



2013 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

FORGING OUR HERITAGE INTO PROSPERITY



Neighborhood Element *Volume 1 of 2*



City of Cumberland, Maryland
December 2011





2013 Comprehensive Plan Neighborhood Element – *Volume 1 of 2*

Prepared by the City of Cumberland – January, 2010 – April, 2011

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I. Introduction

Welcome to the City of *Cumberland, Maryland*, historically known as the “*Queen City of the Alleghenies.*” Increasingly referred to today as “*The City of Steeples*” for its characteristic skyline, Cumberland has a rich history with a distinct cultural heritage that has been defined and molded by the mountains that frame it. In fact, Cumberland was one of the major Colonial-era starting points for the initial exploration, settlement, and eventual economic development of the central Appalachian Mountains.



George Washington Headquarters Building

The City’s early roots can be traced to Fort Cumberland, which marked the western boundaries of Colonial British protection for the earliest settlers of the Allegheny Mountains and became the staging point for both George Washington’s, and General Braddock’s ill-fated military campaigns on Fort Duquesne in 1754 and 1755 (respectively). These campaigns ignited the French and Indian War (1755-1763). Although the French surrendered their claims to lands in Canada and the Ohio River Valley in 1763, skirmishes with several American Indian tribes in

the region lingered on until 1774. The actual fort is now gone, but a cabin, known as George Washington’s Headquarters, once situated on Washington Street near Prospect Square, is now located in Riverside Park on Greene Street, just below the location of the original fort. Another image of that period, a hand-painted mural depicting George Washington and Fort Cumberland during the preparations for Braddock’s March (1755) and the Federal response to the Whiskey Rebellion (1794), adorns the rotunda dome in City Hall.

Incorporated as a City in 1787, Cumberland’s strategic importance made it the most logical starting point for the Federally-funded portions of the National Road (originally known as the “Cumberland Road” for that reason). This road was the fledgling United States Government’s *first* major infrastructure investment and the first major highway constructed through the Appalachian Mountains to promote western settlement. The contract for construction of



National Road Zero Mile Marker on Greene Street

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the first segment that began in Cumberland was signed on May 8, 1811. Several dates for the start of construction work on the road have been suggested, however recently uncovered records allege that construction may have actually begun on June 11, 1811. Although the War of 1812 caused some minor delays, construction work continued and the first segment of the road was completed to Wheeling in 1818. The importance of this corridor as a settlement and trade route helped assure Cumberland's inclusion on the routes for both the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad when ground was broken for those transportation projects on July 4, 1828. The arrival of the railroad in 1842 triggered an era of substantial growth and development in the City and, by the turn of the century, Cumberland had become Maryland's second largest city. The City retained this status until the mid-1900's.

Cumberland's strategic location and emerging importance as a critical transportation and industrial hub made it a strategic staging and logistics center during the Civil War. Although no major battles were fought in Cumberland during the war, numerous skirmishes were fought in the surrounding area, including the 1864 Battle of Folck's Mill. Throughout the war, the City remained in Union hands except for one day—June 16, 1863—when Cumberland fell into Confederate hands. On that day, a cavalry force of 350 Confederate soldiers under the command of Colonel John Imboden advanced on the City from the east along Williams Road and forced a brief, but generally peaceful surrender. The Union troops that normally defended the City had been repositioned to the Keyser area on the previous day to confront a suspected advance by General Lee's forces. The Confederate troops spent a few hours in the City visiting friends and relatives and acquiring fresh horses, clothing, and food before leaving to evade an attack by the returning Union forces. Four days after the Confederate troops left the City, the lands across the North Branch of the Potomac River from Cumberland officially became the new State of West Virginia.

After the war ended in 1865, Cumberland flourished as a major center for new industries that were fed by the abundant natural resources in the surrounding area, including "smokeless" bituminous coal from the Georges Creek Valley, as well as iron ore, sandstone, limestone, and timber. The City's former glass industries, construction companies, boat building yards, lumber mills, tin plate mill, and other early enterprises were supplied and fueled by these extensive raw materials. Most of the historic buildings and the city's pattern of development were constructed during the City's Golden Age between 1870 and 1929. The extensive Victorian, Queen Anne, and Italianesque architectural designs reflected in the City's historic commercial and residential buildings all hearken



Historic Commercial Architecture on the Downtown Mall

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back to this era. Many of the City's residential neighborhoods and major industries emerged and expanded during this period.

The Great Depression in the 1930's marked a gradual transition in the City's (and the area's) economy. Many of the early industries that helped create a diversified economy collapsed or contracted significantly. This era greatly affected the area's coal mining industry, glass manufacturers, beer manufacturers, tin plate mill, and the world-renowned Footer's Dye Works. Aggressive efforts by local elected officials and the Chamber of Commerce helped keep employment levels steady by attracting new industries, such as the Kelly-Springfield Tire Company, the Celanese plant, and the Pittsburgh Plate Glass plant. However, the overall effect of this period was a reduction in employment and economic diversity with a growing emphasis on a specific number of major industries, most of which were located outside the City.

After the Great Depression and World War II, the City began a long and slow decline, as changing national demographic, economic, and transportation patterns led to the gradual loss of many of the City's early industries and with them, roughly half of the City's population. The erosion led to the City's brief but extensive experiment with Urban Renewal during the 1960's and '70's. Those efforts resulted in the construction of the Crosstown Bridge (now a major section of Interstate 68), Queen City Drive, the Public Safety Building, and the Downtown Pedestrian Mall on Baltimore Street.



The Baltimore Street Pedestrian Mall

It also resulted in the loss of many historically significant buildings (chief among them, the Queen City Hotel and Station) and reduced the size of the downtown area. During its economic peak in the early 20th Century, Cumberland was a major regional industrial center that boasted itself as the home of the Kelly-Springfield Tire Corporation. By the close of the Century, the combination of gradual decline in Cumberland and rapid growth in the suburban cities of Baltimore and Washington had reduced Cumberland's population ranking to the 21st largest city in the State.

As it enters the 21st Century, Cumberland is a study in economic and environmental contrasts. The City's main streets still display the historic urban fabric and architectural styles of the City's Golden Era, but nowhere is the casual pedestrian obstructed from dramatic views of the forested natural slopes of the surrounding mountains and ridges. Cumberland's early growth and prosperity were fueled by the might of its heavy industries, but a blossoming arts community and tourism industry is boldly driving the City's economic renaissance. The City has a classic urban design and development pattern that has retained much of its historic integrity, but its economy has always been driven and defined by its rural hinterland—first by the natural

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resources and raw materials *extracted from* the mountains and now by the leisure and recreational industries *supported by* the mountains. The City still serves as a financial, social, and commercial center for a distinctly rural market that extends deep into the surrounding mountains and valleys. With a soul that is neither exclusively urban nor rural in nature, but forged by and reflective of both, Cumberland offers a lifestyle that captures the best qualities of its urban and rural environments. In fact, the City *cannot* be fully understood and appreciated without comprehending the contributions of both of these influences.

As Cumberland works to reinvent itself and blaze a path of renewed economic relevance and vitality in this new century, it is important to be mindful of its distinguished and colorful history and the defining characteristics that helped it negotiate the great forces of change that have molded it—especially its rural natural setting and its distinct and close-knit urban residential neighborhoods. In these resources lie the keys to achieving the City’s future vision—one in which the City’s economy is revitalized, growth is



View of Cumberland from Haystack Mountain

sustained, and its residents and businesses prosper. For those reasons, this component of the City’s Comprehensive Plan is devoted to the City’s neighborhoods, as it explores the resources that exist within them to help drive the City’s overall vision for the future.

A. Purpose and Structure of the Plan

Municipal planning in Maryland is governed by Article 66b of the Maryland Annotated Code, hereafter referred to as “Article 66b.” This article of Maryland Law establishes the State-wide planning goals that must be addressed in each plan, outlines all of the important topics that must be included in a plan, and explains the process by which the plan must be adopted and when it must be periodically reviewed. The general purpose of a municipal comprehensive plan is to:

- 1, identify the public’s needs;
2. inventory the natural and man-made resources that support the City and serve those needs;
3. create a unified vision for the future development and improvement of the City that addresses the public’s needs, and

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4. outline a coordinated action strategy to implement the vision.

While the plan is *not* a regulatory document, it provides the visionary, legal, and philosophical foundation for the codes, ordinances and other strategies that the City adopts to implement its vision. Active and broad public participation in the development of the plan is necessary to legitimize its role as the guiding document for the City's vision. This engagement was accomplished for the plan through the participation of more than 100 citizens, staff, and specialists in the overall planning process.

This plan element is the first of two separate documents that collectively comprise the 2013 Cumberland Comprehensive Plan. The second element, the City-Wide Element of the plan, will build upon the neighborhood needs and issues identified in this element and will present an overall coordinated and comprehensive planning vision for the City in satisfaction of the State requirements outlined in Article 66b. In that way, this Neighborhood Element serves as the primary foundation and source of public input for the City-Wide Element that follows.

The plan was prepared in this way to ensure that the City's vision and its planning goals, objectives, and policies are based on a thorough knowledge and understanding of neighborhood needs. As noted earlier in this section, Cumberland is a city of distinctive neighborhoods that have colorful histories, cohesive social structures, and unique identities that contribute greatly to the City's physical and social fabric and its special character. The City's plan must explore, document, celebrate, and reinforce that basic neighborhood structure to preserve the City's unique character and charm and to create value in urban living and lifestyles. In doing so, the City hopes to entice new development investment into the City and support and expand ongoing reinvestment and revitalization in the neighborhoods.

When thinking about the "unique and cherished features" that help define the City's neighborhoods, it is important to remember that the traditional influences that helped bind neighbors together and helped build the City's original neighborhoods have evolved greatly over the years. In the City's early years, people were drawn to the neighborhoods by the jobs that were offered there. The history and character of each neighborhood was largely driven by the major employers that located in them, such as the Rolling Mill plant in the Rolling Mill neighborhood, the City's two hospitals in Decatur Heights, and the B & O railyard in Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill and Walsh/Humbird. Immigrants to the growing city were drawn to certain residential enclaves in the city on the basis of their varied economic statuses and ethnic identities. Neighborhood residents came to know one another through their shared lines of work, ethnic identification, political affiliations, religious beliefs, and lifestyles. In essence, the City's original neighborhoods became vibrant ethnic and socio-economic communities with strong social ties, political affiliations, and cultural/religious identities. They supported newcomers by providing a familiar and secure cultural base to ease the sense of social isolation and alienation that can occur in a new and unfamiliar environment. As a result, they functioned

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as nurturing grounds for early transition and assimilation into the emerging American culture and lifestyle.

Over time, as the major employers closed or relocated and modern transportation improvements made it possible for people to live farther from their workplaces, much of the social and cultural fabric that reinforced traditional neighborhood character evolved and faded. Some neighborhoods lost their distinctiveness as population shifts, business closures, and gradual redevelopment activity altered their characters so dramatically and fundamentally that they either disappeared altogether or blended into adjoining neighborhoods. The result of this process is the reduced number of neighborhoods that can be identified and defined today.

Many of the social and economic forces that drove these changes are regional and national trends that are beyond the City's exclusive control. That is why these trends and changes are in no way unique to Cumberland. However, the City can take steps to help influence these patterns locally, and in doing so, stabilize and preserve the critical elements that remain, and promote the revitalization of neighborhood identity and cohesion. This process begins by identifying and understanding the special features that remain; building upon and supporting the neighborhood associations that exist today; building partnerships to replace or repair what has been lost through strategic investments, incentives, and special zoning strategies; and finding ways to promote greater social interaction and festive activity within the remaining neighborhoods to create a greater sense of vitality and rejuvenation. For the City's historic neighborhood identities to survive and thrive, they must find and establish a new relevance within the context of our modern society. Otherwise, many fascinating, engaging, and colorful elements of the City's heritage and history could be lost forever.

The City sees the revitalization and strengthening of its neighborhoods as a critical component of its overall redevelopment and growth plan. By guiding this effort, the plan seeks to promote urban neighborhood lifestyles and incentivize private reinvestment and property value appreciation. Quite simply, Cumberland and its taxpayers lack the substantial and sustained funds necessary to completely rehabilitate and revitalize its neighborhoods while also satisfying the City's public obligations to restore and upgrade its infrastructure and provide the high level of urban services that the public has come to expect. The City has been working to stimulate private development investment through its special taxing districts, economic development support programs, and through its efforts to partner with private developers on major redevelopment projects. These efforts have included the creation of special Tax Increment Financing Districts and Developer's Rights and Responsibilities Agreements. The City's Community Development Block Grant program provides additional Federal funds for neighborhood revitalization projects, but the existing level of need is overwhelming and the funds, over time, have become increasingly limited, which hampers the City's efforts to keep pace with the need.

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Residential Streetscape with Large Front Porches

In working to prepare this Neighborhood Element with the various neighborhood associations that represent them, the City hopes to achieve a number of complementary policy objectives that will create more vibrant and festive neighborhoods, increase social interaction within the neighborhoods, and revive interest in creating new neighborhood associations in the neighborhoods that currently lack them. At the same time, this process will give the citizens of the City a proactive forum for meaningful input in the City's ongoing

redevelopment efforts. By pursuing these objectives, the City seeks to create greater economic and social value in urban lifestyles, which will make the neighborhoods more desirable places to live and will help increase property values in each neighborhood. As neighborhood property values increase over time, property owners will realize a greater economic return for investments in restoring and upgrading their properties, which should complement and expand upon the City's own revitalization efforts. In this way, the plan seeks to incentivize public and private reinvestment and redevelopment partnerships that will extend what the City can afford to accomplish through its own limited resources and build a new cycle of reinvestment.

Additionally, the Neighborhood Element provides a useful source of information to City staff responsible for managing the City's infrastructure and critical public services regarding specific neighborhood needs and issues that should be addressed. In this way, it serves as a guide for identifying, targeting, and prioritizing neighborhood revitalization projects through the City's Consolidated Plan, which is the guiding document for the Community Development Block Grant program. Finally, the Neighborhood Element is written in a less technical and more engaging and colorful style than traditional plans to encourage citizens to read and use the plan and to function as a better promotional and marketing guide for the City and its neighborhoods. The Neighborhood Element also can serve as a tool to reinforce and promote the City's efforts to build its Heritage Tourism program, which is a critical feature of Cumberland's Arts and Entertainment and Tourism development vision.

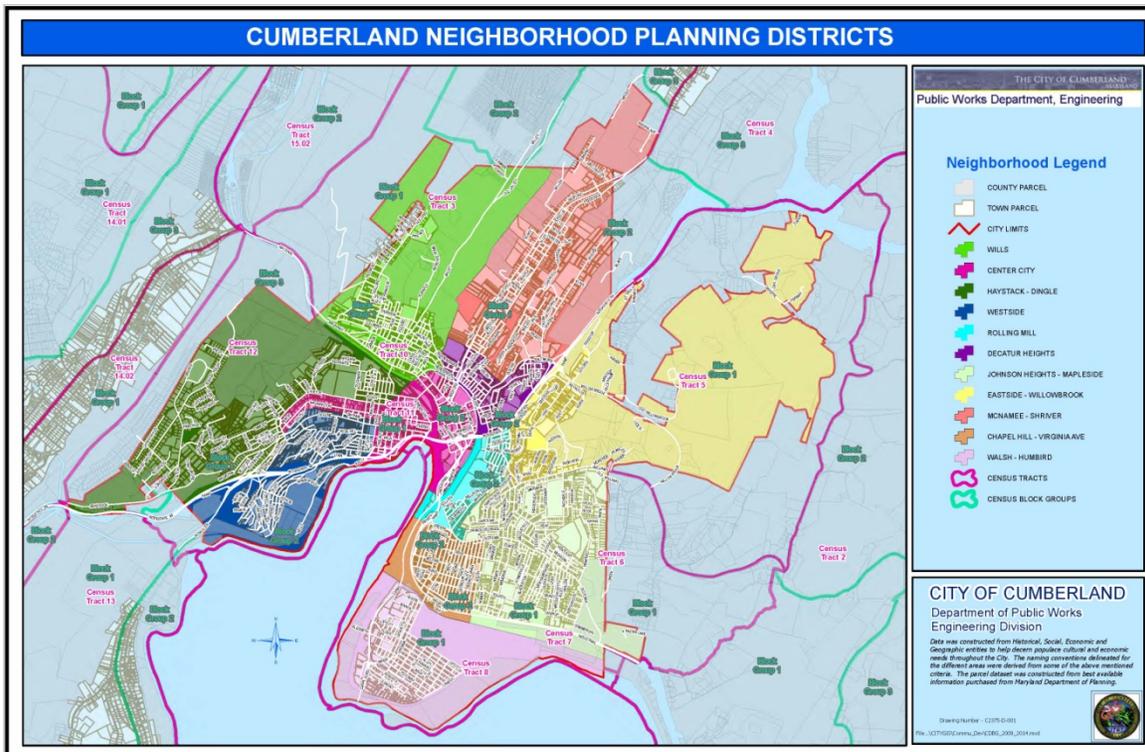
This Element seeks to halt and reverse the overall historic trends of declining neighborhood activity and diminished neighborhood identity by celebrating and promoting the cultural history of the remaining neighborhoods and providing ideas to strengthen the social bonds within the neighborhoods and make them more attractive and festive places to live. As the neighborhoods strengthen and become more vibrant over time, the City can work to revive some of the smaller neighborhoods that once existed, but have since lost their distinct identities.

Given the magnitude of the work required to mount these efforts, they will not be easy or simple to accomplish. Consequently, a steadfast political commitment and determination over

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an extended period of time to support the plan will be required. There is no guarantee that success will result. However, the lack of such guarantee is not a compelling reason to abandon the attempt, given the fact that failing to try would only allow the current trend of decline to continue.

The Neighborhood Element is divided into chapters that focus on each of the 11 primary neighborhoods identified for the plan. Although more neighborhoods are known to have existed, recent demographic trends, changing work and shopping patterns, past redevelopment efforts, and business and industry closures have caused many of the City's original neighborhoods to gradually lose their identities and distinct characters. Many of the neighborhood boundaries also have shifted slightly over time in response to changing employment, cultural, and demographic patterns. In defining the neighborhood boundaries used in this plan, staff reviewed all of the various historic neighborhood boundaries and tried to define neighborhoods that both preserved the areas served by active neighborhood associations and were as consistent as possible with U.S. Census divisions (blocks, block groups, and tracts) to preserve data integrity for basic demographic analysis. Although the final boundaries are not perfect, they provide the greatest consistency among the various competing issues that staff could achieve. It is anticipated by this plan that the neighborhood boundaries used in future City plans will evolve further until more definitive consensus-based boundaries are established.



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It is also important to understand that the neighborhood boundaries used in this plan are intended for general planning purposes only. As the prominent planner Kevin Lynch noted, people perceive, navigate, and understand their urban environment based on their interaction with it—the routes they travel, the places they frequent, and the patterns or boundaries of their social interactions. From these experiences and patterns of interaction with the built environment, citizens form “cognitive maps” of their community that have many common themes, but can differ in subtle and important ways. Consequently, different people and groups will define their neighborhood boundaries differently, even though they might agree on the name and primary defining features of each neighborhood. Neighborhood boundaries can also change over time as the community grows and changes, as changes in employment patterns, ethnic and cultural identities, and population shifts have caused many of Cumberland’s original neighborhoods to lose their identities or combine to form new neighborhoods.

The neighborhood boundaries and names identified for this plan should not be seen as an attempt to “rewrite the City’s history” or to dictate what neighborhoods should be recognized or where their boundaries should be. The boundaries have been defined in this plan only to structure demographic data compilation and citizen input into the planning process and to identify the primary shared features, places, and cultural resources that give meaning to the City’s basic neighborhoods—as they exist or are recognized today. They should not be interpreted as limitations on future neighborhood boundaries or as constraints to different cognitive maps of the City based on other criteria, such as watersheds, commercial districts, Census enumeration districts, school districts, zoning districts, and other factors that may affect the overall function, marketing, or understanding of the City and its needs.

Basic demographic data from the 1990 and 2000 Censuses was compiled for each neighborhood by the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP). A sample copy of the 1990 and 2000 Census data summary report for the Shriver/McNamee neighborhood is contained in Appendix A. MDP staff built Census data for each neighborhood at the ‘block group’ level, where the specific Census-designated block group boundaries fit within the defined neighborhood boundaries. In most instances, the neighborhood boundaries do not precisely match the block group boundaries. As a result, the data figures for each neighborhood may contain information for a number of households that are located in adjoining neighborhoods. Generally speaking, the block groups assembled each neighborhood had a majority of their homes within the assigned neighborhood. However, as an example, so many Census block groups were divided by the Decatur Heights neighborhood boundaries that the data for that neighborhood had to be assembled using individual blocks. This meant that detailed sample survey Census figures for Decatur Heights could not be compiled, because the Census Bureau does not disclose that information at the block level.

Since the neighborhood boundaries do not precisely match the Census block group boundaries, the data contained in the neighborhood data summaries should be viewed as estimates only. However, they represent the most detailed statistical information available for neighborhood

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planning purposes, and are considered sufficient for use in this plan. To prevent misinterpretation of the data accuracy, the information and trends for each neighborhood will be discussed in general terms only.

B. The Planning Process

To maximize opportunities for direct and meaningful citizen input into the plan, the City conducted a total of 10 neighborhood meetings across the City throughout the early preparation work for the Neighborhood Element. During the initial neighborhood meeting process, the two neighborhoods west of Wills Creek (West Side and Haystack/Dingle) were brought together through the public input process at the request of the Neighborhood Watch Group that serves them. In each neighborhood represented by an active association, staff worked directly with the neighborhood associations to arrange and conduct the meetings. The neighborhood associations distributed meeting materials in advance and provided an additional public notification forum to the City's official web site and newspaper advertisements. Meetings in the remaining neighborhoods were coordinated by City staff with advertisements on the City's web site, in City Hall, and in local businesses and social gathering places in each neighborhood. In addition, special articles and interviews regarding the planning process were published in the Cumberland Times-News and broadcasted on local radio stations in the City. Additional opportunities for the submission of written comments and input were provided through the City's official web site. Through these forums, hundreds of meeting notices were disseminated to City residents throughout the process.

The neighborhood meetings began on January 7, 2010 and ran through September 23, 2010. Individual meeting attendance ranged greatly from a high of 17 at the Decatur Heights meeting to a low of 0 at the Eastside/Willowbrook meeting. Consequently, in neighborhoods where only a small number of citizens participated, the issues and needs offered may not be fairly representative of all residents. However, the overall participation over the course of the 10 meeting (a total of 80 participants) is significantly higher than could be expected from a standard public hearing or listening session. When all of the additional city staff and other technical advisors are considered, a total of more than 100 citizens, officials, and specialists contributed to the preparation of this Element making it a truly collaborative effort. All of the meeting information and materials, as well as additional information about the plan and the planning process were posted on a special 2013 Comprehensive Plan page of the City's official web site. This information was maintained and updated on-line throughout the entire planning and adoption process for the Neighborhood Element in 2010 and 2011.

At each meeting, staff presented information on the plan, including neighborhood-specific data, after which the participants were asked to discuss and respond to a series of questions, each of which is listed below.

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- 1. What was the most memorable event that occurred in your neighborhood?**
- 2. What are the most positive changes that have occurred in your neighborhood?**
- 3. What are the most negative changes that have occurred in your neighborhood?**
- 4. What aspects or features of your neighborhood give it a special identity? These aspects or features may be cultural, historical, geographical, man-made features, or natural features.**
- 5. What features of your neighborhood create such strong social connections between the residents of your neighborhood or are so important to your neighborhood's identity that they should be preserved and supported to the maximum extent possible?**
- 6. What do you feel that your neighborhood lacks or needs? What improvements are most critical for the future of your neighborhood? These improvement needs can range from infrastructure and public facility needs to future development needs.**
- 7. In one statement, what is the future vision for your neighborhood?**
- 8. What do you see as the biggest threats, obstacles, or impediments to the future vitality of your neighborhood?**
- 9. What are the biggest assets or opportunities that your neighborhood has to achieve your neighborhood vision or address your needs?**

The purpose for these questions is to understand basic neighborhood needs and issues, how the neighborhood's identity is defined, and how social connections between the residents of each neighborhood are formed. A Defining Characteristics Map for each residential neighborhood was prepared to show the locations of the special characteristics identified by the neighborhood meeting participants. Copies of these maps are provided in Appendix E of this plan. Each neighborhood was also asked to express a future vision statement to help City officials decide how future development and redevelopment activity should be promoted to address neighborhood needs. Citizen thoughts regarding strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats were also collected at the meetings.

The information received from these meetings was compiled into a series of summary reports that were presented to a Planning Coordination Committee. The Committee consisted of 11 City officials (including the City Planner) representing all affected departments to review the neighborhood needs generated from each meeting and identify appropriate recommended strategies to address them. Two officials from the Maryland Department of Planning and one from Allegany County were also invited to serve on the Planning Coordination Committee. The resulting summary reports, data compiled by the Maryland Department of Planning, and the

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recommendations from the Planning Coordination Committee formed the basis of the neighborhood chapters of this plan.

After the plan was drafted, the City followed the traditional adoption process specified in Article 66b. Since the Municipal Growth and Water Resources Elements required by Article 66b are to be incorporated into and adopted as part of the City-Wide Element, no special county review of the Neighborhood Element was required or requested. After final review by the Planning Coordination Committee, the draft Neighborhood Element was submitted to the Maryland Department of Planning for the required State-wide intergovernmental review process. Comments from this review were listed in a Public Comment Review Matrix, which included staff recommendations to the Planning Commission addressing each comment.

Following completion of the State's Intergovernmental review process, the draft plan document and the Public Comment Review Matrix were presented to the Planning Commission at a formal public hearing. Copies of the documents were placed in the City's two public libraries and City Hall for public review prior to the hearing, and the documents were also posted on the City's Web Site. After the initial hearing, the Planning Commission recommended approval of the Plan to the Mayor and City Council, which subsequently conducted a final public hearing. The same public review procedures for the draft plan and matrix were followed for the Mayor and City Council hearing. Once the plan was adopted by the Mayor and City Council, all final editing changes directed by the Mayor and City Council were made by staff and certified copies of the plan were posted on the City's web site and sent to the Maryland Department of Planning. Copies of the adopting Resolutions can be found in Appendix F.

II. Center City (Downtown Cumberland)



The Historic Downtown Cumberland Business District

The Center City neighborhood, as delineated for this plan, constitutes the City's traditional downtown governmental and commercial district. Three of Allegany County's four primary governmental and judicial buildings (City Hall, the U.S. District Court, and the Allegany County District Court) are located in this neighborhood. The Allegany County Administrative Offices are located in the former Kelly-Springfield building in the adjoining Westside neighborhood. The Center City

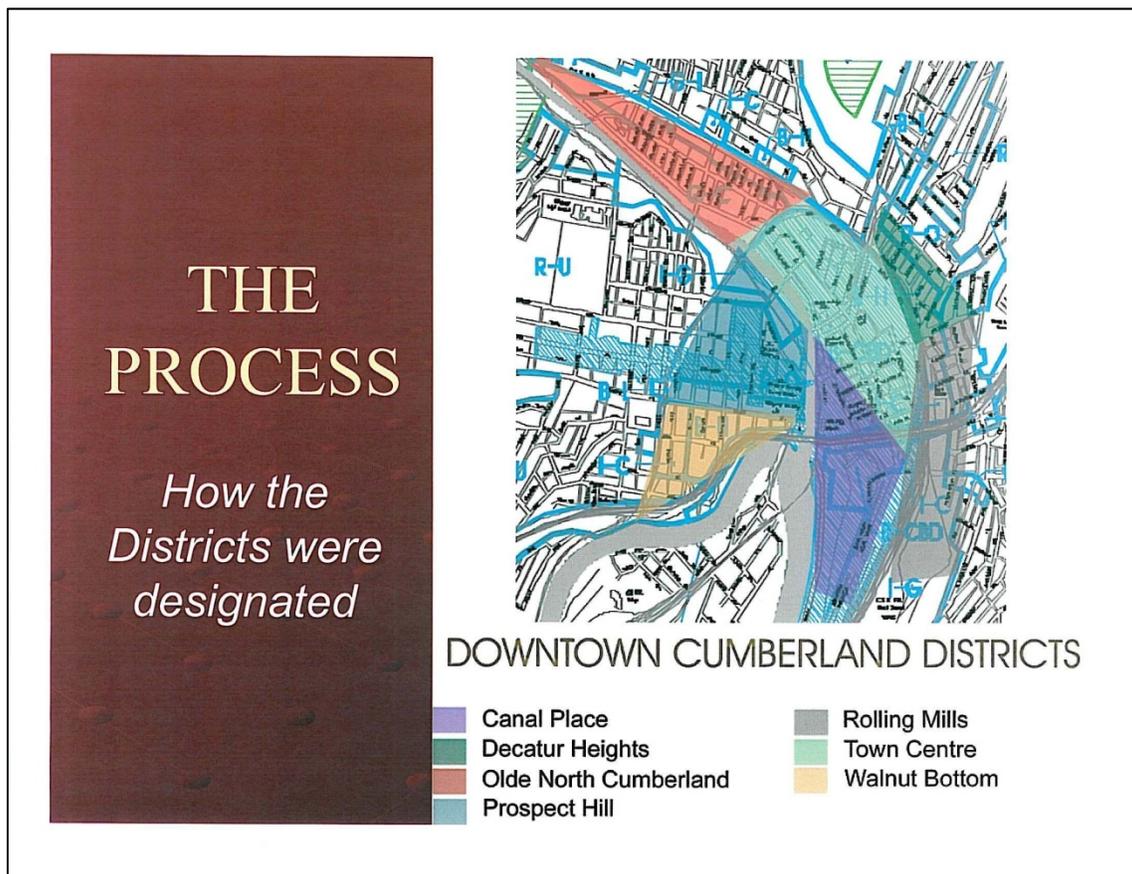
neighborhood also includes the Washington Street National and Local Historic Districts and the Canal Place Preservation District, which is the historic endpoint of the Chesapeake and Ohio Canal and now serves as the meeting point of the C & O Canal Tow Path and Great Allegheny Passage Bike Trails linking Washington, D.C. and Pittsburgh, PA. Another cultural and commercial centerpiece of the Center City neighborhood is the downtown pedestrian mall on Baltimore Street, the City's historic main commercial street. The Center City also includes a smaller scale, secondary business district on Greene Street, which was the original starting point and first leg of the federally funded section of the National Road (also referred to as the "Cumberland Road." The Greene Street business district is also a National Register Historic District and was the location from which the City's settlement first began.

It is important to understand that the City's "downtown" area has been defined many different ways for different purposes. For example, the Central Business District defined by the City's Zoning Ordinance does not include the Washington Street or Greene Street corridors within its boundaries. On the other hand, the Canal Place Preservation District (the City's local historic district) encompasses the main downtown area, the Washington Street corridor, and extends down the C & O Canal Towpath Trail into South Cumberland, but does not include the Greene Street corridor. The City's "special taxing district," administered cooperatively by the City and the Downtown Development Authority, includes only a portion of the core business district where the brick sidewalks are located. All of these different "definitions" of the city's "downtown area" have boundaries that differ from the Center City neighborhood delineated for this plan. While there are sound and practical administrative reasons for the creation of each different "downtown area" definition, the profusion of different boundary delineations can create confusion in understanding and interpreting the boundaries of the City's downtown area for visitors as well as for City residents. That's why it is important to understand that the boundaries defined for the Center City neighborhood in this plan are not an attempt to dictate

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the boundaries of the City's downtown area; they are only intended to organize data analysis and public input for the plan.

To help promote a clearer and more consistent public image of the City's "downtown area," the Downtown Cumberland Business Association devised a marketing and branding concept and plan in 2003. The plan was developed through a public input process and was presented favorably to the Mayor and City Council on June 2, 2003. The plan recognizes a downtown area that not only encompasses the traditional commercial core around the Baltimore Street Pedestrian Mall, but also included a number of adjoining areas in the older neighborhoods of the City that exhibit similar urban design and development patterns and house businesses that are characteristic of traditional downtown areas. Many of these downtown fringe areas fall within the predominantly residential neighborhoods defined by and discussed in this plan and constitute the principal neighborhood business districts within those neighborhoods. The affected neighborhoods include Rolling Mill, Decatur Heights, and Wills. A conceptual map of the proposed DCBA is provided below.



The purpose of this plan was to make it easier for citizens and visitors to identify and locate businesses and services within the downtown area and to make it easier for people to navigate downtown Cumberland. The concept envisions a series of "downtown districts" that recognizes the core pedestrian mall (Town Centre) and other concentrated business areas, such as Decatur

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Heights, Walnut Bottom, and Olde North Cumberland, that may have been overlooked by patrons as part of downtown Cumberland—even though the design patterns in those areas suggest that they should be conceived as part of historic downtown Cumberland. The plan also envisioned and promoted the use of colorful banners to identify each downtown district, which would serve as recognizable wayfinding guides to help shoppers navigate the downtown area. Downtown businesses and services could use the district names to better advertise and market their downtown locations to their customers. The plan was conceived as a way to more effectively market and define downtown Cumberland, by drawing upon historically recognizable names for the various downtown districts that comprise the downtown area.

During the City's manufacturing heydays in the first half of the twentieth century, downtown Cumberland was *the* primary retail and financial center for the city and a large surrounding market area with numerous banks, department stores, theaters, restaurants, and other businesses. The strength of the City's commercial market is reflected in the sustained health of the downtown business district despite an extensive history of repeated floods and fires that devastated the city on numerous occasions. Despite those periodic disasters, the downtown was always rebuilt and thrived. A major U.S. Army Corps of Engineers flood control and levee-building project along Wills Creek and the North Branch of the Potomac River was constructed in 1950 and brought a welcomed end to the devastating floods.

Far more devastating consequences occurred when commercial competition in the developing suburban LaVale shopping district, the loss of inner city manufacturing jobs after World War II, and resulting population declines eroded the city's historic retail base. The business dislocation and relocation that occurred as a consequence of that gradual decline left many downtown buildings vacant. The emergence of the Cumberland Urban Renewal Agency (CURA) in 1962 pumped millions of dollars of public investment into Cumberland to redesign the downtown area, resulting in the creation of the Baltimore Street Pedestrian Mall in 1978. However, in the process, scores of historic downtown buildings (both unsalvageable and salvageable) were demolished, contributing to a significantly reduced downtown area and mixed feelings about the losses that occurred before the controversial CURA era ended in 1974.

According to the City's Main Street office, overall vacancy rates on Baltimore Street were 60% in 1988, with upper story vacancy rates as high as 75%. By 2002, the estimated vacancy rate had dropped to 30% overall and 50% for upper floors. The most current data for 2008 indicates further decline in the vacancy rates to 15% overall and 25% in the upper floor. Statistics compiled for the Main Street program seem to support this observed trend. Between 1998 and 2008, a total of 160 new



Upper Story Apartments on Baltimore Street

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businesses opened in the downtown area creating 1,027 new jobs and 361 public/private funded improvement projects totaling \$38,000,000 in public/private investment.

The ongoing National Recession that began in December 2007 and continues today has clearly impacted downtown business activity. A number of businesses on the Downtown Mall and Canal Place have either closed or relocated in the past two years. The impacts of this deep and prolonged Recession are expected to be temporary in nature. The City is planning a major weekend commemoration event in May 2011 for the 200th Anniversary of the start of construction on the Federally-funded portions of the National Road. The plans include the groundbreaking for a new monument to the National Road at Riverside Park, across the street from the Zero Mile Marker at the beginning of Greene Street. The City hopes to erect and dedicate the monument within the following year, depending on funding availability. The commemoration event is envisioned to help jump-start the 2011 summer tourist season and bring additional business activity into the Downtown area.

While the Center City is and always has been the City's primary central business district, it is also emerging as one of the City's larger and growing residential areas. According to U.S. Census data compiled for the plan by the Maryland Department of Planning, the residential population of the Center City neighborhood increased from just under 2,400 in 1990 to roughly 2,550 in 2000 (which ranked 6th among the City's neighborhoods in total population). The increase makes the downtown area the City's only growing residential area during the decade of the 1990's. Unlike the more traditional residential neighborhoods of the City, renter-occupied units outnumber owner-occupied homes in the Center City neighborhood by a margin of approximately two to one. Many of these rental units have been created in recent years through the rehabilitation of upper floor apartment spaces that became more economically viable as a result of the City's economic development and historic revitalization incentives and the flourishing downtown arts and entertainment district centered on the Baltimore Street mall.

The growing demand for downtown residential units inevitably means that the downtown area will be asked to provide an increasing array of services generally provided in traditional residential areas. Finding effective ways to address all of these needs while minimizing unintended land use conflicts will be an important future planning issue for the City. Limited public parking supplies and the lack of off-street parking have been significant marketing constraints for downtown upper floor apartments, which may also aggravate land use conflicts, as the downtown's service needs continue to evolve.

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From both residential and business perspectives, the recent revitalization of the City's traditional downtown area is one of its greatest success stories. It has survived devastating floods and fires during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and nearly fifty years of economic decline and urban renewal efforts in the latter half of the twentieth century. As the City moves into the twenty-first century, the Center City has been the focus of renewed planning and development efforts that will further promote and expand the City's growing arts and entertainment district. Recent major developments include the construction of the Fairfield inn & Suites in 2009 and the pending development of a new major restaurant at Canal Place.



New Hotel Construction in Canal Place

Plans for the near future include the National Road Bicentennial Commemoration in 2011 and emerging plans for the creation of a new Riverwalk along the North Branch of the Potomac River levee just west (upstream) of Canal Place and Riverside Park.

In 1998, the City undertook and completed the Downtown Design and Redevelopment Plan. This "downtown plan" served as a guiding document for economic revitalization and redevelopment efforts in the central business district as a separate component of the City's Comprehensive Plan. Efforts were initiated in 2008 to prepare for an update to this plan. The new document will involve the Canal Place Preservation and Development Authority, National



North Branch Potomac River Levee

Park Service, and Downtown Development Commission in a coordinated, comprehensive planning effort to address the planning needs of these entities. The new plan will include the Center City neighborhood. Therefore, that planning document, when completed, will be adopted by reference into the City's 2013 Comprehensive Plan. Consequently, readers of this neighborhood element should refer to that associated planning document for more specific details and information regarding the Center City neighborhood.

III. Rolling Mill Neighborhood

A. Overview & Historical Sketch

The Rolling Mill neighborhood is one of the City's most active and organized neighborhoods. For purposes of this plan, the neighborhood is generally bounded by I-68 on the north, Woodside Ave. and Ascension Street on the east (including both sides of Maryland Avenue to Lamont Street), Lamont Street on the south, and Industrial Boulevard on the east. Most of the Rolling Mill neighborhood, as delineated for this plan (including the new Queen City Centre Shopping Plaza), has been envisioned by the Downtown Cumberland Business Association (DCBA) to be a Downtown Cumberland commercial district. For a more detailed discussion of the DCBA's 2003 downtown marketing and wayfinding plan, please refer to the Center City Neighborhood chapter (Chapter II).

The neighborhood is served by the Rolling Mill Neighborhood Association, which helped the City schedule, conduct, and advertize the City's neighborhood meeting process. At the Association's request, a total of two meetings were conducted in the neighborhood on January 7 and February 4, 2010. The first meeting was dedicated to presenting and discussing background information compiled by staff. Neighborhood issues and needs were identified and discussed at the second meeting. A total of 24 participants attended the two meetings.

Rolling Mill neighborhood traces its history back to the earliest days of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad (which later became the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad, also known as the Chessie System, and is now owned by CSX Railroad). The railroad first reached the City from Baltimore in 1842. The namesake and major employer of the neighborhood, the B & O Railroad's Rolling Mill plant, was one of the City's leading industries from its completion in 1879 through the early portions of the twentieth century. It was located at the current site of the Queen City Centre shopping plaza anchored by Martin's supermarket. The dedication of land by the City in 1867 for construction of the plant spawned considerable investment activity in Cumberland, including the construction of Maryland Avenue and several other streets and homes on the east side of the railroad. The plant produced rails for the expanding railroad, but also included a brick plant that provided bricks for many of the neighborhood's earliest homes—examples of which remain today. Workers at the plant earned some of the highest wages that had been paid in the City during that era—between \$3 and \$10 per day. In 1920, the plant became known as the B & O bolt and forge shop. Beginning in the early 1970's the plant housed the railroad's Engineering Department until the facility was demolished in the 1980's.

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The New Queen City Center Plaza

Redevelopment and reuse of the site after the plant closed was slow to occur, due to perceived concerns of site contamination and the costs that would be involved in cleaning up the site. In 1997, the Rolling Mill plant site was approved by the Maryland Department of the Environment as the State's first Brownfield cleanup and redevelopment project. The redevelopment of the site as a new urban shopping center is a source of great pride for the neighborhood, and helped bring long desired economic vitality back to the community.

Another prominent historic feature of the Rolling Mill neighborhood is the former Klots Throwing Company plant, commonly known as the "Klots Mill." Located on Gay Street just south of the Rolling Mill plant on the southern fringes of the neighborhood, Klots Mill processed raw silk into thread that was wound onto sewing bobbins. Built in 1902 and operated into the Great Depression, the mill became a major employer of women in the City. In 1958, the mill was converted into the Tri-State Discount Center. As of the writing of this plan in 2010, the mill and its site are being converted into a low-to-moderate income apartment/townhome housing project.



**The Former Klots Mill Throwing Company
from the Herman & Stacia Miller Collection**

The Rolling Mill neighborhood is witnessing significant change by virtue of its strategic location along the main highway corridors between the City's two main traditional commercial districts—downtown Cumberland and Virginia Avenue. The City recently completed a street improvement project along the Maryland Avenue corridor (2008-2009) that repaved and widened the travel lanes on the street, improved the existing sidewalks, and provided new streetscaping improvements. The street improvements were undertaken to provide better traffic access to the new Queen City Centre shopping plaza and to the Virginia Avenue commercial corridor, which is being similarly revitalized today. In addition, the neighborhood can expect continued revitalization activity beyond the current Klots Mill project. The remaining portions of the Rolling Mill site have yet to be redeveloped and the Cumberland Housing Authority is planning a major redevelopment for the Fort Cumberland public housing project.

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B. Neighborhood Demographics

Rolling Mill is the City's smallest residential neighborhood, in terms of total population. According to the 2000 Census, nearly 1,000 people currently live in the neighborhood. The population declined by roughly 6% between 1990 and 2000, which is about half of the overall rate of population decline that occurred in the City over the decade. The neighborhood has a slightly higher percentage of non-white population than the City as a whole.

Despite the overall decrease in population, the number of working-age adults (between 18 and 64) increased slightly between 1990 and 2000, and the number of school-aged children (between the ages of 5 and 18) remained stable. However, the number of children under the age of 10 decreased significantly during the 1990's, which suggests that, absent any reversal in the rate of childbirths or in-migration, the number of school-age children will begin to decline in future decades.

The number of housing units in Rolling Mill grew slightly between 1990 and 2000, and stands at about 500 total units. The number of owner occupied units increased significantly over the decade, and by 2000 stood at just over half of all housing units, as opposed to just under half in 1990. Although the number of owner occupied units increased by roughly 10% during the 1990's, the number of vacant units grew by a much higher rate (40%) over the decade, with over half of that growth attributable to an sharp increase in vacant rental units. This general trend occurred in other residential neighborhoods, especially in the City's east side.

The overall educational achievement levels of the neighborhood's residents improved between 1990 and 2000. In 1990, only about one of every four residents had attended some college or received a college degree. In 2000, that percentage of the population had increased to one out of three. This trend suggests that either existing residents are obtaining higher levels of education or that those people moving into or staying in the neighborhood have a higher level of education than those who have left.

The mean value of owner-occupied homes increased significantly between 1990 and 2000 from about \$32,500 to just under \$50,000. Roughly half of all home owners in the neighborhood have no mortgage on their homes and have lived in their homes for more than five years. Nearly 2/3 of all housing units in the neighborhood were built before 1940. These three factors remained unchanged through the 1990's.

Of particular concern is a finding that the mean household income for workers in the neighborhood remained relatively unchanged through the 1990's at about \$24,250, and roughly 30% of all persons for whom poverty status was determined in 2000 were living below the poverty level. Since average wage levels in the City increased over that period, this data may suggest that the majority of the people who have left the neighborhood earned higher wages.

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The range of occupations held by workers in the neighborhood became significantly less diverse through the 1990's and increasingly concentrated in clerical, sales, and service occupations. These jobs tend to earn minimum wages, and Federal minimum wage standards remained relatively stable during the 1990's and only began to increase significantly in the late 2000's.

Although the neighborhood can be characterized as a walkable, urban community, the percentage of workers commuting to work by walking, carpooling, or transit decreased from about 20% in 1990 to 2% in 2000. This trend, however, represents a small number of residents and is based on sample survey data.

The overall increase in educational attainment and mean home value during the 1990's are positive trends for the neighborhood. As further redevelopment activity continues, the public image of the neighborhood as a desirable and convenient residential location within the city should improve. Like the Westside neighborhood, there is a need to see this increased educational attainment translate into higher average incomes. The lack of significant growth in this core statistic during the 1990's is a concern for the city's policy makers. The Klots Mille redevelopment project and the proposed revitalization of the Fort Cumberland housing project may not, in and of themselves, cause any significant change in that measure. The availability of additional jobs in the neighborhood may provide opportunities for income growth, assuming that the jobs offer salaries that exceed minimum wage well and can be secured by neighborhood residents. The increase in workers holding clerical, sales, and service occupations suggests that neighborhood residents possess the skills and work experience that would be desirable to the expanding commercial business opportunities in the neighborhood.

C. Land Development Patterns

This section of the plan is not intended to provide a detailed technical analysis of land uses in the neighborhood. Instead, it is written to provide a generalized overview of the neighborhood's predominant development patterns to provide a better understanding of the neighborhood's character and a context for understanding growth and development issues and needs within the neighborhood. A more detailed assessment of land use patterns, as required by Maryland Law, is provided in the City-Wide element of the plan.

Rolling Mill's industrial heritage has long since passed. The neighborhood is now characterized as an emerging residential/commercial transition zone between the City's traditional downtown area and the Virginia Avenue commercial district. Virtually all of the neighborhood's commercial development is concentrated in the northern and western portions of the neighborhood from the Maryland Avenue exit from I-68 south to the Queen City Centre (formerly the Rolling Mill plant site). Most of the businesses, which serve a regional market, are

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accessed from Park Street, Williams Street, and Maryland Avenue. Slightly more than half of the neighborhood's overall land area is commercially zoned.

Vacant residential units within the neighborhood are most heavily concentrated in the northern commercially zoned areas between Williams Street and I-68. Many of these dwellings are in poor structural condition. A 2002 windshield housing survey conducted for the City by The Faux Group identified significant areas of blighted housing in and around the Rolling Mill neighborhood. According to the study, the areas between Williams Street and I-68 received the lowest average score for housing conditions within the City. The study recommended that the City consider acquiring abandoned properties in the area.



Looking North along Maryland Avenue

While the northern portions of the neighborhood have significant numbers of vacant and substandard homes, other sections of the community are showing signs of private investment in redevelopment. Many of the older homes in the neighborhood were built of good materials and construction practices, which helped them survive years of neglect. Consequently, the potential that they can be salvaged and rehabilitated is relatively strong. Many of the newer residents to the neighborhood have restored their homes, adding value to the community and raising property values.

The City rezoned the areas between Williams Street and I-68 to Highway Business as part of the 2008 Comprehensive Rezoning to help promote commercial redevelopment of the vacant and dilapidated structures concentrated in this area. Efforts to establish small neighborhood businesses in former residential structures in this part of the neighborhood failed in recent years due to the lack of off-street parking opportunities that could be created on the small lots to support the proposed commercial uses. The Planning Commission felt that wholesale revitalization would not occur on a parcel-by-parcel basis because of the small size of the properties and the considerable expense involved in restoring or removing the original structures.

The Highway Business zone was chosen as a way to encourage the aggregation and wholesale redevelopment of these properties for several reasons. First, the area's proximity to the Maryland Avenue Exit and I-68 on one side and the Queen City Centre plaza and associated commercial uses on the other side make it both a prime and logical location for commercial uses, rather than residential uses. Second, the cost of acquiring the parcels and removing the

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unsalvageable buildings would be too great to justify smaller scale development. The need for land to satisfy the minimum off-street parking requirements for redevelopment further justified the need to provide for large scale redevelopment. The most critical challenge for future redevelopment in this area will be to encourage an urban design pattern that will ensure a smooth and compatible transition from the newer commercial development to the established and historic residential fabric of the remaining areas along the east side of Maryland Avenue.

Such a focus on building design and context is important to ensure that the value of the remaining residential buildings, many of which have significant historic value and appeal and have received considerable private rehabilitation investment, will not be destabilized or diminished by future commercial redevelopment in the neighborhood. By providing new opportunities for wholesale or large scale commercial redevelopment between Williams Street and I-68, the potential return on investment should be high enough to warrant greater investment in development design. Consequently, the high intensity commercial rezoning of the area provides a way to leverage and internalize the investment cost of higher quality and contextually sensitive future development design.

In addition to redevelopment opportunities, the Rolling Mill neighborhood also offers significant infill development opportunities. Only a portion of the former Rolling Mill site was redeveloped when the Queen City Centre plaza was built. Roughly half of the plant site remains vacant and undeveloped. This area was zoned for business commercial uses in the 2008 Comprehensive Rezoning. In addition, the neighborhood has a number of scattered vacant lots created by the removal of dilapidated residential structures. A number of these former residential lots have remained undeveloped for many years and they are in the process of successive vegetation. While these sites offer infill residential opportunities, many of these lots may pose significant redevelopment cost constraints that will limit their appeal to prospective homeowners until such time as overall property values in the neighborhood increase. Some of these lots may provide opportunities for adjoining homeowners to expand their residential yards, build a garage, and/or provide space for off-street parking.



Maryland Avenue Homes

The Rolling Mill neighborhood is the first residential neighborhood to have created an urban community garden. The garden is located on one of the neighborhood's vacant lots on Maryland Avenue, which is now owned by the City. The original house that once stood on the lot was destroyed by fire many years ago. In 2006, the Rolling Mill Neighborhood Association approached the City with a concept for a community garden, and was given approval to begin

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the project. The Association allows residents to plant vegetables, fruits, and herbs on individual plots on a first come-first served basis. Planting began in the spring of 2009. Reports on initial harvests from the garden are highly encouraging.

D. Cherished Features

During the neighborhood meeting process, participants were asked to identify features of the neighborhood that help define the neighborhood's unique or special character and features and places that bring people together and foster social interaction. These features are important to understand, as they contribute to neighborhood identity and they help strengthen the essential social bonds between residents that make people feel an attachment or bond with their neighborhoods they live in. If these special features are not understood, protected, and reinforced when future development and changes occur within the neighborhood, residents may feel a sense of "loss" that can eventually result in declining civic pride and reduced investment in maintaining their properties. It is essential that these features be captured, celebrated, and promoted as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the most special and attractive aspects of urban neighborhood living are not lost to future generations.

Participants attending the Rolling Mill neighborhood meetings identified a lengthy list of defining characteristics and features. For detailed locations, please see the Defining Characteristics Map in Appendix E. They are listed below in no particular order:

- The former Rolling Mill plant and the current Queen City Plaza (Martins)
- The best views of the downtown skyline framed against the Narrows can be obtained from the Rolling Mill neighborhood
- There are more trees (wooded areas) and undeveloped properties in Rolling Mill than in most neighborhoods
- The former Klots Mill (Klots Throwing Company building) on Gay Street
- The Fort Cumberland Public Housing Project
- Corwell's Meat Market (formerly Wilson's on West Oldtown Road)
- Friendship Haven Church
- The neighborhood has a compact development pattern that makes it easily walkable, but it is not too crowded
- Maryland Avenue
- The Crow Bar at Willison Place (recently renamed Patrick's Pub)
- The historic architecture of the homes in Haley's Addition, particularly the Francis Haley House
- The billboards at the corner of Williams Road and Maryland Avenue
- The new community garden – the first neighborhood common garden in Cumberland

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- The former Kid’s Corner children’s clothing consignment store
- The different look of the older brick homes that were made with bricks from the Rolling Mill plant

The neighborhood’s image is defined by a number of factors that represent both positive improvements in and the historic negative public perception of the neighborhood. The former Rolling Mill and Klots Mill plants contributed greatly to the neighborhood’s identity and provided a major source of jobs for its residents, which promoted social interaction and a sense of shared lifestyles and values. Their closures contributed greatly to the neighborhood’s decline and removed critical sources of jobs. However, the redevelopment of the Rolling Mill site as the Queen City Shopping Plaza has improved the public perception of the neighborhood, boosted civic pride and a sense of optimism for the future, and provided a new social gathering place for residents.

Likewise, residents identified the relatively large number of trees and wooded areas in Rolling Mill as a defining character. However many of those trees are growing on lots that became vacant due to the removal of former vacant commercial and residential structures. The neighborhood’s community garden initiative highlights a creative way that the City can turn such liabilities into assets that help the neighborhoods achieve their visions and reinforce social ties between neighborhood residents and overall allegiance to their neighborhoods. However, care should be taken when creating a community garden on former development sites to ensure that the soils are suitable for the crops that will be planted and that the soils are not contaminated by former uses of the site.



View of Downtown Cumberland from Industrial Boulevard

The residents also identified the outstanding traditional views of the City’s downtown skyline framed by the Narrows that can be obtained from the Rolling Mill neighborhood as a defining feature, but the perceived lack of street access and connectivity with the rest of the City was considered a problem. Participants felt that the close proximity of the neighborhood to I-68 and its relatively poor accessibility to other sections of

the City helped attract the drug trade, which is seen as a problem and an obstacle to overcome in achieving the neighborhood’s vision.

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Another defining feature of the neighborhood, its main street (Maryland Avenue), contributes to negative public perceptions because of its historic association with the local drug trade. However, the positive improvements made to the street by the City in 2008 and 2009 helped bring new traffic and shoppers to the neighborhood, resulted in much needed sidewalk improvements, and helped improve the appearance of the neighborhood.

The Fort Cumberland public housing project on Lamont Street is a residential community often associated with the neighborhood. Its design reflects the former Urban Renewal-era public housing design concept of concentrated mid-to-high density apartment blocks. This design also contributes to the poor public perceptions of the neighborhood. However, the Cumberland Housing Authority is embarking on a major effort to



Fort Cumberland Homes

redesign and redevelop the project with a different design focus of lower density housing in a way that integrates the units with the rest of the neighborhood and provides better access to community services, sources of jobs, and shopping opportunities. The new project will also help residents transition to eventual home ownership, rather than just offering rental units. If successful, the residents of the new project will feel better connected with the neighborhood and will take a greater interest in its improvement.



The Frances Haley House

Citizens also identified the distinctive historic architecture of the neighborhood as a defining character. This architectural theme is reflected in the homes of the Haley addition to the City, including the recently restored Francis Haley house on Maryland Avenue. Another distinctive feature of the historic homes in Rolling Mill is that many of the bricks used to build the homes were manufactured by a plant on the former Rolling Mill site. Citizens also identified open front porches on the homes as a cherished characteristic that should be preserved, as they provide a

convenient and traditional place for residents of the neighborhood to interact and socialize as they walk the streets.

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Citizens identified a number of important social gathering places as important elements of the neighborhood that should be retained and reinforced. Since it is not likely that the historic industries which served as common sources of jobs for the residents can be replaced, these gathering places serve as the only remaining places where residents can meet and socialize. The gathering places identified by the workshop participants are listed below:

- The City's Main Post Office
- The Queen City Plaza at Rolling Mill with Martins Supermarket and the Community Room
- The new community garden
- The two churches in the neighborhood
- Front porches on the homes along the street where people can sit and converse with neighbors
- Wide sidewalks with benches
- The Crow Bar at Willison Place (now named Patrick's Pub)
- Russ Bittner's Barber Shop at the corner of Louisiana and Maryland Avenue
- Miller's Iron Gym (now Energy Fitness) across from Chick Fillet
- The informal parklets in the neighborhood
- Corwell's Meat Market (formerly Wilson's) on West Oldtown Road
- Bachman's Storage Facility Parking Lot serves as a traditional teen hangout place, but a better and safer place is desired to address the social needs of the neighborhood's children
- Chick Fillet, which supports and provides space for neighborhood functions and events

This list includes the two churches in the neighborhood, the main Post Office, the Queen City Plaza (especially the Martins supermarket and the community room located within it), the new community garden, the wide sidewalks with benches, the informal parklets in the neighborhood, and a number of the small businesses in the neighborhood, such as the Crowbar, Russ Bittner's Barber Shop, Miller's Iron Gym (now Energy Fitness), and Corwell's Meat Market. The Chick Fillet restaurant was identified as an important neighborhood business and gathering place, because of its strong support for the neighborhood and for its practice of hosting neighborhood functions and events. The former Kid's Corner consignment shop for children's clothing was identified as a former important gathering place for parents. The relocation of this business out of the neighborhood was seen as a significant loss to the residents. These small businesses serve basic neighborhood needs and should be encouraged in the neighborhood. Several of them were also identified as defining qualities of Rolling Mill.

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be replaced, these gathering places serve as the only remaining places where residents can meet and socialize. They include the two churches in the neighborhood, the main Post Office, the Queen City Plaza (especially the Martins supermarket and the community room located within it), the new community garden, the wide sidewalks with benches, the informal parklets in the neighborhood, and a number of the small businesses in the neighborhood, such as the Crowbar, Russ Bittner's Barber Shop, Miller's Iron Gym, and Corwell's Meat Market. The Chick Fillet restaurant was identified as an important neighborhood business and gathering place, because of their strong support for the neighborhood and for offering to host neighborhood functions and events. The former Kid's Corner consignment shop for children's clothing was identified as a former important gathering place for parents. The relocation of this business out of the neighborhood was seen as a significant loss to the residents. These small businesses serve basic neighborhood needs and should be encouraged in the neighborhood. Several of them were also identified as defining qualities of Rolling Mill.

E. Issues & Needs

The neighborhood identified a number of important issues needs that it wishes to be addressed through the plan. They include, in no particular order:

- A full service community center, where programs for children can occur and to serve as a primary setting for social and family function (which could include a playground);
- A small business incubator site to encourage entrepreneurialism in the neighborhood;
- A neighborhood playground/recreational complex;
- Additional sidewalk improvements and repairs (like the improvements that were done as part of the 2008-09 Maryland Avenue street improvement project);
- Bike lanes on the main streets;
- Expanded handicapped access facilities in the public rights of ways;
- Replacement or repair of the sewer mains serving the Fort Cumberland Housing Project;
- Restoration of abandoned residences;
- Improved traffic access to and from downtown and the rest of the City;
- Increased street lighting and security cameras;
- Increased opportunities for public and/or off-street parking, and
- Increased funding and regulatory enforcement to remove blighted and unsafe buildings.

1. Strengths & Opportunities

Important assets and opportunities in Rolling Mill include the ongoing redevelopment of the Rolling Mill site, which has brought a source of new clerical and retail job opportunities and

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basic retail and service opportunities into the neighborhood. Not only does the redevelopment project help improve public perceptions of the neighborhood as a place to live; it will also help increase neighborhood property values, which will spur additional new investment and revitalization activity.

Other important neighborhood assets include the local business owners who provide support to the community and support from the active arts community in Cumberland, which the neighborhood seeks to expand upon and attract. The citizens also noted that the number of children in the neighborhood presents an important opportunity to build upon the special talents and skills of the adult community to focus on business and service needs for children (daycare, tutoring, health, recreational and social outlets, clothing, clothing repairs, etc.). This will not only promote entrepreneurialism in the neighborhood, it will also empower residents of the neighborhood to share skills and build social connections with other residents of the neighborhood. By building upon these asset bases, the neighborhood can strengthen its retail base and create a more vibrant community.

The redevelopment of Fort Cumberland as proposed by the Cumberland Housing Authority was viewed as a potentially positive opportunity to turn an unfavorable aspect of the community into a positive one. If undertaken as proposed by the Housing Authority – replacing traditional apartment buildings with affordable condominiums, townhomes, and single family homes, it has the potential to encourage some of the rental community residents to become more involved in the community and to become more invested in its revitalization and improvement efforts.

2. Concerns & Problems

The principal obstacles, impediments, and threats to achieving these improvements reflect a number of the current problems that the citizens identified. Chief among them is citizen apathy, especially as it relates to the community of renters and absentee landlords in the neighborhood. Although the number and percentage of rental units in the neighborhood decreased in recent years, the vacancy rate for rental units increased at a much higher rate. The improvement and/or removal of vacant and blighted residential structures was identified as a significant neighborhood problem. Citizens also cited a need for more vigorous enforcement of building safety codes.

While the Rolling Mill Neighborhood Association is recognized as the neighborhood's greatest leadership asset and has achieved a high level of community involvement, it has been unable to engage the citizens of the community who are not resident homeowners. Of course, this is not an uncommon situation in other neighborhoods and other cities.

The perceived lack of access and connectivity to other parts of the City was seen as a major obstacle for the neighborhood to overcome. The neighborhood is confined by natural features

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(including the ridgeline rising to the east of Maryland Avenue and the Potomac River) as well as a number of man-made barriers, such as the railroad, Industrial Parkway, and I-68. Although Maryland Avenue is directly accessed from Exit 43-D of I-68, it is difficult to navigate into the neighborhood from the freeway. I-68 and Oldtown Road serve as the only major access and outlet points into the rest of the City.

Declining incomes and increasing poverty levels were also identified as major obstacles, as was the limited availability of public and private resources to address neighborhood improvement needs.

3. Future Vision

As part of the neighborhood meeting process, each neighborhood was asked to identify a specific future vision for the neighborhood. Citizens attending the Rolling Mill meetings expressed the following vision for the neighborhood:

The future vision of the Rolling Mill neighborhood is to create a diverse neighborhood where people care about each other and share common social bonds that is safe, festive (both socially and artistically), pedestrian friendly, eco-friendly, vibrant (both socially and economically), and projects a dignified public appearance.

F. Recommendations

The City's Planning Coordination Team met on February 18, 2010 to discuss the issues identified at the Rolling Mills neighborhood meeting and to offer suggestions and ideas on how they can be addressed. In evaluating the needs and issues, the staff sought to distinguish between perceptions and fact and worked to identify positive and realistic solutions to the complex issues identified by the participants. In some instances, staff realized that a deeper understanding of the issues would address or resolve some the concerns. Where appropriate, those explanations are provided. In other instances, the issues or problems are beyond the City's ability to resolve.

The neighborhood's desire for greater connectivity with the downtown area was discussed. Staff noted that traffic access is better than many other neighborhoods (and options to improve that are limited by the railroad, topography, and I-68), but that pedestrian access could be improved. Staff also recognized that residents from the southern portions of the neighborhood (in the vicinity of Gay Street) often walk across the remaining vacant lot on the former Rolling Mill site immediately south of the Queen City Plaza, then proceed along the front of the Queen City Plaza and diagonally across the Auto Parts Store lot to East Harrison Street and across the CSX tracks into the downtown area. While adequate land exists to provide a more permanent pedestrian trail across the Rolling Mill site, construction would require easements and

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cooperation from the various property owners, because the City does not own the land. Additional sidewalk improvements can be considered as part of future street improvement projects, but it is unknown if people would use improved sidewalks along the streets, since they are avoiding the sidewalks to use the unimproved short-cut across the Rolling Mill site. The City should give special attention to future pedestrian access and circulation as part of any development proposal for the remaining undeveloped portions of the Rolling Mill site.

The desire for separate bicycle lanes on the City's streets would be difficult to implement, since many of the City's streets have travel lanes that are barely adequate for today's vehicles and widening of the streets is not possible without removing homes and businesses that front tightly on them. A shared travel lane or bikeway system would be easier to establish, and the City's Bicycle Advisory Committee, established in 2009, is working actively to design such a system.

With regard to code enforcement concerns, the City is currently undertaking aggressive code enforcement efforts. Code enforcement efforts often require considerable time for staff to identify and contact property owners, especially where the property has been conveyed to multiple heirs or inheritors. Staff will continue to work with neighborhood groups and the general public to address concerns about the code enforcement process, including legal timeframes related to the enforcement process. Staff will also explore means to increase funding levels to address blight removal, including establishing an impact fee for new construction that would help to finance demolition projects.

Handicapped access improvement needs in City rights-of-way are being addressed through the City's CDBG program. The City needs help from residents to identify specific needs that should be addressed. Residents should be asked to notify the Community Development Department of any areas where such improvements are needed to determine if any of the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funding is available to address those needs and to ask that the street be considered for any current or future funding assistance.

The need for additional parking is a city-wide issue that has few easy or simple solutions. Requirements for adequate off-street parking to be provided with each development are often criticized as impediments to business development and revitalization on small urban lots. This issue has made it difficult for prospective business and apartment developers to rehabilitate and redevelop a number of the abandoned homes in the neighborhood. However, if the City were to abolish off-street parking requirements, then competition for the constrained supply of public on-street parking would become intense, and people who have become dependent on these spaces would quickly demand that the City do something to protect their traditional source of parking. If the City were to propose the construction of new public parking, which in an urban setting typically involves construction of an expensive parking garage, the cost would affect the current tax rate, which would draw taxpayer scrutiny and concern. Although the need for increased parking is almost universally acknowledged, it is very difficult to find a solution that a

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majority of the public will accept—especially in a smaller urban community like Cumberland, where viable public transportation options are limited.

The Planning Coordination Committee has discussed the notion of identifying satellite off-street parking areas that could be used to provide additional parking for workers with transit service to deliver the employees to their places of employment. This strategy has been conceived as a way of alleviating parking conflicts between employees and patrons in the downtown area, but can be applied to other areas where concentrated employment centers exist. Most of the parking needs in the Rolling Mill neighborhood are related to residential uses, which lack the space needed for off-street parking. All of the new employers in the neighborhood satisfy the current requirements for off-street parking.

The best source of land for additional off-street parking is from the re-use of former dilapidated housing. The cost to the City to develop parking areas on these lots can be quite high relative to the number of people who will benefit. One way to address this issue would be for homeowners in the neighborhood to share the cost to develop off-street parking lots on vacant lots that will not be redeveloped for additional housing or used for public parking.

The residents also expressed a desire for a neighborhood community center and/or recreation center with a possible playground. The only playground in the neighborhood at this time is located at the Fort Cumberland public housing project. Since the Cumberland Housing Authority is discussing plans to redevelop this project, opportunities to create a neighborhood community center should be discussed as part of that project.

The redevelopment of Fort Cumberland was also discussed. Information obtained from the neighborhood meetings suggest an interest in building new low and moderate income residential units similar to the concept currently under development at the Cornerstone Hill project on Navy Way. Although the idea of relocating the housing units to the undeveloped portions of the Rolling Mill site was suggested at one of the meetings, staff noted that this area has been zoned for commercial development because it was seen as one of the few remaining large sites in the City ideally located and suited to commercial development. Residential uses are not allowed in that zone. The property also is owned by CSX railroad, and may be quite expensive to acquire for housing, since the railroad values the property for commercial development. The CSX property is recognized as a “Brownfield” for all construction above ground.

It was suggested that a good alternate site for housing redevelopment would be to acquire the Klavuhn’s Moving and Storage property and the adjoining but currently vacant Crites warehouse site along Gay and Glenwood Streets. These uses currently do not conform to the urban residential zoning of those properties, and are currently underutilized. Using these alternative sites would allow the proposed replacement housing project to be integrated into the rest of the neighborhood in a way that conforms to established zoning patterns. This would allow the

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current Fort Cumberland housing project to be redeveloped in a way that could address some of the neighborhood's other needs, such as a community center that would build upon the adjoining playground at that site.

IV. Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill Neighborhood

A. *Overview & Historical Sketch*

Known historically as one of the City's most ethnically and culturally diverse communities, the Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhood did not really begin to develop until after the Civil War in the late 1800's. The impetus for development came from the continued growth and expansion of railroad operations in the City that had previously given birth to the Rolling Mill and Decatur Heights neighborhoods a decade or more earlier. The neighborhood became home to a German enclave, centered around Oak Street, an Italian community known as "Little Italy" on the lower west side between Third Street and Virginia Avenue, and a less concentrated Irish population that came to work for the railroad. These ethnic communities have given the Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhood a rich and colorful cultural heritage that distinguishes it among the City's other residential neighborhoods and helped it produce a special commercial district that has been known as the City's "second downtown."

Prior to the influx of national chain stores and the development of the suburban Country Club Mall in the late 1970's, the Virginia Avenue shopping district was a thriving and fully self-sufficient neighborhood commercial district. According to Dan Whetzel's 2007 publication, *A Photographic History of Cumberland, Maryland*, a 1929 survey of businesses along Virginia Avenue identified a wide array of services, including grocers, barbers, a wall paper shop, plumbers, drug stores, cigar shops, jewelers, shoe repair shops, dry goods stores, the A&P Tea Company, furniture stores, a cigar shop, saloons, theaters, billiard halls, clothing stores, churches, and the Virginia Avenue School. The commercial enterprises that exist today are only a shadow of the retail community that thrived during the City's golden years.

"The Avenue," as it has been known over the years, originally developed to serve the expanding community of railroad workers in South Cumberland and the residential neighborhood that grew around it. Workers at the nearby Rolling Mill plant earned some of the highest wages that had been paid in Cumberland at that time. Employment opportunities in the neighborhood expanded with the arrival of new industries in the area that were attracted to the railroad. Chief among these industries were the South Cumberland Steel and Tin Plate mill in 1872, the Klots Throwing Company mill in 1902 (along the neighborhood's northern boundary with Rolling Mill), the Warren Glass Works below the neighborhood on Queen Street, and a box factory farther to the south. These jobs opportunities provided a stable source of income for neighborhood residents and contributed significantly to its affluence and ability to support a thriving commercial district.

For the purposes of this Plan, the Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhood is bounded by Oldtown and Lamont Streets on the North, South Street on the East, the CSX Railroad on the

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South, and the North Branch of the Potomac River on the West. Virginia Avenue runs north and south through the heart of the neighborhood, basically dividing it into two separate U.S. Census Bureau enumeration tracts. The neighborhood is served by two distinct and active civic associations, the Chapel Hill Neighborhood Association and the South Cumberland Business and Civic Association (SCBCA). The SCBCA is the largest neighborhood or civic association by membership in the City. The City's neighborhood meeting for Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill was conducted on February 25, 2010. Members of both associations participated in the neighborhood meeting. A total of 8 citizens attended the meeting.

B. Neighborhood Demographics

The Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhood is the third most populous of the 11 neighborhoods defined for the Comprehensive Plan, with a total population in 2000 of about 3,000 people. Only the Mapleside/Johnson Heights and Wills neighborhoods had larger populations. Census data indicates that the neighborhood's population declined by approximately 14% between 1990 and 2000, which was higher than the rate of decline for the City as a whole. The neighborhood's racial composition is only slightly more diverse than the city's overall population.

All major age groups in the neighborhood declined between 1990 and 2000, with the greatest decrease occurring in the senior population (those aged 62 years and more), which registered a 23% decrease over the decade. Declines in the number of school-age children (5-17 years) and working age adults (18-64 years) were only slightly less than the overall rate of population decline in the neighborhood, ranging between 12% and 14%.

The total number of housing units in the neighborhood declined by about 2.5% during the 1990's, and currently stands at a total of about 1,550 units. However, the number of vacant units in the housing stock grew by about 75% over the decade, from 166 total units in 1990 to about 290 in 2000. Approximately 80% of the growth in vacant homes can be attributed to an increase in vacant rental units.

The number of owner-occupied housing units decreased by about 6% between 1990 and 2000, while the number of renter-occupied homes decreased by about 16%. The higher rate of decrease in renter-occupied homes over the period resulted in a slight (4%) *relative* increase in the percentage of owner-occupied homes in the housing stock. Roughly half of all occupied housing units in the neighborhood were occupied by owners in 2000.

The percentage of residents who remained in the same house within the neighborhood for at least five years before the Census was taken remained fairly stable at about 60% from 1990 to 2000. In addition, the percentage of housing units in the neighborhood that were built prior to

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1940 also remained the same throughout the decade at about 62%. The Census reports that fewer than 10 housing units were added to the neighborhood between 1980 and 2000.

Despite the decline in population and the limited housing construction activity in the neighborhood over the decade, Census data indicates that the mean value of owner-occupied homes increased from \$33,800 in 1990 to slightly over \$50,000 in 2000. However, the percentage of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood for which the owners had no mortgage decreased slightly (3%) from about 60% in 1990 to 57% in 2000.

The mean income for neighborhood households grew from about \$17,500 in 1989 to about \$25,500 in 1999. This growth in mean incomes helped produce a decline in the percentage of neighborhood residents who lived below the national poverty level, from about 33% in 1990 to roughly 30% in 2000.

According to 2000 Census figures, roughly 25% of all neighborhood residents over the age of 25 had earned a college degree or had attended some college classes. This represents a slight (3%) increase over the corresponding levels in 1990.

The number of working residents in the neighborhood who walked to work or used public transit declined by about 3% between 1990 and 2000, and currently stands at roughly 7%. The top two occupations for workers living in the neighborhood remained the same between 1990 and 2000, with the labor force dominated by workers in the Sales (including clerical and office) and Service occupations. However, the labor force was more highly concentrated in the top two occupations in 2000 than it was in 1990. In 2000, the top two occupations accounted for more than half of the neighborhood's workers, while only Service sector jobs accounted for slightly more than 20% of the employed residents in 1990.

The neighborhood's significant rate of population decline is an important issue to address, given the fact that it is the City's second largest neighborhood. Changes in population trend within this neighborhood would have a significant impact on the City's overall rate of growth. Housing vacancy rates appear to reflect this trend.

The relative shift in favor of owner-occupied housing in the neighborhood is a very positive demographic trend. Many of the residential neighborhoods in that part of the City are showing trends in the opposite direction. The increasing mean value of owner-occupied homes suggests that the neighborhood is attractive to potential home owners.

These trends help justify the City's current investment in the Virginia Avenue project. Efforts to reconstruct the street, improve sidewalks, finance building façade restoration, encourage infill development opportunities, and enhance streetscaping should help make the most visible face of the neighborhood more attractive to future home owners and reinforce the appreciation in home value that was evidenced during the 1990's.

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C. Land Development Patterns

This section of the plan is not intended to provide a detailed technical analysis of land uses in the neighborhood. Instead, it is written to provide a generalized overview of the neighborhood's predominant development patterns to provide a better understanding of the neighborhood's character and a context for understanding growth and development issues and needs within the neighborhood. A more detailed assessment of land use patterns, as required by Maryland Law, is provided in the City-Wide element of the plan.

As discussed in the introduction to this chapter, the Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhood has an extensive commercial and retail sector. Largely confined in the neighborhood's early years to Virginia Avenue between First Street and what is now Industrial Boulevard, many highway commercial uses have become established along Industrial Boulevard as the traditional traffic patterns shifted to the new highway. In recent years, the Virginia Avenue Commercial district has received new attention and development activity, thanks



Looking South along Virginia Avenue

to the 2006 Virginia Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan, which identified a series of street, infrastructure, restoration, and streetscaping improvement needs to revitalize the district.

In implementing this plan, the City pooled funds from a number of grant programs, including the Appalachian Regional Commission, Community Development Block Grant, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act to initiate a major street improvement and revitalization project for Virginia Avenue. The project includes street surface revitalization and resurfacing, infrastructure improvements and upgrades, sidewalk and crosswalk improvements, the installation of street trees, period lighting, and other furnishings. The street improvement project is scheduled to be completed in October 2010.

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The City also initiated other complementary programs to encourage building revitalization and to improve and restore the Springdale Park. New public and private development projects that have been built along or adjacent to the Virginia Avenue corridor over the past five years (2005-2010) include the new Human Resources Development Commission's building, the Allegany Radio Corporation headquarters building, and a Rite Aid Pharmacy. As these buildings were



Chapel Hill Home before Facade Revitalization



...And after Revitalization

developed, several blighted and dilapidated buildings were removed. In addition, many existing commercial and neighboring residential buildings in the neighborhood have received façade improvement and restoration grants and tax credits through the City's Virginia Avenue Area for Targeted Revitalization program. Funding for the revitalization program activities has come from the Community Legacy Program, Appalachian Regional Commission, and Community Development Block Grant. So far, the program has helped a number of residential, commercial, and rental property owners in the neighborhood renovate their building facades. A number of additional properties have received program assistance for interior renovation work and building upgrades to support residential and business stability and retention.

The need for these revitalization efforts were clearly reflected in the 2002 housing conditions survey conducted by the Faux Group (the consulting firm that prepared the 2006 Virginia Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan). Of the 14 sections of the City surveyed for the study, the Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhood had the second lowest overall housing condition rating (exceeded only by Rolling Mill). The study recommended acquiring blighted properties through foreclosures and rehabbing the Virginia Avenue commercial corridor.

Although the neighborhood has a number of problems relating to housing conditions, the current revitalization effort has made great strides in restoring neighborhood confidence and optimism in the future and in making visible improvements to the neighborhood's overall appearance. Many of the remaining homes in the neighborhood have significant historic appeal and integrity that make them good potential investment properties. The vast majority of these homes reflect the neighborhood's Victorian design influence. Infill development opportunities

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exist throughout the neighborhood, which should be developed in a design that would be consistent with the neighborhood's architectural heritage. A number of these vacant lots have been converted to private parking lots, due to the need for additional off-street parking to support expanding business development along the Virginia Avenue commercial district.

D. Cherished Features

During the neighborhood meeting process, participants were asked to identify features of the neighborhood that help define the neighborhood's unique or special character and features and places that bring people together and foster social interaction. These features are important to understand, as they contribute to neighborhood identity and they help strengthen the essential social bonds between residents that make people feel an attachment or bond with their neighborhoods they live in. If these special features are not understood, protected, and reinforced when future development and changes occur within the neighborhood, residents may feel a sense of "loss" that can eventually result in declining civic pride and reduced investment in maintaining their properties. It is essential that these features be captured, celebrated, and promoted as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the most special and attractive aspects of urban neighborhood living are not lost to future generations.

Participants attending the Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhood meeting identified a number of defining characteristics and features. For detailed locations, please see the Defining Characteristics Map in Appendix E. They are listed below in no particular order:

- The South Cumberland Library—Virginia Avenue is the only neighborhood that has a branch library
- The South Penn Elementary School
- The South Cumberland Post Office on Virginia Avenue
- The neighborhood's Italian and German ethnic heritage
- The annual Halloween Parade on Virginia Avenue
- The Virginia Avenue commercial district

Half of the features in the list are important public buildings that also serve as social gathering places for the residents. These buildings represent the primary civic centers for the neighborhood, the loss of which would diminish the neighborhood's identity and role as a center of community for the surrounding residential areas.

Although only one of the three primary public buildings in the neighborhood is located on Virginia Avenue, the commercial district and the annual Halloween Parade conducted along it

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are two additional features that are identified with the neighborhood. The parade and the strong ethnic heritage in the neighborhood represent strong cultural features that must be retained and celebrated to preserve the spirit of the community that underlies its special and unique character.

The meeting participants also listed a number of additional social gathering places that are important places for residents to connect and socialize. They are as follows:

- The two neighborhood parks – Springdale and Smith
- The South Cumberland Library and its community meeting room
- The active neighborhood associations, including Chapel Hill and the South Cumberland Business and Civic Association
- The new HRDC building which is becoming a new center of activity in the neighborhood and draws people into the neighborhood from other parts of the City and County
- The Virginia Avenue commercial district



The South Cumberland Library

Most of the neighborhood's significant social gathering places are tied to or adjacent to the Virginia Avenue commercial district. The neighborhood's two active neighborhood organizations provide both a social outlet and strong voice for neighborhood needs, but would benefit from better communication and coordination in their efforts.

E. Issues & Needs

The neighborhood identified a number of important issues needs that it wishes to be addressed through the plan. They include, in no particular order:

- More parking opportunities
- A transit bus pull-off and shelter
- Continued and increased blight removal and property upkeep
- Encourage more homeownership in the neighborhood to help transition renters and increase community involvement and concern
- The alleys that carry traffic on a daily basis need to be resurfaced or improved

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- Retain streetlights in the neighborhood—a question was asked if the City could have a program whereby property owners could pay a supporting fee to the City to keep the streetlights in front of their property lighted
- A sit-down family restaurant

The first three issues identified are elements discussed in the 2006 Virginia Avenue Corridor Redevelopment Plan. The City has been unable to address the off-street parking needs, because it has not been able to acquire the properties that would be needed. Many of the existing private parking lots are too expensive for the City to purchase. The same problem exists with the plan's proposal for a transit bus pull-off and shelter. This bus stop was envisioned to be constructed on what is now private property which the City could not afford to acquire. The City strongly urged the HRDC to provide a bus stop and shelter as part of their development plan, but had no authority to require it, since the Zoning Ordinance does not currently require such improvements. The City continues to pursue removal of blighted properties, but this process takes time to identify and establish contact with the legal property owners and to complete through the courts. This time delay often gives the appearance that nothing or not enough is being done to address the issue.

1. Strengths & Opportunities

Strengths and opportunities in the neighborhood include the two Neighborhood Associations, the Virginia Avenue Redevelopment project, and the New HRDC building and businesses that have been built in the neighborhood. There is a sense that commercial vitality on the Avenue is beginning to recover and that bodes well for both property values and job opportunities in the neighborhood.

2. Concerns & Problems

The lack of parking and a perceived increase in low income rental units were identified as significant concerns. Participants also noted a general reluctance to move beyond the problems of the past and accomplish things that will make the future better. For many residents in the neighborhood, there has been a lingering perception that the City's leadership favored the downtown area over Virginia Avenue and that is why so many of the neighborhood's needs were not addressed. Now that the City has undertaken the Virginia Avenue Redevelopment project, a number of residents feel that their concerns are being heard and that they would like to see a greater focus on the next steps in the revitalization process that will follow the current project.

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3. Future Vision

As part of the neighborhood meeting process, each neighborhood was asked to identify a specific future vision for the neighborhood. Citizens attending the Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill meeting expressed the following vision for the neighborhood:

To create a safe, clean, drug-free, pedestrian and bicycle friendly mixed income neighborhood.

F. Recommendations

The Planning Coordination Committee met on March 11, 2010 to discuss the input received at the February 25 neighborhood meeting. The Committee devoted considerable time to discuss the concerns raised about low income and Section 8 rental housing. This issue was raised as a concern in the neighborhood due to the perception that rental owners and tenants have not become actively involved in the neighborhood and that their properties are among the more poorly maintained in the neighborhood. Additional concerns were voiced regarding provisions of the Section 8 program that would allow people in other parts of the State to transfer into Cumberland, where housing costs can be lower; thereby creating a market for rental units that would encourage growth in rental conversions and units and a decline in home ownership. The Committee felt that many of these perceptions, while not uncommon, may not be justifiable.

The City of Cumberland currently operates a rental unit licensing program. This program was designed to ensure that rental housing units are improved and maintained to satisfy basic code, livability, and health and safety standards. All housing units that will be leased for rent must register with the program. The program requires that an inspection be conducted of the unit prior to leasing for occupancy. It also requires an inspection when renter complaints are received and before a new tenant occupies the unit. In the past, these inspections were conducted by City staff. When the work load demand for inspections began to exceed the staff's capacity to perform the inspections, the program requirements were altered to allow the landlords to perform self-inspections. If this change in the policy is not resulting in satisfactory housing condition inspections, then it may need to be reconsidered. However, the City currently lacks compelling information to conclude that the program is not achieving its objectives.

In addition to the basic code compliance enforcement for all rental housing afforded by the City's rental unit licensing program, the Section 8 program requires pre-occupancy and annual inspections of all rental units that receive Section 8 voucher subsidies. Additional inspections may be performed when tenant complaints are filed. The standards that must be satisfied through these inspections exceed those required by the City's adopted codes. These inspections must be conducted by Section 8 program staff, which is housed at the Human Resources Development Commission office on Virginia Avenue. These inspections should provide

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additional assurance that rental units participating in the Section 8 program are maintained in accordance with basic health and safety standards. The City has no regulatory mechanism to routinely inspect owner-occupied homes after construction or alteration is complete, nor are they inspected when a change of ownership occurs.

It is also important to understand that specific rental units are not classified as “Section 8 units.” The Section 8 voucher is granted to renters who satisfy the program’s criteria, not the rental unit owners. Any rental unit can be approved for residency by a renter that has been granted a Section 8 voucher, if it satisfies the program’s inspection requirements. If a renter who receives a Section 8 voucher leaves a unit that was inspected and approved for occupancy under the Section 8 program, it can be rented by any tenant, whether or not that tenant holds a Section 8 voucher. The Section 8 voucher only serves as a rental subsidy to the unit owner that covers the difference between the rental price and the amount of rent the tenant can afford to pay. In that regard, the Section 8 voucher can be seen as a federal subsidy to help renters afford to live in rental housing that meets basic code and livability standards that they might not otherwise be able to afford. Consequently, the program helps support rental unit price levels in the community at a level that would better assure proper maintenance by the unit owner.

Another misconception in the neighborhood is that the voucher transfer provision of the Section 8 program encourages renters from more expensive areas of the State to relocate to Cumberland, thereby increasing the demand for rental units in the City. Currently, the City’s Section 8 program has only enough funding to issue vouchers for slightly less than 50% of the actual demand for them. Section 8 statistics at the time of the neighborhood meeting show that a total of 397 renters have been issued Section 8 rental vouchers, while the waiting list contains another 401 names. Program statistics also show that only one Section 8 voucher transfer into the City limits was approved during the last year. That tenant moved from Keyser, WV and has since returned there. While it is always possible that some Section 8 program renters may desire to move to Cumberland to obtain lower cost housing, the voucher would not ensure that the renter could afford to live in Cumberland without a local job and income to cover the remaining costs of living. It is also equally reasonable to assume that some Section 8 renters currently living in Cumberland would seek to relocate to other areas of the State for higher paying job opportunities.

In addition, the City’s overall population levels have remained relatively stable during the first decade of this Century. Census data compiled for the neighborhood meeting show that the lion’s share of the increase in housing vacancy rates within the neighborhood between 1990 and 2000 was driven by the growth in rental vacancies. If the Section 8 program were encouraging new residents to move into the City, then the rental vacancy in the neighborhood rate should be declining, not growing. These statistics do not provide any compelling evidence that the Section 8 program has encouraged a flood of incoming residents from other parts of the State.

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The neighborhood meeting participants also expressed a desire for increased home-ownership opportunities and assistance in the neighborhood. Staff acknowledges this desire and agrees that increased home ownership would help improve neighborhood pride and involvement in all neighborhoods. However, it is important to remember that the cost of homeownership is often more expensive than many residents can afford. The current National and International Recession was triggered primarily by the prevalence of sub-prime mortgages that created homeownership opportunities for many people who could not otherwise qualify for a conventional mortgage and were not ultimately financially sustainable over the long term. The City will need to balance policies to incentivize expanded homeownership opportunities with job and income growth.

The issue of streetlights was also discussed. The current financial constraints of the Recession forced the City to reduce many of its expenses, including the cost of streetlighting, to balance its budget. One participant at the neighborhood meeting asked if property owners could pay a fee to the City to subsidize the cost of retaining street lights in front of their properties. Allegany Power does offer a program for property owners to pay for street lighting in front of their homes. Interested residents should inquire directly to Allegany Power to request that service.

The desire for a bus shelter was also discussed. This was an improvement that was envisioned by the Virginia Avenue Redevelopment Plan, but had to be abandoned because the City could not obtain the land along Virginia Avenue that was needed to erect a bus shelter. The City had originally urged the Human Resources Development Commission to provide a bus shelter as part of their new building construction plans, but that element did not materialize. The City does possess a used shelter that was requested to be removed from a parking lot in the Downtown area. That shelter was financed by a grant obtained for the downtown area (the City's designated transportation center), but the City *may* be able to explore the possibility of relocating it along Virginia Avenue, if the relocation would be consistent with the original funding requirements. However, the City would still need a location where the bus shelter can be installed, if it should be determined that it can be relocated to that area.

In discussing the need for more public parking opportunities, which is emerging as a recurring issue in the neighborhoods, the Committee discussed the potential for a new program that might provide some parking demand relief, particularly for the businesses along Virginia Avenue. The Committee recommends that the City consider establishing one or more satellite parking facilities (one such opportunity would be a portion of the now vacant parking garage at the former Memorial Hospital site) that could be used by business employees along Virginia Avenue, the downtown area, and other commercial districts where parking is limited. To ensure use of the lots, the City could create a transit shuttle service to transport workers to and from the satellite parking lot and their place of work. The cost for this program could be subsidized by parking fees, a contribution from employers (who would benefit from the increased availability of local parking for their customers), a new fee-in-lieu of providing a percentage of the on-site off-street parking spaces required by the Zoning Ordinance, or some combination of

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these funding options. This concept should be explored in greater detail in the City-Wide Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

With regard to the need for improvements in alley pavement conditions, the Committee recognizes this issue as a city-wide need. Overall street conditions in the City have deteriorated over the years, because the City has been unable to secure the financial resources to satisfy the overall paving need. In the past few years, the City has adopted a pavement management system to prioritize and schedule the repaving and improvement of every street in the City, including the major alleys. If travel conditions are a significant safety concern on any specific alley, those concerns should be brought to the attention of the Street Maintenance Division of the Public Works Department until such time as the City can afford to repave or reconstruct the alley, as the case may be.

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V. Decatur Heights Neighborhood

A. *Overview & Historical Sketch*

Although Decatur Heights is one of the City's early expansions, it really began to flourish around 1840, just before the Baltimore and Ohio railroad arrived in 1842. According to the City's 1976 Keller Report, the neighborhood had developed sufficiently by 1847 for sidewalks to be built along Decatur Street. The report also notes that Decatur Street and its associated side streets (Charles, Fulton, and Glenn) contained the largest concentration of mid-nineteenth century architecture in the City at that time. A number of these buildings have since been removed, due to deterioration. However, Decatur Street and its pleasing mix of historic commercial and residential structures offer an attractive urban setting and have significant and substantial revitalization potential.



Decatur Street Homes



The Footer Mansion

During its early development, Decatur Heights was one of the City's premier residential neighborhoods and was home to an elite population, which is reflected in the quality and elegance of its architecture. Prominent residents include Dr. Thomas Koon and Joseph W. Footer, Vice President of the former Footer Dye Works facility located at Canal Place in Downtown Cumberland. The business, which operated in various locations from 1870 through 1937, cleaned and dyed fabrics for an enormous world-wide market that allegedly included European royalty and former Presidents of the U.S. The Footer Mansion remains as one of the neighborhood's prominent homes from the height of its development, along with the numerous other architecturally significant buildings that comprise the Decatur Heights National Register Historic District.

Another major force in the development of the Decatur Heights neighborhood was the construction of the Baltimore Turnpike or the "Bank Road," which eventually channeled into the

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City along Baltimore Avenue. This portion of the National Road was a privately funded eastern extension and upgrade of the route to Baltimore, which later became U.S. Route 40. Along with the eventual construction of Henderson Avenue, which basically parallels Centre and Mechanic Streets on the opposite side of the CSX railroad, the neighborhood eventually became a major gateway into the downtown area from both the north and east.



**Former Western Maryland Hospital on Baltimore Avenue
from the Albert & Angela Feldstein Collection**

Another historic feature of the Decatur Heights neighborhood is its role in the foundation of the City's medical community. Both of the City's two original hospitals, the public Memorial Hospital and the private Sacred Heart Hospital—which were recently consolidated into the new Western Maryland Regional Medical Center on Willowbrook Road—were originally established in the Decatur Heights neighborhood. Memorial Hospital was constructed in 1892 on the current site of the 11-story Cumberland Manor apartment building, and was known by the names of Allegany Hospital and Western Maryland Hospital in earlier years.

Prior to its relocation onto Seton Drive in the 1980's, the Sacred Heart Hospital and its campus were located on the east side of Decatur Street. Only the original stone retaining wall now remains to mark its location. A portion of the site was redeveloped in 2007-08 as part of a planned townhouse development. The long presence of these hospital facilities in the neighborhood explains why Decatur Heights was attractive to medical professionals, like Dr. Koon.



**Former Sacred Heart Hospital on Decatur Street
from the Albert & Angela Feldstein Collection**

Other prominent features in the neighborhood's history include the African Methodist Episcopal Church and the Carver Community Center, both of which are located along Frederick Street. The Carver Community Center began its life in 1921 as the Cumberland High School—a segregated public school for the education of African Americans in Allegany County and portions of West Virginia. An influential Principal of the school worked to change the school's name to the Carver School in 1941 in honor of Dr. George Washington Carver. Both of these buildings are cultural landmarks of the African American community in Cumberland.

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The AME Church

For the purposes of this plan, the Decatur Heights neighborhood is generally bounded by Baltimore Avenue, the unnamed alley behind Helen Street, and Linden Street on the north, I-68 on the east, Queen City Drive on the south, and Alley #19 on the west. The eastern portions of the neighborhood (up to Footer Place and Bellevue Street), has been envisioned by the Downtown Cumberland Business Association (DCBA) to be a Downtown Cumberland commercial district. For a more detailed discussion of the DCBA's 2003 downtown marketing and wayfinding plan, please refer to the Center City Neighborhood chapter (Chapter II).

The neighborhood's residents are served by the Decatur Heights Neighborhood Association, which is one of the most active associations in the City. The Decatur Heights neighborhood meeting, which was conducted at a regular meeting of the Neighborhood Association on March 15, 2010, attracted the highest attendance of any of the individual neighborhood meetings conducted for the 2013 Comprehensive Plan with 17 total participants.

B. Neighborhood Demographics

Census data for the Decatur Heights neighborhood is very limited. Since it is a small neighborhood with irregular boundaries, Census data for Decatur Heights cannot be captured using the census enumeration boundaries for which sample survey data can be released. Only data from the 100% population count was available for analysis in this plan. Consequently, the data analysis for this neighborhood is limited to the most basic population statistics collected by the Census Bureau for all households.

The Decatur Heights neighborhood has a total 2000 Census population of about 1,500 residents, ranking 7th out of 11 neighborhoods in total population. The neighborhood's overall population has decreased by roughly 9 percent between 1990 and 2000, which is about the same as the city's overall rate of decline during the decade.

Roughly 84% of the neighborhood's population is white. Overall, the neighborhood's racial composition and profile are more diverse than for the City as a whole, and the most diverse of any of the City's other residential neighborhoods.

The adult population in the neighborhood declined between 1990 and 2000. The greatest overall decline was in the senior population (62 years and over), which decreased by more than 25% over the decade. The number of working age adults (18-64) decreased at a much lower rate (3.5%) than for the neighborhood as a whole. However, the number of school age children (age 5-17) actually increased by 5.5% during the decade, from 255 in 1990 to 269 in 2000. This

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increase may be somewhat short-lived, because the number of pre-school children decreased from 149 in 1990 to 107 in 2000. Since the children in this age group in 2000 will become part of the school-age population in 2010, the overall trend in the number of children may begin to decline at that time.

The total number of housing units in the neighborhood decreased very slightly (roughly one percent) between 1990 and 2000 and stands at just over 1,000 units.

As in many of the City's other residential neighborhoods, the number of vacant housing units increased by nearly 50% between 1990 and 2000. This rate of increase is similar to the Rolling Mill neighborhood, but lower than Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill. Approximately 60% of the growth in vacant housing units during the decade was driven by an increase in vacant rental units. This pattern is also reflected in other residential neighborhoods across the City.

The number of owner-occupied housing units declined by roughly 6% between 1990 and 2000, while the number of renter-occupied units decreased by about 15%.

About one-third of all occupied housing units in the neighborhood in 2000 were owner-occupied, which was a slight (2%) increase over the percentage in 1990. The percentage of owner-occupied housing units in Decatur Heights is very low, as compared with adjoining neighborhoods and the rest of the City.

The estimated mean value of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood was about \$27,000 in 1990. No data on owner-occupied house values was available from the 2000 Census.

C. Land Development Patterns

This section of the plan is not intended to provide a detailed technical analysis of land uses in the neighborhood. Instead, it is written to provide a generalized overview of the neighborhood's predominant development patterns to provide a better understanding of the neighborhood's character and a context for understanding growth and development issues and needs within the neighborhood. A more detailed assessment of land use patterns, as required by Maryland Law, is provided in the City-Wide element of the plan.

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Decatur Heights has experienced significant changes in its economic mix throughout its history. In the early years, it was one of the City's prominent residential neighborhoods marked by major institutions, including the AME Church, the Baltimore Street YMCA building, and the City's two early hospitals. Businesses eventually became established on Decatur Street, Baltimore Avenue, Frederick Street, and Henderson Avenue/Front Street. Many of these businesses, especially along Baltimore Avenue and Frederick Street, have closed



Mix of Uses along Decatur Street

over the years, and the many of the prominent historic homes have deteriorated. Of the 15 districts across the City evaluated in the 2002 Faux Group housing conditions survey, the Decatur Heights neighborhood ranked 10th in terms of overall housing conditions.



Commercial Rehab at Decatur St. & Baltimore Ave.

Major changes are beginning to occur in the neighborhood. As of the writing of this plan, the Allegany County Tower building on Glenn Street is being revitalized. It will eventually house some medical offices and an expanded Veterans Administration clinic. As noted in the Introduction to this chapter, residential redevelopment of the former Sacred Heart Hospital site was initiated in 2007, although the project developer defaulted during the Economic Recession of the late 2000's, and the project has not yet been completed. Eleven (one third) of

the townhomes proposed for the site were completed before the project was secured over by the lending institution. Banneker Gardens, a 25-unit apartment complex, is being developed by the Cumberland Housing Authority to replace a former 30-unit mid-rise apartment complex, and Cornerstone Hill, a 42 unit residential development consisting of townhomes and single family detached dwellings, was under construction along James Day Drive in 2010. Finally, several mixed use commercial buildings at the intersection of Decatur Street and Baltimore Avenue were rehabilitated during the mid-2000's.



The Vista Tower Rehab Project

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Additional potential for redevelopment exists within the neighborhood as well. The City, in cooperation with CSX Railroad, is working to secure grant financing for the redevelopment of the Amtrak Railroad Station on Front Street. The project will include streetscape improvements around the station. The growth and development that is occurring along Willowbrook Road also has the potential to incentivize revitalization along Baltimore Avenue, which links Willowbrook



Recent Goethe Street Residential Rehab

Road at I-68 with Downtown Cumberland. Baltimore Avenue has several existing deficiencies, including steep grades, sharp curves with tight curb radii, limited parking opportunities, and incomplete sidewalks. The City is discussing a future revitalization project for this corridor that would include Goethe Street. Goethe Street has many historic homes that could be rehabilitated to create affordable, trendy (eclectic), and convenient homes for the professionals working along the emerging Willowbrook

Road corridor. The future growth potential of this corridor could provide an opportunity to revitalize the neighborhood's residential image and restore a measure of the neighborhood's early prominence.

Widespread blighted housing conditions and poor property upkeep, especially along Baltimore Avenue and the upslope streets along the southeastern boundaries of the neighborhood, are two of the most significant concerns in the neighborhood. Strategic removal of unsalvageable homes would create opportunities for much desired parking to relieve the intense competition in the neighborhood for the limited supply of on-street parking. The intense use of on-street parking has created site visibility problems for traffic accessing Decatur Street and Baltimore Avenue from the side streets. This issue creates safety concerns for pedestrians and motorists, alike.

D. Cherished Features

During the neighborhood meeting process, participants were asked to identify features of the neighborhood that help define the neighborhood's unique or special character and features and places that bring people together and foster social interaction. These features are important to understand, as they contribute to neighborhood identity and they help strengthen the essential social bonds between residents that make people feel an attachment or bond with their

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neighborhoods they live in. If these special features are not understood, protected, and reinforced when future development and changes occur within the neighborhood, residents may feel a sense of “loss” that can eventually result in declining civic pride and reduced investment in maintaining their properties. It is essential that these features be captured, celebrated, and promoted as part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the most special and attractive aspects of urban neighborhood living are not lost to future generations.

The following list of distinguishing features and characteristics for the Wills neighborhood were generated by the meeting participants. For detailed locations, please see the Defining Characteristics Map in Appendix E.

- The neighborhood is at a key crossroad location for Henderson Avenue (traffic entering the city from the north) and Baltimore Avenue (traffic entering the City from the east) and serves as a key gateway into Downtown Cumberland
- The three historic graveyards in the neighborhood
- Carver High School/Community Center/Business Incubator
- The Metropolitan AME Church on Decatur Street
- The YMCA building on Baltimore Avenue
- The original sites for Western MD Hospital and Sacred Heart Hospital
- The Baltimore Street Railroad Crossing into Downtown Cumberland – should be enhanced as an attractive gateway between the downtown and neighborhood
- The awkward design and traffic circulation around the island at the intersection of Henderson Street and Baltimore Avenue is a well known feature of the neighborhood, but not necessarily in a positive way – a better solution is desired
- The close proximity to the downtown area makes it easy to walk into Downtown Cumberland
- The pleasing mix of residential and business uses along Decatur Street

The neighborhood’s identity is defined largely by the historic architecture of the older homes in the neighborhood. Decatur Street was the City’s earliest ‘fashionable’ streets, and a number of the City’s prominent residents built their homes in the neighborhood. The neighborhood’s favorable location at the end of Baltimore Street made it a major gateway to the historic Downtown area for traffic travelling



**The Dr. Thomas Koon House on Baltimore Avenue
from the Albert and Angela Feldstein Collection**

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along Henderson Street from the north and Baltimore Avenue from the east. As a focus for traffic into the City, Decatur Street, especially in the areas surrounding the Baltimore Avenue intersection, developed a pleasing mix of commercial and residential uses characterized by rich architectural styles. Although many of the neighborhood's buildings clearly show their age and would benefit from design-sensitive revitalization work, they strongly reflect the neighborhood's distinctive architectural style and early affluence.

The neighborhood is also distinguished by a number of important historic sites, including three historic cemeteries, the former Carver High School on Frederick Street (now a Community Center and Business Incubator), the Metropolitan AME Church on Decatur Street, the YMCA Building on Baltimore Avenue, and the original sites for both of the City's primary hospitals, the Western Maryland Hospital and Sacred Heart Hospital.

Participants also identified the traffic island at the intersection of Baltimore Avenue and Henderson Street as one of the neighborhood's distinctive features, although it is not necessarily a favorable feature. The awkward traffic patterns caused by the island create confusion for many drivers.

The participants also identified a number of important places where residents of the neighborhood gather to socialize or share information. Some of these places are informal gathering locations, but in the absence of major neighborhood employers, they serve as the primary places for social interaction. These locations are as listed below:

- The YMCA on Baltimore Avenue
- The Banneker housing project playground at the intersection of Frederick and Bedford Streets
- The Carver Community Center/Business Incubator on Frederick Street
- The Decatur Heights Neighborhood Association
- The Inn on Decatur Street
- Adams Funeral Home on Decatur Street
- The parking lot adjacent to the Footer Mansion serves as a gathering place for teens, but a better and safer location is desired

E. Issues & Needs

The meeting participants identified a lengthy list of issues and needs that they desire to see addressed. They include, in no particular order, the following:

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- Significant traffic and travel safety improvements for Baltimore Avenue—there are significant conflicts between traffic along Baltimore Avenue and pedestrians/parking/residential access and inadequate enforcement and/or signage of speed limits. The street also suffers from poor design (sharp curves, narrow travel lanes). Meaningful traffic calming and speed enforcement is greatly desired.
- A better way of controlling traffic at the intersection of Decatur Street and Baltimore Avenue
- Restrict travel on Decatur Street to one-way traffic only to alleviate growing congestion and improve access from side streets
- The fire hydrant in the 400 block of Decatur Street is not working and needs to be fixed—fire hydrants in general need to be tested and maintained more frequently
- A better play area in the neighborhood for children that is safe and away from traffic (to take the place of the parking lot adjacent to the Footer Mansion)
- A flashing warning light and/or traffic calming on the McMullen Bridge to make travelers realize they are entering a neighborhood area—travel speeds on the bridge are excessive
- Blighted properties require better maintenance, improvement, or removal
- The coordination of infrastructure maintenance and improvement projects in the neighborhood needs to be improved. The City has established a pattern of undertaking what amounts to quick-fix infrastructure improvements to solve a specific problem (such as breaking into the sidewalk to access a buried water valve) and then not finishing the repairs to the other affected infrastructure, thereby creating a perception of not completing the work.
- Removal/improvement of properties along Waverly Terrace and other areas where unsightly trash and personal belongings are visible
- Need to follow through on code violations
- The sidewalk along the north side of Davidson Street should be repaired/replaced

One of the greatest concerns to the neighborhood includes problems and issues resulting from the recent growth in traffic using Baltimore Avenue and Decatur Street. Both streets have relatively narrow traffic lanes to serve the growing volume, and many of the intersections are becoming unsafe. Travel speeds on Baltimore Avenue are a particularly sensitive topic in the neighborhood, as pedestrian travel and parking is becoming hazardous. Some of the residents report that they have suggested on multiple occasions that warning lights and signs be installed on the McMullen Bridge to advise motorists to slow down as they approach the neighborhood because the bridge is designed in a way that encourages speeding and pedestrian safety is at risk. Residents have also requested additional signage or improvements along Baltimore Avenue to slow traffic descending into the neighborhood from Willowbrook Road and the I-68 interchange.

