

Chapter Two:

Past, Present, & Future Trends

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From the time of its founding in 1837 until the late 1950s, Carroll County was basically a rural farming community interspersed with small towns and villages where trade, civic, and cultural activities took place. In 1959, realizing that growth was inevitable given the County's geographic location, the County Commissioners appointed the County's first Planning Commission. By 1964, the first master plan had been formulated and adopted for Carroll County.

The first Water and Sewer Master Plan for Carroll County was also completed in 1964 and contained a 30-year planned service area for water and sewer. The Community Planning Areas (CPA) were first defined in 1978 at the time of the Agricultural comprehensive rezoning. At that time, the CPAs were defined as all land inside the limits of the 30-year planned water and sewer service area. In 1978, the land inside this service area that had been zoned as Agricultural was rezoned to Transitional. Detailed comprehensive plans were subsequently prepared for each CPA. (The Freedom CPA was defined in 1977 when that small area plan was adopted.) Land in the Transitional zone was then changed to one of the standard zoning categories. Since 1978, the Water and Sewer Master Plans have included only a 10-year planned service area.

During the past 36 years, small area amendments to the original plan have been made, and new elements have been added. However, the basic premises and visions of the original plan have not changed. A periodic assessment needs to be made of the Master Plan to determine how well it is working. Considerable changes have taken place since the first plan was adopted in 1964. A review of some of these changes help identify the key trends and issues that are addressed in this 2000 Plan update.

While the Plan has been the guiding factor over the years, some facets of the Plan have developed more rapidly than others. Residential growth has been very strong; commercial and industrial development has lagged behind; and road construction and school construction has not always kept pace with demand. While the perceived problems seem quite evident, the solutions are much less clear.

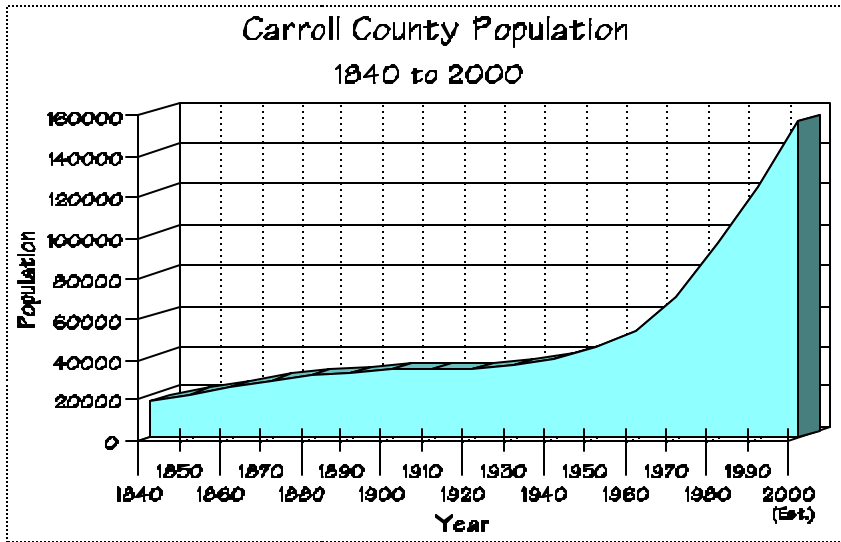
Population

Changes in population result from two factors. The first is natural change, which is caused by births and deaths of the existing population. The second factor is migration of people to and from an area.

Carroll County was created in 1837. The 1840 census was the first official tabulation of the County's population, which was set at that time at 17,241. The County has experienced growth during every decade since then. However, the rate of growth was very slow in the early years. Beginning in 1940, the rate of growth in Carroll County

increased to parallel the rate of growth experienced by the State of Maryland and the United States as a whole.

By 1960, when the first County Master Plan was being developed, the County had grown to a population of 52,785. Since then, the County has grown at a faster rate than both the State of Maryland and the United States.

