
CHECKLIST & TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPLICANT: City of Mount Rainier

NAME OF 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 Applicant Information**

- TAB #2 Sustainable Community Baseline Information - 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. 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.**

- TAB #3 Local Capacity to Implement Plans & Projects: Attach Sustainable Communities Workgroup roster noted in Section III**

- TAB #4 Sustainable Community Plan**

- TAB #5 Progress Measures**

- TAB #6 Local Support Resolution**

- TAB #7 Signed Sustainable Community Application Disclosure Authorization and Certification**

**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:**

Legal Name of Applicant: City of Mount Rainier

Federal Identification Number: 52-6000800

Street Address: One Municipal Pl.

City: Mount Rainier **County:** Prince George's **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 20712

Phone No: 301-985-6585 **Fax:** 301-985-6595 **Web Address:** www.mountrainiermd.org

Sustainable Community Contact For Application Status:**Name:** Jeannelle Wallace **Title:** City Manager

Address: One Municipal Place **City:** Mount Rainier **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 20712

Phone No: 301-985-6585 x22 **Fax:** 301-985-6595 **E-mail:** jwallace@mountrainiermd.org

Person to be contacted for Award notification:**Name:** Jeannelle Wallace **Title:** City Manager

Address: One Municipal Place **City:** Mount Rainier **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 20712

Phone No: 301-985-6585 x22 **Fax:** 301-985-6595 **E-mail:** jwallace@mountrainiermd.org

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, 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 Community Area (s):

County: Prince George's

Name of Sustainable Community: _____

Include boundary descriptions and a map of the Sustainable Community. In addition to hard copies of the 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

Beginning at the intersection of Chillum Rd. and Buchanan St. then south along the centerline of Chillum Rd. then east along the centerline of Upshur St. then south along the centerline of 34th Pl. then east along the southern property line of the Record Plat MT RAINIER- 35TH STREET ADDN, then along the eastern property line of the Record Plat MT RAINIER- RHODE ISL AVE 2ND ADDN, straight through the Bunker Hill Fire Station property to the eastern property line of the Record Plat MT RAINIER- RHODE ISL AVE 1ST ADDN then to the centerline of the MARC railroad tracks then southwest to the District of Columbia boundary, then northwest to the northern boundary of the Record Plat KAYWOOD GARDENS, Lot 1, then along the southern boundary of Tax Map 49, Grid D2, Parcels 25 and 26, then along the northern and eastern boundary of the Record Plat NORTH WOODRIDGE- RUSSELL AVE EXT, Lot 7, then along the southern boundary of the Record Plat NORTH WOODRIDGE- RUSSELL AVE, Lot 8, crossing Russell Av. then around the northern side of the Record Plat NORTH WOODRIDGE- RUSSELL AVE EXT Parcel F, east along the northern right-of-way line of Arundel Rd. to the western boundary of the Record Plat NORTH WOODRIDGE, Block A, Lot 16 then North along the line to the southern boundary of the Record Plat NORTH WOODRIDGE, Block A, Lot 5, then east to the centerline of 25th Ave., then north to the centerline of Queens Chapel Rd. then east to the centerline of the Northwest Branch to the intersection of three parcels (NORTHWEST BRANCH PARK PARCEL 44, Tax Map 41, Grid F-4, Parcel 178 and Tax Map 49, Grid F1, Parcel 45) then south through the Queenstown Apartments to the point of beginning. The City of Mount Rainier is an older community where early settlers bought property and recorded plats in Mt. Rainier in the late 19th Century. What is known as the City of Mount Rainier today was incorporated in 1910.

According to the 2010 US Census, the city's population declined slightly from 8498 in 2000 to 8,080 in 2010. 71.1% of the population is 18 years or older and 22.9% are under the age of 18. The city is comprised of a mixture of ethnic groups as follows: 13.0% White population, 50.9% Black, 0.3% Indian, 2.3% Asian, 31.4% Hispanic, 1.8% all others. 92.9% of all housing units are occupied, with a vacancy housing rate of 7.1%. Approximately 30% of the single family housing units are not owner occupied. This vacancy rate has been consistent over the past decade. In the business district, there are 10 buildings which have remained vacant or are less than 25% occupied over the past decade. The one significant factor is that 2 of the commercial buildings in this district were purchased by the city for \$1.8 million dollars in efforts to spur investment and for the city to control development.

The vacant properties within the business district are all privately owned and have been difficult to either sell or lease to new occupants long before the recession and housing decline of the 21st century. It has been determined that one of the deterring factors is the lack of investment in terms of improving storefronts and minor repairs, as well as a lack of foot traffic on Rhode Island Avenue (Route1) and the business district on upper 34th Street. It should be noted here however, that the businesses on 34th Street are doing fairly well considering overall economic trends. The

aforementioned areas are located within the city's Mixed Use Town Center (MUTC) zone. Blighted conditions that exist due to the vacancies have contributed to the lack of development and investment in the zone. Potential developers also view the numerous overlay zones as problematic, the inability to obtain financing for retail and the County's permitting process as a concern. Previous parking studies concluded that there is insufficient parking in the downtown and the perception is that this is one of the deterrent factors.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Approximate number of acres within the SC Area: 1.2 square Mile

Existing federal, state or local designations (check all that apply):

- Community Legacy Area
- Designated Neighborhood
- Main Street
- Maple Street
- Local Historic District
- National Register Historic District
- A & E District
- State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District
- BRAC
- State Designated TOD
- Other(s): MUTC Zone

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Prior Revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:

(a) List and describe any significant State and 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)

The City has received funding through the State Neighborhood Revitalization Program (Community Legacy) of approximately \$307,000 since 2006. These funds were used to obtain the initial design drawings for a new state of the art library facility, renovate a teen community center /tool shed, install street lighting in the business district on upper 34th street, develop an architectural plan for the 3200 block of Rhode Island Avenue, State Bond Bills were also awarded in 2006 and 2011 in the amount of \$225,000 for construction drawings for the new library. In 2011, the city committed \$211,000 to complete the construction drawings so that the library community center project will be shovel ready in 2012. Prince George's County through its Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission expended \$500,000 towards the revision of the city's MUTC development guidelines and standards which produced the Approved City of Mount Rainier Mixed Use Town Center Zone Development Plan. The city purchased three properties on Route 1 Rhode Island Avenue, increasing its assets and the potential of developer interest and investment. The total of these purchases through city reserve funds and bank loans exceeded \$2.2 million dollars. Additionally, Federal Transit grant funds and city cash match funds were used to purchase a vacant lot across the street from the city municipal building and install pervious pavers for approximately \$277,000. For the period 2006 through 2011, Federal, State, County, and Municipal Funds totaling \$3,495,000 has been invested in the Mount Rainier Community for revitalization, increased parking availability, new library conceptual designs, property acquisition, architectural designs for future development, and development zone guidelines. The city funds used for property acquisition are geared towards controlling development and creating a core civic center municipal complex with the addition of historic Star-Potts Hall.