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The intersection of Decatur Street and Baltimore Avenue is specifically perceived as dangerous, and residents of the neighborhood are concerned that their complaints about these problems have not been heard or addressed. Members of the Decatur Heights Neighborhood Association have repeatedly asked for help and offered suggestions to address these issues and wish to understand why they have not been addressed. Many residents in the neighborhood (some of whom were quite vocal at the meeting) perceive that their concerns are being ignored. This sense of frustration has carried through to other issues and needs that the residents identified.

Residents also expressed concerns about inadequate parking and traffic speeds on Baltimore Avenue. Some form of traffic calming solution is desired on Baltimore Avenue and the McMullen Bridge.

1. Strengths & Opportunities

Some of the more positive changes in the neighborhood include the recent Self Help Project, funded through the Community Legacy Program, which financed the conversion of five formerly abandoned or rental homes into owner-occupied homes. The Decatur Street Streetscape improvements, which resulted in period lighting, street trees, and sidewalk improvements, also were a positive improvement for the neighborhood.



Allegany Station Townhomes on Decatur Street

Participants also noted the opening of the Carver Community Center, the construction of the new townhouse units on Decatur Street (at the former Sacred Hospital site), and the ongoing redevelopment of the Banneker public housing project and the Allegany Tower on Glenn Street as positive changes.



Banneker Gardens Construction

Several strengths and opportunities were also identified by the meeting participants. They include active involvement in and genuine concern for the neighborhood exhibited by many permanent residents and local business leaders, the Decatur Heights Neighborhood Association, the historic architecture in the neighborhood, the proximity of the neighborhood to Downtown Cumberland as a prominent and walkable gateway to the City, the Carver Community Center, and the rehabilitation of the Allegany Tower building on Glenn Street.

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2. Concerns & Problems

When asked to list some of the negative changes in the neighborhoods, the participants pointed to the design of the McMullen Bridge (which created a barrier that divided portions of the neighborhood), and lingering problems with crime. The participants noted that crime has decreased in the neighborhood over time, but additional improvements and a greater effort to utilize neighborhood-based patrols, especially foot or bicycle patrols is desired.

The residents were also asked to identify obstacles, impediments, and threats to neighborhood vitality and improvement. Chief among them was a sense of apathy and non-involvement by absentee landlords and homeowners who don't properly or regularly maintain the condition of their properties. Scattered trash and blight are considered significant problems that need to be addressed. Some residents expressed concerns about the perception of fear that is generated by blight and crime in the neighborhood. Increased neighborhood police enforcement through neighborhood substations is desired.

3. Future Vision

As part of the neighborhood meeting process, each neighborhood was asked to identify a specific future vision for the neighborhood. Citizens attending the Shriver/McNamee meeting expressed the following vision for the neighborhood:

The overall vision for the future of Decatur Heights is to create a friendly, safe neighborhood that maintains the historic fabric of the streetscape and encourages population diversity.

F. Recommendations

The Planning Coordination Committee met on March 25, 2010 to discuss the issues and needs generated by the citizens who attended the March 15 neighborhood meeting. The following recommendations were identified by the Committee.

Most of the Decatur Heights Neighborhood's issues and needs relate to critical infrastructure deficiencies and problems—inadequate traffic controls on streets, faulty fire hydrants, insufficient recreational land, inadequate sidewalks, and uncoordinated or incomplete infrastructure work. The Planning Coordination Committee noted that a number of the specific problems were being addressed. These include the failed hydrant on Decatur Street and the delayed sidewalk repair. The sidewalk repair work (mentioned at the meeting) had been delayed due to weather conditions, which will not become favorable to complete the work until the beginning of the normal construction season.

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Staff noted that one way to help ensure that neighborhood concerns on infrastructure and construction projects are addressed more quickly may be to provide a better forum for communication. In some instances, staff feels that citizens may be contacting the wrong person about a problem, and it just doesn't get communicated through to the right person. Such a directory may help reduce those communication problems. It was suggested that the City develop a contact list to identify names and telephone numbers for the appropriate city official to call when a concern is raised. For example, the list would identify who to contact (with both telephone and e-mail addresses) for pot holes, water main breaks, sidewalk surface problems, etc. This list could be posted on the City's web site for easy reference and provided specifically to the presidents of each Neighborhood Association. This would be an appropriate way to disseminate that information to citizens when issues are raised. In addition, staff further suggested that a new incident or complaint reporting system could be established on the City's web site that would allow a citizen to select an issue or problem from a drop down menu, identify the location of the problem, list his/her contact information, and submit the report, which would be automatically routed to the proper City department for action or follow-up.

Many of the specific concerns raised by the citizens are highly interdependent and interrelated. Concerns about speeding could be best addressed through more periodic speed enforcement on Baltimore Avenue and Frederick Street areas. Based upon complaints received, the Cumberland Police Department has already implemented speed enforcement initiatives which are used in this area and throughout the City, which included the deployment of the speed monitoring trailer on Baltimore Avenue and was followed up by speed enforcement on this street by officers. These efforts will continue as traffic safety is one of the top priorities of the department. However, long term control of traffic issues will require a broader assessment of traffic calming measures, which involve structural improvements to reduce traffic speeds or discourage speeding.

Some of the concerns about rubbish and trash along the streets and on private properties can be temporarily addressed through the annual Day of Caring and Sharing, which is being planned to focus on the Decatur Heights neighborhood (specifically Baltimore Avenue and Goethe Street) in 2010. However, a long term fix for these problems and the other infrastructure and housing condition problems will require a long-term comprehensive neighborhood revitalization strategy or plan on the scale of the current Virginia Avenue revitalization project.

Consequently, the Planning Coordination Committee recommends that a focus be placed on a comprehensive infrastructure and streetscape improvement project for the Decatur Heights neighborhood after the Virginia Avenue project has been completed. The project would focus on Decatur Street, Baltimore Avenue, and Goethe Street, and would involve street, sidewalk, and streetscape improvements to help improve the quality and appearance of the public realm and promote greater private investment in adjoining property improvements. The project would explore the need to eliminate and remove substandard and blighted structures on

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Baltimore Avenue to determine where the street right-of-way could be expanded to reduce or eliminate the sharp curves, which create a travel safety hazard. As part of that assessment, optional traffic calming measures would be evaluated to reduce excessive travel speeds along Baltimore Avenue. The project would also explore options to address neighborhood recreational and sidewalk improvement needs. The City would need to explore funding options to cover the cost of these improvements. This long-range revitalization approach would provide a more permanent solution to the specific issues and needs raised by the citizens.

VI. Wills (North End) Neighborhood

A. Overview & Historical Sketch

The Wills Neighborhood, traditionally known as the “North End,” was named for this plan by the two major features that define neighborhood’s northern and western boundaries—Wills Mountain and Wills Creek, respectively. These features were named after Chief Wills, the leader of a small Shawnee community that lived along the Creek in the Narrows around the time that Fort Cumberland was originally built.



A Pioneer House at 531 North Mechanic Street

Portions of the neighborhood were among the first sections of the Cumberland that were developed. A number of these early homes, many of which are now sheathed in modern siding materials, are believed to remain in the Mechanic Street corridor north of the Railroad Viaduct. The 1976 Keller Architectural Survey of the City notes that the Canada/Viaduct district (along Mechanic and Centre Streets) is “filled with nineteenth and early twentieth-century buildings of major local significance.” A number

of early log cabins now bearing exterior siding can be found along the southern portions of North Mechanic and North Centre Streets in the neighborhood. One of these homes is located at 531 North Mechanic Street. A preliminary assessment of the interior of this building by a historic structures consultant suggests that it could date from the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Over time, the neighborhood expanded to the north and west as the City grew.

Another important historical feature of the Wills neighborhood is Mechanic Street, which became the National Road when the route was relocated from Greene Street and Braddock Road in 1834. The route was eventually paired with Centre Street when the two streets were changed to one-way traffic. Other prominent historic features include the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad Viaduct, which forms the southern boundary of the neighborhood and serves as a gateway into Downtown Cumberland; the Canada Hose Company



Canada Hose Company Building - N. Mechanic Street

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building, which when built in 1834 was the City's first fire station; and the adjoining Blue Spring, which was one the City's first major water supplies and a popular fishing spot.



The Former Cumberland Brewing Company Building

The neighborhood became the early home for many German and Irish settlers, who were drawn to work on the B & O Railroad and the C & O Canal. This cultural mix made the neighborhood a logical location for the City's two main breweries—the Cumberland Brewing Company and the Old German Brewing Company. These brewing plants were located near the intersection of North Centre and North Mechanic Streets until they merged and closed in the latter half of the twentieth

century. The German Brewing Company eventually grew to become the area's largest brewery and gained a strong regional reputation for its beer. At its peak, the plant had a capacity of 75,000 barrels and employed nearly 100 workers. The main building of its primary local rival, the Cumberland Brewing Company, still stands today and was recently renovated in 2009.

Perhaps the most prominent visual reminder of the neighborhood's nineteenth century heritage is the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad line that follows Wills Creek along the base of Haystack Mountain. The Wills neighborhood is the only residential area in the City along which a steam train still operates during the summer months. The popular Great Allegheny Passage recreational bicycle/pedestrian trail follows the Western Maryland Scenic Railroad right-of-way along the creek and through the Narrows on its way to Pittsburgh. The trail can be accessed directly from the neighborhood at the Valley Street trailhead on the south side of Wills Creek. The trail and railroad pass by the former "Narrows Park" that served as a major recreational area for City residents until it finally closed during the Great Depression.



Western Maryland Scenic Railroad

As referenced in this plan, the Wills neighborhood is generally bounded by the City Limits on the north, Wills Mountain and the Narrows on the west, the summit of Shriver Ridge and the CSX (formerly Baltimore and Ohio) railroad viaduct on the east, and Wills Creek on the south. It encompasses two historically distinct and National Register-eligible nineteenth century districts, formerly known as Canada/Viaduct and Dumbhundred. The Canada/Viaduct portions of the neighborhood, has been envisioned by the Downtown Cumberland Business Association (DCBA)

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to be the “Olde North Cumberland” Downtown Cumberland commercial district. For a more detailed discussion of the DCBA’s 2003 downtown marketing and wayfinding plan, please refer to the Center City Neighborhood chapter (Chapter II).

The neighborhood is served by the North End Neighborhood Watch Association and Cumberland Neighborhood Housing Services, both of which meet monthly and are housed at the Canada Hose Company building. The Wills Neighborhood meeting was conducted in conjunction with a meeting of the North End Neighborhood Watch Association on April 22, 2010. A total of 10 residents participated in the meeting.

B. Neighborhood Demographics

The Wills neighborhood is the 2nd most populous of the 11 neighborhoods defined for the Comprehensive Plan, with a total population in 2000 of about 4,100 people. Only the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood had a larger total population. The 3rd most populous neighborhood (Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill) has more than 1,000 fewer residents. Census data indicates that the neighborhood’s population declined by approximately 9.5% between 1990 and 2000, which comparable to the City as a whole. The neighborhood’s racial composition is also comparable to the City’s overall population.

The number of school-aged children between the ages of 5 and 18 living in the neighborhood grew by 5% between 1990 and 2000, from approximately 675 to just over 700. The overall population decline in the neighborhood was driven by significant losses in the number of pre-school age children (0-4 years of age) and the senior population (ages 62 and over). These age groups declined by more than 25% between 1990 and 2000. The decline in the number of children between the ages of 0 and 4 years will eventually migrate into the school-aged population in the 2010 Census, suggesting that the growth in that age group may diminish over time without an influx of new children into the neighborhood. The number of working age adults (18-64) remained relatively stable during the 1990’s, with only a 2% decrease. This age group constitutes nearly 60% of the neighborhood’s total population.

The total number of housing units in the neighborhood decreased slightly between 1990 and 2000 and stands at about 2,250 units.

The number of vacant housing units increased by roughly 10% between 1990 and 2000--a significantly lower rate of change than in many other neighborhoods. However, the number of vacant rental units increased by more than 40% over the decade, which represents the lion’s share of the growth in vacant units. This pattern of significant increases in rental unit vacancies is generally consistent with the City’s other residential neighborhoods.

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The number of owner-occupied housing units decreased slightly (by less than 2%) between 1990 and 2000, while the number of renter-occupied units decreased by roughly 7%. Just over half of all occupied housing units in the neighborhood in 2000 were owner-occupied, as compared to only half in 1990. Since the total number of housing units in the neighborhood declined over the decade, the relative growth in owner-occupied units can be attributed to the faster rate of decrease in rental units during the 1990's.

The estimated mean value of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood was about \$42,250 in 1990 and just over \$61,000 in 2000, which ranks relatively high among the City's residential neighborhoods.

The percentage of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood for which the owner had no mortgage decreased from 58% in 1990 to just over 45% in 2000. This is a greater change than occurred in many other residential neighborhoods, and may be reflective of a slightly higher turnover rate in home owners over the decade.

The percentage of housing units in the neighborhood that were built prior to 1940 increased from 55% in 1990 to 60% in 2000. This trend suggests that more homes built after 1940 were removed from the housing stock, either through conversions or demolitions.

The neighborhood experienced a rapid growth in the number of residents over the age of 25 that had a college degree or had attended some college. According to the 1990 Census, just over 25% of the neighborhood's residents over the age of 25 had attended college classes or graduated from college after completing high school. By 2000, this percentage had increased to over 40%.

The percentage of all workers living in the neighborhood who traveled to work by walking or riding public transit remained stable between 1990 and 2000 at just over 10 percent. This factor declined significantly over the decade in many other residential neighborhoods across the City.

The number of residents living in the same house within the neighborhood five years before the Census was taken remained at just over 50% in both 1990 and 2000.

The mean household income within the neighborhood grew by roughly 1/3 between 1990 and 2000, from about \$22,150 to \$29,500.

In 2000, less than 25% of all persons living in the neighborhood for whom poverty status was determined were living below the poverty level. Roughly 12% of the impoverished residents were over the age of 65.

The top 3 occupations for workers living in the neighborhood in 2000 were Sales & Office Occupations, Service Occupations, and Management/Professional occupations. Each of these

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occupations employed 20% or more of the neighborhood's workers. The top 3 occupations for workers living in the neighborhood in 1990 were Service, Administrative Support (including Clerical), and Sales. No single occupation employed more than 20 percent of the neighborhood's workers.

The Wills neighborhood exhibits socio-economic and housing characteristics that suggest it is relatively average among the City's residential neighborhoods. The promising improvements in educational attainment and average housing values are somewhat offset by persistently low average incomes and high poverty rates, which represent indicators of economic distress. A concerted effort to address and improve these anemic socio-economic characteristics will be needed to sustain continued improvement in the neighborhood.

C. Land Development Patterns

This section of the plan is not intended to provide a detailed technical analysis of land uses in the neighborhood. Instead, it is written to provide a generalized overview of the neighborhood's predominant development patterns to provide a better understanding of the neighborhood's character and a context for understanding growth and development issues and needs within the neighborhood. A more detailed assessment of land use patterns, as required by Maryland Law, is provided in the City-Wide element of the plan.

The Wills neighborhood is framed by striking physical features on three sides—the Narrows and Wills Mountain on the west, Wills Creek on the south, and the railroad viaduct and Shriver Ridge on the east. These features make the Wills Neighborhood an important and well-defined transitional gateway from the City's boundaries at the Narrows into the downtown area—and vice-versa. This combination of historic man-made and natural boundaries creates an attractive and distinctive setting for the neighborhood.



The Narrows from North Mechanic Street

Generally speaking, the neighborhood's overall development patterns transition from a mixed commercial/industrial/residential urban setting (Canada/Viaduct) along the three major east-west streets (North Mechanic, North Centre, and Henderson Avenue) to a predominantly high density urban residential neighborhood (Dumbhundred) between Henderson Avenue and Independence Street, Walnut Street, and Shriver Avenue, to a medium density residential

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neighborhood beyond. This development pattern generally follows the historical progression and build-out of the neighborhood. The only major north/south street in the neighborhood is Valley Street, which provides a connection to the predominantly rural areas outside of the City limits in Allegany County and neighboring Pennsylvania.



The North Centre Street Playground

Recreational opportunities abound in the Wills neighborhood. The primary social, cultural, and recreational centerpieces are the popular North Centre Street Playground, the Jaycee's Park on Valley Street, and the Great Allegheny Passage Trail. Efforts are underway, as of the writing of this plan, to establish a second direct access to the Great Allegheny Passage Trail from the neighborhood along an old railroad spur and bridge that connects the trail with North Mechanic Street near the North

Centre Street intersection. The Jaycees Park is relatively underutilized. Additional recreational facilities and ballfields exist at the Braddock Middle School and Northeast Elementary School campuses in the neighborhood. Finally, a portion of the conservation lands owned by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources on the summit of Wills Mountain is located in the City, and the City holds a lease on the remainder of these lands. This property has potential for future passive recreational uses. A concept for a proposed mountain biking trail on Wills Mountain is discussed in the City's 2008 Trails and Bikeways Master Plan.

Development activity in the neighborhood since 2000 has been primarily limited to restoration and adaptive reuse of the neighborhood's older structures. Most of the undeveloped lots available for future infill development were created by the removal of blighted and dilapidated buildings and are scattered throughout the neighborhood. Structural conditions in the neighborhood, as documented by the 2002 Faux Group Housing Survey, are generally poor in the southern and eastern portions of the neighborhood. It is in these portions of the neighborhood that the highest concentrations of substandard buildings can be found, especially in the areas immediately north of Henderson Avenue, where many vacant buildings can be found. The northern and western sections of the neighborhood fared much better and were rated relatively average by the survey. The Cumberland Neighborhood Housing Services is actively working on plans to stimulate residential revitalization and redevelopment in the neighborhood by identifying and securing potentially marketable tracts of land and by providing access to building façade grants and loans for neighborhood property owners.

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The neighborhood's role within the City as a primary gateway to the downtown area is reflected in the current zoning pattern for the neighborhood. The most urban portions of the neighborhood (the Canada/Viaduct section of the neighborhood along Mechanic and Centre Streets) are subject to two special zoning districts that apply nowhere else in the City—the Gateway Commercial and Gateway Industrial Zones. These zoning districts provide for a wide mix of residential and commercial/industrial



North Mechanic Street Streetscape

uses at urban densities that are only slightly less intense than the Central Business District Zone. In addition, these special zoning districts apply a number of aesthetic standards designed to encourage and protect compatible and consistent building design to a greater degree than is addressed in the City's other zones. These standards have generated some debate because many of them are advisory in nature, not specific requirements that must be satisfied. A more determined evaluation of which standards should be compulsory rather than voluntary might address some of these concerns.

The Henderson Avenue corridor on the other side of the CSX railroad tracks is zoned for Highway Business (heavy commercial) uses. This zoning district is followed by an Urban Residential and an Estate Residential Zone as the overall residential development densities gradually decline to the north of Henderson Avenue. To a greater degree than in most other neighborhoods, the patterns of land use and historical development largely match this zoning scheme.

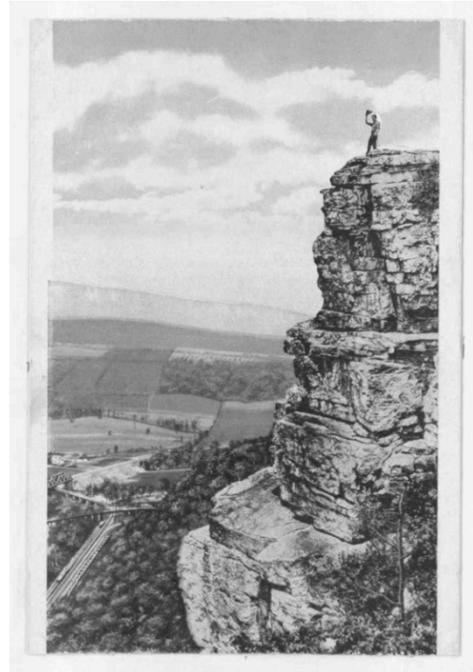
D. Cherished Features

During the neighborhood meeting process, participants were asked to identify features of the neighborhood that help define the neighborhood's unique or special character and features and places that bring people together and foster social interaction. These features are important to understand, as they contribute to neighborhood identity and they help strengthen the essential social bonds between residents that make people feel an attachment or bond with their neighborhoods they live in. If these special features are not understood, protected, and reinforced when future development and changes occur within the neighborhood, residents may feel a sense of "loss" that can eventually result in declining civic pride and reduced investment in maintaining their properties. It is essential that these features be captured, celebrated, and promoted as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the most special and attractive aspects of urban neighborhood living are not lost to future generations.

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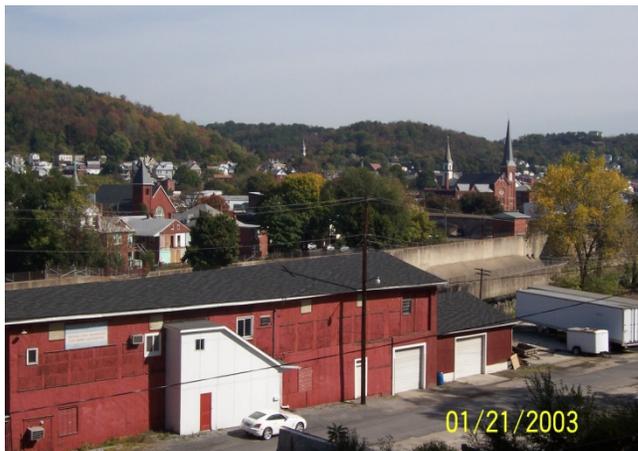
The following list of distinguishing features and characteristics for the Wills neighborhood were generated by the meeting participants. For detailed locations, please see the Defining Characteristics Map in Appendix E.

- The Narrows and Lover’s Leap – the neighborhood was a major gateway to the west
- The Mechanic Street and North Centre Street viaduct as a gateway to and from downtown
- The large churches and church bells
- The Great Allegany Passage Trail and the Valley Street Trail Head
- The various walking marathons and challenges that pass through the neighborhood
- Wills Creek and the flood control project
- Attractive historic architecture



Lover's Leap in the Narrows
from the Herman and Stacia Miller Collection

The participants identified a number of features that defines the neighborhood’s special character, including the Narrows and the CSX Viaduct, which serve as major gateways to and from the neighborhood, the large churches with bells and carillons that toll on the hours, the Great Allegany Passage Trail with the Valley Street Trailhead and parking lot, the various marathons and walking challenges that pass through the neighborhood, Wills Creek and the City’s big flood control project, and the attractive, historic architecture found throughout the neighborhood.



Church Steeples Tower over the Wills Neighborhood

Other important or defining features of the neighborhood that help bring residents together and encourage social interaction include the large and active churches in the area, the two primary neighborhood improvement entities—Cumberland Neighborhood Housing Services and the North End Neighborhood Watch, the North Centre Street Playground, local neighborhood businesses and the Southern States supply store, and the wide sidewalks along several streets that encourage pedestrian activity.

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The meeting participants were also asked to identify the primary places in the neighborhood where residents can meet one another and socialize. Within the Wills neighborhood, many of these locations are local businesses. The list of social gathering places identified for the Wills neighborhood includes:

- The historic churches in the neighborhood
- Cumberland Neighborhood Housing Services
- The North End Neighborhood Watch
- Wide sidewalks that create a very walkable neighborhood
- The North Centre Street Playground
- Local neighborhood businesses
- Southern States supply store

E. Issues & Needs

The April 22, 2010 neighborhood meeting participants generated a long list of issues and needs for their neighborhood. Many of them related to street and infrastructure deficiencies and general law and code enforcement issues. The only two needs that did not fall into one of those two general categories were the desire for a convenience or grocery store in the neighborhood and a call to eliminate utility lines, wires, and signs throughout the neighborhood that were no longer actively used or were otherwise not necessary. The composite list of issues and needs raised by the participants is provided below in no specific order:

- A convenience/grocery store
- Repair/improve the streets and water service—some higher elevations in the neighborhood experience periodic low water pressure—also a number of water main breaks due to aging lines
- Better follow-through and completion of repair projects. Many repair efforts do not restore site to original conditions
- Remove blighted properties, which create an arson risk
- Speeding—especially large commercial trucks traveling on Mechanic and North Centre Streets and Henderson Avenue—better speed enforcement
- Expanded enforcement of all City ordinances, especially noise, sanitation, and zoning

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- Streets are too narrow for traffic and on-street parking in some residential areas—the intersection of Pear Street and Henderson Avenue is a particularly dangerous intersection for school buses
- More one-way streets to allow greater room for on-street parking and to improve traffic flow
- More off-street parking
- Eliminate ‘obsolete’ utility lines/wires and signs
- A formal coordinated snow removal plan that directs people where to park so that snow can be cleared more efficiently and quickly

1. Strengths & Opportunities

Two of the most positive changes that have occurred in the neighborhood are tied to construction of the North Centre Street playground on a former neighborhood school site and the Great Allegany Passage Trail, both of which were identified as defining features of the neighborhood’s special character. Other positive changes include the neighborhood clean-up efforts, recent building façade repainting and rehabilitation projects sponsored by Cumberland Neighborhood Housing Services, and the opening of Page’s Ice Cream shop at the intersection of Mechanic and North Centre Streets.

Assets and opportunities identified by the meeting participants include the two primary neighborhood improvement organizations, the City’s reputable school system, the core group of homeowners and local business owners who are involved in the neighborhood, the churches, and the North Centre Street playground.

2. Concerns & Problems

Recent negative changes in the neighborhood include the increase in vacant buildings, which represent a blighting influence and an arson threat, the general trend towards an increasing percentage of rental units in the housing stock, a growing drug trade, and reduced neighborhood pride and involvement among the residents. The participants also identified an unintended consequence of the new ban on indoor smoking that has resulted in congregations of people smoking and drinking in front of local bars as a negative change.

Critical obstacles and threats to the neighborhood’s improvement efforts to address its needs include inadequate funding opportunities, declining rates of home ownership—which contributes to public apathy and reduced community involvement—and the need to address aging and outdated infrastructure. The participants also stressed the lack of control and vigilance over children as a potential threat to public safety within the neighborhood, especially where young children are allowed to walk or roam the streets unattended and groups of

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teenagers that congregate at night. A desire for a curfew was stressed as a possible way of curbing nighttime crime and vandalism.

3. Future Vision

As part of the neighborhood meeting process, each neighborhood was asked to identify a specific future vision for the neighborhood. Citizens attending the Shriver/McNamee meeting expressed the following vision for the neighborhood:

The vision for the Wills (North End) neighborhood is to create a clean, attractive, and safe community with police foot patrols and more active involvement by community residents.

F. Recommendations

The Planning Coordination Committee met on May 6, 2010 to discuss the input received at the April 22 neighborhood meeting. The following recommendations were suggested by the Committee.

Most of the issues raised at the Wills Neighborhood meeting were similar to issues raised in other neighborhoods. These issues include the need for water system improvements, lack of completion on infrastructure repair projects, removing/rehabilitating blighted properties, speeding, greater code enforcement, and the need for more off-street parking. These issues will need to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. Some of the concerns, such as speeding, blighted property removal, and code enforcement, are ongoing responsibilities of the City that will always merit improvement because of the City's limited staff and the scope of the problem or territory that must be covered. More details regarding the specific location or problem that is not being addressed is needed to resolve the issues. As was suggested in response to similar concerns raised by the Decatur Heights neighborhood, the City could create a list of contacts for specific infrastructure needs and issues that could be posted on the City's web site and distributed to the neighborhood associations, so that residents who identify a concern could know who to contact. The City can also explore creating a complaint reporting system on the City's web site.

Some of the issues identified, such as speeding and teen behavior, are issues in which the Cumberland Police Department is attempting to curtail by using proactive patrols as well as making traffic safety one of its top priorities. Increased enforcement and police visibility can help deter some of the activity. Several participants called for a "curfew" to reduce the number of teens and children roaming the streets or loitering at night. The City of Hagerstown was cited as an example.

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The City of Hagerstown's ordinance is very specific in its interpretation and application. The Hagerstown ordinance applies to children under the age of 17 and includes a number of specific exceptions that limit its jurisdiction. The fact that the ordinance is in the city code does not reflect a true picture of its application. The major issue when drafting and implementing a curfew ordinance is the constitutionality of the law. Several ordinances have been challenged and found to be unconstitutional. The issue of juveniles creating disturbances and violating other criminal laws can be and are dealt with using laws already in place to deal with these behaviors. A curfew ordinance would also create a need for additional officers to alleviate current staffing constraints. If a curfew ordinance was enacted, a critical issue in curfew enforcement would be to determine how to house and care for the juveniles who are caught violating the curfew when no guardian can be located. Teenagers cannot be placed in detention with adult prisoners, and the City does not have a special holding facility for teens. It has also been found that officers would spend a majority of their patrol time attempting to identify juveniles to determine their age and purpose for being out when in fact these individuals have committed no crime. In responding to past reports of teen activity in various areas around the City, Cumberland police officers have found that in many cases that the teens were not causing any specific problems and that the "perception" that a problem existed was mistaken.

Another way of addressing the problem of unsupervised or unengaged children in the City is to view the issue as an opportunity to engage them more constructively. In some cases, parents simply may not be aware of their children's behavior and may need to be reminded more regularly to become more involved. Such action could be encouraged by the Neighborhood Associations through special parent awareness programs or through reminders at neighborhood functions. In other instances, it is possible that the recreational and social activities of today's youths have evolved and the currently available recreational and social outlets are not filling the need. The Team suggested that a survey of children be conducted in the City's schools to better identify the activities that they currently lack. In the past, the YMCA and the Salvation Army have offered special night activities for children and teens, but they were discontinued due to poor attendance. A survey of the target population might help identify recreational and social needs better so that more effective and better attended special programs could be established.

Off-street and on-street parking issues have become a common concern among the residential neighborhoods. In the Wills neighborhood, participants desired more off-street parking and felt that on-street parking on some streets made driving difficult. The Planning Coordination Team acknowledges these concerns, but realizes that they will be very difficult and complex to resolve. Removing on-street parking in the most urban and densely developed areas will create hardships for residents living on those streets, because the most densely developed properties lack the space needed to provide off-street parking. Increasing off-street parking requirements could make it more difficult for owners to obtain permits for new or renewed uses, which could result in more vacancies. That, in turn, could foster more abandoned and blighted properties. Unfortunately, the City lacks the resources and land needed to provide more public off-street parking opportunities. Some off-street parking opportunities do emerge from time to time in

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residential neighborhoods when dilapidated or blighted structures are removed. However, that may not be the best way to encourage more off-street parking opportunities, since it often comes at the expense of the neighborhood's historic character and residential charm.

The Planning Coordination Team also recognizes that changes which foster easier traffic flow on residential streets (removing on-street parking, widening the street, restricting traffic to one-way flow) may have the unintended consequence of increasing travel speeds. This was another concern among the meeting participants. In many instances, motorists drive more slowly when they sense that the street is not safe for high speed traffic, and actions taken to improve traffic flow may allow drivers to feel safer traveling at higher speeds—thereby aggravating another problem.

With regards to the concerns raised about the removal of obsolete overhead utility lines, the Planning Coordination Team has no ideal solution. The utility lines are not owned by the City and the City lacks the resources or regulatory control to remove them. It is also difficult to say what lines are "obsolete," since the utility may feel that they are temporarily out of service and would be reluctant to eliminate them if there was a possibility that they could be needed in the future. If the Neighborhood Association can identify lines that are known to be permanently out of use, City staff may be able to help facilitate a discussion with the appropriate utility to voice those concerns.

The participants also identified a need for a neighborhood convenience or grocery store. The Planning Coordination Team agreed that it would be appropriate to provide for small shops and stores that can serve neighborhood shopping needs at strategic intersections. Some of the provisions that existed in the City's Zoning Map for these uses were removed as part of the 2008 Comprehensive Rezoning. The Team suggests that the Planning Commission consider appropriate locations for neighborhood stores with more specific restrictions on the scale of the business use to provide more convenient opportunities for pedestrian shopping in residential neighborhoods.

Other issues related to zoning for the neighborhood include debate over the need for stronger aesthetic and architectural standards to preserve and protect the historic fabric and integrity of the older commercial and residential buildings and to encourage greater compatibility and design. These concerns are most relevant to the Canada/Viaduct section of the neighborhood along Mechanic and Centre Streets, which are subject to the City's two Gateway zoning districts. The concern in this area has been that the broad mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses in this area makes it difficult to retain continuity in design between the various uses. Over time, the different (and in some respects, diverging) standard designs for these uses have led to stark inconsistencies in the historic streetscape appearance and in building setbacks (especially where off-street parking lots are needed to serve commercial uses).

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The Cumberland Neighborhood Housing Services has discussed and recommended the adoption of a separate ordinance that would codify desired aesthetic and architectural standards, many of which are currently voluntary provisions of the Gateway zones. The application of strict aesthetic standards outside of a local historic district also raises issues of how these proposed standards can be enforced, since such standards are usually applied and enforced through a local historic district designation. A 1998 application to establish a National Register Historic District for the Canada/Viaduct section of the Wills neighborhood was not approved by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Another option, which the City should consider as part of this comprehensive planning effort, is to re-evaluate the aesthetic and architectural standards that are contained in the Gateway Zones and determine which, if any, of them should be made mandatory requirements to help resolve these concerns.

The request for a detailed snow emergency plan is an interesting idea. The City's Street Maintenance Branch of the Maintenance Division of the Department of Public Works does have a detailed written snow plan that is updated yearly. The plan does not specify where cars should be parked on specific days during a snow emergency to facilitate snow removal, primarily because of manpower and enforcement constraints. Staff will evaluate this need and consider ways to ensure proper enforcement as part of the next update.

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VII. Westside & Dingle/Haystack Neighborhoods

A. Overview & Historical Sketch



Greene Street at the Original Starting Point for the National Road

The City's development history actually began west of Wills Creek, in the areas surrounding Fort Cumberland on both Washington Street and Greene Street. The original fort stood on the current site of the Emmanuel Episcopal Church at 16 Washington Street. Greene Street, along with sections of Braddock Road extending into Allegany County, was the original route of the National Road (first known as the "Cumberland Road")

between Cumberland and Wheeling. The Zero Mile Marker—the starting point for the original National Road—stands in the traffic island at the corner of Greene and Bridge Streets in front of Riverside Park.

The west side neighborhoods (south and west of Wills Creek) capture the full breadth of the City's architectural and economic development—from the fashionable homes and imposing churches and civic buildings on Washington Street to the modest and practical working-class homes and former industrial buildings associated with the Kelly-Springfield tire company's operations (which now house the Allegany County administrative offices). The area exhibits some of the City's earliest commercial and residential buildings (along Greene Street) and many of the City's newest and most contemporary homes along the slopes of Haystack Mountain. No other area of the City displays as much of Cumberland's development history as two west side neighborhoods. The City's most historic and prominent buildings are encompassed by Washington Street and Greene Street National Register Historic Districts.



View West along Washington Street with the Allegheny County Courthouse on the Left and the Main Branch of the Allegheny County Library on the Right

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**The Allegheny County Admin Building
(former Kelly Springfield Headquarters)**

The two residential neighborhoods in this area of the City that have been defined for this plan are a study in contrasts. The Westside neighborhood, which encompasses the areas generally south and east of Greene Street and Interstate 68, includes some of the earliest developed parts of the City and the more modest housing built for workers at the Kelly-Springfield Tire Plant. The area also includes the former plant and the associated industrial areas along the North Branch of the Potomac River that developed around it.

The Dingle/Haystack neighborhood includes some of the early prominent homes in the City, as well as the newer homes that ascend the southeastern flanks of Haystack Mountain. This neighborhood has a significantly higher proportion of residential buildings than Westside.



**Entrance to the Dingle
from the Albert and Angela Feldstein Collection**

Dingle/Haystack is the only neighborhood in the City to serve as the home for two high schools. Bishop Walsh (a private, denominational school operated by the Catholic Church) and Allegheny High School (operated by Allegheny County Public Schools) are located in the neighborhood. Although Allegheny High School operated from other locations in the past, it moved to the current building at “Campobello” (Sedgwick Street) in 1926, where it remains today. This site served as a Union



Allegheny High School - Home of the Campers

Army Camp Site for General Lew Wallace and his troops during the Civil War. This heritage is reflected in the school’s athletic team name, the “Campers.”

Originally, the Westside and Haystack/Dingle Neighborhoods were to be evaluated and planned separately. However, the West Side Neighborhood Watch committee, which serves as the sole neighborhood association for the areas of the City west of Wills Creek, suggested that the two neighborhoods be evaluated together. Consequently, staff conducted one combined neighborhood meeting for both neighborhoods and they are discussed together in this Comprehensive Plan Element. Shortly

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thereafter in early 2010, the Neighborhood Watch Committee disbanded and the neighborhood lost its sole active association. The combined neighborhood meeting was conducted on September 23, 2010. A total of 3 residents attended the meeting.

B. Neighborhood Demographics

Combined, the Westside and Dingle/Haystack neighborhoods contained nearly 2,600 residents in 2000. Individually, Westside neighborhood (the smaller of the two in population, registered a 6% decline in population from about 1,200 in 1990 to roughly 1,120 in 2000. The Dingle/Haystack neighborhood witnessed a similar population decline of just under 7% over the decade, from just over 1,550 in 1990 to just over 1,450 in 2000. Both of these declines were less than the 9.2% overall decrease experienced over the 1990's by the City as a whole. In terms of total population, the individual neighborhoods are among the City's smallest, ranking 10th and 8th, respectively.

According to the 2000 Census, roughly 94% of the Westside neighborhood population is White, as opposed to about 90% of the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood population. These percentages represent a slightly higher racial diversity than the City as a whole. The major difference between the two neighborhoods in terms of racial composition is that the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood has a higher Asian population, which represents 4.5% of the Dingle/Haystack population, verses less than 1% for the Westside neighborhood.

The overall population decline in the two neighborhoods between 1990 and 2000 was driven by decreases in the Senior population (aged 62+) and the Working Age population (ages 18-64). While the greatest percentage decrease was consistently registered by the senior population (-22% in Westside and -11% in Haystack/Dingle), the actual number of people lost over the decade was higher in the Dingle/Haystack's working age population. This differs from the trend in the Westside neighborhood, which lost more seniors than working adults (by a factor of 2-to-1), even though the Senior Age Group was only one-third the size of the Working Adult Age group in that neighborhood. Both neighborhoods registered very little change in the Pre-School (under 5 years of age) and School-Age (5-17 years of age) groups over the decade. While the Westside neighborhood saw minor declines (less than 2%) in both groups between 1990 and 2000, the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood saw a 1% growth in Pre-School population and a 1% decline in the School Age population. Similar patterns of growth and decline occurred in other residential neighborhoods across the City.

The total number of homes in the both neighborhood remained relatively unchanged over the decade. According to the U.S. Census, Westside had a total of about 525 housing units, while Dingle/Haystack had about 725. Roughly 90% of the homes in both neighborhoods were occupied, according to the 2000 Census, which are among the highest rates of occupancy in the

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City. Roughly three-quarters of the homes in both neighborhoods were occupied by home owners in 2000, which also ranks high among the City's residential neighborhoods. Owner occupancy rates did not change significantly over the decade in either neighborhood.

As in most of the City's residential neighborhoods, the number of vacant homes in both the Westside and Dingle/Haystack neighborhoods increased between 1990 and 2000. The greatest numerical and percentage increase was in the Westside neighborhood, where the number of vacant units grew by 75%. The number of rental vacancies, although small, doubled over that period, which is also reflected in a number of other neighborhoods across the City. The growth in vacancies within the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood during the 1990's was much smaller, averaging around 16%. This was a relatively low rate of increase for the City as a whole.

The estimated mean value of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood grew in both neighborhoods during the 1990's, but at vastly different rates. In the Westside neighborhood, the mean home value increased from about \$46,275 in 1990 to just under \$59,350 in 2000, an overall appreciation rate of about 28%. This change is fairly representative of some of the City's older residential neighborhoods. However, the mean home value in Dingle/Haystack grew at a much more substantial rate during the decade from \$90,900 in 1990 to \$131,675 in 2000—an increase of almost 45%. The average home value in the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood is the highest in the City, which reflects the much newer housing stock in that neighborhood. According to the 2000 Census, about 44% of the housing units in the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood were built prior to 1940. This compares to 54% of the homes in the Westside neighborhood.

The percentage of residents living in the same house within the neighborhood five years before the Census was taken in 1990 and 2000 increased in both neighborhoods, which differs from most of the City's other neighborhoods where the percentage of residents living in the same house remained relatively stable over the period. In the Westside neighborhood, 62% of the residents in 1990 had lived in the same house for five or more years. By 2000, that percentage had increased to 67%. Likewise in the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood, the percentage increased from 57% in 1990 to 64% in 2000. This trend indicates a growing residential stability within the two neighborhoods.

The two neighborhoods had very different patterns of educational attainment, even as they exhibited the highest levels of educational achievement in the City. In the Westside neighborhood, the percentage of residents over the age of 25 that had a college degree or had attended some college decreased slightly from 48% in 1990 to 45% in 2000. Despite the decline, these levels of achievement are very high for the City as a whole. In contrast, however, the number of residents 25 years or older who had attended some college classes or had earned a college degree in the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood increased from 63% in 1990 to 72% in 2000. These levels of educational achievement were the highest in the City for any

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neighborhood, and rank well above the State average. Just under 500 residents in the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood had earned a Graduate or Professional Degree in 2000.

According to the 2000 Census, none of the workers in the Westside neighborhood walked or rode public transit to work. This statistic is particularly curious for the Westside neighborhood, which registered a relatively low average household income, but may be due to a relatively small Census sample size. In the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood, the 2000 Census indicated that only about 4% (less than 30) of the workers commuted to their jobs by walking or transit.

While the average household incomes in both neighborhoods increased significantly between 1990 and 2000, they reflect very different levels of wealth. In the Westside neighborhood, the mean household income grew from \$17,000 in 1990 to almost \$37,500, an increase of 120% over the decade. In the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood, average household incomes increased from just under \$50,000 in 1990 to just over \$68,000 in 2000, which represents a much more modest, but still substantial, growth rate of 36%. Despite the disparate rates of growth in average incomes, residents in the Westside neighborhood still earn only about 55% of the incomes of their neighbors in Dingle/Haystack. It is interesting to note that the average income levels in the Westside neighborhood are not as reflective of the overall high level of educational achievement as might be expected.

In 2000, only about 12% of all persons living in the Westside neighborhood and only 4.5% of the persons living in the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood for whom poverty status was determined were living below the poverty level. These are among the lowest percentages of poverty in the City. Less than 3% of the impoverished residents in the two neighborhoods were over the age of 65. According to the 2000 Census, none of the senior citizens (aged 65+) living in the Dingle/Haystack had incomes below the poverty level—the only neighborhood in the City to have no impoverished seniors.

The top 3 occupations for workers living in the Westside neighborhood in 2000 were Sales and Office occupations; Management, Professional, and Related Occupations; and Service Occupations. The top two occupations employed over 55% of all workers over the age of 16. The top 3 occupations for workers living in the Dingle Haystack neighborhood in 2000 were the same; however, the number of Management, Professional, and Related workers was far greater than the number of Sales and Office workers. Roughly 50% of the workers in the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood were employed in Management and Professional occupations—the highest concentration of workers in a single occupational category in the City.

Overall, the Census data suggests that the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood is the City's healthiest, both from the standpoint of its socio-economic and housing statistics. A number of the Westside neighborhood's demographic characteristics (overall population trends, educational attainment, worker occupations, poverty levels, home ownership rates, and residential stability suggest that the neighborhood should be comparable in many ways to the Dingle/Haystack

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neighborhood, but the significantly lower average household incomes and average housing values are more characteristic of many of the City's older residential neighborhoods. These discrepancies reflect the rapid transition within the Westside neighborhood from older housing and pockets of economically disadvantaged residents clustered along the fringes of the downtown area (generally east of the CSX railroad and south along the North Branch of the Potomac River) to the relatively newer, high value homes and higher income population that dominate the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood.

C. Land Development Patterns

This section of the plan is not intended to provide a detailed technical analysis of land uses in the neighborhood. Instead, it is written to provide a generalized overview of the neighborhood's predominant development patterns to provide a better understanding of the neighborhood's character and a context for understanding growth and development issues and needs within the neighborhood. A more detailed assessment of land use patterns, as required by Maryland Law, is provided in the City-Wide element of the plan.



**Stately Homes along Greene Street in 1921
from the Albert and Angela Feldstein Collection**

Both neighborhoods on the City's west side (Westside and Dingle/Haystack) are predominately residential in nature, with scattered institutional uses (churches, schools, and government offices). The largest concentration of commercial uses can be found along and immediately south of Greene Street, primarily to the east of Fayette Street. A significant portion of the Greene Street commercial district (east of Lee Street) is part of the Center City (Central Business District) neighborhood, as is all of the Washington Street Historic District.

Average residential densities within the two neighborhoods generally decline to the west, with the lowest overall densities being on the slopes of Haystack Mountain. Homes in the Westside neighborhood are typical of working class "company homes" built primarily for Kelly-Springfield employees. Larger and more fashionable residential styles and architectural themes can be found throughout Dingle/Haystack. The Dingle Company began constructing homes for management professionals—many of whom worked for Kelly-Springfield—after World War I. These houses were among the first constructed in the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood.

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As might be expected from Census Housing Data discussed in the previous section of this Chapter, structural housing conditions in the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood are the highest in the City. According to the 2002 Faux Group Housing Conditions Study, the western section of Dingle/Haystack (primarily along the slopes of Haystack Mountain) ranked first in average housing conditions among the 15 sections that were surveyed. The remaining (lower) sections of Dingle/Haystack and Westside combined ranked 6th overall. Most of the homes that were in critical condition were concentrated in the Westside neighborhood.

Recent development activity in the City's western neighborhoods has been confined to new single family residences (infill development) and new subdivisions on undeveloped lands in the western portions of the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood. Opportunities remain for future infill residential development on scattered vacant lots in this neighborhood. One of the most critical land use challenges will be the reuse and redevelopment of the former Sacred Heart Hospital campus on Seton Drive at the top of Haystack Mountain. Like the Memorial Hospital site in Mapleside/Johnson Heights, this campus is surrounded by residential development—at somewhat lower densities—and is removed from major highways. The City is proposing to design a new floating zone to support the mixed-use redevelopment and adaptive reuse of large, abandoned properties with multiple building, which may provide the land use and design flexibility needed to achieve successful redevelopment of the property. However, unlike the Memorial Hospital site, the Sacred Heart Hospital property is privately owned, and the City has no direct control over the marketing and redevelopment of the campus.



Former Sacred Heart Hospital on Seton Drive



North Branch Levee - Proposed Riverwalk Location

The western neighborhoods represent the largest contiguous residential area of the City that has no public parks. Several smaller neighborhoods on the City's east side (Rolling Mill, Decatur Heights, and Shriver/McNamee) also lack public parks. However, public recreational facilities are available at Allegany High School campus on Sedgwick Street, the City owns and maintains a large passive recreational area at Riverside Park on Greene Street in the adjoining sections of the Center City neighborhood, and the YMCA offers a wide array of recreational programs and facilities at its location on Kelly Road in the Westside neighborhood. Additionally, the City is working with the

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Allegany County Chamber of Commerce to explore the potential for a new “River Walk” pedestrian trail along the North Branch levee west of Riverside Park. The initial section of this River Walk is being planned conceptually from Riverside Park to the old Moose Lodge Building on Beall Street. If the initial concept is approved and implemented, future sections of the River Walk would extend southwest from the old Moose Lodge Building to the County Administration Offices and YMCA on Kelly Road in the Westside neighborhood.

D. Cherished Features

During the neighborhood meeting process, participants were asked to identify features of the neighborhood that help define the neighborhood’s unique or special character and features and places that bring people together and foster social interaction. These features are important to understand, as they contribute to neighborhood identity and they help strengthen the essential social bonds between residents that make people feel an attachment or bond with their neighborhoods they live in. If these special features are not understood, protected, and reinforced when future development and changes occur within the neighborhood, residents may feel a sense of “loss” that can eventually result in declining civic pride and reduced investment in maintaining their properties. It is essential that these features be captured, celebrated, and promoted as part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the most special and attractive aspects of urban neighborhood living are not lost to future generations.

The meeting participants identified a number of prominent features that are commonly identified with the neighborhood and contribute to its character. For detailed locations, please see the Defining Characteristics Map in Appendix E. They are, in no particular order, as follows:

- The stone pillars at the entrance to the Dingle on Buckingham Road
- The neighborhood’s close proximity (easy walking distance) to downtown
- The neighborhood churches—their steeples are an important visual symbol of the neighborhood
- The Washington and Greene Street National Register Historic Districts
- Haystack Mountain and the forested natural backdrop and scenic vistas it provides
- Allegany and Bishop Walsh High Schools
- Rose Hill and St. Peter and Paul’s Cemeteries

The feature that generated the most discussion was Haystack Mountain, which provides both an attractive, natural backdrop to those portions of the neighborhood at lower elevations and dramatic scenic vistas of the City for the areas that ascend its slopes. The attractive and

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pleasing views both of and from the mountain are the most immediately and broadly recognizable feature of the neighborhood.

The historic elements of the neighborhood also represent important identifying features to the meeting participants. These include the Washington and Greene Street Historic Districts, the stone pillars at the entrance to the Dingle on Buckingham Road, the Allegheny High School building (built in 1926), and the adjoining Rose Hill and St. Peter and Paul's Cemeteries. These historic features complement the rich architectural heritage of the neighborhood and contribute greatly to its historic integrity. Other important features include the Bishop Walsh High School, the neighborhood churches and their attractive steeples (which also serve as important gather places for neighborhood residents), and the neighborhood's convenient proximity to Downtown Cumberland.



Stone Pillars at the Dingle Entrance



Goetz's Restaurant

As in most other neighborhoods, the local small businesses that serve basic resident needs were identified as important social gathering places. These businesses include the local bars, Goetz's restaurant (which contains a local bar), and the Sheetz convenience store at the corner of South Lee and Greene Streets. However, the Sheetz convenience store was also perceived as a potential problem in the neighborhood from the standpoint of traffic congestion during the day and its tendency to attract customers during the overnight hours that may contribute to the fears of crime in the neighborhood.

The Allegheny County Library on Washington Street, the neighborhood churches (the most prominent of which is St. Paul's), and the neighborhood streets were additional social gathering places identified by the meeting participants. The participants also noted that the homes of some long-time residents have served as gathering places for many citizens, but they were not specifically identified.

E. Issues & Needs

The meeting participants identified several critical issues and needs for the neighborhood. The list is as follows, in no particular order.

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- Street surface improvements – the residents expressed concern over the high taxes they pay and the poor travel condition on the neighborhood’s streets.
- A public community center and meeting place—residents have historically relied upon St. Paul’s Church.
- Cleaner streets—businesses along Greene Street have left trash sitting on the street over the weekends.
- More parking for neighborhood residents—especially on the most densely developed streets, like Greene and Lee.
- Greater police presence in the neighborhood—crime is perceived as a growing problem along and around Greene Street.

Of these needs, the participants stressed that street repair and improvements and the provision of more resident parking were their highest priorities. The participants noted a general concern that the City needs to be more responsive to neighborhood needs. There was a general sense among the participants that the City should listen more closely to neighborhood needs and that the benefits arising from high property tax payments need to be more apparent.

1. Strengths & Opportunities

The neighborhood participants identified two recent changes that have had an important positive effect on the community. They include the repaving and reconstruction of Washington Street in 2010 and the neighborhood beautification and improvement efforts by the “Day of Caring and Sharing” and Beautify Cumberland programs.

With regard to neighborhood strengths, assets, and opportunities that support the neighborhood’s overall future vision, the participants identified the YMCA on Kelly Road, the overall beauty of the neighborhood, and its close proximity and convenience to Downtown Cumberland. The participants also noted that the neighborhood offers everything its residents need in a convenient radius.

2. Concerns & Problems

Several concerns regarding negative changes were also raised, chief among which is the recent closing of Sacred Heart Hospital in 2009 and the uncertainty that exists over its future reuse and redevelopment. The participants noted that several homes of doctors who live in the neighborhood and worked at the hospital have been listed for sale. There is concern in the neighborhood that the doctors will either leave the area as a consequence of the hospital consolidation or will choose to move closer to the new hospital on the other side of the City. This trend could aggravate the potential property value impacts in the neighborhood of the hospital closure and reuse.

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Other negative changes in the neighborhood mentioned by the participants include the recent end of the traditional neighborhood block parties hosted by the Westside Neighborhood Watch Association and residents of the Dingle, the demise of the Neighborhood Watch Association due to declining meeting attendance, and the lack of parking for residents in the most densely developed portions of the neighborhood. The loss of the street/block parties has implications for the general sense of growing citizen apathy in the neighborhood.

