Sustainable Community Application 2015

I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITYAPPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Sustainable Community:

Town of Trappe

Name of Applicant: Town of Trappe

Applicant's Federal Identification Number: 52-0971722

Applicant's Street Address: 4011 Powell Ave. PO Box 162

City: Trappe **County:** Talbot **State:** MD **Zip Code: 21673**

Phone Number: 410-443-0087 **Fax Number:** 410-443-0562 **Web Address:** www.trappemd.net

Sustainable Community Application Local Contact:

Name: Jennifer Shull **Title:** Planner

Address: PO Box 162 **City:** Trappe **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 21673

Phone Number: 410-443-0087 ext 103 **Fax Number:** 410-443-0562 **E-mail Address:** jennifer@trappemd.net

Sustainable Community Contact for Application Status:

Name: Erin Braband **Title:** Clerk

Address: PO Box 162 **City:** Trappe **State:** MD **Zip Code:** 21673

Phone Number: 410-443-0087 ext101 **Fax Number:** 410-443-0562 **E-mail Address:** clerk@trappemd.net

A. **Provide a description of SC Area boundaries. Include number of acres; federal/state/local designations; prior revitalization investments and smart growth.**

The Town of Trappe located on Maryland's Eastern Shore is a small town based in a rural community surrounded by working agriculture with little to no commercial or industrial base. The town is a residential community with a mix of older but fairly well maintained housing stock including roughly 20% rentals. There is a mixture of single family homes on various lot sizes as well as townhomes, and a few buildings converted to apartments scattered thru out the town. Residents in the community commute out of the town via private vehicles using Ocean Gateway aka RT 50 for employment opportunities to either Cambridge located to the east, or Easton to the west. The town is not accessible via public transportation systems which are extremely limited in the region to the general population.

The identified SC area is the entire town boundary less annexed areas on the east side of RT 50 that are part of a major planned development initiated in 2005 that has yet to be developed. The boundaries include areas for economic improvement, and business retention on Ocean Gateway as well as Main/Maple Streets; older town areas that are flooded by poor stormwater management drains; an area to the west of town center on Barber Road that is flagged for manufacturing yet lacks municipal water/sewer access; sidewalk connectivity along Main St aka RT 565 for those living to the northwest adjacent to the single elementary school as well as areas identified for recreation improvement along Main Street.

Of primary importance is encouraging the few businesses in the center of town to remain, and to encourage new small businesses to locate within the town providing much needed services to the community. The town center is literally a crossroad of Maple and Main Streets, an area that was thriving in the fifties and sixties when the main highway ran thru the center of town on Main Street (State route 565). The town has two restaurants, one non-profit, a quilt shop, post office and a hair salon in the town center. Other businesses including a gift shop, daycare center, restaurant, bank and private preschool have left town following the economic downturn and those that remain struggle. A convenience store, a collectible book store, a storage facility, a shed/equipment sales business, and a frozen food distributor complete the businesses located within town on Ocean Gateway (State Rt 50).

Making the existing businesses and parks accessible to residents without having to walk in the street is critical. Areas of the town lack sidewalks, or have sidewalks that do not meet ADA standards, creating a connectivity issue for those pedestrians desiring to access the school, town office, post office, and other areas. The Town was previously turned down for a grant that would have funded a portion of the sidewalks needed, and has recently obtained assistance in constructing a critical link in connectivity on Main Street aka RT 565 via State Highway. That assistance will close the gap where sidewalk was absent from Home Run Baker Park to the White Marsh School/Lovers Lane townhome area. Pedestrians are forced to walk in the travel portion of a narrow road without shoulders, and with deep ditches on either side. This is the main travel path to the school, and used by many low income families walking to the town center.

The SC area contains approximately 308 acres.

The town has no federal, state or local designations nor have there been any revitalization programs since 1997.

B. **Organizational structure, experience and public input**

The workgroup consists of members of the Town Council, (Norm Fegel, Rose Potter, Tonya Pritchett, RD Diefenderfer and Don English), members of the Town of Trappe Planning Commission, (Chairman Edgar Harrison and Vice-Chair Bobby Quidas) and the Talbot County Economic Development Director, (Paige Bethke). They will be supported by town staff: the town clerk (Erin Braband, and the town planner (Jennifer Shull). There are not any business organizations or community leadership groups from which to draw support or participation.

