

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Appalachian Regional Commission Programs	Provides grants and loans through the Tri-County Council, including a revolving low-interest loan fund for businesses for gap financing.	Tri-County Council of Western Maryland
Rural Utilities Service Financing	Offers low-interest loans for water and sewage projects.	U.S. Dept of Agriculture Rural Utilities Service
Army Corps Programs; NRCS Watershed Programs	Various types of projects to manage flooding	U.S. Army Corps Of Engineers, Baltimore District; U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service
Hazard Mitigation Grant Program	Provides 75% funding to relieve imminent hazards from flooding.	Federal Emergency Management Agency
Small Creeks and Estuaries Water Quality Restoration	Offers 50% funding to restore and improve stream channels.	MD. Dept. of the Environment, Water Management Administration
Water Quality State Revolving Loan Fund	Provides low-interest loans to local governments for projects that will improve water quality, such as stream restoration projects or efforts to reduce non-point source pollution.	MD. Dept. of the Environment, Water Management Administration
Water Supply Financial Assistance Program; Drinking Water Revolving Loan Fund	Provides low-interest loans and grants for water supply system repairs and upgrades.	MD. Dept of the Environment, Water Management Administration

Sources: Publications and internet sites of various agencies; Report of the Governors Flood Mitigation Task Force for Western Maryland.

VII. COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND UTILITIES

Schools Serving Williamsport

The education facilities serving Williamsport are located in a large 114-acre campus at the east edge of the Town. The Williamsport Elementary School was originally constructed in 1959 and upgraded in 1965 and 2003. The school is a 64,112 square foot facility accommodating children in kindergarten through fifth grade. Its State-related capacity (SRC) is 608 students, according to the Washington County Public Schools Education Facilities Master Plan 2003 Update. Enrollment for the 2003-2004 school year is expected to be 488 students.

The Springfield Middle School was built in 1977. It is a large building of some 135,000 square feet with an SRC of 859. Enrollment is projected to be 801 for the 2003-2004 school year.

Williamsport High School was built in 1970. It contains 150,139 square feet of floor area, and has an SRC of 954 students. It is also expected to be significantly under enrolled, with an estimated student body of 870 for the 2003-2004 school year.

The park-like campus provides distinctive areas for each school, with the elementary school on the north side, the middle school in the south, and the high school between the other two. Springfield Farm Lane and Clifford Avenue provide access to the site. An interior roadway connects the three buildings and their parking areas. The large site affords extensive recreation facilities.

Health Systems and Facilities

The health facilities in and near Williamsport include Williamsport Nursing Home and the Homewood Retirement Center. There are no hospitals or health clinics in Williamsport. Health care services are provided in Hagerstown at the Washington County Hospital on King Street, the Western Maryland Hospital Center on Pennsylvania Avenue and the Robinwood Medical Center located on Mt. Aetna Road. Primary health care services are obtainable in Hagerstown; they are discussed below. The Robinwood Medical Center has a satellite office about two miles from Town on Route 11.

The Robinwood Medical Center was the first facility designed to provide one-stop comprehensive health care services. This 105-acre "medical mall" is located on Mt. Aetna Road and was built by the Washington County Hospital Endowment Fund, Inc. (The Washington County Hospital Endowment Fund was established in 1974 to "hold and manage the endowment assets exclusively for the support and benefit of Washington County Hospital, or for activities which support the hospital"). In addition to providing for physician visits, lab services, rehab, pharmacy, and home care products, Robinwood also sponsors health-related programs for the public. The Washington County Hospital is pursuing the development of a new Hospital on adjacent land to the Robinwood Center.

Libraries

The Williamsport Memorial Library is a branch of the Washington County Free Library. The County system is supported by funds from the Town and the County, as well as the State of Maryland and Federal grant funds. The library houses a memorial to 14 children who were killed in a bus accident in 1935. The facility has very strong support from the community. While the library is quite substantial for a community the size of Williamsport, the Director of the County's library system feels that additional area is needed.

Water and Sewerage Systems

On May 17, 1994 the Washington County Commissioners adopted Amendments to the May 13, 1975 Water and Sewerage Plan to make it consistent with the County's Comprehensive Plan. The objective of this plan are to:

- Protect the health, safety, and welfare of the people in the County;
- Coordinate the policies and plans relative to land use and the provision of adequate water and sewerage facilities to assure logical growth pattern in the County;
- Identify and analyze all sources and pollution;
- Provide for the qualified management of water resources;
- Establish priorities; and
- Provide for periodic amendment.

Among the eleven objectives identified in the Plan, three are especially significant to the formulation of the Comprehensive Plan.

The first of those selected objectives indicates that on-lot septic disposal systems in many cases have proven inadequate in terms of implementing the goals of the Plan. As a result, a primary objective points to the need "to provide to the greatest extent possible, alternatives in these systems without encouraging increases in development density in those areas designed in the Plan for the County."

Another objective is "to encourage and guide residential growth to those areas which are served or planned to be served with community water and sewerage systems."

The third of those objectives is to "encourage the extension and expansion of the existing water and sewer lines and facilities to ultimately serve all of the land which is considered to be within the designated urban and town growth areas."

Past and present practices seem to indicate that many residents feel that septic-system usage is a matter of right disposal method rather than a privilege. Many believe that as long as no surface malfunctioning is apparent, their household sewerage system is working properly. Little or no concern is directed toward the issue of groundwater contamination. This is

particularly relevant because development has occurred outside the corporate boundaries where the Town has no jurisdictional authority to control it.

To minimize the risks of contamination, the County has established standards and procedures for the planning and installation of new on-lot and subsurface disposal systems. The Comptroller General of the United States in a Report to Congress on November 8, 1978 concluded that "if properly designed, constructed, operated, and maintained, septic systems should not fail; can be as permanent as central treatment facilities; are often more ecologically sound than sewers and central facilities; and can provide a high degree of wastewater treatment." However, to meet the State's objectives of concentrating future development to protect open space, it may be best to discourage the use of septic tanks.

Water Supply. Williamsport is served by public water supply from the system owned and operated by the city of Hagerstown. The current service area boundaries are the Maryland State line to the north, Maryland Route 63 and Williamsport to the west, Maryland Route 65 at Roxbury Road (Maryland Correctional Institute) to the south, and the Town of Smithsburg to the east.

As noted in the Hagerstown 1997 Comprehensive Plan Update the Hagerstown Water Department is a public utility owned and operated by the City of Hagerstown under the direction of the Mayor and City Council. The Water Department serves more than 75,000 people within the Hagerstown corporate limits, in unincorporated areas, and in other municipalities through over 326 miles of piping. The Hagerstown system provides the entire water supply for the towns of Funkstown and Williamsport, and some of the water for Smithsburg. These towns purchase their water from Hagerstown but retain the responsibility for the operation and maintenance of their own distribution systems, such as pumps, water lines, and water services. The Hagerstown system also serves large industrial and institutional water users, the Maryland Correctional Institution, and Washington County Hospital.

The Potomac River near Williamsport is the source of supply from which water is currently drawn on the average of ten millions gallons per day for filtration at the R.C. Willson Water Treatment Plant. This facility is rated to have the capacity to deliver fourteen million gallons per day of filtered water through two major transmission mains into Hagerstown and the surrounding area. Major components have the ability to produce twenty MGD.

Williamsport does not have formal or continuing programs for water conservation. In the event of a need to conserve water or any other need to advise customer with respect to water use, the Town government would use media campaigns on local radio and newspapers.

Sewerage systems. The Washington County Sanitary District owns, operates, and maintains several public wastewater collection systems and treatment plants in the County. Williamsport, together with several smaller communities, is served by the Nicodemus Wastewater Treatment Plant. This plant is located on the Potomac River on Lockwood road on the outskirts of Williamsport. It is a secondary treatment plant, and its process includes

primary classification, high-rate trickling filters, secondary clarification, and disinfection. It discharges effluent into the Potomac River.

The plant has a capacity of 1.6 MGD and a current average flow of .7 MGD. However, the NPDES permit is for somewhat less than design capacity, at 1.371 MGD. At Williamsport, flow allocations for interceptors of pumping stations are at a design capacity of 0.5 MGD, and in the second half of 1992 the average flow was 0.204 MGD, leaving a net available flow of 0.294 MGD.

The Nicodemus plant processes wastewater from various types of collection systems, including conventional gravity, low-pressure grinder pump, and small-diameter gravity systems. A solids handling facility at the site receives and processes septic waste from Washington County septic haulers, as well as sewage sludge generated at other County treatment facilities.

Solid Waste Collection and Disposal

Solid waste and recycling materials are collected weekly .

Fire / Ambulance Protection

The Williamsport Volunteer Fire Department is located in a facility at 2 Brandy Drive. This site provides adequate space for their needs for some time in the future. The Fire Department has a ladder truck, a fire engine, an engine-tanker, a mini-pumper, a fire squad vehicle, and a utility car.

The Williamsport Ambulance Service, located on Salisbury Street, is currently equipped with two ambulances, a station wagon, and a truck.

Police

Police protection is provided by the Washington County Sheriff's Department. There are currently three officers based at the Williamsport Town Hall.

Other Government Facilities

The Town Hall is located at the intersection of Conococheague Street and Salisbury Street, in the middle of town. It is adequate for the Town's administrative operations.

VIII. TRANSPORTATION

Streets and Highways

Williamsport is blessed with very wide downtown streets, laid out for the original Town. As a result, there is very little congestion, and the streets present opportunities for trees and “street furniture” to increase the Town’s pleasant ambience.

The Town is intersected by one regional highway, U.S. Route 11, which runs along Potomac Street. This route parallels Interstate 81 for a substantial distance, and therefore now carries mostly local traffic. Other major roads in the Town are Maryland Route 63, which connects the Town with Chambersburg Pennsylvania, to the north and Antietam Battlefield area to the southeast, and Maryland Route 68, which connects with Interstate 70 near Clear Spring and with Boonsboro.

Interstate Route 81 is the primary route along the U.S. East coast, paralleling Interstate 95. In this region, it runs from Harrisburg in the northeast through the Shenandoah Valley to the southwest.

Public Transit. Williamsport has bus service to Hagerstown via the County Commuter.

Trails. Williamsport lies on one of the longest trails in the United States, the Chesapeake and Ohio towpath, from Washington, D.C., to Cumberland, Maryland. Use of this trail, currently estimated at 3 million per year, may increase with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources new Rail-Trail, following the old Western Maryland Railroad bed from Fort Frederick to Hancock.

Policy Statements.

- Improve and maintain streets to provide a safe and efficient street network for driving, walking, and biking
- Improve the streetscape and pedestrian environment to create an attractive setting for businesses and to enhance residential communities
- Provide pedestrian and bicycle access to activity centers (e.g., schools, public parks, commercial areas)
- Support the development of a trail system that links visitor attractions in the Town and in the County
- Continue to work with the County Transportation Department to support the transit service to Williamsport.

PART II. THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

X. STATEMENT OF INTENT

The Williamsport Comprehensive Plan is the official policy statement of the Mayor and Council of Williamsport with respect to physical and economic development in the Town. It therefore guides the content of all Town legislation, permits, and programs relating to economic and land development. Those laws and programs must be consistent with this Plan.

Section 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland states that:

“Whenever the local legislative body shall have adopted the plan as a whole or for one or more geographic sections or divisions of the jurisdiction, no street, square, park, or other public way, ground, or open space, or public building or structure, or public utility, whether public or privately owned, shall be constructed or authorized in the jurisdiction or major geographic section thereof until the location, character, and extent of such development shall have been submitted to and approved by the planning commission as consistent with the plan provided, that the commission shall communicate its decision and reasons to the local legislative body which shall have the power to overrule such actions by a recorded vote of not less than 2/3 of its membership.”

XI. GOALS AND VISIONS

Goals and Visions for Williamsport

The following are the goals and objectives of planning for Williamsport.

The Town will seek additional economic development in terms of economic activities within the Town and employment opportunities for Williamsport residents within a reasonable commuting distance.