The impact of the investments in the community is (1) the improved lighting conditions on upper 34th Street business district for increased night time visibility for safer pedestrian access to stores and shops; (2) property acquisition of the Star-Potts Hall will aid in developing a municipal center complex for additional administrative office space and a larger library/community center with a focal entry point facing the WMATA Bus Terminal; (3) the city funds used to purchase the former Dudley Funeral Home and the former Bass Liquor Store and Restaurant, creates a 33,000 sq. foot for street level retail shops and residential units on the 2-3 upper floor levels and gives the city control over the site which was previously had multiple owners; (4) the purchase of the vacant lot across from the municipal center improves the parking availability in the core civic center and for businesses in and around the traffic circle; and (5) the city has moved from design concept drawings to the ability to acquire construction drawings.

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)

The barriers that exist in terms of development are as follows: 92% of the vacant commercial properties are privately owned and many of the owners live outside the city and even the State of Maryland in some cases. These owners are primarily interested in leasing the properties for below market value rate because they either lack the financial ability or will to invest cash in their properties for upgrades. Because the owners are absentee landlords, they are not connected to the potential for businesses to relocate and become self-sufficient in the community that are non-existent (e.g., a small grocery store, a bank, a pharmacy, an artist supply store, a sit-down restaurant, a bicycle shop, etc.). The owners lack of investment correlates to the same type of businesses being attracted to the city – hair salons, barber shops, convenient stores, dollar stores. Thus, the businesses that are attracted to Mount Rainier, are not business savvy, usually have no business plan, do not engage in due diligence to determine what it takes to be successful in terms of the businesses that are lacking in the community; and they lack the business acumen to succeed. Because the properties are privately owned, and the properties are leased and/or sold by financial entities that have taken over the properties due to foreclosures, city intervention occurs after the fact. The current financial market is also a deterrent factor creating barriers; low pedestrian foot traffic is another.

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 places? What is the condition and availability of community parks and recreational assets? Are there transportation assets? What is the current condition of community infrastructure such as roads and lighting? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Strengths – According to a May 2009 Market Analysis Report prepared by Partners for Economic Solutions and Green Door Advisors, many of Mount Rainier's positive attributes reflect the advantages of being "a hidden gem." Despite its position as a DC Gateway, the City kept its historic building fabric and supported long-term retail tenants, because its isolation kept the development community at bay. The Mount Rainier arts community attracts many destination customers attracted to the area from well beyond the immediate vicinity. Joe's Movement Emporium hosts more than six public performances each year and is open seven days a week with performance classes for all ages. GLUT, a local health food co-op, with a long-term presence in the community attracts customers from a broad area. The City and the business community will be able to build on the strengths of this existing customer base, the historic fabric, high levels of automobile traffic and stable residential base by capitalizing on the opportunities highlighted in the matrix. These opportunities include assisting local merchants (with clean & safe programming and facade upgrades); redeveloping key vacant buildings and parcels in prominent locations; and marketing the gateway location.

Other strengths are that the existing buildings offer affordable space, and there is an attraction of existing clients to expand experiences in Mount Rainier, proximity to University of Maryland and Catholic University, as well as the recent development in Hyattsville, Maryland. There are also business anchors including Joe's Movement Emporium, Glut Food Cooperative, and Nisey's Boutique. The close proximity to DC and the Gateway Arts District are additional pluses, as well as the entrepreneurial base, and that the city is located in the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area.

Weaknesses - vacant and underutilized sites on Rhode Island Avenue which gives the appearance of a deteriorating commercial environment. There is a lack of restaurants, pharmacies, or banks, and a redundancy of the same kinds of stores including hair salons, barber shops, liquor stores, and dollar stores. Additionally, since many of the businesses are small, most are understaffed, and some are inexperienced retailers. Available arts retail space greatly exceeds the demand.

Community parks and playgrounds is an asset. They are city and County maintained and owned) with the support of the city's public works department.

Housing Condition - The housing availability is stable. While there are some vacancies that on average are approximately 20-30 single family homes available, people tend to love to relocate to Mount Rainer because of its quaintness and affordability. Some of these homes require moderate renovations, but the size of the homes, the historic value, and lot sizes are attractive to most home buyers. The city's tax credit programs are additional incentives to purchase homes.

Recreational Assets - In terms of recreational assets, during the past decade, with the support of M-NCPPC, a skate park was installed at one of the neighborhood parks on Wells Avenue. A nature center at Arundel and 30th Street, which is also ran by M-NCPPC has many programs scheduled for children and youth. There are numerous other parks including the one located at 34th and Upshur Street, which was recently renovated with native plant species and upgraded park equipment and received national attention from First Lady Michelle Obama as an ideal Kids Park. Richardson Park, 30th Street Park and the Gazebo Park which is owned and maintained by the County's school system are all available green spaces for outdoor recreational uses. Transportation Assets is good in the community. Bus routes steady both in Maryland with great access into the Nation's Capital. Metro stations are nearby within 1 mile in Maryland and 4 miles in the District.

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)

The city is made up of several zoning configurations including residential, commercial, light industrial and mixed use. The city's main thoroughfare is Rhode Island Avenue which is located in the Gateway Arts District and the Mixed Use Town Center zone. The MUTC zone also includes 34th Street. The entire MUTC area is contained within the Mount Rainier Historic District, which has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places since 1990. Most of the commercial buildings in the Mount Rainier Historic District are located in the city's historic downtown area, which traditionally contains a mixture of both residential and mixed-used buildings.

The current zoning is conducive to revitalization investment as the low level of integrity of many structures will allow for sensitive and carefully crafted development of selected sites according the Plan Vision Overview described in the Approved City of Mount Rainier MUTC Zone Development Plan. This development may include historically compatible additions and new replacement buildings. The guidance provided in the MUTC Zone Development Plan is designed to assist the city's MUTC Design Review Committee with analysis and a review of new work, repair, and maintenance activities throughout the MUTC area. This guidance should foster new development while maintaining the character and small town feel of the City of Mount Rainier.

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 within or accessible to residents in the proposed SC Area? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The strength in the community currently is that crime has been significantly down for the past several years. This is attributed to a full stable sworn officer force including the chief and captain. While auto break-ins and burglaries are at about the same level as in the county and the one area which the department of public safety has had difficulty in getting a handle on. However, all other crime statistics have steadily decreased each year for the past 5 years. The city is safe and the resident feel that the city has a very reliable and competent police force.

The largest artistic and cultural event and facility is Joe's Movement Emporium on Bunker Hill Road. This is the focal point of arts in the community, hosting live theatre performance, dance workshops, and a huge cultural exchange and arts craft event son a routine basis.

The Mount Rainier Day festival is held annually the third Saturday in May of each year. This event boasts the cultural diversity and talents of the many artists include painters, sculptors, musicians, and entertainers that make up the City of Mount Rainier.

