

Carroll County

2035

Master Plan

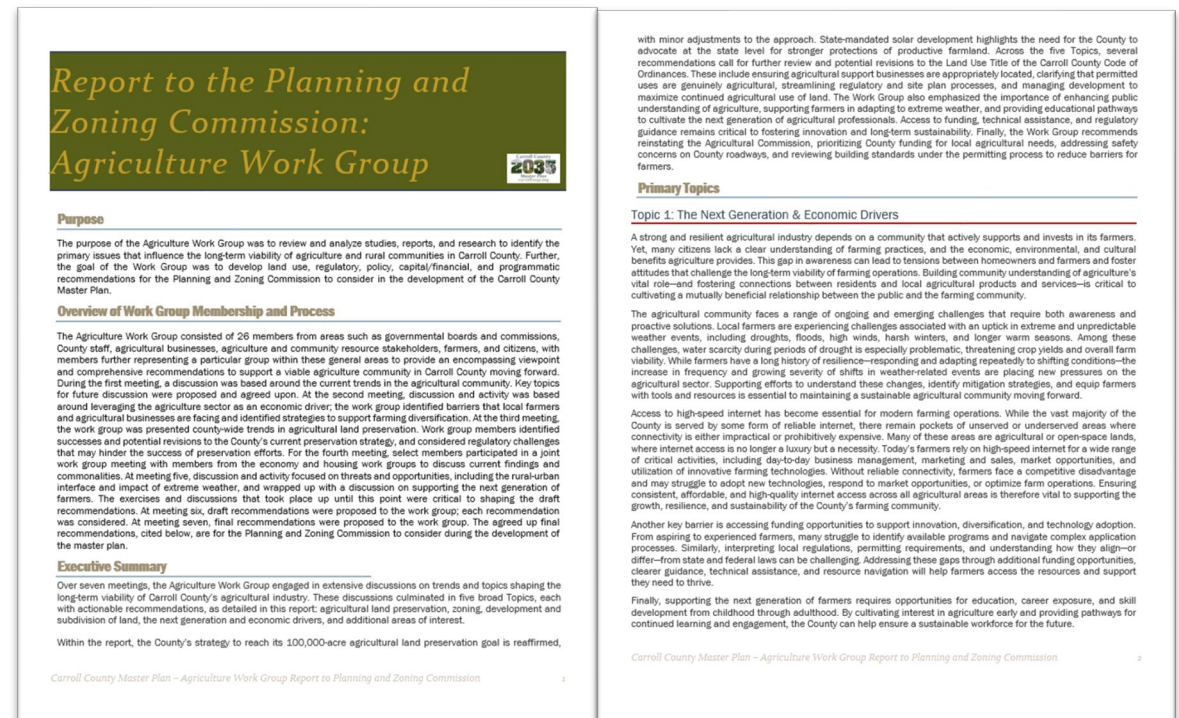
Agriculture Work Group Report

Presented by Gabe Zepp, Chair

Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
November 5, 2025

Report Introduction

- Purpose (presented on 10/1)
- Overview of membership and process (presented on 10/1)
- Executive summary
- 5 Topics
- Conclusion



31 Recommendations: 2 Land Use, 7 Regulatory, 12 Policy, 3 Capital/Financial, 7 Programmatic

Topic 1: The Next Generation & Economic Drivers

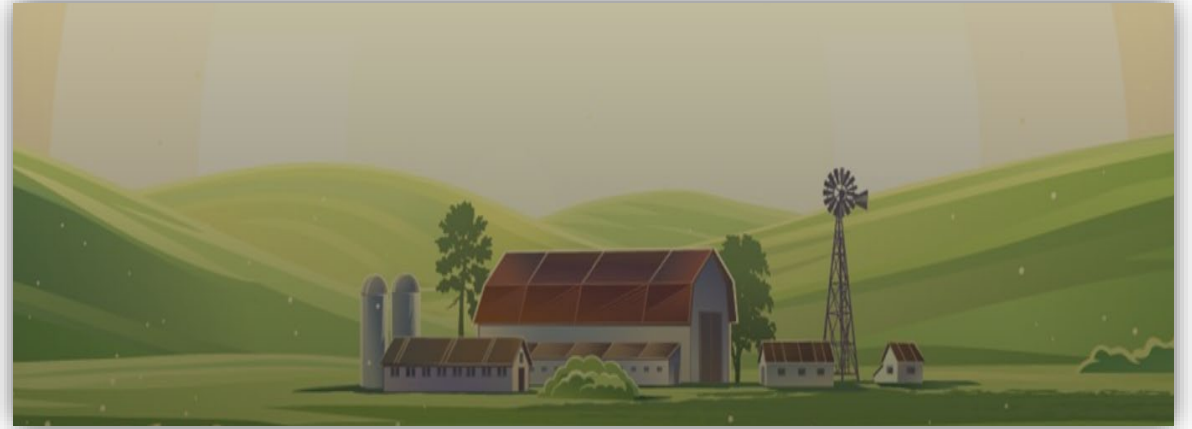


- Community's understanding of agriculture
- Extreme and unpredictable weather events
- Reliable, high-speed internet
- Funding opportunities, clearer guidance, technical assistance, and resource navigation
- Education, career exposure, and skill development

