

SECTION 2

COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

COMMUNITY ANALYSIS

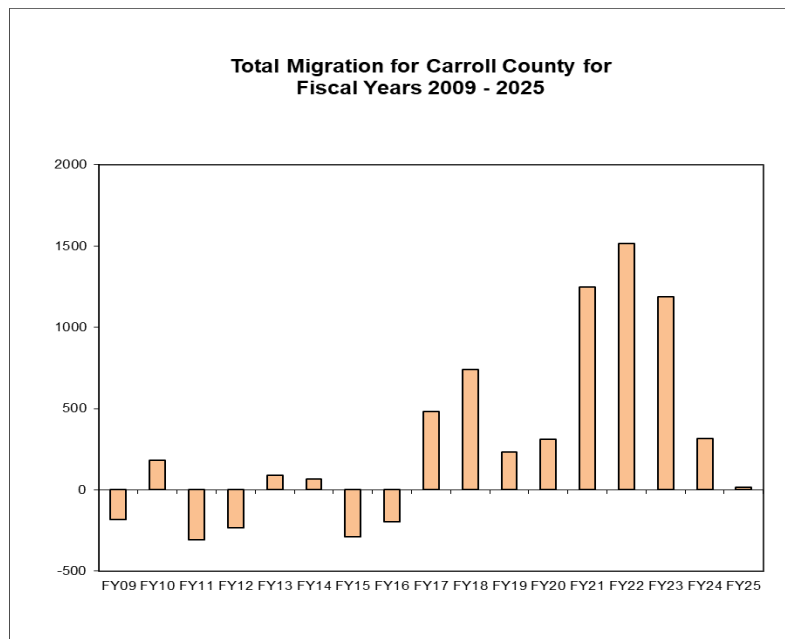
One of the central purposes of this plan is to ensure that there are adequate school facilities to accommodate the public-school enrollment for Carroll County. Public School enrollments are influenced by the County's demographic trends over time. As the County's population experienced rapid expansion in past decades, public school enrollment also experienced rapid growth. Due to this rapid increase in enrollments, fourteen new schools and several school additions were constructed between 1990 and 2010. As the County's population growth slowed after 2005, the public-school enrollment declined from a peak enrollment (28,914) in 2005 to 25,179 students in 2018. Enrollments then experienced annual increases, with the exception of 2020 due to COVID-19, to reach 26,141 in 2024. However, enrollment declined by 409 students in 2025 to a total enrollment of 25,732. It is difficult to say whether this one-year enrollment decline will be the start of a new trend or not, but it seems unlikely that county population growth, and subsequently public-school enrollment growth, will experience rapid increases like the past for the foreseeable future.

POPULATION

According to the 2020 Census, there were 172,891 people and 65,793 households in Carroll County. The past two decades have seen continued population growth in the county, but at a much slower pace than in the preceding decades. The 3.4% increase in population between 2010 to 2020 was the slowest rate of growth in almost a century.

Population by Decade		
Year	Carroll County	Percent Growth
1930	35978	
1940	39054	8.5%
1950	44907	15.0%
1960	52785	17.5%
1970	69,006	30.7%
1980	96,356	39.6%
1990	123,372	28.0%
2000	150,897	22.3%
2010	167,134	10.8%
2020	172,891	3.4%

Suburban expansion in the Baltimore region and the resulting increase in domestic migration was the driving force behind Carroll County's rapid population growth from 1950 to 2010. This migration from other parts of Maryland slowed dramatically from 2007 through 2016 due to the decrease in new home construction and the housing market decline related to the 2008 recession. There were several years between 2007 and 2016 when there were more people moving out of Carroll than moving in. Domestic migration numbers have been positive since 2016, but the annual net increase has seen a significant slowdown over the past two years.



In addition to the changing rate of population growth occurring in the county, the composition of the population is also changing. According to Census Bureau estimates for 2020, forty percent (40%) of the population of Carroll is over 50 years old. This is significantly higher than the 27% in 2000 and 34% in 2010. The aging in place of the population and the resulting smaller percentage of younger populations has also played a factor in the enrollment declines experienced from 2007-2016.

