

2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 Basic Considerations

The basic considerations of Manchester's Comprehensive Plan concern and revolve around future "build-out" of the community and its size. There is a Town vision and strong desire to maintain Manchester's historical small-town identity in this rural area of Carroll County. The opening of the Northwest Expressway (I-795) from the Baltimore Beltway (I-695) to the eastern border of Carroll County in 1986 has brought Manchester within relatively easy commuting distance of Baltimore. The very attributes of the community which the Town seeks to retain are attracting people into the Manchester area to live. The Town fully expects to continue to grow but plans to do so gradually. Given real constraints on the water supply system and available public sewerage capacity, these realities will significantly shape and determine the ultimate size of the Manchester community.

As the community grows, it presents a financial challenge to the municipal, county and state jurisdictions to provide adequate public facilities and services. Fire and police protection, educational facilities, sewage treatment, water supplies (and protection of same), streets, recreational facilities, and emergency services must all be provided on a par with the demand for these services and within the realm of affordability. Many new residents have come from urban or suburban areas where additional resources and more services are available. This has led to raised expectations within rural communities such as Manchester and compounds the demand for public services. At the same time, the cost of providing for and operating basic services such as water and sewer systems has increased dramatically.

When development occurs, it effects the natural environment. Development usually requires altering the surface of the land with the removal of vegetation and the grading of soils. While construction activities affect individual sites directly, the cumulative effect of these impacts on watersheds can be significant regionally. Revisions to this plan have positive implications for the Gunpowder Falls watershed which is part of the Baltimore City water system. This is a result of reduction in planned land use intensity in east and southeastern portions of the Community Planning Area which lie in this watershed.

2.2 Relationship to County Master Plan

Adopted in 1964, and periodically updated and amended by the Carroll County Planning and Zoning Commission and the County Commissioners, the Carroll County Master Plan serves as a blueprint to guide land use and development of the County. This Master Plan has historically embodied a policy of "managed growth", meaning development is to be directed to those areas within the County that have the physical and financial capability to plan, program, arrange for, and provide adequate public facilities and services in conjunction with the County's eight municipalities and the State of Maryland.

Carroll County seeks to accommodate its growth and protects its agricultural land by planning for and directing the development densities characteristic of towns, into its nine Community Planning Areas, including Manchester. (The remaining eight CPAs are: Finksburg,

Freedom-Sykesville, Hampstead, Mount Airy, New Windsor, Taneytown, Union Bridge, and Westminster.) Except for Finksburg, all have a municipality at the heart of the planning area. Each town has a Planning Commission with substantial duties and responsibilities similar to those of the County Planning Commission. Master planning, facilitated by a Town/County agreement (see Appendix 1), is a coordinated and "good faith" effort between the County and municipal governments and their respective Planning Commissions. In addition, community comprehensive plans such as this one have been developed for each CPA as part of the County Master Plan. These comprehensive plans address land use and development in the Community Planning Areas in great detail, are periodically reviewed and amended, and thereby help keep the County Master Plan current through time

2.3 Goals and Objectives of the Plan

What is this Plan trying to accomplish? Planning strives to achieve certain desirable end results by identifying, to the extent possible, the community's desired goals and the means to attain them. Goals and objectives were developed to guide the Town of Manchester and Carroll County in the preparation of the 1991 Plan. Modifications resulting from the 1997 plan review, have been incorporated in the Plan.

Goal 1

Capture the vision of Manchester retaining the small-town identify at build-out and incorporate in the Plan the elements which enable the realization of the vision.

Objectives

- A. Scale and reflect the community's ability and willingness to provide or maintain public services and facilities to achieve the vision.
- B. Accomplish a general recognition of the important significance of establishing and maintaining over time, a physical edge to the community which distinguishes the "town" from the "country"; and plan to retain the existence of this characteristic by determining and implementing all available ways and means.
- C. Develop formal policies (and agreements) of understanding, cooperation and open communication concerning limits of public facilities planning between the County and the Town, as well as joint support for and efforts in permanently preserving agricultural lands at the "edge" of the planning community.
- D. Locate future schools on sites already purchased for this purpose by scheduling construction of the schools in the County Capital Improvements Program.
- E. Identify and protect groundwater resources and recharge areas to ensure an adequate and safe public and private water supply for current and future users.