9 Recommendations: 1 Policy, 2 Capital/Financial, 6 Programmatic

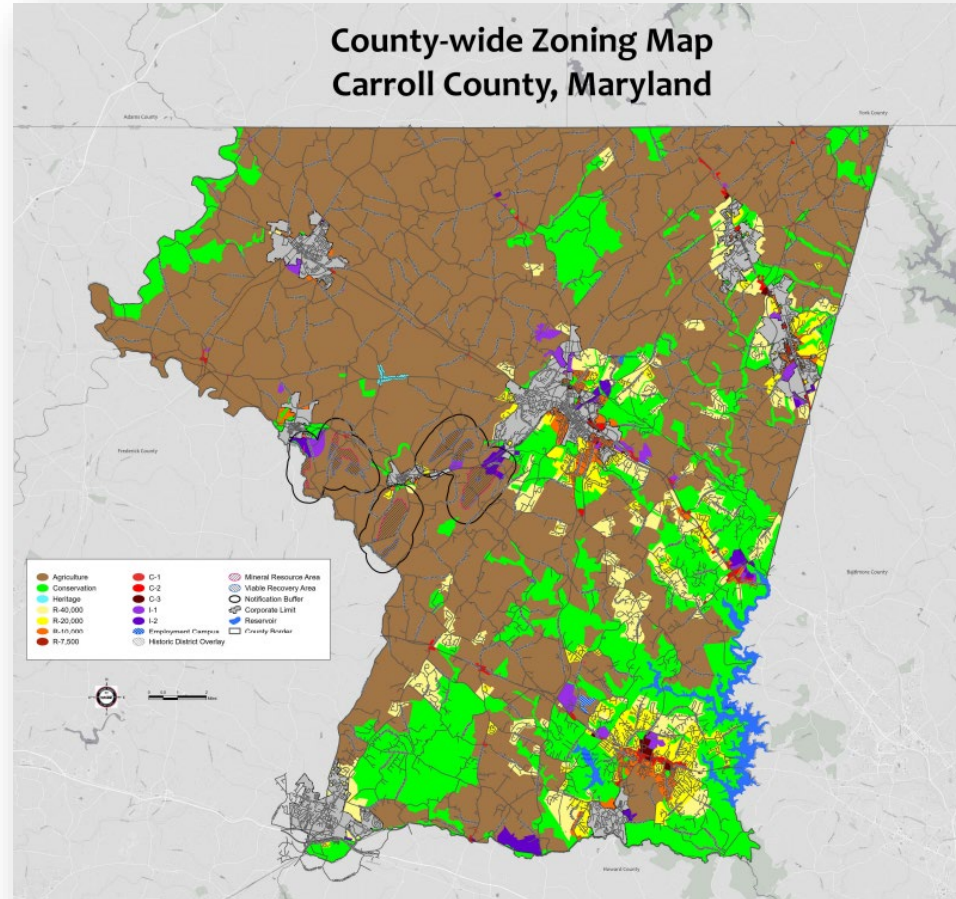
Topic 2: Agricultural Land Preservation

- 100,000-acre goal
- Strategy
- Areas identified for growth
- PPA
- Agricultural support businesses on County easements
- Solar mandates and development



8 Recommendations: 1 Land Use, 1 Regulatory, 5 Policy, 1 Capital/Financial

Topic 3: Zoning



- Definition of agriculture
- Agricultural support businesses
- Permitted uses and the intent of the Agricultural Zone

4 Recommendations: 3 Regulatory, 1 Policy

Topic 4: Development & Subdivision of Land

- Number of permitted uses on remaining portions
- State's growth tier system
- Site plan process
- Rural design standards
- TDR program



5 Recommendations: 1 Land Use, 2 Regulatory, 2 Policy

Topic 5: Additional Areas of Interest

- Agricultural Commission
- Accountability of County funding
- County roads
- Engineering and permitting processes
- Property rights



