

GREENSBORO COMPREHENSIVE PLAN
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CHAPTER 1

BACKGROUND

INTRODUCTION

From its inception in 1732, the future of Greensboro was influenced by a group of people who planned for the Town's overall development. The community leaders of the colonial era, like today's Town officials, were attempting to provide a rational basis for meeting the current and projected development needs of the community. Their purpose was to ensure the Town's continued vitality for centuries to come.

When the Maryland General Assembly gave counties and incorporated communities general planning authority it also granted the zoning and land subdivision powers needed to regulate the development of individual properties so that they would conform to community standards. The Comprehensive Plan provides the overall statement of community policy on development. Along with the Zoning and Subdivision Regulations, which implement these development policies, the Comprehensive Plan is recognized as a major part of the overall growth management program for the Town.

The Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act of 1992 has prompted the Town of Greensboro to update its Comprehensive Plan. The Act requires that the Comprehensive Plan include and implement the Act's Seven Visions. Those Vision's are:

- (1) development is concentrated in suitable areas;
- (2) sensitive areas are protected;
- (3) in rural areas, growth is directed to existing population centers and resource areas are protected;
- (4) stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay and the land is a universal ethic;
- (5) conservation of resources, including a reduction in resource consumption, is practiced;
- (6) to achieve (1) through (5), economic growth is encouraged and regulatory mechanisms are streamlined; and
- (7) funding mechanisms are addressed to achieve these visions.

The Planning Act's Visions are integrated throughout the Town of Greensboro's Comprehensive Plan. The Plan includes a Natural Resource Protection Element, which serves as the Sensitive Areas Element, and a revised Implementation Element, which highlights recommendations to streamline and provide flexible land use regulations, and opportunities to promote intergovernmental coordination. The Town of Greensboro prepared and adopted this Comprehensive Plan to address requirements of the State. However, in doing so, the Town has outlined a framework for future growth and development that will preserve its rural character, enhance its economic vitality, and protect its vital natural resources.

It is the object of this document to trace recent trends, to analyze factors affecting future development, to assess the will and interests of Greensboro residents regarding the future of their

Town, and to establish a Comprehensive Plan for the Town which will direct future development.

Such a document must be viewed as dynamic and thus, continually reappraised and updated to reflect changing needs and trends. This Plan is part of an on-going process -- the process of formulating and intelligently planning the direction and character of future growth in Greensboro -- to assure its serviceable form and the achievement of the many objectives and policies contained herein.

THE LEGAL CONTEXT FOR THE PLAN

The Greensboro Comprehensive Plan serves as a Comprehensive Plan meeting the requirements for local government planning in Maryland, pursuant to State enabling legislation and requirements for the same contained in Article 66-B of the Annotated Code of Maryland, as amended in 1995 to include the provisions of the Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act of 1992. The Plan also serves to meet the minimum requirements of State law as enumerated in Natural Resources Article 8-1808 © and appropriate criteria established for local government preparation of programs in accordance with Section 14.15.10.01.F for jurisdictions, like Greensboro, which are located within Maryland's Chesapeake Bay Critical area.

THE PURPOSE OF THE PLAN

This plan provides the basic policy framework to guide future development in Greensboro. It is designed to deal with problems which are immediate in nature, as well as to provide the planning for longer range actions and policies. As such, the plan is designed to address the Town's needs through the year 2010, and thereby provide for orderly, controlled growth and development throughout the planning period. Various projections, policies, and recommendations have been prepared in the context of balancing the many objectives attendant to this plan. These objectives include:

- ◆ Protection of sensitive natural areas and environmental features.
- ◆ Protection and enhancement of the visual qualities and characteristics of the Town.
- ◆ Pro-actively directing and managing the spatial distribution of future land uses anticipated with a growth in population.
- ◆ Guiding the Town's investment in public services, facilities, and other public improvements in a manner which is cost effective and, through judicious public investment, encourages development to occur in a serviceable form.

These general objectives, together with those more specifically framed in subsequent elements of this Plan, serve as formally adopted policies regarding Greensboro's future. They provide guidance for public decisions concerning how development should be managed or regulated,

where and how it should occur, and where capital improvements and public services should be provided or not provided to support it. In this context, the Plan serves to inform Town residents, the development community, and County, State and Federal agencies of the Town's intent regarding its future. It identifies a number of management measures, financial and human resource investments, and incentives necessary to achieving these objectives.

Finally, the Plan is intended to serve as a "yardstick" for evaluating the merits of proposals which will surface over time. While it is impossible to anticipate all possible future occurrences, problems or opportunities which will arise, undoubtedly Town residents, the Planning Commission and the Town Commissioners will be faced with proposals which could affect many aspects of life in the Town. This Plan, and in particular its policies and objectives, will provide guidance and establish a basis for evaluating such proposals.

DESCRIPTION OF THE TOWN PLANNING PROGRAM

This Comprehensive Plan provides the basic framework and direction for all components of what may be considered the Town's Overall Comprehensive Planning Program. It will influence revisions in the companion documents which serve to implement the Plan, including the Town Zoning Ordinance and Land Subdivision Regulations. Since the Plan concurrently influences and is influenced by the Program documents, a brief description of each is provided.

ZONING ORDINANCE

The Town Zoning Ordinance is the chief (though not exclusive) means through which the Plan is implemented. It prescribes ways in which lands located within the Town may or may not be used. It prescribes a series of zoning districts, and enumerates uses permitted and performance standards which must be met for each district. The standards are designed to ensure achievement of certain objectives established in the Plan, including protection of sensitive environmental features and preservation of the small-town character of Greensboro. Finally, the Ordinance establishes design standards and site Planning standards for certain uses to require control of access to certain local streets and roads; to prescribe minimum landscaping requirements; and to enhance the established pattern of development in the Town.

SUBDIVISION REGULATIONS

The Subdivision Regulations provide guidance and controls for the configuration and layout of land subdivision in the Town. They further establish standards for subdivision plat content and procedural submission requirements. Standards contained in these Regulations are also designed to ensure implementation of certain Comprehensive Plan policies and objectives.

GREENSBORO CRITICAL AREA PROGRAM

The Town Critical Area Program was prepared in 1987. It establishes a protection program for natural resources located within 1000 feet of tidal waters or tidal wetlands within Greensboro. It

also limits development densities in those portions of the Town's Critical Area which are dominated by farm or forested resources and designated "Resource Conservation Areas" in accordance with State guidelines. The Program sets forth standards for future development and protection of forest cover, agricultural lands, and plant and wildlife habitats within this defined geographic area of the Town. The Critical Area Program is therefore, by reference, part of this Plan.

CAROLINE COUNTY WATER AND SEWER PLAN

This Plan serves to meet the legal requirements of Article 43, Sections 387B and 387C of the Annotated Code of Maryland, which requires the County, including the incorporated municipalities, to adopt an overall County Water and Sewer Plan. Its purpose is to guide the development of adequate water supply and sewerage systems and facilities by establishing town development policies to prevent or minimize adverse health and environmental problems. It is designed to ensure that:

- ◆ An ample supply of water may be collected, treated, and delivered to points of use.
- ◆ Wastewater may be collected and delivered to points best suited for waste treatment, disposal, or re-use.
- ◆ Wastewater can be either treated before any discharge into State waters, in compliance with applicable water quality standards and discharge permit conditions, or disposed of with minimum adverse effects on legitimate water uses.

THE PROCESS OF PLAN DEVELOPMENT

In providing a context for subsequent understanding of various Plan Elements, the process of Plan development is as important as the Plan document. Noteworthy components of the process were the direct involvement of the Town Planning Commission, Mayor and Council. Their involvement included periodic review, discussion and selection of Plan Elements. This process involved serious consideration of how the Plan might be implemented and was integral to the selection of Plan policies contained in the various sections of this document.

The process also included a public hearing, hosted by the Planning Commission, at which twenty-eight members of the public heard a presentation on the Plan and then made several comments and suggestions. The public was also given a month after the hearing to submit comments in writing to the Planning Commission.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF GREENSBORO

*Here's a toast. May her fame spread far and wide
Then higher rise, like a Choptank tide.
And though in distant lands we roam
May we e'er be proud to call Greensboro--home.*

- from "A Rhyme of Bygone Years" by Bessie Edwards

The incorporated Town of Greensboro, pleasantly situated near the headwaters of the Choptank River, is one of the oldest inland towns on Maryland's Eastern Shore. An act passed in 1732 by the General Assembly legislated that twenty acres of land were to be purchased from Dorchester and Queen Anne's Counties where each bordered either side of the Choptank Bridge. The act also specified that this town at the "Great Bend" in the river was to be called "Bridge Town". That planned town, the ancestor of what we today know as Greensboro, was not exactly a successful venture. By 1737 only two non-adjacent settlers occupied lots within Bridge Town's limits. Of the twenty building lots parceled out at each end of the bridge, only one lot was sold. In 1740, the unsold lots reverted to their original owners.

As early as 1736, Peter Rich, an innkeeper, acquired two tracts adjoining the western side of the Choptank Bridge. During his lifetime Rich sold only one lot inside the "Great Bend". In 1779 another Peter, namely Peter Harrington (one of Rich's grandsons), began to sell building lots on the hill above the bridge's west side. By 1783 he had founded a town on this hill -- the town we now call Greensboro.

A few of the buildings which date from the time of the original Harrington settlement are still standing, including the founder's two-story brick house. It is located on the present-day northeast corner of Bernard Avenue and Church Street. Among the many structures from that era which no longer exist can be counted a tobacco warehouse (one of the first buildings erected near the bridge's west end) and a county wharf. Lot sales for the tracts at each end of the bridge remained sluggish, even into the nineteenth century.

When resurveyed in 1791, the name "Bridge Town" was changed to "Greensborough." The town was somewhat different in its plan in 1791 than it is today. Main Street at that time lay nearer the river. It joined Railroad Avenue a block below the present conjunction and, by a winding way, reached the Main Street of today (a short distance from the Riverside Hotel of recent memory). The first mention of the street now called Sunset Avenue appeared in a deed circa 1793. There it was mentioned as the "new road leading from the village of Greensborough." There is also evidence, from a deed drawn up in the year 1812, that the present Main Street had by that time superseded the road from the Choptank Bridge (to Nine Bridges) in importance.

By the 1880s, Greensborough was firmly established as a Caroline County town; it was no longer halved between Dorchester and Queen Anne's Counties. At the turn of the century the village underwent a great period of prosperity. At this time the Choptank River was utilized as

a transportation corridor for commercial shipping. It was during this boom period that the greatest population increase for Greensboro was recorded.

The need for Greensboro as a marketing and industrial center began to diminish with the advent of new transportation options. As a result, the growth rate declined and the Town became primarily a residential center. The Town has since shown a stable population pattern (but with a slight increase recorded recently).

PHYSICAL CHARACTERISTICS

General

Greensboro is in the west-central part of the peninsula known as the Eastern Shore. The Town straddles the Choptank River where it turns through north-central Caroline County in a long, lazy S-bend. The National Rivers Inventory has identified an eight-mile segment (from Denton to Greensboro) and a separate sixteen-mile segment (from Greensboro to the headwaters of Tidy Island Creek at Marydel) of the Choptank River as potential National Wild and Scenic Rivers. Located at the tidal limit of the Choptank, the Town has some potentially limiting environmental constraints. (See Map 5, Natural Resources)

Wildlife and Habitat

In and around the environs of Greensboro wildlife is abundant, which adds to the rural character of the Town. Various species of open-land wildlife (such as the rabbits and quail that normally frequent cropland, pastures, meadows, and lawns) thrive here. There is no lack of woodland wildlife (such as the deer, squirrel and racoon which usually inhabit areas with hardwood trees, coniferous trees, shrubs, and mixtures of such plants). Wetland wildlife (such as the muskrat and numerous kinds of waterfowl that typically live in ponds, marshes, and swamps) are also plentiful in the Greensboro region. White perch, striped bass, catfish, alewife herring, and blueback herring spawn in the Choptank River, which threads through town. No rare, threatened or endangered species are known to be located within the Town.

Topography

The topography in and around Greensboro is fairly level, with elevations varying from a few feet above sea level to a maximum elevation of 40 feet. Excessive slopes do not offer a major impediment to development.

Soils

Greensboro is located near the junction of three major soil associations:

1. Pocomoke-Fallsington,
2. Sassafras-Fallsington-Woodstown, and
3. Sassafras-Galestown-Fallsington.

- ◆ Pocomoke-Fallsington - Represents the majority of the soils in Greensboro. The soil is dominated by Pocomoke which is very poorly drained.
- ◆ Sassafras-Fallsington-Woodstown - These soils are well-drained to poorly drained soils that developed in silty or sandy clay. The soils in this association retain moisture and plant nutrients better than the other two types found in the Greensboro vicinity.
- ◆ Sassafras-Galestown-Fallsington - This soil association is very well drained. Of the three main soils which surround the Greensboro area, only the Sassafras-Galestown-Fallsington association is suitable for purposes of development involving on-site septic systems. This type is found south-east of the town.

In the non-tidal wetland areas the substrate is predominately un-drained hydric soils. Soils typed as hydric are wet frequently enough to periodically produce anaerobic [oxygen-absent] conditions, thereby influencing the species composition or growth, or both, of plants in those soils. These soils, noted on the Natural Resources Map (Map 5), offer limitations to development not only due to their saturated condition, but because they are generally associated with protected non-tidal wetland areas.

Water Bodies

The Town of Greensboro is drained on the west side by Forge Branch and on the east by the Choptank River. The River is deep enough at Greensboro to accommodate pleasure boats, gasoline/electric-powered jonboats, rowboats and canoes. At the same time, the River is shallow enough to maintain its role as an important spawning and nursery ground for a number of anadromous fish species.

Floodplain

The Natural Resources Map (Map 5) indicates the location of the 100-year floodplain within the Town. Over 15 percent of the Town lies within the designated floodplain, 48 acres along the Choptank River and 8 acres along Forge Branch. These areas incur high flood risk, as well as additional regulatory restrictions when developed. Bordering the Choptank River, these areas are developed primarily with single-family residential homes and some commercial structures. The flooding problems in the Town result from a combination of heavy rainfall, high river discharge, and storm tides. Development in these areas is currently regulated by the Town's Floodplain District Ordinance.

Wetlands

The area bordering the Town's two water bodies is comprised of a system of tidal and non-tidal wetlands and potential protected habitat areas. The undeveloped areas in the Town bordering the Choptank River and its tributaries are areas that have been found unsuitable for development, either because of wetlands or unsuitable soil conditions.

Non-tidal wetlands have been identified within the Town as shown on Map 5, Natural Resources. The non-tidal wetlands inventoried are found upland from and contiguous to the tidal wetlands that line the Choptank River. These wetlands are classified as Palustrine-Forested-Broadleaved deciduous.

Along the banks of the Choptank River are coastal wetlands of the swamp forest type. Red Maple and Ash are the trees common to this freshwater portion of the wetland system. The wetland area bordering the River is periodically flooded by tidal waters.

The non-tidal wetlands described above fall predominately within the Critical Area 100-foot buffer; therefore, they will receive the protection built into the buffer preservation requirements. Other areas of non-tidal wetlands border Forge Branch and will be protected primarily by wetland permitting processes.

General Characteristics of the Designated Critical Area

The Chesapeake Bay Critical Area boundary, as established in Greensboro, follows the guidelines set forth in the legislation. It extends 1000 feet inland from mean high water or the upland limits of tidal wetlands. The Critical Area described encompasses 130 acres, representing 36 percent of the land area of the Town. Consequently, the Critical Area Local Program has significant ramifications for the overall planning, land development, and economic growth of the Town. The Critical Area includes much of the most intensely developed part of the Town. (See Map 5)

Sensitive Areas

The Maryland Economic Development, Resource Protection and Planning Act of 1992 established requirements that County and Municipal Comprehensive Plans include a sensitive area element that contains goals, objectives, principles, policies, and standards designed to protect certain environmentally sensitive areas from the adverse effects of development. Such areas are defined in the 1992 Planning Act to include:

- ◆ Streams and their buffers,
- ◆ 100-year floodplains,
- ◆ Steep slopes, and
- ◆ Habitats of threatened and endangered species.

These sensitive areas in Greensboro, as defined by the 1992 Planning Act, are generally located within those portions of the Town located within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area.

SOCIO-ECONOMIC CHARACTERISTICS

Population

With a total population of 1,441 in 1990, Greensboro was the third largest municipality in Caroline County. Following a dramatic increase in population for the period 1940 to 1950, when Greensboro grew by over sixty percent, the Town's population remained relatively stable through 1970. During the period 1970 to 1980, the Town's rate of growth increased to 6.8 percent as the town population grew from 1,173 to 1,253 residents. From 1980 to 1990 the Town population increased 15 percent, the highest rate of growth for any decade since the 1940s. Comparison of the 1980 and 1990 Censuses of population indicates the Town population increased by 188 new residents during the more recent 10-year period, reflecting more than double the population increase which occurred in the previous decade. (See Table 1.2)

During the same 1970 to 1990 period, the Upper Eastern Shore Region population growth reversed a long standing trend in relative growth rates. As can be seen in Table 1.2, between 1930 and 1970 the State of Maryland consistently experienced substantially higher rates of growth than did the Upper Eastern Shore, Caroline County, and Greensboro. However, the 1980 and 1990 Censuses revealed that, whereas the rate of growth for the State slowed considerably, the rate for much of the Upper Eastern Shore grew to exceed that of the State. Both Caroline County and the Greensboro Election District (ED 2) experienced higher rates of growth in the eighties than in any decade since 1930. Although the Town of Greensboro's growth rate for the 1980 to 1990 period (15 percent) was not as substantial as the County's (16.8 percent) or the surrounding election district (21.2 percent), it was a significant trend, paralleling the general growth of the region.

Review of building permit data for new residential construction since the 1990 Census provides an indication that the rate of growth evidenced in the eighties may be declining somewhat. Figure 1-2 demonstrates the historic growth trends in Greensboro. Based on building permits issued by the Town for new home construction since 1990, the current estimated population is 1,521.

