

TOWN OF CHINCOTEAGUE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN



Chincoteague, Virginia

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5 YEAR UPDATES

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Chincoteague, Virginia

Comprehensive Plan



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Chapter 0 Overview

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

Introduction

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



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

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

Plan Organization

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

Introduction: Background

Chapter 1 Community Profile

Chapter 2 Goals and Objectives

Chapter 3 Land Use Plan

Chapter 4 Economic Development

Chapter 5 Community Facilities & Services

Chapter 6 Transportation

Chapter 7 Housing / Neighborhoods

Legal Framework

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

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

1. The designation of areas for various types of public and private development and use, such as different kinds of residential, business, industrial, agricultural, mineral resources, conservation, recreation, public service, flood plain and drainage, and other areas;
2. The designation of a system of community service facilities such as parks, forests, schools, playgrounds, public buildings and institutions, hospitals, community centers, waterworks, sewage disposal or waste disposal areas, and the like;
3. The designation of historical areas and areas for urban renewal or other treatment;

4. The designation of areas for the implementation of reasonable ground water protection measures;
5. An official map, a capital improvements program, a subdivision ordinance, a zoning ordinance and zoning district maps, mineral resource district maps and agricultural and forestal district maps, where applicable;
6. The location of existing or proposed recycling centers;
7. The location of military bases, military installations, and military airports and their adjacent safety areas; and
8. The designation of corridors or routes for electric transmission lines of 150 kilovolts or more.”

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

Since 2015, the Code of Virginia has also required that the “Comprehensive plan shall incorporate strategies to combat projected sea-level rise and recurrent flooding.”

Acronyms

ACS – American Community Survey

A-NPDC- Accomack- Northampton Planning District Commission

BOCA- Building Officials and Code Administrators

CCP – Comprehensive Conservation Plan

CCRM- Center for Coastal Resources Management

CEDS- Community and Economic Development Strategy

CERT- Community Emergency Response Team

CLT- Community Land Trust

CRS- Community Rating System

DCR - (Virginia) Department of Conservation and Recreation

DEQ- (Virginia) Department of Environmental Quality

DHCD- (Virginia) Department of Housing & Community Development

EDA- (Accomack County) Economic Development Authority

ESVBA- Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority

ESCC- Eastern Shore Community College

ESDA- Eastern Shore Defense Alliance

FEMA- Federal Emergency Management Agency

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

IBC- International Building Code

IRC- International Residential Code

ISO- Insurance Services Office

MARS-Mid Atlantic Regional Spaceport

MGD- Million Gallons per Day

NASA- National Aeronautics and Space Administration

NIMS- National Incident Management System

NOAA- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

NPS- National Park Service

PUD- Planned Unit Development

USACE – United States Army Corp of Engineers

USFWS- United States Fish & Wildlife Service



Chincoteague Island Nature Trail provides a paved path on the southern side and a natural path on the northern side for visitors to experience the natural vegetation and wildlife of the Island. The southern path hosts a Plant ES Natives Demonstration Garden.

VDH- Virginia Department of Health

VCZM- Virginia Coastal Zone Management

VDOT- Virginia Department of Transportation

VIMS- Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences

VMRC- Virginia Marine Resources Commission

List of Reports/Studies

References in General Order of Occurrence

The Comprehensive Plan recommendations are supported by current research and analysis contained in the following Reports/Studies. These documents are incorporated by reference in general order of first occurrence and may be considered as an element of the adopted Comprehensive Plan (R-xx).

Electronic copies of the following documents are archived and delivered in conjunction with the Comprehensive Plan.

References with stated URL are on-line references.

- 1) American FactFinder, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2013-2017
<https://factfinder.census.gov>
- 2) Weatherbase – Chincoteague, Virginia
<https://www.weatherbase.com>
- 3) Average Weather in Chincoteague, Weather Spark (2018)
<https://weatherspark.com/y/22646/Average-Weather-in-Chincoteague-Virginia-United-States-Year-Round>
- 4) Adapt VA Interactive Map, Center for Coastal Resources Management
http://cmap2.vims.edu/AdaptVA/adaptVA_viewer.html
On-line mapping tool
- 5) Water Supply Plan, Town of Chincoteague (October 2010)
- 6) Source Water Protection Plan, Town of Chincoteague (October 2014)
- 7) Accomack County Regional Water Supply Plan, ANPDC (Draft February 2011)
- 8) The Eastern Shore of Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan, ANPDC (2016)
- 9) The Code of the Town of Chincoteague, Virginia, Town of Chincoteague (September, 2018)
- 10) Accomack County Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Portal
<http://www.vims.edu/ccrm/ccrmp/portals/accomack/index.php>

- 11) Chincoteague and Wallops Island National Wildlife Refuges Comprehensive Conservation Plan, USFWS (October 2015)
- 12) Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge Economic Analysis in Support of Comprehensive Conservation Plan, CNWR, (January 2013)
- 13) Maddox Boulevard Multi-Modal Transportation Enhancement Preliminary Engineering Study, Town of Chincoteague (December 2017)
- 14) Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce Tourism Action Plan, Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce (February 2018)
- 15) Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce Maximum Capacity Study, Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce (July 2015)
- 16) Water System Master Plan, Town of Chincoteague, (October 2003)
2014 Update: Capital Improvement Plan Update Water Systems Improvement Report, Town of Chincoteague, March,2014)
- 17) Wastewater Management Plan, Town of Chincoteague (June 2013)
- 18) Storm Water Master Plan, Phase 1, Town of Chincoteague (April 2011)
- 19) Chincoteague Emergency Operations Plan (CEOP), Town of Chincoteague (May 2017)
- 20) Virginia Shellfish Aquaculture Situation and Outlook Report, VIMS (May 2017),
(Footnotes 1 & 2)
- 21) Eastern Shore of Virginia Pedestrian Facilities Study, ANPDC (December 2017)
- 22) Transit Development Plan, Town of Chincoteague (December 2011)
- 23) Chincoteague 2020 Transportation Plan, VDOT (August 2002)
- 24) Eastern Shore of Virginia Transportation Infrastructure Inundation Vulnerability Assessment, VDOT (May, 2015)

Supporting Documents in Order of General Occurrence

Other supporting documents provide valuable information for future growth and change on Chincoteague Island and the surrounding environment that are not generally considered to be an element of the Comprehensive Plan but were consulted (S-xx).

1. Accomack County Comprehensive Plan, ANPDC, (October, 2018)
2. Virginia Working Waterfront Master Plan, DEQ (September 2016)
3. Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Plan FY 2018-2028, ANPDC (Draft 2017)
4. Accomack County Blue/Green Infrastructure Study, Accomack County (May, 2010)
5. Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Guidance, Center for Coastal Resource Management, (January, 2013)
6. Virginia Community Profile Accomack County, Virginia, Employment Commission ((May 2018)
7. ESVA Regional Economic Development Plan , ANPDC (June 2018)
8. Abbreviated Final General Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement Assateague Island National Seashore, NPS (2017)
9. Virginia State Tourism Plan, Virginia Tourism Corporation (March 2013)
10. Cemetery Preservation Plan, Town of Chincoteague (February 2013)
11. Healthy People, Healthy Places, Community Well-Being on Virginia's Eastern Shore (August 2012)
12. Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Health Assessment Synthesis, VDH (June 2017)
13. Eastern Shore of Virginia Groundwater Resource Protection and Preservation Plan, ANPDC (December 2013)
14. Groundwater Level Trends on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, ANPDC (April 2018)
15. Report to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality and Virginia General Assembly, Eastern Virginia Groundwater Management Advisory Committee (July 2017)
16. Status of Virginia's Water Resources: A Report on Virginia's Water Resources Management Activities (2017), DEQ (October 2017)

17. Wastewater Advisory Committee Planning Report Comparison Study of Similar Communities, Town of Chincoteague (May 2012)
18. Storm Water Master Plan Phase 2, Town of Chincoteague (July 2013)
 - Flood Evaluation for Hallie Whealton Smith Drive
 - Flood Evaluation for Fowling Gut
19. Wallops Assateague Chincoteague Inlet (WACI) Geologic and Coastal Management Summary Report, VIMS & A-NPDC (2015)
20. Urban Construction and Maintenance Program (Urban Manual)Policies and Guidelines, VDOT (June 2015)
21. Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission (PDC 22) Coordinated Human Service Mobility Plan, ANPDC (September 2013)
22. Bicycle & Pedestrian Implementation Guide For Locality Involvement, VDOT (April 2017)
23. Trail/Bicycle Plan, Town of Chincoteague (September 2009/Updated May 2013)
24. 2035 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan, ANPDC (2011)
25. Eastern Shore Bike Plan, ANPDC (Update 2014)
26. Flood Insurance Study, FEMA (May 2015)
27. Eastern Shore of Virginia Regional Dredging Needs Assessment, ANPDC (2013)
28. Last-Mile Expansion: Strategic Considerations, ESVBA (March 2018)
29. 2018 Virginia Outdoors Plan Draft, DCR (2018)
30. Recreational Use Assessment Report – Seaside of Virginia’s Eastern Shore, ANPDC (May 2014)
31. Virginia Seaside Water Trail Map with Launch Sites, DEQ (online resource)
32. Presentation to WIRA, Town of Chincoteague State of the Town/Annual Report Mayor Arthur Leonard, (February, 2019)

Consulted Documents in Order of General Occurrence

Other documents were reviewed and while not referenced may provide valuable contextual information for future growth and change on Chincoteague Island and the surrounding area.

References with stated URL are on-line references.

1. Virginia Eastern Shore Coastal Resilience Tool
[http:// http://maps.coastalresilience.org/virginia](http://maps.coastalresilience.org/virginia)
2. NOAA National Centers for Environmental Information
<https://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/>
3. USGS National Gap Analysis Project (GAP) | Land Cover Data Portal
<https://gapanalysis.usgs.gov/gaplandcover/viewer/>
4. Virginia Flood Risk Information System, Virginia Department of Conservation and recreation
<http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/dam-safety-and-floodplains/fpvfris>
5. Preliminary Engineering Report, Sanitary Sewer System Phase 1, Town of Chincoteague (March 2011)
6. Accomack County Joint Land Use Study – Final Report, Accomack County (May 2015).

Chapter 1 Community Profile

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



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

History of Chincoteague

Agriculture was the primary Colonial economy. This included tobacco, livestock, and later grain. Located in Accomack County, Chincoteague agriculture produced crops of potatoes,



strawberries, and corn. Local watermen have been harvesting a seafood bounty for generations including oysters, blue crabs, clams, and scallops. Chincoteague and other waterfront villages and towns on Virginia's Eastern Shore, were important centers of seafood trade. This would be the beginning of the Town's lifelong connection to the Atlantic Ocean and bay that borders its shores, as evidenced by the fact that a post office was not established on the Island until 1854 as access remained by boat only.

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

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

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



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

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

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

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



Today, Chincoteague is home to over 3,600 people. Tourism is its primary industry. However, a significant portion of the population is employed in the professional, scientific, and health care fields. Seasonal residents and visitors swell this number to over 15,000 during the summer months. Over the years the Town has seen three annexations, with the most recent being in 1989. The 1989 annexation made the entire Island part of the Town of Chincoteague. While annexation provided the Town with additional revenues, it also presented the municipality with expanded public service

responsibilities. The Town is required to provide general governmental services to the residents of the areas annexed at the same level as was provided to the original Town's residents.

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

Socio-Economic Characteristics

Population

Chincoteague's population has remained steady over the years, with a small decline from 1950 to 1970, and a minor increase by only 17 people (0.004%) between 1970 and 1980. The Island experienced its first significant population gain in 30 years between 1980 and 1990, when it grew by 5% as a result of the 1989 annexation of the entire Island. This period of growth was continued between 1990 and 2000 with a 21% increase in population. Between 2000 and 2010 Census counts, the population of Chincoteague declined 32% from 4,324 to 2,941 people. The recent decline is attributed to the conversion of permanent residences to investment properties/seasonal rentals and difficulty in completion of census surveys in our 'hard to count' community. The Town of Chincoteague and Accomack County revised the permanent resident population estimate to over 3,600 people for the purpose of redistricting with approval by the U.S. Justice Department in 2011. The American Community Survey (ACS) 2013-2017 estimates relatively stable population numbers for the period (Reference R-01). Note that projections in this study are based on the 2010 Census population of 2,941 people.

Race

The Island's predominant race is Caucasian, comprising 91% of the population. The remaining 9% represents a mix of African American, Asian, American Indian, mixed and other races. The distribution of races in the population has changed slightly since 2010. Note that variations between the 2010 Census counts and 2017 ACS estimates are within the margins of error.

Age and Sex

Data from the 2017 ACS estimates the median age of the total population had increased slightly from 52 years to 54.4 years from 2010 to 2017. 28.7% of the population is 65 or older.

Chincoteague's median age is significantly older than the median age of Accomack County's population (45.4 years) and 14 years older than the median age of the State's population (37.8 years).

The percentage of females (53.7%) in Chincoteague continues to outnumber the percentage of males (46.3%). The median age of females is slightly older (55.2 years) than the median age of the population and the median age of males is slightly younger (53.7 years).

Households and Families

2010 Census data on household characteristics showed that virtually all (99.5%) of the Island's population lives in households. Chincoteague's average household size was 2.06 persons. The average household size in 2000 was 2.08 persons, indicating a slight decrease in household size between 2000 and 2010. There were 1,417 households on the Island; 61% of them are family households. Of the remaining non-family households, 38.8% were householders living alone. Average family size decreased slightly between 2000 and 2010 from 2.63 persons to 2.58 persons.

2017 ACS data estimates an average household size of 2.02 persons, a slight decrease from 2010 Census data. Estimated total number of households increased to 1,423 with 68.7% as family households with 31.3% were householders living alone. 18.1% are estimated to be occupied by a householder 65 years and over living alone. The average family size estimate of 2.49 is slightly less than that of the 2010 Census data.

Housing Units

The 2017 ACS estimates there are 4,304 housing units on the Island. Of those occupied by households (approximately 1423 units), 74.6 % are 1-unit structures, 5.6% 2-or-more-unit structures, and 19.8% mobile homes or other types of structures. The remaining unoccupied units are second homes, seasonal rental homes, hotel / motel units, rental cabins, campground sites, and other units.

Workforce

Estimates provided by 2017 ACS indicate approximately 57% of the 16 and over population is in the workforce. The unemployment rate is about 6.4%. Of those employed:

- 33% in management, business, science, and the arts
- 32% in sales and office occupations
- 18% in service occupations
- 9% in production and transportation
- 8% in natural resources, construction, and maintenance
- 1% serve in the military

An estimated 87% of the workforce did so within Accomack County. 80.6% commuted to work alone, 9% in carpools, 4% by bicycle, 2% walked to work, and 4% worked at home.

Median household income is \$48,800 with mean earnings of \$59,400 and mean retirement income of \$25,300.

Natural Features

Climate

The average annual temperature in Chincoteague is 56.2 degF. The warm season begins mid-May and ends early October. The highest average monthly temperature occurs in July at 83.4 degF. The coldest month is January, with an average low of 27.4 degF.

Annual total precipitation is 39.9 inches and falls at a rate of about 3 inches per month throughout the year. Average annual snowfall is 8.8 inches, mostly falling during January and February.

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

Surface winds are highly variable and frequent. Winds are predominately from the south or southeast in the summer, and westerly or northwesterly in the winter. The average wind velocity is 9 to 10 mph in the summer (early-May to early October) and 11 to 13 mph in winter.

At Norfolk, the nearest source of such information, the annual mean number of clear days averages 109, with 103 partially cloudy days, and 153 cloudy days. The average percent of possible sunshine is 63%. The brightest period is from mid-April to mid-August. Early-November to early-February is the darkest period.

Two general types of storms affect the area: hurricanes and northeasters. On average, once a year, a tropical storm of hurricane force passes within 250 miles of Chincoteague. Hurricanes are a threat from May through November. Nearly 80% occur in the months of August, September,

and October. About 40% occur in September alone. Hurricanes cause damage from winds and tidal surge. If the storm hits during high tide, a higher surge will occur. If the tide is ebbing, however, flooding will be less. This vertical range of tidal change represents a storage pool.

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

Consult References R-02 and R-03 for additional details.

Geology

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

Between 2,000 and 4,000 years ago, scientists believe Assateague Island joined the north end of Chincoteague Island. An Inlet formed, separating the two islands, and continued sand deposits caused a spit to build southward from the Assateague side of the Chincoteague-Assateague Inlet. This spit grew and eventually formed a south neck. This neck grew between Chincoteague Island and the sea, located around today's Assateague Channel and continues to provide barrier island protection for the Town. Its successor, Tom's Cove Hook, is following a much similar pattern as the one that formed Chincoteague Island (see Exhibit 1-1).

Large-scale weather events, as well as, natural and man-made changes to Assateague Island and the Wallops Island coast contribute to changes in the southern portion of Chincoteague Island.

Physiography

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

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

Chincoteague, Virginia Comprehensive Plan 2010 – 2020
Revision

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

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

Fast-land Soils

Exhibit 1-3 identifies five basic soil complexes on Chincoteague Island. As can be seen from Exhibit 1-3, very poorly drained Bohicket tidal marsh soils surround much of the upland and extend inland in the drainage ways between the upland areas. These soils characteristically are very compressible, consolidate under a load, have high water content, and are poorly drained. As a result, these areas are unsuited for development.

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

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

Ground Water

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

Chincoteague, Virginia Comprehensive Plan 2010 – 2020
Revision

The source of the Town of Chincoteague's drinking water is high quality ground water from the Columbia, Upper and Middle Yorktown-Eastover Aquifers. All of the Town's wells are located on land owned by the Town of Chincoteague or within a perpetual easement located on NASA property. Raw water is pumped from the mainland to Chincoteague Island for treatment, storage and distribution. The Town's water supply is regulated by the Virginia State Water Control Board, an approved Water Supply Plan (Reference R-05), and a Source Water Protection Plan (Reference R-06).

Ten separate well fields serve the pumping station. Depths vary from 63 to 256 feet. While the danger of contamination of these wells is considered minimal, vigilant monitoring of activities on land near the wells is critical. To maintain a supply of quality water for the future, the Town is pursuing development of additional well capacity on the mainland, adjacent to Route 175. The Town also must ensure that future activities, on or around the Wallops Flight Facility's property, do not pose a danger to the wells.

Based on the Accomack County Regional Water Supply Plan (Reference R-07), data indicates that the Town of Chincoteague is one of several public water systems in Accomack County. The combined public water systems account for approximately 20% of permitted groundwater withdrawals in 2013. The Town of Chincoteague's permitted use accounts for approximately half of the community water systems or 8% of total County permitted groundwater withdrawal.

Coastal Floodplain

Chincoteague Island is subject to periodic flooding and storm water drainage limitations due to its unique location and topography. The entire Town has been mapped within a special flood hazard district based on the National Flood Insurance Program that estimates the extent of a 100 year storm event and a base flood elevation. A new coastal flood hazard study has been prepared by FEMA Region 3 that updated the Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) information as of May 18, 2015 (see Exhibit 1-4).

The 2015 FIRM removed 0.6 square miles from the Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA), which removed 1,167 buildings from the SFHA, such that they are no longer required to have insurance if they are under a mortgage. Previously all properties were at the Base Flood Elevation (BFE) of 7, 8 or 9 feet, but the new FIRM has the majority of the commercial and most densely populated area at 4 feet BFE, with the highest BFE now at 6 feet BFE. Base Flood Elevation is the elevation of surface water resulting from a flood that has a 1% chance of equaling or exceeding that level in any given year. The FIRM does not take into account any changes in relative sea-level rise or increases in storm frequency (see Reference R-08).

According to the Virginia Institute of Marine Sciences (VIMS), historic rates of sea-level rise were always estimated at approximately one foot per century. Sea level has been rising since the last Ice Age, but modern rates of sea-level rise are estimated to be 1.5 to 3 times the historic rate. This is supported by trends in sea-levels collected by the NOAA certified Wachapreague Tidal Gauge Data (Figure 1-1)

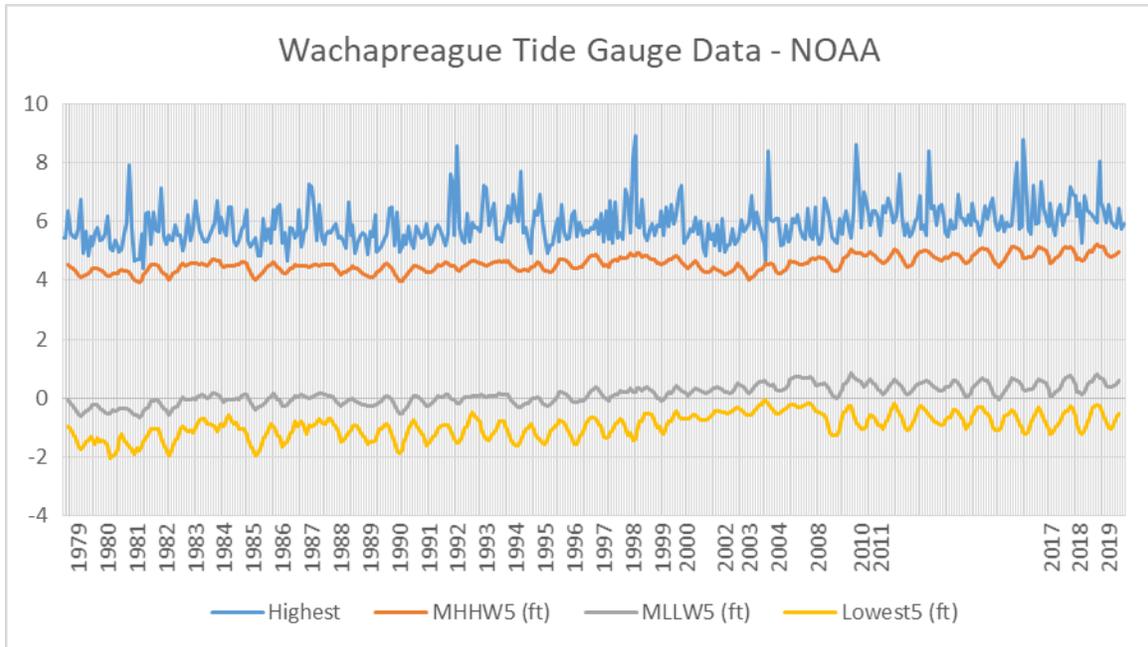


Figure 1-1: Wachapreague Tidal Gauge Data (Source: NOAA)

Tree Cover

Natural area tree cover, in particular the stands of mature Loblolly Pine, has become an important part of the community image and identity. Many of the forested areas of the Island have grown up since the 1962 storm and are experiencing stress from age, saltwater flooding, pine bark beetle and wind damage. In 2011, aside from woody wetlands (22%) and herbaceous wetlands (34%), approximately 3% was evergreen forest. However, stands or single trees are common in developed areas. Exhibit 1-5 shows land cover (Reference R-08). The loss of over 500 mature trees during Hurricane Sandy highlighted the need to plan for trees that help to stabilize the soil, minimize and reduce stormwater flows, balance the water table, improve air and water quality, and provide shade and shelter for our residents. Each year a significant number of trees are lost due to pine park beetle damage with limited and costly options for control and disposal of the trees. It is anticipated that this problem will continue to be a concern for Chincoteague Island.

Surface Water

Freshwater from rain falling on Chincoteague generally drains in a north-south direction over the low glades between the higher sand dune ridges. Since the Island is so flat, open and clear drainage ways are critical. Filling of ditches, important to the Island's drainage, should not occur. This kind of activity is controlled by ordinance (10)a, Section 22-62 of the town code (Reference R-09). Proper management of surface water runoff by property owners is also a concern. An ordinance amendment was approved in 2019 to address this aspect of drainage..

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

Marshlands

Exhibit 1-6 displays the estuarine, marine, and freshwater wetlands on and about the island. All the marshes have high value for wildlife and wildfowl and are closely associated with fish spawning and nursery areas. They also help to prevent erosion, are important to the shellfish industry, and help keep the shoreline stable. The marshlands are an important element adding to the resiliency of the Island.

Drainage

Due to the low elevation of the Island, proper drainage requires constant attention. Storm water drainage is always a problem, especially during periods of heavy rainfall. Most of the uplands soils on the Island are sandy and tend to absorb water quickly. However, the Island is within 3-10 feet of sea level and the soil becomes easily saturated. As a result, ponding occurs in low-lying areas. Often water must await lower tides to flow from the drainage ditches on the Island into the surrounding water. Exhibits 1-7 and 1-8 show the major drainage paths.



The increased frequency and severity of storm events has resulted in larger volumes and higher accumulation rates. Maintenance and an increase of existing drainage capacity has become more imperative to both the Town and property owners in order to maintain the resiliency of the Island.

Current Land Use

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

Recent land use data for the area of the Island incorporated in 1989 reveals that exclusive of tidal waters (33.2 square miles), 14% of the area is devoted to residential development, 5% to commercial enterprises, 35% to public and semi-public uses, with 47% remaining vacant.

Exhibit 1-9 shows current land use on the entire Island. As the map shows, what little industrial activity there remains in Town is on the waterfront side of North and South Main Street within 5 or 6 blocks from Bridge Street.

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

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

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

With the increasing importance of tourism, any population increase will more likely be temporary; seasonal residents attracted to the Island's summer job market, weather, or cultural atmosphere. Further, new dwellings may take the form of manufactured homes, may be conversions of existing homes to apartments, or may be new apartments or townhouse type structures of higher density than existing homes on the Island. The 1980-1990 decade saw a dramatic increase of new homes in Town.

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

Vacant Land / Open Space

At present, some of the vacant land in Town serves to drain storm water and functions to direct and contain flood waters. Current "wetlands" are regulated by various government agencies. Where large tracts of vacant land remain, the Town may consider Innovative-zoning techniques that encourage development designed in response to storm water drainage, "wetlands", or other local environmental factors. Currently the Town, the School Board and several local residents own large tracts of land. It is critical that future development criteria, particularly in the larger

tracts or where higher than normal density is proposed, adequately address the issues of wastewater, drainage, and floodplain management.

With the adoption of the 2015 FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps, some areas of higher elevation are no longer mapped within the regulatory floodplain. Preservation of open space and maintenance of drainage ways are important tools to manage flood risks.

Resiliency

Resiliency is defined as the capacity to maintain or regain functionality and vitality in the face of natural, climate-induced, or man-made stressors and disturbances. In the short term, resiliency strategies provide communities with tools for bouncing back more quickly from extreme weather or other high-impact events. For the long term, resiliency planning provides communities with the ability to adapt and thrive despite changing environmental, social, and economic conditions.

To assist in the development of short-term goals, results from the Resilience Adaptation Feasibility Tool (RAFT) were utilized. The RAFT Scorecard was completed by an independent Core Team and provides a comprehensive assessment of the Town's resilience in five different categories. An Implementation Team from the Town interacts on an on-going basis with the Core Team which provides technical and funding source assistance to localities. The Town of Chincoteague received the second highest score of all localities evaluated on the VA Eastern Shore. Accomack County received the highest score.

The Town of Chincoteague RAFT Implementation Team had identified six main areas to be considered in the 2020 Update of the Comprehensive Plan. They are:

- Shoreline Management- comprehensive evaluation & recommended solutions
- Wastewater Management – find a discharge solution
- Stormwater Management- improve capacity within Town
- Access to Island - flooding of evacuation route
- Communications – effectively distribute information
- Comprehensive Plan Update – actions the Town can implement

For long term resiliency planning, the Town will work with the Eastern Shore of Virginia Climate Adaptation Working Group (CAWG) which coordinates efforts among local, state, and federal representatives of government, aquaculture, agriculture, and community organizations to better plan and mitigate risks associated with climate change and sea level rise. CAWG's mission is to provide educational outreach and develop planning tools to assist local governments and residents. Accomack- Northampton Planning District Commission (A-NPDC) assumed leadership of CAWG in 2012.

Revisions incorporated in this plan utilized goals, assessments, and implementation strategies recommended by the government, commercial, and private sectors. While many medium and

long options are available (Figure 1-2), each planning district plans for and develops implementation strategies within its ability to adapt.

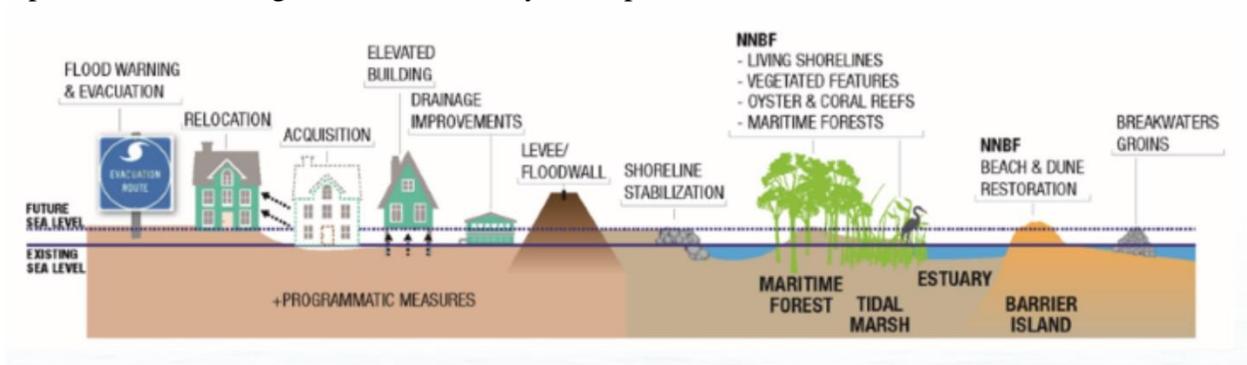


Figure 1-2: Resilient Coastal Solutions (Source USACE)

Exhibits and Their Use

To facilitate their use in the Comprehensive Plan, exhibits are located at the end of the chapter in which they first occur. The resolution of these images are constrained by page size but do provide the user insight into their content.

On-line references are provided whenever available to both document the source and provide a path for the user to view higher resolution and/or updated images.

