

CHAPTER 10 – PREFERRED DEVELOPMENT AREAS

Introduction

There are several areas where development is preferred due in large part to the existence of available public infrastructure features to adequately serve additional growth. These preferred development areas include incorporated towns, existing rural villages, and newer subdivisions that increasingly serve as self-contained communities.

Promoting growth within these preferred development areas must first take into account the ability of the Comprehensive Plan to outline how much additional growth each area may receive based on the adequacy of services to support it. Unlike those areas defined in Chapters 6 and 7 of this Plan, this chapter serves to identify areas in which growth may be promoted through the provision of services to areas attractive to redevelopment, and most importantly preserving those areas of important cultural heritage and recreational value needing protection.

If managed properly, growth will have positive benefits for current and future residents. This will require coordination with transportation improvements and the provision of public utilities, as well as with sensitivity for the County's natural resources.

Incorporated Towns

The most obvious location for future growth is in and around existing municipalities. This is due in large part to the availability of existing public services and infrastructure. It is also the primary location for employment opportunities, social organizations, and other public amenities. There are two incorporated towns within Morgan County that should be promoted as preferred areas for future development to occur.

Town of Bath

The Town of Bath encompasses approximately 384 acres, and is surrounded by the greater urban area commonly referred to as Berkeley Springs. This larger area of primarily developed land stretches north and south along US Rt. 522 and east and west along WV Rt. 9. It is located primarily within the Bath district of the Central Valley Region and includes nearly 5% of the total County population.

Town of Paw Paw

The Town of Paw Paw, located at the southwest tip of Morgan County, along WV Rt. 9, encompasses approximately 320 acres and a population of more than 500, with several small businesses and other employment industries.

Table 10-1 Municipal Annexations

Property	Town	Location	Acres	Year
Tritapoe	Bath	Martinsburg Road	0.98	1997
Omps	Bath	Cornelius Avenue	29.241	2000
Gyerik	Bath	Whisner Avenue	0.25	2000
Goller	Bath	Cornelius Avenue	0.2118	2000
Board of Ed	Bath	N. Berkeley School	2.75	N/A
Seely	Bath	US Rt. 522	0.9	2000
Rt. 9 West	Paw Paw	West side WV Rt. 9	3.81	2002

Source: Morgan County Government

As reflected in the housing and population information, located in Chapter 2, as well as in Table 10-1 above, neither Bath nor Paw Paw has experienced significant increases during the past decade in either land being added to their incorporated limits or population increases due to new growth or redevelopment efforts. As reflected in Chapter 2, population for both towns has continued to decrease since 1980 and there are no current plans for additional major subdivision activity in either corporate limits. However, as both towns provide the necessary public services to promote growth, development will continue to occur in close proximity to these urban centers.

Other Communities

Although there are only two incorporated municipalities in Morgan County, there are numerous other small communities which have been in the past or currently are defined by some centrally located area. These areas typically evolve from the location of some group of services, which in turn creates some concentration of residents who develop additional types of public services over time, and thus become somewhat self supporting communities.

This evolution, as is the case for many small communities in Morgan County, appears to locate around transportation networks such as the Potomac River or the railroad system. However, over time, these networks have been replaced by other types of transportation such as US Rt. 522 and WV Rt. 9. With the exception of Berkeley Springs, population and commercial enterprise have failed to expand significantly beyond the origins of each community, and in some cases have experienced substantial decline.

Recently some of these areas have been supported and changed by the demand from outside interests to purchase and utilize the residences within these older areas for vacation and recreational purposes. This has been especially prevalent in those areas located closest to the County's many natural and scenic waterways and mountains. Even more recent is the increasing interest of larger development plans that are proposed for the more rural undeveloped areas, especially the southern valley area of the Central Valley region. However, both of these examples are areas of concern as the County must account for the ability to provide necessary public services where such services may not have been planned to be extended.

Unincorporated Towns

Great Cacapon is the largest unincorporated community in Morgan County which includes a surrounding population of more than 1,300 residents. Great Cacapon takes its name from the Cacapon River which empties into the Potomac River to the town's east. It was originally known as Cacapon Depot on the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad mainline when a post office was established there in 1848. In 1876, its name was changed to Great Cacapon to differentiate it from Little Cacapon which was also on the B & O mainline. It lies four miles down Cacapon Mountain from the Panorama Overlook along WV Rt. 9, west of Berkeley Springs. It is also a short distance from the Town of Bath and the surrounding Berkeley Springs area, providing convenient access to public services and other daily needs.

