

**KEEDYSVILLE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
LAND USE**

PAST AND PRESENT TRENDS

The Town is an incorporated municipality located in the South Central portion of Washington County and is situated to the west of Boonsboro and east of Sharpsburg; adjacent to the west of the Antietam Battlefield Overlay and Washington County; and to the south and north of Washington County properties.

At one time in its earlier history, Keedysville had a variety of industrial and commercial enterprises clustered along Main Street. Grist and flour mills were the most significant feature of the local economy and the Town's residential housing was primarily located along Main Street. As prosperous farmers continued to patronize local businesses, Keedysville continued to grow in the early twentieth century. Keedysville had a number of small commercial businesses, a newspaper, a hotel, and doctors' offices during this period, and the northern section of Town was developed. Commercial buildings in the older sections of Town received new storefronts during this period. The railroad ceased operation in Keedysville in 1953 and in the 1950s a post office was constructed on the corner of Coffman Farm Road and Main Street. Later in the twentieth century a bypass was constructed to carry traffic on Maryland Route 34 around Keedysville. Late twentieth century single family residential subdivisions had been constructed west of Keedysville between the Main Street and the bypass and along the eastern edge of Town. In 1993, a survey identified a historic district encompassing most of the structures fronting along Main Street and the district was listed on the National Register of Historic Places. (See Keedysville Historic District Map in Appendix A)

During the late 1990s, there was an increase of single family residential development with annexation of the subdivision known as Rockingham. In 1997, the existing Comprehensive Plan was approved. Since that time Stonecrest and Cannon Ridge were additional single family subdivisions that have been approved. An additional annexation of the Milburn property in 2003 resulted in the approval of a 61 single family residential development plan; however, construction has yet to be commenced.

Two Rural Legacy designated parcels have small portions of their acreage in Town with the majority of the property in the County adjacent to the southern Keedysville boundary. Rural Legacy properties are created when property owners make application to the County to designate their properties as such and receive funding from the Department of Natural Resources to do so. Both properties have conservation easements on them and are consistent

BOX: LU-1

The Town Growth Area Boundary is a Washington County Comprehensive Plan designation that encourages growth in those towns that accepted this designation,

The Rural Residential Area designation in the County Plan promotes lower densities in rural areas of the County.

Protected Lands are designations that includes Rural Legacy Easements, Agricultural Preservation Easements, and Permanent Protection areas on Antietam National Battlefield properties.

with the Washington County Comprehensive Plan. Approximately 11 acres are located in Town from the Burtner farm and about 11 acres are on the Flook farm. The Burtner property is a significant historic and Civil War site. The area was the scene of extensive troop activity throughout the Civil War including the Battle of Antietam and the site was used as a field hospital. The house was built in the 1780s and is listed in the Maryland Historic Sites inventory. The Flook farm was founded in 1737 and contains historic Mt. Hebron Road, the Flook historic stone house (1800), Felfoot Bridge (1850), and Mt. Hebron Church site and cemetery (1774). During the Civil War, the area was used by both the 5th and 9th Corps and signal towers and field hospitals were located on the property. Both of the properties have frontage on the Little Antietam Creek and are making environmental efforts to preserve the water quality.

The Town is shown on the County Comprehensive Plan as a Priority Funding Area, as are other municipalities in the State. Priority areas are expected to practice smart growth and wise use of their infrastructure and are eligible for grant's to fund infrastructure projects. A special quality of Keedysville is its close proximity to the Antietam National Battlefield. This major historical landmark has resulted in Keedysville and the County land around it to be designated in the 2005 Washington County Comprehensive Plan as a Rural Residential area; within a Special Program area; and locates Keedysville in close proximity to areas designated as a Permanent Protection area that is placed on the battlefield and on the Rural Legacy areas on their southern boundary.

The 1997 Keedysville Comprehensive Plan's existing Land Use Map depicts the Town of Keedysville as being a predominantly single family residential community. Many of the vacant parcels that were shown on that map are now areas built upon with single family dwelling units or having approvals or infrastructure on the parcels that are proposed for single family development. Some Public/Semi Public parcels are shown and a few commercially designated parcels are shown primarily along Main Street and on the Keedysville bypass road, also known as MD Route 34.