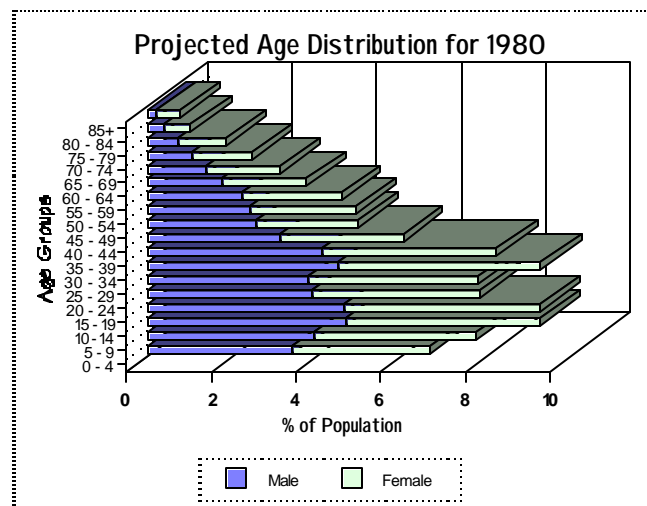


Source: U.S. Census & Carroll County Dept. of Planning & Development

From 1840, it took 80 years for the County's population to double to 34,245 people in 1920. From 1920 it took nearly another 50 years for the population to double again by 1970. Since 1970, the population doubled in only 25 years. The greatest amount of growth occurred from 1970 to 1980, during which time the

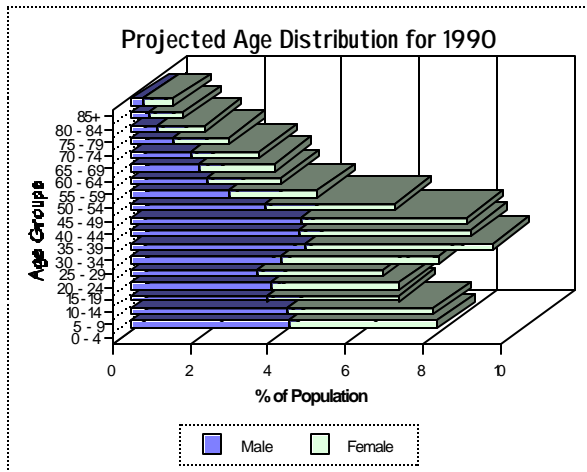
population grew by 27,350, a 40 percent increase. Since 1980, the growth rate has remained steady at an annual average rate of 2.5 percent. The population in 2000 is estimated to be 155,300.

Between the adoption of the first Plan in 1964 and 2000, Carroll County has added about 99,300 people, a 177 percent increase. Despite this immense growth, some of the demographic characteristics have remained the same. In 1960, the population was 95.8 percent white and 4.2 percent non-white. The 1990 Census reported the County's population was 96.7 percent white and 3.3 percent non-white. The gender of the population has also remained the same at 49 percent male and 51 percent female. The percentage of the population that is of school age remained constant at 19 percent between 1960 and 1990. However, the actual number has grown from 10,000 in 1960 to 23,145 in 1990. The median age increased from 32.2 in 1960 to 30.7 in 1980 to 33.3 in 1990. The percentage of people falling within the primary income earning years has increased since 1960. In 1990, more than 60 percent of

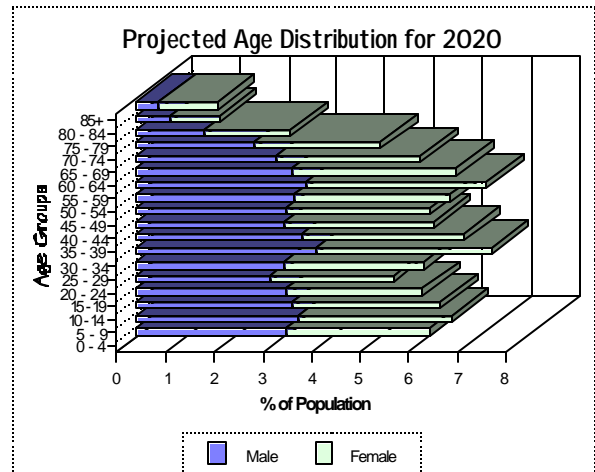


Source: Maryland Office of Planning

the County's population was between 20 and 64 years of age, compared to 53 percent in 1960. The percentage of the population 65 and over fell from 11.5 percent in 1960 to 10.2 percent in 1990; however, the actual number doubled from 6,071 to 12,557.



Source: Maryland Office of Planning



Source: Maryland Office of Planning

Finally, the population density of Carroll County in 1960 was 116 persons per square mile. As of 2000, that figure increased to 343 per square mile.

