
CHECKLIST & TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPLICANT: Ocean City, Town of

NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: Ocean City, Town of

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: Ocean City, Town of

Legal Name of Applicant: Ocean City, Town of

Federal Identification Number: 52-6000802

Street Address: 301 Baltimore Ave.

City: Ocean City **County:** Worcester **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 21842

Phone No: 410-289-8942 **Fax:** 410-289-7385 **Web Address:** <http://oceancitymd.gov/>

Sustainable Community Contact For Application Status:

Name: Matthew Margotta **Title:** Director of Planning

Address: 301 Baltimore Avenue **City:** Ocean City **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 21842

Phone No: 410-289-8942 x **Fax:** 410-289-8703 **E-mail:** mmargotta@oceancitymd.gov

Person to be contacted for Award notification:

Name: Matthew Margotta **Title:** Director of Planning

Address: 301 Baltimore Avenue **City:** Ocean City **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 21842

Phone No: 410-289-8942 x **Fax:** **E-mail:** mmargotta@oceancitymd.gov

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: Worcester

Name of Sustainable Community: Ocean City, Town of

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 Sustainable Community Area is generally described as the southern portion of the Town of Ocean City from the Atlantic Inlet north to 15th and 17th Street; the area is bounded on the East by the Atlantic Ocean and on the West by the Assawoman Bay. The district is the same as described in the existing Community Legacy Plan; development and redevelopment is coordinated with the Ocean City Development Corporation. Please see attached map of the Sustainable Community Area (pdf); Excel Spreadsheet detailing the list of parcels with ID Numbers; and ACCESS Workbook for other data.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Approximate number of acres within the SC Area: 255.00

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

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

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 Ocean City Development Corporation (OCDC) and Town of Ocean City (TOC) have utilized a number of State programs to fund its revitalization projects. Foremost has been the Maryland Community Legacy Program. Other State programs that have been tapped by the OCDC include the Neighborhood Business Works Program and the Community Investment Tax Credit Program.

OCDC receives local jurisdiction funding annually from Worcester County and the TOC to assist with operating funds and provide seed money for matching grants. OCDC, in coordination with the TOC, applied and managed grants and other funding to accomplish revitalization projects. However, while these projects improve the community and raise the tax assessment on the properties, Worcester County receives an increased benefit without further engagement of resources. This sets up a tax differential where Worcester County reaps increased financial benefits and has yet to increase their participation in OCDC projects.

The investments, as a result of these programs and other funded programs have had a tremendous impact on the downtown area. Often the funds have resulted in significant leveraging ratios by the private sector. Below is a listing of projects completed by the OCDC and TOC since 2000 in the downtown area (south of 17th Street):

- 1) Completed the design standards for the Downtown area, codified by the Mayor and City Council in November 2002.
- 2) Completed the design standards for the Upper Downtown Area (3rd to 17th Streets) in 2006.
- 3) Completed a Community Legacy Plan for the Downtown area that has been approved by the Town of Ocean City and State of Maryland for future grant opportunities.
- 4) 134 façade projects have been completed to date. Through the OCDC façade program, over \$4.7 million has been invested into the older buildings of the Downtown area.
- 5) Construction of Somerset Plaza, a semi-pedestrian walkway in 2002. This street is used for special event activities. Construction costs were \$200,000.
- 6) Construction of S. 1st Street, into a pedestrian walkway in 2006 at a cost of \$225,000.
- 7) Construction of Sunset Park, a linear public park located along S. Division Street and Bay in 2006. This park is used for special event activities. Construction costs were about \$1.3 million.
- 8) The OCDC's Public Art Program has raised private contributions for 9 art projects in the Downtown area: White Marlin Sculpture, Ocean City library sculpture, Seahawk Sculpture, Dorchester Street wall mural, Caroline Street enlarged postcards, OC Beach Birds, paver art on W. side of Philadelphia Avenue, and utility box painting project with the Art League of Ocean City, local area high schools and private sponsors. Over \$300,000 has been expended on this program.
- 9) Creation of a historic plaque program. This OCDC program provided bronze plaques to 20 older buildings to recognize the age and importance of such structures.
- 10) Restoration of the Tarry A While Guest House project at 108 Dorchester Street, a building constructed in 1897 and now used as first floor office space for the OCDC and upper floor seasonal rentals.
- 11) Renovation of the building at 110 Somerset Street to provide seasonal housing.
- 12) Renovation of two buildings at 105 Dorchester Street to provide seasonal housing.
- 13) A Green Building Initiatives Program to provide energy efficient enhancements to 18 downtown buildings to date. About \$240,000 of private investment has occurred.
- 14) The creation of a Business Assistance Program to provide financial assistance to new and expanding downtown businesses to decrease the upfront costs of such new business starts.
- 15) Other Town of Ocean City capital projects include construction of the tram building for \$200,000, Worcester Street restrooms/ Police Department station for \$700,000, and the Boardwalk improvements for \$6 million.

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)

There are several barriers to Smart Growth that may affect the Sustainable Community Area; generally the seasonal nature of activity and that the designated area is the most aged development portion of the Town of Ocean City jurisdiction. The seasonal nature of activity in and visitors to the Sustainable Community Area means that year round population varies widely with different levels and categories of needs.

Traffic and Transportation:

The Sustainable Community Area includes many Summer Tourism season destinations, i.e. Amusement Parks, Boardwalk Commercial Activity, Accommodations, Landmarks, etc., that draw a high demand for vehicle movement and parking and general pedestrian movements. Smart Growth and Complete Street principles are not fully incorporated in the existing development pattern. During the season there exists recurring traffic congestion lower than acceptable levels of service and pedestrian movements are likewise constrained.

Tax Differential:

The intent of the Sustainable Community Plan supports Smart Growth development with increased re-investment in the established Sustainable Community Area. The Tax Differential issue between the Town of Ocean City and Worcester County tends to promote development in unincorporated Worcester County just outside of the municipal Town of Ocean City boundary, in other words, promoting urban sprawl. Property in areas immediately adjacent to the Town of Ocean City contribute County and State of Maryland taxes only; while businesses and residences within the Town of Ocean City pay full City, County and State taxes. Relieved of the full tax burden of being within the municipal boundary, development is encouraged in unincorporated Worcester County; particularly ‘Greenfield’ development which is the antithesis of Smart Growth.

Regulations:

Redevelopment and infill development of the Sustainable Community Area is a primary goal of this Action Plan. Development proposals in this area typically need to address a wide range of regulatory issues that can be barriers to redevelopment and infill, such as Flood Zone/ Elevation implications, zoning design and performance standards, non-conforming land use and structure issues, and simple compatibility issues. Especially when compared to adjacent non-conforming structures, new redevelopment and infill project face a burden to avoid exacerbating non-conforming situations. Currently, methods are in place to seek regulatory relief through variance or special exception processes, however, simple by-right redevelopment and infill projects would improve the revitalization and investment in the Sustainable Community Area.