Some areas in town possess environmental or conservation features such as the 100-year flood plain of the Little Antietam Creek, steeply sloped areas, and a small area that is the potential habitat of the an endangered species identified by DNR. In addition, there are parcels that are considered public use due to a governmental use of the property.

The 2002 Washington County Comprehensive Plan showed Keedysville as an incorporated Town; however, multiple acres to the north, south, and west of Town are designated as Rural Residential with Rural Residential Cluster inclusions. As stated in the Introduction Chapter, there is approximately three miles between Keedysville's eastern boundary and the Town Growth Area boundary of Boonsboro which is the most likely area that will create development pressure that may threaten Keedysville's desire to remain a rural town. Areas to the north and east of the Town may be considered areas of future annexation and will be shown as possible future annexable areas on the Land Use Map in the Municipal Growth Element chapter. Decisions to annex are not taken lightly; however, some annexation may be

necessary. In any case, the Town's officials prefer to have any annexation applications come into the Town with a Suburban Residential zoning designation which has less density than other residential zoning in the Town.

There have been a number of changes to the town since approval of the 1997 Plan. This trend has continued because of the desire to have single family residential development in Town which is demonstrated by several housing developments that are in various stages of development occurring on land that was vacant in 1997. The annexed property located where Cannon Ridge subdivision was built now provides 86 single family homes to new residents. In September 2003 a property north of Maryland Route 34 was annexed into town for a single family residential development; however, due to the poor national economy the developer has asked to have his approved preliminary plan extended for a period of one year which was approved by the Planning Commission in early 2009. This trend in single family residential housing has been continuing since adoption of the last Comprehensive Plan and is expected to continue into this planning period.

EXISTING LAND USE

The 1997 Comprehensive Plan lists the following land uses on the Future Land Use Map: single family; two family, and multi- family residential; commercial; public/semi public; agricultural; vacant; conservation; stormwater management; sensitive areas; and potential annexation areas. After analysis of the existing land use classifications, it was determined that some nomenclature and characteristics of these land uses needed to be revamped since some are very specific and are generally not used for future land use designations such as Stormwater Management and Vacant land. In addition, some of the classifications do not correspond well with the current Zoning Ordinance. The update of this Comprehensive Plan will help to bring the two documents more in conformance with each other and will add additional land use classifications that may expand the Zoning Ordinance's designations some time in the future.

When creating Table LU-1, the land uses that correspond to the Zoning Ordinance are listed. Vacant lots and potential annexation areas will be discussed in the Municipal Growth Element relative to the future uses that may occur on them. Although there are approximately 22 acres of agricultural land in Town that are Rural Legacy areas, there is no additional agricultural activity in Town thereby making the Agricultural designation unnecessary. In addition, an agricultural classification is contradictory to the Smart Growth concept adopted by the State, County, and Town. However, the Rural Legacy area designation will protect the two small pieces of land that cross the southern boundary of the Town. The Conservation designation that will be shown on the Future Land Use map would include sensitive and environmental areas.

Table LU-1 shows the Town's land uses and their corresponding Zoning districts that are currently in the adopted Zoning Ordinance. The Residential, Commercial, and Mixed use zoning designations are compatible and may still be used within the Future Land Use Map.

Existing Zoning and Land Uses
Table LU-1

Land Use Type	Corresponding Zoning District
Residential: Low Density	Suburban Residential District (SR)
Residential: Medium Density	Town Residential District (TR)
Commercial: Neighborhood	Neighborhood Commercial (NC)
Traditional Neighborhood Design	Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND)

Table LU-2 contains the existing land use designations and the current zoning in Town and a brief definition of the function of each. After analysis of the existing zoning classifications, it was determined that the nomenclature and characteristics of the current zoning districts needed to be revamped to define density, intensity, and the general types of uses that are permitted in each district and the TND overlay zone. This change should be reflected in the Zoning Ordinance during the next update of that ordinance.

Since the Town has some areas with small lots, the compatibility of uses is of importance. The Zoning Ordinance should be revised as the population grows and higher densities are requested for approval. Zoning regulations such as buffer yards, screening, impervious surface ratios, and landscaping requirements should be reevaluated to be sure different adjacent land uses with higher intensity are compatible. The Planning Commission's evaluation of compatibility and mitigation of any negative land use should take place during development review of future projects. Compatibility issues, also, can be addressed by such instruments as Town Ordinances that address noise issues, adoption of design guidelines which gives guidance concerning location and design of trash enclosures, street amenities, signage regulations, and other infrastructure.

**Land Uses Allowed in Existing Zoning Districts and 1997 Comprehensive Plan Designations
Table¹ LU- 2**

Zoning Classification	Definition
Residential : Low Density; Suburban Residential District (SR)	Intended to preserve and protect the primarily single-family detached residential character of the district and to keep these areas free from the land uses that are incompatible with and/or might adversely affect these single-family neighborhoods. Development is permitted at a moderate density. Maximum density is 2.4 dwelling units per acre.
Residential: Medium Density; Town Residential (TR)	Intended for continuation of the Town's downtown area which contains a mix of residential, commercial, and public service uses. It provides for development of a pleasant living environment with multiple housing types, parks, and other commercial low impact land uses that complement residential and services that are compatible with residential use and provide daily needs of the residents. Maximum density is 4.36 dwellings per acres which meets the Smart Growth requirement.
Commercial; Neighborhood Commercial District	Intended to provide establishment of commercial services, shopping, professional offices, civic buildings, general office uses, and other services that may be permitted in Town Residential

¹Table has been prepared using the 1997 Keedysville Comprehensive Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

In addition to the three land use designations that Keedysville currently uses, there are two overlay districts that are included in the Zoning Ordinance that should be included in this Comprehensive Plan. They are Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND) and National Historic Preservation District.

The Traditional Neighborhood Design Overlay (TND) may be placed on a property which is approved by the Planning Commission. It provides for more flexible standards in the development of a mixed-use project that may include a residential single family, multi-family, and limited neighborhood commercial much like the downtown district. The TND density of four units per acre and up to a maximum density of twelve units per acre can be modified by the Planning Commission based on the determination that the proposed development achieves excellence in site design, architecture, and other amenities.

The Keedysville Historic Overlay is a national designation which focuses on historic properties that are located along Main Street. Figure APA-4 in Appendix A shows this boundary. This designation is significant and shapes the character of the town and provides architectural design that should be considered when future development projects are reviewed and approved.

The Housing Element contains information relative to the Historic Structures that exist in Town and a brief history of the Town's historic district.

PROPOSED LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

The following Comprehensive Plan land use classifications shown on Table LU-3 should be utilized to formulate the next revision of the Zoning Ordinance. If these land use classifications were adopted, some text and district nomenclature would, also, need to be amended in the Zoning Ordinance to be in compliance with this adopted Comprehensive Plan. One major change from this and the 1997 Comprehensive Plan, is that there is a range of densities for Low and Medium density Residential in the proposed Comprehensive Plan. It is expected that as the Town increases in population, there may be higher density development in Town.

Although the Town may be annexing areas in the future, the cost of land will continue to rise and a single family homes may not be an option for all who live in the Town. Generally younger families and senior citizens will start with smaller living quarters and want smaller living quarters in later years, respectively.

BOX: LU-2

The American Planning Association defines an overlay district as: A special District or zone which addresses special land use circumstances or environmental safeguards and is super-imposed over the underlying zoning districts. Permitted uses in the underlying zoning district shall continue subject to compliance with the regulations of the overlay or district.

The Traditional Neighborhood Design may be applied to any property with review and approval of a master plan by the Planning Commission.

The Mayor and Council may from time to time amend the Historic district boundaries if they find it appropriate.