Exhibit 1-1: USGS TOPOS Map - Chincoteague Island



Exhibit 1-2: Shoreline Conditions

Riparian Land Use / Land Cover

Source: CCRM Accomack County Comprehensive Map Viewer

http://cmap2.vims.edu/CCRMP/Accomack2016/Accomack_CCRMP_Viewer.html



January 28, 2019

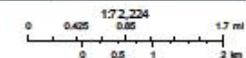
Virginia
Administrative
Boundaries -
Cities/Counties

**Riparian Land
Use/Land Cover**
Agriculture
Bare

Commercial
Forested
Government /
Military

Grass
Industrial
Paved
Residential

Scrub-shrub /
Timbered



Center for Coastal Resources Management,
Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Gloucester
Point, Virginia
Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar

Created from the Accomack County 2018
Comprehensive Map Viewer

Exhibit 1-3: Soils - Chincoteague Island

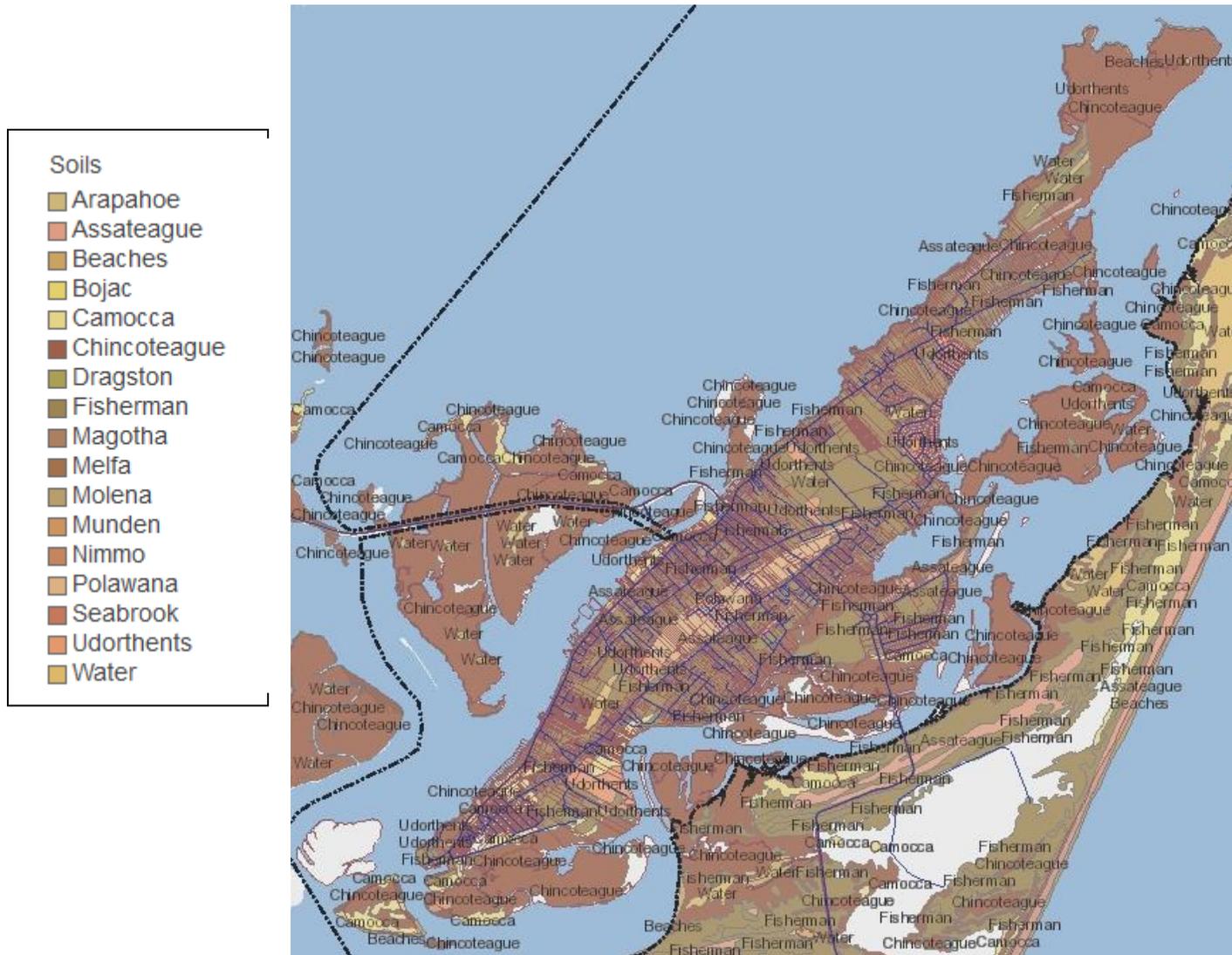


Exhibit 1-4: FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) 2015

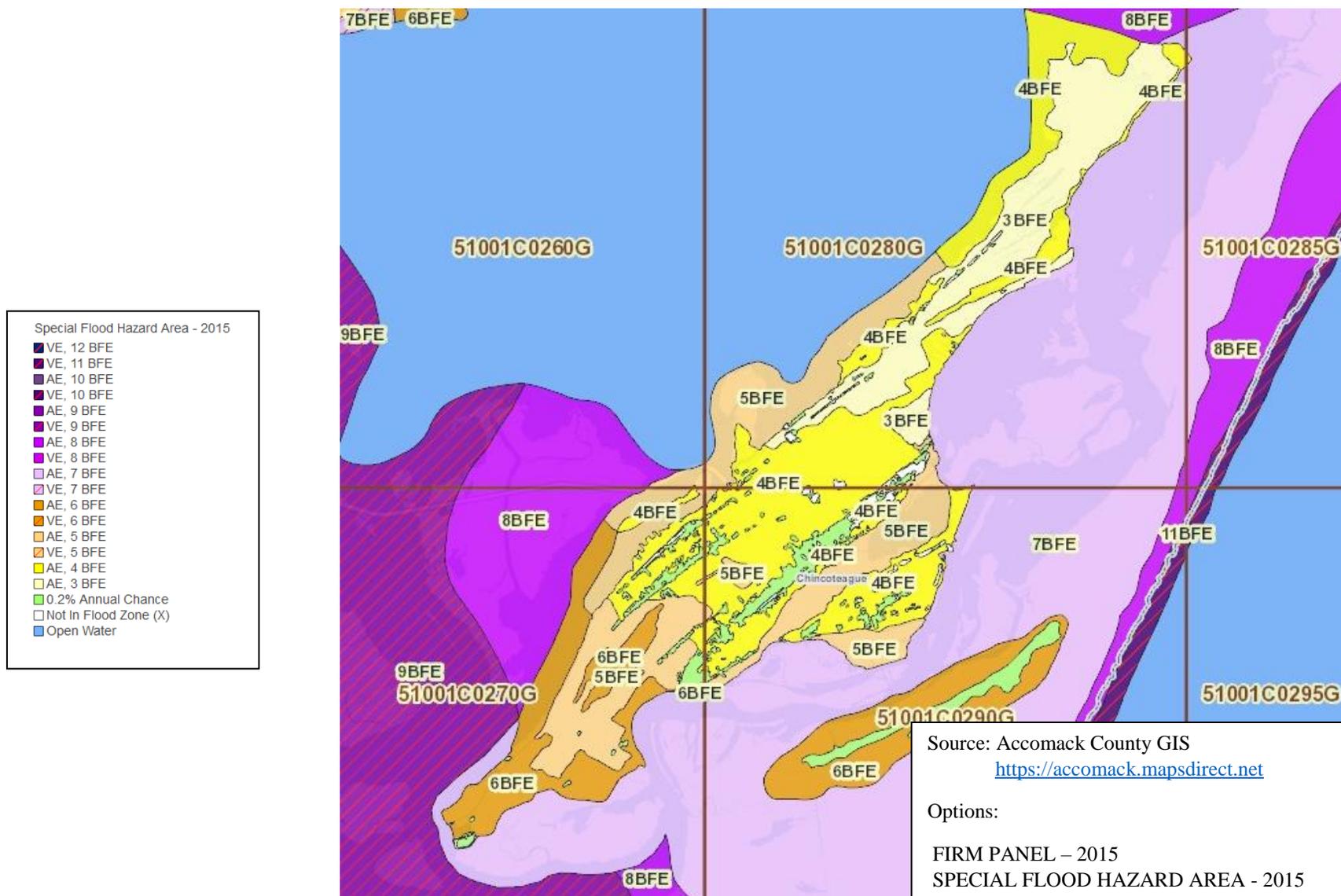


Exhibit 1-5: Land Cover - 2011

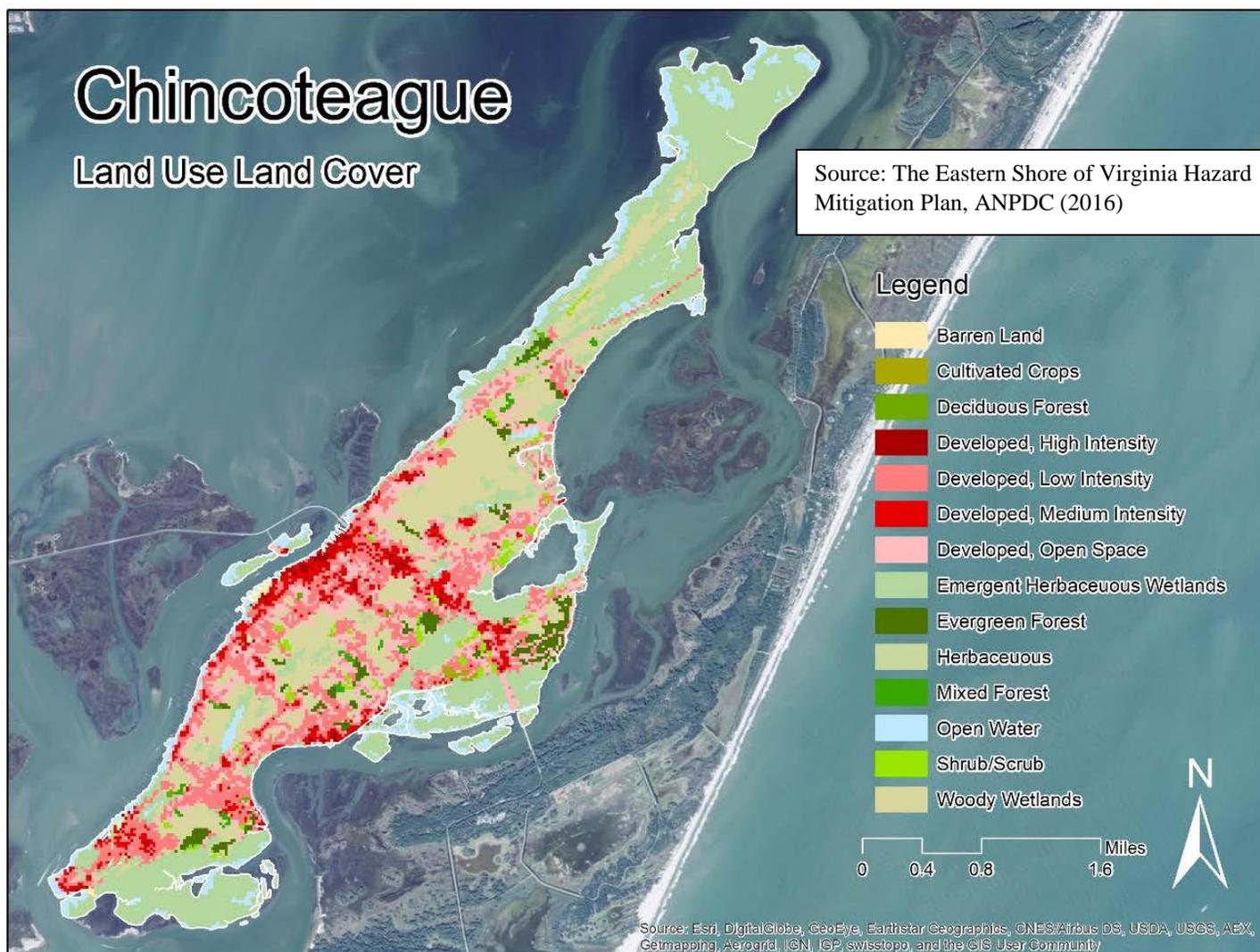


Exhibit 1-6: Tidal and Non-Tidal Wetland Marshlands

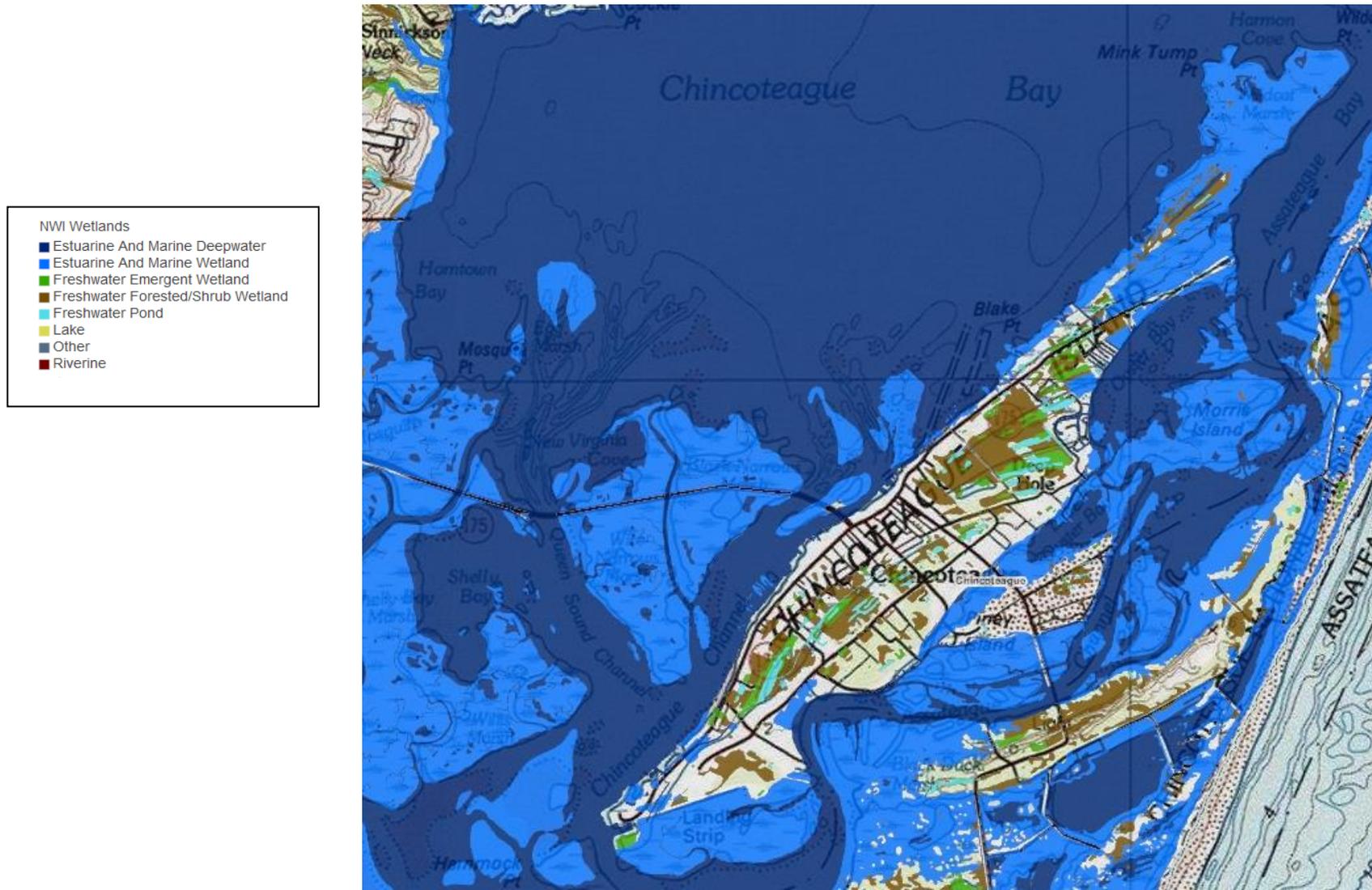


Exhibit 1-7: NHD Drainage Flows - North Island

Source: Virginia Flood Risk Information System (VFRIS)
<http://cmap2.vims.edu/VaFloodRisk/vfris2.html>

Options: NHD FLOW DIRECTION

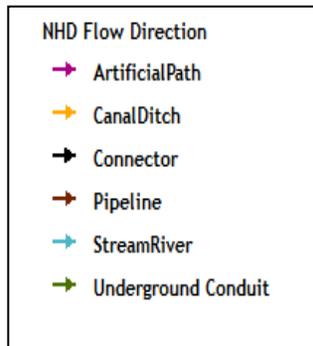
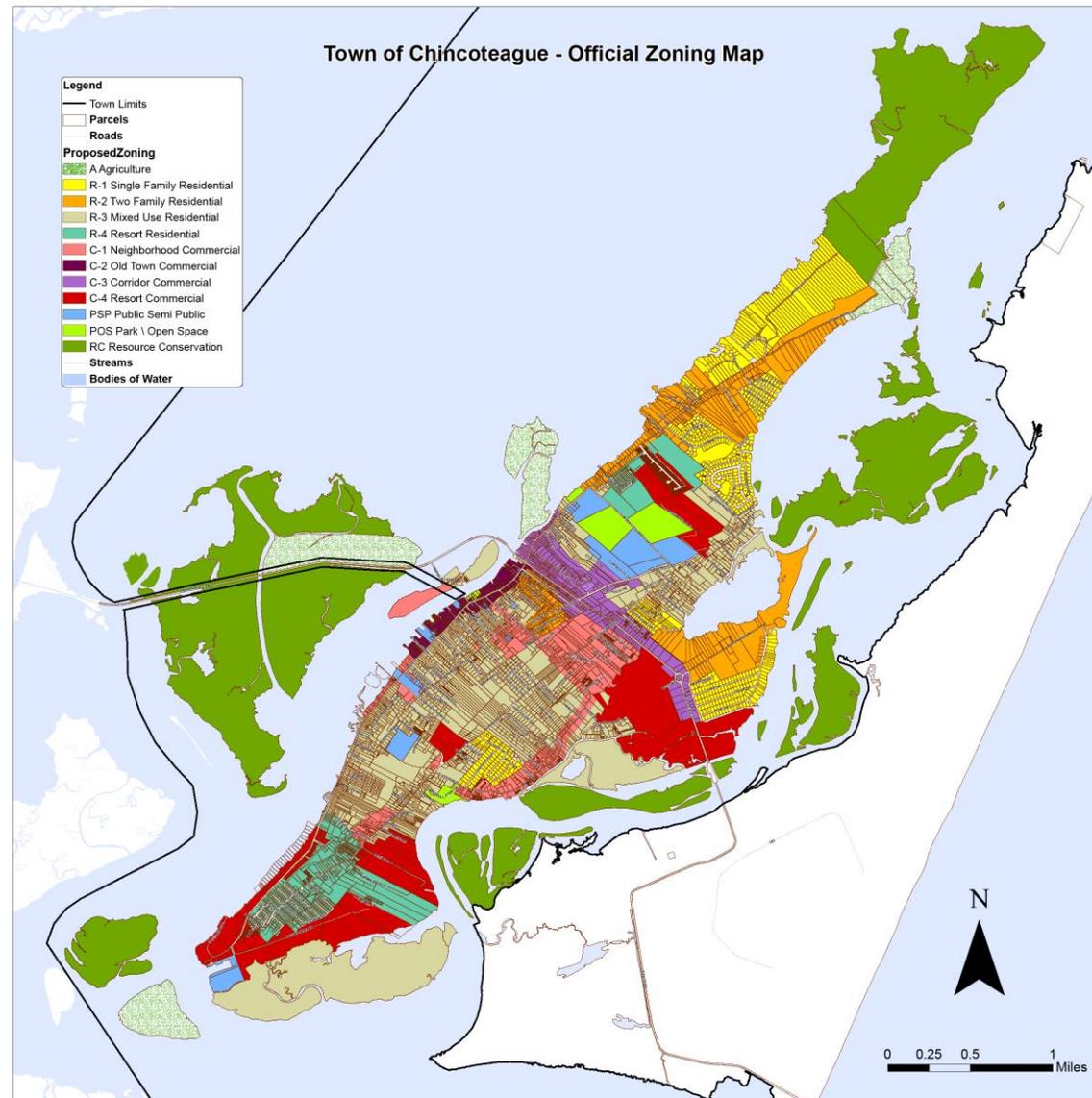


Exhibit 1-8: NHD Drainage Flows - South Island



Exhibit 1-9: Land Use Map



Chapter 2 GOALS & OBJECTIVES

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

The 5 year review is an opportunity to evaluate the goals and objectives established in the Comprehensive Plan adopted in 2010 with updates incorporated in 2015 and possibly revise them to meet new conditions. Significant changes which have occurred since the most recent adoption of the plan include:

- ✓ United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) management changes in the 20 year Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge
- ✓ National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) /commercial launches from Wallops Spaceport increasing tourism events throughout the year
- ✓ Route 175 bridge realignment created a new commercial ‘main street’ along Maddox Boulevard and Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) funds revitalization improvements to the traditional downtown
- ✓ A stabilized national economic recession had impacted the real estate development market and forced a reduction in property values
- ✓ 2010 Census confirms a decrease in year round population and conversion to second homes and seasonal rental property
- ✓ Increased tourist visitation and related economic activity
- ✓ Changing occupation ratios of Town residents
- ✓ Increased year-round business travel visitation associated with Wallops Island and related economic activity

Comprehensive Plan Goals

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

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

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

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

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

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

- ❖ **Environmental Goal:** Conserve important natural and sensitive environmental resource areas which protect the Island from storm events and which serve as the basis for the Town’s economy and visitation to the area. Continue to improve resilience to flooding and other coastal storm hazards while remaining economically and socially viable

- ❖ **Resiliency Goal:** Enhance the capacity to maintain or regain functionality and vitality in the face of natural, climate-induced, or man-made stressors and disturbances.

Land Use Objectives

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

2. Promote development in underutilized commercial zones; redevelopment and infill of existing commercial areas.

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

4. Ensure that buildings and related site improvements for private development are well designed and compatible with surrounding properties and districts.
5. Support a range of housing options to serve the long term needs of the Town.
6. Encourage preservation of open space and environmentally responsible development.
7. Ensure that new and existing commercial developments are attractive in appearance.
8. Promote small to medium scale commercial and office developments.
9. Maintain and enhance the character of existing commercial areas.
10. Further facilitate the revitalization of the Old Town commercial district and its waterfront as a center for commerce.
11. Enhance the commercial corridor of Maddox Boulevard to better serve the tourist trade.
12. Create an attractive street environment, which will compliment private and public properties and be comfortable for residents and visitors.
13. Encourage site design, which preserves scenic vistas.
14. Enhance the future resiliency of the Town.

Economic Development Objectives

1. Enhance the image of the community and create a vital and attractive environment for businesses, residents, and visitors that is reasonably balanced with the need for economic development to assure the town's economic prosperity.
2. Promote and support tourism, which is Chincoteague's primary economic engine.
3. Encourage economically viable marine uses to meet the needs of waterborne commerce and recreation tourism.
4. Provide for a broad range of convenient shopping venues.
5. Support the seafood industry and promote aquaculture.
6. Continue to implement the Chincoteague Downtown Revitalization Plan and the Maddox Boulevard Multi-Modal Transportation Enhancement plan to improve the Island's economic climate for investment and reinvestment.

7. Work to achieve a year-round economy for Chincoteague to ensure economic longevity.
8. Assist in promoting post-secondary school educational opportunities.

Community Facilities & Services Objectives

1. Ensure adequate public facilities and services that meet the needs of residents and visitors.
2. Ensure adequate safe water capacity.
3. Complete mapping of Island drainage systems and flows.
4. Maintain beautiful and functional outdoor public places, which provide a shared sense of belonging for Chincoteague residents, business owners, property owners, and visitors.
5. Provide opportunities for public access and recreational enjoyment of the shoreline.

Transportation Objectives

1. Provide a safe and connected system of pedestrian and bicycle pathways.
2. Pursue opportunities for additional public parking to serve the Old Town and Maddox Boulevard commercial districts.
3. Provide safe, efficient, reliable transportation for many modes of transportation.
4. Enhance public transportation opportunities by continuing to improve the Pony Express trolley service, and to encourage the addition of a private taxi service.
5. Encourage private investment to upgrade and convert significant private roads to meet public street standards so that they may be added to the VDOT street inventory for maintenance.
6. Improve standards for maintenance of the private road network.
7. Ensure adequacy of evacuation routes.
8. Enhance drainage of primary roadways.

Housing/Neighborhood Objectives

1. Encourage a variety of home types and sizes in new development or re-development projects in order to provide housing for people of all socioeconomic backgrounds.
2. Encourage programs to proactively provide accessible and affordable housing for the regional work force, including working with Accomack County and other regional housing entities.
3. Develop policies that support flexible housing arrangements for extended family living, where appropriate.
4. Create policies that facilitate continued occupancy of personal homes by elderly residents, who may need “in-home” care.
5. Encourage housing rehabilitation, redevelopment, infill, and improvement programs for selected areas or neighborhoods.
6. Continue to improve housing conditions by using all available means to ensure decent, safe, and sanitary housing.

Environmental Objectives

1. Adopt shoreline management policies consistent with State Code where practical, and actively promote the use of other structural options when necessary to support working waterfronts and storm damage protection of property.
2. Prepare and implement a general landscape planting guide for Chincoteague Island which encourages planting of trees and shrubs to replace those lost due to storm damage utilizing native species.
3. Continue a partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers and the US Coast Guard to maintain navigable channels surrounding Chincoteague Island and connecting to the Atlantic Ocean.
4. Continue a cooperative working relationship with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service and others to provide convenient public access and recreational use of the Assateague National Seashore for Virginia residents and regional visitors.

Resiliency Objectives

1. Develop and implement a proactive plan for the community to defend from and adapt to long term changes in climate and storm impacts, flooding, water table, vegetation and other environmental factors.
2. Implement a wastewater management plan through a phased implementation.
3. Implement drainage management strategies to enhance overall drainage capacity.
4. Reduce the vulnerability of evacuation route and collector roads to storm water and tidal surge inundation.
5. Perform a comprehensive review of shoreline management to identify information gaps and potential projects to help protect the Island.
6. Encourage increased use of natural and nature-based features to increase coastal resilience.
7. Support the establishment of resiliency goals, strategies, and implementations to assist businesses with resiliency planning.
8. Identify critical infrastructure elements, assess their vulnerability, and enhance their resiliency.

Chapter 3 Land Use Plan

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

“Land Use Planning Areas” include the following:

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



Land Use Planning Areas

The Town of Chincoteague is divided into twelve (12) Land Use Planning Areas (See Exhibit 3-1). The Land Use Plan identifies a broad goal and purpose for each specific Planning Area as well as objectives and implementation strategies to advance the community's goals and objectives.

R-1: Single Family Residential Planning Area

Description of Zone R-1 from the Code of the Town of Chincoteague (Reference R-09):

Statement of intent. This district is composed of certain quiet, low-density residential areas plus certain open areas where similar residential development appears likely to occur.

The regulations for this district are designed to stabilize and protect the essential characteristics of the district, to promote and encourage a suitable environment for family life where there are children and to prohibit most activities of a commercial nature. To these ends, development is limited to relatively low concentration of single-unit dwellings providing homes for the residents, as well as commercial activities conducted in such a manner as to not disturb the peace and harmony of the district. This district requires that public streets, utilities and drainage be installed prior to approval.

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



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

The purpose of the Planning Area is to provide for single-family detached residences and supporting uses. The Planning Area is located in portions of Chincoteague where single-family

residential development patterns are generally established and where services and facilities will be adequate for anticipated population.

The Planning Area is intended to provide for the minor infill of existing neighborhoods, consistent with the existing low density residential character of the area. The Planning Area includes some vacant or larger properties that could be candidate sites for infill

and/or redevelopment projects. When infill development occurs it should be consistent with prevalent lot development patterns. Zoning for this area should maintain single-family residential and strictly limit non-residential uses. Density should be maintained in accordance with historic lotting patterns. Mobile homes and double-wide manufactured housing are not considered appropriate for the Planning Area.

Implementation Strategies

- Apply the existing R-1 Residential zoning to this Planning Area.
- Zoning provisions for this Planning Area should limit each lot to one principal use.
- Improve the quality of local streets and pedestrian systems serving residential neighborhoods, where necessary.
- Limit permitted residential uses to detached single family units.
- Limit new non-residential uses to low intensity home occupations.

R-2: One & Two Family Residential Planning Area

Description of Zone R-2 from the Code of the Town of Chincoteague (Reference R-09):

Statement of intent. This district is composed of the basic components of the R-1 single family residential district, maintaining the same essential characteristics of that district but with a mix of community facilities and home occupations.

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

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

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

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

Implementation Strategies

- Apply the existing R-2 Residential zoning to properties in the Planning Area.
- Amend zoning provisions for this Planning Area to limit each lot to one principal use.
- Improve the quality of local streets and pedestrian systems serving residential neighborhoods, where necessary.
- Permit existing non-residential uses to continue but not expand.
- Strictly limit new non-residential uses to low intensity home occupations.

R-3: Mixed Use Residential Planning Area

Description of Zone R-3 from the Code of the Town of Chincoteague (Reference R-09):

Statement of intent. This district is composed of certain medium to high concentrations of residential uses, ordinarily located adjacent to commercial areas, and/or between residential and commercial areas, plus certain open space areas where similar development appears likely to occur. The regulations for this district are designed to stabilize and protect the essential characteristics of the district, to promote and encourage, insofar as compatible with the intensity of land use, a suitable environment for family life, and to permit, under certain conditions, certain neighborhood commercial uses of a character unlikely to develop extreme concentrations of traffic and crowds of customers, with the limitation of permitted outdoor advertising to only 6 sign types. The positive characteristics of residential neighborhoods shall be maintained while allowing for appropriate infill and redevelopment on vacant and under-utilized parcels. Specific building types will be permitted only by conditional use permit to assure neighborhood compatibility.

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

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

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

Implementation Strategies

- Apply the current R-3 Residential zoning to the Planning Area.
- Establish appropriate zoning provisions to ensure new multi-family and townhouse residential development is consistent with the surrounding area.

