
CHECKLIST & TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPLICANT: Town of Oakland

NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: Garrett County Municipalities

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.**

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: Garrett

Name of Sustainable Community: Garrett County Municipalities

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

The SC boundaries are each of the eight incorporated municipalities in Garrett County – Accident, Deer Park, Friendsville, Grantsville, Kitzmiller, Loch Lynn Heights, Mt. Lake Park and Oakland.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Approximate number of acres within the SC Area: _____

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

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Legacy Area | <input type="checkbox"/> Designated Neighborhood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Main Street | <input type="checkbox"/> Maple Street |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Historic District | <input type="checkbox"/> National Register Historic District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A & E District | <input type="checkbox"/> State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BRAC | <input type="checkbox"/> State Designated TOD |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other(s): <u>see attached matrix</u> | |

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)

Community Revitalization efforts for each of the towns have been different over the last 15 years as each of the towns are different, but the overall goal for each town has been the same – keep the community that is the town intact. In some cases, that means preserving the elementary school that has been closed by the Board of Education (Kitzmilller), in other cases it means improvements to the community building that serves as the hub of the town's activities (Deer Park), or it could be the improvements to business facades and streetscape to enhance the business district (Grantsville and Oakland). In each town there is something in which it excels and some aspect that is the key focal point for that town, the aspect that is unique and important to the town. There are some investments that have occurred in all the towns. For example there has been investment in housing developments in several towns. There have been several developments in Oakland, including one senior complex, the demolition and rebuilding of an income subsidized developments (the former Bradley Manor) that included senior apartments with the family units, the demolition and rebuilding of a development on High Street for income regulated family units and the newest development which will contain a variety of housing units from single family market rate units to senior units to income regulated townhouse units. Grantsville, Loch Lynn and Mt. Lake Park have also seen the development of a new housing complex in their towns. In Kitzmilller, new single family units were built in place of deteriorated units that were demolished. In each of these projects, Community Action was a vital part of the development partnership that funded and developed the units and oversees the management of the developments. In all the towns, Community Action utilizes state and federal funding for individual weatherization projects and rehab projects. The improved housing stock not only provides safe and affordable housing but also improves the assessable base of the town and therefore the revenue from property taxes.

In addition, nearly all the towns have utilized funding from the Community Legacy program for streetscape improvements, including "Welcome to...." Signs, new sidewalks, improved sidewalks, decorative streetlights and banners. These improvements have been located, in some cases, at the gateway or entrance to the town (Loch Lynn, Kitzmilller), or in the case of the sidewalks, in the business district (Oakland), at the town center (Deer Park) or as a new entrance to the Town Hall, Library and ball fields (Grantsville). There have been façade improvements to numerous businesses in all the towns with the exception of Deer Park, also with Community Legacy funding. These improvements have provided financial assistance to the business as the business shares in the cost of the improvements. Creating an inviting gateway to the town with signage, banners and decorative streetlights is also very important in recruiting and retaining businesses.

Other revitalization projects have been specific to a town, and range from the purchase of the site of a small Civil War encampment for Oakland (Fort Alice), to historic signage for Mt. Lake Park, to landscaping and sidewalks for the Transportation Museum in Oakland.

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)

In some cases there are “out-of-town” rates assessed for water and sewer for properties outside the corporate limits of a town. This may be an enticement for development outside the town, however there is little public water and sewer available for areas outside of the towns or the Deep Creek Lake watershed, making any significant development very difficult, if not impossible. In general, development fees are not any higher within the towns.

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)

All eight towns have placed a priority on preserving the historic structures and sites within their corporate boundaries. This has been done in a variety of ways, with historic signage (Mt. Lake Park, Oakland), creation of museums (Oakland, Grantsville, Friendsville), walking tour brochures that highlight some of the historic residential areas and sites (Mt. Lake Park, Oakland), and preservation of structures such as the Drane House in Accident or the "Company Store" in Kitzmiller. Additional promotion and marketing of the historic sites in some of the towns could be beneficial.

There are some issues with the condition of housing in each of the towns, however, that has greatly improved with the creation of the position of Code Enforcement Officer (CEO) for all 8 towns. In instances where the housing did not meet the local codes, the CEO was able to get the violations corrected. In extreme cases funding (CDBG) has been acquired to demolish buildings that were beyond repair.

Each town has their own recreation areas, ranging from parks with playground equipment and picnic tables to extensive athletic fields for softball and soccer. The athletic fields are used by various leagues and are located at both ends of the county – Grantsville and Friendsville to the north and Oakland and Loch Lynn in the southern end so area teams can easily access a playing field. All the towns have parks with playground equipment and in some cases, there are several playgrounds in the town with equipment for different age groups. There is a public golf course in Oakland and Broadford Lake Park is owned by Oakland but located in Mt. Lake Park. Broadford has a number of large pavilions for rent and allows swimming and fishing. Designated walking and biking trails are also a part of many of the towns and there are plans to incorporate some of those trails into a larger county-wide trail system.

There is no county-wide public transportation system that runs on a regular schedule. Garrett County Community Action does operate the Garrett Transit Bus System which is an on-call system available to anyone for transportation within the county and outside of the county. This is particularly beneficial to those of limited income as the fee schedule is based on income. In addition, there is a private company that operates a bus service from the northern end of the county to Baltimore with several stops in between. There are active CSX rail lines in the county, but there is no passenger service.

Each town is responsible for the maintenance of the streets within their corporate limits, unless the street happens to be a state highway. Highway user revenue from the state is the main source of funding for the towns for maintenance and when those funds were severely cut back several years ago, it was a hardship for the towns. Road maintenance is an expensive part of any town budget and for the towns that have smaller populations, the revenue from the state is very important. Lack of funding for street maintenance is still a concern.

