



SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION RENEWAL

Eligible Applicants:

- *Local Governments with a Sustainable Communities Designation*
- *Local Government Consortiums with a Sustainable Communities Designation*

Application must be submitted
on or before the expiration date of
Sustainable Communities designation.

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Division of Neighborhood Revitalization
2 N Charles Street, Suite 450
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-209-5800
<http://dhcd.maryland.gov/>

SGSC Approved - 1.10.24

WES MOORE
Governor
ARUNA MILLER
Lt. Governor
JACOB R. DAY
Secretary
OWEN McEVOY
Deputy Secretary

Overview of Sustainable Communities

The Sustainable Communities Act of 2010 established a framework for reinvestment and revitalization of Maryland’s existing communities creating a single, locally designated geographic focus area. Since that time the “Sustainable Communities” designation has provided an efficient means of targeting scarce public and private resources for multiple State agency investments and prioritizations.

Purpose or Renewal and Streamlined Application

The Sustainable Communities (SC) designation must be renewed every five years. This renewal application provides an opportunity for local governments to update their existing SC action plan and report on the accomplishments made over the past five years. Through the renewal process, local governments can request additional technical assistance and highlight any areas from the original action plan for which progress must still be made.

Application Eligibility and Threshold Requirements

Local governments (municipal or county) are eligible to apply.

Eligible applicants are to reconvene their **Sustainable Communities Workgroup** to discuss the accomplishments and challenges of their Sustainable Community Action Plans in addition to any update they may like to make to the Action Plan. The applicant may choose to select new members to participate in the Workgroup. The purpose of this workgroup is to continue and reinforce working relationships and collaborations among local governmental departments and better align community development priorities and strategies. In addition, this is an opportunity to assess if the Workgroup would like technical assistance from State government agencies to implement certain action items or develop strategies to address local challenges.

Threshold Requirements

All Sustainable Community applications must meet the following threshold requirements:

1) Sustainable Community Area boundaries must be entirely within a Priority Funding Area (PFA) and should be an area in need of renewal and reinvestment that would benefit from a targeted long-term strategy.

Applicants can verify Priority Funding Area boundaries by visiting the MDP website at:

<http://www.mdp.state.md.us/OurProducts/pfamap.shtml>

2) The proposed Sustainable Community is within or near a town center or transportation center, or there is a need for financing assistance for small businesses, nonprofit organizations or microenterprises;

3) The updated Plan must be consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans;

4) A Sustainable Communities Workgroup is re-convened and a roster of members should be provided with the application.

Applications that do not meet these threshold requirements will not be considered.

Application Submission and Evaluation

The Sustainable Community application will be evaluated based on thorough assessment of strengths and weaknesses and how well desired outcomes, strategies and action steps are connected to the local conditions.

The first page of the electronic application is the Table of Contents. This should also serve as a checklist and be used to provide corresponding tabs.

Please submit all materials (application, maps, pictures, and/or shapefiles) via email to the Sustainable Communities project management team.

Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Deliver Sustainable Community Applications via email:

To: Carter Reitman

carter.reitman@maryland.gov

Copy: Olivia Ceccarelli-McGonigal

olivia.ceccarelli@maryland.gov

Site Visits. Follow-up Discussion, Technical Assistance

Attendance at a minimum of one application consultation session or training is mandatory for all applicants. Consult with Carter Reitman at 410-209-5849 or by email at carter.reitman@maryland.gov if you would like to schedule a meeting.

If requested, the Department can provide technical assistance to local governments to prepare their Sustainable Communities applications. When needed, the Department may offer technical assistance, in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Planning, to local governments with limited capacity to prepare their Sustainable Communities applications.

During the application review process, the review team may make site visits and/or hold meetings with applicants. In addition, applicants may be contacted by the Department for follow-up discussions prior to awards.

Approval

Approval of applications will be made by the Governor's Smart Growth Coordinating Committee on the recommendation of an inter-agency review team. The review team is coordinated by the Department of Housing and Community Development. The Governor's Smart Growth Coordinating Committee can defer the approval of a Sustainable Communities renewal to the Governor's Smart Growth Subcabinet.

All questions related to the application, please contact Carter Reitman at 410-209-5849 or by email at carter.reitman@maryland.gov or your regional project manager, found at this link: <https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Communities/Documents/SRP/PM-Map-ContactInfo.pdf>

RENEWAL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The Sustainable Communities application for renewal has **three** sections:

A. Contact information, General Information, Organizational Capacity:

In this section, applicants are asked to update their contact information, provide information about demographic shifts over the past five years, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their Sustainable Communities workgroup, and share any technical assistance needs the workgroup may have.

B. Report on accomplishments over past five years:

The report is an opportunity to reflect on any accomplishments achieved in the Sustainable Community area. It is a tool used to evaluate if the SC applicant achieved its intended outcomes and identify what state resources were used, if any, to achieve those outcomes. Renewal applicants are encouraged to discuss how priorities, actions, and objectives were or were not achieved across the Sustainable Communities plan elements, including how any of the elements may have interrelated during the five initial years of SC designation.

C. Sustainable Communities Action Plan Update:

The Sustainable Communities Action Plan details revitalization outcomes and strategies to achieve those outcomes over the next five years. Renewal applicants are encouraged to use their previous Sustainable Communities applications as a basis for their updated Action Plan. You may identify which weaknesses have not yet been addressed or which strategies have not yet been implemented. Include your revitalization priorities for the next five years, basing them on your community's current strengths and weaknesses.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLAN ELEMENTS

The table below provides a description of each subject area/element of the Sustainable Communities Action Plan. Included are examples of common strengths and weaknesses within each subject area and the types of projects that might be implemented to address said strengths and weaknesses.

ENVIRONMENT: Describes projects involving the natural environment, our use of natural resources, and our relationships to the natural environment.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): the quality of land, water, and air; watershed maintenance and preservation; tree canopies and green spaces; climate change mitigation and adaptation; energy conservation; green infrastructure; stormwater infrastructure and management; water and sewer capacity; recycling, pet waste, and organic waste programs; the mitigation of environmental hazards; and parks and recreation.

ECONOMY: Describes projects centered on economic growth and management.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): business attraction & retention; improving and maintaining the health of business districts, downtowns, and main streets; commercial vacancy reduction; workforce attraction and retention; employment/job training; marketing, branding, and tourism; improving or creating economic impact of cultural and historic assets; providing technical and financial assistance to businesses; commercial building acquisition, rehabilitation and/or adaptive re-use; and creating a sense of place and vibrancy through streetscaping and beautification.

TRANSPORTATION: Describes projects involving the way people in your community get from place to place.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): 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; and road conditions.

HOUSING: Describes projects involving the homes in which people in your community live and which make it easier for them to find and stay in a place to call home.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): affordability; increasing homeownership; increasing rental housing; diversifying the kinds of housing available; improving housing conditions (interior or exterior); housing programs; aging in place; preventing foreclosures; and reducing residential vacancies.

COMMUNITY HEALTH & QUALITY OF LIFE: Describes projects concerned with public health, community culture, and the day-to-day life of community residents.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): improvement of public safety and the reduction of crime; libraries; educational facilities and programs; health and wellness facilities and programs; senior facilities and programs; youth facilities and programs; facilities and programs for the disabled; civic amenities, access to quality food options; collaborations with faith-based organizations; arts and entertainment education; and homelessness prevention, services, and facilities.

LOCAL PLANNING & STAFFING CAPACITY: Describes projects concerned with a local government's ability to plan for the community's future and to meet the current needs of residents.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): updating zoning ordinances or land use; updating municipal/local policies, taxes, fees, etc.; increasing local government staff capacity; and updating planning documents like sector plans or comprehensive plans.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

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, increase prosperity for local households and improve the 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 identified in the action plan are your priorities for improving the livability of community places -- residential, commercial, or other public or private properties – and the sustainability of new work, retail, recreational and housing opportunities for residents. At the same time, the plan should only discuss the strategies that will impact the geographic area targeted for revitalization so that resources have the best opportunity to have the intended effect. These projects can also be designed to 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 livable and sustainable community.

All communities submitted an SC Plan when the community earned its original designation. Some applicants may want to take advantage of the designation renewal process to outline new strategies, set new priorities, or reaffirm existing strategies for their Sustainable Community. Changes to SC Plans may reflect changes in external factors affecting the community or changes in the priorities of the applicant.