A number of the obstacles, impediments and threats to the successful pursuit of the neighborhood's overall vision were identified by the participants, most of which were specifically tied to the critical problems and issues that were raised. These issues include the uncertainty regarding the future disposition of Sacred Heart Hospital, litter and trash along the streets (especially on Washington and Greene Streets), the lack of resident parking, and the recent demise of the Neighborhood Watch Group and the growing sense of community apathy that is suggests. However, the participants also noted that the gradual declining integrity of the neighborhood's architecture is another potential threat to the general appearance of the neighborhood. This decline occurs in several ways—through the demolition and removal of older structures, the use of inappropriate materials and elements in maintenance and renovation improvements to older buildings, and the construction of new “off-the-shelf” buildings that are designed inconsistently with the older buildings.

3. Future Vision

As part of the neighborhood meeting process, each neighborhood was asked to identify a specific future vision for the neighborhood. Westside-Dingle/Haystack meeting participants expressed the following vision for the neighborhood:

The future vision of the Westside & Dingle/Haystack neighborhoods is to create a friendly and festive neighborhood that projects a clean, green, and serene public image.

F. Recommendations

The Planning Coordination Committee met on October 7, 2010 to discuss the input received at the September 23 west side neighborhood meeting. The following recommendations were suggested by the Committee.

Street improvements, a high priority issue identified by the meeting participants, are being undertaken throughout the City under the 2006 Pavement Management System. A large section of Washington Street was reconstructed and resurfaced in 2010. Additional street resurfacing projects scheduled for 2011 and 2012 in the West Side neighborhoods includes the

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remaining section of Washington Street (from Allegany to Fayette), the first section of Braddock Road from its beginning at Greene Street to Highland Avenue, and the entire length of Seton Drive. The Pavement Management System provides a systematic method of scheduling street improvements, based on surface conditions, traffic volumes, and other technical issues that affect improvement priority. The City issued a \$9,000,000 bond in 2008 for the first three years of the program. For at least 30 years prior to the 2008 bond, funding for street resurfacing was limited to the available Community Development Block Grant program and a variety of special grants. The Pavement Management System and subsequent bond financing allows the City to expand the pace of street resurfacing work. The City plans to re-evaluate the schedule after the initial list of projects has been completed.

As with two neighborhoods on the City's east side, the West Side neighborhoods expressed a desire for a neighborhood community center that could serve as a community meeting place. Staff notes that the City's West Side neighborhoods already have several public and semi-public locations where neighborhood meetings and functions can be conducted, including the Allegany County Main Library on Washington Street (the neighborhood meeting for this plan was conducted in the Library's Community Room), St. Peter and Paul's Church on Fayette Street (where the Westside Neighborhood Watch Association formerly met), the YMCA on Kelly Road (which has several community meeting rooms), and Allegany High School on Sedgwick Street. Some local businesses in the neighborhood will provide meeting space on request. Consequently, community meeting space options are far more available in the West Side neighborhoods than in the smaller east side neighborhoods.

On the issue of cleaner streets, City staff began working closely with concerned neighborhood residents in 2010 to remind local businesses not to leave their rubbish outside for extended periods of time before the scheduled pick-up. Citizens are asked to alert the Public Works Department if the problem recurs. The current garbage collection schedule and the issues that it has generated are governed by the current garbage contract, which was initiated in 2009 and runs for three years. Public Works staff plans to begin the process of developing the bid specifications for the next contract in 2011. Concerned residents in all neighborhoods should monitor the Mayor and Council meeting agendas to express their concerns and requests for changes as the bid specifications for the next contract are developed.

The lack of resident parking is a common concern that was specifically raised in four neighborhoods, including the West Side neighborhoods. Many of the homes in older neighborhoods were built on small lots that will not accommodate modern garages and were constructed before the era of automobiles. On-street parking opportunities in these areas have become increasingly constrained over the years, due to the increased number of vehicles per household and the gradual conversion of older homes to rental apartments. Consequently, vehicle parking is quite limited in many areas of the City.

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In some areas, off-street parking lots have been established in older residential areas as dilapidated and blighted homes have been removed. Such facilities have been created on Lee Street, which is one of the streets specifically identified by the meeting participants. Often, these private lots are used to provide parking for apartment conversions. Since the homes in the West Side neighborhood tend to be better maintained than in other areas of the City, opportunities for the creation of additional off-street parking lots from dilapidated and blighted housing removal are far more limited. At this point in time, staff cannot identify a way to finance and provide additional residential parking in the West Side residential neighborhoods.

Along with street resurfacing and improvements, expanded police patrols was the most frequently identified neighborhood need that emerged from the neighborhood meeting process. Staff understands and appreciates the desire expressed in several neighborhoods for greater police presence and patrolling. Currently, the City assigns one patrol officer to each of the four major sections of the City (North, South, East, and West). Officers are instructed to make a strong presence in the neighborhoods while conducting their patrols. They are also advised to spend some extra time speaking with the neighborhood residents and engaging in outreach when responding to calls in their section of the City. However, many of the emergency calls received by the Police Department often require two officers to respond. When that occurs, one section of the City will lose coverage temporarily. The recent switch to 12-hour shifts allows the Police Department to place a few additional officers on the street. The Police Department also applies for grants to cover the costs of expanded coverage, but any officer time charged to that grant must be limited to the specific purposes or activities specified in the grant. The Department will continue to seek these grants to serve the City's enforcement needs, as they become available.

VIII. Walsh/Humbird Neighborhood

A. *Overview & Historical Sketch*

The Walsh/Humbird neighborhood is the southernmost section of the City. Historically, the neighborhood was called “Little Egypt,” allegedly because it was considered to be as “dark as Egypt” in the era prior to suburban streetlighting. Staff has proposed to officially and permanently rename this neighborhood “Walsh/Humbird” in recognition of the two “additions” (subdivisions) to the City through which the neighborhood was originally platted. Humbird is also the name of the neighborhood elementary school that represents the heart and soul of the community to its residents. The original name for the neighborhood is viewed as derogatory and insulting by many residents, and it is time for the neighborhood to have a name that can be viewed positively by all to put a formal and official end to the debate. Consequently, the neighborhood’s former name will not be used or referenced again anywhere in this plan.



The CSX Building on Offutt Street

Walsh/Humbird was one of the last major neighborhood additions to the City, incorporated in 1891. Unlike the other neighborhoods that were part of the City at that time, the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood had been largely platted and developed before it was incorporated. Also unlike any of the other residential neighborhoods, Walsh/Humbird has retained its primary industrial employer, CSX Railroad (formerly the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad), throughout its history. Many residents of the neighborhood still work at the railroad office on the north side of the neighborhood.

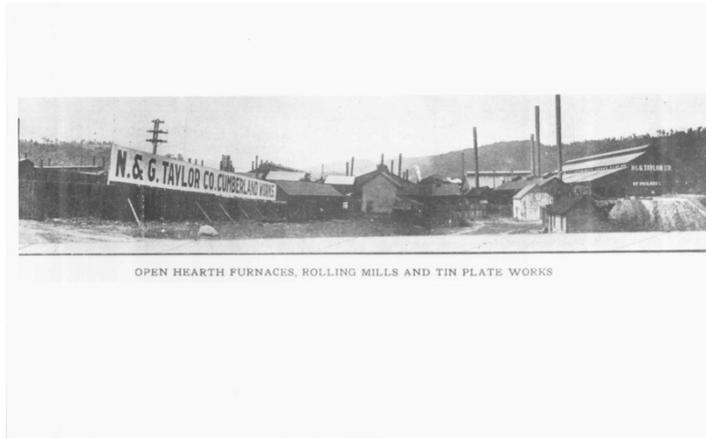
Walsh/Humbird is a neighborhood that was established and defined by the railroad. In fact, the name Humbird refers to an early prominent engineer for the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad who had designed the first successful railroad in Brazil and platted most of the lots in the neighborhood. Several of the neighborhood’s streets (Mary, Offutt, Humbird, and Elder are named for members of the Humbird family). Additionally, many of the neighborhood’s early homes were designed as “railroad flats” under the influence of the railroad. Even



Typical Railroad Flat Homes

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today, one cannot walk the streets of the neighborhood without hearing the various sounds of trains operating in the CSX railyard, which flanks the northern boundaries of the neighborhood.



N. & G. Taylor Tin Plate Mill
from **A Photographic History of Cumberland, MD** by Dan Whetzel

Another major neighborhood employer was the South Cumberland Steel and Tin Plate Mill. The plant operated from 1873 through 1938 on the site that is currently occupied by the City's Municipal Service Center at the end of Bowen Street. Mill operations involved the application of a protective tin coating to steel plates. During the facility's peak production years in the 1920's the mill

employed nearly 1,000 workers. Many homes were built in the neighborhood to house the plant's workers.

The neighborhood also possesses the most in-tact sections of the historic Chesapeake and Ohio Canal that remain in the City. The Canal Towpath Trail now occupies this area, and it can be accessed directly from the neighborhood at the Offutt Street entrance into the Mason Recreation Area. The expansive, winding path that the canal followed along the neighborhood's southern boundaries adds to its strong transportation heritage.



The C & O Canal Towpath at Offutt Street

Another historic feature of the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood is that it served as the original home of the Cumberland Fairgrounds and Horse Racing Track and annual fair, which was the precursor to the current Allegany County Fair. The fairground was built in 1869, and the first agricultural fair in Allegany County was conducted at that location in 1871. At that time, the neighborhood was still being developed and presented a largely rural landscape. The neighborhood's position on the City's rural fringe is also exemplified by the annual cattle drives that were conducted along Virginia Avenue. Local cattle farmers would drive their cattle

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through the Virginia Avenue “Subway” and down through the neighborhood to Kline’s Dairy on the south side of the North Branch River in West Virginia. This practice continued at least through 1943.



Virginia Avenue Cattle Drive
from [A Photographic History of Cumberland, MD](#)
by Dan Whetzel

As conceived for this plan, the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood is generally bounded by the CSX Railroad and Industrial Boulevard on the north and the North Branch of the Potomac River on the east, south, and west. The neighborhood is not currently served by an active Neighborhood Association, although it once had one. Nevertheless, the neighborhood generated the highest meeting participation level for any residential neighborhood not currently served by an association. A total of 10 residents attended the June 8, 2010 neighborhood meeting.

B. Neighborhood Demographics

The neighborhood’s population is average for the City’s residential neighborhoods and stands at approximately 1,300 people, according to the 2000 Census. The neighborhood ranks 9th in total population out of the 11 neighborhoods evaluated for this plan. Although that population declined between 1990 and 2000, the rate of decline was about half of the City’s overall percentage decline. Roughly 98% of the neighborhood’s population is white, which is slightly higher than the City as a whole.

The number of school-aged children between the ages of 5 and 18 living in the neighborhood grew by 15% between 1990 and 2000, from approximately 220 to just over 260. Likewise the number of seniors (aged 62+) increased very slightly (by about 1%) and totaled about 300. The overall population decline in the neighborhood was driven by the largest age group, working aged adults (ages 18-64), which decreased by just over 10% through the decade. The rate of decline for pre-school children (ages 0-4) was greater still, at roughly 40%, but the number of residents in that age group is very small, standing at about 65 in 2000. The decline in the number of children between the ages of 0 and 4 years will eventually migrate into the school-aged population in the 2010 Census, suggesting that the growth in that age group may diminish over time without an influx of new children into the neighborhood.

The total number of housing units in the neighborhood decreased by 5% between 1990 and 2000 and stands at about 575 units.

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Unlike most of the other residential neighborhoods in the City, Walsh-Humbird experienced a 20% decrease in the number of vacant housing units between 1990 and 2000. According to the 2000 Census, the neighborhood's overall housing occupancy rate of just over 93% was the highest in the City and one of only 3 neighborhood occupancy rates in excess of 90%. Although rental unit vacancies increased over the decade, they represented only 30% of all vacant units in the neighborhood, a lower percentage than in most other residential neighborhoods on the east side of the City. 2000 Census data also shows that rental units comprise less than 30% of all occupied housing units in the neighborhood. These trends suggest a strong and relatively stable home ownership base within the neighborhood.

The estimated mean value of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood was about \$38,000 in 1990 and just over \$54,000 in 2000, which ranks relatively high among the City's residential neighborhoods. The percentage of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood for which the owner had no mortgage decreased from 56% in 1990 to 35% in 2000.

The percentage of housing units in the neighborhood that were built prior to 1940 decreased slightly from about 58% in 1990 to 55% in 2000.

The neighborhood experienced growth in the number of residents over the age of 25 that had a college degree or had attended some college. According to the 1990 Census, only 22% of the neighborhood's residents over the age of 25 had attended college classes or graduated from college after completing high school. By 2000, this percentage had increased to nearly 30%. However, these levels of educational attainment are still lower than a number of other residential neighborhoods in the City.

The number of all workers living in the neighborhood who traveled to work by walking or riding public transit remained stable between 1990 and 2000 at about 18. This factor declined in many other residential neighborhoods across the City.

The number of residents living in the same house within the neighborhood five years before the Census was taken increased slightly from just over 65% in 1990 to roughly 70% in 2000. This level of residential stability is higher than for most of the City's residential neighborhoods.

The mean household income within the neighborhood grew by roughly 1/3 between 1990 and 2000, from about \$23,000 to nearly \$33,000. In 2000, only about 12% of all persons living in the neighborhood for whom poverty status was determined were living below the poverty level. This figure represents a low rate for a residential neighborhood. About 20% of the impoverished residents were over the age of 65.

The top 3 occupations for workers living in the neighborhood in 2000 were Sales & Office Occupations; Production, Transportation, & Material Moving Occupations; and Service Occupations. Just over 36% of the neighborhood's workers were employed in Sales and Service

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Occupations. The top 3 occupations for workers living in the neighborhood in 1990 were Service; Precision Production, Craft, and Repair, and Administrative Support (including Clerical). However, no single occupation employed more than 22 percent of the neighborhood's workers.

When compared to the City's other residential neighborhoods, Walsh/Humbird has a relatively low rate of population decline and poverty, and a decreasing number and percentage rental housing units. Home ownership levels in the neighborhood are relatively high and the percentage of homes with outstanding mortgages is very low. Although the average housing value in 2000 is only half of the level that exists in the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood, it still ranks among the top half of all residential neighborhoods. Although the neighborhood's poverty rate is very low, the average household income and overall educational attainment levels are average at best and have not increased as rapidly as they have in other residential neighborhoods around the City.

C. Land Development Patterns

This section of the plan is not intended to provide a detailed technical analysis of land uses in the neighborhood. Instead, it is written to provide a generalized overview of the neighborhood's predominant development patterns to provide a better understanding of the neighborhood's character and a context for understanding growth and development issues and needs within the neighborhood. A more detailed assessment of land use patterns, as required by Maryland Law, is provided in the City-Wide element of the plan.

The Walsh/Humbird neighborhood is one of the few distinct areas of the City that has retained its largest employers and sources of jobs for residents, CSX (formerly the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad) and the Humbird Elementary School. The Offutt Street building houses a major maintenance operation for the railroad. However, it has lost a number of small neighborhood businesses on the southern end of Virginia Avenue over the years, the most cherished of which was Lacy's Market, a neighborhood grocery store.

The neighborhood has a broad range of land uses, but they tend to be more segregated than in many of the City's older neighborhoods. The western and southern fringes of the neighborhood (along the North Branch of the Potomac River) are part of the Canal Place Preservation District and the C & O Canal Towpath, and are subject to conservation use restrictions, due to the extensive floodplain and Federal Government land ownership in that area. Portions of the Virginia Avenue corridor from the subway under the CSX railroad tracks and the River Avenue intersection have been developed and zoned for commercial uses. The areas between that commercial corridor and the Canal Towpath exhibit the greatest mix of uses in the neighborhood, consisting of commercial or light industrial uses and residual single family residences. The northern fringes of the neighborhood are occupied by the railroad and are

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zoned for heavy industrial uses, while the remainder of the neighborhood between Offutt and Clement Streets is dedicated almost exclusively to moderate density residential uses.

Of greatest concern from a zoning perspective is a narrow corridor of remaining residences in the commercial/industrial zoned area along Lafayette Avenue immediately west of the Virginia Avenue commercial corridor. Under the current Business-Commercial zoning of this area, these homes and the remaining vacant lots between them have become pre-existing, nonconforming uses, and cannot be expanded without approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals. However, a number of these homes (especially those at the southern end of Lafayette Avenue) are being maintained in relatively good condition and possess strong value for continued residential use. The lots in this area are quite small, and several vacant lots (with residential development potential) remain. These vacant lots are too small for most practical commercial uses and would not be easily marketable as such without removal of the adjoining residences and consolidation of the lots. This area should be evaluated more closely in the City-Wide Element to determine if a transitional zoning classification that would retain the residential uses as permitted (such as the Residential-Office zone) would be more appropriate to protect the integrity and value of these homes.



Single Family Homes on Lafayette Avenue

According to the 2002 Faux Group Housing Conditions Survey, overall housing conditions in the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood were relatively average among the areas surveyed. The neighborhood ranked 8th out of the 15 sectors that were evaluated. Since this neighborhood was one of the last built in the City, dilapidated and distressed homes tend to be more scattered.



Mason Recreation Area Entrance on Offutt Street

Because of the neighborhood's low elevation along the North Branch of the Potomac River, the City's wastewater treatment plant is located in the southeast corner of the neighborhood along Candoc Lane. The City also owns and operates a Municipal Service Center at the western end of Bowen Street. The City's second largest park, Mason Recreation Area, is located at the southern end of Offutt Street, between the C & O Canal Towpath and the North Branch River. Direct access to the trail can be obtained from the Offutt Street entrance to the park.

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D. Cherished Features

During the neighborhood meeting process, participants were asked to identify features of the neighborhood that help define the neighborhood’s unique or special character and features and places that bring people together and foster social interaction. These features are important to understand, as they contribute to neighborhood identity and they help strengthen the essential social bonds between residents that make people feel an attachment or bond with their neighborhoods they live in. If these special features are not understood, protected, and reinforced when future development and changes occur within the neighborhood, residents may feel a sense of “loss” that can eventually result in declining civic pride and reduced investment in maintaining their properties. It is essential that these features be captured, celebrated, and promoted as part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the most special and attractive aspects of urban neighborhood living are not lost to future generations.

The following list of identifying features and characteristics for the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood were generated by the meeting participants. For detailed locations, please see the Defining Characteristics Map in Appendix E.

- C & O Canal Towpath and access points in the neighborhood
- Mason Recreation Area
- Ice Cream trucks that travel through the neighborhood in the summer – Mr. Softee and Snow Cone Joe
- The Virginia Avenue Subway (although not a favorable aspect)
- Canal Parkway
- Humbird Elementary School
- The common perception of the neighborhood as being “right across the River from WV”
- The K-Bar on Virginia Avenue
- Attractively maintained landscaping at the CSX maintenance building and the annual Christmas light display
- The former Lacy’s Market on Virginia Avenue (next door to the K-Bar)



Humbird Elementary School

The participants identified a number of features that defines the neighborhood’s special character, including the C & O Towpath Trail and the Mason Recreation Area. Two neighborhood businesses also made the list of special characteristics, the K-Bar and the former

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Lacy's Market on Virginia Avenue. Lacy's Market no longer exists. The attractive and well-maintained landscaping and annual Christmas lights display at the CSX building also made the list, as did the Humbird Elementary School. Two streets were identified as defining characteristics of the neighborhood, Canal Parkway and the Virginia Avenue Subway, although the subway's association with the long-cycle traffic light at Industrial Boulevard gives it a negative perception among the neighborhood's residents. Finally, the participants identified two "whimsical" defining features—the common perception that the neighborhood is "right across the river from West Virginia" (by virtue of the two bridges that link it to the Wiley Ford community), and the Mr. Softee and Snow Cone Joe ice cream trucks that serve the neighborhood during the summer months.

Other important or defining features of the neighborhood that help bring residents together and encourage social interaction include the block parties that have been conducted in past years, Halloween Trick or Treating in the neighborhood, the Humbird Elementary School, the three main churches in the neighborhood—Emmanuel Bethel, Soul Harbor, and Living Word Lutheran.

E. Issues & Needs

The residents attending the June 8 meeting identified a number of important issues and needs in the neighborhood. They are, in no particular order, as follows:

- A convenience/grocery store
- Expanded police enforcement or appropriate traffic calming measures to reduce traffic speeds on Mary and Humbird Streets in the vicinity of Humbird Elementary School
- More aggressive police patrolling and drug enforcement, especially in the area around the reconstructed playground where the streetlight was recently turned off
- A community/neighborhood meeting place
- Improvements and repairs to the Virginia Avenue subway where the walls are deteriorating

The desire for increased police vigilance and enforcement is a recurring concern among the neighborhoods, especially on the City's east side. In the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood, these issues were prominent. The Cumberland Police Department assigns officers to the various sectors of the city in an effort to make a strong visible presence in each of the neighborhoods throughout the city. The officer's presence is to deter criminal activity and to listen to the residents of those areas to determine what problems are affecting the neighborhood and how the police department can resolve those issues. In many instances, the time involved in documenting and prosecuting drug trafficking cases gives a false impression that little or not enough is being done to address this issue. The need or desire for traffic calming measures to

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control speeding is another recurring theme in the City's neighborhoods that staff will evaluate in more detail in the City-wide Element of the Comprehensive Plan and address in specific street improvement projects through the Pavement Management System.

The neighborhood also desired repairs and improvements to the Virginia Avenue subway abutments. The need for these improvements is being evaluated by the City's Engineering staff, and may require cooperation from CSX Railroad to address.

1. Strengths & Opportunities

Two of the most positive changes that have occurred in the neighborhood are tied to Humbird Elementary School, which is the most prominent and convenient gathering point for parents and children in the neighborhood. These changes include the County's efforts to maintain and expand the school building, which have helped ensure its viability and sustainability, and the restoration of the Playground at the school. The participants lamented the loss of neighborhood playground and parks throughout the City as a negative change that affect the overall quality of life in the City and the ability for parents to meet and interact. The other positive change that neighborhood participants identified is the creation and expansion of the Mason Recreation Area.

As would be expected, the neighborhood's primary assets and opportunities include the Humbird Elementary School, the major churches in the neighborhood, active community support and stewardship from CSX, and the Mason Recreation Area.

2. Concerns & Problems

Recent negative changes in the neighborhood include a perception of increased crime in the neighborhood, which consists predominantly of vandalism, but includes arson. Teens with limited alternative social and entertainment outlets are considered to be the primary source of the problem. Participants also noted that City's recent policy to shut down street lighting, especially the light at the school playground, is another negative change that contributes to the crime problem. This issue is also reflected in a growing fear that neighborhood residents have of using the C & O Towpath trail, especially during the evening hours. Meeting participants reported that many residents of the neighborhood have stopped using it.

Critical obstacles and threats to the neighborhood's improvement efforts to address its needs include a lack of organization among the neighborhood's residents and limited financial resources, resident apathy—especially among owners and residents of rental units—the continued gradual deterioration of properties and poor maintenance practices, the growing drug trade, and the condition of the Virginia Avenue Subway and traffic congestion at the Industrial Boulevard traffic light.

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3. Future Vision

As part of the neighborhood meeting process, each neighborhood was asked to identify a specific future vision for the neighborhood. Citizens attending the Shriver/McNamee meeting expressed the following vision for the neighborhood:

The vision for the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood is to create a safe and attractive neighborhood with well maintained, quality housing and tree-lined streets.

F. Recommendations

The Planning Coordination Committee met on June 17, 2010 to discuss the input received at the June 8 neighborhood meeting. The Committee's recommendations to address the neighborhood's critical issues are as follows:

The desire for a neighborhood grocery/convenience store is common among the residential neighborhoods. Both Walsh-Humbird and Rolling Mill neighborhoods identified former "neighborhood markets" as important social gathering places and cherished neighborhood characteristics. Cumberland has many small old commercial buildings that could be dedicated to such uses, but they often lack adequate off-street parking to serve the business needs and comply with basic Zoning requirements and the market for such businesses is often constrained by competition from big box retailers and national or regional chain convenience stores. While off-street parking requirements can be altered or reduced, the corresponding impacts such changes would have on the availability of and competition for on-street parking for older homes without driveways or garages would create additional complaints and issues. The City is exploring innovative ways to resolve these competing parking issues.

The City understands and appreciates the desire expressed in several neighborhoods for greater police presence and patrolling. Currently, the City assigns one patrol officer to each of the four major sections of the City (North, South, East, and West). Officers are instructed to make a strong presence in the neighborhoods while conducting their patrols. They are also advised to spend some extra time speaking with the neighborhood residents and engaging in outreach when responding to calls in their section of the City. However, many of the emergency calls received by the Police Department often require two officers to respond. When that occurs, one section of the City will lose coverage temporarily. The recent switch to 12-hour shifts allowed the Police Department to place a few additional officers on the street. The Police Department also applies for grants to cover the costs of expanded coverage, but any officer time charged to that grant must be limited to the specific purposes or activities specified in the grant. The Department will continue to seek these grants to serve the City's enforcement needs, as they become available.

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Drug enforcement is an important ongoing priority for the Police Department. While the Police Department actively responds to drug trafficking complaints, effective action requires a great deal of investigative time to build a case. By its nature, the drug trade operates on secrecy and extensive networks that must be thoroughly investigated to ensure conviction. Once an investigation is complete and arrests are made, the case must be prosecuted through the court system, which requires additional time. With all of the time that can be involved in building and prosecuting a drug trafficking case, it is understandable why residents would not see the immediate action they often expect. The perceived lack of immediate action in some cases does not mean that Police Department is not aggressively addressing the issue or does not share the residents' concerns. To date, there have been no reports of incidents involving the two regional bike trails in the City. Citizens are urged to file reports with the Police Department whenever they see suspicious activity in their neighborhoods. Neighborhood Associations are also encouraged to organize Neighborhood Watches to help increase vigilance within their neighborhoods. Through these cooperative community efforts, existing police patrols can be utilized more effectively and efficiently.

Through the neighborhood meeting process, numerous areas where traffic volumes, safety, and travel speed issues have been identified. City staff should evaluate traffic calming measures as potential strategies to address these issues. These measures include structural improvements that convey visual clues to drivers that cause them to slow down. They can include wider curbs and sidewalks at intersections, altering travel lanes to include gentle weaves, and other engineering practices. These strategies should be explored in greater detail as part of the City-Wide Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

The participants also raised concerns about the structural condition of the retaining walls in the Virginia Avenue subway or underpass. City Engineering staff is aware of the erosion of the retaining walls and is routinely monitoring the situation. The concrete walls in the subway were last repaired in 1982, when concrete patches were applied to the areas that were eroding. Based on the concerns raised at the June 8 meeting, the City will re-evaluate the need to repair the deterioration. Maintenance of the subway abutments is governed by an agreement between the City and CSX. CSX is responsible for maintaining those portions of the retaining walls that are directly beneath the railroad bridge. The City is responsible for the remaining portions of the walls on either side of the railroad bridge.

During the last year (2009), the City repaved the southern end of Virginia Avenue within the neighborhood, between Mary and Clement Streets. Another section of Virginia Avenue (between King and Mary Streets) is scheduled to be repaved before the end of 2012.

The participants also expressed as desire for a community meeting place, which would be helpful in organizing a Neighborhood Association. City staff notes that public and community meeting spaces are limited. During the initial phases of organizing a neighborhood group, staff

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recommends that the community contact the three churches in the neighborhood, to see if accommodations for the Neighborhood Association can be arranged. Several other Neighborhood Associations use or have used local churches as meeting sites.

Although the participants did not identify the recent increase in train whistles at the CSX rail yard as an important issue, it was discussed as a concern. The City enacted “quiet zone” regulations governing and restricting the use of train whistles at railroad crossings in 1966. CSX railroad complied with the regulations until 1996, when accident data at several at-grade crossings suggested that the train whistle ban was leading to unsafe traffic conditions and increased accidents between trains and cars. The City negotiated with CSX to preserve the whistle ban, but has been informed by the Federal Railroad Administration that accident rates remain high at several crossings. In addition, a new Federal Rule has been adopted that requires all train horns to be tested for compliance with safety standards by June 24, 2010. The City has raised resident concerns about the testing, and is actively working with the Federal Railroad Administration to investigate the issue and its impacts on residents in the area.

Staff also recommends that the current zoning for the residual residential areas along Lafayette Avenue should be evaluated as part of the City-Wide Element to determine if a transitional zoning classification that would permit both commercial and residential uses would be desirable to help protect the value of the existing residences and the development potential of the remaining vacant lots in that area. Additional rezoning consideration should be given to a vacant manufacturing building at the intersection of Offutt Street and Olive Avenue. This building has remained vacant for a number of years, and is currently zoned exclusively for residential use. The building is not easily adaptable to a permitted residential use. While the building is surrounded on three sides by existing single family residences, it is also adjacent (across the street) from a General Industrial Zone the CSX property. Interest in the reuse of the property for light manufacturing use has been raised, but the existing zoning precludes those uses. Some concern exists that the property will remain abandoned and will not be adequately maintained, since it has no current marketable residential or business use.

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IX. Eastside/Willowbrook Neighborhood

A. Overview & Historical Sketch

The area historically known as “Eastside” includes some areas in the adjoining Shriver/McNamee and Decatur Heights neighborhoods that were ‘severed’ or divided by the construction of Interstate 68, when several interconnecting streets were cut off by the highway. The former Eastside Elementary School, which is located north of I-68 but served many residents south of the freeway, was connected to the remaining neighborhood by a pedestrian bridge. This bridge was removed by the State Highway Administration, when it was deemed unsafe, after a high profile traffic accident occurred with a similar pedestrian bridge in Baltimore. The former pedestrian bridge was relocated to the current Allegany County Fairgrounds and now provides an elevated pedestrian crossing over the racetrack at the complex.

In addition to being “eroded away” by the construction of I-68, the City has expanded its boundaries to the east of the neighborhood, annexing a number of large parcels along Willowbrook Road and Evitts Creek. All of these parcels were annexed between 1997 and 2010. These new lands house some of the City’s major employers, including Allegany College of Maryland, the new Western Maryland Regional Medical Center, Devlin Manor nursing home, the Allegany County Health Department, the Thomas Finan Hospital



The New Western MD Hospital on Willowbrook Road

Center and Brandenburg Center, and the Cumberland Country Club. This combination of contracting boundaries in the older neighborhood and expanded boundaries to encompass the recently annexed areas along and east of Willowbrook Road makes the Eastside/Willowbrook neighborhood one of the City’s most dynamic and rapidly changing areas.

The July 13, 2010 Eastside/Willowbrook neighborhood meeting was the only forum conducted for the comprehensive planning effort that attracted no participants. Consequently, staff had no citizen input to work from in trying to identify planning needs and issues for the neighborhood. To compensate for the lack of attendance and participation, the Planning Coordination Team met on July 22, 2010 to identify current issues and needs within the neighborhood, based on staff experience, citizen complaints and concerns, and known trends in recent years. In identifying needs and issues, the Team also considered the issues & needs obtained from the earlier neighborhood meetings and the differences and similarities between them. While the issues and needs identified by the Planning Coordination Team cannot replace

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direct citizen input, they do serve as a starting point for neighborhood planning. The neighborhood is not served by an active neighborhood association.

B. Neighborhood Demographics

The Eastside/Willowbrook neighborhood is one of the larger residential neighborhoods defined for the plan, with a 2000 population of just over 2,550 people. It ranked 4th in overall population. Although the neighborhood's population declined between 1990 and 2000, the rate of decline (4%) was less than half of the City's overall percentage decline. With recent annexations and housing development that has occurred in the Willowbrook/Evitts Creek corridor since 2000, the neighborhood may have experienced some recent population growth.

The number of school-aged children between the ages of 5 and 18 living in the neighborhood remained unchanged at about 400 between 1990 and 2000. The number of pre-school aged children (under 5) declined slightly by about 2.5%, which suggests that the number of school-aged children may begin to decline slightly in the next Census as the pre-school aged population from 2000 migrates into the school-aged population in 2010. The number of seniors (aged 62 and over) living in the neighborhood increased slightly by about 1.5% between 1990 and 2000, and stands at nearly 650 persons or about one quarter of the entire neighborhood population. The net population decline in the neighborhood was driven by the largest age group, working aged adults (ages 18-64), which decreased by about 6% over the decade.

The Eastside/Willowbrook neighborhood registered a slight growth in the number of homes in the neighborhood between 1990 and 2000. A total of 10 new units were added during that decade. The recent residential development that has occurred in the Willowbrook/Evitts Creek annexation corridor suggests that additional growth in the housing stock has occurred within the neighborhood since the 2000 Census. Owner occupancy within the neighborhood also grew by about 1% between 1990 and 2000, while rental unit occupancy declined by about 9 percent. Roughly 80% of the homes in the neighborhood were occupied, according to the 2000 Census, with 54% (over 575 units) occupied by home owners and the remaining 46% occupied by renters.

Like most other residential neighborhoods on the City's east side, the number of vacant housing units increased significantly between 1990 and 2000 by more than 25%. According to the 2000 Census, vacant homes constitute nearly 250 of the total homes in the neighborhood. The number of vacant rental units in the neighborhood increased by about 65% during the 1990's.

The estimated mean value of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood rose substantially when compared to other residential neighborhoods, from about \$38,000 in 1990 to \$72,500 in 2000. This represents an overall increase of about 90% over the decade and places the

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neighborhood 3rd overall in average housing values among the City's neighborhoods. A sharp decline during the 1990's in the number of owner-occupied homes for which no mortgage is owed may be an indication that homes are changing ownership more frequently within the neighborhood. According to Census data, the percentage of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood for which the owner had no mortgage decreased by about one-third during the decade, from about 65% in 1990 to about 41% in 2000. This decrease may reflect a relatively strong resale market for owner-occupied homes. This pattern can be expected in a rapid growth and development area. This trend is further supported by the rapid increase in mean home values (90%) and mean household incomes (over 100%) in the neighborhood between 1990 and 2000. These statistics reflect the level of change occurring in the neighborhood.

The percentage of housing units in the neighborhood built prior to 1940 decreased slightly by about 1% between 1990 and 2000.

The number of residents living in the same house within the neighborhood five years before the Census was taken increased slightly from 50% in 1990 to roughly 54% in 2000. This level of residential stability is about average for most of the City's residential neighborhoods.

The neighborhood experienced rapid growth in the number of residents over the age of 25 that had a college degree or had attended some college. According to the 1990 Census, roughly 400 of the neighborhood's residents over the age of 25 had attended college classes or graduated from college after completing high school. By 2000, this number had grown by 25% to just over 500. This number is expected to rise in 2010, due to the growth in professional jobs in the neighborhood from the completion of the new Western Maryland Regional Medical Center.

The number of all workers living in the neighborhood who traveled to work by walking or riding public transit decreased by half from about 60 in 1990 to 30 in 2000.

The mean household income within the neighborhood doubled between 1990 and 2000, from about \$17,000 to nearly \$35,000. This trend can be expected to continue into 2010, due to the recent construction of the Western Maryland Regional Medical Center and the demand for professional worker housing it will create in the neighborhood.

In 2000, only about 22% of all persons living in the neighborhood for whom poverty status was determined were living below the poverty level. About 14% of the impoverished residents were over the age of 65.

The top 3 occupations for workers living in the neighborhood in 2000 were Production, Transportation, and Material Moving Occupations, Management, Professional, and Related Occupations, and Service Occupations. Each of these occupations employed over 20% of all workers over the age of 16. As more professional employees relocate to the area around the

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new Hospital and Allegany College, the number of Management and Professional workers can be expected to grow in future Censuses.

The top 3 occupations for workers living in the neighborhood in 1990 were Service; Precision Production, Craft, and Repair, and Sales. However, no single occupation employed more than 20 percent of the neighborhood's workers.

C. Land Development Patterns

This section of the plan is not intended to provide a detailed technical analysis of land uses in the neighborhood. Instead, it is written to provide a generalized overview of the neighborhood's predominant development patterns to provide a better understanding of the neighborhood's character and a context for understanding growth and development issues and needs within the neighborhood. A more detailed assessment of land use patterns, as required by Maryland Law, is provided in the City-Wide element of the plan.



Homes along Williams Street

As explained in the introduction to this chapter, the traditional Eastside neighborhood has contracted in recent years, due to the construction of Interstate 68 and the barrier it imposes to areas that were formally part of the neighborhood. The remaining core of the original neighborhood (generally south and west of Willowbrook Road and north and east of Williams Street) is predominantly residential in composition. The dividing line between the original neighborhood and the newly annexed areas along Willowbrook Road and Evitts Creek

is Constitution Park. Some of the worst housing conditions in the City, according to the 2002 Faux Group Housing Conditions Survey, are concentrated in the southeastern portions of Eastside, on the hill above Williams Street. This area was identified as a major blight area by the study.

These issues stand in stark contrast to the newly annexed sections of the neighborhood. Since 1997, six of the eight annexations that the City has undertaken occurred in the Willowbrook Road/Evitts Creek corridor of this neighborhood. In fact, the entire eastern extension of this neighborhood was annexed during that period. The lands annexed into the neighborhood over the past 13 years include the Allegany College campus, the Cumberland Country Club, the County Health Department building, the proposed Cumberland Crossing (Turano) and Willowbrook Marketplace commercial developments, Devlin Manor nursing home, and the site

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of the new Western Maryland Regional Medical Center. The only two annexations that did not specifically occur within the Eastside/Willowbrook neighborhood in the past 13 years were the Commerce Center Lot # 5 annexation on Commerce Drive and the Averitt Annexation at the



The Allegany County Health Department

corner of Messick Road and Industrial Boulevard, both of which were incorporated in 2008. While these two annexations did not occur in the neighborhood, they were also on the city's eastern boundaries, further confirming the potential for future annexation activity on the City's eastern fringes. For that reason, the City expanded its targeted areas for future annexation along the eastern boundaries of this neighborhood as part of the 2009 Comprehensive Plan amendment to add a new Municipal Growth Element. It is important to note that growing portions of this annexation area

currently fall outside of the 1.5-mile service radius of the City's three fire stations, which may become a factor in the City's ISO fire insurance rating.

The annexed lands in the neighborhood have generated some of the city's largest recent development projects, including the Western Maryland Regional Medical Center campus, a series of dormitories on the Allegany College campus, and a condominium project at the Cumberland Country Club. The recently approved Cumberland Meadows senior housing project is



The Allegany College Campus on Willowbrook Road

currently under construction on land between Allegany College and the Cumberland Country Club and will add a total of 64 new housing units when completed. That project will also result in the construction of a new City street radiating north off Willowbrook Road, which is tentatively named Wyckoff Street. Some of the largest vacant and potentially developable tracts of land can be found in the recently annexed Willowbrook Road/Evitts Creek corridor of the neighborhood.

Future growth and development in the recently annexed areas in the Willowbrook Road/Evitts Creek corridor will be dependent upon the extension and upgrading of streets, water, and sewer infrastructure. Portions of the neighborhood, including sections of the original Eastside residential neighborhood and the newly developing commercial areas along I-68 and the western portions of Willowbrook Road are currently served by or possess convenient access to

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the existing water tank on McNamee Hill in the Shriver/McNamee neighborhood. While this water supply tank has adequate supplies for the existing service area, it is operating very close to its existing capacity, and any major increase in demand on this water tank could exceed its capacity. The City is working to evaluate its options to address this projected limitation.

Although adequate sewer capacity exists in the area, many of the existing lines are undersized for intensive development. Replacement and expansion of existing lines will need to be carefully coordinated with proposed development projects.

In addition, State Highway Administration completed a highway corridor study in 2009 for the Willowbrook, Williams, and Messick Road corridor. Based on the projected traffic impacts from permitted and potential buildout of this corridor under the City and County's current zoning ordinances, the State Highway Administration has concluded that significant portions of Willowbrook Road will need to be widened to 6 lanes (three lanes in each direction) with a median and turn lanes at major intersections when zoning build-out occurs. This projected highway scenario is based on the assumption that Willowbrook Road will be the predominant travel corridor for most traffic generated by the adjoining projects. It does not consider an alternative traffic circulation network that could be developed in the form of a new street network that would provide alternative routes of travel and access to multiple exits from I-68 that have the potential to serve the Willowbrook Road corridor. These additional exits include Exit 43D (Maryland Avenue) and Exit 45 (Hillcrest Drive), which can be improved to provide support access to the Willowbrook Road corridor. The development of a future network of side streets in the corridor would also encourage more efficient development of land in the growing corridor and would provide for a more traditional development pattern, rather than encouraging a standard suburban highway commercial strip. All of these infrastructure issues will need to be evaluated and addressed in greater detail in the City-Wide Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

These specific growth changes are somewhat counterbalanced within the established residential portions of the neighborhood by the closing of the former Memorial Hospital campus in the adjoining areas of the Johnson Heights/Mapleside neighborhood which borders the Eastside/Willowbrook neighborhood on the South. The City is currently working with a developer to revitalize the site and create new employment and residential opportunities in that area.

D. Cherished Features

During the neighborhood meeting process, participants were asked to identify features of the neighborhood that help define the neighborhood's unique or special character and features and places that bring people together and foster social interaction. These features are important to

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understand, as they contribute to neighborhood identity and they help strengthen the essential social bonds between residents that make people feel an attachment or bond with their neighborhoods they live in. If these special features are not understood, protected, and reinforced when future development and changes occur within the neighborhood, residents may feel a sense of “loss” that can eventually result in declining civic pride and reduced investment in maintaining their properties. It is essential that these features be captured, celebrated, and promoted as part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the most special and attractive aspects of urban neighborhood living are not lost to future generations.



The Pool at Constitution Park

Due to the lack of attendance at the July 13, 2010 neighborhood meeting, no cherished identifying features or important social gathering places were identified by the citizens. However, it is not difficult to understand that the most significant feature and social gather place for the neighborhood is Constitution Park. The new public and semi-public facilities that have been annexed into the City or developed in the Willowbrook/Evitts Creek corridor include Allegany College, the new Western Maryland Regional Medical Center, the Allegany County

Health Department, and the Cumberland Country Club. All of these features have become prominent identifying features of the neighborhood. For detailed locations of these features, please see the Defining Characteristics Map in Appendix E.

E. Issues & Needs

Due to the lack of input from citizens at the neighborhood meeting, staff evaluated neighborhood issues and needs based on prior experience and known complaints and issues raised by residents in past years. Based on this assessment, Planning Coordination Team members were able to identify several important issues and needs at its July 22, 2010 meeting. They include:

- Repair or remove a number of dilapidated residential structures concentrated along the western portions of the neighborhood that are concentrated between Williams and Emily Streets and ranging east to Broadway Circle.
- Repair and expand sidewalks where feasible in the areas specified above.
- Implement traffic calming measures to address speeding and growing traffic volumes on Pine Avenue, which is receiving increased use as a local shortcut to the new hospital on Willowbrook Road.

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- Protect Constitution Park as a recreational area from conversion and redevelopment.
- Work closely with County officials to undertake a joint comprehensive planning effort along the Willowbrook Road Corridor to establish a coordinated and shared vision for future development and to implement consistent County and City Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to implement that shared vision.
- identify a potential future site for a new manned fire station capable of providing adequate coverage for the newly annexed areas and targeted future annex properties to ensure that the City's current Insurance Services Organization (ISO) rating can be maintained as the City grows.
- Identify and protect sensitive environmental resources in the developing Willowbrook Road corridor, specifically including the Evitts Creek floodplain, and evaluate opportunities for passive recreational improvements in those areas.

1. Strengths & Opportunities

In addition to identifying critical issues in the Eastside/Willowbrook neighborhood, staff also evaluated the area to identify strengths and opportunities. The most obvious among them is the opportunity for growth and redevelopment offered by the emerging Willowbrook/Evitts Creek corridor. The creation of significant and high wage employment opportunities and the commercial/retail development opportunities in the corridor will bring new vitality to the neighborhood and, in doing so, will create new opportunities for private redevelopment investment and increased property values. This potential for growth also represents a potential problem if development does not occur in a planned, coordinated, and consistent manner.

Additional opportunities for future jobs may arise from the ongoing redevelopment and reuse of the former Memorial Hospital site in the adjoining areas of the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood. Constitution Park, the City's largest and most extensive recreational facility is a significant asset to the neighborhood.

2. Concerns & Problems

Since no residents attended the July 13, 2010 neighborhood meeting, the responsibility of identifying some basic concerns, problems, and obstacles for the neighborhood fell in the hands of the staff. Chief among them is the potential for uncoordinated future development patterns in the Willowbrook/Evitts Creek corridor, due to the fact that substantial portions of this rapidly developing area is located in and controlled by Allegany County, which has different long range plans and development regulations than the City. While the City desires to annex additional lands in the corridor, the complexities of Maryland Annexation Law and the lack of incentives for developed property owners to accept annexation into the City means that substantial areas within the corridor will remain in the jurisdiction of the County for many years to come. This

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fact increases the need for the City and County to develop consistent plans and development regulations for the corridor to ensure efficient and appropriate development of the area.

Based on input received from adjoining neighborhoods and past complaints received from residents of the neighborhood, staff assumes that crime and blighted housing conditions represent significant problems and impediments within the western and established portions of the neighborhood, especially in the areas above Williams Street along and adjoining Broadway Street. The division of the former neighborhood by I-68 also divided the community in a way that diminished its former identity, and may be a factor in the lack of neighborhood identity and cohesion demonstrated by residents today. This issue will also pose an obstacle to overcome in organizing a neighborhood association in the area.

3. Future Vision

Absent a vision statement from the neighborhood residents, staff prepared the following vision statement for the Eastside/Willowbrook neighborhood:

The proposed vision for the Eastside/Willowbrook neighborhood is to create a more cohesive neighborhood development pattern between the existing developed areas and the rapidly developing Willowbrook/Evitts Creek corridor and to improve housing conditions in the established areas of the neighborhood.

F. Recommendations

Based on the issues and needs identified by the Planning Coordination Team on July 22, 2010, the following specific recommendations for the Eastside/Willowbrook neighborhood are proposed:

Given the rapid pace of change and development in the Willowbrook Road Corridor, the Team felt that the need for a cooperative County/City planning and zoning study for that area was the most urgent need for the neighborhood. Since only portions of the Willowbrook Road Corridor are within the City limits and the City may not gain the citizen support that would be needed to annex the entire area, the City and County must work cooperatively to manage the growing development potential in that corridor. A special focus on development form and design is desired to ensure that the area develops in a pattern, scale, and manner that complements and reinforces the City's established and historic development pattern.

The staff also recognized the need to expand the street network in the Willowbrook Road Corridor to provide multiple routes of travel and access points to the corridor. Such a street

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network would alleviate potential congestion on Willowbrook Road, provide more convenient access for residents in the surrounding neighborhoods, provide access to lands not fronting on Willowbrook Road for future development/redevelopment, and establish a development pattern that is more consistent with the rest of the City. Planning for this future street network will require the cooperation of both Allegany County and the Maryland Department of Transportation.

Future development patterns in the Willowbrook and Evitts Creek Corridor areas on the City's east side will also require special attention to sensitive environmental features and resources. Much of the land in the corridor is constrained by steep slopes, floodplains, and wetlands. When developing a coordinated plan for this area, a special emphasis should be placed on conservation and protection of Evitts Creek and its associated floodplains as a potential green space and linear passive recreational corridor for the area. A prime potential passive recreational resource that might be appropriate to consider would be an off-road hiking and biking trail, which could eventually be linked into the City's planned bikeway network and the C & O Canal Towpath.

To address the growing need for expanded fire protection services in the Willowbrook/Williams/Messick Road corridor, the Fire Department has been evaluating the need for a new station on that side of the City and working with developers in that area to identify potentially suitable properties. Two potential opportunities have emerged—one along Willowbrook Road, just south of I-68, and another south of the U.S. Highway 220/I-68 intersection (below Exit #47). If the contemplated station is close to I-68 in the proposed locations, then it can provide alternate coverage for Station #3 on Frederick Street (which has the greatest equipment storage constraints and improvement needs), thereby allowing the City to close that station in addition to providing adequate coverage for the newly annexed areas and other areas to the east where future expansion of the City may occur. The Fire Department should continue to work with prospective developers in these areas to identify an appropriate site then develop a budget and site plan for the proposed new station.

With regard to the water capacity constraints on the McNamee Hill water tank, the City is evaluating two alternative solutions—expand the height of the storage tank to increase its capacity or divide the service district for the tank to alleviate demand. The potential problem with raising the height of the storage tank to increase its capacity is that it will increase the water pressure within the distribution lines. On the other hand, portions of the service district for the McNamee Hill tank along Baltimore Avenue and in the Decatur Heights neighborhood could be redirected to be served by the Fort Hill Reservoir, which has adequate existing capacity to support the added demand. This issue will be evaluated further in the City-wide Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

The overall potential for new development and redevelopment in this gateway area is very strong. Consequently, the Planning Coordination Team also stressed the need to conserve and

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protect Constitution Park as a primary recreational resource for the neighborhood. The park already enjoys a strong demand, which has been strengthened in recent years by the closure of the smaller neighborhood parks that were once scattered around the city. Additional growth in professional office and residential uses within the corridor will help generate more future recreational demand for the park. Staff feels that the City should be careful not to compromise the recreational value and potential of Constitution Park as demand for future development and redevelopment in the neighborhood continues and expands.

Revitalization needs in the neighborhood tend to be concentrated on the western fringes of the neighborhood—primarily the areas above Williams Street. Several of the streets in this portion of the neighborhood lack complete sidewalks or have sidewalks that are in great need of repair and maintenance. In addition, substandard housing is concentrated in this area, and many of the structures are unsalvageable and in need of demolition.

Finally, staff identified a potential need for traffic calming measures to address the growing incidents of speeding on Pine Avenue. This street is receiving increased traffic use as a neighborhood shortcut to the new hospital and other offices on Willowbrook Road. The Planning Coordination Team desires to keep this street as a part of the future street network for the corridor, but recognizes the need to manage traffic growth and its potential impacts on the adjoining residences.

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X. Shriver/McNamee Neighborhood

A. Overview & Historical Sketch

The Shriver/McNamee neighborhood is a major historic gateway into the City from Pennsylvania and points north along U.S. Highway 220. Prior to the highway relocation project in late 1990's, Bedford and Frederick Streets served exclusively as U.S. Highway 220. The neighborhood, along with the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood, is also one of the last residential neighborhoods to be developed on the City's east side. A number of homes on the northern fringes of the neighborhood were constructed in the 1960's and 1970's.



Durham Drive Homes

The neighborhood's attractive landscape is defined and enhanced by two imposing ridgelines—Shriver Hill and McNamee Hill—for which the area has been named by this plan. Shriver Hill is one of the most prominent natural backdrops for the downtown area portions of which are protected from intensive development by a special Viewshed Protections Overlay Zone.



Shriver Ridge from the McMillen Bridge

Shriver Ridge is also important for its geologic and archaeological significance. The ridgeline, which extends into neighboring areas of West Virginia and Pennsylvania, was raised by geologic folding that occurred when the North American and African Continental plates collided hundreds of millions of years ago. Subsequent erosion wore down the limestone rock in the ridge and exposed veins of chert (flint) in a number of locations along the ridge. Native Americans mined these chert veins to create arrowheads, which have been found throughout the area. Some of these arrowheads may have been manufactured from small chert veins on Shriver Hill within the neighborhood.

Today the neighborhood, like Wills, is a quiet, residential community with a distinctive valley setting.

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The Shriver/McNamee neighborhood meeting was conducted on August 5, 2010. A total of 4 participants attended. The neighborhood once had a Neighborhood Association, but is not currently served.

B. Neighborhood Demographics

According to the 2000 Census, the Shriver-McNamee Neighborhood had a population of about 2,575, making it the 5th most populous of the City's 11 neighborhoods. The neighborhood's population declined by about 7.5% between 1990 and 2000, which is slightly less than the City's overall rate of population decline. Roughly 93% of the neighborhood's population is white, which is comparable to the City as a whole.

The overall population decline in the neighborhood between 1990 and 2000 was driven by a sharp decline in the Senior population (aged 62+) and the Working Age population (ages 18-64). While the greatest percentage decrease was registered by the Senior population (-17%), the actual number of people in that age group was less than 600. By comparison, the Working Age group had a smaller rate of decline over the decade (-5.5%), but represented a much larger number of citizens (nearly 1,500 total persons). The number of Pre-School Aged Children (under 5) and School-Aged Children (between the ages of 5 and 17) remained relatively stable, with overall declines of between 3 and 1 percent, respectively. As in many of the City's residential neighborhoods, the decline in the number of Pre-School Aged Children was greater than for the School-Aged Children age group.

The total number of homes in the neighborhood decreased by about 9 units between 1990 and 2000 and stands at early 1,350. Roughly 83% of the homes in the neighborhood were occupied, according to the 2000 Census, with 65% (725 units) occupied by home owners and the remaining 35% occupied by renters. The number of both owner-occupied and renter-occupied units declined by about 7% between 1990 and 2000, which is relatively unique among the City's neighborhoods. In most of the City's residential neighborhoods, the number of rental units either increased over the decade or changed at a greater rate than for owner-occupied units.

