

LAND USE FACT SHEET

INTRODUCTION

The General Plan's land use goal provides a platform which underlies the relationships and connections among the other goal topics. The land use goal focuses on the pattern of land use in Montgomery County.

This fact sheet presents information about the major types of land uses in Montgomery County: housing; employment; farmland and rural open space; and recreation, parks and community facilities. Transportation, the environment, community identity and design and the County's relationships with other neighboring governments are not highlighted but form an underlying set of opportunities and constraints to the general land use pattern. Together, all the goals and objectives give guidance to area master plans and functional plans which set specific locations for individual land uses for each piece of property in the County.

The fact sheet concludes with a discussion of the overall land use pattern and the County's supply of land. Additional information about housing and the environment is available in the previous fact sheets on those topics. Information on transportation, community identity and design, economic activity, and regionalism will be available in later fact sheets.

I. CHANGES IN LAND USE

The amount of land in Montgomery County is fixed; how it is used is not. The land area of Montgomery County is approximately 495 square miles, or about 320,000 acres. Information is available on how the general land uses of the County have changed between 1960 and 1991. The following are some of the more significant observations from a comparison between the two time periods.

*** Between 1960 and 1991, the amount of developed land has increased over three times.** In 1960, about 49,000 acres of the County had been developed while in 1991 the corresponding

amount is about 155,000 acres. These amounts represent about 15 and 48 percent of the total land area, respectively. Developed land includes residential, community facilities, parks and recreation, commercial and industrial, as well as other uses such as right-of-ways for transportation and utilities.

Summary of Land Use, 1960-1991
(in Acres)

	1960		1991	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Single-Family	23,700	7.5%	86,800	26.7%
Multi-Family	700	0.2%	6,700	2.1%
Commercial	1,000	0.3%	5,600	1.7%
Industrial	1,000	0.3%	2,800	0.9%
Loc.Gov., Institutions, Fed. Install, other open	10,600	3.3%	22,800	7.0%
Park & Rec.*	6,800	2.1%	24,100	7.4%
Vac. Forest, Ag.	263,400	82.8%	167,300	51.6%
Other, including ROW	10,800	3.4%	8,400	2.6%
TOTAL **	318,000	100.0%	324,500	100.0%

* Some parkland is included in other categories.

** Totals vary due to differences in tabulations of rights-of way and islands.

Source: Montgomery County Planning Department

*** Residential uses are the most common land use, accounting for about 60 percent of the developed land in 1991.** In 1991, there were about 93,000 acres of land in residential use. The next most common developed uses were park and recreation uses with about 24,000 acres. Other community facilities, government and other open space accounted for about 23,000 acres. Office, commercial, retail and industrial uses had about 8,400 acres while transportation and utility right-of-ways accounted for about 6,000 acres in the developed areas.

*** The proportions among the developed land uses, while having changed somewhat, remained relatively stable between 1960 and 1991.** Between 1960 and 1991, the table shows that the proportion of developed land devoted to residential and commercial uses increased as did land for parks, recreation and open space. Smaller proportional increases occurred in community facilities,