
CHECKLIST & TABLE OF CONTENTS**APPLICANT:** Town of Chestertown**NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY:** Chestertown Sustainable Community

Please review the checklist of attachments and furnish all of the attachments that are applicable. Contents of the notebook should be tabbed and organized as follows:

- TAB #1 Sustainable Community Applicant Information**
- TAB #2 Sustainable Community Baseline Information and Map: In addition to the baseline narrative, include a hard copy of the proposed Sustainable Communities map in Tab 2.**
- TAB #3 Local Capacity to Implement Plans & Projects and Workgroup Roster: Attach Sustainable Communities Workgroup roster noted in Section III**
- TAB #4 Sustainable Community Plan**
- TAB #5 Progress Measures**
- TAB #6 Local Support Resolution and Letters of Support: In addition to the local support resolution, please include any letters of support that demonstrate partner commitments to the implementation and/or oversight of the Sustainable Community Plan.**
- TAB #7 Signed Sustainable Community Application Disclosure Authorization and Certification**
- TAB #8 CD-ROM: The CD-ROM should include the following contents:**
 - Map in pdf format of the proposed Sustainable Communities area**
 - GIS shapefile of the proposed Sustainable Community boundaries and other GIS related data, eg, spreadsheet of detailed listing of parcels that form the project boundary. If you have additional comments or questions about the GIS mapping requirements, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, DHCD, wolters@mdhousing.org**
 - Pictures (jpeg format) of your Sustainable Community as it relates to your application**

**All documents on this checklist are mandatory.
Failure to provide the requested document will automatically deny your application.**

I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Sustainable Community: Chestertown Sustainable Community

Legal Name of Applicant: Town of Chestertown

Federal Identification Number: 52-6000783

Street Address: 118 N. Cross Street

City: Chestertown **County:** Kent **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 21620

Phone No: 410-778-0500 **Fax:** 410-778-4378 **Web Address:** chestertown.com

Sustainable Community Contact For Application Status:

Name: Kees de Mooy **Title:** Zoning Administrator

Address: 118 N. Cross Street **City:** Chestertown **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 21620

Phone No: 410-778-0500 **Fax:** 410-778-4378 **E-Mail:** kees.chestertown@verizon.net

Person to be contacted for Award notification:

Name: Kees de Mooy **Title:** Zoning Administrator

Address: 118 N. Cross Street **City:** Chestertown **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 21620

Phone No: 410-778-0500 **Fax:** 410-778-4378 **E-mail:** kees.chestertown@verizon.net

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Through this section, applicants will demonstrate that trends and conditions in homeownership, property values, employment, commercial and residential vacancy, community facilities and infrastructure, nature, natural resources, the local business and residential districts show a need for new or continued revitalization reinvestment. Demographic data and trends provided by Applicants should support the choice of the proposed Sustainable Community Area boundary and help form a basis for needs and opportunities to be addressed through the initiatives and projects described in the Sustainable Community Action Plan (Section IV)

POINTS IN THIS SECTION WILL BE
AWARDED BASED ON THE SC AREA'S NEED FOR REINVESTMENT AS EVIDENCED BY THOROUGH
DESCRIPTIONS OF CURRENT CONDITIONS OR TRENDS (and will not be based upon current or planned revitalization
activities which will be covered in Section IV).

A. Proposed Sustainable Area(s):

County: Kent

Name of Sustainable Community: Chestertown Sustainable Community

Include boundary descriptions and a map of the Sustainable Community. In addition to hard copies of the project location map, a detailed listing of parcels(i.e. Parcel ID Numbers)that form the project boundary should be included. If possible, maps should also be submitted in electronic GIS form (shape file). If you have additional comments or questions, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, DHCD,

wolters@MdHousing.org

The Chestertown SC Area extends along the Chester River waterfront from the mouth of the tidal stream at Horsey Lane south to the mouth of Radcliffe Creek, then south on Quaker Neck Road to the southern municipal boundary, then west and north along the municipal boundary that runs along Radcliffe Creek and the western boundary of Stepne Manor to the edge of the subdivision at Radcliffe Drive. The SC Area follows the southern boundary of the Radcliffe subdivision to the Chestertown Rail Trail and follows the Trail northwest to the south property line of Gateway Park, then following the western boundary of the Town limits to High Street Extended then up both sides of Flatland Road to the northernmost entrance to the Coventry II subdivision. The SC Area then follows High Street Extended to the planned traffic circle at the intersection with Morgnec Road/Rt. 291 and follows the north side of Morgnec Road to Talbot Drive, then north on Talbot Drive to its northern extent, then west to the dividing line between the Washington Park and Coventry I subdivisions, then north along the east side of the Coventry I subdivision to the southeast corner of the planned Coventry III subdivision, then east along the municipal boundary to the east side of the rail bed, which forms the western property boundary of Foxley Manor subdivision, then south along the rail bed to the property line at the valley between LaMotte and Washington College properties, following that property line northeast to Washington Avenue/Rt. 213, then north along the east side of Washington Avenue to the south property line for the Washington Plaza shopping center. The SC Area continues east along the south property line of Washington Plaza and then north on Haacke Drive Extended, which is part of the municipal boundary, then returning to the same point and extending northeast to the eastern extent of Scheeler Road, then continuing southeast along the east municipal boundary to the northern parcel line of the last parcel before Rt. 291, and following the northern parcel line of the next two parcels west, then south along the west parcel line of Upper Shore Aging to Rt. 291, then along Hadaway Drive to Cedar Street, south to Holly Avenue and east on Holly to the west property line of the Chestertown Baptist Church, wrapping around the Baptist Church property to Rolling Road, then east to the northern parcel line of the Chestertown Community Park and wrapping around the park to Rolling Road, then south on Rolling Road to Campus Avenue, then south on Campus Avenue, then south on Barroll Drive, then east on Kent Street, south on Richard Drive south along the east property line of the Chestertown Water Plant, then south along the edge of the tidal creek to the starting point.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Approximate number of acres within the SC Area:

Existing Federal, State, or Local designations(check all that apply)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Community Legacy Area | <input type="checkbox"/> Designated Neighborhood |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Main Street | <input type="checkbox"/> Maple Street |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local Historic District | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> National Register Historic District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A&E District | <input type="checkbox"/> State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BRAC | <input type="checkbox"/> State Designated TOD |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other(s) | National Historic Landmark District, MHAA Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area,
Sustainable Maryland Certified, Maryland Green Travel Partners |

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Prior revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:

(a) List and describe any significant State local smart growth or revitalization related program investments (for instance, Community Legacy or SC Rehab Tax Credit) that have been invested in the Area since the launching of Maryland's Smart Growth initiative and programs in 1997 (including Housing investment). What impact have these investments made in the community?

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

In the early 2000's CDBG funds were used to construct the Family Support Center and Upper Shore Aging Senior Center. The Chestertown Visitors Center was constructed in 2003 using a State Bond issue and TEA-21 funds. State and Federal funds were used to construct the Chestertown Wastewater Treatment Plant Lagoon, and Water Plant upgrades were completed with State revolving loan funds. In 2006, \$250K in SAFETEA-LU funding was dedicated to the Chestertown Rail Trail, which led to the completion in 2012 of the first two of four planned phases of construction. In 2002, \$400K in Program Open Space Stateside funding was used to purchase the Chestertown Community Park. In 2012, \$100K in Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) funding was used to purchase a derelict property at the edge of town that will, with the help of recently approved Community Parks and Playgrounds funding, become Gateway Park. Charles Sumner Hall, the only African American Civil War veterans' hall left standing in Maryland and one of only two in the nation, is being restored as a museum, art and performance space with \$225K in Community Legacy and \$100K in Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA) funding. The Town also hopes to benefit from State grant programs in the revitalization of the Chestertown Marina, which was purchased with a State revolving loan fund. All of these investments have dramatically improved recreational opportunities for residents, and have made Chestertown a highly attractive place to live, work and play. Chestertown's economy has also benefited significantly, as these types of improvements help to strengthen the Town's heritage tourism appeal.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(b) Describe any existing barriers to Smart Growth that may affect your jurisdiction or the proposed SC Area. For instance, does your area have higher development fees than outer "cornfields"?

