

CHECKLIST & TABLE OF CONTENTS**APPLICANT:** Town of Rising Sun**NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY:** Town of Rising Sun

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

- TAB #1 Sustainable Community Applicant Information**
- TAB #2 Sustainable Community Baseline Information and Map: In addition to the baseline narrative, include a hard copy of the proposed Sustainable Communities map in Tab 2.**
- TAB #3 Local Capacity to Implement Plans & Projects and Workgroup Roster: Attach Sustainable Communities Workgroup roster noted in Section III**
- TAB #4 Sustainable Community Plan**
- TAB #5 Progress Measures**
- TAB #6 Local Support Resolution and Letters of Support: In addition to the local support resolution, please include any letters of support that demonstrate partner commitments to the implementation and/or oversight of the Sustainable Community Plan.**
- TAB #7 Signed Sustainable Community Application Disclosure Authorization and Certification**
- TAB #8 CD-ROM: The CD-ROM should include the following contents:**
 - Map in pdf format of the proposed Sustainable Communities area**
 - GIS shapefile of the proposed Sustainable Community boundaries and other GIS related data, eg, 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, DHCD, wolters@mdhousing.org**
 - Pictures (jpeg format) of your Sustainable Community as it relates to your application**

**All documents on this checklist are mandatory.
Failure to provide the requested document will automatically deny your application.**

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Through this section, applicants will demonstrate that trends and conditions in homeownership, property values, employment, commercial and residential vacancy, community facilities and infrastructure, nature, natural resources, the local business and residential districts show a need for new or continued revitalization reinvestment. Demographic data and trends provided by Applicants should support the choice of the proposed Sustainable Community Area boundary and help form a basis for needs and opportunities to be addressed through the initiatives and projects described in the Sustainable Community Action Plan (Section IV)

POINTS IN THIS SECTION WILL BE AWARDED BASED ON THE SC AREA'S NEED FOR REINVESTMENT AS EVIDENCED BY THOROUGH DESCRIPTIONS OF CURRENT CONDITIONS OR TRENDS (and will not be based upon current or planned revitalization activities which will be covered in Section IV).

A. Proposed Sustainable Area(s):

County: Cecil

Name of Sustainable Community: Town of Rising Sun

Include boundary descriptions and a map of the Sustainable Community. In addition to hard copies of the project location map, a detailed listing of parcels(i.e. Parcel ID Numbers)that form the project boundary should be included. If possible, maps should also be submitted in electronic GIS form (shape file). If you have additional comments or questions, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, DHCD, wolters@MdHousing.org

The proposed Sustainable Community Area boundary includes the historic Main Street area and surrounding housing areas. This Area contains the bulk of the historic structures and older housing stock that have been identified by the Sustainable Communities Workgroup to be the areas with the most need for the Sustainable Communities designation. The proposed boundary is located wholly within the Rising Sun Priority Funding Area. The proposed Sustainable Community Area was carefully defined to identify areas that would be the focus of the Town's initial Sustainable Communities Action Plan and reflects existing investments and priorities geared towards revitalizing and energizing economic development in the downtown; maximizing investments in infrastructure; and improving quality of life and entertainment opportunities for residents.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Approximate number of acres within the SC Area: 377

Existing Federal, State, or Local designations(check all that apply)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community Legacy Area | <input type="checkbox"/> Designated Neighborhood |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Main Street | <input type="checkbox"/> Maple Street |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Local Historic District | <input type="checkbox"/> National Register Historic District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> A&E District | <input type="checkbox"/> State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BRAC | <input type="checkbox"/> State Designated TOD |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other(s) | |

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

Prior revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:

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

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

The Rising Sun Comprehensive Plan advocates Smart Neighborhoods and Infill and Redevelopment, particularly for revitalization of the historic commercial core. The Sustainable Communities Action Plan focuses on implementing Town goals for the revitalization of the historic commercial core and improving conditions and accessibility of the surrounding residential neighborhoods. There have been some streetscape improvements along Main Street but there is a lack of uniformity in the character of the area.

Rising Sun is within a Priority Funding Area and as such is positioned to promote smart growth. Rising Sun is construction a new ENR Wastewater Treatment Plant to improve current treatment levels and accommodate future growth. There have been several park improvements in the community, including Veteran's Park and a new dog park.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(b) Describe any existing barriers to Smart Growth that may affect your jurisdiction or the proposed SC Area. For instance, does your area have higher development fees than outer "cornfields"?