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)

STENGTHS: Ocean City offers visitors and residents activities that most cities would love to have: clean and free beaches, popular boardwalk, and quality accommodations. The most popular amenity in this downtown district is the beach and Boardwalk, both of which extend the full length of the Sustainable Communities Area district. Two prime destination points for visitors to Ocean City are the downtown amusements and arcades, Trimper Amusements and the Pier Rides. The bayside area of downtown provides attractive views to the water and various water related activities including fishing, boating, jet ski rentals, parasailing, and several noted restaurants. The 3rd/4th Street ball fields provide a large open space for recreation uses.

A primary asset to downtown Ocean City is the mass transit system and is an important source of transportation for millions of visitors, locals, and employees during the summer months. A private trolley system with its southern terminus at Somerset Street in downtown Ocean City provides a smaller and attractive means of transport; as well as the Boardwalk tram which runs from South 1st Street to 27th Street providing another fun way to get around Ocean City.

The Town of Ocean City spends substantial funds to enhance and maintain their public infrastructure. As a tourist destination serving millions of visitors each year such infrastructure must be in excellent working condition.

Downtown Ocean City has a number of organizations interested in the area. A group, called the Partners was created to improve networking and coordinating of various issues, particularly related to business and economic development. The Partners Group consists of the following organizations: Ocean City Development Corporation, Ocean City Chamber of Commerce, Hotel Motel Restaurant Association, Downtown Association, and the Economic Development Committee. These groups meet as needed to address specific issues.

WEAKNESSES: The downtown district is in a transitional stage of revitalization; there are areas that are in need of redevelopment. A number of buildings are in fair to poor condition. This area does not contain an historic district and there are a handful of individual buildings that may qualify for historic status; however, many of these owners tend not to be interested in pursuing this designation. The only designated historic structure in Ocean City is the St. Paul's By-The-Sea Episcopal Church located at Baltimore Avenue and 3rd Street.

Ocean City as a tourist destination has a relatively short business season. Although the business season has been lengthened with other activities most businesses close during the off-season. This seasonal nature of employment provides challenges for many employees and year round residents.

Other than the beach, the boardwalk is Ocean City's number one destination. The downtown core offers very little else in support of the boardwalk and beach attractions. It was noted by the International Waterfront Group (IWG) 1999 report that Downtown Ocean City has become a parking lot and with limited circulation for the boardwalk and beach. No other anchor exists to attract visitors to the downtown core especially during the off peak season. Congested downtown interior roadways discourage pedestrian interaction with downtown core businesses.

As noted by the IWG report that many business owners feel that the city has not done enough to enforce codes that relate to the upkeep of structures. Because of this, there is unwillingness by business owners to invest capital into facility improvements. There is a lack of confidence from prospective investors because of the uncertainty in knowing what kind of neighbor will exist. However, many others feel that the existing codes are too restrictive and should be relaxed to encourage a more "pro" business climate.

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 SC area has some limited recreational overlays allowing for public use. The Business zoning along the boardwalk and the Downtown Mixed Use zoning elsewhere in the lower downtown area are adequate to permit future expansion of business uses. Marinas along the bayside have existed for decades. The town encourages their expansion and renovation to accommodate larger numbers of vessels as the town's populace increases.

Residential zoning has many older homes and apartments that could be improved upon or replaced with new dwellings. We are seeing demolition occur more often as dwellings age. Original structures were not built to code and are unsafe and uncomfortable due to the lack of insulation and lower quality components. The town encourages commercial and residential mixed use projects to help bring needed services into the SC area. Year-round commercial services are lacking in the SC area.

Residential zoning replaces Business zoning at the northern end of the SC area, along the boardwalk. Local Commercial zoning replaces Residential zoning on Philadelphia Avenue as this road becomes wider (known as Coastal Highway) at 15th Street in the Upper Downtown SC area. This is significant in that small businesses offering the services that visitors need become more common. As trends change, so too do the types of businesses that locate along Coastal Highway.

Our viewpoint is that the proposed Sustainable Community area, as a whole, can be revitalized with enough participation from local developers, property owners, and businesses. The infrastructure improvements, as explained later in this application, have been completed to allow for future redevelopment efforts. The task at hand is finding ways to enhance and create interesting places within the older downtown core, within the SC area. Interesting places serve as the magnetic medium through which individuals, residents, and visitors are motivated and interact within commercial areas or their communities. Identifying the strengths of the SC area and cultivating those strengths is the first step.

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)

Strengths

Efforts to improve the appearance of utilities and building facades have been successful. Community pride is rising. Consistent code enforcement ensures that restrictions are followed. A strong police presence shows how serious the town feels about providing a safe community.

The Ocean City Art League promotes Art and culture with its many members and volunteers. The town has many events that are either free or at low cost where local art is sold, charitable activities are offered, classes are taught, and a library where art lovers can appreciate and admire crafts and works created in this area. The Art League occupies a new facility on 94th Street that houses a gallery, a pottery studio, classrooms, an art library, and five working artist's studios. This year marks the 50th year for the Ocean City Center for the Arts.

The town's rich history is preserved in the Life Saving Museum at the inlet parking lot. Visitors can learn about the "surfmens" who rescued stranded fishermen from the ocean.

Worcester County, Maryland has a branch of the county library on 100th Street where anyone is free to explore its many resources.

Our Convention Center is host to many major attractions. A current expansion of the facility promises to attract even larger entertainers and shows to provide entertainment for our visitors and residents, alike.

An annual air show and skateboarding event takes place each summer on the beach which attracts those seeking a thrill in aerial aerobatics and the newest tricks and products on the market for biking and skateboarding.

Our mass transit system transports millions of visitors each summer to destinations within town, thereby decreasing the number of personal vehicles on the roads. Similarly, the alleyways permit limited movement as a alternative route to congested roads.

Weaknesses

As with most places, there exists some crime within the SC area due to its small, compacted size and the older neighborhoods where lower rents prevail. The town's police force handles the small amount of petty crimes in this area. The lack of a school in Ocean City means school-age students are bused to schools in West Ocean City and Berlin, Maryland. Worcester County provides the bus service needed for this transfer.

Fragmented land ownership presents challenges when considering redevelopment projects in the interior. Conversely, there are opportunities for beneficial, small-scale redevelopment.

Congested downtown interior roadways discourage pedestrian interaction with downtown core businesses.

A "main attraction" or anchor business is being sought to occupy a location within the SC area. The Ocean City beach and boardwalk are our main attractions. Off the boardwalk, though, the town needs an attraction on the bayside or western side of the island. A bayside boardwalk connected to the

Oceanside boardwalk has been one priority for several years. Acquiring or encouraging contiguous land to build such a project has stifled efforts, to date.

Additional employee housing is needed to house the influx of foreign workers in the summer months.

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)

Land: The SC area is developed in an ultra-urban environment. Property use is in a mixture of services and commercial uses, single and multi-family residential, hotel and motel, marinas, parking lots, public works facilities, restaurants, and amusement parks. Each type of land use has its own specific impact on the environment. A pollution prevention plan needs to be developed for each of these types of uses.

Air: The air quality of Ocean City is relatively good. On average, the air quality index is below 50. The SC area on Delmarva is located east of major industrial centers, where deposition or fall-out of pollution originates. There are local sources of pollution that contribute to our air quality. Motor vehicle exhausts, engine fumes from jet skis, scooters, boats, gas pumps, and ammonia from local poultry farms are all sources originating within short distances of the SC area.

Water – Nutrient deposition is a concern for water quality when it runs off into the Coastal Bays. Natural concentration of nitrogen from power plants, vehicles, and industry contribute up to 30% of the nitrogen inputs. The Coastal Bay water is listed on the 303-d list for being impaired by nutrients. Stormwater is a non-point source of pollutant for the Coastal Bays. Nutrients come from a variety of sources including the atmosphere, fertilizers, pesticides, pet waste, and groundwater. Bacteria, trash-gross solids, hydrocarbons, and heavy metals are a local concern. Tourism is our primary industry. Keeping our waters clean and productive is essential to maintaining our economy. Drinking water is obtained from the underground aquifers of which the town uses 25 wells to extract from. This ensures that there is equal distribution from the aquifers to avoid salt water intrusion. The town maintains adequate capacity for our peak seasonal population.

Watersheds: The Coastal Bays Watershed is made up of 4 bays with approximately 175 square miles of drainage area. Ocean City has less than 2.5 square miles of land area draining to the Sinepuxent, Isle of Wight, and Assawoman Bays. We are almost completely developed with nearly all new construction coming in the form of redevelopment. Drainage from the town is through a storm drain system or sheet flow. The ocean beach is protected from high bacteria resulting from our drainage to the western bays.

Tree Canopy: The ultra-urban environment is counter-productive to the tree canopy. We have a Critical Area ordinance that requires that redevelopment must provide 15% plantable area. This is over-ridden by grandfathering and non-conformity in the zoning code. They are required to pay a fee-in-lieu to offset the requirement. This money collected must be spent on work within the SC area. There are also mini grant programs to offer private property owners plant materials for BayScape gardens or rain gardens. Street trees were planted while utilities were being placed underground. Some vacant spaces where trees have died should be filled using the fee-in-lieu money.

Sea Level Rise: The effects of global warming, sea level rise, and land subsidence over the next century will potentially exacerbate the severity of coastal storms and flooding. Sea level has risen about one foot in the past century. Another rise of 2-3 feet is expected for the coming century. There will be more shoreline erosion and loss of coastal wetlands, if this occurs. The town is considering measures to reduce the effects which include raising the level of streets, improving bulkheads, and constructing buildings at higher elevations. Coastal storm surge from hurricanes could become higher and more intense rainfall could raise the potential from flooding from land runoff. An acceleration of sea level rise may increase the cost of current shore protection practices.

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)

Recycling: The town has a bulk collection program where we recycle large appliances to keep them from entering the waste system. During construction or demolition projects, we recycle the piping. The town ships its waste to a company in Pennsylvania for recycling. It becomes an alternative fuel source for creating electricity.

Local foods: The town has a farmer's market located outside the SC area. Efforts should seek another market within the SC area where foot traffic is heavy and visitors would benefit by not having to travel across the bridge to buy food.

Energy and water conservation: The town requires low flow fixtures on all redevelopment projects. We also enforce the International Energy Conservation Code to have more insulation, better windows, and more efficient HVAC.

As far as conservation efforts within the SC area, the town enforces the energy conservation code, the new (IECC) International Energy Conservation Code. Some of the residential energy efficiency codes that we are now inspecting are: A) All hot water circulation systems shall be insulated with a readily accessible manual switch to turn off the hot water circulation pump when not in use, (B) All hot water pipes larger than 3/4 inch shall be insulated, (C) All piping from water heaters to the kitchen sink outlet, (D) Hot water lines to bathrooms and utility rooms shall be insulated per Table R403.4.2 minimum thermal resistance (R-Value) of R-3. The Maryland State Plumbing Code requires low flow plumbing fixtures including toilets, faucet aerators and shower heads. All new or replacement insulation of toilets use no more than 1.6 gallons per flush compared with about 3.5 gallons of water used with older standard toilets. Low flow shower heads use about 2.5 gallons of water per minute compared to between 4 and 5 gallons per minute used by conventional heads and low-flow faucets aerators can cut water usage of faucets by as much as 40% from 4 gallons per minute to 2.5.

Buildings will be 15% more energy efficient than the 2009 IECC. Increased fenestration requirements mean better windows, increased insulation values for walls, floors, ceilings & roofs improve conservation measures. There are more efficient mechanical system checks. There are many other more stringent energy efficiency requirements both residential & commercial.

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 Town of Ocean City has adopted the State's stormwater ordinance that gives a waiver for quantity control to projects that discharge directly into tidal waters. Since tidal waters surround the town, the water quantity requirements are not applicable. On redevelopment projects, builders must meet water quality requirements. This requirement is the reduction of impervious surface by 50% or treating 50% of the existing imperviousness and 100% of the increased imperviousness. The grandfathering and non-conformity allowed by the zoning code limits areas where environmentally sensitive designs can be performed. There are many lots that have no setbacks on them, allowing for building to the property line.

The Ocean City Development Corporation has guidelines to maintain the heritage of the Historical nautical marine atmosphere. They request wider porches and sidewalks that encroach on the landscaped areas. Landscaping can be used as both a bio-retention area for infiltration and for filtering purposes. Adding more landscaping can help meet the reduction of impervious surfaces.

Opportunities for alternative paving surfaces are applicable. The SC area should require more alternative surfaces for all parking. Surface storage of stormwater and alternative surfaces are the only feasible options for stormwater treatment.

The groundwater in the SC area is very high, usually, within 2 feet of the surface. The tidal influence backs up the storm drains and floods the streets at spring tides and during Northeaster events. A fee-in-lieu policy has been used but is not a standard operating procedure. Storm drain and outfall retrofits could use the funds collected. Street cleaning is a viable BMP and is currently being done by the Department of Public Works. As a pilot project, we have installed catch basin inserts to collect trash, debris, oil, and other loose substances. So far, the effort has been successful. We need a long-term maintenance agreement before we can expand on this effort any further.

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)

Strengths: The tourism industry has served Ocean City well over the past 100 years and is expected to be the primary industry for many years to come. The traditional downtown area of Ocean City is the oldest section of town and enjoys substantial business tenure, for example, the Trimper Amusement rides has operated for over 100 years; Dolle's Candy celebrated its 100th anniversary in 2011. The Atlantic Hotel, first built in 1875 by one of the original families and still managed by the Purnell's. The Alaska Stand eatery, owned by the Givarz family, celebrates its 80th birthday in 2013. It contains a variety of buildings that have been adapted for new uses. In April 2012 Ocean City was named one of Maryland's Main Street Maryland Communities. The Ocean City Boardwalk is as an important attraction for visitors as the beach. This lively and well-maintained boardwalk is one of the best pedestrian experiences one will find.

Due to the seasonal nature of Ocean City, the town invests heavily in the public infrastructure that must handle much more than its 8,000 year round residential base. On peak weekends, the town's population will exceed 300,000. This drastic population change from off-season to in-season may be one of the biggest changes found in the United States.