All of the towns now have both public water and sewer systems. In some of the smaller towns, the systems are owned and operated by the Garrett County Department of Public Utilities (DPU). These include Deer Park, Friendsville and Kitzmiller. DPU also operates the water system for Loch Lynn and Mt. Lake Park and they treat the sewage collected by those two towns at a county facility. Oakland and Grantsville have their own licensed and certified operators for their water and wastewater systems. Accident also operates their system, with assistance from DPU. All of the towns and DPU continue to upgrade and do repairs to their systems to ensure that they are in compliance with all the current regulations.

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)

All eight towns have adopted Comprehensive Development Plans and all were recently updated to include the two new elements as required by recent state legislative action. The updates were done as a group under GCM with funding from the Community Legacy program and Appalachian Regional Commission funds. This was very helpful for the very small towns that have only part-time staff and limited financial resources to hire a consultant on their own.

Only six of the eight towns have adopted Zoning Ordinances. Each of the six ordinances have classifications that allow for some type of commercial and mixed use land use. The more "residential" towns of Mt. Lake Park and Loch Lynn Heights have more limited areas designated for the commercial or industrial types of uses. Those areas are located, as they should be, near or adjacent to the major roads and/or the state highway. The other four, Accident, Friendsville, Grantsville and Oakland offer more of a variety of zoning classifications with allocations for industrial use, commercial use, general retail use and residential use. The Comprehensive Plans, Strategic Revitalization Plan and Zoning Ordinances all work together to ensure that there is an adequate and appropriate areas for revitalization activities.

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)

Education – Garrett County offers excellent educational opportunities to all of the county residents. There are two middle and two high schools, one at the northern end of the county and one at the southern end of the county. Of the eight elementary schools, five are either located within town limits or adjacent to the town boundaries. With the exception of the town of Kitzmiller, who just lost their elementary school last year, all of the residents of the towns have easy access to a school. Garrett College is centrally located in McHenry and offers classes in a wide variety of programs of study as well as continuing education offerings and classes of interest for the community in general. The college also has developed a community recreational complex on their campus, offering swimming pools, gymnasium and other athletic opportunities.

Culture and Arts – Garrett College is also the host venue for most of the performances of the Garrett Lakes Art Festival (GLAF). This organization brings to the county a number of nationally recognized performers. Oakland is the location of the local theatre group which offers various plays and other performances throughout the year. Both Oakland and Grantsville are host location for concert series' during the summer months. All of the towns hold annual community events. Some of these events are called "Homecomings" which offer to the current and former residents an opportunity to get together and celebrate the community that is their town. In some cases the event is part of a larger county event, such as Autumn Glory or the 4th of July. The key is that these are opportunities for the residents to gather and celebrate their town.

Crime – We are fortunate that none of the towns have high crime rates. The towns located along the interstate corridor, Grantsville and Friendsville have experienced more instances of crime due to the proximity of the interstate, but specific measures have been taken by the local law enforcement agencies to curb that activity.

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)

Strengths: Four of the towns at the southern end of the county, Oakland, Mt. Lake Park, Loch Lynn Heights and Deer Park are part of the Little Youghiogheny River watershed. Friendsville is part of the Youghiogheny River watershed, Grantsville is part of the Casselman River watershed and Kitzmiller is part of the Potomac River watershed. These water courses are important in a number of ways. In some cases, they are used as a source of drinking water and in all cases as a source of recreation, whether it is rafting, swimming or fishing. Many of the towns have had active programs for tree planting along streets in both commercial and residential streets. Both Oakland and Friendsville are part of the Maryland "Tree-Mendous" program. As noted in previous sections, all towns have a number of open spaces and parks. And in Garrett County as a whole, approximately 18-20% of the county's land area is state owned forest or park land.

Weaknesses: One of the weaknesses faced by the towns is one, which unfortunately, there is no way to control – the weather, particularly in the winter. During the winter months, snow fall in excess of 100 inches is not unusual. This means increased costs for snow removal and clean up efforts.

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 six refuse and recycling sites strategically located throughout the county, along with the landfill, where town residents can recycle a number of items. The towns collect the garbage weekly, but residents can recycle for free at any of the seven locations. In addition all towns offer a bulk pick-up program so that larger items that would not be part of the regular weekly garbage collection are collected. Several towns went together to purchase a "chipper" so that tree limbs and tree debris may be chipped and later used as mulch.

All eight towns took advantage of the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant from the Maryland Energy Administration. The amounts varied depending on the size of the town. In several cases the grant funds were used to purchase energy efficient heating systems for the Town buildings. The Town of Oakland contracted with Johnson Control for a major energy conservation effort that includes new, efficient water meters, new lighting systems in the town buildings, and new energy efficient windows for the community center among other items. With limited budgets, all the towns are very energy conscious.

The Town of Oakland is the location for the local Farmer's Market held annually from June through October. In addition, there is a move to place locally grown food in both grocery stores and restaurants. Garrett Growers is the name that is put with the locally grown food items that are offered for sale.

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)

As with most small towns in the state, the towns in Garret County were developed and built before the modern stormwater regulations were in place. Because of limited staffing, the towns have an agreement with the county for administration of the county-wide stormwater management ordinance. All new development is required to abide by the regulations. In some developments, such as the River Hill development in Oakland, innovative stormwater management techniques are proposed that will increase the green space in the development while managing stormwater. In the towns where public sewer systems have been in place for many years, efforts have been made to ensure that stormwater is removed from the sewage collection systems. This results in more efficiency in the treatment plants. While the towns do have some system of stormwater management, there will need to be improvements to ensure that the current regulations can be met.

