



# SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

## APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION RENEWAL

### Eligible Applicants:

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

### 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

<http://dhcd.maryland.gov/>

LARRY HOGAN, *Governor*

KENNETH C. HOLT, *Secretary*

BOYD K. RUTHERFORD, *Lt. Governor*

## **OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

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

## **PURPOSE OF RENEWAL AND STREAMLINED APPLICATION**

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

## **APPLICATION ASSISTANCE**

If a local government has limited capacity, staff from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and Department of Planning (MDP) will be available to assist local government officials through the application process.

Please contact Mary Kendall at DHCD if you would like to request or learn more about this assistance (see page iii for contact information).

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES BENEFITS**

The benefits of a Sustainable Community designation are substantial. The SC designation is a threshold requirement for application to several State of Maryland revitalization programs (such as the Community Legacy Program and Strategic Demolition Fund listed below). Other programs offer additional points or preference in the application process. (See attachment “Sustainable Community Benefits”). The Sustainable Communities designation provides access to a suite of resources that can support housing and community development, local transportation enhancements, tax credit programs and programs to support a healthier environment. Taken together, these resources can promote safer, healthier and more attractive communities for families to live and put down roots.

**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 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 Fund catalyzes public and private investment in the reuse of vacant and underutilized sites. These funds are restricted to Sustainable Communities.

### **Application Eligibility and Threshold Requirements**

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

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

### **Threshold Requirements**

All Sustainable Community applications must meet the following threshold requirements:

- 1) Sustainable Community Area boundaries must be entirely within a Priority Funding Area (PFA) and should be an area in need of renewal and reinvestment that would benefit from a targeted long-term strategy;
- 2) The proposed Sustainable Community is within or near a town center or transportation center, or there is a need for financing assistance for small businesses, nonprofit organizations or microenterprises;
- 3) The updated Plan must be consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans;
- 4) A Sustainable Communities Workgroup is re-convened and a roster of members must be provided with the application.

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

### **Application Evaluation**

The Sustainable Community application for renewal will be evaluated based on the reporting of the accomplishments achieved and a 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 MDP website at:

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

### **Application Training**

The Department will be hosting various webinars for communities planning to submit a renewal application. Attendance at a minimum of one application training session is strongly encouraged for all applicants. Contact Mary Kendall (contact information below) to schedule an application training.

### **Application Submission**

Applications will be submitted both electronically/digitally and via postal mail. Each applicant must submit two hard copies (one original and one copy) of their application with all required attachments. DHCD reserves the right to not consider incomplete applications.

The first printed page of the electronic application is a Table of Contents (see page vi). 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 or flash drive. 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

### **Site Visits, Follow-up Discussion, Technical Assistance**

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

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 for renewal.

### **Approval**

Approval of applications will be made by the Governor’s Smart Growth Coordinating Committee on the recommendation of an inter-agency review team. The review team is coordinated by the Department of Housing and Community Development.

*All questions related to application content, please contact Mary Kendall at 410-209-5800 or by email at [Mary.Kendall@maryland.gov](mailto:Mary.Kendall@maryland.gov).*

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLAN ELEMENTS**

Ongoing designation as a Sustainable Community is contingent upon the continuation, expansion, and/or modification of a multi-year investment strategy that addresses the topic areas of Environment, Economy, Transportation, Housing, Quality of Life, and Land Use/Local Planning. The table below provides a non-exhaustive list of ideas that can be incorporated into each element as they are addressed in the sections that follow in this application.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Environmental accomplishments and objectives may include improvement of quality of land, water, air or watersheds, increased tree canopy, mitigation or adaptation to issues related to sea level rise, reduction of carbon footprint, improved energy conservation, access to local foods, green infrastructure, stormwater infrastructure/management, construction of parks, trails and other recreation facilities, recycling, improved water and sewer capacity, etc.

**ECONOMY:** Economic accomplishments and objectives may include increased regional accessibility, business attraction/retention, improved health of the business district and decreased commercial vacancies, improved accessibility to employment opportunities and economic drivers, adopted local policies/regulations that encourage economic growth, enhanced marketing and tourism, improvements to cultural and historic assets, etc.

**TRANSPORTATION:** Transportation accomplishments and objectives may include increased access to transit corridors, improved pedestrian safety and increased accessibility/sidewalks, alternative modes of transportation, such as bikeways and trails, public transit, such as bus and rail, carpooling, improved parking and road conditions, etc.

**HOUSING:** Housing accomplishments and objectives may include an increase in affordable, workforce or market rate housing, either for homeownership or rental, improved housing conditions and values, increase in housing programs, reduction in foreclosures and residential vacancies, increase in property values and home sale values, etc.

**QUALITY OF LIFE:** Quality of life accomplishments and objectives may 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.

**LAND USE/LOCAL PLANNING:** Land use accomplishments and objectives may include changes to zoning, improved land use policies, increase/decrease in taxes and fees, etc.

## **RENEWAL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS**

The Sustainable Communities application for renewal has three sections:

A. Contact information, General Information, Organizational Capacity:

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

B. Qualitative and Quantitative Report on accomplishments over past five years:

The report is an opportunity to reflect on any accomplishments achieved in the Sustainable Community area. It is a tool used to evaluate if the SC applicant achieved its intended outcomes, implemented the strategies initially envisioned and identify what resources were used. Renewal applicants are encouraged to discuss how priorities, actions, and objectives were or were not achieved across the six elements listed on the previous page (iv), including how any of the elements may have interrelated during the five initial years of SC designation.

C. Sustainable Communities Action Plan Update:

The Sustainable Communities Action Plan has been revised so that it less time consuming and focused on developing a strategic implementation plan. Renewal applicants are asked to use their previous Sustainable Communities applications as a basis for their updated Action Plan. You may identify which weaknesses have not yet been addressed or which strategies have not yet been implemented. Include your revitalization priorities for the next five years, basing them on your community's current strengths and weaknesses.