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

R-4: Resort Residential Planning Area

Description of Zone R-4 from the Code of the Town of Chincoteague (Reference R-09):

Statement of intent. This district is intended to encourage the continuation of seasonally and permanently occupied homes, and limited resort commercial use. These uses support

Chincoteague’s role as a visitor destination and improve the local economy. The regulations for this district are designed to stabilize and protect the essential characteristics of the district, to promote and encourage, insofar as compatible with the intensity of land use, a suitable environment for family life, and to permit, under certain conditions, certain limited commercial uses of a character unlikely to develop extreme concentrations of traffic and crowds of customers. To these ends, retail activity is limited and this district is protected against encroachment of general commercial and industrial uses. Most residential types of structures for both permanent and transient occupancy, including institutions, are permitted.

Some structures for commercial uses conforming to the pattern of the district and several low-impact commercial uses are allowed.

GOAL: Maintain and create desirable residential environments.

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

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

Implementation Strategies

- Apply the current R-4 Residential zoning to the Planning Area.
- Continue to permit resort recreation including, but not limited to, campgrounds, rental cottages, bed and breakfast, and tourist homes.
- Ensure interconnected streets that are designed to balance the needs of all users with sidewalks and on-street parking.
- Encourage open spaces that are integral to the community.

C-1: Neighborhood Commercial Planning Area

Description of Zone C-1 from the Code of the Town of Chincoteague (Reference R-09):

Statement of intent. The primary purpose of this district is to provide appropriate areas for retail commercial and service uses catering to year-round residents, while minimizing impacts to existing adjacent residential areas. This district is intended as the location for basic neighborhood, commercial, service and business uses and may also allow one and two family residential uses. Of the commercial districts, neighborhood commercial is designed to be a lower density with more open space type activities than other commercial districts.

The district recognizes the demand for a variety of land uses adjacent to the major traffic arteries which link the recreational facilities on Assateague Island to the mainland.

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

This area is located adjacent to major roadways in town such as Maddox Boulevard, South Main Street, and near the Assateague Channel.

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

Implementation Strategies

- Apply the current C-1 Commercial zoning to the Planning Area.

C-2: Old Town Commercial Planning Area

Description of Zone C-2 from the Code of the Town of Chincoteague (Reference R-09):

Statement of intent. Generally this district covers that portion of the community intended for the conduct of general business to which the public requires direct and frequent access, but which is not characterized either by constant heavy trucking other than stocking and delivery of light retail goods, or by any nuisance factors other than those occasioned by incidental light and noise of congregation of people and passenger vehicles. This includes such uses as retail stores, banks, restaurants and taverns, and garages and service stations.

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

This zone contains elements of critical infrastructure in the Food, Health Care, Financial Services, Energy, Government Facilities, and Information Technology sectors.

Implementation Strategies

- Apply the current C-2 Commercial zoning to the Planning Area.
- Work with property owners to retain commercial services and retail uses in existing structures, thereby minimizing the conversion of structures to residential uses and enhancing the quality of the resident and tourist experience.
- Encourage economic development.
- Work with the local businesses and community groups in support of business growth and development in the downtown.
- Promote redevelopment or infill development in appropriate locations consistent with the Old Town Center’s unique assets, which include distinctive architecture and a pedestrian friendly environment.

- Broaden the range of uses, attractions, and activities that strengthen the Old Town Center’s identity as a unique visitor destination.
- Strengthen the identity, role, and marketing of the downtown business district as a viable year-round shopping area that provides a broad array of goods and services that cater to visitors and residents.
- Consider preparing building appearance and architectural design objectives and incentive-based processes to ensure that new construction, reconstruction, or infill development are appropriate to existing architectural patterns.
- Where possible, require sites that are redeveloped to provide a shoreline buffer and/or pedestrian promenade, when adjacent to Chincoteague Channel or Chincoteague Bay.
- Enhance tourist information and management by local organizations in the downtown.
- As appropriate, continue to improve the “Robert N. Reed Downtown Waterfront Park” facility and fishing pier to enhance downtown’s relationship to Chincoteague Bay and promote downtown visitation.
- Promote the Old Town Center as an arts district for theatre, music, and additional forms of outdoor entertainment.
- Explore opportunities to feature the works of both local and out-of-town performing and visual artists through use of a downtown building or structure to house a fine arts center.
- Explore needs for additional public restroom facilities in the downtown and identify appropriate locations for the construction and maintenance of such facilities to enhance the visitor experience.
- Improve the quality of local streets, public parking, and pedestrian systems, where possible.

C-3: Commercial Corridor Planning Area

Description of Zone C-3 from the Code of the Town of Chincoteague (Reference R-09):

Statement of intent. The primary purpose of this district is to establish and protect a district that will serve the tourist trade that is vital to the growth of Chincoteague. Two commercial districts have been combined, C-1 and C-2 to create a single district that encourages a context based design review process. Generally this district covers that portion of the community intended for the conduct of general business to which the public requires direct and frequent access, but which is not characterized either by constant heavy trucking other than stocking and delivery of light

retail goods, or by any nuisance factors other than those occasioned by incidental light and noise of congregation of people and passenger vehicles. It will also allow for some residential uses which are compatible with certain retailing operations. The district recognizes the demand for a variety of land uses adjacent to the major traffic arteries which link the recreational facilities on Assateague Island to the mainland.

GOAL: Enhance the Commercial Corridor of Maddox Boulevard.

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

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

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

The anticipated conversion of existing residential structures to commercial uses will present challenges for parking and traffic safety. Within this Planning Area, re-development, infill development, and structural additions will be permitted but should be sensitively designed to reflect a positive image of the community. The Town recognizes the potential for these properties to redevelop, especially if public sewer is added in the future.

This zone contains elements of critical infrastructure in the Food and Financial Services sectors.

Implementation Strategies

- Consider establishing building appearance and architectural design objectives for new construction, reconstruction, or infill development. Zoning may include “special infill and re-development” provisions that offer flexibility and enhance opportunities to secure improvements in the form of landscaping, sidewalk enhancements, public parking facilities, or other proffers that provide public benefit as a trade-off for approval.
- Explore needs for additional public restroom facilities in the Maddox Boulevard corridor and identify appropriate locations for the construction and maintenance of such facilities to enhance the visitor experience.
- Encourage landscaping for commercial and residential uses in the Town zoning code.

- Provide street furniture, trash cans, and seating areas in limited locations along the corridor to enhance pedestrian use.
- Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to enhance vehicular and pedestrian safety in the Maddox Boulevard corridor and seek State assistance to develop a “Corridor Management Plan” to identify opportunities to enhance access controls and assure the corridor can sustain adequate levels of service to accommodate projected future traffic volumes.
- Facilitate transit service in the corridor. Consider more off-street parking options especially for the businesses.
- Continue implementation of the Town’s bike and pedestrian plans.
- Establish Master Plan Community or mixed-use community provisions that permit redevelopment within this Planning Area. Other provisions of a zoning district should include standards for planned mixed-use developments as well as requirements for appropriate proffers.

C-4: Resort Commercial Planning Area

Description of Zone C-4 from the Code of the Town of Chincoteague (Reference R-09):

Statement of intent. The primary purpose of this district is to encourage the continuation of seasonally and permanently occupied homes, campground facilities, and resort commercial uses. These uses support Chincoteague’s role as a visitor destination and improve the local economy.

GOAL: Maintain and create desirable commercial environments.

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

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

should encourage well-planned mixed-use commercial developments that complement and enhance the quality of life for all Town residents.

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

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

Implementation Strategies

- Apply the current C-4 Commercial zoning to the Planning Area.
- Continue to permit recreational campgrounds and other facilities to support but not limited to seasonally occupied cabins, mobile homes, and recreational vehicle use.
- Adopt appropriate standards to ensure that any development or re-development activities minimize impacts to environmental resources and preserve or enhance drainage patterns.
- Establish Master Plan Community or Planned Unit Development (PUD) provisions that permit redevelopment of larger sites within this Planning Area. Other provisions of a zoning district should include standards for planned mixed-use developments as well as requirements for appropriate proffers.
- It is advised that when looking at the zoning of this land use area, the permitted uses follow what is currently permitted, as of the adoption of this plan, in the C-1 District, in addition to any other uses delineated in Chapter 3 of this Comprehensive Plan Update.

PSP: Public/Semi-public Planning Area

Description of Zone PSP from the Code of the Town of Chincoteague (Reference R-09): *Statement of intent.* The primary purpose of this district is to establish and protect a district that will provide an appropriate array of public facilities and services to meet the basic needs of the community. This includes public facilities and services that are available to all portions of the town. The district will not include any parcel that is in private individual ownership. Public land uses are defined as those uses, which are owned and controlled by a public body for use as a service to the general public. Public land uses comprise a variety of uses for the health, education, safety, and general wellbeing of the public such as town offices, post offices, or other government service buildings. Semi-public land uses are uses owned and controlled by a private or civic group for the purpose of aiding in the health, education, safety, or well-being of the general public or a specific segment of the public. Small-scale semi-public uses may be located in residential neighborhoods. Large-scale semi-public uses should be located in commercial districts.

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

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

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

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

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

This zone contains elements of critical infrastructure in the Government Facilities, Emergency Management System, Water Systems, and Communications sectors.

Implementation Strategies

- Require adequate public facilities be made available as a condition of approval for any proposed development.
- Set development review fees at a level that covers the actual cost of development review and approval processes.

POS: Park & Open Space Planning Area

Description of Zone POS from the Code of the Town of Chincoteague (Reference R-09): *Statement of intent.* The purpose of this district is to provide parks, recreational and open space areas for use by visitors and residents of the Town of Chincoteague. Parks and open spaces help to define neighborhoods, serve as natural drainage ways, and satisfy the aesthetic and recreational needs of the community.

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

Parks and open spaces provide a source of recreation as a focal point in neighborhoods. Recreation and open space areas help define neighborhoods, serve as natural drainage-ways, and satisfy the aesthetic needs of residents. The Assateague Island parks satisfy the need for a large natural park. Five Town parks along with several recreational facilities serve the community and visitors alike with more active forms of recreation and provide for water related activities.

RC: Resource Conservation Planning Area

Description of Zone RC from the Code of the Town of Chincoteague (Reference R-09): *Statement of intent.* The resource conservation district is established for the specific purpose of conserving essential lands and open spaces for the protection of natural resources and waters and the reduction of pollution, soil erosion, and hazards from floods, fires and storms. Uses within this district shall be limited to those conservation uses expressly permitted by right. Any proposal for the conversion of such lands to another use shall be evaluated for its impact on the town's existing resources and needs, and may be authorized only after reasonable and orderly zoning amendment process in accordance with the review procedures and standards specified in this ordinance.

GOAL: Conserve important natural and sensitive environmental resource areas.

This area includes extensive wetlands, off-shore islands, indigenous vegetation, and wildlife habitat. It also includes the primary drainage system for Chincoteague. Two of the Island's most renowned and renewable economic resources are supported by the Planning Area: 1) scenic beauty; and 2) seafood. Protecting these resources and the environments that enable them is a critical public purpose. The Town's intent is to conserve these areas and protect the island's environmental quality by minimizing impacts from adjacent development.

The purpose of this Planning Area is to delineate sensitive environmental areas, where the Town will regulate land uses to protect water quality in surrounding waters. Development standards should ensure development disturbances, which might adversely impact sensitive environmental features including both tidal and non-tidal wetlands and habitats of rare, threatened, or endangered species, are minimized to the maximum extent possible. The Planning Area is established to complement the purpose and objectives established by the National Park Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the Assateague Island National Seashore and the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge. This includes maintaining the protections afforded by barrier islands from storm events and protecting the diverse and unique ecology that serves as the basis for the Town's economy and visitation to the area.



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

Implementation Strategies

- Continue to protect these areas for the enjoyment of current and future generations.
- Consider increasing area within this district to include all saltwater marsh areas.

GOAL: Incorporate State guidance relative to Coastal Resource Management.

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

Implementation Strategies

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

A: Agriculture Planning Area

Description of Zone A from the Code of the Town of Chincoteague (Reference R-09):

Statement of intent. This district covers those portions of the town occupied by various open spaces, forests, farmlands, beaches and parks. The agricultural district is established for the specific purpose of promoting and encouraging the development of agricultural and forest lands for continuing agricultural operations, and for the purpose of conserving essential lands and open spaces for the protection of natural resources and waters and the reduction of pollution, soil erosion, and hazards from floods, fires and storms. Uses within this district shall be limited to those agricultural and conservation uses expressly permitted by right. Any proposal for the conversion of such lands to another use shall be evaluated for its impact on the town's existing resources and needs, and may be authorized only after reasonable and orderly process in accordance with the review procedures and standards specified in this ordinance.

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

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

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

Implementation Strategies

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

General Land Use Planning

This section discusses planning considerations that may be applicable to one or more planning areas.

Coastal Resource Management

Coastal ecosystems reside at the interface between the land and water, and are naturally very complex. They perform a vast array of functions by way of shoreline stabilization, improved water quality, and habitat for fishes; from which humans derive direct and indirect benefits. The Town of Chincoteague developed as a community in this setting and has managed its surrounding natural resources over the centuries.

There is great concern on the part of the Commonwealth that the continued armoring (Exhibit 3-2) of shorelines and construction (Exhibit 3-3) within the coastal area will threaten the long-term sustainability of coastal ecosystems under current and projected sea level rise. Locally, there is a concern that traditional practices are still necessary and appropriate in places to support other goals for working waterfronts, storm hazard mitigation, flood protection, and coastal resiliency of the Commonwealth's barrier island primary frontal dune/beach system. Local interest in the promotion and preservation of working waterfronts as a critical component of our resilient coastal communities could lead to a preference for "conventional" shoreline management practices.

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

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

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

This guidance, known as Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Guidance (Reference S-05), was prepared by VIMS. . It outlines where and what new shoreline best management practices should be considered where coastal modifications are necessary to reduce shoreline erosion and increase resilience of our coastal ecosystems. This guidance includes full spectrum of appropriate management options which can be used by local governments for site-specific application and consideration of the sustainability of shoreline resources. The guidance applies a decision-tree method using a resource based mapping database that will be updated from time to time, and a digital geographic information system model created by VIMS. For localities within the Tidewater region of Virginia, VIMS also created and maintains an interactive on-line portal to present the digital geographic information. The Island is addressed in the Accomack County Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Portal (Reference R-10).

GOAL: Apply State guidance relative to Coastal Resource Management where practical.

Shoreline management policies consistent with State Code will be adopted where practical, will also actively promote the use of other structural options which are necessary to support working waterfronts and storm damage protection of property, and will recognize the limitations of multiple small ownership parcels along the existing Town waterfront.

Implementation Strategies

- Refer to the guidance presented in the locality's Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Guidance (Reference S-05) to guide regulation and policy decisions regarding shoreline erosion control.
- Utilize VIMS Self-Guided Decision Tools for onsite review and subsequent selection of appropriate erosion control/shoreline best management practices: http://www.vims.edu/ccrm/ccrmp/bmp/decision_tools/index.php.
- Utilize VIMS Accomack County Comprehensive Coastal Resource Management Portal (Reference R-10) for digital geographic information with numerous layers addressing erosion control/shoreline best management practices: <http://www.vims.edu/ccrm/ccrmp/portals/accomack/index.php>.
- Utilize VIMS' CCRMP Shoreline Best Management Practices for management recommendations for tidal shorelines in the jurisdiction where applicable.
- Utilize VIMS/Coastal Zone Management/National Working Waterfronts Network resources for best management practices in working waterfront areas.

- Coordinate with Accomack County Wetlands Board to continue permitting traditional practices as the above Shoreline Best Management Practices become the recommended adaptation strategy for erosion control.
- Encourage staff training on decision making tools developed by the Center for Coastal Resources Management at VIMS, and participation in the development of guidance which will apply in the Town of Chincoteague.
- Follow and participate in the development of the state-wide General Permit being developed by Virginia Marine Resources Commission (VMRC).
- Ensure that local policies are consistent with the provisions of the permit, and continue to allow traditional options where necessary for working waterfronts.
- Evaluate and consider a town-wide general permit to expedite shoreline applications that request actions consistent with the VIMS guidance.
- Seek public outreach opportunities to educate citizens and stakeholders on new shoreline management strategies including Living Shorelines.
- Follow and participate in the development of integrated shoreline guidance under development by VMRC.
- Evaluate and consider a locality-wide regulatory structure that encourages a more integrated approach to shoreline management.
- Evaluate and consider cost-share opportunities for construction of living shorelines.

Resiliency

Land use is influenced by many factors. In addition to Coastal Resource Management discussed above, other factors of growing concern are drainage, recurrent flooding, and the resiliency of critical infrastructure, both government provided and commercial.

The Stormwater Master Plan Phase I was completed in May of 2011 (Reference R-18) identified drainage issues at the time and recommended future actions. While the Town has been proactive in resolving these drainage issues, additional effort may be required to

minimize the impact of future events. The Stormwater Master Plan states that “In addition to flooding caused by rainfall events, the Island is subject to tidal flooding. The tidal influence impacts all three of the Island’s primary watersheds. High tides can cause localized flooding even with the absence of additional rainfall. In the cases of extreme high tide, the drainage system will backflow and result in tidal flooding for more inland areas that are usually not directly impacted by tidal flooding. The problem is compounded when a heavy rainfall coincides with a prolonged high tide. The storm water runoff is prevented from draining through the already inadequate drainage system by the high tide elevation. The combination of heavy rain and high tides can result in prolonged flooding even after the weather system has passed”. Phase II of the Plan outlined additional long-term actions still outstanding.

The US Department of Homeland Security defines 16 critical infrastructure sectors whose assets, systems, and networks, whether physical or virtual, are considered so vital that their incapacitation or destruction would have a debilitating effect on security, economic security, public health or safety, or any combination thereof. Identification of critical infrastructure elements, assessment of their resiliency, and consideration of future infrastructure enhancements should be considered.

GOAL: Enhance the future resiliency of the Town, particularly that of critical infrastructure, where practical.

Much has been done to enhance the resiliency of the Island, however the collection, assembly, and analysis of data reflecting current conditions would help to define and implement medium and long-term goals.

Implementation Strategies

- Perform an updated study and identification of the impacts of recurrent flooding and tidal surge events.
- Identify critical infrastructure elements, assess, and increase their resiliency.
- Perform a vulnerability and exposure analysis for general land use, infrastructure, and critical infrastructure.
- Consider designation of additional areas for special protection with zone PSP, POS or RC designation.
- Site future critical infrastructure outside of or in less vulnerable areas.
- Identify specific goals, objectives, and policies that will respond to identified impacts.

Exhibit 3-1: Zoning Map – Chincoteague Island

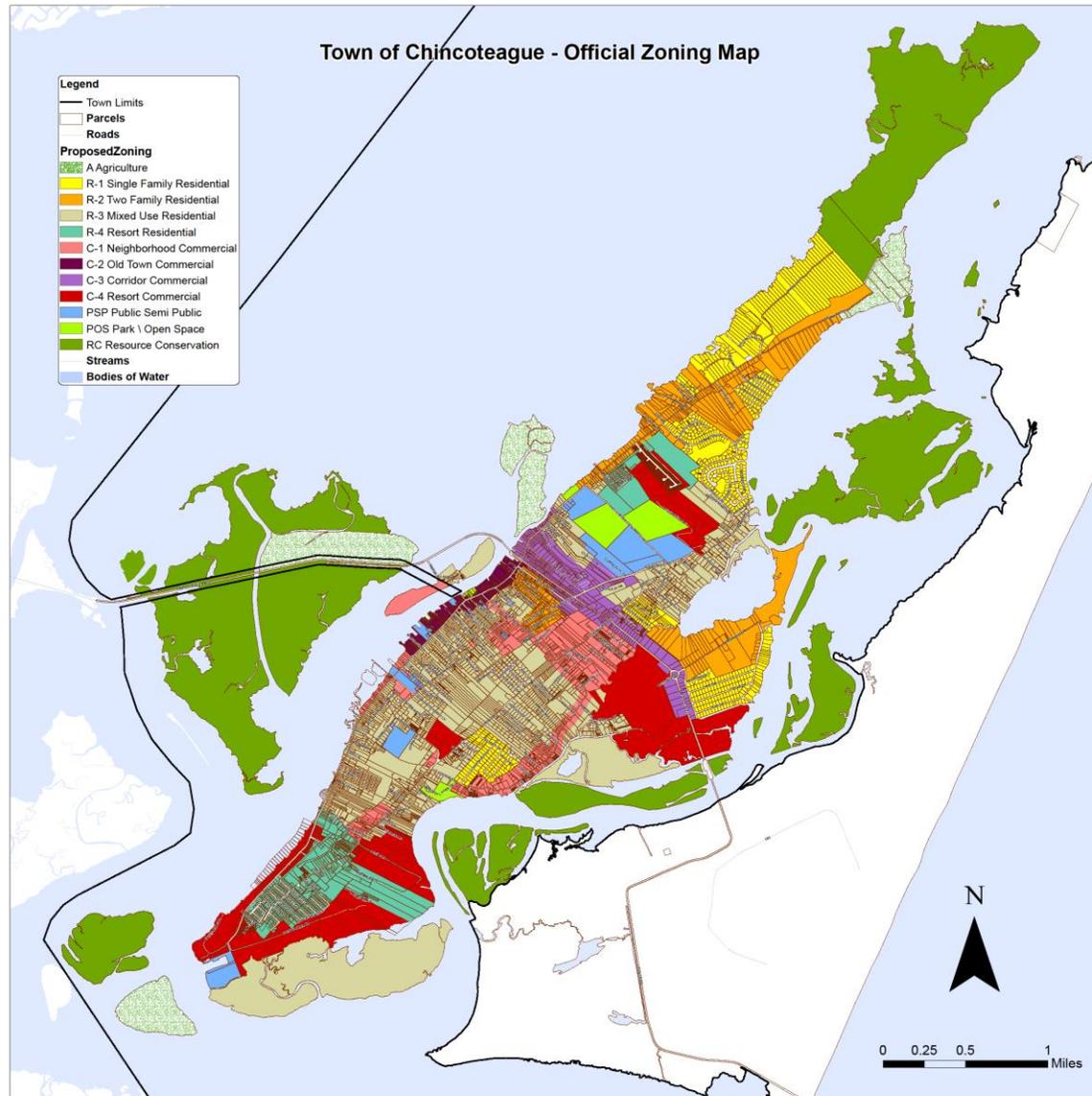


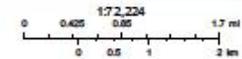
Exhibit 3-2: Shoreline Protection Structures

SHORELINE PROTECTION STRUCTURES



January 28, 2019

- | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|----------------|
| Virginia Administrative Boundaries - Cities/Counties | Shoreline Protection Structures Breakwater Bulkhead | Debris Dilapidated Bulkhead Groinfield | Jetty Marsh Toe Revetment Riprap | Unconventional |
|--|--|--|--|----------------|



Center for Coastal Resources Management,
 Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Gloucester
 Point, Virginia
 Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar

Created from the Accomack County 2016
 Comprehensive Map Viewer

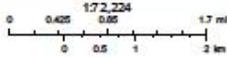
Exhibit 3-3: Shoreline Access Structures

SHORELINE ACCESS STRUCTURES



January 28, 2019

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| <p>□ Virginia Administrative Boundaries - Cities/Countries</p> | <p>Shoreline Access Structures</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Boathouse ● Dilapidated Dock | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dock ● Private Ramp ● Public Ramp |
|--|---|---|



Center for Coastal Resources Management,
 Virginia Institute of Marine Science, Gloucester
 Point, Virginia
 Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar

Created from the Accomack County 2018
 Comprehensive Map Viewer

Chapter 4 Economic Development

Chincoteague owes its economic fortune to its serene and fertile coastal landscape. Windswept beaches, quiet village life, and thriving waterways have made it one of Virginia’s premiere resort islands, world famous for its oyster beds and clam shoals. Its quaint setting has made it a favorite destination for two centuries of vacationing families. Today, it is the gateway to Assateague Island National Seashore and the Chincoteague Wildlife Refuge, welcoming over 1 million people a year to two national destinations.

Chincoteague shares the economic development goal of many other rural communities – to diversify and strengthen the local economy in a way that maintains our treasured local culture and increases year-round employment. New opportunities for economic development are now available to promote space tourism, Broadband access, and small businesses..

Background



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

The Island’s earliest settlers subsisted mostly by farming and raising cattle and sheep. Land was used for crops and grazing. This was the case until the early 1800s when oysters, which had always been a popular seafood, became fashionable as a gourmet delicacy and were increasingly sought by the large populations of the East Coast’s metropolitan areas. By the late-1800s seafood was the Island’s main source of income. The Chincoteague oyster was famous up and down the Atlantic seaboard. By the early 1900s, watermen were also catching clams, crabs and fish, expanding the local industry and the Island’s reputation as a seafood capital.

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

The most recent data available from the U.S. Census Bureau (see Reference R-01) provides a profile of Island commerce and resident employment. Data extracted from the Economic Census of the United States conducted every 10 years (Table 4-1) shows the highest sales receipt industries.

| Top Economic Segments Meaning of NAICS code | 2002 | | | | 2012 | | | |
|--|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|
| | Number of businesses | Revenue (\$1,000) | Annual payroll (\$1,000) | Number of employees | Number of businesses | Revenue (\$1,000) | Annual payroll (\$1,000) | Number of employees |
| Accommodation and food services | 46 | 24742 | 7336 | 511 | 49 | 31053 | 7819 | 469 |
| Retail trade | 36 | 25406 | 2592 | 147 | 31 | 33225 | 3122 | 141 |
| Real estate and rental and leasing | 8 | 3623 | 366 | 20 | 12 | 4181 | 507 | 25 |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation | 8 | 725 | 253 | 22 | 5 | D | D | D |
| Construction | N | N | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Health care and social assistance | 5 | 1496 | 587 | 35 | 8 | 2464 | 1096 | 35 |
| Professional, scientific, and technical services | 4 | D | D | D | 4 | D | D | D |
| Administrative and support | 4 | D | D | D | 3 | D | D | D |
| Educational Services | N | N | N | N | N | N | N | N |
| Other services (except public administration) | 7 | 1347 | 358 | 28 | 6 | 1509 | 349 | 19 |

D = Withheld, data considered proprietary

N = Not available or not comparable

Table 4-1: Highest Grossing Economic Segments - Chincoteague

Values indicate that economic activity was relatively stable through the ‘Great Recession’ of 2008. Other data suggest significant growth may be evident in the 2022 Economic Census.

Table 4-2 lists the most frequent occupation of town residents using data extracted from the 2013-2017 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.

| Top Occupational Segments Meaning of NAICS code | ACS 2013 - 2017 | |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------|
| | # of residents employed | % of those employed |
| Accommodation and food services | 262 | 19.8 |
| Retail trade | 236 | 17.9 |
| Real estate and rental and leasing | 5 | 0.4 |
| Arts, entertainment, and recreation | 13 | 1.0 |
| Construction | 88 | 6.6 |
| Health care and social assistance | 94 | 7.1 |
| Professional, scientific, and technical services | 142 | 10.7 |
| Administrative and support | 74 | 5.6 |
| Educational Services | 189 | 14.3 |
| Other services (except public administration) | 66 | 5.0 |

Table 4-2: Highest Occupational Segments - Chincoteague

The data above indicates that many residents live and work on the Island. Tourism-related businesses require seasonal employees while some residents commute off-Island to work, particularly in the health care, educational, and professional occupations. Additional detailed information is available under various reports available at Reference R-01.

The primary economic drivers for Chincoteague are:

- Tourism & Recreation,
- Local Full-Service Economy,
- Seafood & Aquaculture, and
- The Wallops Island Area

Tourism & Recreation

When the causeway to Chincoteague Island opened in 1922 (around the same time the Town began to feel the economic effects of the declining oyster harvests), Chincoteague’s major source of income began to shift from harvesting seafood to attracting visitors. The Island had long been popular for hunting, fishing, and vacationing but until 1922, access was only by boat. Steamers and passenger boats carried people to and from Chincoteague and Franklin City.

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

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



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

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

Visitation over the decades has led to increased ownership of second and seasonal homes resulting in a significant vacation rental house industry. A story often heard is how enjoyable family vacations spent in campgrounds, cabins, or motels on the Island have resulted in home ownership and relocation here to work or retire. This economic activity has better supported a full-service year-round economy.

The Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge

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

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

Refuge History

The Town of Chincoteague's local economy and way of life rely on the assurance of Congressional Action/Public Law and recorded agreements with the Department of Interior. The National Refuge System is currently preparing new management plans for all refuges and Chincoteague NWR's Comprehensive Conservation Plans or CCPs (Reference R-11) was completed in 2015. The CCP planning process involved input from the public and the partners including the Town of Chincoteague in developing its management strategy. There have been a series of significant decision points over the years that have shaped the management of the Refuge and the National Seashore over time.

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

- **2011** – Due to concerns with over-wash and eroding lands, the USFWS proposed to reassign the designated bathing beach areas to a new location within the refuge that would minimize human impacts to wildlife management areas.
- **2014/2015** – A draft CCP was presented to the public with recommended changes to the current management plan, which addressed many community concerns and will continue the planning process for relocation of the recreational beach over the next 3 to 8 years. The CCP was finalized in 2015 and a Record of Decision signed on November 6, 2015 (Reference R-11)
- **2018** – An Environmental Assessment that tiered off the CCP was completed and proposed a series of design and placement options needed to support relocation of the recreational beach. The Hybrid Alternative was selected for implementation and finalized in the decision document called the Finding of No New Significant Impacts dated December 11, 2018. The new recreational beach parking will consist of separate parking lots with larger lots along the northern end of the designated recreational beach. Three smaller lots will be constructed south of D-Dike along the accommodation zone boundary. North of D-dike, two larger lots, increasing in size as they move north, will be constructed. The new parking areas will have a clay-sand-clamshell surface, the same as what is currently found at the existing parking areas. Recreation amenities that are currently provided at the existing recreational beach will be provided at the new recreational beach. Amenities at the new recreational beach will include utilities (potable water, power, telephone), vault toilets, rinse-off showers, changing room cabanas, lifeguard stands, beach wheelchair storage and other facilities needed for a safe and appropriate beach recreational visit.

