



MAY 19, 2025

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT UPDATES FOR PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDED DOCUMENT

2040 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND | DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING  
AND ZONING

WASHINGTON COUNTY, MARYLAND



## SUMMARY

This summary outlines the key changes made by the Planning Commission in response to comments received as part of their public hearing held on January 13, 2025. The changes reflect updates, clarifications, and shifts in focus to align with strategic goals outlined for each topic while incorporating stakeholder, public and Planning Commission comments.

## OVERALL PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

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### AGENCY/STAKEHOLDER COMMENTS RECEIVED

There was a total of approximately 40 comments received. Addressing these comments resulted in approximately 4 text changes, 1 map update, and 4 table/chart/data updates. The changes made to address public comment only affected the Land Use Element (Chapter 14). Agencies that commented include:

- City of Hagerstown
- Hagerstown/Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Greater Hagerstown Committee
- Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area Board
- National Park Service (Antietam National Battlefield, C&O Canal National Historic Park, Harpers Ferry National Historic Park, Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail, and Appalachian National Scenic Trail)
- Town of Sharpsburg
- Washington County Historical Trust

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### CITIZEN COMMENTS

There was a total of 24 comments received in written format via mail or email. These comments do not include specific land use map change requests. The topics covered by these comments include:

- Objections to the removal of the Preservation Policy Area in rural areas.
- General support of historic and cultural preservation initiatives.
- Objections to reduction of Urban Growth Area
- Objection to decreasing areas shown on the current land use plan as Industrial Flex.
- Objection to include stream buffers as areas to be designated as Environmental Conservation policy areas.
- Desire to see more efforts toward public transportation in rural areas.
- Consideration of adding more information related to solar facilities and their benefits.
- Support of the Civil War Rail Trail being included in the Plan.

There were 5 individual land use map change requests received. Each were discussed separately by the Planning Commission in Workshops. Results of these workshops discussions are reflected in the future land use map and workshop minutes are available on the Planning Commission webpage.

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT UPDATES FOR PLANNING COMMISSION  
RECOMMENDED DOCUMENT**

Property Owner	Address of Property	Policy Area in Public Hearing Draft	Requested Land Use Policy Area	Planning Commission Recommendation
<b>2008 Lappans LLC</b>	SW corner of Sharpsburg Pike and Lappans Road	Agriculture (AG)& Environmental Conservation (EC)	Rural Village (RV)	<u>Ag Rural &amp; Environmental Conservation</u> Rural Villages are not intended to grow. The Land Use Article specifically states that development should be limited to infill development in accordance with the defined boundaries. Expansion of these areas creates additional sprawl in areas where there are not public facilities to adequately support new development.
<b>Britner Family Farms LLC</b>	Southside of Sterling Road (multiple parcels)	Agriculture (moved out of UGA)	Medium Density Residential (leave in UGA)	<u>Low Density Residential (leave in UGA)</u> The property owner presented information to support the request. Low density residential is a more appropriate designation due to its location on the border of the growth area moving into the rural area. Low density provides a better transition to the rural area.
<b>Downsville Pike LLC</b>	NW corner of Halfway Blvd. & Downsville Pike	Medium Density Residential	Commercial	<u>Medium Density Residential</u> This parcel has been the subject of multiple rezoning requests. The location adjacent to existing residential development as well as limited and challenging access to roadways is not conducive to commercial development.
<b>Clyde Ebersole</b>	16438 Kendle Road	Low Density Residential	Agriculture (move out of UGA)	<u>Agriculture (Move out of UGA)</u> Owner requested to be taken out of the growth area so they were eligible for land preservation programs. One of the goals of the plan is to reduce the growth area for more manageable infrastructure expansion.
<b>Fast Gas Company</b>	16514 Virginia Ave.	Medium Density Residential	Commercial	<u>Commercial</u> Owner seeks to do a modest expansion of an existing business. Proximity to the interstate and the existence of a long-standing business supports this request.

*The changes highlighted in this document are meant to provide general guidance on changes made by the Planning Commission in response to comments received as part of the public hearing. They are not inclusive to all plan updates. Staff recommends that interested parties read the final draft section of interest and provide comment accordingly.*

## 14 – GROWTH MANAGEMENT AND LAND USE

### PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY

The following stakeholders and agencies were involved in commenting on this chapter resulting in updates:

- Hagerstown/Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau
- Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area Board
- National Park Service
- Washington County Historical Trust
- Numerous citizens

Comments received from the stakeholders above focused on the removal of the Preservation Land Use Policy Area. There was considerable objection to the removal of the policy area.

### STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENTS

- Preservation was added back in as Land Use Policy Area.

### CONTENT UPDATES

- Language was updated to reflect the addition of the Preservation Policy Area back into the Land Use Plan.

### POLICY REFINEMENTS

None

### VISUAL ADDITIONS AND UPDATES

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#### MAPS

- 14-6 Future land Use map has been updated to reflect changes related to growth area boundaries and individual request for changes to land use policy areas.

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#### TABLES

- 14-8 Residential Capacity Analysis of Proposed 2024 Land Use Plan by Growth Area – changes made to reflect adjustment to growth areas and land use policy areas by the Planning Commission in response to public comment.
- 14-10 Residential Capacity Analysis – Rural Areas – Proposed 2024 Land Use Plan – changes made to reflect the inclusion of Preservation as a policy area by the Planning Commission in response to public comment.
- 14-11 Comparison of Existing vs. Proposed Growth Areas – changes reflect adjustments made to the UGA boundary

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF DOCUMENT UPDATES FOR PLANNING COMMISSION RECOMMENDED DOCUMENT

- 14-12 Removed – redundant information contained within 14-11
- 14-3 Area per Land Use Policy Area relabeled at 14-12 and figures updated to show land use policy areas as a result of adding Preservation as a policy area.

### RECOMMENDATION UPDATES

- Recommendation to remove the Preservation Land Use Policy Area

### TECHNICAL CORRECTIONS

- Fixed typographical errors and inconsistencies in formatting from previous draft.