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

Chestertown's historic downtown core embodies many of the elements of Smart Growth, including walkability, tree lined streets, mixed uses coexisting in residential areas, and densely developed neighborhoods. However, more recent (mid- to late-20th Century) developments such as Byford Drive, College Heights and Coventry Farms do not fit this definition. These areas were developed with wide roads, no sidewalks, large single-family lots where residents are completely car dependent for work, shopping and entertainment. The Town's edge of town commercial areas likewise suffer from lack of sidewalks, trees, and traffic calming, although these issues are slowly being addressed, with the help of the recently revised zoning regulations. Recent adoption of the Chestertown Tier Map makes clear the Town's intention to allow expansion only in designated areas to the north and east. Coordination with Kent County and its Tier Map further strengthens the ability of the Town to resist the pressure to develop in unsuitable or undesirable areas. The Tier Maps augment and reinforce the Town's Priority Funding Area (PFA), which likewise directs growth north and east. Chestertown's zoning was overhauled in 2012, and the Comprehensive Plan is currently being reviewed and updated. The integration of planning and zoning is crucial to guiding future development within Chestertown and in potential annexation areas in a controlled, sustainable manner.

Chestertown's Comprehensive Plan has for decades called for a bypass to be constructed from Queen Anne's County to north of Town. The Town wants the bypass in order to reroute commercial through traffic (i.e. tractor trailers) away from the Chester River Bridge, Washington Ave./Rt. 213 and the Chestertown Historic District. From a Smart Growth perspective, the bypass may encourage growth outside of the Priority Funding Area, but it is hoped that coordinated planning and zoning regulations will prevent this negative outcome.

Expansion of Chestertown's sewer system south to Lovers Lane, an area that is outside of town limits and outside of the town's PFA, creates a conflict with Smart Growth goals in that it provides an opportunity for future expansion on what is currently a limited access line.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

B. Community Conditions: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses in the proposed Area's existing built environment. For example, what is the condition of housing? Are there underutilized historic buildings and cultural palces? What is the condition and availability of community parks and recreational assets? Are there transportaion assests? What is the current condition of community infrastructure such as roads and lighting?

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

Chestertown has a reasonably good mix of housing types, although affordable housing is always in short supply. The Chestertown Historic District has, like other Historic Districts around the country, helped housing values remain stable throughout the economic downturn. The high concentration of well-preserved historic properties, with the inherent Smart Growth attributes mentioned earlier, makes homes within the District attractive to retirees and other investors. As the county seat for Kent County, Chestertown has benefited from the presence of the Kent County Government Center, as well as many of the largest employers in the area, including Washington College, Chester River Health System, Dixon Valve, Lamotte Company, Benchworks, and Gillespie and Son. Local arts organizations have worked assiduously to make Chestertown a vibrant arts community. Contributing non-profit groups that have led the way include the Kent County Arts Council, RiverArts, the Garfield Center for the Arts at the Prince Theater, and the National Music Festival. Washington College's role cannot be overstated. Their arts, entertainment and cultural programs, including those sponsored by the Art Department and Kohl Gallery, the Center for Environment & Society, Rose O'Neill Literary House, and the C.V. Starr Center for the Study of the American Experience provide a vital and diverse contribution to Chestertown's arts and entertainment scene. Washington College is also now a cosponsor of the National Music Festival.

Chestertown has four public parks that offer passive recreational opportunities (WilmerPark, Chestertown Community Park, Remembrance Park, Washington Park, plus the planned Gateway Park). None of these currently offer playgrounds for young children, for which solutions are being formulated. A large dog park was recently constructed at Rolling Road Park in response to the need for a safe place for small and large dogs to run and play off-leash. Chestertown's 2012 purchase of the Chestertown Marina will ensure public access to the waterfront, and will lead in the near future to a sustainably designed, pedestrian friendly, park-like setting with links to the Rail Trail and Water Trail. The Kent County Community Center in Worton, 6 miles from Chestertown, provides residents in the county exercise facilities, but there is no public facility like it in town. Washington College offers exercise facility, pool and tennis court access for a fee, but only during times when students and school teams are not using them.

No widely available public transportation options exist in Chestertown due to its small size, although the USTAR (Upper Shore Take-A-Ride) rural transportation program provides some limited service. Designed to serve Upper Shore Aging, Inc., which operates in four Eastern Shore counties, the service also offers rides to the general public.

Roads and lighting are adequate, but sidewalks and street lighting must be extended into those neighborhoods that currently lack them. A feasibility study is currently underway by the State Highway Administration for Flatland Road, which connects several housing developments at the north end of town to the downtown, shopping, the future Gateway Park and Rail Trail. A CDBG funding request was just submitted for sidewalks, street lighting, street trees and other infrastructure improvements in the northwest corner of the Historic District, a low and moderate income neighborhood that would benefit substantially.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the Area's land use/zoning make-up(residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use). Is the current land use or zoning conducive to revitalization investment?

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

Chestertown's Zoning Ordinance, map, and Table of District Regulations were substantially revised and updated in 2012 to make them more conducive for sustainable development. In the more densely built residential areas, setbacks were reduced to allow more compact infill development, which is typical in the historic residential neighborhoods of Chestertown. A new R-6 Traditional Neighborhood Development District was added for Stepne Manor, the largest remaining infill parcel in Chestertown, which requires development that is sympathetic to the prevailing patterns in the adjacent historic core, and includes amenities such as walking trails, green spaces and water access. The RB Professional Office District was expanded to create a more consistent transition zone between commercial and residential areas. A new zoning classification, C-3 Neighborhood Commercial, was created to encourage mixed-use development along two busy corridors where strip development currently predominates. New setback requirements encourage building closer to the front property line and locating parking areas to the rear, and it is now possible to add residential uses to the second floor. An Institutional District was created to buffer residential and other areas from encroachment by the town's larger institutions, including Washington College, Chester River Hospital Center, local schools and churches. The CM Commercial Marine District was also modified to preserve and protect maritime-based uses, and to prevent housing developments from being built on prime waterfront land.

More than 45 percent of Chestertown's municipal area is untaxed, a very large number that significantly reduces the tax base and thereby reduces funds that can be used for capital improvements and operational expenses. Untaxed areas include Washington College, Kent County Government Center, Kent County Schools (Elementary and Middle), Kent County Court House, Chestertown Post Office, and local churches.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(3) Describe strengths and weaknesses in basic features of community quality-of-life. For instance, is crime an issue for this SC Area? What is the condition and quality of educational choices available to the community? Are artistic, cultural, or community resources, events or facilities with in or accessible to residents in the proposed SC Area?

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

The quality of life in Chestertown is relatively high. Crime is at a four-year low and residents generally feel safe on town streets and in their homes. Public schools in Chestertown have a fairly good reputation, although there is much room for improvement. Poverty rates are high relative to the rest of the State, and a high proportion of homes - especially along High Street and the downtown area - are rentals. The trend has been toward gentrification in the downtown, and recent development is responding to the increase in demand for higher quality rentals with upscale condominiums. As described above, Chestertown has a rich cultural and artistic scene that gets better every year. The Garfield Center for the Arts offers a lively music and theater schedule, and offers programming and classes for children including summer acting camps. The National Music Festival, which brings together world-class mentors and apprentice musicians on the cusp of their musical careers, was established in 2012 and is a resounding success. Washington College's diverse lecture series, classes, art exhibits, music and theatrical programs provide a tremendous benefit to the Town. The Town of Chestertown recently applied for a NEA Our Town grant to create a Public Arts Master Plan for the Chestertown waterfront. If successful, the Our Town grant will dovetail with a Washington College initiative for the same area, a \$575K Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant that will create Sandbox: A Program for Creativity and the Environment, a public arts project that will bring together college students, artists, museums and institutions. RiverArts is a 350-member strong arts organization with a gallery that features primarily local artists, and which offers classes for young and old. The completion of Phase I and II of the Chestertown Rail Trail has created considerable excitement, and has dramatically improved the recreational opportunities in town. All of the programs listed above are located within, and benefit, the Chestertown Sustainable Community Area.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

C. Natural Resources and Environmental Impact: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the community's "Natural environment" in or near the Sustainable Community Area. What is the current condition of key natural resources - lands, air, water, watersheds, tree canopy, other? If the community is located in a coastal zone, what risks might the community be subject to associated with climate induced sea level rise?

