



FRIENDS of FREDERICK COUNTY

preserving our land, our water and our quality of life

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Frederick County's 20 Year Growth Plan Reins in the Cost of Sprawl New Growth Boundaries Will Reduce Strains on County Services and Tax Payer Wallets

On Tuesday January 19, 2010 at 6 pm at Frederick High School there will be a joint public hearing before the Board of County Commissioners and the County Planning Commission on a new comprehensive plan that redraws the growth boundaries to reduce sprawl. The new plan comes as Frederick County leaders grapple with budget shortfalls fueled by residential growth that placed demands on services, roads and school capacity. The new 20 year growth plan shifts away from past trends of car-centered subdivisions established in rural areas and instead focuses development in areas where services such as emergency, water, sewer, transportation and schools already exist. The move is likely to protect the next generation of county residents from tax increases that are often used to subsidize growth. Each new single-family house built requires \$20,000 to \$30,000 or more in public infrastructure to provide water, sewers, storm drainage, roads, fire stations, schools, libraries and other community facilities¹.

Friends of Frederick County, (FOFC) a coalition of county citizens who *promoting environmental conservation, fair and open government, and active civic engagement in Frederick County* praised the new plan as a common sense approach to sprawl and an instrument of fiscal responsibility.

"The recent budget deliberations by the county on cutting school activities, and municipal services underscore the high price we all pay for poor planning and sprawl," said Rich Maranto, a board member of FOFC and a Middletown resident. "The current plan takes careful steps not to repeat these mistakes for our next generations to deal with. For Middletown, the plan also removes a portion of the two bypasses in our region that would have led to more sprawl and gridlock for Middletown residents."

At the opposite end of the county *Residents for Saving a Rural Monrovia* have been saying much the same when expressing concern over conversion of 400 acres of farmland near Routes 75 and 80 for the Monrovia Town Center and its over 1600 dwelling units. "We applaud Frederick County's move to take the Monrovia Town Center off the map, as it is contrary to the goals of the Growth Management Initiative. This huge development would overwhelm the infrastructure and destroy the rural and historic character of our community, " said Monrovia resident Jeannie Pellicier.

¹ Fodor, Eben V. BETTER, NOT BIGGER: How to Take Control of Urban Growth and Improve Your Community
http://www.fodorandassociates.com/book/Book_Factoids.pdf

Highlights of the new plan include:

- A shift from low density residential development to agriculture or resource conservation in large parcels of land located away from municipalities.
- Protection of streams and wetlands and wildlife habitats from commercial and residential development.
- Makes strong recommendations for better planning to protect and restore Frederick County's natural resources and green infrastructure
- Provides a common sense approach to transportation to ease gridlock on the roadways.

Frederick County residents are encouraged to weigh in on the new comprehensive plan and can find out more by visiting

<http://frederickcountymd.gov/documents/Planning/Countywide%20Comp%20plan%20Update/BOCC%20Draft%20Plan%20Dec%202009/SumTxtRev.PDF>

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