

VOLUME 2

Comprehensive Plan

Town of Accident, Maryland

2009

*Recommended goals,
policies, and actions
through 2030*



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Table of Contents

1.0 Introduction 1

2.0 Future Conditions..... 2

 2.1 Projections for Future Growth 2

 2.2 Impacts of Future Growth – General Public Facilities..... 4

 2.3 Impacts of Future Growth – Water Resources 5

3.0 Plan Goals, Policies, and Implementing Actions 8

 3.1 Land Use..... 9

 3.2 Municipal Growth..... 11

 3.3 Sensitive Areas 12

 3.4 Transportation..... 13

 3.5 Water Resources 14

 3.6 Community Facilities and Resources..... 15

 3.7 Mineral Resources 17

4.0 Conclusion 18

List of Maps

Following Page

Accident Comprehensive Plan..... 1

Accident Sensitive Areas 1

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Comprehensive Plan for Accident is a two-volume report. Volume 1 is a comprehensive source for baseline information on current development and infrastructure improvement projects, demographics, natural areas, land use, zoning, transportation, and community facilities in Accident as well as the other towns in Garrett County. Volume 2 of this Comprehensive Plan provides the forecasts, goals, policies, and actions that will guide future growth and conservation in Accident through 2030. Accident is located in the scenic Bear Creek Watershed. Stewardship of natural and historic resources and community facilities is paramount.

The Plan is long-range and comprehensive. It provides the organizing framework for more detailed planning and design work. The Plan is a guide for the Town and its residents, land developers, and outside agencies and units of government. The Plan is a compilation of what is most important to Accident as it contemplates change over the next 20 years. Notably, this Plan envisions a citizen population engaged in formulating and implementing adopted policies and actions. It also anticipates consistent outreach to other agencies and units of government with the resources and expertise to advance the interests the Town shares with others. The Plan implements the visions set forth in Article 66B of the Maryland Annotated Code:

- Development is concentrated in suitable areas;
- Sensitive (natural) areas are protected;
- Growth is directed to existing population centers, and resource areas are protected;
- Stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and the land is a universal ethic (Although Accident is not located in the Chesapeake Bay watershed, stewardship over the land is central to this Plan);
- Conservation of resources, including a reduction in resource consumption, is practiced;
- Economic growth is encouraged and regulatory mechanisms are streamlined;
- Adequate public facilities and infrastructure are available or planned in areas where growth is to occur; and
- Funding mechanisms are addressed.

It is important to note at the beginning of this volume that the Accident Comprehensive Plan addresses most of the same subject areas addressed in the Garrett County Comprehensive Plan—land use, water resources, etc. While Accident’s Plan does not contain a separate section on Housing, the Town does support the County’s findings and its recommended policies, especially related to workforce housing. The Town accepts the finding that roughly 1,400 affordable housing units will be needed countywide by 2030 and 300 to 400 of these units should be developed in the towns of the County while the bulk of the remaining affordable/workforce housing needs should be met in the Deep Creek Lake area. Accident will work with County, State, and Federal agencies and local non-profit corporations to encourage workforce housing.

This report contains two maps. The Accident Comprehensive Plan Map shows the proposed land use pattern for the Town. This map is referenced throughout the report. It designates all land area within the Town as one of eight primary land use types. It also shows the location of parks, a recommended trail system, streams, and the proposed gateway and traffic calming improvements along Route 219. It illustrates a long term vision for the Town and its surroundings.

The other map is a Sensitive Areas Map. It is an aerial photograph of the Town highlighting the local stream system, which is part of the Bear Creek Watershed. The floodplain of the South Branch of Bear Creek and its associated wetlands are shown steeply sloping terrain at gradients of 20-25 percent, 25-30 percent and 30 percent and greater are also shown. This map is intended to be an important guide for the Town as it considers the suitability of development proposals in light of key natural resources.

2.0 FUTURE CONDITIONS

Section 2 of this report discusses the growth that Accident may expect through 2030 and the likely impacts of this growth on public facilities, services, and water resources.

2.1 A FORECAST OF FUTURE GROWTH

The Accident Comprehensive Plan is a plan for growth, development, and conservation through the year 2030. The Town has considered a number of important factors that have a bearing on future growth including historic trends, County growth projections and development policies, the potential to build new houses within the Town’s boundaries, and municipal water and sewer capacities¹. These factors are discussed below and form the basis for the forecast of residential growth.

From 1990 to 2000, Accident maintained its residential base of 138 households. Since 2000, the Town issued eight building permits for new housing units resulting in an estimated 146 households by 2007. The Town of Accident will experience growth pressure due to employment and population increases at the nearby Deep Creek Lake area. The Garrett County Comprehensive Plan projects that the number of housing units in the County will grow by 6,750 between 2005 and 2030, or by nearly 37 percent. The County projects that 60 percent of this growth will occur in the Deep Creek Lake area and the remaining 40 percent will be located in the towns and rural areas of the County.

In anticipation of this increased growth, the County Comprehensive Plan contains a land use plan for the area surrounding Accident—the Bear Creek Watershed. The watershed is a 49 square mile area dominated by farmland and woodlands. It represents seven percent of the County’s land area. Accident is the only town in the watershed and the only provider of municipal water and sewer services. The County projects that, by 2030, 250 housing units will be constructed in the Bear Creek watershed². The County’s land use plan forecast that this growth will largely occur in the farmlands and hillsides surrounding Accident (on private well and septic systems).

Some of the growth projected for the Bear Creek Watershed will and should be located in Accident. Recent trends bear this out. In addition to the eight permits issued since 2000, the Town has recently granted preliminary development approvals allowing for 53 more housing units. Given all factors involved, including the goals of this Plan, Accident forecasts a growth of about 50 households through 2030. Fifty households represent 20 percent of the growth projected for the watershed. It computes to an annual average growth rate of 1.3 percent over the 22-year period between 2008 and 2030, as shown in Table 1 below. Table 1 indicates that the Town will contain 196 households in 2030. These households would equate to approximately 453 residents.³

Table 1: Forecast of Households

| 2007 Estimate | 2030 Forecast | Change | | Annual rate of Growth |
|---------------|---------------|--------|------|-----------------------|
| | | # | % | % |
| 146 | 196 | 50 | 34.2 | 1.3 |

