



**Washington County Planning Commission
Annual Report on Growth Related Changes
Per SB 280/HB 295 effective June 1, 2009**

Prepared by the Washington County Planning Commission for the period
January 2012 through December 2012

Submitted on July 2, 2013

1. Development Patterns – List of all changes in development patterns that have occurred over the past year, including:

- a. New subdivisions created:
 - i. Total new residential lots – 74
 - 1. New urban lots – 49
 - 2. New rural lots – 25
 - ii. Total new commercial lots – 1
 - 1. New urban lots – 1
 - 2. New rural lots - 0
- b. New Building Permits issued - 38
 - i. Residential Permits inside PFA – 5
 - ii. Commercial Permits inside PFA – 3
 - iii. Residential Permits outside PFA – 18
 - iv. Commercial Permits outside PFA – 4

As in past years, the majority of residential permits issued are outside of the Priority Funding Areas as a result of the lack of activity in the large residential developments within the PFAs. As the improving economy has an effect on Washington County, it is expected that the pendulum will shift back to these projects.

Commercial Activity outside of the PFAs includes two new agriculture based businesses, and improvements to existing commercial, industrial, or educational enterprises.

- c. Zoning Amendments
 - i. **RZ-12-001 – Map Amendment** - This map amendment changed the zoning for a property located on Beaver Creek Road, near Hagerstown, from RB-E (Rural Business – Existing) to RV (Rural Village).
 - ii. **RZ-12-002 – Text Amendment** added Farm Wineries and Breweries, Banquet and Reception Facilities as uses which shall be considered “a bona fide and normal agricultural activity, and an

- iii. agricultural management activity” to Art. 3, Sec 3.3 B & K; Art. 11 Sec 11.1 K, Art. 12, 1A, and Art. 28.
 - iv. **RZ-12-003 – Map Amendment** – This map amendment changed the zoning for a cluster of properties located at or near the intersection of Md. RT. 64 and the Mapleville Road from RR (Rural Residential) to BL (Business Local). This supported a number of Planning Visions by allowing for a connection of two Business Local zoned areas through the transformation of the intervening properties.
 - v. **RZ-12-004 – Text Amendment** added clarifying language to the table of land uses.
 - vi. **RZ-12-005 – Map Amendment** – This map amendment corrected a mapping error which occurred during the Urban Growth Area rezoning.
- d. Subdivision Ordinance Amendments
- i. **SO-12-001** – This amendment changed the definition of a Minor Subdivision to 7 or less lots, and that of a Major Subdivision to 8 or more lots, as permitted by the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012.
- e. Zoning Text Amendments that resulted in changes in development patterns: Text Amendment **RZ-12-002**, allows for the addition of farm wineries and breweries, thereby increasing the opportunities for a broadening of agricultural activity in the county.
- f. New Comprehensive Plans or plan elements adopted: The substantial revisions and/or creation of zoning classifications in the Growth Areas was adopted on April 17, 2012. As a result, new development will continue to be directed into the Urban Growth Area in a continuation of the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Washington County did not adopt a Tier Map per the guidelines of the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012.
- g. New Roads or substantial changes in roads or other transportation facilities: New roads reflect subdivision roads accepted into County ownership during 2011. This means that the construction was completed to County standards. Other roads are currently under design or construction per subdivision plans. Capital projects are new or widening road projects that the County will fund.

Accepted into County:

Road Name	Subdivision	Length
Morning Dew Drive	Westfields Section 4B	408 LF
Wisset Terrace	Westfields Section 4B	55 LF
Wisset Way	Westfields Section 4B	465 LF
Misty Field Lane	Westfields Section 4B	530 LF
Westernberger Drive	Westfields Section 4B	750 LF
Roulette Drive	Claggetts Mill Phase I	1,329 LF
Mary Flowers Way	Claggetts Mill Phase I	1,101 LF
Ballantyne Way	Claggetts Mill Phase I	172 LF

Roads currently under design or construction per subdivision plans started in 2012:

Road Name	Subdivision	Length
Sapphire Drive,	Emerald Pointe	199 LF
Blooming Meadows Court,	Blooming Meadows	768 LF
Kelburn Terrance,	Westfields 4C	173 LF
Morning Dew Drive,	Westfields 4C	753 LF
Walgreens Commercial Entrance	Arnett Farm	

- h. New Schools or additions to schools – No new schools opened in 2012.

Construction Activity began on Bester Elementary School replacing an existing aging, (80 years), and inadequate facility. Construction began in 2012, and is ongoing. This facility is located on the existing Bester Elementary site and will continue to act as a community center. The new school will accommodate 4 classes per grade level and will contain expanded facilities for pre-kindergarten, kindergarten, and special education increasing the state-rated capacity from the current capacity of 511 students to 608 students. Community use spaces will include an enlarged gymnasium and a community garden.

Western Heights Middle School – The lower level of Western Heights Middle School, used for the former Antietam Academy middle school program, is currently being reconfigured so that this space can be best utilized by the facility.

New Facilities Planned: “West City” Elementary School – This new facility will replace two inadequate elementary schools. The new school is designed as a three-round (3 classes per grade) pre-kindergarten through grade five school and will include core space to accommodate an eventual phased build out up to five rounds to facilitate future enrollment growth projected for the western portion of Hagerstown. The three-round school will accommodate 471 students and allow full-time staffing of programs that are now staffed part time at the current schools. Community use spaces, including an enlarged gymnasium, are part of the facility design.

2. Maps –
 - a. New residential lots – inside and outside PFAs
 - b. Zoning Map changes

3. Consistency – Changes which occurred during the 2012 calendar year were minimal and consistent with each other, the recommendations of the last annual report, the adopted portions of the Comprehensive Plan, and those of adjoining jurisdictions and those jurisdictions which have responsibility for financing or constructing the public improvements necessary to implement the local jurisdiction’s plan.

4. Process Improvements (2013) - The County Division of Plan Review and Permitting implemented a number of policy changes in 2012-2013 to improve the efficiency and timeliness of the land development plan approval process. These modifications include:
 - a. Creation of a process to assist in stimulating commercial development through allowance of concurrent site plan approval and building permit applications;
 - b. Modification of the Development Advisory Committee process to improve communication between the regulatory and development participants;
 - c. Allowance of expedited review for commercial priority projects;
 - d. Allowance of concurrent submittals of the stormwater management concept and site plans for minor development projects;
 - e. Elimination of the grading certification requirement on certain residential development projects.

5. Ordinances and/or regulations that have been changed or adapted to implement the planning visions in Article 66B:
 - a. RZ-12-002 provides expanded opportunities for economic development and natural resources-based businesses, (Vision 8), by virtue of utilizing the area's combination of climate and soils to create a wide range of employment activities through the newly approved activities and an increase in a proven tourism based business. In addition, it supports Vision 11 by supporting the growth of sustainable communities.
 - b. RZ-12-003 supports Visions 3,4, and 5 for supporting growth adjacent to a business center; in an area served by transit; and with access to public water.
 - c. RZ-12-005 supports Visions 3,4, and 5 by correcting an error in mapping; which confirmed denser growth in an area with public water and sewer, good access to the interstate highways and transit, and close access to schools and shopping.