5 Recommendations: 1 Regulatory, 3 Policy, 1 Programmatic

Carroll County

2035

Master Plan

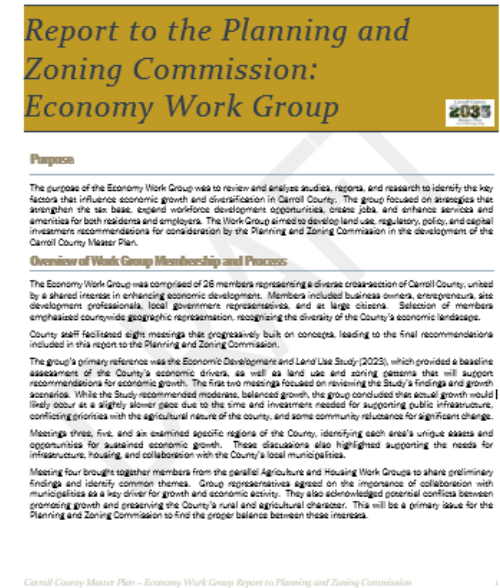
Economy Work Group Report

Presented by Amy Yingling, Chair

Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
November 5, 2025

Report Introduction

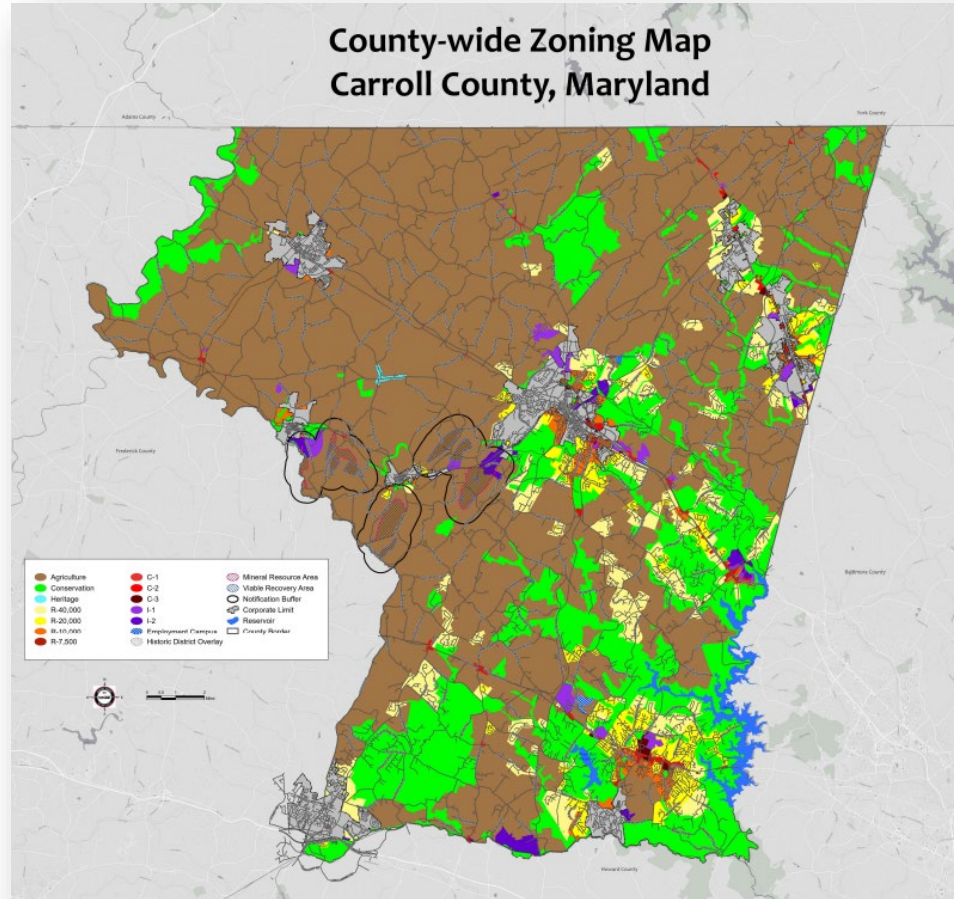
- Purpose (presented on 10/1)
- Overview of membership and process (presented on 10/1)
- Executive summary
- 8 Topics and 8 Target Areas
- Conclusion



31 Topic Recommendations: 5 Land Use; 17 Policy; 9 Capital/Financial

28 Target Area Recommendations: 9 Land Use; 11 Policy; 6 Regulatory; 2 Capital/Financial

Topic 1: Expansion of Commercial and Industrial Land Supply



- Only 3% of County land zoned commercial/industrial (vs. 7.5% regional avg in Frederick, Harford, Baltimore counties).
- Growth opportunities in hospitality, agritourism, manufacturing, and small business incubation.
- Selective rezoning and targeted infrastructure investment needed to support growth.
- Prioritize redevelopment of underutilized sites with existing roads, water, sewer, and broadband.
- Focus expansion in infrastructure-ready areas—no fixed acreage or % goal recommended.
- County should “set the table” through proactive investment and public outreach to build support.

5 Recommendations: 2 Land Use, 2 Policy, 1 Capital/Financial

Topic 2: Housing to Support Industry



- Housing shortages limit workforce retention and economic growth.
- Over 29,000 commute in and 58,000 commute out for work—clear jobs-housing mismatch.
- Need for more starter homes, mixed-use projects, and diverse housing options.
- Review and update zoning to support a range of housing types.
- Address barriers such as zoning restrictions and infrastructure costs.
- Use incentives and public investment to promote affordability and variety.

5 Recommendations: 2 Land Use, 2 Policy, 1 Capital/Financial

Topic 3: Preserve the County's Rural Character

- Rural identity and agriculture are core County strengths.
- Focus preservation on productive farmland, not all open space.
- Support ag-related industries (processors, markets, equipment suppliers).
- Encourage ag-tech innovation and potential partnerships (e.g., FITCI).
- Update zoning to allow compatible agricultural businesses.
- Balance preservation with economic opportunity.