Unger is an unincorporated community in southern Morgan County distinguished amongst other communities in Morgan County for retaining an operating post office since one was established here in 1853. From 1857 to 1935, it was known as Unger's Store until its name was shortened to Unger. Although the Post Office recently closed, the community established in this area thrives with the potential of new neighboring developments. It is located at the crossroads of Winchester Grade Road (CR 13) and Unger's Store Road (CR 11). As new development proposals continue to occur in this area, there will be increasing need for the County to plan for the provision of services to this growing community.

Suburban Neighborhoods

Berryville is a former independent community located south of downtown Berkeley Springs. It sprouted up along US Rt. 522 at the beginning of the 20th Century; first as a farming community and then as a residential extension of a growing Berkeley Springs. It remains outside the Bath town limits. Berryville includes Berkeley Springs High School, Widmyer Elementary School, and Greenway Cemetery.

Jimstown is another community located in close proximity to the Town of Bath corporate limits and generally considered a neighborhood of Berkeley Springs. The community is located just north of the Town.

Between the Town of Bath and Jimstown is the neighborhood of North Berkeley. Like Jimstown, North Berkeley does not lie within the limits of Bath, but it is generally considered a neighborhood of the town. The community includes the location of the Board of Education main offices.

Omps is a small unincorporated community that lies along US Rt. 522. Omps previously had its own post office in operation between 1887 and 1973.

Ridersville is an unincorporated community between Berkeley Springs and Stohrs Crossroads along WV Rt. 9 on Pious Ridge (804 feet) where Pious Ridge Road (CR 4) and Peter Yost Road (CR 9/8) intersect with WV Rt. 9. Ridersville sprang up in the 19th Century as a small farming

community along the Martinsburg Road with a general store. It had its own operating post office until it was closed in 1903 due to the community's close proximity to Berkeley Springs. During its period as an independent agrarian town, it was known as Friendship, Rider Store, Riderville, and finally as Ridersville. Today, it is merely a growing residential area of Berkeley Springs.

Rock Gap is a small community along Valley Road located between Omphers to its south and Berkeley Springs to its north. Situated between Warm Springs Ridge (1,086 feet) to its west and Timber Ridge (1,355 feet) to its east, Rock Gap takes its name from the "Rock Gap" in Warm Spring Ridge, carved out by Rock Gap Run, a tributary stream of Sleepy Creek. Rock Gap began as a small farming community along Valley Road. It had a post office in operation from 1884 to 1907 and again between 1921 and 1925. Residents of Rock Gap currently have a Berkeley Springs address. Rock Gap is the site of the old Mount Garfield School and Mount Tabor Church.

Sir Johns Run is an unincorporated community at the mouth of Sir Johns Run on the Potomac River northwest of Berkeley Springs. It is bound to its west by the Widmeyer Wildlife Management Area and to its east by Warm Springs Ridge (1,086 feet). While Sir Johns Run was once an operating station on the old B & O mainline as an early passenger station for Berkeley Springs, it is primarily a residential community of Berkeley Springs accessible by Sir Johns Run Road (County Route 3). Sir Johns Run had its own post office in operation from 1850 to 1938. Today, the stream and its namesake are a site on the Washington Heritage Trail.

Rural Villages

Cherry Run is a small village located along the B & O mainline on the Potomac River. The community is named for the stream, Cherry Run, that meets the Potomac in its vicinity. It was originally known as Cherry Run Depot because of the important interchange between the B&O and the Western Maryland Railroad there. Across the Potomac from Cherry Run lies Big Pool on the C & O Canal. Cherry Run is reached by Householder Road (County Route 10) from the west and both Cherry Run Road (County Route 5) and Fulton Road (County Route 1/5) from Martinsburg Road (WV Rt.9) to the south. On the B & O mainline, Cherry Run is located between Hancock to its west and Little Georgetown in Berkeley County to its east.

Doe Gully is an older community along the Potomac River located along the old B & O Railroad where it bisects a bend in the Potomac by way of the Randolph Tunnel, Doe Gully is only accessible by way of Doe Gulley Lane (County Route 18/2) from Orleans Road (County Route 18/1). It is located southwest of Orleans Cross Roads. The C & O Canal National Park crosses the Potomac River onto the West Virginia side to Doe Gulley's west and it also lies directly across the river from it.

Hancock is located off of US rt. 522 on River Road (County Route 1) along the Potomac River north of Berkeley Springs. Originally known as Brosius, its post office's name was changed to Hancock in 1948 to reflect its location on the B & O mainline across the river from Hancock, Maryland. Located along River Road from US 522, Hancock is also accessible by way of Fairview Drive (County Route 2) from Berkeley Springs and also Pious Ridge Road (County Route 4) from Ridersville on WV Rt. 9.

Hansrote is a small village located along the old B & O mainline on the Potomac River. Hansrote is northeast of Magnolia and southwest of Doe Gully. Stuart Tunnel connected Hansrote and Magnolia by railroad, but today Hansrote is accessible by way of Hansrote Road (CR 12/2) from Magnolia Road (CR 12).

