SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DESIGNATION

2019 APPLICATION

Eligible Applicants:

Local Government
Local Government Consortium

Sustainable Communities Application Rounds

January 27, 2017
April 7, 2017
July 2, 2017
October 6, 2017

Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Division of Neighborhood Revitalization
2 N Charles Street, Suite 450
Baltimore, MD 21201

410-209-5800
www.mdhousing.org

LARRY HOGAN, *Governor*
BOYD K. RUTHERFORD, *Lt. Governor*

KENNETH C. HOLT, *Secretary*
TONY REED, *Deputy Secretary*

OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

Aiming for "sustainability" and promoting "sustainable communities" has gained great momentum in recent years. Leaders and community stakeholders increasingly recognize the importance of ensuring that scarce investment resources result in a more sustainable economy and improved community quality-of-life for all citizens.

There are many definitions for "sustainability." According to the World Commission on Environment and Development, "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."[1] With respect to developing sustainable communities, people also often organize strategies according to the categories of "People, Place and Planet."

Relatedly, at the national level, the U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD), Department of Transportation (DOT), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have committed to coordinate their capital investments in alignment with the following six "Livability Principles":

1. **Support existing communities**. Target public and private resources toward existing communities—through strategies like transit oriented, mixed-use development, and land recycling—to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and to safeguard rural landscapes.

2. **Value communities and neighborhoods**. Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.

3. **Coordinate and leverage policies and investment**. Align policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.

4. **Enhance economic competitiveness**. Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers, as well as expanded business access to markets.

5. **Promote equitable, affordable housing**. Expand location and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.

6. **Provide more transportation choices.** Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation's dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health. .

The Sustainable Communities Act of 2010 was a great step forward toward reinvestment and revitalization in our State's existing communities through the simplification of the targeting of State revitalization resources into a single focus area called "Sustainable Community Areas." In the Act, Sustainable Community Areas are defined as places where public and private investments and partnerships achieve:

[1] World Commission on Environment and Development. 1987, from "One Earth to One World: An Overview." Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Development of a healthy local economy;
Protection and appreciation of historical and cultural resources; A mix of land uses;
Affordable and sustainable housing, and employment options;
Growth and development practices that protect the environment and conserve air, water and energy resources, encourage walkability and recreational opportunities, and where available, create access to transit.

So, while there are a number of frameworks for sustainability and livability, all aim to "break down silos" and achieve more integrated and balanced approaches to community planning and investment. This application will attempt to take the best from various approaches to planning for "community sustainability" to provide a framework for the development of local Sustainable Community Action Plans.

This is one next step in the implementation of the 2010 Act. *Through this application, eligible applicants will propose two things:*

(1) Define a geographic area with an existing built environment in need of revitalization or additional state investment to strengthen the local market
(2) Submit a Sustainable Community Action Plan, a summary of initiatives and projects for the revitalization of the targeted Sustainable Community Area

Sustainable Community Action Plan

The January 2010 report, "Sustainable Maryland: Accelerating Investment in the Revitalization and Livability of Maryland's Neighborhoods," reviewed Maryland's tool kit for revitalization and the impact of these tools over the last fifteen years. That report, developed at the request of the Task Force on the Future for Growth and Development in Maryland, found that the Maryland communities that have made the most revitalization progress share the follow characteristics:

A specific local target area that has attained multiple State "designations" that make the community eligible for maximum access to State revitalization funding;
Strong local leadership and partners from the public and private sectors that coordinate and leverage financing to implement ongoing initiatives; and,
A multi-year investment strategy that is both realistic and ambitious, providing a road map for local stakeholders to create a more sustainable economy and livable community life.

These findings informed the content of the 2010 SC Act, recognizing the importance of local leadership and locally driven and targeted plans. These locally generated Sustainable Community Action Plans are to include a range of revitalization strategies and projects that prevent or reverse the decline of or disinvestment in a Sustainable Community Areas through improvements in residential, commercial, or other public or private properties and resources and can also result in reduction of community environmental impacts.

All pre-existing Community Legacy and Designated Neighborhoods designations have expired as of December 31, 2013. All local governments that would like to have a community considered for a Sustainable Communities designation must submit an application for a 5-year designation.

Round 19: April 7, 2017
Round 20: July 2, 2017
Round 21: October 6, 2017

Complete applications received by the closing date of each round will be reviewed by State inter-agency teams, and recommendations will be presented to the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and then to the Smart Growth Subcabinet within approximately three months.

Sustainable Community Area Benefits

The list below reflects the *current* State programs that are contributing resources to designated Sustainable Community areas:

Community Legacy Program is administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and provides local governments and community development organizations with financial assistance to strengthen communities through such activities as business retention and attraction, encouraging homeownership and commercial revitalization. Community Legacy funds are restricted to Sustainable Community Areas.

Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth Impact Fund is administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and provides grants and loans to local governments and community development organizations for predevelopment activities including demolition and land assembly for housing and revitalization projects. The Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth Impact Fund catalyzes public and private investment in the reuse of vacant and underutilized sites. SDSGIF dollars are restricted to SC areas.

Neighborhood BusinessWorks Program is administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and provides loans through gap financing, i.e. subordinate financing, to new or expanding small businesses and nonprofit organizations. These funds are restricted to Priority Funding Areas and Sustainable Communities.

Enhanced Local Tax Increment Financing Authority. During the 2013 Maryland General Session, House Bill 613: Sustainable Communities – Designation and Financing was passed. The law not only enables the Maryland Economic Development Corporation to support local governments with designated Sustainable Communities by issuing bonds to finance public improvements, but it also expands the permitted use of Tax Increment Financing beyond traditional public infrastructure. The law broadened the set of eligible uses of Tax Increment Financing in Sustainable Communities to include historic preservation or rehabilitation; environmental remediation; demolition and site preparation; parking lots, facilities or structures of any type, public or private; highways; schools; and affordable or mixed-income housing. Local governments with Sustainable Communities may also pledge alternative local tax revenues generated within or attributed to the Tax Increment Financing district to its associated special fund.

Low Income Housing Tax Credits. The Department of Housing and Community Development incorporated "Priority Project Categories" into the competitive scoring criteria of tax credit applications. Eight points will be allocated to projects located in a state-designated Transit Oriented Development area. (All state-designated Transit-Oriented Development areas are Sustainable Communities.) For areas that are not state-designated transit-oriented development areas, but are Sustainable Communities, applications will be awarded four additional points.

Job Creation Tax Credit is administered by the Maryland Department of Commerce. Maryland provides a tax credit to encourage businesses expanding in or relocating to Maryland. Enhanced incentives are provided in

Sustainable Communities. The standard credit is 2.5% of annual wages up to $1,000 per new job. For businesses located in a Sustainable Community, the credit is 5% of annual wages up to $1,500 per new job; and, the threshold to qualify for the tax credit drops from 60 to 25 jobs created.

Sidewalk Retrofit Program is administered by the Maryland Department of Transportation. This program helps finance the construction and replacement of sidewalks along state highways (Maryland and U.S. Routes, other than expressways). The program covers 50 percent of the cost for approved projects. For projects located in a Sustainable Community, the program covers 100 percent of the cost.

Maryland Bikeways Program is administered by the Department of Transportation. It supports projects that maximize bicycle access and fill missing links in the state's bike system. Additional points awarded in application evaluation for projects located in or connecting to a designated Sustainable Community. Sustainable Communities are considered also considered a "priority investment area" under the bikeways program and projects may be eligible for reduced matching requirements.

Community Safety and Enhancement Program is administered by the Maryland State Highway Administration and provides funding for transportation improvements along state highways that support planned or on-going revitalization efforts. Improvements typically include pedestrian and vehicular safety, intersection capacity/operations, sidewalks, roadway reconstruction or resurfacing, drainage repair/upgrade and landscaping. Projects must be in a Priority Funding Area and communities designated as a Sustainable Community are given preference.

Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund is administered by the Maryland Department of the Environment's Water Quality Financing Administration. It provides below market interest rate loans and additional subsidies such as loan-forgiveness and grants to finance: construction of publicly-owned wastewater treatment works, implementation of non-point source/estuary capital improvements, and/or implementation of US Environmental Protection Agency defined "green" projects (i.e. green infrastructure water efficiency, energy efficiency/climate change, environmentally innovative). Projects are ranked and can receive up to 100 points. Up to 25 points can be awarded to a project with sustainability benefits including 7 points for projects in designated Sustainable Communities.

In addition, the 2010 Sustainable Communities Act noted that the Department of Transportation's Transportation investments would recognize Sustainable Community Areas in the planning and utilization of its resources.

Application Eligibility and Threshold Requirements

Local governments (municipal or county) are eligible to apply. Eligible applicants are to form a local **Sustainable Communities Workgroup** that will develop and guide implementation of Sustainable Community Action Plans. The purpose of this workgroup is to establish working relationships and collaborations among local governmental departments and better align community development priorities and strategies. For example, the **Sustainable Communities Workgroup** should include representatives from key governmental departments, such as Community and Economic Development, Planning, Transportation, Parks and Recreation and Historic Preservation. The **Sustainable Communities Workgroup** could also include non-governmental organization partners such as Main Street Organizations, Community Development Corporations, Community/Neighborhood Associations, as well as key employers and other stakeholders in the community. Applications are required to include a roster of the workgroup members.

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 indicative of a targeted approach;
2) A local government resolution in support of the boundary designation and Plan should accompany the application or must be in process (all Sustainable Community Area designations will be contingent upon an executed local resolution);
3) Entities in the community must have pledged financial and/or in-kind resources to implement the Plan as indicated by letters of support;
4) 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;
5) The proposed Plan must be consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans;
6) A Sustainable Communities Workgroup is formed and a roster of members is provided.

