



SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY DESIGNATION

2015 APPLICATION

Eligible Applicants:

- *Local Government*
- *Local Government Consortium*

Sustainable Communities Application Rounds

October 29, 2015

February 5, 2016

June 3, 2016

October 7, 2016

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

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

KENNETH C. HOLT, *Secretary*
ELLINGTON E. CHURCHILL, JR., *Deputy Secretary*

OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES

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

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

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

1. **Support existing communities.** Target public and private resources toward existing communities—through strategies like transit oriented, mixed-use development, and land recycling—to increase community revitalization and the efficiency of public works investments and to safeguard rural landscapes.
2. **Value communities and neighborhoods.** Enhance the unique characteristics of all communities by investing in healthy, safe, and walkable neighborhoods—rural, urban, or suburban.
3. **Coordinate and leverage policies and investment.** Align policies and funding to remove barriers to collaboration, leverage funding, and increase the accountability and effectiveness of all levels of government to plan for future growth, including making smart energy choices such as locally generated renewable energy.
4. **Enhance economic competitiveness.** Improve economic competitiveness through reliable and timely access to employment centers, educational opportunities, services and other basic needs by workers, as well as expanded business access to markets.
5. **Promote equitable, affordable housing.** Expand location and energy-efficient housing choices for people of all ages, incomes, races, and ethnicities to increase mobility and lower the combined cost of housing and transportation.
6. **Provide more transportation choices.** Develop safe, reliable, and economical transportation choices to decrease household transportation costs, reduce our nation’s dependence on foreign oil, improve air quality, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and promote public health. .

The Sustainable Communities Act of 2010 was a great step forward toward reinvestment and revitalization in our State’s existing communities through the simplification of the targeting of State revitalization resources into

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

a single focus area called “Sustainable Community Areas.” In the Act, Sustainable Community Areas are defined as places where public and private investments and partnerships achieve:

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

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

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

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

Sustainable Community Action Plan

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

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

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

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

Sustainable Communities – Application Rounds

Round XIV: October 29, 2015

Round XV: February 5, 2016

Round XVI: June 3, 2016

Round XVII: October 7, 2016

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

Sustainable Community Area Benefits

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

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

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

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

Maryland Sustainable Communities Tax Credit Program (Small Commercial Tax Credit). In 2014 the Maryland General Assembly expanded the tax credit program to include a Small Commercial Tax Credit. The small commercial category will help fund modest rehabilitation projects that have historically struggled to compete for the large-scale commercial awards. Eligible projects may earn a state income tax credit equal to 20 percent of qualified rehabilitation expenditures. Small commercial properties must be certified as historic, located within a designated Sustainable Community, and must not contain more than 75% residential rental use. The credit is capped at \$50,000 in a 24-month period and eligible costs must be between \$5,000 and \$500,000 to qualify. The Small Commercial Tax Credit program is administered by the Maryland Historical Trust. Applications will be available beginning September 1, 2014 for preliminary review; however, projects cannot begin work and will not be certified prior to January 1, 2015.

Enhanced Local Tax Increment Financing Authority. During the 2013 Maryland General Session, House Bill 613: Sustainable Communities – Designation and Financing was passed. The law not only enables the Maryland Economic Development Corporation to support local governments with designated Sustainable Communities by issuing bonds to finance public improvements, but it also expands the permitted use of Tax Increment Financing beyond traditional public infrastructure. The law broadened the set of eligible uses of Tax Increment Financing in Sustainable Communities to include historic preservation or rehabilitation; environmental remediation; demolition and site preparation; parking lots, facilities or structures of any type,

public or private; highways; schools; and affordable or mixed-income housing. Local governments with Sustainable Communities may also pledge alternative local tax revenues generated within or attributed to the Tax Increment Financing district to its associated special fund.