Holton is a small community in northeastern Morgan County, located on Martinsburg Road at its junction with Cherry Run Road (CR 5) along Cherry Run and the Berkeley County line. Holton had its own post office in operation between 1889 and 1903.

Johnsons Mill is an unincorporated area in eastern Morgan County on Johnson's Mill Road (CR 26). It is centrally located between three other small rural villages along Sleepy Creek and is named for the "Johnson's Mill" that once operated here. Smith Crossroads on Winchester Grade Road (CR 13) is to its west by way of Autumn Acres Road (CR 26), New Hope is to its north by way of Spohr's Road (CR 8), and Duckwall is located to its east on Johnson's Mill Road along the western flanks of Sleepy Creek Mountain.

Magnolia is located northeast of Paw Paw along the Potomac River. It is located along the B & O mainline and east of where the Western Maryland Railroad right of way crosses the Potomac, bypassing a series of bends in the river. As a depot and water station on the B & O, Magnolia has been known by a number of names including Magnolia Dale, Magnolia Vale, and sometimes as Water Station Number 12 on the railroad. The community had its own school, Magnolia School, until it was closed in 1952, in favor of sending students from the Magnolia area to attend the schools in Paw Paw. Magnolia also had its own post office in operation from 1867 to 1868 as Magnolia Vale, and then again in 1871 to 1943 as Magnolia, when it too was closed and the residents of Magnolia were assigned Paw Paw addresses. Magnolia can be accessed by way of Magnolia Road (CR 12). It is located between Paw Paw to the southwest and Jerome to the northwest.

Oakland is an unincorporated community located along Virginia Line Road (CR 8) north of Unger and south of Stotlers Crossroads. Oakland is connected to Valley Road by County Route 26 (Oakland and Morton Grove Roads). Oakland sprouted up as a small farming community in the 19th Century and established the second post office in Morgan County as well as a school which were both in operation until the early 20th Century. The Oakland United Methodist Church was the oldest continuous congregation in Morgan County until it merged with Greenwood United Methodist Church.

Orleans Cross Roads lies on the western flanks of Sideling Hill. To its south, Rockwell Run, a mountain stream fed by springs, empties into the Potomac. Orleans Cross Roads lies along the old B & O Railroad directly across the river from Little Orleans. It is accessible by way of Orleans Road (CR 18/1) from Cacapon Road via Detour Road (CR 18). Once the site of a functioning station on the B & O, Orleans Cross Roads also had its own operating post office. The community and post office were often known as Orleans Cross Roads or Orleans Crossroads while its station was known as Orleans Road Station. It is still inhabited today and is the site of the historic Orleans Cross Roads Methodist Episcopal Church, built in the 1850s.

Sleepy Creek is a small community on the Potomac River, at the mouth of Sleepy Creek. By 1860, Sleepy Creek had a post office and functioned as an important station on the B & O Railroad. Sleepy Creek is located along River Road (CR 1) east of Hancock and is accessible from Cherry Run to its east by way of Householder Road (CR 10).

Stohrs Crossroads is located along Martinsburg Road to the west of Sleepy Creek. Originally named Spohrs Cross Roads for the Spohr family, its name was eventually changed over the 19th Century to "Stohrs". Stohrs "Crossroads" is formed by Martinsburg Road's intersection with the Potomac-Virginia Line Road (CR 8). North of Stohrs Crossroads, CR 8 is known as Potomac Road and south of the crossroads, it is known as Spohr's Road. It reaches the Virginia state line at Unger where it is known as Virginia Line Road.

Stotlers Crossroads is a small community in southeastern Morgan County, situated along Winchester Grade Road (CR 13) between the South and Middle Forks of Sleepy Creek on the eastern flanks of Highland Ridge (942 feet). A post office was established here in 1885 and took the name of the Stotler family, a prevalent family in the immediate area. Stotlers Crossroads is the home to several historic sites including the Mount Olivet United Methodist Church (1888) and Ambrose Chapel, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Stotlers Crossroads is a junction of Winchester Grade Road (CR 13) with the Virginia Line and Highland Ridge Roads (CR 8).

Woodrow lies south of Paw Paw along WV Rt. 9 in both Hampshire and Morgan Counties. Woodrow lies on the eastern flanks of Spring Gap Mountain with Sideling Hill to its east. Woodrow Union Church has served the community since the late 19th Century.

Woodmont is a small community on the Potomac River located immediately to the west of the community of Great Cacapon.