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

Application Evaluation

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

Priority Funding Areas

All Sustainable Communities must be located entirely within a Priority Funding Area. Applicants can verify Priority Funding Area boundaries by visiting the Maryland Department of Planning website at: http://www.mdp.state.md.us/OurProducts/pfamap.shtml

Mandatory Training

Attendance at a minimum of one application training session is **mandatory for all applicants**. Consult with Mary Kendall at 410-209-5810 or by email at Mary.Kendall@maryland.gov if you would like to schedule an application training.

Contact the Department for a copy of the Sustainable Communities application. Applications will be submitted both electronically/digitally and via postal mail. Each applicant must submit two hard copies (one original and one copies) of their application with all required attachments.

The Department of Housing and Community Development reserves the right to not consider incomplete applications.

The first printed page of the electronic application is a Table of Contents. This should also serve as a checklist and be used to provide corresponding tabs. In addition to the hard copies of an application, all pictures and maps are to be submitted on a CD-ROM. Pictures should be burned to the CD in a JPEG format and maps

should be burned to the CD in a pdf format. Please ALSO include GIS shapefiles of Sustainable Community boundaries and other GIS related data. Please label your files on the CD-ROM appropriately, i.e., "Proposed Sustainable Community Boundary," "Current Sustainable Community Boundary," etc.

No incomplete applications will be accepted.

Deliver Sustainable Community Applications to:

Sustainable Community Application
ATTN: Mary Kendall
Division of Neighborhood Revitalization
Department of Housing and Community Development
2 N Charles Street, Suite 450
Baltimore, MD 21201
410-209-5800

Site Visits. Follow-up Discussion, Technical Assistance

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

In collaboration with the Maryland Department of Planning, the Department of Housing and Community Development is offering technical assistance to local governments with limited capacity to prepare their Sustainable Communities applications.

Approval

Approval of applications will be made by the Governor's Smart Growth Subcabinet on the recommendation of the Secretary of Housing and Community Development. A State inter-agency team will review applications and make recommendations to the Department of Housing and Community Development Secretary.

All questions related to application content, please contact Mary Kendall at 410-209-5810 or by email at Mary.Kendall@maryland.gov.

Sustainable Community Application 2019

I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITYAPPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Sustainable Community:

Town of Hancock, Maryland 21750

Name of Applicant:

Applicant's Federal Identification Number: 526000795

Applicant's Street Address: 126 West High Street

City: Hancock	**County: Washington**	**State: MD**	**Zip Code: 21750**
Phone Number: 301-678-5622	**Fax Number: 301-678-5832**	**Web Address: townofhancock.org**	

Sustainable Community Application Local Contact:

Name: Joseph Gilbert	**Title: Town Manager**		
Address: 126 West High Street	**City: Hancock**	**State: MD**	**Zip Code: 21750**
Phone Number: 301-678-5622	**Fax Number: 301-678-5832**	**E-mail Address:**	hancocktownmanager@gmail.com

Sustainable Community Contact for Application Status:

Name: Joseph Gilbert	**Title: Town Manager**		
Address: 126 West High Street	**City: Hancock**	**State: MD**	**Zip Code: 21750**
Phone Number: 301-678-5622	**Fax Number: 301-678-5832**	**E-mail Address: hancocktownmanager@gmail.com**	

Sustainable Community Application 2017

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY – General Information

A. Proposed Sustainable Community Area(s):

(1) Provide a description of SC Area boundaries. How did the applicant determine that these are the most appropriate boundaries for its target area? Describe the methodology for choosing this target area.

The proposed boundaries for the Town of Hancock's Sustainable Community include the Town's downtown commercial district zoned Town Center and General Commercial. The Sustainable Community will also include the Town's tourism district and recreation areas of the C&O Canal, Western Maryland Rail Trail, the Towpath Trail and the Tuscarora Trail. The recreational areas include Widmyer and Kirkwood Parks.

This area was determined to be most appropriate because of the current economic status of the Town of Hancock and capitalizes on the strengths of the Town to target for rehabilitation and revitalization.

There are many vacant, dilapidated or under-utilized commercial and residential buildings throughout the Town, particularly in the downtown commercial district. This is problematic because it is adjacent and intermingled with the Western Maryland Rail Trail, the Towpath Trail, the C&O Canal and the Potomac River. These features are the assets of the Town we will rely on to draw visitors and tourists to the Town and be the engine for economic development and growth in the future.

It was determined that the Town's parks and greenspaces, namely Kirkwood Park, Widmyer Park, and the Joseph Hancock Park needed to be included as not only are these the primary recreational areas for the Town's residents, the parks are also where the Town holds the vast majority of its events to also draw outside visitors and tourists and are key elements of economic activity. These activities include our annual Harvest Festival, National Night Out, Rock in the Park concert series, summer weekly farmers' markets and Miracle on Main Street.

Maryland State Route 144, which is Main Street, out to Interstate 70 East was included because of planned annexations of property to fuel economic development lie in those currently unincorporated zones. For example, the property located at 528 East Main Street is designated as the likely location for targeted acquisition to serve as the Town's Career Training and Business Incubation Center.

The National Park Service property from the Visitor Center on the Western Maryland Rail Trail, 439 East Main Street to the Town's boat ramp located on parcel M. 0502 , P. 0567 is included because first, the Town is in the process of adopting a memorandum of understanding with the National Park Service for joint use and maintenance of this area and because this land along the Towpath Trail and the Potomac River is critical for the Town's efforts to rebrand itself as a regional tourist destination.

It was determined that given the economic and demographic status of the Town of Hancock, for example the median income for the Town of Hancock is half of the median income for the State of Maryland, and the efforts to revitalize the town's economy, residential and commercial property, and to create a vibrant tourist industry that the entire Town needed to be included in our Sustainable Community plan.

(2) Include the following in as an attachment: 1) PDF or JPEG of proposed Sustainable Communities map, 2) GIS shapefiles of proposed Sustainable Community boundary (mapped to the parcel boundary), 3) pictures of proposed Sustainable Community area.

(3) Approximate number of acres within the SC Area:_Approximately 600 acres.

(4) Existing federal, state or local designations:

☐Community Legacy Area ☐ Designated Neighborhood **X**Main Street ☐Maple Street
☐National Register Historic District ☐Local Historic District **X** Arts & Entertainment District
☐State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District ☐BRAC ☐ State Designated TOD
☐Other(s):

(5) Prior Revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:

a. *List and describe any significant State and local smart growth or revitalization related program investments* (for instance, Community Legacy or SC Rehab Tax Credit) that have been invested in the Area since the launching of Maryland's Smart Growth initiative and programs in 1997 (including Housing investment). What impact have these investments made in the community?

None.

(6) Describe the SC Area's demographic trends (with respect to age, race, household size, household income, educational attainment, or other relevant factors).

There are several trends affecting the proposed Sustainable Community area within the Town of Hancock. First, as with most other communities, Hancock has an aging population. Approximately half of the residents of Hancock are aged sixty or older. This is relevant as older residents tend to prefer to travel less to do their shopping, dining and recreation and also tend to do less online shopping than younger residents. Currently, all residents of the community have to travel to at least Hagerstown to have access to a variety of these amenities.

This trend of having older residents also affects household size. The adult children of our older residents are, by and large, not staying in Hancock.

Another trend in Hancock is that our median income is approximately $38,000 per year. That is about half of the rest of the State of Maryland. The unemployment rate within Hancock is also higher than the rest of the state. Other sources have measured Hancock's median income as low as $31,910 (City-Data.com). Maryland recognizes the Town of Hancock as an economically depressed community and a designated Opportunity Zone. The opportunities afforded by the Sustainable Community program will be important to reverse these trends.

The majority of the population of Hancock has little or no education beyond high school. The overall economic status of the town effects earnings of the town's residents who do have a college education. According to US Census Bureau statistics, even our residents with a four-year on average only earn the average median income (https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF). This may be at least partly due to the portion of those residents with a college degree being retired or no longer in the working population.

Overall the trends in Hancock are an aging population, smaller household size and low to medium income status, even among our educated residents.

Sources:

US Census Bureau, American Fact Finder, Retrieved from:

https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF, and https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/tableservices/jsf/pages/productview.xhtml?src=CF
City Data: Retrieved from: http://www.city-data.com/city/Hancock-Maryland.html
Town Charts: http://www.towncharts.com/Maryland/Demographics/Hancock-town-MD-Demographics-data.html

B. Organizational Structure, Experience and Public Input:

(1) Describe the Applicant's organizational structure. Specifically, which organizations are members in the **Sustainable Communities Workgroup** and who are the respective staff? Who are the leaders, and how will the Workgroup advisor or staff manage implementation of the SC Area Plan?

The Hancock Sustainable Community Workgroup has been codified by a Resolution passed by the Town Council and Mayor. The workgroup consists of representatives from Town of Hancock administration, the Parks and Recreation Councils, the Hancock Planning Commission and Main Street Hancock. The Town Manager is the overall coordinator for the Hancock Sustainable Communities Workgroup.

The groups so designated will each designate a representative to the Hancock Sustainable Community Working Group and provide their respective point of contact information to the Town no later than 15 November 2019.

The Town of Hancock Sustainable Community Working Group will meet not less than quarterly in location and time as decided upon by the Town.

The purpose of the Hancock Sustainable Community Working Group is to monitor and record progress of the community in accomplishing the goals as set forth in the Hancock Sustainable Community Action Plan and to explore and pursue opportunities for the Town of Hancock with the Maryland Sustainable Community program areas of the Community Legacy Program, Strategic Demolition and Smart Growth Impact Fund, Neighborhood BusinessWorks Program, Enhanced Local Tax Increment Financing Authority, Low Income Housing Tax Credits and Job Creation Tax Credit.

The Sustainable Community Working Group will provide a report to the Town of Hancock Mayor and Council at the regularly scheduled Town meetings not less than quarterly beginning at the first meeting of the second month of the Hancock Sustainable Community Working group formation, December 2019 and quarterly thereafter.

The Hancock Town Manager will be the overall project manager and together with the members of the Sustainable Community Workgroup will identify short, mid and long range goals set forth in the Hancock Sustainable Community Action Plan and track progress towards those goals. The Town Manager will also identify resource needs to accomplish these goals and working with the Workgroup, identify and pursue opportunities to satisfy any resource gaps to ensure continuous progress in accomplishing the Action Plan.

(2) Describe the Applicant organization's past experience in administering revitalization plans and projects. Describe the roles of the members of the **Sustainable Communities Workgroup**, including their experience in implementing revitalization initiatives. What are the strengths and challenges of the capacity of these groups with respect to implementation of the SC Plan?

Hancock identified those organizations and groups within the community best suited to provide input and staffing of the Hancock Sustainable Community Workgroup in accordance with their organization's stated mission statements and goals.

Each of these groups contributing to the Hancock Sustainable Community Workgroup have experience in fund raising, grant applications and grant management, event planning and management and parks and recreation. The organization Main Street Hancock, for example is a non-government 501c3 with the specific mission statement of revitalizing the Hancock business district's "economic ecosystem" to include retail and other businesses, tourism, transportation and parking, green and open spaces and building facades. These stated goals of this organization are aligned with the goals of the Hancock Sustainable Community Action Plan. In each instance in choosing the representatives to the Hancock Sustainable Community Workgroup, we sought out those organizations with complementary missions.

Again, as the overall project manager, the Hancock Town Manager will manage the implementation of the Hancock Action Plan in conjunction with and with the cooperation of those organizations providing members to the Workgroup.

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

The formation of the Hancock Sustainable Community Action Plan has been a multi-year project started in 2017. Throughout the process the Town received input from various organizations and committees to include the Hancock Planning Commission, Historical Society, Parks and Recreation Council and more.

The residents of Hancock and other stakeholders provided input and were afforded the opportunity to contribute and comment on the Action Plan through numerous Town Hall meetings as well as the public meetings held since 2017 by the various groups and committees that comprise the Hancock Workgroup.

When applicable, the authors of the Hancock Sustainable Community Action Plan reached out to key private sector businesses and non-profit organizations for their input. Also, the Town of Hancock worked in conjunction with our counterparts in the Washington County government for guidance, advice and input in the development of our Action Plan.

The development of our Action Plan was concurrent with the development of the Hancock Comprehensive Plan review. Much of the Hancock Comprehensive Plan, to be published in 2020, directly corresponds to the goals set forth in the Hancock Sustainable Community Action Plan. Likewise, much of the Action Plan was derived with goals identified in the development of the 2010 and then the 2020 Hancock Comprehensive Plan.

The Hancock Sustainable Community Action Plan is also reflected in the Hancock current Zoning Ordinance and Zoning map. The overall goals of the Hancock Action Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Hancock Comprehensive Plan are the revitalization of the Hancock downtown district, to attract and retain new business and overall economic development of the entire town, not solely the downtown, increased tourism highlighting the Potomac River, C&O Canal, Western Maryland Rail Trail, the Towpath Trail and the Tuscarora Trail. These plans of the Town of Hancock: the 2010 and 2020 Comprehensive Plans, the economic development plan, the revised Zoning Ordinance, and with the

ongoing efforts of the Hancock Planning Commission working with the new Hancock Sustainable Community Workgroup are to drive economic development, recruit and retain new business and industry and to rebrand the Town of Hancock as the tourist destination for Western Maryland.

III. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The Sustainable Community Action Plan (SC Plan or Plan) is meant to be a multi-year investment strategy – a strategic set of revitalization initiatives and projects that local partners believe will increase the economic vitality and livability of their community, 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 a livable and sustainable community.

Please complete the attached matrix. The document has been broken down into six different sections, namely Environment, Local Economy, Housing, Quality of Life, Transportation and Land Use/Local Planning. These parts address key components of your Sustainable Community Action Plan. Follow the guidelines below to fill out the matrix.

1) **For each of the different sections, 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: Dept. of Housing and Community Development (Community Legacy program), Small Business Administration (Services and financial assistance) etc.

Sustainable Community Application 2019

Resolution of [INSERT *Name of Local Governing Body*] to designate the [INSERT *Name/description of Community]* as a Sustainable Community, pursuant to the attached Sustainable Community map (and Sustainable Community Plan (the "**Plan**," as further described in the Sustainable Community Application (the "**Application**"), for approval either directly by the Department of Housing and Community Development (the "**Department**") of the State of Maryland or through the Smart Growth Subcabinet of the State of Maryland.

WHEREAS, [INSERT *Name of Local Governing Body*] recognizes that there is a significant need for reinvestment and revitalization of the communities in [INSERT *Name of County/City*]; and

WHEREAS, [INSERT *Name of Local Governing Body*] proposes to (i) designate the area of [INSERT *Name/description of Community*] in [INSERT *Name of County/City*], as outlined on the attached map (the "**Area**"), as a Sustainable Community, and to (ii) adopt the Plan, as further described in the Application, for the purposes of contributing to the reinvestment and revitalization in the Area; and

WHEREAS, the Area is located within a priority funding area under Section 5-7B-02 of the Smart Growth Act; and

WHEREAS, the applicable law and the Community Legacy Program regulations require a local government to submit an application to the Department in order to become a designated Sustainable Community, and to adopt a satisfactory Sustainable Community Plan in order to be eligible to receive financial assistance under the Community Legacy Program;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, [INSERT *Name of Local Governing Body]* hereby (i) endorses the designation of the Area as a Sustainable Community; and (ii) adopts the Sustainable Community Plan described in the Application.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the chief elected executive official is hereby requested to endorse this Resolution, indicating his or her approval by signature hereof; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the following persons are hereby authorized to execute documents and take any action necessary to carry out the intent of these resolutions;

Name	Office/Title	Signature
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, copies of this Resolution are sent to the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development of the State of Maryland for consideration by the Smart Growth Sub-Cabinet.

READ AND PASSED THIS_____ day of_____ , 2019.__

BY ORDER: _____, I hereby certify that Resolution Number_____ is true and correct and duly adopted by the (Legislative Body) of (City or County).

ATTEST/WITNESS:

_____

[INSERT *Name of Local Governing Body*]

By:_____

Name:_____

Title:_____

Approved By:_____

Name:_____

Title: _____

[Chief elected executive official]

Date:_____

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICATION

DISCLOSURE AUTHORIZATION AND CERTIFICATION

The undersigned authorizes the Department of Housing and Community Development (the "**Department**") to make such inquiries as necessary, including, but not limited to, credit inquiries, in order to verify the accuracy of the statements made by the applicant and to determine the creditworthiness of the applicant and the accuracy of the application.

In accordance with Executive Order 01.01.1983.18, the Department advises you that certain personal information is necessary to determine eligibility for financial assistance. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by Maryland's Access to Public Records Act, State Government Article, Section 10-611 et seq. of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the "**Act**"). This information will be disclosed to appropriate staff of the Department or to public officials for purposes directly connected with administration of this financial assistance program for which its use is intended. Such information may be shared with State, federal or local government agencies, which have a financial role in the project. The applicant has the right to inspect, amend, or correct personal records in accordance with the Act.

The Department intends to make available to the public the contents of the local governments' Sustainable Community Plans and the contents of Sustainable Community Applications, including posting of entire applications on the Department's website, use of such materials at presentations, training sessions, press releases, articles and other means of publication. This information may be confidential under the Act. If the applicant considers this information confidential and does not want it made available to the public, please indicate this objection in writing and attach the same to this application.

The applicant agrees that not attaching an objection constitutes consent to the information being made available to the public as herein described, and a waiver of any rights the applicant may have regarding this information under the Act.

I have read and understand the above paragraph. Applicant's Initials: _____

Anyone who knowingly makes, or causes to be made, any false statement or report relative to this Application, for the purposes of influencing the action of the Department on such Application, may become ineligible to receive State financial assistance, and is subject to other penalties authorized by law.

The undersigned hereby certifies that s/he is authorized to enter into the agreements and certifications contained herein and in the Application, and further certifies that the information set herein and in any attachment in support hereof is true, correct, and complete to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

	Joseph Gilbert, Town Manager	31 October 2019
Authorized Signature	Type Name and Title	Date

CHECKLIST AND TABLE OF CONTENTS

Resolution
Sustainable Community Application 2019

Resolution of the Town of Hancock designate the Town as a Sustainable Community, pursuant to the attached Sustainable Community map (and Sustainable Community Plan (the "**Plan**," as further described in the Sustainable Community Application (the "**Application**"), for approval either directly by the Department of Housing and Community Development (the "**Department**") of the State of Maryland or through the Smart Growth Subcabinet of the State of Maryland.