**CHECKLIST AND TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**APPLICANT:** Jeremy Hurlbutt, AICP, Director of Planning

**NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY:** Town of La Plata

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:

- ✓ **Section A - Sustainable Community Renewal Applicant Information**
- ✓ **Section B – Sustainable Community Renewal Report (Projects, Strategies and Partners)**
- ✓ **Section C – Sustainable Community Renewal Action Plan Update (Matrix)**
- ✓ **Section D – Sustainable Communities Workgroup Roster**
- ✓ **Section E – Signature Letter (acknowledging Disclosure Authorization and Certification)**
- ✓ **Section F – CD-ROM:** The CD-ROM should include the following contents:
  - Map in pdf format of the proposed Sustainable Community modification area
  - **GIS shapefile of the modified 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](mailto:Brad.Wolters@maryland.gov))
  - Pictures (jpeg format) of your accomplished projects of the last five years (as indicated in Section B)

**I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY RENEWAL APPLICANT INFORMATION**

**Name of Sustainable Community:**

Town of La Plata

**Name of Renewal Applicant:**

Jeremy Hurlbutt, AICP, Director of Planning

**Applicant's Federal Identification Number:** 52-6002080

**Applicant's Street Address:** 305 Queen Anne Street, P.O. Box 2268

**City:** La Plata      **County:** Charles      **State:** Maryland      **Zip Code:** 20646

**Phone Number:** (301) 934-8421      **Fax Number:** (301) 934-5724      **Web Address:** www. TownofLaPlata.org

**Sustainable Community Renewal Application Local Contact:**

**Name:** Jeremy Hurlbutt      **Title:** Director of Planning

**Address:** 305 Queen Anne Street      **City:** La Plata      **State:** Maryland      **Zip Code:** 20646

**Phone Number:** (301) 934-8421      **Fax Number:** (301) 934-5724

**E-mail Address:** JHurlbutt@TownofLaPlata.org

**Other Sustainable Community Contacts:**

**Name:** Michelle Miner      **Title:** Assistant Town Manager

**Address:** 305 Queen Anne Street      **City:** La Plata      **State:** Maryland      **Zip Code:** 20646

**Phone Number:** (301) 798-4165      **Fax Number:** (301) 934-5724

**E-mail Address:** MMiner@TownofLaPlata.org



**I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY – General Information**

**A. Please inform us if you want to propose any changes to the existing Sustainable Community Area(s)**

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

The current Sustainable Community Area for the Town of La Plata is approximately 15 acres in size and is bounded by Talbot Street extended to the North, the CSX railroad tracks to the East, Charles Street (Route 6) to the South and Washington Avenue to the West. After reviewing the Town's Comprehensive Plan, Vision Plan, Downtown Plan and with guidance from the State, we have chosen to expand our Sustainable Community boundary. The proposed Sustainable Community Area will be approximately 192 acres in size and will incorporate most of the downtown core. The Downtown Plan made several recommendations for improvements that extend beyond the current Sustainable Community Area, including a focus on expanding key infrastructure and improving the economic vitality of the area. The Town has created a vision for a walkable downtown, improved streetscapes, network connections and neighborhood revitalization in the surrounding communities. After the 2002 tornado, the Town of La Plata was designated as a Community Legacy (CL) and assistance was provided to help rebuild the downtown core. In order to continue forward with our efforts to redevelop and revitalize the downtown, it is important that the Sustainable Community Boundary is expanded to allow communities to benefit from the many programs offered under the Sustainable Communities initiative.

**(2) If you are not requesting any changes to your boundary, explain why. N/A**

**(3) Include the following in as an attachment (if requesting a modification to your current boundary):**

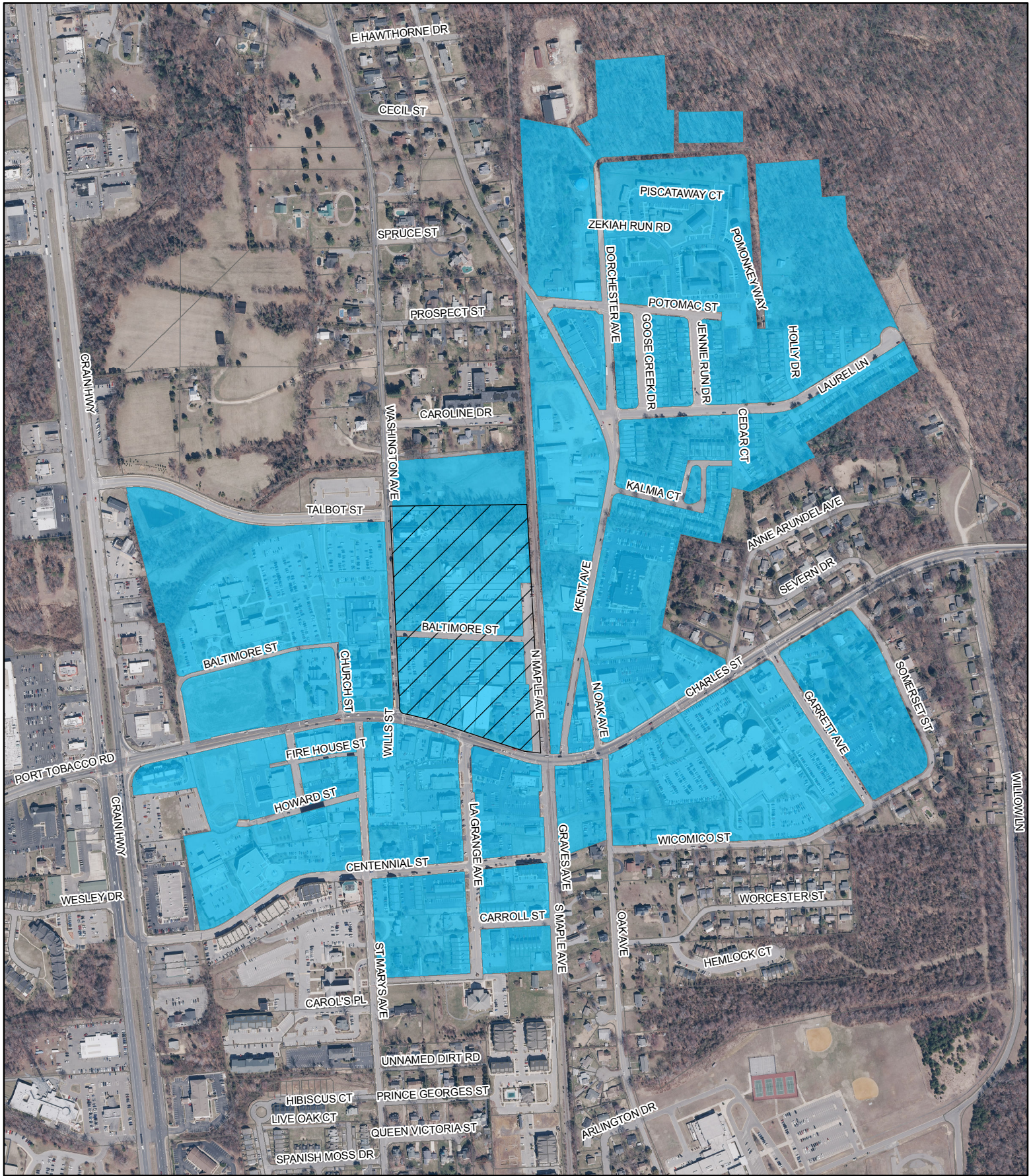
- a. PDF or JPEG of modified Sustainable Communities boundary map;
- b. GIS shapefiles of modified Sustainable Community boundary (mapped to the parcel boundary),