- The Town will encourage continuing employment activities in the area around the interchange of Interstate 81 with Conococheague Street.
- The Town will encourage the use and rehabilitation of vacant buildings and parcels in commercial and industrial areas.
- The Town will provide streetscape improvements in the Central Area, starting with Conococheague Street between Potomac and Salisbury Streets and Potomac Street between Conococheague Street and the C & O Canal, including: street trees, benches, planter boxes, other “street furniture”, and new street lighting compatible

with the Town's historic character, and other items seen as necessary to create the desired atmosphere.

- The Town will enlist community support for a beautification program for the Town that would assist in developing streetscape improvements and general building and property maintenance.
- The Town will encourage the establishment of a business association to assist with street improvements and expand services for tourism, including such activities as restaurants and bed-and-breakfasts related to the C & O Canal and other attractions.
- The Town will investigate the coordination of tourist promotion with other Washington County towns, such as Boonsboro, Sharpsburg, Clear Spring, Funkstown, and Hancock.

The Town will encourage and support its residents in improving the housing stock.

- The Town will work with Washington County Community Development Agency to make County, State, and Federal housing assistance available to Williamsport homeowners.

The Town will seek to preserve its historic resources and enhance them as economic and cultural assets to Williamsport.

- The Town will work with the National Park Service in improving public areas along the C & O Canal.
- The Town will seek ways to like the Conococheague Street commercial core more effectively with the Canal complex around the Cushwa Basin.
- The Town should work with Washington, Frederick and Carroll Counties and the municipalities that are involved with developing a management plan for the Civil War Heritage Area.

The Town will seek to preserve the natural assets of the Potomac River, Conococheague Creek, and its other natural resources.

XII. FUTURE POPULATION AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Population

While most of this growth will take place in undeveloped areas outside of Williamsport, there is some vacant residential land in the Town, and its population could grow by 100 or more people. However, this is not expected to have any substantial impact on Williamsport's public-service needs.

Countywide, the school-aged population is expected to increase slightly to be the first decade of the twenty-first century, as the children of the "baby boom" move into school, and then to decline. However, this is based on a modest increase in the whole population. If

Washington County were to become more of a “bedroom community”: for the spreading metropolitan communities to the east, the school-aged population would resume its growth.

More substantial growth is expected in the working-age population from age 19 to age 65. Countywide, a ten percent increase is expected, again the result of the post-World War II baby boom. Thus, new sources of employment for the County are important.

A very substantial increase – some 44 percent – is expected in the County’s elderly population, increasing the need for services, such as medical and moderate-cost housing, for this group. Countywide population projections indicate an increase of some 300 older persons in the Williamsport area, compared with about 855 persons in that age group now living in the area, and compared with the approximately 400-person increase expected in the total population. Thus most of the increase could be in older people who are not in the workforce. Again, the increase within Williamsport will depend upon the nature of new development in the Town’s few vacant areas and the Town’s policy on annexation. However, older people tend to live in towns, where they can have good access to shopping and services, so the elderly population within Washington County’s towns can be expected to grow substantially.

Economic projections

Future Trends. The State Planning office has projected employment to the year 2020. Clearly, any projections should be viewed with caution, but these provide the current “best estimate” for anticipating future economic changes. These projections are summarized here.

**Detail 6
Projected Employment in Washington County**

	1990	2000	2020
Agriculture, forestry, fisheries	1,800	1,900	1,700
Construction	4,900	4,600	4,900
Manufacturing	8,900	8,900	8,300
Transportation, Public Utilities	3,700	4,100	4,500
Wholesale Sales	3,800	3,800	4,200
Retail Sales	13,900	14,500	16,800
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate	3,100	3,300	3,800
Services	16,500	22,300	26,900
Government	9,700	9,800	9,600
Total	66,500	73,300	80,800

Source: Maryland Department of Planning

Slight growth or an actual decline is expected in agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and government. The growth sectors are expected to be transportation, utilities, wholesale and retail sales, finance, and services.

XIII. THE LAND USE PLAN

The Land Use Plan indicates several land use policy categories by color. The Town's policy for these areas is as follows:

Residential. In these areas it is the policy of the Town to encourage residential development in predominantly single-family housing types. Appropriate services will be permitted with special review by the Planning Commission, including:

- churches, clubs, and other semipublic activities, with sufficient site size and off-street parking
- neighborhood commercial services, such as grocery stores
- public services, such as schools, firehouses, and libraries

Commercial. It is the policy of the Town to encourage retail commercial activities and other private and public services in these areas. Residential uses are permitted. Industrial uses with high employment densities are discouraged, to limit congestion that could have an adverse impact on retail activities.

Residential-Special Commercial. In these areas, residential uses are encouraged, together with compatible commercial activities. These are transitional areas, where commercial conversions of residential buildings are encouraged. They are mapped in the Town's historic district, and renovations of buildings should be compatible with the area's historic character.

Residential Multifamily. It is the Town's policy in these areas to encourage multifamily development, such as conversions for apartments and new apartment structures, plus compatible commercial activities which serve surrounding residential neighborhoods.

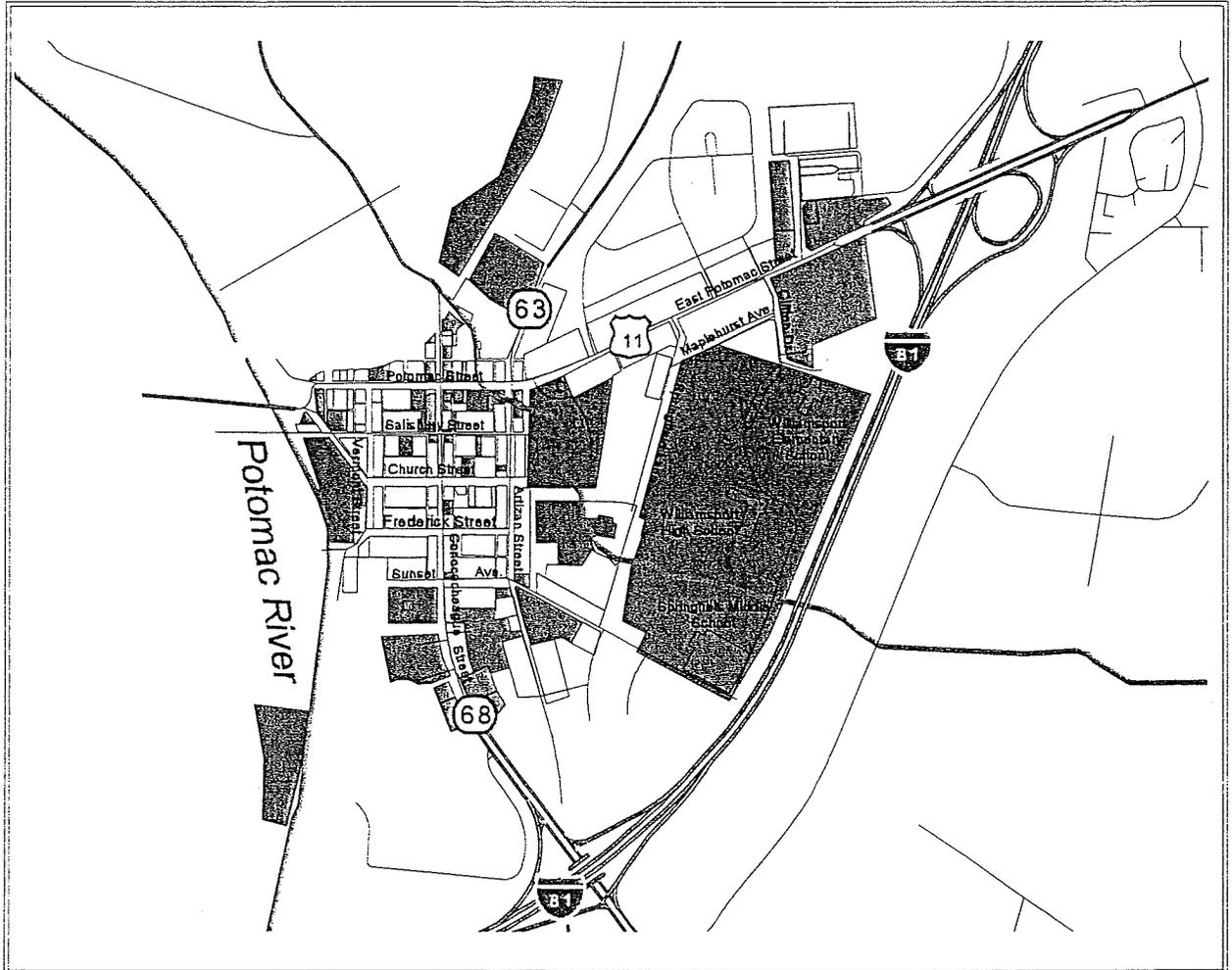
Industrial / Employment. It is the Town's policy to encourage development in these areas which is primarily industrial and other employment facilities. Residential uses are discouraged, to avoid pre-empting land from use for employment activities.

Public Facilities. These are sites of existing major public facilities. Other public facilities may be located in residential, commercial, and industrial areas, as appropriate.

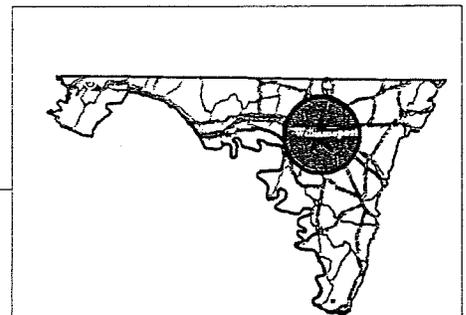
Parks, Recreation, and Open Space. These are areas of existing and potential public or reserved open space that should be reserved as open space in the future.

The plan also proposes that the area between the old railroad right of way along Conococheague Creek and the Creek itself be changed to the TR zone and that this area be reserved as open space. Portions of this rail spur might become a rail-trail.

Existing Land Use



- | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|---|---|
|  | Single Family Residential |  | Commercial/Office |
|  | Multifamily Residential |  | Institutional (Government Bldgs, Churches, Cemeterys) |
|  | Open Space/Recreation |  | Vacant |
|  | Manufacturing | | |







This map was prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning in conjunction with Tri-County Council for Western Maryland.

XIV. TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

The Street and Highway Plan

No major changes to streets and highways in Williamsport are suggested by existing conditions. Traffic is not congested, and the streets are wide enough to handle projected traffic increases. During the time of emergencies on Interstate 81 traffic is held at a standstill within the downtown. Other rerouting options should be explored to alleviate some of this intense congestion.

A possible trouble area is the portion of U.S. Route 11 where Potomac Street turns toward the bridge over the Potomac River. There is some confusion here for a visitor, because heading straight eastward on Potomac Street leads to a dead end at the Cushwa Basin. The National Park Service also has expressed some concern about adequate parking for the Canal attractions in the Basin's vicinity. Continuing highway planning should aim for the elimination of any safety hazards here, more clarity in the route to the bridge, and the possibility of providing more parking.

Trails

The Town should work with Washington County toward the development of pedestrian and bicycle trails linking it with Hagerstown. As noted before, the regional transportation study suggests routes along Downsville Pike or Hopewell Road. Another possible trail would be northward along Conococheague Creek. Other major visitor attractions in the County, such as Fort Frederick and the Antietam Battlefield, can be reached from Williamsport by trail via the C & O Canal towpath trail.

XV. COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Schools

The 2003 Educational Facilities Master Plan shows 2002-2003 enrollment at the Williamsport Elementary School to be well within the school's rated capacity of 608 students.

The Springfield Middle School and Williamsport High School are projected to remain underenrolled for the foreseeable future.

Libraries

While the Williamsport public library is quite substantial, the Director of the County library system estimates that it needs on the order of 300 square feet of additional space. There are currently no specific plans for additions, primarily because of the very low level of capital

funding that is currently available. Capital funding must come from County bond issues, from private donations, and from foundations. Federal funding is expected to be unavailable for the next several years.

Community and Cultural Facilities

The Town will continue to improve the Springfield Barn, the Town Museum, and the proposed Civil Ware museum in the tenant house on this site. As these attractions are improved and expanded they will become more of a “draw” for visitors, adding to Williamsport’s tourism potential.

