

# **Westminster Community Profile**

## **Location**

Westminster is located in the piedmont region of central Maryland in Carroll County, Maryland. For instance, it is located close to major cities. It's located just 70 miles north of Washington, DC and 35 miles northwest of Baltimore.

## **Population**

The population of the city of Westminster has increased 11% since the year 2000. As of 2010, the population is estimated to be 18,590. The median age of the population is approximately 33 years of age. 7% of the population is under 5 years, while 23% is under 18 years. Between 2006 and 2010, there were close to 7,000 households with an average of 2.28 people per household.

## **Land Use and Availability**

Westminster is 6.3829 square miles with approximately 2,800 people per square mile. Land in the city is used with more intensity than in outlying areas. Within the corporate zoning limit, most of the land to the north is zoned for industrial use, while business use is heavily concentrated in center and east of the city. Central and Downtown business areas are surrounded by residential zoning, with additional planned and residential zoning areas to the west. A large planned regional shopping zone is located just northeast of the Downtown business area. A smaller neighborhood commercial zone is located northwest of central business zone.

## **Natural and Capital Resources**

In addition to recreation and residential land use, Westminster has many rolling acres of land for agriculture, hunting, livestock, or mixed use. For example, Evermore Farm is a small, family owned and operated livestock and produce farm. In their pastures, they raise beef cattle, lambs, hogs and pigs on over 18 acres of land. Sunny Side Farms is a solar-powered chicken egg production farm. Nev-R-Dun Farm provides organically grown produce, including vegetables, fruit, salad mix, transplants and herbs to Carroll County residents and neighboring counties. Lastly, Peaceful Hollow Farm breeds and sells alpacas.

Westminster City has no major water bodies or rivers within its boundaries. However, there are many sources of public water around the Westminster area to freshwater fish, including the branches of water that stem from the Patapsco River, lakes, ponds, runs and streams. Streams within the incorporated area include: Copp's Branch, Meadow Branch, and West Branch. Nearby major streams are Little Pipe Creek and Big Pipe Creek. There is an aquifer that provides the source for 11 groundwater wells; which is why the city gets much of the water supply from wells and surface water from creeks in the two watersheds. Unfortunately, the city's surface water resources are negatively impacted by upstream agricultural uses and storm water runoff carrying fertilizers which can cause water pollution.

### **Unique Characteristics**

The Downtown area was once a very important location during the Civil War and has many historical locations. The City of Westminster is a Historic District Zone, which means that the government offers protection to historical buildings. Westminster also has many parks and trails. The city participates in the Maryland Municipal League Geocache Trail, the First State League in the country to launch a Geocache Trail. Westminster is also where the Baltimore Ravens football team holds summer training camp at McDaniel College.

### **Existing Industries and Business**

The most common industries in Westminster City from 2005-2009 were:

- Construction (14%)
- Retail trade (13%)
- Professional, scientific, and technical services (10%)
- Educational services (8%)
- Manufacturing (8%)
- Accommodation and food services (8%)
- Public administration (5%)

Specialized businesses in the community include dining, retail/ shopping, recreation, and services. The many dining options include delis, take-out, fast-food chains and dine-in restaurants, such as McDonalds, Burger King, Green Turtle, and Olive Garden. Also, there are many locally-owned restaurants and eateries in Downtown that offer fine-dining and ethnic foods.

Westminster has four shopping centers and many major retailers. For example, Walgreens, Marshalls, Sears, Rite Aid, and Target are located on the shopping corridor off of MD Route 140 as well as near the Downtown area. The Westminster Farmers Market is held on Saturday mornings and a second Farmer's market is added at different times of the year. There, farmers sell local goods, such as produce and hand-made crafts, to members of the surrounding communities.

Westminster has a large Recreation and Parks Department that offers children's camps, family fitness center, and events and programs. They offer a Tot Camp for children ages 3-5 and a Summer Day Camp for ages 6-12. Additional public services available to the community are: Carroll Hospital Center, Carroll County Public Library, Carroll County Post Office, Carroll County Regional Airport, and Westminster County District and Circuit Court. Colleges include McDaniel College and Carroll Community College.

### **Business Analysis (What to Produce)**

Westminster has plenty of specialized business for dining, retail/shopping, and services. These include health and wellness, automotive repairs, counseling services, barbers and beauty salons, financial / investment advisors, lawyers, as well as delis, dine-in, take-out and fast-food restaurants. Westminster also has three major shopping centers and a variety of large and specialty retail stores along the shopping corridor and Downtown.

In contrast, the specialized businesses that are scarce are in the area of recreation. There is one dance studio on East Main Street, and only one indoor play space. The Town Mall of Westminster has a family entertainment center, called Bounce About, which has open play every day. The Recreation and Parks Department offers camps for children ages 3-5 held in the Babylon Community Building and a Summer Day Camp for children ages 6-12 which takes place at the Longwell Municipal Center. The city also offers a family fitness center and monthly events and programs for children, caretakers and families.

The city's parks are spread-out and include volleyball and basketball courts, multi-purpose fields, tot lots, playgrounds and the city pool. There is also a walking trail that runs from Uniontown Road to Long Valley Road. These services are offered in open/public space parks and mixed use zones.

## **Business Analysis (How to Produce)**

Currently, there is one indoor play and family entertainment space in Westminster. In order to create indoor play areas, natural, capital and human resources are needed. For example, land use needs would require zoning in the neighborhood commercial zone or the planned neighborhood and commercial zones. Two indoor play spaces could be opened near the neighborhood commercial development zones near north Westminster and a second location near the residential communities surrounding Downtown. The indoor play spaces would need two locations with indoor space and access to a safe outdoor area. The buildings need water and power sources supplied by the city. The business will need many toys, games, and equipment that can be purchased locally or online. The business locations would be supervised by experienced managers who would hire and be in charge of employees such as coaches, teachers, play monitors, and as front desk staff. The number of regular employees will depend on the size of the business space, space use, and the numbers of children who choose to attend classes, events, and open play sessions. Temporary and seasonal employees can be hired as needed.

Westminster is located centrally in Carroll County, MD and continues to grow in population. As a result, zoning and land usage decisions are influenced by opportunity cost and available resources. Since Westminster is an historic area, it is important to consider how land and commercial space is zoned for existing and future specialized businesses serving the community. Some specialized businesses seem plentiful while others are scarce. The city government, farmers and retail business owners depend on natural, capital and human resources in order to provide products and services to fulfill community wants. Some natural and capital resources can be found locally while others are found outside of Maryland. The goal is to develop specialized businesses that fulfill a community want while strengthening the local economy.

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