Action Plan Guidance

The Action Plan is comprised of six sections: Follow the guidelines below to fill out the matrix.

- 1) **For each section, pinpoint essential strengths and weaknesses of your community.** Example Transportation: Strength - Good sidewalk connectivity. Weakness - Insufficient amount of downtown parking.
- 2) **Based on those strengths and weaknesses, formulate specific outcomes that address the most pressing issues or greatest potentials. Include a means of measuring the success of said outcome.** Example Economy: Outcome – Expand broadband fiber optics in Town. Progress Measure - Linear measurement of fiber laid and number of residential and business connections.
- 3) **After defining the outcomes, list detailed strategies (break down to several action steps if needed) that will serve as the means to achieve those goals.** Example Economy: Strategy - Increase number of Town sponsored events ☐ Develop with community input, a series of weekend events that the Town could host.
- 4) **List potential partners that can support the successful implementation of these strategies through different types of resources.** Example Economy: DHCD (Community Legacy program), Small Business Administration (Services and financial assistance) etc.

CHECKLIST AND TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPLICANT: City of Crisfield

NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: City of Crisfield

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

- Section A - Sustainable Community Renewal Applicant Information**
 - [Applicant Information](#)

- Section B – Sustainable Community Renewal Report (Projects, Strategies and Partners)**
 - [Part 1: Qualitative Assessment](#)
 - [Part 2: Competitive Funding](#)

- Section C – Sustainable Community Renewal Action Plan Update (Matrix)**
 - [Action Plan](#)

- Section D – Sustainable Communities Workgroup Roster**

- Section E – Signature Letter (acknowledging Disclosure Authorization and Certification)**
 - [Disclosure Authorization](#)

- Section F – Additional Files:** The following contents should be included:
 - If requesting a boundary modification, map in pdf format and a GIS shapefile of the proposed Sustainable Community boundary
 - Photos (jpeg format) of your aforementioned accomplished projects of the last five years

SECTION A - SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY RENEWAL APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Sustainable Community:		City of Crisfield	
Name of Applicant:		City of Crisfield Mayor and City Council	
Applicant's Federal Identification Number:		526000785	
Applicant's Street Address:		319 West Main Street	
City: Crisfield	County: Somerset	State: MD	Zip Code: 21817
Phone Number: 410.968.1333	Fax Number: 410.968.2167	Web Address: www.cityofcrisfield-md.gov	

Sustainable Community Application Local Contact:

Name: Darlene Taylor		Title: Mayor	
Address: [REDACTED]	City: Crisfield	State: MD	Zip Code: 21817
Phone Number: [REDACTED]	Fax Number: [REDACTED]	E-mail Address: [REDACTED]	

Sustainable Community Contact for Application Status:

Name: Jennifer Rafter		Title: Grants Coordinator	
Address: [REDACTED]	City: Crisfield	State: MD	Zip Code: 21817
Phone Number: [REDACTED]	Fax Number: [REDACTED]	E-mail Address: [REDACTED]	

Other Sustainable Community Contacts:

Name: Tracey Taylor		Title: Director, MDP LES Regional Office	
Address: [REDACTED]	City: [REDACTED]	State: MD	Zip Code: [REDACTED]
Phone Number: [REDACTED]	Fax Number: [REDACTED]	E-mail Address: [REDACTED]	

(1) Sustainable Community Boundary and Description

(1) Are you requesting any changes to your Sustainable Community boundary? Describe why or why not? No changes to the boundary are being requested. The existing boundary adequately addresses the city's priority areas for rehabilitation and revitalization efforts.

(2) No changes are proposed.

(3) If yes, Include the following in as an attachment:

- a. PDF or JPEG of modified Sustainable Communities boundary map,

- b. GIS shapefiles of modified Sustainable Community boundary (mapped to the parcel boundary),

(4) Approximate number of acres of entire SC Area: **1,920 acres**

(5) Existing federal, state or local designations:

- Main Street National Register Historic District Local Historic District
 Arts & Entertainment District State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District BRAC
 State Designated TOD Other(s): Opportunity Zone

(6) Describe the SC Area's current demographic trends (with respect to age, race, household size, household income, educational attainment, number of housing units, or other relevant factors). How have demographics changed in the last five years?

Crisfield is one of just two municipalities in Somerset County. According to the 2020 Census, Crisfield's population was 2,475 which is a 9.2% decrease in the city's 2010 population of 2,726. Of this population, approximately 58% are Caucasian (compared to 59% in 2010), 33% are African American (compared to 36% in 2010), with remaining races totaling about 9%. In 2020, there were 1,518 total housing units, which is a 0.8% decrease in the 2010 total of 1,531. According to the 2020 Census, of all occupied housing units (1,081), 462 or 43% are owner-occupied and 619 or 57% are renter occupied. This represents a -5% and -1% respectively from 2010. The 2020 median age of the population is 42.3 which is slightly higher than the 2010 median age of 38.4. The median household income decreased from \$39,046 in 2010 to \$34,444 in 2020, and Somerset County has lowest median income in the state, as well as the lowest per capita income at \$16,471.

(2) Organizational Structure, Experience and Public Input:

(3) Describe any changes to the Applicant's organizational structure. Specifically, how has membership of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup changed in the last five years? Who are/were the leaders, and how will/did the Workgroup advisor or staff manage implementation of the SC Area Plan?

The 2018 City of Crisfield Sustainable Communities Workgroup was composed of city staff including the City Manager, Code Enforcement Officer, City Clerk, Public Utilities Director, and Circuit Rider as well as the Crisfield Chamber of Commerce Director, Somers Cove Marina Director, Tawes Museum Director, McCready Memorial Hospital representative, Sherwin Williams representative, Somerset County Economic Development Director, Somerset County Department of Technical and Community Services Director, Somerset County Commissioner representing Crisfield, Crisfield Arts & Entertainment District Project Chair, Crisfield Ministerial Alliance Chair, Somerset County Schools Superintendent and Crisfield Police Chief.

The city has been without a City Manager since 2019. The Sustainable Communities Workgroup had been inactive for some time when it was reactivated in April of 2023. The composition of the committee remained similar, although many of the roles reflected were now filled by different individuals. The Crisfield Ministerial Alliance is no longer in existence.

The 2023 City of Crisfield Sustainable Communities Workgroup was very similar in composition to the 2018 workgroup, although many roles are now filled by different individuals. The workgroup includes the Code Enforcement Officer, City Clerk, Director of Operations, Grant Administrator, and Circuit Rider as well as the Mayor, two City Council members, the Crisfield Chamber of Commerce Board President, Somers Cove Marina Manager, Tawes Museum Director, McCready Memorial Hospital representative, Sherwin Williams representative, Crisfield Arts & Entertainment District Project Board representative, the Housing Authority Director, Somerset County Schools Superintendent, Greater Crisfield Action Coalition (2 members), Somerset County Economic Development (2 members) and the Crisfield Police Chief.

City staff will manage the implementation of the SC Area Plan, as it is primarily grant funded, and will seek guidance of the workgroup as needed. The Workgroup will meet once per year to review progress, or on an as-needed basis.

- (4) What have been the strengths and challenges of the capacity of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup with respect to implementation of the SC Plan?

The strength of the Workgroup is the diversity of individuals, businesses and organizations represented by the group. The challenges have been the positions turnovers in many organizations in the intervening five years leading to a lack of continuity in tracking and follow through.

- (5) How did residents and other stakeholders in the community provide input to the Sustainable Communities Action Plan update? On which existing local plans (comprehensive plans, economic development plans, sector plans, etc.) is the Sustainable Communities Action Plan based?

Sustainable Communities meetings have taken place twice a month from April through October of 2023. These are open meetings and have been advertised to the public by press releases and an e-newsletter that is delivered to 1000 Crisfield residents and interested individuals. No community members attended the meetings. The Sustainable Communities plan will be approved by the Mayor and Council in a public meeting.

- (6) Would you like any technical assistance from State agencies to help expand the capacity of your SC Workgroup or implement your SC plan? Please describe with which revitalization strategies you would like assistance.

The City of Crisfield would like assistance from State agencies in implementing the SC plan. Specifically, we would like assistance identifying funding for the highest priorities which were identified in the 2022 Community Visioning and adopted as priorities by the Mayor and Council including: infrastructure improvements to address flooding, business development including façade improvements, revitalization of Main Street, waterfront development, recreation, rehabilitation of derelict housing, marketing, zoning improvements, recreation including youth engagement.

