

## ***B.2 History of Suburbanization in Maryland***

Suburbanization throughout Maryland was largely influenced by the same trends that propelled the movement across the United States. Like most areas, suburban development in the areas around the state's urban centers was directly related to transportation routes, including railroad lines, streetcar/trolley lines, early road networks, and freeway construction. In addition, the location and layout of suburbs were influenced by such factors as the ethnic heritage and the income of prospective residents. There has been very little information written on the trends and history of suburbanization in Maryland in general, partially due to the fact that prior to World War II, only Baltimore and Washington, D.C. were involved in the suburbanization trend to any great extent. The discussion of Baltimore is presented because Maryland's suburban trends began in Baltimore and therefore give a more complete understanding of suburbanization in Maryland. Montgomery and Prince George's counties are only treated in a minor way in this section, being more closely associated with the trends of suburbanization in Washington, D.C. than in Maryland. The two counties are presented more fully in Section B.3, History of Suburbanization in the Washington, D.C. Area.

### ***B.2.1 Agricultural-Industrial Transition Period (1815-1870)***

In Maryland, the majority of transportation routes originated from major cities, namely Baltimore and later Washington, D.C., and between ports, markets, and milling centers. The four Maryland counties that tended toward suburbanization surrounded those areas, specifically Baltimore County, Anne Arundel County, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County (Callcott 1985, 20). The development of suburban Baltimore was largely influenced by the trend of cities towards annexation, and the problems associated with incorporating non-urban areas into the city limits. After 1776, the city of Baltimore grew well beyond the municipal boundaries, and by the early 1800s, a large urban population lived in "the precincts" adjoining the city. The "precincters" comprised almost one third of Baltimore County's population, and the lands owned by the precincters accounted for over forty percent of the county's total property value (Arnold 1978, 110). City officials sought to capture that wealth by annexing the territory into the city. In the city's 1816 appeal to the state government, they concentrated on the need for a coordinated city plan, and failed to mention their desire for an increased tax base. The city won its petition, and the extensive area added to the city in 1817 contained almost all urban growth within the new boundaries until after the Civil War (Arnold 1978, 111).

Baltimore had an early history of "suburban" development. Only a few houses had been built near the Washington Monument in Baltimore in 1839 when two builders, James and Samuel Canby, proposed a large-scale development of middle-class housing on the western outskirts of town. They bought a thirty-acre tract and offered a square in the middle as a public park. Franklin Square became the first of many similar squares, including Lafayette, Harlem Park, Perkins Spring, Johnson, Madison and Collington. The early suburbs were accessible through the services of an omnibus in 1844. Within the first decade, Washington Square, Fells Point, Canton, Towsontown, Ashland Square, and Franklin Square could be reached by omnibus (Green 1980, 98).

In 1851, disputes over sharing the costs of several public institutions caused the city and county to separate, resulting in the relocation of the county government to Towsontown, seven miles north of Baltimore. Both remained wary; the county distrusted the city's landholdings outside the city boundaries that it used for its almshouses, parks, and water system. The city residents were upset at the use of city schools, fire protection, and police by non-taxpaying county residents.

After 1864 and the enactment of the State Constitution, Baltimore City could no longer annex a portion of the county without the consent of the residents of the area. Baltimore County had inserted the clause requiring a vote for annexation to prevent its most valuable areas from being annexed by the city. Since the city still provided many services to the county without receiving tax money in return, the city government felt justified in asking for an expansion of the city boundaries. The county residents opposed the higher taxes associated with living within the city boundaries, and voted down the annexation in 1874.