The CCP recommended Alternative B, which relocates the recreational beach area and maintains 961 parking spaces in a more stable area of Assateague Island that would be less susceptible to storm damage. As stated above, an Environmental Assessment tiered under the CCP evaluated a series of design options and sought public input into that decision. In December of 2018, the agencies selected the Hybrid Alternative. This design solution is currently being developed in conjunction with the Federal Highways Administration. It is anticipated that design specifications and plans will be drafted by the winter of 2020, but implementation is dependent on funds. Aspects of the plans may be phased over time based on funding availability. Because interim losses of parking from storms can have impacts to the Town, a post-storm access plan is also recommended to minimize the impact of any temporary loss of visitor parking at the beach. With the slow and careful implementation of proposed management changes, the CCP will minimize any potential negative impacts to the tourism based economy.

Economic Impact

Chincoteague’s proximity to Assateague Island National Seashore and the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge continues to be its largest economic development opportunity.

At the community’s request, the US Fish and Wildlife Service included in its Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) for the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge an Economic Impact Analysis (Reference R-12). The USFWS Division of Economics estimates a regional economic benefit of the seashore/refuge in Virginia at \$113.8 million per year, which supports

approximately 1,794 jobs. The estimate for just the Town of Chincoteague is \$42.4 million and 593 jobs.

Visitors stimulate the economy through direct payments for food, lodging, transportation, equipment, and supplies. In turn, local merchants use a portion of the money spent to buy other local goods, resulting in a multiplier effect. While refuge specific expenditures are not available, estimates can be derived from averages taken from the 2007 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. The percentages of expenditures estimated are then apportioned among Accomack County, Worcester County, and outside the area. The expenditure percentages are assumed to be 45 percent for Accomack County, 45 percent for Worcester County, and 10 percent for outside the area, based on a study of expenditures resulting from the Wallops Flight Facility.

Total visitor recreation expenditures and associated economic output for Accomack and Worcester Counties in 2010 are summarized in Table 4-3 below. Table values are based on the percentages noted above and the assumption that Chincoteague brings in 85 percent of tourism revenue for Accomack County. It should be noted that values have increased significantly since 2010.

Table 3-8. 2010 Visitor Recreation Expenditures and Associated Economic Output for Accomack and Worcester Counties (in millions)

| Economic Category | Residents | Non-Residents | Total |
|---|-----------|---------------|----------|
| Retail Expenditures | \$2.9 | \$110.9 | \$113.8 |
| Economic Output | \$3.8 | \$146.5 | \$150.3 |
| Job Income | \$1.2 | \$47.4 | \$48.6 |
| Tax Revenue | \$0.6 | \$10.0 | \$10.6 |
| Total | \$8.50 | \$314.80 | \$323.30 |
| Jobs | 45 | 1,749 | 1,794 |
| Source: Estimates compiled by the Division of Economics, USFWS. | | | |

Table 4-3: Visitor Recreation Expenditures

In addition to the revenue coming from visitors, the refuge itself spends \$3.4 million in operations and maintenance each year, three-quarters of which goes to employees who live in the area,

Visitation Profile

Since the opening of a public beach in the early 1960s, visitation steadily rose during the 1960s, 1970s, and most of 1980s. In 1987 visitation peaked at over 1.5 million visits, with over 800,000 occurring during the summer season, June through August. Since then, the number of annual visits to the refuge has leveled off to between 1.2 and 1.4 million visits. From 2005 to 2010, 57 percent of the visits occurred during the months of June, July, and August (Table 4-4). Recreational beach use tapers off quickly after early September and returns at the end of May.

Although not all summer visitation is associated with beach use, the parking patterns and anecdotal reports indicate that beach use is the primary use. The town of Chincoteague developed and distributed a “Beach Access Questionnaire” online and throughout the community in summer of 2010 that resulted in almost 3,000 responses. In the survey, 82 percent of respondents indicated that they primarily came to Chincoteague to go to the beach.

**Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge: June - August and Annual Visitors,
2005 – 2010**

| Month | 2005 | 2006 | 2007 | 2008 | 2009 | 2010 |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| June | 181,724 | 162,293 | 172,760 | 145,904 | 162,572 | 160,581 |
| July | 375,862 | 307,132 | 297,697 | 291,281 | 314,110 | 304,248 |
| August | 289,398 | 311,846 | 317,484 | 311,367 | 328,783 | 282,916 |
| 3 month total | 846,984 | 781,271 | 787,941 | 748,552 | 805,465 | 747,745 |
| Annual Total | 1,454,371 | 1,401,862 | 1,386,842 | 1,296,285 | 1,400,254 | 1,359,553 |
| June - August total as % of annual total | 58.2 % | 55.7 % | 56.8 % | 57.7 % | 57.5 % | 55.0 % |
| Source: USFWS 2011 | | | | | | |

Table 4-4: Chincoteague NWR Peak and Annual Visitation

Spending associated with recreational use of the Refuge can generate a substantial amount of economic activity in both local and regional economies. Refuge visitors spend money on a wide variety of goods and services. Trip-related expenditures may include expenses for food, lodging and transportation. Anglers, hunters, boaters and wildlife watchers also buy equipment and supplies for their particular activity. Because this spending directly affects towns and communities where these purchases are made, recreational visitation can have a significant impact on local economies, especially in small towns and rural areas.

Recreational Opportunities

The refuge attracts visitors to the region for a number of reasons. Visitors come for the beach, the wildlife and Chincoteague ponies, surf fishing, off-road vehicle use, and waterfowl and big game hunting. In 2010, the refuge had almost 1.4 million visits, with over half of those visits occurring in the peak summer months. Table 4-5 illustrates the relative popularity of activities in 2010.

Chincoteague NWR 2010 Visitation

| Total number of visitors | | 1,359,553 |
|---------------------------------|--|------------------|
| Visits¹ | Special events on site | 8,568 |
| | Visitor Center or Contact Station | 364,568 |
| | Upland game hunt | 0 |
| | Big game hunt | 2,097 |
| | Total hunting | 2,304 |
| | Fishing | 129,885 |
| | Foot Trail/Pedestrian | 1,019,664 |
| | Auto Tour | 1,359,553 |
| | Boat Trail/Launches | 0 |
| | Bicycle | 352,740 |
| | Wildlife Observation | 2,731,957 |
| | Photography | 815,731 |
| | Environmental education programs. | 8,948 |
| | Interpretation participants in on- and off-site talks/programs | 60,226 |
| Other recreation | 2,719,106 | |

1 The term "visits" represents the number of activities a visitor participated in during their visit to the refuge.
Source: USFWS 2011

Table 4-5: Chincoteague NWR 2010 Visitation

Some recreational uses on Chincoteague NWR include walking, bicycling, horseback riding, OSV use, and boating. Commercial uses are regulated. All of these uses are limited to specific areas of land and/or times based on wildlife management and some have permits and fees. There are no campsites on Chincoteague NWR.

Since 2010, both Heritage and eco-tourism have become very popular in the United States.

Special Events On-Site

The refuge holds eight major special events with all but one occurring during the shoulder seasons:

- Great Backyard Bird Count - February,
- Junior Duck Stamp Contest - April,
- International Migratory Bird Day Celebration - May,

- Wild Pony Roundup – July,
- Sunrise Pony Walk during Pony Penning - July,
- Annual Beach Clean-up - September,
- National Public Lands Day - September,
- National Wildlife Refuge Week - October,
- Waterfowl Weekend - November.

Beach Parking

From 1982 to 2001, the refuge and Seashore kept records of the frequency and dates for when the beach parking lots reached capacity; the refuge began recording frequency again in 2007. A review of data from 2000 and 2001 indicates that closures last from 30 minutes to 4 hours and were always initiated between 11:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. There are no similar records for a more recent year, but refuge staff anecdotally reported that there are typically 4 to 6 closures a year, also occurring between the peak hours noted above, and lasting approximately 30 minutes to 2 hours. These closures are highly weather-dependent but usually occur on the 4th of July if it is a 3-day weekend, and on the first two Saturdays and Sundays in August. The capacity closure data do not include closures due to damage to the parking from storm events.

In terms of parking occupancy for non-summer months, the refuge conducted hourly manual parking counts (approximately 9 a.m. through 4 p.m.) for the weekends of April and May 2010 and September 2010 through February 2011. The data indicates that total parked vehicles did not surpass 200 between November and April, and did not surpass 480 from October through May except for Memorial Day weekend.

Implementation Strategies of the Refuge

Carry out the intent of the CCP - As part of the CCP development, the refuge solicited input on key concerns from the community and reviewed policy and initiatives that guide the FWS. These concerns included climate change/sea level rise, regional conservation, balance between public use and habitat and wildlife conservation, public access to the refuge, in particular to the recreational beach, and impact on visitor experience and the local economy and public safety and community resilience to storm damage and flooding. FWS received many comments requesting that the refuge maintain a balance between people and nature, or recreation and wildlife management. Statutory and policy framework of the Refuge System clearly defines that wildlife and wildlife conservation must come first on refuge lands and waters. Many of Refuge policies and goals aim to achieve this balance, through allowing for public uses that are deemed appropriate and compatible for each refuge. The CCP discusses in detail the approach the refuge will use to address these and other priorities and should be consulted for more information and specifics (Reference R-11).

Beach Relocation - Access to the refuge, in particular to the recreational beach, was the most commonly cited issue by the public. The Refuge is committed to preserving access to the refuge, including by personal vehicle, and to continuing to provide a recreational beach. The beach

relocation project's objective aims to solve three transportation issues at the Refuge/Park and in the Town of Chincoteague:

1. Resiliency of the parking lot at the recreational beach;
2. Safety and accessibility issues along Maddox Boulevard; and
3. Congestion at the entrance to the Refuge.

However, there are elements within these objectives that can continue to be enhanced by cooperative and coordinated improvements between the Town of Chincoteague and the Refuge. Exploration of additional multi-modal enhancements, such as improvements and extensions of bike and pedestrian trails (see Reference R-13), changes in fee collection mechanisms (electronic prepay systems) and improved communication of refuge/beach status (through electronic messaging or new technology) will likely further improve efficiency and the visitor experience.

Improving Visitor Services - As indicated in the beach relocation planning documents, the National Park Service will relocate their visitor services staff to the Bateman Center when the parking relocation is complete and collocate with the Refuge. Displays at the Bateman Center will be changed to address the shared mission and enhance messaging and educational programs.

Secure Funds to Further Improve Shared Opportunities - The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Federal program supports the protection of federal public lands and waters – including national parks, forests, wildlife refuges, and recreation areas – and voluntary conservation on private land. LWCF investments secure public access, improve recreational opportunities, and preserve ecosystem benefits for local communities. The refuge would like to work with the Town of Chincoteague to pursue this and other funding opportunities to continue to improve the refuge and adjoining areas for the benefit of the community.

Coastal Resilience and Regional Conservation – The Refuge is committed to a landscape-level approach to conserve, manage, and restore refuge lands and waters, as well as to facilitate such conservation actions beyond our boundaries. The FWS recognizes the conservation importance of the southern Delmarva Peninsula and the regional challenges it faces, including those related to climate change and land use. Recent repeated coastal flooding and over wash caused by nor'easters and tropical hurricanes have resulted in damage to beach access and parking. Impacts on habitat and wildlife have been either beneficial or negative depending upon the timing and severity of the weather event. FWS is committed to working with partners to continue research and assessment of future climate change impacts on the Delmarva Peninsula. The refuge will work with the town of Chincoteague to explore potential impacts and identify protective methods to address hazard mitigation, in coordination with others, such as Accomack County, Commonwealth of Virginia, NPS, NASA, FEMA, and USACE. The refuge would also work with partners to explore how best to advance the study, information exchange, and project resources for adaptive management practices that sustain the resiliency of this unique barrier island system including but not limited to Assateague, Wallops, Assawoman, and Metompkin islands in the face of dynamic coastal processes and climate change.

Island Tourism

Today the Island's economy is dependent upon tourism. Besides the recreational opportunities offered nearby, visitors are attracted to the Island by its fishing village atmosphere and wide range of amenities. Much effort and planning has been done to maintain the Town's family-friendly qualities while improving the quality, diversity, and completeness of amenities. Efforts by the Town, other government agencies, Chamber of Commerce, civic organizations local business community and property owners have all contributed to making the Island a tourist destination in itself by providing a pleasant environment, variety of year-round activities, and wide selection of amenities and services.

The Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce takes the lead in promotion and growth of Chincoteague Island for tourism while advocating for quality of life for local residents and business owners. The Executive Director of the Chamber is identified by the Commonwealth of Virginia as the designated tourism official for the Town. As part of its Action Plan (Reference R-14) the Chamber performed a SWOT (Strength Weakness Opportunity Threat) Analysis which has been considered in the preparation of this plan. The Chamber organizes festivals and special events, provides tourism information on a daily basis, works to promote the Chincoteague brand and destination marketing, and provides website services for its membership. As a result of hard work and the exceptional experiences that the area can offer, Chincoteague and Assateague Islands have received numerous accolades over the last several years.

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

- Easter Decoy and Art Festival – Friday & Saturday before Easter,
- Annual World Migratory Bird Celebration – May,
- Seafood Festival – May,
- Chincoteague Volunteer Fireman's Carnival – June and July,
- Annual Blueberry Festival – July,
- Annual Pony Swim and Auction – July,
- Chincoteague Decoy Carvers Association Decoy Show – August or September,
- Motorcycle Poker Run – September,
- Chincoteague Oyster Festival – Saturday of Columbus Day weekend,
- Chili Chowder Cook Off- September,
- Assateague Island Waterfowl Week – November,
- Holly Day Market & Wildlife Art Gallery – November,
- Christmas Tree Lighting and Old Fashioned Christmas Parade – December, and
- New Year's Eve 'Horseshoe Drop' and Island Theatre Concert.

The Historic Main Street Merchants Association, a group of merchants located in the Main Street area, work to create unique experiences and enhance enjoyment of island life. Association sponsored weekend events held annually include:

- Death by Chocolate Scavenger Hunt – 2 days during President’s Day weekend,
- Search for the Shamrocks Scavenger Hunt – around St Patrick’s Day,
- Shop the Dock at Robert Reed Park – 3rd Sunday monthly, April to October,
- Trick or Treat Main Street - Halloween evening from 4:00-7:00pm, downtown

In addition, the Chincoteague Police Department, NASA Wallops Island Visitor Center, and non-profit organizations (such as the Museum of Chincoteague Island, Chincoteague Cultural Alliance, and Chincoteague Island Arts Organization) host regularly scheduled events year-round that attract residents and visitors of all ages. See Chapter 5 for lists of additional events and services. A calendar of local events is maintained by the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce on its website. These events contribute to the quality of life for all attending and support the local year-round economy through dining, overnight stays, and other retail purchases.

Unique/Local Dining

Located seaside and with a strong seafood & aquaculture industry, local dining establishments offer a wide variety of dining options. The number, total service capacity, and cuisine options of this industry has significantly increased over the past ten years, particularly the most recent five years. Dining had been provided by local full-service restaurants, specialty restaurants, and wayside vendors. More recent additions have included wayside vendors, delis, and seafood market carry-outs.

As of January, 2019, there were at least 21 traditional sit-down restaurants in operation on the Island with a total seating capacity in excess of 2,100. Most provide year-round service allowing for off-season maintenance periods. In addition, wayside vendors typically service the primary tourist season, some staying open well into the shoulder seasons. This segment provides carry-out service and limited outdoor seating capacity. In addition to providing fresh seafood/fish, several markets also provide shellfish cooked to order for carry-out. The range of cuisine is large, including, but not limited to, American, Seafood, Italian, Asian, Mexican, Caribbean, BBQ, Pizza, Deli, and Dessert. Wayside vendors allow for dynamic cuisine options.

To service those preparing in-home meals, there are at least five seafood markets, five food specialty shops, a seasonal farmers market, one grocery store, and two dollar stores.

Accommodations

Accommodations in Chincoteague provide for a wide range in visitor preference and price in each type category with many, if not most, units being waterside or water view. Table 4-6 below summarizes data compiled by the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce in July of 2015 under a Maximum Capacity Study (Reference R-15). Most growth over the past two decades has occurred with addition of chain hotels, condos, and rental houses. Additional capacity has been added since 2015 with the opening of at least one hotel and a number of rental houses.



| Accommodations by Type | | |
|---|----------------|-----------------|
| Type | 2015 | |
| | # Units | Capacity |
| Hotels/Motels | 925 | 3800 |
| Bed & Breakfasts | 34 | 79 |
| Campgrounds | 1150 | 5550 |
| Cottages/Condos/Houses (Independent) | 80 | 427 |
| Cottages/Condos/Houses (Property Management Company) | 496 | 3570 |
| Total | 2685 | 13426 |

Table 4-6: Accommodation Profile

Town Centers

The Old Town Commercial (downtown Main Street) and the Commercial Corridor (Maddox Boulevard) town centers offer shopping, cultural, amusement options in addition to culinary attractions and accommodations. Both contain essential commercial services and each center has a unique character. However, retail enterprises are found in the other commercial zones of the Town.

The downtown business district has preserved its historic character, continues to function as a center of commerce, and is a pedestrian-oriented commercial center. The Robert N. Reed Downtown Waterfront Park and fishing pier enhance downtown's waterfront access to Chincoteague Bay, promotes downtown visitation, and is a great place to view spectacular sunsets.

The Maddox Boulevard commercial district is the gateway to the wildlife refuge and national seashore. This area is more oriented towards the recreational visitor. Originally an auto-oriented district, on-going multi-modal enhancements are making this area more pedestrian/bicyclist-oriented.

Shopping / Amusements

Shopping opportunities include a number of specialty shops, art galleries, bookstores, florists, and more. Six or more businesses provide amusements, including miniature golf, go carts, and water activities.

History & Heritage

Experiences, structures, and sites that show Chincoteague, Virginia & U.S history and heritage are prevalent in Town. The Museum of Chincoteague Island is the lead in capturing, maintaining, and promoting local history and heritage. Besides the content of the Museum, it provides lectures and special presentations throughout the year. The Museum conducts guided tours during the primary tourist season in addition to land or water tours offered by commercial entities. While there has been some loss of historical structures, many fine examples are still in existence. Of particular note is the oldest house on the Island. Open to the public, the Captain Timothy Hill House is a registered Virginia Historic Landmark and listed with the National Register of Historic Places.

Meetings / Conventions

The past decade has seen a significant increase in the number and quality of meeting facilities in Town. Facilities range in capacity and services with the largest, the Chincoteague Center, having a maximum capacity of 800 to small meeting rooms for groups of 10 or less. Venues are located throughout the town and are provided by government, commercial, and non-governmental organizations. See Chapter 5 for additional details.

Outdoor Recreation

Chincoteague benefits from its natural beauty, parklands, surrounding waters, bike paths, trails, and location alongside some of the most fertile sport-fishing grounds on the Mid-Atlantic coast. This provides for exceptional outdoor recreational opportunities including beaches, camping, bicycling, walking/hiking, local parks, observing native flora & fauna, boating, fishing, hunting, and shell-fishing. Outfitting and guides are available to maximize visitor enjoyment.



Sport-fishing is an important economic industry for Chincoteague.

Chincoteague's waters are on the Seaside Water Trail. The addition of kayak launches / floating docks at several of the Town's parks have resulted in the increase of kayakers. Several local businesses provide kayak rentals, instruction, and tours.

Significant efforts by the Town to improve multi-modal transportation has contributed to its use and growth of local businesses. There are at least 5 bicycle rental establishments, along with several scooter and street-licensed alternate vehicle rental businesses.

In the 1980s, the Town constructed Curtis Merritt Harbor of Refuge at the south end of the Island (see Chapter 5). In addition, public docking is available along downtown Main Street with public boat ramps at the Harbor, City Dock, and on Eastside Drive. Several commercial entities have boat slips, docking and launching available.

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

Chincoteague's off-shore fishing rivals the best in the Mid-Atlantic, with excellent catches of bluefin and yellowfin tuna, as well as dolphin, marlin, wahoo and king mackerel. Wreck fishing for sea bass is also very productive, with many large tautog being caught along with triggerfish, blues and spadefish. The in-shore fishing produces plentiful catches of flounder along with croaker, sea trout, and sea bass.

Scenic cruises are popular and offer the opportunity to explore the many fascinating areas around the channels, coves and marshes of the Chincoteague and Assateague waters. Eco-oriented cruises bring you close to nature, abundant birds and wildlife, historic and scenic places.

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

In 2015 the American Sportfishing Association published the "Economic Contribution of Recreational Fishing: U.S Congressional Districts”, a report which showed that marine recreational fishing in Virginia’s 2nd District by over 84 thousand anglers contributed 1.1 thousand jobs to the district’s economy, generated \$92 million in retail sales output, \$137.6 million to the district’s gross domestic product, and \$39.9 million in salaries and wages.

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

It should be noted that the indoor/outdoor facilities are available for tennis, pickleball, and basketball. See Chapter 5 for a more detailed discussion of recreational facilities.

Resiliency & Business Retention

The Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce has established goals, strategies, and implementations to assist businesses with resiliency planning, wherein businesses are able to open quickly after a weather related event (Reference R-14).

Business Resiliency Planning is a continuous lifecycle, adapting to meet changing business needs, deliverables and customer commitments and to ensure that there are viable documented plans to respond to a wide range of significant risks and events that may adversely affect critical business activities.

The Chamber is hosting a series of Business Resiliency workshops to help businesses learn about and understand business resiliency and develop their business resiliency plan for such events. The first workshop discussed common sense measures business owners and managers can take to prepare for and rapidly recover from natural and man-made disasters. The main topics addressed include:

- Which disasters are most common locally
- Interaction between government disaster agencies interact
- Local emergency management planning, preparation, and communication with the community
- How businesses can Plan, Respond, Mitigate, and Recover
- Hazard Identification Risk Analysis and how to complete one
- Emergency Operations Plan for Your Business and how to develop one

Subsequent workshops focused on “after the storm mode”.

Economic Impact

Table 4-7 lists values for employment in Town by month for 2010. It shows the dominance of tourist related employment in Chincoteague during the prime season and a significant factor throughout the year. More recent meal tax receipts by month in which it is paid (Figure 4-1) suggest a broadening of the Fall tourist season with May and September being increasingly strong months. Note meal taxes are paid in the month following its collection at point of purchase.

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

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

Source: Virginia Employment Commission 2011

Table 4-7: 2010 Tourist and Non-Tourist Employment by Month

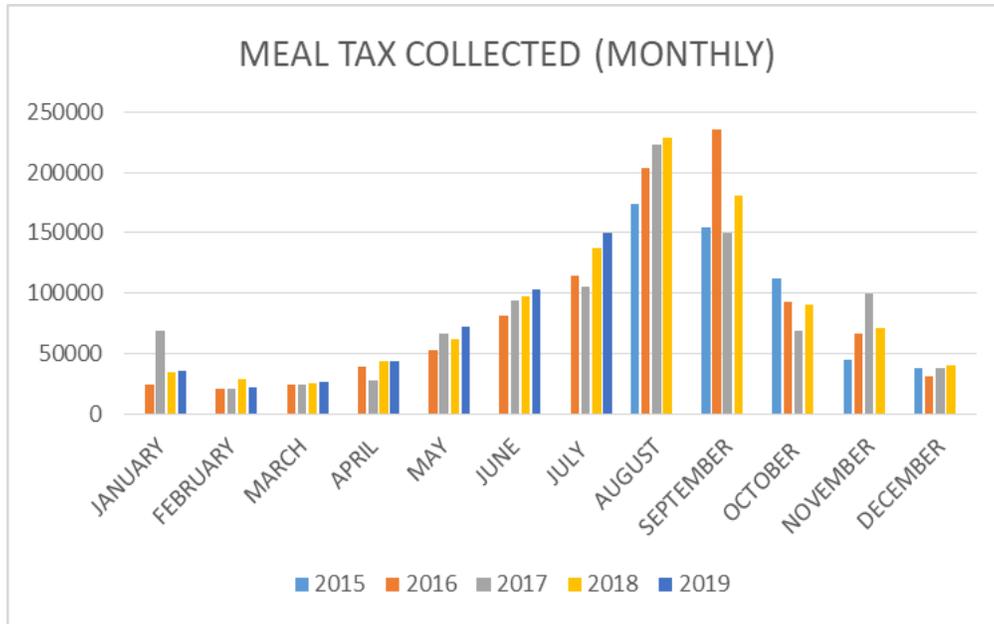


Figure 4-1: 2015-2019 Town Meal Tax Receipts

Approximately 91% of Accomack County’s tourist-related tax revenue is generated by the Town of Chincoteague. Chincoteague charges its own transient occupancy tax which increased from 3% to 4% in Fiscal Year 2013 (in addition to the 2% charged by the County) as well as a 5% meal tax. The meal tax was increased from 4% to 5% in Fiscal Year 2011. Figure 4-2 shows a strong and continued increase in tourism-generated tax receipts since 2010.

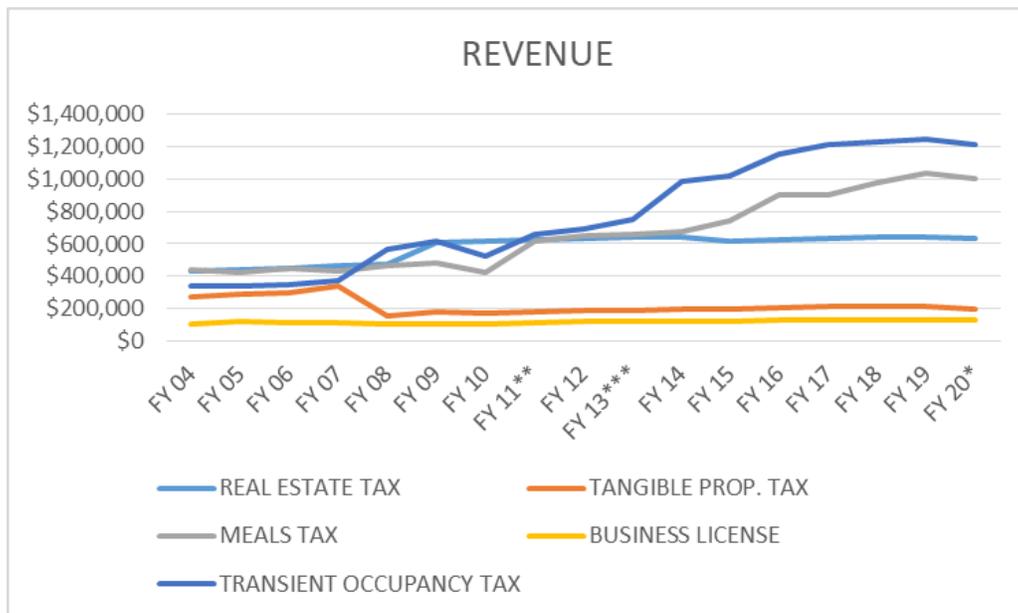


Figure 4-2: 2002-2020 Town Tax and Fee Receipts

Seafood & Aquaculture

While the harvesting of seafood played a significant historical role in the economic development of Chincoteague, its gradual diminishment from a once-thriving industry continued through the mid-1900s.

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

The Virginia clam aqua farming industry has shown tremendous growth since the 1990s. Aqua farming produced close to \$38 million for Virginia clam farmers and \$18.5 million for oyster farmers. The 2002 Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission's Regional Housing Assessment cited that recent growth in aqua farming for clams has resulted in the creation of jobs that pay better than the poultry industry and other jobs in the area.

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science reported in 2017 that seed plantings for hard clams have stabilized over the last 5 years at around 500 million, while oysters show a significant increase up to 138 million planted in 2015.¹

The Virginia Institute of Marine Science reports that growth in production of seed has accompanied the expansion of the industry, with an estimated 95% of seed produced being planted in Virginia. Aqua farms have expanded to accommodate the increase in demand, and report a stable employment forecast of full time with part time-personnel reducing slightly.²

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

There are four packing wharfs on the Island to support the industry. The Virginia Working Waterfront Master Plan (see Reference S-02) assessed the state of working waterfronts within

¹ Source: *Virginia Institute of Marine Science Results of Virginia Shellfish Aquaculture Crop Reporting Survey 2017*

² Source: *Ibid.*

the Accomack-Northampton Planning District and provided recommendations for their maintenance and resiliency.

Given its coastal location combined with its waterman culture, Chincoteague is a prime location for aqua-tourism, including oyster farms and clamming. Visitors may experience kayak clamming tours or oyster farms.

Wallops Island Area

The Wallops Island Area is a major employment center for the region. More than 1,200 people work within the cluster of engineering, aerospace, and naval operations that include National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), the United States Navy, and the Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority (Virginia Space). The NASA Wallops Flight Facility and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport, both located on Wallops Island, provide the only licensed rocket launch facility on the Atlantic Coast other than Cape Canaveral.

NASA's Wallops Flight Facility provides agile, low-cost flight and launch range services to meet government and commercial sector needs for accessing flight regimes worldwide from the Earth's surface to the moon and beyond. Wallops' flight assets provide a full-range of capability while operational launch range and airfield capabilities meet ongoing and emerging needs in the science, aerospace, defense, and commercial industries. The NASA Wallops Flight Facility is operated by the Goddard Space Flight Center in Greenbelt, Maryland.

In addition, Wallops is a multi-user/multi-tenant facility in a geographic location ideal for supporting satellite tracking and commanding, military operations and training, scientific investigations, technology development and testing, as well as commercial aerospace. The facility's diverse mission sets and on-site partners, including the U.S. Navy, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the Federal Aviation Administration, Virginia Space and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport, is a model for leveraging and optimizing multi-organizational capabilities and support services. This environment provides for a wide range of employment opportunities in various fields, including engineering, technology, manufacturing, training and maintenance.

Chincoteague's service industries also benefit substantially from the proximity of the facility where more than 1000 people are employed. Many employees reside in or near the Town of



Chincoteague. This creates a significant demand for services, including electrical, plumbing and automobile repair, cleaning, carpentry, and health and child care. In addition, employees traveling to the facilities lodge, eat, and recreate on Chincoteague. At least one commercial entity supporting the complex has located offices in town.

NASA Goddard Space Flight Center - Wallops

The NASA Goddard Space Flight Center's Wallops Flight Facility operations add another tourism asset to the region and is a major employment center. Major programs range from research aircraft, unmanned aerial systems and high-altitude balloons to suborbital and orbital rockets. Within a short driving distance from Chincoteague, NASA employs 1000 full time civil servants and contractors.

