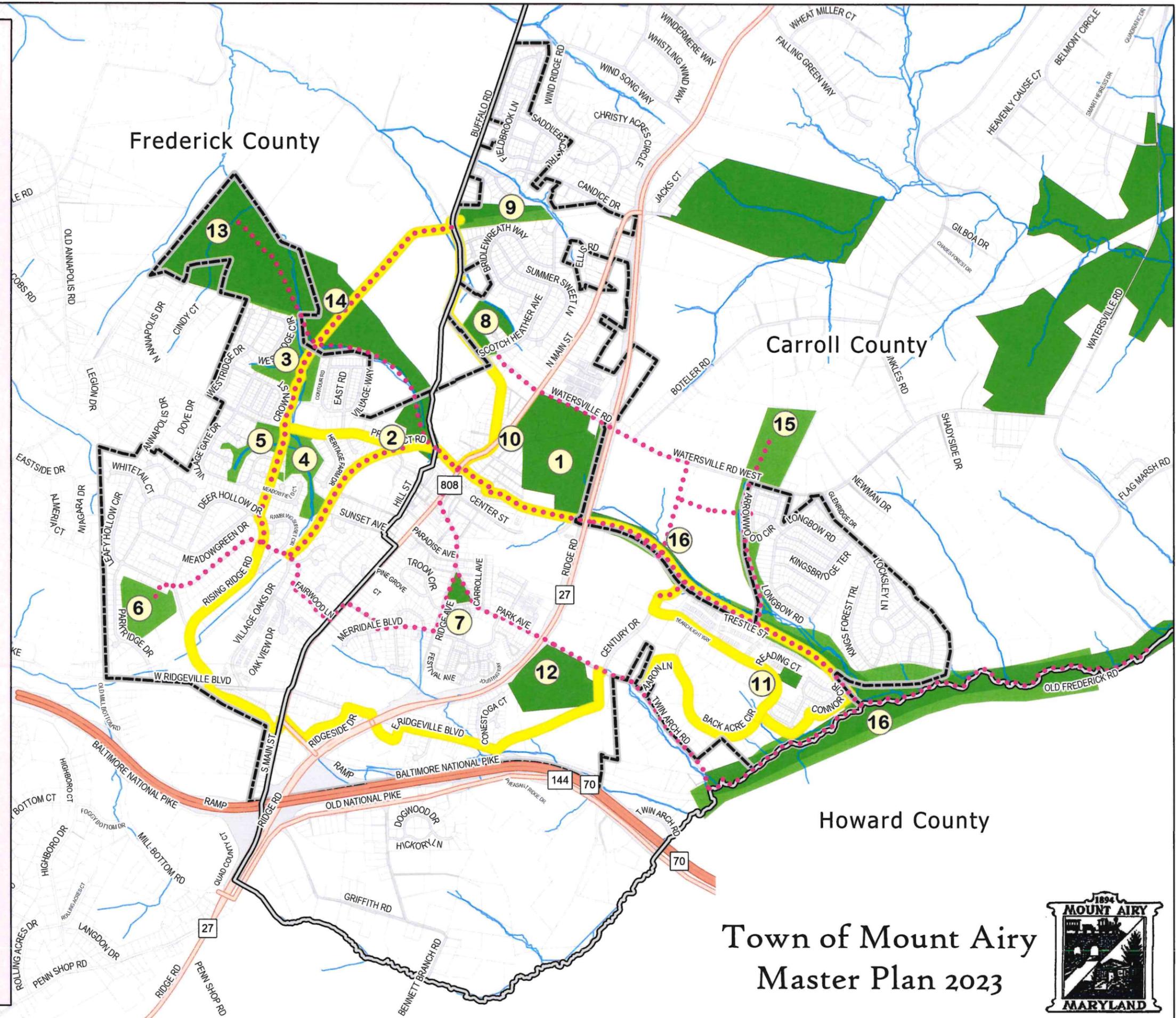
1. Watkins Regional Park
2. Prospect Park
3. East - West Park
4. Village Gate Tennis Courts
5. Village Gate Soccer Field
6. Twin Ridge Elem. Ball Fields & Soccer Fields
7. Wildwood Park - Walking Trail
8. Summit Ridge Ball Field
9. Summit Ridge Soccer Field
10. Vest Pocket Park
11. Basketball Ct; Soccer Field off Back Acre Cir.
12. Firemen's Carnival Grounds