### B.2.2 Industrial/Urban Dominance Period (1870-1930)

Access provided by horse-car lines and later electric streetcars encouraged further development outside of city lines in the 1870s and 1880s. Fashionable townhouses were built along Madison Avenue and McCulloch Street, on Eutaw Place, and in Bolton Hill. Such diverse areas as Arlington, Highlandtown, Huntingdon, Mt. Washington, Peabody Heights, and Pimlico began to grow as a result of the more rapid public transportation systems (Green 1980, 144). The suburban problem rose to prominence in Baltimore once again. An area called "the Belt" had developed, encircling the city on three sides with industrial and residential settlements of approximately 20,000 people by 1874. The growth occurred just over the city line, and extended along the new suburban horse-car lines up the Jones Falls Valley. Baltimore once again annexed territory in 1888, assuming control of over two-thirds of the suburban area opened by the horse-car lines between 1865 and 1888 (Arnold 1978, 117).

Baltimore streetcar lines were electrified in the 1890s, stimulating a new suburban belt outside the municipal boundaries. Modest towns like Pikesville, and Catonsville grew along the trolley lines that extended out from Baltimore. By 1910 motor vehicles and improved roads opened an even larger area. County citizens developed organizations to encourage improved conditions in the area north of the city. The success of their efforts removed some of the desire of county citizens to become part of the city in order to gain city utilities, but enough county citizens still voted in favor of annexation, allowing the City of Baltimore to annex more land in 1918 (Callcott 1985, 20).

More than other areas in Maryland, Baltimore had a large ethnic population, spurred by intense immigration from Europe as well as migration of former slaves from the south, that lived in various neighborhoods around the city. The city was home to the nation's largest free African-American community during the antebellum period. African-Americans occupied enclaves on the east and west sides of the business district, with the elite living in the area north of the city, from Mt. Vernon Square to beyond Guilford and

Roland Park. The Jewish population lived in an area to the northwest and moved farther and farther out as African-Americans began to occupy a larger portion of the city. An Italian enclave occupied the western area of the city, and a portion of the northeast area. There was a German population to the southwest; German, Greek, and Irish communities were located in the south; immigrants from Poland and Czechoslovakia settled in the southeast; Polish and Greek communities were settled in the east, and a mixed community of Italians and Germans was located in the northeast (Callcott 1985, 2). The Jewish population in Baltimore was from an early period a strong force in the city. A small community of Jewish immigrants arrived in Baltimore after the American Revolution, mostly from England and Holland. By 1826 they had received the right to vote. Along with a second migration of German Jews in the 1850s, the earliest Jewish settlers of Baltimore were middle-class, worked in merchandising, skilled trades, and professional jobs, and lived mostly in the Fells Point area and the eastern half of the city. By 1880 there were approximately 10,000 Jewish citizens in Baltimore, comprising about 1.5 percent of the city's population. Around the turn of the century, there was a large influx of Jewish immigrants as a result of the organized massacres taking place in Russia, the Baltic States, and Poland. Mostly poor, this Jewish population entered the garment industry working for the German Jews who were already well-established in the city. Originally occupying the area around Eutaw Place, the German Jews moved further out to Forest Park and Pimlico as the Russian Jews began to settle the Eutaw Place area. In the 1920s, and later in the 1950s, the wealthier Jewish community migrated to the outer suburbs, first towards Fallstaff and Pikesville and later to Stevenson and Randallstown as African-Americans moved into the neighborhoods which had previously been Jewish enclaves.