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

Chestertown is a small town that is surrounded by rich farmland, forests, and the Chester River. These resources are highly valued by the Town, and the Town's stewardship is evidenced by a string of awards received in the past few years. In 2009, the Town was awarded the Maryland Municipal League Award for Excellence for the Chestertown Goes Green Program, which was started by Mayor Margo Bailey and a group of likeminded residents. In 2010, the Town received the inaugural Melanie Teems Award for exemplary environmental stewardship by the Chesapeake Bay Trust, primarily for the successful construction of a Living Shoreline project at Wilmer Park. In 2011, the Chester River Association presented to the Town its Riverkeeper Award for its wide reaching greening efforts. And in 2012, Chestertown became one of the first four communities in Maryland to achieve Maryland Sustainable Certified status. Projects carried out during this period included creating a tree canopy inventory and action plan, three demonstration rain gardens, energy efficiency improvements at Town Hall, and a planned 1.2 mW solar photovoltaic system at the Chestertown Wastewater Treatment Plant. Chestertown is ramping up its sustainability efforts in to address the local Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP), a multi-state effort to reduce stormwater runoff to the Chesapeake Bay. One project that will break ground in late 2013 is a \$450K Stormwater Step Pool Conveyance, funded by the Middle Chester Trust Fund, which will treat runoff coming from nearly 52 acres of primarily impervious surface in the most densely concentrated commercial part of the town. Integral to the Town's success in sustainable projects is its partnership with local nonprofits, institutions, and schools. These include Washington College's Center for Environment & Society (CES) and the Student Environmental Alliance (SEA), the Chester River Association, Kent County Middle School Discovery Corps, Kent County Master Gardeners, local garden clubs, and other groups.

Climate change and sea level rise will be analyzed and discussed in the currently ongoing revisions to the Comprehensive Plan, and will use sources that include FEMA's Sept. 2012 revisions to the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) for Kent County. It is anticipated that Washington College's GIS Lab will assist in measuring the impacts of climate change and sea level rise and that DNR will also provide some technical assistance.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of any current efforts to reduce the community's "carbon foot print" or impact on the environment. Is recycling (commercial or residential) available to minimize waste? Are there current efforts to encourage the purchase and availability of fresh local food and other local products and services to the community? Describe any current energy or water conservation efforts that may be underway. If the community has not implemented one of the above initiatives, has the community identified a need or interest to pursue these or other efforts to reduce environmental impact, for instance through the new Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative?

(Answer space 4000 characters)

Chestertown was one of the first communities to achieve Maryland Sustainable Certified designation, a testament to the Town's dedication to reducing its carbon footprint. Under the leadership of Mayor Margo Bailey and the Chestertown Green Team, many sustainability initiatives have been completed and many more are planned. The Chestertown Farmers Market has been in operation since 1981, and in the past two years was voted #1 Small Farmers Market by the American Farmland Trust. Twenty-five vendors sell a wide variety of produce, including organic vegetables, fruit, hydroponically grown lettuce, artisan breads and pastries, native plants and flowers, beef, lamb and eggs. Kent County Middle School's Discovery Corps and Master Gardener Sabine Harvey have built a Victory Garden at the Middle School, which in 2012 supplied nearly 110 pounds of vegetables to the school cafeteria and the local Food Pantry. In 2010, the Town received a CLG grant from the Maryland Historical Trust for a pilot energy efficiency study of ten homes in Chestertown's Historic District. Four Maryland communities participated, with the goal of creating a national model for improving energy efficiency in historic homes. In 2012, Chestertown received \$28K in EECBG funding for energy efficiency retrofits at Town Hall, consisting of a high-efficiency condensing boiler, high efficiency T-8 fluorescent ballasts and bulbs, and a 3.36 kW solar photovoltaic system. The retrofits were selected with the help of a MEA energy audit. Two years ago, Chestertown took over recycling from Kent County, which had discontinued the program due to budget pressures related to the economic downturn. Since taking over the program, participation has more than doubled, and in 2012, more than 212 tons of materials were diverted from the local landfill. Costs are kept down for the program by having customers separate recyclables instead of combining them (i.e. "single stream"), which yields a lesser quality of materials. Greenhouse gas emissions generated by the Town were studied for the period 2007 to 2010 by Washington College's Center for the Environment & Society, which led to reduced energy usage at municipal facilities, and the creation of a Community Greening Toolkit. Funding from Chesapeake Bay Trust was used to create a Living Shoreline at Wilmer Park, and three demonstration rain gardens on public land. A planned 1.2 mW solar photovoltaic field at the Waste Water Treatment Plant will provide power for approximately 80 percent of the municipal government's energy usage, including the entire WWTP.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(3) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the jurisdiction's current stormwater management practices and how these may affect the proposed SC Area. Is redevelopment and retrofitting of infrastructure an issue or opportunity in this SC Area? Stormwater runoff is a significant source of pollution to Maryland's streams and the Chesapeake Bay. Buildings constructed before 1985 have little or no stormwater controls, and development between 1985 and 2010 have some controls. Updated stormwater regulations passed by Maryland's General Assembly in 2010 require that development and redevelopment projects utilize stringent stormwater controls. Sustainable Community Areas may have opportunities for redevelopment practices that can reduce stormwater flows.

(Answer space 4000 characters)

Chestertown is actively addressing stormwater issues as part of its commitment to the local Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP). Ongoing activities that address stormwater include street sweeping, regular stormwater drain and catchbasin maintenance and cleanout, tree planting to fulfill a 40 percent canopy goal, reducing impervious surfaces wherever feasible, using pervious paving where practical to increase infiltration, enforcing private stormwater system maintenance requirements, and enforcing maintenance of vegetated buffers and treed areas. New development and redevelopment projects are held to stringent stormwater and, where applicable, Critical Areas requirements. The Chesapeake Stormwater Network (CSN) recently led a workshop at the Town Yard to train Town employees in runoff reduction and best management practices. Chesapeake Bay Trust has funded several innovative projects that address stormwater runoff within Town limits, including a Living Shoreline, wetland restoration and three demonstration rain gardens. The Chester River Association (CRA) holds stream cleanup events and does regular testing of local waterways through its Chester Testers program. CRA is performing preliminary water testing for the \$450K stormwater project being constructed at the north end of Town, to create a benchmark from which the long term performance of the Step Pool Conveyance will be measured.

The ability to implement stormwater best management practices is severely limited in the historic downtown core, an area that is built on a three hundred years old plan with little or no stormwater infrastructure. Retrofitting existing systems and adding new one will be very, and in some cases, prohibitively, expensive. As one moves out from the downtown core, newer neighborhoods have increasingly better infrastructure, and funding allows, the older infrastructure in those will be upgraded over time. Washington College has, for the past ten years, required that all buildings be constructed to at least LEED Silver level, and future development will include LEED Gold and Platinum buildings, where it is anticipated that stormwater controls will also be constructed to a higher standard.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

D. Economic Conditions & Access to Opportunity: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the jurisdiction's current economic strengths and weaknesses. For example, are there distinct economic drivers in the area or region that will affect access to job opportunities and the progress of the SC Plan? What are the main barriers to the Area's conomic competitiveness? What is the current level of broadband access available to serve residents, businesses and public facilities? What efforts are currently in place to increase worker skills and employment? Describe trends in employment rates and business formation.

