



# SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

## APPLICATION FOR DESIGNATION RENEWAL

### Eligible Applicants:

- *Local Governments with a Sustainable Communities Designation*
- *Local Government Consortiums with a Sustainable Communities Designation*

### Sustainable Communities Application Rounds

January 27, 2017

April 7, 2017

July 2, 2017

October 6, 2017

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/>

**LARRY HOGAN**, *Governor*

**KENNETH C. HOLT**, *Secretary*

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

**TONY REED**, *Deputy Secretary*

## **OVERVIEW OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES**

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.

## **PURPOSE OF RENEWAL AND STREAMLINED APPLICATION**

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.

## **APPLICATION ASSISTANCE**

If a local government has limited capacity, staff from the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) and Department of Planning (MDP) will be available to assist local government officials through the application process.

Please contact Mary Kendall at DHCD if you would like to request or learn more about this assistance (see page iii for contact information).

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES BENEFITS**

The benefits of a Sustainable Community designation are substantial. The SC designation is a threshold requirement for application to several State of Maryland revitalization programs (such as the Community Legacy Program and Strategic Demolition Fund listed below). Other programs offer additional points or preference in the application process. (See attachment “Sustainable Community Benefits”). The Sustainable Communities designation provides access to a suite of resources that can support housing and community development, local transportation enhancements, tax credit programs and programs to support a healthier environment. Taken together, these resources can promote safer, healthier and more attractive communities for families to live and put down roots.

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

**Strategic Demolition Fund** is administered by the Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development and provides grants and loans to local governments and community development organizations for predevelopment activities including demolition and land assembly for housing and revitalization projects.

The Strategic Demolition Fund catalyzes public and private investment in the reuse of vacant and underutilized sites. These funds are restricted to Sustainable Communities.

### **Application Eligibility and Threshold Requirements**

Local governments (municipal or county) are eligible to apply.

Eligible applicants are to convene 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.

### **Threshold Requirements**

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;
- 2) A local government resolution in support of the boundary designation and Plan should accompany the application or must be in process (all Sustainable Community Area designations will be contingent upon an executed local resolution);
- 3) 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;
- 4) The updated Plan must be consistent with other existing community or comprehensive plans;
- 5) A Sustainable Communities Workgroup is re-convened and a roster of members must be provided with the application.

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

### **Application Evaluation**

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

### **Priority Funding Areas**

All Sustainable Communities must be located entirely within a Priority Funding Area. Applicants can verify Priority Funding Area boundaries by visiting the MDP website at:

<http://www.mdp.state.md.us/OurProducts/pfamap.shtml>

### **Application Training**

The Department will be hosting various webinars for communities planning to submit a renewal application. Attendance at a minimum of one application training session is strongly encouraged for all applicants. Contact Mary Kendall (contact information below) to schedule an application training.

### **Application Submission**

Applications will be submitted both electronically/digitally and via postal mail. Each applicant must submit two hard copies (one original and one copy) of their application with all required attachments. DHCD reserves the right to not consider incomplete applications.

The first printed page of the electronic application is a Table of Contents (see page vi). This should also serve as a checklist and be used to provide corresponding tabs. In addition to the hard copies of an application, all pictures and maps are to be submitted on a CD-ROM or flash drive. Pictures should be burned to the CD in a JPEG format and maps should be burned to the CD in a pdf format. Please ALSO include GIS shapefiles of Sustainable Community boundaries and other GIS related data. Please label your files on the CD-ROM appropriately, i.e., “Proposed Sustainable Community Boundary,” “Current Sustainable Community Boundary,” etc.

No incomplete applications will be accepted.

Deliver Sustainable Community Applications to:  
Sustainable Community Application  
ATTN: Mary Kendall  
Division of Neighborhood Revitalization  
Department of Housing and Community Development  
2 N Charles Street, Suite 450  
Baltimore, MD 21201

### **Site Visits, Follow-up Discussion, Technical Assistance**

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.

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

### **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.

*All questions related to application content, please contact Mary Kendall at 410-209-5800 or by email at [Mary.Kendall@maryland.gov](mailto:Mary.Kendall@maryland.gov).*

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES PLAN ELEMENTS**

Ongoing designation as a Sustainable Community is contingent upon the continuation, expansion, and/or modification of a multi-year investment strategy that addresses the topic areas of Environment, Economy, Transportation, Housing, Quality of Life, and Land Use/Local Planning. The table below provides a non-exhaustive list of ideas that can be incorporated into each element as they are addressed in the sections that follow in this application.

**ENVIRONMENT:** Environmental accomplishments and objectives may include improvement of quality of land, water, air or watersheds, increased tree canopy, mitigation or adaptation to issues related to sea level rise, reduction of carbon footprint, improved energy conservation, access to local foods, green infrastructure, stormwater infrastructure/management, construction of parks, trails and other recreation facilities, recycling, improved water and sewer capacity, etc.

**ECONOMY:** Economic accomplishments and objectives may include increased regional accessibility, business attraction/retention, improved health of the business district and decreased commercial vacancies, improved accessibility to employment opportunities and economic drivers, adopted local policies/regulations that encourage economic growth, enhanced marketing and tourism, improvements to cultural and historic assets, etc.

**TRANSPORTATION:** Transportation accomplishments and objectives may include increased access to transit corridors, improved pedestrian safety and increased accessibility/sidewalks, alternative modes of transportation, such as bikeways and trails, public transit, such as bus and rail, carpooling, improved parking and road conditions, etc.

**HOUSING:** Housing accomplishments and objectives may include an increase in affordable, workforce or market rate housing, either for homeownership or rental, improved housing conditions and values, increase in housing programs, reduction in foreclosures and residential vacancies, increase in property values and home sale values, etc.

**QUALITY OF LIFE:** Quality of life accomplishments and objectives may 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.

**LAND USE/LOCAL PLANNING:** Land use accomplishments and objectives may include changes to zoning, improved land use policies, increase/decrease in taxes and fees, etc.

## **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 and discuss the strengths and weaknesses of their Sustainable Communities workgroup.

B. Qualitative and Quantitative Report on accomplishments over past five 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 (iv), 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 less time consuming and focused on developing a strategic implementation plan. Renewal applicants are asked 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.

**CHECKLIST AND TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**APPLICANT: Pocomoke City**

**NAME OF SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY: Pocomoke City**

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

- Section A - Sustainable Community Renewal Applicant Information**
- Section B – Sustainable Community Renewal Report (Projects, Strategies and Partners)**
- Section C – Sustainable Community Renewal Action Plan Update (Matrix)**
- Section D – Sustainable Communities Workgroup Roster**
- Section E - Local Support Resolution: (sample form on page 30) In addition to the local support resolution, please include any letters of support that demonstrate partner commitments to the implementation and/or oversight of the Sustainable Community Action Plan.**
- Section F – Signed Sustainable Community Application Disclosure Authorization and Certification (sample form on page 31)**
- Section G – CD-ROM:** The CD-ROM should include the following contents:
  - **Map in pdf format of the proposed Sustainable Community modification area**
  - **GIS shapefile of the modified Sustainable Community boundaries and other GIS related data**, e.g., spreadsheet of detailed listing of parcels that form the project boundary. (If you have additional comments or questions about the GIS mapping requirements, please contact Brad Wolters, Senior GIS Specialist, Department of Housing and Community Development, [Brad.Wolters@maryland.gov](mailto:Brad.Wolters@maryland.gov))
  - **Pictures (jpeg format) of your accomplished projects of the last five years (as indicated in Section B)**

**I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY RENEWAL APPLICANT INFORMATION**

**Name of Sustainable Community:**

Pocomoke City

**Name of Renewal Applicant:**

Pocomoke City

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**Applicant's Federal Identification Number:** 52-6000803

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**Applicant's Street Address:** 101 Clarke Ave.

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**City:** Pocomoke

**County:** Worcester

**State:** MD

**Zip Code:** 21851

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**Phone Number:** 410-957-1333 **Fax Number:** 410-957-0939

**Web Address:** [www.cityofpocomoke.com](http://www.cityofpocomoke.com)

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**Sustainable Community Renewal Application Local Contact:**

**Name:** Ernest A. Crofoot

**Title:** City Manager/City Attorney

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**Address:** PO Box 29

**City:** Pocomoke

**State:** MD

**Zip Code:** 21851

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**Phone Number:** 410-957-1333

**Fax Number:** 410-957-0939

**E-mail Address:** [ernie@pocomokemd.gov](mailto:ernie@pocomokemd.gov)

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**Other Sustainable Community Contacts:**

**Name:** Valerie Mann

**Title:** Grant Consultant

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**Address:** 700 Grason Lane

**City:** Fruitland

**State:** MD

**Zip Code:** 21826

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**Phone Number:** 410-546-3801

**Fax Number:** 410-957-0939

**E-mail Address:** [vjmann@comcast.net](mailto:vjmann@comcast.net)

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**I. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY – General Information**

**A. Please inform us if you want to propose any changes to the existing Sustainable Community Area(s)**

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

No changes are requested.

(2) If you are not requesting any changes to your boundary, explain why.

The current boundaries capture all the areas of the City which need attention under the Sustainable Communities Program.

(3) Include the following in as an attachment (if requesting a modification to your current boundary):

- a. PDF or JPEG of modified Sustainable Communities boundary map,
- b. GIS shapefiles of modified Sustainable Community boundary (mapped to the parcel boundary),

(4) Approximate number of acres of entire SC Area: 501

(5) Existing federal, state or local designations:

Main Street Maple Street

X National Register Historic District Local Historic District  Arts & Entertainment District

State Enterprise Zone Special Taxing District BRAC  State Designated TOD

X Other(s): Main Street Affiliate

(6) 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?

As of November of 2016, the Maryland Department of Labor, Licensing and Regulation reported that Worcester County’s unemployment rate was the highest in the state at 10.0%, nearly two and a half times higher than the state rate of 4.1%. This rate is extremely high because of seasonal positions in Ocean City.

Residential new construction has slowed down greatly over the past 5 years. Therefore, the ratio of owner-occupied homes to rental homes has remained steady during that time and indeed, since the 2000 Census. The 2010 Census shows that the housing vacancy rate is 14.1%, with 85.9% of homes occupied. The 2015 Census American Community Survey shows that the vacancy rate has increased to 17.3%. Of the occupied homes in 2010, 53.5% were owner-occupied and 46.5% are renter-occupied. The 2015 data shows an increase in the rate of renter occupied homes to 55.4%. Pocomoke

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section A

has seen declines in property values over the past 5 years. Housing indicators are therefore clearly getting worse.

Per the 2015 American Community Survey, 30.5% of residents 25 years of age and over have earned a high school diploma, with 22.3% having a bachelor's degree or higher. Approximately 23.2% have not attained high school graduation. The remaining 24.0% have some college course work completed or have an associates' degree.