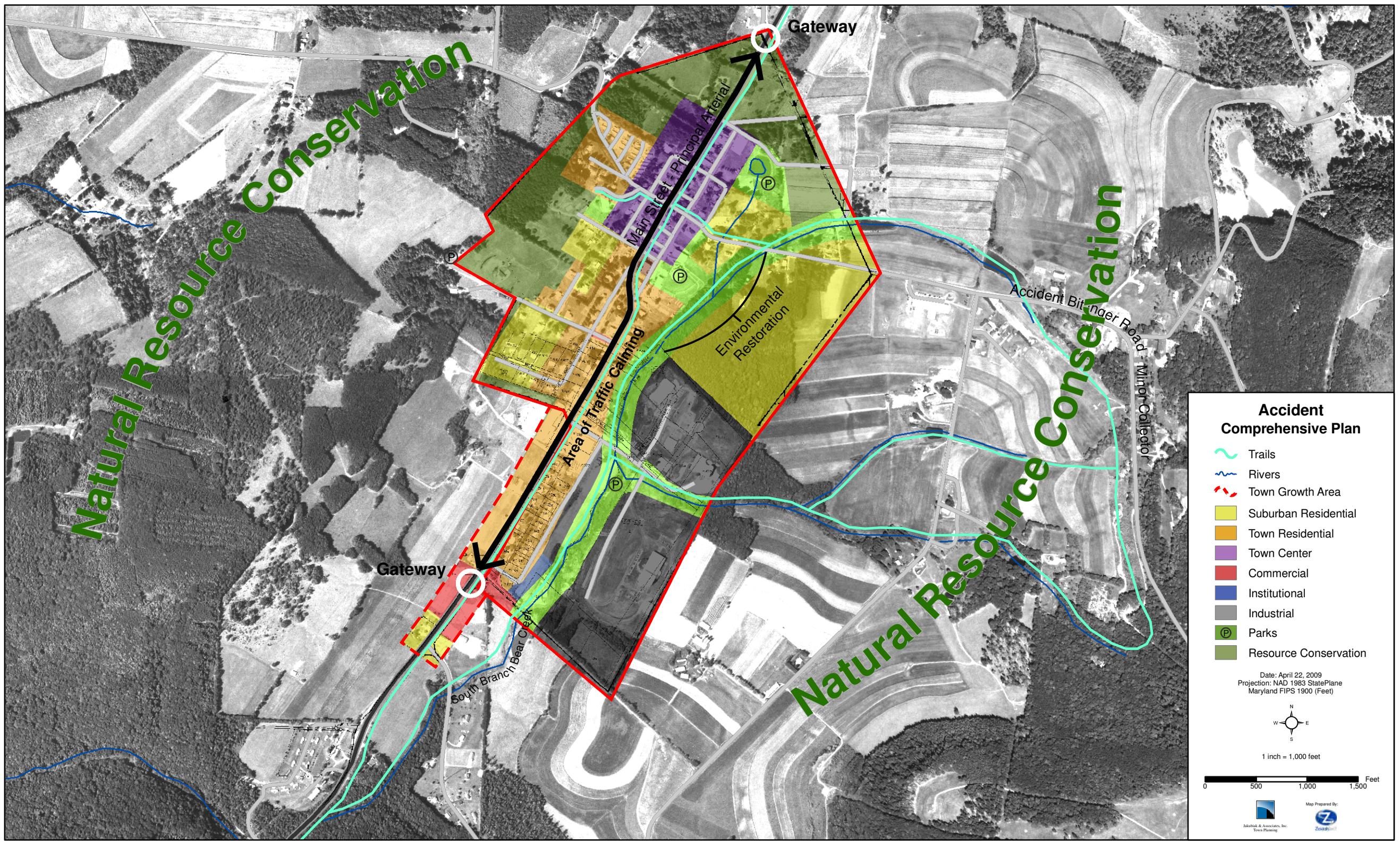
¹ Historic population and household data are documented in Volume 1.

² The County’s land use plan for the Bear Creek Watershed also records that 227 housing units were constructed in the watershed between 1990 and 2005.

³ This assumes an average household size of 2.31, MDP’s estimated 2030 household size for Garrett County.

Natural Resource Conservation

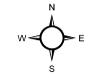
Natural Resource Conservation



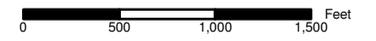
Accident Comprehensive Plan

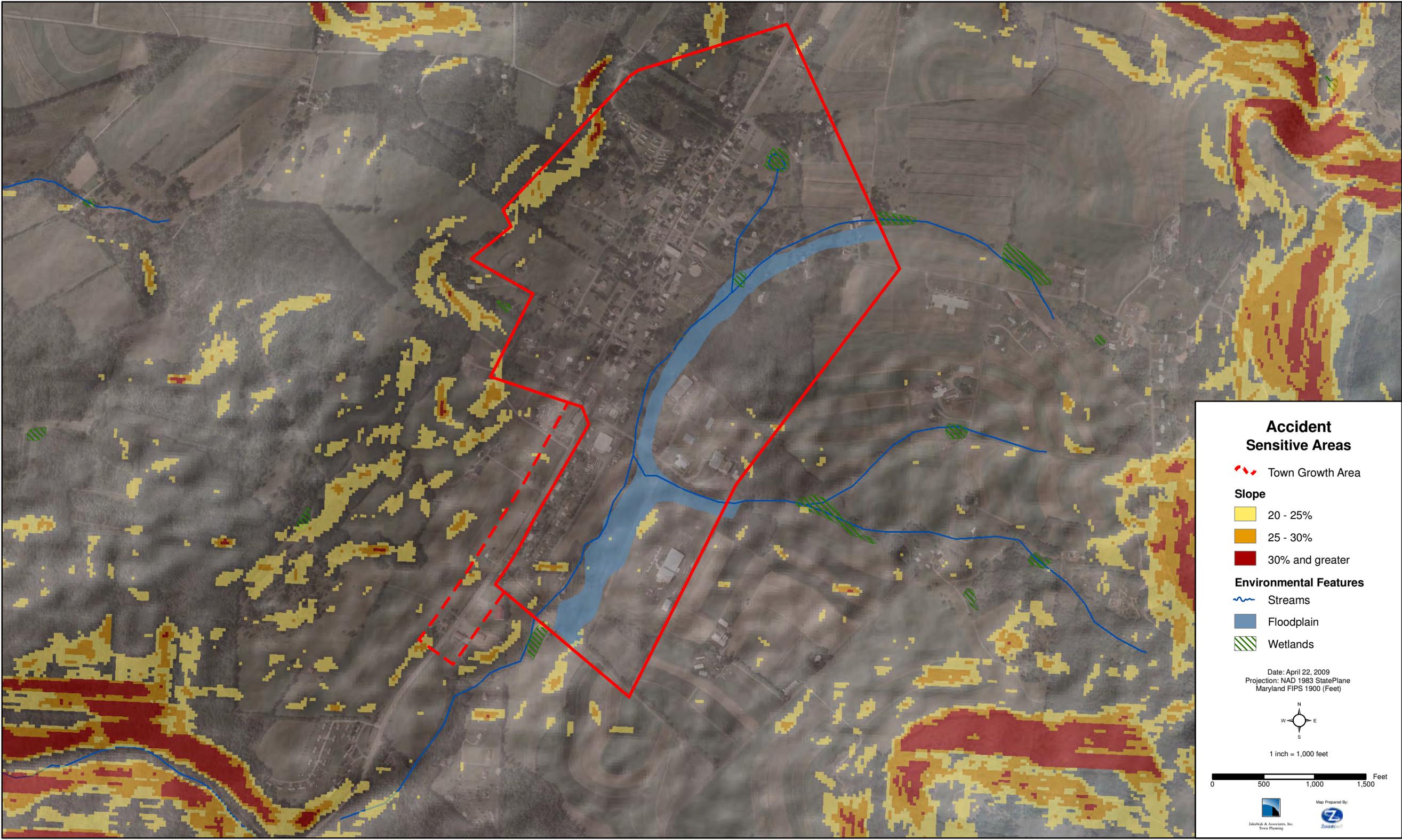
- Trails
- Rivers
- Town Growth Area
- Suburban Residential
- Town Residential
- Town Center
- Commercial
- Institutional
- Industrial
- Parks
- Resource Conservation

