CARROLL 2030 INITIAL FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION POINTS

(DOCUMENT TO BE USED TO INVOLVE AND ENGAGE THE PUBLIC)

INTRODUCTION

In January 2013, Carroll County Commissioner Doug Howard invited a team of community leaders, representing a wide range of interests and activities, to meet, discuss, and prepare a report identifying what they saw as needs that should be met in order to position Carroll County for continued success in the future.

This report represents the careful thinking of that group, the Carroll 2030 Workgroup. The Workgroup was almost unanimous in identifying the top priority areas that Carroll County will have to invest in over the next 15 years. The Workgroup membership, draft reports and background materials can be found at vision.carr.org. The next step in the Carroll 2030 process is for YOU to add your opinion and thoughts to those of the Workgroup.

Do you agree with these priorities? Have additional priorities to add? Want to change the priorities? How much are you willing to invest? Are we investing enough? Not enough? Too much? Please forward your comments and thoughts to _____.

We will incorporate the additional input into the Carroll 2030 report and present it to the Board of Commissioners, with a request that they consider involving County staff in determining specific costs and a plan of action for implementation.

BACKGROUND

Nine clusters of activity were addressed: Technology; Business; Education; Housing, Transportation, and Infrastructure; Health and Well Being; Municipalities; Public Safety; Arts, Culture, and Recreation; and Agriculture and Environment.

Many participants representing these clusters met for the first time at Carroll 2030 meetings. Cluster representatives learned that they shared similar challenges and could work together in developing long-term solutions. This spirit of cooperation has been a hallmark of the process and has the potential to lead to shared use of resources in designing future capital projects and addressing operational needs.

Each cluster presented its vision for the future and identified top needs to be addressed to support the vision. The 2030 Workgroup then ranked the needs and came up with a list of priorities. The priorities were:

1. Develop high speed internet connectivity and a coordinated technology infrastructure.

2. Develop an adequate infrastructure for water, sewer and roads.

3. Provide superb educational opportunities that provide the education and training to meet employment needs.

4. Maintain strong emergency response capability for EMS, Fire, and Police.

THEMES RUNNING THROUGHOUT ALL CLUSTERS

Increase Carroll County's sustainability as an attractive place to live and work by:

• Providing citizens and businesses both free and paid access to high-speed technology.

• Ensuring proper staffing and funding of all public entities needed to both maintain and increase quality services.

• Properly maintaining and modernizing our current infrastructure including public buildings, roads and city and town Main Streets.

• Recognizing the changing and increasing population and adapting public services accordingly.

• Sustaining the rural ambiance of the county while preserving an ecological balance.

• Providing citizens with diverse cultural and recreational activities within the County.

• Recognizing that federal and state mandates impact decisions.

PRIORITIES

TECHNOLOGY

A major theme for all Carroll 2030 clusters is access to low-cost or free broadband services for all Carroll County residents and businesses to provide the foundation for future technological advances. In a 2013 survey of the Chamber of Commerce membership, 95% of respondents stated that broadband access was *Important* or *Very Important* to businesses located in Carroll County and key to attracting new businesses. Based on the recognized importance of broadband

access today and in the future, what will Carroll County's technology infrastructure need to look like in 2030 to make this a reality?

<u>Providing the Foundation</u>

- Remove barriers to full implementation of fiber throughout the County.

- Develop a well-defined and easy to implement "last mile" service provision for linking business to the fiber optic backbone.

- Set aside a portion of the Economic Development Infrastructure Investment Fund (EDIIF) to cover the current maintenance of the network and the design and construction of the expanded network.

- Provide matching grant funds from the EDIIF to help local businesses connect to the fiber network.

- Partner with municipalities to bring "last mile" network infrastructure to the pockets of higher density home and business in and around the towns.

- Continue an ongoing annual investment in engineering, equipment, physical infrastructure, maintenance and internet services to create a connected Carroll County.

- Leverage the existing and proposed fiber network to increase revenues by leasing the fiber to businesses.

<u>The Future of Technology</u>

- Prepare for the impact of technological advances like robots, drones, driverless cars, etc. on both the public and private sectors.

- Arrange for services to utilize robotic companions, interactive voice communication and other technologies to minimize the effects of aging and isolation.