## PROPOSED FACILITIES

13. Town-owned Space
14. Ball Fields
15. Ball Fields - Watersville
16. Future Rail to Trails Recreation Trail



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 Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and  
 Land Management. 2024 (kc)



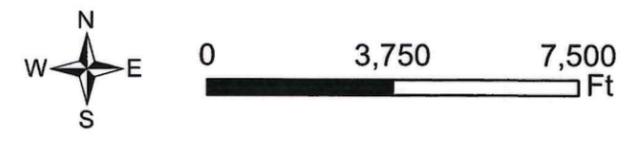
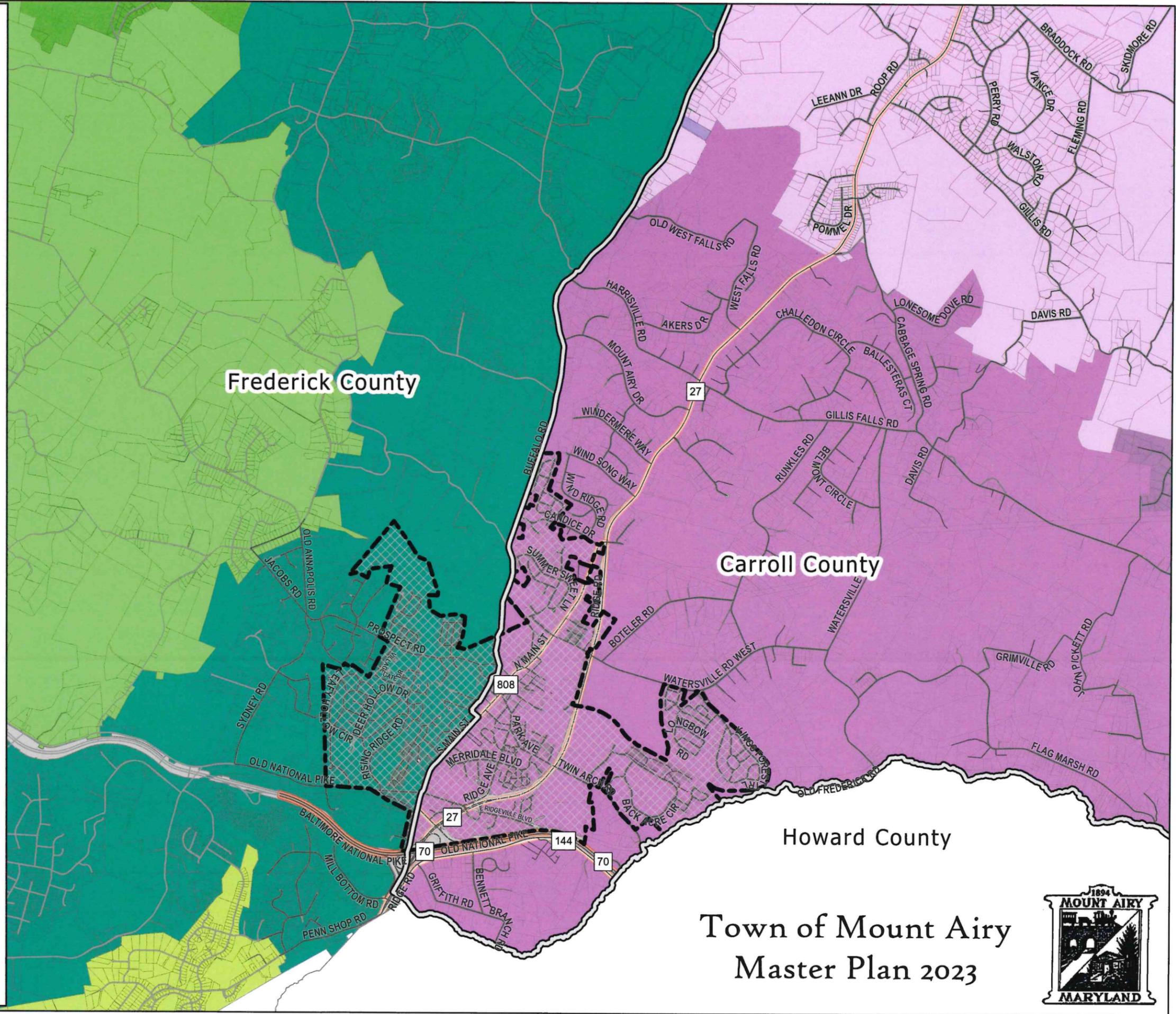
Town of Mount Airy  
 Master Plan 2023



