



# **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM**

## **APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION RENEWAL**

### **Eligible Applicants:**

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

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

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

**APPROVED BY SGCC**  
**4/13/2022**

LARRY HOGAN  
Governor  
BOYD K. RUTHERFORD  
Lt. Governor  
KENNETH C. HOLT  
Secretary  
OWEN McEVOY  
Deputy Secretary

## **OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

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

## **PURPOSE 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) 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) 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;
- 4) The updated Plan must be consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans;
- 5) 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.

### **Incomplete applications will not be accepted.**

Deliver Sustainable Community Applications via email:

Subject Line: Sustainable Community Application

To: Olivia Ceccarelli-McGonigal

[olivia.ceccarelli@maryland.gov](mailto:olivia.ceccarelli@maryland.gov)

Copy: John Papagni

[john.papagni@maryland.gov](mailto:john.papagni@maryland.gov)

### **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:** City of Mount Rainier

**NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY:** City of Mount Rainier

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 - Local Support Resolution: (sample form on page 30) 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 Action Plan.**
- ☐ **Section F – Signed Sustainable Community Application Disclosure Authorization and Certification (sample form on page 31)**
- ☐ **Section G – 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, [REDACTED])**
  - **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:** City of Mount Rainier

---

**Name of Renewal Applicant:** City of Mount Rainier

---

**Applicant's Federal Identification Number:** 52-6000800

---

**Applicant's Street Address:** One Municipal Place

---

**City:** Mount Rainier      **County:** Prince George's      **State:** MD      **Zip Code:** 20712

---

**Phone Number:** 301-985-6585      **Fax Number:** 301-985-6595      **Web Address:** mountrainiermd.org

---

**Sustainable Community Renewal Application Local Contact:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Title:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Address:** One Municipal Place      **City:** Mount Rainier      **State:** MD      **Zip Code:** 20712

---

**Phone Number:** [REDACTED]      **Fax Number:** [REDACTED]      **E-mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

---

**Other Sustainable Community Contacts:**

**Name:** Kourosh Kamali      **Title:** City Manager

---

**Address:** One Municipal Place      **City:** Mount Rainier      **State:** MD      **Zip Code:** 20712

---

**Phone Number:** [REDACTED]      **Fax Number:** [REDACTED]      **E-mail Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

---



**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.

No SC Area boundary modification.

- (2) If you are not requesting any changes to your boundary, explain why.

The Sustainable Communities designation applies to the whole of the City of Mount Rainier and the boundaries have not changed since the original designation. The City will continue to implement the goals of the SC designation within the designated area.

- (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: 768

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

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

- (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?

**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 original Sustainable Communities Application identified the workgroup as consisting of city staff, volunteers, and community leaders specifically identifying the city manager, assistant city manager, public works director, the Environmental Protection Board (EPB) / Green Team chairperson, the Design Review Board (DRB) and the Mixed Use Town Center Design Review

Committee (MUTC), the staff liaison assigned to the DRB and MUTC committees (Director of Economic Development), DRB and MUTC Council liaison. Staff were to work with the sustainable work group to manage the implementation of the SC Area Plan. Since the original application, the City has undergone staffing reorganization and the committees have also seen turnover and growth.

The 2017 Sustainable Communities Plan was developed taking into consideration more community input and the priorities of the City Mayor and Council to best reflect the interests and needs of the Mount Rainier community. The workgroup drew on the insight and expertise of city staff, elected officials. City staff include; City Manager Kourosh Kamali, Director of Economic Development Ronald Hopkins, Police Chief Linwood Alston, Code Enforcement Director Alma Ferrufino, Public Works Director Rocio Latorre. Community groups include Mount Rainier Green Team represented by Green Team Chair Sarah Lifsey, DRB represented by Bryan Knedler, Tree Commission represented by Tree Commission Liaison Rocio Latorre, Community Garden organizer Jacquelyn Riposo, and Mount Rainier Business Association (MRBA) made up of Mount Rainier business owners represented by MRBA Coordinator Jordan Dyniewski. The structure of the Sustainable Communities Plan and the progress metrics developed in the Action Plan portion provide the necessary measures and steps for implementation by the Sustainable Communities workgroup.

- (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 City of Mount Rainier has been able to make progress in many areas identified in the Sustainable Communities Plan and some strengths have been representation of the diverse Mount Rainier community. Some challenges for implementing the guide were the lack of specific measurable goals and designated personnel and time for each goal. Another challenge the City of Mount Rainier faced is staff turnover in the last several years and COVID has also delayed a lot of the permitting process, which could have slowed progress on ongoing efforts, however it also brought new perspectives.

- (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 Sustainable Communities Action Plan gathered input from community group leaders and elected officials to represent the goals and interests of the Mount Rainier community. The Sustainable Communities Action Plan draws on several existing plans and documents, including the Green Infrastructure Master Plan, the Green Team's annual Work, City Manager, Kourosh Kamali's work plan and goals, and the priorities set by the City Mayor and Council. The Sustainable Communities Action Plan also reflects the input and expertise of city staff.

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

Yes, the City of Mount Rainier would be interested in technical assistance to help expand the SC Workgroup capacity and implement the Sustainable Community Plan.

# **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 city added green elements to approximately more than 1000 linear feet of roadway that had been experiencing severe flooding. Specifically, rain gardens 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 more than \$600,000.00).*

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





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

**Accomplishment 1**

***Outcome: Reduce Commercial Property Vacancies***

***Project 1:*** In 2010 the City of Mount Rainier purchased underutilized and abandoned properties and combined them into a parcel on 3200 Rhode Island Avenue and Eastern Avenue, the Washington DC borderline. In 2020 the City sold the property to the IFG Group. Their mixed-use development project consists of 97 condominiums, 11 street-level retail outlets and a 2 level underground parking garage.



<http://ifgggroup.us/project/3200-rhode-island-ave-mount-rainier-md-20712/>

***Project 2:*** The Singer Building, a long vacant historic landmark on Rhode Island Ave at Perry Street has been completely renovated by The Menkiti Group and is open for business. The mixed-use development has 12 residential units (fully leased) and 3 new business establishments operating within 10,000 sq. ft. of retail space.