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)

High quality information technology is essential to sustainable economic growth in rural areas. The eight Garrett municipalities will leverage the Sustainable Communities designation to take advantage of the State and County's implementation of a fiber optic network in Garrett County (see attached map). The County's plan, now under construction, is to provide high speed broad band access to 90% of the residents and businesses. The installation of the fiber "backbone" is scheduled to be operating by September of 2013. Seven of the eight incorporated towns have direct access to the back bone. Kitzmiller is included in an innovative wireless technology using "white space" to be available in 2014. Private providers will connect residential and commercial locations with the fiber optic system as part of the second mile application and public locations including municipal buildings, schools, community centers, and libraries are linked directly to the fiber back bone. The imminent availability of this technology creates a new opportunity to direct private and public investments into commercial and educational strategies that best build on the assets of each of the eight towns.

While each of the towns has some commercial business activity, Oakland, as the County Seat, has the most retail, service and commercial activity within its boundaries. Grantsville also has a substantial amount of commercial activity and one of the County's Industrial Parks was annexed into the town. Accident is also the location for one of the County Industrial Parks. The Towns of Kitzmiller, Deer Park, Loch Lynn Heights and Mt. Lake Park are primarily residential communities, but each has a small number of businesses. In previous strategic plans, all the towns have indicated a desire for increased opportunities for new and expanded businesses. The County Department of Economic Development has initiated a new plan to work with the municipalities and to assess their infrastructure, heritage and other developments so that a fluid line of communication can be established. There are a variety of training opportunities offered by Garrett College, both in terms of general training and training that is specific to a particular business.

The most common industries present in the towns are construction, manufacturing, and retail. Individual communities have particular focuses. Grantsville, for example, has a very prevalent transportation and health sector. Accident, Deer Park and Friendsville have a core in accommodations/food and retail. Overall, the employment in the towns has tracked the balance of the County and has shown improvement. Commute times to employment ranges from a low of 9 minutes in Oakland to 34 minutes in Kitzmiller. The Economic Status and Common Industries charts are attached to give additional information.

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)

Sustainable Communities designation for the eight municipalities provided for under this application is essential to continue the collaboration between the Towns and Community Action to provide access to affordable and quality housing. Community Legacy helped create positive housing outcomes in Garrett County's small rural incorporated areas over the past decade and Sustainable Communities designation will be necessary to leverage many layers of investment that go into housing development and continue the efforts to make housing accessible.

Over 40% of all occupied rental units inside the eight municipal boundaries are affordable units targeted to households at or below 60% of area median household incomes. Of these 517 units, 388 or 75% are owned by Community Action. Most of the units developed through GCCAC were in Mountain Lake Park, Oakland, Grantsville and Loch Lynn Heights. There are 60 units of rental housing in Friendsville developed by a private developer and Accident has 31 affordable rentals developed by GCCAC and a local faith based organization. GCCAC has single family rentals in Kitzmiller and Deer Park.

1,686 housing units of the total 2,943 occupied units with the municipal boundaries are owner occupied. The 57% home owner rate for housing in the towns is below the 83% rate for non-incorporated areas in Garrett County. The percentage of rentals inside towns has risen over the past 30 years from 33% to 43% with Grantsville actually showing a change to 57% in the 2010 Census. The homeownership and rental distribution of occupied units has remained about the same in Garret County unincorporated areas over the same period. Kitzmiller is the exception has maintained an owner occupation rate above 75% over the last three decades. The majority of towns have made affordable home ownership an important consideration.

Affordable home ownership and First Time Home Buyer strategies are an essential component of GCCAC's asset building program designed for low and moderate income households and GCCAC is now the primary provider for assisting potential low and moderate income buyers to access financing and in providing home buyer education and crises intervention. GCCAC has assisted over 300 first time buyers in the past twelve years with down payment assistance and home buyer counseling. 70% of these buyers purchased homes inside of towns. GCCAC has also on a limited basis developed single family houses to sell to low and moderate income persons. 32 such units were built and sold primarily in Mountain Lake Park and Grantsville. Scattered units were also built in Kitzmiller, Deer Park, and Loch Lynn. The GCCAC assisted for sale units all target household at or below 80% of the area median household incomes. Approximately half of GCCAC 62 foreclosure cases between 2011 and 2013 were home owners residing municipalities. Of the 29, 17 were in Oakland, 6 from Grantsville and 5 in Friendsville.

In the 30 year between 1990 and 2010 the number of housing unites inside the eight Garrett County towns grew by 27% (714) compared to a growth of 35% outside of the municipalities. Among the towns, the rate ranged from a high of 83% (180) in Grantsville to zero in Deer Park.

The increase in home values among the eight towns in Garrett County has been very uneven over the past ten years. County wide the increase has been approximately 90% inclusive of properties inside the towns. Much of the County rapid increase is driven by resort homes around Deep Creek Lake. Over the same period, the rate of increase among the towns ranges from a low of 33% in Friendsville to a high of 83% in Accident. Oakland and Mountain Lake Park as the two largest population centers experienced 75% and 82% increases respectively.

The Garrett Municipalities Housing chart attached to the application provides greater detail to housing conditions and trend

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)

The population pattern of towns in Garrett County trends very close to that of the County. Municipal growth in the 2000-10 decade was less than 1% (.09) compared the 1.07 rate in the balance of the County. 23% of the County population resided outside of towns, a portion that has remained constant over the last century. Two towns, Grantsville (24%) and Loch Lynn Heights (18%) experienced significant increases in past decade while Friendsville, Accident and Mountain Lake Park had declines of over 7%. Overall municipal population has remained relatively flat over the past century except of the 1990-2000 decade. There have, however, been wide swings at the individual town level. See the attached Municipal population trend chart for more detail. Annexation was factors in the Grantsville and Loch Lynn rapid growth.

Household incomes have historically lagged behind that of the County and that pattern is continuing. In 2010 the average poverty rate of the eight towns was 18% compared to 12.7% in the County. Average median household income is also only 75% that of the County and the gap increased during the past decade. There some were notable shifts among towns with substantial increases in the median household incomes in Accident, Grantsville, Kitzmiller and Oakland and significant declines in poverty rates in Accident, Deer Park, Kitzmiller and Oakland. Grantsville and Loch experienced increases in the poverty rate according to the 2010 Census. An explanation for Loch Lynn is likely the annexation of a 24 unit family affordable housing development and in Grantsville case the relatively large number of non-family and single person households may point to the Town's annexation of a nursing home.

