

SECTION 3 – FUTURE CONDITIONS & CAPACITIES

Planning for future land use and development needs to be based on existing land availability and characteristics, zoning designations, water & sewer capacity, and tax base considerations, coupled with trends in population growth, and potential infrastructure capacity. Adjustments to the land use plan for Emmitsburg can be made after considering these elements and how best to manage available resources so that the town can be sustained in the long term. Data regarding resources involved in the future land use planning picture are described in the following subsections. This analysis pertains only to land and services within the Town of Emmitsburg municipal boundary, rather than the growth area.

3.1 LAND AVAILABILITY & SERVICES CAPACITY WITHIN EMMITSBURG

Table 3.1-1 shows what the current and eventual demand for water taps would be, based on current zoning and acres available in each zoning district.

TABLE 3.1-1 LAND AVAILABILITY & WATER DEMAND			
Non-residential vacant land	Acres	Present Demand (taps)	Potential Future Water Demand (taps)
Office Research Industrial - <i>ORI</i>	137.69		156
General Business District – <i>B2</i>	22.76		71
Highway Service District - <i>HS</i>	11.18		29
Industrial Park - <i>IP</i>	105.97		120
Total	277.60 ac.		376 taps
Residential			
Existing approved lots		57 taps	
Residential-zoned potential development			110 taps
TOTAL DEMAND, PRESENT & FUTURE Based on current approved lots & zoning		543 taps	

Source: Town of Emmitsburg 2009

TABLE 3.1-2 WATER SYSTEM CAPACITY		
<i>CURRENT SYSTEM (2009)</i>	<i>42,600 GPD ÷ 250GPD per tap</i>	170 taps available
<i>FUTURE</i>		
Emmit Gardens Treatment Plant Phase I (in design phase as of April 2009)		468 new taps
Emmit Gardens Treatment Plant Phase II (provided for in design of Phase I, no predictable time frame)		240 new taps
TOTAL CAPACITY OF CURRENT & POTENTIAL WATER SYSTEM		878 total taps Existing + future capacity

Source: Town of Emmitsburg 2009

TABLE 3.1-3 SANITARY SEWER CAPACITY	
Treatment Plant Design/Permitted Capacity	750,000 GPD
minus Average Daily Inflow (2006-2008)	- 475,000 GPD
Minus 10% safety margin	- 47,500 GPD
Remaining Average Capacity	227,500 GPD
227,500 GPD ÷ 250 GPD per tap =	910 taps available at current plant

Source: Town of Emmitsburg 2009

Based on the information in the Tables above, it is possible to see that if the water treatment facilities were built as envisioned, the number of water taps would ultimately balance with the capacity available at the sewage treatment plant. The 910 additional taps capacity at the sewage treatment plant represents the limit of the plant's current design and permitting relative to treatment capability and discharge standards. There is no time frame associated with the ultimate build-out of the Emmit Gardens Water Treatment Facility. Phase I is currently (Summer 2009) in the design phase, however, there is no commitment to construction of the facility at this time.

Given the fact that there are currently 170 taps available, and current zoning would generate 543 potential taps, this plan will need to evaluate whether the current zoning is realistic and viable in terms of likely development versus the number of taps that each zoning district would use between 2009 and 2030. This analysis is provided in Section 4.

3.2. DEMOGRAPHICS

Projections

There are several different methods for projecting population growth, which generally yield varying results. In the case of Emmitsburg, there is not a significant difference in the long term.

The most recent population projections available from the Maryland Department of Planning for Emmitsburg are shown in Table 3.2-1.