Weaknesses: The prime Ocean City season runs during the summer season; with diminished visitors for weekends before and after these prime weeks. However, this weather dependent, seasonal nature of tourism can make for a very challenging economic environment.

The small year round population base and the large number of tourists makes for a challenging task to provide the number of employees necessary to accommodate the tourism industry. Businesses in the area depend on the labor supply of the mid-Atlantic region and foreign worker labor. In addition to this high seasonal demand the opposite occurs in the off-season. The smaller population makes it difficult to support local small businesses in Ocean City.

The issue of Tax Differential between the Town of Ocean City and Worcester County creates an economic weakness because properties in the unincorporated county and immediately adjacent to the Town of Ocean City do not share the same tax burden.. Therefore, they are more capable of retaining capital for reinvestment efforts thus placing businesses and residences in the Sustainable Community area at an economic disadvantage.

The tourism base makes for a limited type of business in Ocean City. Stores locating in West Ocean City are providing many of the goods and merchandise found in traditional downtown areas.

Distinct Economic Drivers: It is expected that tourism will remain the primary industry for the Sustainable Communities Area. A number of outside influences, such as weather and the labor market, affect the industry.

In terms of workers increasing skills and employment, there are a number of training facilities in the eastern shore that have partnered with Ocean City businesses. For example, the University of Maryland Eastern Shore and the local Wor-Wic Community College each have a hotel management courses and culinary schools well suited to address the need for skilled workers in Ocean City hotels and restaurants. Salisbury University is only 30 miles from Ocean City and many of its students and graduates find work in Ocean City. The Ocean City Chamber of Commerce holds its spring Job Fair that has become a major hiring source for local Ocean City businesses.

Ocean City historically has very high unemployment rates in the winter seasons. The Ocean City economy has expanded over the past years as the shoulder season has grown. Much of this growth in these shoulder seasons is a result of the OC Convention Center business and large increase in the area's golf industry. It is expected that the stronger shoulder season business will expand which will help reduce the high level of unemployment in the off-season periods.

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)

Ocean City has a variety of housing types such as single family, townhouse, condominium, and even manufactured housing. Such housing caters to various income levels. There have been several Ocean City employers who have realized the need to find affordable housing for their employees and have either constructed such housing or purchased housing.

Over the past few years the housing market has been depressed and has resulted in little new construction. However, at the same time there has been substantial building renovation going on – both exterior and interior improvements. The downtown area contains a concentration of housing for the thousands of foreign workers and American workers who work for the summer season. This area has some of the oldest residential units.

In many municipalities in Maryland, the downtown areas often contain upper floors that are either vacant or used for storage. In Ocean City the upper floors are often used as seasonal housing – an important need for the seasonal workers as well as a valuable income source for the property owners. A number of residential buildings that used to cater to weekly visitors have been converted into housing for seasonal workers.

As the economy strengthens it is expected that new development will occur more often. The housing absorption rate and housing prices have stabilized. The recent recession did result in less construction activity, lower property values, and more foreclosures. However, there were also some good elements that came from this slower economy. In many sections of the downtown area homeowners did invest funding in the renovation of their older structures. The OCDC has assisted over 130 property owners in renovating their buildings. Almost five million dollars has been invested into such structures over the past 10 years, but most of it in the past 4 years. The lower property values and low interest rates have resulted in more affordable housing opportunities.

Some examples of the increased housing include the four building the OCDC manages for the Town of Ocean City's seasonal workers. To date 43 beds are provided by the OCDC. Another example was the unfinished condominium project at 2nd Street and St. Louis Avenue. Due to the poor condo market this 11 unit project sat idle for two years. A new owner purchased the units via auction and invested the necessary funds resulting in a new 11 unit housing project that caters to seasonal workers. There are 120 seasonal workers living at the facility.

Pertaining to disabled households, new construction standards in Ocean City require such housing to accommodate disabled households. Whereas the older buildings cannot accommodate such individuals, new housing often contains elevators and other features to increase their mobility. In addition, the Town of Ocean City operates a transit van to transport such individuals to various needs.

It is expected that Ocean City will continue to see a blend of housing types.

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 SC area is a small, distinct district that does not follow established Census Bureau boundaries. The area contains about 255 acres of land or about .4 square miles. According to the Maryland Department of Planning, there were 1,199 year round residents counted during the 2010 census in the SC area.

Age: Of the approximately 1,199 residents in the SC area, 85% are over 21 years of age. The average age is 46 years. Females comprise about 46% of the Sc area population.

Race: Whites are 92% of the SC area. Blacks are 3%. Asians are 2.7%.

Households: There were 591 households in 2011. That number is projected to be 611 by 2016. There are 253 family households and 338 non-family households. The estimated average household income was \$63,782 in 2011. The 2011 estimated household size was 1.85 persons. There were 484 one and two person households in 2011 in the SC area. There were 16 households with 5-7 persons each.

Education: Of the 904 people with education in the SC area, 40% had earned a high school diploma or less. Those with college degrees totaled over 37%.

Income: Of the 591 people who reported incomes, about 13% earned less than \$15,000 per year. Those earning less than \$100,000 totaled 83%. Those earning \$200,000 or more were 3.39% of the total SC area. There were 11 families living below the poverty level in 2011. Seven of those families had children.

Employment: In 2011, civilian employed workers totaled 425 of the 603 people age 16 or over who were eligible to work. Those not in the labor force was 314 of the total 603. The highest employment types were sales (95 of 603), management (92 of 603), and food preparation and serving (70 of 603).

The above information explains the 2010 Census data; however, demographic issues relating to the Sustainable Community Area have much more impact in regards to the seasonal influx of weekly and daily tourists visiting the area. Ocean City becomes one of the most densely populated communities in the world during its peak season from Memorial Day to Labor Day holidays. An average peak season weekend experiences approximately 250,000 people enjoying the entire community and its amenities; however, adjusted to the 0.4 square miles of the Sustainable Community Area, that equates to approximately 56,600 +/- people per square mile living in the community. High peak events or circumstances such as the 4th of July holiday have seen that number rise to 350,000 people (354,000 in 2011 and 332,000 in 2012) equating to between 75,000 and 80,000 people per square mile. Obviously, the Sustainable Community Area experiences quite a seasonal shift in the population and the level of service needed to support that population. Compare this influx of population to popular resort communities such as Vail, Colorado (999 people per square mile) and Hilton Head Island, South Carolina (586 people per square mile). Perhaps a better comparison is to well known world-class cities. Los Angeles, California has a density of 8,092 people per square mile; Beijing, China has a density of 3,200 people per square mile.

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 director and several members of the Ocean City Development Corporation's Downtown Design Committee are the lead people for the Sustainable Community Program. The director and planner of the Ocean City department of Planning, Zoning, and Community Development are members. There is also a local banker, several local business owners, a realtor, and a county commissioner. Discussions with the town's Planning and Zoning Commission, together with the public, will allow for transparency of the program with ample opportunities for input and feedback.

