



Town of La Plata

Planning and Community Development Overview



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Introduction

The Town of La Plata has been seeing some significant changes over the last few years and we have a lot of work to do to ensure that as we develop, we provide adequate public facilities, maintain green space and increase our recreation opportunities.

This presentation will provide an overview of what we are working on, goals, challenges and how we plan to utilize smart growth initiatives as we develop.



Town Plans

- Strategic Plan – 2021
- Comprehensive Plan – Updated in 2020
- Urban Land Institute TAP Study (Sustainable Community Boundary)– 2016
- Parks and Recreation Master Plan -2011
- Transportation Study - 2009
- Downtown Vision Plan – 2002
- Vision Plan for Greater La Plata - 2000

The Planning part is easy, it is the implantation of those plans that can be difficult!

The background features a light grey base with a large, dark brown organic shape on the left and a muted green organic shape on the right. A white silhouette of a pine branch is visible in the top left corner. A white wavy line curves across the bottom right area.

Development Overview

Development Capacity Analysis

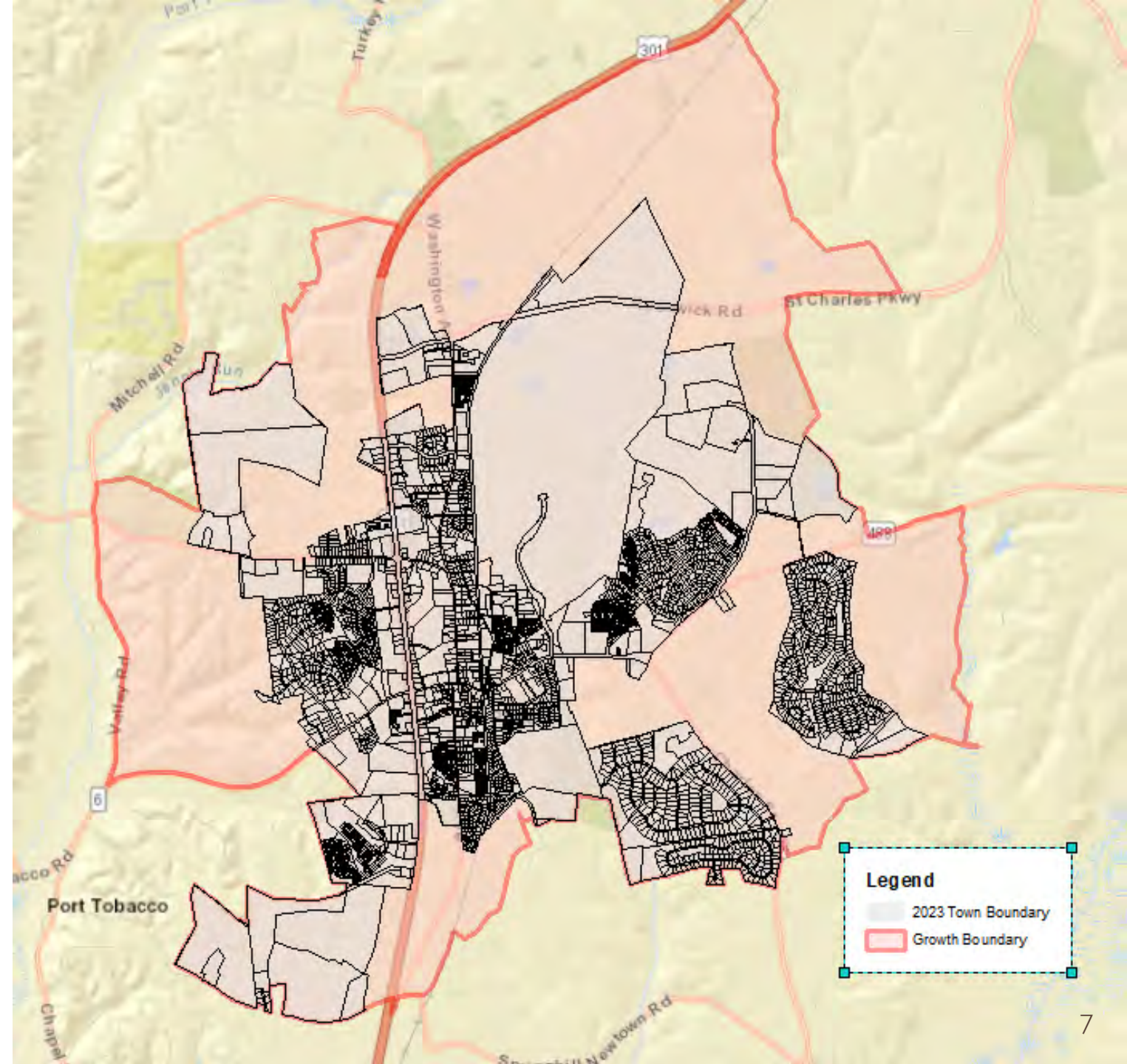
As of 1.29.2023

Status	Number of Acres	Number of Residential Units	Square footage of Commercial	Estimated Water Demand (GPD)*	Estimated Sewer Demand (GPD)*
Approved Final Plat	131.0932	363	N/A	90,750	90,750
Approved Major Site Plan	39.2286	302	61,027±	85,790	85,790
Approved Preliminary Plat	399.5566	1,296	N/A	324,000	324,000
Development in Review	919.3727	3,170	98,310±	804,352	804,352
Proposed Development	431.3926	2,448	Unknown	612,000	612,000
Totals:	1,921±	7,579±	159,337±	1,916,892±	1,916,892±

*Water/Sewer estimates were calculated using a standard 250 gallons per unit for planning purposes. These numbers are subject to change based upon water and sewer studies for each project.

Town's Growth Boundary

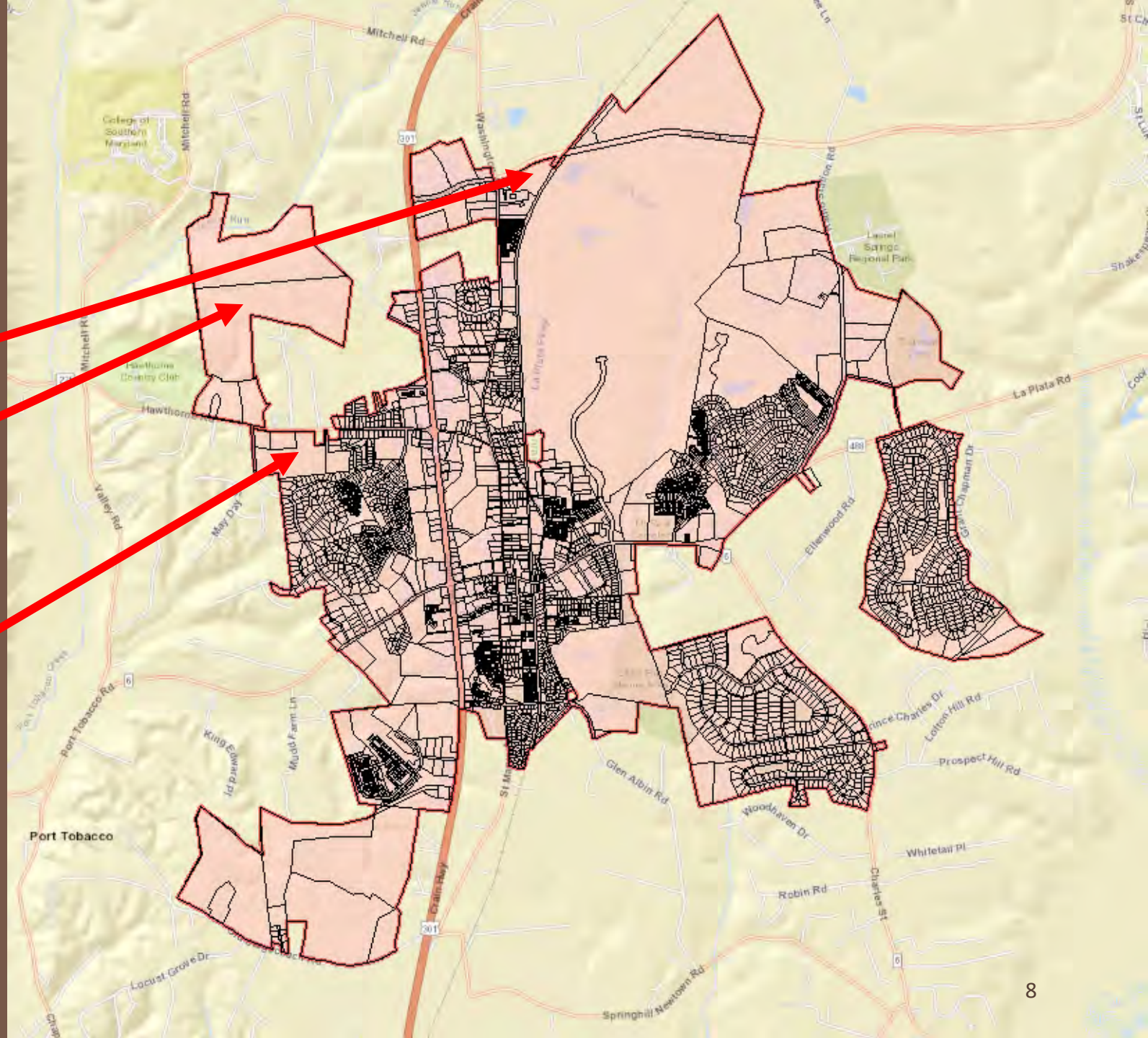
- Growth boundary contains approximately 4,584 acres of land.
- This boundary was updated with our Comprehensive Plan in 2020
- Eight Annexations have been approved since the Comprehensive Plan was adopted:
 - Four single lot annexations – failing septic
 - 5780 Crain Highway – Existing Development
 - Three Annexations – Greenfield Development