SECTION B - SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY RENEWAL **REPORT**

PART I: QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

Purpose:

The purpose of this assessment is to capture significant projects/ improvements that have been completed since the approval of your local government's Sustainable Communities designation.

In relation to the goals stated in your local government's Sustainable Community Action Plan, **please highlight at least three major accomplishments from the last five years**, including how you achieved them. When writing your narrative, consider the questions below and refer to the six elements discussed in the General Information section of this document (page iv) – Environment, Economy, Transportation, Housing, Quality of Life, and Land Use/Local Planning.

- 1) **Outcome:** Which outcomes identified in your Sustainable Community plan were you able to achieve?
- 2) **Projects:** Which projects did you implement in order to achieve the outcome? Also indicate when you started and completed these projects.
- 3) **Partners:** With whom (i.e. state agencies, local stakeholders) did you partner to complete projects?
- 4) **Impact:** What kind of measurable impact did the achieved outcome have on your community? Are there other intangible benefits?
- 5) **Photos:** Please also include pictures that depict your accomplishments.

[EXAMPLE] Descriptive Narrative: Please list the most significant accomplishments that apply

Example – Accomplishment 1

Outcome: Improved stormwater management

Projects:

Project 1: Stormwater Retrofit Plan – In October 2014, the Town Council approved the Town's stormwater retrofit plan which outlines various strategies and capital budget expenditures over the next five years. Strategies include reducing the amount of impervious surface in the community and improving stormwater management. One of the plan recommendations is to pass an ordinance that assesses an environmental protection fee on municipal permits.

Project 2: Green Streets – The Town added green elements to approximately 600 linear feet of roadway that had been experiencing severe flooding. Specifically, bioswales were constructed and trees were planted.

Partners:

Chesapeake Bay Trust – provided technical assistance

MD DHCD – provided financial assistance in form of a Community Legacy grant (totaling \$50,000).

Impact: The implementation of the projects had a significant impact on the community by improving stormwater runoff. The streets with the newly constructed bioswales no longer experience flooding.

Descriptive Narrative: Please list the most significant accomplishments that apply.

Accomplishment 1: Water and Sewer Infrastructure Funding / Improvements

Outcome: Improvements to aging water and sewer infrastructure system.

Projects:

- (1) Replacement of wastewater pumping stations - The city has three wastewater pumping stations located at Cove Street, Rubberset (Sherwin Williams), and Jersey Island (Norris Harbor Drive). MDE/USDA-RD funding has been secured for the pumping stations at Cove Street and Rubberset and the engineering design is being finalized with a tentative construction schedule for the summer/fall of 2024. Construction of the Jersey Island Pump Station is slated to begin in spring 2024 as engineering design funds have yet to be secured.
- (2) 1936 Sanitary Sewer Investigation and Rehabilitation Phase II and Water Isolation Valve Installation - The 1936 Sanitary Sewer Investigation and Rehabilitation Phase II is underway. Chesapeake Environmental Services (CES) has completed the investigation of the original sewer pipes from 1936 to determine needed repairs and pipe rehabilitation is planned for the fall/winter of 2023. The Water Isolation Valve project will install eleven (11) isolation valves to allow water to be shut down in strategic sections of the city to allow repairs when needed. This will prevent the need to shut down the entire City during repairs as done in the past with this looped water system. The project has been awarded and is to be completed in the fall of 2023.
- (3) Inflow and Infiltration (I&I) - This project includes the cleaning, recording, and lining of sewer pipes to repair pipes that have become porous and allow groundwater to enter, impacting the processing of sewage at the city's wastewater treatment plant. This project is 90% complete and is expected to be done in the fall/winter of 2023.

Partners: MDE, USDA, City of Crisfield American Rescue Act funds

Impact: These projects will result in an updated, much improved, and more resilient water and sewer system that will reduce the number of emergency repairs and will pose less constraints and inconveniences on the city government and its citizens (i.e., shut down of city-wide looped water system for leaks or pipe breaks, and increased wastewater capacity due to I&I reduction).

Accomplishment 2: Drainage System and Stormwater Management Improvements

Outcome: Improved water quality, drainage, and stormwater infrastructure.

Projects:

- (1) Crisfield Comprehensive Drainage Study - In 2021, the city received a grant from DHCD-CDBG and DNR to hire a professional environmental consultant to conduct the city's first ever comprehensive drainage study. The completed study identified drainage issues and proposed corrective implementation measures, project phasing, and cost estimates.
- (2) Norris Harbor Drive Culvert Replacement - The city secured grant funds from MDE to replace a collapsed stormwater pipe (culvert) on Norris Harbor Drive which carried stormwater into Somers Cove Marina.
- (3) Tide Gates and Stormwater Pumping Stations - The city secured grant funds from FEMA and MDE to install eleven (11) tide gates at various locations and two stormwater pumping stations at Broadway & 8th Street, and at the Norris Harbor Drive intersection with Gerald Ditch. The project is currently being advertised for bids.

(4) Installation of two (2) stormwater pumps along Maryland Avenue (MD Route 413) - The State Highway Administration (SHA) installed two (2) new stormwater pumps along MD Route 413 in the vicinity of Collins Street and Family Dollar.

(5) Flood Adaptation Project - The Nature Conservancy (TNC) is partnering with George Mason University (GMU), the University of Maryland's Environmental Finance Center (EFC), and the EPA Office of Research and Development (EPA ORD) to bring flood adaptation support to Crisfield. Funding for this project comes from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Adaptation Science Program and Lockheed Martin. The project is ongoing and includes an assessment of flood adaptation strategies to evaluate their costs and benefits for flood protection and community development goals. TNC is working with a fifteen member Citizen's Advisory Committee to refine the team's assessment approach and provide feedback on project recommendations. The goal is to provide city decision-makers with recommended adaptation approaches which support ongoing and future flood mitigation and planning efforts. The project will also explore financing and policy options to implement recommended strategies.

(6) Climate Resilience Evaluation Tool (CREAT) Building Regional Water Utility Resilience – Crisfield was selected, along with Chesapeake Beach and Cambridge, to participate in CREAT, an Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) tool that assists water sector utilities in assessing climate-related risks to utility assets and operations. With the assistance of EPA, Crisfield completed a cost-benefit analysis for the South Somerset Avenue to Woodson School Road drainage system, with several economic consequence categories related to floods. Potential adaptive measures included performing maintenance on the ditch system, enclosing the system by replacing the ditches with drainage pipes, or a combination of enclosing the system and protecting the city with a berm or similar structure. Preliminary numbers estimate the cost of improved ditch maintenance to be \$200,000 per year, including staffing and annualized equipment costs.

Partners: EPA, FEMA, DHCD, DNR, MDE, SHA

Impact: Collectively, these projects and measures will help to address flooding and drainage issues, improve water quality, and update and improve stormwater management infrastructure. This improves the city's quality of life, provides better access to area businesses and services, and promotes environmental resiliency.

Accomplishment 3: Crisfield Capital Improvement Program

Outcome: The Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is a tool which provides a working blueprint for sustaining and improving the community's infrastructure. It coordinates strategic planning, financial capacity, and physical development.

Projects: The CIP was developed in 2021 when a CDBG grant was secured from DHCD to develop the city's first-ever CIP. City officials recognized the importance of developing a plan for building, maintaining, upgrading, and replacing municipal facilities and infrastructure.

Partners: DHCD-CDBG

Impact: City officials are better positioned to coordinate and budget community planning and fiscal management efforts to determine the location, timing, and financing of capital improvements.

Accomplishment 4: Crisfield Business Development and Façade Improvement Program

Outcome: Grant funding to business owners to improve the exterior appearance of blighted structures and to breathe “new life” into the city.

Projects: Since 2019, this program has provided \$143,330 in grants to support exterior improvements to numerous businesses. The city currently has \$36,400 in remaining façade funds and will award those funds by the fall of 2023.

Partners: DHCD

Impact: Aesthetic improvements in the business community, leveraging of private investments to make revitalization efforts more affordable, removal of urban blight, and preservation of economic vitality of commercial services.

Accomplishment 5: Crisfield Armory

Outcome: Rehabilitation and adaptive reuse of the former Armory to eliminate a blighted structure and to create a multi-purpose community facility.

Projects: DHCD has funded four State Revitalization Grants for a total of \$1 million. The most recent grant, for \$250,000, will be utilized to address heating, ventilation, and air conditioning upgrades and mold remediation. The city is exploring sources for the continued renovation of this structure.