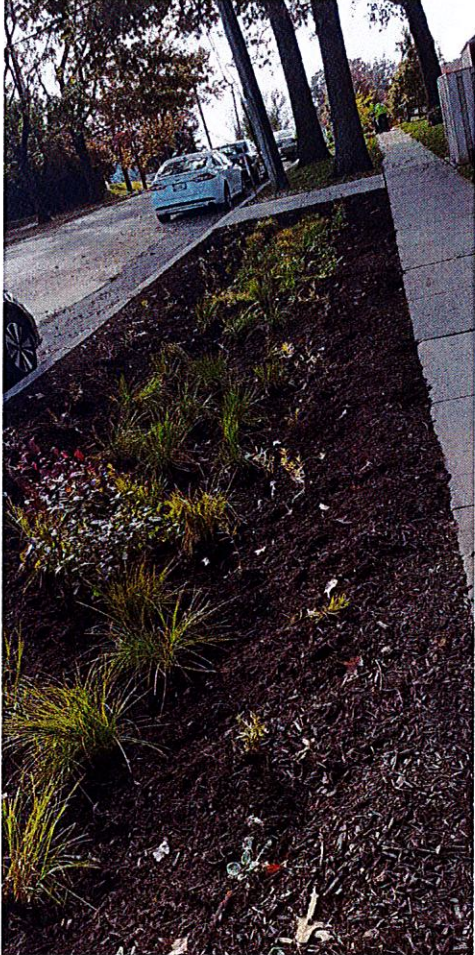
<https://www.singerbuilding.com/>



## Accomplishment 2

*Outcome: Improve Stormwater management*

*Project 1: Since 2017 the city has been awarded over half a million dollars in grants to design and implement bioretention stormwater retrofit projects in city right-of ways to reduce stormwater runoff, improve safety, beautify the community, and improve water quality in the Anacostia River Watershed. Over 30,000 sq ft of rain gardens have been installed throughout the city.*



*Project 2: In 2017 the city had all streets and sidewalks surveyed by Toole Design and came up with a Comprehensive Street and Sidewalk Inventory, Assessment, and Action Plan for the city. With this study, over 90% of the recommendations set forth in this assessment has been completed. The city has also implemented another stormwater practice using a product called KBI Flexi®-Pave to mitigate stormwater while experiencing less cracking or settling on the surface, improving groundwater quality, and even protecting our street trees.*





*Partners: The City of Mount Rainier has participated with Chesapeake Bay Trust (CBTRUST) through the Prince George's County Stormwater Stewardship Award Program to fund for the bioretention stormwater retrofit projects. Toole Design Study surveyed all streets and sidewalks city-wide. Grace Management Construction is the firm used to implement the installation of new sidewalks throughout the city.*

*Impact: The Green Infrastructure Master Plan and the Buchanan Green Street Project set an example for the City of Mount Rainier to continue working towards implementing stormwater management best practices. Also developing a Comprehensive Street and Sidewalk Inventory, Assessment, and Action Plan has helped the city move forward with the implementation of new sidewalks to help beautify the city, meanwhile making it safe for residents and practicing stormwater management.*

### **Accomplishment 3**

*Outcome: Protect and expand the urban tree canopy*

*Project 1: The City of Mount Rainier Mayor and Council passed an amendment to the Urban Forest Chapter of the City Code on December 6th, 2016. The ordinance protects city trees on private property larger than 56.5 inches in circumference at 4.5 feet about the ground, streamlines and clarifies the permitting process, and offers scaled replacement options. The ordinance also strengthens the Enforcement section and the Code Enforcement Department has issued several fines for illegal tree work or removals.*

*Project 2: In conjunction with City legislation, the Mount Rainier Tree Commission has overseen tree plantings in the City each year to grow and diversify the urban canopy, beautify City streets, and provide environmental services. The City has designated funding towards the maintenance and purchases of new trees in which the city has planted over 300 trees in the last 5 years.*

*Partners: The City of Mount Rainier has participated in the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Tremendous Program to purchase native trees for public spaces and residents and community members take advantage of both the Tree ReLEAF program and the RainCheck Rebate to plant or replace trees.*

*Impact: The City of Mount Rainier has taken steps to protect trees on private property with enforceable city code as well as expanding and diversifying the urban canopy, and beautifying the City. As well as beautification and higher property values, trees offer many environmental services including improving air quality, heat island*

*effect, providing habitat, and contributing to improved water quality. With increasing development, protections on large trees allow the City to retain its tree-shaded and green character.*



#### **Accomplishment 4**

*Outcome: Reduce Solid Waste*

*Project 1: The City of Mount Rainier adopted a new trash and recycling policy in 2018 and delivered one new 48 gallon trash and one new 64 gallon recycling bin to each residential home city-wide. It's purpose is to promote less trash and more recycling. Since the new adoption, tipping tonnage in trash has reduced by 15%*

*Partners: The new waste collection bins were distributed by Toter.*

*Impact: Since the new adoption of the new trash and recycling police, tipping tonnage in trash has reduced by 15%*

**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.**

*N/A*

## **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.



<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>		<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>  <b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>
1. Has there been an improvement in water quality? Have you completed any projects intended to improve water quality? Ex. impervious surface reduction, stormwater improvements etc.	X				The City of Mount Rainier does not independently track water quality, it participates in Prince George's County's NPDES MS4 efforts and reporting from the municipal level and recommendations from the Urban Green Infrastructure Master Plan have been implemented (Buchanan Green Street was completed 2016) and new Raingarden bio retentions have been installed city-wide.
2. Have you improved wildlife habitat in your community? Ex. native plantings, pollinator gardens, rain gardens	X				Mount Rainier residents are part of the wildlife corridor and many homes participate in the native planting.
3. Have you increased access to green space, parks or outdoor recreational opportunities?	X				The City re-mulched the playground and established the community garden (2013) at Richardson Park. The park will also be approved to receive a grant for revitalization. A Food Forest was also created on 31st Street by community members from the Tree Commission and Green Team along with Council members.

