

## **Chapter 10: Community Development**

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## Community Development

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# Chapter 10

## Community Development

This Chapter focuses on the physical layout, settings and character of housing, retail and employment areas, and the relationship between the existing and new development in targeted areas of the County. The Chapter brings together several elements that were separate chapters in past comprehensive plans including community character and urban design, housing, and historic preservation.

The desire to improve community character has been a prime concern of past comprehensive plans. Concerns have evolved over the years with changing economic and real estate trends but, at one period or another, included the following:

- Town Centers had not developed as the 1990 Comprehensive Plan envisioned, as physical centers of community with a distinctive community character or theme.
- Residential subdivisions were being built as standalone developments unrelated to adjoining lands. With some exceptions, few developments were physically connected to each other with roads or sidewalks, thus discouraging community interaction and a more broad sense of neighborhood.
- Charles County sought to achieve better all-round quality of development and quality of life in areas such as urban design and construction, well-designed and used public spaces, provisions for pedestrian activity, pride in community development, cultural and entertainment activities, night life etc.
- Unattractive or degraded sites in highly visible locations were a blighting influence and presented a negative image of the County.
- Generic development, both for site improvements and buildings, were making development in Charles County indistinguishable from development in other areas.
- Residents' positive perception of the County as a healthy community that was developing in the right direction was being questioned. The County sought to understand better how it could help create and maintain communities that are physically and socially healthy and vital.
- Higher travel costs and increasing congestion on US 301 and MD 210 were affecting residents' quality of life. This further strengthened the desire for better transit connections, especially from Waldorf to Washington DC.
- Vestiges of the high cost of housing (in the late 1990s and early 2000s) combined with the weaker economy and higher cost of living of the late 2000s resulted in a lack of affordable housing, particularly for the lower income sectors of county residents.
- Unique community character in the rural areas, including agricultural landscapes, waterfront vistas and references to heritage themes were not being preserved and enhanced.

## Goals and Objectives

- 10.1 Integrate existing and future development into a cohesive whole that creates a distinct, attractive and healthy community character for Charles County.
- 10.2 Continue to seek improvement in the design quality of development in the County.
- 10.3 Establish an urban-scaled, transit-oriented community with an identifiable sense of place in the traditional heart of Waldorf.
- 10.4 Provide a broad range of quality housing for all County residents, including those with low and moderate incomes.
- 10.5 Provide housing opportunities for the County's share of residents who have difficulty competing for standard, market rate dwellings.
- 10.6 Pursue opportunities for public water access and waterfront development opportunities in selected waterfront areas.
- 10.7 Clarify levels of development and conservation in different Charles County villages.
- 10.8 Preserve and enhance the County's rural community character including agricultural landscapes, waterfront vistas, and historic and natural resources.
- 10.9 Protect significant views and vistas from the adverse effects of development including the Mount Vernon viewshed.
- 10.10 Create healthy, safe neighborhoods and communities that remain viable and stable as their housing stock ages and turns over to new residents.

## Defining Community Character for Charles County

Community character is the sum of the characteristics that make a place distinctive. Community development involves efforts to enhance those features or characteristics that the community values so that its overall community character is enhanced. Charles County is diverse and different parts of the County have their own character. The overall characteristics that residents value is listed in Chapter 1 and is repeated here for convenience:

Rural character	Waterfront resources	Cultural/ethnic diversity
Historic features	Natural resources and environment	Affordable housing
Smaller settlements, villages	Agricultural resources	Proximity to employment and service

## Development Districts

The Development Districts concept protects many of the characteristics valued by residents such as rural character, agricultural resources and smaller settlements by directing 75 percent of future growth into higher density development with good access to public facilities and services.

The overall vision for community character in the Development District is for compact development which is urban in places and that respects the area's environmental resources. In suburban areas, neighborhoods are distinctive and a sense of connectedness is promoted. Contiguous areas of green open space and amenities for residents are provided.

In urban areas the community character should be urban, and new development and redevelopment should seek to enhance urban character. This means incorporating concepts such as the following into development planning:

- Compact areas with public and private uses within walking distance.
- The center of the community having a distinct character or theme.
- Areas of vitality and diversity, including a mix of commercial, office, residential, public institutional and park uses, which contribute to the concept of community center.
- Urban character and feel with abutting buildings and smaller setbacks, all organized around a system of city blocks with sidewalks and a formal streetscape.
- An area with higher residential density mix of single-family, townhomes, and other unit types.
- Urban-scaled public parks and plazas to provide for respite and community interaction for residents, workers, and shoppers.

In suburban residential areas the community character should be high-quality suburban development organized around a network of open space and community facilities. To provide attractive neighborhoods and foster a sense of community within suburban neighborhoods, suburban development should:

- Provide adequate facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists within neighborhoods.
- Promote road, pedestrian, and bicycle connectivity between neighborhoods.
- Provide ample passive and active recreational amenities such as trails, parks and other community gathering spaces.
- Have high-quality, attractive, distinctive architecture that avoids the homogeneity typical of many suburban developments today.

## Rural Areas

Roughly 80 percent of the County lies outside the County's main Development District. Here, the landscape is dominated by forest and agricultural land, although increasing rural residential development in this area is a concern to the extent that it changes the character of the rural landscape.

The overall vision for community character in the Rural Areas is to preserve rural character in an economically sustainable manner. This means preserving agricultural land (through purchasing conservation easements), protecting forests, marsh and waterfront landscapes; protecting important views, scenic vistas and references to County history and culture, and maintaining and enhancing rural villages. New economic activity is necessary to keep the rural areas vibrant, but it respects and fits into the older, existing landscape rather than taking it over and dominating it.

## **Enhancing Community Character**

This section describes community development initiatives that will be a priority for the County over the next five to six years to respond to the goals and objectives in this chapter.

### **Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor**

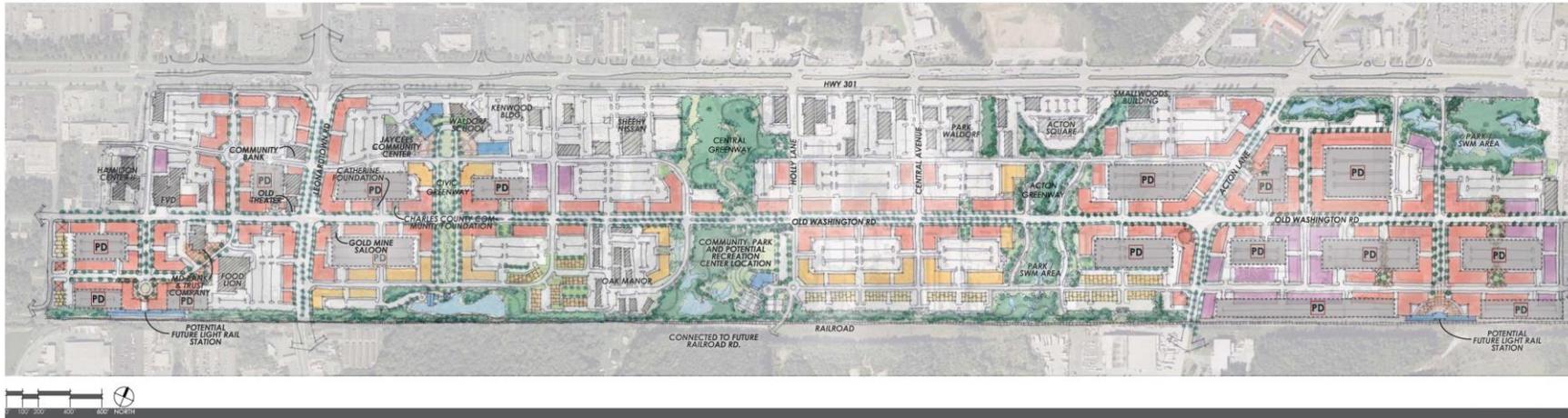
Redevelopment and revitalization of Waldorf has been a county focus for several years. The Waldorf Sub-Area Plan (2004) was followed by the Waldorf Urban Design Study (WUDS) that set forth a vision for a study area comprising the Acton and Waldorf Activity centers, two of four activity centers identified in the Waldorf Sub-Area Plan. The vision was to create a downtown center, an attractive focal point for the larger Waldorf community and a destination with a unique sense of place not offered elsewhere in Waldorf. The WUDS was adopted in 2010 along with changes in the zoning regulations designed to facilitate the types of development that would begin to achieve the vision (Figure 10-1). The WUDS includes design guidelines that will inform future redevelopment within the area.

In 2011 the County began a Feasibility Study in the form of i) an implementation plan for the water, sewer, stormwater, and other infrastructure including structured parking, to serve the development/re-development of the Waldorf Urban Design Study Area and ii) recommendations for the potential for a first phase of development, possibly a public-private partnership that would stimulate further private investment within the plan area. This study was completed in 2013. As part of that analysis, the redevelopment area is now referred to as the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC).

