

TOWN OF WILLARDS
7344 MAIN STREET
P O BOX 98
WILLARDS, MARYLAND 21874
410-835-8192 FAX - 410-835-3549
townofwillards@wicomico.org

December 20, 2019

Ms. Mary Kendall
Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development
Division of Neighborhood Revitalization
2 North Charles Street, Suite 450
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

RE: Town of Willard's Sustainable Communities Application

Dear Ms. Kendall:

The Town of Willards would like to respectfully submit its' Sustainable Communities application to the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development for consideration and approval.

Enclosed please find the Town of Willard's Sustainable Communities (SC) application to include applicant information, community general information, the Action Plan/Matrix, signed Resolution, signed Community Application Disclosure Authorization and Certification, SC Boundary Map and community photos. The Town has also enclosed a CD which contains the shapefiles for the proposed SC boundary, the Town's proposed SC Map in pdf format and related community photographs in jpeg format.

Should you have any questions please feel free to contact Willard's Circuit Rider Joe Mangini, Jr., whose contact information is noted on the application, or Tracey Gordy, Maryland Department of Planning's Senior Regional Planner for the Lower Eastern Shore Region, who assisted the Town with this application.

Sincerely,



Margaret E. White
Willards Council President

Enclosures

Cc: Tracey Gordy, MDP

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICATION

DISCLOSURE AUTHORIZATION AND CERTIFICATION

The undersigned authorizes the Department of Housing and Community Development (the "Department") to make such inquiries as necessary, including, but not limited to, credit inquiries, in order to verify the accuracy of the statements made by the applicant and to determine the creditworthiness of the applicant and the accuracy of the application.

In accordance with Executive Order 01.01.1983.18, the Department advises you that certain personal information is necessary to determine eligibility for financial assistance. Availability of this information for public inspection is governed by Maryland's Access to Public Records Act, State Government Article, Section 10-611 et seq. of the Annotated Code of Maryland (the "Act"). This information will be disclosed to appropriate staff of the Department or to public officials for purposes directly connected with administration of this financial assistance program for which its use is intended. Such information may be shared with State, federal or local government agencies, which have a financial role in the project. The applicant has the right to inspect, amend, or correct personal records in accordance with the Act.

The Department intends to make available to the public the contents of the local governments' Sustainable Community Plans and the contents of Sustainable Community Applications, including posting of entire applications on the Department's website, use of such materials at presentations, training sessions, press releases, articles and other means of publication. This information may be confidential under the Act. If the applicant considers this information confidential and does not want it made available to the public, please indicate this objection in writing and attach the same to this application.

The applicant agrees that not attaching an objection constitutes consent to the information being made available to the public as herein described, and a waiver of any rights the applicant may have regarding this information under the Act.

I have read and understand the above paragraph. Applicant's Initials: MEW

Anyone who knowingly makes, or causes to be made, any false statement or report relative to this Application, for the purposes of influencing the action of the Department on such Application, may become ineligible to receive State financial assistance, and is subject to other penalties authorized by law.

The undersigned hereby certifies that s/he is authorized to enter into the agreements and certifications contained herein and in the Application, and further certifies that the information set herein and in any attachment in support hereof is true, correct, and complete to the best of his/her knowledge and belief.

Margaret E. White
Authorized Signature

Margaret E. White / Council President
Type Name and Title

12/20/19
Date

I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name of Sustainable Community:

The Town of Willards
Wicomico County, Maryland

Name of Applicant:

The Town of Willards, Maryland

Applicant's Federal Identification Number: 52-1034293

Applicant's Street Address: 7344 Main Street

City: Willards **County:** Wicomico **State:** Maryland **Zip Code:** 21874

Phone Number: (410) 835-8192 **Fax Number:** (410) 835-3549

Web Address: None

Sustainable Community Application Local Contact:

Name: Joseph A Mangini, Jr **Title:** Town Manager/Circuit Rider

Address: 7344 Main Street **City:** Willards **State:** Maryland **Zip Code:** 21874

Phone Number: (443) 614-0600 **Fax Number:** (410) 835-3549

E-mail Address: bluehen1@peoplepc.com

Sustainable Community Contact for Application Status:

Name: Joseph A Mangini, Jr **Title:** Town Manager/Circuit Rider

Address: 7344 Main Street **City:** Willards **State:** Maryland **Zip Code:** 21874

Phone Number: (443) 614-0600 **Fax Number:** (410) 835-3549

E-mail Address: bluehen1@peoplepc.com

II. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY – General Information

A. Proposed Sustainable Community Area(s):

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

The Sustainable Community Boundary was determined by the Sustainable Communities Workgroup and supported by the President and Town Council. This area focuses on the core of the Town, which includes a majority of Willard's older structures and smaller residential lots, the business/commercial area, and that part of the Town zoned industrial. It also includes the Town's public buildings. The proposed Sustainable Communities Area is entirely within a Priority Funding Area (PFA).

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

The Sustainable Communities Boundary Map and photographs have been included with the application, as well as the GIS shapefiles, on the enclosed CD-ROM.