POPULATION COMPARISON 1930 - 1990							
	<i>1930</i>	<i>1940</i>	<i>1950</i>	<i>1960</i>	<i>1970</i>	<i>1980</i>	<i>1990</i>
Maryland	1,631,526	1,821,244	2,343,001	3,100,689	3,923,897	4,216,975	4,781,468
Upper Eastern Shore	90,610	90,681	99,274	121,498	131,322	151,380	180,726
Caroline	17,387	17,549	18,234	19,462	19,781	23,143	27,035
Greensboro Election District	2,570	2,445	2,744	2,744	2,817	3,371	4,097
Town of Greensboro	760	737	1,181	1,160	1,173	1,253	1,441

Table 1.1

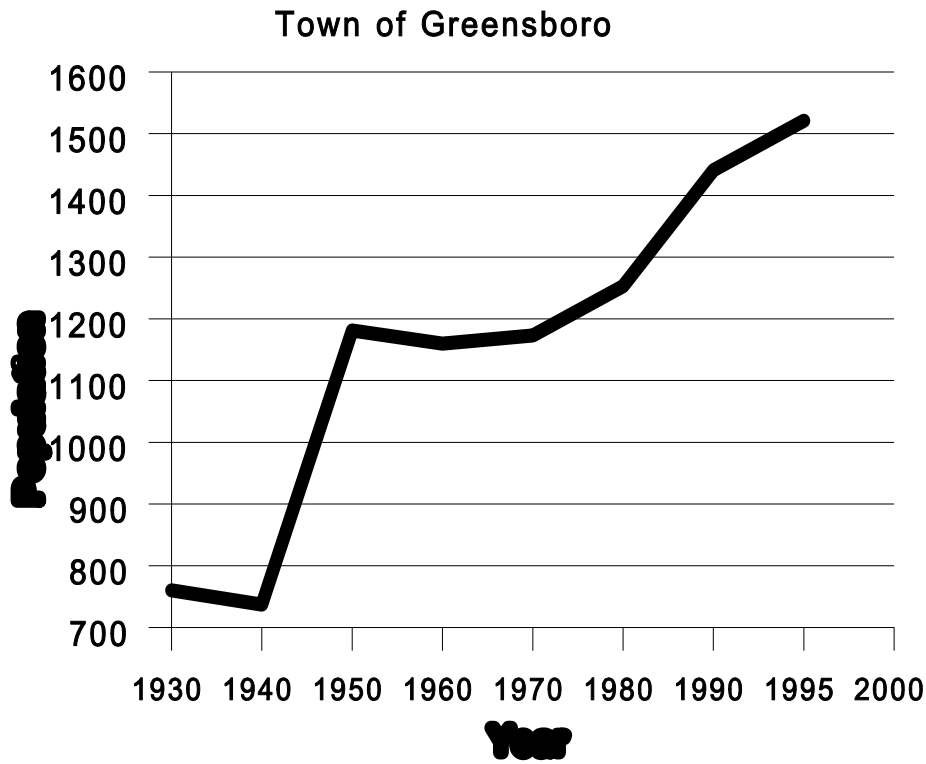
Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 1930-1990

POPULATION COMPARISON Percent Change 1930 - 1990						
	<i>1930-1940</i>	<i>1940-1950</i>	<i>1950-1960</i>	<i>1960-1970</i>	<i>1970-1980</i>	<i>1980-1990</i>
Maryland	11.6	28.6	32.3	26.5	6.9	13.4
Upper Eastern Shore	-0.1	7.2	17.9	7.4	16.1	19.4
Caroline County	0.9	3.9	6.7	1.6	17.0	16.8
Greensboro District	-4.9	7.9	0	2.7	19.7	21.5
Town of Greensboro	-3.0	60.2	-1.8	1.1	6.8	15

Table 1.2

Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 1990

Population Growth Trends



Household Formation

In 1990 there were 595 households in the Town of Greensboro, as compared to 450 households in 1980. This growth in the number of households (145) appears to be substantial, given a population increase of only 188 new residents during the same period. Closer examination reveals the average household size declined 13 percent over this 10-year period, from 2.78 persons per household in 1980 to 2.42 persons per household by 1990.

By way of comparison, in 1980 the average household size for Caroline County (2.81 persons per household) was quite similar to Greensboro's (2.78). By 1990, the County average household size declined to 2.66, only a 5 percent decrease.

Age and Race

Of the total 1980 population, 87 percent or 1,087 were white and 12 percent or 157 were black. Less than 1 percent of the town's population was of other racial origin. The 1990 Census indicated that 86 percent or 1239 residents were white and 13 percent or 181 were black, reflecting little change in the racial composition of Greensboro during the 10-year period.

The age distribution of the population of Greensboro reported in the 1990 Census was very similar to that of the surrounding election district and the County (see Table 1.3). There is a somewhat higher percentage of Town residents 65 years and older (17 percent) as compared to the County and surrounding election district (both less than 15 percent), and a slightly lower percentage in the 18-44 years group. With the possible exception of the higher percentage of the Town population over 65, however, the differences are not significant.

Income

The median household income for Greensboro recorded in the 1990 Census was \$20,946 (see Table 1.4). The median family income in 1990 was \$25,508, nearly 22 percent higher than the median household income for the Town.

The median household income for Caroline County in 1989 (\$27,758) was higher than that of the Town of Greensboro. Median family income for Caroline County (\$32,093) was also higher than the median income of families in Greensboro.

In 1980, white families had a substantially higher median (\$18,006) income than non-white families (10,274). A closer look at incomes reveals that by 1989 the gap between white and non-white income levels had narrowed substantially, with mean household incomes of \$25,242 and \$20,725 reported by the 1990 Census for white and non-white households respectively. (see Table 1.5)

Of the total population in the Town, 217 individuals had incomes at or below poverty level in 1980, as compared with 175 classified by the 1990 Census as below the poverty level. (see Table 1.6)

Housing

The 1980 Census recorded 482 housing units in the Town of Greensboro. By 1990, the Census indicates that housing stock grew substantially, to 628 units, an increase of 146 units for the 10-year period.

Other changes in the composition of housing stock occurring during the 10-year period are noteworthy. (see Table 1.8) In 1980, over 80 percent of the Town's total housing stock took the form of detached single family homes, with attached and multi-family housing representing less than 20 percent of Town housing stock. By 1990, attached and multi-family units grew to represent roughly 40 percent of total housing stock, indicating that the majority of units constructed in the Town since 1980 were multi-family unit structures.

These trends in the type of housing construction also appear to have influenced changes in the occupancy characteristics of housing in Greensboro. Approximately one quarter of the occupied housing units in 1980 were renter occupied. By 1990, 44 percent of the total occupied units were renter occupied. (see Table 1.9) In 1990, the median rent was \$267. Recorded monthly rents ranged from less than \$250 for 100 units to over \$500 for 6 units.

The trends reflected in the growing proportions of multi-family housing stock and rental units support the data indicating a significant reduction in household size in the Town. According to the 1990 Census, 172 households in the Town were single person households. Over half of these units are occupied by residents over 65, reflecting the increase during the 80's in construction of units for the elderly.

As can be seen in Table 1.7, 39 percent of the housing units in Greensboro are over 55 years old, and over 30 percent or 202 units have been constructed within the past 15 years.

AGE DISTRIBUTION COMPARISON						
	<i>Town of Greensboro</i>		<i>Greensboro Election District</i>		<i>Caroline County</i>	
Age	<i>1990</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>1990</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Under 5 years	126	8.7	341	8.3	2,057	7.6
5 - 17 years	257	17.8	729	17.8	5,043	18.7
18 - 44 years	551	38.2	1,615	39.4	10,712	39.6
45 - 64 years	261	18.1	806	19.7	5,333	19.7
65 +	246	17.1	606	14.8	3,890	14.4
Total	1,441		4,097		27,035	

Table 1.3
Source: Maryland Office of Planning

HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY INCOME, 1989		
<i>Income</i>	<i>Households</i>	<i>Families</i>
Less than \$5,000	58	16
\$5,000 - \$9,999	67	23
\$10,000 - \$14,999	103	63
\$15,000 - \$24,999	105	92
\$25,000 - \$34,999	111	103
\$35,000 - \$49,999	84	69
\$50,000 - \$74,999	38	29
\$75,000 or more	12	6
Median	\$20,946	\$25,508

Table 1.4
Source: Maryland Office of Planning

FAMILIES BY RACE OF HOUSEHOLDER BY INCOME				
	1979		1989	
<i>Income</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Non-White</i>	<i>White</i>	<i>Non-White</i>
Less than \$5,000	21	8	47	11
\$5,000 - \$9,999	55	13	62	3
\$10,000 - \$14,999	25	6	90	10
\$15,000 - \$24,999	134	2	84	21
\$25,000 - \$34,999	42	4	95	12
\$35,000 - \$49,999	12	0	75	9
\$50,000 or more	4	0	50	0
Mean	\$18,006	\$10,274	\$25,242	\$20,725

Table 1.5
Source: Maryland Office of Planning

POVERTY STATUS				
	<i>Above Poverty Level</i>		<i>Below Poverty Level</i>	
<i>Race</i>	<i>1979</i>	<i>1989</i>	<i>1979</i>	<i>1989</i>
White	924	1,095	161	141
Black	91	142	49	22
Other	2	14	7	12
Total	1,017	1,251	217	175

Table 1.6
Source: Maryland Office of Planning

YEAR-ROUND HOUSING UNITS BY YEAR STRUCTURE WAS BUILT		
<i>Period</i>	<i>Units</i>	<i>Distribution</i>
April 1990 - 1994	33	5%
1989 - March 1990	39	5.9%
1985 - 1988	82	12.3%
1980 - 1984	48	7.2%
1970 - 1979	61	9.2%
1960 - 1969	31	4.6%
1950 - 1959	75	11.3%
1940 - 1949	38	5.7%
1939 or earlier	259	38.8%
Total	666	

Table 1.7
Source: Maryland Office of Planning

Housing Characteristics Town of Greensboro		
	<i>1980</i>	<i>1990</i>
Single-family detached	409	376
Single-family attached	11	29
Multi-family: 2 - 4 units	28	62
Multi-family: 5 or more	15	98
Mobile homes	20	63*
Total, all units	483	628
Total, occupied units	450	595
Total, vacant units	32	33

Table 1.8
Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 1990

Housing Occupancy		
	<i>1980</i>	<i>1990</i>
Owner Occupied	344	329
Renter Occupied	106	266
Total	409	595

Table 1.9
Source: U.S. Bureau of Census, 1990

* While the Town has used U.S. Census Bureau data to assemble population and housing statistics, the Town has done so with certain knowledge that the mobile home data is incorrect and, if correct, would have shown a decline in the number of mobile homes.

Employment

In 1980, a total of 453 persons 16 years old and over were employed in the civilian labor force. By 1990, the Town civilian labor force grew to 634 persons 16 years old and over, with female residents representing a growing percentage of the Town labor force. The vast majority (490 or 77 percent) was classified as private wage and salary workers. The next major class of workers

was government workers (local, state and federal), which comprised 17 percent of the employed labor force in the Town. The remaining 6 percent were classified as self-employed workers.

As shown in Table 1.10, a total of 29 persons in the labor force (4.3 percent) were unemployed in 1990. An additional 406 persons 16 years or over were not in the labor force. Males had the highest labor participation rate (71 percent), with 5.8 percent of the male labor force unemployed in 1990.

The labor participation rate for females grew from 42 percent of the total female population in 1980 to 55 percent in 1990. The unemployment rate for females in the Town labor force (3 percent) was substantially lower than for males.

Table 1.11 provides a breakdown of the industry of employment for employed persons 16 years and over in 1990. As can be seen, the leading industry of employment for Town residents is manufacturing, followed by retail trade, construction, and education services. Together these industrial sectors accounted for 55 percent of all jobs.

Table 1.12 provides an occupational profile of the Town labor force in 1990. The leading class of occupations of workers in 1990 was the category of technicians and related support, sales, and administrative support. The second leading occupational class was operators, fabricators, assemblers and inspectors. These occupations correspond to the leading industry of employment, manufacturing, shown in Table 1.11.

The mean travel time to work for workers in 1990 was 27 minutes. Of the total reported (613 persons), the vast majority (76 percent) drove alone, and 13 percent carpooled. Almost 9 percent of workers reported that they either walked to work or worked in their homes.

LABOR FORCE STATUS PERSONS 16 YEARS AND OVER BY SEX BY RACE, 1990 Town of Greensboro						
	<i>Total</i>		<i>White</i>		<i>Non-White</i>	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Armed Forces	2	0	2	0	0	0
Civilian: Employed	328	306	298	256	30	50
Civilian: Unemployed	20	9	16	1	4	8
Not in Labor Force	145	261	117	240	28	21

Table 1.10

Source: Maryland Office of Planning & U.S. Bureau of Census, 1990

EMPLOYED PERSONS 16 YEARS AND OVER BY INDUSTRY, 1990		
<i>Industry</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Distribution</i>
Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Mining	26	4.1%
Construction	71	11.2%
Manufacturing:		
Nondurable Goods	55	8.7%
Durable Goods	80	12.6%
Transportation	33	5.2%
Communications & Other Public Utilities	3	.5%
Wholesale Trade	42	6.6%
Retail Trade	90	14.2%
Finance, Insurance, & Real Estate	28	4.4%
Business & Related Services	21	3.3%
Personal, Entertainment, & Recreation Services	23	3.6%
Professional & Related Services:		
Health Services	30	4.7%
Educational Services	53	8.4%
Other	41	6.5%
Public Administration	38	6%
Total	634	

Table 1.11
Source: Maryland Office of Planning

EMPLOYED PERSONS 16 YEARS AND OVER BY OCCUPATION, 1990		
<i>Occupation</i>	<i>Persons</i>	<i>Distribution</i>
Managerial & Professional Speciality:		
Executive, Administrative, Managerial	36	5.7%
Professional Speciality	29	4.6%
Technical, Sales, Administrative Support:		
Technicians & Related Support	25	3.9%
Sales	80	12.6%
Administrative Support, incl. Clerical	103	16.2%
Service:		
Private Household	6	1%
Protective Service	17	2.7%
Other	75	11.8%
Farming, Forestry, Fishing	22	3.5%
Precision Production, Craft Repair	117	18.5%
Operators, Fabricators, Assemblers, Inspectors:		
Machine Operators, Assemblers, Inspectors	63	10%
Transportation & Material Movers	45	7.1%
Handles, Equipment Cleaners, Helpers, Laborers	16	2.5%
Total	634	

Table 1.12

Source: Maryland Office of Planning

COMMUNITY FACILITIES

Water

The municipal water system in Greensboro depends exclusively on groundwater supplies. There seem to be several good sources of underground water in the region. In the past, the Town has used the Calvert Aquifer. Currently, the Town is tapping the Piney Point and Aquia Greens formations. A new well will draw from the Aquia Aquifer, which is the aquifer of choice in the region for both water quality and quantity. The Magothy and the Patapsco formations also offer good potential water supplies at greater depths and consequently at greater costs.

Map 1 characterizes the existing and proposed water system and storage system. The current total pumping capacity of the system is 425 gallons per minute with a total storage capacity of 150,000 gallons. The Town is presently using the Hobbs Street well. There are currently no identifiable water quality problems at the point of production.

New water storage facilities and a new production well are currently planned to be constructed on Town-owned land. The storage facilities will improve storage capacity (an additional 100,000 to 150,000 gallons) and most fire flow requirements.

Since 1992, the Town has been correcting dead ends, undersized water mains, and lack of fire hydrants. (see Map 1) The final phase of these corrections will be completed in conjunction with the new elevated storage tank project. The final phase of these community facility enhancements will be completed when the necessary funds are secured.

Sewer

The Town's wastewater treatment plant is a high-rate trickling filter, built in 1971, with a capacity of 0.28 MGD. Modifications to the plant, such as a chlorination/dechlorination system, have been made in past years to meet current discharge permit standards. Current flows average 0.142 MGD, with peak flows around 1.12 MGD. Major inflow and infiltration problems are indicated; however, the plant design has allowed the Town to hydraulically handle storm flows.

The Town has converted the existing trickling filter plant to a Rotating Biological Contactor plant. In addition, a new secondary clarifier, emergency generator, and new sludge bed will be constructed. This construction should be complete by spring of 1997.

The existing sewer system uses 6" to 12" gravity sewer lines, which handle existing flows with reserve capacity. The Town wastewater collection system has four pumping stations and force mains. Map 2 characterizes the existing sewer system. Town pumping stations are due to be replaced or upgraded.

Parks and Public Buildings

The recently constructed Town Offices are centrally located and now appear to meet the functional needs of Town Government for office space and a meeting room for various appointed boards and commissions. Use of the former Town office location for the police department has also increased the availability of space to support policing functions. The completion of the new Town library and Community Center in 1997 will satisfy a need identified in the 1988 Comprehensive Plan for library facilities in the Town and will add to the space available for community and civic organization activities.

The Town has a well developed and maintained park, Ober Park, located behind the old elementary school at Horsey Street and Bernard Avenues. Park/ballfield facilities are also located at Cedar Lane and School Street to support northern Town resident recreational needs. A developed picnic area on Forge Branch provides some opportunities for outdoor enjoyment on the west side of Town. Public boat launching facilities on the Choptank River and an adjacent picnic area near the Town carnival grounds, south of the new bridge, provide additional recreation facility offerings to Town residents. Tot lot facilities have been provided at Rolling Meadows and at the new community center to meet community needs. The Choptank River Park, located on the north side of the new Sunset Street bridge, will provide additional recreational opportunities for Town residents.

Overall, park development within the Town indicates adequate service levels by most standard measures. This is especially true given the rural setting of the Town and the numerous outdoor recreational opportunities nearby.

EXISTING LAND USE

The existing pattern of land uses was surveyed in the field in July, 1995, and recorded in detail on a 1"=300' scale map on file at the Greensboro Town Office. Map 3 also identifies the pattern of existing land use in Greensboro at a reduced scale. Once identified and mapped, the land use distribution was calculated by class or type, as represented in Table 1.13, for description and further analysis. On the basis of this inventory, the following observations were made.

Generally, Greensboro is located in an agricultural area with very little urban-type development beyond the community's corporate limits. Most of the usable land within the corporate limits of Greensboro has been built upon or is otherwise in use. Approximately 19 percent of the land located within the corporate limits remains undeveloped. Many of these areas are less than suitable for development due to environmental constraints. An evaluation of the Town's major land use areas are as follows.

Residential

Single-family residential is the dominant land use type in Greensboro, representing 49 percent of the developed land area in the Town. Land devoted to residential use totals an estimated 179

MAP 1

MAP 2

acres. Roughly 11 percent of land in residential use (14.7 acres) represents land occupied by multi-family residential uses. A similar inventory conducted in 1980 indicated 9 percent of land in residential use was in multi-family residential use at that time.

Multi-family residential use increased substantially in Greensboro in the 1980s with construction of Greensboro Heights Apartments and Rolling Meadows Apartments. A significant number of single-family residences have also been converted to apartments in past years. However, during the past few years this trend toward multi-family construction appears to have leveled off, with new construction of single-family units exceeding the pace of multi-family units since 1990.

Commercial

The traditional business center of the Town is in the vicinity of the intersection of Sunset and Main Streets. In 1988, the Central Business District (CBD), combined with several smaller nodes of business activity and miscellaneous scattered commercial sites throughout the Town, represented a total of 8 acres in commercial use or 2.8 percent of the total developed area of the Town. Commercial land uses now occupy an estimated 12.5 acres and have grown to represent 3.7 percent of the developed area of the Town.