### **Transit Corridor**

The Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC) is part of a larger transit corridor that extends from the County line to White Plains. Within the entire corridor transit-oriented land uses will be promoted to further promote transit oriented development and provide greater support of potential federal transit funding (see also Chapters 3 and 8).

Figure 10-1 Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor

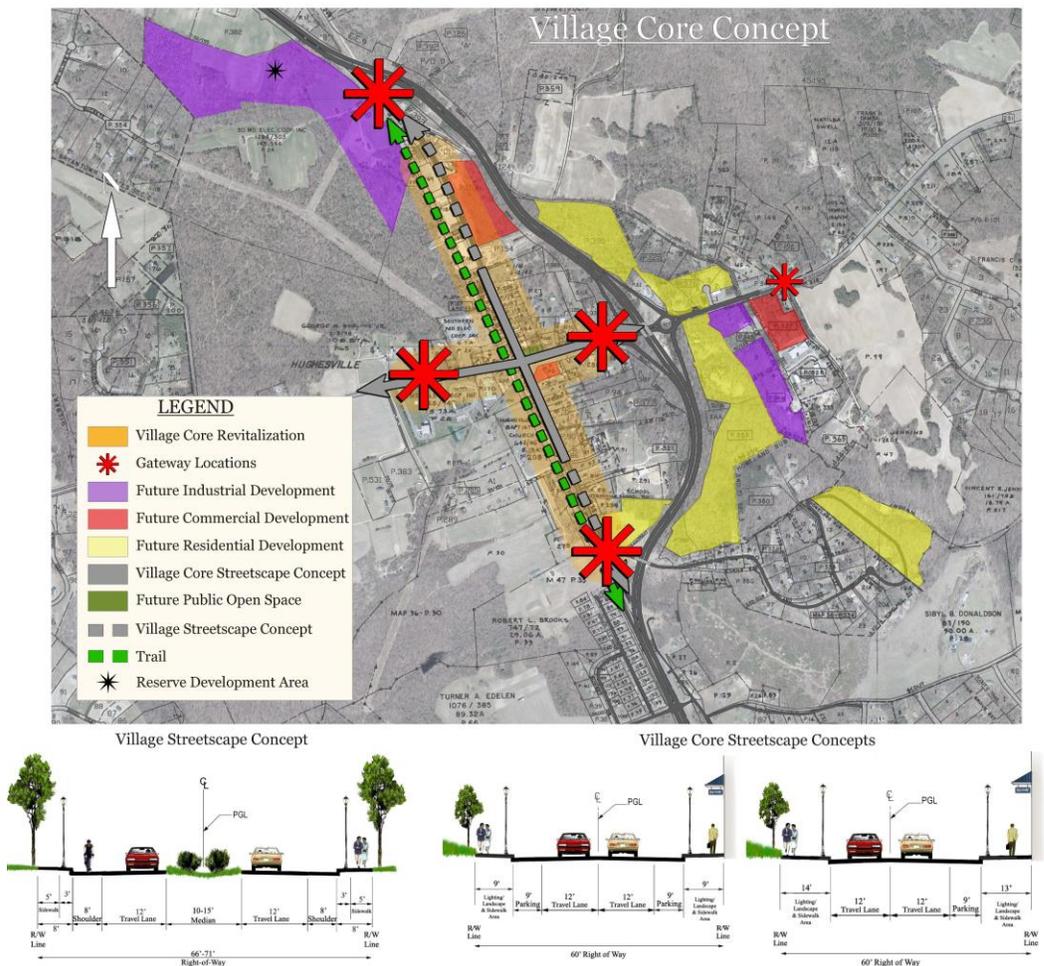


-  existing buildings
-  mixed-use retail or retail w/ residential
-  mixed-use offices or retail with offices
-  medium density residential condos or apartments
-  low density residential townhomes or stacked townhomes
-  civic uses
-  open spaces
-  parking deck/garage w/ potential retail front

## Hughesville

The Hughesville Village Revitalization Plan was adopted in May 2007. The plan envisions a village core with small-scale, retail-oriented, commercial, office and employment areas that are pedestrian-friendly (Figure 10-2). Revitalization efforts include façade improvements, selective demolition, infill and adaptive reuse; and infrastructure improvements to create a walkable community that provides basic goods and services. In 2010, the Hughesville Business & Civic Alliance, Inc. (HBCA) was established to guide and facilitate the implementation of the revitalization plan. The HBCA has established project priorities that include Main Street improvements, adaptive reuse of the tobacco auction warehouses as an events venue, revising the current Priority Funding Area boundary, and providing a full signal at Old Leonardtown Road and Foster Lane. In 2013, the County Commissioners authorized going forward with Priority Funding Area changes for the Hughesville area as related to a new College of Southern Maryland (CSM) campus in Hughesville, the adjacent Hughesville Station employment park project, and the historic tobacco warehouse revitalization projects. A new village center zoning district will be completed in 2017.

**Figure 10-2 Hughesville Village Core Concept**



## Benedict

The Benedict Waterfront Village Plan was adopted in January 2012 (Figure 10-3). The plan identifies a vision for the future of the village that includes protecting its natural, historic, and other cultural resources and maintaining its physical integrity, small-town scale, and distinctive character. The plan identifies and prioritizes physical improvements to enhance the village’s waterfront image including implementing planned sewer service improvements, defining appropriate land uses and infill development, and improving water access and amenities. Waterfront boardwalk, landscaping and signage improvements were completed in 2015.

**Figure 10-3 Benedict Village Concept Plan**



Village Concept Plan

May 4, 2011  
AECOM

## **Additional Villages**

As discussed in Chapter 3, the Comprehensive Plan's objectives for villages are to preserve and enhance their present character so that they may continue to act as rural service areas and/or rural residential communities and to serve their traditional roles in rural County life.

As part of the 2016 Comprehensive Plan, the County conducted a detailed review of the 22 villages first designated in the 1990 Comprehensive Plan. The review was intended to compare the assessment conducted for the 2006 Comprehensive Plan with current village conditions while considering the following questions:

- What should the role or function be for each of the Village Centers?
- Should any of the Villages be encouraged to expand or be discontinued as viable rural centers?
- What should the size of a village be and should they all be the same?
- What uses should be permitted within villages and why?

Staff toured and photographed each of the villages to document and compare 2011-2012 conditions against the documented 2006 village assessments. This work resulted in the following findings and conclusions:

### *A. Rural Village Hierarchy & Types*

The County's rural villages continue to be extremely varied in size, character and uses. The 1990 Comprehensive Plan first introduced the land use concept of the village and it was reaffirmed in the 2006 plan update. Since that time the villages have remained unchanged in terms of their general size and area designations for Commercial Village and Residential Village zoning; however, they now require further detailed classification to properly address future land use, development and community character in each location. The County's rural villages can best be described as one of the following three types:

- The Mixed Residential / Commercial Village is typically comprised of a blended mix of multiple commercial, employment, institutional and/or government uses with complementary ratio of residential homes linked through a series of interconnected streets that form small and often irregular shaped blocks. They are self-sustaining communities in the sense that residents do not need to leave the area for basic goods and services. These mixed-use villages range in size from 75 acres (e.g. Nanjemoy) to over 400 acres (e.g. Hughesville).
- The Residential Village is comprised primarily of Residential Village zoning and homes associated with one or sometimes two small site(s) dedicated to local neighborhood-serving commercial, employment or institutional uses. These villages are primarily rural residential enclaves (hamlets) within close proximity to another nearby, commercial serving village or town. The Residential Villages range in size from 7 acres (e.g. Tompkinsville) to 235 acres (e.g. Morgantown).
- The Commercial Village is comprised primarily of commercial service or employment uses with little or no residential uses. These villages primarily serve rural neighborhood populations, through-traffic, and tourists with neighborhood-commercial uses. The

Commercial Villages range in size from just over 1 acre (e.g. Wayside) to 127 acres (e.g., Glasva).

A number of different development options for the villages were explored as part of the Plan's alternative scenarios (see Chapter 1). One of the options would have focused significant new development in only six of the villages with the remaining villages seeing very little or no future additional development.

As discussed in Chapter 3, this 2016 Comprehensive Plan recommends retaining all 22 villages designated in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan (see Table 3-1). The following analysis is intended to inform future planning for villages.

### *B. Village Roles and Functions*

The role and function of the Residential Villages and Commercial Villages are limited by their respective focus on rural residential living or rural neighborhood commercial services. As such they really do not have a larger role or unique function in the County. In contrast, the more substantial and varied Mixed Commercial-Residential Villages can be defined with an identity and role within the larger areas they serve.