# Elementary School Attendance Areas School Year 2022

## Legend

-  Linton Springs Elementary
-  Mt. Airy & Parrs Rdige Elementary
-  Windfield Elementary
-  Kemptown Elementary
-  Liberty Elementary
-  Twin Ridge Elementary
-  New Market Elementary
-  County Border
-  Incorporated Area



All data are approximate and are for planning purposes only. Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and Land Management. 2023 (kc)

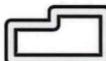
Howard County

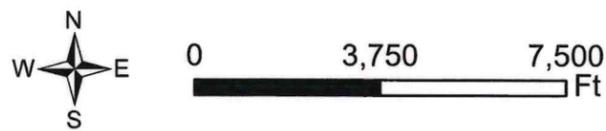
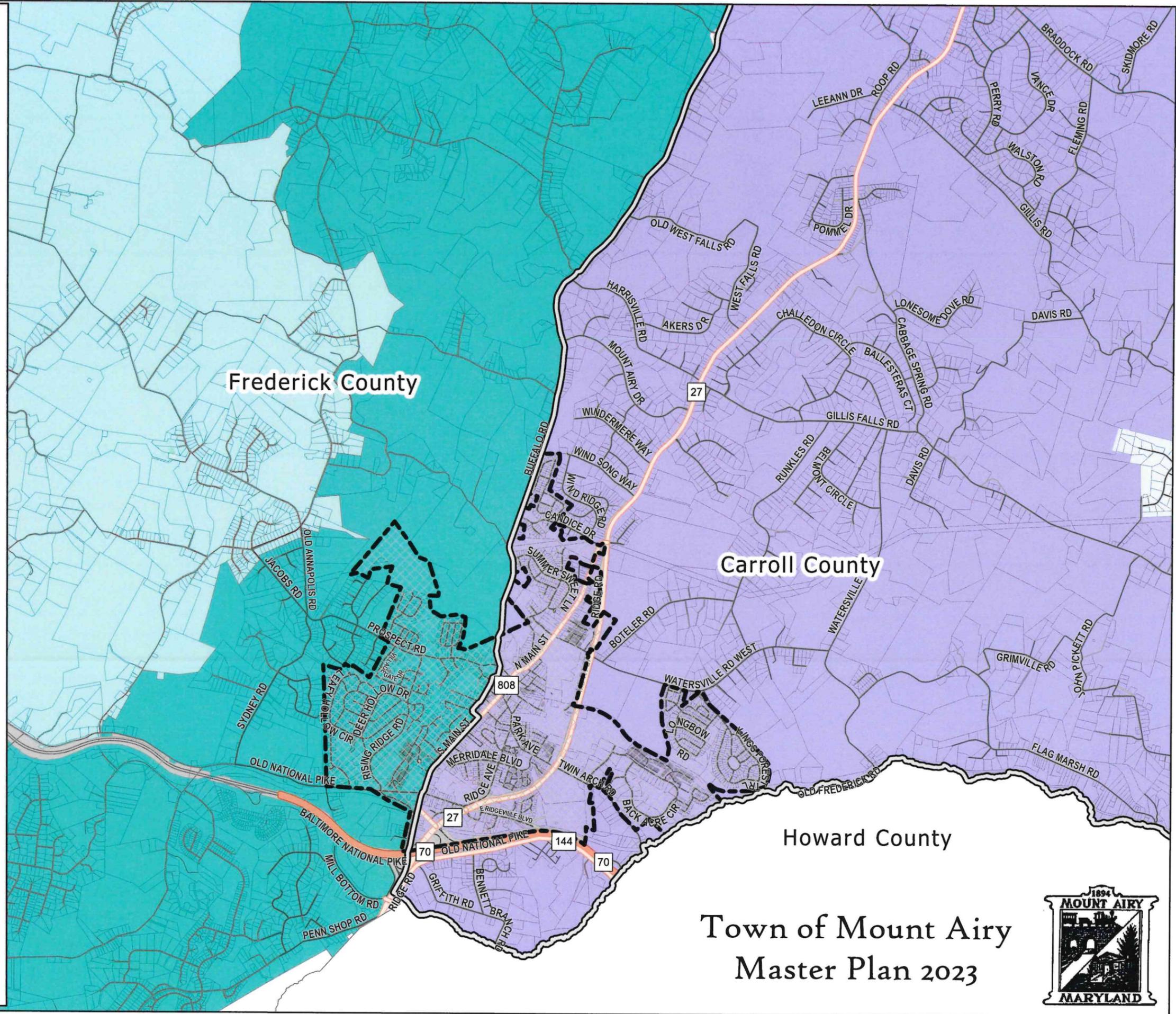
## Town of Mount Airy Master Plan 2023



