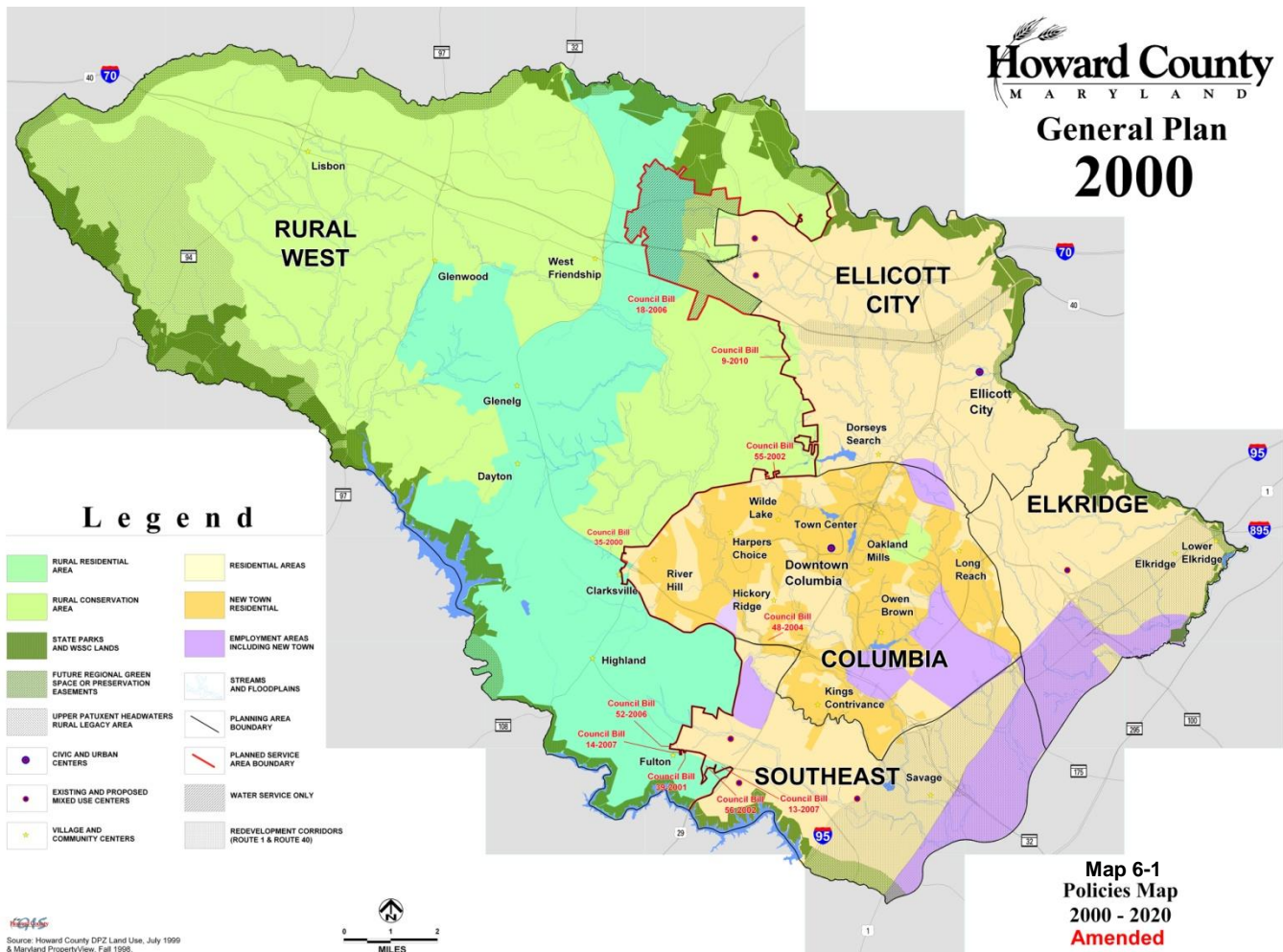


PlanHoward 2030 also incorporates the recently adopted State legislation that implements new restrictions on major subdivisions using septic systems in rural areas. This legislation, known as the Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act, requires local jurisdictions to classify land into one of four “Growth Tiers.” The intent of this legislation is to prohibit major subdivisions of five or more lots in Tier IV areas. The tiers for Howard County are designated in accordance with this 2012 law and are also shown in this chapter on Map 6-3.