WHEREAS, the Town of Hancock recognizes that there is a significant need for reinvestment and revitalization of the community of the Town of Hancock and,

WHEREAS, The Town of Hancock proposes to (i) designate the entire area within the incorporated limits in the Town of Hancock as outlined on the attached map (the "**Area**"), as a Sustainable Community, and to (ii) adopt the Plan, as further described in the Application, for the purposes of contributing to the reinvestment and revitalization in the Area; and

WHEREAS, the Area is located within a priority funding area under Section 5-7B-02 of the Smart Growth Act; and

WHEREAS, the applicable law and the Community Legacy Program regulations require a local government to submit an application to the Department in order to become a designated Sustainable Community, and to adopt a satisfactory Sustainable Community Plan in order to be eligible to receive financial assistance under the Community Legacy Program;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Town Council hereby (i) endorses the designation of the Area as a Sustainable Community; and (ii) adopts the Sustainable Community Plan described in the Application.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the chief elected executive official is hereby requested to endorse this Resolution, indicating his or her approval by signature hereof; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the following persons are hereby authorized to execute documents and take any action necessary to carry out the intent of these resolutions;

Name	Office/Title	Signature
Leo Murray	Town Council	
Roland Lanehart	Town Council	
Timothy Boyer	Town Council	
Tim Smith	Town Council	

and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, copies of this Resolution are sent to the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development of the State of Maryland for consideration by the Smart Growth Sub-Cabinet.

READ AND PASSED THIS 9th day of October 2019.

BY ORDER: _____, I hereby certify that Resolution Number 1109-01-2019 is true and correct and duly adopted by the Town Council of the Town of Hancock.

ATTEST/WITNESS:

_____
Town Manager

Town of Hancock, Maryland 21750

By: _____
Name: _____
Title: Town Clerk

Approved By: _____
Name: RALPH T. STAUFFER JR
Title: MAYOR
[Chief elected executive official]

Date: 10/9/2019

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICATION

APPLICANT: Town of Hancock, Maryland

NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: Town of Hancock

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

- ❑ **Tab #1 Sustainable Community Applicant Information**

- ❑ **TAB #2 - Sustainable Community General Information:** In addition to the narrative about the baseline information included in the Sustainable Communities application, include a hard copy of the of the proposed Sustainable Communities map in Tab 2.

- ❑ **TAB #3 – Sustainable Community Action Plan/Matrix**

- ❑ **TAB #4 – Local Support Resolution: (sample resolution on page 11) In addition to the local support resolution, please include any letters of support that demonstrate partner commitments to the implementation and/or oversight of the Sustainable Community Plan.**

- ❑ **TAB #5 – Signed Sustainable Community Application Disclosure Authorization and Certification (sample form on page 13)**

- ❑ **TAB #6 – CD-ROM:** The CD-ROM should include the following contents:

  Map in pdf format of the proposed Sustainable Community area

  GIS shapefile of the proposed Sustainable Community boundaries and other GIS related data, e.g., spreadsheet of detailed listing of parcels that form the project boundary. (If you have additional comments or questions about the GIS mapping requirements, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, Department of Housing and Community Development, Brad.Wolters@maryland.gov)

  Pictures (jpeg format) of your Sustainable Community as it relates to your application

Sustainable Community Action Plan

Town of Hancock

Submitted by Name of Local Government

9/25/2019

Environment

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

Strengths

- Situated amid the western slopes of the Blue Ridge Range of the Appalachian Mountains, The Town of Hancock is directly northwest of the confluence of Tonoloway Creek with the Potomac River. The region is characterized by rolling, productive agricultural lands that are flanked by forested mountains.
- Topographic and natural features create an established rural buffer and transition area surrounding the Town of Hancock.
- Hancock's main park is the 30-acre Widmeyer Park. Located on Main Street, the park contains ballfields, tennis and basketball courts, a band shell, picnic pavilions, and the Town library.
- Kirkwood Park is an athletic complex with five softball/baseball fields, and a multi-use field on 155 acres. Over the past few years, the state, Town, and County have contributed over $400,000 towards the development of the park.
- Other recreation areas include Gerber Field and neighborhood parks: Joseph Hancock Primitive Park, Hancock Community Center Park, and James Breathed Park
- The C&O Canal National Historic Park and the Western Maryland Rail Trail (WMRT) provide Hancock access to a regional recreation network stretching to east Washington, D.C., and west to Cumberland, including paved and unpaved trails for hiking and biking as well as picnic areas, a boat ramp, and passive recreation land.
- There are no water quality concerns related to the Town's drinking water.
- Water consumption is down due to leak repairs.
- The Town participates in the county's reforestation program and has set aside land in its parks and conservation areas for protection and expansion of the tree canopy.
- A farmers' market occurs twice weekly at Joseph Hancock Jr. Park on Main Street and accepts vouchers; the Blue Goose Fruit Market & Bakery - just east of town limits - is a full-time proprietor of fresh, local food; there is also a full-service grocery store (Food Lion) conveniently located on Pennsylvania Avenue and Sav-A-Lot on West Main Street.
- Hancock has regular communication with the County's vocational/agricultural education programs and the Future Farmers of America in regards to utilizing the town's property for projects such as maple syrup production and raising chickens.
- A seasonal community garden is traditionally available to town residents.

Weaknesses

- Approximately 227 acres of land within the existing municipal boundaries (13%) is in the 100-year floodplain of the Potomac River, Tonoloway Creek, or Little Tonoloway Creek; the most recent serious flood occurred in 1996 when the flood level was recorded at 36 feet above normal. Even those water level rises that do not threaten to flood the town still make kayaking and other river activities difficult.
- In 2015 the Town was cited and fined by MDE for not meeting nitrogen and pollutant regulations in the lagoon system that has long been used to treat sewage. Wastewater runs through a series of settling and aeration basins, and is treated with chemicals before it flows into Tonoloway Creek and on into the Potomac. Since then, the town has worked with AECOM to resolve the issue and is in the process of securing grant funding to replace its aging wastewater infrastructure.
- Current County zoning is quite permissive and not in keeping with the Town's interest in maintaining rural buffers and transition areas (in order to concentrate development in the Town).
- In many limestone areas of Washington County (such as the area around Hancock), there is a concern that pollution could permeate the geology and contaminate water sources. The Town's wellhead area is potentially susceptible to contamination by volatile organic compounds from underground storage tanks (particularly gasoline tanks).
- The Hancock WWTP experiences significant levels of Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) from a number of sources: illegal sewer connections, broken pipes, manholes, lagoons, etc.
- Much of Kirkwood Park is undeveloped, and the property also lacks proper public restrooms and other public facilities. It also remains unconnected from the nearby, fully-developed Widmeyer Park. Without much signage, many residents are unaware of the current and future amenities within Kirkwood.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures **Based on strengths and weaknesses, identify the assets on which you would like to build and the challenges you would like to address. What outcomes are you trying to achieve? Where/ in what area do you want those changes to happen?** **Progress Measure: Identify how you will know that you have achieved your outcome.**	**Strategies and Action Items** **Identify strategies that will help your community to achieve each identified outcome to the left. If applicable, break down each strategy into specific action items that outline different steps of the strategy. Specify how you are planning to achieve the desired outcomes.**	**Implementation Partners** **Which community stakeholders need to be involved to realize each action step and strategy? Name specific public and/or private sector partners.**
Outcome 1: Protect, conserve, and restore water quality and natural habitat in nearby bodies of water. Progress Measures: reduction in runoff, improved water quality, number of stormwater projects completed, reductions in water usage, funding amount of wastewater improvements	Strategy A: Complete stormwater retrofits in the town's most environmentally sensitive areas to reduce nonpoint source pollution. • Perform a stormwater management study, if necessary to help encourage environmentally friendly solutions to stormwater issues. • Encourage non-structural stormwater management techniques such as buffer strips, vegetated swales, and dry wells to reduce the quantity of runoff from development sites. • Identify streets in need of new curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, or that are most flood prone. • Apply for grant funding to implement comprehensive stormwater system improvements, streetscaping, including bioretention. Strategy B: Educate and collaborate with residents and businesses on water conservation techniques in order to decrease the average gallons used per day. • Water meters should be periodically inspected to ensure proper water usage is being documented. • Conduct outreach to business owners and residents about water conservation strategies. • Look into a park or wayfinding installation that highlights water conservation. • Establish a rain barrel or rain garden program. • Identify and install meters on currently unmetered water users, such as the water softening process at the Water Treatment Plant. Strategy C: Protect the town's wellheads from contamination. • Form a local planning team to implement wellhead protection strategies and regulations. • Ensure public awareness of wellhead protection issues, focusing particularly on facilities that possess potential sources of contamination, such as gasoline stations. • Install signage to raise public awareness of the boundaries of the wellhead protection area.	Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), Washington County Department of Environmental Management, Maryland Department of Planning (MDP), Washington County Department of Planning & Zoning US Department of Agriculture US Army Corps of Engineers