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 Ocean City Development Corporation (OCDC), established by the Town of Ocean City in 2000, will serve as the Work Group to implement the Sustainable Communities Plan. The OCDC has established a Work Group Planning Committee to formulate this Sustainable Communities Plan. The OCDC has been implementing its approved Community Legacy Plan since 2001. The OCDC Executive Director will oversee this project. He has been working with the OCDC nearly since its creation in 2000. Financial matters and specific facade applications are approved by the OCDC Board of Directors. The OCDC Board consists of 15 volunteers who meet monthly. The OCDC also employs a part-time administrative assistant and bookkeeper to assist the Executive Director with operational items. The OCDC has an excellent working relationship with City staff to process these facade projects. The OCDC Executive Director will be responsible for submitting all quarterly reports and payment requests for this project. He has been responsible for these same tasks on all other CL funded projects.

The Town of Ocean City has been an active participant with the OCDC in implementing many of the downtown projects, particularly the capital improvement projects. These include the development of Sunset Park, S. 1st Street, Somerset Plaza, and a number of street improvement projects. The Town is also active in the Boardwalk improvements and beach maintenance, both of which are extremely important elements in the revitalization of downtown Ocean City.

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 Work Group Planning Committee reviewed the draft Sustainable Community Application and Action Plan to establish the public review document.

The Town of Ocean City and Ocean City Development Corporation staff conducted a public meeting on April 24, 2013 to provide an overview of the then proposed Action Plan and received input to incorporate in the adopted Action Plan. This public meeting was advertised on the Town's website, local access TV channel, and thru a press release reported by local newspaper and TV media.

Subsequent to the public meeting; the Work Group Planning Committee reviewed and recommended approval of the Action Plan to the Ocean City Planning Commission. The Planning Commission in turn reviewed and recommended that the Town of Ocean City Mayor & City Council approve the Action Plan via resolution.

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 Town of Ocean City has been a strong follower of Smart Growth in both its policies and practices. The OCDC recognizes the importance of Smart Growth in its efforts to redevelop the downtown area, too. All of the OCDC's recommended projects in its redevelopment plans promote Smart Growth standards in various ways. Some of the practices of the Town that promote Smart Growth are listed below:

Mass Transit:

The Town of Ocean City has actively promoted its mass transit system, which now carries 4 million passengers per year. The Town only charges \$3 per day for unlimited bus use. The Town operates over 60 buses and plans to expand this service even more. The Town's bus system has evolved in a major means of transportation for residents, tourists, and employees throughout Ocean City.

Zoning codes:

In terms of zoning, the Town of Ocean City has several items that promote Smart Growth Initiatives. First, the Town has a transfer of development rights program that directs development from an environmentally sensitive area (the Atlantic Ocean beach) to areas designated in the Town's Comprehensive Plan as its highest density areas. Secondly, the Town encourages mixed-use development by allowing shared parking by complementary uses. The Town codes also encourage on-site employee housing by not counting such units against a property's density limits and reducing parking requirements. Thirdly, the Town working with the OCDC has approved design standards for the downtown area of the City and is familiar with improving the character and appearance of new development. This reflects the traditional development patterns downtown and makes the buildings more pedestrian friendly. Fourthly, the Town's Comprehensive Plan reflects the Smart Growth Visions as stated in the Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act of 1992, and includes all appropriate elements required by the State's Planning Act.

Tax Differential:

Properties in unincorporated Worcester County and immediately adjacent to the Town of Ocean City do not share the same tax burden as those properties in the Sustainable Community Area. This relief of the tax burden encourages growth in 'Greenfield' areas of unincorporated Worcester County that potentially degrades natural resources, farms and rural landscapes. The Town of Ocean City actively promotes redevelopment effort to encourage re-investment and revitalization in the existing built environment of the Sustainable Community Area.

Redevelopment:

The Town of Ocean City has continued to support the OCDC in its efforts to revitalize the downtown area of Ocean City. Besides co-sponsoring several grant applications for redevelopment with the OCDC, the Town has also established the Inlet Parking Lot Fund that sets aside a specific amount of funds from the Inlet Parking lot for revitalization projects, including land acquisition.

In regards to the Maryland Rehabilitation Code, the Town was involved with its development through its Chief Building Official who served on the advisory committee that developed the code. The Town has adopted this code, which is an important tool for assisting older buildings in renovation.

The Town facilitated the establishment of the OCDC and has provided funding for its redevelopment efforts since its creation in 2000. The Town also received the Maryland Smart Growth Award in 2000 for the redevelopment of Baltimore Avenue from 15th Street to 33rd Street. These improvements encouraged private sector development in the area.

To date the OCDC has received several redevelopment awards for its many projects. Such project awards include the OCDC Façade Program; South 1st Street Redevelopment; Sunset Park design and project; St. Louis Avenue

Revitalization; and, the OCDC marketing video.

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)

New 8-inch underground water lines were installed under Baltimore Avenue in 1988 from North Division Street to 9th Street, to provide excellent water pressure. In 1991, the town ran a new 8" waste water main from the inlet to South 2nd Street, up to North Division Street. In 1994, the town ran a new 8' water main up Baltimore Avenue from 9th Street to 15th Street. To improve heavy traffic volumes during summer months, the town has paved local streets, placed all overhead utilities underground, and replaced all sidewalks with wider ones.

In 1995, Baltimore Avenue from 9th Street to 15th Street was repaved. New storm drains and sidewalks were installed. In 1996, St. Louis Avenue from Caroline Street to Somerset Street, within the SC area, had new water mains, new underground utilities, new storm drains, new sidewalks, and the street was paved. In 1997, we rebuilt the infrastructure on St. Louis Avenue south of the Route 50 bridge, including all side streets from the bay to Philadelphia Avenue. In 2004, from North Division Street to South 1st Street, work was performed on Philadelphia Avenue that included new underground utilities, new water mains, new sewer mains, new sidewalks, and the street was paved.

Presently, we are rebuilding St. Louis Avenue, in phases, from 17th Street to North Division Street. A new 8" water main is being installed for the full length of St. Louis Avenue to improve water capacity to all of the SC downtown area. This new line, together with a 12" main pipe running down Philadelphia Avenue from 10th Street to the Worcester Street lot, will provide sufficient water supply to the entire downtown area.

The SC area sidewalks that are 8 feet wide are only a small proportion of the total sidewalks. This would be found in the area of South 1st Street to North Division Street. There is a pedestrian study done earlier that mentions the widening of all east to west sidewalks for better pedestrian flow at a future time. As streets are rebuilt, their sidewalks will be widened to 8 feet at that time.

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 Town of Ocean City is not classified as a NPDES Phase II community, meaning we are not required to file an NOI to be included in the national permit. We are proactive in addressing six measures. These include public education, public involvement, illicit discharge detection, construction site and post construction site runoff and pollution prevention. We have developed a Pollution Prevention and Habitat Enhancement Plan for the SC area. The plan lists the target audiences, common pollutants and their sources, and suggests the best management practices that can be used for various land uses. The town has proposed some projects to remove gross solids and trash from the storm drainage system, mini grants for BayScape and rain gardens, rain barrels, and storm water retrofit cost share program. We will be doing a water quality audit on single family homeowners and give them recommendations on ways they can reduce the impact they have on the environment.