- (3) Approximate number of acres within the SC Area: approximately 120 acres
- (4) Existing federal, state or local designations: **NONE**
☐Community Legacy Area ☐Designated Neighborhood ☐Main Street ☐Maple Street
☐National Register Historic District ☐Local Historic District ☐Arts & Entertainment District
☐State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District ☐BRAC ☐State Designated TOD
☐Other(s):

- (5) Prior Revitalization Investments & Smart Growth:

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

Historically, Willards has not been the recipient of grants specific to revitalization and Smart Growth efforts. The Sustainable Community designation will facilitate grant funding through State programs previously not available to the Town. Additionally, the Town is no longer a Low to Moderate Income (LMI) community, so it does not currently qualify for Community Development Block Grants. The Town has secured a couple of low interest loans for water and sewer infrastructure projects, but they were through federal funding programs. Before it lost its designation as an LMI community, the Town did secure a DHCD CDBG grant to update/revise its comprehensive plan.

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

Demographic trends included are for the entire Town and not just for the proposed Sustainable Community area. However, the Town is small and rather homogeneous, so the demographics cited generally apply to the Sustainable Community Boundary area as well.

The following are demographics for the Town from the 2010 Census, unless otherwise noted:

Population: 967

Households: 332

Housing Units: 366

Owner Occupied: 72% of total units (232)

Renter Occupied: 28% of total units (90)

Vacant Housing Units: 12% (44)

Family Households: 239

Average Household Size: 2.91

Average Household Income: \$53,375

Racial Makeup: 87.7% White, 8.8% Black or African American, Other 3.5%

Median Age: 32.6

Educational Attainment: 90.1% high school or higher

B. Organizational Structure, Experience and Public Input:

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

The Town is governed by a President and four (4) members of the Town Council. They have overseen and implemented several projects involving the continued maintenance of the public water/sewer systems, park/recreational facilities, and drainage system. Through designation of a portion of the Town as

a Sustainable Community, it is the desire/intent of the President and Town Council to identify those areas that require a more focused effort to sustain and improve the Town.

The Town's Sustainable Communities Workgroup met for five (5) months to prepare this application with the Town Manager/Circuit Rider serving as Chair. Representatives from the Town Council, planning/zoning commission, staff, parks/recreation, and volunteer fire company were included in the workgroup.

With respect to the Town's capacity to implement the Sustainable Communities Plan, Willards is fortunate to have a DHCD grant-funded, experienced Town Manager/Circuit Rider as the primary resource who has already been very active in managing the Town of Sharptown's Action Plan. The Willards Town Manager/Circuit Rider will have the full assistance and support from the various state agencies, but specifically from the staff of the Maryland Department of Planning's Lower Eastern Shore Regional Office. Local support will come from the President and Town Council, planning/zoning commission, parks/recreation committee, and Town staff who will have supporting roles in furtherance of the Sustainable Communities Plan/Program.

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

Historically, Willards has not been the recipient of grants specific to revitalization and Smart Growth efforts. The Sustainable Community designation will facilitate grant opportunities not previously available to the Town. Additionally, the Town is no longer a Low to Moderate Income (LMI) community, so it does not qualify for Community Development Block Grants. The Town has secured a couple of low interest loans for water and sewer infrastructure projects, but they were through federal funding programs. Before losing its designation as an LMI community, Willards was able to obtain a DHCD CDBG grant to revise/upgrade its comprehensive plan presently in progress.

The Town's implementation of various projects over the years has been accomplished via a combination of hired consultants and community volunteers. The Town is a member of the grant funded DHCD Town Manager/Circuit Rider Program and has an experienced individual on hand who administers its grant and capital improvement projects. The Town Manager/Circuit Rider will administer the Sustainable Communities Program, apply for grant funding, and have assistance from the various state agencies, specifically the Maryland Department of Planning's staff of the Lower Eastern Shore Regional Office, as

well as the President and Town Council, Planning Commission, and other Town staff.

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

The Willards Sustainable Communities Workgroup held five (5) monthly work sessions at Town Hall to prepare the draft Action Plan. All meetings were announced and open to the public. Throughout the process, the Town Manager/Circuit Rider served as Chair and reported the group's progress at each Town meeting as part of his report. The Planning Commission reviewed the application at its meeting on December 2, 2019, during which it made a favorable recommendation of the application to the President and Town Council of Willards. Subsequently, the President and Town Council of Willards reviewed the recommended draft of the Sustainable Communities application, Boundary Map, and Action Plan at its regularly scheduled meeting on December 9, 2019. No one in attendance spoke in opposition of the designation or the application, and the Sustainable Communities Resolution was passed by the President and Town Council.

The Sustainable Communities application, boundary map, and Action Plan was informed by, and based upon, the Town's 2009 Comprehensive Plan, the Town's 2008 Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map, and the County's 2010 Comprehensive Water and Sewerage Plan (as amended).

