

# Questions and Answers

About the Investing in Workers and Workplaces Planning Effort



## What is the purpose of this plan?

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The plan is intended to:

- (1) express a strategic vision for accomplishing economic development goals while maintaining community character and improving the lives of current and future residents;
- (2) expand the non-residential tax base;
- (3) prioritize target industries for growth; and
- (4) ensure an adequate supply of land for the redevelopment or development of employment sites.

## Why expand the non-residential tax base?

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The property tax generates roughly half of the County's funding. Expanding the non-residential tax base can ease the burden on residents while allowing the County to continue providing high-quality services like public education, fire and police protection, parks and recreation, and programs and facilities for seniors.

## What are some known employment issues?

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Frederick County's population is growing, especially our senior population. Workers in the medical field are needed to meet current demand and future needs. Employment opportunities that pay a living wage and provide a career path are also needed for residents who do not have a college education. Maintaining a full range of accessible and affordable skills training and educational opportunities to best equip the County's workforce for current and future jobs is a critical challenge for our community.

The lack of affordable childcare and affordable housing are also challenges for workers and employers.

## How will the plan address data centers?

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The County's economic development strategy includes data centers, but this use has not been prioritized over other industries in the planning process. Advisory Group members identified the competition for industrially-zoned land – the only zones where data centers are allowed – as a concern for other target industries as well as the County's many small businesses.

## What area of the County does this plan focus on?

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The Advisory Group identified several existing community growth areas and places near existing growth areas for staff and county officials to consider as a draft plan is developed. These include the growth areas for the City of Frederick, the City of Brunswick, and the Town of Thurmont and the area south of I-70 in the Town of New Market growth area. Others include the Jefferson Tech Park area, the Urbana/270 area, and the area surrounding the Eastalco/Quantum property north of Adamstown.

## How many acres of land will be rezoned to implement this plan?

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The County has not established an acreage goal. The planning process will include consideration of infill development and redevelopment opportunities. Staff will also review sites that are already zoned for development, but that may not have the zoning designation needed to support target industries, such as life sciences and biotechnology.



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