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)

The city has a strong five member tree commission in addition to a former mayor and council member who serves as the City's Certified Roadside Tree Expert. The current mayor and public work director have both been trained in the proper pruning of trees and readily know when trees are diseased and or need special attention. For the past 4 years, the city has replaced diseased or dying trees with the support of the Prince George's County Tree ReLeaf Grant. During the past 4 years, over 200 new street trees have been planted. This was accomplished with the support of public works, and community volunteers including members from the Anacostia Watershed Society. The city has been awarded over \$30,000 in grant funds the county for this effort. Of the 109 trees planted in 2011, only 9 trees were lost due to the summer drought. Those 9 trees were replaced in the fall of 2011. Additionally, the tree commission prepares and updates the city's tree inventory, watches the trees that suspect of being in "trouble", and prepares a list of the trees that are scheduled for the next pruning and or trimming.

During the last tree inventory updated in 2011, there are 1,690 trees in the city. Therefore the tree canopy is excellent. The city also received a plant award including a Silver Level awarded in 2011. Because the city promotes walking, cycling, the use of ZIP Car, and public transportation, the air quality in the city is in good to excellent condition, in addition to the number of trees in the city. The city is currently engaged in obtaining Sustainable Maryland Certification for its efforts to reduce water-run-off, use of alternative energy sources (including solar panels on the city municipal building) and the residents who use corn pellets as an alternative home heating supplier.

As an example of reducing water run-off, the city urges the use of pervious surfaces wherever possible. A recently purchased vacant parking lot has been turned into a parking lot of pervious pavers where gallons of water per minute are slowing filtered into the surrounding tributaries. Joe's Movement Emporium (the focal cultural arts center in the city) sponsors a avenue and alleyway clean up each year with youth, families and other citizen volunteers. Many of the city's elected officials and residents are active members of both the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area and the Anacostia Watershed Society. The city is one of the county's ATHA communities. The city also received a grant award from ATHA in the amount historical house tours.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of any current efforts to reduce the community's "carbon footprint" 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 4,000 characters)

There are strengths in this category for the city: recycling is not only encouraged but collected by the department of public works on a weekly basis each and every Friday. Recycling containers are provided free to each homeowner, and duplicate containers are available for \$7. Replacement containers that have been stolen or are damaged are also provided free of charge to the residents. Electronic recycling is provided for the residents free of charge at a minimum of 5 times per year and often in partnership with the Town of Brentwood. The city partners with agencies that guarantee proper disposal of electronics that do not harm other communities and that are not outsourced overseas. Commercial recycling is provided by private contractors who are licensed with Prince George's County.

The availability to buy fresh local food and other products is done in three ways: the Glut Food Cooperative whose members reside in the city, has been established for over 40 years. This coop provides natural herbs, fresh produce and organic foods, nuts, and grains for those who want an alternative to the average public grocery; there is Sweet and Natural restaurant located 4009 34th Street which offers organic steamed vegan food for those who choose not to eat meat or dairy products; and there is the Mount Rainier Farmer's Market which hosts venues from local farmers located in Maryland and Pennsylvania – the market is run from April through October of each year.

The city has received its first points through the Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative and hopes to become fully certified in February 2012. A vision summary of the plan, and draft of the city's going green efforts has already been completed as well as the city's sustainability plans and assessment document.

Energy conservation efforts are evidenced by the city's partnership with Clean Currents – an alternative energy supplier, the installation of solar panels on the city's municipal building, the upgrade of energy efficiency for 15 single family homes in the city with grant funding from the Neighborhood Revitalization Program, and the Chesapeake Bay Trust Award of \$35,000 to design a Bio-retention Cell on Buchanan Street to prevent water pooling on the Buchanan Street parking lot and to reduce pollutants going into the Anacostia River and Northwest Tributaries.

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 4,000 characters)

The reduction of stormwater flows can be somewhat controlled by building design. For example, the city has an artist apartment complex that has a rain garden on the roof which collect rain water and then filters the water to the landscaping surround the building. Designs of this type can filter and reuse water naturally. A rain garden was recently planted at the Mount Rainer Nature Center with city funds. The pervious pavers that were planted in December 2011 on a vacant property lot were bordered with shrubbery. The city is committed to continue with these types of water filtering and conservation efforts. Developers will be required to offer these types of conversation efforts in all of their proposed designs. In other capacities, the city relies on the County's Stormwater and Storm Drain Management program and WSSC to ensure that there is proper drainage and that pipes can withstand torrential rain fall. State Highway Administration has been a great partner in ensuring that drains are clear of vegetation along state roadways.

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 economic 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 4,000 characters)

The city's strongest economic base is the city itself. With an operating budget of \$4.5million dollars and an employee force of 40 personnel, the city is operating extremely well and is in good condition and financially solvent. The city has a healthy reserve balance of approximately \$1.5 million dollars over 25% of its annual budget. The city has operated in the black for three consecutive years, with revenue exceeding expenditures. Annual fiscal audits have been good, with the most recent audit for the period ending June 30, 2011 finding no material or management weaknesses. The city has increased its assets with property acquisition (some of which is historic) to reduce the number of private owners of key development property in the MUTC area. Some of the economic drivers for the area include the various County economic revitalization programs that are available including the County's Revitalization Area Tax credit Program, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Property Tax Abatements, Business Improvements District (BID), Revolving Loa Program, Prince George's Financial Service Corporation, Historic Property Grant Program, Land Readjustment Programs, Capital Improvement Program, and Gateway Community Development Corporation.

The city's recent award of \$75,000 for façade improvement for the local businesses is another economic driver to help with stabilizing existing businesses. The Mount Rainier Business Association is a partner with the city in establishing a buy local campaign, branding, and has recently hired a staff person to work on improvement relationships between the city and business owners in improving the business perception and serving as both an economic developer and MainStreet coordination responsibilities.

Employment trends are steady among existing businesses. Businesses automatically become members of the Mount Rainier Business Association through their business occupancy license fees. Active participation is encouraged but not always possible because so many of the businesses are understaffed. This is considered a weakness and is one of the goals of the MRBA staff person to engage in encouraging greater participation through face-to-face communication. One of the resources of the MRBA is connecting owners with all of the available resources in the County to assist them with business management tools. The city and MRBA created a Welcome package with most of this information for both new and existing business owners. Training and going over the materials with each business owner is a goal for 2012 in addition to conducting an information forum with each business entity.

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 and 50% AMI. What efforts are in place currently to house individuals, families and the disabled at or below the AMI levels described above? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The city is considered one of the most affordable in the Washington Metropolitan Region compared to Washington DC and Prince George's County. The city is considered one of the most dense populated cities in the state with 4 large apartment complexes – Kaywood Garden Apartments with 918 units, Queenstown Apartments with 720 units, Queens Manor apartments with 520 units. There are approximately 920 single family homes in the city, two artist work force housing complexes totally 56 units. The city's prevailing housing costs are affordable to households below the 50% AMI. Single family homes that are in need of major renovation are easily purchased for \$75-\$150,000 and easily re-sell after renovations in the \$200-\$300K range within a short (6 months) time frame. Property values have remained steady and affordable for past decade.