Unlike most of the other residential neighborhoods on the City's east side, the number of vacant housing units remained unchanged between 1990 and 2000. Most of the other neighborhoods showed large increases (over 20%) in the total number of vacant rental units over the decade. According to the 2000 Census, vacant homes constituted about 230 of the total housing units in the neighborhood.

The estimated mean value of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood increased from about \$45,000 in 1990 to \$61,000 in 2000. This represents an overall increase of about 35% over the

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decade. The percentage of owner-occupied homes in the neighborhood for which the owner had no mortgage decreased by 10% during the decade, from about 63% in 1990 to about 53% in 2000. This decrease may reflect a healthy resale market for owner-occupied homes within the neighborhood.

The percentage of housing units in the neighborhood built prior to 1940 decreased slightly by about 1.5% between 1990 and 2000.

The number of residents living in the same house within the neighborhood five years before the Census was relatively unchanged, with about 62% in 1990 and roughly 61% in 2000. This level of residential stability is about average for most of the City's residential neighborhoods.

The neighborhood experienced little change in the number of residents over the age of 25 that had a college degree or had attended some college. According to the 1990 Census, roughly 667 of the neighborhood's residents over the age of 25 had attended college classes or graduated from college after completing high school. By 2000, this number had grown slightly to just under 680. This rate of change is less significant than in many of the City's other neighborhoods, but may reflect the fact that the neighborhood consistently possesses one of the higher levels of educational achievement in the City with well over 30% of its residents having attended some college.

The number of all workers living in the neighborhood who traveled to work by walking or riding public transit remained constant between 1990 and 2000 at about 45.

The mean household income within the neighborhood more than doubled between 1990 and 2000, from about \$12,500 to nearly \$37,000.

In 2000, only about 16% of all persons living in the neighborhood for whom poverty status was determined were living below the poverty level. This is one of the lowest percentages of poverty in the City. About 10% of the impoverished residents were over the age of 65.

The top 3 occupations for workers living in the neighborhood in 2000 were Sales and Office occupations, Service Occupations, and Management, Professional, and Related Occupations. Each of these occupations employed over 20% of all workers over the age of 16. The top 3 occupations for workers living in the neighborhood in 1990 were Service; Sales; and Professional Specialty. However, no single occupation employed more than 20 percent of the neighborhood's workers.

Generally speaking, the Shriver/McNamee neighborhood has fared well socioeconomically, and is one of the City's healthier neighborhoods. Although a population decline occurred during the 1990's, the rate of decline was less than for the City. Overall housing values and the housing

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market appear healthy, and the neighborhood meeting participants identified no major issues relating to growth, income, and housing conditions.

C. Land Development Patterns

This section of the plan is not intended to provide a detailed technical analysis of land uses in the neighborhood. Instead, it is written to provide a generalized overview of the neighborhood's predominant development patterns to provide a better understanding of the neighborhood's character and a context for understanding growth and development issues and needs within the neighborhood. A more detailed assessment of land use patterns, as required by Maryland Law, is provided in the City-Wide element of the plan.

The Shriver/McNamee neighborhood is largely residential in nature, with two small commercial areas on either end of the Bedford/Frederick Street corridor. The corridor is defined by the two prominent ridgelines (Shriver and McNamee Hills) that run in a northeast/southwest alignment through the neighborhood. Commerce Center Business Park, with its concentration of commercial offices, is located at the northeastern corner of the City on Bedford Road, and several small businesses, physician's offices, a few churches, and the Western Maryland Food Bank are located at the southern end of Frederick Street. Generally, the development densities increase significantly from north to south along the corridor.



Cumberland Floral Shop on Frederick Street



Homes along Frederick Street

As noted in the previous section of this chapter, the neighborhood is noted for its well-maintained streets and high quality housing stock. According to the 2002 Faux Group Housing Conditions Survey, the three survey sections that comprise the neighborhood ranked 2nd, 3rd, and 5th best out of 15 in terms of overall housing conditions. Concentrations of lower income populations and deteriorating housing conditions can be found along Shades Lane, which is located along the southern flank of McNamee Hill.

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Very little new development activity has occurred in this neighborhood since 2000. However, two annexations—one of which occurred in 2008 and the second was being processed in 2010—have been added along the northeastern boundaries of the neighborhood, which indicates a potential for further expansion of the neighborhood along the Bedford Road corridor. The only major new development over that period, the construction of two office buildings in the Commerce Center Business Park and the reconstruction/Conversion of the former Farley’s



Commerce Center Business Park on Bedford Road

Foodland grocery store into a Sheetz convenience store/gas station, has occurred in this area. Most of the remaining development activity that has occurred in the neighborhood has been in the form of minor renovations and additions. A number of vacant lots with infill development opportunities are scattered throughout the neighborhood.

The neighborhood has lost its two major employers, the former Smith’s Bakery on lower Frederick Street and the Biederlack blanket plant in Commerce Business Center. The Biederlack plant was the last to cease production in 2009. The plant has a high reuse potential and is being maintained by the owner, as it continues to be used as a warehouse facility for the plant’s remaining inventory. Additional vacant commercial office lots remain available for development in the Commerce Center Business Park.

D. Cherished Features

During the neighborhood meeting process, participants were asked to identify features of the neighborhood that help define the neighborhood’s unique or special character and features and places that bring people together and foster social interaction. These features are important to understand, as they contribute to neighborhood identity and they help strengthen the essential social bonds between residents that make people feel an attachment or bond with their neighborhoods they live in. If these special features are not understood, protected, and reinforced when future development and changes occur within the neighborhood, residents may feel a sense of “loss” that can eventually result in declining civic pride and reduced investment in maintaining their properties. It is essential that these features be captured, celebrated, and promoted as part of the City’s Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the most special and attractive aspects of urban neighborhood living are not lost to future generations.

A total of 5 special features that contribute to the neighborhood’s identity and special character were identified. They included the distinctive valley, framed by Shriver and McNamee Hills that

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define the neighborhood, and the attractive homes for which the neighborhood is well known. They also noted that the neighborhood is still remembered as the old main route to Bedford, PA (former U.S. Route 220), even though it has been relocated to a new alignment outside the City. The ballfield at the summit of Leiper Street and the former bakery were additional distinguishing features of the neighborhood identified by the participants.

As described above, the list of special identifying features for the Shriver/McNamee neighborhood, as identified by the neighborhood meeting participants, is as follows—in no particular order. For detailed locations, please see the Defining Characteristics Map in Appendix E.

- The surrounding hills that define the valley and the neighborhood
- The neighborhood is known as having some of the most attractive homes in the City
- Bedford Street- the old Highway 220 Corridor to PA
- The ballfield at the top of Leiper Street
- The old Smith's Bakery

The participants also identified five important neighborhood “gathering places” in the area, three of which are local businesses that are currently located outside the current City limits. They include the Bedford Road Pharmacy, the Bedford Road Liquor Store, and Farley's Supermarket. As of the writing of this plan, a petition has been filed with the City to annex the Farley's Supermarket property, which has been proposed for conversion to a convenience store. Participants expressed concern about the gradual erosion of locally owned neighborhood stores, as they provide the best opportunities for residents to meet and exchange news. The other traditional gathering places in the neighborhood were the sidewalks and alleys in the neighborhoods (where neighbors tend to interact with one another) and the various churches in the neighborhood, which were touted as some of the most active church congregations in the City.

E. Issues & Needs

A total of 6 neighborhood issues and needs were identified by the Shriver/McNamee neighborhood meeting participants. They are, in no specific order:

- Sidewalks for Shades Lane, Leiper Street, and Bedford Street
- Need a neighborhood playground. Currently there is no convenient public destination for neighborhood residents to meet.

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- Neighborhood streets are in need of repaving.
- Traffic visibility on Lower Bedford Street from the side streets is bad.
- The Frederick Street Fire Station appears vacant all the time. There is a desire to have it manned.
- Provide periodic police foot patrols. There is a desire for more interaction with police officers in the neighborhood.

The lack of sidewalks on certain streets was seen as a significant concern, because the neighborhood is recognized as one of the more “walkable” areas in the City and they provide the best remaining opportunity for residents to interact with one another. The desire for a playground also stemmed from the need for more public places for neighborhood residents and children to interact. Police foot patrols were desired to give the residents a better opportunity to interact with the City’s Police Department, which may be desired as a result of the overall low level of incidents in the neighborhood. There was a general feeling that the Frederick Street Fire Department should be manned, as it appears to be a vacant building to many of the residents.

The remaining two needs related to street improvement issues. There was a desire for street repaving and to find ways to improve sight visibility for vehicle accessing lower Bedford Street from the side streets and alleys.

1. Strengths & Opportunities

The meeting participants identified a few positive changes that occurred within the neighborhood. Two of these changes occurred 15 or more years ago—the paving of the gravel portions of Frederick Street and the relocation of U.S. 220. The new churches in the neighborhood, Cornerstone Baptist Church (formerly Gephardt Elementary School and the Central Assembly of God were mentioned as positive changes.

The participants identified several assets and opportunities, including the good and attractive appearance and quality of the housing stock, and the efforts by residents to communicate with one another and look after their neighborhood, such as cleaning up the streets in front of their homes. However, the efforts residents have made to socialize with one another and to maintain the appearance of their properties has not translated directly into support for a neighborhood association. The participants noted that the neighborhood once had an active association that ceased as citizen participation faded. The general lack of serious issues or problems within the neighborhood may be a contributing factor to the decline of the association, and it may be a factor to overcome in working to revive the association.

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2. Concerns & Problems

As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the Shriver/McNamee participants were generally satisfied with conditions in their neighborhood. Consequently, they identified very few negative changes and/or problems, threats, or impediments. Ironically, the closing of Gephardt School was seen as a negative change, even as it created the opportunity for the Cornerstone Baptist Church. The loss of neighborhood schools and public playgrounds was a concern for the residents, as they reduced the number of public gathering places that were available for neighbors to meet and interact. Although the residents understand and accept the recent replacement of storm grates on Frederick and Bedford Streets with bicycle-friendly grates, they expressed concern about the observation that they were beginning to rust after being in place for only 1-2 years.

The few obstacles and threats to the neighborhood's vitality that they did identify included the lack of nearby jobs for residents, the overall poor street surface conditions (and the image that creates), and the lack of sidewalks on the aforementioned streets.

3. Future Vision

As part of the neighborhood meeting process, each neighborhood was asked to identify a specific future vision for the neighborhood. Citizens attending the Shriver/McNamee meeting expressed the following vision for the neighborhood:

The vision for the Shriver/McNamee neighborhood is to maintain the neighborhood as a safe, comfortable, and attractive residential area and encourage additional small neighborhood businesses.

F. Recommendations

The Planning Coordination Committee met on August 19, 2010 to discuss the input received at the August 5 neighborhood meeting. The following suggestions are based on the input generated at that meeting.

Participating residents identified a need for sidewalks along Bedford Street, Leiper Street, and Shades Lane. Neighborhood residents identified the sidewalks that already exist in the area as an important gathering and meeting place, given the lack of public parks and community meeting places in the neighborhood. Although the City's sidewalk network is extensive, there are many areas that lack sidewalk improvements in other neighborhoods as well as Shriver/McNamee. The City tries to build and improve sidewalks where financially feasible as part of its major street improvement projects, such as the recent projects on Maryland Avenue

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and Virginia Avenue. Unfortunately, the streets that the neighborhood has identified have constrained rights-of-ways (specifically Shades Lane and Leiper Street) and they have significant elevation changes along the sides of the streets that would require significant regrading. These physical constraints add greatly to the cost of creating sidewalks and have made it cost prohibitive in many areas. The City currently does and will continue to seek special grant funds to help offset the cost of creating new sidewalks in such areas. However, the City's ability to secure special grant funds to construct sidewalks in most portions of the Shriver/McNamee neighborhood may be limited due to the relatively high median incomes in that area.

Residents also noted that the site visibility for traffic turning onto lower Bedford Street from the adjoining side streets is limited and presents a safety hazard for motorists. This situation is caused by the fact that many of the buildings in that section of the neighborhood front along the sidewalk, which limits visibility from the side streets. Cars parked along the Bedford Street in that area only add to site visibility problems that exist in that area. The only solutions to this problem would be to move or demolish the buildings on the corners or prohibit on-street parking near those intersections. A blanket restriction on parking in this area would be very unpopular with residents, because the houses are sited on very narrow lots that lack sufficient area for off-street parking, and the availability of on-street parking is very limited for the demand that exists. The Planning Coordination team also acknowledged that periodic speed monitoring by the Police Department along that section of Bedford Street might help improve safety for vehicles entering Bedford Street in these areas.

The participants also expressed a need for a neighborhood playground to provide a convenient meeting place for parents and children that live in the area. The only public playground area in that section of the City is at the Banneker Gardens project, which the housing authority is currently redeveloping at the intersection of Bedford and Frederick Streets. Residents of the neighborhood do utilize the ballfield on Leiper Street, but it is not convenient for many residents due to the lack of sidewalks, the steep grades, and the distance of the ballfield from most homes in the neighborhood.

Several other neighborhoods, including Rolling Mill and Decatur Heights, also expressed a desire for neighborhood parks and playgrounds. Many former playgrounds and parks around the City were closed and sold due to the cost of maintenance and upkeep and the lack of active use. Unfortunately, the City's current financial situation does not make it possible for the City to create any new parks. However, the Planning Coordination Team suggested that the neighborhood could consider creating a community garden, like the one that was established by the Rolling Mill Neighborhood Association. Such a facility would provide the same social gathering function as a park or playground, but would impose no additional maintenance responsibilities on the City, if the neighborhood formed an association to oversee it. The neighborhood has a number of vacant or underutilized properties that could serve as potential community gardens; however each potential site should be carefully analyzed to ensure that the soils were not contaminated by the former uses.

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The Mayor and City Council recognizes the need for more street improvements and more reliable management of pavement surfaces. Consequently, in 2006 the City developed a Pavement Management System that evaluated all of the City's streets for improvement needs and ranked them for improvement priority based on a series of parameters, including functional classification, traffic volumes, and surface conditions. Based on that system, the City issued a bond in the amount of \$9,000,000 for the first three years of prioritized street improvements. Three streets in the Shriver/McNamee neighborhood were repaved in the first year of the program (2008). These streets are Valentine Avenue, Dryer Avenue, and Fectig Street. An additional street, Marshal Street, is scheduled to be repaved in 2011. Finally, the first section of Frederick Street just below the neighborhood (between the McMullen Bridge and the beginning of the concrete section) was repaved in 2010. If travel conditions are a significant safety concern on any specific street in the neighborhood, those concerns should be brought to the attention of the Street Department until such time as the City can afford to repave or reconstruct the street, as the case may be.

Fire Station Number 3 on Frederick Street is currently used by the Fire Department as a reserve engine storage facility. Although the station was designed with basic living facilities for fire personnel, the basic infrastructure is out of date and in need of significant repair and improvements. Due to the lack of funds to make the necessary improvements and insufficient staffing to man all three stations that the Fire Department operates, the Frederick Station cannot be manned at this time. The station also lacks the storage space necessary for the larger modern trucks. However, the Fire Department needs the storage space for the vehicle that is currently parked at the building because there is no alternative storage space for it.

Due to the City's recent expansion (annexation) to the southeast of I-68, there is a need to expand fire station coverage on that side of the City. Any new fire station that would be constructed in the Willowbrook or Evitts Creek corridor would also be able to provide coverage to the area now served by the Frederick Street station. The City continues to evaluate the need for fire service expansion on that side of the City and is seeking a strategic location where new service could be provided to cover the newly annexed portions of the City. If and when the construction of this contemplated new station is approved by the Mayor and City Council, the Fire Department would have no further need for the Frederick Street station. Given its proximity to the neighborhood, the Planning Coordination Team felt that the station might have some potential to be converted to a future community center.

The desire for additional police patrols, including foot patrols, was raised in other neighborhoods, including Rolling Mill, Decatur Heights, and Walsh/Humbird. While foot patrols would be desirable in an urban environment (especially from a community relation standpoint), the staffing requirements and associated cost to provide that level of service would be considerable. Currently, the City assigns one patrol officer to each of the four major sections of the City (North, South, East, and West). Officers are instructed to make a strong presence in the

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neighborhoods while conducting their patrols. They are also advised to spend some extra time speaking with the neighborhood residents and engaging in outreach when responding to calls in their section of the City. However, many of the emergency calls received by the Police Department often require two officers to respond. When that occurs, one section of the City will lose coverage temporarily. The recent switch to 12-hour shifts allowed the Police Department to place a few additional officers on the street. The Police Department also applies for grants to cover the costs of expanded coverage, but any officer time charged to that grant must be limited to the specific purposes or activities specified in the grant. The Department will continue to seek these grants to serve the City's enforcement needs, as they become available.

The Planning Coordination Team also identified an issue that was not raised by the meeting participants. Although the City is able to meet the current water needs of the neighborhood using the existing water main along Frederick Street from the Filtration Plant and the high pressure tank at the summit of McNamee Hill, the system has very limited water capacity for future expansion of service. The existing McNamee storage tank has been determined to be very close to maximum capacity. Any significant new growth or development on the lines served by this tank could exceed its service capacity. The City is evaluating two alternative solutions—expand the height of the storage tank to increase its capacity or divide the service district for the tank to alleviate demand. The potential problem with raising the height of the storage tank to increase its capacity is that it will increase the water pressure within the distribution lines. On the other hand, portions of the service district for the McNamee Hill tank along Baltimore Avenue and in the Decatur Heights neighborhood could be redirected to be served by the Fort Hill Reservoir, which has adequate existing capacity to support the added demand. This issue will be evaluated further in the City-wide Element of the Comprehensive Plan.

XI. Mapleside/Johnson Heights Neighborhood

A. Overview & Historical Sketch

Mapleside/Johnson Heights is one of the City's newer residential neighborhoods. It is the home to Fort Hill, one of the City's three High Schools, and for many years, was the home of Memorial Hospital, which was consolidated into the Western Maryland Regional Medical Center on Willowbrook Road in 2009. The neighborhood also has the newly renovated Greenway Stadium, adjacent to Fort Hill High School, which is the home field for both Fort Hill and Allegany High Schools and a source of community pride and identity for the neighborhood.



Fort Hill High School

Fort Hill High School, which was built in the mid 1930's as a Public Works Administration project of the Roosevelt Administration, was named in honor of a Civil War hill fortification above nearby Folck's Mill, from which Union Brigadier General Benjamin Kelley repulsed an August 1864 Confederate Army advance determined to attack and burn the City. This force had been involved in the Battle of Chambersburg, PA, and had left that town in ruin. Kelley's artillery defense from a hill along Christie Road overlooking the mill convinced the Confederate troops that they were facing a superior force and invariably saved Cumberland from capture and destruction. The Confederate force eventually retreated across the river into West Virginia, causing damage to the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad and Chesapeake and Ohio Canal along its way. The skirmish was the only battle of the Civil War that occurred within the immediate area of the City. The school's athletic team name, the Sentinels, was derived from this historic stand.

The last sitting President to make a public speech in Cumberland, President Lyndon Johnson, did so at Fort Hill's Greenway Stadium on May 7, 1964—100 years after the battle for which the school was named. After speaking to a crowd assembled at the stadium, President Johnson boarded an open limousine and was driven to City Hall along Williams Street, which was lined with citizens. That visit and subsequent limousine ride remains a proud memory of citizens today.



Greenway Stadium

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Today, Mapleside/Johnson Heights is known as a quiet residential neighborhood—with the exception of High School football games at Greenway Stadium. Residents of the neighborhood consider themselves to be avid high school football fans. Game nights at the stadium attract large crowds of neighborhood residents who consider the stadium to be one of the most important social gathering places for its residents.

The Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood meeting was conducted on August 30, 2010. A total of 4 participants attended. The neighborhood does not have a neighborhood association of its own, but a number of residents serve on the South Cumberland Business and Civic Association, which does represent neighborhood interests.

B. Neighborhood Demographics

According to the U.S. Census data compiled for this plan by the Maryland Department of Planning, Mapleside/Johnson Heights stands as the most populous of the City's 11 neighborhoods, with a 2000 Census total population figure of about 4,825. This figure represents a decrease of about 7.5% from the 1990 Census estimate of about 5,225. That rate of decline is almost 2% less than for the City as a whole. Nearly 99% of the neighborhood's 2000 population is white, which is less diverse than the rest of the City.

The majority of the population decline within the neighborhood between 1990 and 2000 occurred in the working age (18-64) and senior (62+) age groups. The population for both age groups declined by 11% over the decade. By comparison, the childhood population remained relatively stable. No population change occurred during the 1990's in the school-age population (ages 5-18), and only a slight 2% change occurred in the pre-school age group (0-4). These trends suggest that the families with children remain strongly attached to the neighborhood and most of the population change may have been due to empty nest households.

The neighborhood's housing stock stood at just over 2,300 total units in 2000, with more 90% of them occupied. The neighborhood's overall occupancy rate was the 2nd highest among the City's neighborhoods (after Walsh/Humbird) and, combined with Dingle/Haystack, was one of only 3 neighborhoods in the City to register overall housing vacancy rates of 10% or less.

Of the neighborhood's occupied units in 2000, 35% were renter occupied. This figure represents a decline of about 3% from the 1990 Census. The vast majority of the homes in the neighborhood (65% in 2000) are owner occupied. Of the vacant units in the neighborhood that year, 33% were unoccupied rental units. This figure was a 12% increase over the percentage of rental unit vacancies registered in the 1990 Census.

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The neighborhood is known for its relatively good quality housing. About 32% of the homes in the neighborhood in 2000 were built before 1940 and the mean home value for the neighborhood was relatively high (when compared to all other neighborhoods on the City's East Side) at nearly \$73,000 in 2000. This average value was the 2nd highest in the City (after Dingle/Haystack) and was slightly higher than Eastside/Willowbrook. It also represents a nearly 50% increase in average value from the 1990 Census.

Roughly 66% of the neighborhood's population in 2000 was living in the same house at least five years prior to the Census, as opposed to 64% in 1990. This rate of residential stability is slightly higher than a number of surrounding neighborhoods.

Overall incomes in the neighborhood were comparable to those in adjoining neighborhoods. The 2000 Census reported a mean household income of \$33,000, which represents an increase of only 23% since 1990. Just over 53% of the neighborhood's home owners held no mortgage on their homes in 2000, which was a slight 5% decrease from 1990. This level of decrease should be considered low relative to the rapid increase in mean housing values during the decade.

In 2000, about 20% of all persons living in the neighborhood for whom poverty status was determined were living below the poverty level. Only 9% of the impoverished residents were over the age of 65, which is the 2nd lowest poverty rate for seniors among the City's neighborhoods (after Dingle/Haystack).

Roughly 39% of the neighborhood's population over the age of 25 in 2000 had attended some college or possessed a college degree. This level of educational attainment is higher the City as a whole, and represents a 10% increase from the 1990 Census.

About 6% of all workers living in the neighborhood traveled to work by walking or riding public transit, which is close to average for the City's neighborhoods.

The top 3 occupations for workers living in the neighborhood in 2000 were Sales and Office Occupations; Management, Professional, and Related Occupations, and Service Occupations. About 56% of all neighborhood employees were working in the top 2 occupations. This represents a slightly higher degree of concentration in worker occupations than exists in most other residential neighborhoods.

The top 3 occupations for neighborhood workers in 1990 were Administrative Support, including clerical; Precision Production, Craft, and Repair; and Service. However, the distribution of worker occupations was much broader in 1990. Combined, the top 3 occupations employed only 45% of all workers living in the neighborhood.

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Overall, the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood is the City's largest, with a 2000 Census population of just over 4,800. The neighborhood's relatively low rate of population decline verifies its stability. On a relative basis, the socioeconomic data for Mapleside/Johnson Heights suggests that it is the 2nd healthiest of the City's residential neighborhoods, after Dingle/Haystack.

The neighborhood is known for some of the City's newer high quality housing, which is reflected in the relatively high mean value of owner-occupied homes (roughly \$73,000 in 2000). The percentage of owner-occupied homes is relatively high for the City at 65%, and the percentage of older homes (built prior to 1940) is very low at 32%. Many of the neighborhood's homes were built around and after World War II and several major housing projects have been developed in the neighborhood since 2000.

According to the 2000 Census, the neighborhood had a generally low percentage of homeowners that had no mortgage on their homes (53%) relative to the substantial increase in average home values that occurred during the 1990's. Roughly 66% of the neighborhood's population was living in the same house at least 5 years before the 2000 Census, which is higher than was identified in other neighborhoods. It is well known that homes for sale in the neighborhood do not remain on the market as long as in other neighborhoods, which indicates a relatively strong housing market.

Although the neighborhood exhibits some of the highest average housing values in the City, the average annual household income is not as high as might be expected, with a 2000 average of just over \$33,000. The neighborhood has a number of areas which qualify for Community Development Block Grant assistance for low and moderate income households, which suggests a very diverse income mix within the neighborhood. The neighborhood also experienced a substantial shift and qualitative change in the occupations held by workers living in the neighborhood between 1990 and 2000.

C. Land Development Patterns

This section of the plan is not intended to provide a detailed technical analysis of land uses in the neighborhood. Instead, it is written to provide a generalized overview of the neighborhood's predominant development patterns to provide a better understanding of the neighborhood's character and a context for understanding growth and development issues and needs within the neighborhood. A more detailed assessment of land use patterns, as required by Maryland Law, is provided in the City-Wide element of the plan.

Mapleside/Johnson Heights is a largely residential neighborhood framed by three main east-west streets, Williams Street on the north, Oldtown Road in the center (which is the historic

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dividing line between Johnson Heights on the north side and Mapleside on the south), and Industrial Boulevard (MD Highway 51) along the south. Virtually all of the commercial land uses are concentrated along these three major streets. The remainder of the neighborhood is



South Penn Elementary School

comprised of residential uses interspersed with institutional uses—predominantly schools and churches. The neighborhood has three major public schools—South Penn Elementary, Washington Middle, and Fort Hill High. It is the only neighborhood in the City to have public schools hosting all three grade levels.

Of great concern in the neighborhood is recent loss of its major source of jobs—Memorial Hospital.

The hospital closed its doors in November of 2009 when it was consolidated with Sacred Heart Hospital to create the new Western Maryland Regional Medical Center on Willowbrook Road. As the owner of the property, the City is working aggressively to reuse the property, and has signed a long-term agreement with a property manager to aggressively market the site and oversee its revitalization.

The revitalization and reuse of the Memorial Hospital site is the greatest zoning issue in the neighborhood. The site is currently zoned R-U (Urban Residential)—consistent with the zoning for the surrounding neighborhood—because the former hospital use is allowed as a conditional use within that zone. As long as the City remains the owner of the property, any use of the buildings would be classified as a “governmental use,” which is permitted in all zoning districts. The City wishes to sell the property for two main reasons—it lacks the financial resources and staffing to maintain the site in perpetuity and it desires to make the property a productive part of the City’s tax base. However, if the property is sold for private ownership, it can only be used for a conforming use under the current zoning classification, which is primarily residential.



The Former Memorial Hospital Campus

The Memorial Hospital property contains several buildings and a large parking garage that is not easily or affordably adapted to the limited range of uses permitted within the R-U Zone. Portions of the hospital, such as the patient rooms, could be adapted to apartments or a nursing home use (both of which can be permitted in the R-U Zone), but the operating rooms, labs, medical offices, and other facilities are not easily adapted to permitted uses in that zone. The cost of demolition and redevelopment would also be quite high for the potential return on investment that the alternative uses allowed within the R-U Zone would provide.

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The wide range of potential alternative uses that would be attracted to the hospital site—from bio-technology research and development to restaurants to multi-family residential—are not adequately captured by most of the current zoning classifications established by the Zoning Ordinance. City staff has determined that a new overlay zone should be created to provide for the comprehensive redevelopment and adaptive reuse of large properties with multiple buildings. Such properties would include the Memorial Hospital campus as well as the former Sacred Heart Hospital and a number of former large industrial sites scattered around the city. Unlike the current R-U Zone, a “floating zone” can be applied to individual properties on a case-by-case basis that satisfy specific locational or development criteria outlined in the Zoning Ordinance and the Comprehensive Plan. Consequently, as of the writing of this plan, the City is working on an amendment to the 2004 Comprehensive Plan that would authorize the development of this proposed new floating zone. The new zoning classification is expected to be completed in 2011.



The New Gateway Townhomes Project

The neighborhood is also experiencing a significant level of development and redevelopment activity. New developments include infill commercial uses on Industrial Boulevard (including a new commercial shopping plaza at the corner of Industrial Boulevard and Messick Road). The site of this plaza was annexed into the City in 2008, and represents the newest addition to the neighborhood. Most of the recent redevelopment activity in the neighborhood is residential in nature, including the Gateway Townhomes project on Gateway Terrace and the Cascades apartment complex at the corner of 4th and Vancouver Streets.

Overall housing conditions in the neighborhood vary significantly from east to west in the neighborhood. According to the 2002 Faux Group Housing Conditions Survey, concentrations of blighted and deteriorating housing can be found in the eastern sections of both the Mapleside and Johnson Heights sections of the neighborhood, generally east of Wempe Drive and Montgomery Avenue. This portion of Mapleside received the third lowest overall rating of the 15 sections surveyed in the study. However, the remaining portions of Mapleside (from Wempe Drive east to the City limits) received the 4th highest overall rating for housing quality and was one of two sections of the neighborhood that were rated “stable areas.” The high average value of housing in the neighborhood and the level of residential infill and redevelopment activity that is occurring in the neighborhood indicate a strong market potential for further housing rehabilitation investment in the future.

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D. Cherished Features

During the neighborhood meeting process, participants were asked to identify features of the neighborhood that help define the neighborhood's unique or special character and features and places that bring people together and foster social interaction. These features are important to understand, as they contribute to neighborhood identity and they help strengthen the essential social bonds between residents that make people feel an attachment or bond with their neighborhoods they live in. If these special features are not understood, protected, and reinforced when future development and changes occur within the neighborhood, residents may feel a sense of "loss" that can eventually result in declining civic pride and reduced investment in maintaining their properties. It is essential that these features be captured, celebrated, and promoted as part of the City's Comprehensive Plan to ensure that the most special and attractive aspects of urban neighborhood living are not lost to future generations.

The list of special identifying features for the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood, as identified by the neighborhood meeting participants, is as follows—in no particular order. For detailed locations, please see the Defining Characteristics Map in Appendix E.

- The Johnson Heights Medical Building on the site of the former Johnson Heights Elementary School
- Fort Hill High School & Greenway Stadium
- White Oak Shopping Plaza and the Dollar General Store (major retail shopping centers)
- The Dairy Mart on Oldtown Road
- Oscar's Restaurant on Oldtown Road
- St. Mary's Church – the largest and most prominent church in the neighborhood
- The quality and well maintained residential properties in the neighborhood
- South Penn Playground
- The Salvation Army headquartered on First Street with Community Center on Sommerville Avenue

The Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood is primarily known as the home of Fort Hill High School and the Greenway Avenue stadium, which is shared by both Fort Hill and Allegany High Schools. The Fall High School Football Games at Greenway Avenue Stadium are a major social gathering activity for the neighborhood's residents, who proudly profess to be among the most active and engaged high school football fans within the city. The neighborhood's



Oscar's Restaurant

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major retail shopping and eating establishments, concentrated primarily along Oldtown Road, Industrial Boulevard, and in the White Oaks Shopping Plaza are also primary identifying features of the neighborhood. They include Oscar's Restaurant (a popular local haunt for Fort Hill High fans), the Dairy Mart, and the Dollar General Store. St. Mary's Church, which is the most visually prominent church in the area, the South Penn Playground, and the Salvation Army headquarters and community center were also identified as important features that contribute to the neighborhood's identity and special character.

The local businesses and playgrounds also serve as the primary social gathering places for neighborhood residents. The participants also identified the bowling alley at White Oaks Plaza as one of the primary places where neighborhood residents often meet and interact. Although the South Cumberland Business and Civic Association is widely known for its advocacy of the Virginia Avenue neighborhood and commercial district, the meeting participants noted that many of its members live in the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood and that the organization also supports the neighborhood. Another primary social event in the neighborhood is the annual classic car show at the businesses along Industrial Boulevard.

E. Issues & Needs

A total of 9 important neighborhood issues and needs were identified by the meeting participants. They are, in no specific order:

- Sidewalks, along with the associated handicapped access facilities, for the streets that provide strategic connections between residential areas and the three schools and shopping areas in the neighborhood.
- Better access to the C & O Canal Towpath trail.
- More frequent police patrols and presence, especially more frequent enforcement to control speeding on Hilltop Drive and Oldtown Road.
- Repaving of Oldtown Road.
- Improvements to the Washington Middle School, which lacks air conditioning. Both interior and outdoor facility repairs and improvements are needed.
- More diverse neighborhood retail options, such as a Target urban neighborhood store and a coffee shop.
- A residential façade improvement program for qualified homeowners.
- Community dumpsters financed and maintained through the Community Betterment program.
- Unspecified stormwater drainage and sewer improvements.

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The lack of sidewalks was seen as a high priority need, since the residents must walk along busy streets to conduct their business. The condition of the Washington Middle School was also considered an urgent need because of the relatively poor state of the facility, relative to other schools in the County. Increased efforts to control the growing crime problems in the neighborhood were also a high priority, as residents have seen criminal activity increase.

1. Strengths & Opportunities

The primary positive changes in the neighborhood include the recent renovation of the Greenway Avenue Stadium that began after the 2009 high school football season and is being completed in 2010, the new housing projects that have been completed in the neighborhood, including the Gateway Townhomes and Cascades Project on opposing sides of Vancouver Street, and the ongoing efforts to redevelop and reuse the Memorial Hospital site.

The participants also identified several assets and opportunities, including the two major civic organizations in the neighborhood—the South Cumberland Business and Civic Association and the Salvation Army. The two playgrounds (South Penn and Johnson Heights) and the wide array of organized neighborhood sports opportunities for children were also viewed as strong assets upon which to build a more festive neighborhood. The participants also identified the three neighborhood schools (which include the South Penn Elementary School, the Washington Middle School, and Fort Hill High School) as important assets as they allow neighborhood children to remain connected to their friends and the neighborhood throughout their school years.

2. Concerns & Problems

The closing and relocation of that hospital in 2009 was one of the biggest negative changes in the neighborhood, as it removed the primary employer and economic pulse of the neighborhood. The most controversial negative change was the closing of the Johnson Heights Elementary School, although the playground that was retained and the replacement for the school (the Johnson Heights Medical Building) were identified as two of the neighborhood's primary social gathering places

The primary obstacles and threats to the neighborhood's vitality included the lack of funding for much needed street and pedestrian improvements and the growing problems combating crime in the neighborhood. Although the efforts that residents make to get to know their neighbors was viewed as a strength and asset, the lack of interest in translating that neighborhood spirit into action to address the neighborhood's needs was seen as an impediment. Speeding drivers and periodic school induced traffic congestion were also seen as threats or impediments to the neighborhood.

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3. Future Vision

As part of the neighborhood meeting process, each neighborhood was asked to identify a specific future vision for the neighborhood. Citizens attending the Mapleside/Johnson Heights meeting expressed the following vision for the neighborhood:

The vision for the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood is to make strategic improvements in the neighborhood that will lower crime, improve walkability and accessibility (sidewalks and ADA improvements), and expand greenspace and parks.

F. Recommendations

The Planning Coordination Committee met on September 9, 2010 to discuss the input received at the August 30 Mapleside-Johnson Heights neighborhood meeting. The following suggestions and recommendations to address the neighborhood's identified needs were generated by the Committee.

According to Engineering Department staff, sidewalk construction in the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood was not undertaken in the past because of insufficient funding. Consequently, many streets known to need sidewalks lack them. In addition, some sidewalks that do exist in the neighborhood (such as Louisiana Avenue and Oldtown Road) either need surface work to repair general deterioration or root damage.

Generally speaking, sidewalk improvements are not part of the City's 2006 Pavement Management System funding, unless they become an integral part of major street reconstruction work associated with a specific street improvement project. In those instances, the sidewalk work may be limited to ADA Handicapped Access improvements. Historically, the City has allocated or sought Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), State Highway Enhancement, and Appalachian Regional Commission funds for sidewalk improvements because such work can be eligible for these funds. However, aside from CDBG funds, these sources are available only periodically through specific project applications. Additional funding for sidewalk improvements to schools can be obtained periodically through the "Safe Routes for Schools" program.

The Planning Coordination Team suggested that sidewalk needs be evaluated first using the bikeway network that is being developed from the 2008 Trails and Bikeways plan that was prepared for the City. The bikeways identified through that planning process were designed to create links between the neighborhoods and the major destinations for residents and tourists, including schools and shopping areas. The system recognizes and avoids streets with the steepest slopes, since they can be difficult and unsafe for bicycles. By using this system as a

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starting point, the best pedestrian routes can be identified and analyzed to determine where sidewalks are deficient or unavailable. Engineering staff can then evaluate the routes and determine if sufficient right-of-way for sidewalks exists and the potential cost for the improvements. Once this background work has been completed, the appropriate funding source can be ascertained to finance the desired improvements.

Improved access to the C & O Towpath is a more complicated matter. The neighborhood is separated from the trail by the CSX railroad, which has multiple tracks and a major railyard in that area that would have to be crossed to provide the desired access. The railroad is understandably reluctant to grant new crossings due to liability issues. The potential for accidents between pedestrians and trains is especially great where multiple tracks must be crossed to provide the desired access.

The best possible way to address this issue would be to evaluate the potential for ADA Handicapped Access improvements to the pedestrian tunnels at the Virginia Avenue Subway—which provides access to the existing Canal Towpath Trail access at Offutt Street. The current pedestrian tunnel on the west side of Virginia Avenue (closest to the neighborhood) has two stairways that must be traversed. Since the Engineering Division is already exploring the need for repairs to the subway abutments, the potential for ADA Handicapped improvements to remove the stairs could also be explored as part of that future project.

As in several other residential neighborhoods, the desire for greater police patrolling was raised. The City understands and appreciates the desire expressed in several neighborhoods for greater police presence and patrolling. Currently, the City assigns one patrol officer to each of the four major sections of the City (North, South, East, and West). Officers are instructed to make a strong presence in the neighborhoods while conducting their patrols. They are also advised to spend some extra time speaking with the neighborhood residents and engaging in outreach when responding to calls in their section of the City. However, many of the emergency calls received by the Police Department often require two officers to respond. When that occurs, one section of the City will lose coverage temporarily. The recent switch to 12-hour shifts allowed the Police Department to place a few additional officers on the street. The Police Department also applies for grants to cover the costs of expanded coverage, but any officer time charged to that grant must be limited to the specific purposes or activities specified in the grant. The Department will continue to seek these grants to serve the City's enforcement needs, as they become available.

The participants also noted the need for street surface repairs to Oldtown Road. This street is scheduled to be resurfaced (mill and overlay, with some drainage and curb improvements) in 2011 under the City's Pavement Management System. Additional stormwater and drainage improvement needs (as noted by the participants) should be conveyed to the Department of Public Works. The City will investigate and evaluate repair needs as the specific problem locations are known.

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With regard to improvements at the Washington Middle School, the City does not administer and maintain the public schools. They are administered by Allegany County Public Schools in cooperation with the Allegany County Board of Commissioners. The City can convey these needs to Allegany County through the comprehensive planning process and may be able to assist the County in applying for funding support as may be needed for the specific improvements.

Residents also expressed a desire for a broader range of retail shopping options. Over the years, the range of retail businesses has changed and the neighborhood has lost traditional department and clothing stores, including Grants and Ames. While the participants were not displeased with the specific stores that have moved into the neighborhood, they expressed a strong desire for stores that will serve basic neighborhood shopping needs. This is not an issue that can be addressed through a simple zoning change. Zoning regulations do not dictate what goods can be sold, only the general types of uses that can be permitted.

The Planning Coordination Committee noted that the City has experienced difficulty attracting national chain stores, due to the limitations of socio-economic data for the City and its market area. The City's market area covers a wide area that extends into Pennsylvania and West Virginia. In some instances, it can be difficult to compile data for this area, which results in a limited demographic portrait of the City and its economic base. More detailed demographic and socioeconomic data can be obtained through a "Psychographic Study" of the area, the cost for which could be shared by the City and County. Efforts to pursue this study are being explored by the Economic Development Division.

The participants also expressed a desire for two neighborhood needs that can be addressed through the City's Community Development Block Grant program. The first is a residential façade improvement grant program for eligible homeowners, which could be accomplished through an extension of the current program being applied in the Virginia Avenue and Chapel Hill neighborhoods. The second need is for a community dumpster program. This program, typically financed through CDBG Community Betterment funds, would finance the temporary placement (typically 1-2 days) of a portable dumpster within a neighborhood to collect large items that are not picked up by standard trash collection services. The dumpster must be managed by neighborhood volunteers—usually through the auspices of a citizen Neighborhood Association. This program is currently offered by the City's 4 active Neighborhood Associations (Rolling Mill, Decatur Heights, Chapel Hill, and North End). Coordinating such a program for the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood could be accomplished by forming a new neighborhood association or gaining sponsorship from the South Cumberland Business and Civic Association, which occasionally represents the neighborhood.

XII. Policy Implications Summary

This chapter of the Neighborhood Element summarizes the implications for the policies, goals, and objectives of the subsequent City-Wide Element that emerged from the data that was compiled and the neighborhood meetings conducted for this element. This chapter also pulls together many of the issues and recommendations common to the residential neighborhoods as identified by the 80 citizens who participated in the neighborhood meetings. A matrix of the general issues raised in the various meetings illustrating common themes between the neighborhoods is provided in Appendix B. The significant policy implications discussed in this chapter are summarized in bullet form at the end of the section and are highlighted in bold-faced print where they can be found within the section narratives.

A. Demographics

Based on the demographic estimates compiled by the Maryland Department of Planning for each neighborhood from the 1990 and 2000 Censuses, several important findings can be drawn that should be considered in the formulation of policies, goals, and objectives in the City-Wide Element of the Comprehensive Plan. Clearly, the neighborhoods have a number of common issues, but also reflect significant differences in overall socio-economic conditions that must be understood and reflected in the City's overall revitalization policies and priorities.

From the standpoint of overall population changes and patterns, **the City of Cumberland experienced a population decline of 2,188 persons or 9.2% during the 1990's**. More recent population estimates suggest that the decline slowed significantly during the first decade of the twenty-first century. However, the decline was substantial enough during the 1990's to be reflected in 10 of the 11 neighborhoods defined for the Comprehensive Plan—including all predominantly residential neighborhoods. **Only the Center City neighborhood (or downtown area) witnessed population growth during the decade**. The estimated population in the Center City neighborhood grew from just under 2,400 in 1990 to nearly 2,550 in 2000, an overall healthy gain of about 6.5%. This growth can be attributed in large part to the increased rate of upper floor commercial renovations into apartments, which expanded residential living opportunities within the downtown area.

The rest of the neighborhoods experienced population declines between 1990 and 2000. Most of the individual neighborhood declines were comparable to or less than the overall rate of decline for the City as a whole. Only the Chapel Hill/Virginia Avenue neighborhood declined at a significantly greater rate (13.7%). Two other neighborhoods, Decatur heights and Wills, declined at rates that were comparable to the City as a whole—between 9.0 and 9.5%. The lowest rate of population decline (4.0%) occurred in the Eastside/Willowbrook neighborhood. All other residential neighborhoods declined at rates ranging between 5.7% and 7.7%.

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The lowest rate of population decline during the 1990's occurred, ironically, in the neighborhood (Eastside/Willowbrook) that experienced the most annexation activity in the first decade of the 2000's. The additional residences that were annexed and the new residential construction that has occurred as a result of these annexations are not captured by the 1990 and 2000 Census data. Consequently, it is reasonable to anticipate that the Eastside/Willowbrook neighborhood will perform well again in the 2010 Census, relative to most other residential neighborhoods in the City. The highest rates of decline occurred in the Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill, Wills, and Decatur heights neighborhoods. **Stabilization of the City's population after more than 60 years of steady declines remains a high priority.**

In terms of total population in the 2000 Census, only two of the 11 neighborhoods have populations in excess of 4,000—Mapleside/Johnson Heights and Wills, in that order. The next four most populous neighborhoods, Chapel Hill/Virginia Avenue, Eastside/Willowbrook, Shriver/McNamee, and Center City had total populations that fell in a narrow range between 2,500 and 3,000. The neighborhood with the smallest total population was Rolling Mill at slightly less than 1,000 residents. All of the other neighborhoods had populations between 1,100 and 1,600 persons.

The population estimates from the 1990 and 2000 Censuses show generally consistent declines across all major age groups in most neighborhoods. Several neighborhoods witnessed positive growth in the number of school age (5-18) children over the decade. The largest such rate of growth occurred in the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood, with a smaller rate of growth recorded in both the Wills and Decatur Heights neighborhoods. Four other residential neighborhoods maintained relatively stable school age populations. However, the three neighborhoods that experienced strong growth in the school age population also experienced significant declines in the pre-school age population (0-4 years of age). Since the pre-school children will age into the school-age population in the following decade, these patterns suggest that—absent strong in-migration of school-age students—the growth in school aged children may subside in the first decade of the 2000's.

Seven of the ten residential neighborhoods experienced significant declines in the Senior population (aged 62+) between 1990 and 2000. In at least 5 of those neighborhoods, (Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill, Decatur Heights, Wills, and both West Side neighborhoods) the decline in Seniors was a significant factor in the neighborhoods' overall population declines. While the Eastside/Willowbrook and Walsh/Humbird neighborhoods experienced slight growth in the number of Seniors, the overall population declines were driven by losses in the Working Age population. Only the Wills neighborhood maintained a relatively stable Working Age population. These trends reflect the lack of employment opportunities in the City and the movement of working age and young adults away from the area or into the surrounding suburban areas. Mean household income data from the 2000 Census also shows that average earnings for City residents are relatively low and have not improved as greatly as other socio-

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economic measures. **Increasing employment opportunities and overall working wages within the City are critical to reverse the population drain on the working adult age group in Cumberland.**

Socio-economic data and trends from the 1990 and 2000 Censuses show glimmers of hope for the City. While the City's primary socio-economic measures (in terms of incomes, education levels, housing values, and poverty levels) tend to be worse than State averages, there is considerable variation within the City's neighborhoods. **Perhaps the most encouraging data comes from educational attainment levels, which increased significantly over the decade in most neighborhoods.** In the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood on the City's West Side, the number of residents over the age of 25 who had at least attended some college increased from 63% in 1990 to 72% in 2000. This level of educational achievement is well above average for the City and also exceeds the State average. **Overall, the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood consistently ranks strongest in the socio-economic measures with highest educational attainment levels, the highest mean household incomes, and the highest average housing values, and the lowest rates of poverty in the City.** The mean home value in the neighborhood according to the 2000 Census exceeded \$130,000, which is very high for Western Maryland, and ranks favorably against the State average for that period in time. The Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood had the second best rating in these measures with the second highest average home values in the City.

As introduced above, household incomes remain a significant improvement need for the City's neighborhoods. Several neighborhoods witnessed little growth in mean household incomes between 1990 and 2000. Only in the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood did the mean household income reach \$68,000. The second highest mean household income level was achieved by the Westside/Willowbrook neighborhood. In all other neighborhoods, the mean household income fell below \$37,500. The lowest mean household income levels were recorded in the Rolling Mill and Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhoods at \$24,500 and \$25,500, respectively. Consequently, Rolling Mill and Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill registered at the bottom in neighborhood rankings on the issue of overall demographic vitality. However, it is important to note that detailed estimates for Decatur Heights were not available from the Census, due to inconsistencies between the neighborhood and census boundaries for which data were available.

*In summary, the key **demographic** policy implications discussed above for the City-Wide element above are as follows:*

- **The City of Cumberland experienced a population decline of 2,188 persons or 9.2% during the 1990's.**
- **Of the 11 neighborhoods defined for this plan, only the Center City neighborhood (or downtown area) witnessed population growth during the decade.**

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- The rest of the neighborhoods experienced population declines between 1990 and 2000. Most of the individual neighborhood declines were comparable to or less than the overall rate of decline for the City as a whole.
- The population estimates from the 1990 and 2000 Censuses show generally consistent declines across all major age groups in most neighborhoods.
- Stabilization of the City's population after more than 60 years of steady declines remains a high priority.
- Increasing employment opportunities and overall working wages within the City are critical to reverse the population drain on the working adult age group in Cumberland.
- Socio-economic data and trends from the 1990 and 2000 Censuses show glimmers of hope for the City.
- Educational attainment levels increased significantly over the decade in most neighborhoods.
- Overall, the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood consistently ranks strongest in the socio-economic measures with highest educational attainment levels, the highest mean household incomes, and the highest average housing values, and the lowest rates of poverty in the City.
- Household incomes remain a significant improvement need for the City's neighborhoods.

B. Housing

Housing is a form of basic community infrastructure that, with only a few exceptions, is privately owned, developed, and maintained. The City influences housing construction and maintenance largely through land use regulations and codes and through special financial incentive and assistant programs, such as those offered through Community Development Block Grant funds and special property tax assessment and deferral programs. In cases where housing conditions have been neglected to the point that it violates City codes and poses a threat to public health and safety, the City can intervene and compel demolition. Yet, despite these limitations on the City's control over housing development and maintenance, it remains one of the most visible and fundamental factor in determining overall neighborhood health and vitality. **Abandoned and blighted housing depresses neighborhood property values, discourages private investment in and maintenance of surrounding properties, contributes to negative public perceptions, provides attractive locations for criminal activity, and discourages neighborhood cohesion. On the positive side, removal of blighted housing, strategic public investments in neighborhood revitalization and incentives for infill development can breathe new life and economic vitality into aging and declining neighborhoods and promote increased private investment in maintenance and rehabilitation.**

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The overall advanced age of the City's housing stock is well established. The vast majority of the City's current housing stock was built prior to 1940. This fact is both a positive and negative factor for the City's public image. The large number of older houses with strong historical integrity and architectural continuity are attractive to people seeking traditional neighborhood environments with great rehabilitation potential and value. However, age is not a positive attribute for many homes that have been poorly maintained or left vacant for extended periods. Many homes in the City's older neighborhoods are deteriorating and in danger of degrading to the point where rehabilitation is not an economically viable option. Blight and unsafe housing removal was a significant concern at several neighborhood meetings on the City's East Side.

In 2002, the City hired The Faux Group, a consulting firm based in Annapolis, to conduct a windshield survey and assessment of 6,500 housing units across the City. The City was divided into sections based on the tax maps and housing in each section was evaluated on the basis of exterior structural conditions. The results from this study were referenced in each neighborhood chapter in this Element.

The survey of housing conditions determined that the poorest housing conditions and highest levels of blight were concentrated in a narrow band running immediately north and east of the CSX Railroad around downtown Cumberland. The greatest concentrations of blighted housing are predominantly located in four residential neighborhoods—Rolling Mill, Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill, Decatur Heights and large portions of Wills. According to the neighborhood estimates based on 2000 Census data, two of these neighborhoods, Rolling Mill and Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill, had the lowest mean housing values in the City. Detailed housing value data was not available for Decatur Heights. Scattered pockets of blighted housing were found in the residential areas adjoining these areas, which extend into the Walsh/Humbird, Mapleside/Johnson Heights, Eastside/Willowbrook, Dingle/Haystack, and Westside neighborhoods. **The best overall housing conditions identified through the survey were concentrated in the outer fringes of the City, which correspond to the neighborhoods with the newest housing stock and highest mean home values in the City—Mapleside/Johnson Heights, Shriver McNamee, Dingle/Haystack, and the northernmost portion of Wills.**

The City has worked aggressively and in cooperation with landowners and private development to remove, improve, and revitalize deteriorating housing throughout the City. Since 2000, many of the City's historic homes have been revitalized and rehabilitated through private investment. These improvements can be seen in the homes along Louisiana Avenue and in scattered locations in Rolling Mills and Decatur Heights. **Neighborhood Housing Services, a private, non-profit organization housed in the old Canada Fire Station on North Mechanic Street has worked closely with the City to secure grant funding to subsidize private façade improvements to many residences in the Wills neighborhood.** In addition to these financial

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incentives, the organization feels that additional architectural design guidelines are needed to preserve the value, architectural integrity, and stability of the historic high-density housing stock in the Mechanic and Centre Street corridors of the Wills neighborhood. The organization is working with The Faux Group to develop standards, guidelines, and a review process that it will propose to the City as a means of protecting established residential uses from incompatible and inconsistent design and development practices. Similar guidelines were incorporated into the City's current Gateway Commercial and Industrial Zones, which apply exclusively to the Mechanic and Centre Street Corridors in the Wills neighborhood, but Neighborhood Housing Services staff asserts that their application has not produced the desired results.