Wallops Flight Facility Visitor Center

The Wallops Flight Facility Visitor Center has a variety of hands-on exhibits and hosts events and programs that are free and available to the public. The Visitor Center and grounds are open to the public during most launch events from Wallops Island. Visitor Center programs offer age-appropriate hands-on learning experiences in STEM to school and youth groups. Exhibits and activities at the visitor center reflect the current activities conducted at the Wallops Flight Facility by NASA and its allied organizations. The Center estimates that they receive an average of 50,000-60,000 visitors per year.

Surface Combat Systems Center Wallops Island

The Surface Combat Systems Center is a unique shore installation that provides the best maritime and littoral environment, operational team, high-fidelity combat systems and platform sensors, along with the ability to connect with ships, aircraft, and other land-based sites for Surface Navy testing, training, and support of deployed surface combat systems, advanced systems under development, warfare systems integration, interoperability, and at-sea testing and exercises.

The United States Navy Surface Combat Systems Center is comprised of over 400 military, civilian, and contractor personnel who provide engineering, training, and base operations support to the United States Fleet. Not only are there a relatively large number of jobs, they are also relatively high-skill and high-wage jobs. The SCSC employs 30 full-time resident employees along with contractor support.

NOAA Wallops Command and Data Acquisition Station

The Wallops Command and Data Acquisition (CDA) Station is responsible for ensuring scheduled data flow from NOAA satellites to designated user subsystems. NOAA manages, operates, and maintains the station. The Station acquires, maintains, and distributes a continuous flow of meteorological satellite data. NOAA employs about 100 full-time resident employees.

Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS)

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

MARS provides space launch facilities and support services to commercial, government and scientific customers on a fee basis. It supports a full complement of launch-range services by NASA including safety monitoring, telemetry, radar tracking, command, control and communications, and data retrieval and processing. The addition of payload processing and integration facilities added offices, a lab, and test and evaluation areas to support operations. The spaceport can provide a wide array of additional services related to satellite design, assembly and launch.

MARS is licensed by the FAA Office of Commercial Space Transportation for launches to orbital trajectories. MARS is only one of four spaceports in the U.S. that is currently licensed to launch to orbit, and is only one of two on the east coast.

MARS Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS) Airfield

Additional capability is provided by the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport’s Unmanned Aircraft Systems (MARS UAS) Airfield. The MARS UAS Airfield is part of an array of autonomy-related assets designed to attract business. This investment, combined with programs from NASA at Wallops and Langley, the establishment of the Autonomous Systems Center of Excellence run by the Center for Innovative Technology, and designation of Virginia as one of six FAA test sites for unmanned aircraft systems, will help fulfill Virginia’s mission of being one of the best autonomous hubs of industry in the nation.

A study, completed by the Association for Unmanned Vehicle Systems International (AUVSI), predicts the UAS industry will have a total economic impact in Virginia of approximately \$270M annually by the year 2020.

Wallops Research Park (WRP)

The presence of an aerospace industry cluster on nearby Wallops Island provides Chincoteague with a major advantage over many rural Eastern Shore communities. The potential for skilled career opportunities and an above-average income level being the most prominent. The facilities on Wallops Island already offer careers for hundreds of engineers and technicians. The

development of commercial rocket launches has the potential to attract hundreds of new jobs in the aerospace industry.

Companies that have shown an interest in the Space Flight Center all require a location in very close proximity to the Center to facilitate transporting finished rockets and pay-loads. The WRP facility was authorized under the Space Act Agreement of 2009 as follows: “Wallops Research Park (WRP): WRP is a research park including land, infrastructure, taxiway to connect with the Wallops runway and to create an overall attractive environment to support economic growth and the missions of NASA/GSFC/WFF and Chincoteague Bay Field Station (CBFS) through new commercial and educational institutions located within the park. WRP consists of Accomack County land, NASA/GSFC/WFF land leased by Accomack County and CBFS land.”

In the same year, Virginia Code (15.2-2403, 15.2-2403.2) authorized WRP as a Service District and the establishment of the WRP Leadership Council (WRP LC).

In 2017, construction at the site, including infrastructure and taxiway was completed.

In 2019, ground was broken for the first commercial entity to locate in WRP. This commercial unit will provide small satellites the capability for frequent, reliable and affordable dedicated launch capabilities.

Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority (VCSFA)

The Virginia Commercial Space Flight Authority (VCSFA), also known as ‘Virginia Space,’ was created by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia in 1995, with the legislated mission of promoting commercial space activity, economic development and aerospace research within the Commonwealth.

Virginia Space aims to provide safe, reliable, and responsive Space Access at competitive prices, and is proud to offer full-service launch facilities for commercial, government, scientific and academic users both foreign and domestic.

Virginia Space began its lease at Wallops Island in 1997 and continually expanded the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS) facilities to its present day level of capabilities, with two launch facilities (one mid-class and one small-class launch facility), as well as access to support infrastructure facilities through agreements with NASA, such as vehicle and payload processing integration facilities, support instrumentation and emergency facilities.

Wallops Island Regional Alliance (WIRA)

The Wallops Island Regional Alliance is a 501c 6 organization with by-laws and a diverse 13 member board. WIRA’s mission is to enhance and protect federal and state assets on the Eastern Shore. Three states, Virginia, Maryland, and Delaware are represented on the board. Membership includes private industry, academia, and government entities including federal, state, county and the Town of Chincoteague. As members, the Town and Chincoteague

Chamber of Commerce participate in WIRA’s strategic planning process. Member organizations represent a broad range of occupational segments.

WIRA is focused on workforce development and achieving a sustainable workforce. WIRA can be an asset in promoting STEM outreach, particularly related to WIRA workforce applications. With its vast representation at Wallops Island, WIRA can also assist in developing space tourism and as a source for community feedback on local services required for continued growth. The Town may also benefit from coordination with WIRA in regard to support for upcoming opportunities and events such as space and military operations at Wallops Island.

Virginia Space Flight Academy (VSFA)

The Virginia Space Flight Academy (VSFA) is a non-profit organization based at Wallops Island, Virginia. Its purpose is to educate middle school students (ages 11-15) about space flight and STEM concepts associated with space flight operations. Since its beginning in 1998, several thousand young people have been to one or more of its week-long, summer residential space camps. The program is interactive and “hands-on”.

Started as a pilot program with initial state funding, VSFA works in partnership with NASA, the Navy’s Surface Combat Systems Center, Virginia Space and the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport (MARS), local schools and universities and area contractors to deliver its programs.

VSFA recognizes the critical importance of the local community by supporting local businesses, working to increase tourism to the region and helping promote the image of the region as a center for space-related, high tech activity. To reinforce that role, permanent Board seats are granted to the Chincoteague Chamber of Commerce and the Eastern Shore of Virginia Chamber.

VSFA ‘campers’ frequent dining and entertainment venues during their stay. Parents and family members frequent area hotels, rental homes, or visit family members on the island.

Through a partnership with the Accomack County School District students from Chincoteague Combined School have earned scholarships to attend Space Adventure Camp.

VSFA values its relationship to the island and stands ready to build more programs for area students while promoting Chincoteague as a wonderful vacation spot for families wishing to vacation before, during or after a child attends camp.

Wallops Island Resiliency

NASA adaptation strategies underway and under consideration include beach re-nourishment to minimize sea level rise and storm surge impacts; building designs that reduce reliance on the remote power sources that may become less reliable during extreme events; and landscaping changes that reduce water use in dry regions and capture rain water to reduce flooding in wet regions.

To refine resiliency strategies specific to the Wallops Flight Facility and vicinity, a Seaside Special Area Management Plan (SAMP) is under development. The SAMP process has engaged

many stakeholders to reduce use conflicts and enhance the productivity and resiliency of both natural systems and local water-based industries. The northern areas of the Seaside face a unique set of challenges related to established development and uses on the barrier islands of Wallops, Chincoteague, and Assateague that are not common to the remainder of the Seaside which is largely undeveloped and pristine. This process has produced the Wallops Assateague Chincoteague Inlet (WACI) Geologic and Coastal Management Summary Report (Reference S-19).

Economic Development Opportunities

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

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

The intent of an Arts and Cultural District is to provide incentives for the support and creation of arts and cultural organizations and businesses located within district boundaries. Chincoteague may grant tax incentives in the district, including reduction of permit fees, reduction of user fees; and reduction of any type of gross receipts tax. The Town may also provide incentives in the form of regulatory flexibility in the district, including special zoning, permit process reform, and exemption from ordinances. Any incentives adopted by the Town are binding for a period of up to 10 years.

The Chincoteague Island Arts Organization (CIAO) was incorporated in Virginia as a non-profit organization in December 2011 with the goal to establish a cultural arts center on Chincoteague Island to share film, performing arts, education programs, and other entertainment with our community and visitors. Through private investment, the Island Theater was fully restored and opened in 2014. CIAO has established partnerships with the Virginia Main Street Program, the Chincoteague Main Street Merchant Association, the Chincoteague Cultural Alliance, and other Island organizations. Chincoteague continues to take significant steps to revitalize its downtown and improve its streetscape, but more remains to be done.

Downtown Revitalization Program

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

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

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

To date, Chincoteague and the town of Exmore have received funding from the Virginia Department of Community Development, the Department of Transportation, and United States Department of Agriculture Rural Development program for construction of streetscape improvements and the establishment of loan-pools for business expansion and facade improvements.³



³ Source: 2004 Eastern Shore of Virginia Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS).

Maddox Boulevard Multi-Modal Transportation Program

In 2017, the USFWS awarded a grant to be used for the improvement of sidewalks and bike/pedestrian trails that connect the Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge (CNWR) with the historic downtown section of the town. An engineering study (Reference R-13) was conducted, produced analysis with recommendations, and formed the basis for the ongoing efforts to enhance multi-modal transportation within the Maddox Boulevard district. Significant enhancements to date have resulted in the ever increasing pedestrian and bicycle traffic, providing easier access to the districts businesses while reducing traffic congestion. When completed, these enhancements will provide easy multi-modal access from Main Street to CNWR and all commercial establishments in between.

Hub and Spoke Itinerary Tourism

Itinerary tourism attracts individuals and groups interested in specific local and/or regional trail themes. The concept is to offer an array of theme-related activities within easy driving distance from hub towns. Generally, itinerary tourism is active throughout the year. The Town is a hub and has one or more points of interest on several trails.

- Virginia Oyster Trail
- Virginia's Eastern Shore Artisan Trail
- Eastern Shore of Virginia Heritage Trail
- Virginia Water Trails – Eastern Shore
- Coastal Region Bird & Wildlife Trail

Year-Round Economic Activity

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

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

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

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

Regional Partners

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

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

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

Enterprise Zone Projects

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

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

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

Implementation Strategies

The Economic Development Goal:

Provide a quality working/business environment that ensures a balanced mix of seasonal and year-round commercial and employment uses to serve the day to day needs of residents and visitors. Encourage educational opportunities for all ages to promote higher salary jobs throughout town.

The Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge

The CNWR CCP presents both opportunities and challenges for the local economy and town infrastructure. Implementation of the CCP objectives can be enhanced by cooperation and coordination with the Town.

- Continue to coordinate multi-modal enhancements.
- Improve communication of refuge/beach status.
- Coordinate with CNWR to pursue funding opportunities to improve the refuge and adjoining areas for the benefit of the community.
- Explore potential impacts and identify protective methods to address hazard mitigation.
- Work with CNWR, and other partners, to develop and utilize adaptive management practices that sustain the resiliency of these barrier islands.

Main Street Revitalization

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

- Ensure the public, property owners, and merchants are included in the development of overall plans and policies as key stakeholders.
- Seek out state funding from the Virginia Department of Transportation, Community Development Block Grants, and other programs to assist economic efforts.
- Apply for state grants from the Virginia Department of Transportation to repair or replace bulkheads and piers for overnight dockage, charter, and tour boats.
- Extend the boardwalk along the waterfront of Main Street and pedestrian walkways from the waterfront to Main Street.
- Determine placement for bike paths in this area and connect to other bike paths identified in the Town’s bike plan.
- Lease transient boat slips to offset costs and upkeep.
- Obtain easements from adjoining property owners for a waterfront boardwalk.
- Create tax incentives, for example, a tax credit equal to a percentage of construction expenses for property owners to make appropriate façade improvements on buildings fronting on Main Street.
- Create low-interest loan pools for property owners to make appropriate façade improvements on buildings fronting on Main Street.
- Apply for state grants from the Virginia Department of Transportation to bury utility lines and install new lighting from Cropper Street to Maddox Boulevard with new sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, and a new gateway treatment to the island.
- Promote the establishment of residential over commercial.
- Actively seek alternative parking strategies downtown.

Maddox Boulevard Commercial District

- Establish guidelines for the district’s enhancement and development.
- Encourage the development of enterprises that enhance and balance the district’s current offerings and increase vibrancy.

- Continue to develop multi-modal transportation that allows for enhanced connectivity within and to the district.
- Provide public restrooms within the district.

Balanced Year-Round Economy

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

- Promote more year-round economic activity that takes advantage of the unique historic and cultural character of the Town.
- Promote sound local economies by conserving the Island’s unique values and providing protections from developments that may cause irreversible damage. The Island’s natural attributes and its heritage are its most valuable economic resources.
- Encourage development that enhances the environmental, historic, and scenic qualities of the Island to promote a healthy coastal environment to foster economic vitality.
- Encourage efforts to diversify the Island economy consistent with the quality and character of the existing Chincoteague Island.
- Give top priority to year-round job opportunities for permanent Island residents and increase the Island’s self-sufficiency to diversify the economic base so that the Island will be less reliant on the tourist trade.
- Create jobs for the skills and working habits of the year-round labor force, in industries, which will prudently utilize the Island’s natural resources.
- Encourage the development of small-scale industries to enhance the year-round economy.
- Private initiatives will influence the future of the Island at least as much as government regulations. Encourage creative and environmentally sound economic initiatives, ensure that regulations affecting small businesses do not cause unnecessary burdens and review regulations that might discourage new small business start-ups.
- Where appropriate, encourage water-dependent maritime uses of coastal land.
- Promote necessary economic support for sport and commercial fishing.

- Promote and encourage enhanced relationships between the Town and the Wallops Island entities.

Tourism, Real Estate, & Seasonal Businesses

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

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

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

- The island’s qualities should be preserved for summer residents, visitors, and taxpayers as well as for those who live on Chincoteague Island year-round.
- Ensure history and heritage experiences are preserved, refreshed, and expanded.
- Develop, maintain, and expand parks, outdoor trails and water trails.
- Leverage the Town’s waterfront areas.
- Ensure wayfinding signage and visitor information is visible, consistent in content & format, and available through multiple points (signage, printed materials, electronic media).
- Encourage an increase in affordable housing for short-term and/or seasonal employees.
- Foster a more welcoming attitude towards visitors by developing information and welcoming facilities both on- and off- Island.
- Recognize the importance of the summer economy as a base for the year-round economy and manage it through public and private actions including infrastructure and capital planning.
- Educate the public about the tourist economy on Chincoteague.

Seafood & Aquaculture Industries

- Promote policies on protecting the Island Seafood Industry. Seafood harvesting is an ancient determinant of the Island’s character and land use. Ensure that it remains a visible part of the landscape.
- Protect the seafood industry from changes in attitudes and ensure sufficient land is zoned for this activity. Prevent conflicts with residential land uses.
- Encourage and foster the local seafood and aquaculture economies for the benefit of the whole island economy and character. The availability of local seafood, as well as the opportunity to “catch” local seafood, is essential features for the Island experience.
- Encourage economic activities, which are positive additions to the rural Island environment.
- Encourage boating and fishing activities for the well-being of the Island economy, particularly tourism. Recognize the importance of commercial and sport fisheries to the local economy.

Wallops Island (WI) Area Economy

- Promote, with Wallops Island entities, educational opportunities.
- Obtain recommendations from Wallops Island entities which could make the Town a more appealing location for their employees.
- Coordinate promotion of upcoming opportunities and events such as space and military operations at Wallops Island.
- Obtain Wallops Island entity workforce requirements and promote local development of qualified candidates.
- Encourage sponsorship of scholarships for Chincoteague middle school students to attend the Virginia Space Flight Academy.
- Encourage local government leaders to promote S.T.E.M. (science, technology, engineering and math) programs for area students in available venues. Wallops Island entities are eager to find local talent, particularly for jobs in the trades.

Economic Impact Study

- Encourage the commission of an economic impact study to include the following:
 1. Economic Baseline Study Update – Document levels of economic activity in Island business. Look for measures of growth such as sales tax figures, bank and insurance activity, employment and unemployment, commercial utilities accounts, licenses granted. Plot trends in economic activity annually and project future areas of growth. Find stable and sustainable levels of economic activity based on long-term trends rather than boom-and-bust cycles. Study the income generated by different Island industries and identify industries that recycle their income back into the Island economy.
 2. Year-Round Employment – Document year-round employment including numbers of jobs by industry.
 3. Alternative Trades – Research other examples of resort and rural communities for possible new industries and types of employment.
 4. Crafts Cooperatives – Encourage local outlets for Island crafts, especially where opportunities for Island artisans can be encouraged.
 5. Commercial Rents – Study the range of rents paid and develop measures to offset costs for year-round businesses.
 6. Local Investment – Encourage businesses to invest through local institutions to use local labor and materials and to patronize Island businesses. Identify purchasing and contracting that uses off-Island vendors and encourage the development of local sources for local vendors.
 7. Manage Resources With Economic Value – Natural, historical, cultural, scenic, and recreational resources are the prime Island “export.” Maximize the potential of a clean environment, restore and protect historic buildings and areas, and manage and expand recreational uses.
 8. Develop Education Programs to Strengthen Local Economy – Teach subjects that focus on Island heritage: history, environment, marine-biology, and link these programs with opportunities for hands-on experience and job awareness.
 9. Monitor Consumer Prices – Survey Island prices for consumer goods at regular intervals and inform the public so that businesses can monitor themselves in terms of prices.

10. Waterfront Resources – Encourage the development of waterfront zoning bylaws that are protective of coastal environments and their traditional Island uses.
11. Local Management of Tourism – The Town should continue to take some responsibility for the ongoing planning of tourist facilities including restrooms and for educational programs to better manage tourism.
12. Cost Benefit Analysis of Tourist Economy – Study the impacts of each segment of the tourist economy and identify costs and benefits. Identify portions of the summer economy that should be encouraged.
13. Educate – Educate the public about the tourist economy through school programs community workshops and literature at arrival points.
14. Make the Island More User-Friendly – Design specific features to orient and educate visitors including brochures, historic plaques and markers, transportation symbols, guidebooks. The Town should encourage active website design and maintenance, for the Town itself and for businesses.
15. Marketing the Island to Specific Clientele – Pool resources to advertise with campaigns specifically designed to boost the desired parts of the economy (i.e. Birders/Nature Enthusiasts).
16. Higher Education as an Industry – Explore the potential for high school and college level research and credit programs to attract off-season economic activity.

Planning for Commercial Growth

- Keep existing business districts vital and workable.
- Restore and renovate historic buildings as an alternative to new construction, wherever possible.
- Support planned economic growth.
- Encourage commercial development to match the scale and density of Island neighborhoods. Limit overall square footage, massing of individual buildings, and expanses of paved areas to blend with the rural scale of the Island. Provide an appropriate rhythm of buildings along streetscapes with view corridors to the coast, wherever possible. Prevent strong shadowing effects from buildings near public coastlines and parks.

- Town Centers – Maintain services and year-round uses in existing Town commercial centers for pedestrian access and community identity. Address parking and traffic issues and sewage and septic needs.
- Positive Incentives – Develop incentives to direct commercial growth to desired locations.
- Home Businesses – Continually update and develop standards for home businesses to avoid conflicts with residential uses.

Education Partnerships/Workforce Development

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

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

Chapter 5 Community Facilities & Services

Community facilities and services provided by the Town, other government agencies, and non-government organizations ensure the public's health, safety and contribute to the welfare of residents and visitors.

GOAL: Provide public facilities and services that are adequate to meet the needs of the community and are affordable, accessible, attractive, and add to the enjoyment of the physical environment.

Significant changes and completed projects have occurred since the last plan update including:

- Addition of a new Town Water Supply Well
- Replacement of water meters with a remotely sensed system
- Planning for a public sewer service area for the Maddox Corridor
- Replacement of Main St sidewalks between Jester St & the Fairgrounds and portions of Main St & Maddox Blvd
- Extension/improvement of bicycle trails and lanes along the John H. Tarr Bay to the Beach Bike Trail
- Addition of two full-time EMS staff
- Renovation at the Curtis Merritt Harbor of Refuge
- Construction of a modern facility by the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Department
- Addition of the Miles Hancock Workshop and Legacy Pavilion at the Museum of Chincoteague Island
- Addition of the Annex to the Island Theatre
- Renovation of the old elementary school kitchen into the Chincoteague Cultural Arts (CCA) Center for the Arts
- Development of the Island Community House
- Renovation and expansion of the YMCA facilities and programs
- Addition of a floating dock at Robert Reed Park
- Memorial Park enhancements including re-establishment of the ballfield and addition of a kayak ramp
- Construction of the Hallie Whealton Smith Dog Park adjacent to The Island Nature Trail
- Improvements to the Donald J. Amrien Recreation Center (formerly the Island Activity Center)
- Development of the Smith Street Park adjacent to the DJA Recreational Center

Government Facilities and Services

Continuous monitoring by the Town ensures that facilities and services are able to meet current and projected demand. The Town must have the ability to anticipate when and where expanded capacity will be needed for basic infrastructure such as roads, streets and sidewalks, sewer, water services, and storm drainage systems. Public facilities and services such as schools, parks, libraries, health care, police, and emergency services, should also be monitored to ensure availability when needed.

Exhibit 5-1 shows the locations of community facilities and services provided by the Town and other government agencies supporting the public's health, safety and welfare.

Education

Two public schools, part of the Accomack County Public School System, are located in the Town of Chincoteague.

Chincoteague Elementary School, located on Hallie Whealton Smith Drive, serves pre-kindergarteners through fifth graders. Nearby, the Chincoteague Combined School is located on Main Street and serves students in sixth grade through 12th grade. Both schools are fully accredited.

Chincoteague Elementary School (CES) provides a full range of educational support for approximately 250 students.

Chincoteague Combined School (CCS) is a small community school with an enrollment of approximately 300 students. The school opened in 1957 and underwent a complete renovation in 2006, the classrooms are state of the art, with fully enhanced technology access for staff and students. CCS offers a wide range of academic courses, including dual enrollment, and advanced placement classes. Close proximity to NASA Wallops Flight Facility allows for unique opportunities in STEM education and internships. CCS is a full member of the Virginia High School League Athletic Association and provides many extracurricular activities to students.

The Eastern Shore Community College (ESCC) serves the residents of Accomack and Northampton Counties as a two-year institution of higher learning. The College is less than an hour's drive from Chincoteague. It is accredited by the "Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools" to award associate degrees in arts and sciences and also offers a vocational/technical training program. ESCC occupies a 115-acre site on U.S.



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

Route 13 and includes classrooms, laboratories, a bookstore, a lecture hall, administrative offices, and a Library-Learning Resource Center. The College is open during the entire year on a semester system.

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

An Old Dominion University (ODU) Distance Learning Site is located at ESCC. The ODU Main Campus is located in the City of Norfolk. ODU is a public research institution with rigorous academic programs and strategic partnerships. A robust curriculum is offered both on campus and online. A Guaranteed Admission Agreement between ESCC and ODU facilitates transfer from ESCC for select programs.

Town Complex

A complex of Town facilities and services are located at 6150 Community Drive. The complex houses the Town Office, as well as offices for Public Works, Building & Zoning, Law Enforcement, Mayor, Town Manager, Emergency Medical Services, Council Chamber, and conference rooms. The Chincoteague Center is also located in this complex. The Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company, Station 3, is located across Deep Hole Road from the complex.

Police Protection

The Chincoteague Police Department, the Island's primary law enforcement agency, employs eleven officers to enforce criminal and traffic laws protecting the Island's 4,000 residents and over 1 million annual visitors. The Department employs 10 full time officers, one part time officer, one seasonal traffic control officer and one seasonal park attendant. There is a need for a full time investigator. The Chincoteague Police Department has seven Department of Criminal Justice Services certified instructors with specialties in firearms, ASP baton, Centurion pepper gun and standardized field sobriety testing. The Town's law enforcement efforts are assisted by Accomack County's provision of jail and court facilities.

The Department has four full-time telecommunications positions, augmented by four to six part-time positions. The telecommunications provides service to the citizens of the Island on a 24-hour basis in its Communication Center for police dispatch. Due to recent consolidations of the federal government, dispatch services for the United States Fish and Wildlife and the National Park Service on Assateague Island have stopped. The Department is a member of the Hampton Roads Regional Academy of Criminal Justice in Newport News, VA.

The Chincoteague Police Department achieved professional accreditation by the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission in 2012, citing the rewards of "peer

recognition, liability insurance rate reductions, and political status within the community.” The Department is currently working on its third consecutive accreditation award and is the only accredited agency on the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

Public Works

The Public Works Department manages the operations and maintenance of the Town's public buildings, waterworks, public roads, sidewalks, drainage, mosquito control, solid waste management, street lighting, parks, and boating facilities. Routine installations, maintenance, repairs, and replacements required by any of these systems or facilities can in most cases be accomplished utilizing Public Works employees, equipment, and funding. The department procures materials and other services through requests for quotes, bid contracts, and applications.

Water System

The original water works system for the Town was constructed in 1927. In 1973, the Town added approximately 70,000 feet of additional distribution lines to the system resulting in approximately 70 miles of Town-owned and maintained water mains on the Island. In the mid-1980's, the Town installed a 16” ductile iron transmission line parallel to the existing 8” line. This line was subsequently slip lined with HDPE pipe reducing the effective diameter to 12” pipe. The older 8” supply line has been upgraded. It is used primarily to add redundancy to the system.



The source of the Town's water is a series of wells on the mainland approximately 5 miles from Town. There are currently 4 deep wells and 3 shallow wells for public water supply. The total capacity of the working wells is approximately 1.5 million gallons per day (MGD). As of mid-September 1991, the one-day maximum draw was 1.45 MGD, which occurred when the Town experienced a leak in the large transmission line. The one-day maximum draw under ordinary circumstances was 1.1 MGD, which has occurred on several years during the month of July.

Pumped water is chlorinated at the well site and then pumped 5 miles to the Island via either the 16" transmission line or through the older 8" transmission line. The water reaches the Town's water works, where it is filtered for iron and manganese, then enters a one million gallon ground storage tank. All contaminant levels, both primary and secondary, are consistently below EPA standards. From the ground storage tank, water is pumped to a 200,000-gallon elevated storage tank for distribution to the Town's 3,800 water customers. During the peak of the Island's tourist season the Town's storage capacity is sufficient to meet one day's demand.

Storage capacity is, perhaps, the one weak point in the system. The Town’s Planning Commission recommends that the Town review options regarding the construction of additional storage capacity for the water system. Supervisory Control And Data Acquisition (SCADA)

based system controls were installed in May, 2011. This system allows for remote monitoring and control of the wells and the Willow Street waterworks lift pumps. The water delivery system has also been automated with radio read meters. This provides for constant monitoring of flows at each individual meter, significantly enhancing the Towns water conservation efforts (i.e. detection of leaks, etc.).

For a detailed description of the water system, consult the Water Supply Plan (Reference R-05). It documents the 2010 water sources, use, resource conditions, projected demand, management actions, and a statement of need.

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

A Source Water Protection Plan (Reference R-06) was completed in October, 2014. The plan, developed with funding from the Virginia Department of Health, identifies and recommends steps to mitigate natural and manmade threats to the Town's water source.

In 2003, the Town commissioned development of the Water Master Plan. The plan was updated in 2014 (Reference R-16). This plan collected data on the existing water system, analyzed demand, developed a water system model, evaluated the current and modified systems, and recommended improvements. Most of these improvements have been implemented.

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

Sewage Disposal

Presently there is no central sewerage collection and treatment system serving the Island. Wastewater on Chincoteague is disposed of primarily by the use of holding or septic tanks and drain fields along with some remaining cesspools and seepage pits. The maintenance of these individually owned sewerage systems on the Island is provided by the periodic pumping of facilities every three to five years by private firms. Several package wastewater treatment systems have been installed and are in use. Inspection and regular maintenance from a certified operator are required by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality.

Sewerage disposal is probably the most controversial subject on the Island. At the one extreme are those who feel that there are no sewerage problems on the Island. On the other extreme are those who believe that every cesspool and septic system on the Island has either failed or is about to fail. In addition, different state and federal agencies have confused the issue by referencing the "sewerage problems" on Chincoteague in numerous reports and documents, without apparent substantial supporting evidence. For example, the state Department of Health, Division of Shellfish Sanitation has "restricted" approximately 30% of the waters surrounding Chincoteague (mostly on the west side of the Island) because the "potential for contaminating" shellfish growing areas is present. Whether the potential pollution is fossil (fuel, as many suspect) or fecal is not spelled out.

In 2011, Town Council appointed five (5) representatives to a Wastewater Advisory Committee. The Committee was tasked with completing a 2-year study of public wastewater treatment options and a Phase One utility system to serve the Main Street and Maddox Boulevard commercial corridors. The Committee issued a final report in June of 2013, see Reference R-17 for additional details.

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

Drainage

Localized flooding that occurs during rainfall events is the result of storm drainage system capacity limitations and flat topography. Infill development can contribute to the flooding by filling in existing low areas that naturally store runoff, redirecting runoff onto adjacent properties or disrupting the natural drainage patterns. In addition to flooding caused by rainfall events, the Island is subject to tidal flooding.

A Stormwater Master Plan was completed in May of 2011 (Reference R-18). The plan provided a list of recommended improvements, many of which have been implemented. Much work has been accomplished in improving the drainage situation for Chincoteague, however, the following recommendations still apply:

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

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

- Apply the current drainage ordinance -controlling the filling in of remaining drainage channels.
- An ordinance should be written and adopted to control the filling of private parcels which may adversely affect an adjoining property.

Roads / Sidewalks / Storm Drains

The Town of Chincoteague is included in the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Urban Program. This is the only source of public revenue for the maintenance of the Town's public road system. The mission of the Urban Program is to administer the maintenance program and develop & manage the construction program with municipalities to provide safe, efficient, effective and environmentally balanced urban transportation systems. Urban highways include certain roads and streets within the corporate limits of qualifying municipalities. A 'qualifying municipality', as defined under Sections 33.1-23.3 and 33.1-41.1 of the Code of Virginia, is one having 3,500 or more inhabitants and maintaining streets under Section 33.1-80 of the Code. Consult Reference S-20 for information about the VDOT Urban Program.

