

MOUNT AIRY COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

MOUNT AIRY MUNICIPAL GROWTH ELEMENT

Chapter 68:

This Chapter constitutes the new Municipal Growth Element required under House Bill 1141. HB 1141 was passed by the Maryland General Assembly during the 2006 legislative session and amends Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The sections of this chapter that follow address the specific points cited in the amendment. They are designed to substantiate the desire and need for municipal expansion and demonstrate how the municipality intends to provide the necessary services and facilities for the expanded population. The designated municipal growth area, which corresponds to the community planning area, was developed by the Town in conjunction with both Carroll and Frederick County Planning Departments.

The inter-jurisdictional coordination of the Town with Carroll and Frederick Counties is also an important component in monitoring the growth and development directly outside its boundaries. The review of land development proposals and comprehensive plan designations is essential to evaluate whether changes will affect the Town's existing infrastructure such as roads, parks, emergency services and other public utilities. The Town will continue to monitor development in adjoining counties to assess the long-term impacts for Mount Airy.

Municipal Growth

1. Past growth patterns of the municipal corporation

This is the municipal growth element for the Town of Mount Airy, Maryland. It is intended to present detailed analysis of land use and facilities impacts that can be expected in the Town as a result of an increase in population growth for the next twenty years.

The Town of Mount Airy experienced a tremendous growth trend in the last twenty years. Mount Airy's location at a meeting point of the boundaries of four counties and its desirable commuting distance to the major regional employment centers of Baltimore and Washington DC set the stage for tremendous growth pressure from 1980 to 2000. The next five years the growth continued although at a slower pace due to inadequate infrastructure availability.

The regional and town population growth during the last three decades has been significant. Mount Airy grew 33% each decade from 1940 to 1970. From 1970 to 1980,

the growth rate increased 39% and from 1980 to 1990 surpassed 50%. According to the State of Maryland, Mount Airy was the fastest growing municipality in the State from 1990 to 1997. That trend continued into the next decade and only recently in the last five years has slowed down significantly due to infrastructure issues and the overall downturn in the economic climate.

Locational influences of the Town are primarily the Washington-Baltimore job market expansion that has had far reaching impacts on the outer suburban areas including Mount Airy. Mount Airy is a desirable place to live, which is a valuable commodity in this region. Many families have relocated to Mount Airy seeking a high quality of life and convenient commuting distance to Baltimore and Washington, D. C. Mount Airy, while providing a respectable amount of services and commercial enterprises for its residents, continues to function as a “bedroom community” with average growth for the foreseeable future.

2. The relationship of the long-term development policy to a vision of the municipal corporation’s future character.

Due to the tremendous residential growth of the Town during the last two decades, the next decade will concentrate on the infill development and redevelopment opportunities currently available in Town. Mount Airy has several corridors of zoned land that may lend themselves to excellent development opportunities provided the infrastructure demands do not exceed what is available at the time of development.

The next twenty years will allow Mount Airy to concentrate on making the historic development pattern of the Town a richer one. The Town embraces its small town character while providing excellent opportunities for small local businesses to flourish and place roots in the Town. To this end, the majority of the future growth is slated to take place in the already zoned commercial corridors that frame and define the downtown and core areas of Mount Airy. The principals of smart growth have already been endorsed by the Town by encouraging downtown development and revitalization, along with redevelopment of existing commercial corridors. Future annexation areas in the growth scenarios have been reduced due to severe limitations on water supply and wastewater capacity. These public utility limitations will in a large part drive the type of development and the pace of desirable development.

The population projections and population growth scenarios for the Town are expected to take a much slower pace than in previous years and in previous decades. The Town’s larger emphasis for the immediate future and in the next decade will concentrate on commercial development of infill properties and commercial redevelopment opportunities along with downtown revitalization. Housing growth has slowed down significantly in the Baltimore-Washington Regional job market and has affected residential growth in the Town which is classified as a commuter suburban area of this market.

3. Capacity of land areas available for development within the municipal corporation, including in-fill and redevelopment.

In 2006, the Town of Mount Airy entered into a consent agreement with the Maryland Department of the Environment in order to meet water supply for the entire inventory of buildable land within the current Town limits and for growth areas in the 2003 Master Plan. This inventory of lots does include infill and redevelopment areas, but does not include any future annexation areas that will be designated in the update of the Town Master Plan.