**(4) Approximate number of acres of entire SC Area: 192 acres**



**(5) Existing federal, state or local designations:**

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





Legend

-  Current SC Boundary
-  Proposed SC Boundary





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

Town Staff used ERIS community builder data to provide the following demographic changes in the last 5 years. The proposed sustainable community area could not use general census data since the boundaries crossed census block designations and would have included information that does not represent the area.

Summary	Census 2010	2016	2021			
Population	693	767	831			
Households	264	291	316			
Families	169	185	201			
Average Household Size	2.47	2.50	2.51			
Owner Occupied Housing Units	153	159	172			
Renter Occupied Housing Units	111	132	144			
Median Age	34.8	34.3	32.5			
Trends: 2016 - 2021 Annual Rate	Area	State	National			
Population	1.62%	0.84%	0.84%			
Households	1.66%	0.75%	0.79%			
Families	1.67%	0.68%	0.72%			
Owner HHs	1.58%	0.77%	0.73%			
Median Household Income	0.39%	1.96%	1.89%			
Households by Income	2016		2021			
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent		
	<\$15,000	5518.9%	7323.1%			
	\$15,000 - \$24,999	196.5%	206.3%			
	\$25,000 - \$34,999	155.2%	144.4%			
	\$35,000 - \$49,999	227.6%	227.0%			
	\$50,000 - \$74,999	6622.7%	5316.8%			
	\$75,000 - \$99,999	3512.0%	4413.9%			
	\$100,000 - \$149,999	3813.1%	4413.9%			
	\$150,000 - \$199,999	237.9%	257.9%			
\$200,000+	175.8%	216.6%				
Median Household Income	\$60,202		\$61,377			
Average Household Income	\$77,715		\$81,107			
Per Capita Income	\$30,306		\$31,465			
Population by Age	Census 2010		2016		2021	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
	0 - 4	527.5%	516.7%	587.0%		
	5 - 9	608.6%	516.7%	495.9%		
	10 - 14	537.6%	597.7%	506.0%		
	15 - 19	466.6%	567.3%	587.0%		
	20 - 24	395.6%	668.6%	8310.0%		
	25 - 34	9914.3%	10714.0%	14417.3%		
	35 - 44	9513.7%	9212.0%	9311.2%		
	45 - 54	10214.7%	10714.0%	9010.8%		
	55 - 64	628.9%	7710.1%	9411.3%		
	65 - 74	365.2%	486.3%	566.7%		
	75 - 84	284.0%	293.8%	334.0%		
	85+	223.2%	233.0%	242.9%		
Race and Ethnicity	Census 2010		2016		2021	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
	White Alone	34950.4%	34344.7%	32439.0%		
	Black Alone	28140.5%	34144.5%	40448.6%		

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section A

American Indian Alone	5	0.7%	7	0.9%	9	1.1%
Asian Alone	24	3.5%	31	4.0%	37	4.5%
Pacific Islander Alone	2	0.3%	3	0.4%	4	0.5%
Some Other Race Alone	9	1.3%	13	1.7%	17	2.0%
Two or More Races	23	3.3%	29	3.8%	36	4.3%
Hispanic Origin (Any Race)	26	3.8%	40	5.2%	51	6.1%

**Data Note:** Income is expressed in current dollars.

**Source:** U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Esri forecasts for 2016 and 2021.

### B. Organizational Structure, Experience and Public Input:

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

The La Plata Town Center Corporation (LPTCC) was created in 2011 and is dedicated to the mission of downtown development by trying to continue the 2000 Vision Plan goals with a focus on the current Sustainable Community Area. The LPTCC is made up of representatives from the La Plata community, which includes; architects, developers, business owners, development attorney's, County Planning officials, and County Economic Development staff. They serve as an advocate for the improvement, betterment, and revitalization of businesses and civic interests and concerns for the Town Center area in downtown La Plata. The board is made of at least seven (7) members and no more than eleven (11). Currently the board has seven (7) members, including:

- President - Steven Ball, Charles County Director of Planning
- Vice President - Larry Abell, Lawrence Abell and Associates Inc.
- Secretary/Treasurer - Stephen Scott, Scott Law Group, LLC
- Larry Sanders, Edward L. Sanders Insurance Inc.
- Rob Brough, CMI General Contractors, Inc.
- Mathew Simpson, Councilman – Ward 1
- Roy Hale, Former Town of La Plata Mayor

Members and staff have changed over the last five (5) years with some members leaving or being replaced, but the represented groups (lawyer, business owner, county economic development, County Planner, Architect, Developer, etc.) have stayed the same.