Areas of Growth

Approved Annexations in 2022:

- The Villages of Rosewick
Zoned NCX
21 Acres
- The HUB
Zoned TDX
298 Acres
- Hawthorne Yards
Zoned NCX
53 Acres




Statistics

- Population Estimates (Average Persons per household 2.68)

2022	10,404
2021	10,112
2020	10,159
2010	8,753
Data from the Census Bureau Quick Facts	

Based upon the development capacity analysis if all proposed development were to proceed the Town could see a population growth of approximately 20,311 people.



So, what does the Town Plan to
do about all this development?

Primary Goals

Goals and action items on paper may not look the same in real life!

Review and Update Regulations

- Several chapters of the Town Code need to be reviewed and updated to address current day issues
- Education on Zoning, Comprehensive Plans and how they affect development

Adequate Public Facilities

- Water Supply
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrades
- Transportation Improvements

Sustainable Community Designation

- 5 year renewal – update boundary

Software and hardware updates

- Permit/development review improvements
- Improve GIS / mapping capabilities

Keep La Plata Beautiful Initiatives

- Bird City
- Tree City

Code Revisions/Updates

- Subdivision Ordinance – last updated in 1992!
- Waters and Sewer
 - Adopt Charles County Standard Details
- Streets and Sidewalks
 - Adopt Charles County Standard Details
 - Adopt Complete Streets Ordinance
- Zoning Code
 - Review and update parking regulations
 - Review and update landscaping regulations (native landscaping precedence)
 - Add form-based code for downtown core
 - Review Table of Permitted Uses
- Health and Sanitation
 - Add Certified Wildlife Habitat Application Process
- Vehicles and Traffic
- Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance

Adequate Public Facilities

- With the anticipated growth proposed for the Town, we have started drafting an Adequate Public Facilities Ordinance (APFO)
- The APFO will address Traffic Analysis, Water Capacity, Sewer Capacity and School Seat Allocations
- Need to address water supply
- Need to continue upgrades to the Town's Wastewater Treatment Plan to increase capacity
- Need to establish expiration dates and allocation process for water and sewer



I honked at car in front of me and this angry alpaca popped out and now I'm not sure what to do



Based on a community survey the Town received the following feedback on our current strengths and weaknesses:

Strengths	Weaknesses
Park and Ride Facility	Traffic Congestion
VanGo Bus Operation	Lack of Sidewalk Connections
Pedestrian Crossing Flags	Too much development
Upgrades to Wastewater Treatment Plant	Aging Infrastructure
Collaboration and Community Involvement	Water Supply