4. Have you implemented operational sustainability practices (example: town hall enhancements) and/or community-based practices? (ex. Rain barrels or rain gardens at residences, recycling, composting etc)	X				The City of Mount Rainier, in partnership with the Mount Rainier Green Team, continues to implement a backyard composting program and the City offers composting bins at an 80% discount to city residents. Also adopted a new trash and recycling policy to reduce waste. Also participated in a rain check rebate with residents to purchase rain barrels at a portion of the price.
OTHER:					

ECONOMY	YES	NO	N/A	If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years
				If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?

# Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

1. Has there been an increase in the number of new businesses in your Main Street/ Commercial District?	X	We have 9 new businesses located within our Main Street Affiliate Designation District. In addition, property values in the City have increased 49% over the last 5 years.
2. Did the Municipality/ Sustainable Community area receive any designations that support local economic development?	X	Yes, The City of Mount Rainier has received a Main Street Affiliate Designation. Our Director of Economic Development has applied and received \$200,000 from DHCD for the Memorial Park Project in which the renovated Singer Building

# Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

			now accommodates 3 new businesses. Furthermore, we were awarded another total amount (3 grants) of \$250,000 from DHCD for our Rhode Island Avenue Facade Improvement Program. These funds are earmarked to beautify our commercial storefronts, facilitate reinvestment and revitalize our entire downtown district.
3. Has there been an increase in foot traffic in the Main Street/commercial district?	X		The City does not have data tracking foot traffic. However, with the addition



# Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

			of 9 new businesses which include 4 magnificent restaurants with sidewalk and patio dining, we can safely assume that foot traffic has significantly increased in our commercial district.
4. Have the number of commercial vacancies decreased?	X		Property values in the City have increased 49% over the last 5 years and storefront vacancies have decreased.
5. Has there been an increase in local jobs within the Sustainable Community for its residents?		X	The City of Mount Rainier does not measure the number of local jobs for



# Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

				<p>residents of the City.</p> <p>However, 2 of our new restaurant owners and 85% of their employees are Mount Rainier residents.</p>
<p>6. Has there been an increase in workforce development training or other opportunities for connecting potential employees to well-paying jobs?</p>				<p>Yes, we partner with Employ Prince George's and have selected intern's via their Youth CareerConnect Program. One of the interns working with the Department of Economic Development was hired full time by the City as the City Hall Administrative Assistant.</p> <p><a href="https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/md-politics/workforce-training-prince-georges/2020/03/06/f38b6df8-3bc3-11ea-baca-eb7ace0a3455_story.html">https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/md-politics/workforce-training-prince-georges/2020/03/06/f38b6df8-3bc3-11ea-baca-eb7ace0a3455_story.html</a></p> <p>In addition, these program services were offered to our local businesses with several of them working with interns as well.</p> <p>A few of our businesses have taken advantage of Employ Prince George's Rapid Employment Program and have sourced quite a few employees working with an industry sector based Business Consultant.</p> <p>Finally, along with our professional development workshops for businesses, we offer "start your own business" and "resume writing" seminars " free of charge to all Mount Rainier residents.</p>

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

**OTHER:**

The City of Mount Rainier hired Ronald A. Hopkins who was formerly employed with Prince George's Economic Development Corporation as the new Director of Economic Development. He established a Million Dollar Incentive Fund to grow, attract, and retain new and existing businesses to the city.

# TRANSPORTATION

YES

ON

N/A

If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years

# Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

				If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?
1. Has the amount of bike trails/paths increased? How many linear feet do the trails cover?			X	
2. Have there been improvements to the public transit infrastructure?	X			<p>WMATA Metro Bus and Prince George's County's The Bus have several routes that serve the City of Mount Rainier. WMATA improved access to Mount Rainier with the G9 providing express transportation to downtown Washington, in early 2017.</p> <p>There are two metro stations within walking distance</p>



## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

			<p>from Mount Rainier; West Hyattsville (green/yellow lines) is .5 miles and Rhode Island Ave (red line) is 2 miles.</p> <p>The City of Mount Rainier is also expected to get 2-4 Capital Bike Share stations in Phase 1 of expansion to Prince George's County.</p>
<p>3. Has there been an increase in sidewalks? (Amount in linear feet). Were accessibility elements added, such as more ADA-accessible ramps and signage/signals? Has there been a noticeable increased use of these walking places?</p>	X		<p>No, but the city has reconstructed the old sidewalks and implemented flexi-pave material.</p>

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<p>4. Have there been any roadway improvements that support "Complete" or "Green" streets?</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>Buchanan Green Street was a complete green street providing driving, parking, and bicycle lanes as well as sidewalk and crosswalk improvements and the bioretention cell. The City of Mount Rainier has installed over 30,000 sq ft of rain gardens.</p>
<p>5. Has traffic congestion along major roads decreased? (Amount in percent)</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>The City of Mount Rainier does not collect data on traffic congestion. A traffic light was installed in 2016 by DC DOT at the intersection of Eastern</p>

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

				<p>Avenue and Bunker Hill</p> <p>Road in response to several major accidents.</p>
OTHER:				
HOUSING	YES	NO	N/A	<p>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</p> <p>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</p>
<p>1. Have any residential facades or interiors been improved? Has the energy efficiency of any housing units been increased?</p>			X	<p>The City does not track all investments made to residential facades. Property values in the City have increased 49% over the last 5 years.</p>



Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<p>2. Has the homeownership rate increased?</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>The City does not track Home ownership. The rising prices indicate that there is demand and residential properties stay on the market an average of less than one month.</p>
<p>3. Has there been an increase in the number of housing units in the Sustainable Community area? What number and/or percent are affordable? How many are within .5 miles of a transit stop?</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>The City does not track the total number of housing units or the percentage of affordable units. Over the last five years there have been several infill development projects putting new units on the market in the City of Mount</p>

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B


					Rainier.
4. Has there been demolition of blighted properties?				X	
5. Has the residential vacancy rate decreased?	X				Homes placed on the market in the City of Mount Rainier have been selling more quickly, reducing the level of vacant properties in the last few years. The City also passed vacant property legislation in 2021 to tax vacant properties at a higher rate, encouraging the reduction of the ensuing blight and neglect.

