TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

Chincoteague, Virginia
Approved January 4, 2010

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Chincoteague, Virginia
Comprehensive Plan

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Acronyms ~~Page~~

ANPDC- Accomack- Northampton Planning District Commission

BOCA- Building Officials and Code Administrators

CEDS- Community and Economic Development Strategy

CERT- Community Emergency Response Team

CLT- Community Land Trust

CRS- Community Rating System

DHCD- (Virginia) Department of Housing & Community Development

DEQ- (Virginia) Department of Environmental Quality

EDA- (Accomack County) Economic Development Authority

ESVBA- Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority

ESCC- Eastern Shore Community College

ESDA- Eastern Shore Defense Alliance

FEMA- Federal Emergency Management Agency

F& WS- (United States) Fish & Wildlife Service

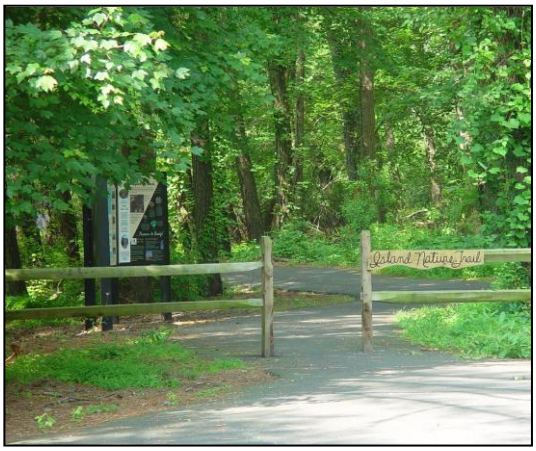
IBC- International Building Code

IRC- International Residential Code

ISO- Insurance Services Office

MARS-Mid Atlantic Regional Spaceport

MGD- Million Gallons per Day



NASA- National Aeronautics and Space Administration

NIMS- National Incident Management System

NOAA- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NPS- National Park Service

PUD- Planned Unit Development

VDOT- Virginia Department of Transportation

VIMS- Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences

VMRC- Virginia Marine Resources Commission

List of Reports/Studies

The Comprehensive Plan recommendations are supported by current research and analysis contained in the following Reports/Studies. These documents are incorporated by reference (in no particular order) and may be considered as an element of the adopted Comprehensive Plan.

A. Wastewater Advisory Committee Report (June 2013)

B. Preliminary Engineering Report, Sanitary Sewer System Phase 1 (March 2011)

C. Hazard Mitigation Plan (December 2011)

D. Storm Water Master Plan, Phase 1 (April 2011)

E. Storm Water Master Plan, Phase 2 (July 2013)
   - Flood Evaluation for Hallie Whealton Smith Drive
   - Flood Evaluation for Fowling Gut

F. FEMA Flood Insurance Study (May 2015)

G. Transit Development Plan (December 2011)

H. Cemetery Master Plan (February 2013)

I. Draft Outdoor Recreational Areas and Facilities Inventory (September 2012)

J. Downtown Revitalization Plan (July 2010)

K. Water Supply Plan, (October 2010)

L. Water System Master Plan, 2003 (2014 Update)

M. Source Water Protection Plan, (October 2014)

N. VDOT Small Urban Area Plan (2002)

O. Trail/Bicycle Plan (September 2009/Updated May 2013)

P. Healthy People, Healthy Places, Community Well-Being on Virginia's Eastern Shore (August 2012)

Other documents provide valuable information for future growth and change on Chincoteague Island and the surrounding environment that are not generally considered to be an element of the Comprehensive Plan.

A. USFWS Comprehensive Conservation Plan (1993/2015)

B. Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority Marketing Strategy (2011)

C. VIMS Coastal Bays Water Quality Model (November 2013)

D. Draft Accomack County Joint Land Use Study – Wallops Island (Future)

E. 2035 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (2011)

F. ESVA Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) (2012)

G. Virginia Outdoors Plan (2013)

Introduction Background

The widespread and deeply rooted appreciation for the place that is Chincoteague is directly related to the most unique and endearing historic, cultural, and physical features of the Island. These features have long provided the setting for the harmonious community life one finds. In this context, growth pressure and evidence of changing development patterns has heightened the debate about growth and its implications for the future of the Town. These circumstances surround the update of the *Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan* and create a more compelling need for the Town to take stock of its future and articulate a vision and path forward to reach consensus about the future of the Island.

Chincoteague's unique natural beauty is part of an important historic and cultural heritage that makes the Island a desirable place to live and visit.

Introduction

There seems to be an almost universal consensus throughout the population that the growth of the Town should occur in an economically and environmentally sustainable manner. This growth should reflect the site development and existing building traditions of the Town. However, there is less of a consensus on how to achieve this goal. The most contentious topics in the public debate are related to what actions the Town should undertake in order to achieve a sustainable future. Some express concern about public regulation of private property and the implications for economic opportunity. Others insist that the Town must take immediate steps to curtail potential large-scale development that could dramatically alter the existing community character, resident makeup, and quality of life so appreciated by residents and visitors alike.

The Chincoteague planning process provided a framework wherein residents, stakeholders, and public officials were all given an opportunity to collectively consider the most pressing issues facing the community over the next 15 to 20 years. It also provided citizens an opportunity to evaluate alternative plan implementation strategies to capitalize on community strengths and opportunities. In the end, the goals, objectives, and implementation strategies contained in this Plan represent a community consensus on the path forward to achieve the community's vision of the future.

Plan Organization

The Chincoteague Comprehensive includes 7 chapters. Each chapter includes a brief background discussion, an inventory, and recommended implementation strategies. The Plan is organized along topic lines:

Introduction: Background
Chapter 1 Community Profile
Chapter 2 Goals and Objectives
Chapter 3 Land Use Plan
Chapter 4 Economic Development
Chapter 5 Community Facilities
Chapter 6 Transportation
Chapter 7 Housing

Legal Framework

The Code of Virginia, Chapter 22, §15.2-2223 establishes the scope and purpose of community comprehensive plans. As stated, the "comprehensive plan shall be made with the purpose of guiding and accomplishing a coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the territory which will, in accordance with present and probable future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the inhabitants."

"The plan, with the accompanying maps, plats, charts, and descriptive matter, shall show the locality's long-range recommendations for the general development of the territory covered by the plan. It may include, but need not be limited to, the following:

1. The designation of areas for various types of public and private development and use, such as different kinds of residential, business, industrial, agricultural, mineral resources, conservation, recreation, public service, flood plain and drainage, and other areas;

2. The designation of a system of community service facilities such as parks, forests, schools, playgrounds, public buildings and institutions, hospitals, community centers, waterworks, sewage disposal or waste disposal areas, and the like;

3. The designation of historical areas and areas for urban renewal or other treatment;

4. The designation of areas for the implementation of reasonable ground water protection measures;

5. An official map, a capital improvements program, a subdivision ordinance, a zoning ordinance and zoning district maps, mineral resource district maps and agricultural and forestal district maps, where applicable;

6. The location of existing or proposed recycling centers; and

7. The location of military bases, military installations, and military airports and their adjacent safety areas."

In addition, Virginia law requires that, "the plan shall include: the designation of areas and implementation of measures for the construction, rehabilitation and maintenance of affordable housing, which is sufficient to meet the current and future needs of residents of all levels of income in the locality. This includes consideration for the current and future needs of the planning district within which the locality is situated."

Chapter 1 Community Profile

Discovered by Captain John Smith in 1608 for English settlement, the Delmarva Peninsula is situated between the Atlantic Ocean on the east and the Chesapeake Bay on the west. In Virginia, the peninsula was divided into two counties in 1663, Accomack and Northampton. Chincoteague's first European settlers arrived on April 1st, 1671. Prior to that date, the earliest inhabitants were the Gingo-Teague Tribe of Indians, who were eventually dispersed by colonial settlement. Indian influences are present today in the names of Eastern Shore towns such as Chincoteague, Assateague, Onancock, and Chesapeake.

Chincoteague's first settlers arrived in 1671, as the Colony of Virginia witnessed more immigrants from England. The early economy of the region was based on seafood and agriculture.

History of Chincoteague

Agriculture was the primary Colonial economy. This included tobacco, livestock, and later grain. Located in Accomack County, Chincoteague agriculture produced crops of potatoes, strawberries, and corn. Local watermen have been harvesting a seafood bounty for generations including oysters, blue crabs, clams, and scallops. Chincoteague and other waterfront villages and towns on Virginia's Eastern Shore, were important centers of seafood trade. This would be the beginning of the Town's lifelong connection to the Atlantic Ocean and bay that borders its shores. As evidenced by the fact that a post office was not established on the Island until 1854 when access remained by boat only.

Chincoteague is famous for its ponies, a particular breed only found on Chincoteague and Assateague Islands. There are two predominant theories as to how the ponies arrived on the Islands. The first theory is that the ponies came to the islands by way of a shipwrecked Spanish Galleon, probably in the 1700s; they came ashore and began to thrive. The second theory is that the ponies are descendants of herds turned loose by early settlers. The island provided a perfect grazing land with naturally "fenced" boundaries. "Pony Penning," or round-ups, began as a way for livestock owners to claim, brand, break, and harness their loose herds. By the 1700s it had become an annual event, complete with drinking, eating and plenty of revelry by the entire community. The

earliest known description of pony penning was published in 1835, and is believed to have been begun by two islanders who owned large herds that grazed on Chincoteague.

The penning continued on Chincoteague and Assateague Islands for years. In 1923, the event was moved to Chincoteague with one penning for both islands. In 1925, the practice of transferring the herds by boat was discontinued and ponies were swum across the channel between the two islands, a practice that continues today. Marguerite Henry's book "Misty of Chincoteague" helped make the area nationally famous. Thousands of visitors come each year to see the "Pony Penning."

By the latter half of the 1800's, the number of people living on Chincoteague had grown substantially, overtaking agricultural land and uprooting early settlers, who could no longer make a living by farming. At about this time a steamboat named "Chincoteague" was put in service to carry passengers and freight to and from the Island, departing from the mainland at Franklin City and arriving at Chincoteague during the busy crop production season of the summer. Stores, hotels, and wealthy business owners began to appear in Chincoteague and several churches were organized. The Island's fame for its seafood began in the early to mid-1800s, when oysters became hugely popular and were much sought after, particularly in the large, northern cities. In 1861, when Union forces (including many from Chincoteague) won a significant battle in the early part of the Civil War, a celebratory banquet was held for the victory. An estimated 4,000 people were served Chincoteague oysters and from this point forward the Island became known for its succulent oysters. Chincoteague's seafood industry grew to include consumers in New York and Philadelphia.

Chincoteague continued to prosper through the turn of the century, incorporating as a Town in 1908. In 1919 a causeway connecting the Island to the mainland was proposed to eliminate the need for steamers and passenger boats to carry people to and from Chincoteague and Franklin City. Construction was started, but while it was underway, in 1920, a major fire burned much of downtown Main Street to the ground. With the causeway under construction, fire companies on the mainland were not able to assist the newly-formed local volunteer fire company of Chincoteague. The extensive destruction caused by the fire threatened to destroy the economy of the Island, but in 1922 the causeway was opened and traffic and access to the Island increased. The 4.5 mile-long road that entered Chincoteague began as a toll road, but in 1930 the Commonwealth of Virginia took over ownership and made it free to the public.

Another major fire in 1924 nearly destroyed the Town a second time, and efforts to raise money to improve the equipment and capabilities of the fire department resulted in the organization of the annual pony penning event that continues today as the Town's major

tourist attraction. In 1943 the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) was created on Assateague Island, and in 1965 Assateague was designated as a National Seashore. Through the end of the 20th century, the peaceful seclusion of the Island, its famous seafood, abundant wildlife, proximity to two national landmarks, and preserved coastal setting all contributed to a steadily growing tourism industry.

Today, at the beginning of the 21st century, Chincoteague is home to ~~4,300~~over 3,600 people and tourism is its primary industry. Seasonal residents and visitors swell this number to over 15,000 during the summer months. Over the years the Town has seen three annexations, with the most recent being in 1989. The 1989 annexation made the entire Island part of the Town of Chincoteague. While annexation provided the Town with additional revenues, it also presented the municipality with expanded public service responsibilities. The Town is required to provide general governmental services to the residents of the areas annexed at the same level as was provided to the original Town's residents.

The annexation enabled the energies of the enlarged municipality to address more effectively the significant environmental and public service concerns confronting the Island. The future well-being of all residents will be determined by a proper resolution of the same public service issues and environmental concerns.

Socio-Economic Characteristics

Population

~~Between 1990 and 2000, the population of Chincoteague grew 21% from 3,572 to 4,317 people.~~ Chincoteague's population has remained steady over the years, with a small decline~~d in population~~ from 1950 to1970, and a minor increase~~d~~ by only 17 people (0.004%) between 1970 and 1980. The Island experienced its first significant population gain in ~~the~~ 30 years between 1980 and 1990, when it grew by 5% as a result of the 1989 annexation of the entire Island. This period of growth was continued between 1990 and 2000 with a 21% increase in population. Between 2000 and 2010 Census counts, the population of Chincoteague declined 32% from 4,324 to 2,941 people. The recent decline is attributed to the conversion of permanent residences to investment properties/seasonal rentals and difficulty in completion of census surveys in our 'hard to count' community. The Town of Chincoteague and Accomack County revised the permanent resident population estimate to over 3,600 people for the purpose of redistricting with approval by the U.S. Justice Department in 2011.

Race

The Island's predominant race is Caucasian, comprising ~~98~~97% of the population. The remaining ~~2~~3% ~~is predominantly~~represents a mix of ~~-~~African American, Asian, and American Indian heritage. ~~A very few residents are Asian or American Indian/Alaska Natives.~~ The distribution of races in the population has not changed ~~only slightly~~significantly since ~~1990~~2000~~, however, it is interesting to note that the rate of growth in the Asian and American Indian/Alaskan Native populations between 1990 and 2000 was double the rate of growth of the white population, and exponentially higher than the rate of growth in the Black/African American population (each experienced a 33% increase).~~

Age and Sex

~~The~~ Data from the 2010 United States Census indicates the median age of the total population ~~is~~ has increased from 46 years to 52 years. Chincoteague's median age is significantly older than the median age of Accomack County's population (~~39~~ 45 years) and ~~almost 10~~15 years older than the median age of the State's population (37.5 years). ~~Data from the 1990 United States Census indicates the same comparison, an older population in Chincoteague than in the County and Virginia.~~

The percentage of females (~~52~~50.6%) in Chincoteague continues to outnumber the percentage of males (~~48~~49.4%). ~~However, from 1990 to 2000 the male population grew at a slightly greater rate than the female population, thus somewhat closing the gap between the populations of the sexes.~~ The median age of females is slightly older (~~47~~ 53.5 years) than the median age of the population and the ~~average~~ median age of males is slightly younger (~~45~~ 50.1 years).

Households

Data on household characteristics in ~~2000~~ 2010 show that virtually all (99.5~~6~~%) of the Island's population lives in households. Chincoteague's average household size is 2.06~~8~~ persons. The average household size in ~~1990~~ 2000 was 2.08~~10~~ persons, indicating a slight decrease in household size between ~~1990 and~~ 2000 and 2010. There are ~~2,068~~1,417 households on the Island; 61~~0~~% of them are family households.~~,~~ Of the remaining ~~40% are~~ non-family households, 38.8% are householders living alone.~~. Between 1990 and 2000, the percent increase in the number of non-family households (36%) was nearly three times the increase in family households (13%).~~ Average family size ~~increased only~~decreased slightly between ~~1990 and~~ 2000 and 2010 from 2.63~~2~~ persons to 2.58~~63~~ persons.

Natural Features

Climate

Chincoteague Island has a humid climate with no distinct dry season. The relative humidity (measured at nearby Wallops Flight Facility) averages 76%. Spring is least humid, with an average of 78% to 79% humidity from August through September. Daily averages of humidity vary from 83% in early morning to 66% in the afternoon.

Surface winds are highly variable and frequent. Winds are predominately from the south or southeast in the summer, and westerly or northwesterly in the winter. The average wind velocity is 9 to 10 mph in the summer and 11 to 13 mph in winter. Average precipitation for Chincoteague is 45-46 inches per year.

At Norfolk, the nearest source of such information, the annual mean number of clear days averages 109, with 103 partially cloudy days, and 153 cloudy days. The average percent of possible sunshine is 63%.

Two general types of storms affect the area: hurricanes and northeasters. On average, once a year, a tropical storm of hurricane force passes within 250 miles of Chincoteague. Hurricanes are a threat from May through November. Nearly 80% occur in the months of August, September, and October. About 40% occur in September alone. Hurricanes cause damage from winds and tidal surge. If the storm hits during high tide, a higher surge will occur. If the tide is ebbing, however, flooding will be less. This vertical range of tidal change represents a storage pool.

Northeasters are storms with strong on-shore winds from a northeast direction. The winds are persistent, causing above normal tides for long periods of time. The March 1962 northeaster caused 10 to 15 foot waves, persisted for five tide cycles, and caused inundation and wave damage for 60 hours.

Geology

Chincoteague Island is commonly believed to be an ancient barrier island. It was formed some 4,000 years ago, as the forces of wind, waves, and ocean deposited sand parallel to the Eastern Shore mainland. Erosion formed breaks in these barrier Islands and allowed the still rising sea to flood the flatlands behind the Island. These flats are now the marshes, channels and bays between Chincoteague and the mainland.

Between 2,000 and 4,000 years ago, scientists believe Assateague Island joined the north end of Chincoteague Island. An Inlet formed, separating the two islands, and continued sand deposits caused a spit to build southward from the Assateague side of the Chincoteague-Assateague Inlet. This spit grew and eventually formed a south neck. This neck grew between Chincoteague Island and the sea, located around today's Assateague Channel and continues to provide barrier island protection for the Town. Its successor,

Tom's Cove Hook, is following a much similar pattern as the one that formed Chincoteague Island.

Physiography

Most of Chincoteague Island's shoreline consists of tidal and nontidal wetlands (see Exhibit 1). Numerically, nearly 85% of the Island's 31.6 miles of shoreline is marshlands with another 11% consisting of artificially stabilized shoreline made up of bulk heading and riprap along commercial waterfronts and privately owned areas. In many of these places the shoreline has been built out or filled in, and many piers extend out into the water (see Exhibit 2).

The fast-land of the Island, above the shoreline, is typically flat. In fact, elevations on the Island rarely exceed 10 feet. The higher ridges on the Island run northeast to southwest along the length of the Island, again giving evidence to the barrier island origin of the Island. As remnant sand dunes, these upland ridges are composed of well-sorted sand particles - and as a result are high in strength, low in compressibility, and highly permeable and porous. In layman's terms, if these areas are protected from winds and waves, they can bear heavy loads and will drain water quickly.

Off shore, the bottom of the bays surrounding the Island also have mild slope. Except where dredged, Chincoteague Bay is shallow with four feet or less of water and a soft bottom. Muddy, and in some places, marshy tidal flats extend from the shore into the bays. Only in Chincoteague Channel and Assateague Channel does the bottom drop off quickly. Chincoteague Channel, a dredged channel paralleling the western edge of the Island, averages 13 feet in depth with 6 inch to 4 foot shoals. Assateague Channel, on the eastern edge of the Island, has a maximum depth of 21 feet. This channel is narrow, bordered by mud flats and oyster rocks. Between Piney Island and Janeys Marsh Creek It is only four feet in depth.

Fortunately, most of Chincoteague Island is not experiencing shoreline erosion due to the storm damage protection provided by Assateague Island . However some locations around Chincoteague are experiencing severe rates of erosion (greater than 3 feet per year). Moderate erosion (1 to 3 foot per year) is occurring above Black Point Landing in Assateague Channel. No structures are in immediate danger, however shoreline protection projects for critical infrastructure such as south Main Street and the Route 175 Causeway will be needed. ~~in either location.~~

Fast-land Soils

Exhibit 3 identifies five basic soil complexes on Chincoteague Island. As can be seen from Exhibit 3, very poorly drained Bohicket tidal marsh soils surround much of the upland and extend Inland in the drainage ways between the upland areas. These soils characteristically are very compressible, consolidate under a load, have high water content, and are poorly drained. As a result, these areas are unsuited for development.

The higher Duckston sand soils represent somewhat better conditions for development. These soils cover the central portion of Piney Island, areas along the waterfront in the center of the Town, and inland from Assateague Channel. Even though these land areas are considered upland, and have been developed in many areas, they are still poorly drained soils subject to flooding, wetness, and seepage.

The best soils on the Island in terms of development are called Pactolus soils. These soils are the best drained, although problems of flooding and wetness occur. These soils extend along Rt. 175 (Main Street) and Willow Street, along Chicken City Road, between Deep Hole Road and Oyster Bay, and are also found around the harbor near Chincoteague Point.

Ground Water

~~Chincoteague Island residents are totally dependent upon underground wells on the mainland for drinking water. Five miles of transmission lines carry water from these wells across the marshes to the Island.~~ The Town of Chincoteague is surrounded on all sides by saltwater, has no streams of any substantial size, has no significant source of surface water and therefore must depend on groundwater as its sole source of drinking water. Groundwater sources available on the Island are typically not suitable as a drinking water supply due to nutrient/septic system contamination (shallow) or brackish water intrusion (deep). A community water supply system has been constructed to serve the entire Island and is currently supplied by existing wells located on the mainland of Accomack County. Five miles of transmission lines carry water from these wells across the marshes to Chincoteague Island.

Eight separate well fields serve the pumping station. Depths vary from 63 to 256 feet. While the danger of contamination of these wells is considered minimal, vigilant monitoring of activities on land near the wells is critical. The Town also must ensure that future activities, on or around the Wallops Flight Facility's property, do not pose a danger to the wells.

Based on a Regional Water Supply Plan prepared by Malcolm Pirnie (April 2010), data indicates that the Town of Chincoteague is one of several public water systems in Accomack County. The combined public water systems account for approximately 20% of permitted groundwater withdrawals in 2013. The Town of Chincoteague's permitted use accounts for approximately half of the community water systems or 8% of total County permitted groundwater withdrawal.

The source of the Town of Chincoteague's drinking water is high quality ground water from the Columbia, Upper and Middle Yorktown-Eastover Aquifers. All of the Town's wells are located on land owned by the Town of Chincoteague or within a perpetual easement located on NASA property. Raw water is pumped from the mainland to Chincoteague Island for treatment, storage and distribution. The Town's water supply is regulated by the Virginia State Water Control Board, an approved Water Supply Plan, and a Source Water Protection Plan.

Coastal Floodplain

Chincoteague Island is subject to periodic flooding and storm water drainage limitations due to its unique location and topography. The entire Town has been mapped within a special flood hazard district based on the National Flood Insurance Program that estimates the extent of a 100 year storm event and a base flood elevation. A new coastal flood hazard study has been prepared by FEMA Region 3 that will update flood map information in 2015 (see Exhibit 4).

Tree Cover

Natural area tree cover, in particular the stands of mature Loblolly Pine, has become an important part of the community image and identity. Many of the forested areas of the Island have grown up since the 1962 storm and are experiencing stress from age, saltwater flooding, pine bark beetle and wind damage. The loss of over 500 mature trees during Hurricane Sandy highlighted the need to plan for trees that help to stabilize the soil, balance the water table, improve air and water quality, and provide shade and shelter for our residents. Each year a significant number of trees are lost due to pine park beetle damage with limited and costly options for control and disposal of the trees. It is anticipated that this problem will continue to be a concern for Chincoteague Island.