Date: April 22, 2009
Projection: NAD 1983 StatePlane
Maryland FIPS 1900 (Feet)



1 inch = 1,000 feet





Accident Sensitive Areas

 Town Growth Area

Slope

 20 - 25%

 25 - 30%

 30% and greater

Environmental Features

 Streams

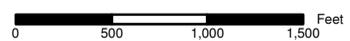
 Floodplain

 Wetlands

Date: April 22, 2009
Projection: NAD 1983 StatePlane
Maryland FIPS 1900 (Feet)



1 inch = 1,000 feet



Map Prepared By:

This plan projects that around 400,000 square feet of new non-residential development will occur in Accident between today and 2030. This non-residential development in the Accident area is projected to equate to 13 equivalent residential units (ERUs)⁴.

In preparing this Plan, Garrett County’s “development capacity analysis” for Accident was reviewed⁵. A “development capacity analysis” is a technique for estimating how much development can be built within a community, at least in theory, with currently available land and under current zoning⁶. The finding: the current zoning in Accident would allow 166 housing units to be added to the Town. This is far more development than the Town can now serve with water and sewer services. It also greatly exceeds this Plan’s 2030 forecast growth of 50 more households.

One of the essential principles of this Plan is to help balance long-term development potential with municipal water and sewer capacities. This Plan helps achieve this balance. In excluding steep slopes from development potential and protecting certain other open areas from urban development, the Accident Comprehensive Plan can reduce demand for water and sewer services. The land use pattern recommended in this report helps to lower the level of potential growth from 166 housing units to about 75 units. While lower, this is still more than can be served by currently available water and sewer capacities, but it does bring growth potential more in line with planned upgrades to these systems.

As discussed later in Section 2.3, the drinking water system in Accident has a capacity for only 38 more ERUs and there are no improvements programmed to expand the system. With regard to the sewer system, it is now operating over design and permitted capacity. Plans are underway to repair infiltration and inflow problems which will help bring the wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) into compliance with its permitted discharge limits. As discussed in Section 2.3 expansion of wastewater treatment capacity is recommended. When the repairs and expansion upgrades are completed, the sewer system will be able serve the build-out of the Town that is recommended under this Plan. Therefore, the main determinant of town growth in the near-term is water and sewer capacity. Constraints in these systems, if not resolved, would limit growth potential. In light of the 2030 growth forecast of 50 households, this Plan does the following:

1. It acknowledges that the forecast of 50 households and 13 ERUs of non-residential development cannot be achieved given current drinking water capacity and the current state of the sewer system.
2. Recommends a careful allocation of the remaining drinking water capacity: 25 ERU’s for residential, 5 ERUs for non-residential and 7 ERUs unanticipated needs. The Town will prepare a water allocation management policy under guidance of the Maryland Department of the Environment which will determine more precisely how allocations will be distributed.
3. Recommends that the water system be expanded to accommodate at least the full built-out of the Town and the growth area shown in this Plan. This will ensure that supplies are adequate to serve development beyond 2030.
4. Recommends that the sewer system be expanded to accommodate at least the full built-out of the Town and the growth area shown in this Plan. This will ensure that supplies are adequate to serve development beyond 2030.

⁴ An ERU is equal to the water use or water discharge of a typical household—262.5 gallons of water per day.

⁵ This analysis was actually prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning for the County’s use. The Draft Garrett County Development Capacity Analysis report is available from the county.

⁶ With a development capacity analysis, the land available within a Town’s current boundaries and its existing zoning are used to estimate the number of housing units that could potentially be built. A certain amount of “infill” development is typically allowed in towns. “Infill” refers to the new housing units that could reasonably be expected to be built under current zoning. Sometimes infill can come about when an existing lot is subdivided to create another buildable lot. Sometimes infill can come about when single-family lots are converted into multifamily development projects. However, for the most part, infill happens when vacant lots are developed and/or large lots are subdivided into residential lots.