(Answer space 4000 characters)

The Chestertown Revitalization Task Force and the Greater Chestertown Initiative (GCI) are currently studying the town's economic strengths. The Task Force is focused on the waterfront, while GCI is focused on the issue from a broader perspective. GCI's Branding and Messaging Committee is currently surveying business owners with the goal of developing a marketing plan for the Town. Like many communities, the Chestertown has endured a prolonged economic downturn, although its position as the County's seat of government has protected it more than many other towns in the region. The presence of large institutions and employers has ensured relatively stable jobs for a fixed number of employees, but there is very little net job growth and therefore no incentive for young people to stay or move to the area. Kent County is the least populated county in the state, and its population has remained relatively unchanged for more than two hundred years. Lack of growth means a stagnant tax base and correspondingly fewer jobs. The Town and surrounding county have a relatively high poverty rate – 26.6 percent versus 9.0 percent for the State – and this adds to the problem. The declining number of school age children has led in the past two years to school consolidation, which included moving the Board of Education from Chestertown to Rock Hall. Despite these obstacles, Chestertown is successfully reinventing itself as a heritage and arts tourism destination. Its historic architecture and picturesque riverfront setting are highly valued by visitors, and the Town's appeal has led to numerous awards, including the National Trust for Historic Preservation naming the Town one of its 2007 Dozen Distinctive Destinations. As discussed above, several local non-profit organizations have made major contributions to Chestertown's growing reputation as a heritage and arts destination. Sultana Projects has established itself as a premier educational organization with its Schooner Sultana, a reproduction 1768 British schooner that is used to teach students throughout the Chesapeake Bay region about history and the environment. Sultana Projects' Downrigging Weekend is one of the largest tall ship events on the East Coast. The Chestertown Tea Party Festival, a yearly event held at the end of May, draws thousands of visitors for three days of historic reenactments, parades and performances. The National Music Festival, now in its second year in Chestertown, has drawn rave reviews for its two weeks of orchestral, chamber, solo recital, vocal, choral and chamber opera performances. Despite the many challenges of starting a new business during tough economic times, a bakery and coffee shop, an exercise and physical therapy facility, a hair and beauty salon, and several new restaurants have been started in the last year. It is hoped that Chestertown's many positive attributes will continue to encourage and sustain entrepreneurial activity. Regarding broadband access, ARRA and Community Legacy funding has paid for a fiber optic connection in Chestertown that provides free WiFi for the Fountain Park area, and will include high-speed connection for Town Hall. Workforce training is provided in the region by Chesapeake College, which offers some courses in Chestertown as well as on-line training, professional licensing, ESL, GED, and Adult Basic Education. Washington College also offers adult courses through their Academy of Lifelong Learning (WC-ALL). Employment rates have steadily improved during the past few years, and unemployment rates have dropped to 6.6 percent as of December 2012, which is equal to the Maryland average and lower than the national average of 7.8 percent.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the jurisdiction's housing market and access to affordable workforce housing. What are the trends in residential construction (rental and homeownership), homeownership rate, foreclosure rate and, property values. Describe how and whether your jurisdiction's prevailing housing costs-both homeownership and rental - are affordable to households below 120% AMI, 80% AMI, 50% AMI. JWhat efforts are in place currently to house individuals, families and the disabled at or below the AMI levels described above?

(Answer space 4000 characters)

Chestertown has a mix of housing types, from single family homes to apartment buildings. There are a total of 2,361 housing units in Chestertown, of which approximately 40 percent are owner occupied. More than 400 single family homes are rentals, and there are approximately 875 additional rental units in town, not including Washington College campus housing and dormitories. Approximately 55 percent of the total rental units have a density higher than six units per parcel.

Chestertown's housing market as measured by building permits issued has picked up slightly this year, after two years where there was not a single new housing start. A relatively low vacancy rate at the three major low-income housing developments (where most residents are at 50% AMI or less) suggests that the need for that type of housing is being met.

A foreclosed medium-income housing development located in the northeast of the town was purchased in early 2013 and several speculative homes are being completed. Over \$75K has been spent by the developer, who is a Smart Growth advocate, to improve the landscaping and make the project more attractive to prospective buyers, and he is in negotiations with several surrounding property owners in order to develop the project on a larger scale. It is anticipated that all of the homes being developed will fall into the low to mid medium-income price range.

The average price of a new home in Kent County in February, 2013 was \$177,042 (average for the State is \$265,063), reflecting a nearly 20 percent drop compared to the average new home price in the previous year. The number of housing units in inventory, 342, has increased slightly since 2012, and the 28.5 months of inventory figure is the second highest in the State after Dorchester County. (Source: www.mdrealtor.org) However, there is anecdotal information that sales are increasing and realtors are optimistic about the future.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(3) Describe the SC Area's demographic trends (with respect to age, race household size, household income, educational attainment, or other relevant factors).

(Answer space 4000 characters)

As of 2010, the population was 5,254 people, 1,971 households, and 984 families residing in the town. The population density was 2,020.0 inhabitants per square mile, and there were 2,361 housing units at an average density of 908.1 per square mile. The racial makeup of the town was 74.2% White, 20.4% African American, 0.3% Native American, 1.8% Asian, 1.0% from other races, and 2.2% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race constituted 4.2% of the population.

There were 1,971 households out of which 18.6% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 32.7% were married couples living together, 13.8% had a female householder with no husband present, 3.5% had a male householder with no wife present, and 50.1% were non-families. 42.2% of all households were made up of individuals and 22.3% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.00 and the average family size was 2.65.

The median age in the town as of 2010 is 34.9 years. 12.4% of residents were under the age of 18; 28.7% were between the ages of 18 and 24; 16.4% were from 25 to 44; 19.1% were from 45 to 64; and 23.6% were 65 years of age or older. The gender makeup of the town was 43.1% male and 56.9% female.

High school graduates totaled 80.5% of the population, and those with a Bachelor's degree or higher were 36.5%. Mean travel time to work for workers 16 and over was 27.8 minutes versus 31.7 for Maryland. The homeownership rate 2007-2010 was 46.9%, and the median value of a home was \$289,900 versus \$319,800 in the State. The poverty rate is 26.6% compared to 9% for the State. (Source: quickfacts.census.gov) More than 60% of children in the Town's elementary and middle school are Title I.

The median income for Chestertown is \$31,809 compared to \$69,272 for the State. The median gross rent cost in 2009 was \$716.

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

A. Organizational Structure:

Describe the Applicant's organizational structure. Specifically, which organizations are members in the Sustainable Communities Workgroup and who are the respective staff? Who are the leaders, and how will the workgroup advisor or staff manage implementation of the SC Area Plan?

(Answer space 4000 characters)

The Sustainable Communities Workgroup is made up of representatives of the Chestertown Mayor and Council, Chestertown Town Manager and Zoning Administrator, Washington College Center for Environment and Society, Chestertown Green Team and Sustainable Maryland Sustainable Certified Committee, Greater Chestertown Initiative, Chestertown World Café, Downtown Chestertown Association, Diversity Dialogue Group, Marina Study Group, and NEA Our Town Committee.

Leaders for these groups include: Town of Chestertown Mayor Margo Bailey, Town Manager Bill Ingersoll, and Zoning Administrator Kees de Mooy; Washington College Center for the Environment & Society Director John Seidel and Climate Coordinator Briggs Cunningham; Chestertown Green Team leaders Rob Busler, Jon Hanley, Andy Goddard, Bob Ingersoll, and Ed Minch; Chestertown Revitalization Task Force members John Moag, Rebecca Flora, Linda Kuiper, Al Massoni, Toby Tobriner, Ron Athey, Dicky Grieves, Chris Havemeyer; Greater Chestertown Initiative members Carla Massoni, Bill Arrowood, Judy Crow, Bart Stolp, Joan Buffone, Gil Watson, Nancy Bennington, Rebecca Flora, Kay MacIntosh, Zane Carter, Karin Cowperthwait and Jay Yerkes; Chestertown World Café Planning Committee members Jennifer Hicks, Steve Atkinson, Jana Carter, Muriel Cole, Ken Collins, Diane Daniels, Dan Danko, Holly Geddes, Susanne Hayman, Katie Hughes, Elisa Medrano, Gail Owings, Leslie Raimond, Jeanette Sherbondy, Karen Somerville, Liz Starkey, Bart Stolp, Julie Vallecillo, Bernadette Van Pelt, Linda Wilson; Downtown Chestertown Association Board Members Nancy McGuire, JR Alfree, Kristen Owen, Bob Ramsey, Andy Goddard; Diversity Dialogue Group members Armond Fletcher, Donald Wilkerson, Jeanette Sherbondy, David Keating, Milford Murray, William Cooper, Hope Clark, Jane Jewel; Chestertown Port Committee members Donald Cantor, Gibson Anthony, Matthew Tobriner, Ray Tarrach, David McIntire, Carter Stanton; NEA Our Town Committee Margo Bailey, Kees de Mooy, Carla Massoni, Leslie Raimond, Lani Seikaly, Alex Castro, Bob Ingersoll, Nancy McGuire.

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

B. Organizational Experience:

Describe the Applicant organization's past experience in administering revitalization plans and projects. Describe the roles of the members of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup, including their experience in implementing revitalization initiatives. What are the strengths and challenges of the capacity of these groups with respect to implementation of the SC Plan?