	• Continue to monitor wells and potential sources of contamination, particularly underground storage tanks. • Where feasible, purchase land or easements (using state funding, where available) around the wellhead, in order to reduce the potential for contamination. Strategy D: Upgrade the wastewater treatment plant process to remove infill and infiltration (I/I) and decrease nutrient loading into Tonoloway Creek and the Potomac River. • Perform an I/I study to identify problem areas and subsequently repair or replace aging sanitary sewer mains where necessary. • Fund and conduct water leakage and I/I testing, and correct problems that are identified by these tests. • Implement Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) technology that will reduce the mass of nitrogen and phosphorus discharged.	
Outcome 2: Maintain appropriate amounts and types of land for scenic, open space, and recreational uses, and ensure that these uses are an integral part of the Town's development pattern. Progress Measures: number/cost of park improvements, number of new park users	Strategy A: Complete a five-year parks improvement and master plan. Strategy B: Complete programmed improvements to Widmeyer Park. • Implement safety and accessibility recommendations found in the Washington County Land Preservation, Parks and Recreation Plan (LPPRP) including timed lighting, emergency call boxes, and technologically advanced playground equipment that meets diverse user needs. • Pursue any uncompleted improvements from the 2005 County LPPRP: entrance signs, planter boxes, new stone walls, parking lot resurfacing, and landscaping changes. • Add a skatepark or skating area that could be used for ice skating or rollerblading, skateboarding, etc. • Paint and renovate the pavilions, adding electricity to one of them and restoring the kitchen in the Lions Club pavilion. • Convert the underutilized tennis courts to a different use. Strategy C: Complete improvements to Kirkwood Park. • Install second set of public restrooms, and add other facilities. • Connect Kirkwood to Widmeyer Park by acquiring the necessary parcel and building out and marking a trail system between them. • Add and mark mountain biking trails and other bike trail features. • Install wayfinding signage to point park visitors to amenities and trail connections to other recreational spaces in town. • Build a road along the creek to extend opportunities for fishing. Strategy D: Add educational experiences within the park system through way-	DNR, Washington County Division of Public Works - Parks & Facilities Department

	signage and identification of naturally occurring features. Strategy E: Support efforts to develop a state park at Fort Tonoloway. • Participate in planning studies, master planning, and archeological surveys. • Ensure burdens for municipal services are not created. Strategy F: Work with NPS to remove invasive species and clear out more vistas on the town's Potomac frontage.	
Outcome 3: Identify and pursue opportunities to preserve sensitive areas—particularly floodplains and areas of alluvial soils—or to utilize these areas for recreation purposes, in order to minimize the impact of periodic flooding. Progress Measures: Number of zoning and land use policies changed or enacted, tree canopy coverage, stream quality	Strategy A: Work with the county to rezone buffer Agricultural/Rural Residential areas as Environmental Conservation, the most appropriate and adjoining zoning district. Strategy B: Develop and amend town ordinances. • Develop a new ordinance or amend the Zoning Ordinance to define roles and responsibilities for the maintenance of street trees, shrubs and plantings in the planting strips along Main Street. • Amend the Town's development ordinances to restrict potential new contaminant sources in the Town's wellhead protection area. Strategy C: Pursue stream restoration programs for Little Tonoloway and Great Tonoloway Creek. Strategy D: Continue applying for tree-planting grants from the Chesapeake Bay Foundation and other agencies.	DNR, MDE, Washington County Department of Environmental Management, Washington County Department of Planning & Zoning
Outcome 4: Pursue green conservation strategies and best practices throughout Town. Progress Measures: recycling tonnage and participation rate, number of solar program participants, energy expenditures	Strategy A: Increase recycling participation by residents and businesses. • Launch a public education and outreach campaign. • Expand the hours of the drop off facility (currently 7:00 AM to 3:30 P.M. daily). • Pursue Hancock becoming a Tree City with supporting ordinances, designated tree manager and funding. Strategy B: Explore solar energy programs and other efficiency tools for town residents to save on electricity costs.	MDE, Washington County Department of Environmental Management

Economy

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

Strengths

- The Town derives much of its economic vitality from the presence of major transportation facilities. Interstates 68 and 70 and U.S. Route 522 link East Coast cities to the Midwest and the Appalachian region. Thousands of travelers and commercial vehicles use these highways daily, and many of them visit the restaurants and service stations in Hancock.
- Hancock is building on its emerging strengths in the surrounding land rich in natural beauty and resources, including the C&O Canal, Western Maryland Rail Trail, Sideling Hill road cut (items from the former rest stop Exhibit Center were relocated to the Hancock Museum), and antique auctions.
- The Town has worked with property owners to capture the benefits of tourism by encouraging repairs to storefronts and buildings.
- A few trail-related businesses have also opened, including a bike shop that was kept in business by sharing its facility with a lawn and garden store.
- Despite the decline of the orchard industry in the 1980s, today a storage facility for apples grown in other parts of Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia still exists within the Town; a fruit market and bakery (Blue Goose) was rebuilt and opened in 2011.
- Hancock is an historic destination for sportsmen and hunters — the site of the former Woodmont Rod and Gun Club, established in the late 1800s, is currently managed by Fort Frederick State Park as a State Game Preserve; another private hunting reserve was opened on a former orchard property just west of town, and attracts many visitors to the area.
- Freeway access and available manufacturing buildings make the Town attractive for warehousing or light industrial uses.
- The Fleetwood Travel Trailers plant was acquired in 2008 with a private donation and dedicated to the Town for future economic development activities. It has been renamed the Stanley Fulton Manufacturing Center. In 2016, this center won a license to grow and process (but not dispense) cannabis plants and expected to create 120+ jobs. Harvest has since extended its processing operations to another vacant warehouse adjacent to the site.
- Saputo Cheese Factory, which closed in 2014, was purchased and reopened in 2015 by Lanco Dairy Farms and remains one of the town's largest employers.
- The Town of Hancock website and its Main Street 501c3 organization, Main Street Hancock offer a local business directory and an online inventory of available commercial properties.
- The Town is actively seeking hotel development in town. Two existing bed and

Weaknesses

- The closure of several factories and plants in the 1990s and early 2000s has had significant economic impacts on the Town and forced it to reinvent itself — nearly 650 jobs were lost between 2005-08.
- Workers have been forced to find jobs farther away, in Hagerstown and Frederick, adding to their commuting times and costs.
- Some industrial facilities and Town Center storefronts remain vacant, including a flex space for 3D printing that was recent town investment. At one point, the town had nearly 25 acres of developable land and 11,000 square feet of vacant building space in the Main Street and Pennsylvania Avenue business corridors.
- Many commercial landlords are absentees who pay taxes for their vacant storefronts but do not actively seek new tenants.
- Commercial property owners on Main Street lack the capital necessary to rehabilitate the buildings they purchase.
- Unemployment is high and mean income is low — household income as of 2000 in Hancock was about 30% less than Washington County as a whole.
- Since the 2010 Comprehensive Plan, Hancock has encouraged tourist activity by pursuing the development of new lodging facilities close to I-70 at the east end of Town. However, specific plans for such development have not materialized.
- Highway travelers seeking variety or a higher quality of food likely bypass Hancock in favor of Hagerstown or Breezewood, PA. Recruiting additional restaurants – including ethnic options such as Asian/Chinese – could attract more visitors to Hancock and appeal to residents.

breakfast establishments are usually fully occupied.	

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Expand the Town's status as a tourist destination, centered on the Western Maryland Rail Trail, the C&O Canal National Historic Park, and other natural and Civil War-related resources. Progress Measures: New businesses, reported revenue/profit increases at existing businesses	Strategy A: Enhance the Western Maryland Rail Trail. • Construct small shelters with emergency phones. • Redevelop vacant properties along the Rail Trail for retail, lodging, or unique merchandise stores. • Clean the rear of buildings that adjoin the WMRT between Pennsylvania Avenue and Canal Street. • Rebuild the retaining wall between Main Street and the Western Maryland Rail Trail. • Attract a hotel developer to construct a new chain hotel in town. • Continue updating the WMRT website for the benefit of the Town. • Hold specialized events at the Hancock Primitive Park. Strategy B: Support efforts to develop a state park at Fort Tonoloway. • Participate in planning studies, master planning, and archeological surveys. • Ensure burdens for municipal services are not created. Strategy C: Improve marketing and tourism efforts to entice visitors to town attractions. • Purchase and install a canal boat or caboose. • Install a pumping system to use when the water is discolored. • Acquire donated Civil War artifacts and provide building space for their display. • Pursue rebuilding the Town's visitor center and museum. Pursue acquiring land adjacent to the Western Maryland Rail Trail and Pennsylvania Avenue for this joint purpose. Strategy D: Develop the WMRT Parking Lot. • Continue to actively work with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources to conduct improvements along the Town leased DNR land and WMRT and Canal. • Solicit proposals for development of the site. Such proposals should include parking (to replace at least part of the WMRT lot), as well as mixed use construction that is consistent with the rest of Main Street. Due to the sloping topography southward from Main Street, the site could likely be developed with a covered public parking deck and the upper floors as mixed use. Strategy E: Use a public-private partnership to develop a venue for off-road vehicle use and zipline and ropes course activities, visible from the interstate. Strategy F: Coordinate efforts to attract canal and trail visitors to town center businesses • Create a coupon or voucher program for recreational visitors to purchase meals or gifts in town • Launch new Town website repurposed to be an online marketing machine to attract	Hagerstown-Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Maryland Department of Commerce, DNR, National Park Service (NPS), C&O Canal Trust, Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development (DHCD), Washington County Department of Business Development, Washington County Office of Budget & Finance, Hancock Chamber of Commerce

	visitors and tourists.	
Outcome 2: Support economic development efforts in the East End of Hancock, near the intersection of Main Street and Interstate 70. Progress Measures: New businesses, reported revenue/profit increases at existing businesses, new jobs	Strategy A: Attract additional restaurants, a hotel, and other service uses. Strategy B: Ensure architectural compatibility with Main Street and avoid "franchise" highway development design. Strategy C: Determine ongoing uses for the site of the former SHA Western Laboratory office facility. • Maintain tenant leases. • Enact Town resolution to incentivize new local businesses suspending the collection of all Town taxes for a period to allow these businesses to become established. • Open a Town business incubation and career training site to jump start new small local businesses and provide training for workforce development. Strategy D: Create a distinctive Town gateway. Strategy E: Work with property owners along the WMRT and C&O Canal to address interrelated commercial, environmental, and recreation issues. • Negotiate the possible sale of the NPS C&O maintenance facility for reuse as artisan and industrial space. Strategy F: Obtain surplus right-of-way from NPS to enhance future development along East Main Street. Strategy G: Reuse any space vacated by NPS (including their current maintenance facility) as public works or artisan space.	DHCD, Maryland Department of Commerce, DNR, NPS, C&O Canal Trust, ARC, Hagerstown-Washington County Economic Development Commission, Washington County Department of Business Development, Washington County Office of Budget & Finance, Hancock Chamber of Commerce

