



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 - 7.24



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, and 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

1) For each element, identify the essential strengths and weaknesses of your community.

Example:

Strength - Good sidewalk connectivity

Weakness - Insufficient bicycle infrastructure

2) Based on those strengths and weaknesses, formulate specific outcomes that address the most pressing issues or greatest opportunities. Identify a way to measure the success of that outcome.

Example:

Outcome - Expand fiber optic broadband Internet connections in Town

Progress Measure - Linear measurement of broadband fiber laid

3) After defining the outcomes, list detailed strategies and discrete actions that will serve as the means to achieve those goals.

Example:

Strategy A - Increase number of Town sponsored events

Action A - Organize a workgroup tasked with planning weekend events

Action B - 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:

Partner 1 - DHCD (Community Legacy program)

Partner 2 - Small Business Administration (Services and financial assistance)

CHECKLIST AND TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPLICANT: County Commissioners of Washington County

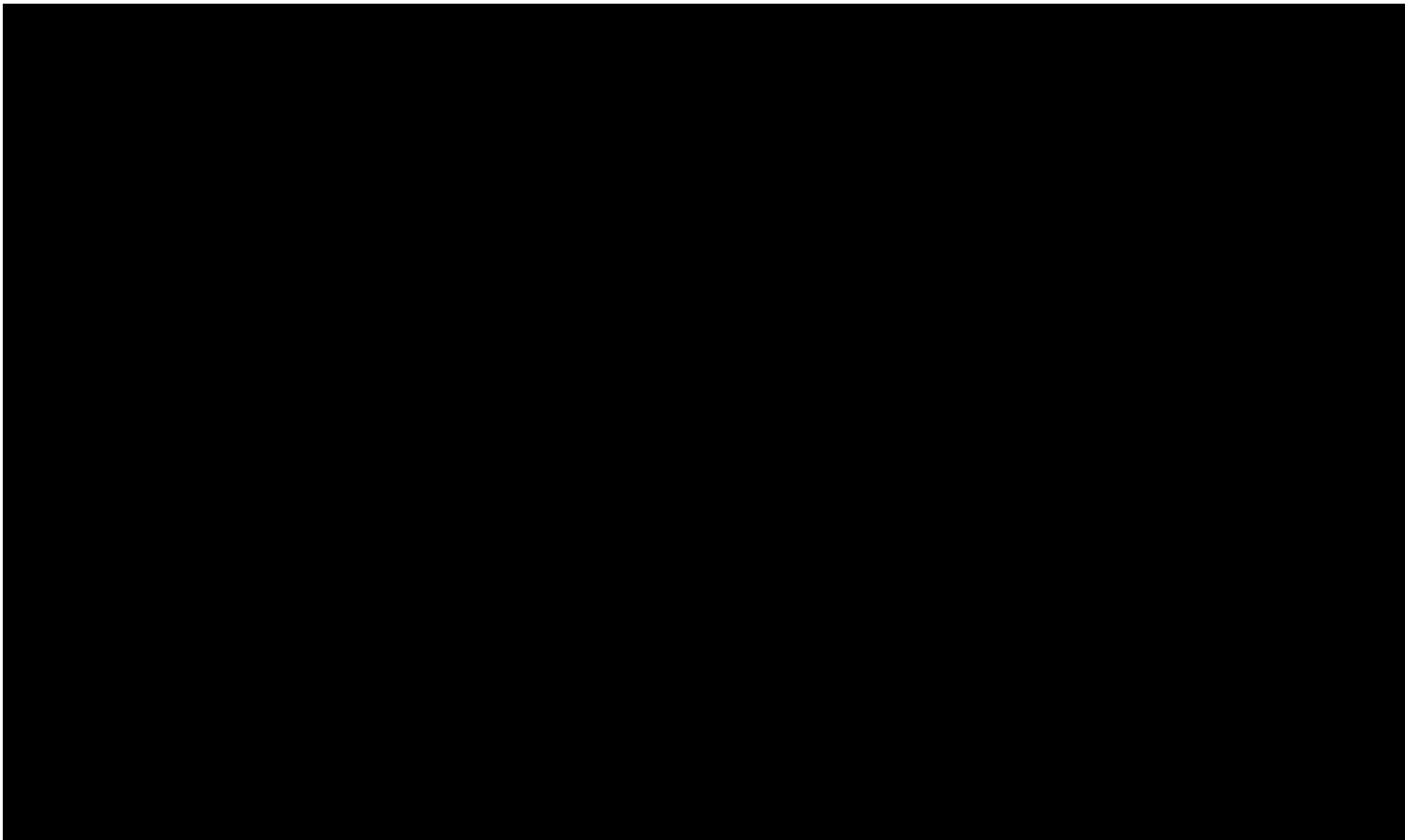
NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: Fort Ritchie - Cascade

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:		Fort Ritchie - Cascade
Name of Applicant:		County Commissioners of Washington County
Applicant's Federal Identification Number:		52-6001037
Applicant's Street Address:		100 West Washington Street, Room 1101
City: Hagerstown	County: Washington	State: MD Zip Code: 21740
Phone Number: 240-313-2200	Fax Number: 240-313-2201	Web Address: www.washco-md.net



(1) Sustainable Community Boundary and Description

- (1) Are you requesting any changes to your Sustainable Community boundary? Describe why or why not?** No, because the current Sustainable Community boundary mirrors the underlying Priority Funding Area boundary.
- (2) If yes, Include the following in as an attachment:**

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section A

- a. PDF or JPEG of modified Sustainable Communities boundary map,
- b. GIS shapefiles of modified Sustainable Community boundary (mapped to the parcel boundary),

(3) **Approximate number of acres of entire SC Area:** 1,210 Acres

(4) **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): Camp Ritchie Historic District (Maryland Historical Trust Inventory of Historic Properties), Foreign Trade Zone # 255.

