Sustainable Community Application 2015

I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Sustainable Community:

_____Town of Trappe_____

Name of Applicant: Town of Trappe

Applicant's Federal Identification Number: 52-0971722

Applicant's Street Address: 4011 Powell Ave. PO Box 162

City: Trappe   **County:** Talbot   **State:** MD   **Zip Code: 21673**

Phone Number: 410-443-0087   **Fax Number:** 410-443-0562 **Web Address:** www.trappemd.net

Sustainable Community Application Local Contact:

Name: Jennifer Shull   **Title:** Planner

Address: PO Box 162   **City:** Trappe   **State:** MD   **Zip Code:** 21673

Phone Number: 410-443-0087 ext 103   **Fax Number:** 410-443-0562 **E-mail Address:** jennifer@trappemd.net

Sustainable Community Contact for Application Status:

Name: Erin Braband   **Title:** Clerk

Address: PO Box 162   **City:** Trappe   **State:** MD   **Zip Code:** 21673

Phone Number: 410-443-0087 ext101   **Fax Number:** 410-443-0562 **E-mail Address:** clerk@trappemd.net

A. **Provide a description of SC Area boundaries. Include number of acres; federal/state/local designations; prior revitalization investments and smart growth.**

The Town of Trappe located on Maryland's Eastern Shore is a small town based in a rural community surrounded by working agriculture with little to no commercial or industrial base. The town is a residential community with a mix of older but fairly well maintained housing stock including roughly 20% rentals. There is a mixture of single family homes on various lot sizes as well as townhomes, and a few buildings converted to apartments scattered thru out the town. Residents in the community commute out of the town via private vehicles using Ocean Gateway aka RT 50 for employment opportunities to either Cambridge located to the east, or Easton to the west. The town is not accessible via public transportation systems which are extremely limited in the region to the general population.

The identified SC area is the entire town boundary less annexed areas on the east side of RT 50 that are part of a major planned development initiated in 2005 that has yet to be developed. The boundaries include areas for economic improvement, and business retention on Ocean Gateway as well as Main/Maple Streets; older town areas that are flooded by poor stormwater management drains; an area to the west of town center on Barber Road that is flagged for manufacturing yet lacks municipal water/sewer access; sidewalk connectivity along Main St aka RT 565 for those living to the northwest adjacent to the single elementary school as well as areas identified for recreation improvement along Main Street.

Of primary importance is encouraging the few businesses in the center of town to remain, and to encourage new small businesses to locate within the town providing much needed services to the community. The town center is literally a crossroad of Maple and Main Streets, an area that was thriving in the fifties and sixties when the main highway ran thru the center of town on Main Street (State route 565). The town has two restaurants, one non-profit, a quilt shop, post office and a hair salon in the town center. Other businesses including a gift shop, daycare center, restaurant, bank and private preschool have left town following the economic downturn and those that remain struggle. A convenience store, a collectible book store, a storage facility, a shed/equipment sales business, and a frozen food distributor complete the businesses located within town on Ocean Gateway (State Rt 50).

Making the existing businesses and parks accessible to residents without having to walk in the street is critical. Areas of the town lack sidewalks, or have sidewalks that do not meet ADA standards, creating a connectivity issue for those pedestrians desiring to access the school, town office, post office, and other areas. The Town was previously turned down for a grant that would have funded a portion of the sidewalks needed, and has recently obtained assistance in constructing a critical link in connectivity on Main Street aka RT 565 via State Highway. That assistance will close the gap where sidewalk was absent from Home Run Baker Park to the White Marsh School/Lovers Lane townhome area. Pedestrians are forced to walk in the travel portion of a narrow road without shoulders, and with deep ditches on either side. This is the main travel path to the school, and used by many low income families walking to the town center.

The SC area contains approximately 308 acres.

The town has no federal, state or local designations nor have there been any revitalization programs since 1997.

B. **Organizational structure, experience and public input**

The workgroup consists of members of the Town Council, (Norm Fegel, Rose Potter, Tonya Pritchett, RD Diefenderfer and Don English), members of the Town of Trappe Planning Commission, (Chairman Edgar Harrison and Vice-Chair Bobby Quidas) and the Talbot County Economic Development Director, (Paige Bethke). They will be supported by town staff: the town clerk (Erin Braband, and the town planner (Jennifer Shull). There are not any business organizations or community leadership groups from which to draw support or participation.

The Town Council President, Norm Fegel, will assume leadership of the group, and work with the others to develop subgroups with individual leadership using staff to implement the SC area plan with assistance from the partners and State agencies.

Recent past experience in administering public projects or revitalization efforts by the town is limited to very small locally funded infrastructure improvement projects. Town staff have experience obtaining state funds (Community Park and Playgrounds) for recreational improvements to the Lakeside community park; Nace's park; and slum/blight demolition thru the CDBG program. With extremely limited staff, a clerk, part-time billing clerk, and a planner there have been few opportunities to implement or fund revitalization efforts. The Town's general budget is $687,000.00 which does not include funding for either economic development, and very limited funds for infrastructure revitalization. The town has funded past projects in part with loans, grants or rearranged funding of other budget line items. Council members Norm Fegel and Don English typically take the lead in developing and guiding infrastructure improvement projects other than parks which is under the direction of Commissioner Rose Potter. The Talbot County Economic Development Director, Paige Bethke, will provide leadership and direction in the area of business revitalization and retention, with the assistance of Commissioner Tonya Pritchett who has expressed interest in this area. The strength of the team is its willingness to improve the town, and seek help. The weakness is the lack of depth in the implementation of a plan such as this, a lack of significant funding to implement an economic development drive by the town leaders and the inability to recruit more general citizen participation.

Notices of the development of a Sustainable Community Action Plan were placed on the town web site, and in the monthly town newsletter mailed with water bills. Other individuals were also contacted via email. There was an initial discussion at the regular town meeting about the potential of a SC designation, followed by dialogue with another town that had made application, and subsequently a meeting/workshop with staff from the State. An additional public workshop was held to review and fine tune the matrix action plan. Again, the public was invited but did not participate. The town's comprehensive plan and Planning Commission support the items identified in the action plan, however, the Planning Commission does not believe it has the experience or knowledge to put together an economic development plan.

ROSTER OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY TEAM MEMBERS

Council of Trappe:
President Norm Fegel, Vice President Rose Potter, Commissioner Tonya Pritchett, Commissioner RD Diefenderfer, Commissioner Don English

Maryland Dept of Commerce:

Debbie Bowden, Sr Business Development Representative

Trappe Community Team:

Margaret English, Julie Libby, Elizabeth Ferguson, Mike Sullivan, Flo Adams, Brandi Rosebrock, Nancy Dunn and other residents

Trappe Planning Commission:
Chairman Edgar Harrison, Vice Chairman Bobby Quidas will represent the five member commission.

Talbot County Economic Development Commission
Director Paige Bethke

Town of Trappe Staff:
Clerk Erin Braband, Planner Jennifer Shull

U.S. Small Business Administration:
Business Development Specialist, Rachel Howard

Kim Hardesty, Owner/Salon Inspire, Trappe Business

Sustainable Community Action Plan

Town of Trappe, Talbot County, MD

Town of Trappe

1/5/2016

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	Weaknesses
- Homerun Baker Park (County owned) - Veterans Memorial, Nace Park, Harrison Circle/Lakeside (playground) Parks (City owned) - Seasonal farmers market - Excess water/sewer capacity to support 100 infill lots	- No parks east of Route 50 - No recycling program/curbside pick up - Lack of stormwater management activities and implementation - Greenfield, Main St, Powell and Sullivan streets suffer from deterioration from standing water

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies	Implementation Partners
Based on the strengths and weaknesses identify the strengths on which you would like to build and the challenges you would like to address. What outcomes are you trying to achieve? Where/ in what area do you want those changes to happen? Progress Measure: Identify how you will know that you have achieved your outcome.	Identify strategies that will help your community to achieve each identified outcome to the left. If applicable, break down each strategy into specific action items that outline different steps of the strategy. Specify how you are planning to achieve the desired outcomes.	Which community stakeholders need to be involved to realize each action step and strategy? Name specific public and/or private sector partners.
Outcome 1: Complete the improvements at Nace Park Progress Measures: Completion of walking trails	Strategy A: Continue work with community partners to assure the completion of walking trails, landscaping, plaza, signage and tributes to Nace Hopkins.	Town of Trappe, Community Partners, Department of Natural Resources, Scott's United Methodist Church, Talbot County Parks and Recreation
Outcome 2: Create a single stream recycling program (at no extra cost to the Town) Progress Measures: Completion of study	Strategy A: Study the potential costs/benefits and similar scale programs to determine recycling program feasibility	Town of Trappe, Talbot County, Department of Natural Resources, Department of Housing and Community Development

Outcome 3: Complete implementation of stormwater management design	Strategy A: Increase drainage of standing water sites Strategy B: Identify most impacted sites and projects that can mitigate the standing water
Progress Measures: Amount of funding awarded	Strategy C: Apply for funding/grants to implement stormwater management projects

Economy

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

Strengths	Weaknesses
• Availability/Accessibility to Route 50 (to Easton and Cambridge, Annapolis and Baltimore)	• TEDC limited reach/small
• Vacant storefronts available for new businesses	• No town marketing campaign to attract businesses or residents
• Town website/newsletter that promotes local businesses	• Water/sewer debt load
• Paris food distribution center as a major employer	• Business district small and limited off Route 50
• Elementary school as a major employer	• No commitment of business community to county Economic Development office
• Low tax rates (one of the lowest in Talbot County)	• Insufficient parking spots available downtown and at Talbot County boat launch
• Rural Life Museum	
• Talbot Economic Development Commission (TEDC) [Implementation Partner]	• Only few community events
• Nace Hopkins – historical relevance for starting schools and educating African American children, descendants now attend Scott's church	• Lacking workforce
• Proximity of boat launch for watermen, and recreational boaters	• Majority of population is retired/semi-retired

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Increase number of small, vibrant businesses in town (council needs a plan)	Strategy A: Strengthen and diversify business base	Town of Trappe, Talbot County Development Commission, Department of Housing and Community Development
	Strategy B: Recruit new small businesses to town (rental incentives, facade improvements)	
Progress Measures: Number of businesses present in downtown	Strategy C: Facilitate cross promotion for existing businesses (launch common marketing strategy)	
Outcome 2: Increase designated parking for business district (need supplemental/community parking)	Strategy A: Establish additional parking lot on empty parcel close to business district	Town of Trappe, Talbot County Roads Department, Local Business
	Strategy B: Apply for government funding for business district improvement	
Progress Measures: Number of parking spaces available downtown	Strategy C: Provide directional signage to available downtown parking	
Outcome 3: Improve Placemaking/Town signage on Route 50	Strategy A: Work with SHA and other government partners to make signage improvements	Town of Trappe, State Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Transportation, Talbot County Roads Department
Progress Measures: Signage hung		

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
• Most of Main St. has sidewalks in downtown • Many walkers/pedestrians in town • Access/connectivity with Route 50 to Easton and Cambridge	• No public bus system (regional system with 2 stops per day in downtown) • LACK OF ADEQUATE PARKING • Roads are too narrow to add bike lanes/sidewalks • No rail system • Street lighting scattered throughout town limiting night visibility for pedestrians

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Create and improve pedestrian connectivity (specifically 565/Old Trappe Rd to downtown) Progress Measures: Feet of new sidewalk created	Strategy A: Study where people work/live/commute to and from Strategy B: Identify pedestrian pathways of school children and apply for Safe Routes to School funding to fill sidewalk gaps Strategy C: Partner with SHA/MDOT to create an implementation plan for new sidewalks	Town of Trappe, State Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Transportation, Talbot County Roads Department, National Center for Safe Routes to School
Outcome 2: Increase number of street lights Progress Measures: Number of street lights installed	Strategy A: Work with county and SHA to determine best locations for new street lights	
Outcome 3: Increase regional bus system ridership Progress Measures: Signage for buses hung	Strategy A: Mark bus stops with signage to publicize availability and location	

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
• Healthy housing stock, built most in 1930's and 1960's • No visibly blighted houses • Good variety/balance of housing type (townhouse, single family, duplexes, accessory units, 75% owner occupied) • Stable, middle and upper middle class, housing	• Economic downtown placed hold on new housing construction • Waiting for condo/townhouse/apartment/single family unit construction (PUD across Route 50 not built yet, 2501 units planned) • Some foreclosures • County impact fees/town water-sewer capacity charges

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: *The Town would like to focus on its environmental, transportation and economic needs. Housing prices are stable and the town already has a diverse housing stock that meets the needs of people of all economic backgrounds. Progress Measures:	Outcome 1, Strategy A:	

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
• Extremely active fire department as a community meeting space (annual carnival event) • White Marsh Elementary school active in the community • Many churches/faith based organizations including Trappe United Methodist Church, Scotts United Methodist Church, St Paul's Episcopal Church, Wesleyan Church • Community/Town picnic event • Rural Life Museum – local history, community garden, community events, 120 annual visitors • Nace's Day celebration/event • Nondenominational yearly worship service • Active Lions Club • Classic and antique Car show to fundraise for Fire Department and for scholarship funds at Scotts UMC • Paid paramedics and Medivac • Trauma Center located within 30 min drive • Local Emergency responders well equipped & trained • Extremely low crime rate • Weekly quilting activities at local business • 7 baseball teams, 1 soccer team (seasonal)	• Lack of gym/YMCA/organized recreation activities and kids play in the streets • Inadequate use of school and facilities • No neighborhood daycare center • No yearlong or all season sports for kids, only seasonal

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies →	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Increase promotion of cultural activities	Strategy A: Create a work group to explore feasible ways to promote and support existing community events	Town of Trappe, Churches, Local Businesses
Progress Measures: Number of activities held each year and number of attendees at cultural events		
Outcome 2: Provide pedestrian improvements	Strategy A: Create a work group to explore locations and funding for benches and more lighting.	Town of Trappe, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Progress Measures: Number of benches and lighting installed		

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Outcome 3: Create more organized and year round activities for youth	Strategy A: Create a work group to explore feasibility and implementation of youth activities	Town of Trappe, White Marsh Elementary School, Talbot County Schools, YMCA, local non-profits
Progress Measures: Number of youth activities per season		
Outcome 4: Provide placemaking signage for town	Strategy A: Identify appropriate locations for signage throughout Town and develop consistent theme/design	Town of Trappe, State Highway Administration, Maryland Department of Transportation, Maryland Department of Planning
Progress Measures: Signage hung		

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
• Active Town planning commission	• Only special exceptions allowed in village redevelopment sub-area (mostly commercial)
• Village overlay (to protect downtown)	• County Impact Fee
• Revisions proposed for signage changes in zoning	
• Ease of access to Easton/Cambridge	
• PUDs available/flexible on edge of town	

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Complete comprehensive plan review.	Strategy A: Work with planning commission, elected officials, and community to write revisions for the plan	Town of Trappe, Talbot County Planning and Zoning, Maryland Department of Planning
Progress Measures: Plan politically approved	Strategy B: Include favorable conditions for emerging technologies to foster	
	Strategy C: Include tiered maps	
Outcome 2: Zoning in place to enable PUDs approved	Strategy A: Update comprehensive plan to promote PUDs and favorable zoning for PUD construction	Town of Trappe, Talbot County Planning and Zoning, Maryland Department of Planning
Progress Measures: Plan politically approved		

Sustainable Communities 2021 Renewal Considerations

The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (the Department) recognizes that the COVID-19 pandemic has resulted in challenges for local governments in preparing Sustainable Community renewal applications. These may include staff absences as well as difficulty convening public meetings and workgroups needed to prepare renewal applications.

In response to these concerns, during the COVID-19 state of emergency and catastrophic health emergency only, local governments may opt to participate in the COVID-19 abbreviated application for renewal, rather than the standard designation renewal process. Traditionally, the Sustainable Communities workgroup convenes to develop and submit a renewal application, that includes public input. However, the Department recognized that this may not be possible during the state of emergency.

The COVID-19 abbreviated application for renewalwill include:
1. A transmittal letter containing the following:
    a. Request to utilize the COVID-19 abbreviated application;
    b. Statement affirming no changes to the previous Sustainable Community Action Plan or boundary (see attached letter template).
2. A copy of the previous Sustainable Community Action Plan.
3. Completed COVID-19 Renewal Summary including assessment worksheet (attached).

Requests for boundary modifications may not come through the COVID-19 abbreviated application. Additionally, if there are significant changes to the community and/or the strategy, the renewal application should be submitted through the traditional Sustainable Communities renewal application process. Please be aware that capital project applications to Community Legacy, Strategic Demolition Fund and others ask how the particular project fits in with the Sustainable Communities Action Plan. If you find that there is a mismatch between capital projects you would like to pursue and the current Sustainable Community Action Plan, we encourage you to pursue the traditional renewal application process and/or plan to submit a plan amendment as soon as you possibly can.

Whichever renewal application is chosen, [Regional Project Managers](#) at the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development will continue to be available to respond to questions and assist local governments with preparation of Sustainable Community renewal applications.

Frequently Asked Questions
Why would a community choose the COVID-19 abbreviated application for renewal?
A: Social distancing due to COVID-19 has made it difficult for local governments to convene Sustainable Communities workgroups to share ideas and develop local plans. Staff absences for health and related issues have made it difficult for staff to complete tasks related to the renewal application process.

Local governments requesting Sustainable Community boundary modification must go through the traditional renewal application process. Local governments making substantial modifications to Sustainable Community plans and strategies may be directed to submit through the standard Sustainable Community renewal application. Determination by DHCD staff may be on a case by case basis and if larger changes need to be made we may work with you on updating through the standard application process. If you are unsure regarding whether your Sustainable Community renewal is appropriate for the COVID-19 abbreviated or standard renewal application process, you are encouraged to contact program staff.

What is the deadline for submission?
A: Sustainable Communities renewal, whether through the traditional or COVID-19 abbreviated process, must be submitted prior to the expiration date. As usual, for communities where there are active capital projects through such programs as Community Legacy, award agreements may not be executed nor can award funds be disbursed until the renewal application has been approved by the appropriate governing body (usually the Smart Growth Coordinating Committee).

When will the special COVID-19 abbreviated application for renewal end?
A: The COVID-19 abbreviated application option will close once the Governor has lifted the Declaring a State of Emergency and Existence of Catastrophic Health Emergency – COVID-19, dated March 5, 2020

https://governor.maryland.gov/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Proclamation-COVID-19.pdf.

Any Sustainable Communities set to expire between now and three months past the lifted Order may opt to utilize the COVID-19 renewal application process.

How long will the renewed Action Plan be valid?

A: Once approved, Sustainable Community designations regardless of renewal application process will have a term of five years. Local governments will continue to have the opportunity to submit amendments and updates to the application during the five-year term as appropriate. We encourage communities to submit an updated action plan if priorities have shifted and/or new strategies are being pursued.

Does this apply to new designations?

A: No, this policy pertains to renewal designations at risk of lapse only.

COVID-19 Abbreviated Application Assessment and Accomplishments Worksheet

1) Have there been any significant changes to the size of the community, such as population or through annexation? No
    a) If yes, please describe:

2) Are there any strategy shifts within an Action Plan component? No
    a) If yes, please describe:

3) Do you request any technical assistance from the State in implementing Sustainable Community Action Plan strategies? No
    a) If yes, please describe:

4) Have you been awarded any revitalization-related State funds in the past five years? For example, DHCD Community Legacy, DHCD Strategic Demolition Fund, MDOT Community Safety and Enhancement, MDOT Bikeways, MDOT Sidewalk Retrofit, MDE Water Quality Revolving Loan Fund. We have not been awarded revitalization-related funding but we did receive funding from the MDE Water Quality Revolving Loan Program in 2018 for a new Well.
    a) If yes, please list the State department, name of the program, description of the project and amount of awarded funds: The Town was awarded a loan in the amount of $982,310 which will have a 50% loan forgiveness 10 years after the project is completed. The new Well project is scheduled to be completed in October 2021.

5) Have you been awarded any federal CARES Act funding and/or State emergency COVID funds? No
    a) If yes, please list name of the program, description of the project and amount of awarded funds:

6) Please list and describe any significant accomplishments over the past five years as a Sustainable Community. Examples may include the launch of a new façade improvement program, number of senior housing repairs, linear feet of sidewalk replaced, etc. We have completed Nace's Park as presented under Environment in our plan.

7) Have anticipated needs or strategies shifted during the COVID-19 pandemic? Relatedly, has the ongoing pandemic uncovered community needs previously undetected? No

    a) If yes, please describe: