

# **1. INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Overview**

### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Comprehensive Plan is to provide an official long-range blueprint and vision. It provides direction while also serving as a basis for policies and ordinances to guide private and public land use and development decision-making in the Manchester Community Planning Area (CPA). The Plan details needed public Capital Improvements and facilities required to carry out the Plan, and provides focus for budgeting at the appropriate level of government. A comprehensive plan should facilitate careful and well-reasoned decision-making, help provide continuity over time, and minimize short-sighted or narrow ad-hoc decision-making that fails to consider the community as a whole.

### **Visions**

This Plan revision embraces the seven (7) Visions enumerated in Article 66B, Section 3.06.(b) Plan Purpose; as set forth below:

- (1) Development is concentrated in suitable areas;
- (2) Sensitive areas are protected;
- (3) In rural areas, growth is directed to existing population centers and resource areas are protected;
- (4) Stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and the land is a universal ethic;
- (5) Conservation of resources, including a reduction in resource consumption, is practiced;
- (6) To assure the achievement of paragraphs (1) through (5) of this subsection, economic growth is encouraged and regulatory mechanisms are streamlined; and
- (7) Funding mechanisms are addressed to achieve these visions.

### **Scope**

This Plan has been prepared in accordance with Article 66B, the State Enabling Act for Planning and Zoning. Section 3.05 of that Article 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 . . ." The chapter in Article 66B entitled General Development Regulations and Zoning states in Section 4.03, Zoning Purpose, "such (zoning) regulations shall be made in accordance with the plan . . ."

This Plan covers the Town of Manchester and its environs (see the Comprehensive Plan Map at the back of this document for area limits). The Manchester Planning and Zoning Commission, and the Mayor and Town Council have jurisdiction within the corporate limits, while the Carroll County Planning and Zoning Commission and the Carroll County Commissioners have jurisdiction in the

unincorporated environs. The Mayor and Council of Manchester is the public utility company of record for the provision of public water and sewer service within the Manchester Community Planning Area.

**Description of Planning Area**

The Manchester and environs planning area is located in northeast Carroll County at the junction of Maryland Route 27 and Maryland Route 30 (see Maps 1, 2 and 3). The general limits of the CPA extend north to Ebbvale Road, south to the North Carroll Middle School, and roughly a mile, more or less, to the east and west of Maryland Route 30 (Main Street). Nearly all of the planning area is located in the Manchester Election District (E.D. #6).

The table below shows the breakdown of the Manchester Community Planning Areas by Town and unincorporated area.

**SIZE OF PLANNING AREA - 1997**

<u>Area</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Square Miles</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
Town of Manchester	1,256	2	36%
Unincorporated Area	<u>2,223</u>	<u>3.5</u>	<u>64%</u>
TOTALS	3,479	5.5	100%

**Relation to Other Places**

The table below indicates Manchester's location in relation to other places in the region (see map 1).

**DISTANCE FROM MANCHESTER**

<u>City</u>	<u>Miles</u>
Hampstead, MD	2
Westminster, MD	9
Hanover, PA	10
Hunt Valley, MD	20
Owings Mills, MD	20
Baltimore, MD	30
Washington, D.C.	62

Manchester is located on Hanover Pike (Maryland Route 30), which links it with Hanover, PA to the north and Baltimore (via I-795, the Northwest Expressway) to the south. In addition, Maryland Route 27 provides direct access to Westminster, the County seat and to Interstate 270 to Washington, D.C.

**Regional orientation map**

**(not available on Internet)**

**county map**

**(not available on Internet)**

**manchester planning area map**

**(not available on Internet)**

## **1.2 Historical Background**

### **Brief Town History**

The Town of Manchester has grown up around the intersection of what were once two important Indian trails. Robert Owings, deputy surveyor of Maryland, laid out the first public road in what is now Carroll County along one of these trails in 1737. The road, which was originally called the Conewago Road, came to be known as the Hanover Pike. Up until around 1750, about 70 Susquehannock Indians lived within a mile of Manchester.

The first land grant in this section was apparently located at the intersection of the present Lineboro Road and Hanover Pike. It was known as "Steven's Hope" and probably was the location of the first home to be built in the area. Additional early land grants were issued, but the first one within the present confines of Town was laid out by the Elders of Zion Church in 1758 and designated "German Church."

On March 5, 1765, a tract of 67 acres of land adjacent to "German Church" was surveyed and patented to Captain Richard Richards in a grant known as "New Market". On this tract he laid out the Town, naming it Manchester after native city in England. Although Richards and a few of the early settlers were English, most of the people who moved into the area were of German heritage, many migrating from nearby York County in Pennsylvania. In fact, from the middle 18th Century until nearly the beginning of the 20th Century, the primary language of the Townspeople was German or Pennsylvania Dutch.

The Town of Manchester was incorporated in 1834. Originally part of Baltimore County, Manchester became part of Carroll County upon its creation on January 19, 1837.

The Town has historically been linked to farming. Nearly all of the settlers in the early 19th century were farmers. That began to change somewhat when the Hanover Pike developed as a major artery for trade between Baltimore and Hanover. Large Conestoga wagons and coaches traveled through Town from both directions, trading goods and creating the demand for some stores, taverns and inns. By the middle of the 19th century, a few small manufacturing firms were established. The railroad never came directly into Manchester, but one line ran within two miles of Town, at Millers Station.

At one time Manchester had two fine educational institutions. The Manchester Academy, founded in 1831, and Irving College, founded in 1858, attracted students from several states. However, dissension resulting from the Civil War closed the Manchester Academy and seriously weakened Irving College, which survived until 1893.

During the Civil War, Manchester received fame as the base from which the Union Army VI Corps under General John Sedgwick made its march to Gettysburg to play a decisive part in the great battle on July 1, 1863.

At one time, Manchester was an important cigar manufacturing town with about 400 employees in seven factories. Trump's Tin Shop, Manchester Foundry and Machine Works, coachmaking, mining, canneries, and sewing factories were all early industries of the area. In addition, Manchester was a

lively summer tourist trade spot in the latter half of the 19th century. A number of civic clubs and service organizations began to appear. Perhaps most important was the Manchester Fire Engine and Hook and Ladder Co. No. 1 which was organized in 1885 and dedicated its first building at the present location on September 2, 1899.

The 20th century brought changes in technology, with automobiles causing the greatest revolution in the life of this rural community. Transportation improvements allowed people to live in Manchester and work elsewhere. The completion of the Northwest Expressway (I-795) in 1986 has had a major impact in that regard. The current capacity of the Hanover Pike is reaching its limits during the morning and evening rush hours. The need is evident to provide for additional improvements to separate through traffic from local traffic on the old Conewago Road.

### **Planning Background**

The Carroll County Planning and Zoning Commission was formed in 1959. By 1962 the County had adopted a Major Highway Plan. In 1963 subdivision regulations for the unincorporated areas were adopted. By 1964, the County had developed and adopted a County-wide Master Plan. In 1965, comprehensive zoning was adopted for the unincorporated areas of Carroll County. Since 1977, the County has updated the Master Plan with comprehensive community plans for the municipalities and environs.

The Manchester Planning and Zoning Commission was formed in 1968. The Major Street Plan for the Manchester planning area was originally adopted in 1968 and the Town has had subdivision regulations since that time. An Interim Zoning Ordinance, adopted by Manchester in 1970, was replaced by a Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance in 1976 in conjunction with the adoption of the Town's first Master Plan in 1976. The Town's Master Plan was subsequently amended in 1979, and in 1991 prior to the amendments of 1997.

### **1.3 Opportunities and Challenges**

In the years since the Town of Manchester adopted its first Master Plan in 1976, the area has seen numerous changes and steady growth. It is important, in the process of developing or revising a comprehensive plan, to identify and be aware of the community's assets and to recognize challenges or problems it faces in order to move confidently and purposefully toward the future.