**Future Land Use Classifications
Table LU-3**

Land Use	Recommended Density	Recommended Uses
Neighborhood Commercial	Variable	Retail and office uses within or in close proximity to residential areas that provide residents pedestrian access to essential and convenience services needed on a daily basis.
Residential, Low Density	3.5 to 8 DU/AC	Single-family, detached, attached, and multi-family, and residential accessory uses. Neighborhood-serving retail and services provided that land uses are compatible with and do not adversely affect residential neighborhoods.
Residential, Medium Density	9 to 12 DU/AC	Single-family, detached, attached, and multi-family, and residential accessory uses. Neighborhood-serving retail and services provided that land uses are compatible with and do not adversely affect residential neighborhoods.
Residential, Traditional Neighborhood Design (TND)	Overlay District 4 to 12 DU/AC	The Planning Commission may modify the density of a TND based on such elements as excellence of design, excessive landscaping and open space, recreational land, and architectural design.
Recreation and Parkland	N/A	Lands and facilities generally owned and operated by the Town or other level of government for the purpose of recreation or public open space.
Conservation and Sensitive Areas	N/A	Publicly or Privately owned environmentally sensitive areas including steep slopes, non-tidal wetlands, floodplains, and endangered species.
Historic District Overlay	9-12 DU/AC	The Historic District follows the underlying zoning since it is an overlay district. In this case it will follow the Medium Density Residential Comprehensive Plan designation which would be equated to the Town Residential Zoning Classification.
Rural Legacy Designated / Agriculture	N/A	Land Uses will remain as they were at the time of placing the Rural Legacy easement on the property.

Prepared by ARRO Consulting, Inc.

The Proposed Land Use Map shows Keedysville as it is today with only few differences: additional County Land has been included to show future possible annexation areas and vacant land that has been annexed but has not yet commenced construction.

Proposed Land Use Classifications¹

Table LU-4

Land Use	Acreage	Percent
Neighborhood Commercial	6.37	1 %
Residential Low Density	392.28	73 %
Residential Medium Density	98.89	18 %
Parkland and Recreation	10.08	2 %
Conservation	11.37	2%
Rural Legacy/ Agricultural	20.08	4 %
Total Town Area	539.07	100 %
Historic Overlay District	96.77	18 %
Total Town Area	539.15	100 %

¹ The Right of Way for Md. Route 34 is not included in this calculation. Prepared by ARRO Consulting, Inc. from the Proposed Land Use Map.

Table LU-4 identifies the proposed land use classifications by land area.

FUTURE LAND USE CLASSIFICATIONS

Approximately 392 acres of Residential Low Density land is shown located throughout the Town. These areas are zoned Suburban Residential and include many single family homes on areas that have been annexed into the Town in the last 10 years. A large tract of land on the north side of Maryland Route 34 has a preliminary plan approval for 61 lots; but, has not started construction due to the poor economy. Residential Medium Density consists of approximately 99 acres and is primarily found along Main Street and consists of many homes that have contributed to the National Historic Preservation District designation that is overlaid along Main Street. This Comprehensive Plan designation equates to the Town Residential Zoning District. Town Commercial areas are somewhat limited and consist of 6.37 acres; however, the Boonsboro Town Growth Area that has shopping, restaurants, and services is less than three miles away. Some business services, and retail uses with little impact on residential neighborhoods are permitted by Special Exception in the Residential Districts. Since the little Antietam Creek runs through the center of Town and is adjacent to development, the Town is planning on adopting a buffer yard measured from the center of the stream to help to preserve water quality. It is expected that passive recreation could take place along this buffer when there are not flood events. Parkland and Recreation makes up approximately 10 acres which consists of the Town's park and ownership of part of the B & O railway alignment which may become more than a passive park.

In their efforts to plan land uses within their town, the Planning Commission and elected officials have realized that it is important to enhance the town by continuing to provide recreational opportunities to the citizens and tourists, ensure that there is a mix of residential housing types for their citizens of all ages, and approve necessary commercial services that will serve their population with their commercial establishments to meet their daily needs.

LAND USES ADJACENT TO KEEDYSVILLE

On the northeast and northwest boundary of Town lie parcels in Washington County where there has been some interest in annexation into the Town. The south/southeast boundary has the Rural Legacy designations and some existing residential communities. The south/southwest contains additional residential development and is in very close proximity to the National Antietam Battlefield Overlay.