(Answer space 4000 characters)

The Town of Chestertown has successfully managed millions of dollars in Federal and State grant funds from programs such as ARRA, the DHCD Community Development Block Grant Program, DNR Community Parks and Playgrounds Program, Chesapeake Bay Trust, Maryland Heritage Areas Authority, Maryland Historical Trust, and Community Legacy Program. The members of the SC Workgroup, with grant writing and implementation expertise supplied by Town Hall, have diverse professional and academic experience in sustainability initiatives and Chestertown will continue to benefit from their involvement.

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

C. Public Input:

How did residents and other stakeholders in the community provide input to Action plan described below in section IV?

(Answer space 4000 characters)

Each of the groups listed in III had public meetings in which community members participated, and the people listed under the organizations are the key personnel only. Mayor and Council meetings are public and televised on local access cable, with minutes available on the Town website. The Center for Environment and Society's programs are public. The Chestertown Green Team sent a GoogleDocs survey to 540 citizens via Constant Contact, Facebook and direct email. The Chestertown Revitalization Task Force was appointed by Mayor Margo Bailey and Washington College President Mitchell Reiss, and they will provide periodic updates at public Mayor and Council meetings, as well as meet with a large number of business owners, residents, and entities with a stake in Chestertown's future. The Eastern Shore Land Conservancy is assisting in this process. The Greater Chestertown Initiative meets weekly in public meetings, and is currently polling business owners for a Chestertown marketing initiative. GCI has set up a website and Facebook page that are open to the public. The Chestertown World Café brought together 160 residents in June 2010 for an intensive visioning session, with the results discussed at a public meeting of the Mayor and Council. Downtown Chestertown Association meetings are public and they meet monthly. They send out frequent email alerts regarding business promotions, special events and new business announcements. The Diversity Dialogue Group meetings are public. The Chestertown Port Committee met for six months and presented their findings several times in public meetings for input from local stakeholders and citizens, and their recommendations resulted in the purchase of the Chestertown Marina in 2012. The NEA Our Town Committee wrote a grant proposal that calls for a series of three charettes with public input, and this will undoubtedly ensure that the broadest possible cross section of the population will be represented in the final product, a Public Arts Master Plan for the Chestertown waterfront.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The Sustainable Community Action Plan (SC Plan or Plan) is meant to be a multi-year investment strategy - a strategic set of revitalization initiatives and projects that local partners believe will increase the economic vitality and livability of their community, increased prosperity for local households and improved health of the surrounding environment. The Plan should be flexible enough to be updated regularly and renewed every five years as the community envisions new goals. The priority initiatives and projects in the SC Plan should improve the livability of community places -- residential, commercial, or other public or private properties - and create new work, retail, recreational and housing opportunities for residents. These projects should also reduce the environmental impact of the community through water and energy resource conservation and management strategies. In this way, the Plan can be a road map for local stakeholders as well as State agencies to work together to create a more a sustainable and livable community.

A.Supporting existing communities & reducing environmental Impacts.

(1) A community’s approach to Smart Growth generally includes two inter-related areas of focus: encouraging reinvestment and growth in existing communities; and, discouraging growth that degrades natural resources, and farms and rural landscapes. Broadly describe your jurisdiction’s Smart Growth approach and any significant accomplishments made over the last decade or so.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Chestertown has become nationally known as a historic, picturesque small town with a unique sense of place. Its residents are committed to making the Town an attractive, sustainable, and friendly place to live and do business. The Chestertown Comprehensive Plans plays a vital part in protecting the area’s assets, and ensuring that growth happens in a careful, sustainable fashion. When forced to do so, the Town’s citizenry have joined together to keep out unwanted development. A prime example of the town’s commitment was the mid-1990’s successful effort to prevent Wal-Mart from establishing a 107,000 square foot store on the edge of Town. At triple the size of any other retailer in the area, it was feared that the store would force many smaller downtown stores to close. In addition to becoming a national model for keeping large retailers out of small towns, the campaign also forced Wal-Mart to soften its tactics and to learn to build smaller, compatibly-designed stores that better fit into small communities.

The revised Comprehensive Plan reiterates the fundamental importance of the Chestertown Bypass as the Town's number one transportation priority. The Bypass includes a new Chester River bridge crossing combined with a limited-access parkway from the intersection of MD 213 and MD 297 (north of the Town limits) to the intersection of MD 213 and 544 in Queen Anne's County. The Bypass would facilitate decreased heavy truck traffic through Chestertown's National Historic Landmark District and improve pedestrian and cyclist safety. Chestertown will continue to lobby for the Bypass so that funding for the project can be secured within ten years.

As stated in the Comprehensive Plan’s Preface, the Town has “a firm commitment to protecting Chestertown from the fate that has befallen some other locales on the Eastern Shore – development of vast tracts of uncontrolled, unattractive generic housing that virtually obliterate a small town’s character and surrounding open space.” To this end, strong development standards and architectural guidelines have been incorporated into the recently revised Zoning Ordinance, and the town’s Comprehensive Plan is currently being updated to provide a sustainable road map for the future. The Comprehensive Plan will include annexation guidelines that, among other things, will ensure that large developments will have to pay the cost of infrastructure improvements. The Historic District Guidelines were revised within the past two years to provide clear guidance to the residents of the Historic District. Within the past year, the town achieved Sustainable Maryland Certified status, a clear indication of the environmental concern shared by the residents of the town.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) Describe any major investments in community infrastructure -water, stormwater, sewer, sidewalk, lighting, etc. -- that must be undertaken in order to improve the readiness or competitiveness of the proposed SC Area for private investment and compliance (if applicable) with TMDL regulations. Addressing the stormwater during redevelopment can reduce the pollution entering our streams and contribution to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Investments in infrastructure, generally, can be an important catalyst for new private investment in the community.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Chestertown Waste Water Treatment Plant (WWTP) was upgraded in 1990 with an outfall line discharging into the Chester River and construction of a new aeration system. Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) and Biological Nutrient Removal (BNR) were added in the mid-2000's, thereby significantly reducing nitrogen and phosphorus concentrations in the effluent entering the Chester River. The Comprehensive Plan's Municipal Growth Element and Water Resources Element show that at its current capacity, the WWTP can handle all of the anticipated infill development within the Town's municipal boundaries, and that any substantial development outside of town limits would require expansion of the plant's capacity. The Town's water infrastructure is likewise sufficient for anticipated infill development to the year 2020.

Stormwater capacity in the downtown historic core is problematic and will have to be addressed incrementally. As is typical of Colonial-era riverside towns, the stormwater devices that exist in the historic core do not meet modern standards, and the areas closest to the Chester River have no or very few stormwater controls. Regular street sweeping mitigates this issue to some extent. As one moves further away from the historic downtown to the newer outlying neighborhoods, stormwater controls are more evident and a correspondingly higher level of treatment is therefore evident. The creation of a Living Shoreline at Wilmer Park, as well as three demonstration rain gardens in three of the Town's parks, have brought the subject of stormwater runoff to the attention of local residents. The construction of a planned Stormwater Step Pool Conveyance (SPC) will heighten public awareness further, given its high visibility and proximity to the main shopping centers. Adjacent to the SPC, a planned redevelopment of the Kent Plaza shopping center will trigger site plan review and a significant upgrade to the existing parking lot, which because of its age has no stormwater controls. At this time stormwater fees are not being considered by the Mayor and Council, although the issue has been raised.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that the community will undertake or expand in order to reduce the SC Area's impact on the environment. Examples include but are not limited to: conservation or management of stormwater through retrofitting of streets and by-ways (Green Streets, rain gardens, etc.); retrofitting of facilities and homes for energy conservation; implementation of "green" building codes and mixed-use zoning; recycling of waste; clean-ups of watersheds; and, encouragement of "Buy Local" approaches that benefit local suppliers and food producers. A comprehensive menu of such actions may be found through the nonprofit Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Chestertown's Green Team has implemented, as part of the Sustainable Maryland Certified program, a Three Year Action Plan that includes the following:

YEAR 1

1. Achieve Sustainable Maryland Certified Bronze status. Raise awareness of Town of Chestertown sustainability initiatives in local news. Rail Trail, Remembrance Park, recycling, energy efficiency improvements at Town Hall, participation in the Watershed Implementation Plan, Middle School Victory Garden, local food initiatives, health and wellness programs, walking trail and dog park at Rolling Road park, plastic bag ban, rain gardens, and other projects are all part of the Town's holistic approach to sustainability.
2. COMMUNITY BASED FOOD SYSTEM: Participate in University of Maryland and Master Gardener food garden initiative, Grow It Eat It, which has named 2012 "The Year of Leafy Greens." The program includes local food gardening classes for youths and adults.
3. HEALTH & WELLNESS: H. H. Garnett Elementary and Kent County Middle Schools to participate in county-wide School Wellness Council that will establish a wellness plan for students, teachers and staff.
4. LOCAL ECONOMIES: Implement Buy Local campaign with the Spend Local – Stay Local gift card from Chesapeake Bank.
5. NATURAL RESOURCES: Increase membership in Chester River Association through expanded presence at local events, articles in local and regional media, expanded volunteer membership, and legislative updates.
6. PLANNING & LAND USE: Extend Chestertown's current Certified Legacy Areas status to new Sustainable Communities designation.