Progress under General Plan 2000

Since adoption of *General Plan 2000*, most residential and nonresidential growth has occurred in the County’s PFA. Zoning changes were approved allowing higher-density, mixed-use development in targeted areas, particularly along the Route 1 Corridor where several projects have been completed and others are under construction or planned. Some mixed-use development has also been planned in parts of the Route 40 Corridor. The Downtown Columbia Plan was adopted, establishing the framework for progressive redevelopment and intensification of Howard County’s urban center. Regulations allowing revitalization of older Columbia Village Centers have also been adopted.

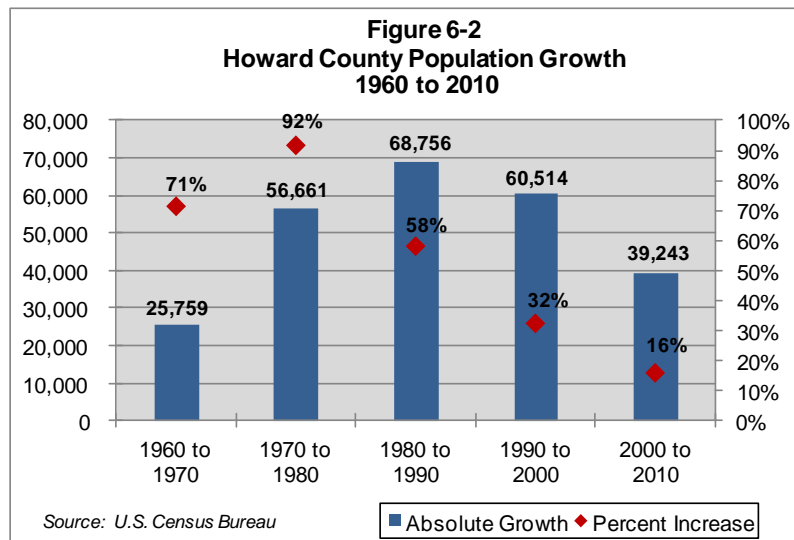
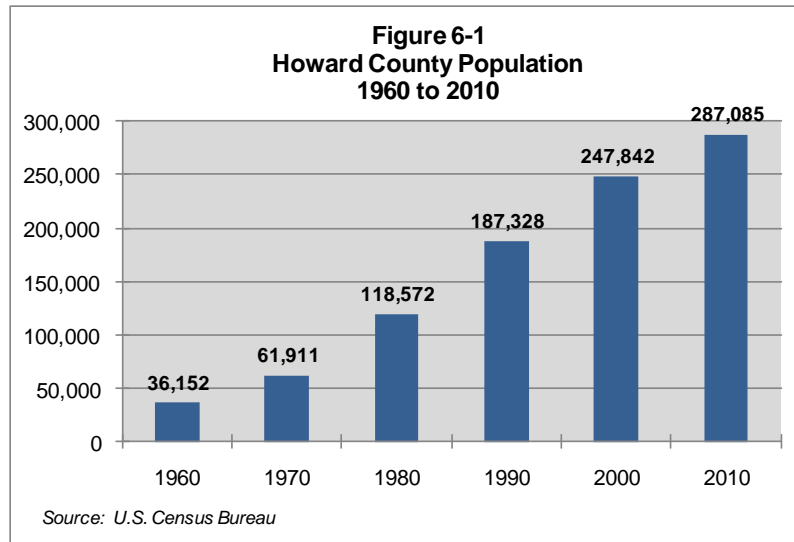
Map 6-1 is the Policies Map from *General Plan 2000* summarizing the major land use policies implemented with that plan. This map shows the five planning areas established under *General Plan 2000*. In that plan growth projections were established for each of the planning areas and serve as the basis for the annual



housing unit allocations as part of the County's Adequate Public Facilities (APF) Act, first adopted in 1992. These allocations, along with the open/closed schools test, have been used to phase residential growth to ensure that adequate school capacity and other public infrastructure is built to accommodate new development. *PlanHoward 2030* proposes that allocations be granted based on the designated place types rather than the five planning areas. This change is discussed later in this chapter.