In South Cumberland, the City has focused Community Development Block Grant funds along the Virginia avenue area of Chapel Hill to support residential and commercial façade renovation projects and is working on a major revitalization project for the Virginia Avenue commercial district. The initiative includes a major repaving of Virginia Avenue, improvements to the curbs, sidewalks, and crosswalks, and the installation of period lighting and street furniture as well as the replacement of street trees. The City also restored the Chapel Hill Playground on Springdale Street into a small neighborhood park. Recent private investments along the corridor include the construction of the new HRDC building, the Allegany Radio Corporation building, a Rite Aid pharmacy, and expansion of the Sheetz convenience store/gas station. The redevelopment activity has been well received in the neighborhood.



402 Virginia Ave. Before Façade Restoration



402 Virginia Ave. After Façade Restoration

This plan recommends that this program continue and that the next area to target for comprehensive revitalization is the Baltimore Avenue/Goethe Street corridor on the border between the Decatur Heights and Shriver/McNamee neighborhoods. Baltimore Avenue is

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expected to receive additional traffic from the growth that is occurring and planned for the Willowbrook Road corridor on the east side of I-68. Improvements are needed to the surface of the road and to eliminate sharp curves along the steep grade leading into the downtown area. This corridor will eventually become a major gateway into the downtown area from Willowbrook Road and I-68. While many blighted homes have already been removed along the street, a number of additional residential structures have deteriorated and require immediate attention. The conditions on Baltimore Avenue have had a blighting influence on Goethe Street, which offers a relatively protected and secluded residential enclave off Baltimore Avenue, but suffers from poor access. Many of the homes on Goethe Street have strong architectural character and integrity, but require rehabilitation and new investment. If a secondary access from Goethe Street to Baltimore Avenue can be established, the street offers attractive potential for private revitalization investment, due to its proximity to the growing number of professional jobs being created on Willowbrook Road. A major streetscape improvement project, a new street access to Baltimore Avenue, and strategic residential façade improvement grants would support private investment in the homes along Goethe Street that remain salvageable. Continued and determined strategic revitalization investments of the magnitude discussed above are necessary to raise neighborhood property values to provide a positive investment return for increased private investment in housing rehabilitation and maintenance.

The potential to generate additional revitalization investment in the City's older residential areas is bolstered by the dedication and determination of its homeowners. **Demographic data and trends from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Censuses analyzed for each neighborhood document that generally between 50 and 60 percent of the residents living in each neighborhood lived in their homes for five or more years prior to the Censuses. Additionally, roughly 60 percent or more of the homeowners living in most residential neighborhoods own their homes outright and make no mortgage payments. Homeownership levels are also relatively high for a City with such an intense urban development pattern.** These are all factors that suggest a strong attachment to the neighborhood and community and substantial investment interest in owner-occupied housing. Stable residential neighborhoods with long-term residents who own most or all of their homes are significant and motivated resources to engage in support of neighborhood revitalization efforts.

One of the greatest obstacles to increased private property investment among these residents are the low average household incomes and advanced age of the most stable and long-term residents. Many of the City's elderly residents do not have the financial resources they need to hire contractors or undertake major improvements to their homes. To compound matters, the high cost of properly remediating lead paint and asbestos issues in older homes (built prior to 1976) greatly reduces the financial assistance for basic revitalization and rehabilitation improvements that can be provided under the City's increasingly constrained Community Development Block Grant funds.

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While homeownership levels are relatively high in most of the City's residential neighborhoods (when compared with comparable cities in the State), **an emerging issue is the recent growth in vacant units in many neighborhoods.** According to the 2000 Census, vacant housing units comprised less than 10% of the total housing stock in only 3 of the City's 10 residential neighborhoods—Walsh/Humbird, Mapleside/Johnson Heights, and Haystack/Dingle. Data from the 1990 and 2000 Censuses also show that most of the increase in vacant units that occurred in a number of the City's neighborhoods during the 1990's can be attributed to vacant rental units. In many neighborhoods, vacant rental units increased by 40% or more over the decade. This issue is becoming especially apparent in the Rolling Mills and Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhoods, which have relatively high rates of both vacant and rental units. However, the increase in vacant rental units was not limited to neighborhoods with large proportions of rental units in the housing stock. The same trend was evident in the Dingle/Haystack neighborhood, which has many of the highest value homes in the City.

Neighborhood concerns regarding rental housing and Section 8 vouchers were raised in several neighborhoods, especially in the Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhood. Many of the concerns raised represent common misperceptions and misunderstandings of the Section 8 program, as discussed in greater detail in the Recommendations section of the Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill Chapter of this plan. Similar misperceptions were raised regarding the City's Rental Housing Licensing program and how it operates.



Residential Conversion of the former Klots Mill Building

Rental housing is a necessary housing option for large segments of the society—not just temporary or transient residents. As the cost of home ownership continues to increase, many young and older citizens who plan to stay in their local communities actively seek rental housing as a lifestyle choice. Although rental units are generally considered to be one of the most basic forms of housing in a community, the availability and cost of rental housing (whether the structures are apartment buildings or rental houses) exerts a subtle,

but tangible market influence on the cost of owner-occupied housing. In fact, it is that relationship and the general price sensitivity of the rental housing market that may represent the most critical influence that rental housing can have on overall neighborhood housing quality and conditions.

Because profits obtained from rental units are highly sensitive to overall maintenance costs (many of which can be difficult to predict or control in any given year), the inherent risks

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involved in converting and renting older homes can be great. If the prevailing market rate for rental housing is relatively low, discretionary (and in severe cases, essential) maintenance needs may be postponed or avoided by the owner to preserve a positive cash flow. When this situation persists for long periods, poorly maintained rental housing becomes increasingly evident in the community landscape, which can devalue neighboring properties thereby creating a disincentive for maintenance and private investment in nearby owner-occupied homes. This potential influence is often a primary source of concern, fear, and resistance among homeowners to expansion of rental housing in predominantly owner-occupied neighborhoods. What many homeowners often overlook is that the same problems can apply to absentee property owners, whether or not the property is leased or used infrequently.

The City's current housing code and rental licensing inspection program provide the most effective control over private rental housing conditions and quality that the City is legally empowered to impose. **However, it is important to bear in mind that if the expansion of rental units exceeds the supply of renters, then rental market prices will decline with potential negative consequences for maintenance and upkeep of older units. This situation may provide an explanation for the increase in rental unit vacancies that occurred during the 1990's.** It also may help explain the growing fear that neighborhood meeting participants voiced regarding rental housing. As an urban community in a largely rural setting, Cumberland will always have a higher proportion of rental units and renters than the surrounding area. However, a delicate balance of supply and demand remains necessary to ensure that the rental housing stock remains a sound investment and is properly maintained.

The primary source of publicly financed, owned, and maintained housing in the City is provided through the auspices of the Housing Authority of the City of Cumberland (known informally as the Cumberland Housing Authority or the Authority). The Authority operates a total of five public housing developments offering more than 400 units. Two of the developments constituting 200 total units are designated for elderly and disabled residents. The Cumberland Housing Authority also serves as an affiliate of the Cumberland Housing Alliance (a Community and Housing Development Organization), which as of the writing of this plan, has acquired and is completing the 42-unit Cornerstone Hill Group Development on James Day Drive. The Authority's principal offices are located at 635 East First Street in South Cumberland. In addition to the Cumberland Housing Authority, the Allegany County Housing Authority on Furnace Street owns and operates the Willow Valley Apartments, a 34-unit public housing complex.



Cornerstone Hill Townhomes

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Beginning in 2007, the Cumberland Housing Authority embarked on an initiative to modernize and redevelop its public housing projects throughout the City. The first of its projects to be redesigned was the Banneker apartment complex located near the confluence of Frederick and Bedford Streets in Decatur Heights. The Authority worked closely with residents of the complex and concerned citizens through a series of community meetings to determine how the project would be redeveloped. The new project, Banneker Gardens, which remained under construction during the writing of this plan, will offer 25 units (a reduction of 5 units from the former apartment complex) in a series of row house buildings with a traditional townhouse design, a formal community common area or “green”, a community center building, and a rehabilitated playground. The project has been redesigned to more closely replicate and reinforce the traditional urban streetscape that adjoins the project on Decatur and Bedford Streets, with residences that front along the street and directly access the sidewalks. The project is part of the Authority’s community commitment to redesign public housing projects in a way that better complements surrounding development and architectural patterns and allows the project to “blend into” its neighborhood surroundings.



Banneker Gardens under Construction

Upon completion of the Banneker Gardens project, the Authority plans to work on a similar revitalization and redesign of the Fort Cumberland project on Lamont Street in the Rolling Mill neighborhood. Representatives from the Authority actively participated in the Comprehensive Plan neighborhood meetings, and expressed their desire to work cooperatively with the neighborhood during the redesign process to more effectively integrate the public housing project into the neighborhood. **Rolling Mill Neighborhood Association members and City staff view the Cumberland Housing Authority’s planned redesign of the Fort Cumberland project as a potentially significant opportunity to expand the City’s recent Maryland Avenue upgrade and the new Queen City Shopping Center into a more comprehensive neighborhood revitalization effort.** In fact, by expanding the project into adjoining underutilized or vacant properties, the project can provide a more seamless design transition into the public housing project and serve some of the community needs identified by participants at the Rolling Mill neighborhood meeting, such as a community center and playground facility. **Consequently, this plan recommends that the best additional lands to acquire and integrate into the Fort Cumberland redesign project would be for the Authority to acquire the Klavuhn’s Moving and Storage property and the adjoining but currently vacant Crites warehouse site along Gay and Glenwood Streets.** The current uses on these properties do not conform to the urban residential zoning in the area, and redevelopment as part of the Fort Cumberland project would help bring them into consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance, while providing the land necessary to more creatively redevelop the housing project.

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*In summary, the key **housing** policy implications discussed above for the City-Wide element above are as follows:*

- The overall advanced age of the City's housing stock is well established. The vast majority of the City's current housing stock was built prior to 1940.
- Abandoned and blighted housing depresses neighborhood property values, discourages private investment in and maintenance of surrounding properties, contributes to negative public perceptions, provides attractive locations for criminal activity, and discourages neighborhood cohesion. On the positive side, removal of blighted housing, strategic public investments in neighborhood revitalization and incentives for infill development can breathe new life and economic vitality into aging and declining neighborhoods and promote increased private investment in maintenance and rehabilitation.
- The 2002 survey of housing conditions conducted by The Faux Group determined that the poorest housing conditions and highest levels of blight were concentrated in a narrow band running immediately north and east of the CSX Railroad around downtown Cumberland. The greatest concentrations of blighted housing are predominantly located in four residential neighborhoods—Rolling Mill, Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill, Decatur Heights and large portions of Wills.
- The 2002 housing conditions survey showed that the best overall housing were concentrated in the outer fringes of the City, which correspond to the neighborhoods with the newest housing stock and highest mean home values in the City—Mapleside/Johnson Heights, Shriver McNamee, Dingle/Haystack, and the northernmost portion of Wills.
- According to the neighborhood estimates based on 2000 Census data, the Rolling Mill and Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhoods had the lowest average housing values in the City.
- The City has worked aggressively and in cooperation with landowners and private development to remove, improve, and revitalize deteriorating housing throughout the City. Since 2000, many of the City's historic homes have been revitalized and rehabilitated through private investment.
- Neighborhood Housing Services, a private, non-profit organization, has worked closely with the City to secure grant funding to subsidize private façade improvements to many residences in the Wills neighborhood.
- In South Cumberland, the City has focused Community Development Block Grant funds along the Virginia avenue area of Chapel Hill to support residential and commercial façade renovation projects and is working on a major revitalization project for the Virginia Avenue commercial district.

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- This plan recommends that this strategic neighborhood revitalization program continue and that the next area to target for comprehensive revitalization is the Baltimore Avenue/Goethe Street corridor on the border between the Decatur Heights and Shriver/McNamee neighborhoods.
- Long-term and stable homeownership is an important factor in promoting healthy neighborhoods. Demographic data and trends from the 1990 and 2000 U.S. Censuses analyzed for each neighborhood document that generally between 50 and 60 percent of the residents living in each neighborhood lived in their homes for five or more years prior to the Censuses. Additionally, roughly 60 percent or more of the homeowners living in most residential neighborhoods own their homes outright and make no mortgage payments. Homeownership levels are also relatively high for a City with such an intense urban development pattern.
- One of the greatest obstacles to increased private property investment among these residents are the low average household incomes and advanced age of the most stable and long-term residents.
- An emerging housing issue is the recent growth in vacant units in many neighborhoods. According to the 2000 Census, vacant housing units comprised less than 10% of the total housing stock in only 3 of the City's 10 residential neighborhoods—Walsh/Humbird, Mapleside/Johnson Heights, and Haystack/Dingle. Data from the 1990 and 2000 Censuses also show that most of the increase in vacant units that occurred in a number of the City's neighborhoods during the 1990's can be attributed to vacant rental units. In many neighborhoods, vacant rental units increased by 40% or more over the decade.
- When evaluating rental housing issues and needs, it is important to bear in mind that if the expansion of rental units exceeds the supply of renters, then rental market prices will decline with potential negative consequences for maintenance and upkeep of older units. This situation may provide an explanation for the increase in rental unit vacancies that occurred during the 1990's.
- Rolling Mill Neighborhood Association members and City staff view the Cumberland Housing Authority's planned redesign of the Fort Cumberland project as a potentially significant opportunity to expand the City's recent Maryland Avenue upgrade and the new Queen City Shopping Center into a more comprehensive neighborhood revitalization effort.
- Consequently, this plan recommends that the best additional lands to acquire and integrate into the Fort Cumberland redesign project would be for the Authority to acquire the Klavuhn's Moving and Storage property and the adjoining but currently vacant Crites warehouse site along Gay and Glenwood Streets.

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C. Public Safety

In the context of this Comprehensive Plan, public safety refers to the City's Police, Fire, and Emergency Medical Response protection services. These three services represent the City's greatest and most essential investments in overall public health and safety. **Cumberland is one of only two cities in Maryland (along with Baltimore) to provide full-time, paid professional services in all three areas.**



The Cumberland Public Safety Building on Bedford Street

Public Safety issues and needs were identified in a number of neighborhood meetings conducted for the plan and ranked high in terms of frequency, along with transportation and public facility (infrastructure) issues. **Expanded police patrols tied with street repairs and improvements as the most frequently identified issue. Both were raised in five of the ten neighborhood meetings conducted for the plan. Speeding and speed-related traffic issues were raised in four different neighborhood meetings. Other public safety issues raised in one or two neighborhood meetings include a request for security/surveillance cameras to dissuade criminal activity, a fire hydrant that was not working in Decatur Heights (which has since been addressed), and a desire for dedicated staff to man the Frederick Street Fire Station.**

Generally speaking, the most common neighborhood public safety issues relate to police enforcement—either to address concerns regarding drug-related crimes or speeding. Several of the neighborhood associations provide neighborhood watch program functions, and many of the more active neighborhood residents have worked closely with law enforcement staff and are aware of the criminal activities that occur in their respective neighborhoods. In fact, the Westside neighborhood group that disbanded in 2010 was originally organized as a crime watch group.

Traffic safety is one of the Cumberland Police Departments top priorities. This includes enforcement efforts that target aggressive drivers as well as those who are operating motor vehicles while under the influence of alcohol or drugs. Officers generally use their own discretion when determining which streets in the city to monitor traffic and take enforcement action. However, officers are directed at times to streets and areas in which it appears that motorists are traveling above the posted speed limits or committing some other traffic violation on a regular basis, such as not obeys stop signs, or cross walks. These complaints can be

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generated by the officers themselves if they identify a problem on a particular street or they can be driven by citizen complaints who have notified the department of a particular issue at which time it is investigated and efforts are taken to resolve that issue. The Cumberland Police Department utilizes a speed monitoring trailer. This trailer is deployed throughout streets in the city on a rotating basis in an effort to remind motorists of their speeds on the various streets. The trailer is equipped with a large screen which displays the motorists' speeds as they approach the trailer. The operational procedure with this trailer is to deploy the trailer on a specific street and then follow up with actual enforcement by an officer in the following days. This trailer can be and has been requested by citizens to be placed in their neighborhoods as a reminder to motorists of the speeds that they are traveling in an effort to make the neighborhood safe for everyone.

The Cumberland Police Department actively pursues and has received numerous grants relating to traffic safety. Some examples of grants received are: Safe Routes to School, Safe School Bus Rider Program, Aggressive Driving Enforcement and DUI Enforcement. The Department also participates in the "Click it or Ticket" program which is a yearly campaign which emphasizes seatbelt usage.

Unlike the City's water and sewer systems, which are physical plants that were designed and built to serve a much larger population than exists today, Police and Fire Department staffing capacity has been maintained more closely commensurate with current demand and financial conditions. As the City's population and financial constraints have changed over time, public safety staffing and service capacity has evolved accordingly. Current staffing levels for both the Police and Fire Departments were evaluated as part of a 2009 Comprehensive Plan amendment to prepare a new Municipal Growth Element and were determined to be adequate for present needs.

Under current staffing arrangements, the City assigns one patrol officer to each of the four major sections of the City (North, South, East, and West). Officers are instructed to make a strong presence in the neighborhoods while conducting their patrols. They are also advised to spend some extra time speaking with the neighborhood residents and engaging in outreach when responding to calls in their section of the City. However, many of the emergency calls received by the Police Department often require two officers to respond. When that occurs, one section of the City will lose coverage temporarily. The recent switch to 12-hour shifts allowed the Police Department to place a few additional officers on the street. The Police Department also applies for grants to cover the costs of expanded coverage, but any officer time charged to that grant must be limited to the specific purposes or activities specified in the grant. The Department will continue to seek these grants to serve the City's enforcement needs, as they become available.

The unfortunate reality of traffic speeding issues is that, if the driving environment or street conditions are conducive to excessive driving speeds, then dedicated and consistent

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enforcement must be maintained to control the problem. However, speeding can be controlled through other measures than enforcement. **One way to deter speeding is to consider instituting “traffic calming measures.”** These measures can include structural improvements, such as narrowing the street pavement by relocating the curb and increasing the sidewalk, adding large street trees, installing “rumble strips” or raised crosswalks at key intersections, alternating curb extensions to make the travel lanes meander through the right-of-way, and other measures that send clear visual clues to drivers that excessive speeds are unsafe in that location. Where they would be cost effective, appropriate traffic calming measures can be incorporated into planned street improvement and revitalization projects. Another non-structural traffic calming measure that can be instituted at reasonable cost would be the purchase of additional speed monitoring trailers for the periodic and strategic placement to warn motorists when they are speeding. These measures should be evaluated further in the City-Wide Element to help manage the long term staffing costs and impacts of traffic control on current police services.

The other major public safety concern raised at the neighborhood meetings was a desire for increased or expanded neighborhood patrols to help discourage criminal activity. Two specific activities that were identified are drug activity and teen behavior. Teen behavior concerns were raised most explicitly in the Wills neighborhood, and issues relating to “curfews,” as specifically desired by the meeting participants, are addressed in greater detail in the Recommendations Section of that Chapter. Illicit drug use and drug trafficking concerns were raised in several neighborhoods and require a more generalized discussion.

Drug enforcement and prosecution is far more complex and time consuming process than is commonly known. Many of the concerns that residents have regarding drug enforcement stem from the perception that the problem does not always stop immediately after it is recognized. With drug offenses, effective action requires a great deal of investigative time to build a strong case. By its nature, the drug trade operates on secrecy and extensive networks that must be thoroughly investigated to ensure conviction. If a street trafficker, who generally stands at the end of the production and sales chain, is taken out of action, a new trafficker will take his/her place and a chance to understand and prosecute the higher level criminals in the larger drug production and supply network may be lost. Until the larger network is uncovered and broken, the drug trafficking problems will not be effectively stopped.

Once an investigation is complete and arrests are made, the case must be prosecuted through the court system, which requires additional time. With all of the time that can be involved in building and prosecuting a drug trafficking case, it is understandable why residents would not see the immediate action they often expect. **However, the lack of immediate action in some cases does not mean that Police Department is not aggressively addressing the issue or does not share the residents’ concerns.**

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With regard to fire protection services, only two specific issues were raised during the neighborhood meeting process. The first was a complaint about an inactive fire hydrant, which has been addressed. The other was a desire to station full-time personnel in the Frederick Street Fire Station, which is currently used for equipment storage. This station cannot be manned at this time, due to the lack of funds necessary to make critical improvements to the station. These needs include additional storage space to accommodate modern equipment and improvements to the living quarters.

Perhaps the most pressing fire safety improvement need is the siting of a new, modern fire station on the City's east side to serve the newly annexed and developing areas along the Willowbrook Road and Evitts Creek corridor. Recent annexation and growth patterns analyzed for the 2009 Municipal Growth Element suggest that the City can expect additional development in this area. However, significant portions of this area fall outside the recommended service radii that must be satisfied to maintain the City's current Insurance Services Organization (ISO) insurance rating. This rating is used by insurance companies to assess homeowner insurance costs for properties within the City.

Two potential opportunities to address this need have emerged—one along Willowbrook Road, just south of I-68, and another south of the U.S. Highway 220/I-68 intersection (below Exit #47). If the contemplated station is close to I-68 in the proposed locations, then it can provide alternate coverage for Station #3 on Frederick Street (which has the greatest equipment storage constraints and improvement needs), thereby allowing the City to close that station in addition to providing adequate coverage for the newly annexed areas and other areas to the east where future expansion of the City may occur. The Fire Department should continue to work with prospective developers in these areas to identify an appropriate site then develop a budget and site plan for the proposed new station.

No specific issues and needs regarding the City's emergency medical response services were identified through the neighborhood meeting and planning process.

In summary, the key public safety policy implications discussed above for the City-Wide element above are as follows:

- **Cumberland is one of only two cities in Maryland (along with Baltimore) to provide full-time, paid professional services in all three areas.**
- **Based on the results from the neighborhood meetings conducted for this plan, expanded police patrols tied with street repairs and improvements as the most frequently identified issue. Both were raised in five of the ten neighborhood meetings conducted for the plan. Speeding and speed-related traffic issues were raised in four different neighborhood meetings. Other public safety issues raised in one or two neighborhood meetings include a request for security/surveillance cameras to**

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dissuade criminal activity, a fire hydrant that was not working in Decatur Heights (which has since been addressed), and a desire for dedicated staff to man the Frederick Street Fire Station.

- Unlike the City's water and sewer systems, which are physical plants that were designed and built to serve a much larger population than exists today, Police and Fire Department staffing capacity has been maintained more closely commensurate with current demand and financial conditions.
- Current staffing levels for both the Police and Fire Departments were evaluated as part of a 2009 Comprehensive Plan amendment to prepare a new Municipal Growth Element and were determined to be adequate for present needs.
- One way to deter speeding is to consider instituting "traffic calming measures." These measures can include structural improvements, such as narrowing the street pavement by relocating the curb and increasing the sidewalk, adding large street trees, installing "rumble strips" or raised crosswalks at key intersections, alternating curb extensions to make the travel lanes meander through the right-of-way, and other measures that send clear visual clues to drivers that excessive speeds are unsafe in that location. Where they would be cost effective, appropriate traffic calming measures can be incorporated into planned street improvement and revitalization projects. Another non-structural traffic calming measure that can be instituted at reasonable cost would be the purchase of additional speed monitoring trailers for the periodic and strategic placement to warn motorists when they are speeding. These measures should be evaluated further in the City-Wide Element to help manage the long term staffing costs and impacts of traffic control on current police services.
- Drug enforcement and prosecution is far more complex and time consuming process than is commonly known. Many of the concerns that residents have regarding drug enforcement stem from the perception that the problem does not always stop immediately after it is recognized. However, the lack of immediate action in some cases does not mean that Police Department is not aggressively addressing the issue or does not share the residents' concerns.
- Perhaps the most pressing fire safety improvement need is the siting of a new, modern fire station on the City's east side to serve the newly annexed and developing areas along the Willowbrook Road and Evitts Creek corridor.
- Two potential opportunities to address this need have emerged—one along Willowbrook Road, just south of I-68, and another south of the U.S. Highway 220/I-68 intersection (below Exit #47). If the contemplated station is close to I-68 in the proposed locations, then it can provide alternate coverage for Station #3 on Frederick Street, which has the greatest equipment storage constraints and improvement needs.

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- **No specific issues and needs regarding the City's emergency medical response services were identified through the neighborhood meeting and planning process.**

D. Transportation & Circulation:

Along with calls for expanded police enforcement, improvements and repairs to the City's streets was the most frequently registered issue or need identified through the neighborhood meeting process for this comprehensive plan. These issues were raised and discussed in five of the City's ten residential neighborhoods. The City's streets are subject to heavy traffic demands, due to the overall intensity of development within the City and the City's position as a major regional center for commerce, which draws considerable volumes of outside traffic into the City. Over time, the State has transferred ownership and maintenance obligations for a number of streets in the City that either serve regional traffic or bear State or Federal route numbers. The only highways within the City that are currently maintained by the State of Maryland are Interstate 68, Industrial Boulevard (MD Route 51), Canal Parkway (MD Route 61), and portions of Willowbrook Road (MD Highway 639). Several other major highways bearing Federal and State route numbers, such as U.S. Route 220 (Greene Street/McMullen Highway), U.S. Route 40-A (Henderson & Baltimore Avenues), and Braddock Road (MD Route 49) are now owned and maintained by the City. With the limited resources available to the City to provide a high level of urban services and maintain a significant regional infrastructure (including water and sewer), it is not surprising that a number of street improvement needs have not been promptly addressed.

To address the City's compounding street improvement needs, the City hired a consultant in 2006 to prepare a Pavement Management System. This study evaluated the structural conditions of the City's streets, traffic volumes, and the function of the street to develop a prioritized list of pavement and structural improvement needs. The resulting improvement needs to address the accumulated backlog of street repairs totaled \$68,000,000 in 2006 dollars. When the Mayor and Council adopted the Pavement Management System in 2008, they also approved a \$9,000,000 bond levy to fund three years of the most critical street improvement needs to preserve the basic integrity of the street network. The streets that have been improved to date and are planned for improvement under the remaining funds in the bond are outlined in the Recommendations Section of each Neighborhood Chapter.

In addition to the specific projects in the Pavement Management System, the City is completing two major neighborhood revitalization projects—the first in Rolling Mill and the second in Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill—that included significant street repairs and streetscaping work. These projects were financed through special grants from a number of programs, including the Appalachian Regional Commission, Community Development Block Grant, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. This plan recommends that these

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funding sources should be sought for a third neighborhood revitalization project along the Baltimore Avenue and Goethe Street Corridor to improve Baltimore Street as an important gateway between I-68 and the downtown area and to incentivize and support housing rehabilitation on Goethe Street.

The City is also involved in a public/private partnership in association with Allegany County, Allegany College, the State Highway Administration, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and WODA Development Corporation to replace and upgrade a section of Old Willowbrook Road on the City's East Side. The new street that will be constructed will provide access to both Allegany College and a new 64-unit senior housing development known as Cumberland Meadows. Combined, these street improvement projects represent a significant increase in investment by the City over the levels undertaken that were undertaken between 1980 and 2008.

During the neighborhood meeting process, citizens in the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood raised concerns about the structural integrity of the retaining walls in the Virginia Avenue Subway. This issue was raised on the basis of resident observations that pieces of concrete were breaking away from the retaining walls. This concern was evaluated by Engineering Division staff to determine the urgency of the City's need to undertake repairs. The City's analysis of the retaining walls determined that the erosion was not an imminent threat to public safety, but that efforts to initiate repairs should be pursued. The improvement work must be coordinated with CSX Railroad officials because the railroad owns and maintains those portions of the retaining walls that are directly below the railroad bridge. **In coordinating with CSX Railroad on proposed improvements to the Virginia Avenue Subway, the City should also explore the potential to upgrade the sidewalk through the Subway to make it more accessible to handicapped citizens.** This improvement would address a concern for improved pedestrian access to Mason Recreation Area and the C & O Towpath that was raised by residents in the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood.

Another important transportation issue that was raised in four neighborhood meetings is the need for expanded parking opportunities within the City. Parking is an inherently difficult issue to resolve through citizen consensus. Requirements for new development to provide off-street parking to satisfy its demand are often viewed as impediments to economic development or growth—especially on small, urban properties where there is inadequate land to improve for parking. Allowing new businesses and residences to use existing on-street parking inevitably generates complaints from neighboring residents and businesses that must fight for a dwindling supply of on-street parking spaces (especially from those lack the space needed to satisfy their own off-street parking needs). The high cost of constructing parking garages can be a significant concern for taxpayers. In the final analysis, parking is an issue that everyone agrees is a problem but that few can agree on a solution. To address these issues, the City requires private land owners and developers to provide adequate off-street parking on each lot or within 600 feet of

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any development project and will work with landowners, where possible or feasible, to establish more privately financed parking facilities.

The lack of adequate parking is a serious issue in urban commercial districts, such as downtown Cumberland and the Virginia Avenue commercial district. The high density of development and businesses in these areas combined with narrow city streets and physical constraints for on-street parking combine to make the problem particularly difficult to solve. There is often little vacant land in these areas that can be dedicated to parking. Once the available supply of parking in the major commercial districts is filled, the problem quickly spills over into the adjoining residential areas, as customers compete with residences for the remaining supply of on-street parking spaces.

Two potential alternative solutions to the City's primary parking problems were identified by the Planning Coordination Team. The first is to limit public parking on the most stressed residential streets by issuing residential parking permits. If permits are issued free to residences along the street, then the City must cover the full cost of the program. Fine revenues for parking violations would partially offset these costs, but not in a reliable or predictable way. **Furthermore, this strategy is only a partial solution to the problem. It helps residents protect necessary on-street parking, but it leaves business customers with no alternative place to park. An alternative approach to this strategy would be to designate limited non-resident parking spaces in residential neighborhoods, where available on-street parking exists.**

A second strategy to relieve parking competition in the urban commercial districts is to establish a trolley service to transport workers from satellite parking lots to their places of work. This strategy would reduce competition between workers and customers for the limited supply of public parking within the commercial districts. The cost for shuttle transit service could be paid by the businesses who benefit (from the increased customer traffic that could be generated by the availability of convenient parking), the City, or both. However, to be effective, service would have to be offered throughout the day to accommodate different work shifts and workers who need to leave work for appointments and other needs.

The City also should explore improved public transit service and bicycle/pedestrian improvements to promote alternative modes of travel. The City's relatively small population makes the frequency and cost of service difficult issues to balance. Convenience is a critical factor in effective transit service, and public subsidies for transit have become increasingly limited over the years. One way to make transit more convenient for patrons is to provide special transit curb stops and shelters. Such improvements were envisioned as part of the Virginia Avenue revitalization project, but the City was unable to purchase the land needed for the transit station. In its initial construction plans, the new HRDC building on Virginia Avenue was designed to include an off-street transit stop and shelter, but land constraints became a significant issue during the later stages of the building design and the proposed bus stop was eventually abandoned. **The City's narrow streets make the siting of transit stations especially**

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difficult to accommodate without acquiring private property. Nevertheless, a number of transit shelters have been strategically placed in Downtown Cumberland. Finding a way to effectively provide this amenity in the Virginia Avenue commercial corridor has proven to be a significant challenge.

The City began efforts to improve and promote bicycle use in 2008, with the adoption of the Trails and Bikeways Master Plan and the creation of a Bicycle Advisory Committee to oversee its implementation. That planning document is hereby incorporated by reference into the City's Comprehensive Plan. The plan envisions an extensive bikeway network consisting predominantly of shared travel lanes. The City's narrow streets greatly limit opportunities to create special bike lanes, and little available land exists for off-street facilities. The City's Bicycle Advisory Committee is working to identify special signage and pavement markings for bikeways that will help motorists understand that they must share the lanes with bicyclists and to help encourage residents to consider using bicycles more frequently. A local cycling advocacy group, the Western Maryland Wheelmen, offers numerous regular and special bicycling events, including an annual bike-to-work ride, to help promote cycling. The City also is installing new and decorative bike racks and enclosed bicycle lockers in the downtown area to encourage local shoppers to ride bicycles and to draw regional cycling traffic from the Great Allegheny Passage and Chesapeake and Ohio Towpath trails that converge in downtown Cumberland. The Bicycle Advisory Committee is also working closely with the Allegany Transit System to provide bike racks on the buses in an effort to provide more convenient and flexible transit service for local residents.

The need for sidewalk improvements was raised at four neighborhood meetings. Improvement needs range from sidewalk repairs to handicapped access constraints, to constructing sidewalks along streets that lack them. Many streets in the City were constructed without sidewalks, especially in areas that were not expected to experience through traffic and when adequate funding was not available. In a number of locations, such as the areas adjacent to Bedford Street, steep grades along the rights-of-way create engineering and design constraints to sidewalks. Nevertheless, a number of residents identified several streets where sidewalk improvements should be explored, including Bedford Street, Leiper Street, Shades Lane, and a number of streets in the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood. Rolling Mill meeting participants suggested the need for a more direct and formal pedestrian pathway to the new Queen City Shopping Center and downtown Cumberland. Residents of that neighborhood have created an informal pathway across the Rolling Mill property. The creation of a special multi-purpose (bicycle/pedestrian) pathway would also provide a convenient and safe bicycling connection between Virginia Avenue and downtown Cumberland that would bypass Industrial Boulevard.

Generally speaking, sidewalk improvements are not part of the City's 2006 Pavement Management System funding, unless they become an integral part of major street reconstruction work associated with a specific street improvement project. In those instances,

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the sidewalk work may be limited to ADA Handicapped Access improvements. Historically, the City has allocated or sought Community Development Block Grant (CDBG), State Highway Enhancement, and Appalachian Regional Commission funds for sidewalk improvements because such work can be eligible for these funds. However, aside from CDBG funds, these sources are available only periodically through specific project applications. Additional funding for sidewalk improvements to schools can be obtained periodically through the “Safe Routes for Schools” program.

The Planning Coordination Team suggested that sidewalk needs be evaluated first using the bikeway network that is being developed from the 2008 Trails and Bikeways plan that was prepared for the City. The bikeways identified through that planning process were designed to create links between the neighborhoods and the major destinations for residents and tourists, including schools and shopping areas. The system recognizes and avoids streets with the steepest slopes, since they can be difficult and unsafe for bicycles. By using this system as a starting point, the best pedestrian routes can be identified and analyzed to determine where sidewalks are deficient or unavailable. Engineering staff can then evaluate the routes and determine if sufficient right-of-way for sidewalks exists and the potential cost for the improvements. Once this background work has been completed, the appropriate funding source can be ascertained to finance the desired improvements.

Another related transportation issue, raised and discussed in greater detail in the Public Safety Policy Implications of this Chapter, is the need to reduce speeding on the City’s streets. This issue was voiced in five of the ten neighborhood meetings. While speeding is often considered a police enforcement issue, staff has recommended that the City evaluate traffic calming measures that can be implemented to effectively slow traffic in areas where the street environment lacks the visual cues necessary to induce safe travel speeds. The McMullen Bridge is a prime example of a street that is designed in a way that allows drivers to feel comfortable driving at speeds much higher than the posted limit.

*In summary, the key **transportation and circulation** policy implications discussed above for the City-Wide element above are as follows:*

- **Along with calls for expanded police enforcement, improvements and repairs to the City’s streets was the most frequently registered issue or need identified through the neighborhood meeting process for this comprehensive plan.**
- **To address the City’s compounding street improvement needs, the City hired a consultant in 2006 to prepare a Pavement Management System. This study evaluated the structural conditions of the City’s streets, traffic volumes, and the function of the street to develop a prioritized list of pavement and structural improvement needs.**
- **In addition to the specific projects in the Pavement Management System, the City is completing two major neighborhood revitalization projects—the first in Rolling Mill**

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and the second in Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill—that included significant street repairs and streetscaping work. These projects were financed through special grants from a number of programs, including the Appalachian Regional Commission, Community Development Block Grant, and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

- This plan recommends that these funding sources should be sought for a third neighborhood revitalization project along the Baltimore Avenue and Goethe Street Corridor to improve Baltimore Street as an important gateway between I-68 and the downtown area and to incentivize and support housing rehabilitation on Goethe Street.
- The City is also involved in a public/private partnership in association with Allegany County, Allegany College, the State Highway Administration, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and WODA Development Corporation to replace and upgrade a section of Old Willowbrook Road on the City's East Side.
- During the neighborhood meeting process, citizens in the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood raised concerns about the structural integrity of the retaining walls in the Virginia Avenue Subway. This issue was raised on the basis of resident observations that pieces of concrete were breaking away from the retaining walls. This concern was evaluated by Engineering Division staff to determine the urgency of the City's need to undertake repairs. The City's analysis of the retaining walls determined that the erosion was not an imminent threat to public safety, but that efforts to initiate repairs should be pursued.
- In coordinating with CSX Railroad on proposed improvements to the Virginia Avenue Subway, the City should also explore the potential to upgrade the sidewalk through the Subway to make it more accessible to handicapped citizens.
- Another important transportation issue that was raised in four neighborhood meetings is the need for expanded parking opportunities within the City.
- The lack of adequate parking is a serious issue in urban commercial districts, such as downtown Cumberland and the Virginia Avenue commercial district.
- Two potential alternative solutions to the City's primary parking problems were identified by the Planning Coordination Team. The first is to limit public parking on the most stressed residential streets by issuing residential parking permits.
- This strategy is only a partial solution to the problem. It helps residents protect necessary on-street parking, but it leaves business customers with no alternative place to park. An alternative approach to this strategy would be to designate limited non-resident parking spaces in residential neighborhoods, where available on-street parking exists.

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- A second strategy to relieve parking competition in the urban commercial districts is to establish a trolley service to transport workers from satellite parking lots to their places of work.
- The City also should explore improved public transit service and bicycle/pedestrian improvements to promote alternative modes of travel.
- The City's narrow streets make the siting of transit stations especially difficult to accommodate without acquiring private property.
- The City began efforts to improve and promote bicycle use in 2008, with the adoption of the Trails and Bikeways Master Plan and the creation of a Bicycle Advisory Committee to oversee its implementation.
- The need for sidewalk improvements was raised at four neighborhood meetings. Improvement needs range from sidewalk repairs to handicapped access constraints, to constructing sidewalks along streets that lack them.
- The Planning Coordination Team suggested that sidewalk needs be evaluated first using the bikeway network that is being developed from the 2008 Trails and Bikeways plan that was prepared for the City. The bikeways identified through that planning process were designed to create links between the neighborhoods and the major destinations for residents and tourists, including schools and shopping areas. The system recognizes and avoids streets with the steepest slopes, since they can be difficult and unsafe for bicycles. By using this system as a starting point, the best pedestrian routes can be identified and analyzed to determine where sidewalks are deficient or unavailable.
- Another related transportation issue, raised and discussed in greater detail in the Public Safety Policy Implications of this Chapter, is the need to reduce speeding on the City's streets. This issue was voiced in five of the ten neighborhood meetings. While speeding is often considered a police enforcement issue, staff has recommended that the City evaluate traffic calming measures that can be implemented to effectively slow traffic in areas where the street environment lacks the visual cues necessary to induce safe travel speeds.

E. Public Facilities:

In addition to streets, the City provides two essential public infrastructure facilities, municipal water and sewage treatment. Both of these facilities serve a regional population, with customers in Pennsylvania and West Virginia. The City's water filtration and treatment plant is located in southern Bedford County, Pennsylvania—adjacent to the system's two primary supply reservoirs, Gordon and Koon Lakes. The City's sewer treatment plant is located along the Potomac River in the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood. Specific details regarding system design,

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service areas, and demand for these two facilities can be found in the Water Resources Chapter of the City-Wide Element of this plan. The discussion this element focuses on specific needs and issues that were identified through the neighborhood meeting process.

Most of the issues raised by neighborhood meeting participants regarding the city water and sewer issues were related to specific issues or problems that have been communicated and addressed. In some cases, such as in the Decatur Heights and Wills neighborhoods, residents expressed concerns about infrastructure projects that did not appear to be well coordinated or were not promptly completed. These situations do occur from time to time, especially when projects involve work from different departments of the City or coordination with outside infrastructure providers, including the State and private utility companies. In addition, infrastructure work and repairs are often dependent on weather conditions. While some elements of the work may be done in cold or inclement weather, closure and patching work may have to be postponed or delayed until weather conditions are optimal. These situations can give the appearance that repair work is not being coordinated or completed properly.

Since many of the infrastructure issues and confusion can be attributed to communication difficulties, the Planning Coordination Team recommended that the City prepare a directory of appropriate city officials to contact in reporting problems, providing both a telephone and e-mail contact. This information can be disseminated to the public by posting on the City's web site and directly to the Neighborhood Associations, since many residents bring these issues to the attention of the City through their Neighborhood Association. In addition, this directory could be supplemented by a new incident or complaint reporting system on the City's web site that would allow a citizen to select an issue or problem from a drop down menu, identify the location of the problem, list his/her contact information, and submit the report, which would be automatically routed to the proper City department for action or follow-up. These services may help reduce confusion that occurs when residents contact the wrong City official or do not know what person or department to call when reporting a problem.

Another way to enhance understanding of the complexities that may be involved in a major repair or improvement project would be to expand outreach efforts to explain the issues involved and how long it may take to fix the problem. Currently, the City communicates with the media and posts information on the City's web page when a major problem occurs. However, the City could expand public awareness of these issues by also communicating that information to the Neighborhood Associations, who can then distribute it to their members through meetings or e-mails.

One important infrastructure capacity constraint that was identified through the neighborhood meeting and evaluation process is the current limitations of the McNamee Hill water tank, which serves portions of the Shriver/McNamee, Decatur Heights, and Eastside neighborhoods. While this tank has adequate water capacity and pressure to serve current demand, it has limited capacity for new growth. This issue poses concern for the certain areas

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within its current service boundaries that have potential for future development, such as between Shades Lane and I-68 and the developing areas along the eastern portions of Willowbrook Road.

The City has two options to address this potential issue that should be explored further in the City-Wide Element of the plan. The first is to expand the height of the McNamee Hill Tank to increase its capacity. The second is to divide and reduce the service territory of the McNamee Hill tank and redirect water from the Fort Hill Reservoir to serve the remaining areas. Either of these options would resolve the issue and prevent a future problem accommodating new development in the affected potential growth areas. A special engineering and cost study may be needed to more fully evaluate the two options.

Participants in several neighborhoods expressed concerns about the City's recent cost-cutting measure to reduce street lighting. Public safety, drug activity, and vandalism were the primary fears that meeting participants expressed. The Mayor and Council's decision to cut the City's streetlighting costs was difficult to make and was not taken casually. Most neighborhood meeting participants understood that it was only taken in response to desperate financial conditions driven by the National Recession. **A Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhood meeting participant asked if any special arrangements with Allegheny Power could be made by individual property owners to restore service to streetlights in front of their properties. Allegheny Power can provide that service, but such arrangements must be made directly with the company.**

Public parks and recreational facilities and programs are another important public facility that the City provides. **Most of the City's existing parks were identified by neighborhood meeting participants as critical special characteristics that define and identify the neighborhoods as well as important social gathering places for residents to meet and interact with their neighbors. Input received during the neighborhood meetings regarding park and recreation needs generally took the form of a desire for neighborhood community centers that could serve as central meeting places with playgrounds and other recreational amenities.** The construction of such facilities in each neighborhood would be a significant capital cost and long-term maintenance obligation for the City. Fortunately, most of the City's neighborhoods have public and semi-public facilities that can and do function as community meeting and activity center, including libraries, churches, public housing authority community centers, and public schools. Certain neighborhoods have other facilities that can be used for neighborhood social events, including the two YMCA buildings and the new Activity Building in Constitution Park. In addition, some businesses in the community provide meeting rooms that can be used by the public, including a number of banking institutions and the Martins supermarket at the Queen City Shopping Center on Maryland Avenue. Additional neighborhood playground facilities are provided at schools and public housing authority sites. Designing community meeting facilities, playgrounds, and other recreational facilities that would serve both project residents and citizens of the surrounding neighborhood represents one way that the Cumberland Housing

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Authority can redesign its projects in a way that would better integrate public housing more seamlessly into the larger neighborhood.

Although schools are an important public facility for City residents, the City does not own or maintain these facilities. All schools in Allegany County public schools are owned, operated, and maintained by the Allegany County Board of Education. The only issue raised during the neighborhood meeting process relating to public schools was the need for improvements to the Washington Middle School, which lacks air conditioning. Both interior and outdoor facility repairs and improvements are needed. The need for these improvements will be conveyed to the Allegany County Board of Education through the comprehensive planning process.

Two remaining public facility considerations were raised by neighborhood meeting participants. The first was a call for expansion of the community dumpster program in the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood. This program is currently financed and provided through the City's Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program's Community Betterment Funds, and is administered through a cooperative relationship with neighborhood volunteers—usually a neighborhood association. The CDBG funds are used to secure 1-2 portable dumpsters within a neighborhood for the collection of large items that are not collected by standard curbside collection services. Access to the dumpsters is managed by community volunteers to make sure that they are not used for business waste. Four neighborhood associations currently participate in the program and offer this service—Rolling Mill, Decatur Heights, Wills, and Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill. Since the South Cumberland Business and Civic Association serves both the Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill and Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhoods, it could serve as a managing agent for the program in the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood. The ability of neighborhood associations to provide this service in other neighborhoods serves as an important incentive and justification for creating neighborhood associations in those parts of the City that are not currently served.

The final public facility consideration identified through the neighborhood meeting process was a call for the City to establish a Snow Emergency Plan. The City's Street Maintenance Branch of the Maintenance Division of the Department of Public Works does have a detailed written snow plan that is updated yearly. The plan does not specify where cars should be parked on specific days during a snow emergency to facilitate snow removal, primarily because of manpower and enforcement constraints. Staff will evaluate this need and consider ways to ensure proper enforcement as part of the next update.

*In summary, the key **public facility** policy implications discussed above for the City-Wide element above are as follows:*

- **Most of the issues raised by neighborhood meeting participants regarding the city water and sewer issues were related to specific issues or problems that have been communicated and addressed.**

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- In some cases, such as in the Decatur Heights and Wills neighborhoods, residents expressed concerns about infrastructure projects that did not appear to be well coordinated or were not promptly completed.
- Since many of the infrastructure issues and confusion can be attributed to communication difficulties, the Planning Coordination Team recommended that the City prepare a directory of appropriate city officials on the City's web site to contact in reporting problems, providing both a telephone and e-mail contact. In addition, this directory could be supplemented by a new incident or complaint reporting system on the City's web site that would allow a citizen to select an issue or problem from a drop down menu, identify the location of the problem, list his/her contact information, and submit the report, which would be automatically routed to the proper City department for action or follow-up.
- Another way to enhance understanding of the complexities that may be involved in a major repair or improvement project would be to expand outreach efforts to explain the issues involved and how long it may take to fix the problem.
- One important infrastructure capacity constraint that was identified through the neighborhood meeting and evaluation process is the current limitations of the McNamee Hill water tank, which serves portions of the Shriver/McNamee, Decatur Heights, and Eastside neighborhoods.
- The City has two options to address this potential issue that should be explored further in the City-Wide Element of the plan. The first is to expand the height of the McNamee Hill Tank to increase its capacity. The second is to divide and reduce the service territory of the McNamee Hill tank and redirect water from the Fort Hill Reservoir to serve the remaining areas.
- Participants in several neighborhoods expressed concerns about the City's recent cost-cutting measure to reduce street lighting. Public safety, drug activity, and vandalism were the primary fears that meeting participants expressed.
- A Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhood meeting participant asked if any special arrangements with Allegheny Power could be made by individual property owners to restore service to streetlights in front of their properties. Allegheny Power can provide that service, but such arrangements must be made directly with the company.
- Input received during the neighborhood meetings regarding park and recreation needs generally took the form of a desire for neighborhood community centers that could serve as central meeting places with playgrounds and other recreational amenities.
- Most of the City's existing parks were identified by neighborhood meeting participants as critical special characteristics that define and identify the neighborhoods as well as important social gathering places for residents to meet and interact with their neighbors.

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- Although schools are an important public facility for City residents, the City does not own or maintain these facilities. All schools in Allegany County public schools are owned, operated, and maintained by the Allegany County Board of Education.
- The only issue raised during the neighborhood meeting process relating to public schools was the need for improvements to the Washington Middle School, which lacks air conditioning. Both interior and outdoor facility repairs and improvements are needed.
- Two remaining public facility considerations were raised by neighborhood meeting participants. The first was a call for expansion of the community dumpster program in the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood.
- The final public facility consideration identified through the neighborhood meeting process was a call for the City to establish a Snow Emergency Plan.

F. Land Use & Development Codes:

Throughout the neighborhood meeting process, citizens raised a number of issues relating to development patterns, zoning, and code enforcement issues that often become lost or overlooked when struggling with the complexities and interdependencies of the larger overarching issues affecting community growth and development. These issues become an interesting reminder that community planning is not always or exclusively a “big picture” issue. Most citizens are more immediately affected or impacted by the little issues, which may explain why they tend to get concerned and speak out so strongly on individual projects, rather than becoming actively involved in larger and more comprehensive planning issues. Consequently, it is important to give some attention and consideration to these neighborhood issues as a part of the process of contemplating and evaluating broader community development and redevelopment issues in the City-Wide Element.

The desire for more aggressive code enforcement, especially as it relates to blighted property removal and property maintenance/rubbish removal, was specifically raised in several neighborhoods and alluded to in others. These issues as they relate to housing conditions are discussed in greater detail in the Housing Policy Implications Section of this Chapter. **Generally speaking, neighborhood residents expressed concerns about public safety concerns and impacts on neighboring properties from blighted and dilapidated homes.** These buildings often become targets for vandalism and arson and havens for criminal activities within the neighborhoods.

The City’s residential building code provides a basic legal mechanism for staff to determine when housing is unsafe and governs the process to address and resolve those issues. Once the structural condition of a building is drawn into question, either by a resident complaint or

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through routine staff inspections, the building must be inspected to evaluate its structural condition and integrity. After inspection is complete, staff must research the ownership of the property and notify the owner of the problem and provide a reasonable time to correct the deficiencies. Only if the owner fails to make the necessary improvements within a reasonable time can the City process the violation and seek to remedy the situation. If the property ownership is not clear (the property is owned by a trust, has been taken into receivership, or is in probate court pending settlement of a will) or the City does not have a current address for the legal owner, then the process of correcting the problem can require considerable time to complete. Processing the case through the Court system to obtain an order to demolish the structure requires additional time and cost. These procedural problems can give outside observers the impression that the issue is not being promptly addressed, even though the appropriate actions are being taken.

Vigilance of changing neighborhood housing conditions and problems associated with blighted housing is an important and valuable role for the neighborhood associations. Most of the existing neighborhood associations serve in this capacity, but several of the neighborhoods have no active neighborhood association to provide this essential assistance to the City. **The eventual ‘disposal’ or transfer of abandoned properties, whether acquired through owner negligence of blighted conditions or through property tax delinquency, often extends the time required to return a property to productive use—both for a future owner and for the City’s tax base. A new bill passed by the Maryland Legislature in the 2010 session (House Bill 1464) authorizes local governments to establish a “Local Land Banking Authority” that can receive these properties from the City and more expeditiously market them for redevelopment or revitalization. The City should explore the powers created by the passage of this bill.**

The Planning Coordination Team also discussed issues associated with obtaining the funds necessary to remove blighted structures. In the past, the up-front cost for demolition of blighted structures has come from the General Fund or Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds. Additional time for removal can be required when CDBG funds are used to address historic building impacts and potential environmental issues. The use of General Fund revenues affects the City’s operating budget. **The Planning Coordination Committee discussed the issue of up-front funding for demolition of blighted housing and suggested that the City consider the possibility of establishing a small impact fee on new residential construction to provide a dedicated fund for future blight removal.**

Three additional neighborhood land use issues arising from the neighborhood meeting process were the need for a cooperative City/County/State planning coordination effort for the developing Willowbrook Road/Evitts Creek corridor on the City’s east side, a desire in the Wills neighborhood for more specific building design standards for new development, and a zoning consistency consideration for existing residences in a section of the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood. The first of these issues, the need for a cooperative and coordinated planning effort for the Willowbrook Road/Evitts Creek Corridor, was identified and discussed as part of

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the City's first Municipal Growth Element adoption in 2009. The City recognizes significant portions of the land in this emerging growth corridor will remain under the jurisdiction of the Allegany County Commissioners. Since the City and County have very different zoning and subdivision regulations and procedural requirements, some active coordination is needed between the two governments to develop a more consistent vision for future growth and development patterns in the corridor, ensure that adequate water, sewer, road improvement and public safety services are provided, and to promote more consistent, efficient, and compatible development patterns between the City and County. **To help avoid potentially conflicting development patterns and confusion within the development community regarding the different zoning and subdivision regulations that currently apply in the Willowbrook/Evitts Creek Corridor, the Planning Coordination Team recommended that the City and County pursue a coordinated special planning study of the corridor and make appropriate changes to the current zoning and subdivision regulations that apply in that corridor to implement a more consistent, efficient, and sustainable development pattern.**

Meeting participants in the Wills neighborhood discussed a perceived need for the application of stronger architectural design requirements for new development within the oldest section of the neighborhood. These concerns apply to the Canada/Viaduct section of the neighborhood along Mechanic and Centre Streets, which are subject to the City's two Gateway zoning districts. The concern in this area has been that the broad mix of residential, commercial, and industrial uses in this area makes it difficult to retain continuity in design between commercial and residential uses. Over time, the different (and in some respects, diverging) standard designs for these uses have led to stark inconsistencies in the historic streetscape appearance and in building setbacks (especially where off-street parking lots are needed to serve commercial uses).