THE TOWN OF WILLARDS

RESOLUTION NO. 2019-7

A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE TOWN OF WILLARDS TO DESIGNATE THE TOWN OF WILLARDS AS A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY PURSUANT TO THE ATTACHED SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY MAP AND SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY PLAN (THE "PLAN"), AS FURTHER DESCRIBED IN THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY APPLICATION (THE "APPLICATION"), FOR APPROVAL EITHER DIRECTLY BY THE DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT (THE "DEPARTMENT") OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND OR THROUGH THE SMART GROWTH SUB-CABINET OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND

WHEREAS, The Town Council for The Town of Willards recognizes that there is a significant need for reinvestment and revitalization of the community of The Town of Willards; and

WHEREAS, The Town Council for The Town of Willards desires to: (i) designate an Area within the corporate limits of The Town of Willards as a Sustainable Community, all as more particularly set forth on Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference; and (ii) adopt a Sustainable Community Plan, all as more particularly set forth on Exhibit B attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, and as further described and attached to the Sustainable Communities Program Application, for the purpose of contributing to the reinvestment and revitalization in the Area; and

WHEREAS, the designated Area is located within a Priority Funding Area under Section 5-7B-02 of the Smart Growth Act; and

WHEREAS, the applicable law and the Community Legacy Program Regulations require a local government to submit an Application to the Department of Housing and Community Development in order to become a designated Sustainable Community, and, in addition thereto, adopt a satisfactory Sustainable Community Plan in order to be eligible to receive financial assistance under the Community Legacy Program; and

WHEREAS, The Town Council for The Town of Willards hereby adopts this Resolution for purposes of accomplishing the abovesaid.

SECTION I: NOW, THEREFORE BE IT HEREBY ENACTED AND RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE TOWN OF WILLARDS that the Area within the corporate limits of The Town of Willards set forth on Exhibit A attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference is hereby approved and designated as a Sustainable Community.

SECTION II: BE IT FURTHER ENACTED AND RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE TOWN OF WILLARDS that the Sustainable Community Plan set forth on Exhibit B attached hereto and incorporated herein by reference, and as further described and attached to the Sustainable Communities Program Application is hereby approved and adopted by The Town of Willards.

SECTION III: BE IT FURTHER ENACTED AND RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE TOWN OF WILLARDS that The Town of Willards does hereby approve the filing of an Application to the Department of Housing and Community Development in order to become a designated Sustainable Community and the President of The Town Council for The Town of Willards is hereby authorized to execute and submit said Application on behalf of The Town Of Willards and to execute any additional documents and take further action as may be needed to carry out the intent of this Resolution.

SECTION IV: BE IT FURTHER ENACTED AND RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE TOWN OF WILLARDS that a President of The Town Council for The Town of Willards or her designated agent is hereby directed to send a copy of this Resolution to the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development of the State of Maryland for consideration by the Smart Growth Sub-Cabinet.

SECTION V: BE IT FURTHER ENACTED AND RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE TOWN OF WILLARDS, that this Resolution shall be known as the "The Town of Willards Sustainable Community Resolution" for The Town of Willards.

SECTION VI: BE IT FURTHER ENACTED AND RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR THE TOWN OF WILLARDS, that this Resolution shall take effect December 9, 2019.

THE ABOVE RESOLUTION was introduced and passed at a regular meeting of the Town Council on December 9, 2019. The Town Clerk is hereby authorized to proceed with the posting of the resolution.

[SIGNATURES TO FOLLOW ON NEXT PAGE]

ATTEST:

Andreia L. Hess

Andreia L. Hess, Town Clerk

THE TOWN COUNCIL FOR
THE TOWN OF WILLARDS

By Margaret E. White (SEAL)
Margaret E. White, President

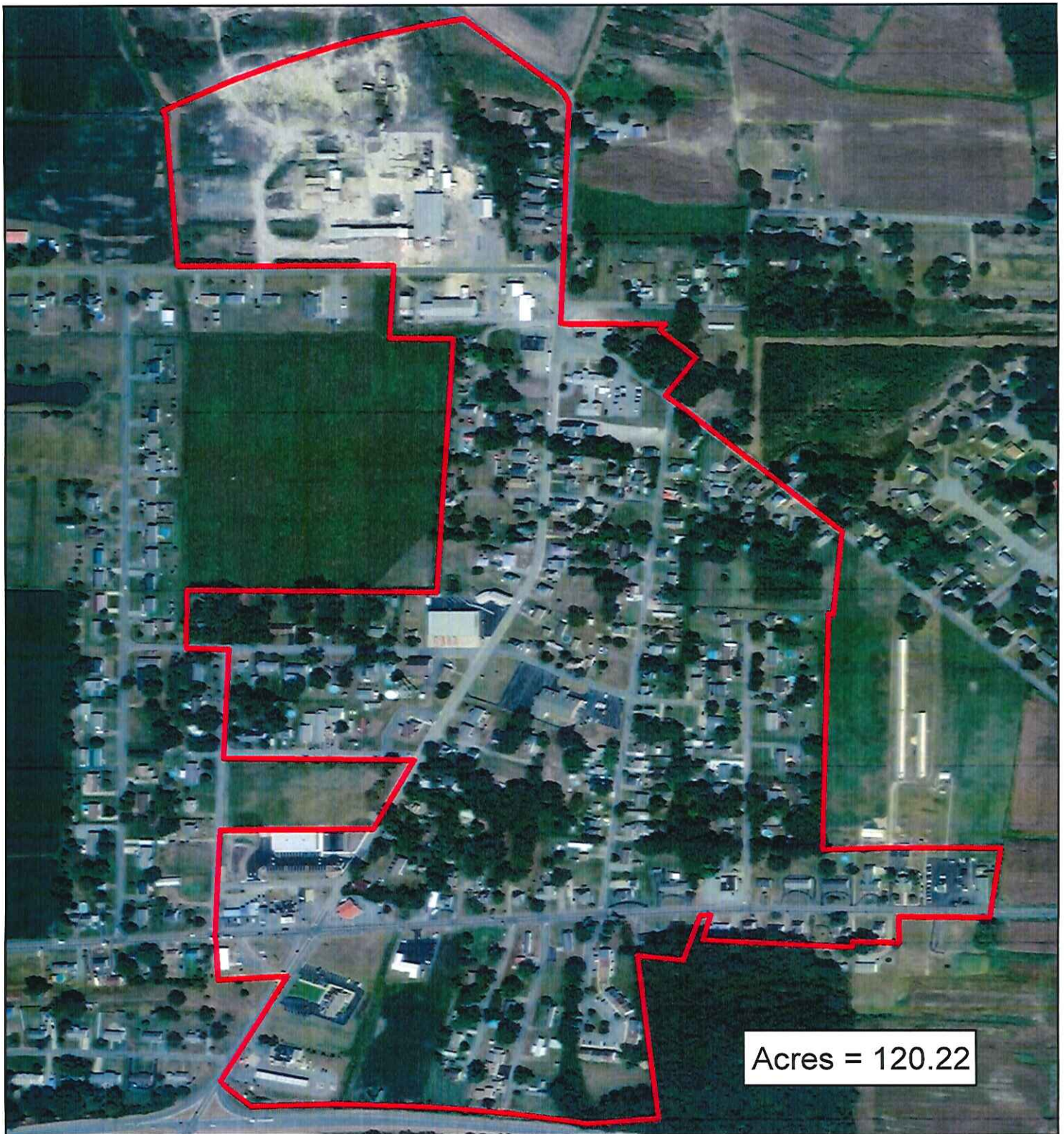
By George E. Smith (SEAL)
George E. Smith, Vice President

By Ralph A. Seaton (SEAL)
Ralph A. Seaton

By Laura J. Mears (SEAL)
Laura J. Mears

By _____ (SEAL)
Chester Keith Twilley

EXHIBIT “A”



Acres = 120.22

Willards Maryland Sustainable Community Boundary



0 0.125 0.25 .mi



EXHIBIT “B”

Sustainable Community Action Plan

The Town of Willards

Approved by the Town Council for The Town of Willards
12/9/19

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
- Willards is not located within the Critical Area and only a small portion of the proposed Sustainable Communities boundary is located within a floodplain - The Town is located near a variety of different natural landscapes such as nontidal wetlands, farmland, woodlands, wildlife habitats, floodplains, and streams - According to the 2009 Comprehensive Plan, the Town has approximately 43 acres of open land and public parks - All properties are served by municipal sewer and water and all residents are required to be on the municipal sewer system - Municipal water system has been upgraded to increase total water capacity to 240,000 gpd - Though Willards does not have its own recycling program, Wicomico County has a regional recycling center located in the Town that is highly used. - The Town is located on the proposed Salisbury/Pocomoke River Greenways	- Three public ditches (drainage system) are not well maintained, expensive to excavate, and not effective as a stormwater management strategy - Increasing development pressure due to the Town's location along U.S. Route 50 and its proximity to Ocean City could cause degradation to the Town's natural areas - Some areas of Town lack easy access to neighborhood park facilities - The County has plans to repair pavilions at the Little League Field and at the elementary school.
<u>Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures</u> 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. Outcome 1: Minimize adverse impacts on water quality, including ground water, and the natural resources Progress Measures: Reduction of runoff and improved water quality	<u>Strategies</u> 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. Strategy A: Avoid development in and around environmentally sensitive areas and identify areas for future growth that limit environmental impacts The Zoning Code for the Town of Willards should be amended to include standards that address development near stream buffers, non-tidal wetlands, steep slopes, and any habitats of threatened and endangered species
	<u>Implementation Partners</u> Which community stakeholders need to be involved to realize each action step and strategy? Name specific public and/or private sector partners. Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Maryland Department of Planning (MDP)

	Strategy B: Encourage the use of low-impact stormwater management techniques to address flooding and stormwater - Apply for grant funding to implement streetscaping and bioretention upgrades - Perform a stormwater management study to encourage best management practices to address stormwater issues - Identify streets in need of new curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, or that are most flood prone, to assist with localized flooding and/or drainage problems - Improve existing stormwater infrastructure with more bioswales and rain gardens to decrease reliance on ditches		
Outcome 2: Create, preserve, and improve park and recreational facilities, to include a mix of passive and active recreational facilities and amenities Progress Measures: Improvements to existing parks and new neighborhood parks/open space	Strategy A: Expand, improve, and develop neighborhood playgrounds and parks - Encourage and, when possible, partner with the County to support efforts to improve the parks and recreational system - Support the County's efforts to repair the pavilions - Apply to the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Community Parks and Playgrounds Program for acquisition of park land and improvement of parks - Work with the State or County to establish a new park on the southern end of Town to provide residents with easy access to public open space - Require new development to set aside areas for open space which are easily accessible to the surrounding neighborhood Strategy B: Apply to the Maryland Department of Transportation Recreational Trails Program and the Bikeways Grant Program to fund projects within the Town limits that connect with compatible County greenways/bikeways in the areas surrounding the Town	MDE, DNR, MDP, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), Wicomico County Recreation & Parks, Wicomico County Public Works	
Outcome 3: Continue to improve and maintain the Town's water/sewer system in the most efficient, effective manner possible Progress Measures: Decreased nutrient loadings and safe drinking water	Strategy A: Upgrade the wastewater treatment plant, as necessary, to decrease nutrient loadings, and maintain the public water system to continue to have quality drinking water for the Town's citizens	MDE, DNR	