The major increase in commercial land area is due to recent development of commercial uses along MD Route 313 (Greensboro Road), including an IGA grocery store and automotive services. This particular area has become a major highway-oriented commercial center in contrast with the traditional CBD, which provides the ambiance of a traditional walkable downtown. A few scattered businesses within well-established single family areas pose some small conflicts with adjacent neighborhoods, primarily due to tractor trailer traffic.

Industrial

In spite of the solid manufacturing employment base found in Greensboro, the land used for industry totals only 9.3 acres or 3.2 percent of Town land area. However, total land area shown as industrial on the existing land use map as industrial represents 26.4 acres, which includes vacant land near the rail corridor adjacent to Sunset Avenue. Within this area there are opportunities for expansion of existing industries or the location of new businesses in the Town.

The only identifiable concentration of industrial activity in the Town is on the west side, along the rail line at Sunset Avenue. The rest of the sites are in scattered locations within or adjacent to established residential areas.

EXISTING LAND USE Town of Greensboro		
<i>Land Use</i>	<i>Acres</i>	<i>Percent</i>
Single family residential	164.3	49.1%
Multi-family residential	14.7	4.4%
Commercial	12.5	3.7%
Industrial	26.4	7.9%
Public	8.2	2.4%
Semi-Public	10.5	3.2%
Parks/Open Space	22.8	6.9%
Streets and Roads	75	22.4%
Subtotal developed land	334.4	81%
Undeveloped land	77.6	19%
Total	412	100%

Table 1.13

Source: Redman/Johnston Associates Field Survey, July 1995

Parks and Open Space

There are 22.8 acres of land developed as parks or designated as open space in the Town. These areas are well distributed throughout the Town. In addition, the cemetery property on the south side serves the function of providing permanent open space within the developed Town.

Public Lands

Public lands represent some 8.2 acres of land in Greensboro and include land owned by the Town or committed to public uses. These include the Municipal Building, Police Department, Fire Department, and sites supporting various components of the Town sewer and water systems, but not including Town parkland.

TRANSPORTATION

Greensboro is located on the main north-south artery in Caroline County. MD Route 313, a minor arterial, bypasses the Town center on the east. The Town is linked to the US Route 50 corridor via MD Route 480 to MD Route 404. MD Route 480, or Main Street, functions as a minor north-south local collector. Sunset Avenue, running through the Town center and loosely

MAP 3

connecting with MD Route 314, serves as minor east-west local collector, linking the Town to US Route 13 via MD Route 12. Traffic counts for these major routes are shown on the Traffic Trends Map. The traffic is generally light on these roads and, therefore, there are no planned improvements related to capacity. Even though State roads are adequate and far from reaching capacity, the residents may notice the steady incremental increase annually in daily traffic counts shown on the Transportation Map.

The remainder of the Town's streets function as local streets. Though they serve existing land uses adequately, many do not meet minimum standards for paving width. Future development in the Town will require upgrading the streets to handle increased traffic in certain areas.

This section describes the existing situation for key road links for Greensboro in terms of average daily traffic volumes, accidents at key intersections, and the degree of congestion in terms of level of service. The initial effort involved an inventory and analysis of existing transportation facilities using the best available data. The results of this inventory are presented below. Based on published materials, the following information relating to highways was analyzed: functional classification, existing average daily traffic volumes, roadway capacity/level of service, and available excess capacity, and safety.

Traffic Volumes

Average daily traffic (ADT) volumes prepared by the Maryland State Highway Administration were reviewed for the years 1983, 1989, and 1993, to identify changes in traffic volume for major routes in recent years. Information concerning trends in volume are shown on Figure I-a. The highest ADT (4575 vehicles) in Greensboro in 1993 was on MD Route 313, the Intermediate Arterial in the region. Maryland Route 314 is currently classified as a Major Collector, and in 1993 handled an average of 2650 vehicles per day on the west side of Town and 3250 on the east side. MD Route 480 (Main Street), also functions as a Major Collector, and in 1993 carried 2550 vehicles per day at the southern Town limit and 2450 at the northern Town limit. The other streets and roadways in the Town are local in function. Significant increases in traffic volumes are evident for the 10-year period from 1983 to 1993 for each of these routes, with the exception of traffic volume on North Main Street, which reflected only a modest increase from 1983 to 1989. North Main Street then showed a decline in traffic volume in 1993, to a level below that of 1986.

Capacity/Level of Service

To evaluate the operation of specific road sections, the capacity of the major roadways was determined. Roadway capacity is a function of the roadway classification, number of lanes, pavement type, and intersection control. The daily service capacity for each roadway classification was determined from the Maryland State Highway Capacity Manual. MD Route 313 has a capacity of 7900 vehicles per day to maintain Level of Service (LOS) C as a two lane highway. MD Routes 314 and 480 likewise have an approximate capacity of 7900 vehicles per day. Most of the local streets in the Greensboro have limited capacity to receive any additional traffic from new development.

Using the 1993 ADT volumes and the estimated capacity, a volume to capacity ratio (V/C) was determined. This ratio ranges from values of 0.31 on less trafficked routes, such as North Main Street, to volumes which exceed half of route capacity (0.58) on Route 313 in Town. MD Route 480 has a volume to capacity ratio of 0.41 on the north end of Town and has a ratio of 0.32 on the south end of Town. All of the roadways in Greensboro are currently operating at a level of service A or better. This includes MD Route 313, which has a maximum access capacity of 3325 vehicles per day, if acceptable levels of service are to continue.

Safety

Accident summary data from the State's high accident location (HAL) report have been evaluated for the Greensboro area and no high accident intersections were identified.

Pedestrian Circulation

Pedestrian safety has been a long-time concern of the Town. There are gaps in a continuous pedestrian circulation system. Some existing sidewalks are hazardous to walkers and need to be upgraded.

The most notable recent improvement is the addition of a walkway in conjunction with the new bridge across the Choptank, thus eliminating what was in the past a formidable barrier to residents on the east side of Town who might walk to the Town center. However, this bridge walkway amplifies a larger problem of the Town, which is to provide safe pedestrian crossing across MD Route 313.

Public Transportation

There are two public transportation facilities for Greensboro residents. Neither is suitable for commuting to a job. Maryland Rural Development Corporation provides a medical transportation service with three days advance notice. Upper Shore Aging provides public transportation services (U-STAR) to anyone requesting such services in Greensboro with 24 hour notice. This service is used primarily by special populations (handicapped and elderly), but is available for general public use. The service is suitable for shopping, medical visits or any planned trip within the region.

CHAPTER 2 ANALYSIS/PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

POPULATION GROWTH

The amount, distribution and timing of projected population growth and residential and industrial development in Greensboro will all influence the character of the Town and its capacity to provide services to a changing resident population. These factors determine the cost of providing the public facilities needed to support the new population.

Greensboro has grown steadily during the past several years, and this growth is expected to continue into the year 2010. (see Table 2.1)

POPULATION PROJECTIONS GREENSBORO

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Caroline County
1970	1,173	1,173	19,781
1980	1,253	1,253	23,143
1990	1,441	1,441	27,035
1995	1,548	1,548	29,050
2000	1,630	1,664	30,600
2005	1,695	1,788	31,800
2010	1,754	1,922	32,900

Table 2.1

Population forecasts prepared by RJA employ two alternative growth scenarios. Scenario I assumes that the Town's growth rate will parallel the rate of growth projected for Caroline County by the Maryland Office of Planning. This forecast assumes that the Town population will continue to represent 5.33 percent of the County population into the future.

Scenario 2 assumes future Town growth in population will reflect past trends. It forecasts the Town's future population based on a straight line projection of growth trends during the period 1980 to 1995. Projections provided in Scenario 2 reflect a growth rate of approximately 15 percent per decade. It assumes market trends evident through the 1980 to 1995 period will continue. This projection further assumes that the impact of the Maryland 1992 Planning Act will result in a moderately higher rate of growth in the Town, consistent with County efforts to

concentrate development in suitable areas, like Greensboro, where existing infrastructure is available or can be more cost-effectively upgraded to support growth.

Scenario 1 projects a total increase of approximately 206 new residents or a 13.3 percent increase by 2010. Scenario 2 projects a total increase of approximately 374 or a 24 percent increase by 2010. According to Maryland Office of Planning forecasts, the County's population will increase by approximately 3,850 or 13.3 percent in the next 15 years.

Table 2.2 displays the percentage rate of projected changes in population by five-year increments. Again, Scenario 1 produces growth rates comparable to the County and Scenario 2 projects growth rates consistent with recent growth trends from 1980 to 1995.

**PROJECTED PERCENT CHANGE IN POPULATION
Town OF GREENSBORO**

	Scenario 1	Scenario 2	Caroline County
1990-95	7.4	7.4	7.5
1995-2000	5.2	7.5	5.3
2000-2005	3.9	7.5	3.9
2005-2010	3.4	7.5	3.5

Table 2.2

LAND USE ANALYSIS

In this section, the current land use statistics of Greensboro are compared with an average land use breakdown of comparable communities in an effort to pinpoint major deficiencies in the present land use pattern, and to serve as a general guide in determining the most desirable range of development activity for the future development of Greensboro. Since no two communities are identical, it is cautioned that this average breakdown of major land uses in a typical small town is, therefore, intended to serve only as a rough guide in projecting a desirable range of development activity in each major land use category.

Table 2.3 shows the land use breakdown for an average of 10 other Eastern Shore towns. This comparison indicates that all residential use is considerably higher in Greensboro than in other towns, while commercial use is notably less. Industrial land use in Greensboro is significantly less than the comparable towns.

The most notable difference between Greensboro and the other towns is the predominance of residential land use. 53.5 percent of the developed land area is in residential use in Greensboro compared to the average of 42 percent for the other Eastern Shore towns.

EXISTING LAND USES
GREENSBORO AND COMPARABLE TOWNS

Land Use Type	Percentage of Developed Area	
	Greensboro	Comparable Towns in the Eastern Shore Region*
Residential	53.5	42
Single Family	49.1	
Multi-Family	4.4	---
Commercial	3.7	4.3
Industrial	7.9	9.4
Public/Semi-Public	5.6	9.4
Parks/Open Space	6.9	8.1
Streets/Rails	22.4	26.8
Totals:	100%	100%

Table 2.3

* Comparative data for ten (10) Eastern Shore Towns of similar size

Source: Redman/Johnston Associates, 1987

Lands available for the projected future growth appear to be limited within the current Town limits. This provides Greensboro with less than 80 acres for future development, and may limit flexibility in determining future land use patterns, considering that much of that land has environmental constraints, as described in the Land Use Suitability Analysis in this Chapter. This fact is underscored when the projected population growth to year 2010 is converted to residential land use. The 374 projected additional residents can be converted to dwelling units using the average household size of the Town (2.4 persons per household). When an average residential density of three (3) dwelling units per acre is assumed, the residential land requirements are 52 acres.

Based on a review of Town building permits, the ratio of multi-family units to single family units was more than 3 to 1 from 1980 through 1986. This was a notable trend given the Town's interest in preserving the existing small-town character. In more recent years, single family construction has represented a higher percentage of total residential development.

LAND USE SUITABILITY ANALYSIS

A basic tenet of environmental planning is that it is possible, through careful research, study and analysis, to determine the suitability of any land area for various land uses. The following analysis of natural and built environmental factors provides a basis for the land use suitability analysis for Greensboro.

Natural Environmental Constraints

The first step in the analysis was to review all major proposed future use categories for Greensboro in relation to the natural and built environmental conditions to identify those factors that are particularly relevant to determining the suitability of any given area for a specific use. For example, areas containing wetlands or floodplains are best suited for open space and natural parks.

Map 5 shows the areas of natural environmental constraint in the Town of Greensboro. They include:

- ◆ Severe soil constraints for construction of buildings exist on the hydric soils;
- ◆ Development within the 100-year floodplain is subject to Federal regulation and is both a potential hazard for life and property, and a constraint upon the natural function of this important element in the surface water system;
- ◆ On the other hand, the alluvial soils typically deposited in hydric areas are usually fertile soils for farming and are ideal for parks and open space;
- ◆ Erodible soils and soils with a high runoff potential require special measures during the construction process to prevent sedimentation of the surface water system. Where such conditions are severe, the affected lands are poorly suited for playfields and other activities that repeatedly disrupt the vegetation needed to mitigate them;
- ◆ Forest cover has value for both protection of water quality and the small-town environment, which suggest that it requires protection, particularly in areas to be developed for suburban residential densities or commercial, office or industrial uses.

Land Pre-Empted from Development

The second step was to identify those conditions that virtually preempt land from development. Two such conditions were identified.

- ◆ The first condition is lands that are already developed.

- ◆ The second is a set of environmental characteristics that represent such natural value, fragility, susceptibility to damage from encroachment, or importance to the maintenance of the quality of the Chesapeake Bay that it is recommended that lands with these characteristics be preserved in their natural state.

The characteristics defining this preservation category include:

- ◆ A 25-foot buffer area adjacent to all non-tidal wetlands and streams, and a 100-foot buffer adjacent to all tidal wetlands;
- ◆ The 100 year floodplain;
- ◆ Tidal and non-tidal wetlands and marshes;
- ◆ Slopes greater than 25 percent.

It should be noted that these characteristics are only those requiring the greatest degree of protection. Other conditions that warrant conservation measures are described in the Natural Resource Protection chapter.

The defining characteristics of the Preservation category are generally protected by State and, in some cases, Federal legislation. While there are circumstances under which some such areas might be developed, the fact that the majority of the land in Greensboro is better suited for development and amply able to accommodate foreseeable future growth. Lands recommended for the Preservation category are illustrated on the Natural Resources Map (Map 5).

As is apparent from a review of the Natural Resources Map, some areas of the Town are well-suited for more than one use. The Suitability Analysis is a process of establishing priorities among uses. Highest Suitability is determined on the basis of the following considerations:

- ◆ Town development densities and intensities of use are recommended to be limited to areas presently served or proposed to be served with public sewer and water.
- ◆ Preservation areas are uniquely and particularly suited for natural park use or permanent open space.

The following recommendations integrate suitability findings with the location and patterns of existing land uses.

Parks and Open Space

The Parks and Open Space category includes all lands with any of the identified factors recommended for preservation from development. These areas occur throughout the Town in and near developed areas. Preservation of these areas in natural vegetated open space through the site review process would significantly enhance the visual quality of the Town's landscape and the health of the natural environment. Retention of wooded creeks as natural open space within the Town developed areas would greatly improve recreational opportunities and protect vital natural areas and water quality. Forested buffers are natural filters of pollution that protect streams and rivers. Land management techniques, such as protecting wooded areas, are recommended in the Town's Critical Area.

Town Development

Town development densities and intensities should be limited to areas in and adjacent to those that are presently served or proposed to be served with public water and sewer. These uses include residential densities of four or more dwelling units per acre, general commercial uses, and office and major institutional uses.

TRAFFIC VOLUME ANALYSIS

Under average daily traffic conditions, most of the local roads and streets in the Greensboro area are expected to operate at acceptable levels of service (C or better) until at least 2005. Figure 1-a shows the growth of traffic volumes on Greensboro's major roadways. As can be seen, since 1983, traffic volumes on these routes have increased at rates between 2.7 and 5 percent annually. Each segment of roadway showed steady increases each intervening year, except for North Main Street.

The main concern is the increase in traffic projected on Md Route 313, if the growth in the region continues. This roadway is projected to fall below Level of Service C by year 2005. Fortunately, road improvements to increase capacity on MD Route 313 in Town are feasible due to routing of MD Route 313 outside the traditional Central Business District and away from right of way constraints. Therefore, alternative routing is not indicated as necessary to preserve acceptable levels of service.

Although capacity and level of service measures are not the only indicators of potential highway needs (safety being another important consideration), the above analysis does suggest improvement of highway facilities in the future. In a town setting, the key to determining Level of Service is an analysis of individual intersection locations, which is beyond the scope of this Plan and generally considered unwarranted, given the low present traffic volumes at intersections. Generally, a higher number of delays is tolerated in a town setting, where the posted speed limits are low.

It should be noted here, that the Town Council has expressed concern to the State about the intersection of MD Route 313, East Sunset Avenue-Whitelysburg Road, and Boyce Mill Road, at the end of the bridge across the Choptank River. The increasing traffic volume on MD Route

313 and pedestrian traffic across that road create the potential for a safety hazard at this multiple intersection. The State recently installed a flashing yellow caution light at this intersection; however, the Town has requested new traffic counts of MD Route 313 and the Sunset Avenue bridge, and consideration of the installation of a full traffic light.

In summary, few significant major highway improvements will be necessary to plan for the future traffic projected on MD Route 313 by the year 2005. And the remainder of the Town roads will need only repaving and maintenance, since high delays are not likely to occur in the near future.

CHAPTER 3

GOALS

The overall intention of the Greensboro Comprehensive Plan is:

To promote and maintain Greensboro as a vibrant and attractive residential, commercial and industrial community.

Planning decisions have direct, long-term impacts on the quality of life and the quality of services provided to Greensboro's residents, and are fundamental determinants of the Town's character.

The formulation of goals is the initial step in the planning process and an integral part of establishing a vision for future development of the Town of Greensboro. The specific goals of the Town's Comprehensive Plan serve as the guiding principles within which public and private interests work cooperatively to achieve common aspiration, while enhancing the Town's sense of place and character.

The goals provide a framework for future planning decisions, including commercial, industrial, and residential development; economic policy; community facility development; and natural resource protection. They serve as guidance to the Town Planning Commission to ensure that growth is consistent with the Town's values and goals; embodies the planning philosophy of the Town; and is supportive of, not detrimental to, the Town's character.

The Goals section of the Plan is complemented by the more detailed Plan Elements sections. The Plan Element sections provide the Town and its residents with an implementation strategy to achieve the Goals of the Plan.

The following Goals represent the underlying concepts by which the Comprehensive Plan was developed.

LAND USE GOALS

- ◆ Maintain land use patterns and densities that are consistent with the small-town character of the Town.
- ◆ Ensure that future residential, commercial and industrial growth occurs in suitable areas, consistent with the Town's character.
- ◆ Guide future growth into areas that are consistent with Town development policies, are appropriate to the protection of ecologically sensitive areas, promote the local economy, and can be serviced by the existing Town infrastructure and/or reasonable extensions/expansions thereof.

SENSITIVE AREAS GOALS

- ◆ Preserve ecologically valuable resources and find a balance between natural resource protection and economic growth.
- ◆ Protect sensitive areas to ensure the long-term economic and environmental health of the community.
- ◆ Preserve the diversity of natural resources, with special attention given to habitats of threatened and endangered species and other unique ecosystems.
- ◆ Adopt and meet the goals established in the Maryland Chesapeake Bay Tributary Strategies.

HISTORICAL PRESERVATION GOALS

- ◆ Preserve all Town historical structures.
- ◆ Encourage the revitalize of historical structures that require attention.

TRANSPORTATION GOAL

- ◆ Provide the community with safe, efficient transportation routes for vehicular and pedestrian traffic that are consistent with the Town's patterns of existing and future growth.