The only private road maintenance provided by the Town is scraping/grading. Any materials required must be furnished by the owner. Requests for grading must be made in writing.

The Town should ensure that the collector roads to evacuation routes are maintained at or near minimum elevations of the SR 175 causeway.

Street Lights

Street lights are installed on publicly owned streets by the Town. Street lights may be installed on privately owned streets provided such streets serve more than one household and are publicly accessible. On privately owned streets without power poles, it is the responsibility of the requester(s) to provide the necessary electrical feed and poles for street lights; the Town provides the street lights and pays the monthly cost of such lights. Note that the Town determines the placement of lights on such privately owned streets.

Solid Waste Management

The Town provides weekly pick up of regular household waste through contract with the fees for the service being included in water bills issued by the Town. Residents must place garbage curbside in a roll out cart. Residents with bulk trash items which cannot be disposed through curbside collections or at the Recycling Center may wish to use the Town's bulk trash service.

Accomack County provides a Recycling Center on Deep Hole Road to receive household trash. The center recycles metal, cardboard, waste oil, waste antifreeze, tires, batteries and plastic at this location. The center also accepts used clothing donations.

The Accomack County Landfill is located on Greta Road in Atlantic, Virginia to receive items not collected by the Town.

Emergency Medical Services

The Town of Chincoteague Emergency Medical Services (CEMS) provides twenty-four hour Advanced Life Support response to the citizens and visitors of Chincoteague Island. CEMS works jointly with the members of the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company Rescue Squad, to provide Advanced Life Support and transportation of sick and/or injured patients. Medics work out of the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Department, Station 3, on Deep Hole Road. CEMS also provides Emergency Medical Response to Assateague Island and assists the United States Coast Guard with Search and Rescue cases when requested. Mutual Aid is also provided to and received from mainland communities.

Emergency Management

The Town of Chincoteague has a robust all hazards emergency management program. Emergency Management staff monitors daily weather and intelligence briefings to protect citizens and visitors from natural and man-made disasters. The Public Safety Committee meets bi-monthly to discuss safety issues of the island, including those pertaining to emergency management and serves as the LEPC (Local Emergency Planning Committee) for Hazardous Materials Planning and Tracking per SARA Title III.

During an emergency, the Town operates within the guidelines of the Emergency Operations Plan that is reviewed and updated regularly and is re-adopted by the Town Council every 4 years, as is required by the Commonwealth of Virginia. The purpose of this plan is to establish the legal and organizational basis for operations in the Town of Chincoteague in response to any type of disaster or large-scale emergency situation.

The Town of Chincoteague's Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is located in the Municipal Building at 6150 Community Drive. The EOC is staffed with emergency personnel during disasters to mitigate the dangers to life safety, public property, and private property.

The Chincoteague Center

The Chincoteague Recreation/Convention Center Authority completed the construction of a recreation and convention center in 1996. Construction was funded by allocations from the County and Town transient occupancy taxes. The mission of the Center is to provide affordable event space for the engagement, education, and enrichment of community members and the visiting public. It also serves as a Point Of Distribution (POD) for Emergency Management Services, if needed. The facility is located at 6155 Community Drive.

Renovated and maintained as a modern ADA-compliant 9,000 square foot facility, it can host 40 to 800 guests with ample parking, flexible room sizing, a removable stage, lighting & sound

systems, HD projection system, and catering kitchen options. The facility includes an outdoor patio area. Professional consultants and other services are available. The Center annually hosts corporate events/conventions, itinerary/group travel activities, festivals, shows, workshops, seminars, performances, private events/weddings, and meetings of local organizations.

The Center has implemented a strategic plan entitled Chincoteague Center Action Plan: Foundation for Tourism Growth and Community Enhancement. Increases in the number of annual events, attendees, and revenue has been significant over the past four years. Operating costs in excess of revenues are supported by Town transient occupancy and meals taxes.

Flood Insurance

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

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

In 2003, Chincoteague improved its rating to Class 8, entitling the community to a 10% discount on flood insurance premiums. The NFIP adopted a revised manual for the CRS program in 2013 which required Chincoteague to amend its flood plain management program in order to maintain or improve the flood insurance discount available to Town property owners. Chincoteague retained a rating of Class 8.

Effective May 18, 2015, new FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps changed the flood risk of certain properties at higher elevations. These structures are no longer located in the regulatory 100 year floodplain (subject to a 1% chance flood) and are eligible for voluntary flood insurance at reduced rates. In addition, the base flood elevation has been lowered throughout the Town which affects building requirements for new construction or substantial improvements, and may have insurance rate benefits for existing structures.

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

Harbor



The Curtis Merritt Harbor of Refuge was constructed in the 1980's at the south end of the Island. This location gives boating access to Chincoteague Bay as well as other seaside Eastern Shore inlets and bays and the Atlantic Ocean.

Renovations completed in 2005 included such improvements as the breakwater, bulkheading, finger piers, handicapped floating pier, fish cleaning station, collector piers and a paved parking lot

area. Subsequent renovations include restrooms, showers, a floating loading dock, a Harbor Master Office, a replacement fuel service system, and bulkhead repairs. In 2019, a second pair of restrooms were completed. The facilities are ADA compliant and include a dock with handicap access.

The harbor offers boat launching facilities and 25', 30', 40', and 50' slips for an annual lease fee. Twenty-six additional slips have been added for a total of 120. The Planning Commission recommends that additional slips be added.

The Harbor is used by local and off-Island boaters for both working and recreational craft. There is currently a waiting list for annually leased slips, indicating the need to create more slips to accommodate the number of boaters who want to keep their boats at the facility.

The Harbor was originally constructed using federal grant funds. Ongoing operations, routine maintenance (bulkhead and decking replacement), and some enhancements have been funded through leasing fees and fuel sales. Additional funding has been provided by the Town and the Virginia Port Authority. Future enhancements include installation of an additional floating dock, replacement of both finger piers, and a new fuel service system.

Town Council and the Harbor Committee should consider development of a long-term plan specific to the Harbor.

As the inlet at the Island's south end has become wider and the marsh that protected the harbor significantly reducing, wave action at the harbor has increased. An engineering study of the area is recommended and may provide implementable means of deflecting the wave action off the harbor.

Town council should consider implementable means supporting resiliency of the harbor.

Trolley Service

The Pony Express is a seasonal trolley service provided by the Town of Chincoteague. This service is open to the public and follows fixed routes, stops, and schedules, servicing a

significant portion of the island. Ridership fees are minimal. An Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) public transportation option is available.

Star Transit

Star Transit, the public transportation program of the Accomack-North Hampton Transportation District Commission, exists to provide safe, reliable and cost efficient general public transportation services to the residents of the Eastern Shore. Star Transit provides a local fixed route and bus service for the Eastern Shore of Virginia.

Service began in 1996. Seven routes have been established with the Silver and Orange Lines connecting the Island with the mainland. The system now carries over 80,000 riders per year.

Maritime Services

The US Coast Guard manages six major operational mission programs: maritime law enforcement, maritime response, maritime prevention, marine transportation system management, maritime security operations, and defense operations. Coast Guard Station Chincoteague is located near downtown Main Street.

Coast Guard Station Chincoteague is an operational field unit engaged in:

- Search and Rescue
- Maritime Law Enforcement
- Foreign and Domestic Vessel Inspections
- Fishing, Towing, Charter and Attraction Vessel Exams
- Marine Casualty Investigations
- Port Safety and Security
- Homeland Defense / Military Readiness
- Waterways Management
- Waterfront Facility Inspections
- Marine Environmental Protection
- Aids to Navigation

Postal Services

The United States Postal Service is an independent agency of the executive branch of the United States federal government responsible for providing postal service in the United States. The Postal Service mission is to provide a reliable, efficient, trusted and affordable universal delivery service that connects people and helps businesses grow. The local Post Office, located in downtown Main Street, provides a full complement of postal products and services.

Non-Government Facilities and Services

A number of non-government organizations provide services in the town. Those with facilities and services available to the public, are considered essential infrastructure, and/or receive financial support from the Town of Chincoteague are listed here.

Exhibit 5-2 shows the locations of community facilities and services provided by non-government agencies supporting the public's health, safety and welfare.

Fire & Emergency Services

Fire and emergency services on the Island are provided by the Chincoteague Volunteer Fire Company, a combination paid/volunteer department jointly supported by the Town and Accomack County. Located near the Town Municipal Center on Deep Hole Road, the Company operates out of one station and is comprised of 25 active volunteer members and 85 life members. Paid staff includes five paramedics, who are on duty 24 hours a day, all year around. The Department owns four pumper/engines, a 75-foot ladder truck, a rescue squad, and two Advanced Life Support (ALS) ambulances. The Company provides firefighting, hazardous material (HAZMAT) response, ALS emergency medical, and vehicle rescue (extrication) services. The facility, completed in 2019, allows for all equipment to be housed under one roof, state of the art communications system, as well as a dining hall, de-contamination room, and dedicated office space.



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

The Town provides paid Town Staff in support of Emergency and Rescue Services for 24 hour operations. Accomack County appropriates minimal funds annually to the Volunteer Fire Company. Additional financial support is provided through private donations, fundraising events, and contributions from the Town. The Department maintains ownership of a herd of approximately 150 wild ponies, rounded up each year for its Pony Swim and Auction. An annual carnival event is held the month of July and is a major funding source.

The Insurance Services Office (ISO) of Virginia classifies water distribution and fire suppression capabilities on a scale of "1" to "10," 10 being "no" or "minimal" protection. Properties within the corporate limits of Chincoteague are rated "6/9" by the ISO in terms of their exposure to fire loss. This rating means that properties located 5 road miles from the fire station and within 1,000 feet of a hydrant are rated "6." Properties located within five road miles from the station and more than 1,000 feet from a hydrant are rated "9". Approximately, 95% of the Island is rated "6" and five percent of the Island is rated "9." With a change in the ISO Public Protection Classification, the Town's rating is now listed as 06/6X.

Health Care

A community health center which is part of the Eastern Shore Rural Health System currently provides primary health care to Town residents. The Chincoteague Community Health Center, located on Main Street, is operated by the Eastern Shore Rural Health System, which is a non-profit community and migrant health center organization. The Center offers full laboratory services, immunization services for children and adults, preventive health education, outreach services, case management, and other health counseling. While the Center provides health care to people of all ages, it specializes in adult and geriatric primary care and preventative services.

Pharmacy, dental, and outpatient physical rehabilitation services are commercially available on the Island.

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

Riverside Shore Memorial Hospital constructed a new hospital facility to serve residents of the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Its location in Accomack County (Town of Onley) is closer to Chincoteague. A new medical facility recently constructed in New Church by the Eastern Shore Rural Health System provides enhanced services to North Accomack County and Chincoteague.

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

Utilities

While the Town provides water services, other utilities are offered by commercial entities.

Home Heating Fuel

Liquid propane and heating oil services are offered by a number of local businesses, some of whom have distribution centers located on the Island. Property owner storage is by above ground tanks.

Electricity

Power is delivered to the Island by two 69kV transmission circuits entering the Chincoteague substation. There is no plan for additional transmission circuits or increases in voltage for at least 20 years. The utility performs upgrades to the Chincoteague substation which increases capacity but not the voltage. The distribution system on Chincoteague is 12kV and also not expected to change. Service is distributed throughout the Island by overhead cables.

There are currently no transmission lines of 150kV or higher, nor are any planned.

Telephone - Landline

Landline phone service is provided by a single utility which offers additional services, such as DSL internet service. Service is distributed throughout the Island via overhead cables.

Telephone - Cellular

Service is distributed throughout the Island via two cell towers, one of which was constructed in 2019.

Cable Television

Cable television service is provided by a single utility which offers additional services, such as cable internet service. Service is distributed throughout the Island via overhead cables.

Satellite Television

Satellite television service is provided by several commercial vendors, some offer additional services, such as satellite internet and/or telephone services.

Broadband

The Eastern Shore of Virginia Broadband Authority is a public authority, formed by the Counties of Northampton and Accomack, to provide broadband services on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. The ESVBA is a public not for profit company created under the Virginia Wireless Service Authorities Act, Chapter 54.1 §15.2-543.1.1 et seq. and by a resolution of the Counties of Northampton and Accomack.

The ESVBA provides connectivity and dedicated internet services to all customers. However, the ESVBA's network is an "Open Access" network, which allows for any certified provider to utilize the ESVBA's network to provide services to end customers.

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

Wireless residential connections are currently available on the Island from certified providers. Fiber optic connections have been installed at several government and commercial entities. Residential fiber optic connections are offered through ESVBA's Fiber To The Home (FTTH) initiative.

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

Museum

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

Originally known as the Oyster and Maritime Museum (Oyster Museum, Inc.), the Museum was created in the 1960s through private donations. The building was enlarged and modified in the early 1990s to accommodate a growing artifact collection. In 2010 the Board of Directors broadened the scope of the mission to embrace the full island history. It was renamed the Museum of Chincoteague Island, and the exhibits were extensively renovated and revised. At that time the Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation provided a grant of \$49,000 to repair and upgrade the facility. In 2012 the Virginia Foundation for the Humanities provided a research grant of \$3,000 to investigate the role of African-Americans in early island history. The museum relies on the generosity of its guests and benefactors, including the Town, for financial support for its educational programs and endowment fund.



Highlights of the museum collection include the original 1st order Fresnel lens from the Assateague Island lighthouse; the iconic island ponies, Misty and Stormy; the island oyster industry and the antique pumper that was the first piece of fire-fighting equipment acquired by the island's fire company. Other exhibits feature local decoy carvers, ship models and island waterfowl. In addition to its regular exhibits, the Museum mounts several temporary exhibits each year focusing on other aspects of island and regional history. The museum also hosts special events and educational programs. The Museum partners with Road Scholar (formerly Elderhostel) to offer sixteen or more travel-study programs each year.

Recent additions include the Miles Hancock Workshop and Legacy Pavilion. The Pavilion, with views of Assateague Island and Channel, provides space for meetings & events, seating up to 50

people. The Museum Entrance Hall seats a maximum of 45. Anyone interested in using the museum as a venue for a meeting or an event can contact the Director for details.

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

Library

The Chincoteague Island Library opened its doors on July 4, 1995 in the restored Wallace Jester Barbershop in downtown Main Street. Less than 15 years later, in 2010, the library dedicated a new wing which tripled the size of the original building. The Town of Chincoteague donated the land to build the addition, several Virginia foundations awarded generous grants, and full-time/part-time residents & visitors generously donated time, talent and funds to support this effort.

The Library serves the residents of Chincoteague, Eastern Shore neighbors and many visitors. Although free and open to the public, the Library is an independent 501 c(3) organization, and is supported by private donations and grants. Over 30 volunteers staff the facility. The library is affiliated with the Eastern Shore Public Library (ESPL) in Accomac, Virginia which provides some part-time support staff, access to their circulation system, twice weekly messenger service as well as several other agreed upon services.

The Library Provides:

- Books, magazines, audio books, DVDs and resources of the ESPL System
- Public-use computers with Internet access
- 24/7 wireless Internet (Wi-Fi) access
- Free books and magazines for those who do not have a library card
- Year-round preschool story time & crafts
- Summer children's programs which include an incentive reading program, weekly programs for younger and older children, and special program events
- Adult programs, book clubs, poetry readings and special events
- Informational services for the general public
- Library Benefit Shop sells used books, stationery, book marks, special first edition books and other merchandise



The Island Theatre

The Theatre, built in 1946 in 40's deco style, was the site for the world premiere of *Misty of Chincoteague*, and preserves *Misty's* hoofprints as a present-day tourist attraction. The Island Theatre is the last of three theaters that once existed on the island.

The Chincoteague Island Arts Organization (CIAO) was formed by a group of concerned citizens in 2011 with the goal of purchasing and restoring the historic Island Theatre at 4074 Main Street. The theater purchase and renovation efforts are supported by generous donations from island residents and visitors and substantial grant funding. The Town supports the Island Theatre as a unique asset and vital component of our "historic core" and continuing downtown Main Street revitalization.



The Island Theatre renovation included upgraded sound, light and projection systems. The theatre now offers first-run movies throughout the tourist season, year-round concerts and live stage plays. It also hosts a popular weekly classic film series during the winter and spring months.

The Island Theatre Annex, a former retail space attached to the theatre building, was renovated in 2015. It provides a venue for smaller, intimate performances, informational lectures, educational

opportunities, children's activities and a flexible meeting space for community groups. The Annex is also available to rent for private events.

Chincoteague Island Arts Organization

The Chincoteague Island Arts Organization (CIAO) is a 501(3)c non-profit organization, incorporated in Virginia as a non-profit in December 2011. CIAO was created to save, utilize and maintain the vintage Island Theatre as a cultural arts center for Chincoteague, offering a unique downtown venue for events.

The mission of CIAO is to offer movies, education, cultural and community events that enhance vitality and activity in the downtown business district, to support island tourism and to promote the general well-being of the island's citizens and businesses.

Chincoteague Cultural Alliance

The Chincoteague Cultural Alliance (CCA) is a grassroots, all-volunteer, 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to building community through the arts. Launched in 2003 with a monthly Art Stroll featuring art exhibits and demonstrations, performances and tastings at local galleries and shops, CCA now produces over 100 events a year. Most take place at CCA's Community Center for the Arts on Church Street.

During its first 10 years in operation, CCA expanded to present an array of arts programming. CCA strives to give residents and visitors opportunities to experience the arts, both as audience members and creators. The Island Coffeehouse, Chincoteague Island Theatre Company productions, and Story Swaps offer possibilities for musicians, actors, and anyone to perform and polish their skills. Events like the Farmers and Artisans Market, Second Saturday Artful Flea, Holly Day Market, and Annual Plein Air Show, as well as the Kitchen Gallery, give experienced and emerging artists a venue to show and market their work. CCA offers classes in all things creative for adults and a free monthly art class for children. The organization keeps costs for attendance low, and many events, like movies and concerts in the park, are free.

Through community support, CCA raised enough funds for a down payment and purchased the building in December 2015. To complete the extensive renovations necessary, CCA received a \$50,000 grant from the Eastern Shore of Virginia Community Foundation and a \$30,000 challenge grant from the Cabell Foundation, which was matched through individual contributions. The Town partnered to fund a new septic system that is shared by the CCA building and the Donald J. Amrien Recreation Center.

To support its programming, CCA receives funding through the Virginia Commission for the Arts Local Government Challenge Grant that the Town has applied for successfully since 2010. In addition, the organization has gotten a small General Operating Support grant from the Virginia Commission for the Arts each year since 2014. Most of CCA's revenue, however, comes from programming and small donors - individuals and local businesses.

Island Community House

The Island Community House is a small "community center" located in the historic downtown commercial district. The House is a registered 509-C non-profit. It is hoped that the House can serve as a central asset that all non-profits can share and use cooperatively.

As a multi-use space, the Community House hopes to offer amenities and services not addressed by current non-profit organizations.

Facilities include a meeting room, smaller meeting/office room, full commercial kitchen, and a handicapped accessible ½ bath located on the first floor. Two temporary residential units consisting of a bedroom and full bath is located on the second floor. The rear building will contain a freestanding small residential apartment.

The Community House funding is being done privately through a donation by a local benefactor. It is envisioned that if it is successful, an endowment will be created to insure its long term success.

David Landsberger Family YMCA

As a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization, the Y provides crucial programs and services to residents and visitors every year. The Chincoteague Island Family Y offers exceptional Health and Wellness facilities & classes through its recently renovated facility. With the help of generous donors, the Y is able offer key outreach programs that teach children to swim, prepare children six months - to five years old for kindergarten, provide summer enrichment programs to combat summer learning loss, mentoring, diabetes prevention programs, cancer support and more.

Recreation Facilities

The Town of Chincoteague offers a wide range of facilities available to residents and visitors providing year-round recreation opportunities.

Exhibit 5-3 shows the locations of the recreational facilities provided by the Town supporting the public's health, safety and welfare.

Boat Landings

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

Robert N. Reed Downtown Waterfront Park

One of the Town's waterfront parks, the Robert N. Reed Downtown Waterfront Park, located on Main Street near the Chincoteague Channel, offers a waterfront venue for residents to enjoy picnicking, recreation, and beautiful views of the water. In addition to recreational opportunities, the park serves as a site for community festivals and events and other arts & cultural events which have already begun drawing as many as 1,500 visitors annually. The park currently has 10 boat slips available for rent to transient boats 26' to 50' in length; additional slips for docking, and a fishing pier.

The Town purchased an expansion parcel that connects existing park improvements along the waterfront to Bridge Street. Through the support of a grant from the Virginia Saltwater Fishing

Fund, the old bridge fender at the end of Bridge Street was constructed as a 150 foot long fishing pier in 2014.

Revitalization of Main Street with new sidewalks and street furnishings has been completed during this Plan cycle from Maddox Boulevard to Church Street and from Cropper Street to the Fairgrounds..

Chincoteague Veteran’s Memorial Park

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



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

Donald J. Leonard Park

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

Island Nature Trail

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

The Trail is a demonstration landscape for the Plant Eastern Shore Natives campaign as an example of shady landscape native plants.

Hallie Whealton Smith Dog Park

Located adjacent to the Island Nature Trail, the Hallie Whealton Smith Dog Park was opened in 2019. For dogs, the park includes two enclosed areas (small dog & large dog), water fountains,

waste collection facilities, agility equipment, and decorative fire hydrants. Park benches have been installed in the enclosures. Construction and maintenance for the park was funded by the Town, Park Pass fees, and private donations.

Watson Park

A small urban lot park is located in downtown Main Street at the intersection of Main and Cleveland Streets. The park is well gardened with a backdrop of wall murals and park benches.

Mariners Point

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

Donald J. Amrien Recreation Center

The Donald J. Amrien Recreation Center, formerly known as the Island Activity Center, previously served as the old elementary school gym. Center indoor facilities include pickleball courts, basketball courts, and restrooms. Outdoor facilities include a pickleball court. The facility, located at 6301 Smith Street, is available year-round and use must be scheduled with the Town.

Other Possible Facilities

The Town should pursue the possibility of turning other public lands into recreational areas such as the vacant Bridge Tender's House located on Marsh Island and property located on Lekiets Drive. It is noted that the local little league organization has leased the property behind the Chincoteague Center from Accomack County Public Schools and constructed four little league fields. Planned and under development is the Smith Street Park. Facilities will include playground equipment and park benches. The park will be located adjacent to the Donald J. Amrien Recreation Center.

Resiliency of Facilities and Services

The primary hazard for the Town has been coastal flooding with hurricanes and northeasters. Mitigation of and rapid recovery from the effects of water intrusion onto the Island have long been an essential element of the Town's planning and implementations. An overall assessment of hazards to the community is addressed in The Eastern Shore of Virginia Hazard Mitigation Plan (Reference R-08).

Of particular interest here is the resiliency of non-commercial critical infrastructure.

Implementation Strategies

Government Services and Facilities

Police Protection

- Maintain professional accreditation for the Chincoteague Police Department as per the Virginia Law Enforcement Professional Standards Commission
- Add a full time investigator to staff.

Water Systems

- Continue to maintain the water system with existing resources.
- Consider integration of one or more above ground storage tanks (see Reference R-16).

Sewerage

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

- Encourage private (and USCG) wastewater treatment permit holders to provide service by voluntary connection within the Main Street Corridor small service area between Maddox Boulevard and Bunting Road.
- Work with others to identify and reduce nutrients in the waters around Chincoteague Island.

Drainage

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

Roads / Sidewalks / Storm Drains

- Ensure that the collector roads to evacuation routes are maintained at or near minimum elevations of the SR 175 causeway.
- Correct drainage at the intersection of Main Street and Maddox Boulevard.

Flood Insurance

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

Harbor

- Ensure the harbor remains as an economically valuable Island asset.

- Harbor Committee should continue to review current financial health and make necessary adjustments to ensure that future costs are not born by Island taxpayers.
- Develop a long-term plan specific to the Harbor.

Town Facilities

- Adopt a standard for facility wayfinding signage and apply to appropriate facilities.
- Maintain current information for local government facilities, including locations, on the Town website and brochure.
- Consider utilization of best management practices (Stormwater & Shoreline Management) supporting resiliency when improving or maintaining facilities.
- Identify application of best management practices with informational signage and/or printed/electronic materials.

Non-Government Services and Facilities

Utilities - Broadband

- Encourage service providers to expand and improve affordable broadband services on Chincoteague Island to all residents.
- Working with service providers, develop a plan for extending high-speed data services to all Island potential customers.
- Encourage service providers to reduce broadband rates for all customers.

Recreation Facilities

- Pursue the possibility of acquiring or improving other public lands into recreational areas.
- Continue to consider the possibility of a plan to raise funds for construction of an outdoor community swimming pool.
- Consider utilization of best management practices (Stormwater & Shoreline Management) supporting resiliency when improving or maintaining facilities.
- Identify application of best management practices with informational signage and/or printed/electronic materials.

- Maintain current information for Town Recreational Facilities, including locations, on the Town website and brochure.
- Adopt a standard for recreational facility wayfinding and location signage and apply to all facilities.

Resiliency of Facilities and Services

- Identify critical non-commercial infrastructure elements, assess, and increase their resiliency.
- Perform a vulnerability and exposure analysis for non-commercial critical infrastructure.
- Site future non-commercial critical infrastructure outside of or in less vulnerable areas.
- Ensure the placement of trees and shrubs conform to utility easements.

Exhibit 5-1: Government Facilities and Services



Exhibit 5-3: Town Recreational Facilities



Chapter 6 Transportation

Streets are the most visible and most important public spaces in the Town of Chincoteague.

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



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

GOAL: Provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.

Significant changes and completed projects have occurred since the last plan update including:

- Replacement of sidewalks, curbing, road surface, road markings and signage along Maddox Boulevard from Main Street to the Wildlife Refuge
- Replacement of sidewalks, curbing, road surface, road markings and signage along Main Street between Church Street and Maddox Boulevard
- Replacement of Main Street sidewalks between Jester Street & the Fairgrounds
- Additional public parking established adjacent to Bridge Street
- Resurfacing of arterial roads including Willow Street and Ocean Boulevard
- Resurfacing of numerous local streets
- Extension/improvement of bicycle trails and lanes
- Release of a revised Bicycle & Trail Brochure
- Improvements to boat docking facilities at Robert Reed Park & marina

Introduction

Chincoteague Island property owners are currently served by a well maintained network of paved public streets that includes approximately 24 miles of roadway. In addition to this transportation network, there is another 21 miles of private roadway and access easements which are currently in various states of private owner maintenance. The Planning Commission identified the topic of private roads as a significant issue that is not currently addressed in the Comprehensive Plan.



The street network and individual streets are considered to be shared spaces in which the needs of pedestrians and bicyclists are given equal or greater priority than those of auto drivers. The street layout should provide many alternative paths from origin to destination. Street design should require slow auto speeds and to give clear notice to drivers that these are places where slower speeds are required. Streets should promote connectivity and small-blocks

appropriate to the natural conditions. They should serve the most frequent users pedestrians, bikes and local traffic. Necessary, but infrequent users (e.g. moving vans, emergency vehicles), should be accommodated but their requirements should not control the street design.

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

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

1. Improve vehicular circulation by upgrading streets where feasible, requiring connectivity between adjacent properties and requiring new development to make improvements to the existing street system;
2. Continue to provide and enhance local transit service (Star Transit, Pony Express, UBER/LYFT);
3. Improve safety and convenience for pedestrians and bicyclists by planning and developing a community wide system of bike routes (Jack Tarr Bay to Beach Bike Trail) and pedestrian trails; and

4. Increase the resiliency of public roads, primarily evacuation routes and those circulator roads connecting to it, by reducing their inundation vulnerability.

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

Public Streets

The Town transportation system includes streets, sidewalks, and support elements for waterborne transport (See Exhibit 6-1).

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

Currently, parking in the downtown area is limited. The area between Mumford and Church Streets allows some storefront parking on the east side of Main Street. Additionally, the Town owns and maintains a parking lot off of Post Office Street which is located behind current businesses located between Mumford and Church Streets. The Town also provides off street parking in the boat ramp area located across from Cropper Street. Additional public parking was added in the Downtown Main Street area along Bridge Street, adjacent to Robert Reed Park. It is recommended that the Town look into future parking areas for easy access.

Another municipal service provided by the Town is the installation, operation, and maintenance of street lights. Currently there are approximately 624 publicly funded streetlights within the Town's corporate limits. The Town has a policy of accepting requests for additional streetlights from its citizens, and where such are deemed appropriate and necessary for public safety and welfare, new lights are installed and operated at public expense. As street lights are requiring maintenance, they are being replaced with LED models.

Approximately 80% of the public roads serving residential and commercial areas in the original Town have sidewalks. The Town has a policy of installing sidewalks upon citizen request and upon their agreement to bear half of the construction cost. The Town annually allocates public funds for the maintenance and extension of these facilities to meet such citizen requests or municipal needs.

Sidewalks are virtually nonexistent in the annexed area. The application of the sidewalk policy should benefit this area. Compared with other towns on the Eastern Shore of Virginia, lot sizes in Chincoteague are small and population density is high. These facts make sidewalks important, particularly in the centers of activity in Town. As population density and traffic continue to

increase on Chincoteague, good sidewalks throughout the Town will become a necessity in order to promote safety, access and circulation in the residential and commercial neighborhoods. A 2017 VDOT survey (Reference R-21) showed a total of 17.5 miles of sidewalks with 1.2 miles ADA-compliant, 8.2 miles non-ADA compliant but functional and 7.9 miles both non-ADA compliant and non-functional. Since release of that report a significant portion of sidewalk has been replaced with ADA compliant surfaces.

A 2015 study prepared for Virginia Coastal Zone Management (VCZM) assesses the inundation vulnerability of the transportation infrastructure for the Eastern Shore of Virginia (see Reference R-24).