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

Job Creation Tax Credit is administered by the Maryland Department of Commerce. Maryland provides a tax credit to encourage businesses expanding in or relocating to Maryland. Enhanced incentives are provided in Sustainable Communities. The standard credit is 2.5% of annual wages up to \$1,000 per new job. For businesses located in a Sustainable Community, the credit is 5% of annual wages up to \$1,500 per new job; and, the threshold to qualify for the tax credit drops from 60 to 25 jobs created.

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

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

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

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

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

Application Eligibility and Threshold Requirements

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

All Sustainable Community applications must meet the following threshold requirements:

- 1) Sustainable Community Area boundaries must be entirely within a Priority Funding Area (PFA) and should be indicative of a targeted approach;
- 2) A local government resolution in support of the boundary designation and Plan should accompany the application or must be in process (all Sustainable Community Area designations will be contingent upon an executed local resolution);
- 3) Entities in the community must have pledged financial and/or in-kind resources to implement the Plan as indicated by letters of support;
- 4) The proposed Sustainable Community is within or near a town center or transportation center, or there is a need for financing assistance for small businesses, nonprofit organizations or microenterprises;
- 5) The proposed Plan must be consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans;
- 6) A Sustainable Communities Workgroup is formed and a roster of members is provided.

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

Application Evaluation

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

Priority Funding Areas

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

Mandatory Training

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

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

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

The first printed page of the electronic application is a Table of Contents. This should also serve as a checklist and be used to provide corresponding tabs. In addition to the hard copies of an application, all pictures and

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

No incomplete applications will be accepted.

Deliver Sustainable Community Applications to:

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

Site Visits. Follow-up Discussion, Technical Assistance

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

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

Approval

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

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

Sustainable Community Application 2015

I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Sustainable Community:

Town of Sharpsburg

Name of Applicant:

The Mayor and Council

Applicant's Federal Identification Number: 52-6019191

Applicant's Street Address: 106 East Main Street, PO Box 368

City: Sharpsburg County: Washington State: MD Zip Code: 21782

Phone Number: (301) 432-4428 Fax Number: (301) 432-8990 Web Address: sharpsburgmd.com

Sustainable Community Application Local Contact:

Name: Kimberly Fulk Title: Town Clerk

Address: 106 East Main Street, PO Box 368 City: Sharpsburg State: MD Zip Code: 21782

Phone Number: (301) 432-4428 Fax Number: (301) 432-8990 E-mail Address:
townofsharpsburg@comcast.net

Sustainable Community Contact for Application Status:

Name: Kimberly Fulk Title: Town Clerk

Address: 106 East Main Street, PO Box 368 City: Sharpsburg State: MD Zip Code: 21782

Phone Number: (301) 432-4428 Fax Number: (301) 432-8990 E-mail Address:
townofsharpsburg@comcast.net

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II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY – General Information

A. Proposed Sustainable Community Area(s):

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

The SC Area boundaries are that of the Town of Sharpsburg corporate limits. The Town of Sharpsburg is a small town, boasting a population of approximately 706 people. Because the Town is only approximately 148 acres, we felt this was a manageable area with predetermined boundaries to designate as the SC Area.

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

- (3) Approximate number of acres within the SC Area: 148 acres

- (4) Existing federal, state or local designations:

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

- (5) Prior Revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:

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

Non-Applicable

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

As of the 2010 Census, there were 705 people, 285 households, and 192 families residing in the town. The population density was 3,065.2 inhabitants per square mile (1,183.5/km²). There were 342 housing units at an average density of 1,413.0 per square mile (545.6/km²). The racial makeup of the town was 95.7% White, 0.4% African American, 0.1% Native American, and 3.7% from two or more races. Hispanic or Latino of any race were 2.1% of the population.

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There were 285 households of which 28.1% had children under the age of 18 living with them, 47.7% were married couples living together, 13.0% had a female householder with no husband present, 6.7% had a male householder with no wife present, and 32.6% were non-families. 25.3% of all households were made up of individuals and 7% had someone living alone who was 65 years of age or older. The average household size was 2.47 and the average family size was 2.92.