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 4,000 characters)

There are 8080 residents in the city according to the 2010 Census. Population declined by 4.9% over the prior decade. Population by age – 71.1% of the total residents are 18 years of age and over. 22.9% of the total population is under the age of 18. The racial category is as follows: White + 13.0% of the total population; Black –50.9%; Indian 0.3%; Asian 2.3%; Islander 0.0%; Hispanic 31.4%; Two or more races 1.6%; other 0.4%.

There are 3,601 housing units in the city; 92.9% of which were occupied and 7.1% of total housing units were unoccupied at the time of the latest Census. The vacancy rate has pretty much remained constant over the past decade. There has been a decline in the white population over the past decade by 7.0% and an increase of the Hispanic population of 13.1%.

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 4,000 characters)

The City of Mount Rainier operates under a council-manager form of local government. The Mayor and Council consist of five (5) members including the Mayor who has voting powers. They are the electoral body and the Mayor is the Chief Elected Official signing all major grant awards and contracts. As a body, they set policy, adopt legislation, and appropriate funding for each fiscal year. The city manager serves as the chief operating and/or administrative officer and supervises the management team which is comprised of a finance director, assistant city manager, police chief, public works director, and cable television (Mount Rainier Television [MRTV]). The municipal clerk and the code enforcement division also serve under the supervision of the city manager and assistant city manager. The city contracts with a legal firm in addition to Local Government Insurance Trust (LGIT) to handle all litigation, public official liability as well as tort claims against the city and city staff including the mayor and council. An independent auditing firm is contracted annually to conduct a fiscal audit of the city's financial statements for each fiscal year commencing with July 1 and ending on June 30.

The city relies heavily on the support of volunteer work groups to address various issues including water quality, preservation of trees, sustainability issues, development, etc. The city's Environmental Protection Board (EPB) serve as members in the Sustainable Communities Workgroup and city staff include the city manager, assistant city manager and public works director. The primary leaders are the chairperson of the EPB and council liaison. Other civic leaders may also include members of the Design Review Board (DRB), and the Mixed Use Town Center Design Review Committee (MUTC) as needed. The assistant city manager is the staff liaison assigned to both the DRB and MUTC committees, and the city manager is the lead person to work with the sustainable workgroup. Staff will work primarily with the sustainable work group to manage and implement the SC Area Plan.

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 4,000 characters)

The current staff has managed all grants pertaining to the current Community Legacy Plan and designation including Community Development Block Grants and Livable Communities Grant Awards, Tree ReLeaf Grant Awards, and Federal Grant Awards from the Federal Transit Administration through the Department of Transportation, and Department of Justice grant awards as well as the Governor's Office on Crime Control and Prevention. The staff assigned to these grant programs include the city manager, finance director, assistant city manager, police chief, and contracted grant writer. The city manager as served in her present capacity for the city for 10 years. The finance director has served in his present position for the past 7 years. The police chief has served in his present capacity as chief for 5 years, and served as the deputy police chief for 5 years. The assistant city manager has served in his present capacity for the city for the past 5 years. Mount Rainier has an excellent history of submitting good programmatic and financial reports in a timely manner and adhering to grant requirements.

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 4,000 characters)

Because the city relies heavily on volunteer community support, public input is always at the forefront of major decisions. This input occurs in the format of public hearings, focus groups, charettes, and workgroups. Special meetings of the mayor and council occur routinely to address public concerns. For the Approved City of Mount Rainier MUTC Zone Development Plan which was revised and approved in November 2010, several public forums were held commencing with a kick-off meeting in October 2009, and community workshop held October 2009 through February 2010. Presentation of the new Design Guidelines and Standards were approved in March 2010.

Public Charettes for the design drawings for the construction of the civic center including a new library and renovations to the historic Star-Potts Hall occurred over a period of two years from 2008-2010. The initial concepts for the library began as far back as 2003.

The council's decision to purchase the former Bass Property on Rhode Island Avenue was formerly approved after a public hearing following a 20 year battle to revoke the liquor license of the Bass Liquor Store and Restaurant due to years of criminal activity and property decline. All of these steps were necessary to formalize a vision for the city's sustainable community area – the majority of which lies within the city's town center on Rhode Island Avenue and upper 34th Street. As the city continues to develop and amend its sustainable communities plan, public input will continue. For example, the council will host one special meeting in January 2012 to focus solely on development issues; a work session in January is scheduled to discuss the city's draft sustainable plans and to obtain public comment on the plan in order to move forward with certification under the Sustainable Certified Maryland program.

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)

The City of Mount Rainier has encouraged re-investment and growth in the community through several initiatives. These initiatives include encouraging citizens to participate recycling efforts. Electronic recycling is sponsored at least quarterly in partnership with the Town of Brentwood, Maryland. During the 1980's, the city became the first municipality in Prince George's County to establish a bike trail; adopted the 1987 Chesapeake Bay Agreement; established the city's Tree Commission to preserve the city's trees; held its first Arbor Day with planting of 200 trees. During the 1990's, the city held its first Earth Day event; recycling of yard waste began; the city and Takoma Park jointly awarded \$23,000 to conduct energy audits of commercial and residential buildings; the city partnered with the Prince George's Memorial Library System for a walk-up library to encourage residents to use this facility as opposed to driving to the nearest library. In October 2009, the Preserve Our Planet Corn Cooperative was created by 30 residents who use corn pellets as a heating alternative and store the pellets in a corn silo on city owned property.

During the twentieth century the city was awarded \$4,000 in grants from the Anacostia Trails Heritage Area (ATHA) for its Historical House Tour and Centennial celebration; state funding was awarded to install energy efficient lighting in and around the municipal center; the city built the first energy efficient police station in the country; the city created the second tool shed in the state encouraging residents to re-use and share household and garden tools; the city received \$75,000 grant from the state to create its Green Home Initiative whereby 15 homeowners received energy star appliances, new windows and doors to reduce air draft, and had energy audits conducted to learn additional ways to reduce their carbon footprint, conserve energy, and improve energy efficiency which was highlighted in the city's local newspaper and cable stations. The city receives funding every year to plant new trees to preserve the existing stock and replace diseased and dying species; the city received a silver level plant awards in 2009 and Silver Level in 2010. The city received a Maryland Municipal League Award of Excellence for its tool shed in 2005, and the creation of a Bicycle Coop in 2006 which encourages residents to use this form of transportation. In 2011, the city passed its Going Green Ordinance, and created a Green Garden theme park (earth, environment, and education) promoting sustainability using native plantings, recycled materials and the use of children's handprints encouraging future leaders to learn about the preservation of plant material.

The city established an Environmental Protection Board as the green working committee for the city to increase awareness among citizens to become and sustain environmental preservation and to become a leader in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) recognized City.

In order to discourage growth that degrades natural resources the city has developed an Environmental Sustainability Plans and Assessment document as a footprint for the city's plan for going green. The city has established the plan to educate both residents and city employees to promote sustainability efforts. A recent energy audit was conducted on all city buildings by the Maryland Energy Administration.