The following figures are taken from the 2015 American Community Survey. The city's median income of \$33,866 is substantially below the state's median income of \$74,551. The per capita income is \$19,126, while the state per capita income is \$36,897. The total population as of the 2015 ACS was 4133, down from 4184 in the 2010 Census. The poverty rate as shown in the 2015 ACS was 25.4%, or more than two and a half times the poverty rate for the state, which is 10.0%.

The 2015 median house value was \$150,800, substantially less than the state median house value at the time, \$286,900.

The median age per the 2015 ACS is 35.6 years. It was 36.4 in 2010. The Caucasian percent of the population per the 2015 ACS was 44.6% , while it was 49.5% in 2010. There were 1781 housing units in 2015 and 1894 in 2010. The housing vacancy rate is 14.1% as of the 2010 Census and 17.3% as of 2015.

### **B. 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?

Pocomoke City has not made any changes to its organizational structure since the original Sustainable Communities designation. The City is governed by a Mayor and five-member City Council. Day-to-day affairs are managed by the City Manager/City Attorney, Ernest Crofoot, who replaced Russell Blake in the City Manager position upon the retirement of Mr. Blake. There have also been some changes in the City Council as elections have occurred and some new members have come on the group. Finally, the Downtown Coordinator has changed since the original designation.

This has impacted the membership of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup, as Mr. Blake was a member of that body along with a councilmember who is no longer on the City Council. Mr. Crofoot has taken Mr. Blake's place on the workgroup and Councilman George Tasker has been appointed to take the place of the Councilman who is no longer in office. Ms. Joanne Lusby, a local businessperson, has been added to the group.

Much progress has been made in the past five years as a result of aggressive grant seeking and searching for any opportunities which can advance the goals of the plan. This is expected to continue as the City has kept abreast of state and federal opportunities and has proactively sought to use as many as possible.

## Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section A

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

The major strength of the Sustainable Communities Workgroup has been the diversity of its membership. Business people are represented, in addition to the City Clerk, the City Housing Inspector/Rehabilitation Coordinator, and the Downtown Coordinator. The administration of the City's planning and zoning function is being streamlined by means of a software program which will codify those functions. The software system is being implemented by a part-time employee funded under the Maryland Circuit Rider program. This will make it easier to plan for future progress toward the Sustainable Communities Action Plan.

The City has also invested in a consulting grant writer to allow Pocomoke to more proactively seek grant funding to improve the workgroup's capacity.

One of the challenges has been the competitive nature of a number of the grant programs Pocomoke City has relied upon to implement the action plan. However, the City has been quite successful in the past five years in obtaining grant funds. Another challenge has been the poor economic indicators of the area. A low assessable base, non-diversified economy, high poverty rate, poor housing conditions, and a low median income has meant that Pocomoke City has had to put even more effort into revitalization opportunities.

- (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 Sustainable Communities Action Plan is based on the City's Comprehensive Plan. However, changes to conditions since the adoption of the Comprehensive Plan are also considered. As grant funding is received and projects are implemented, the overall picture is changed. The Sustainable Communities Work Group met on 1/25/17 to complete the renewal plan.

- (4) Would you like any technical assistance from State agencies to help expand the capacity of your SC Workgroup or implement your SC plan?

No technical assistance is needed at this time.

# **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 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) **Pictures:** Please also include pictures that depict your accomplishments.

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

#### ***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:* Improved appearance in downtown storefronts

*Projects:* Improvements to 111 Willow St., 129Market St., 123 Market St.,

*Partners:* Building owners

*Impact:* These buildings were improved and help the downtown to present a much better appearance. This has encouraged new business to locate in Pocomoke and has increased the number of shoppers in the downtown.

**Accomplishment 2:**

*Outcome:* Pedestrian improvements in the downtown

*Projects:* A walkway through the downtown mini-park was completed, as well as the construction and placement of downtown informational signs.

*Partners:* N/A

*Impact:*

The directional signs and have helped to enhance the visitor experience. The walkway has added a recreational component as well. This will all encourage visitors to spend a greater amount time in the downtown and enjoy the attractions and visit the stores.

**Accomplishment 3:**

*Outcome:* Improvements to two historic attractions, Marva Theater and the Costen House

*Projects:* Costen House- HVAC system, repair to the foundation which was causing structural problems, insulation and repair of the cellar door.  
Marva Theater- DVD projector

*Partners:* Spirit of Newtown Committee; Board of Directors of the Marva Theater

*Impact:* Costen House has had several major projects completed. This has enhanced its appeal to visitors. This new capability at the MarVa Theater has drawn additional visitors. Having the capability to stream films from the film companies has increased the number of movies that are shown. This increase in unique film showings has ensured that residents will come to the theater more often. This is a benefit to the other heritage tourism sites in the city such as the Delmarva Discovery Center, the Costen House, and the Sturgis One-Room School Museum.

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

*Outcome:* Construction of new “flex” building at the Industrial Park

*Narrative:* No grant programs were identified to help with this project. Pocomoke, due its poor economic indicators, was not able to provide funding for this.

*Outcome:* Revive Revolving Loan Fund

*Narrative:* Funding was unavailable. In addition, there was not sufficient city staff to operate the program.

*Outcome:* “Green” Neighborhood connections (paths and bikeways)

*Narrative:* Lack of funding and staff time resulted in this project not being implemented.

# **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY RENEWAL REPORT**

## **PART II: QUANTITATIVE ASSESSMENT**

### **Purpose:**

The purpose of the quantitative assessment is to capture indicators of accomplishments in each Sustainable Community. Indicators should reflect the five year time period 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). In your answer, be sure to only share the quantifiable changes that have occurred since your Sustainable Communities designation was approved. 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.