Several other small neighborhoods and crossroads include Duckwall located in Sleepy Creek just east of Johnsons Mill, Greenwood in southeastern Morgan County, Mount Trimble situated around the crossroads at Michael's Chapel near the confluence of Sleepy Creek and Meadow Branch, New Hope located at the confluence of Yellow Spring Run and Sleepy Creek, Redrock Crossing located on River Road (County Route 1) between the communities of Hancock and Sleepy Creek, and Smith Crossroads at the crossroads of the Winchester Grade Road (County Route 13) and County Routes 26 and 13/1.

Seasonal Home Clusters

Largent lies partly in Hampshire County, located on the Cacapon River, about 18 miles southwest of Berkeley Springs along Cacapon Road. Its post office was in operation from 1906 until the 1950s. Residences and businesses in Largent are currently serviced by Paw Paw's post office, therefore, bearing Paw Paw addresses.

Lineburg is an unincorporated area located on the western flanks of Sideling Hill on the Turkey Foot Bend of the Potomac River. The community originally served as a station on the B & O

Railroad, but has since become a location for vacationing weekenders from the Washington D.C. area.

Vacated Communities

Green Ridge is a now uninhabited railroad community located along the old B & O mainline where the Western Maryland Railroad crossed the Potomac River from the Stickpike Tunnel in Maryland. Green Ridge was originally known as Baird and was an operating station on the B & O. Today, it is located within the C & O National Park. A stretch of the Western Maryland's Right-of-Way from Green Ridge to Jerome is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Green Ridge is accessible by way of Baird Lane (CR 12/3) from Hansrote Road (County Route 12/2) at Hansrote. It can also be reached by a number of residential roads in the Nixon Tracts development on Magnolia Ridge from Magnolia to the south.

Jerome is an uninhabited community along the old B & O mainline on the Potomac River. Jerome is also the site of a stretch of the Western Maryland Railroad Right-of-Way from milepost 126 to milepost 160 listed on the National Register. At Jerome, the train-order office was in use until it was closed on September 1, 1959. When it was abandoned by the Chessie System in May 1975, the office was not torn down and is one of the few buildings that remain today in Jerome. There was also an operating connection with the B & O low line at milepost 137 but it was later removed when the B & O abandoned the lowline in 1961. The community and its station on the railroad are rumored to have been named for Jerome Boneparte.

Commercial Areas

Burnt Factory is an unincorporated area located north of Berkeley Springs. It is located along Sand Mine Road (CR 38/1) off of Hancock Road and is the site of the U.S. Silica Company's Berkeley Springs plant. U.S. Silica is a leading producer of high quality ground and unground silica sand, kaolin clay, and aplite. These materials are mostly extracted from Warm Spring Ridge directly across US Rt, 522 from the facility in Burnt Factory.

Ridge is located along Valley Road at its intersection with Fish Hatchery Road (CR 38/10) near the Frederick County, Virginia line. Sleepy Creek and Timber Ridge lie to its east with Warm Springs Ridge lying to its west. It was originally known as Birch Grove, then as Timber Ridge, and then finally as Ridge. Its post office was in operation from 1860 to 1953. Ridge is the home to the Ridge State Fish Hatchery which breeds West Virginia trout used to stock local lakes, such as nearby Sleepy Creek Lake.

New Community Developments

The County has experienced increased interest in new development over the past 5 years reflecting a growing trend in the region as a whole. These new development proposals may consist of a large number of mixed types of units in close proximity to other new developments, primarily in the southern area of the Central Valley planning region. As services in this area of

the County are required to grow to handle this growth, there is also an increased interest in including commercial components around these developments for local convenience and use.

In total, County records include subdivision over the past several decades of more than 7,000 lots on over 30,000 acres. These subdivisions range from just 2 lots being created to nearly 300, scattered across the County from Paw Paw to Cherry Run. Many of these lots have not been improved as outlined in Chapter 1 of this Plan. These subdivisions total 274 equating to an average of 26 lots per subdivision on an average of 4 acres per lot. Many of these larger subdivisions, which have developed into neighborhoods over time are located on the subdivisions map in Chapter 2 of this Plan.

Goals and Objectives

Goals

Although market demand is the primary factor influencing development, it is important for government to guide growth in a way that makes the most efficient use of public services and infrastructure. Goals that strive to balance planning efforts and development pressures include:

- Supporting the direction of development toward appropriate locations and where there are existing available resources and public services;
- Fostering development initiatives that reduce the need to extend these public services in inefficient ways when such extensions are required;
- Encouraging creation of neighborhood centers in densely populated areas; and
- Encouraging the location of community activities (e.g. parks and recreation facilities) where proper access and services are located.

Objectives

Progress toward achievement of these goals may be accomplished by the following objectives:

- Supporting efficient designs that minimize infrastructure costs;
- Encouraging the creation and use of incentives and disincentives to direct development to locations where public services are already available or may be readily provided;
- Promoting development such that growth and access to public services will be concurrent;
- Encouraging opportunities for compatible mixed-use development.