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

The Town issued a sewer & water moratorium on new growth in 2006, due to inadequacies of the old wastewater treatment plant and lack of water supply redundancy. MDE issued a consent decree for the wastewater treatment plant in 2010. The Town began construction of a new \$14 million dollar ENR wastewater treatment plant in 2012. The new wastewater treatment plant is anticipated to be online within the next several weeks. In addition, the Town has conducted numerous studies regarding the various options available to the Town to increase water capacity. The Town has paid for the design of a water line through PA to the Maryland border. The Town has completed a Preliminary Engineering Report and a Environmental Impact study as part of a financial assistance application with USDA - The new water line is scheduled for completion in late 2017.

The lack of sufficient wastewater treatment and water supply has been an obstacle for new growth within the Town. With the new wastewater treatment plant online and increased water capacity, the Town will be able to accommodate future growth. The cost of the new wastewater treatment plant and new water line will be paid for by user fees. The debt service will likely increase the cost to existing and future users. The rates will need to be closely monitored to ensure that costs are equitable. The new wastewater treatment and increased water capacity will support higher densities within Town and annexation areas.

Undeveloped farm land around the town acts as a disincentive to infill and redevelopment in the commercial core; however, potable water availability, sewer capacity, streetscape enhancements, facade improvements, zoning regulation updates and quality of life improvements can be incentives to attract new investment to Town.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

B. Community Conditions: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses in the proposed Area's existing built environment. For example, what is the condition of housing? Are there underutilized historic buildings and cultural palces? What is the condition and availability of community parks and recreational assets? Are there transportaion assests? What is the current condition of community infrastructure such as roads and lighting?

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

The Town has strong community aesthetic, including a Town Center with a small town character. It is the only urbanized center for several miles and provides many of the commercial and social services for the area, including one of the only grocery stores in this region of Cecil County.

There are banks, restaurants, shops, services, museums, a library and parks provide for a number of basic needs for residents in this area. The housing stock is generally older and is deteriorating. There is a high number of renter occupied single-family homes. The rents tend to be relatively affordable for the County. The town parks are highly utilized.

The town is served by US 1, MD 273, MD 274 and MD 276 but the Town is not served by any bus transit routes. The roads are in relatively good condition or are programmed for repaving. No transit options, results in limited access to Cecil College and major employment centers in the County. Cecil College is located several miles to the south on MD 274 and the University of Delaware is located in Delaware, several miles to the east.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the Area's land use/zoning make-up(residential, commercial, industrial, and mixed-use). Is the current land use or zoning conducive to revitalization investment?

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

The Town's current land use is conducive to revitalization. Most of the area along Main Street consists of commercial areas and residential areas. There are opportunities for new commercial and residential infill that connects to existing developed areas. The Town has commissioned a study to re-due the existing zoning map and is in the process of reviewing their zoning code to ensure that new development will emphasize compact, walkable, and high quality development standards.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(3) Describe strengths and weaknesses in basic features of community quality-of-life. For instance, is crime an issue for this SC Area? What is the condition and quality of educational choices available to the community? Are artistic, cultural, or community resources, events or facilities with in or accessible to residents in the proposed SC Area?

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

There are many strengths in Rising Sun:

- The town office building, police department, fire department, library, and other municipal services are available in the town.
- The Police and fire departments are adequate to meet the demands of the current population. Crime is not seen as a major issue in the proposed Sustainable Community Area.
- There are three parks, Diddie Richardson Park , Veterans Community Park and the newly constructed Triangle Dog Park and Trails are accessible to residents.
- The Pavillion at the Veterans Community Park can be reserved year round for parties.
- There are several community events are held in town, such as, Sunfest, Carol Sing, Spooktacular, Color Fun Run, Movies in in the Park, Music in the Park and Music on the Porch.
- The Town is applying for an Arts & Entertainment District.
- The Town has a small town atmosphere and is perceived as neighborly where personal relationships can be developed, a Town that you can know everyone, and is thought of as a good place to raise children or your family.
- The rural character of surrounding area draws patrons to established business services, shopping, dining and entertainment.
- The Business district is composed of small mom and pop restaurants and shops.
- Student test scores at the elementary, middle, and high schools are among the highest in the state.
- Town of Rising Sun Historical Museum showcases many amazing artifacts, documents, clothing and other items depicting the life and times of Rising Sun over the past 150 years.
- Annual Civil War Reenactment promotes history of the area and fun.