2.2 IMPACTS OF FUTURE GROWTH – GENERAL PUBLIC FACILITIES

Understanding the impacts of future growth on community facilities and services helps ensure that adequate facilities are in place to meet current and future needs. Section 2.1 provides a forecast of 50 new housing units through 2030. The following table outlines the impacts of an additional 50 households in Accident. The community facilities assessed are schools, library, parks, police, and fire and emergency services. Impacts to drinking water and sanitary sewer are discussed in Section 2.3.

| Schools | <p>The Garrett County Board of Education does not project that growth will result in overcrowding of the school system. In general, graduation rates are expected to be higher than birth rates. However, a projection of new students from the anticipated growth in Accident is provided in Table 2. There is adequate capacity to accommodate projected population growth.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Table 2: Impacts to Schools</p> <table border="1" style="margin-left: auto; margin-right: auto;"> <thead> <tr> <th style="text-align: center;">School</th> <th style="text-align: center;">2007 Enrollment (pupils)</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Forecast Pupil Generation in Accident¹</th> <th style="text-align: center;">Capacity (pupils)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Accident Elementary</td> <td style="text-align: center;">239</td> <td style="text-align: center;">10</td> <td style="text-align: center;">314</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Northern Middle</td> <td style="text-align: center;">392</td> <td style="text-align: center;">5</td> <td style="text-align: center;">570</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Northern High</td> <td style="text-align: center;">607</td> <td style="text-align: center;">7</td> <td style="text-align: center;">701</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: small;">The following pupil generation rates were used to project enrollment by new households: 0.19 Elementary, 0.10 for Middle, and 0.14 for High School. ¹ Does not include Pre-K students</p> | School | 2007 Enrollment (pupils) | Forecast Pupil Generation in Accident ¹ | Capacity (pupils) | Accident Elementary | 239 | 10 | 314 | Northern Middle | 392 | 5 | 570 | Northern High | 607 | 7 | 701 |
|---------------------|---|---|-----------------------------|---|----------------------|---------------------|-----|----|-----|-----------------|-----|---|-----|---------------|-----|---|-----|
| School | 2007 Enrollment (pupils) | Forecast Pupil Generation in Accident ¹ | Capacity (pupils) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Accident Elementary | 239 | 10 | 314 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Northern Middle | 392 | 5 | 570 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Northern High | 607 | 7 | 701 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Library | Current library is sufficient for current and future needs. |
|----------------|---|

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Parks | Current parks are sufficient to meet current and future needs. However, linear parks and a bike path along South Branch Bear Creek should be part of the proposed development on the east side of Town. |
|--------------|---|

| | |
|---------------|--|
| Police | Current police services are sufficient for current and future needs. |
|---------------|--|

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Fire/EMS | Current fire and EMS services are sufficient for current and future needs. |
|-----------------|--|

2.3 IMPACTS OF FUTURE GROWTH – WATER RESOURCES

The following summarizes water resources in Accident. The assessment below is based on the Town’s growth forecast, which considered the limitations of the Town’s water and sewer systems. The Town will follow the policies and actions laid out in this plan to limit growth to only that which can be served by available capacity. Additional information can be found in Volume 1, specifically in the Natural Resources and Community Facilities sections⁷. Garrett County is also now updating its Water and Sewer Master Plan. This plan, when completed, will show areas in and around Accident that could be served by the public drinking water and sewer systems.

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Drinking Water</p> | <p>The Town’s water source is groundwater wells in the Hampshire formation. These wells have no water quality issues. The water treatment plant has a production capacity of 108,000 gallons per day (gpd) with a permitted withdrawal capacity of 70,000 gpd—enough to serve 267 ERUs⁸. The system now serves a demand of 60,000 gpd or 229 ERUs. This means that capacity remains to serve 38 more ERUs. Therefore, residential growth will be limited and major projects will need to develop in phases. Each phase will be contingent on the availability of water and sewer capacity while ensuring that service remains for owners of recorded lots. This Plan shows areas eligible for annexation, however, no development in these areas will be permitted until water supply and treatment is expanded. Expanding the WWTP to 90,000 gpd as discussed below, may require the Town to obtain an additional 20,000 gpd of water for flushing the expanded system. However, this plan recommends that the new WWTP use gray water re-use, rather than fresh water for system flushing. At this time, there are no committed or programmed projects to expand the Town’s water system.</p> |
| <p>Wastewater Treatment And Point Source Water Pollution</p> | <p>The Accident WWTP has a treatment capacity of 50,000 gpd, which can serve 190 ERUs. The plant serves 229 ERUs, 39 more than its capacity. Its current average daily flow is 160,000 gpd which is substantially above system treatment capacity. Although, 10,000 gpd is due to the additional 39 ERUs, the bulk of this excess is due to significant “inflow” and “infiltration” (I&I)⁹. Rehabilitation of the system is underway as is expected to bring the plant into accepted parameters of its treatment capacity. While some I&I will inevitably remain in the system, repairs are anticipated to reduce I&I by 83%.¹⁰</p> <p>Garrett County and the Town of Accident are working together to secure funding to increase WWTP capacity to 90,000 gpd. At 90,000 gpd, the WWTP could accommodate the full build-out of the Town and its Growth Area as recommended on the Comprehensive Plan Map. The planned Growth Area—both residential and commercial development—could demand close to 16,000 gpd. The 75 housing units possible within current boundaries, discussed in Section 2.1, would demand approximately 19,700 gpd.</p> <p>Following year 2030, projected point source loadings of nitrogen and phosphorus from the WWTP (at South Branch Bear Creek) are: 4,177 lbs/year for nitrogen and 1,393 lbs/year for phosphorus. Levels achievable in 2030 with BNR treatment of wastewater are 1,856 lbs/year for nitrogen and 464 lbs/year for phosphorus.</p> |

⁷ The Garrett County Comprehensive Plan contains a map of water service areas on page 5-3 and sewer service areas on page 5-14 which the reader may wish to review for added context and supporting information. However, the County proposed service areas for Accident do not reflect the Town Growth Area recommended in this Plan.

⁸ This section refers to the term “Equivalent Residential Unit” (ERU). An ERU is equal to the water use or water discharge of a typical household—262.5 gallons of water per day.

⁹ Inflow is stormwater that enters the system as a result of insufficient stormwater management on lots—e.g., downspouts that direct water into sewer collection pipes. Infiltration is flow from groundwater that enters the system through cracks in pipes, for example. I & I add to the amount of wastewater that needs to be treated and discharged, which reduces available capacity for households and businesses.

¹⁰ This estimate comes from the Town’s October 1, 2001 Facilities Plan for the Proposed Improvements to the Sanitary Sewer System and Wastewater Treatment Plant, prepared by Thrasher Engineering.