- Embrace interactive technology so that individuals can participate in high quality, online educational opportunities outside the classroom.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Carroll County and its eight incorporated municipalities have the responsibility of providing and maintaining a physical infrastructure of roads, water, and sewer systems, as well as a human infrastructure system of service providers supporting commercial and industrial development and providing for the health, safety, and well being of its residents. Under the State of Maryland mandate for smart growth, new growth should take place in areas where this infrastructure already exists—and it exists in the urban areas.

Roads

- Ensure adequate resources to maintain current infrastructure of roads.

- Provide necessary road improvements through key business corridors.

- Provide a countywide public transportation system to connect workplaces and shopping areas.

- Provide additional "shovel ready" business park lots with access to water, sewer and broadband.

Water and Sewer

- Ensure adequate water and sewer resources to allow growth to occur in Carroll County, particularly in municipal areas where state policies direct smart growth to occur.

- Explore better ways to store and use rainwater for agricultural uses.

- Work collaboratively within the Water Resources Coordinating Council (WRCC) to ensure that mandated regulations for improved water quality, upgraded waste water treatment plants and storm water management are implemented and brought into compliance.

Other

- Maintain current ratios for recreation lands and explore increased field development.

- Continue the preservation of agricultural land (100,000 acres by 2020) and its significance to the economic engine of the County.

- Include strategies for mobility and wellness for the aging population.

- Construct a professionally managed performing arts center to accommodate larger scale events and increased attendance. Consider public/private partnerships to fund and manage the center.

- Extend the airport runway.

EDUCATION

The Education cluster included the CCPS, CCPL and CCC. The interrelatedness of emerging technologies is anticipated to play an important role in the provision of educational services in the future. Also noted as having an impact on future educational services is evolving federal and state mandates on local program as well as shifting financial commitments from federal, state and local government agencies.

<u>Assumptions</u>

- The role of education will continue to increase due to rapidly changing workplace demands that require constant lifelong learning.

- Carroll County will continue to grow and our community demographics will shift as we become a more diverse community.

- Access to and management of technology and data will be critical to avoid a have/have-not community.

- Community will increasingly look to the education sector to validate external online training, credentialing and proficiency.

- Community expects up-to-date and modern facilities.

- Access to technology, data, power and services during emergencies will be critical.

- Technology needs to be inter-operational among educational institutions.

- We must embrace a culture of strategic innovation and collaboration.

<u>Top Priorities</u>

- Expand broadband and wireless infrastructure.

- Re-commit to including infrastructure technology funds in the CIP.

- Invest in modernization and repurposing of existing space in public educational facilities to meet shifting needs of the community and to prepare the workforce to compete in a global marketplace.

  - Create technology-loaded collaborative workspaces to prepare students and community for new technologies in the workplace

- Build a K-12/CCC joint career technology center.

- Continue to support economic and business development.

- Continue to pursue strong partnerships to meet continuing educational needs.

PUBLIC SAFETY

With a strong partnership between its municipalities, emergency services volunteers, and the State of Maryland, the Carroll County Law Enforcement Community is comprised of 230 full-time sworn officers serving residents through seven law enforcement agencies: the Carroll County Sheriff's Office, Hampstead, Manchester, Maryland State, Sykesville, Taneytown, and Westminster Police Departments. Many of the County's law enforcement officers also serve as members in one of Carroll's fourteen volunteer fire and ambulance companies. Excepting a

small number of contractual paramedics and drivers, ambulance and fire services are provided by volunteers.

- Provide all ambulance, fire and police services with seamless access to local and regional crime, warrant, and intelligence data on demand without burdening the dispatcher.

- Transition from volunteer ambulance and fire services to a career fire rescue system supported by volunteers.

- Expand partnerships with the University of Maryland to offer Certificate and Associate degree programs in Fire Science, Emergency Medical Service and Emergency Management, and expand curriculum and degree programs with CCPS and CCC.

- Investigate the establishment of a law enforcement program with CCPS Career and Technology Center similar to the Fire Cadet Program.

- Locate ambulance, fire, and police apparatus along the busy MD 26 corridor in a shared police/fire/public safety facility.

- Maintain adequate levels of police, fire and emergency personnel to meet the needs of our expanding population.