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	
- Nearby urban centers include Salisbury (approximately 14.5 miles from Willards), Berlin (approximately 10 miles from Willards), and Ocean City (approximately 16 miles from Willards) - Main Street consists of a few small businesses (banks, coffee shop, food establishments, thrift store), which provide services to the community - The new Dollar General will help fill the need for certain grocery items and provide jobs - Annual festivals in Salisbury, such as the National Folk Festival and the Salisbury Festival, attracts visitors to the Town - Willards historically industry was centered on agriculture, poultry, and timber; all of which still significantly contribute to the local economy - Of the current working population, 31% are employed in sales and office occupations, 7.3% are self-employed, and 6.3% are government workers - Unemployment rate of 5.1% is lower than Wicomico County's	- Willards has experienced slow population growth since the discontinuation of the railroad in 1955, and today is primarily a bedroom community - Fairly remote location with residents traveling longer distances for essential needs; there are no grocery stores or basic services, and few restaurants - There is no traditional downtown commercial district; rather dispersed commercial uses along MD Route 346 (Old Ocean City Road) and U.S. Route 50 - Poor sidewalk network near businesses, creating an unwelcoming pedestrian environment - Cropper Brothers Lumber company Inc., an important employment center for Willards, recently closed - Most workers travel to other municipalities for employment due to few local opportunities in Town. - Average household income of \$39,035; lower than Wicomico County's (\$54,493)		
Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures		Strategies	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Encourage new businesses in Town while preserving the small-town character Progress Measures: Number of new businesses, increased business activity at existing establishments, number of new employment opportunities	Strategy A: Attract additional compatible businesses to Town to support a diverse economy and provide services that might attract industrial employers - Use technical assistance and grants available from Salisbury - Wicomico Economic Development (SWED), Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Areas, Wicomico Tourism - Promote Tax Credit Programs for which extra points are available through Sustainable Communities designation (Job Creation, Small Commercial Tax Credits)		Property and businesses owners, SWED, Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Areas, Wicomico County Tourism, DHCD, Small Business Administration, MDP, Maryland Department of Commerce

	- Provide guidance to small businesses and entrepreneurs to attain access to resources and small business loans Strategy B: Beautify the commercial corridor to attract customers - Develop design standards and guidelines for lighting, painting, etc. - Implement facade program / tenant fit-out program - Apply for funds for streetscape projects - Rehabilitate buildings or properties through facade improvements - Consider Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) sidewalk retrofit program as a resource for sidewalk construction, reconstruction, and ADA improvements - Incorporate stormwater management into streetscape improvements Strategy C: Partner with local businesses to create incentives for people to visit multiple shops and restaurants - Encourage businesses to provide a discount program for local clientele - Increase connectivity between restaurants, services, residential, retail, and commercial establishments	
Outcome 2: Expand commercial activity along Main Street (State Hwy 354) with a focus on infill and redevelopment Progress Measures: Number of new businesses on MD 354, increased business activity at existing establishments, number of new infill and revitalization projects	Strategy A: Work with other small municipalities in the vicinity to coordinate economic development strategies and create a collective economic development program/package to incentivize travel between proximate municipalities and to attract visitors during area annual festivals Strategy B: Attract a developer and tenant to provide fresh and local foods - Allocate funds to perform independent market studies of proposed grocery retail development - Conduct a market study and analyze the competitiveness of a grocer with the recent opening of the new Dollar General - Circulate findings of the market study to potential businesses who could locate in Willards such as hardware stores, fast food establishments, bakery/donut shop, etc...	Property and businesses owners, SWED, Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Areas, Wicomico County Tourism, DHCD, Small Business Administration, MDP

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	
- Willards is located on U.S Route 50 and Old Ocean City Road (Maryland Route 346), which provide easy access to and from Town - Close proximity to Ocean City, Berlin, and Salisbury makes for easy commutes - The Town has an adequate system of collector roads and local streets - Shore Transit Association (STA) Route 452 operates daily and is available to Willards' residents upon telephone request, and the cost is affordable (\$3/ride and \$1.50/ride for seniors)		- No public transportation service outside of Shore transit's telephone request system - A complete sidewalk system does not exist in the Town; some areas do not have a sidewalk, others have gaps in the system, and others need repairs and need to be made ADA compliant - Inadequate off-street parking - Streets are in poor condition and in need of repair - Current streets are automobile centric and do not easily accommodate bikes and other alternate modes of transportation - Some streets have improper signage and signals - According to the 2000 Census, no residents of Willards use public transport to commute to work	
Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures		Strategies	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Repair, expand, and maintain the existing street and sidewalk infrastructure Progress Measures: Installation of curb and gutter, linear feet of new and/or refurbished sidewalks, ADA compliant sidewalks, linear feet of street paving		Strategy A: Ensure complete street and sidewalk connectivity within the Town boundary - Connect residential areas to the Main Street commercial corridor - Apply for Safe Routes to School to increase safety between neighborhoods and Willards Elementary School - Require new development to install sidewalks and bike paths where possible - New development projects within the Town should be required to expand the existing grid system Strategy B: Complete streetscape improvements for Main Street and other primary travel routes, to include curb, gutter, paving, sidewalks, lighting, seating, landscaping, street art, etc... - Apply for Sidewalk Retrofit Program to upgrade and widen existing sidewalks	MDOT, State Highway Administration (SHA), MDP, Wicomico County Department of Planning & Zoning, Wicomico County Public Works