Table 3.2-1 Emmitsburg	Census 1990	Census 2000	Proj. 2005	Proj. 2010	Proj. 2015	Proj. 2020	Proj. 2025	Proj. 2030
Population	1,688	2,290	2,565	2,740	3,055	3,380	3,647	3,901
Households	639	811	917	987	1,116	1,245	1,352	1,464
Housing Units	681	862	975	1,049	1,186	1,323	1,437	1,548

Source: MDP Data Services 2009

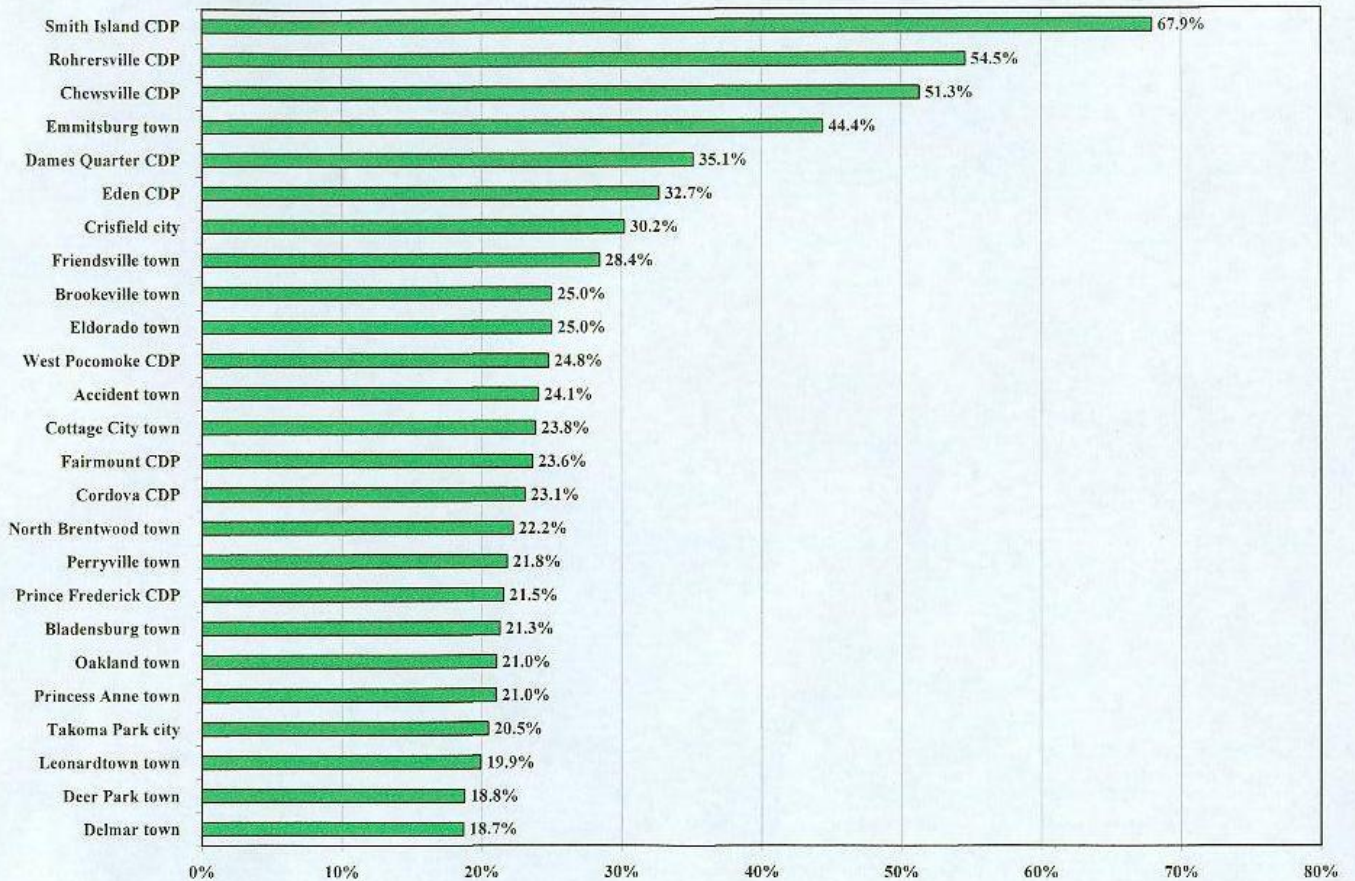
Frederick County Data Services *Population Estimates for January 1, 2009* estimated the current population of Emmitsburg at 2,852, or 1.2% of the estimated Frederick County population of 233,439. The County offers a Frederick County population projection of 326,224 for the year 2030. If Emmitsburg continued to represent 1.2% percent of the county population, the projected 2030 population would be 3,915. This correlates well with the MDP 2030 prediction of 3,901.

