

III. RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT



RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

CURRENT CONDITIONS

Over the past two decades, residential development in Frederick County has continued to increase at a relatively consistent rate. According to studies performed by the Economic Development Authority (EDA), Frederick County remains primarily an in-commute location. This Plan also acknowledges Frederick County is also home to a large population of residents that commute out of the County for employment. One of the contributors to the County's population growth was the migration of people from inside of the Washington Metropolitan Statistical Area (WMSA) to Frederick County for a higher quality of life including lower housing costs and a lower tax rate. Frederick County, because of its location and excellent access to Northern Virginia and Washington, DC, has become a desirable place to live for those commuters. Frederick County has also become an attractive place to live for retirees.

Frederick County's housing stock includes a variety of homes in both suburban and rural settings. In recent years Frederick County has seen approximately two thirds of its new residential growth constructed in the Urban Development Area (UDA) and one third in the rural areas, including the Residential Recreational Communities (such as Lake Holiday, Lake Frederick, and Shawneeland).

The rural areas are home to the agricultural, forestal and open spaces of the County. Within the rural areas, the predominant types of residential units are single family dwellings with a density of one house per five acres. In addition to the traditional five acres lots seen in the past, dwellings at the same density can be clustered using a two-acre lot size with the remainder being preserved through a 60% preservation tract. The County also has a number of historic Rural Community Centers where residential uses are clustered. These rural community centers typically have smaller lot sizes, higher densities, and some commercial uses. Residential developments located in the Rural Areas, including Rural Community Centers are typically on private individual water and sewer systems.

The Urban Development Area (UDA) is the portion of the County which has been identified as the area where more intensive forms of residential development will occur accommodate the anticipated residential growth within the Community. While the UDA currently consists of primarily suburban residential types of development, with some multifamily units, particular areas have been identified to accommodate a more intensive mix of land uses and residential housing opportunities.

The UDA is designed to accommodate increased residential densities because it is adjacent to or in near proximity to necessary infrastructure and public facilities. These facilities include public water and sewer, schools, emergency services, and a transportation network more capable of handling the increased trips from higher density residential uses. To further encourage residential development in the Urban rather than Rural Areas, the County adopted a Transfer of Development Rights Program (TDR) in the spring of 2010. More information on the County's TDR Program can be found in the Rural Areas chapter of this Plan.

FOCUS FOR THE FUTURE

Residential growth in Frederick County is anticipated to continue. The County must ensure that land use policies are established to adequately direct and shape that growth. While new residential growth is expected in both the Rural and the Urban Areas, new residential growth should be focused primarily within the Urban Development Area (UDA) which is better suited to meet the needs of these new residences.

The County should continue to establish policies which result in attractive and welcoming residential neighborhoods which are able to accommodate a growing population. The County should strive to offer a variety of neighborhood and housing choices to attract younger populations that would help support a diverse and skilled workforce for the County. It is also important that housing opportunities be available to all household types and income categories.

The land use policies of the Urban Areas will further guide this residential development and community growth.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Proactive planning efforts are essential in both the Urban and Rural Areas to ensure that the County is able to deal with its future residential growth in a cost-effective and attractive manner.

Proper planning and land use policies enable the County to identify where future residential growth should be accommodated. It enables the County to plan for and provide infrastructure and services in defined areas where they can reach the majority of the population. By directing growth and services to the urban areas, the County can develop community facilities that become focal points to the residential areas.

GOALS/STRATEGIES

GOAL1: NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT SHOULD BE FOCUSED WITHIN THE URBAN DEVELOPMENT AREA (UDA).

STRATEGIES:

- Guide new residential development to areas that are served by public utilities, access to transportation networks able to serve higher intensities, employment areas, schools, recreation facilities and shopping facilities.
- The Urban Development Area should allow for housing that will meet the needs of first-time buyers, retiree's, move-up residences, and seniors.
- Higher density residential development is encouraged in close proximity to or mixed with commercial areas to enhance walkable access to employment,

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shopping, and entertainment. The County's strategic growth areas, the Urban Centers and Neighborhood Villages, are the most desirable locations for this type of development.

- Continue to monitor the supply of land designated and zoned for residential use in the Urban Areas to ensure adequate capacity for future population growth.

GOAL 2: NATURAL SYSTEMS, OPEN SPACES AND FOCAL POINTS SHOULD BE INCORPORATED INTO NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT.

STRATEGIES:

- When new development occurs in the rural areas, the rural preservation option should be encouraged as the preferred subdivision form and design to preserve natural and environmental features.
- New residential neighborhoods should incorporate focal points, landscaping, recreational amenities, open space amenities (active, passive, and natural), located in close proximity to all dwellings, with an emphasis on the provision of usable open space that facilitate community interaction and promote a quality neighborhood development.

GOAL 3: ENCOURAGE NEW AND INNOVATIVE HOUSING CHOICES WHICH MEET THE NEEDS OF VARIOUS AGES AND INCOMES.

STRATEGIES:

- Residential housing types and design guidelines should be flexible to accommodate evolving demographic trends, and to ensure that housing choices are maximized.
- Ensure that adequate housing options are available to the development community through the Zoning Ordinance. Investigate additional opportunities such as new or expanded manufactured housing developments and accessory units to help expand the housing supply and help meet the County's affordable housing needs.
- Rural Community Centers should be enhanced as viable and desirable places to live, as they can serve an important role as a location with lower development costs, thus reducing the housing costs. Opportunities to provide water and sewer services, public or private, should be investigated.
- When water and sewer (public or private) becomes available, promote the completion of land use plans for the Rural Community Centers and provide incentives to increase the viability of these neighborhoods.