	- Request that SHA undertake a streetscape improvement project for the section of Old Ocean City Road within the Town limits - Install curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and planting space for trees - Implement traffic calming techniques at key locations	
Outcome 2: Improve alternative transportation options for Willards residents Progress Measures: Expanded transit network, transit ridership and number of daily trips, number of bike and pedestrian friendly streets	Strategy A: Work with local and regional transit authorities to provide public transportation options for Willards - Determine demand for nearby destinations - Coordinate with public transportation agencies (e.g. Shore Transit) to provide new routes or shuttle service to Willards - Add designated Shore Transit commuter bus stop in Willards for commuters between Salisbury and Ocean City - Work with the County to establish programs for commuters such as park and ride facilities Strategy B: Enhance bicycle and pedestrian access throughout Willards - Provide safe, convenient, and inviting routes between local activity centers - Prioritize pedestrian friendly streets within corporate limits - Establish street design standards for new developments that provides safe and efficient mobility for all - Require blocks be small enough to create easy travel for non-motorized transportation	Shore Transit, MDP, Wicomico County Department of Planning & Zoning, Wicomico County Public Works, Salisbury-Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization

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	
- The 2000 census shows about 76% of Willard's housing units were owner-occupied; many of the residents are long-term; more than half of the homes are occupied by residents who have lived here for ten or more years - Housing is relatively affordable; Wicomico County has lower home prices than surrounding counties, and lower rental prices - There is sufficient room for infill development to accommodate growth, so there is no need to annex more land - Rural, family-oriented residential community		- Lack of housing diversity, such as apartments, duplexes, and townhomes - Willards has an aging population and will require increased affordable housing options, in particular 55 and older residential developments - There are some blighted houses in need of rehabilitation or demolition - According to the 2009 Comprehensive Plan (2000 census data) about 57% of households were cost burdened in Wicomico County overall, suggesting the need for more affordable housing options, including smaller units	
Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures		Strategies	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Ensure a variety of housing choices (cost & type) for all members of the community Progress Measures: Homeownership rate, number of affordable/workforce units, number of senior units		Strategy A: Provide medium and low-income families (workforce housing) with information on housing programs that can assist them in purchasing homes (Maryland Mortgage Program, Maryland Home Financing Programs) Strategy B: Encourage the development of senior restricted housing to meet the demands of Willards' aging population - Partner with nonprofit developers to provide affordable senior housing - Retrofit existing units to allow for "aging in place" Strategy C: Implement programs and regulations that will help provide more affordable housing options for working class and low-income residents - Waive or reduce fees and infrastructure requirements to facilitate the construction and renovation of affordable housing - Work with Wicomico County to develop and promote employer assisted housing programs - Ensure that regulatory policies align with affordable housing goals - Utilize inclusionary zoning to require a portion of any new development to include a certain amount of affordable housing	U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, DHCD, MDP, housing developers, Salisbury Neighborhood Housing Service (NHS), Habitat for Humanity