Littering enforcement will slow the discarding of waste by visitors. Our streets and the boardwalk are swept manually and mechanically each day during the summer season. The beach is also cleaned daily with specially-designed machinery. Catch basin inserts will lessen the waste entering local drains. Trees and shrubs obtained through the TreeMendous program will be planted on public lands to help clean the air and provide needed shade.

The State is going to establish a TMDL for the coastal bay and will be assigning a load allocation to the non-point source runoff. This should be happening within the year. The town has developed a database and a GIS data layer for all stormwater management systems installed in the town. This GIS layer has the drainage area to each system and the removal efficiency of the type of BMP. We will be able to calculate a load removed to document our contribution to the load allocation. These systems must be maintained and inspected every 3 years and the date is noted in the database.

The town should continue to include energy and water conservation in all redevelopment projects. The plumbing code requires water saving fixtures.

There are clean-up events each year in town where volunteers spend a day collecting trash from the beach. Another such event focuses on the dunes.

The Maryland Coastal Bays Program uses it's Comprehensive Conservation Management Plan to target water conservation. They have worked with the Hotel-Motel industry to requests that guests reuse their towels and linens to reduce the water demand.

The town has a requirement that any tree removed or large shrub has to be replaced at a ratio of 1:1. A tree about to be removed agrees in an application to replace it by a certain date. The current landscaping ordinance requires 15% of the parcel be planted. A new program may begin this year that will reimburse residents when they plant native species.

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)

Maryland Coastal Bays Program, OCDC, Area Merchants, Town of Ocean City Departments (i.e. Public Works, Building, Plumbing, Engineering)

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)

Access:

There is an existing street grid system throughout the Sustainable Community Area. Vehicular movement is fairly intuitive and pedestrian movement is facilitated throughout the area for access to the Boardwalk and Beach plus movement to the Bay side of area.

Transit:

An existing bus transit system operates throughout the Sustainable Community Area. Transit movement is primarily, if not exclusively, North/South along the axis of the area.

Parks:

Two major parks within the Sustainable Community are the Sunset Park and Skateboard Park. Sunset Park generally operates as a passive park, yet the location and programming make it ideal for Summer Concerts that are open to the public. Skateboard Park is a skateboard facility owned by Worcester County and operated by the Town of Ocean City. Skateboard Park experiences use throughout the year, although still when the weather is conducive to skateboard activity.

Events:

Throughout the Summer Season, the Town of Ocean City, Ocean City Development Corporation and private entities conduct special events that attract visitors to the Sustainable Community Area. Examples include The Ocean City Air Show, Summerfest, Free Concerts and more.

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 Sustainable Community Area includes the Main Street Program area and is a significant way considered the 'traditional' and historic portion of Ocean City. The Ocean City Boardwalk aligns along the Eastern edge of the Sustainable Community Area where the majority of retail commercial and amusement district exists. Also within this area is the Ocean City Lifesaver Station Museum which functions as a historical society as well.

Implementing the Main Street Program along with updating the Design Guidelines as part of the Action Plan intends to increase the sense of place that exists in the sustainable community Area. Consideration is being given to creating an Historic District with walking tours and plaques to identify the historic elements in the area. Finally, a way finding system for pedestrians is contemplated as a method to further define the cultural, historic and economic resources 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)*

Town codes have mandatory setbacks to maintain some open space on each parcel. There are mandatory landscape requirements as part of site plan reviews. Stormwater management requires the planting of native plant species.

The beach allows for access to open space. The beach varies in width. The town routinely cleans the beach using specifically-designed machinery for the purpose. All foreign objects are removed from the sand and discarded.

Sunset Park on the bayside at South Philadelphia Avenue is a small facility with live bands, a stage, exhibits, crabbing, and fishing. It is only a few hundred feet from a bus depot and the boardwalk.

The Downtown Recreation Complex on the bayside between 3rd Street and 4th Street has several activities and open fields for activities. There is a skateboard facility, a playground, baseball fields, a basketball court, and space to go crabbing or fishing.

Somerset Plaza is a converted town street with trees, shops, and free Wi-Fi. It is closed to vehicular traffic. The Inlet jetty provides opportunity for fishing, sightseeing, and bird watching. Deep sea fishing vessels pass by on their way to the nearby harbor.

Landscaping practices focus on the use of native species of plants to assure that they reach maturity.

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)

Area Merchants, OCDC Main Street Program, Town of Ocean City Departments (i.e. Recreation, Public Works, Building, Plumbing, Engineering), Downtown residents and property owners, Historic Society.

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)

Job training seminars, low interest loans, OCDC grants for commercial improvements, similar to what they do now. The OCDC façade program and Green Building Initiatives program assist businesses and homeowners with improving their properties.

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)

Worcester County/State of Maryland could assist in providing transportation to the job market office. Many of the businesses in Ocean City need labor only during the summer months as this is a coastal resort community that thrives off tourism. The goal of everyone involved in improving our market is to fill every job opening and find housing to keep employees in or near their jobs. A goal of ours is to increase the amount of quality employee housing. Unfortunately, the enforcement of housing standards by town staff determines that many employee housing situations are sub-standard and need upgrades before they can continue to be occupied. This can only be done through private investments, assisted by loans or grants from the local area and funded through the State agencies. Job assistance and training should be provided within the SC area by the State if local, potential employees are to compete for jobs.

MD. Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation - (<http://www.dllr.state.md.us/employment/>)

Veterans: The Maryland Employment Service administers the Local Veterans Employment Representative (LVER) and Disabled Veterans Outreach Program (DVOP) to provide services to veterans and eligible persons in the One-Stop Career Centers. Veterans are given priority when referred to job orders placed on Maryland Workforce Exchange. In addition to helping veterans find employment and training opportunities, DVOP/LVER staff provides vocational guidance, referral to supportive services and case management services to veterans with significant barriers to employment.

Maryland's One-Stop Career Centers:

The One-Stop Job Market in Salisbury, Maryland serves Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester counties. The Job Market features an array of employment and training services for job seekers and businesses, providing a broad range of workforce development resources and information in one location. We strive to make every customer's experience productive and rewarding by focusing on their needs and providing the right blend of services to ensure success.

Foreign Workers:

Foreign labor could be assisted with finding job openings by asking employers to list their jobs at City Hall and other town facilities, as well as at OCDC and on our website. The Worcester County Economic Development Department can provide access to jobs through offering job placement seminars where applicants can search openings in the local area, much like the jobs fair Ocean City has each year at the Convention Center.

The Social Security Administration provides their services to issue social security numbers to non-resident foreign workers each summer through a cooperative effort with the Ocean City government whereby Social Security staff set-up office in City Hall on 3rd Street, within the SC area, to allow these workers to apply for and obtain numbers that are a requirement for receiving a paycheck from American employers. The small number of hours that the Social Security Administration has allowed for their Ocean City operation has proven to be insufficient (Friday mornings from 8:00 A.M. – 11:00 A.M.). This service needs to be expanded to more than one day per week. Potential foreign workers continually arrive at City Hall expecting to apply for their social security numbers, only to be turned away and told to return the following Friday.