- Hughesville should remain focused as an “Inland Village” serving the eastern portion of the County as a center of commerce and quasi-governmental center. Hughesville continues to serve both a regional and local population with the concentrated commercial and institutional services the village provides.
- Bel Alton should also be focused as an “Inland Village” serving the southern portion of the County as a center of commerce, community service and heritage tourism, especially related to the John Wilkes Booth Trail.
- Nanjemoy should be a satellite center for eco-tourism and heritage tourism for western Charles County.
- Benedict and Cobb Island are primarily water-oriented villages that maintain Charles County's heritage in the maritime and seafood industries. Benedict is now a key point of heritage tourism focus for the Star Spangled Banner National Historic Trail. These villages should also be considered the satellite centers for eco-tourism and heritage-tourism for eastern and southern Charles County.
- Newburg, if combined with Aqualand, could also be considered a water-oriented village; however, the primary role for Newburg should be as a commercial and quasi-governmental center serving the southern Charles County area as well as a visitor gateway destination for travelers entering Charles County from the south. Like Hughesville, the Newburg-Clifton-Aqualand Sub-Area has the potential to serve both a regional and local population with additional planned commercial and community services.

### *C. Recommended Permitted Village Uses*

The broad range of non-residential uses that are permitted in villages should be reviewed for suitability in relation to their role and function. Under Village Commercial zoning, uses that

could be permitted include large retail stores (shoppers merchandise), sale of bulky items (general merchandise), fast food restaurants, and motor-vehicle sales. Some of these uses may be appropriate in some villages at the right scale and intensity, but some may not. Design guidelines and the special exception process may not be enough to prevent a use that would be out-of-scale with the objectives for villages. Outlined below is a list of uses that are compatible with the scale and goals of the villages:

- Local neighborhood-serving retail and commercial service uses (e.g., gas station, general store, hardware store, marine sales.)
- Professional offices (medical, financial, etc.)
- Heritage tourism and eco-tourism related uses (e.g., outfitters' stores, small inns and bed and breakfasts)
- Small scale institutional uses (e.g., rural school, day care, religious institutions)
- Civic uses (e.g., fire hall, community hall, post office, satellite County offices)
- Small-lot single-family residential, similar in size and scale to existing village residential
- Village-scale recreational uses (e.g., small parks, village commons, athletic fields, community pavilions)
- Small industry and employment uses with a special emphasis on eco-oriented businesses, green industries, agri-business.

The viability of each of these uses will vary in each village given that some are very remote and others lie along well travelled roads. Uses will have to be evaluated on a case-by-case basis with special consideration for precedents that have already been established within each village.

### *D. Suggested Development Character for Villages*

The 2006 Comprehensive Plan recommended that architectural themes be framed for each village so that future development could be subject to review. While this has not been accomplished, the County does use Architectural and Site Design Guidelines and Standards (originally drafted by the Site Design and Architectural Review Board) when reviewing plans and applications. Generally, villages should:

- Remain relatively small in physical area and population;
- Continue to provide limited, highly localized commercial services;
- Provide limited employment opportunities;
- Provide opportunities for civic, community and institutional uses; and,
- Provide a population density consistent with the existing development pattern and other objectives of the Plan. The need for public water and sewer is currently anticipated in three villages only; Hughesville, Benedict and Cobb Island.

In order to assure the continued small size of the villages, any central water or sewer system which is eventually provided to correct failing septic systems in other villages

should be built to serve land area and development only within the immediate physical confines of the village itself and not extend to adjacent non-village areas.

*E. Village Size, and Expansion Recommendations*

Some villages, such as Hughesville, Cobb Island and Benedict, have continued to grow or infill, (slowly) and are true rural service centers that reinforce the identity of the communities they serve. In contrast, most of the villages have seen very little change since the 1990s, with the exception of a few where some commercial uses have closed (e.g., Malcolm, Mt. Victoria, Ironsides and Tompkinsville).

Many villages are very small with little room for development and are limited to a single or a few commercial establishments (e.g., Dentsville, Gallant Green, Ironsides, Simpsons Corner, Wayside and Welcome). Commercial and hospitality sections of the villages along the US 301 corridor (Bel Alton, Faulkner, Glasva, and Newburg) have seen little reinvestment, marginal reuse or no redevelopment, giving the southern portion of the US 301 corridor a somewhat neglected image and first impression. Residential uses within the villages appeared to be stable.

Through the public visioning forum planning process, three of the twenty-two village areas studied were identified for further study in terms of their size and boundaries: Nanjemoy, Bel Alton, and Newburg.

*Nanjemoy*

The Village of Nanjemoy is located in a very rural portion of west central Charles County where MD 6 intersects with Liverpool Point and Baptist Church Roads. The village is approximately 75 acres in size with 11.6 acres currently designated for Commercial Village zoning uses and 63.3 acres designated for Residential Village zoning uses. The village primarily serves the needs of the local population with primary uses limited to a County community/health center, local church, fire department and post office with some small supporting businesses (Figure 10-4).

A few of the noteworthy uses and buildings associated with Nanjemoy, such as the old school/community center and its surrounding park and play spaces and nearby residences, are not actually located within the current Village boundary. This Comprehensive Plan recommends redefining/expanding the Village boundary slightly to include the area surrounding the Community Center (old Nanjemoy School) to the north, the Baptist Church to the east and fire hall to the south. The intent is to reinforce Nanjemoy's role as the primary service center and ecotourism satellite for the southwestern portion of Charles County by bringing all nearby contributing village uses into the Village (and Priority Funding Area) boundary to assure that future implementation funding programs can be applied to these areas also for the benefit of the Nanjemoy community.

**Figure 10-4 Nanjemoy Village Uses and Conditions**

		
<b>Fire and Community Hall</b>	<b>Post Office</b>	<b>Small Businesses</b>
		
<b>Community center &amp; park</b>	<b>Park and playground</b>	<b>Residential across from community center</b>

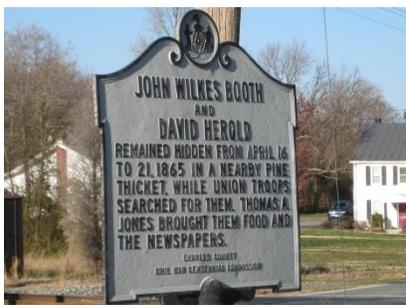
**Bel Alton**

Bel Alton is located south of the Town of La Plata along US 301 and Bel Alton-Newtown Road. It is one of the larger villages in Charles County at approximately 318 acres of which 118 acres are zoned for Commercial Village uses and 200 acres are zoned for Residential Village uses (Figure 10-5). The commercial village consists of a historic section with a post office, fire house and general store (vacant as of 2012) as well as a highway commercial corridor along US 301 with hotels, apartments, bar & grill restaurant, daycare and professional building, a liquor store, and the Bel Alton High School Community Development Center /Jude House to the south (Figure 10-6).

**Figure 10-5 Bel Alton Village Current Boundary**



**Figure 10-6 Bel Alton Village Uses and Conditions**

		
<p><b>Volunteer Fire Dept. &amp; Community Hall</b></p>	<p><b>1920's Era Gas Station</b></p>	<p><b>Historic Post Office and Store</b></p>
		
<p><b>Apehangers Bar &amp; Grill &amp; Thrift Shop</b></p>	<p><b>Historic Marker John Wilkes Booth Trail</b></p>	<p><b>Community Development Center</b></p>

With its location on US 301, the village has traditionally served the needs of the local population, as well as regional travelers and highway-oriented through traffic. The village’s linear orientation to both the US 301 Corridor and Bel Alton-Newtown Road has created a somewhat sprawling community with only a moderate amount of redevelopment capacity. This condition could be improved with a small village expansion that would allow for better linkages with adjoining residential subdivisions, residential village character along both sides of Bel Alton-Newtown Road, and greater potential for commercial revitalization along US 301 and Bel Alton-Newtown Road.

Figure 10-7 illustrates existing conditions in Bel Alton. Figure 10-8 shows the potential for what the future Bel Alton Village could be with the proper planning, design and implementation of the Village principles that retain the rural character of the area, while creating a sustainable model for village life. These principles are shown in Figure 10-9 in the form of a concept plan for an expanded Bel Alton village that illustrates the potential for sensitive growth and development with implementation of 17 key village elements.

1. An expansion of the village boundary to the northwest to connect with nearby Chapel Point Woods residences west of US 301 to create a more cohesive village environment.
2. An expansion of the village boundary to the southeast to include new commercial and residential opportunities across from Bel Alton High School to the railway line.
3. An expansion of the village boundary across Bel Alton-Newtown Road east of the railway to include opportunities for additional village residential on both sides of Bel Alton-Newtown Road to the east.

## Community Development

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4. Reinforce the existing Bel Alton historic district with revitalization and adaptive reuse of historic structures along the Bel Alton-Newtown Road corridor: two room schoolhouse, 1920s era gas station, general store, etc.
5. New gateway entrances and signage announcing the Village of Bel Alton at US 301 and Irving Road, Chapel Point Road, and Balsam Run.
6. An extended network of small streets, lanes and alleys between Twinberry Drive and US 301 on the west side of the village and between the Railway and US 301 on the east side of the village. Additional residential streets are also suggested for the south side of Bel Alton-Newtown Road.
7. New east-west street connections from US 301 into the village at the four existing median breaks in the US 301 Corridor. New limited, shared access, right-in/right-out access points are also suggested in between median breaks.
8. Retention of existing vegetative buffers along US 301.
9. Expanded highway-oriented commercial, commercial service and professional office uses oriented along new internal north-south streets paralleling and maintaining visibility to US 301 between Balsam Road to the north and Irving Road to the south.
10. Potential infill commercial on hotel open space frontage along US 301.
11. A potential new village commercial center located on the vacant site at Bel Alton-Newtown Road and US 301. This commercial center would serve the Bel Alton area as well as the smaller villages south and east of La Plata.
12. A new village common at the center of the Bel Alton historic district at a reconfigured intersection of Bel Alton-Newtown Road and Fairgrounds Road.
13. An historic Depot Grounds Village Green east of the railway track on the site of the old railway station.
14. A new active and passive recreation park and center in the existing open space in the northwest corner of the proposed village.
15. Realignment of South Faulkner Road to the east to allow for its extension north for a direct connection between Bel Alton and Faulkner, without traveling on US 301. Faulkner Road traffic would be redirected to a new and safer intersection at US 301 and Irving Road.
16. New institutional and civic uses could be located south of the recreation park to allow for shared use of open space amenities and high visibility from US 301 and the Village core.
17. Expanded single-family village residential to the west of US 301 along Twinberry Drive and to the east of US 301 with a focus on existing forest and agricultural hedgerow preservation to transition and blend with the surrounding agricultural and forest environs.

**Figure 10-7 Bel Alton Village Existing Conditions**



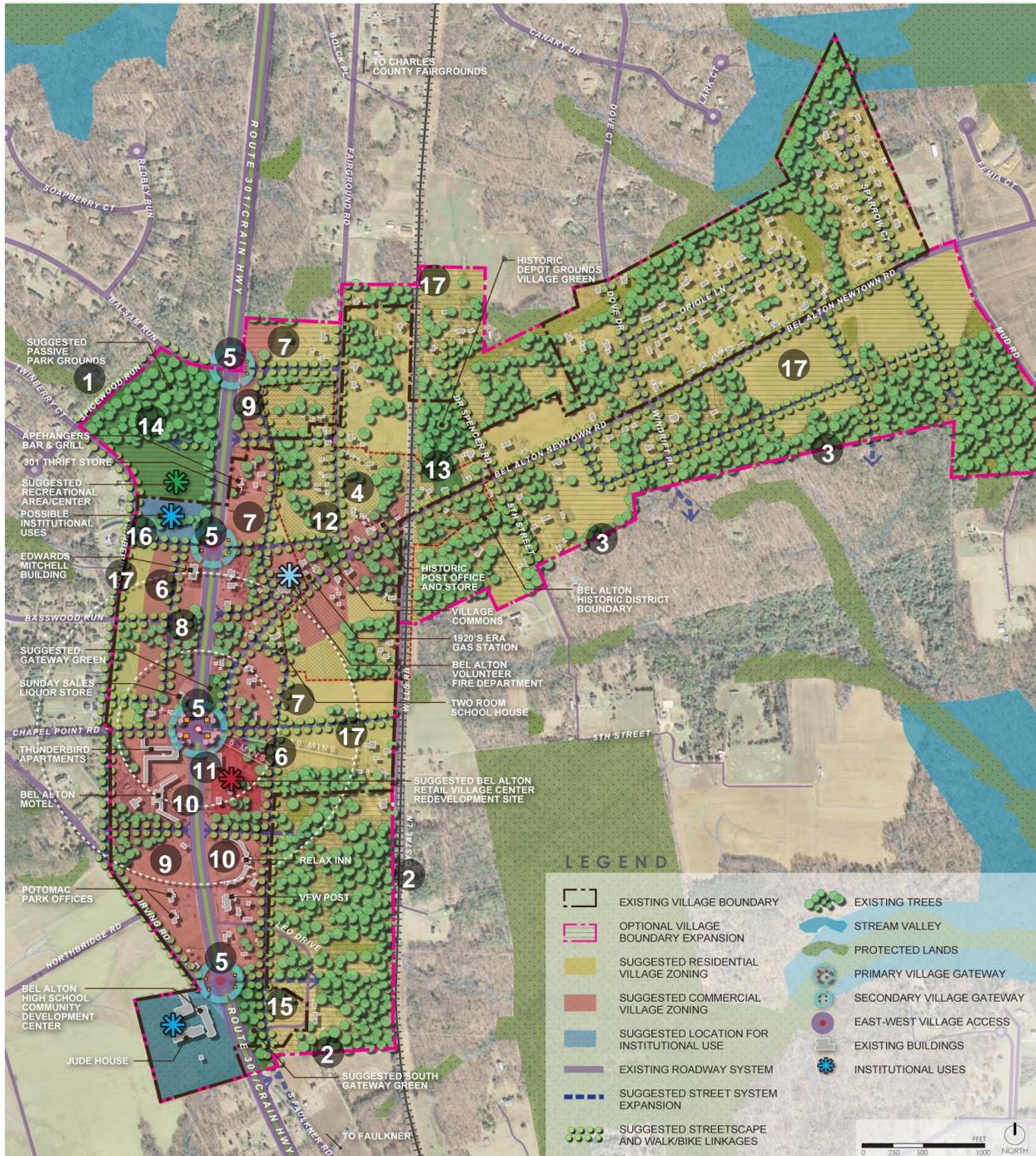
*Many of the current commercial uses are highway-oriented with little relationship and connectivity back to the historic core of Bel Alton along Bel Alton-Newtown Road, Fairgrounds Road and the rail tracks*

**Figure 10-8 Bel Alton Village Future Conditions**



*With careful planning and implementation of modest architecture, small street linkages, additional open space, gateways and integration with current uses, Bel Alton has the potential to be a more viable rural village.*

**Figure 10-9 Bel Alton Village Area Concept Plan**



Note: The Department of Planning and Growth Management has a larger, more detailed version of this figure.

*Newburg*

Newburg Village is currently a 50 acre village zoned Community Commercial (CC) along US 301 at its intersection with Rock Point Road (Figure 10-10). The current CC Zone consists of an antique store, truck sales and service, marine sales, liquor store, hardware store, general store, post office, fire department/rescue squad and a small number of single-family residences (Figure 10-11). The area currently serves the local and regional populations as well as highway through traffic.

**Figure 10-10 Newburg Village Current Boundary**



**Figure 10-11 Newburg Village Uses and Conditions**

<p><b>Volunteer Fire Dept. &amp; Community Hall</b></p>	<p><b>Post office and Dan's Store</b></p>	<p><b>True Value Hardware Store</b></p>
<p><b>Mil-Mar Business</b></p>	<p><b>Newburg Marine Sales</b></p>	<p><b>Antique Collector's Cove</b></p>

Figure 10-12 illustrates existing conditions in Newburg. Figure 10-13 shows the potential for what the future Newburg Village, Clifton area and Aqualand area could be with the planning, design and implementation of the Village principles that retain the rural character of the area, while creating a sustainable model for village life. These principles are shown in Figure 10-14 in the form of a concept plan illustrating the potential for sensitive growth and development of the Newburg Village with implementation.

These elements and the concept plan for Newburg Village are recommended for further study and definition in a future Sub Area Plan for the larger Newburg-Clifton-Aqualand area. The sub area plan will include recommendations for central sewer and water services and how private investment can help offset costs for wastewater treatment.

To provide development flexibility as a mixed-use village this Comprehensive Plan recommends the current CC zoning district be replaced with a balanced mix of designated Commercial Village Zoning and Residential Village Zoning areas. The overall village area size is initially recommended to be approximately 330 acres to accommodate a sustainable mix of commercial, residential, institutional and employment uses, including the existing travel center and transfer facility. The exact size and location will be determined during the planning process.

**Figure 10-12 Newburg Village Existing Conditions**



The Newburg area refers to a long-standing Community Commercial area at the corner of US Route 301 and Rock Point Road known for its marine sales and services, and local commercial services.

