

the capacity of the Little Patuxent plant, all increases in treatment capacities depend on receiving State discharge permits. A moratorium on sewer allocations could be imposed if plant expansions are delayed or limited.

The ultimate planned expansion for the Little Patuxent Water Reclamation Plant will accommodate the flows from planned future growth in the Little Patuxent sewershed, provided growth phasing is consistent with plant expansion. Planned future growth in the Patapsco sewershed will be accommodated by the County's increased share of the capacity of Baltimore City's plant, once it is expanded in 2005.

The Water Service System

The water for the County's public water supply system is purchased from Baltimore City and from WSSC through a series of negotiated legal agreements (Map 4-6). More than 95% of the County's public water supply is provided through the Baltimore City Central System. In addition to supplying water to Baltimore City and Howard County, the Central System also provides water to Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll and Harford Counties. The Central System's water sources include Loch Raven, Prettyboy and Liberty Reservoirs and the Susquehanna River.

Less than 5% of the County's public water is provided by WSSC. In addition to supplying water to the County, WSSC also provides water to Montgomery and Prince George's Counties. Water sources for WSSC are the Patuxent River reservoirs and the Potomac River. The water from WSSC is normally used in the County's water pressure zone located east of I-95 between Laurel and Jessup. In an emergency, the County system can pump water from WSSC to other areas of the County.

Howard County's water system is currently divided into six pressure zones. An additional seventh water pressure zone is planned in the southern portion of the County for the Hammond Branch Extended area. This area is located west of US 29 between MD 216 and Johns Hopkins Road.

Future water supply needs will place major capital improvement requirements on Howard County. The Baltimore Central System will require major new facilities to provide for the future water needs of Howard

County. The County does not plan to seek additional capacity from the WSSC supply system because this water is more costly than the water from the Baltimore Central System.

The supply of water is not expected to be a constraint on projected growth and development through the year 2020. Some acceleration of improvements to the conveyance and storage facilities will be needed at the County level, but these do not present unusual problems.

Expansion of the Planned Service Area

Most expansions to the Planned Service Area (PSA) since 1990 have occurred on a site-specific basis to address failing septic systems, potential well contamination and a few changes in land use. In July 1993, the County Council voted to extend the PSA to include the area around the Alpha Ridge Landfill. This extension was done solely out of concern for potential future groundwater contamination originating from the Alpha Ridge Landfill, therefore, only water service is provided in this area. No change from rural land uses or zoning is intended. Sewer service may be provided in this area only for qualifying parcels and under certain conditions. A qualifying parcel is one that is owned by either the Howard County Government or the Board of Education of Howard County and that adjoins another parcel where sewer service is available. Sewer service to a qualifying parcel may be extended only if sewer service can be extended without making sewer service available to any intervening non-qualifying parcel not owned by Howard County Government or the Board of Education of Howard County. *[Amended per CB 18-2006, Effective June 7, 2006]*

As discussed in Chapter 2, *Responsible Regionalism*, the boundary of the PSA is important not only to determine which parcels will be served by public water and sewer service, but also because the PSA is Howard County's designated growth area (Priority Funding Area). As such, adjustments to the PSA have major ramifications in terms of both permitted development intensity and the level of other County and State services.

Howard County is expected to continue to experience strong demand for economic and residential growth due to its prime location and high quality of life. However, residential land in the PSA is quite limited. One of the

four growth scenarios described previously in Box 4-1 included consideration of an expansion of the present water and sewer service area boundaries to accommodate additional residential units. Based on the fiscal analysis, there is no compelling fiscal need for additional growth that justifies an expansion of the PSA boundary.

Although this General Plan does not propose an expansion of the Planned Service Area to accommodate future residential or commercial growth, it should be anticipated that in the future there may be isolated situations where minor adjustments may be appropriate. Any requests for a General Plan amendment for expansion of the Planned Service Area should be denied unless the following minimum criteria are met: the proposed expansion of the Planned Service Area is part of a proposed zoning and is consistent with the General Plan and Smart Growth policies, or the proposed expansion of the Planned Service Area is intended to provide for a public or institutional use such as a religious facility, charitable or philanthropic institution, or academic school. In each case sewer and water infrastructure capacity [Amended per CB 44-2002, Effective July 2, 2002] and costs shall be analyzed to confirm the feasibility and availability of scheduled capacity. Institutional or public use expansions of the Planned Service Area boundary are limited to institutional or public properties adjoining the existing boundary of the Planned Service Area without including an intervening privately owned parcel currently not located in the Planned Service Area. [Amended per CB 18-2006, Effective June 7, 2006] An amendment to the Planned Service Area for an institutional use shall only include the minimum parcel size necessary to serve the proposed use. Subdivision of the parcel consistent with the Planned Service Area boundary amendment shall occur subsequent to the Council Bill approving the amendment and prior to the inclusion of the parcel into the Metropolitan District. Any proposed institutional use for the remaining parcels not included in the Planned Service Area may be the subject of an additional amendment at a subsequent date. If an amendment to the Planned Service Area is approved for a public or institutional use, it shall be approved with conditions limiting the expansion to the particular use proposed at the time of expansion and providing a deadline by which the improvements for the proposed use must be completed and connected to the public water and/or sewerage system. If the parcel is not used for the public or institutional use

proposed at the time of passage of the Bill and is not actually constructed and connected to the public water and/or sewerage system by the deadline specified in the Bill, the Planned Service Area expansion and the Metropolitan District inclusion, if applicable, shall be null and void and the Planned Service Area as it relates to the parcel shall revert to that in place prior to the Council Bill approving the expansion, without any additional action of the Council. [Amended per CB 44-2002, Effective July 2, 2002]

Policies and Actions

POLICY 4.7: Ensure the adequacy of water and sewer services.

- ◆ **Plant Capacity Expansion.** Accommodate flows from projected growth in the Planned Service Area by constructing the planned expansion of the Little Patuxent Water Reclamation Plant.
- ◆ **Master Plan for Water and Sewerage.** Do not include capital projects for capacity expansion beyond the needs of the current Planned Service Area.
- ◆ **Priority Category Shifts.** Defer shifts into the 0-5 year priority status for development proposals until they have received Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance approval.
- ◆ **Developer Agreements.** Assess the merits of refining the current method of financing water and sewer extensions through developer agreements.

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Transportation

Highways

Transportation strategies in the 1990 General Plan focused on ways to address rapidly increasing traffic demands. A top priority was placed on planning for and funding Howard County's portion of a highway grid system serving the Baltimore-Washington region. Many of the highway

projects identified in the 1990 General Plan are now open to traffic or are well along in the planning and engineering process.

The transportation challenges for this General Plan are broader. As the County matures, the sustainability and redevelopment of the County's existing communities and infrastructure will assume more importance. Rather than simply building more and bigger roads, the County must look at ways to make transportation infrastructure and programs more efficient, more diverse and more responsive to environmental and community concerns. The County and State must also place a high priority on adequately maintaining existing infrastructure and operating programs.

Between 1990 and 1999, traffic increased by about 40% on Howard County roadways. Most of this travel is accounted for by personal vehicles with only one occupant. The increase in auto use in Howard County and throughout the region during this period has been due to many factors, including population growth, County residents' higher per capita rate of automobile ownership, relatively low gasoline prices and growth in the labor force. Also, since 1990, a higher proportion of trips are non-work related and by senior citizens. Unavoidably, traffic volumes in Howard County will continue to rise and traffic congestion will continue to worsen during peak traffic periods at some locations. Continuing population and employment growth, as well as such factors as changes in travel behavior (for example, more two-earner families commuting to work), increasing through traffic (resulting from regional growth) and the limited options for expansion of highway capacity are the causes.

The 1992 Adequate Public Facilities legislation was enacted to aid in ensuring that the road network would meet future needs and to require new development to test and, if necessary, improve critical intersections. The Adequate Public Facilities legislative package has allowed Howard County to fulfill many of the 1990 General Plan's objectives with regard to controlling the pace and location of development. Through associated State legislation, the County gained approval to levy an excise tax on all new building construction, in order to fund and/or leverage State funding for high priority roadway improvements. Between April 1992 and June 1998, approximately \$33.8 million in excise tax revenues was collected.