Water Supply and Wastewater Systems

Water Supply. The Hagerstown water Department uses a prioritized program for capital improvements to the system. Required flow is expected to increase from 9.86 MGD in 1992 to 12.5 MGD by the year 2010 for the whole Hagerstown system. Planned improvements affecting Williamsport are the following:

Richard C. Willson Water Treatment Plant. Upgrade of the plant to enable the treatment of up to 20 MGD at future water quality standards. The current maximum treatment flow is 14 MGD.

Watershed Land Acquisition. The program of land acquisition to protect the Willson Reservoir is continuing on an opportunity basis.

Williamsport Transmission Line. A third twenty-four inch or larger water transmission main is needed to deliver water from the filtration plant to the southern portion of the Hagerstown System.

Sewerage and Wastewater Treatment. Washington County’s water and sewerage plan projects an increase in total flow from about 0.70 MGD to 0.772 MGD by the year 2010. The current system capacity is 1.6 MGD; therefore there will still be excess capacity of more than 0.8 MGD in 25 years.

The five and ten-year priorities for the system in Williamsport will complete a sewerage system rehabilitation to correct inflow and infiltration in the service area.

The majority of sludge produced in Washington County is disposed of in the Washington County sanitary landfill; the remainder is disposed of by landspreading. All sludge transported to the Nicodemus plant is disposed of at the landfill.

Police Facilities

Williamsport has three Resident Deputies who are assigned to specifically meet the law enforcement needs of the Town. The Resident Deputies use space in the Town Hall. This is adequate for the foreseeable future.

Fire / Ambulance Protection

The new firehouse is quite large, and will be adequate for the fire and rescue squad's need for the next several years.

XVI. PARKS, OPEN SPACE, SENSITIVE AREAS, MINERAL AREA, AND AREAS OF CRITICAL STATE CONCERN

Recreational Open Space

As noted in a previous section, Williamsport's recreation facilities are well located and are adequate for the use of residents of Williamsport and the vicinity. Generally speaking, additional improvements, if any, will be oriented to attracting visitors who will patronize Williamsport's businesses. Landscaping and improvements should also be made at the Town's "Gateways" – locations that form visitors' first impression of the Town. These are on Route 68 (Clear Spring Road) as it crosses Conococheague Creek, Route 63 (Greencastle Road) as it crosses the Town limits, and at the interchanges of U.S. Route 11 and State Route 68 with Interstate 81. The Town should also investigate landscaping of River Bottom Park, to make it more inviting to Town citizens and visitors alike. However, this landscaping must be able to survive occasional flooding.

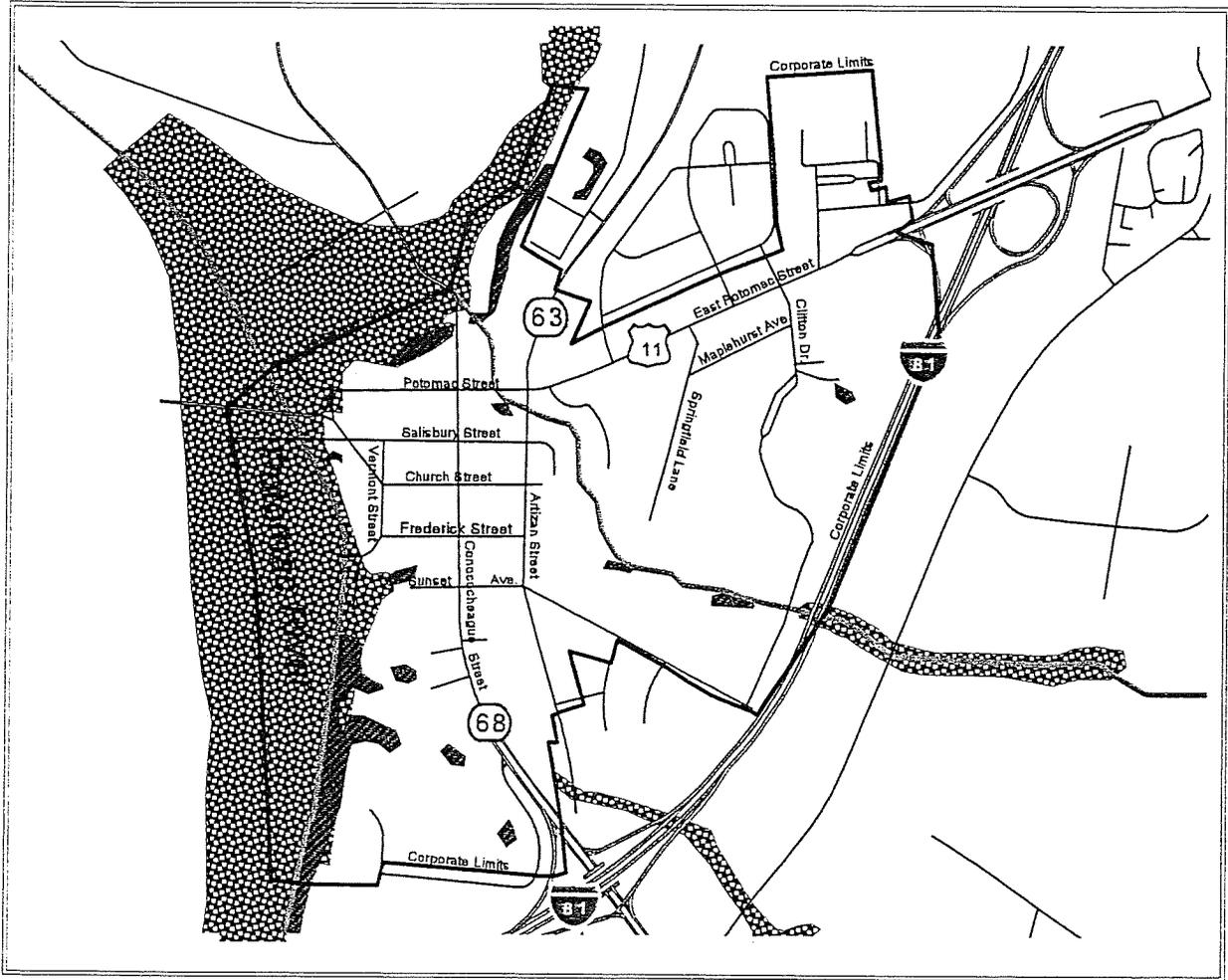
Sensitive Areas

Sensitive areas in the Town limits of Williamsport are limited to those related to the Potomac River and its tributary creeks. Steeper slopes border the Potomac floodplain, Conococheague Creek, and three unnamed smaller creeks to the east of Town. Steep slopes do not present serious obstacles to development unless they exceed 25 percent or so; even in this case problems occur largely when soils are unstable. Construction on slopes as steep as 35 percent or even more is feasible with careful engineering design. For the most part of the land in Williamsport is fairly level and presents no inherent obstacles to development.

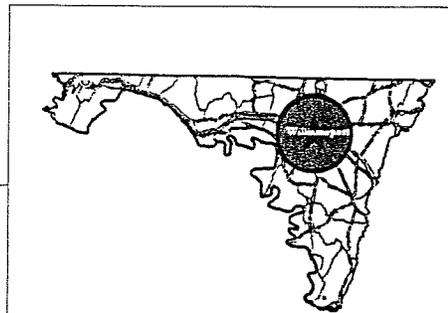
Land along Conococheague Creek should be preserved as a buffer area. The old railroad spur that served the power plant and the area between it and the Creek should be kept open as part of this buffer.

The Potomac River floodplain is a major obstacle to development in a broad swath along the River. However, most of this land is occupied by the Chesapeake and Ohio National Historical Park and the power plant, and would not be available for additional development

Sensitive Areas



-  Streams
-  100 Year Flood Plain
-  Steep Slopes



This map was prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning in conjunction with Tri-County Council for Western Maryland.

in any case. Outside of Town to the west, the tannery is at least partially in the floodplain. Presumably, over the long history of this activity procedures have evolved to cope with occasional flooding, and additional development, especially of residences, should be discouraged.

Floodplains along the Conococheague and the smaller streams, plus buffers of about one hundred feet from the streams should be reserved to protect development from the risk of flood damage and to improve water quality by filtering runoff from adjacent land into the streams.

Habitats of Valuable, Rare, and Endangered Plant and Animal Species

County maps of plant and animal species indicate no rare or endangered species in the Williamsport area.

Mineral Areas

There are no known areas with potential for mineral extraction within the Town limits. There is a large quarry outside Town to the northwest and very large areas that have been zoned for mineral exploitation beyond the existing quarry, but it is unlikely that Williamsport will extend its boundaries to this area. The County should be encouraged to monitor this operation and encourage the restoration of the site after extraction is complete.

Areas of Critical State Concern

There are no areas of critical State concern in the Williamsport area.

XVII. REGULATORY REVIEW

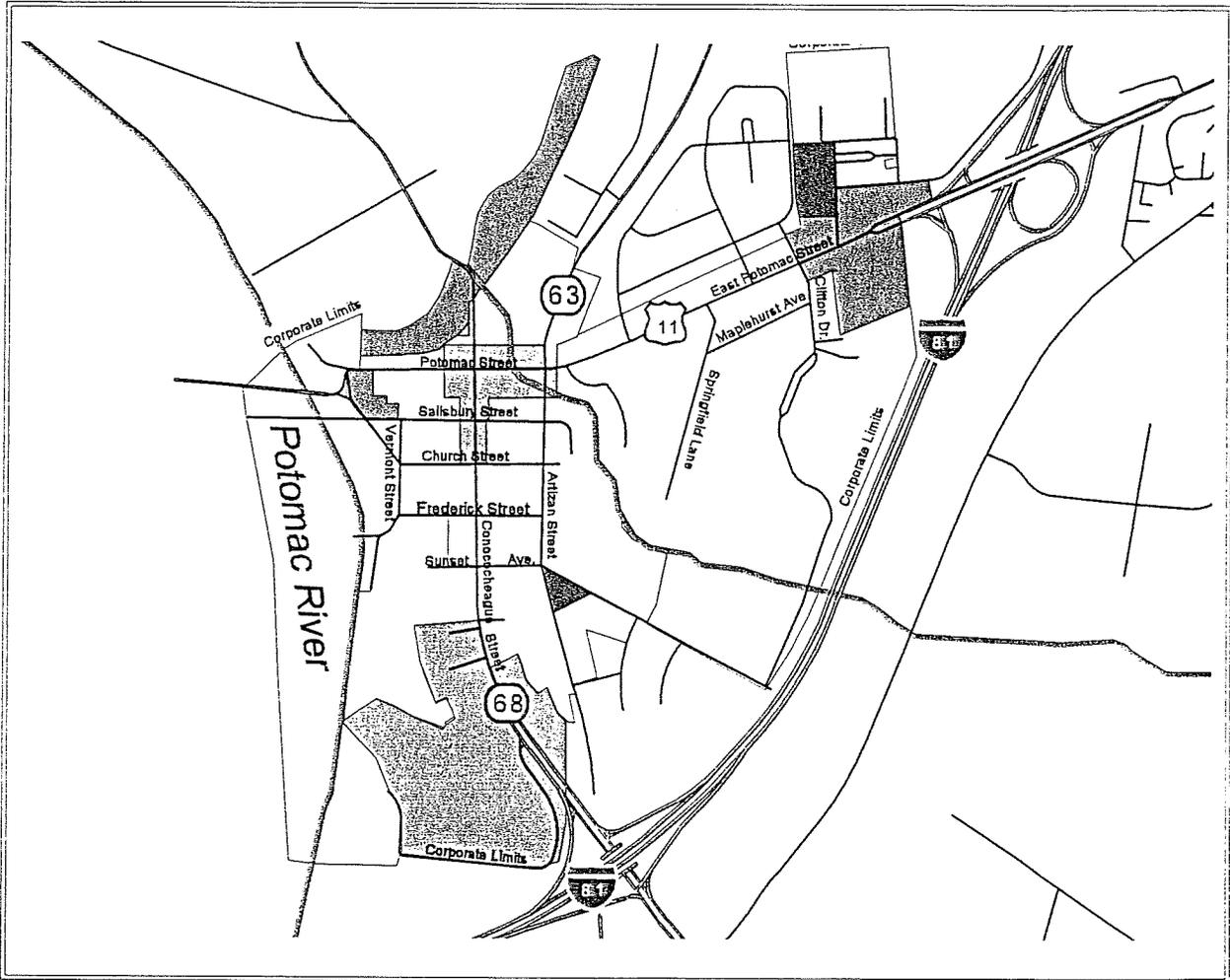
Water and Sewer Plan Recommendations

The Water and Sewer Plan recommends that all future land development proposals be first discussed in concept with the Williamsport Planning Commission. At the time of the initial meeting a tentative agreement will be made on the allocation of sewer capacity for the proposed development. The allocation is subtracted from the total allocation granted to the Town by the Sanitary District. The developer will then advise the Mayor and Council of the proposed development. If the development is located within the Town limits, an development plat is submitted to the Planning Commission for approval. Current Town policy requires annexation of any development located outside the Town limits that will connect to the Williamsport sewage collection or water distribution systems.