Available Land Development within the Total Water Usage

R-2	136 acres	1.75 dwellings per acre	24.4%	238 EDU
R-3	15 acres	3.0 dwellings per acre	4.6%	45 EDU
R-5	15 acres	5.0 dwellings per acre	7.7%	75 EDU
R-7	36 acres	7.0 dwellings per acre	26%	252 EDU
CC	13 acres	500 gallons per acre	2.7%	26 EDU
<u>Industrial</u>	<u>101 acres</u>	<u>1,000 gallons per acre</u>	<u>34.6 %</u>	<u>337 EDU</u>
Total	316 acres			973 EDU

The residential portion of this chart represents an additional 610 dwelling units that are in the master plan for future development potential in the 2004 adopted Master Plan. The R-2 and R-3 zoning classifications have the potential to be significantly reduced or rezoned to Conservation and a mixed use commercial zone respectively.

These decisions will be based on water and wastewater availability as well as newly desired patterns of land use along the major corridors of the town. The R2 zoning classification has the possibility of being changed to Conservation in order to provide a green belt designation around the peripheral areas of town and largely determine a boundary line between the municipal limits and County designated growth areas. This includes green buffers on both the Carroll and Frederick County limits.

4. Town Population Projections

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 low scenario currently takes into account the downturn in the economy and the overall sluggish residential building permit activity recently experienced. Due to severe restrictions on groundwater appropriations, even in a healthier economic climate, the middle scenario of twenty-five residential units is most likely to occur over the next five years.

These middle case projections for housing unit growth would yield a low 1 to 1 ½ percent growth per year, adding approximately 75 to 100 persons to the Town population assuming a household size of 2.90 to 3.0 persons. The middle growth scenario is the most likely pace of residential growth that will yield Mount Airy’s projected population.

Year	20 units/yr	25 units/yr	30 units/yr
2010	9197	9212	9227
2011	9257	9287	9317
2012	9362	9362	9407
2013	9377	9437	9497
2014	9437	9512	9587
2015	9497	9587	9677
2020	9797	9962	10127
2025	10097	10337	10577
2030	10397	10712	11027

Our current build out of residential units (610) at 3.0 persons per household could potentially add an additional 1,830 persons to the Town population, which would yield the amount of population growth designated by the middle and high scenario range, but not exceeding an 11,000 person population. The amount of residential zoning is in most likelihood going to be reduced in the future master plan which would realistically yield a population in the middle range for the Town.

A good deal of the future growth of the Town in the update of the Master Plan will be oriented towards mixed use commercial development and redevelopment of the historic downtown area and revitalization. Serious consideration will be given to balancing out the commercial and mixed use commercial developments in light of the significant amount of residential development that occurred in the twenty previous years. Priority will be given to all existing land inventory as listed in our Consent Agreement with MDE approvals.

R-2	136 acres	1.75 dwellings per acre	238 dwelling units
R-3	15 acres	3.0 dwellings per acre	45 dwelling units
R-5	15 acres	5.0 dwellings per acre	75 dwelling units
R-7	36 acres	7.0 dwellings per acre	252 dwelling units
Total	316 acres		610 dwelling units

5. Land area needed to satisfy demand for development at densities consistent with the long-term development policy.

The land use policies of the Town are currently in transition as a result of water supply alternatives that have been determined to assist the Town in reaching build out. The outer areas of the Town that have not been developed will be considered to reflect a

conservation zone to provide a buffer between the Town and both Counties. This conservation zoning will also provide for additional water recharge area for our 10 existing wells. As was stated before, further development of the Towns current commercial corridors along Center Street, Century Drive and downtown, also give the Town opportunity to build out within the current municipal limits.

Following is a discussion of future annexation areas in Frederick and Carroll Counties.

Future Annexation Areas:

Carroll County Annexation Areas:

- A. The Knill property, which totals 190 acres and is currently in Agricultural use in the County. This property has the potential to be a Master Planned mixed use development that could accommodate 30-35 acres of active recreational use, mixed commercial development and a small residential component of 3.5 units per acre density. Additional water supply will be needed to develop this parcel to its full capability.
- B. South I-70 Area, which totals 600 acres. This annexation petition is currently being reviewed. The Town does not have water or sewer capacity to service this area, but could consider annexation without the extension of these services. The area could classify as additional groundwater recharge area for the Town's newly appropriated South Main Street well (public well #11) and serve as a greenbelt buffer for the Towns southern border.