COMMUNITY FACILITIES GOALS

- ◆ Ensure the general health, safety and welfare of Town residents.
- ◆ Ensure services for the community are efficiently provided.
- ◆ Conserve open spaces and public lands to protect vital water resources and provide adequate recreational opportunities for Town residents.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS

- ◆ Improve the economic vitality of the Town by protecting the Town's economic base and encouraging future investment and business opportunities in identified growth areas.
- ◆ Encourage commercial growth in the Central Business District (CBD) and industrial growth in proposed or existing industrial parks, using streamlined regulations wherever possible.

- ◆ Encourage economic growth through the protection, conservation and promotion of historically and culturally significant buildings and ecologically significant resources.

HOUSING GOALS

- ◆ Ensure that decent, sanitary and safe housing is available to residents of all incomes.
- ◆ Preserve and improve the stability of Greensboro's neighborhoods.

CHAPTER 4

LAND USE PLAN ELEMENT

The Land Use Plan Element is the most important element of the Greensboro Comprehensive Plan. It establishes the relationship between the Town's existing pattern of development and the location, distribution, and scale of future development. It also influences the location and timing of public facilities and transportation system improvements. The enhancement of specific Town qualities, preservation of rural character, and protection of natural resources is achieved through all Elements of the Comprehensive Plan, with the Land Use Element serving as the cornerstone. The cost-effective provision of roads, water and sewer facilities and other public services cannot be assured without a clear means of managing growth by directing it to specific areas where development infrastructure already exists.

The Land Use Plan Element provides the means to integrate the various planning goals and objectives of all of the Plan Elements into a comprehensive whole. This Element captures the vision of Greensboro's Town development pattern and is a fundamental extension of the Town's growth management philosophy.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES (Goals from Chapter 3)

- ◆ Maintain land use patterns and densities that are consistent with the Town character and that will provide an improving quality of life for all residents.
- ◆ Ensure that future residential, commercial, and industrial growth occurs in suitable areas, consistent with the Town's character.
- ◆ Direct future growth into areas that are consistent with Town development policies, are appropriate to the protection of ecologically sensitive areas, promote the local economy, and can be serviced by the Town's existing infrastructure and/or reasonable extension/expansions thereof.

OVERALL LAND USE OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Foster a sense of community by **concentrating development in suitable areas**, and ensuring the compatibility of new development with the character of existing buildings and uses, including the Town's grid development pattern. (**Vision 1**)
- ◆ **Protect areas from encroachment of incompatible uses and intensive development** through land development regulations, recognizing that low-density residential use and related services will continue to be the predominant land uses. (**Visions 1 & 2**)

- ◆ Encourage development that is consistent with the level of public services in the Town, and plan the timing of major new development with the provision or expansion of those services.
- ◆ Annex properties adjacent to the Town, as appropriate, to facilitate logical and efficient growth and development.
- ◆ Encourage the continued growth of the Town in a manner that will preserve its significant natural features and **protect its sensitive environmental areas** by requiring proper planning and design techniques for future development. (**Vision 2**)
- ◆ Provide a variety of open space areas, recreational facilities, and the **protection of sensitive, undevelopable natural areas** of the Town for the enjoyment of all residents. (**Visions 2 & 3**)
- ◆ Encourage residential use of vacant land on or close to existing public sewer and water lines. Encourage in-fill residential development on vacant lots in existing neighborhoods. (**Vision 3**)
- ◆ Encourage protection and restoration of existing structures to maintain the character of the Town. (**Vision 3**)
- ◆ Encourage greater recognition by all residents of the Town that **the Chesapeake Bay, its tributaries (including the Choptank River), and the land around them are finite resources**, and their **wise use and effective conservation** are essential for the prosperity of existing and future generations. (**Vision 4**)
- ◆ **Ensure the conservation of land resources**, and integrate land use and the network of streets and highways to provide for the logical extension and improvement of existing streets and highways, in proper coordination with the State and County. (**Vision 5**)
- ◆ **Encourage** the provision of functional and attractive residential areas, with safe, sanitary, and **energy efficient** housing for residents of the Town. (**Vision 5**)
- ◆ Establish better physical linkages within the Town and across the Choptank River to encourage residents to walk and bicycle to downtown businesses, government offices, the library, and the **recycling center**, thereby contribution to **energy conservation**. (**Vision 5**)
- ◆ Enhance the four road entryways into Town by encouraging renovation of buildings, planting of trees and other native flora, creation of parks, and appropriate placement of **business** and organization signs, thereby **encouraging commuters and travelers to visit the Town**. (**Vision 6**)

- ◆ Enhance the central downtown as a **viable commercial business center**, including retail, governmental and office functions, **by the use of appropriate and streamlined Town Ordinances and Regulations. (Vision 6)**
- ◆ **Use responsible fiscal planning and management to implement all of the objectives**, including the solicitation of Federal, State and private/non-profit technical and financial support, where appropriate and available. **(Vision 7)**
- ◆ Preserve the small-town character of Greensboro by appropriately designed and implemented Zoning Ordinances, and by encouraging the restoration and maintenance of historic and culturally significant buildings.
- ◆ Encourage development of a heritage tourism base to support patronage of downtown businesses.

TOWN DEVELOPMENT POLICIES

- ◆ Encourage protection and restoration of existing residential and commercial structures to maintain the character of the Town.
- ◆ Protect residential neighborhoods and the Central Business District from encroachment by incompatible uses and intensive development, through land development regulations, recognizing that low-density residential use and related services will remain the predominant land uses in the future.
- ◆ Encourage new development to be compatible with the existing character of the Town center and mitigate any adverse impacts from new development in an effort to maintain the amenities of the affected neighborhoods.
- ◆ Encourage development that is consistent with the level of services in the community and time major development with the provision or expansion of public services, including transportation.

LAND USE PLAN CONCEPTS

Planning Areas

The Greensboro Land Use Plan Element expresses the Town's objectives and policies concerning the type, location, intensity, and quality of public and private land use now and into the future. The Land Use Map (Map 4) delineates areas identified by the Town as appropriate locations for private land uses, such as residential and commercial activities, and areas considered appropriate for public uses or for special protection due to the presence of a sensitive or important natural resource.

Implementation recommendations contained in the Land Use Plan Element are meant to establish an agenda for the development and adoption of a land use regulatory and resource protection scheme for the Town to achieve the objectives set forth herein. As such, the Land Use Plan Element will serve as an integral part of the day-to-day administration of land use and related regulations and codes.

The Town of Greensboro has been divided into five land use planning areas. They are:

- ◆ Town Residential
- ◆ Central Business District
- ◆ Highway Commercial
- ◆ Industrial
- ◆ Park and Open Space

In addition to the planning areas, the Town is partially located in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area. The Critical Area is an overlaying district that imposes additional resource protection requirements on the underlying land uses, consistent with the Greensboro Critical Area Program. A major resource protection requirement under the terms of the Critical Area Program is the Critical Area Buffer Zone which fronts on the Choptank River.

Town Residential

Town Residential corresponds to areas classified as Single Family Residential and Multi-Family Residential on the existing Land Use Plan Map. This is the dominant land use category within the Town, existing and proposed. The purpose of the Town Residential Planning Area is to conserve the current low-density, residential character of the Town, and to preserve the integrity of existing neighborhoods. This Planning Area also includes some vacant lots which are designated for additional residential development.

Central Business District

The Central Business District (CBD) Planning Area encompasses the mix of existing residential, commercial, and public uses that make up the Town Center. The dominant land use is commercial and public. The purpose of the Central Business District Planning Area is to enhance the Town's existing commercial center and preserve the character of the community. It is also the area of Town where some additional neighborhood commercial uses may be permitted in the future, *i.e.*, a mixed-use area that provides incentives for commercial redevelopment.

Highway Commercial

The purpose of the Highway Commercial Planning Area is to recognize areas of the Town that, due to their historic development pattern, form a commercial corridor along a major highway route (MD Route 313). Vacant land in this Planning Area is intended to provide sufficient space, in appropriate locations, for additional future commercial service activities which would

generally serve a wide area and need to be located along existing major thoroughfares. This Planning Area is primarily automobile accessible and allows for more intensive uses than the commercial uses that may be located in the Central Business District Planning Area.

Industrial

Industrial development includes activities such as processing, manufacturing, assembly, and storage of bulk commodities. Often, industrial development is incompatible in residential areas; however, with proper site treatment, light industrial uses may be suitable at in-town locations. Heavy industrial uses are usually separated from other land uses in a community and often have access to major highways and railroad tracks. The Town has identified an industrial park at the northwest end of Sunset Avenue, along the rail line.

Parks and Open Space

As a result of the continued process of land development, Federal, State and local governments have become involved in providing recreational systems to ensure that recreational, scenic, and open space land is preserved for current and future generations. Parks and open space are essential to the health, general welfare, and well-being of the public. The Town of Greensboro must continue to be involved in recreation planning, for it is in the community in which people live that their unique recreational interests and needs are best served.

PLANNING AREA OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Town Residential

Objectives

To preserve residential neighborhoods in Greensboro and to provide guidelines for future development, the following Residential Objectives are established:

- ◆ Prevent development of land that is not suitable for residential use because of soil characteristics, water table, or other faults.
- ◆ Locate residential development close to services and amenities.
- ◆ Encourage residential development reflecting good design practices that will make efficient use of available land and produce attractive subdivisions in keeping with the existing physical character of the Town.
- ◆ Protect residential areas from encroachment by incompatible land uses to preserve the predominant single-family residential character of the Town and to protect these areas from harmful impacts.

- ◆ Encourage energy conservation in residential development and establish subdivision and zoning regulations to accommodate techniques that achieve greater energy efficiency.

Policies

The following policies for residential development are designed to address the above objectives.

- ◆ The density of residential development should be based on the availability of community facilities.
 - Developments should be evaluated with regard to the availability of, and impact on, public facilities and Town services.
 - Adequate recreational facilities and open space should be required as part of new residential developments.
- ◆ Residential areas should be protected from incompatible land uses and be designed to ensure a desirable living environment.
 - Through-traffic and heavy vehicles should be prohibited, wherever possible.
 - In-fill development and redevelopment should be encouraged, where appropriate.
 - Land development regulations should reflect proper design standards, including landscaping and street tree requirements.
- ◆ Development review by the Planning Commission should consider energy conservation practices, including building orientation, shading, natural ventilation, and accessibility to service areas.

Residential Density Standards

An important part of guiding development is the establishment of appropriate guidelines addressing the intensity of development permitted within the Town. Population densities determine the level and expense of community facilities and services which are essential for protecting the health, welfare and safety of Town citizens. Facilities such as sewer, water, roads, and parks are planned and constructed based upon the ultimate number of housing units and people to be served. Establishing specific density levels, therefore, becomes a basic policy decision to properly guide policy boards in preparing plans to meet future growth changes.

Two residential density categories are provided for in Greensboro. Higher density developments should be discouraged from locating in established residential neighborhoods. Direct access to collector or arterial streets should be provided. The designations apply to broad areas, and individual developments may not always occur at the exact population level identified for each

density category. These incidental developments will not alter the overall purposes of the category.

Low Density Residential - The predominant residential category in Greensboro should be low density residential. Low Density Residential areas are those designated primarily for single family detached homes, together with other facilities commonly incidental to residential activities. These areas may be developed in a density range of approximately 2-3 units per acre. Using the average household size for the Town as a guide, a low density residential area would average approximately 4 to 8 persons per acre. The current density (1990) in Greensboro is slightly over 4 persons per acre, which is consistent with this standard.

Medium Density Residential - These areas may be developed in a density range of 4-8 units per acre. These standards would apply to all "tract" housing, multi-family units, and duplexes. Standards for related facilities will assure that new development occurs in accordance with community objectives.

Commercial

The Comprehensive Plan recognizes that the need exists for several types of low-intensity commercial development within the Town. It is essential to recognize existing commercial areas, and, consistent with the Town's development concept, to provide areas for necessary future expansion to allow healthy growth of this important sector of the economy.

Objectives

- ◆ Maintain and revitalize existing commercial areas.
- ◆ Channel future high volume commercial activity into selected areas adjacent to MD Route 313, where suitable access is available.
- ◆ Emphasize safety, convenience, and attractiveness in commercial development, ensuring that it is not disruptive to the surrounding neighborhood or the community as a whole.

Policies

Central Business District (CBD)- The CBD is the appropriate location for such commercial activities as small grocery stores, drug stores, general stores, service stations, banks, offices, and public buildings. The present Central Business District is of sufficient size to meet the foreseeable demand in Greensboro, and no other centers are planned. However, the Central Business District does face major problems, including physical decay, functional obsolescence and vacancy. The decline in this area is primarily due to the inability of the Central Business District businesses to compete with larger commercial offerings nearby. The following policies are recommended:

- ◆ Retail service and office uses located in the Central Business District should be restricted to uses that primarily serve the Town residents.
- ◆ All development regulations and ordinances should recognize the Central Business District businesses as essential to the economic well-being of Greensboro and should allow them every opportunity to grow and prosper.
- ◆ Adequate parking, street lighting, sidewalks, and other public services and amenities should be provided.
- ◆ All possible means of Central Business District revitalization should be undertaken.

Highway Commercial - Highway Commercial is a term applied to commercial and industrial activities that depend on highway traffic outside the Town for business. Highway Commercial uses typically include restaurants, large grocery stores, service stations, convenience stores, and building suppliers. Greensboro's Highway Commercial land use is located along MD Route 313. Although serving an important function in the local economy, these uses also can create numerous problems which impair the efficient operation of highways. To avoid some of these problems in the future, the following policies should be established regarding Highway Commercial development:

- ◆ The State Highway Administration should be requested to limit crossovers on MD Route 313 to the existing intersections.
- ◆ Direct access points on MD Route 313 should be minimized to: 1) consolidate individual entrances, and 2) require service roads and connected parking lots, where possible. These requirements should be included in the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, and entrance locations should be coordinated by the Town with developers and the State Highway Administration.
- ◆ Sign controls appropriate to this area should be developed.
- ◆ The impact of intense commercial development on adjacent existing and future residential neighborhoods should be minimized.
- ◆ All Highway Commercial areas should be located adjacent to MD Route 313 at the intersection with Sunset Avenue.
- ◆ Rather than strip commercial development along the highway, clustered commercial development is recommended.

MAP 4

- ◆ Town regulations should be reviewed, and when necessary, revised to assure adequate off-street parking, sign control, and buffering are provided to protect nearby residential areas.
- ◆ Suitable landscaping and buffering measures should be required adjacent to property lines and along highway frontages.
- ◆ Uses should be regulated to ensure compatibility within the Highway Commercial cluster and with nearby non-commercial activities.

Industrial

In recognition of the need to provide additional job opportunities for Town residents and enhance the tax base of the Town to provide additional services, the Town has designated an Industrial Park and other locations where industrial development is encouraged. This land is currently in private ownership.

Objectives

- ◆ Provide a variety of attractive, safe, and convenient sites that are suitable for industry in terms of size, location, physical characteristics, and accessibility.
- ◆ Require buffering and suitable standards as a means to control undesirable influences or adverse effects of potential industrial development on surrounding areas.

Policies

- ◆ Necessary steps should be taken to further encourage industrial development in the Industrial Park, which is currently underutilized.
- ◆ Strict performance standards, including bufferyards, should be utilized to ensure nearby land uses and critical areas, such as Forge Branch, are not adversely affected by the industrial site.
- ◆ Industrial locations should continue to be concentrated to preserve the small-town character of Greensboro.
- ◆ Diverse industries, which will provide jobs that attract middle to upper income families, should be encouraged to locate in the Town.
- ◆ It is recommended that only light industry (processing and assembly) be permitted in close proximity to residential development.

- ◆ It is recommended that all heavy industry be confined to the Town's Industrial Park.

Parks and Open Space

See Chapter 8.

INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION

In planning for the future growth of Greensboro, cooperation must be enhanced between the Town and the County. Maryland's Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act of 1992 encourages such coordination and cooperation. The Town of Greensboro should consider requesting the Caroline County Commissioners to establish a joint committee to develop shared principles for future growth that address:

- ◆ *Permit Process Streamline* - Encourage consistency between Town and County permitting process to streamline the administrative process.
- ◆ *Sewer and Water Systems* - Coordinate land use management and service policies that recognize the Town of Greensboro as a Designated Growth Area.
- ◆ *Sensitive Areas Protection* - Natural systems do not begin and end at jurisdictional lines; therefore, coordination with the County should be established to develop a comprehensive management plan for sensitive areas.
- ◆ *Preserve Regional Resource Lands* - The potential exists to establish a Greenbelt around the Town of Greensboro. The system provides both resource land protection, cultural heritage preservation, and aesthetic value to both the Town and the County. The Greenbelt will not inhibit future growth, but rather direct that growth to appropriate lands adjacent to Greensboro. The system could build upon the private lands already designated as Easement Properties and Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Districts surrounding the Town. In addition, the joint committee could discuss the development of a greenway system to run along the Choptank River.
- ◆ *Transportation Planning* - Coordination of public road improvements is essential if use of public funds is to be maximized and priority public transportation systems are to be improved.
- ◆ *Economic Policy* - As economies become more regional, economic incentives and disincentives to achieve regional goals must be supported. Efforts to enhance the economic viability of the region should be supported.

CHAPTER 5

NATURAL RESOURCE PROTECTION PLAN ELEMENT

As a result of various State initiatives, strong resource protection requirements are mandated for most development. Resources such as tidal and non-tidal wetlands, stream valleys, and sensitive plant and wildlife habitats in coastal areas are protected under the requirements of the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Program. Non-tidal woodlands are protected wherever they occur and the recent adoption by the State of a forest conservation law affords protection for existing forest and will result in the planting of new forest cover on sites currently unforested. In addition, flood regulations protect many riparian stream areas, albeit for reasons related to risk management as opposed to water quality and habitat protection.

Greensboro is located between Forge Branch and the Choptank River, a tidal tributary of the Chesapeake Bay. The Choptank River is among the many bodies of water which feed the Chesapeake Bay, the Nation's largest and most productive estuary. The balance of the Bay's delicate ecosystem has been damaged by development, which creates runoff that overloads the Bay with nutrients and clouds it with sediments. Therefore, it is important that the Choptank River be protected, and that development which could degrade the water quality of the Bay be controlled.

In adopting the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Law (Natural Resources Articles 8-1801 through 8-1816), the Maryland General Assembly specifically found that there is a critical and substantial State interest in fostering more sensitive development activity along tidal shorelines of the Bay to minimize damage to water quality and wildlife habitats. The Critical Area Law required the Town to adopt and implement a Critical Area Program consistent with the guidelines established by the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Commission. Greensboro's Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Protection Program was adopted on May 24, 1990.