Partners: DHCD

Impact: The rehabilitated building will provide a venue for community events, meetings, weddings, and other celebrations as well as indoor sports activities. It is also envisioned as a space to relocate outdoor events during inclement weather.

Descriptive Narrative: Please use this section to describe any major outcomes or projects from your last Sustainable Communities Action Plan that have NOT been accomplished and why.

Outcome: Crisfield’s previous SC Action Plan had an outcome in the *Economy* section to “attract a large-scale anchor employer in the Crisfield area”. The listed strategies were to “invest in a green energy production plant and to develop a job training incubator for local population to keep workers in both Crisfield and Somerset County”.

Narrative: Crisfield, Somerset County, and the Somerset County Economic Development Commission officials worked diligently over the past five (5) years to facilitate the sale and adaptive reuse of the former Carvel Hall cutlery factory. A deal was secured to sell Carvel Hall to Element MD, in anticipation of the owners obtaining a cannabis cultivation license from the State of Maryland. This business would have created much needed, well-paying jobs in the immediate area, however, unfortunately the owners were not selected for a license and therefore the project is currently on hold.

Outcome: Crisfield’s previous SC Action Plan had an outcome in the *Local Planning and Land Use* section to “update the comprehensive plan”. The listed strategy was to “coordinate with MDP and DHCD to find grant funds to hire a planning consultant”.

Narrative: Crisfield has limited staff, so grant opportunities must be prioritized as grant writing and management is primarily done by a single individual. In the past five (5) years, the city has elected to focus on grants that address serious infrastructure needs such as water, sewer, drainage, and stormwater management in lieu of funding planning documents. The city recognizes the importance of an updated comprehensive plan and continues to include the plan as an outcome in this renewal application.

Outcome: Crisfield’s previous SC Action Plan had an outcome in the *Quality of Life* section to “continue to promote waterfront activities”. A listed strategy was to “encourage residents and visitors alike to use the waterfront by hosting events that access waterfront facilities”.

Narrative: COVID-19 had a temporary adverse impact on the gathering of large groups for events during the past five years, however, even with COVID-19 limitations, the city and the Arts and Entertainment District coordinator did an excellent job of creating and promoting various city-wide events. Unfortunately, the city dock (Depot), which serves as the city’s main outdoor waterfront venue, needs critical structural repairs. A structural assessment was recently conducted that determined the city dock needs \$2.3 million in essential improvements to make it safe. The city is actively seeking funds for this critical infrastructure improvement, but until such time as the dock is rehabilitated, public events at the dock are restricted to no more than 100 attendees as the existing substructure will not support the live loading required by code.

Part II: Competitive Funding

Use the rows below to list competed funds sought for sustainability or revitalization projects since receiving Sustainable Communities designation.	Source (federal, state, foundation, etc.)	Amount Received	If no funding was received, what technical or other assistance from the state would help with future applications?	Other Notes
Community Legacy (CL): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SRP-CL-2020-Crisfield-00216 ● SRP-CL-2021-Crisfield-00299 ● CL-2021-Crisfield-00548-R ● SRP-CL-2019-Crisfield-00037 	DHCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● \$55,000.00 ● \$50,000.00 ● \$77,672.08 ● \$100,000.00 		
Strategic Demolition Fund (SDF): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● SRP-SDF-2020-Crisfield-00156 ● SDF-2021-Crisfield-00116 ● SDF-2022-Crisfield-00360 ● SDF-2023-Crisfield-00051 	DHCD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● \$200,000.00 ● \$300,000.00 ● \$250,000.00 ● \$250,000.00 		
Community Safety & Enhancement Program:	MDOT			
Maryland Bikeways Program:	MDOT			
Sidewalk Retrofit Program:	MDOT			

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund:	MDE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$350,000.00 		
<p>Other Funding Programs: <i>examples are U.S. HUD Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), or grants from USDA, EPA, Appalachian Regional Commission, Chesapeake Bay Trust, Maryland Heritage Areas Association, Preservation Maryland, Safe Routes to School, Maryland Rural Development Corporation, Maryland Energy Administration, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, etc.</i></p> <p>*Please add more rows if necessary</p>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MD-17-CDBG-22 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$800,00.00 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDE-DNR-LF-1936C-22 • Pier replacement DNR 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$90,000.00 • \$160,000.00 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDE WQBL/PF-0943-20L • MDE WQBL/PF-0941-20L 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$346,700.00 • \$228,300.00 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Rescue Funds Round 1 • American Rescue Funds Round 2 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1.263M • \$1.263M 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MDE FY21 • MDE • DHCD • MD-20-CD-1 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$172,000.00 • \$925,000.00 • \$30,962.60 • \$52,000.00 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PDMC-PJ-03MD-2019-15: FEMA Crisfield Tide Gates, Culvert Modifications and Pumping Station 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • \$1,241,526 		

COMPETITIVE FUNDING: Are there any types of projects/needs for which your Sustainable Community needs funding; however, there isn't a funding source?

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

The city could use grant funding to update its comprehensive plan and regulatory ordinances, such as zoning and subdivision. It is difficult, if not impossible, to find grant funding for these types of projects. Updated plans and ordinances are critical to the implementation of these DHCD Action Plans.

SECTION C - SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACTION PLAN

City of Crisfield, Somerset County, Maryland

October 19, 2023

Example Section

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Insert bulleted list of strengths (provide some detail as to why and how this is a strength in your community) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Insert bulleted list of weaknesses (provide some detail as to why and how this is a weakness in your community)

<u>Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures</u>	<u>Strategies and Action Items</u>	<u>Implementation Partners</u>
<p>Outcomes should be considered end results of actions and strategies. Based on the strengths and weaknesses, identify the strengths on which you would like to build and the challenges you would like to address.</p> <p>Progress Measure: What will you use to measure success toward outcome? Is it quantifiable or qualifiable?</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Which community stakeholders need to be involved to realize each action step and strategy? Name specific public and/or private sector partners.</p>
<p>Example Outcome 1: Code violations and complaints are reduced in the Sustainable Community residential areas.</p> <p>Example Progress Measures: Code violations reduced by 25% in Sustainable Community residential areas</p>	<p>Example Strategy A: Review and revise, as needed, code compliance program to reduce frequency and number of residential code violations.</p> <p>Example Action 1: Complete analysis of code violations over the past five years to determine areas, both geographically and topically, for which code violations are most frequent.</p> <p>Example Action 2: Conduct outreach program to determine barriers to code compliance.</p> <p>Example Action 3: Analyze code compliance program for potential inefficiencies and opportunities for proactive engagement.</p> <p>Example Action 4: Pursue façade improvement funding to assist low-income homeowners overcome barriers to code compliance.</p>	<p>Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Department of Housing, County Planning Department, local homeowners association</p>

Environment

This section describes projects involving the natural environment, our use of natural resources, and our relationships or access to the natural environment. This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): the quality of land, water, and air; tree canopies and green spaces; green infrastructure; habitat improvement, climate change mitigation and adaptation; nuisance flooding; stormwater infrastructure and management; water and sewer capacity; energy conservation; recycling, pet waste, and organic waste programs; the mitigation of environmental hazards; and parks and recreation improvements.