The LPTCC work was initially funded by the Town of La Plata and has received \$15,000 a year. The LPTCC was formed after the Vision Team identified the area in downtown that would benefit most from community support beyond market forces. The Vision Team was a group of citizens that reviewed the status of the Vision Plan helping to create and guide the LPTCC. Since 2011 the LPTCC has worked with Kishimoto, Gordon, Dalaya (KDG) Architects to look at possible locations for the La Plata branch of the Charles County Library. The group also worked with Maryland Main Street to develop a plan following the Main Street model.

In 2015, KDG Architects also conducted a planning study and held a meeting with property owners within the current Sustainable Community area to review and consider public and stakeholder input. The LPTCC has tried to work with property owners and local officials to promote revitalization in the Sustainable Community area. The goal is to build a support system that helps make the LPTCC financially supported by a broader group of property owners and interested parties.

The La Plata Town Center Corporation (LPTCC) partnered with the Urban Land Institute (ULI) in 2016, to create a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP). The TAP looked at few key questions that the LPTCC hoped would help spark ideas for redevelopment. After the ULI TAP, the focus has been on retaining the Library in Downtown La Plata, providing pedestrian connections and streetscape improvements. The Town believes that expanding the Sustainable Communities area also will allow more flexibility in development opportunities and support business and property owners so they can improve their properties.

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

The La Plata Town Center Corporation (LPTCC) has a strong commitment to improving La Plata and has been very active in trying to address the issues they find most important. The Town's existing master plans and several studies conducted by the LPTCC have provided a clear vision for future development. The LPTCC has a mixture of development professionals that offer their own expertise to help implement the goals of the Sustainable Communities plan.

There are still many challenges for the LPTCC to carry out the vision for the Sustainable Communities Plan. The downtown is dominated by established corporations and government entities that make change difficult and over time the streetscape, pedestrian connections and a sense of place have deteriorated.

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

The Vision Plan for Greater La Plata and the Downtown Plan were the basis for the Sustainable Communities Action Plan. The Vision Plan for Greater La Plata was completed in 2000, with the objective to allow key stakeholders to define the preferred future for the Town and identify goals for implementation. The Downtown Plan was prepared in 2001 by a Citizen's Task Force and was intended to be the first step in implementing the Vision Plan and helped create the La Plata Town Center Corporation.

The LPTCC has conducted several studies that have allowed for community input, including the 2014 Main Street study and most recently the ULI TAP that focused on our current Sustainable Communities area. The TAP included a stakeholders meeting and a presentation of recommendations from the ULI development professionals.

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section A

The Town is currently in the process of updating the Comprehensive plan which will provide opportunities for citizens to comment on all landuse and development issues in the town.

**(4) Would you like any technical assistance from State agencies to help expand the capacity of your SC Workgroup or implement your SC plan?**

The LPTCC and/or the Town would be interested in assistance to help facilitate two (2) main goals for the downtown area. The first goal is to relocate two (2) existing industrial corporations from the downtown area to provide a location for a new library. The second goal is to improve the streetscape along Maryland Route 6 (Charles Street) and Washington Aveune in order to create pedestrian connections and a sense of place.

# **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY RENEWAL REPORT**

## **PART I: QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT**

### **Purpose:**

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

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

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

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

#### **Example – Accomplishment 1**

*Outcome: Improved stormwater management*

#### **Projects:**

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

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

#### **Partners:**

*Chesapeake Bay Trust – provided technical assistance*

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

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

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

**Accomplishment 1:**

*Outcome: Adopted a new sign code in October 2016.*

*Projects: The Town worked with the La Plata Business Association to refine the Town's Sign ordinance to make it more user-friendly for the applicant, address Supreme Court findings from Reed vs Town of Gilbert, AZ, and maintain an attractive street presences.*

*Partners: La Plata Business Association*

*Impact: Allows business to self-promote more with new sign options and has helped show that the Town's supportive to the business community.*

**Accomplishment 2:**

*Outcome: Drafted new mixed use zone*

*Projects: The Neighborhood Commercial Mixed-Use (NCX) Zone was drafted as part of the Town's Comprehensive zoning code review. The adoption of the updated zoning is planned to be in Spring of 2018. This Zone will be applied to areas, some of which may be in the downtown core if determine by the Town Council or as part of the Comprehensive plan update.*

*Partners: Town of La Plata Planning Commission*

*Impact: Since project is not complete, but the intended impact would be to apply this new zoning to area where redevelopment is wanted as an insensitive to*

**Accomplishment 3:**

*Outcome: reduce storm water run off*

*Projects: Christ Church Rain Garden*

*Partners: Christ Church and Port Tobacco River Conservancy.*

*Impact: As the Town awaits approval of it MS-4 permit private improvements such as this are need to help reduce runoff, improve water quality and recharge the ground water that the Town relies on.*



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

*Outcome: No redevelopment of the existing sustainable communities designated area.*

*Narrative: As much as the town has tried no properties have been redeveloped in last few years.*

*Outcome: No location determined New Library*

*Narrative: The Town has worked with the County to make sure that a new library proposed to be relocated from the current location on the east side of Downtown stays in the downtown. The working group sees this as great opportunity for anchor use in the redevelopment. It is important asset to the Town.*

*Outcome: Sidewalk improvements did not including Streetscape*

*Narrative: The SHA Sidewalk ADA improvement were a miss opportunity to partner with SHA to develop a streetscape that could help improve walkability while also creating a sense of place. The project did little to create place or implement streetscape plan developed after the 2002 Tornado by SHA. The working group and Town would like to work with SHA to show investment in the redevelopment.*

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY RENEWAL REPORT**

### **PART II: QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT**

#### **Purpose:**

The purpose of the quantitative assessment is to capture indicators of accomplishments in each Sustainable Community. Indicators should reflect the five year time period since the adoption of the Sustainable Communities Action Plan. Thus, the following questions focus on the common outcomes that were identified in the various Sustainable Community Action Plans approved by the State. The assessment will be grouped in the sections of Environment, Economy, Transportation, Housing, Quality of Life and Land Use.