Residents in Garrett County's towns are primarily white as is the entire County. The rate of aging is faster than that of the State but is aligned closely with that of the rest of the County. The aging factor is indicative of an out migration of working age persons and in particular persons with high education attainment. Fewer than 20% of adults over 25 have a college or higher degree.

The attached Population Patterns, Economic Status and Education and Household Characteristics charts provide additional detail and description of the persons, families and household residing in the eight communities included in this application.

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)

As required by Legislation, the Town of Oakland is the applicant on behalf of the eight incorporated towns in Garrett County: Accident, Deer Park, Friendsville, Grantsville, Kitzmiller, Loch Lynn Heights, Mt. Lake Park and Oakland. The Town of Oakland and Garrett County Community Action Committee (GCCAC) will, upon SC Plan approval, execute a Memorandum of Understanding (draft attached). GCCAC builds on a decade of experience in which GCCAC acted as the fiscal agent working with the eight towns to obtain recognition as Community Legacy areas and in administering the Circuit Rider and Codes Enforcement programs in a joint endeavor to build capacity and implement programs at the municipal level.

The idea for organizing the Garrett County Municipalities group as a distinct intentional organization grew from an interest in 2002 by the Garrett County Community Action Committee to enable the small towns in Garrett County to participate with the State Smart Growth initiatives to direct growth and investments toward existing communities. Community Legacy as one of the lynchpin programs for implementing Maryland's Smart Growth initiative is primarily designed to work with older largely urban centers. Since the largest town in Garrett County has a population of 2,000, the GCCAC proposal was for the eight incorporated communities to submit a single application to the State through Community Action to implement a Community Legacy Program in Garrett County. Community Legacy was the catalyst for having Garrett County's small rural towns share resources, staff and a way to achieve scale and be efficient when implementing revitalization strategies. Because of the smallness of the towns in Garrett County, there is little capacity for towns to singly support such positions as a grant writer, codes officer or small business lending program. Such staff positions would be cost prohibitive and under-utilized. Using the suggested approach also creates fertile ground for problem solving and learning among the towns.

Utilization of the above described structure has resulted in significant results over the past ten years. Each town has adopted and is implementing a strategic revitalization plan and each has updated or adopted a comprehensive development plan. The towns joined together to fund a shared codes enforcement officer. GCCAC structured a core staff that includes a Circuit Rider town manager, Codes officer and a Resource/grants Coordinator funded by the County Commissioners to provide administrative and fund raising support for the endeavor. A wide range of projects identified in the revitalization and comprehensive plans have been funded and completed through the work of this core group. To provide governance to the process the mayors and Community Action took action to incorporate a private nonprofit 501 c 3 corporation with a board composed of the mayor of each municipality and the CEO from Community Action.

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)

GCCAC will act as the fiscal agent and grant administrator for the eight towns to assist in implementing the Sustainable Communities Plan under a Memorandum of Understanding with the Town of Oakland. In addition to its experience working with the towns in developing and implementing the Community Legacy plans, GCCAC has a 45 year history in administering a wide range of community development and human service programs. It has also served as the primary developer of affordable housing and community facilities most of which occurred inside the corporate limits of one or more of the municipalities. Over the past 15 years, GCCAC has developed and manages over 500 units of affordable rental housing and helped another 700 households purchase or substantially rehabilitate homes. Over 110,000 square feet of community and commercial facilities have been developed largely within the corporate town boundaries.

Overall guidance for the Sustainable Communities Plan is provided through the GCM Board of Directors as representative of each of the towns. A Sustainable Community Advisory Council has also been organized to coordinate and advise on specific projects and initiatives. The Advisory Council members represent GCM, GCCAC, and Garrett Heritage Area, Garrett Trails, County government and the County Economic Development Department.

The single most important asset available to groups responsible for implementing the Garrett Municipalities Sustainable Communities Plan is the existence and purpose of a structure and process by which small its small towns can guide and monitor implementation. There is an experienced and capable administrative entity in place that will provide logistical and technical support. There is an existing governance structure that is and has worked smoothly and efficiently and at the same time recognizes the diverse interests among the eight communities. This has also resulted in implementation plans and detail which will give a head start to much of the work proposed in the SC application. At the same time it is necessary to recognize that not all action plans can be implemented simultaneously. Priorities will need to be established and reasonable schedules adopted.

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)

The Sustainable Communities action plan is built on the strategic revitalization plans adopted by each town under the Community Legacy Program. The revitalization plans were facilitated under the guidance of a consultant employed by GCCAC under the joint advisement and oversight of the eight towns. Each plan represented a series of community meetings in each town involving general public input and the organization of citizens Community Legacy Revitalization Committee. The transition from Community Legacy to Sustainable Communities involved a staff review and update of each Revitalization action plan with subsequent meetings with a representative(s) from each town to review and make the SC plan current with the individual towns' goals and objectives.

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)

Each of the eight incorporated municipalities is unique but all of them are not just towns, but are communities. When the Community Legacy program became available, the towns were all eager to take advantage of the funding. This particular program has allowed the towns to undertake projects to revitalize and re-energize themselves. Each of the towns went through an extensive process to develop Strategic Revitalization Plans that involved a lot of citizen participation. The end result was a plan that is not just a plan but a tool for each of the towns to utilize as they direct their resources to those strategies that will strengthen their communities. Streetscape improvements such as sidewalks, streetlights and banners have been used to define and improve the appearance of the business districts of some of the towns, or to provide an inviting gateway to the town. Façade funds were used by various businesses to improve the appearance of their buildings.