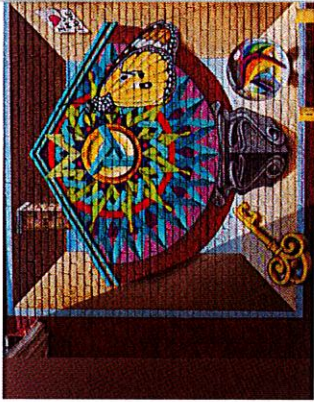
Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

6. Has the jurisdiction partnered with any community development corporations to improve its housing stock, increase the availability of affordable housing, or support those experiencing homelessness or being threatened with eviction? Has the jurisdiction initiated any of its own programs to do the same?					
7. Has there been an increase in homeownership counseling services or individuals accessing such services?					
OTHER:					
<b>COMMUNITY HEALTH &amp; QUALITY OF LIFE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>  <b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>	



# Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<p>1. How many historic properties were renovated/improved? To your knowledge, did the renovations mitigate certain environmental hazards such as lead and asbestos?</p>				<p>The City does not track the historic properties that were improved/renovated. The city did renovate the library in which asbestos had to be mitigated in 2018-2019.</p>
<p>2. Have there been improvements and/or additions to your public or community available spaces? Examples include museums, community centers, public plazas, murals and public art.</p>				<p>The City of Mount Rainier is a thriving arts district and has many programs to support and promote the arts. For example, the newly renovated Singer Building now houses the exquisite PennyRoyal Station restaurant with it's beautiful mural painted on the facade. In addition, via a public-private partnership between the City, DMV</p>



34th Street Mural

League of Artists' and Arrow Inc./Penske, the largest and most exciting mural in Mount Rainier's history, was created. The mural sits on Rhode Island Avenue for all commuters and pedestrians to catch sight of, as you leave Maryland and venture towards Washington DC. The City of Mount Rainier is also home to many world renowned artists' with a plethora of galleries and studios who participate in our annual Gateway Arts Open Studios Tour.

# Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B


<p>3. Are there opportunities for residents to gather, communicate and celebrate? Do they serve multi-generations and all populations in the community? Examples are wide-ranging and may include fairs, community history days, neighborhood meetings, etc.</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>The new food forest on 31st Street has become a space where residents come together and celebrate various events.</p>
<p>4. Have there been any changes in access to health and wellness services? Examples include mobile clinics, hospitals, telehealth opportunities.</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>The city has hired a full-time bi-lingual social service employee to provide wellness services to the community of Mount Rainier.</p>
<p>5. Are there any residential health and wellness opportunities in place (i.e. athletic facilities, recreational indoor/outdoor courses or groups)?</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>The Mount Rainier Nature and Recreation Center provides recreation activities and space for youth and adults.</p>




# Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

				<p>The City of Mount Rainier has access to the Anacostia Tributary Trail System, and approximately 1 mile of the East Coast Greenway passes</p>
<p>6. Do all residents have access to healthy food options such as fresh food grocery stores, farmers markets, community gardens, etc., within the Sustainable Community?</p>	X			<p>The community uses the Food Forest, local grocery Glut, and the Water Hole.</p>
<p>7. Has there been a decrease in crime rate?</p>	X			<p>There has been a decrease in crime over the last 5 years.</p>

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

8. Do all residents have access to the Internet and other basic utilities and services?	X			
OTHER:				
<b>LOCAL PLANNING &amp; STAFFING CAPACITY</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>  <b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>
1. Have there been any infill developments?	X			<p>The City has seen 1 major infill development project.</p> <p>The long vacant historic landmark Singer Building has been renovated by the Menkiti Group and is now a mixed-use development</p>
				

				<p>with 12 residential units and 10,000 sq. ft. of retail space.</p>
<p>2. Has there been an increase in the amount of preserved/protected land?</p>		<p>X</p>		<p>There has not been a change in the amount of preserved or protected land in the City of Mount Rainier</p>

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<p>3. Have there been any developments hindered by growth constraints? If so, please describe. Example constraints could be inadequate infrastructure, insufficient zoning density/intensity, or lack of buildable land.</p>	<p>X</p>
<p>4. Have there been any zoning or policy changes that have fostered growth or redevelopment in your Sustainable Community?</p>	<p>X</p> <p>MNCPPC is currently re-zoning with a goal of simplification and the City council and serval committees have provided feedback. In 2016 the City Council passed the municipal Vacant Property legislation, placing a higher tax rate on vacant properties, providing a</p>



Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

				strong economic incentive for absentee landlords to occupy or sell vacant residential properties.
5. Have there been any significant improvements to the municipal infrastructure within the Sustainable Community (i.e. street lighting, water/sewer lines)?	X			<p>The City of Mount Rainier has received funding through several competitive funding sources for municipal infrastructure improvements and has been able to retrofit 100 decorative street lights to LED using Pepco Small Business Program Incentives.</p>

# Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

6. Have you hired any new staff members, reassigned duties, or procured the services of a contractor to increase or better align local capacity? Have you implemented any professional development programs?	X		Social Services
7. Has your community initiated or completed any planning efforts that will support the Sustainable Community area, including comprehensive planning, small area planning, or planning studies?		X	
<b>OTHER:</b>			

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<b>COMPETITIVE FUNDING:</b> Use the rows below to list competed funds sought for sustainability or revitalization projects since receiving Sustainable Communities designation.				
	Source (federal, state, foundation, etc.)	Amount Received	If no funding was received, what technical or other assistance from the state would help with future applications?	Other Notes
<b>Community Legacy (CL):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>CL 2021 00194 Rhode Island Ave. Façade Improvement</li> <li></li> <li></li> </ul>	DHCD	\$50,000.00	In Progress	N/A
<b>Strategic Demolition Fund (SDF):</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NCSEDF 2020 00262 Memorial Park</li> <li>NCSEDF 2021 00500 Rhode Island Ave. Façade Improvement</li> <li>NCSEDF 2022 00270 Rhode Island Ave. Façade Improvement</li> </ul>	DHCD	\$200,000.00  \$100,000.00  \$50,000.00	In Progress  In Progress  In Progress	N/A
<b>Community Safety &amp; Enhancement Program:</b>	MDOT		N/A	N/A
<b>Maryland Bikeways Program:</b>	MDOT		N/A	N/A
<b>Sidewalk Retrofit Program:</b>	MDOT		N/A	N/A

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<b>Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund:</b>	MDE			
<b>Other Funding Programs:</b> <i>examples are U.S. HUD Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), or grants from USDA, EPA, Appalachian Regional Commission, Chesapeake Bay Trust, Maryland Heritage Areas Association, Preservation Maryland, Safe Routes to School, Maryland Rural Development Corporation, Maryland Energy Administration, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, etc.</i> *Please add more rows if necessary				
<b>CDBG PY47 Economic Development Micro-Enterprise Assistance Grant</b>	CDBG	\$54,000.00	In Progress	N/A
<b>CDBG PY46R Economic Development Micro-Enterprise Assistance Grant</b>	CDBG	\$40,000.00	In Progress	
<b>MHAA Memorial Park Grant</b>	MHAA	\$100,000.00	In Progress	N/A
<b>FFY18 Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant Section 117</b>	MDNR	\$149,998.00	Project Completed	
<b>Chesapeake Bay Trust-Prince George's County Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program</b>	CBT	\$166,707.00	Project Completed	
<b>FY20 National Capital Strategic Economic Development Fund (NCSEDF)</b>	MDHCD	\$200,000.00	In Progress	Memorial Park (see above)
<b>Chesapeake Bay Trust-Prince George's County Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program</b>	CBT	\$196,000.00	Project Completed	



Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

Chesapeake Bay Trust-Prince George’s County Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program	CBT	\$142,441.00		
Chesapeake Bay Trust-Prince George’s County Stormwater Stewardship Grant Program	CBT	\$150,520.00		

### **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 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

---

City of Mount Rainier

Submitted by City of Mount Rainier

Date:



# Environment

(Environmental strengths and weaknesses can include but are not limited to quality of land, water, air, watersheds, tree canopies, 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

- Strong community involvement and activism for environmental programs and protections, including the official city committees Environmental Protection Board, Tree Commission.
- Tree Ordinance and dedicated funding for developing, protecting, and maintaining the City's tree canopy.
- Energy efficient municipal buildings and renewable energy purchasing plan
- Participation in the Prince George's Municipal Collaborative for
- The City has a Green Infrastructure Master Plan completed by the Low Impact Development (LID) Center through a NFWF Grant.
- Stormwater management demonstration projects throughout the city include Buchanan Green Street, various rain gardens city-wide have been installed,, several green roofs, and previous pavers in the municipal parking lot and adjacent alley.
- Mount Rainier Bike Co-Op and Community Toolshed encourage reuse and sharing of tools
- The Green Infrastructure Master Plan and the Environmental Sustainability Plans Assessment to guide growth and development
- As well as trash collection, the city has regular yard waste and recycling collection as well as curbside leaf vacuuming in the fall. The City participates in Electronic Recycling for free.
- Energy conservation efforts include the installation of solar panels on City Hall, LED replacements, and alternative energy purchasing for municipal buildings
- The volunteer run Community Toolshed offers free rentals of tools and equipment to the community

## Weaknesses

- Most of the City's parks are MNCPPC owned and maintained. The city has been working with MNCPPC to improve several parks and green spaces but there is a need for improved communication and collaboration.
- Relatively low recycling rates
- Green infrastructure is not built into development and improvement projects, it is approached separately, making it less cost effective to implement retrofits.
- The demographics of the groups such as the Green Team and the Tree Commission do not reflect the diversity of the community.
- The city relies heavily on the support of volunteer work groups to address various issues including water quality, preservation of trees, sustainability issues, development, etc. The city's Environmental Protection Board (EPB) serve as members in the Sustainable Communities Workgroup and city staff include the city manager, assistant city manager and public works director.



<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Environmental Protection Board (EPB) reviews development plans in the city and makes recommendations to the council.</li></ul>		
<div><u>Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures</u></div> <div>Based on the strengths and weaknesses identify the strengths on which you would like to build and the challenges you would like to address.</div> <div>What outcomes are you trying to achieve? Where/ in what area do you want those changes to happen?</div> <div>Progress Measure: Identify how you will know that you have achieved your outcome.</div>	<div><u>Strategies and Action Items</u></div> <div>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.</div>	<div><u>Implementation Partners</u></div> <div>Which community stakeholders need to be involved to realize each action step and strategy? Name specific public and/or private sector partners.</div>
<div>Outcome 1: Promote more green initiatives such as reducing carbon footprint.</div>	<div>Strategy A: Networking with companies generating electric vehicles and applying for funding available for this initiative through state programs.</div> <div>Strategy B: Continue to implement stormwater devices such as rain gardens and pervious surfaces throughout the city.</div> <div>Strategy C: Converting some of the city fleet vehicles to zero-emissions.</div>	<div>Mount Rainier Department of Public Works, Mount Rainier Green Team, Communications Committee, Thomas, Prince George’s County Schools in Mount Rainier</div>
<div>Outcome 2: Improve water quality</div> <div>Progress Measures: Number of trees planted; Gallons of stormwater treated, amount of impervious surface removed;</div>	<div>Strategy A: Implement the recommendations in the Mount Rainier Urban Green Infrastructure Master Plan. Incorporate retrofits in street improvement projects and advocate other agencies to do the same within the city.</div> <div>Strategy B: Continue community education on the impervious surface fee and promoting the Prince George’s Rain Check Rebate program, which provide incentives for removing impervious surface and installing pervious pavers and other stormwater management practices.</div> <div>Strategy A: Continuing to encourage Net-Zero Energy Design or the highest LEED certification in the private and public sector development projects in the City</div> <div>Strategy B: Maintain and update the solar panels on City Hall and explore the expansion of alternative energy generation options within the City.</div>	<div>Mount Rainier Department of Public Works, MNCPPC, PGC Department of Environment, PGC Department of Public Works and Transportation.</div>
<div>Outcome 3: Reduce the carbon footprint of the City of Mount Rainier</div> <div>Progress Measures: Reduction of municipal energy consumption, energy efficiency retrofits for residential and commercial</div>		<div>Mount Rainier Department of Economic Development, Mount Rainier Department of Public Works</div>



buildings, residents generating alternative energy (solar panels)	Strategy C: Track and encourage energy efficiency retrofits in residential and commercial buildings, residents generating alternative energy (solar panels).
---	--

## 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 City and the business community builds on the strengths of this existing customer base, the historic fabric, high levels of automobile traffic and stable residential base by capitalizing on the opportunities highlighted in the matrix.
- Existing buildings offer affordable space, proximity to University of Maryland and Catholic University, as well as the recent development along the Route 1 corridor in Hyattsville, Maryland and Washington, DC.
- Prince George's County economic revitalization programs are available including Revitalization Area Tax credit Program, Tax Increment Financing (TIF), Property Tax Abatements, Business Improvements District (BID), Revolving Loan Program, Prince George's Financial Service Corporation, Historic Property Grant Program, Land Readjustment Programs, Capital Improvement Program, and Gateway Community Development Corporation.
- The Department of Economic Development via grant awards offers over \$400,000 in storefront facade improvements and commercial revitalization efforts. Its Million Dollar Incentive Fund has motivated several new businesses to open within the city while simultaneously expanding the capacities and services of our existing establishments.

Our motto is "Winning Through Collaboration" and we've partnered with Prince George's Economic Development Corporation, SBDC, Prince George's Chamber of Commerce, FSC First, Prince George's Arts and Humanities Council, Gateway CDC, Employ Prince George's and MRBA to

### Weaknesses

- Many vacant commercial properties are privately owned and often these owners are primarily interested in leasing the properties for way above market value rate in anticipation of the speculative influx of Washington DC residents moving into the city based upon our rising housing prices and potential economic boom.
- Businesses that open in Mount Rainier are not always business savvy, usually have no business plan, do not engage in due diligence to determine what it takes to be successful in terms of the businesses that are lacking in the community; and they lack the business acumen to succeed.
- Because the properties are privately-owned, and the properties are leased and/or sold by financial entities that have taken over the properties due to foreclosures, city intervention occurs after the fact
- The fluctuating financial markets and the Covid 19 virus are other factors which provide a high level of uncertainty for investment and development.
- Vacant and underutilized sites on Rhode Island Avenue give the appearance of a deteriorating commercial environment.



provide <b>free</b> professional development seminars, workshops and events for our business and resident community.	
--	--

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1:</p> <p>Flourishing and prosperous Main Street Affiliate destination city with artists, restaurants, entertainment facilities, next-level retail establishments, and newly constructed residences.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Decrease in vacancies in the City; Increase the number of new businesses moving into the city; Retain and strengthen the number of existing businesses.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue to invest in our Million Dollar Incentive Fund to attract and support new and existing businesses.</p> <p>Strategy B: Continue to expand and fund community revitalization and commercial facade improvement programs.</p> <p>Strategy C: Implement the MUTC design standards for new and existing properties in the City</p>	<p>City of Mount Rainier's Department of Economic Development, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Prince George's Economic Development Corporation, FSC First, Prince George's Chamber of Commerce, Prince George's Arts &amp; Humanities Council, Gateway CDC</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Reduce vacant and underutilized properties in the commercial areas of the city.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Decrease in vacancies in the City; Encourage public-private partnerships for investment and development projects in targeted infill (vacant) areas:</p>	<p>Strategy A: Facilitate infill development in our commercial downtown business corridor and throughout the City,</p> <p>Strategy B: Implementation of the Municipal Vacant Property tax to provide incentives for maintaining and renting properties.</p>	<p>City of Mount Rainier's Department of Economic Development, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Prince George's Economic Development Corporation, FSC First, Prince George's Chamber of Commerce, Mount Rainier Finance Department, Various Developers, Realtors, Construction Companies, Foreign Investors, Venture Capitalists.</p>



# 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 City of Mount Rainier developed and flourished around the street car and is a transportation hub with WMATA MetroBus and Prince George's County TheBus providing good coverage to most of the City and connectivity to the Rhode Island Avenue corridor that extends South into Washington and North towards College Park.</li> <li>● There are three metro lines in walking distance of the City of Mount Rainier; West Hyattsville (green/yellow lines) .5 miles and Rhode Island Ave (red line) 2 miles.</li> <li>● Mount Rainier participates in Prince George's County DPWT paratransit service, Call-A-Bus. The City operates this service in conjunction with the County's service to provide Mount Rainier elderly or disabled residents with transportation alternatives.</li> <li>● The city received federal funding from the Federal Transit Administration for its Intermodal Pedestrian Project to build a pervious parking lot to serve the bus hub and provide additional parking in the town center.</li> <li>● A Zipcar is located just south of the traffic circle in Mount Rainier as an opportunity for car sharing.</li> <li>● Sidewalk connectivity within the City of Mount Rainier and into the neighboring communities is good with sidewalks on almost all blocks of streets in the City.</li> <li>● The City has developed a Bike Infrastructure Master Plan, has placed bike racks around the City, supports the Mount Rainier Bike Co-Op, and bike ridership seems high.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The nearest metro station West Hyattsville metro station does not bear the name of the City of Mount Rainier, a destination point in close proximity to Hyattsville.</li> <li>● Connectivity to downtown Washington, DC and to the Route corridor out to College Park</li> <li>● On-street parking is in demand in the downtown area and as development continues, demand will increase without much option</li> <li>● Major roads serving the city are owned and maintained by other agencies including DC DOT (Eastern Avenue) and Maryland SHA (Rhode Island Avenue and Queens Chapel Road). Improvements are slow and coordination is difficult.</li> </ul>



Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Enhance and promote multi-modal transportation safety and infrastructure with City and County</p> <p>Progress Measures: Improved or increased sidewalks and bike lanes; Amount invested in pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure</p>	<p>Strategy A Implementation of the recommendations of the Comprehensive Street and Sidewalk Inventory, Assessment, and Action Plan, expected to be completed 2017.</p> <p>Strategy B Advocate for and encourage the implementation bike lanes, signage, lighting, and pedestrian safety measures including safer crosswalks, less exposed sidewalks, on Queens Chapel Road (MD Rt. 500) and Rhode Island Avenue (US Rt. 1); Dedicated transit lane to faster bus rides into DC and out Rhode Island Ave</p>	<p>Mount Rainier Department of Public Works, Mount Rainier Green Team, Prince George's County DPWT, SHA and DC DOT</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Enhance and promote multi-modal transportation safety and infrastructure with City and County</p> <p>Progress Measures: Improved or increased sidewalks and bikelanes; Decrease in crime to and from the Metro and at the bus stops</p>	<p>Strategy A: Use community policing to increase visibility and safety walking to the West Hyattsville Metro and at major bus stops in the city (Rhode Island Avenue)</p> <p>Strategy B: Improve facilities at major bus stops on Rhode Island Avenue, Eastern Avenue, 34<sup>th</sup> Street, and Queens Chapel Road</p> <p>Strategy C: Work with SHA to implement bike lanes, signage, lighting, and pedestrian safety measures including safer crosswalks, less exposed sidewalks, on Queens Chapel Road (MD Rt. 500) and Rhode Island Avenue (US Rt. 1)</p>	<p>Prince George's County, MNCPPC, SHA</p>



# 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>• The modest historic homes have remained relatively affordable compared the rest of the DC region; the size of the homes, the historic value, and lot sizes are attractive to buyers.</li> <li>• Property values have increased 49% in the last five years and the sale prices of homes are steadily rising.</li> <li>• The city is one of the most densely populated cities in the state with 4 large apartment complexes – Kaywood Garden Apartments with 918 units, Queenstown Apartments with 720 units, and Queens Manor apartments with 520 units. There are approximately 920 single family homes in the city, two artist work force housing complexes totally 56 units.</li> <li>• 7.1% of total housing units were unoccupied at the time of the latest Census.</li> <li>• The City of Mount Rainier offers a tax incentive to homeowners who wish to renovate their homes by offering a tax credit of 10% of the pre-approved costs in the Maryland Heritage Structure Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program (up to 20% tax credit of pre-approved costs) .</li> <li>• HOMESTEAD TAX CREDIT, Homeowner</li> <li>• Mount Rainier offers a tax credit for the replacement of existing windows and doors with historically and architecturally comparable windows and doors. The City's Code Enforcement Department enforces local housing code requiring a basic level of maintenance.</li> <li>• The 2016 municipal Vacant Property legislation and tax places a higher tax rate of X% on vacant properties, providing a strong economic incentive for absentee landlords to occupy or sell vacant residential properties. The rising prices and indicate that there is demand and residential properties stay on the market averaging less than one month.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The expansion of housing choice in the Mount Rainier Community is designed to be located in the MUTC where the city currently owns property. This is virtually the only existing area excluding a few lots in the city which are privately owned to building additional housing. The current policy is to create development of high quality without the need to access services by car. In addition, housing will be energy efficient and make use of environmentally sensitive design</li> <li>• Housing will increase from 100-200 units depending upon the configuration of the development according to several developers that the city has consulted with. Workforce housing will consist of approximately 8-10% of the total units. It should be noted here that the city currently has workforce housing for artists (44 units of live where you work Artist Lofts in the Artist Housing on Rhode Island Avenue. Another 12 units of low income apartments exist at 33rd and Perry Streets. Mount Rainier is considered one of the last affordable housing areas in Prince George's County with homes averaging between \$200K and \$300k.</li> <li>• Since property values had previously remained affordable, many homes have not suffered the "mansionization" trend of "flippers" doing poor quality renovations and expansions.</li> </ul>



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The City also passed vacant property legislation in 2016 to tax vacant properties at a higher rate, encouraging the reduction of the ensuing blight and neglect.</li> </ul>	
--	--

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Preserve the historic character of the homes in the City of Mount Rainier while improving the condition of the buildings</p> <p>Progress Measures: Number of properties taking advantage of the state and local historic tax credits, Renovated properties that preserve historic character, Decrease vacant and decaying properties</p> <p>Outcome 2: Retain economic and cultural diversity of the Mount Rainier community as property values rise and new residents come in</p> <p>Progress Measures: Home ownership rates</p>	<p>Strategy A: Implementation of the Municipal Vacant Property tax to provide incentives for maintaining and renting properties</p> <p>Strategy A: Use municipal tax code to allow long-time residents to remain in their homes; reduce tax increases</p> <p>Strategy B: Build in requirements for affordable housing units in new developments over a certain size</p>	<p>MNCPPC, DRB, Mount Rainier Code Enforcement Department</p> <p>Mount Rainier Department of Economic Development, Mount Rainier Finance Department</p>