Concern for the conservation and protection of the sensitive natural features of the Town transcends arbitrary boundaries, *i.e.*, the 1,000-foot Critical Area. Issues such as the loss of forest and trees, sedimentation of streams, and loss of wildlife habitat are now of concern throughout the Town. Many realize that growth and development in the Town must be balanced with consideration for the positive contributions that the natural setting in Greensboro makes to the quality of community life. The limitations of natural systems in some areas to withstand the impacts of major disturbance in or near them must be addressed through public policy and implementation provisions.

The Maryland Economic Growth, Resource Protection and Planning Act of 1992 added the requirement to Article 66B that the Comprehensive Plan contain a Sensitive Areas Element which describes how the jurisdiction will protect the following sensitive areas:

- ◆ Streams and stream buffers,
- ◆ 100-year floodplain,
- ◆ Endangered species habitats,
- ◆ Steep slopes, and
- ◆ Other sensitive areas a jurisdiction wants to protect from the adverse impacts of development.

The Town is also concerned about the protection of groundwater resources, and has added them as sensitive areas in its Critical Area Program.

Protection of sensitive areas is also addressed in the Land Use Element of this Comprehensive Plan.

Natural features of Greensboro are identified on the Natural Resources Map (Map 5).

SENSITIVE AREAS POLICIES

- ◆ Direct intensive activities away from natural areas
- ◆ Preserve areas adjacent to existing streams to protect natural areas and the natural drainage system of Greensboro.
- ◆ Preserve environmentally sensitive areas along the Town's waterways.
- ◆ Establish specific policies for reviewing all development activities within natural areas, and with respect to their impact upon and protection of groundwater.
- ◆ Preserve natural drainage ways and provide access points for maintenance purposes.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives are meant to preserve the natural resources and features of Greensboro and its surrounding environs by ensuring a balance between development and the need to protect natural resources or features:

- ◆ Define, identify, and protect unique natural resources.
- ◆ Protect and restore environmentally sensitive areas in accordance with Maryland's Economic Growth, Resource Protection, and Planning Act of 1992. Provide specific protection measures for the following:
 - Steep Slopes;
 - 100-year floodplains;
 - Streams and their buffers; and
 - Habitats of threatened and endangered species.

MAP 5

(Note: These areas are already afforded adequate protection under the terms of the Town's Critical Area Program and implementing provisions).

- ◆ Ensure the protection of all lands in the Town's Chesapeake Bay Critical Area. Implement the Town's Critical Areas Program to protect the tidal wetlands and critical species habitat along the Choptank River, thereby preserving and enhancing the River and protecting its living resources as valued natural resources.
- ◆ Maintain ecologically sensitive resources by focusing growth in suitable areas, and encouraging the restoration of ecologically valuable areas in the Town.
- ◆ Encourage economic opportunities that may result from protecting and promoting unique natural resources (e.g., canoe trails, heritage tourism).
- ◆ Provide and maintain adequate and appropriate public access to the River and recreational areas along the Town's shoreline.
- ◆ Encourage the development of a natural "greenway" along the Choptank River.
- ◆ Assess future development proposals in light of a site's physical suitability to accommodate development while protecting natural resources.
- ◆ Preserve and protect fragile groundwater resources within the Town.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Protection Program

Greensboro's Chesapeake Bay Critical Area Protection Program regulates use of lands in the Critical Area. The Program should also be used as a reference guide for making educated decisions on land use issues affecting lands outside of the Critical Area. Many of the resource protection measures required in the Critical Area, e.g., stream buffers, limiting development in areas with development constraints, and limits on forest clearing, should be considered for application outside of the Critical Area.

Tree Preservation and Forest Conservation

To preserve the Town's forested areas, developed woodlands, and street trees, the Town should develop an Urban Forestry Plan, and explore the possibility of developing and implementing tree preservation requirements as part of the Zoning Ordinance.

Maryland Forest Conservation Law requires that clearing of forest be regulated as of December, 1992, to ensure that certain forest conservation measures are implemented. Greensboro should

continue to support the Forest Conservation Law to protect vital habitat, improve aesthetics, and protect water resources. The State is currently administering the Law on behalf of the Town.

Carrying Capacity

From a resource protection perspective, all land is not equally capable of sustaining the impacts associated with development without a substantial alteration of environmental quality. Development sites containing extensive sensitive natural resources and land areas with development constraints (e.g., steep slopes, highly erodible soils, floodplain, etc.) are less suitable for development from this perspective than those that do not. Put another way, sites with few or no development constraints are said to have a higher carrying capacity to successfully absorb the impacts of development, while minimizing adverse environmental effects than those that do.

This phenomenon should be recognized in the development approval process. One way of doing this is to apply permitted density provisions on a modified base site area basis. Permitted density should be calculated on the "net buildable base site area." Net buildable base site area is calculated by subtracting certain sensitive lands from the gross site area. For example, if the gross site area is 50 acres, 5 acres of which are classified resource protection land (e.g., tidal and/or non-tidal wetlands, steep slopes, or other characteristics), the net buildable base site area would be 45 acres. Density would be calculated on 45 acres.

The Town should adopt net buildable base site area provisions that require that sensitive lands be subtracted from the gross site area to derive a net buildable base site area with which to calculate density. Sensitive lands should include:

- ◆ Tidal and non-tidal wetlands;
- ◆ Slopes in excess of 25 percent;
- ◆ Highly erodible soils, i.e., soils with a K value of 0.35 or greater on slopes in excess of 15 percent; and
- ◆ The 100-Year floodplain.

Stream Buffers

Streams and their buffers are important resources. Streams provide drinking water for local communities, natural drainage, and irrigation for farmers. Streams are prime spots for recreation and fishing, serve as spawning areas for sport and commercial fish stock, and provide wildlife habitat. Streams also transport valuable nutrients to the Chesapeake Bay. Natural growth adjacent to our streams often serves as a natural screen between different types of land use.

The floodplain, wetlands and wooded slopes along streams are important parts of the stream ecosystem. As development activity becomes more intense, a large amount of open land, forests, and natural vegetation along streams is diminished. The cumulative loss of large amounts of open space and natural vegetation reduces the ability of the land along streams to buffer the effects of such intrusions as high stormwater runoff.

Buffers serve as protection areas adjacent to streams to preserve some of the biological and hydrological integrity of the stream basin. These areas act as run-off and groundwater pollution control systems by filtering pollutants through the soil and root zone of natural growth. For example, microscopic organisms that inhabit the soils in a forested buffer assist in the decomposition of pollutants much like microbes in a sewage treatment plant.

Buffer areas provide protection from flooding that might otherwise cause loss of life and/or property. Development near streams compromises this protection.

Buffers also provide wetland habitats. In view of the fact that most of Greensboro is in the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area, buffer protection is already required for the Choptank River.

Outside of the Critical Area the Town should define a stream corridor as being measured 100 feet from stream banks. Any development occurring within this area should be evaluated for its potential impact on adjacent streams. The minimum stream buffer requirement for areas outside the Critical Area should be 50 feet from the bank of all streams. This stream buffer should be expanded (to as much as 100 feet) if the Town determines it to be in the best interest of protecting the stream. Forge Branch has been identified as appropriate for a stream buffer at such time as development may occur in its vicinity.

Natural Features

Greensboro, like the rest of the Eastern Shore, has a rich variety of natural features that should be conserved. These features include wetlands, floodplain, wildlife habitats, creeks, and aquifers, among others. Such features help maintain the ecological balance of life and contribute to the quality of our environment, both urban and rural. Alteration of wetlands and floodplains through public or private development may have the most immediate effect on the community; wetlands because they are essential to our fisheries, and therefore affect the economy; and floodplains because they are essential to effective stormwater management, thereby minimizing flooding.

Floodplain

Some areas in the Town are subject to periodic flooding which pose risks to public health and safety, and potential loss of property. Flood losses and flood-related losses are created by inappropriately located structures which are inadequately elevated or otherwise unprotected and vulnerable to floods. In addition, development in sensitive areas that disturb natural features, increases flood damage to other lands or development. While protection of life and property provided the initial basis for protection of floodplains, there has been a growing recognition that limiting disturbances within floodplains can serve a variety of functions with important public purposes and benefits.

Floodplains moderate and store floodwaters, absorb wave energies, and reduce erosion and sedimentation. Wetlands, found within floodplains, help maintain water quality, recharge groundwater supplies, protect fisheries, and provide habitat and natural corridors for wildlife. The minimum requirements of the National Flood Insurance Program do not prohibit development within the 100-year floodplain. However, to adhere to the minimum Federal requirements the Town requires development and new structures in the floodplain to meet certain flood protection measures including elevating the first floor of structures a minimum of one foot above 100-year flood elevations and utilizing specified flood proof construction techniques.

Moreover, where alternative building sites on a parcel are available for construction outside the 100-year floodplain, then construction in the floodplain is prohibited. These requirements are established in Caroline County's Floodplain Management Ordinance, to which the Town adheres.

The floodplain areas in Greensboro are determined by the Flood Hazard Boundary Maps developed by the Federal Insurance Administration (FIA). The Town participates in the regular phase of the National Flood Insurance Program.

Tidal Wetlands

Public and private tidal wetlands are important natural areas protected by State law (Title 9, Sections 9-101/9-301 of the Natural Resources Volume, Maryland Annotated Code), which sets forth strict licensing procedures for any alteration of wetlands. They are also within the protective jurisdiction of the Federal Government through the US Army Corps of Engineers. Town policies and regulations regarding wetlands should be reviewed for conformance with and implementation of appropriate State and Federal legislation.

Steep Slopes

Although there are not a lot of steep lands in Greensboro, development is regulated on steep slopes wherever they occur in the Town's Critical Area. This same type of land management practice should be applied outside of the Critical Area.

Placement of structures or impervious surfaces should be severely limited on any slope with a grade of 25 percent outside of the Critical Area. On slopes between 15 percent and 25 percent, good engineering practices should be required to ensure sediment and erosion control and slope stabilization before, during and after disturbance activities, and to minimize cut and fill. The Town's Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations should include these requirements.

Endangered Species Habitat

To ensure the protection and continued existence of endangered species within the Town's jurisdiction, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations should include the following protective measures.

- ◆ Require that anyone proposing development activities must address protection of State and Federally designated endangered species. The developer must determine through contact with the Town and the Maryland Fish, Heritage and Wildlife Administration (MFHWA) whether proposed activities will occur within or adjacent to identified endangered species habitat and whether the activities will affect the area.
- ◆ If it is established that an activity will occur within or adjacent to an endangered species habitat, the Town should require that the developer provide protection measures in the project design. A written environmental assessment, including site design plans and a description of measures to be taken to protect the endangered species, should be submitted to the Town as part of the development review process. The developer must work with the Maryland Natural Heritage Program in establishing species/site-specific protection measures. Protection measures may include:
 - Designation of protection areas around the essential habitat of the designated species. Development activities or other disturbances shall be prohibited in the protection area, unless it can be shown that these activities or disturbances will not have or cause adverse impact on the habitat. The protection area designation will be made with input from the MFHWA.
 - Implementation of design strategies that work to protect the species and essential habitat. These strategies should include (but are not limited to) restrictions on siting of structures, use of cluster design, establishment of undisturbed open space areas, restrictive covenants, and restrictions on noise levels and timing of construction activities.

CHAPTER 6

HISTORICAL FEATURES PLAN ELEMENT

The past is a building block for the future and, if a plan is to be comprehensive, it must incorporate that past as a key element of planning for the future. History is kept alive through education and preservation, both of which can take many forms and vary in intensity. Old homes can be restored such that they are comfortable homes of today or they can be refurbished as an office. Historic sites can honor the past while providing a place for leisure activities. An old church can hold worship services similar to those held one hundred years ago. A number of programs exist to help individuals and groups temporarily or permanently protect sites and structures considered significant.

Historic preservation is a program which involves the inventorying, researching, restoration, and ongoing protection of sites and structures having a significant local or national historic interest. Continued historic and cultural resource preservation and enhancement, through sensitive land use planning and other administrative means, would provide Greensboro with a number of benefits, including:

- ◆ Promotion of a strong sense of community pride for Town residents;
- ◆ Community revitalization through the renovation or adaptive reuse of older structures;
- ◆ Increased property values and tax revenues as a result of renovation and restoration; and
- ◆ Increased revenues generated from tourism.

POLICIES

The following are the Town's policies for cultural and historic preservation:

- ◆ The Town supports promotion of historic sites through tourism efforts and business services that are complementary to historic areas.
- ◆ The Town supports the efforts of preservation and cultural organizations in the Town and encourages open communications between those same organizations.
- ◆ The Town encourages school and community participation in historical resource management programs through education and public awareness.
- ◆ The Town government and local citizens should work jointly to develop mutually acceptable mechanisms for protecting places of historic interest.

OBJECTIVES

The Town's objectives for cultural and historic preservation are:

- ◆ To encourage identification, preservation, and restoration of historic buildings within the Town, regardless of location.
- ◆ To seek out Federal and State funding programs which might be used to assist restoration and upkeep of the buildings.

There are a number of structures and sites within the Town that are of historic, cultural, or architectural significance. These structures, given proper concern and recognition, have tremendous potential to serve as physical reminders of the history and heritage of our past. In recent years, there has been considerable public concern that the vestiges of our heritage will be irretrievably lost. It has been found that an active historic and architectural preservation program can have beneficial social, economic and aesthetic impacts on an area.

Therefore, rather than permit demolition, destruction, or abandonment of our rich heritage, an active historic preservation program is recommended. Such a program should permit the continued use of the identified sites and structures, while simultaneously discouraging inappropriate exterior alterations. The development of a Historic Preservation Program for the Town should be the result of a cooperative effort between the public and private sectors of the community.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

The following programs are designed to facilitate achieving this Plan's goal of preserving and enhancing the Town's rich cultural and historic heritage.

Protection and Preservation Programs

A number of existing programs provide assistance in protection or preservation, offer tax benefits, provide professional historical/architectural consulting, and so forth. More detailed information on programs, including the National Register of Historic Landmarks, National Register of Historic Places, Conservation and Preservation Easements, and Historic Overlay Districts, can be obtained from various historic preservation organizations, such as the Maryland Historical Trust and its local chapter in Caroline County.

National Register of Historic Places. In 1966, Congress established the National Register of Historic Places as the Federal Government's official list of properties, including districts, significant in American history and culture. In Maryland, the State Landmark List is the Maryland Register of Historic Properties. Some benefits resulting from a listing in the National Register include the following:

- ◆ National recognition of the value of historic properties individually and collectively to the Nation.
- ◆ Eligibility for Federal tax incentives and other preservation assistance.
- ◆ Eligibility for a Maryland income tax benefit for the approved rehabilitation of owner-occupied residential buildings.
- ◆ Consideration in the planning of Federally and State-assisted projects.

Listing does not interfere with a private property owner's right to alter, manage or dispose of property.

Maryland Historical Trust. The Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) surveys historic buildings, structures and archaeological sites to determine eligibility for being listed on the State Register. As with being on the National Register of Historic Places, listing does not limit or regulate the property owner in what can or cannot be done with the property. To be considered for listing on the National Register or having an easement on the property accepted by the MHT, the site usually must first be listed on the Maryland Historical Trust Register.

Maryland Historic Preservation Easement. A State-held historic preservation easement, monitored by the MHT, is an excellent means of perpetually preserving a historical structure and property for future generations. Regulations state that easements may be assignable to other parties or run with the land. The benefits for a property owner of donating his land to the MHT include income, estate, inheritance, gift, and property tax benefits. In exchange, the owner gives the MHT the final word regarding proposed alterations. However, for properties whose fair market value is largely based on the value of development rights, this method of preservation may not be the most financially expedient for the property owner or for the MHT.

Local Historic Overlay Zone. A third, but separate, type of designation is the locally-zoned historic district, which is an overlay on the existing zoning ordinance of a specified area. This district, legally allowed by Section 8.01 of Article 66B in the Annotated Code of Maryland, is designed to maintain the visual character of the community. It may provide for an appointed Commission to monitor changes, alterations and demolition of buildings and structures of architectural or historic significance. The main purpose of such zoning is:

- ◆ Safeguard the heritage by preserving the Districts that reflect elements of the area's cultural, social, economic, political or architectural history;
- ◆ Stabilize or improve property values in such a District;
- ◆ Foster civic beauty;
- ◆ Strengthen the local economy;

- ◆ Use and preservation of Historic Districts for the education, welfare and pleasure of the residents of the county or municipal corporation.

Adaptive Re-Use. The Town should adopt zoning provisions that promote the adaptive reuse of historic structures for public and private uses, including, but not limited to, bed and breakfast establishments, craft/gift shops, museums, and studio space for artisans, when such uses minimize exterior structural alteration.

Support Owners. The Town should encourage the preservation of historic structures through the use of various incentives, including tax incentives for major structural or exterior renovation or the donation of protective historic easements.

Local Historic Districts. The Town may, through the use of various incentives, encourage the establishment of local historic districts in the Town. Incentives may include tax incentives and recognition through the awarding of plaques.

Development Proposal Review. The Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations for the Town should require developers to identify cemeteries/burial grounds/archaeological sites/historical structures on a property prior to any disturbance of the site and to support archaeological and historical research through preservation of significant sites.

CHAPTER 7

TRANSPORTATION PLAN ELEMENT

Growth Management and Transportation

The movement of people and goods is an important concern in any community's growth plan. To provide a safe and efficient transportation network with minimal disruption of the area can sometimes be difficult to achieve. The Transportation Plan Element must be closely coordinated with other elements of the Plan to assure that transportation plans and policies complement and promote those of other sections.

Too often, transportation planning begins in reaction to a problem. The comprehensive planning process and the Maryland Planning Act of 1992 suggest that a proactive approach to mobility issues is needed. Caroline County and its municipalities need to plan their transportation in coordination with their growth management planning. Land use growth and development patterns in the past have in large part been a product of transportation policies, rather than vice versa. When major roads were created, development along those corridors soon followed. This new growth ran counter to traditional development patterns, where commercial, public, residential, and light industrial land uses were placed in a centralized area. These traditional central areas were designed to the human scale, where pedestrian, motor, and bicycle traffic co-existed and personal interactions took place daily.

The Town should, therefore, institute transportation policies that support the objectives of the Comprehensive Plan, which include preserving a sense of place for its residents. Improving streets and sidewalks, developing nature trails for recreation, and promoting alternatives to motorized traffic will support the objectives of the Town's Comprehensive Plan. Through-traffic and heavy vehicles should be prohibited in residential areas, wherever possible.

The future vision for Greensboro is streets that are pleasant to walk along; safe and efficient bike routes; effective incentives for carpools and vanpools; and a network of roads that moves people and goods efficiently throughout the Town. The goal must be to preserve and enhance the Town's traditional grid system of streets. This system, if preserved and enhanced, will result in balancing the need for cars and trucks, transit riders, bike riders, and walkers.

To become a less car-dependent community, there must be more opportunities to live closer to work, in safe, walkable neighborhoods. In addition, streets must be well connected to make travel from one place to another as straightforward as possible. The key to achieving this vision is to redefine streets as a network that will serve the pedestrians, bike riders, and vehicles that will use them. In areas where we want to increase density and where we want more people to live and work, existing streets need to be retrofitted with sidewalks and street trees. These improvements will help attract people back to these streets and encourage investors to redevelop these areas.