Though much of the growth around Baltimore occurred haphazardly around transportation routes, one of the premier planned suburban developments of the nineteenth century was built in Baltimore. Roland Park began in 1890 with the decision of William Edmunds to develop 100 acres of property, located west of Jones Falls and north of the mill town of Hampden. Edmunds invited Edward H. Bouton from Kansas City to develop the acreage, including the provision of roads, water, electric lighting, gas, sewage disposal, telephone service, postal service, fire and police protection, school and church sites, a shopping center, a country club, parks and landscaping, and good architectural construction. Bouton sought the services of Frederick Law Olmsted, Jr. to design the plats in 1897. Following the natural topography, the design of the area embodies the natural planning concepts of the late-nineteenth century (Gilbert and Whitaker 1989, 22-25). Two-thirds of all the buildings were designed or constructed by the Roland Park Company. Though purchasers were not required to use the company architect Edward L. Palmer, Jr., they were required to follow design covenants placed on the deed, and plans had to undergo review by the architectural review board (Gilbert and Whitaker 1989, 34). Olmsted and the developer devised a set of deed restrictions governing the use of property, maintenance, and common responsibilities for the operation of a community organization (Reps 1965, 348). In addition, Roland Park had its own club, institutions, churches, shopping center, and services such as street maintenance and garbage collection (Gilbert and Whitaker 1989, 46). It was serviced by a streetcar line from Baltimore. By 1913, the Roland Park Company was offering lots for sale in Guilford. This proved so popular that in 1924 the company bought Homeland, the estate of David Perine, ancestor of one of the

Revolution era settlers and craftsmen of Baltimore, and began to plan for its development (Green 1980, 186).

Additional information on Roland Park and other planned suburbs can be found in Harry Schalck's article, "Planning Roland Park: 1891-1900," in the *Maryland Historical Magazine*, and in John Reys book *The Making of Urban America: A History of Planning in the United States*.

### B.2.3 Modern Period (1930-1960)

Through the early 1940s Western Maryland, Baltimore and Montgomery Counties, and the Eastern Shore, all shared a fear of the city, the suburbs, and the future. (Callcott 1985, 19). Western Maryland, Baltimore County, and Montgomery County were involved in conflicting agrarian and industrial economies, while southern Maryland still identified with its tobacco and slavery heritage, including a society still strictly divided along class lines. By 1940 most people thought of suburbanites in Maryland as rich commuters, despite the growth of the middle-class into suburban areas (Callcott 1985, 20).

The Depression prompted a surprising amount of development in the counties of Baltimore, Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince George's, which grew by 38 percent in the 1930s. (Callcott 1985, 19-20). Growth was encouraged by the New Deal's Federal Housing Authority and the Home Owners Loan Association.

For the people of Maryland the greatest single impact of World War II was prosperity. The war did not equally impact all communities though. Population on the Eastern Shore and in the western counties declined during the war. In areas of industry and military activity though, population boomed. Extending in a 40-mile strip along the Chesapeake Shore, Cecil, Harford, and Baltimore counties' populations grew in 1945 to five times what they had been in 1940. Elkton in Cecil County boomed due to its munitions factory, which employed thousands of women, recruited from Appalachia, and African-Americans from the Carolinas. A research and testing complex was located south of Elkton in Harford County. Founded in 1917, the Aberdeen Proving Ground had declined to just 914 people by 1940, but by 1943 the proving grounds employed 5,700 civilians and 30,000 military personnel. Adjacent to Aberdeen was Edgewood Arsenal, the Army Chemical Center. The small-towns of the area, Havre de Grace, Aberdeen, Abington, Edgewood, and Joppatowne, were overwhelmed by the huge new population influx. All across Maryland, employers brought in thousands of new residents to work in war-related industries. In Baltimore County the Glenn L. Martin Aircraft Company on the Middle River employed 53,000 people. The influx of new workers had caused a severe housing shortage, so the company agreed to build one house for every two the government built. By 1943, the community around the plant included four dormitories, 1,200 trailers, and approximately 2,000 temporary houses arranged in projects with such names as Aero Acres and Victory Villa (Brugger 1990, 539).

In the western counties, towns expanded to accommodate huge numbers of new employees. Kelly-Springfield Tire in Allegheny County grew from 1,000 to 7,000 employees, and in Washington County, Fairchild Aircraft grew from 200 to 8,000 employees. Other counties in Maryland grew with the burgeoning of military camps. When the Patuxent Naval Air Station was built in St. Mary's County, its population of 24,620 was swelled with 7,000 construction workers in 1942, and 14,000 civilian and military workers and their families in 1944. Other military areas, including Fort Meade and the Annapolis Naval Command in Anne Arundel County, and Andrews Air Force Base in Prince George's County, brought additional growth to those areas during the war (Callcott 1985, 40-43).