# 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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The arts community of Mount Rainier is robust and both serves the Mount Rainier community as well as attracting visitors and new investment from around the region. Joe's Movement Emporium on Bunker Hill Road. This is the focal point of arts in the community, hosting live theater performance, dance workshops, and a huge cultural exchange and arts and craft events on a routine basis.</li> <li>• Variety of parks, playgrounds, and recreational spaces maintained by the city and MNCPPC including MNCPPC skate park, MNCPPC Nature and Recreation Center offering programs for children; 34<sup>th</sup> Street playground, 30th Street Park, Gazebo Park owned and maintained by Prince George's County Public Schools, and the City owned Richardson Park and Community Garden</li> <li>• Community Policing contributes to low crime rates. Mount Rainier Police Department annually hosts a National Night Out community event.</li> <li>• The Mount Rainier Day festival, Gateway Arts Open Studio Tour, Mount Rainier Craft Fair, and other cultural events held annually reflect the community's cultural diversity and the talents of the many artists and craftsmen in the community and surrounding areas.</li> <li>• The historic character of the City of Mount Rainier; Anacostia Heritage Trail Area (ATHA) communities. ATHA supports the annual historic homes tour in the City, which promotes new homeownership and investment, it provides an opportunity for residents to meet their neighbors.</li> <li>• Glut Food Cooperative established over 40 years ago and offers fresh produce and organic foods to the community. Community members earn store credit by volunteering hours at the shop keeping it accessible to community members with limited means.</li> <li>• The Maryland Heritage Structure Rehabilitation Tax Credit Program is administered by the Maryland Historical Trust and provides Maryland</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is a lack of pharmacies, banks, fine dining, and nightlife, and redundancy of liquor stores, and convenience stores</li> <li>• Available arts retail space greatly exceeds the demand. Although gallery space is available, several prominent gallery locations remain unoccupied. Foot traffic is likely too low to support galleries.</li> <li>• Plans for the Mount Rainier Civic Center project were completed in April 2013. A barrier to development was financing opportunities and since the concept plans were completed, the project has stalled after not receiving staff time or funding.</li> <li>• MNCPPC is responsible for the maintenance of most of the parks and public recreation spaces in the City of Mount Rainier and the city has struggled with the lack of maintenance and responsiveness to the community's changing needs.</li> <li>• The Mount Rainier Branch of Prince George's County Memorial Library System is in a crumbling municipal building and does not provide adequate resources for the community. A barrier to improved library facilities and services is cooperation and coordination with the Prince George's County Memorial Library System, and an apparent lack of funding and time investment.</li> </ul>



- income tax credits equal to 20% of the qualified capital costs expended in the rehabilitation of a "certified heritage structure." The credit is available for owner-occupied residential property (homeowner) and income-producing property (commercial). The City of Mount Rainier offers an additional tax credit for 10% of the approved MHSR tax credit.
- Homeowners who replace existing windows or exterior doors, or install new windows or exterior doors are eligible for a city tax credit of 10% the cost if the windows/exterior doors are deemed historically and/or architecturally compatible with the style and period of a house that has historical or architectural value by the Design Review Board.
  - The City of Mount Rainier is a thriving arts district. The City is a key member of the Gateway Arts District and has many programs to support and promote the arts, including affordable housing units for artists. Joe's Movement Emporium is a cultural arts hub that provides a wide range of arts opportunities for the community, particularly providing arts education to students in the community.
  - The City of Mount Rainier is also host to many artist studios and galleries and had 23 studios and collectives participate in the Gateway Arts Open Studios Tour
  - Much of the City of Mount Rainier is a historic district on the national registry and the historic character is valued by the community.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Improve the community's parks public spaces</p> <p>Progress Measures: Improvements to civic institutions and public spaces, reduction of loitering and low level crime in public spaces, improvements to parks and green spaces</p>	<p>Strategy A: Improvement of city's civic institutions. Embark on public/private partnership to complete the Civic Center project for much needed expansion to the Mount Rainier Public Library; improved functionality of office and meeting space for city government, community groups, and City Council.</p> <p>Strategy B: Use public arts to activate underutilized public spaces and parks</p> <p>Strategy C: Use Community Policing strategies to target persistent problems in public spaces.</p>	<p>Prince George's Library System, Mount Rainier Department of Economic Development, MNCPPC</p> <p>Local Artists, MRBA, Gateway CDC, MNCPPC</p> <p>Mount Rainier Police Department, WMATA</p>



<p>Outcome 2: Preserve the cultural diversity and the historic character of the City.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Amount invested in historic renovations and improvements, Reduction in vacant properties, homeownership</p>	<p>Strategy A: Targeted engagement for existing tax incentive programs for homeownership and historic renovations</p> <p>Strategy B: Implementation of Municipal Vacant Property Tax on vacant housing and commercial buildings to provide incentives for maintaining and renting properties</p> <p>Strategy C: Continue to work with Prince George's County and MNCPPC on the zoning re-write and the implementation of NCOZ and design standards.</p>	<p>Mount Rainier Finance Department, Design Review Board</p>
---	---	--



# 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>MNCPPC is currently conducting a zoning re-write for Prince George's County and the City has taken the opportunity to provide input.</li> <li>The current zoning is conducive to revitalization investment as the low level of integrity of many structures will allow for sensitive and carefully crafted development of selected sites according to the Plan Vision Overview described in the Approved City of Mount Rainier MUTC Zone Development Plan.</li> <li>The current staff has managed all grants pertaining to the current Community Legacy Plan and designation including Community Development Block Grants and Livable Communities Grant Awards, Tree ReLeaf Grant Awards, and Federal Grant Awards from the Federal Transit Administration through the Department of Transportation, and Department of Justice grant awards as well as the Governor's Office on Crime Control and Prevention. The staff assigned to these grant programs include the city manager, finance director, assistant city manager, police chief, and contracted grant writer.</li> <li>In order to promote investment, the city purchased property in its downtown for \$1.8 million dollars to control the type of development.</li> <li>The City is located in the Gateway Arts District and is in the Enterprise Zone of Prince George's County.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As the City revitalizes its buildings, purchases cars and equipment, and makes improvements, it will strive to use materials and services that are in keeping with this ordinance's objectives. For example when budgeting for police cars, the City will strive to purchase and place into use at least one alternative fuel or hybrid vehicle; purchase recycled paper; install energy efficient lighting, etc.</li> <li>There have also been discussions with WMATA about the possibility of relocating the bus turnaround, removing the bus lanes in front of city hall to create a green public gathering space as highlighted in the Approved City of Mount Rainier Mixed-Use Town Center Zone Development Plan.</li> <li>Improve the relationship between key stakeholders i.e., commercial property owners and the city government staff and improve business acumen of business owners;</li> <li>Rehabilitation of existing structures in the 3300 Block of Rhode island Avenue, renovation of the former Star-Potts Hall located at 3405 Rhode Island Avenue</li> </ul>

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Infill development on vacant and underutilized properties	<p>Strategy A: Implement the MUTC design standards for the town center and the NCOZ</p> <p>Strategy B: Encourage and support infill development</p> <p>Strategy C: Implementation of the Municipal Vacant Property tax to provide incentives for maintaining and renting properties</p>	Mount Rainier Department of Economic Development, Office of Finance



Progress Measures: Infill development in the town center, renovations and development adhering to design standards