# Middle School Attendance Areas School Year 2023

## Legend

-  Mount Airy Middle
-  Sykesville Middle
-  New Market MS
-  Windsor Knolls MS
-  County Border
-  Incorporated Area



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Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and  
Land Management. 2024 (kc)

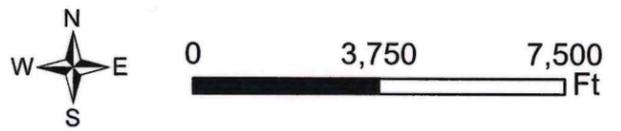
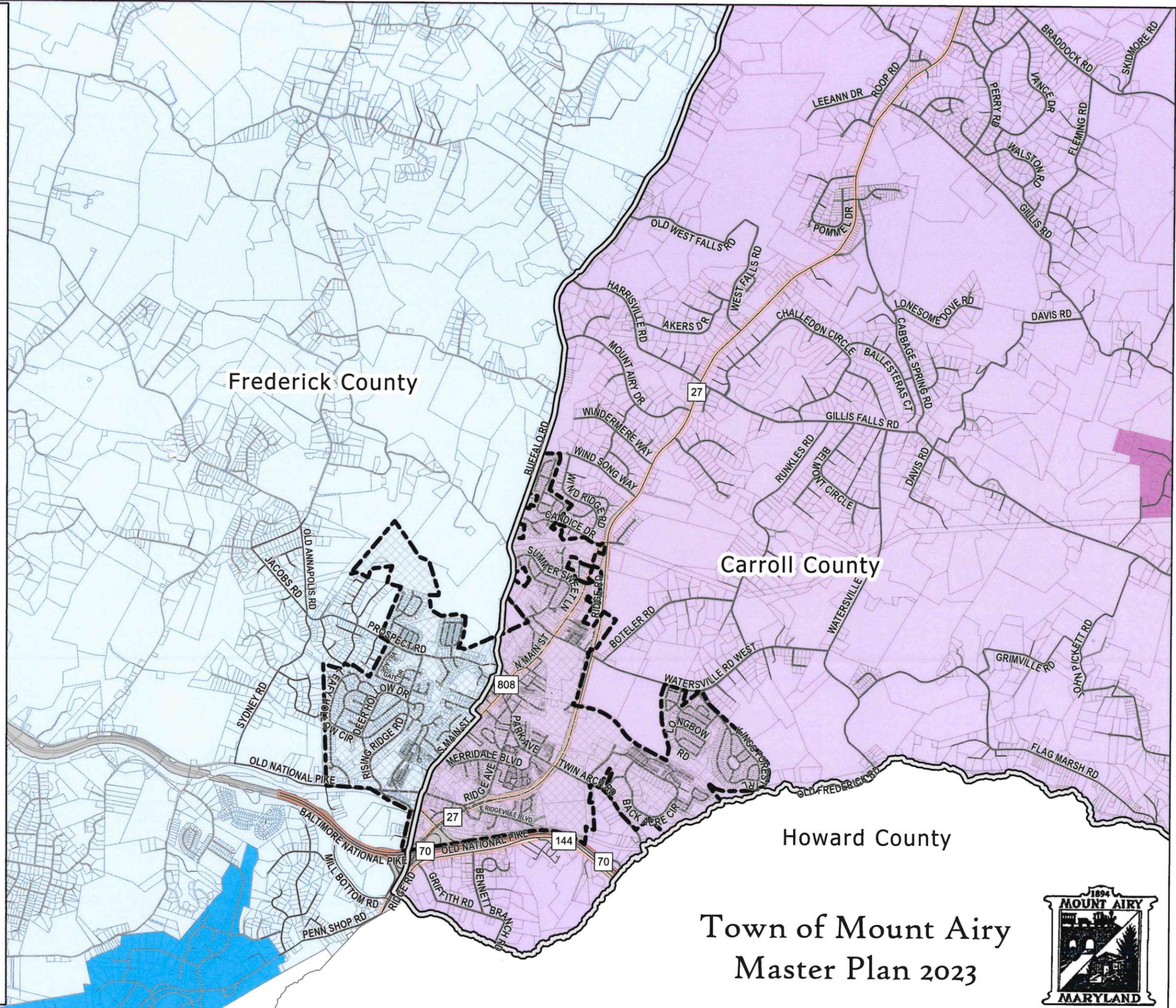
Town of Mount Airy  
Master Plan 2023