Emmitsburg planning efforts relative to water and sewer management have utilized a current population estimate of 2,900 and a projected 2030 population of 3,750 to calculate future demand. This was based on County information plus more specific knowledge of local development potential. The projection of 3,750 is also within a reasonable range of the Frederick County and MDP 2030 projections of 3,901, particularly considering the current economic conditions. Projections are a planning tool, but - as shown in the previous section - infrastructure capacity will ultimately determine the amount of growth that Emmitsburg can accommodate.

As noted in Section 2, compared to Frederick County, Emmitsburg has a higher number of people over 65 (21%), a higher number of single-person households (26.8%) and a lower median household income compared to Frederick County and most other towns in the county. Figure 3.2-1 is a chart generated by the Maryland Department of Planning, which illustrates the Emmitsburg over-65 income level relative to the entire state of Maryland. It shows that 44.4% of the over-65 population in Emmitsburg was living below the poverty level in the year 2000, making Emmitsburg fourth-ranked town in the state for this statistic. This type of information is important to consider when addressing the fiscal element in community planning, which is the subject of the next subsection.

Figure 3.2-1

Poverty Rate of the Elderly (Ages 65 and Over) - 2000



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2000.
Prepared by the Maryland Department of Planning, Planning Data Services, May 2002.

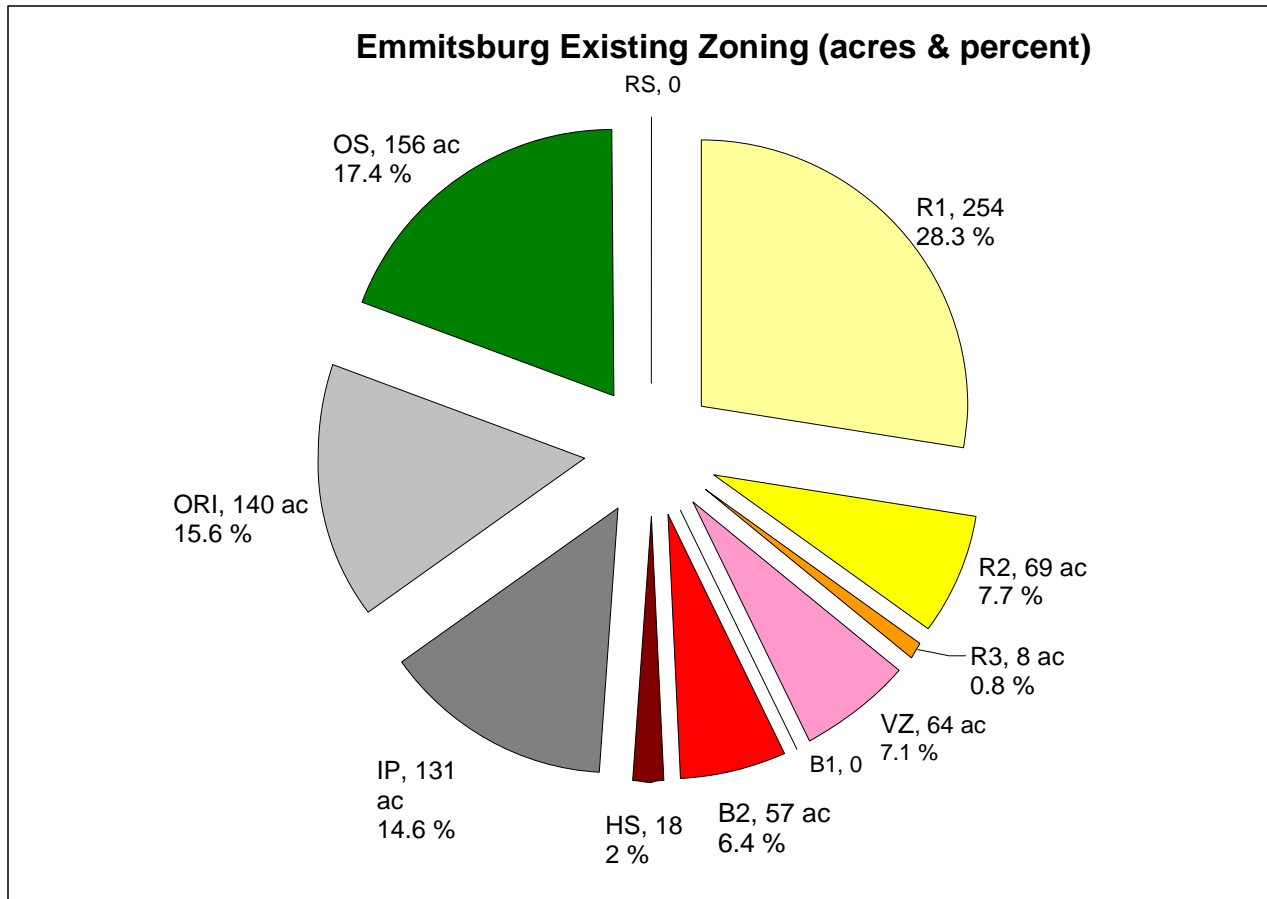
3.3 FISCAL CONSIDERATIONS

The financial health of a community is important to consider when addressing future land use, particularly in a small town like Emmitsburg. Since different uses generate different amounts of tax revenue, and different land uses have different costs to the municipality, the mix of uses is important to consider from a financial sustainability standpoint. This is particularly important in Emmitsburg, where a significant amount of developed land is tax exempt, and current household incomes are lower than other areas of Frederick County (see Section 2), so the property tax burden is a significant issue, particularly to those residents over 65, as shown in Figure 3.2-1.