The study, using high-resolution elevation data, conducted a series of simulations to assess roadway inundation as a result of sea level elevations above the 2015 Mean High High Water (MHHW) levels. A portion of those results are provided in the Table 6-1 below. A more general visualization is given in Exhibits 6-3 and 6-4.

| Jurisdiction | Total Miles of Roads | Sea Level above 2015 MHHW | | | |
|--------------|----------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------------------|
| | | 1 Foot | | 2 Feet | |
| | | Total Miles Inundated | % of Total in Jurisdiction | Total Miles Inundated | % of Total in Jurisdiction |
| Chincoteague | 60 | 4 | 6.70% | 38 | 63.30% |

Table 6-1: Roadway Inundation Estimates

While some public roads are serviced by storm water management systems, most rely on ditches. Some elements of these systems are inundated from rainwater runoff during storm events and salt water from tidal and wind forcing. The issues stemming from these conditions are two-fold. Firstly, inundated systems lack the desired capacity to accommodate stormwater, increasing flooding vulnerability of the road, Secondly, these conditions increase the vulnerability of surrounding areas by serving as a conduit for storm surge (see Reference R-24).

Improvement Projects

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

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

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

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

Improvements to the Main Street corridor were subsequently extended from Church Street north to Maddox Boulevard as well as south from Cropper Street to the Fairgrounds. In addition, Main Street was resurfaced from the Fairgrounds south to Beebe Road.

US Fish and Wildlife Service completed a new elevated boardwalk along Beach Road in 2013 improving the connection between Town and Wildlife Refuge for pedestrians and bicyclists. Long range plans for the Refuge provided grant funding for various alternative transportation proposals provided multi-modal transportation enhancements to the refuge (Reference R-13) along Maddox Boulevard between Main Street and Chicken City Road. Work is currently in progress to complete enhancements to the Wildlife Refuge.

Implementation Strategies

- Where possible, require construction of planned vehicle (e.g., planned collector routes) and pedestrian system (e.g., sidewalks, waterfront trail) components as part of proposed development projects.
- Monitor the volume of traffic on secondary roads to ensure safe passage.
- Develop long range design and management solutions for the primary areas of traffic congestion during the peak summer months at Main Street/Maddox Boulevard and Deep Hole Road/Maddox Boulevard intersections.
- Promote and encourage continued maintenance dredging of the Chincoteague Inlet, Chincoteague Channel, and Inland Waterway.
- Promote efficient and safe waterfront areas for docking both large deep-draft vessels and smaller boats.

- Seek to ensure that handicapped and disabled residents and visitors are provided adequate means of access to all buildings and places.
- Promote the continued open flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic to existing facilities on Assateague Island.
- Create bike paths in areas susceptible to heavy bike traffic.
- Improve the existing right-of-ways by widening the roads providing greater shoulder access and installing sidewalks, where appropriate.
- Install sidewalks along the entirety of Maddox Boulevard. Continue to implement Maddox Boulevard Multi-Modal Transportation Enhancement plan (See Reference R-13)
- Pursue the construction of shoulders along the Route 175 Causeway to provide for public safety, emergency response, and possible shoreline stabilization/storm resiliency.
- Address SR 175 elevation and frequent flooding concerns with VDOT.
- Raise or protect roads to secure emergency access routes.
- Increase storm water drainage system and floodplain storage capacities servicing collector roads.

Private Roads

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

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

Implementation Strategies

- Amend Town Code, Appendix B – Land Subdivision and Development to include multiple standards for private roads that represent the range of conditions, property access and lot sizes found across the Island. Identify which private road categories are eligible for improvement to a public street standard and define the necessary steps to achieve the higher standard.
- Continue work with VDOT to adopt a modified subdivision street standard serving a limited number of small lots so that more private roads may be eligible for public street maintenance.
- Study and develop strategies for funding and constructing improvements to private roads so that they may be eligible for acceptance into the public street system.
- Encourage the use of available resources to acquire and improve private right of way where limited segments of the private road network provide a critical through public street function for emergency, utility and Town service vehicle access.

Exhibit 6-1: Transportation Map - Chincoteague

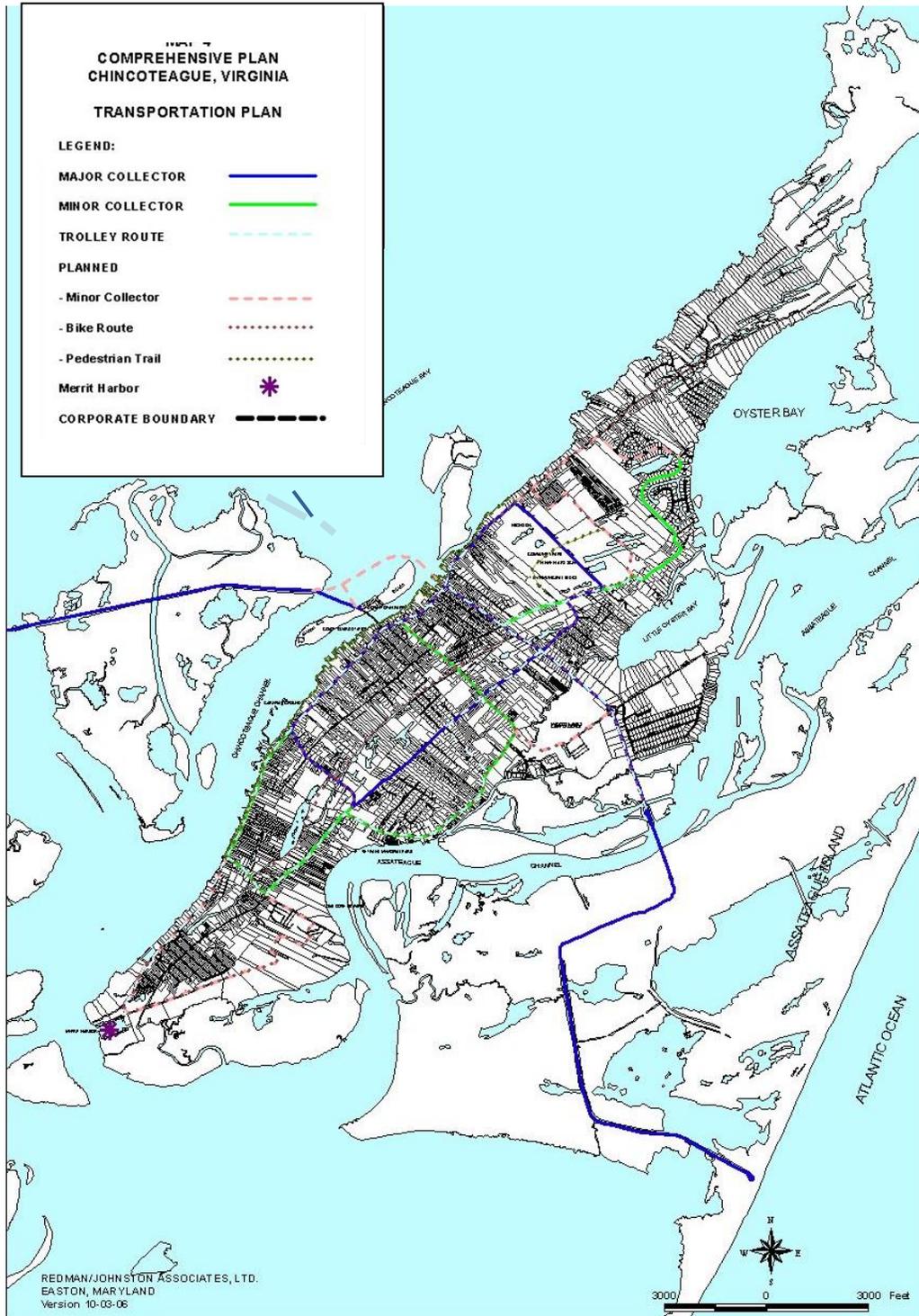


Exhibit 6-2: Public Street and Private Road Network



Exhibit 6-3: Inundation Vulnerability Assessment Map - SR 175

Source: Eastern Shore of Virginia Transportation Infrastructure Inundation Vulnerability Assessment, VDOT (May, 2015)

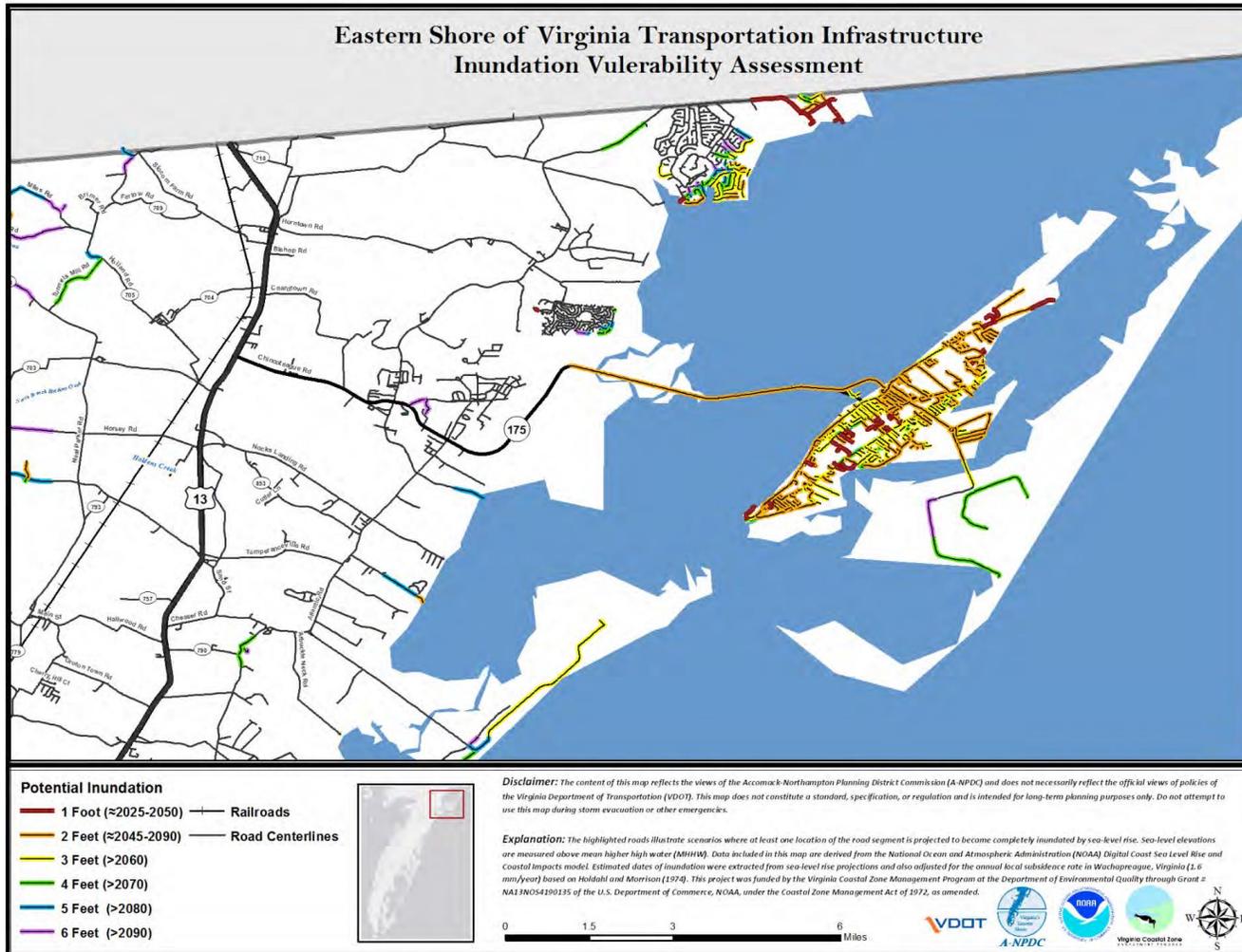


Exhibit 6-4: Inundation Vulnerability Assessment Map - Town of Chincoteague

Source: Eastern Shore of Virginia Transportation Infrastructure Inundation Vulnerability Assessment, VDOT (May, 2015)



Chapter 7 Housing / Neighborhoods

In recent years, a growing concern by community business interests is the provision of housing at costs that satisfy the needs of residents who earn their living as part of the community work force. The Plan seeks to continue the existing variety and pattern of residential neighborhoods which have developed over time and which now align with the Official Zoning Map following a comprehensive Town zoning amendment in 2012. A mix of housing types and affordability for all ages will be encouraged in order to maintain Chincoteague's small town character.

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

Recent Changes

The national economic conditions of the last 5 years present different challenges than those described in the housing chapter adopted in 2010 and updated in 2015. The transition to more seasonal and rental housing, continued investment in repairs and renovations, a recovering resale market, improved FEMA flood elevations, and Health Department approval of advanced septic mound systems are all positive factors that continue to support the current mix of housing on Chincoteague Island.

Introduction

Present trends indicate a growing interest in Chincoteague as a second home or vacation home location for seasonal residents. Chincoteague remains a strong housing market for investment. Local schools are attractive to young families, and convenient services, commerce and recreation support nearby federal employers. With increased national and local emphasis on creating walkable communities, healthy lifestyles and mixed use neighborhoods, Chincoteague provides a genuine family-oriented town living experience for visitors and residents alike.

It is important to support age diversity in the resident population that includes young families and their children, as the Town also supports a community of seasonal residents and older adults in retirement. This diversity creates community challenges to ensure a wide cross-section of daily needs are met and creates opportunities for people to participate and volunteer in community activities.

Estimated by the 2017 American Community Survey (see Reference R-01), there are 4,304 housing units on the Island with 1423 occupied full time and 2881 seasonally occupied, rented or vacant. While the overall cost of living is lower here than the national and Virginia averages, the median cost of housing is \$251,000 as compared to \$157,200 for Accomack County and \$217,600 nationally. Though approximately 27% of the housing units have a value of \$150,000 or less, there is still the need for affordable housing.



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

To assist, there are Affordable Housing Programs available. Several programs and services are offered to residents of Accomack & Northampton Counties by the Accomack-Northampton Planning District Commission, Eastern Shore of Virginia Housing Alliance and the Accomack-Northampton Regional Housing Authority. These include rental assistance, financial literacy education, homelessness prevention, foreclosure prevention, housing and pre-purchase homeownership counseling.

Building Codes

The Town enforces, through a Building Code Administrator, the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) as the standards for new construction in Town. These standards are effective as of July 2014. In addition, because the Town is in the 120 mph wind zone, all structures must conform to either the 2001 Wood Frame Construction Manual, 1999 Standard for Hurricane Resistant Residential Construction, or 7-05 Minimum Design Loads for Building and Other Structures.

Areas of the Town are located within a FEMA Special Flood Hazard Area which also controls building construction standards. Elevation of the first floor and mechanical equipment above the base flood elevation creates a variety of accessibility conditions and sometimes changes the traditional relationship between the residential front door/porch and the sidewalk, particularly when elevating existing structures. Effective May 18, 2015, new FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Maps changed the flood risk of certain properties at higher elevations. In addition, the base flood elevation has been lowered throughout the Town which affects building requirements for new construction or substantial improvements. As flood risk information is improved and updated, a comprehensive update of zoning, subdivision, site plan and infrastructure standards has and will continue to be completed to manage cost and design impacts to residential neighborhoods.

Implementation Strategies

The primary need, with respect to housing on Chincoteague, is the provision of a variety of housing options. Housing type is often based on the land capacity for a septic drainfield, leading to modest single family homes with 3 bedrooms or less. Townhomes or duplexes are typically constructed in small groups and integrated with single family homes in the R-2 and R-3 zoning districts. Condominiums and apartments which require expensive wastewater treatment systems



Affordable housing for new families, teachers, police, seniors, etc. is an important element of the quality of life on the Island.

have been built in high value waterfront locations. The increase in real estate and housing values in recent years will challenge the community in its efforts to address affordable housing, more so than in the past.

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

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

Affordable Housing Program - Zoning

Virginia law permits the Town to create zoning ordinance provisions that implement an affordable housing dwelling unit program. As per the Code of Virginia, § 15.2-2305. Affordable dwelling unit ordinances, *the enabling legislation states:*

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

One way that other communities boost the available stock of affordable housing is by requiring developers to provide and construct a given share of moderately priced dwelling units as a condition for approval of construction. In order to compensate for building lower-priced units or lower profits, the Town can consider granting the developer "density bonuses" (allowing them to build more units per acre).

Both zoning and subdivision regulations can be modified to allow density bonuses, or possibly allow new housing types such as apartments above retail use in a mixed use building, guest cottages, or small homes where appropriate

Second and Third Floor Apartments

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

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

Accessory Dwelling Units

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

With the trend toward larger numbers of one- and two-family households, accessory apartments provide opportunities for Town residents to make their housing available to the community at-large, including young unmarried, divorced, or widowed individuals. Although likely dependent on the availability of public wastewater treatment facilities, this particular housing option offers a number of benefits including the following:

- Provides older homeowners with an opportunity to generate some additional income.
- Increases the supply of low- and modest-cost rental housing.
- Provides young singles, couples, and single parents with another source of income. This option may allow them to buy into the housing market; maintain ownership of their present home; or make available modest-priced rental housing in neighborhoods, which provide a wholesome environment for children.
- Modestly increases economic activity in the private sector, which benefits commercial lenders, real estate agents, builders, and retail businesses.
- Results in small increases in property assessments, which generate modest amounts of additional tax revenues.

- Creates an opportunity to continue to live in one's own home and maintain contact with the neighborhood.
- Tenants may add a measure of security and alleviate the fear of break-ins.
- Tenants may provide companionship.
- Tenants may be willing to provide personal services in lieu of rent. This could include the performance of routine maintenance work around the house; maintaining the yard; shoveling snow; performing light housekeeping tasks; providing modest, personal in-home health services; and providing occasional transportation.

In spite of these many prospective benefits, the Town would need to consider how best to craft provisions to support accessory apartments in the face of likely concerns. Many people feel that accessory apartments run contrary to traditional values, single family neighborhood character, and may have the potential for introducing new disruptive elements that may:

1. Visually alter the surroundings (alterations to the exterior of houses and the increased presence of automobiles in new off-street parking spaces or on the streets);
2. Mix summer vacationers with permanent residents;
3. Attract absentee landlords, who will exploit the housing resources; or
4. Put additional strain on the neighborhood infrastructure through increased usage of the streets, utilities and public services including school systems.

Concerns that accessory apartments will result in a general deterioration of the neighborhood, adversely affecting the quality of life in the community suggest that the Town would need to consider incorporating refinements and safeguards into any code provisions permitting conversion to accessory apartments. Such refinements may include any of the following:

- Restricting the conversion option to senior citizens over a specified age.
- Requiring the homeowner to reside in one of the living units within the house.
- Restricting the conversion to homes which were constructed prior to a given date.
- Requiring a minimum square footage as a prerequisite for a house to be considered eligible for a conversion.
- Specifying the particular zoning classifications where conversions may be considered eligible.

- Permitting conversions only by homeowners who have resided in the home for a designated number of years prior to making an application for a conversion.
- Prohibiting exterior modifications to the house.
- Specifying minimum or maximum floor sizes for accessory apartments requiring that a conversion not exceed a designated percentage of the total floor space of the house. Typically such floor areas required in ordinances establish a minimum of 400 to 500 square feet in size to a maximum of 900 to 1,100 square feet.
- Placing a limit on the number of people who can occupy the accessory apartment or designating the aggregate number of people who can occupy the entire house.
- Encouraging barrier-free design considerations for persons with handicaps or limited mobility.

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

- Create new living units without the expense of new infrastructure;
- Upgrade the energy standards of existing houses that will reduce the overall consumption of gas and electricity;
- Generate a flow of new dollars within the community from home equity;
- Avoid the "empty school syndrome" where large amounts of funds are invested in new additions to the infrastructure. These temporarily satisfy the needs of a large group of people who may be gone in one or two generations leaving unused facilities; and
- Reduce the costs of medical care for the elderly, who can receive less-expensive, in-home care services while living in an accessory apartment rather than being forced to move to a more costly nursing home or long-term health care facility.

Temporary Family Health Care Structures

Virginia HB 1307, which was approved on April 8, 2010 and took effect on July 1, 2010, adds a new section (15.2-2292.1) to the State Code that requires local jurisdictions to incorporate zoning provisions for temporary family health care structures. Under certain circumstances a

‘temporary family health care structure’ of no more than 300 gross square feet is permitted as an accessory use in any single family detached zoning district, and are not required to obtain a special use permit.

Community Land Trust

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

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

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

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

Adaptive Re-Use

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

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

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

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

Increased Density

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

Small lot developments require greater attention to site design -- the layout of streets, lots, mixing of lot and house sizes, variation in building setbacks and elevations, variation in exterior designs, and landscaping -- to enhance aesthetic appeal and to blend well with surrounding neighborhoods. Other elements of good community design include open space and recreation areas, adequate stormwater/drainage management, and access to public roads and utility infrastructure.

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

Appendix A : IMPLEMENTATION MATRIX

PRIMARY GOAL OF THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

The primary goal of the Comprehensive Plan seeks to manage and adapt to change over time in an economically and environmentally sustainable manner while retaining the most endearing and unique physical and cultural features of the Town and providing the setting for a harmonious community life.

CHAPTER 3: LAND USE PLAN

| LAND USE GOALS | LAND USE OBJECTIVES | LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
|--|---|--|-----------------|
| <p><u>PRIMARY GOAL:</u> The Town of Chincoteague seeks to change over time in an economically and environmentally sustainable manner so that it retains it’s most endearing and unique physical and cultural features and provides the setting for harmonious community life.</p> | <p><u>OBJECTIVE:</u> Protect the quality of life in existing residential neighborhoods, while permitting appropriate infill and redevelopment.</p> | <p><u>Single Family Residential Planning Area</u></p> | |
| | | <p>Continue to apply the existing R-1 Residential zoning to this Planning Area.</p> | <p>Maintain</p> |
| | | <p>Zoning provisions for this Planning Area should limit each lot to one principal use.</p> | <p>Maintain</p> |
| | | <p>Improve the quality of local streets and pedestrian systems serving residential neighborhoods, where necessary. Encourage</p> | <p>Maintain</p> |

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| LAND USE GOALS | LAND USE OBJECTIVES | LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
|----------------|---|---|---|
| | | <p>minimum maintenance standards for private streets, and private investment to dedicate private to public streets.</p> <p>Limit permitted residential uses to detached single family units and accessory units by special permit.</p> <p>Limit new non-residential uses to low intensity home occupations.</p> | <p>Maintain</p> <p>Maintain</p> |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Ensure that all development is compatible with the scale and character of adjacent uses in the area.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>One & Two Family Residential Planning Area</u></p> <p>Apply the existing R-2 Residential zoning to properties in the Planning Area.</p> <p>Amend zoning provisions for this Planning Area to limit each lot to one principal use.</p> <p>Improve the quality of local streets and pedestrian systems serving residential neighborhoods, where necessary.</p> <p>Permit existing non-residential uses to continue but not expand.</p> | <p>Maintain</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>Maintain</p> |

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| LAND USE GOALS | LAND USE OBJECTIVES | LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p>Strictly limit new non-residential uses to low intensity home occupations and low-intensity cottage industries.</p> <p>Establish appropriate development standards for new non-residential uses that ensure they are appropriately located and designed to “blend in” with the existing character of the surrounding area.</p> | <p>Maintain</p> <p>On-going</p> |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Promote redevelopment and infill of existing underutilized residential and mixed use areas.</p> <p>OBJECTIVE: Ensure that buildings and related site improvements for private development are well designed and compatible with surrounding properties and districts.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Mixed-Use Residential Planning Area</u></p> <p>Apply the current R-3 Residential zoning to the Planning Area.</p> <p>Establish appropriate zoning provisions to ensure new multi-family and townhouse residential development is consistent with the surrounding area (e.g., conditional use).</p> <p>Limit multi-family development or re-development to duplex, triplex, or quadraplex units to minimize the scale and intensity impacts of greater density.</p> <p>Establish voluntary and incentive-based design objectives for infill and redevelopment and multi-family residential uses that are appropriate to the existing character of neighborhoods.</p> | <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>Complete</p> <p>On-going</p> |

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| LAND USE GOALS | LAND USE OBJECTIVES | LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|---|-----------------|
| | | Minimize negative architectural appearances of structures that are required to satisfy 100 year floodplain regulations. | On-going |
| | | Ensure that any development or re-development activities minimize impacts to environmental resources and preserve or enhance drainage patterns. | On-going |
| | | Assess opportunities to enhance local street and pedestrian system connections as development or redevelopment occurs over time. | On-going |
| | | Improve the quality of and connections between local streets serving residential neighborhoods within the Planning Area. | On-going |
| | | Implement the Town’s bike plan. | On-going |
| | | Establish minimum landscape, buffering, and environmental protection standards. | |
| | | Permit existing non-residential uses to continue. | Maintain |

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| LAND USE GOALS | LAND USE OBJECTIVES | LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
|----------------|--|---|---|
| | | Limit new non-residential uses to low intensity home occupations and low intensity cottage industries. | Maintain |
| | | Establish appropriate development standards for new non-residential uses that ensure they are appropriately located and designed to “blend in” with the existing character of the surrounding area. | Maintain |
| | OBJECTIVE: Provide a range of housing options to serve the long term needs of the Town. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Resort Residential Planning Area</u></p> <p>Consider a new mixed use development zoning district that permits a mix of uses including residential, commercial, employment office, civic, and open space in a master planned development.</p> <p>Continue to permit resort recreation including, but not limited to, campgrounds, rental cottages, bed and breakfast, and tourist homes.</p> <p>Ensure interconnected streets that are designed to balance the needs of all users with sidewalks and on-street parking.</p> <p>Ensure open spaces that are integral to the community.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Complete</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Maintain</p> <p style="text-align: center;">On-going</p> |

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| LAND USE GOALS | LAND USE OBJECTIVES | LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | | Maintain |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Ensure that new and existing commercial developments are attractive in appearance.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Neighborhood Commercial Planning Area</u></p> <p>Manage a new zoning district to implement the objectives for this Planning Area (similar to the existing C-1 zoning district).</p> <p>Consider adding small well screened contractor yards, storage facilities and the like at appropriate locations as conditional uses in the Planning Area.</p> | Complete |
| | | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Town Center Commercial Planning Area</u></p> <p>Manage a Town Center zoning classification, similar to the current C-2 zoning district that permits commercial and business uses appropriate to the land use objectives for the Planning Area and allows limited residential use above the first floor.</p> <p>Work with property owners to retain commercial services and retail uses in existing structures, thereby minimizing the</p> | Complete |

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| LAND USE GOALS | LAND USE OBJECTIVES | LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
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| | | conversion of structures to residential uses and enhancing the quality of the resident and tourist experience. | On-going |
| | | Encourage economic development. | |
| | | Promote redevelopment or infill development in appropriate locations consistent with the Town Center’s unique assets, which include distinctive architecture and a pedestrian friendly environment. | On-going |
| | | Broaden the range of uses, attractions, and activities that strengthen the Town Center’s identity as a unique visitor destination. | On-going |
| | | Strengthen the identity, role, and marketing of the Town Center (downtown business district) as a viable year-round shopping area that provides a broad array of goods and services that cater to visitors and residents. | On-going |
| | | Consider preparing building appearance and architectural design objectives and incentive-based processes to ensure that new construction, reconstruction, or infill development are appropriate to existing architectural patterns. | |

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| LAND USE GOALS | LAND USE OBJECTIVES | LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
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| | | <p>Where possible, require sites that are redeveloped to provide a shoreline buffer and/or pedestrian promenade, when adjacent to Chincoteague Channel or Chincoteague Bay.</p> <p>Enhance tourist information and management by developing a visitor “Discovery Center” in the downtown.</p> <p>Continue to improve the “Downtown Waterfront Park” facility and fishing pier to enhance downtown’s relationship to Chincoteague Bay and promote downtown visitation.</p> <p>Promote the Town Center as an arts district for theatre, music, and additional forms of outdoor entertainment.</p> <p>Explore opportunities to feature the works of both local and out-of-town artists through use of a downtown building or structure to house a gallery for the sale of artwork.</p> <p>Explore needs for additional public restroom facilities in the downtown and identify appropriate locations for the construction and maintenance of such facilities to enhance the visitor experience.</p> | <p>Complete</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> |

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| LAND USE GOALS | LAND USE OBJECTIVES | LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
|----------------|---|--|----------|
| | | Improve the quality of local streets, public parking, and pedestrian systems, where possible. | On-going |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Enhance the commercial corridor of Maddox Boulevard to better serve the tourist trade.</p> <p>OBJECTIVE: Maintain and enhance the character of existing commercial areas.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Commercial Corridor Planning Area</u></p> <p>Consider establishing building appearance and architectural design objectives for new construction, reconstruction, or infill development. Zoning may include “special infill and re-development” provisions that offer flexibility and enhance opportunities to secure improvements in the form of landscaping, sidewalk enhancements, public parking facilities, or other proffers that provide public benefit as a trade-off for approval.</p> <p>Include minimum landscape standards for commercial uses in the Town zoning code.</p> <p>Provide street furniture, trash cans, and seating areas in limited locations along the corridor to enhance pedestrian use.</p> <p>Work with the Virginia Department of Transportation to enhance vehicular and pedestrian safety in the Maddox Boulevard corridor and seek State assistance to develop a “Corridor Management Plan” to identify opportunities to enhance access</p> | |

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| LAND USE GOALS | LAND USE OBJECTIVES | LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
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| | | <p>controls and assure the corridor can sustain adequate levels of service to accommodate projected future traffic volumes.</p> <p>Explore needs for additional public restroom facilities along the Maddox Boulevard gateway corridor and identify appropriate locations for the construction and maintenance of such facilities to enhance the visitor experience.</p> <p>Facilitate transit service in the corridor.</p> <p>Implement the Town’s bike plan.</p> <p>Improve the quality of local streets, public parking, and pedestrian systems, where possible.</p> | <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Promote small to medium scale commercial and office developments.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Resort Commercial Planning Area</u></p> <p>Manage a new zoning district to implement the objectives for this Planning Area (e.g., Resort Commercial C-4).</p> <p>Continue to permit recreational campgrounds and other facilities to support seasonally occupied cabins, mobile homes, and recreational vehicle use.</p> | <p>Complete</p> <p>Maintain</p> |