(5) **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?**

The demographic trends of the Fort Ritchie - Cascade Sustainable Communities area have remained consistent over the past five years. The Median Age of 37.8 remained unchanged; Racial composition became slightly more varied; Household Size increased by 0.33 persons; and Ancestry is still primary German and Irish. Notable changes include an increase of \$20,152 in the Median Household Income; a 6.5% decrease in residents with a high school diploma, a 1.8% drop in those with bachelor's degrees and a 3.6% increase in those with graduate or professional degrees. The number of families below the poverty level decreased by 0.4% but unemployment increased by 0.2%.

Age (median): 37.8

Race: 96.5% White; 3.0% Black/African American; 0.5% Asian

Household Size (average): 2.73

Household Income (median): \$74,479

Educational Attainment: 45.2% high school graduate; 10.8% bachelor's degree; 5.6% graduate or professional degree

Housing Units: 568 Total Units; 419 Occupied/149 Vacant

Families Below Poverty Line: 7.2%

Unemployment: 3.6%

Ancestry: 29.5% German; 12.1% Irish

NOTE: The above characteristics were reported for the zip code 21719, as this area better corresponds to the boundaries of the existing Sustainable Community

SOURCES: 2020 US Census; American Community Survey 2018-2022

(2) Organizational Structure, Experience and Public Input:

(1) 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?

Since the last Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities renewal, the remaining 475 +/- acre Fort Ritchie property was sold to Cascade Properties, LLC on April 7, 2021. Mr. John Krumpotich, owner of Cascade Properties, LLC, has been working closely with Washington County Government on the redevelopment of the property and has been added to the Sustainable Communities Workgroup. Within County government, the composition of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup has remained consistent. The membership of the Workgroup includes:

Director, Department of Planning & Zoning
Deputy Director, Department of Planning & Zoning
Director, Office of Grant Management
Director, Department of Business and Economic Development
Director, Division of Public Works
Director, Division of Environmental Management
John Krumpotich, Owner, Cascade Properties, LLC

Jennifer Kinzer, Deputy Director of the Department of Planning & Zoning for Washington County will be the lead contact moving forward with the renewal of the Sustainable Communities Program Designation and will work closely with staff and other interested parties such as the owners of Cascade Town Centre and the Cascade Community at large to manage the implementation of the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities Action Plan.

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

The most dominant strength of the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities Plan has been the transfer of the 475 +/- acre former Fort Ritchie property to Cascade Properties, LLC in 2021. Other strengths of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup continue to be the experience that Washington County Government staff has in assisting with local revitalization projects and working with Cascade Properties, LLC to market the property for redevelopment. Washington County staff has considerable experience with:

- Writing and obtaining Maryland DCHD grant funding for revitalization projects within the boundaries of the former Fort Ritchie property.
- Marketing areas prime for business and industrial development.
- Writing and adopting policy changes and developing incentives to promote growth and development in designated areas.

- Acquiring Department of Housing & Community Development Grants, Community Development Block Grants and Appalachian Regional Commission funding.
- Operation, inspection, and maintenance of County owned infrastructure.

Challenges persist in educating all property owners within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Community area of the benefits available to them through DHCD and other State and local programs.

(3) 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?

The current Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities Action Plan is available for review on the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Developments website. This update to the Action Plan has been distributed to the various Washington County Departments that have a vested interest in seeing that the Action Plan is written to promote future growth and development in the defined Sustainable Communities area. Cascade Properties, LLC was also given the opportunity to provide input to this updated Action Plan. Cascade Properties, LLC plans to continue their revitalization efforts on the former Fort Ritchie property and has a five-year redevelopment plan in place to help guide this process.

Washington County intends to continue to work with JG Business Link International and the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Community to the greatest extent possible in order to assist with the growth and redevelopment of the Sustainable Communities area. The Sustainable Communities Action Plan for Fort Ritchie – Cascade is based off of the goals and objectives listed in the 2002 Comprehensive Plan for Washington County, Maryland. This Sustainable Communities Action Plan update is also included in the goals and objectives of the Draft 2040 Comprehensive Plan for Washington County that is currently going through a revision process following a 90-day public comment period.

(4) 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.

Washington County may seek technical assistance from State agencies to help implement the Sustainable Communities Plan. Multiple financing programs from the State's revitalization toolbox, such as the Strategic Demolition Fund and the Community Legacy Program, have already been utilized in order to promote growth, development and revitalization in this area. Washington County will continue to promote the availability of State resources to all property owners in the Fort Ritchie - Cascade Sustainable Communities area. Examples of programs that Washington County will continue to promote include:

- Community Legacy Program: to attract new businesses, encourage homeownership and promote new mixed-use developments.

