

## NEWS RELEASE

The Garrett County Planning Commission will sponsor two separate public information meetings scheduled for Monday, February 26<sup>th</sup>, 2007 and Tuesday, February 27, 2007 for the purpose of soliciting public comments on the Garrett County Comprehensive Planning process.

The Comprehensive Plan is the primary policy document used by the County to ensure healthy future growth and development. The Plan is widely used and referred to by multiple state and county agencies, economic development offices, bond rating firms, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Appeals.

The *2008 Comprehensive Development Plan* will update the current Plan that was adopted in 1995.

Garrett County has experienced many changes since 1995, especially the rapid residential and commercial growth in and around Deep Creek Lake. These changes have brought the County many opportunities but also many challenges. The new Plan will look forward and establish new policies to guide the County through the year 2030 in areas including growth, development, rural preservation, transportation, and protection of environmentally sensitive areas. A master plan for the Deep Creek Watershed Area is to be a major component of the new Comprehensive Plan.

**The first of these meetings will be held on Monday, February 26, 2007, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the auditorium of Garrett College in McHenry**

The February 26, 2007 meeting is intended to be a visioning meeting and will provide citizens with the opportunity to express their opinions and views on future growth and development in Garrett County. The Planning Commission encourages citizens to express their opinions not only on how they vision Garrett County twenty five years in the future, but more importantly what goals, objectives and policies should be established to realize that vision.

**The second of these meetings will be held on Tuesday, February 27, 2007, from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in Room 224 of the Continuing Education Building at Garrett College in McHenry.**

The February 27, 2007 meeting will feature a presentation by the County's consultant Environmental Resources Management (ERM) on water quality data for the Deep Creek Watershed. The presentation will include an analysis of growth and the associated impacts future growth may have on the water quality of the lake.

Public participation and input is a vital part of the Plan development process. The Planning Commission needs to hear from the broadest possible spectrum of the public interested in growth and development, including the Towns, so that the Plan reflects the breadth of the community's concerns and interests. The Planning Commission hopes the public will be able to join us on both February 26, 2007 and February 27, 2007 to ask questions and provide comments.