# High School Attendance Areas School Year 2023

## Legend

-  South Carroll High School
-  Century High School
-  Linganore HS
-  Urbana HS
-  County Border
-  Incorporated Area



All data are approximate and are for planning purposes only.  
Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and  
Land Management. 2024 (kc)

Town of Mount Airy  
Master Plan 2023



# Existing Facilities

## CIVIC BUILDINGS

- A. Mt. Airy Town Hall
- B. Parr's Ridge Library and Senior Center
- C. Mt. Airy Volunteer Fire Company
- D. Twin Ridge Elementary School
- E. Mt. Airy Elementary School
- F. Parrs Ridge Elementary School
- G. Mt. Airy Middle School

## PARKS

- H. Watkins Park
- I. Prospect Park
- J. East - West Park
- K. Summit Ridge Park
- L. Summit Ridge Soccer Field
- M. Wildwood Park
- N. Windy Ridge Park
- O. Twin Ridge Ball Field
- P. Twin Arch Crossing Soccer Field

## HISTORIC SITES

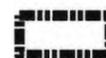
- Q. Pine Grove Cemetery
- R. Mt. Airy Train Station
- S. Twin Arch Bridge
- T. Parrs Spring (4 County Marker)

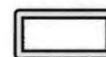
## CHURCHES

- U. Calvary United Methodist Church
- V. St. James Episcopal Church
- W. Mt. Airy Baptist Church
- X. Church of Latter Day Saints