YEAR 2

1. ENERGY: Design and construct a 1.2 MW solar field at Chestertown Wastewater Treatment Plant.
2. HEALTH & WELLNESS: Construct Phase III of Chestertown Rail Trail to increase length of walking trail by an additional .6 mile.
3. NATURAL RESOURCES: Design and construct a regenerative stormwater conveyance (RSC) at the Rt. 291 to treat stormwater from Kent Plaza Shopping Center and other businesses along Rt. 213.
4. LOCAL ECONOMIES: Implement a green procurement policy for Town of Chestertown.
5. HEALTH & WELLNESS: Implement the findings of the School Wellness Council at Garnett Elementary and Kent Co. Middle School.
6. NATURAL RESOURCES: Increase recycling rate in Chestertown by 20 percent.

YEAR 3

1. ENERGY: Design and construct a 1 MW community solar garden.
2. COMMUNITY BASED FOOD SYSTEM: Construct community gardens on vacant Town-owned property in low income neighborhood.
3. HEALTH & WELLNESS: Build a new Town park on the Rail Trail with public playground and basketball courts.
4. LOCAL ECONOMIES: Implement Maryland Green Registry program, which recognizes green businesses.
5. NATURAL RESOURCES: Implement Maryland Clean Marina Initiative and stormwater improvements at Town-owned marina.
6. NATURAL RESOURCES: Increase Chestertown's tree canopy to 40 percent as part of the Community Urban Greening Program.

In addition to these action items generated through the Town of Chestertown, Washington College is engaged in several large-scale building projects with a focus on sustainability: construction of a new waterfront environmental education, laboratory and office facility to LEED Platinum standards; transforming the currently vacant Board of Education building into new offices and classrooms to LEED Gold standard, including a new geothermal HVAC system; construction of new dormitory housing to LEED Silver standard, which will tie into an existing geothermal HVAC system; and ongoing campus beautification efforts that will increase the tree canopy and address stormwater issues. All building projects within the past ten years have been constructed to a minimum LEED Silver standard.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Mayor and Council, Green Team, Downtown Chestertown Association, Chestertown Initiative, Washington College, Chester River Association.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

B. Valuing communities and neighborhoods -- building up on assets and building in amenities:

(1) What are the key assets that exist in the community upon which the Plan's projects and initiatives will build? Assets may include physical assets such as parks and historic structures and also civic and economic assets such as employers, educational institutions, and cultural organizations and activities.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Chestertown has one of only four National Historic Landmark Districts in Maryland. The importance of its history and architecture is hard to overstate. Throughout its history Chestertown has been a political, cultural, and commercial center on the upper Delmarva Peninsula. In the 18th Century Chestertown was one of Maryland's wealthiest and most prominent towns. The Town's history is inextricably linked with Washington College, founded in 1782 and, like the Town, the College is firmly committed to sustainability goals. The Town and College are working together to ensure that the Town's waterfront is preserved and developed with public access, sustainability and environmental education in mind. A NEA Our Town planning grant will create a Public Arts Master Plan that will be centered on three themes – Art, Environment, History – identified by the Chestertown Initiative and Downtown Chestertown Association. The Our Town grant will dovetail with the recently funded SANDBOX initiative described elsewhere in this application.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) What policies, initiatives or projects will reuse or enhance the historical assets, traditional business districts/Main Streets and cultural resources of the community? What actions will reinforce your community's authentic "sense of place" and historic character?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Chestertown's historic and architectural importance is fully recognized by the Town of Chestertown, including its Planning Commission and Historic District Commission. As discussed above, the Downtown Chestertown Association and other groups have worked very hard to enhance the economic climate, especially in the downtown historic core. One DCA initiative within the past two years was to place an iSign at the busiest pedestrian intersection. The digital sign provides information about local businesses and services, as well as a wayfinding map. The new WiFi connection for downtown is another benefit for visitors and residents, providing high-speed internet access for, as an example, a smart phone user who wants to find a restaurant. DCA has also initiated a downtown beautification program that includes the placement of large plant containers in the shopping areas, which increases the aesthetic appeal and makes shopping a more pleasant experience. DCA also sponsors the annual downtown Christmas lights and has augmented the lights with pine garlands that add an old fashioned charm to the downtown. Preserving and protecting Chestertown's historic character falls mainly to the Historic District Commission, which regulates exterior modifications, new construction and signs. The recently revised Historic District Guidelines have been expanded to include regulations for new materials and technologies, such as synthetic siding materials and solar photovoltaic panels. The HDC has done an excellent job of creating uniform, fair and consistent rules that directly lead to the preservation of one of the Town's greatest assets: its historic architecture, and by extension, its unique sense of place. These efforts have been recognized at the highest levels, with the National Trust for Historic Preservation naming Chestertown one of its Dozen Distinctive Destinations in 2007. "Chestertown is a treasure hidden in plain sight," said Richard Moe, president of the National Trust for Historic Preservation. "A small, historic and relatively unspoiled Eastern Shore town, Chestertown had the good sense to hang on to what makes it so special. The result is a vibrant community that offers travelers an ideal retreat."

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that will increase community access to green spaces, parks and other amenities? A community can gain social and physical benefits from access to a healthy natural environment. The inclusion of complete streets, trails, green space, parks and trees contribute to the character and health of a community. Examples might include improvements to the tree canopy by planting street trees, improving local neighborhood streams, or reusing a vacant lot for a new community park or playground.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Chestertown has four public parks with a fifth under development, which will create a total of 43.5 acres of public park space. The Chestertown Rail Trail, waterfront walkways and other green spaces adds about another 20 acres. In addition, the Town of Chestertown has purchased the Chestertown Marina (1.82 ac.) to ensure public access to the waterfront. Gateway Park, the planned park mentioned above, will provide recreational opportunities identified as needed in the Recreation Commission’s findings, such as a basketball court, playground, and a handicap-accessible nature trail. It is currently a derelict property that was used to store tractor trailers located in the headwaters of Radcliffe Creek, a tributary of the Chester River. The Town is currently in discussions with the State Highway Administration regarding the extension of sidewalks and bike trails. A dog park is currently being constructed at Rolling Road Park in response to dog owners’ requests for safe play space for large and small dogs. Chestertown is committed to increasing the tree canopy from 24% to 40% as stated in its Urban and Community Forest Master Plan, and is more than half way to meeting that goal. Traffic calming modifications on upper High Street include a bike path and tree islands. SHA is currently studying Flatland Road for sidewalks to provide safe pedestrian walkways from several housing developments to Gateway Park, the Rail Trail, and downtown.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Town of Chestertown, Washington College, Recreation Commission, Chester River Association, Center for Environment & Society, Tree Committee, State Highway Administration.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