3 Recommendations: 3 Policy

Topic 4: Streamlining the Development and Permitting Processes



- Current permitting and review processes can delay development.
- Coordination with municipalities adds complexity and time.
- Simplify and clarify development review and building permit procedures.
- Improve efficiency to reduce turnaround times.
- Align County and municipal processes for consistency.
- Clearer, faster approvals will enhance competitiveness and attract investment.

Topic 5: Enhanced Collaboration with Municipalities



- Carroll County has 8 independent municipalities with shared and separate responsibilities.
- Inconsistent zoning codes cause confusion and inefficiency for developers.
- Stronger coordination and standardization would improve clarity and streamline review processes.
- Collaboration can align economic growth, planning, and revitalization goals.
- County support for Main Street revitalization can enhance local destinations
- Mutual agreements and incentives can encourage shared progress toward Countywide goals.

4 Recommendations: 3 Policy, 1 Capital/Financial

Topic 6: Establish Metrics for Tracking Economic Progress



- Measuring progress is essential for accountability and strategic focus.
- Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) should track outcomes like:
 - Commercial tax base growth
 - Employment levels
 - Business expansion and retention
- Regular tracking will help ensure the County is moving toward its economic development vision.

1 Recommendations: 1 Policy

Topic 7: Business Incentives



- The County offers loans, grants, and financing programs to attract and retain businesses.
- These incentives help stimulate economic growth and support local employers.
- Continued and expanded support of incentive programs is essential.
- Explore innovative strategies like new grants, tax credits, and co-ownership models.
- Extend incentives to municipalities and Main Street revitalization efforts.

3 Recommendations: 1 Policy; 2 Capital/Financial

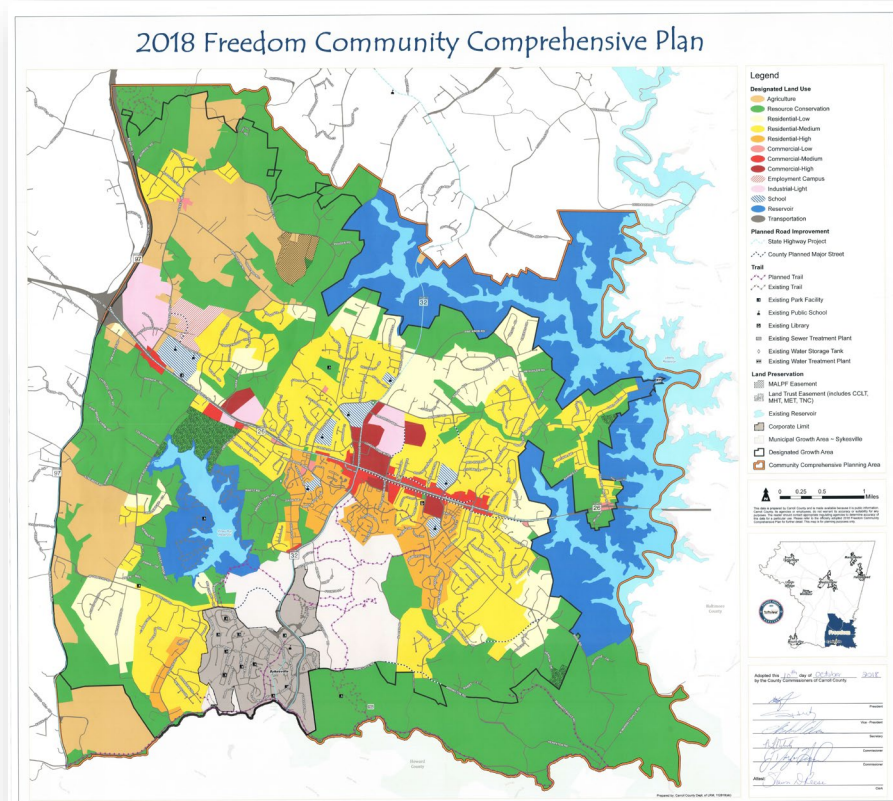
Topic 8: Investment in Public Infrastructure



- Infrastructure gaps—water, sewer, roads, broadband—are major barriers to growth.
- Proactive investment can attract new businesses and expand growth areas.
- Target strategic corridors (MD 140, MD 30, MD 27, MD 26) for future development.
- Explore public infrastructure funding plans similar to Agricultural Preservation.
- Continue investment in broadband and transportation improvements.
- Collaborate with partners to create project-ready industrial sites.