The Town Council President, Norm Fegel, will assume leadership of the group, and work with the others to develop subgroups with individual leadership using staff to implement the SC area plan with assistance from the partners and State agencies.

Recent past experience in administering public projects or revitalization efforts by the town is limited to very small locally funded infrastructure improvement projects. Town staff have experience obtaining state funds (Community Park and Playgrounds) for recreational improvements to the Lakeside community park; Nace's park; and slum/blight demolition thru the CDBG program. With extremely limited staff, a clerk, part-time billing clerk, and a planner there have been few opportunities to implement or fund revitalization efforts. The Town's general budget is $687,000.00 which does not include funding for either economic development, and very limited funds for infrastructure revitalization. The town has funded past projects in part with loans, grants or rearranged funding of other budget line items. Council members Norm Fegel and Don English typically take the lead in developing and guiding infrastructure improvement projects other than parks which is under the direction of Commissioner Rose Potter. The Talbot County Economic Development Director, Paige Bethke, will provide leadership and direction in the area of business revitalization and retention, with the assistance of Commissioner Tonya Pritchett who has expressed interest in this area. The strength of the team is its willingness to improve the town, and seek help. The weakness is the lack of depth in the implementation of a plan such as this, a lack of significant funding to implement an economic development drive by the town leaders and the inability to recruit more general citizen participation.

Notices of the development of a Sustainable Community Action Plan were placed on the town web site, and in the monthly town newsletter mailed with water bills. Other individuals were also contacted via email. There was an initial discussion at the regular town meeting about the potential of a SC designation, followed by dialogue with another town that had made application, and subsequently a meeting/workshop with staff from the State. An additional public workshop was held to review and fine tune the matrix action plan. Again, the public was invited but did not participate. The town's comprehensive plan and Planning Commission support the items identified in the action plan, however, the Planning Commission does not believe it has the experience or knowledge to put together an economic development plan.

ROSTER OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY TEAM MEMBERS

Council of Trappe:

President Norm Fegel, Vice President Rose Potter, Commissioner Tonya Pritchett, Commissioner RD Diefenderfer, Commissioner Don English

Maryland Dept of Commerce:

Debbie Bowden, Sr Business Development Representative

Trappe Community Team:

Margaret English, Julie Libby, Elizabeth Ferguson, Mike Sullivan, Flo Adams, Brandi Rosebrock, Nancy Dunn and other residents

Trappe Planning Commission:

Chairman Edgar Harrison, Vice Chairman Bobby Quidas will represent the five member commission.

Talbot County Economic Development Commission

Director Paige Bethke

Town of Trappe Staff:

Clerk Erin Braband, Planner Jennifer Shull

U.S. Small Business Administration:

Business Development Specialist, Rachel Howard

Kim Hardesty, Owner/Salon Inspire, Trappe Business

Sustainable Community Action Plan

Town of Trappe, Talbot County, MD

Town of Trappe

1/5/2016

Environment

(Environmental strengths and weaknesses can include but are not limited to quality of land, water, air, watersheds, tree canopy, risk of sea level rise, carbon footprint, energy conservation, access to local foods, green infrastructure, stormwater infrastructure/management, parks, trails and recreation, recycling, water and sewer capacity, etc)

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Homerun Baker Park (County owned) • Veterans Memorial, Nace Park, Harrison Circle/Lakeside (playground) Parks (City owned) • Seasonal farmers market • Excess water/sewer capacity to support 100 infill lots	• No parks east of Route 50 • No recycling program/curbside pick up • Lack of stormwater management activities and implementation • Greenfield, Main St, Powell and Sullivan streets suffer from deterioration from standing water