The Cumberland Neighborhood Housing Services has discussed and recommended the adoption of a separate design standards ordinance that would codify desired aesthetic and architectural standards, many of which are currently voluntary provisions of the Gateway zones. The application of strict aesthetic standards outside of a local historic district also raises issues of how these proposed standards can be enforced, since such standards are usually applied and enforced through a local historic district designation. A 1998 application to establish a National Register Historic District for the Canada/Viaduct section of the Wills neighborhood was not approved by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. **Another option, which the City should consider as part of this comprehensive planning effort, is to re-evaluate the aesthetic and architectural standards that are contained in the Gateway Zones and determine which, if any, of them should be made mandatory requirements to help resolve the building design consistency and compatibility concerns raised in the Wills neighborhood.**

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The Planning Coordination Team also identified concerns relating to the current zoning pattern in the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood. One issue results from an abandoned manufacturing property on Offutt Street that is currently zoned for residential use, but sits directly across the street from a General Industrial Zone. Although all of the neighboring properties on the same side of Offutt Street are residential, there has been no interest in redeveloping the property for residential use. Another issue is the recent application of non-residential zoning to a stable residential area long the southern end of Lafayette Avenue as part of the City's 2008 Comprehensive Rezoning. In both instances, the current zoning of these properties could have the unintended consequence of discouraging long-term maintenance of the properties. The Planning Coordination Team recommended that these areas be re-evaluated as part of the next Comprehensive Rezoning effort for the 2013 Comprehensive Plan to determine if a better transitional zoning pattern can be applied that would not discourage essential maintenance investment and would allow for compatible reuse.



A Stable Residential Area on Lafayette Avenue

In summary, the key land use and development code policy implications discussed above for the City-Wide element above are as follows:

- The desire for more aggressive code enforcement, especially as it relates to blighted property removal and property maintenance/rubbish removal, was specifically raised in several neighborhoods and alluded to in others. Generally speaking, neighborhood residents expressed concerns about public safety concerns and impacts on neighboring properties from blighted and dilapidated homes.
- The City's residential building code provides a basic legal mechanism for staff to determine when housing is unsafe and governs the process to address and resolve those issues.
- Vigilance of changing neighborhood housing conditions and problems associated with blighted housing is an important and valuable role for the neighborhood associations.
- The eventual 'disposal' or transfer of abandoned properties, whether acquired through owner negligence of blighted conditions or through property tax delinquency, often extends the time required to return a property to productive use—both for a future owner and for the City's tax base.
- A new bill passed by the Maryland Legislature in the 2010 session (House Bill 1464) authorizes local governments to establish a "Local Land Banking Authority" that can

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receive these properties from the City and more expeditiously market them for redevelopment or revitalization. The City should explore the powers created by the passage of this bill.

- The Planning Coordination Committee discussed the issue of up-front funding for demolition of blighted housing and suggested that the City consider the possibility of establishing a small impact fee on new residential construction to provide a dedicated fund for future blight removal.
- Three additional neighborhood land use issues arising from the neighborhood meeting process were the need for a cooperative City/County/State planning coordination effort for the developing Willowbrook Road/Evitts Creek corridor on the City's east side, a desire in the Wills neighborhood for more specific building design standards for new development, and a zoning consistency consideration for existing residences in a section of the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood.
- To help avoid potentially conflicting development patterns and confusion within the development community regarding the different zoning and subdivision regulations that currently apply in the Willowbrook/Evitts Creek Corridor, the Planning Coordination Team recommended that the City and County pursue a coordinated special planning study of the corridor and make appropriate changes to the current zoning and subdivision regulations that apply in that corridor to implement a more consistent, efficient, and sustainable development pattern.
- Meeting participants in the Wills neighborhood discussed a perceived need for the application of stronger architectural design requirements for new development within the oldest section of the neighborhood.
- The Cumberland Neighborhood Housing Services has discussed and recommended the adoption of a separate design standards ordinance that would codify desired aesthetic and architectural standards, many of which are currently voluntary provisions of the Gateway zones.
- Another option, which the City should consider as part of this comprehensive planning effort, is to re-evaluate the aesthetic and architectural standards that are contained in the Gateway Zones and determine which, if any, of them should be made mandatory requirements to help resolve the building design consistency and compatibility concerns raised in the Wills neighborhood.
- The Planning Coordination Team also identified concerns relating to the current zoning pattern in the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood. One issue results from an abandoned manufacturing property on Offutt Street that is currently zoned for residential use, but sits directly across the street from a General Industrial Zone.

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- **Another issue is the recent application of non-residential zoning to a stable residential area long the southern end of Lafayette Avenue as part of the City's 2008 Comprehensive Rezoning.**
- **The Planning Coordination Team recommended that these areas be re-evaluated as part of the next Comprehensive Rezoning effort for the 2013 Comprehensive Plan to determine if a better transitional zoning pattern can be applied that would not discourage essential maintenance investment and would allow for compatible reuse.**

G. Neighborhood Character

As discussed in the Introduction to this Plan Element, each of the City's residential neighborhoods has a rich and distinct cultural and developmental heritage. Special efforts were undertaken during the public participation process to capture the most important elements of neighborhood character from the residents themselves. This Section of the Policy Implications Summary Chapter attempts to characterize the input received on these features during the neighborhood meeting process and identify the pertinent policy considerations for the City-Wide Element of the plan.

Neighborhood character can be a difficult issue to manage and preserve over time. Many of the influences that will affect neighborhood character are dependent on cultural, economic, and demographic trends over which the City has limited control or ability to influence. **Effective long-term promotion of the cultural heritage and social cohesion that define each neighborhood will require active support from the respective Neighborhood Associations.** It is not surprising to see that the neighborhoods with the greatest integrity and strongest identity are those that have maintained active neighborhood associations. Meeting participants in neighborhoods represented by active associations identified their Neighborhood Association as major assets and important qualities of their neighborhoods. Neighborhoods represented by active associations also had the highest participation rates throughout the public participation process for the plan and tended to generate the most information regarding neighborhood character and needs.

It is also important to consider the potential impacts of shifting or evolving neighborhood boundaries and identities. These changes have occurred throughout the City's history, as evidenced by the fact that many historic ethnic enclaves in the City are no longer recognized or widely remembered. More recently, the construction of I-68 divided the historic Eastside Neighborhood, effectively forcing changes in historic social patterns and the ultimate boundaries of Eastside and adjoining neighborhoods. **The 2003 Downtown Cumberland Business Association plan to create and market the downtown area through a series of commercial districts (see the Center City chapter of this Plan (Chapter II) for additional details)**

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would encompass several mixed use districts in three different residential neighborhoods. This plan should be explored further as a marketing and branding strategy for downtown Cumberland and its various business enclaves.

The fact of the matter is that changes in social patterns, development trends, and employment/work patterns will cause continued changes in neighborhood identity and boundaries. They are not inherently “good” or “bad” changes, and many people will view them both ways. They are merely a consequence of urban change, growth, and evolution. They are as inevitable as history already shows them to be, and they only serve to reinforce the need for neighborhoods and their Neighborhood Associations to promote and preserve their cherished heritages. What is ultimately important is that this history is not lost and forgotten, because the richness of a community’s cultural heritage is an important and valuable (both intangibly and economically) aspect of a community’s unique image and identity.

In general, the existing neighborhood associations are representing their residents well. **A list of suggestions for additional strategies that Neighborhood Associations can employ to further promote the cultural heritage of their neighborhoods and social interaction and cohesion within their neighborhoods is provided in Appendix C of this Element. Copies of this list were distributed during each of the neighborhood meetings conducted for this plan. In addition, a handbook for Neighborhood Associations, developed by the City of Phoenix, AZ, identifying a wide range of strategies to help strengthen Neighborhood Associations is provided in Appendix D of this Element. Those neighborhoods that are not currently represented by active associations are encouraged to review these materials and to organize new associations.**

The neighborhood meeting participants also discussed many of the more tangible aspects of neighborhood character. These include physical features, buildings, and places that contribute to the distinctive character of each neighborhood. All of these features have been mapped for each neighborhood. As would be expected, most of the physical characteristics can be divided into two broad categories. They include prominent natural features, such as the Narrows, prominent ridgelines, and specific scenic views and vistas. The second and largest category is manmade features, buildings, and businesses that are unique to each neighborhood. The vast majority of the distinctive features fell into this category. It can be further divided into man-made features that remain today and others that have been lost over time—including a number of former businesses and places of employment that also served as important gathering places for neighborhood residents to meet and interact. **Many of these features have significant historic value and can be protected through the establishment of local Historic Districts. Currently, the only locally designated Historic District is in the City’s downtown area, which includes portions of Washington Street and Canal Place. Additional local districts would need to be established for some of the more sensitive areas in the surrounding residential neighborhoods for that level of protection to be applied in those areas.**

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During the discussion of neighborhood defining characteristics and important social gathering places in the neighborhood meeting process, it was very evident that small, local businesses were very important. Many participants identified small neighborhood businesses that no longer exist as characteristics that defined the neighborhood or important losses to the neighborhood. Some of these businesses include the former Kids Corner consignment clothing store in Rolling Mill that was an important shopping and social gathering place. The store recently moved away from the neighborhood. Despite the development of the Queen City Plaza and all the new shopping opportunities that have been established in the neighborhood in recent years, long-time residents miss the intimacy of a store that provided an essential and affordable service that met their daily needs. Residents of the Walsh/Humbird neighborhood listed the former Lacy's Market on Virginia Avenue as important aspect of the neighborhood that has been lost. Residents of the Virginia Avenue/Chapel Hill neighborhood lobbied for years for a comprehensive revitalization of the commercial district because of the local businesses that were lost. In each of these and other cases, important elements of community pride, neighborhood identity, neighbor interaction, and essential services were lost.

In many, but not all, of these instances, residents attached themselves to small, locally owned and operated non-chain stores. Such attachments are understandable because the business owners and operators have a much more intimate understanding of their patron's needs, purchasing patterns, and spending limitations. They also develop strong interpersonal relationships with their customers that forge a reciprocal relationship with the larger neighborhood—creating both an *attachment to* the neighborhood for the business as well as helping create a sense of *identity for* the neighborhood. Such businesses are also, by definition, somewhat unique, and when successful, they contribute greatly to the neighborhood's special identity. However, not all of the businesses identified as important characteristics and social gathering places were small, locally owned, non-chain stores. The Dollar General store in Mapleside/Johnson Heights and the Martins Supermarket in Rolling Mill are two such examples.

Perhaps the strongest unifying aspects of the businesses that neighborhood residents cherish and desire to have are that they primarily serve essential neighborhood resident needs at prices affordable to people within that neighborhood and their owners or managers actively support the neighborhood. Logically, virtually every business identified as important by the neighborhood participants satisfies all of those basic criteria. These criteria were also, to a large degree, reflected in the interests that participants identified for businesses or services that the neighborhood currently lacks. For examples, residents of the Mapleside/Johnson Heights neighborhood perceived a loss in diversity within the neighborhood's retail base and wanted to see more clothing and dining options to suit their needs, which was expressed in a desire for a Target urban neighborhood store and a coffee shop.

While the City can control the location and pattern of uses and can protect historically significant buildings and places, it is much more difficult to control or effectively influence the more specific aspects of the uses that define its relationship to neighborhood residents. These

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more subtle influences and aspects include the types of goods that a business sells or the market area that a business serves. While neighborhood residents clearly want specific types of businesses and services in their neighborhoods, the City can only effectively and directly govern the type of use, the scale or size of the building that is allowed, and the locations where it can be placed. If special design standards are applied or the business is being placed in a local historic district, the City also may be able to affect the architectural design of the building.

*In summary, the key **Neighborhood Character** policy implications discussed above for the City-Wide element above are as follows:*

- **Effective long-term promotion of the cultural heritage and social cohesion that define each neighborhood will require active support from the respective Neighborhood Associations.**
- **The 2003 Downtown Cumberland Business Association plan to create and market the downtown area through a series of commercial districts (see the Center City chapter of this Plan (Chapter II) for additional details) would encompass several mixed use districts in three different residential neighborhoods. This plan should be explored further as a marketing and branding strategy for downtown Cumberland and its various business enclaves.**
- **A list of suggestions for additional strategies that Neighborhood Associations can employ to further promote the cultural heritage of their neighborhoods and social interaction and cohesion within their neighborhoods is provided in Appendix C of this Element. Copies of this list were distributed during each of the neighborhood meetings conducted for this plan.**
- **In addition, a handbook for Neighborhood Associations, developed by the City of Phoenix, AZ, identifying a wide range of strategies to help strengthen Neighborhood Associations is provided in Appendix D of this Element. Those neighborhoods that are not currently represented by active associations are encouraged to review these materials and to organize new associations.**
- **The neighborhood meeting participants also discussed many of the more tangible aspects of neighborhood character. These include physical features, buildings, and places that contribute to the distinctive character of each neighborhood.**
- **Many of these features have significant historic value and can be protected through the establishment of local Historic Districts. Currently, the only locally designated Historic District is in the City's downtown area, which includes portions of Washington Street and Canal Place. Additional local districts would need to be established for some of the more sensitive areas in the surrounding residential neighborhoods for that level of protection to be applied in those areas.**

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- During the discussion of neighborhood defining characteristics and important social gathering places in the neighborhood meeting process, it was very evident that small, local businesses were very important. Many participants identified small neighborhood businesses that no longer exist as characteristics that defined the neighborhood or important losses to the neighborhood.
- Perhaps the strongest unifying aspects of the businesses that neighborhood residents cherish and desire to have are that they primarily serve essential neighborhood resident needs at prices affordable to people within that neighborhood and their owners or managers actively support the neighborhood.
- While the City can control the location and pattern of uses and can protect historically significant buildings and places, it is much more difficult to control or effectively influence the more specific aspects of the uses that define its relationship to neighborhood residents.

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XIII. Appendices

- Appendix A: Census Data Summary Reports For Shriver/McNamee Neighborhood (MDP)**
- Appendix B: Neighborhood Issues Matrix**
- Appendix C: Listing of Neighborhood Action Strategies**
- Appendix D: Neighborhood Association Tool Kit (from the City of Phoenix, AZ)**
- Appendix E: Defining Characteristics Maps for each Neighborhood**
- Appendix F: Adoption Resolutions & Certification**

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Appendix A

**Sample Census Data Summary Reports For Shriver/McNamee
Neighborhood (*Provided by MDP*)**

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Profile 1 - 1990 Census Profile - Population and Housing Characteristics

User Defined Area: **McNamee Shriver**

Population Characteristics

TOTAL POPULATION	2,787
Sex: Female Population	1,504
Male Population	1,283
Race: White	2,597
African-American	180
American Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	2
Asian or Pacific Islander	5
Other Race	3
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	3
Age: 0 - 4 Years	209
5 - 11 Years	229
12 - 14 Years	95
15 - 17 Years	113
18 - 24 Years	249
25 - 34 Years	351
35 - 44 Years	369
45 - 64 Years	602
65+ Years	570
16+ Years	2,225
18+ Years	2,141
62+ Years	695
85+ Years	56

GROUP QUARTERS

Total Group Quarters	11
Type: In Correctional Institutions	0
In College Dormitories	0
In Military Quarters	0
All Other	11
Age: Under 18 Years	1
18-64 Years	1
65+ Years	9

FAMILY HOUSEHOLD TYPE

Families	795
Married-Couple Family	593
With Persons Under 18	217
Male Householder, No Wife Present	35
With Persons Under 18	17
Female Householder, No Husband Pres.	167
With Persons Under 18	113
Non-Family Households	402
Householder Living Alone	346
Householder Not Living Alone	56
Households With 1 or More Persons 65+	419
1 Person Household	190
2 or More Family Household	219
2 or More Non-Family Household	10

Housing Characteristics

TOTAL HOUSING UNITS	1,352
OCCUPIED UNITS	1,197
Owner Occupied	782
Renter Occupied	415
VACANT UNITS	155
For Sale Only	19
For Rent	54
ROOMS PER HOUSING UNIT	
Total Housing Units	5.47
Occupied	5.58
Owner Occupied	6.06
Renter Occupied	4.68
Vacant	4.61
PERSONS PER OCCUPIED UNIT	
Total Occupied Units	2.32
Owner Occupied	2.31
Renter Occupied	2.33
TENURE BY PERSONS PER ROOM	
With 1.01 or More Persons / Room	15
Owner Occupied	4
Renter Occupied	11
PERSONS IN OCCUPIED HOUSING UNITS	
One-Person Households	346
Owner Occupied	197
Renter Occupied	149
SPECIFIED OWNER OCCUPIED UNITS	
Units With Value	696
Less than \$50,000	449
\$50,000 - \$74,999	182
\$75,000 - \$99,999	56
\$100,000 - \$149,999	7
\$150,000 - \$199,999	1
\$200,000 - \$299,999	1
\$300,000 and over	0
Mean Value	\$45,036
SPECIFIED RENTER OCCUPIED UNITS	404
Units With No Cash Rent	21
Units With Monthly Rent	383
Less than \$200	161
\$200 - \$299	166
\$300 - \$449	53
\$450 - \$599	3
\$600 - \$749	0
\$750 and over	0
Mean Monthly Rent	\$214
UNITS IN STRUCTURE	1,352
1 Unit Detached	835
1 Unit Attached	160
2 - 4 Units	222
5 - 9 Units	56
10 - 19 Units	8
20 or more Units	53
Mobile Home	3
Other	15

Source: 1990 Census data from Summary Tape File (STF) 1B. Prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services.

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

Profile 2 - 1990 Census Profile - Selected Social, Labor Force and Employment Characteristics

User Defined Area: **McNamee Shriver**

URBAN AND RURAL RESIDENCE			
Total Population	2,723	LABOR FORCE STATUS (continued)	
Urban population	2,570	Females 16 and over	145
Inside urbanized area	2,570	With own children under 6 years	65
Rural population	153	In labor force	65
Farm population	0	With own children 6 to 17 years only	166
		In labor force	73
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT		PLACE OF WORK	
Persons 3 yrs and over in school	558	Workers 16 years and over	996
Preprimary School :	25	Worked in State of residence	933
Public School	5	Worked in county of residence	895
Private School	20	Worked out of county of residence	38
Elementary or High School :	365	Worked out of State of residence	63
Public School	298		
Private School	67	COMMUTING TO WORK	
College :	168	Workers 16 years and over	996
Public School	140	Drove alone	765
Private School	28	Carpooled	148
		Used public transportation	0
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT		Used other means	15
Persons 25 years and over	1,896	Walked	43
Less than 9th grade	207	Worked at home	25
9th to 12 th grade, no diploma	415	Mean travel time to work (minutes)	15
High school graduate	607		
Some college, no degree	372	OCCUPATION - Employed persons 16 +	1,002
Associate degree	79	Executive, administrative & managerial	65
Bachelor's degree	152	Professional specialty	148
Graduate or professional degree	64	Technicians and related support	12
		Sales	168
RESIDENCE IN 1985		Administrative support, including clerical	62
Persons 5 years and over	2,496	Private household	0
Lived in same house	1,543	Protective service	31
Lived in different house in U.S.	953	Service, except protective & household	176
Same State	732	Farming, forestry, and fishing	6
Same county	675	Precision production, craft, and repair	101
Different county	57	Machine operators, assemblers, inspectors	55
Different State	221	Transportation and material moving	102
Lived abroad	0	Handlers, equip. cleaners, helpers, laborers	76
VETERAN STATUS - Persons 16 years and over	2,210		
Civilian veterans 16 years and over	469	INDUSTRY - Employed persons 16 +	1,002
Persons 65 years and over	625	Agriculture, forestry and fisheries	6
Civilian veterans 65 years and over	165	Mining	13
		Construction	46
NATIVITY AND PLACE OF BIRTH		Manufacturing, nondurable goods	108
Total Population	2,723	Manufacturing, durable goods	31
Native population	2,690	Transportation	105
Foreign-born population	33	Communications & other public utilities	0
Entered the U.S. 1980 to 1990	13	Wholesale trade	12
		Retail trade	280
LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME - Persons 5 +	2,496	Finance, insurance and real estate	22
Speak a language other than English	66	Business and repair services	23
Do not speak English "Very Well"	34	Personal services	35
Speak Spanish	26	Entertainment and recreation services	7
Do not speak English "Very Well"	0	Health services	128
Speak Asian or Pacific Island Language	0	Educational services	83
Do not speak English "Very Well"	0	Other professional and related services	58
		Public administration	45
LABOR FORCE STATUS- Persons 16 +	2,210		
In labor force	1,086	CLASS OF WORK	
Civilian labor force	1,086	Employed persons 16 years and over	1,002
Employed	1,002	Private for profit wage & salary workers	677
Unemployed	84	Private not-for-profit wage & salary workers	78
Armed forces	0	Government workers	168
		Local government workers	107
Males 16 years and over	957	State government workers	54
In labor force	561	Federal government workers	7
Females 16 years and over	1,253	Self-employed workers	79
In labor force	525	Unpaid family workers	0

Source: 1990 Census data from Summary Tape File (STF) 3A. Prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services.

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

Profile 3 - 1990 Census Profile - Selected Social, Income and Poverty Characteristics

User Defined Area: **McNamee Shriver**
 INCOME IN 1989

Households	1,234
Less than \$5,000	126
\$5,000 to \$9,999	228
\$10,000 to \$14,999	200
\$15,000 to \$24,999	283
\$25,000 to \$34,999	168
\$35,000 to \$49,999	125
\$50,000 to \$74,999	95
\$75,000 to \$99,999	0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	0
\$150,000 or more	9
Mean household income	\$22,130
Families	834
Less than \$5,000	76
\$5,000 to \$9,999	114
\$10,000 to \$14,999	82
\$15,000 to \$24,999	200
\$25,000 to \$34,999	133
\$35,000 to \$49,999	125
\$50,000 to \$74,999	95
\$75,000 to \$99,999	0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	0
\$150,000 or more	9
Mean household income	\$26,471
Nonfamily households	400
Less than \$5,000	55
\$5,000 to \$9,999	120
\$10,000 to \$14,999	118
\$15,000 to \$24,999	72
\$25,000 to \$34,999	35
\$35,000 to \$49,999	0
\$50,000 to \$74,999	0
\$75,000 to \$99,999	0
\$100,000 to \$149,999	0
\$150,000 or more	0
Mean household income	\$12,477

INCOME IN 1989 BY RACE/HISPANIC ORIGIN

Total households	1,234
Mean household income	\$22,130
White households	1,131
Mean White household income	\$22,686
African-American households	97
Mean African-American hh income	\$15,320
Amer Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut households	6
Mean Amer Indian, Eskimo, Aleut hh income	\$27,341
Asian and Pacific Islander households	0
Mean Asian & Pacific Islander hh income	\$0
Other Race households	0
Mean Other Race household income	\$0
Hispanic Origin (any race) households	8
Mean Hispanic Origin household income	\$59,400
INCOME TYPE IN 1989, HOUSEHOLDS	1,234
With wage and salary income	732
Mean wage and salary income	\$22,077
With nonfarm self-employment income	77
Mean nonfarm self-employment income	\$23,669
With farm self-employment income	6
Mean farm self-employment income	\$-6,223
With interest, dividend or rental income	471
Mean interest, dividend or rental income	\$3,052
With social security income	563
Mean social security income	\$7,919
With public assistance income	224
Mean public assistance income	\$3,731
With retirement income	267
Mean retirement income	\$7,979

POVERTY STATUS OF PERSONS IN 1989 BY AGE AND RACE

	Total Persons	Below Poverty
Total	2,715	703
Under 5	227	156
5 years	13	5
6 to 11	152	77
12 to 17	193	71
18 to 24	234	73
25 to 34	304	126
35 to 44	341	53
45 to 54	284	13
55 to 59	156	17
60 to 64	186	13
65 to 74	374	52
75 years and over	251	47
White	2,436	546
Under 5	183	120
5 years	8	0
6 to 11	118	43
12 to 17	155	42
18 to 64	1,377	242
65 to 74	344	52
75 years and over	251	47
African-American	266	157
Under 5	44	36
5 years	5	5
6 to 11	34	34
12 to 17	38	29
18 to 64	115	53
65 to 74	30	0
75 years and over	0	0
Amer Indian, Eskimo, or Aleut	6	0
Asian and Pacific Islander	0	0
Other Race	7	0
Hispanic Origin (any race)	15	0

POVERTY STATUS OF FAMILIES IN 1989 BY FAMILY TYPE AND PRESENCE AND AGE OF RELATED

	Total Families	Below Poverty
Married Couple Family	573	54
Under 5 only	60	25
5 to 17 only	99	6
Under 5 and 5 to 17	17	9
No Related Children under 18	397	14
Male Householder, No Wife	27	6
Under 5 only	6	6
5 to 17 only	14	0
Under 5 and 5 to 17	0	0
No Related Children under 18	7	0
Female Householder, No Husband	234	125
Under 5 only	43	43
5 to 17 only	94	62
Under 5 and 5 to 17	15	15
No Related Children under 18	82	5

Source: 1990 Census data from Summary Tape File (STF) 3A. Prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services.

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

Profile 4 - 1990 Census Profile - Selected Housing Characteristics

User Defined Area: McNamee Shriver

Total housing units	1,332			
YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT	1,332	VEHICLES AVAILABLE		1,176
1989 to March 1990	5	None		210
1985 to 1988	5	1		472
1980 to 1984	13	2		345
1970 to 1979	88	3		118
1960 to 1969	132	4		20
1950 to 1959	201	5 or more		11
1940 to 1949	196			
1939 or earlier	692			
BEDROOMS	1,332	MORTGAGE STATUS AND SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS		
No bedroom	0	Specified owner-occupied housing units		736
1 bedroom	161	With a mortgage		278
2 bedrooms	448	Less than \$300		36
3 bedrooms	613	\$300 to \$499		97
4 bedrooms	100	\$500 to \$699		108
5 or more bedrooms	10	\$700 to \$999		29
		\$1,000 to \$1,499		8
		\$1,500 to \$1,999		0
		\$2,000 or more		0
		Not mortgaged		458
SOURCE OF WATER	1,332	Less than \$100		0
Public system or private company	1,332	\$100 to \$199		236
Individual drilled well	0	\$200 to \$299		188
Individual dug well	0	\$300 to \$399		22
Some other source	0	\$400 or more		12
SEWAGE DISPOSAL	1,332	SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS AS A PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1989		
Public sewage	1,321	Specified owner-occupied housing units		736
Septic tank or cesspool	11	With monthly owner costs computed		731
Other means	0	Less than 20 percent		456
SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS		20 to 24 percent		75
Total Housing Units	1,332	25 to 29 percent		30
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	7	30 to 34 percent		75
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	30	35 percent or more		95
Condominium housing units	19	Not computed		5
Total Owner-Occupied Units	798	GROSS RENT		
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	7	Specified renter-occupied housing units		378
No telephone in unit	7	With cash rent		363
No vehicles available	68	Less than \$200		72
Condominium housing units	0	\$200 to \$299		146
Total Renter-Occupied Units	378	\$300 to \$399		126
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	0	\$400 to \$499		13
No telephone in unit	75	\$500 to \$599		6
No vehicles available	142	\$600 to \$749		0
Condominium housing units	0	\$750 to \$999		0
Occupied housing units	1,176	\$1,000 or more		0
HOUSE HEATING FUEL	1,176	No cash rent		15
Utility gas	880	GROSS RENT AS A PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1989		
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	12	Specified renter-occupied housing units		378
Electricity	99	With monthly owner costs computed		358
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc	93	Less than 20 percent		91
Coal or coke	49	20 to 24 percent		54
Wood	37	25 to 29 percent		30
Solar energy	0	30 to 34 percent		35
Other fuel	6	35 percent or more		148
No fuel used	0	Not computed		20
YEAR HOUSEHOLDER MOVED INTO UNIT	1,176	HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1989 BY TENURE AND MORTGAGE STATUS (UNITS AND MEAN INCOME)		
1989 to March 1990	157	Total occupied housing units	1,176	\$22,259
1985 to 1988	298	Owner Occupied housing units	798	\$27,253
1980 to 1984	102	With a mortgage	317	\$36,170
1970 to 1979	251	Not mortgaged	481	\$21,376
1960 to 1969	105	Renter Occupied housing units	378	\$11,717
1959 or earlier	263			

Source: 1990 Census data from Summary Tape File (STF) 3A. Prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services.

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

2000 Census Summary File One (SF1) - Maryland Population Characteristi

User Defined Area : McNamee Shriver

Table P1 : Population by Race, Hispanic or Latino			Table P2 : Total Population by Type			
	Number	Pct. of Total		Number	Pct. of Total	
Total Population :	2,574	100.00	Total Population :	2,574	100.00	
Population of One Race :	2,543	98.80	Household Population	2,505	97.32	
White Alone	2,388	92.77	Group Quarters Population	69	2.68	
Black or African American Alone	133	5.17	Total Group Quarters Population :	69	100.00	
American Indian & Alaska Native Alone	6	0.23	Institutionalized Population :	0	0.00	
Asian Alone	5	0.19	Correctional Institutions	0	0.00	
Native Hawaiian & Other Pacific Islander Alone	0	0.00	Nursing Homes	0	0.00	
Some Other Race Alone	11	0.43	Other Institutions	0	0.00	
Population of Two or More Races	31	1.20	Noninstitutionalized Population :	69	100.00	
Hispanic or Latino	22	0.85	College Dormitories	0	0.00	
Not Hispanic or Latino	2,552	99.15	Military Quarters	0	0.00	
			Other Noninstitutional Group Quarters	69	100.00	

Table P3 : Total Population by Sex and Age						
	Total	Pct. of Total	Male	Pct. of Total	Female	Pct. of Total
Total Population	2,574	100.00	1,260	100.00	1,314	100.00
Under 5 Years	144	5.59	74	5.87	70	5.33
5 to 9 Years	153	5.94	77	6.11	76	5.78
10 to 14 Years	178	6.92	94	7.46	84	6.39
15 to 17 Years	100	3.89	60	4.76	40	3.04
18 and 19 Years	64	2.49	32	2.54	32	2.44
20 and 21 Years	65	2.53	39	3.10	26	1.98
22 to 24 Years	71	2.76	29	2.30	42	3.20
25 to 29 Years	175	6.80	84	6.67	91	6.93
30 to 34 Years	158	6.14	85	6.75	73	5.56
35 to 39 Years	161	6.25	80	6.35	81	6.16
40 to 44 Years	181	7.03	87	6.90	94	7.15
45 to 49 Years	187	7.26	90	7.14	97	7.38
50 to 54 Years	186	7.23	96	7.62	90	6.85
55 to 59 Years	133	5.17	65	5.16	68	5.18
60 and 61 Years	41	1.59	18	1.43	23	1.75
62 to 64 Years	63	2.45	28	2.22	35	2.66
65 and 66 Years	46	1.79	25	1.98	21	1.60
67 to 69 Years	75	2.91	32	2.54	43	3.27
70 to 74 Years	138	5.36	68	5.40	70	5.33
75 to 79 Years	111	4.31	46	3.65	65	4.95
80 to 84 Years	86	3.34	33	2.62	53	4.03
85 Years and Over	58	2.25	18	1.43	40	3.04
5 to 17 Years	431	16.74	231	18.33	200	15.22
18 to 24 Years	200	7.77	100	7.94	100	7.61
25 to 34 Years	333	12.94	169	13.41	164	12.48
35 to 44 Years	342	13.29	167	13.25	175	13.32
45 to 54 Years	373	14.49	186	14.76	187	14.23
55 to 64 Years	237	9.21	111	8.81	126	9.59
65 Years and Over	514	19.97	222	17.62	292	22.22
18 to 64 Years	1,485	57.69	733	58.17	752	57.23
62 Years and Over	577	22.42	250	19.84	327	24.89
67 Years and Over	468	18.18	197	15.63	271	20.62

Prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services.

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

Profile 2 - 1990 Census Profile - Selected Social, Labor Force and Employment Characteristics

User Defined Area: **McNamee Shriver**

URBAN AND RURAL RESIDENCE		LABOR FORCE STATUS (continued)
Total Population	2,723	Females 16 and over
Urban population	2,570	With own children under 6 years
Inside urbanized area	2,570	In labor force
Rural population	153	With own children 6 to 17 years only
Farm population	0	In labor force
SCHOOL ENROLLMENT		PLACE OF WORK
Persons 3 yrs and over in school	558	Workers 16 years and over
Preprimary School :	25	Worked in State of residence
Public School	5	Worked in county of residence
Private School	20	Worked out of county of residence
Elementary or High School :	365	Worked out of State of residence
Public School	298	
Private School	67	COMMUTING TO WORK
College :	168	Workers 16 years and over
Public School	140	Drove alone
Private School	28	Carpooled
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT		Used public transportation
Persons 25 years and over	1,896	Used other means
Less than 9th grade	207	Walked
9th to 12 th grade, no diploma	415	Worked at home
High school graduate	607	Mean travel time to work (minutes)
Some college, no degree	372	
Associate degree	79	OCCUPATION - Employed persons 16 +
Bachelor's degree	152	Executive, administrative & managerial
Graduate or professional degree	64	Professional specialty
RESIDENCE IN 1985		Technicians and related support
Persons 5 years and over	2,496	Sales
Lived in same house	1,543	Administrative support, including clerical
Lived in different house in U.S.	953	Private household
Same State	732	Protective service
Same county	675	Service, except protective & household
Different county	57	Farming, forestry, and fishing
Different State	221	Precision production, craft, and repair
Lived abroad	0	Machine operators, assemblers, inspectors
VETERAN STATUS - Persons 16 years and over		Transportation and material moving
Civilian veterans 16 years and over	2,210	Handlers, equip. cleaners, helpers, laborers
Persons 65 years and over	469	
Civilian veterans 65 years and over	625	INDUSTRY - Employed persons 16 +
NATIVITY AND PLACE OF BIRTH		Agriculture, forestry and fisheries
Total Population	2,723	Mining
Native population	2,690	Construction
Foreign-born population	33	Manufacturing, nondurable goods
Entered the U.S. 1980 to 1990	13	Manufacturing, durable goods
LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME - Persons 5 +		Transportation
Speak a language other than English	2,496	Communications & other public utilities
Do not speak English "Very Well"	66	Wholesale trade
Speak Spanish	34	Retail trade
Do not speak English "Very Well"	26	Finance, insurance and real estate
Speak Asian or Pacific Island Language	0	Business and repair services
Do not speak English "Very Well"	0	Personal services
LABOR FORCE STATUS- Persons 16 +		Entertainment and recreation services
In labor force	2,210	Health services
Civilian labor force	1,086	Educational services
Employed	1,002	Other professional and related services
Unemployed	84	Public administration
Armed forces	0	
MALES 16 years and over		CLASS OF WORK
In labor force	957	Employed persons 16 years and over
Females 16 years and over	561	Private for profit wage & salary workers
In labor force	1,253	Private not-for-profit wage & salary workers
In labor force	525	Government workers
		Local government workers
		State government workers
		Federal government workers
		Self-employed workers
		Unpaid family workers

Source: 1990 Census data from Summary Tape File (STF) 3A. Prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services.

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

2000 Census Summary File Three (SF3) - Maryland Selected Social Characteristics

User Defined Area : McNamee Shriver

SCHOOL ENROLLMENT		Number	Percent	NATIVITY AND PLACE OF BIRTH		Number	Percent
Population 3 years and over enrolled in school		572	100.00	Total population		2,575	100.00
Nursery school, preschool		42	7.34	Native		2,575	100.00
Kindergarten		35	6.12	Born in United States		2,575	100.00
Elementary school (grades 1-8)		282	49.30	State of residence		2,004	77.83
High school (grades 9-12)		94	16.43	Different state		571	22.17
College or graduate school		119	20.80	Born outside United States		0	0.00
EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT				Foreign born		0	0.00
Population 25 years and over		1,807	100.00	Entered 1990 to March 2000		0	0.00
Less than 9th grade		97	5.37	Naturalized citizen		0	0.00
9th to 12th grade, no diploma		257	14.22	Not a citizen		0	0.00
High school graduate (includes equivalency)		774	42.83	REGION OF BIRTH OF FOREIGN BORN			
Some college, no degree		379	20.97	Total (excluding born at sea)		(NA)	(NA)
Associate degree		142	7.86	Europe		(NA)	(NA)
Bachelor's degree		107	5.92	Asia		(NA)	(NA)
Graduate or professional degree		51	2.82	Africa		(NA)	(NA)
Percent high school graduate or higher		80.41	(X)	Oceania		(NA)	(NA)
Percent bachelor's degree or higher		8.74	(X)	Latin America		(NA)	(NA)
MARITAL STATUS				Northern America		(NA)	(NA)
Population 15 years and over		2,108	100.00	LANGUAGE SPOKEN AT HOME			
Never married		554	26.28	Population 5 years and over		2,435	100.00
Now married, except separated		1,028	48.77	English only		2,426	99.63
Separated		83	3.94	Language other than English		9	0.37
Widowed		243	11.53	Speak English less than "very well"		0	0.00
Female		179	8.49	Spanish		9	0.37
Divorced		200	9.49	Speak English less than "very well"		0	0.00
Female		102	4.84	Other Indo-European language		0	0.00
GRANDPARENT AS CAREGIVERS				Speak English less than "very well"		0	0.00
Grandparent living in household with one or more own grandchildren under 18 years		(NA)	(NA)	Asian and Pacific Island languages		0	0.00
Grandparent responsible for grandchildren		(NA)	(NA)	Speak English less than "very well"		0	0.00
VETERAN STATUS				ANCESTRY (single or multiple)			
Civilian population 18 years and over		2,024	100.00	Total population		(NA)	(NA)
Civilian veterans		464	22.92	Total ancestries reported		(NA)	(NA)
DISABILITY STATUS OF THE CIVILIAN				Arab		(NA)	(NA)
NONINSTITUTIONALIZED POPULATION				Czech /I		(NA)	(NA)
Population 5 to 20 years		524	100.00	Danish		(NA)	(NA)
With a disability		108	20.61	Dutch		(NA)	(NA)
Population 21 to 64 years		1,358	100.00	English		(NA)	(NA)
With a disability		427	31.44	French (except Basque) /I		(NA)	(NA)
Percent employed		26.23	(X)	French Canadian /I		(NA)	(NA)
No disability		931	68.56	German		(NA)	(NA)
Percent employed		79.16	(X)	Greek		(NA)	(NA)
Population 65 years and over		553	100.00	Hungarian		(NA)	(NA)
With a disability		218	39.42	Irish /I		(NA)	(NA)
RESIDENCE IN 1995				Italian		(NA)	(NA)
Population 5 years and over		2,435	100.00	Lithuanian		(NA)	(NA)
Same house in 1995		1,485	60.99	Norwegian		(NA)	(NA)
Different house in the U.S. in 1995		950	39.01	Polish		(NA)	(NA)
Same county		710	29.16	Portuguese		(NA)	(NA)
Different county		240	9.86	Russian		(NA)	(NA)
Same state		71	2.92	Scotch-Irish		(NA)	(NA)
Different state		169	6.94	Scottish		(NA)	(NA)
Elsewhere in 1995		0	0.00	Slovak		(NA)	(NA)
				Subsaharan African		(NA)	(NA)
				Swedish		(NA)	(NA)
				Swiss		(NA)	(NA)
				Ukrainian		(NA)	(NA)
				United States or American		(NA)	(NA)
				Welsh		(NA)	(NA)
				West Indian (excluding Hispanic groups)		(NA)	(NA)
				Other ancestries		(NA)	(NA)

- Represents zero or rounds to zero. (X) Not applicable.

1 The data represent a combination of two ancestries shown separately in Summary File 3. Czech includes Czechoslovakian. French includes Alsatian.

French Canadian includes Acadian/Cajun. Irish includes Celtic.

Prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services, August 2002.

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2000 Census Summary File Three (SF3) - Maryland Selected Housing Characteristics

User Defined Area : McNamee Shriver

	Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Total housing units	1,353	100.00	OCCUPANTS PER ROOM		
UNITS IN STRUCTURE			Occupied housing units	1,107	100.00
1-unit detached	834	61.64	1.00 or less	1,107	100.00
1-unit attached	130	9.61	1.01 to 1.50	0	0.00
2 units	147	10.86	1.51 or more	0	0.00
3 to 4 units	75	5.54			
5 to 9 units	54	3.99	Specified owner-occupied units	706	100.00
10 to 19 units	11	0.81	VALUE		
20 or more units	96	7.10	Less than \$50,000	259	36.69
Mobile home	6	0.44	\$50,000 to \$99,999	374	52.97
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.00	\$100,000 to \$149,999	73	10.34
			\$150,000 to \$199,999	0	0.00
			\$200,000 to \$299,999	0	0.00
			\$300,000 to \$499,999	0	0.00
YEAR STRUCTURE BUILT			\$500,000 to \$999,999	0	0.00
1999 to March 2000	5	0.37	\$1,000,000 or more	0	0.00
1995 to 1998	0	0.00	Median (dollars)	(NA)	(NA)
1990 to 1994	6	0.44	Mean (dollars)	\$60,945	(X)
1980 to 1989	6	0.44			
1970 to 1979	88	6.50	MORTGAGE STATUS AND SELECTED		
1960 to 1969	129	9.53	MONTHLY OWNER COSTS		
1940 to 1959	438	32.37	With a mortgage	330	46.74
1939 or earlier	681	50.33	Less than \$300	0	0.00
			\$300 to \$499	71	10.06
ROOMS			\$500 to \$699	140	19.83
1 room	38	2.81	\$700 to \$999	110	15.58
2 rooms	24	1.77	\$1,000 to \$1,499	0	0.00
3 rooms	119	8.80	\$1,500 to \$1,999	9	1.27
4 rooms	203	15.00	\$2,000 or more	0	0.00
5 rooms	242	17.89	Median (dollars)	(NA)	(NA)
6 rooms	439	32.45	Not mortgaged	376	53.26
7 rooms	157	11.60	Median (dollars)	(NA)	(NA)
8 rooms	106	7.83			
9 or more rooms	25	1.85	SELECTED MONTHLY OWNER COSTS AS A		
Median (rooms)	(NA)	(NA)	PERCENTAGE OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1999		
Mean (rooms)	5.39	(X)	Less than 15.0 percent	344	48.73
			15.0 to 19.9 percent	88	12.46
Occupied housing units	1,107	100.00	20.0 to 24.9 percent	106	15.01
YEAR HOUSEHOLDER MOVED INTO UNIT			25.0 to 29.9 percent	45	6.37
1999 to March 2000	182	16.44	30.0 to 34.9 percent	22	3.12
1995 to 1998	246	22.22	35.0 percent or more	90	12.75
1990 to 1994	130	11.74	Not computed	11	1.56
1980 to 1989	127	11.47			
1970 to 1979	188	16.98	Specified renter-occupied units	373	100.00
1969 or earlier	234	21.14	GROSS RENT		
			Less than \$200	36	9.65
VEHICLES AVAILABLE			\$200 to \$299	57	15.28
None	146	13.19	\$300 to \$499	177	47.45
1	457	41.28	\$500 to \$749	84	22.52
2	395	35.68	\$750 to \$999	0	0.00
3 or more	109	9.85	\$1,000 to \$1,499	0	0.00
			\$1,500 or more	0	0.00
HOUSE HEATING FUEL			No cash rent	19	5.09
Utility gas	885	79.95	Median (dollars)	(NA)	(NA)
Bottled, tank, or LP gas	14	1.26	Mean (dollars)	\$371	(X)
Electricity	104	9.39			
Fuel oil, kerosene, etc	58	5.24	GROSS RENT AS A PERCENTAGE OF		
Coal or coke	6	0.54	HOUSEHOLD INCOME IN 1999		
Wood	29	2.62	Less than 15.0 percent	81	21.72
Solar energy	0	0.00	15.0 to 19.9 percent	55	14.75
Other fuel	5	0.45	20.0 to 24.9 percent	11	2.95
No fuel used	6	0.54	25.0 to 29.9 percent	22	5.90
			30.0 to 34.9 percent	16	4.29
SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS			35.0 percent or more	152	40.75
Lacking complete plumbing facilities	0	0.00	Not computed	36	9.65
Lacking complete kitchen facilities	11	0.99			
No telephone service	60	5.42			

Prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services, August 2002.

Appendix B

Neighborhood Needs Matrix

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

2013 Comprehensive Plan Neighborhood Needs Matrix

Identified Need/Issue	NEIGHBORHOOD											Tally
	Rolling Mill	VA Ave - Chapel Hill	Decatur Heights	Wills	Humbird	Walsh - Willowbrook	Eastside - Willowbrook	Shriver - McNamee	Mapleside - Johns. Hgts.	Westside - Dingle		
A full service family Community Center	X				X					X		3
A Small Business Incubator	X											1
Neighborhood Playground/Recreation Area	X		X					X				3
Sidewalk Improvements/Repairs/Extensions	X		X					X				4
Bike Lanes/Routes	X							X				2
Handicap Access Improvements in ROWs	X							X				2
Sewer/Water Line Repairs/Improvements	X			X				X				3
Restoration of Abandoned/Vacant Homes	X											1
Demolish Dilapidated/Abandoned Homes	X	X	X	X								4
Improved Property Maintenance/Code Enfor.	X	X	X	X								3
Increased Traffic Access To Neighborhood	X											1
Additional/Retained Street Lighting	X		X									2
Security/Surveillance Cameras	X											1
Greater Public/Private Parking Opportunities	X	X	X	X					X			4
Improve/Resurface High Traffic Alleys		X										1
Expand Neighborhood Home Ownership		X										1
Transit Pulloffs/Shelters		X										1
Sit-Down Family Restaurants		X										1
Excessive Traffic Speeds & Conflicts			X	X	X				X			4
Better traffic control at key intersections			X									1
One-Way traffic on Decatur Street			X									1
Fire Hydrants not working			X									1
Better coordination/completion of infras.			X		X							2
Convenience/Grocery Stores			X	X	X				X			2
Street Repairs/Improvements			X	X	X			X	X			5
Improvements for traffic flow on streets			X									1
Remove 'obsolete' utility lines & wires			X									1
A formal, coordinated snow removal plan			X									1
Expanded Police patrols	X				X			X	X			5
Improved traffic site visibility at intersections								X				1
Man vacant fire station								X				1
Improve Washington Middle School									X			1
A residential Façade Improvement Program									X			1
Dumpsters through Community Betterment									X			1
Removal of litter and trash from streets										X		1

Appendix C

**Listing of Potential Neighborhood Action Strategies
(Distributed at all Comprehensive Plan Neighborhood Meetings)**

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

List of ideas for Neighborhood Action Strategies

This list was developed as a resource for the City of Cumberland’s Comprehensive Plan. The purpose of the list is to provide a reference guide of suggested strategies to expand the range of services/activities offered by Neighborhood Associations, to forge stronger social ties between residents of the City’s neighborhoods and to help build neighborhood spirit. It is intended as a starting point to discuss possible neighborhood action strategies for the City’s Comprehensive Plan, and should not be viewed as an exhaustive list of all possible strategies. Individual neighborhoods should build upon the list as appropriate to address specific needs and issues.

1. Barter Boards

A “barter board” is a special bulletin board that could be placed at a traditional central meeting or gathering place within each neighborhood to advertise services and products for TRADE (not sale). The idea is to provide a location for residents of the neighborhood to offer service, skills, or items they have produced to trade for services, skills or items they may need. This would help maintain and reinforce the Appalachian tradition of bartering for services and helping neighbors. It would also foster closer bonds between residents of the neighborhood and continue the pattern of shared lifestyles and values. Additional bulletin boards can be established for residents to advertise goods and services for SALE, but they should be kept separate and distinct from the neighborhood Barter Board. Barter Boards are intended to serve as mechanisms to encourage greater social interaction and the sharing of services and, in so doing, foster a stronger sense of community and a shared lifestyle.

2. Neighborhood Association Newsletters

Most existing Neighborhood Associations currently produce periodic newspapers and distribute them in print form or through e-mails. However, some neighborhoods in the City (as identified in this plan) still lack formal associations and a regular newsletter to communicate information about the neighborhood and upcoming community events. Each neighborhood is encouraged to create a formal membership association to organize community events and establish stronger communication links between residents.

3. Neighborhood Festivals

Each neighborhood and/or Neighborhood Association should schedule and conduct annual or semi-annual neighborhood street festivals to celebrate and showcase its neighborhood’s special character, cultural roots, and history. Events could include a wide range of activities, including story-telling competitions (where residents recount their favorite memories of the neighborhood and its people or events, which could be serious, humorous, or exaggerated—as in a “tall tale”), cultural heritage displays and activities, historic recreations of important events,

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food sales or a neighborhood cook-out, dances or music performances by neighborhood residents, talent competitions, outstanding neighborhood citizen awards, and neighborhood rummage sales. The festivals would bring broader attention to each neighborhood and help new residents learn more about their neighborhood and meet their neighbors. The festivals should be carefully scheduled and coordinated so that they don't compete with or conflict with other neighborhood festivals. The idea is not to create competition between neighborhoods, but to create a calendar of festivities that allows residents of the entire city and visitors to share in the celebration of the city's unique character and flavor. Some festivals could be associated with major holidays, such as a 4th of July parade or community cook-out or a special Christmas Pageant with associated events.

4. Neighborhood Murals

Each neighborhood could work with local artists or neighborhood school art teachers to create a public mural in a central location or at a major gateway into the neighborhood to showcase the neighborhood's historic events, prominent residents, landmarks, cultural heritage, and other features that make it unique. Such a mural would make a colorful, attractive, and inviting feature for each neighborhood, provide a cultural link between the past and younger generations, and it would prompt new residents and visitors to ask questions and learn more about the neighborhood. The murals could be located on blank walls or building facades that would otherwise be featureless.

5. Welcome Committees

Each neighborhood or Neighborhood Association should create or organize a welcome committee that would visit and welcome all new residents of the neighborhood to provide information about the neighborhood's heritage and history, to engage them to participate and become involved in neighborhood events and the neighborhood association, and to help them feel more connected to their new neighborhood.

6. Neighborhood Emblems

Each neighborhood should be encouraged to develop a recognizable and colorful representative or symbolic emblem of the neighborhood that can be used to on banners, flags, or as street sign toppers to help mark and identify the neighborhood. The emblem also can be included on neighborhood brochures. The emblem should incorporate important features of the neighborhood (landmark buildings or natural features) and/or significant cultural icons (ethnic flags or colors, important historical events, or prominent citizens) that best represent the neighborhood's unique or distinctive character and heritage. Neighborhood Emblems, when properly placed and used, convey a strong sense of cohesiveness, identity, and stability to people within and outside the neighborhood.

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7. Neighborhood Crime Watch

Although it is now an established concept, it is highly effective and still worth noting. Where neighborhood crimes, such as burglaries and drug-dealing are a problem, working with the Police Department to establish a neighborhood crime watch program is a good way to combat the problem and improve the neighborhood's image. It also encourages residents to work together and establish social connections. Working closely with the Police Department helps create a greater sense of security within the neighborhood, which is conducive to social interaction and a heightened sense of comradery among the residents.

8. Neighborhood Brochure

Creating a neighborhood brochure can be a good way of developing interest in the neighborhood's history, cultural heritage, and important social events. It also teaches prospective new residents about the neighborhood and demonstrates strong social cohesion among the residents. Each brochure should contain a detailed map of the neighborhood highlighting all of the social gathering places and a smaller location map of the City to show where the neighborhood is located. It should give a brief explanation of the neighborhood's distinctive character and history, and it should highlight the major social events (festivals, parties, and celebrations) that routinely occur throughout the year. It also should list the various neighborhood organizations, contact numbers, and meeting times. Areas can be reserved in the brochure for local business ads, if desired, to help finance publication of the brochure. It is an item that should be distributed to newcomers through a welcome committee, and it should be displayed prominently within the neighborhood at local businesses and at neighborhood bulletin or barter boards. The brochure also can be made in the form of a place mat for use in neighborhood restaurants and family eateries.

9. Internet Web Site

Each neighborhood can create a web site to advertise its special character, social organizations and committees, and special events and festivals. The web site can be created by the Neighborhood Association and accessed by a link from the City of Cumberland's home page. Advertising links or space can be provided on the page to neighborhood businesses as a way to help finance the web site. Neighborhood businesses should be approached and encouraged to establish links from their own web sites. The web site should be colorful and updated regularly to convey activity and stability to the general public.