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| LAND USE GOALS | LAND USE OBJECTIVES | LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
|-----------------------|----------------------------|---|---|
| | | <p>Maximize opportunities for the public to access the water.</p> <p>Adopt appropriate standards to ensure that any development or re-development activities minimize impacts to environmental resources and preserve or enhance drainage patterns.</p> <p>Consider Master Plan Community or Planned Unit Development (PUD) provisions that permit redevelopment of larger sites within this Planning Area. Other provisions of a zoning district should include standards for planned mixed-use developments as well as requirements for appropriate proffers. In addition, the Town should limit the number of multi-family residential units to no more than 35% of the total number of units that may be built to ensure a mix of dwelling unit types.</p> <p>Consider a mixed-use conditional zoning classification applicable to the Maddox Campground property or other similar campgrounds. The zoning district may be written to permit a small business park or off-corridor commercial business/service uses in a “campus like” setting.</p> | <p align="center">On-going</p> <p align="center">On-going</p> |

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| LAND USE GOALS | LAND USE OBJECTIVES | LAND USE RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
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| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Create an attractive street environment, which will compliment private and public properties and be comfortable for residents and visitors.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Public/Semi-Public Planning Area</u></p> <p>Require adequate public facilities be made available as a condition of approval for any proposed development.</p> <p>Set development review fees at a level that covers the actual cost of development review and approval processes.</p> <p>Contain the costs of future development and growth to ensure that costs do not burden current and future residents and businesses. Accordingly, new development should be expected to pay for the extension of municipal services and capital improvements resulting from such new development as well as pay for the necessary technical expertise to review plans.</p> | |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Encourage site design, which preserves scenic vistas.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Park & Open Space Planning Area</u></p> <p>Maintain current inventory of Town park and Open Space assets.</p> <p>Adapt Town Park resources to meet changing needs.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">Maintain</p> <p style="text-align: center;">On-going</p> |

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| <p><i>GOAL: Conserve important natural and sensitive environmental resource areas which protect the Island from storm events and which serve as the basis for the Town's economy and visitation to the area.</i></p> | <p>OBJECTIVE: Encourage preservation of open space and environmentally responsible development.</p> | <p><u>Resource Conservation Planning Area</u></p> | Complete |
| | | <p>Manage a new resource conservation zoning classification. Limit permitted uses to low intensity agriculture, aquaculture, forestry, and single family residential uses.</p> | Maintain |
| | | <p>Establish minimum buffer standards for drainage-ways and encourage low impact development practices to improve water quality.</p> | On-going |
| | | <p>Coordinate with State agencies to study shoreline conditions and plan for a combination of design solutions which reduce erosion, and also encourage working and recreational waterfront uses.</p> | |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Continue to provide an area for agricultural practices.</p> | <p><u>Agriculture Planning Area</u></p> | Maintain |
| | | <p>Promote the continuation of current agricultural practices.</p> | |
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| | | <u>GENERAL LAND USE PLANNING</u> | |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Apply coastline best management practices, where practical.</p> | <p align="center"><u>Coastal Resource Management</u></p> <p>Utilize public outreach opportunities to educate citizens and stakeholders on shoreline management strategies.</p> <p>Develop local policies utilizing integrated shoreline management strategies.</p> <p>Encourage implementation of a more integrated approach to shoreline management.</p> | |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Enhance the resiliency of the Town, in particular, that of critical infrastructure.</p> | <p align="center"><u>Resiliency</u></p> <p>Identify the impacts of recurrent flooding and tidal surge events.</p> | |

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| | | <p>Identify critical infrastructure elements, assess, and enhance their resiliency.</p> <p>Perform a vulnerability and exposure analysis for general land use.</p> <p>Consider designation of additional areas for special protection.</p> <p>Site future critical infrastructure outside of or in less vulnerable areas.</p> <p>Identify specific goals, objectives, and policies that will respond to identified impacts.</p> | |

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| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| <p><i>GOAL: Provide a quality business environment that ensures a balanced mix of seasonal and year-round commercial and employment uses to serve the day to day needs of residents and seasonal visitors</i></p> | <p>Objective: Enhance the image of the community and create a vital and attractive environment for businesses, residents, and visitors that is reasonably balanced with the need for economic development to assure the Town’s economic prosperity.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge</u></p> <p>Coordinate multi-modal transit enhancements to the refuge with CNWR.</p> <p>Coordinate with CNWR to pursue funding opportunities to improve the refuge and adjoining areas for the benefit of the community.</p> <p>Evaluate potential impacts and identify protective methods to address hazard mitigation.</p> <p>Coordinate with CNWR to develop and utilize adaptive management practices that sustain the resiliency of both barrier islands.</p> | |

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| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Continue implementation of the Chincoteague Downtown Revitalization Plan to improve the Island’s economic climate for investment and reinvestment.</p> | <p><u>Main Street Revitalization</u></p> | |
| | | <p>Ensure the public, property owners, and merchants are included in the development of overall plans and policies as key stakeholders.</p> | On-going |
| | | <p>Continue to seek out state funding from the Virginia Department of Transportation, Community Development Block Grants, and other programs to assist economic efforts.</p> | On-going |
| | | <p>Apply for state grants from the Virginia Department of Transportation to repair or replace bulkheads and piers for overnight dockage, charter, and tour boats.</p> | On-going |
| | | <p>Build a boardwalk along the waterfront of Main Street and pedestrian walkways from the waterfront to Main Street.</p> | Maintain |
| | | <p>Determine placement for bike paths in this area and connect to other bike paths identified in the Town’s bike plan.</p> | On-going |

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| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p>Lease boat slips to offset costs and upkeep.</p> <p>Obtain easements from adjoining property owners for a waterfront boardwalk.</p> <p>Create tax incentives, for example, a tax credit equal to a percentage of construction expenses for property owners to make appropriate façade improvements on buildings fronting on Main Street.</p> <p>Create low-interest loan pools for property owners to make appropriate façade improvements on buildings fronting on Main Street.</p> <p>Complete the implementation of state grants from the Virginia Department of Transportation to bury utility lines and install new lighting from Cropper Street to Maddox Boulevard with new sidewalks, lighting, landscaping, and a new gateway treatment to the island.</p> | <p>Maintain</p> <p>Maintain</p> |

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| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Promote and support tourism, which is Chincoteague’s primary economic engine.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Maddox Boulevard Commercial District</u></p> <p>Establish guidelines for the district’s enhancement and development.</p> <p>Continue to develop multi-modal transportation that allows for enhanced connectivity within and to the district.</p> <p>Provide public restrooms within the district.</p> | <p>On-going</p> |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Work to achieve a year-round economy for Chincoteague to ensure economic longevity.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Balance Year-Round Economy</u></p> <p>Promote more year-round economic activity that takes advantage of the unique historic and cultural character of the Town.</p> <p>Promote sound local economies by conserving the Island’s unique values and providing protections from</p> | <p>On-going</p> |

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| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p>Where appropriate, encourage water-dependent maritime uses of coastal land.</p> <p>Promote necessary economic support for sport and commercial fishing.</p> <p>Promote and encourage enhanced relationships between the Town and neighboring federal agencies such as US Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, NASA, NAVY, NOAA, US Coast Guard.</p> | <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Encourage economically viable marine uses to meet the needs of waterborne commerce and recreation tourism.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Tourism, Real Estate, & Seasonal Businesses</u></p> <p>The island’s qualities should be preserved for summer residents, visitors, and taxpayers as well as for those who live on Chincoteague Island year-round.</p> <p>Recognize the importance of the summer economy as a base for the year-round economy and manage it through public and private actions including infrastructure and capital planning.</p> | <p>Maintain</p> <p>Maintain</p> |

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| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | Educate the public about the tourist economy on Chincoteague. | Maintain |
| | OBJECTIVE: Support the seafood industry and promote aquaculture. | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Fishing & Island Seafood Industries</u></p> <p>Promote policies on protecting the Island Seafood Industry. Ensure that it remains a visible part of the landscape.</p> | On-going |
| | | <p>Protect the seafood industry from changes in attitudes and ensure sufficient land is zoned for this activity. Prevent conflicts with residential land uses.</p> | On-going |
| | | <p>Encourage and foster the local seafood and aquaculture economies for the benefit of the whole island economy and character.</p> | On-going |
| | | <p>Encourage economic activities, which are positive additions to the rural Island environment.</p> | On-going |

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| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p>Encourage boating and fishing activities for the well-being of the Island economy, particularly tourism. Recognize the importance of commercial and sport fisheries to the local economy.</p> <p>Create jobs for the skills and working habits of the year-round labor force, in industries, which will prudently utilize the Island's natural resources.</p> <p>Encourage the development of small-scale industries to enhance the year-round economy.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">On-going</p> <p style="text-align: center;">On-going</p> <p style="text-align: center;">On-going</p> |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Work to achieve a year-round economy for Chincoteague to ensure economic longevity.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Wallops Island (WI) Area Economy</u></p> <p>Promote, with Wallops Island entities, educational opportunities.</p> | |

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| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p>Obtain recommendations from Wallops Island entities which could make the Town a more appealing location for their employees.</p> <p>Coordinate promotion of upcoming opportunities and events such as space and military operations at Wallops Island.</p> <p>Obtain Wallops Island entity workforce requirements and promote local development of qualified candidates.</p> <p>Promote S.T.E.M. (science, technology, engineering and math) programs for area students in available venues.</p> | |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Provide for a broad range of convenient shopping venues.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Economic Impact Study</u></p> <p>Encourage the commission of an economic impact study to include the following:</p> | |

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| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Baseline Study Update • Year-Round Employment • Alternative Trades • Crafts Cooperatives • Commercial Rents • Local Investment • Manage Resources With Economic Value • Develop Education Programs to Strengthen Local Economy • Monitor Consumer Prices • Waterfront Resources • Local Management of Tourism • Cost Benefit Analysis of Tourist Economy • Educate • Make the Island More User-Friendly • Marketing the Island to Specific Clientele • Higher Education as an Industry | |
| | | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Planning for Commercial Growth</u></p> <p>Keep existing business districts vital and workable.</p> <p>Restore and renovate historic buildings as an alternative to new construction, wherever possible.</p> | |

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| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p>Support planned economic growth.</p> <p>Encourage commercial development to match the scale and density of Island neighborhoods. Limit overall square footage, massing of individual buildings, and expanses of paved areas to blend with the rural scale of the Island. Provide an appropriate rhythm of buildings along streetscapes with view corridors to the coast, wherever possible. Prevent strong shadowing effects from buildings near public coastlines and parks.</p> <p><u>Town Centers</u> – Maintain services and year-round uses in existing Town commercial centers for pedestrian access and community identity. Address parking and traffic issues and sewage and septic needs.</p> <p><u>Town Center Streetscapes</u> – Plan more downtown parks and design places to sit such as Town squares for gathering, eating, and resting. Develop standards for landscaping and view corridors in Town centers. Create pedestrian precincts and eliminate cars in some areas.</p> | |

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| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p><u>Preserve Town Character</u> – Rehabilitate and re-use older structures to preserve the character and historic fabric of the Island.</p> <p><u>Positive Images</u> – Research historic footage of streetscapes for positive examples of Town character. Produce films and multi-media presentations on current Town character to emphasize positive examples.</p> <p><u>Positive Incentives</u> – Develop incentives to direct commercial growth to desired locations.</p> <p><u>Home Businesses</u> – Develop standards for home businesses to avoid conflicts with residential uses.</p> | |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Promote post-secondary school educational opportunities.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Education Partnerships/Workforce Development</u></p> <p>Support development of an Eastern Shore Community College campus at Wallops Research Park.</p> <p>Enroll students in career and technical education programs.</p> | |

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| ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT GOALS | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OBJECTIVES | ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | Engage universities and colleges in regional economic development, e.g., through current activities at Wallops Island. | |

| CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES | | | |
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| COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES GOALS | COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES OBJECTIVES | COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p>Limit the encroachment of new development on existing ditches, which are critical for drainage.</p> <p>Enhance existing drainage facilities.</p> <p>Favor open ditches over underground pipes where feasible because the initial costs and maintenance costs over time are lower.</p> <p>Enforce a municipal ordinance to control the filling of remaining drainage channels.</p> <p>Enforce a municipal ordinance to control the filling of private parcels which may adversely affect an adjoining property.</p> <p><u>Roads/Sidewalks/Storm Drains</u></p> <p>Ensure that the collector roads to evacuation routes are maintained at or near minimum elevations of the SR 175 causeway.</p> | <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> |

| CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES | | | |
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| COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES GOALS | COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES OBJECTIVES | COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p>Correct drainage at the intersection of Main Street and Maddox Boulevard.</p> <p><u>Flood Insurance</u></p> <p>Improve the Town’s rating status under the Community Rating System (CRS) of the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s National Flood Insurance Program to lower community-wide insurance rates in affected areas.</p> <p><u>Harbor</u></p> <p>Ensure the harbor remains as an economically valuable Island asset.</p> <p>The Harbor Committee should continue to review current financial health and make necessary adjustments to ensure that future costs are not born by Island taxpayers.</p> <p>Develop a long-term plan specific to the Harbor.</p> | <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> <p>On-going</p> |

| CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES | | | |
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| COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES GOALS | COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES OBJECTIVES | COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p><u>Town Facilities</u></p> <p>Adopt a standard for facility wayfinding signage and apply to appropriate facilities.</p> <p>Maintain current information for local government facilities, including locations, on the Town website and brochure.</p> <p>Consider utilization of best management practices (Stormwater & Shoreline Management) supporting resiliency when improving or maintaining facilities.</p> <p>Identify application of best management practices with informational signage and/or printed/electronic materials.</p> | |
| | | <p>NON-GOVERNMENT SERVICES AND FACILITIES</p> <p><u>Fire & Emergency Services</u></p> | |

| CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES | | | |
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| COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES GOALS | COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES OBJECTIVES | COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p>As improvements to the Town water system are implemented, apply for an improved “ISO” classification for the Town from the Virginia Insurance Services Office if eligible.</p> <p><u>Utilities - Broadband</u></p> <p>Encourage service providers to expand and improve affordable broadband services on Chincoteague Island to all residents.</p> <p><u>Health Care</u></p> <p>Consider an active program to recruit, support, and retain physicians on the Island.</p> | |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Maintain beautiful and functional outdoor public places, which provide for recreation and a shared sense of belonging for Chincoteague residents, business owners, and visitors.</p> <p>OBJECTIVE: Provide opportunities for public</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">RECREATION FACILITIES</p> <p>Pursue the possibility of acquiring or improving other public lands into recreational areas.</p> <p>Continue to consider the possibility of a plan to raise funds for construction of an outdoor community swimming pool.</p> <p>Consider utilization of best management practices (Stormwater & Shoreline Management) supporting resiliency when improving or maintaining facilities.</p> | |

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES

| CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES | | | |
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| COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES GOALS | COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES OBJECTIVES | COMMUNITY FACILITIES & SERVICES RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | access and recreational enjoyment of the shoreline. | <p>Identify application of best management practices with informational signage and/or printed/electronic materials.</p> <p>Maintain current information for Town Recreational Facilities, including locations, on the Town website and brochure.</p> <p>Adopt a standard for recreational facility wayfinding and location signage and apply to all facilities.</p> | |

CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION

| CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION | | | |
|---|---|---|-----------------|
| TRANSPORTATION GOALS | TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES | TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| <p><i>GOAL: Provide for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods.</i></p> | <p>OBJECTIVE: Provide a safe and connected system of pedestrian and bicycle pathways.</p> | <p>Where possible, require construction of planned vehicle (e.g., planned collector routes) and pedestrian system (e.g., sidewalks, waterfront trail) components as part of proposed development projects. Encourage the improvement of private roads to meet public street standards and be added to the public street system for maintenance.</p> | <p>On-going</p> |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Provide safe, efficient, reliable transportation for many modes of transportation.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PUBLIC ROADS & WATERWAYS</p> <p>Monitor the volume of traffic on secondary roads to ensure safe passage.</p> <p>Develop long range design and management solutions for the primary areas of traffic congestion during the peak summer months at Main Street/Maddox Boulevard and Deep Hole Road/Maddox Boulevard intersections.</p> <p>Promote and encourage continued maintenance dredging of the Chincoteague Inlet, Chincoteague Channel, and Inland Waterway.</p> | |

CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION

| CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION | | | |
|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| TRANSPORTATION GOALS | TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES | TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p>Promote efficient and safe waterfront areas for docking both large deep-draft vessels and smaller boats.</p> <p>Seek to ensure that handicapped and disabled residents and visitors are provided adequate means of access to all buildings and places.</p> <p>Promote the continued open flow of pedestrian and vehicular traffic to existing facilities on Assateague Island.</p> <p>Create bike paths in areas susceptible to heavy bike traffic.</p> <p>Improve the existing right-of-ways by widen the roads providing greater shoulder access and installing sidewalks, where appropriate.</p> <p>Install sidewalks along the entirety of Maddox Boulevard. Continue to implement Maddox</p> | |

CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION

| CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION | | | |
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| TRANSPORTATION GOALS | TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES | TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p>Boulevard Multi-Modal Transportation Enhancement plan.</p> <p>Pursue the construction of shoulders along the Route 175 Causeway to provide for public safety, emergency response, and possible shoreline stabilization/storm resiliency.</p> <p>Address SR 175 elevation and frequent flooding concerns with VDOT.</p> <p>Raise or protect roads to secure emergency access routes.</p> <p>Increase storm water drainage system and floodplain storage capacities servicing collector roads.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PRIVATE ROADS</p> <p>Amend Town Code, Appendix B – Land Subdivision and Development to include multiple standards for private roads that represent the range of conditions,</p> | |

CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION

| CHAPTER 6: TRANSPORTATION | | | |
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| TRANSPORTATION GOALS | TRANSPORTATION OBJECTIVES | TRANSPORTATION RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | <p>property access and lot sizes found across the Island. Identify which private road categories are eligible for improvement to a public street standard and define the necessary steps to achieve the higher standard.</p> <p>Continue work with VDOT to adopt a modified subdivision street standard serving a limited number of small lots so that more private roads may be eligible for public street maintenance.</p> <p>Study and develop strategies for funding and constructing improvements to private roads so that they may be eligible for acceptance into the public street system.</p> <p>Encourage the use of available resources to acquire and improve private right of way where limited segments of the private road network provide a critical through public street function for emergency, utility and Town service vehicle access.</p> | |

CHAPTER 7: HOUSING/NEIGHBORHOODS

| CHAPTER 7: HOUSING/NEIGHBORHOODS | | | |
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| HOUSING GOALS | HOUSING OBJECTIVES | HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| <p>GOAL: <i>Preserve and protect the neighborhood character and quality of life in residential neighborhoods; encourage a balanced range of housing type and opportunities; promote opportunities for clean, safe, and affordable housing; and maintain safety, appearance, and harmony within neighborhoods.</i></p> | <p>OBJECTIVE: Encourage a variety of home types and sizes in new development or re-development projects in order to provide housing for people of all socioeconomic backgrounds.</p> | <p><u>Affordable Housing Program - Zoning</u></p> <p>(See Chapter 7: Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan)</p> | |
| | <p>OBJECTIVE: Encourage programs to pro-actively provide accessible and affordable housing for the regional work force, including working with Accomack County and other regional housing entities.</p> | <p><u>Second and Third Floor Apartments</u></p> <p>(See Chapter 7: Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan)</p> | |

CHAPTER 7: HOUSING/NEIGHBORHOODS

| CHAPTER 7: HOUSING/NEIGHBORHOODS | | | |
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| HOUSING GOALS | HOUSING OBJECTIVES | HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | OBJECTIVE: Develop policies that support flexible housing arrangements for extended family living. | <u>Accessory Dwelling Units</u> (See Chapter 7: Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan) | |
| | OBJECTIVE: Create policies that facilitate continued occupancy of personal homes by elderly residents, who may need in-home care. | <u>Community Land Trust</u> (See Chapter 7: Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan) | |
| | OBJECTIVE: Encourage housing rehabilitation, redevelopment, and improvement program for selected areas or neighborhoods. | <u>Adaptive Re-Use</u> (See Chapter 7: Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan) | |
| | OBJECTIVE: Continue to improve housing conditions by using all available means to ensure decent, safe, and sanitary housing. | <u>Renovation and Re-Investment</u> Promote renovation and home improvement investment to existing housing and property to reduce flood risk, improve | |

CHAPTER 7: HOUSING/NEIGHBORHOODS

| CHAPTER 7: HOUSING/NEIGHBORHOODS | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|-----------------|
| HOUSING GOALS | HOUSING OBJECTIVES | HOUSING RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| | | wastewater treatment systems, maintain property values, and expand public street access. | |
| <p>*Note: Many of the recommendations for “Housing” our “Neighborhood” development are directly related to the future development of sewer facilities and services for Chincoteague Island. The Town is performing feasibility studies in regards to sewerage facilities and services therefore these recommendations describe potential future actions if sewer is made available at a later date.</p> | | | |

| ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS | | | |
|---|---|--|----------|
| ENVIRONMENTAL GOALS | ENVIRONMENTAL OBJECTIVES | ENVIRONMENTAL RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| <p>GOAL: <i>Conserve important natural and sensitive environmental resource areas which protect the Island from storm events and which serve as the basis for the Town's economy and visitation to the area.</i></p> | <p>OBJECTIVE: Conserve important natural and sensitive environmental resources.</p> <p>OBJECTIVE: Incorporate State guidance relative to Coastal Resource Management.</p> | <p>Adopt shoreline management policies consistent with State Code where practical, and actively promote the use of other structural options when necessary to support working waterfronts and storm damage protection of property.</p> <p>Prepare and implement a general landscape planting guide for Chincoteague Island which encourages planting of trees and shrubs to replace those lost due to storm damage utilizing native species.</p> <p>Continue a partnership with the US Army Corps of Engineers and the US Coast Guard to maintain navigable channels surrounding Chincoteague Island and connecting to the Atlantic Ocean.</p> <p>Continue a cooperative working relationship with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Park Service and others to provide convenient public access and recreational use of the Assateague National Seashore for Virginia residents and regional visitors.</p> | |

| RESILIENCY CONSIDERATIONS | | | |
|---|--|--|----------|
| RESILIENCY GOALS | RESILIENCY OBJECTIVES | RESILIENCY RECOMMENDATIONS | SCHEDULE |
| <p>GOAL: <i>Enhance the capacity to maintain or regain functionality and vitality in the face of natural, climate-induced, or man-made stressors and disturbances.</i></p> | <p>OBJECTIVE: Develop and implement a proactive plan for the community to defend from and adapt to long term changes in climate and storm impacts, flooding, water table, vegetation and other environmental factors.</p> | <p>Implement a wastewater management plan through a phased implementation.</p> <p>Implement drainage management strategies to enhance overall drainage capacity.</p> <p>Reduce the vulnerability of evacuation route and collector roads to storm water and tidal surge inundation.</p> <p>Perform a comprehensive review of shoreline management to identify information gaps and potential projects to help protect the Island.</p> <p>Encourage increased use of natural and nature-based features to increase coastal resilience.</p> <p>Support the establishment of resiliency goals, strategies, and implementations to assist businesses with resiliency planning.</p> <p>Identify critical infrastructure elements, assess their vulnerability, and enhance their resiliency.</p> | |

Appendix B : Chincoteague Public Questionnaire – Results

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

Appendix C Background Planning Process

Planning Process

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

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



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

- Chincoteague will have improved emergency services, a 24-hour community medical facility and community services for the elderly and youths.
- There will be a limited amount of multi-family housing, and there will be affordable housing for young and old.
- The Town will continue to promote the seafood industry.
- Chincoteague will have new businesses that go beyond tourism, including internet and other information technology businesses.

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

2006 Chincoteague Comprehensive Plan – Public Workshop

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

Key issues identified were the following:

1. A need to develop appropriate development standards and review procedures to address large-scale development proposals.
2. Inappropriate redevelopment of sites.
3. Capacity to support growth (infrastructure and natural conditions).
4. Seasonal vs. year-round demands (accommodating peak demand at a reasonable cost).
5. Protecting and preserving character.
6. Condominiums lining waterfront (loss of community character).
7. Too many signs (visual pollution).
8. A need to expand the scope of Capital Improvements Programming.

9. A need to diversify zoning districts.
10. Commercial businesses being displaced by resort residential, eroding the commercial base of the community.
11. Development regulations that do not facilitate appropriate negotiations (exactions) between the community and potential developers.
12. No aesthetic and landscape requirements.

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



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

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

Land Use

- ❖ Stores, shops, and businesses should be the primary uses allowed in the historic Town Center (Main Street from Church Street to the Fire House).
- ❖ Detached single family dwellings should be the predominant land use allowed along Main Street and the waterfront outside of the Town Center.

- ❖ Zoning regulations should prohibit multifamily dwellings along the Main Street waterfront outside the Town Center.
- ❖ The Town should institute temporary measures that further restrict multi-family, townhouse or condominium development not already approved until work on the new Comprehensive Plan is completed.
- ❖ The Town should consider designating the Town Center as a Historic District.
- ❖ Redevelopment of existing campgrounds and/or trailer parks as planned residential communities should be allowed.

Community Design

- The architectural characteristics of the “best examples” of traditional Chincoteague buildings located in the Town Center should be reflected in new construction in the Town Center.
- Building height, width and depth, as well as location on the lot should be regulated so as to retain open views of Chincoteague Channel and the Bay from Main Street.
- Views of Chincoteague Channel and the Bay waterfront from Main Street should be retained to the maximum extent possible.
- The visual appearance of Maddox Corridor should be improved with more landscaping e.g., street trees.
- The visual quality of signs along Maddox Boulevard should be improved.
- The existing views of Main Street and the waterfront entering Chincoteague from the main land should be retained to the maximum extent possible.
- The design of new construction and redevelopment (e.g., in terms of size, height, building materials, architectural details, etc.) should be compatible with the best examples of traditional Chincoteague residences in the neighborhood.
- The Town should adopt design standards to regulate the appearance of new structures in the residential neighborhoods.
- The appearance of buildings along Maddox Boulevard should be improved.

Natural Resource Protection

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

Transportation

- The Town should increase the number of pedestrian trails and bikeways throughout the community.
- Pedestrian and bicycle facilities on Maddox Boulevard should be improved.

Community Facilities and Services

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

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

1. The Town should temporarily restrict further multi-family, town house, and condominium development until an updated comprehensive plan has been adopted and appropriate implementation measures put into place; and
2. Public sewer is needed, but a comprehensive plan and strong implementing provisions should be in place before public sewer is pursued.

2007 Chincoteague Stakeholder Meetings

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

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

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

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

2010 Adoption of Fully Revised Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Chincoteague adopted a fully revised Comprehensive Plan on January 4, 2010. The comprehensive plan is designed to be a general guide for growth and future development for the next 20 years.

2015 Five Year Update of Approved Comprehensive Plan

The Code of Virginia (§ 15.2-2230) requires that at least once every five years the comprehensive plan shall be reviewed by the local planning commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan. The Approved 2010 Comprehensive Plan was the reviewed document.

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

Several strategies were used to accomplish the required review process:

- A) Complete a chapter by chapter (or page by page) review during the next several regular meetings of the Planning Commission to identify any areas that require additional study or revision.
- B) Focus on Appendix A – Implementation Matrix to determine which Goals, Objectives and Land Use Recommendations have been accomplished and adjust them as necessary to reflect current conditions.
- C) Incorporate current planning activities such as:

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

D) Revise to include changes required by State Code:

1. Coastal Resource Management

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

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

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

F) Revise approved land use map to include:

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

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

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

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

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

2020 Five Year Update of Approved Comprehensive Plan

The Code of Virginia (§ 15.2-2230) requires that at least once every five years the comprehensive plan shall be reviewed by the local planning commission to determine whether it is advisable to amend the plan. The Approved 2015 Comprehensive Plan Update was the reviewed document.

To allow adequate time for review of the plan, the implementation steps, and new legislative requirements, the Planning Commission began work on a strategy and schedule to provide Town Council with a recommendation for any changes prior to January 2018.

Several strategies were used to accomplish the required review process:

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

- B)** Recommended additional study or revision items included:
 - 1. Collect and archive available documents listed in the List of Studies/Reports for both the 2015 & 2020 updates.
 - 2. Make current, information in all Chapters. Where useful, include trend data.
 - 3. Focus on Chapters 4 & 5 – Adjust text structure and content as necessary to more fully reflect current conditions.

- C)** Incorporate current planning activities such as:
 - 1. Public Works Systems (Water, Wastewater, and Drainage)
 - 2. Multi-Modal Transportation
 - 3. Environment/Recreation (CCP and GMP plans)
 - 4. Transportation infrastructure vulnerability

- D)** Revise to include changes required by State Code:
 - 1. Coastal Resiliency

Virginia Code § 15.2-2223.3 (2015): Comprehensive plan shall incorporate strategies to combat projected sea-level rise and recurrent flooding.

Beginning July 1, 2015, any locality included in the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission shall incorporate into the next scheduled and all subsequent reviews of its comprehensive plan strategies to combat projected relative sea-level rise and recurrent flooding. Such review shall be coordinated with the other localities in the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission. The Department of Conservation and Recreation, the Department of Emergency Management, the Marine Resources Commission, Old Dominion University, and the Virginia Institute of Marine Science shall provide technical assistance to any such locality upon request. Where federal regulations as effective July 1, 2015 require a local hazard mitigation plan for participation in the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program, such a plan may also be incorporated into the comprehensive plan. For a locality not participating in the FEMA Community Rating System, the comprehensive plan may include an action plan and time frame for such participation. (2015, c. [186](#)).

- E) Complete a study with recommendations for Town policy and comprehensive plan language for:
 - 1. Stormwater/Drainage
- F) Apply accepted formal document standards and formatting styles to the plan document while retaining as much of its original appearance as possible.
- G) Revised sections were reviewed during 2018 and 2019 at the regularly scheduled Planning Commission Meetings. Generally, each section had received three or more review cycles.

The Planning Commission finalized its recommended changes on October 8, 2019 and presented Town Council with a draft redlined copy of the Town Comprehensive Plan 5-year Update on November 12, 2019. Comments and corrections received during this review and during the Planning Commission meeting on January 10, 2020 have been incorporated into the public hearing draft document.

A joint public hearing with the Planning Commission, held on February 20, 2020 at the Town Council Workshop meeting was advertised in Eastern Shore Post for 2 consecutive weeks to allow for the consideration of public comment.