If there is an issue with which you would like assistance in addressing, please check “**interested in technical assistance**”. State agencies would like to provide assistance to communities in helping them achieve their goals identified in their Sustainable Community Action Plans.

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<b>ENVIRONMENT</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Interested in technical assistance</b>
<p>1. Has there been an improvement in water quality? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p>			X	Lack of funding has made it impossible to do necessary improvements.		
<p>2. Has the amount of impervious surface in your Community been reduced? (Amount in SF) <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p>					X	
<p>3. Have there been improvements and/ or additions to your park and/ or recreational green space? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b> The City has received a \$40,000 grant from the Recreational Trails program to top a 1864-foot long, 4 foot-wide trail along the Pocomoke River with Trex decking.</p>	X	The trail will be covered with material which makes it easier to walk on its 1864 feet.				
<p>4. Did the Sustainable Community implement any recycling or waste reduction programs? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p>					X	
<p>5. Do all residents have access to healthy food options (i.e. fresh food grocery stores, farmers markets etc.) within the Sustainable Community? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>  A Farmers' Market is available.</p>	X	This market is available two mornings a week in season.				

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<b>OTHER:</b>					
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<b>ECONOMY</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Interested in technical assistance</b>
<p>1. Has there been an increase in the number of new businesses in your Main Street/ Commercial District? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p> <p>This has been accomplished largely through the efforts of the City's fulltime Downtown Coordinator and the façade improvement program.</p>	X	Six new businesses have located in the downtown, an increase of 25% from 5 years ago.				
<p>2. Did the Municipality/ Sustainable Community area receive any designations that support local economic development? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p> <p>The downtown received designation as a Main Street Affiliate community.</p>	X	This designation happened in mid-2016.				
<p>3. Has there been an increase in foot traffic in the Main Street/commercial district? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences) – what contributed to the increase:</b></p> <p>The façade improvement program and the many downtown events contributed to this increase.</p>	X	Five facades have been completed and- several new events have been added in the past five years.				

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<p>4. Have the number of commercial vacancies decreased?  <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p> <p>The percentage of downtown vacancies has decreased to 10%</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>The fulltime Downtown Coordinator position and active work by the Worcester County Economic Development Department has created this success over the past 5 years.</p>				
<p>5. Has there been an increase in local jobs within the Sustainable Community for its residents?  <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p> <p>The new businesses in the downtown have created additional jobs.</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>We estimate that a total of 18 new jobs have been created.</p>				
<p><b>OTHER:</b></p>						

<p><b>TRANSPORTATION</b></p>	<p>YES</p>	<p>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</p>	<p>NO</p>	<p>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Interested in technical assistance</p>
<p>1. Has the amount of bike trails/paths increased? How many linear feet do the trails cover?  <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p>			<p>X</p>	<p>Lack of funding prevented an increase.</p>		
<p>2. Have there been improvements to the public transit infrastructure?  <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p>					<p>X</p>	

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

3. Has there been an increase in sidewalks? (Amount in linear feet) <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Most major streets in the SC area already have sidewalks.		
4. Have there been any roadway improvements that support “Complete” or “Green” streets? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Adequate funds have not been available.		
5. Has traffic congestion along major roads decreased? (Amount in percent) <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Traffic patterns preclude this, particularly when it is considered that Route 13, a major highway to Virginia beaches, has experienced increased traffic.		
<b>OTHER:</b>						
<b>HOUSING</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan’s desired outcomes?</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Interested in technical assistance</b>
1. Have any residential facades been improved? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>  The City has continuously received funding from the CDBG program for the rehabilitation of homes occupied by low-and-moderate income households.	X	The City has rehabilitated over 30 homes in the past five years, increasing the value and livability.				
2. Has the home ownership rate increased? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	In 2010, 53.5% of the houses were owner-occupied. In 2015, 44.6% of the houses were owner-occupied. It is not		

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

				known what has caused this.		
3. Has there been an increase in the number of housing units in the Sustainable Community area? What number and/or percent are affordable? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	There were 1894 housing units in 2010 and 1781 in 2015. The reason is disinvestment in the community.		
4. Has there been demolition of blighted properties? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	The City has tried to demolish the old fire department and the National Guard Armory. However, both SD applications for this purpose were turned down because the Maryland Historical Trust did not want these buildings to be demolished.		
5. Has the residential vacancy rate decreased? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	The vacancy rate in 2010 was 14.1%, while in 2015, it had gone up to 17.3%.		
<b>OTHER:</b>						
<b>QUALITY OF LIFE</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Interested in technical assistance</b>

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<p>1. Has there been a decrease in crime rate?  <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p> <p>The crime rate has gone down in the past five years.</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>Crime has decreased primarily due to active community policing.</p>				
<p>2. Have there been improvements and/ or additions to your public spaces (i.e. museums, community centers, public plazas)?  <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p> <p>Adequate funding has been received from the state to emphasize these cultural attractions.</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>These are the four core cultural attractions in the downtown- Delmarva Discovery Center, Sturgis One-Room Schoolhouse, Costen House and the Marva Theater.</p>				
<p>3. Has there been an increase in public art/ arts &amp; entertainment programs/venues (i.e. murals, movie theatre, music events)?  <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p>	<p>X</p>	<p>During the period, the Marva Theater has been improved.</p>				
<p>4. How many historic properties were renovated/improved?  <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p> <p>Grant funding for the Costen House has provided a significant improvement in its condition.</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>The Costen House continues to be one of the most popular historic venues in the City and is responsible for attracting a large number of visitors.</p>				
<p>5. Are there any residential health and wellness opportunities in place (i.e. athletic facilities, recreational indoor/ outdoor courses or groups)?  <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p> <p>Due to its geographical isolation, there are not many facilities of this nature. However, the YMCA offers a wide variety of programs.</p>	<p>X</p>	<p>The Pocomoke YMCA is a popular venue for residents.</p>				