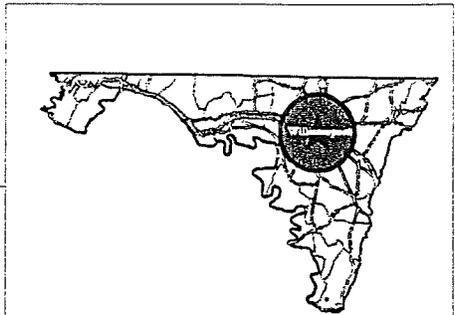
Zoning Patterns to Achieve the Land Use Plan

The land use plan is consistent with the present zoning with some exceptions. The plan recommends a transitional or mixed residential-commercial area between the town center and the Cushwa Basin, to strengthen the link between the commercial center and the tourist and visitor center of the C & O Canal. There are some obstacles to such a link: the distance is somewhat long, although it is certainly not an unreasonable walking distance. Also, the structures along Potomac Street in this stretch are primarily residential. Not all area easily adaptable to commercial use, and their historic character must be preserved. However, to achieve a higher level of visitation, this link is important. An overlay district should be established along Potomac Street between the TC zone on Conococheague Street and the GC zone next to the Canal complex. This overlay should permit as special exception uses such activities as antique stores, gift shops, and small restaurants within existing buildings, but not exterior alterations that harm the historic fabric of the area.

Zoning Districts



- | | | | |
|---|----------------------|---|-------------------------|
|  | Suburban Residential |  | General Commercial |
|  | Town Residential |  | Neighborhood Commercial |
|  | Town Center |  | Historic Recreation |
|  | Employment Center | | |







This map was prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning in conjunction with Tri-County Council for Western Maryland.

XVIII. ACTION PLAN

Introduction. An economic development program for Williamsport should have two primary goals:

- To increase the income of Williamsport's residents and
- To improve the Town's tax base
- To improve the quality of life for Williamsport residents
- To maintain the town and town services for future residents

Most employment for Williamsport residents is located outside the Town limits, largely in Washington County. Therefore, it is in the Town's interest to work with County economic development authorities to enhance the County's economy as much as possible and, in particular, to encourage the establishment of new economic activities within easy reach of Williamsport – in such areas as the Interstate Industrial Park and the Interstate 70/81 Industrial Park.

The residents of Williamsport will benefit both from the location of new and expanded economic activities within the Town that will enhance the property-tax base without overburdening Town services and improved employment activities for the residents themselves. Thus, the potential for economic growth in Williamsport lies in three general categories: (1) location of those activities that are compatible with its historic and residential character in Williamsport, (2) continuing development of business and industry in the "EC" area at the south end of Town, and (3) location of other economic activities within easy commuting distance of Williamsport.

Historic Attractions. The particular assets of the Town are its historic buildings and residential character, the presence of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and related sites, the scenic areas along the Potomac River and Conococheague Creek, Williamsport's proximity to major regional freeways, and its good accessibility to the Civil War and other historic sites, and the state parks in the nearby mountains. If the Town wishes growth in history-related employment within its borders the most desirable activities would be additional antique shops; restaurants serving travelers, Canal visitors, and the antique shoppers; additional bed-and-breakfast accommodations and inns; stores selling merchandise related to River activities and other outdoor pursuits; and gift shops featuring regional specialties.

Williamsport's historic resources are one of its primary assets in improving its citizens' economic situation. The Town realizes that historic preservation can be a major factor in continuing economic growth. Town leadership will work with the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal staff of the National Park service to achieve the best balance of preservation and enhancement of historic resources.

Williamsport is unique in its historic location at the confluence of highway, water, and rail transportation routes, its original town plan, and its well-preserved historic buildings.

The focus of economic development activities should be the area related to the Cushwa Basin and the other Canal attractions and the central commercial area: Conococheague, Potomac,

and Salisbury Streets. These areas should be tied together visually and functionally, to build a "critical mass" of tourist and commercial attractions. Tourists should be able to move easily back and forth between these areas, by foot if possible. The distance from the Basin to Town Hall is about a half-mile, which is walking distance for most people, although at the longer end of the acceptable range. However, if there are attractions along the way the distance should not be a problem.

Park Service Program. The National Park Service views Williamsport as one of the prime attractions along the upper reaches of the Canal. The Park Service has developed a program for the area around the Cushwa Basin which is intended to enhance the historic resources in that area. Actions listed in a 1980 plan report include those listed below. A new interpretive plan for the area is under way, and an interim visitor center has been established. More than three million people visit the C & O Canal annually, and the many points of interest in Williamsport could bring visitors who would patronize the Town's businesses. The 1980 Plan proposed the following:

- Stabilize the Conococheage Aqueduct, possibly to the point of rewatering the Aqueduct.
- Restore the trolley power station as a combination visitor center and management facility. This work is underway, with an interim visitor center in the Cushwa Warehouse.
- Restore the Cushwa Warehouse and find an appropriate use for it.
- Landscape the area around the basin.
- Outline the Basin in stone for interpretive purposes.
- Restore the Canal prism and towpath westward to Mile 100.9.
- Restore lock 44 and Lockhouse.
- Develop a self-guiding interpretive walk with wayside exhibits at the Aqueduct, the Basin, the trolley power station, Cushwa Warehouse, the railroad lift bridge, the Bollman Truss Bridge, and Lock 44 and Lockhouse.
- Rewater the canal from Lock 44 to Conococheage Aqueduct.
- If possible, rewater from level 43 through lock 44 to permit its operation.

To support and enhance the National Park Service attractions, the Town should make compatible improvements in the adjoining Riverbottom Park. These would not have to be expensive; in fact, substantial investment is not appropriate because of periodic flooding. Landscaping could make this park more attractive, and a developed recreation field here could add to Williamsport's recreational services. Another town project, that would support both the C & O Canal attractions and the Downtown area, would be to develop additional parking between Downtown and the Basin, within walking distance of both. This would encourage "one-stop" visits to the Canal and to Downtown merchants.

In addition, in order to improve the scenic beauty of the Basin, the Town should look into an investment in the small Town garage and fenced yard that is adjacent to the Basin. The current condition detracts from the visual beauty of the area. A solution could be to give the garage and yard a historic "face lift" to better blend with the historic atmosphere of the site.

Williamsport could also establish Town facilities or encourage private facilities in the Basin area that would promote canal and river activities. For the Canal, this could be activities and amenities for bicyclists; and for the river, this could be canoe or other boating activities and amenities.

It will be important to separate traffic to and from the power plant from the related to Downtown and the Canal, and to insure easy travel along the C & O Canal towpath from the north and south.

Improvements at Williamsport should be combined in an advertising and interpretive program with others along the Canal and River from Harper's Ferry to Cumberland, including the aqueducts at Antietam, Conococheague, Great Tonoloway, Fifteen Mile, Town, and Evitts Creeks, facilities at Four Locks (Locks 47 to 50), Fort Frederick, Hancock, the Paw Paw Tunnel, and others. They should also be combined in these programs with other historic attractions in Frederick, Washington, and Allegany Counties, such as Antietam Battlefield, downtown Hagerstown, and the historic towns of Sharpsburg, Boonsboro, Keedysville, Funkstown, Clear Spring, and Hancock. These attractions, taken together, should support accessible restaurants and overnight accommodations for visitors from the large metropolitan areas from Philadelphia to Richmond.

Downtown. The preservation element of the Williamsport Comprehensive Plan has two focuses: the old "Town Square" at the Cushwa Basin and the commercial core, centering on Conococheague between Potomac and Salisbury Streets. A study should identify the historic structures within an area bounded by the frontages of Potomac Street from the Canal to Artizan Street and Conococheague Street from the north frontage of Potomac Street to Church Street. This would be coterminous with the current "TC" zoning, plus Potomac Street to the Canal. The most valuable historic buildings should be identified and their preservation assured. A new overlay zoning district should be established on Potomac Street from Conococheague Street to the National Park Service property, as suggested above. Uses compatible with downtown functions, tourism, and visitor services should be encouraged in this area through these zoning regulations and available public programs providing grants and technical assistance for preservation and business development.

The Maryland Development of Housing and Community Development is currently organizing a new Neighborhood Business Development Program, providing grant and loan assistance for the improvement of business areas. This program's focus will be on smaller towns. Designated areas may be urban, suburban, or rural, and areas may vary from a few blocks to a whole town. Both direct funding and other program resources will be offered by DHCD. Activities eligible for funding will include planning, studies, and surveys; land acquisition and improvements; and start-up operating costs.

The Main Street Maryland Program, also under the direction of DHCD, works in conjunction with the Nation Main Street Center of the National Trust of Historic Preservation and may be able to assist Williamsport in reaching its goal of revitalizing the downtown area.

Williamsport should apply for a planning and design grant for its downtown core and, if possible, initial development funds. Some of this could be used for streetscape improvements, parking improvements, and landscaping, as well as design work on new facilities in the area.

The Williamsport Historic District was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on October 26, 2001. While the Town has rejected a historic district in the past because of its regulatory effect, a National Register listing does not impose regulations on private property owners. However, it can promote revitalization through the availability of a 20 percent investment tax credit for rehabilitation of historic buildings. This district would be approximately the same as the TC district outlined above.

Williamsport should also investigate the Main Street program, sponsored by the National Trust for Historic Preservation, and should join the Maryland Downtown Development Association.

Quality of Resident Life. Williamsport is seen as a residential community and so the quality of life of its residents of all ages should be preserved. Some of the areas in which this can be done are:

- Work on street and park lighting to maintain beauty and to improve safety
- Build an amphitheater to stage outdoor concerts and other entertainment
- Make improvements to the Town swimming pool and bath house
- Replace / upgrade playground equipment in Byron Memorial Park to make it more modern, safer, and accessible to children with handicaps
- Improve / enlarge the gazebo to allow for a variety of uses by the public
- Move electric lines in all park and historic areas underground to keep with the scenic nature of the areas
- Build a fourth pavilion to increase service to residents
- Purchase land to expand park and recreation services
- Establish / build other youth recreation facilities to encourage a more creative use of free time

Maintain Town Services. Williamsport is an older town in need of many improvements, now and in the future, that will allow it to keep pace with the changing times in its service to its residents. Some areas that should be addressed are:

- Completion of the road off Church Street to alleviate a dangerous traffic congestion problem at the Park entrance.
- Build an electric substation to enhance our electric service to residents
- Upgrade / modernize our sewer pumping and ejector stations to prevent future problems
- Upgrade / replace old water and sewer lines
- Relocate main Town garage to allow for growth, modernization, and vehicle storage
- Install an elevator in Town Hall to allow the upper floors to be handicapped accessible

- Improve streets, alleys, and sidewalks to keep them at a continuously high level of quality

Other Economic Development. Other economic development should include both employment opportunities for Williamsport residents and tax-paying establishments in Town. Economic activity outside of Williamsport will be the responsibility of County economic development officials, but Town officials should support and cooperate with this effort.