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>Stormwater Runoff</p> <p>Non-Point Source Pollution</p> | <p>The Garrett County Comprehensive Plan (pages 5-26 and 5-27) assesses impacts of non-point source loading (stormwater run-off) under two scenarios for how future growth could be managed. The first scenario would provide for a low-density residential pattern in rural areas. The second considers clustering growth around towns and urban areas. The County Plan found the second scenario to be preferred because of its lower impact. As stormwater run-off and nutrient loading are assessed at a county-wide watershed level, this Town Plan does not analyze alternative land-use plans itself. Although none of the County scenarios incorporates the Town's plans, the Accident Comprehensive Plan helps implement the preferred scenario. It further retains and expands local stream and floodplain buffers which can absorb stormwater run-off and remove nutrients before they enter streams. This Plan recommends as a matter of policy that the County's proposed low-density suburban development on lands adjoining the Town instead be town residential served by public sewer, thereby limiting private septic systems and their long-term impact to non-point source loadings. The County and Town should coordinate their long term land use and infrastructure planning in this regard. The Town will request that during Garrett County's update of its comprehensive plan it include Accident in its non-point source loading model. The Town will incorporate this analysis into this plan and its goals, polices, and actions when it becomes available.</p> |
|--|--|

Table 3 summarizes the water resource needs in Accident.

| | Drinking Water (gpd) | Sanitary Sewer (gpd) |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2030 System Capacity | 70,000 | 90,000 |
| 2007 Use | 60,000 | 119,000 |
| Available Capacity for growth | 10,000 | -29,000 |
| Projected Use from Growth | | |
| Residential growth | 13,125 | 13,125 |
| Non-residential growth | 3,413 | 3,413 |
| I & I Reduction | - | -48,970 |
| New Demand in 2030 | 16,538 | -32,433 |
| Remaining Capacity in 2030 | -6,538 | 3,433 |

Table 4 indicates that there is a need for additional water resources to serve the demand projected through 2030. In addition to this demand it is projected that build-out of the Town would require an additional 16,000 gpd in each system to serve the municipal growth area. This development is forecast to occur beyond the timeframe of this plan. The plan limits the amount of growth that can occur by 2030. The Town will address how it will accommodate full build-out when it reviews and updates this plan in the future. The Town will need to expand water production and wastewater treatment capacity to serve its full build out including the growth area. Table 4 below shows the total expansion needs for each system.

| | Drinking Water (gpd) | Sanitary Sewer (gpd) |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 2007 Demand | 60,000 | 119,000 |
| New Demand in 2030 | 16,538 | -32,433 |
| 2030 Use | 76,538 | 86,568 |
| Residential Build-out demand | 6,563 | 6,563 |
| Growth Area Build-out demand | 16,000 | 16,000 |
| Capacity required for Buildout | 99,100 | 109,130 |

While the actual impact of non-point source loading in Accident cannot be determined, the County Comprehensive Plan provides an assessment of point and non-point source loading for the overall watershed. The County analysis varies from the Town’s analysis because the County estimates a smaller amount of residential units will locate in the Town, and therefore be served by the Town’s wastewater treatment plant, by 2030. Table 5 summarizes the Town’s nutrient loading assuming that the Accident WWTP serves 50 residential units and 13 non-residential ERUs with BNR treatment technology.

Table 5: Yearly Nutrient Loading for Bear Creek Watershed

| | Current (lbs/year) | | Future (lbs/year) | |
|------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| | Nitrogen | Phosphorus | Nitrogen | Phosphorus |
| Point Source | 8,773 | 2,924 | 1,862 | 466 |
| Non-point Source | 29,989 | 1,421 | 41,367 | 2,321 |
| TOTAL | 38,762 | 4,345 | 43,229 | 2,787 |

Source: 2008 Garrett County Comprehensive Plan (page 5-29) and Jakubiak & Associates

This assessment indicates the scale of the expected nutrient impacts would be in 2030 from the Town’s WWTP (point-source) and from land uses and septic tanks in the watershed (non-point source). These numbers are estimated by a general model and should not be considered precise estimates of future nutrient loading in the Bear Creek Watershed.

Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) provide information on the “assimilative capacity” of a water body, that is, the TMDL of nutrients that Bear Creek could accommodate while maintaining acceptable water quality. MDE has not completed TMDL documents for the Bear Creek Watershed. Absent a TMDL document to guide the Town’s land use plan, the Town has chosen a land use plan which seeks to minimize the nutrients from point and non-point sources. This is consistent with the Garrett County Comprehensive Plan, which calls for minimizing nutrient impacts.¹¹

¹¹ Garrett County Comprehensive Plan 2008. page 5-30.

3.0 PLAN GOALS, POLICIES, AND IMPLEMENTING ACTIONS

The Planning Commission prepared this Comprehensive Plan as called for by Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland. Article 66B requires that municipal comprehensive plans contain elements addressing the following: goals, sensitive (environmental) areas, land use, municipal growth, transportation, water resources, community facilities, mineral resources, and recommendations for land development regulations. Each of the following sections presents goals, policies, and actions as described below.

- Goals** - Statements that describe Accident's intentions for the future.
- Policies** - The recommended courses of action to be pursued by Accident in achievement of each goal.
- Implementing Actions** - Specific tasks to be undertaken to implement the policies over the next six years. Consistent with State law, the Planning Commission should review the Plan in six years. At that time, progress should be assessed and a new set of actions to further the goals and policies should be developed and adopted as needed.

The goals and policies are drawn in part from research and analyses presented in Volume 1 of this report. The inventory and mapping of existing conditions in the areas of land use, zoning, community facilities, and natural resources is especially important. From time to time, it may be helpful for the reader desiring more detail to turn to Volume 1 for background information. Volume 1 also presents and describes three town planning principles for the towns of Garrett County. These are three statements of universal values that have guided the preparation of this Plan. In summary they are:

1. Natural areas play significant roles in the quality and health of human settlements.
2. Development and redevelopment can occur in ways that respect the size, scale, and use of existing historic development patterns.
3. Stewardship of municipal facilities requires that a town's growth be balanced with infrastructure and service capacities.

The Accident Comprehensive Plan Map illustrates the key goals, policies, and actions of the Comprehensive Plan and should be used as a guide to implement the zoning changes proposed herein. The Planning Commission should also use the Map when determining whether a proposed development project, land use change, or infrastructure improvement is compatible and consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

3.1 LAND USE

This section outlines the goals, policies, and recommendations for future land use. The land use table on the following page outlines the supported land uses. The paragraph following the land use table discusses the priority zoning recommendation. Recommendations in Sections 3.2 (Municipal Growth) and 3.3 (Sensitive Areas) also address future land use.