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<b>OTHER:</b>						
<b>LAND USE/LOCAL PLANNING</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>If YES, specify in quantifiable units and compare values from the last five years</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>If NO, why not? What kept you from achieving your plan's desired outcomes?</b>	<b>N/A</b>	<b>Interested in technical assistance</b>
1. Have there been any infill developments? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>			X	Most of the land in Pocomoke has already been developed.		
2. Has there been an increase in the amount of preserved/protected land? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>					X	
3. Have there been any developments hindered by growth constraints? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>					X	
4. Have there been any zoning or any policy changes that have fostered growth in your Sustainable Community? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b>					X	

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<p>5. Have there been any significant improvements to the municipal infrastructure within the Sustainable Community (i.e. street lighting, water/sewer lines)? <b>If so, explain (1-2 sentences):</b></p> <p>Funding in the amount of \$2,000,000 has been received from the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and the US Department of Agriculture to rehabilitate the Clarke Ave. Pump station.</p>	X	This pump station was found by the state to have significant issues which merited letters from MDE.				
<b>OTHER:</b>						
<b>COMPETITIVE FUNDING:</b> Use the rows below to list competed funds sought for sustainability or revitalization projects since receiving Sustainable Communities designation.	<b>Source (federal, state, foundation, etc.)</b>	<b>Amount Received</b>	<b>If no funding was received, what technical or other assistance from the state would help with future applications?</b>	<b>Other Notes</b>		
<b>Funding Program: Small Cities Community Development Block Grant Program</b>	MD DHCD- state	\$234,728				
<b>Funding Program: Strategic Demolition</b>	MD DHCD-state		The Maryland Historic Trust did not wish for the two buildings in question to be demolished.			
<b>Funding Program: Community Legacy</b>	MD DHCD- state	\$127,500				
<b>Funding Program: Maryland Department of the Environment</b>	MDE- state	\$1,000,000				

Sustainable Communities Renewal Application - Section B

<b>Funding Program: Recreational Trails</b>	Maryland State Highway	\$40,000		
<b>Funding Program: Community Parks and Playgrounds</b>	Maryland Department of Natural Resources		This application is under review.	
<b>Funding Program: Community Facilities</b>	US Department of Agriculture-federal		Several applications are pending for equipment, vehicles, and City Hall renovations	

\*Please add more rows if necessary

Circuit Rider- DHCD- \$92,000

### **III. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN UPDATE**

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 a 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 be due to changes in external factors affecting the community or changes in the priorities of the applicant.

Guidance for completing the Action Plan can be found on the next page.

## Action Plan Guidance

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

# Sustainable Community Action Plan

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POCOMOKE CITY, MD

Submitted by Pocomoke City Mayor and Council

1/27/2017

# 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)

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pocomoke River-recreational opportunities and tourism attraction</li> <li>• Cypress Park – waterfront park with amenities</li> <li>• Shad Landing, Pocomoke State Park, &amp; Jane’s Island w/i close proximity</li> <li>• Good hunting and fishing opportunities</li> <li>• Adequate tree canopy</li> <li>• Good air quality</li> <li>• 1.5-mile nature trail</li> <li>• Two recycling centers</li> <li>• Public boat ramp/dock helps city interact with the scenic Pocomoke River</li> <li>• Boat slips, inexpensive rentals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk of flooding from the Pocomoke River (17% of city within 100-year floodplain)</li> <li>• Stormwater infrastructure is aging and needs work</li> <li>• Cypress Park needs significant new equipment. A POS application has been filed to stabilize the stream bank, repair/repave tennis courts and convert some courts to Pickleball; replace a dilapidated restroom/replace 2 water fountains. In addition, new energy efficient lighting and new handicapped accessible playground equipment is needed</li> <li>• Nature trail in need of repairs. A SHA Rails to Trails grant has been approved to replace deteriorated boards on the walkway and is in the process of being implemented</li> <li>• Degraded streams and wetlands</li> <li>• Four structures, two of which historic, are expected to be inundated by 2025. These structures are single family dwellings currently experience periodic flooding. They are located on the front on the north side Front Street adjacent to Cypress Park. Pocomoke River water quality is deteriorating</li> </ul>

<u>Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures</u>	<u>Strategies and Action Items</u>	<u>Implementation Partners</u>
<p>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?</p>	<p>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.</p>	<p>Which community stakeholders need to be involved to realize each action step and strategy? Name specific public and/or private sector partners.</p>



<p>Where/ in what area do you want those changes to happen?</p> <p>Progress Measure: Identify how you will know that you have achieved your outcome.</p>		
<p>Outcome 1: Re-equipping of Cypress Park</p> <p>Progress Measures: Stream bank is stabilized, tennis courts/pickleball courts are repaired, new restroom is constructed; playground equipment and lighting is installed. Receipt of grant funding and completion of work.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Application for funding pending at MD DNR</p> <p>Strategy B: If the DNR application is not approved, the City will seek other sources</p>	<p>MD DNR</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Improved stormwater system</p> <p>Progress Measures: Completion of a storm water project. An inventory and assessment of the condition of the storm water drainage system must be conducted. Clearing of strategic waterways will be implemented. Repairs to existing storm drains and culverts will be repaired. A new street sweeper must be purchased. Educate the public on the need to keep the storm drains clear.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Study what work needs to be done</p> <p>Strategy B: Seek Funding</p> <p>Action Item 1: Apply for MDE grant;</p> <p>Action Item 2: Apply for USDA grant for streetsweeper</p>	<p>MDE, MD DNR, USDA</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Improve water quality on the Pocomoke River</p> <p>Progress Measures: Improved water quality metrics. Evaluate opportunities to reduce stormwater runoff and decrease impervious surfaces.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Increase trees in the floodplain</p> <p>Strategy B: Restoration of streams and green infrastructure</p> <p>Action Item 1: Explore and use DNR's Living Shoreline Program</p> <p>Strategy C: Reduce impervious surfaces</p> <p>Action Item 1: Explore options for more pervious pavers for city-owned lots</p>	<p>DNR</p>