Population growth is expected into the future. Natural increase is expected to continue at a fairly steady rate, but less than the 1990-1995 rate. Between 1990 and 1995, 30 percent of the increase in population was attributed to natural increase. Growth resulting from net immigration is more difficult to project. Based on the growth trend experienced from 1986 through 1995, it is estimated that zoning capacity would be reached by 2012, with a projected population of 201,321. The 1986-1995 growth trend is not expected to continue. Birth rates are down, and new housing starts have slowed. Population growth will more likely reach the 200,000 mark around the year 2020. At that time, the characteristics of the population will have changed. It is estimated that 17 percent of the population in 2020, or 35,000 people, will be 65 years of age and over. There will be approximately 30,000 school age children comprising only 15 percent of the population. While Carroll County will continue to be an attractive area for young families in the near future, in the long range there will be an aging of the population.

Housing

In 1960, there were 14,957 dwelling units in Carroll, of which 14,186 were occupied representing a household. Of the occupied units, 9,702 or 68 percent were owner-occupied, and 4,484 or 32 percent were renter-occupied. The vacancy rate was 5 percent. By 1990, the number of occupied units had increased to 42,248, of which 78 percent were owner-occupied. Presently, the number of occupied units is estimated to be 53,887, or a 21.6 percent increase since 1990. In 1990, only 3 percent of the housing stock was

vacant. In 1960, 76.9 percent of all units were single-family detached, or 11,491 units. By 1990, the number of single-family detached units had increased to 32,895, representing 75.5 percent of all units. The number of County households paying more than 30 percent of their gross income for housing expenses (contract rent and utilities for tenants; principle, interest, taxes, insurance and utilities for owners) is estimated to have grown from 5,201 to 6,700 from 1980 to 1990, a 29 percent increase. About half of these households are paying more than 50 percent of their income for housing. The median value of owner-occupied units in 1960 was \$11,100. By 1990, the median value of owner-occupied units in the County was \$126,700. The condition of the housing stock is generally very good. In 1990, only 1 percent of all units lacked complete plumbing facilities.

Each of the eight incorporated towns has a planned growth area surrounding it. The town and surrounding growth area are considered to be a Community Planning Area or CPA. The Finksburg area is a ninth CPA not associated with any incorporated town. Presently, there are 33,145 households in the CPAs or 62 percent of all households. For the period 1992 through 1996, 71 percent of new residential units added were located in the 9 CPAs.

In 1960, the number of persons per household in Carroll County was 3.32. This figure declined steadily to 2.85 in 1990. This declining trend is expected to continue, which will result in a greater growth in units than in population. In 1960, 4,444 units, or 30 percent of all units, were located in an incorporated town. By 1990, 11,309 households, or 27 percent of all households, were located in an incorporated town. Presently, 14,674 households (27%) are within a municipality.

New residential units are planned to be constructed in the future and will add significantly to population growth in the County even though the average household size is expected to continue to decline. During the 10-year period 1986 through 1995, an average of 1,279 dwelling units were completed every year. Based on 1996 County and town zoning, it has been estimated that an additional 20,108 potential residential units can be created. At the rate of 1,279 units added per year, zoning capacity would be reached in 2012. As was mentioned in the Population section, the 1986-1995 growth trend is not expected to continue. It will more likely take 23 years to add approximately 20,000 units, or an average of 870 units per year. Based on current zoning and the slower growth rate, by the year 2020, the southeast section of the County (Election Districts 4, 5 and 14) will contain 22,327 units, or 32 percent of all units in the County. The second largest area will be Westminster (Election District 7) with 15,519 units. The northeast (Election Districts 6 and 8) and northwest (Election Districts 1, 2, 3, 10, 11 and 12) will be close in size with 13,357 and 12,399 units, respectively. The smallest area in terms of units will be the southwest (Election Districts 9 and 13) with 6,206 units.

Assuming the Agricultural Land Preservation Program continues to purchase easements at the present rate, 42 percent of all the units that will be added by 2020 will be on large lots (Agricultural and Conservation zones).

Agriculture

Historically, agriculture has been the largest industry in Carroll County. However, the acreage devoted to farming has steadily declined. In 1960, 224,805 acres were in farms. By 1997, this acreage had decreased to 160,000 acres. The number of farms in Carroll County has been declining since 1910 when there were 3,884 farms. The 2,035 farms in 1960 declined to 1,080 in 1992, a 47 percent decrease in 32 years. One noted increase is the average size of farms going from 110.5 acres in 1960 to 146 acres in 1992.