This Comprehensive Plan brings a new awareness of the importance of streets to the quality of life in Greensboro. Again, the form that the streets take and the newly defined functions they

serve will determine how quickly the Town vision is achieved, or whether the vision can be achieved at all.

Maryland Department of Transportation's draft Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) for FY 1997 - FY 2002 includes a streetscape improvement study for Sunset Avenue, from the Choptank River Bridge to Chesapeake Railroad. The streetscape improvement study will support the Town's goal of preserving its rural character and providing safe, efficient transportation routes for vehicular and pedestrian traffic that are consistent with the Town's patterns of existing and future growth. Streetscaping can enhance both the quality and aesthetics of a neighborhood street, while supporting the revitalization efforts of a community. The streetscape improvement study will build upon the improvements made to the Choptank River Bridge and has the potential to greatly enhance the "gateway" to Greensboro.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives are meant to maintain and enhance existing transportation systems and support the development of future alternative modes of transportation throughout the Town.

- ◆ Encourage the continuation of the traditional grid system of streets in all new developments.
- ◆ Improve and preserve the streets and sidewalks within the Town.
- ◆ Improve pedestrian and bicycle linkages which connect the sidewalk of the Choptank River bridge to the main streets downtown and to the commercial buildings along the MD Route 313 corridor.
- ◆ Enhance the four road entryways into Town by encouraging renovation of buildings, planting of trees and other native flora, creation of parks, and appropriate placement of business and organizational signs, thereby encouraging commuters and travellers to visit the Town.
- ◆ Prohibit through-traffic and heavy vehicles in residential areas, wherever possible.
- ◆ Continue to establish working relationships with County and State Highway Administrations for improvements to State and County-owned and maintained routes.
- ◆ Create a yearly capital improvement and maintenance program for Town-owned roads. In most instances, improvements within the Town will involve street resurfacing, sidewalk reconstruction or new construction, and new curbs and gutters.
- ◆ Promote, in coordination with the County and other County municipalities, the development of public transportation services that are responsive to the needs of the

community, including specialized clients such as elderly, handicapped, and transit-dependent residents.

- ◆ Develop a hike-n-bike "greenway" trail along the Choptank River corridor, from Greensboro Park to Denton. Coordinate with the State Greenways Commission and the County. Utilize State Highway Administration ISTEPA funds and Maryland Department of Natural Resources Open Space funds to finance the trail. Create trail linkages to the Town's Central Business District to improve the downtown's economic viability.
- ◆ Promote the redevelopment of the old Penn-Central rail line to enhance economic opportunities for the Town. If such redevelopment is not economically feasible, then consideration should be given to a rail-to-trail program to turn the rail line into a hiking/riding trail, potentially running from Marydel to Easton. (Coordination with other local as well as County, State, and Federal agencies and non-governmental organizations will be necessary.)
- ◆ Promote the navigation of the Choptank River by maintaining access for recreational boaters from Greensboro to all points south. Promote cultural activities and identify unique sites along the River and provide access to those points. Incorporate public access points and unique sites as a component of a heritage tourism strategy. Seek Maryland Department of Natural Resources and Maryland Department of Transportation funding to support the implementation of a Heritage Tourism Strategy consistent with the Maryland Heritage Act.
- ◆ Provide for the safety of vehicles and pedestrians at intersections by ensuring adequate sight distances and by using traffic control devices and geometric design features such as T intersections, marked crosswalks where sidewalks and road meet, traffic signals, stop signs, and other strategies where appropriate.

FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION SYSTEM

The initial and most essential step in the development of an integrated and balanced transportation system is the classification of the function the streets and highways were designed to provide. The development of a functional classification system provides for the logical coordination of the street and highway network of the Greensboro area.

Functional classification categories in Greensboro include; 1) principal arterial, 2) major and minor collectors, and 3) local streets and rural routes.

Arterial Highway

The highest level of highway service provided to the Town is the arterial system. The primary purpose of all arterial highways is to provide continuous and efficient routes for movement of high volume traffic between Towns or major traffic generators particularly that of an intra-state or inter-state nature. Direct access to adjoining land should not be provided except at certain key points. Arterial highways are designed to maintain homogeneous neighborhoods and to serve as boundaries between various neighborhoods. On-street parking should be prohibited. MD Route 404 is classified as a Principal Arterial. MD Route 313 is classified by the Maryland Department of Transportation as a minor arterial.

The Town should consult with the State Highway Administration (SHA) as it permits development to occur at the intersection of MD Route 313 and MD Route 314 and along MD Route 313 and West Main Street.

Collectors

Both minor and major collectors serve a similar function, though varying in volume and intensity of use. The primary purpose of the collector system is to collect traffic from local residential streets and provide for the direct movement of traffic to commercial and industrial areas and the arterial highways.

Major collectors connect areas of relatively dense settlement with each other and with other major traffic routes. These streets are intended for inter-neighborhood and through traffic.

Minor collectors are streets which, in addition to serving abutting properties, intercept minor streets, connect with community facilities, and are intended primarily to serve neighborhood traffic. Such streets assume medium traffic flow and standards have been established accordingly. MD Route 480 is classified as a Minor Local Collector.

Local Residential Streets

The most extensive part of the Town of Greensboro's street network is local residential streets. Local residential streets, including cul-de-sacs, are streets intended primarily to provide access to abutting properties, and are designed to discourage their use by through traffic. Such streets assume light traffic flow and their standards have been established accordingly.

Rural-residential Streets

In the outlying areas surrounding Greensboro, the rural-residential road is the predominant element of the highway system. The rural-residential street is similar in function to local residential streets, providing a means of access to collectors. The rural-residential street connects dispersed farms, houses, and outlying areas to highways of a higher order.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

Street Trees

A new awareness of the importance of streets to the quality of life in our growth centers is needed. We must plan for streets that are pleasant to walk along. Existing streets and developments and new development can and should create an exciting, attractive and vibrant community. New concepts — using the successful communities of our past — should be permitted, encouraged and preferred. Street trees improve the quality of life and ensure the "sense of place" to which small communities on the Eastern Shore have become accustomed.

As part of this philosophy, street tree planting should be required and specimen trees should be saved where possible. The Town should enforce its street tree requirements in new developments and in parking lots, and should invest in street trees along existing roadways and in older developments. All plantings should be done in conformance with the Forestation Act and the Town's Forest Conservation Ordinance.

Parking

Parking improvements have been proposed for the Town of Greensboro. Priority parking improvements include resurfacing of the Town parking lot on Sunset Avenue and the development of a new parking lot at 109 Main Street. These parking improvements will support Plan objectives to revitalize the downtown. Limited parking discourages patronage of the Town's center and will be detrimental to any revitalization effort. Parking that is currently available in the Central Business District should be identified by street signs to better inform motorists of parking opportunities. Securing parking facilities for the proposed Greensboro Park should also be considered.

Transit Development

Transit service for the general public in Caroline County is not feasible at this time without a substantial subsidy and would not likely prove to be cost effective under any circumstances given the existing settlement pattern. At such time as settlement patterns, demand, or other circumstances warrant, the Town and County should explore the feasibility of providing public or private bus service between major residential, commercial and employment centers within the County. In the immediate future, the Town can be most effective in reducing drive-alone auto trips by cooperating with the State in the planning and provision of "park and ride" facilities to encourage ride-sharing and commuting.

Possible reduction in car use within the Town may be achieved by the planned improvements in the sidewalks accessing the central part of Town and developing a safe crossing across MD Route 313 from the east side of Town to the Choptank River bridge.

Bicycle Facilities

Bicycle traffic should be encouraged in the Town of Greensboro. Sidewalks are the most used bicycle paths in Town and current plans to upgrade deteriorating sidewalks should therefore enhance bicycle access. In addition, the Town, in coordination with County and the State Department of Transportation, should identify “popular” bicycle routes for designation as such, in the near future. Town, County, and State transportation policies should support these bicycle routes as they are designated. As opportunities present themselves, appropriate Town streets should be enhanced to provide adequate bicycle routes.

Additionally, the Town should amend the Zoning Ordinance to require a provision of bicycle parking spaces in non-residential developments and permit an appropriate reduction in parking based on the availability of space for parking bicycles. Bicycle parking spaces should also be provided at all public buildings and parks.

Opportunities to provide bicycle and pedestrian greenway trails should also be pursued through the appropriate County and State Agencies.

Ridesharing

The Town should encourage business and industry to provide reserved parking spaces for carpools, vanpools, and bicycle racks at office and industrial sites to accommodate and encourage high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) commuting.

Highway Commercial Development

The Town should consult with the State Highway Administration (SHA) as it permits development to occur at the intersection of MD Route 313 and MD Route 314 and along MD Route 313 and West Main Street.

New Streets - Standards

Town streets are currently maintained by either the Town or the State. This is a situation that is likely to continue in the future. When new streets are proposed they should be designed to standards established in the Town Subdivision Regulations or State standards, if the State is to maintain the street. These standards should be consistent.

Illustrated Draft Street Standards, Options and Issues

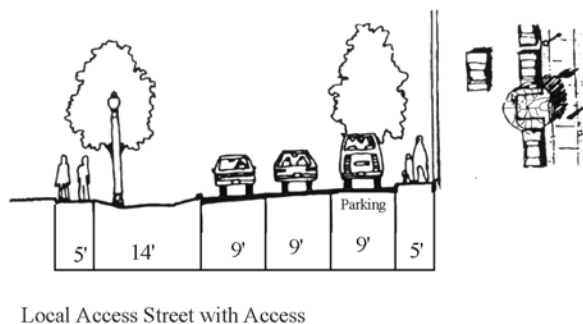
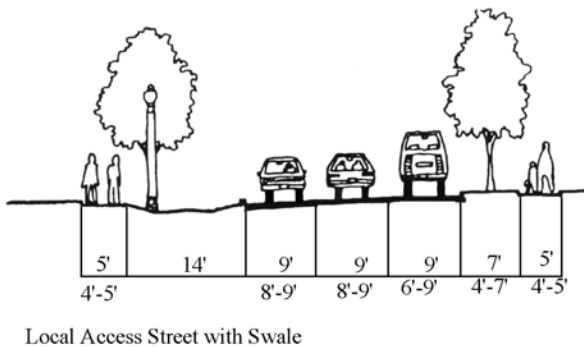
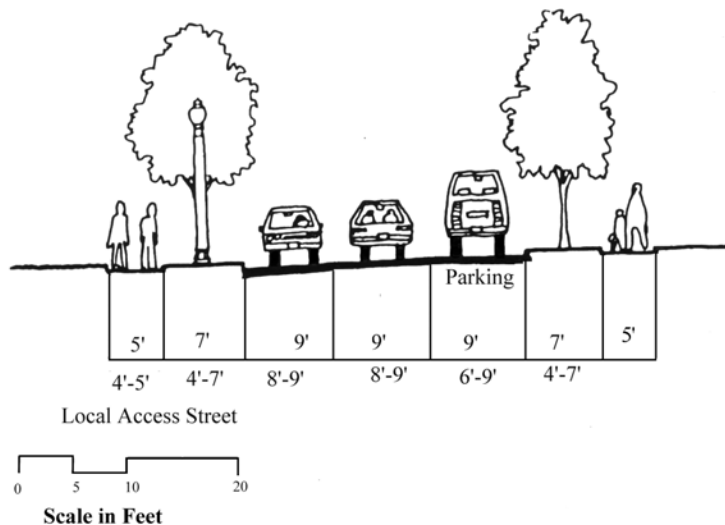
The draft street standards shown in Table 7.1 should be reviewed during preparation of development regulations. The suggested range of widths should be carefully considered. Policy direction from the Comprehensive Plan should guide the development of the final standards.

Recommended Minimum Street Standards

Type of Street	R-O-W Width*	Lane Width	Parking Width	Sidewalk Width	Planting Strip Width
Collector- Minor	60' - 64'	10' - 12'	9' - 10'	5' - 7'	7' - 10'
Local Street	50' - 62'	9'-10'	7' - 9'	5'	7'

Table 7.1

* R-O-W width will vary depending on design speed and parking configuration (i.e., no parking, one-side parking or two-side parking)



Important Elements

Parking on one or both sides should be an option since this increases the separation between moving vehicles and pedestrians and provides needed parking space for the adjacent uses.

Street trees and parking strips

are important to the creation of a street that people will be willing to walk on. This is especially important in areas where people are to be encouraged to walk to transit stops, to jobs, or to commercial services. In higher density areas, these streets are essential to the success and liveability of the area.

Issue: The broad swale for stormwater detention and parking are not the best options. This degrades the quality and landscaping of the street edge and parking strip in a configuration that keeps the street edge from being narrow.

neighborhood get across the street? Underground, back of lot, or shared detention ponds are a preferable option for the "people function" of these neighborhood streets.

CHAPTER 8

COMMUNITY FACILITIES PLAN ELEMENT

The adequacy and capacity of physical public services and facilities are of importance to the quality of life and are vital if the Town is to pursue its goal of being a residential community. These service and facilities include the water and sewer systems, roads, parks, other recreational facilities, and public buildings.

One of the most complex problems facing the Town is the continuation of existing levels of service at reasonable costs so that the public health, welfare and safety of current residents are adequately protected. It is the purpose of this Element to review objectives, analyze existing community facilities, and establish facility policies to determine if current needs are being met, and to ensure that future growth can be adequately served. Map 6 shows the Town's existing community facilities and Map 5 shows the Town's natural features.

Another item of concern in the Town is the condition of the water and sewer pipes. Many parts of this system need to be upgraded or replaced. One of the sources of the ongoing damage is the tractor trailer traffic passing through Town, primarily along Main Street and Sunset Avenue (which are State highways), as well as certain connecting Town streets (e.g., Church Street and Park Avenue).

POLICIES

The following policies will apply to the provision of community facilities within Greensboro:

- ◆ To protect the existing groundwater (drinking water) resources, the Town will require appropriate environmental review in the development approval process.
- ◆ The Town will encourage stormwater management practices which utilize surface and on-site drainage treatments as opposed to underground drainage piping.
- ◆ The Town will cooperate with the County in establishing a county-wide greenways system to the extent possible.
- ◆ Future annexations will occur only after opportunities to develop underutilized land within the Town boundaries are considered, and only after extensions and/or improvements are provided for at least the water, sewer, and road systems.

OBJECTIVES

To guide improvements in the future, the expansion of community facilities should be consistent with the following objectives:

- ◆ To assure the continued expansion of public facilities and services commensurate with local financial capabilities and the capacity of each system.
- ◆ To assure the provision of community services and facilities to all living and working areas of the Town in a manner which is the least disruptive to the environmental qualities of the area.
- ◆ To encourage the efficient use of natural resources of the area such as water, waterways, and scenic areas for the benefit of all Town residents.
- ◆ To encourage use of public lands and buildings for a variety of public purposes.

RECREATION, PARKS AND OPEN SPACE

Greensboro has a well developed parks and recreation system. In and around Town, there is also an adequate amount of open space which supports the recreational needs of the community. Natural areas, open spaces, and parks should be considered valuable assets of the community. Existing natural areas, and those that could be acquired, support habitat for living resources and ensure safe drinking water for the Town's residents. In addition, natural areas and open spaces act as natural buffers which support floodplain management. These natural areas should be considered natural infrastructure of the Town because of their ability to filter pollutants, buffer potential flooding and protect water quality. Town actions to preserve natural areas in and out of the regulated Critical Area should be supported through the Town's Subdivision Ordinance and Zoning Regulations.

Park facilities are also critical to the quality of life of the residents of Greensboro. Parks are common meeting places that bring the community together for events, ball games and recreational outings. Greensboro has adequate park facilities. With the addition of the Choptank River Park and park and recreational facilities at the Greensboro Elementary School, the Town is demonstrating its commitment to enhancing the quality of life of its residents through the development of park and recreation facilities. Greensboro should continue to support its parks and recreation system, and maintain that system to ensure safe and aesthetically pleasing recreational activity. See Map 6 for distribution of Park facilities.

The Parks of Greensboro

- ◆ Choptank River Park
- ◆ Fireman's Park
- ◆ Forge Branch Park
- ◆ Greensboro Elementary School - Ballfields and Open Space
- ◆ Ober Park
- ◆ Senior League Park
- ◆ T-Ball Park

MAP 6

The standards in Table 8.1 serve as a general guideline in determining community recreational needs.

Standards for Recreational Activity

TYPE	AGE GROUP SERVED	OPTIMAL SITE SIZE	SERVICE AREA
Playlot	Pre-School	50'x100'	Walking Distance - 1/8 mile
Playground	5-14 Years	3-7 Acres	1/4 to 1/2 mile radius
Neighborhood Park	All ages	5-15 Acres	1/4 to 1/2 mile radius
Playfield	15 years and over	12-20 Acres	1/2 to 1 mile radius

Table 8.1

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

- ◆ Storm drains at three sites should be replaced to better manage stormwater and protect the Town's water quality. Those three replacement sites are: Academy St. and Caroline Street; Cedar Lane and School Street; and Lincoln Street.
- ◆ Water storage facilities to replace the Town's 1914 water tower are in the planning stages and funding is being sought. The new water storage facility should have the capacity to support growth that is planned for the Town.
- ◆ Conduct a study of the impact of through-traffic by tractor trailers on the Town's streets, water and sewer system, and quality of life for its residents.
- ◆ Funding to maintain the Hobbs Street water tower should be sought. Repairs to Hobbs Street water tank should be completed, and then regular maintenance conducted.
- ◆ Water and sewer lines on the east side of Town should be looped.
- ◆ Pursue all means, including Maryland's Project Open Space Program, to further develop and enhance the Choptank River Park. Enhancements to the Park should include, but not be limited to, continued acquisition of flood-prone property in the Park area; purchase and plantings of a streamside buffers and native plants; and the purchase of park benches.
- ◆ Enhance Fireman's Park by building basketball courts and restrooms.
- ◆ Relocate the recycling center from the East Sunset Avenue entrance into Town to a location convenient to Town residents, but less visible to passersby.

CHAPTER 9

HOUSING PLAN ELEMENT

The quality of Greensboro's neighborhoods is determined by the cumulative impact of the Town's housing supply and living environment. Since major community goals are to improve the quality of life and to promote the availability and affordability of decent, safe, and sanitary housing for all Town residents, housing ranks as an important local concern. Important factors to be considered in forming Town policy toward the public function of housing in the Comprehensive Plan are:

- ◆ Housing is a durable, physical product in a neighborhood setting.
- ◆ Housing is a major user of the Town's land.
- ◆ Housing is a generator of local public facilities and services.
- ◆ Housing is the object of local real estate taxes.
- ◆ Housing is a major influence on the Town's physical and social environment.
- ◆ Housing is an essential requirement for continued economic development.
- ◆ Housing construction is a major source of employment.
- ◆ Housing is a major investment or expenditure for individual families.
- ◆ Housing is a major investment for the private financial community.
- ◆ Housing is a major ingredient in family satisfaction or dissatisfaction and in a community's sense of well-being.