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## Economy

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

<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location on Route 13, a major north-south artery</li> <li>• Downtown businesses include Riverside Grill, a hardware store, a new sneaker store, a new coffee shop, and the newly-refurbished Mar-Va Theatre.</li> <li>• Riverside Grill, a successful restaurant overlooking the Pocomoke River, is in a building owned by the city.</li> <li>• Critical mass of tourist attractions in the downtown, including the Delmarva Discovery Center, a major regional draw. The city is also home to the Costen House, the Sturgis One-Room School Museum, and a historic drawbridge that attracts photographers.</li> <li>• Location on the scenic Pocomoke River, a kayaking and fishing destination</li> <li>• Fulltime city position of Downtown Coordinator</li> <li>• Located near sites such as Pocomoke River State Park and Shad Landing State Park that attract hunters from across the region, who patronize local businesses.</li> <li>• Located less than an hour’s drive from tourist sites such as Assateague, Chincoteague, and Crisfield.</li> <li>• Located less than an hour’s drive from job centers like Ocean City and less than half an hour from NASA Wallops Flight Facility (1,400 employees)</li> <li>• Part of the community designated by the state as an Enterprise Zone</li> <li>• Affordable boat slip rental (first two days free) a draw</li> <li>• Industrial park in town, with active recruitment of new industrial</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High unemployment rate (Worcester County’s 10.6% unemployment the highest in the state – FYI this is a highly skewed number because of seasonal employment in Ocean City))</li> <li>• High vacancy rate including a vacant armory in need of repair</li> <li>• Downtown facades and sidewalk in need of improvement. As of October, 2017, approximately 17 of 58 buildings in a 12-block area of downtown (29%) are vacant. At least two storefront façades/buildings are in danger of collapse, (Lusby Building and 100 block of Willow St.)</li> <li>• Low-skilled workforce</li> <li>• High poverty rate (25.4%)</li> <li>• Low median household income (\$33,866 in 2015 – County income \$56,773)</li> <li>• Highway sign advertising downtown from highway lost to storm</li> </ul>

<p>businesses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Manufacturing in area includes Hardwire, Beretta, and Bel-Art.</li> <li>• Pocomoke has been identified by the Worcester County Economic Development as a prime location for high-tech employment</li> <li>• Town has an Industrial park with room to accommodate additional industries.</li> <li>• Several well-attended yearly community festivals and events, including concerts and arts every Fourth Friday, a Native American festival, and a popular Christmas tree lighting and parade</li> <li>• Fairgrounds/Racetrack that accommodates horse racing and special events.</li> </ul> <p>One bed and breakfast in town, as well as a Holiday Inn Express.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Railroad and water transport options are seen as major assets by industrial businesses.</li> </ul>	
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Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	 <b>Strategies and Action Items</b> 	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Substantial creation of new jobs with salaries above the minimum wage</p> <p>Progress Measures: Creation of at least 50 new jobs per year</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with the Worcester County Economic Development Department to bring new businesses to the City</p> <p>Strategy B: Develop a business incentive plan</p> <p>Strategy C: Research how to best leverage the railroad tracks and the Pocomoke River</p>	<p>Worcester County</p>

<p>Outcome 2: Continue to work on downtown revitalization</p> <p>Progress Measures: Full occupancy of Main Street storefronts</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue the façade improvement program</p> <p>Strategy B: Explore programs to decrease commercial and residential vacancies, such as tenant fitout programs and incentives.</p> <p>Strategy C: Beautify Main Street</p> <p>    Action Item 1: Replace Bradford Pears (see list of recommended street trees from City of Baltimore: <a href="http://treebaltimore.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/StreetTreeSpeicesList_BaltimoreCity_Final_7-08-2013.pdf">http://treebaltimore.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/03/StreetTreeSpeicesList_BaltimoreCity_Final_7-08-2013.pdf</a>)</p> <p>    Action Item 2: Repair sidewalks</p> <p>    Action Item 3: Install placemaking and wayfinding signs.</p>	<p>DHCD</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Increase tourism to Pocomoke City</p> <p>Progress Measure: Increased attendance at events and museums</p>	<p>Strategy A: Establish a brand and marketing strategy.</p> <p>Strategy B: Continue promoting events, and create new ones</p> <p>Strategy C: Increase awareness of Downtown Pocomoke City</p> <p>    Action Item 1: Rebuild sign advertising businesses on Rt. 13</p> <p>    Action Item 2: Reach out to Ocean City advertising outlets to advertise the city and its sights</p> <p>Strategy D: Entice boaters up the Pocomoke River</p> <p>    Action item 1: Construct gas pumps at public dock</p> <p>    Action Item 2: Promote Pocomoke River as a boating destination</p>	<p>Worcester County, Local business owners</p>