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section A

- Strategic Demolition Fund: to focus on the reuse of vacant and underutilized sites.
- Maryland Mortgage Program: to promote home ownership among younger residents who also have a large amount of student loan debt.
- National Capital Strategic Economic Development Fund: to improve the economic viability of “grey field development” such as Fort Ritchie where the majority of the buildings are older, and their functionality may be diminished.
- Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund: to provide upgrades to Water and Wastewater treatment facilities, lines, and other infrastructure.
- Low Income Housing Tax Credit: to support potential development of multi-family affordable housing options in the area.
- Job Creation Tax Credit: to serve as an incentive for employers to establish new businesses in the area.

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: Land Transfer to Cascade Properties, LLC

Outcome: On April 7, 2021, Washington County Government transferred the remaining 475 +/- acres of the former Fort Ritchie Army Base to Cascade Properties, LLC for the redevelopment of the property. Cascade Properties, LLC has developed a 5-year Action Plan of its own to help guide the growth and development of the property.

Projects: The first project after the conveyance was to renovate and lease 58 residential units at the rear of the property. This community is known as Whistling Ridge. A second and ongoing project continues to be the rehabilitation of the 37 historic stone 'finger buildings' for non-residential uses including shops, boutique stores and Airbnb's. The Camp Ritchie Museum and newly established Nisei Art Gallery/Artisan Village (Building 305) were renovated and opened to the public in 2023. These uses are expected to draw in guests daily and aid in the historic preservation and educational programming of Fort Ritchie. The Greenhouse Café also opened its doors for business in 2023. As of December 2023, Fort Ritchie is home to 15 different businesses and almost all buildings on the property have received new roofs, halting any further degradation to the existing structures. Renovations to Building 102 are planned to commence in the Spring of 2024 and will be home to the future Top-Secret Taproom.

Partners: Cascade Properties, LLC, DHCD and Washington County Government.

Impact: New traditions on the property include an annual Christmas Tree Lighting event, a Fourth of July fireworks event and a series of Farmers Markets; all of which have attracted thousands of people back to the Fort. Through adaptive reuse of many buildings, the Fort is coming back to life after 25 years of abandonment.

Accomplishment 2: Meritus Health opens Primary Care Facility

Outcome: In a recent study, the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area was identified as an under-served region of Washington County for basic medical care. The opening of this Primary Care Facility will provide easier access to coordinated health services for residents of the area.

Projects: Renovation of the building located at 14303 Lake Royer Drive were fundamental to the opening of this facility which is now providing services to the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.

Partners: Meritus Health, Cascade Properties, LLC and Washington County Government.

Impact: Residents will now have easier access to coordinated health care through the Meritus Health umbrella of services.

Accomplishment 3: Sewer Collector Replacement/Septic Tank Pumping and Replacement

Outcome: In 2021, a major sewer collector line was replaced, and multiple residential septic tanks were either pumped out or replaced between 2019 and 2021.

Projects: In 2021, a major Washington County owned sewer collector line was replaced in the right-of-way of Lake Royer Drive. This line serves as the collector for the majority of the former Fort Ritchie property and flows directly to the Winebrenner Wastewater Treatment Facility. In addition, because the Pen Mar/Highfield/Cascade sewer collection system was constructed as a hybrid collection system, many properties have on-lot septic systems where a holding tank collects solids and the effluent from these tanks then flows into a second tank that discharges into a smaller gravity-flow system. Due to the nature of the system, it is the County's responsibility to pump out the primary collection tanks on a 10-year cycle. This occurred during the 2019-2021 timeframe.

Partners: Washington County Division of Environmental Management

Impact: The new sewer line collector and the clean-out of existing septic tanks should reduce any groundwater contamination from leaking or poorly maintained infrastructure in the area.

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: Since the last update to the Fort Ritchie - Cascade Sustainable Communities Action Plan, stimulating economic development and reuse of existing buildings and infrastructure, specifically on the 63 +/- acre property owned by JGBLI, has proven to be a challenge.

Narrative: Over the past 5 years, several land development subdivisions and site plans have been submitted for review on the JGBLI property, but to-date, only one site plan for a restaurant/café has received approval and this business has yet to open. The JGBLI property is still sitting dormant, waiting on residential or non-residential activity to occur.

Outcome: From a transportation perspective, little has been done over the past five years to promote diversifying transportation options in the area.

Narrative: In the previous Fort Ritchie - Cascade Sustainable Communities Action Plan, developing both bicycle friendly options and exploring railroad accessibility to the Fort Ritchie – Cascade area were mentioned. While redevelopment is occurring on the Cascade Properties LLC site and pedestrian accessibility has been improved with the existing sidewalk infrastructure, bicycle friendly options have largely fallen by the wayside. Discussions of expanding railroad access in the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area have not occurred either. This is most likely due to a lack of requests from users seeking this type of service and the large cost associated with coordinating such an effort.