POLICIES

The following are the Town's policies for housing planning.

- ◆ A variety of housing types should be provided for within the Town's land use controls.
- ◆ The Town should encourage the use of innovative programs to provide a suitable mix of housing types in affordable price ranges.
- ◆ The purpose of Town housing and building codes is to ensure high standards of quality in new construction, while remaining sensitive to housing affordability.

- ◆ The Town should continue to encourage, through both private and public actions, the renovation or removal of substandard housing.
- ◆ The Town should continue to encourage, through both private and public actions, an opportunity for families to live in adequate homes in price ranges that are affordable.

OBJECTIVES

- ◆ Preserve housing in good condition from replacement by other uses or public facilities unless a greater public need would be served by such action.
- ◆ Encourage continued maintenance and upkeep of existing housing, and stimulate the replacement of housing that becomes unfit for human habitation.
- ◆ Protect residential zones from incompatible activities and land uses to create comfortable and safe living environments.
- ◆ Provide a balanced housing stock with housing opportunities for all Town residents.
- ◆ Improve housing conditions for all the Town's residents, especially the disadvantaged population.

RECOMMENDED ACTIONS

There are several implementation alternatives available to local governments for the provision of affordable housing. The extent to which these alternatives are used, either singularly or in combination, depends on the particular needs of the community. Each approach to providing housing to achieve the multi-objectives of the community has varying degrees of success.

Revitalizing Existing Housing

Although housing in Greensboro is predominately well-structured and maintained, there are a number of housing lots are old and in need of repair. The Town's housing efforts should focus on those properties identified by the Town as substandard. Substandard housing includes those homes that are damaged, decayed, dilapidated, unsanitary, and/or unsafe for both the residents' and the general public's health and well-being.

Substandard housing units just east and west of the railroad tracks along Sunset Avenue and along its minor arterials are in need of repair, reconstruction, redevelopment or a combination of all three. Additional properties scattered throughout the Town, on both the east and west sides of MD Route 313, also require repair, reconstruction, and/or redevelopment.

The Town's code enforcement program should be re-evaluated to determine its effectiveness in dealing with these types of problems.

The Town should apply for County, State and Federal programs that provide low interest loans for home improvements and redevelopment to assist the owners in improving or replacing these housing units. A list of housing programs is included in Appendix C of this Plan.

Land Use and Development Controls

One of the most important things that the Town can do is protect the quality of its existing housing stock from new, poorly designed or constructed developments. This can be accomplished through a consistent application of the Town's Zoning, Subdivision, and Building Code Ordinances. A strong ordinance enforcement effort is also needed to guarantee that new structures are built in conformance to approved plans and applicable ordinances. Where appropriate, the Town should also use its Zoning and Subdivision Regulations to encourage redevelopment and replacement of deteriorated housing. The Town should provide incentives to encourage redevelopment that will include several existing lots in one development effort.

Future Residential Development

For the foreseeable future, the Town of Greensboro will experience growth. The Town should be prepared to deal with both the problems and opportunities represented by this development. The following policies should be considered as a basis for promoting sound residential growth:

- ◆ The Land Use Element should guide the Zoning Ordinance as to the location and type of housing, and appropriate development standards.
- ◆ The Zoning Ordinance should be capable of preventing incompatible development, while at the same time being flexible enough to accommodate innovative design.
- ◆ Adequate public facilities and services should be provided to meet the needs of residential development. The Town should improve coordination between sewer planning and land use planning. New sewers should not be permitted to direct higher density development in areas designated for lower density uses.
- ◆ Building and housing codes should be kept up-to-date with regional and national standards and should be enforced to ensure that new construction conforms to the best possible practice. Adequate fees should be collected through the building permit system to cover the cost to the Town of reviewing the building application and performing necessary inspections during construction.
- ◆ The Town should ensure that its private and public roadway standards promote safety, as well as minimizing the impact of roads on the land and surrounding natural resources.

Accessory Apartments

Accessory apartments may be permitted under certain conditions with adequate safeguards to protect the character of the existing residential neighborhoods. Both the homeowner and the community can benefit from the presence of accessory apartments, if they are carefully managed.

The most obvious public benefit of accessory apartments is that they offer a source of inexpensive housing units in the community with virtually no conversion of land use to produce them. Accessory apartments are moderate-cost housing and can reduce the need for some new development.

The following guidelines should be used to address some of the concerns about the impacts that single family housing conversion to accessory apartments may have on the character of a neighborhood:

- ◆ Require owner occupancy - Require that the owner of the home continue to reside in one of the units to ensure that the appearance of the structure will be maintained.
- ◆ Restrict the age of homes to be converted - These provisions should discourage builders from taking advantage of an accessory apartment provision as a backdoor route to two-family development and should limit conversion to existing structures.
- ◆ Provide for parking and traffic - These provisions should mandate that the existing parking pattern not be altered and that off street parking be provided.
- ◆ Guarding against visual change in the neighborhood - These provisions should generally restrict the owner from making external alterations to the structure, such as adding a second entrance on the front of the house.
- ◆ Specifying minimum apartment sizes - These provisions should limit the size of the accessory apartment as it relates to the main unit to ensure that the accessory unit is clearly secondary. Maximum size of apartments should be designated in the Housing Code ordinance.
- ◆ Providing opportunities to control the scale of change - These provisions should allow conversions under a Special Exception to the Zoning Ordinance, rather than as a “by right” in any zone, thereby allowing neighborhood residents a chance to respond.

CHAPTER 10

IMPLEMENTATION RECOMMENDATIONS

The Town Comprehensive Plan is intended to capture a vision of the future Greensboro. As such, it provides a basis for a wide variety of public and private actions and development decisions which will be undertaken in the Town over time. It provides general guidelines to the local community so that piecemeal improvements or day-to-day decisions can be properly evaluated in light of their long-range impact upon the community and their relationship to existing settlement patterns.

The Plan, and in particular the Land Use Element, indicates the intended general or conceptual development pattern of the community. However, it is not a detailed blueprint. Local conditions, values, and philosophies change as a result of economic and political pressures, and the Plan must be responsive to these changes. The Plan is not a document which encourages regimentation. It is a guide which encourages patterns of development which will permit orderly and economical growth of the community in a manner which can be efficiently served with a variety of governmental services and facilities, and is consistent with community values.

The following sections outline implementation methods for the Plan, including a summary of recommendations from each Plan Element. Implementation requires the concerted actions of Town elected officials, certain appointed boards, and citizens, in cooperation with the County and State governments. The responsibilities of these parties and their respective roles in the implementation of the Plan are summarized.

Administration and Enforcement

One of the most important, yet often neglected, issues to be considered in the formulation of the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations is administration and enforcement. Even the most well conceived plans and ordinances will lose effectiveness, and in some cases be invalidated, without consistent and equitable administration and enforcement. The responsibility for administering and enforcing the Comprehensive Plan, and its associated ordinances and regulations, rests primarily with the Town Commissioners, the Zoning Inspector, and the Planning Commission. Their roles in administration and enforcement of the Plan and its conforming Ordinances and Regulations are defined in the following sections.

Town Commissioners

The Town Commissioners are the final authority concerning decisions to adopt or revise and amend the Comprehensive Plan for Greensboro. They are also a primary group responsible for implementing Plan proposals. As the elected officials of the Town, they are responsible for addressing public concerns and community needs through the development of public policy.

Greensboro Commissioners are fortunate in having charter powers which invest them with a variety of responsibilities and the authority necessary to discharge their public responsibilities.

Specific proposals are identified below which will require consideration by the Town Commissioners. The Town Commissioners should work with County officials to ensure consistency with regional growth and development objectives which are compatible with the 1992 Maryland Planning Act.

Recommendations of the Plan are designed to assist the Town in achieving Plan goals and objectives, and improving the quality of life of its residents. The Town Commissioners should be primarily responsible for undertaking the following actions to make the Plan adopted public policy:

- ◆ The Commissioners must, under Maryland law, review and adopt the Comprehensive Plan. This provides a foundation for the existing Zoning and Subdivision regulatory controls, and will serve as a basis for their revision, as needed.
- ◆ The Commissioners should review specific improvement projects within the context of the Comprehensive Plan.
- ◆ The Commissioners should support the recommendations of the Plan by allocating funds under their direct control to support specific actions outlined in the Plan, as well as by researching and soliciting County, State and Federal resources to support priority actions that the Town is currently unable to fund on its own.
- ◆ The Commissioners should institute procedures to coordinate with the County government, as well as various State and Federal agencies, to assure their actions are consistent with Town Planning objectives.
- ◆ The Commissioners should oversee the coordination of development activities and proposed programs within the Town, either as a "committee of the whole" or by delegating this function to the Planning Commission and/or appropriate Town staff for their detailed analysis and opinions.
- ◆ The Commissioners should ensure the consistency of the Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations with the Comprehensive Plan policies, objectives, and recommendations.

As a summary of the actions to be taken by the Town Commissioners, the following items are listed as a guide. Each category is presented as a method of clarifying the various roles of the Commissioners in Plan implementation.

Legislative

- ◆ Officially adopt the revised Greensboro Comprehensive Plan, after appropriate review, discussion and public hearings, and in accordance with the 1992 Maryland Planning Act.

- ◆ Review and adopt any necessary revisions to the 1995 Greensboro Zoning Ordinance to implement basic land use policies of the Comprehensive Plan.
- ◆ Revise, as necessary, the Town Zoning Map to conform to the Town's desired patterns and density of land use as discussed in the Land Use Plan Element (Chapter 4) of the Plan.
- ◆ Review and adopt any necessary revisions to the 1995 Subdivision Ordinance to assure consistency with any development standards recommended within the Plan.
- ◆ Adopt an Ordinance officially establishing the Greensboro Planning Commission and defining its powers, responsibilities and duties.

Administrative

- ◆ Maintain an inspection staff to enforce locally enacted codes, including housing, zoning and building codes. Consider hiring an additional, part-time staff person whose only duties would be those of the Greensboro Zoning Inspector.
- ◆ Continue to maintain an annual capital improvements program and capital budgeting process to help establish community priorities, clearly indicate assets and liabilities, and continue to provide essential community services.
- ◆ Continue to maintain, through future appointments, the roles and functions of ongoing Town boards and commissions, including the Town Planning Commission, Board of Zoning Appeals, and other ad hoc committees which may be required to assist them from time to time in Plan-related actions or activities.

Coordination

- ◆ Discuss with the Caroline County Commissioners and elected officials of other municipalities in the County the establishment of quarterly Comprehensive Plan meetings as a method of coordinating plans and programs to achieve shared goals and address common challenges. One possibility would be to dedicate one of the current monthly meetings of Caroline County Mayors to such discussions, and invite the participation of the County Commissioners.
- ◆ Initiate cooperative meetings with the County library board, school board and other local boards to ensure that the future location of physical facilities will be consistent with the extension of Town public services and facilities.
- ◆ Maintain ongoing procedures for incorporating the views of Town residents into the planning process to make public plans consistent with public needs.

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission, appointed by the Town Commissioners, is instrumental in directing the Comprehensive Planning efforts of the Town. The Commission's role is to coordinate, educate, advise, recommend, and support, wherever possible, the activities of residents and government agencies in their efforts to implement the Plan.

Under Maryland law (Article 66 B of the Annotated Code), the Planning Commission is responsible, as they deem necessary, for the preparation and periodic update or revision of the Plan by the Town Commissioners. The current update of the Plan is in accordance with the 1992 Maryland Planning Act.

One of the most significant roles for the Planning Commission in the Town development process is to serve as a coordinating body for the Town Commissioners. The Maryland Planning Enabling Act provides the Planning Commission with broad authority to review, study and recommend solutions to various local development issues.

In exercising this responsibility, the Planning Commission has the following responsibilities:

- ◆ Preparation of the Comprehensive Plan, which serves as a guide to public and private actions and decisions, to ensure the development of public and private property in appropriate relationship to local needs.
- ◆ Approve the Plan and recommend its adoption by the Town Commissioners. The Plan must conform to the basic elements required by State Law.
- ◆ Promotion of public understanding of the Plan and what it seeks to accomplish, and incorporate citizen participation in the planning process.
- ◆ Recommend, to appropriate public officials, programs for construction of public structures and improvements which are necessary to implement the Plan.
- ◆ Prepare and file an Annual Report with the Town Commissioners at their first meeting of each new calendar year. The report is the method through which the Planning Commission identifies changing conditions within the Town and brings these conditions to the attention of the Town Commissioners.

- ◆ In addition to the duties generally identified by Article 66B, The Maryland Planning and Zoning Enabling Act, the Planning Commission is charged with a variety of specific administrative functions directly related to day-to-day decisions which cumulatively affect implementation of the Plan. These functions include:

- Review and approval of all Subdivision proposals, consistent with the requirements and authority established by the Town Subdivision Regulations.

- Review, report and recommend to the Town Commissioners actions on all rezoning requests brought before the Town. The Commission reviews each proposal for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan, in accordance with standards for review contained in the Town Zoning Ordinance.

- Review and comment upon various requests for Special Exceptions, which are ultimately decided by the Town Board of Appeals.

- Review and submit recommendations to the Town Commissioners concerning the Town's Annual Capital Improvements Program.

Through exercising its responsibility related to these specific items, the Planning Commission can exert great influence on the course and pattern of local development to ensure consistency with Plan policies and objectives.

Zoning Inspector

The duty of the Zoning Inspector is to administer and cause the enforcement of the provisions outlined in the Administration and Enforcement chapter of the Greensboro Zoning Ordinance. The Zoning Inspector issues, administers, and causes the enforcement of all aspects of the zoning certificate and the zoning occupancy permits. The Zoning Inspector role is critical to the enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance; therefore the function and importance of the Zoning Inspector, within the context of the Comprehensive Plan, should not be overlooked. Action should be taken if the Town does not have a Zoning Inspector currently issuing, administering and causing the enforcement of the Zoning Ordinance provisions.

Additional Administration and Enforcement Policies

Several measures can be taken to ensure higher quality administration and enforcement of the Town's Ordinances and Regulations. Some of these measures are administrative and budgetary. Others have to do with the structuring of the Plan and Ordinances. Some of these policies are mandatory if the Town is to have effective zoning administration. The following policies will be discussed:

- Professional Staff
- Funding
- Performance Standards
- Staff Authority
- Periodic Review and Plan Amendment
- Uniformity in Administrative/Ministerial Functions
- Information Management

In general, professional staff and funding should be viewed as essentials of any planning program. Without these elements, good ordinance administration is, at best, problematic. The regulatory approaches do contain some choices that the Town must address.

Professional Staff

Developing a highly professional planning staff, which possess both planning and management skill, will greatly enhance the quality and level of administration and enforcement. First, and foremost, professional competence requires a commitment by the Town to seek and hire qualified personnel for all planning and administrative positions. Job descriptions should be prepared and only qualified people hired to fill the positions.

A second requirement is proper funding to ensure that qualified individuals are attracted to the Town and retained long enough so that they can be effective. Adequate funding for all administrative tasks should also be provided. Inadequate funding for such tasks as zoning administration, regulating subdivisions, variance and conditional use processing, as well as issuing building permits, will result in poor and inconsistent enforcement. If there are insufficient personnel to inspect for compliance of both plans and actual construction, the best plans and regulations will be inadequate. Cross-training of personnel to be knowledgeable about other ordinances and programs should also help to identify violations.

Funding

Inadequate funding should never serve as an excuse for low quality administration and enforcement. Funding can be provided one of two ways: through a General Revenue Fund or through a fee structure. Long-range planning functions are a Town effort that benefit the entire community. It is therefore logical that long-range planning should be supported out of the Town's General Revenue Fund. The short-range planning activities, such as subdivision review, zoning administration and building permits, should be supported by fees for permits, inspections, and processing of zoning applications. Fees should be adequate enough to cover support provided by Town departments and any planning costs that are directly related to these activities. These costs can be identified in the budgets of respective departments and are easily calculated. Short-range planning and administration should not cost the Town money. This is in keeping with the widely held view that developments should be responsible for paying their own way. There are existing fee structures that can be modified to implement this goal.

Using General Revenue Funds to cover administrative costs is still an option. This, of course, is a political decision and should be made accordingly. Limited resources in the General Revenue Fund, however, should not be used as an excuse for inadequate funding of administrative services, since other mechanisms for covering these costs are available.

Performance Standards

The term “performance standard” implies the existence of a firm standard that can quantitatively be determined. For example, instead of seeking to protect the environment to the maximum extent possible, it sets a standard for protection (floodplains 100%, woodlands 70%). There is no room to debate the achievement of a standard. If 32% of a woodland is to be disturbed, then the standard has not been met.

It is clear that this type of planning means more work in developing the ordinance. The standards have to be tested, and the equity issues over the impact of the standard have to be carefully weighed before the standards are adopted. Once in place, however, there is a much lower demand on staff, since each review is a question of checking to see if the plan conforms to measurable standards. Time-consuming debates, position papers, and reports that characterize ad hoc reviews, dependent on arm-twisting, can be eliminated.

The major difficulty with adopting performance standards is that it requires solving problems up front, rather than postponing them to a later date, and not every potential issue can be anticipated and resolved with quantitative standards. However, a better effort to quantify standards than is presently in place is clearly possible.

Staff Authority

Effective administration depends on the appropriate use of staff and an understanding of the different roles played by elected officials, appointed boards and commissions, and the professional staff. The primary job of elected officials and planning commissions is to make policy decisions. Once policy is made, the staff should be directed to implement the decisions. This is a critical distinction. Where possible, authority must be delegated to the staff and, where delegation is not feasible, the role of elected officials and/or appointed commissioners should be sharply defined.

Periodic Plan Review & Amendment

A comprehensive plan or ordinance is based on a whole series of goals and objectives. Because the elected officials hold the public hearings and adopt the ordinances, they clearly understand all of the details at the time of adoption. However, as memories begin to fade and different officials are elected, the level of understanding diminishes. Thus, a series of standards and findings of fact required of the Town Commissioners before making amendments is a very useful structure for decision-making.

The Comprehensive Plan will require periodic review, evaluation and update to ensure it serves the Town's purposes. The Plan, at a minimum, should be reviewed and updated every four years. The actual form and scheduling of Plan review and update will be heavily dependent on Town staff and the Planning Commission's capabilities, and on the issues that arise as the Plan is implemented over time.

Uniformity in Administrative/Ministerial Functions

Administrative decisions at first glance may not seem as weighty as a large rezoning matter; however, the cumulative effect of several plats of subdivisions invoking proposed lots, as evidenced in recent years, represents incremental decisions which will most likely have a much more substantial impact on the community than a few larger legislative decisions. This is why it is important that all administrative decisions, regardless of how minor, be considered uniformly in light of the Comprehensive Plan and its associated Ordinances and Regulations. This is another argument for adequate professional staff.