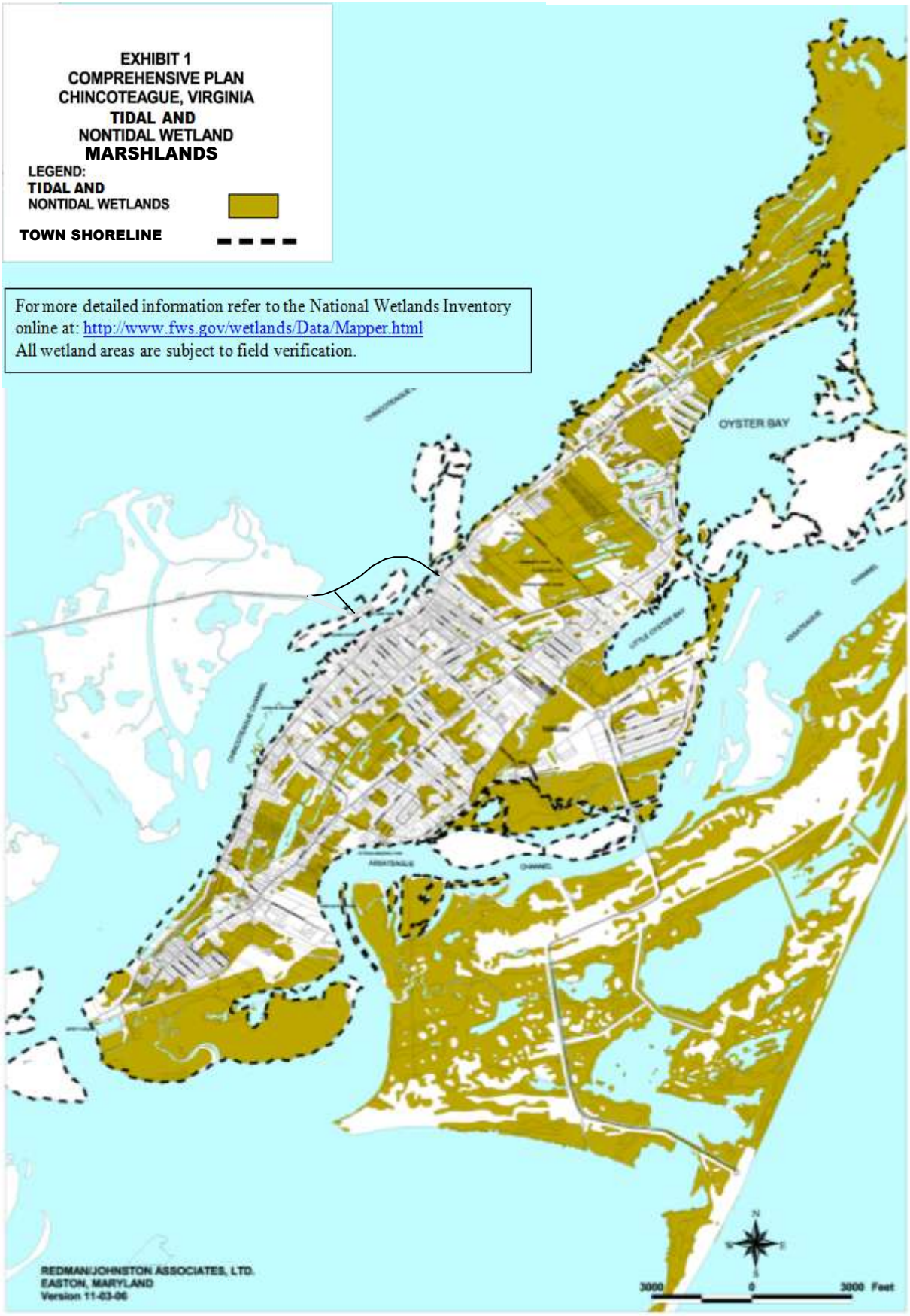


EXHIBIT 1
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
CHINCOTEAGUE, VIRGINIA
TIDAL AND
NONTIDAL WETLAND
MARSHLANDS
LEGEND:
TIDAL AND
NONTIDAL WETLANDS
TOWN SHORELINE
For more detailed information refer to the National Wetlands Inventory online at: http://www.fws.gov/wetlands/Data/Mapper.html
All wetland areas are subject to field verification.
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EASTON, MARYLAND
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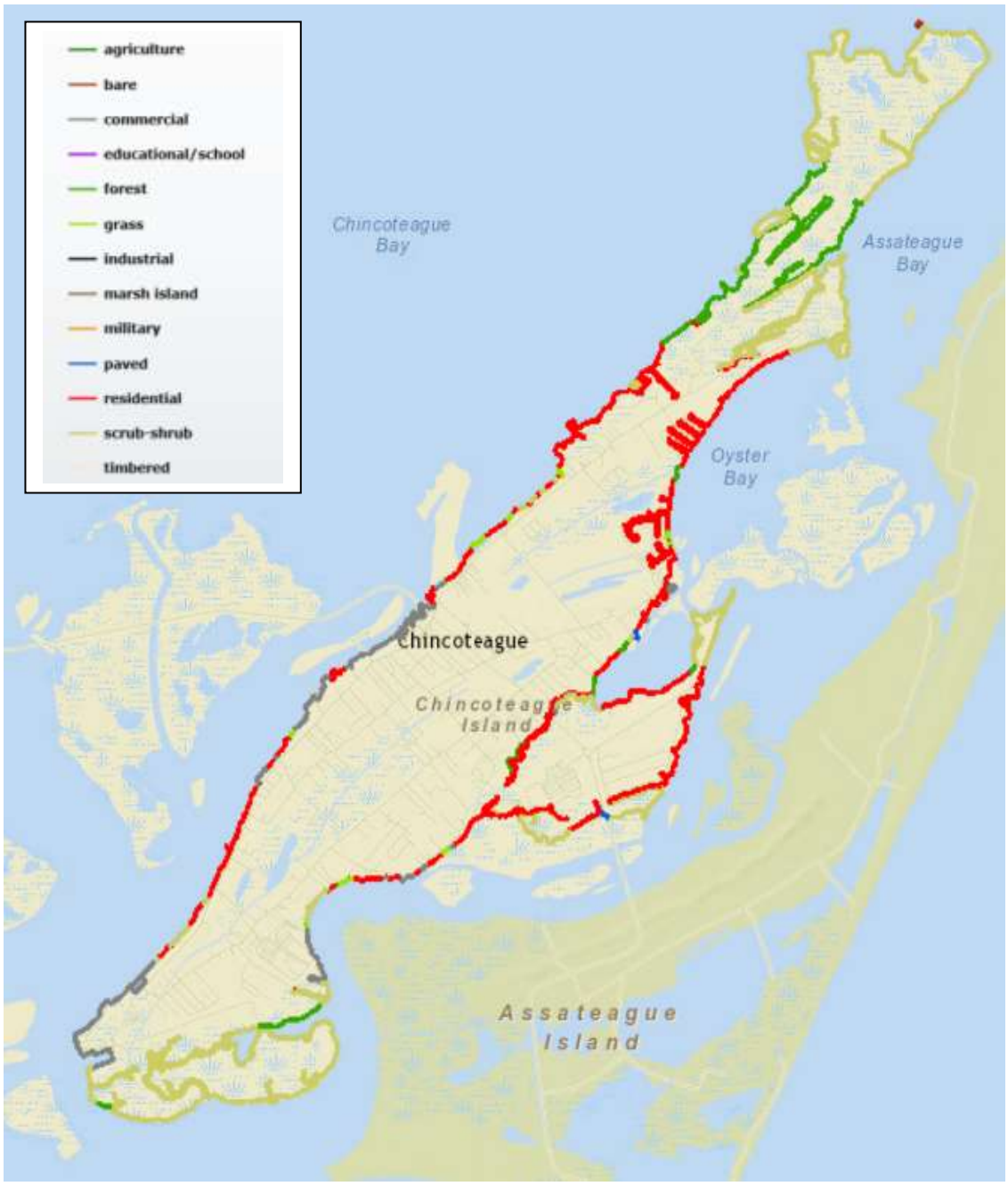
EXHIBIT 2

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
CHINCOTEAGUE, VIRGINIA

SHORELINE CONDITIONS



Surface Water

Freshwater from rain falling on Chincoteague generally drains in a north-south direction over the low glades between the higher sand dune ridges. Since the Island is so flat, open and clear drainage ways are critical. Filling of ditches, important to the Island's drainage, should not occur and, in fact, it is recommended that this kind of activity be controlled by an ordinance or some other developmental/maintenance tool.

The saltwater bays surrounding the Island support a wide variety of marine and animal life. Shellfish such as oysters and clams are important to the livelihood of many local residents. These areas should be preserved in a natural and healthy state.

Marshlands

Exhibit 1 displays the major marsh areas that surround Chincoteague Island. All the marshes have high value for wildlife and wildfowl and are closely associated with fish spawning and nursery areas. They also help to prevent erosion, are important to the shellfish industry, and help keep the shoreline stable.

Drainage

Due to the low elevation of the Island, proper drainage requires constant attention. Storm water drainage is always a problem, especially during periods of heavy rainfall. Most of the uplands soils on the Island are sandy and tend to absorb water quickly. However, the Island is within 5-10 feet of sea level and the soil becomes easily saturated. As a result, ponding occurs in low-lying areas. Often water must await lower tides to flow from the drainage ditches on the Island into the surrounding water.

Current Land Use

With respect to the original Town's physical development, 1988 land use data indicated that 52% of Chincoteague's total area was devoted to residential development, 13% to commercial enterprise, 8% to industrial activity, 8% to public and semipublic uses, and 19% (97 acres) remained vacant. A large portion of the vacant land was situated on tracts, which had questionable development potential with the result that the Town had an extremely limited amount of vacant land suitable for future development.

Recent land use data for the area of the Island incorporated in 1989 reveals that exclusive of tidal waters (33.2 square miles), 14% of the area is devoted to residential development,

EXHIBIT 3
COMPRENSIVE PLAN
CHINCOTEAGUE, VIRGINIA
Soils
Legend
chA -Tidal Marsh
FMD/FRB - Eoilian Sand
CaA/FhB/ATD - Eoilian Fine Sand
upd - Unconsolidated Sediment Soils
PoA - Muck Sandy Loam
TaxParcel_New

5% to commercial enterprises,~~, 1% to industrial activity~~, 35% to public and semi-public uses, with 47% remaining vacant.

The intensity of development of the area is indicated by the fact that based on its 1988 population estimate and its land area of 8.8 square miles, the area has an overall population density of 263 persons per square mile, or nearly five times the density of the county generally (53.7 persons per square mile).

Exhibit 4 shows current land use on the entire Island. As the map shows, what little industrial activity there remains in Town is on the waterfront side of North and South Main Street within 5 or 6 blocks from Bridge Street.

A large number of commercial businesses, many of them tourist related, are also located along the waterfront side of Main Street. The commercial businesses on the fast-land side of Main Street within 3-4 blocks of the causeway combine with the stores, shops, and seafood businesses on the waterfront to create Chincoteague's unique downtown area. This downtown area provides goods and services to local residents and tourists alike. It is also an important center for social and civic life in Town.

A second commercial area is located on Maddox Boulevard, on the road to Assateague. Unlike the older Main Street shopping area, this shopping district is oriented more towards the automobile than the pedestrian and more toward the tourist than the year-round resident. Nearby motels and campgrounds strengthen the role of this area as an auto-oriented, seasonal tourist center.

Much of the remaining land on the Island is either in residential use or is vacant. Businesses and tourist facilities are scattered among some areas designated as "Residential" and many residents pursue secondary and even primary vocations out of their homes (home occupations). In addition many residential structures are located in areas zoned "Commercial." Several distinct residential neighborhoods have evolved in Town. For example, three of the Town's seven churches are located among the homes around Church Street.

Prior planning projections now appear to have been overly optimistic. At one time as many as 375 new residents housed in 250 new dwellings were projected through the end of the 20th Century. With the increasing importance of tourism, any population increase will more likely be temporary; seasonal residents attracted to the Island's summer job market, weather, or cultural atmosphere. Further, new dwellings may take the form of manufactured homes, may be conversions of existing homes to apartments, or may be new apartments or townhouse type structures of higher density than existing homes on the Island. The 1980-1990 decade saw a dramatic increase of new homes in Town.

Given continued economic growth on the Island, hopefully, both the old downtown commercial area and the newer Maddox Boulevard area can continue to grow in future years, even though at a much slower rate than earlier projected. The Town of Chincoteague has a unique opportunity to both encourage and direct future growth to the long term good and betterment of all local residents.

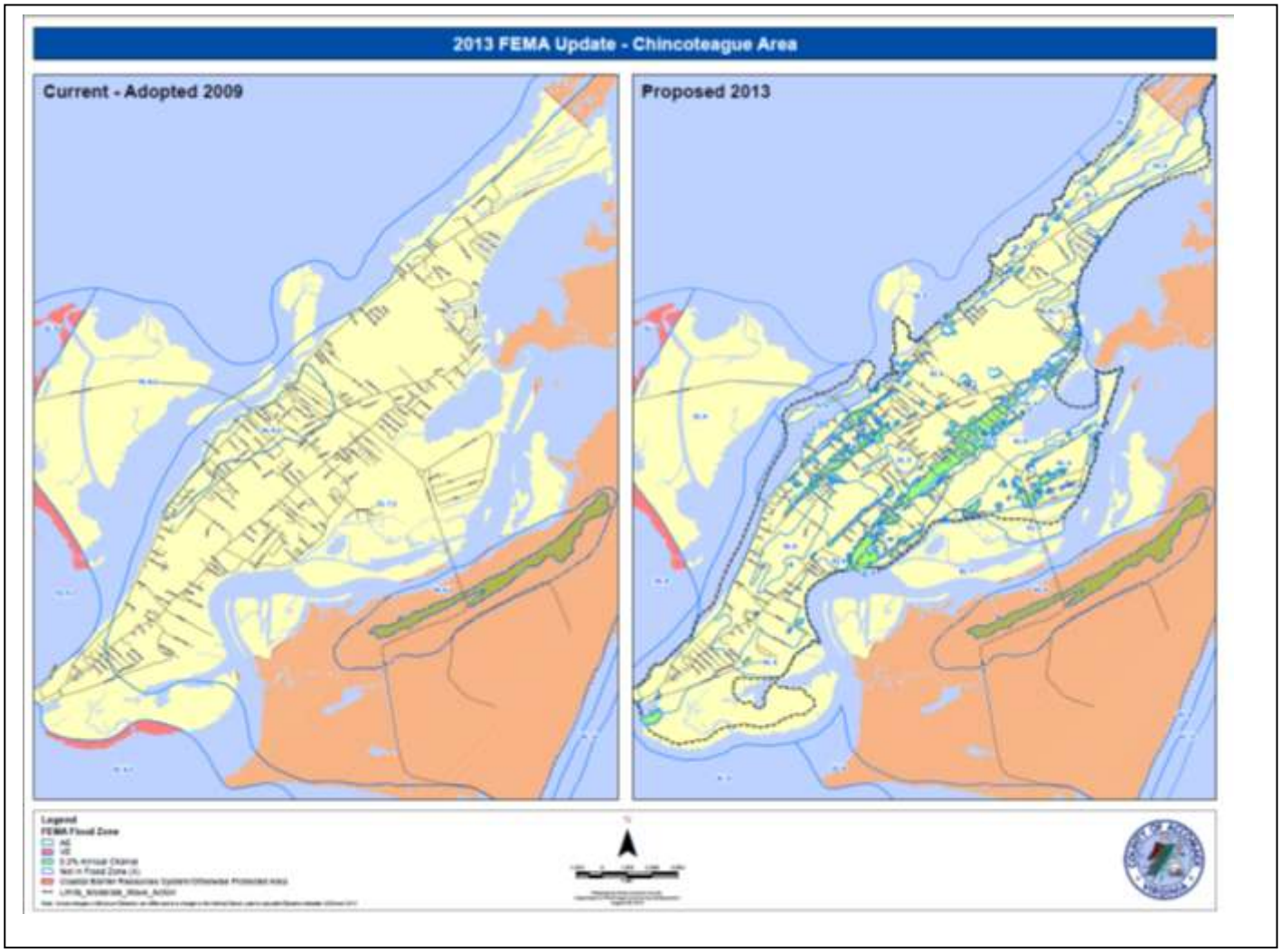
Vacant Land / Open Space

~~As seen in Exhibit 4, a large expanse of vacant land exists in the northern part of Town, adjacent to the School Board property. A few lots are scattered throughout the existing residential neighborhoods in Town. Large blocks of land exist in the southern part of Town, on lots east of Main Street. Much of the waterfront is occupied; however, a large open area exists along the southern portion of Main Street.~~

At present, some of the vacant land in Town serves to drain storm water and functions to direct and contain flood waters. Current “wetlands" are regulated by various government agencies. Where large tracts of vacant land remain, the Town may consider Innovative-zoning techniques that encourage development designed in response to storm water drainage, "wetlands", or other local environmental factors. ~~In December of 1999, there were 1,734 vacant lots within the Town.~~ Currently the Town, the School Board and several local residents own large tracts of land. It is critical that future development criteria, particularly in the larger tracts or where higher than normal density is proposed, adequately address the issue of wastewater ~~and~~ drainage and floodplain management.

Exhibit 4 illustrates areas of higher elevation which will no longer be mapped within the regulatory floodplain by the draft FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps which are scheduled for adoption in May 2015. Preservation of open space and maintenance of drainage ways are important tools to manage flood risks.

Exhibit 4
Current and Proposed FEMA
Flood Insurance Rate Map
Areas Subject to the 1% Chance Flood (light yellow)
Higher ground areas above the Base Flood Elevation (light green)



Chapter 2 Goals & Objectives

Goals are broad policy statements, describing what the Town of Chincoteague hopes to achieve in the future through its planning program. Goals are statements of direction for objectives, which are clarifications of the specific steps required to achieve the implementation of the *Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan*. Goals, objectives and recommendations (implementation strategies) are outlined in "Appendix A: Implementation Matrix."

The 5 year review is an opportunity to evaluate the goals and objectives established in the Comprehensive Plan and possibly revise them to meet new conditions. Significant changes which have occurred since the plan adoption include:

- ✓ USFWS proposal for management changes in the 20 year Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge
- ✓ NASA /commercial launches for Space Station re-supply missions from Wallops Spaceport increasing tourism events throughout the year
- ✓ Route 175 bridge realignment creates a new commercial 'main street' along Maddox Boulevard and VDOT funds revitalization improvements to the traditional downtown
- ✓ A continued national economic recession has impacted the real estate development market and forced a reduction in property values
- ✓ 2010 Census confirms a decrease in year round population and conversion to second homes and seasonal rental property.

Comprehensive Plan Goals

Primary Goal – The primary goal of the ~~Town of Chincoteague~~Comprehensive Plan seeks to manage and adapt to change over time in an economically and environmentally sustainable manner ~~so that it retains~~while retaining the most endearing and unique physical and cultural features of the Town and providing~~es~~ the setting for a harmonious community life.

- **Land Use Goal:** Provide a quality living environment for all residents by ensuring a balanced mix of residential and commercial development, while preserving and improving natural resources and promoting the Town's image as a desirable, visually attractive, safe, and economically stable residential community.

- **Economic Development Goal:** Provide a quality ~~living~~ working/business environment that ensures a balanced mix of seasonal and year-round commercial and employment uses to serve the day to day needs of residents and visitors. Encourage educational opportunities for all ages to p~~P~~romote higher salary jobs throughout town.

- **Community Facilities and Services Goal:** Provide public facilities and services that are adequate to meet the needs of the community and are affordable, accessible, attractive, and add to the enjoyment of the physical environment.

- **Transportation Goal:** Provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

- **Housing Goal:** Preserve and protect the neighborhood character and quality of life in residential neighborhoods; encourage a balanced range of housing type and opportunities; promote opportunities for clean, safe, and affordable housing; and maintain safety, appearance, and harmony within neighborhoods.

- **Environmental Goal:** Conserve important natural and sensitive environmental resource areas which protect the Island from storm events and which serve as the basis for the Town's economy and visitation to the area.

Land Use Objectives~~:~~

1. Protect the quality of life in existing residential neighborhoods, while permitting appropriate infill and redevelopment.

2. Promote redevelopment and infill of existing underutilized commercial areas.

3. Ensure that all development is compatible with the scale and character of adjacent uses in the area.

4. Ensure that buildings and related site improvements for private development are well designed and compatible with surrounding properties and districts.

5. ~~Provide~~ Support a range of housing options to serve the long term needs of the Town.

6. Encourage preservation of open space and environmentally responsible development.

7. Ensure that new and existing commercial developments are attractive in appearance.

8. Promote small to medium scale commercial and office developments.

9. Maintain and enhance the character of existing commercial areas.

10. Facilitate the revitalization of the central business district and its waterfront as a center for commerce.

11. Create an attractive street environment, which will compliment private and public properties and be comfortable for residents and visitors.

12. Encourage site design, which preserves scenic vistas.

Economic Development Objectives

1. Enhance the image of the community and create a vital and attractive environment for businesses, residents, and visitors that is reasonably balanced with the need for economic development to assure the town's economic prosperity.

2. Promote and support tourism, which is Chincoteague's primary economic engine.

3. Encourage economically viable marine uses to meet the needs of waterborne commerce and recreation tourism.

4. Provide for a broad range of convenient shopping venues.

5. Support the seafood industry and promote aquaculture.

6. Implement the Chincoteague Downtown Revitalization Plan to improve the Island's economic climate for investment and reinvestment.

7. Work to achieve a year-round economy for Chincoteague to ensure economic longevity.

Transportation Objectives

1. Provide a safe and ~~comfortable~~ connected system of pedestrian and bicycle pathways.

2. ~~Look at~~Pursue opportunities for additional public parking to serve the Main Street and Maddox Boulevard commercial districts. ~~the possibility of having a downtown parking garage.~~

3. Provide safe, efficient, reliable transportation for many modes of transportation.

4. Enhance public transportation opportunities by continuing to improve the Pony Express trolley service, and to encourage the addition of a private taxi service.

~~3.~~5. Encourage private investment to upgrade and convert significant private roads to meet public street standards so that they may be added to the VDOT street inventory for maintenance. Improve stanadards for maintnenance of the private road network.

Community Facilities & Services Objectives

1. Ensure adequate public facilities and services that meet the needs of residents and visitors.

2. Maintain beautiful and ~~comfortable~~ functional outdoor public places, which provide a shared sense of belonging for Chincoteague residents, business owners, and visitors.

3. Provide opportunities for public access and recreational enjoyment of the shoreline.

Housing/Neighborhood Objectives

1. Encourage a variety of home ~~prices~~ types and sizes in new development or re-development projects in order to provide housing for people of all socioeconomic backgrounds.

2. Encourage programs to pro-actively provide accessible and affordable housing for the regional work force, including working with Accomack County and other regional housing entities.

3. Develop policies that support flexible housing arrangements for extended family living, where appropriate.

4. Create policies that facilitate continued occupancy of personal homes by elderly residents, who may need "in-home" care.

5. Encourage housing rehabilitation, redevelopment, infill, and improvement programs for selected areas or neighborhoods.

6. Continue to improve housing conditions by using all available means to ensure decent, safe, and sanitary housing.

Environmental Objectives

1. Adopt shoreline management policies consistent with State Code where practical, and actively promote the use of other structural options when necessary to support working waterfronts and storm damage protection of property.

2. Prepare and implement a general landscape planting guide for Chincoteague Island which encourages planting of trees and shrubs to replace those lost due to storm damage

3. Continue a partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers and the US Coast Guard to maintain navigable channels surrounding Chincoteague Island and connecting to the Atlantic Ocean

4. Continue a cooperative working relationship with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service and others to provide convenient public access and recreational use of the Assateague National Seashore for Virginia residents and regional visitors

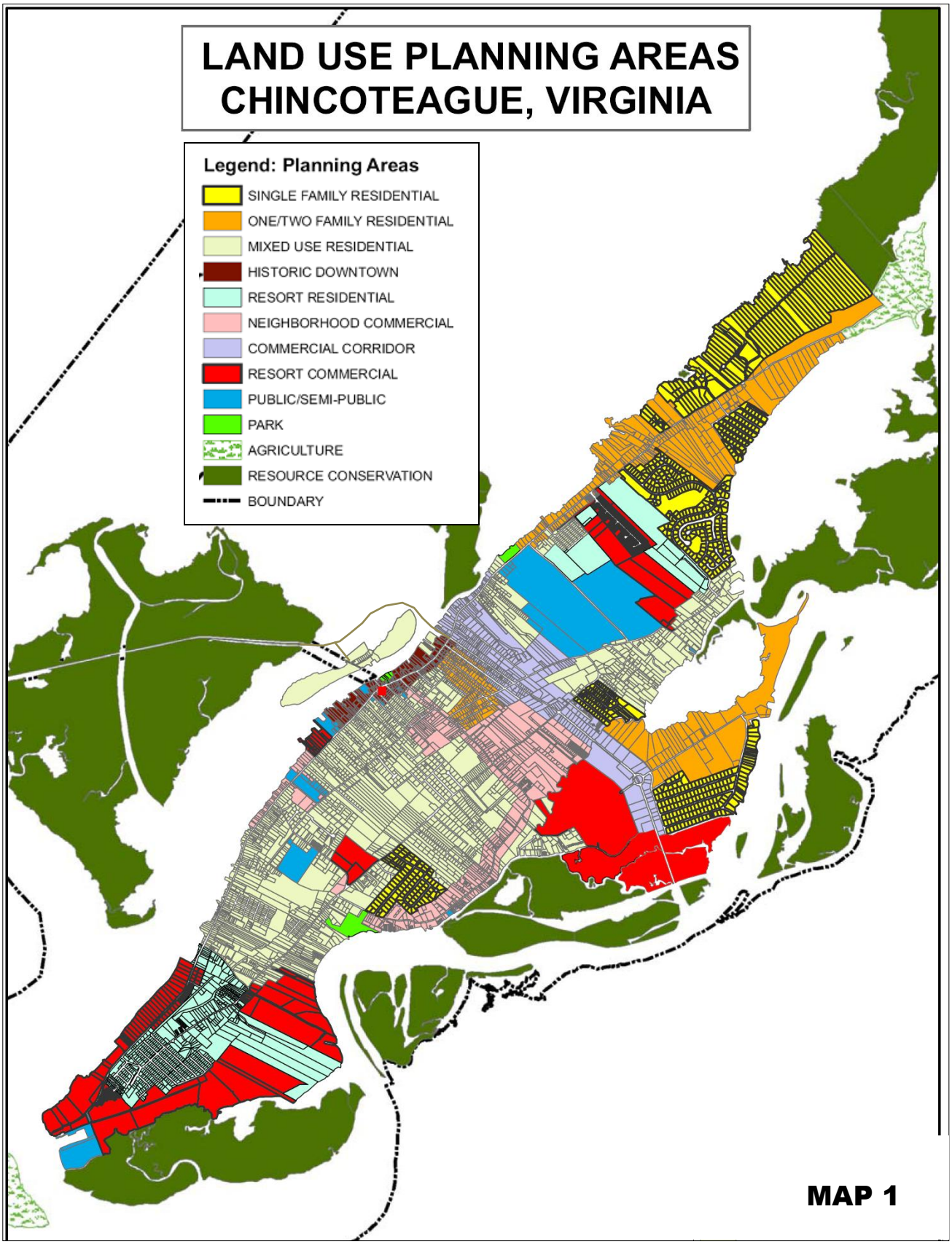
5. Develop and implement a proactive plan for the community to defend from and adapt to long term changes in climate and storm impacts, flooding, water table, vegetation and other environmental factors.

Chapter 3 Land Use Plan

The Land Use Plan provides a policy framework for guiding future growth, development, and re-development in the Town of Chincoteague. The Plan identifies several distinct "Land Use Planning Areas." The location and delineation of each Planning Area considers existing use, established settlement patterns, and opportunities for growth and redevelopment.

"Land Use Planning Areas" include the following:

1. Single-Family Residential;
2. One & Two Family Residential;
3. Mixed Use Residential;
4. ~~Historic Downtown~~Old Town Commercial;
5. Resort Residential;
6. Neighborhood Commercial;
7. Commercial Corridor;
8. Resort Commercial;
9. Public/Semi-Public;
10. Park & Open Space;
11. Resource Conservation; and
12. Agriculture.


LAND USE PLANNING AREAS
CHINCOTEAGUE, VIRGINIA
Legend: Planning Areas
SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
ONE/TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
MIXED USE RESIDENTIAL
HISTORIC DOWNTOWN
RESORT RESIDENTIAL
NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL
COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR
RESORT COMMERCIAL
PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC
PARK
AGRICULTURE
RESOURCE CONSERVATION
BOUNDARY
MAP 1

Land Use Planning Areas

The Town of Chincoteague is divided into twelve (12) Land Use Planning Areas. The Land Use Plan identifies a broad goal and purpose for each specific Planning Area as well as objectives and implementation strategies to advance the community's goals and objectives.

1) SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PLANNING AREA

GOAL: Preserve existing low density residential neighborhoods and ensure that infill and redevelopment are consistent with the existing character of the Planning Area.

The "Single-Family Residential Planning Area" encapsulates existing residential areas which are characterized as primarily detached single-family neighborhoods.

The purpose of the Planning Area is to provide for single-family detached residences and supporting uses. The Planning Area is located in portions of Chincoteague where single-family residential development patterns are generally established and where services and facilities will be adequate for anticipated population.

The Planning Area is intended to provide for the minor infill of existing neighborhoods, consistent with the existing low density residential character of the area. The Planning Area includes some vacant or larger properties that could be candidate sites for infill and/or redevelopment projects. When infill development occurs it should be consistent with prevalent lot development patterns. Zoning for this area should maintain single-family residential and strictly limit non residential uses. Density should be maintained in accordance with historic lotting patterns. Mobile homes and double-wide manufactured housing are not considered appropriate for the Planning Area.

<u>Implementation Strategies</u>

- Continue to apply the existing R-1 Residential zoning to this Planning Area.
- Zoning provisions for this Planning Area should limit each lot to one principal use.

- Improve the quality of local streets and pedestrian systems serving residential neighborhoods, where necessary.

- Limit permitted residential uses to detached single family units.

- Limit new non-residential uses to low intensity home occupations.

2) ONE & TWO FAMILY RESIDENTIAL PLANNING AREA

GOAL: Protect existing low to medium density residential character and ensure infill and redevelopment are consistent with the existing character of the Planning Area.

This area is a mixture of existing single and multi-family residential uses. Much of this Planning Area is located near Oyster Bay and Little Oyster Bay. A small portion of the area is located adjacent to Maddox Boulevard and the Chincoteague Town Center.

The purpose of the Planning Area is to protect existing neighborhoods primarily consisting of one and two family dwellings. It is the Town's intent to allow infill and redevelopment of a similar scale and intensity consistent with the existing character of the neighborhoods.