One of the Plan’s main land use recommendations actually concerns future land use in the vicinity of, but outside, Town limits. The Garrett County Comprehensive Plan designates significant land area around Accident for suburban residential development (on private well and septic). This Plan, by contrast, recognizes the environmental constraints to development on the steep slopes west of Town, the watershed protection needs on the east side of Town, and the scenic resource value of open space generally. This Comprehensive Plan calls for these areas to remain as woodland and farmland until annexation is approved and municipal services are extended, which would likely not occur until after 2030.

| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--------------------------------------|--|---|---|
| Goals | The integrity of the historic character and fabric of the Town is protected for future generations and serves as a guide for future development. | The natural environment provides form to the built environment, helping to guide the location of future development. | Growth of the Town occurs within or adjacent to the existing Town boundary. |
| Policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The historic structures and character of Accident are maintained for future generations. The views of surrounding hillsides and farmlands are preserved as a community asset. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sensitive areas in Accident are not developed, but are restored and preserved for open space and recreation. The hillside to the west forms Accident’s western boundary. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New development will occur within the Town’s current boundaries and in the Town's growth area. Growth and development in and around Accident will be consistent with the Comprehensive Plan Map. |
| Implementing Actions Year 1-6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the possibility of applying for historic district status with the National Register of Historic Places. Consider design standards based on the National Park Service standards for the rehabilitation of historic structures to help property owners protect the long term integrity of historic buildings, especially in the town center district shown on the Comp. Plan Map. Work with Garrett County and local farmers to take part in farmland preservation programs. Work with Garrett County to limit development on the hillsides and farmlands that surround the Town. Work with MET and local trusts to acquire donated conservation easements that preserve scenic corridors, views, and gateways. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with State and County agencies to plant areas along South Branch Bear Creek so that they can become heavily forested. Given the proposed subdivision development plan for the area east of Town that was formerly forested land; require the developer to restore the natural environment around South Branch Bear Creek. Prevent development in this area from occurring within 300 feet of the Creek. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend the zoning ordinance and map to bring about the land use pattern shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map. Include a “Parks” zoning district. The Town works with Garrett County to ensure that areas outside of Town are maintained in a rural or natural state; that the hillside west of Town remains undeveloped. Permit annexations of land only in those areas delineated on the Comprehensive Plan Map as Town Growth Area. |

The Comprehensive Plan Map shows the recommend land use for each parcel in Town. This table describes the land use designations shown on the Map.

Land Use

| Industrial | Commercial | Town Center | Town Residential | Suburban Residential | Institutional | Parks | Resource Conservation |
|------------|------------|-------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------|-------|-----------------------|
|------------|------------|-------------|------------------|----------------------|---------------|-------|-----------------------|

Purpose

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| To provide locations for industrial and related uses that may not be compatible with residential areas. | To provide essential services and employment opportunities. | To provide for a mix of uses that support local business. | To reflect and conserve the traditional pattern of residential development in Accident. | In areas where development has taken place or is approved, allow large lot residential development. | To provide community services to residents. | To provide land for recreational opportunities. | To protect farmland and natural resources from development. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|

Use/ Intensity

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central Garrett Industrial Park • Research operations • Manufacturing • Warehousing • Offices | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Businesses • Offices • Retail | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local shops • Residences • Institutions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single family housing on min. 10,000 sf lots • Duplexes • Town homes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single-family housing on min. 20,000 sf lots • Open space • Parks/ Trails • Recreation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government offices • Schools • Churches • Other community facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks • Trails • Open Space | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trails, Park • Woodland • Farming • Rural Density Residential |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|---|--|

The Town Zoning Ordinance and Map should be amended to implement the land use recommendations. The Town should consider the following two-part priority: (1) Bring about a better balance between water and sewer capacity and potential residential development and (2) Promote more efficient use of available land in the long term. The Town Suburban Residential (SR) zoning district now covers substantial portions of undeveloped land. It allows substantially more houses than can be served by municipal water and sewer. It also requires a minimum lot size of 20,000 square feet, (almost ½ acre). The Town should consider replacing the SR district with a new Resource Conservation district and applying the new district as shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map. The new district’s regulations should comply generally with the notes in the table above. If residential use is to be allowed, then the required minimum lot sizes should be at least 80,000 square feet. In the long term, as the Town expands water and sewer services, it could then consider reapplying residential zoning (Town Residential) to these lands. This would provide for a higher potential density for the long term future and promote compact neighborhood development patterns that are compatible with the traditional patterns in Accident.

3.2 MUNICIPAL GROWTH

The following goals, policies, and actions address municipal growth in Accident. As discussed in Section 2.1, the Town can accommodate the projected growth of 50 households within its current boundaries. This Plan does identify a Town Growth Area and recommend suitable land uses, however no development in the growth area would be permitted until water and sewer services were expanded to cover the full build-out of the existing Town and the Growth Area. The primary purpose for identifying the Growth Area is to provide public notice of the Town’s long term desire to allow for expanded commercial opportunities along Route 219 south of Town and to establish a recommended land use pattern. Future residential areas would be mostly limited to the west side of Route 219 opposite the current Town residential zone. The Accident Sensitive Areas Map shows that there are areas of steep slopes along Route 219 in the Growth Area which should be protected from development.

| Goals | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | Municipal expansion is thoughtfully considered in light of surrounding farming and natural resources. | The expansion of municipal services should be guided by the Comprehensive Plan Map. | Development does not occur in the Accident area, outside of Town boundaries, unless supported by this Plan and annexed into Accident. |
| Policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The surrounding hillside will provide a natural boundary to Town. The surrounding farmland and woodlands form a greenbelt of open space around Accident. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Municipal services are expanded to meet the goals and interests of Accident as represented in this Comprehensive Plan. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial expansion and development adjacent to Accident is permitted only through the property being annexed into the Town limits. Garrett County protects open space and surrounding farmlands from development until annexation is deemed appropriate. |
| Implementing Actions Year 1-6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The priority for residential development is within the existing boundaries of Accident. The Town will work with property owners, Garrett County, and the State to enroll surrounding farmland into preservation programs under the framework of the Rural Legacy Program covering the Bear Creek Watershed. Development will not be permitted in areas of steep slope as defined by the County. Supplement purchased easement acquisitions with donated conservation easements within Rural Legacy Areas. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Town will work with Garrett County to promote compatibility between the County Water and Sewer Master Plan and the Town Growth Area. Annexations shall not be permitted if water resources and other community facilities are not adequate to serve new households or businesses. Annexations shall be required to provide adequate connections to the existing street and pedestrian networks (sidewalks and trails). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Town will work to ensure that commercial development in the designated Town Growth Area occurs only as the result of annexation. The Town will work to ensure that the lands outside of Town, shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map as Natural Resource Conservation, are not developed but are instead maintained in their current state through 2030. The Town would allow development on the west side only for the benefit of its residents. |

3.3 SENSITIVE AREAS¹²

The sensitive areas of Accident are described in Volume 1 and illustrated here on the Accident Sensitive Areas Map. The South Branch Bear Creek is the main resource in the Town, flowing north to south and paralleling Route 219 on the east side of Town before crossing the highway south of Accident. Its drainage area includes the agricultural fields and high relief topography east of the Town. It is listed as Tier II (High Quality) waters by MDE and is biologically impaired by and subject to sediment loading. Wetlands are located along the stream system both in and outside of the Town’s boundaries. This section outlines the goals, policies, and actions that Accident intends to implement to ensure these sensitive resources are protected.