The Comprehensive Development Plan for each town was recently updated to include the new sections on annexation and water resources.

The towns continue to promote in-fill development to encourage reinvestment and growth within their boundaries. The towns appreciate the rural nature of Garrett County and its rich natural resources, agriculture and rural landscapes and realize that these resources are important to the towns for both attracting visitors and for the enhancement of the quality of life for their residents

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)

All of the towns have public water and wastewater systems. Some of the systems are operated by the County's Department of Public Utilities, some by the towns themselves, but in all cases there are on-going improvements to those systems to ensure that all state and federal regulations are implemented and that there is sufficient capacity to support growth within the town's boundaries.

All Towns are within the established TMDL regulations.

There are no major investments required by any of the Towns at this time. There are ongoing maintenance and compliance issues that must be addressed by the individual towns. There are a variety of projects for which the towns have sought funding such as improvements to the wastewater plant in Accident and a third phase of sewer collection line rehab in Mt. Lake Park. However, there is nothing that would prohibit private investment in any of the towns.

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)

In the towns that have enacted zoning ordinances and that have a sizeable commercial district, the zoning ordinances do allow for a mixed use that would allow persons to live and work in their community. There are existing examples of retail establishments on the ground floor and residential units on the upper floors in several of the towns. This type of use will be encouraged in future development. In addition, the town of Oakland amended its zoning ordinance to include a Planned Residential Development (PRD) section. This has allowed cluster development in the newest housing development at River Hill.

The towns began actively pursuing energy conservation measures with the MD Energy Administration's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grants which each town received in varying amounts. The funds were used for such items as furnace replacement and lighting replacement. The towns are continuing to look for energy saving measures. Oakland has installed new water meters, additional new lighting and new windows at the Community Center. Community Action's weatherization program is also available to all homeowners to assist with improvements for energy conservation.

Recycling is an active program of the County's Solid Waste and Recycling Department and recycling sites are located at all six of the satellite sites as well as the landfill. Residents of the towns can use the recycling sites at no cost.

The Mt. Fresh Producers Association continues to grow there association and are now offering the "Garrett Growers" program which puts locally grown food into local grocery stores and restaurants.

The Farmers Market in Oakland is very successful and other towns hope that the Association will be able to expand into a location in their towns.

The towns will look at stormwater management and work with the County to ensure that sufficient stormwater controls are in place. This may mean that there will be a need to find funding to help offset the cost of any needed improvements.

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)

1. Garrett County Community Action Committee's Housing Rehabilitation and Weatherization Programs.
2. Mt. Fresh Producers Association and Garrett Growers
3. Garrett County Department of Planning and Land Development
4. Garrett County Department of Solid Waste and Recycling
5. Garrett County Department of Public Utilities

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)

Historic Preservation: Accident has the Drane House, believed to be the oldest residence in the county. Deer Park has the Deer Park Inn which was visited by several US Presidents and they are home to springs which produce Deer Park Water. In Friendsville, the town owns the building housing the Friend Family Museum which offers a tremendous amount of genealogical information about many of the families of Garrett County. Grantsville also has a museum which feature the photographs of Leo Beachy. In addition, the Casselman River Bridge, which will celebrate 150 years this fall, was the largest arch span at the time it was built. Also, the National Road is the main street of Grantsville. Kitzmiller has preserved the company store and renovated the space to house a restaurant and apartments. Loch Lynn Heights' Town Hall serves as a mini-museum with pictures and memorabilia. Mt Lake Park has numerous historic homes that are privately owned and have, in some cases, been restored and they offer a walking tour of those homes. Also, the ticket office for the amphitheater has been restored by the Town. In Oakland, there are three museums, including one in the B & O train station, there are several historic homes on Second Street and numerous plaques that describe some of the historic sites within the town. The Courthouse is also a historic structure and is in Oakland.

Parks and Recreation: Every town has at least one park and a playground. In some there are several small parks and playgrounds. Loch Lynn Heights, Oakland (at Broadford Park), Grantsville and Friendsville have several athletic fields for softball, baseball and soccer. There are also basketball and tennis courts in several towns. The towns are actively working with the Garrett Trails organization to make connections between town trails and the county trails as part of the larger Eastern Continental Divide Loop. This trail will have connections with the Great Allegheny Passage from Friendsville to Confluence and from Grantsville to Meyersdale.

Business and Economic Development: In the two towns that have the largest base of retail and commercial activity there are existing Business Associations. The County owns Industrial/Business Parks that are located in Accident and Grantsville. Another Park is located just east of Mt. Lake Park and Oakland. Oakland is also a state and nationally recognized Main Street Community. Accident, Friendsville, Grantsville and Mt. Lake Park has elementary schools. Southern High School is in Oakland and adjacent to Mt. Lake Park.

Housing: there are several affordable housing developments in the towns that have been built using a partnership between GCCAC, Garrettland Management and Devlin Construction. These developments in some cases replaced older, less desirable developments and are a mix of single family, townhouse, apartment and senior housing. There are developments in Grantsville, Oakland, Mt. Lake Park and Loch Lynn Heights.

Culture and Quality of Life: Each town has a festival, homecoming or event that has become their unique event. For Kitzmiller and Loch Lynn Heights, an annual or semi-annual Homecoming is held. For Accident, their Homecoming is part of their Fourth of July celebration. Grantsville Days is a weekend event held every year featuring musical groups, a parade and food. Friendsville Days is a similar event with a parade, food and presentations. Oakland is host to many of the County's Autumn Glory Festival events and hosts their own Winterfest featuring ice sculptures. The Little Yough Summer Concert Series is in Oakland at the Farmer's Market Pavilion. Mountain Lake Park provides a year-round historic district where persons may tour historic cottages, houses, and the nationally famous clay tennis court. Deer Park has an active youth program and hosts day trips to various places.