7 Recommendations: 1 Land Use; 2 Policy; 4 Capital/Financial

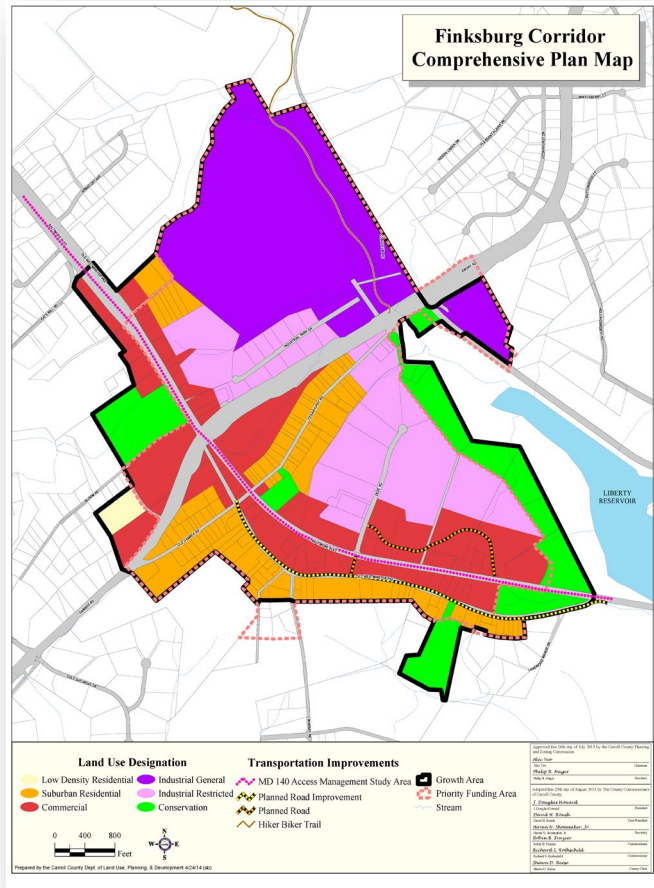
Target Area 1: Freedom Area



5 Recommendations: 2 Land Use; 1 Regulatory; 1 Policy; 1 Capital/Financial

- Specific areas identified were:
 - The Warfield Complex
 - Corridors along MD 26 and MD 32
 - Larger rural villages such as Gamber
- Business sectors mentioned to attract included technology, health care, high-tech manufacturing, and small-scale distribution.
- Assess wastewater capacity
- Encourage mixed-use development along MD 26.
- Address infrastructure gaps.
- Improve roadway safety and functionality
- Pursue funding opportunities and coordinate with State and Baltimore City on transportation, wastewater, and water infrastructure.

Target Area 2: Finksburg



- Specific areas identified were:
 - MD 140 west of Finksburg
 - Southeast of the MD 91 and MD 140 intersection
 - Sandymount
- Business sectors mentioned to attract include restaurants, light retail, office parks, multi-use, and multi-family housing.
- Lack of public water and sewer in Finksburg is a major barrier to growth.
- Evaluate potential for development of public water and sewer for Finksburg.
- Comprehensively review zoning districts and codes.
- Work with Maryland State Highway Administration to improve state roadway functionality and safety for MD 140.

3 Recommendations: 2 Land Use; 1 Policy

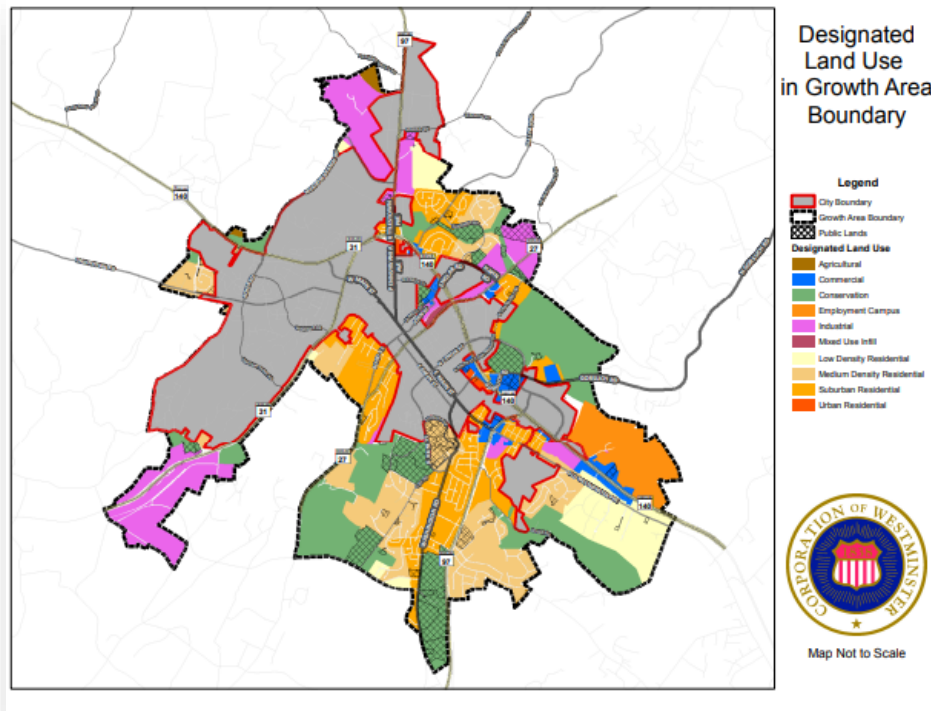
Target Area 3: Shamrock Farm Area



- Specific areas discussed included:
 - MD 26 corridor
 - Woodbine Road
 - Winfield/Taylorville area
 - Klees Mill at MD 26
- Business sectors mentioned to attract include restaurants, a boutique hotel, truck services (machinery/mechanical), and university extensions.
- Evaluate potential for development of public water and sewer.