Population and Household Growth

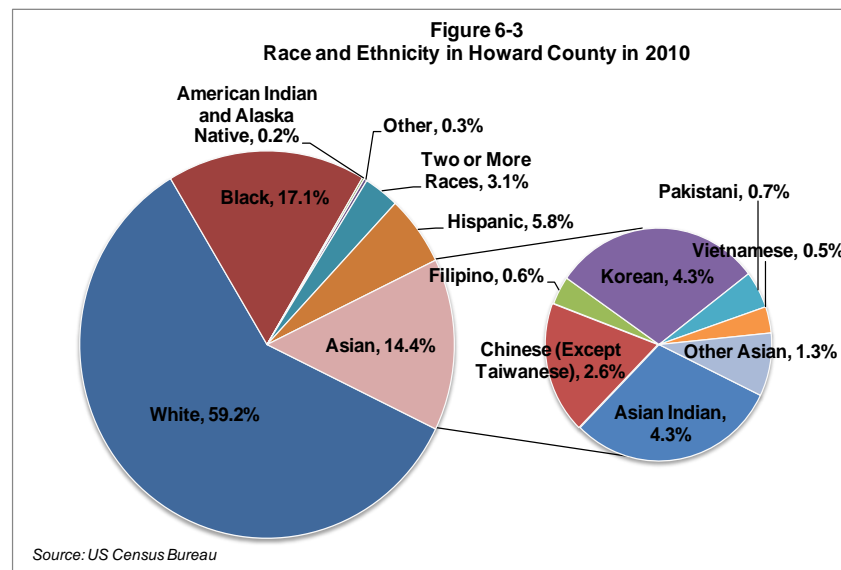
The population of Howard County has grown by 16% over the last decade, from 247,842 residents in 2000 to 287,085 residents in 2010, an increase of about 39,000 according to the U.S. Census. This is half the growth rate of the 1990s when the County grew by 32%, or 60,500 residents. The slower growth rate of the last decade was dictated in large part by *General Plan 2000* policies and the APF Act. *General Plan 2000* set the pace of growth and the County's APF Regulations are the control measure. Prior to this, the County had grown by 68,800 residents in the 1980s and 56,700 residents in the 1970s. Figures 6-1 and 6-2 demonstrate the population increases.



General Plan 2000 anticipated that by 2010 there would be 107,450 housing units in the County. The 2010 Census recently counted 109,282 housing units, slightly more than *General Plan 2000*'s projection. It is likely that the 2010 Census included newly constructed homes that were nearly complete but did not yet have certificates of occupancy. DPZ's estimate of total units based on certificates of occupancy on April 2010 was 106,420. This is an increase of about 16,500 new units over ten years, an average of 1,650 per year.

A Diversifying Population

The 2010 Census shows that the population of Howard County is 59% non-Hispanic White, 17% non-Hispanic African American, 14% non-Hispanic Asian, and close to 6% Hispanic. About 3% of the population indicated that they were of more than one race. The remaining 0.5% is of another race including a small number of American Indians and Native Alaskans. Hispanics can be of any race (Figure 6-3).



Compared to a decade ago, it is clear that the County has become increasingly diverse (Figure 6-4). In 2000, the non-Hispanic White population was 73% of the total. The remaining 27% consisted of minority populations. By 2010, the minority populations have increased to 41% of the total, a significant increase over a relatively short period of time.

The non-Hispanic Asian population increased the most between 2000 and 2010, by more than 22,000 people, a 116% increase. This is followed by the non-Hispanic African American population which grew by close to 14,000 residents, a 39% increase. Hispanics increased by about 9,200 residents, representing the largest growth rate at 123%. By comparison, the non-Hispanic White population decreased by 10,000 residents, a 5.6% decline.

This is the first time the non-Hispanic White population has decreased in Howard County between decennial censuses. At the current rate of change it is likely that Howard County will be a "majority-minority" county sometime over the next five to ten years.