The security of these property assets is crucial to homeowners in terms of quality of life and stable property values. The unique features of the Planning Area are essential characteristics of Chincoteague, being attractive to residents and visitors alike. Implementation strategies should include measures to protect the existing low to medium residential character and ensure that new construction, re-development, infill development, and structural additions reflect development patterns already present.

Implementation Strategies

- Apply the existing R-2 Residential zoning to properties in the Planning Area.

- Amend zoning provisions for this Planning Area to limit each lot to one principal use.

- Improve the quality of local streets and pedestrian systems serving residential neighborhoods, where necessary.

- Permit existing non-residential uses to continue but not expand.

- Strictly limit new non-residential uses to low intensity home occupations.

3) MIXED USE RESIDENTIAL PLANNING AREA

GOAL: Protect the existing mixed residential character of the Planning Area and ensure new infill and redevelopment does not adversely impact surrounding areas.

The area consists of existing single and multi-family residential uses and some neighborhood commercial uses. The objective for this Planning Area is to maintain the positive characteristics of these neighborhoods, while allowing for appropriate infill and redevelopment on vacant and underutilized parcels.

The purpose of the Planning Area is to recognize areas with a mix of existing single and multi-family residential units as well as neighborhood commercial uses. At the same time, the Town will ensure that the location and intensity of uses in the Planning Area are controlled to maintain property values and avoid congestion.

Implementation Strategies

- Apply the current R-3 Residential zoning to the Planning Area.
- Establish appropriate zoning provisions to ensure new multi-family and townhouse residential development is consistent with the surrounding area.
- Limit multi-family development or re-development to duplex, triplex, or quadraplex units to minimize the scale and intensity impacts of greater density.
- Encourage design objectives for infill and redevelopment and multi-family residential uses that are appropriate to the existing character of neighborhoods.
- Encourage development that is consistent and amenable to existing development in surrounding area. This is especially applicable to structures that are required to satisfy 100 year floodplain regulations.
- Ensure that any development or re-development activities minimize impacts to environmental resources and preserve or enhance drainage patterns.
- Assess opportunities to enhance local street and pedestrian system connections as development or redevelopment occurs over time.
- Improve the quality of and connections between local streets serving residential neighborhoods within the Planning Area.
- Establish minimum landscape, buffering, and environmental protection standards.
- Permit existing non-residential uses to continue.
- Limit new non-residential uses to low intensity home occupations and low intensity cottage industries.

- Establish appropriate development standards for new non-residential uses that ensure they are appropriately located and designed to "blend in" with the existing character of the surrounding area.

4) ~~HISTORIC DOWNTOWN~~OLD TOWN COMMERCIAL PLANNING AREA

GOAL: Protect and ensure the continued viability of the Old Town Center as a pedestrian-oriented commercial center.

The Old Town Center is Chincoteague's traditional and historic business district. It defines an area critical to the economic health and prosperity of the Town. In addition, the Old Town Center is a primary attraction for visitors/tourists, providing an important economic component of the Town's tax base. The objective for this Planning Area is to maintain and enhance the area as a pedestrian oriented shopping district.

The Old Town Center plays an important role in the community including the following:

- Provides an employment center;
- Strongly influences the Town's image and identity;
- Represents the historic core of the community;
- Provides key visitor attractions; and
- Provides public space where residents and visitors can congregate or be part of parades, special events, and celebrations that reinforce a sense of community.

The purpose of the Planning Area is to protect the downtown business district by preserving the historic character and ensuring it continues to function as a center of commerce. This includes actions for the continued viability of the ~~Historic~~ historic d~~D~~owntown as a pedestrian-oriented commercial center. Chincoteague intends to fulfill this purpose by maintaining the existing character of the ~~historic~~ Main Street shopping district to the maximum extent possible and reinforce its role as a center for community life.

The ~~Historic Downtown~~Old Town Center has ~~historically~~ traditionally been the primary location for commercial uses catering to seasonal and year round populations. Unlike Maddox Boulevard, the ~~Historic Downtown~~Old Town Center retains a ~~traditional~~ commercial shopping district "look and feel." The Town should e~~E~~ncourage development standards and support retention of existing commercial uses and buildings as well as limit conversion of existing commercial structures to non-commercial uses. If residential conversion occurs, it should be relegated to second and third story areas, maintaining the first floor for commercial use. Design objectives and incentive-based processes can assist to maintain and/or enhance the existing architectural character of the Planning Area.

It is the intent of the Town to work with local merchants and property owners and retain scenic views of Chincoteague Bay from Main Street to the maximum extent possible. This includes the visual character of the waterfront as seen from the mainland approach to the Town. Public investment within the ~~Historic Downtown~~Old Town Center area will emphasize improvements to address traffic congestion, pedestrian safety and circulation, parking, streetscape improvements, public amenities and public access to the water.

Implementation Strategies

- ~~Create~~ Manage an ~~Historic Downtown~~Old Town commercial zoning classification, similar to the current C-2 zoning district that permits commercial and business uses appropriate to the land use objectives for the Planning Area and allows residential use above the first floor.

- Work with property owners to retain commercial services and retail uses in existing structures, thereby minimizing the conversion of structures to residential uses and enhancing the quality of the resident and tourist experience.

- Encourage economic development.

- Work with the local businesses and community groups in support of business growth and development in the downtown.

- Promote redevelopment or infill development in appropriate locations consistent with the ~~Historic Downtown's~~Old Town Center's unique assets, which include distinctive architecture and a pedestrian friendly environment.

- Broaden the range of uses, attractions, and activities that strengthen the ~~Historic Downtown's~~Old Town Center's identity as a unique visitor destination.

- Strengthen the identity, role, and marketing of the ~~Historic Downtown (~~downtown business district~~)~~ as a viable year-round shopping area that provides a broad array of goods and services that cater to visitors and residents.

- Consider preparing building appearance and architectural design objectives and incentive-based processes to ensure that new construction, reconstruction, or infill development are appropriate to existing architectural patterns.

- Where possible, require sites that are redeveloped to provide a shoreline buffer and/or pedestrian promenade, when adjacent to Chincoteague Channel or Chincoteague Bay.

- Enhance tourist information and management by local organizations in the downtown.

- As appropriate, continue to improve the "Robert N. Reed Downtown Waterfront Park" facility and fishing pier to enhance downtown's relationship to Chincoteague Bay and promote downtown visitation.

- Promote the ~~Historic Downtown~~Old Town Center as an arts district for theatre, music, and additional forms of outdoor entertainment.

- Explore opportunities to feature the works of both local and out-of-town performing and visual artists through use of a downtown building or structure to house a fine arts center.

- Explore needs for additional public restroom facilities in the downtown and identify appropriate locations for the construction and maintenance of such facilities to enhance the visitor experience.

- Improve the quality of local streets, public parking, and pedestrian systems, where possible.

5) RESORT RESIDENTIAL PLANNING AREA

GOAL: Maintain and create desirable residential environments.

The Planning Area is located at the southern and northern ends of Chincoteague off North and South Main Street.

The purpose of the Planning Area is to set aside areas for the development of master planned mixed-use residential communities, while at the same time, allowing the continuation, expansion, and redevelopment of existing resort uses. Implementing provisions should encourage well-planned mixed-use neighborhoods that complement and enhance the quality of life for all residents in the Town. The location of planned mixed-use developments should be adjacent to and extended from the fabric of the existing community. These areas should be linked to become integral parts of Chincoteague. This includes reflecting the scale and character of the existing community in any new development.

Implementation Strategies

- Create a new mixed use development zoning district that permits a mix of uses including residential, commercial, employment office, civic, and open space in master planned developments.

- Continue to permit resort recreation including, but not limited to, campgrounds, rental cottages, bed and breakfast, and tourist homes.

- Ensure interconnected streets that are designed to balance the needs of all users with sidewalks and on-street parking.
- Encourage open spaces that are integral to the community.

6) NEIGHBORHOOD COMMERCIAL PLANNING AREA

GOAL: Maintain and enhance the commercial character of the Planning Area.

This area is located adjacent to Maddox Boulevard, the Maddox Family Campground, and near the Assateague Channel.

The purpose of the Planning Area is to provide appropriate areas for retail commercial and service uses catering to year-around residents, while minimizing impacts to existing adjacent residential areas. The Planning Area is intended as the location for basic neighborhood, commercial, service, and business uses. The area also allows one and two family residential uses.

Implementation Strategies

- Create a new zoning district to implement the objectives for this Planning Area (similar to the existing C-1 zoning district).

- Consider adding small well screened contractor yards, storage facilities and the like at appropriate locations as special use processes in the Planning Area.

7) COMMERCIAL CORRIDOR PLANNING AREA

GOAL: Enhance the Commercial Corridor of Maddox Boulevard.

The Planning Area begins at the causeway and extends along Maddox Boulevard, the only route to Assateague Island.

The Commercial Corridor Planning Area is where visitors get their first impressions of Chincoteague. Making a positive first impression will help local businesses capture the interest of the million-plus tourists, who visit the area each year. Ensuring that the corridor presents an appropriate appearance is basic to protecting the collective business investment. For these reasons, the purpose of the Planning Area is to accommodate commercial uses that serve visitor and year round populations at appropriate locations, while ensuring streets, buildings, structures, and sites present a positive visual image of the community.

The purpose of the Planning Area is to concentrate highway oriented commercial uses along the Maddox Boulevard corridor, enhance the visual image of this gateway corridor, and ensure safe movement of vehicles and people.

The anticipated conversion of existing residential structures to commercial uses will present challenges for parking and traffic safety. Within this Planning Area, re-development, infill development, and structural additions will be permitted but should be sensitively designed to reflect a positive image of the community.

Implementation Strategies

- Consider establishing building appearance and architectural design objectives for new construction, reconstruction, or infill development. Zoning may include "special infill and re-development" provisions that offer flexibility and enhance opportunities to secure improvements in the form of landscaping, sidewalk enhancements, public parking facilities, or other proffers that provide public benefit as a trade-off for approval.

- Explore needs for additional public restroom facilities in the Maddox Boulevard corridor and identify appropriate locations for the construction and maintenance of such facilities to enhance the visitor experience.

- Encourage landscaping for commercial and residential uses in the Town zoning code.

- Provide street furniture, trash cans, and seating areas in limited locations along the corridor to enhance pedestrian use.

- Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to enhance vehicular and pedestrian safety in the Maddox Boulevard corridor and seek State assistance to develop a "Corridor Management Plan" to identify opportunities to enhance access controls and assure the corridor can sustain adequate levels of service to accommodate projected future traffic volumes.

- Work with Accomack County to quit claim ownership of land within the traffic circle on Maddox Boulevard to the Town of Chincoteague and assist the Chamber of Commerce with expansion of the Visitor Center facilities.

- Facilitate transit service in the corridor. Consider more off-street parking options especially for the businesses.

- Implement the Town's bike plan.

8) RESORT COMMERCIAL PLANNING AREA

GOAL: Maintain and create desirable commercial environments.

This area defines portions of the community where the character of development is presently dominated by concentrations of seasonally occupied homes, commercial uses, and campgrounds. These uses support Chincoteague's role as a visitor destination. The Planning Area includes land located on the southern end of Chincoteague Island (Tom's Cove and adjacent to the Curtis Merritt Harbor of Refuge), land north of Hallie-Whealton Smith Road between North Main Street and Deep Hole Road, and land adjacent to Maddox Boulevard (Maddox Family Campground).

The purpose of the Planning Area is to encourage the continuation of seasonally and permanently occupied homes, campground facilities, and resort commercial uses. These uses play an important role in the local economy by catering to the visitor population. The Town recognizes the potential for these properties to redevelop, especially if public sewer is added in the future. Collectively, these sites represent land-holdings that could be assembled and converted to larger planned mixed-use developments. Chincoteague should encourage well-planned mixed-use commercial developments that complement and enhance the quality of life for all Town residents.

Although, serving an important function in the local economy, commercial uses also can create numerous problems. In order to avoid some of these problems in the future, the following considerations are recommended regarding commercial development:

- If reasonably possible commercial centers should be designed as compact clusters, as another consideration to long strips, to encourage shared parking and walking between stores.
- If possible commercial centers should unify the streetscape with continuous street trees, high-quality parking, and lot landscaping.
- If possible sidewalks and crosswalks should be built throughout the area to encourage shared parking, public transportation, and walking between stores and to nearby homes and offices.
- If possible the design of commercial centers should reinforce street frontage by filling in the front of large parking lots with small, closely spaced store fronts with parking behind the building or on the side of the building.
- The impact of commercial development on adjacent existing and future residential neighborhoods should be minimized.

Implementation Strategies

- Create a new zoning district to implement the objectives for this Planning Area

- Continue to permit recreational campgrounds and other facilities to support but not limited to seasonally occupied cabins, mobile homes, and recreational vehicle use.

- Adopt appropriate standards to ensure that any development or re-development activities minimize impacts to environmental resources and preserve or enhance drainage patterns.

- Establish Master Plan Community or Planned Unit Development (PUD) provisions that permit redevelopment of larger sites within this Planning Area. Other provisions of a zoning district should include standards for planned mixed-use developments as well as requirements for appropriate proffers.

- Since this is a new land use area it is advised that when looking at the zoning of this land use area, the permitted uses follow what is currently permitted, as of the adoption of this plan, in the C-1 District, in addition to any other uses delineated in Chapter 3 of this Comprehensive Plan Update.

9) PUBLIC/SEMI-PUBLIC PLANNING AREA

GOAL: Provide for an appropriate array of public facilities and services.

Public land uses are defined as those uses, which are owned and controlled by a public body for use as a service to the general public. Public land uses comprise a variety of uses for the health, education, safety, and general well-being of the public such as Town offices, post offices, or other government service buildings.

Semi-Public Land Uses are uses owned and controlled by a private or civic group for the purpose of aiding in the health, education, safety, or well-being of the general public or a specific segment of the public. Small-scale semi-public uses may be located in residential neighborhoods. Large-scale semi-public uses should be located in commercial districts.

Chincoteague should ensure that public facilities and services are available to all portions of the Town. However, public services can only be provided according to the community's ability to support the service through funding and staffing. In this respect, the Town will need to be mindful of the cost of providing services juxtaposed to the revenues that the Town can reasonably expect to derive from existing sources (e.g. property taxes etc.). Where it is determined that expenditures for new or expanded public services and/or facilities will exceed projected revenues, the Town may want to consider implementing alternative techniques to offset revenue shortfalls.

The Town's objective is to provide an appropriate array of public facilities and services to meet the basic needs of the community. This includes public facilities and services that are available to all portions of the Town and that the cost of providing expanded basic public services is affordable (i.e. funding, staffing, etc.).

Implementation Strategies

- Require adequate public facilities be made available as a condition of approval for any proposed development.

- Set development review fees at a level that covers the actual cost of development review and approval processes.

10) PARK & OPEN SPACE PLANNING AREA

GOAL: Provide parks, recreation facilities, and open space for Town residents.

Parks and open spaces provide a source of recreation as a focal point in neighborhoods. Recreation and open space areas help define neighborhoods, serve as natural drainage-ways, and satisfy the aesthetic needs of residents. Assateague Island Park satisfies the need for large natural park. Veterans Park and the Down Town Park serve the community and visitors alike with more active forms of recreation.

11) RESOURCE CONSERVATION PLANNING AREA

GOAL: Conserve important natural and sensitive environmental resource areas.

This area includes extensive wetlands, off-shore islands, indigenous vegetation, and wildlife habitat. It also includes the primary drainage system for Chincoteague. Two of the Island's most renowned and renewable economic resources are supported by the Planning Area: 1) scenic beauty; and 2) seafood. Protecting these resources and the environments that enable them is a critical public purpose. The Town's intent is to conserve these areas and protect the island's environmental quality by minimizing impacts from adjacent development.
The purpose of this Planning Area is to delineate sensitive environmental areas, where the Town will regulate land uses to protect water quality in surrounding waters. Development standards should ensure development disturbances, which might adversely impact sensitive environmental features including both tidal and non-tidal wetlands and habitats of rare, threatened, or endangered species, are minimized to the maximum extent possible. The Planning Area is established to complement the purpose and objectives established by the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the Assateague Island National Seashore and the Chincoteague Wildlife Refuge. This includes maintaining the protections afforded by barrier islands from storm events and protecting the diverse and unique ecology that serves as the basis for the Town's economy and visitation to the area.

The preservation and protection of natural drainage-ways on Chincoteague Island are critical for quality of life because they filter harmful pollutants.

Implementation Strategies

- Continue to protect these areas for the enjoyment of current and future generations

GOAL: Incorporate State guidance relative to Coastal Resource Management:

Coastal ecosystems reside at the interface between the land and water, and are naturally very complex. They perform a vast array of functions by way of shoreline stabilization, improved water quality, and habitat for fishes; from which humans derive direct and

indirect benefits. The Town of Chincoteague developed as a community in this setting and has managed surrounding natural resources over the last 334 years.

Recent scientific research on coastal ecosystem resource management has revealed that traditional resource management practices may limit the ability of the coastal ecosystem to perform many of these essential functions. The loss of these services has already been noted throughout coastal communities in Virginia as a result of development in coastal zone areas coupled with common erosion control practices. Beaches and dunes are diminishing due to a reduction in a natural sediment supply. Wetlands are drowning in place as sea level rises and barriers to inland migration have been created by construction of bulkheads and revetments.

There is great concern on the part of the Commonwealth that the continued armoring of shorelines and construction within the coastal area will threaten the long-term sustainability of coastal ecosystems under current and projected sea level rise. Locally, there is a concern that traditional practices are still necessary and appropriate in places to support other goals for working waterfronts, storm hazard mitigation, flood protection, and coastal resiliency of the Commonwealth's barrier island primary frontal dune/beach system. Local interest in the promotion and preservation of working waterfronts as a critical component of our resilient coastal communities could lead to a preference for "conventional" shoreline management practices.

In the 1980s, interest arose in the use of planted wetlands to provide natural shoreline erosion control. Today, a full spectrum of living shoreline design options is available to address the various energy settings and erosion problems found. Depending on the site characteristics, they range from marsh plantings to the use of rock sills in combination with beach nourishment.

Research continues to support that natural system approaches combat shoreline erosion, minimize impacts to the coastal ecosystem and reinforce the principle that an integrated approach for managing tidal shorelines enhances the probability that the resources will be sustained. Therefore, adoption of new guidance and shoreline best management practices for coastal communities is now necessary to insure that functions performed by coastal ecosystems will be preserved and the benefits derived by humans from coastal ecosystems will be maintained into the future.

In 2011, the Virginia Assembly passed legislation to amend §28.2-1100 and §28.2-104.1 of the Code of Virginia and added section §15.2-2223.2, to codify a new directive for shoreline management in Tidewater Virginia. In accordance with section §15.2-2223.2, all local governments shall include in the next revision of their comprehensive plan beginning in 2013, guidance prepared by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science (VIMS) regarding coastal resource management and, more specifically, guidance for the appropriate selection of living shoreline management practices where applicable. The legislation authorizes and encourages the use of living shorelines as the preferred alternative for stabilizing tidal shorelines.

This guidance, known as Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Plan, is being prepared by VIMS for localities within the Tidewater region of Virginia. It outlines where and what new shoreline best management practices should be considered where coastal modifications are necessary to reduce shoreline erosion and increase resilience of our coastal ecosystems. This guidance will include a full spectrum of appropriate management options which can be used by local governments for site-specific application and consideration of the sustainability of shoreline resources. The guidance applies a decision-tree method using a resource based mapping database that will be updated from time to time, and a digital geographic information system model created by VIMS.

Implementation Strategies

- Refer to the guidance presented in the locality's Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Plan (CCRMP) prepared by VIMS to guide regulation and policy decisions regarding shoreline erosion control.

- Utilize VIMS Decision Trees for onsite review and subsequent selection of appropriate erosion control/shoreline best management practices: http://ccrm.vims.edu/decisiontree!index.html.

- Utilize VIMS' CCRMP Shoreline Best Management Practices for management recommendations for tidal shorelines in the jurisdiction where applicable.

- Utilize VIMS/Coastal Zone Management/National Working Waterfronts Network resources for best management practices in working waterfront areas.

- Coordinate with Accomack County Wetlands Board to continue permitting traditional practices as the above Shoreline Best Management Practices become the recommended adaptation strategy for erosion control

- Encourage staff training on decision making tools developed by the Center for Coastal Resources Management at VIMS, and participation in the development of guidance which will apply in the Town of Chincoteague.

- Follow and participate in the development of the state-wide General Permit being developed by VMRC.

- Ensure that local policies are consistent with the provisions of the permit, and continue to allow traditional options where necessary for working waterfronts.

- Evaluate and consider a town-wide general permit to expedite shoreline applications that request actions consistent with the VIMS guidance.

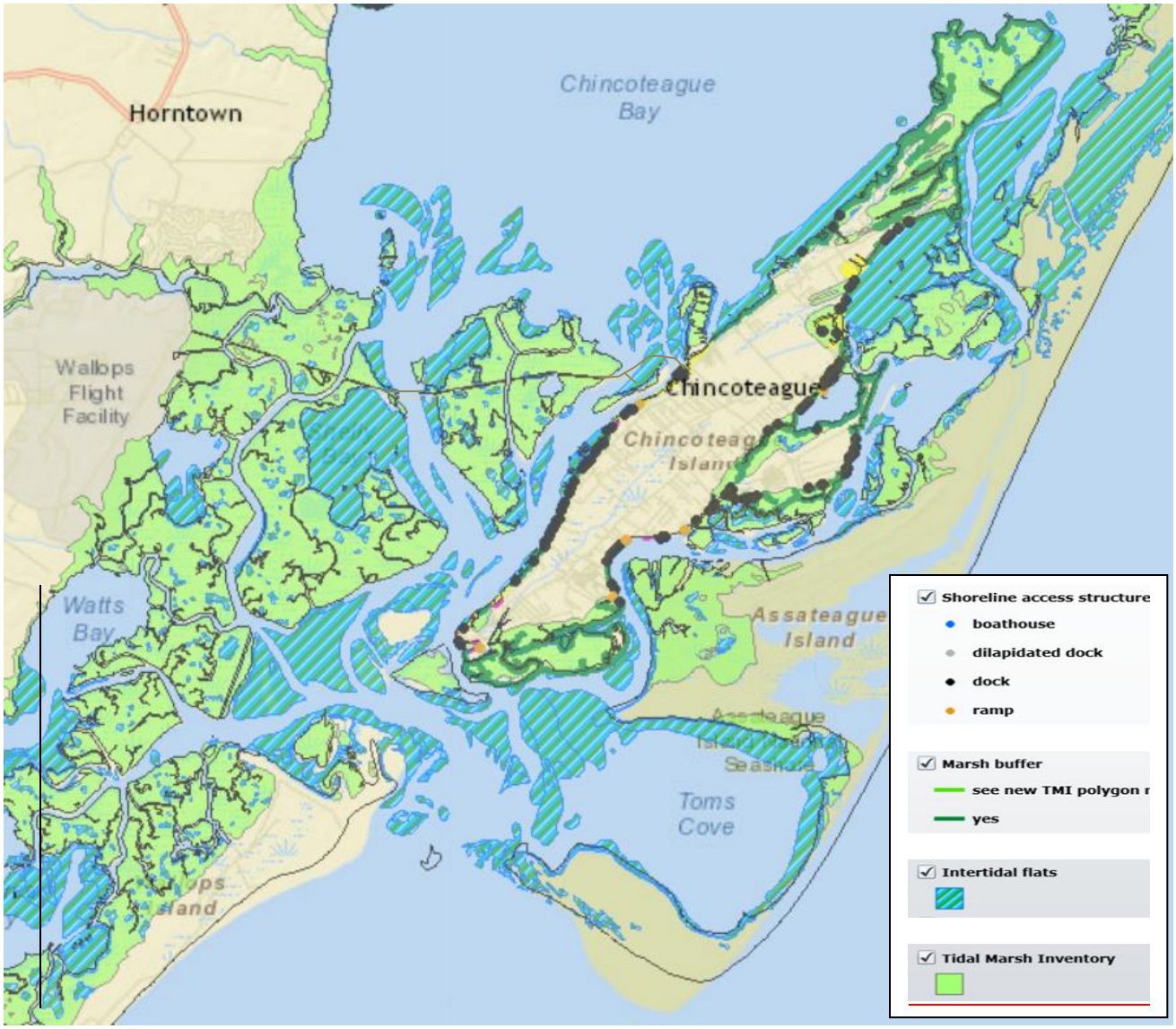
- Seek public outreach opportunities to educate citizens and stakeholders on new shoreline management strategies including Living Shorelines.

- Follow and participate in the development of integrated shoreline guidance under development by VMRC.

- Evaluate and consider a locality-wide regulatory structure that encourages a more integrated approach to shoreline management.

- Consider preserving available open spaces adjacent to marsh lands to allow for inland retreat of the marshes under rising sea level, along with other coastal defense options that protect and maintain critical infrastructure, property value, and the public health/safety/welfare of the Town residents..

- Evaluate and consider cost-share opportunities for construction of living shorelines.



Shoreline Assessment Map

(http://cmap.vims.edu/ShorelineAssessmentMapper_SL/ShorelineAssessmentMapperTestPage.html)

12) AGRICULTURE PLANNING AREA

GOAL: Continue to provide an area for agricultural practices on the Island

This land use area covers those portions of town occupied by various open spaces, forests, farmlands, beaches and parks. The agricultural land use area's purpose is to promote and encourage the development of agricultural and forest lands for continuing agricultural operations, and for the purpose of conserving essential lands and open spaces for the protection of natural resources and waters and the reduction of pollution, soil erosion, and hazards from floods, fires and ice storms.

Uses within this land use area should be limited to those agricultural and conservation uses that are harmonious current land use patterns. Any proposal for the conversion of such lands to another use shall be evaluated for its impact on the town's existing resources and needs, and may be authorized only after reasonable and orderly process in accordance with the review procedures and standards specified in the Town of Chincoteague Zoning Ordinance.

Implementation Strategies

- **Promote the continuation of current agricultural practices in this land use area.**

Annexation Areas

GOAL: Improve the Town's economic base.

The Town of Chincoteague should consider the possibility of annexing nearby lands that the Town and its governing body deem necessary and expedient for the continued well-being of the community and its citizens.

Chapter 4 Economic Development

Chincoteague owes its economic fortune to its serene and fertile coastal landscape. Windswept beaches, quiet village life, and thriving waterways have made it one of Virginia's premiere resort islands, world famous for its oyster beds and clam shoals. Its quaint setting has made it a favorite destination for two centuries of vacationing families. Today, it is the gateway to Assateague Island National Seashore and the Chincoteague Wildlife Refuge, welcoming over 1 million people a year to two national ~~landmarks.~~ destinations. Chincoteague shares the economic development goal of many other rural communities – to diversify and strengthen the local economy in a way that maintains our treasured local culture and increases year-round employment. New opportunities for economic development are now available to promote space tourism, Broadband access, and small businesses as they grow from home occupation to a renovated main street and along a new commercial gateway corridor.

Background

The famous "Chincoteague Oyster" is an important economic legacy of the Town.

