

MUNICIPAL GROWTH ELEMENT

The Municipal Growth Element is a detailed analysis of population growth, land development and infrastructure impacts in order to adequately prepare for future development and its affects.

This section focuses on the next 10 to 15 years and the potential impacts that may be expected from a population number of approximately 6,500. A discussion of growth beyond this time frame or of a larger population is not possible at this time due to existing wastewater capacity constraints.

Introduction

Poolesville has proceeded through an orderly process to revise and update the Town Zoning Ordinance and Code, review and adopt a new water allocation plan, and finish a comprehensive review of the Master Plan. This process represents an attempt to:

- Support incremental, limited growth from the current population of 4,883 to approximately 6,500 in the foreseeable future;
- Provide for a Rural Zone with the restrictions of the current Rural Density Transfer (RDT) Zone;
- Encourage the commercial uses in Poolesville –including retail, service, and office uses – within a central Commercial Zone, to reinforce the Town Center concept and to avoid strip mall development along main roads within the Town; and
- Encourage decreasing residential density as development moves farther out from the center of Town and as available land gets closer to the surrounding Agricultural Reserve.

Residents want to maintain Poolesville’s small town or village character. It is important to describe what that concept means to ensure that local residents, businesses and community leaders know what to expect when they become part of the community. For the purposes of this Master Plan a small town or village:

- Is predominantly residential and has supporting commercial and public facilities at or near its center;
- Is compact compared to its surroundings, and to traditional suburban tract development;
- Is easily distinguishable from surrounding land which is usually farmland or forests, and is usually located in the midst of rural or only slightly developed areas;
- Encourages personal interaction and pedestrian movement among local origins and destinations through mixed land uses.

This description of a “village” reflects the rural, small town environment that Town residents value and is intended to help guide the development and planning activities of the Town going forward.



Growth History

Past Growth Trends

Poolesville is not a suburb that sprouted around the outskirts of a major city. Instead, it is a true, independent community with a long history. Since the Town's beginnings as a settlement in colonial days, it has developed a supportive economic and cultural life that has made it unique in character from many of the other suburban areas ringing Washington, D.C.

Poolesville was settled in 1760 and incorporated in 1867; however, in 1950, it was still a rural town with a strong agricultural base and only 58 single-family dwelling units. Residential development increased only slightly by 1970, totaling 128 single-family units. During the post-1970 period, the Town experienced its greatest expansion, growing by more than 900 housing units to 1,086 in 1977. Subsequent to 1977, the Town has grown gradually and steadily. The current residential development, made possible by the increased availability of public sewerage and water, stands at 1,660 housing units.

Land Impacts

Residential Zoning

Table 1 indicates the amount of developed and undeveloped/unimproved acreage existing within the Town's boundaries. In 1998, the Planning Commission completed a comprehensive re-zoning of the Town. The main objective of the re-zoning was to support the concept of increasing residential housing density near the Town Center and decreasing density as the distance from the Town Center increases. The Planning Commission is considering the creation of some limited transition zoning between the existing $\frac{3}{4}$ acre residential and 25 acre rural density categories. Such parcels would, in the future, help fill a niche currently being addressed by developmental incursion in the surrounding Agricultural Reserve. The Planning Commission also recommends changing in the Town Code the nomenclature of Rural Density Transfer Zone to the more accurate Rural Density Zone.

Table 1 (Existing Zoning In Acres)

	Developed	Undeveloped	Total	Percent
RDT		818.94	818.94	32%
Residential (3/4 Acre)		238.1	238.1	9%
Residential (1/2 Acre)	326.76	103.48	430.24	17%
Residential (1/3 Acre)	217.77	103.25	321.02	12%
General Commercial	39.97	7.78	47.75	2%
CBD	14.87	1.57	16.44	1%
Townhouses	31.80	2.11	33.91	1%
Misc. parcels, Pool,	655.71		655.71	26%
Total	1,286.88	1,275.23	2,562.11	



Residential Growth

As discussed previously, the Town anticipates adding nearly 1,300 residents/400 homes to the existing stock within the foreseeable future. Ever increasing congestion in Washington D.C. and throughout surrounding suburbs makes Poolesville an attractive place to raise a family and experience the “small town character” way of life. Water and sewer allocation approval occurred in December 2009 and includes a sunset provision for properties that do not timely submit a site plan or request an extension. The projected dwelling unit figures are based on actual development proposals submitted during the allocation planning process. All of the planned growth will be fulfilled by utilizing existing undeveloped/zoned acreage within the corporate limits without the annexation of additional land.