#### **Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.**

Check “YES” if applicable to your community. If you answer “YES” please quantify the accomplishment (i.e. Q: Has there been an increase in the number of businesses in your Main Street/commercial district? A: YES 4 new businesses have opened in the past five years). In your answer, be sure to only share the quantifiable changes that have occurred since your Sustainable Communities designation was approved. If necessary, please also provide a short description of the accomplishment.

Please check “NO” if the question item did not have any impact on your community. If you answer “NO” please briefly summarize what kept you from achieving your plan’s desired outcomes.

Check “N/A”, if the question item does not apply to your Sustainable Community.

If there is an issue with which you would like assistance in addressing, please check “**interested in technical assistance**”. State agencies would like to provide assistance to communities in helping them achieve their goals identified in their Sustainable Community Action Plans.

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

ENVIRONMENT	YES	If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years	NO	If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?	N/A	Interested in technical assistance
1. Has there been an improvement in water quality? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>					X	
2. Has the amount of impervious surface in your Community been reduced? (Amount in SF) <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Little redevelopment has happened, and what has increase impervious.		
3. Have there been improvements and/ or additions to your park and/ or recreational green space? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	The planned area for a park is tied to redevelopment plan.		
4. Did the Sustainable Community implement any recycling or waste reduction programs? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>					X	
5. Do all residents have access to healthy food options (i.e. fresh food grocery stores, farmers markets etc.) within the Sustainable Community? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>	X	The Town has increased the number of venders at the bi-weely farmers market, but there still a need for geocery store that are within walking distance of downtown neighborhoods.				
OTHER:						

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<b>ECONOMY</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Interested in technical assistance</b>
1. Has there been an increase in the number of new businesses in your Main Street/ Commercial District? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Businesses have come and gone. The Town doesn't track this information, but generally, one or two storefronts are vacant. The lack of sense of place Facade and streetscape improvement could help this.		X
2. Did the Municipality/ Sustainable Community area receive any designations that support local economic development? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Have not Identified any goals designations, but Town Council are exploring Historic and Main Street Designations.		
3. Has there been an increase in foot traffic in the Main Street/commercial district? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences) – what contributed to the increase:</b>			X	The La Plata Business Association has created a number of events that bring people to the Downtown, but the lack of width on attached sidewalks, safe crossing, and connection of sidewalk make downtown, not an Ideal pedestrian environment.		
4. Have the number of commercial vacancies decreased? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>					X	

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

5. Has there been an increase in local jobs within the Sustainable Community for its residents? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>					X	
<b>OTHER:</b>						

<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Interested in technical assistance</b>
1. Has the amount of bike trails/paths increased? How many linear feet do the trails cover? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	The Focus has been placed on the pedestrian environment. Park and Rec board are exploring a trail from Clarks Run neighborhood to area southeast of downtown		
2. Have there been improvements to the public transit infrastructure? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>					X	
3. Has there been an increase in sidewalks? (Amount in linear feet) <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	No Development means no sidewalks. We are looking at policies to increase sidewalk requirements and create a transportation fund.		X

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

4. Have there been any roadway improvements that support “Complete” or “Green” streets? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	This something we hope to explore as part of the Comp. Plan update.		
5. Has traffic congestion along major roads decreased? (Amount in percent) <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Need to break up larger blocks and provide more street network. An additional railroad crossing would help.		
<b>OTHER:</b>						
<b>HOUSING</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan’s desired outcomes?</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Interested in technical assistance</b>
1. Have any residential facades been improved? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Only two residents in the existing Plan area. This will be a goal of the enlarged plan area that will add residential communities that need improvements.		X
2. Has the home ownership rate increased? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	The existing SC area homes are being converted to offices and those homes in the new SC area are increasingly becoming rental as the neighborhood continues to decline. Support of new home buyers may help address this issue.		X

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

3. Has there been an increase in the number of housing units in the Sustainable Community area? What are number and/or percent affordable? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Within the proposed new SC area we have seen 6 multifamily units added, which is all the multifamily developed in the last five years in the town.		
4. Has there been <u>demolition</u> of blighted properties? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	No blighted properties in the existing SC Area and those in the new SC area are mostly townhouses. <u>Also</u> this is hard for the town.		
5. trends (with respect to age, race, household size, household income, educational attainment, number of housing units, or other relevant factors). ? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>					X	
<b>OTHER:</b>						
<b>QUALITY OF LIFE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Interested in technical assistance</b>
1. Has there been a decrease in crime rate? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	The expanded limits will include a neighborhood with a call service rate.		

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

2. Have there been improvements and/ or additions to your public spaces (i.e. museums, community centers, public plazas)? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>					X	
3. Has there been an increase in public art/ arts & entertainment programs/venues (i.e. murals, movie theatre, music events)? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>	X	Island music added a mural and Charles Street Bakery has been approved for another. Both just outside the existing SC area.				
4. How many historic properties were renovated/improved? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Our Historic Program needs improvement and has not been active.		
5. Are there any residential health and wellness opportunities in place (i.e. athletic facilities, recreational indoor/ outdoor courses or groups)? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	There will be some of these in the New SC area.		
<b>OTHER:</b>						
<b>LAND USE/LOCAL PLANNING</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Interested in technical assistance</b>
1. Have there been any infill developments? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>						



## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

2. Has there been an increase in the amount of preserved/protected land? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Nothing developed and Town has not done anything.		
3. Have there been any developments hindered by growth constraints? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Existing businesses are happy with what they have.		
4. Have there been any zoning or any policy changes that have fostered growth in your Sustainable Community? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>	X	The Town is in the middle of a comprehensive zoning code update and hope some of the changes will foster growth.				
5. Have there been any significant improvements to the municipal infrastructure within the Sustainable Community (i.e. street lighting, water/sewer lines)? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Not in the last Five years. But Infrastructure has capacity. Streetlights could be improved.		
<b>OTHER:</b>						
<b>COMPETITIVE FUNDING:</b> Use the rows below to list competed funds sought for sustainability or revitalization projects since receiving Sustainable Communities designation.	<b>Source (federal, state, foundation, etc.)</b>	<b>Amount Received</b>	<b>If no funding was received, what technical or other assistance from the state would help with future applications?</b>		<b>Other Notes</b>	
<b>Funding Program:</b>						

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

Funding Program:				
Funding Program:				
Funding Program:				
Funding Program:				
Funding Program:				
Funding Program:				

\*Please add more rows if necessary

### **III. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

The Sustainable Community Action Plan (SC Plan or Plan) is meant to be a multi-year investment strategy – a strategic set of revitalization initiatives and projects that local partners believe will increase the economic vitality and livability of their community, increase prosperity for local households and improve the health of the surrounding environment. The Plan should be flexible enough to be updated regularly and renewed every five years as the community envisions new goals. The priority initiatives and projects identified in the action plan are your priorities for improving the livability of community places -- residential, commercial, or other public or private properties – and the sustainability of new work, retail, recreational and housing opportunities for residents. At the same time, the plan should only discuss the strategies that will impact the geographic area targeted for revitalization, so that resources have the best opportunity to have the intended effect. These projects can also be designed to reduce the environmental impact of the community through water and energy resource conservation and management strategies. In this way, the Plan can be a road map for local stakeholders as well as State agencies to work together to create a more a livable and sustainable community.

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

Guidance for completing the Action Plan can be found on the next page.

### Action Plan Guidance

The document has been broken down into the same six categories as the Quantitative Assessment section of this document. 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: DHCD (Community Legacy program), Small Business Administration (Services and financial assistance) etc.

# Sustainable Community Action Plan

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Name of Sustainable Community

Papagni, John and Hurlbutt, Jeremy

11/20/2017

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## 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)

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Town of La Plata works with the community to cultivate a sustainable future through focus on landscaping, water and energy supply in the community. These include a, Conservation Corner Articles in the Town Newsletter, website and Facebook, Grant Opportunities, Green Education Classes, researching business and apartment Recycling Programs. To set the example, the Town Hall is LEED Certified.</li><li>• Clarke Run Natural Resource Management Area</li><li>• La Plata operates a Farmer's Market, located in the downtown area, adjacent to the County Courthouse. Operating hours are generally 9:00 am to 3:00 pm on Wednesday and Saturdays, selling local produce and other products</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• La Plata Farm Market is located in the a County Courthouse parking lot.</li></ul>

<u>Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures</u>	<u>Strategies and Action Items</u>	<u>Implementation Partners</u>
Based on the strengths and weaknesses identify the strengths on which you would like to build and the challenges you would like to address. What outcomes are you trying to achieve? Where/ in what area do you want those changes to happen? → Progress Measure: Identify how you will know that you have achieved your outcome.	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. →	Which community stakeholders need to be involved to realize each action step and strategy? Name specific public and/or private sector partners.
Outcome 1: Provide Stormwater management with redevelopment  Progress Measures:	Strategy A: Implement an inspection program and maintain an inventory of stormwater management facilities in Town. Promote retrofits for existing facilities and utilize standards for new development in keeping with low-impact, environmentally 6 sensitive site design practices as described in the latest version of the Maryland Stormwater Design Manual.	MDE

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Outcome 2: Promote an ethic of environmental stewardship  Progress Measures:	Strategy A: Apply and demonstrate “green” land and building management practices on Town-owned sites.	
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## 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)

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lowe’s, Target, two grocery stores, and several other business anchor the community</li><li>• The 301 corridor is a major retail destination</li><li>• SAIC’s Metro area training facility is in La Plata</li><li>• American Community Survey 2015 unemployment rate estimate is just 3.4%</li><li>• Major employment and activity centers are either adjacent or within walking distance and include the County Courthouse and County Office Building complex to the west, the University of Maryland - Charles County Regional Medical Center, Charles County Public Library, and the County Social Services building, all to the east. In addition, the La Plata Town Hall is located to the south.</li><li>• La Plata is centrally located between major military facilities (Dahlgren, Virginia, Patuxent Naval Air Station and Indian Head)</li><li>• An economic asset is that La Plata is the County Seat. This provides the opportunity for partnering with Charles County in seeking grants and other financial support opportunities. This also enhances La Plata as an activity center, providing employment opportunities for major employers in the downtown area, including, the County government, the University of Maryland Charles Regional Medical facility, and related support activities - lawyers, engineers, accountants and related professionals</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Vehicular congestion, fragmented ownership, and lack of relocation and redevelopment readiness for two significant industrial properties hinder redevelopment prospects.</li><li>• Big box chain and strip mall development offer little in the way of a clearly defining the regional center or creating a sense of place</li><li>• Additional retail opportunities are limited due to competition</li></ul>

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The SC area is close to the College of Southern Maryland (CSM) which provides workforce development education and training, geared to needs of the community and its changing economy</li><li>• The concentration of parcels, existing utility infrastructure, and market strength of the area create opportunities for redevelopment</li><li>• La Plata can be seen as the first major retail, services, and employment destination for many of the areas to the south.</li><li>• The town has a comparatively higher income and well-educated population relative to surrounding areas of Southern Maryland, and anticipates continuing growth</li><li>• Two large industrial properties owned by Coca Cola and South Maryland Oil are currently operational in the town center - these large parcels and their concentrated ownership create substantial opportunity</li><li>• 11,000 jobs in the La Plata community</li></ul>	
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Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	Strategies and Action Items →	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Increase jobs (reduce the need for residents commute out of Town or county for work)  Progress Measures:	Strategy A: Establish economic development guidelines that increase employment  Strategy B: Promote the Town to new businesses that could provide high quality career opportunities, enabling our citizens to live near where they work  Strategy C: Ensure the availability of services that are essential to sustain Town growth and business development. This may be accomplished through improvement of traffic flow, provision of adequate police support/protection, increasing telecommunications capability and maintaining adequate and dependable supplies of water, sewer and electrical power  Strategy D: Foster more restaurant and boutique retail, complementary with existing retail, as new housing is built and more residents move into the town center	Department of Commerce