The Island's earliest settlers subsisted mostly by farming and raising cattle and sheep. Land was used for crops and grazing. This was the case until the early 1800s when oysters, which had always been a popular~~, if not elegant,~~ seafood, became fashionable as a gourmet delicacy and were increasingly sought by the large populations of the East Coast's metropolitan areas. By the late-1800s seafood was the Island's main source of income. The Chincoteague oyster was famous up and down the Atlantic seaboard. By the early 1900s, watermen were also catching clams, crabs and fish, expanding the local industry and the Island's reputation as a seafood capital.

Decades of abundant oysters provided a steady economic base that enabled the Town to grow and prosper. The first efforts to restore depleted oyster bars by seeding them with young oysters began in 1922. While these efforts met with some success, oyster harvests continued to diminish through successive decades and Chincoteague's economic base began to change, moving away from seafood.

Tourism & Recreation

When the causeway to ~~the~~ Chincoteague Island opened in 1922 (around the same time the Town began to feel the economic effects of the declining oyster harvests), Chincoteague's major source of income began to shift from harvesting seafood to attracting visitors. The Island had long been popular for hunting, fishing, and vacationing

but until 1922, access ~~to~~ was only by boat. Steamers and passenger boats carried people to and from Chincoteague and Franklin City.

The new causeway gave travelers convenient automobile access to Chincoteague and city dwellers came in greater numbers from nearby urban centers to enjoy the beauty and charm of the small, island town. Ice cream parlors, hotels, boarding houses, beach cottages, and seafood restaurants dotted the Island, providing goods and service services to tourists and income to residents.

In 1924, the second of two major fires in four years spurred the Women's Auxiliary members of Chincoteague's fire department to create an annual summer event to raise money ~~to~~for improving~~e~~ the equipment and capabilities of the "all-volunteer" department. The fund-raising affair, a carnival during the annual pony penning, was held in 1925. It quickly became a nationally-recognized heritage event that drew thousands of people from across the country annually. By 1937, the Town was hosting an estimated 25,000 people for "Chincoteague Pony Penning Day". In 1947, Marguerite Henry published "Misty of Chincoteague," and the annual pony round-up became internationally famous. The round-up is still held in July during the Chincoteague Volunteer Firemen's Carnival and recent attendance estimates range from 35,000 to 50,000 people.

The Chincoteague Wildlife Refuge

In 1943, the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge was created on Assateague Island. The Refuge is located primarily on the Virginia side of Assateague Island. It consists of more than 14,000 acres of beach, dunes, marsh, and maritime forest. The opening of a bridge linking Assateague and Chincoteague Islands in 1962 continued to fuel~~ed~~ the growth in Chincoteague's tourism economy. The establishment of the Assateague Island National Seashore in 1965 increased the area's popularity as a destination for beach recreation.

The Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge and the Assateague Island National Seashore are primary recreation destinations throughout the country. The Wildlife Refuge is one of the top 5 shorebird staging areas in the U.S.

The Chincoteague Wildlife Refuge is now one of the top five shorebird migratory staging areas in the United States, east of the Rocky Mountains. The United States Department of the Interior has designated the area a National Natural Landmark in recognition of its outstanding natural values. Additionally, the Refuge has been designated a Globally Important Bird Area and is part of the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network, which is designated as one of the top ten birding "Hotspots" by the National Audubon Society.

With approximately 1.2 million visits a year, Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge is one of the most visited refuges in the nation. The Refuge's new Herbert H. Bateman Educational and Administrative Center, a state-of-the-art "green architecture" facility opened in 2003, offers 5,000 square feet of exhibits, a 125 seat auditorium, and a classroom/wet lab. This is in addition to the many outdoor recreational opportunities available throughout the Refuge and Seashore.

60 Year History (1954 to 2014)

The Town of Chincoteague's local economy and way of life rely on the assurance of Congressional Action/Public Law and recorded agreements with the Department of Interior. The National Refuge System is currently preparing new management plans for all refuges including Chincoteague NWR called Comprehensive Conservation Plans or CCPs. The CCP planning process currently underway has the potential to significantly impact the Town's economy for the better or worse by proposing management changes which do not honor the history of prior decisions.

- **1954** - Chincoteague Mayor Robert M. Reed reaches agreement with U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service to build a bridge to Assateague Island and a road to the Atlantic Ocean beach of the Refuge for the benefit of both Chincoteague and the FWS.

- **1957 to 1959** – Congress authorized the Department of Interior to grant a perpetual deed of easement from the United States of America to the Chincoteague-Assateague Bridge and Beach Authority (a political subdivision created by act of the General Assembly of Virginia in 1956) across Assateague Channel and the National Wildlife Refuge to the Atlantic Ocean beach of Assateague Island for public road access. To have and to hold by the Authority, its successors and assigns, this deed of easement would automatically cancel with non-use for a period of two years, or if abandoned.

- **1959** – By contract agreement (#14-16-008-573), the south end of Assateague Island was 'set over and assigned by the United States to the Authority', its successors and assigns, for public beach recreation over a term of 40 years ending in 1999 with automatic renewal for two successive terms of 15 years ending in 2014 and 2029.

- **1966** - The assets of the Authority, including the above deeded rights and contract agreement, were purchased through Congressional action, by the National Park Service, with taxpayer funds under the National Seashore authority, and have been formalized in the current Interagency Agreement between FWS/NPS.

- **2004** - The assigned area for public beach recreation was approved as a 'Compatible Use' with a 10 year re-evaluation date of 2014. This action updated the 1979 Memorandum of Understanding and the 1990 Inter Agency Agreement between FWS and NPS.

- **2011** – The USFWS plans to remove a section of Beach Road that would cut off historic access to the Beach and void the deeded access easement. Over 4 miles of 'assigned area' for public recreation is proposed to be replaced with a 1 mile area in a brand new location that would minimize human impacts to wildlife management areas.

- **2014** – A draft CCP was presented to the public with recommended changes to the current management plan which addressed many community concerns and will continue the planning process for relocation of the recreational beach over the next 3 to 8 years.

At the community's request, the US Fish and Wildlife Service included in its draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge a long awaited Economic Impact Analysis which evaluated possible management changes compared a baseline study of the local economy. The USFWS Division of Economics estimates a regional economic benefit of the seashore/refuge in Virginia at $113.8 million per year which supports approximately 1,794 jobs. The estimate for just the Town of Chincoteague is $42.4 million and 593 jobs.

The impact of reducing parking at the beach by half, either due to storm damage or as a FWS management change, is projected to reduce overall economic benefit by 34% ($38.6 million and 609 jobs). These impacts could hit the Chincoteague economy with devastating effects during the summer months when local business 'make it or break it' over a 4 month period.

The draft CCP recommends the selection of Alternative B which relocates the recreational beach area and maintains 961 parking spaces in a more stable area of Assateague Island that would be less susceptible to storm damage. This solution has not been designed and consequently was not included in the economic impact analysis to evaluate whether the visitor experience would be diminished in the new location. The Town will request that the site design, the economic analysis and a storm damage reduction plan by the US Army Corps of Engineers to be completed before any relocation

of the existing visitor facilities is initiated. A post-storm access plan is also recommended to minimize the impact of any temporary loss of visitor parking at the beach. With the slow and careful implementation of proposed management changes, the CCP will minimize any potential negative impacts to the tourism based economy.

Sport-fishing Recreation

Chincoteague benefits from its location alongside some of the most fertile sport-fishing grounds on the Mid-Atlantic coast. In the 1980s, Chincoteague successfully applied for a State grant for the construction of the Curtis Merritt Harbor of Refuge at the south end of the Island. Today the harbor offers 30', 40', and 50' length slips to a total of 97 vessels. The harbor is one of the two major ocean fishing ports on the Delmarva Peninsula (Ocean City is the other).

Sport-fishing is an important economic industry for Chincoteague.

Charter boats, party (or "head") boats, tour boats, and scenic cruises are offered by dozens of locally-owned small companies for inshore and offshore fishing and fly fishing, as well as cruising and sightseeing. The fishing season starts in the spring with the arrival of flounder. Coastal fishing is possible almost year-round, as autumn brings large numbers of species such as bluefish, sea bass, tautog and rockfish (striped bass).

The economic impact of sport fishing is felt far beyond the charter boat companies. Fishermen (men and women) come with "money to be spent" on food, lodging, fuel, bait and tackle as well as hotels, motels, bed and breakfasts, restaurants, hardware stores, gas stations, and grocery stores, which all provide services to anglers from out of town. Weigh-ins, fishing tournaments, and the daily action in an active marina are tourist attractions in their own right, as well, and add to the array of sightseeing opportunities available on the Island.

In ~~1998~~ 2011 the National Marine Fisheries Service published the "Economic Contribution of Marine Angler Expenditures in the United States, 2011", ~~Marine Angler Expenditure Survey in the Northeast Region,"~~ a report which showed that marine recreational fishing in Virginia contributed 9.5 thousand jobs to the state's economy, generated $970 million in output (sales), $627 million to the state's gross domestic product, and $386 million in income. Trip expenditures generated approximately 1.6 thousand jobs and durable expenses generated 7.8 thousand jobs. ~~fishing activity has risen 57% since 1994.~~ A ~~1998~~ 2011 National Marine Fisheries Service survey estimates

that $~~547~~ 923 million was spent by sport fishermen in Virginia, which includes the Eastern Shore.

Continual dredging of the Chincoteague Channel by the Army Corps of Engineers is required for easy access to both the harbor and the numerous docks surrounding the Island. Dredging occurs on an ongoing basis ~~and more frequently as needed~~ in order to keep the Island's waterways navigable.

Island Tourism

Today the Island's economy is dependent upon tourism. ~~At the 2002 World Ecotourism Summit, the United States State Department reported that in 1995, the Wildlife Refuge alone generated $21 million from non-resident visitors, supporting 545 local jobs.~~ In its summary of labor force statistics for Chincoteague, the ~~2000~~ 2008-2012 United States Census ACS estimates recorded that the largest percentage (24.6~~20~~%) of the Island's workers are employed in tourism and tourism-related industries such as arts, entertainment, recreation, accommodation and food services. Another ~~16~~6.3% of the Island's workforce ~~is~~ are employed in the Town's retail industry, which is dominated by tourist-oriented gift boutiques, apparel, and souvenir shops, and 14.6% are employed in professional, scientific, management, and administrative fields.

The Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce takes the lead in promotion of Chincoteague Island for tourism. The Executive Director of the Chamber is identified by the Commonwealth of Virginia as the designated tourism official for the Town. The Chamber organizes the Seafood Festival and the Oyster Festival, provides tourism information on a daily basis, works to promote the Chincoteague brand and destination marketing, and provides website services for its membership. As a result of hard work and the exceptional experiences that the area can offer, Chincoteague and Assateague Islands have received numerous accolades over the last several years.

Festivals and special events are held all year long to help promote the Island as a year-round tourist destination, including:

- Easter Decoy and Art Festival and Auction – April;
- Annual International Migratory Bird Celebration – May;
- ~~Blessing of the Fleet – May;~~
- Seafood Festival – May;
- Chincoteague Volunteer Fireman's Carnival – June and July;
- Annual Blueberry Festival – July;
- Annual Pony Swim and Auction – July;
- Chincoteague Decoy Carvers Association Decoy Show – August or September;
- Motorcycle Poker Run - September
- Chincoteague Oyster Festival – September or October;
- Chili Chowder Cook Off- October;

- Assateague Island Waterfowl Week – November;
- YMCA 'Chin-dig' Festival – November
- Deborah Waterfowl Show and Auction – November; ~~and~~
- Christmas Tree Lighting and Old Fashioned Christmas Parade – December: and~~.~~
- New Years Eve 'Horseshoe Drop' and Island Theatre Concert

The Chincoteague Cultural Alliance, a non-profit arts organization, hosts regularly scheduled events year-round that attract residents and visitors of all ages. On every second Saturday between April and December, the Alliance hosts "Second Saturdays", when participating Chincoteague Island galleries and shops remain open from 6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m., offering special events including arts and crafts demonstrations and exhibits, readings and book signings, live music, and wine tastings. The Alliance also sponsors an annual "House Concert" series, held at different locations around the Island and featuring contemporary, traditional, and original music performed by nationally-known artists.

Accommodations in Chincoteague include over 21~~0~~ hotels or motels, about a half dozen bed and breakfast establishments, and dozens of rental homes, cottages, efficiencies, and apartments. High peak season occupancy rates indicate that additional overnight accommodations of this type will be necessary, if the number of overnight visitors to the Island increases. [1] There are four campgrounds on Chincoteague with approximately 1,143 sites: ~~1)~~ Maddox~~, which has 339 hook-ups and 250 tent sites~~; ~~2)~~ Tom's Cove~~, which has 914 camp sites and 24 mobile home sites~~; ~~3)~~ Inlet View~~, which has 300 sites, 4 cottages and 5 mobile homes~~; and ~~4)~~ Pine Grove~~, which has 150 campsites~~. Each of these sites report they are about 70% to 80% full from June through Labor Day.[2]

~~In 2000, about 83%~~Approximately 80% of Accomack County's tourist-related tax revenue ~~was~~ is generated by the Town of Chincoteague. ~~Proportions were higher in 1998 and 1996. About 87% of tourism tax revenue was generated by Chincoteague in 1998 and approximately 85% in 1996.~~ Chincoteague ~~also~~ charges its own 4~~3~~% occupancy tax (in addition to the 2% occupancy tax charged by the County) as well as a 5~~2~~% meal tax. ~~The tax revenues generated decreased slightly in Accomack County between 1998 and 2000, while the tax revenue generated in Chincoteague increased.~~[3]A baseline economic analysis was completed for the Town of Chincoteague by the USFWS Division of Economics in

[1] *Source: Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel Toll Impact Study, October 2001.*
[2] *Source: Ibid*
[3] ~~*Source: Accomack County and Northampton County Commissioners of Revenue and Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce*~~

January 2013 which documents the value of recreational tourism to the local and regional economy from job creation and tax revenues.

Chincoteague Town Tourist and Non-Tourist Employment by Month, 2010

Month	Tourist-related Businesses	Non-Tourist related Businesses	Total
Jan	573	284	857
Feb	577	292	869
March	584	302	886
April	695	333	1,028
May	797	340	1,137
June	941	356	1,297
July	949	391	1,340
August	975	362	1,337
September	859	359	1,218
October	730	309	1,039
November	601	303	904
December	580	295	875
Annual range	573 - 975	284 - 391	857 - 1,340

Source: Virginia Employment Commission 2011

Town of Chincoteague: Lodging and Food Excise Tax Collected: 2004-2010
(dollars in thousands)

	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Lodging Excise tax Collected	$328.4	$339.0	$358.4	$384.0	$573.4	$620.0	$602.8
Food Service Excise tax Collected	$433.1	$434.3	$435.0	$451.0	$452.2	$480.7	$487.1
Total Excise Tax collected	$761.5	$773.3	$793.4	$835.0	$1,025.6	$1,100.7	$1,089.9

Source: Virginia Tourism Corporation 2011

Seafood & Aquaculture

While the harvesting of seafood played a significant historical role in the economic development of Chincoteague, its gradual diminishment from a once-thriving industry continued through the mid 1900s~~ until the 1980s and 1990s, when disease destroyed much of what was left of the oyster stock. The end of the 1990s brought a downward spiral of the oyster industry and lingering economic effects on Chincoteague~~.

Some watermen switched to clamming in an effort to maintain their livelihoods. Clam aqua farming had been in practice to a limited extent but in the 1990s, it began to increase. Since then, it has become increasingly important to the Island's economy. Virginia has offered leases to watermen to plant and harvest shellfish on the bottom of bays and rivers since the 1800s. The practice was increased in the early 1900s to try to boost dwindling oyster harvests by cultivating and planting oyster 'seeds' or spat on depleted beds. By the end of the 1980s, as disease destroyed even the new oysters, watermen with leased oyster beds sought new sources of income from the once fertile beds. Clams were chosen because of their resistance to disease and their ability to thrive in the same high-salinity waters that once nurtured oysters.

The Virginia clam aqua farming industry has shown tremendous growth since the 1990s. Aqua farming produced close to $~~30~~ 34 million for Virginia clam farmers ~~between September 2005 and 2006 alone~~. The 2002 Accomack-Northh~~ H~~ampton Planning District Commission's Regional Housing Assessment cited that recent growth in aqua farming for clams has resulted in the creation of jobs that pay better than the poultry industry and other jobs in the area.

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science reported in ~~2006~~ 2014 that ~~clam growers increased~~ seed plantings ~~by 39% between 2004 and 2005~~for hard clams have stabilized over the last 5 years at around 500 million, while oysters show a significant increase up to 138 million planted in 2014. [4] ~~While reporting from 2006 is not yet complete, data indicates a further increase in seed planting of 20% to 25% during 2006. A recent crop reporting survey indicates an estimated 19% increase in market clams sold during 2005. In 2005, as in 2004, 90% of the market clams grown in Virginia were shipped to out-of-state markets.~~

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science reports that growth in production of seed has accompanied the expansion of the industry, with an estimated 95% of seed produced being planted in Virginia. Aqua farms have expanded to accommodate the increase in demand, and report ~~an increase in~~a stable employment forecast of both full time ~~(+9 percent)~~ and part time ~~(+22 percent)~~ personnel.~~; an overall growth in employment of 13%.~~[5]

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[4] *Source: Virginia Institute of Marine Science Results of Virginia Shellfish Aquaculture Crop Reporting Survey ~~2004-2006~~2013*

[5] *Source: Ibid.*

Areas of Chincoteague Bay, which has good soil and high salinity content, are currently being leased by aqua farmers, who have met with some success in growing clams. Based on the success of the aqua farming efforts in other areas of coastal Virginia, The State of Maryland, Ocean Trust and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries are working with local aqua farmers in Chincoteague Bay and providing financial and technical assistance to help revive the region's once-thriving seafood industry.

Wallops Island Area

The Wallops Island Area is a major employment center for the region. More than 1,000 people work within the cluster of engineering, aerospace, and naval operations that include National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the United States Navy, and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration Wallops Flight Facility and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport, both located on Wallops Island, provide the only licensed rocket launch facility on the Atlantic Coast other than Cape Canaveral.

Wallops Island provides the only licensed rocket launch facility on the Atlantic Coast other than Cape Canaveral in Florida.

The United States Navy Surface Combat Systems Center is comprised of over 400 military, civilian, and contractor personnel who provide engineering, training, and base operations support to the United States Fleet. Not only are there a relatively large number of jobs, they are also relatively high-skill and high-wage jobs.

~~The Eastern Shore Defense Alliance was established to support the missions of the Center by providing mutual support among contractors and serving as a resource of area employment. The Alliance has recently expanded the membership to include key economic development government representatives from Virginia as members, including the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission's Economic Development Director. The Alliance's new focus is on creating new jobs for the region through the growth of United States Navy operations at Wallops. Three project areas have been identified that have significant growth potential for the base: 1) development and testing of unmanned aerial vehicles; 2) joint activities with the United States Navy aviation~~

~~facility at Pautuxent River; and 3) a new building to support the development of the upcoming DD(X) ship defense system.~~

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Management Education Center is also located on Wallops Island. Attendees at seminars and training held at the Education Center and other visitors stay at motels on Chincoteague, generating millions of dollars in food, beverage and lodging sales in the Town often during non-peak season months.[6] Chincoteague's service industries also benefit substantially from the proximity of the Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility on Wallops Island. More than 1000 people are employed at the facility and reside in or near the town of Chincoteague. This creates a significant demand for services, including electrical, plumbing and automobile repair, cleaning, carpentry, and health and child care.

NASA Wallops Flight Facility was selected as one of six unmanned aircraft system (UAS) test sites by the Federal Aviation Administration in 2014. The FAA has selected UAS test site operators that will allow the agency to develop research findings and operational experiences to help ensure the safe integration of UAS into the nation's airspace as we transition to a system featuring NextGen technologies and procedure. NASA's Langley Research Center in Hampton and NASA's Wallops Flight Facility on Virginia's Eastern Shore are expected to work with a team from Virginia Tech to conduct UAS failure mode testing and identify and evaluate operational and technical risks areas from test site range locations in both Virginia and New Jersey.

Goddard Space Flight Center - Wallops Flight Facility

The National Aeronautics and Space Administration Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility adds another tourism asset to the region and is a major employment center. Within a short driving distance from Chincoteague, the facility employs 750 full time workers. It shares space with the United States Navy's Surface Combat Systems Center, which employs 300 people and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Command and Data Acquisition Station, which employs 100 people.

The facility is also home to the newly developed ~~Virginia Space Flight Center~~Mid Atlantic Regional Spaceport~~, a commercial space port~~. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration Wallops Island Visitors Center hosts weekly programs, hands-on exhibits, and education activities. The Center estimates that they receive an average of 50,000-60,000 visitors per year. The National Aeronautics and Space Administration plans to expand the Visitors Center to double its present

[6] *Town of Chincoteague Downtown Revitalization Plan Downtown Market Study, 2001*

exhibit space and to include the range of activities undertaken by all federal entities located on Wallops Island.[7]

Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS)

The Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport is located at the ~~Virginia Space~~NASA Wallops Flight ~~Center~~ Facility on Wallops Island. The center was ~~created~~ expanded by the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority~~. It will~~ and operates in partnership with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and ~~Dyn-Space,~~Orbital Sciences Corporation, a private commercial space industry partner in the project to provide timely low-cost access to space. The launch pads ~~has~~ have been constructed, in part with funding from the United States Economic Development Administration. The Center for Excellence, a consortium of industry, government, and academia, will provide technical/vocational, secondary, and higher education opportunities relating to the technology and processes involved in aerospace activities. It is envisioned that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Wallops Flight Facility and the ~~Virginia Space Flight Center spaceport~~ MARS activities will provide a "hands-on" laboratory to support the learning process.

~~The Flight Center also~~MARS will also provide space launch facilities and support services to commercial, government and scientific customers on a fee basis. It will ~~offer~~ support a full complement of launch-range services by NASA including safety monitoring, telemetry, radar tracking, command, control and communications, and data retrieval and processing. The addition of payload processing and integration facilities will add offices, a lab, and test and evaluation areas to support operations. Eventually, the ~~center~~ spaceport will be able to provide a wide array of additional services related to satellite design, assembly and launch.

The ~~Virginia Space Flight Center's~~ key competitive advantage of MARS is that the cost of launching from its facility will be an estimated 65% cheaper than what is now available at sites in California and Florida. Second to cost is the advantage of no scheduling interferences with military or space shuttle missions. As the development of the ~~Virginia Space Flight Center~~Mid Atlantic Regional S~~s~~paceport continues, the potential exists for significant positive economic impacts to Chincoteague.

Wallops Research Park

The presence of an aerospace industry cluster on nearby Wallops Island provides Chincoteague with a major advantage over many rural Eastern Shore

[7] *Town of Chincoteague Downtown Revitalization Plan Downtown Market Study, 2001*

communities. The potential for skilled career opportunities and an above-average income level being the most prominent. The facilities on Wallops Island already offer careers for hundreds of engineers and technicians. The development of ~~the Virginia Space Flight Center~~ commercial rocket launches has the potential to attract hundreds of new jobs in the aerospace industry.

Companies that have shown an interest in the Space Flight Center all require a location in very close proximity to the Center to facilitate transporting finished rockets and pay-loads. However, the closest existing site suitable for industrial development is the Accomack Airport Industrial Park, located thirty miles away. To solve this problem, Accomack County created a task force to spearhead the development of a business park and learning center near the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Wallops Island Facility. Members include representatives from the National Aeronautics and Space Administration and the Virginia Space Flight Center as well as the Accomack County Administrator and County staff. The task force identified a potential site just outside the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Wallops Facility main gate. The site, ~~to be~~ named Wallops Research Park, is owned by four entities: 1) Accomack County; 2) the National Aeronautics and Space Administration; 3) the Marine Science Consortium; and 4) the United States Navy. A preliminary engineering report, phase one environmental review, and development plan have been completed for the site. Construction of the Research Park infrastructure is scheduled for completion by the end of 2014.

Eastern Shore Defense Alliance

The Eastern Shore Defense Alliance was established to support the missions of the Center by providing mutual support among contractors and serving as a resource of area employment. The Alliance has recently expanded the membership to include key economic development government representatives from Virginia as members, including the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission's Economic Development Director. The Alliance's new focus is on creating new jobs for the region through the growth of United States Navy operations at Wallops. Three project areas have been identified that have significant growth potential for the base: 1) development and testing of unmanned aerial vehicles; 2) joint activities with the United States Navy aviation facility at Pautuxent River; and 3) a new building that~~o~~ supports the development of the ~~upcoming~~ DD(X) ship defense system.

The Eastern Shore Defense Alliance is working to preserve and grow the operations of the United States Navy at Wallops Island. The Alliance includes contractors, local government representatives from Maryland and Virginia, and other community representatives. Current operations in combat systems development and training may expand to include the development of unmanned

aerial vehicles and other advanced systems. The Surface Combat Systems Center at Wallops Island creates engineering and technical jobs that are higher-skilled and pay well above the average wage rate in the region. By building on this existing asset the Alliance hopes to add more of these high quality jobs.

Economic Development Opportunities

Chincoteague's proximity to Assateague Island National Seashore and the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge continues to be its largest economic development opportunity. Over one million people a year come through the Town on their way to these two national~~ landmarks~~destinations. The Town's dining establishments and accommodations, including small seafood restaurants, pizza and sub shops, rustic campgrounds and cottages, and small motels, have adequately served the visitors who have traditionally come to the area for decades. However, tourist needs have changed and the Town's tourism offerings may need to change with them. Both Heritage and eco tourism have become very popular in the United States. The Town needs to continue to ~~be sensitive to these types~~expand activities for a variety of tourist~~s~~ opportunities and promote the Town as a destination for eco and heritage tourists.

Numerous possibilities exist to add arts and cultural venues to enhance Chincoteague's already appealing attributes. During its 2006 session, at the request of the Town, the Virginia Legislature granted Chincoteague the authority by Ordinance to establish a "Virginia Arts and Cultural District" within its boundaries. Chincoteague is one of only six municipalities in the state that have been recognized with this distinction.

The intent of an Arts and Cultural District is to provide incentives for the support and creation of arts and cultural organizations and businesses located within district boundaries. Chincoteague may grant tax incentives in the district, including reduction of permit fees, reduction of user fees; and reduction of any type of gross receipts tax. The Town may also provide incentives in the form of regulatory flexibility in the district, including special zoning, permit process reform, and exemption from ordinances. Any incentives adopted by the Town are binding for a period of up to 10 years. ~~In May 2006, the Town Council voted unanimously to create an Arts Sub-committee to advise the Town Council and the Planning Commission on the proposed Arts and Cultural District.~~

~~The Arts Sub-committee also will work with the Planning Commission on relevant design and preservation issues in the Town. This includes the review and/or creation of ordinances and to assist with the review of project proposals submitted to the Commission regarding architectural and landscape design and impact on historic resources. The sub-committee will research grants and other sources of funding for additional revenues to support arts and cultural programs in the Town. The sub-committee also will~~ The Chincoteague Island Arts Organization (CIAO) was incorporated in Virginia as a non-profit organization in December 2011 with the goal to establish a cultural arts center on Chincoteague Island to share film, performing arts,

education programs, and other entertainment with our community and visitors. Through private investment, the Island Theater was fully restored and opened in 2014. CIAO is encouraged to establish partnerships with the Virginia Main Street Program, the Chincoteague Main Street Merchant Association, the Chincoteague Cultural Alliance, and other Island organizations. Chincoteague ~~has taken several~~continues to take significant steps to revitalize its downtown and improve its streetscape, but more remains to be done.