In both permitting and rezoning decisions, consistency and equity are mandatory. Each applicant must be afforded the same due process in administration and enforcement. Different rules cannot be applied on a case-by-case basis, just as policy cannot be determined case-by-case. Discretionary decision making must be minimized to the extent possible. The Comprehensive Plan, after all, is supposed to serve as a standard for regulation and should not be reinterpreted each time a specific development is proposed. It is often difficult to overcome the natural tendency to become involved in the plight of the landowner, losing sight of the larger purpose and community objectives of the Plan.

Information Management

The starting point for effective inspections and enforcement is a good set of records, reflecting what regulations, plans, permits, and conditions affect a particular piece of property. Traditional zoning regulations were easy to administer and enforce because all that was necessary in the way of records for most situations were a zoning map, a copy of the zoning regulations, and a description of the property (to find it on the map).

A particular property may be affected by not only the zoning map and applicable regulations, but also by conditions imposed on a rezoning; restrictions contained on a plat, such as easements and high water lines; terms of an annexation agreement; special conditions applicable to a particular use; and one or more sign permits, including special conditions. If the site is approved as a Planned Unit Development (PUD), then conditions established as part of that approval may also affect the property.

If an owner applies for a building permit, a new business license, or a permit for an additional sign, it is essential that the Zoning Inspector or building official be able to determine accurately what conditions and restrictions apply to the property.

With a sophisticated, computerized “geographic information system” (GIS), it is possible to specify all of the conditions and restrictions applying to each part of a particular parcel. The only administrative requirement for record keeping on such a system is to ensure that every official action resulting in the imposition of restrictions are part of the record. All that is necessary is a file reference number or other piece of information to refer the user to the full site plan, conditional approval, or other document containing the conditions or restrictions.

Most communities, however, do not have and will not soon have such sophisticated systems and must build records in another way. Making records of restrictions is essential to the entire administration of land-use regulations, not just to enforcement actions. Some communities have replaced a traditional zoning map with a map containing references to PUD and site plan approvals. While such a system is a satisfactory way to track large-scale approvals, it cannot realistically identify all individual site plans, conditional re-zonings, sign permits, or similar matters. The only effective way to track all conditions applicable to a particular parcel of ground is with a parcel-based filing system, whether it is on a computer or on paper.

Capital Improvements Program

The Town Commissioners should consider implementation of a comprehensive process leading to the preparation of a six-year Capital Improvements Program, which would constitute both an effective public financial management tool and a mechanism for coordinating development.

The primary value of the Capital Improvements Program is to provide a public framework for establishing priorities and evaluating projects according to local needs. As various community needs are identified, and detailed engineering and cost data accumulated, the Town Commissioners are better able to project the impact of proposed projects on the Town's fiscal resources. By projecting residents' needs over a 5-6 year span, various improvement projects can be effectively coordinated with local development policy.

Each project advocated for community development purposes should be described as to purpose, location, type of improvements, and cost estimates. To properly identify the projects proposed for the Town, it is necessary to group various projects according to a uniform numbering system. All projects requiring allocation of municipal funds should be numbered, briefly described, and added to each year's capital program. Categories are divided according to a basic functional classifications, such as streets, sewer and water extensions, and parks. Project numbers should not be reused until a project is fully completed.

The entire program should be revised annually and projects which receive approval should be included in the Capital Improvements Schedule. Projects should be kept in the program until completed or canceled.

Annexation

Future annexations should be of sufficient size to allow for proper planning of land use and community facilities. Annexations should be in accordance with a predetermined policy which permits smaller areas to be annexed as a part of an overall pattern. Smaller area annexations should also be undertaken to clarify boundaries and to prevent "enclaves" from occurring.

Financial considerations play the paramount role in determining the course of future annexations, both from the standpoint of the Town and of prospective Town residents in the area proposed for annexation. The Town assumes considerable obligations to supply basic Town services to these areas as they develop. Unless development occurs within the areas immediately adjacent to existing development, public funds are wasted in attempting to service remote and scattered clusters of development. Financial policy is equally important to public policy criteria for annexation and for resolving practical problems for people living in future Town areas.

To avoid Town-County conflicts which might result from development and community facility improvements, the following broad annexation objectives are presented to establish guidelines for future annexation efforts.

- ◆ The primary purpose of future annexation efforts should be to provide existing and future residents of the area with the public facilities and services necessary for protection of health and property. Thus, future annexations will concentrate on providing additional residential areas and recreation areas, parks, and open space.
- ◆ Proposed annexation areas should be economically self-sufficient and should not result in larger municipal expenditures than anticipated revenues, which would burden existing Town residents with the costs of services or facilities to support the area annexed.
- ◆ The costs of providing roads, utilities, parks, and other community services should be borne by those people, whether developers or residents, gaining the most value from their existence through income, profits or participation.
- ◆ Future annexations will occur only after opportunities to develop underutilized land within the current Town boundaries are considered, and only after extensions and/or improvements are provided for at least the water, sewer, and road systems.

Use of these guidelines for future annexations should result in the expansion of the Town at a pace and manner which provide the maximum benefits of service at the lowest possible costs. Assurance is also extended to existing Town residents that new additions to the Town will be in accordance with long-range public policy.

The Land Use Plan Map shows areas of consideration for annexation during the Planning Period (through 2010). These future growth areas are serviceable by the Town within the planning

horizon, and offer opportunities for the Town to direct the future pattern and scale of development along its edges.

Land Development Regulations

Land use and its impacts on the social, environmental and economic well being of Greensboro is a major concern of the Town. The Zoning Ordinance and Subdivision Regulations, which were adopted on June 2, 1988, ensure that land use is controlled in a manner which is designed to minimize the number of incompatible uses, which create adverse relationships among residential, commercial and industrial neighbors.

The Land Use Element of the Plan identifies land use policies. The Zoning Ordinance is the regulatory device adopted by the Town Commissioners to implement the Land Use Element. Each zoning district is established in concert with the Land Use Plan and follows the basic concepts of the Plan.

Subdivision Regulations provide the regulatory powers necessary to assure that land is developed in a manner which will best promote the public health, welfare, and safety. These regulations provide for the control of land development practices; establish uniform standards of development and recording; establish erosion control measures; and guide the arrangement of streets and access routes between subdivisions. They also ensure that the private division of land into lots or parcels is consistent with public policy established by the Plan.

Zoning Ordinance Enhancements

Zoning is the most commonly used device for guiding development at the local level in Maryland and many other parts of the country. It is usually employed to control the use of land and structures thereon, as well as to establish more detailed regulations concerning the area of the lot that may be developed (setbacks and separation of structures), the density of the development (minimum lot sizes, etc.), and the height and bulk of buildings and other structures. The general purpose of zoning is to avoid undesirable side effects of development by segregating incompatible uses and by maintaining adequate standards for individual uses.

The Town Commissioners and Planning Commission should revisit the Zoning Ordinance to ensure that it reflects the types of land use and will preserve the community's character that the Town wants to achieve in each of the Planning Areas.

The Zoning Ordinance should also include provisions for bufferyard enhancements between residential and non-residential uses along the MD Route 313 corridor. Bufferyards should include a minimum setback and a minimum planting requirement.

The Town may want to consider requesting technical assistance from the County or Maryland Office of Planning in the review and possible revision of the Zoning Ordinance.

Although steps were taken to enhance its Zoning Ordinance as a result of the 1988 Comprehensive Plan, the Town should now consider taking further actions to revise its zoning regulations to be more consistent with the Town's goals and objectives. The following policies should be incorporated into the Town's Zoning Ordinance to ensure the most suitable and flexible uses of land are available to residents and the public and private sectors.

- ◆ Revise the Town's Zoning Ordinance to ensure that the redevelopment of the Central Business District can be completed in a manner consistent with the downtown's original pattern and design. Therefore, the Zoning Ordinance should permit modest front setbacks, which create characteristically close relationships with the street, and should retain this pattern to preserve the Town's character. Redevelopment should also allow for formal characteristics, such as height, massing, roof shapes, and door and window proportions consistent with original designs.
- ◆ New construction in and adjacent to the Central Business District should blend with its surroundings. Design of these properties should also permit height, massing, roof shapes and, door and window proportions consistent with original designs.
- ◆ Mixing of compatible uses of land, for instance, small-scale commercial and residential, should be permitted throughout the Town. Concepts of "New Urbanism," which promote mixed-use development, adjacent parks and public facilities, should be embraced by the Town and its local decision-makers. Regulations discouraging this type of development should be examined, and if necessary, revised.
- ◆ Business and industry should be encouraged to provide reserved parking spaces for carpools, vanpools, and bicycle racks at office and industrial sites to accommodate and encourage high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) commuting and the use of bicycles. The Zoning Ordinance should also be amended to permit the Planning Commission to allow an appropriate reduction in parking based on the availability of space for parking bicycles.

Subdivision Regulation Enhancements

The following additional policies should be incorporated into the Subdivision Regulations and apply to street design in major and minor subdivisions:

- ◆ Future development in the Town should be subject to some level of design review for compliance with minimum development appearance standards. These minimum standards are performance standards rather than inflexible and stringent criteria. The intent of these performance standards is to promote quality development that will complement the small-town character of Greensboro.
 - Design standards include: placing off-street parking lots only to the rear or side of buildings, which reduces the visual impact of parking areas through landscaping

and buffering requirements; permitting signage that is designed to be readable by pedestrians and slow moving vehicles, as well as consistent with the scale of buildings; control lighting in both height and intensity by shielding luminaries to prevent excessive lighting and glare beyond lot lines onto neighboring properties or public ways.

- ◆ Proposed roads should be continuations of existing roads wherever possible, including undeveloped but platted roads; and a provision should be made for road connections at suitable points within the Town. Continuation of the grid system of roads will ensure consistency in the pattern of new development with the existing character of the Town.
- ◆ Where not otherwise provided by interior pedestrian ways or similar means, sidewalks should be provided by the subdivider when, in the opinion of the Planning Commission, sidewalks will promote and facilitate pedestrian access to existing and/or planned institutional, recreational or commercial uses. Where a development fronts on an existing Town Street and where a sidewalk terminates at the property line of the proposed development, the sidewalk should be extended along the entire road frontage of the proposed development. In the above cases, alternative means of pedestrian access, besides a sidewalk built to specification within the Town right-of-way, can be considered, provided that such pedestrian access renders the same or better access as sidewalks, and provided that, if the pedestrian access is located outside a Town right-of-way, the developer provides guarantee of future maintenance.
- ◆ Where appropriate, the design of major subdivisions and commercial and industrial site plans should
 - Support bicyclists and pedestrians by providing safe, convenient and inviting routes and walkways between activity centers and in areas where the use of alternatives to driving alone for commuters is encouraged.
 - Incorporate bike routes for commuters into street plans.
 - Provide covered bike racks, lockers and showers at employment sites.
- ◆ Bufferyards should be required along roads and commercial strips to maintain and enhance the visual character of the area. Public perception of community character is most commonly experienced moving along public roads.

Conclusion

As implementation options for the Comprehensive Plan are continually sorted out and decided upon, it becomes important to think ahead to administration and enforcement. Once the Plan is completed, the job of putting it into action begins. Long-established development review processes and practices may clearly need to be altered.

In the end, the ability of the Town to properly administer and enforce the Plan, and its associated ordinances, is the Plan's most accurate measure of success. No matter how good an idea sounds on paper, if the Town cannot make it work or neglects to make it work, then that idea has had little or no impact on the future well-being of Greensboro. If the Plan cannot effectively be administered and enforced, it will not have served its public purpose. The Comprehensive Plan must be administratively feasible and enforceable, given the budget and staffing resources allocated by the Town to do the job. Constant attention to management and re-evaluation of administrative processes and procedures should be considered equally important to initial structuring and staffing of administrative procedures. Sound administration derives from good management which is attentive to the needs of re-evaluation and adjustment over time.

APPENDIX A - DEFINITIONS OF CENSUS SUBJECT CHARACTERISTICS

- ◆ Household - A household includes all the persons who occupy a housing unit.
- ◆ Housing Unit - A housing unit is a house, an apartment, a mobile home, a group of rooms, or a single room that is occupied as separate living quarters. Separate living quarters are those in which the occupants live and eat separately from any other persons in the building and which have direct access from the outside of the building or through a common hall. The occupants may be a single family, one person living alone, two or more families living together, or any other group of related or unrelated persons who share living arrangements.
- ◆ Housing Stock - Total number of housing units in a community, both occupied and vacant.
- ◆ Householder - Generally, the person whose name the home is owned, being bought, or rented. If there is no such person in the household, any adult household member 15 years old or over could be designated as the householder. A family householder is a householder living with one or more persons related by birth, marriage, or adoption. A nonfamily householder is a householder living alone or with nonrelatives only.
- ◆ Household Income - Total money received in the stated calendar year by all household members 15-years-old and over.
- ◆ Average Household Size - The average number of household residents per household. All household occupants are counted, but living in group quarters are not included.
- ◆ Family - A family consists of a householder and one or more other persons living in the same household who are related to the householder by birth, marriage, or adoption. All persons in a household who are related to the householder are regarded as members of his or her family. A household can contain only one family for purposes of census tabulations. Not all households contain families since a household may comprise a group of unrelated persons or one person living alone.
- ◆ Family Income - The sum of the incomes of all family members 15 years old and over.

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APPENDIX C - HOUSING ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

Home Ownership Programs

Maryland Mortgage Program (MMP) - The purpose of the MMP is to enable low- and moderate-income households to purchase homes by providing below-market interest rate mortgage financing through private lending institutions. The MMP, which targets first-time home buyers, is available to individuals and households with incomes at or below 85 percent of the State median income.

Maryland Home Financing Program - Home Purchase (MNFP- PIRL) - The purpose of MNFP is to provide low-interest rate mortgages for lower-income households. The MMFP, which targets first-time home buyers, is available to individuals and households with incomes at or below 55 percent of the State median income.

Maryland Home Financing Program - Reverse Equity (MHFP-REMP) -The purpose of the MHFP-REMP is to enable elderly families of limited income to access part of their accumulated equity in order to pay for housing and other personal expenses to continue to occupy the home. For eligible applicants and properties, the Community Development Administration (CDA) will establish a line of credit up to a program maximum of \$50,000 from which funds may be requested on a monthly basis. No repayment of loans is required until the death of the last surviving borrower, after the borrower voluntarily moves out, or after the sale or transfer of the property.

Settlement Expenses Loan Program (SELP) - SELP provides financial assistance in the form of low interest loans to pay settlement expenses.

Rental Housing Programs

Multi-Family Bond Program (MBP) - This program is designed to increase the construction and rehabilitation of multi-family rental housing for families with limited incomes. Tax exempt bonds and notes provide below-market rate construction and permanent financing to profit and nonprofit developers. A certain percentage of units in the project must be made available to low-income persons and households.

Rental Housing Production Program (RHPP) - The purpose of the RHPP is to increase the supply of rental housing for low-income families by providing below-market rate and deferred payment loans to developers. The program is designed to be used in conjunction with tax-exempt, private, local and federal loans.

Elderly Rental Housing Program (ERHP) - The purpose of the ERHP is to increase the supply of rental housing for low-income elderly households by providing below-market rate and deferred payment loans to developers. The program is designed to be used in conjunction with tax-exempt, private, local and federal loans.

Nonprofit Rehabilitation Program (NRP) - The purpose of the NRP is to provide low-interest mortgage loans to nonprofit organizations and local governments to rehabilitate housing for low-income households.

Partnership Rental Housing Program (PRHP) - The PRHP is intended to expand the supply of affordable housing for poor families through State and local government partnerships. Eligible projects include new construction and acquisition or rehabilitation of rental housing.

Maryland Housing Rehabilitation Program - Multi-Family (MHRP-MF) - The purpose of the Multi-Family Program is to provide loans to assist owners in bringing their multi-family units up to applicable building codes and standards.

Multi-family Home and Energy Loan Program (HELP-MF) - The purpose of the HELP is to finance rehabilitation and energy conservation of existing multi-family properties using the proceeds of tax-exempt bonds.

Construction Loan Program (CLP) - The CLP provides low-interest, construction financing loans to nonprofit and local governments to acquire, rehabilitate, or construct certain types of housing and for bridge loans to profit motivated developers.

Transitional Housing and Emergency Shelter Program - The THESP provides grants to improve or create transitional housing and emergency shelters for the purpose of reducing homelessness in the State.

Special Loan Programs

Maryland Housing Rehabilitation Program - Single Family (MHRP SF) - The purpose of the program is to preserve and improve existing small residential properties by bringing the properties up to applicable codes and standards. In 1990 this program was merged with the Liveability Code Rehabilitation Program.

Accessory, Shared and Sheltered Housing Program (ACCESS) - The purpose of ACCESS is to expand low cost housing opportunities for low-income households and low-income elderly, handicapped or disabled persons by financing the creation of accessory, shared, and sheltered housing facilities.

Indoor Plumbing Program (IPP) - The purpose of the IIP is to provide indoor plumbing in residential properties. Loans are made to income eligible households in owner-occupied single family units.

Residential Lead Paint Abatement Program (RELAP) - Loans are provided through the RELAP to reduce instances of lead poisoning of children by financing the abatement of lead paint in residential buildings.

Group Home Financing Program (GHFP) - The purpose of this loan program is to assist individuals and nonprofit organizations to construct or acquire and modify existing housing to serve as group homes or temporary and emergency shelter for income-eligible persons and households with special housing needs.

Special Housing Opportunities Program (SHOP) - The purpose of the Special Housing Opportunities Program (SHOP) is to assist non-profit organizations and local development agencies construct and acquire and modify existing housing to provide shelter and service individuals with special housing needs.

Special Targeted Area Rehabilitation Program (STAR) - The purpose of the STAR program is to preserve and improve single family properties. STAR was designed to bring properties up to applicable building codes and standards or a minimum housing quality standard.

Housing Subsidy Programs

Rental Allowance Program (RAP) - This program provides grants to local governments to provide flat rent subsidies to low-income families who are homeless or have emergency housing needs. The purpose of the program is to help these families to move from temporary housing to permanent housing and self sufficiency.

Section 8 Existing Certificate/Voucher Program - A U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Program (HUD), Section 8 Existing is a rental assistance program which subsidizes the rent of low income families through the use of federal grants. This program is administered through the Maryland CDA.

Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program

The Federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, created by the Tax Reform Act of 1986 and extended by the Revenue Reconciliation Act of 1989, is designed to encourage private sector investment in the construction and rehabilitation of housing for low- and moderate-income families. The law gives states annual tax credit allocation based on population. CDA is the agency which allocates the state's tax credits on a competitive basis.

Infrastructure Program

The purpose of this program is to provide an efficient and economical means of access to capital markets in order to finance infrastructure projects to local governments. This program is administered through the Maryland CDA.