Goal 2

Design the land use plan to reflect the constraints on providing public water and sewer service areas given financial and physical limitations, topography, location of the planning area with respect to reservoir watersheds, and arrange for a mix of land uses with minimal conflict between uses.

Objectives

- A. Encourage the future development of retirement, nursing, assisted living and related health-care industry enterprises; as well as office park enterprises.
- B. Provide for a low density residential use (R-40,000) where public water and sewer service areas will not be planned within the Town, as well as in the unincorporated environs of the Community Planning Area.
- C. Where public sewer and water is planned for undeveloped areas, foster subdivision and lot design which provides area for private space (yards) but also is an efficient utilization of the sewerage system.
- D. Encourage clustering, good land design, and architecture in new residential development to protect environmentally sensitive areas, and build attractive stable neighborhoods which will be assets to the Town.

Goal 3

Build a well-maintained, safe, and efficient transportation network.

Objectives

- A. Protect the alignment for the Bypass (MD 30 Relocated) east of Town as located on the Plan and lobby the State to advance the project into the Transportation Improvement Program to sequence with the construction of the Hampstead Bypass.
- B. Return Manchester's Main Street to Manchester by constructing MD Route 30 Relocated (the Manchester Bypass) around the edge of Town.
- C. Complete sections or segments of major (collector) streets shown on the Plan to accomplish essential connections, effective access, and traffic circulation throughout the community.
- D. Evaluate existing major intersections and roadways for traffic, bicycle, and pedestrian safety and initiate necessary improvements, especially along Maryland Route 30 between Maryland Route 27 and Maryland Route 86 (Lineboro Road).

- E. Locate office parks near major highways.

Goal 4

Protect groundwater and the environment as development occurs.

Objectives

- A. Review all development plans with groundwater protection as a priority.
- B. Implement landscape regulations to enhance the community with plantings in all new development, and whenever possible, by the preservation or replacement of existing mature trees.
- C. Continue to acquire lands for the development, use, and protection of the community's water supply resources.

Goal 5

Encourage creative and harmonious development in the community.

Objectives

- A. Preserve the community's natural features wherever possible and try to integrate new development into the existing environment by diminishing aesthetic intrusions and environmental alterations, by increasing open space, and by instituting good development design under flexible regulation.
- B. Promote environmentally sensitive development that utilizes and enhances existing site features without detracting from scenic views and historically significant areas, and adheres to adopted Environmental Resource Protection measures.
- C. Provide guidance that encourages development which avoids repetition and rigidity, but draws instead on the wealth of architectural character which is particular to Manchester.
- D. Publicly and officially commend and recognize architectural design and development that is historically harmonious, typical of the locality, and unique to Manchester.

Goal 6

Capitalize and expand on the existing nursing, health care and associated housing industry for the elderly and other citizens for which the Manchester community is eminently suited.

Objectives

- A. Attract well-paid, skilled and professional personnel in the health care industry who can not only live in the community but work in the community.
- B. Secure enterprises which are relatively lower volume water users.
- C. Secure land uses that do not tend to contribute to tax base deficiencies.

Goal 7

Support and promote the continued revitalization of the downtown area to become an aesthetically pleasing cultural, retail and residential center.

Objectives

- A. Work hard to have the S.H.A. separate MD 30 from Main Street so the Town can have its Main Street back.
- B. Foster a business climate that is positive for existing enterprises and new enterprises.
- C. Build on the Tree Planting Program already started.
- D. Seek solutions to parking problems.
- E. Ensure a pedestrian scale for the downtown areas as Westminster has done.
- F. Support programs that encourage property owners to maintain their properties so as to present a “well-kept look.”
- G. Publicize unique cultural aspects of the Town.