Downtown Revitalization Program

~~First and foremost,~~ Chincoteague completed a Downtown Revitalization Master Plan in 2001. The initiatives and recommendations made in that document were well planned and prioritized on a comprehensive scale. These recommendations should continue to be implemented

In addition to conducting its own downtown revitalization study in 2001, Chincoteague is one of five towns who have joined together to support a regional downtown revitalization program staffed by the regional Planning District Commission. The regional program works with merchant associations in providing planning and implementation assistance to create and sustain successful revitalization programs.

The program follows the four points of the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program (promotion, design, economic restructuring and organization). Projects that have been undertaken as part of the program include Chincoteague's newly completed waterfront park and Exmore's installation of a downtown wastewater treatment system. Small revolving loan funds are in place in each town and have been used to help finance four new businesses. Merchants in each town organize to promote special events, design streetscape and building facade improvements, and existing businesses expand.

To date, Chincoteague and the town of Exmore have received funding from the Virginia Department of Community Development, the Department of Transportation, and United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development program for construction of streetscape improvements and the establishment of loan-pools for business expansion and facade improvements.[8]

~~**"Green" Hotel/Conference Center and Resort**~~

~~Chincoteague lies directly in the path of hundreds of thousands of eco-tourists, who travel each year to Assateague Island and the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. Additionally, the Island is in close proximity to the National Aeronautics and Space Administration Management Education Center, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and other facilities in the Wallops Island Area, which host conferences~~

[8] Source: 2004 Eastern Shore of Virginia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

~~and workshops. A hotel/conference center on Chincoteague Island with a mission of conservation, that embraces green architecture and sustainable design would have significant appeal to the thousands of naturalists who come to Chincoteague for work or for a vacation.~~

~~A "Green" resort complex would be ideally suited to the natural unspoiled beauty of Chincoteague and at the same time, fulfill the Island's need for modern all-inclusive facilities that are capable of accommodating an ample number of visitors year-round. Such a complex could be designed using much of the low impact techniques and systems found in the Wildlife Refuge's new Bateman Educational and Administrative Center, including geothermal energy to heat and cool buildings; low-flow and waterless restroom fixtures coupled with a constructed wetlands system to recycle wastewater; recycled products and renewable natural resources such as recycled rubber tires, cork and bamboo flooring; ceiling beams made from wood byproducts, and recycled carpet that contains no petroleum products. Plantings and landscaping could include native species to provide important food and shelter to wildlife. By allotting 90% fenestration of all building exteriors, the hotel/resort complex could maximize the use of natural light and offer daylight and scenic views throughout each building. The complex could minimize impact on fish and wildlife resources by being located in an area already disturbed or impacted by development, such as a campground or a residential area.~~

Year-Round Economic Activity

As the ~~2002~~ 2010 Comprehensive Plan stated, a stable year-round economy will ensure the longevity of Chincoteague as a hometown and as a resort. With the planned expansion of facilities and employment on Wallops Island, as well as the likely increase in year-round housing units on Chincoteague Island in the event of installation of a sewer system, the mostly tourist and seasonal resident customer base of many Island businesses will likely expand to include a larger number of full-time year-round clientele. This bodes well for local businesses of all types, but particularly for service industries such as home improvement and repair, health and medical care, child care, and financial and investment services.

While state, national and regional trends indicate an increasingly larger proportion of senior citizens in future populations, Chincoteague and the areas around it could experience a fairly even increase in all age groups over the next five to ten years, given the prospective increase in employees coming to Wallops Island, most of whom will presumably be younger and have families.

It is unlikely that Chincoteague will experience a major surge in new businesses because there is only a limited amount of land on the Island available for commercial development. Rather, the economic opportunities will lie in the year-round growth in local business activity and the possible expansion of existing businesses to fulfill the needs of a growing population. New business development can be expected to some

extent, as voids are discovered and filled, but the real promise will lie in the ability of seasonally-operated businesses to extend operations beyond summer months and capably support the local workforce year-round.

Eastern Shore of Virginia Heritage Trail & Seaside Water Trail

Chincoteague is a site on the Eastern Shore of Virginia Heritage Trail, a driving tour of the historic, scenic, birding, and natural sites in Accomack and Northampton Counties. The Trail was developed with "Transportation Enhancement Funds" from the Virginia Department of Transportation. This effort was in response to the growing trend in heritage tourism around the country and the success heritage tourism programs have had in the Mid-Atlantic region.

The Seaside Water Trail was developed by the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission in cooperation with Accomack County, Northampton County, the Town of Chincoteague, the Town of Wachapreague, and the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program. Two new floating docks have been installed in the Towns of Chincoteague and Wachapreague to provide improved canoe, kayak and public access to the Seaside Water Trail. This trail connects the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge with the Virginia National Wildlife Refuge. The entire trail is over 70 miles long. The Chincoteague floating dock is located at the Town's Eastside Landing Dock off Eastside Landing Road. A new "Seaside Water Trail Brochure" will guide kayakers along the length of the trail and will be printed and made available on the web at www.a-npdc.org.

Regional Partners

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Partnership is a group of more than 30 local business, government, civic and educational leaders. The Partnership is pursuing seven economic development projects considered to be of great importance to the region.

The Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission focuses on regional planning, housing, and community development issues, and provides staff for the Economic Development Commission. The Virginia Eastern Shore Economic Empowerment and Housing Corporation is the lead entity for the federally designated Enterprise Community. The Corporation operates a microenterprise revolving loan fund along with other community development programs.

The Accomack-Northampton Regional Housing Authority (A-NRHA), which is housed under the auspices of the A-NPDC works on housing issues on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The A-NRHA primarily works to provide housing solutions for workforce families, low-income families and the elderly. The Housing Choice Voucher Program is the A-NRHA's largest.

Enterprise Zone Projects

Part of the Town of Chincoteague is in a State-designated Enterprise Zone. Virginia Enterprise Zones provide grants for qualifying companies that create new full-time jobs or improve commercial real estate. Two substantial financial incentives are available to encourage business locations and expansions within the Zone:

Real Property Improvement Grants: Commercial real estate construction or improvement projects that meet minimum thresholds are eligible for a grant of up to 30% of the total cost of qualified improvements (maximum amount not to exceed $125,000 in a 5-year period). The grants are made after the project is complete. New construction projects must cost at least $250,000. Rehabilitated or expanded real property requires a minimum investment of at least $50,000. The purchase price of the real estate is not included in the investment calculation. Residential projects are not eligible. Mixed-use projects that are at least 30% business use can qualify for a grant.

Job Grants: Businesses that create at least 4 new full-time jobs may be eligible to receive job creation grants, for a maximum of 350 eligible jobs per year. Jobs paying 200% of the federal minimum wage and providing health benefits will be eligible for a grant of $800 per year for five years. Jobs paying less than 200% of minimum wage, but at least 175% (and providing health benefits) will be eligible for a grant of $500 per year for five years. Jobs paying less than 175% of minimum wage will not be eligible for job grants. Job grants are not available to retail, local service or food/beverage service businesses.

Implementation Strategies

Main Street Revitalization

The relocation of the bridge presents both opportunities and challenges for the economic development of the town center. The challenge is ensuring that the historic town shopping area continues to attract shoppers and businesses and continues to thrive. The Town believes that it is imperative to retain the existing cluster of businesses located in the Town Center and to encourage new business start-ups. The Town also believes that the best means of achieving this end is to retain the unique pedestrian scale oriented characteristics of the area and maintain its strong linkage to the waterfront. To this end, the following strategies are recommended:

- Ensure the public, property owners, and merchants are included in the development of overall plans and policies as key stakeholders.

- Seek out state funding from the Virginia Department of Transportation, Community Development Block Grants, and other programs to assist economic efforts.

- Apply for state grants from the Virginia Department of Transportation to repair or replace bulkheads and piers for overnight dockage, charter, and tour boats.

- ~~Build a~~Extend the boardwalk along the waterfront of Main Street and pedestrian walkways from the waterfront to Main Street.

- Determine placement for bike paths in this area and connect to other bike paths identified in the Town's bike plan.

- Lease transient boat slips to offset costs and upkeep.

- Obtain easements from adjoining property owners for a waterfront boardwalk.

- Create tax incentives, for example, a tax credit equal to a percentage of construction expenses for property owners to make appropriate façade improvements on buildings fronting on Main Street.

- Create low-interest loan pools for property owners to make appropriate façade improvements on buildings fronting on Main Street.

- Apply for state grants from the Virginia Department of Transportation to bury utility lines and install new lighting from Cropper Street to Maddox Boulevard with new sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, and a new gateway treatment to the island.

- Promote the establishment residential over commercial.

- Actively seek alternative parking strategies downtown.

Balanced Year-Round Economy

Increasing year-round economic activity is "good for business." It also benefits the Town and its residents through increased local revenue and business opportunities. The following strategies are intended to help achieve this end:

- Promote more year-round economic activity that takes advantage of the unique historic and cultural character of the Town.

- Promote sound local economies by conserving the Island's unique values and providing protections from developments that may cause irreversible damage. The Island's natural attributes and its heritage are its most valuable economic resources.

- Encourage development that enhances the environmental, historic, and scenic qualities of the Island to promote a healthy coastal environment to foster economic vitality.

- Encourage efforts to diversify the Island economy consistent with the quality and character of the existing Chincoteague Island.

- Give top priority to year-round job opportunities for permanent Island residents and increase the Island's self-sufficiency to diversify the economic base so that the Island will be less reliant on the tourist trade.

- Private initiatives will influence the future of the Island at least as much as government regulations. Encourage creative and environmentally sound economic initiatives, ensure that regulations affecting small businesses do not cause unnecessary burdens and review regulations that might discourage new small business start-ups.

- Where appropriate, encourage water-dependent maritime uses of coastal land.

- Promote necessary economic support for sport and commercial fishing.

- Promote and encourage enhanced relationships between the Town and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.

Tourism, Real Estate, & Seasonal Businesses

Chincoteague Island is a nature resort, where attraction is based on its environmental quality and natural beauty. Investment in these resources is essential to a healthy economy.

Both sport and commercial fishing are part of the essence of the tourist experience of Chincoteague Island and generate a substantial local economy, compatible with the protection of Island resources. Opportunities for direct participation in the Island's natural environment through activities such as fishing, boating, swimming, beachcombing, hiking, biking, horseback riding and shopping for local products make Chincoteague Island a unique place to visit.

The following strategies are intended to ensure that this component of the Island's economic engine continues:

- The island's qualities should be preserved for summer residents, visitors, and taxpayers as well as for those who live on Chincoteague Island year-round.

- Foster a more welcoming attitude towards visitors by developing information and welcoming facilities both on- and off- Island.

- Recognize the importance of the summer economy as a base for the year-round economy and manage it through public and private actions including infrastructure and capital planning.

- Educate the public about the tourist economy on Chincoteague.

Economic Impact Study

- Encourage the commission of an economic impact study to include the following:

1. Economic Baseline Study Update – Document levels of economic activity in Island business. Look for measures of growth such as sales tax figures, bank and insurance activity, employment and unemployment, commercial utilities accounts, licenses granted. Plot trends in economic activity annually and project future areas of growth. Find stable and sustainable levels of economic activity based on long-term trends rather than boom-and-bust cycles. Study the income generated by different Island industries and identify industries that recycle their income back into the Island economy.

2. Year-Round Employment – Document year-round employment including numbers of jobs by industry.

3. Alternative Trades – Research other examples of resort and rural communities for possible new industries and types of employment.

4. Crafts Cooperatives – Encourage local outlets for Island crafts, especially where opportunities for Island artisans can be encouraged.

5. Commercial Rents – Study the range of rents paid and develop measures to offset costs for year-round businesses.

6. Local Investment – Encourage businesses to invest through local institutions to use local labor and materials and to patronize Island businesses. Identify purchasing and contracting that uses off-Island vendors and encourage the development of local sources for local vendors.

7. Manage Resources With Economic Value – Natural, historical, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources are the prime Island "export." Maximize the potential of a clean environment, restore and protect historic buildings and areas, and manage and expand recreational uses.

8. Develop Education Programs to Strengthen Local Economy – Teach subjects that focus on Island heritage: history, environment, marine-biology, and link these programs with opportunities for hands-on experience and job awareness.

9. Monitor Consumer Prices – Survey Island prices for consumer goods at regular intervals and inform the public so that businesses can monitor themselves in terms of prices.

10. Waterfront Resources – Encourage the development of waterfront zoning bylaws that are protective of coastal environments and their traditional Island uses.

11. Local Management of Tourism – The Town should continue to take some responsibility for the ongoing planning of tourist facilities including restrooms and for educational programs to better manage tourism.

12. Cost Benefit Analysis of Tourist Economy – Study the impacts of each segment of the tourist economy and identify costs and benefits. Identify portions of the summer economy that should be encouraged.

13. Educate – Educate the public about the tourist economy through school programs community workshops and literature at arrival points.

14. Make the Island More User-Friendly – Design specific features to orient and educate visitors including brochures, historic plaques and markers, transportation symbols, guidebooks. The Town should encourage active website design and maintenance, for the Town itself and for businesses.

15. Marketing the Island to Specific Clientele – Pool resources to advertise with campaigns specifically designed to boost the desired parts of the economy (i.e. Birders/Nature Enthusiasts).

16. Higher Education as an Industry – Explore the potential for high school and college level research and credit programs to attract off-season economic activity.

Fishing & Island Seafood Industries

- Promote policies on protecting the Island Seafood Industry. Seafood harvesting is an ancient determinant of the Island's character and land use. Ensure that it remains a visible part of the landscape.

- Protect the seafood industry from changes in attitudes and ensure sufficient land is zoned for this activity. Prevent conflicts with residential land uses.

- Encourage and foster the local seafood and aquaculture economies for the benefit of the whole island economy and character. The availability of local seafood, as well as the opportunity to "catch" local seafood, is essential features for the Island experience.

- Encourage economic activities, which are positive additions to the rural Island environment.

- Encourage boating and fishing activities for the well being of the Island economy, particularly tourism. Recognize the importance of commercial and sport fisheries to the local economy.

- Create jobs for the skills and working habits of the year-round labor force, in industries, which will prudently utilize the Island's natural resources.

- Encourage the development of small-scale industries to enhance the year-round economy.

Planning for Commercial Growth

- Keep existing business districts vital and workable.

- Restore and renovate historic buildings as an alternative to new construction, wherever possible.

- Support planned economic growth.

- Encourage commercial development to match the scale and density of Island neighborhoods. Limit overall square footage, massing of individual buildings, and expanses of paved areas to blend with the rural scale of the Island. Provide an appropriate rhythm of buildings along streetscapes with view corridors to the coast, wherever possible. Prevent strong shadowing effects from buildings near public coastlines and parks.

- Town Centers – Maintain services and year-round uses in existing Town commercial centers for pedestrian access and community identity. Address parking and traffic issues and sewage and septic needs.

- Positive Incentives – Develop incentives to direct commercial growth to desired locations.

- Home Businesses – Continually update and develop standards for home businesses to avoid conflicts with residential uses.

Education Partnerships/Workforce Development

Chincoteague will encourage partnerships which seek to improve educational opportunities for all ages to obtain training needed to succeed in both high technology and natural resource industries. Strategies listed below will encourage a strong broad based economy for the future which balances private and public sector careers that provide both generate value and prosperity while re-investing tax revenues in the region.

- Eastern Shore Community College campus at Wallops Research Park
- Enroll students in career and technical education programs
- Engage universities and colleges in regional economic development, e.g., through current activities at Wallops Island
- Provide small business incubator space centrally located in the regional district that is easily accessible and satisfies workforce training and business development needs and programs.
- Continue a targeted marketing effort to determine how best to "brand" and "sell" the region to potential new businesses and entrepreneurs
- Improve broadband access for e-commerce and tourism marketing
- Support dual enrollment (whereby high school students take college-level classes for college credit) between high schools and higher education institutions.
- Encourage, expand, and pursue funding for internships, apprenticeships, and co-ops.
- Pursue education/training funds for middle-income population that does not qualify for other assistance.

Chapter 5 Community Facilities & Services

As shown on Map 3, community facilities and services provided by the Town and other government agencies, to ensure the public's health, safety and welfare, must be monitored continually. This ensures that they are able to meet current and projected demand. The Town must have the ability to anticipate when and where expanded capacity will be needed for basic infrastructure such as roads, streets and sidewalks, sewer and water services, and storm drainage systems. Public facilities and services such as schools, parks, libraries, health care, and police and fire protection, also should be monitored to ensure availability when needed.

Significant changes and completed projects have occurred within the last 5 years including:

- Renovation of the old elementary school gym into the Island Activity Center
- Development of a new park at Mariners Point, expansion of Robert Reed Downtown Waterfront Park, Main Street Revitalization
- Addition of a new Town Water Supply Well
- Expansion of the private sewer service area for Sunset Bay Utilities
- Expansion of the solid waste transfer Convenience Center
- Addition of fuel sales at the Curtis Merritt Harbor of Refuge
- Renovation of the Museum of Chincoteague Island
- Expansion of the YMCA facilities and programs
- Transfer of E-911 services to the ESVA 911 Center
- Renovation of the Island Theatre
- Construction of a new Town Fishing Pier

Education

Two public schools are located in the Town of Chincoteague. Chincoteague Elementary School, located on Hallie Whealton Smith Drive, serves pre-kindergarteners through fifth graders ~~and enrolled approximately 265 students in 2008.~~. Chincoteague Middle School, located on Main Street, shares buildings with Chincoteague High School. This complex serves students in sixth grade through 12th grade ~~and in 2008 had an enrollment of approximately 330.~~ .

Chincoteague has ~~three~~ two public school facilities: the Chincoteague Elementary School; ~~Chincoteague Middle School;~~ and the Chincoteague ~~High~~ Combined Middle/High School.

~~The 2002 Comprehensive Plan noted that the elementary school's gymnasium was inadequate for serving the needs of the school and that gym programs were being conducted in the old elementary school gymnasium located across the street. The Plan also noted that onsite parking facilities at the elementary school were insufficient. The elementary school has since partitioned off a lunch/gym room for physical education programs and is no longer using the old elementary school facility. A $10.4 million renovation project to the Chincoteague Middle/High School complex, including a new gymnasium, began in March 2005 and was completed in 2006.~~

The Eastern Shore Community College (ESCC) serves the residents of Accomack and Northampton Counties as a two-year institution of higher learning. The College is less than an hour's drive from Chincoteague. It is accredited by the "Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools" to award associate degrees in arts and sciences and has recently added a vocational/technical training program. ESCC occupies a 115-acre site on U.S. Route 13 and includes classrooms, laboratories, a bookstore, a lecture hall, administrative offices, and a Library-Learning Resources Center. The College is open during the entire year on a semester system.

In addition to open enrollment continuing education classes, the College also hosts a Workforce Development Program that offers broad range of cost-effective education and training services to individuals, businesses, industries, and government and professional organizations in support of economic development and community enrichment. The Workforce Development staff offers customized programs to meet specific workforce training needs and can schedule training on-site at a business to save time and travel costs.

Museum

The mission of the Museum of Chincoteague Island is to preserve the unique history of Chincoteague Island, its traditions and is culture. The exhibits provide a timeline that give summer visitors and island residents a clear understanding of the island as it existed from prehistoric times to today.

The museum originally was known as the Oyster and Maritime Museum (Oyster Museum, Inc.), created in the 1960s through the combined efforts of a group of dedicated island women on land donated by businessman Wyle Maddox. The building was enlarged and modified in the early 1990s to accommodate a growing artifact collection. In 2010 the Board of Directors decided to take the museum in a new direction which broadened the scope of the mission to embrace the full island history. It was renamed the Museum of Chincoteague Island, and the exhibits were extensively renovated and revised. At that time the Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation provided a grant of $49,000 to repair and upgrade the facility. In 2012 the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities provided a research grant of $3,000 to investigate the role of African-Americans in early island history.

Highlights of the museum collection include the original 1st order Fresnel lens from the Assateague Island lighthouse; the iconic island ponies, Misty and Stormy; the island oyster industry and the antique pumper that was the first piece of fire-fighting equipment acquired by the island's fire company. Other exhibits feature local decoy carvers, ship models and island waterfowl. In addition to its regular exhibits the museum mounts several temporary exhibits each year focusing on other aspects of island and regional history. The museum also hosts special events and educational programs. The museum partners with Road Scholar (formerly Elderhostel) to offer sixteen or more travel-study programs each year. Anyone interested in using the museum as a venue for a meeting or an event can contact the Director for details. The museum relies on the generosity of its guests and benefactors for financial support for its educational programs and its endowment fund.

The Museum of Chincoteague Island, located at 7125 Maddox Blvd. at the entrance to the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge, is visited by over 10,000 people yearly. The museum is open to the public from Easter to Thanksgiving.

Library

A citizens group restored the Wallace Jester Barber Shop, one of the oldest frame commercial buildings in Town. It opened in 1995 as the Chincoteague Island Library. The Island Library, located on Main Street, is affiliated with the Eastern Shore Public Library system but is not owned or managed by the County. It is operated by volunteers and funded by contributions. The Town supported~~s~~ the library's ~~planned~~ expansion in the downtown which has been completed and ~~has~~ donated land for the project. A building design was~~has been~~ prepared for the expanded facility that reflects the architectural character of the Island circa 1900. ~~Fund raising to complete the project is completed.~~ In

December 2006, the Library was awarded a $50,000 grant from the Argyll Fund of the Norfolk Foundation to help fund the expansion.

In 2004 and 2005, the Library received grants from the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities to support the first phase of a long-term effort to document the disappearing cultural tradition of Chincoteague Island. The Chincoteague Island Community Heritage Project will result in the creation of a permanent photo and oral history archive at the Library.

The Library is open to the public year-round, Monday through Saturday, except Thursday, from 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Library hours on Thursdays are 4:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

The Island Theatre

A group of concerned citizens formed the non-profit Chincoteague Island Arts Organization (CIAO) in 2011, purchasing and subsequently restoring the historic Island Theatre. The Theatre, built in 1946, was the site for the world premiere of Misty of Chincoteague, and preserves Misty's hoofprints as a present-day tourist attraction. The Island Theatre is the last of three theaters that once existed on the island.

The theater purchase and ongoing restoration efforts are supported by generous donations from island residents and visitors and substantial grants for infrastructure improvements. The Town supports the Island Theatre as a unique asset and vital component of our "historic core" and continuing downtown revitalization.

The Theatre's mission is to offer movies, education, cultural and community events to

enhance the downtown business district and to promote the general well-being of the island's citizens and businesses. A major goal is to offer broad-based cultural education in the community. As an example, in May 2013 the Theatre hosted a djembe drummer who instructed local students and adults on the art of African drumming. A full audience performance concluded the program.

The Island Theatre offers first run films during the Summer season, is the venue for our local history plays, and offers other performing arts and special events throughout the year.

Fire & Emergency Services

Fire and emergency services on the Island are provided by the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company, a combination paid/volunteer department jointly supported by the Town and Accomack County. Located on Main Street, the Company operates out of one station and is comprised of 25 active volunteer members and 85 life members. Paid staff includes five paramedics, who are on duty 24 hours a day, all year around. The Department owns four pumper/engines, a 75-foot ladder truck, a rescue squad, and two Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulances. The Company provides firefighting, hazardous material (HAZMAT) response, ALS emergency medical, and vehicle rescue (extrication) services. A site for construction of a new building has been identified near the Town Municipal Center on Deep Hole Road with plans underway for relocation within the next 5 years.

The Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Department is an important part of the community, responsible for the Island's herd of wild ponies and the annual Pony Swim and Auction.

The Town ~~makes a direct annual appropriation to the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company for equipment and the operation of the rescue squad.~~provides paid Town Staff in support of Emergency and Rescue Services for 24 hour operations.- –Accomack County appropriates funds annually to the Volunteer Fire Company ~~with a large portion of that designated for the rescue squad.~~. Additional financial support is provided through private donations and fundraising events. The Department maintains ownership of a herd of approximately 150 wild ponies, rounded up each year for its Pony Swim and Auction. An annual fundraising event is held at the end of the Fireman's Carnival in July.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) of Virginia classifies water distribution and fire suppression capabilities on a scale of "1" to "10," 10 being "no" or "minimal" protection. Properties within the corporate limits of Chincoteague are rated "6/9" by the ISO in terms of their exposure to fire loss. This rating means that properties located 5 road miles from the fire station and within 1,000 feet of a hydrant are rated "6." Properties located within

five road miles from the station and more than 1,000 feet from a hydrant are rated "9". Approximately, 95% of the Island is rated "6" and five percent of the Island is rated "9."

The 2002 Comprehensive Plan noted several improvements to the municipal water system and recommended applying for an improved ISO classification for all properties affected by the improvements. Since the 2002 Plan, the Town has made additional upgrades to its water system and the Town should apply for an improved ISO classification at the earliest opportunity.

Police Protection

The Chincoteague Police Department, the Island's primary law enforcement agency, employs eleven officers to enforce criminal and traffic laws protecting the Island's 4,000 residents and over 1 million annual visitors. The Department employs 10 full time officers ~~of which include~~including one seasonal bicycle officer, and four Department of Criminal Justice Services Instructors, and an RADAR Instructor and Firearms Instructor. The Town's law enforcement efforts are assisted by Accomack County's provision of jail facilities, as well as by the activities of the County's Sheriff Department.

The Department has four full-time telecommunications positions, augmented by four or five part-time positions. In 2013, the E-911 call center was transferred and consolidated with the Eastern Shore of Virginia 911 Center in order to improve service and efficiency for Town residents. The telecommunications department continues to provide~~s~~ service to the citizens of the Island on a 24-hour basis in its Communication Center for police dispatch, ~~which operates the Chincoteague 911 Center and provides services to the citizens, police, fire and rescue. The Communication Center, in an agreement made between the Town and the Federal Government, also provides~~and dispatch services for the United States Fish and Wildlife and the National Park Service on Assateague Island. The Department is also a member of the Hampton Roads Regional Academy of Criminal Justice in Newport News.

The ~~2002 Comprehensive Plan recommended that the~~ Chincoteague Police Department ~~pursue~~ achieved professional accreditation by ~~as per~~ the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc. Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies, citing the rewards of "peer recognition, liability insurance rates reductions, and political status within the community."

~~The Town should make achieving the goal of accreditation a top priority for the Police Department.~~

Public Works

The Public Works Department manages the daily operations related to the Town's water, drainage and roads systems, mosquito control, parks, and boating facilities. Routine installations, maintenance, repairs, and replacements required by any of these systems or

facilities can in most cases be accomplished utilizing Public Works employees, equipment, and funding. The department procures materials and other services through requests for quotes, bid contracts, and applications.