Frederick County Annexation Areas:

- C. The Zeltman and Kraft Properties: Over 200 acres of open agricultural land in the County. This property is currently undeveloped. The Zeltman property was annexed in 2005, but reversed in a referendum. The Kraft property is also vacant and has not been proposed for any development recently. Both of these parcels have been discussed as conservation/open space usage. These zoning classifications would serve as a buffer to Frederick County development and serve as additional water recharge area. These parcels also adjoin the Town owned Windy Ridge Park, a parcel of 88 acres that is currently being master planned into a regional park complex.
- D. The Rigler Property Prospect Road: This parcel totals 25 acres and is currently zoned for Agricultural use. Under the current master plan, the property is proposed for low-density residential. More recently, there has been discussion of preserving the property for open space use, providing a primary or secondary entrance into the Town owned property now master planned for a regional passive park.

- E. South Main Street Area: This area consists of multiple parcels that total approximately 130 acres of commercial development opportunity. Currently the parcels are zoned agricultural, but are a logical annexation area to the Town due to the proximity of the I-70 highway interchange area with MD 808 (Main Street).

Infill and Redevelopment Opportunities:

Center Street Corridor: Another major parcel that has commercial development capabilities is located along MD 27 at Center Street. There are two parcels, one is currently zoned R-7 residential and located on the east side of MD 27 at Center street, this parcel totals 36 acres and could possibly yield 200 homes. The other parcel is zoned CC- Community Commercial and located on the west side of MD 27, it totals 13 acres. Adjacent to that further west is a parcel residentially zoned that totals 13 acres and is zoned R-3, medium density residential and could yield approximately 35 residential units.

Fireman's Carnival Grounds: This 34 acre parcel is located at a primary commercial intersection along MD 27. Currently the grounds are used for intramural sports and other community activities such as dinners, meetings, public hearings, annual carnivals, and a variety of other community activities. The Mount Airy Volunteer Fire Company has requested commercial rezoning of this property during the last two Town Master Plan Updates. This property development would require additional water sources to complete the development. Alternative site locations would also be needed to relocate the existing athletic fields due to the amount of usage they receive from Town residents and the regional community.

Pank Land LLC: This 39 acre parcel is located directly east of the Firemen's Carnival Grounds. This parcel is currently zoned industrial but may have the potential with an additional water supply for a mixed use commercial redevelopment opportunity. The property has direct access to Twin Arch Road leading to the main intersection with MD 27 north and south.

Cramer Property: This 7- acre property is slated to be the last section of senior housing for the existing Wildwood Park Development. Proposed zoning on the property will be R-3 residential to allow low-level senior condominiums to be built on the land. The development can only go forward with adequate water supply.

Downtown Revitalization Area: This area involves the Main downtown development district. The downtown revitalization has seen tremendous private investment in the last seven years. This revitalization is greatly supported by the Town and the State of Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. Continued revitalization projects will continue to be given high priority for existing water allocations.

Cold Storage Property: This property lies adjoining the Main Street downtown corridor to the west. The old railroad right-of-way is also a part of this property and provides for a

unique and critical opportunity for a mixed-use redevelopment project. There is an allocation of water that goes along with this property. A high density development with a minor residential component may need additional water allocation to achieve build-out.

Even though our current land inventory has a potential for over 600 residential units, subdivision activity is at low ebb due to the economic climate. During the upcoming Master Plan Process there is more potential for several of the residential properties to transfer to a commercial classification. These rezoning proposals could reduce the potential number of residential units by 30 – 40%. This would still provide a reasonable number of housing units to complete Town development and reserve at least 35% of our water supply for commercial development and redevelopment.

The vacant land inventory of over 300 acres of ground currently within the planned and ultimate growth limits of Mount Airy will satisfy the need for ultimate buildout of the Town with a projected population of 10,500 persons to 11,200 persons. The remaining land inventory will be developed over the next twenty years in a commercial capacity or redevelopment and revitalization within the traditional downtown district.

6. Public services and infrastructure needed to accommodate growth within the proposed municipal growth areas, including those necessary for schools, libraries, public safety, water and sewerage 6

Two major tools are implemented by the Town to control the timing and pace of both residential and commercial growth. The Town instituted an APFO Ordinance in 1989. In 2003 and again in 2006, detailed standards were added that required certifications of adequacy for water and sewer, schools, roads, fire and rescue and police services.