C. Enhancing economic competitiveness:

(1) What economic development policies, initiatives or projects will improve the economy through investments in small businesses and other key employment sectors? What economic development and business incentives will you build upon or implement as part of the SC Plan? Examples could include but are not limited to: green-taping for expedited project application review; permitting and inspection; job training; business tax credits; and, revolving loan funds.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Downtown Chestertown Association has implemented several initiatives designed to make the downtown a more vibrant and sustainable marketplace. These include First Fridays, where businesses, art galleries and the local theater open their doors after hours on the first Friday of every month. Taste of the Town features local chefs and caterers and locally-sourced produce, meats and wines. Think Chestertown First is a DCA initiative that draws attention to the important value of local businesses and services bring to our daily life and sense of place. DCA is also contemplating a façade improvement grant program funded by the Community Legacy Program and administered by the Town of Chestertown and a façade review committee. Economic sustainability goals included in the Chestertown Green Team’s Action Plan include the Buy Local gift card developed by Chesapeake Bank, implementing a green procurement policy for the Town of Chestertown, and joining the Maryland Green Registry program. The Chestertown Initiative is developing a marketing strategy for the Town that will help to draw shoppers and new businesses. Part of the marketing strategy will include capitalizing on town's location on the Chesapeake Country National Scenic Byway and Captain John Smith National Historic Trail, and getting local businesses to join the the Green Travel Partners Program. Another group involved in improving the economy include SCORE (Service Corps of Retired Executives), which mentors young entrepreneurs, conducts in-person and online workshops, and provides other services tailored to first-time business owners.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) What workforce development policies, initiatives or projects will increase access to jobs and economic opportunity for residents in the SC Area? Do you have a goal for job creation? Are green jobs an opportunity in the jurisdiction or SC Area?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Other than what is discussed in the previous question, this question seems geared towards larger towns and cities. Job creation and green jobs are the purview of the Kent County Economic Development office.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Describe whether the Sustainable Community will be impacted by the Base Re-alignment and Closure (BRAC) activities in Maryland. If impacted, how do the initiatives and projects in your Plan complement BRAC-related growth? (If not applicable, all ten points will be assessed based on answers to questions 1, 2, and 4)

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

No impact anticipated.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Town of Chestertown, Downtown Chestertown Association, Chestertown Revitalization Task Force, Chestertown Initiative.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

D. Promoting access to quality affordable housing.

(1) What housing policies, initiatives or projects will expand housing choices - rental and homeownership -- for people of a range of ages, incomes, and also for disabled individuals? How will these actions address the current housing conditions and needs noted in Section II?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Chestertown’s policies include expanding housing choices, encouraging higher density and mixed-use infill projects, ensuring that the need for senior and low-income housing is met, strengthening local neighborhoods, preserving historic areas and resources, ensuring public safety, improving local schools, enforcing property maintenance and other codes that contribute to public health and safety, and developing bicycling and walking infrastructure with a town-wide system of trails.

The Town of Chestertown currently owns and administers two low-income housing developments, High Steps (6 units) and Satterfield Court (16 units). The Town also constructed Calvert Heights (44 units) in 1979, which was sold and is now administered as low income housing by the Delaware Valley Development Company. Satterfield and Calvert Heights include units that are ADA accessible. As a requirement of a CDBG project in 2009, the Town of Chestertown adopted a Citizen Participation Plan, a Displacement and Relocation Assistance Plan, and a Section 3 Plan to ensure that HUD financial assistance is directed to public housing residents and other low-income persons.

Workforce housing is one of the most pressing challenges for Chestertown, and it is anticipated that the Chestertown Revitalization Task Force and, to a lesser extent, the Chestertown Initiative, will address this concern. The Task Force, on which half the representatives are Washington College appointees, is interested in creating housing options for new faculty, which typically have to live outside of Chestertown where housing is more affordable and where spouses can find work.

The revisions to the Zoning Ordinance should have a significant impact on community walkability, as it encourages mixed uses in areas formerly dedicated to commercial businesses, and decreases residential setbacks in multiple-family, downtown, and TND districts in order to allow for denser, and therefore more walkable, development. Increased residential development was also helped by rezoning several large infill parcels to a higher density residential use. In a few cases, existing single-family districts were down-zoned in order to protect single-family districts from multi-family development, which would have a negative impact on the predominant housing pattern.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) Will these housing initiatives or projects increase access to transit or community walkability and/or decrease transportation costs? In other words, will the housing investments result in more people living near work or town centers, or able to more conveniently reach work, school, shopping and/or recreation?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The listed initiatives above increase walkability and lower transportation costs by encouraging denser residential infill, which can lower construction costs and incentivize residential home builders, and mixed-use development, which creates second-floor residential options in formerly commercial-only areas. Chestertown's dedication to expanding the Rail Trail, sidewalks and pedestrian pathways, as well as its civic beautification and sustainability projects, all make the Town a more desirable place to live and work and increases the likelihood that people will want to live here.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) What is your goal for of number of units to be created of affordable workforce housin, rental and homeownership? What populations (by income or special needs) will benefit from this increased access to affordable housing?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Town of Chestertown has not set goals for increasing workforce housing, rental and homeownership. However, the projects listed above will make the Town a more attractive and sustainable place to live, which will draw people to live and work here who value this type of environment.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects ntoed in this section?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Town of Chestertown, Chestertown Revitalization Task Force, Chestertown Initiative, Downtown Chestertown Association, Kent County Public Schools, Friends of the Rail Trail.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

E. Support transportation efficiency and access.

(1) What policies, strategies and projects are envisioned to strengthen the transportation network that affects the proposed SC Area? How will these initiatives support transportation choices (including walking, bicycling, bus or rail transit, and carpooling) or otherwise promote an efficient transportation network that integrates housing and transportation land uses?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Major changes anticipated and desired for the Town’s road network include the construction of the Chestertown Bypass and the extension of Cross Street into the future TND development in Stepne Manor. The bypass has been in planning for more than two decades and will remain in the Comprehensive Plan as a highly desirable solution to traffic congestion caused by commercial traffic along Washington Ave./Rt. 213. Rerouting the commercial traffic will benefit the Historic District and the Town as a whole by alleviating the wear and tear on Washington Avenue and the Chester River Bridge, which is historic in its own right. The extension of Cross Street will be realized when Stepne Manor is developed, which is anticipated to occur when the housing market recovers. The extension of Cross Street will be guided in part by the revised Zoning Map and Ordinance, which calls for the extension of Downtown Commercial zoning for at least one block in order to create a smooth transition of uses. The Comprehensive Plan also calls for a road grid in the Stepne development that closely follows the existing patterns of the historic core, thereby better blending the new with the old. Street trees, lighting and green spaces will also help to integrate the new development into the town.

Minor changes to the town’s road network consist primarily of extending a few currently “paper” streets to create better traffic flow through neighborhoods. These include: the construction of Metcalfe Road, which parallels Conley Drive and was not built due to a lack of parcel sales in the development; the extension of Talbot Boulevard, which runs through an industrial area and into an area slated for a multiple family housing development; and the extension of Greenwood Avenue through Rolling Road Park, which will create an alternate route from Rolling Road to Morgnec Road/Rt. 291.

The Chestertown Rail Trail will be expanded with two planned, ready to construct phases to augment a growing network of land and water-based trails. The first of those phases has been funded by a \$168K Bikeways grant and will break ground in May 2014, and consists of a 1.2 mile spur that connects the downtown to Gateway Park at the north end of High Street. The spur runs behind primarily commercial businesses, including two restaurants that should see enhanced business from pedestrians and cyclists using the Rail Trail. Sidewalks will be constructed in areas where, during the expansion of the Town in the mid-20th Century, none were required or desired. Sidewalk construction is also being implemented to connect newer developments to the downtown and shopping centers. The increasing awareness of the benefits of walking for health and fitness will ensure that this effort continues. Traffic calming devices are also being constructed along busier arterial streets to make them safer for pedestrians and cyclists. The only transportation that approaches mass transit is small buses that serve the several retirement facilities and Washington College, but these are generally not available to the public.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) If applicable, describe the SC Area’s connection or proximity to transportation centers (e.g. Metro, MARC, and light rail stations) and describe opportunities for Transit - Oriented Development (TOD). Will Plan strategies and projects contribute to jobs/housing balance or otherwise provide a mix of land uses that can be expected to reduce reliance on single-occupancy automobiles? (If transit or TOD is not applicable in your community, all points in this section will be based on questions 1 and 3)

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Not applicable.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Chestertown Mayor and Council, Green Team, Friends of Chestertown Rail Trail.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