Strengths

- Waterfront municipality with water-oriented resources and activities
- Historical waterman (working waterfront) community
- Somerset County Trail Mix Program promotes hiking, biking, and water trails throughout the county with specific trails designated in and around Crisfield, providing additional recreational opportunities and promoting eco-tourism
- The Terrapin Run Trail is a 4.7 mile paved walking, hiking, and biking trail that runs from Crisfield to Marion
- Numerous bike trails (Backroad Bikeride, 413 Rail to Trail, and Crustacean Causeway)
- Janes Island State Park and associated amenities to include rental cabins, campground, conference center, trails, picnic areas, pavilions, and a boat ramp
- Water trails for canoeing and kayaking and floating ADA compliant canoe/kayak launch (Janes Island, Little Annemessex small boat harbor, Jenkins Creek, Whitty's Ditch, and Brick Kiln)

Weaknesses

- Susceptible to coastal flooding and storm surge, in part due to low elevation above sea level, erosion, periodic changes in water levels and the potential effects of climate change
- Negative impacts to wetlands (erosion, filling, sediment, removal of vegetation, invasive species, building construction, and changes in water levels) cause wetland reduction and decreased protection from storm surge
- Documented drainage issues due to aging stormwater system and lack of system maintenance
- City experiences high amounts of inflow and infiltration (I&I) into its wastewater collection system which considerably impacts WWTP capacity and energy use during high tides or storm events
- Entire city is located within the 100-year floodplain, with the exception of a few elevated areas
- Aging water and sewer infrastructure

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

- Waterfowl and birding eco-tourism
- Hunting, fishing, and crabbing opportunities
- Wellington Beach (public) and several active and passive park opportunities
- Somers Cove Marina and several public boat ramps
- City Dock (Depot) public space for activities and boat docking
- Farmer's Market and Community Gardens
- Large expanse of existing wetlands helps dissipate the energy from storm surge and tidal action and provides habitat for local wildlife
- Municipal turbine for electricity savings

- Given Crisfield is a waterfront community, aside from Wellington beach, there is a lack of public access to the water unless you own watercraft
- Frequent nuisance flooding
- Majority of the city is located in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area which can pose development constraints
- Lack of alternative renewable energy projects
- No recycling program

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<u>Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures</u>	<u>Strategies and Action Items</u>	<u>Implementation Partners</u>
<p>Outcome 1: Address nuisance flooding and minimize flooding caused by high tides and storm events</p> <p>Progress Measures: Reduction in annual number of street, facility, and business closures; reduction in amount of property damages; amount of funding secured for flood prevention measures; and number of drainage improvements implemented</p>	<p>Strategy A: Seek grant funding to implement the strategies and recommendations outlined in the 2023 City of Crisfield Drainage Assessment Report</p> <p>Strategy B: Collaborate with federal, state, academic, and non-profit subject matter experts on non-traditional flooding and stormwater management alternatives and best management practices, and seek grant funding sources for implementation</p> <p>Strategy C: Partner with federal, state, academic, and non-profit organizations to sponsor local educational workshops to assist the general public on flood-proofing and flood- prevention measures</p> <p>Strategy D: Work with federal, state, academic, and non-profit organizations to implement measures to build community resiliency against climate-driven events</p>	<p>Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of the Environment, Maryland Department of Emergency Management, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, Environmental Protection Agency, Rural Maryland Council, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Federal Emergency Management Agency, academic institutions, and non-profits</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Address aging water and sewer infrastructure</p> <p>Progress Measures: Replacement and/or rehabilitation of water and sewer lines, pumping stations and water valves; and improved water quality resulting from lead and copper reduction from water pipes</p>	<p>Strategy A: Apply for grant funding to upgrade water and sewer infrastructure</p> <p>Strategy B: Seek funding to address the I&I problem to alleviate stormwater infiltrating the sewer system and adversely impacting WWTP energy usage and treatment capacity</p> <p>Strategy C: Implement water and sewer infrastructure projects as appropriated in the city’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP)</p> <p>Strategy D: Implement a lead pipe inventory to improve water quality and conduct project to map existing water lines to individual homes</p>	<p>Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of Emergency Management, Maryland Department of the Environment, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and the Federal Emergency Management Agency</p>

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<p>Outcome 3: Address stormwater management issues/deficiencies</p> <p>Progress Measures: Number of grants secured, stormwater management improvements implemented, new infrastructure tools, reduction in runoff, and improved water quality</p>	<p>Strategy A: Seek grant funding to implement the strategies and recommendations outlined in the 2023 City of Crisfield Drainage Assessment Report to improve existing stormwater management facilities and to implement new and innovative stormwater management techniques</p> <p>Strategy B: Partner with the Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative to map all of the existing drainage ditches, and determine direction of ditch flow; ultimately for the development of an annual ditch maintenance plan</p> <p>Strategy C: Continue to partner with federal, state, academic, and non-profit agencies to develop various tools (EPA CREAT) and strategies (mapping of tide gates) to address stormwater management issues</p> <p>Strategy D: Partner with federal, state, academic, and non-profit organizations to sponsor and promote local educational workshops to assist homeowners with lot-level best management practices (i.e., rain barrels, landscaping) to help reduce stormwater runoff</p> <p>Strategy E: Work with federal, state, academic, and non-profit organizations to implement measures to build community resiliency against climate-driven events</p>	<p>Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of the Environment, Maryland Department of Emergency Management, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, Environmental Protection Agency, Rural Maryland Council, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Eastern Shore Regional GIS Cooperative, academic institutions, and non-profits</p>
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Economy

This section is centered on economic growth and management. Strengths and weaknesses might focus on the following: business attraction & retention; improving and maintaining the health of business districts, downtowns, and main streets; commercial vacancy reduction; workforce attraction and retention; employment/job training; marketing, branding, and tourism; improving or creating economic impact of cultural and historic assets; providing technical and financial assistance to businesses; commercial building acquisition, rehabilitation and/or adaptive re-use; and creating a sense of place and vibrancy through streetscaping and beautification.

Strengths

- Crisfield has a number of small, Mom-and-Pop style businesses, contributing to the city’s unique character
- Designated Arts and Entertainment District with three galleries
- The Crisfield Heritage Foundation manages the Tawes Museum, Crisfield Customs House (currently under renovation) and Ward Brothers Workshop
- Many natural assets which draw visitors for fishing, crabbing, hunting, boating, and bird-watching
- Somerset County Trail Mix Program promotes hiking, biking, and water trails throughout the county with specific trails designated in and around Crisfield, providing additional recreational opportunities and promoting eco-tourism
- Janes Island State Park and (state-owned) Somers Cove Marina
- Designated Opportunity Zone and Enterprise Zone
- Major employer - Rubberset (Sherwin Williams)
- Seafood industry with working waterfront culture

Weaknesses

- Many commercial buildings are underutilized in the central business district (empty storefronts)
- The City has a labor force participation rate of 59%
- Unemployment rate is 18%
- Median household income is \$34,444
- Crisfield is geographically isolated
- No economic development strategy or action plan
- Unskilled workforce, shortage of employees, and lack of workforce training opportunities
- Insufficient municipal marketing resources for business and tourism
- Several commercial properties remain vacant and many are held by absentee landlords
- Business instability (high turnover) and unreliable business hours

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

- Tourism opportunities / Gateway to boat ferry system for Smith Island, Maryland and Tangier Island, Virginia
- Located within 30 minutes of the Salisbury-Ocean City: Wicomico Regional Airport and within three hours of major metropolitan areas (Baltimore, Washington DC, Philadelphia, Norfolk)
- National Historic District
- Numerous annual events and festivals (J. Millard Tawes Crab & Clam Bake, National Hard Crab Derby, Crisfield Bluegrass & Sunset Festival, Stars & Stripes Festival, Boat Docking) that draw thousands of people
- Tidal Health McCready Pavilion health facility and Alice B. Tawes Nursing Home
- Included in Beach to Bay Heritage Area
- Included in the Chesapeake Country All-American Road as part of the National Scenic Byways Program
- Low cost of living

- Several central business district structures are in need of exterior and interiors renovations to be suitable for occupancy
- Downtown historic buildings susceptible to flooding and unable to flood-proof effectively due to Maryland Historic Trust restrictions
- Existing population insufficient to support area businesses
- No hotels that can accommodate social events, conventions, and conferences
- Lack of high-speed internet access
- No Main Street designation

(Note: The 2017-2021 ACS 5-Year Estimates were utilized for this section)

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Increase the local tax base</p> <p>Progress Measures: Population increase, increase in number of new and/or rehabilitated affordable or workforce housing units, increase in a variety of housing types, and increased tax revenue</p>	<p>Strategy A: Take advantage of low cost of living and work with various levels of government and private developers to provide increased affordable and workforce housing opportunities to grow local population</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with government agencies and private developers to provide for a variety of housing options to include senior restricted housing to meet the demands of Crisfield’s aging population for “aging in place” opportunities</p>	<p>Crisfield Chamber of Commerce, Crisfield Arts and Entertainment District, Somerset County Economic Development Commission (EDC), Maryland Department of Commerce, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, private developers, private industry, and non-profits</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Promote Crisfield as a business and tourism-friendly environment to attract increased community interest with the goal of improving the city’s overall economic health</p> <p>Progress Measures: Secure funding source for a marketing strategy, prepare marketing plan, begin implementation, and track metrics</p>	<p>Strategy A: Develop a municipal marketing strategy to help promote business, recreational, and heritage tourism opportunities</p> <p>Strategy B: Seek funding to hire an affordable consultant, such as Salisbury University’s Business Economic and Community Outreach Network (BEACON), to develop the marketing strategy that capitalizes on the city’s working waterfront history, its Arts and Entertainment District designation, and the Somerset County Trail Mix Program</p> <p>Strategy C: Work with Somerset County Recreation and Parks to promote the Trail Mix Program recreational and eco-tourism options in and around Crisfield (area parks, fishing, crabbing, biking, birding, hiking, water trails)</p> <p>Strategy D: Work with the Crisfield Arts and Entertainment District staff on the coordination and promotion of heritage</p>	<p>Crisfield Chamber of Commerce, Crisfield Arts and Entertainment District, Somerset County Economic Development Commission (EDC), Maryland Department of Commerce, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, private developers, private industry, academic institutions, and non-profits</p>