**Figure 10-13 Newburg Village Future Conditions (concept only)**



*With sensitive infill of small businesses, residences and institutional uses along an expanded pedestrian-friendly street network linking passive and active open spaces, the Newburg-Clifton-Aqualand area has the potential to be a regional service center, visitor gateway and recreational amenity for southern Charles County.*



Key elements for consideration in the Newburg-Cliffton-Aqualand Sub-Area Plan:

1. Development of a larger Sub-Area Plan for the Newburg-Cliffton-Aqualand area would be more effective than limiting the study to a village center area.
2. Formal study area boundaries for the new Newburg-Cliffton-Aqualand Sub-Area Plan will be determined at the time of the study.
3. This Sub-Area Plan will provide recommendations for the sewer service area.
4. This Sub-Area Plan would help leverage new private investment for improvements to wastewater treatment.
5. Expanding sewage treatment for Aqualand would be a catalyst for redevelopment.
6. Moving the center of the Newburg-Cliffton-Aqualand Sub-Area westward to a more central location could occur during the study once it commences.
7. The need for a more macro-level analysis of the mix of commercial and residential uses can be studied further during the Sub-Area planning process.
8. An expansion of the village boundary to the west and southwest to connect with the Cliffton Neighborhood west of US 301 and create a more cohesive village environment.
9. An expansion of the village boundary to the south to include new commercial and residential opportunities between the village core and the Crain Memorial Welcome Center.
10. An expansion of the village boundary to the southeast to include all frontage parcels on Rock Point Road west of the power transmission lines.
11. Potential redevelopment of Aqualand as a waterfront economic development opportunity and Potomac River Gateway where US 301 crosses the Potomac River and enters the State of Maryland.
12. New gateway entrances and signage announcing the village of Newburg at US 301 and Rock Point Road, the industrial park access road and Cliffton Drive.
13. An extended network of small streets, lanes and alleys between the Cliffton Neighborhood, Edge Hill Road and US 301 on the west side of the village and between Rock Point Road and US 301 on the east side of the village.
14. New east-west street connections from US 301 into the village at the three existing median breaks in the US 301 Corridor. New limited, shared access, right-in/right-out access points are also suggested in between median breaks.
15. Retention of existing vegetation along US 301.
16. A potential new village commercial center located on the east side of US 301 between US 301 and the railway. This commercial center would serve the Newburg/Aqualand area as well as the small villages along the southern peninsula to Cobb Island.
17. Expanded highway-oriented, commercial service and professional office uses oriented along new internal north-south streets paralleling and maintaining visibility to US 301 between Rock Point Road and the existing transfer facility to the south.
18. A new Village Common at the center of the Newburg Village at the new Volunteer Fire Department at a reconfigured intersection of Rock Point Road and Mt. Victoria Road.

19. A new active and passive recreation park and center in the central portion of the proposed village on the west side of US 301. The recreation center could be located in or on the site of an existing barn site at the end of Mt. Victoria Road extended west.
20. New institutional and civic uses could be located north of the recreation park to allow for shared use of open space amenities and high visibility from Edge Hill Road, US 301 and the Village core.
21. Expanded employment uses on the east side of US 301 between the existing transfer facility and Crain Memorial Welcome Center.
22. Expanded single-family village residential to the west of US 301 and to the east of Rock Point Road with a focus on existing forest and agricultural hedgerow preservation to transition and blend with the surrounding agricultural and forest environs.
23. Future expansion of the Crain Memorial Travel/Visitors Center site as needed.

### **Waterfront Development**

Public access to Charles County's waterfront was identified during the comprehensive plan process as an important community amenity. Of the County's more than 180 miles of shoreline, relatively little is developed. From an economic development perspective, waterfront development can be very valuable and increasing access to the water is also a County recreation objective.

A 1999 Waterfront Development Opportunities study identified seven locations as most appropriate for targeting future waterfront development.

Upper Potomac River shorefront	Mattawoman Creek/Sweden Point
Wades Bay/Mallows Bay Corridor	Port Tobacco River
Potomac River 301 Corridor Crossing	Lower Potomac Area
Village of Benedict	

A need for development of a new management plan for Piscataway Park which would include some improvements to Marshall Hall. This would allow County residents additional access to the Potomac Heritage Trail, Captain John Smith Trail and others in the Chesapeake Gateway network. This development and completion of these trails will bring recreational and economic benefits to the County.

In 2010, the County Commissioners reviewed development concepts for these seven areas and prioritized Port Tobacco, Benedict, and Potomac Crossing/ Aqualand for further work.

A Benedict Waterfront Village Revitalization Plan and a plan for Port Tobacco was completed in 2012. This Comprehensive Plan recommends a Sub-Area Plan for the Newburg-Cliffton-Aqualand area, including the Potomac River Crossing.

## Housing

As discussed in Chapter 2, Charles County is projected to add approximately 32,200 housing units between 2010 and 2040, a close to 60 percent increase over the total 2010 housing inventory of 55,000 units.

The location, type, form, and cost of this housing will have far-reaching consequences for the county's community character and landscape. Housing was an important issue during preparation of the Comprehensive Plan and many groups, organizations, and individuals responded to surveys, and submitted comments, input and, in some cases, reports and studies with recommendations on one or other aspect of housing.

Table 10-1 shows selected trends in housing since 1990.

## Community Development

**Table 10-1 Housing Trends 1990 - 2010**

Housing Units	1990		2000		2010		Change 1990-2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Owner Occupied	24,957	72%	32,571	74%	40,317	73%	15,360	45%
Renter Occupied	7,993	23%	9,097	21%	10,897	20%	2,904	8%
Vacant	1,537	4%	2,235	5%	3,749	7%	2,212	6%
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,487</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>43,903</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>54,963</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>20,476</b>	<b>59%</b>
<b>Units in Structure (1)</b>								
1 unit detached	24,377	71%	31,204	71%	38,461	72%	14,084	74%
1 unit attached	5,463	16%	7,856	18%	8,772	16%	3,309	17%
2 or more units	3,256	9%	3,933	9%	5,290	10%	2,034	11%
Mobile Home, Trailer, Other	1,391	4%	910	2%	1,063	2%	-328	-2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>34,487</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>43,903</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>53,586</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>19,099</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Median Value of owner occupied housing</b>								
Charles	\$ 122,000		\$ 153,000		\$ 355,800		\$ 233,800	192%
Calvert	\$ 136,100		\$ 169,200		\$ 392,900		\$ 256,800	189%
Prince George's	\$ 121,200		\$ 145,600		\$ 327,600		\$ 206,400	170%
St. Mary's	\$ 108,300		\$ 150,000		\$ 327,800		\$ 219,500	203%
Maryland	\$ 115,500		\$ 146,000		\$ 329,400		\$ 213,900	185%
<b>Median monthly rent</b>								
Charles	\$ 690		\$ 858		\$ 1,104		\$ 414	60%
Calvert	\$ 664		\$ 837		\$ 1,011		\$ 347	52%
Prince George's	\$ 642		\$ 737		\$ 1,023		\$ 381	59%
St. Mary's	\$ 539		\$ 719		\$ 954		\$ 415	77%
Maryland	\$ 548		\$ 689		\$ 933		\$ 385	70%
<b>Occupied Units lacking complete kitchen facilities</b>								
Charles	549	1.7%	221	0.5%	135	0.3%	(414)	
Maryland	10,796	0.6%	8,223	0.4%	10,205	0.5%	(591)	
<b>Occupied Units lacking complete plumbing facilities</b>								
Charles	918	2.8%	338	0.8%	176	0.3%	(742)	
Maryland	12,685	0.7%	9,033	0.5%	7,597	0.4%	(5,088)	

(1) Note: The 2010 Census collected limited housing data. The total for units in structure (53,586) does not match the total units in the County (54,963) because these data are estimates from the American Community Survey.

Sources: US Bureau of the Census, 1990, 2000, 2010 Decennial Censuses; American Community Survey 2010, 2011.

The following trends are of note:

- The share of housing units that are renter occupied declined from 23 percent in 1990 to 20 percent in 2010.
- The share of housing units that were vacant increased to seven percent, possibly as a result of the recession.

- The share of attached and multi-family housing units in 2010 was 26 percent, below the 30 percent target set in the 1997 and 2006 Comprehensive Plans.
- The value of owner-occupied housing continues to be higher than the state and nearby counties (except Calvert). Rental costs are the highest in the region.
- The number of substandard homes (lacking kitchen and plumbing facilities) has fallen substantially and is now very low (0.3%).

## **Housing Affordability**

The dominant issue in the public input on housing for the Comprehensive Plan was affordability with many comments regarding the high cost of housing and the inability of many working individuals and families to obtain decent housing at an affordable cost. This is not a new issue in Charles County, and was addressed in the 2006 Comprehensive Plan and in the 2005 Community Development Housing Plan. The issue gained additional traction because of the national economic recession that began in 2008 that resulted in many foreclosures.

In 2010 the Charles County Planning and Growth Management Department, Planning Division completed a peer-reviewed Housing Supply, Demand and Zoning Options Analysis that examined supply and demand for affordable housing. The Study concluded that that the greatest area of housing need in Charles County was with those making less than \$40,000 per year. Families earning between \$30,000 and \$40,000 per year might be able to afford a house within their income limits, but there were few for sale houses available within their affordability range (\$100,000 to \$125,000) and there were also a limited number of rentals in their affordability range (\$750 to \$1,000 per month). For those families within the workforce housing range, there was adequate supply to meet demand, but the data indicated that some families in the higher workforce housing income range could possibly afford a more expensive house than the one they reside in as based solely on their income levels.

The study examined various zoning mechanisms and possibilities for using zoning as one tool out of many to assist in the provision of affordable housing. Developing partnerships for projects in the County's redevelopment corridor may provide an opportunity for incorporating affordable housing within transit oriented development areas in the future.

A Housing Stock Study was completed in June 2015 and confirmed many of the previous findings that the area of greatest need was for low income housing opportunities. The study found that based on HUD Area Median Family Income (MFI) in the Washington DC region of \$107,000 for a family of four, the categories of income ranges used indicate that the workforce income extends from \$107,001 to \$128,400 for a family of four. While housing is available for those within the workforce housing income range, market rate housing for low income does not meet demand. Generally market housing with rents under \$1,000 per month are typically one bedroom units. A maximum rent for a three person household with 50% of the MFI is \$1,200 a month, including utilities.

In order to make affordable housing available to people of all incomes, the Zoning Ordinance shall be amended to require:

- i. A provision that 10 to 15% of the houses in a new subdivision of 20 or more units be moderately priced dwelling units (MPDUs).

- ii. This requirement applies even if the development is phased in over time. Developers must identify all land in the County that the developer owns or controls that is suitable for development in order to ensure that the law cannot be circumvented by breaking a development up into separate developments of 19 or fewer.
- iii. The Charles County Affordable Housing Board (to be created) will monitor the addition of affordable housing to ensure that the provision rate is sufficient to Charles County. The Board will make recommendations to the Commissioners regarding needed changes to the policy and to ensure developers are in compliance with the County's policy.
- iv. Moderately Priced Housing is intended to assist with the housing needs of residents approaching retirement age, with consequent fixed or reduced incomes, young adults of modest means forming new households and public sector employees in moderate income ranges who wish to live within the county.

### **Substandard Housing**

In December 2010 the Department of Community Services completed a Housing Needs Assessment for Nanjemoy. Housing in Nanjemoy has received considerable attention in recent years. Poor housing conditions (trailers, dilapidated conditions) in a few locations were highlighted in newspaper articles, including the Washington Post. Charles County elected and appointed officials sought action to improve conditions, and the purpose of the Assessment was to provide objective data and information, based on a scientific survey and community input, regarding housing conditions and needs in the Nanjemoy community.

The Assessment showed that while housing needs do exist in Nanjemoy, a large majority of the homes were in good or excellent condition. Housing conditions within Nanjemoy have improved over time, but pockets of seriously substandard housing exist. Questions remain regarding exactly how many units are in this condition, but the survey indicated that the number may be around 120, or 12% of the housing stock. The Assessment also revealed an abundance of pride in Nanjemoy with residents enjoying the community and its rural lifestyle.

### **Homeless Shelters**

Though an underserved and often times forgotten part of the population, the following is a summary of those programs available to the homeless.

- The Jude House Inc., Men's Facility and Treatment Center (Bel Alton)

Provides residential housing and treatment for drug and alcohol dependent men; clients work in the community. Treatment lasts a minimum of four months and includes professional assessment along with individual and group counseling. Medical, vocational, legal, social, and transportation services are provided to clients or coordinated by the program if client need exceeds the scope of program resources.

- The Jude House Inc., Women's Group Home (Bel Alton)

## Community Development

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Provides residential housing for women with drug and alcohol dependence. Treatment is provided at the Jude House Treatment Center.

- Life Styles – Robert J. Fuller Transitional House Homeless Advocacy Assn. (Waldorf)

Many services are provided to the participant, such as substance-abuse counseling, housing placement support, employment support, mental health services, individual development plan, and revision. With the support of staff as well as other residents, all clients will be encouraged to gain self-sufficiency by finding employment, a permanent residence, and a support system of friends and family. Within one year of staying at the house, the client should be able to re-enter society with confidence.

- Life Styles – Martha's Place Transitional Home (La Plata)

Martha's Place Transitional Home provides temporary housing intended to get women and children under 18 who are homeless into a safe, positive, living environment. The house can accommodate up to 6 residents, including 1 emergency bed. It is equipped with a communal kitchen, dining area, living space, and bathroom. Transitional housing is a living situation with a supportive, positive, and social community of other individuals who have had similar experiences. Martha's Place provides individuals and families a sheltered environment that enables them to work toward addressing barriers which prohibited independence.

- Life Styles – Gayle's House (La Plata)

Gayle's House provides temporary housing to assist survivors of domestic violence who are homeless in a secure and positive living environment. As a home-like sanctuary with a confidential location, Gayle's House provides survivors of domestic violence with the protection, care, and support that they need to regain control and make decisions over their own lives and about their futures. Transitional housing is a living situation with a supportive, positive, and social community of other participants who have had similar domestic violence experiences. The house can accommodate up to 12 persons, with three bedrooms and an emergency stay room. It is equipped with a communal kitchen, dining area, living space, and bathrooms. A house mother (or resident assistant) is provided for the safety of the home and its residents. Like Martha's Place, many services will be provided to the participant, such as access to counseling, housing placement support, employment support, transportation, mental health services, individual development planning, and revision.

- Charles County Department of Disability Determination Services (La Plata)

Emergency shelter placement, food counseling, and case management. Assistance with benefits applications.

- Charles County Department of Social Services (La Plata)

Assists the family with crises, including food and shelter emergencies, and provides counseling services to assist the family to overcome problems of parenting, parent-child conflict and family dysfunction.

- Angel's Watch Regional Shelter (Catholic Charities) (Hughesville)

A source of safety and new beginnings for women and their children fleeing domestic violence or homelessness in southern Maryland. We protect the location and identities of our residents and work one-on-one with them to guide them to an independent life free of abuse. Clients are homeless single women or women with children. Clients must be alcohol and drug-free.

- Fortitude Housing of Southern Maryland (Catholic Charities)

Fortitude Housing Southern Maryland is a permanent supportive housing program, providing living accommodations for up to 5 residents at a time. The program provides individualized case management services to clients and focuses on budgeting, bill paying, community engagement and apartment maintenance. Clients must be alcohol and drug-free.

- St. Sebastian Town Homes (Catholic Charities) (Waldorf)

St. Sebastian Townhomes are permanent supportive housing units located in Waldorf, MD. The program provides one-on-one case management services to clients depending on clients' specific needs. The program offers its clients permanent housing and one-on-one case management services that help to connect residents with resources targeting individuals experiencing mental health issues or physical disabilities. Residents who occupy secure permanent housing have a renewed opportunity to rebuild their lives. Apartment units are located in Waldorf. Clients must be alcohol and drug-free.

There are also several additional applications for homeless shelters which are pending.

## Housing Needs

Many sectors of the housing market in Charles County are healthy, but the following summarizes specific housing needs.

- For-sale housing at lower price ranges.
- Workforce housing to supply the needs of the County's labor force
- Emergency and transitional housing to meet the needs of the rising homeless population.
- Affordable housing that providers can purchase and retrofit for use by the disabled and developmentally disabled.
- A greater number of housing units designed with an aging population in mind
- Greater overall housing diversity

## Historic Preservation

Chartered over 350 years ago, in 1658, Charles County's history spans over five centuries. Including a wealth of resources such as Piscataway Indian culture, tobacco growing heritage, colonial architecture, Victorian railroad towns and post-World War II Amish communities, the County's history reflects the diversity and continuity of life in southern Maryland.

Charles County boasts numerous historic sites, structures, districts, and landscapes that uniquely reflect its past. This tangible heritage represents an invaluable and irreplaceable asset to its citizens. Historic preservation enhances community character, contributes to a unique sense of place, and shows that a community has pride and self-awareness. The

County's historic preservation program seeks to preserve and enhance the County's rich cultural heritage by making use of a broad range of preservation tools and strategies.

### **Historic Resource Recognition and Protection**

Well organized and implemented historical protection programs will help Charles County preserve its unique identity as it grows. Significant historic sites can be recognized and/or protected in different ways. The most common form of recognition is the National Register of Historic Places and the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties, which is a non-regulatory list. Charles County has 37 individual sites, plus two districts: Port Tobacco and Bryantown listed on the National Register. The Maryland Historical Trust also maintains an Inventory of Historic Properties. The inventory includes resources of all kinds such as houses, churches, and cemeteries, and contains over 1,000 listings. County staff currently reviews subdivision preliminary plans and special exceptions applications for potential adverse impacts to historic buildings. The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties and associated maps are used as a flagging system for identification of potential adverse impacts from proposed development.

Key protection programs for buildings include the Maryland Historical Trust Preservation Easement Program and the Charles County Historic Landmarks Program. A historic preservation easement program administered by the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) preserves both interior and exterior elements of historic structures. Thirteen sites are protected by such easements in Charles County, including Linden Farm, Dr. Samuel Mudd House and Waldorf School (Figure 10-15.)