Another factor in the fiscal picture is the fact that residential development generally costs more to maintain and service than it generates in property tax dollars. Residential development is also more likely to contribute to the need for schools.

Examination of the current zoning distribution shows that 54.2 percent of the land in Emmitsburg is currently either in the Open Space, R-1, R-2, or R-3 zoning, which generally represent an expenditure of tax dollars, rather than a break-even situation.

Figure 3.3-1



Within the Open Space (OS) category are properties owned by Frederick County School system, the Town of Emmitsburg, and the Sisters of Charity. The Town properties are devoted to recreation, which is discussed in a later subsection.

Emmitsburg is home to a unique facility which affects the fiscal balance to a greater degree than would be experienced in a larger town or city, with a larger tax base to absorb it. The Sisters of Charity properties constitute 73 acres of the total 156 in OS, or 8.7 % of the town's total land area. Twenty-three acres are associated with the Mother Seton Elementary School, and the remainder surrounds the Daughters of Charity (DOC) complex. The DOC complex is a tax-exempt facility consisting of public and private nursing home facilities, nun's quarters, and the Mother Seton Shrine, in an attractive campus-like setting. The facility utilizes ambulance, fire, police, and other municipal services, however, it does not pay fire tax. It also uses (and pays for) approx. 50,000 gallons of water per day (equiv. 200 taps). The July 1, 2009 assessment information for the 50-acre portion that contains the DOC complex indicates a value of \$54,852,833. If this property were not tax-exempt, it would be 20% of the total assessed real property base and would mean a 24% decrease in the tax rate for current taxpayers in the town.

Consideration of additional uses in the OS zone, or creation of an Institutional zoning district was proposed during meetings on the draft plan. However, given the current tax burden this sizable (and valuable) property places on the community, it would not be equitable to consider expansion of uses in the OS zone, or creation of a new zone to allow increased commercial use of this property, *with tax-exempt status*.