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 municipalities have identified the need for design guidelines that can be used to help guide development in a way that will best preserve the individual character of each town.

While none of the other towns meet the criteria to become a Main Street community like Oakland, the Main Street concepts can be applied to those towns that have clustered business districts.

Marketing of the towns and their business communities is key to a healthy economy. Working with the County's Department of Economic Development and utilizing their resources is important. There will be continuing support of the business associations in Oakland and Grantsville. Improvement to the appearance of the business community is also a key aspect and utilizing the façade improvement program has been and continues to be important to each town.

Development of walking trails and connecting those trails to the larger county trail system is a project that will involve all towns.

The towns will look to build upon those events and festivals that are part of their town. An example might be developing an event that would celebrate the four towns that owe at least part of their existence to the railroad. Oakland, Mt. Lake Park, Loch Lynn Heights and Deer Park are all located along the railroad. In each town hotels were built to accommodate the passengers on the railroad. In most cases those late 1800's hotels are no longer standing, but the history of that era could be celebrated in a joint promotion or event. The Town of Grantsville is actively participating in the 150th celebration of the Casselman bridge (owned and maintained by the MD DNR as part of the Casselman River Park) and would benefit from additional promotions of the National Road. Kitzmiller and Friendsville both are located on major water resources, the Potomac River and the Youghiogheny River. Promotion of river related activities would be appropriate for those towns. And for Accident, an event or promotion centered on agri-tourism is something that would fit into the heritage and culture of that area. In all cases, these kinds of activities would strengthen the historic and cultural resources that are already a part of the individual towns. Another aspect of the history of Garrett County and specific to several of the towns is the mining of coal and timbering operations. A Coal Heritage Trail is something that has been discussed as a project.

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)

All of the towns consider gateway improvements to be important not only as an attraction for visitors and tourists, but also for potential economic development. Previous revitalization plans have discussed streetscapes that include trees. Planting of trees along major streets not only softens the commercial look, but also provides a traffic calming influence. In addition, several towns have already embarked on major tree plantings – both Oakland and Friendsville are Tree-Mendous communities as designated by MD DNR. The other towns could work with DNR to also earn that designation. Oakland took part in the “legislative forest” promotion of several years ago and planted over 100 pine trees. When these types of promotions become available, working with Garrett Municipalities will help to get the word out so that other towns can participate.

Continued upgrades and additions to their community parks and playgrounds is part of each town’s strategic plans. Several of the towns work with the numerous baseball, softball and soccer leagues to build new and/or maintain the fields that are in the corporate limits of the towns. The towns will utilize the funding from Program Open Space and Community Parks and Playgrounds to facilitate these improvements.

Garrett Trails, a nonprofit group, is working toward a county wide trail system, the Eastern Continental Divide Loop Trail that will connect with the Great Allegheny Passage and other regional trails that travel through or close to many of the Towns. This group is working with the Towns to develop “in-town” trails and trails that will connect to the Eastern Continental Divide Loop Trail. The trail plan actually overlaps with, and is a part of, the Heritage Plan for Garrett County. Trails make the Towns more attractive to residents by offering a safe place to walk, run or bike and since they often connect with natural resources, they are attractive to visitors also.

Since all of the towns are on the Scenic By-Way that is in Garrett County, it would be beneficial to partner with the Heritage Area and develop a Corridor Management Plan as the first step in the process to accessing additional funds for preservation and enhancement along the By-Way.

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)

1. Mountain Maryland Gateway to the West Heritage Area
2. Garrett County Historical Society
3. Garrett Trails
4. Oakland Main Street/ Greater Oakland Business Association
5. Garrett County Economic Development
6. Oakland Main/Greater Oakland Business Association
7. Greater Grantsville Business Association
8. Garrett County Chamber of Commerce
9. Garrett County Planning and Land Development
10. MD Department of Natural Resources
11. Local Little League and soccer organizations

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 Towns will utilize Garrett County's Economic Development Department for business support including the Business Counseling services and business loan programs. In addition, the Department has launched a new initiative specific to the municipalities. By using a standard set of questions, the Department staff will assess the priorities of each municipality on things such as infrastructure needs, heritage and other development. The goal is to develop an open and flowing line of communication between the County Economic Development Department and the towns. The expertise of the County staff will be of great benefit to the towns, some of which have very limited staff. Additionally, the Economic Development Department is finalizing a branding study that is being done in conjunction with the Chamber of Commerce. The "brand" is being designed so that it will be easy to "co-brand" with the towns and other entities in the county. Once the study is complete there will be a set of guidelines that will outline how to leverage the "brand" with marketing materials that the towns may already have.

In addition to the funding available from Community Legacy for façade improvements, the towns will work with Community Action to maximize Neighborhood Business Works investment in the Towns.

The Towns will work with regional groups and Community Action to create a Community Development Finance Institute to attract capital for business growth in the Towns. This is a long term project, but will give additional resources for the smaller businesses that do not qualify, based on their size, for some of the more traditional resources.

Most of the permitting function is handled at the county level for all the towns. Even for the zoning permit, the towns' utilize the County's Planning and Land Development Department. The towns will continue to support the county in the permitting process to ensure that it is smooth and efficient. But, also the towns will continue to make upgrades to their public utility systems so that there will be sufficient capacity to accommodate new development.

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)

For the towns with significant commercial development such as Oakland and Grantsville, and to a lesser extent Accident and Friendsville, the towns will work with the County Economic Development Department's visitation and retention program to ensure that the businesses in the towns are part of that program. A program of regular visits is helpful in preventing problems in the future for a given business. This program will be of particular interest to the larger manufacturing and service businesses that are located in the County Industrial Parks in Accident and Grantsville. As a Main Street Community Oakland will take advantage of the "BeSmart" loan program for its business community. At this time, there are not specific opportunities for green jobs in the municipalities. Community Action in partnership with their development team does utilize some green construction initiatives in their developments. One of those, River Hill, is located in Oakland.