A major effort for the County must be to retain and continue to attract manufacturing, transport-related, and other traditional industries. A shift-share analysis has been carried out for Washington County, to identify industries that are growing faster here than in the nation as a whole. These are presumed to be industries for which conditions in Washington County are relatively good. The industries identified in this analysis are general contracting; wholesale trade, particularly in lumber and other construction materials, metals and minerals, and groceries; manufacturing, particularly rubber products, stone, glass, and clay; retail trade, particularly food stores and eating and drinking places; finance, insurance, and real estate; and repair services.

These are all in addition to tourist services. Location quotients and growth rates are low for this industry, but it represents an untapped source of employment and income. Washington County is close to major metropolitan areas and low in cost of living. If the national economy continues to grow slowly, as seems likely at this time, people will be seeking low-cost vacations and away-from-home recreations. Western Washington County is prime territory for these visitors, with its low costs and recreational amenities.

Summary of the Action Program

To achieve the goals of economic development and community improvement, Williamsport should focus on a number of opportunities and actions. The Town should:

- Provide streetscape improvements in the central area, starting with Conococheague Street from Salisbury Street to Potomac Street, then Potomac Street from Artizan Street to the C & O Canal property, then extending north along Conococheague Street to Conococheague Creek and south to Church Street
- Encourage compatible commercial activities, such as antique shops, gift shops, small restaurants, and bed-and-breakfast inns along Potomac Street between the central business area and the C & O Canal while preserving the historic structures and character of this section.
- Continue to promote employment activities in the area next to the Route 68 / Interstate 81 interchange.
- Work with Washington County to bring housing assistance programs to Williamsport, primarily to help residents to improve their homes.

- Work with Washington County, the State, and the National Park Service to promote Williamsport and other historic towns, the C & O Canal, Antietam Battlefield, Fort Frederick, and other attractions as a network of historic attractions.
- Preserve land along Conococheague Creek and the railroad right of way as open space and a trail.
- Continue improvements to the Town Museum, and the potential Civil War Museum.

CONCLUSION

Williamsport is a friendly town and an old one, with very few serious problems. However, population and economic trends and the Town's advancing age indicate that Williamsport cannot "rest on its laurels" and must continue its efforts to improve its economic and physical assets. This plan suggests a number of actions that can contribute to these improvements.

Town of Williamsport, Maryland

Hurd Building, Williamsport, Md., 1908.



2004

Comprehensive Plan

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PREFACE

Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland mandates that municipalities adopt a comprehensive plan in order to properly and effectively address the provisions of the Maryland Planning Act of 1992.

The town adopted its initial comprehensive plan on February 7, 1972. It adopted and implemented the Comprehensive Plan of Washington County, Maryland as it was applicable within the corporate limits of the town. This was accepted by Washington County on February 8, 1972. This plan is recorded among the Acts, Ordinances and Resolutions of Incorporated Towns in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court at Liber 1, folio 93.

On April 27, 1975 the plan in effect was updated and again certified to the Circuit Court for Washington County, Maryland. The resolution again reiterated that the town was adopting and had adopted a portion of the Washington County Comprehensive Master Plan that was applicable within the corporate limits of the municipality. The town at that time without relinquishing or abrogating any of its municipal powers authorized and directed the County Commissioners and its various agencies (to wit Planning, etc.) to conduct studies and to implement the Comprehensive Plan in so far as it was applicable within the corporate limits of the town. This was recorded on April 30, 1975 among the Acts, Ordinances and Resolutions at Liber 1, folio 339, et seq.

Subsequent thereto on June 14, 2004 in accordance with the applicable provisions of Maryland law and good planning procedures, the Comprehensive Plan was updated and became effective on June 14, 2004. This is recorded at Liber 10, folio 0383 among the Acts, Ordinances and Resolutions in the Office of the Clerk of the Circuit Court and is on file with the Maryland Department of Planning.

IT MUST BE NOTED THAT ALTHOUGH THIS COPY IS CONTAINED WITHIN THE PAGES OF THE CODE OF THE TOWN OF WILLIAMSPORT, THAT THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IS NOT AN ORDINANCE AND IS NOT CONSIDERED AS LAW,

Pursuant to the laws of the State of Maryland, it is considered a guide to assist and utilize in the orderly growth of a community in conjunction with other ordinances that are legislative acts.

KUCZYNSKI & KUCZYNSKI, P. A.

Attorneys at Law

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Edward L. Kuczynski

of Counsel

Robert E. Kuczynski

June 21, 2004

Ms. Bonnie Errico, Clerk
Town of Williamsport
P. O. Box 307
Williamsport, Maryland 21795

Re: Comprehensive Plan
Our File: W-349

Dear Bonnie:

The original of the above-captioned Resolution Adopting your new Comprehensive Plan was recorded this date among the Acts, Ordinances and Resolutions for Incorporated Towns in Washington County.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact this office.
Thank you.

Very truly yours,

KUCZYNSKI & KUCZYNSKI, P.A.

By: *Ed (rgr)*
Edward L. Kuczynski

ELK/rgr

Encl. (As Noted Within)

Corr.Clerk.Recording of Comprehensive Plan.06.21.04

Acts, Ordinances,
Resolutions-Towns
Clerk of the Circuit Court
Washington County

ADOPTION RESOLUTION

THE TOWN OF WILLIAMSPORT, MARYLAND 21795

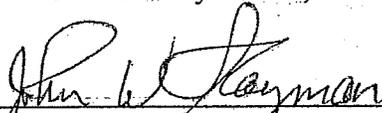
WHEREAS, Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland empowers local municipalities to provide for the orderly growth and development of their respective jurisdictions; and

WHEREAS, the Williamsport Mayor and Council have recently completed an update and revision of their Comprehensive Plan;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and Town Council of Williamsport that the document known as the "Comprehensive Plan for Williamsport, Maryland" is hereby adopted and placed into effect this 14th day of June, 2004.



Bonnie Errico, Town Clerk



John W. Slayman, Mayor

Introduced: June 14, 2004
Passed: June 14, 2004
Effective: June 14 2004

Record and Return to: Ms. Bonnie Errico, Town Clerk
Town of Williamsport
P. O. Box 307
Williamsport, MD 21795

DJM WAG
Jun 21 2004 02:13 PM

MAILED JUN 23 2004

This report was prepared by the Town Clerk, Planning Commission, Mayor, and Council of Williamsport under the supervision of Maryland Department of Planning. The historic postcard depicted on the cover was donated courtesy of the Albert and Angela Feldstein Collection.

Mayor and Council of Williamsport

John Slayman, Mayor
Walter Tracy, Assistant Mayor

Gloria J. Bitner
Monty R. Jones
Earle R. Pereschuk
James G. McCleaf, II
Roxanne L. Long

Williamsport Town Planning Commission

George Stumbaugh, Chairman

Charles South
Richard Kittle
Ben Dell

Town Clerk

Bonnie J. Errico

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PART I. BACKGROUND STUDIES

I. BACKGROUND

Williamsport lies in the central portion of Washington County in central western Maryland. Washington County is bounded on the east by Frederick County and the west by Allegany County. The state of Pennsylvania lies to the north, West Virginia to the south.

Washington County's land area is approximately 467 square miles, or 298,851 acres, the eighth largest county in Maryland. As of 1997, 89.9 percent of the County was zoned either "conservation" or "agricultural."

Williamsport is an incorporated town on the Potomac River at its confluence with Conococheague Creek, near Hagerstown, in Washington County, Maryland. The Town is adjacent to Interstate Route 81 near Interstate 70, giving it a high degree of accessibility by highway. The town's population was 1,868, which is a decrease from the 2,103 in 1990, but all in all the population has been fairly stable for a number of years. Williamsport is a community of mixed use, with a number of historic buildings. The terrain is relatively level, with the highest elevations just east of Conococheague Street; the land slopes downward from this point to Conococheague Creek and the Potomac.

The *Historic Preservation Survey and Planning Project* for Williamsport, prepared by Dr. Paula Reed, of Preservation Associates, in 1994 notes that:

"Although a settlement was present at the site of Williamsport as early as the mid 18th Century, the town was not formally created until 1787. It was located at a ferry crossing of the Potomac River on a major north-south highway running along the center of the Great Valley of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. When Otho Holland Williams established the town, it was because of its trade potential due to the river."

In 1790, the Town was proposed as a site for the national capital, but was not selected. In the nineteenth century and into the twentieth century its existence was based on the river and the canal, which was completed to Williamsport in 1834, and later the railroad. The population grew from 827 in 1820 to 1,283 in 1870. By 1970 it had reached 2,270, and it has declined slightly since.

This plan is a revision of a Comprehensive Development Plan prepared for Williamsport in 1995, but was never adopted. It is concerned with changes that have occurred since that time. It is based on the authority given by Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland. The Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992 and its amendments require certain things to be a part of any comprehensive plan. Specifically:

THE NEW PLANNING ACT

The need for more up-to-date information and the desirability of reevaluating the ideas in a previous Comprehensive Plan are not the only reasons why Williamsport is embarking in this effort to update the Comprehensive Plan. Williamsport is now required to review and if necessary update its Comprehensive Plan to comply with the provisions of the Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act of 1992.

New and updated information was obtained and examined in order to address the following seven visions in the Maryland Planning Act of 1992.

- **Concentrate development in suitable areas.**

Providing development opportunities near existing and planned population centers where existing and /or planned water and sewer service exist is important.

- **Protect sensitive areas.**

Providing open space to protect streams and stream buffers, steep slopes, 100-year floodplains and habitats of endangered and threatened species is important.

- **In rural areas, direct growth to existing population centers and protect resource areas.**

Providing development opportunities within and around Washington County's towns and other concentrations of development such as Williamsport, protecting unique natural resources and retaining rural areas are important.

- **Demonstrate stewardship of the Bay and the land.**

Identifying and protecting environmentally sensitive areas that residential or nonresidential development could damage while educating government officials and local residents to the issues and concerns of the Chesapeake Bay are important.

- **Conserve and reduce the consumption of natural resources.**

Protecting key parcels of land can help protect larger sections of resource areas.

- **Encourage economic growth and streamline land use regulatory measures to encourage the achievement of the preceding five visions.**

Providing economic development opportunities to existing businesses, seeking new businesses and enhancing other activities such as tourism are important as well as amending existing land use regulations and providing new provisions that will assist Williamsport to achieve this vision in the State Planning Act.

- Adequate public facilities and infrastructure under the control of the County or Municipal corporation are available or planned in areas where growth is to occur.

Insuring that public water and sewer facilities are either in place or proposed in conjunction with new development in compliance with the 1997 Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Initiatives.

- Address funding mechanisms to achieve the previous policies.

Appropriating funds, continuing public and private cooperative ventures, seeking creative financing techniques and promoting volunteerism and cooperation are important.

1997 Smart Growth and Neighborhood Conservation Initiatives

The 1997 General Assembly adopted several specific programs, which together form the Smart Growth initiatives. Collectively, these initiatives aim to direct State resources to revitalize older developed areas, preserve some of Maryland's valuable resource and open space lands, and discourage the continuation of sprawling development into our rural areas.

The Smart Growth legislation allows the State to direct its programs and funding to support locally designated growth areas and protect rural areas. This landmark legislation's passage is a significant accomplishment, which will play a major role in Maryland's efforts to better manage land use and growth.

The centerpiece of this new legislative package is the "Priority Funding Areas" legislation, which limits most State infrastructure funding and economic development, housing and other program monies to Smart Growth Areas, which local governments designate for growth. The other bills in the 1997 legislative package also support locally identified development areas. They facilitate the reuse of brownfields and provide tax credits to businesses creating jobs in a Priority Funding Area. A new Live Near Your Work pilot program supports this effort by providing cash contributions to workers buying homes in certain older neighborhoods. And, to spur more preservation of undeveloped land, the new Rural Legacy Program provides financial resources for the protection of farm and forestlands and the conservation of these essential rural resources from development. The Priority Funding Areas legislation builds on the foundation created by Visions adopted as State policy in the 1992 Growth Act. Beginning October 1, 1998 Smart Growth establishes a policy for the use of State funds, which support communities, and influences the location of development. State funding for projects in Maryland municipalities, other existing communities, industrial areas, and planned growth areas designated by counties will receive priority funding over other projects. Priority Funding Areas are locations where the State and local governments want to target their efforts to encourage and support economic development and new growth.

Rural Legacy Program

The Rural Legacy Program will redirect existing State funds into a focused and dedicated land preservation program specifically designed to limit the adverse impacts of sprawl on our agricultural lands and natural resources. The Program will reallocate State funds to purchase conservation easements for large contiguous tracts of agricultural, forest and natural areas subject to development pressure, and fee interests in open space where public access and use is needed. Local governments and private land trusts will be encouraged to identify Rural Legacy Areas and to competitively apply for funds to complement existing land conservation efforts or create new ones.

Brownfields Legislation

Maryland's new Brownfields law limits liability for those redeveloping unused or abandoned properties that are contaminated, or even perceived to be contaminated, unless they exacerbate contamination or create new pollution. The law creates a voluntary clean-up program through which an eligible developer supplies the State information about environmental conditions, including contamination of the site and proposed clean-up procedures. If approved, the applicant prepares a detailed Response Action Plan that explains all tasks necessary to clean up the site and demonstrates that the project meets applicable public health and environmental protection criteria. This process also provides an opportunity for public participation.

Live Near Your Work Program

The Live Near Your Work Program encourages employees of Maryland's businesses and institutions to buy homes near their workplace. This initiative will help stabilize the neighborhoods surrounding the State's major employers by stimulating home ownership in targeted communities. In addition to providing resources for programs sponsored by public and private institutions, the State is participating as a major employer.

Job Creation Tax Credit Program

The Job Creation Tax Credit Program encourages mid-sized and smaller businesses to invest in Smart Growth areas around the State. Small businesses comprise almost 80 percent of Maryland businesses, and small businesses in particular generate the majority of new job growth in the State. This proposal will encourage small business development and job growth in areas accessible to available labor pools, and will encourage more efficient use of the State's existing infrastructure.

II. History

The Historic Preservation Survey and Planning Project for Williamsport, by Dr. Paula Reed, of Preservation Associates, contains an excellent history of the Town. This section repeats the highlights of that narrative.

Williamsport began as a mid- 18th Century trading settlement on the Potomac River at its confluence with Conococheague Creek. This was the location of a major highway crossing

of the river, serving the Great Valley of Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. The Town grew and prospered as a center of trade, taking advantage of the north-south highway, the trade route along the Potomac River and the C & O Canal, and later the railroad.

Early on, most landowners in Washington County were from Tidewater Maryland and traders attempted to make Williamsport a center of the tobacco trade. But the climate was not ideal for tobacco and the bulk of successful farmers in the 19th Century raised grain.

In 1790 there was an attempt to establish the national capital at Williamsport.

Williamsport's development through the 19th Century centered on trade, first on the Potomac River, then on the C & O Canal, which reached Williamsport in 1834 and continued in operation until 1924. Major industries were a tannery, lumber and coal dealers, and brickyards. The W.D. Byron Tannery, established in 1897, and the Cushwa Brick Company, started in 1896, continue in operation to this day just north of the Town limits. Another major activity was the shipment of coal from the mines in western Maryland to Georgetown. Shipment was along the canal until the establishment of the railroads; for a time coal was transhipped to the Western Maryland and Cumberland Valley Railroads.

During the 19th Century, Williamsport had at least two hotels, the Potomac Hotel, at Potomac and Conococheague Streets, and the Globe Inn, on northern Conococheague Street. The Potomac Hotel was later known as the Taylor Hotel, and was visited by General Robert E. Lee in his retreat from Gettysburg. By 1877, another hotel, the Potomac House had been established on Potomac Street near Artizan Street. Williamsport also housed a number of taverns; by the early 19th Century there were eleven tavern keepers in the town. By the latter part of the century, the town's businesses included a dealer in building materials, several dealers in rice, oats, hay, corn, other grains and groceries, coal dealers, and several hotels, grocery stores, lumber dealers, mills, and small manufacturers. By the early 20th Century, the Western Maryland Railroad had established a railroad yard and an electric light plant had been built. Construction on the Potomac Edison power plant was started in 1922.

Parks in Williamsport were first established in the 20th Century. Conomac Park was founded east of Conococheague Creek and north of the Western Maryland railroad depot in 1924 and the Community park was established on the east side of town in 1927.

Dr Reed's historic report notes that:

“Architecturally, Williamsport contains significant examples illustrating its early development as a settlement along a major pioneer route to the Appalachian South and as a river town. Later, as the C & O Canal and railroads led to a boom period, there was additional growth resulting in prominent late 19th Century Italianate and Queen Anne style buildings for residential and commercial purposes and renovation of some older structures.”

Within Williamsport's history district, about 20 percent of the buildings date from the late 18th and early 19th Centuries; about 60 percent were built in the latter part of the 19th and early 20 Centuries. Buildings are almost equally long, brick, and frame construction. Only 11 buildings are constructed of stone, and four of these are from the 20th Century, somewhat surprisingly, in light of the many 19th Century stone structures in Washington County.

III. Natural Features

General Geography

Washington County includes part of the western slopes of the Blue Ridge, the broad Hagerstown Valley, which is part of the Great Limestone Valley system of the United States, and part of the Appalachian Mountain system. It is characterized by rolling, productive agricultural lands that are flanked on the east and west by forested mountains. The County is well suited for agricultural development since more than 60 percent of the acreage is suitable for regular cultivation. Another 15 percent is more limited but still suitable for some cultivation, 12.5 percent is not well suited for crops but good for pasture. The remaining 13 percent of the County is mostly rough, very rocky or stony, and in some places severely eroded.

The Hagerstown Valley forms the eastern and central parts of the County, between the Blue Ridge and the Appalachian ridges and valleys. The highest point in the County is the crest of Quirauk Mountain of the Blue Ridge at an elevation of 2,145 feet above sea level. The Valley covers more than half the County, ranging in elevation from 300 feet near the Potomac River to 600 feet at the boundary with Pennsylvania.

Approximately 30 percent of the County's land area has slopes in excess of 15 percent while the Hagerstown Valley portion (which comprises more than half of the land area of the County) is essentially level or with very gentle slopes. Along the streams and rivers are large areas of alluvial terraces and flood plains. The latter are nearly level and lying just above the normal stages of the streams. However, the alluvial terraces are considerably above the streams and rivers. Washington County is entirely within the draining system of the Potomac River Basin, traversed by several streams which generally flow southward.

Geological Characteristics

The County's geology is complex. All of the surface rock strata and most of the subsurface rocks in Washington County are of sedimentary origin and consist of limestone, shale, and sandstone. The Hagerstown Valley is underlain predominantly by relatively soluble limestone and shows evidence of sinkholes and caverns as well as underground channels through which water may flow. Groundwater is abundant within the limestone, and as a result of the geologic structure, there is a potential for ground water degradation from septic tanks and other disposal systems that does not exist to the same degree in most other parts of Maryland."

The 1974 Plan describes Williamsport's geology as follows:

"The bedrock beneath the Town and its immediate vicinity consists of limestone and shale formed during the Ordovician Period, about 425 – 500 million years ago. A major fault line extends diagonally in a northeast-southwest direction through the extreme western portion of Williamsport (directly west of the intersection of Potomac and Conococheague Streets, and Frederick and Vermont Streets) separating the shale and limestone. Visually, this fault forms the ridge that extends along the eastern side of the Conococheague Creek and the Potomac River.

"Two different, but similar, limestone formations occur in the territory east of this faultline. The older Stonehenge Limestone Formation adjoins this fault and occupies a band about one-third mile wide. This formation is estimated to be 500 to 800 feet thick. It contains massively bedded clayey limestone at its base and this conglomeratic beds in its upper portion.

"Immediately east of the Stonehenge Limestone lies a younger and harder limestone formation, the Rockdale Run Formation. This extensive formation occupies all the remaining portion of Williamsport, east of the faultline. Where the soil above the Rockdale Run Formation is shallow, grading or excavation for foundations or utility lines is comparatively more expensive as it encounters this hard dolomitic limestone.

"The State's geologic map shows that the area west of this faultline contains Martinsburg Shale. This formation is found throughout Washington County, along the meandering sections of the Conococheague. In Williamsport, it underlies the area southeast of the confluence of the Conococheague Creek and the Potomac River. To the degree that its upper portion contains more shale than limestone or sandstone, it should be comparatively easier to grade or excavate than the limestone formations to the east.

"A final geologic feature influencing the Williamsport area is not really a formation, but has been caused by countless river terrace deposits in the area along the Potomac River flood plain. This deposit known as "Potomac River Alluvium," consists chiefly of brown, poorly-sorted, fine to medium sand and silt, with some gravel. This alluvium covers only the portion of Williamsport adjacent to the Potomac River and Conococheague Creek. Its depth to bedrock, near the Town, is reported to be from 21 to 27 feet.

"Although this alluvial material is easily excavated for development, flooding causes a severe hazard. Although these areas should not be developed, they can still provide for the enjoyment of open space and serve for certain types of recreation uses.

Soil Characteristics

A knowledge of soils and their properties provides a solid foundation for understanding human settlement and other types of land uses. For example, the suitability of soils for on-lot subsurface sewer disposal systems is not always given sufficient importance in reviewing proposals for development: many occupants of the land feel that septic system usage is a matter of right rather than a privilege. Many feel that as long as no surface malfunctioning is apparent, their household septic system is operating properly, and little concern is directed toward the issue of groundwater contamination and its effects on neighbors.

Potential erosion problems which might threaten the stability of structures if not properly designed are another concern related to soil characteristics. Soils of Washington County have been considered in four broad groups according to their position. They are (1) soils of the uplands; (2) soils of old colluvial deposits; (3) soils of the old stream terraces, and (4) soils of the flood plains.

Within each of these groups, soils vary according to parent materials.

Soils of the uplands, developed in place from materials weathered from the underlying rocks, cover about 71 percent of the County's land. Soils of old colluvial deposits, transported by gravity, represent about 16 percent, while soils old stream terraces, previously floodplains created when the streambeds were at a higher current level, make up about 5 percent. The balance of 8 percent is covered by soils of the flood plains of more recent occurrence.

These soils shape the County's landscape. The differences among them are fairly easy to notice. The more obvious differences are in the shape, steepness, length of slopes; the width, volume, and speed of streams; and the size and shape of the valleys.

In the County there are fourteen general soil patterns referred as soil associations. These associations have been grouped by the Soil Conservation Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture into four divisions according to drainage and depth of soils.

The divisions are (1) well-drained, stony, and very stony soils; (2) well to excessively drained, shallow, medium-textured soils; (3) moderately well to well-drained, deep, medium-textured soils; and (4) well drained, deep, medium-textured soils.

The first division occupies about 10 percent of the County's land area, the second covers about 25 percent, the third makes up about 2 percent, while the fourth makes about 63 percent of the entire County.

According to the Town's 1974 plan, the chief soil conditions of concern in Williamsport are (1) wetness and flooding, and (3) shallowness. The principal limiting condition occurs in the Linside silt loam in the floodplains of the Potomac and Conococheague Creek, an area that should be reserved from development in any case because of periodic flooding. These conditions occur in an 800-foot band along the Potomac and a narrower 300-foot strip on the eastern side of the Conococheague. Another area of potential flooding is the area of Dunning

and Melvin silty clay loams along a small creek flowing from the southern portion of the high school site through the Park.

Most of the area west of Artizan Street, and virtually all of central Williamsport is underlain by extremely rocky silty clay loam soils that are very shallow over bedrock. The 1974 plan notes that "typically, as much as 40 percent of the surface area in this soil type consists of outcropping ledges and reefs of hard limestone bedrock. This soil presents severe obstacles to development because it is subject to erosion and because construction of foundations and basements into the bedrock may be expensive and difficult. Most of this area is already developed, and these limitations apply largely to a few infill sites.

Surface Water Characteristics

As previously mentioned, Washington County lies totally within the Potomac River Basin and is drained by the Conococheague Creek in the western portion of the Great Valley and by the Antietam Creek in the eastern section. The majority of the County lies within the Upper Potomac River Sub-Basin. The remainder, a small section in the southwestern portion of the County, lies within the limits of the Middle Potomac River Sub-Basin.

The pattern and intensity of water surface is dictated by the County's location in the Valley and Ridge physiographic province characterized by long, ridge-like, parallel mountains and intervening valleys. In the western part, the streams have rather flashy runoff as a result of steeply sloping terrain and rough topography.

In Williamsport, surface drainage runs to the Potomac and Conococheague. There are few steeply sloped areas except along the floodplains of the major watercourses.

Water Quality

According to the County's amendments to the Water and Sewer Plan adopted on May 17, 1994 by the Board of County Commissioners, the quality of the Washington County's surface water as a source of supply would necessitate considerable treatment prior to consumption. Even a generalized analysis of the sampling data indicates a high coliform count. In addition, most of the water courses were quite alkaline because of the limestone formation. The predominant causes of degradation of water quality of the watercourses in the County are agricultural and urban runoff and industrial and sewage treatment discharges.

A report to the EPA conducted in 1988 stated that "water quality in the Upper Potomac River Sub-Basin is good and suited to water contact recreation and aquatic life and, where classified, trout production. Elevated suspended sediment, nutrient and bacterial and nutrient levels are observed in the Sub-Basin. Overall, water quality has degraded slightly in the Upper Potomac Sub-Basin between 1976 and 1985."

Water Quality in Conococheague Creek. Conococheague Creek runs along the western boundary of Williamsport. Its drainage area extends well up into Pennsylvania, and includes 65.8 square miles of land. The mainstream length is 22 miles.

Conococheague Creek exhibited poor water quality from 1966 to 1969. Extremely high bacteriological values were recorded just downstream from the Pennsylvania border, and bacterial water quality of the remainder of the stream's length did not meet acceptable water quality standards. By 1974 water quality in the Creek had improved. Fecal coliform values still violated the numerical standard but had decreased. Dissolved oxygen values were generally high at no time went below the standard. The stream water was alkaline and contained large amounts of dissolved solids. Nitrate concentrate was high and phosphate was unusually high.

Within Maryland, the Creek is polluted by farm wastes and individual septic-system seepage. A wastewater treatment plant serving the Garden State tannery discharges into the Creek just above its mouth. In 1992 the Washington County Sanitary District began using a 2.5 million gallons per day (MGD) wastewater treatment plant that serves a large portion of the Conococheague drainage basin within the Hagerstown Urban Growth Area, discharging directly into Conococheague Creek at a point near Kemps Mill. Water quality in the Creek is now generally good.

Climate

Washington County has a climate typical of the middle Atlantic states: moderate, with average temperatures of 53 ° F in the spring, 73° in summer, 55° in the fall, and 32.1° in the winter. Average annual rainfall is 37.96 inches, snowfall 29.7 inches and a total of 164 frost free days.

IV. POPULATION AND ECONOMY

Population

The 2000 Census indicates that Washington County was the home of 131,923 persons, who enjoy a scenic setting, diverse environment, and opportunities for a variety of lifestyles. Those who live in the countryside retain easy access to employment and services provided in the urban areas. Those living in more dense urban settlements can also delight in the quiet atmosphere, charm, and special character of the small towns.

Between 1950 and 1970 , the County's population increased by 31.6 percent, from 78,886 to 103,829. By 2000 the population was 131,923, of which 51.1 percent was male and 48.9 percent female. The 2000 Census showed that 89.7 of the County's population was white; 7.8 percent African American; the balance was other racial groups.

In the past 30 years there have been some significant changes in the composition of the population. The school-aged population (ages 5 to 19) *decreased* from 29,275 to 25,826 from 1970 to 2000, while the number of residents aged over 65 *increased* from 10,202 to 18,690. These changes paralleled population changes in the United States as a whole, as the

“baby boom” generation moved into adulthood and middle age, and as science and better medical care increased everyone’s changes of living longer.

These trends have some implications for the County’s economy and its public services. Although financing for schools should not have to increase, that of services for older people – especially medical services – will increase substantially

Without exception, all election districts within the County are projected for a population increase by 2020. The City of Hagerstown makes up 27.8 percent of the County’s total population.

The total number of households increased by 9,769 between 1980 and 2000, and it is projected that this number will continue to increase. However, the average size of the household reduces from 3.07 in 1970 to 2.46 in 2000. Of the 49,726 occupied housing units in 2000, 65.6 percent is owner-occupied. This percentage is not as high in Williamsport, with only 49.2 of the occupied housing units being owner occupied.

The proportion of the total population over 16 years old in the labor force was 57.5 in 1970 and 61.1 percent in 2000.

Williamsport’s population increased gradually, from 1,755 in 1930 to 2,270 in 1970, and then remained relatively stable at 2,103 in 1990. By 2000, however, the population had decreased to 1,868.

**Detail 1
Population Trends 1910-2000
Williamsport & Washington County**

<u>Year</u>	<u>Total Williamsport Population</u>	<u>PERCENT CHANGE</u>	
		<u>Williamsport</u>	<u>Washington County</u>
1910	1,571	-----	10.0%
1920	1,615	2.8%	20.3
1930	1,775	9.9	10.3
1940	1,772	-.01	4.5
1950	1,890	6.7	14.6
1960	1,853	1.9	15.6
1970	2,270	22.0	13.8
1980	2,153	- 5.2	8.9
1990	2,103	- 2.3	7.3
2000	1,868	- 11	8.7

While the town is now quite well developed and until recently has had very little residential development over the last 30 years. New residents create a need for additional home and services such as schools, roads, water and sewer lines, parks and other facilities. Although Williamsport's population decreased by .11% between 1990 and 2000 the County's population growth for Williamsport as well as the rest of Washington County is expected to continue to increase for many reasons. Interstate 70 and 81 will continue to spur new growth as will the new economic development opportunities from the heritage tourism industry and from the development of new industrial areas within Washington County.

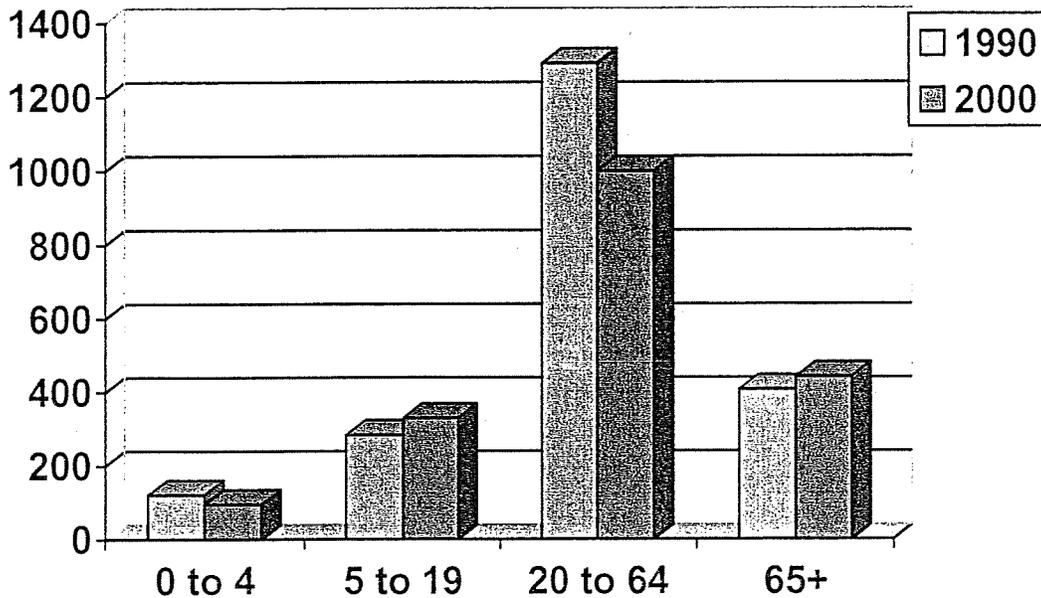
Detail 2
Population by Age Group, 1970 – 2000
Williamsport, Maryland

Age Group	Percent of Total Population		
	1970	1990	2000
Under 5	7.3	5.8	5.1
5 to 19	22.7	13.5	17.7
20 to 64	56.1	61.4	53.5
Over 65	13.8	19.4	23.7

The population by age groups has undergone some significant changes in the past 30 years. The largest differences are in the school-aged group and in the older population. A major part of the well-known "baby boom" population was still in school in 1970, but has moved into the working age population by 1990 and is moving into the older population by 2000.

By 2000 the Williamsport population was 44.6 percent was male and 55.4 percent female. The population was 98.3 percent white; .8 percent African American; the balance was other racial groups.

Detail 3
Age Composition 1990 & 2000
Williamsport, Maryland



1990	121	284	1,291	407	2,103
2000	96	330	1,000	442	1,868

SOURCE: U.S. Census

Characteristics of the County's Economy. A comparison of Washington County's employment breakdowns with that of the State of Maryland indicates the special characteristics of Washington County's economy. Detail 4 below shows the proportion of Washington County's personal earnings that originate with each sector. The detail also gives an indication of the value to the County of each type of employment by indicating the average earnings per worker.

A survey of industries listed in the County's Business and Industry Directory, 2003, with Williamsport addresses gives indications of the nature of employment in the Town's vicinity. Many of the activities identified this way are in the Interstate Industrial Park and the Interstate 70/81 Industrial Park, both located near or adjacent to the Town limits.

Williamsport has several small industries in the area at its southern edge, one major manufacturing establishment, Garden State Tanning, with 1,007 employees, and a large industrial area, the Industrial Park, immediately adjacent to the Town on the south side with a number of industrial firms. In addition, the 70/81 Industrial Park is about a mile north of Town and several other established industrial and business parks are within two miles.

Detail 4
Industry Group as a Percentage of Labor Force
Washington County and Maryland, 2000

Industry Group	Washington Co	Maryland
Agriculture, forestry, fishing, and mining	1.6	.6
Construction	9.1	6.9
Manufacturing	14.7	7.3
Wholesale Trade	3.2	2.8
Retail Trade	13.4	10.5
Transportation, warehousing, and utilities	5.6	4.9
Information	2.8	4.0
Finance, insurance, and real estate	7.0	7.1
Professional, educational, and health services	29.2	38.6
Arts, entertainment, recreation, and food services	6.0	6.8
Public administration	7.5	10.5

Manufacturing industries listed in the County Business and Industry Directory for Williamsport are the following. This list shows a broadly diversified group of manufacturing industries.

Establishment	Product	Employees
Garden State Tanning	Automotive leather	1007
Dover Inlay Mfg. Co. Inc.	Marquetry, inlays, veneer products	17
Maryland Paper Company	Dry paper felt	75
Packaging Services of MD	Corrugated shipping containers	140
Engineered Polymer Solutions	Resin products for paint	20
Rust-Oleum Corporation	Rust preventive coatings	170
Sun Chemical Corporation	Printing ink	5
Xerxes Corporation	Fiberglass storage tanks	70
Caldwell Manufacturing Co	Window hardware	70
CertainTeed Corporation	Vinyl siding and windows	381
Eaton Corp / Aeroquip Group	Plastic extrusions	50
Redland Brick, Inc.	Paving bricks, specialty bricks	140
Maccaferri Gabions, Inc.	Gabions	63
Atlantic Coast Refurb Center	Remanufacturing market equipment	50
S.A.M.P. / USA Inc	Wire drawing, spooling machines	26
South Atlantic Controls, Inc	Industrial electric controls	10
Transwheel Corporation	Aluminum wheels	35
Sealy Mattress Company	Mattresses and box springs	190
My Home Towne, Inc	Replica miniature wooden buildings	6
Martin Marietta Aggregates		

These measures indicate that the strongest manufacturing sectors are, in descending order:

Leather. The large employment in this sector is, of course, wholly because of Garden State Tanning, which at this point is not operating at its full capacity and is in the process of closing one section of its operation.

Chemicals. Most of the employment in chemicals is at Rust-Oleum, a manufacturer of moisture-resistant coatings, located in the Interstate Industrial Park. The other activity in this category is Sun Chemical, which manufactures printing ink.

Furniture and Fixtures. There are two plants in this category. The Williamsport area is a good location for them because of its excellent highway access to eastern and Midwestern cities.