Outcome 2: Improve quality of existing housing stock Progress Measures: Number of new residents, increased home and property values, number of homes rehabilitated	Strategy A: Conduct a housing study to identify the housing stock in need of rehabilitation, determine if they are abandoned or occupied, contact owners, and seek grant funds to rehabilitate Strategy B: Encourage, through policies and programs, the restoration and rehabilitation of existing homes - Implement a residential facade program to make subsidized upgrades and repairs to older exteriors - Work with landlords to develop and provide incentives to upgrade rental property in ways which do not cause exorbitant rent increases Strategy C: Develop simple and practical regulations that encourage appropriate infill and redevelopment to make more cohesive neighborhoods, and ensure compatibility with existing character - Develop regulations that instill design standards that maintain the character of the community	U.S. Department of Housing & Urban Development, DHCD, MDP, housing developers
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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	
- Willards is a small, quiet, safe, and relatively affordable "bedroom" community - There is a significant amount of public outdoor green space and recreational areas for residents to enjoy, including baseball fields and parks - Population is relatively stable - There are annual festivals in Salisbury which bring additional visitors to Willards - The schools serving Willards are considered excellent County schools, including one newer elementary school located within the Town - A large percent of intact buildings pre-date WWII, including the historic Willards Ticket Office at the intersection of Market and Main Streets which currently houses The Iron Horse Coffee House & Eatery - The Lions Club Community Center provides a space for community events - Adequate, effective Fire Department/EMS - Willards is a low crime area and does not have a need for their own police force, but rather utilizes the County Sheriff's Department and State Police for public safety - Local Chamber of Commerce hosts an annual 4th of July celebration which is heavily attended by people throughout the County - A new Town Hall to accommodate growth and provide constituents a more comfortable accommodating setting for public meetings was recently constructed		- Unlike other Eastern Shore towns, Willards does not have an intact historic district or many historic buildings, and thus lacks the historic character that often contributes to a community's sense of place - Similarly, there is no intact downtown or commercial center, rather commercial uses are dispersed along the Main Street and U.S. Route 50 corridors - The Town does not have any public health facilities, so residents needing health services must travel to Salisbury or Berlin - Residents have complete reliance on vehicles for day to day needs and activities, since the Town is approximately 20 minutes from larger urban areas that offer products, activities, and services - Nearest high school is Parkside High school in Salisbury	
Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures		Strategies	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Ensure that the community is adequately served by a variety of facilities meeting the desires and needs of all citizens Progress Measures: Number of new recreational, cultural and civic events and facilities, businesses, health services and facilities/clinics, and community improvements		Strategy A: Work with other local communities and the County to expand regional health services - Work with Shore Transit to research the potential of a shuttle bus service to Peninsula Regional Medical Center - Support efforts to schedule periodic clinics to provide health services to residents. - Local facilities could be made available to the local Health Department to increase temporary clinics, rather than requiring people to travel to Salisbury	DHCD, MDP, Wicomico County Department of Planning & Zoning, Shore Transit, Peninsula Medical Center, Maryland Department of Health, other neighboring municipalities and communities

	Strategy B: Expand, improve, and develop neighborhood playgrounds - Town is working with Wicomico County to design and complete a revitalization of the Town's community park with open space funding Strategy C: Promote educational and cultural opportunities - Expand the Town's online presence, marketing efforts, and County, State, and federal partnerships - Work with other nearby cultural and historic sites to promote comprehensive tourism and educational opportunities - Create partnerships with the City of Salisbury to promote Willards as a place to visit during the annual festivals as well as other neighboring municipalities and communities in Wicomico County	
Outcome 2: Enhance the commercial corridors to increase the sense of place and attract more visitors focusing on the Town's Main Street corridor Progress Measures: Increase in business activity, linear feet of sidewalk and aesthetic improvements, number of people walking	Strategy A: Create a concentrated commercial center along the Main Street Corridor and the intersection of Main Street and Old Ocean City Road - Enhance the Town's Gateway with appropriate signage and landscaping - Implement commercial facade program to make subsidized upgrades and repairs to older exteriors - Beautify the commercial corridor through establishing design guidelines for the commercial corridor based on best practices, including design standards for buffers, signage, access, lighting, landscaping, etc. - Improve lighting, tree canopy, benches, landscaping and painting - Consider starting an annual event to celebrate and highlight the Town, its history and its people Strategy B: Implement streetscape improvements to improve walkability - Install curbs, gutters, sidewalks, and planting space for trees - Request that SHA undertake streetscape improvement project for the section of Old Ocean City Road within the Town limits - Upgrade and widen existing sidewalks	DHCD, MDP, Wicomico County Department of Planning & Zoning, Wicomico County Parks/Recreation
Outcome 3: Recognize and protect the Town's historic, cultural, and recreational assets, as well as its' rural character	Strategy A: Embrace and promote the history of agriculture in the community - Seek grant funding to protect and preserve historic, cultural, and recreational resources that define the community - Consult with the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) to find out if an historic survey is appropriate and/or advantageous. Apply for the non-capital historic preservation grant through MHT to fund survey	DHCD, MDP, Wicomico County Department of Planning & Zoning, Maryland Historic Trust, Maryland Department of Tourism, Wicomico County Historical Society, Wicomico County Tourism Convention and Visitor's Bureau

Progress Measures: Amount of funds secured for maintenance and promotion of historic and cultural resources, number of visitors to Town	Strategy B: Continue to partner with the local Chamber of Commerce to collaborate on marketing and events to increase community awareness and togetherness	
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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
- The "Neighborhood Redevelopment Planning Area" (NR) includes lots and small parcels that lend themselves to infill and redevelopment to accommodate growth, so there is no need to annex more land - Willards upgraded the water and sewer systems in 2010, and with little expected population growth, the capacity of water and sewer is not an issue - All properties are served by municipal sewer and water, and all residents are required to be on the municipal sewer system - Willards has recently received a CDBG grant to revise/update its comprehensive plan expected to be completed by 2020 - The Town has an active Planning and Zoning Commission - The Town is an established priority funding area - Agricultural land is the second largest land use in Willards - Majority of new residential development is concentrated in the central area of the Town	- The public ditches are not well maintained, expensive to excavate, and not effective as a stormwater management strategy - The Town has limited commercial growth along Main Street and Old Ocean City Road - The Town has no established historic areas or downtown - Very little commercial development taking place in Willards