There are also some weaknesses in town.

- The Town office building is inadequate for the present level of service needed in the Town and needs to be replaced or enlarged.
- There is a lack of programs and activities for the younger population.
- The wastewater system is near capacity and is prone to failure.
- * The Town's existing well system is not sufficient for peak demand and does not allow for future needs regarding infill within the Town.
- The downtown lacks a unifying identity.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

C. Natural Resources and Environmental Impact: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the community's "Natural environment" in or near the Sustainable Community Area. What is the current condition of key natural resources - lands, air, water, watersheds, tree canopy, other? If the community is located in a coastal zone, what risks might the community be subject to associated with climate induced sea level rise?

(Answer space 4,000 characters)

The Town has several Natural Strengths:

- The Octoraro Creek Watershed is listed in Maryland Department of Environment’s 2008 Integrated Report on water quality as Category 2, Clean Waters, and is designated for use by wildlife and aquatic life.
- No TMDL has been issued for Octoraro Creek Watershed.
- The Town is upgrading the sewer system to ENR by September 2015.
- The Town has 100 acres of forested land.
- The Town has a recycling program.
- The Town has regulations to require low flow plumbing fixtures.
- The Town has an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO).
- The Town has applied for a \$759K DNR grant to put in a stormwater. management project at Veterans Community Park.

The Town has identified some weaknesses that can be addressed by the Sustainable Communities Action Plan:

- The Town does not have strong greenbelt protection.
- Trees and plantings not integrated into Main Street.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of any current efforts to reduce the community's "carbon foot print" or impact on the environment. Is recycling (commercial or residential) available to minimize waste? Are there current efforts to encourage the purchase and availability of fresh local food and other local products and services to the community? Describe any current energy or water conservation efforts that may be underway. If the community has not implemented one of the above initiatives, has the community identified a need or interest to pursue these or other efforts to reduce environmental impact, for instance through the new Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative?

(Answer space 4000 characters)

The Town has a recycling program and requires low flow plumbing fixtures. At the new Town Dog Park, an artificial surface was used to reduce the need for mowing and watering. The Town is encouraging a greater tree canopy but there are limited trees and planting along Main Street and at town parks. The town is surrounded by rural farms that provide a variety of fresh local food options.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(3) Describe the strengths and weaknesses of the jurisdiction's current stormwater management practices and how these may affect the proposed SC Area. Is redevelopment and retrofitting of infrastructure an issue or opportunity in this SC Area? Stormwater runoff is a significant source of pollution to Maryland's streams and the Chesapeake Bay. Buildings constructed before 1985 have little or no stormwater controls, and development between 1985 and 2010 have some controls. Updated stormwater regulations passed by Maryland's General Assembly in 2010 require that development and redevelopment projects utilize stringent stormwater controls. Sustainable Community Areas may have opportunities for redevelopment practices that can reduce stormwater flows.

(Answer space 4000 characters)

The Octoraro Creek Watershed is listed in Maryland Department of Environment's 2008 Integrated Report on water quality as Category 2, Clean Waters, and is designated for use by wildlife and aquatic life. There are some areas of concern. The Town has submitted a \$759K DNR grant request to put in a rain garden and pervious concrete to reduce stormwater impacts. The Town has also requested to complete some streambank restoration as part of a \$230K DNR grant to build a new playground and convert rail to walking trail.

Some challenges facing the Town on stormwater management is that it's not easy or inexpensive to retrofit Stormwater management system, such as, at Stone Run. Some of the antiquated wastewater systems affect stormwater management improvements.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

D. Economic Conditions & Access to Opportunity: Strengths and Weaknesses

(1) Describe the jurisdiction's current economic strengths and weaknesses. For example, are there distinct economic drivers in the area or region that will affect access to job opportunities and the progress of the SC Plan? What are the main barriers to the Area's economic competitiveness? What is the current level of broadband access available to serve residents, businesses and public facilities? What efforts are currently in place to increase worker skills and employment? Describe trends in employment rates and business formation.

(Answer space 4000 characters)

The Town has the potential to create a walkable downtown. The historic buildings and some larger lots that are located on Main Street could appeal to desirable retailers. The Town has a large draw of shoppers from Cecil County and the surrounding regions of Southern Chester County PA and Delaware.

Challenges for the commercial core is very limited opportunity for street parking and only one available public parking lot. There are a number of vacant store fronts that need new patrons. Combined, the Area does not attract the high volume of pass through traffic to stop. There is also a lack of high paying jobs in town so most residents commute out of town to their jobs.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

(2) Describe the jurisdiction's housing market and access to affordable workforce housing. What are the trends in residential construction (rental and homeownership), homeownership rate, foreclosure rate and, property values. Describe how and whether your jurisdiction's prevailing housing costs-both homeownership and rental - are affordable to households below 120% AMI, 80% AMI, 50% AMI. JWhat efforts are in place currently to house individuals, families and the disabled at or below the AMI levels described above?

(Answer space 4000 characters)

The Town has a relatively low vacancy rate for housing. Only 5% of the community's housing stock lies vacant. Many houses are well maintained. There is a significant amount of rental housing that is available and is relatively affordable for the area. Cecil College students consider Rising Sun for housing opportunities because of the affordability and proximity.

The average household size has been declining and is expected to decline in the future. The housing stock in the proposed Sustainable Community Area is older and is aging. There is a low owner occupied housing rate. Many of the units are rentals (40%), compared to the County rate of (25%). The average home values are slightly less than 89% of the County's average. The median home value is \$117,700, which is \$14,600 less than the county median.

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY BASELINE INFORMATION

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

(Answer space 4000 characters)

The Town of Rising Sun is growing; the population grew 65% between 2000 and 2010 due to the construction of new residential developments in the growth area. With the completion of the the ENR wastewater treatment plant additional development can be supported.

The median income of the town is 34% lower than the Cecil County average and has been growing a slower rate than the County since 2000. The percentage of the population reported in the 2013 American Community Survey (ACS) for Rising with a high school degree or equivalency is 86.4% The percentage of population with a bachelor's degree or higher is 14.2%. This is less than Cecil County percentage of 87.5% and 22.5% and Maryland percentage of 88.7% and 36.8% respectively.

The unemployment rate for the Town was not available but the unemployment rate of Cecil County was 7.7%, higher than the Maryland rate of 6.6% in 2013.

The median age is 35.5 years, slightly less than the Cecil County median age of 39.6 reported in the 2013 ACS. Median age is slightly higher than the 33.5 years reported in the 2000 Census for Rising Sun.

The median household income in Rising Sun of \$49,623 is reported in the 2013 ACS. This is less than the \$66,689 reported for Cecil County. Incomes are growing at a slower pace in Rising Sun than in Cecil County. The 2000 Census reported a median household income of \$41,089 in Rising Sun and \$50,510. The Town has a poverty rate of 12.7% reported in the 2013 ACS. The poverty rate is higher than the Cecil County rate of 10.4%. The poverty rate has increased 29%, or 3.1% higher, than the 9.8% reported in the 2000 Census.

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

A. Organizational Structure:

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

(Answer space 4000 characters)

The Sustainable Communities Workgroup is headed by the Town Administrator, Calvin Bonenberger, Jr. The Town has limited staff resources so assistance will be required by the Town Clerk, Marsha Spencer, the Arts Council and Commissioner Dave Warnick. Additional assistance will come from the Mayor, Town Commissioners, Planning Commission and Greater Rising Sun Chamber. In addition, the Town will request assistance from DHCD and MDP staff to assist with implementing the various activities of the Action Plan.

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

B. Organizational Experience:

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

(Answer space 4000 characters)

Town Administrator, Calvin Bonenberger Jr, has over 35 years of municipal government experience to include significant experience in administering grants and complex financial projects. Mr. Bonenberger has also spearheaded several other economic development and community improvement initiatives in PA through past employment. As the Town Administrator, Mr. Bonenberger will be responsible for guiding and convening the members of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup and stakeholders. Mr. Bonenberger will be assisted by Marsha Spencer, Town Clerk, who will provide administrative help in document processing, meeting coordination and stake holder events. Mr. Bonenberger and Mrs. Spencer will be responsible for organizing and submitting the Community Legacy and/or SGIF grant applications. The Workgroup members will assist with application development and implementation of grant activities. Workgroup members are experienced with project development. The challenge is that this is a small Town with limited staff. Some of the leg work must be completed by volunteer members of the Workgroup.

III. LOCAL CAPACITY TO IMPLEMENT PLANS & PROJECTS

C. Public Input:

How did residents and other stakeholders in the community provide input to Action plan described below in section IV?