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)

Not applicable

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)

1. Garrett County Community Action
2. Garrett County Department of Planning and Land Development
3. Garrett County Economic Development Department
4. Oakland Business Association and Main Street Program
5. Grantsville Business Association
6. Garrett College Continuing Education division
7. Garrett College Career Training and Technology Center
8. Garrett County Development Corporation
9. Garrett County Board of Education

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 towns in the SC application have had success in making housing accessible. Each municipality will ensure the quality of the existing affordable rental units. The efforts have primarily been in collaboration with Community Action. Through its partnership with the Garrett County Community Action 388 affordable family and elderly rental units have been developed inside municipal boundaries and 260 first time home buyers assisted in purchase of a home. 200 low income home owners received assistance with substantial repairs. Each town plans to continue the partnership with Community Action. The following are planned;

A. Mountain Lake Park

Meadows: Rehabilitate 58 units of existing elderly housing and construction of 40 new affordable and 20 market rate elderly homes.

Owner Rehabilitation: Assistance to ten low income home owners for health and safety repairs.

B. Oakland:

River Hill: Build 40 units of workforce family town homes and 120 market rate single family homes in a mixed income PRD.

Owner Rehabilitation: Assistance to ten low income home owners for health and safety repairs

Overlook Subdivision: Construct five single family homes for first time home buyers.

C. Loch Lynn Heights

Pleasant View Subdivision: Construct four single family homes for first time home owners

Owner Rehabilitation: Assistance to three low income home owners for health and safety repairs

D. Deer Park:

Owner Rehabilitation: Assistance to five low income home owners for health and safety repairs

Complete feasibility/market study for an affordable rental development

Rehabilitate a single family home as an affordable rental unit.

E. Kitzmiller

Owner Rehabilitation: Assistance to five low income home owners for health and safety repairs

Construct two in fill homes on vacant site for affordable rental or home purchase

Sell existing affordable rental unit to the current tenant

Acquire and rehabilitate an existing unit for use as affordable rental

F. Grantsville:

Complete and gain approvals for constructing 20 owner occupied homes on Springs Road subdivision.

G. Friendsville:

Owner Rehabilitation: Assistance to five low income home owners for health and safety repairs

Acquire three sites to construct owner occupied homes through either Habitat for Humanity or GCCAC

H. Accident:

Owner Rehabilitation: Assistance to three low income home owners for health and safety repairs

Linking individuals to a range of services is also an important component to offering real choices. GCCAC operates emergency shelter and homeless prevention services including a nine bed transitional shelter in Oakland. Its Pathway initiative is designed to move persons through a continuum to permanent housing. Through its central tracking data system, GCCAC can identify housing needs and reach out to virtually every low and moderate income household in the eight town to offer assistance ranging from crises intervention to rental assistance to homeownership

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)*

Garrett County has no transit development centers; but by definition the housing will be located in a PFA and from a rural perspective be located in close proximity to services thereby reducing transportation costs. The largest proposed new developments are also located in towns who have employment centers in close proximity (Oakland, Mountain Lake Park and Grantsville) providing a choice to live close to work. There are also extensive trail connections linking the housing projects to larger systems. The Oakland trail links to the downtown business district.

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)

:

- Elderly
 - o Owner Occupied Substantial Rehab – 41
 - o Affordable Rental Rehab – 60
 - o New Market For Sale – 20
 - o New Affordable Rental - 40

- Family
 - o New Affordable Rental – 40
 - o New Affordable For Sale – 34
 - o New Market Rate For Sale – 120

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 primary developer and service provider in each town will be the Garrett County Community Action Committee. Garrett Habitat for Humanity will also have a role as developer. Devlin Inc., a private Garrett based company and Devlin Design (Pittsburgh) will have part ownership in the market rate homes planned in Oakland. GCCAC is seeking a private owner partner for its Grantsville market rate development. Financing and investment partners have yet to be determined but historically the key financing stakeholders have been DHCD, Enterprise Partners, Frist United Bank, and the Federal Home Loan Bank of Atlanta. Any project will require the support of the individual town in which it occurs. Family housing is an important element in the County economic development strategic plan and the County Economic Development Department is a key stakeholder in promoting workforce housing within the towns. The local School District and the County Commissioners have a particular interest and stake in promoting family housing projects in Friendsville as a strategy for increasing the student population and preserving the elementary school in that community.

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 Towns will participate in a concentrated effort to develop trail linkages between the Towns where feasible and other Trails like the Greater Allegheny Passage and the Eastern Continental Divide Loop. For example, the town of Oakland has listed as a project the potential for developing a sidewalk or trail that would link the hospital complex with the Health Department and then on to Broadford Elementary and Southern Middle Schools. From the schools, there could be a connection to Broadford Lake Park which is located in Mt. Lake Park. In addition the housing development at River Hill in Oakland which includes senior housing and affordable, income regulated housing is now connected to a similar complex, the Glades, and will be eventually connected to Herrington Manor State Park. This is just an example of the kinds of connections that are being planned between the towns and between the towns and Garrett Trails larger, county-wide trail system.

The Community Action Committee will continue to provide their on-demand response public transit service, Garrett Transit in all Towns. This service provides transportation for both general transportation needs and special needs, such as transportation to major hospitals and medical centers in the state and in the region. In addition, Garrett Transit has fully handicapped accessible vehicles. Community Action will also be completing a study to determine the viability of a fixed route in the southern part of the county, centered around the towns of Mt. Lake Park, Loch Lynn Heights and Oakland.

The towns are looking at preparing a capital project plan that will outline street maintenance projects. The town of Friendsville has a project to provide a parking area for the many rafters, boaters and fishermen that frequent the town during the summer months. Establishment of a parking lot, with informational kiosks and a designated trailhead for bikers and hikers will alleviate the parking congestion on the narrower town streets.