# Transportation

(Transportation strengths and weaknesses can include access to transit corridors, pedestrian safety and accessibility/sidewalks, alternative modes of transportation, such as bikeways and trails, public transit, such as bus and rail, carpooling, proximity to transportation centers, parking, road conditions)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Location on Route 13</li> <li>• Most streets are well-maintained</li> <li>• Located on countywide Viewtrail 100 bike trail</li> <li>• Railroad a major asset for town's industrial park</li> <li>• Pocomoke River used for shipping</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of substantial public transportation</li> <li>• Lack of bikeways and trail network</li> <li>• Relative geographical isolation</li> <li>• YMCA across major road and out of town limits</li> <li>• Bradford pear trees are damaging sidewalks</li> <li>• Railroad in town abandoned</li> <li>• Newer areas lack sidewalks</li> <li>• Poor network connections in newer area of town</li> </ul>

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	→ Strategies and Action Items →	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Expansion transit services to Pocomoke</p> <p>Progress Measures: Increase in stops in Pocomoke by Shore Transit</p>	<p>Strategy A: Meet with Shore Transit to discuss expansion</p> <p>Strategy B: Explore passenger train excursion possibilities.</p>	<p>Shore Transit</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Increase in bikeways and walking paths</p> <p>Progress Measures: Begin a bikeway program and add one walking path</p>	<p>Strategy A: Survey potential locations</p> <p>Strategy B: Research funding sources</p>	<p>Funding programs</p>
<p>Outcome 3: Improve walkability along Main Street</p> <p>Progress Measures: repaired sidewalk along Main Street</p>	<p>Strategy A: Inventory sidewalk issues throughout town</p> <p>Strategy B: Seek funds from Sidewalk Retrofit Program</p>	<p>MDOT, other funding programs</p>
<p>Outcome 4: Increase connectivity in outlying parts of community</p> <p>Progress Measures: Construction of new sidewalks, connection of dead-end streets.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Extend 11<sup>th</sup> Street to provide another connecting street in town</p> <p>Strategy B: Construct sidewalks on streets that currently lack them, especially in the vicinity of the school buildings.</p>	<p>MDOT Safe Routes to School funding</p>



# Housing

(Housing strengths and weaknesses can include affordability, homeownership vs rental, housing stock diversity, housing condition and value, housing programs, foreclosures, residential vacancies, property values, home sale values)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supply of housing is generally adequate</li> <li>• Majority of homes have historic value</li> <li>• Significant residential infill capacity (384 acres) in the town.</li> <li>• Affordable prices (average rent \$491 as of 2010)</li> <li>• Proximity to growing retirement communities in and around Ocean City.</li> <li>• CDBG funds used to support low-to-moderate income housing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High vacancy rate</li> <li>• More than 55% of homes are renter-occupied</li> <li>• Many landlords fail to maintain rental properties</li> <li>• A number of homes are in poor condition. Windshield surveys identify at least 30 homes may be abandoned or considered as long term vacant. An additional 100 housing units may be considered in need of major repairs. Additional housing condition studies are needed to confirm these numbers.</li> <li>• A lack of senior housing</li> <li>• Home owners cannot afford to fix their homes</li> <li>• Foreclosures are still a major issue.</li> </ul>

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	work →	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Improve the condition of housing</p> <p>Progress Measures: number of homes in standard condition</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue to utilize CDBG funds for housing rehabilitation</p> <p>Strategy B: Refer households to other programs for supplementary assistance, such as the Maryland Housing Rehabilitation Program</p> <p>Strategy C: Enforce codes more stringently</p> <p>Action Item 1: Create rental property registry to allow for entry into homes.</p>	<p>DHCD</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Decrease the vacancy rate</p> <p>Progress Measures: Number of houses which are vacant</p>	<p>Strategy A: Work with landlords on a strategy to improve vacant structures</p> <p>Strategy B: Enhanced marketing efforts</p> <p>Strategy C: Encourage acquisition of vacant single family for home ownership</p> <p>Action Item 1: Identify development partner such as Habitat for Humanity to acquire and renovate homes for low-moderate income home</p>	<p>Landlords, local realtors</p>

	<p>ownership</p> <p>Action Item 2: Identify development partner to acquire and renovate single family properties for market rate home ownership</p> <p>Action Item 3: Create design guidelines to preserve character of neighborhood</p> <p>Strategy D: Acquire and demolish vacant and extremely dilapidated properties outside of historic district</p> <p>Action Item 1: Create plan for reuse of vacant property sites.</p>	
<p>Outcome 3: Help seniors in Pocomoke City age in place in Pocomoke</p> <p>Progress Measures: Construction of new senior housing</p>	<p>Strategy A: Partner with a developer to build senior housing or develop downtown second-floor residential space into senior housing</p> <p>Strategy B: Connect seniors to the DHCD Accessible Homes for Seniors programs to retrofit their homes for increased mobility</p>	<p>DHCD, developers</p>

# Quality of Life

(Strengths and weaknesses can include crime, socio-economic demographics, educational opportunities, museums, libraries, historic and cultural assets, civic amenities, faith-based organizations, economic health of households, sense of place, etc)