Each development whether it is residential development or commercial development must be checked against our approved list of properties contained in the Town's MDE Consent Agreement to see if water taps can be allocated. If the property is not included in the attached list, new water sources must be found before the project can move forward.

Water and sewer capacity are the primary considerations when reviewing any project within the Town limits. The remaining adequate Town facilities are reviewed and evaluated at the concept plan stage of development so there is clear direction early on the adequacy of all public facilities.

The Town works diligently with both Frederick and Carroll Counties to provide equivalent standards through the Town APFO. This ensures that County facilities, such as schools, will be protected from overcrowding from any municipal development.

A. Public Schools

Both the Carroll and Frederick County school systems serve Mount Airy. The students attend elementary, middle, and high schools in their respective counties. In Frederick County, the students are served by Twin Ridge Elementary, New Market Middle and Langanore High School (currently substituted by Oakdale High). In Carroll County, the students are served by Parrs Ridge primary school, Mount Airy Elementary, Mount Airy Middle and South Carroll High School. Resident children are divided between these two counties although they often live in close proximity to each other. Most municipalities the size of Mount Airy have their own high schools. Mount Airy has not had a high school since 1967.

Frederick County is rebuilding Langanore to address capacity and physical structural issues. Langanore students are currently attending Oakdale High School until the new Langanore High opens in the fall of 2010. All of the enrollments of students in the Town schools and County schools are under capacity and slated to stay under capacity for several years.

In the Carroll County side of Mount Airy, Mount Airy Middle is currently going through the design phase of a needed renovation and possible expansion. Capacity and physical condition of the school has placed the renovation to be scheduled in the Carroll County Board of Education Capital Improvements Program. The Town Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance does not allow any residential subdivision to move forward if any of the schools in the Town or in the County are at 100% of State Rated Capacity.

B. Libraries

Carroll County provided a branch library in Mount Airy that has served the community well. There is also a Mount Airy Senior Center that is well used and adjoins the library on one side. Both of these facilities serve the Town of Mount Airy, but also the four counties surrounding the Town, which are Frederick, Carroll, Howard, and Montgomery.

C. Public Safety

Police, fire, and emergency medical services are part of the Town's Adequate Public Facilities standards. The scope of all of these services will be discussed below.

Police service has been provided by the Maryland Resident Trooper Program since 1975. Mount Airy has five resident troopers with one officer from the Carroll County Sheriff's Office that circulates within the town area should they be needed. State funding for the State Trooper Program was steady until FY 2010 where the program cut approximately \$55,000.00. This mandates that the Town make up the shortfall in funding to maintain the Program. The Town has been quite satisfied with the Program and has full intentions to maintain it as their resident coverage.

Emergency Services are provided by the Mount Airy Volunteer Fire Company for fire, rescue, and ambulance service. The Fire Company personnel include 65 active volunteers and 14 part-time (day) paid emergency medical service providers. Three of the paid providers staff the station Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. One paid staff person works on the weekend. The Fire Station was constructed in 1992 and located across the street from the Mount Airy Elementary School.

The “first due” service area, or area where the Mt. Airy Volunteer Fire Company 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 Mt. Airy Volunteer Fire Company may be called outside the first due response area to assist departments in any of the four surrounding counties on “mutual aid” calls. Of the 1,900 annual calls, 51% were in Carroll County, 38% were in Frederick County, 8% were in Howard County, and 3% were in Montgomery County.

Increasing calls and decreases in volunteers has resulted in the need for increases in paid staff. This need is especially evident for EMS trained personnel as the Town population increases. The Town now has an ordinance that provides \$1,000 per residential building permit that is mandatory revenue going to the Mount Airy Volunteer Fire Company.

D. Water and Sewerage Facilities

The Town of Mount Airy has historically utilized groundwater wells for its primary water supply. The emphasis on groundwater supply has served the Town well over the last thirty years. The primary procurement of these wells has been through the residential development process and were dedicated to the Town through this process by developers. The Town currently has control over 11 production wells, all within our municipal boundaries. Four of these wells are in the Carroll County side of Mount Airy and seven are within the Frederick County side of Mount Airy.