Water

The original water works system for the Town was constructed in 1927. In 1973, the Town added approximately 70,000 feet of additional distribution lines to the system. Of the approximately 70 miles of Town-owned and maintained water mains on the Island, 70% are located in the annexed area. In the mid-1980's, the Town upgraded the transmission line bringing water from the mainland from an 8" pipe to a 16" pipe. The 8" line initially enabled the Town to supply water to all residents without the need for rationing during the summer tourist season. Subsequent to the installation of the 16" supply line, the older 8" supply line has had work done on it and is available for use during peak demand periods or when the 16" main is shut down for maintenance or repair.

The source of the Town's water is a series of wells on the mainland approximately 5 miles from Town. There are currently 4 deep wells and 5 shallow wells for public water supply. The Town ~~is currently making application to~~has recently installed one additional deep well and a monitoring well to study future saltwater intrusion. Additionally, the Town has considered installing an additional 1,000,000-gallon tank or two high-rise tanks to meet demand.

The total capacity of the working wells is approximately 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD). As of mid September 1991, the one-day maximum draw was 1.45 MGD, which occurred when the Town experienced a leak in the large transmission line. The one-day maximum draw under ordinary circumstances was 1.1 MGD, which occurred during the summer of 1988.

Pumped water is chlorinated at the well site and then pumped 5 miles to the Island via either the recently installed 16" transmission line or through the older 8" transmission line. The water reaches the Town's water works, where it is filtered for iron, then enters a one million gallon ground storage tank. The iron content of the unfiltered water is still below the maximums set by the state.

From the ground storage tank, water is pumped to a 200,000 gallon elevated storage tank for distribution to the Town's ~~3,200~~ **3,550** water customers. During the peak of the Island's tourist season the Town's storage capacity is sufficient to meet one day's demand.

This is, perhaps, the one weak point in the system, the storage capacity. The Town's Planning Commission suggests that the Town review options regarding the construction of additional storage capacity for the water system.

Chincoteague is permitted by the Virginia Department of Health to withdraw up to 1.34 MGD of groundwater from its existing wells. This cap was placed due to concerns that any increase in this volume could result in the depletion of the underground water table and the intrusion of saltwater into the aquifer. Such withdrawal operations are monitored on a monthly basis by the Department of Health and the Department of Environmental Quality to ensure that groundwater sources are not being depleted. The Town can exceed its permitted withdrawal volume on an infrequent basis to meet peak water demands. The town estimates that during the tourist season the average daily population in its water service area is approximately 15,000 persons. In addition Department of Health and Department of Environmental Quality officials have stated that there have been no incidents of saltwater intrusion into the mainland aquifer serving Chincoteague as a result of the operation of the Town wells.

~~A recent groundwater study has estimated that while licenses have been issued for a total withdrawal amount of 14.9 MGD the recharge rate or water replacement of the aquifer averages only 11 MGD. Permitted withdrawals are more than three times the current withdrawal rates.~~

In terms of the interests of the residents of the annexed area, it should be noted that their incorporation into the Town had the effect of reducing their cost for water service. Further, during annexation proceedings the Town indicated its desire to improve and extend its water distribution system in the area proposed for annexation by installing an additional 8,300 feet of water main and 16 fire hydrants.

It should be pointed out that the water pressure in the system is sufficient to meet nationally recognized standards for municipal water service.

Sewage Disposal

Presently there is no central sewerage collection and treatment system serving the Island. Wastewater on Chincoteague is disposed of primarily ~~by discharge directly into seepage pits, cesspools, or~~ by the use of holding tanks or septic tanks and drain fields along with some remaining cesspools and seepage pits. The maintenance of these individually owned sewerage systems on the Island, is provided by the periodic pumping of facilities by private firms. Recently a few ~~packaged~~ engineered sewerage systems have been installed by residents of the Island and are in use.

Sewerage disposal is probably the most controversial subject on the Island. At the one extreme are those who feel that there are no sewerage problems on the Island. On the other extreme are those who believe that every cesspool and septic system on the Island has either failed or is about to fail. In addition, different state and federal agencies have

confused the issue by referencing the "sewerage problems" on Chincoteague in numerous reports and documents, without apparent substantial supporting evidence. For example the state Department of Health, Division of Shellfish Sanitation has "restricted" approximately 30% of the waters surrounding Chincoteague (mostly on the west side of the Island) because the "potential for contaminating" shellfish growing areas is present. Whether the potential pollution is fossil (fuel, as many suspect) or fecal is not spelled out.

~~The closure term itself (restricted) causes concern until one discovers that with proper permits and procedures, shellfish in most of these areas can be removed and sold. In defense of the Division of Shellfish Sanitation, they are currently trying to get more definitive language approved by the State. It also should be noted that those shellfish beds currently being utilized in surrounding waters have, to the best of knowledge, never been closed by any State or Federal agency. In fact, the Division of Shellfish Sanitation has categorically stated that "the water quality is excellent" in those areas.~~

-Recent opportunities to encourage private investment in wastewater treatment infrastructure that would benefit the entire Town have been presented. In order to address these issues, the Town Council participated with Accomack County in the preparation of a grant funded regional wastewater study in 2011, and appointed five (5) representatives to a Town Wastewater Advisory Committee with the several goals to be completed by June 2013.

Wastewater Advisory Committee members unanimously agree that small steps should be taken to implement a plan for public wastewater utility service on Chincoteague Island. In addition, the solution should be expandable, should allow for private investment to meet interim needs and should not try to replace adequate State programs and responsibilities. Before any long term solution can be implemented, a detailed plan would be presented for public hearing and comment, and may also be subject to a referendum vote.

Stormwater Drainage

Often storm water must wait for lower tides to flow from the drainage ditches on the Island into the surrounding waters. Much work has been accomplished in improving the drainage situation for Chincoteague, however, the following recommendations still apply:

- New development should not encroach on existing ditches needed for drainage. Rather, such development should enhance existing drainage facilities.

- Where feasible, open ditches are favored over underground pipes. Initial costs and maintenance costs are lower. Well-maintained ditches may help low-lying soils to drain better.

- As mentioned before, an ordinance should be written and adopted to control the filling in of remaining drainage channels.

Flood Insurance

Chincoteague participates in the Community Rating System (CRS) of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Flood Insurance Program. The Flood Insurance Program provides participants a way to protect~~ion~~ against catastrophic damage of loss from flooding. Communities participate in the Program by adopting and enforcing local ordinances that reduce future flood losses by regulating new construction. These measures include the adoption of floodplain zoning provisions, designed to limit damage to structures in flood hazard areas. Measures also include the adoption of special building codes for affected areas. Homeowners, renters, and business owners living in communities that participate in the Program are eligible for federally backed flood insurance.

The Community Rating System rewards communities that voluntarily take steps beyond the minimum requirements of the Flood Insurance Program with discounts on flood insurance premiums. Eligible activities fall under one or more of the following categories: flood preparedness; flood damage reduction; mapping and regulations; and public awareness.

In 2003, Chincoteague improved its rating to Class 8, entitling the community to a 10% discount on flood insurance premiums. ~~Chincoteague's 2006 rating is Class 8.~~ The NFIP adopted a new manual for the CRS program in 2013 which will require Chincoteague to amend its flood plain management program in order to maintain or improve the flood insurance discount available to Town property owners.

The Mayor and Town Council should take the necessary actions to maintain or improve the Town's CRS rating.

Harbor

The Curtis Merritt Harbor of Refuge offers boat launching facilities and 25', 30', 40', and 50' slips for an annual lease fee.
The Harbor is used by local and off-Island boaters for both working and recreational craft. There is currently a waiting list for annually leased slips, indicating the need to create more slips to accommodate the number of boaters who want to keep their boats at the facility.

Town Council and the Harbor Committee should look at ways to direct revenues into a long term fund for repairs and facility replacement costs.

~~The Harbor Committee has an aggressive plan to set aside $0.55 of every dollar collected as slip rent for the long term replacement of the facility with a long term replacement goal of one million dollars. A recent opinion from a Certified Public Accountant stated that such a facility should be depreciated over a 20-year period at which time the replacement fund should be adequate to rebuild the Harbor. Such a depreciation timetable would require the Committee set aside of $50,000 per year for twenty years to meet the one million dollar goal.~~

~~The best-case appraisal of a 20-year lifetime for the original harbor is currently under discussion. It has been pointed out by Harbor Committee members that both sides of the bulkheads at the facility now have worms.~~

~~There also have been a growing number of voices raised, which point out that the Harbor has the opportunity and the obligation to take corrective financial actions now. In addition, the Harbor Committee should not expect taxpayers to replace the harbor at the end of its current lifetime.~~

~~The Town Council believes that both the expected 20-year life of the facility and one million projected replacement costs are unrealistic, and has encouraged the Harbor Committee to review their current financial health and make some tough, drastic changes. It would be very unfortunate if the Island were to lose the Harbor.~~

Health Care

A community health center which is part of the Eastern Shore Rural Health System, and a medical center affiliated with Peninsula Regional Medical Center currently provide primary health care to Town residents. The Chincoteague Community Health Center, located on Main Street, is operated by the Eastern Shore Rural Health System, which is a non-profit community and migrant health center organization. The Center offers full laboratory services, immunization services for children and adults, preventive health education, outreach services, case management, and other health counseling. While the Center provides health care to people of all ages, it specializes in adult and geriatric primary care and preventative services. Island Family Medical which is owned by PRMC is a nonprofit health care facility located on Teal Lane which provides well checkups, x-ray capabilities, and some lab work.

Public health services for Chincoteague residents also are available through the Accomack County Department of Health, located in the Town of Accomac. Services are provided free or on a sliding fee scale, and include programs on family planning and support, immunization, communicable diseases, Women, Infants and Children, and maternity clinics.

Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital plans construction of a new hospital facility to serve residents of the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Its proposed location in Accomack County

(Town of Onley) will be closer to Chincoteague. A new medical facility recently constructed in New Church provides enhanced services to North Accomack and Chincoteague.

The Town should consider an active program to recruit, support, and retain physicians.

Broadband

The Town of Chincoteague worked with the Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority (ESVBA) since 2008 to construct and expand a regional broadband communications infrastructure which provides a fiber connection across the causeway to serve Chincoteague Island. A comprehensive broadband network improves vital services such as public safety, education, and public health while providing an engine for economic development. Our current investment in the network through a Community Development Block Grant will be leveraged by the expansion of the network through agreements with service providers to offer affordable wireless residential connections in the short term, and to expand fiber connections to commercial, civic and residential customers in the long term.

The Town should continue to look at ways to expand affordable Broadband access to every resident.

Recreation Facilities

Boat Landings

Town residents can find access to many marshes, beaches, bays and the ocean through a number of public boat landings. The Town maintains ramps for launching boats at the Town Dock, Fir Landing, Eastside, Curtis Merritt Harbor of Refuge, and Chincoteague Veterans Memorial Park. The Town Dock is located on Main Street across from the firehouse behind the American legion building. The Eastside Boat Ramp is located on Eastside Road, and Fir Landing is located on Fir Landing Road off of Deep Hole Road.

Robert N. Reed Downtown Waterfront Park

The Town's new waterfront park, the Robert N. Reed Downtown Waterfront Park, located on Main Street near the Chincoteague Channel, offers a waterfront venue for residents to enjoy picnicking, recreation, and beautiful views of the water. In addition to recreational opportunities, the park ~~will~~ serves as a site for community festivals and events such as the "~~Weekend of the Islands~~Mother Earth Day Festival" ~~and the "Chili Chowder Cook-off"~~ and other arts & cultural events which have already begun drawing as many as 1,500 visitors annually. The park currently has 10 boat slips available for rent to transient boats 26' to 50' in length; additional slips and a fishing pier ~~are planned~~.

The Town recently purchased an expansion parcel that connects existing park improvements along the waterfront to Bridge Street. Through the support of a grant from the Virginia Saltwater Fishing Fund, the old bridge fender at the end of Bridge Street was constructed as a 150 foot long fishing pier in 2014.

Revitalization of Main Street with new sidewalks and street furnishings has been completed during this Plan cycle from Cropper Street to Church Street through the downtown business district.

Chincoteague Veteran's Memorial Park

Chincoteague Veteran's Memorial Park, another waterfront park, is located on Eastside Road. Park facilities include tennis courts, basketball courts, playground equipment, a fishing-crabbing pier, ball field, boat ramp, skate park, pavilion and restrooms. New playground equipment was installed in the Park in 2002 through volunteer efforts and donations.

In 2014, the Recreation and Community Enhancement Committee initiated a playground improvement project that will replace existing play structures as needed and possibly add a 'rocket theme' element to coordinate with new tourism opportunities at Wallops Island spaceport. The Park pavilion may be reserved for group events through a permit issued by the Town. The Town of Chincoteague purchases a fishing license from the Commonwealth of Virginia for the Park's fishing pier, so an individual license is not required.

Donald J. Leonard Park

This park located across from the Chincoteague Combined School was created in 2009. Over one acre of waterfront land has been left in its natural state for the enjoyment of the citizens and visitors alike. Improvements in 2012 included additional picnic tables, entrance signage and landscaping, and water service for irrigation.

Island Nature Trail

The Island Nature Trail is a .7 mile long loop off of Hallie Whealton Smith Drive. It is an accessible path complete with benches, and trash cans. Phase II of the Island Nature Trail ~~is in the process of being~~was completed as a natural surface trail and will add significant length to the current trail system. The trail is located on land that was purchased by the Town from Accomack County School Board to help fund the remodeling and expansion of the Chincoteague Combined School. Repaving of the accessible trail loop will be completed in 2014 to repair weather damage and improve the durability of the pavement section.

Mariners Point

The southern tip of Chincoteague Island, with views to the Inlet and Wallops Island rocket launches, was identified as one of the most beautiful places in Town by the Recreation and Community Enhancement Committee. Public Works staff successfully converted a municipal operations facility into a level viewing area and passive park. The addition of a Watermen's Memorial in 2013 is part of an ongoing partnership with community organizations to make this one of Chincoteague's finest parks.

The Chincoteague Recreation Convention Center

The Chincoteague Recreation/Convention Center Authority completed the construction of a recreation and convention center in 1996. Local schools and agencies have used this 9,000 square foot structure for graduations and special events, and the facility meets the needs of most of the Island's civic and volunteer organizations.

Monies raised to build the Center came from County and Town transient occupancy taxes. The 2002 Comprehensive Plan proposed that future operating costs which may exceed revenues be distributed to the Center from the same Town transient taxes, which could result in a facility that would be operated at no expense to the residents of Chincoteague.

~~The 2002 Comprehensive Plan also made reference to the Center Authority's plan to raise funds for construction of a community pool at the Center. If this type of expansion is not feasible, the Town would willingly support the addition of a YMCA to the Island to accommodate the recreational needs not currently being fulfilled by the Recreation/Convention Center.~~

Other Possible Facilities

The Town should pursue the possibility of turning other public lands into recreational areas such as the ~~Lekites~~ vacant property located on Lekites Drive. ~~for a walking trail or the Curtis Merritt Harbor of Refuge property on the south end of the Island for a fishing recreation pier.~~ It is noted that the local little league origination has leased the school property behind the Community Center ~~to construct two~~and constructed four little league fields.

~~Museums~~

~~Heritage resources located within Chincoteague also serve the recreational needs of the community. These include two museums, the Oyster and Maritime Museum and the Refuge Waterfowl Museum. The Oyster and Maritime Museum, a non-profit educational institution, is located on Maddox Boulevard just before the entrance to the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. Founded in 1965 by a group of Island women, the museum opened in 1972 and was recently expanded in 1996. The museum tells the story of Island~~

~~history and of the oystering and seafood business which was the major industry of the Island.~~

~~The Refuge Waterfowl Museum is located on Maddox Boulevard and features over 8,000 square feet of Atlantic flyway waterfowling history. Exhibits include antique boats, guns, traps, art and decoys by various craftsmen. An extensive collection of the resident carver Delbert "Cigar" Daisey's work can be seen throughout the museum. Additional exhibits include a restored hunting buggy, a carver's shop replica and a new wing opened in May of 2002 which features a realistic 'by the seashore experience' for visitors.~~

Implementation Strategies

Police Protection

- ~~Pursue~~ Maintain professional accreditation for the Chincoteague Police Department as per the Virginia Law Enforcement Accreditation

Fire & Emergency Services

- Apply for an improved "ISO" classification for the Town from the Virginia Insurance Services Office.
- NIMS Certified

Sewerage

- Continue studying the feasibility of developing public sewer collection and treatment facilities. Identify a potential Maddox Boulevard Corridor wastewater treatment service area and prepare the next phase of engineering studies, permit applications, and grant requests to determine its feasibility for operation as a publicly owned wastewater treatment facility similar to the private Sunset Bay Utilities facility.
- Provide public information regarding options for a public sewer system, hold public hearings to obtain comment, and consider a referendum vote prior to initiating a a public utility system.
- Regularly review and refine zoning ordinance and development standards for areas within new sewer service areas.
- Continue to encourage individual wastewater treatment systems that are properly maintained to meet current State regulations.
- Encourage Virginia Department of Health (VDH) to permit, inventory, inspect, and improve private maintenance and repair of the Island's individual wastewater systems (cesspools, drainfields, etc.). VDH will continue to enforce violations identified by the Division of Shellfish Sanitation. Request VDH to expand its computerized reporting system to include public access to mapping, inspection and repair reports so that improvements can be documented.

- Encourage private (and USCG) wastewater treatment permit holders to provide service by voluntary connection within the Main Street Corridor small service area between Maddox Boulevard and Bunting Road.
- Actively participate with Virginia State Agencies, Accomack County, and the Maryland Coastal Bays Program to revise the Comprehensive Conservation & Management Plan (CCMP) for monitoring and improving water quality in Chincoteague Bay, and will seek to continue working on a long range plan that reduces nutrient loads from septic drainfields to the surrounding waters of Chincoteague Island on a voluntary basis.

Drainage

- Limit the encroachment of new development on existing ditches, which are critical for drainage.
- Enhance existing drainage facilities.
- Favor open ditches over underground pipes where feasible because the initial costs and maintenance costs over time are lower.
- Enforce a municipal ordinance to control the filling of remaining drainage channels.

Flood Insurance

- Improve the Town's rating status under the Community Rating System (CRS) of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Flood Insurance Program to lower community-wide insurance rates.

Harbor

- Ensure the harbor remains as an economically valuable Island asset.
- Encourage the Harbor Committee to review current financial health and make necessary adjustments to ensure that future costs are not born by Island taxpayers.

Broadband

- Encourage service providers to expand and improve affordable broadband services on Chincoteague Island to all residents.

Recreation

- Pursue the possibility of ~~turning~~ acquiring or improving other public lands into recreational areas. ~~such as the Lekites property located on Lekites Drive for a walking~~

~~trail or the Curtis Merritt Harbor of Refuge property on the south end of the Island for a fishing recreation pier.~~

- Continue to consider the possibility of a plan to raise funds for construction of an outdoor community swimming pool.

Chapter 6 Transportation

Streets are the most visible and most important public spaces in the Town of Chincoteague. Given the natural constraints that exist on the Island, the ability of the Town to substantially increase capacity in the local transportation system are limited. In keeping with the goal of promoting an economically and environmentally sustainable future and the Town's heavy reliance on tourism as a source of economic activity, the transportation plan focuses on creating a multi-modal system.

Multi-modal components work together to enable residents and visitors to access the Island's residential areas, public facilities, and commerce and recreation uses and activities. It is based on a policy that streets should be designed to encourage and support use of non-motorized modes for travel to local destinations.

Significant changes and completed projects have occurred within the last 5 years including:

- Route 175 re-alignment and bridge connection to Maddox Boulevard creating an entry corridor to the National Seashore park and refuge destinations
- Main Street revitalization project through downtown with narrow lanes to 'calm traffic' and widen pedestrian sidewalks
- Church Street/Chicken City Road intersection realignment
- Multi-use trail access to the Wildlife Refuge, Ocean Boulevard Extended Trail
- Bicycle and Trail Plan
- Safe Routes to School Program/Multi-use trail project

Introduction

Chincoteague Island property owners are currently served by a well maintained network of paved public streets that includes approximately 21 miles of roadway. In addition to this transportation network, there is another 21 miles of private roadway and access easements which are currently in various states of private owner maintenance. The Planning

Commission identified the topic of private roads as a significant issue that is not currently addressed in the Comprehensive Plan.

The street network and individual streets are considered to be shared spaces in which the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists are given equal or greater priority than those of auto drivers. The street layout should provide many alternative paths from origin to destination. Street design should require slow auto speeds and to give clear notice to drivers that these are places where slower speeds are required. Streets should promote connectivity and small-blocks appropriate to the natural conditions. They should serve the most frequent users pedestrians, bikes and local traffic. Necessary, but infrequent users (e.g. moving vans, emergency vehicles), should be accommodated but their requirements should not control the street design.

The use of alleys for access to parking and as utility corridors is permitted and encouraged, where possible. On-street parking as a buffer between pedestrians on adequate sidewalks, and moving traffic also will be encouraged and permitted where appropriate and feasible.

The intentions underlying the recommendations in the transportation element are to:

1. Improve vehicular circulation by upgrading streets where feasible, requiring connectivity between adjacent properties and requiring new development to make improvements to the existing street system;

2. Continue to provide and enhance local transit service; and

3. Improve safety and convenience for pedestrians and bicyclists by planning and developing a community wide system of bike routes and pedestrian trails.

While continuous walkways are the goal, retrofitting areas without them will usually occur in phases. Lack of a seamless system is no excuse not to provide parts of the system. In retrofitting streets that do not have a continuous or accessible system, locations near transit stops, schools, parks, public buildings, and other areas with high concentrations of pedestrians should be the highest priority.

~~Transportation Analysis~~Public Streets

The Town transportation system includes streets, sidewalks, and support elements for waterborne transport (See Map 4)

One-way streets have been discussed as a means of diverting heavier traffic flows onto parallel routes. Further encroachment of non-local traffic in the quieter residential areas should be discouraged. Luckily, many of the streets in the residential areas of Town are dead ends or are narrow and do not encourage through traffic use.

Currently, parking in the downtown area is limited. The area between Mumford and Church Streets allows some storefront parking on the east side of Main Street. Additionally, the Town owns and maintains a parking lot off of Post Office Street which is located behind current businesses located between Mumford and Church Streets. The Town also provides off street parking in the boat ramp area located across from the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company's main station. It is recommended that the Town look into future parking areas for easy access.

Another municipal service provided by the Town is the installation, operation, and maintenance of street lights. Currently there are approximately 635 publicly funded streetlights within the Town's corporate limits. The Town has a policy of accepting requests for additional streetlights from its citizens, and where such are deemed appropriate and necessary for public safety and welfare, new lights are installed and operated at public expense.
Approximately 80% of the public roads serving residential and commercial areas in the original Town have sidewalks. The Town has a policy of installing sidewalks upon citizen request and upon their agreement to bear half of the construction cost. The Town annually allocates public funds for the maintenance and extension of these facilities to meet such citizen requests or municipal needs.

Sidewalks are virtually nonexistent in the annexed area. The application of the sidewalk policy should benefit this area. Compared with other towns on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, lot sizes in Chincoteague are small and population density is high. These facts make sidewalks important, particularly in the centers of activity in Town. As population density and traffic continue to increase on Chincoteague, good sidewalks throughout the Town will become a necessity in order to promote safety, access and circulation in the residential and commercial neighborhoods.

Improvement Projects

New bridges connecting Chincoteague Island to the mainland include the 3/4 mile-long Chincoteague Bridge built over Black Narrows and Lewis Creek Channel and a 729-foot long, low profile Connector Bridge to Marsh Island that were completed by VDOT in April 2010 at a cost of $68.7 million. The award winning design of the bridges helps to

provide better traffic flow and access into the Town of Chincoteague and was recognized for balancing the needs of the public with environmental sustainability.

The Chincoteague Main Street Corridor Project continues to implement a master plan of the downtown core area of Chincoteague from roughly Cropper Street to Maddox Boulevard. The Master Plan will include the Main Street Corridor, the property between Main Street and the Chincoteague channel and commercial areas east of Main Street.

The Main Street corridor improvements are rebuilding the roadway and streetscape elements including walkways, streetlights, street furniture and other design elements including review of the water distribution system, investigate the potential for sanitary sewer extension, improvements to the storm drainage, and relocation of the existing overhead utility systems to underground as required. Completion of the final phase including Bridge Street access to a new fishing pier is expected in 2015.

US Fish and Wildlife Service completed a new elevated boardwalk along Beach Road in 2013 improving the connection between Town and Wildlife Refuge for pedestrians and bicyclists. Long range plans for the Refuge have proposed various alternative transportation proposals that could provide remote access to the Seashore following major storm events.

Town Council requested VDOT to update the Town's priority for the next '6-year plan' road improvement project in March 2013: To establish an urban system highway project for the improvement of Maddox Boulevard from Deep Hole Road east to the Maddox Boulevard traffic circle, inclusive, a distance of approximately four thousand (4,000) feet. Improvements shall consist of the addition of sidewalks, bicycle paths and drainage improvements.

Implementation Strategies

- Where possible, require construction of planned vehicle (e.g., planned collector routes) and pedestrian system (e.g., sidewalks, waterfront trail) components as part of proposed development projects.

- Monitor the volume of traffic on secondary roads to ensure safe passage.

- Develop long range design and management solutions for the primary areas of traffic congestion during the peak summer months at Main Street/Maddox Boulevard and Deep Hole Road/Maddox Boulevard intersections.

- Pursue the development of a plan to provide transient airport services at the nearby NASA base.

- Promote the development of a permanent hard surface lighted helicopter landing area for use in day or night for emergencies.

- Promote and encourage continued maintenance dredging of the Chincoteague Inlet, Chincoteague Channel, and Inland Waterway.

- Promote efficient and safe waterfront areas for docking both large deep-draft vessels and smaller boats.

- Seek to ensure that handicapped and disabled residents and visitors are provided adequate means of access to all buildings and places.

- Promote the continued open flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic to existing facilities on Assateague Island.

- Create bike paths in areas susceptible to heavy bike traffic.

- Improve the existing right-of-ways by widening the roads providing greater shoulder access and installing sidewalks, where appropriate.

- Sidewalks along the entirety of Maddox Boulevard.

- Pursue plan to ensure private roads are safe and can be traversed by first responder vehicles.

- Pursue and collect information to inventory all roads on the Island. Coordinate with VDOT to complete an update to the Small Urban Area Plan and the Transportation Plan map #4.

Private Roads

Approximately one half of the roadways providing access to property on Chincoteague Island are privately owned without the benefit of regular maintenance normally provided through the Virginia Department of Transportation for publicly owned streets. This reflects the land use growth that occurred outside of the former Town limits prior to the 1989 annexation of land from Accomack County, as well as the option for private road subdivisions currently allowed by the Town Subdivision Ordinance.

While it is not reasonable to plan for all private roads to eventually be improved to public street standards, there is a public purpose and need for minimum standards of maintenance and public safety. Certain critical sections of private road (such as Seaweed Drive between Ridge Road and South Main Street) should be considered for improvement to public street standards. There remains however a concern for the

significant cost to convert Private Roads to Public Street standards which must be carefully considered.

Implementation Strategies

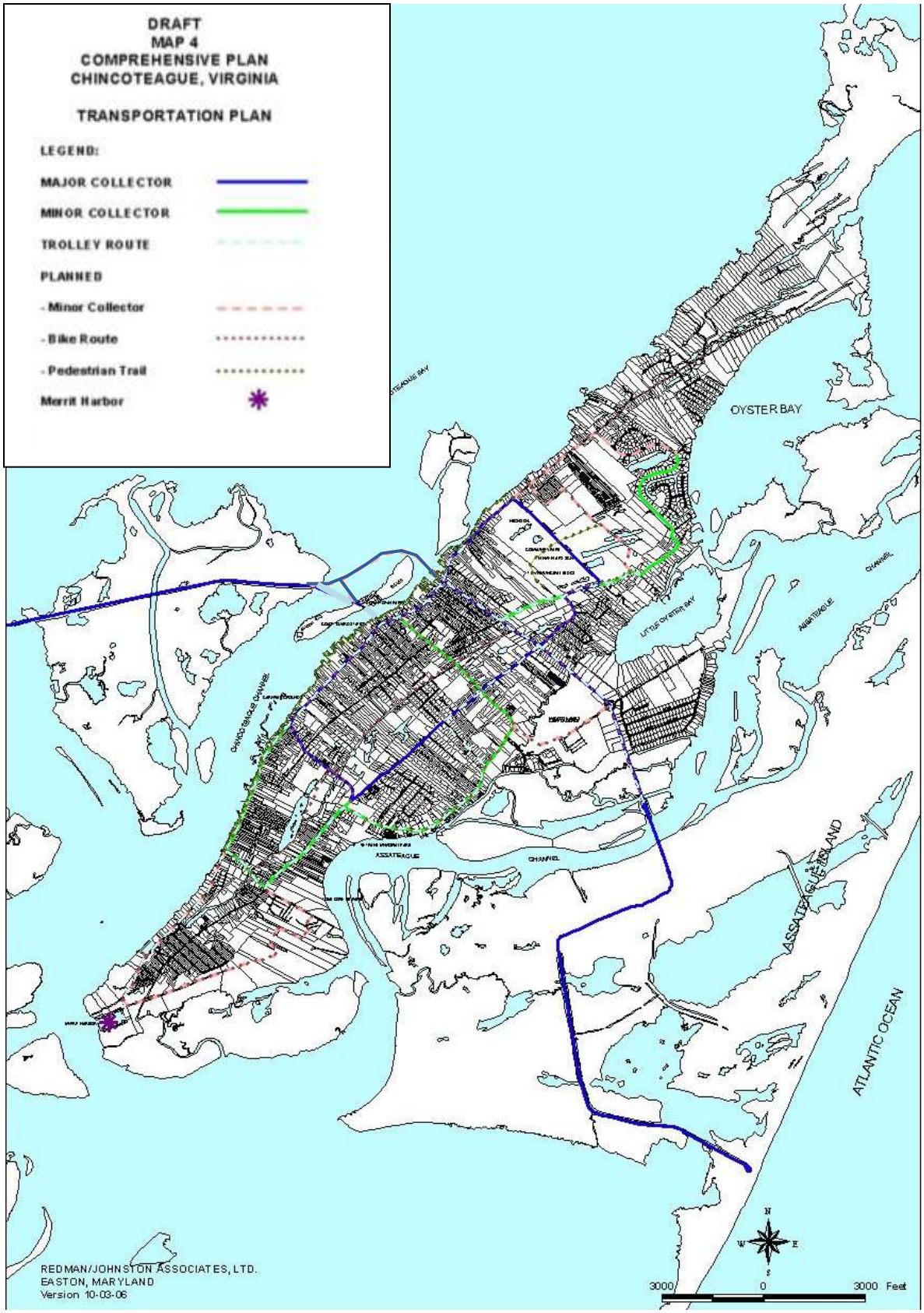
- Amend Town Code, Appendix B – Land Subdivision and Development to include multiple standards for private roads that represent the range of conditions, property access and lot sizes found across the Island. Identify which private road categories are eligible for improvement to a public street standard and define the necessary steps to achieve the higher standard.

- Work with VDOT to adopt a modified subdivision street standard serving a limited number of small lots so that more private roads may be eligible for public street maintenance.

- Study and develop strategies for funding and constructing improvements to private roads so that they may be eligible for acceptance into the public street system.

- Use public resources to acquire and improve private right of way where limited segments of the private road network provide a critical through public street function for access of emergency, utility and Town service vehicles.

Legend
Private Roads
State/Town/Federal Maintained Roads
0 1,000 2,000 3,000 Feet
N


DRAFT
MAP 4
COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
CHINCOTEAGUE, VIRGINIA
TRANSPORTATION PLAN
LEGEND:
MAJOR COLLECTOR
MINOR COLLECTOR
TROLLEY ROUTE
PLANNED
- Minor Collector
- Bike Route
- Pedestrian Trail
Merrit Harbor
OYSTER BAY
ATLANTIC OCEAN
REDMAN/JOHNSTON ASSOCIATES, LTD.
EASTON, MARYLAND
Version 10-03-06
3000
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Chapter 7 Housing and Neighborhoods

~~The price of homes in Chincoteague has risen dramatically over the past several years and is generally higher than in most other Eastern Shore towns in Virginia. One frequently expressed concern among current residents is that many young people cannot afford to live in the Town.~~ In recent years, a growing concern by community business interests is the provision of housing at costs that satisfy the needs of residents ~~that~~ who earn their living as part of the community work force. The Plan seeks to continue the existing variety and pattern of residential neighborhoods which have developed over time and which now align with the Official Zoning Map following a comprehensive Town zoning amendment in 2012. A mix of housing types and affordability for all ages will be encouraged in order to maintain Chincoteague's small town character.

Recent Changes

The national economic conditions of the last 8 to 10 years present different challenges that those described in the housing chapter adopted in 2010. The transition to more seasonal and rental housing, continued investment in repairs and renovations, a strong resale market, improved FEMA flood elevations, and Health Department approval of advanced septic mound systems are all positive factors that continue to support the current mix of housing on Chincoteague Island.

Introduction

~~The possible loss of residents that are native to Chincoteague or have worked and lived in the community as year round residents for a number of years, due to lack of affordable work force housing, will continue to be a concern in the community given~~ ~~p~~Present trends ~~and the~~indicate a growing interest in Chincoteague as a second home or vacation home location for seasonal residents. ~~Many existing homeowners, who have benefited from equity gains from sharp increases in home values, are concerned that such gains are an illusion, when they consider the likely replacement cost should they sell their homes yet wish to remain in~~

Chincoteague is ~~becoming~~ a popular resort area, where second-home buyers and retirees are locating. This phenomenon is creating higher land and home values on the Island, attributing to affordable housing issues.

~~Chincoteague~~. Chincoteague remains a strong housing market for investment which has maintained home values and resale potential throughout the 'Great Recession'. Local schools are attractive to young families, and convenient services, commerce and recreation support nearby federal employers. With increased national emphasis on creating walkable communities, healthy lifestyles and mixed use neighborhoods, Chincoteague provides a genuine family-oriented town living experience for visitors and residents alike.

~~There is also a concern regarding the loss of~~It is important to support age diversity in the resident population that includes young families and their children, ~~which is homogenizing the composition of the population base~~ as the Town ~~becomes~~ also supports a community of seasonal residents and older adults in retirement. ~~One result of that change is a change in community character from its present mix to one that becomes stratified toward an older population.~~ This diversity creates community ~~concerns~~ challenges ~~that it will become more and more difficult~~ to ensure a wide cross-section of ~~interests~~daily needs are met and creates opportunities for people to participate and volunteer in community activities.

Building Codes

~~As of the adoption date t~~The Town enforces, through a Building Code Administrator, the ~~2006 International Residential Code (IRC) and 2006 International Building Code (IBC)~~ Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) as the standards for new construction in Town. These standards ~~were enforced beginning in May 2008~~are effective as of July 2014~~, after the State phased out the BOCA (Building Officials and Code Administrators – Building Codes) and CABO (Council of American Building Officials – Building Code) codes and adopted the IRC and IBC.~~. In addition, because the Town is in the 90~~110~~ mph wind zone, all structures must conform to either the 2001 Wood Frame Construction Manual, 1999 Standard for Hurricane Resistant Residential Construction, or 7-05 Minimum Design Loads for Building and Other Structures.

Areas of the Town are located within a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area which also controls building construction standards. Elevation of the first floor and mechanical equipment above the base flood elevation creates a variety of accessibility conditions and sometimes changes the traditional relationship between the residential front door/porch and the sidewalk, particularly when elevating existing structures. As flood risk information is improved and updated, a comprehensive update of zoning, subdivision, site plan and infrastructure standards should be completed to manage cost and design impacts to residential neighborhoods.

Implementation Strategies

~~With median housing value outpacing median income by a wide margin, affordable housing on Chincoteague will likely become a serious issue in the future. A lack of~~ A~~a~~ffordable housing for new families, teachers, police, seniors, etc. ~~could impact~~is an important element of the quality of life on the Island. ~~and create inflationary trends for land, homes, and services.~~

The primary need, with respect to housing on Chincoteague, is the provision of ~~affordable~~ a variety of housing options. Housing type is often based on the land capacity for a septic drainfield, leading to modest single family homes with 3 bedrooms or less. Townhomes or duplexes are typically constructed in small groups and integrated with single family homes in the R-2 and R-3 zoning districts. Condominiums and apartments which require expensive wastewater treatment systems have been built in high value waterfront locations. The increase in real estate and housing values in recent years will challenge the community in its efforts to address affordable housing, more so than in the past.

Meeting those challenges will require use of more than one approach to providing affordable housing and will require greater private sector involvement.

As a general note, most of the housing strategies discussed below are hypothetical, being dependent on development of public sewer service that, in turn, ~~will~~ would enable higher densities and more intense use of existing developed properties through infill and redevelopment.

Affordable Housing Program - Zoning

Virginia law permits the Town to create zoning ordinance provisions that implement an affordable housing dwelling unit program. The enabling legislation states:

> "Such program shall address housing needs, promote a full range of housing choices, and encourage the construction and continued existence of moderately priced housing by providing for optional increases in density in order to reduce land costs for such moderately priced housing. …Any local ordinance may authorize the governing body to (i) establish qualifying jurisdiction-wide affordable dwelling unit sales prices based on local market conditions, (ii) establish jurisdiction-wide affordable dwelling unit qualifying income guidelines, and (iii) offer incentives other than density increases, such as reductions or waiver of permit, development, and infrastructure fees, as the governing body deems appropriate to encourage the provision of affordable housing."

One way that ~~Chincoteague~~ other communities ~~can~~ boost the available stock of affordable housing is by requiring developers to provide and construct a given share of moderately

priced dwelling units as a condition for approval of construction. In order to compensate for building lower-priced units or lower profits, the Town can consider granting the developer "density bonuses" (allowing them to build more units per acre).

~~Many communities have developed programs that offer developers "density bonuses" in exchange for the inclusion of affordable units within a proposed residential project. A density bonus allows a developer to build more units within a project than would otherwise be permitted under normal density limits.~~ Both zoning and subdivision regulations can be modified to allow density bonuses, or possibly allow new housing types such as apartments above retail use in a mixed use building, guest cottages, or small homes where appropriate~~.~~

~~By increasing the overall value of a project, density bonuses make the provision of affordable housing units more economical. Density bonus programs allow for the provision of affordable housing that in many cases would not be economically feasible for either the developer or the municipality.~~

~~Town officials can consider what level of additional density would be allowed in exchange for a specified number of affordable units. Density bonuses are usually expressed as a percentage of the density allowed under normal zoning regulations.~~

Second and Third Floor Apartments

The Town may increase the available rental housing stock by encouraging mixed-use rehabilitation or re-development of sites and structures in the Town Center with structures that provide second and third floor residential/apartment use.

An added benefit to this strategy is that increased residential use in the Town Center will increase evening activity, provide greater security through surveillance in the downtown and increase the stock of affordable housing options in proximity to shops and services, modestly reducing demand for vehicle use. Given the seasonal variation in market conditions and high commercial rental rates that presently make doing business in Chincoteague downtown difficult, the addition of rental income from ancillary residential use may support greater business investment in the downtown area.

Accessory Dwelling Units

The Town may consider permitting accessory apartments as another strategy to increase the supply of low and modest- cost rental housing. Accessory apartments, in-law apartments or “Granny Flats” offer Chincoteague an opportunity to make adaptations to some single-family neighborhoods to accommodate ~~the~~ ever-changing housing needs where adequate land is available to meet parking and health department standards.

With the trend toward larger numbers of one- and two-family households, accessory apartments provide opportunities for Town residents to make their housing available to the community at-large, including young unmarried, divorced, or widowed individuals.

Although likely dependent on the availability of public wastewater treatment facilities, this particular housing option offers a number of benefits including the following:

- Provides older homeowners with an opportunity to generate some additional income.
- Increases the supply of low- and modest-cost rental housing.
- Provides young singles, couples, and single parents with another source of income. This option may allow them to buy into the housing market; maintain ownership of their present home; or make available modest-priced rental housing in neighborhoods, which provide a wholesome environment for children.
- Modestly increases economic activity in the private sector, which benefits commercial lenders, real estate agents, builders, and retail businesses.
- Results in small increases in property assessments, which generate modest amounts of additional tax revenues.
- Creates an opportunity to continue to live in one's own home and maintain contact with the neighborhood.
- Tenants may add a measure of security and alleviate the fear of break-ins.
- Tenants may provide companionship.
- Tenants may be willing to provide personal services in lieu of rent. This could include the performance of routine maintenance work around the house; maintaining the yard; shoveling snow; performing light housekeeping tasks; providing modest, personal in-home health services; and providing occasional transportation.

In spite of these many prospective benefits, the Town ~~will~~ would need to consider how best to craft provisions to support accessory apartments in the face of likely concerns. Many people feel that accessory apartments run contrary to traditional values, ~~which dictate that~~ single family neighborhood~~s~~ character ~~should be inhabited exclusively by married couples with children, thereby accessory apartments~~ , and may have the potential for introducing new disruptive elements that may:

1. Visually alter the surroundings (alterations to the exterior of houses and the increased presence of automobiles in new off-street parking spaces or on the streets);
2. ~~Bring in people with alternative social values and living styles~~Mix summer vacationers with permanent residents;
3. Attract absentee landlords, who will exploit the housing resources; or

4. Put additional strain on the neighborhood infrastructure through increased usage of the streets, utilities and public services including school systems.

~~All of these negative reactions create an illusion of c~~Concerns that accessory apartments will result in a general deterioration of the neighborhood, adversely affecting the quality of life in the community~~. T~~ suggest that the Town ~~will therefore~~would need to consider incorporating refinements and safeguards into any code provisions permitting conversion to accessory apartments. Such refinements may include any of the following:

- Restricting the conversion option to senior citizens over a specified age.
- Requiring the homeowner to reside in one of the living units within the house.
- Restricting the conversion to homes which were constructed prior to a given date.
- Requiring a minimum square footage as a prerequisite for a house to be considered eligible for a conversion.
- Specifying the particular zoning classifications where conversions may be considered eligible.
- Permitting conversions only by homeowners who have resided in the home for a designated number of years prior to making an application for a conversion.
- Prohibiting exterior modifications to the house.
- Specifying minimum or maximum floor sizes for accessory apartments requiring that a conversion not exceed a designated percentage of the total floor space of the house. Typically such floor areas required in ordinances establish a minimum of 400 to 500 square feet in size to a maximum of 900 to 1,100 square feet.
- Placing a limit on the number of people who can occupy the accessory apartment or designating the aggregate number of people who can occupy the entire house.
- Encouraging barrier-free design considerations for persons with handicaps or limited mobility.

From a public policy perspective, accessory apartments provide an alternative to the popular "add-on" strategy of continually relying upon new construction (houses, streets, sewers, utilities and public services) to satisfy the needs of a growing community. They concentrate on preserving, refurbishing and making more efficient use of existing housing and the expensive community infrastructure, which is not maximized. Accessory apartments allow a community to:

- Create new living units without the expense of new infrastructure;

- Upgrade the energy standards of existing houses that will reduce the overall consumption of gas and electricity;

- Generate a flow of new dollars within the community from home equity;

- Avoid the "empty school syndrome" where large amounts of funds are invested in new additions to the infrastructure. These temporarily satisfy the needs of a large group of people who may be gone in one or two generations leaving unused facilities; and

- Reduce the costs of medical care for the elderly, who can receive less-expensive, in-home care services while living in an accessory apartment rather than being forced to move to a more costly nursing home or long-term health care facility.

Temporary Family Health Care Structures

Virginia HB 1307, which was approved on April 8, 2010 and took effect on July 1, 2010, adds a new section (15.2-2292.1) to the State Code that requires local jurisdictions to incorporate zoning provisions for temporary family health care structures. Under certain circumstances a 'temporary family health care structure' of no more than 300 gross square feet is permitted as an accessory use in any single family detached zoning district, and are not required to obtain a special use permit.

Community Land Trust

Community land trusts (CLTs) are created to acquire and hold land for a community's benefit. They typically maintain the long-term affordability of housing by separating the ownership of the land from ownership of the home that is built on it. Homebuyers purchase homes at affordable prices and enter into long-term leases of the land with the CLT, which retains ultimate ownership of the land. Approximately 120 community land trusts already exist or are under development across the country.

Typically, CLTs are administered by private non-profit corporations that can operate in a variety of settings. For example, CLTs may develop new housing themselves through a community development corporation or may simply hold the land beneath housing produced by other developers. In order to guarantee that CLT homes are sold at affordable levels, community land trusts design resale formulas contained in the ground lease. The resale formulas set maximum prices to ensure the homes remain at an affordable level. CLTs also typically retain an option to repurchase any residential structure located on their land if the owners choose to sell.

In recent years, an increasing number of municipal officials have recognized that CLTs can play an important role as stewards of housing resources and have played leading roles in facilitating their creation.

Affordable housing programs are currently administered by the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission which is able to combine regional resources to address the greatest needs.

Adaptive Re-Use

Adaptive re-use results from the conversion of surplus and/or outmoded buildings including old school buildings, warehouses, factories, etc., to economically viable new uses in many communities every day. In its broadest application, adaptive reuse projects are aimed at conserving, preserving, and recycling surplus property by adapting older buildings to current market needs. Many such projects have involved the conversion of old structures into new office and retail space, markets, restaurants, and other similar commercial applications. Adaptive reuse projects can also be used for the production of new housing through conversion of old buildings to new apartments or studio units.

Adaptive reuse is another method to introduce housing particularly in areas in proximity to the downtown. The Chincoteague Island Library, which used to be a barber shop, is a good example of a successful adaptive re-use project. The Town can facilitate adaptive reuse projects by adopting flexible zoning policies that permit mixed-use zoning or by allowing residences in existing non-residential structures as a conditional use in portions of the downtown and surrounding “old town” residential neighborhoods.

Renovation and reuse of previously vacated or deteriorated buildings can be less expensive than new construction when infrastructure and other site improvements are already in place and are adequate for the proposed re-use. In addition, the basic structure, although it may need renovation, is already there. With the lower construction costs associated with renovation, developers can produce affordable living units. Projects which involve historically or architecturally significant buildings may qualify for preservation tax credits for private investors if used for low-income housing.

Utilizing this technique may involve various steps, including making inventories of potential adaptive reuse sites, amending local zoning regulations, and identifying sources of assistance in obtaining funding such as loans, grants and rent subsidies.

Increased Density

~~Allowing a reduction in minimum lot sizes for single-family detached or attached housing is a basic technique for reducing residential development costs. Small lot developments, whether in a cluster or traditional "grid pattern" subdivision, increase density and the opportunity to create affordable housing. It also provides more opportunity for development to avoid sensitive environmental areas.~~

~~Small lots (which may range from 2,500 to 6,000 sq. ft.) and small lot districts can be utilized more fully by: (1) reducing minimum lot size requirements to allow building on lots that are currently below the specified minimum size in the town; and (2) dividing~~

~~large lots that currently have excess space. Although, there may be no existing "in-town" locations, where such a district may be feasible, zoning for a small lot district may be appropriate in some locations at such future time as public wastewater treatment facilities are available to support small lot development.~~

Many communities have designated special small lot zoning districts, which permit development on small lots within an entire district and encourage the use of innovative site design techniques. The lower land and development costs associated with higher densities in small lot developments can result in significant savings, and therefore, lower cost housing. With a higher density, land and infrastructure costs of multiple unit developments can be spread over a large number of units, resulting in reduced per-unit costs.

~~As in cluster development and planned unit developments, the reduced frontage and front-yard setbacks characteristic of small lots, allow for less pavement, sidewalk, and gutters per unit, shorter utility runs, and reduced material costs. Reduced lot size requirements allow the development of smaller houses, which may be more desirable and affordable for many of today's smaller households.~~

Small lot developments require greater attention to site design -- the layout of streets, lots, mixing of lot and house sizes, variation in building setbacks and elevations, variation in exterior designs, and landscaping -- to enhance aesthetic appeal and to blend well with surrounding ~~developments~~neighborhoods. Other elements of good community design include open space and recreation areas, adequate stormwater/drainage management, and access to public roads and utility infrastructure. ~~Requirements for two side-yard setbacks are often relaxed in small lot developments, allowing for "zero lot line" development and other similar design innovations which can enhance the appearance and liveability of higher density developments.~~

~~Special consideration should be given to parking in small lot developments to avoid the problem of cars dominating the streetscape (the visual quality of the development as seen from the street). Consideration may be given to staggering front-yard setbacks or allowing parking access through alleys running along rear yards. The maintenance of privacy will also require some attention in small lot developments. Use of landscaping, fences, walls, staggered setbacks, and windowless side walls, are common techniques used to enhance privacy in small lot and other higher-density single-family developments.~~

~~Some small lot development ordinances require the use of buffers at the perimeter of small lot projects to lessen the visual impact from near-by larger-lot developments and to help in achieving neighborhood acceptance.~~

This type of small lot development is currently accommodated in Chincoteague within existing campgrounds and travel trailer parks providing a variety of affordable housing opportunities for both permanent and seasonal residents.

APPENDIX A: IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

CHAPTER 3: LAND USE PLAN

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS	SCHEDULE
PRIMARY GOAL: The Town of Chincoteague seeks to change over time in an economically and environmentally sustainable manner so that it retains it's most endearing and unique physical and cultural features and provides the setting for harmonious community life.	**OBJECTIVE ~~#1~~:** Protect the quality of life in existing residential neighborhoods, while permitting appropriate infill and redevelopment.	**Single Family Residential Planning Area** Continue to apply the existing R-1 Residential zoning to this Planning Area. Zoning provisions for this Planning Area should limit each lot to one principal use. Improve the quality of local streets and pedestrian systems serving residential neighborhoods, where necessary. Encourage minimum maintenance standards for private streets, and private investment to dedicate private to public streets. Limit permitted residential uses to detached single family units~~.~~. and accessory units by special permit. Limit new non-residential uses to low intensity home occupations.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#2~~: Promote redevelopment and infill of existing underutilized ~~commercial~~ residential and mixed use areas.	**One & Two Family Residential Planning Area** Apply the existing R-2 Residential zoning to properties in the Planning Area. Amend zoning provisions for this Planning Area to limit each lot to one principal use. Improve the quality of local streets and pedestrian systems serving residential neighborhoods, where necessary. Permit existing non-residential uses to continue but not expand.	

CHAPTER 3: LAND USE PLAN

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS	SCHEDULE
		Strictly limit new non-residential uses to low intensity home occupations and low-intensity cottage industries. Establish appropriate development standards for new non-residential uses that ensure they are appropriately located and designed to "blend in" with the existing character of the surrounding area.	
GOAL: *Provide a quality living environment for all residents by ensuring a balanced mix of residential and commercial development, while preserving and improving natural resources and promoting the Town's image as a desirable, visually attractive, safe, and economically stable residential community.*	**OBJECTIVE ~~#3~~:** Ensure that all development is compatible with the scale and character of adjacent uses in the area.	**<u>Mixed-Use Residential Planning Area</u>** Apply the current R-3 Residential zoning to the Planning Area. Establish appropriate zoning provisions to ensure new multi-family and townhouse residential development is consistent with the surrounding area (e.g., conditional use). Limit multi-family development or re-development to duplex, triplex, or quadraplex units to minimize the scale and intensity impacts of greater density. Establish voluntary and incentive-based design objectives for infill and redevelopment and multi-family residential uses that are appropriate to the existing character of neighborhoods. Minimize negative architectural appearances of structures that are required to satisfy 100 year floodplain regulations. Ensure that any development or re-development activities minimize impacts to environmental resources and preserve or enhance drainage patterns. Assess opportunities to enhance local street and pedestrian system connections as development or redevelopment occurs over time.	

CHAPTER 3: LAND USE PLAN

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS	SCHEDULE
		Improve the quality of and connections between local streets serving residential neighborhoods within the Planning Area. Implement the Town's bike plan. Establish minimum landscape, buffering, and environmental protection standards. Permit existing non-residential uses to continue. Limit new non-residential uses to low intensity home occupations and low intensity cottage industries. Establish appropriate development standards for new non-residential uses that ensure they are appropriately located and designed to "blend in" with the existing character of the surrounding area.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#4~~: Ensure that buildings and related site improvements for private development are well designed and compatible with surrounding properties and districts. **OBJECTIVE ~~#10~~:** Facilitate the revitalization of the central business district and its waterfront as a center for commerce.	**<u>Town Center Commercial Planning Area</u>** ~~Create~~ <u>Manage</u> a Town Center zoning classification, similar to the current C-2 zoning district that permits commercial and business uses appropriate to the land use objectives for the Planning Area and allows limited residential use above the first floor. Work with property owners to retain commercial services and retail uses in existing structures, thereby minimizing the conversion of structures to residential uses and enhancing the quality of the resident and tourist experience. Encourage economic development. Promote redevelopment or infill development in appropriate locations consistent with the Town Center's unique assets, which include distinctive architecture and a pedestrian friendly environment.	

CHAPTER 3: LAND USE PLAN

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS	SCHEDULE
		Broaden the range of uses, attractions, and activities that strengthen the Town Center's identity as a unique visitor destination. Strengthen the identity, role, and marketing of the Town Center (downtown business district) as a viable year-round shopping area that provides a broad array of goods and services that cater to visitors and residents. Consider preparing building appearance and architectural design objectives and incentive-based processes to ensure that new construction, reconstruction, or infill development are appropriate to existing architectural patterns. Where possible, require sites that are redeveloped to provide a shoreline buffer and/or pedestrian promenade, when adjacent to Chincoteague Channel or Chincoteague Bay. Enhance tourist information and management by developing a visitor "Discovery Center" in the downtown. ~~As appropriate, c~~Continue to improve the "Downtown Waterfront Park" facility and fishing pier to enhance downtown's relationship to Chincoteague Bay and promote downtown visitation. Promote the Town Center as an arts district for theatre, music, and additional forms of outdoor entertainment. Explore opportunities to feature the works of both local and out-of-town artists through use of a downtown building or structure to house a gallery for the sale of artwork.	

CHAPTER 3: LAND USE PLAN

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS	SCHEDULE
		Explore needs for additional public restroom facilities in the downtown and identify appropriate locations for the construction and maintenance of such facilities to enhance the visitor experience. Improve the quality of local streets, public parking, and pedestrian systems, where possible.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#5~~: Provide a range of housing options to serve the long term needs of the Town.	**Resort Residential Planning Area** ~~Create~~ Consider a new mixed use development zoning district that permits a mix of uses including residential, commercial, employment office, civic, and open space in a master planned development~~s~~. Continue to permit resort recreation including, but not limited to, campgrounds, rental cottages, bed and breakfast, and tourist homes. Ensure interconnected streets that are designed to balance the needs of all users with sidewalks and on-street parking. Ensure open spaces that are integral to the community.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#7~~: Ensure that new and existing commercial developments are attractive in appearance.	**Neighborhood Commercial Planning Area** ~~Create~~ Manage a new zoning district to implement the objectives for this Planning Area (similar to the existing C-1zoning district). Consider adding small well screened contractor yards, storage facilities and the like at appropriate locations as conditional uses in the Planning Area.	

CHAPTER 3: LAND USE PLAN

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS	SCHEDULE
	OBJECTIVE ~~#9~~: Maintain and enhance the character of existing commercial areas.	**Commercial Corridor Planning Area** Consider establishing building appearance and architectural design objectives for new construction, reconstruction, or infill development. Zoning may include "special infill and re-development" provisions that offer flexibility and enhance opportunities to secure improvements in the form of landscaping, sidewalk enhancements, public parking facilities, or other proffers that provide public benefit as a trade-off for approval. Include minimum landscape standards for commercial uses in the Town zoning code. Provide street furniture, trash cans, and seating areas in limited locations along the corridor to enhance pedestrian use. Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to enhance vehicular and pedestrian safety in the Maddox Boulevard corridor and seek State assistance to develop a "Corridor Management Plan" to identify opportunities to enhance access controls and assure the corridor can sustain adequate levels of service to accommodate projected future traffic volumes. Explore needs for additional public restroom facilities along the Maddox Boulevard gateway corridor and identify appropriate locations for the construction and maintenance of such facilities to enhance the visitor experience. Facilitate transit service in the corridor. Implement the Town's bike plan. Improve the quality of local streets, public parking, and pedestrian	

CHAPTER 3: LAND USE PLAN

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS	SCHEDULE
		systems, where possible.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#8~~: Promote small to medium scale commercial and office developments.	**Resort Commercial Planning Area** ~~Create~~ Manage a new zoning district to implement the objectives for this Planning Area (e.g., Resort Commercial C-4). Continue to permit recreational campgrounds and other facilities to support seasonally occupied cabins, mobile homes, and recreational vehicle use. Maximize opportunities for the public to access the water. Adopt appropriate standards to ensure that any development or re-development activities minimize impacts to environmental resources and preserve or enhance drainage patterns. ~~Establish~~ Consider Master Plan Community or Planned Unit Development (PUD) provisions that permit redevelopment of larger sites within this Planning Area. Other provisions of a zoning district should include standards for planned mixed-use developments as well as requirements for appropriate proffers. In addition, the Town should limit the number of multi-family residential units to no more than 35% of the total number of units that may be built to ensure a mix of dwelling unit types. Consider ~~the merits of~~ a mixed-use conditional zoning classification applicable to the Maddox Family Campground~~s~~ property or other similar campgrounds. The zoning district may be written to permit a small business park or off-corridor commercial business/service uses in a “campus like” setting.	

CHAPTER 3: LAND USE PLAN

LAND USE GOALS	LAND USE OBJECTIVES	LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS	SCHEDULE
	OBJECTIVE ~~#11~~: Create an attractive street environment, which will compliment private and public properties and be comfortable for residents and visitors.	**Public/Semi_Public Planning Area** Require adequate public facilities be made available as a condition of approval for any proposed development. Set development review fees at a level that covers the actual cost of development review and approval processes. Contain the costs of future development and growth to ensure that costs do not burden current and future residents and businesses. Accordingly, new development should be expected to pay for the extension of municipal services and capital improvements resulting from such new development as well as pay for the necessary technical expertise to review plans.	
GOAL: *Conserve important natural and sensitive environmental resource areas which protect the Island from storm events and which serve as the basis for the Town's economy and visitation to the area.*	**OBJECTIVE ~~#6~~:** Encourage preservation of open space and environmentally responsible development.	**Resource Conservation Planning Area** ~~Create~~ Manage a new resource conservation zoning classification. Limit permitted uses to low intensity agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, and single family residential uses. Establish minimum buffer standards for drainage-ways and encourage low impact development practices to improve water quality. Coordinate with State agencies to study shoreline conditions and plan for a combination of design solutions which reduce erosion, and also encourage working and recreational waterfront uses.	
		Annexation Areas Proposed annexation areas will be economically self-sufficient and will not result in larger municipal expenditures than	

CHAPTER 3: LAND USE PLAN			
LAND USE GOALS	**LAND USE OBJECTIVES**	**LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
		anticipated revenues, which would indirectly burden existing Town residents with the costs of services or facilities to support the area annexed. The costs of providing roads, utilities, parks, other community services will be borne by those people gaining the most value from such facilities through either income, profits, or participation. Specific conditions of annexation will be made legally binding in an executed annexation agreement. Such agreements will address, among other things, consistency with the goals, objectives and recommendations contained in the Town of *Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan*, zoning and development expectations, responsibility for appropriate studies, and preliminary agreements concerning responsibilities for the cost of facilities and services provided by the Town. For annexations involving larger parcels of land, the Town may require appropriate impact studies, including a fiscal impact study and an environmental impact assessment that addresses the potential impact of the proposed annexation and planned development on the environment of the site and surrounding area. If necessary, applicants for annexation shall pay the cost of completing all studies related to expanding capacity in existing public facilities and/or services.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#12~~: Encourage site design, which preserves scenic vistas.		

CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
GOAL: *Provide a quality ~~living~~ business environment that ensures a balanced mix of seasonal and year-round commercial and employment uses to serve the day to day needs of residents and seasonal visitors.*	**Objective ~~#1~~:** Enhance the image of the community and create a vital and attractive environment for businesses, residents, and visitors that is reasonably balanced with the need for economic development to assure the Town's economic prosperity.	**Main Street Revitalization** Ensure the public, property owners, and merchants are included in the development of overall plans and policies as key stakeholders. ~~S~~Continue to seek out state funding from the Virginia Department of Transportation, Community Development Block Grants, and other programs to assist economic efforts. Apply for state grants from the Virginia Department of Transportation to repair or replace bulkheads and piers for overnight dockage, charter, and tour boats. Build a boardwalk along the waterfront of Main Street and pedestrian walkways from the waterfront to Main Street. Determine placement for bike paths in this area and connect to other bike paths identified in the Town's bike plan. Lease boat slips to offset costs and upkeep. Obtain easements from adjoining property owners for a waterfront boardwalk. Create tax incentives, for example, a tax credit equal to a percentage of construction expenses for property owners to make appropriate façade improvements on buildings	

CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
		fronting on Main Street. Create low-interest loan pools for property owners to make appropriate façade improvements on buildings fronting on Main Street. ~~Apply for~~Complete the implementation of state grants from the Virginia Department of Transportation to bury utility lines and install new lighting from Cropper Street to Maddox Boulevard with new sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, and a new gateway treatment to the island.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#2~~: Promote and support tourism, which is Chincoteague's primary economic engine.	**Balance Year-Round Economy** Promote more year-round economic activity that takes advantage of the unique historic and cultural character of the Town. Promote sound local economies by conserving the Island's unique values and providing protections from developments that may cause irreversible damage. The Island's natural attributes and its heritage are its most valuable economic resources. Encourage development that enhances the environmental, historic, and scenic qualities of the Island to promote a healthy coastal environment to foster economic vitality. Encourage efforts to diversify the Island economy consistent with the quality and character of the existing Chincoteague Island.	

CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
		Give top priority to year-round job opportunities for permanent Island residents and increase the Island's self-sufficiency to diversify the economic base so that the Island will be less reliant on the tourist trade. Private initiatives will influence the future of the Island at least as much as government regulations. Encourage creative and environmentally sound economic initiatives, ensure that regulations affecting small businesses do not cause unnecessary burdens and review regulations that might discourage new small business start-ups. Where appropriate, encourage water-dependent maritime uses of coastal land. Promote necessary economic support for sport and commercial fishing. Promote and encourage enhanced relationships between the Town and ~~the National Aeronautics and Space Administration.~~neighboring federal agencies such as US Fish andWildlife Service, National Park Service, NASA, NAVY, NOAA, US Coast Guard.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#3~~: Encourage economically viable marine uses to meet the needs of waterborne commerce and recreation tourism.	**Tourism, Real Estate, & Seasonal Businesses** The island's qualities should be preserved for summer residents, visitors, and taxpayers as well as for those who live on Chincoteague Island year-round. Foster a ~~more~~ welcoming attitude towards visitors by developing information and welcoming facilities both on-	

CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
		and off- Island. Recognize the importance of the summer economy as a base for the year-round economy and manage it through public and private actions including infrastructure and capital planning. Educate the public about the tourist economy on Chincoteague.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#4~~: Provide for a broad range of convenient shopping venues.	**<u>Economic Impact Study</u>** Encourage the commission of an economic impact study to include the following: • Economic Baseline Study Update • Year-Round Employment • Alternative Trades • Crafts Cooperatives • Commercial Rents • Local Investment • Manage Resources With Economic Value • Develop Education Programs to Strengthen Local Economy • Monitor Consumer Prices • Waterfront Resources • Local Management of Tourism • Cost Benefit Analysis of Tourist Economy • Educate • Make the Island More User-Friendly • Marketing the Island to Specific Clientele	

CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
		• Higher Education as an Industry	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#5~~: Support the seafood industry and promote aquaculture.	**<u>Fishing & Island Seafood Industries</u>** Promote policies on protecting the Island Seafood Industry. Ensure that it remains a visible part of the landscape. Protect the seafood industry from changes in attitudes and ensure sufficient land is zoned for this activity. Prevent conflicts with residential land uses. Encourage and foster the local seafood and aquaculture economies for the benefit of the whole island economy and character. Encourage economic activities, which are positive additions to the rural Island environment. Encourage boating and fishing activities for the well being of the Island economy, particularly tourism. Recognize the importance of commercial and sport fisheries to the local economy. Create jobs for the skills and working habits of the year-round labor force, in industries, which will prudently utilize the Island's natural resources. Encourage the development of small-scale industries to enhance the year-round economy.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#6~~: Implement the Chincoteague Downtown	**<u>Planning for Commercial Growth</u>**	

CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
	Revitalization Plan to improve the Island's economic climate for investment and reinvestment.	Keep existing business districts vital and workable. Restore and renovate historic buildings as an alternative to new construction, wherever possible. Support planned economic growth. Encourage commercial development to match the scale and density of Island neighborhoods. Limit overall square footage, massing of individual buildings, and expanses of paved areas to blend with the rural scale of the Island. Provide an appropriate rhythm of buildings along streetscapes with view corridors to the coast, wherever possible. Prevent strong shadowing effects from buildings near public coastlines and parks. Town Centers – Maintain services and year-round uses in existing Town commercial centers for pedestrian access and community identity. Address parking and traffic issues and sewage and septic needs. Town Center Streetscapes – Plan more downtown parks and design places to sit such as Town squares for gathering, eating, and resting. Develop standards for landscaping and view corridors in Town centers. Create pedestrian precincts and eliminate cars in some areas. Preserve Town Character – Rehabilitate and re-use older structures to preserve the character and historic fabric of the Island.	

CHAPTER 4: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT			
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES**	**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
		Positive Images – Research historic footage of streetscapes for positive examples of Town character. Produce films and multi-media presentations on current Town character to emphasize positive examples. Positive Incentives – Develop incentives to direct commercial growth to desired locations. Home Businesses – Develop standards for home businesses to avoid conflicts with residential uses.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#7~~: Work to achieve a year-round economy for Chincoteague to ensure economic longevity.		

TABLE 4: TRANSPORTATION (CHAPTER 6)			
TRANSPORTATION GOALS	**TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES**	**TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
GOAL: *Provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.*	**OBJECTIVE ~~#1~~:** Provide a safe and ~~comfortable~~ connected system of pedestrian and bicycle pathways.	Where possible, require construction of planned vehicle (e.g., planned collector routes) and pedestrian system (e.g., sidewalks, waterfront trail) components as part of proposed development projects. Encourage the improvement of private roads to meet public street standards and be added to the public street system for maintenance.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#2~~: Pursue opportunities for additional public parking to serve the Main Street and Maddox Boulevard commercial districts, including the possibility of having a downtown parking garage.~~Minimize elements, which clutter the roadway and look unattractive.~~ **OBJECTIVE:** Provide safe, efficient, reliable transportation for many modes of transportation.	Monitor the volume of traffic on secondary roads to ensure safe passage.	
		Pursue the development of a plan to provide transient airport services at the nearby NASA base.	
		Promote the development of a permanent hard surface lighted helicopter landing area for use in day or night for emergencies.	
		Promote and encourage continued maintenance dredging of the Chincoteague Inlet, Chincoteague Channel, and Inland Waterway.	
		Promote efficient and safe waterfront areas for docking both large deep-draft vessels and smaller boats.	
		Seek to ensure that handicapped and disabled residents and visitors are provided adequate means of access to all buildings and places.	
		Promote the continued open flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic to existing facilities on Assateague Island.	
		Create bike paths in areas susceptible to heavy bike traffic.	
		Improve the existing right-of-ways by widen the roads providing greater shoulder access and installing sidewalks, where appropriate.	

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES			
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES GOALS	**COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES OBJECTIVES**	**COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
GOAL: *Provide public facilities and services that are adequate to meet the needs of the community and which are accessible, attractive, and add to the enjoyment of the physical environment.*	**OBJECTIVE ~~#1~~:** Ensure adequate public facilities and services that meet the needs of residents and visitors.	**Police Protection** ~~Pursue~~ Maintain professional accreditation for the Chincoteague Police Department as per the "Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies, Inc." *Standards for Law Enforcement Agencies*.	
		Fire & Emergency Services ~~A~~As improvements to the Town water system are implemented, apply for an improved "ISO" classification for the Town from the Virginia Insurance Services Office if eligible.	
		Sewerage Continue study~~ing~~ and preliminary engineering for the feasibility of developing public sewer collection and treatment facilities.	
		Drainage Limit the encroachment of new development on existing ditches, which are critical for drainage. Enhance existing drainage facilities. Favor open ditches over underground pipes where feasible because the initial costs and maintenance costs over time are lower. Prepare and adopt a municipal ordinance to control the filling of remaining drainage channels.	

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES			
COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES GOALS	**COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES OBJECTIVES**	**COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
		Flood Insurance Complete recertification and i~~I~~mprove the Town's rating status under the Community Rating System (CRS) of the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Flood Insurance Program to lower community-wide insurance rates in affected areas. Protect critical infrastructure from storm damage and flooding.	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#2~~: Maintain beautiful and ~~comfortable~~ functional outdoor public places, which provide for recreation and a shared sense of belonging for Chincoteague residents, business owners, and visitors. **OBJECTIVE ~~#3~~:** Provide opportunities for public access and recreational enjoyment of the shoreline, including the public recreation beach at Assateague Island National Seashore.	**Harbor** Ensure the harbor remains as an economically valuable Island asset. Encourage the Harbor Committee to review current financial health and make necessary adjustments to ensure that future costs are not born by Island taxpayers.	
		Health Care Consider an active program to recruit, support, and retain physicians on the Island.	
		Recreation ~~Pursue the possibility of turning other~~Continue the improvement of public lands into recreational areas such as ~~the Lekites property located on Lekites Drive~~ Ocean Boulevard Extended for a walking/biking trail or Mariners Point at the Curtis Merritt Harbor of Refuge property on the south end of the Island ~~for a fishing recreation pier~~.	

CHAPTER 7: NEIGHBORHOODS			
HOUSING GOALS	**HOUSING OBJECTIVES**	**HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
GOAL: Preserve and protect the neighborhood character and quality of life in residential neighborhoods; encourage a balanced range of housing type and opportunities; promote opportunities for clean, safe, and affordable housing; and maintain safety, appearance, and harmony within neighborhoods.	**OBJECTIVE ~~#1~~:** Encourage a variety of home ~~prices~~ types and sizes in new development or re-development projects in order to provide housing for people of all socioeconomic backgrounds.	**Affordable Housing Program - Zoning** (See Chapter 7: Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan)	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#2~~: Encourage programs to pro-actively provide accessible and affordable housing for the regional work force, including working with Accomack County and other regional housing entities.	**Second and Third Floor Apartments** (See Chapter 7: Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan)	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#3~~: Develop policies that support flexible housing arrangements for extended family living.	**Accessory Dwelling Units** (See Chapter 7: Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan)	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#4~~: Create policies that facilitate continued occupancy of personal homes by elderly residents, who may need in-	**Community Land Trust** (See Chapter 7: Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan)	

CHAPTER 7: NEIGHBORHOODS			
HOUSING GOALS	**HOUSING OBJECTIVES**	**HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS**	**SCHEDULE**
	home care.		
	OBJECTIVE ~~#5~~: Encourage housing rehabilitation, redevelopment, and improvement program for selected areas or neighborhoods.	**Adaptive Re-Use** (See Chapter 7: Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan)	
	OBJECTIVE ~~#6~~: Continue to improve housing conditions by using all available means to ensure decent, safe, and sanitary housing.	**~~Increased Density~~ Renovation and Re-Investment** ~~(See Chapter 7: Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan)~~ Promote renovation and home improvement investment to existing housing and property to reduce flood risk, improve wastewater treatment systems, maintain property values, and expand public street access.	
*Note: Many of the recommendations for "Housing" our "Neighborhood" development are directly related to the future ~~acquisition~~ development of sewer facilities and services for Chincoteague Island. The Town is performing feasibility studies in regards to sewerage facilities and services therefore these recommendations describe potential future actions if sewer is made available at a later date.			

APPENDIX B: Chincoteague Public Questionnaire – Results

(This section intentionally omitted to indicate that a current questionnaire was not complete for the 5 year Comprehensive Plan Update. The results are available on request at the Town Office from the 2010 Adopted Comprehensive Plan record copy.)

Appendix C Background

Planning Process

Chincoteague's unique natural beauty is part of an important historic and cultural heritage that makes the Island a desirable place to live and visit.

Chincoteague's planning process began in 2003 with the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission "Visioning Workshop." The following vision statements provided by residents that attended the visioning workshop were reported as follows:

- ~~In 2015, the~~The Town of Chincoteague will have balanced commercial and residential development that is managed to protect private property rights.
- There will be public water and sewer, with limited future capacity in order to manage growth.
- Chincoteague Island's small-town character will be preserved by managing growth, restricting demolition, preserving historic and natural resources, and promoting good design for downtown redevelopment.
- Chincoteague will have a professional Town Planner, who guides the Town Council and Planning Commission in managing future development and redevelopment.
- There will be adequate zoning staff to provide strict enforcement.
- Chincoteague's waterfront, parks, and natural areas will be preserved for future generations.
- There will be adequate boat slips, bike paths, and walking trails.
- Access to Assateague Island will be maintained with adequate beach access and parking.
- Private roads will be improved along with public streets and sidewalks.
- Chincoteague will have improved emergency services, a 24-hour community medical facility and community services for the elderly and youths.

- There will be a limited amount of multi-family housing, and there will be affordable housing for young and old.

- The Town will continue to promote the seafood industry.

- Chincoteague will have new businesses that go beyond tourism, including internet and other information technology businesses.

The highest ranked recommendation that came out of the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission Visioning Workshop, was to determine through public meetings, the perspective of citizens regarding how best to balance preserving Town Character with development.

2006 Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan – Public Workshop

A second public workshop was held on two consecutive evenings in June 2006 for the purpose of further promoting discussion of growth management issues and strategies. At these workshops, planning consultants retained by the Town presented a summary of key issues gleaned from the Visioning Workshop and from other work sessions with the Planning Commission and Town Council.

Key issues identified were the following:

1. A need to develop appropriate development standards and review procedures to address large-scale development proposals.

2. Inappropriate redevelopment of sites.

3. Capacity to support growth (infrastructure and natural conditions).

4. Seasonal vs. year-round demands (accommodating peak demand at a reasonable cost).

5. Protecting and preserving character.

6. Condominiums lining waterfront (loss of community character).

7. Too many signs (visual pollution).

8. A need to expand the scope of Capital Improvements Programming.

9. A need to diversify zoning districts.

10. Commercial businesses being displaced by resort residential, eroding the commercial base of the community.

11. Development regulations that do not facilitate appropriate negotiations (exactions) between the community and potential developers.

12. No aesthetic and landscape requirements.

The consultants also presented a conceptual land use framework and related implementation strategies for the comprehensive plan update at the second public workshop. Participants were asked to "fill-out" a questionnaire as a means of gauging public reaction to the consultant's recommendations and provide guidance to the planning process. Copies of the questionnaire were made available at the Town administrative offices so that interested individuals were given any opportunity to react to the recommended strategies even if they were not able to attend on the two-nights of the public forums.

The public process forms an important part of the planning effort for the updated Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan to ensure that all sections of the public are represented in developing a vision for the Town's future.

As indicated in Appendix B: Summary of the 2006 Chincoteague Questionnaire, a total of 127 questionnaires were returned following the second public workshop. The questionnaire results demonstrated broad support for most of the land use concepts and implementation strategies presented. These are summarized by topic category as follows:

<u>Land Use</u>

- Stores, shops, and businesses should be the primary uses allowed in the historic Town Center (Main Street from Church Street to the Fire House).
- Detached single family dwellings should be the predominant land use allowed along Main Street and the waterfront outside of the Town Center.
- Zoning regulations should prohibit multifamily dwellings along the Main Street waterfront outside the Town Center.
- The Town should institute temporary measures that further restrict multi-family, townhouse or condominium development not already approved until work on the new Comprehensive Plan is completed.
- The Town should consider designating the Town Center as a Historic District.

- ❖ Redevelopment of existing campgrounds and/or trailer parks as planned residential communities should be allowed.

Community Design

- The architectural characteristics of the "best examples" of traditional Chincoteague buildings located in the Town Center should be reflected in new construction in the Town Center.

- Building height, width and depth, as well as location on the lot should be regulated so as to retain open views of Chincoteague Channel and the Bay from Main Street.

- Views of Chincoteague Channel and the Bay waterfront from Main Street should be retained to the maximum extent possible.

- The visual appearance of Maddox Corridor should be improved with more landscaping e.g., street trees.

- The visual quality of signs along Maddox Boulevard should be improved.

- The existing views of Main Street and the waterfront entering Chincoteague from the main land should be retained to the maximum extent possible.

- The design of new construction and redevelopment (e.g., in terms of size, height, building materials, architectural details, etc.) should be compatible with the best examples of traditional Chincoteague residences in the neighborhood.

- The Town should adopt design standards to regulate the appearance of new structures in the residential neighborhoods.

- The appearance of buildings along Maddox Boulevard should be improved.

Natural Resource Protection

- Greater measures should be taken to protect sensitive environmental resources, including important drainageways on the Island.

Transportation

- The Town should increase the number of pedestrian trails and bikeways throughout the community.

- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities on Maddox Boulevard should be improved.

Community Facilities and Services

- The Town should consider construction of public wastewater treatment facilities (i.e., a municipal sewer treatment plant and collection system).

People who filled out the questionnaire were given an opportunity to include comments on the questions. Two consistent themes emerged from the comments on the questionnaire:

1. The Town should temporarily restrict further multi-family, town house, and condominium development until an updated comprehensive plan has been adopted and appropriate implementation measures put into place; and

2. Public sewer is needed, but a comprehensive plan and strong implementing provisions should be in place before public sewer is pursued.

2007 Chincoteague Stakeholder Meetings

On September 19, 2007, the consultant held stakeholder meetings to further refine the planning process. The concept of the stakeholder meetings was to capture ideas from prominent Town residents, such as businesses and property owners as well as others who could not attend earlier comprehensive plan workshops. Discussions were held at four varying time intervals during the day to maximize participation.

The meetings included discussion on a range of issues. Participants offered suggestions to Town that focused on the following:

- Land Use and Zoning;
- Town Legislative and Administrative Processes;
- Private Property Rights;
- Affordable Housing;
- Public Sewer Services;
- Marinas and Marine Uses; and
- Commercial Uses in Town.

A summary of these discussions is included in the Comprehensive Plan as "Appendix C: Stakeholder Meetings Summary."

2015 Five Year Update of Approved Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Chincoteague adopted a fully revised Comprehensive Plan on January 4, 2010. The comprehensive plan is designed to be a general guide for growth and future development for the next 20 years. The Code of Virginia (*§ 15.2-2230*) requires that at least once every five years the comprehensive plan shall be reviewed by the local planning commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan.

To allow adequate time for review of the plan, the implementation steps, and new legislative requirements, the Planning Commission began work on a strategy and schedule to provide Town Council with a recommendation for any changes prior to January 2015.

Several strategies were used to accomplish the required review process:

A) Complete a chapter by chapter (or page by page) review during the next several regular meetings of the Planning Commission to identify any areas that require additional study or revision.

B) Focus on Appendix A – Implementation Matrix to determine which Goals, Objectives and Land Use Recommendations have been accomplished and adjust them as necessary to reflect current conditions.

C) Incorporate current planning activities such as:

1. FEMA Hazard Mitigation
2. FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps (new in 2014) and NFIP/CRS
3. Water and Wastewater Utility Systems
4. Healthy Communities
5. Environment/Recreation (CCP and GMP plans in 2014)
6. JLUS and Wallops Island Master Plan EIS

D) Revise to include changes required by State Code:

1. Coastal Resource Management

§ 15.2-2223.2. Comprehensive plan to include coastal resource management guidance.

Beginning in 2013, any locality in Tidewater Virginia, as defined in § 62.1-44.15:68, shall incorporate the guidance developed by the Virginia Institute of Marine Science pursuant to subdivision 9 of § 28.2-1100 into the next scheduled review of its comprehensive plan. The Department of Conservation and Recreation, Virginia Marine Resources Commission, and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science shall provide technical assistance to any such locality upon request. (2011, c. 885.)

E) Consider a special area plan for the Maddox Boulevard Corridor/(C-3 Zoning)

F) Revise approved land use map to include:

1. Route 175 New Bridge Alignment
2. Island Activity Center
3. Proposed CVFC site
4. Private to Public Road priority for Seaweed Drive
5. Mariners Point
6. Bridge Street/Robert Reed Park expansion/Fishing Pier

G) Complete a study with recommendations for Town policy and comprehensive plan language for:

1. Private Roads issue

2. Sidewalk and Trail Plan
3. Stormwater/Drainage
4. Tourism/Event Planning
5. Island wide Broadband service
6. Landscaping/Tree Canopy

The Planning Commission finalized its recommended changes on November 4, 2014 and presented Town Council with a draft redlined copy of the Town Comprehensive Plan 5-year Update on November 13, 2014. Comments and corrections received during this review and during the Planning Commission meeting on December 9, 2014 have been incorporated into the public hearing draft document.

A joint public hearing with the Planning Commission, held on January 5, 2015 at the regular Town Council meeting was advertised in Eastern Shore Post for 2 consecutive weeks to allow for the consideration of public comment. The Town Council took the following action: