SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION RENEWAL

Eligible Applicants:

Local Governments with a Sustainable Communities Designation

Local Government Consortiums with a Sustainable Communities Designation

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

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

SGSC Approved - 2.24

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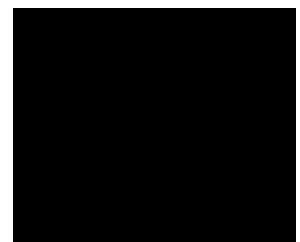
<u>Overview of Sustainable Communities</u>

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

<u>Purpose or Renewal and Streamlined Application</u>

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

<u>Application Eligibility and Threshold Requirements</u>

<u>Local governments (municipal or county) are eligible to apply</u>.

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

<u>Threshold Requirements</u>

All Sustainable Community applications must meet the following threshold requirements:

1) Sustainable Community Area boundaries must be entirely within a Priority Funding Area (PFA) and should be an area in need of renewal and reinvestment that would benefit from a targeted long-term strategy. Applicants can verify Priority Funding Area boundaries by visiting the MDP website at: http://www.mdp.state.md.us/OurProducts/pfamap.shtml

2) The proposed Sustainable Community is within or near a town center or transportation center, or there is a need for financing assistance for small businesses, nonprofit organizations or microenterprises;

3) The updated Plan must be consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans;

4) A Sustainable Communities Workgroup is re-convened and a roster of members should be provided with the application.

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

Application Submission and Evaluation

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

The first page of the electronic application is the Table of Contents. This should also serve as a checklist and be used to provide corresponding tabs.

Please submit all materials (application, maps, pictures, and/or shapefiles) via email to the Sustainable Communities project management team.

Incomplete applications will not be accepted.

Deliver Sustainable Community Applications via email:

Subject Line: Sustainable Community Application
To: Carter Reitman
carter.reitman@maryland.gov
Copy: Olivia Ceccarelli-McGonigal
olivia.ceccarelli@maryland.gov

Site Visits. Follow-up Discussion, Technical Assistance

Attendance at a minimum of one application consultation session or training is mandatory for all applicants. Consult with Carter Reitman at 410-298-5849 or by email at carter.reitman@maryland.gov if you would like to schedule a meeting.

If requested, the Department can provide technical assistance to local governments to prepare their Sustainable Communities applications. When needed, the Department may offer technical assistance, in collaboration with the Maryland Department of Planning, to local governments with limited capacity to prepare their Sustainable Communities applications.

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

Approval

Approval of applications will be made by the Governor's Smart Growth Coordinating Committee on the recommendation of an inter-agency review team. The review team is coordinated by the Department of Housing and Community Development. The Governor's Smart Growth Coordinating Committee can defer the approval of a Sustainable Communities renewal to the Governor's Smart Growth Subcabinet.

All questions related to the application, please contact Olivia Ceccarelli-McGonigal at 410-209-5826 or by email at olivia.ceccarelli@maryland.gov or your regional project manager, found at this link: https://dhcd.maryland.gov/Communities/Documents/SRP/PM-Map-ContactInfo.pdf

RENEWAL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

The Sustainable Communities application for renewal has **three** sections:

A. **Contact information, General Information, Organizational Capacity:**
   In this section, applicants are asked to update their contact information, provide information about demographic shifts over the past five years, discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their Sustainable Communities workgroup and share any technical assistance needs the workgroup may have.

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

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

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLAN ELEMENTS

The table below provides a description of each subject area/element of the Sustainable Communities Action Plan. Included are examples of common strengths and weaknesses within each subject area and the types of projects that might be implemented to address said strengths and weaknesses.

ENVIRONMENT: Describes projects involving the natural environment, our use of natural resources, and our relationships to the natural environment.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): the quality of land, water, and air; watershed maintenance and preservation; tree canopies and green spaces; climate change mitigation and adaptation; energy conservation; green infrastructure; stormwater infrastructure and management; water and sewer capacity; recycling, pet waste, and organic waste programs; the mitigation of environmental hazards; and parks and recreation.

ECONOMY: Describes projects centered on economic growth and management.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): business attraction & retention; improving and maintaining the health of business districts, downtowns, and main streets; commercial vacancy reduction; workforce attraction and retention; employment/job training; marketing, branding, and tourism; improving or creating economic impact of cultural and historic assets; providing technical and financial assistance to businesses; commercial building acquisition, rehabilitation and/or adaptive re-use; and creating a sense of place and vibrancy through streetscaping and beautification.

TRANSPORTATION: Describes projects involving the way people in your community get from place to place.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): 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; and road conditions.

HOUSING: Describes projects involving the homes in which people in your community live and which make it easier for them to find and stay in a place to call home.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): affordability; increasing homeownership; increasing rental housing; diversifying the kinds of housing available; improving housing conditions (interior or exterior); housing programs; aging in place; preventing foreclosures; and reducing residential vacancies.

COMMUNITY HEALTH & QUALITY OF LIFE: Describes projects concerned with public health, community culture, and the day-to-day life of community residents.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): improvement of public safety and the reduction of crime; libraries; educational facilities and programs; health and wellness facilities and programs; senior facilities and programs; youth facilities and programs; facilities and programs for the disabled; civic amenities, access to quality food options; collaborations with faith-based organizations; arts and entertainment education; and homelessness prevention, services, and facilities.

LOCAL PLANNING & STAFFING CAPACITY: Describes projects concerned with a local government's ability to plan for the community's future and to meet the current needs of residents.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): updating zoning ordinances or land use; updating municipal/local policies, taxes, fees, etc.; increasing local government staff capacity; and updating planning documents like sector plans or comprehensive plans.

<u>Additional Guidance for Developing the Sustainable Communities Action Plan</u>

<u>III. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN UPDATE</u>

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

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

<u>Action Plan Guidance</u>

The Action Plan section has been broken down into the same six categories as the Comprehensive Assessment section of this document. These parts address key components of your Sustainable Community Action Plan. Follow the guidelines below to fill out the matrix.

1) **For each section, pinpoint essential strengths and weaknesses of your community**. Example Transportation: Strength - Good sidewalk connectivity. Weakness - Insufficient amount of downtown parking.

2) **Based on those strengths and weaknesses, formulate specific outcomes that address the most pressing issues or greatest potentials. Include a means of measuring the success of said outcome.** Example Economy: Outcome – Expand broadband fiber optics in Town. Progress Measure - Linear measurement of fiber laid and number of residential and business connections.

3) **After defining the outcomes, list detailed strategies (break down to several action steps if needed) that will serve as the means to achieve those goals.** Example Economy: Strategy - Increase number of Town sponsored events ⬚ Develop with community input, a series of weekend events that the Town could host.

4) **List potential partners that can support the successful implementation of these strategies through different types of resources.** Example Economy: DHCD (Community Legacy program), Small Business Administration (Services and financial assistance) etc.

CHECKLIST AND TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPLICANT: Town of Snow Hill

NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: Snow Hill, MD

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

❑ **Section A - Sustainable Community Renewal Applicant Information**
- Applicant Information

❑ **Section B – Sustainable Community Renewal Action Plan Update (Matrix)**

- Action Plan

❑ **Section C – Sustainable Community Renewal Report (Projects, Strategies and Partners)**
- Part 1: Qualitative Assessment
- Part 2: Comprehensive Assessment
- Competitive Funding

❑ **Section D – Sustainable Communities Workgroup Roster**

❑ **Section E – Signature Letter (acknowledging Disclosure Authorization and Certification)**

- Disclosure Authorization

❑ **Section F – Additional Files:** The following contents should be included:

- If requesting a boundary modification, map in pdf format and a GIS shapefile of the proposed Sustainable Community boundary

- Photos (jpeg format) of your aforementioned accomplished projects of the last five years

SECTION A - SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY RENEWAL APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Sustainable Community:	**Town of Snow Hill**
Name of Applicant:	**Town of Snow Hill**
Applicant's Federal Identification Number:	**52-6000807**
Applicant's Street Address:	**103 Bank Street**

City: Snow Hill	**County: Worcester**	**State: MD Zip Code: 21863**
Phone Number: 410-632-2080	**Fax Number: 410-632-2858**	**Web Address: snowhillmd.gov**

Sustainable Community Application Local Contact:

Name: Rick Pollitt	**Title: Town Manager**
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Sustainable Community Contact for Application Status:

Name: Lorissa McAllister	**Title: Director of Economic Development**
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Other Sustainable Community Contacts:

Name: Michael Pruitt	**Title: Mayor**
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Sustainable Community Boundary and Description

(1) Are you requesting any changes to your Sustainable Community boundary? Describe why or why not?
No, the current boundary includes priority reinvestment and revitalization areas in Snow Hill.

(2) If yes, Include the following in as an attachment
   a. PDF or JPEG of modified Sustainable Communities boundary map,
   b. GIS shapefiles of modified Sustainable Community boundary (mapped to the parcel boundary),

(3) Approximate number of acres of entire SC Area: 1,845.77

(4) <u>Existing federal, state or local designations:</u>
(X) Main Street Affiliate ☐Maple Street
(X) National Register Historic District (X) Local Historic District (X) Arts & Entertainment District
(X) State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District ☐BRAC ☐ State Designated TOD
(X) Other(s): Opportunity Zone

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

Since our renewal application in 2018, Snow Hill's population has increased by 104 people from 2,052 to 2,156 according to census data. The average age has decreased from 39 years old to 34 years old. According to the 2020 census, 58% of the population are White, 32% are Black or African American, and 7.3% are two or more races. 42.7% of the population has a high school diploma or higher education. 23.7% of the population has a bachelors degree or higher. The median house hold income is $50,069, a $17,785 increase since reported in 2018, but more than $20,000 below the national average of $70,784 and more than $40,000 below the Maryland average of $91,431. There has been a 61 unit net gain in the number of housing units since 2018. The median home value has increased by $14,800 to $164,400. However, that is 49% lower than the Maryland median home value. The poverty rate has increased by 1.6% since 2018 to 22.8%.

Organizational Structure, Experience and Public Input:

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

Since the last Sustainable Communities renewal in 2018 the Town has made changes to the organizational structure to better meet the goals and needs of the community. A new Director of Economic Development position has absorbed the Media, Marketing and Promotion position and focuses on increasing economic opportunities in Snow Hill. A second Clerk position was added to assist with communication and social media, billing and general clerical duties. Our Grants Administrator position was expanded to full time from part time status. These staffing changes will help support the realization of our action plan by providing the administrative structure to implementation. There has been a significant amount of turn-over in the past few years, but the current staff have provided information to complete this application to the best of their ability.

The Work Group has changed this year to be comprised of more community members who have familiarity and insight related to the six categories within the Action Plan. As opposed to the previous work group that was made up of Town Hall employees and a couple people from other organizations/businesses, this new work group represents a cross section of residents who are active in the community and passionate about it's well-being. They will continue to be involved as fits their availability and expertise to ensure the Action Plan is being executed.

Work Group Roster

2023 (All Work Group Members are residents of Snow Hill)

Janet Simpson, Snow Hill Council Person

Chase Phillips, Zoning Analyst for the Town of Ocean City

Diana Nolte, Snow Hill Business Owner, Founder of Downtown Snow Hill Inc.

Maurice Ames, Personal Mortgage Advisor at Nations Lending

Deborah Baines, Retired from Healthcare Industry

Jason Allinder, Vice President of Recruitment at Gratus Staffing

Kathryn Culbertson, Garden Program Manager at Snow Hill Bloom

Emily Moore, English & Communication Faculty at Eastern Shore Community College

Paul Bassette, Snow Hill Grants Administrator

Lorissa McAllister, Director of Economic Development, Manager of Downtown Snow Hill Inc

2018

Steve Mathews, Snow Hill Interim Mayor

LaToya Purnell, Snow Hill Council Person

Alison Cook, Snow Hill Council Person

Jenny Hall, Snow Hill Council Person

Ann Gibb, Grants Administrator

Jordy Kuczak, Economic Development and Event Coordinator

Martin Sullivan, Code Enforcement Officer

Trish Goodsell, Assistant to the Town Manager

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section A

Tom Davis, Retired Chief of Police

Edward Schreier, Interim Chief of Police

Dian Armstrong, Snow Hill Business Owner

Cindy Byrd, Director of the Julia A. Purnell Museum

Kate Patton, Assistant Director of the Lower Shore Land Trust

Randy Barfield, Director of Public Works

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

A high turn-over rate has greatly impacted the capacity of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup to ensure implementation of the SC plan. More challenging has been the lack of funds to accomplish and manage projects. A strength of the workgroup has been the passion with which each member has contributed their efforts.

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

The Work Group was entirely comprised of residents and community stakeholders. Seven meetings were held to develop the updated action plan, which were all open to the public and advertised on various social media platforms.

(4) Would you like any technical assistance from State agencies to help expand the capacity of your SC Workgroup or implement your SC plan? Please describe with which revitalization strategies you would like assistance.

The Town greatly appreciates the assistance provided in completing this renewal process. DHCD staff graciously presented to our Mayor and Council to help explain the importance of the program and the logistics of the renewal process. The DHCD staff is unfailingly supportive and willing to answer any questions. With an aging infrastructure, like most rural municipalities, technical and financial assistance with infrastructure upgrades (such as waste water management, storm water management, and street improvements) would be greatly appreciated so that we may provide the quality services our residents have grown to rely on and to position our selves for future growth. Lastly, the Town and it's non-profit partner, Downtown Snow Hill, Inc. have been working tirelessly as an affiliate to achieve Main Street designation. Staffing constraints have proven to be the biggest obstacle to achieving that status.

SECTION B - SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACTION PLAN

[Name of Sustainable Community]

Example Section

Strengths	Weaknesses
● Insert bulleted list of strengths (provide some detail as to why and how this is a strength in your community)	● Insert bulleted list of weaknesses (provide some detail as to why and how this is a weakness in your community)

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures Outcomes should be considered end results of actions and strategies. Based on the strengths and weaknesses, identify the strengths on which you would like to build and the challenges you would like to address. Progress Measure: What will you use to measure success toward outcome? Is it quantifiable or qualifiable?	Strategies and Action Items Identify strategies that will help your community to achieve each identified outcome to the left. If applicable, break down each strategy into specific action items that outline different steps of the strategy. Specify how you are planning to achieve the desired outcomes.	Implementation Partners Which community stakeholders need to be involved to realize each action step and strategy? Name specific public and/or private sector partners.
Example Outcome 1: Code violations and complaints are reduced in the Sustainable Community residential areas. Example Progress Measures: Code violations reduced by 25% in Sustainable Community residential areas	Example Strategy A: Review and revise, as needed, code compliance program to reduce frequency and number of residential code violations. Example Action 1: Complete analysis of code violations over the past five years to determine areas, both geographically and topically, for which code violations are most frequent. Example Action 2: Conduct outreach program to determine barriers to code compliance. Example Action 3: Analyze code compliance program for potential inefficiencies and opportunities for proactive engagement. Example Action 4: Pursue façade improvement funding to assist low-income homeowners overcome barriers to code compliance.	Maryland Department of Planning, Maryland Department of Housing, County Planning Department, local homeowners association

Environment

This section describes projects involving the natural environment, our use of natural resources, and our relationships or access to the natural environment.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): the quality of land, water, and air; tree canopies and green spaces; green infrastructure; habitat improvement, climate change mitigation and adaptation; nuisance flooding,; stormwater infrastructure and management; water and sewer capacity; energy conservation; recycling, pet waste, and organic waste programs; the mitigation of environmental hazards; and parks and recreation improvements.

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Located on the bank of the Pocomoke River; Surrounded by 15,000 acres of the Pocomoke Forest - Approximately 18 acres of Town owned parkland (Byrd Park, Sturgis Park, Gateway Park); another 88 acres immediately outside of Town (J. Walter Smith Park, County site); less than 5 miles from the Pocomoke River State Park - Renovations to Sturgis Park including new picnic tables, repairs to the Pavilion and public bathrooms - Substantial progress on the State's Wildland bike trail that will connect the Pocomoke River State Park to the Town's Byrd Park. 4 electric charging stations located in the Municipal Parking Lot on Green Street Ext. - The 2022 (most recent) Annual Drinking Water Quality Report indicates that water quality for the Town is satisfactory. - Sewage and Stormwater systems cover most of the incorporated area of Snow Hill	- Aging water and sewer infrastructure with limited growth potential - Tidal and stormwater flooding in Byrd Park, the largest park in Town and former landfill (late 1800-1900's) - Parks are well worn, unprogrammed, over capacity, and need accessibility and safety upgrades. Most of the Sturgis Park Masterplan from 2018 cannot be implemented - Excessive lawn space throughout town creating mono-diversity issues and invasive species. - Lack of green space connections. While we have plans to address this (Bikeways, Bank Street Promenade) limited resources are an obstacle to implementation - Sidewalk conditions throughout town - Lack of park staff to adequately maintain and operate parks. - Lack of public bathrooms in downtown - Lack of qualified candidates to staff WWTP

- Curbside trash and recycling pickup and drop off at County-managed facilities.

- Weekly Farmers Market May through October

- Strong partnership with the Lower Shore Land Trust, which is headquartered in Snow Hill

- Planning Documents: Byrd Park Flooding, Stormwater, and Subsidence Assessment; Bikeways Feasibility Study; WWTP Upgrade Engineer Assessment; Bank Street Promenade Development Plan

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Improve existing and increase number of green spaces and connections to green spaces. Increase walkability. Progress Measures: increase biodiversity; improved accessibility and walkability; use of space; number of completed projects	Strategy A: Implement Bikeways Plan, Bank Street Promenade Plan, Remediate Flooding at Byrd Park and renovate pavilion and bathrooms at Sturgis Park Strategy B: Recognize the natural environment in determining best implementation strategies Strategy C: Improve biodiversity throughout town with strategic landscaping efforts	Lower Shore Land Trust; Worcester County, MD Department of Natural Resources; MD Department of the Environment; Department of Housing and Community Devlopment
Outcome 2: Upgrade Stormwater management practices, Wastewater Treatment Plant, and Sewer infrastructure to reflect current and projected best practices and needs Progress Measures: increased efficiency; increased capacity potential; completed infrastructure mapping	Strategy A: Implement WWTP upgrades as suggested by the Town's Engineering Firm. Strategy B: Identify and assess stormwater and sewer network quality Strategy C: Increase grant research efforts and staffing capacity	MD Department of the Environment; United States Department of Agriculture; MAryland Department of Planning Environment Protection Agency

Economy

This section is centered on economic growth and management.

Strengths and weaknesses might focus on the following: business attraction & retention; improving and maintaining the health of business districts, downtowns, and main streets; commercial vacancy reduction; workforce attraction and retention; employment/job training; marketing, branding, and tourism; improving or creating economic impact of cultural and historic assets; providing technical and financial assistance to businesses; commercial building acquisition, rehabilitation and/or adaptive re-use; and creating a sense of place and vibrancy through streetscaping and beautification.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Snow Hill is the County Seat and have government offices and _____ employees in the downtown. This attracts visitation, stabilizes the economic activity, and concentrates leadership representation in Snow Hill. • Within 20 miles of the Wallops Island NASA campus, a growing high-tech facility which employs a significant number of mid to high level professionals who are attracted to Snow Hill as a place to live. • Close proximity to 5 schools, including the Worcester County Technical High School. Snow Hill Elementary, Middle and High Schools are Blue Ribbon schools. • Close proximity to Wor-Wic Community College, UMES and Salisbury University. These learning institutes as well as the Lower Shore Work Force Alliance are accessible resources to growing and strengthening the local workforce • Hardwire and other industry growth in the surrounding area • Close proximity to tourist destinations such as Ocean City, Chincoteague, Assateague. Situated on the bank of the Pocomoke River and in the heart of the Pocomoke Forest, Snow Hill attracts outdoor recreation enthusiasts, many of whom visit on day trips while vacationing at one of the near-by destinations. • The Worcester County Recreation Center is located on the outskirts of Town limits, where many sports tournaments are hosted throughout the year.	• There is a lack of lodging available to accommodate visitors and tourists. • Lack of strategic policies and regulations for Air B&B development opportunities that are non-restrictive but encourage appropriate use reflective of the needs of the community. • Lack of local private sector jobs that offer competitive compensation. • Limited transportation options for workforce. Most job opportunities are in neighboring towns/cities and require a commute. • Undeveloped second and third floor units in the Downtown area that could be used commercially or residentially. • Condition of commercial buildings and the unwillingness or inability of property owners to invest in renovations. • Limited housing stock that is affordable for families. • Limited access to capital and investors for new businesses and existing businesses looking to expand.

- There has been an increase in the success rate of businesses in Snow Hill with many celebrating over 20 years in operation.

- Snow Hill, with low over head costs and a business-friendly atmosphere, is rightly poised for pop-ups and start ups

- The Town holds multiple designations: Opportunity Zone, Enterprise Zone, Arts and Entertainment District, Main Street Affiliate

- There are a number of heritage and cultural sites as well as events in and around Snow Hill: The Julia A. Purnell Museum is the Oldest museum on the Eastern Shore; Furnace Town Historical Site; The Pocomoke River Canoe Company; The Pocomoke River State Park; The Blessing of the Combines; the Blues Jam

- Snow Hill is located in the Beach to Bay Heritage Area and is eligible for resources through the Maryland Heritage Areas Program

- Economic Drivers and large employers in Snow Hill are the Tyson Feed Mill, Royal Plus, Paul Jones Lumber Mill, Harrison Senior Living, Worcester County, and The Board of Education

- Fiber Optic installation is slated to begin in the Spring of 2024.

- There are some Bed and Breakfasts and Air BnB's in Town which supplement incomes and provide lodging for visitors.

- Immediate access to US RT113 and MD RT12, significant transportation arteries.

- Lack of diversity and number of attractions in business district including goods, services and restaurants.

- Limited capacity for expansion of existing commercial/industrial areas or development of new commercial/industrial areas.

- Limitations on allowable signage on Rt. 113 due to Scenic Byway designation.

Desired Outcomes and Progress	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners

Measures		
Outcome 1: Continue to incentivize the rehabilitation of vacant properties to increase business activity in the three commercial centers of Downtown, West Market Street and East Market Street Progress Measures: increased number of businesses, increased occupancy of second and third floors of commercial buildings, decreased commercial vacancy, increased number of jobs	Strategy A: Update and implement the 2025 Strategic Revitalization plan for the commercial centers Strategy B: Explore an upper story redevelopment program or a tenant fit-out program to promote use of upper floor space of commercial buildings Strategy C: Continue the commercial facade improvement program in preparation for more businesses. Strategy D: Assess best use of the Old Fire House as an anchor building in Downtown Snow Hill	Worcester County; Tri County Council; Maryland Department of Commerce; Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development; Maryland State Arts Council; Downtown Snow Hill, Inc., Snow Hill Arts on the River,
Outcome 2: Attract new and diverse employers to Snow Hill Progress Measures: Number of businesses attracted to town, number of jobs created and number of marketing materials created and distributed	Strategy A: Address issues that prevent development within town limits and prioritize areas for development to be included in the upcoming Comprehensive Plan Update and in collaboration with Worcester County's Comprehensive Plan Update. Strategy B: Maintain website to include section for potential businesses, search feature and mobile optimization. Strategy C: Develop marketing strategies appropriate for our industrial area. Market Snow Hill as a place for remote work and available incubator space to attract pop-ups and budding entrepreneurs. Strategy D: Create a "welcome kit" to attract businesses to Snow Hill including current incentives, tax incentives, start-up guide and a welcoming committee of current local businesses.	Worcester County, Maryland; Department of Planning, Maryland Department of Commerce; Snow Hill Area Chamber of Commerce; Downtown Snow Hill, Inc.

	Strategy E: Work with commercial property owners to improve beautification throughout town and at gateways.	
Outcome 3: Increase nature tourism with Snow Hill as the "base camp" for tourists. Progress Measures: Increased bookings of B&Bs and AirBnbs, increased use of canoe/kayak launches, increased foot traffic of downtown and riverfront businesses	Strategy A: Campsite opportunities exist in Snow Hill with a permit. Attract visitors to Shad Landing and Milbourne Landing to participate in activities in Snow Hill. Strategy B: Extend advertising across various social media platforms and explore partnerships with social media influencers. Strategy C: Explore partnerships with neighboring high-tourist destinations like Ocean City or Chincoteague to attract day-trip tourism from those locations. Strategy D: Market B&B and AirBnB properties for outdoor adventure seekers. Strategy E: Coordinate with area Museums and cultural institutions to push people around from one attraction to another.	Maryland Department of Natural Resources; Worcester County; Maryland Tourism Coalition; Pocomoke River State Park

Transportation

This section describes the way people in your community get from place to place.

Strengths, weaknesses and outcomes can focus on: 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; and road conditions.

Strengths	Weaknesses

- The two main arteries through Town have a manageable traffic volume of roughly 15,000 in total. These main thoroughfares pass through the downtown shopping district.

- Community is highly walkable
- Rail tracks connecting Snow Hill and the Town of Berlin could be improved to allow for commercial freight as well as an excursion line for bringing tourists from Berlin and Ocean City. Some improvements have been completed.
- Town is again eligible for CDBG funding
- The Town has completed a bikeways feasibility study identifying a 3-mile loop to enhance connectivity. Worcester County is in the process of conducting a feasibility study to assess the potential of connecting destinations throughout the County with bike paths.
- Traditional grid street network provides for ample connectivity
- Market Street acts as a spine and connects three commercial areas
- Town of Snow Hill has access to Shore Transit bus service
- Dualization of Route 113
- Traffic cameras and "Know Your Speed" electronic signs help prevent speeding in Town limits and provide supplemental funding to public safety (police and fire depts.)
- Bank Street Promenade project will connect the downtown shopping district to the Pocomoke River at Sturgis Park, with a shared, complete-street design.

- Some intersections and some traffic flow patterns are safety concerns.

- Speeding is a major concern around Town, especially downtown during morning commute times.

- The long ride, irregular schedule, and number of stops along the shore transit route make the service ineffective and unappealing. An express service to Salisbury is needed.

- Lack of truly ADA compliant handicap parking spaces

- Lack of parking spaces to accommodate County employees and people in town for County business as well as people visiting the downtown. A County parking garage would be beneficial.

- Lack of traffic calming designs and equipment such as blinking lights.

- Lack of method to shuttle people around during events

- Lack of sidewalks, condition and size of sidewalks, and the burden of sidewalk maintenance is on the property owner.

- Lack of bike lanes and bike parking

- Insufficient signage for wayfaring and parking. Parking is not identifiable on google.

- Lack of connectivity (sidewalks, bike paths, trails) throughout town

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners

Outcome 1: Increase connectivity throughout Town to improve access to key destinations Progress Measures: • Linear feet of sidewalk installation and improvement • Linear feet of bike paths • Number of signs	Strategy A: increase traffic calming measures through design, traffic flow pattern and equipment, targeting problematic intersections and streets Strategy B: Implement Bikeways plan and Bank Street Promenade Plan Strategy C: Partner with property owners to improve sidewalk conditions Strategy D: improve and increase amount of parking and wayfaring signage Strategy E: Commit to investigating improvements for public transportation.	Maryland State Highway Administration, MDOT Bikeways Program, MDP, WorCo Department of Environmental Programs, WorCo Department of Development Reviews and Permitting, WorCo Dept of Tourism
Outcome 2: Increase and improve parking throughout Town to accommodate a variety of needs from events to everyday use. Progress Measures: • Number of new spaces • Increased enforcement	Strategy A: assess current standards for parking spaces within the Town's code Strategy B: Optimize Town owned parking lots and street parking through better utilization of space, restriping and signage Strategy C: increase number and optimize placement of ADA compliant handicap spaces Strategy D: utilize shuttles and develop partnerships for increased parking during events Strategy E: Enforce parking and work with County to find mutually satisfying parking solutions.	Maryland State Highway Administration, MDOT Bikeways Program, MDP, WorCo Department of Environmental Programs, WorCo Department of Development Reviews and Permitting

Housing

This section focuses on the homes in which people in your community live and efforts which make it easier for them to find and stay in a place to call home.

Strengths, weaknesses and outcomes might focus on the following: affordability; increasing homeownership; increasing rental housing; diversifying the kinds of housing available; improving housing conditions (interior or exterior); housing programs; aging in place; preventing foreclosures; and reducing residential vacancies.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• The Historic District covers approximately 80% of the Town (1/3 were built prior to 1939) and is the highest concentration of architecturally	• Do not have strategic plan to address diverse housing needs such as workforce housing and low-income housing.

significant housing in Worcester County and the lower Eastern Shore. Historic homes provide a sense of place and charm.

- There have been 14 new homes built in the Sustainable Communities boundary, and a 51-unit development built right outside of the boundary. There have been 4 upper-level residential developments and 5 are planned downtown.

- The Town employs a full-time Code Enforcement Officer.

- The Mayor and Council are exploring policies to address vacant buildings – commercial and residential.

- Homeownership has increased 2.6% and vacancy rates have decreased 3.8%

- Lack of rental housing that are not income restricted, or starter homes

- Zoning and building codes encourage single family development and are not reflective of smart growth principles

- Increasing number of seniors in rental units that are in poor condition; lack of senior housing

- Small number of homes are significantly dilapidated and in need of demolition in the historic district or present some historic significance.

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Increase and diversify housing stock for rent and homeownership and attract new residents to Snow Hill. 　　Progress Measures: 　　• Increased population 　　• Increase number of housing units	Strategy A: Re-assess zoning and building codes to reflect smart growth principles Strategy B: Establish a "live where you work" program to attract new residents to Snow Hill, with a focus on those who work for the town in Snow Hill, but live elsewhere. Establish incentives to live in town. Strategy C: Work with developers to accomplish infill development. Strategy D: Encourage rehabilitation of under-utilized upper stories in the downtown for residential use. Explore creating an incentive program for upper story development.	Snow Hill Mayor and Council, DHCD, private developers, HAbitat for Humanity
Outcome 2: Improve occupied residential properties to enhance structural integrity and curb appeal 　　Progress Measures:	Strategy A: Explore adoption and enforcement of Vacant Building Ordinance Strategy B: Assess feasibility of incentive program to help homeowners repair and maintain properies with a focus on weatherization, energy efficiency, and facade improvement.	Snow Hill Mayor and Council, DHCD, MDE

Community Health and Quality of Life

This section is concerned with public health, community culture, and the day-to-day life of community residents.

This category includes projects focusing on (but not limited to): improvement of public health including improving community design to promote healthy behaviors such as walking and strengthening community support and connectedness through health and wellness programs and facilities that create inclusive communities. These projects may include built environment, indoor spaces, outdoor environments such as increasing community gardens and access to services including educational facilities and programs; health and wellness facilities and programs that serve multi-generations; senior facilities and programs; youth facilities and programs; facilities and programs for the disabled; civic amenities, access to quality food options; collaborations with faith-based organizations; arts and entertainment education; and homelessness prevention, services, and facilities. Projects should include community engagement that includes participation in the selection of strategies and outcomes, progress reports, and evaluation.

Strengths	Weaknesses
- Many structured programs for youth - Proximity to barrier islands Assateague, Pocomoke State Forest and Pocomoke River State Park's Shad Landing and Milbourne Landing for both residents and tourists to enjoy. - Low crime rate - Strong sense of community among residents - Snow Hill has a Historic District and celebrates it's history and heritage - The Purnell Museum is dedicated to promoting and preserve local culture with established events and educational programs. - Blue Ribbon Schools identify Snow Hill schools as providing high quality education, superior to neighboring schools - Town is home to the administrative offices of the Worcester County Public Library system, Sherriff's office, Health Department, Department of Recreation and Parks, Economic Development and Tourism, and other departments.	- Snow Hill has a low median income with a title one school designation. - Many county employees that work within Snow Hill live in neighboring areas with more amenities available. - The Town has not capitalized on it's available recreational assets such as the Pocomoke River, Parks and accessibility to nearby hiking and camping opportunities. - Limited access to daily-use goods and services such as quality grocery products, clothing, etc. - Access to healthcare is difficult for those with limited means of transportation.

- High number of government jobs in Snow Hill
- Wide array of civic organizations, including 11 churches within town limits
- Roust Main Street Affiliate program with a non-profit partner, Downtown Snow Hill, INC
- Snow Hill has schools for all levels of education, from Pre-K to High School including Cedar Chapel Special School and Worcester Technical High School just outside of town. The Town is near several Colleges and Universities.
- Town is near Atlantic General Hospital and Tidal Health
- A designated Arts and Entertainment district, there is a high presence of local artists in Town
- Committed to incentivizing business growth and entrepreneurship
- Recent efforts to create a sense of place with beautification and events have proven successful.

- Access and opportunity for youth activities that are not organized or structured

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Increase Town median income for residents of all socioeconomic backgrounds through the generation of wealth building opportunities Progress Measures: • Median income levels • Number of new jobs • Number of businesses selected for incubation process • Number of program attendees • Number of visitors • Number of jobs created	Strategy A: work with local colleges and business to offer skill and workforce development programs for residents and entrepreneurs Strategy B: Assess the feasibility of a business incubator space to provide a physical "pop-up" space for businesses as well as training and resources to entrepreneurs.	Local artists, MD Department of Commerce, Snow Hill Area Chamber of Commerce, Worcester County, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development, Maryland State Arts Council
Outcome 2: Improve access to and increase the number of daily-use goods, services, and activities needed by the community. Progress Measures:	Strategy A: Identify needs through location data, leakage reports and surveys Strategy B: Recruit businesses based on results from strategy A Strategy C: Work with existing grocery stores and healthcare providers to improve access and availability to meet the needs of the community.	DHCD, DNR, MDOT, MDH, Economic DEvelopment, Private Businesses

	• Number of businesses opened that provide goods and services needed by residents • Improved services by existing businesses • Decreased leakage figures • Increased use of recreational assets	Strategy D: Connect youth, families, and seniors with nature and expand outdoor recreation opportunities, such as increasing opportunities on the Pocomoke River such as a fishing pier, living shoreline, and a children's natural play area in the park space along the river. Explore feasibility of a community center Strategy B: Make improvements to wayfinding signs and trail heads.	

Local Planning and Staffing Capacity

This section is concerned with a local government's ability to plan for the community's future and to meet the current needs of residents.

Strengths, weaknesses and outcomes might focus on the following: updating zoning ordinances or land use; updating municipal/local policies, taxes, fees, etc.; increasing local government staff capacity; and updating planning documents like sector plans or comprehensive plans.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Dedicated and passionate staff. • Changes to staff positions to include an economic development director, full time grant administrator and additional clerk position. • Increased water and sewage rates to ensure the WWTP is self sufficient • Strong and comprehensive plans for impactful projects • Strong character and identity as a small but charming and historic community with unique assets. • Diverse housing typology	• The water and sewage rate increases were the first increase in over 20 years and has been a difficult adjustment for the residents. • Maintenance and land use policies do not adequately address needs • Need more staff: Public works, admin support, wastewater treatment plant operators, town planner, • Not fully designated as a Main Street community, and struggling to reach staffing designation requirements. • Lack financial, technical and staffing resources to implement plans • Lack of financial resources to offer competitive compensation packages to employees

- Limited professional development and training opportunities largely due to financial limitations.

- Limited procedure and operations guidelines per department which makes continuity and training difficult.

- Industrial zoned land is generally built out and the possibility of expansion or intensification is limited

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies and Action Items	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Optimize land use using smart growth principles. Progress Measures: • Number of survey responses • Number of spaces identifed as eligible for repurpose to meet community needs.	Strategy A: Identify spaces that can be used for outdoor recreation, connectivity and to meet community needs Strategy B: Reassess optimal use for current spaces based on community needs and input and natural limitations and opportunities.	DNR, DHCD, MDE, MDP, MDH, Mayor and Council, Planning and Zoning Commission
Outcome 2: Optimize operational efficiency and strengthen partnerships Progress Measures • Number of new staff positions • Number of new systems used • Creation of operation and training manuals	Strategy A: create procedure and operation guidelines per department Strategy B: Digitize records and utilize technology to organize and manage information Strategy C: Increase number of staff and explore internship opportunities. Increase education, training and professional development opportunities	DHCD, MDP, Local Colleges and Universities, Main Street Maryland, Main Street America, Downtown Snow Hill, INC

• MOU with Downtown Snow Hill executed	Strategy D: Achieve full Main Street Designation Status	

SECTION C - SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY RENEWAL REPORT
PART I: QUALITATIVE ASSESSMENT

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

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

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

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

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Example – **Accomplishment 1**
Outcome: Improved stormwater management

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

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

Partners:
Chesapeake Bay Trust – provided technical assistance
MD DHCD – provided financial assistance in form of a Community Legacy grant (totaling $50,000).

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

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

Accomplishment 1:
Outcome:
- *enhance beautification efforts Downtown*
- *improve recreation opportunities*
- *improve active green spaces*
- *continued assessment of the riverfront as a destination*

Projects:
- *Downtown Street Scaping – light pole planters, sidewalk planters, new murals*
- *Park Improvements – riverwalk/boardwalk repairs and expansion at Byrd and Sturgis Park along the Pocomoke River; Improvements to boat ramps at Byrd Park*
- *Improved ADA access to playground at Byrd Park*
- *Canoe/kayak launches at Gateway and Sturgis Park,*
- *Bikeways Feasibility Study and Bank Street Promenade Plan completed to create a connectivity network*

Partners: Downtown Snow Hill, INC., Lower Shore Land Trust, Toole Design, Davis, Bowen & Friedel, MSAC, MDOT, DNR

Impact: These outcomes have been grouped as accomplishments because together they have improved quality of life for residents and contributed to the strengthening of our local economy. Beatifying and enhancing the Downtown has resulted in increased visitor attraction and event attendance. Improving and enhancing recreation opportunities along the river and in our parks has increased use of the facilities by residents and visitors alike. Both beautification efforts and improved recreation opportunities have created a sense of community pride. Funding for the Bathroom renovations in Sturgis Park have been successfully acquired and construction is slated to begin in Spring of 2024. Plans to mitigate flooding in Byrd Park, create a bikeways network to connect key destinations in Town and develop a shared-street, flexible space promenade between downtown Snow Hill and the River are all underway with great momentum. While these projects have not been fully realized, there has been great success in furthering these revitalization initiatives that will help increase outdoor/nature tourism and provide more recreation opportunities for our residents.

Accomplishment 2:
Outcome:
- *Continue to incentivize rehabilitation of commercial buildings*
- *Attract new and diverse businesses*

Projects:
- *Commercial Building Improvement Program – Legacy Grant funded*
- *Snow Hill Business Grant – ARPA funded*
- *Economic Opportunities Brochure, Financial Incentive Brochure*
- *Vendor events, Pop-Up/Incubator Space to foster entrepreneurship*

Partners: Downtown Snow Hill, INC., DHCD, MSAC, Wor. Co. Economic Development, SBDC

Impact: incentivizing the rehabilitation of commercial buildings has had a huge impact on the number of businesses in downtown Snow Hill, strengthening the local economy. These new businesses have brought a diverse patronage to the downtown and have created a vibrancy that has not been seen in a number of years. As a thriving downtown commercial district, private investment has increased and interest in opening businesses and buying commercial property has increased. This has resulted in an increase in goods and services available to our residents and establishes the downtown as a destination.

Accomplishment 3:

Outcome:
- *Reduce number of blighted properties*
- *Improve curb appeal of properties*
- *Increase housing stock*
- *Attract new residents*
- *Encourage homeownership*

Projects:

- *Demolish properties deems unsalvageable – 7 properties have been demolished*
- *14 new homes have been built within the SC Boundary; 51 immediately outside of the boundary*
- *Encouraged development of second and third story units for residential use*

Partners: DHCD, Teach the To Fish,

Impact: 65 new homes in the Snow Hill area has increased our population and provided additional housing options at varying price points. 29% of the properties developed in the SC boundary are considered affordable and two were infill development. A number of commercial and residential properties have been renovated, increasing property value and curb appeal. Three upper-level units in the downtown area have become available as residential units, with three more becoming available in the coming weeks. This will increase patronage of our local stores and strengthen our taxbase.

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

Outcome:
Reduce area of Historic District

Narrative:
The boundaries of the Historic District remain the same. While the requirements for renovation to historic buildings can be stringent, they also preserve the character of the community. Snow Hill is known for it's historic charm through the preservation of the Victorian and Colonial Architecture, bringing visitors into town and attracting new residents. Our designation as a historic district is also an advantage when seeking funding opportunities. While we acknowledge the need to have a diverse housing stock and the challenges that can arise from enforcing historic code compliance, the perception of our historic designation as a hinderance has changed in the last five years.

Outcome:
Improve quality of sidewalks

Narrative:
We continue to enforce code compliance that places the responsibility of sidewalk maintenance on the property owner. However, with a full time grants administrator now, we will explore funding opportunities that will incentivize and assist property owners with maintaining existing and installing new sidewalks.

Outcome:
Enhance visibility of parking

Narrative:
There still exists a need to increase parking visibility in Snow Hill. Wayfaring signage is a component of the Downtown Streetscape Plan that will help direct people through Town, including to available parking. Restriping of two municipal parking lots has recently become a topic of discussion to increase the number of parking spaces as well. Increasing parking viability and access remains a goal within our new Action Plan.

PART II: COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT

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

Please answer the following questions to the best of your knowledge.
Check "**YES**" if applicable to your community. If you answer "**YES**" please quantify the accomplishment (i.e. Q: Has there been an increase in the number of businesses in your Main Street/commercial district? A: YES 4 new businesses have opened in the past five years). If necessary, please also provide a short description of the accomplishment.

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

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

ENVIRONMENT	YES	NO	N/A	If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?
1. Has there been an improvement in water quality? Have you completed any projects intended to improve water quality? Ex. impervious surface reduction, stormwater improvements etc.	x			There has been an improvement in the water quality through replacement of storm drains and catch basins. An I &I project is currently in progress, replacing the sewer lining on Market Street, which runs parallel to the Pocomoke River, will further improve water quality. Gravit sewer collection systems and storm drain systems on Purnell Street are also being replaced as part of a Utility and Roadway Improvement project.
2. Have you improved wildlife habitat in your community? Ex. native plantings, pollinator gardens, rain gardens	x			Increased landscaping in the downtown has been accomplished using many native plants.
3. Have you increased access to green space, parks or outdoor recreational opportunities?	x			A Bikeways Feasibility Study was completed in 2021 identifying a three-mile loop that will connect the key destinations throughout town, including all of the Town's parks and create access to the Worcester County Recreation Center. A flood mitigation study for Byrd Park was completed as well with the goal of increasing usability of Byrd Park, the Town's largest park, year-round. Moreover, in collaboration with Downtown Snow Hill, Inc. the Town has developed a design plan to create a share-street promenade on Bank Street to connect the downtown shopping district with the Pocomoke River at Sturgis Park. There have been significant improvements to the board walks along the Pocomoke River at Byrd Park and Sturgis Park. The roadway to the community boat ramps at Byrd Park has been repaired and an ADA accessible walkway connecting the pavilions to the playground has been installed. Regular maintenance of the playground continues. The pavilion at Sturgis Park has recently been renovated to address structural concerns and the bathrooms are slated for a complete renovation in the Spring of 2024. We continue to pursue funding opportunities to implement suggested treatments and improvements to our recreation assets.

4.	Have you implemented operational sustainability practices (example: town hall enhancements) and/or community-based practices? (ex. Rain barrels or rain gardens at residences, recycling, composting etc)	x			The Town continues to require recycling and provides curbside pick-up service weekly. It also requires the use of standard refuse cans for all residents that are compatible with the Town's refuse truck to streamline trash pick-up. Rain barrels collect water that is used for plants throughout the downtown. A community garden has also been started and produce made available to residents.
OTHER:					

ECONOMY	YES	NO	N/A	If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?
1. Has there been an increase in the number of new businesses in your Main Street/ Commercial District?	x			There are 8 new businesses in our B-1 commercial district, with 3 closures. One new business in the Western commercial district has opened. A number of businesses throughout Town have expanded and/or renovated.
2. Did the Municipality/ Sustainable Community area receive any designations that support local economic development?	x			After a lapse in our Enterprise Zone designation, we re-established the designation this year. We remain a Main Street affiliate community, diligently working to obtain full designation. We remain an Arts and Entertainment district and Opportunity Zone. We are located within the Beach to Bay Heritage area and have a robust Historic district.

3. Has there been an increase in foot traffic in the Main Street/commercial district?	x			Overall, there has been an increase in foot traffic in our commercial district. The increase in businesses of all kinds has contributed to this increase, as have the increase in number and growth of existing events. There is an especially higher amount of foot traffic in the spring and summer season as we are an attractive day trip to visitors in Ocean City and other surrounding vacation destinations.
4. Have the number of commercial vacancies decreased?	x			As of our 2018 application there were 6 vacancies and 9 spaces requiring major renovations for a total of 15 unoccupied spaces. Today there are 11 vacant spaces in total; 6 under construction (2 of which are projected to be completed within the month of this writing), 1 listed for lease, 1 under contract,
5. Has there been an increase in local jobs within the Sustainable Community for its residents?	x			With new businesses opening and veteran businesses expanding, there have been roughly 25 new jobs created in the last 5 years.
6. Has there been an increase in workforce development training or other opportunities for connecting potential employees to well-paying jobs?	x			The Worcester County Office of Economic Development and Tourism is located in the heart of Downtown Snow Hill. They have offered a number of workforce development trainings that we have partnered with them to advertise and increase attendance. Our small business owners have especially benefited.
OTHER:				

TRANSPORTATION	YES	NO	N/A	If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?
1. Has the amount of bike trails/paths increased? How many linear feet do the trails cover?		x		A bikeways feasibility study was conducted in 2021 identifying a 3-mile bike loop that would connect key destinations throughout Town. Through this study we learned that many of our residential roads are bike and pedestrian friendly as they are low speed and low volume, albeit narrow. While we have not implemented any of the treatments suggested within the feasibility study, we are pursuing funding options and partnerships to accomplish priority segments such as the connection from the Worcester County Recreation Center, to the schools, and to the proposed Wildland's trail that will connect the Pocomoke River State Park- Shad Landing to Snow Hill's Byrd Park.
2. Have there been improvements to the public transit infrastructure?	x			There has been a significant amount of improvement to roadways in Snow Hill over the past five years. Nearly ten streets have been fully or partially repaved, including Catherine Lane, which was not previously paved. A number of stop signs have been replaced and new signs added to increase safety at intersections in residential neighborhoods. A speed bump has been installed on Green Street to reduce speeds.
3. Has there been an increase in sidewalks? (Amount in linear feet). Were accessibility elements added, such as more ADA-accessible ramps and signage/signals? Has there been a noticeable increased use of these walking places?		x		To date there has been no increase in sidewalks, however, as part of the Purnell Street Improvement Project sidewalks will be replaced.
4. Have there been any roadway improvements that support "Complete" or "Green" streets?	x			Snow Hill has a Walk Score of 57/100 due to low volume, low speed streets and some errands can be accessed on foot. Crosswalks in the downtown area have been repainted through the years. A transformative design to create a complete street promenade that would connect the downtown shopping district to the Pocomoke River at Sturgis Park has been completed. This would increase multimodal safety, create flexible space for events as well as everyday us, and encourage movement between two of the most significant assets of Snow Hill.

	YES	NO	N/A	
5. Has traffic congestion along major roads decreased? (Amount in percent)			x	Snow Hill continues to experience very little roadway congestion.
OTHER:				
HOUSING	**YES**	**NO**	**N/A**	**If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years** **If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?**
1. Have any residential facades or interiors been improved? Has the energy efficiency of any housing units been increased?	x			There have been 32 improvements to residential facades and interiors. Six housing units have made improvements to energy efficiency with installation of solar panels.
2. Has the homeownership rate increased?	x			According to American Survey census data, homeownership has increased by 2.6% in the past 5 years.
3. Has there been an increase in the number of housing units in the Sustainable Community area? What number and/or percent are affordable? How many are within .5 miles of a transit stop?	x			There has been a 14 housing unit increase within the Sustainable Communities boundary. Twelve of those new units are within a half mile of a transit stop and 29% are affordable.

4. Has there been demolition of blighted properties?	x			Since 2020, there have been 7 demolished properties.
5. Has the residential vacancy rate decreased?	x			According to the 2020 American Survey data there has been a 3.8% decrease in residential vacancy since 2018.
6. Has the jurisdiction partnered with any community development corporations to improve its housing stock, increase the availability of affordable housing, or support those experiencing homelessness or being threatened with eviction? Has the jurisdiction initiated any of its own programs to do the same?		x		The Town does not have any formal partnerships with development corporations, but there are several homes that have been built by Habitat for Humanity, and our housing stock has seen a substantial increase in the past five years. There have been 14 new homes built within the Sustainable Communities boundary and a 51 unit development just outside of the boundary. Fortunately, homelessness is not a pervasive issue and through various resources in the area those in need of assistance receive it.
7. Has there been an increase in homeownership counseling services or individuals accessing such services?		x		There has not been an increase in homeownership counseling services, but Teach Them to Fish, LLC continues to provide financial literacy to assist individuals in the Snow Hill area on their path to homeownership and financial freedom. This organization was founded by Snow hill resident Edward Lee.
OTHER:				

COMMUNITY HEALTH & QUALITY OF LIFE	YES	NO	N/A	If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?
1. How many historic properties were renovated/improved? To your knowledge, did the renovations mitigate certain environmental hazards such as lead and asbestos?	x			25 historic properties have undergone renovations and improvements. Five of these properties have eradicated asbestos siding.
2. Have there been improvements and/or additions to your public or community available spaces? Examples include museums, community centers, public plazas, murals and public art.	x			As mentioned above, there have been a number of improvements to Town parks. Our Julia A Purnell museum has undergone renovations as well with roof repair and floors redone on both levels. The Old Fire House located in Downtown Snow Hill, which serves as a meeting location and in many ways our community center, has also had roof repairs completed as well as four mini-split HVAC units installed in the main hall. There have been 5 installations of public Art in Sturgis Park and four outdoor murals in the downtown. As discussed previously, Our Bank Street Promenade is in the final design process.
3. Are there opportunities for residents to gather, communicate and celebrate? Do they serve multi-generations and all populations in the community? Examples are wide-ranging and may include fairs, community history days, neighborhood meetings, etc.	x			There are ample opportunities for residents to gather, communicate and celebrate. There are a number of civic and community organizations that the Town collaborates with to bring nearly 40 events to the Snow Hill area, almost half of which are located in the downtown area. Our First Friday Arts on the River monthly street festival is a local favorite and has grown exponentially in the past 5 years. There are many volunteer opportunities, especially through our Downtown Snow Hill Inc Main Street affiliate organization. There are at minimum two Mayor and Council working meetings and a monthly Mayor and Council Town meeting which provide additional communication opportunities.

4.	Have there been any changes in access to health and wellness services? Examples include mobile clinics, hospitals, telehealth opportunities.	x			Access to wellness services has largely remained the same, with increased access to tele-health services. There is a Tidal Health satellite office in Town limits, the Worcester County Health Department is headquartered in Snow Hill, there are multiple mental health service providers, and a dental office.
5.	Are there any residential health and wellness opportunities in place (i.e. athletic facilities, recreational indoor/outdoor courses or groups)?	x			The Worcester County Recreation Center is located just outside Town limits, with youth and adult programming, a fitness room and a park with superb sports fields. The Town has three outdoor parks along the River with boat ramps, canoe/kayak launches, a playground, and basketball courts. A local yoga instructor hosts classes both at the Rec Center as well as at the Old Fire House in downtown Snow Hill.
6.	Do all residents have access to healthy food options such as fresh food grocery stores, farmers markets, community gardens, etc., within the Sustainable Community?	x			A new community garden benefits the residents of Snow Hill and there remains an initiative to add more community gardens. There is a locally owned grocery store and the Town hosts a weekly farmers market from May through October.
7.	Has there been a decrease in crime rate?	x			Since, 2018, the Snow Hill Police Department has seen a slight decrease in the crime rate according to the Uniform Crime Reporting. We have seen a significant decrease in citizen calls for service which correlates to less crime. There has been an estimated 15% decrease in crime in the last 5 years.

	YES	NO	N/A	
8. Do all residents have access to the Internet and other basic utilities and services?	x			All residents have access to broadband internet services and other basic utilities. Installation of Fiber Optics is slated to begin in early 2024 to bring services to the downtown area as an initial phase increase access incrementally.
OTHER:				

LOCAL PLANNING & STAFFING CAPACITY	YES	NO	N/A	If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?
1. Have there been any infill developments?	x			There have been 2 infill developments.
2. Has there been an increase in the amount of preserved/protected land?		x		There has not been an increase in preserved or protected land. However, the Town remains committed to meeting Critical Areas requirements and being responsible stewards of our natural resources.
3. Have there been any developments hindered by growth constraints? If so, please describe. Example constraints could be inadequate infrastructure, insufficient zoning density/intensity, or lack of buildable land.		x		There has not been any hindrances to development or growth in the past five years, as the development which has occurred had been planned for and EDUs reserved. Future development may be impacted by WWTP capacity, aging infrastructure, and buildable land.

4. Have there been any zoning or policy changes that have fostered growth or redevelopment in your Sustainable Community?		x		There have been no changes to our zoning or policies, but we remain open to growth and working with development agents.
5. Have there been any significant improvements to the municipal infrastructure within the Sustainable Community (i.e. street lighting, water/sewer lines)?	x			The Market Street I&I project and the Purnell Street Utility and Roadway Improvement projects are two significant improvements within the district that are currently under way. The town has also made improvements to the Water Town by recoating the inside and installing a mixer. Continued repair and replacement of failed water and sewer lines and mains have also resulted in improved conditions, eradicating outdated terracotta pipes. New street lights will be installed in the coming weeks in the downtown area.
6. Have you hired any new staff members, reassigned duties, or procured the services of a contractor to increase or better align local capacity? Have you implemented any professional development programs?	x			There have been several staffing changes in the past few years. A new Director of Economic Development position has absorbed the Media, Marketing and Promotion position and focuses on increasing economic opportunities in Snow Hill. A second Clerk position was added to assist with communication and social media, billing and general clerical duties. Our Grants Administrator position was expanded to full time from part time status. Professional development is encouraged, and the Town has a reimbursement policy for training and education.

7. Has your community initiated or completed any planning efforts that will support the Sustainable Community area, including comprehensive planning, small area planning, or planning studies?	x			Due to Covid, we have not yet completed our 2020 Comprehensive Plan, however we anticipate having it completed by 2025. We will also be updating our Strategic Revitalization plan. We have had a Sturgis Park Master Plan completed, as well as a Bikeways Feasibility Study. Our Byrd Park Flooding Mitigation Study will help us plan for improvements to the park as well.
OTHER:				

Part III: Competitive Funding

Use the rows below to list competed funds sought for sustainability or revitalization projects since receiving Sustainable Communities designation.	Source (federal, state, foundation, etc.)	Amount Received	If no funding was received, what technical or other assistance from the state would help with future applications?	Other Notes
Community Legacy (CL): ● **FY 2018** ● **FY 2019** ● **FY 2020** ● **FY 2021** ● **FY 2022** ● **FY 2023**	DHCD	● $100,000 ● $150,000 ● $55,000 ● $60,000 ● 0.00 ● $50,000	FY 2022 Declined	
Strategic Demolition Fund (SDF): ● **FY 2021** ● **FY 2022**	DHCD	● 0.00 ● $175,000	● Declined by Town of Snow Hill	
Community Safety & Enhancement Program:	MDOT			
Maryland Bikeways Program: **Snow Hill Bikeways Feasibility Study**	MDOT	$60,000		
Sidewalk Retrofit Program:	MDOT			

Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund:	MDE			

Other Funding : *examples are U.S. HUD Community Development Block Grants (CDBG), or grants from USDA, EPA, Appalachian Regional Commission, Chesapeake Bay Trust, Maryland Heritage Areas Association, Preservation Maryland, Safe Routes to School, Maryland Rural Development Corporation, Maryland Energy Administration, Maryland Department of Natural Resources, etc.*

*Please add more rows if necessary

OAG/TAG • **FY 2021**	DHCD	$10,000		
CDBG • **FY 2022 Market Street Sewer**	DHCD	$503,700		
Community Safety Works • **FY 2023 Business District and Neighborhood Safety**	DHCD	$79,190		
Critical Areas Programs • **FY 2019** • **FY 2020** • **FY 2021** • **FY 2022** • **FY 2023**	DNR – Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays	• $2,000 • $2,000 • $2,000 • $2,000 • $2,000		
Sanitation Services Contract • **FY 2021** • **FY 2022** • **FY 2023**	DNR – Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays	• $1,340 • $1,350 • $2,700		
Byrd Park Flood, Stormwater, & Subsidence Assistance	DNR – Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays	$50,000		

5k Grant Program FY 2023 **Boardwalk Plank Replacement at Byrd Park Dock**	DNR – Chesapeake and Atlantic Coastal Bays	$4,392		
State Aid for Police Protection • **FY 2019** • **FY 2020** • **FY 2021** • **FY 2022** • **FY 2023**	GOCCP	• $21,814 • $19,611 • $21,592 • $21,351 • $48,779		
PHPA – Ora lhealth Fluoridation Equipment	MDH	$4,500		
Coulbourn Lane Well Back Up Power	MDE	$190,806		
Upgrade and Refurbish Paddlewheel Ship's Hull	MHAA	$29,715		
Public Art 50/50	MSAC	$3,425		
A&E Operating Assistance • **FY 2019** • **FY 2020** • **FY 2021** • **FY 2022** • **FY 2023**	MSAC	• $10,000 • $15,000 • $13,425 • $16,571 • $17,089		
Public Art Across Maryland – Legacy Mural	MSAC	$38,083		

Rural MD Economic Development Grant – Snow Hill Bikeways	Tri County Council	$100,000		

COMPETITIVE FUNDING: Are there any types of projects/needs for which your Sustainable Community needs funding; however, there isn't a funding source?

One of the most significant challenges to accomplishing the goals set out in our Action Plan is staffing capacity and the tools for our staff to work efficiently. However, funding for capacity building is limited. With the ability to offer competitive compensation packages and invest in our employees' issues such as high turn-over, employees being over extended, and too much time being spent using outdated operation procedures would be mitigated.

Our aging infrastructure is also a concern that will require immediate attention and result in a significant financial burden for the Town. Failing water and sewage infrastructure is not only costly, but impedes our ability to grow. With the federally mandated 120-Water Lead and Copper project and upgrades needed to our waste water treatment plant, there are serious planning and funding concerns that the Town is trying to work through. Assistance would be incredibly impactful to our community.

Work Group Roster

2023 (All Work Group Members are residents of Snow Hill)

Janet Simpson, Snow Hill Council Person

Chase Phillips, Zoning Analyst for the Town of Ocean City

Diana Nolte, Snow Hill Business Owner, Founder of Downtown Snow Hill Inc.

Maurice Ames, Personal Mortgage Advisor at Nations Lending

Deborah Baines, Retired from Healthcare Industry

Jason Allinder, Vice President of Recruitment at Gratus Staffing

Kathryn Culbertson, Garden Program Manager at Snow Hill Bloom

Emily Moore, English & Communication Faculty at Eastern Shore Community College

Paul Bassette, Snow Hill Grants Administrator

Lorissa McAllister, Director of Economic Development, Manager of Downtown Snow Hill Inc

2018

Steve Mathews, Snow Hill Interim Mayor

LaToya Purnell, Snow Hill Council Person

Alison Cook, Snow Hill Council Person

Jenny Hall, Snow Hill Council Person

Ann Gibb, Grants Administrator

Jordy Kuczak, Economic Development and Event Coordinator

Martin Sullivan, Code Enforcement Officer

Trish Goodsell, Assistant to the Town Manager

Tom Davis, Retired Chief of Police

Edward Schreier, Interim Chief of Police

Dian Armstrong, Snow Hill Business Owner

Cindy Byrd, Director of the Julia A. Purnell Museum

Kate Patton, Assistant Director of the Lower Shore Land Trust

Randy Barfield, Director of Public Works

One of several floating docks

River Walk Extension at Sturgis Park

Chenceford Hall Bed and Breakfast driveway re-pavement funded through the Snow Hill Business Grant Program.

Evelyn's Village Inn Memorial Mural partially funded by the Worcester County Arts Council.

Snow Hill Legacy Mural Restoration

Funded by the Maryland State Arts Council

G.M. Dryden Ghost Sign Restoration

Partially funded through Worcester County Arts Council.