Charles County is also rich in archeological resources. Currently there are numerous archaeological sites identified in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties. Recently, several significant archeological investigations have been completed in Charles County leading to the re-discovery of several key sites such as Moore's Lodge, the site of Charles County first courthouse, the 17<sup>th</sup> century Piscataway Fort at Zekiah, and His Lordship's Favor. Zekiah Fort was recently acquired and permanently protected by the Charles County Commissioners. Significant archeological survey work has also been completed in the historic district of Port Tobacco and near the village of Benedict. Because of this, interest in the protection of archaeological resources has grown. The County now requires development projects to be reviewed for potential impacts and mitigation of historic and archaeological resources.

#### *Local Historic Landmark Designation*

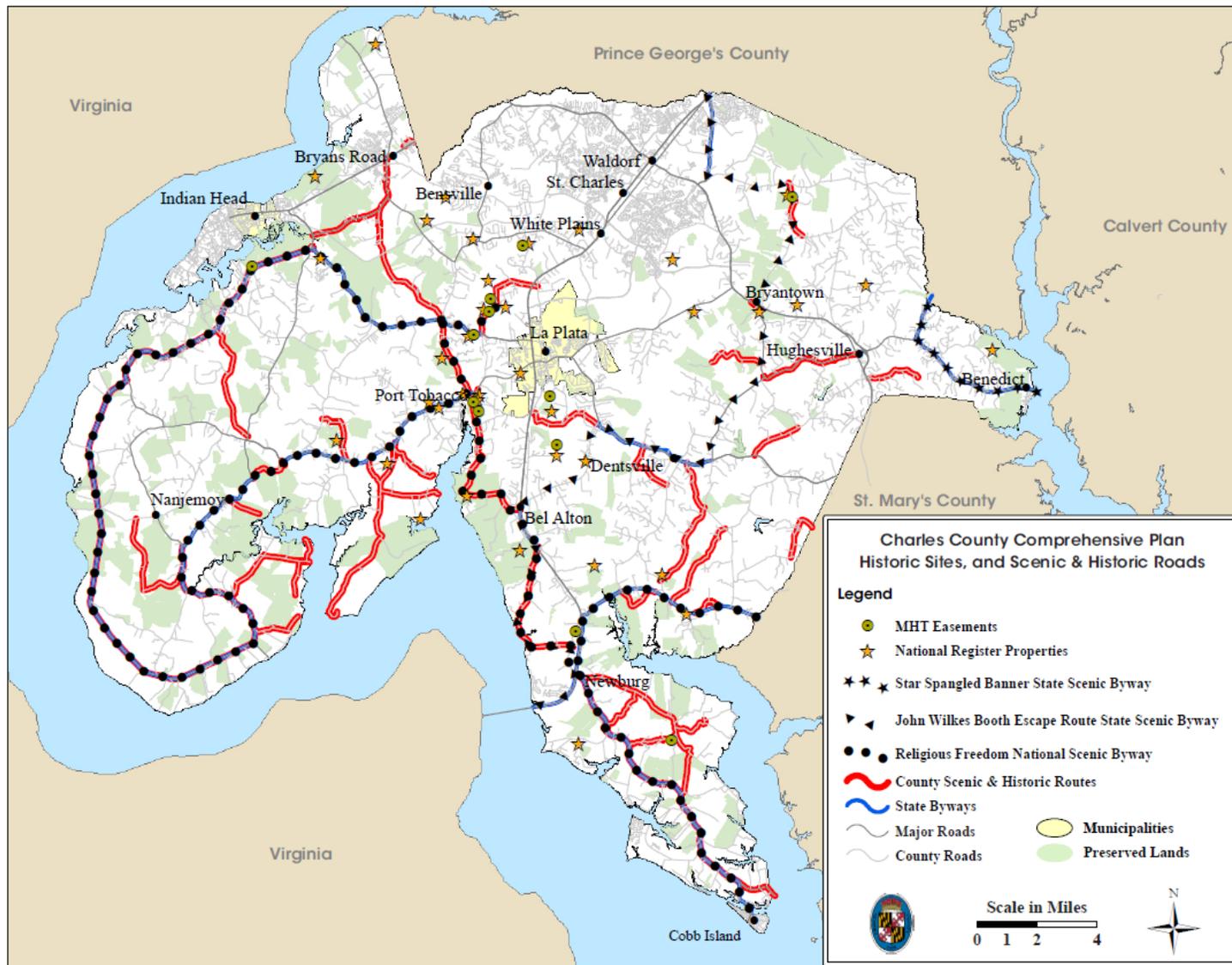
In 2009, Charles County adopted legislation to create a Historic Preservation Commission. The Commission recommends properties for local historic landmark designation, reviews exterior changes to locally-designated landmarks, and supports documentation of historic resources throughout the County. This is Charles County's most effective means of preserving historic properties. The Commission was formed and meets on a regular basis. The County was named a Certified Local Government in 2013. This program is jointly administered by the National Park Service and the Maryland Historical Trust and recognizes counties and municipalities that have made a special commitment to preservation. It qualifies the County to receive technical assistance and an opportunity to compete for grant funding each year.

## Community Development

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The County has several locally designated historic properties including Stagg Hall, the Old Waldorf School, Bel Alton High School and Gibbons Family Cemetery. Other significant historic properties in the County which are protected through preservation easements held by the Maryland Historical Trust include St. Thomas Manor, Friendship House, Burch House, Crain's Lot, Linden, Oak Grove, Edge Hill, Dr. Mudd House, Locust Grove, The Exchange and the Eugene Chaney House. The highest priority properties for future protection include those listed on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. For additional details on these and other sites, review the Charles County Historic Site Survey, Phase V Report, dated May, 2005 and available for review in the County's Planning & Growth Management Department.

Figure 10-15 Historic Sites and Scenic & Historic Roads



## **Scenic Roads and Landscapes**

Preservation of Charles County's rural heritage and character was one of the key community concerns during the Comprehensive plan update. A major contributor to public perception of community character is what can be seen from an automobile while driving along roads. For example, the easiest reference to rural character to recognize is natural, unmanaged or partially managed areas of landscape and an uninterrupted horizon of trees, fields and sky. Retention of these landscapes and views would be a significant step in preserving rural character.

Several state agencies as well as regional and local programs have identified scenic roads and landscapes worthy of protection. The Religious Freedom Byway Management Plan was completed in 2008. The Byway follows Charles County's most scenic corridors and incorporates many of the nation's oldest churches. The management plan establishes stewardship strategies for the protection of key resources including conservation priority mapping and developing design guidelines for key corridors.

Established by Congress in 2008, the Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and Scenic Byway consists of a 100-mile corridor that connects the places, people and events that led to the birth of the national anthem during the War of 1812. The Byway and Trail includes the village of Benedict, the site of the British invasion during the War of 1812. Charles County should continue to delineate these areas and develop programs to address the preservation of these key scenic and historic assets.

## **Local Scenic and Historic Roads Designation**

In 2011, Charles County adopted a Scenic and Historic Roads zoning ordinance which is intended to preserve both scenic vistas and historic landscapes in the rural areas of the County. This program incorporates and expands upon the state and nationally designated byways (Figure 10-15).

Charles County has a Highway Corridor zoning overlay district (Article X of the Zoning Ordinance) designed to protect and improve the visual appearance along key highway corridors and to ensure that buffering, landscaping, lighting, signage, and proposed structures are internally consistent and of a quality that contributes to the County character.

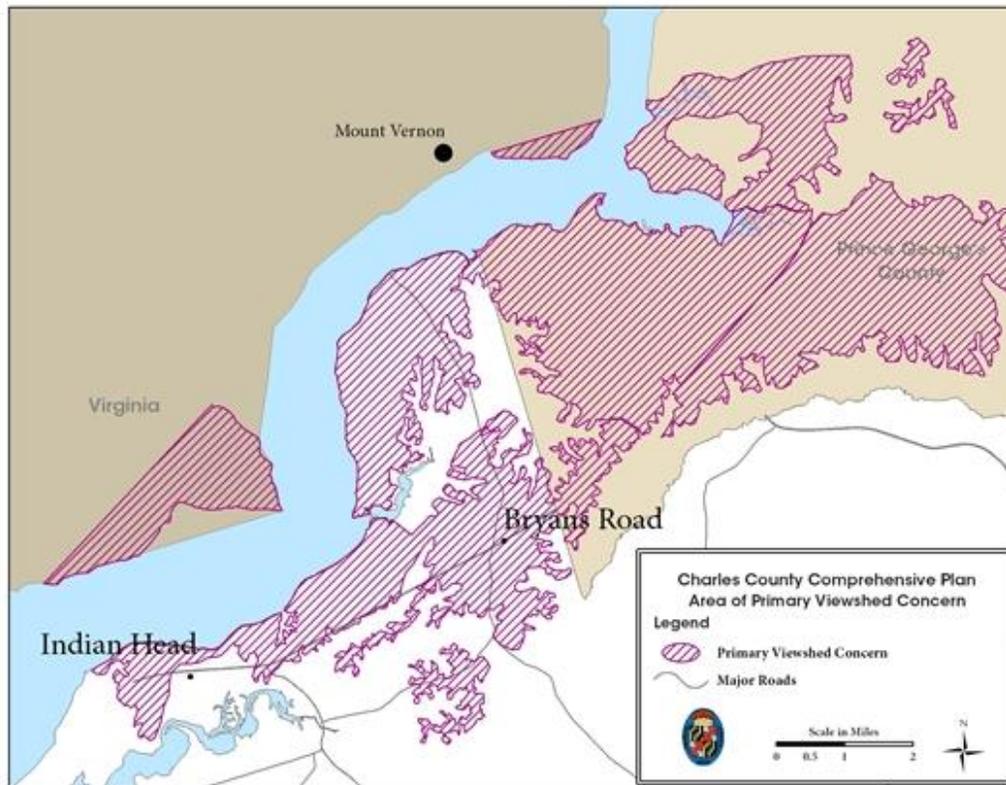
## **Mount Vernon Viewshed**

Mount Vernon, the home of George Washington, is a designated National Historic Landmark. Views from the mansion across the Potomac River are considered an important part of the Mount Vernon historic landscape. Piscataway National Park, the Moyaone Reserve and the Accokeek Foundation on the eastern shore of the Potomac were all established, at least in part, to preserve the shoreline portions of that view. However, largely due to topography, if not developed properly some interior land development in Charles and Prince Georges County would be visible and have an adverse effect on the Mount Vernon historic landscape.

Mount Vernon has conducted a detailed viewshed analysis and identified the most sensitive areas for land development in both Charles and Prince Georges Counties and a set of recommended design guidelines for various types of development within these areas (Figure 10-16).

This Comprehensive Plan recommends the County explore the most appropriate means to prevent adverse impacts on the Mount Vernon viewshed. Code amendments to control visual impacts on the viewshed should be considered to protect this valuable national historic site.

**Figure 10-16 Mount Vernon Viewshed**



## Heritage Tourism Planning & Development

In addition to its economic development potential, the presence of well-planned and managed heritage tourism sites in Charles County is a desirable community amenity and plays a key role in supporting and promoting preservation throughout the County. There are several sites owned and operated by various Federal, State, County and non-profit agencies including Thomas Stone National Historic Site, Samuel Mudd House, Mount Aventine, and the Port Tobacco Courthouse. Charles County also owns the colonial home known as Maxwell Hall and Stagg Hall in the Port Tobacco Historic District.

One of the most important funding programs for heritage tourism is the Maryland Heritage Area Program. The Southern Maryland Heritage Area Tourism Management Plan was

certified by the State of Maryland in 2003 and is referenced here in accordance with the Financial Institutions Article, Title 13, Subtitle 11, Annotated Code of Maryland, Section 12-1111(e). The plan recommends key capital improvements, resource protection, stewardship and programmatic steps to enhance heritage tourism assets in Charles County. The Plan is incorporated here by reference for those portions which pertain to Charles County. The Plan establishes target investment and identifies significant corridors that link key clusters of heritage resources. In 2012, the Charles County Tourism Destination Plan Study was completed and outlines key assets, challenges and recommendations for enhancing existing heritage tourism assets.

The villages of Benedict and Port Tobacco play a key role as heritage tourism assets. In 2012 Charles County completed two village plans: Benedict Waterfront Village Revitalization Plan and the Port Tobacco Village Plan. Both stress the village's heritage resources as contributing to its unique character and a key asset to be preserved and enhanced. The Port Tobacco Village Plan envisions as a heritage-themed community gathering place centered around a restored Courthouse Green (Figure 10-17).

**Figure 10-17 Port Tobacco Village Plan Concept**



## **Policies and Actions**

### **Policies**

#### *Enhancing Community Character*

10.1 Continue to seek improvement in the design quality of development in the county

#### *Villages*

10.2 Continue planning, revitalization and enhancement efforts in targeted villages.

*Housing*

- 10.3 To provide a balanced housing stock with housing opportunities for all residents Charles County will achieve a future county housing mix of approximately 80% single family, 15% townhomes and condominiums and 5% apartments.
- 10.4 Serve the homeless, with special attention on service-supported transitional housing and permanent housing for family households.
- 10.5 Develop a variety of elderly care facilities such as, but not limited to, independent living facilities, assisted living accommodations, and retirement communities.
- 10.6 Create an effective Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit (MPDU) program.
- 10.7 Seek greater housing diversity in the development district and villages.

*Waterfront Development*

- 10.8 Seek opportunities to increase public access to the Charles County shoreline while recognizing Benedict, Port Tobacco and Aqualand as key priorities.

*Historic Preservation*

- 10.10 Make use of a broad range of preservation tools and strategies to permanently protect the County's most significant historic assets. Develop programs and strategies to educate the public about heritage resources and their preservation.
- 10.11 Continue efforts to document and permanently protect historic structures and archaeological resources, including updating the 2004 Historic Preservation Plan as needed.

*Scenic and Historic Roads and Landscapes*

- 10.12 Preserve targeted scenic and historic roads, byways and landscapes as a key feature of rural and local character.

*Heritage Tourism Planning & Development*

- 10.13 Seek to preserve and enhance key heritage tourism sites as an economic development asset and as an amenity for the County's citizens.

**Actions**

*Enhancing community character*

- 1. Implement the Waldorf Urban Redevelopment Corridor (WURC) recommendations.

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## Community Development

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2. Develop a Sub-Area Plan for the Newburg-Cliffton-Aqualand area, including the Potomac River Crossing.

### *Villages*

3. Work with the communities of Bel Alton, Newburg/Cliffton/Aqualand area, and Nanjemoy to develop area plans for those villages, using this chapter as a basis of further discussion.
4. Implement the Hughesville Village Revitalization Plan, the Benedict Waterfront Village Revitalization Plan, and the Port Tobacco Village Plan.

### *Waterfront Development*

5. Implement the waterfront access recommendations in the Charles County Land Preservation Parks and Recreation Plan,
6. Continue to seek waterfront access opportunities in Port Tobacco, Aqualand, and Benedict.

### *Housing*

7. Periodically revisit and update the Housing Supply, Demand and Zoning Options Analysis and respond accordingly based on the findings at that time.
8. Update the County's 2005 Community Development Housing Plan.
9. Continue programs and policies to upgrade existing substandard housing, both rental and owner-occupied, through private and public actions.
10. Examine options for increasing housing diversity within the development district and villages to include accessory apartments and live-work units.
11. Conduct an Affordable Housing Technical Assistance Program report working with community and county leaders, developers and stakeholders such as the Housing Association of Non Profit Developers and the Southern Maryland Association of Realtors, and a team of professionals from an organization such as the Urban Land Institute or the American Planning Association, in order to develop specific action items that result in a greater supply of low to moderate income housing for the residents of Charles County.
12. Continue County settlement expense financial assistance loan programs and policies to assist existing Charles County income eligible residents as first time home buyers and to consider home ownership in existing residential communities, and future mixed use communities in Charles County.
13. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to require moderately priced dwelling units for any subdivision of 20 units or greater. Include the formation of an Affordable Housing Board to implement the monitoring and enforcement of such.

14. Ensure that the Planning & Growth Management permitting process is aligned with the balanced housing stock policy 10.3 listed above.

#### *Historic Preservation*

15. Actively seek local landmark designations to protect significant historic resources through outreach, marketing, and the development review process.
16. Incorporate the review for impacts to significant archaeological resources during the development process.

#### *Scenic and Historic Roads and Landscapes*

17. Develop conservation priority mapping for key historic sites and scenic/historic views and vistas.
18. Explore the most appropriate means to prevent adverse impacts on the Mount Vernon viewshed. These means could include an overlay zoning district covering the viewshed within which development would be subject to special reviews and regulations such as height limits, tree planting, and building siting.
19. Develop design guidelines or other such means of protection for key historic corridors and districts.
20. Update the Highway Corridor (HC) Zoning Regulations § 297-147 to delete MD 205, now MD 5, and to add MD 5 Business.
21. Coordinate the review and approval of future development and redevelopment plans located on County Scenic and Historic Roads and State Scenic Byways with local byway management entities and the Maryland Scenic Byways Program.
22. Utilize the guidance provided in the *Religious Freedom Byway Management Plan*, the *Star-Spangled Banner National Historic Trail and Scenic Byway Comprehensive Management Plan and Corridor Management Plan and Environmental Assessment*, the *Context Sensitive Solutions for work on Maryland Scenic Byways* document, and *The Southern Maryland Heritage Area Heritage Tourism Management Plan* as part of the review and approval of future development and redevelopment plans located on County Scenic and Historic Roads and State Scenic Byways.

#### *Heritage Tourism Planning & Development*

23. Continue to support village revitalization and destination development in Benedict and Port Tobacco.
24. Utilize available grants from State and Federal partners to enhance targeted heritage tourism assets and amenities.