## Strengths

- Strong community-oriented law enforcement, with 15 officers.
- Attractive and spacious community center with rentable ballroom and banquet operated by fire department
- Four museums, including the Delmarva Discovery Center
- Cypress Park on the Pocomoke River
- City commitment to revitalization
- Several community festivals and events, including concerts and arts every Fourth Friday, a Native American festival, and a popular Christmas tree lighting and parade
- Visited by Brown Box Theatre, a Boston-based touring theatre company
- Public golf course
- Harness racing at fairgrounds
- High-quality schools within town limits
- Several community meeting places, including three with capacity of 200 or higher
- Located in Lower Eastern Shore Heritage Area
- Location on the scenic Pocomoke River, home to both fresh and brackish water fishing, a river walk, and 11 boat slips although additional docking spaces are available.
- Many recreational activities, including tennis courts and a public golf course. YMCA at edge of the city.
- Located near Shad Landing and Pocomoke River State Parks
- Downtown is revitalizing, including restaurants such as Riverside Grill, XO Beanery and Bites, and Café Milano, as well as a successful bridal shop, a new sneaker store, and the Mar-Va Theatre.
- County-run senior center

## Weaknesses

- Geographical isolation – nearest hospital is 30 minutes away in Crisfield
- Downtown needs for building improvements
- Park floods during summer
- Fairgrounds in need of infrastructure improvement
- Former armory building sits unused
- No programming for teenagers and a need for more senior programming.

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Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures →	Strategies and Action Items →	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Revitalized appearance in the downtown</p> <p>Progress Measures: all buildings needing work will be addressed.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue façade improvement program</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with building owners to find other funding mechanisms as well.</p>	DHCD; building owners
<p>Outcome 2: Cultural amenities and events continue to be supported</p> <p>Progress Measures: Maintenance of current levels and improvements over current levels</p>	<p>Strategy A: Continue with Downtown Coordinator position and seek funds to maintain and enhance cultural amenities</p>	Community organizations
<p>Outcome 3: Provide more recreation space to residents, especially teens.</p> <p>Progress Measures: Opening of a new community center</p>	<p>Strategy A: Renovate armory into new community center</p> <p>Action Step 1: Acquire \$1.5 Mil Bond Bill</p> <p>Action Step 2: Acquire funding from other sources</p>	State legislators, DHCD

# Local Planning and Land Use

(Strengths and weaknesses in the local planning and land use subject area include but are not limited to zoning, land use, policies, taxes and fees, historical patterns of development, lot sizes and shapes, etc)

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Zoning designations have proven to be appropriate</li> <li>• Town is hiring a director of planning, housing, and zoning.</li> <li>• Town is getting new modern zoning/permitting software.</li> <li>• Water treatment plant capacity meets municipal needs.</li> <li>• Sufficient water capacity</li> <li>• New police station</li> <li>• Strong design and placemaking requirements for new communities outlined in comprehensive plan</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Planning and Zoning is handled through an outdated system (this is being addressed through the purchase of a software system to automate the process and the hiring of a part time position to implement the changes)</li> <li>• Zoning discourages multifamily housing</li> <li>• Small city staff</li> <li>• No Maryland Main Street designation</li> </ul>

Desired Outcomes and Progress Measures	→ Strategies and Action Items →	Implementation Partners
<p>Outcome 1: Planning and Zoning administration is streamlined</p> <p>Progress Measures: Implementation of software system to automate Planning and Zoning</p>	<p>Strategy A: Purchase software system (already accomplished with City funds)</p> <p>Strategy B: Work with the software system to implement the changes (in progress)</p>	<p>DHCD through a Circuit Rider grant to provide a part time employee to</p>
<p>Outcome 2: Infill development closer to downtown</p> <p>Progress Measures: Two new building(s) in historic core.</p>	<p>Strategy A: Create Infill and Redevelopment Overlay Zone</p>	<p>MDP</p>



# Sustainable Community Application 2017

**Resolution  
Pocomoke City, MD  
No. -----**

Resolution of the Mayor and Council of Pocomoke City to designate portions of Pocomoke City 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 Subcabinet of the State of Maryland.

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of Pocomoke City recognizes that there is a significant need for reinvestment and revitalization of the communities in Worcester County and

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council of Pocomoke City proposes to (i) designate the area of the downtown and the industrial park in Pocomoke City, Worcester County, as outlined on the attached map (the “**Area**”), as a Sustainable Community, and to (ii) adopt the Plan, as further described in the Application, for the purposes of contributing to the reinvestment and revitalization in the Area; and

WHEREAS, the 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 in order to become a designated Sustainable Community, and to adopt a satisfactory Sustainable Community Plan in order to be eligible to receive financial assistance under the Community Legacy Program;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Mayor and Council of Pocomoke City hereby (i) endorses the designation of the Area as a Sustainable Community; and (ii) adopts the Sustainable Community Plan described in the Application.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the chief elected executive official is hereby requested to endorse this Resolution, indicating his or her approval by signature hereof; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, the following persons are hereby authorized to execute documents and take any action necessary to carry out the intent of these resolutions;

Name	Office/Title	Signature
Bruce Morrison	Mayor	_____
Ernest A. Crofoot	City Manager/City Attorney	_____
_____	_____	_____

and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT, copies of this Resolution are sent to the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Community Development of the State of Maryland for consideration by the Smart Growth Sub-Cabinet.

READ AND PASSED THIS \_\_\_\_ day of January, 2017.

BY ORDER: I, Carol Sullivan, City Clerk, do hereby certify that Resolution Number \_\_\_\_ is true and correct and duly adopted by the Mayor and Council of Pocomoke City, MD.

ATTEST/WITNESS:

\_\_\_\_\_

Mayor and Council of Pocomoke City

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: Bruce Morrison

Title: Mayor

## Sustainable Community Application 2017

Approved By: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

[Chief elected executive official]

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Sustainable Community Application 2017

## 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:** \_\_\_\_\_

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.

_____	Mayor Bruce Morrison	_____
Authorized Signature	Type Name and Title	Date