Transportation/Pedestrian/Bicycle Improvements

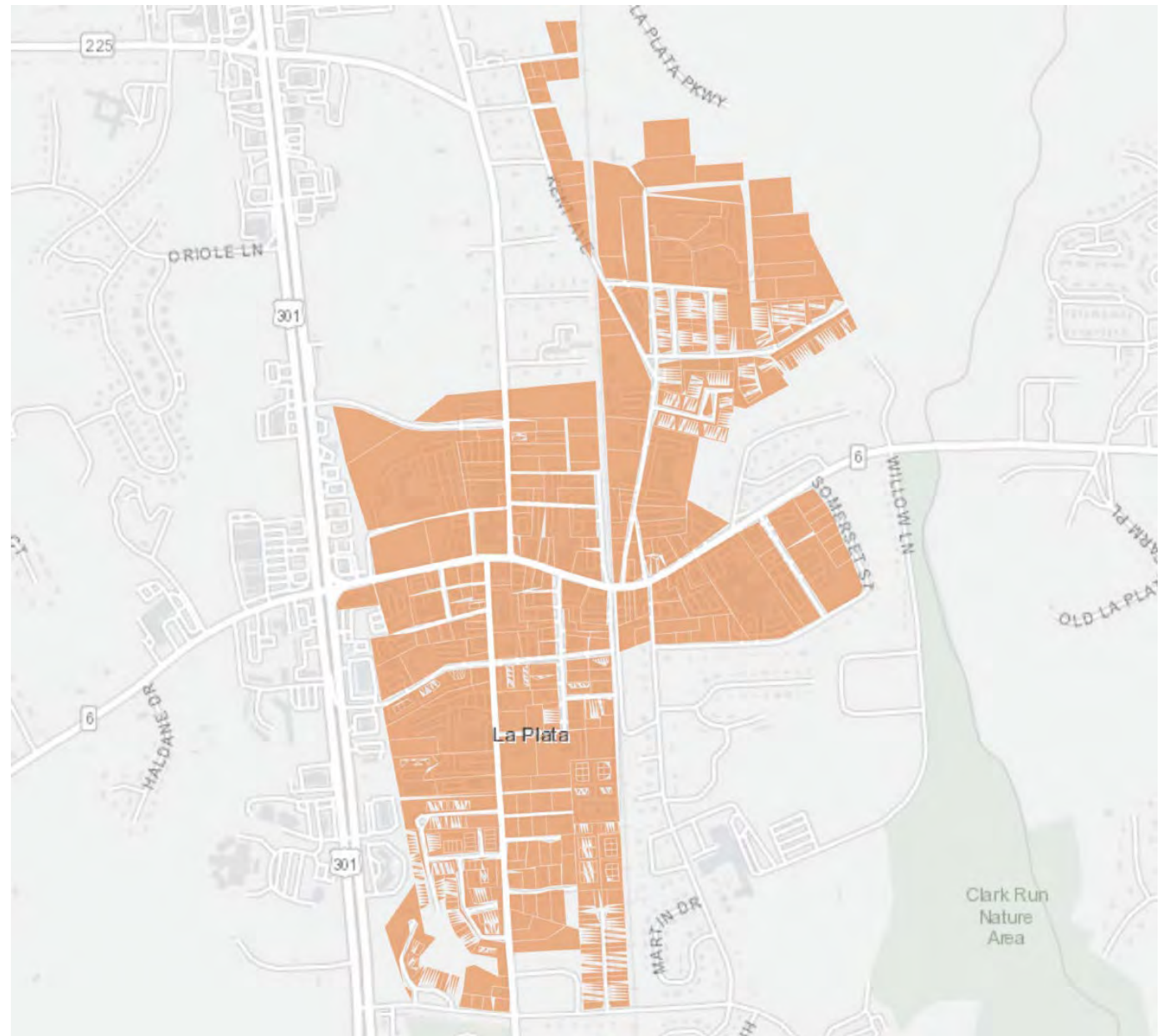
- Shared Pedestrian/Bike Path from Rosewick Road to Willow Lane
- Southwest Quadrant Access Management Study
- Washington Avenue Sidewalk Project – Collaboration with Charles County Government
- Charles Street Improvement Study – Collaboration with MDOT/SHA
 - MDOT Capital Transportation Program includes \$5.4 million in FY23 – 28 for “safety and accessibility improvements” along MD 6 in La Plata



Sustainable Community Designation

- The Town has submitted an application to DHCD in order to renew our Sustainable Community Designation.
- The proposed boundary of the sustainable community area has been expanded to allow for more assistance for residential units.

“The Sustainable Communities Act of 2010 established a framework for reinvestment and revitalization of Maryland’s existing communities creating a single, locally designated geographic focus area. Since that time, the “Sustainable Communities” designation has provided an efficient means of targeting scarce public and private resources for multiple State agency investments and prioritizations.” - DHCD



Bird City Initiatives

The Town was named the First Bird City in the State of Maryland, some initiatives are:

- Maintain and/or grow habitat for birds and other wildlife
- Provide education and resources for the community
- Bird feeders have been added to the Town Hall park
- Create a bird friendly pocket park in downtown
- Review lighting regulations

Fun fact!

The Purple Martin was recognized as the official Town Bird





Tree City Initiatives

- Tree Inventory – Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay and the Davey Resource Group
 - Determine tree canopy percentage goals
 - Identify priority planting areas
 - Enforce Forest Conservation Regulations
- Created Planting Recommendations – Plant Native!
- La Planta Project – Coming Soon!
- Update landscaping requirements in our Zoning Code and implement parking maximums

Fun Fact!

The Sweetbay Magnolia was recognized as the official Town Tree

Goal Implementation

How we get there?

Collaboration	Community Engagement	Education	Planning
As a municipality collaboration with the State, County and regional committees is essential!	The Town is looking for ways to improve engagement including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Website Update ➤ Interactive Mapping 	What does the Comprehensive Plan do, and how does it connect with the zoning regulations?	Look at existing plans/regulations in place and determine where changes need to be made.
Utilize Grant Opportunities and Partnerships with Non-Profit Organizations	Encourage volunteers	How do our current zoning categories align with smart growth?	Look at staffing needs
Tri-County Council	Make planning efforts accessible	Affordable Housing	Track Comprehensive Goals/Actions progress
Private Businesses / Local Business Association	Homeowner's Associations / Community Advocates	Zoning Review Process	Promote flexibility and smart growth

Questions?

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