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures Based on the strengths and weaknesses identify the strengths on which you would like to build and the challenges you would like to address. What outcomes are you trying to achieve? Where/ in what area do you want those changes to happen? Progress Measure: Identify how you will know that you have achieved your outcome.	Strategies Identify strategies that will help your community to achieve each identified outcome to the left. If applicable, break down each strategy into specific action items that outline different steps of the strategy. Specify how you are planning to achieve the desired outcomes.	Implementation Partners Which community stakeholders need to be involved to realize each action step and strategy? Name specific public and/or private sector partners.
Outcome 1: Complete the improvements at Nace Park Progress Measures: Completion of walking trails and plaza development	Strategy A: Continue work with community partners to assure the completion of walking trails, landscaping, plaza, signage and tributes to Nace Hopkins.	Town of Trappe, Community Partners, Department of Natural Resources, Scott's United Methodist Church, Talbot County Parks and Recreation
Outcome 2: Create a single stream recycling program (at no extra cost to the Town) Progress Measures: Completion of study	Strategy A: Study the potential costs/benefits and similar scale programs to determine recycling program feasibility	Town of Trappe, Talbot County, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Housing and Community Development

Outcome 3: Complete implementation of stormwater management design Progress Measures: Amount of funding awarded	Strategy A: Increase drainage of standing water sites Strategy B: Identify most impacted sites and projects that can mitigate the standing water Strategy C: Apply for funding/grants to implement stormwater management projects	

Economy

(Economic strengths and weaknesses can include but are not limited to regional accessibility, business attraction/retention, health of the business district and commercial vacancies, workforce/employment and economic drivers, local policies/regulations, marketing, tourism, cultural and historic assets)

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Availability/Accessibility to Route 50 (to Easton and Cambridge, Annapolis and Baltimore) • Vacant storefronts available for new businesses • Town website/newsletter that promotes local businesses • Paris food distribution center as a major employer • Elementary school as a major employer • Low tax rates (one of the lowest in Talbot County) • Rural Life Museum • Talbot Economic Development Commission (TEDC) [Implementation Partner] • Nace Hopkins - historical relevance for starting schools and educating African American children, descendants now attend Scott's church • Proximity of boat launch for watermen, and recreational boaters	• TEDC limited reach/small • No town marketing campaign to attract businesses or residents • Water/sewer debt load • Business district small and limited off Route 50 • No commitment of business community to county Economic Development office • Insufficient parking spots available downtown and at Talbot County boat launch • Only few community events • Lacking workforce • Majority of population is retired/semi-retired

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	→ Strategies →	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Increase number of small, vibrant businesses in town (council needs a plan) Progress Measures: Number of businesses present in downtown	Strategy A: Strengthen and diversify business base Strategy B: Recruit new small businesses to town (rental incentives, facade improvements) Strategy C: Facilitate cross promotion for existing businesses (launch common marketing strategy)	Town of Trappe, Talbot County Development Commission, Department of Housing and Community Development
Outcome 2: Increase designated parking for business district (need supplemental/community parking) Progress Measures: Number of parking spaces available downtown	Strategy A: Establish additional parking lot on empty parcel close to business district Strategy B: Apply for government funding for business district improvement Strategy C: Provide directional signage to available downtown parking	Town of Trappe, Talbot County Roads Department, Local Business
Outcome 3: Improve Placemaking/Town signage on Route 50 Progress Measures: Signage hung	Strategy A: Work with SHA and other government partners to make signage improvements	Town of Trappe, State Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Transportation, Talbot County Roads Department

Transportation

(Transportation strengths and weaknesses can include access to transit corridors, pedestrian safety and accessibility/sidewalks, alternative modes of transportation, such as bikeways and trails, public transit, such as bus and rail, carpooling, proximity to transportation centers, parking, road conditions)

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Most of Main St. has sidewalks in downtown • Many walkers/pedestrians in town • Access/connectivity with Route 50 to Easton and Cambridge	• No public bus system (regional system with 2 stops per day in downtown) • LACK OF ADEQUATE PARKING • Roads are too narrow to add bike lanes/sidewalks • No rail system • Street lighting scattered throughout town limiting night visibility for pedestrians

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	Strategies →	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Create and improve pedestrian connectivity (specifically 565/Old Trappe Rd to downtown) Progress Measures: Feet of new sidewalk created	Strategy A: Study where people work/live/commute to and from Strategy B: Identify pedestrian pathways of school children and apply for Safe Routes to School funding to fill sidewalk gaps Strategy C: Partner with SHA/MDOT to create an implementation plan for new sidewalks	Town of Trappe, State Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Transportation, Talbot County Roads Department, National Center for Safe Routes to School
Outcome 2: Increase number of street lights Progress Measures: Number of street lights installed	Strategy A: Work with county and SHA to determine best locations for new street lights	
Outcome 3: Increase regional bus system ridership Progress Measures: Signage for buses hung	Strategy A: Mark bus stops with signage to publicize availability and location	