Stone, Clay, and Glass. This index is high because of Redland Brick. The category is a good one for Washington County because of the presence of raw materials and nearby urban markets for construction materials.

Paper Products. Two plants in the Williamsport area manufacture felt from recycled paper and corrugated containers. This, again, is a good industry for Washington County and Williamsport because of proximity to large urban areas both for supplies of recyclable paper products and for markets in those cities.

Relationships to Land Use and Zoning in Surrounding Areas

Zoning districts in the County surrounding Williamsport reflect the economic development that is occurring gradually around the Town. Large areas of General Industrial, Planned Industrial, and Highway Interchange Commercial zoning is interspersed with smaller remnants of Agricultural and Rural Residential (actually a suburban residential density.) A large planned-industrial development, the Interstate Industrial Park, lies along Interstate 81 southeast of Williamsport. In the bend of Conococheague Creek to the northwest of Town a large area is zoned IM, Industrial Mineral, and a large quarry, supplying the Redlands Brick Company, occupies the portion of this area closest to Williamsport.

Most of the areas around the Town are developed: the Interstate Industrial Park to the east and southeast, residential portions of the unincorporated community of Halfway to the northeast, and the industries and mineral-extraction operations to the northwest.

V. RECREATION, PARKS, AND OPEN SPACES

Williamsport has a broad range of recreation and park facilities for a town of its size. These are supplemented by unique cultural and park resources along the Potomac River and the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal.

Regional Facilities

The principal major park facility in Williamsport is the Chesapeake and Ohio (C&O) Canal National Park. A segment of this 185-mile-long, 6,900-acre national park within Williamsport includes a number of elements of historic interest. Williamsport was an important center during the Canals development. It included a major turning basin and was actually a port where goods were transferred between the Canal, the railroad, and other land transportation. Facilities in addition to the turning and loading basin are a lock and lockhouse, several canal-related industrial buildings (one now being used as a visitor center), an aqueduct over Conococheague Creek, a Bollman Truss bridge, and a lift bridge that carried a railroad over the Canal. A section of the Canal and the basin have been re-watered.

The Canal connects to a number of points of interest between Washington, D.C., and Cumberland, Maryland. Within ten miles along the Canal are Fort Frederick, a well-preserved fort from the French and Indian War, and the Four Locks area, where four locks were necessary within a quarter of a mile of the Canal. More distant are Hancock, the Paw Paw Tunnel, and Cumberland to the west and the Antietam Battlefield and Harpers Ferry to the east. The C&O Canal parkland also runs several hundred feet up both shores of Conococheague Creek.

The other regional recreation facility is the recreational portion of the Williamsport High School site. This is part of a 114-acre site containing the high school, a middle school, and an elementary school. The high school facilities include a softball field, three football fields, two soccer fields, and a running track.

Local Facilities

The Town owns three parks: Byron Memorial Park, at Potomac and Artizan Streets, Billy Doub Park, on South Conococheague Street, and Riverbottom Park, on the Potomac River at the end of West Salisbury Street. In addition, Williamsport residents are served by the recreation facilities at the Springfield Middle School and the Williamsport Elementary School on the eastern edge of town. One of its Little League fields is located at the southwest corner of the school campus.

Byron Memorial Park is a 22-acre park containing a baseball field, three pavilions, a community building, a swimming pool, and a picnic area. The Park is centrally located, three blocks from Downtown. It is within a quarter-mile of all residential areas within the Town limits, and is very accessible.

Billy Doub Park contains four acres of land, a baseball diamond, play equipment, and two tennis courts. This facility is also within a quarter-mile of most of Town.

River Bottom Park is a 27-acre tract on the Potomac River shoreline. It is surrounded by National Park land in the C&O Canal National Park. The site is undeveloped, except that it

contains a paved boat ramp, allowing small boats to be launched on the Potomac River. There is also a large, level grass area and a large parking lot.

The Springfield Middle School and Williamsport Elementary School together have four baseball fields, one soccer field, two blacktop play areas, two basketball courts and nine tennis courts.

Adequacy of Facilities

The Williamsport area is served by the following facilities, one more than 150 acres of land:

- Three baseball fields
- Six softball fields (including Pinesburg)
- Two soccer fields
- Four football / soccer fields
- Eleven tennis courts
- Two areas with playground equipment
- Two general-purpose fields (including River Bottom Park)
- One swimming pool.

VI. HOUSING

There are 865 housing units in Williamsport. Over half (51 percent) 441 of these are single-family detached, and another (12.8 percent) 111 are single-family attached. There are 60 units in buildings containing more than 10 units each. The Town's housing stock is well-maintained, although much of it is quite old.

There are no outstanding housing problems in Williamsport. It is possible that many residents pay more for housing than they can afford, although the median gross rent was \$438 per month in 2000. Gross rent includes the cost of utilities and fuels used by the renter. The median contract rent for Williamsport for 2000 was \$347 per month. Purchase prices were also quite reasonable, with more than 50 percent of owner-occupied houses valued at less than \$100,000. Housing for the growing elderly population has been becoming scarce. This, however, will be alleviated with the addition of the new elderly housing development that is currently under construction.

Historic Preservation Easements

Owners of properties listed on, or eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places, or located within a locally certified or Register-listed historic district, may convey a perpetual historic preservation easement as a gift to the Maryland Historical Trust. Not only does an easement provide for the future of your property, it may also provide you with financial incentives and is an important part of estate planning.

Historic Preservation Loan Program

The Historic Preservation Loan Program provides loans to nonprofit organizations, local jurisdictions, business entities, and individuals to assist in the protection of historic property. Loan funds can be used to acquire, rehabilitate, or restore historic property listed on, or eligible for, the National Register of Historic Places. They may also be used for short-term financing of studies, surveys, plans and specifications, and architectural, engineering, or other special services directly related to pre-construction work required or recommended by the Trust or the State Historic Preservation Officer on projects being funded with federal or state monies.

Historic Rehabilitation Tax Credits

The Federal Rehabilitation Tax Credit program enables the owners or long-term lease holders of income-producing certified historic structures (listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or a contributing element within the boundaries of an historic district), to receive a federal tax credit. The Heritage Preservation Tax Credit Program, administered by the Maryland Historical Trust, provides Maryland income tax credits equal to 25% of the qualified capital costs expended in the rehabilitation of a "certified heritage structure."

Detail 5
Current County, State, and Local Improvement Programs

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Designated Neighborhoods	Provides priority for many types of funding Programs, once an area is approved as a "Designated Neighborhood"	MD. Dept of Housing and Community Development
Neighborhood Business Development Program	Provides low-interest loans to small businesses or non-profit organizations for projects in older business areas. Provides up to 50% funding of flexible gap financing for businesses starting-up or expanding or for reuse of a vacant building. Cannot be used for speculative projects.	MD. Dept of Housing and Community Development
Business Tax Credits for Neighborhood Projects	Awards tax credits on a competitive basis To non-profit organizations that sponsor community development projects in designated neighborhoods. The tax credits are then sold to private businesses.	MD. Dept of Housing and Community Development
MD. Historic Preservation Capital and Non-Capital Grant Programs	Offers grants for capital projects, including the acquisition, rehabilitation or restoration of historic properties. Also offers grants for non-capital projects, such as research of historic resources. In most cases provides a maximum of 50% of the project cost.	MD. Historical Trust
MD. Certified Local Government Grant Program	Offers grants to local governments who are certified within a Federal historic preservation program. Funds can be used for research of historic resources, educational programs, technical assistance and other efforts.	MD. Historical Trust
MD. Historic Preservation Loan Program	Offers low-interest loans to acquire, rehabilitate or restore properties listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places, in return for an easement guaranteeing the preservation of the site.	MD. Historical Trust

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Preservation Tax Credits	Offers State and Federal income tax credits for a percentage of the qualified capital costs to rehabilitate certified historic buildings. The programs require that the work conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Only income-producing properties qualify for the federal program.	State Program: MD. Dept. of Housing and Community Development; MD. Historic Trust. Federal Program National Park Service.
Community Development Block Grant (CDBG)	Offers grants through a competitive process for a wide variety of activities, provided the applicant proves that the project will benefit 51% low and moderate income persons or eliminate an officially approved "blighted" condition.	MD. Dept Housing and Community Development; Allegany County Dept. of Community Services
Program Open Space	Provides up to 100% grant funding for acquisition and up to 75% grant funding for development of public recreation facilities and open space. Projects need to be based upon the County Land Preservation and Recreation Plan.	MD. Department of Natural Resources; County Parks and Recreation Dept.
Rural Legacy Program	Directs various State and Federal funds towards the coordinated acquisition of key concentrations of natural resources and agricultural areas.	MD. Department of Natural Resources
Various State Housing Programs	Provides low-interest loans to for-profits and non-profits for the construction or rehabilitation of housing for low and/or moderate income persons. Individual programs include: Multi-Family Housing Rehabilitation Program, Construction Loan Program and Single-Family Housing Rehabilitation Program.	MD. Dept of Housing and Community Development
Reverse Equity Mortgage Program	Offers low-income persons age 65 and older the opportunity to receive income from the equity of their home so they may continue to afford to live within it .	MD. Dept of Housing and Community Development

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
State Homeownership Programs	Offer favorable financing to qualified Persons to purchase their own home. Programs include the Settlement Expense Loan Fund, and the Preferred Interest Rate Loan Program.	MD. Dept. of Housing and Community Development
Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credit	Offers Federal income tax credits to non-profit and for-profit developers of housing for low-income persons. Non-profits can then sell their credits to investors.	MD. Dept. of Housing and Community Development
Rural Economic Development Programs (formerly Farmers Home Administration)	Offers a variety of programs to finance economic development, community facilities and low-income housing in rural areas.	U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Rural Development Administration
Neighborhood Conservation Program	Provides funding in Priority Funding Areas and "designated neighborhoods" approved by the MD. Dept of Housing and Community Development. Can be used for sidewalks, streetscaping, curbs, drainage, repaving and lighting.	MD. Dept of Transportation
Street and Sidewalk Program	Provides 100% funding for improvements for new sidewalks and related improvements along State roads in "designated neighborhoods" approved by the MD. Dept of Housing and Community Development.	MD. Dept. of Transportation
Day Care Financing Programs	Offers low-interest loans and loan guarantees for development of child or senior day care facilities.	MD. Dept. of Business and Economic Development
Community Development Block Grant Funds for Economic Development	Offers low-interest gap financing for up to 50% of project cost. Financing is provided to municipality, which then makes loans to businesses. Emphasizes creation of low and moderate income jobs. Can be used for downtown revitalization, infrastructure, property acquisition, building construction and market studies.	MD. Dept. of Housing and Community Development

Name of Program	General Description of Program	Administering Agency
Maryland Industrial Land Act	Offers low-interest loans to counties and municipalities working to develop or redevelop industrial space. Can be used for acquisition, utilities, access roads, site improvements and shell building construction. Can also be used to rehabilitate existing buildings as “incubators” for new businesses.	MD. Dept. of Business and Economic Development
Job Creation Tax Credit	Offers income tax credits to companies creating 60 or more jobs which pay at least 150% of the minimum wage.	MD. Dept of Business and Economic Development.
MD. Industrial and Commercial Redevelopment Fund	Offers low-interest loans to municipalities working to develop or redevelop commercial or industrial businesses. Provides up to 90% of funding need. Can be used for land,, buildings, infrastructure and technical studies. The municipality can then loan the funds to businesses, provided the municipality guarantees the loans.	MD. Dept. of Business and Economic Development
MD. Industrial Development Financing Authority Program	Makes available low-interest financing for business development and expansion, except for certain types of retail uses. Better terms are possible for industrial development funded through tax-exempt bonds	MD. Dept of Business and Economic Development; Plus Industrial Revenue Bonds issued through The County
MD. Small Business Development Financing Authority Programs	Makes available low-interest financing for development and expansion of small businesses. Includes a Long-term Guarantee Program, a Surety Bond Program and an Equity Participation Investment Program. Most programs emphasize businesses owned by socially and economically disadvantaged persons.	MD. Dept of Business and Economic Development
Investment Financing Programs	Offers financing through the Challenge Investment Program and the Enterprise Investment Fund.	MD. Dept. of Business and Economic Development