During preparation of this Comprehensive Plan, the possibility of annexation of adjacent land areas was analyzed and it appears that there is interest from some adjacent property owners to request annexation some time in the future. Some of the properties are large and are solely owned; others are smaller lots owned by a number of different property owners.

LAND USE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

Land use development regulations are generally thought to secure public safety, promote health and welfare of citizens, provide for adequate light and air and conservation of natural resources, facilitate adequate provisions of transportation, water, sewerage, recreation, landscaping, and conservation of natural resources. With adoption of a Comprehensive Plan, review of Land Development Ordinances should take place to insure that regulations are compatible with the goals and polices of the Comprehensive Plan. This Plan has a list of all polices and strategies in the Implementation chapter that will help guide the staff, public officials, and appropriate agencies and give direction as to the proper authority that is responsible for the completion of each task that is needed to carry out the Comprehensive Plan.

A summary of land use issues that were indentified in the citizen survey, and preceded drafting of this Plan, is found in bolded text below with policy suggestions that could be implemented with adoption of this Plan.

❖ Enhance streetscape improvements.

A number of respondents of the citizen survey felt that attractive streetscape, lighting in streets, and beautification of the Town were attributes that they felt were very important or fairly important.

Several types of land use regulations can create a better streetscape, landscaping, and street lighting which would make Main Street and other areas in Town more attractive. It is important that as the Town grows that it continues its efforts to be aesthetically pleasing and vibrant. Since the State Highway Administration owns and maintains Main Street, better

known to SHA as 845A, the Town would need to request streetscape improvements and funding from them. It is noticeable that the sidewalks are in poor shape and should be repaired and that streetscape improvements need to be done. Unfortunately the economic situation has curtailed some of the projects in the SHA work program at this time. However, pedestrians are at risk walking on sidewalks that are in need of repair or in the street and such construction should be conducted concurrently with SHA improvements. The Town should request streetscape improvements to be sure they are considered when SHA is determining necessary improvements.

A Street Tree list identifies the requirements to determine the appropriate species of trees to maintain a tree-lined street without the potential conflict of underground utilities or root invasion of sidewalks and macadam. When approving development plans, the Planning Commission should require a variety of species in its street right of way to prevent decimation of trees during a tree blight or disease event or that would stand up to a wind or ice storm. Such a list could be added to the Zoning Ordinance and could, also, be used in planting of all public areas in the Town. Developers should be encouraged to follow the list on private land for the same reasons.

Other benefits from trees and landscaping are the uptake of surface runoff that is not captured by conventional storm water management. Under natural and undeveloped conditions, surface runoff can range from ten to thirty percent; however, a developed site can increase that percentage to fifty percent or more which may result in ponding of water, onsite flooding, erosion, and degradation of water quality entering the Little Antietam. Low Impact Development (LID) techniques can reduce such effects and can be a requirement of the Zoning Ordinance and final site plan approval.

❖ **Historic District.**

The National Historic Preservation District was an attribute that the survey indicated was very important.

Design guidelines have been prepared in the Community Facilities Chapter to enable developers to be aware of what the Town would like to see when reviewing development plans in the Historic District and to allow the Planning Commission to use them to review projects or to solidify some or all of them by amending the Zoning Ordinance to require design standards, if desired. The guidelines apply to site design and building architecture so they may be used to encourage appropriate design.

❖ **Encourage retail services that will add viability to the downtown area but not impact the neighborhood. Do not over develop the Town; preserve the character and charm of our family friendly small town. Although additional commercial services were mentioned in the survey by respondents, the response was mixed and appeared to be in favor of smaller retail shops.**

The Comprehensive Plan needs to demonstrate through its goals, policies, and strategies, the importance of a balance between the provision of services for the citizens of the town and the importance of retaining the charm which are goals that are not contrary to each other. Mixed use can be very compatible if the correct regulations are in the Zoning Ordinance and there is adequate review of non-residential projects. Buffering, screening, requirement of off-street parking and the like can mitigate low impact uses among residential development. Parking for commercial businesses is a concern due to the competition for parking at this time and may render certain sites in Town not useable for Commercial establishments since a use may not be able to provide off-street parking required by the Zoning Ordinance for a particular business.