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	Strategy E: Work with developers to provide office uses to support growth in the local government and medical industries	
Outcome 2: Redevelop Downtown  Progress Measures:	Strategy A: Encourage businesses and the La Plata Business Association to support the community development goals of the town, especially those that foster a sense of community identity (signage, festivals, public events, holidays, community “build” days).  Strategy B: Foster more art, entertainment, restaurant and boutique retail, complementary with existing retail, as new housing is built and more residents move into the town center	
Outcome 3: Harness redevelopment potential in downtown industrial sites  Progress Measures:	Strategy A: Work with private owners to remediate environmental hazards and address natural impacts, seize and utilize financial resources, and otherwise facilitate redevelopment  Strategy B: Form public private partnerships  Strategy C: Evaluate the possibility of using tax increment financing  Strategy D: Support Coca Cola and Southern Maryland Oil with identifying prospective relocation options	Developers

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## 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Route 301 highway corridor provides north-south connections. State Highway 6 is a principal east-west route extending into southern Maryland.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Lack of parking downtown</li><li>A rail line once provided passenger and freight service to points north, and is now used only to ship coal to a power plant located to the south</li><li>MD 6 is a frequently congested commuter corridor bisecting La Plata's traditional core, employment hubs, and services. This heavy traffic makes it a focal point for businesses, but also divides the downtown and makes it difficult and dangerous for pedestrians to cross the street.</li><li>Pass-through traffic is creating competition with local circulation, which impedes the opportunity for successful retail.</li><li>Bypass for Route 6 (Heritage Green Parkway) stalled by lack of movement by the developer.</li></ul>

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	Strategies and Action Items →	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Make downtown La Plata a "pedestrian-friendly" place  Progress Measures:	Strategy A: Require "complete streets" design for new and retro-fit construction – standards include devices to accommodate car, bike and pedestrian traffic within the same thoroughfare safely, attractively, and smoothly.  Strategy B: Install sidewalks and pedestrian crosswalks on existing Town streets in the downtown area, which are compliant with ADA regulations wherever they do not currently exist	SHA, MDOT

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	<p>Strategy C: Develop a palette of traffic-calming devices to be utilized as need arises on neighborhood streets, such as vertical deflection, horizontal shifts, and road narrowing.</p> <p>Strategy D: Add a traffic signal at the corner of Maple and Charles Streets and a pedestrian-activated signal at La Grange and Charles Streets.</p>	
<p>Outcome 2: Eliminate “disconnects” between existing communities</p> <p>Progress Measures:</p>	<p>Strategy A: Establish an extensive pedestrian and bicycle network that is a safe and attractive option for local trips that connects the Town’s neighborhoods, parks, schools, and employment and retail centers</p> <p>Strategy B: Improve crossing of Maryland Route 6 and US Route 301</p> <p>Strategy C: Add to the road network/grid to reduce congestion.</p> <p>Strategy D: Continue to support and function as partners with MSHA on administration of the Route 301 Access Management Program</p> <p>Strategy E: Continue to work with Charles County transportation planning staff to address regional traffic issues as they pertain to Rosewick Rd., Washington Ave, and by-pass strategies</p> <p>Strategy F: Use roundabouts vs. signalized intersections on “parkway” functioning streets like La Plata Parkway, Heritage Green Parkway, and Stagecoach Avenue.</p>	SHA, MDOT
<p>Outcome 3: Develop strategies to address the critical issue of parking in the Central Business District</p> <p>Progress Measures:</p>	<p>Strategy A: implementation of joint-use agreements provision of more municipal parking spaces reduction in off-street parking requirements</p>	SHA, MDOT
<p>Outcome 4: Improve infrastructure to provide for Multimodal transit</p> <p>Progress Measures:</p>	<p>Strategy A: Implement a policy to include transit stops (bus/VanGo) in all new planned communities and major commercial developments, and to provide accommodation for bike lanes, paths and racks wherever possible</p>	MWCOG Transportation/Land-Use Connections program

[Type text]

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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• According to ACS estimates, the number of vacant housing units town wide has fallen every year since 2010, when the total was 379 or 11.5% of the stock. In 2015, this number was just 43, or 1.4%.</li><li>• About 70% of units are owner-occupied</li><li>• There is a strong short- and long-term market opportunity for for-sale housing. The site’s location is prime for housing employees who work either in or near the town center.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The homeownership rate (70%) has declined since 2010 (77%)</li><li>• Median home value (\$325,300) has declined since 2010 (\$368,800)</li><li>• Restrictive zoning</li><li>• Rental housing, by contrast, tends to require more land than is currently available</li></ul>