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

	<p>tourism opportunities and the annual calendar of community events</p>	
<p>Outcome 3: Business attraction and retention</p> <p>Progress Measures: Numbers of new businesses, number of commercial buildings renovated, decrease in commercial vacancies, and increase in tax assessment for commercial structures</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue to seek grants for and promote the commercial façade program to improve building aesthetics and to increase assessed values of commercial properties</p> <p>Strategy B: Implement marketing strategy to develop incentives to help draw and expand businesses to reduce the number of commercial vacancies</p> <p>Strategy C: Work with the Crisfield Chamber of Commerce and the Arts and Entertainment District to address the needs and concerns of existing businesses and to strategize how the A&E can partner with existing businesses to plan events to attract patrons that are economically beneficial to those businesses</p> <p>Strategy D: Work with state government and the Somerset County Economic Development Commission to promote the benefits of small business loan programs, One Maryland, Enterprise Zones, and Opportunity Zones.</p> <p>Strategy E: Work with federal and state government to schedule and promote local workforce training programs/opportunities to provide an increased skilled workforce available for local jobs and improve the socioeconomic status of area residents</p> <p>Strategy F: Hire a Business Development Director to focus on the attraction, retention, expansion, and establishment of new businesses</p>	<p>Crisfield Chamber of Commerce, Crisfield Arts and Entertainment District, Somerset County Economic Development Commission (EDC), Maryland Department of Commerce, Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Workforce Alliance, private developers, private industry, and non-profits</p>

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<p>Outcome 4: Improve infrastructure and municipally-owned facilities</p> <p>Progress Measures: Number of improvements to infrastructure and municipal owned facilities, number of resiliency projects implemented, and number of best management practices implemented</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue to apply for federal and state grant funding to upgrade water, sewer, and stormwater drainage systems to enhance the city’s ability to attract new residents and businesses</p> <p>Strategy B: Continue to work with the various levels of government, academic institutions, and non-profits on the implementation of resiliency projects to proactively plan for the adverse impacts of climate-driven events</p> <p>Strategy C: Seek funding to implement the various infrastructure projects as appropriated in the city’s Capital Improvement Program (CIP).</p>	<p>Federal Emergency Management Agency, Environmental Protection Agency, Rural Maryland Council, United States Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Emergency Management, Maryland Department of the Environment, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of Transportation/State Highway Administration, academic institutions, and non-profits</p>
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Transportation

This section describes the way people in your community get from place to place. Strengths, weaknesses and outcomes can focus on: 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; and road conditions.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Shore Transit provides scheduled bus service between Crisfield and Salisbury with stops in Princess Anne and Westover ● Crisfield is a walkable and bikeable community; and bike, golf cart, and canoe/kayak rentals are readily available ● Crisfield has an ADA accessible floating canoe/kayak launch ● The boat ferry system provides passenger service, as well as the transport of goods, to both Tangier and Smith Islands ● A new Rails to Trails, Terrapin Run Trail, connecting Crisfield to Marion has been completed and is a 4.7 mile paved walking, hiking, and biking trail ● Golf cart traffic has been approved and is permitted within the city limits ● The Crisfield City Dock provides a downtown waterfront location venue for community events and provides temporary docking facilities for cruise lines, ferry boats, and private boaters ● City streets are safe with reduced speed limits, no traffic issues, and no need for traffic lights within the city ● Somers Cove Marina provides 515 boat slips, a transient floating pier, extended fuel dock, and launching ramps 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Many roads which are used to access public facilities (schools, city hall, etc.) are only three feet in elevation above sea level and prone to flooding ● The Crisfield City Dock needs structural improvements to accommodate full capacity for community events and to be code compliant and structurally sound ● Off-street parking and public parking lots are an issue, particularly overnight parking for tourists taking the ferry to Smith Island or Tangier Island ● City roads in need of repair and many roadways have significant drainage issues ● Sidewalks in need of repair, fill gaps, and lack of ADA compliance ● Limited taxi service and no transport companies (i.e., Uber, Lyft) ● Crisfield relies on a fixed-route transit system and has no city-wide transit system ● Lack of fast charging stations for electric vehicles ● Lack of bike lanes

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

- Located within 30 minutes of the Salisbury-Ocean City: Wicomico Regional Airport and within three hours of major metropolitan areas (Baltimore, Washington DC, Philadelphia, Norfolk)
- The Crisfield Airport is a city/county airport with private plane activity and plans for expansion
- MD Route 413 SHA streetscape project with roadway improvements to include paving, sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, and drainage improvements
- Installation of five new heritage-tourism themed bike racks
- Included in Beach to Bay Heritage Area
- Somerset County Trail Mix Program promotes hiking, biking, and water trails throughout the county with specific trails designated in and around Crisfield
- Included in the Chesapeake Country All-American Road as part of the National Scenic Byways Program
- Medical assistance is uniquely provided via water, air and roadways and Tidal Health (formerly McCready) is committed to assisting local citizens with medical transportation needs

- Lack of community crosswalks
- Need improved system for pay to park for public parking spaces

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Address the lack of off-street and overnight parking and parking payment system issues</p> <p>Progress Measures: Increased opportunities for off-street and extended stay parking, number of new spaces created, and implementation of a more effective pay to park system</p>	<p>Strategy A: Increase signage to help people find existing off-street and extended stay City-owned parking</p> <p>Strategy B: Develop a list of available properties for new off-street and extended stay parking and seek grant funding for acquisition with a focus on available land not subject to periodic changes in water levels and the potential effects of climate change</p> <p>Strategy C: Seek funding for the design and construction of an attractive off-street parking that employs landscaping and innovative stormwater BMP's to add to the attractiveness</p> <p>Strategy D: Explore the feasibility of establishing a parking facility outside of the municipal boundary and utilizing various modes of seasonal transportation (i.e., trolley car, art bus) to transport visitors to businesses, events, and facilities within the city.</p> <p>Strategy E: Work with vendors to implement a user-friendly pay to park system and consider a “free parking program” for a designated time period (i.e., first hour free)</p>	<p>Crisfield Mayor and City Council, Crisfield Chamber of Commerce, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, local business owners, private property owners, and private vendors</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Create a well-drained, well-maintained walkable, bikeable street system</p> <p>Progress Measures: Reduced number of road inundation issues, linear feet of street resurfaced, linear feet of storm drain pipe installed, number of catch basins installed, linear feet of curb and gutter installed, linear feet of new/repared sidewalk, number of new crosswalks, and linear feet of new bike lanes</p>	<p>Strategy A: Include a street maintenance and repair schedule in the Crisfield CIP to include paving, storm drains, curb and gutter</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with federal and state agencies and the county to address flooding on roads in Crisfield</p> <p>Strategy C: Explore the option of elevating roadways at critical locations</p> <p>Strategy D: Install additional bike lanes, crosswalks, and sidewalks</p>	<p>Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration, Somerset County, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, and the Federal</p>