After the war, Maryland underwent the same housing boom as many other areas, as Washington, D.C. experienced significant growth. In the 1940s, only the San Francisco and Houston regions grew faster than the Washington area (Hiebert and MacMaster 1976, 329). The first wave of government expansion after the Second World War brought new government workers from all over the nation. They worked in Washington and commuted to their jobs from the suburbs by car, train, streetcar, or bus. The older suburbs attracted higher-status employees and professionals, while the new suburbs catered to young families just starting homes and careers. The populations of Bethesda and Wheaton located in Montgomery County soared in this time period. The new suburbs began to in-fill areas that had previously seen little growth, including the area east and southeast of the District boundaries in Prince George's County. The names of many of these new developments reflected their suburban location away from the low-lying city, and included Boulevard Heights, Carmody Hills, Green Meadows, and Landover Hills in Prince George's County, and Indian Springs Village, and Woodmoor in Montgomery County. (Hiebert and MacMaster 1976, 330).

A number of other forces unique to the area promoted growth outside of the city limits of Washington, D.C. The development of the atomic bomb and the realization that an entire city could be destroyed with one bomb encouraged the government to decentralize. As early as 1948, the General Services Administration was planning to disperse Federal installations. In order to allow for this dispersal, consideration had to be given to building new roads and facilities to support the movement. Military facilities had begun to locate outside the District of Columbia before and during World War II, and this trend continued after the war. The National Institutes of Health was located in Bethesda, including the Bethesda Naval Hospital, and continued to grow through the 1950s. The Atomic Energy Commission was located in Germantown in 1956, and the Bureau of Standards located in Gaithersburg in 1959. At the same time that Federal agencies were expanding outward, industry began to locate around the D.C. area. Defense spending encouraged government-related scientific and technological research and development firms. The burgeoning space program also brought large corporations to the area, including International Business Machines (IBM) in Rockville (Hiebert and MacMaster 1976, 351-355).

To meet the immediate need for shelter to accommodate the great increase in Federal employees, Maryland Congressman J. Glenn Beall introduced, and Congress approved, a Veteran's Emergency Housing Act to authorize the sale of government barracks and government construction machinery to build civilian housing for the returning veterans. Baltimore and Anne Arundel counties bought title to 4,500 family units that had been designed as temporary facilities for war workers or troops. The counties in turn sold the facilities to private firms who rented them for decades. Montgomery County purchased 475 temporary units and thirty trailers, which were erected in public park land under the provision that they be torn down in five years. Prince George's County acquired 33 barracks and gave them to the University of Maryland for student housing.

By 1947, the economy was stable enough to support private construction, and the housing boom began in Maryland. Firms that had previously worked as government contractors began to construct residential developments with thousands of homes each. Callcott discusses the effects of this boom on the suburban counties of Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George's:

Early in 1947 the four suburban counties had about 75,000 housing units; that year another 9,000 were completed; the next year 14,000 were completed; then 18,000, 20,000, 26,000. In the five years from 1947 to 1952 more new houses sprang up in the four suburban counties than had been built there in all the preceding centuries. During these five years the four counties accounted for more than 80 percent of the state's total new construction (Callcott 1985, 61).

The two largest developments were Veirs Mill Village, located southeast of Rockville in Montgomery County, and Harundale, located south of Baltimore in Anne Arundel County. When complete in 1948, Veirs Mill Village contained 1,105 identical four-room Cape Cod bungalows, each with a basement, which sold for \$8,700. Harundale contained 1,013 houses constructed in two different styles with three or four rooms on a concrete slab, which sold for \$6,900. The homes in Harundale were prefabricated, and the community was one of largest prefabricated developments in America. Both developments were built to provide housing; they were not designed as community development projects. The builders provided their own streets and temporarily provided for sewage disposal, but other necessities such as street maintenance, schools, shopping areas, access roads, parks, and fire and police protection were ignored. The builders also gave no thought to aesthetics; the land was plowed flat, and the development included no landscaping (Callcott 1985, 61).