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
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<p>Outcome 1: Promote and maintain a variety of housing choices to meet the needs of the present and future population and encourages socioeconomic diversity while remaining compatible with the character of La Plata</p> <p>Progress Measures:</p>	<p>Strategy A: Add Multi-Family and Affordable Housing</p> <p>Strategy B: support mixed-use and Traditional Neighborhood communities and mixed-use Live/Work buildings in the downtown and the TND village center</p> <p>Strategy C: Support development proposals and programs, which identify and address the needs of the senior and/or physically challenged population. Connect those that qualify with programs that provide assistance to low-income disabled persons in retrofits of existing homes to meet ADA.</p> <p>Strategy D: Strategy E: Adopt an ordinance, which will allow for the development of accessory dwelling units in association with single family detached homes, to create a supply of affordable housing for work-force, senior, and youthful segments of our population</p> <p>Strategy E: Promote an attached townhouse product and live/work units amongst home builders, developers, and consumers</p> <p>Strategy F: Create an upper-story redevelopment program to rehabilitate residential units above office and retail</p>	
<p>Outcome 2: Increase home ownership in blighted communities</p> <p>Progress Measures:</p>	<p>Strategy A: Promote compact, infill development within the Town, designed to enhance the pedestrian streetscape experience and reduce “sprawl” development outside of planned growth areas.</p> <p>Strategy B: Revitalize older communities with the addition of sidewalks, street furniture, lighting, and plantings, and mass transit stops, where conducive to meeting the needs of the residents and preserving home values and neighborhood pride.</p> <p>Strategy C: Encourage rehabilitation and reuse of existing buildings</p>	DHCD
<p>Outcome 3: Address property maintenance and crime in blighted communities</p> <p>Progress Measures:</p>	<p>Strategy A: Partner enforcement with grant funding for façade improvements to address property maintenance issues.</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with first time buyers to improve home ownership.</p>	DHCD

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## 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

- The town is a historic county seat with good access to Washington, D.C.
- Shared use recreational facilities at La Plata High School, La Plata Outdoor Pool, and Matula Elementary School
- Mini-parks at Carroll La Plata Village and La Plata Train Station
- The Town, through the Special Events Coordinator, promotes and sponsors free events throughout the year including Celebrate La Plata, summer band concerts, Chili Cook Off, Community and Costume Swap, Fall Festival, Memorial Day and Veterans Day celeb ceremony, and Christmas Celebration. An annual schedule of these events is posted on the Town's website and Town Facebook page. A printed brochure is also available.
- The Town of La Plata provides free, public WiFi network across downtown La Plata, providing access to the Internet.
- The Town's Beautification Grant is designed to bring awareness to the community's appearance, cleanliness, and to encourage pride. The La Plata Beautification Commission invites residents of the Town of La Plata, Home Owner Associations, school projects, scout groups, civic organizations, businesses, and other community members to submit applications. The winning project proposals are granted up to \$500.
- The Town, and County are working together to relocate the library in the downtown core. The town owns property near Town Hall on the northwest quadrant of St Mary's Avenue and Queen Anne Street. The La Plata Town Center Corporation believes this location or somewhere else in the study area would be the ideal location for a new Library.

### Weaknesses

- Drug related deaths
- Lack of recreational programing of city parks

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures



Strategies and Action Items



Implementation Partners

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<p>Outcome 1: Maintain and enhance La Plata's Central Business District as the center of the town.</p> <p>Progress Measures:</p>	<p>Strategy A: Utilize placemaking techniques such as signage and streetscape improvements</p> <p>Strategy B: Relocate library to core</p>	
<p>Outcome 2: Develop a high-quality public parks and recreation system with adequate space and facilities, which integrates an appropriate mix of recreation activities that are accessible to all Town residents</p> <p>Progress Measures:</p>	<p>Strategy A: Develop zoning requirements that will help to implement the park Recreation master plan.</p> <p>Strategy B: allow Charles County and other to program Town parks and facilities till staff and Town program can be funded and created.</p>	



[Type text]

## 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The mixture of uses and structure is reflective of a small town in which residential properties back up and/or have been converted to commercial uses and are in close proximity to industrial and commercial uses.</li><li>• “Fee-in-lieu” as an alternative to parkland 18 dedication or reservation has not been utilized as a means to meet subdivision requirements for several years</li><li>• Utilities and stormwater management strategies are in place and working well.</li><li>• There is a strong culture of stakeholder participation, evidenced by the creation and investment of the LPTCC.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A culture of strict adherence to the town Vision Plan may be hampering progress</li><li>• The development process is fragmented and uncoordinated and existing zoning does not support or incentivize redevelopment</li></ul>

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	Strategies and Action Items →	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Ensure new developments protect the environment  Progress Measures:	Strategy A: Require a site inventory as part of an application for site development or subdivision plan approval, to include soil types, topography, natural vegetation and forest canopy, scenic views, floodplains, streams or drainage courses, or any other natural features of interest  Strategy B: Include a “greenway” analysis in the review process for all new subdivisions, to determine potential for open space assemblage and linkage on and off-site  Strategy C: Restrict major alterations to natural drainage channels; implement stream restoration practices for road and utility crossings to re-vegetate and re-stabilize disturbed areas as needed. Promote bridges over box culverts to sustain aquatic life in open stream sections	

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	Strategy D: Encourage Low Impact Development through Environmentally Sensitive Design utilizing management practices such as pervious paving, sand filters, infiltration facilities, and vegetated buffers.	
Outcome 2: Promote mixed-use development  Progress Measures:	Strategy A: Update the Zoning Code to allow for easier implementation of Mixed-use  Strategy B: Add more multi-family housing  Strategy C: Encourage a mixed-use development pattern in commercial and office areas along Route 301 and in the downtown. Place more intensive retail and service uses along the street frontage and gradually less intensive office or residential uses above or behind the commercial occupant.	MDP
Outcome 3: Redevelop downtown core  Progress Measures:	Strategy A: Use tax increment financing or bond financing to subsidize development projects	

## SIGNATURE LETTER

On behalf of Town of La Plata, I hereby approve the application for renewal of the Sustainable Communities designation for the Town of La Plata. I understand that the Disclosure Authorization and Certification from the original Sustainable Communities application continues to apply to the applicant local government, and as such the applicant agrees that not attaching an objection constitutes consent to the information being made available to the public, and a waiver of any rights the applicant may have regarding this information under Maryland's Access to Public Records Act, State Government Article, Section 10-611 et seq. of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

I also confirm that I am named or a former holder of my current title is named as an authorized official for the Sustainable Communities designation for my local government in the Local Government Authorization submitted with the original application.

  
Authorized Signature

Jeremy Hurlbutt, AICP, Director of Planning  
Type Name and Title

November 20, 2017  
Date