While the nature of farming may change in the future, the industry will not survive if land is developed for other uses. Recognizing the importance of land for agriculture to remain a viable industry, Carroll County began participating in an agricultural land preservation program in 1980. Through July of 2000, 33,758 acres of agricultural land have been preserved through a deed of permanent easement, 721 acres of which were donated through land trusts and 1,236 through the Carroll County Little Pipe Creek Rural Legacy Program. At the present average annual rate of 2,000 acres preserved, by the year 2020 only 73,000 acres will be permanently preserved.

Schools

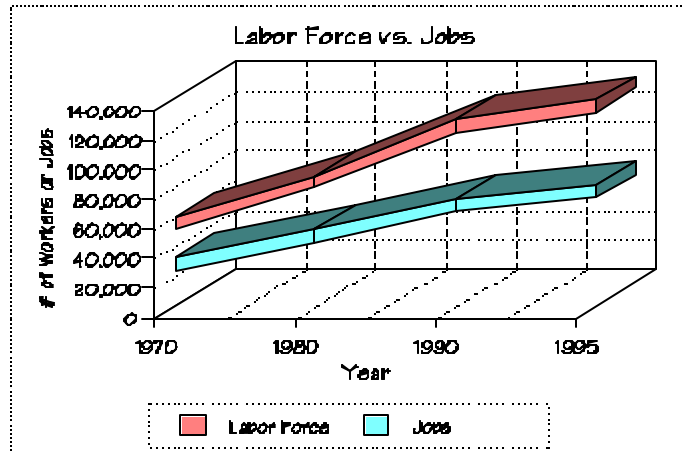
Growth in the number of students enrolled in Carroll County Public Schools reflects the overall growth in population in the County. In 1883, there were 113 schools in Carroll County (mostly one-room schoolhouses) with an enrollment of 6,150 pupils. By 1960, the public school system had grown to 10,661 students housed in 18 buildings. In September 1999, Carroll County Public Schools had an enrollment of 26,2506 students in 34 facilities. The 34 facilities consisted of 21 elementary schools, 8 middle schools, and 5 high schools. A new middle school opened in August of 2000. Countywide, 117 portable classrooms accommodated the pupil population that exceeded the buildings' capacity. Presently, two new high schools are funded and under construction. Century High School, located in the south Carroll area, is expected to be occupied for the 2001-2002 school year, while the occupancy of the new Westminster area high school is expected for the 2002-2003 school year. In the capital improvement program FY 2001-2006, funding is planned for the modernization of a middle school, the construction of an alternative education program facility, renovation and addition to the career and technology education program facilities, and an addition to a high school.

There are a number of private schools in Carroll County serving a small number of students. The Maryland Department of Planning estimates that in 1995 and 1996 over 95 percent of all pupils in the County were served by Carroll County Public Schools.

It is estimated that enrollment in Carroll County Public Schools will continue to increase to 30,545 students by 2006, for a 13 percent increase in the next six years.

Employment

In 1960, Carroll's labor force was 20,300. With population growth, the labor force has also grown, reaching 67,000 in 1990 and an estimated 77,389 in 1996. The 1999 labor force included 79,420 employed persons and 1,597 unemployed persons. Carroll's 1999 average unemployment rate was 2.5 percent, one of the lowest in the State.



Source: U.S. Census, MD Office of Planning, BEA

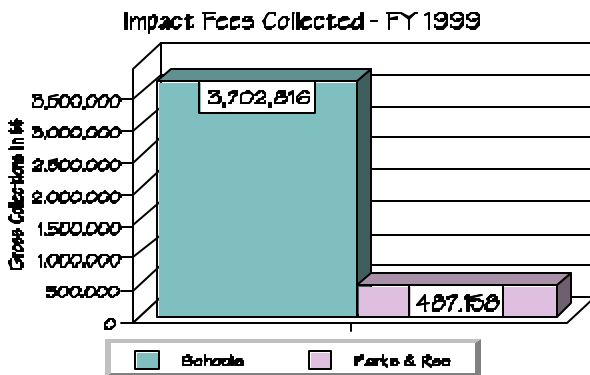
In 1960, almost 30 percent of the labor force was employed in manufacturing. By 1990, manufacturing employed only 15 percent of the labor force. The primary industry of employed persons in 1999 was retail trade and professional-related services.

In 1990, an estimated 10,422 people traveled into Carroll County for employment, while 35,458 Carroll residents left the County for employment elsewhere.

In 1969, there were an estimated 27,414 jobs (full and part-time) in Carroll County. Employment in the County grew to 53,109 jobs in 1990 and an estimated 64,400 jobs in 1998. Employment in the County is projected to reach 72,400 jobs (full and part-time) by 2020, of which 56,156 will be full-time jobs.

County Services Financing

County services are financed through the use of income tax, state and federal funds, license and permit fees, and other sources, with the majority of funds coming from property tax. In FY97, for every dollar collected as revenue from residential properties, \$1.10 worth of services was required. By contrast, for every dollar collected as revenue for commercial/industrial properties, \$0.56 was required for services. For every dollar collected in revenue from agriculturally-assessed land, \$0.48 was spent in services.



Source: Carroll County Comptroller's Office

Carroll County has imposed an impact fee on new development for schools since 1976. Initially, the fee was used to acquire school sites. In 1989, the fee was changed to apply to construction costs as well. The impact fee for schools was last changed in 1995. Since then, all new single-family units pay \$4,197 in impact fees for schools at the building permit stage. An impact fee

for parks has been collected since 1989. All single-family units also pay an impact fee of \$547 for parks when applying for a building permit.

According to the 1990 Census, the median value of all owner-occupied units in the County was \$126,700. In 1998, the average value of new single-family detached dwellings ranged from \$144,000 in the northwest to \$209,500 in the southeast area of the County. The tax revenues generated by new construction are well above those generated by the average existing single-family dwelling.

Transportation

The transportation system serving Carroll County and its residents and businesses consists of a network of trails, roads, railways, public and private airfields, and a regional airport. Aside from a few notable exceptions, the County-wide transportation network we know today has remained virtually unchanged since MD 140, the original Westminster Bypass, was built in 1952.

The first major transportation system to serve Carroll Countians was a railway built in 1831 as part of the Baltimore and Ohio railroad. The B & O was extended to Sykesville as part of a connection to the Washington, D.C. area. A second railway system, the Western Maryland Railroad, originally chartered in 1852 as the "Baltimore, Carroll and Frederick Railroad Company," was built to Westminster in 1861, Union Bridge in 1862, and Detour in 1868. Today, the Maryland Midland Railroad operates a freight service along the original Western Maryland Railroad rights-of-way.

The recent expansion of the runway to 5,100 linear feet at the Carroll County Regional Airport is among the more notable recent expansions of Carroll's transportation network. While the expansion allows small planes and corporate jets to utilize this public facility today, it operated as a small private facility with two turf landing strips until 1976, when Carroll County acquired the airport. In the late 1970s, the first paved runway was constructed along with the main hangar/administration building and runway lighting. The "Jack Poage Field," as it is known, is one of eight airports/airfields currently operating in Carroll.

In 1962, with the adoption of the original County-wide Major Street Plan, Carroll County began the process of planning for the long-term traffic needs of its citizens and businesses. A principal focus of the 1962 Major Street Plan was the construction of bypass roads around several of Carroll's incorporated towns, particularly those whose Main Streets were state highways. These bypasses, in conjunction with local collector road construction, were expected to divert heavy traffic away from the historic towns and create economic development opportunities for the County. The vision set forth by the 1962 Major Street Plan has remained the focus of Carroll's transportation planning efforts ever since.

Today, as a result of the decentralization of the Baltimore metropolitan area and the construction of the Northwest Expressway (I-795), Carroll County's traffic volumes

continue to escalate. The Northwest Expressway, in particular, has accelerated the need for improvements to the state roadway system. In 1999, the most current traffic data available, the State Highway Administration reports that MD 140 in the Westminster area is accommodating roughly 48,000 vehicles per day. Traffic along MD 140 near the Baltimore County line decreases to approximately 42,000 vehicles per day. Other congested corridors in the County include MD 26 in the Eldersburg area (33,000 vehicles per day), MD 30 in the Hampstead area (18,000 vehicles per day), and MD 97 North (16,875 vehicles per day). These steadily increasing traffic volumes continue to indicate a need for capacity improvements along Carroll's more congested State road corridors.