Other locations in Maryland had similar projects under development soon after World War II. The Queenstown Apartments were constructed in Prince George's County, with 1000 units. Similar apartment, duplex, and single-family developments were constructed in Chillum, Langley Park, District Heights, Hillcrest Heights, and Glassmanor. Twinbrook, a prefabricated community with winding streets named after important World War II battles such as Midway, Ardennes Avenues, and Coral Sea Drive, was built in Montgomery County. Other Montgomery County developments included Woodside,

Parkwood, and Wheaton Woods. Projects in Baltimore County spread along Merritt Boulevard through Essex and Dundalk, and in Middle River, Towson, Catonsville, and Liberty Road-Woodlawn.

All of the new developments shared a few key characteristics; they were near the city line and their residents depended on automobile transportation. Forty-five percent of the developments were composed of single-family units, two- and three-story apartments made up 30 percent, and 25 percent were composed of duplexes (Callcott 1985, 62). The residents usually worked in the city, in generally non-executive white-collar positions, such as clerks, bureaucrats, accountants, teachers, and sales positions. Most of the residents in these areas were Caucasian and represented diverse religions. Catholics were scattered widely throughout the new housing, and the Jewish population, which had earlier been excluded due to restrictive covenants, was more widely welcomed. The majority of the population in these new developments was young; the median age of a couple in Harundale was 28 years, with 1.5 children, and the median age for all residents at Veirs Mill Village was 21 years (Callcott 1985, 63). These new developments encouraged settlement in the suburbs and by the 1950s the Maryland suburban population increased by 87 percent in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George's County.

Supermarkets and shopping centers were developed in the suburbs beginning in the mid 1940s. Until that time, county residents were dependent on traveling to nearby cities for shopping other than groceries and gas. In 1944, Montgomery County's first shopping center, the Silver Spring Shopping Center, opened. Within five years the town had over 600 retail establishments, indicating the need as well as the popularity of suburban shopping (Hiebert and MacMaster 1976, 356-357). The first full-scale shopping center in Maryland was Edmondson Village, which opened in 1947 on the western edge of Baltimore. Created by a single developer, it incorporated architectural unity and ample off-street parking with a major department store, a supermarket, a theater, a restaurant, and more than 20 other stores (Callcott 1985, 69). Other shopping centers outside Washington, D.C. included Friendship Heights (1949), Wheaton Plaza (1954; enlarged to become the nation's fourth largest shopping center in 1963), and Congressional Plaza (1958) (Hiebert and MacMaster 1976, 356-357). The first enclosed mall in Maryland was built at Harundale outside of Baltimore in Anne Arundel County. It opened in 1958 and was the second enclosed mall to be opened in the country, after one in Minneapolis (Callcott 1985, 69). These centers were instrumental in transforming the suburbs from urban bedroom communities into self-contained living and working areas. In addition to these larger centers, smaller local shopping centers also developed, both in new subdivisions as well as in older commercial areas. Government agencies and industry, sales and services, doctors and lawyers, banks and churches all went to the suburbs. From the 1940s through the 1960s public and private interest in commercial, industrial, and public facilities almost equaled investment in housing. The major public investment was for roads, built mostly to serve people on the urban outskirts (Callcott 1985, 66-67).