F. Coordinating and Leveraging Policies and Investment

(1) What specific steps will the Sustainable Community Workgroup take to coordinate policies and funding streams to remove barriers to investment and maximize and increase funding in the proposed Sustainable Community Area?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Sustainable Communities Workgroup, which includes the extended network of stakeholder groups, is unified in their desire to preserve and improve Chestertown's quality of life and unique sense of place. There is broad consensus that the Town must build on its greatest assets, which have been identified as falling into the three broad themes mentioned earlier in this application: art (includes artists, galleries, and arts programming), environment (including the Chester River, parks, and Chestertown Rail Trail), and history (including architecture, historic sites, and archaeology). Sustainable Communities designation will help to prioritize and fund future projects that fulfill the goals set out collectively by the groups listed above.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) How is the proposed Sustainable Community Plan consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The proposed SC Plan was developed in coordination with all of the existing plans for Chestertown, including: the Comprehensive Plan, particularly the Land Use Element, Transportation Element, Public Facilities Element, and Historic Resources Element; Chestertown Task Force recommendations, Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area Management Plan, especially Chapter 6 Focusing State and Local Investment (which includes the Chestertown Target Investment Zone), and Chapter 7, Addressing Community Character; Chestertown World Café Meeting Report; Chestertown Sustainable Maryland Certified Report; Town of Chestertown Urban & Community Forest Master Plan. These plans reflect many of the same concerns, central among them, sustainability and preserving Chestertown's unique sense of place.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) How will the Plan help leverage and/or sustain more private sector investments?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

A coherent, systematically organized Sustainable Communities Plan will provide the Town with a blueprint for future development, and helps the Town prioritize goals and potential projects.

V. PROGRESS MEASURES

For the Plan parts of section IV(A through F):

(1) List the specific outcomes that the Plan seeks to produce.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

- Chestertown Bypass: Continue to lobby for the construction of the bypass. The SHA has purchased all of the properties and easements needed to construct the bypass on the Queen Anne’s County side, but no land has been purchased on the Kent County side, and no commitment has been made to implement the project.
- Sidewalks: Expand the town’s sidewalk network into neighborhoods which do not currently have them, starting with the primary roads through those neighborhoods. Examples include sidewalks for: Cannon Street, Lynchburg Street and S. College Avenue where those three streets intersect, which is the only remaining area of the Historic District not to have sidewalks; the east side of Flatland Road to connect Gateway Park to several developments; Scheeler Road from Washington Avenue to expanding developments in the northeast corner of town; Haacke Drive to serve expanding developments in the same area; Morgnec Road/Rt. 291 from Washington Avenue to the anticipated Chestertown Bypass; Greenwood Avenue from Washington Avenue to the Chestertown Community Park; Philosopher’s Terrace between Kent Street and Campus Avenue; and S. Cross Street from the Rail Trail to Radcliffe Creek.
- Chestertown Rail Trail: Build Phases III and IV as shown in engineered plans by McCrone, including crosswalks where needed, including Morgnec Road/Rt. 291. Develop uniform, well designed trail and directional signage.
- Chestertown Marina: renovate and expand the Marina using currently applied-for State and Federal funding: \$800K DNR Waterway Improvement for dredging, marina repairs and pier replacement and expansion, a \$100K Tier I Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG), and a planned \$500K Tier II BIG grant. Implement
- Impact Fees: For annexations, develop impact fees based on developer-funded evaluations of impacts on public facilities, to include water, sewer, roads, police, fire and schools.
- Recreation: Increase recreational opportunities by expanding walking and bicycling trails, as well as sidewalks. Build playgrounds on public park land, develop Gateway Park with basketball court and ADA-accessible nature trails, and finish construction of the Rolling Road Dog Park. Construct a floating dock on Radcliffe Creek for kayak and canoe use.
- Preservation: Protect the Town’s historic resources by enforcing Historic District architectural standards, encouraging infill and new development that is sympathetic to the prevailing neighborhood development, and encouraging adaptive reuse of historic buildings and other structures.
- Environment: Preserve and enhance Chestertown’s natural assets by mandating best management practices for stormwater, requiring native plants and trees in new developments, increasing Chestertown’s tree canopy, and encouraging rain gardens and other retrofits that reduce carbon emissions, treat runoff and provide wildlife habitat value.
- Solar Power: Build a 1.2 mW solar photovoltaic system at the town’s wastewater treatment plant, which will power 85 percent of the town’s municipal electrical usage.
- Conservation Corridor: Develop to the maximum extent feasible a greenbelt around Chestertown, using existing MALPF and other protected lands on the municipalities’ perimeter.
- Gateways: Encourage sensitive development and redevelopment for the Town’s five gateways. The northwest entrance from Rock Hall, Route 20, is slated by SHA for a traffic circle with sidewalks and planting beds, which will drastically improve this entrance into Town.
- Institutions: Continue to work in partnership with the hospital, college, and other institutions to resolve the growth needs for these large employers.
- Growth: Enforce a policy of slow, sensitively planned growth that respects the Town’s existing infrastructure, open spaces, historic architecture, and natural resources.

V. PROGRESS MEASURES

(2) And, list the specific benchmarks that will be used to measure progress toward these outcomes.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

- Chestertown Bypass: Within five years, secure a commitment from SHA to construct the Chestertown Bypass, with a construction timeline under ten years.
- Sidewalks: Within two years, build sidewalks on Cannon Street, Flatland Road, and Scheeler Road. Complete lower priority sidewalks within five years.
- Chestertown Rail Trail: Complete Phase III by July 1, 2014, and Phase IV by July 1, 2015.
- Chestertown Marina: Within two years, complete dredging, remove existing piers and boardwalk and replace with new floating piers with water and electric hookups. Within five years,
- Impact Fees: Within two years, create impact fees for annexations.
- Recreation: Within one year, complete the dog park project at Rolling Road Park and improve entryways into the Park. Complete construction of Gateway Park by July 1, 2014. Within two years, build a children's playground or play sculpture at Wilmer Park. Within three years, construct a kayak dock on Radcliffe Creek.
- Preservation: Within one year, revise and update the Historic Resources Element for the Comprehensive Plan.
- Environment: Within one year, complete a planned stormwater step pool conveyance at the Chestertown Bypass. Within two years, renovate the town yard to meet and exceed stormwater regulations. Within three years, increase the Town's tree canopy to 40 percent.
- Solar Power: Within one year, complete planned construction of a 1.2 mW solar field at the wastewater treatment plant.
- Conservation Corridor: Within five years, complete a planned conservation corridor around the northern perimeter of Chestertown.
- Gateways: Within two years, complete the planned traffic circle and infrastructure improvements including rail trail, water trail and sidewalk connections at the Rt. 291/Morgnac Road – High Street/Rt. 20 intersection.

**REPLACE THIS PAGE WITH LOCAL
GOVERNMENT SUPPORT
RESOLUTIONS**

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICATION
DISCLOSURE AUTHORIZATION AND CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned authorizes the Department of Housing and Community Development (the "Department") to make such inquiries as necessary, including, but not limited to, credit inquiries, in order to verify the accuracy of the statements made by the applicant and to determine the creditworthiness of the applicant.

In accordance with Executive Order 01.01.1983.18, the Department advises you that certain personal information is necessary to determine your eligibility for financial assistance. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by Maryland's Access to Public Records Act, State Government Article, Section 10-611 et seq. of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the "Act"). This information will be disclosed to appropriate staff of the Department or to public officials for purposes directly connected with administration of this financial assistance program for which its use is intended. Such information may be shared with State, federal or local government agencies, which have a financial role in the project. You have the right to inspect, amend, or correct personal records in accordance with the Act.

The Department intends to make available to the public certain information regarding projects recommended for funding in the Sustainable Community Plan. The information available to the public will include the information in this application, as may be supplemented or amended. This information may be confidential under the Act. If you consider this information confidential and do not want it made available to the public, please indicate that in writing and attach the same to this application.

You agree that not attaching an objection constitutes your consent to the information being made available to the public and a waiver of any rights you may have regarding this information under the Act.

I have read and understand the above paragraph. Applicant's Initials: _____

Any one who knowingly makes, or causes to be made, any false statement or report relative to this financial assistance application, for the purposes of influencing the action of the Department on such application, is subject to immediate cancellation of financial assistance and other penalties authorized by law.

The undersigned hereby certifies that the Sustainable Communities Plan or Project(s) proposed in this Application can be accomplished and further certifies that the information set herein and in any attachment in support hereof is true, correct, and complete to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Authorized Signature	Print Name and Title	Date
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