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

	<p>Strategy E: Use Highway User Revenues and/or secure grant funding for street repairs, bike lanes, and sidewalks</p>	<p>Emergency Management Agency</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Provide community accessibility for residents and visitors alike</p> <p>Progress Measures: Increased and/or varied transit routes, new modes of public transportation, and linear feet of boardwalk</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with Shore Transit to establish routes that better accommodate the needs of Crisfield residents</p> <p>Strategy B: Explore the feasibility of creating a water taxi system</p> <p>Strategy C: Work with private property owners and state agencies to explore the feasibility of establishing a boardwalk along the waterfront</p> <p>Strategy D: Explore the feasibility of establishing various modes of seasonal transportation options for tourists (i.e., trolley car, art bus)</p> <p>Strategy E: Continue to work with the Maryland Department of Transportation and Somerset County to explore the feasibility of a passenger ferry service between Crisfield and multiple Chesapeake Bay crossings</p>	<p>Maryland Department of Transportation, State Highway Administration, Shore Transit, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Department of the Environment, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Crisfield Arts & Entertainment District, Crisfield Chamber of Commerce, Somerset County Commissioners, Regional Ferry Coalition, and private property owners</p>
<p>Outcome 4: Structural improvements to the Crisfield City Dock</p> <p>Progress Measures: Number of improvements made to the City Dock, restrictions lifted due to code compliance, number of events held at the City Dock, number of cruise ships moored at the dock, and number of recreational boats moored at the dock</p>	<p>Strategy A: Seek grant funding to structurally improve the Crisfield City Dock to make it more resilient to salt spray, periodic changes in water levels, and the potential effects of climate change</p>	<p>Federal Emergency Management Agency, Maryland Department of Emergency Management, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Department of the Environment, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and federal and state legislators</p>

Housing

This section focuses on the homes in which people in your community live and efforts which make it easier for them to find and stay in a place to call home. Strengths, weaknesses, and outcomes might focus on the following: affordability; increasing homeownership; increasing rental housing; diversifying the kinds of housing available; improving housing conditions (interior or exterior); housing programs; aging in place; preventing foreclosures; and reducing residential vacancies.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Mix of housing structure types (Attached and detached single family; multi-family housing; apartments; condos) ● There is a lot of potential for infill development to make for a more dense housing market ● Housing (owner and rental) is more affordable when compared to the rest of the Eastern Shore and the State of Maryland ● Low vacancy rate for habitable dwellings ● Housing has a unique architectural/historic style ● The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) are actively rehabilitating and elevating housing ● Access to housing rehabilitation programs through Somerset County ● Low property taxes ● Lower property values and lower median home values compared to the rest of the Eastern Shore and the State of Maryland 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crisfield has a high percentage of vacant structures (25 percent); mostly due to housing blight ● Owner-occupied housing within Crisfield is lower at 42 percent compared to renter occupied at 58 percent. ● Approximately 47 percent of all housing structures were built prior to 1970 with 25 percent of that total constructed prior to 1939 ● Poor condition of housing stock ● Housing shortage, particularly a lack of senior, affordable, workforce, and rental housing. ● Limited opportunities for residents to transition from public housing to homeownership ● The elevation of housing stock is an issue due to chronic flooding.

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Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Create more connectivity between the downtown/commercial business districts and the surrounding residential neighborhoods</p> <p>Progress Measures: Number of measures implemented (i.e., job training opportunities, improved roadways, sidewalks and transportation options) so residents can readily and safely access work, community, and businesses in the downtown area; increase in foot traffic in downtown/commercial business districts; increased services and sales activity; and increase in new businesses and job training opportunities</p>	<p>Strategy A: Create workforce programming and training opportunities where area residents can train with state agencies, non-profits, and local businesses, particularly in the downtown/commercial business districts</p> <p>Strategy B: Provide improved connections to healthcare, food, retail, recreation, community services, and transportation, particularly in the downtown/commercial business districts</p> <p>Strategy C: Promote the creation of additional retail and service space (i.e., new storefronts, small business incubator) in the downtown/commercial districts within walking/biking distance for residents within the surrounding neighborhoods</p>	<p>Crisfield Mayor and City Council and City staff, Public Housing Authority, Somerset County Economic Development Commission, Crisfield Chamber of Commerce, Crisfield Arts and Entertainment District, Maryland Workforce Alliance, Maryland Department of Commerce, Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Small Business Development Center, local business owners, non-profits, private developers, and residents</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Increase homeownership in Crisfield and the immediate surrounding area</p> <p>Progress Measures: Increase in owner-occupied home sales, number of blighted homes rehabilitated for home ownership, and number of new programs created to promote homeownership opportunities</p>	<p>Strategy A: Explore opportunities/resources and hold workshops to introduce and educate residents on federal, state, and non-profit programs that promote and enable homeownership</p> <p>Strategy B: Create a residential façade program to combat blight and improve the exterior appearances of homes within Crisfield</p> <p>Strategy C: Partner with a housing counseling non-profit that could provide homeownership and/or foreclosure counseling to current and potential residents</p>	<p>Crisfield Mayor and City Council and City staff, Public Housing Authority, Somerset County, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning,</p>

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

	<p>Strategy D: Partner with a housing developer and/or a non-profit to acquire and rehabilitate vacant homes to provide affordable housing</p> <p>Strategy E: Work with landlords and tenants on a hybrid “rent to own” program in which incentives are provided to the landlord in exchange for providing tenants an opportunity to eventually purchase their rental property</p>	<p>Salisbury Neighborhood Housing Service, Shore Up, Inc., private developers, non-profits, realtors, landlords, and residents</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Increase housing inventory and improve existing housing stock</p> <p>Progress measures: Number of new owner-occupied and rental housing units, number of rehabilitated houses, and number of new residential and mixed-use developments</p>	<p>Strategy A: Implement and enforce the City’s Rental License Program, to include the Public Housing Authority, to improve the appearance and livability of all rental housing units in the City</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with non-profits and private developers to create new residential and mixed-use developments that offer a variety of housing types, to include affordable, workforce, and senior housing opportunities</p> <p>Strategy C: Review the City’s Zoning Ordinance to verify the regulations allow for infill, redevelopment, and revitalization opportunities and, if not, entertain necessary zoning text amendments</p>	<p>Crisfield Mayor and City Council and City staff, Public Housing Authority, U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Somerset County Board of Education Career and Technical Education Program, Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, landlords, non-profits, private developers, realtors, and residents</p>

Community Health and Quality of Life

This section is concerned with public health, community culture, and the day-to-day life of community residents. This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): improvement of public health including improving community design to promote healthy behaviors such as walking and strengthening community support and connectedness through health and wellness programs and facilities that create inclusive communities. These projects may include built environment, indoor spaces, outdoor environments such as increasing community gardens and access to services including educational facilities and programs; health and wellness facilities and programs that serve multi-generations; senior facilities and programs; youth facilities and programs; facilities and programs for the disabled; civic amenities, access to quality food options; collaborations with faith-based organizations; arts and entertainment education; and homelessness prevention, services, and facilities. Projects should include community engagement that includes participation in the selection of strategies and outcomes, progress reports, and evaluation.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Historical waterman (maritime/seafood) community with water-oriented resources and activities (i.e., waterfowl, birding, eco-tourism, hunting, fishing, and crabbing) ● Presence of a local high school and elementary school in the city, middle school and new Somerset County Technical High School located in nearby Westover, and no schools are operating over capacity ● University of Maryland Eastern Shore (HBCU), Salisbury University, and Wor-Wic Community College all within 45 miles ● State of the art Crisfield Library ● Crisfield has a Head Start and It Takes A Village afterschool programs for students ● Somerset County Trail Mix Program promotes hiking, biking, and water trails throughout the county with specific trails designated in and around Crisfield, providing additional recreational opportunities and promoting eco-tourism 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Crisfield residents have a considerably lower median household income than nearby municipalities (\$36,146) ● Public water access is limited to several boat ramps and the public beach the city leases from the local American Legion ● Between 1960 and 2020, the city’s population decreased by 1,004 residents, or by 28 percent ● Opioid addiction, and substance abuse in general, is a concerning issue in Crisfield ● Volunteer Fire Department facility is in need of repair ● Lack of community health care specialists and specialized services such as dialysis ● Lack of EMS staff ● No public swimming pool

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● The Terrapin Run Trail is a 4.7 mile paved walking, hiking, and biking trail that runs from Crisfield to Marion● Numerous bike trails (Backroad Bikeride, 413 Rail to Trail, and Crustacean Causeway)● Janes Island State Park and associated amenities to include rental cabins, campground, conference center, trails, picnic areas, pavilions, and a boat ramp● Included in Beach to Bay Heritage Area● Included in the Chesapeake Country All-American Road as part of the National Scenic Byways Program● Water trails for canoeing and kayaking and floating ADA compliant canoe/kayak launch (Janes Island, Little Annemessex small boat harbor, Jenkins Creek, Whitty's Ditch, and Brick Kiln)● Wellington Beach (public) and several active and passive park opportunities● Somers Cove Marina and several public boat ramps● City Dock (Depot) public space for activities and boat docking● Farmer's Market and Community Gardens● Crisfield has a number of annual festivals and events (J. Millard Tawes Crab & Clam Bake, National Hard Crab Derby, Crisfield Bluegrass & Sunset Festival, Stars & Stripes Festival, Boat Docking) that draw thousands of people | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Lack of organized community activities for youth and adults on a year-round basis● Lack of high-speed internet access● Lack of restaurants, bars, nightclubs with consistent year-round hours● Chronic nuisance flooding● Lack of indoor recreational space / meeting rooms |
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- The Crisfield Heritage Foundation manages the J. Millard Tawes Historical Museum, Crisfield Customs House (currently under renovation) and Ward Brothers Workshop, which are unique cultural attractions
- Designated Arts & Entertainment District (July 1, 2018) with three galleries
- Tourism opportunities / Gateway to boat ferry system for Smith Island, Maryland and Tangier Island, Virginia
- National Historic District
- Tidal Health McCready Pavilion health facility, Alice B. Tawes Nursing Home and Assisted Living facility, and two local pharmacies
- Low cost of living and low property taxes
- City has own Police Department and a low violent crime rate
- City has Volunteer Fire Department and EMS unit
- The National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD) are actively involved in rehabilitating and elevating housing
- Fresh foods are available via local Food Lion, non-profit food truck, church food pantries, and roadside stands

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Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Promote continued and increased opportunities for community-based health care</p> <p>Progress Measures: Continued operation of Tidal Health, new medical services offered, number of new doctors/dentists, number of new specialized services, reduction in mortality rates, and number of individuals able to “age in place”</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue to partner and work with Tidal Health to keep the current medical facility open, to retain the ER, and to offer local services such as kidney dialysis</p> <p>Strategy B: Continue to support the Tawes Nursing Home and Assisted Living Facility so area residents can “age in place”</p> <p>Strategy C: Work with Tidal Health, the Somerset County Health Department, and medical practitioners to provide specialty and clinical services for Crisfield residents</p>	<p>Tidal Health, Somerset County Health Department, Maryland Department of Health, Crisfield Mayor & City Council, Somerset County Commissioners, and medical/ dental practitioners</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Create additional year-round public spaces and activities; and partner and promote new businesses</p> <p>Progress Measures: New commercial and recreational facilities, new activities and programs, increased number of active participants in community activities, and new businesses and commercial services</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue to work with state partners on the Armory rehabilitation to serve as a multi-purpose venue to fill a current void of available indoor space for a variety of youth and adult activities</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with Somerset County Recreation and Parks to create opportunities for youth activities and events in Crisfield</p> <p>Strategy C: Hire a Business Development Director to focus on the attraction, retention, expansion, and establishment of new businesses (i.e., restaurants, clubs, recreational activities)</p>	<p>Mayor and City Council and city staff, Somerset County Recreation and Parks, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, Somerset County Economic Development Commission, Crisfield Chamber of Commerce, Crisfield Arts & Entertainment District, Somerset County Arts Council, and non-profits</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Improve municipal facilities and infrastructure</p> <p>Progress Measures: Reduction in nuisance flooding, increase in community meeting</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue to seek grant funding to implement the strategies and recommendations outlined in the 2023 City of Crisfield Drainage Assessment Report and the recommendations of the FEMA Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities (BRIC) Direct Technical Assistance team</p>	<p>Mayor and City Council and city staff, Somerset County Commissioners, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Maryland</p>

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<p>space and indoor activity centers, increase in number of residents with access to high-speed internet, and number of improvements to existing municipal buildings and facilities</p>	<p>Strategy B: Collaborate with federal, state, academic, and non-profit subject matter experts on non-traditional flooding and stormwater management alternatives and best management practices and seek grant funding sources for implementation</p> <p>Strategy C: Continue to seek grant funding to rehabilitate the Armory and to improve existing, and establish new, recreational facilities</p> <p>Strategy D: Continue to partner with, and seek grants from, federal and state agencies to improve municipal and community service buildings and facilities, and to make them more resilient to tides and climate-driven events</p> <p>Strategy E: Work with federal and state partners to seek grants for high-speed internet access for all residents</p>	<p>Department of the Environment, Maryland Department of Emergency Management, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, Environmental Protection Agency, Rural Maryland Council, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Federal Emergency Management Agency, academic institutions, and non-profits</p>
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Local Planning and Staffing Capacity

This section is concerned with a local government’s ability to plan for the community’s future and to meet the current needs of residents. Strengths, weaknesses, and outcomes might focus on the following: updating zoning ordinances or land use; updating municipal/local policies, taxes, fees, etc.; increasing local government staff capacity; and updating planning documents like sector plans or comprehensive plans.

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Many of the buildings that formerly housed seafood processing plants have become vacant, and several sites have been redeveloped into multi-family residential projects (condos) ● Somers Cove Marina is the prominent feature of the waterfront, occupying 50 acres of land ● Development is isolated to the existing city center, maintaining the natural resources and undeveloped land uses of the surrounding region. Development work outside of the city center has been low-density, accessible by a network of rural roads or in agricultural or open space use ● City-owned buildings are available to be rehabbed for public use such as the Armory and several West Main Street properties ● Newly adopted zoning ordinance and zoning map in 2018 ● Several grant-funded plans and studies have been completed for Crisfield outlining needed infrastructure improvements ● The city has lower tax rates and lower property values compared to median household income ● Crisfield has a police department, volunteer fire department, and EMS unit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Water, sewer, and stormwater infrastructure is old and dilapidated ● There is a lack of public meeting space with ADA accessibility ● Comprehensive Plan in need of update ● Staff retention is an ongoing issue; high turnover rate ● Staff pay is low compared to other municipalities ● Lack of staff and each employee performs several functions / wear several hats ● The city has lower tax rates and lower property values compared to median household income ● Several grant-funded plans and studies have been completed for Crisfield outlining needed infrastructure improvements that have not been implemented due to financial constraints ● Lack of tax revenue

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● DHCD Town Manager/Circuit Rider Grant Program assistance ● Increase in staff to apply for, manage, and implement grant funded projects ● Crisfield Arts & Entertainment District ● Technical support from the FEMA, EPA, MDP and The Nature Conservancy ● Crisfield Airport / jointly with Somerset County 		
Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Provide adequate municipal services to residents, visitors, businesses, and developers</p> <p>Progress Measures: Retention rates, number of senior staff, number of training programs and opportunities, number of employee certifications, and number of increased employee incentives</p>	<p>Strategy A: Review all current and anticipated staff positions and develop detailed job descriptions and a competitive salary structure</p> <p>Strategy B: Investigate better options for employee fringe benefits to include affordable medical, dental, vision, and a contributory pension program</p> <p>Strategy C: Work to develop an incentive program to help retain employees, reduce turnover, and provide opportunities for tenured employees due to their institutional knowledge</p> <p>Strategy D: Research available workshops and training opportunities for staff</p>	<p>City of Crisfield, Somerset County, Somerset County Economic Development Commission, and private vendors</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Have an updated long-range vision for the City of Crisfield</p> <p>Progress Measures: Secured funding for comprehensive plan update, community input, and updated/adopted plan</p>	<p><u>Strategy A</u>: Update the Crisfield Comprehensive Plan</p> <p>Action Item #1: Seek grant funding for a comprehensive plan update</p> <p>Action Item #2: Once funding has been secured, prepare an RFP, and hire a consultant to update the plan</p>	<p>City of Crisfield, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, and private consultant</p>

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	<p>Action Item #3: Conduct several public input meetings to encourage community investment in, and ownership of, the plan</p>	
<p>Outcome 3: Have updated ordinances to implement the Comprehensive Plan's long-range vision for the City of Crisfield</p> <p>Progress Measures: Secured funding for ordinance updates, community input, and updated/adopted ordinances</p>	<p><u>Strategy A</u>: Update the Crisfield Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map following the Comprehensive Plan update.</p> <p>Action Item #1: Seek grant funding for Zoning Ordinance update and do necessary minor text amendments in the interim</p> <p>Action Item #2: Once funding has been secured, prepare an RFP, and hire a consultant to update the ordinance</p> <p>Action Item #3: Conduct several public input meetings to encourage citizen participation in the development of the ordinance</p> <p><u>Strategy B</u>: Update the city's Critical Area Ordinance and any other outdated regulatory ordinances such as subdivision, floodplain, stormwater management, etc...</p>	<p>Crisfield Mayor and City Council, Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development</p>