The future development within the Town boundaries will consist of single-family detached homes, a 17-unit townhome site, and some commercial space.

Table 2 depicts the amount of land consumed due to the construction of over 400 homes.

Table 2 (*Land Consumed (In Acres)*)

	New Dwelling Units	Population Increase (DU X 3.2)	Acreage Consumed*
RDT	11	35.20	290.44
Residential (3/4 Acre)	182	582.40	203.79
Residential (1/2 Acre)	33	105.60	32.1
Residential (1/3 Acre)	160	512	97.94
General Commercial			6.23
Townhouses	17	54.4	2.11
Total	403	1,289.60	632.61

* “Acreage Consumed” includes land constrained by natural features and includes 83 acres open space and parkland that will be dedicated to the Town and not available for future development.

Growth Impacts on Public Services and Facilities

This section projects the potential impacts that the roughly 1,300 new resident increase will have on services and facilities in Poolesville and the surrounding area. It should be noted that important related material also appears in the Water Resource Element and that both growth elements should be reviewed in order to obtain a clear and complete picture.

Public Schools

The Community Facilities chapter of this Master Plan identifies the Poolesville Cluster schools, programs and future challenges. In October, 2009, the Montgomery County School Superintendent recommended the closure of Monocacy Elementary School effective August 2010, and the consolidation of the enrollments of Monocacy and Poolesville Elementary schools at Poolesville Elementary School due to projected declining enrollments. The Poolesville



Cluster, with Poolesville Government support, rallied together in a roundtable process during the spring of 2010. The group introduced several suggestions to boost enrollment and submitted updated housing projections. In October 2010, the superintendent released new recommendations for Monocacy and Poolesville Elementary Schools. In light of increased enrollment at Poolesville Elementary School and the planned construction of 400 additional homes, Montgomery County Public Schools amended the projected enrollments and space availability for the Poolesville Cluster. The following table details the amended projected enrollment and space availability.

Schools		Actual 10-11	Projections							
			11-12	12-13	13-14	14-15	15-16	16-17	2020	2025
Poolesville HS	Program Capacity	1152	1152	1152	1152	1152	1152	1152	1152	1152
	Enrollment	1170	1145	1172	1167	1163	1170	1133	1200	1200
	Available Space	(18)	7	(20)	(15)	(11)	(18)	19	(48)	(48)
John Poole MS	Program Capacity	459	459	459	459	459	459	459	459	459
	Enrollment	355	392	376	346	287	277	294	350	350
	Available Space	104	67	83	113	172	182	165	109	109
Poolesville ES	Program Capacity	539	539	539	539	539	539	539		
	Enrollment	399	385	401	412	447	460	470		
	Available Space	140	154	138	127	92	79	69		
Monocacy ES	Program Capacity	219	219	219	219	219	219	219		
	Enrollment	169	152	139	141	145	150	150		
	Available Space	50	67	80	78	74	69	69		

Libraries

Montgomery County provides library services for the Town. In 2001, a store front location on Fisher Avenue in the Poolesville Towne Center was renovated and became the home of the existing 6,000 sq.ft. public library. The American Library Association recommends 1,000 sqft of library space for each 10,000 population. There are no current plans to expand the library at this time.

Public Safety

The Montgomery County Police Department provides police services for Poolesville. With Poolesville's anticipated growth of approximately 1,300 individuals during the next 6 years, Montgomery County should plan for the addition of two officers based on the commonly used ratio of 1.6 sworn officers per 1,000 residents.

Fire and emergency medical services are provided by the Upper Montgomery County Volunteer Fire Department in Beallsville, MD, which is approximately three miles from the center of Poolesville. The planned addition of 400 residential units is included in the County's Master Plan and addressed through their planning process.

The Town follows Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission and Montgomery County guidelines for fire protection. All new roads will be designed for adequate emergency access and fire hydrant placement. Water pressures in Poolesville are in compliance with established



standards. The Town has 1.5M gallons of water storage capacity for fire fighting, which was designed and constructed in accordance with the Master Plan population target.

Recreation

The Community Facilities chapter of the Master Plan has a section devoted to Parks and Recreation. It lists all of the existing parkland (active and passive) within the Town and future needs. The Town consists of 2,374 total acres of which 98 acres are parkland and/or stream valleys.

The State of Maryland uses a standard ratio of 30 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents, meaning that the 1,300 new residents will generate the need for 39 additional acres of parkland. A minimum of 50% should be owned by the jurisdiction. The two larger sub-divisions, under construction in the western and northern segments of Town, will provide an additional 83 acres of parkland/conservation stream valleys and multi-use parks with baseball and lacrosse/soccer fields, tot lots (playgrounds), and trails sufficient to accommodate build-out requirements. These additions will provide 44 acres over the State recommended ratio.

With the growing number of local youths in sports organizations, overuse of athletic fields and requests for alternative recreation, the Town should actively seek parkland acquisition. The Town should also continue to evaluate the need for recreation/community facilities.

Water and Sewer Facilities

A detailed description of the existing water and sewer facilities, plus various other descriptive materials pertaining to each, is contained in the Water Resource Element.

Stormwater

Each major development presents challenges to the protection of water quality in Poolesville and the surrounding area. In order to mitigate the runoff, sand filtration and other control structures are constructed onsite. Prior to preliminary plan approval, developers must have a conceptual stormwater management plan approved by Montgomery County. Prior to final record plat, full analysis and approval by the County is required. The County has full jurisdiction over quality and quantity control for stormwater runoff, issues permits, and performs inspections.

The Town works in partnership with the County for the maintenance of the existing stormwater ponds. The Town provides grass cutting and trash pick-up, while the County performs structural maintenance. The stormwater conveyance system is owned and maintained solely by the Town.

Additional detailed information on stormwater management can be found in the Water Resource Element.



Financing Necessary Facility Expansions

Poolesville funds capital costs directly related to new development through impact fees. The calculation used to determine the impact fee is contained in Appendix F of the current Master Plan. The use of these funds is specifically designated to items in the fee breakdown. This model was developed using a calculation of thirty homes per year, which originated from an overall average from previous development.

Rural Buffers and Transition Areas

The Town's current zoning was created to provide transition by increasing residential housing density near the Town Center and decreasing density as the distance from the Town Center increases. Once past the Town boundaries, the County zoning is RDT or 1 house per 25 acres. Poolesville is nestled within the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve, which provides a unique buffer helpful in maintaining open space and wellhead protection zones.

Burdens on Municipally Provided Services and Infrastructure Lying Beyond Proposed Municipal Growth Areas

Poolesville does not have or plan to have infrastructure extending out of the Town boundaries. All stormwater and related water quality potential impacts are mitigated within the Town boundaries and no impacts are expected beyond the growth areas.

Protection of Sensitive Areas

It is the goal of this Growth Element to ensure that all future development is planned, designed and constructed in a manner, which will conserve sensitive natural resources and promote a healthy and sustainable environment for present and future residents. This will be accomplished by application of existing Town Ordinances, reviewing plans to ensure that all County, State and Federal regulatory program compliances have been obtained and by proposing new or modified ordinances from time-to-time as needed.

Sensitive areas generally consist of wetlands, flood plains, forested areas, and the wellhead protection areas. The protection of these areas and additional information can be found in the Water Resource Element.

The Relationship of Long-Term Development Policy to a Vision of The Municipal Corporation's Future Character

In the coming decade, Poolesville's vision is moderate growth of primarily residential development in keeping with the small town and town center concepts. In concert with this vision, of ensuring some growth while protecting Poolesville's small town image, this plan outlines steps that move toward incremental and limited growth while protecting our infrastructure and small town character.