Outcome 3: Encourage appropriate reuse options for former manufacturing businesses that previously operated in the Town, and the development of new industries. Progress Measures: New businesses, number and square footage of buildings reused, new jobs	Strategy A: Attract jobs related to high-technology or "green" technology industries. Strategy B: Support new private sector, non-profit Main Street Hancock organization in their efforts to revitalize the Hancock downtown business districts and attract new businesses and tourists. Strategy C: Tailor Workforce Development training to meet the needs of new high technology, green jobs, IT, and healthcare related careers. This will provide a ready workforce for new companies to relocate to Hancock.	Maryland Department of Commerce, ARC, Hagerstown-Washington County Economic Development Commission, Washington County Department of Business Development, Washington County Office of Budget & Finance, Hancock Chamber of Commerce
Outcome 4: Assist businesses in establishing, improving, or expanding in the town's commercial districts. Progress Measures: New businesses, number and square footage of buildings reused, reported revenue/profit increases at existing businesses, new jobs	Strategy A: Revise the zoning code and development review processes to encourage business improvements. • Ensure that on-premise signage in the Town Center district will be erected in proper scale, quality, and harmony to the surrounding environment. • Promote mixed uses (i.e. first floor commercial and second floor residential) and offices to increase service-based business for convenience and job growth. • Initiate design competitions for adaptive reuse projects with proposed retail development. • Link development incentives to projects along Main Street such as permit fee waivers or expedited approvals. Strategy B: Rehabilitate and/or (in rare cases) demolish buildings and shopping centers in poor condition, and pursue landscaping and streetscape enhancements. • Use DHCD Community Legacy funding to establish a revolving loan fund or grant for façade improvements to remove eyesores which impair visitor's image of the community. • Promote a façade improvement program among local business owners and owners of commercially zoned properties. • Solicit façade grant applications and monitor exterior improvements on grantee buildings. • Target the G&N Realty Shopping Center for aesthetic improvements. Strategy C: Support County and property-/business-owner efforts to develop the Orchard Business Park outside of town – currently undeveloped, the site is already home to Lanco Dairy Farms, one of the Hancock area's largest employers, and close to I-70. Strategy D: Develop and implement a marketing plan for the Town, including informational and promotional materials, Town maps, and a revised and updated website.	DHCD, MDP, Maryland Department of Commerce, Washington County Department of Planning & Zoning, Washington County Department of Business Development, Washington County Office of Budget & Finance, Hancock Chamber of Commerce

	Strategy E: Attract additional compatible service businesses to Town. • Develop a survey to understand commercial needs – determine what residents value about the businesses available to them in Hancock and what needs go unfilled by the current inventory of Town businesses. • Use technical assistance and grants available from the Hancock and County Chambers of Commerce, County Tourism, State community development and commerce offices. • Foster home occupations that are not adverse to the surrounding community. • Gauge interest in a coworking office space for home-based businesses. • Provide incentives and grants to allow upkeep and maintenance of Main Street buildings. • Promote Tax Credit programs for which extra points are available through SC designation (Job Creation, Small Commercial tax credits). Strategy F: Develop a town-owned storefront for pop-up businesses to test new concepts and products, including: • Bookstores; • Artist studios or other workspace for artists, writers, or craftsmen/women • An event/retreat center; • Outdoor experience store or sporting goods.	

Transportation

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

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Hancock has excellent freeway access, since the Town sits just south of the intersection of Interstates 70 and 68, as well as U.S. Route 522. • The town benefits from the recent completion of an extensive streetscape renovation project along Main Street (MD 144) between Virginia Avenue and Tollgate Ridge Road. Funded by the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA), these renovations included the installation of sidewalks, street lights, bicycle racks, curbs, and some street trees on both sides of Main Street, as well as on-street parking in the central business district. • The Western Maryland Rail Trail, C&O Canal towpath, and Tuscarora Trail (a western leg to the Appalachian Trail) attract long-distance cyclists, hikers, and pedestrians. • A 25-mile bicycle tour, the Woodmont – Rail Trail Bicycle Tour was recently	• Many private off-street private parking lots serving businesses and establishments along Main Street, such those on the northwest corner of Fulton Street, the southeast corner of Pennsylvania Avenue, and the shopping center parking lot at Virginia Avenue, are not visually buffered from the street, interrupting the visual character of Main Street. • The Western Maryland Rail Trail parking lot is located at the corner of Church and Main Streets, near the heart of downtown. It is the largest publicly owned site on Main Street, and creates a substantial “hole” in the Main Street’s otherwise continuous façade. • No marked on-road bicycle lanes or off-road bicycle paths are provided in town. • The park-and-ride facility is at or near capacity on business days.

designated by the County. The recreational tour heads west from Hancock through orchard country, then south through Woodmont Rod & Gun Club to an intersection with the WMRT. • On-street parking is available on several streets in the Town Center, particularly along Main Street (which has metered spaces) and portions of High Street. Off-street parking is provided in public lots to the south of Main Street at Church Street and William Street. These large lots are screened from view of Main Street and provide adequate parking to serve nearby commercial uses, as well as the WMRT and C&O Canal. A parking lot for the C&O Canal is located south of the Canal, accessible via Pennsylvania Avenue. • A park-and-ride facility is located along westbound East Main Street near Center Street and the American Legion. In 2006, the facility was expanded to 100 parking spaces. • The Interfaith Service Coalition provides monthly shopping trips to residents in need of help with transportation.	• A 2002 analysis of the MARC Brunswick Line extension from Martinsburg (via the B&O line) proposed a terminus located about one-half mile east of U.S. 522 near Hancock. The study found that this extension would be economically feasible with the support of CSX. However, since completion of this study, MARC extension to Hancock has not been advanced, due largely to concerns about CSX cooperation and operational costs. • Public transportation is not available in Hancock, although private taxi service is available. Given the Town Center's relatively compact layout the establishment of transit service is not a high priority within the town but county services in Hagerstown and elsewhere are distant and inaccessible. • The Town's ability to manage traffic resulting from road construction or interstate accidents is constrained by the barriers created by topography and the interstate highways. • Double parking during the unloading of commercial vehicles along Main Street sometimes results in blocked travel lanes. • The Town's Public Works department has been repairing local roads without county help. • Speeding is an issue on Main Street.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Maintain and enhance the roadway to support land use plans for the region. Progress Measures: traffic congestion reduction, new signage, funding for transportation improvements	Strategy A: Work with the State Highway Administration to include proper pedestrian scale signage for traffic controls, pedestrian safety, and public parking in the Town Center area. Strategy B: Work with the State Highway Administration to erect appropriate wayfinding signage on I-68 and I-70, as well as on town streets for trucks traveling through. Strategy C: Explore a new exit from I-70 to the Saputo/Lanco-Pennland cheese factory to mitigate traffic in town. Strategy D: Improve the appearance of the Town's gateway at US 522 and High Street.	Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), State Highway Administration (SHA), Washington County Division of Public Works - Highway Department
Outcome 2: Improve the pedestrian network. Progress Measures: funding for transportation improvements, linear feet of sidewalks	Strategy A: Identify gaps in the Town Center's sidewalk network, and work with landowners to eliminate these gaps and repair existing sidewalks. Strategy B: Amend the Town's development ordinances to require sidewalks and connectivity to existing adjacent sidewalks for new construction in all zoning districts except Rural Development. Strategy C: Improve pedestrian connections between the C&O Canal Towpath and the Town Center. Strategy D: Improve roadways to make them safer for bicycle traffic to encourage WMRT bicycle travelers to explore the Town center.	MDOT, SHA, Washington County Division of Public Works - Highway Department, NPS
Outcome 3: Enhance the Western Maryland Rail Trail. Progress Measures: completed street grid, decrease in traffic congestion	Strategy A: Make streetscape improvements along the Rail Trail from Church Street to Pennsylvania Avenue. Strategy B: Provide frontage access from the Rail Trail to adjoining local businesses and structures. Strategy C: Erect signs and kiosks to advertise Hancock's amenities to trail users. In some key locations, create side paths from Rail Trail to venues and businesses.	MDOT, DHCD, DNR, Washington County Division of Public Works - Parks & Facilities Department

	Strategy D: Fund new and additional lighting on the trail. Strategy E: Add more bike racks to the parking lot.	
Outcome 4: Improve the parking landscape in town. Progress measures: increased parking capacity or improved parking configurations	Strategy A: Develop a comprehensive parking plan for the Town Center that addresses parking for visitors, tenants, employees, and deliveries. • Identify off-street parking locations for tenants and employees, perhaps through a permit system in the Town's public parking lots. Strategy B: Coordinate parking plans with any future development of the WMRT Lot. • Ensure that development proposals feature parking (to replace at least part of the WMRT lot), including the option of a covered public deck with mixed use upper floors.	MDOT, Washington County Division of Public Works - Highway Department
Outcome 5: Expand non-auto options for town residents needing access to remote job opportunities or services. Progress measures: Number of carpoolers originating in or stopping in Hancock, local app downloads	Strategy A: Partner with and advertise carpooling programs such as MWCOG's free CarpoolNow mobile app which links passengers and drivers going the same way. Strategy B: Support Interfaith's efforts to coordinate transportation to healthcare and shopping needs out of town. Strategy C: Work with Washington County to provide more supportive services to senior populations in need transportation to Hagerstown and other points east.	MDOT, MWCOG, Interfaith Service Coalition