(Answer space 4000 characters)

A draft Action Plan was developed with the assistance of DHCD and MDP staff. The draft Action Plan is based upon the needs for the downtown and surrounding area that are identified in the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Rising Sun convened a Citizens Advisory Committee to define the objectives of the 2010 Comprehensive Plan. That plan provided the foundation for the Action Plan. The draft Action Plan was refined by the Workgroup Committee members. Community input for the Action Plan was solicited at a Town public hearing.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The Sustainable Community Action Plan (SC Plan or Plan) is meant to be a multi-year investment strategy - a strategic set of revitalization initiatives and projects that local partners believe will increase the economic vitality and livability of their community, increased prosperity for local households and improved 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 in the SC Plan should improve the livability of community places -- residential, commercial, or other public or private properties - and create new work, retail, recreational and housing opportunities for residents. These projects should also 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 sustainable and livable community.

A.Supporting existing communities & reducing environmental Impacts.

(1) A community's approach to Smart Growth generally includes two inter-related areas of focus: encouraging reinvestment and growth in existing communities; and, discouraging growth that degrades natural resources, and farms and rural landscapes. Broadly describe your jurisdiction's Smart Growth approach and any significant accomplishments made over the last decade or so.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Town of Rising Sun is making major investments in wastewater treatment and new sources of drinking water. This investment will accommodate growth and reinvestment in our existing downtown and surrounding neighborhoods. The Town has made investments in parks and trails and is working to connect these resources into the existing community. The Town has several historic commercial and residential structures that are targeted for improvement. The Town is working to promote arts and entertainment in the downtown. The Town is working to promote community events that will attract visitors and increase economic activity.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) Describe any major investments in community infrastructure -water, stormwater, sewer, sidewalk, lighting, etc. -- that must be undertaken in order to improve the readiness or competitiveness of the proposed SC Area for private investment and compliance (if applicable) with TMDL regulations. Addressing the stormwater during redevelopment can reduce the pollution entering our streams and contribution to the restoration of the Chesapeake Bay. Investments in infrastructure, generally, can be an important catalyst for new private investment in the community.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Town has invested over \$14 million to build a new ENR wastewater treatment plant. This plant is expected to be operational by September 2015. The construction of this plant will not only improve the quality of the discharge but will also end a building moratorium that has been in place since 2006. In addition, the Town is financially preparing to invest \$6 million to construct a new water line to deliver up to 500,000 gallons plus of water to the Town of Rising Sun. The construction of this water line will help alleviate documented water shortages to the Town in order to a building moratorium that has been in place since 2006.

Streetscaping, parking, trees, landscaping, sidewalks, lighting, facade programs, trails and stormwater management are all needs that the Town will focus on to make the Town more competitive and attractive. The Town will work with business owners to facilitate investment in redevelopment, infill, and shared parking. The Town will also review it's zoning ordinance to ensure that infill development can be appropriate and streamlined.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that the community will undertake or expand in order to reduce the SC Area’s impact on the environment. Examples include but are not limited to: conservation or management of stormwater through retrofitting of streets and by-ways (Green Streets, rain gardens, etc.); retrofitting of facilities and homes for energy conservation; implementation of “green” building codes and mixed-use zoning; recycling of waste; clean-ups of watersheds; and, encouragement of “Buy Local” approaches that benefit local suppliers and food producers. A comprehensive menu of such actions may be found through the nonprofit Sustainable Maryland Certified initiative.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Town will work to minimize the impacts of point and non-point sources of pollution in the Octoraro Creek Watershed. This will require the use of best-practices for infill development and designated growth areas of Town; require that impervious surface areas be minimized; require developers to map wetland areas on-site and on adjacent sites; use the Tributary Strategy for decision making; and identifying potential sites for wetland and stream mitigation areas.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Rising Sun Chamber of Commerce will be instrumental in activating improvements to the downtown, including facade improvements, shared-parking strategies, infill development, streetscaping and business expansion. The Rising Sun Arts Council will be key in attracting arts and entertainment business into town, seeking an Arts & Entertainment District designation, and promoting music, art, and entertainment events. The Town Council and Planning Commission will also be key in working to streamline the zoning ordinance, ensuring adequate public facilities, and promoting trail connections and parks in town. Assistance will be requested from DHCD, MDP, MHT, MDOT, MDE and DNR on applicable topics.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

B. Valuing communities and neighborhoods -- building up on assets and building in amenities:

(1) What are the key assets that exist in the community upon which the Plan’s projects and initiatives will build? Assets may include physical assets such as parks and historic structures and also civic and economic assets such as employers, educational institutions, and cultural organizations and activities.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Key assets in Town are the park and trail system to Veterans Community Park, Diddie Richardson Park, Triangle Dog Park and the Town’s sense of community and history.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) What policies, initiatives or projects will reuse or enhance the historical assets, traditional business districts/Main Streets and cultural resources of the community? What actions will reinforce your community’s authentic “sense of place” and historic character?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Sustainable Communities action plan will focus on preserving and enhancing the Town's rich cultural and historic heritage. The Town will explore the use of protection and preservation programs such as the National Register of Historic Places, National Historic Landmark, Conservation and Preservation Easements, Historic Overlay District, and Maryland Historical Trust. The Town would like to complete an inventory of historic structures and resources, adopt zoning ordinances that promote adaptive reuse, and encourage preservation of historic structure and resources through tax incentives for renovations and donation of protective historic easements, and requiring the identification of historic structures and resources prior to development approvals.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Describe policies, initiatives or projects that will increase community access to green spaces, parks and other amenities? A community can gain social and physical benefits from access to a healthy natural environment. The inclusion of complete streets, trails, green space, parks and trees contribute to the character and health of a community. Examples might include improvements to the tree canopy by planting street trees, improving local neighborhood streams, or reusing a vacant lot for a new community park or playground.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Town is planning to increase access to green space by completing a series of connecting pedestrian pathways and bike trails between the parks and surrounding neighborhoods. The Town is promoting increased tree canopy in the Main Street area and in Town parks. The Town would like to incorporate bike racks and provide a comfort station at the bike trail near the Volunteer Fire Department site. The Town is working to address stormwater issues at Stone Run Creek and will consider zoning ordinance amendments to reduce impervious surfaces.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Coordination between the Parks and Recreation Committee, Arts Council, Planning Commission, Town Council with property owners and the Town Administrator will be key.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

C. Enhancing economic competitiveness:

(1) What economic development policies, initiatives or projects will improve the economy through investments in small businesses and other key employment sectors? What economic development and business incentives will you build upon or implement as part of the SC Plan? Examples could include but are not limited to: green-taping for expedited project application review; permitting and inspection; job training; business tax credits; and, revolving loan funds.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Town wants to improve the business climate and develop a marketable identity and Town branding. The Town has developed an RFP for an "Economic Development and Community Revitalization Study" The Town submitted a financial assistance grant with USDA to pay for the Study and is waiting on final determination of any award. The Town will conduct a parking demand study for the downtown and will consider opportunities for shared-parking near the Volunteer Fire Department. The Town would like to attract more day trippers to Town. The Town will review parking regulations in the zoning ordinance and promote adaptive reuse. The Town will consider creating an upper-story residential development program to provide matching grants to property owners or businesses that are willing to convert their second story space into apartments in the downtown. The Town will consider a facade program to fund new windows, signage, lighting, entryways or other improvements to the front facades. The Town will consider design standards to guide future rehabilitation and development that will encourage an attractive and cohesive downtown that reflects the historic character. The Town will work to create a strategy to promote arts as a component of economic development and will work to expand the successful Movies in the Park and Art in the Park programs. The Town will consider zoning ordinance amendments to support artisan based business, including galleries, craft shops, museums, studio space, and Bed and Breakfasts establishments.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) What workforce development policies, initiatives or projects will increase access to jobs and economic opportunity for residents in the SC Area? Do you have a goal for job creation? Are green jobs an opportunity in the jurisdiction or SC Area?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Town would like to create a job center, perhaps at the Town Library, were residents can access the internet to search and apply for jobs, find information about job training and education opportunities, and receive employment counseling. The Town would like to identify the types of businesses and industries that would thrive in Rising Sun and create a plan to train workers for those industries.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Describe whether the Sustainable Community will be impacted by the Base Re-alignment and Closure (BRAC) activities in Maryland. If impacted, how do the initiatives and projects in your Plan complement BRAC-related growth? (If not applicable, all ten points will be assessed based on answers to questions 1, 2, and 4)

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Rising Sun is not impacted by BRAC.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Coordination between the Chamber of Commerce, Arts Council, Cecil County Economic Development and the Town Administrator will be key.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

D. Promoting access to quality affordable housing.

(1) What housing policies, initiatives or projects will expand housing choices - rental and homeownership -- for people of a range of ages, incomes, and also for disabled individuals? How will these actions address the current housing conditions and needs noted in Section II?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Town would like to increase the percentage of homeownership in the Sustainable Community Area. The Town would promote the Maryland Mortgage Program for first-time home-buyers and would work with DHCD or others to conduct workshops for stakeholders. The Town will consider opportunities for accessory dwelling units and upper-story residential units. The Town will consider stronger code-enforcement and seek Community Legacy funding for building rehabilitation or demolition.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) Will these housing initiatives or projects increase access to transit or community walkability and/or decrease transportation costs? In other words, will the housing investments result in more people living near work or town centers, or able to more conveniently reach work, school, shopping and/or recreation?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Increasing housing in the Sustainable Community area would increase access to downtown, parks and shopping, school and jobs.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) What is your goal for of number of units to be created of affordable workforce housing, rental and homeownership? What populations (by income or special needs) will benefit from this increased access to affordable housing?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Town would like to increase the percentage of housing units that are owner-occupied.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(4) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Mayor's office, Town Council, local realtors and code enforcement will need to coordinate closely with the Town Administrator.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

E. Support transportation efficiency and access.

(1) What policies, strategies and projects are envisioned to strengthen the transportation network that affects the proposed SC Area? How will these initiatives support transportation choices (including walking, bicycling, bus or rail transit, and carpooling) or otherwise promote an efficient transportation network that integrates housing and transportation land uses?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Town would like to improve the streetscape along Main Street to include landscaping and special street furniture. The Town would like to expand sidewalks along Hopewell Road to accommodate pedestrians and cyclist. The Town would like to complete pedestrian trails and greenways connecting parks in Town. The Town would like to provide bike racks. The Town would like to explore the use of the Volunteer Fire Department lot as a park-and-ride facility. The Town would like to explore shared-parking in the downtown area. The Town would like to explore the feasibility of providing transit services to Cecil College and County employment areas.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) If applicable, describe the SC Area’s connection or proximity to transportation centers (e.g. Metro, MARC, and light rail stations) and describe opportunities for Transit - Oriented Development (TOD). Will Plan strategies and projects contribute to jobs/housing balance or otherwise provide a mix of land uses that can be expected to reduce reliance on single-occupancy automobiles? (If transit or TOD is not applicable in your community, all points in this section will be based on questions 1 and 3)

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Not Applicable.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) Which community groups or stakeholders will be key to the implementation of the initiatives and projects noted in this section?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Mayor's Office, Town Council, MDOT, SHA, Cecil County Transit, Cecil College, WILMAPCO will need to coordinate with the Town Administrator.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

F. Coordinating and Leveraging Policies and Investment

(1) What specific steps will the Sustainable Community Workgroup take to coordinate policies and funding streams to remove barriers to investment and maximize and increase funding in the proposed Sustainable Community Area?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Sustainable Community Workgroup will coordinate with MDP and DHCD to identify funding streams and opportunities and identify solutions for any barriers encountered.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(2) How is the proposed Sustainable Community Plan consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Sustainable Community Plan is consistent with the 2010 Comprehensive Plan and has been developed as an implementation tool of the Comprehensive Plan. The Town will also consider zoning ordinance amendments needed to support the Comprehensive Plan and Sustainable Community Plan.

IV. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

(3) How will the Plan help leverage and/or sustain more private sector investments?

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

The Town will work with the private sector to promote investments in downtown. The provision of adequate wastewater is the first step. Investments in streetscaping, facade improvements, housing, parks, accessibility and quality of life will help to attract new residents and business. The Town will seek federal funding from sources such as CDBG, and state resources that will assist with business development and community enhancements.

V. PROGRESS MEASURES

For the Plan parts of section IV(A through F):

(1) List the specific outcomes that the Plan seeks to produce.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Infrastructure and Environment Outcomes include: Reduced stormwater runoff and pollution in the Octoraro Creek watershed; access to parks; enhanced wastewater treatment; reduced impervious surface; survey historic resources; reduce amount of blighted properties; guide new growth and development to downtown and infill areas; improve bicycle and pedestrian connections.

Quality of Life Outcomes: Reinforce and strengthen the sense of place; develop a local historic register; continue and expand recycling programs; continue movies in the park, civil war re-enactment and other community art and entertainment venues; enhanced signage and facades.