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"> Washington County received funding to rehabilitate Building 305 on the former Fort Ritchie property for the purpose of preserving a historic Japanese Nisei Mural and turning the historic structure into an Art Gallery/Artisan Village. Washington County received funding to rehabilitate Building 102 on the former Fort Ritchie property for the purpose of converting a 13,000 square foot space from a former theatre and Ritchie Boys Training Facility into the Fort Ritchie Taproom. 	DHCD	\$275,000		FY 2023
	DHCD	\$200,000		FY 2024
Strategic Demolition Fund (SDF): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Washington County received funding to upgrade sewer utility lines along Barrick Avenue for non-residential uses in order to promote workforce opportunities. 	DHCD	\$200,000		FY 2022
Community Safety & Enhancement Program: N/A	MDOT			
Maryland Bikeways Program: N/A	MDOT			

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Sidewalk Retrofit Program: N/A	MDOT			
Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund: Washington County received a Water Quality Revolving Loan in the amount of \$2.5 million to make upgrades to the Winebrenner Wastewater Treatment Facility in the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.	MDE	\$2.5 Million		2016
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> *Please add more rows if necessary				
Bay Restoration Fund Grant: Washington County received a grant in the amount of \$2.7M towards the improvements at the Winebrenner Wastewater Treatment Facility in the Fort Ritchie - Cascade Sustainable Communities area.	Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)	\$2.7 Million		2016
Chesapeake Bay Water Quality Project Biological Nutrient Removal Grant: Washington County received a grant in the amount of \$2.6M towards the improvements at the Winebrenner Wastewater Treatment Facility in the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.	Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE)	\$2.6 Million		2016

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section C

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

SECTION C - SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACTION PLAN

Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities Area

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.

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rural community character with plentiful open space and forest cover. Adjacent to South Mountain State Park and the Appalachian Trail, which provides unique panoramic views. Upgraded wastewater treatment facility and sewer lines to improve the health of the local waterways, especially the Antietam Creek Watershed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connections to existing and aging infrastructure on portions of the former Fort Ritchie property may still be problematic. Development requirements relating to stormwater management, sidewalks, road adequacy and water and sewer line conditions may cause a financial burden when required to meet current County and State regulations.

<u>Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures</u>	<u>Strategies and Action Items</u>	<u>Implementation Partners</u>
<p>Outcome 1: Ensure that future development in the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area coincides with the rural character of the community and that land use compatibility, especially among adjacent properties, it prioritized.</p> <p>Progress Measures: The ratio of approved Site Plans, Subdivisions and Ordinance Modification requests when compared to those submitted for consideration ought to clearly illustrate positive progress with regards to new development coming into the community.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with local property owners and developers to maximize potential development within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area while minimizing impacts to the natural environment.</p> <p>Strategy B: Encourage the establishment of service-based businesses that will further enhance to strong rural character of the community while promoting a range of housing options in order to rekindle the atmosphere of a live, work and play community.</p> <p>Strategy C: Actively promote DHCD Financing Programs as an incentive for business and property owners in the Fort Ritchie - Cascade Sustainable Communities area. Homeowners and Businesses can take advantage of many State of Maryland offered tax incentives and grant options in order to realize the full potential of their development or revitalization plans.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, community leaders, property owners and developers need to unite to achieve the desired outcomes listed in this plan. The goals of forest retention and the protection of lands for natural and recreational purposes should be ranked equally with land use development and growth in the community.</p>

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<p>Outcome 2: Continue to protect and promote the natural environment and quality of natural resources in the vicinity through watershed and stormwater protection measures, energy conservation and recycling efforts and the promotion of minimally invasive land uses that seek to prevent or greatly reduce environmental hazards.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Progress can be measured by documenting approved stormwater management concept plans and site plans along with analyzing land use change over time and recycling ratios.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Promote efforts to educate property owners and the public on the value of resource conservation and what it means to be good stewards of the land. Promote community recycling and energy conservation measures to reduce the carbon footprint on the environment, which will naturally aid in reducing environmental hazards.</p> <p>Strategy B: Review and approve land use development plans with the goal of minimizing disturbance in order to achieve the desired growth and development within the community.</p> <p>Strategy C: Explore methodology and funding options to document land use changes over time in the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area in order to more easily facilitate studies on the success of natural resource protection.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, Maryland Department of the Environment and private developers will all need to work in unison to continue making progress towards this goal.</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Set a goal for increasing forest cover and park and recreational acreages as development occurs.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Notable progress was made since the last update to the plan (29.9 acres were added to this category for a current total of 50.03). Continued progress would be to add an additional 20 acres over the next five years.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Require forest easement retention and afforestation as this area continues to develop.</p> <p>Strategy B: Encourage the conservation and dedication of land for parks and recreational facilities to public entities for permanent protection.</p> <p>Strategy C: Proceed with the development of the Pen Mar – Fort Ritchie – Cascade Trail in order to link the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area with the Appalachian Trail and its users.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, community leaders, property owners and developers need to unite to achieve these goals for forest retention as well as park and recreational lands.</p>
<p>Outcome 4: Continue work to specifically improve water quality within the Antietam Creek Watershed.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Linear feet of water and sewer line replacement can be calculated along with the number of well and septic repairs/failures in order to gauge the reduction of point and non-point source pollution in the Antietam Creek Watershed. Water sampling at regular intervals can assist with showing improvement or decline in both stream and watershed health.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Protect sensitive environmental areas, such as stream buffers and steep slopes, through stabilization, conservation, and restoration activities.</p> <p>Strategy B: Continue to repair or replace deteriorating infrastructure in the Winebrenner Wastewater Treatment service area.</p> <p>Strategy C: Require and implement stormwater management upgrades as development occurs in the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, Maryland Department of the Environment, property owners and private developers will all need to work collectively to continue making progress towards this goal.</p>

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.