Age Group	2010	% of Population	2020*	% of Population	% Change, 2010 - 2020
80+	6,208	3.7%	6,606	3.8%	6%
70 to 79	8,494	5.1%	13,551	7.8%	60%
60 to 69	16,859	10.1%	21,858	12.6%	30%
50 to 59	25,624	15.3%	27,478	15.9%	7%
40 to 49	29,270	17.5%	20,689	12.0%	-29%
30 to 39	17,691	10.6%	21,668	12.5%	22%
20 to 29	17,234	10.3%	18,950	11.0%	10%
10 to 19	25,290	15.1%	22,318	12.9%	-12%
0 to 9	20,464	12.2%	19,772	11.4%	-3%
Total	167,134	-	172,890	-	3%

*Census Population Estimates for July 1, 2020

Along with the aging of the population, there is also a trend toward smaller household sizes. The average household size in Carroll County has been declining steadily over the past several decades. The average household size went from 2.81 in 2000, to 2.74 in 2010, and down to 2.68 in 2020. This decline in household size can be attributed to the fact that families are having fewer children, there are more single-parent families, there are more single-person households, and the population is aging in place thus creating more single and two-person elderly households in the County. Although the

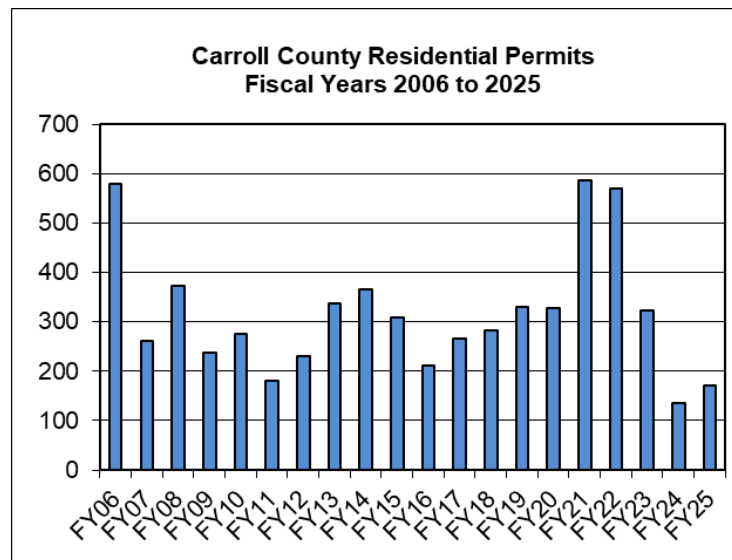
average household size in the county is declining, it should be noted that the county's average household size of 2.68 persons per household is the second highest in the Baltimore Region.

Recent Census data also indicates that the population of Carroll County is becoming more diverse. The percent of total population consisting of non-white racial makeup has increased from less than 5% in 2000 to 14% in 2020. This growing diversity in total population has also led to an increasing amount of diversity in student enrollments.

Carroll County Population by Race, 1970 -2020							
Year	White	% of Total Population	Black	% of Total Population	Other Races	% of Total Population	Total Population
1970	66,170	95.9%	2,736	4.0%	100	0.1%	69,006
1980	92,818	96.3%	2,840	2.9%	698	0.7%	96,356
1990	119,336	96.7%	2,933	2.4%	1,103	0.9%	123,372
2000	144,399	95.7%	3,433	2.3%	3,065	2.0%	150,897
2010	155,282	92.9%	5,332	3.2%	6,520	3.9%	167,134
2020	148,621	86.0%	6,482	3.7%	17,788	10.3%	172,891

HOUSING

The rapid population growth experienced by Carroll County during the 1990's and early 2000's was largely due to people moving into Carroll as part of a wave of suburban expansion. This wave of growth across the region was driven by cheaper residentially zoned land. Due to Carroll County's rural landscape, low crime rates, and reputation for good schools the demand for new housing in Carroll County was high. However, new housing growth has experienced a significant slowdown since 2005. The annual number of new residential permits has consistently been under 400 for two decades now. This is much lower than the number of new residential permits issued annually prior to 2005, which was consistently over 1000 permits a year. This slowdown in new home construction coincided with the school enrollment decline experienced after 2005.



Although new home construction remains relatively low across the county, recent real estate data indicates that the housing market is strong, and housing demand is still relatively high. Due to the limited number of newly constructed homes, most of the current volume in Carroll is being driven by existing home sales.

Real Estate Trend Indicators 2022 - 2025				
	2022	2023	2024	2025
Total Sold Dollar Value	\$1,019,161,244	\$818,411,902	\$902,587,319	\$937,855,503
Average Sold Price	\$452,020	\$478,141	\$501,003	\$506,207
Median Sold Price	\$415,000	\$430,000	\$458,907	\$466,000
Total Units Sold	2,292	1,737	1,824	1,866
Average Days on Market	16	20	18	24
Average List Price	445,048	471,296	495,604	504,223
Avg. Sales Price as a Percentage of Avg. List Price	100.9%	100.5%	100.1%	98.8%

EMPLOYMENT

According to the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing, and Regulations (MDLLR), Carroll County's December 2025 total labor force of 93,165 made up approximately 3% of Maryland's total labor force. Statistics from the 2000 Census indicate that more than half (55%) of workers living here commuted to jobs outside the county. The large number of workers commuting to jobs outside the county indicates that Carroll is a desirable place to live but it does not have the types of business and industry to provide jobs for all of its residents. Unless the County sees an expansion in the number and types of business, it will continue to be more of a bedroom community.

According to the 2024 Employment and Payrolls report from MDLLR, private sector jobs in the county accounted for 85% of the total employment for Carroll County, while government sector jobs made up the remaining 15%. Jobs in the Service Providing industry group made up the largest percentage of total employment for both Carroll County (66.8%), and the State of Maryland (70.6%).

Employment Distribution by Industry Group 2024				
Industry Group	Carroll County	Percent of Total Employment	Maryland	Percent of Total Employment
<i>Goods-Producing</i>	<i>10,872</i>	<i>18.4%</i>	<i>284,894</i>	<i>10.3%</i>
Natural Resources and Mining	529	0.9%	7,590	0.3%
Construction	6,339	10.7%	164,323	5.9%
Manufacturing	4,003	6.8%	112,981	4.1%
<i>Service Providing</i>	<i>39,534</i>	<i>66.8%</i>	<i>1,953,354</i>	<i>70.6%</i>
Trade, Transportation, and Utilities	12,347	20.9%	467,627	16.9%
Information	264	0.4%	34,384	1.2%
Financial Activities	1,432	2.4%	126,591	4.6%
Professional and Business Services	5,728	9.7%	484,708	17.5%
Education and Health Services	10,687	18.1%	474,543	17.1%
Leisure and Hospitality	6,811	11.5%	272,367	9.8%
Other Services	2,265	3.8%	93,008	3.4%
Private Sector Total - All Industries	50,406	85.2%	2,238,248	80.8%
<i>Federal Government</i>	<i>629</i>	<i>1.1%</i>	<i>161,701</i>	<i>5.8%</i>
<i>State Government</i>	<i>1,287</i>	<i>2.2%</i>	<i>108,040</i>	<i>3.9%</i>
<i>Local Government</i>	<i>6,873</i>	<i>11.6%</i>	<i>260,559</i>	<i>9.4%</i>
Government Sector - Total	8,789	14.8%	530,299	19.2%
Total Employment	59,195	100.0%	2,768,546	100.0%

Note: The data include all wage and salary workers covered by unemployment insurance. Not included are self-employed, agricultural, railroad, military, and some religious organization employees. These data pertain to people who work in the jurisdiction rather than those who live in the jurisdiction.

CARROLL COUNTY MASTER PLAN

The Carroll County Board of Commissioners adopted the 2014 County Master Plan on February 26, 2015. This plan is the second revision to the original 1964 Master Plan. The adopted plan reflects the choices of the citizens to reaffirm support of the direction dictated by the original Carroll County Master Plan. The basic premise of the plan is that development should be directed into and around the County's nine Designated Growth Areas (DGAs) while preserving the rural character of the surrounding land. These DGAs are generally centered around municipalities which have historically seen higher density development due to the availability of public water and public sewer facilities. The DGAs identified in the plan are: Finksburg, Freedom, Hampstead, Manchester, Mount Airy, New Windsor, Taneytown, Union Bridge, and Westminster.

The County and Municipalities have also developed community comprehensive plans to provide more details for these designated growth areas. The following is a list of the current adopted community comprehensive plans and the year they were adopted:

County Adopted Community Plans	
Plan	Year Adopted
Finksburg Corridor Plan	2013
Freedom Community Comprehensive Plan	2018
Municipal Adopted Community Plans	
Plan	Year Adopted
Hampstead Community Comprehensive Plan	2023
Manchester Community Comprehensive Plan	2018
Mount Airy Comprehensive Master Plan	2023
New Windsor Community Comprehensive Plan	2010
Sykesville Community Comprehensive Plan	2021
Taneytown Community Comprehensive Plan	2010
Union Bridge Community Comprehensive Plan	2024
Westminster Community Comprehensive Plan	2009

One of the main goals of the Carroll County Master Plan is to “Pursue policies and Capital Improvement expenditures that facilitate growth in the designated growth areas, thereby protecting and conserving agricultural and environmental resource areas, preserving open space, and providing public facilities and services efficiently and cost effectively”. Although there are a few schools that are located outside the DGAs, the majority of schools are located within the DGAs. The schools that are located outside of the growth areas are older schools that are necessary to serve the rural areas located between DGAs.

FREEDOM DESIGNATED GROWTH AREA			
SCHOOLS	PFA	Public Water	Public Sewer
Carrolltowne Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Century High	Yes	Yes	Yes
Eldersburg Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Freedom Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Liberty High	Yes	Yes	Yes
Linton Springs Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Oklahoma Road Middle	Yes	Yes	Yes
Piney Ridge Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Sykesville Middle	Yes	Yes	Yes
HAMPSTEAD DESIGNATED GROWTH AREA			
SCHOOLS	PFA	Public Water	Public Sewer
Hampstead Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
North Carroll Middle	Yes	Yes	Yes
Shiloh Middle	Yes	Yes	Yes
Spring Garden Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
MANCHESTER DESIGNATED GROWTH AREA			
SCHOOLS	PFA	Public Water	Public Sewer
Ebb Valley Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Manchester Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Manchester Valley High	Yes	Yes	Yes
MT. AIRY DESIGNATED GROWTH AREA			
SCHOOLS	PFA	Public Water	Public Sewer
Mt. Airy Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Mt. Airy Middle	Yes	Yes	Yes
Parr's Ridge Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
NEW WINDSOR DESIGNATED GROWTH AREA			
SCHOOLS	PFA	Public Water	Public Sewer
TANEYTOWN DESIGNATED GROWTH AREA			
SCHOOLS	PFA	Public Water	Public Sewer
Northwest Middle	Yes	Yes	Yes
Taneytown Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
UNION BRIDGE DESIGNATED GROWTH AREA			
SCHOOLS	PFA	Public Water	Public Sewer
Elmer Wolfe Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes

WESTMINSTER DESIGNATED GROWTH AREA			
SCHOOLS	PFA	Public Water	Public Sewer
Career & Technology Center	Yes	Yes	Yes
Carroll Springs	Yes	Yes	Yes
Cranberry Station Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Friendship Valley Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Robert Moton Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Westminster East Middle	Yes	Yes	Yes
Westminster Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Westminster High	Yes	Yes	Yes
Westminster West Middle	Yes	Yes	Yes
William Winchester Elementary	Yes	Yes	Yes
Winters Mill High	Yes	Yes	Yes
OUTSIDE DESIGNATED GROWTH AREAS			
SCHOOLS	PFA	Water	Sewer
Francis Scott Key High	Rural Village	Public	Public
Mechanicsville Elementary	Rural Village	Onsite	Onsite
Runnymede Elementary	no	Onsite	Onsite
Sandymount Elementary	no	Onsite	Onsite
South Carroll High	Rural Village	Onsite	Onsite*
Winfield Elementary	Rural Village	Onsite	Onsite*
* Schools are served by County operated sewage treatment facility on South Carroll's property			

Based on the County's past and current master plan, there is an expectation that future growth will occur in and around these growth areas. In order to ensure that land would be available for the construction of schools if necessary, the County worked to acquire several school sites over time in areas where growth was expected to occur. All but one of these acquired sites are located within a DGA and have access to public water and sewer.

FUTURE SCHOOL SITES					
Property Name	Acres	DGA	PFA	Water	Sewer
Cape Horn Park	60	Manchester	Yes	Public	Public
Friendship Valley ES Fields	26	Westminster	Yes	Public	Public
Mayeski Park	30	N/A	Rural Village	Private	Private

CONCURRENCY MANAGEMENT AND ADEQUATE PUBLIC FACILITIES

The Concurrency Management and Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance is the tool that the county utilizes to coordinate subdivision approvals with the availability of public facilities. For all major subdivisions, the ordinance requires that an Adequate Threshold Capacity for all years in the current 6-year Community Investment Program (CIP) be determined for schools, roads, police, fire and emergency services, and water and sewer services. The ordinance establishes three categories: Inadequate, Approaching Inadequate, and Adequate. A school is determined to be inadequate if the utilization percentage is over 120% of the State Rated Capacity for elementary and high schools, and over 120% of functional capacity for middle schools. Any subdivision located in a school attendance boundary that is determined to be inadequate will be placed in a development queue. Projects in the queue will be reevaluated annually and released for approval when capacity is available. A school is determined to be approaching inadequate if the utilization percentage is between 110% and 119% of the State Rated Capacity for elementary and high schools, and between 110% and 119% of the Functional Capacity for middle schools. A subdivision located in a school attendance boundary that is determined to be approaching inadequate may have a phasing plan developed. This authority resides with the Carroll County Planning and Zoning Commission. A school is determined to be adequate if the utilization percentage is below 110% of State Rated Capacity for elementary and high schools, and below 110% of Functional Capacity for middle schools. Projects located within a school attendance boundary that is determined to be adequate have no restrictions on their approval.

This ordinance has been rewritten several times as rapid growth often overwhelmed the county's public infrastructure. The current ordinance was written in 2004 during a development deferral enacted by the County Commissioners. Since this new ordinance has been in place, growth in the county has dramatically declined. This slow down in new growth has reduced the number of schools which are considered inadequate based on the Concurrency Management and Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance.

Using the 2026-2027 to 2035-2036 Enrollment Projections and the criteria contained in the Concurrency Management and Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance the following schools are, or will be considered inadequate or approaching inadequate at some point within the next six fiscal years:

Inadequate (120% and greater of Capacity)

No schools

Approaching Inadequate (110% to 119% of Capacity)

Freedom Elementary	2026-2031
Sykesville Middle	2027-2029