LAND USE GOALS

1. Continue to maintain and improve the quality of life for all residents of Keedysville and insure that future growth reflects the goals, polices, and desires of its citizens.
2. Make adequate provisions for appropriate distribution of residential, commercial, and recreational land uses with a focus on preserving the Town's small town character, while maintaining and enhancing the quality of the existing residential neighborhoods.
3. Manage growth so that it keeps pace with public infrastructure and provide the necessary infrastructure for low to medium density residential, commercial, and office uses in suitable areas.
4. Provide cultural, historical, recreational and environmental opportunities in Town by encouraging historic preservation, and supporting the library and other cultural events.
5. Review design guidelines for new development, infill on vacant lots, and adaptive reuse projects that will complement and enhance Keedysville's charm and historic community.
6. Provide for efficient use of land, ensure safeguards for environmentally sensitive areas, and promote high quality development and rehabilitation through the use of flexible and innovative development controls, and streamlined site plan review.
7. Encourage citizen participation in the land use planning decisions.
8. Encourage and incorporate Green building promoted by Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and Low Impact Development (LID) techniques in future development decisions and promote enhancing streetscapes whenever possible.
9. Support a variety of housing types.
10. Encourage the County to participate establishing Rails to Trails alignment on the B & O abandoned rail line for additional recreation in Town.
11. Continue to provide streamlined development review and provide land use regulations that provide for developers to finance any impacts to the community as a result of the new development. Proffers should be documented in development agreements with the Town. Revision to the Zoning Ordinance will be necessary to accomplish new regulations.

POLICIES AND IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGIES

- Policy LU.1:** Promote new or redevelopment that incorporates environmental resources as site amenities. This can be incorporated in the Zoning Ordinance as a low percentage of Stormwater Management (SWM) and be increased if it proves beneficial to the Town.
- Policy LU.2:** Require new or redevelopment projects to provide handicap accessible access on pedestrian walkways and public sidewalks.
- Policy LU.3:** A Town Tree list should be prepared and adopted so that the appropriate species of Street Trees and landscaping for public and private projects would be used which may provide a cost savings to the Town. Appropriate street trees and landscaping should be added to the Town's gateways.
- Policy LU.4:** Provide incentives for adaptive reuse of historic structures and incentives to preserve or document historic structures in Town rather than demolish them.
- Policy LU.5:** Review and amend the Development Regulations to expand and further define screening and buffer yard requirements when incompatible uses are adjacent to each other; and, to accommodate future increased density.
- Policy LU.6:** Continue to require Best Management Practices and low-impact development (LID) in site design techniques to minimize the impact of infrastructure on adjacent environmentally sensitive areas.
- Policy LU.7:** Avoid potential negative impacts on the built environment through site design with emphasis on facility access, building heights, scale, massing, and setbacks.
- Policy LU.8:** Require developers to partner with the Town to fund infrastructure improvements associated with their development and develop and approve developer agreements for all proffers made during the review and approval of final site plans or preliminary plats.
- Policy LU.9:** Reduce sign pollution by amending land use regulations to promote the use of monumental signs and avoid pole and temporary signs. Encourage residents to clear sidewalks of obstacles and vehicles that impede handicap accessibility.
- Policy LU.10:** Encourage new development and redevelopment to be compatible with the character of existing or already approved planned development in the neighborhood.

Policy LU.11: Avoid commercial traffic from traveling in Residential neighborhoods.

Policy LU.12: Prohibit inappropriate land uses in the well head protection overlay when established.

Policy LU.13: Practice good site design and protect environmental resources when approving new development.

Policy LU.14: Ensure that any increased impact or strain on Town infrastructure that is results from new development is financially shared by the developer of such development.

Policy LU.15: Establish fee in lieu of parking, parkland, and recreational facilities and resources required by new development in the Zoning Ordinance so that new development pays its fair share.