Housing

(Housing strengths and weaknesses can include affordability, homeownership vs rental, housing stock diversity, housing condition and value, housing programs, foreclosures, residential vacancies, property values, home sale values)

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Healthy housing stock, built most in 1930's and 1960's • No visibly blighted houses • Good variety/balance of housing type (townhouse, single family, duplexes, accessory units, 75% owner occupied) • Stable, middle and upper middle class, housing	• Economic downtown placed hold on new housing construction • Waiting for condo/townhouse/apartment/single family unit construction (PUD across Route 50 not built yet, 2501 units planned) • Some foreclosures • County impact fees/town water-sewer capacity charges

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	Strategies →	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: *The Town would like to focus on its environmental, transportation and economic needs. Housing prices are stable and the town already has a diverse housing stock that meets the needs of people of all economic backgrounds. Progress Measures:	Outcome 1, Strategy A:	

Quality of Life

(Strengths and weaknesses can include crime, socio-economic demographics, educational opportunities, museums, libraries, historic and cultural assets, civic amenities, faith-based organizations, economic health of households, sense of place, etc)

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Extremely active fire department as a community meeting space (annual carnival event) • White Marsh Elementary school active in the community • Many churches/faith based organizations including Trappe United Methodist Church, Scotts United Methodist Church, St Paul's Episcopal Church, Wesleyan Church • Community/Town picnic event • Rural Life Museum – local history, community garden, community events, 120 annual visitors • Nace's Day celebration/event • Nondenominational yearly worship service • Active Lions Club • Classic and antique Car show to fundraise for Fire Department and for scholarship funds at Scotts UMC • Paid paramedics and Medivac • Trauma Center located within 30 min drive • Local Emergency responders well equipped & trained • Extremely low crime rate • Weekly quilting activities at local business • 7 baseball teams, I soccer team (seasonal)	• Lack of gym/YMCA/organized recreation activities and kids play in the streets • Inadequate use of school and facilities • No neighborhood daycare center • No yearlong or all season sports for kids, only seasonal

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	→ Strategies →	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Increase promotion of cultural activities Progress Measures: Number of activities held each year and number of attendees at cultural events	Strategy A: Create a work group to explore feasible ways to promote and support existing community events	Town of Trappe, Churches, Local Businesses
Outcome 2: Provide pedestrian improvements Progress Measures: Number of benches and lighting installed	Strategy A: Create a work group to explore locations and funding for benches and more lighting.	Town of Trappe, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

Outcome 3: Create more organized and year round activities for youth Progress Measures: Number of youth activities per season	Strategy A: Create a work group to explore feasibility and implementation of youth activities	Town of Trappe, White Marsh Elementary School, Talbot County Schools, YMCA, local non-profits
Outcome 4: Provide placemaking signage for town Progress Measures: Signage hung	Strategy A: Identify appropriate locations for signage throughout Town and develop consistent theme/design	Town of Trappe, State Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Transportation, Maryland Department of Planning

Local Planning and Land Use

(Strengths and weaknesses in the local planning and land use subject area include but are not limited to zoning, land use, policies, taxes and fees, historical patterns of development, lot sizes and shapes, etc)

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Active Town planning commission • Village overlay (to protect downtown) • Revisions proposed for signage changes in zoning • Ease of access to Easton/Cambridge • PUDs available/flexible on edge of town	• Only special exceptions allowed in village redevelopment sub-area (mostly commercial) • County Impact Fee

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	→ Strategies →	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Complete comprehensive plan review. Progress Measures: Plan politically approved	Strategy A: Work with planning commission, elected officials, and community to write revisions for the plan Strategy B: Include favorable conditions for emerging technologies to foster Strategy C: Include tiered maps	Town of Trappe, Talbot County Planning and Zoning, Maryland Department of Planning
Outcome 2: Zoning in place to enable PUDs Progress Measures: Plan politically approved	Strategy A: Update comprehensive plan to promote PUDs and favorable zoning for PUD construction	Town of Trappe, Talbot County Planning and Zoning, Maryland Department of Planning