The median age in the town was 42.8 years. 20.3% of residents were under the age of 18; 7.3% were between the ages of 18 and 24; 26.4% were from 25 to 44; 33.2% were from 45 to 64; and 12.8% were 65 years of age or older. The gender makeup of the town was 50.9% male and 49.1% female.

B. Organizational Structure, Experience and Public Input:

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

The Town of Sharpsburg has a Mayor, a Vice Mayor and five other council members. The Mayor and Council will be responsible for leadership and implementation of plans in the SC Area. The Town Clerk, Kimberly Fulk, will assist with implementing and administering projects in the SC Area.

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

The Mayor and Council have worked jointly on developing parks and a town pond in the town. They are focused on providing a positive place for residents to live and work and a positive experience for tourists. They look forward to the opportunity to implement a plan that will help them achieve this goal.

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

The Sustainable Communities Action Plan is based on the Town of Sharpsburg's Draft Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan was created based on input from the Mayor and Council and with the help of the Sharpsburg's Planning and Zoning Commission.

III. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The Sustainable Community Action Plan (SC Plan or Plan) is meant to be a multi-year investment strategy – a strategic set of revitalization initiatives and projects that local partners believe will increase the economic vitality and livability of their community, increase prosperity for local households and improve the health of the surrounding environment. The Plan should be flexible enough to be updated regularly and renewed every five

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years as the community envisions new goals. The priority initiatives and projects identified in the action plan are your priorities for improving the livability of community places -- residential, commercial, or other public or private properties – and the sustainability of new work, retail, recreational and housing opportunities for residents. At the same time, the plan should only discuss the strategies that will impact the geographic area targeted for revitalization, so that resources have the best opportunity to have the intended effect. These projects can also be designed to reduce the environmental impact of the community through water and energy resource conservation and management strategies. In this way, the Plan can be a road map for local stakeholders as well as State agencies to work together to create a more a livable and sustainable community.

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

- 1) **For each of the different sections, pinpoint essential strengths and weaknesses of your community.**
Example Transportation: Strength - Good sidewalk connectivity. Weakness - Insufficient amount of downtown parking.
- 2) **Based on those strengths and weaknesses, formulate specific outcomes that address the most pressing issues or greatest potentials. Include a means of measuring the success of said outcome.**
Example Economy: Outcome – Expand broadband fiber optics in Town. Progress Measure - Linear measurement of fiber laid and number of residential and business connections.
- 3) **After defining the outcomes, list detailed strategies (break down to several action steps if needed) that will serve as the means to achieve those goals.** Example Economy: Strategy - Increase number of Town sponsored events → Develop with community input, a series of weekend events that the Town could host.
- 4) **List potential partners that can support the successful implementation of these strategies through different types of resources.** Example Economy: Dept. of Housing and Community Development (Community Legacy program), Small Business Administration (Services and financial assistance) etc.

Sustainable Community Action Plan

Town of Sharpsburg, Washington County

Sharpsburg, Washington County

Date: 05-24-16

Environment

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

Strengths

- Water and sewer system in Town. The system is operated and maintained by the county. The town has a filtration plant of 0.23 million gallons, and storage tank of 200,000 gallons. Limited population growth is anticipated for the town, therefore there no concerns regarding future water capacity.
- Land for agriculture and conservation use. Most of the land surrounding the town is not hampered by shallow soil and steep slopes, hence are reserved for agricultural purposes. This protects the historic setting of the town.
- Trash collection and street lighting. These facilities are provided and maintained by the town. The current street lighting is adequate for the Town. Period aesthetic lighting would be preferred.

Weaknesses

- Flooding. As town is situated in a small basin the excess amount of runoff water is causing deterioration (e.g. current retaining wall is collapsing). Due to the nature of soils (alluvial), any more development that will increase impervious surfaces can cause flooding.
- Excavation for construction and maintaining street grades is expensive. It is not cost efficient to build basements due to shallow soils (less than 3 feet to hard bedrock), since the removal of limestone requires blasting.
- Water Resource Element (WRE) is absent. WRE is not absent in the draft comprehensive plan which includes water resource, wastewater and stormwater management. The Town will continue working with Washington County Planning and the MD Department of Planning to update the WRE.

Desired Outcomes and Progress

Measures



Based on the strengths and weaknesses identify the strengths on which you would like to build and the challenges you would like to address.

What outcomes are you trying to achieve?
Where/ in what area do you want those changes to happen?

Progress Measure: Identify how you will know that you have achieved your outcome.

Strategies



Identify strategies that will help your community to achieve each identified outcome to the left. If applicable, break down each strategy into specific action items that outline different steps of the strategy. Specify how you are planning to achieve the desired outcomes.

Implementation Partners

Which community stakeholders need to be involved to realize each action step and strategy?
Name specific public and/or private sector partners.

<p>Outcome 1: Utilize the open spaces, primarily reserved for agriculture and conservation, for recreational purposes.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Passive and Active Recreational Opportunities provided/constructed by year 2019</p>	<p>Strategy A: Determine specific recreational uses and their location. (e.g. hiking/biking trails, boardwalk etc.)</p> <p>Strategy B: Establish that these recreational facilities are compatible and do not have any adverse effects on the conservation and agricultural lands. These areas will include the small parks and playgrounds that are mentioned in the Facilities section of the Plan.</p> <p>Strategy C: Develop a Parks and Recreation Plan with guidelines for development of facilities.</p>	<p>Sharpsburg Parks and Recreation Committee, County Recreation Dept, C&O Canal Towns, DNR - Program Open Space</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Develop Water Resource Element (WRE)</p> <p>Progress Measures: Water Resource Element Plan Developed by year 2016-17</p>	<p>Strategy A: Engage expert professionals and other stakeholders.</p> <p>Strategy B: Meet requirements of HB1141. (Guidelines are provided by Maryland department of Planning).</p> <p>Strategy C: Review and get approval for the Plan.</p>	<p>Washington County Planning MD Department of Planning</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Improve stormwater management practices in areas in Town where flooding is causing erosion and other issues.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Develop map of areas most in need of flood mitigation and stormwater management improvements.</p> <p>Strategy B: If needed, consult with experts to develop plan for addressing flooding</p>	<p>Washington County Planning MD Department of the Environment MD Department of Planning</p>

Economy

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

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Has maintained a “small town charm” due to limited growth -> ordinance that prohibits chains and franchises ● Antietam Battlefield brings tourist to Town ● Little League field hosts various tournaments and attracts visitors ● Most of commercial properties located in Town Center, include auto repair shop, bank, dog grooming, 4 B&Bs, 3 taverns, 5 churches, post office, flea market, quilt shop, ice cream shop ● Close proximity to C&O Canal (bike visitors) ● Close proximity to Frederick and Hagerstown which are job centers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Limited development potential -> boundaries restricted by federally owned as well as agricultural preservation easements ● Infill development too limited for future population growth projections ● Commercial businesses serving needs of residents rather than attracting tourists ● Town revenue extremely small -> revenue can only cover the costs of town property maintenance ● Needs more parking for its business district (especially for tourists and visitors) ● Poor bike connectivity within Town and to C&O Canal

- Town is apparently not CDBG eligible
- Vacant commercial properties (one)

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	Strategies →	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Attract new businesses to newly designated business district in Town</p> <p>Progress Measures: Number of new businesses</p>	<p>Strategy A: Survey community members to verify type of businesses they want to see in business district</p> <p>Strategy B: Attract/recruit gas station owner or grocery/convenience store owner</p> <p>Strategy C: Encourage rehabilitation of old soda fountain store to be used as a soda fountain and convenience store</p> <p>Strategy D: Encourage establishment of affordable family restaurant in Town</p> <p>Activity: Town establishes program that offers small business development Incentives, such as, vacant property renovation grant program</p>	<p>Maryland Department of Planning, Washington County Planning Department, DHCD (Community Legacy Program)</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Identify re-use for Town-owned former American Legion Building</p> <p>Progress Measures: Implementation of re-use plan of American Legion building, acquisition of parking lot</p>	<p>Strategy A: Conduct study for most appropriate re-use of American Legion building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - initial ideas are: community building, event space, Town hall offices <p>Strategy B: Acquire parking lot adjacent to American Legion building to provide sufficient parking spaces for building re-use</p>	<p>Community Development Block Grant Program, Maryland Department of Planning</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Maintain old historic town image with implementation of design guidelines for new businesses</p> <p>Progress Measures: Implementation of design guidelines, rehabilitation of old soda fountain store</p>	<p>Strategy A: Develop set of design guidelines</p>	<p>Maryland Department of Planning Washington County Planning Department,</p>
<p>Outcome 4: Research other potential funding sources that can assist the Town with achieving its revitalization goals</p>	<p>Strategy A: Reach out to MD Community Development Block Grant Program to verify if certain areas of Town could be considered CDBG eligible</p>	<p>CDBG, MDP</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"> ● <u>Sidewalk network</u>. The town is exceptionally walkable. Main Street is very walkable, sidewalks are existing and in good conditions. Many of the streets that interest with Main Street have sidewalks, although some are incomplete. ● <u>Accessibility</u>. The town is only 20 minute drive from the MARC stop. MD 34 and MD 65 are present only at 10 miles distance from the interstate system. ● <u>Shared parking</u>. The town encourages the joint or shared use of existing parking areas. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <u>Incomplete sidewalks</u>. Sidewalks are missing at various locations. ● <u>Lack of Bikeways</u>. There are no bike lanes that connect the town to C&O canal along Snyders Landing Road. ● <u>Lack of off-street parking</u>. The future development to capitalize town's business core and possible tourist trade will increase off-street parking demand, for which there is no provision.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	Strategies →	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Increase pedestrian mobility by completing sidewalk gaps.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Linear feet of sidewalks improved</p>	<p>Strategy A: Identify all locations where the sidewalks are absent or missing.</p> <p>Strategy B: For gaps along the State highway, consult district engineer from State Highway Administration. This may make the town eligible for participating in the Sidewalk Retrofit Program.</p>	<p>State Highway Administration (SHA), DHCD: CDBG (pending eligibility), Local Government Infrastructure Financing Program</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Enhance bike connectivity between the Town and C&O Canal.</p> <p>Progress Measures: number of bikeway improvements</p>	<p>Strategy A: Add signage "Beware of bicyclists" to inform drivers on roadways.</p> <p>Strategy B: Add signage on C&O Canal for directing bicyclists to visit the town.</p>	<p>MDOT: Maryland Bikeways Program</p>

<p>Outcome 3: Implement a ride-share program, which would establish an access to appointments, shopping and entertainment facilities in Hagerstown. Progress Measures: Number of users.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Investigate the feasibility of a Rural Uber type of local transportation system to take locals to and from events and appointments.</p>	<p>MD Department of Transportation MD Department of Planning Washington County Planning</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"> • Very few vacancies – approximately 10-12 homes for sale • Primarily a bedroom community (residents work in DC and Baltimore, 88% of land devoted to residential use); community also home to retirees • There are 342 home is Town, most are single family dwelling units. • Very affordable (most homes are under \$200K) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aging housing stock (while homes are affordable, they also need updates – both interior and exterior) • Some duplex housing in the Town, but the duplexes do not fit in the existing streetscape of the Historic Town. • Town has experienced a 2% population growth since 2000. • 33% of houses are renter occupied

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Provide housing types to ensure that adequate housing is available to every family and individual Progress Measures: TBD</p>	<p>Strategy A: Encourage rehabilitation and renovation of existing older homes Action 1: Establish a Loan/Grant program with matching criteria to encourage this need. Strategy B: Aid young people and the elderly in procuring housing Action 2: Establish a Loan/Grant program with matching criteria to encourage this need.</p>	<p>MD Department of Housing and Community Development, local housing developers</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"> ● Small and safe community – very low crime rate. ● National historic district – Town looks almost identical to how it was in 1862; both interior and exterior of various buildings have historic fabric in tact ● Town has Playground, little league field, town pond (with an annual fishing rodeo) ● Town is in close proximity to Antietam Battlefield ● Located in a great school district in Washington County ● Sharpsburg elementary school within walking distance to Town ● Active fire department; has an ambulance club ● Town was recently included in the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area ● Sharpsburg Historical Society Headquarters and Museum ● 100 year old Town Hall ● Four churches and four cemeteries ● Sharpsburg Library ● Mark Smith Park and Lonnie Crampton Park 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Insufficient programs/activities for youth (only has cub scouts and little league in Town) ● Lack of communication about the Town with existing, new and potential community members ● Town has limited number of staff, therefore programs that support the community are limited ● Minimal participation in council meetings ● 16% of households receive Social Security

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	→ Strategies →	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Increase recreational activities for both youth and adults</p> <p>Progress Measures: Feasibility study completed</p>	<p>Strategy A: Encourage residents and local non-profits to utilize Town-owned space for youth development activities (consider re-use of American Legion building as part community center)</p> <p>Strategy B: Study financial feasibility for Town to maintain community center (if Town can't maintain it, can it identify a partner, such as County Recreation Department, to assist)</p>	<p>Washington County Division of Public Works, Washington County Department of Business Development</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Improve communication between Town and both existing and potential residents</p> <p>Progress Measures: Weekly/monthly posts on social media</p>	<p>Strategy A: Establish Town Facebook page as a communication/outreach tool</p> <p>Strategy B:</p>	
<p>Outcome 3: Increase staff support for revitalization projects</p>	<p>Strategy A: Research additional funding programs that can assist with raising funds for staff</p>	<p>Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Historical Trust</p>

Progress Measure: Increased staffing		
Outcome 4: Increase awareness of Town's unique historic fabric Progress Measures: Historic inventory report completed	Strategy A: Obtain professional evaluation of structures and areas with historic importance and/or architectural significance Strategy: Promote Town's connection to the Heart of the Civil War Heritage Area Activity 1: Identify buildings and places that have Civil War and historic significance Activity 2: Create and install markers throughout Town	Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Historical Trust, Heart of Civil War Heritage Area

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"> ● Town Center Zoning in place for business district ● Town Center zoning prohibits chains and franchises from opening ● limited in growth because surrounded by agriculture conservation areas as well as historic structures ● Low commercial tax rate (same as residential rate) ● Historically predominantly residential, however encouraging more commercial development 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Concern to become commercialized historic site such as Gettysburg ● Limited, narrow parking lots -> potentially unable to accommodate future modern housing stock ● Town at capacity ● Expensive Water/sewer hook-up ● High quarterly Town water bill, difficult for fixed income residents to afford

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	→ Strategies →	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Maintain Sharpsburg's Town Residential category Progress Measures: Number of residential housing in relation to commercial properties	Strategy A: Town Residential Areas only available for Housing, permit small home businesses as well as neighborhood convenience stores at Town center Strategy B: All new housing and commercial properties must face street and follow design guidelines in order to maintain historic look	Maryland Department of Planning, Washington County Planning Department

<p>Outcome 2: Conservation of agricultural areas, historic structures as well as open space</p> <p>Progress Measure: Number of acres preserved, number of historic buildings identified</p>	<p>Strategy A: Recommend only for limited use due to the environmental conditions (difficult to develop soil type, run-off) as well as preservation of open space for recreational purposes</p> <p>Strategy B: Conserve historic battlefield area</p>	<p>Maryland Department of Planning Washington County Planning Department</p>
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