Housing

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

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Regional population shifts have led to new housing starts and relocation of residents from Hagerstown or further east. • Growth will likely take the form of infill on established residential lots. • The amount of currently planned development should be adequate to meet population projections. • A 25-unit senior housing project is available in the Town Center at the reconstructed Monterey House. • There is one subsidized housing development in Town, the Quaker Creek apartment complex on Pennsylvania Avenue. • Much of Hancock's housing stock is compatible with workforce housing needs. Houses in Hancock tend to be moderately-sized and priced (compared to other jurisdictions), while most neighborhoods are close to the Town's services and commercial establishments, reducing transportation costs for basic services. The town is a popular location for police officers and other middle class professionals working elsewhere in Washington and other nearby counties. Large homes are adequately sized for families. • Homeownership programming facilitated by DHCD has occurred in town. • The Interfaith Service Coalition supports the Good Samaritan House which provides temporary housing for individuals experiencing hardship.	• The population of Hancock's town limits has had an overall declining trend. • Hancock has a higher percentage of its population in the 65+ cohort (21% of the total population), and slightly less in its under-18 cohort (18% of the total population) than Washington County as a whole (14 and 23 percent of the total County population, respectively). • Large future residential development areas are limited within the present municipal limits or the growth boundary. In addition, some residential areas have remained vacant or unimproved for years. • Slightly more than half of the Town's occupied housing units in 2000 were renter-occupied (376 units). By comparison, approximately 66% of occupied units in Washington County were owner-occupied. • There is a need for affordable, quality workforce housing. • While rental prices in Hancock (relative to income) were comparable to those in the County and state, mortgage costs were substantially higher. • Much of the Town's housing inventory is more than a half-century old. • Maintenance is a challenge and unaffordable, there are some abandoned homes with debris with roughly 10% of properties vacant in town (most of which are foreclosures). • The prevalence of kerosene and firewood home heating creates the risk of fires.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Encourage a variety of housing options, with the goal of ensuring housing supply that is affordable to all citizens of the Town. Progress Measures: homeownership rate, number of affordable units	Strategy A: Make official the town's support for a variety of housing types in any new residential development constructed in the East End outside of the municipal limits. Strategy B: Encourage the development of more senior-friendly housing units or retrofit existing homes to be more senior-friendly, so that more Hancock residents can "age in place." • Allow for age-restricted subdivisions through the Elderly Rental Housing Program. • Attract a developer for an assisted living facility in town. • Identify potential locations for a second senior housing facility.	DHCD, housing developers, U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development

Outcome 2: Encourage residential growth in Town to reduce vacant homes and restore stability to the housing stock. Progress Measures: homeownership rate, number of new residents in town core, home values	Strategy A: Encourage, through both private and public actions, the renovation or removal of substandard or abandoned housing. • Implement a residential façade improvement program for homeowners to make subsidized upgrades and repairs to older exteriors. • Work with landlords to develop and provide incentives to upgrade rental property in ways which do not cause exorbitant rent increases. Strategy B: Provide outreach programs and engage with property owners, potential residents, and housing developers, in order to make more units available to new residents. • Address vacancy/absentee issues – work with housing providers or rehabilitators to acquire and renovate properties for sale • Address income/profit feasibility issues. Strategy C: Work with homeowners, homebuyers, and realtors to facilitate sales. • Create a database of available properties and homes for sale. • Liaise with realtors across the county to promote Hancock as a destination for affordable homeowner opportunities with additional incentives like the Maryland Mortgage Program's You've Earned It initiative. • Create and facilitate local down payment assistance programs, including with top employers like Lanco Dairy and Harvest.	DHCD, housing developers, HUD, current and prospective homeowners
Outcome 3: Promote high standards of property maintenance that lead to stable home values and neighborhoods. Progress measures: changes to the town code, number of code incidents enforced, number of properties improved	Strategy A: Adopt and enforce a property maintenance code, such as the International Property Maintenance Code, to regulate the condition of buildings – especially vacant ones. Strategy B: Establish license and inspection requirements for all rental residential properties. Strategy C: Re-engage or divest properties from absentee landlords • Develop and use a strategy that places liens or other code enforcement and compliance techniques on tax-delinquent or otherwise unattended properties • Partner with a property rehabilitator to improve properties for re-sale to responsible local owners	MDP, Washington County Planning & Zoning

Outcome 4: Ensure that homeownership remains affordable for existing residents. Progress measures: homeownership rate, number of efficiency repairs completed	Strategy A: Promote energy efficiency improvements such as new windows, insulation, and appliances. • Work with Washington County, DHCD, MEA, and other state agencies to obtain and advertise funding for such upgrades. Strategy B: Create a revolving loan fund or residential façade improvement program for homeowner repairs and upgrades.	Washington County Planning & Zoning, DHCD, MEA

Quality of Life

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

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Hancock has an idyllic location along the Potomac River and within the Appalachian Mountains. • The town has a historic reputation as a stagecoach stop, a trading post, a ferry/canal town, a place of railroad activity, and currently a rest stop for traffic on I-68 and I-70. • Each year, the Hancock Lions Organization holds a "Canal-Apple Days" festival in remembrance of the B&O Canal's heyday, along with the former orchard industry that once abounded in the Hancock area. • The great majority of architectural resources in the Town date from the early 1900s – including downtown facades and larger homes on Main and High Streets. • There is some Civil War heritage associated with Hancock • Despite Hancock's proximity to freeways, the Town has retained its unique small town character, a valuable marketing asset. • Both the elementary and shared middle-high school buildings are located nearby to the town center and in town limits. The school's small population results in small class sizes. • A substantial number of students from Hancock attend the County's Technical High School in Hagerstown. • In addition to the two public schools, Head Start programs, a privately-operated day care and preschool, and numerous home-based childcare facilities exist. • Hagerstown Community College, the oldest community college in Maryland, is a local higher and continuing education asset. • Hancock War Memorial Library is a branch of the Washington County Free Library (which is based in Hagerstown). • Hancock's main park is the 30-acre Widmeyer Park. Located on Main Street, the park contains ballfields, tennis and basketball courts, picnic pavilions, and the Town library. Widmeyer Park serves as a focal point for the community, hosting many community events such as carnivals, Canal Apple days, Winterfest, and the Halloween Parade. Recent improvements to the parks include a new bandshell, and extensive maintenance of the ballfields. • The Hancock Middle-High School supports recreational needs with two ball fields, tennis courts, and a football field. The Hancock Community Gym, adjacent to the school, is used by the community for summer and winter recreation programs. Other recreation areas include Gerber Field (the Town's Little League baseball park), and a variety of neighborhood parks.	• Hancock lacks a "cluster" of amenities, with most recreational, shopping, and other daily needs spread out around town. Many other services available to Washington County residents are over 30 miles away. • The Interfaith Service Coalition has limited capacity and funding to expand its programming. • Hancock Middle-High School is the smallest high school in the state and is significantly under capacity; WCPS projects that enrollment will continue to slowly decline. The possible merging of HMHS with Clear Springs schools has been discussed. • The Town of Hancock does not have historic district zoning authority, and there is no formal historic district in the Town. That opportunity notwithstanding, establishment of a historic district does raise concerns about architectural and other requirements that might be placed on owners of historically-designated properties. • Despite Hancock's role in Civil War skirmishes, being cited in the Maryland Heritage Areas Heart of the Civil War Management Plan (2006), and adoption of the plan by Hancock, the state did not deem the Town's role substantial enough to warrant listing as an approved or programmed Targeted Investment Zone (TIZ). • Much of Kirkwood Park is undeveloped, and the property still lacks proper public restrooms and other public facilities. • The town Swimming Pool at Widmeyer Park closed in 2015 – discussions have been underway to build a replacement but have stalled or slowed over two consecutive summers. • A fire destroyed one of Widmeyer Park's pavilions in May 2017, causing $30,000 in damage. • The 2017 Canal Apple Days festival was canceled due to limited capacity to host it by the Lions Club. • Local educational programs in STEM or other high-tech fields, such as those at Hagerstown Community College or USMH, feel out of reach for residents looking for professional development in more traditional trades. • Hancock has limited access to specialty healthcare providers, with the closest facilities in Morgantown, WV, Winchester, VA, or Hagerstown. • There is a dearth of youth programming and lack of town pride from the younger and school-aged population.

• The Town currently has a staff of four police officers, each working approximately 30 hours per week. This equates to a full-time equivalent of 3 officers. The Town's police department is supplemented by personnel from the Washington County Sheriff's Office and Maryland State Police to provide 24-hour police coverage. Using the IACP standards, the Town's police force is adequate to serve existing and future population. • Hancock Volunteer Fire Department has two paid positions, and relies on volunteers for the remainder of its fire response. The fire department recently renovated its facility on Fulton Street. Based upon current and future population projections the Town's fire protection services are adequate. • The Maryland Historical Trust's (MHT) Inventory of Historic Properties includes approximately 350 sites in Hancock—primarily homes or commercial establishments in the Town Center. Properties included on the Inventory are eligible for inclusion on the National Register. • The town's historic whiskey warehouse was preserved as a bed-and-breakfast and a bank on Main Street was also recently restored; both efforts received a historic preservation award from the Washington County Commissioners. • Due to the long distance to full-service healthcare facilities, the Tri-State Health Center was opened in Hancock as a non-profit, federally-supported, multi-jurisdictional medical facility. Services include primary treatment, education, health screening, pediatrics (including immunizations), laboratory services, and on-site medical services for mental health and obstetrics/gynecology. • The Town Hall and Community Center houses administrative offices, the police department as well as a community center and museum. Along with public use for town services, volunteer groups work to host dance, drama, and musical events in the space. • The Interfaith Service Coalition (ISC) is a United Way-affiliated agency that serves as a clearinghouse for services and emergency funds provided by various organizations. Founded in Hancock in 1989, it focuses on community outreach to lower-income and at-risk persons and families. • Active community groups include the Rotary Club, Lions Club, Boy Scouts, and Historical Society. • A new Recreation committee was added to the Parks committee to support community activities in the town's park spaces. • Hancock In Motion is an ad hoc committee that aims to restore and bring new regular low cost events to residents and show appreciation for the small town.	