1 Recommendations: 1 Land Use

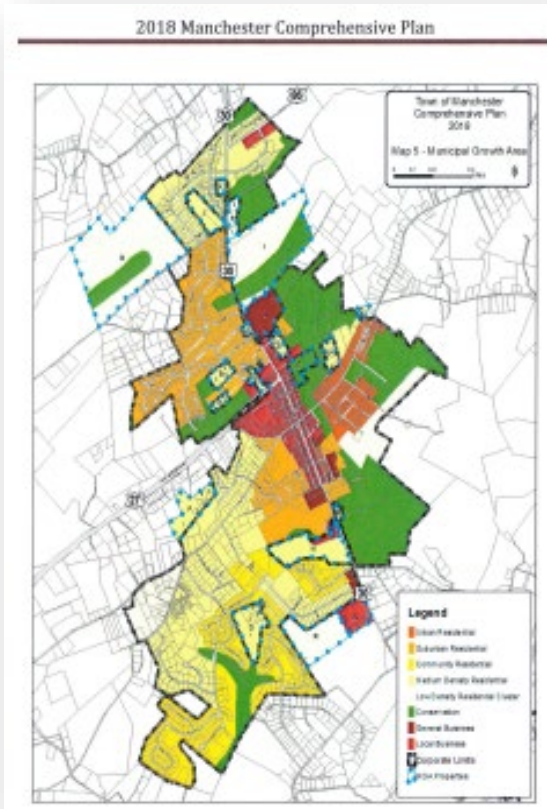
Target Area 4: Westminster



- Specific areas discussed included:
 - MD 97 North of Westminster's Growth Area for breweries/wineries/weddings
 - MD 482 near Leisters Church Road for employment campus
 - MD 140 as an industrial tech corridor
 - The Town Mall property for redevelopment potential
- Business sectors mentioned to attract include incubation for breweries/wineries/weddings, employment campus, creating an industrial tech corridor, light commercial, office, retail, hotel, higher education partnerships due to proximity of McDaniel College and Carroll Community College, health care due to proximity to Carroll County Hospital, and mixed-use businesses
- Evaluate opportunities with the City of Westminster for multi-family housing options.
- Evaluate benefit of higher height allowances.
- Coordinate with the City and Maryland State Highway regarding transportation modes to support economic growth, including traffic congestion, pedestrian accessibility, and other alternative modes.
- Work with Maryland State Highway Administration to improve state roadway functionality and safety on MD 97 north of Westminster.
- Enhance collaboration with higher education institutions and healthcare system to expand on workforce development opportunities.

5 Recommendations: 1 Land Use; 1 Regulatory; 3 Policy

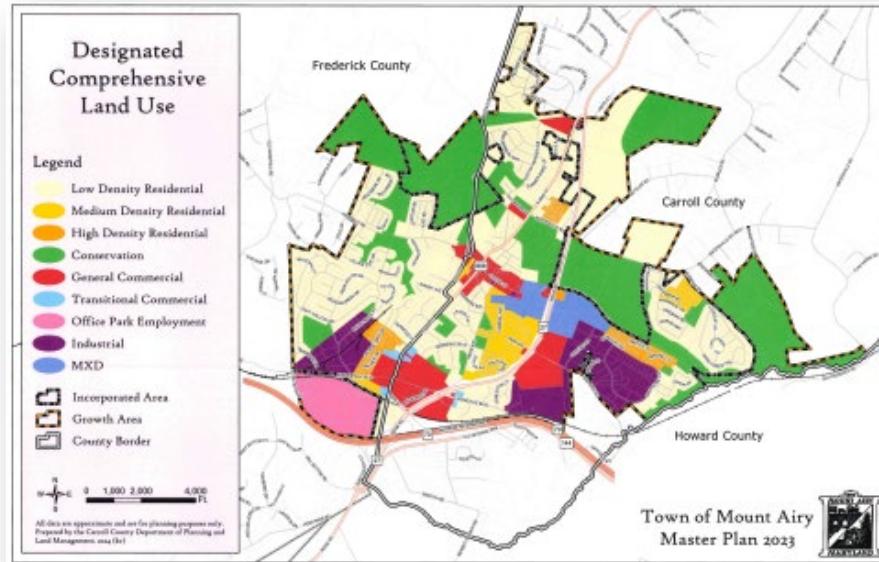
Target Area 6: Manchester



- Specific areas discussed included:
 - MD 496 (Bachman Valley Road)
 - MD 30 (Melrose area)
 - Across from Manchester Valley High School
- Business sectors mentioned to attract include teenager uses across from Manchester Valley High School, commuter businesses, Amish related businesses, and contractors.
- Evaluate need for water and sewer infrastructure to support further development of the area.
- Work with Maryland State Highway Administration to improve state roadway functionality and safety on MD 30 north of Manchester.