Economic Competitiveness Outcomes: Streamlined Zoning Ordinance to promote a business climate that supports the Towns vision and character; create an economic development plant that leverages existing strengths to bring new industries that provide non-local serving jobs at family-supporting wages; open a job center; create a vibrant downtown; create a plan for parking.

Housing Outcomes: Provide new opportunities for housing options in the downtown; increase homeownership opportunities; increase code enforcement.

Transportation Outcomes: Increase pedestrian connections and bicycle infrastructure; provide a park-and-ride for carpooling; and provide new transit opportunities.

V. PROGRESS MEASURES

(2) And, list the specific benchmarks that will be used to measure progress toward these outcomes.

(Answer Space 4,000 characters)

Infrastructure and Environment Benchmarks: Completing ENR wastewater plant by September 2015; identifying feasibility of car-pool site; stormwater upgrades at Stone Run Creek; use of impervious surface at municipal lots; expanded trail system.

Quality of Life Benchmarks: Maintaining traditional neighborhood character; completing zoning ordinance update with design standards by 2016.

Economic Competitiveness Benchmarks: Complete Zoning Ordinance streamlining by 2016; apply for funding for job center by 2016; apply for funding for facade improvements by 2016 and complete at least two facade improvement projects by 2017; conduct a parking and shared-lot study for downtown; identify parking adjustments in the zoning ordinance update.

Housing Benchmarks: Rehabilitate three affordable housing units by 2017; increase housing ownership rate by 10% in three years.

Transportation Benchmarks: The number of bicycle and pedestrian facilities added within three years; number of capital projects completed by 2017; number of sidewalks that are ADA compliant by 2018.

COVID-19 Abbreviated Application Assessment and Accomplishments Worksheet

- 1) **Have there been any significant changes to the size of the community, such as population or through annexation?** No. We have not had any recent annexations and population remain steady at around 2.8 to 3 thousand.
- 2) **Are there any strategy shifts within an Action Plan component?** No. Our strategies remain the same as previously submitted and approved.
- 3) **Do you request any technical assistance from the State in implementing Sustainable Community Action Plan strategies?** Yes
 - a) If yes, please describe: We will continue to need the support of Maryland Department of Planning by utilizing their Upper Shore Regional Planner for support with Comprehensive Planning, Zoning updates, grant writing, and assisting the Town in setting up their Façade Improvement Program.
- 4) **Have you been awarded any revitalization-related State funds in the past five years? For example, DHCD Community Legacy, DHCD Strategic Demolition Fund, MDOT Community Safety and Enhancement, MDOT Bikeways, MDOT Sidewalk Retrofit, MDE Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund.** No.
- 5) **Have you been awarded any federal CARES Act funding and/or State emergency COVID funds?** Yes.
 - a) If yes, please list name of the program, description of the project and amount of awarded funds: We were reimbursed Emergency Overtime for the Police Departments and the cost of pamphlets for community education in the amount of \$21,163.99.
- 6) **Please list and describe any significant accomplishments over the past five years as a Sustainable Community. Examples may include the launch of a new façade improvement program, number of senior housing repairs, linear feet of sidewalk replaced, etc.**

The Town of Rising Sun completed building a new two million gallons per day water line from Pennsylvania to Rising Sun treatment facility. We upgraded our sewer plant to ENR standards, capable of processing 500,000 gallons per day. These improvements allowed the Town to remove a water and sewer moratorium on growth lifted in November of 2019. This improvement is expected to allow the

Town to add new housing developments and to reach out to areas with poor water quality to improve their quality of health and life. Since the moratorium was lifted, the Town has had 5 new homes built. These new homes have an average evaluation of \$275,000 dollars which is significant for the Town of Rising Sun.

Working with the Eagle Scouts and our Public Works Department, we have improved our parks systems by adding walking trails and bridges that support access to wetland habitat and public involvement by getting out into the community for family walks.

7) Have anticipated needs or strategies shifted during the COVID-19 pandemic? Relatedly, has the ongoing pandemic uncovered community needs previously undetected? Yes. Somewhat.

- a) If yes, please describe: As we open back up the ability to meet and have social events, we see the need to have more outdoor sanitizing stations with hand-washing stations throughout Town especially in our parks, dog-parks and Town provided family events. We want to continue awareness of public health in more that just a pandemic response.