The character of the suburbs began to change in Maryland during the 1950s. Much of the suburban development of the 1940s had consisted of temporary housing, apartment housing, and inexpensive houses such as those found in Veirs Mill Village. These were

quick measures to meet a desperate need for housing. Inexpensive housing construction declined sharply after 1951. Garden apartment construction nearly stopped, and larger, more expensive homes became prevalent. A second post-war housing boom occurred in the late 1950s and early 1960s. It differed from the first boom in the size and expense of the homes. While the average house cost was \$10,000 during the first boom, the average cost had risen to \$18,000 by 1959. The rise in housing expenditures was due to a combination of rising incomes, maturing suburban communities, and changing mortgage practices. In addition to these larger houses, the construction of apartment buildings increased significantly after 1960 in the D.C. suburbs due to the high cost of land. Whereas there had been 2,100 apartments in 1940 in Montgomery County (representing less than 10% of the housing units), 32,000 apartment units were constructed in the 1960s alone. By 1970, apartments accounted for 30% of the county's housing units. Most were located inside the beltway and along the I-270 corridor between Rockville and Gaithersburg. Finally, another significant development in housing came to the D.C. suburbs during this period. In the 1960s, Leisure World, a self-contained retirement community was constructed. It was one of only six such developments in the country (Hiebert and MacMaster 1976, 357-360).

Though the nature of the suburbs may have changed, the expanding nature of the suburbs did not. By 1960, the suburbs were expanding into Howard and Harford counties, and by 1980, although still extensively rural in many sections, Carroll and Charles counties were also considered suburban (Callcott 1985, 60). Part of the reason for the expanding suburban boundaries was the 15 major highways being constructed in Maryland. All but two were completed between 1952 and 1972, and all but two serviced the suburbs. These highways included:

- 1939 MD 2/Ritchie Highway, Baltimore-Annapolis
- 1952 First Bay Bridge
- 1954 Baltimore-Washington Parkway (now Maryland 295)
- 1955 U.S. 50/John Hanson Highway, Washington-Annapolis
- 1956 U.S. 40/Baltimore National Pike, Baltimore-Frederick
- 1957 Baltimore Harbor Tunnel
- 1957 U.S. 240/Washington National Pike, Washington-Frederick
- 1959 I-83/Harrisburg Expressway, Baltimore-Harrisburg
- 1962 I-83/Jones Falls Expressway, Baltimore
- 1962 I-695/Baltimore Beltway
- 1963 I-95/John F. Kennedy Highway, Baltimore-Wilmington
- 1964 I-495/Washington Beltway
- 1970 I-70/National Freeway, Frederick-Ohio
- 1971 I-95, Baltimore-Washington
- 1982 Baltimore City Freeways

While the highways made it easier to get to city jobs and increased land values in the suburbs, they ripped through the hearts of downtown areas, displacing thousands of city dwellers. The highways also created new opportunities for suburban living, farther away from the city than ever before and less dependent on it for jobs and shopping. The

number of apartments, condominiums, and town houses grew throughout the 1960s and 1970s. Typical of the new high-rise apartments were the Grosvenor Park apartments, which opened three 17-story towers south of Rockville in Montgomery County in 1963.

Planned towns were also created, in part because of the increased access to large, previously unoccupied parcels of land now within easier commuting distance of the major cities. The town of Bowie was built outside of Washington close to Greenbelt by the corporation that built Levittown. The first models opened in 1960, and from that point the area grew to 9,700 units housing 43,000 people by 1977. Though the company donated land for high schools and churches, the community had to bear the cost of building through self-imposed taxation. With no commercial or business enterprises and little cohesion, Bowie lacked the elements of a complete community (Callcott 1985, 75). Another planned town was Columbia, located in Howard County between Baltimore and Washington. Columbia was developed by James Wilson Rouse as a private enterprise. Unlike Bowie, though, Columbia was designed to provide a sense of community to the residents and encouraged class, religious, and racial diversity. The plan incorporated a "downtown" area complete with high rises, businesses, and shopping. The plan was successful, and the town grew from 1,000 people in 1960 to 57,000 in 1980. At its completion, the development contained nine satellite villages located around smaller commercial centers and a large industrial complex. In a town of 57,000, 20 percent of them African-American, there were 32,000 jobs, a diverse housing stock, and subsidized housing for lower-income families (Callcott 1985, 79).