2 Recommendations: 1 Regulatory; 1 Policy

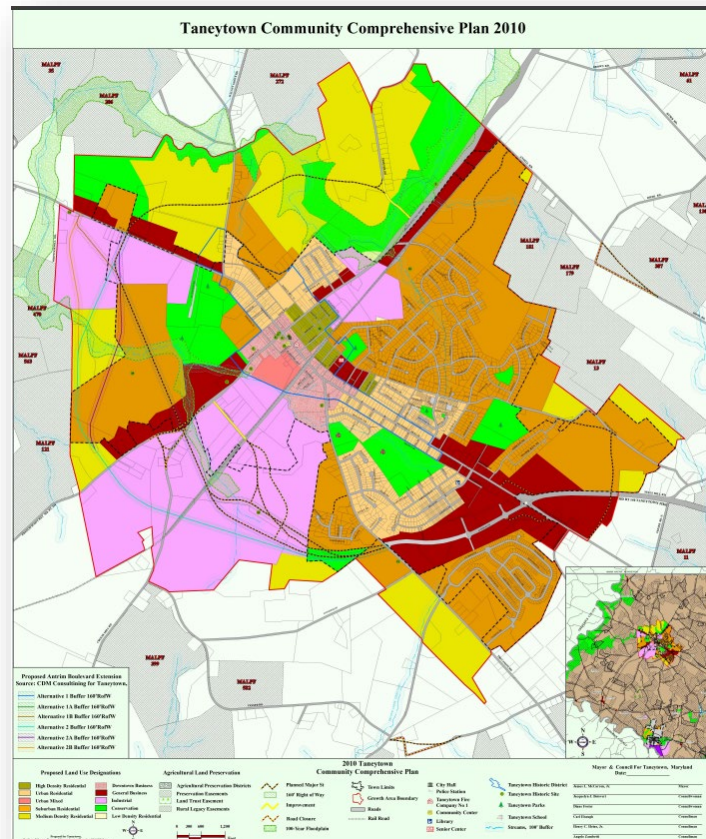
Target Area 7: Mount Airy



- Specific areas around Mount Airy discussed included:
 - The MD 27 corridor
 - The Harrison Leishear Property
 - Employment Campus- designated land
 - Southern Mount Airy around MD 27 and Ridgeville Boulevard
- Business sectors mentioned to attract include employers whose staff live in the area, so they do not need to commute, defense, technology, biotech support, and mixed use.
- Strategic location for growth due to proximity to Howard and Frederick Counties and Interstate 70.
- Evaluate water and sewer infrastructure improvement needs to support development.

2 Recommendations: 1 Regulatory; 1 Policy

Target Area 8: Taneytown



- Specific areas discussed included:
 - North of Taneytown on MD 194
 - Thunderhead Bowling area
 - South of Old Taneytown Road
 - Around EVAPCO
 - MD 140 corridor to Westminster (ag tech incubation)
- Business sectors mentioned to attract include manufacturing, hotels, retail, restaurants, and agricultural tourism.
- Support the completion of the bypass.
- Evaluate accessory uses on agricultural farms to house and support agriculture-tech uses.
- Ensure agriculture preservation does not affect Taneytown's future growth.

5 Recommendations: 2 Land Use; 1 Regulatory; 2 Policy

Concluding Thoughts

- Maintaining sustained economic development will be essential to any vision for a balanced future
 - This growth must remain sensitive to the County's inherent character, while leveraging its strong agricultural base and the historic municipal cores
- Continued collaboration among the County, municipalities, and citizens is vital to ensure a unified and balanced vision for the future
- With a clear direction and a shared commitment of time, resources, and funding from all stakeholders, Carroll County can achieve sustainable growth and long-term success.
- The Master Plan will need to define the vision for economic growth in the county and put the things in place to achieve it

Carroll County

2035

Master Plan

Planning & Zoning Commission Meeting
November 5, 2025

Housing Work Group Report

Presented by
Karen Leatherwood

Introduction

Work Group Overview

- 29-member team
- Identified key housing challenges and opportunities in Carroll County.
- Eight meetings
- Seven topic areas emerged

Introduction

Seven Key Topic Areas:

- Education & Engagement
- Growth Planning & Coordination
- Zoning Reform
- Accessible & Inclusive Housing
- Administrative Improvements
- Incentives & Mandates
- Financial Support & Education

7 Topic Recommendations: 7 Land Use, 28 Policy, 27 Regulatory, 33 Capital/Financial

Topic 1: Education & Community Engagement

Communication to Build Understanding

- Recommended for incorporation in Master Plan text.
- Promotes early, open dialogue about housing needs and benefits.
- Aims to reduce stigma and misinformation.
- Strengthens public understanding of housing terms, options, and impacts.
- Encourages collaboration among residents, officials, and developers.