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	Strategies	Implementation Partners
Outcome 1: Direct future growth within Town boundaries; preserve and enhance the existing character through targeted growth and reinvestment of existing properties Progress Measures: Number of infill projects completed, vacancies reduced	Strategy A: Develop "Smart Growth - infill and redevelopment" standards to guide future growth in existing neighborhoods, and to incorporate future development into existing Town boundaries - Use infill development to ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses and existing character - Encourage restoration, rehabilitation, and adaptive reuse of existing buildings especially in the Town Center and the Neighborhood Conservation Districts - Create special overlay districts for the Town Center that encourage and facilitate context sensitive infill development by utilizing existing infill development	MDP, Wicomico County Department of Planning & Zoning, Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development

	- Streamline current regulations and create flexible procedures to promote investment in existing properties and promote context sensitive design for infill development - Establish development standards and guidance for planned mixed-use development that comply with the Town's development design objectives Strategy B: Promote inter-jurisdictional coordination and future cooperative planning and zoning efforts with Wicomico County		
Outcome 2: Address key infrastructure issues: water, sewers, drainage, roads, sidewalks Progress Measures: Linear feet of stormwater ditches repaired, reduction of runoff and improved water quality, reduction in nutrient discharge, number/linear feet of new and/or improved sidewalks, number/linear feet of paved roadways	Strategy A: Replace older sections of public stormwater ditches which have either become too expensive to repair or were mistakenly installed improperly Strategy B: Use best management practices to mitigate stormwater runoff and to encourage the use of low-impact stormwater management techniques - Perform a stormwater management study, if necessary, to help encourage environmentally friendly solutions to stormwater issues - Identify streets in need of new curbs, gutters, and sidewalks, or that are most prone to flooding - Apply for grant funding to implement streetscaping, including bioretention - Require new development and infill redevelopment projects to treat stormwater using nonstructural and micro-scale bioretention practices as much as possible. Stormwater should be filtered using such techniques as: rain gardens, landscape and tree planters (e.g., linear tree pits, sidewalk planters), grass swales and bioswales, tree-swales, grass filter strips and vegetated buffers. - Require that no development may be approved unless it can be demonstrated that the current or planned public facilities are adequate to meet the new development's needs		MDE, DNR, MDP, MDOT, Wicomico County Department of Planning & Zoning, Aydelotte Public Drainage Association

	Strategy B: Expand, improve, and develop neighborhood playgrounds - Town is working with Wicomico County to design and complete a revitalization of the Town's community park with open space funding Strategy C: Promote educational and cultural opportunities - Expand the Town's online presence, marketing efforts, and County, State, and federal partnerships - Work with other nearby cultural and historic sites to promote comprehensive tourism and educational opportunities - Create partnerships with the City of Salisbury to promote Willards as a place to visit during the annual festivals as well as other neighboring municipalities and communities in Wicomico County	
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Outcome 3: Recognize and protect the Town's historic, cultural, and recreational assets, as well as its' rural character	Strategy A: Embrace and promote the history of agriculture in the community - Seek grant funding to protect and preserve historic, cultural, and recreational resources that define the community - Consult with the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) to find out if an historic survey is appropriate and/or advantageous. Apply for the non-capital historic preservation grant through MHT to fund survey	DHCD, MDP, Wicomico County Department of Planning & Zoning, Maryland Historic Trust, Maryland Department of Tourism, Wicomico County Historical Society, Wicomico County Tourism Convention and Visitor's Bureau

Progress Measures: Amount of funds secured for maintenance and promotion of historic and cultural resources, number of visitors to Town	Strategy B: Continue to partner with the local Chamber of Commerce to collaborate on marketing and events to increase community awareness and togetherness	
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EXAMPLES OF POTENTIAL HOUSING REHABILITATION



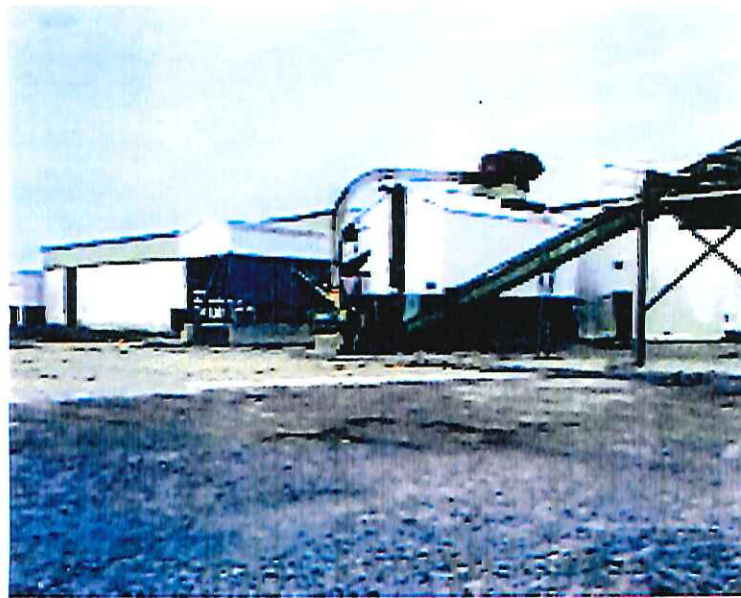
COMMERCIAL ENTERPRISES



MAIN STREET / POTENTIAL STREETScape



INDUSTRIAL AREA



COMMUNITY CHURCH