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 city is also encouraging potential investors and developers to use recycled materials and engage in construction projects that strive for LEED certification. The city staff use recycled materials (i.e., office and restroom paper and cleaning products). The city received federal funding from the Federal Transit Administration for its Intermodal Pedestrian Project to encourage persons to use public transportation. The funding supported the purchase of a vacant parking lot and the implementation of pervious pavers on the lot which serves two purposes – increases the parking availability in the downtown and reduces pollutants and water run-off into the Anacostia River and Northwest Tributaries. These pave drains are a nationally recognized solution to water run-off. The city's match for this grant was used for property acquisition and to seal and stripe the pave drains. Additionally, the city used the same system on one of its alleyways to control the flow of water away from property owners due to the natural grading of the street. The city is also pursuing using this system in other areas of the city where there is pooling of water during the warmer climates and the formation of ice during colder seasons. This will be in partnership with the EPA if the funding comes through.

In order to promote investment, the city purchased property in it's downtown for \$1.8 million dollars to control the type of development. \$25,000 in Community Legacy Funding was used to draft a Downtown Architectural Plan to develop building design concepts. An RFP was issued and the city is currently waiting for pro-forma documentation from two potential developers. The city also purchased another historical property (the former Star-Potts Hall) adjacent to the municipal building to create a civic center in conjunction with a new state-of-the art library. The library will also house larger meeting space and a community center for recreational activities for youth and teens. The civic center design is being funding through city funds in the amount of \$211,000, and state bond bills totaling \$225,000. The city hopes to leverage the \$2 million it has expended in property acquisition and design drawings against requests for funding of the civic center. The goal of course is to spur increased investment in the city and increased foot traffic for existing businesses

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)

The city installed a rain garden at the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) Nature Center for \$500. This garden serves as a learning tool for the youth who access the center. The city also has a rain garden on the roof of one of its artist apartments at 32nd and Perry Street. The Corn Bin housed at 36th and Bunker Hill Road stores corn for those residents who participate in the alternative home heating program. 21 Energy efficient lights were recently installed at the Kaywood Garden Apartments with a Community Development Block Grant-Recovery (CDBG-R) funds to improve lighting in the area.

For the past two seasons, the city has hosted a farmer's market to support organic and local suppliers of produce, teas, and Shea butter. The city also has developed a vision and community action plan for going green. The vision statement incorporates a summary of these activities as follows:

The City of Mount Rainier prides itself as a leader in sustainability efforts to reduce its carbon footprint, and continually looks at ways to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors.

The City began a commitment to improve air and water quality, and establish an environmentally friendly city in the early 70's, almost 40 years ago. Through adopted legislation and municipal codes, the city has routinely shown that it supports Maryland Smart Growth initiatives.

This Environmental Sustainability Plan and Assessment is a working document that addresses the significant components of sustainability – environmental, social, and economic factors.

The focus is to research ways that both city leaders and residents can proactively impact their surroundings. This has been done through several activities, programs, and initiatives, including but not limited to the 2011 Green Home Initiative, the Preserve Our Planet Corn Bin, the Mount Rainier Bicycle Cooperative, the City of Mount Rainier Recycling efforts, the 2011

Rain Garden at the Mount Rainier Nature Center, the annual replanting of native and new city street trees, the installation of solar panels on the City Municipal Building, and the first "green" police facility in the country.

This Sustainability Plan reflects the city's priorities for improving energy efficiency, reducing waste and fostering a healthy community through wellness and local economic development programs. In addition to the benefits this will provide to our residents, it will also put us on a path to become one of the very first "Sustainable Maryland Certified Communities," a designation that will bring much deserved recognition for the ongoing innovative work of the City of Mount Rainier.

In November 2010, the city in conjunction with the M-NCPPC, created an Approved City of Mount Rainier Mixed use Town Center (MUTC) Zone Development Plan. This MUTC zone district was initially created in 1994 to promote reinvestment in the county's older, mixed use areas. The current plan updates the July 1994 Mont Rainier Town Center Development pedestrian friendly, vibrant mixed used town center for the city.

The city's Environmental Protection Board (EPB) is working with the city council to ensure that the city becomes one of the first Maryland Certified Cities.

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)

The city's Environmental Protection Board, (EPB) Mixed Use Town Center Review Committee,(MUTC) and the Mount Rainier Business Association, (MRBA) are all key stakeholders to bring the vision into fruition. The MRBA works diligently with city staff to ensure that businesses are engaged in promoting the success and viability of the downtown and business district. This is evidenced by the following: The 2012 Business License Occupancy Application process includes a requirement that all new businesses participate in a "counseling program" with members of the MRBA executive board and city management staff to encourage sustainable and successful business attitudes (e.g., keeping business storefronts clean, inviting and attractive, consistent hours of operation, learning how to survive during inclement weather events, and disaster preparedness, and learning how to compete with similar business venues). Welcome packages were developed with and MRBA Marketing Expert and city management team. The MUTC committee reviews all signage and façade improvements to ensure that they are in compliance with current zoning regulations. The EPB will help to ensure that new development, construction, etc., compliance with the city's green initiatives.

The city recently partnered with Clean Currents as an alternative Energy supplier to reduce energy costs. Solar panels were recently installed on the city municipal building as an indication that the city is not only a leader in its plans to reduce its carbon footprint, but that the city actually engages in activities as an environmentally friendly community.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

B. Valuing communities and neighborhoods -- building upon 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)

Key assets that existing includes a city management team with 35+ years of municipal experience in working with federal, state, county, and local government, to improve service delivery and citizen volunteers who serve on numerous committees to improve the quality of life and livability of the city. These volunteers serve on the Design Review Board, which makes recommendations to the management staff and the mayor and council for all variance requests for home additions, fence height, etc. The city's Tree Commission reviews the trimming and replacement needs of all city street trees and updates the city's tree inventory annually. The MUTC are volunteers as well and are appointed by the M-NCPPC to review all exterior renovations, and signage within the MUTC of the city. Public hearings and Charettes are held routinely on major investments and expenditures and attended by an enthusiastic and well informed community. One of the city's parks at 34th and Upshur Streets was recently re-designed with funding from M-NCPPC. The local community was very active and vocal with insisting that new plantings be of a native species. The drought of the Summer of 2011 proved to be very challenging. Neighbors got together and adopted the park and brought watering buckets to keep the new plantings healthy. The same enthusiasm occurred to preserve the 190 new street trees which were planted in 2010. While watering bags were bought by the city's public works department, keeping the trees watered was a monumental task for staff. Volunteers once again came to the rescue – notices were put in the city newsletter and on the cable stations asking citizens to volunteer to adopt a tree in front of their homes. Trees were adopted by local residents who agreed to water the trees on their own. As a result, only 9 trees were lost out of the 1109 that were planted in the fall of 2010.

Other residents have adopted Richardson Park, another neighborhood park. They keep an eye on vandalism or broken park equipment notifying the departments of public safety and public works. These citizens regularly see that unusual amounts of trash is collected, and tie up and bundle when they can fallen tree branches.

Neighborhood watch groups are formed and active throughout the city and work with the city's police chief and ensure that unwanted and suspicious activity is kept to a minimum. The police chief regularly writes articles in the city's newspaper on safety tips to avert burglaries and assaults. As a result of this community/staff coordination, crime has been reduced for the third consecutive year.

The city's Tool Shed volunteers host a plant swap every year, and most recently hosted a composting workshop educating residents on how to individually compost leaves, store and re-use this material. The EPB serves as the city's "Green Team", and participated in a state sponsored green training sponsored by Sustainable Maryland Certified along with city staff. The goals of the EPB include educating the community about energy efficiency loans and grants at the federal state and county level.

At one vacant lot at the corner of 33rd and Perry Street, local residents obtained permission and visitors to buy locally. A Better Block Project implemented during the spring of 2011, will be done again in the spring of 2012 to encourage investment in vacant property in the business district. This will also be one of the initiatives of the Façade Improvement Program for 2012.

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)

The approved City of Mount Rainier Mixed Use Town Center Zone Development Plan is the guide for the visioning of future development within the city. It addresses the vision of the renovations of both the library and Star-Potts Hall – a historically significant building to create a civic core- civic center facing a "civic green". The vision also speaks to the construction of a public gathering place on the civic green promoting pedestrian activity in the downtown. The creation of a kiss and ride lot adjacent to the city municipal building promotes the utilization of public transportation. The partnership with Zip Car also promotes the use of a car only "when you need one" further promoting the decrease of fossil fuel emissions.

The annual Mount Rainier Day Festival held the third Saturday in May of each year, celebrates the city's history, and showcases local talent of every ethnicity represented in the city. The northbound side of Rhode Island Avenue is closed for vendors, shopping, exhibits, and entertainment. This virtual main street is an opportunity for visitors and local businesses to highlight their food, venue, etc. and highlights the cultural diversity of the city. It is one of the largest street festivals held in Prince George's County with 2-3 high school marching bands and participation of the local fire department, Prince George's County, Montgomery County, and Metropolitan Police departments, county health department, local financial institutions, WSSC, health screenings, and all sorts of activities for youth and families.

The Better Block Project modeled after a town in Texas, promotes usage of buildings within the business district and the potential fuses of property. The project also focuses on the local talents of the residential artists in the community who use their skills to improve the store fronts of businesses and buildings. This is another street festival type of event, promoting the buy local campaign.

National Night Out held every year in August promotes public safety awareness in the community and brings face to face the community with the police officer staff. It teaches youth the important concepts of being aware of your surroundings and instilling pride in the community.

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)*

Each year the city engages in a tree planting campaign to replace diseased and or dying trees. This project is done with the support of Prince George's County Tree ReLeaf Grant, the Anacostia Watershed Society, the city's Public Works Department, and city volunteers. During the past three years the city has planted over 200 trees. The city has received over \$30,000 in funding for this effort. The city has also partnered with PEPCO concerning tree trimming, appropriate pruning, and a schedule for trimming of city trees.

Street parks are another focal point for city volunteers. Richardson Park has been adopted by citizen groups to ensure the parks beauty and health. A rain garden was planted at the city's Nature Center, The Upshur Street Park has been restored with new playground equipment from M-NCPPC and native plants which are kept healthy by local volunteers. This park re-named as a Kids Park is designed to educated youth on the importance of plants, keeping the park free of trash and the harm done to plants walking on them.

The city also has hosted for the past two years a historical house tour. Residents and visitors get to see the beauty of the large historical homes in the city, as well as the tree lined streets. During the month of October 2011, the third historical house tour event occurred with 150 people participating. New homeowners said they purchased their home as a result of participating in the previous tour. This event not only promotes new homeownership and investment, it provides an opportunity for residents to meet their neighbors and interact with them.

The city purchased a vacant lot which will be used to increase parking availability and a new pave drain system was installed to reduce water run-off. Another parking lot on Buchanan Street will be used to install a bio-retention cell for a possible future green street. Currently water pooling occurs and the design will reduce the water run-off and pollutants that are gathered there. Support funding in the amount of \$35,000 was awarded from Chesapeake Bay Trust.

The city also promotes the Let's Move Initiative sponsored by First Lady Michelle Obama. Mount Rainier Elementary School participated in this event with kick-ball and basketball activities on a specified date.

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)

The key stakeholders will be the Mixed Use Town Center Review Committee (MUTC) which will be responsible for recommending to the mayor and council all exterior design, including building height, materials used, paint color, signage, square footage, etc. Joe's Movement Emporium is a focal point in the community for recreation programs in the city including after school program, yoga, belly dancing, health and fitness, live theatre performances, etc. Persons attracted to this venue will be the same ones targeted for this development and will be key stakeholders in public forums and hearings discussing this development. Additionally, the Environmental Protection Board members will serve as the key members of the sustainable workgroup in conjunction with city staff to implement the initiatives and projects. The Design Review Board will be consulted as well and give input as to key implementation elements of the project.

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 City is located in the Gateway Arts District and is in the Enterprise Zone of Prince George's County. The city recently completed its MainStreet application for this designation and participates in the County's economic revitalization programs to include the County's Revitalization Area Tax Credit Program, Tax Increment Financing (TIF) and Property Tax Abatements. In addition, the city established its own Historic Preservation Tax Credits Program of 5-10%, and a homeowner's tax credit of 10% for those income eligible homeowners with incomes of less than \$60,000. Both of these programs promote investment and encourages preservation, restoration and improvement of property.

During 2010, the city partnered with the Mount Rainier Business Association and business owners to assist small businesses with investment opportunities to make improvements in their properties. Businesses were awarded funding up to \$6,000 each from the city and MRBA to improve their storefront with painting, artwork, or new windows. The business or property owner had to match dollar for dollar the amount of funding,

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)

As part of the city's green initiatives, it adopted Ordinance 3-2011. A workforce policy is included in this document as follows:

Create a more environmentally friendly workplace for its employees as part of its going green project.

This will take planning, funding and time to achieve the maximum results. Therefore Mayor and Council will use a smart approach to accomplish this objective, i.e., as the City revitalizes its buildings, purchases cars and equipment, and makes improvements, it will strive to use materials and services that are in keeping with this ordinance's objectives. For example when budgeting for police cars, the City will strive to purchase and place into use at least one alternative fuel or hybrid vehicle; purchase recycled paper; install energy efficient lighting, etc.

Creating a sustainable office environment will reduce the City's overhead and operating expenses, conserve resources, and increase awareness of the environmental impacts of our day-to-day operations on our environment. The savings will be realized over time.

Additionally, the elected officials of the city stress the importance of not only buying locally, but hiring locally providing employment opportunities to Mount Rainier residents.

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)

It is not anticipated that BRAC will greatly impact the City of Mount Rainier. There will be some residual impact in that Mount Rainier is one of the top 10 green cities in the nation according to a dc.urbantauraf.com article with "unheard of" home prices in the \$200s or \$300s if renovated according to a September 15, 2010 article of the same source. With these home prices and large lots averaging 5-7,000 sq. ft, it is an opportunity for folks to relocate to the city and in close proximity to the District of Columbia with great available bus service and metro rail nearby. The city averages 20 or so vacant single family homes at any one time, and more availability in the multi-family apartment complexes which are also affordable. Artist housing is at a premium, however; vacancies are limited with one bedrooms in artist apartments averaging around \$600-800 and the artist lofts \$800.