7 Recommendations: 6 Policy, 1 Capital/Financial



Topic 2: Growth Planning & Coordination

Aligning Growth and Infrastructure

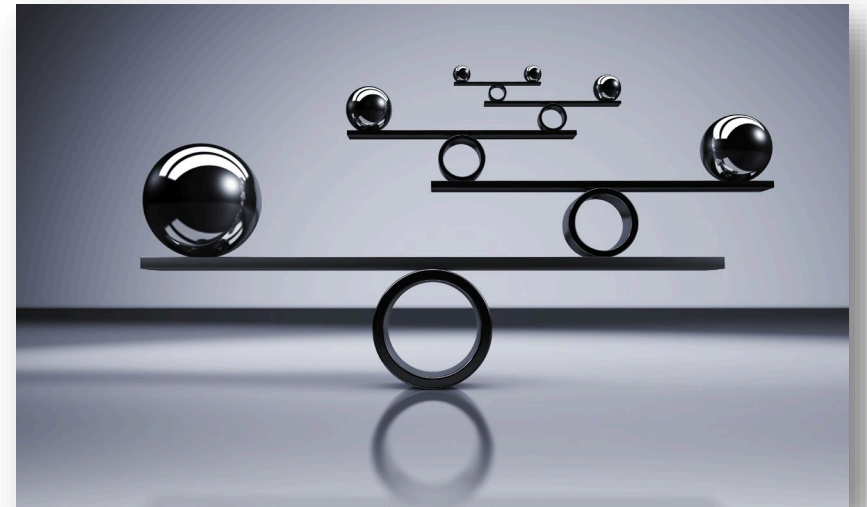
- Connects housing, transportation, and infrastructure planning.
- Encourages coordination between county and municipalities.
- Stresses consistency in following adopted plans.
- Supports growth that balances livability and sustainability.



Topic 3: Zoning Reform

Modernize Land Use Regulations

- Calls for updated zoning to meet today's housing needs.
- Supports flexibility in housing types and community design.
- Encourages innovation and adaptive reuse of existing properties.
- Balances community character with evolving demographics.
- Revisit growth tiers



12 Recommendations: 1 Land Use, 11 Regulatory

Topic 4: Accessible & Inclusive Housing

Designing for All Ages and Abilities

- Promotes homes adaptable to different life stages and abilities.
- Recognizes accessibility as key to long-term community resilience.
- Encourages awareness of inclusive and multigenerational housing options.

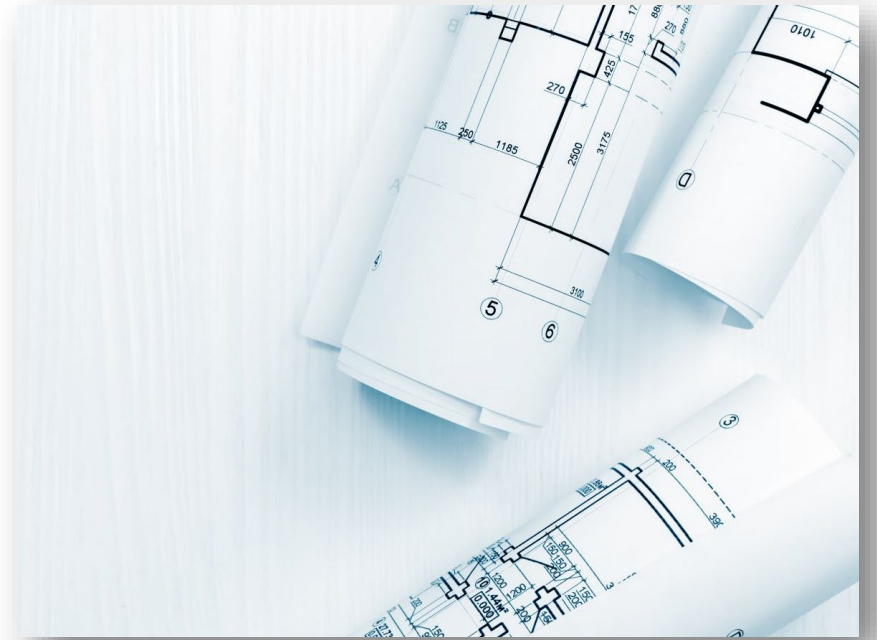


9 Recommendations: 5 Regulatory, 4 Capital/Financial

Topic 5: Administrative & Process Improvements

Streamlining Development Processes

- Aims to make approvals more efficient and predictable.
- Encourages clear, consistent procedures across departments.
- Plans for early engagement to reduce delays and foster communication.



9 Recommendations: 7 Regulatory, 2 Policy

Topic 6: Housing Incentives & Mandates

Encouraging Housing and Affordability

- Explores balanced tools to expand housing options.
- Promotes collaboration among public, private, and nonprofit partners.
- Focuses on flexible approaches that align community goals with market realities.



Topic 7: Financial Education & Support

Expanding Financial Readiness and Stability

- Builds pathways to homeownership through education and support.
- Strengthens nonprofit and institutional partnerships.
- Connects financial empowerment to housing access and stability.



Conclusion

Integrate Work Group insights into the County Master Plan

- Strengthen coordination among County agencies, municipalities, and partners.
- Continue open dialogue with the community to guide implementation and strengthen trust and understanding.
- Prioritize implementation that balances growth, affordability, and livability.