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)

There may be an impact by the expected increase in personnel at Wallops Island. At this time the potential impact is not quantified or understood in regards to this Action Plan. Current BRAC activities do not identify facilities located within the municipal limits of Ocean City.

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)

Ocean City Chamber of Commerce, Ocean City Development Corporation, Downtown Association, MD. DLLR, Worcester County, MD Business and Economic Development Department, MD Department of Labor and Licensing, Hotel Motel Restaurant Association, Town of Ocean City Departments.

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 Town of Ocean City and OCDC shall strive to improve the existing building stock within the Community Legacy Area and to increase the availability of affordable housing opportunities.

POLICY 1: The Town of Ocean City and OCDC shall provide support for various selected public and private building improvement programs, which are aimed at rehabilitation and the provision of additional affordable housing.

POLICY2: The OCDC shall work with the Town in the preparation of neighborhood and redevelopment plans. The Sustainable Communities Area may provide funding or utilize its powers for implementation of appropriate provisions of these plans.

POLICY3: The Town of Ocean City and OCDC shall increase housing opportunities in the area and to demonstrate the type of infill housing, which could be built on available vacant lots within the Sustainable Communities Area.

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)*

Transit - The Town of Ocean City is a linear city which extends 10 miles from north to south and generally only one quarter to one half mile east to west. Almost any new housing projects will be in close proximity to this bus service. The Town's bus system operates year round and covers this whole 10 mile length of island. An all-day bus pass is only \$3 making it affordable to residents and visitors. Special discount bus passes are also available. The Town provides a bus to those incapable of using the general bus. This is a free service.

Walkability – For the most part the Town's streets have sidewalks on both sides of the rights of way. The Town has placed a priority on safe walking for residents and visitors. The Town attempts to work with private property owners to widen downtown sidewalks whenever possible. Such wider sidewalks allow for more pedestrians to use the walkways and also to have the option of walking further from the street and vehicles when on street parking is not present. The downtown area has ample on street parking. Such on street parking can be classified as a traffic calming device to assist in more safe walkways. The 2.7 mile long Boardwalk is one of the best and fun walking experiences one will find.

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)

Since most of Ocean City is currently developed, an important housing goal is to ensure that a variety of housing types are available to allow for workforce housing, rental and homeownership opportunities. Currently the downtown area contains a concentration of the workforce housing for seasonal summer employees. In several cases, new workforce housing units have been provided, but this is not the norm. Most of these units are in the older buildings and often found on the upper floors above commercial first floors. Proper code enforcement of these older buildings can help ensure that such properties are in good condition and not overcrowded.

Rental housing is quite affordable in Ocean City during the off-season. However, during the peak summer season the market rate structure presents challenges for many.

Home ownership is also challenging for year round residents, however, the current low interest rates and relatively soft real estate market makes for an ideal time for renters to purchase housing.

The Town of Ocean City has a variety of housing such as single-family homes, townhouses, condominiums, and mobile homes.

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 Town of Ocean City is the important player in the downtown revitalization efforts. The Town provides funding to the OCDC for its operations. It also has committed the important revenue stream of the Inlet Parking Lot Fund to be used for revitalization projects such as land acquisition. Its departments work closely with the OCDC staff and Board.

Worcester County is another important partner in the revitalization efforts for downtown Ocean City. The County provides an annual grant to the OCDC for its operations. The County Commissioner for Ocean City serves on the OCDC Board of Directors.

Within Ocean City there is a unique networking of organizations that make up the Partners Group. This loosely set up organization was established seven years ago and is a means of communicating on various issues affecting Ocean City. The OCDC is the newest member of this organization and works very closely with each of the other five Partner organizations. The Partners Group consists of the following organizations:

Ocean City Development Corporation
 Hotel Motel Restaurant Association, Inc.
 Ocean City Chamber of Commerce
 Downtown Association
 Economic Development Council

The OCDC also has one ex-officio member of each of these organizations. Such members are permitted pursuant to the OCDC by-laws. The OCDC receives valuable input on its redevelopment program from each of these members. The OCDC has provided at least one presentation on its redevelopment program to these organizations and keeps in touch with each organization on a regular basis. The Economic Development Council sponsors meetings on a regular basis whereby the organizations provide an update to each other, too. The Partners Group will play an integral part in our redevelopment program in terms of policy formulation as well as support of our strategies.

The OCDC will need to partner with the Town of Ocean City on the redevelopment program for this area. The OCDC will also require the financial assistance of the City on specific projects, too. Since the creation of the OCDC, this organization has had a strong relationship with the Town of Ocean City. The City's Planning and Community Development Director is the appointed contact between the City and OCDC and he attends our Board meetings. He also works closely with the OCDC Executive Director on several projects. The OCDC provides various information to the City on a regular basis as well as provides an annual report of its activities to the Mayor and City Council.

The most important partnership for the OCDC is to work with the area business owners, property owners, and residents. It is this group that has allowed for the success of the OCDC programs and projects particularly those required a match from the private sector applicants such as the Façade Improvement Program.

Many of the OCDC members are from these groups. Almost the entire OCDC Board is a resident, business owner, or property owner in the downtown area. Other important organizations which the OCDC has partnered with include the UMES/Rural Development Center, Salisbury University, the Community Foundation of the Eastern Shore, the Art League of Ocean City, Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Council, Patrick Bennett Foundation, and Worcester County Arts Council.

The OCDC will also be partnering with area business and property owners to continue its façade improvement program, Green Building Initiatives Program, Business Assistance Program and other OCDC programs. As previously mentioned, the OCDC recognizes the need to partner with the private sector to bring about successful redevelopment. And it also realizes that such actions will require the OCDC to take an aggressive role in promoting this form of redevelopment.

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)

There is currently a bus transfer station on South Division Street that gives access to public transportation options for visitors. From there, riders have access to any part of town via the buses for a minimal fee. Adjacent to this depot is a large public parking lot. Future plans have this location slated for a public parking garage. Taxi cabs are regulated by the town through a medallion system, charging annual fees for mandatory licenses for each taxi cab on the town's streets.

In West Ocean City the town owns a large parking facility where visitors park and ride the bus into town. The streets, themselves, have been repaved. Utilities have been moved underground. New sidewalks replaced older ones which allow for safer use. There are many bicycle and scooter rental businesses in the SC area. Visitors have several options, once they have parked their personal vehicles, to move about the town.

The town operates several electronic signs that are located where they are most effective. These signs give motorists current information on road conditions, weather, and parking issues to help them avoid congested areas. A grant has just been approved by FEMA to help us purchase another such digital, solar-powered sign later in 2013.

Boardwalk Trams are energy-efficient mini-trains that move tourists up and down the boardwalk. They offer riders a scenic trip along the beachfront where the oceanview can be enjoyed.