Goals

| | 1 | 2 |
|--|---|--|
| | Sensitive natural areas and the scenic resources they provide are protected from development. | The resource value of natural areas such as wetlands, woodlands, floodplains, streams, stream buffers, steep slopes, and the source waters for Accident’s municipal water system is acknowledged and, to the extent possible, protected. |

Policies

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural features and productive farmlands are conserved and permanent open space is established in conjunction with future land development, wherever feasible. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Town’s zoning and regulatory authority is brought to bear to ensure long-term protection and conservation of sensitive areas in Accident. Rare, threatened, or endangered species habitat is protected from future development. |
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Implementing

Actions Year 1-6

| | | |
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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amend the zoning ordinance to include open space zoning for the preservation of natural resources and the development of associated parks. This zoning should be applied to areas around South Branch Bear Creek and areas in Town shown as Resource Conservation on the Comprehensive Plan Map. Amend the zoning ordinance to require open space dedication with all new development over three houses. Amend the zoning ordinance to require development on the east side of Town to restore forested buffers around South Branch Bear Creek. Amend the zoning ordinance to require that new development preserve forested portions of development parcels. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the environmental restoration of a portion of the recently cleared woodland adjacent to South Branch Bear Creek in conjunction with the land’s proposed development. This area is designated on the Comprehensive Plan Map. Maintain up-to-date information on rare, threatened, or endangered species and monitor development compliance with State and County regulations concerning these species. Work with Maryland Department of the Environment to monitor the impact of these actions on the biologic and sediment impairments in South Branch Bear Creek. |
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¹² Recommendations concerning sensitive areas are also provided in Section 3.1 (Land Use) and Section 3.5 (Water Resources).

3.4 TRANSPORTATION

The Town’s pressing transportation challenge relates to Route 219. Route 219 is both a rural arterial highway and the Town’s Main Street. When traffic speeds are fast and traffic volumes high, Route 219 divides Accident, making circulation through Town difficult and potentially dangerous. The highway is expected to carry 9,500 vehicles per day (vpd) during the tourism peak season in 2030¹³. The State Highway Administration (SHA) estimates that it now carries 4,700 vpd. This Plan recommends that Route 219, in its role as Main Street, be given priority over its role as a regional highway and it recommends that physical improvements be implemented to lower traffic speeds and promote safety for pedestrians and motorists alike (traffic calming). Improvements should also include designated crosswalks, signs, a designated bikeway, and improved sidewalks, curbs, and gutters. These improvements are also intended to promote Main Street as a good location for commercial activity. These improvements should not wait for the possible future construction of an Accident bypass; instead work should begin within the next six years.

| Goals | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|--|
| | Accident's transportation network is well-maintained; safety is paramount; traffic congestion is not present. | All residents of Accident are able to access activity centers by walking or biking. | Route 219’s role as Main Street is given priority over the movement of high speed traffic through Town. |
| Policies¹⁴ | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintain a well-functioning street system with special attention to Main Street. Ensure that all areas of Accident are well-connected, monitor congestion and speeds and address safety concerns. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is possible to walk or bike to activity centers (parks, town hall, etc.) from any area of Accident. New development will provide connections to a Town network of trails and sidewalks. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coordinate with State and County agencies to implement good ideas for slowing traffic speeds and re-enforcing the sense of place created by Main Street through Accident. |
| Implementing Actions Year 1-6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require new development to maintain connectivity by continuing the grid system of streets and alleys. Adopt street design guidelines so that new streets are similar in size and design to the Town’s existing streets and alleys. Require developers to both perform traffic studies and provide solutions when impacts to area streets are expected. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Begin the recommended recreational trail system shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map by preparing a plan and a funding strategy. Sidewalks and trails are built to improve pedestrian and bicycle connections between residential areas and town hall, the elementary school, library, and recreation areas. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop gateways at the north and south ends of Town and work with SHA to study and implement traffic calming. Work with the County to realize its planned County-wide bike route along Route 219. Implement the streetscape improvements set forth in the Accident Community Legacy Plan. |

¹³ Source: Garrett County Comprehensive Plan, 2008.

¹⁴ While the policies of this Plan are mostly focused on the existing network of streets and roads, the Town will continue to support the Garrett Transit Services “People Mover” paratransit services.

3.5 WATER RESOURCES

The Town of Accident is the only municipality in the Bear Creek Watershed. It provides public water and sewer services and receives operations and maintenance services from the Garrett County Department of Public Utilities. The WWTP discharges to the South Branch Bear Creek south of Town. The Town proposes a future growth area that would eventually be served by municipal water and sewer, provided the systems are expanded to accommodate the build-out of property within existing Town limits as well as the Growth Area. The following goals, policies and actions must be understood in the context of the information on existing conditions and future growth provided in Section 2.0 of this volume.

| Goals | 1 | 2 |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| | Public water and sewerage facilities are adequate to meet demand. | Stormwater is managed, treated, and dispersed slowly to the South Branch of Bear Creek. |
| Policies | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water consumption is reduced. • The first priority for water and sewer capacity is growth within the Town boundaries. • Expand the WWTP to 90,000 gpd. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accident and Garrett County innovatively administer the Maryland Stormwater Design Manual and its updates • Development near South Branch Bear Creek is held to high environmental standards. |
| Implementing Actions Year 1-6 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and adopt a water and sewer allocation management plan. • Work with County, State and federal agencies to ensure upgrades and expansions of facilities are coordinated with growth. • Begin to study additional well and spring locations for future drinking water. • Support County incentives for water conservation with educational materials. • Study the potential of developing springs in and around Town as a drinking water source. • Continue to work with DPU to study the capacity of existing wells to serve planned growth. • Consult with MDE about increasing the Town’s appropriation permit for the current wells. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain forested areas and open space between properties to allow for increased absorption of stormwater into the water table. • For all future development and major clearing and grading, work with County and State agencies to promote enforcement and inspection of sediment and erosion control requirements. • With the help of MD DNR, begin to restore the stream buffer along the South Branch of Bear Creek. • Update the Town zoning ordinance to comply with the Comprehensive Plan Map, targeting specific areas for development while other areas are maintained in open space uses. |

WATER RESOURCES

Goals

3

4

Source water, including ground and surface water resources, is protected.