The Town has been under a consent order for public water supply since 2006. This consent order is a requirement from the Maryland Department of the Environment to reach certain milestones in meeting water capacity supply and new water sources in order to meet current and future demand on the Town 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 the Mount Airy system would be 1,189,000 gpd. These demand estimates do not reflect factors unique to this individual municipal system that may have been considered.

In September of 2009, subsequent to the assessments completed for this plan, the Town’s average water appropriation was increased from 865,000 gpd to 910,000 gpd. Although this is anticipated to drop, per our standing MDE Consent Order, to 803,000 in 2011, it is anticipated that re-appropriations on Well #6 and the addition of the South Main Street well (#11) that will ultimately provide the Town with an appropriation of 897,000 gpd.

This amount is enough to satisfy the Consent Order without providing any contingency for Smart Growth or commercial development. The month of maximum use appropriation is anticipated to increase from 1,304,000 gpd by the appropriate month of maximum use on Well #11. The combined month of maximum use is not expected to have any limit on future growth.

The Town would like to continue this trend to rely primarily on groundwater resources within the municipal boundaries. The Town also understands that a long-term water solution may not fit within these desired criteria. 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 WWTP has reached its design and physical limitations at its present location. A second plant would be cost prohibitive for the Town now and in the future. The wastewater plant discharges to the South Branch of the Patapsco River. No expansion is anticipated for Mount Airy's WWTP; however, the Town is upgrading the plant to ENR or Enhanced Nutrient Reduction. Environmental and physical limitations preclude the plant to further expand beyond the current 1.2 mgd capacity.

The total future wastewater 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 wastewater demand for the Mount Airy WWTP would be 1,064,000 gpd.

E. Stormwater Management Systems

The Town of Mount Airy follows the State of Maryland guidelines for stormwater management that is implemented throughout the Town by the Carroll County Office of Stormwater Management. The State of Maryland revised their stormwater management regulations and subsequently so did Carroll County to be aligned with the State regulations. 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. The county also instituted a floodplain management program to review all activities within and affecting any designated floodplains within the municipal boundaries. Other revised and updated County Ordinances include grading, erosion and sediment control.

The Town/County Agreement has provided review and implementation mechanisms for the Town projects through the County Office of both Stormwater Management and Grading and Sediment Control.

F. Parks and Recreation

In the past, the town had a policy of dedicating 10% of land to parks. However, in 2006, the town's Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance was changed to reflect a requirement of dedicating 3 acres of park land for every 100 citizens, bringing the town in line with Carroll County Park standards. This new goal left the town with an immediate and significant shortfall of park land. Even with the addition of a new 88-acre park (Windy Ridge), approximately 100 additional acres are needed to meet town park needs. Some of this may be acquired with a change in subdivision regulations requiring a higher percentage of land be dedicated to open space based on the density of housing. However, there is an active search to purchase additional land specifically for a regional sports complex to make up the shortfall. The vision is that a 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.

Town of Mount Airy Park and Recreation Facilities

Current Inventory of Town-Owned Park Facilities

<i>East/West Park (5 acres)</i>	<i>Watkins Regional Park (24 acres)</i>	<i>Summit Ridge Park (7 acres)</i>
-baseball field	-1 lg and 2 sm. picnic pavilions	-soccer field
-playground equip	-2 tennis courts	-2 baseball fields
-parking area	-1 basketball court	-parking area
-basketball court	-walking trail	-playground equipment
-connection to trail system	-2 soccer fields, 2 baseball fields	
	-playground area, volleyball court	
	-horseshoe pit, parking area	
	-doggy playground area	
	-future trail connection	
	-concert stage	
	-skate park/parking area	
<i>Village Gate Park (6 acres)</i>	<i>Prospect Park (10 acres)</i>	<i>Vestpocket Park (1/2 acre)</i>
-2 tennis courts	-roller hockey court	-benches and gardens
-1 soccer field	-playground	-gazebo
-walking path	-lg picnic pavilion	
-parking area	-horseshoe pit/volleyball	
-reforestation area	-basketball court	
-connection to trail system	-fishing pond	
	-future trail connection	
	-parking	
<i>Twin Ridge Park (5 acres)</i>	<i>Windy Ridge Park (88 acres)</i>	<i>Wildwood Park (3 acres)</i>
-1 baseball field (lighted)	-perimeter nature trails	-walking path
-1 soccer field	-in the master planning process	-gazebo