- \* **Location** – Manchester's geographic location relative to Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area to the south and the Hanover-York-Harrisburg area to the north (see Map 1) makes Manchester readily accessible to major markets and vice versa.
- \* **Land** - The quantity of undeveloped land in the CPA provides room for continued growth within the community for various uses. The Town at the heart of the Community Planning Area is a prime candidate for State Smart Growth capital investment, to aid in the implementation elements of the revised Plan.
- \* **People** - The area has a mix of friendly, industrious people - old and young, long-time residents and newcomers - whose skills and community interest will shape the future of the Manchester area.

- \* **Small-Town Rural Atmosphere** - Manchester is a historic town which exhibits the pride found in a close-knit rural community and offers residents a clean, relatively crime-free place to live. There is a strong desire to perpetuate these attributes.
- \* **Natural Beauty** - Sitting high atop Parr's Ridge, the area's natural beauty gives inhabitants of Manchester a visually pleasing environment in which to live, work and play. The County's highest elevations are in the Manchester area. From them, one is able to view with appreciation the agricultural environs that form the setting of "town and country" which contribute to the small-town rural atmosphere. **Retaining these rural agricultural environs and the areas beyond is vitally important to the future well-being of the Manchester community.**
- \* **Moderate Growth** - Carefully planned, phased, and managed growth will promote financial stability and vitality, and allow the community to assimilate expansion while retaining the small-town atmosphere which is so highly desired.
- \* **Expansion of Services** - Services and facilities provided by State, County and local jurisdictions (schools, water, sewer, police, fire, roads, etc.) in order to be properly maintained and expanded to meet the needs of a growing community, must be adequately funded. Funding and financial limitations are realities which must be recognized in developing, revising, and implementing a comprehensive plan.
- \* **Broaden Tax Base** - To meet the needs of providing expanded services and facilities, and to equitably spread out the burden of paying for them, the tax base must expand with enterprise that offers good paying jobs and contributes both to the property tax base, and the "piggy-back" income tax base.
- \* **Job Opportunities** - In addition to broadening the tax base, new business enterprises provide new job opportunities for area residents. **Attracting enterprise particularly suited to Manchester is recognized as an important challenge and objective of this Plan.**
- \* **Protecting the Environment** - Environmental protection and enhancement is vital to the future of the community. Sensitive areas are addressed pursuant to an Environmental Resource Protection Measures Element adopted in 1997 by Manchester and Carroll County. Existing and future sources of potable water as are identified must be constantly protected by everyone in the community, and are high on the list.
- \* **Bypass** - Current and projected increases in traffic flows and development make the construction of a bypass (Maryland Route 30 Relocated) essential to routing through traffic around Manchester and allowing Main Street to function as a main street. This will become critical to sequence as soon as the Hampstead Bypass is under construction.
- \* **Town-County Coordination** - As both Manchester and Carroll County continue to grow, communication, coordination and mutual understanding of efforts are continuously needed. The Town-County Agreement is a foundation on which to continue building to help maintain essential connections.
- \* **Aesthetics** - Anything that improves the appearance of the Town and its environs is of great benefit to the community.

- \* **Topography** - Careful handling of the "lay of the land" during development construction will aid in protecting the environment, promote aesthetics, and may help reduce public and private costs.
- \* **Community** - As new residents locate in the Manchester area, it is, and will be, important to maintain a sense of community among long-time residents and newcomers, working to make the community all that it can be.
- \* **Historic Resources** - The historic structures and sites in the Manchester area provide the old town character and atmosphere which is an invaluable asset on which to build and improve. Widespread recognition of this and taking a "close look" will help to retain what is valuable to the community.
- \* **Implementation** - For any Plan to have real meaning and serve the community, people generally and their representatives particularly have to be familiar with it, keep the Plan in view, and work to accomplish it. Doing so is not only important, but can be very rewarding and most beneficial to the community's destiny to be all that it can be.