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Maintain appropriate amounts and types of land for scenic, open space, and recreational uses, and ensure that these uses are an integral part of the Town's development pattern. Progress measures: number and cost of park improvements, event attendance	Strategy A: Complete a five-year parks improvement and master plan. Strategy B: Improve Widmeyer Park with timed lighting, emergency call boxes, technologically advanced and accessible playground equipment, resurfaced and safer basketball and tennis courts, repaired pavilion, signs, planter boxes, walls, parking lot resurfacing, and landscaping changes. Strategy C: Install additional restrooms and other public facilities in Kirkwood Park, along with new mountain biking trails and features, new road cuts into the fishing area, wayfinding signage, equipment, a bandshell, and relevant storage space for movie screenings and other events. Strategy D: Connect Widmeyer and Kirkwood by acquiring land and building and marking new trails. Strategy E: Work with the National Park Service (NPS) to increase the extent of rewatering (improvements that allow the canal to hold water again), and to remove trees and vegetation between the Canal and the Potomac River to improve views of the river. Strategy F: Bring more activities to town parks. • Support and expand geocaching features. • Screen movies and plan concerts and shows for a new bandshell facility. • Work with the Lions Club to revamp the Canal Apple Days festival.	DNR, Washington County Division of Public Works - Parks & Facilities Department, DHCD, NPS, C&O Canal Trust, Pro Pools, Washington County Free Library system, ARC, Parks and Recreation Committee

Outcome 2: Encourage the restoration of historical structures and preservation of historic assets where economically and physically feasible. Progress measures: number and cost of historic restoration and preservation activities	Strategy A: Expand efforts to highlight the Town's historic resources and further enhance the Town's economic development activities related to its history. • Work with MHT to thoroughly understand the potential advantages and disadvantages of various approaches to historic preservation, and to choose the strategy that best fits the Town's aspirations and limitations. • Work to relocated or acquire property to build new Town museum and visitors' center close to WMRT within the Downtown Business District. Strategy B: Work with the Maryland Heritage Areas Authority to seek Targeted Investment Zone (TIZ) status as the Heart of the Civil War footprint expands through Washington County. • Acquire Civil War artifact donations and building space for their display and storage. Strategy C: Support property owners with or pursue public efforts to rehabilitate and reuse of historic structures in town. • Explore and implement design guidelines for historic property rehabilitation efforts.	DHCD, MDP - Maryland Historic Trust (MHT), Maryland Heritage Areas Authority (MHAA), Washington County Department of Planning & Zoning, Hagerstown-Washington County Convention and Visitors Bureau, Hancock Chamber of Commerce
Outcome 3: Ensure that the visual appeal of Hancock's Town Center is maintained and enhanced. Progress measures: number and cost of Main Street improvements, new ordinances	Strategy A: Develop an ordinance to more clearly define roles and responsibilities for the maintenance of landscaping in the planting strip along Main Street for adjacent property owners. Although property owners are currently responsible for maintenance of this landscaping, the Town often performs maintenance, due to a lack of clarity regarding these responsibilities. Strategy B: Continue to work with owners on Main Street that face the WMRT to encourage maintenance and to improve the visual character of the backs of buildings that are visible from the WMRT. Strategy C: Install public art and commission murals and other visual enhancements to the Town Center. Strategy D: Establish design guidelines that can be recommended for improvements made by property owners in the town center.	DHCD, MDP, Washington County Department of Planning & Zoning, Hancock Chamber of Commerce

Outcome 4: Promote increased community engagement, civic pride and involvement, and programming targeting the youth population and families. Progress measures: number of new events, meeting and event attendance	Strategy A: Stream town council meetings live on television and Town website or virtual platforms to promote community involvement. Strategy B: Determine ways to revive, support, and expand town programming such as the Canal Apple Days festival and Hancock In Motion activities. • Improve advertising mechanisms for existing town events, such as the sparsely attended Winterfest. Strategy C: Add murals, public art pieces, historic statues, and signs for buildings, streets, and infrastructure in town. Strategy D: Organize events like town and canal cleanups and an annual Hancock "Homecoming" on Main Street to coincide with the high school's and generate civic pride. Strategy F: Support Interfaith's efforts to employ a part-time mentor program coordinator from Big Brothers Big Sisters. Strategy G: Attract a statewide Little League tournament. Strategy H: Organize and hold a resource fair that brings together local, county, state, and other agencies and groups (including NPS) to discuss their services and network with residents and one another. Strategy I: Generate more volunteer opportunities and regularly post and update them on the town website. Strategy J: Develop and use a town survey to determine additional events, programming, and services desired by residents, business owners, and visitors.	Shenandoah Business Solutions (town website), Lions Club, Habitat For Humanity, Parks and Recreation Committee, NPS, Washington County government, ISC
Outcome 5: Keep residents and visitors safe and deter increases in town's the crime rate. Progress measures: crime rate	Strategy A: Procure firearms, vehicles, and upgrades to the cameras for the police, fire, and rescue departments. Strategy B: Improve surveillance and enforcement of street activity to avoid crime incidents and disturbances in public spaces or Main Street shops. • Remove old/dead trees that block views.	Hancock Police Department, Hancock Volunteer Fire Department, Main Street shop owners

Local Planning and Land Use

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

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Hancock's greatest asset for attracting development is the underutilized land at the eastern edge of Town. • The Town's water system has adequate capacity to support future development (including economic development activities). There is also adequate reserve supply to accommodate unexpectedly rapid residential growth, or a specialized economic development activity. • Hancock has adequate wastewater treatment capacity to support projected growth through 2030, as well as for specialized commercial or industrial purposes or to accommodate unexpectedly rapid residential growth. • The Town Center district permits by right a variety of mixed uses, such as commercial, multi-family apartments, medical offices, banks, and lodging. • Hancock has made great strides to correct the issue of system water lost through broken and cracked water lines. • Hancock has part-time access to a Circuit Rider for supporting writing grant applications. • The town is in good fiscal condition thanks to the leadership of the previous administration.	• Hancock has only had a townwide zoning ordinance since 2007. Previously, the Town addressed land use concerns in subdivision setbacks and site-specific ordinances. This led to a suburban and highway-oriented neighborhood character on the far west and east ends of Main Street. • The state Department of Planning raised some opposition to the town's proposed growth areas as identified in its most recent comprehensive plan. • The diminished economic base (compared to recent years), along with topographic constraints will likely inhibit growth. The amount of undeveloped land within the Town not subject to slope or floodplain restrictions for development is significantly limited. • The WWTP has physical capacity to accept additional wastewater, but must be upgraded to a higher level of treatment to meet state environmental requirements. It is likely that the WWTP will become subject to nutrient caps (limits on the amount of nitrogen and phosphorus that the WWTP may discharge) by 2030.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items →	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Protect the natural environment and maintain the town's fiscal status and the efficiency of its public services by concentrating development to appropriate areas with existing infrastructure. Progress measures: number of infill lots redeveloped, capacity measures for public services	Strategy A: Apply the TND overlay zone to the areas of Main Street between U.S. 522 and Church Street. Strategy B: Pursue WWTP upgrades to implement Enhanced Nutrient Removal (ENR) technology and reduce the mass of nitrogen and phosphorus discharged into Tonoloway Creek and the Potomac River. Strategy C: Actively pursue opportunities to participate in point-to-point or nonpoint-to-point nutrient trading, or "bubble" systems, to secure additional wastewater capacity for the Town. Strategy D: Work closely with Washington County, Allegany County and jurisdictions in West Virginia and Pennsylvania to address interjurisdictional growth management issues and pursue regional growth strategies. Strategy E: Designate and appoint a Town Tree Manager as part of the strategy of Hancock becoming a Tree City USA member community and enforce ordinances to protect the Town's green spaces.	MDP, Washington County Environmental Management, Washington County Planning & Zoning
Outcome 2: Maintain a safe and adequate drinking water supply and adequate wastewater treatment capacity to serve the existing population and projected growth. Progress measures: water and sewer capacity	Strategy A: Procure a new well and water storage tank north of I-70 to increase water supply (particularly fire flow) for the East End and provide system redundancy. ● Allocate capital funds. ● Apply for ARC grants. Strategy B: Rehabilitate and improve the Hancock WWTP system. ● Allocate capital funds. ● Apply for ARC, MDE, HUD and USDA grants.	ARC, MDP, Washington County Environmental Management, Washington County Planning & Zoning US Department of Agriculture US Housing and Urban Development
Outcome 3: Ensure that future commercial development is visually compatible with the Town's overall aesthetic vision and—particularly in the Town Center—will create a positive image for visitors. Progress measures: implementation of design guidelines, storefronts and commercial facilities improved	Strategy A: Adopt specific guidelines for commercial architecture, signage, site planning, and landscape design. Strategy B: Incentivize storefront uniformity with commercial façade improvement grants.	MDP, DHCD, Maryland Department of Commerce, Washington County Planning & Zoning, Washington County Department of Business Development, Hancock Chamber of Commerce

Outcome 4: Build local capacity for planning and town management activities. Progress measure: Number of projects completed, reduced time to deliver services to town residents	Strategy A: Secure an AmeriCorps or other volunteer/stipend-based employee to build capacity within the town government. Strategy B: Work with local university and community college students to offer volunteer or contracted work opportunities in support of town initiatives. Strategy C: Launch or partner with programs that hire senior citizens or retirees to volunteer in town or other facilities, similar to the ways in which the Bowles House and town museum are run now.	Town departments, Corporation for National and Community Service, Hagerstown Community College, University System of Maryland at Hagerstown