-future trail connection

-connection to trail system

-gardens

There are also a number of county facilities (Carroll and Frederick) both public and private available to Mount Airy residents. This includes Old National Pike Park, 3 miles west of town. This facility 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 Four County Little League (FCLL) make use of baseball and soccer fields at schools located within the municipality. Schools outside the municipality are generally too distant to be of much use to the leagues serving the community. Another private set of fields has been used primarily by MAYAA over the years at the Fireman's Carnival grounds. There are three baseball fields at this complex and during winter months, two of the fields are used for football. The Mount Airy Volunteer Fire Company owns the carnival grounds. If any development of this land were to occur, the community could lose the ball fields there. Therefore, the Town should actively pursue an alternative location to replace those fields as well as create additional fields to meet current shortfalls caused by rapid growth in recent years.

Plans for Future Park Facilities

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 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 2008, a town survey was conducted which has changed the town government perception of public needs and wants. Approximately 80% of the residents surveyed indicate a strong preference for passive, open-space recreation to include more picnic facilities, wooded areas and hiking/biking paths, camping, etc. This now needs to be considered in addition to the strong demand for more active, recreational sports. Longer range plans for Mount Airy Parks and Recreations include; development of Windy Ridge Park, the development of a Rails-to-Trails project, acquisition of land for a future sports complex, and a recreation center for indoor sports, cultural events, and teen activities.

Windy Ridge Park

In 2006, town residents voted overwhelmingly to stop planned residential development on an 88-acre plot of land on the northwest side of town. This area has since been designated as a municipal park and has a 1 ¼ mile long nature trail surrounding it. Funding was made available within the town budget for a master plan for this park in the FY2008-2009 budget. This process should be completed in calendar year 2009 making Windy Ridge the first Mount Airy park to be planned from the beginning. The intent is for this park to be a largely passive recreation area because of topography and limited access features through residential areas that make it most suitable for this type of use. This is consistent with the strong preferences shown in the town survey for this purpose. The development of the park is intended to occur in phases over many years. This will minimize cost and enable portions of it to be completed as community volunteer

projects. Some of the features discussed so far in the planning process include camping and picnic areas, education and conservation areas for indigenous wild animals and plant-life, especially along the nature trail, a sledding hill, an outdoor amphitheater and a variety of other more passive types of recreation. This park could also house a future dog park and recreation center. The park will be designed so that the topmost level area could be used for additional ball fields in the event that the town is unable to acquire the land needed for a sports complex is the optimal solution for additional active recreation needs.

Rails-to-Trails Facilities Plan

The rails to trails right-of-way has been designated in the Mount Airy Master Plan for the last sixteen years. The actual trail pathway runs along the right of way for the old B&O railroad that went from the eastern border of town through the western border crossing the center of the downtown. This future greenways corridor will likely be completed in three phases. The first phase will run from the downtown to Watkins Park. A subsequent phase will extend from Watkins Park over Rte. 27 to the east and run one more mile to the main line rail line traveling east to Baltimore. This is shown in the Carroll County Comprehensive Plan to continue to Sykesville. The final phase of the rails to trails plan is to finish the trail from the downtown through to the westernmost part of the Mount Airy where it will meet up with the railway to points west. Then 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 is now in the process of actively acquiring easements needed for the trail system.

Mount Airy Sports Complex

A Mount Airy Athletic Field Assessment was completed in 2006 that revealed an overall shortage of between 8-11 athletic fields. This coupled with the realization that if the Fire Company decided to develop the land at the Fireman's Activity Facility for another purpose, has made it necessary for the town to actively search for a 75-100 acre parcel of land to be used for a sports complex. To date, field needs have been met with a number of community and school parks all over and around the town. Parents of young athletes have consistently complained of the need to travel to several fields which presents a hardship for families with multiple children involved with sports. Further, the benefit of a sports complex for bringing together the community and for hosting playoffs and tournaments in the various sports is substantial and if situated off of a main road will minimize noise and traffic complaints in neighborhoods. A separate sports complex provides the best long-term solution for the needs of the town.

Recreation Center

Mount Airy needs a facility for indoor recreational needs. This could include dual-purpose gymnasium and auditorium needs for stage performances as well as areas for arts and crafts, and /or a place for teen activities such as dances and other types of games and recreation. The two most likely spots for this type of facility at present would be Watkins Park or Windy Ridge Park as these have more space than any of the other town parks.