3.4 COMMUNITY SERVICES

Parks and Recreation

Accepted standards for minimum per capita acreage of recreational land are 2.5 ac./1,000 population for community parks, and 1.0 ac./1,000 for neighborhood parks. The Town of Emmitsburg owns Community Park (54.51 acres), Memorial Park (5.79 acres), Silo Hill park (6.9 acres), plus land in Emmit Gardens (4.7acres) which will be utilized in part for recreation and part for Phase 1 of the Emit Gardens Water Treatment plant. Based on these ratios and acreages, Emmitsburg has ample recreational land to serve the 3,900 population projected for 2030. There is also a privately-owned neighborhood park in the Northgate subdivision.

The Town also owns 1300 acres on College Mountain outside of the town which serves primarily as watershed/supply protection, but also provides hunting and fishing opportunities for Town residents. A feasibility study has been completed for a potential hiking and bicycling trail in conjunction with lands owned by Mount St. Mary’s University on College Mountain, which would add recreational opportunities.

Education

Public schools are the under the jurisdiction of Frederick County. Students from Emmitsburg attend elementary school in Emmitsburg, and travel to Thurmont for middle and high school. Frederick County Public Schools issued an assessment of Enrollments and Capacities as of June 2009 that includes the following information for schools that provide education for Emmitsburg residents.

**Table 3.4-1 Frederick County Public Schools – Enrollments & Capacities
Emmitsburg area as of June 2009**

School	Total Enrollment	Equated Enrollment	State Rated Building Capacity	Percent Capacity
Emmitsburg Elementary	285	268	316	85%
Thurmont Middle	710	710	900	79%
Catoctin High (Thurmont)	933	933	1135	82%

Source: Frederick County Public Schools & Town of Emmitsburg Planning Office

There is no anticipated need for school expansion at this time or the near future. The full assessment listing for all Frederick County schools is included in the Appendices for comparative purposes.

The Thurmont Regional Plan indicates a school symbol on a property on the southwest side of Emmitsburg that will be in the Town's growth area. While the potential future need for a school seems unlikely, the Town would suggest that the symbol at least be placed on property south of Town on South Seton to be better served in terms of other educational facilities and traffic circulation.

Emergency Services

Fire, Police, and Emergency Services provide service to an area that extends beyond the Town boundary and into nearby Pennsylvania. The level of service is affected by development in Emmitsburg, but also by development in the larger service area. Additional residents in the Town will require additional services, and hopefully, would also add to the potential volunteer base for Vigilant Hose Company, which is entirely staffed by volunteers. It is appropriate to monitor the response times of these services and work with the service providers and Frederick County to ensure that response times stay at their current levels as development occurs.

3.5 SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Ultimately, growth and development in Emmitsburg will be limited by water supply and wastewater management infrastructure. There are 170 water taps currently available, and if Phase I of the Emmit Gardens Water Treatment Facility were to be built, it would mean an additional 468 taps. It is important to note that some existing projections may indicate more growth potential, however, these projections do not take water/sewer limitations into account.
2. The Town should pursue zoning and development ordinances that would minimize the cost to the town for residential development -- more compact development with fewer road and water/sewer miles – while also maintaining open space and important views, and protecting environmental features.
3. Infill development should be encouraged for economic reasons - providing workforce housing and commercial opportunities – but it also because it reflects the goals of pedestrian and bicycle access within the town. Infill development should be designed in harmony with neighboring structures. These goals should be considered when viewing and annexation proposals, as well.
4. The Town needs to consider the fiscal aspects of development and achieve a balance between the potential for residential and commercial development.
5. The demographic and economic aspects of the Town’s population need to be recognized when considering land use issues and any potential additional costs that would skew the burden to taxpayers as the result of development.
6. Zoning needs to reflect the limitations posed by the water supply, realistic expectations for the time period of this plan, as well as the long term allocation of available resources. Down-zoning of some areas that are less likely to develop during the period of this plan should be considered, so that resources can be applied where development is more likely and relevant to the goals expressed in the plan.