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 SC area has direct access to major transportation routes and links with air transit facilities including Salisbury Airport and Baltimore Washington International Airport. U.S. Route 50 enters town at Division Street, within the SC area, delivering traffic into the heart of the lower downtown area. The SC area is about a half mile from the West Ocean City Park and Ride facility where visitors can park their vehicles to enter town on one of our buses. There are no rail stations in this area. With the present lack of attractions downtown, visitors can continue to use the bus system and walk between destinations. The 1,200 space Inlet parking lot provides substantial parking relief to the SC area. Another option is for motorists to park further north and walk south along the boardwalk to reach entertainment destinations at the southern end of the SC area.

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)

Maryland State Highway Department; Maryland Department of Transportation; Town of Ocean City Public Works (Transportation); and OCDC

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 will continue some of the work already underway based on the Community Legacy Plan and explore other options to expand their role as facilitators of resources being employed by the community. Examples of existing programs meant to continue include Façade and Private Business Reinvestment Initiatives supported by funds from Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development. Another example of a continuing program is the use of a portion of the funds from the Inlet (Beach) Parking Lot owned and operated by the Town of Ocean City; these funds have been used as matching funds for grants to improve streets, create public parking areas and more.

To expand their current role, the Sustainable Community Workgroup will explore Tax Increment Financing as a funding option; previous attempts were unsuccessful though this option is worthy of pursuit. Another expansion of their role will be actively pursuing Federal and Maryland grants, while using matching local funds to implement priority projects. Being a clearing house and providing increased and active pursuit of Federal and Maryland funding sources that support private business.

Properties in unincorporated Worcester County and immediately adjacent to the Town of Ocean City do not share the same tax burden as those properties in the Sustainable Community Area. Addressing this tax differential would level the playing field of tax burden paid by the properties and encourage investment in the Sustainable Community Area.

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 Sustainable Community plan is consistent with the Ocean City Comprehensive Plan. The following are several of the consistencies:

- 1) The Sustainable Community area consists of about 255 of the 3,000 acres of land that make up the town. Within those 255 acres are some of the highest density residential occupancies in the town. This area also has the oldest structures in town, dating back to the late 1880s. Our population density far exceeds that of Baltimore City or Annapolis, Maryland. We are challenged to help create new jobs and additional employee housing within a small area that is only active, commercially, about 5 months each year. Having the state programs assisting us in that endeavor is absolutely imperative to our success. This is why we seek financial resources that will help keep money flowing through Ocean City and back to the state.
- 2) A Sustainable Community must stay ahead of economic competitors by showing outright support and having the resources it needs to attract business and promote its unique opportunities that are indicators of whether this distinct area has infrastructure in place, transportation established, and can protect its natural resources. Our Plan focuses on these exact points, as well.
- 3) A Sustainable Community needs the transportation infrastructure in place before asking investors to develop. Our Plan recommends improved transportation, a good road system, good transit ridership, and a pedestrian connection between attractions and other points within the SC area. As noted in previous answers, the Ocean City Public Works Department has already made huge road improvements, created wider sidewalks, installed new water pipes, and replaced much of our boardwalk. This shows that the town is serious about competing with other resort destinations for tourism dollars.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

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

Based on experience the Sustainable Community Action Plan is attainable and realistic. Ocean City witnessed a trend of private investment following public infrastructure improvements. A prime example is the redevelopment just north of the Sustainable Community Area along Baltimore Avenue from 15th Street to 27th Street (the ocean side portion of the town that fronts along the Boardwalk) where Complete Street concepts such as wider sidewalks, under grounding power lines, bike lanes and traffic calming measures were installed. This area received a series of private property reinvestment along those ocean front properties to redevelop mixed use projects and updated accommodations. Another method employed by the Working Group utilizes matching funds to promote Green Building, Façade Improvements, and Business Assistance programs to encourage reinvestment.

Initiatives in the Action Plan anticipate private investment. St. Louis Avenue has a design for a phased streetscape project. Continuing the maintenance of the Boardwalk, increasing the number of comfort stations and even simply repaving existing streets will rejuvenate the area. Implementing Design Guidelines raise the standard of the redevelopment and encourage further redevelopment of adjacent properties.

Addressing the Tax Differential issue encourages investment with a surety that properties within the Sustainable Community Area are taxed fairly for their location as opposed to being disadvantaged by simply being within the municipal boundary. Currently, the Tax Differential encourages growth in the Greenfield area of unincorporated Worcester County. Private sector investments are encouraged to seek new opportunities for growth outside of the area. Reinvestment promoted by this plan sustains the Sustainable Community Area as a major destination in an existing development pattern.

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 following projects are recommended planning initiatives followed by a three-phase plan of action:

Planning Initiatives

- Develop plan and initiate evaluation of streets requiring wider sidewalks in downtown
- Plan for future land acquisition activities
- Design wayfinding signage program
- Evaluate appropriate business assistance programs
- Identify buildings and programs to preserve designated historic buildings
- Identify Buildings for renovations
- Develop marketing strategies
- Work with Town to create design standards for other areas of city, including the Boardwalk.
- Create and promote a program that provides tax relief to specific older structures which complete significant renovation
- Consider the development of an Historic District Program incorporating the Lifesaving Museum and increasing the role of the Historical Society
- Address the Tax Differential with Worcester County to increase funding

Phase I

- Continue OCDC Commercial Façade Program
- Continue OCDC Residential Façade Program
- Continue OCDC Public Art Program
- Create and implement business assistance program
- Pursue land acquisition/landbanking activities
- Pursue parking structure development
- Expand Fence program
- Prioritize Code Enforcement
- Implement renovation program
- Implement wayfinding signage program
- Promote additional special events in downtown area
- Assist owners in historic preservation efforts as requested
- Manage employee housing units
- Promote street improvements to St. Louis Avenue
- Promote park improvements to 3rd/4th Street park area
- Alleyway improvements

Phase II

- Continue programs referenced in Phase I
- Continue to pursue wrap around Bayside/Inlet Boardwalk project
- Completion of East/West corridor enhancements
- Development of specialty retail concentration in interior block area
- Work with City to develop Baltimore Avenue enhancements from N. Division Street to 15th Street
- Inlet Park/entranceway improvements

Phase III

- Continue programs referenced in Phase I
- Completion of East/West Corridor enhancements to the bayside
- Pursue developers for land banked properties
- Promote water taxi system

V. PROGRESS MEASURES

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

There are a number of benchmarks to use to gauge the success of the redevelopment efforts of this extended Community Legacy Plan. They are as follows:

Design Standards implementation – the easiest method to determine the effectiveness of this project is to evaluate the quality of the new buildings being designed and developed in this district. The OCDC has already been working with the Town of Ocean City in this site plan process and has offered many recommendations that have been incorporated into the design of new projects.

Façade Program – the increased number of commercial uses that are renovating their facades. As previously mentioned, this program would be aimed at commercial businesses as well as motel, hotels, bed & breakfast establishments, and housing serving workforce employees. The effectiveness of this program is easily determined by the number of projects completed as well as the level of private investment.

An increase in the pedestrian traffic within this district, particularly in the inner blocks, would be good measure of success.

The number of site plans and building permits being issued could also measure additional private sector redevelopment.

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