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cascade Properties, LLC (former Fort Ritchie owner property) has a Master Plan for the property which includes a 5-year Redevelopment Plan to rehabilitate many of the buildings on the property in order re-create a sense of place. • The Fort Ritchie – Cascade area has an abundant amount of vacant building stock available for renovation, rehabilitation and/or adaptive commercial/business reuse along with a fair number of vacant parcels that would be prime for new business start-ups or relocations. • The areas proximity to the Baltimore/Washington DC economic markets and workforce. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Costs associated with needed infrastructure repairs could be a limiting factor of the revitalization of many buildings in the Fort Ritchie - Cascade Sustainable Communities area. • While the transportation network around the Sustainable Communities area is good, its remote location in northeastern Washington County could be a limiting factor. • Lack of a local workforce due to the small population in the community could cause issues in attracting employees to the area.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Encourage the redevelopment of the Camp Ritchie Historic District to take advantage of its historic assets. Efforts being made by Cascade Properties, LLC could re-create a sense of place, especially with the establishment of the Fort Ritchie Museum, Artisan Gallery and other commercial uses.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Success can be measured by analyzing the occupied versus vacant number of buildings on the property and with the number of new Zoning Confirmation letters issued.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue to work with Cascade Properties, LLC to apply for and receive DHCD grant funding in order to facilitate the renovation, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of buildings on the property, especially in the Historic Camp Ritchie designated area.</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with the Washington County Department of Public Relations in order to promote tourism and market the community as a tourist destination.</p> <p>Strategy C: Work with the Washington County Department of Business & Economic Development to promote and market the area to prospective tenants.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, Cascade Properties, LLC and current future business owners need to collaborate to ensure the success of this redevelopment effort.</p>

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<p>Outcome 2: Foster development outside of the Camp Ritchie Historic District of the Fort Ritchie property as these are prime locations for manufacturing and light industrial uses based on the Special Economic Development zoning designation and Foreign Trade Zone incentives.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Success can be measured in terms of the number of Site Plans and Permits that are applied for and approved within the area along with the issuance of Use and Occupancy permits and Foreign Trade Zone Applications.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Cascade Properties, LLC, in coordination with the Washington County Department of Business Development and the Maryland Department of Commerce, should work to target light industrial and manufacturing businesses that could benefit from locating their production line within the Foreign Trade Zone area. The flexible Special Economic Development zoning designation should aid in promoting this location to existing industrial and commercial establishments while encouraging new opportunities for future business owners.</p> <p>Strategy B: Continue to promote the property's amenities including close proximity to I-70, I-81 and US-15, County Water and Sewer availability, and airport runway access at Hagerstown Regional Airport. Work with Cascade Properties, LLC to promote seasonal and annual events, highlight the rural atmosphere and accessibility to recreation offerings in order to attract employers/employees to the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p>	<p>Cascade Properties, LLC, Washington County Department of Business Development, and the Maryland Department of Commerce should collaborate on attracting businesses to the area in order to bolster the economy within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Provide support and resources for the continued development, growth and revitalization of the entire Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area. Efforts being made by Cascade Properties, LLC can serve as a role model that other property owners can emulate in revitalizing their community.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Success can be measured by tracking land use activity along with the number of property owners who are submitting applications to one of DHCD's many programs.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Washington County Government and the Department of Housing a Community Development should continue to advertise the availability of DHCD grant funding options in order to facilitate the renovation, rehabilitation and/or adaptive reuse of buildings in the area. This public awareness campaign should extend to offering assistance when applying for funding through the DHCD portal.</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with the Department of Business & Economic Development to promote and market the area to prospective commercial and industrial tenants. Work with local realtor associations to promote DHCD grant funding as a potential rehabilitation funding source when marketing properties to potential clients.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, Department of Housing and Community Development and all property owners should work together to optimize funding sources available to ensure the successful revitalization effort in the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p>
<p>Outcome 4: Continue to market the entire Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area as a prime location for both residential and non-residential development based on its flexible zoning designations, low crime rates, school capacity and proximity to recreational opportunities.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Success can be measured in terms of the number of Site Plans, Subdivisions and Permits that are applied for and approved within the Sustainable Communities area along with tracking school enrollment numbers at Cascade Elementary School.</p>	<p>Strategy A: All vested parties should work together in marketing the entire Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area as a place to live, work and play. Promote passive and active recreational opportunities along with the cultural and educational experiences that are available. Promote existing retail establishments and encourage new opportunities for future business owners.</p> <p>Strategy B: Continue to promote the Pen Mar Park's Summer Concert Series sponsored by the Washington County Department of Parks and Recreation; Work with Cascade Properties, LLC to promote seasonal Farmers Markets, and annual events such as the Christmas Tree Lighting and Fourth of July Fireworks celebrations and continue to work with the Washington County Division of Public Works on the creation of the Pen Mar – Fort Ritchie – Cascade Trail to attract people to the area</p>	<p>Washington County Government, Washington County Tourism Office, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Cascade Properties, LLC and all current and future property and business owners need to work together to bolster the economy in the area.</p>