10. Special Neighborhood Committees and Community Groups

Once the essential needs of the neighborhood have been identified, a good way to mobilize residents to take ownership of the issue or need is to organize one or more special neighborhood committees to take action. For example, if litter on the streets is a problem, the

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neighborhood can create a beautification committee through the Neighborhood Association to coordinate trash pick-ups and undertake other street beautification projects. Not only do such committees help address critical problems, they also bring residents together in a social setting. Such committees do not have to be organized to address a problem in the neighborhood. They also can be organized to encourage around special recreational or interest themes to establish new social connections, such as a quilting guild or a teen activity club.

11. Home/Business Beautification or Decoration Contests

The local Neighborhood Association can conduct an annual or holiday-specific contest to encourage homeowners and/or business owners to beautify or decorate their properties. Such contests also can be sponsored by local businesses to raise funds for prizes. Absent prizes, the Neighborhood Association can work with the newspaper to have photographs of the winners published or the winning property(ies) can be featured on the neighborhood's web site. Such a contest can help convey neighborhood pride and activity at the same time that it promotes beautification.

12. Neighborhood Pride Day in School

Each Neighborhood Association can approach the Allegany County Board of Education to conduct a Neighborhood Pride Day or Week in the public schools located in that neighborhood. Neighborhood leaders could appear in Social Studies or English classes to discuss the history (including legends, folklore, and interesting stories) and character of the neighborhood and seek improvement and activity ideas from the students. Neighborhood Associations and/or neighborhood children can prepare colorful artwork depicting the important events and features of each neighborhood for posting in school hallways and classrooms. Special school essay contests also can be conducted in association with the event. The planning, design, and creation of a Neighborhood Mural also can be coordinated as part of the event.

13. Community Gardens

One way to bring neighbors together in an outdoors environment would be to create a "community garden" site within the neighborhood where residents could either lease a personal garden plot to grow fresh food for their families or they could contribute to a neighborhood fund (perhaps maintained by the Neighborhood Association) to sponsor food production in the garden and receive a share of the food grown on the property. This latter arrangement is sometimes referred to as "Community Sponsored Agriculture" or a CSA. Creating a community garden can be a good way to turn a vacant lot into an neighborhood asset that adds color and enhances property values. If such a lot is not available or can't be acquired, the Neighborhood Association can establish a CSA arrangement with a local farm in the area that may be outside the City to obtain locally produced, farm-fresh foods for neighborhood residents. This would

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still allow citizens of the neighborhood to socialize through the Neighborhood Association and still support local farming.

14. Shut-In Care Committee

The various Neighborhood Associations could provide a valuable service to elderly and handicapped residents by forming a committee of volunteers willing to provide periodic visits to senior citizens, disabled veterans, and other handicapped individuals living in their neighborhoods. These individuals would benefit from the added sense of security and concern that these volunteers could provide. Those willing to volunteer for this service should be willing to learn about the programs and benefits provided by the Human Resources Development Commission (the local Area Agency on Aging in Allegany County), Medicare and Medicaid, and the Veteran's Administration, in order to coordinate with these and other service agencies on the specific needs of the shut-ins within the neighborhood.

15. Christmas In April/National Rebuilding Day

This national volunteer program is known by a number of names, most prominently Christmas In April or National Rebuilding Day. Normally conducted around the last Saturday in April, the program coordinates volunteer workers and materials donations to help low income citizens undertake essential maintenance work on their homes that they might not be able to afford to undertake on their own. The various Neighborhood Associations could form a Committee to organize such activities, including the selection of candidates within the neighborhood for assistance, donations of necessary building materials, and the marshalling of neighborhood volunteers (both skilled and unskilled) to provide the assistance. Where a Neighborhood Association cannot perform the necessary organizing work on its own, it can offer assistance to an established program that may be operating more broadly within the County or coordinate with the local Habitat for Humanity chapter to build that capacity. By becoming actively involved in neighborhood volunteer revitalization efforts such as this, the Neighborhood Association can directly contribute to beautification and increased property values within the neighborhood.

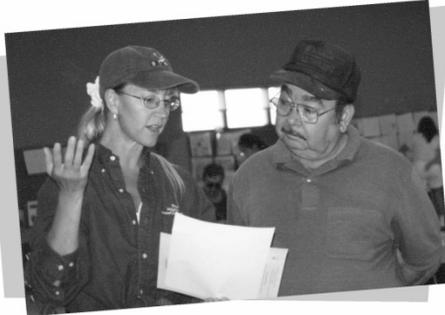
Appendix D

**Neighborhood Association Tool Kit (City of Phoenix, AZ)
(Distributed at all Comprehensive Plan Neighborhood Meetings)**



City of Phoenix
Neighborhood Services Department

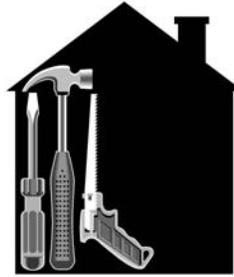
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The city of Phoenix

created the Neighborhood Services

Department to preserve and revitalize neighborhoods, and help residents access city services. The department approach to project- and problem-management emphasizes partnerships between residents, business owners, elected officials, and city employees to build and preserve clean, safe neighborhoods that reflect the diversity of the city's population. The city's investment in healthy neighborhoods is ultimately an investment in people, in a sense of community, and in an ethic of shared pride.



**Neighborhood
Association
Tool Kit**
A guide for neighborhood
associations

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What is a neighborhood association and what does it do?



A neighborhood association is a group of residents who meet regularly to accomplish goals in their neighborhood. The association may include home owners and renters, apartment residents, business owners, school and church officials, and members of nonprofit organizations. Depending on the goals of the group, meetings may be held twice a year, once a quarter, or every month.

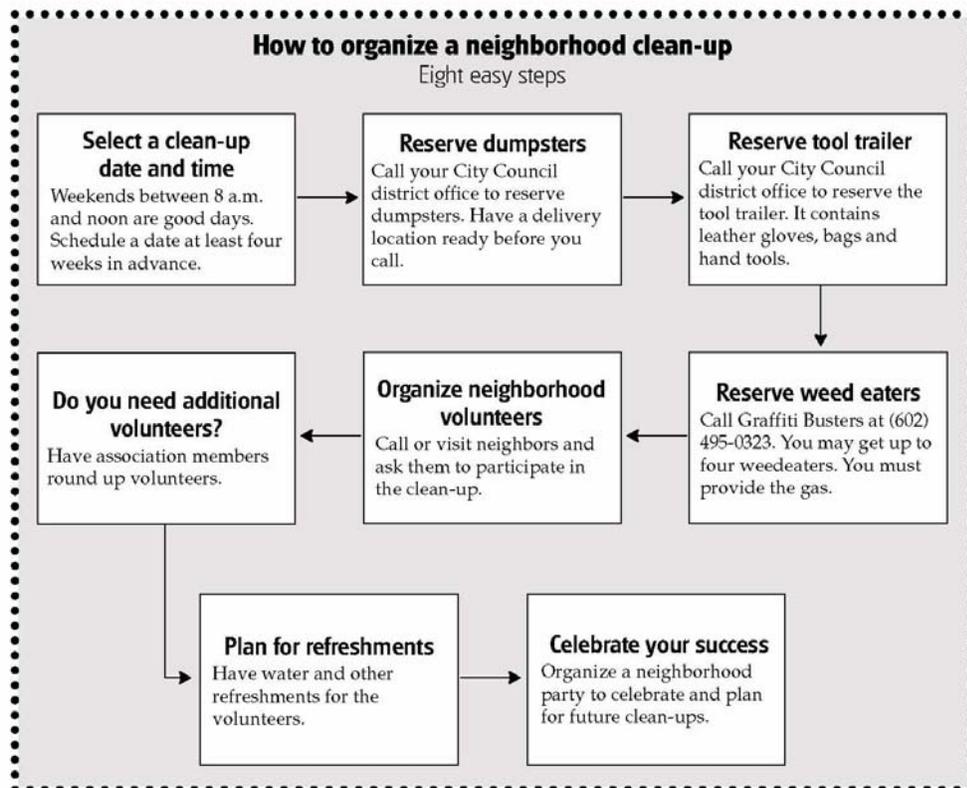
Neighborhood associations help represent neighborhood residents to elected officials, identify challenges and problems in the neighborhood, support change and improvement efforts, help resolve conflicts, provide volunteers for community projects, and find and get resources to make the neighborhood a better place to live.

It's important to identify some of your goals before you ask others to form a neighborhood association. Goals for improving your neighborhood may include:

-  helping neighbors get to know each other by holding social events
-  making physical improvements such as installing street lights and community signs
-  holding regular neighborhood clean-ups
-  forming a Block Watch to reduce crime
-  organizing to share opinions with representatives of government.

How to organize a neighborhood clean-up

Eight easy steps



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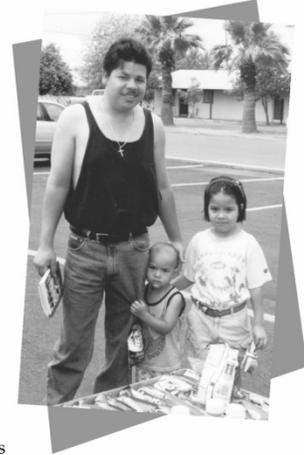
How to form a neighborhood association

1. Start with a core group

Start your neighborhood association by finding a core group of people who agree to meet regularly. Ask some neighbors you already know. Then knock on the doors of some you don't know and explain why you want to form a neighborhood association. When you find five to ten people who are interested schedule a meeting at someone's house, or at a school, church or other central location. It's a good idea to set up the meeting quickly before people lose interest.

Each member of the neighborhood association should:

-  Try to attend every meeting.
-  Act for the benefit of the group.
-  Use agreed-upon procedures at meetings.
-  Be polite and make constructive comments.
-  Treat other members with respect.
-  Discuss issues and concerns, not personalities.
-  Accept group decisions after a vote has been taken.



2. Set the neighborhood boundaries

It's important to determine the boundaries of your neighborhood association. Boundaries might be roads, natural features such as a mountain or canal, residences within a certain distance of a school, or houses built in a certain type of style. You might want to look at a city map and take a tour of the neighborhood to help you set the boundaries. Call the Neighborhood Services Department to see if your boundaries include any existing neighborhood associations: you may want to merge groups or work as partners on common problems.

Once you have set the boundaries, establish a list of residents and property owners. This list will help you get other neighbors involved in your association and its activities. You may need to go door to door to create this list; you may also get information by calling the city's Property Records Section at (602) 262-6878.



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3. Identify problems and develop a neighborhood plan

A neighborhood plan will help your association make decisions and take action. First, conduct a neighborhood inventory. An inventory is a collection of facts about the neighborhood including information on residents, types of housing, area businesses, churches and schools. You can get information from the U.S. Census Bureau, at the library, and from the city of Phoenix Planning Department.

After you have gathered information by conducting a neighborhood inventory, identify a few neighborhood problems, concerns or desires. Problems can be identified by hosting a meeting where neighbors can share concerns. Problems and concerns typically addressed by neighborhood associations may include crime, physical improvements, traffic and street lights, preserving unique features of the neighborhood, zoning or a desire for residents to get to know each other better.

The plan should include:

- the reasons the association was formed
- principles that will guide the association's actions
- when members will meet
- how meetings will be conducted
- the goals of the association
- an action plan for accomplishing the goals.

4. Establish committees

Neighborhood associations work best when the work is divided among members who sit on committees. The core group should define the goals and objectives of the committees and decide the rules members will follow. The goals of the association will help determine what kind and how many committees to create.

Examples of committees	Possible duties
Bylaws Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine how the association will conduct meetings and votes. • Make decisions to resolve disagreements among members about procedures.
Crime Reduction Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with the Police Department to educate residents about crime prevention. • Helps organize Block Watch programs.
Finance Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep track of the association budget. • Conduct fundraising for the association.
Neighborhood Development Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Works with the city and nonprofit organizations on programs to encourage business development in the neighborhood.
Neighborhood Improvement Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizes neighborhood clean-ups. • Works with the city on ordinance enforcement. • Organizes tree plantings and landscaping projects.
Publicity Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform people in the neighborhood of events and share information. • Inform and remind members of meeting dates and locations, and provide transportation to those who may need it.

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Woodward Park Neighborhood Action Plan	
Problem	Rising burglary rate
Committee and goal	Crime Prevention Committee. Goal: reduce burglary rate and overall crime.
Resources and strategies	<p>Resources: Police Department, Neighborhood Services Department</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Form Block Watch groups for every block. Have them operating within three months. 2. Have at least two residents from each block attend Police Department Block Watch training. 3. Check with Neighborhood Services Department about possible grant for street lighting.
Problem	Need to reduce blight and graffiti
Committee and goal	Neighborhood Beautification Committee. Goal: improve appearance of neighborhood properties and public areas.
Resources and strategies	<p>Resources: Graffiti Busters, city's tool lending program, Neighborhood Preservation Ordinance, families willing to help with clean up.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Get a group to receive Graffiti Busters paint-sprayer training. 2. Hold a neighborhood clean-up within next six months. 3. Identify problem properties and talk to the owners.
Problem	Traffic problems on Melrose Street
Committee and goal	Traffic Committee. Goal: make Melrose Street safer.
Resources and strategies	<p>Resources: City Street Transportation Department, area businesses.</p> <p>Strategies:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Discuss whether speed humps would be a good idea. 2. Check with city about possibility of moving crosswalk. 3. See whether the owners of The Book Rack and Coffee Island would be willing to close one of their parking lot entrances.

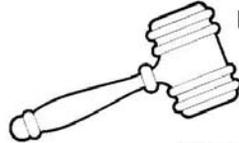
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How to hold meetings

Plan the meeting

People will be more likely to attend meetings if they are organized, brief and useful, and in a convenient location. Set the time, date and location by consulting with the core group of members. Plan the meeting to last no longer than one hour.

Pick a place that is centrally located and familiar to your neighbors such as a home, school, church or public building, then remind them of the time and date by phone, letter or flier. Before the meeting begins, arrange the tables and chairs and place any handouts near the entrance of the room. Be sure to test any equipment such as projectors or computers before the meeting starts.



Parliamentary procedures

Parliamentary procedures are rules for conducting meetings. Small groups may choose to operate informally and not use them. Large groups will find them very helpful, though; they are used to maintain order, ensure equal treatment for everyone, and accomplish business efficiently.

Officers

To use parliamentary procedures, the group will need at least a few elected officers. They are:

- Chair** The chair is the presiding officer at the meeting. Meetings are controlled by the chair. It is the responsibility of the chair to use parliamentary procedures, treat everyone fairly, keep the meeting moving and ensure that all items on the agenda are addressed. Anyone who wishes to speak at a meeting must be recognized by the chair. To get the chair's attention, a member raises a hand and says "Mr. or Madam Chair."
- Vice Chair** Serves as alternate to the president in presiding at meetings. Also serves on the association executive committee.
- Treasurer** The treasurer handles finances, keeps financial records and prepares budget and financial reports. The treasurer also maintains the tax exempt number and coordinates tax statement preparation for 501(c)(3) organizations.
- Secretary** The secretary is responsible for keeping clear and accurate records of meetings, including the minutes of the meeting. The secretary also maintains the roster of members, stores a copy of the neighborhood plan and bylaws and handles correspondence.

Here are some terms and actions that are part of parliamentary procedures:

Motion. A motion is a proposal that meeting participants take an action or consider a subject. Only one motion may be considered or acted upon at a time. To make a motion, say "I move that ..."

Seconding a motion. Seconding a motion means that someone other than the person who made the motion wants the whole group to consider it. The person who seconds a motion does not have to support the motion; they just want the group to consider it.

Stating the motion. After a motion is made and seconded, the chair formally places it before the group by saying, "It is moved and seconded that _____. Is there any discussion?" When debate stops the chair repeats the motion and takes the vote. After the vote, the chair states the result of the vote.

Withdrawing a motion. Before a motion has been stated by the chair, it can be withdrawn or modified by the member.

Motion to reconsider. Unwise action can be corrected through the motion to reconsider that is made by someone who voted on the winning side.

Voice vote. The chair says, "All those in favor say 'yes' (pause for vote). Those opposed say 'no'."

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Majority vote. Means the side with the most votes wins. The count is based on the members who are present at the meeting and participating in the vote.

Tie vote. When there are an equal number of votes on both sides, the motion is defeated.

The agenda

All meetings should have an agenda. The agenda lists what will happen at the meeting, including committee reports and any business that needs to be discussed. Here is a typical agenda:

1. Call to order

The chair calls the meeting to order and makes brief opening remarks.

2. Reading/approval of the minutes

The secretary keeps minutes of all the meetings. The secretary reads the minutes of the last meeting and asks, "Are there any corrections to the minutes?" No motion is needed for approval of minutes.

3. Reports of officers

The treasurer and other officers deliver association business reports. No motion is needed for adoption of the treasurer's report unless it is audited. After each of the reports, the chair asks, "Are there any questions or observations?" If not, the reports are filed.

4. Reports of committees

Committee chairs give their reports. No motion is needed for adoption of committee reports unless recommendations for association action are made. After reports, the chair asks, "Are there any questions or discussion in regard to this committee report? If not, the report will be filed." Appreciation may be expressed to the committee.

5. Committee recommendations for action

Motions are usually made by the chair and seconded by a committee member. Each motion is discussed and disposed of before another motion may be proposed. The chair states, "The committee recommends that the association (take a particular action). Is there any discussion?" One way to keep a meeting moving forward is to limit the amount of time that can be spent on debate to five or 10 minutes.

6. Unfinished and new business

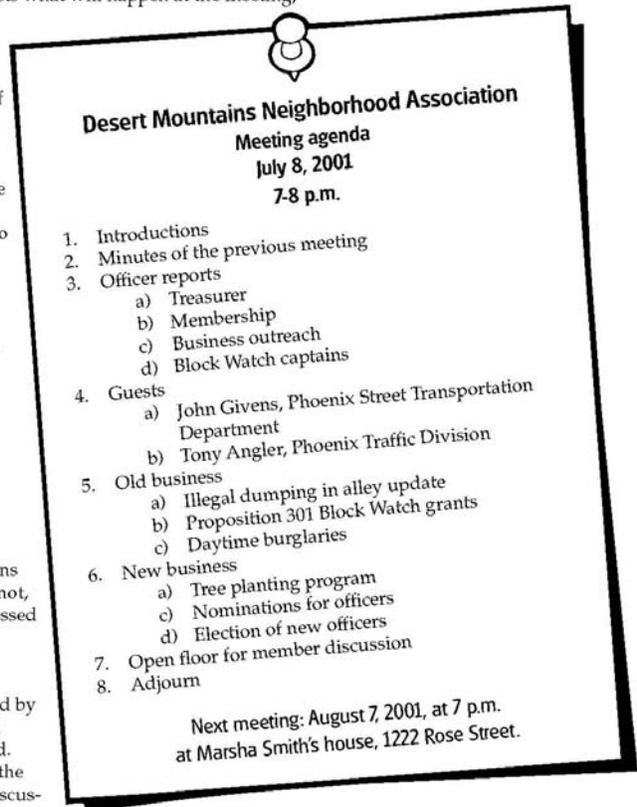
Unfinished business from the last meeting is brought to the floor for action. The chair asks, "Is there any unfinished business?" After discussion and action, the chair asks, "Is there any new business to discuss?"

7. Announcements

Persons making announcements should be seated up front. The chair asks "Are there any announcements?"

8. Adjournment

The chair automatically adjourns a meeting unless there is any business that cannot be finished at that meeting. Then a motion for adjournment must be made and seconded. The chair says, "If there is no further business, the meeting will stand adjourned."



2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*



Desert Mountain Neighborhood Association Minutes for July 8, 2001

REPORTS

Treasurer: We added \$35 to our account, bringing our total to \$324.23. No expenses were recorded. **Membership:** Tim Lewis announced that 21 welcome wagon packets were delivered in June to new residents. **Business:** The Encanto Village Planning Committee has established an alliance between residents and businesses in our area. A major grocery store chain will be locating in the old shopping mall; the developer has expressed an interest in working with the neighborhood to address our concerns. **Housing/maintenance:** Lisa Smith announced that the Housing Committee helped three elderly homeowners clean up their yards over the weekend. Another three homes will be done in August; please see Lisa if you can help. **Block Watch:** All has been quiet this summer. The Block Watch meetings are held every third Monday of the month.

GUESTS

John Givens of the Phoenix Street Transportation Department told us how to apply for street lights. The cost of each light is \$550. Members voted to table the issue until more money can be raised. Tony Angler of the Phoenix Traffic Division talked to us about cut-through traffic and some good ways to address it. Most members said they didn't like the idea of speed humps. Most liked the ideas of putting no left turn signs. Mr. Angler is willing to work with our neighborhood association to find a solution.

OLD BUSINESS: An arrest has been made for illegal dumping in the alley. The police say there has been a big decrease in illegal dumping since the arrest and said it was a Block Watch member who made the call that led to the arrest. Two Block Watch grants were submitted for areas within our boundaries thanks to the Block Watch Captains who helped collect information and write the applications. Next year all Block Watches should submit an application. Daytime burglaries continue to be a problem and you are reminded to make sure your doors and windows are locked when you leave for work.

NEW BUSINESS: Everyone is invited to come to the park for the GAIN event in October, 7 p.m., for free hot dogs and soda and to meet your neighbors. The Phoenix Urban Forestry program has given us 50 trees and a planting weekend has been set August 11th. Please volunteer to help plant these beautiful trees!

Nominations for 2002/2003 officers were as follows: President - Ran Vegas and Beatty White; Vice President - Zachariah Abraham, Trey Kies and Samantha Sooner; Treasurer - Bob Smillie; and Secretary - Terry Ruggels, Kevin Kilgore, and George Age. Elections followed the nominations and the new officers are:

President: Beauty White
Vice President: Trey Kiel
Treasurer: Bob Smile
Secretary: George Age

Next meeting is scheduled for August 7, 2001, at 7 p.m.

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

Publicity

Communication is very important to the success of your association. Sharing information is a great way to build a sense of community in your neighborhood, get new people to join your association, and enlist support for your events and programs.

Here are some ways to get the word out:

-  Publish a neighborhood association newsletter 4-12 times a year. Team-up with a nearby association to share the cost and work.
-  Announce your meetings and events in weekly area newspapers, and in schools, church and club newsletters.
-  Distribute fliers door to door.
-  Distribute a neighborhood survey (and the results) by mail, phone or door to door.
-  Ask permission to place notices, posters or fliers in laundromats, libraries, supermarkets, restaurants, local businesses, and waiting rooms in nearby dentist and doctor's offices.
-  Offer to be a speaker to business groups, service clubs, schools and churches.
-  Send letters.
-  Set up a telephone tree.



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Finances

Does every neighborhood association need a treasurer's report and a bank account? It depends on how active the association is, what its goals are, and how much money—if any—it collects. Every association that collects or distributes money should have a treasurer's report. Whether you need a bank account depends on how much money is involved.

Report for the Month of May 2000												
Date	Activity Description	Check #	Receipts		Cash Flow		Expenditures					
			Donations/ Fundraising	Received	Paid Out	Balance	Office Supplies	Printing	Crime Prevention	Clean-Up	Publicity	Misc.
5/1/00	Beginning Balance					\$1,347.86						
4/5/00	Sally Smith locker keys	1022			\$5.10	\$1,342.76						\$5.10
4/5/00	Bob Hoyt (donuts for meeting)	1023			\$10.03	\$1,332.73					\$10.03	
4/5/00	Terry Carr (binoculars)	1024			\$20.00	\$1,312.73					\$13.63	
	Voided Check	1025			\$0.00	1,312.73						
4/5/00	Chery Carr - newsletter copies	1026			\$231.05	\$1,081.68		\$111.38			\$119.67	
4/15/00	Store-It locker rental 1 mo. \$10.00 + onetime fee \$20.83	1027			\$30.83	\$1,050.85						\$30.83
4/20/00	Chery Carr - April newsletter copies	1028			\$246.33	\$804.52		\$246.33				
4/20/00	Deposit: newsletter ad sales		\$305.00	\$305.00		\$1,109.52						
4/24/00	Store-It locker rental	1029			\$10.00	\$1,099.52						
5/31/00	Apr bank maintenance fee				\$10.00	\$1,089.52						\$10.00
			\$305.00					\$357.71			\$263.33	\$45.99
5/31/00	Ending Balance					\$1,089.52						

Bank accounts

Beginning associations probably do not need a bank account. Intermediate associations with stable or growing membership and bigger goals may benefit from having a personal or corporate checking or savings account. Advanced neighborhood associations may benefit from a bank account and may want to file for 501(c)(3) status as a charitable organization.

Personal account or corporate account?

An association can open a bank account with a member's personal Social Security number, or with a tax identification number obtained from the IRS. If the association uses a member's Social Security number, the person whose number is used is liable for paying taxes on the interest income reported by the bank to the IRS. Also, if there is ever a lien against the account holder's assets, the money in the account can be assessed.

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Types of accounts

All bank accounts open to individuals are also open to neighborhood associations. Banks usually charge lower fees on checking accounts that maintain a minimum balance, so checking accounts are good for associations that need to make frequent, but not large, withdrawals to pay for expenses. Savings accounts are good for associations that don't need to make withdrawals very often; some also have limited check-writing privileges. Banks may waive service charges to organizations that provide a necessary public service.

Opening an account

To open an account with an organization tax identification number, bring a copy of your association bylaws or the minutes of a meeting. Also bring the names and titles of the members who will be authorized to conduct business for the organization. Personal identification, such as a driver's license, credit cards or a passport, is required to open any type of account. Signature cards must be signed by any member who will be signing on the account.

Associations that register as a charitable organization must provide a copy of the Articles of Incorporation stamped "Filed" by the Arizona Corporation Commission. You will also need the signature of an officer of the corporation or the designated director.

After you have provided the bank with documentation, the bank will provide a card with wording for a resolution to authorize the bank account. The resolution must be adopted by members of the neighborhood association or—in the case of a 501(c)(3)—the board of the charitable organization.



501(c)(3) Status

Benefits and disadvantages

Larger, well-organized groups may want to apply for status as a charitable organization, also known as a 501(c)(3).

Benefits

-  Qualify for grants from government agencies.
-  Qualify for grants from private foundations.
-  Provide tax deductions for your donors' gifts.
-  Receive tax exemptions from federal, state, local, income, property, sales and excise taxes.
-  Provide legal protections for the association's directors and officers.

Disadvantages

-  Must keep detailed financial records.
-  Required to prepare and file an annual report or other periodic report with the state.
-  Must make financial records available to organizations or individuals that contribute funds to the association.
-  Association must not engage in political activities such as campaigning, lobbying, or support of specific candidates for office.

Contact the Arizona Secretary of State and ask for the required materials and supplies for nonprofit incorporation. To apply for recognition by the IRS of exempt status as a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, use IRS Package 1023, Application for Recognition of Exemption. The application must be complete and accompanied by the appropriate user



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fee. The organization should also request an employer identification number using Form SS-4, Application for Employer Identification Number, even if the organization does not have any employees.



Leadership: Finding and maintaining it

Part of the job of a neighborhood organizer is to identify and develop neighborhood leaders. People in leadership positions are responsible for coordinating the activities of a group, including activities designed to help the group achieve its goals and those to help members stay together and feel good about working together.

It is important for leaders to involve all group members in the decision-making process and to be sure everyone is heard before the group votes on an action or makes a decision. The qualities of good leaders include flexibility, the desire to listen and consider the opinions of others, the ability to clearly state goals and expectations, and a willingness to acknowledge the contributions and achievements of other people.

The task of recruiting and developing leaders should be an ongoing activity for all members of the neighborhood association. Sometimes leaders are reluctant to share authority or delegate responsibility, but that hurts the group in the long run: eventually these leaders may burn out and no one will be available to replace them. Part of being a good leader is helping others to grow into leadership roles as well.

Develop leaders	Avoid leader burnout
Search for many potential leaders, not just one or two.	Delegate responsibility: match members' personal needs with the needs of the group.
Encourage people to switch tasks and discover their strengths.	Break big jobs into small parts and assign to different people.
Remind members to be open to change: bring in new members and leaders.	Encourage teenagers to get involved in association activities.
Encourage people to communicate in a positive and productive manner.	Focus on goals and achievements, not personalities.



When members disagree

Neighborhood associations, like any group of people, can run into problems with personality conflicts, burnout and leadership issues. When problems occur, encourage open and respectful discussion among association members. One way to avoid conflict is for association leaders to invest time in consensus building before key votes are taken.

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Consensus building

Consensus building is a process in which groups of people who disagree are encouraged to share information and negotiate to reach the goals of the association. Each member of the group should be asked for their opinion and each should be willing to accept less than everything they want in order to help the group move toward its goal. A majority vote does not represent a consensus. Instead, the most acceptable alternative for all members should be offered and explained; this approach requires members to be flexible and willing to accept less than everything they might want.



Managing conflict

Some people try to avoid dealing with conflict because it makes them uncomfortable—and some people try to approach conflict as if they were in a battle, determined to win. But it's best to address conflict immediately so it won't damage personal relationships or the association, and many disagreements can be resolved with negotiation. Disagreements among association members can be an opportunity for growth, change and new understanding.

Tips for handling conflict

-  Talk directly to one another, face to face. Direct conversation is more effective than sending a letter or complaining to someone else.
-  Choose the right time to talk. Find a neutral place where you can both talk undisturbed for as long as it takes. Approach the other person and ask if you can set a convenient time to talk.
-  Think about what you want to say ahead of time. State the problem, how it makes you feel, and offer a solution. Don't blame or interpret others' behaviors.
-  Don't blame or call names. If you make the other person angry, they are less likely to be calm with you.
-  Listen to the other person. Give them a chance to tell their side of the story completely. Although you may not agree with what is being said, show that you are listening by saying that you hear what they are saying and are glad that you are discussing the problem together.
-  Negotiate a solution. Ask "What can we do to improve the situation for both of us?" or "What can we do to resolve our differences?"
-  Check back with each other. Ask the other person, "Is this working for you?"

People who cannot resolve serious disagreements on their own may want help from a trained mediator. A mediator is a neutral person who will help neighbors in conflict create their own solution to the problem. For help finding a mediator call the Neighborhood Services Department at (602) 262-3738 and ask to speak to the Neighborhood Specialist assigned to your city council district.

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Esta información está disponible en español.


City of Phoenix
Neighborhood Services Department
200 W. Washington St., 4th Floor
Phoenix, Arizona 85003
(602) 262-7344

To receive this information in
alternative print/audio formats, contact
the Neighborhood Services Department
ADA Liaison.
Voice number (602) 495-5459.
TTY (602) 495-0685

2001

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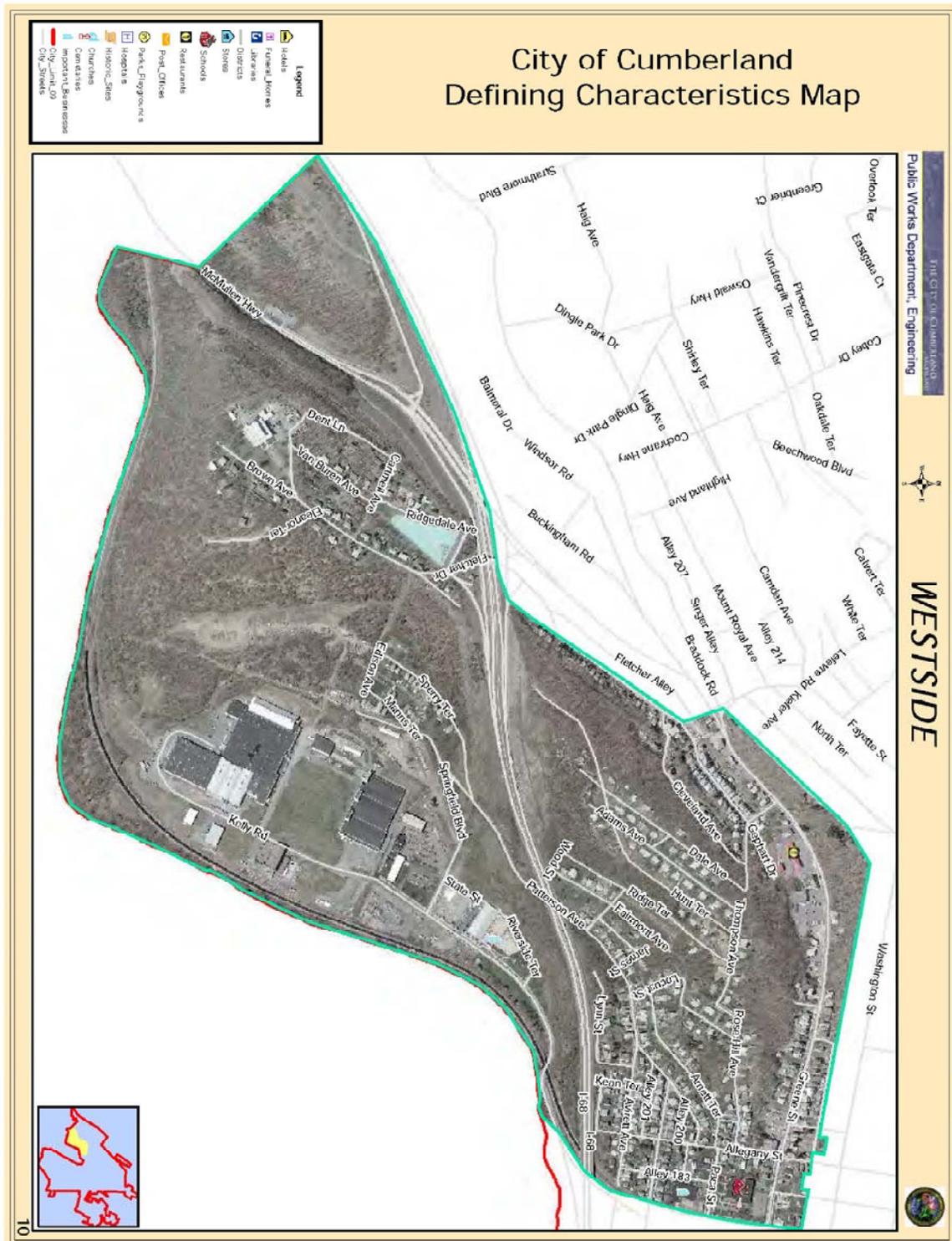
Appendix E

Defining Characteristics Maps for each Neighborhood

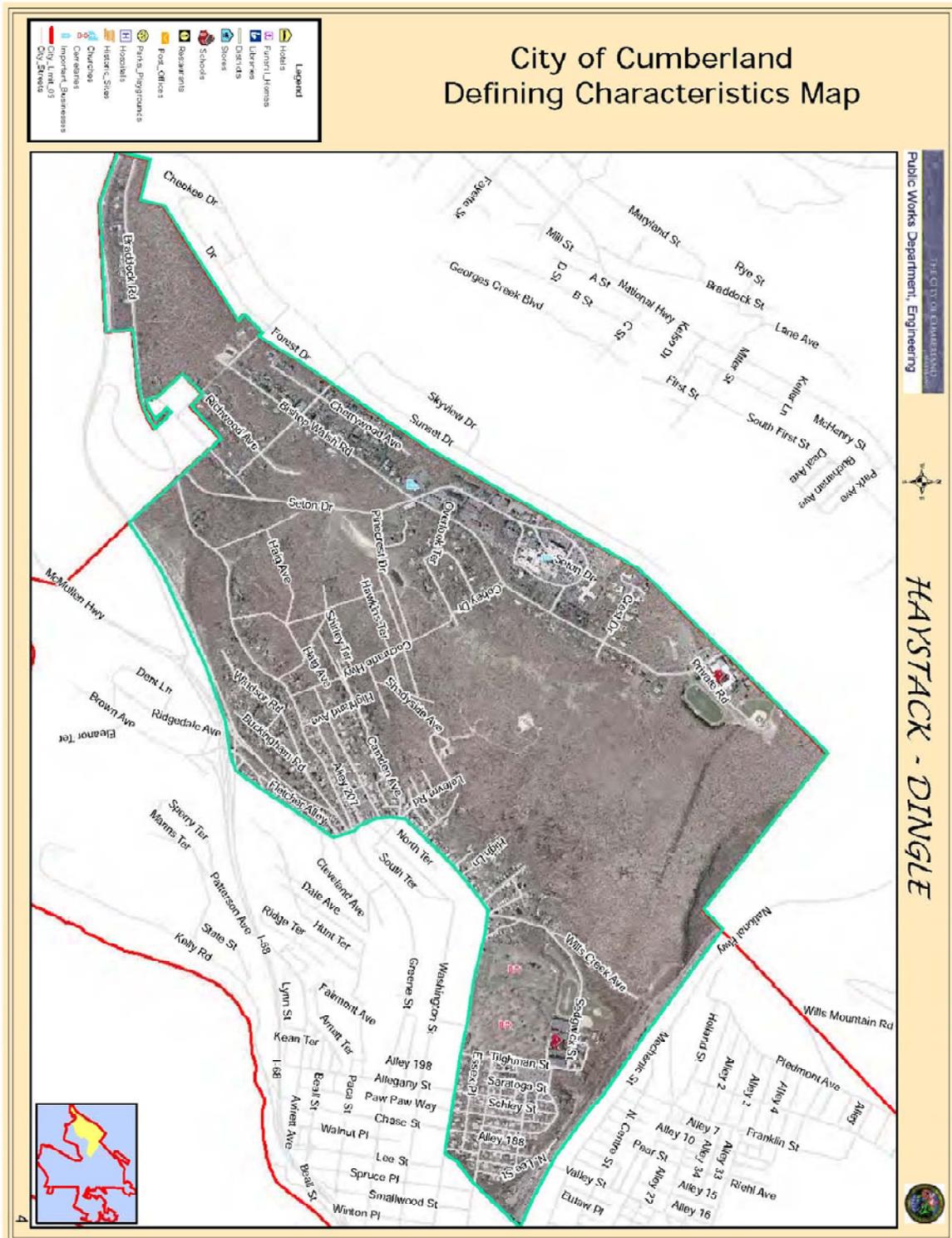
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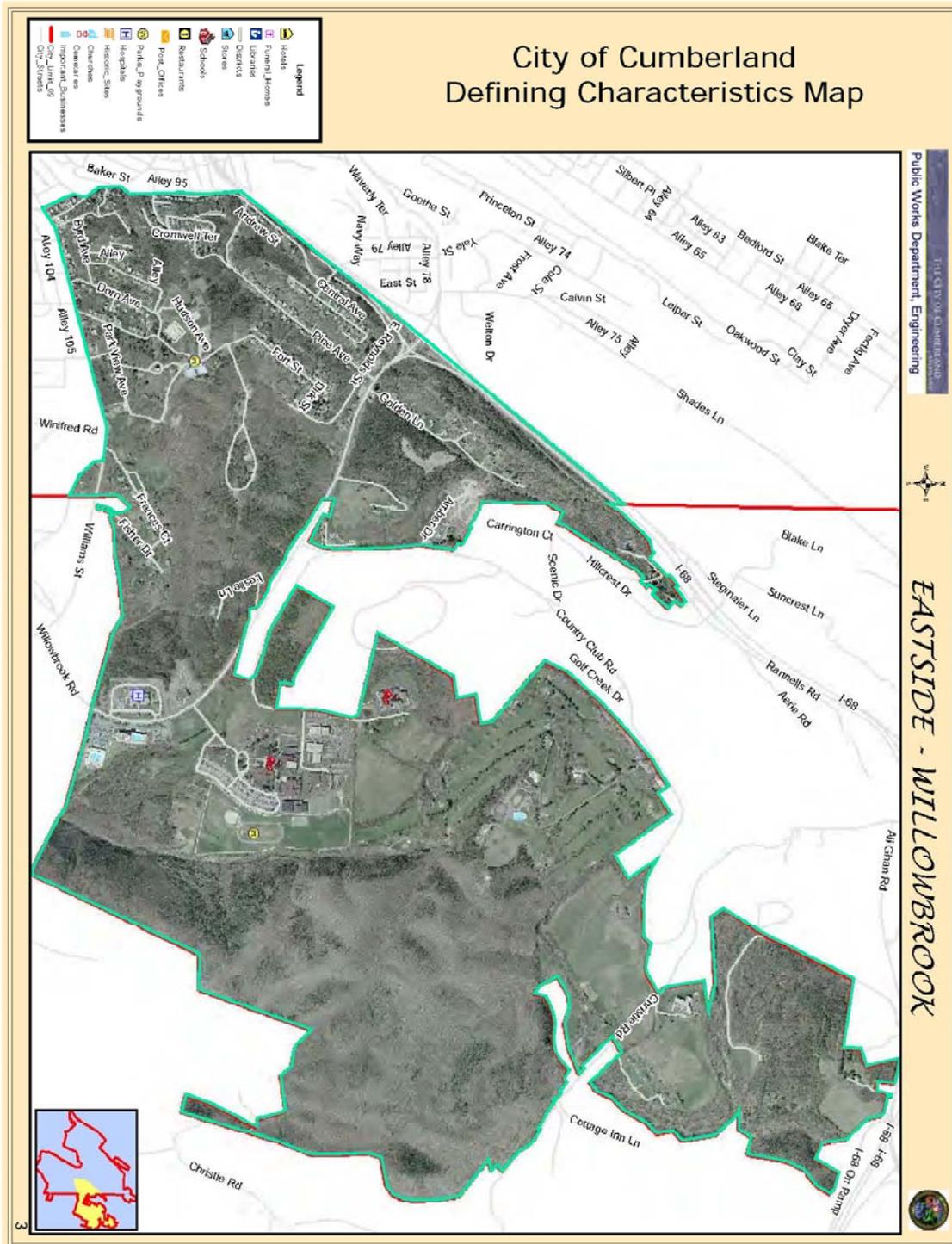
2013 Comprehensive Plan: Neighborhood Element



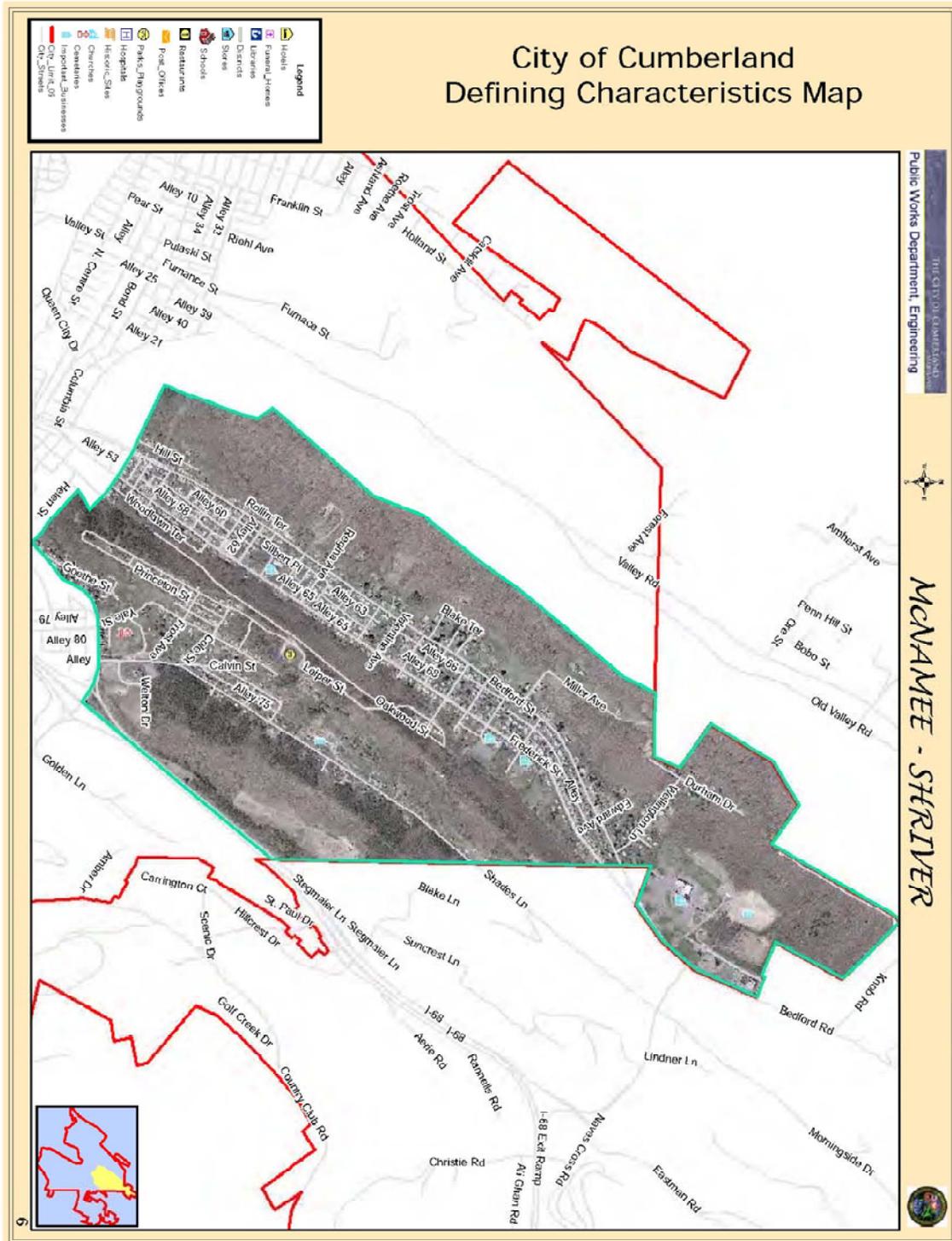
2013 Comprehensive Plan: Neighborhood Element



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Appendix F

Adoption Resolutions

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

City of Cumberland

- Maryland -

RESOLUTION

A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF CUMBERLAND PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION TO RECOMMEND THAT THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL ADOPT THE DECEMBER 2011 NEIGHBORHOOD ELEMENT OF THE CITY OF CUMBERLAND'S 2013 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 66B, REVISED, ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND.

- WHEREAS, Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland authorizes and empowers municipalities to make, adopt and amend comprehensive plans for the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development; and
- WHEREAS, Section 3.07 (a) of Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland authorizes and empowers Planning Commissions to adopt a Comprehensive Plan as a whole or in successive parts; and
- WHEREAS, The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Cumberland, Maryland, is a policy guide to govern future physical development within the City of Cumberland; and
- WHEREAS, City staff has prepared and recommended a neighborhood element as the first of two volumes that will collectively comprise the 2013 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Cumberland, the said neighborhood element being set forth in the document titled "2013 Comprehensive Plan: Forging Our Heritage Into Prosperity, Neighborhood Element, Volume 1 of 2, December 2011", an attested copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit 1, the said document hereinafter being referred to as the "Neighborhood Element"; and
- WHEREAS, The said Neighborhood Element was submitted to the Maryland Department of Planning, all adjoining jurisdictions and all affected State agencies for formal review and comment at least 60 days prior to the formal public hearing before the Planning Commission, said submission having been effected through the Statewide Clearinghouse Process in compliance with Article 66b, Section 3.07 (c) of the Annotated Code of Maryland; and
- Whereas, The purpose of the Neighborhood Element is to provide input to the subsequent City-Wide Element regarding important neighborhood issues and needs that should be addressed by the Comprehensive Plan; and

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

WHEREAS, The City of Cumberland Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing on September 12, 2011 regarding the proposed Neighborhood Element; and

WHEREAS, The Planning Commission has carefully considered the Neighborhood Element and find that it constitutes a suitable component to the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Cumberland and that it will promote, in accordance with present and future needs: the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and the general welfare of the City of Cumberland as well as efficiency and economy in the development process.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by a majority vote of the City of Cumberland Planning and Zoning Commission as follows:

1. The Planning Commission finds, based on public input received to date and in light of the fact that no requests for changes have been made by the Maryland Department of Planning, adjoining planning jurisdictions or affected State agencies, that no additional changes or additions to the Neighborhood Element are warranted at this time; and
2. The Planning Commission approves the Neighborhood Element and recommends that the Mayor and City Council adopt it and all text, maps, and descriptive matter contained therein, annexed thereto and/or made a part thereof as the first volume of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan; and
3. This Resolution and the aforementioned Neighborhood Element are certified to the Mayor and City Council of Cumberland, Maryland as required by law; and
4. The Chairman of the Planning Commission is authorized to execute this Resolution on behalf of the Planning Commission; and
4. This Resolution shall take effect on the date of its passage.

GIVEN UNDER OUR HANDS AND SEALS THIS 17th DAY OF October,
IN THE YEAR 2011, DULY ATTESTED BY THE SECRETARY OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION.

Attest:


Robert Baldwin
Secretary



Thomas W. Farrell
Chairman

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

City of Cumberland

- Maryland -

RESOLUTION

NO. R2012 -01

**A RESOLUTION OF THE MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL OF CUMBERLAND TO ADOPT THE
DECEMBER 2011 NEIGHBORHOOD ELEMENT OF THE CITY OF CUMBERLAND'S 2013
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF ARTICLE 66B, REVISED,
ANNOTATED CODE OF MARYLAND.**

WHEREAS, Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland authorizes and empowers municipalities to make, adopt and amend comprehensive plans for the general purpose of guiding and accomplishing coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development; and

WHEREAS, The Comprehensive Plan for the City of Cumberland, Maryland, is a policy guide to govern future physical development within the City of Cumberland; and

WHEREAS, City staff has prepared and recommended a neighborhood element as the first of two volumes that will collectively comprise the 2013 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Cumberland, the said neighborhood element being set forth in the document titled "2013 Comprehensive Plan: Forging Our Heritage Into Prosperity, Neighborhood Element, Volume 1 of 2, December 2011", an attested copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit 1, the said document hereinafter being referred to as the "Neighborhood Element"; and

WHEREAS, The said Neighborhood Element was submitted to the Maryland Department of Planning, all adjoining jurisdictions and all affected State agencies for formal review and comment at least 60 days prior to the formal public hearing before the Planning Commission, said submission having been effected through the Statewide Clearinghouse Process in compliance with Article 66b, Section 3.07 (c) of the Annotated Code of Maryland; and

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2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

Whereas, The purpose of the Neighborhood Element is to provide input to the subsequent City-Wide Element regarding important neighborhood issues and needs that should be addressed by the Comprehensive Plan; and

WHEREAS, Section 3.07 (a) of Article 66B of the Annotated Code of Maryland authorizes and empowers planning commissions to recommend the adoption of comprehensive plans as a whole or in successive parts as well as recommending any amendments to those plans;

WHEREAS, The City of Cumberland Planning and Zoning Commission held a public hearing on September 12, 2011 regarding the proposed Neighborhood Element; and

WHEREAS, The Planning Commission carefully considered the Neighborhood Element and found that it constitutes a suitable component to the Comprehensive Plan of the City of Cumberland and that it will promote, in accordance with present and future needs: the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity, and the general welfare of the City of Cumberland as well as efficiency and economy in the development process; and

WHEREAS, Consistent with its findings, the Planning Commission passed a Resolution dated October 17, 2011, recommending that the Mayor and City Council adopt the Neighborhood Element; and

WHEREAS, The Mayor and City Council of Cumberland carefully considered the Neighborhood Element and made the same findings the Planning Commission did.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Mayor and City Council of Cumberland as follows:

1. The Neighborhood Element together with all text maps and descriptive matter contained therein, annexed thereto and/or made a part thereof; be and is hereby adopted as a part of the 2013 Comprehensive Plan for the City of Cumberland; and

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

2. That this Resolution shall be certified to the Maryland State Agencies (including, the Maryland Department of Planning and the Clerk of the Circuit Court for Allegany County, Maryland) as required by law; and
3. This Resolution shall take effect on the date of its passage.

GIVEN UNDER OUR HANDS AND SEALS THIS 14th DAY OF February,
IN THE YEAR 2012 WITH THE CORPORATE SEAL OF THE CITY OF CUMBERLAND HERETO
ATTACHED, DULY ATTESTED BY THE CITY CLERK.

ATTEST:


Marjorie A. Eirich
City Clerk


Brian K. Grim
Mayor



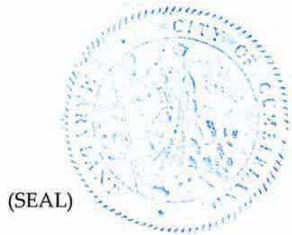
Introduction: December 20, 2011
Public Hearing: January 17, 2012
Enactment: February 14, 2012
Effective Date: February 14, 2012

2013 Comprehensive Plan: *Neighborhood Element*

Certified True Copy

I hereby certify that the attached is a true copy of the December 2011 Neighborhood Element of the City of Cumberland's 2013 Comprehensive Plan approved by the Mayor and City Council of Cumberland during their public meeting held February 14, 2012.

Witness my hand as City Clerk with the Seal of the City of Cumberland hereto affixed this 27th day of February, 2012.



Marjorie A. Eirich, City Clerk

The image shows a handwritten signature in blue ink, which appears to read "Marjorie A. Eirich". The signature is written over a horizontal line.