Water quality of all water resources is maintained and improved for future generations.

Policies

- Buffers of forested areas where development is not permitted are established around water sources.

- Future upgrades to the Wastewater Treatment Plant (WWTP) reduce discharge nutrient loads.
- Stormwater does not enter streams directly but travels through stormwater management systems and forested buffers.

Implementing Actions Year 1-6

- Update Town ordinances to support County updates to the sensitive areas ordinance as it relates to buffers surrounding water sources.
- Protect the area to the west of Town from development while the Town studies this area for springs. Appropriate buffering should be applied if springs are found.

- Work with County, State, and federal agencies to ensure that the planned upgrades to the WWTP include improvements in treatment technology.
- Support and keep current on County efforts in the area of source water protection as laid out in the County Comprehensive Plan, Section 5.2.7.

3.6 COMMUNITY FACILITIES & RESOURCES

The following goals, policies, and actions address maintaining Accident’s community facilities and protecting its cultural resources. Section 2.2 of this volume addressed the impact of growth on schools and other community facilities. It showed that expansions of community facilities are not necessary because of the modest level of housing growth anticipated in Accident. Protection of historic resources is considered an important part of promoting the Town’s economic vitality.

Goals

| | 1 | 2 | 3 |
|--|--|---|---|
| | The culture and history of Accident as expressed in its physical town design and buildings remain central to community life. | Adequate facilities to serve current and future residents are in place before development occurs. Accident does not suffer service reductions due to development. | The Town and outside agencies work together to ensure existing facilities and services are maintained, improved, and optimized as the Town grows. |

Policies

| | | |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The historic structures in Accident are preserved and restored. • Accident maintains a connection to its agricultural past. • Main Street’s role as a central feature of the Town’s culture and economy is protected and strengthened. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accident cooperates in sharing resources with neighboring localities to improve the cost effectiveness of public services wherever feasible. • Municipal-related functions such as water, sewer, police and fire, library, and park services and facilities remain adequate. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a high quality of education for Accident residents. • Promote and support good local health care. |
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Implementing Actions Year 1-6

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement the Community Legacy Plan’s recommendations regarding the Drane House and the historic resources of the Town. • Conduct a feasibility study for a farmers’ market. • Apply to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development for Accident to become a Designated Neighborhood. • Apply to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development for designation as a “Main Street Maryland” community, making use of the technical assistance the State can provide. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All policies and actions of Section 3.5, Water Resources are implemented. • Coordinate with nearby localities to share in service provision. • Coordinate with County agencies to ensure that the police, fire, emergency service, library, and school needs in Accident continue to be met. • Require that new parks be improved and dedicated by developers during site development. These parks should coincide with those shown on the Comprehensive Plan Map. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet regularly with the Garrett County Board of Education to discuss current and future enrollment and educational needs affecting families in Accident. • Maintain communication with health care providers to ensure their ability to continue providing services to Accident. |
|--|---|---|

3.7 MINERAL RESOURCES

While mineral resources are present around Accident, the development of resources other than natural gas is not supported by this plan. Extensive mining and storage of mineral resources is contrary to the historic and environmental restoration goals of the Town. The following goal, policy, and actions support this statement.

Goals

Any mining or storage operation in or around Accident meets the highest environmental and water quality protections and public health and safety standards.

Policies

- New and existing natural gas storage wells comply with the highest safety and environmental standards.

Implementing

Actions Year 1-6

- The impact of natural gas storage operations on the environment is monitored.
- The impact of natural gas storage on the residents of Accident is monitored.
- The highest safety standards are followed for the storage of natural gas.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The Town of Accident is the only town located in the scenic Bear Creek Watershed of Garrett County. The entire watershed is a designated Rural Legacy Area. This means that it is the focus of State and County land preservation efforts under the Maryland Rural Legacy Program. This Comprehensive Plan acknowledges this unique location and seeks to responsibly manage growth and development in and around the Town's current boundaries. In so doing, this Plan has established a set of goals and long term development policies.

Stewardship of the land, natural resources, and community facilities is a strong theme of this Plan. Through the year 2030, Accident anticipates population growth and commercial development and it proposes zoning changes and infrastructure expansions to help balance future demand for municipal services with supply. The Town also seeks to protect the integrity of its historic character, preserve sensitive environmental areas and scenic views, and promote traffic safety along Route 219. It should be noted that implementation of the Town's Community Legacy Plan is an important part of this Comprehensive Plan.

A number of the major recommendations of the Plan have implications for funding. Here are several potential mechanisms for funding that Accident will consider:

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|-----------------------------|--|
| Water and Sewer: | Loans from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Local Government Infrastructure Financing Program, grants and technical assistance from the Maryland Department of the Environment, Community Development Block Grants (MD DHCD), and grants from Appalachian Regional Commission. The Town could seek to cover the costs of water and sewer expansion and rehabilitation through surcharges on new connections to these services. The Town could use tap fees to cover the water treatment costs of new connections. Developers seeking annexation could be required to make contributions. |
| Route 219 Streetscape: | The Maryland State Highway Administration's "When State Highway is Main Street" program for technical and financial assistance and the Transportation Enhancement Program, a federal grant program administered by the Maryland State Highway Administration. |
| Farmland Preservation: | The Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Rural Legacy Program as a coordinating entity for land acquisition, the purchase of conservation easements and technical and strategic planning assistance. The Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Fund for the purchase of conservation easements. The Maryland Environmental Trust for assistance in acquiring donated conservation easements. |
| Historic Preservation: | The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Community Legacy Program. Maryland Historic Trust for technical assistance in the delineation and nomination of historic structures and districts. |
| Main Street Revitalization: | The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development's Main Street Maryland program for technical assistance. |

The implementation of this Plan will require a long term commitment to cooperative efforts with local, County, State, regional and federal agencies and units of government and non-profit organizations.