Completion of sidewalks is also a priority for several towns so that pedestrians will have a safe place to walk within the town. The sidewalk projects are located in the town centers where there can be connections to retail and commercial activity, schools, or other town amenities, such as community parks. Oakland is also looking at a parking facility in the downtown area to accommodate the visitors to the Farmers Market and the downtown businesses.

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 closest passenger rail line is in Cumberland, about one hour to the east. It is a limited service. There is no regular bus service within the County (other than Garrett Transit as described in #1). There is a regular bus service, operated as a private entity, that does provide transportation from the northern end of the county to points east, including Frostburg State University, Hagerstown, Frederick and BWI airport. This is a set and regular service.

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)

1. Garrett County Memorial Hospital – Wellness Program
2. Garrett County Health Department
3. Garrett Trails
4. County Roads Department
5. Town Street Departments
6. Maryland State Highway Administration

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)

There will be one Sustainable Community Workgroup for all eight Towns. This Workgroup already exists as the Grants Committee which consists of the Chair of the Garrett County Municipalities, Rural Water, Mt. MD Gateway to the West Heritage Manager, Garrett County Economic Development Department, Circuit Rider Program, and GCCAC's, President. The work group will coordinate financing applications and work assignments to eliminate redundancy and to implement priorities established by the Garrett County Municipalities Board of Directors. This group is playing an important role in coordinating efforts to pursue funding for municipal projects from such sources as CDBG, Transportation Enhancement, NBW, CITC, Trails, Heritage, and Safe Routes to School, POS, Parks and Recreation, and Heritage Tourism.

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)

This plan is consistent with each town's comprehensive plans. Six of the towns updated and adopted a comprehensive plan with assistance of Community Legacy. Kitzmiller and Deer Park have draft plans but have not yet adopted it. This Sustainable Community application is also built on the Strategic Revitalization Plans. It updates those plans and recognizes the completed projects and those which were dropped because of changes that occurred in the interim.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

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

3. Access to fiber optic broad band will provide a new impetus of private business investments in each of the town. The infrastructure will also provide opportunity for home based entrepreneurship. Entrepreneurs and small enterprises wanting to locate in the municipalities will be linked to the emerging small business entrepreneurship Center being developed Garrett College as part of a partnership between College, Chamber of Commerce, County Economic Development and Community Action. This Center will provide technical assistance and mentoring and access to capital. One of the expected outcomes is the creation of a CDFI which will bring a new source of capital for small businesses operating or desiring to move into the anyone of the towns.

Private public partnerships as housing development strategy is a requirement for successful projects whether affordable or market rate. Community Action's affordable rental developments rely on private investments attracted to tax credits and historically make up approximately 70% of the total development. GCCAC first time home buyers assistance relies on a similar private contribution in the form of blended mortgages.

Workforce development is another important aspect for attracting economic development. The County's strategic economic development plan has placed a high priority on education and skill development. In addition, the County has expanded its scholarship program to include students enrolled in the career and technology program operated through Garrett College (the scholarship program provides free tuition for two years at Garrett College for any young person graduating from a county high school or GED). Community Action is also administering a Pathway Program for its clients designed to result in helping people implement plan to achieve greater economic security. Resident s of each of the towns will be linked to these endeavors through Community Action, the schools and businesses. The initiative will focus on both individual job skill and readiness and on responding to skill needs of employers.

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 eight municipalities of Garrett County will measure progress toward the goals of the Action Plan by continuing to follow through with projects, plans and activities that are ongoing throughout each municipality. Each of the Towns will also work to implement projects specific to their town that are designed to create communities that are more livable and sustainable for residents and businesses.

There are a number of strategies of the Plan that apply to all of the municipalities. In terms of Business and Economic Development all of the towns want to continue with their commercial revitalization to include façade improvements. Business attraction and retention is an important strategy as is encouraging business counseling and entrepreneurship, particularly for the small business ventures. Encouraging the “Buy Local” program – Garrett Growers of the Mt. Fresh Farmers Association is something all the towns can do, whether it is for the local restaurant or grocery store. Development of marketing plans, strategies and marketing materials is another strategy that is important to all towns. While not every town has a significant commercial development, they all have unique assets that they can market to visitors and tourists and as an attraction to potential new business development.

Infrastructure needs apply to all the towns. In the matrix that is part of V B, specific projects in relation to water and wastewater systems are listed for individual towns. However, as state and federal requirements change, all towns will be continually planning upgrades to their systems. In addition, paving and street improvements, including stormwater management is part of the strategies for all the towns as they strive to maintain a safe and efficient network of streets.

Reduction of the environmental impact of the community will also be an outcome that the eight municipalities seek to produce by ensuring that all infrastructure projects and/or improvements continue to comply with all MDE guidelines.

Continuing to cooperate with Community Action for housing rehabilitation is a part of the Community Development strategy that is applicable to all the towns. This strategy also includes creating an infill plan where needed to ensure an adequate supply of housing for families of all incomes. Creation of design guidelines for residential and commercial activities and façade improvements are part of the Community Development. They are also important to the Tourism Enhancement strategy as they improve the appearance of the community and provide an attractive and pleasant “look” to the town. Continuing with streetscape improvements and gateway improvements is an important outcome for all the towns as a Community Development Strategy and a Tourism Enhancement Strategy.

Additional outcomes under the Tourism Enhancement Strategy for all the towns include identifying the key assets of the town and then developing a calendar of events, or promotion of event’s that will highlight those key assets.

Finally, under the Parks and Recreation Strategy, all the towns will continue to utilize funding from Program Open Space and Community Parks and Playgrounds to maintain and enhance the numerous parks, playgrounds and green spaces located in each town.

V. PROGRESS MEASURES

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

Specific benchmarks see attached matrix' for each town.

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