## OTHER

- Y. Mt. Airy Carnival Grounds
- Z. Post Office

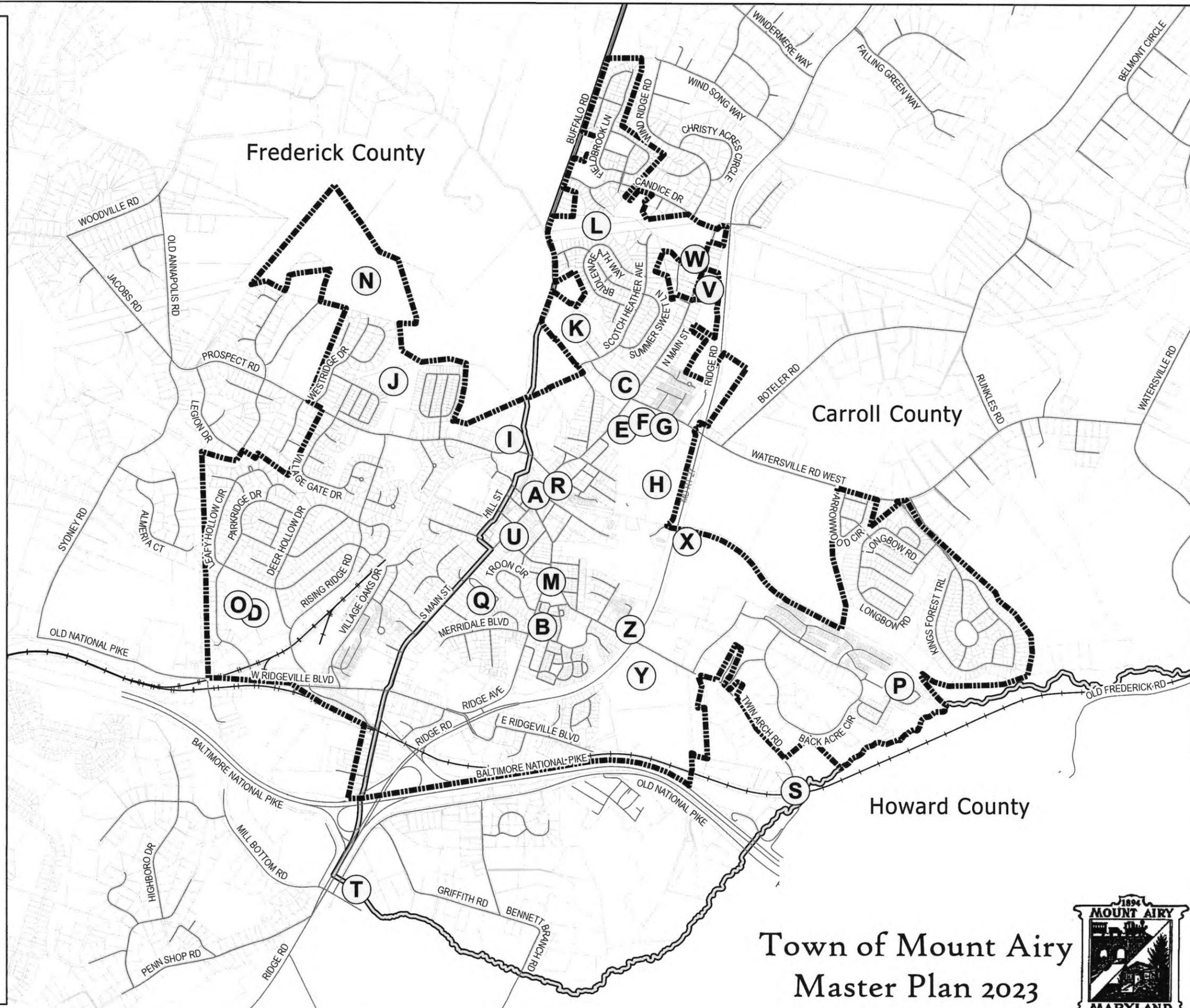
 Incorporated Area

 County Border



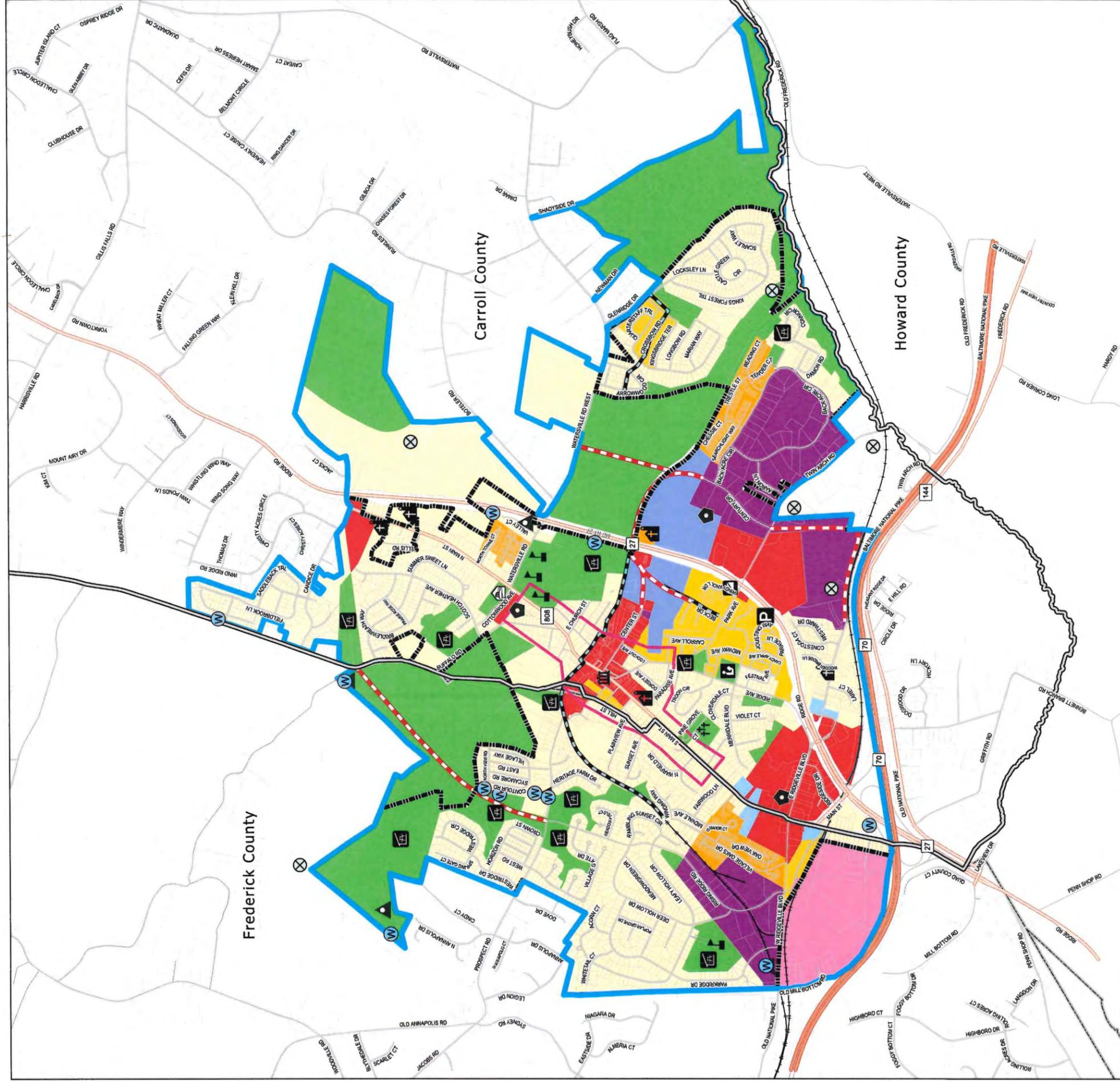
0 1,000 2,000 4,000  
Ft

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Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and  
Land Management. 2024 (kc)

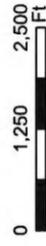


Town of Mount Airy  
Master Plan 2023





# Town of Mount Airy Master Plan 2023



All data are approximate and are for planning purposes only.  
Prepared by the Carroll County Department of Planning and Land Management. 2024. (kc)

## General

- Pedestrian Path
- Proposed Road
- Production Well
- Potential Well
- Parcel data
- Historic District
- Incorporated Area
- Ultimate Town Boundary
- County Border

## Points of Interest

- church
- cemetery
- fire co
- library
- school
- park
- park and ride
- post office
- town hall
- Water Tower
- Sewage Treatment Plant