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)

The key stakeholders are the management staff of the multi-family units to work with city staff informing them of vacancies and of course advertising availability. The city's code enforcement division also stays on top of vacancies providing reports to the city manager. The elected officials also adopted a few years ago a very strong vacant building and vacant lot ordinance requiring owners of residential and commercial properties to register their properties and provide a plan regarding renovation, intent to occupy, etc.

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)

The expansion of housing choices in the Mount Rainier Community are designed to be located in the MUTC where the city currently owns property. This is virtually the only existing area excluding a few lots in the city which are privately owned to building additional housing. The current policy is to create development of high quality without the need to access services by car. In the 3200 block of Rhode Island Avenue where the city currently through 4ourth floor with a combination of a parking deck in the rear and or underground parking. Developer interest will be asked to design housing that is within the current Urban Design Objectives in the Provision of Housing which is to create housing that is compact, energy efficient; accessible public transportation networks which meet the need of pedestrians and cyclists, and provide a good range of amenities and services within easy and safe walking distance of homes.

The new home design should encompass flexibility in that is should be reasonably accessible for older people, the very young and persons with disabilities. The reason for focusing on apartment type homes for lease or ownership is that according to the national research, people are delaying the purchase of single family homes until much later in life; they are also delaying marriage; childless couples, students, and retirees are looking for residences that require little to no maintenance, and accessibility to amenities and recreation. The design therefore needs to incorporate all of these elements to be sustainable.

The design must also make maximum use of daylight. This policy was adopted for both the design of the municipal building and police station. On bright sunny days, artificial light is seldom used. Automatic sensors should be installed for light fixtures. Water usage reduction elements should be designed for all restrooms and kitchens. Rain gardens should be used and/or TPO reflective material on roofs. Since the city is considering a multi-family development, the developer must give consideration to the use of prefabricated bathroom "pods" that meet the required standards of construction and standardized bathroom layouts. The preferred fuel for space and water heating is natural gas. Such factors as expected emissions of smoke, CO2 and other harmful gasses will also be factored in the design of any construction.

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)

Fortunately, the city is located adjacent to the District of Columbia, bordering NE Washington at Eastern Avenue. It is less than 4 miles from the Rhode Island Avenue metro stop in DC, and approximately 1 mile from the West Hyattsville station in Maryland. Bus routes on Rhode island Avenue a frequent, with a transportation stop (bus turnaround) directly in front of city hall (the former streetcar stop). The proposed developed of mixed use housing on Rhode Island Avenue in approximately two city blocks from the bus turnaround located at the traffic circle. The mixed use housing will result in people living close to work in either Prince George's County or Washington, DC. Recent development of retail shops and restaurants in Hyattsville, Maryland is 3 miles north of the city.

Mount Rainier also has two elementary schools in the city both of which are easily accessible since the city is only 1.2 square miles. Middle and high schools are also nearby in Hyattsville, Maryland approximately 2 miles in total distance. The city is also fortunate that it has a nature center within its boundaries. Residents who are members of Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) can participate in various program activities and be picked up and returned home by bus or van.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) What is your goal for of number of units to be created of affordable workforce housing, rental and homeownership? What populations (by income or special needs) will benefit from this increased access to affordable housing? (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

It is anticipated that the increased housing will increase from 100-200 units depending upon the configuration of the development according to several developers that the city has consulted with. Workforce housing will consist of approximately 8-10% of the total units. It should be noted here that the city currently has workforce housing for artists (44 units of live where you work Artist Lofts in the Artist Housing on Rhode Island Avenue. Another 12 units of low income apartments exist at 33rd and Perry Streets. Mount Rainier is considered one of the last affordable housing areas in Prince George's County with homes averaging between \$200K and \$300k. It is the intent that the new housing stock should not exceed current trends within the city. Currently, single young couples are attracted to the city because of its "bedroom" appeal, tree lined streets, and active community that thrives on environmental issues. While incomes have increased somewhat over the last decade, they still fall within the middle to low income range. It is expected that new families will fall within the same income range.

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)

The key stakeholders will be the Mixed Use Town Center Review Committee (MUTC) which will be responsible for recommending to the mayor and council all exterior design, including building height, materials used, paint color, signage, square footage, etc. Joe's Movement Emporium is a focal point in the community for recreation programs in the city including after school program, yoga, belly dancing, health and fitness, live theatre performances, etc. Persons attracted to this venue will be the same ones targeted for this development and will be key stakeholders in public forums and hearings discussing this development

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)

The City of Mount Rainier submitted a formal request to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to amend the name of the Wet Hyattsville metro station stop to West Hyattsville/Mount Rainier. While this request met with some opposition from the City of Hyattsville, the County supported this name amendment. A meeting occurred between the City of Hyattsville Council and the City of Mount Rainier Council to discuss the pros and cons of this name amendment which essentially will alert riders that Mount Rainier is a destination point in close proximity to Hyattsville (adjacent to the City of Hyattsville to the north and west). The City of Hyattsville recently sent a letter that they felt this would be an appropriate request to make during the implementation of the Silver Line.

There have also been discussions with WMATA about the possibility of relocating the bus turnaround, removing the bus lanes in front of city hall to create a green public gathering space as highlighted in the Approved City of Mount Rainier Mixed-Use Town Center Zone Development Plan.

The convenient ZIP car is stationed just south of the traffic circle and bus turn-around as another incentive to use alternative modes of transportation.

The city developed an Intermodal Pedestrian Project promote increased usage of the Metro Bus. The city purchased with federal dollars and a city match of approximately \$29,000 a vacant parking lot for this purpose. The lot will serve a dual purpose – a kiss and ride lot for bus operators and bus riders, and additional parking in the downtown. The city also uses the Call-a-bus whereby city staff operates to provide door-to-door transportation for the elderly, physically and mentally challenged.

A recent grant submission was made to the state for the installation of a bike shared program to continue to promote alternative forms of transportation. If funded, this will further the goal of the Mount Rainier Bike Coop program which teaches bicycle safety among youth and teens, educates the young and old on routine maintenance and building of bicycles. The program is funded through donations of cash and used bikes and run by volunteers.

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)

The City of Mount Rainier is located approximately 4 miles from the Rhode Island Avenue Metro stop in Washington DC, and less than 1 mile from the West Hyattsville Metro Station in Hyattsville, Maryland. There is a MARC Train Station located in New Carrollton, Maryland approximately 5 miles in distance.

The City falls under the 2004 Approved Sector Plan and Sectional Map Amendment for the Prince George's County Gateway Arts District which includes the "recommendations for the plan elements of land use and development pattern, environmental infrastructure, transportation systems, public facilities, economic development, urban design, historic preservation, and arts and cultural heritage.

Any successful retail leasing will be dependent upon job creation and ideally increasing the live and work space for homeowners and employees. Because the residential development is on Rhode Island Avenue, the Metro Bus is located directly in front of the potential development site, thus reducing the need for single-occupancy automobile use. The close proximity of two metro stations also makes the viability of development on Rhode Island Avenue that more attractive and possible.

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)

The key stakeholders here are of course WMATA and METRO. Both will need to be partners with the city to spur development interest. For example, a new bus stop will need to be added to the southbound direction in the 3200-3300 blocks of Rhode Island Avenue for increased service availability along the Route 1 corridor on Rhode Island Avenue. The city has been in discussions with both WMATA and M-NCPPC about the creation of a civic green for a public gathering space. To make this a reality, WMATA will have to relocate the stop for bus operators when shifts are changing.

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 Community Workgroup for the City of Mount Rainier is the Environmental Protection Board. The following is a list of action steps and plans created by the board:

- ? Participate in green team training sponsored by Sustainable Maryland Certified
 - ? Prepare an annual report of progress that shows the value proposition for greening activities and distribute to Mayor and Council.
 - ? Work to ensure that all city buildings become LEED-certified and/or certified as LEED Commercial Interiors.
 - ? Post and maintain Mount Rainier's Plan for Going Green (this checklist) on our website, and other external and internal media.
 - ? Pursue the idea of obtaining Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) for Neighborhood Development certification for the city.
 - ? Promote LEED certification in the private sector.
 - ? Create a green self-certification program for homeowners (similar to Wilmington, DE -- www.wilmingtonde.gov/residents/greencertification)
 - ? Create a community green education strategy using:
 - o Kiosks
 - o Green home certification signs
- Green awareness events (links between healthy community and healthy environment)
- Local Food Fair

Local Food Consumption & Preservation Classes

Better Block Project food preparation and preservation class I (on-going Spring)

Establish Local Farmer's Market

Establish local farmer's market (on-going April through October)

Promote Local Farmer's Market (on-going)

Support healthy local foods at the Glut Food Co-op and at the farmer's market (on-going)

Local Food Production

Community Gardens

Designate areas for community gardens, and encourage residents to have small gardens in their yards.

(on-going)

Health and Wellness

Let's Move

Workplace Wellness

Join Healthiest Maryland Businesses

Workplace Wellness Program

Living Well Program

Innovative Demonstration Projects

In order to improve indoor air quality, ban smoking from interior spaces and designate exterior smoking areas at least 25 feet from building entries, outdoor air intakes and operable windows, with cigarette butt disposal units.

City should consider banning fuel leaf blowers in order to protect children from asthma and to reduce pollution.

City should work to minimize noise pollution where possible.

Support for Joe's Movement Emporium

Community Gardens

Designate areas for community gardens, and encourage residents to have small gardens in their yards. (on-going)

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 plans are consistent with the city's sustainable plans and assessment because it incorporates all areas of efficiency in the city's Community Action Plan for Going Green— health and wellness, energy, greenhouse gases, and local economics along with natural resources and land use. The city is also working to become one of the first municipalities to become a Sustainable Maryland Certified community. One of the goals is for the city to work to educate residents about water conservation and the damage that excess stormwater does to the Anacostia River. Another goal of the city is to avoid the use of fertilizers and pesticides, including Round-Up where practical.

The recycling efforts of the city are designed to help implement a waste reduction program and thereby eliminate disposables (plastic utensils, towels, rags, coffee filters, etc.)

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) How will the Plan help leverage and/or sustain more private sector investments? *(Answer Space 4,000 characters)*

The city strives to partner with developers that seek LEED certification or an equivalent rating system for buildings. At minimum, the building design should incorporate sustainable concepts into the designs that allow building to accommodate different uses over time. For example, current development projects for street level retail of a four story building should start out with residences on the street level if retail is not feasible at the present time. The use can be amended to retail in the future if the market demands such. In terms of materials, the specification and selection is one of the most important sustainable strategies. Developers and residents are encouraged to consider renewable energy sources such as geothermal or solar power to improve energy performance. Buildings should be insulated including HVAC systems and hot water pipes to prevent heat gain or loss. When possible, use energy star appliances, fixtures and heating and cooling systems, and use controllable lighting systems for interior spaces.

If these elements are incorporated into develop in the private sector, then Mount Rainier will have done its job in being proactive as a green community concerned with protecting the environment.

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)

The specific outcomes include the following: (1) revitalization of the sustainable community area including development of new construction in the downtown on Rhode Island Avenue and upper 34th (2) rehabilitation of existing structures in the 3300 Block of Rhode island Avenue, renovation of the former Star-Potts Hall located at 3405 Rhode Island Avenue, (3) façade improvements to existing businesses on upper 34th Street and Rhode island Avenue; (4) quality renovation of existing single family vacant properties throughout the historic district in the city; (5) improve the capacity to host community meetings and provide recreational program activities for families and youth; (6) continue to provide a forum for a community farmer's market and family movie night; (7) continue to improve quality of life issues i.e., the reduction of vacant housing and vacant commercial buildings throughout the city; (8) improve the relationship between key stakeholders i.e., commercial property owners and the city government staff and improve business acumen of business owners; (9) ensure that all construction and renovations in the city adhere to minimum standards pertaining to reduction and control of stormwater run-off and pollutants; 10) that all new construction, building renovations, housing additions, etc. attempt minimum standards for uses of recycled materials included reflective roofing materials and insulation; and (11) promote a buy local campaign for area businesses.

V. PROGRESS MEASURES

(2) And, list the specific benchmarks that will be used to measure progress toward these outcomes. (Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Complete the City of Mount Rainier's Plan for Going Green with a timeframe for Complete the City of Mount Rainier's Plan for Going Green with a timeframe for completion of each task. The benchmarks are as follows:

Community Action: - Develop a Green Team and Action Plan conducting a community barrier and benefits assessment within the first 3 months of SC designation; Create a community based food system including a community garden and continue to promote the local farmer's market in April 2012.

Energy: conduct energy audits of city municipal buildings. This benchmark was completed in February 2011 so the City of Mount Rainier is ahead of the outcome measures curve.

Greenhouse Gas: Assess and track the city's estimated baseline carbon footprint by developing a climate action and ad action plan; develop policies regarding tree planting, use teleconferencing when possible; and create a policy against idling of all city-owned vehicles among others within a 6 month time frame.

Health and Wellness – target the employees to participate in a workplace wellness program; participate in let's move initiative within 6 months of designation. The Mount Rainier Elementary School already participated in a national program under this effort in September 2011.

Local Economics: Establish a Local Business Directory – this was done in 2008, updated in 2010 and 2011.

Promoting use of this directory will occur by the fall of 2012, as a part of the buy local campaign for local businesses. Establish a green business recognition and green purchasing policy within 2 years.

Implement a waste reduction program, and a Watershed stewardship/pollution outreach program including a stormwater management program within 3-5 years. Develop a water conservation program within 3 years. The city is currently a Tree USA City.

Engage in planning and land use activities including participating in DHCD Sustainable Communities. The city has participated in Green Home Recognition in 2010 with its Green Home Initiative Program.

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: _____

Anyone 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