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"> Proximity to the Maryland State Highway transportation network (with wide paved shoulder areas) and reasonable access to Interstates 70 & 81, US-15 and PA-16. Proximity to Hagerstown Regional Airport. Great potential to develop a walkable community for pedestrian mobility and access to recreational trails. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited CSX railroad access. Longer drive times to and from regional destinations. No public transportation offerings are available in this area.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Washington County Government should work collaboratively with current and future property owners to develop a 'Walkable Community Plan' throughout Fort Ritchie - Cascade Sustainable Communities area. Specifically, as part of the Master Redevelopment Plan for Fort Ritchie, site design and landscaping considerations should be made to ensure that the revitalization of the property is walkable and ADA compliant.</p> <p>Progress Measures: New Site Plans, Subdivision and Permits should be reviewed in accordance with the County Zoning Ordinance and can be analyzed to ensure that sidewalks and pedestrian accessibility are prioritized with the safety of the pedestrian in mind.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Create and administer a walkability survey to the residents within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area to identify needs and expectations throughout the community.</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with various Washington County departments as well as the Maryland State Highway Administration and current and future property owners to identify needs and implement strategies for improved pedestrian movement where safety features and ADA compliance is of paramount importance.</p> <p>Strategy C: Develop a method for tracking sidewalk repair, improvements, and new construction within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities Area. The database should include a log of linear feet of sidewalk and the number of curb ramps installed as part of ADA compliance requirements.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, Cascade Properties, LLC and other current and future development partners need to join forces to improve walkability and ADA accessibility within the community.</p>

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<p>Outcome 2: Support the development of the Pen Mar – Fort Ritchie – Cascade Trail as a connection between the Sustainable Communities area and the Appalachian Trail.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Use of the Trail, once constructed, can be measured by the number of people that come off of the Appalachian Trail to shop, dine or stay overnight in the community.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with the Division of Public Works and the Washington County Board of County Commissioners to ensure that funding will be available for the design and construction of the Trail.</p> <p>Strategy B: Coordinate with local restaurants, shops, Airbnb’s and future business owners to market their services to those hiking along the Appalachian Trail.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, current and future property owners and business owners in the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area need to cooperate with each other to bring this project to fruition.</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Complete a ‘Road Network Analysis’ in order to determine the adequacy of the road network in the entire Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area (both publicly and privately owned) and work with property owners to bring infrastructure up to County Road Adequacy standards for development. Consideration for bicycling as a mode of transportation should also be taken into consideration.</p> <p>Progress Measures: New Site Plans, Subdivision and Permits should be reviewed in accordance with the Policy for Determining Adequacy of Existing Highways and required improvements can be tracked to ensure that roadways met County standards.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with the Washington County Division of Engineering in order to determine a baseline for road adequacy based off of the County’s existing ‘Policy For Determining Adequacy Of Existing Highways’ guide.</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with current and future property owners and developers, as projects come to fruition, to identify deficiencies and implement improvements to bring roadways into compliance.</p> <p>Strategy C: Create and administer a bicycle survey to the residents within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area to identify needs and expectations in the community.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, current and future property owners and developers, including Cascade Properties, LLC and JGBLI need to join forces to improve the transportation network within the community.</p>
<p>Outcome 4: As the Fort Ritchie property redevelops, and new uses are added into the Special Economic Development zoning district, ensure that parking requirements are being met per the Zoning Ordinance and that all parking spaces are being allocated accordingly, including Handicapped Parking as required.</p> <p>Progress Measures: As Site Plans are submitted for review and approval, a running tally of parking space allocation should be maintained in order to ensure that the parking requirements per the Zoning Ordinance are being met for each specific proposed use.</p>	<p>Strategy A: County Land Use Planners should devise a method for tracking the allocation of existing a proposed parking spaces on the former Fort Ritchie property to ensure that parking requirements are being met.</p> <p>Strategy B: A review of Parking Requirements per the Zoning Ordinance should be conducted to affirm that the current requirements are still valid and do not need to be updated.</p>	<p>Washington County Planning & Zoning will need to work with current and future property owners and developers to ensure that parking standards are being met.</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"> An increased in the rate of homeownership continues to be a strength in the community. There has been a significant increase in the number of renovated rental properties in the community. Continue to promote improvements to the existing housing stock within the community through various State and local programs including but not limited to DHCD grant funding and Washington County Historic Tax Credits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The housing stock in the area is aging as approximately 75% of the residences in the area were built prior to the end of World War II. Lack of current and diverse employment opportunities makes this area more of a bedroom or commuter community as opposed to a traditional town or suburban area.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Continue to find and promote diverse funding options and incentives to entice property owners to improve the appearance and structural integrity of the housing stock and reduce blighting influences in the area.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Progress can be measured by calculating the number of properties receiving tax incentives or grant funding assistance. Washington County can track permits issued for home improvement projects in the area and compile a report that will illustrate progress.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with Washington County Planning & Zoning Department and the Historic District Commission to promote Tax Credit Incentives to property owners within either of the two Maryland Historic Trust Districts that are located within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p> <p>Strategy B: Promote rehabilitation of existing housing stock through the marketing of financial assistance programs such as those offered by DHCD along with continued education on local building code requirements.</p> <p>Strategy C: Work with local real estate agents to assist home buyers and real estate investors in identifying acquisition opportunities of vacant properties in order to return them to the housing inventory.</p>	<p>Washington County Planning & Zoning, Washington County Historic District Commission, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, local real estate agents and current and future property owners need to work collectively to improve the quality and appearance of the housing stock in the area.</p>

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<p>Outcome 2: Continue to promote and encourage home ownership while working to decrease vacancy rates in the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Home ownership rates can be tracked based on assessment data; occupancy data can be calculated using American Community Survey data.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Explore opportunities for acquisition and rehabilitation of existing housing stock by real estate investors, promote home ownership through home buyer incentives and the marketing of homeownership resources, such as the Hagerstown Home Store, to reach a wider audience of prospective buyers in Washington County.</p> <p>Strategy B: Encourage renovation and adaptive reuse of vacant properties into a variety of housing types such as studio/lofts and artist live-work spaces along with traditional single family and multi-family dwelling units. Continue to publicize DHCD grant funding programs as an incentive to revitalize the area.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, current and future property owners, homeownership resources vendors, and the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development need to work together to promote the home ownership incentives available to residents in the community.</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Promote the historic character and charm of the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area to protect and restore homes within the Maryland Historical Trust Districts of Highfield/Cascade (WA-IV-057) and Fort (Camp) Ritchie (WA-IV-262) Historic Districts.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Progress can be measured by tracking the number of permits issued for home improvement projects in the area. Real estate property tax credits can also be analyzed to identify the number of properties receiving tax incentives or grant funding assistance in the area.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Assist homeowners and potential buyers and investors in identifying structures that would qualify for the financial assistance programs that are available to help preserve the unique resources in this area. Provide assistance in completing applications and provide supporting documentation to all qualifying applicants.</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with the Maryland Historical Trust to promote programs and resources that have been identified in Heritage2031, Maryland's Statewide Preservation Plan. This should apply to areas currently under MHT protection as well as properties that could be eligible to apply for inclusion under MHT's umbrella of protection measures and designations.</p>	<p>Washington County Department of Planning & Zoning, Washington County Historic District Commission, current and future property owners, real estate agents, Maryland Historical Trust and the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development need to work together to identify and protect these dwindling historic resources.</p>
<p>Outcome 4: Promote State of Maryland Housing Legislation in an effort to make Maryland a more affordable place to live. Maryland's smart growth initiatives encourages infill development and redevelopment or order to maximize resources while reducing the impact that development has on the land.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Washington County Permitting and Land Development data can be tracked to analyze permits, subdivisions, and site plan approvals in the area. Home ownership and occupancy data can also be calculated using American Community Survey data.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with current and future property owners, real estate agents and investors, local government resources and State of Maryland resources to continue to promote and market the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area as an ideal residential community based on smaller class sizes, low crime rates, public utility availability and proximity to recreational opportunities.</p> <p>Strategy B: Encourage infill development on vacant parcels of land in order to contribute to the historic character and charm of the area while increasing the quality and affordability of the housing stock in the area.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, current and future property owners and the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development need to work together to promote the home ownership incentives available to 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"> Fort Ritchie Community Center continues to serve the area as an athletic, educational, and cultural center and continues to expand its offering of dedicated youth and senior activities throughout the year. The Camp Ritchie Museum and Nisei Gallery are now open to visitors. The Cascade Elementary School is well below the State Rated Capacity for student enrollment and, as a result, offers small class sizes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no dedicated Senior Centers or Libraries within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area. There is only one physical, faith-based organization in the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Promote and develop a series of healthy behavior options within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area. This could take the form of either passive or active amenities that would engage public participation from within the community while attracting tourists and visitors to the area.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Increases in businesses and non-profit organizations establishing a presence in the area can be tracked with land development tracking data.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with current and future property owners, the Fort Ritchie Community Center and the Washington County Government to develop a series of Healthy Behavior Trails that would include both walking and bicycling paths throughout the Community.</p> <p>Strategy B: Continue to encourage and assist the Fort Ritchie Community Center in offering diverse and engaging activities for people of all ages and abilities that promote health and diversity within the community.</p> <p>Strategy C: Explore options to increase the number of faith-based organizations that would have a physical presence in the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, current and future property owners, and current and future business and non-profit organizational leaders should work with the shared goal of improving community health and promote the area as being prime for retail, civic and cultural development.</p>

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<p>Outcome 2: Continue to market the area to prospective business owners, artists and historians with the goal of creating a diverse and culturally significant tourist and visitor attraction that is focused on the historical evolution and subsequent growth, decline and revival of the community based on the presence of Camp Ritchie/Fort Ritchie.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Press Releases, Facebook postings and a Community Calendar of Events could all be used to track the progress of this goal.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with current and future property owners and business owners along with the Washington County Department of Business and Economic Development to promote the areas as culturally diverse location for economic development.</p> <p>Strategy B: Continue to work with Cascade Properties, LLC and the Maryland Historical Trust in order to preserve as many of the historically significant Fort Ritchie structures as possible by utilizing adaptive reuse methods to transform their interiors into functional spaces with a diverse range of uses.</p> <p>Strategy C: Continue to work with Cascade Properties, LLC and the Fort Ritchie Community Center to organize and hold a variety of community events such as weekly farmer's markets, monthly museum displays and annual holiday events in order to revitalize the area and create a sense of place within the community.</p>	<p>Current and future property and business owners, the Fort Ritchie Community Center, the Maryland Historical Trust and Washington County Government all need to collaborate with one another in order to successfully promote the area as a tourist or visitor destination due to the unique character of the community.</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Continue to market the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area to more diverse retail, restaurant, and community service sector businesses. Provide more diversity and easier access to a range of shopping and dining options along with services and civic amenities.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Increases in businesses establishing a presence in the area can be tracked via land development tracking data based on Zoning Certifications.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with current and future property owners, the Washington County Department of Public Relations, and the Washington County Department of Business & Economic Development to promote the area as a unique and desirable location for business location, re-location or expansion.</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with the Fort Ritchie Community Center to continue to offer diverse and engaging activities that promote health and diversity within the community. Senior and youth activities along with health and human services should be of paramount importance.</p> <p>Strategy C: Continue to partner with Meritus Health to expand health and human services to the residents of the community.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, the Fort Ritchie Community Center, Meritus Health, and current and future property and business owners should work with the shared goal of improving community health, civic amenities while promoting the area as being prime for revitalization.</p>
<p>Outcome 4: Continue to market the area to prospective business owners as a unique community looking to expand its employment base in the light industrial sector.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Zoning Certifications and a variety of permitting related activities can be tracked and measured as evidence of progress.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with current and future business and property owners and the Washington County Department of Business and Economic Development to promote the areas as being prime for economic development by promoting tax incentives such as the Foreign Trade Zone to further incentivize the area for light industrial business uses.</p> <p>Strategy B: Promote financial assistance opportunities to current and future development partners and business owners as an incentive to locate in the area while highlighting low crime rates, housing availability, school capacity and recreational opportunities.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, current and future property and business owners all need to promote the area as being a prime location for light industrial development.</p>

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"> Professional County staff are skilled at working with property and business owners to promote and encourage development in a logical and efficient manner. Local zoning and building codes are updated regularly and the County Comprehensive Plan has established parameters for managing growth. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Older buildings are more expensive to restore, especially in a Maryland Historic Trust overly area.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Work with Cascade Properties LLC and other current and future property owners to reduce the number of vacant or blighted structures in the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Permit and land development tracking, Zoning Certification issuance and the Use and Occupancy letters can assist in measuring the progress of this goal.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with current and future property owners, Washington County Government and the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development to seek out and apply for revitalization funding in order to rehabilitate existing structures in the area.</p> <p>Strategy B: Develop and strengthen public-private partnerships to promote future development within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, current and future property owners, and the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development all need to work towards revitalizing the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p>
<p>Outcome 2: County Planning & Zoning staff should continue to work diligently towards the adoption of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for Washington County. Specific goals and recommendations should include the revitalization of the former Fort Ritchie property and be proactive towards the redevelopment of the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Adoption of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan and implementation of its recommendations will serve as progress measures.</p>	<p>Strategy A: As part of the Implementation Strategies listed in the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for Washington County, staff should ensure that development and redevelopment opportunities have been specifically listed as the short to medium range goals within this targeted economic development area.</p> <p>Strategy B: Continue to work with the Washington County Department of Economic Development to promote the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area for both residential and non-residential development.</p>	<p>Washington County Government and the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development need to work in coordination with each other to identify existing and new funding sources.</p>

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<p>Outcome 3: Upon adoption of the 2040 Comprehensive Plan for Washington County, Planning and Zoning staff should begin work on updates to both the Washington County Zoning Ordinance and the Water and Sewerage Plan for the County. Permitted land uses in both the Rural Village and Special Economic Development sections of the Zoning Ordinance should be reviewed and updated as necessary.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Adoption of a revised Zoning Ordinance and Water and Sewerage Plan will determine the progress of this goal.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with current and future property owners, Washington County Government and other interested stakeholders to provide comments and requests during the public input and revision process of updates to both the Zoning Ordinance and the Water and Sewerage Plan for the County.</p> <p>Strategy B: Promote future development within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area by seeking community input regarding permitted and non-permitted land uses within the area.</p> <p>Strategy C: Conduct research to determine the Water and Sewer service designations that should be applied to each property within the service area.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, current and future property owners, and the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development all need to work towards revitalizing the Fort Ritchie - Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p>
<p>Outcome 4: Revisit the initial list of funding sources that could be leveraged to make sure that the list is up-to-date and to look for new methods of promoting the area for revitalization and development.</p> <p>Progress Measures: The publication of a pamphlet or creation of a webpage that highlights the funding sources available to properties within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area would be illustrative of progress towards this goal.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with the Washington County Department of Business & Economic Development, Washington County Department of Planning & Zoning, the Maryland the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development to identify all possible funding sources for development purposes.</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with the Washington County Department of Public Relations to develop both physical/written pamphlets as well as a digital web presence/internet site where all of these resources could be shared with prospective property owners and tenants regarding properties within the Fort Ritchie – Cascade Sustainable Communities area.</p>	<p>Washington County Government, the Maryland Historical Trust and the Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development need to work in coordination with each other to identify existing and new funding sources and make a comprehensive list available to the public.</p>

SECTION D – Sustainable Communities Workgroup Roster

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