## Land Use

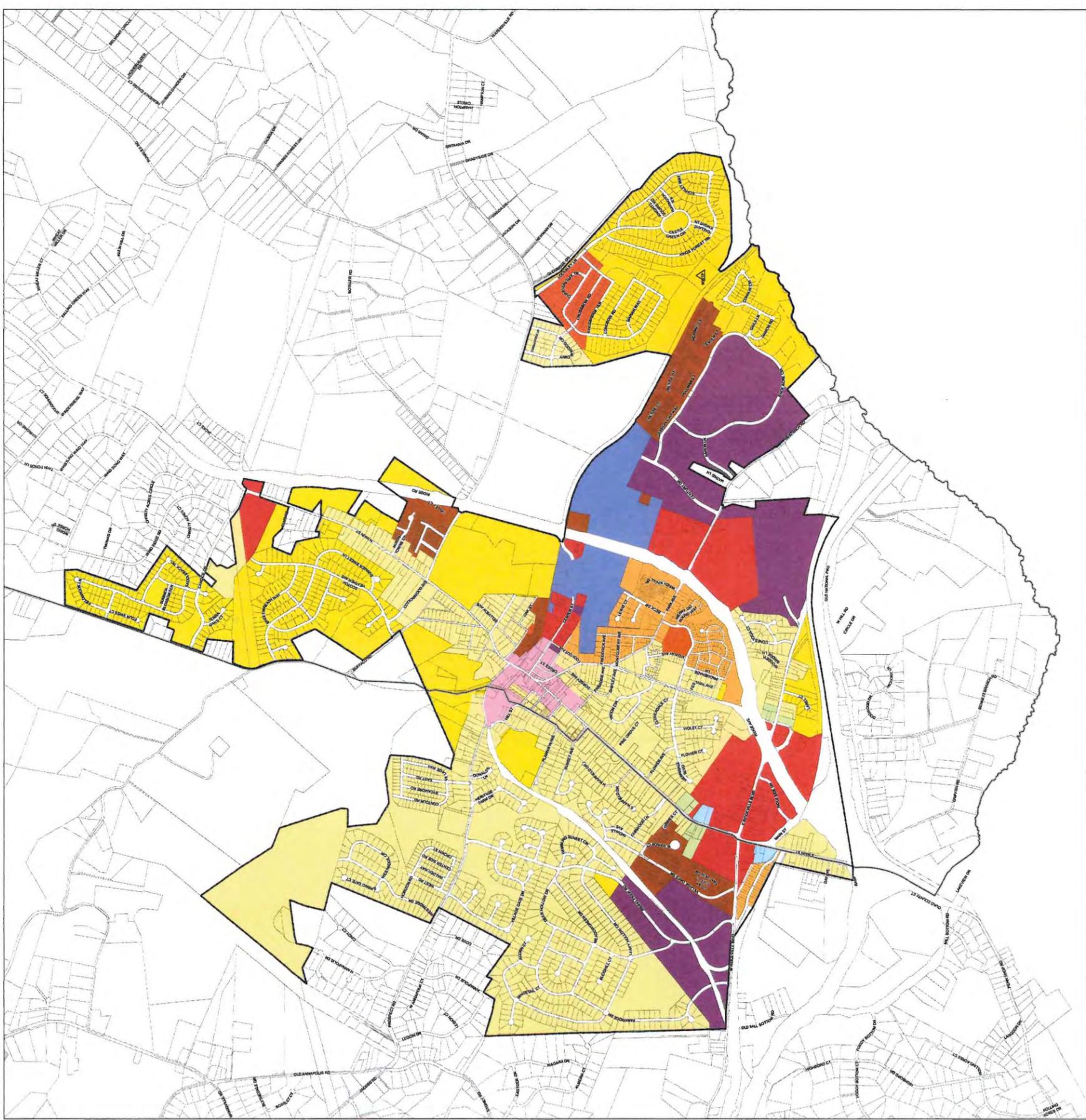
- Low Density Residential
- Medium Density Residential
- High Density Residential
- Conservation
- General Commercial
- Transitional Commercial
- Office Park Employment
- Industrial
- MXD

Adopted this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_ 20\_\_\_ by the Mayor and Council of the Town of Mount Airy.

- Mayor \_\_\_\_\_
- Town Council President \_\_\_\_\_
- Town Council \_\_\_\_\_
- Town Council \_\_\_\_\_
- Town Council Secretary \_\_\_\_\_
- Town Council \_\_\_\_\_
- Town Clerk \_\_\_\_\_

Approved this \_\_\_ day of \_\_\_ 20\_\_\_ by the Planning & Zoning Commission of the Town of Mount Airy.

- Chair \_\_\_\_\_
- Vice-Chair \_\_\_\_\_



# Zoning Map Town of Mount Airy

- Legend**
- RE - Residential Existing
  - R2 - Low Density Residential
  - R3 - Medium Density Residential
  - R5 - Medium Density Residential
  - R7 - High Density Residential
  - DTZ - Downtown Zone
  - MXD - Mixed Use Development
  - CC - Community Commercial
  - LC - Limited Commercial
  - NP - Neighborhood Professional
  - I - Industrial
  - Municipal Limits
  - Carroll / Frederick County Border



Ordinance 2021-177 Repeals and Amends Zoning Map, Ordinance 2019-024 as Amended, and Ordinance 2021-001 by the Mayor and Council

Approved this 24th day of October, 2021.

Mayor: Janet Porter  
 Vice Mayor: Lynn Calhoun  
 Secretary: Pamela Reed

Approved this 24th day of October, 2021.

Mayor Pro Tem: Anne Meyer  
 Deputy Mayor: Holly McLaughlin

Prepared by the Carol County Dept. of Land and Revenue Mgmt. October 2021