7. Anticipated financing mechanisms necessary to support public services and infrastructure.

Along with the annual budget process, the Town of Mount Airy devises and approves a five-year capital budget. The capital expenditures are broken into two categories, which are General Fund, and Water and Sewer projects. Within the General Fund, capital projects that are funded involve parks and recreation, and road projects primarily. Water and Sewer projects involve all capital expenditures to address upgrades or major replacements within the existing system. Capital projects for extending water and sewer infrastructure may also involve a new water source for the Town.

On the average, the capital expenditure budgeting for General Fund projects runs about \$600,000 – \$700,000 dollars and the water and sewer budget runs around \$500,000. Each budget cycle, all capital projects for all five years are analyzed and reevaluated for prioritization. If funding from the General Fund, State of Maryland, Program Open Space, and Water and Sewer fees is less than expected, projects are scaled back or delayed.

Much of the new water and sewer infrastructure as it relates to subdivision development and necessary new water source development 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 extension of all utilities into the site.

The Capital Improvements Program is very detailed for an in-depth explanation of the reason and timing of the projects. For the next several years, the Town of Mount Airy will only have four capital projects that are active. The first is a rehabilitation of the Town Maintenance Facility, the second is an Enhanced Nutrient Reduction for the WWTP to meet MDE wastewater discharge standards and the third will be to connect our next public well #11 into the Town system, the fourth project is the installation of a SCADA system to be completed in 2012. The Town serves as its on general contractor on the majority of these capital projects to make them more cost effective.

8. Any burden on services and infrastructure for which the municipal corporation would be responsible for development in areas proximate to and outside of the proposed municipal growth area.

The Town of Mount Airy does not provide water and sewer services beyond the municipal limits. 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, the school boards in Frederick and Carroll Counties serve the municipal student population.

9. Rural Buffers and Transitional Areas.

The Town has traditionally been very diligent in following their comprehensive plan for development, open space, and infrastructure to support Town 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.

The 2004 Town Master Plan is currently being updated and creating rural buffers between the municipal growth limits and the Counties is vitally important. The Town has a conservation zone in their zoning ordinance that can provide adequate protections to land areas on the peripheral portions of the Town, included in the future growth area boundaries. 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. Lower level recreational activities would also be well served on those conservation zoned properties.

In terms of transitional areas of development, the Town has created three transitional type of commercial zoning to protect the residential areas of development that are close by existing commercial zones. The Towns three transitional zones are the downtown zone, which allows a mixture of commercial retail development along with the opportunity for housing in the downtown area; limited commercial which is a lower level commercial zone used between the heavier commercial zones and Main Street and the last is neighborhood professional which is much more restrictive and fundamentally protects long-standing residential areas in close proximity to major commercial corridors.

The Town is open to creating new zoning classifications and re-evaluates existing zoning classifications to provide the proper protective mechanisms to the existing fabric of Town development.

10. Protection of sensitive areas, as defined in Article 66B, 1 (J) of the Annotated Code of Maryland, that could be impacted by development planned within the proposed municipal growth area.

The Natural Resources chapter of the current Town Master Plan addresses the location and protection of sensitive areas within the Town limits. Greater protective mechanisms are codified and address well-head protection area and floodplains. The Town development review process for site development, allows identification and protection of environmentally sensitive areas on a parcel by parcel basis. Carroll County implements the protection of the floodplain areas during the site development review process.

Other tools used by the Town will be a review of the current conservation zoning to make sure that it is inclusive of all State, County and locally defined sensitive areas.

11. Anticipated future municipal growth areas outside the existing corporate limits of the municipal corporation.

The current update of the Master Plan will have a future municipal growth boundary that is a significant reduction of the 2004 plan. This reduction of municipal growth area is due to several factors. The first is the Town's desire to concentrate in the next decade on the development of existing commercial corridors, commercial redevelopment, and revitalization of the downtown area; the second factor is the limitation on public water supply and wastewater processing capacity due to standards set by the Maryland Department of the Environment and our dependence on groundwater supply; thirdly, the desire to encourage open space and recreational opportunities that are needed by the community; lastly, maximizing the goal of establishing definitive boundaries from both Carroll and Frederick Counties.